

# THE READINESS REPORT

FOR INDIVIDUAL RESERVISTS

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*The official magazine of the  
Headquarters Individual Reservist Readiness and Integration Organization*

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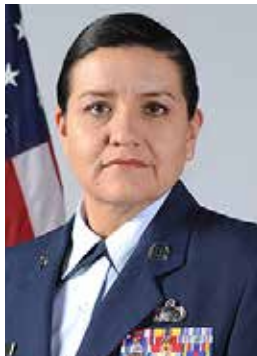
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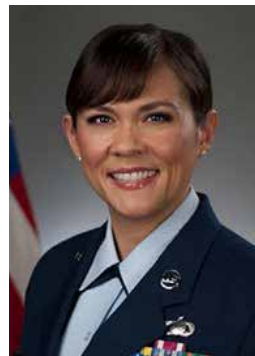
## LEADERSHIP



*Col. Kelli B. Smiley  
Commander*



*Chief Master Sgt. Dolores Colella  
Group Superintendent*



*Master Sgt. Wendy Barraza  
First Sergeant*

## ABOUT HQ RIO

The Headquarters Individual Reservist Readiness and Integration Organization (HQ RIO) is located at Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado. Its mission is to seamlessly integrate wartime-ready Individual Reserve forces to meet Air Force and Combatant Commander requirements.

HQ RIO standardizes the processes for the Individual Reserve program. The IR force is comprised of Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMAs), who are accountable to the Air Force Reserve Command and assigned to funded, active-component positions, and Participating Individual Ready Reservists (PIRRs), who participate for points towards retirement only. Both IMAs and PIRRs augment active-component missions and are rated by active-component or government agency supervisors.

There are more than 2,700 enlisted members and more than 4,500 officers in the IR. IMAs and PIRRs support more than 50 major commands, combatant commanders and government agencies.



**Watch >>** the AFRC Community Spotlight of HQ RIO on YouTube:  
<https://youtu.be/r0bMSNnYhUE>.

## NEWS BRIEFS

## AY18/19 RDEDB Invitation to Apply Release

The academic year 2018/2019 Air Force Reserve Developmental Education Designation Board (RDEDB) will convene Oct 23, 2017, at the Air Reserve Personnel Center, Buckley Air Force Base, Colo. Both the Invitation to Apply and RDEDB Application can be accessed via the myPers scrolling banner or on the Force Development page. Additionally, the Invitation to Apply can be found on the [ARPC public website](#).

To apply, log in to the myPers vPC Dashboard and the RDEDB application will be accessible under the "Action Requests" tab. Applications from Individual Reservists are due to their servicing HQ RIO Detachment by Aug. 28, 2017.

The RDEDB is convened to identify the best-qualified officers for in-residence developmental course placement. Board members will evaluate applicants based on the whole person concept, which includes depth and breadth of military experience. In addition, applicants will be evaluated on responsibilities that capitalize on the member's attendance at a specified course, as well as their demonstrated professional and leadership qualities.

For more information, call the Total Force Service Center at DSN 665-0102 or 210-565-0102. Questions specific to the RDEDB process can also be directly addressed by emailing [arpc.dpaf.rdedb@us.af.mil](mailto:arpc.dpaf.rdedb@us.af.mil).

## Virtual TAP option now available to Individual Reservists

Individual Reservists who need to complete the Congressionally-mandated Transition Assistance Program (TAP), but whose qualifying 180+ day Title 10 orders have already ended, may now complete the requirement virtually.

The TAP mandate requires any reservist who has served an active-duty tour of 180 days or longer since November 2012 to complete the TAP program. Every effort should be made to complete this requirement during the qualifying orders. To do this, reservists must contact their local Airman and Family Readiness Center (or sister-service equivalent).

Members who have verified employment or qualifying school enrollment can expect to complete the requirement in about eight hours. They will complete a Pre-separation brief, two Veterans Affairs benefits briefings and the Capstone portion of the requirement virtually.

Members must be in a duty status to complete Transition Assistance Program requirements. In the event that the member is completing TAP after the end of the qualifying order, they must participate in a points-only IDT status unless they receive permission and funding to participate in another status. Members should work with their servicing HQ RIO Detachment and assigned unit to determine which status is right for them.

Begin the virtual program by scheduling an over-the-phone pre-separation briefing with Ms. Vernesta Harris, Air Force Reserve Command Force Integration Support Team:

- Email: [afrc.a1ry@us.af.mil](mailto:afrc.a1ry@us.af.mil)
- Phone: (478) 327-2107

Ms. Harris is available for one-on-one phone counseling and also offers regularly-scheduled conference call  
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## Did You Know?

### Career tips for Individual Reservists

Did you know the Department of Defense is rolling out a portable retirement program, Jan. 1, 2018? Individual Reservists who have accrued fewer than 4,320 retirement points as of Dec. 31, 2017, are eligible to opt-in to the Blended Retirement System. The opt-in period is from Jan. 1 - Dec. 31, 2017.

Eligible members must indicate they are aware of the new retirement system by going to myPers and completing the BRS Acknowledgement: [https://mypers.af.mil/ci/documents/detail/2/AFR\\_BRSN](https://mypers.af.mil/ci/documents/detail/2/AFR_BRSN).

They must also complete a two-hour BRS Opt-in Training on ADLS (course number ZZ133146, located under "Selected Force Training) or Joint Knowledge Online (course number BRS-OC/J3OP-US1332). Taking the training does not opt members into the program but does provide education on the new benefit available to them.

For more information on the BRS, visit <http://militarypay.defense.gov/BlendedRetirement/>.

# Editorial: collaboration is key to IMA success

By Capt. Bari Wald, Public Affairs, U.S. Forces Korea

**R**eporting for duty as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee often means getting thrown right into the mix with little to no ramp-up time. You're expected to be proficient, professional, and capable of accomplishing the mission, no matter what.

As a public affairs IMA with USFK, Yongsan Army Garrison, Seoul, South Korea, I recently stepped into some high-level situations in a very unstable part of the world when I arrived for my annual tour. When I showed up in January, I was told I would support the largest Department of Defense logistics exercise in history. I found that collaboration with my fellow Airmen, sister-service teammates and Republic of Korea counterparts was critical for success.

Shortly after arriving at my unit, I was informed I would be the PA officer in charge for Operation Pacific Reach and was sent to the rehearsal of concept drills. After arriving in the southern part of Korea for the rehearsal, I met up with my counterpart, an Army type from my unit, who had been on the ground for less than three weeks himself. We had little information as to what we were walking into but by pooling our resources built a successful framework for the operation.

Imagine showing up at an indiscriminate warehouse in the dead of winter, very little heat, and walking into a large, Hollywood-style military briefing room and being told that you, a first lieutenant, will brief the three-star general and his ROK counterpart on the public affairs concept of support for an international media day for an upcoming operation. It was a bit nerve-wracking but, thanks to the support of my Army and ROK counterparts, everything came off without a hitch and I left the rehearsal with my career intact.

Normally, heading back to civilian life with a large international exercise looming in my future would leave me with a ball of anxiety in the pit of my stomach. Thankfully, I was able to pass the next phase of planning to another member of my USFK team, fellow IMA Maj. Agneta Murnan. As the previous public affairs OIC for the exercise, she was a fantastic continuity piece and already understood the ins and outs of the exercise. She was able to establish connections, finalize plans, package everything neatly and pass it back to me for execution a few months later.

Upon returning to South Korea for the exercise in April, I was fortunate to have two days of turn-over with the major prior to the media day. She and I worked tirelessly together for those two days to wrap up outstanding coordination pieces, attend final planning meetings and answer all my questions.

As the public affairs officer in charge for Operation Pacific reach, I led a team of 10 PA professionals from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and ROK to execute the international media day that included more than 70 journalists from 40 outlets. Our collaboration resulted in four front-page stories in Korean newspapers, more than 40 additional stories in other publications, and numerous types of social media content. The entire public affairs team delivered the message, showcasing the strength of the ROK – U.S. alliance to an audience of millions worldwide.

Being military-- whether active duty, guard or reserve--we're all in this fight together. Helping each other out and serving one another is what makes us effective. The success of our international media day during Operation Pacific Reach wasn't the result of luck or any one person's efforts, it was successful because of the hard work and collaboration between Air Force Reserve IMAs and the other outstanding public affairs professionals from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and ROK. This experience has me looking forward to the next "movie-esque" scenario I get thrown into in the non-stop world of USFK.



Media outlets report on events at Operation Pacific Reach. IMA Capt. Bari Wald managed the public affairs team for the operation, overseeing 10 U.S. and ROK troops.



Sgt. 1st Class John Queen, USFK public affairs, Maj. Hyun Chang-yong, ROK Armed Forces, and author Capt Bari Wald. The three worked together to run PA operations for Operation Pacific Reach.



Members of the media record actions during Operation Pacific Reach.

# IMA pilots nuclear alert aircraft, leads at AF Nuclear Weapons Center

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

Col. Mark Arnholt, the Individual Mobilization Augmentee to the Air Force Nuclear Weapon Center vice commander, came to the nuclear enterprise late in his career but that hasn't deterred him from making an impact there.

For most of his career, the Reserve Citizen Airman served as an F-16 pilot with the New Mexico Air National Guard. A civilian job change in 2012 introduced him to the nuclear enterprise, as well as the opportunities available in the Air Force Reserve.

That job, as an alert pilot flying a variant of the Boeing 747 for the National Nuclear Security Administration at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, had him interacting with others in the enterprise. He soon met

required to serve between 24 and 36 days each year, depending on their position but may volunteer to fill additional needs. There are more than 7,200 IMAs assigned to major commands, combatant commands and government agencies around the world.

Arnholt served at DTRA for about a year before he received a call from Lt. Col. Kurt A. Kochendarfer, who was the 944th Operations Group Detachment 1 commander at the time, inviting him to come serve as an F-16 instructor in the Traditional Reserve at his new schoolhouse at Holloman Air Force Base. Arnholt agreed and changed his status to the Traditional Reserve program. However, shortly after beginning his F-16 requalification program, Arnholt was notified of his selection for promotion to colonel.

"I didn't even realize he was eligible to put on colonel," said Kochendarfer.

When the commander sat down with his instructor pilot to discuss the situation, Arnholt said he was planning to defer his promotion in order to train students at the schoolhouse. A fantastic decision in Kochendarfer's opinion.

"He was great with students," said Kochendarfer. "He's one of those guys who could build rapport with students. He understood what they were thinking when they didn't understand and could explain the problem in a new way."

After two years, Arnholt could no longer defer his promotion. In 2016 he found a colonel vacancy in the IMA program and assumed his current role as the IMA to the AFNWC vice commander, Col.



some Air Force Reservists assigned to the Department of Defense's nuclear schoolhouse who introduced him to the Individual Reserve program and expanded his horizons as to what was possible for his career.

Arnholt said he started asking questions and was in the right place at the right time to land a position as the IMA to the deputy chief at the schoolhouse, known as the Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

IMAs are part of the Air Force Reserve's Individual Reserve program. They are assigned to active-duty organizations or government agencies. They are

George Farfour.

Farfour has had extensive experience working with IMAs and said he has great faith in their ability to backfill for the active duty. He hired Arnholt because it was apparent from the outset that he had the right attitude and the disposition to learn whatever he needed to get the job done right.

Since joining the AFNWC, Arnholt has helped re-energize the mission sets and identified areas where more reservists could be helpful; he is currently working phase two of a plan to increase reserve manning within

the center's five directorates. Arnholt said he sees a knowledge gap in the nuclear enterprise created by 40 and 50 year old technology, retirements and young, nuclear-trained talent being drawn out of the military for better-paying civilian jobs. He has worked to recruit some of that talent back into the reserve program.

"Being able to retain that expertise [in the IMA program] bridges that gap," he said.

Farfour said one of the talents Arnholt brings to the AFNWC is his ability to find the right expertise and put it in the right area. He added that his IMA's newness to the nuclear enterprise also provides perspective and ensures someone is always checking the blind spots.

"Col. Arnholt is not a two-week kind of reservist," said Farfour. "He's a full member of the team and a leader."

Throughout his time in the Air Force Reserve, Arnholt continued to fly for the NNSA as a civilian alert pilot. According to the NNSA website, the agency was established by Congress in 2000 as a semi-autonomous agency within the U.S. Department of Energy and is responsible for enhancing national security through the military application of nuclear science.

Arnholt's plane, a Boeing 747-400 COMBI, has a cargo compartment in the front, accessed via a large side door that, when opened, peels back about a quarter of the aircraft, and a passenger compartment in the rear. Arnholt said his job consists of two measures: parts delivery and emergency response. The majority of his time is spent transporting components used to repair and replace parts on nuclear weapons to locations around the U.S.

When he's not transporting components, Arnholt is preparing for emergency situations. In the event of a nuclear event, Arnholt would be called to fill the passenger compartment on his aircraft with scientists from the national laboratories located in Albuquerque and fly them to the site of the disaster. He has yet to be called on for this duty but trains for it frequently. Early this year he participated in exercise Vigilant Shield 2017, an annual exercise sponsored by the North American Aerospace Defense Command and led by Alaskan NORAD Region, in conjunction with Canadian NORAD Region and Continental NORAD Region, who undertake field training exercises aimed at improving operational capability in a bi-national environment.

Arnholt said his role as an Air Force Reservist not only complements his civilian work, it has also allowed him to do things that interest him and advance his Air Force career.

"I was kind of just looking to do stuff that was enjoyable, productive and useful," he said. "It wasn't intentional, but as a result, I pushed my career along."

### ***TAP--Continued from page 3***

options. During the pre-separation briefing, Ms. Harris will explain the requirements in more detail and members will begin their DD eForm 2648 (through the [DOD TAP website](#)) and [Career Readiness Standards checklist](#), which are used to track progress through the program. The pre-separation briefing takes about 60 minutes to complete.

The next step is the Virtual Transition GPS curriculum, which is broken up into two segments: Veterans Affairs Benefits Briefings and Department of Labor Employment Workshop (DOLEW). These courses are available on the [Joint Knowledge Online \(JKO\) website](#).

Members who have verified employment or a qualifying school enrollment are only required to complete Veterans Affairs Benefits Briefings I and II.

All courses are available on JKO by searching by course name:

- Transition Overview (TGPS-US001) (1.5 hours)
- MOC Crosswalk, course (TGPS-US002) (1.5 hours)
- Personal Financial Planning (TGPS-US003) (3 hours)
- DOL Employment Workshop (TGPS-US004) (15 hours)
- Federal Employment, course (TGPS-US005) (4 hours)
- Veterans Affairs Benefits I for Reserve/Guard (TGPS-US011) (1 hour)
- Veterans Affairs Benefits II for Reserve/Guard (TGPS-US012) (3 hours)

The time to complete just the VA Benefits Briefings is about four hours. The total time to complete the DOLEW and the VA Benefits Briefings is about 29 hours.

Members who must complete the full DOLEW may elect to take a T-GPS Track. The three options provide information on pursuing technical training, college and entrepreneurship. Reservists may select one track from JKO:

- Career Technical Training Track (TGPS-US008) (3 hours)
- Accessing Higher Education Track (TGPS-US009) (4 hours)
- Entrepreneur Track (TGPS-US010) (9 hours)

The final step is Capstone. This portion is mandatory and can be completed with the member's HQ RIO Detachment commander over the phone once their Career Readiness Standards Checklist is verified as complete by Ms. Harris. The member should [contact their servicing HQ RIO Detachment](#) to set up a Capstone appointment.