

THE READINESS REPORT

FOR INDIVIDUAL RESERVISTS

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

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LEADERSHIP



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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. 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 What is the Individual Reserve video on YouTube:
<https://youtu.be/r0bMSNnYhUE>.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Updated career and travel guides available

The Travel Companion for Individual Reservists and the Guide for Individual Reservists were recently updated. These guides are valuable tools for IRs to use when managing their readiness, careers, duty schedules and travel. They should be an IRs first reference for all career, duty and travel related questions.

- [The Guide for IRs](#) | Includes information on readiness, participation and point credit, orders and waivers, military pay, per diem and travel allowances, assignments, mobilization and volunteerism, and entitlements and benefits.
- [Travel Companion for IRs](#) | Includes information on the Government Travel Charge Card program, travel policies and procedures, travel vouchers, authorized travel entitlements, IDT travel, and more. It also includes checklists that step through a variety of travel reimbursement procedures, such as IDT lodging reimbursement and travel voucher submission.

If a member is unable to find the answer to their question in these guides, they should contact their [servicing HQ RIO Detachment](#).

IRs can now submit pay, travel documents in myPers

HQ RIO is beta testing myPers as a secure method for IRs to submit and track their pay and travel documentation. All IRs who need to file travel and/or pay documents, including leave, leave carryover and leave sellback, are encouraged to participate.

To submit documents in myPers, follow the instructions at the links below:

- Pay: <http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/HQRIO/IMA-RPO.aspx>
- Travel: <http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/HQRIO/IRTravel.aspx>

HQ RIO is evaluating the new process throughout the beta test. If the system proves effective, myPers will become the primary method for submitting pay and travel documents and the Pay and Travel email org boxes will no longer accept these documents.

Utilizing myPers provides a secure way to transmit sensitive personal information without the redundancy of using email and AMRDEC-SAFE to send files. It also offers IRs visibility into the status of their request and allow HQ RIO to closely track pay and travel reimbursement processes and timelines.

40A requires three signatures

When filing for IDT travel reimbursement, 40As must have three signatures - certifying official, authorizer and member. UTAPS does not generate these signatures automatically.

If a certifying official or authorizer is not available to sign, a color PDF print of the member's IDT schedule will be accepted in lieu of a signature.

More information on IDT travel reimbursement and many other travel resources for Individual Reservists are available at <http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/HQRIO/IRTravel/>.

Did You Know?

Career tips for Individual Reservists

Did you know a CAC and CAC reader are now required to access myPers? The username/password log-in is no longer available. Because of this change, which went into effect March 31, all Individual Reservists should ensure they have regular access to a working CAC reader.

Access to myPers is important, as it is rapidly becoming the hub for all personnel-related requests and inquiries. HQ RIO is currently beta testing myPers as the primary method for IRs to submit pay and travel documents. In

addition to myPers, CACs are required to access sites such as vPC, vMPF and others.

Members who do not have a CAC reader may contact their servicing HQ RIO Detachment to request one. They are also available commercially. Information for setting up a CAC reader on a home computer is available from www.militaryCAC.com (non-DOD link disclaimer).

STEP II nominations packages due May 20

Individual Reservists who wish to meet the 2018 Stripes for Exceptional Performers II (STEP II) promotion board must submit their nomination packages to their servicing HQ RIO Detachment May 20, 2018.

STEP II is a commander's program designed to promote outstanding and well deserving enlisted Air Force Reserve members to one grade above the authorized grade for their position. Only those Airmen who clearly demonstrate outstanding potential will be considered for promotion under STEP II. Promotions are based on a demonstrated ability to serve in the next higher grade.

IMAs and PIRRs (E5 – E8) interested in the program must work with their supervisor and/or unit reserve coordinator (URC) to assemble a nomination package. The supervisor and/or URC must submit this package to the member's servicing HQ RIO Detachment no later than May 20. HQ RIO will route applications to ARPC by June 10 and the board convenes July 23-27.

Nominations are submitted via vPC. Complete information on the STEP II program is available in the 2018 STEP II Guide, including eligibility, package and submission guidelines, sample forms and board information. Basic eligibility and nomination package requirements are below.



Eligibility:

- Nominees must meet all eligibility requirements in accordance with AFI 36-2502, Enlisted Airman Promotion/Demotion Program, para 8.9, except time-in-grade and time-in-service at the time nominations are due to ARPC, June 10.
- STEP II promotions are limited to one grade over the authorized grade of the occupied UMD position.
- Satisfactory participation for the previous 12 month period from the nomination date
- Individuals must be able to obtain 24 month retainability from the promotion effective date before being considered for promotion to E7-E9.
- Current, passing fitness score
- Possess and conferred CCAF degree at the time of nomination for consideration for promotion to E8-E9

Nomination packages must include the following:

- STEP II Checklist – signed by HQ RIO/CC and ARPC/CCC, confirming that all promotion eligibility requirements are met
 - AF 1206 - single-spaced bullet format covering any specific accomplishments within a member's career and not reflected in the three most recent EPRs. The 1206 must contain the squadron commander's, or equivalent, signature only. The front of the AF Form 1206 consists of bullet statements of no more than 35 lines, which includes the following mandatory headings:
 - SSgt/TSgt: Job Performance in Primary Duty, Leadership and Followership, and Whole Airman Concept
 - MSgt/SMSgt: Leadership and Job Performance in Primary Duty and Whole Airman Concept.
 - AF 224 – Required for nominations
 - A printout from the Air Force Fitness Management System II (AFFMS II) documenting a current and passing fitness test
 - Individuals nominated for STEP II to the rank of chief master sergeant must sign a Statement of Understanding acknowledging the Chief Orientation Course requirement. Members must attend prior to promotion effective date
 - Signed RSC contract (Sample) (only required for packages being considered for E7-E9)
 - ARPC/DPAF will pull each nominee's last three EPRs and career data brief
- Questions should be directed to the member's servicing HQ RIO Detachment.

Reserve Citizen Airman sets sail as first reserve mission commander

By Senior Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

While many Airmen take to the skies, Reserve Citizen Airman Maj. Christina Light sets sail. The space and missile operations officer, assigned to the Air Force Technical Applications Center (AFTAC) Technical Operations Squadron (TOPS) as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee, is the first Air Force Reservist certified to serve as a mission commander on one of the organization's radar ships, the USNS Howard O. Lorenzen.

AFTAC, based at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, performs nuclear treaty monitoring and nuclear event detection. AFTAC provides national authorities quality technical measurements to monitor treaty compliance. It also performs research and development of new proliferation detection technologies to enhance or assist treaty verification to limit the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Maj. Light first came to AFTAC as a contractor after 10 years on active duty. She left the active-duty Air Force in 2014 to be on the same continent as her husband and joined the Air Force's traditional reserve program to continue serving in uniform. However, her reserve unit was a nine-hour commute, one way, and she didn't feel like she could really be part of the unit. AFTAC indicated they wanted her support in both military and civilian status, so she transitioned into a vacant IMA billet in 2015.

IMAs are part of the Air Force Reserve's Individual Reserve program and are assigned to augment active-component organizations and government agencies.

Unlike traditional reservists, who drill one weekend a month and have two weeks of annual tour to complete, IRs work with their unit supervisors to create a custom duty schedule; they often complete their 24 to 36 days of requirements in one or two blocks of time.

Wanting to get more familiar with her new role, Maj. Light asked for active-duty orders so she could work in uniformed status full-time. After her request was granted, she realized she might have something to contribute to the ship mission.

According to Lt. Col. Don Wittenberg, the TOPS commander, his squadron didn't have as many active-duty mission commanders as they would like, so when Maj. Light petitioned to become the first reserve mission commander, he welcomed the idea.

As a field grade officer, Maj. Light brought a maturity of leadership and expertise to the active-duty mission commanders, who are more junior, said Lt. Col.



Maj. Christina Light, the Technical Operations Squadron Director of Operations with the Air Force Technical Applications Center, Patrick AFB, Fla., stands in front of the USNS Howard O. Lorenzen, a U.S. naval ship that hosts the \$1.7 billion Cobra King radar platform. Light is a certified mission commander responsible for the overall operation and maintenance of the ship and its radar systems. (Courtesy photo)

Wittenberg. Her augmentation also reduced the burden on the new officers coming into the program, allowing them time to focus on their spin-up training and qualifications rather than putting out to sea.

The USNS Lorenzen is operated by U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command to carry AFTAC's state-of-the-art Cobra King mobile radar system wherever it's needed. The radar is employed to provide worldwide,

high quality, high resolution, multi-wavelength radar data to the Department of Defense's strategic community, the Missile Defense Agency and other government agencies.

The radar and ship are the sea component of DoD's Cobra program that monitors ballistic missile launches. Other Cobra platforms include the Cobra Ball (airborne tracker) and Cobra Dane (stationary array).

The ship operates with a crew of civilian mariners who are responsible for operating and navigating the ship, as well as and civilian contractors who operate and maintain the radar and communications equipment.

Maj. Light's first sea tour started in the spring of 2017 when the Lorenzen headed into U.S. Pacific Command. As the only Airman aboard, she was one-deep in her leadership role. It was her responsibility to ensure the platform team members were able to successfully collect mission data. In addition to daily mission taskings, she also worked closely with experts from MSC to develop a prioritized listing of necessary ship-related items to address whenever the vessel is in port or at the shipyard.

Even with all her certifications, Maj. Light said once in place, there was still a steep learning curve to the job. However, with a high operational tempo and a highly experienced team of contractors, it didn't take long to learn the ropes. Maj. Light was particularly impressed with the dedication and proficiency of the contractors.

"They go to sea for months on end, year after year, by choice. They have decades of experience," she said.

Life on the ship was a new experience for the Reserve Citizen Airman. She said the rhythm of the days was set by meals at the galley. Her state room--living quarters and bath--were attached to her office, which meant work was never far away. She also learned the importance of building a network of connections with the Navy officers around the fleet.

According to Lt. Col. Wittenberg, the first time an Airman goes out on the ship they are like an outsider on an island. But, as a field grade officer, her leadership and experience enabled her to get right in there and get the mission done.

After returning from her first tour at sea, Maj. Light split her time between her contractor position and military orders. In mid-August 2017, she decided to leave her contractor job to focus on the military mission full-time and prepare for her next sea deployment on the USNS Invincible later this year.

"I love my career field, wearing the uniform and everything that goes along with it," she said.

According to Lt. Col. Wittenberg, his reservist was recently selected to attend Intermediate Developmental Education (IDE) in-residence via the CSAF's Blue Horizons Program and will begin the next phase of her career, following her ship deployment.

"I am proud of what she has done. She has brought a lot to our squadron," he said.



Maj. Christina Light (in red), Technical Operations Squadron Director of Operations with the Air Force Technical Applications Center, Patrick AFB, Fla., receives a briefing from Sean Kelly, the Ship's Operations Manager, for an upcoming balloon calibration sphere launch.

Refer a friend to the AFR

The Get1Now Program is a great way to keep the Air Force Reserve strong. Reservists can refer people they believe will make good members of the Air Force Reserve. Once a referral is verified as a qualified lead, the Reservist becomes eligible for one of many prizes.

Visit the Get1Now website for info on how to refer candidates and the various prizes available: www.Get1Now.us.



HYT, MSD waivers allow IRs to continue their Air Force Reserve adventure

By Senior Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

High year of tenure (HYT) extension and mandatory separation date (MSD) waivers allow eligible reservists to serve past their normal retirement date if they are interested in continuing their Air Force Reserve adventures.

In order to take advantage of these programs, Airmen must understand the waiver application process and ensure they adhere to the timeline.

Before applying for a HYT or MSD waiver, the member should consider the following criteria, which are used to evaluate waiver requests:

- What is the impact on unit readiness if losing the member?
- Is the member's AFSC on the AFRC Critical Skills List?
- What are the local and command-wide manning statistics?
- Has the member completed the appropriate level of professional military education?
- Does the member have a current and passing fitness assessment?
- Is the member blocking a promotion or developmental opportunity for another member?

“Submit early to avoid any potential break in support to your active duty unit”

Additionally, the member's performance and long-term record must warrant submission, the member should be mission-ready and an extension request should not be submitted solely to get a member to retirement. Members will be prohibited from participating past their MSD or HYT without an approved extension. For fiscal year 2018, extensions for 24 months or less will receive favorable consideration.

High Year of Tenure is a year point when an enlisted Airman is ineligible for reenlistment or extension of enlistment due to their grade and length of service. Individual Reservists must submit HYT extension waiver requests 180 days prior to their HYT date. HYT extension waiver requests are initiated by the member, endorsed by their active-component commander and HQ RIO Detachment Commander. The waiver is processed by the Airman's servicing HQ RIO Detachment and finalized at ARPC/DPTTS. Additional HYT extension information is available in AFI 36-2606, Reenlistment and extension of enlistment in the United States Air Force.

Mandatory separation date, service credit and points beyond age 60 waivers authorize an officer to serve past the age of 60. These waivers must be submitted no earlier than 18 months and no later than 12 months prior to the member's MSD. The waiver process is initiated by the member, then goes to their active-component commander for written justification. The waiver then routes to the member's servicing HQ RIO Detachment commander and HQ RIO commander for concurrence. It is then submitted to ARPC/DPTTS for routing through AFRC and up to Secretary of the Air Force, which is the approval authority for MSD waivers.

Col. Jennifer McGonigle, the HQ RIO Detachment 3 commander, emphasized that the routing process is lengthy, eventually culminating with final approval or disapproval made by the Secretary of the Air Force.

“Submit early to avoid any potential break in support to your active duty unit,” she said.

Col. McGonigle, whose detachment has processed seven waivers so far this year, added that the justification portion of an MSD waiver request must show how the disapproval of the officer's MSD extension would result in significant mission degradation.

More information on the MSD waiver process is available in the AFRC Guide for Requesting MSD Extensions and Service Credit and Points Beyond Age 60.

Individual Reservists should direct any additional question regarding HYT and MSD waiver extensions to their servicing HQ RIO Detachment.



RIO Connect IMA Mobile Wingman App

Official app of HQ RIO

Whether you're on the road TDY or at home, the [RIO Connect IMA Mobile Wingman App](#) is everywhere you are with the information you need to manage your Air Force Reserve career. It is the official mobile app of the Headquarters Individual Reservist Readiness and Integration Organization (HQ RIO) and is designed for Individual Reservists.

UNSOCIAL MEDIA OPERATIONAL SECURITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

By Tyler Grimes, Air Force Reserve Command

In late January, Secretary of the Air Force Dr. Heather Wilson and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein released a joint memorandum on operational security and the renewed need to protect sensitive and classified information.

“Clearly in times past, we have sought to protect key operational details, but today’s informative standard should be more cautious, and we need your enduring vigilance to ensure compliance,” the memo stated.

One of the areas Reserve Citizen Airmen must be vigilant in when it comes to operational security is social media. Erick Holloway, Air Force Reserve Command OPSEC program manager, explained Reservists have a special responsibility to maintain OPSEC even when off-duty in their civilian roles.

“Even though a private sector job may not be as close-hold with the information they share, the same OPSEC principles that are practiced while in uniform should be applied,” Holloway said. “A major take away for a Reservist is to always be aware of what is discussed around individuals without a need to know.”

In the social media environment, discussions are never private and can become public even without the knowledge of all parties involved. In most instances things posted on the internet and social media are there permanently.

“While it can be fun, entertaining and useful for maintaining relationships, social media has become one of our greatest operational security weaknesses,” he said. “OPSEC should always play a big role in how social media is used. Everyone must remain cautious when posting personal and work-related information.”

He said the goal is not to stop Citizen Airmen from using social media, but to ensure all Reservists are properly trained on the ‘do’s and don’ts’ of posting and communicating on social media.

The type of information an individual should never share on social media includes specific locations of a residence or workplace, detailed job descriptions, upcoming travel plans, and personal data such as date of birth, social security number and banking information. Other common practices to avoid on social media are listing family members, employment history and job titles, and posting photos of your home or work area.

According to studies cited by Holloway, more than 70 percent of all adults use some type of social media and almost 90 percent of 18 to 29 year olds use social media. In saying that, those numbers encompass the majority of the Reserve force. Regardless of age, Holloway has additional tips for all Reservists who use social media. He recommends disabling geo-location tagging on applications that use it, never post photos of deployed locations, do not accept friend or follower requests from unknown individuals, always remain professional and report any sensitive or critical information found on social media.

“Although most sites have improved privacy settings, Citizen Airman still run the risk of the wrong people seeing what they post due to complacency or lack of know-how,” he said. “It is each member’s responsibility to ensure external web site applications that are enabled on personal devices only have access to noncritical information.”

As social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, just to name a few, keep advancing technologically, it has become increasingly more important now than ever to practice good OPSEC when online.

With the adversaries’ collection methods becoming more sophisticated in the social media landscape, it can be a challenge to keep up. Holloway suggests if Reservists have questions about practicing good OPSEC while using social media, they should contact their unit-level OPSEC coordinator. If questions still exist, they can consult with the wing or headquarters OPSEC program manager.

“Adversaries are very interested in gathering insight into what vulnerabilities can be exploited,” he said. “The more that is shared on social media the easier it is for the bad guys to gather critical information.”

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