

HQ INDIVIDUAL RESERVIST READINESS & INTEGRATION ORGANIZATION

The Readiness Report

Det 6 commander, husband, retire from AF on same day

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

On July 17, Headquarters RIO lost 28 years of Individual Reserve management experience when the Detachment 6 commander retired.

In a joint ceremony held in the Davis Conference Center at MacDill Air Force Base, Col. Malia Spranger, the Det. 6 commander, retired alongside her husband, Lt. Col. Kurt Spranger, U.S. Southern Command international integration team chief.

While this unique, double ceremony marked the loss of 64 years of Air Force experience, it also highlighted the legacy the couple leaves behind. In attendance were the Spranger's three sons, Kurt II, Craig, and Zachary, who are all Air Force Academy graduates, now serving throughout the force.

The packed-house retirement was presided over by long-time Spranger family friend and Academy classmate, Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Sharpy, director of strategic plans, requirements and programs, Headquarters Air Mobility Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

Malia and Kurt, who both come from military families, met as classmates at the Air Force Academy. Following graduation, they married and moved to Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, where Kurt attended pilot training, and Malia had her first brush with the Individual Reserve program.

She said in 1987, she held the additional duty of Air Reserve Management Officer, overseeing about 125 Individual Mobilization Augmentees and learned it was a great program. In 1992, after six years of active duty and the birth of their three sons, she transitioned to the Individual Reserve, as a readiness officer.

(Turn to page 4 for continuation and photos from the retirement ceremony)



New guide for IRs now available

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

The Headquarters Individual Reservist Readiness and Integration Organization has released a completely revised version of the Guide for Individual Reservists.

The document, which is an A-to-Z guide on how to manage an IR career, received its most extensive overhaul in three years. Over a period of 10 months, 500 revisions were made to five draft versions.

Changes include updated language reflecting last year's transition of the program from the Readiness Management Group to HQ RIO and a visual makeover. The new version includes a fully-indexed and linked table of contents, allowing users to jump directly to their chosen topic.

The redesign was led by Senior Master Sgt. Deana Rossi, superintendent of IR Plans, Programs and Readiness. She said that the last revision of the guide was dated to 2012 and most of the information was outdated following the transition of the IR program from the Readiness Management Group to HQ RIO.

"We wanted to give IRs access to the latest information and technology available," she said. "This guide is designed to be more user friendly, with links that connect directly to the sites and forms they need."

Another important aspect of the redesign was ensuring it was mobile-friendly and easy to navigate from a smart phone or tablet so it could be incorporated with the HQ RIO mobile app.

The new Guide for Individual Reservists was a collaborative effort between a wide variety of IR program experts, including the HQ RIO detachments and operating locations, the Air Reserve Personnel Center, and the RIO Academy, which is made up of subject matter experts from the different offices within the organization. The cover page was designed by Individual Mobilization Augmentee Master Sgt. Christian Michael.

Rossi said The Guide for IRs is one of the most powerful resources available for IR's, supervisors, commanders, and unit reserve coordinators.

"As a prior URC, my advice is 'download the guide, read it, read it again, highlight it, and keep it handy.' It will answer most of the questions that will come up along the way," she said.

The Guide for Individual Reservists is available for download from the HQ RIO public website on the resources page under "Forms, memos, templates."

Connect with HQ RIO

Phone | 720-847-3RIO

Email | arpc.det1.rio@us.af.mil

www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/home/hgrio.aspx





HQ RIO Leadership



Col. Carolyn A. Stickell
Commander



CMSgt. J. Seth Perron
Superintendent



MSgt. Jerrod Kester
First Sergeant

[Enlisted leader biographies](#)

HQ RIO Quick Links

- [HQ RIO Website](#)
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- [The Guide for IRs](#)
- [IMA Travel Guide](#)
- [Wingman Toolkit](#)
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Share your story!

Have an incredible Air Force story? Tell it by contacting the HQ RIO Public Affairs office at 720-847-3787.

Clothing replacement available to IRs

Under the fair wear and tear policy, Individual Reserve enlisted members are eligible for replacement uniform items every 36 months.

A newly revised standard operating procedure outlines the process for these IRs to follow. This SOP can be downloaded from the HQ RIO website by clicking on "Resources" link.

Officers who are serving on orders for 91 days or longer qualify for clothing allowance. To receive this, they must file an AF Form 1969 with the HQ RIO Reserve Pay Office.

Questions regarding the clothing replacement process or allowance should be directed to the member's servicing HQ RIO detachment.

Monthly IR Refresher Trainings available

By Senior Master Sgt. Tammi Soto, Superintendent, Integration Cell

The Headquarters RIO Integration Cell offers monthly, online training sessions for Individual Reservists. These DCO courses cover topics such as readiness, career management and more.

Upcoming trainings:

- Topic: IR Retirement Process; Sept. 10 and Oct. 8, 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. (MT)
- Topic: Line of Duty Process; Oct. 8* and Nov. 12, 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. (MT)

**additional 3:30 p.m. (MT) training sessions in October*

These training sessions are available via DCO and teleconference. Information on how to log-in to these trainings and how to obtain supporting training materials will be available on the Integration Cell portion of the HQ RIO public website at www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/home/hqrio.aspx.

Did you know? | Tips for the Individual Reservist

Did you know Individual Reservists can volunteer for deployments? Below are the core readiness requirements and where to find volunteer opportunities.

Qualification for all IRs seeking deployment opportunities:

- Must be "Green-to-Go" in ARCNET
- Most deployments require passing fitness assessment; see location-specific Reporting Instructions
- Must possess a 3-level in AFSC unless otherwise specified in the requirement
- Work through detachment and active-component chain of command

IRs may volunteer for deployments advertised through:

- Volunteer Reserve System (VRS) – AFSC approved
- AFRC Functional Area Managers (FAMs)
- Assigned unit and/or the gaining command (unit must provide man days)

Note: Deployments must have a valid Unit Line Number (ULN)

IRs interested in deployment opportunities should contact their servicing HQ RIO detachment for deployment processes. Members must also submit a Statement of Understanding (SOU) through their HQ RIO detachment.



Enlisted Traditional Reservist becomes IMA officer

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

2nd Lt. Brandon J. Kyle was a staff sergeant and traditional reservist at the 433rd Airlift Wing until the Deserving Airman program landed him an officer's billet in the Individual Reserve.

Kyle, who spent his first five years in the Air Force as an intelligence analyst, said he was supporting the 24th Air Force Joint Intelligence Operations Center on active duty orders when he responded to an all-call for the enlisted-to-officer program.

He viewed the opportunity as a way to enhance his experience in the Air Force and further his career. His grandfather and uncle were both Air Force non-commissioned officers, and Kyle thought of his commissioning as a way to enhance the legacy of his family's military service.

"I saw a great opportunity to break a generational barrier for my family. I saw a chance to make my prior and current military family more proud of me. I saw a chance to improve," said Kyle

The intelligence Airman said assembling his application package was pretty easy. The hardest part, said Kyle, was waiting to hear back during the interview process. But, in true "Deserving Airman" fashion, he knew he shouldn't just slack off and wait for the results.



2nd Lt. Kyle

"I just continued along my enlisted career path during that time as if I was not going anywhere," he said. "I figured I should continue doing the best I could with what I had considering where I was at during that time frame."

Senior Master Sgt. Nanette K. Maglinao, HQ RIO Detachment 2 manager, said the Airman Commissioning Board to which Kyle applied was the first of its kind for Detachment 2 IMA positions. He stood out in an extremely competitive field of 30 highly-qualified Airmen, she added.

"He has definitely set the standard of a 'deserving airman,'" said Maglinao.

Word came in December 2014 that he had been selected to attend Officer Training School. Five months later, on May 5, he reported for duty at Maxwell Air Force Base.

Kyle said that, as a former enlisted person, many things, such as dress and appearance and military bearing, came naturally. He noted that the most difficult part was learning to balance his time between school work and additional duties, such as serving as squadron commander. However, he felt that if he applied the right amount of effort, kept an open heart and mind toward becoming a better leader, he would earn his USAFR commission. His attitude served him well and on July 10, he emerged from OTS a newly-minted Air Force officer, taking top academic honors for his flight in the process.

"It was a great experience that I would never do again," said Kyle.

Next up for the second lieutenant is intelligence school at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas, where he will learn the ins and outs of being and intelligence officer. After that, he will go to work for the U.S. Pacific Command Joint Intelligence Operations Center as an IMA.

"I'm looking forward to something different. This is another stage in life, another stone unturned, and I'm excited to augment the active duty," he said.

9th CMSAF laid to rest

By Tech. Sgt. Daniel DeCook, SAF PA

"If you've met Chief Binnicker, you've met an icon -- a hero, a legend," said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force, James A. Cody.

Cody said these words as he delivered the eulogy for former Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James C. Binnicker, at the Fort Meyer post chapel in Arlington, Virginia, Aug. 14.

As Binnicker's flag-draped casket lay in front of more than 500 family, friends and fellow Airmen, a hushed silence fell over a visibly somber crowd as Cody reflected on Binnicker's impact on today's Air Force.

"If you've met Chief Binnicker, you're a better Airman today for it, for those moments, or that moment you spent together," Cody said. "If you've met Chief Binnicker, you're better prepared to lead because of the truth and wisdom he likely shared, even when the truth hurt a little."

Binnicker was born in 1938 and enlisted in the Air Force in 1957. He spent most of his early career on the flight line.

After Vietnam and before serving as the ninth chief master sergeant of the Air Force, Binnicker spent time as the senior enlisted adviser for the 12th Air Force, Headquarters Pacific Air Forces and Headquarters Tactical Command. He also represented the Air Force as senior enlisted adviser on the President's commission on military compensation.

"Taking care of our Air Force family is not a one-time deal, it's a forever deal; those are Chief Binnicker's words not mine," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III. "He believed them, he shared them, and most importantly he lived every day by them. He dedicated all he had to our service, and he continued his life's work as a wingman, leader and warrior."

As the morning dew still clung to the grass, a casket-laden caisson, trailed by a long line of Airmen, family and friends, brought Binnicker to his final resting place in section 57.

After a 21-gun salute, the playing of Taps, and a B-52 Stratofortress flyover, Cody once again spoke. This time he did so on bended knee with a folded flag in both hands, and his words were reserved only for Binnicker's wife, Janice.

The ninth chief master sergeant of the Air Force now rests in the shadows of the Air Force Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.



(Retirement, continued from page 1)

The careers of husband and wife progressed, and their family matured. Following a stint flying C-141s at Travis Air Force Base, California, the family moved to the Air Force Academy where Kurt served as as chief of intramurals. Their sons were in elementary school during those years, and the cadets they met left an enduring impression that would one day lead all three of them back to the Academy.

While Kurt taught cadets, Malia continued serving as an IMA, now at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, as a readiness flight commander. In 2000, following his tour at the Academy, Kurt left active duty to fly jets for American Airlines, and the family moved to Florida.

It was there, after the attacks of 9/11, that Malia returned to managing IRs. She was mobilized by U.S. Central Command to oversee the mobilization of IMAs for Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Following that assignment, she was hired into an Active Guard Reserve position at Special Operations Command in 2003, still managing IRs.

That same year, Kurt decided to resume his Air Force career and re-enlisted as an academy liaison officer in the Air Force Reserve; his wife swore him in.

Malia continued managing IRs at SOCOM until 2007, when she promoted to colonel and took a reserve position as the SOCOM deputy inspector general. Meanwhile Kurt rose to become the top ALO in Florida and their oldest son departed for the Academy.

Kurt II said that even though his parents were both Air Force Academy alumni and his dad was serving as an ALO, they didn't pressure their sons to join. He said their experience at the Academy as kids, when the cadets were like big brothers to them, and the example Kurt and Malia set were the two biggest factors that led all three sons to follow in their parent's footsteps.

As the boys headed off to the Academy, Malia continued to serve as deputy IG until 2012, and Kurt took assignments with U.S. Central Command then SOCOM, building relationships with international partners. Malia's reputation in IR management preceded her and when the Readiness Management Group, predecessor to HQ RIO, solicited for a detachment commander, she was selected to take over Det 3.

In addition to applying her expertise to the day-to-day management of 1200-plus IRs, Malia's skills would be invaluable during the 2014 transition

of IR management to HQ RIO. According to Col. Carolyn A. Stickell, the HQ RIO commander, Malia's expertise and leadership in IR management were critical during the shift. Following the merger, her detachment was renumbered to Det 6.

The couple finished their careers with a ceremony that, according to Kurt II, had a very personal, off-the-cuff feel he hadn't been previously seen.

The couple highlighted the legacy they are leaving behind by giving the oath of office to Kurt II, who was recently promoted to captain. Kurt senior administered the oath.

"He stopped half way through, and I thought he forgot the words," said Kurt II. "I started helping him under my breath and then I realized he was choked up."

Kurt II added that a focus on others was a theme throughout the retirement, and he felt the spotlight was really on the relationships his parents had built throughout their careers. He also said those relationships mean they aren't really done with the Air Force.

"The Air Force has always been a part of their lives and will continue to be," said their eldest son. "They have three boys in the service, and they'll remain actively involved in the community. They're not saying a complete goodbye."

Youngest-son Zachary agreed with his brother's sentiments and said this will be the retirement to which he compares all other retirements.

"The Invocation, the speech from Gen. Sharp, the flag folding, and my brother's promotion were all done so prudently and full of emotion," he said.

During the family photo session following the receiving line, Zachary had one more surprise up his sleeve. After the last picture was taken, he said he pulled his family together.

"I love my family but today I wish to make it bigger," he said as he turned and called his for his girlfriend, Julia, to come over. "She immediately put her hands up to her face, which gave me the biggest smile of my life."

He proposed. She said yes.

Malia's final day with HQ RIO was July 31. Col. Clifton Stargardt will serve as the new Det 6 commander.

"Her experience managing IMAs can't be easily replaced; she will be sorely missed!" said Stickell. "We have been



Col. Malia Spranger (above) | The HQ RIO Det 6 commander retired, July 17. Col. Clifton Stargardt is the new Det 6 commander.

>> The legacy | The Spranger's retirement ceremony highlighted the legacy the Air Force couple leaves behind. Sons Kurt II, Craig and Zachary, pictured here with their wives, children and fiancé, are all graduates of the Air Force Academy, just like mom and dad.



<<64 years of service | Lt. Col. Kurt Spranger (left) and Col. Malia Spranger (center) represented more than six decades of service to the Air Force when they retired, July 17. The ceremony, held at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, was presided over by long-time family friend Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Sharp (right), commander, 18th Air Force, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.