

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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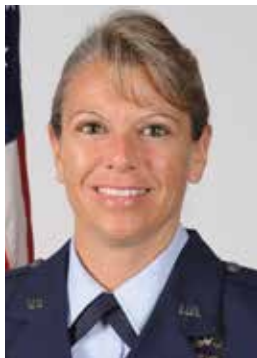


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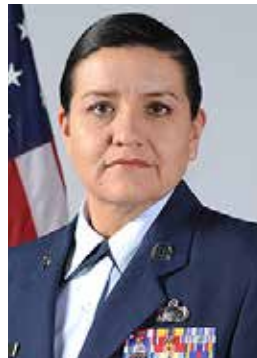


RIO Connect - IMA Mobile Wingman

LEADERSHIP



*Col. Carolyn Stickell
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/SXGHTuLuB_k

NEWS BRIEFS

CY18 Enlisted Developmental Education Board (EDEB) Invitation to Apply

The Calendar Year 2018 Air Force Reserve Enlisted Developmental Education Board (EDEB) will convene Monday, May 15, at the Air Reserve Personnel Center, Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado. The Invitation to Apply, which includes the application, can be found on [myPers](#) located under the red “News Alert” tab. Applications must be emailed to: arpc.dpaf.edeb@us.af.mil by April 17, 4:30 p.m., MT. However, applicants are urged to check with their units for local deadlines.

For more information, call the Total Force Service Center at DSN 665-0102 or 210-565-0102.

Access to AROWS-R, UTAPSweb now available from .com network

Access to AROWS-R and UTAPSweb from .com networks has been restored. Additional outages are possible, though not expected.

To access UTAPSweb, users must first log-in to AROWS-R and select UTAPS from the “Please Select a Menu” drop-down at the top left of the page.

User guides and instructional videos for both systems are available in the Travel and Resources sections of this website.

In the event of additional outages, please contact your servicing HQ RIO Detachment for support. Contact information can also be found on the [HQ RIO Directory](#).

Blended Retirement System Opt-In training now available to all Airmen

The Department of Defense will implement the new Blended Retirement System in less than a year. While no one needs to make a decision until Jan. 1, 2018, all Airmen should take advantage of training and informational resources to research their options during 2017.

Airmen eligible for the new BRS will begin receiving email notifications in February from myPers to ensure they receive correct information regarding their benefits to make the decision best suited for their individual needs.

The Opt-In course is designed to provide sufficient information for eligible Airmen to make an educated decision about their retirement system. However, Airmen are highly encouraged to discuss their personal situations with a personal financial counselor at the Airman and Family Readiness Center. The training (course number J3OP-US1332) is now available via Joint Knowledge Online and takes approximately two hours to complete.

Only those active Airmen who, as of Dec. 31, 2017, have served fewer than 12 years, or reserve Airmen who have accrued fewer than 4,320 retirement points, will have the option of electing BRS or remaining in the legacy retirement system. These Airmen will be required to take the Opt-In training and should provide a copy of the JKO training certificate to their Unit Training Manager upon completion.

The Air Force recommends BRS training for all Airmen and encourages them to take either the Opt-In course or the [BRS Leader Training on JKO](#) (course number J3OP-US1330).

Did You Know?

Career tips for Individual Reservists

Did you know that IRs must notify their unit of assignment/attachment and Detachment of any changes in their physical condition that may potentially affect their availability for worldwide duty or their ability to perform active/inactive duty in their specified AFSC within 72 hours?

An IR who is not medically ready may be denied participation and could be processed for separation. In addition, reserve members with mobility restrictions may not perform military duty for pay or points without an approved medical participation waiver from AFRC/SG. Members should contact their RIO Detachment for medical participation waiver request requirements and process.

New mobile app for IMAs is “everywhere you are”

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman, Headquarters RIO Public Affairs

The Headquarters Individual Reservist Readiness and Integration Organization (HQ RIO) has released a new mobile app for IMAs.

The RIO Connect – IMA Mobile Wingman app is available to both Android and Apple users and offers IMAs easy access to the tools and information they need to manage their careers, when and where they need it.

The app allows users to access content from the HQ RIO website on their mobile devices, while also leveraging native mobile features and functions, further enhancing the user experience. RIO Connect was developed based on usage statistics from the HQ RIO website and primary features include a click-to-call and email directory, pay, travel and career resources, how-to videos and an events calendar.

The RIO Connect – IMA Mobile Wingman app builds off the proof-of-concept HQ RIO app developed in 2015.

“This new app builds on the original app and gives our IMAs a 24/7 ability to connect, which I believe will create more enabled, engaged and empowered Airmen,” said Col. Minh-Tri Trinh, the HQ RIO Advancing Technology Office program manager.

The RIO Connect app is available in both the Google Play or Apple App stores by searching RIO Connect, or by following the links below:



Follow the on-screen instructions to install the app.

The app was developed in conjunction with Straxis Technology, LLC., of Tulsa, Oklahoma, which has developed a number of other apps for Air Force organizations, including the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Col. Carolyn Stickell, the HQ RIO commander, said one of her top priorities is ensuring Individual Reservists receive the support they need to be as effective as possible when augmenting their active-component organizations. She sees the app as a platform that will deliver relevant tools and information where people want it – on their mobile devices.

“The RIO Connect – IMA Mobile Wingman will give IMAs instant access to the knowledge base they want and need in a format that’s easy to access and navigate right from their mobile devices,” she said. “And, if they can’t find what they’re looking for on the app, we’ve made it easy to contact the detachments or headquarters by building our contact information right into the app.”

A word with the commander

Col. Carolyn Stickell discusses the latest from HQ RIO, including the RIO Connect mobile app for IMAs, the IMA Travel Office move, and the establishment of the Force Management team.



Solicitation for SNCOLC facilitators

HQ AFRC/A1KO is accepting applications for Senior NCO Leadership Course (SNCOLC) facilitators. The facilitator training course will be held at Robins AFB, GA, June 19-23, 2017.

The course is centrally funded for IMAs and O&M Unit Funded for AGR/RegAF personnel.

SNCOLC is a group-paced, 16-hour course that provides top-three enlisted personnel (E-7 - E-9) with the opportunity to explore in-depth communication, trust, teamwork, and current AFRC leadership initiatives. SNCOLC students learn techniques to convey basic leadership and teamwork proficiencies.

Facilitator Requirements:

- Rank: E-7 through E-9
- Education: Must have a CCAF degree
- Must have attended the SNCOLC prior to selection
- Must have a minimum of two-years retainability from time of selection
- Knowledge of facilitation principles and skills is preferred

Package Requirements:

- Cover letter **
- Endorsements from member's Rater and/or Director and RIO/CCC. At a minimum, the endorsement from the Rater/Director must state the member meets requirements of AFI 36-2903 and will be allowed to perform a minimum of two TDYs (2-4 days in length each) per year in their capacity as a facilitator **
- A resume including military and civilian education, training and qualifications. It should also highlight supervisory and leadership experience (No more

than 2 pages) **

- Copy of last 3 EPRs
- Copy of current Career Data Brief
- Copy of current Fitness Test score
- A 30-second video (.wmv file format) introducing yourself and explaining why you would like to be a facilitator (in ABU uniform)

** Use the Tongue and Quill AFH 33-337

Enrollment Procedures:

Register intent to apply on the AFRC Enlisted Facilitator SharePoint site at <https://afrc.eim.us.af.mil/sites/A1/PDC/facilitatorapp/SitePages/Home.aspx> (CAC-enabled). Applicants will receive an e-mail within five duty days after intent is accepted providing a link to an established by-name folder where the nomination package contents can be uploaded. The by-name folder will be available to upload a complete nomination package until 3 p.m. (ET), Friday, April 21, 2017.

- April 21, 2017 - Deadline for uploading nomination packages
- April 24-28, 2017 - Selection board meets
- May 5, 2017 - Reporting instructions will be emailed to selectees
- June 19-23, 2017 - Facilitator training course at Robins AFB

Questions can be directed to SMSgt Stephen Hoyt (Stephen.hoyt@us.af.mil; DSN - 497-0269; Comm -478-327-0269) or SMSgt John Besselman (John.Besselman.1@us.af.mil; DSN - 497-0737; Comm -478-327-0737).

IMAs may also contact their servicing HQ RIO detachment with questions or concerns. Contact information can be found in the [HQ RIO Directory](#).

Reservist shares civilian skills to support SOCOM Para-Commandos

By Lt. Col. Erin Karl

Bill Walsh is a familiar face to the people of Charleston, S.C. He's been the lead weather forecaster for the #1 station there for 30 years. His face is on billboards and his professional Facebook page has 17,000 followers.

Many Charleston residents have come to rely on Bill for his forecasts; some also know about his "side gig." Bill is also Lt. Col. Bill Walsh, an individual reserve public affairs officer who, for the last three years, has taken on a distinctive position within the reserve community; he's one of two individual mobilization augmentee public affairs officers who support the U.S. Special Operations Command Para-Commandos.

"It's the most amazing military job I've had so far," said Walsh. "You're part of a team made up of Navy Seals, Army Rangers, Green Berets, and Marine Special Operations members. You better be ready to keep up!"

The Para-Commandos are the Department of Defense's only joint parachute demonstration team. They are made up of special operators from all services who are assigned to staff jobs at SOCOM headquarters at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. Their participation on the team is a voluntary additional duty which takes them to airshows and sporting events across the country to demonstrate special operations parachute insertion techniques and call attention to the vast talent and sacrifice of special operations forces stationed around the globe.

As a Para-Commando, Walsh wears four hats as a trained drop zone safety officer, weather officer, narrator and public affairs officer, bridging his civilian expertise in meteorology with his military role. He was recently selected to be one of the team members chosen to work the National College Football Championship game between Clemson and Alabama where three teammates flew in the flags of each team as well as the American Flag.

"What a game!" said Walsh. "To be a part of it, to be on the field and supporting these guys was a complete thrill."

Walsh's position with the Para-Commandos is an example of how IMAs can be creatively used to enhance and support active duty missions.

Air Force Reserve IMAs are assigned to active-component organizations and government agencies around the world. They augment their active-duty

counterparts in order to plus-up their offices when in need, often filling particular niches that enhance the active-duty mission.

"Lt. Col. Walsh's type of reserve job is not the norm," said Col. Clif Stargardt, commander of Headquarters Individual Reservist Readiness and Integration Organization Detachment 6, "but that's what so great. There are many creative ways IMAs can be used to provide operational capability, strategic depth, and surge capability. With a reservist like Lt. Col. Walsh in a position like the one he fills with the Para-Commandos, you get all three. It's fantastic."

The Para-Commandos perform two or three weekends a month, and during those times the team needs help with media interaction and scheduling. Instead of detailing an active-duty public affairs troop from SOCOM headquarters, two IRs

-Keith Walter

assigned to the team split the duty of providing those on-site resources.

"Bill Walsh is truly a treasure. Actually, that's his nickname on the team," said Mr. Keith Walter, leader of the Para-Commandos. "He has increased our media and press engagement by probably 1000%. That's not hyperbole.

Prior to his arrival on the team, we were lucky to interact with the press three or four times a year. Now it's three or four times a weekend."

Walsh has been nominated both this year and last year for Para-Commando of the Year. He's the only reservist in the history of the

team to be nominated for the award. Walter says that's a testament to what a great asset he is for the team.

"He has increased our media and press engagement by probably 1000%. That's not hyperbole"



Lt. Col. Bill Walsh, an Air Force Individual Mobilization Augmentee attached to the Special Operations Command Para-Commandos joint demonstration team, narrates a jump during an air show. Walsh also serves as the public affairs officer, drop zone safety officer and weather officer for the team. (Courtesy photo)

Reservist wraps up two-year mobilization, supports OIR in Turkey

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

Over the past two years, Individual Mobilization Augmentee Col. Carl Magnusson has travelled the globe in support of a variety of U.S. operations.

The U.S. Pacific Command Air Force Reservist has seen Japan, the Philippines, and Mongolia as a joint exercise control group director, and most recently, Kuwait and Turkey, where he supported Operation Inherent Resolve.

As an IMA, Magnusson is assigned to US PACOM's Operations Directorate. As a reservist, it's his job to augment PACOM exercises. After talking things over with his family, he decided that 2015 was his turn to step up and let PACOM utilize his expertise full-time. He saw the 365-day voluntary mobilization as an opportunity to put all his training to use but he had no idea it would turn out the way it did. Two years and three extensions later, he says he has realized Reservists need to be flexible and ready to serve when and where they are called.

Most of his two years was spent in the Pacific region, leading exercises like a global peacekeeper training in Mongolia. However, the last five months of his tour found him working for the Army, supporting Combined Joint Task Force-OIR in the fight against ISIL.

Originally slated to serve out his mobilization in Kuwait, following the attempted coup in Turkey, the U.S. Army's III Corp quickly redeployed him there. He arrived in Ankara two weeks after the attempted overthrow and served as the chief of the Operations Integration Cell within the Office of Defense Cooperation. It was his responsibility to provide the CJTF-OIR commanders on the ground in Kuwait visibility and perspective into the situation in Turkey, as well as represent their interests to the Turkish general staff.

"It was a shirt-sleeves environment and we provided an American face to the Turkish military to make sure the CJTF was informed about developments in Turkey," he said.

He said the office was somewhat unpredictable,

so building personal relationships with counterparts within the Turkish military was an important part of supporting the warfighters. The Reservist worked daily with a Turkish Air Force colonel who was his peer in the operations integration cell. This drove home the importance of building professional relationships to the long-term success of operations.

"Many of our partner nations put great stock in interpersonal relationships," he said. "We still have many friends at the personal level within the Turkish military, which is an important partner and ally."

As his tour was winding down, Magnusson said there was an influx of both funding and personnel to broaden the contributions of the Operations Integration Cell. He said that because of the importance of Incirlik Air Base and other facilities, U.S. leadership placed great effort in maintaining and strengthening relationships with the Turkish military.

Looking back on his experiences of the last two years, especially the deployment to Turkey, Magnusson said he has a better understanding of geopolitics and has a



Ankara, Turkey, at sunset. (Photo courtesy of Col. Carl Magnusson)

deeper appreciation of our contributions and sacrifices in Northern Syria and Iraq.

He also noted that some of the old preconceptions about reservists are fading.

"No one walked up to me and asked if I was a Reservist and that's critical when you get there," he said. That's a measure of success because we have conquered some of the stereotypes we have been trying to overcome as total-force partners."

(Continued on page 8)

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Magnusson also said that he realized there are many fascinating opportunities for fully-qualified reservists who are ready to apply their skills to help their country. And he's not just talking about supporting the Air Force – “sister-services and the Interagency continue to need the Airman's perspective as they plan and execute their disparate missions in support of national security.”

The key to getting involved, he said, is to ask and make your desires known.

“Ten years ago, I would never have thought to ask how I could support United Nations peacekeeping training with our Mongolian friends, but it happened,” he said. “As Reservists, we might not know where the road will lead us, but we know where the journey starts—and as Citizen Airmen, the first step is always ours.”



Mongolian Armed Forces Brig. Gen. D. Ganzorig, left, shakes hands with U.S. Air Force Col. Carl Magnusson, exercise co-director for Khaan Quest 16, shake hands after a media engagement event at the Ministry of Defense, in Ulaanbatar, Mongolia, May 20, 2016. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Hilda M. Becerra / Released)

AF responds to hiring freeze

By Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

The Air Force is working with the Defense Department to provide additional guidance on the federal civilian hiring freeze implemented Jan. 23.

According to the official memorandum, the hiring freeze applies to all executive departments and agencies regardless of the sources of their operational and programmatic funding, excepting military personnel. Exemptions may be permitted to meet the national security mission and public safety responsibilities or to prevent essential services from interruption. During this freeze, contracting outside the government is not permitted.

The appointment of federal employees who began work on or before Jan. 23 will not be affected and those with existing “firm” offers with effective dates on or before Feb. 22 may proceed. The Air Force Personnel Center will provide individual notices to those directly affected by this freeze. This will include those individuals who received job offers prior to Jan. 22 with a confirmed start date after Feb. 22, or in some cases, no start date.

The official memorandum calls for the implementation of a long-term plan to reduce the size of the federal civilian workforce through attrition. This plan is to be submitted within 90 days by the Office of Management and Budget in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management.

“Our civilian force is absolutely critical to our readiness and mission, we are taking every step to ensure we get this right,” said Lt. Gen. Gina M. Grosso, the deputy chief of staff for Air Force manpower, personnel and services. “Our team has been working closely with OSD to draft clear Air Force guidance on implementation and hiring freeze exemptions. As of today, we have not received the final DOD guidance memorandum, which we believe will contain some relief in critical mission areas. Once the DOD guidance is released, we will provide the field with detailed guidance on exemption processing to ensure the most swift and effective method to request needed relief.”

The civilian workforce makes up 26 percent of the total Air Force and is currently staffed at 96 percent with more than 179,000 positions filled. Given historical attrition of 1,300 personnel per month, the civilian work force could shrink by 3 percent over the next four months, leaving more than 13,000 vacant positions.

“The impact of this freeze will likely be felt over time as personnel retire and separate from the Air Force,” she continued. “Because of the vital role civilians perform, we will work to provide as much information as possible, as quickly as possible with regard to the freeze.”