

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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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

New EPME course phases out Course 15

Individual Reservists who are currently enrolled in Course 15 may take advantage of an updated version of that course, June 1, per a memo from Air Education and Training Command.

To participate in the updated material, called Noncommissioned Officer Distance Learning Course, IRs must disenroll from Course 15 and enroll in the new course. Students who choose this option will need to start from the beginning of NCO DLC.

If members wish to complete Course 15, they must do so by Sept. 30, 2018.

Any student not enrolled in Course 15 as of June 1 must enroll in NCO DLC.

The NCO DLC offers students an enhanced distance learning experience while providing Airmen institutional competency development as they progress through the continuum of enlisted education. Course enhancements designed to increase the students' ability to learn the material and pass the course include improved content quality divided into three separate modules, more practice questions in each chapter and a formative (practice) test after each module to help students gauge their comprehension of the material before taking the summative test, and a summative test after each module (replaces two summative tests in the current course).

Questions about the new course should be directed to Enlisted Professional Military Education Distance Learning Student Support by calling (334)416-1736/DSN 596-1736 or submitting a ticket at www.aueducationssupport.com.

May IR Orientation canceled, two new dates scheduled

Due to a lack of funding created by the repeated continuing resolutions and last minute budget passage, HQ RIO postponed the May 16-18 Individual Reserve Orientation (IRO) course.

IRs who were scheduled to attend this course have priority placement in two newly-scheduled course dates. The new dates are Aug. 1-3 and Sep 26-28.

Applications to attend either course must be received by May 25.

IRs who were confirmed for the canceled May IR Orientation must reply to the RNT/myPers incident they received via email to indicate their preferred course date. The deadline for these members to reply is also May 25.

IMAs gained within the last 12 months are also eligible to attend. IMAs gained more than 12 months prior to the class start date may attend with HQ RIO Detachment commander approval.

IR Orientations are provided twice a year at HQ RIO, Buckley AFB, Colorado. The course provides IRs with tools and information to effectively manage their Air Force career. Although this training is not mandatory, it is highly recommended.

All attendees must be in a RPA/School Tour status (requested through AROWS-R). Annual tour or IDTs cannot be utilized for IR Orientation attendance. For application and registration information, visit the [training portion of the HQ RIO website](#).

Did You Know?

Career tips for Individual Reservists

Did you know enlisted Individual Reservists are eligible for uniform replacements for issued items only once every three years, IAW AFI 23-101, *Material Management, AFRC Supplement*, under the Fair Wear and Tear (FWT) Replacement? Requests for uniform replacement are submitted on the AF 656 to HQ RIO through myPers, the order is placed in KYLOC and uniforms are mailed to members ready to wear.

Additionally, while officer Individual Reservists are normally ineligible for uniform replacements, if the member serves on active-duty orders for at least 91 consecutive days, they may be entitled to clothing allowance every two years.

Due to FY budgeting, all request must be submitted no later than Aug. 31 for processing. For full details on how to obtain uniform replacement or allowance, visit the [Resources section of the HQ RIO website](#).

HQ RIO to see change in command

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman, Headquarters RIO Public Affairs

The Headquarters Individual Reservist Readiness and Integration Organization is set to receive a new commander next month.

Col. Carolyn A. Stickell, who has led the organization responsible for IR management since 2015, will transfer command to Col. Kelli B. Smiley during a change of command ceremony at the Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center, June 12.

Colonel Stickell leaves HQ RIO to serve as chief of the Joint Force Support Division, U.S. Pacific Command.

Colonel Smiley currently serves as the director of ARPC's personnel and total force services center, which provides personnel support to over 1 million Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard and Retired Airmen. [Her full biography is available on the ARPC website.](#)

HQ RIO is located at Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado. Its mission is to seamlessly integrate wartime-ready Individual Reserve (IR) forces to meet Air Force and combatant commander requirements.

HQ RIO first opened its doors on Feb. 1, 2014, and began transitioning management of the IR program from the Readiness Management Group as part of Air Force-directed manpower transformation initiatives. HQ RIO was officially activated on Oct. 1, 2014.

The organization is responsible for managing the readiness of the IR force and standardizing the processes associated with getting our IRs to the fight. Seven detachments and eight operating locations at geographically-separated bases around the world assist the headquarters in this mission, providing direct oversight and support to more than 8,000 IR Airmen. The headquarters is located within the Air Reserve Personnel Center, where synergies are leveraged across the personnel and financial management functions.

Col. Carolyn A. Stickell | HQ RIO commander since June 2015, will join U.S. PACOM as Chief, Joint Force Support Division

Col. Kelli B. Smiley | Assumes command of HQ RIO June 12, 2017, currently serves as Director, ARPC Personnel and TFSC



COL. CAROLYN A. STICKELL
OUTGOING COMMANDER

COL. KELLI B. SMILEY
INCOMING COMMANDER



IMA is leading scholar on Chinese military

By Master Sgt. Timm Huffman

Forty-six weeks out of the year, Oriana Skylar Mastro goes to work along the banks of the Potomac River as an assistant professor of security studies at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

For the other six weeks of the year, she is Captain Mastro, an Air Force Reserve Individual Mobilization Augmentee assigned to Pacific Air Force, as a political military affairs strategist.

The Airman, who holds a doctorate in politics from Princeton University, said there is a symbiotic relationship between her two careers.

“Originally when I joined, the conventional wisdom was that my civilian career was ruined - the academic and military paths do not tend to go well together,” said Mastro. “But now, after over seven years, I’m happy to say that those fears were unwarranted.”

The Chinese military and security policy expert wasn’t always interested in East Asian studies. When she first entered Stanford University for her undergraduate degree, she was primarily interested in the drama and music programs. However, as she explored different subjects through her course work, she found an interest in Chinese language and history.

A life-long lover of languages, she set out to learn Mandarin as a way to challenge herself. Mastro took a year off from her regular studies to enter an immersive language program in Beijing, spending up to six hours a day learning the world’s most spoken language.

Then, during her senior year at Stanford, her love for Chinese culture intersected with her future career when she was accepted into an honors program in international security. She discovered she also enjoyed studying the Chinese military.

“I realized that the U.S.-China relationship would shape the future and I wanted to be a part of that,” she said.

After graduating from Stanford, Mastro spent a year at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. According to its website, the think tank’s mission is “to advance the cause of peace through analysis and development of fresh policy ideas and direct engagement and collaboration with decision-makers in government, business, and civil society.” She spent her time there as a junior fellow, working under senior fellow Michael Swaine, an expert on the Chinese military.

After leaving the think tank, she attended Princeton

University to earn her masters and then her doctorate in politics. During her third year, she met a former deputy commander of Pacific Command, Lt. Gen. Dan Leaf, who convinced her she could make contributions to the nation’s defense. In 2009, she joined the Air Force Reserve as an IMA.

IMAs are Air Force Reservists who are assigned to active-component organizations and government agencies around the world. In addition to their primary mission of serving as a backfill during times of war, they also offer a cost-effective way to increase manpower when needed. And, as in Mastro’s case, many bring a wealth of unique skills, knowledge and experience from the civilian sector that the Department of Defense would not normally have access to.



Oriana Skylar Mastro, an Air Force Reserve Individual Mobilization Augmentee assigned to Pacific Air Force, gives a lecture on the Chinese military. Captain Mastro is a political-military affairs strategist at PACAF and is an assistant professor of security studies at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

Mastro’s first job as an Airman was at the Pentagon, where she served as a China strategist with the Chief of Staff of the Air Force’s Strategic Studies Group and later served in a nascent Asia-Pacific Cell. During her time at the Pentagon, she served under three chiefs of staff, writing memos for one and directly briefing the latter two.

“I didn’t realize how much I would enjoy this aspect of my life,” she said. “Little by little, I was making a difference.”

During her four years at the Pentagon, she finished a

doctorate and landed a tenure-track position at Georgetown. As a professor, Mastro teaches a number of courses on security policy, research methodology, the Chinese military and Chinese foreign policy. She explained tenure-track as a trial period, during which she has a number of years to complete as much research and publish as many articles as possible. At the end of the evaluation period, her work is sent out to various experts for review. The university then decides based on her package whether she will have a job for life, or they let her go. In this role, teaching is only a small part of her responsibilities. Research is a top priority, and her agenda currently focuses on Chinese military and security policy, Asia-Pacific security issues, war termination and coercive diplomacy.

In fact, this year she isn't even teaching. Instead, she is serving as a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. This one-year opportunity allows her to put her teaching duties on hold in order to focus full-time on her research, which currently centers on what China could and would do with North Korea's nuclear assets in a contingency.

Before the fellowship, she had already completed volumes of research and writing, with scholarly articles and interviews appearing in numerous U.S. and Chinese podcasts, television shows, blogs and journals. She is also in the final stages of writing a book, her first.

Normally, a tenure-tracked professor has six years to build a body of work. However, because of her Air Force commitment of about two months each year, Georgetown University granted Mastro an extra year to account for the time away from the school to accomplish her Air Force mission. Unlike traditional reserve assignments, where the reservist works mostly weekends, IMAs perform their duty in one or two longer blocks each year.

Mastro said balancing her work at the university with her Air Force duties at the Pentagon was difficult at times, as she often found herself putting in a full day's work in uniform, only to hurry across town to teach at the university. In order to find a better balance and to gain knowledge in the operational Air Force, she took her current IMA position at Pacific Air Force in 2016.

As a top China strategist at PACAF, Mastro is responsible for providing input for strategy and plans in support of air, space and cyberspace across the Pacific region.

"In the day to day, Airmen often need inputs about what is happening right now with China, why is it happening, what is likely to happen in the future, and how China may respond to U.S. policies and actions," said Mastro. "My job is to answer such specific questions on-demand to help shape Air Force strategy, doctrine and plans."

Some of the things she has accomplished during her short time with PACAF include steering the joint bed-down plan for entire combatant command, developing and conducting a training program on China for over 120 action officers and shaping PACAF's unclassified strategy. Her work at PACAF led to her being named the 2016 Individual Reserve Company Grade Officer of the Year.

Mastro said her military job has taught her about resiliency, how to be a leader, a follower and a team player, and affords her the opportunity to work around others – something that is often lacking when she's holed up doing research at Georgetown. She added that the Air Force provides her a way to directly apply her research.

"I spend a lot of time researching and writing, and the fact that I can disseminate my knowledge directly to the people that care about security in the Asia-Pacific is personally rewarding."

Just as the military benefits from her civilian work, her civilian work in academia benefits from her military work. Mastro said she uses her knowledge of what interests her comrades-in-arms to guide her research. Her connections at the Pentagon also allow her to act as a conduit between civilian experts and military communities, often helping academics schedule meetings with people in defense, as well as introducing people in defense to top thinkers on the civilian side.

"In this way, I hope to broaden people's minds to avoid bias in thinking," she said.

She also said her military experience lends her credibility with the policy makers and strategists in Washington, D.C. -- a field largely dominated by men. As a woman in this

environment, she said every ounce of credibility is important. She constantly needs to combat the misperception that somehow she is less qualified because she's a woman, said Mastro.

"When was the last time you worried about how you would be greeted?" she asked. "When I'm in my civilian role,

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"In the day-to-day, Airmen often need inputs about what is happening right now with China... My job is to answer such specific questions on-demand to help shape Air Force strategy, doctrine and plans."

-Captain Oriana S. Mastro



Captain Oriana S. Mastro

Use of online booking tools to rent private residences for short-term lodging restricted

Per a memo from the Air Force Accounting and Finance Office, the Joint Travel Regulation (paras. 4130-L; 4130-A4, A5; 2830-G; 4155-A; 4250-B) restricts DoD travelers in the use of online booking tools designed to rent private residences for short-term lodging. This includes AirBnB.

Properties rented through these tools are not considered commercial and are not required to meet the established standards for suitable lodging. These tools are only authorized in the event of lodging shortages in specific locations.

Travelers are required to make commercial lodging arrangements through the Defense Travel System/Travel Management Company, unless exceptions apply. If a traveler does not have an exception and fails to use DTS/TMC, the traveler is still authorized the actual and necessary costs of lodging but is personally responsible for any excess costs such as service fees and booking fees.



Additionally, travelers who elect to use tools such as AirBnB can face disciplinary action from their commander for failure to follow regulatory guidance. IRs should ensure they are booking lodging in accordance with the JTR guidelines.

Air Force implements changes to joint matters, joint tour credit

By Kat Bailey, Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

The definition of “joint matters” and the authorized length of joint tours, two major joint officer management laws affecting active and reserve component Air Force officers, have recently changed following publication of guidance from the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Directive-type Memorandum 17-005, Implementation of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 Changes to the DoD Joint Officer Management Program, was published by the Office of the Secretary of Defense on March 24, formally implementing the changes to the United States Code due to the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act in December 2016.

Title 10, Section 668, USC, expands the types of joint activities considered “joint matters,” which are the basis for joint credit determinations. The updated definition adds command and control duties as well as other essential joint functions and career fields such as intelligence, fires, movement and maneuver, and protection or sustainment of operations under unified command.

“The addition of these duties will likely cause more positions across the Air Force to become eligible for designation as standard joint duty assignments,” said Jeff Gatcomb, Joint Officer Management policy program manager at the Air Force Personnel Center. “More eligible positions would mean more available joint assignments on the joint duty assignment list and more officer experiences being validated by the experience-based joint duty assignment panel.”

Standard joint duty assignments are those in multi-service, joint or multinational commands or activities involved in the integrated employment or support of the land, sea and air forces.

Section 664 of Title 10 modifies joint tour lengths to allow full joint credit after 24 months without a waiver,

which provides the Services increased flexibility to move officers for mission needs like command and officer professional development.

“In the past, most officers that left a joint tour with less than 36 months required a Secretary of Defense joint tour length waiver,” Gatcomb said. “Services were forced to defer many officer move decisions based solely on time in a joint assignment versus officer professional development or critical mission needs.”

A majority of officers will still serve the full tour length of 36 months, but those that need to leave between 36 and 24 months can now do so without penalty or waiver, provided the joint organization agrees.

Gatcomb said officers leaving a joint duty assignment at less than 24 months for a command-boarded position or developmental education will still need a waiver to receive accrued credit.

Any Air Force training or Air Force temporary duty of more than 30 consecutive days away during a joint duty assignment, to include pre-command training or joint professional military education course attendance, will not count toward the 24-month minimum tour credit.

Full joint tour credit for Air Reserve component officers will be reduced from six years in a standard joint duty assignment to four years, with a 50-day per year minimum annual participation requirement.

Joint qualified officer requirements remain unchanged for both active and reserve component officers.

Stay informed on the most current joint officer management information on the officer Assignment pages on myPers or select “Any” from the dropdown menu and search “Joint Officer.”

For more information about Air Force personnel programs, go to [myPers](#). Individuals who do not have a myPers account can request one by [following these instructions](#).

TF development services now in a single-point center

By Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

The Air Force has consolidated all total force development services and resources to a single-point center. All Airmen (active duty, Reserve, Guard and civilian) will now be able to fully utilize all force development resources through the virtual force development center.

The online center acts as a single-point depot that links Airmen to numerous professional force development resources. It is a comprehensive portal for self-paced training, education and other force development tools.

“All these resources are designed to professionally develop Airmen in their self-development journey,” said Barry Waite, the chief of Air Force Workforce Development Division at the U.S. Air Force Personnel Professional Development School. “The virtual center has the tools to shrink proficiency gaps and maximizes our total force’s skills.”

The virtual force development center provides access to professional resources generated from both the Air Force and the private sector which are easily transferable to the workplace. The virtual center connects members to information on foundational learning, professional education, Air Force e-Learning and other resources to include seeking a mentor.

“Developmental opportunities to broaden and strengthen an individual’s foundation are essential for the future of our workforce,” Waite added.

The virtual center, through AF e-Learning, also offers hundreds of no-cost self-paced courses, books, audiobooks, videos, simulations, challenges, summaries, case studies, exercises, learning tracks, and live events to support Airmen’s continual development.

“The fundamental goal of force development is to provide Air Force members the skills, knowledge and abilities to excel in their organizations. I encourage all of us across the total force to check out the virtual center. Challenge yourself and learn something new every day,” said Russell Frasz, the director of Force Development at Headquarters Air Force.

The virtual force development center is located on the [Air Force portal site](#) under the career and training tab.



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if my superior comes in and shakes the hands of all the men but then hugs me, or calls them Dr. so-and-so, but calls me by my first name, it puts me on a different level than everyone else.”

To combat this, Mastro puts a lot of thought and energy into the questions she asks, the meetings she schedules and equipping the next generation for success. Recently she participated in a panel discussion for students at George Washington University about how to succeed as a woman in academia.

Mastro said she knows some people roll their eyes at the idea of programs aimed at increasing diversity; she said they miss the point. When norms and institutional structures make it hard for a particular group to serve, then you are going to lose some of the best and the

brightest, she said. Diversity is important because it’s about gaining the ability to bring the best people to the table, whether that’s in the military, academia or elsewhere.

Gender issues aside, Mastro has asserted her place as an expert. Even the Chinese consider her an expert on their military and she is often invited to participate in government-sponsored conferences and events. She travels to the country to meet with leaders and conduct primary research several times a year, though she admits it’s not as frequent as she’d like.

Mastro believes her experiences in the Air Force Reserve highlight the effectiveness of the IMA program. Her active-component organization is able to plug her in when and where she’s needed and she gets the flexibility to pursue a career in the civilian world; one that also has benefits for the Air Force.

Senate confirms Wilson as Air Force Secretary

By Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

Heather Wilson will be the next secretary of the Air Force, following her confirmation by the Senate May 8, 2017.

Wilson, who is stepping down from her position as the president of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology to take the post, is expected to be sworn in within a week.

“We live in a remarkable country, protected by innovators and intrepid Airmen who take great risks on our behalf,” said Wilson. “I look forward to getting to work, focusing on readiness, modernization, development of leaders and research for the future.”

Wilson graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in the third class to include women. After graduating from USAFA in 1982, she earned masters and doctoral degrees as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University in England. She served as an Air Force officer in Europe during the Cold War and on the National Security Council Staff under President George H.W. Bush during the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the collapse of the Warsaw Pact. She has also worked as an advisor to several large defense and scientific organizations both before and after serving for a decade in the U.S. Congress.

The daughter and granddaughter of aviators, Wilson is an instrument rated private pilot.

Wilson becomes the second confirmed appointee in the Defense Department and will be responsible for organizing, training and equipping the U.S. Air Force of 660,000 Active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian Airmen, as well as managing its \$132 billion budget.

Wilson replaces Lisa Disbrow, who has been Acting Secretary of the Air Force since Jan. 20, 2017.



Heather Wilson was confirmed as Secretary of the Air Force, May 8.

TRICARE changes to Nexium coverage

Starting June 28, the drug Nexium will no longer be a TRICARE preferred, or formulary, drug. This means it will no longer be available in military pharmacies, and you will pay more if you get it through TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery or a retail network pharmacy.

Nexium is a brand name prescription drug often prescribed to treat gastroesophageal reflux disease. To prepare for the change, patients can switch to one of three preferred drugs for the treatment of GERD.

- Omeprazole
- Pantoprazole
- Rabeprazole

Your doctor may determine that the preferred drugs are not right for you and Nexium is medically necessary. In that case, TRICARE will cover the cost of Nexium. The normal copays for brand name formulary drugs through home delivery and retail network

pharmacies will apply.

To get medical necessity, your doctor must submit a prior authorization request to Express Scripts that includes a reason why Nexium is deemed medically necessary for you. If you already have a prior authorization for Nexium, your doctor must submit an additional medical necessity determination, or you will have to pay the non-formulary copay.

What is GERD and how is it treated?

GERD is a chronic digestive condition, which occurs when stomach acid flows back into the esophagus. This acid irritates the lining of the esophagus, which over time can lead to GERD.

Many people can make lifestyle changes and take over-the-counter drugs to manage their GERD symptoms. Sometimes, people need prescription drugs to reduce their symptoms.

The National Institutes of Health has more information about GERD and drug choices to treat it. For more information regarding brand and generic drugs, and which drugs are on TRICARE's formulary, please visit the TRICARE website.