

Kingsley adds new, distinctive jet to 173rd fleet

Story by

Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- The 173rd Fighter Wing welcomed a distinctive new F-15C aircraft to its growing fleet Feb. 7, 2014. The jet sports a tan, desert paint scheme rather than the typical grey-blue worn by all the other aircraft at the wing.

The aircraft comes from the aggressor squadron at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., where it simulated adversary aircraft. Two more aircraft from Nellis are scheduled to arrive between now and June 2014, but those will have the standard F-15 paint.

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The 173rd Fighter Wing's newest aircraft sports the desert paint scheme having come from the aggressor squadron at Nellis AFB, Nev. Maintainers updated the tail flash and added Air National Guard emblems and the 114th Fighter Squadron will use the airframe for normal operations until June when it is scheduled to receive the standard paint for an F-15C. (Photo by James "Hazy" Hazeltine, HIGH-G Productions)



Col. Wes "Pappy" French pins Lt. Col. David "Down" Unruh with a 2,000 hour patch immediately after he disembarked from an F-15 aircraft at Kingsley Field, where he crossed that threshold. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar)

Kingsley Pilot crosses 2,000 hours in Eagle

Story by Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- Lt. Col. David "Down" Unruh joined a small cadre of pilots to reach 2,000 hours in an F-15 Eagle, Jan. 17 at Kingsley Field, Klamath Falls, Ore. Unruh, an F-15 instructor pilot at the 173rd Fighter Wing crossed that threshold during a routine training

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Roll Call

Airmen: Winning the Fight. Strengthening the Team. Shaping the Future.



A Higher Calling...A Higher Standard

Commentary by Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Cody

Roll Call!
As Airmen we
step to a higher
calling and
hold ourselves
to the highest

standards. We have certain beliefs and truths that strengthen our organization and our nation. At the very heart of this is our Core Values; they are a clear illustration of the price of admission to our Air Force, and the common bond by which we win the fight, strengthen the team, and shape the future.

To win the fight, these values must be much more than words... they must guide us and point us to what is universal and unchanging in our profession of arms. Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do are the very fabric that bonds our commitment and dedication to duty, honor, country, fidelity, and competence.

Integrity defines our character. It is our moral compass that directs us always towards the right path. We must never waiver from this basic tenant, nor can we condone or tolerate those that do. The American people have placed a sacred trust in each of us, a trust that has been bolstered by countless Airmen who both came before us and serve alongside us today...we cannot take this for granted or squander such selfless sacrifice.

The strength of our team is directly linked to Service Before Self. We follow the rules and understand the need to maintain discipline and self-control. To do anything less is to lose faith in the system and place ourselves before service to our great nation. The fundamental respect we have for each other as human beings is a constant to comrades in arms.

Our Core Values guide Airmen and "serve as beacons vectoring us back to the path of professional conduct; they allow us to transform a climate of corrosion into a climate of ethical commitment." Our heritage is a testament to years of Excellence In All We Do, and this value remains critical as we shape the future. We are intrinsically tied to a tradition of honor and a legacy of valor, and our Core Values must pave the way if we are to remain the world's greatest Air Force.

So, why a Roll Call on Core Values? We know the words by heart, and on any given moment 99 percent of our Airmen live up to these high standards...but we must continue to guard against complacency. When one percent of Airmen fail to live according to our values, it reflects poorly on our Air Force as a whole. The nation questions our resolve and our trustworthiness to maintain the most powerful and destructive weapons the world has ever known. We

can ill afford to lose this trust. Don't ever apologize for living our Air Force Core Values. Ignoring them is not an option, and there is simply no room in our Air Force for those who do. We own this as Airmen.

There's no question we will right the course of the few and stay the course of the many. Integrity First... Service Before Self...Excellence In All We Do.

***Core Values:
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-- Chief Master Sgt.
of the Air Force James Cody

173rd mission expands, welcomes new jets

(Continued from front page)

“There was a scheduling conflict for [this] aircraft that prevented it from being painted prior to transfer,” said Lt. Col. Jeff “Sled” Smith, 173rd Maintenance Group Deputy Commander. “When asked if we would accept a brown “lizard” paint scheme, we agreed to it!”

The arrival of this aircraft and six others scheduled between now and June will bring the total number of assigned to Kingsley Field to 32. Smith says seeing the unique aircraft in the skies over Klamath Falls is significant.

“It’s a visible sign to the base and local community that Kingsley’s mission is growing despite budgetary challenges across the Air Force and DoD as a whole,” he said.

Col. Jeremy Baenen, the 173rd Fighter Wing Commander says it points toward the USAF commitment to adding more F-15C pilots to the fleet.

“In order to produce more pilots the 173rd Fighter Wing has to grow in both aircraft and personnel,” he said. “This recently acquired aircraft retains the paint scheme of the 65th Aggressor Squadron where it originated but blends in ANG and 173rd



Three 173rd Fighter Wing jets, including the newest addition to the fleet, a “lizard” from the aggressor squadron at Nellis AFB return to Kingsley Field, Ore., Feb. 19, 2014. (Photo by James “Hazy” Hazeltine, HIGH-G Productions)

FW emblems. It also symbolizes our desire to grow personnel at Kingsley Field by blending ANG and active duty personnel.”

That growth manifests itself in many ways, among them the former alert facility which went unused by the wing since that mission left the base years ago, is once again a beehive of activity.

“Building 400 and building 404 have been a necessity in accepting more aircraft,” said Maj. Micah Lambert, the 173rd Fighter Wing Maintenance Squadron Commander, of the former alert barns. “We are currently performing two phase inspections there, and one aircraft acceptance with the fourth bay being

used for weapons load training and aircraft washes. This facility is also the primary location for NDI [non-destructive inspection] to perform aircraft x-ray. It is a busy facility!”

And that won’t change any time soon; the building is slated for a full renovation of the entire electrical system, HVAC system, and installation of a high expansion foam (HEF) fire suppression system, said Maj. Tim Bruner, 173rd Fighter Wing Civil Engineer Squadron Commander.

With the addition of this aircraft and the four temporarily assigned here from the 144th Fighter Wing in Fresno, Calif., the Kingsley ramp is home to 34 F-15C aircraft, the largest number of aircraft in base history.

Kingsley earns top award for air traffic control complex

Story and poster by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. – Approximately one year ago the Associated Press reported that Kingsley Field's air traffic control tower was selected for closure under the terms of sequestration, a term describing a budget impasse in the U.S. Congress.

This galvanized a strong response, and the FAA ultimately removed Kingsley Field's tower from the closure list.

Over that year the people at the 270th have maintained a high standard of work, so high in fact they were named 2013 Airfield Operations Flight Complex of the Year for the entire Air National Guard. The unit is no stranger to the award having earned it in 2008 as well. "This airfield operations award, this is the big one," said Maj. Michael Balzotti, 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron Commander.

The award takes into account three main areas, airfield management which falls under the 173rd Fighter Wing, radar approach control and the tower which are both part of the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron.

The chief of air traffic control airspace and ranges at National Guard Bureau, Mr. S. Scott Duke presided over the board who ultimately selected Kingsley for the top award in the field noted that the 270th and 173rd Airfield Management operations have an established track record of excellence.

"They would certainly be the benchmark that others would need to strive to attain to be competitive," said Duke. "They really have mastered the association you need with management of the airfield, the control-



lers in the tower and the services provided by the radar controllers."

He said the award shows each of the three areas—tower, radar and airfield management—are performing at a high level.

"This award recognizes a balance between the areas," said Duke. "You can't have one area, the tower for instance that was superb, they all three have to be excellent."

Doug Cunningham, 270th Air Traffic Manager sums up the mission saying, "it's maintenance, it's supply, it's logistics and especially keeping people ready to deploy all over the world to control aircraft."

Those pieces will be tested yet further as the Kingsley Field adds more aircraft and controls a complex mixture of Air National Guard, fire suppression, general, and commercial aviation.

There is even an air race featuring more than 50 aircraft scheduled for this June.

270th Employee rescues motorist



270th Air Traffic Controller retired Senior Master Sgt. John Crowe conducts an interview with KOTI the NBC affiliate in Klamath Falls, Ore., following his rescue of an injured motorist on Hwy. 58 east of Eugene, Ore. He said the motorist suffered a broken femur and lacerations and that he stopped to investigate upon seeing a glowing tail light in the predawn hours of Jan. 19.

*Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. --

A 270th Air Traffic Controller potentially saved the life of an injured motorist on Oregon Highway 58, Jan. 19. Retired Senior Master Sgt. John Crowe, now a civilian air traffic controller, was driving home from the Portland Airport when he spotted an illuminated tail light on an obviously wrecked vehicle in the dark hours just before dawn.

"Since the tail light was on, I just felt it was responsibility to stop and check it out," he said. As he scrambled down a hill he could see someone remained in the car.

The driver was conscious but in obvious shock from his injuries.

"He asked me who I was and I said, 'my name is John, I'm here to help get you out of here,'" said Crowe.

After carefully checking the man for injuries he could tell that he suffered a broken femur and had a possible broken arm and multiple lacerations. Because the area was outside cell service

he faced the dilemma of either moving the man to his vehicle or leaving him and calling paramedics. Because the temperature was well below freezing, he decided it was critical to get the man warm and to medical help as soon as possible and pulled him from the vehicle. He carried the man to his truck and drove until he could call paramedics.

At first he said he simply reacted to the situation using his Air Force training, but as he drove the man to safety he reflected on the situation and was extremely glad he had been in the right place at the right time.

"Because it was dark I could see the tail light and that was why I stopped, but after the sun came up he might have been in trouble," said Crowe, who is uncomfortable with the publicity he has received, but nonetheless happy he was able to help a person in need.

"I really think anyone would stop and help and that was all I was doing," he said. "Everyone I know would do the same thing."

Pilot reaches 2,000 hours

(Continued from front page)

mission.

"This milestone reminds me of just how transitory our time is in the military, said Unruh. "As I reflect on just how quickly these 2,000 hours came and went I think of all of the people who led and trained me, as well as all of the countless hours that many men and women put in to make sure everything worked properly."

He was quick to acknowledge and thank those that have helped him along in his career.

"I cannot fathom the weight of effort exerted to get me in the air effectively over and over again, and I'm humbled by the faithful service of so many individuals," he said.

Unruh noted that those who desire to reach such significant milestones must be tenacious in the pursuit of their goals. "I've seen people fall by the wayside because they became tired and stopped perusing the goal ahead of them--never give up, never quit," he added.

Unruh spent 11 years in the active duty Air Force before joining the Oregon Air National Guard in 2008. He has held many roles at Kingsley Field, to include chief of syllabus development, flight commander, chief of scheduling, chief of training, and currently the chief of advanced programs.

"I have been deployed above the Arctic Circle, as well as the Middle East and have taken off in the F-15 in blowing snow at minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit and blowing sand at 140 degrees Fahrenheit," said Unruh. "Whether freezing or roasting, the men and women of the Air Force have stood strong day and night, and I cannot thank them enough."

The 173rd Fighter Wing is one of two Oregon Air National Guard wings. The 173rd Fighter Wing is the sole U.S. Air Force F-15 schoolhouse in the Nation.

Polar Plunge supports Special Olympics

Story by

**Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson,
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs**

KLAMATH FALLS, Ore. --

Rainy, 40-degree weather tested the resolve of Polar Plungers Feb. 8, 2014, including 12 members of the Kingsley Field Fire Department and two guard members from the 270th Air Traffic Control Squadron.

Both teams remained undeterred and leapt into the chilly water helping raise more than \$3,000 for the local Special Olympics chapter.

Initially plans called for a plunge into Klamath Lake at the Moore Park Marina, but Staff Sgt. Gary Langdon may have discovered one reason for the change.

"I went down there this morning and there is ice about six inches to a foot thick," he said. "I don't see how we could chip through it."

And so Kingsley Firefighters not only took the plunge, but set up the tank for everyone to jump into. For good measure they set it up near a bank of snow and shoveled much of it into the water.

Langdon and Staff Sgt. Kristin Cotton raised \$460 with their leap into frigid water.

Tim Van Leeuwen, Kingsley Firefighter and volunteer Special Olympics coach, spearheaded the effort to get the 173rd Firefighters involved.

"We raised \$600 through this event," he said. "The guys had a



173rd Fighter Wing Firefighter Kyle Tecmire, center, lands in icy water during the Polar Plunge held on a rainy Saturday, Feb. 8, 2014 at Moore Park, Klamath Falls, Ore. The 173rd Fire Department raised nearly \$600 for the event and they say they are excited to see what they can do next year. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson/Released)

blast and they are already talking about how to make next year even better."

Van Leeuwen sparked an interest in Special Olympics when his son began to compete several years ago. Since then, he and his wife both became volunteer coaches and work to raise money to help the athletes compete year round.

"Coaching Special Olympics is really neat, sometimes other sports can push the competition or foster cliques, but this has none of that," said Van Leeuwen. "We have lots of high-fives, lots of encouragement, and very little discouragement."

The plunge is in its second year and organizers Darcie Turner and Kellie Weitman plan to hold it annually. This year's event grew significantly over last which was held a local outdoor pool.

"Thanks to the Kingsley Firefighters we were able to make this a really good event," said Turner. "We hope they can help us next year and beyond."

If you would like to more information on Special Olympics or the 2015 Polar Plunge, contact either Darcie Turner at (541) 591-0888 or Kellie Weitman at (541) 591-1166.



BG Stencil visits 173rd Fighter Wing

Master Sgt. Brett Lundberg describes to Brig. Gen. Michael Stencil, Assistant Adjutant General-Air, how he discovered a fleet-wide flaw in a technical order that causes F-15 generators to fail when the engine is operating. The part in question is a valve responsible for cooling the oil in the generator. It was Stencil's second visit in his capacity as assistant adjutant general, Jan. 5, 2014. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Penny Hamilton)

New passive fall restraints speed phase maintenance

Story by
Tech. Sgt. Jefferson Thompson
173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- New safety stands help keep Kingsley Field's maintainers safer from falls than in the past. With an investment of fewer than 160-thousand dollars these new stands surround an F-15 aircraft and make it virtually impossible to fall from the airframe to the ground more than 10-feet below.

According the Master Sgt. Mark Draper, the phase section supervisor, these stands were purchased as a response to new safety standards outlined in Air Force Instruction regulations. "The AFI says, 'Passive fall protection shall be provided whenever workers can fall four feet or more,'" added Draper.

In the past maintainers used exist-

ing floor stands which required frequent moves from position to position as work moved around the aircraft.

"We didn't have enough stands to go around and so we'd scrounge one up and have to move it constantly," said Draper. "Everyone likes these new stands because they surround the aircraft and provide four access points, rather than just one—they definitely save us time as we work to get aircraft back in the air."

As the number of aircraft grows toward a total assigned number of 32,



Bld. 400 houses jets in phase maintenance following some renovations to the historic buildings. The stands pictured meet the requirement for passive fall restraint and personnel using them say they speed the phase maintenance process. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Jennifer Shirar, 173rd Fighter Wing Public Affairs)

the workload on Kingsley's maintainers increase proportionately. An investment into these safety stands helps mitigate one area of lost time and energy, said Draper.

Heads up: major, new inspection here in September

**Commentary by Capt Nikki Jackson,
173rd Fighter Wing**

KINGSLEY FIELD, Ore. -- Welcome to the new Air Force Inspection System! Most of you have heard this acronym, but maybe were not quite certain what it meant. Some have said, "It's the same thing we've been doing for years", "Inspections are inspections no matter what new spin you put on it", or "We're having an inspection in September, I better get ready!" If you are one of these people, then this article is for you!

Let's start with what AFIS is NOT. It is nothing like the old inspection system. For those of us who have gone through an Operational Readiness Inspection, Unit Compliance Inspection, Compliance Inspection, Logistics Compliance Assessment Program, Multiple Systems Evaluation Program, Environmental Safety and Occupational Health Compliance Assessment and Management Program Assessment, etc., delete those memories from your brain. There is no more inspection prep. No putting together the perfect "book". No spending time ensuring all of your answers are "yes" on your IG checklists. No painting the grass green. No stressing about the inspectors; "Will I get a nice one, or will they be unhappy about every answer I give?" Now breathe, because it is about to get a lot better.

What IS AFIS? Per AFI 90-201, AFIS is focused on assessing and reporting a unit's readiness, economy, efficiency, effectiveness, and state of discipline to execute assigned missions. The AFIS gives the Secretary of the Air Force, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and commanders at all levels an independent assessment of:

- A unit's compliance with established directives and ability to execute

its assigned mission, leadership effectiveness, management performance, and aspects of unit culture and command climate.

- A unit's ability to find, analyze, report, and fix deficiencies.

- A unit's ability to prevent fraud and minimize waste and abuse.

What does this mean? Good news everybody! AFIS gives our commander the ability to build his own Commander's Inspection Program to the unique mission and needs of Kingsley Field. And, we inspect ourselves. Yes, that is correct - the 173rd Fighter Wing is responsible for inspecting our own.

How? It starts at the lowest level. Management Internal control Tool-set is used for self-assessments. The Wing Inspector General Staff, with support from subject matter experts on the Wing Inspection Team, will inspect wing-wide performance and

programs, and organizations below the Wing level. During these inspections, WIT members will review your MICT checklists, formulate questions based on those checklists (as well as any areas identified by your commander), visit your area to discuss those questions, and conduct "interviews" with select unit members. Big picture—the WIT will validate and verify your self-assessment program. Oh, and don't forget, the WIT also plans, organizes, and evaluates all wing-level exercises.

What do you need to do? This is the easy part—continue to do the fantastic job you're currently doing! If you are responsible for checklists in MICT, answer the questions thoroughly and honestly (it is ok to answer no), and provide documentation to support your answers. If you are a supervisor, pay attention to your people; be aware of, report, and try to fix any issues (not just those related to job skills, also personal, morale and welfare, etc. too). Think of ways to improve the unit—ask for help, share best practices, and be a great wingman.

What type of inspection will we have in September? Our inspection in September will be what AFIS describes as a "capstone" event. These happen every 4-5 years and are used by the Major Commands to validate and verify our CCIP. Yes, inspectors will look at MICT and will visit your areas. In addition, Air Education Training Command IG will send out a base-wide survey for all members to complete, and will conduct individual and small group interviews with select members.

The IG Staff is available to provide additional information and answer any questions or concerns you may have.

**No putting
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No painting the
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-- Capt. Jackson,
On what the inspection is NOT

AF uniform policy changes: welcome back morale t-shirts

**By Staff Sgt. David Salanitri,
Air Force Public Affairs Agency**

WASHINGTON -- The Air Force updated the policy governing uniform wear Jan. 17, with a goal of not financially burdening Airmen.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark. A. Welsh III approved several updates to Air Force Instruction 36-2903, Air Force Dress and Appearance, with many of the changes coming directly from Airmen. During the past year, Welsh prompted Airmen to make their voice heard through the Every Dollar Counts campaign, held last spring, and suggestions made directly to him during base visits or comments to the uniform survey board itself.

"The policy changes revolve around three areas," said Col. Patrick Doherty, Director of Air Force Services who has oversight of the uniforms and awards and recognition branch. "The first area of policy changes is focused on heritage, team building, esprit de corps and unit pride.

The second is recognizing and valuing Airmen's experiences, qualifications and job performance, allowing Airmen to wear what they have earned. The last area is a group of common sense approach inputs from Airmen in the field that senior leaders thought were great ideas."

There are dozens of updates to the AFI, including the following: Morale T-shirts/patches representing individual squadrons that were worn in the past to increase unit pride are now authorized to wear on Fridays. Squadron color T-shirts may be worn with the ABU or flight suit when

in-garrison or on-station during unit temporary duty assignments and contingency deployments. Shirts must be one color throughout the squadron, and may have only a small squadron patch over the left chest. Wing Commanders can authorize personnel from different units to wear the same color T-shirts to facilitate esprit de corps



and team building. For example, maintainers, life support personnel and flight doctors are allowed to wear the color T-shirt of the flying squadron they support. Also, authorized is the in-garrison Friday wear of morale patches and nametags that have tasteful nicknames or call signs on flight suits. Unit commanders have approval authority for morale patches and nametag naming conventions.

Earned Air Force and other services' badges are authorized to wear, but only the command insignia pin is mandatory. This reverses a previous decision to prohibit wear of qualification badges and various patches on ABUs, to eliminate the need to re-

move and replace badges for deployment or permanent change of duty station moves.

In recent years, Airmen deployed to Afghanistan wore the Operation Enduring Freedom Camouflage Pattern. The OCP is flame retardant, treated with insect repellent and also used by the Army. Following this evolution, the ABU has become primarily an in-garrison uniform, according to Air Force senior leaders.

"The increased wear of the ABU in-garrison, coupled with Airmen's long-term desires to wear the qualification badges and the command insignia they have earned, makes authorized wear on the ABU a logical step," said Lt. Gen. Sam Cox, the Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services. A list and examples of all newly approved badges authorized for wear on the ABU is located in attachment five of AFI 36-2903.

The Air Force physical training uniform no longer has color restrictions for athletic shoes. Airmen are now also authorized to wear black socks with their athletic shoes.

Cell phones no longer have to be black, as long as they're not worn on the uniform or attached to a purse.

Changes came directly from the field and major commands, said Cox.

"The changes are the result of months of the Chief of Staff listening to what Airmen had to say about ABUs and other uniform wear policies," Cox said.

Airmen can expect to find the optional badges on the AAFES website by mid-July to early August. The commander's insignia pin will be mandatory once the cloth pins go on sale at AAFES.

SecAF outlines top priorities during 'State of AF' address

Story by Rich Lamance,
Air Force News Service

ORLANDO -- After her second month in office, Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James laid out her top three priorities as part of a "state of the Air Force" address, during the final day of the 30th annual Air Force Association Warfare Symposium and Technology Exposition Feb. 21.

James laid out the path she, and other senior leaders, feel the Air Force needs to pursue, both in the short term, as well as the years ahead, basing her priorities upon an Air Force that faces dwindling budgets, resources and people.

She feels the Air Force's No. 1 priority, above aircraft, weapons or equipment, is its people. "Having the right people in the right job at the right time, who are trained and developed should be our number one priority."

The Secretary added that, "taking care of people means to me recruiting, retaining and reshaping our force, so that we have the right people in the right jobs for the immediate future, as well as thinking ahead to the longer term. We are going to be smaller. We will be going through a force-shaping set of procedures, which will include mostly voluntary measures. We may do some involuntary as well, but this will be a big deal over the next year or two."

James said the other part of taking care of people is compensating people fairly. She believes compensation has escalated over the last dozen years or so, but she expects to see a leveling off in the years ahead. She also believes that to grow Airmen, the Air Force needs to be more diverse.

"Taking care of people also means growing our leadership, developing



Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James delivers her keynote speech during the 30th Annual AFA Air Warfare Symposium and Technology Exposition, in Orlando, Fla., Feb. 21, 2014. James described the Air Force as the "Nation's go-to force, ready at a moment's notice to answer the President's call, providing global vigilance, global reach and global power." (U.S. Air Force photo by Scott M. Ash)

our people, and getting more diversity of thought at the table. That includes people who come from diverse backgrounds. People with diverse backgrounds have different approaches to problems, and I'm convinced we will get better solutions if we have that diversity of thought."

James also stressed that family programs, along with a good balance of work and family time are key to growing better and more productive Airmen.

"It means protecting family programs, achieving a work-life balance, which is hard for a lot of people in the Air Force, because there is a lot of work and it's hard to get that work-life balance in there.

It means leveraging the best talents of our active, Guard, Reserve and civilian teams. We also need to ensure a climate of dignity and respect for all, all of the time, period, whether

you are on duty or off duty."

While most of what she sees in the Air Force is extremely positive, James said there are important Airman issues that need to be improved. In the past two months, she has traveled to eight states, as well as the District of Columbia, and has put time and effort into addressing some of those issues

"One of the things I'm tracking on is sexual assault and sexual harassment. I'm listening and watching to see what changes have been made over the last year or two, and I'm impressed with what I've seen. I get that our top leaders, without question, get the importance of it; they're on it, we're working it and that's the way it needs to remain -- persistent focus will create an atmosphere throughout the Air Force that that behavior won't

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AF Budget forecast cloudy as DoD sustains deep cuts

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exist.”

The second Airman issue involved 92 missile crewmembers at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont, who had some level of involvement in the cheating incident involving a monthly proficiency test on nuclear weapons.

“Some of these officers were directly involved with the cheating, others knew something about it, but for whatever reason, they failed to stop it and they failed to report it. I went out to the missile fields because I wanted to talk to some of the people involved and learn more about it.”

James traveled to the missile bases, along with the Global Strike Command headquarters, and came away with a sense that the Air Force nuclear mission is in good hands, after receiving command briefs, tours, and more importantly talking to Airmen.

“I am convinced after all of this that, number one, our nuclear mission is safe and secure. One test does not make or break anything, and there are plenty of outside evaluations and inspections which demonstrate to me that these Airmen know their job, they are performing it well, so our nuclear mission is safe and secure”

James’ No. 2 priority is balancing today’s readiness with tomorrow’s modernization. “When it comes to today’s readiness, I have the utmost confidence in our Air Force.

If they are called upon tonight to do a mission half way across the globe, they will step up and do a magnificent job.

“With that said, I wouldn’t be truthful with you if I didn’t tell you readiness has slipped in recent years. Last year, during sequestration, was a particularly difficult time. We had to

stand down some of our flying squadrons. So readiness has slipped. And we need to reverse this. The Chief is committed, I’m committed, we are all committed to returning the Air Force to higher levels of readiness than we have today. We owe it to our Airmen, we owe it to our country and that’s what we’re going to do.”

James said that with the immediate relief the Air Force has been provided in fiscal years 14 and 15, “we’re going to take most of that and we’re going to beef up our readiness. It doesn’t mean it will be perfect, it doesn’t mean that will fix it, it doesn’t mean that we wouldn’t like to do more – but it will be a top priority moving forward.

“That’s today’s readiness. Then there’s tomorrow’s readiness, which is my way of talking about modernization and the need to recapitalize our platforms to ensure we stay ahead of the threats, and be able to control the skies, project power and extend global reach for the years to come.”

The Secretary said the top three priorities for modernization remain the newest fifth generation fighter, the F-35 Lightning II, the new KC-46 tanker, recently named the Pegasus, and the Long Range Strike Bomber.

James third priority is to make every dollar count, and said added value to the taxpayer is important in everything we do. “We need to make sure our programs are on budget and on schedule. We need to be able to deliver auditable books of how we allocate and spend our money.”

She said the details on how she plans to advance these priorities will be revealed as early as next month.

“The details on how we’ll do all that will be rolled out in March in the 2015 budget. Shortly thereafter, Gen-

eral Welsh and I will go to Capitol Hill and we’ll start the posture hearings, talk to Congress and explain our point of view.”

She mentioned that like all give and take, there may be things we don’t like, with hard choices that have to be made, citing possible retirements of complete fleets of aircraft among others.

“I mentioned force shaping measures, there will be headquarters reductions, there will be a number of areas where we will be reducing. I’m telling you this now to get you prepared and ask for your help in telling the total story on how we can achieve these savings, sometimes in very unpopular ways. So we can take some of those savings and reinvest them in some of the key areas –people, readiness and modernization.”

While there will be tough decisions to be made in the months and years ahead, James looks at the Air Force in a positive light. “Our future is very, very bright...whether we’re flying an aircraft to project visible airpower capability, or launching a satellite from Florida to provide GPS for the nation, or whether we’re guarding a missile silo in the Great North, or refueling an airlifter over the Pacific, or providing close air support in Afghanistan, our security depends on these amazing Airmen.

“And, the more time I spend with them, the more I see them carry out these indispensable missions, the more proud of them I am, and of their families. From the sacrifices they endure, sometimes in remote locations around the world, our Airmen are very dedicated professionals, they are steadfast to their commitment to America, and they are living our legacy every day.”

Announcements



Recent Promotions

Capt Eric T. McDaniel
 2nd Lt Beth D. Narramore
 SMSgt Nicholas A. Figueroa
 SMSgt Scott A. Hoglund
 SMSgt Christine D. Mckenzie
 MSgt Kelley R. Damrow
 MSgt Tia L. Williams
 TSgt Timothy J. Brady
 TSgt Jason J. Carlisle
 TSgt Brandy M. Halvorsen
 TSgt John R. Mckay
 TSgt Adam R. Stacey
 TSgt James F. Whaling, Jr.
 TSgt Daniel J. Winsinger
 TSgt Delbert J. Woodside
 SSgt Nicholas M. Alexander
 SSgt Christopher J. O'Conner
 SSgt Wyatt H. Stinnett
 SSgt Derik J. Trumbull
 SrA Alicia R. Edick
 SrA Nicholas R. Johnson
 SrA Tina A. McAllister
 SrA Arloa B. Patrick
 A1C Zachariah D. Hamilton

New Members! Welcome to Kingsley Field!

Maj Mark A. Smedra
 SrA Steven G. Hansen
 SrA Claudia Ruble
 A1C Matthew C. Cox
 A1C Joshua B. Hunsinger
 A1C Krista M. Galloway
 A1C Lucas H. Galloway
 A1C Christopher D. Greene
 A1C Erich V. Luhrs

173d Fighter Wing SARC,
Lt Col Martin Balakas
Call: (541) 885-6198 or
(541) 205-2305



You
 are
 not
 alone

Retiree Corner

Retirees and their families who need information or assistance with a "Retiree Issue" please contact the Oregon National Guard Retiree Service Office. (Air & Army)
 Located at: Room 231, Anderson Readiness Center
 3225 State Street, Salem OR 97309
 Office Hours: 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM Every Thursday
 Phone: (503) 584-2891
 E-mail: NGOR.J1.RSO@ng.army.mil
 Web site: www.orng-smfs.org



The 173rd Fighter Wing's newest aircraft sports the desert paint scheme having come from the aggressor squadron at Nellis AFB, Nev. Maintainers updated the tail flash and added Air National Guard emblems and the 114th Fighter Squadron will use the airframe for normal operations until June when it is scheduled to receive the standard paint for an F-15C, Feb. 19, 2014. (Photo by James "Hazy" Hazeltine, HIGH-G Productions)

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Vice Wing Commander:

Col. Gregor J. Leist

Wing Public Affairs Officer:

Capt. Andrew Bowman

State Public Affairs Officer:

Maj. Stephen S. Bomar