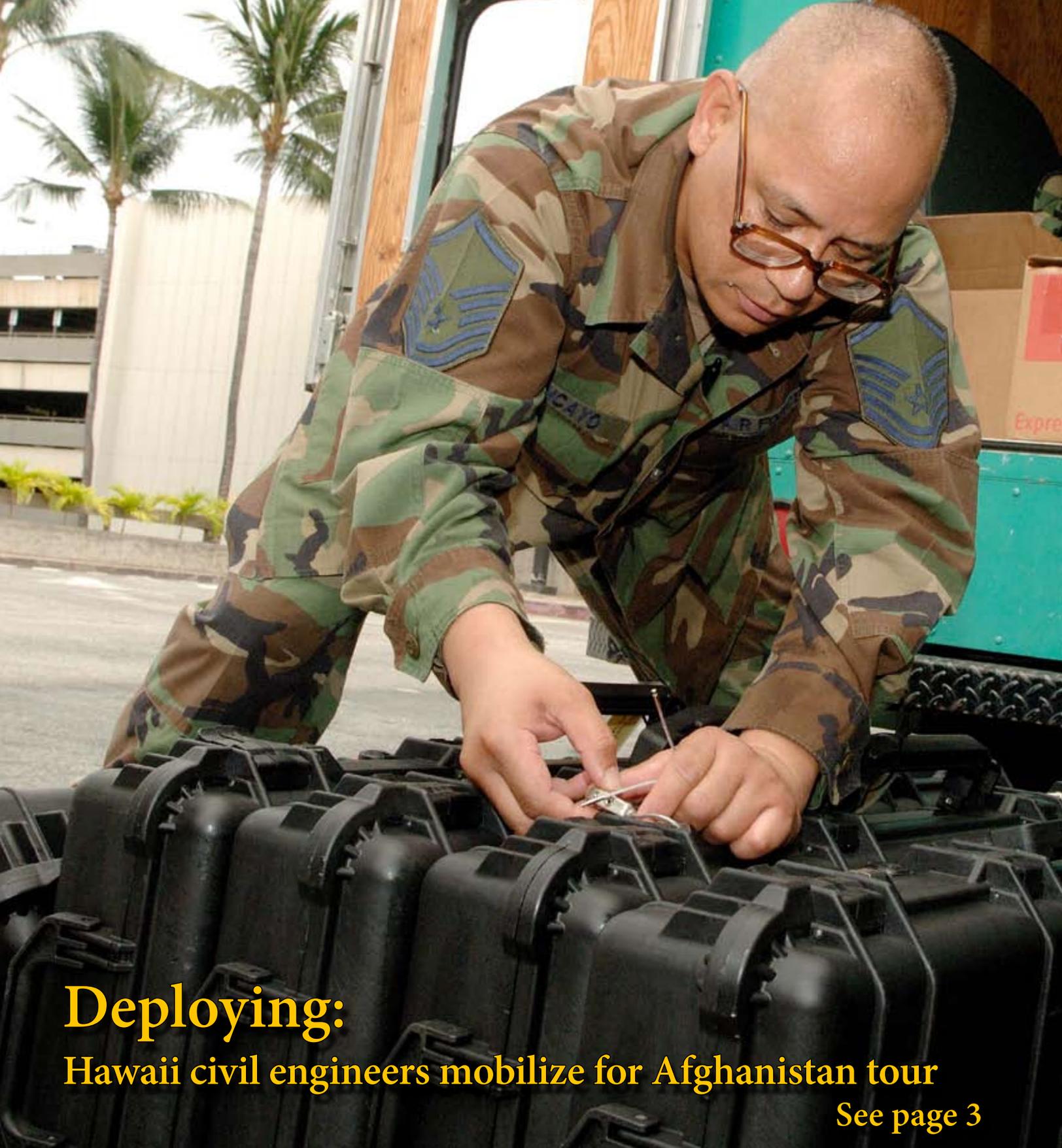


# *Pacific Crossings*

August 2009

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group



**Deploying:**

Hawaii civil engineers mobilize for Afghanistan tour

See page 3

# Accountability:

## Holding ourselves to a higher standard

By Capt. Michael Aflague  
724th Aeromedical Staging Flight

What does 'accountability' mean to you?

History is marked by unfortunate events including the Black Hawk incident in which two U.S. Army Black Hawk helicopters were mistakenly destroyed by two U.S. F-15's under the command and control of an AWAC (Airborne Warning & Control System) resulting in the deaths of twenty-six U.S. soldiers, Airmen and civilians.

In 2007, the 5th Bomb Wing at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., was decertified from handling Advance Cruise Missiles or nuclear warheads after a weapons loading crew accidentally loaded a pylon of nuclear armed air-launched cruise missiles on the wing of a B-52 bomber.

The aircraft journeyed 1,100 miles to Barksdale Air Force Base, La., and sat on the flight line for over eight hours before munitions personnel, who followed correct procedures, discovered the mistake.

As we continue down memory lane we have witnessed the numerous and very disturbing sexual assault incidents that have tainted our beloved Air Force Academy and also recall the 8th Fighter Wing commander who was relieved of duty at Kunsan Air Base, Korea, after a series of inspections found



substandard performance to technical orders and regulations

Let's not forget the ground shaking events of the Enron and World-Com debacle. The revelation of gross accounting violations by these firms and others, and the continued weakness of the financial markets have undermined both popular and political support for freemarket policies and give way to a litany of increased accounting and auditing regulations never-before-seen.

So what do all these stories have in common?

Those responsible at various levels for each of these incidents were held accountable for their actions or inactions in a conscious effort to restore credibility. As military leaders, our standards are higher than those in our society at large because of what we do. We defend our nation. The tools of our trade are lethal.

We are held to a higher standard by the public and we are held in high regard by the public because of the integrity we demonstrate by holding ourselves accountable and others accountable for their actions.

It's important to understand that accountability does not necessarily mean punishment. Although punishment is an integral part of hold-

*ACCOUNTABILITY continued on page 7*

### Pacific Crossings

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#### Action Line

The Action line is your direct line to the 624th Regional Support Group Commander. If you have worked through normal channels and are not satisfied with the answer, the Action Line is your opportunity to ask questions or make suggestions about the subjects of concern to the 624th RSG community.

You may contact the action line at 624RSG.PA@Hickam.af.mil.

Please include your name and phone number in case additional information is required. Action lines of general interest will be published in Pacific Crossings while others will be answered by phone.

#### On the Cover

Master Sgt. Robert Tancayo, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, inspects weapon cases prior to distributing them to deploying members at Honolulu International Airport Friday July 31. The team is on its way to Afghanistan for six months.

Story on page 3

(Photo by Mark Bates)



Staff Sgt. Jonathan Ariola, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, hones his marksmanship skills prior to his deployment July 12 at the Combat Arms Training and Maintenance range, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. (Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)



Tech. Sgt. Leonard Samson, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, receives one last hug from his son prior to leaving for his deployment at Honolulu International Airport Friday July 31. (Photo by Mark Bates)

## Deploying to Afghanistan

Fifty-four Reservists from the 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, which falls under the 624th Regional Support Group, have been mobilized to deploy to Afghanistan for six months.

This is a "partial" mobilization, meaning half the squadron is being mobilized as opposed to the entire squadron. Once in the area of responsibility, the CE team will be supporting the Army at Bagram.

En route to Afghanistan, the civil engineers made a stop at Ft. McCoy, Wis., where they are getting combat skills training.

Lt. Col. Rich Parkinson, 624th CES commander, is with the team and reported Aug. 5 on the training they and other Airmen are getting in preparation for their desert experience:

"Our group of 90 folks lined up and received all of our 'battle rattle' this morning. All the folks were looking like true American heroes after they geared up and were weighted down with IBA [Individual Body Armor], combat packs, weapons, ACH [Advanced Combat Helmet] and hydration systems. All 90 are CE types and a good mix of Reserves and regular AF personnel.

**DEPLOYING** continued on page 4

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Deploying father Senior Master Sgt. Rolando Belong spends time with son Roland and daughter Rosebel at a pre-deployment briefing during the June drill weekend. The Belong children are both members of the Civil Air Patrol. (Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)



Master Sgt. Janet Hudson, 624th Regional Support Group Family Support, helps Tech. Sgt. Detric Brown, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron, with his gear prior to his departure from Honolulu International Airport July 31. (Photo by Mark Bates)

## ***DEPLOYING continued from page 3***

After lunch we broke into two teams and a mixed bag went into Up Armored HMMWV training while the Bagram (Hickam and Dover) team (sans a few busdrivers) went into HEAT.

No... not that! It's a HMMWV Extraction Trainer - basically a Hummer on a stick where they rotated us to 90 degrees and then upside down so we could feel what it's like. Then they did several slow rolls to simulate a slow roll over, and stopped the trainer either upside down or on it's side and we needed to extricate ourselves from our seats, gather our weapons and sensitive items and then exit as a team (while looking for any enemy).

Sounds easy... unless you're wearing 30 pounds of gear and you're crammed into a small space. Nonetheless, we learned a lot, have a much better chance of surviving a rollover now (250% better), and, of course, we had FUN too! Some of the guys took some photos and videos - I'll see if I can copy and send you a few.

Then we spent an hour receiving a LOAC briefing from an Army lawyer and decided the Vikings will win the Superbowl this year (so the briefing wouldn't last two hours). Tomorrow we spend a long day on the range (0500-2200) -- a 2 MRE day.

Hopefully everyone will stay hydrated and shoot straight!"

# Warrior of the Month



## Harry Shin

Senior Airman

624th Civil Engineer Squadron

Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii

**JOB TITLE:** Engineer Apprentice

**JOB DESCRIPTION:** Directs and performs civil engineering design, drafting, surveying, and contract surveillance to support Air Force facility construction and maintenance programs. Prepares manual and Computer Aided Design (CAD) drawings, specifications, and cost estimates. Develops, operates, and maintains Geographic Information System (GIS) modules. Utilizes surveying technology to include Global Positioning System (GPS). Evaluates potential construction sites and performs field tests on soils, asphalt, and concrete.

**HOMETOWN:** Honolulu, Hawaii

**FAVORITE THING ABOUT UNIT:** "Everyone is so friendly here, like one big family. You can feel the Aloha."

**FAVORITE THING ABOUT JOB:** "It's something I don't do every day, so it's fun and exciting to learn something new when we come in for UTA. It's also a refreshing break from the civilian world."

**LITTLE KNOWN FACT:** "I love to work under pressure. It allows me to show myself and to everyone what I am really capable of."

**SUPERVISOR SAYS:** "Apart from others is Shin's no-questions-ask attitude. When given a specified task, he displays mature professionalism with the work and doesn't object when processed. His commitment to the team and mission is incomparable." -- Capt. Allence Ribao

## Personnel Briefs

### Civilian Employer Information

It is the duty of each individual member of the Ready Reserve to comply with the requirements of the Civilian Employer Information (CEI) program.

A member of the Ready Reserve who knowingly fails or refuses to provide required employment-related information or who knowingly provides false employment-related information may be subject to administrative action or punishment for dereliction of duty under Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice.

You can enter your employer data by going to the Defense Manpower Data Center Web site located at: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/Guard-ReservePortal>. After clicking on the Web site, enter your employment status.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve staff will not directly

contact any employer about an individual reservist unless the reservist asks for assistance with an employer issue.

We ask that you please continue to update any changes in the future.

### Virtual Record of Emergency Data

Servicemembers are required to keep their Virtual Record of Emergency Data current at all times and are required to review their vRED at least annually. Additionally, the member must also review their vRED during in/out-processing, RSG annual mobility folder inspection, and prior to all deployments. Each command support staff orderly room will outline in writing specific review procedures to ensure in/out processing and pre-deployment review requirements are met. An automatic suspense is already established through the vMPF for annual member review. The vRED is accessed through the vMPF using the

AF Portal through AFPC secure website at <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil>.

### MILITARY PERSONNEL FLIGHT HOURS

Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

#### DRILL WEEKENDS

Saturday:

Open hours: 10 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Closed for in-processing: 7 - 10 a.m.

Sunday:

Open hours: 7 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
2:30 - 4 p.m.

Closed for training: 1-2:30 p.m.

If an ID card is required, please call before coming to MPF to check if DEERS is up and running.



## Dental ready is mission ready

Maintaining proper dental hygiene is an extremely important part of everybody's health. For Airmen, it is imperative that they maintain their teeth with the same diligence that they apply to all other aspects of their career.

This becomes critical for members who can expect to be deployed. Having a dental emergency while deployed can be serious business.

724th Aeromedical Staging Flight dental personnel conducted examinations for Guam Reservists at the Andersen Clinic during the June drill weekend.

(Above) Staff Sgt. Vincent Nelson, dental technician, and Dr. (Capt.) Michael Fernandez, dentist, review digital x-rays of patient Master Sgt. Anthony Toves, 44th Aerial Port Squadron.

(Left) Doctor Fernandez performs a dental exam on Chief Master Sgt. Maurice Sayama, 44th Aerial Port Squadron.



## ASTS in Alaska

624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron Airmen took turns practicing the Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support algorithm (ACLS) on a mannikin. Staff Sgt. Allan Quitoriano is doing chest compressions while Capt. Janet Baxa prepares medication to be delivered during a cardio-pulmonary arrest scenario. The medics and others members of the 624th ASTS performed their annual tour with the 3rd Medical Group at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska. (Courtesy photo)

### **ACCOUNTABILITY** *continued from page 2*

ing someone accountable, in and of itself is not accountability.

Merriam-Webster defines accountability as, “the quality or state of being accountable; an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions.”

This definition addresses the functional meaning of the word but fails to encapsulate organizational accountability.

Organizational accountability requires an active and feedback follow-up-system triggered by engagement.

Taking ‘vital signs’ of your unit is the first step in keeping the organization and individuals accountable.

When processes and programs are left broken the impression given is that no one cares and there is no cost to leave them in a derelict state. Airmen want to know that leadership is engaged and that we care about what they do. When we offer them the chance to show how they do things right, even if we ourselves are proficient/ experts, it imparts to them an increased sense of importance, inspires them to new heights and encourages creative thinking.

In a 2003 speech to the Association of Public Treasures of the U.S and Canada,

Gen. Norton Schwartz identified accountability as one of five basic

elements of leadership.

“In the U.S. military, accountability

is critical to maintaining a moral force and the shared values of the profession of arms. While we are certainly accountable to our country’s elected leaders and laws, we also, as a profession, have an obligation to police our own in order to maintain the values of the profession” (Schwartz, 2003).

We should never lose sight of who we are and why we are here.

We must continue to perform each of our duties and carry out the mission with the utmost integrity, excellence and service.

# Making a slight detour in Iraq

By Senior Master Sgt. Mark Avery  
48th Aerial Port Squadron

Aloha! As a Team Chief, we always want to ensure our Airmen are properly informed and prepared for their upcoming deployments. One major item that is always touched before deployments is the fact that whatever you are told prior to leaving, things can change in a moment's notice.

Case in point. Stationed at Joint Base Balad (JBB), I began my deployment tasked as Air Terminal Superintendent. My task were to follow the functions under my control; such as Passenger terminal, Load Planning, Cape Forecasting, Data Records, Commercial Tender, and ATOC.

On June 6th, three weeks after my arrival to JBB, I was settling in to my daily routine of checking my e-mails, attending morning meetings, and began to working on issues that needed answers.

As I stated, things here in the AOR can change in a moment's notice! I was approached by the Deployment & Distribution Flight Commander--48th APS's own Captain Izon--along with the Chief--CMSgt Lyons--who asked if I was ready to catch a plane. Upon further discussion, our deployed 332rd ELRS Commander needed someone to forward deploy for about one month to a detachment under his control. The supervisor at Tall Afar/Det. 5 needed to redeploy home due to an emergency in the family.

I was the chosen one! Time for some more AOR frequent flyer miles!

Those who have deployed to the Area Of Responsibility know the pain of flying through it. My travels, with bags in hand and wearing full Individual Battle Equipment (IBE), took me out of Iraq to Kuwait and back into Iraq. My destination, Tall Afar, Iraq. Tall Afar, also known as Forward Operating Base (FOB) Sykes, is located Northwest of Mosul and is about a 2 hour drive from the Syrian border. As Detachment Chief, I was responsible for leading seven other AF personnel in all Aerial Port functions at this austere location. Austere is the correct word for Air Force personnel at FOB Sykes. Besides the eight Det. 5 Airmen, myself included, there were only five other personnel from two other AFSC's of 3,000 per-



Senior Master Sgt. Mark Avery pictured at a forward operating base in Iraq.

sonnel attached to units at the FOB. In fact, the only time we really rose above that number was when a C130 had maintenance issue and they were stranded overnight. The AF population doubled overnight!

The location for everything on base was choice! Everything within 2 minutes walk of each other. BX, DFAC, gym, MWR, and living quarters. It was very convenient for our Airmen.

Being at an austere location was nothing new, having deployed to FOB Spiecher, Al Sahra near Tikrit, Iraq in 2005. Although, as Det. Chief there were responsibilities beyond the Aerial Port that were a new learning experience. Being the base was ran by the Army, I was responsible for attending several meetings throughout the week...Mayor's Cell meeting, Base security, and deployment/redeployment planning of Apache and Blackhawk units. Besides Army movements, we had the pleasure to focus on several

Marine movements by loading/unloading supplies onto UH-47 during engine running operation (ERO) for quick response.

All in all the trip was a new, exciting experience. The trip back to Joint Base Balad (JBB) took me from Tall Afar on a Blackhawk HELO, to a 14 hour wait at Mosul, and finally a C130 back to JBB. Upon returning I continued to mentor to the Airmen to be willing to learn new things, be safe, and ready to change directions at a moment's notice.

*Senior Master Sgt. Mark Avery is currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom along with 25 other members of the 48th Aerial Port Squadron, 624th Regional Support Group Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.*



Loading cargo onto a running helicopter is just another day's work for the aerial porters at Forward Operating Base Sykes, Tall Afar, Iraq. (Courtesy photo)

# Felicia's on her way... Are you ready?

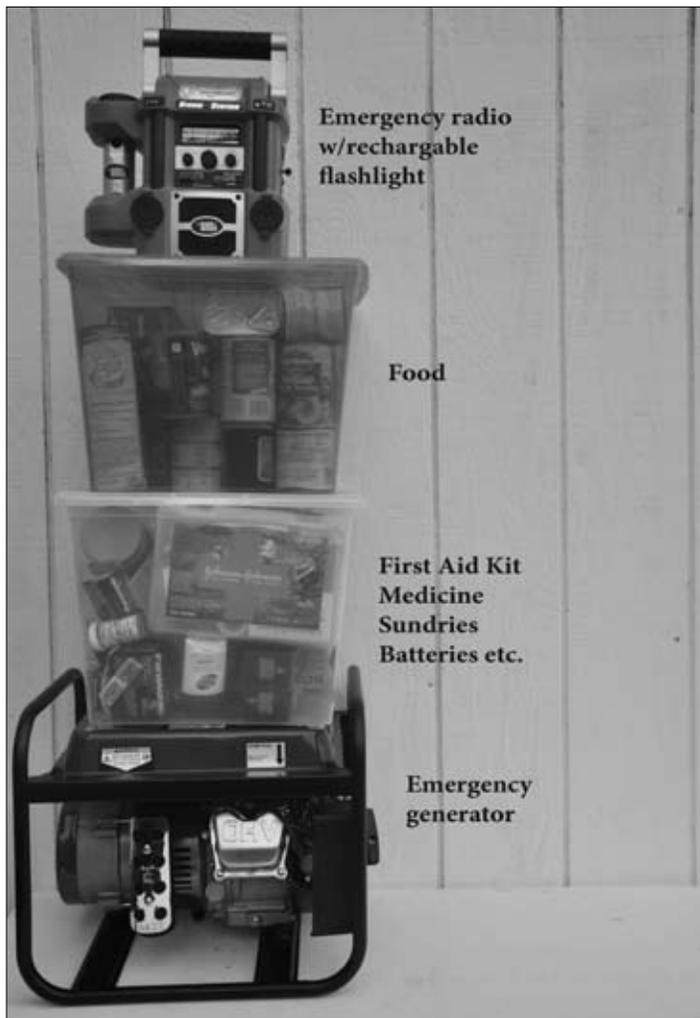
By Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel  
624th Regional Support Group

In this past week, Hurricane Felicia has been bearing down on the Hawaiian Islands. My sister, Wendy, who is savvy about such things, broke out her home disaster kit to assess what was up to date and what was needed. All the dry goods were in order. Most of her effort went into ensuring an adequate water supply and figuring out what needed securing from high winds.

Watching her preparations gave me the excuse necessary to break out and test the portable generator that I had bought on sale a few months ago. I am happy to report that it works.

Fortunately, according to the National Weather Service, the Category 4 hurricane has degraded to 3 (no 2... no 1) and looks to fade further as the weekend progresses. Here's hoping that a little heavy rain is all that can be expected.

Still, getting ready for Felicia has been good practice. Growing up in islands you can count on something happening. If it's not storms, it's tsunamis or earthquakes or lava flows or... well you get the picture. You definitely don't want



to get caught short waiting in an impossibly long line at a store for supplies which may or may not be available. Remember if you fail to plan, you plan to fail. The 15th Airlift Wing Mission Support Group has the following suggestions for disaster preparation:

## Disaster Prep Kits

- encourage folks to get a kit, inventory existing kits
- provisions for 3-days, ideally 7
- Basic kit checklist reference:  
<http://www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/basickit.shtm>
- Essentials:
  - Water
  - Food
  - First aid supplies
  - Clothing, bedding and sanitation supplies
  - Tools (e.g., to turn off gas lines; AM radio)
  - Special items (medicine, disability-related supplies etc)
- Ensure kit is easily transportable, accessible, and close to an exit
- BXTra & Commissary have kit supplies available

## Hickam flood potential & evacuation awareness

- South-side areas closest to the ocean are lowest relative to sea level
- residents along the water front are most at risk for evac
- can have a plan in place to stay w/a base neighbor
- o/wise expect to evac to a designated base shelter w/disaster kit
- Refresher on installation evac procedures to follow (via web site, e-notes, etc)
- Home preparedness; trees & shrubs, rain gutters & downspouts, windows
- advise Hickam Community Housing of any concerns here
- Outdoor recreation items; securing boats
- SVS provides/confirms guidance for Hickam Harbor users; coming today

## Mission preparedness considerations

- units should know their list of mission critical personnel
- maintain personnel accountability including dependents of deployed
- facility preparedness
- flood zone, wind design limit awareness (CES advises fac mgrs here)
- back-up, generator power (CES confirms for critical facilities)
- storm supplies (CES can assist, e.g., sand bags)
- storm prep for high-value mission assets
- vehicles; storm parking plan already sent to unit VCOs

## Stay informed

- Public News
- Base AM Radio 1610
- Hickam AFB Web Site; hurricane info
- <http://www2.hickam.af.mil/hurricane/season.asp>
- Cable TV (cable override announcements)
- Hickam Commander's Access Channel (Cable Channel 2)
- Base Marquee



## ... and push

Staff Sgt. Vinton Velez and Staff Sgt. Kevin Mesa, 44th Aerial Port Squadron, Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, guide a pallet onto a cargo loader in preparation for a later loading during the June drill weekend. The 44th APS works hand-in-hand with their active duty counterparts in the 734th Air Mobility Squadron. (Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel)

# UTA Schedule

## Hickam

August 8-9  
September 12-13  
October 3-4  
November 7-8

## Andersen

August 22-23  
September 19-20  
October 24-25  
November 21-22



*By Senior Master Sgt. Leony Macapagal  
48th Aerial Port Squadron  
First Sergeant*

Females will not wear shades of nailpolish that distinctly contrast with their complexion, that detract from the uniform, or that are extreme. Some examples of extreme colors include, but are not limited to, purple, gold, blue, black, bright colors like fire engine red, and fluorescent colors. Nail polish will be limited to one color. French manicures are allowed. Nail length will not exceed 1/4 inch past finger tip.