

Pacific Crossings

September 2007

The Official Newsletter of the 624th Regional Support Group

Fit to Fight
is coming -
Are you ready?
How it can affect
your career...

See Page 3



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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 rsgactionline@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, and others will be answered by phone.

On the Cover

Senior Airman Richie Biluan, 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, and Senior Airman David Eum, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron run the mile and half for the June 2007 Fit to Fight evaluation.

Photo by
Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel

Pay now or pay later

What a difference two years makes

By 1st Lt. Siul Michel
624th Regional Support Group
Executive Officer

Two years ago, I had the fortune of joining the 624th Regional Support Group and being appointed the Groups Fitness Program Manager. These two years have brought many changes in policy and on individual results.

Colonel Milligan's aggressive quarterly assessment policy has really impacted us as Airman and our personal lives.

The RSG policy has helped us make that cultural change that was necessary to achieve the results we have today.

The September 2005 Fitness Assessment had a total of 18 Members that scored in the Excellent (90 percent and above) category.

Currently, we have 88 members in this same category with the numbers growing each assessment that we take, just as impressive is the Poor/Marginal category has decreased from more than 75 members in September 2005 to less than 15 members, these results put the 624th RSG at the top of the 4th Air Force metrics.

This great improvement in our fitness can directly be attributed to the aggressive approach we have taken in meeting the challenge of our quarterly assessment.

But are we better off today than we were two years ago? Absolutely!

Ask yourself, do you regret your improvement in your fitness, or do you find yourself more energized and feeling better?

Physical fitness is more than "just" an Air Force requirement; fitness is something that will directly improve your overall quality of life.

It is about enjoying our life by minimizing any health risk setting the example for our families and not burdening them with health issues that can be prevented.

It is about enjoying our retirement and collecting as many retirement checks that we can, it's all about you and your family!

The changes we have made in our fitness are already benefiting our careers when you consider the major impact fitness will have in the new Enlisted/Officer Performance Reports.

The new fitness scoring will be pass and fail; all scores below 75 will be a failing score and be documented in your EPR/OPR.

Members with failing fitness scores will receive a referral EPR/OPR and for most members that is a career ender.

We have all come a long way from where we were two years ago and the fruits of our labor is peace of mind when the new Performance Reports come out but more importantly it is peace of mind every morning we wake up feeling energized and ready to take on the day.

For those who have not quite grasped fitness as much as you would like, just ask your coworkers if they feel better than they did a year ago. Ask them if they regret getting into shape.

Today is the tomorrow you have been waiting for.

Referrals

*By Maj. Tina Smith
624th Regional Support Group
Chief of Military Personnel*

While conducting numerous basewide briefings on the new officer and enlisted evaluation forms for Hickam Air Force Base, many people seemed concerned about the addition of the Fitness standard to the forms.

Is this because even after four years under the new Air Force Fitness Program, some members are still having trouble passing the test on a consistent basis?

It must be because performance reports closing out after 14 Aug must be accomplished on the new forms, and those who do not meet the AF Fitness Standard with a score of at least 75 percent, will receive an automatic Referral Performance Report.

So what does it really mean if you receive a referral report?

Well, if you're enlisted, it means you cannot be promoted, nor can you reenlist until your next non-referral report is accomplished.

Additionally, you will not be looked upon favorably for awards, decorations or job assignments with a referral report. As a Reserve member, that means it could take two years or more to overcome the damage of that referral!

And, if your enlistment is up prior to your next projected report, you may have to leave the AF.

If you're an officer, it takes much longer to overcome the negative effects of a referral report.

In fact, the truth is your career may never recover!

Promotion is almost impossible and loss of or failure to gain command is likely.

Further, if the reason for the referral is due to a Letter of Reprimand or other punishment, an Unfavorable Information File is automatically opened for four years, and the pa-

perwork could also be filed in your Officer Selection Record which is used at promotion boards.

As individuals, we are each responsible for meeting the standards that are set for us. Some standards, such as fitness, are defined by Air Force Instruction.

But other standards are set by your chain of command. Each person should receive feedback and know your supervisor's expected standards of performance.

If your supervisor doesn't come to you with feedback, it's your right and responsibility to request (demand if you must) feedback.

That way, there should be no surprises when it comes to evaluation time.

And hopefully, no referral report in your future.

What constitutes a referral report?

Enlisted:

- ~ Any rating of "Does Not Meet" in Section III
- ~ An Overall Performance Assessment rating of "Poor" or "Needs Improvement" in Section V
- ~ Any negative comment contained in the report

Officer:

- ~ An overall rating of "Does Not Meet Standards"
- ~ Any negative comment contained in the report



Bivouac

624th CES goes camping

Above: Tech. Sgt. John Gabriel, holding a fake M-9, acts as a security personnel while Staff Sgt. Steve Dumlao plays an intruder trying to gain access to a compound during a training scenario. The Work Party Security class was part of 624th Civil Engineer squadron's Annual BIVOUAC Category II Training that all its personnel must accomplish.

Right: Tech. Sgt. Kerwin Canionero turns a crank so that the portable lights stand upright, Staff Sgt. Jeff Franco assists.

Next Page: Senior Airman Jeffrey Baez and Tech. Sgt. David Bryant lend a hand in removing Master Sgt. Robert Tancayo's boots after Nuclear Biological Chemical training. The three just finished their Total Quality Task training which involved completing a Structures task while in full protective gear.

Photos by Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel





Recognitions



Derek Dumlao
Airman 1st Class
48th Aerial Port Squadron

Hometown: Wahiawa, Hawaii
Reserve Job: Air Transportation Specialist
What do you do for fun? Go fishing, play video games, exercising, grappling, boxing and kickboxing.
What is your favorite color? Red, because that is the color of everyone's insides.
What is your favorite food? I don't care. If you say it tastes good, I'll try it.
Where do you see yourself in five years? In ten years? I see myself in five years walking down the street and people recognizing me.
What is your favorite movie? Snatch
If your life had a theme song, what would it be? The 'Rocky' theme song - Eye of the Tiger.
What is your pet peeve? People that I see that don't like to work hard.
Why did the chicken cross the road? Because he was trying to be

Spotlight On

Hometown: Aiea, Hawaii
Reserve Job: Chief of Readiness Flight
What do you do for fun? Anything outdoors, triathlons, hiking, biking, surfing and tennis.
What is your favorite color? Green, it makes me happy.
What is your favorite food? There is no favorite. I'll eat and enjoy most foods.
Where do you see yourself in five years? In ten years? I can't see that far out...hopefully, I'll be in a bigger house and be happy with whatever I am doing.
What is your favorite TDY location? Don't know, does someone want to send me TDY to all the places I want to visit? I'll let you know when I come back.
What is your favorite movie? Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade is up there.
Why did the chicken cross the road? He was being chased by the cook.



Kimberly Hubbard
Captain
624th Civil Engineer Squadron



Every so often members will ask what exactly is Inactive Duty Training. The following will hopefully answer those questions -

Q. What are IDTs ?

A. There are four types of Inactive Duty Training (IDT) which are:

- Training Period (TP) – A four hour period of training, duty or instruction
- Unit Training Assembly (UTA) – A planned period of training, duty, instruction or test alert
- Equivalent training (ET) – A training period accomplished in place of a scheduled UTA or TP
- Additional Flying training Period (AFTP) – A flying training period authorized for an individual in a flying position

Q. What are the rules for IDT?

A. All IDTs must:

- Have advanced authorization from unit commander or designated rep.
- Ensure appropriate and adequate training is provided.
- Be performed for pay and points or points only.

• Must be documented on AF Form 40, authorization for Inactive Duty Training or AF form 40A for reservist-participating on an individual basis.

• Be at least four hours in duration if paid and not exceed two IDTs per one calendar day. Points only IDT periods should not be under two hours.

Q. Am I authorized travel pay to or from the place of IDT?

A. No. Unit members, except for aircrew performing flight duty are not authorized travel in IDT status unless approved by the NAF.

Q. May I perform IDT in conjunction with Annual Training (AT) or mandays (ADSW or ADT)?

A. Yes, but under no circumstances should mandays or annual training be combined with IDT for the purpose of providing travel expense to the IDT location

Q. May I be excused from a UTA?

A. Commanders may excuse missed training periods or approve ET.

They may grant this based on member's submission of adequate justifica-

tion within 30 days prior to or 30 days following the missed UTA. It can not be authorized outside the 30-day period.

Q. What happens if I have an unexcused UTA?

A. A member that is unexcused for UTA will not receive pay or points for that period.

If a member has nine unexcused absences the commander will be notified and has 30 days to excuse, authorize ET, retain the member as a mobilization resource, or initiate discharge.

If for any reason the member fails to notify their unit commander of the circumstances regarding the absence, the commander or supervisor contacts the individual.

Every effort will be made to make contact during the first period of the UTA but not later than the end of the UTA.

If contact is made anytime during the UTA, the commander may excuse, unexcuse, authorize or unauthorize other training as appropriate, based upon the merits of the case.

Return to Kiribati



Senior Airman Jennifer White hangs with Kiribati children.



*By Master Sgt. Daniel Nathaniel
624th Regional Support Group
Public Affairs*

Tech. Sgt. Dino Saludes felt like he had stepped back in time.

"The island reminded me of some pictures I've seen of old Hawaii back in the 1800's," said Sergeant Saludes, 624th Civil Engineer Squadron.

The island he was referring to is Tarawa, part of an atoll which is part of the Republic of Kiribati, an island nation in the central Pacific Ocean consisting of 33 atolls dispersed over 1,351,000 square miles.

Sergeant Saludes and seven other 624th Regional Support Group members were there serving as a part of a humanitarian mission spearheaded by Pacific Air Forces. The joint-mission which included personnel from all branches of the U.S. Armed Forces would be the first significant American presence in the area since World War II.

In November of 1943, the U.S. Marine Corps launched an amphibious landing to take the islands from Japanese Forces entrenched there that would come to be known as the Battle of Tarawa.

Over 60 years later, a PACAF team performed a site survey to see if the islands could benefit from a Medical Civic Action Program. A MEDCAP provides aid and care to places that often lack basic necessities. The MEDCAP would also be a way of proving the C-17 Globemaster's airlift capability to respond quickly and timely to medical needs.



Senior Victor Renaires and Staff Sgt. George Repollo fix the gutters on one of three clinics on Tarawa.

During the course of the survey, an elderly woman who was child on the islands during WWII came up to survey team member Lt. Col. Diep Duong and said to her –

“You were here, you liberated us, you should come back again.”

In July 2007, PACAF fulfilled this request by sending teams to not only Kiribati but to the atoll nations of Nauru and Vanuatu as well.

“While we were there the medical team provided medical and dental care to students and teachers at two schools in nearby villages,” said Master Sgt. Mary Shirley-Gray, 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron.

“We accomplished over 1150 medical and dental exams over four days,” Colonel Duong said.

While the medical team checked the health of the local people, a team of Civil Engineers which included six Reservists from the 624th Civil Engineer Squadron kept busy renovating, repairing and or replacing aging plumbing systems and restore running water for the three clinics on the island.

“My primary job was to install new sinks, replace the plumbing system and to restore running water in the clinics,” said Sergeant Saludes. “All were accomplished during the last three days we were there with the help of two locals.”

Team members learned important lessons on how to cope in a “less than optimal” environment. The heat and humidity were considerable and the island lacked many things that would be considered basic necessities stateside.

“Due to the road conditions and numerous speed bumps, it took up to one hour to travel the 16 kilometers between the sites, said Lt. Col. Melvin Muraoka, 624th CES.

“Availability of local supplies was limited and very expensive,” Colonel Muraoka said.

Despite these limitations team members and the Kiribati worked together to help make the mission a success.

“The people of Kiribati were very warm and friendly,” said Sergeant Shirley-Gray. “The students, teachers and family member of the local villages provided entertainment, lunch, and small handmade gifts in appreciation for our humanitarian efforts. We were all touched and completely surprised by this.”



Tarawa locals thank team members with song and dance.

All photos by Navy Petty Officer AC Rainey



Aloha from the desert

Capt. Jerilyn Pedrina and friend check out fighter aircraft while on break from her nursing duties. Captain Pedrina is currently deployed to the 332nd Expeditionary Aerospace Medical Squadron, Balad, Iraq, from the 624th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

UTA Schedule

Hickam

September 15-16
October 13-14
November 3-4
December 1-2

Andersen

September 22-23
October 27-28
November 17-18
December 15-17



*By Master Sgt. Leony Macapagal
624th Civil Engineer Squadron
First Sergeant*

Don't forget the value of a good "first impression." Your appearance, the way you carry yourself, your attitude, all tell a story ... your story. Don't leave it up to someone else to form an opinion about what kind of Airman you will be.

Set precedence early with good eye contact, a firm handshake and/or quick salute. You will see the rewards.