



## Career Development

### AIR FORCE PRINT NEWS (APRIL 26, 2006) PROFESSIONAL, PERSONAL EDUCATION KEY TO AIR FORCE FUTURE

Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle, USAF

**W**ASHINGTON—The Air Force is the most technologically advanced and capable air force in the world, in part due to the professional and personal education airmen obtain, the secretary of the Air Force said recently.

“We need our people to be highly qualified and we set that standard from the first line of accession, and we retain that standard throughout a person’s career,” said Michael W. Wynne. “We actively encourage this development and we want our airmen to think of themselves on a quest for personal and professional development.”

The Air Force relies on many internal professional development courses for enlisted and officer education and training, but also seeks interaction and support from educational institutions in the United States.

“We sit in the cradle of education throughout America; we revel in the fact that our educational opportunities are the best in the world,” he said. “We need to take advantage of that and leverage the investment made by our senior educators across America.

“We can do this by making sure our personal and professional education dovetail into accessible degrees,” he said.

The secretary said he has asked Air University leaders at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., to come up with partnerships to ensure airmen can receive transferable credit to civilian institutions for all courses offered by AU.

The pursuit of or earning a degree is a very personal decision, the secretary said.

“I don’t want to stretch our personnel to exhaustion, but we want to foster our airmen to quest after personal and professional education in any ways or means they can,” Wynne said.

A joint letter released from Wynne and Gen. T. Michael Moseley, Air Force chief of staff, stated that promotion boards will once again consider officers’ educational progress as they advance in rank.

“Once a degree is achieved, you can [do an Internet search on] almost anyone’s background to see [he or she] earned a degree, and we find that we are trying to withhold information from that most vital element—the promotion board,” Wynne said.

The change in policy will not take effect until fiscal 2008.

“I did not want to dispose of the policy of masking degrees right away,” he said.

“Because we have some people who felt they may have been disadvantaged because they didn’t get the opportunity to show they had a degree, we are giving this time to all individuals who may not have had the opportunity to get a degree,” he said. “Interestingly enough, for [our enlisted, masking degrees] has never been the case. All enlisted promotion selection boards have seen, in succession, the educational success of those individuals up for promotion.

“Our future relies on educated airmen, whether they are active duty, Reserve, or Guard,” Wynne said.

### AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (APRIL 27, 2006) DOD WORKING TO IMPROVE TOTAL WORKFORCE

Rudi Williams

**F**ALLS CHURCH, Va.—The Defense Department is seeking ways to foster sweeping changes in its civilian, Reserve, and active forces, DoD’s top personnel official said here April 25.

Any changes would be aimed at making the department more agile and effective, said David S. C. Chu, under secretary of defense for personnel and readiness.

Chu said DoD plans to convert thousands of military jobs to civilian positions. Other initiatives include transforming the armed forces, prolonging careers before retirement, and basing military promotions on preparedness rather than time in service.

DoD needs to better integrate its people because people are the core of the organization and the reason it has been successful, Chu said.



## Career Development

"It was their performance in the first Persian Gulf war almost 15 years ago that restored the American military to its place as the most respected institution in our society," he said.

Pointing out that integration of the National Guard, Reserve, and active forces into a "total force" isn't a new issue, Chu noted that former Defense Secretary Melvin Laird coined the phrase "total force" a generation ago. Laird used the term in describing how the active duty and reserve communities were brought together to thwart the Soviet Union's efforts to dominate Western Europe and the oil fields of the Persian Gulf, Chu said.

He said Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's single, most important charge from the president is transforming the armed forces to meet challenges of the early 21st century.

Emphasizing that transformation is about much more than hardware, Chu said: "Yes, new weapons systems are important. But ultimately it's the people who are operating those systems that make the difference."

Therefore, he said, it's important to effectively manage how DoD manages its people, how it treats them, and how they're recruited, motivated, and retained so the nation can retain the finest fighting force in the world.

Chu discussed the three broad strands that are the focus of DoD's personnel agenda—civilians, active military forces, and reserve components.

"The issue is how we bring these together most effectively in this early 21st century period to produce the military capabilities that we must have to defend our people and our society," he noted.

He said one of Secretary Rumsfeld's central concerns is how to restore the civil service to its rightful place as an equal partner with the military.

"Too often in recent years managers have avoided using a federal civil service solution because the system has been too cumbersome," Chu said. "It doesn't give us an agile and responsive capacity."

DoD is working toward having civilians play a larger role in the defense of the nation.

"The department is in the process of converting about 20,000 positions from military to civil status," he said.

"And there are plans to convert at least 10,000 more positions."

Chu also said many changes have been made in the way DoD looks at the reserve forces.

"Historically, since World War II, the United States saw the reserves as a strategic asset, perhaps mobilized once in a generation," he said.

He added that the National Guard has generally been used for home tasks but not current operations. But that began to change in the last decade and expanded enormously after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

"We made the decision in the department that the reserves would really be part of the operational force, an integral part of the total force," Chu said. "We recognized that reservists are not able to serve continuously, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Therefore, we have to be judicious and prudent in our use of reserve components."

About 500,000 guardsmen and reservists have been mobilized since Sept. 11, 2001.

Officials are working to bring civilians, reservists, and active duty personnel together into one integrated community, which would make the total force more agile and more responsive, Chu said.

"Unlike the Cold War where we had a very well-developed idea of what was the problem and what might be the solution, now we can't foresee with the same kind of certainty what the military operation of the future might look like," he said. "We have to be able to respond much more quickly than was true in the Cold War."

### AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (APRIL 28, 2006)

#### DEPUTY DEFENSE SECRETARY SIGNS NEW PERSONNEL SYSTEM INTO EFFECT

*Steven Donald Smith*

**W**ASHINGTON—Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England signed a directive to implement the new National Security Personnel System during a roll-out ceremony here today.

"Today is a milestone event," England said during the Pentagon ceremony. "After two and a half years of very hard work, the Department of Defense is initiating the



human resources phase of the National Security Personnel System.”

About 11,000 Defense Department civilian employees from 12 DoD organizations will be part of the initial “Spiral 1.1” phase-in process of the new system.

England said the old civilian personnel system, which has been in place for 50 years, was not capable of keeping pace with the department’s needs.

“As our military forces are reoriented to better address a changing landscape, the civilian workforce too needs to become more agile, adaptable, and fully integrated with the efforts of our military forces,” he said.

Employees will be converted to pay bands that replace the general schedule and will be given new results-focused performance plans that are clearly linked to their organization’s mission and strategic goals, defense officials said.

The performance appraisal cycle for Spiral 1.1 employees begins April 30 and ends October 31. These employees will receive their first performance pay increases in January 2007. In addition, employees performing satisfactorily will receive an increase equivalent to the general pay and locality increase received by general schedule employees in January 2007, according to a DoD press release.

England said he understood if some civilian employees had a little anxiety about the conversion, but he stressed that supervisors have been given a lot of training to help make sure people are comfortable with the new system. “This is not a fire-and-forget effort,” he said.

Classroom and Web-based training covering the basics of NSPS, with special emphasis on performance management, has been in high gear for employees over the last several months, according to a DoD press release.

This is a critical time for the United States because the current security context is much more varied and un-



Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England signs a directive to implement the new National Security Personnel System during a roll-out ceremony at the Pentagon, April 28.

Photograph by Robert Ward.

certain than at any time in the past, England said, and to meet today’s challenges the Department of Defense needs the right people in the right places, working in the right ways.

“People are our most valuable resource, and today we are improving the ability of the department’s people to be successful,” he concluded.

### **SHORTAGE OF MARINE CORPS ACQUISITION OFFICERS PROMPTS POLICY CHANGE OF PROFOUND AND LASTING IMPACT**

*Col Robert Martinez, USMC • Ron Morris*

**O**n March 27, the deputy commandant of the Marine Corps for aviation presented the 2005 Marine Aviation Detachment Patuxent River Semper Fidelis Award to the PMA-234 JATO (Jammer Technique Authorization Team). Part of the citation reads,



“Navy and Marine Corps Squadrons fielded new capabilities in only a few weeks—an unprecedented feat when compared to the years it has historically taken to field similar capabilities. ... The immediate impact of the systems fielded by the JATO Team no doubt saved the lives of many American servicemembers and Iraqi and Afghan citizens.”

The award illustrates that the acquisition process affects the warfighter not only in the long term, but in the near term as well. Acquisition program managers are responsible for leading a program through major milestones, which cover cradle-to-grave aspects of weapons systems and equipment, said Col. Robert Martinez, commanding officer, Marine Aviation Detachment, Patuxent River, Md.

Until recently, officers seeking to advance in the acquisition career field had to train for their primary military occupational specialty (MOS) while at the same time working towards acquisition requirements. This often resulted in acquisition officers' non-selection for promotion. With no primary MOS in acquisitions, the Marine Corps was challenged to provide enough qualified candidates to lead its important acquisition programs, said Martinez.

To improve the situation, he said, the commandant of the Marine Corps created the U.S. Marine Corps Acquisition Professional Officer 9959 MOS in 2004. The Marine Corps Acquisition Command Slate Board selects highly qualified 9959 Marine officers where the Corps has a unique and vested interest.

Membership in the acquisition workforce initially comes through the primary MOS monitor, who assigns officers to entry- and mid-level acquisition billets. Billets are coordinated through co-occupational field sponsors (chief of staff, Marine Corps Systems Command for ground officer, and the commanding officer Marine Aviation Detachment, Patuxent River for aviation officers). Once assigned to an acquisition billet, officers can seek acquisition certification, said Martinez. Certification also depends on eligibility for membership in the Acquisition Corps.

*Martinez is commanding officer, Marine Aviation Detachment, Patuxent River, Md., and Morris is his acquisition manpower officer.*

### ARMY NEWS SERVICE (JULY 5, 2006) U.S. ARMY TRANSFORMS PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

**W**ASHINGTON—Have you heard of the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System—better known as DIMHRS? Wondering if it's still alive? DIMHRS is indeed alive, moving forward and scheduled for implementation in fiscal year 2008.

Now soldiers can stay informed on this historic personnel and pay transformation by simply logging onto the new Army DIMHRS Web site at <http://www.army-dimhrs.army.mil>.

In order to meet the demands of the global war on terrorism and keep pace with the modern warfighter, the Army is transforming how it manages its personnel by implementing DIMHRS, which will have an impact on every soldier.

In order to communicate this monumental effort to the entire Army community, the Army has launched the Army DIMHRS Web site, which will be the Army's primary means to communicate DIMHRS-related news and updates.

“This enhanced Web site provides the Army DIMHRS team a great opportunity to tell the Army community all about Army DIMHRS and to keep the community informed on where we are with the program,” said Col. Jeanne Brooks, Army DIMHRS program manager.

DIMHRS is the largest commercial off-the-shelf solution ever attempted by the federal government and will result in the largest, fully integrated human resources system in the world.

Supporting the soldier is at the core of the Army's mission, and DIMHRS will provide the Army with a much-needed integrated personnel and pay system to ensure timely and accurate compensation, benefits, and entitlements for the more than 1.3 million active, Reserve, and National Guard servicemembers performing Army missions around the globe each day.

The Army DIMHRS Web site provides an overview of the Army DIMHRS program, monthly highlights, Army DIMHRS announcements, and a library full of DIMHRS resources.