

THE

EXCEPTIONAL RELEASE



The Maintenance Officer Association (MOA) is committed to enhancing the USAF mission by improving the maintenance world. Although comprised primarily of USAF maintenance officers, MOA is not associated with the United States Air Force or any other organization.



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From the President

by Lt Col Don Wetekam

A lot has happened in the world since the last edition of the *ER*, and I suspect, a great deal may have happened in the time between the writing and publishing of this article. Nonetheless, I feel compelled to at least comment on events as they stand at the moment.

Military operations in the Middle East certainly should serve to remind us of what this career field is really all about. It's not a question of promotion potential, visibility with the boss, or the next assignment. It's simply a matter of putting iron in the air. Some of you can contribute to that mission from the flightline in the middle of the Arabian desert. Others of us have to be content for the moment to make our contribution from a computer terminal and telephone. But it all comes down to the age-old business of professional soldiering.

There are a lot of ingredients which go into that. In this article I'll only comment on a couple — physical and mental preparation for the hardships which occur in combat. Being a maintenance officer doesn't confer some form of non-combatant status like the home folks back in dear old Peoria. I have always held the conviction that we need to be prepared for the physical hardships which accompany life in a war zone. It's a little late to start thinking about getting in shape when you're climbing the ladder into the C-141. By the same token, assuming the role of combat leader takes just as much mental preparation. In a war zone, we as maintenance officers are going to have to provide a sense of confidence in an environment full of

confusion, fear and despair. That's not a fountain that a successful combat leader can just turn on when needed. It's something that takes months and even years of personal mental preparation.

The bottom line here is that we all need to examine our personal motivations and preparedness. In some ways, our peacetime Air Force of the last fifteen years has fostered the precepts of successful programming and management. I'm not saying that this experience isn't important. It's essential to daily operations as well as our future structure. The problem, it seems to me, is that some of us seem to have lost sight of what we are really here for. We are in this business to lead the men and women who generate sorties in support of combat operations — borrowing from General McConnell, "to fly and fight." If your motivation is to get the right job that will get you promoted early, then I suggest that you consider trading in your blue suit for a pinstriped one.

Some time ago I heard one of my contemporaries comment that he didn't want to go back to a squadron commander's job because there was "no future in it." I'll never understand that attitude. Obviously, his only motivation for wanting to command a squadron was to get his ticket punched so he could get promoted again. I suggest to all the members of this organization that we each reexamine our personal motivation for being in the Air Force and in this career field along with our preparedness for providing the leadership, courage and

dedication required in a combat zone. After all, that's why we are here.

To the folks deployed in the Middle East, keep pressing. I have the utmost confidence in your ability to get the job done. After all, it's the good horses which get ridden when the going is tough, and I know that we sent only our best horses over there. If there are any doubts about that, just read Lt Gen Viccellio's comments which follow in which he discusses his recent trip to the theatre.

Turning to the association as a whole, I can see a lot of positive things beginning to happen. My thanks to the many folks who called in to volunteer their services as Advisors and Regional Directors. Their names are reflected in this issue. Of course, there are still a number of open positions, so the rest of you feel free to jump in any time. Likewise, we now have a presence at Chanute and soon will be offering a complimentary membership to our new maintenance officers. More to come on that.

There is a new feature in this edition of the *ER*. Thanks to Jim Marstall, we have the first of what we hope is a recurring column by and for our retired membership, called "Quick Turns." Of course, any column such as this is only as good as the articles submitted so let us hear from you.

Finally, a letter we ran in the last edition entitled "40XX Career Progression" has generated a great deal of interest and response. This issue features a letter by the SAC/LG which provides a new perspective on that subject.

Desert Shield Feedback

by Lt Gen Henry Viccellio, Jr.,
HQ USAF/LE

My observations during an eight-stop, two-day whirlwind tour of the DESERT SHIELD arena are worth passing on to this readership, since you had an instrumental role — and a lot to be proud of — in what I saw.

Our troops in place are ready and well-equipped, with morale buoyed by their own proven capabilities and strong support from our Air Force and the American people. It was gratifying to see the results of 10 years of effort and investment that focused on *combat capability*. It's all there — decentralized organization where decisions are happening at the lowest practical level; focus on *output* — at the moment, combat-ready aircraft; equipment that simply *oozes* R&M; an effective spares posture, built by the strongest maintenance-supply team in our history; and a pre-positioned asset base that gives our force the infrastructure needed to do the job. Above all, our *loggies* at every level, in every functional area, at every location, are showing the strength of an attitude that pervades our Air Force today — that *Logistics is Special!* I have every confidence that if our tasking involves combat, our confidence in who we are and what we can do will help to ensure a successful outcome. Every Air Force officer, NCO, airman and civilian who calls himself/herself a "loggie" can and should take pride — you're part of this success!

Alaska: The Last Frontier

by Maj (Sel) Arthur B. Cameron, III
11 AF/LGMW

Alaska Air Command, in the past, has earned a reputation of considering "Fishin' to be the Mission." While the fishing is still excellent, Alaska has become a much more dynamic environment.

For those of you unfamiliar with AAC, the logistics of supporting the Alaskan Theatre presents unique challenges. Alaska contains over 586,000 square miles and, if superimposed over the lower 48.

Alaska has three main operating bases, Elmendorf, Eielson and Shemya (which, near the end of the Aleutians, is almost 1500 miles from AAC/HQs at Elmendorf). We also have three remote sites, King Salmon and Galena, with F-15s from Elmendorf standing NORAD alert. Plus, we have 17 long range radar sites.

Alaska is a land of extremes. Our transporters not only have to worry about long distances between bases but paved roads are scarce. Whittier, one of our primary munitions shipment delivery locations, is inaccessible by land. Many river towns are ice free for only a short time and receive one resupply per year via barge. The "Cool Barge" arrival at Shemya is one of the high points of the year.

Our maintainers excel in dealing with the extreme environment. Eielson temperatures range from -70 in the winter to 90 in the summer. Daytime in the winter only lasts a few hours; conversely, it's light virtually all summer. Doing well in a harsh environment is routine for our maintainers. We've proven that we can excel under pressure. Our 21TFW maintainers at Elmendorf recently won the PACAF Sabre Spirit trophy. In addition, they won the bomb production competition, quite an accomplishment for an air to air unit.

Alaska is a flyers paradise. Our range space is unlimited. While other commands are worried about flying low level, dropping

BDUs, and supersonic corridors our pilots have the capability of flying almost any profile and we drop more live MK-82, 84s per airframe than any other command. In addition, our flying window is virtually unlimited with the long days. We will also shortly have a fullfledged ACMI range. For all these reasons and more we are working diligently to make the Alaskan Weapons Training Detachment a reality. We've been in phase 1 for a year, we provide the ramp space and facilities for deploying units. Over 21 units will deploy into Alaska this year to utilize our airspace. Phase 2 will allow units to deploy in with minimum personnel and equipment and utilize inplace assets.

In short, with changing global politics, Alaska has grown in importance. Alaska has unlimited potential and offers one unique advantage over other locations, it's on American soil.

So, if you're looking for an overseas assignment that offers unique challenges, has unlimited growth potential, and vast recreational opportunities, come to Alaska!

Stovepipe

by Maj Tom Billig
AFMPC/DPM RSL 1

You've probably heard the term at least once in kicking around the maintenance community. Loosely translated, it means having only one area of expertise. Depending on who you talk to, some swear it's the only way to be successful. Others encourage our young officers not to be trapped in one command or weapon system. I confess to having been one of the former. But with recent events in the maintenance world and a different view of the Air Force, my way of thinking has changed.

Some of you may remember an initiative by former USAF/LE, Lt Gen Marquez, to move our maintenance officers to a "broader experienced" force. As a young lieutenant, I heard the "old heads" and the pro and con arguments. We could see "ATC only" "TAC only" "SAC only" "MAC only" officers being very successful. But as you know, our Air Force is marching to a changed tune.

Probably the best example is ATC. Ten years ago, a young lieutenant could start on an ATC flightline and follow a solid professional development path of staff and unit level duties through maintenance supervisor, squadron commander, right up to the O-6 level and never take the ATC patch off. But now, there are little more than two wings of unit level positions left in ATC due to the conversion to contract maintenance. Chances of following this type of plan now is very slim.

Naturally, not everyone is going to contact maintenance, but initiatives such as the defense management review, conventional forces Europe agreements, and the ever changing budget process all point to a reduction in the force. Reduction in aircraft means reduced authorizations for maintenance officers from unit level up through the Pentagon. It applies to both aircraft and munitions. A second issue to consider is the trek to senior officer. You probably cannot find one logistics senior officer that you can hang a "tag" on stating their experience in only MAC or SAC or tankers or F-16's.

The recent initiation of the logistics officer professional development (LOPD) program and the cross-flow program within LOPD is an effort to ensure we have multi-talented logisticians to meet the future needs of the Air Force. The axiom is true for maintenance officers also. Whatever experience you accumulate as a company grader points the direction you will follow as a field grader. There

are always exceptions. But our experience shows these are very few. For example, if your experience as a company grader is all MAC, then your chances of being a squadron commander in TAC/PACAF/USAF are probably slim. As each MAJCOM reduces in size, the squadron command opportunities reduce also. So if your background is limited, your opportunity to compete may also be limited.

Recent trends in the MAJCOM Squadron Commander Boards recognize multi-talented officers and many are selected as commander candidates in several MAJCOMS and in both aircraft and munitions categories. But being "stovepiped" with a limited base of experience makes these choices few and far between. By expanding your experience base, you can increase your chances.

Is this to say we do not need experts in a particular area? On the contrary, MAC needs C-17 experience the same way TAC needs F-15E experience. But if you put all your "eggs" in one basket, you may find your basket getting very small in the next five years. As stated before, this applies not only to different MAJCOMS and weapons systems, but for aircraft and munitions as well. As always, success is totally dependent on your performance.

Those who do not have the opportunity to participate in the LOPD cross-flow program can pursue the same type of "broader horizons" within maintenance. For example, a SAC bomber experienced officer does a three-year tour in PACAG learning the F-15 and TAC decentralized maintenance. Or a munitions officer moves to the flightline for a two-year stint as a AMU OIC or bomber branch chief. Depending on Air Force needs, they may not return to those duties or MAJCOMs. But now they have multiple areas of experience to draw from as a field grader. You and your commander should agree on the best time for this type of move.

The force is getting smaller. Authorizations in each MAJCOM are being reduced. As initiatives move to reduce the numbers of squadrons, close bases, and change mission objectives, it appears the officer with "stovepiped" experience will go the way of the dinosaur.

Field Training Detachment (FTD) Commander: A Special Duty Assignment

by Maj Travis M. Wheeler

NOTE: The author, Major Matt Wheeler, is currently the Maintenance Supervisor, 7391st MUNSS, Balikesir, Turkey. He was assigned as Commander, FTD 523, Nellis AFB, Nevada from July 1988 to November 1990. His detachment was selected as the Air Training Command John F. Entrican Award winner for 1989. This award recognizes the best FTD in the Air Force out of 94 detachments worldwide. He is the author of an 18-page "Guidebook for Field Training Detachment Commanders" published by the 3785th Field Training Wing, Sheppard AFB, Texas.

Many of us dream of the day when we become Unit Commanders and are in a position to make a real and significant impact on the quality of aircraft maintenance at our base. If you are a 40XX Lieutenant or Captain, there is an excellent opportunity for you to do that now! You can take command of a Field Training Detachment (FTD).

An FTD's mission is to provide timely, responsive, high quality aircraft maintenance and enlisted specialty training support in order to improve the Air Force's war-winning

capability. An FTD will qualify maintenance people on new equipment, techniques and procedures, as well as increase their skill, knowledge and technical proficiency on specific weapon systems.

FTD's top priority is the quality of maintenance instruction, not the number of students they graduate. FTD instructors clearly understand that quality is not defined as how good they are at what they do. Quality is "conformance to requirements." FTD instructors teach aircraft maintenance technicians how to fix aircraft malfunctions quickly and right the first time, by the book.

You apply for this two-year special duty assignment by going to the CBPO Customer Service Center and following the application procedures outlined in AFR 36-20. Also, you must update your AF Form 90. Your special duty application will be reviewed by the appropriate Field Training Squadron Commander in the 3785th Field Training Wing at Sheppard AFB. Normally, after a telephone interview with you, the decision is made whether or not to forward your application to AFMPC for assignment action.

When you receive your G-series orders appointing you as commander, you will find that there is a big difference between managing the maintenance production activities on the flight line or in the munitions storage area and being a commander. As the commander, you are ultimately responsible for every program within your detachment and the behavior and performance of everyone under your command, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You cannot delegate this responsibility to anyone. You are responsible for good order, discipline, and the successful accomplishment of your mission. This means that you must take care of your people, take disciplinary actions when appropriate, and get the job done. You will have a substantial amount of legal authority to direct your folks to do what is necessary to get the mission accomplished. You must take care never to abuse this "power" that you have over your people.

There are two formal training courses that you will attend as an FTD commander. The first is an FTD Commanders Orientation Course at Sheppard AFB and the second is an Air Training Command Commander's Course at Randolph AFB. These courses allow you to talk face-to-face with your squadron and wing commander and learn about community services, quality force actions, and other important information to help you be a successful commander.

As commander of a geographically separated unit, you do not get to see or talk to your boss very often. This means that you have to establish your detachment goals and priorities and make many important decisions yourself. Fortunately, you have an experienced detachment superintendent assigned to help you make decisions and to manage the day-to-day business of your detachment.

You will find your instructors are a cut well above the average maintenance person you find on the flight line or in the bomb dump. Like you, they have been closely screened and must meet rigorous requirements before they are chosen for this special duty assignment. All of your people will be smart, hard-charging, and very articulate.

Your FTD will often get many more requests for training than you can actually provide. Not only will you support your local DCM, you may also provide training in support of the Air National Guard, Air Force Reserves, our sister services, personnel going overseas, and many other active duty Air Force bases. Providing dozens of separate courses on several weapons systems to hundreds of different organizations is a challenging job. However,

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your training priorities are clearly outlined in AFR 50-54.

As an FTD commander, you not only have an extraordinary opportunity to obtain command experience early in your career, but more importantly, you will supervise and learn about people in nearly every maintenance AFSC there is. Under your leadership, your detachment can significantly increase the quality of aircraft maintenance and, in turn, our combat capability will improve. Finally, you will get tremendous satisfaction of working with the very best maintenance people around. Before you know it, your tour in FTD will be over and you will be ready to take advantage of even greater opportunities for advancement!

For more information concerning an assignment as an FTD commander, contact Major Ted Wood, Chief Resources Division, 3785th Field Training Wing, Sheppard AFB, TX, DSN736-2775.

Logistics Officers in the Joint Arena

by Lt Col G.B. Vega
HQ AFMPC/DPMRSL

After passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, and more specifically, Title IV of this law, clear guidance was provided for the selection, education, assignment and promotion of officers in joint duty. A joint duty assignment (JDA) is an assignment to a designated position in a multi-service or multinational command or activity that is involved in the integrated employment or support of the land, sea, and air forces of at least two of the three military departments. Some of these JDAs are further identified as critical joint duty assignment (CDA) billets. The critical aspects is based on the need to have educated and experienced officers in joint matters in those billets. Currently, the joint duty assignment list (JDAL) identifies 230 field grade logistics joint requirements, both in CONUS and overseas locations.

Under the provisions of Title IV, officers selected for JDA must complete an approved joint professional military education (JPME) program and must be accepted by the joint agency. Once the officer has met the above requirements, he/she becomes a joint specialty officer (JSO) nominee, and only after he/she has completed a JDA and is recommended by the Secretary of the Air Force to the Secretary of Defense, will he/she be designated a JSO. The law further requires that JDAs be filled with at least 50 percent JSOs or JSO nominees, and that CJDAs be filled by 100 percent JSOs by January 1994. Under this new guidance, logistics officers will have greater opportunities to bring their field experiences into the joint arena. With the exception of missile maintenance (31XX), each of the logistics career disciplines have JDA billets. The following provides a quick reference listing by AFSC and experience levels:

Aircraft Maintenance/Munitions Officers (40XX): There are 31 joint duty (JD) positions, of which two are critical. These positions are located in eight different joint agencies (USEUCOM/SHAPE, JCS/OSD, DNA, NATO, CENTCOM, and PACOM). Eighteen of these positions require a munitions background. Nineteen of these positions are overseas, with eight being in short tour locations. Three positions require language training in Arabic, German and Portuguese.

Transportation Officers (60XX): In this career field, there are 54 joint duty positions, with one coded critical. These positions are found in the Military Traffic Command, Military Sealift Command, Military Airlift Command, US Transportation Command,

USEUCOM, NATO SOUTHCOM, ESC, DLA, PACOM, SOCPAC, JSOC, CENTCOM, AFSSC, OSD, OJCS, DCA, SOUTHCOM, Defense Courier Service, US Forces KOREA, and ROKUS. These positions require heavy emphasis on transportation planning and experience in either air or traffic management. Seventeen joint duty requirements are overseas. Four positions require language training in Italian, Spanish, or Korean.

Supply Officers (64XX): Supply officers fill 47 joint duty positions (of which five are coded critical) in 13 different joint agencies such as: DLA, DNA, security assistance activities, JCS, NATO, CENTCOM, USEUCOM, LANCOM, PACOM, and DISAM. Twenty-eight of these positions require a strong supply background; 19 positions require fuels experience. Five of the fuels billets are coded critical (of which four are commander positions). Language training in French, Portuguese, or Turkish are required for three JDAs.

Logistics Plans Officers (66XX): The majority of the joint duty requirements are found in this career field. There are 98 joint duty billets (of which 11 are coded criteria) in 16 different joint agencies such as: Italian, Dutch, Spanish, Turkish, Indonesian, Thai, Norwegian, or Serbo-Croatian. A strong background in some of the following areas is necessary: security assistance, foreign military sales, host nation support planning, war planning and reserve materiel management experience. Currently, logistics officers other than 66XXs are helping meet the high demand in this area.

Joint duty tours offer great career opportunities. Officers assigned to joint duty requirements will receive a wealth of experience working with the various services on issues involving the security of our nation. Joint duty tours are fast paced, demanding, and very rewarding; and the experience received in this type of environment enhances the logistics officer's potential. Interested officers should contact their HQ AFMPC assignments action officers.

Lost Notes

Colonel Bob Drewitt

Pinned on Colonel 1 May. PCS from Eglin AFB (Ass't DCM, 3246 TESTW) to HQ AFSC/LGM effective 1 Aug.

Maj Jonny J. Helper

Selected as the HQ TAC Munitions Maintenance Field Grad Manager of the year for 1989 and nominated to HQ USAF for the Lieutenant General Marquez Award. Recently moved from HQ TAC/LGWP Division Chief to take over HQ TAC/SEW.

Colonel (Ret) Ronald N. Hoelzer

After trying for years to get back into a maintenance position with Beech Aerospace, Inc. on either an ATC or TAC civilian maintenance team under contract, I quit. Even Northrop, General Dynamics, McDonnell-Douglas could not find a position for this "lover" of logistics/maintenance. So for the past year I have been active in a civic association combatting the state and county governments on services involving road maintenance, water and waste water systems, parks and recreation, etc. There appears, in Tampa, that accountability of money and productivity is lost or non-existent!

I am soon to be elected as President of the Jerry Waterman Chapter of AFA. I plan to attend as a Florida delegate to the AFA National Convention in September. I will attend the outstanding Airmen/NCO luncheon. How many of these outstanding people will be from the 40XX field (maintenance)? Hope to see you there, keep in touch guys! (I was the DCM for the 18th TFW (Kadena) and the last LOA guy in AFLC HQs!)

Colonel Rod Kontny

Charter member of MOA — Gave my \$20 to Larry Matthews in 1980, I think, for the first time.

Was surprised and honored to be selected as Vice Commander of the United States Logistics Group, Ankara, Turkey. First non-rated VC in history of the unit.

Right now we are preparing for war and trying to figure out how to fight in "Dusty Mustard" gas!

Capt Bren Shuler

After a year and a half at Misawa AB, Japan, I've worked a year at the bomb dump and then been to SOS. Now I'm on staff, working as chief of the maintenance training division. It was an eye-opening and enjoying experience working Ammo. The challenges I face now include Rivet Workforce and providing the training necessary to do the job better and more efficiently in these days of troop reductions. I should be at Misawa for another year and then, with luck, it's on to Bitburg.

Major Bennie L. Thurman

Several great things have happened to me this year. I was selected to

join the F-117A Stealth Fighter Team based on Tonopah Test Range Nevada. This has really been a hectic and fast-paced year. I am assigned as the AGS Maintenance Supervisor and really having a great time. Our activities have included a full blown TAC UEI, involvement with Operation Just Cause, National Debut of the "Black Jet" at Nellis in April 90, world-wide shows and demonstrations to include Operation Desert Shield. Also, they have by some "oversight" allowed me to get promoted to Major! I was able to get off the "control roster" the first of June.

At Tonopah we have a small group of super maintenance officers, headed by our DCM Col (sel) Jay Gaskins. Many of the others you will be seeing as new MOA members, now that we can expose ourselves, I've had the MOA applications to most of the folks eligible.

If you're wondering what Tonopah is like, consider this if you can: Imagine working/living in Kunsan AB Korea 4-5 days a week and having family/living at Osan. We fly from Nellis on Mondays or Tuesdays to Tonopah (TTR) and return usually on Thursday evening or Fridays. Kind of a semi-remote tour!

Final note, I've just about completed my Master's Degree in Public Administration with the University of Oklahoma. Comps in Sept and research paper in Nov, I hope. Six years of work during three different assignments, "not too bad"??

Members on the Move

Mr. Ted Andersen, HQ MAC/LGMP, Scott AFB
Col James C. Baker, DLA, Def Pers Sppt Cntr, Dir of Man, Phila, PA
Maj Christine A. Begunich, 5 MMS/CC, Minot AFB
LTC Robert S. Bentley, General Electric, ILS, West Chester, OH
1Lt David Bruce Coomer, 347 AGS/70 AMU, OIC, Moody AFB
LTC Howard E. Creek, 2954 CLSS/CC, Kelly AFB
LTC John P. Di Pierro, 3096 AVDS/CC, Nellis AFB
LTC William D. Duncan, Jr., Air War College, Maxwell AFB
Col (Ret) John M. Elle, Las Vegas, NV
LTC Terry Lee Gabreski, Air War College, Maxwell AFB
Maj Armand P. Grassi, Jr., Student, ACSC, Maxwell AFB
Capt Howard D. Hazell, HQ USAFE/LGMA-16, Ramstein AB
Maj Byron K. Hinton, 374 EMS/CC, Yokota AB
Capt Alan J. Hobbs, 6515 AMS, Edwards AFB
Capt Darrell C. Holck, 81 TFW, Det 1/LG, Sembach AB
Maj Theresa L. Hunt, 58 TTW/MAM, Luke AFB
LTC Daniel G. Joyce, Jr., HQ USAF OL NGB 1/LGM, Andrews AFB
Col Michael J. Kenna, DIA Headquarters
1Lt Bryce H. Kennedy, 432 CRS, Misawa AB
LTC Karl F. Lewandowski, 438 MAW/MA, Asst DCM, McGuire AFB
Maj Kenneth M. Lewandowski, HQ PACAF/IGIM, Hickam AFB
LTC Glen D. Locklear, HQ ATC/LGMMJ Division Chief, Randolph AFB
Capt Eric C. Lorraine, 27 AGS/428 AMU, Cannon AFB
Capt Patricia L. Mills, 343 TFW/MAS, Chief, Mnt Mgmt, Eielson AFB
Capt Joanna C. Moen, 7 OMS, Carswell AFB

Capt Regina Montgomery, 437 MAW/MAS, Charleston AFB

LTC Pete Mooy, 27 AGS/CC, Cannon AFB
Maj Judyann L. Munley, 50 Muntns Mnt Sqd Theatre/CC, Morbach, W Germany

Col Paul A. Reid, CSAF Chair, ICAF, Ft. McNair
LTC Charles A. Reyer, Jr., 306 SW/MA, RAF Mildenhall
Maj Walter W. Saeger, Jr., HQ USAFE/LGWM, Ramstein AB

Capt Richard Schlegel, 3532 USAFRSQ, Nashville, TN
Col Dennis C. Scruggs, III, 379 BMW, Vice-Wing Commander, Wurtsmith AFB

Maj Kathleen M. Spencer, 6510 CRS/CC, Edwards AFB
Capt (Ret) Stephen I. Steiner, General Dynamics Services Co., Harlingen, TX

Maj David L. Stringer, HQ USAF/XOOTC, War Plans Officer, Pentagon

Capt Gerald D. Thompson, AM/MOC Instructor, Rantoul, IL

Maj Ronald E. Thompson, HQ USAFE/IG, Ramstein AB
Maj Richard J. Williams, 48 AGS, Maintenance Supervisor, RAF Lakenheath

Maj (Ret) Lynn P. Woolard, Hernandez Engineering Inc., Aerialia, Turin, Italy

New Members

Col Peter S. Miner, F-4 System Program Manager, Hill AFB

Capt John P. Pronk, Maintenance Operations Div., Chief, Eielson AFB

Maj David E. Rooney, 363 TFW, Shaw AFB
Capt Bren Shuler, 432 TFW, Chief Training Mgmt Div, Misawa AB

LTC Steve Sylvester, 405 TTW, Asst DCM, Luke AFB
Maj Kenneth E. Wiechert, HQ SAC/LGMK, Offutt AFB

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor:

In your summer issue you reprinted a letter on 40XX career progression that was written by a SAC DCM. Since that topic is important to me, to SAC, and I hope to all your readers, I think it's appropriate to share my views in this forum. As I see it, there are two central issues: first, how can we make sure we have enough qualified loggies in the right grade at the right time; and second, why should future wing commanders spend time as DCMs or ADCMs.

I'd like to tackle the second issue first since it tends to draw the most heated (least thought out) opposition. Okay, bottom line first — I think it's a good idea, a *damn* good idea. The Air Force can't *help* being better if its key leaders have the opportunity to get their hands dirty and earn some honest scar tissue on the flight line. My boss, General John T. Chain, Jr., has been CINCSAC for about four years. It's been great to work for him for a lot of reasons, not the least of which is that he understands the loggie business — did you know that he was a DCM — twice? Sure, there will be a few tough days and weeks as you train the new DCM — what's a delayed discrepancy? why does a phase take so long? can't you just waive that? why do you do it that way? and a host of other "dumb" questions. But guess what? You're up to it. You taught me and a lot of others before and since. Soon they'll learn it's not *you*, it's *we*. That represents long-term growth in team work and it's worth the effort.

The actual numbers are as follows: of the 13 DCM and 7 ADCM positions filled since the program started (Spring '90), 6 DCM and 4 ADCM positions were filled by "ops" guys. That's a clean 50% overall. Again — we can handle that because these are hand picked officers who came to learn and are eager to contribute.

Now, suppose we all buy that argument. How do we make sure that career maintainers get a chance at promotion and key jobs? Just like everyone else — by being ready when opportunity knocks. How? Counseling, education, experience, and broadening for starters. You DCMs and squadron commanders out there need to take your young maintenance officers and add the ingredient it takes to make them pros. How many of you push LOPD? (Do you even know what LOPD stands for?) Too damn few in my book. Make the investment now and take that good young branch OIC or maintenance supervisor, send him to supply, transportation, or contracting (and make sure he really learns that business), then bring him back. He'll be broad enough to compete for promotion and good enough to succeed as a squadron commander. If you convince him to get a *quality* graduate degree (have you heard about the University of Texas at Tyler master's program for loggies?) and some good PME to complement the tough flight line jobs, I guarantee he'll be ready and people will be fighting over the right to hire him. They'd be dumb not to.

The logistics business has never been easy and it certainly isn't easy today. But, from my seat, we can make it better by developing real expertise in our leaders and professional loggies. Let's work together to make that happen.

— Charles J. Searock, Jr.
Major General, USAF
Deputy Chief of Staff Logistics

Dear Editor:

The following is the basic text of a letter I wrote to the *ER* in Oct. of 89. It was never printed or responded to that I know of; however, it has a bearing on the recent discussion of professional certification and/or testing of aircraft maintenance officers. First, let me say that my wife is a board certified family practice physician. To remain certified, she must complete education credits and be periodically retested. If we are not willing to do this then we are "professional" only in the same sense that a professional hairdresser is professional, i.e., we have completed a tech school and passed a health exam. Directly below is my previous letter.

In 1988 I wrote a letter to the *ER* in which I suggested that the MOA should move more in the direction of a true professional association. I may have not been clear enough in my letter, but what I had in mind was the kind of professional organizations available to doctors, lawyers, and accountants. In addition to professional contacts, networking, and mentorship, some of these groups protect the reputations of their members and the interests of the public, by establishing strict professional standards, enforcing ethical conduct, and by carrying out a continuing education program. For example, a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants has met certain standards not required of just any CPA; and the difference between being a family practice doctor and being an American Board of Family Practice certified doctor can have a great impact on a doctor's career. Neither hospitals nor accounting firms are required to accept the certifications of these groups, but many of them do for practical reasons. The MOA has the potential of serving this function for the Air Force.

Even though each major command has a maintenance officer training program and DCMs are tasked with evaluating officers before awarding upgraded AFSCs, many of us have had the misfortune of working for or with unqualified but officially designated "maintenance officers." Sometimes this is because the DCM has a vacant slot and no one to fill it unless he upgrades someone. Sometimes officers from other career fields are appointed maintenance officers after an abbreviated training program. I personally have never heard of anyone being delayed or denied upgrade after serving the minimum time in the AFSC, although it may have happened. An MOA certification procedure could be kept independent of official pressures. It seems to me that in competition for a sought-after slot or promotion, an MOA Board Certified Maintenance Officer might have a leg up on the others. How a person becomes and remains Board Certified should be up for discussion. I think it should include a standardized test, personal appearance before a local board, and a requirement for continuing duty-related professional education. At the national level we should have a standards committee, ethics committee, and a certification committee. I think that would put us on the road to becoming a truly professional organization. I'd like to see what the membership thinks about this idea.

— Major J. Kenneth Harkins, Jr.

MOA Financial Statement Third Quarter, 1990

Beginning Balance	\$19,730
Revenues	3,400
Expenses	<u>5,096</u>
Balance	\$18,034

QUICK TURNS

by Jim Marstall, Lt Col (Ret)

A recurring column dedicated to helping maintenance officers prepare for the inevitable separation from active duty by sharing the experiences and lessons learned of those that have already made the transition to a second career.

Like death and taxes, one of the inevitabilities of military life is that, at some point, you will have to leave the active duty Air Force. It's not a question of "if", only a question of "when".

If you are one of the lucky few who have invested well or inherited a lot, then maybe you can retire-retire. Or maybe you have a family business you can gently slip into with hardly a ripple to your lifestyle. If either or those conditions describe your situation, then this column is not for you.

For the vast majority of us however, leaving active duty as a maintenance officer means starting over in a new career in the commercial sector. For the first time having to: compete for a job on the open market; agonize over writing a resume; repeatedly act out the *Interview Mini-Drama*; buy a business man's wardrobe; actually negotiate your salary; and learn a new Cost-Accounting vs Contributions-To-Profit business language.

One thing can be said with some certainty. If you think you are ready to make this transition; you are sorely mistaken. Even at its best, the process is tedious, frustrating, and painfully slow. At its worst, it is demeaning, saps you of your self-esteem, unhinges your entire family, panics you into making decisions you will later regret, and/or costs a whole lot more money than you had expected. Maybe I am overstating the case and crying wolf, but based on the people I've talked to, I don't think so!

It takes a minimum of a year (and preferably two or three) of concentrated reading, studying, talking to contacts, and writing/re-writing resumes to make the transition process even begin to approach normalcy. The purpose of this column is to extend the concept of mentorship, which we have discussed so often before, into this process. Many of those who helped form the MOA or were early members have since made the transition to a second career. The frustrations they endured, and the lessons they learned,

should not be wasted. We want to tap into this source of expertise and make it of value to other MOA members as they plan for their transition, be it next year or in ten years. I therefore challenge the MOA'ers who have (Ret) after their ranks to write a short article which would appear in this column telling their stories and what they have learned:

- What worked for you and what didn't?
- What would you do differently or the same?
- What lessons can you impart that would help ease the pain of making the transition?
- What do you know now that you wish you had known then?
- What career areas are suited for MO skills and which are not?
- What are the opportunities (or lack therein) in commercial airlines maintenance or in production in the major defense contractors?

I hereby call on Jay Bennett, Luke Gill, Ross Schmoll, Ray Burnett, and all the rest of the retired maintenance officers to get writing and give something back to the career field that gave you all so much! I will start the ball rolling with a couple of articles while you are sharpening your pencils, but if this column is to survive, it must have inputs from the membership at large. It's up to you. If I get inputs, I'll know there is some interest out there; if not, I'll know it was a dumb idea.

Some basic ground rules for your submissions:

- *Try to give specific do's and don'ts.* We all realize they will be your personal opinions.
- *This isn't a brag column.* If you're making six figures, congratulations; but that really isn't germane except as proof that your advice may be of value.

Don't use company names. I vacillated on this one. I'm sure the members would like to know what companies have hired old MOs, but there are too many downside risks to the MOA if a particular company gets overly sensitive to a perceived critical reference.

• Most importantly, *even the slightest hint of "it's better on the outside" will be immediately eliminated.* The decision of when to retire is a very personal one for every MO and is based on economics, family considerations, and professional career plans. The purpose of this column is *not to* influence that decision in any way, but simply to assist the transition process once the decision is made.

Need some ideas? Try these:

- ≈ Skills Employers Are Looking For
- ≈ Opportunities Other Than DoD Support Firms
- ≈ What Is The Interview Process Like?
- ≈ How To Get Into Consulting
- ≈ What Is An Offer Letter? How Does It Work?



by Jim Marstall, Lt Col (Ret)

I work for a relatively large (4,000 people) international management consulting firm. The generic title for these types of firms is Professional Services Companies, but they are satirically labeled as Beltway Bandits. I am the Program Manager for a four year, fourteen manyear per year contract with the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (SDIO) to write a series of engineering specifications on the Soviet ICBM and Anti-Satellite systems that would be the main threat to the Strategic Defense System (aka Star Wars). How did an old fighter aircraft maintenance officer with a business administration background get into the intelligence related, strategic satellite engineering spec field? I got it through networking!

Networking is *the* buzz word of the 80s & 90s. It is defined as a group of things (in this case people) that are interconnected and intertwined as if by weaving. In the career development context, it is used to describe the list of contacts that a person has built by which he or she keeps tabs on what is going on in their area of interest; what opportunities are active; and who is doing what to whom. Each person's network is best pictured as a spider web with the person in the center, feeling the vibrations in each and every strand

and ready to pounce on the first delicious chance.

Sending out "blind" resumes to newspaper ads or to long lists of candidate companies is virtually a worthless effort. Only about 15 out of 100 companies will even acknowledge they received your resume, and getting a positive response (i.e. an initial screening call) from even 1 or 2 of that 100 would be worth bragging about. Every job candidate has to go through the exercise of sending out hundreds of these blind resumes (it gives you something to do while your wait), but don't be disappointed when it seems that they all disappear into a vast black hole. No, the vast majority of candidates get a job because their resume was "sponsored in" to a company with an open position by someone they knew and had contacted through networking.

Why is that? Well first, the biggest percentage of jobs are never advertised anywhere. Joe Bloe, working for ABC Corporation, knows that his company is looking for an Assistant Production Manager. He knows that Andy the Maintenance Officer (whom he met at an Air Force Association luncheon) is "on the street" because he recently received Andy's resume. Joe thinks that Andy might be right for that job, so Joe tells his Personnel Group to give Andy a call and get him in for an interview. In many companies, if Andy is then hired, Joe will get a bonus. (My company gives \$1,500.)

Secondly, the decision to hire a new person is just as traumatic for the company as it is for the candidate. The cost of making a wrong hiring decision is so high to a company that anything as simple as a present employee saying, "Yeah, I know Andy. He seems to be a good guy." is enough to move your resume ahead of the literally hundreds a company receives each day.

How well do your contacts have to know you to get their sponsorship? Hardly at all. They only have to *have a sense* that you might be right for the job, don't have an extra eye in the middle of your forehead, and would be interested in the position. Above all, the sponsor must *feel* that he wouldn't be embarrassed by recommending that you come in for an interview. The sponsor doesn't need much exposure to you to get that *feel*. A short talk at an association luncheon is more than enough to do it. Sounds very personality oriented doesn't it? Well it is!

In my case, a year before my retirement was the 25 year reunion of my all-male St. Louis high school. I found out there were 17 of my classmates in the Washington DC area, so I had a pre-reunion party at my house. Business cards were exchanged along with a general description of what we were all doing. A year later, I sent a resume to one of the men who came to the party. He sponsored me into the firm, I got the job, and for the first year he was my boss. Essentially, my exposure to him was about an hour and a half spread over 26 years. It doesn't take much!

How To Establish A Network

- Collect business cards! When the local aircraft/system tech rep visits your base – collect his card. When a company marketeer comes to a meeting at Hq TAC/LG – collect his card. When you attend a modification PDR (preliminary design review) at the aircraft plant – collect everybody's card. Write on the back the date & place you met and any other information which will help jog your memory of the person a couple of years down the road. An organized way of storing the cards is probably in order, but those plastic holders get mighty expensive.

These cards, and the other hints that follow, allow the first sentence of your cover letter to be: "Dear Joe. I enjoyed talking with you at Plant #2 in April 19XX at the PDR ..." Obviously, collecting company Vice-President's cards are better than tech reps, but they will all come in handy when you are trying to get the name and address of the VP you want to send a resume to.

- Keep a roster, journal, notebook, yellow stickies, or something of the people you've worked with over the years. Maybe you have a photographic memory, but I have a terrible time with names. I also wasn't smart enough to keep a contact journal, so I'm constantly asking other people, "What was the name of that Colonel who used to work up in the fighter acquisition shop on fan jet performance requirements?" Blank stares. "You know; short, thin, sandy-haired. I heard he went to work for XYZ Corporation. Do you know who might have a telephone number for him?" Usually I get shrugs, and suddenly my listener has an important call he has to make.

You need something you can refer to, and more importantly update, when you hear about people changing locations and careers. You'd be surprised how valuable it is to know the present company affiliation of an old Assistant DCM of a Wing you were assigned to two tours ago.

- Foot stomp. **This is important!** Join and become active in the associations involved in the career area you want to pursue whether it's defense, retail sales, health services, or legal aid. Do it! Join 3 or 4. Volunteer to work on the Membership or Program Committee. Get active! Go to the luncheons and executive committee meetings. Go to the conventions. Sit next to, and pick the brains of, the oldest people in the room. They are probably retired from the industry and usually know everybody. They will introduce you to others and your network will increase geometrically. You'll get to know the current issues of the industry. You'll pick up the language. You'll get to know the industry high-rollers on a first name basis. This is valuable stuff! This is **the most productive way** I know of to build a solid, current network. But you have to be willing to invest the time and energy it takes to really get involved. It can be fun too. Myself, Ray Reed, and Ed Lynn (all old MOs) comprise half of the Executive Committee of the Gabriel Air Force Association Chapter.

There are over 600 associations listed in the Washington DC yellow pages, but I've heard that there are over 3,000 registered in the area. There are Indexes Of Professional Associations in the library. The last one I looked through was 2 & 1/2 inches thick with name, addresses, and phone numbers. Local Chambers Of Commerce have listings of all groups in their area. If there isn't a local chapter for your focus industry – start one! At the very least, as you go around trying to enlist business owners to join, say, a local chapter of the Industrial Safety Equipment Association, you will be selling yourself. And building your network.

- Finally, invest \$50 a month in phone bills to keep tabs on old contacts. The conversations will be, "What ever happened to 'ol George? Really, he's a Legal Administrator now. You don't happen to have a good number for him do you? Thanks. I heard from Pete the other day. He's now with..." This is valuable to both parties and you'll soon be getting as many calls as you place. Remember, *everyone* is trying to build a network. It's a "let's scratch each other's back" situation.

This dissertation is much too long, but building a network is important, takes a long time and must be started years before you decide to start a new career. If you start job hunting with only a list of Personnel Dept. in large companies, it's like starting a hundred yard dash from the bottom of a ten foot hole. Others will finish before you!

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The Exceptional Release has a policy of accepting advertisements. We get two important benefits from this: our members find out about job openings, products and services; and our treasury gains additional revenues to expand our programs.

Help us out! If you know of any company that has job openings, runs seminars, publishes books, sells computer software, manufactures equipment, or does anything else of interest to maintenance officers, contact them for a possible ad. Or, if you prefer, tell our Business Manager, Dr. Armand B. Weiss, Associations International, 6803 Whittier Avenue, Suite 200, McLean, VA 22101, telephone (703) 442-8780, and he will follow up.

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*If we have to typeset the ad. If the ad is "camera-ready" (requires no additional work), there is only the space charge.

A 10% discount is given for ads in four or more issues.

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MOA STATS

Maintenance Officer Association

6803 Whittier Avenue, Suite 200
McLean, VA 22101
703/442-8781

(MOA has been classified as a nonprofit organization by the Internal Revenue Service.)

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Vice President: Lt Col Chris J. McWilliams
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