

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

Things are moving fast and seem to be picking up even more speed. We were getting ready to go to press with this issue when things cut loose in the Persian Gulf so I'm back for at least a partial rewrite. (Hence some of the delay in getting this issue printed). To the maintainers in the AOR, we all salute you. This is the true test of the professional, and from the number of sorties the USAF is throwing in the air these days, you are doing one helluva job. From all of us back here in the real world, keep pressing and kick some butt.

For the sake of this issue, we are going to publish the articles we had planned, even though some of them may not seem too critical when compared to what is going on in the Middle East. I would expect that we will have a number of articles and letters concerning Desert Storm for the next issue. Nonetheless, there is a lot going on these days that will have a far-reaching effect on the future of the Air Force and specifically on the aircraft maintenance career field. In spite of any short-term surges induced by the Gulf War, it would seem that the USAF of the future will be a great deal smaller than that which we have known. With the reduction in force size will come the inevitable restructuring, both at the staff and field levels. While rumors are rampant at the present, we still are not sure just what this restructuring will and will not entail.

Suffice it to say, that we intend to keep the membership informed of upcoming changes and we are looking for ways to keep this organization involved in the change process as it happens. Hopefully, by the time we publish the next *ER*, we will have a clearer picture of what is happening and be able to provide some insight to the membership. Along this line, the current issue of the *ER*

contains an article by Colonel Bill McDonald from HQ TAC which should provide a good discussion framework on the future of the professional maintenance officer as we progress down the road of organizational change.

The mailbag seems to be getting bigger with each succeeding issue of the *ER*, so keep those cards and letters coming, folks. Whether it's an article for publication or just a note to say what is going on at your particular location, let us hear from you. Of particular note is the letter which follows that we received from Lt Gen Marquez. If his comments are any indication of the opinion of the membership as a whole, then those of us here in the puzzle palace are pretty encouraged.

The "Quick Turns" article by Jim Marstall in the last edition was a big hit. We had several letters and calls on that one, each of them strongly positive. My thanks to Jim for his help on this column and his offering for this edition. I think it might be appropriate to expand the charter of this column for future issues. Instead of limiting the column to helping maintenance officers prepare for retirement, why not open it up to any article which applies to our retired or soon-to-be retired maintainer population. If there is an area in which I think the MOA has been exceedingly deficient, it's that of addressing the concerns of this segment of our membership and tapping the wealth of knowledge which exists out there. Hopefully, this column is a step in that direction. Let's make it work.

We received quite a bit of mail (some signed and some anonymous) in response to Maj Gen Searock's letter on rated officers filling DCM and maintenance squadron commander billets. While I understand

the reluctance of some people to put their signature to a piece of mail which may be controversial, I think we have a responsibility to maintain some type of order in dealing with this type of controversial subject. There is a critical issue at work here, but it can easily degenerate into a war of words on the pages of the *ER*, and we don't want to see that happen. Because of this and space limitations, we have elected to publish those signed letters which we received. For those of you who wrote in anonymously, I hope you would agree that these are representative of the opinions you expressed in your own letters. If you are not satisfied with this approach, give me a call at AV227-4688 and let's discuss it.

Before closing, I would like to make a few comments about our organizational structure. Each version of the *ER* provides a rather extensive list of Committees, Advisors, and Regional Directors. We have been fortunate in recent months that a number of you have volunteered for these positions, thereby cutting the number of unfilled jobs in half. But when we started to come up with a list of duties, we found that none of these jobs are to be found in the MOA Charter. Confused? So are we. What we are proposing is a consolidation of these positions into a single board of advisors with approximately 12-15 members. This could be organized either by geographic area or MAJCOM. The concept is still a little fuzzy right now, so let us have your suggestions on how to make this work.

Well, that's the view from here. 1991 promises to be an interesting year to say the least. My thanks to those of you who have contributed to this issue.

Keep 'em flying!

Change and the Combat Maintainer

by Col William F. McDonald, HQ TAC/LGW

A 1960s song has a line in it that says, "The times they are a changing," and today's headlines certainly reflect that from the break up of the Soviet east bloc, US economic downturn, and the war in the Persian Gulf. Concurrent with these changes are the economically and politically induced DOD "streamlining" efforts which mandate getting the job done with a lot less. Closer to home, every Air Force member is keenly aware that force restructuring efforts are upon us with large strength cuts, fewer promotions, selective early retirement, early outs, and, although temporarily shelved by Desert Storm requirements, looming reductions in force. Fact is, the Air Force is committed to dramatic change and we must be prepared for it or risk becoming irrelevant and expendable.

These changes are impacting the maintenance officer career field. For instance, there has been a school of thought that felt hard core maintainers were too narrow or "stove piped" and would be better suited as logistics officers after tours in a number of logistics specialties such as transportation and supply.

This approach has gained a toehold now with a cream of the crop skimming process to broaden future logistics leaders at the early Captain and mid-career ranges by mandated tours in other logistics specialties. In fact, it was recently suggested that aircraft/munitions maintenance officer as a term had become archaic and should be transformed into the more generic logistics officer. While there is obviously considerable merit in making young maintenance officers more conversant with other logistics specialties, a mid-career tour will become untimely if it now precludes opportunities to compete for fewer and fewer squadron commander billets. Remember the force structure is coming down rapidly. So, we need to think positively on how to fit combat maintainers into these currents of change. I believe that young maintainers should aggressively seek to career broaden at an early grade level and still become the sharpest can-do line maintainers possible. Hard work is the answer on the flight line and it is next to the jets where the action is. And that has been a time proven avenue to squadron command.

Another wind of change that is blowing which will surely affect the maintenance officer is evidenced in a recent article entitled "For the Composite Wing" in the Fall 1990 *Airpower Journal* by Gen McPeak, then the PACAF Commander. The article proposes an interesting and viable picture of a composite wing structure designed to optimize combat capability. It is sort of like the old 1970s TAC Reg 66-31 fighter squadron which had all of its own intrinsic maintenance capability with a few new wrinkles. As a 23 year maintainer who spent his first active duty tour in the 308th Tactical Fighter Squadron (F-100D) at Tuy Hoa Republic of Vietnam in 1968 and again in an F-4E fighter squadron at Homestead with a subsequent combat deployment to Thailand in April 1972, I feel I might offer some limited perspectives on the trends back to operations and the impact on combat maintainers.

First, to paraphrase a recently unsuccessful candidate for governor in my home state, if the event is inevitable you might as well relax and enjoy it. He did just that and lost! Looking at this from the bottom up, that might seem to be the common sense thing to do. Especially if we remember one of the time proven precepts to survival in this business is that one needs to be a competent and effective team player. Failing to do so can make anyone part of the problem, as an impediment to progress. I suggest then, that the best course of action is to accept that change is inevitable, then apply appropriate vectors to guide these forces to something that firmly establishes the place of the professional maintainer in the mainstream of the new Air Force.

While realities of force drawdown and structure changes may be uncomfortable for you the young maintainer, especially if you've always wanted to command an aircraft generation squadron and wanted to be assured of solid career progression opportunities to Colonel, the time is now to closely analyze these changes and develop opportunities to control the vector since the train is on the move and throttle control is well above all of our pay grades. None of us can stop a moving train. The name of the train is the Composite Wing Express.

It would be helpful to recognize early that being in an operations environment may not be all bad. You will really know the ops officer, line jocks, and the schedulers on a first-hand basis. That means real time dialogue and planning opportunities. You will also gain a better insight on what operators do, maybe even get opportunities to fly, and most importantly, you will know what isn't being done (nobody knows the line troops better than you) or what is or isn't written up on the jets. There isn't anything quite like the satisfying sensation of being on the team and able to contribute. For example, I was in the middle of a wartime fighter bar and one of my squadron mates who just got back from a high pucker mission over Hanoi eased up next to me and wanted to talk his airplane. He didn't know how to phrase it but pulling off target he felt a short weird vibration with a power setting change. He never noticed it again and didn't feel like it was worthy of a write-up, especially since we were hurting for jets. Since I knew the guy was a solid stick, I thought it was worthy of investigation and before the next combat sortie, I ran through the records, put the jet on the trim pad and ran it hard. Problem? A failing engine mount and maybe saving a fighter jock for another round. Point is that when you win the confidence of the aviators, you become a member of the team and they will TALK to you about their concerns with YOUR airplanes. That's an attitude you've got to develop to survive in combat maintenance and I submit it will be a key issue in the organizational structures of the near future.

From an organizational standpoint, however, I would suggest that within the composite wing operations squadron, the logistics or material officer (or whatever the senior maintainer is called) be at an equivalent grade level with the

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rated operations officer. And, the position must *not* be a flying coded slot. It should be a professional nonrated maintainer slot. If a flight check officer is required in the organization, then code that slot in quality assurance as an F4024 major or captain. But, leave the maintenance/material officer a nonrated Lt Col 4016 slot. The rationale for this stems partly from my own wartime experience which found me as a Captain flight line OIC propelled two slots higher when we deployed to Southeast Asia because the demand for senior mission ready aviators pulled both the squadron maintenance officer, a Major WSO, and the material officer, a Lt Col aviator, back to the cockpit. End result, I went as the senior maintenance officer for the squadron on a steep learning curve. The deployment was a success much like those seen in support of Desert Storm. When I returned to the States, we went into centralized maintenance and ultimately, thank heaven, evolved to the successful COMO concept of today. Still, with the composite wing to come, the ops squadron senior maintenance slot needs to be one of our own!

The irony, however, of these winds of change is that often what goes around comes around again. Thinking back over the last 23 years it amazes me to think that I saw a drastic down sizing on the force, numerous organizational and career structure changes, and, on the upside, a tremendously successful Air Force that helped break the back of the communist bloc. The main constant through all of the 23 years is that change, both good and bad, is constant. And if the combat maintenance officer chooses not to become extinct as a species, as has the career munitions and avionics officer of yesterday, then instead of being resistant to change we better think positively and find ways to make the next round of force and organizational changes work for us. The nature of Air Force business is to fly. Back in my day, the charter for career success was to be the best maintainer on the ramp because we wanted to be where the action was. Today's charter may well be to be the best operations maintainer in the business for the same reason. You would do well to remember that competition will be incredibly tough for squadron commander billets. Maintainers, you will have a leg up on your nonrated counterparts if you stake your claim close to the operations turf! Remember, directly contribute to the flying and fighting because everything else may become rubbish or irrelevant.

While the intent of these words are directed to young flight line maintainers who are anxious to optimize combat capability and optimize their careers, I would submit that those maintainers in the acquisition, development, and logistical organizational structures might want to keep a wary eye on these upcoming changes if there is a desire to keep true aircraft maintenance/munitions officers relevant and viable. Otherwise, if there is an ongoing and definite thrust to make us into something more generic in logistics, then I believe the Maintenance Officers Association that seeks to increase our professional status and purpose is ready for a name change and a new charter.

In the final analysis, I firmly believe there is a strong case

for professional nonrated maintenance officers, even with vastly improved maintainability and reliability, because leading and managing a technical work force to improved combat capability is our single avocation. That is pretty relevant to quality combat aviation and the future of a great Air Force.

Maintenance — More Self Sufficiency, Lower Cost

by Col Richard M. Higbie, HQ, TAC/LGM

Who says the cost of flying keeps going up — not the folks at the 58th Tactical Training Wing. For the past few years they have been expanding their repair capability and have netted a profit of over \$1,000,000. In fact, they have the lowest F-16 cost per flying hour in the entire world-wide F-16 fleet and they're flying over 20,000 sorties a year!

How did this cost-reduction venture get its start? Simply as a goal to improve the F-16 reliability and reduce the dependence on the logistics system. Since the wing's aircraft are TF coded with no assigned WRSK or BLIS, it depends heavily on the logistics system for parts. Being at the end of the pipeline is not the 58th's style. So using the old proverb, "necessity is the mother of invention," the 58th sought out different initiatives which would achieve its goal.

The initiatives have developed into what is now referred to as combat oriented repair initiatives (CORI). CORI is actually an evolution of the combat oriented repair enhancement (CORE) program (AFTO Form 135). However, CORE was too slow, and in numerous cases unresponsive to the needs of the 58th. So the 58th decided to develop its own programs which when put together compose CORI.

CORI is composed of three programs: 1) centralized repair activity (CRA) — expanding the number of items you repair; 2) repair enhancement program (REP) — seeking out contractor support; and 3) quality maintenance (QM) — fix it before it breaks.

At the heart of CORI, CRA encourages in-house repair of expendable items rather than throwing them away. It also promotes expanding local repair capabilities. This is accomplished in concert with the system or item manager for an appropriate component. For example, a few years ago there was a shortage of F-16 inlet navigation lights. The lights cost over \$400. The 58th discovered that in a majority of cases the only thing wrong with the lights was that the socket which holds the light bulb was breaking. So they found a source for the socket (\$18 a piece) and developed local procedures to repair the lights.

But they didn't stop there, instead they obtained from salvage as many broken inlet navigation lights as could be found and repaired them. They then turned those back into

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More Self Sufficiency

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the logistics system to satisfy the demand from other F-16 units. So far, the 58th has repaired over 450 inlet navigation lights for the entire F-16 fleet. This is just one example, there are currently 48 other items that the 58th repairs locally which not only satisfies their need but also the needs of other F-16 units.

The second program, REP, is similar to CRA in concept. The difference is that the items are repaired by local repair companies under contract to the 58th. Even with the best efforts of the on-base repair shops, some items cannot be repaired in-house due to lack of equipment or specialized tooling. The 58th started seeking out local companies that would have those capabilities. Once identified, the companies are contacted to determine their repair capability. A fine example of this program is the repair of a wiring harness for the F-16 weapons delivery system. The 58th discovered that UNICOR, an industrial function of the federal prison system, had the capability and AFLC certification to repair the wiring harness. So a very productive contract was let and like the inlet navigation light story, wiring harnesses are not only repaired for the 58th but also for the entire F-16 fleet.

An important feature of the contracts currently in existence is that repair costs will never go above a determined percentage of the government's original purchase price for the item. If the item was bought for \$1,000 and the company guarantees repair at a cost under 25 percent of that, the 58th would pay no more than \$250 for the work.

The final program, QM, was developed to increase the reliability of F-16 systems. A tracking system was developed to record pilot discrepancies and LRU performance. This system enables technicians and supervisors to quickly identify trends, bad actors, and the associated maintenance actions. When a particular component is suspected of poor performance, it is routed to the appropriate repair shop and returned back to the original workcenter. This procedure verifies quality workmanship and eliminates bad actors quickly.

The QM program has had a dramatic effect on the performance indicators at the 58th. The break rate for its block 10 (oldest aircraft in the regular Air Force), 25/30, and 42 F-16s is only 8.5 percent, the average for TAC is 11.7 percent. Also, the total abort rate is only 3.9 percent. Once again that's supporting over 20,000 sorties a year. Additionally, the deferred discrepancy rate for the 58th is only 1.9 per aircraft.

The initiatives developed at the 58th have had a significant impact on their operations. So far, 1,102 items have been repaired through the CORI program. In view of the reparables industrial funding, you can bet we are "going to school" on the 58th experience and will develop TAC programs in conjunction with AFLC to promote decreased depot dependency and increased productivity.

Integrity

by Col John R. Ray

Dep Dir, Aerospace Mnt, HQ USAFE/LGM

General McPeak, in remarks to the AFA in Los Angeles, said, ". . . Integrity. Let's face it, many in America are skeptical about the sincerity, honesty, and candor of public officials. Since the Air Force is, of course, a public institution, some of this has rubbed off on us. Our image has been hurt. We must correct this misperception. The public, the Congress, industry, and the press must believe in our integrity. No matter how bad the problem, no matter how difficult the circumstances, the Air Force as an institution does not, will not, and cannot accept anything less than absolute, rock solid, uncompromising integrity. Integrity is so important that we can't stand even the appearance of its absence."

Aircraft/munitions maintenance officers rely implicitly on their people to follow technical data and regulations, to use only approved parts, and to document all actions in aircraft/equipment forms and in CAMS. We expect our workers/supervisors/leaders to comply with the spirit and intent of Air Force rules and to report the outcome accurately. What is reported is accepted as the true "state of the fleet" because we accept the integrity of those who reported/recorded the data initially.

Whether at home station or deployed (Red Flag or Desert Shield), maintainers develop schedules, report deviations to that schedule, report the true aircraft status, and work the system to fix the problems that occur. Accurate reporting is necessary for two reasons:

a. During peacetime, we need to know how severe the problems are and what the specific problem is, which then allows us to develop a plan of action. At the unit level it may require Ops and Maintenance to revise the schedule to eliminate resource conflicts; at the MAJCOM level, it allows us to ask for a shift of resources or new procedures to fit the problem; and above MAJCOM level, it provides an accurate basis for appeals to our service and national leaders for the resources we need to do our job.

b. During wartime, accurate reporting is even more critical. The true status of our aircraft and equipment is a key ingredient in battle plans, and factual data allows "the system" to deliver resource constrained assets where they will do the most good. Additionally, accurate wartime data is extensively used to develop spares levels, attrition factors, and other data that directly impacts our planning for the next war.

Maintenance officers need to ensure that all levels of our organizations understand the importance of accurate status reporting every minute of every day. It is extremely important that our junior officers, who are at the point where data is generated/gathered/recorded, understand the real need for integrity when they feel pressured to "liberally interpret" reporting guidelines. The key is the actual condition of the aircraft/equipment, not how it compares to the standard, nor how it may affect any perceived competition. We must have uncompromising integrity to make our system work.

Squadron Commander Selection Process

by Maj Tom Billig

Chief, Aircraft Maintenance/Munitions Officer Assignments Section Air Force Military Personnel Center

RANDOLPH AFB, Texas — This past year, the logistics force gained more than 500 new majors. The majority are itching to be squadron commanders, but they do not know how selections are made. The squadron commander process is not a dark mystery; in fact, it's pretty simple. Here is how the process works:

Officers are selected as candidates for possible squadron commander billets through either formal or informal MAJCOM boards. USAFE, TAC, SAC, and MAC all have formal squadron commander boards. The squadron commander boards are usually held every six months (in the spring and in the fall).

HQ AFMPC ensures that all logistics officers worldwide have the same opportunity to compete for squadron commander positions. The center provides each MAJCOM with a list of all officers eligible to move under present PCS rules and are within the eligibility window (for officers who are eligible to move in the next 18 months from date, data is provided). Major selects through lieutenant colonels are considered. Prior to an upcoming major's board, captains who are in the prime zone to major are also included.

Up to this point, the computer has done all the work. A manual scrub is then done to ensure no one has been missed by the computer. In the process, no distinction is made relative to present MAJCOM or background; each MAJCOM will see all the available officers in MAC, TAC, SAC, USAFE, PACAF, AFLC, SOAs, senior and intermediate service schools, etc. HQ AFMPC does not make any decisions on "who should or should not" make this "macro" list. It is strictly a function of grade, availability to move, and quality of force indicators (UIF, weight management, etc.). The MAJCOMs are then given access to this database.

MAJCOMs review the candidates and determine which ones they will consider before a board. Some MAJCOMs board three times as many candidates as they project requirements for. This includes officers who are available to move to both CONUS and overseas commander requirements. Officers who are not eligible to move may be boarded if the wing commander makes a recommendation to their respective MAJCOM. The board then considers candidates recommended from both a worldwide HQ AFMPC database, as well as those nominated by wing commanders. For those officers assigned outside the boarding MAJCOM, a copy of their selection folders on microfiche, along with a copy of the most recent AF Form 90, will be forwarded from HQ AFMPC. Note: this is one of the few times your AF Form 90 meets a formal board, so it needs to be as current as your photo.

Once the boards complete this process, a selection list is produced. This list is then approved by the MAJCOM commander. Once approved, HQ AFMPC and the MAJCOMs

use the list to nominate candidates to the individual wing commanders needing replacement squadron commanders. In some cases, MAJCOMs provide information copies to other commands, i.e., TAC usually provides an info copy to both PACAF and USAFE. If you're not on the MAJCOM candidates list, your chances of being a commander are slim.

Now, what can you do to make sure you have an opportunity to meet and be selected by the MAJCOM boards? By far and most important, you should make sure your records are accurate and up-to-date, including your AF Form 90. Believe it or not, we have people who meet the MAJCOM boards with photos and AF Forms 90 that are over five years old. This does not give a good first impression to the board members! HQ AFMPC provides the candidate databases to the MAJCOMs in April and October of each year. If you have more than two years on station, or are completing a controlled tour, you should be on this list. If you are interested in knowing if you will be considered, give us a call. Remember, if you don't meet the criteria for PCSing, you need your wing commander's recommendation to be considered by your MAJCOM.

With the changes in the entire Air Force structure, including a continued decline in the rated supplement presence in almost all MAJCOMs, the need for quality officers as squadron commanders is increasing. Quality officers are in demand. In fact, there are several logistics officers on the SAC and MAC commanders lists who have never worked in those commands before. If you're a quality officer with a record of proven performance in the tough jobs, more than one MAJCOM will be knocking at your door.

If you have questions concerning the squadron commander process, call your Palace Log assignments team at HQ AFMPC:

Aircraft Maintenance/Munitions	DSN 487-3556
Transportation	DSN 487-4024
Supply	DSN 487-6417
Logistics Plans/Programs	DSN 487-5788
Missile Maintenance	DSN 487-5207

Letters to the Editor

Dear MOA Members:

I have just received the Fall 1990 edition of the *Exceptional Release*. I think that it is perhaps the best one to date, and I've read them all. I am encouraged that the association is displaying a steady trend toward becoming a true forum for the exchange of ideas. The letters in this issue were excellent as was the president's lead article. He hits what we are about — professional soldiers. While it is only human to try to benefit personally from any situation or at least insulate oneself from pain (and regrettably some are far better at that than at their profession) our real objective should be the development of our professional skills to cope with the true test of our profession — WAR.

The letter by Tom Billig on "Stove piping" was on the mark, but my true thrust was not intercommand, but interdisciplinary — i.e., munitions guys trying maintenance, or maintenance guys working in supply and transporters being something else. The objective being not to become the very best TAC maintenance officer, i.e., Ten foot tall, two inches wide, but a Robust six-footer with hands on experience in maintenance and supply or maintenance and munitions. These can be achieved, and with a shrinking force coming up — a multi-experienced guy is going to be more valuable than a uni-dimensional one.

Jim Marstall's column was excellent. With three years in the private sector behind me, I could not have written it better. We will all eventually wind up on the outside. Our system (and it is not wrong; we need young men to fight wars) releases us at the peak our productive years into a different environment which oft-times looks askance at retired military persona. But, believe me, the ex-military officer is far ahead because of his broad management training and varied experienced, so fear not — just learn the new rules.

So, MOA, keep up the good work. Luke Gill and Larry Matthews had a good idea which is now bearing fruit.

*Leo Marquez
Lt Gen USAF (Retired)*

An Open Letter to All LGs

Dear Editor:

Major General Charles J. Searock's, SAC Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, letter to the Editor of Maintenance Officer Association is a correct and necessary start. In the words of General Robert Dixon, "Why are 6 DCMs and ADCMs rated officers?" "Why aren't all the DCMs and ADCMs career logistics officers?" If the maintenance or logistics training is so important, should not that training be accomplished under the "Rated Supplement" program, and not at the higher grades at the expense of the highly professional logistics corps? Of course, such training should be at the earliest possible time so that the fast burner can use that experience in his career development. Of course very few volunteer for such experience, indeed it is my personal experience that rated supplements do not like or want such jobs unless they are prestigious positions like command positions. If such training is so good to be done later, then it has got to be better if done earlier. If the experience can be used, then it ought to be given early in the career of that officer.

As I was leaving my DCM job I was appalled at the "Squadron Commander" selection board process being used in Europe. The

process was adapted from the "rated" arena where such political actions like "commanders boards" abound. I was not so opposed to the process per se, but to the fact that after we made up a list of "potential" squadron commanders from career logistics officers, the personnel weenies ran in a list of "deserving rated Officers" that did not make the cut in the "Rated Squadron Commander Selection Board." That smacks of second class officers for maintenance squadron commanders. Fortunately, the DCMs flatly rejected all of the "rated" officers that had no back ground in logistics, and put those that did at the very bottom of the list.

If LGs continue to put rated officers in the command positions and other positions of responsibility, the talented maintenance officers will opt out of the service. These men and women know they are good and deserving, and that industry will reward them for their hard work. They will tire of carrying rated officers in the job. If there is no incentive and goals of the career ladder are so often closed to them, they will get out of the USAF. It is just as important to retain good, qualified maintenance officers as it is to retain pilots.

This is not to say that the wing commanders can not still make their input into the selection process. That is as it should be, but the overall majority of the squadron commanders and their DCMs and ADCMs ought to be career maintenance officers drawn from the rank of your Major Air Commands. After all it would be foolish to try to use the Tactical Maintenance Officer in the Airlift Command, the needs are different. If one wants cross experience, that is good, but the career officer wants to return and progress in his or her Major Air Command.

About advanced degrees, they are nice but I have yet to see that one made any difference in the leadership ability of any particular officer. The Art of War is best taught by warriors, not necessarily academic institutions. The Art of Logistics seems only to become important during hostilities or prolonged crises (And it is coming to the forefront now in Saudi Arabia.) I found those officers that had cross career tours in with other services and other nations far more adept, and useful than any one with an advanced degree. Overseas experience is probably the second best factor in a maintenance officer, for he knows the limitations of distance and has had to deal with a number of deployments and other tough logistics problems. Most of the advanced degrees come out of base degree mills where universities can pick up some extra income providing the education at the base level and not at the university proper. Often such education is looked down on by the academic community as distinctly second class in quality. Perhaps the Texas Tech University curriculum can be of use, but how many attend?

The very last item I would pass on is do not discriminate as to sex. Not too long ago, SAC refused to offer a very fine female maintenance officer a real position of responsibility. She went to USAFE, their gain and SAC's loss. But the plain fact was that this below the zone officer was refused a position of responsibility in a SAC wing because of her sex! She went where the challenge was offered, where the job responsibility was commensurate with her grade and capabilities.

Finally, I'll close with a story told by Major General Herb Gavin, one time TAC LG and the Commander of Sacramento Air Logistics Center upon his retirement. He was asked at a Christmas party at Langley AFB (HQ TAC) where he got these fine maintenance officers? When asked how he got such good briefers and mainte-

nance officers for his staff, and that they were all non-rated, he replied, "I simply gave them the opportunity to do the job. Furthermore, they are all around you in your organizations in the field. You are not using your talent like you should." General Gavin also said that there is no substitute for "getting the job done." He did not put down advanced degrees, but for a fact some of his staff officers at HQ TAC did not even have undergraduate degrees. They were getting the job done.

Men and women are the people that get the mission accomplished. Treat them as professionals and you will have talent abounding.

— *William C. Morrison*
Colonel (Ret), USAF

Dear Editor:

Recent Letters to the Editor have raised the issue of other officers coming into our career field. The issue is not new. I remember it back in the late 60s when I first started out. I've personally witnessed the phenomenon on more than several occasions and feel that overall it didn't do much for the Air Force generally, and our career field specifically. To me, it's about equal to what happens in the diplomatic field. You have the career people and the political appointees. Whether it's admitted or not, the personnel who come over for a tour are normally there to get their ticket punched for bigger and better things. It's only human nature to take short term approach when you have a short term "career."

I'm proud to be a member of the reserve forces. As I'm sure you realize, we don't play second fiddle to anyone. How did we get there? Many factors, one of which is our full time maintenance officer force. We had, until recently, a requirement that *each* full time maintenance officer qualify in the GS-1601 career field. The standard is a pain and has blocked some excellent people. Point being, we had a set of standards that you had to fill. No exceptions. This led to a highly motivated, career oriented maintenance officer force the equal of any. I feel it is one of the actions that has made us strong. When Wing DCM positions are open there is a level playing field with only career maintenance people competing for promotion. All participants had the minimum requirements. Again, it's only one factor that made us as effective as we are, despite unions, ancient aircraft, etc.

I have one major exception to the above. I've seen excellent results, at least in the reserve forces, of several individuals who spent significant time in OPS who hung up their wings and decided to become dedicated, career maintenance officers. I hate to admit it, but these guys actually have a leg up on the rest of us. They are working in the field now and I am proud to consider them colleagues. I feel their contributions have added to both the career field and the Air Force in general.

— *Ralph C. Zuleeg, Col, USAFR*

Lost Notes

Capt Richard Schwing

— Promoted to Captain, DOR 3 Aug 90

— Assumed duties as OIC, EC-135 Branch, Offutt AFB on 1 Aug 90

— New York Address: 55 OMS/MAOEC, Offutt AFB, NE 68113

Lt Col Eddie G. Womack

I moved from the Director of Quality working for the DCS/Maintenance at WP AFB to the DCS/MA Executive job last March 89. But after an exciting learning experience as an Exec, I'm off to the flightline once again. I departed Wright-Patterson 15 Sep 90 for Homestead AFB to be the Asst DCM. AFLC like everyone is in a period of change, streamlining, and implementing lot what is being called "Product Directorates." If you were not familiar with AFLC before, the change may not affect you — but if you were you need to keep a close watch on AFLC not to get lost or confused.

Major Joe and Captain Dave Brozena

My brother Dave and I had the unique opportunity of attending MAC's Airlift Operations School TOGETHER. This outstanding 3-week school teaches all facets of combat and peacetime airlift activities and provides a diverse forum for discussing airlift related subjects. Dave runs the 608 CAMS Enroute Maintenance Branch at Ramstein AB, Germany and I'm the 436th OMS Maintenance Supervisor at Dover AFB, DE.

Members Who Have Moved

Capt Mark A. Amarin, 3096 AVDS/SU, Nellis AFB

Capt Paul E. Aunspaugh, Jr., 56 TTW, MacDill AFB

Capt Gage A. Bleakley, Company Grade Advisor to 8AF/CC Barksdale AFB

Maj Gregory K. Boomgaard, HQ PACAF/DLGW, Hickam AFB

Col James H. Cushman, 507 TAIRCW/LG, Shaw AFB

Capt Roger B. Fogleman, 36 AMU, OIC, Osan AB

Col F. Jay Hackleman, Chief of Staff, Defense Logistics Agency LTC (Ret) Paul F. Haskell, E-SYSTEMS, Melpar Division, Falls Church, VA

Col Kevin F. Hegarty, 416 BMW, DCR, Griffiss AFB

LTC Wm. A. (Sam) Miller, 81 TFW, Det. 4, Norvenich

Capt Melvin R. Nicholson, ALD/YML, Eglin AFB

Capt Robert W. Ratcliffe, ALD/OAB (B1B SPO), Wright Patterson AFB

Capt Lloyd E. Rowe, HQ USAFE/LGWRX, Ramstein AB

LTC Nancy A. Shefflette, 314 TAW/Asst. MA, Little Rock AFB

Capt Mark A. Smith, 57 FFW, Nellis AFB

LTC Bruce E. Sorum, HQ SAC/LGMMP, Div Chief, Offutt AFB

LTC Gregory O. Stanley, 60 AGS/CC, Travis AFB

Maj Travis M. Wheeler, 7391 MUNSS, MX Supervisor, Balikesir, Turkey

Capt Robert M. Wood, Jr., 2854 ABG/LP, Career Broadening, Tinker AFB

Maj Jerry R. Worsham, HQ PACAF, Dir. of Munitions, Hickam AFB

New Members

Capt James M. Eldridge, Jr., 438 OMS, OIC Flightline Branch, McGuire AFB

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.

Articles for this column are eagerly solicited from all retired MOA members. Please call Jim Marstall at 703-271-1603 or mail a submission to him at: 6213 Capella Ave. Burke, VA 22015.

Send us your lessons learned!



CAREER TRANSITION PREFLIGHT

• • •

The need for meticulous preparation prior to performing a complex mission is the one thing that should be totally ingrained in every maintenance officer's genes. Hours and hours are spent in preflight ensuring that every aircraft system is operating, fueled, and armed. We review (and even rehearse) presentations for the DCM Stand-up and we go fully prepared with position papers to Program Reviews or Funding Allocation Panels. The need to properly prepare for something as important (and scary) as your personal career transition is no less critical. In my case, I had never heard about how to get started or at what. As a result, I got a late start and it became very obvious very quickly that I hit the market only half prepared. I'm really not an expert, but for better or worse, following are some of the lessons I learned the hard way.

(Time periods shown in parenthesis refer to how long before your transition you should start the activity)



- (3 Years) Decide on your industries of interest. Don't unnecessarily limit yourself, but try to focus on the particular industries you would most like to work in. DoD support/production or non-defense? Retail sales or consumer goods manufacturing? Legal administration or management consulting? You stand a much better chance of getting into your industry of choice if you concentrate your research in two or three main areas.

Clip out the help wanted ads in your selected industry that look like they might interest you, or you think you are qualified for, and throw them into a desk drawer. You may have to subscribe to the Sunday paper of a major city if you have a particular geographic area in mind. Every six months or so, open the drawer and sort the want ads by types of jobs or by company or by industry, etc. You'd be surprised how good a feel you can get for who is hiring, the kinds of jobs being offered, salary ranges being proffered, skills being searched for, etc. from a hundred or so ads spread over six months.



- (3 Years) Firm up your network. Locate long lost contacts. Join associations and societies in your selected industries. Get active and meet people. (See Fall 1990 ER article on Networking).



- (3 Years) Start your transition reading program. The library shelves are full of books on career transitioning. They range from general discussions to specific "How To ..." guides on writing a resume or reading body language during an interview or negotiating a top salary. Read/review as many as you can get your hands on. A very good one is: "What Color Is Your Parachute?" which contains numerous exercises designed to help you prepare for a career change. Some of the exercises take quite a while to complete which is why you should start your reading program so early.



- (2 Years) Join The Retired Officers Association (TROA). No, I'm not an agent for TROA! But they do publish a really helpful booklet for their members called Strategy For Career Transition that is full of down-to-earth, practical hints about career transitioning, formats for a number of resume types, and a "do's & don'ts" guide for interviewing. It is an excellent research reference. They also conduct career counseling and run a job referral system. The TROA monthly magazine features a column called TOPS that lists current job opportunities.

The Air Force Association also offers a free resume writing, critiquing, and editing service for its members called Employment Transition Service (ETS). The ETS will enter your resume in the Human Resources Information Network (HRIN) MILITRAN Resume Registry, a direct-dial information network with over 5,000 corporate users. There is plenty of help out here that you don't have to pay for.



- (2 Years) Take a career transition course(s). Finding, interviewing for, and getting a new job is a *skill*. And like any other skill, it can be initially learned and refined by practice. I took a course offered by a commercial firm that is offered in

Washington DC, San Antonio, San Diego, Las Vegas, and other cities that was three hours a night, two nights a week, for six weeks. Cost is \$490.00. It covered everything from resume writing, how to dress for success, practice interviews, and a comprehensive set of personality and aptitude tests. There were about 300 other people in the class and four classes a year, so you can see the amount of money involved.

Others that I worked with in AF/LEYY thought that was too much money to spend for what you can read about in the library for free. They are probably right, but for me the investment was worth it to help me focus on what I didn't know, what I had to do, and when to do it. (I took the course only six months before my retirement, so I was waaaay behind and needed all the help I could get.)

I also now know that the Fairfax County Adult Education Program offers this information in a series of individual classes. The listing below shows about one-third of the courses they offer. Check into your local adult education system, you might save yourself a lot of money.

COURSE	Sessions	Hours/Session	Cost
Military In Transition	2	4	\$27
How To Find A Job	4	2.5	\$43
Sure-Hire Resumes	2	3	\$37
Win The Interview	1	3	\$17
Find The Hidden Job Market	1	2	\$15

Whether you choose the self-study method, the glossy high-priced course, or piece it together a little at a time at a junior college; this is a skill that must be trained for and practiced. It takes a fair amount of time, so start early! The skills are not perishable. It would be much better to get the training much earlier than you need it than to scramble at the last minute the way I did. My office mate who sat next to me during my long course is presently a Colonel selectee MAC Asst. DCM. He won't use his skill for probably five years, but at least he knows what he has to do when the time comes.

- (1 Year) Write your resume. Write up a first draft and send it out to your friends, TROA, and the AFA. You'll get plenty of (at times seemingly too much) helpful advice. You need to give yourself plenty of time for this. A resume always improves with a little age. Each time you work on it, and set it aside for a while, it will get a little better (and usually shorter); so don't try to rush this activity. It's one of the toughest tasks you have to do.

- (1 Year) Start building your wardrobe. This is a very personal task. You may totally disagree with what I have to say, but for what it's worth here's what I found you need to get started: 4 - 6 suits (dark blue/black, all wool, \$300 ea); 2 pair shoes (all leather, \$85 ea); many ties (100% silk, \$15 ea); belts (all leather, \$8 ea); shirts (65% cotton, \$35 ea), briefcase (all leather, \$250 ea); all weather coat (\$175 ea); pens; calculators;

etc.; etc. All told, an initial investment of around \$2,000. I wasn't prepared to lay out that kind of money all at once, so the earlier you start amassing your wardrobe the better. I've probably spent a similar amount since retirement expanding my wardrobe with sports jackets and seasonal suits.

- (6 Mos.) Plan your retirement date carefully. After the appearance of the Networking article, Gary Miller called me from Philadelphia and in the course of the conversation, he said: "Timing is everything". Hopefully, there will be a major article all to itself on this subject. Suffice it to say that you don't want to retire in the summer just because the weather is nice and the kids are out of school. The job market is severely curtailed during the summer because of non-availability of hiring decisionmakers and little new contract activity. You need to plan to be available just when the companies are most active in looking for people to fill positions - Sept. to Nov. and Feb. to May. Hopefully, more on this later.

- (2 Mos.) Buy an answering machine. You certainly wouldn't want to miss a call from a prospective employer just because you went out shopping for the day. Recruiters will try to reach you twice, maybe even three times, but they won't chase after you for long. They have plenty of other live prospects. Have a nice, professional message for them promising that you'll get back to them at the first opportunity. Cutsie messages in your best Bogart impersonation are probably not a good idea. Oh, and brief your children. My 12 year-old didn't think my message was cool enough and recorded her own because she hadn't been told any different. It was over three weeks before I found out that possible employers were being greeted with "Hey, Dude!".

A couple of miscellaneous items:

- If you aren't computer literate, you probably ought to take a course in computer operations. At least in the consulting/professional services industry, a desktop computer is pretty much standard equipment, and everyone generates their own documentation and briefing slides.

- Take a couple of months off before you start a new job. It takes a long time before you start amassing the measly two or three weeks vacation your company will give you. Take the time to recharge your batteries or finish up your transition preparation. Resist the temptation to panic. You've earned a nice rest. Make sure you reward yourself.

Help Obtain Ads for the Exceptional Release

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.

Ad Rates:

Size of Ad	Dimensions	Space Cost	Typesetting Cost*
Full page	7 ³ / ₄ x 9 ¹ / ₂	\$300	\$60
Half page	3 ¹ / ₂ x 9 ¹ / ₂	\$220	\$30
	7 ³ / ₄ x 4 ³ / ₄		
Quarter page	3 ¹ / ₂ x 4 ³ / ₄	\$150	\$20
Eighth page	3 ¹ / ₂ x 2 ³ / ₈	\$110	\$15

*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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Maintenance Officer Association

6803 Whittier Avenue, Suite 200
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(MOA has been classified as a nonprofit organization by the Internal Revenue Service.)

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