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Wing Tips

108th Wing
NJ Air National Guard

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Commander's Column

Protecting yourself during a pregnancy is important

Submitted by Col. Sandra Long, 108th Medical Group commander

Pregnancy is an exciting time and it's important to protect the health of a developing fetus. In addition, it's also important to protect the mother and father before pregnancy. But most important to remember is assessing workplace hazards, which is imperative to protecting a developing fetus; and let's not forget that avoiding these exposures at home is also important.

According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), reproductive hazards are substances that affect the ability to have healthy children. Some examples are radiation, many chemicals, drugs (legal and illegal), cigarettes, hazardous noise, and heat. Exposure to these harmful substances happens in many ways: Inhalation, contact with the skin, or ingestion, which can happen if hands are not properly washed before eating, drinking, or smoking.

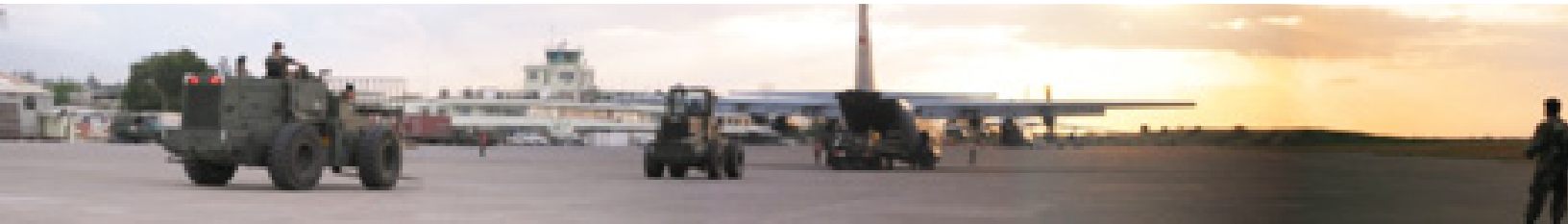
Men and women are affected in different ways from exposure to harmful substances. When exposed, women may have menstrual cycle affects, infertility, miscarriage, birth defects, low birth weight, developmental disorders, and childhood cancer. Men may be affected by lowered number of sperm, abnormal sperm shape, altered sperm transfer, and altered sex hormones. It is important to remember that protecting the reproductive health of men is just as important as protecting the reproductive health of women.

Consequently, employers have a responsibility to protect workers. However, you should always take the safety of your health into your own hands. Take the following steps to protect yourself: Store chemicals in sealed containers when they are not in use; wash hands before eating, drinking, and smoking; and avoid skin contact with chemicals. In addition, you should follow all the safety information provided in the material safety data sheet of products. Also, avoid bringing contaminated work clothing home and always wash it separately from other laundry. Always participate in education, training, and monitoring programs in the workplace.

As part of the monitoring program, Air National Guard Instruction 40-104, requires that all Air National Guard members report a confirmed pregnancy at the earliest possible time to allow the unit to accurately report operational and readiness capability, and to assess the member's work environment for potential hazards.

108th members who become pregnant must report to the 108th Medical Group's Public Health with written confirmation from their primary obstetrician provider at the earliest possible time. Contact the 108th Public Health at 609-754-5978 if you need more assistance.

For more information on male and female reproductive hazards see NIOSH publication No. 96-132 and No. 99-104. For more information on pregnancy see ANGI 40-104, Pregnancy of Air National Guard Personnel.



Tech. Sgt. Purvis R. Coley, left, and Tech. Sgt. Charles E. Hester, both with the 108th Security Forces Squadron, reenlisted with the Wing here at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, April 22. Col. Kevin Keehn, center, 108th Wing Commander, performed the Oath of Enlistment durigng the reenlistment ceremony. To view more photos of the 108th Wing's awards and ceremonies from April's Unit Training Assembly, click on the following link: April Awards & Ceremonies. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Eric Erbe, 108th WG/PA)

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A Message From the Safety Office

Five tips that will allow you to enjoy bike riding

May is the month of motorcycles, and motorcyclists as riders across the country, swing their leg across their two-wheeled steeds to hit the open road. Whether you enjoy riding you Harley-Davidson, Honda, Kawasaki, Suzuki, Yamaha, Ducati or something else, motorcycling can be ultra enjoyable when done in a safe manner.

This month, the Motorcycle Safety Foundation provides riders with a five basic road riding rules to follow to ensure that everyone, riders and non-riders alike, can enjoy a beautiful and safe spring season.

1. **Get properly trained and licensed** - The best first ride is an MSF RiderCourse. Riding is serious fun and proper training is crucial. However, half of all riders today have never taken a proper safety class. To help motorcyclists earn an endorsement or license, MSF offers progressive instruction to motorcyclists of all skill levels, starting with the Basic RiderCourse for beginning riders that includes five hours of classroom instruction and 10 hours of riding exercises in a controlled environment. Riders who already have basic skills and a license can hone their techniques in one of MSF's advanced RiderCourses or MSF's new Street RiderCourse, which takes riders beyond the traditional controlled learning environment and into real-world traffic. MSF recommends every new rider enroll in the Basic RiderCourse and encourages riders to get as much training as possible, no matter how skilled they may be. Even the pros practice the basics to keep their skills sharp.

2. Wear all protective gear, all the time - T-shirts and shorts are good for the beach, but not for riding a motorcycle. Riders should gear up properly before every ride, even if just riding down the street on an errand. Wearing a DOT-compliant helmet and eye protection is the law in many states, and is strongly recommended everywhere else. Wearing boots that cover over the ankle, long pants, and a riding jacket is also advisable. Built-in body armor is a smart addition, and can look pretty cool too.

3. Ride unimpaired by alcohol or other drugs - Bikes and booze don't mix. Government studies show that 46 percent of riders killed in motorcycle crashes had been drinking. While under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, a motorcyclist's necessary skills, including agility, perception and awareness, are decreased dramatically. In fact, having a blood-alcohol content greater than 0.05 percent increases the risk of crashing by about 40-times. So, while it is bad enough to try to get behind the wheel of a car while buzzed or drunk; hopping on a machine that requires maximum control and concentration is simply stupid.

4. Ride within your own skill limits and obey traffic laws - Every rider should know the limits of their ability, and not attempt to exceed them. Humans weren't designed to fly, and unless you're a trained professional on a closed course, stunting, high speed or tricks can only cause you trouble. Follow all traffic laws and be conscious of how road conditions may affect your riding. MSF now offers an online Rider Perception Challenge to help riders gauge and improve their visual awareness of road signs and common collision traps, which can be taken free at www.msf-usa.org/riderperception. Using sharp skills and common sense will keep you alive; trying to be Superman will not.

5. Be a lifelong learner by taking refresher RiderCourses - Motorcyclists should keep in mind that no matter how often or how long they've been riding, there is always room to learn something new. Taking an advanced course to brush up on the basics and work on perfecting current skills is a smart move for any rider. MSF's CORE Curricula programs include two new Street RiderCourses for training in traffic and the Advanced RiderCourse - SportBike Techniques course for intensive maneuvering drills, among other classes to keep expanding motorcyclists' learning experiences.

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation hopes riders will follow these rules and suggestions for everyone's benefit, and to ensure a safe Motorcycle Awareness Month for 2012.

The Motorcycle Safety Foundation promotes safety through rider education and training, operator licensing tests and public information programs. The MSF works with the federal government; state agencies; the military and others to offer programs for all skill levels so riders can enjoy a lifetime of safe and responsible motorcycling. Standards established by the MSF have been recognized worldwide since 1973.

For safety information or to enroll in the RiderCourse nearest you, visit www.msf-usa.org or call 800- 446-9227. The Rider Course is also available through Joint Base MDL Safety Web Page. https://militarysafep-mv.com/index.cfm?/content/6/.

New state command chief announced

108th senior enlisted leader will assume new responsibilities in June

By Master Sgt. Mark C. Olsen, 177th FW/PA

The wait is over. Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) has announced that Command Chief Master Sgt. Vincent Morton, 108th Wing command chief master sergeant, will become the New Jersey State Command Chief Master Sergeant at a Change of Authority ceremony at JFHQ June 9.

As state command chief, Morton will be responsible for advising the adjutant general and the commander of the New Jersey Air National Guard on mission effectiveness, professional development, military readiness, training, utilization, health, morale, and welfare of the command's enlisted Airmen and how to take action to address shortfalls or challenges.

A board which was comprised of Maj. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson, commander, New Jersey Air National Guard; Col. Wayne McCaughey, Chief of Staff - Air; State Command Chief Master Sgt. Michael Francis and State Command Sgt. Maj. Jerome Jenkins, reviewed the candidates and made their recommendations to Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff, the Adjutant General of New Jersey.

Morton began his military career in 1979 when he entered the United States Air Force. After basic training and the Security Police Academy at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, he was assigned to the 45th Missile Support Squadron at Ellsworth AFB, S.D., where he served on security escort team, camper alert team and as a fire team leader.

In December 1982, Morton was assigned to Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, and worked in support of F-111 Aardvark aircraft alert, weapons storage area supervisor and quality control evaluator. In 1986, he was involved in United States bombing of Libya, code-named Operation El Dorado Canyon, which was carried out in response to the 1986 Berlin discotheque bombing. He separated from active military service after returning to the United States in 1987.

In 1989, Morton enlisted in the New Jersey Air National Guard in the 170th Security Police in support of KC-135E aircraft and air base defense.

A year later, Morton deployed to Moron Air Base, Spain in support of Operation Desert Shield. He was subsequently mobilized in support of Operation Desert Storm and assigned to Minot AFB, N.D. in 1991.

Following the merger of the 108th Tactical Fighter Wing with the 170th Air Refueling Group to form the 108th Air Refueling Wing in 1991, Morton was assigned as the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Security Police training section, flight sergeant, security police operations superintendent and the security force manager. During that period he deployed in support of Operations' Deliberate Guard and Southern Watch.

Immediately following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, Morton was mobilized in support of Operations' Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom. During his mobilization for Operation Noble Eagle, Morton served as the Air Guard Security Force liaison for Air Mobility Command gained security force units at Scott AFB, Ill. Later on he was assigned as the detainee movement operation NCOIC at Fort Dix, N.J. where he coordinated and participated in detainee movement teams to numerous foreign destinations.

During Operation Katrina he deployed in support of local law enforcement in New Orleans.

From April to October 2010 Morton served as the 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group Superintendent at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom where he was awarded the Bronze Star.

Lead where you stand.....

By New Jersey State Command Chief Master Sgt. Michael R. Francis

I want to thank everyone for their hard work and diligence during my time as the State Command Chief; it has brought me great rewards and many challenges. During my tenure, I have attended many post inspection out-briefs and have always been impressed with the inspector's comments on our positive attitudes and excellent results. It is this attitude, along with our shared military values and heritage that will aid us through the challenging days ahead.

As you move forward through these inspections and deployments take the opportunity to, "*Lead where you stand*." Pick up that rock or bolt - even when it's not a FOD walk - or the piece of paper in the hallway. Point out a job "well done" - even if that Soldier or Airman doesn't work for you. Conversely, it is as equally important to discreetly mention when someone's uniform needs attention or their behavior needs adjusting. The act of both encouraging and holding each other accountable demonstrates a level of caring needed in today's complex operating environment.

In continuing this level of leading, be active in your professional organizations; they are your direct voice to your elected officials and there is strength in numbers. Continue to work toward your degrees, particularly your Community College of the Air Force. This is crucial to maintaining our "Profession of Arms". I encourage you to always look for ways to improve professionalism and safety. Not only that, make sure to share your ideas with leadership at all levels. The officer - enlisted relationship is time honored and battle proven. This, along with our customs and courtesies has served us well since the days of General Washington and demonstrates the fact that we remain a nation free to exercise our military heritage according to our traditions.

In leading where you stand, we cannot forget a few important final thoughts: Don't put off making tough decisions and work with your leadership to officially recognize those that deserve it. It is the little things that often make the biggest difference. Take the time to listen and ask that Soldier or Airman how their day is going. Pay attention, and be prepared to answer their questions. Take the time to listen to your leaders, peers, subordinates and especially to your family?

While leading where you stand isn't that complicated, it can have a tremendous impact. Ken Blanchard and Norman Vincent Peale state in their book, *The Power of Ethical Management,* "Nice guys may appear to finish last, but usually they are running a different race." No one knows what tomorrow may bring, be prepared and be that enlisted professional that leads by running a different race.

With Honor and Sincerity, Chief Francis.

Service members, families get free pass to National Parks

By Lisa Daniel, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Service members and their families will be able to enter all of America's national parks free of charge for a year under an initiative announced May 15.

The pass – the America the Beautiful National Parks and Federal Recreation Lands Annual Pass, which normally costs $80 – will become available to service members and their dependents on Armed Forces Day, May 19.

The passes allow the holder and passengers in a single private vehicle access to some 2,000 sites that charge per vehicle. At sites where entrance fees are charged per person, it covers the pass owner and three adults age 16 and older.

Military personnel can get the passes at any national park or wildlife refuge that charges an entrance fee by showing their military ID. Family members also will be able to obtain their own pass, even if the service member is deployed or if they are traveling separately.

The pass will be accepted at National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Army Corps sites that charge entrance or standard amenity fees.

The free pass will be made available for activated members of the National Guard and reserves, but not for military veterans or retirees as they have other opportunities for free or reduced admission, such as the National Park Service's "Access Pass" or a

seniors pass for those 62 and older.

The free pass initiative is part of the "Joining Forces" campaign, which first lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, launched last year to rally Americans around supporting service members and their families.

"Our nation owes a debt of gratitude to our servicemen and women who make great sacrifices to protect our country and preserve our freedom," Dr. Biden said in a White House statement. "In recognition of their service, we are so pleased to be putting out a welcome mat for our military families at America's most beautiful and storied sites."

108th CE Airman prepare for Prime BEEF

Photo and story by Staff Sgt. Armando Vasquez, 108WG/PA

Where can you find Prime BEEF... Not the type that you eat, but Airmen assigned to Prime Base Emergency Engineer Force?

Training at the 201st Red Horse Squadron Regional Training Center at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., is where the 108th Civil Engineers Squadron could be found April 20-22.

As a Prime BEEF unit, the 108th CE Airmen would deploy to a war zone with tools to complete special projects of hardening airfields and critical base facilities. These include making repairs on existing systems, and updating/ modernizing utilities; preparing new areas for "tent cities" for initial bed-down of arriving troops in country, and building bunkers for personnel protection.

So as an upcoming deployment seems imminent for these Airmen, maintaining their skills to complete all of these objectives is critical.

"At home base we can't train for contingency response," said Lt. Col. Paul Novello, 108th CES commander. "But here we have all the tools for our war objectives."

Within the training complex, the Airmen were able to work on installing emergency airfield lighting systems (EALS), constructing large base shelters, repairing airfields, water purification, heating ventilation air conditioner maintenance and repairs, and other tasks associated with a deployment to a war zone.

Novello said that using the actual equipment that is part of the contingency environment helps his CEs get firsthand experience.

And taking advantage of the tools around him was Senior Airman Bryant Ubando. The Dover resident was among the group of electrical systems personnel working on EALS and then climbing utility poles during the three-day deployment readiness exercise.

Ubando had previously deployed to the Middle East in 2010 and was eager for the upcoming deployment. The Dover resident was among the group of electrical systems personnel working on EALS and then climbing utility poles during the three-day deployment readiness exercise.

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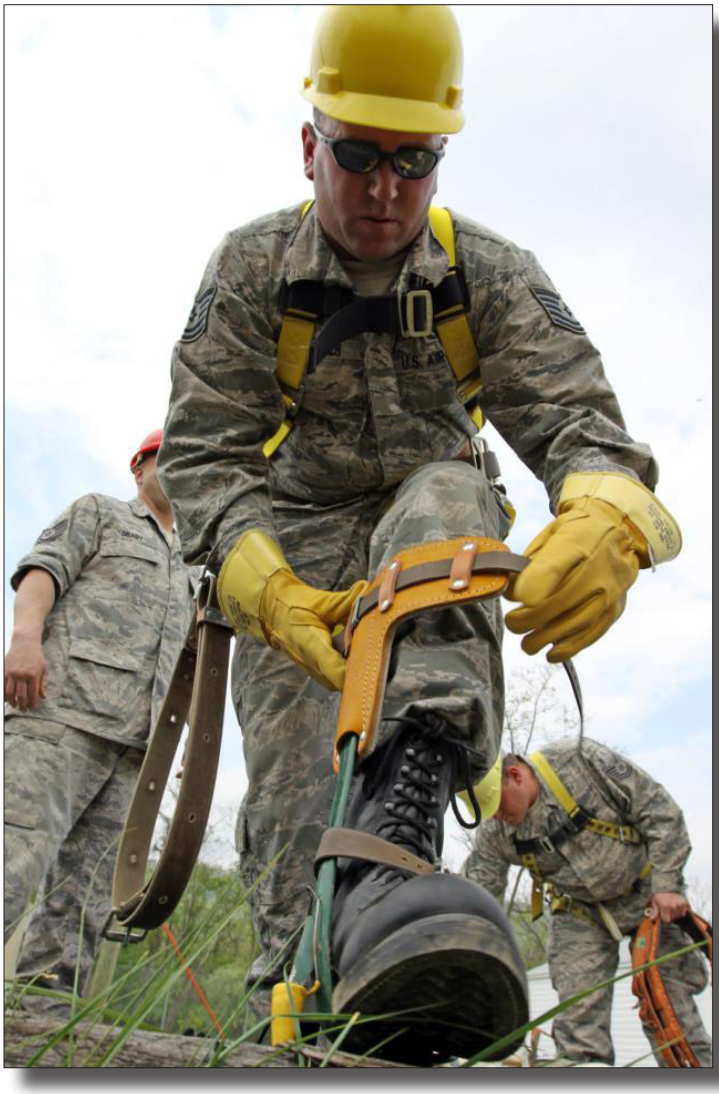

Tech. Sgt. Matthew Scudder puts gaffs on his work boots as he prepares to climb a utility pole at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., April 21. To view more photos of the CE training, follow this link: 108 CES @ FTIG.

Military Appreciation Day celebrated at Belmar in June

The Borough of Belmar, N.J. would like to invite you to their 2nd Annual Military Appreciation Day at their 5th Avenue Beach on Saturday, June 30, beginning at 10 a.m.

All active military personnel and their families will be entitled to a free beach pass, parking, lunch, music and more at the Taylor Pavilion in Belmar.

Pre-registration and proper military identification is required if planning to attend.

Please contact the Belmar recreation director, Tina Connelly, at 732-681-3700 ext. 211 or via email at recreation@belmar.com.

Taylor Pavilion is located 512 Ocean Avenue in Belmar.

Task qualification training

A Task Qualification Training (TQT) event is an annual requirement that ensures all unit members are able to fulfill their primary duties while dressed in their chemical warfare suit. This year's TQT event has been scheduled for Saturday, June 9 from 9 – 11 a.m. Unit commanders may use their discretion to ensure safety, customer service, and workload issues are addressed. The intent is to ensure that all unit members have all appropriate gear, are able to don the gear properly, and perform primary duties as assigned.

What you need to do: Inventory your gear this weekend. Go to supply if missing any items. Do not wait until June 8 to find out you are missing gear. Be prepared for the training event.

If you have any questions, contact your unit Exercise Evaluation Team representative or Lt. Col. Michael Baldi, 108th Wing EET chief. EET members will be on hand to assist units complete this training event.

DCMA team learns from Guard, Reserve program

108th Wing Airman's nomination allows boss a once-in-a-lifetime experience

By Patrick Tremblay, DCMA Public Affairs

Two Defense Contract Management Agency Philadelphia leaders had a unique opportunity when a quality assurance specialist invited them to ride along on an Air National Guard aerial refueling mission.

Consequently, on Feb. 22, Army Col. Kenneth Copeland, DCMA Philadelphia commander, and Michael Sywulak, supervisory quality assurance specialist, observed a three hour training mission aboard a 108th Wing's KC-135 Stratotanker courtesy of Tech. Sgt. Edward Lowden, an aircraft mechanic with the 108th Wing, and the New Jersey Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve's "Orientation Flight" program.

In addition, Lowden, a QAS at the contract management office when not in uniform, was on the ground that day serving in his uniformed job as an Air Force technical sergeant, inspecting, launching and recovering the aircraft on which his supervisors flew.

Through the ESGR's Orientation Flight – an endorsed Department of Defense program - Airmen in the unit are able to invite their civilian employers to ride along on an aerial refueling mission.

"I saw the orientation flight as the perfect opportunity for my DCMA supervision to see exactly what their QAS's do on a part-time basis," said Lowden, noting that several DCMA Philadelphia employees serve with the National Guard. "We support the war fighter full time, and become the war fighter part-time."

Copeland and Sywulak were impressed with what they had seen. "As I observed the consummate skill and professionalism of the flight crew, I thought to myself, 'these folks are representative of the war fighters we support on a daily basis in DCMA,'" said Sywulak.

The Stratotanker can carry up to 200,000 pounds of fuel, which can be pumped through a rear boom to other aircraft while in flight. During this mission, the 108th Wing provided refueling training for the Wing's crew and other aircraft, beginning with several F-16 fighter jets from the 177th Fighter Wing, an Air Guard unit based in Atlantic City.

"The smaller F-16s appeared alongside our KC-135, just off our wing tips, before settling in below and behind our aircraft for refueling," said Sywulak. "Our crew included newer boom operators who were receiving in-flight training from an experienced boom operator, who had seven years of experience."

As an extra bonus, during the flight home, Sywulak sat in the cockpit's jump seat near the pilot and co-pilot, watching the crew work and listening to their interaction with air traffic controllers at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst.

So by nominating his supervisors for the orientation flight, Lowden through this program was able to demonstrate the critical role the National Guard and Reserve play on our nation's defense. Employers and supervisors are given an opportunity to observe National Guard and Reserve members on duty as part of the Total Force, thus providing the employer a better understanding of what their employees do when they are away from their civilian occupation for duty with their military units. Employers see firsthand the type and quality of military training and leadership activities National Guard and Reserve members receive.

From left to right, Army Col. Kenneth Copeland, Defense Contract Management Agency Philadelphia commander, Michael Sywulak, DCMA Philadelphia supervisory quality assurance specialist and Tech. Sgt. Edward Lowden pause before boarding a 108th Wing KC-135 Stratotanker Feb. 22 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. Lowden, an aircraft mechanic with the Wing here, works as a civilian quality assurance specialist with DCMA Philadelphia. (Courtesy photo)

And Lowden, who has nearly 30 years of federal experience in inspections, the last eight with DCMA, was able to demonstrate his military talent and how it can benefit his employer.

His work in uniform makes him a better civilian employee, and vice versa, said Lowden. "The training and responsibilities I am assigned at the National Guard are all positive attributes which carry over to my DCMA career."

Furthermore, Lowden is no stranger to service overseas, but since joining DCMA his deployments have all come through contingency contract administration services. He's completed three six-month deployments with DCMA CCAS, including both Iraq and Afghanistan.

He is also finishing two degrees this year, and has been selected to be his air wing's next first sergeant, and he credits the understanding, support and positive reinforcement of his DCMA leadership with helping to make this possible.

"It is our privilege and pleasure to serve these folks," reflected Sywulak. "Our experience with the 108th on this refueling mission reminds us once again – we have a high calling in DCMA."

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The importance of two-way communication

Airmen's performance feedback depends on leaders's ability to communicate

By Senior Master Sgt. Mark A. Bajada, 108th Contingency Response Group first sergeant

As a first sergeant, one of our responsibilities is to monitor the Airman and NCO Performance Feedback System, also known as the PFS. I believe this program is an essential tool in the development of our Airmen. As enlisted leaders, Air National Guard Instruction 36-2627, Airman and Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Formal Performance Feedback System, mandates, at a minimum, this interview be conducted annually, but I also believe feedback should be a continual process. Whether you are an officer or a noncommissioned officer, it is our primary responsibility to communicate to our Airmen the crucial fundamentals needed to improve their performance. The way to build a relationship is to have communication, so both parties have a good understanding of what is expected of them, as well as a full understanding of any goals that are needed to accomplish all objectives.

In our schedules, one of the most overlooked duties is the obligation to our members. Quite frequently, we get caught up in the daily grind of trying to get things done and there seems to be never enough time to finish all planned tasks. With our tight schedules, we tend to neglect certain tasks. One of them being to set aside some time to what matters most: The time to evaluate our most valuable resources.

Some of the most common mistakes we make are: (1) we assume our members already know how they are doing; (2) we think feedback is unnecessary; and (3) we avoid giving feedback period.

As leaders, we need to recognize that even if our Airmen are doing a good job and meeting expectations. It is still important to communicate this to them. Feedback will avoid any guesswork on our Airmen's part and will confirm to them that they are doing a good job. It will also open the lines of communication for our Airmen to share feedback with their supervisor. In contrast, when our Airmen are not meeting performance expectations, we tend to avoid the situation because it is not comfortable giving them negative feedback. Instead, we tend to "just ignore" or "rather procrastinate" to what really needs to be accomplished.

Furthermore, as leaders, we need to show our Airmen the importance of feedback. Some steps you can take are to schedule feedback meetings with each Airman during your calendar year so you can allocate enough time to meet.

I believe these formal feedbacks should be semi-annually. This will allow you to direct or redirect behavior or technical abilities midway, thus correction or praise could be addressed prior to the end of the year.

I also encourage a culture of feedback from your Airmen. This opens a two-way communication relationship, which limits the one way flow from the top down effect. In addition, this two-way communication approach gives our Airmen the opportunity to share information with supervisor and designs a systematic infrastructure for feedback. In essence, we shouldn't get caught up in just writing memos, performance evaluations, and reports.

Also, sometimes providing feedback can be as simple as having a conversation in the work place or stepping out of the office to convey your point in a casual manner.

In conclusion, the road to an effective Performance Feedback program is not always an easy one. But progressing towards long-term goals by making manageable changes - step by step - will bring about significant results for you as a leader; for your Airmen; the organization; and the mission. Just remember, you won't be able to address all concerns of all Airmen all of the time. Our Airmen know this and don't expect you to, but they do appreciate being heard. Airmen want to work for an organization that cares about what they think and how they are performing.

As legendary UCLA basketball-coach John Wooden once said, "Make sure that team members know they are working with you, not for you."