

# Base, community adjust to main gate closure

Traffic is flowing more smoothly through the Commissary Gate after some initial problems were overcome earlier this week.

The Dorchester Gate will be closed for up to two more weeks as work continues to repair a major sewer line in the area.

"We have received many action line requests and e-mails concerning the gate closure, and rest assured we have and will continue to look at alternatives to moving traffic smoothly through the Commissary Gate," said Col. Dennis Kaan, 437<sup>th</sup> Support Group commander.

Inbound Dorchester Road traffic coming from Summerville has been routed through Hunley Park on Alaska Avenue. Signs from the South Carolina Department of Transportation are helping make drivers aware of this option.

In addition, the Department of Transportation has adjusted the timing on the traffic light outside the Commissary Gate so that drivers leaving Hunley Park will have more time to cross Dorchester Road.

The Charleston County Sheriff's Department is aiding with traffic control at the light as necessary during rush hour. Traffic on Hill Boulevard and North O'Neill Avenue has been streamlined by forbidding turns across traffic that would impede the flow of traffic at Hill Boulevard and O'Neill and again at O'Neill and Lawson Drive.

The 437<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineering Squadron and 437<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron welcome any suggestions regarding traffic engineering (such as routes, lights, signs etc.) and traffic enforcement (gate operations and traffic control, etc) respectively, Kaan said.

"Predictably, traffic was delayed in the morning beginning last Tuesday," Kaan said. "The Dorchester Gate accommodates two inbound lanes, it has a long approach and has left turn lanes on Dorchester Avenue. It also has a small island that allows security forces to post an additional guard when manning permits.

"The Commissary Gate provides none of these advantages. We've essentially taken six lanes of traffic (four at Dorchester Road and two at the Commissary Gate) and jammed them into two lanes during rush hour. Therefore traffic backs up."

There are several things base members can do to help alleviate the congestion at the Commissary Gate during the next several weeks:

- manders could mandate that some troops report to work early and leave early. Others could report to work late and leave late.

- sharing cars, fewer vehicles will clog the road.

- congested and much less hazardous.

- a DD Form 2220 (base registration



Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodier

Drivers are encouraged to ease congestion on Dorchester Road by entering the alternate Hunley Park Housing gate and proceeding to the stop light near the Commissary Gate. Drivers are reminded that the speed limit in Hunley Park is 20 miles per hour.

decal), you register your vehicle and affix the decal to your windshield. Gate guards can move traffic along much more quickly if they don't have to stop vehicles and check ID cards.

will be the same number of vehicles trying to fit into fewer traffic lanes and without the traffic control advantages built into the Dorchester Gate.

Directing traffic is one of the most dangerous duties a police officer can do and they are not expected to take that risk unless traffic jams are truly

risking safety.

"There is no easy way to close the Dorchester Gate and keep traffic flowing as smoothly through only the Commissary Gate," Kaan said. "We hope to have the gate back open by the end of the month. In the meantime, please be patient during the gate closure. Plan plenty of time to access the base to make appointments and report to work. More importantly, please drive carefully."

(Submitted by the 437 SPTG)

## Rodeo

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thing for the very first time," said West. "Our wing has taken the advantage of using Charleston as our sister wing to understand the competition better. We won't know whom we will be refueling for sure, but we are betting that the C-17 will be our airplane to refuel. It really is just a hunch, but the majority of the heavy lifters that we refuel are the C-17."

He added that it is unlikely that they will be asked to refuel another tanker during the competition.

West and Heuer said the practice sessions would better prepare both teams for the competition in May. West's team is not practicing with the 315 AW team, since they are assuming that they will have to refuel an active duty wing during the competition.

"We are sharing tips between the two teams and that is one of the primary reasons why we are here to talk over tactics, techniques and procedures to make sure we are all on the same sheet of music when we are in the air," West said.

"We're competing for wing versus wing for overall honors, but when we hook up with the tanker be it MacDill or somebody else, we both get the same scores, so we must work closely together with the tanker units," Heuer said. "Obviously, there is still a little friendly rivalry going on between MacDill and us and we'll see how that comes out during competition."

The Rodeo Team for MacDill consists of 20 airmen compared to the 42-person Rodeo team for the 437 AW. "We are competing in more events than our sister wing. We also have two Engines Running Off-load teams as well as a Joint Airdrop Inspection Team and of course we are fielding C-17 and C-141 teams," Heuer said.

"This is my very first Rodeo and I am glad that Major West showed up so I can get some overall rodeo experience from him. It is great that I can pick his brain for ideas," Heuer said.



Maj. Matthew Heuer

A Charleston based C-17 is refueled by a MacDill KC-135 during practice for the Rodeo 2000 competition to be held at Pope AFB, N.C., May 6-13.