

COMMENTARY

437 CES demonstrates wartime skills

By Col. Karl Young
437 AW vice commander

We were fortunate to have Maj. Gen. Larry Northington, deputy assistant secretary for budget, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Financial Management and Comptroller, Washington, D.C., as our guest speaker for an April 19 luncheon for the American Society of Military Comptrollers. He is responsible for planning and directing the formulation of the annual Air Force budgets, totaling more than \$72 billion.

General Northington spoke about the overall Air Force budget and how we can make the best out of what we have. His message was that Air Force leadership is working very hard to fund what we need and have been successful in getting about 75 cents for every dollar requested. The bottomline is that we are getting most of what we are asking for.

He stated that they are continuing to work hard to fully fund the Air Force's needs, but that people should not focus on what we don't have, but rather what we do have. He presented a number of ideas on how to effectively manage the funds that we do have. His message was for us to count our blessings because we are getting some pretty good things funded. His remarks were thought-provoking and interesting.

It looks like the Dorchester Gate will reopen Wednesday, weather permitting. I thank everyone for their patience. Those sewer line repairs were necessary and the only way to fix the problem was to replace the old pipe. Besides those repairs, we also have a basewide power outage scheduled for May 13 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The outage is necessary to replace a substation switch that had failed during Hurricane Floyd in September. The base has been running on a bypass circuit that could cause a problem if not replaced. Since so much of our base electrical infrastructure is so old, it took a while to find someone that could repair this old switch. During this outage period, the Base Commissary and Exchange will be closed. Please plan ahead now. Additional details

about the power outage will be included in an upcoming issue of the *Airlift Dispatch*.

It is not too early to start thinking about hurricane preparations and severe weather procedures. Everybody should have their own personal plan to prepare for a hurricane evacuation if required. Take time now to review the Charleston AFB Natural Disaster pamphlet, available from your unit disaster preparedness representative or on-line from the Globemaster web site. The base will be doing some exercises and preparations for the hurricane season. We will have a command post exercise in June to walk the new wing staff through hurricane procedures.

The 437th Logistics Group had a number of changes of command. Maj. Herb Phillips assumed command of the newly formed 437th Maintenance Squadron Tuesday. Maj. Ricky Cornelius, former 437th Component Repair Squadron commander, assumed command of the 437th Aircraft Generation Squadron on Wednesday. Lt. Col. Paul Bartlett, former 437 AGS commander, and Tony Williams, former 437th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, both head to the Pentagon in their new assignments and I thank them for all their hard work. We are awaiting Maj. George M. Pierce II to assume command of the 437th Supply Squadron in June. During this period, Capt. Douglas Smith will be filling in as commander.

Forty-nine 437th Civil Engineer Squadron members deployed to a Savannah military training area on Tuesday and Wednesday to demonstrate their wartime skills, to include such tasks as rapid runway repair and bomb disposal. The Air Mobility Command Inspector General team will be closing watching the CES folks perform these tasks as part of their Operational Readiness Inspection. They will return Sunday on one of our C-17s.

Everyone is invited to cheer on the C-141 and C-17 Rodeo Teams as they depart next week. The C-141 departure ceremony will be on May 5, at 3:30 p.m. in the Charleston Club. The 437 and 315 AW Rodeo C-17 departure ceremony will be on May 6, at 10:15 a.m. in the C-17 nose dock. I hope to see you there. Let's send them off in true Team Charleston style!

About the paper

AIRLIFT
Dispatch

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Address/Numbers

Editorial content is prepared by the 437th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 1600, Rm. 223.
Phone: (843) 963-5608
Fax: (843) 963-5604.
Mail to:
437 AW PAI
102 East Hill Blvd.
Charleston AFB, SC 29404-5154
or send to:
dispatch@charleston.af.mil

Editorial Staff

437 AW Commander
Col. Vern M. "Rusty"
Findley II

Chief, Public Affairs
Lt. Col. Edmund Memi

Editor
Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith

Associate editor
Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe

Photo Support
Base Visual Information Center

You're appreciated

(The following letter was recently received by the Public Affairs office from a retired Navy chief petty officer)

Being retired Navy, you may think it a bit odd that I am writing. I have been using the base facilities for many years and am always amazed at how clean and kept up everything is. The grounds and buildings are really something to be proud of.

I use the base pharmacy rather than the Naval Hospital, and the people there are always helpful and polite and will go out of their way to answer any questions they can.

As I don't live that far from the main gate now, I often walk to the base. The guards are there are always so neat appearing and polite and always show a positive attitude. I wonder if anybody ever thanked them for that.

Action Line

The Commander's Action line is your direct link to me. It's your opportunity to make Charleston Air Force Base a better place to live, work and play.

First give the appropriate base agency a chance to solve the problem, but if you don't get a satisfactory answer, call me at 963-5581 or send an e-mail to action@charleston.af.mil.

To ensure you receive a response to your concerns, please leave your name and the information needed to contact you.



I think what I am really trying to say is that the people that are stationed there and work there should really be proud of the base and the job they are doing.

There are a lot of people who feel as I do, I just don't know if they mention it.

Suggestion

I'm a retired master sergeant who has a problem with the base clinic.

I believe the clinic is do-

ing an outstanding job, but I believe the medical benefits section could use some improvement.

In order to submit a TRICARE claim, we need access to a TRICARE form, which are kept in the medical benefits section. Why can't these forms and other information about TRICARE be placed on a rack in the waiting area?

When I retired from the Air Force, a big effort was put into providing quality customer service. I hope

this program is still alive.

Thanks for your comments and suggestion. As a result, a rack will be set up to enable customers have TRICARE information and claim forms readily available.

In the meantime brochures, pamphlets and forms are displayed for easy pick-up inside the TRICARE office. This will allow beneficiaries who know what they need, to get it without having to wait. Feel free to contact the TRICARE office at 963-6708, with further questions or concerns.

Commonly used phone numbers:

Security Force.....	963-3611
Base Exchange.....	552-5000
Commissary.....	963-5695
Housing Office.....	963-3859
Medical Group Info.....	963-6700
Family Support	963-4406
Education Office.....	963-4573
Charleston Club.....	963-3914
Services Squadron.....	963-3821