



# News Release

## UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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### **GUARD, RESERVE TAKE OVER 437 APS OPERATIONS DURING PATRIOT PARTNER**

**CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE, S.C.** – Air National Guard and Reserve units are taking over the 437<sup>th</sup> Aerial Port Squadron as part of Patriot Partner.

From July 7-21, 21 members of the 81<sup>st</sup> Aerial Port Squadron here, 80 members of the 35<sup>th</sup> Aerial Port Squadron, McGuire AFB, N.J., and 10 members of the 927<sup>th</sup> Operation Support Squadron Aerial Port Flight, Selfridge ANGB, Mich., will integrate with the 437 APS and take over its operations, according to Tech. Sgt. Billy Williams, 437 APS Reserve coordinator.

“It’s basically a test of the Total Force concept,” said Williams. “They come in not so much for training, but to phase in and operate the port, hopefully by the end of the first week.”

Patriot Partner is a program Charleston AFB has been using for many years, Williams said. Any aerial port can host Patriot Partner through coordination with the proper agencies.

Even though the number of personnel participating is less than expected, Patriot Partner gives 437 APS personnel a chance to catch up on a number of things, Williams said.

“They came in Saturday and got their in-briefs, then started working their first shift Sunday morning,” Williams said. “The units have been integrating into the sections and will continue to do so through the week. By the end of the week, we’re hoping to turn as many 437 APS personnel loose as we can for the squadron picnic.”

In addition to allowing the squadron time off for a picnic, Patriot Partner allows individuals to take leave and, most importantly, train, Williams said.

“It’s not so much the time off that’s important,” said Lt. Col. Robert King, 437 APS commander. “This program gives us time to train and get up to speed for the IG (Inspector General) exercise coming up. We’ll be deploying 38 people and equipment to Savannah (Ga.) in August. While the Reserve is running the port, it gives us full time to focus on that mission.”

The 437 APS personnel aren’t the only ones to benefit from Patriot Partner, Williams said.

“Reserve units try to train on items they need while they’re here,” said Williams. “Right now, six people are training on the 60K loader.”

The passenger terminal also had a number of reservists going through vehicle training, according to Williams.

Though some of the personnel here for Patriot Partner are training, that isn’t the main goal, according to King.

“Patriot Partner tries to bring experienced personnel rather than trainees,” King said. “The idea is to take over as much of the port as possible.”

**(For more information, contact Master Sgt. Daniel Murphy at 963-5582 or Staff Sgt. Pamela Smith at 963-5589)**