

437th Aircrew Life Support Flight

Unit proves 'Your Life is Our Business' is more than just a motto

by Senior Airman Michael Duhe
437th AW Public Affairs

The 437th Aircrew Life Support Flight maintains round-the-clock operations in support of the mission at Charleston AFB.

Belonging to the 437th Operations Support Squadron, the 40-member flight is made up of five sections, plus an administrative unit.

The training section is responsible for training active duty and Reserve aircrew members in combat survival, water survival, aircrew chemical defense and decontamination procedures, egress, and post-bailout procedures.

The aircrew services section's duties include fitting, issuing and maintaining aircrew equipment, such as helmets, oxygen masks and night vision goggles.

The aircraft services section installs and removes aircraft-installed life support equipment, such as parachutes, aircraft oxygen masks, protective breathing equipment, passenger oxygen masks and emergency passenger oxygen system packets, referred to as EPOS.

The aircrew chemical defense section handles the fitting, issuing, inspecting and maintaining of aircrew chemical defense equipment.

The flight's survival kit section inspects and maintains survival kits for multi-place life rafts, protective clothing kits and survival vests.

"We're the largest flight in the operations support squadron," flight commander Capt. Tim McLain pointed out.

"Aircrew and passenger safety is the number one concern," said flight superintendent Master Sgt. Michael Freebury. "Everyone in the flight is dedicated to that. Our job is to give aircrews and passengers that last option when everything else is going badly.

"We couldn't do our job without numerous organizations on base, especially maintenance," Freebury added.

Currently located near the base fire training pit, the 437th Life Support Flight is scheduled to move to a new facility next summer. At a cost of \$4.1 million, the 26,000 square foot facility will be one of two (the other is at McChord) in Air Mobility Command to be built exclusively for life support operations, according to Freebury.



photos by Senior Airman Michael Duhe

Staff Sgt. Janette Gallik (right), training section NCO, assists aircrew members don Aircrew Eye/Respiratory Protective equipment during a recent training class.



(above) Senior Airman Barbara James, supervisor of the aircrew chemical defense section, inspects an Aircrew Eye/Respiratory Protection blower.

(left) Airman Basic Aaron Widner and Airman Joy LeBlanc, both aircrew life support apprentices, refer to a manual while assembling an aircrew helmet.

(right) Airman Kevin Sealy, an aircrew life support apprentice, performs an inventory of Emergency Passenger Oxygen System packs.

