

New A-10 crew ready for action

Story and photo by
Tech. Sgt. Eric M. Grill
455th EOG Public Affairs

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — About 150 people and eight A-10 Thunderbolt IIs are deployed here from Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, to stand guard and support Operation Enduring Freedom and the Global War on Terrorism.

Spangdahlem's people are taking over combat operations from the Maryland Air National Guard's 104th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, who have been deployed since Jan. 8.

This isn't the first deployment for Spangdahlem, but this is the first time they've been deployed to Afghanistan, said Lt. Col. Pat Malackowski, the new 455th Expeditionary Operations Group deputy commander here.



A crew chief, from the 455th Expeditionary Operations Group, marshals an A-10 Thunderbolt II to its parking spot. The 52nd Fighter Wing at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, deployed about 150 people and eight A-10s to Bagram in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

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Stop loss doesn't stop soldier's questions

By Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — Some soldiers are being deployed in the Operation Enduring Freedom Area of Operations, but their orders say Operation Iraqi Freedom. These soldiers bring many questions with them.

"The majority of questions we get are regarding the stop loss program," said Staff Sgt. Shawn Rohan, career counselor here. He pointed out some issues he said need to be clarified.

"If (soldiers) are over here in support of OIF, then they fall under a different change in the stop loss policy. The stop loss is blanket-wide except for a few (military occupational specialties)," said Rohan.

According to Rohan, the latest Retain message (May 28) for soldiers in support of

Combined Joint Task Force – 180 states that affected soldiers with an End Tour of Service date prior to June 30 are being adjusted to June 30 to allow the soldier transition processing time. Soldiers with a contracted ETS date of June 30 and later will revert back to their contracted ETS date. Soldiers desiring additional time are granted liberal authority to extend up to Sept. 30 at the convenience of the government.

Rohan said it is important for commanders and their soldiers to know the latest on the stop loss program, because "getting this information out is integral for the future ... You can't (out-process) when you don't know when you are going home."

The partial lift, "gives some sort of closure" for OEF soldiers.

Soldiers, who are approaching their ETS, are planning on their second careers and college, etc. This is why it is important to

know the latest stop loss updates – a wrong decision can affect a soldier's career, said Rohan. The re-enlistment team also provides updates each morning at the battle update briefs.

The first step for a soldier approaching their ETS date is to go to the re-enlistment office to verify their date. "If they want to stay here in support of this mission, it's possible for us to do a voluntary extension for the soldier," said Rohan.

"(For) anybody that's supporting Task Force-180, we have liberal authority to extend them up to Sept. 30," he said. "We try to do anything we can to get the soldier re-enlisted regardless of how the stop loss affects his ETS date."

For more information regarding the stop loss program or anything regarding re-enlistment, the office is located on the second floor of Motel 6, room 202.

World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



A wounded man is wheeled into the emergency room at a hospital in Gaza City Tuesday after the helicopter strikes.

Hamis, Israeli officials vow to keep fighting

GAZA CITY—A Hamas official targeted by an Israeli helicopter gunship Tuesday vowed that his militant Palestinian group would continue to launch attacks against Israelis.

“We must fight those who came to hurt us inside our home,” Hamas spokesman Abdel Aziz Rantissi said from his hospital bed.

“At Hamas, we will not drop our weapons, even if all leaders are assassinated,” he said. “We will not drop our weapons. This is the only option for the Palestinian people.

“[Israeli Prime Minister Ariel] Sharon understood that the Aqaba summit had given him the green light to kill Palestinian people,” Rantissi said. “We are today experiencing a Zionist war against the Palestinians.”

Israeli military sources said Rantissi was targeted because he has been stepping up his involvement, his incitement and his coordination of attacks against Israel since the U.S.-led “road map” for peace was introduced.

They said a second Apache helicopter strike in Gaza on Tuesday was aimed at militants who fired six homemade Qassam rockets toward Israel. No one was injured by the Qassam rockets. At least two bystanders were killed in the air strikes, according to witnesses and Palestinian sources.

Report predicts ‘high probability’ of al-Qaida attack

UNITED NATIONS—A “high probability” exists that al-Qaida will attempt an attack using a biological, chemical, radiological or nuclear weapon within the next two years, according to a U.S. report presented to a U.N. committee.

The report — submitted April 17 — predicted that al-Qaida “will remain for the foreseeable future the most immediate and serious terrorism threat facing the United States.”

A U.S. diplomat cautioned, however, that “too much is being made” of the two-year time frame.

The State Department official who wrote the report — which was based on existing intelligence — “judged for himself that the threats appear to cover about two years,” the diplomat told CNN.

“It was just a choice of words by an individual.”

The diplomat said the report did not mean to suggest the United States had specific intelligence about such an incident being attempted within two years. Nor did it mean the threat would end in two years, the diplomat said.

The report did not specify where a strike could occur, but said the terrorist group would continue to “favor spectacular attacks but also may seek softer targets of opportunity, such as banks, supermarkets, and places of recreation and entertainment.”



The Rev. V. Gene Robinson says sexual orientation “was almost a footnote” in his election as bishop.

Episcopalians in New Hampshire elected the church’s first openly gay bishop Saturday. The Rev. V. Gene Robinson cannot take office until he gains the approval of clergy and laity at a national church convention in July in Minneapolis, Minn.

His election has already stirred controversy.

CNN anchor Anderson Cooper recently interviewed Robinson for a broadcast Tuesday evening.

COOPER: I spoke with the Rev. Gene Robinson, whose title until he takes office is actually Canon Robinson, shortly after his election. Canon Robinson, when you realized you were gay, did you think you had any future in the church?

ROBINSON: It was a terrible risk. I thought I might not have a future as an ordained person in the church. I’d hoped that the church wouldn’t reject me, but I thought my ordained ministry might be over.

And it’s hard to remember how the world was just that few years ago. It was a very tough place to come out, and the church really hadn’t dealt with these issues yet.

COOPER: As you well know, there are many conservatives in the church who say the Scriptures condemn homosexuality. How do you respond to that?

ROBINSON: What I would say is what we’re talking today about faithful, monogamous, lifelong intentioned relationships between people of the same sex is just simply not addressed in Scripture. The references are to people who are thought to be heterosexually oriented who are acting in homosexual ways, which is against their nature. The whole issue of sexual orientation is only about 100 years old.

Developer would replace all WTC space

NEW YORK — Larry Silverstein, the developer who leased the World Trade Center six weeks before it was destroyed Sept. 11, 2001, plans to replace all 10 million square feet of commercial space with five buildings over the next decade.

Silverstein outlined the ambitious rebuilding schedule in a rare public speech Tuesday to the Associated Builders and Owners of Greater New York, raising questions over who has the upper hand — him or the architect chosen after a public design competition.

Silverstein said he would be the primary builder of the 1,776-foot signature tower envisioned by architect Daniel Libeskind, whose site plan was chosen in February by officials led by Gov. George Pataki and Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

452nd CSH takes Bagram's medical mission

Story and photos by
Pfc. Christina Carde
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — After the mobilization of more than 500 troops and months of waiting to deploy in support of a mission, the 452nd Combat Support Hospital once bound for Iraq, found themselves in Afghanistan June 1, in support of a new operation.

A high threat level environment in conjunction with chemical warfare was the type of atmosphere the 452nd CSH out of Milwaukee anticipated when they mobilized earlier this year in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Where they ended up was far from where they would be.

“When we mobilized, we had a whole hospital element with chemical gear ready and available expecting to be thrown into a biological war zone,” said Capt. Michael Moyle, adjutant, 452nd CSH. “While waiting for about three months at Fort McCoy, Wis., to go to Iraq, the mission there ended and most of our troops were demobilized and sent back home.”

Feelings of disappointment and discouragement were soon replaced with excitement when the hospital was notified that they were needed for another mission.

“About 128 people from the CSH were chosen to replace the 48th CSH and carry on the level three care hospital that was currently in place,” said Moyle. “We may have been pulled from our mission to Iraq, but after all that waiting, we were happy we were still going somewhere.”

According to Col. Richard Stone, hospital commander, things were a lot different here than what they expected.

“We never thought we would be so busy right away,” said Stone. “We had barely stepped off of the plane when we were spontaneously thrown into the mix and were expected to take over almost immediately. It’s a lot more stressful than we originally anticipated.”

Another problem that adds to the stress of the job is the small amount of people available to accomplish a very large mission.

“Our assets were cut by almost 70 percent before we came out here which puts a variety of tasks on a small number of soldiers,” said Moyle. “Our regular mission in addition to details and other demands puts a strain on our time and our manpower.”

Despite the shortage of troops and the intensity of the task, the 452nd dove right into the mission and are looking forward to improving the hospital’s level of care.

“The facility the hospital is currently operating out of has been up and running for over 18 months which is a lot longer than it was designed for,” said Stone. “As early as this week we will begin reconstruction of over 80 percent of the hospital to make it more suitable for patients.”

“Another addition will be a special ward designed for patients who do not need a doctor’s attention,” Stone added. “This way the medics can take care of the minor issues so the doctors can attend to more serious problems.”

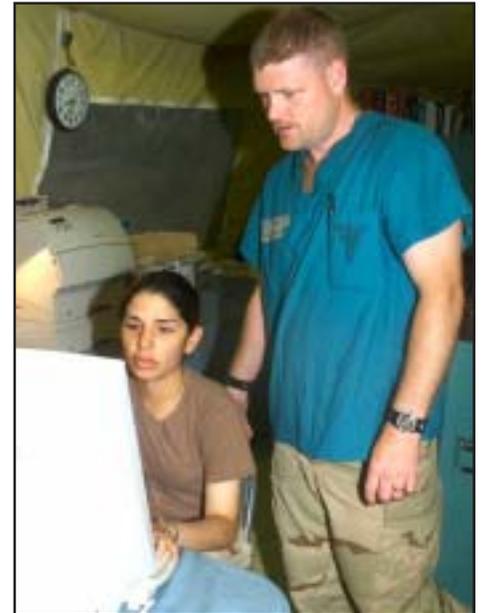
The 452nd is also focusing on more ways to become involved with the Afghan population.

“We have been very involved in the construction of the Egyptian Hospital that will be used to take care of Afghan patients,” said Moyle. “We will also continue the (Co-operative Medical Assistance) that were

started by the 48th and are even looking into adopting a village.”

Even though the 452nd is taking on a variety of missions, they are all secondary to the primary goal.

“If we achieve one thing here it will be improving our facilities and level of care for all the forces on Bagram,” said Stone. “We want our soldiers to have a hospital they can trust and be proud of.”



Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Proctor and Spc. Jamie Contereras, the new 452nd CSH pharmacy technicians, look at some prescription data.



Capt. Patricia Rose-Liana, nurse, 452nd Combat Support Hospital, Task Force-44, Milwaukee, gives a sick call patient some tips to stay healthy.

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“We were prepared to deploy to Operation Iraqi Freedom, and was on a prepare-to-deploy order for four and a half months,” he said. “We never did deploy, so when our deployment order came down for here, we were excited and ready to mobilize, generate and deploy.”

Malackowski, who is the 81st EFS commander at Spangdahlem, said that he is honored to work and serve with everyone here on such an important mission.

“Our mission (here) is to kill, capture and deny sanctuary to al-Qaida and Taliban, and provide humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people,” said Col. Bill Busby, 455th EOG commander. “I am delighted to have this talented group of warriors here to accomplish this important mission. I am confident that the 81st EFS will help us take the fight to these terrorists and in so doing, significantly reduce the terrorist threat back home and around the world.”

Part of the mission is to support U.S. and coalition forces deployed throughout the country here, Malackowski said.

“We feel that we’re experts on providing close air support and airpower for the air component commander, ground forces commander, and airpower to CJTF-180,” he said.

To prepare for the close air support mission here, Malackowski said the pilots reviewed information about the terrain in Afghanistan and learned about the rules of engagement for the operational tasking of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“The entire 52nd Fighter Wing [at Spangdahlem] consolidated their planning efforts in order for us to effectively and efficiently deploy to this theater,” he said. “Because of the great support from both the 104th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron and 455th EOG here, our transition is going extremely well.”

One of the goals for the deployment is to gain experience, Malackowski said.

“I hope to get the 52nd Fighter Wing people experienced in the operational task safely and effectively,” he said.

“We also want to leave our mark on the base here and continue on the great improvement that everyone before us has brought to the base,” Malackowski concluded.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: “A Knight’s Tale.” A peasant squire takes up the identity of his master when the knight suffers an untimely demise.



Tomorrow’s movie will be “Disappearing Act.”

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Thursday
Bagram:	Scattered t-storms H: 91F L: 66F	Mostly clear H: 91F L: 64F
Kandahar:	Dusty H: 99F L: 68F	Clear H: 100F L: 68F
Kabul:	Dust H: 91F L: 61F	Partly cloudy H: 93F L: 61F
Uzbekistan:	Isolated showers H: 83F L: 58F	Mostly cloudy H: 87F L: 53F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)



Lucious Harris and the Nets shot 37 percent in their Game 3 loss.

Spurs continue to prove their worth

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Whenever times are tough, the San Antonio Spurs can always find refuge in the most unlikely of places away from the SBC Center.

“We play better on the road than at home,” said Tony Parker of the Spurs’ league-best 27-14 road record in the regular season. “I don’t know why.”

Disappointed by another defeat that exposed their poor free-throw shooting and careless ball handling in Friday’s 87-85 loss, the Spurs not surprisingly made themselves at home at Continental Airlines Arena.

Parker, the second-year point guard, showed them how.

Parker scored 26 points, including 11 in the final period, as the Spurs regained homecourt advantage with an 84-79 victory over the New Jersey Nets Sunday night.

“My shot was going down in the second half,” said Parker, who shot 9-of-21, which, on this night, was George Gervin-like. “I finally found a rhythm.”

Down 57-54 going into the fourth quarter, the Spurs reeled off a 19-5 run to take a 73-62 lead with 5:21 remaining. Parker buried two 3-pointers during the game-turning spurt, sinking his second from the top of the key for a seemingly comfortable nine-point bulge.

The Nets didn’t panic and rallied behind their leader, Jason Kidd, whose driving dish to Aaron Williams cut the deficit to 77-75 with 1:43 to play. New Jersey never got the chance to tie the game, however, as Manu Ginobili came up with two key plays in the final minutes.

First, the rookie guard came up with a crucial defensive stop to keep the Spurs ahead by three, stripping the ball from Lucious Harris with 1:18 left. Ginobili then sank a baseline runner for an 80-75 cushion after the possession was prolonged by Tim Duncan, who sneaked past Martin to grab the offensive rebound on the latter of Parker’s two missed free throws.

“That right there was probably the difference,” Nets coach Byron Scott said.

Duncan had 21 points, 16 rebounds and seven assists, but more importantly, the league MVP made his free throws, sinking nine of

12 after missing 3 of 10 on Friday.

Kenyon Martin led the Nets with 23 points, 11 rebounds and four steals. Kerry Kittles had 21 points and Jason Kidd managed just 12 points on 6-of-19 shooting to go with 11 assists.

The series takes two days off before resuming Wednesday with Game 4 at Continental Airlines Arena.

Spurs coach Gregg Popovich was eager to see how his team would react to the “hurt” suffered their Game 2 loss. Everyone watching the game felt the pain of Popovich and Scott in the first half as the coaches watched their teams brick their way to tying the lowest scoring half in NBA playoff history.

Any offense was going to come from the outside as the Nets continued its double-teaming of Duncan to force the MVP to pass the ball out and the Spurs brought New Jersey’s running game to a complete stop with a zone defense that kept Kidd out of the paint.

Led by Duncan’s 11 points, San Antonio shot 38.2 percent (13 of 34), while New Jersey, led by Martin’s 12 points, managed just 37.1 percent (31 of 35) in trailing 33-30 at halftime.

Knicks receive second-round pick

HOUSTON — The Houston Rockets will introduce their new coach Wednesday at their new arena. It won’t be a surprise.

Jeff Van Gundy will join team owner Leslie Alexander and general manager Carroll Dawson at a news conference near the Rockets’ new downtown home, which is under construction.

Van Gundy told Dawson Monday he was ready to succeed Rudy Tomjanovich as the Rockets’ coach, pending his agent completing contract negotiations.

On Tuesday, Dawson was getting ready to sign assistant coaches and preparing for the NBA draft.

“My reaction is very excited,” Dawson said. “We had a lot of competition for this guy. Everybody who had an opening was trying to get him, so we feel very fortunate.

“I’m going to start signing whoever he wants as assistants, then we’ve got to get ready for the draft.

“We don’t have a first-round pick, but we have people coming in to work out.”

Among the names mentioned for an assistant coaching position is former Knicks star Patrick Ewing, now an assistant with the Washington Wizards. Van Gundy coached Ewing with the Knicks.

“He’s (Van Gundy) mentioned that, but I think there’s a lot of competition for Patrick,” Dawson said. “Patrick might be in the same position that Jeff was under because he’s under contract. I don’t know if we can talk to him.

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“That’s going to be up to the coach.”

The Rockets have agreed to give the Knicks a second-round draft pick as compensation for Van Gundy, who is under contract through July 31.

Former Rockets and current Knicks forward Othella Harrington suggested the Rockets get ready for a disciplined coach who gives extreme attention to detail.

“He’s a guy who’s going to work constantly to improve the team and the organization,” Harrington said. “He’s a very intense guy. There are no questions about his ability to coach and to win and there’s no question about him wanting to win.

“It’s going to be him coming in and instilling that on the other guys.”

Floyd’s base salary \$4.8 million for three years

NEW ORLEANS — The New Orleans Hornets decided to give Tim Floyd a chance to prove he is a better coach than his disastrous NBA debut with the Chicago Bulls.

Floyd, whose 49-190 record with Chicago in just over three seasons left him with one of the lowest winning percentages in NBA history, reached an agreement with the Hornets on Monday.

Floyd said he will earn about \$4.8 million in base salary over three years, plus incentives tied to playoff victories, but added, “I didn’t get back into this for the money.”

Hornets vice president Bob Bass has long said it would be unfair to judge Floyd — a successful college coach — by his experience in Chicago, where he had a young and often changing roster in the Bulls’ post-Michael Jordan era.

Floyd “never made one excuse. He had patience and understanding in a very difficult situation,” Bass said. “I sincerely believe he’ll develop our young players, and at the same time let our veteran players use their talents — let them play. That’s what was important to me.”

Floyd also contrasted his new job with his last one, saying that personnel decisions in Chicago constantly put him back at “square-one.” The Hornets, who have made the playoffs four straight seasons, have the type of roster any coach would want, he said.

“It’s a team comprised of very skilled veteran players and talented kids,” Floyd said. “This is a team and organization that has not only won, but one I believe will win at a higher level.”

Floyd, who was a guest Tuesday on the The Dan Patrick Show on ESPN Radio, said he has talked to and is considering hiring former Iowa State coach, Larry Eustachy, as an assistant.

Eustachy resigned last month after publication of photographs showing his partying at an apartment in Columbia, Mo., after Iowa State’s Jan. 21 loss. The photos, printed in The Des Moines Register, were taken by a University of Missouri student. The photos show Eustachy holding a can of beer, kissing young women on the cheek and being kissed by them.

Floyd’s immediate challenge could be establishing a good

rapport with players who were outspoken in their support of former coach Paul Silas before the Hornets decided on May 4 — the day after the Philadelphia eliminated New Orleans from the first round of the playoffs — not to renew his contract.

“Those guys being behind Paul Silas — I love it,” Floyd said. “I know what players are about, and that’s player-coach loyalty.”

He said his first priority will be to talk to his new players.

Silas, the franchise’s career victory leader with a 208-155 record in four-plus seasons, was earning about \$1.5 million a year with the Hornets but was seeking about twice that.

When the Hornets let Silas go, they said money was not the issue, but rather finding a coach who could take the Hornets to the NBA Finals.

Floyd’s base annual salary will be among the lowest in the league, but Hornets majority owner George Shinn maintained money was not a deciding factor.

“Everything we do is a business decision,” Shinn said. “The objective is to get the best person you can. Pat Riley is supposedly one of the great NBA coaches but you wouldn’t know it by his record last season (25-57). You can’t be a good coach if you don’t have good players. We have the players that we think are going to make (Floyd) shine.”

The Hornets interviewed two other coaches — Mike Fratello and Brian Hill. Fratello withdrew from consideration last week.

Despite his NBA struggles, Floyd remains popular in New Orleans, where he’s lived nearly 14 years over several stints, including a six-year period as head coach at the University of New Orleans. He took UNO to the NCAA tournament twice before moving on the Iowa State for four seasons and three NCAA tournament appearances.

“We’ve been part of this wonderful and unique community before ... It feels good to be home. It feels like this is where we belong,” Floyd said. But he sought to stress that his coaching qualifications are the real reason he got the job.

“Ultimately, it will not matter where I’m from in terms of winning,” he said.

