Software team now tests wiring in minutes, not days

BY JENNY GORDON
jenny.gordon@robins.af.mil

Testing complex electrical wiring systems inside aircraft might sound a bit intimidating, but for a team from the 5th Air Force Logistics Complex, it's just another day on the office.

The union uses the Automatic Wire Test Set not only to support aircraft testing across multiple Air Force platforms, but Navy ships as well. The cost improvement effort for the sets rolled out in the fall of 2010.

Since then, software development for the test set has been maintained by the SMXS team, along with groups from C-5 and F-15 shops, to support ongoing field testing and the design and building of the tester's cables that hook into wire systems inside various aircraft.

"What's really exciting about this is we can go to an aircraft, connect to a system - and test all the wires in a matter of minutes," said Jacob Lamme, SMXS Flight J project manager for the system.

In the past, wire testing of various systems would sometimes take up to a week or more when done with a hand-held meter. "It's a major time savings," he added. "This tester can basically do what you can't do by hand, which takes this testing to a whole new level."

"There is a cut on the flight line or to maintenance facilities at other bases about once a month to conduct tests. Since the tester is relatively new, Lamme explained that the tents do get booked up well in advance, expecting a steady 30 to 60 orders a month.

Currently, the SMXS Flight J team is working with both the 5th Combat Communications Group and the 559th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron to conduct the tests.

"This is really exciting for us because it's our first time to have a common piece of equipment that we can use on the flight line and in the shop," said Lt. Tom Gallagher, 53rd CBCS Operations Flight commander. "It's a situation where we needed help; we were asked and immediately supported."

When the call comes, members of the 5th Combat Communications Group stand ready to deploy within 72 hours.

"That call can also be right here at home," said the assistance of the 559th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron - one of four mission squadrons whose military members specialize in complex combat communications equipment and networks.

It's been almost a year since the squadron began supporting the base information technology network on the flight line - specifically maintenance and scheduling personnel with the 559th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

Normally a deployable combat unit, the prospect of helping here is a welcome opportunity.

"While they're upgrading their infrastructure, we're filling the gap," said Fr. Lt. Tom Gallagher, 53rd CBCS Operations Flight commander. "It was a situation where the base needed help, we were asked and immediately supported."

Two radio frequency antennas, are temporarily mounted on top of two trailers on the flightline.

L-R, Staff Sgts. Aziel Perez and Travis Hood, 53rd Combat Communications Squadron cyber transport craftsmen, perform a proactive maintenance inspection on a radio frequency module antenna.

5th CCG assists with wiring upgrade

BY JENNY GORDON
jenny.gordon@robins.af.mil

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Two radio frequency antennas, are temporarily mounted on top of two trailers on the flightline.

The 5th Combat Communications Group is the newest unit stationed in Warner Robins, Ga. It’s a self-sufficient unit that can deploy anywhere in the world on short notice.

The group recently transitioned from manual testing to the use of an automated test system.

“Normally this testing takes up to a week or more when done with a hand-held meter. It’s a major time savings,” said Lamme. “This tester can basically do what you can’t do by hand, which takes this testing to a whole new level.”

“Since this is a new system,” said Lamme, “we’re getting a steady 30 to 60 orders a month. The testers do get booked up well in advance, expecting a steady 30 to 60 orders a month.”

Currently, the SMXS Flight J team is working with both the 5th Combat Communications Group and the 559th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron to conduct the tests.

“On the flight line and in the shop, we’re filling a gap,” said Lamme. "This is really exciting for us because it’s our first time to have a common piece of equipment that we can use on the flight line and in the shop.”

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L-R, Staff Sgts. Aziel Perez and Travis Hood, 53rd Combat Communications Squadron cyber transport craftsmen, perform a proactive maintenance inspection on a radio frequency module antenna.

U.S. Air Force photo by SUE SAPP

New complex plating shop safer, more efficient

BY JENNY GORDON
jenny.gordon@robins.af.mil

The Advanced of Metal Finishing Facility -- the newest building in the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex -- will boast a multitude of improved efficiencies in plating since it’s up and running later this year.

But, one of the new facility’s greatest benefits will be reduced workplace exposure to hazardous chemicals due to improved systems during the plating process.

"Bottom line, environmentally friendly and safer for the workers," said Jim Cunningham, 5th Combat Communications Group Commodities Maintenance Support Squadron process engineer.

At nearly 98,000 square feet, the facility will replace the existing plating shop in Bldg. 142, which performs a variety of chemical surface treatments for aircraft parts. The treatments include cleaning, etching, and inorganic and electroplated chrome.

Over 3,500 pounds of chemicals, situated in a staging area between ‘cell’ and ‘dry’ process areas, will be part of the automated process. Basically that means the processes occurring in all of the tank lines will be automated, allowing a worker to step from having to physically immerse parts into individual tanks.

“We’re going from a manual plating shop to a predominantly automated plating shop,” said Cunningham.

Chemicals will not only be remotely added to tanks, but a team of eight dedicated chemical technicians will be trained to perform the added responsibilities.

The new facility is part of a larger project, Project METAL, that includes a new plating shop, a metals and finishes shop, and a chemistry lab.

"METAL is about shaping the workforce to better align with future requirements, while maintaining a workforce with skills that better match the anticipated workload," Wood said.

Despite the timing of the METAL effort, it’s not related to any VERA/VSIP activities.

The facility will allow the workers to see advanced technologies existing in the defense industry and work with a workforce with skills that better match the anticipated workload.

"Beside the timing of the METAL effort, it’s not related to any VERA/VSIP activities," Wood said. "However, VERA/VSIP is about shaping the workforce to better align with future requirements, while maintaining a workforce with skills that better match the anticipated workload."

"In addition, he said, the VERA/VSIP goal was workplace simplification, taking some of the vacanciey created by the departures, and matching the workforce with skills that better match the anticipated workload.

"They’re two distinct and unrelated efforts," Wood said. "VERA/VSIP is about shaping the workforce to better align with future requirements, while maintaining a workforce with skills that better match the anticipated workload."

"There are no plans for another round of VERA/VSIP, although that is subject to change."
Norovirus: Not your average flu

BY CAPT MELANIE MULDROW
78th AMDS Public Health Flight

Have you or someone you know recently been sick with food poisoning or the stomach flu? Well, it’s possible it was norovirus. Norovirus is a very contagious virus that causes sudden gastroenteritis—infestation of the stomach and intestines—most often not related to seasonal flu.

Recently, there have been an increased number of cases reported in Georgia, including the Warner Robins area. Symptoms usually include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and some stomach cramping. Sometimes people also have a low-grade fever, chills, headache, muscle aches and fatigue. Most people get better within a day or two, but can continue to be contagious the first three days after recovery.

If you have norovirus, you can spread it very easily through contaminated hands, surfaces, food and water. People with norovirus shed billions of virus particles in their stool and vomit, and can easily infect others. There is no vaccine to prevent norovirus infection and no drug to treat it. If you have norovirus illness, drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration. If you or someone you are caring for becomes dehydrated, call your health care provider. What can you do to help protect yourself from norovirus?

BY HOLLY J. LOGAN-ARRINGTON
Rev-Up page one

Money-saving tips to survive budget cuts

The accompanying tips are provided by the Robins Airmen & Family Readiness Center

WHAT TO KNOW
For more information, visit the CDC’s norovirus website at http://www.cdc.gov/norovirus days after recovery. Young children, the elderly and people with other medical illnesses are most at risk for severe or prolonged infection. Anyone can get norovirus. It can spread quickly through contaminated hands, surfaces, food and water. People with norovirus shed billions of virus particles in their stool and vomit, and can easily infect others. There is no vaccine to prevent norovirus infection and no drug to treat it. If you have norovirus illness, drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration. If you or someone you are caring for becomes dehydrated, call your health care provider. What can you do to help protect yourself from norovirus?

By to sequestration, the Secretary of the Air Force approved the suspension of the Military Tuition Assistance effective March 11. The suspension applies to all components, including the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard on extended duty orders. The Air Force has had to make difficult choices to preserve readiness to include cancellation of training and education programs.

According to officials, military tuition assistance requests that were in the queue by 6 p.m. eastern time, March 11, will be processed by the Air Force Centralized Office. Airmen may still continue to pursue their educational goals with applicable VA education benefits that include the Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty, Montgomery GI Bill – Selected Reserve, Reserve Education Assistance Program, the Post 9/11 GI Bill, federal grants and federal financial aid.

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Getting ready

Tech. Sgt. David Drake, 359th Aerial Port Squadron Joint Base McGuire-Dix- Lakehurst, N.J., marshals a C-130 Hercules in Alexandria, Va., in support of Joint Readiness Training Center aeromedical evacuation training. Service members at the training center are taught combat patient care and aeromedical evacuation in simulated combat environment.

About 275 people attended the event, which featured speeches by local and U.S. officials, including Afghan Lt. Col. Laleh Nabizada, the first female helicopter pilot in the history of Afghan aviation, and U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost, the Air Forces Central Command director of mobility forces.

“You and your sisters have courageously chosen to take action, to work outside the home, to speak out, defend your nation and your families, and say no to threats of corruption, abuse, and violence,” Van Ovost told the audience, which included dozens of Afghan women.

“Together, you do the things that wish you and your nation harm, those who want to make your home a war zone,” Van Ovost said.

“Over the last few years we have made the Afghan air force your home,” Maj. Gen. Abdul Wahab Wardak, the commander of the AAF, told women in the audience. “The door is open to join.”

To learn more, visit www.af.mil.

Nellis pilots take first step toward F-35 operational testing

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — Two officers from the operational test and evaluation community are among the six pilots in the first F-35 Lighting II pilot training course after an Air Education and Training Command formal start training here in January.

Lt. Col. Benjamin Bishop, the 422nd Test and Evaluation Group director of operations, is one of the students who flew their first sortie in March. He will transition the F-15E Strike Eagle weapons training skills to the F-35 before he returns to Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., next month.

“I am excited, an honor to be a part of the future of this aircraft,” said Bishop. “The aircraft performed as I expected. It is fast and a different aircraft to get used to, but both are easy to fly. Like any new aircraft, it’s a different system to learn and I’m getting used to the basic maneuvers.”

According to Nellis officials, four F-35s will begin arriving soon. The 422nd TES will add the F-35A to its list of aircraft they execute command-directed operational test and evaluation for live and/or virtual environments.

AAF at Kadiz International Airport

Thundertails II, F-15E, F-15E, F-16CM Fighting Falcon and F-22A Raptor hardware, software, and weapons upgrades prior to combat Air Force release. The squadron conducts tactics development, foreign material exploitation and special access programs to optimize system combat capability.

To learn more, visit www.af.mil.

Afghan, coalition forces celebrate Afghan air force women

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN (April 4, 2013) — Afghan and coalition members dedicated 7 for a celebration of gender integration in the Afghan air force during an International Women’s Day event hosted by the House of Representatives to provide the Department of Defense with a budget for the rest of the year.

Many of the congressmen I visited were hopeful this would start the dialogue to reach a budget compromise that would mitigate the need for furloughs.

One congresswoman lead aircraft is actively engaging with local community leaders to find ways to support our workforce. The squadron’s flightline, local state and local communities, businesses, families, creditors and vendors are looking for ways to mitigate the financial burden.

I have been impressed by many banks and businesses which are looking to set up programs to support that alternate payment schedules for loans and incomes. Our banks are taking a proactive stance to get help.

Maybe the most important thing I want to convey is that we are not alone, and we will get through this difficult time together. If you need help, reach out and let someone know. I can’t think of anything where the government support is more critical and when the network for support is more energized.

Your leadership team will provide updates as events change. Our commitment is to ensure everyone has the best information possible.

Finally, you will all know to know just how proud I am of our professional workforce. We have a tough, demanding mission that is fueled by the innovation, dedication, and motivation of each and every member of our team.
The Finance Office will close today at 1 p.m. for an official function. The office will re-open Monday at 8:30 a.m. For emergencies, contact Master Sgt. Pablo Rivero at 478-550-2910.

Robins is celebrating Women’s History Month with the following events:

- A luncheon is scheduled March 26 at 11:30 a.m. at Horizons Event Center. Brigid Petrie O’Hearn, 577th Software Maintenance Squadron director, will be the guest speaker. Deadline to purchase tickets is today. The cost is $15. POC is Tech. Sgt. Jessica Colunga at 241-3025.

- An “All Women Home Build” is scheduled for April. Volunteers will work with Habitat for Humanity to give a needy family a home. POC is Waymer at 241-3025.

A Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program workshop will be March 22 and 23 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Airman & Family Readiness Center Building 794. PREP is one of the most comprehensive and well-respected divorce prevention and marriage enhancing programs in the world. It is a skills and principles-building curriculum designed to help partners say what they need to say, get to the heart of problems, and increase their connection with each other.

PREP is a prevention program for couples who are thinking about getting married, newlyweds and couples who have been married for a long time. Register now. Seating is limited.

For more information, call the Family Advocacy Program at 327-8422.

The following leadership class is scheduled for March:

- Karan Fowler will present “Five Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace” March 27 from 2 to 3:30 p.m. in the Contracting Directorate’s Executive conference room in Building 301 East Wing.

Please view the Robins Splash Page and click on Team Robins for any changes in class schedules.

To reach the 78th Security Forces Base Defense Operations Center for non-emergency calls dial 468-2187.

When dialing E911, which is also used as the Crime Stop hotline, callers are requested to state whether the call is in reference to an emergency or a crime stop notification to ensure proper routing.

Migration of the Military Personnel Data System will continue through March 27. During this period MIPDS will be unavailable, however provisions have been made to handle critical transactions through the Military Personnel Section. For more information, call MPS at 497-7337.

EAP Management Coaching is now available for managers and supervisors. The program focuses on maximizing a manager’s strengths to improve performance and enhance his or her quality of life.

For more information, call 497-7377.

Congrats Team Robins award winners

Senior Airman
Angelica Lango
Airman of the Year

Master Sgt.
Charisse Bruce
First Sgt. of the Year

Tech. Sgt.
Ryan Stanley
NCO of the Year

Proudly Nominated

Warner Meadows
Coast of the Year Cat. 1

Paula West
Coast of the Year Cat. 2

Vanessa Screen
Coast of the Year Cat. 3

Senior Master Sgt.
Jeffrey Taylor
Senior NCO of the Year

Senior Master Sgt.
Gnester Brown
Civilian of the Year Cat. 4

Senior Airman
Angelica Longo
Airman of the Year

Captain
Gilberto Perez
CGO of the Year

Tech. Sgt.
Ryan Stanley
NCO of the Year

Clay Kernell
Coast of the Year Cat. 5

William Arnett
Civilian of the Year Cat. 6

Senior Airman
Andrew Hull
Civilian of the Year Cat. 1

Greater Brown
Civilian of the Year Cat. 4

Senior Master Sgt.
Jeffrey Taylor
Senior NCO of the Year

Captain
Gilberto Perez
CGO of the Year

Senior Airman
Angelica Longo
Airman of the Year

Master Sgt.
Charisse Bruce
First Sgt. of the Year

Paula West
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Giving back, Georgia guardsman taking the heat for his community

BY TECH. SGT. REGINA YOUNG
116th Air Control Wing Public Affairs

Like other military members who choose to volunteer, a 116th Air Control Wing noncommissioned officer is stepping up for his community.

Master Sgt. Todd, from the 129th Combat Training Squadron, recently graduated from level-one firefighter training, a course giving volunteers the basic information about fires and fire skills.

“When a woman in a laundromat was having unexplained chest pain, I didn’t know what to do so I reached for my wife – a nurse for more than 23 years,” said Todd. “It really impressed me … both my wife’s interaction with the woman and the first responder’s ability to save a life.”

That incident, and the encouragement from a fellow guardsman who has been a volunteer firefighter for many years, prompted Todd to embark on his journey.

Since Todd graduated from training, he said he has realized that being a volunteer firefighter is a lifestyle change.

At the end of the day when the Guard uniform comes off, Todd is ready at a moment’s notice to don his firefighter attire, join the department and respond to a call for help in his community.

“I love my job with the JSTARS aircraft, the mission and what we are doing in the world,” said Todd. “It’s the right time in my life to do more in the community.”

Editor’s note: First names of flight crew members are not used for security reasons.

What constitutes government vehicle misuse

Many people have heard the term “Vehicle Misuse,” but not everyone is clear on what defines vehicle misuse. According to AFI 24-301 “Providing a government vehicle solely or principally to enhance the comfort or convenience of member(s) is not permitted.” Basically stopping at the ATM, lemon lot, TIP office, Airman’s Attic, etc., is not permitted and is an example of vehicle misuse. Another type of vehicle misuse is blatant misuse, meaning you knowingly misused the vehicle, i.e., trips to the bank, lunch or shopping.

Military members, civilian contractors, and DoD civilians have the responsibility to stop and report vehicle misuse either through the Vehicle Operations Office at 926-3493 or 468-4628, or through GSA directly via its email address at hwmymdriving@gssa.gov.

The information needed to complete a report is time, place, vehicle type, license plate number and the reportee’s name and contact info. The punishments are severe – whether it is through the UCMJ for military or through applicable laws for civilian personnel.

So do yourself and the government a favor, if you aren’t sure if it’s legal or authorized, get clarification or just don’t do it. It’s not worth the punishment just for the sake of convenience.

What do I do?

The Robins 2013 Air Force Assistance Fund campaign has completed its first week with donations of $7,815.

The theme is “Commitment to Caring,” and this year’s goal is $78,833.

The AFAF raises money for charities which provide support within the Air Force family.

They include the Air Force Villages Charitable Foundation, the LeMay Foundation, Air Force Enlisted Village and the Air Force Aid Society.

In 2012 through the AFAF, the official charity of the Air Force, Robins was able to provide 116 forms of emergency loan assistance and four grants.

It also provided support for community programs and educational funding.

To donate to the AFAF, primary unit project officers include: Tech Sgt. Jehu Forte, 461st Air Control Wing; 2nd Lt. Diana Hall, 78th Air Base Wing; Master Sgt. Thomas Williams, 498th Combat Communications Wing; Senior Master Sgt. Lisa McCarthy, AFRC; Staff Sgt. Vernon Pifer, WR-ALC; 1st Lt. Greg Capuzzo, AFLCMC; Master Sgt. Thomas Sokren, 359th FLTS; 1st Lt. Yvonne Johnston, 638th SCMG.

AFAF rolls into second week

BY JENNY GORDON
jenny.gordon.ctr@robins.af.mil

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To donate:


Donations must be completed by March 29.

Tax ID: 26-0197-319

Watch your SPEED ... WE ARE WATCHING YOU
the Robins team was the first group ever to take charge of the tester’s programming capabilities as well as its cable design.

“We are pioneering this effort,” he said.

Once the AWTS team receives a customer requirement, which can also come from highly-specialized systems inside Air Force Special Operations Command air-craft, C-130s or even H-60 helicopters, the team takes a system’s engineering data (technical orders, wiring diagrams, etc.), learns the system and programs it into the tester line by line by using their software. The process can take several months.

Once it’s ready, the tester is unpacked with its cables, and hooked into hundreds of different wiring components. Looking on a computer screen, a continually test for example can easily detect whether a wire’s electrical resistance is good enough, or needs to be replaced, or if wire faults are also detected. To date, the tester has experienced a 100 percent success rate, but there’s always room for improvement, said Lanier.

“This can turn an inexperienced maintainer into a super-experienced troubleshooter because it does all the work for you,” he explained.

Using the tester for preventive maintenance is something else he’d like to see happen. For example, testing the integrity of a plane’s wiring system over time and incorporating it as a tool with inspections can lead to finding problems early.

That only leads to less time planes are on the ground for maintenance. Since 2010, about 30 to 40 tests have been run on various aircraft. With each new test comes a better understanding of how to best support the aircraft and maintainers.

Maintainers, who may be reluctant to test the new equipment, quickly adopt it as a supplemental tool when they realize the benefits — especially in the present atmosphere of doing more with less, and tighter deadlines.

“Our test equipment is the same here as it would be in a deployable environment,” said Staff Sgt. Travis Hood, a 53rd CBCS cyber transport craftsman.

Providing high data communications to its users, the antennas can provide services up to a three-mile range. While downrange, that means a connection can be established not only in the middle of a base, but outlying areas that need it as well.

“The 5th MHS is always happy to support our mission partners as everything we do relies on teamwork,” said Col. Bill Wainhck, 5th CCG commander. “The 555th MXS mission plays a vital role in the sustainment of the Air Force air mobility mission, which is a critical component in our ability to deliver combat communications and airfield systems worldwide.”

That idea is we’ll set a line up in the new facility, get it running reliably, and once the line is established, we’ll shut down the equivalent processes in the old facility.”

There is still much work to be done in the new building. Its assembly lines for metals treatment include a total of 153 small and large tanks. The larger tanks are sized in process much larger C-5 and C-17 parts, and now have a capacity of up to 7,600 gallons. That is an increase from the maximum 1,800 gallon tanks housed in the old facility.
Local Community Festivals

Local community partners will be hosting festivals that provide some FREE entertainment for individuals and families. Below links will provide more information.

**DUBLIN**
St Patrick’s Day Festival now through March 24.
To find out more, visit www.dublinstpatricks.com.

**MACON**
Cherry Blossom Festival today through March 24.
Visit www.cherryblossom.com for more details

**PERRY**
Dogwood Festival April 13 and 14.
To read more, visit www.perrygeorgiachamber.com/dogwoodfestival.

Editor’s Note: No federal endorsement is intended or implied.