

Desert Lightning News

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Serving Southern Arizona's military community, including Davis-Monthan Air Force Base

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FEATURE



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Vaughn Weber

BUSHWHACKER 22-04

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Red Flag-Rescue 22-2 offers advanced warfighter training opportunity

By Airman 1st Class
WILLIAM TURNBULL

355th Wing Public Affairs

Red Flag-Rescue is a joint exercise that involves other service branches as well as partner nations and is the Department of Defense's premier combat search and rescue exercise held twice a year, hosted exclusively by Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and goes on for roughly two weeks.

Red Flag-Rescue 22-2 involved several units from the 355th Wing, including pararescuemen and pilots, in addition to members of the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force Regiment, and other rescue units from Nellis AFB, Nevada, all converging at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, Aug. 8-18, 2022.



U.S. Air Force Photos by Airman 1st Class William Turnbull

An HH-60G Pave Hawk assigned to the 55th Rescue Squadron, flies over an exercise incident site at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, Aug. 11, 2022. Davis-Monthan Air Force Base is the only installation that hosts Red Flag-Rescue. RF-R is hosted twice a year and includes various American units as well as various partner forces.

Members of the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force Regiment exit an HH-60G Pave Hawk assigned to the 55th Rescue Squadron, at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, Aug. 11, 2022. Red Flag-Rescue is the Department of Defense's premier combat search and rescue exercise, involving various wings and partner nations

Desert Lightning News

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Whether it is a mass casualty or a downed pilot rescue, the participants of RF-R use the skills learned from their respective training pipeline and sharpen them through repetition during RF-R so there is no room for doubt if the need arises to utilize CSAR.

"Red Flag-Rescue is the premier Air Combat Command-directed, joint, national accredited personnel recover exer-

cise conducted at Davis-Monthan AFB," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Jeffery Budis, 414th Combat Training Squadron commander. "We started doing RF-R about 15-20 years ago, it began right here at DM. The rescue forces at large determined that they needed deeper levels of tactical training than some of the larger force exercises of the world were able to provide."

The exercise provides advanced, realistic and relevant air-to-surface integration warfighter training in a robust contested, degraded and operationally limited environment.

"We provide the players with a variety of challenges in their scenarios," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Warren Metcalf, RF-R 22-2 air cell team chief. "It can be

See RED FLAG, Page 3



HISTORY HIGHLIGHT

1990s — In honor of the countdown to the U.S. Air Force’s 75th Anniversary in September, we’re showcasing pieces of Davis-Monthan Air Force Base history and highlighting how far it’s come over the years through innovation, accelerating change and thriving through the decades.

In the 1990s several big changes and events happened, including:

- From 1980 to late 1991, the 22nd Tactical Air Support Squadron and 23rd Tactical Air Support Squadron were both stationed at DM as part of the 602nd Tactical Air Control Wing, when DM was under the 836th Air Division, Tactical Air Command.
- In 1992, the 355th Tactical Training Wing was re-designated as the 355th Wing. The 836th AD was inactivated and TAC changed to Air Combat Command.
- The 23rd TASS, 41st and 43rd ECS deployed from DM in support of Operation Desert Storm, as did several hundred maintenance, operations, support personnel and pilots from the 355th WG.
- In honor of Capt. Patrick Olson, the only member killed in action from the 836th Air Division during Operation Desert Storm, a flag pole was placed in Heritage Park and dedicated to his memory.
- From 1997 to 1999, the 354th Fighter Squadron deployed to support Operation Southern Watch, enforcing the no-fly zone south of the 33rd parallel over Iraq.



Courtesy photos



Warrior of the Month

Warrior of the Month celebrates outstanding Desert Lightning Airmen who go above and beyond to contribute to the United States Air Force mission.

Congratulations to August’s Warrior of the Month, U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Alexandra May, 42nd Electronic Combat Squadron. May is an outstanding leader and unparalleled Airman. During her recent Immediate Response Force deployment, May supported Chief of Staff of the Air Force directives head-on while supervising nine members through more than 12 sorties, developing tactics against future threats and projecting dominant Electromagnetic Attack against near-peer adversaries. May also secured a hi-visibility Temporary Duty opportunity for a student to support the first Colombian Action Plan event in Paraguay, where her student gave a two-hour human rights brief, in her target language, to 14 joint service Paraguayan aviators.

DM Airmen race into action for emergency offshore rescue

355th Wing Public Affairs

On Aug. 5, 2022, the 563rd Rescue Group received a request to support the 129th Rescue Wing, California Air National Guard, with one HC-130 to provide air refueling and overhead command and control capabilities in an offshore rescue.

Airmen from across Davis-Monthan Air Force Base sprang into action, working tirelessly throughout the weekend to rescue a man experiencing a life-threatening condition onboard an oil tanker located hundreds of miles off the coast of California.

Aircrew, maintainers, aircrew flight equipment technicians, aviation resource managers, airfield operators and weather Airmen went to work coordinating and planning well into Friday evening for a Saturday morning take off. That same day, the Guardian Angels and HC-130 crews from the 129th RW airdropped a team into the vicinity of the oil tanker to render critical care to the patient, who at that point was at risk of losing a limb to a rapidly expanding infection.

The next morning, maintainers from the 79th Rescue Generation Squadron and aircrew from 79th Rescue Squadron worked together to launch the aircraft and fly to Moffett Field, California, for additional mission planning and integration with the 129th RW.

When the oil tanker was within range of the California based HH-60s, the 79th RQS crews flew 390 nautical miles off the coast of California to execute three helicopter air refuelings, provide weather reconnaissance, and relay vital communications between the Guardian Angel

team on the boat, the HH-60 crews racing to exfil the patient, and the Rescue Operations Center.

The mission was executed flawlessly and the patient was ultimately flown in stable condition to Moffett Field for follow on medical care.

The actions are a direct result of what the Airmen of the 563rd RG do every day to maintain the most capable Rescue Force on the planet. Their sacrifices and teamwork saved the life of a man who will get to see his loved ones again.



Courtesy photo



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Vaughn Weber

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Kayla West, 355th Operational Support Squadron weather craftsman, inputs oceanography data for a weather brief at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 16, 2022. On Aug. 5, 2022, West provided a detailed weather brief to aid in the rescue of a man experiencing a life-threatening condition hundreds of miles off the coast of California. West gathered sea state and drop zone information for every hour of the rescue mission, including sectioning data for the air refueling route.

LEFT: A team of Airmen from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base provide aid in a rescue hundreds of miles off the coast of California, Aug. 7, 2022.

RED FLAG

(from Page 1)

something as simple as a pre-planned exercise like a downed pilot that players will have to go out and get, but we also have scenarios where they are planning to cover a strike package, and we are going to surprise them with a mass casualty event. They now have to figure out how to get to those casualties.”

Whether the U.S. military is providing humanitarian aid during a natural

disaster, or proving combat power in a conflict with a near-peer adversary, learning how to execute CSAR missions in a joint-service environment will drastically improve mission success rates.

The U.S. Air Force continues building its interoperability with other nations by participating in and facilitating exercises like these in order to improve and maintain our readiness to deter, and if necessary, defeat near-peer adversaries that may arise.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon

Four GTR-18A rockets are placed on launch rails during exercise Red Flag-Rescue 22-2 at Playas Training Center, New Mexico, Aug. 11, 2022. Airmen from Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, played as an opposing force during RF-R by monitoring for aircraft via radar and launching GTR-18A rockets at them. RF-R is an Air Combat Command-sponsored, Joint National Training Center-certified, two-week, live-fly, combat search and rescue (CSAR) exercise designed and executed by Detachment 1, 414th Combat Training Squadron.



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355th Wing commander presents new wing priorities at first all-call



U.S. Air Force photos by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon

U.S. Air Force Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander, introduces himself to Airmen from across the wing and shares new Wing priorities during his first all-call at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 5, 2022. During the all-call, Mills set expectations for himself and all members of DM with the new priorities: fight, fit, family — respected, connected, protected.

LEFT: U.S. Air Force Col. Scott Mills, 355th Wing commander, shares with Airmen that he intends to be more present and accessible on social media during his first all-call at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 5, 2022. During the all-call Mills set expectations for himself and all members of DM.

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A glimpse into the future for the 55th Electronic Combat Group



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Vaughn Weber

An EC-37B Compass Call arrives at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 17, 2022. Upon completion of further testing, the EC-37B Compass Call is scheduled to replace the EC-130H Compass Call, providing enhanced flight performance with a commercial business jet airframe. Compass Call suppresses air defenses by preventing the transmission of essential information between adversaries, their weapon systems, and control networks.



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BUSHWHACKER 22-04;

By Staff Sgt.
ALEX MILLER

355th Wing

The 355th Wing hosted various training scenarios during Bushwhacker 22-04 at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 15-18, 2022.

This iteration of Bushwhacker focused on Anti-terrorism/Force Protection threats, procedures and actions to safeguard the base. These are critical skills for Airmen as they learn to deal with situations they may face downrange.

“We create a multitude of realistic scenarios in high-stress environments and expect them to perform to the best of their abilities,” said U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. David Lawhead, 355th Wing Staff Agencies wing exercise planner. “While things don’t always work out perfectly, we capture lessons learned and developed best practices going forward.”

This exercise helped broaden and refine the skill sets DM Airmen have to provide the wing the ability to rapidly deploy agile and self-sufficient forces.

“The readiness exercise that was performed this week was part of the Commander’s Inspection Program,” said Andy Infante, 355th Wing Staff Agencies deputy director of inspections. “Our job is to ensure compliance and mission readiness while continuously improving the wing’s capabilities.”

The Wing is developing Airmen to meet the needs of the ever-changing global climate of war by forging an unmatched and unprecedented state of high-end readiness.

“The Bushwhacker exercises are important because they ensure a constant state of readiness for our Airmen,” said Lawhead. “This ensures that if these types of incidents ever happen, Davis-Monthan is ready to respond.”

The Wing is leading the way in executing the priorities of Air Force and Department of Defense senior leaders by staying ready to exercise combat airpower anywhere, anytime through constantly evolving and enhanced training.

As a reminder, any suspicious activity should be reported to the Base Defense Operations Center.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Andrea Anderson, 355th Security Forces defender, checks locked doors during an active shooter exercise as part of Bushwhacker 22-04 at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 18, 2022. The exercise tested the response time of SFS defenders as well as the response of the 355th Medical Group to an active shooter threat.

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Kyle Lyon, explosive ordnance disposal technician, inspects a device located in a vehicle during Bushwhacker 22-04 at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 18, 2022. The exercise focused on Anti-terrorism/Force Protection threats and actions to safeguard the base.



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Nathaniel, explosive ordnance disposal technician, uses a chainsaw to cut through a metal structure during an active shooter exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 18, 2022. The exercise tested the skill sets DM Airmen have to provide the wing the ability to rapidly deploy agile and self-sufficient forces.

U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Vaughn Weber

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Paige Weldon. Tech. Sgt. Kyle Lyon, 355th Civil Engineering Squadron explosive ordnance disposal technician, responds to a simulated explosive ordnance during exercise Bushwacker 22-04 at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 17, 2022. This iteration of Bushwacker 22-04 simulates Force Protection threats, procedures and response.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Alex Miller

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Kyle Lyon, 355th Civil Engineering Squadron explosive ordnance disposal technician, puts on a bomb suit during Bushwacker 22-04 at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 17.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Alex Miller

Tech. Sgt. Nathaniel Sanchez Conary, 355th Civil Engineering Squadron explosive ordnance disposal technician, gathers the tools needed to inspect a simulated explosive ordnance during exercise Bushwacker 22-04 at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 17. This exercise helped broaden the training opportunities for all personnel and help ensure all personnel have to provide the wing the ability to rapidly deploy against threats.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Vaughn Weber

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. David Lawhead, 355th Wing exercise planner, helps direct an active shooter exercise at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, Aug. 18, 2022. The 355th Medical Group held the active shooter training with the 355th Security Forces as part of Bushwacker 22-04.

48th RQS human performance optimization

By Airman 1st Class
WILLIAM TURNBULL

355th Wing Public Affairs

Human performance optimization is a program the Air Force implemented as a support system for those with the most physically and mentally taxing jobs.

With the support of the 355th Medical Group, the 48th Rescue Squadron Human Performance Optimization flight is able to keep its pararescuemen, combat rescue officers and combat mission support Airmen fit-to-fight on all fronts.

Returning from a deployment or general wear-and-tear, HPO is designed to keep the "human weapon system" fully capable year-round as well as increase the longevity of the Airmen who are constantly asked to bear a heavy burden for the sake of national defense.

"We are particularly designed to optimize our special warfare operators," said U.S. Air Force Maj. Laurence Pass, 48th RQS HPO flight commander. "We look at ourselves as people who not only maintain and prevent injury to the human weapon system, but truly optimize it and raise the baseline level of functioning across both physical and behavioral health domains."

The 48th RQS's HPO staffing consist of an active duty licensed clinical psychologist



U.S. Air Force Photo by Airman 1st Class William Turnbull

Pictured is the 48th Rescue Squadron's Human Performance Optimization physical therapy room at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, July 18, 2022. The 48th RQS's HPO flight is designed not only to assist in physical and mental recovery, but raise the baseline of resilience for the individuals that utilize the service.

and an active duty physical therapist. The civilian employment consists of an embedded athletic trainer, a licensed clinical social worker, a contracted athletic trainer, the 355th Wing dietician, a strength and conditioning coach, a part-time massage therapist and a part-time optometrist.

With an access-to-care rate of 0.22 days

of requested service to appointment with a provider, anyone seeking care is typically seen during the same day as scheduling an appointment with most of the aforementioned specialist within the unit. Over 95% of 48th RQS's PJ and CRO personnel regularly utilize the HPO program.

"Particularly with special operations forc-

es there is a higher likelihood of increased physical and psychological disturbances," said James Smuda, 48th RQS HPO program manager. "As a result of that, HPO teams have been implemented across the Air Force to assist these Airmen with increased amounts of stress."

The HPO flight also assists in spouse support while the service member is deployed by bringing them into the unit, introducing themselves to the spouse, explaining to them what to expect, and reassuring them they are not alone during this process.

"The deployer is so saturated with tasks and trying to get out the door that they don't have time to explain the context of what's happening," said Pass. "We try to bridge that gap by giving them information, letting them know what is actionable, what to expect and how things go so that it can alleviate some of that stress that they're feeling."

The HPO program that the 48th RQS has adopted has shown that its existence has improved the physical recovery and mental resilience of PJ and CRO personnel who have used it. The 355th Wing is building an unprecedented level of operational readiness across its rescue and attack mission by constantly improving the support functions, like the 48th RQS's HPO program, that develop the most important asset of the U.S. Air Force, its Airmen.

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SCO: Lt Russell, McKayla (520)228-4312

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- Talking about wanting to die or to kill oneself
- Looking for a way to kill oneself
- Feeling hopeless or having no purpose
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Sleeping too little or too much
- Acting anxious, agitated, or reckless
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge

ASK QUESTIONS

- "Do you ever think about suicide?"
- "Do you plan to hurt or kill yourself?"
- "Have you attempted suicide before?"
- "Have you thought about when you would do it (today, tomorrow, next week)?"
- Have you thought about what method you would use?"

DO'S

- Let the person talk and LISTEN to them without judgement
- Reassure them that treatment and help is available
- Tell them what they are experiencing is treatable and that suicidal feelings are temporary

DON'T'S

- Don't try to minimize problems or shame a person into changing their mind
- Don't try to convince a person who is suicidal that "it's not that bad"
- Don't preach about suicide being right or wrong



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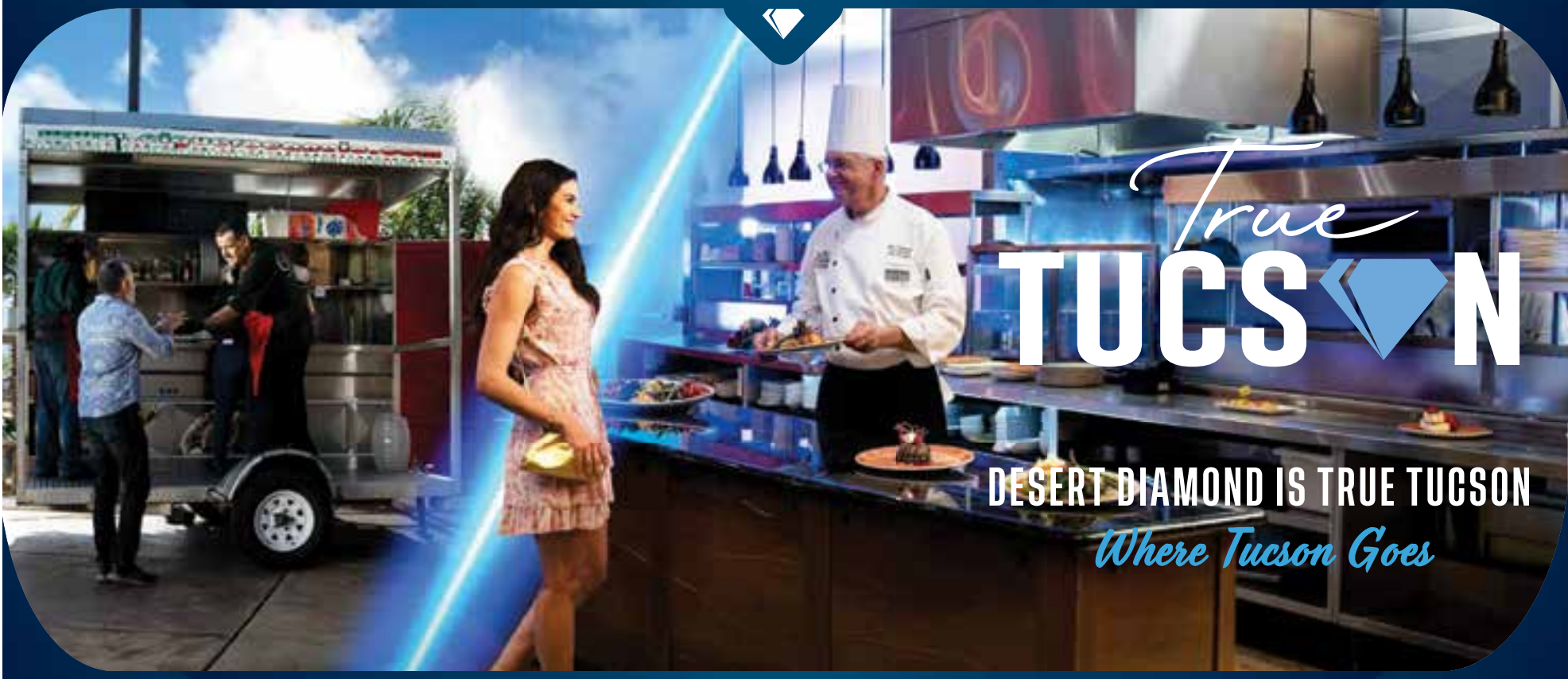
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