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'Petting Zoo' temporary closed, being relocated

by Tech. Sgt. AJ Hyatt

Nellis AFB, Nev.

Located at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., the U.S. Air Force's premier Threat Training Facility, owned and managed by the 547th Intelligence Squadron, houses a collection of adversary weapons including ground equipment, surface-to-air missile systems, and aircraft.

Currently, the TTF, also known as the "Petting Zoo," is closed to the public while the equipment is being relocated at Nellis AFB near the Simmons Gate as part of the 365th Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Group MILCON project.

The expected completion of the relocation move and re-opening is early 2023.

What is the 'Petting Zoo'?

"The purpose of the TTF is to educate and train warfighters through a blend of physical and virtual instructional methodologies," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Jeremy Hirsch, 547th Intelligence Squadron commander. "Seeing these real weapons systems up close offers unique opportunities to understand how they might be used by an adversary in combat."

While much of the equipment is Soviet era, these systems can bolster the unit's understanding of tactics observed on modern battlefields like Ukraine, and can be used as building blocks toward understanding more advanced threats being fielded by our adversaries, according to Hirsch.

Why the relocation?

"The TTF move offers an opportunity to bring threat-representative training to a new generation of Airmen," Hirsch said.

One of the first benefits of the move is the opportunity to refurbish equipment that has been sunbaking in the Las Vegas heat for decades to restore the look and feel of the older systems.

The 547th team has carefully planned the new layout to take students on a journey from early technology to newer weapons systems. For example, there will be a "MiG Alley" that starts with a Korean War-era MiG-17 Fresco and ends with a MiG-29 Fulcrum.



Courtesy photograph

The U.S. Air Force's premier Threat Training Facility is located at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., and operated and maintained by the 547th Intelligence Squadron. The 547th IS is the U.S. Air Force's "Center of Excellence" for adversary tactics analysis. The unit compiles, writes and edits the Air Force's Threat Reference Guide and analyzes, refines and disseminates intelligence on adversary tactics and weapons employment for customers throughout the Department of Defense. The TTF is currently closed and expected to re-open in early 2023 after its relocation.

"We will also maintain our SA-8 and SA-13 surface-to-air missile systems in partial working condition to continue to offer unique training opportunities to Airmen and visitors using real systems," Hirsch added.

According to Hirsch, in order to maximize the training value of the TTF, they are blending technology to fill training gaps to take students beyond what is in front of them using tools such as QR-code links to videos and information that can be accessed

from any smart phone and will be taking delivery of several new assets that will become available to our customers at a classified level.

In the end, this effort to modernize the TTF will pay dividends for the Joint Force by helping the warfighter better understand the threats they will face in training environments and in combat.

What can people expect in the meantime?

In the interim, there will still be several opportunities to interact with

some of the weapon systems and 547th IS instructors, including the Nellis AFB Air Show which is scheduled for November.

"We expect to provide several static displays and offer walk-around tours and briefs to anyone who stops by the 547th IS booth," said Hirsch.

Lastly, the 547th IS Training Flight subject matter experts remain postured to offer tailored classroom-style training opportunities for units or groups who coordinate with us ahead of time.

Brown presses case for speed, innovation, culture change across the Air Force

by Charles Pope

Air Force News

Invoking the ingenuity and courage of the Doolittle Raiders and other World War II Airmen, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. CQ Brown, Jr., beseeched the current Total Force in a Sept. 20, 2021, speech to embrace a similar “culture of innovation, collaboration and accountability that made the impossible possible.”

Change — and a new culture — are needed, Brown said during his address to the Air Force Association’s Air, Space, and Cyber Conference, to confront emerging and legitimate threats from China and “near peer” competitors. Such change is required to develop and deploy new capabilities necessary to defend the United States, its interests, and allies.

“We are seeing two significant challenges converge,” Brown said. “First, the return to strategic competition with near peer adversaries able to threaten not only the American homeland, but its ideals and values. The second, the need to holistically transform our Air Force to compete, deter, and win in a highly contested environment but blocked by bureaucracy, prioritization, and the application of resources.”

Brown’s assessment of the threats and what is needed to meet them echoed those presented earlier in the day by Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall. Like Brown, Kendall noted growth and ambitions of China as a primary strategic concern and the need for the Air Force to reset the way it operates and thinks to respond successfully.

“To overcome these challenges, we must transform our culture to one that values innovation, collaboration and accountability,” Brown said. “... We must move with a sense of urgency today in order to rise to the challenges of tomorrow. Because the return to strategic competition is our nation’s greatest challenge.”

The main themes in Brown’s remarks to an audience of Airmen, industry officials, policy makers and advocates, all echoed the call to action Brown issued more than a year ago shortly after becoming the service’s highest-ranking officer. That document, “Accelerate, Change, or Lose” is Brown’s blueprint for forcing cultural change, for adding speed to actions and decisions, and infusing a more freewheeling sense of innovation across the force.

While Brown emphasized that the Air Force must push hard to change and to accelerate in order to accomplish its missions and protect the nation, he also noted that such change is possible because of the quality of people in the Total Force.



Courtesy photo

“I truly believe we have the greatest Airmen and best defense and tech industry in the world,” he said. “Together we must work to accomplish what seems impossible. We must rise to the challenges of today to prepare for tomorrow.”

Brown said he has seen “progress” on meeting the goals he outlined but he said more is needed.

“Over the last year, I have seen the embers of a culture shift,” he said. “Our shift in culture has empowered Airmen to reduce bureaucracy and to decide what to prioritize by what is truly value added.”

He added, “Based on our deliberate efforts to change and define culture, I believe we have started to set conditions to ensure U.S. airpower can continue to be decisive in 2030 and beyond.”

But, he warned, there is no room for complacency. “A few embers here and there will not bring about the culture change,” or transform the service’s bureaucracy to move faster and with clarity of purpose,” he said.

“My job and our collective job as leaders is to pour fuel, through innovation and collaboration, on the embers to create a fire of culture change. Culture is not just sufficient, it is necessary to accomplish what seems impossible, it is necessary to transform our Air Force to meet the demands of tomorrow.”

Brown praised the Air Force’s recent performance in Afghanistan “where we saw our Airmen execute the largest airlift in history.”

But he offered a bookend to the history in Afghanistan and the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attack to what is confronted today.

“We cannot wait for a catastrophic crisis — sudden

or insidious — to drive change for our Air Force and the joint force,” he said. “It will be too late.”

He specifically highlighted actions and personal initiatives that highlight the kind of thinking and behavior needed to ensure continued superiority. “While at AF-CENT (U.S. Air Forces Central) and USAFE (United States Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa), I saw fighter squadrons prove we can generate combat power with a third less manning,” he said. “They were able to achieve this by capitalizing on multi-capable Airmen and agile combat employment concepts.”

He called out for praise Master Sgt. Jason Yunker and Master Sgt. Timothy Peters and the so-called VIPER Kit they developed from a concept “drawn on the back of a bar napkin” that allows refueling operations with any existing infrastructure.

“It reduces the footprint required to support combat generation from six vehicles, six personnel, and diplomatic clearances that take up to 15 days per TDY to ... three personnel, and no diplomatic clearances,” he said. “Not only did this change how the Air Force conducts deployed refueling operations and enable rapid global operations, it changed the lives of these Airmen.”

Lt. Miolani Grenier is another example, Brown said. While Grenier is an Air Force intelligence officer, she is certified to operate a forklift “so she could unload aircraft upon initial arrival at a deployed location.”

“This is exactly the type of culture we need,” Brown said. “If we do not challenge the status quo, we will not be able to provide airpower anytime, anywhere.”

Brown’s remarks came three days after he issued an “Innovation Letter” to Airmen. While acknowledging in the one-page letter “that innovation instinctively aligned to create the world’s dominant Air Force,” Brown said more is needed.

“To succeed, we must properly identify problems, empower decentralized solutions by individuals and teams, and infuse an ethos of innovation at all levels. Innovation depends on both creative individuals and supportive organizations to turn concepts into reality,” the letter says.

Brown carried that call to action in his remarks at the AFA conference.

“I am extremely proud of the progress we have made towards creating a culture that will ensure our success tomorrow,” he told the audience of more than 2,000 at AFA.

“But we still have work to do and we must collaborate and hold each other accountable. ... We have the opportunity, but not the time. We must accelerate change to leave our mark and make the impossible possible.”

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Strike AMU Airmen Earn Combat Edge Award



Air Force photograph by Airman 1st Class Jordan McCoy

Airmen from the 757th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron stand on the wing of an F-15E Strike Eagle at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 19, 2022. Due to the courage showed by these four Airmen, personnel in the area were able to avoid serious injury or death as a result of the aircraft fire, earning them an Air Combat Command safety award. The Strike Aircraft Maintenance Unit is part of the 757th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron which accomplishes intermediate-level maintenance on aircraft and support equipment components, maintaining avionics, laser guided weapons systems, pneudraulics, fuel systems, engines, measurement/diagnostic equipment, electro- environmental, and egress systems.



LET: Senior Airman Malik Dawson, 757th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron assistant dedicated crew chief, sits atop an F-15E at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 19, 2022. Positioning and charging a halon 1211 fire extinguisher, Dawson made it possible to quickly and effectively put out the compartment fire on the F-15E, which resulted in an Air Combat Command safety award.



LEFT: Airman 1st Class Eric Johnson, a 757th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron weapons team member, poses on top of an F-15E Strike Eagle at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 19, 2022. Noticing the fire as it started, Johnson alerted leadership to the danger and made it possible to quickly engage the fire, which resulted in an Air Combat Command safety award.



Tech. Sgt. Tyler Adams, 757th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron flight line expediter, stands next to an F-15E Strike Eagle at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 19, 2022. Standing upwind of the flames, and being aided by three other Airmen, Adams played a pivotal role in extinguishing a compartment fire in an F-15E, which resulted in an Air Combat Command safety award.



Staff Sgt. Joseph Scarmack, 757th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, kneels on the wing of an F-15E Strike Eagle at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 19, 2022. Standing upwind of the flames, and being aided by three other Airmen, Scarmack played a pivotal role in evacuating personnel away from the fire in an F-15E, which resulted in an Air Combat Command safety award.

Portable Aircraft Control Station paves way for MQ-9 Agile Combat Employment

By Capt. Savannah Bray

Eglin AFB, Fla.

The 556th Test and Evaluation Squadron, in partnership with the 432nd Wing, conducted the first launch of an MQ-9 Reaper using the Portable Aircraft Control Station, or PACS, at Creech Air Force Base, Nev., July 12-13, 2022.

PACS allows a ground team to complete the aircraft startup sequence without the line-of-sight Launch and Recovery cockpit or flight crew present. The ground team hands control to aircrew in a remote cockpit who in turn taxis and takes off.

“The ability to gain control of the aircraft directly from downrange maintenance personnel without any deployed aircrew or line-of-sight requirements continues to reduce our forward footprint and increase the MQ-9’s agility,” said Lt. Col. Michael Chmielewski, 556th TES commander. “The system automates the aircraft power-up and engine start sequences that aircrew typically conduct for launches. Experienced maintainers also gain efficiencies from PACS for a variety of maintenance functions.”

This initial PACS success, combined with the recent gains in Valiant Shield that leveraged the advances in



Senior Airman Jacob and Staff Sgt. Matthew from the 432nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron conduct launch procedures on the flightline for the Portable Aircraft Control Station MQ-9 Reaper Operational Test on July 12, 2022, at Creech Air Force Base, Nev. The PACS allows ground personnel to fully generate an aircraft without a line-of-sight Launch and Recovery Cockpit.

aircraft software and automated takeoff and land capability over satellite-only communication, continue to display the potential to place the platform wherever the mission requires persistent airpower.

When fielded and fully mission capable, PACS has the potential to replace the Ruggedized Aircraft Maintenance Test Stand. This change will further reduce the deployed logistics and manning footprint currently required to employ MQ-9s.

Ultimately, PACS will eliminate the requirement for a downrange LR cockpit and flight crew for MQ-9 deployment, increasing the agility of the MQ-9.



Airmen from the 432nd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron watch as an Operational Test MQ-9 Reaper prepares for a first-time Portable Aircraft Control Station launch on July 12, 2022, at Creech Air Force Base, Nev.



Air Force photograph by Robert Brooks

An Operational Test MQ-9 Reaper prepares for first-time Portable Aircraft Control Station launch on July 12, 2022, at Creech Air Force Base, Nev. When fielded and fully mission capable, PACS will eliminate the requirement for a downrange LR cockpit and flight crew for MQ-9 deployment, increasing the agility of the MQ-9.

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Nellis hosts Rattlesnake Rodeo 2022

Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., is a place where the training never stops.

The 422nd Test and Evaluation Squadron hosted Rattlesnake Rodeo 2022.

Rattlesnake Rodeo is the F-16CM's Test Force's annual Force Development Evaluation of the latest software and hardware, and an opportunity to enhance the F-16 into a four-plus generation aircraft.



LEFT: An F-16M Fighting Falcon from Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., takes off during Rattlesnake Rodeo, the Force Development Evaluation exercise, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 9, 2022. Rattlesnake Rodeo takes advantage of local Nellis aircraft such as F-22s, F-16s, F-15Es, F-35s, A-10s and range assets in a large force exercise manner.

Air Force photograph by Airman 1st Class Josey Blades



Air Force photograph by Airman 1st Class Makenna Gott

LEFT: An F-16CM Fighting Falcon from Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., taxis to the runway during Rattlesnake Rodeo, the force development evaluation exercise, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 9, 2022. The focus for this year's exercise is the integration of a new Active Electronically Scanned Array Radar along with multiple software and hardware upgrades within operationally relevant test scenarios.



Air Force photograph by Airman 1st Class Makenna Gott

An 85th Test and Evaluation Squadron F-16CM Fighting Falcon pilot prepares to taxi during Rattlesnake Rodeo, the force development evaluation exercise, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 9, 2022. Rattlesnake Rodeo takes advantage of local Nellis aircraft such as F-22s, F-16s, F-15Es, F-35s, A-10s and range assets in a large force exercise manner.



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NELLIS HOSTS BLACK FLAG 22-2



Air Force photograph by William R. Lewis

An F-16 Fighting Falcon assigned to the 64th Aggressor Squadron, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., takes off in support of Black Flag 22-2, at Nellis Air Force Base, Sept. 20, 2022. The 64th AGRS provided adversary air during the exercise. This Black Flag assessed interoperability of near-future capabilities across the domains and services with a focus on tactical data link and consolidated F-35 cross service maintenance and logistics.



Air Force photograph by William R. Lewis

Staff Sgt. Keyli Pillaro-Estrada, 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, talks with Marine Cpl. Jesse Mattics assigned to Marine Operational Test & Evaluation Squadron 1, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., prior to a mission for Black Flag 22-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev, Sept 21, 2022.. Members of the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps participated in consolidated F-35 Cross service maintenance and logistics training during Black Flag 22-2.



Air Force photograph by

Staff Sgt. Keyli Pillaro-Estrada, 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, finishes pre-flight on a Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II during Black Flag 22-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept 21, 2022. During the exercise, members of the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps were trained in consolidated cross service maintenance and logistics.



Air Force photograph by Airman 1st Class Trevor Bell

U.S. Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Steven Engelhardt, Plane Captain from Marine Operational Test & Evaluation Squadron One, and U.S. Air Force Capt. Matthew Brown, 422nd Test and Evaluation Squadron, perform a pre-flight checks on a F-35A Lightning II in preparation for a Black Flag 22-2 training flight at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 21, 2022.



Air Force photograph by William R. Lewis

A U.S. Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II assigned to VMX-1, Marine Operational Test & Evaluation Squadron 1, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., takes off for a mission during Black Flag 22-2, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 20, 2022. One focus of Black Flag 22-2 was to assess interoperability of Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps aircraft maintainers in consolidated F-35 cross service maintenance and logistics training.



Air Force photograph by William R. Lewis

An EC-130 assigned to the 418th Test and Evaluation Squadron, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., takes off for a mission in support of Black Flag 22-2 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 20, 2022. The 418th TES, the first ever combined HC-130J Combat King II and EC-130H Compass Call test unit in the entire U.S. Air Force, activation ceremony took place at Davis-Monthan AFB in 2021.



Air Force photograph by William R. Lewis

Staff Sgt. Keyli Pillaro-Estrada, 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, greets Marine Corp F-35B pilot assigned to Marine Operational Test & Evaluation Squadron 1, Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., during cross service training during Black Flag at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 21, 2022.



Air Force photograph by William R. Lewis

An F-16C Falcon assigned to the 422nd Test and Evaluation Squadron takes off for a Black Flag 22-2 mission, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Sept. 20, 2022. Black Flag 22-2 assessed interoperability of near-future capabilities across the domains and services.

photograph by William R. Lewis
pre-flight checks
, Sept. 21, 2022.
consolidated F-35



Creech Honor Guard at Raiders home game



Air Force photographs

On Sunday, Sept. 18, 2022, the Creech Air Force Base Honor Guard were on hand at Allegiant Stadium for the Las Vegas Raiders first home game of the season. The Raiders hosted the Arizona Cardinals, but lost to the Cards, 29-23.

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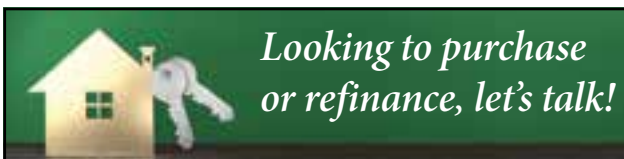


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 - f. Military DD-214 Release Papers and Military Transcripts (If Applicable)
 - g. Transcripts of Trade School, College, Work Investment Program etc. (optional)
7. Take a mandatory basic math exam administered by the Committee on the day assigned. ***Please note: In order to test, you must have submitted the application and all the required documents.***
8. Appear before the J.A.T.C. Committee for an oral interview.
9. All Applicants selected are subject to a Substance Abuse Test prior to being indentured into the September 2023 Plumbers and Pipefitters Apprenticeship Program.

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