

## A-10C pilot receives Distinguished Flying Cross for combat ops

By 1st Lt. Lindsey Heflin/Mike Hasenauer  
Eglin AFB, Fla.

A Nov. 22, 2022, flight line ceremony at Nellis Air Force Base, saw Maj. Kyle "Metric" Adkison, a 59th Test and Evaluation Squadron A-10C operational test pilot, receive the Distinguished Flying Cross with combat device.

The medal was presented by Maj. Gen. R. Scott Jobe, Director of Plans, Programs, and Requirements, Headquarters Air Combat Command, Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va.

"This is a great day for us as an Air Force, for us a warfighting community, to really recognize the heroism of Maj. Adkison's actions in combat operations," said Jobe. "People like Metric are so good at what they do, and he is rightfully being recognized."

Adkison earned the Distinguished Flying Cross with the "C" device as an A-10C pilot for extraordinary achievement while supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel and the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, August 2019.

He simultaneously managed two ground controllers on separate frequencies while supporting friendly clearing operations and locating enemy forces in dense urban terrain. Additionally, he facilitated airspace control into and out of the operating area and coordinated four troops-in contact engagements, disrupting a surprise grenade attack.

Adkison demonstrated exceptional flying skill by engaging danger-close strafing passes as close as five meters from friendly forces, halting the en-

emy onslaught and protecting coalition forces.

"The quality training the A-10 community provided and faith in the superb capability of the A-10 gun system helped us grapple with the challenges we faced that day," said Adkison. "The JTACs were extremely professional and competent, and their composure under fire was critical in enabling us to do what we did."

In three separate instances of friendly forces taking effective fire, Adkison coordinated attacks with multiple AH-64 Apache helicopters and split his flight to more efficiently engage the enemy across different locations.



Air Force photographs by Senior Airman Cydnie Williams

Maj. Kyle "Metric" Adkison, an A-10 Pilot assigned to the 59th Test and Evaluation Squadron, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with Combat Device during a ceremony at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Nov. 22, 2022. The "C" device was established in 2016 to distinguish an award earned for exceptionally meritorious service or achievement performed under combat conditions.



LEFT: Maj. Kyle "Metric" Adkison, a 59th Test and Evaluation Squadron A-10 pilot, is presented the Distinguished Flying Cross with Combat Device by Maj. Gen. R. Scott Jobe, Director of Plans, Programs, and Requirements, Headquarters Air Combat Command, during a ceremony at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Nov. 22, 2022.

The actions of Adkison and his wingman, Capt. Erin Fullam, successfully broke contact with enemy forces, protected friendly positions, and prevented coalition casualties.

"I am honored and humbled to be awarded this medal, but I'm convinced that any A-10 pilot would be able to do just as well, if not better than Captain Fullam and I," said Adkison. "We just happened to be the ones flying the lines that day. You don't have to go far in the A-10 community to find someone with a similar story, many of which have received no recognition. The A-10 community is filled with incredible

people doing exceptional things in an exceptional aircraft and I'm honored to count myself among these heroes."

The Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. Both heroism and achievement must be entirely distinctive, involving operations that are not routine. The "C" device was established in 2016 to distinguish an award earned for exceptionally meritorious service or achievement performed under combat conditions.

The 59th TES is assigned to the 53rd Wing, Eglin AFB, Fla.



# Discipline: The 10-letter word

by Chief Master Sgt. Steve Cenov  
Barksdale AFB, La.

Discipline is the 10-letter word that is the basis of the U.S. Air Force.

Gen. Bernard Roger stated in 1977, “the problem is not one of devising and posting new rules; the challenge is following the ones we have.” There is no silver bullet. It takes every person in the chain of command, from the first-line supervisor to the general officer, to know and enforce standards constantly and consistently. You must expect excellence to get excellence!

Basic Military Training, United States Air Force Academy, Officer Training School, Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps all produce great Airmen. They provide us with a solid foundation for service to our great nation. They taught us the difference between right and wrong, moral, and immoral, and legal and illegal. They taught us and held us to high standards. I can recall at the very start of my military journey, when I went through training, the units with clear standards and discipline to meet those standards are the

ones that performed well. On the other hand, units that lack standards and discipline were only reactive to situations.

Examples of standards and discipline are more simple and more straightforward than you might think: always wearing eye protection during operations or carrying your rifle at the “READY” position over your back, for instance, demonstrate standards and discipline. They might seem trivial, but they are the difference between average and excellence, and with the nature of the military, the difference between winning and losing.

What happens after our Airmen leave those environments?

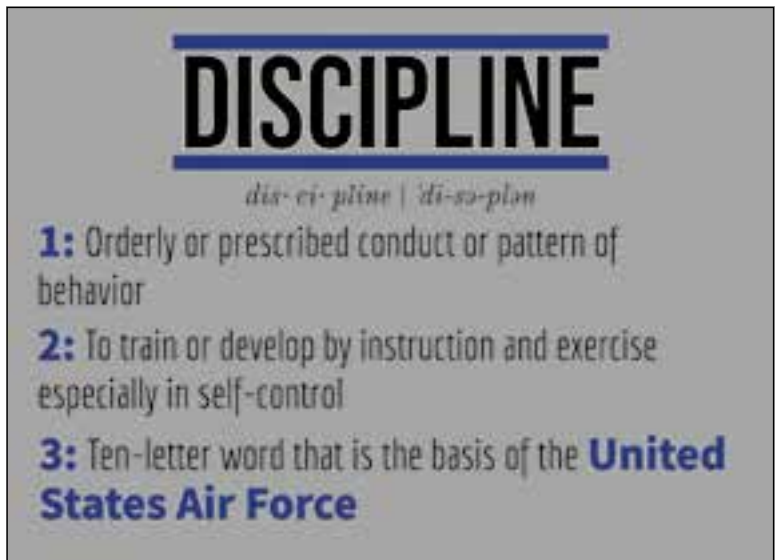
Why do we look the other way when we see someone not doing what is right or course correct when someone isn’t performing to our expectations?

“You deserve what you tolerate.” I regret I can’t tell you the origin of this quote, however, the origin is not important; what is important is that this quote embodies the Air Force’s Core Value of “Excellence in All We Do”. As the world’s premier Air Force, we simply cannot afford

to tolerate substandard actions or behaviors regardless of their perceived superficiality. Our profession of arms demands we continually strive for perfection. After all, if you hold yourself and those around you to the highest standards, there is no need to tolerate anything less.

Correcting, holding Airmen accountable in our formation who are not performing or failing to uphold standards is everyone’s responsibility. I get it, some Airmen are concerned about being perceived as the bad guy/gal and some just willingly pass the buck. Some believe it’s not their job, while others simply don’t like confrontation and avoid it at all costs.

The problem with all these approaches is that the action or behavior never gets addressed and failing to address it, in the end, is the same as condoning it. As an Airman, whether you are the subordinate, co-worker, or supervisor, you do not have the option of looking the other way; it’s your duty to act. This, however, does not have to be a life-altering event for either party. A timely “you need a haircut” is usually more than sufficient



Courtesy graphic

to get the desired result from someone who is looking a little shaggy around the ears. You can also use a similar low-key approach to address an unkempt uniform. As trivial as these two examples may seem, they illustrate that all standards within your realm must be upheld. And if you address the issue early on, you can prevent it from becoming a bigger problem down the road.

We are what we repeatedly do.

Excellence then is not an act

but a habit, so if we repeatedly practice high standards and discipline, it is the creation of those habits that enable us to defeat a determined and audacious enemy. Each of us has a personal choice to make every day. We can let our guard down or we can guard our Air Force by keeping its integrity intact and committed to excellence. You’ll be better for it; your Airmen will be better for it and the Air Force will be better for it and it’s the Striker Way.

## Time to take stock: Are you who you want to be?

by LeAnn Throlson  
Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

As the year comes to an end, it’s a good time to look in the mirror and reflect on whether you are the person you want to be. Seriously, look at how you are choosing to spend your time and what is motivating how you spend it.

Are you proud of what you achieved? Do you have regrets or goals you didn’t accomplish? Are you doing what you want or what you or someone else thinks you should be doing?

As we move through life, it can be easy to get caught up in being who we think we should be or doing what

others want us to do instead of being true to ourselves. At work and home, most of us have tasks we must do, whether we want to or not. Beyond the musts, how are you spending your time and taking care of yourself?

If you’re thinking — “I don’t have any free time” — it might be a good time to assess whether you have any commitments you can step back from. We often commit without making the intentional choice to spend our time on what we value.

It’s easy to think: “I’ll start working out, taking classes, eating better or find a new hobby” — at my next base or in January — only to end up being the same person, since it’s much more challenging to take action.

If you made it here, you might have some time to spare. Spend it on yourself. Take a moment and write down what you value and who you want to be. Now, identify what you can do in the next 24 hours, few days, weeks and years to become that person.

Even if it takes 10 years, in 10 years you’ll be 10 years older, whether you’re true to yourself or not. You might as well make progress on being someone you are proud of. Identify what has prevented you from being this person and what might prevent you from progressing. Once you identify these barriers, determine how to overcome them.

Time is a limited entity. Don’t forget to prioritize spending it on being who you want to be.



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# 801st RHTS stands up Operating Location-A at Nellis

by Airman 1st Class Tiffany Del Oso  
Nellis AFB, Nev.

Following the stand-up of the 801st Rapid Engineer Deployable, Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers Training Squadron at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., earlier this year, an additional geographically separated unit activated Nov. 21, 2022, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

The 801st RHTS was designed to stabilize, standardize and cultivate contingency training for combat support teams across the Air Force, allowing instructors to focus on training members. Special Capabilities flight, originally under the 820th RED HORSE, was realigned as the 801st RHTS Operating Location-A to best execute the existing mission.

"[The Special Capabilities flight] is made up of instructors operating under the 820th [RED HORSE] which is focused on deployments and executing projects," said Capt. Victoria LaFemina, 801st Operating Location — A flight

commander. "The 801st Operating Location will give leadership an opportunity to invest in our instructors to ensure they are trained not only on how to be an instructor and teach, but also to make

See **RHTS**, on Page 12



Airmen with 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers cap off boreholes with stemming at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Oct. 20, 2022. To contain the energy to the mountain, Airmen bind and seal boreholes with stemming.



LEFT: Staff Sgt. Stephen Webb, 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers special capabilities instructor, measures the length of a borehole at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Oct. 20, 2022. Airmen measured the depth of boreholes to get the correct amount of blasting agent and explosive.



Airmen from the 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers gather for a safety brief before their monthly proficiency blast training at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Oct. 20, 2022. To maintain their skills, Airmen participate in monthly blast qualifications.



Staff Sgt. Christopher Lineback, 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers pavement and heavy equipment operator, feeds dynamite and downhole delay through a borehole at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Oct. 20, 2022. Dynamite and downhole delay can range from five feet to 11 feet deep.



# Shadow Operations Center-Nellis hosting industry open house

by Deb Henley  
Nellis AFB, Nev.

The 805th Combat Training Squadron, also known as the Shadow Operations Center-Nellis, aims to increase synchronization with industry partners to improve command and control systems and processes as part of the Advanced Battle Management System, or ABMS, during the ShOC-N Industry Open House event, Dec. 9, at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

The ShOC-N is the U.S. Air Force's premier Battle Lab supporting the experimentation, prototyping, integration and test of key technologies, and capabilities designed to compress the kill chain for joint and coalition warfighters.

Since coming to office, Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall has consistently emphasized the important role industry partners play in advancing our ability to C2

airpower. In recognition of this important partnership between industry partners and the Air Force, vendors that have capabilities to enhance C2 system architectures, exercise support and the automation of C2 processes are invited to submit a request to attend the ShOC-N Industry Open House event.

The event will inform industry partners on the following to advance C2 airpower and create shared awareness to continue accelerating C2 processes:

Strategic Guidance: Update on current Air Force strategic guidance with a focus on future C2 capabilities and needs. How is the Air Force aligning with Secretary of the Air Force Operational Imperatives to deter/beat China?

What is Operational, Tactical, and Agile C2: Focus on the how the Air Force operates today and how we will address the future C2 problem sets.



Courtesy graphic

How can we better provide "War Winning Air Component C2" and how do industry partners fit in?

505th Command and Control Wing Mission Brief: The mission of the 505th CCW is to "prepare and enable the joint force to execute war winning command and control of airpower." Roles include air operations center weapons system training, testing, exercise support, and experimentation.

ShOC-N Mission Overview:

The ShOC-N hosts industry partners providing opportunities for multi-domain systems at varying classifications to connect to operationally relevant data and gain access to warfighters for feedback.

ShOC-N Mission and Capabilities: Inform industry of the mission of the ShOC-N, overview existing capabilities within the laboratory, discuss upcoming opportunities, and ShOC-N's roadmap for new capabilities.

How Industry can Utilize the ShOC-N: ShOC-N will cover the mechanisms for use of the laboratory including: potential to help refine the laboratory's instrumentation roadmap and potential for Cooperative Research and Development Agreements, or CRADA, efforts.

Industry Technology Onboarding: ShOC-N will discuss how technologies are onboarded into the ShOC-N environment with emphasis on cyber security processes.

Due to the volume of vendors that wish to attend, industry partners must initiate attendance requests through the Government Point of Entry via:

<https://sam.gov/opp/635366a084e44ec8b1b33487ef200215/view> NLT noon, EST, Nov. 18, 2022

The security classification for the ShOC-N Industry Open House event is SECRET and no dial-in capability is available.

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# 42 Years Ago: The MGM fire of 1980 and the Air Force response

By Daniel Wheaton  
Nellis AFB, Nev.

Forty-two years ago, on the morning of Nov. 21, 1980, Red Flag training operations at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., became disrupted when a fire swept through the luxury MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Although 85 people perished in the blaze and 650 sustained injuries, more may have died from fire and smoke inhalation if not for the quick response of Air Force personnel and equipment diverted from the training exercise. At the time of the fire, the 26-story building's 2,000 rooms contained about 5,000 people.

At 7:38 that morning, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police contacted the base command post for assistance.

Nine Air Force helicopters involved in Red Flag, including UH-1Ns of the 57th Fighter Weapons Wing and CH-3Es of both the 1st Special Operations Wing of Hurlburt Field, Fla., and the 302nd Special Operations Squadron of Luke

AFB, Ariz., quickly responded with the first taking off for the hotel at 7:55, less than 20 minutes after the initial notification.

Soon after arriving, the helicopters began evacuating people from the smoke-blanketed building as city police helicopters at the scene coordinated rescue efforts by radio. The Air Force helicopters quickly rescued 93 people from the hotel roof, taking them to a nearby parking lot serving as an improvised landing pad and triage area.

In its efforts, the Air Force

helicopters transported about 75 firefighters to fight the fire and took exhausted firefighters from the roof to the safety of the landing site. The helicopters conducted 38 total trips back and forth during the rescue efforts.

The heroic actions of the Air Force units received national attention for saving lives in the days following the tragedy, as the MGM fire resulted in the worst disaster in Las Vegas history and, at the time, the second-worst hotel fire to occur in the United States.



Courtesy photograph

Guests rescued from the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino disembark a U.S. Air Force helicopter at a nearby parking lot. Air Force personnel, at Nellis for Red Flag, were diverted from training to help with the rescue effort.



Air Force photograph

A U.S. Air Force helicopter flies a rescue mission during the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino fire, Nov. 21, 1980. At the time of the fire, the 26-story building's 2,000 rooms contained about 5,000 people.



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# Adapt to Win — Green Flag-West 23-02

by Senior Airman Zachary Rufus  
NAS North Island, Calif.

The 549th Combat Training Squadron successfully operated a disaggregated, multi-service Green Flag-West exercise Nov. 2-9, 2022, that integrated U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force command and control, tactical units, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, while operating from multiple locations across the West Coast.

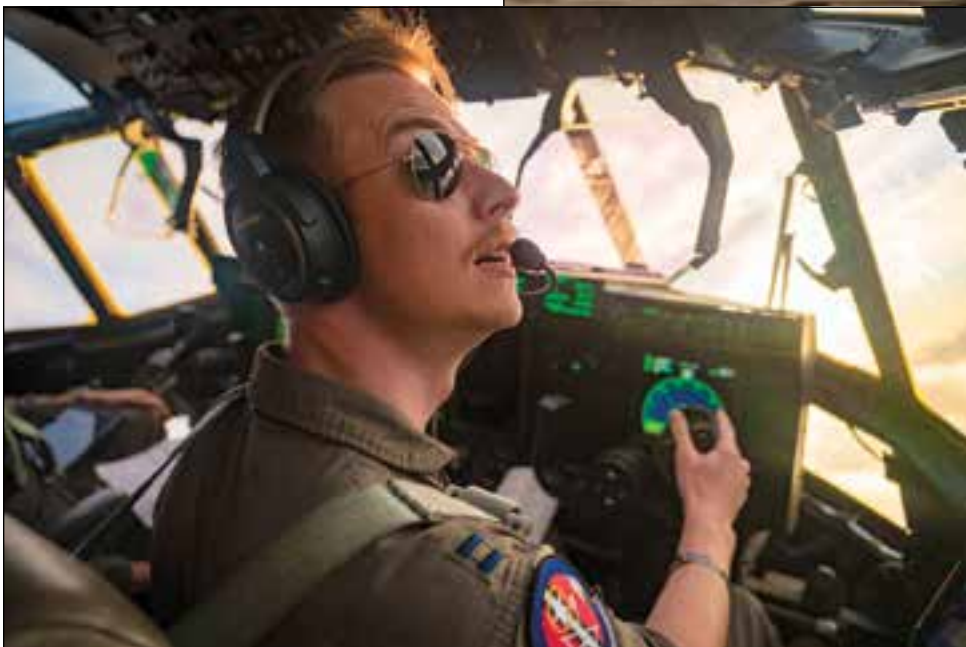
Green Flag participants, staged out of U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps bases along the coast of California, placed the joint force in a realistic environment where they can practice deterrence and defense against growing threats in the Indo-Pacific operations theater.

Traditionally, Green Flag-West exercises were air-to-ground primarily executed in conjunction with U.S. Army exercises at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. In an effort to modernize and strengthen our military for strategic competition, the 549th CTS used Green Flag-West 23-02 to



Air Force photographs by Senior Airman Zachary Rufus

A Naval aircrewman taxis in an A-10C Thunderbolt II assigned to the 66th Weapons Squadron during Green Flag-West 23-02 on San Clemente Island, Calif., Nov. 7, 2022.



Capt. Matthew Frizzell, 29th Weapons Squadron pilot, scans the surrounding airspace aboard a C-130J Hercules during a Green Flag-West 23-02 mission over the Pacific Ocean, Nov. 7, 2022.

focus on facilitating air operations in maritime surface warfare missions, air-to-surface.

“Integrating with the Army is easier because Green Flag-West has been doing that since 1981,” said Capt. Joseph Cole, 549th CTS assistant director of operations. “Integrating with the Navy isn’t something that the Air Force usually gets to do on a unit-level and in order to win in a maritime fight, we’re going to need each other.”

One challenge both services faced was trying to accomplish the same mission while learning each other’s languages.

“If we don’t practice and go through the struggles now to execute the trans-

lation errors, we will fail,” said Maj. Taylor Raasch, 66th Weapons Squadron instructor and project officer. “We try to teach our students to go out and talk to other services, learn their language and understand how they operate. At the end of the day, as a good communicator, you have to speak and understand their language in order to provide the effect that we all want to move forward with — which is to win.”

Aside from translation challenges, the two services worked cohesively to execute any mission set they were tasked with executing.

“A concern we had in the planning phase of Green Flag was ‘how are we

going to find the boats?’” said Cole. “We know we can kill them, but how can we find them and target them?”

Upon acting as a joint force, they came to learn the U.S. Navy is very good at it.

“It seems very obvious, but they find the ship like you wouldn’t believe; it’s quick and it’s accurate,” said Cole. “I think both sides learned a lot from this. We learned to give those responsibilities to the people that should be managing them. From the Navy’s perspective, when they locate an enemy ship, they have to put a boat in position to strike, which can take a while, when an aircraft can strike in minutes.”

The 66th Weapons Squadron, along with the help of the 549th CTS, 29th WPS, 57th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and Navy Special Warfare partners, was able to successfully load a DATM-160, a training version of the ADM-160 Miniature Air-Launched Decoy, onto an A-10 placed on an austere island off the coast of Naval Air Station North Island, Calif.

The A-10 can carry up to 16 MALDs, the same quantity as the B-52, and 12 more than the F-16. When launched from an aircraft, the MALD, like a cruise missile, can mimic the radar returns of any American aircraft in service — buying time and survivability for the blue forces by making the targeting problem

more complicated for the enemy.

In this iteration of Green Flag, the 66th WPS took “Accelerate Change or Lose” personally.

Raasch added, “What we, (the A-10), can do to help support the 5th generation fight in support of a pacing threat is provide the unique capability to carry a multitude of weapons and work in austere environments. We can help provide effects in the Indo-Pacific operations theatre.”

Air Force A-10 pilots integrated with Navy H-60Rs, E-2s, P-8s and Navy SEALs. The Navy benefited as well, integrating their C2 and ISR platforms with the U-2, Distributed Ground System and other non-traditional C2 methods they do not normally train with.

The units moved to several locations throughout the exercise, including San Clemente Island, and executed expeditionary operations with the support of Navy SEALs and U.S. Air Force C-130s from the 29th WPS.

“I could not be prouder of the integration that our team and these units accomplished during Green Flag-West 23-02,” said Lt. Col Matthew Keilen, 549th CTS commander. “We look forward to furthering multi-service maritime integration in the future.”

**See additional photos on Pages 8 - 9**

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# ADAPT TO WIN — GRE



Staff Sgt. Justin Hillard, 29th Weapons Squadron instructor loadmaster, performs pre-flight inspections aboard a C-130J Hercules before participating in a Green Flag-West 23-02 mission on Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., Nov. 7, 2022.



Multiple A-10C Thunderbolt IIs assigned to the 66th Weapons Squadron, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., sit on the tarmac at Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., Nov. 7, 2022.



U.S. Navy Aviation Structural Mechanic Petty Officer 2nd Class Tracy Donigan (left) and U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Caleb Ackerman (right), a 757th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron avionics technician, discuss the capabilities of the A-10C Thunderbolt II on Naval Air Station North Island, Calif., Nov. 7, 2022.



A U.S. Navy SEAL adjusts the straps on a DATM-160, a training version of the ADM-160 Miniature Air-Launched Decoy, loaded on an A-10C during Green Flag-West 23-02 on San Clemente Island, Calif., Nov. 7, 2022. Green Flag-West's main objective is to provide advanced, realistic and relevant air-to-surface integration warfighter training in a robust, contested, degraded, and operationally limited environment.



An A-10C Thunderbolt II assigned to the 66th Weapons Squadron, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., loaded with a DATM-160 training version of the ADM-160 Miniature Air-Launched Decoy, sits on San Clemente Island, California, November 7, 2022.



# GREEN FLAG-WEST 23-02



..., sit on the flight line at



Tech. Sgt. Alexander Lauher, 29th Weapons Squadron weapons instructor, looks out the back of a C-130J Hercules during a Green Flag-West 23-02 mission over the Pacific Ocean Nov. 7, 2022.



Weapons load crew Airmen, assigned to the 757th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., maneuver a DATM-160, a training version of the ADM-160 Miniature Air-Launched Decoy during Green Flag-West 23-02 on San Clemente Island, Calif., Nov. 7, 2022.



Air Force photographs by Senior Airman Zachary Rufus

Senior Jorge Hernandez-Perez, a crew chief assigned to the 75th Fighter Generation Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, Ga., prepares to launch an A-10C Thunderbolt II for a Green Flag-West 23-02 mission at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Nov. 9, 2022. In an effort to modernize and strengthen our military for strategic competition, the 549th Combat Training Squadron used Green Flag-West 23-02 to focus on facilitating air operations in maritime surface warfare missions, air-to-surface.



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**RHTS, from Page 3**

them the leading experts in whatever course they're teaching."

Performing a training mission under an operational squadron poses several complications. Reorganizing the command structure to place the Special Capabilities flight under the 801st RHTS will provide instructors with the stability and resources necessary to provide critical training without having to worry about also completing a deployable mission.

"Before, we would have to keep rotating instructors, so we could teach for so long but eventually [due to a deployment, TDY or other priorities] we would be rotated out," said Staff Sgt. Emanuel Lopez, 801st OL-A instructor. "Now with us being coded under the operating location, we aren't eligible for deployments which allows us to get our knowledge up and become the true subject matter experts on material that we're teaching."

Lt. Col. Craig Poulin, 801st RHTS commander, explained that RED HORSE is unique because they bring specialized capabilities to the fight to enable combat support and to build the infrastructure required in contingency environments.

"Being a RED HORSE instructor is also very special," said Poulin. "It takes confidence and competence in the ability to instruct others, both in the classroom and in the field. That confidence and competence applies both to the students we teach, but also to the instructors we have within the organization."

The mission of the now 801st RHTS OL-A, will not change. The unit offers more than 70 courses a year including asphalt paving, explosive demolition operations and quarry operations to active duty, guard and reserve civil engineers. In fact,



Air Force photographs by Airman 1st Class Jordan McCoy

Airmen from the 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers inspect left over dynamite before a clean-up blast at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Oct. 20, 2022. After a blast proficiency test, Airmen expend the last of their left-over dynamite.

the location of the 801st OL-A is unique to Nellis due to the amount of space available to conduct explosive demolition operations and quarry operations.

The reorganization of the 801st RHTS OL-A will provide the instructors with the stability and support they need to reach their highest potential and foster a training environment that produces combat support Airmen.



Staff Sgt. Joseph Brearley Jr., 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers pavement and heavy equipment operator, participates in a monthly blast proficiency training in a quarry at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Oct. 20, 2022. As part of their special capabilities training, Airmen at the 801 RHTS hold monthly demolitions qualifications that reinforce their proficiency with explosives.

Airmen from the 820th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers mix ammonia nitrate fuel oil before a blast qualification at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., Oct. 20, 2022. ANFO is used in combination with explosives to maximize the effects of a blast.







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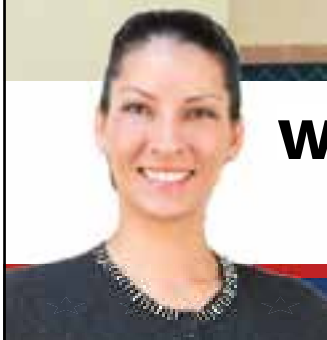
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