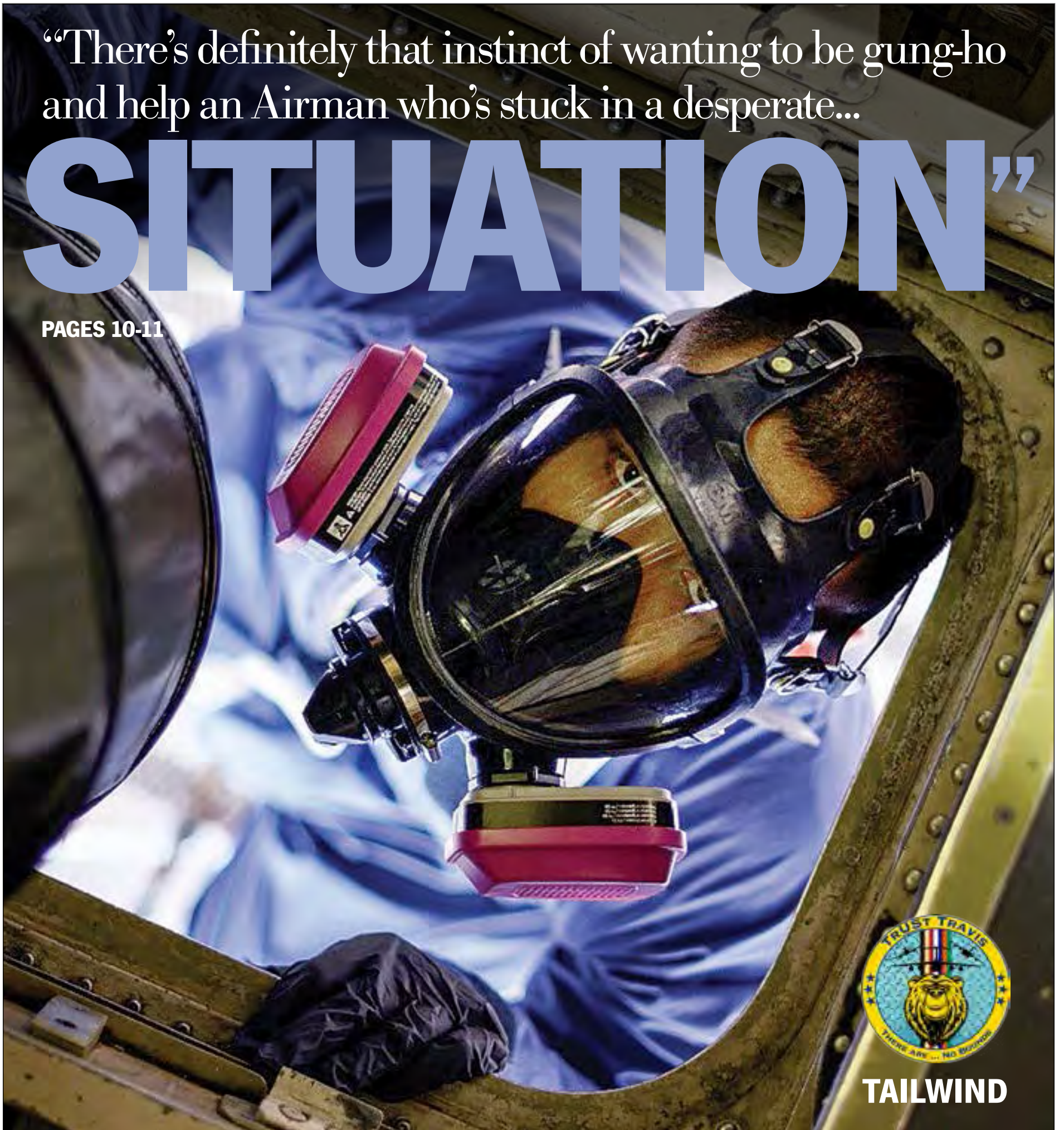


“There’s definitely that instinct of wanting to be gung-ho and help an Airman who’s stuck in a desperate...

# SITUATION”

PAGES 10-11



**TAILWIND**

# Innovation keeps Travis' natural resources thriving

Heide Couch

60TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Travis Air Force Base, California – Growing up, Leslie Peña, 60th Civil Engineer Natural Resource Program manager, a child of two U.S. Air Force active duty parents, always had an interest in plants, wildlife and the environments they live in. She was also aware that most of the people around her didn't share that same interest, didn't care, or were un knowledgeable about the connections between the loss of habitat and the possible extinction of species.

"People didn't know that losing something not only causes a huge ripple effect on the animal world, but on us also," said Peña. "Once I got to high school, I wanted to join the Air Force, but my parents wanted me to go to college. Knowing how important it was for my parents, I decided to go the biology route. I didn't know what I wanted to be exactly, but knew the field I wanted to work in was biology."

"I went to school, got a biology degree first and then an Environmental Science degree through an Internship with AmeriCorp," said Peña. After completing her education, Peña began working in her chosen career field, and was appointed to the NRP manager position at Shepard Air Force Base.

"Though it was difficult work, I learned valuable



Leslie Peña, left, 60th Civil Engineer Squadron Natural Resource Program manager, and Karen Gallardo Cruz, Colorado State University wildlife biologist, inspect an earthen dam partially blocking Union Creek at Travis Air Force Base, California, June 11, 2021.

information that enabled me to deal with environmental and natural resource issues that others may not have experience with," said Peña.

From Shepard AFB, Peña traveled to Travis Air Force Base for her next job.

Through a combination of programs and partnerships with the Center for Environmental Management of Military Lands and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the 60th Civil Engineer Squadrons'

**MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 19**

Natural Resource Program is helping to protect threatened and endangered species at Travis AFB.

The NRP maintains or restores ecosystem composition, structure, and function within a natural range of variability, with special emphasis on rare

or endemic species unique to California.

Air Force installations are home to 123 of the more than 2,000 species on the USFWS' endangered species list. Travis AFB is home to four of these endangered or threatened species: California tiger salamander, Contra Costa goldfield, vernal pool fairy shrimp and the vernal pool tadpole shrimp.

"For this particular area, these fauna and flora are endangered because of habitat

loss in the surrounding areas," Peña continued. "Due to federal regulations, military installations tend to have the highest concentration of threatened endangered species as we have mechanisms in place to conserve habitat when building and growing the installation. The process is set up to safeguard the habitat and allow particular species to survive."

According to The National Wildlife Federation, an endangered species is an animal or plant that's considered at risk of extinction. A species can be listed as endangered at the state, federal and international levels. On the federal level, the endangered species list is managed under the Endangered Species Act.

The installation has 5,137 acres and an additional 357 acres of Geographically Separated Units consisting of unincorporated open space.

"Due to the size of Travis AFB, there are only small areas in which the base residents can use for recreation," she said. "Since we have several endangered and threatened species on base there are multiple locations that are considered protected habitats and are off-limits to residents such as the GSUs. Our job is to ensure the Air Force does not damage the environment as it completes its mission. We ensure that the habitat is functioning and threatened or endangered

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### On the cover

**Senior Airman Byron Mazariegos, 349th Maintenance Squadron pneudraulics technician, surveys the scene of a simulated extraction exercise at Travis Air Force Base, California, June 16, 2021.**

U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Christian Conrad

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## Tailwind

Travis AFB, Calif. | 60th Air Mobility Wing

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# Travis Airmen host Pride Month color run, encourage acceptance

Staff Sgt. Christian Conrad

60TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — Airmen from across Travis Air Force Base, California, gathered at the base's Duck Pond running path June 19, 2021, to participate in a Pride Month 5k and show their support for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community.

The run, organized by Capt. (Dr.) Julian Moreno, 60th Dental Squadron general dentist, aimed to both reduce the stigma that members of the LG-BTQ+ community sometimes face and normalize their service; something that has been seen as controversial in years past.

"Being a member of the community – being a gay man myself – I've luckily dodged the physical attacks that some people I know have faced, but I've nonetheless faced a lot of adversity," Moreno said. "Being catcalled on the street, being called the f-word – all these things are unfortunately all too common amongst people in the LGBTQ+ community. It's our hope that by being here and being queer—being ourselves—that it'll open a lot of people's eyes to say, 'You know, this really isn't something to be afraid of.'"

It wasn't until September



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Christian Conrad

Participants of a Pride Month 5k run pose for a photo, June 19, 2021, at Travis Air Force Base, California. The purpose of the run was to normalize lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the military and reduce the stigma that LGBTQ+ service members sometimes face as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identities.

2011 when the Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act became effective that lesbian, gay and bisexual people were allowed to serve openly in the U.S. military. Before then, members of the community were subject to discharge if their sexual orientations were divulged.

DADT and the atmosphere

of secrecy and shame it fomented only served to weaken the military, Moreno said.

"Airmen from all career fields deal with job stressors," he said. "That's just the nature of the work we do. Couple that, though, with the added stress of hiding yourself and being prevented from being

your authentic self and it can be devastating to someone's mental health. It can lead to depression and even suicidal ideation, and Airmen dealing with these things, needlessly too, don't bring that same authentic self to the work they do."

With the Air Force

See **PRIDE RUN** Page 16

## Virus effects waning across DoD, Pentagon

C. Todd Lopez  
DOD NEWS

COVID-19 restrictions on Pentagon personnel were lifted a bit Wednesday, providing the ability for more personnel to work in the building and for larger numbers of people to gather in one location, the Pentagon press secretary said.

According to John F. Kirby, the Pentagon planned to drop from Health Protection Condition "Bravo-Plus" to HPCON Bravo, beginning Wednesday.

"Under HPCON Bravo, the occupancy goal will be no more than 50% in workspaces," Kirby said. "That's up from 40% ... where we are now. Supervisors will continue to provide maximum telework opportunities to eligible employees."

Gatherings in the building were limited to just 25 people. By Wednesday, that number went up to 50. Kirby also said workers who are not fully vaccinated should continue to follow DoD masking and social distancing guidelines while in the building.

For the time being, he added, workers entering the building will continue to be screened at a rate of about 10 to 20%, while all visitors

See **COVID** Page 18



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# US air advisers continue to strengthen partnership with Ecuadorian Air Force

**Tech. Sgt. Jacob Haines**  
571ST MOBILITY SUPPORT  
ADVISORY SQUADRON

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — Air advisers from the 571st Mobility Support Advisory Squadron successfully executed their second major in-country engagement April 27-May 20, 2021, at Cotopaxi Air Force Base in Latacunga, Ecuador.

The 571st MSAS plays an essential role in establishing and maintaining relations with global strategic partners in the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility. Since the unit conducted their very first Mobile Training Team engagement in Ecuador last summer, they've maintained relationships with the Fuerza Aérea Ecuatoriana, also known as FAE, counterparts and returned once again for a follow up engagement in spite of the global pandemic.

During this engagement, 571st MSAS air advisers embedded with FAE technicians of their respective specialties where they worked side-by-side exchanging ideas and experiences to discover cooperative solutions for the betterment of the FAE while also improving the air advisory capabilities of the MSAS.

The MTT consisted of air advisers with specialties in aircraft and vehicle maintenance, logistics, airfield operations, military working dog and base defense.

Upon the team's arrival, the commander of the FAE's 11th Transportation Wing, Lt. Col. Jorge Alcázar Sevilla, once again greeted all with a formal presentation and expressed his gratitude for the continued relationship.

The MSAS team also coordinated with and assisted aircraft maintenance air advisers from the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing, Ecuador's state partner under the State Partnership Program (SPP), in the execution of their



**Tech. Sgt. Luis Ochoa discusses vehicle maintenance principles and organization with maintenance personnel of the FAE's 11th Transportation Wing.**

one-week engagement with the FAE during the same time frame in preparation for future SPP engagements, through knowledge sharing and translation services from English to Spanish.

As the engagement progressed, the team was able to assist their FAE partners with their operations, bolster the experience of their air advisers, and ultimately continue to nourish the relationship they fostered with the FAE last summer.

Lt. Col. Nel Vaca Flores, commander of the FAE's 112th Logistics Group in Cotopaxi, expressed his gratitude for the engagement.

"Since last year, after the MSAS conducted courses with our personnel, our work

improved considerably due to the knowledge imparted by the USAF instructors. That event adequately increased the knowledge level of our technicians in their different areas of responsibility, leading to continuous improvement," he said. "The experience, knowledge and learning that has been achieved in the past few weeks during this engagement, has truly exceeded all of our expectations and will be of great use for the future of our organization. I appreciate the patience and trust that we have in each other, for each and every one of the team members of the 571 MSAS."

He summed up his words with this statement, "I am grateful to the MSAS for their partnership. Given that we are

brother countries and friendly air forces, we have the same ideals, principles and values; this type of help makes our union much stronger."

Additionally, the team took the opportunity to visit a nearby rural school. Capt. Kaitlin Morones and Tech. Sgt. Anthony Colon-Matos coordinated the community relations event with the help of FAE leadership and brought school supplies including pencils, notebooks, backpacks, toys as well as soccer balls for the students to enjoy during recess. The team had lunch at the school and concluded the event with a friendly soccer game between the MSAS and the students.

"I could not be more proud of what the team was able to accomplish throughout this

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"I could not be more proud of what the team was able to accomplish throughout this

# Air Force re-addresses women's hair standard

**Secretary of the Air Force  
Public Affairs**

ARLINGTON, Va. (AFNS) — Building on women's hair updates announced in February 2021, the Air Force will further revise Air Force Instruction 36-2903 to address differences in hair density and texture.

Previously, hair worn in a bun, braid, ponytail or equivalent could not extend beyond the width of the head. Beginning June 25, when hair is secured behind the head, the hair may extend six inches to the left and to the right and six inches protruding from the point where the hair is gathered. The 12-inch total width must allow for proper wear of headgear.

"Change doesn't happen overnight, and sometimes it takes another iteration to arrive at the best solution," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. CQ Brown, Jr. "This updated guidance represents meaningful progress. The feedback we received from our Airmen highlighted the need to reevaluate the policy and ultimately, make it more inclusive."

The change addresses feedback received since the previous guidance was originally published. Specifically, women voiced concerns over difficulty related to securing hair in a manner that does not extend beyond the head.

"In developing policy we try to address all angles and perspectives, but sometimes we have a blind spot," said Lt. Gen. Brian Kelly, Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower, personnel and services. "The feedback we received

highlighted the need to reevaluate the policy to make it even more inclusive."

Initial changes to women's hair standards were the result of various recommendations issued last fall by the Air Force uniform board. The group of 19 Airmen included a diverse group of men and women with officers and enlisted members from various ethnic and occupational backgrounds across major commands and headquarters directories.

"Whether we're talking about hair, uniforms or forums for sharing ideas, an approach that embraces diversity and fosters an inclusive environment is critical to ensuring our talented, dedicated Airmen stay with us on this journey," said Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force JoAnne S. Bass.

Members must adhere to current occupational safety, fire and health guidance, and mishap prevention procedures emphasizing when and how to mitigate the potential for injury from hair of varying lengths and styles around machinery, equipment, power transmission apparatus or moving parts. Airmen are encouraged to reach out to their safety office for assistance in analyzing any potential hazards, as applicable.

At this time, Guardians will adhere to the grooming standards of the U.S. Air Force until the U.S. Space Force develops its own policy.

Additional ideas generated from the uniform board are still under consideration for policy change and updates will be released as they become available.



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### Dispositions of personal effects

Capt. Michael Ferrandino is authorized to make disposition of the personal property of Master Sgt. Dominic Salierno, deceased, 60 Wing Safety, as stated in AFI 34-501. Any person having claims for or against the deceased person please contact Capt. Ferrandino by phone at (707) 424-4813 or email "michael.ferrandino@us.af.mil"

Change of Command



U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Daniel Peterson

Top: Col. Andrew Black relinquished command of the 349th Operations Support Squadron to Lt. Col. William Westfahl, June 5. Bottom: The 349th Air Mobility Operations Squadron held a Change of Command for Lt. Col. Fredric Millar, right, transferring command to Lt. Col. Harry Alderson, center.

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AF releases Bridge Tanker Sources Sought Announcement

AFLCMC Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, Ohio (AFLCMC) — The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center issued a Sources Sought Announcement for the Bridge Tanker Program to determine the number of qualified, interested companies capable of providing solutions for the planned, non-developmental tanker recapitalization program.

The Air Force is seeking companies that have the capability to deliver commercial derivative tanker aircraft to supplement the Air Force tanker aircraft fleet at the end of KC-46A production.

The new aircraft will bridge the gap to the next Advanced Air Refueling Tanker recapitalization phase, previously referred to as “KC-Z.” The existing KC-46A firm-fixed price contract is limited to 13 production lots, with the last planned procurement in 2027 and delivered in 2029.

As a commercial derivative aircraft, the Bridge Tanker will be based on existing and emerging technologies with a full and open acquisition competition. Neither developmental stealth nor unmanned capability is planned.

The requirements for Bridge Tanker are currently being defined and the necessary capabilities will be incorporated into the final Request for Proposal once it is validated through the Department of Defense’s joint staffing process. The Air Force plans to release the final RFP by the end of 2022.

The KC-135 will be 70 years old when the Air Force expects to receive its last KC-46 delivery in 2029, and replacing these vital aircraft continues to be critical to the Air Force mission to project Rapid Global Mobility in today’s strategically competitive environment.



U.S. Air Force photo/Christopher Okula

A KC-46A Pegasus prepares to get fuel from KC-10 Extender with a KC-135 Stratotanker in the background. The Bridge Tanker program will bridge the gap to the next Advanced Air Refueling Tanker recapitalization phase, previously referred to as “KC-Z.”

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# Air Force announces final ICBM environmental study

**Air Force Global Strike Command Public Affairs**

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La. (AFNS) — The Department of the Air Force announces the availability of the Final Environmental Assessment for the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent Test Program and the program's Finding of No Significant Impact. The analysis can be found at gbsdtesteaoea.govsupport.us.

The GBSD program would modernize the aging U.S. land-based intercontinental ballistic missile Minuteman III system. The Air Force plans to modernize the land-based leg of the nuclear triad, recapitalizing

its ICBM fleet while upgrading the weapon system technology, supporting infrastructure, and command and control functions. Test program-related actions would occur primarily at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, and at Vandenberg Space Force Base, California. Such tests would include conducting missile launches from Vandenberg SFB with flights over the Pacific Ocean in the Western Test Range. Additional test support activities would occur at U.S. Army Dugway Proving Ground, Utah.

The environmental assessment also includes analysis of the proposed GBSD Formal Training Unit/Schoolhouse at

Vandenberg SFB. The GBSD and Minuteman III test demonstrations are proposed to occur at U.S. Army Garrison-Kwajalein Atoll and within the Republic of the Marshall Islands territorial waters. The analysis of overseas environmental impacts is also included in the assessment. Test activities would comply with the U.S. Army Kwajalein Atoll environmental standards.

For more information visit <http://gbsdtesteaoea.govsupport.us> or contact Air Force Global Strike Command at [AFGSC.PAWorkflow@us.af.mil](mailto:AFGSC.PAWorkflow@us.af.mil).

# FAA, Department of the Air Force sign commercial space agreement

**Joint Statement by Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs and the Federal Aviation Administration**

The Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of the Air Force signed an agreement June 15 aimed at eliminating red tape while protecting public safety during commercial space activities at ranges operated by the U.S. Space Force.

The agreement recognizes common safety standards for FAA-licensed launch and reentry activities that occur on, originate from, or return to Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Florida and Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. It also removes duplicative processes and approvals for the U.S. commercial space sector.

"Assured access to space is vital to our national security," said Acting Secretary of the Air Force John P. Roth. "The launch licensing standards provided in the agreement will

support a rapidly expanding commercial launch sector and strengthen our space industrial base, bolstering our economy and enhancing our security as a nation."

"Building a streamlined regulatory approach for commercial space activities at these federal launch sites is the right thing to do for public safety and U.S. competitiveness," said Steve Dickson, FAA administrator. "This agreement will help the burgeoning U.S. commercial space industry grow even faster and continue to lead the world in safety and innovation."

Under the agreement, the FAA will accept the Department of the Air Force's ground safety rules and other safety processes, analyses and products as long as they satisfy FAA regulations. The Department of the Air Force will accept FAA licensing decisions and generally will not impose its own requirements for the flight portion of a launch or reentry.

In addition, the two agencies

will consult before responding to commercial space operator requests for relief from safety requirements and on the development of hazard areas. Both also will coordinate prior to publication of materials related to ground safety and launch or reentry activities and collaborate on environmental reviews to ensure the government's response is prompt and consistent.

The two ranges each have four FAA-licensed commercial space transportation companies authorized to conduct launch operations. In 2020, the FAA licensed 39 commercial space launches, the most in the agency's history. Of those, 24 occurred at, and were supported by, these two U.S. Space Force ranges.

To learn more about the FAA's role and responsibilities in commercial space transportation, please listen to the Ticket to Space episode of the agency's "The Air Up There" podcast.

## Base exchange extends layaway to include back-to-school electronics

**Army & Air Force Exchange Service Public Affairs**

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE — The Army & Air Force Exchange Service is showing Air Force families that it matters where they shop, allowing more time to pay for electronics during back-to-school season.

From July 2 through Sept. 2, Army & Air Force Exchange Service shoppers can use layaway to hold tax-free purchases of computers, notebooks,

tablets and iPads — items that are not typically eligible for the program.

"Technology is evolving quickly and having the right tablet or computer can be critical to academic achievement," said Travis AFB Exchange General Manager Phonda Bishop. A \$3 service fee and a deposit of 15% are required to hold items on layaway. Items must be picked up by Sept. 2. Shoppers can visit customer service at the Travis AFB Exchange for details.

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4	7	6	5	3	2	1	
9	8	7	6	4	5	3	
7	8	9	5	1	3	4	2
6	5	7	8	2	1	3	4
5	6	9	8	7	2	1	

How to beat Str8ts — Like Sudoku, no single number can repeat in any row or column. But... rows and columns are divided by black squares into compartments. These need to be filled in with numbers that complete a 'straight'. A straight is a set of numbers with no gaps but can be in any order, eg [4,2,3,5]. Clues in black cells remove that number as an option in that row and column, and are not part of any straight. Glance at the solution to see how 'straights' are formed.

You can find more help, tips and hints at [www.str8ts.com](http://www.str8ts.com)

### SUDOKU

No. 548 Medium

3		4				1	
6						2	8
		7	3		9	5	
				1		6	
		1			7		
7		9					
		5	6		3	8	
4	6						7
9				7			5

Previous solution - Easy

4	9	5	8	2	1	7	3	6
8	3	6	9	4	7	2	1	5
2	1	7	6	5	3	4	8	9
9	7	3	2	8	6	1	5	4
1	5	2	4	7	9	3	6	8
6	4	8	3	1	5	9	7	2
3	8	9	7	6	2	5	4	1
7	6	1	5	9	4	8	2	3
5	2	4	1	3	8	6	9	7

To complete Sudoku, fill the board by entering numbers 1 to 9 such that each row, column and 3x3 box contains every number uniquely.

For many strategies, hints and tips, visit [www.sudokuwiki.org](http://www.sudokuwiki.org). If you like Str8ts, Sudoku and other puzzles, check out our books, iPhone/iPad Apps and much more on our store at [www.str8ts.com](http://www.str8ts.com)

The solutions will be published here in the next issue.

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# Travis AFB maintainers receive skinny on saving lives



Airmen from the 60th and 349th Maintenance Squadrons simulate resuscitation procedures on a training mannequin as part of a fuel tank extraction exercise at Travis Air Force Base, California, June 16, 2021. The exercise served as an annual refresher for maintainers who work in enclosed spaces and could potentially face an incident in which they or those around them become trapped in their work environments and require rescue.

Photos and story by  
Staff Sgt. Christian Conrad

60TH AIR MOBILITY WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — “Spacious” is not a word used to describe the center accessory compartment of a KC-10 Extender.

The 1-foot wide, 6-feet long workspace isn’t for the claustrophobic and, coupled with toxic substances like fuel that can leak into other compartments of the aircraft, can be dangerous. The space can make short work of respirator filters, proving an ever-present challenge for those working in it.

Luckily, the 60th and 349th Maintenance Squadrons at Travis Air Force Base, California, have a failsafe: fuel tank extraction exercises.

The annual exercise, consisting of calling emergency services, evacuating affected personnel from an aircraft and beginning resuscitation protocol, combines with a series of computer-based trainings to turn what would otherwise be a frantic struggle to save an Airman trapped inside a remote area of an aircraft into a precise execution of procedure to ensure their safety.

“There’s definitely that instinct of wanting to be gung-ho and help an Airman who’s stuck in a desperate situation,” said Abraham Bernardo, 60th MXS fuels systems mechanic and one of the exercise’s most recent participants. “But when that instinct results in not just one trapped Airman, but two, we’re doubly screwed. The extraction exercise works to install that muscle memory in our maintainers so that when a situation potentially does happen, we’re ready to go with the correct procedures.”

It’s a testament to the Air Force’s commitment to their people, he added.

It’s in that same vein that the Air Force not only has protocol in place for would-be rescuers, but those who could be on the receiving end of that rescue as well.

Senior Airman Gustavo Rodriguez-Vasquez, 60th MXS systems journeyman, who participated in the training along with Bernardo, recalled a time when he nearly found himself in need of an extraction.

“When I was deployed, there was a moment when I began to feel light-headed and queasy,” he recalled. “When you’re in the middle of a job, it can be hard to take a moment and check on how you’re feeling, but in addition to this training, we’re also taught how to identify those tell-tale signs. It can be a fine line between catching yourself and passing out, so that training can be a game-changer.”

Bernardo, too, has seen his fair share of close-calls.

“Above all, communication is key,” he said. “Whether that’s communication to emergency services or communication with your own team. One time, I was working in an enclosed



Above: Senior Airman Byron Mazariegos, 349th Maintenance Squadron pneudraulics technician, surveys the scene of a simulated extraction exercise at Travis Air Force Base, California, June 16, 2021.

Below: “Rescue Randy,” a 200-pound training mannequin, is positioned inside of a KC-10 Extender center accessory compartment as part of a fuel tank extraction exercise at Travis Air Force Base, California, June 16, 2021.

space and the guy next to me said, ‘Dude, you know you’ve been cleaning that one surface for, like, five minutes, right?’ It can be that easy for the symptoms to creep up on you — I hadn’t even noticed.”

For leaders like Tech. Sgt. Ian Lindon, 60th MXS fuels systems supervisor, who oversaw the training, the exercise marks the total sum of not only the successes and progress of the Air Force, but its failures and shortcomings, too.

“At the end of the day, we don’t perform this training because we think it’s fun,” he said. “We do it because there have been fatalities in the past and we have been caught unprepared in the past. We do this training because on our watch, there won’t be another. On our watch, aircraft are going to fly and it’ll be because of our people.”



## Resources

From Page 2

species' homes stay intact."

"At Travis, we have over 600 vernal pools and wetlands, which make building anything on base a challenge."

In order to offset development in these areas' mitigation is required. Mitigation is coordinated with USFWS and a mitigation bank is an area that is protected outside the boundaries of the base and its sole job is to restore and expand habitat that is being taken or removed.

"Most projects on base have to go through this process to ensure that if we are removing these features on base, they are technically being replaced in a conservation area where they will stay intact forever," Peña continued. "This ensures that we do not truly lose these environments and there is no net loss of habitat in the county."

The NRP has two missions, which is different from most environmental programs. Their primary mission is to ensure our base stays in operation and our aircraft are flying; however, the NRP has the added mission to ensure we are not destroying the habitat or further endangering species.

"We all have to come to the table to meet in the middle, which is my motto," said Peña. "If we are not able to do so, the base would not be able to function and our primary mission would fail."

In 2017, heavy rainfall at Travis AFB was followed by a great year for California tiger

salamander breeding. A Programmatic Biological Opinion was developed to conserve and protect the California tiger salamander on the installation.

"Up until 2017, CTS sightings on base were rare and the older population on base will tell you they don't truly ever remember seeing them," said Peña. "The emergency Programmatic Biological Opinion had to be done to ensure the base was not exceeding and or killing a high number of CTS per USFWS. Our goals now are to continue to do what we're doing. Our studies are showing us areas that are not a concern and can now help lower the complexity of conservation measures in place for areas that no longer need them."

The studies describe how the Air Force can achieve both goals of maintaining the mission while simultaneously ensuring the habitat stays intact, ensuring USAF is doing its part to help protect these rare species.

"Our natural resources team is continually coming up with unique methods to protect the endangered species from both danger and impacts to the mission," said Capt. Chris Meyer, 60th CES Installation Management flight commander. "For example, the NRP team developed creative fencing to prohibit salamanders from crossing the runway resulting in aircraft and CTS encounters. Their innovation saved countless endangered CTS and ensured no impact on air operations. The team continues to come up with innovative ways to safely guide CTS from breeding to nesting grounds

which allows both the mission and CTS to thrive."

Current drought conditions in the state of California have also affected Travis AFB. Last year's LNU Lightning Complex Fire effected communities near the installation. Units with the 60th and 349th Air Mobility Wings, rallied to evacuate the base's fleet of C-17 Globemaster III, C-5M Super Galaxy and KC-10 Extender aircraft to safeguard them against the impending danger of the fire.

To prevent this from reoccurring, the NRP implemented tactics to protect the base and local surroundings. "The NRP continues to accomplish their goal to drastically reduce fire risk to Travis AFB. NRP worked alongside civil engineering operations flight to safely disk grass fields, without harming endangered species, along the perimeter fencing to eliminate

potential fire fuel and prevent future fires from spreading off-base to on-base," said Meyer.

"Their efforts mitigate the risk of another full base evacuation due to encroaching wildfires," Meyer continued.

"Without natural resources, you would be looking at a base that would be devoid of life and desolate," said Peña. "Landscaping would be non-exist or

flooded with invasive species which would spread and devastate natural resources outside of the base. Having a healthy ecosystem not only helps wildlife but us (humans). Without natural resources, most endangered species that we currently protect would now be extinct. We may not be able to save the world all at once but we can save one piece at a time."

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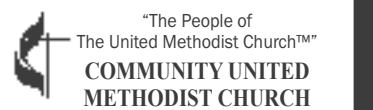


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# DoD budget request focused on innovations for warfighter

David Vergun  
DOD NEWS

The fiscal year 2022 budget request reflect the pacing threat from China, as well as threats from Russia, North Korea, Iran, transnational challenges and climate change, to name a few, the deputy defense secretary said.

Kathleen H. Hicks spoke virtually from the Pentagon today at a Defense One Tech Summit.

The budget request includes a lot of joint concept work within the services, she said. "There's lots of experimentation going on across the department. There's also lots of innovation going on across the department."

Hicks provided a few examples.

The Defense Department is moving from concepts to capabilities in its artificial intelligence and data accelerator initiative, she said.

"Teams will go out within the next 90 days to every single combatant command and start to tie in their data, and they'll also have technical expert teams on AI and they'll start looking at how to bring AI and data to the tactical edge in support of the warfighter," she said.

The joint all-domain command and control is another big endeavor that involves innovation from all of the services, she said, adding that to bring it to fruition will require a cloud enterprise solution.

China relies on civil-military fusion, targeting government funding on civilian

research related to military applications, Hicks said.

The U.S. uses a different model, which she termed "collaborative disruption." That model involves collaboration between private sector research institutions, commercial industry and government labs, and uses seed money from the government to fund critical technologies.



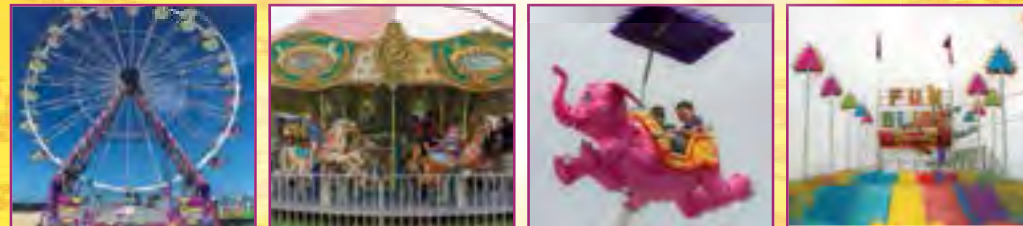
U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Cheng Chang

A Modular Ghost drone is displayed at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, San Diego, California, March 24, 2021.



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349th AMW Public Affairs photos

## Brig. Gen. Stitzer visits Travis

Reserve Citizen Airmen at the 349th Air Mobility Wing had the opportunity to speak with Brig. Gen. Max Stitzer, the special assistant to the Chief of the Air Force Reserve and the military deputy to the Directorate of Staff-Integration at the Pentagon, during his visit to Travis Air Base, California, June 11, 2021.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Christian Conrad

Senior Airman Madison Enright, 60th Dental Squadron dental technician, runs during a Pride Month 5k run at Travis Air Force Base, California, June 19, 2021. The purpose of the run was both to normalize lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the military and reduce the stigma that LGBTQ+ service members sometimes face as a result of their sexual orientation or gender identities.

## Pride Run

From Page 3

promoting innovation within its ranks, Moreno believes that service members being more accepting of their LG-BTQ+ brothers and sisters in arms could not only increase the quality of life for everyone serving, but promote mission readiness as well.

"When you're made to feel like you need to hide, you tend to hide other things as well," he said. "Thoughts, emotions, ideas. These can all be thrown to the wayside just by that queer service member feeling side-lined in an effort to not be outed. Diversity of thought and of people can be a powerful tool in generating positive conversations and executing the Air Force's mission, but we need to not only allow everyone a seat at the table, but also invite them to it and nurture an environment in which everyone feels valued and respected there."

For Moreno, nurturing that environment comes down to a

simple request to all Airmen: Be open-minded.

"It costs nothing to be empathetic—everyone can do it," he said. "Whether you're a commander or just an Airman out grabbing something from the dining facility, being open-minded to the fact that not everyone is going to be just like you and that's something to be celebrated instead of fearful of would go far in moving the culture in a positive direction. Learning about the community as well, even in conversations with members of it, is also something everyone can do."

While the run was a small event, it didn't need to be a big one, said Moreno. With smiles and good feelings abound, it served its purpose.

"We were here and we were ourselves," he said. "We had fun, nobody got hurt and I hope that today speaks to a larger shift in the attitudes of our people. That we all matter and even though we might look or act or love different, we're still Airmen, and we aren't going anywhere."

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## COVID

From Page 3

will be screened. Additionally, he said, the Pentagon remains closed to public tours and the Pentagon's 9/11 memorial is also closed.

In February, the Defense Department partnered with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to set up community vaccination centers where military personnel were available to administer COVID-19 vaccines to Americans who wanted them.

The last of those vaccination sites — this one in New Jersey — shut down this week, Kirby said.

"More than 5,100 active duty service members supported 48 federal sites across the country, including Guam, (the Northern Mariana Islands) and the Virgin Islands, and provided nearly 5 million COVID vaccines," Kirby said.

The National Guard continues to operate under guidance from their state governors, he said.

To date, the National Guard has administered more than 12



Photo by Army Spc. Robert P Wormley III

**Army Sgt. Jonathan Fox administers a COVID-19 vaccine at the Milwaukee Community Vaccination Center in the Wisconsin Center, May 21, 2021.**

million vaccines to the American public.

"Combined, that's over 17 million vaccines by service members," Kirby said. "As we often see in times of crisis, our troops are marshaled to care for their fellow Americans, and the secretary is very, very proud of the critical role that they played throughout this pandemic and thanks them and their families for the sacrifices and the service that they rendered their fellow citizens."

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Left: Burrowing owl chicks, listed as a bird species of special concern, stay close to their nest entrance at Travis Air Force Base, California, June 14, 2021. These birds usually claim burrows that have been abandoned by squirrels, but are capable of digging their own. Travis AFB is host to many kinds of wildlife, including threatened or endangered species. Military bases often host a wide array of local wildlife due to the wide-open federally protected spaces.

Bottom left: A sheep rests in a field of dried grass at Travis AFB, California, June 15, 2021. The natural resources office uses livestock grazing as an effective land management tool.

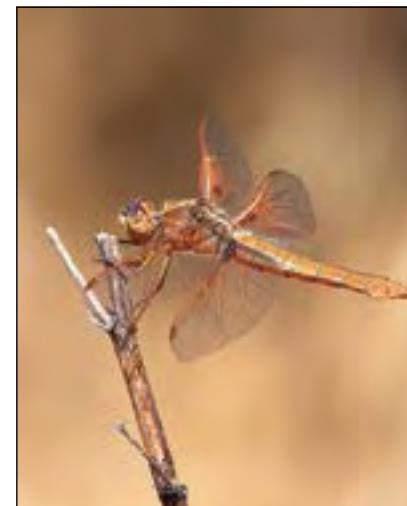
Bottom center: Karen Gallardo Cruz, left, Dr. Lyndsay Rankin, center, both Colorado State University wildlife biologists, and Leslie Peña, 60th Civil Engineer Squadron Natural Resource Program manager, record time, date, temperature and global positioning system measurements while conducting a survey at Travis AFB, California, June 11, 2021. Travis AFB's Natural Resources Program is responsible for surveys, analysis and documentation of threatened and endangered species, wetlands, forest resources and other field studies.

Bottom right: A dragonfly perches on a dried-up twig at Travis AFB, California, June 15, 2021.

U.S. Air Force photos by Heide Couch

Innovation keeps Travis' natural resources...

# THRIVING



City of Fairfield

# 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY

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