Leading an AEF Rotation

A GROUP COMMANDER'S PERSPECTIVE

Colonel Lyndon S. Anderson, USAF

The purpose of this handbook is to discuss AEF leadership from a group commander's perspective with emphasis on leading an AEF rotation. The intent is to inform, educate, and start a dialogue whereby leaders can share their experiences and knowledge with others. This handbook is based on experience gained from commanding the 379th Expeditionary Mission Support Group (EMSG) at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. The unit's task was to support the Global War on Terrorism by overseeing the base operations support mission for approximately 6,000 members of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, the Combined Air Operations Center, and a host of tenant units.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: COLONEL LYNDON S. ANDERSON, USAF, IS THE CHIEF, DEPOT MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS DIVISION, HEADQUARTERS AIR FORCE MATERIEL COMMAND, WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, OHIO.

> *Table of Contents*

48 **Chapter 1 - The AEF Rotation**

52 **Chapter 2 - Directing Readiness Exercises**

56 **Chapter 3 - Focusing the Squadrons**

60 **Chapter 4 - Leading the Troops**

62 **Chapter 5 - Managing Resources**

66 **Chapter 6 - Guiding the Rotation**

Leading an AEF Rotation

A GROUP COMMANDER'S PERSPECTIVE

> Foreword

This handbook is based on experience gained from commanding the 379th Expeditionary Mission Support Group (EMSG) at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. The concepts, initiatives and programs presented in this handbook center around the ideas of leading people and managing base operations within an EMSG; however, many of these ideas are transferable for application, either directly or indirectly, to other deployed wings, groups, or squadrons.

To set the stage, the 379 EMSG's task was to support the Global War on Terrorism by overseeing the base operations support mission for approximately 6,000 members of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, the Combined Air Operations Center, and a host of other tenant units. The base was well established, even though it was transitioning from tents to semi-permanent trailers. The vast majority of personnel assigned to the base lived in Coalition Compound, a housing area on the installation but separated from the main base. The compound consisted of 136 dorm trailers, with most of the flights belonging to the 379th Expeditionary Services Squadron. The work facilities were mostly trailers with a few organizations still working out of tents.

The 379th EMSG was comprised of six squadrons and a personnel support for contingency operations (PERSCO) team. The group was made up of approximately 1,400 rotational military members. Additionally, the group had 60 permanent-party military members comprising the leadership team and a handful of Department of Defense (DoD) civilians and contractors.

The primary mission of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing was to fill air tasking orders and other support requirements levied by the Joint Forces Air Component Commander in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, and Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa. The 379th EMSG's task was to provide base operating support for the wing and other tenant units assigned to the installation. Over the course of the following year, we would work our way through three full air expeditionary force (AEF) rotations.

This handbook should be used as a reference only—Department of Defense and Air Force directives will always take precedence.

The views expressed in this document are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the United States Air Force, Department of Defense, or the US Government.

Chapter 1 - The AEF Rotation

Establishing a Timeline

Looking at a rotation from the perspective of time helps to frame the many tasks associated with a 120-day rotation. This perspective adds order and structure to the many actions that need to be accomplished to effectively lead and manage an AEF rotation.

Figure 1 provides a timeline used by EMSG to sequence events through a rotational cycle. In order to provide a structured flow of events, in chronological order, the timeline groups the events into three periods: pre-rotation, rotation, and post-rotation.

An AEF rotation generally has a defined start and end date set by the AEF Center. Official pre-rotation preparations and personnel arrival begin approximately 30 days prior to the official start date of the rotation. The AEF rotation ends 120 days after the official start date.

The 120-day rotational timeline is typically not followed by aviation organizations, such as expeditionary mission support groups and expeditionary medical groups. Most personnel assigned to these groups rotate in accordance with the AEF cycle, except for the personnel assigned to security forces and vehicle operations who rotate on a 179-day cycle because of increased deployment requirements and limited manpower.

Personnel assigned to expeditionary operations groups and the expeditionary maintenance groups generally rotate with movement of aircraft. Units assigned to these groups rotate on a nonstandard cycle linked more closely to the rotation of aircraft rather than a standard AEF cycle. These groups are also subject to seemingly continuous movement of personnel because of the types of aircraft flown and unit of assignment. For example, some reserve component flying units arrived every 40 days, while others would send the aircraft for a full 120-day rotation, but rotate the

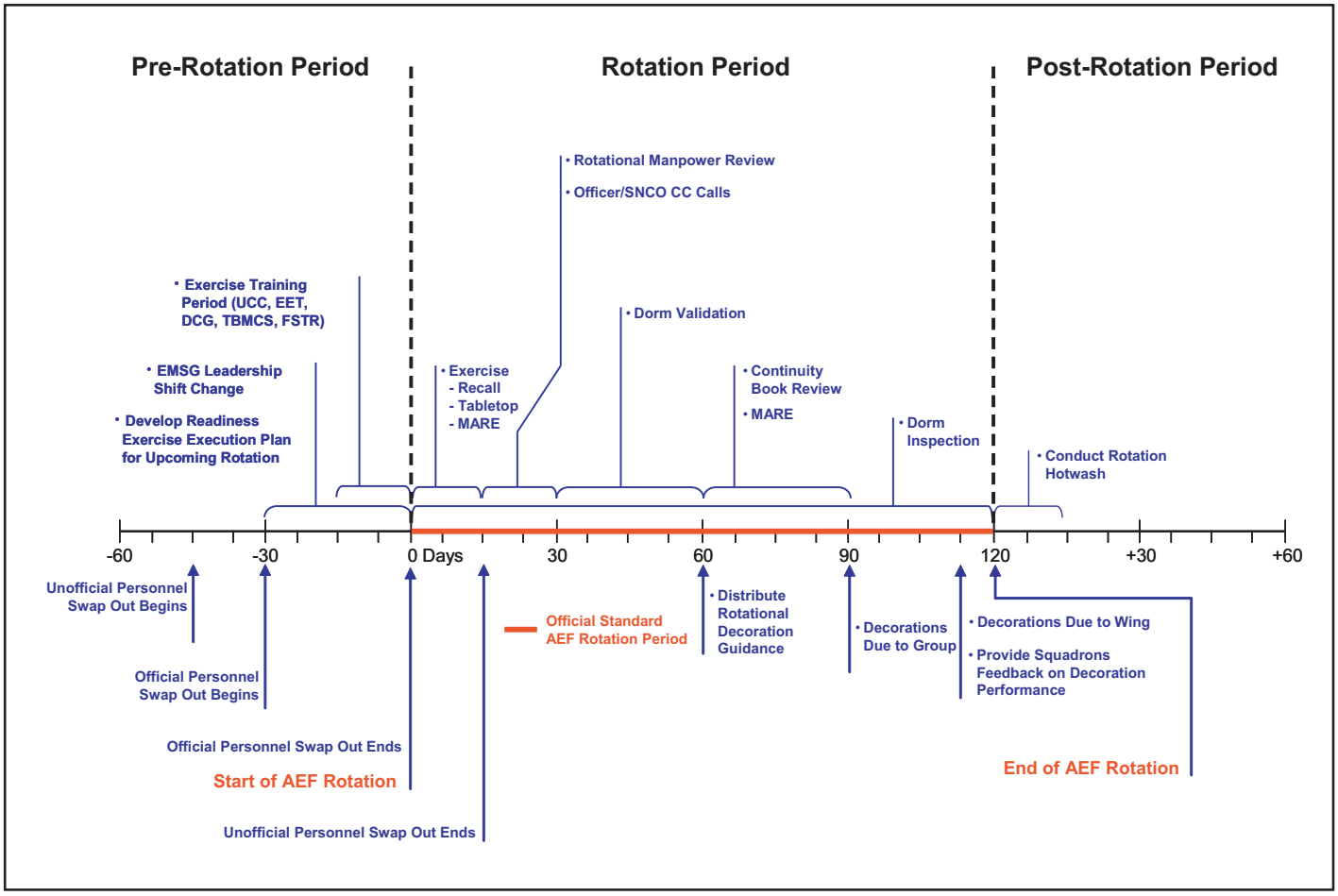


Figure 1. AEF Rotation Management Timeline

people every 30 days. Other units would rotate aircraft and personnel on a monthly basis.

Pre-Rotation Period

Typically, 30 days prior to the official rotation start date, several activities need to be considered and accomplished; for example, in-processing and lodging accommodations for inbound personnel, as well as accommodations for outbound personnel. It is not uncommon for personnel to arrive as early as 30 days prior to the rotation and continue arriving as late as 2 weeks into the AEF cycle.

Upon arrival, personnel must in-process into the country and onto the base. In most cases, a defense cooperative agreement between the United States and the host nation defines entrance criteria. Usually, a military member or government official enters the country and immigrates with a valid identification card and a set of orders. All personnel, however, must abide by the host nation's customs requirements as described in the Department of State's *Foreign Clearance Guide*. The most common customs problems at Al Udeid involved attempts to enter the country with alcohol, pornography, or illegal or unauthorized weapons.

Next, all personnel are required to in-process onto the base. At Al Udeid, this was done by the base PERSCO team in order to account for every person in the United States Air Force Central Command (USCENTAF) area of responsibility. During this time, PERSCO would schedule newly arrived personnel for Right Start, a series of briefings that familiarized the individual with the base and with the installation commander's policies.

Lodging accommodations require upfront planning before new personnel arrive and during the nearly 6 weeks of transitional movement of inbound and outbound personnel. Because both incoming and outgoing personnel will be on station at the same time, units have to work closely with the expeditionary services squadron to ensure sufficient lodging is available. First sergeants and the expeditionary services squadron's transient lodging manager are the primary players in orchestrating lodging accommodations. Due to limited space in transient lodging during the rotation period, units at the deployed location have to maximize use of existing bed spaces within their assigned dorms before requesting use of transient lodging. During rotation time at Al Udeid, transient personnel swelled to above 1400 people per night.

Personnel from the outgoing rotation will generally start departing the base 1 week after personnel from the new rotation arrive. During this transition period, outgoing personnel must do a turnover with their replacement, such as clear out of their dorm and out-process from various base activities, their unit, and PERSCO. They must also satisfy the host nation's exit criteria and customs requirements.

A US Air Force C-17 on the Ramp at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar

Personnel in transient status must also be considered during this period. In the case of Al Udeid, the base served as a hub for movement of personnel throughout the theater of operation. These individuals were not required to formally enter and exit the country; however, they were required to satisfy customs clearance. The base had to work closely with the expeditionary logistics readiness squadron, who had responsibilities for transient personnel movement, to ensure enough lodging was available through the services squadron to meet the increased demand from transient movers.

Finally, during this pre-rotational period, time is spent planning to spin-up the next rotation for a potential major accident or for a threat response. Plans are developed and put in place to educate all players involved in readiness. Additional details on

379th Personnel Stand Formation

readiness exercises can be found in Chapter 2, Directing Readiness Exercises.

Rotation Period

During the rotation period, many activities should occur to help better manage the rotation. Early in the rotation, the unit should conduct a series of readiness exercises to ensure the emergency response teams are fully trained and familiar with base operating procedures. Additionally, commander's calls should be held to communicate standards of performance and expectations. In the beginning of the rotation, manpower reviews should also be accomplished to identify unfilled, mismatched, or training discrepancies and report them to the AEF Center, so the center can identify fixes or work-arounds. During the middle of the rotation period, dorm validations should be accomplished to ensure dorm room management is controlled and adjusted to reflect changes in the mission that, in turn, drive changes in numbers of personnel needing lodging accommodations. Throughout the rotation, commanders may want to emphasize continuity and consistency between rotations so an effective hand-over can occur. Finally, toward the end of the rotation, commanders need to focus their attention on ensuring quality letters of evaluation (LOEs) are produced for deployed personnel, and where applicable, generate necessary decorations to recognize superior performers.

Post-Rotation Period

Post-rotation activities center on capturing lessons learned and incorporating those lessons into actions to be resolved for the next rotation. Though adjustments are made throughout the rotation, a mechanism is needed to formally capture lessons and improvement initiatives so they can be incorporated into policy, guidance, or other institutionalized processes. Each of these areas will be discussed in greater length throughout this handbook.

Chapter 2 - Directing Readiness Exercises

Readiness exercises are an important mission area requiring a great deal of attention at the beginning of each rotation. The focus is to rapidly spin-up and qualify personnel for major accident responses such as an aircraft incident, security breech, or natural disaster. In the absence of a wing plans and programs (XP) function, EMSG took on the responsibilities for planning and executing the wing's readiness exercise program. A planning schedule was developed for each rotation to guide the wing through the various phases of preparation.

An exercise plan is necessary to provide a rapid path to train personnel and to practice major accident response scenarios in a stepped fashion. The first area that requires attention is team development. Though personnel arrive trained in their functional areas, none have worked together as a team at the deployed location. It is, therefore, necessary to assemble the team and push them through their paces to ensure that they know what is expected of them.

A second area requiring immediate focus is getting the essential upfront familiarization training done as soon as possible after the rotation begins. This is necessary to reduce the vulnerability gap between rotations (that period of time between when the previous rotation's qualified team disbands and when the new rotation's emergency response teams are fully trained). During this transitional period, the wing is most vulnerable (at risk) should a major accident response be necessary. Therefore, the quicker the spin-up period can occur, the shorter the vulnerability gap will be.

The third area of focus is timing. It is important to start the planning process 30 days prior to the official start of the new rotation. This is necessary to ensure the plan is fully coordinated

379th Security Forces Personnel During Exercise Preparation

before the replacements arrive. The plan should include a clear set of wing-level objectives, the date and time for each of the readiness exercises, an organizational list of participants, and a conceptual description of the exercise scenario. The wing's leadership must review and approve the plan before implementation.

Spin-Up Period

Before the wing can exercise, it has to go through a spin-up period to provide the necessary training and familiarization required to be effective at the deployed location. Major accident response procedures, base layout, communications systems, and other pertinent training is provided to members of the exercise evaluation team, disaster control group, battlestaff, unit control centers, and full spectrum threat response representatives. These teams also receive training on the Theater Battle Management Control System (TBMCS), a command and control system used for major accident responses.

Required training begins as soon as new rotational personnel arrive (before the start of the official rotation period) and continues until all personnel are trained. Training is completed by the beginning of the new rotation, or as soon thereafter as possible (but no later than 2 weeks), so readiness exercises can commence. This is necessary to minimize the vulnerability between a fully trained response team that departed from the last rotation, and the new team arriving for the new rotation. The training occurs in three logical steps—crawl, walk, and run.

Crawl – Recall Exercise

A recall exercise is done for members of the disaster control group and battlestaff within days of the beginning of the new rotation. The objectives of the exercise is to practice the recall process and the pager and land mobile radio systems, to ensure the disaster control group and battlestaff members know where the primary assembly locations are, and to conduct inspections to ensure all personnel have the required equipment and checklists to do their jobs. During this exercise, the commander of the disaster control group and the director of the battlestaff discuss administrative issues, explain the exercise process, and have the staff conduct communication checks of desk and satellite telephones, land-mobile radios, non-secure Internet protocol router network, and secret Internet protocol router network connectivity.

Walk - Tabletop Exercise

A tabletop exercise is typically done within just a few days following the recall exercise. Participants for this exercise are

379th Security Personnel and Military Working Dog

members of the unit control centers, initial responders (fire fighters, security forces, medical, and explosive ordnance and disposal), disaster control group, battlestaff, and the exercise evaluation team. The first responders, disaster control group and battlestaff assemble at different locations and walk through the tabletop exercise in isolation from one another using a common scenario. This allows the freedom to discuss issues relative to each group without overcomplicating the exercise. It also gives each team the opportunity to discuss roles and responsibilities, command and control, and administrative duties.

The tabletop exercise has several objectives. The first objective is to practice the notification and response phases of a major accident response, while the second objective is to exercise the unit accountability process (to include off-base travelers). This is necessary to ensure units and major accident response teams have a common understanding of how unit accountability will occur. A third objective is to exercise the TBMCS command and control tool. This objective is part of every exercise to reinforce training and to ensure the tool can be effectively used during a major accident response. The final objective is to conduct another check of the communications systems at the end of the exercise to doubly ensure all personnel are familiar with the communications gear and that the gear is fully operational.

Run - Major Accident Response Exercise

A major accident response exercise is the culminating event for the readiness exercise program. It is conducted after the tabletop exercise, but no later than 2 weeks after the beginning of the rotation. The participants for the exercise include members of the unit control centers, initial responders, disaster control group, battlestaff, and the exercise evaluation team.

The primary objectives for this exercise are to practice all phases of major accident response—notification, response, withdrawal and recovery; exercise the unit accountability process (to include off-base travelers) for unit control centers; and

exercise the command and control tool to ensure effective processes are in place.

The most probable major accident response, an aircraft crash, is the basis for the first major accident response exercise. The wing leadership wants to ensure that they have a fully trained and functional response capability to deal with potential aircraft incidents in a combat zone with such a high operational tempo. A second exercise is conducted about halfway through the rotation to maintain proficiency for the response teams. During this exercise, the wing often focuses on a security response scenario. The wing leadership recognizes the need to be able to swiftly and effectively respond to a high security threat to the installation.

Host Nation, Joint, and Coalition Partnership Exercise Involvement

Whether the exercise is an aircraft incident, a security incident, or any other scenario, it is vitally important to include the host nation, Joint, and coalition partners in the planning and execution, in order to ensure effective response. The involvement is a good opportunity to crossfeed information and develop strong ties of mutual support. It also allows US forces to take advantage of the emergency response capabilities of all involved. This is a necessary and prudent precautionary measure to ensure we are ready for any unforeseen major accident response, both on- and off-base.

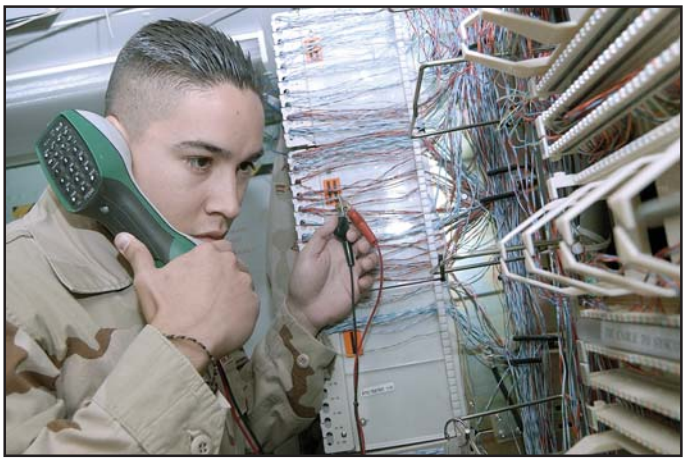
Guidance and Oversight

Supporting a readiness exercise program is difficult without a wing XP office to coordinate all the requirements, and to ensure all necessary details associated with planning and execution is complete. The need for a detailed exercise operating instruction is necessary to codify processes and procedures, and to institutionalize them within the wing to provide the continuity from one rotation to the next.

Additionally, it is necessary to objectively evaluate performance during exercises and document the findings so corrective actions can be assigned and monitored for future rotations. The exercise evaluation team is used to objectively evaluate all phases of the readiness exercises, ensure compliance with the wing's major accident response operating instructions, provide a formal mechanism for documenting results of the exercise, and provide unbiased feedback on the readiness of the major accident response teams. The membership of the exercise evaluation team is functionally oriented around the processes for first responders, unit control centers, disaster control group, and the battlestaff. Members of the expeditionary communications squadron evaluate the TBMCS as well. Members of the Exercise Evaluation Team are most effective if each is at least a senior noncommissioned officer (SNCO) or officer with knowledge and experience in his or her squadron's functional areas of responsibility.

C2 Tool – Theater Battle Management Control System

The TBMCS serves as the wing's single command and control tool. Though the wing XP normally has the responsibility for overseeing the implementation and use of TBMCS, in absence of an XP at Al Udeid, EMSG took on this responsibility and developed a TBMCS implementation plan, later codified in an operating instruction, to provide the guidance and oversight, roles and responsibilities, and processes and procedures for use of the tool. Although painful during the spin-up phase, the tool proved to be highly effective in providing the necessary command and control for major accident response.



Checking Phone Lines in Preparation for an Exercise

Chapter 3 - Focusing the Squadrons

Perhaps one of the most difficult challenges in a contingency environment is developing a clear vision for the future. The purpose of focusing the squadrons is to set clear goals and expectations for the future, and to provide a common direction for all of the squadrons within a group. When all of the squadrons are headed in the same direction, mutual support yields synergies that otherwise would not be created. To start, we have to define priorities and then develop a long range plan. From there, we are postured to execute the plan and monitor progress.

Defining Priorities

Defining priorities requires that we understand the wing's priorities. In the absence of wing priorities, EMSG priorities were coordinated with the wing commander to ensure those priorities were congruent with his direction for the future. Going through the effort of defining priorities was crucial to ensure limited resources were focused in the proper areas.

EMSG chose the following as its priorities, in order of precedence.

- *Mission*: provide maximum support to the warfighter
  - Maximize combat operations support
  - Institute processes to minimize rotational vulnerabilities
  - Implement processes to ensure rapid and effective disaster control measures
- *Quality of Life*: ensure the highest quality of life for our people
  - Ensure a safe and secure force
  - Communicate and enforce standards of good order and discipline
  - Provide creative and healthy morale programs and events
- *Infrastructure*: establish a healthy and safe working and living environment

379TH Personnel Performing Training on an All-Terrain Forklift

- Design, develop, and maintain safe and reliable infrastructure
- Implement enduring, long-term planning and execution processes
- Develop an executable and coordinated transition plan from tents to semi-permanent facilities, and from semi-permanent facilities to permanent facilities

Using these priorities, it was possible to develop a long-range plan for EMSG that articulated a vision and expressed executable action steps to achieve that vision.

Long Range Plan

Developing an executable plan results from answering four fundamental questions.

- Where are we now (baseline)?
- Where are we headed (commander's intent or vision)?
- How will we get there (long range plan)?
- Are we on track (measures of progress and success)?

Where Are We Now?

The first question baselines the organization by establishing a starting point. Answering this question allows the commander to define a starting point so he or she can better gauge progress toward achieving the desired vision. In other words, the commander needs to know the health of the squadron. As the path is laid out for the squadron, constant monitoring of the health of the squadron, relative to the direction the squadron is headed, allows the commander to verify if he or she is on the right track.

Measuring the health of the squadron involves evaluating compliance with expectations associated with mission, safety, training, personnel and manpower, facilities, resources, and funding.

How well a squadron supports the mission of the wing is the first order of business. A commander needs to clearly understand the mission of his or her squadron, so he or she can establish clearly defined measures of merit to determine if the mission is effectively executed. Each squadron should have its own set of metrics to measure mission performance. For example, some service-related support squadrons may want to measure customer response rates, or number of completed trouble tickets, over a certain period of time. Other squadrons may want to measure weapon system availability or support equipment readiness. Equipment turn-time, number of inspections completed, or scheduling effectiveness rates, may be additional measures of mission performance. Whatever the mission, a set of metrics

Retreat Formation at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar

should be developed to let the squadron commander know if the mission is being accomplished in an effective manner.

Compliance with safety directives is another important measure regarding the health of a unit. Unit safety program compliance, number of direct safety violations, or technical data violations are examples of areas that can be measured to provide a picture of the unit's safety program. Other useful measures may include tracking on- and off-duty injuries. Use of the Air Force (AF) Form 55 has been a long-standing method for documenting safety concerns for the squadron work centers. Even tracking compliance by use of AF Form 55 documentation can be a useful indicator of compliance within unit safety programs.

Training is another measure of a unit's health. Commanders are responsible for ensuring that people are adequately trained to perform the mission. Each must ensure that initial training, proficiency training, and upgrade training is accomplished in a timely manner. Examples of possible measurement areas may include training completion rates, overdue training, additional duty training, and percentage of personnel in upgrade or proficiency training, to include status of progress.

Personnel metrics are yet another measure of the health of a unit. Comparisons between authorized and assigned personnel validate whether the squadron has sufficient manpower to achieve its assigned mission. As was mentioned earlier, reviewing unfilled positions, mismatched positions, or training deficiencies for the new rotation is necessary to ensure shortages are identified and corrected. Equally important are the measures that indicate if we are taking care of our people. These measures include enlisted performance report (EPR), officer performance report (OPR), and letter of evaluation (LOE) monitoring to ensure they are being completed on time. The commanders should also review status of decorations to ensure timeliness, and to ensure deserving people are properly rewarded for their performance. Additional metrics may focus on percentage of personnel assigned to mobility positions, and a litany of measures to ensure positions are identified and equitably filled for AEF rotations as mission needs dictate.

Facilities are another excellent measure of a unit's health. Facilities are easily neglected if the commander does not take a personal interest. There are a number of ways to gauge the health of the unit's facilities. The commander should ensure all

facilities have a manager assigned and that facility discrepancy logs are used. The commander should frequently inspect facility safety reports and discrepancy logs to get a feel for the condition of his or her facilities. Additionally, the commander should insist on an upgrade plan or a long-range development plan. Finally, the commander should monitor status of discrepancies to ensure that they are being addressed in a timely manner.

Another important area to focus on when determining a unit's health is resources, in terms of equipment (test, support, and personnel protection), vehicles (special purpose and general purpose), tools and consumables. All of these have measures of merit that should be reviewed by leadership. Some examples include status of custodian authorization/custody receipt listing accounts, automated data processing equipment accounts and communications security accounts, availability or serviceability rates, and mission capability rates. Other examples may include repair rates, parts status, and storage levels. The commander has a responsibility for ensuring that his or her people are properly resourced to execute the mission. A significant amount of the commander's time should be spent breaking down barriers and working with resource providers to ensure sufficient resource support is available.

The final area that is a key indicator of a unit's health is funds management. As with resources, the commander has a responsibility to ensure that his or her unit has sufficient funding to conduct the mission, and must ensure procedures are in place to properly manage those funds. The measures of merit in this area can range from monitoring status of Form 9 submissions to tracking spend lines against obligations and authority.

Where Are We Headed?

This question addresses the long range vision of the commander. By addressing this question, a unit is able to provide an unambiguous and precise direction for the future. Articulating a common vision for EMSG was necessary to ensure all units were collectively headed in the same direction. The commander's intent set the destination and direction EMSG would collectively go as they planned for the future.

The commander's intent for EMSG had a threefold vision. First, was the development of an effective rotation management process. The issue centered on degraded mission support during the transition period of a rotation. The intent was to develop a seamless and efficient transition between AEF rotations with no degradation of the mission. Second was the development of an effective aerial port operation. Aerial port operations were problematic as were transient immigration, troop beddown and movement through Al Udeid Air Base. The intent was to develop efficient, customer-focused processes and support structures for moving people through Al Udeid Air Base during rotations while, at the same time, being able to provide an enhanced level of support for rotational personnel at Al Udeid. Third was the idea of evolving to a more progressive enduring base operation. The main issues that drove this intent was the realization that constant changes in mission caused resources (personnel and equipment) not to be properly aligned with new missions. The intent was to develop a methodology to align these resources with mission requirements now and for the future.

It took 4 months to develop a clear understanding of the root causes of problems that plagued EMSG and the wing. It took a concerted effort to look beyond the challenges of daily operations in a high operations tempo environment, to identify where EMSG needed to be headed. It would have been easier to maintain the status quo and continue marking time, but that was not enough. As leaders, we were expected to provide forward-leaning leadership, even if it created additional workload for an already heavily-tasked group. By late October 2004, the vision was clear, and the time to develop a plan was at hand.

How Do We Get There?

In early November, EMSG leadership and squadron commanders met for a half day *offsite* and the group commander presented his intent. The purpose of the meeting was to explain the vision for EMSG and to task the squadrons to develop a plan on how they were going to achieve the vision.

The squadrons were given 2 months to develop individual long-range plans. Guidance for plan development required inclusion of measurable, obtainable, and actionable initiatives that mapped directly to each of the three vision statements (effective rotation management process, effective aerial port operation, and progressive enduring base operation). Each initiative had to have an office of primary responsibility, a target completion date, and ways to measure progress and success. The squadron plans were then rolled up into an EMSG plan.

How Do We Know We Are On Track?

The final step is to institute a process to review status and measure progress toward achieving the three vision statements. It is important to periodically monitor the health of each squadron to determine where to make course corrections and to ensure the squadrons are properly focused on the commander's intent.

A monthly *How Goes It* meeting was mandated for each squadron. This meeting was tailored to the unique characteristics of each squadron and included all of the measures of merit previously discussed in this section. Attendees included the group commander, deputy, chief enlisted manager (CEM), squadron commander, operations officer, flight commanders and flight chiefs. Each squadron presented the information differently, but with a common theme and focus that kept them all aiming for the same vision for EMSG.

Visit the *Journal* online at: http://www.aflma.hq.af.mil/lgj/Afjlhome.html

Chapter 4 - Leading the Troops

Personnel need reassurance that they belong to a fully functioning wing with a chain of command with full *Uniform Code of Military Justice* authority. It becomes important for senior wing leadership to get out in front of the troops early in the rotation and often. The new rotations need to know as quickly as possible what the wing leadership expects of them. A critical first step is to set the standards of expectation relative to behavior and performance. This is a big step in ensuring a smooth and successful rotation. This can be accomplished through Right Start briefings, commander's calls, and wing leadership being visible in the workplace and in the living areas.

Commander's Calls

Within EMSG, officer and SNCO calls were used to communicate standards and expectations. These calls were conducted separately, but with the same basic message. Each call had a clear and concise explanation of EMSG's mission in relation to the mission of the wing. It was important to help everyone understand how they contributed to the success of the wing's combat mission. Next, a discussion on safety emphasized the need for supervisory involvement on a 24/7 basis. Following safety, I discussed what I expected of my officers and SNCOs, and what they could expect from me, so we could start producing as a group. The officer and SNCO calls were mandatory for all rotational personnel. Permanent party personnel were not required to attend, but were highly encouraged to attend and often came on their own volition. The setting for the calls was structured, but informal. I wanted my leaders to engage with questions and comments to ensure that my messages were effectively being sent and received.

Visibility

Being visible is a necessary and important part of effective leadership in a deployed environment. It is important to let people see the commander out among the troops; to sit and listen to their concerns, to share his or her expectations, and help them better understand his or her concerns. Being visible reinforces the chain of command by letting people know who the commander is, and that he or she cares. The idea of *leading from the front* energizes personnel and drives them to perform well because they can better relate to the leader as a person, who, like them, is away from family and friends and is dedicated to doing his or her best to support the mission of the wing.

Letters of Evaluation

Another important part of leadership is taking care of the troops. One of the ways of doing this is to take the time to document performance during the rotation. Within EMSG, it was mandatory that all personnel (officer and enlisted) be given letters of evaluation (LOE), except in cases where the deployed rater was also the ratee's rater at their home station. This was beneficial for the individual when it came time to consider them for an end-of-rotation decoration or when documenting performance for their annual performance report.

Decorations

Decorations are an important method for recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance. Because it is easy to abuse the system, a policy should be generated to provide guidance on submitting deserving personnel for such decorations. The main point of the policy should state that decorations will be submitted for those who clearly and distinctly perform in an outstanding manner that cannot be appropriately recognized in another way. Not everyone deserves a decoration, just because they deployed to the war zone. To preserve the value and meaning of the decoration and to recognize those truly deserving, it is important to only decorate those whose performance is exceptional.

When reviewing the decoration package, it is helpful to have a copy of the draft LOE in the package, along with any award submissions. This information helps to reinforce the comments in the citation, so that a more informed decision can be made by the reviewing officials.

Timing is also an issue with decorations. It is necessary to give the units sufficient time to develop decoration packages, while at the same time, ensuring that appropriate time is allotted in the review process to review all submitted packages. To achieve this balance, decoration guidance is provided to the squadrons halfway through the rotation cycle (60 days). At the 90-day point, decorations are submitted to the group level to allow sufficient time to review and rewrite as necessary. At the 114-day point, decoration packages are finalized and submitted to wing level.

At the end of the review process, feedback from the group level is provided to the squadron so the commanders can adjust their processes for the next rotation. This allows the commanders to see what has been approved, disapproved, and downgraded at the group level. It also provides a sense of how they did relative to other squadrons within the group.

Awards Program

Another important recognition program is the awards program. The mindset of some first line supervisors, however, is to focus on the mission and not spend time producing awards packages.

Therefore, it is important to insist on use of the program and ensure each squadron recognizes their best performers during each rotation. Within EMSG, the CEM managed the program and ensured fairness and timeliness of submissions occurred so sufficient time was available to recognize award winners, and document their achievements in their LOEs.

Managing the Staff

Another important area of leadership for the commander is managing the staff. The commander's immediate staff should include a permanent party deputy and a rotational executive officer, a CEM, a resource advisor, and an administrative assistant.

At EMSG, my deputy served as my *right-hand man*. We recognized early the importance of being in synch with each other and being mutually supportive on the day-to-day issues, as well as the long-term direction for EMSG. The deputy was assigned specific responsibilities to oversee the staff and troubleshoot problem areas that crossed multiple squadrons, groups, or tenant units. The deputy also served as a facilitator, ensuring that communications effectively occurred both up and down the chain of command, as well as horizontally among the squadrons. Last, the deputy had the responsibility of being an advocate for both the squadron commanders and the group commander. In this capacity, the deputy communicated information from me, as well as communicating information to me, when necessary.

A group commander must broaden the deputy's perspective with challenging responsibilities, listen to his or her advice, support his or her decisions, and document his or her performance on the performance report and the promotion recommendation form. The commander must take a personal interest and involvement in the deputy's next assignment. Although this requires time, along with documenting performance, it is the most important thing commanders could do for a well-deserving deputy.

The CEM is another key member of the staff and is assigned a number of responsibilities. The key task is to be well versed on the pulse of the enlisted corps. The CEM also serves as a troubleshooter and a manager of special projects. The CEM needs to be brutally honest and visible, communicating both to and from the commander, as the CEM interfaces with the troops. Furthermore, it is important that both the commander and the CEM be visible together. One of the ways to accomplish this is during weekly drive-arounds. At EMSG, during this time the commander and the CEM would not only inspect the base (to include working areas and living areas), but also spend time together to discuss morale concerns and other issues on the minds of the troops.

Chapter 5 - Managing Resources

One of the important functions of leadership is to ensure the troops have the resources necessary to do their jobs. Several initiatives should be put in place.

Manpower Review

At Al Udeid, a manpower review initiative was established to ensure sufficient manpower existed to support EMSG's many mission areas. The initiative was twofold in that it focused on near-term rotational issues and long-term sustainment issues.

A policy letter was published outlining the requirement for a rotational manpower review. Its purpose was to ensure manning documents were correct and discrepancies were captured, documented, and resolved. The Employee Requirements Manning Document was reviewed against the Deployed Requirements Manpower Document to ensure personnel assigned were consistent with the authorizations and grades, skill sets were correct, and deviations from line remarks were adequately addressed. Discrepancies were documented and elevated as necessary within the first week of the new rotation to ensure unfilled or mismatched positions were quickly and properly addressed. Likewise, training requirements were reviewed to ensure personnel filling a position were sufficiently trained to do their job. The EMSG CEM was assigned responsibility for ensuring a thorough group review was properly conducted. The CEM reported group results and results from each squadron to the group commander and deputy. Discrepancies outside the control of EMSG were elevated for corrective action to minimize repeats during subsequent rotations.

This effort generated significant concerns that the authorization documents were not keeping pace with the ever-changing mission needs of the installation. As the base matured, the base operating support mission and other missions were rapidly transitioning from a contingency focus to a more enduring operations focus. The manpower documents had not kept up with this change. For example, the expeditionary civil engineering squadron's heating and ventilation air conditioning flight was manned to support a contingency base operation using Harvest Falcon assets heated and cooled by large ground air conditioning units. The base had moved away from Harvest Falcon assets and was now using semi-permanent trailers. In total, the 136 dorms, with 30 rooms each, had a single small window air conditioner in each room. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) shop was not manned to support maintenance of 4080 window units, much less the preventive maintenance measures needed to keep these air conditioning units operating. They were only manned to support the Harvest Falcon assets that had long been removed and replaced with semi-permanent facilities.

A complete revalidation of core manning documents needed to be accomplished to ensure authorizations adequately supported the current mission. USCENTAF's A1 staff was asked to conduct a full-scale top-to-bottom manpower review to ensure authorizations supported the current mission taskings. This effort was initiated and found to be needed across the entire theater of operation. It was then performed on a frequent basis to ensure manpower was properly resourced to meet the current mission requirements. The AEF Center must be an integral part of this process to ensure AEF rotations are responsive to the needs of the units.

Equipment

Equipment was another resource area that required attention. Much of the equipment available at Al Udeid was old and obsolete. Some of the equipment was provided from stockpiles of war readiness materiel no longer used in the active duty inventory. Examples included communications gear and special purpose vehicles.

Personnel often arrived unfamiliar with equipment. Since the equipment was not available or used at the home station, it was not part of their training. Therefore, they were not able to generate a level of proficiency on the equipment before deploying.

We were limited on what proactive measures we could take to avert these problems. The squadrons were very resilient in figuring out how to adapt to equipment unfamiliar to their people. However, this must be recognized as a weakness in the AEF process. We must not expose personnel to this kind of equipment for the first time in a deployed environment. The learning curve is steep, and the risk of using old or obsolete equipment may prove to be too high, especially where safety and impact on direct mission support are involved.

Facilities and Infrastructure

Facilities and infrastructure growth was a monumental challenge at Al Udeid. During 2005, Al Udeid had facilities in three stages of disposal or development. The original tent city was torn down. Tents were either salvaged or disposed, and the land was reclaimed for return to the host nation. Semi-permanent trailers for the living compound and much of the working areas were either in place or being built, and permanent facilities were being designed and constructed. The permanent facilities were managed by Air Combat Command's (ACC) construction management office.

Development, upkeep, disposal of tent facilities, and semi-permanent trailer facilities kept the expeditionary civil engineering squadron more than busy. The tent facilities had been set up quickly during 2001 to meet mission needs. After being in the harsh desert environment for 3 years, these facilities were getting old and worn out. Electrical teams spent thousands of man-hours carefully monitoring and repairing primary and

secondary power distribution systems and boxes to avert power failures or fires. From a fire safety perspective, the tent facilities were not built for long-term occupancy. Structural teams, plumbers, electricians, and heating and cooling specialists spent inordinate amounts of time and resources repairing such things as leaky roofs, clogged toilets and plumbing, electrical power failures, and wind-damaged doors and windows.

To better manage this effort, an infrastructure utilization board process was put in place to more effectively manage all aspects of infrastructure requirements for facilities, roads, water, sewage, communications, and electrical work. This effort helped to guide and direct the many moving parts associated with managing the base infrastructure needs.

Additionally, the expeditionary civil engineering squadron led a base-wide development project to merge the many building and infrastructure programs from the wing, Combined Air Operations Center, host nation, and coalition partners into a single comprehensive 5-year development plan. This initiative brought together all the players in the development of Al Udeid Air Base to ensure a congruent and functional long-term development plan existed.

Funds Management

Although there was essentially no formal operational budget managed by the wing in fiscal year 2005, as commanders, we had a fiduciary responsibility to wisely and prudently spend our limited Global War on Terrorism funds. We also recognized that careful spending on our part gave the Air Force greater flexibility to execute its entire budget both at the home station and in the USCENTAF area of responsibility.

In absence of a budget, an initiative was put in place at the group level to control spending. Guidance was distributed in a policy letter mandating that every effort be made to avoid wasteful, inappropriate or unnecessary spending, and that all purchases be justified with an audit trail sufficient to satisfy a General Accounting Office review. Specifically, the policy directed that each squadron perform the following:

- Ensure all purchases were necessary, prudent, and limited to those needed to support mission operations
- Ensure resource advisors and other purchasing individuals kept an audit trail of all purchases
- Ensure excess supplies and equipment were inventoried, stored, and visible to other units for use as needed
- Ensure an effective squadron commander-level review process was in place to avoid improper or unnecessary expenditures

A two-part oversight plan was executed. First, each squadron was asked to establish procedures for regular oversight reviews to ensure compliance with the policy. At a minimum, squadron

oversight assessments needed to include status reviews of purchases, pending deliveries, receipts, and payments. Secondly, Form 9 submissions were carefully scrutinized at the squadron commander level, and later at the group commander level when Global War on Terrorism funding was severely curtailed.

Base Appearance

Base cleanliness and appearance was a major concern when I arrived at Al Udeid. It was an indicator that provided an indirect warning sign of waning attitude, morale, and discipline. The logic was simple—if people cared little about their working and living environment, then they might care even less about their support to the mission. Additionally, it was important to ensure the base was presentable for the many dignitaries and distinguished visitors that passed through. It was only natural to want to present to others a clean and polished appearance of where we lived and worked. It followed, therefore, that if leadership paid attention to base appearance, others would do so as well. EMSG leadership, wing chiefs, and first sergeants put this logic into practice by conducting weekly walk-throughs and drive-arounds, varying the time of day and the areas they looked at.

This approach achieved several objectives. First, it allowed them to be visible. They would conduct their walk-throughs in uniform so others would know they were interested in the health and welfare of the troops. Second, they inspected the dorms and living areas to ensure standards of good order and cleanliness were maintained. They would develop a list of *discrepancies* and provide them to the dorm managers each week to work. The troops appreciated that senior enlisted leaders were concerned about their living conditions.

During each rotation, a half day was spent inspecting each of the 12 large bath houses and 6 smaller latrine buildings in Coalition Compound. When this initiative began, the bathrooms were in a poor state of repair, even though they were less than a year old. They simply required senior leadership attention to force others to take action. This worked well, and the bathrooms were then maintained in a good state of repair. It took direct leadership intervention to get the attention of the personnel using the facilities and the attention of the organization responsible for their upkeep.

The group chief and I also spent 2 hours each week driving around the entire base. We documented problem areas each week and tasked them out to the squadrons to resolve. This, too, worked well, and the squadrons recognized that we were serious about base appearance. Squadrons took initiatives to improve base appearance, and the expeditionary civil engineering squadron instituted base beautification efforts.

Dorm Management and Validation

A comprehensive validation of dorm rooms should be done with each rotation to ensure adequate numbers of rooms are available for assigned personnel and for transient populations. This is necessary because of the constant mission changes that drive significant fluctuations in forces assigned. This validation achieves two objectives. First, it ensures units have the correct number of rooms to meet mission needs for the current rotation. Second, to ensure fairness and equity, the validation serves to monitor compliance with installation room assignment policies.

Failure to comply can result in morale issues and space issues. At EMSG, morale was affected because of the perceived injustice when rooms were not equitably distributed among personnel. For example, airman through master sergeant, and lieutenants through major, were assigned two people to a room. If a unit did not comply with this policy, then it was being unfair to those units who did comply. There were exceptions, especially for flight crews requiring crew integrity, but these were explainable and accepted. Moreover, compliance with policy was necessary to ensure sufficient transient rooms were available during the periods preceding and during rotations. Limited room availability made it important to abide by occupancy policies.

Timing to start the validation process, typically, occurred 30 days after the official start of the rotation. Ideally, a validation would be done in advance of a rotation, but the AEF system was not able to identify personnel by rank or gender in advance with enough fidelity to conduct a validation prior to the rotation. The validation was therefore completed in the middle of the rotation, after the transition from one rotation to the next was completed.

The EMSG CEM worked with his counterparts from the wing and tenant units to conduct the validation and report adjustments to the group commander. The validation process took a great deal of time and was often very contentious among units. Many units were resistant to giving up rooms for fear the rooms might be needed at some point in the future.

Quarters Inspections

Quarters inspections are accomplished during each rotation to assess the security, military fitness, and good order and discipline of a unit. These inspections are also done to ensure compliance with maintenance standards and to monitor upkeep of living quarters. Even though the upkeep of the quarters is the responsibility of every member of each unit, it is the commanders who had responsibility and authority for ensuring compliance. Included in this authority is the ability to make an examination to determine if standards for sanitation and cleanliness are being met, and locating and confiscating unlawful weapons and other contraband. Just as a cautionary note, any such inspections should be conducted in a uniform manner with respect to all members of the unit.

For EMSG, the following activities were mandatory. Each squadron was expected to conduct a quarters inspection of every rotational member within the group at least once during the rotation. Commanders were to conduct a thorough inspection for excessive trash, dirt, dust, dirty laundry, and unpleasant odors. The refrigerators and metal lockers in each room were to be examined and any contraband seized. The squadron was to conduct the inspection with full cooperation and guidance from the staff judge advocate's office. However, they were cautioned that quarters inspections were not a substitute for probable cause searches. If a commander suspected someone of an offense under *The Uniform Code of Military Justice,* he or she was instructed to consult with the staff judge advocate, prior to the inspection.

Organizing the Schedule

Establishing a routine meeting schedule was an important step in leading EMSG. At the command level, two routine staff meetings were conducted, one on a daily basis with the commander's immediate staff, and one on a weekly basis with the commander's immediate staff and squadron commanders.

Daily Status Update Meeting

At EMSG, the daily status update meeting was a quick 15-minute meeting with the deputy, executive officer, and CEM. The purpose of this meeting was to review status of mission critical systems, highlight issues that surfaced overnight, review the daily calendar, and discuss key areas of interest. A review of the day's calendar and activities with the staff was conducted to ensure all meetings were covered and ensure that each individual knew what the other was doing. We would then go through the read file, put together by the executive officer and senior administrator, who spent the first hour of their day assembling the read file for the meeting. The content of the read file included the force protection intelligence summary, a synopsis of force protection and intelligence summaries, messages, correspondence for the past 24 hours, the expeditionary security forces squadron blotter, and the expeditionary civil engineering squadron's fire flight blotter. The read file also included a status update section on critical EMSG resources. This section would be used to generate a one-page stoplight summary slide of critical systems (shown in Figure 2) which was then presented at the daily wing stand-up. Supporting documentation showed resource status for critical communications systems, force protection and security systems, special purpose vehicles, infrastructure status associated with power, water and sewage, and finally, status of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and fire equipment.

Other sections of the read file included the daily flying air tasking order, aircraft maintenance status, mission capable (MICAP) boards, wing suspense slide, and the daily distinguished visitor schedule. Last, the read file included a quick reference section containing current battlestaff directives, the latest rotation schedule, and the weekly PERSCO strength report. Typically, it took approximately 15 minutes to preview the read file in preparation for the meeting. Questions generating from this preview were the basis for discussion during the actual meeting.

Weekly EMSG Staff Meeting

The group staff meeting served as a time to exchange information and to provide status updates on various issues among the squadrons and group. They were specifically focused on sharing information, and not solving problems. Generally, the meetings lasted approximately 90 minutes, which provided adequate amount of time for each squadron to address taskers, issues, and any upcoming events. With time permitting, additional meeting topics included administrative actions and the passage of communications from previous wing-level meetings.

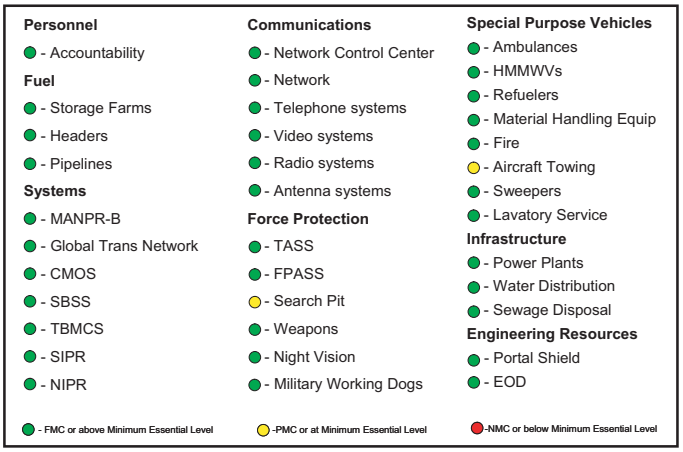


Figure 2. 379 EMSG Resource Status Update

Chapter 6 - Guiding the Rotation

Guiding an AEF rotation requires a perspective different from that needed to lead an organization at home station. Continuity is a critical component of success from one rotation to the next. This continuity helps to ensure the mission continues as personnel transition between rotations. To be successful, commanders should ensure that the standards of performance, processes, and expectations are passed between rotations. This is especially difficult under an AEF rotation, when only slightly more than 1 percent of the squadron, group, or wing leadership remains from one rotation to the next. In some locations, there is little or no command continuity between rotations. In either case, commanders should establish processes to ensure continuity exists within their squadron. These processes may include such things as communication (for example, communicating often, clearly, and simply to ensure careful planning, execution and followups are accomplished. As a general rule, the commander will want to keep processes simple from one rotation to the next.

Split Shift Operations

For EMSG, the first of these initiatives was to ensure maximum leadership availability and presence during the actual transition period between rotations. The group commander and deputy split up during this time to ensure one was on duty during the peak transition periods.

The group commander's core duty hours were 0600 to 1800. These hours were dedicated to monitoring rotational activities and focused little on other duties that removed him from the core rotation mission. Those types of duties were accomplished after his shift was completed. The deputy's core duty hours were 1200 to 2400. This provided 6 hours of coverage overlap, allowing a cross flow of communications between the deputy and the group commander. The deputy's duty hours also provided group leadership coverage during peak afternoon and evening operations, especially during high volume rotator aircraft arrival and departure times. Split shift duties ensured all rotator operations (arrival, billeting, food, weapons storage, customs, immigration, and initial PERSCO processing) had senior leader oversight to ensure smooth and consistent flow, and to address and resolve any immediate issues.

Hot Wash

An end-of-rotation hot wash was institutionalized in EMSG to capture, document, and put in place any fixes to problems from the previous rotation. With permanent party commanders, a hot wash was done early in the new rotation (or late in the rotation for rotational commanders) to capture the issues while they were still fresh in their minds. This hot wash served several purposes. First, it provided a forum to communicate issues up and down the chain of command. This was necessary to ensure that all levels were aware of the issues and that solid fixes were in place. Second, it provided a forum to assign ownership and suspenses for those issues that either were not in a unit's control, or spanned across several units within an organization. Last, hot washes served as a historical record to capture the issues and record what was done. Such documentation helped to feed higher level hot washes (USCENTAF or AEF Center) and could be used for AEF planning sessions for subsequent AEF rotations.

Over the course of the year at Al Udeid, the hot wash process improved after each rotation. In the end, the hot wash covered airlift issues (rotator schedule, seat availability, onward movement issues, issues with movement back to the states, and issues with in-theater airlift), base operating support issues (lodging, food services, transportation, weapons storage, mobility bag issues, reception control, and PERSCO in-processing and out-processing), and issues outside the wing's control (host nation entry, exit, customs, air mobility squadron concerns, compliance with reporting instructions, and so forth). The hot washes were orchestrated and led by the deputy group commander and concluded with a report to the group commander.

Continuity Books

The use of continuity books is an essential element for long-term continuity among AEF rotations. Most units had used continuity books in some fashion during earlier rotations and understood the concept and why they were necessary. We found, however, that understanding the concept and putting it into effective practice were not always congruent with one another. Too often, people had to be forced to develop and use continuity books. The permanent party commanders became staunch believers after living through one rotation where the continuity book program was not effective. It also became clear at the group level that a set of standard minimum requirements was necessary to ensure an effective program existed within EMSG.

The EMSG CEM (a rotational position) had the responsibility for managing the program. The program was put under his care to ensure a common, consistent program was in place and used across the group. Additionally, the CEM was a logical choice because it got the CEM engaged quickly in the squadrons where a solid network of SNCOs existed to cross-flow information. The CEM also related more easily to the SNCOs who worked the programs at the squadron, flight, and element level. During each rotation, the CEM was formally tasked with ensuring compliance, thoroughness, and standardization. As the group commander, I wanted to ensure an effective continuity book program not only existed at every command level within EMSG, but that the program was actually being used. The books had to be

comprehensive enough on the one hand, yet be easy to use and follow on the other. The CEM would cross-pollinate good ideas among the squadrons and identify weak programs to the necessary level of authority for corrective action. Standardization was necessary to ensure minimum required information was passed from one rotation to the next. Such information included tasks, OPR, telephone numbers, location, points of contact, and the like.

Conduct and Behavior

Establishing standards of conduct and behavior was necessary at Al Udeid Air Base to maintain good order and discipline. These standards served to help protect people from getting into trouble during the rotation. They were particularly important in governing conduct and behavior in the living compound during off-duty hours.

The wing senior leadership was cognizant of the need to keep standards to a bare minimum. Standards were a major issue with the troops, especially when it came to mandatory wear of physical fitness gear when not in uniform, alcohol consumption policies, and mixed genders in dorm rooms. Because of the sensitivity of these issues, leadership established standards of conduct and behavior only when necessary. The standards were communicated clearly and often, and were applied and enforced fairly for all. When this didn't happen, standards were perceived as harassment.

Getting the word out early and often was necessary to prevent bad habits from developing in the absence of clear-cut standards. Standards were broadcast in a number of ways. They were explained to personnel who were getting off the planes, at Right Start, at commander's calls, and at roll calls. They were often printed in the base paper as well. The internal website had access to the *Coalition Compound Management Plan*, and supervisors were encouraged to know the standards and help with the enforcement.

Enforcement was everybody's business. Supervisors, first sergeants, chiefs, and commanders were all expected to know the standards of conduct and behavior. Furthermore, they were expected to set examples, and enforce compliance when necessary. Often, it was necessary to take quick and decisive action if standards were not being followed. Commanders were constantly tested by the troops on whether or not they would enforce the standards.

Leadership didn't always get it right the first time. When changes were necessary, we found that they were far easier to implement when put into effect between rotations. The changes were more easily accepted by the remaining personnel (since they were soon to leave), and for the arriving personnel, the changes were considered *already in place*.

Behavior Cycle of a Rotation

There were some interesting behavioral dynamics that occurred during a rotation. These dynamics are referred to as the behavior cycle of a rotation. Generally, during the first month of a rotation, personnel were *raring to go*. They were enthusiastic, energetic and highly motivated. They were also impressionable and could be more easily molded to fit the expectations of the wing commander. It was important to note, however, that they were also going through a steep learning curve in trying to adjust to the many changes within their new environment.

During the second and third months of the rotation, personnel *hunkered down* for the long haul. At this point, they considered themselves *seasoned vets* and it was smoother sailing now that they had adjusted to their new environment. During this period, there were relatively few problems with discipline or with knowingly violating rules of behavior. Personnel remained focused on getting the job done.

The fourth month of the rotation always proved to be a bit more challenging for supervisors. Personnel were tired and anxious to go home. Supervisors worked hard to constantly remind their folks to stay focused on the mission. However, silly and inattentive mistakes occurred and discipline problems increased—especially violation of standards. Additionally, this time period became the highest risk for an incident to occur. However, simply knowing that these dynamics existed and instituting common sense risk mitigators helped alleviate many of the problems.

Maintaining Your Sanity

Perhaps one of the most important focus areas for a commander is to ensure that he or she does not burn out. Commanders need to find a balance between duty and off-duty activities. A common analogy often used to stress the importance of striking a balance is to remind ourselves that we were in a marathon and not a sprint. As commanders, we must stay healthy, fresh, and alert. All work and no play, or an imbalanced workaholic approach, is not healthy for the commander, for the unit, or for the mission. It is, therefore, important to find a way to relax and reduce stress. Routine helps, but is too easily turned into a work-eat-sleep cycle with little or no room for recreation, or other necessary elements of a healthy lifestyle.

Balance, as it relates to physical well-being, emotional stability, and mental alertness, is absolutely crucial. Making a balanced lifestyle a priority is an important first step. A healthy lifestyle keeps the commander energized, while presenting a positive, aggressive, and confident image for others to emulate. If you don't take care of yourself, it is hard to ask others to take care of themselves. In a deployed environment, this is an essential survival tool.

It is often important to demonstrate to your folks that you are human, as well—that you enjoy yourself and those around you, and you don't mind laughing at yourself every once in a while.

In the area of physical fitness, the key to success is to make it a priority by scheduling it first and then not deviating from the schedule except when absolutely necessary. The commander must make physical fitness as a high priority in order to keep up the pace and to set the example for his squadron commanders.

The same applies to your emotional life. You have to make it a priority as well. Practice your faith as you see fit, and spend time communicating with your family. These areas are easily neglected or tend to take a lesser priority as you strive to stay ahead of the day-to-day activities. It is important not to let your emotional life fall by the wayside at the expense of getting another tasker completed.

Knowledge - Technology - Innovation

Lots of organizations have catchy mottoes. Likewise, many have catchy vision statements. We do, too. But there's a big difference—we deliver on what we promise. *Generating Today's Solutions, Shaping Tomorrow's Logistics* aren't just words to us; they're our organizational culture. We use a broad range of functional, analytical, and scientific expertise to produce innovative solutions to problems and design new or improved concepts, methods, systems, or policies that improve peacetime readiness and build war-winning logistics capabilities. Our key strength is our people. They're all professionals from logistics functions, operational analysis sections, and computer programming shops. Virtually all of them have advanced degrees. But more important, virtually all of them have recent field experience. They've been there and done that. They have the kind of experience that lets us blend innovation and new technology with real-world common sense and moxie. It's also the kind of training and experience you won't find with our competitors. Our special blend of problem-solving capabilities is available to every logistician in the Air Force.

501 Ward Street
Maxwell AFB, Gunter Annex,
Alabama 36114-3236

DSN: 596-4511

Commercial: (334) 416-4511

The Power to Solve Your Problems

AIR FORCE LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT AGENCY

http://www.aflma.hq.af.mil