



April 2012



US Air Force demonstrates aerial refueling for Kyrgyz parliamentarians

Seven members from the Kyrgyz Parliament and three staff members visited the Transit Center at Manas March 20 for an opportunity to witness firsthand aerial refueling on a KC-135 Stratotanker.

"This is an opportunity for us to show the government officials of the Kyrgyz Republic what our mission is and how their support of us allows us to support international efforts in Afghanistan," said Col. Brian Newberry, 376th Expedition-

ary Operations Group commander.

Parliament members received a wing mission brief by Col. James Jacobson, Transit Center director, prior to boarding the KC-135 to observe the refueling of a C-17 Globemaster III at more than 25,000 feet in the air.

The C-17 was transporting troops to the Transit Center who were on their way home from supporting international efforts in Afghanistan.

"I understand a lot more

about what the Transit Center does," one parliamentarian said. "I think it's good that we're meeting closely with members of the U.S. Air Force and Americans so we can know each other and work together a lot better."

Monthly, the Transit Center processes approximately 25,000 military personnel into and out of Afghanistan. Additionally, the center provides nearly 30 percent of all aerial refueling over Afghanistan.

"I enjoyed watching the parliament member's expressions during the refueling portion of the flight," Newberry said. "Aerial refueling is an art form that the U.S. has perfected over the last 50 years. It gives me pride when we can show how we do our mission."

"It was beautiful when the two airplanes got that close together," another parliamentarian said. "I've never seen anything like that."

US, Kyrgyz share EOD, CBRNE techniques

Emergency responders from the Kyrgyz Ministries of Emergency Services, Interior and Defense visited the Transit Center to exchange information on explosive ordnance disposal and chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosives response Feb. 22.

"By bringing the Kyrgyz Ministry of Defense here, we were able to share our capabilities with them and have the opportunity to learn from them as well," said Tech. Sgt. John Combs, 376th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron emergency management representative.

The military-to-military event was part of a continuing information exchange partnership that familiarizes Kyrgyz experts with U.S. Air Force CBRNE and EOD tactics, techniques and procedures.

One of the demonstrations included EOD technicians showing the capabilities of a robot, which is used to assess

a scene without putting people at risk. Members of the Kyrgyz Ministry of Defense practiced using the robot.

"I was very impressed with how quickly they picked up the techniques [of the robot]," said Tech. Sgt. Justin Krautkremer, 376th ECES EOD technician. "They had it down in 10 to 15 minutes."

Krautkremer enjoyed the opportunity to work with his Kyrgyz counterparts.

"I loved getting to see them play with the robot and seeing their enjoyment," he said. "They definitely got into it, it was fun to see."

Combs thought the day brought great opportunities.

"I think this is something that will enhance our capability to be able to have community outreach and help us engage with our Kyrgyz partners and establish better relationships," he said. "We were able to build those informal and professional relationships that are

important for being successful in the military."



Kyrgyz, Americans participate in cultural exchange

Kyrgyz and American citizens gathered for a Women's Club meeting Feb. 17 at Bayalinov Children's Library in Bishkek.

The Women's Club is part of the U.S. Embassy-sponsored American Corner program.

Every week, the group meets to discuss various topics including marriage, children, career goals and life decisions.

Aigul Ryskalora, a student and part-time teacher at the English Academy in Bishkek, was inspired by the meeting.

"I was impressed with the ladies because they answered all our questions and interacted so well with us," she said. "I think they are super-human because they pursue work and motherhood."

Although this was not her

first visit to the Women's Club, Ryskalora said this visit was the most interesting thus far.

"Today's visit was different than the rest, it was very vivid," she said. "I will do my best to get here on time and attend this club more often."

During the discussion, Venera Myrzabaeva, a 22-year-old International University of Kyrgyzstan student, explained the cultural pressures on Kyrgyz women to marry by the age of 25.

Capt. Kay Stern, Theater Security Cooperation social cultural section chief, said the Women's Club is her favorite hour of the week.

"The club is my absolute favorite thing to do. Even though we live halfway around the world from one another, we have more similarities than differences," she said. "These women are

young and driven. They are so young, yet they already know what they want and have a plan to affect change in their families, communities and their country."

Stern is deployed to the Transit Center from Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.

Participating in the Women's Club provides many opportunities for Kyrgyz and American women to learn about each

other's cultures.

"This is not a one-way experience. It's just as rewarding to see the zeal on the faces of the Transit Center personnel when they participate," Stern said. "It gives an opportunity for our Airmen to see new sights and experience the beauty of another country and culture for themselves."





Volunteer Airmen help local school

Volunteers from the 376th Expeditionary Communications Squadron here worked together to install 13 chalkboards in the Kamyshanovka Village School in Kyrgyzstan Feb. 10.

Senior Airman Natasha Flores and Airman 1st Class Patricia Goetter, 376th ECS help desk technicians, raised more than \$1,200 in one day.

"After we put the word out, we received almost \$1,000 in the first hour," Flores said. "People were still donating even after we reached our goal."

Goetter was surprised at the quick turnaround.

"It was amazing for me to be able to see our squadron come together and have the money we needed for the chalkboards in less than a

day, then still donating more after they knew we had enough," she said. "It shows the goodness (of their hearts) and how much people want to help (if given the opportunity)."

The two Airmen created a slideshow to demonstrate the need for the chalkboards in the school. While they came up with a plan to raise the money on their own, the two Airmen still needed help to purchase the chalkboards.

"We contacted Capt. Steve Martin who helped us get the pricing on the chalkboards," Flores said.

Martin works at the Theater Security Cooperation division here.

"I can't tell you how impressed I am with these two," he said. "I challenged them and they truly amazed me."

This is the first big project for Flores and Goetter, and neither expected the outcome.

"Getting the response we did was truly amazing to me," Flores said. "It's truly a blessing that this came together and to know that what our squadron has done will impact this school for years to come."

"It is nice to be able to go somewhere and be able to give back and do something bigger than ourselves. We are helping a village with something that is substantial and truly beneficial to the school," Goetter added.

Kurtubaev Daulet, a physical education teacher at the school, was thankful for the new chalkboards.

"They are much nicer than our old ones," he said. Skopin Sergei and

Tilektestegi Nurbek, 10th graders at the school, helped install the new chalkboards. They were also thankful for the donation.

"These boards are so much nicer than our old ones," Sergei said. "They will be easier to read in our classes," Nurbek said.





Kyrgyz environmental group visits Transit Center

An eight-person Kyrgyz environmental delegation visited the Transit Center at Manas March 15 to see firsthand how the Air Force conducts its daily missions in an environmentally responsible manner.

The group, led by Abdykalyk Rustamov, received an overview of the Transit Center missions of aerial refueling and coalition troop and cargo movements. The briefing, led by Transit Center Director Col. James Jacobson, then moved to specific environmental measures followed by U.S. military units around the world, with direct emphasis on issues related to the Transit Center. The delegation received extensive responses to their questions regarding fuel jettisoning, solid waste disposal, water

usage and the economic impact of the installation.

"This is a friendly visit and I welcome you in our country," Rustamov said. "On behalf of the entire working group, I would like to thank you for inviting us to the Transit Center today to share this information."

The environmental group was most interested in fuel jettison. The delegation learned that the last time a Transit Center aircraft jettisoned fuel was more than three years ago during an in-flight emergency in a remote area far from human habitation. During that event, the cabin of the aircraft began to fill with smoke and it was determined that lives were in danger. Fuel jettison is extremely rare and would only happen in cases in which human lives are at

risk. In addition to Transit Center aircrew following identical procedures and flight patterns as the other users of Manas International Airport, Jacobson added that aircrews must also contact him before jettisoning fuel.

"In this type of emergency, the flight crew would immediately contact the controllers at Kyrgyz Air

Navigation and I would notify the U.S. Embassy, who in turn would coordinate with officials from the Kyrgyz Republic government," he said.

The environmental delegation ended the visit with a promise to work closely together with the Transit Center in the coming years.





Airmen donate jackets, school supplies

Airmen from the 376th Expeditionary Force Support Squadron here visited the Jany Pahkta School in Bishkek March 15 to donate school supplies and winter jackets.

"We visit the school once a month to donate school supplies and whatever else they might need," said Master Sgt. Rocio Resendiz, 376th EFSS contracting officer representative. "We also have another school, Oktybrskoye, which we sponsor as well."

Resendiz is deployed here from Carswell Air Force Base, Texas.

Although EFSS already distributed jackets to Jany Pahkta this winter, they wanted to ensure every child in need of a jacket received one.

"Last time we were here, not all the children were present," Resendiz said. "We got the sizes of the children who were absent and made sure they would be here this time."

The students and teachers were grateful for the donated supplies.

"Thank you very much. You are welcome in our school anytime," said Mairam Iseeva, Jany Pahkta School principal.

Donating the supplies had a positive effect on the Airmen as well.

"(I loved) seeing the smiles on their faces," said Staff Sgt. Nichole Link, 376th EFSS personnel support of contin-

gency operations team member. "Just knowing that they are getting something and are excited about it makes me feel good."

Link is deployed here from Scott AFB, III.

To Resendiz, who is often referred to as the "school's daughter-in-law" by the principal, the visit had a more significant meaning.

"They brought out this photo album containing pictures from all of our visits," she said. "I just think that it's a good experience for future rotations to come out and experience giving. It's very enlightening."



Transit Center Economic Impact as of March 31, 2012

Direct Expenditures	FY09 Actual	FY10 Actual	FY11 Actual	FY12 YTD
Payments to Kyrgyz Govt - Dip Note	\$26,620,000	\$60,000,000	\$60,000,000	\$30,000,000
Payments to Manas International Airport	\$22,999,039			
Lease, Passes, Utilities		\$4,029,091	\$7,817,140	\$4,362,446
Aircraft Landing, Parking, Service Fees		\$21,157,571	\$19,460,590	\$8,278,714
Contributions to Airport Improvements	\$30,600,000	\$0	\$0	\$19,138,881
Contributions to Kyrgyz Aeronavigation	\$0	\$0	\$30,000,000	\$60,505
Contract Payments (Furniture, Sports Equipment, Parts, Supplies, Buildings, Renovations, Road Repairs, Grounds Maintenance, Refuse, Custodial, Vehicle Leases)	\$24,601,908	\$42,790,517	\$30,916,871	\$17,490,270
Leases (non-MIA)	\$81,562	\$66,596	\$120,698	\$89,400
Programmatic Humanitarian Assistance	\$1,700,000	\$2,273,488	\$823,634	\$687,255
Subtotal Direct Expenditures	\$106,602,509	\$130,317,263	\$149,138,933	\$80,107,471
Indirect Expenditures				
Estimated U.S. military local spending	\$1,037,530	\$1,161,743	\$1,427,396	\$828,611
Subtotal Indirect Expenditures	\$1,037,530	\$1,161,743	\$1,427,396	\$828,611
Total Economic Impact	\$107,640,039	\$131,479,006	\$150,566,329	\$80,936,082
Aviation Fuel Payments to Gazpromneft-Aero Kyrgyzstan				\$49,793,161

Transit Center dedicates school renovation project

Transit Center leadership gathered with the local community at a dedication ceremony of the Razdolnaya School in Lesnoya village, Kyrgyzstan, March 1.

More than 300 students, faculty members and Transit Center Airmen were in attendance to watch the ribbon cutting of the newly renovated school.

During the ceremony, Col. James Jacobson, Transit Center director; David McCormick, U.S. Embassy acting deputy chief of mission; and Djoldoshaliev Beckbolot, Razdolnaya School principal, gave speeches about the \$295,000 project.

"It is my distinct honor to share this important event with you which signifies the United States of America's commitment to a lasting

partnership with the people of Kyrgyzstan," Jacobson said. "As your neighbor, it remains our goal to advance our partnership with you."

The renovation increases capabilities for school officials to provide quality education to more than 700 students in the community.

"The people of your village have opened their arms and welcomed us in schools, playgrounds and to numerous special occasions. I thank you for your warm and welcoming hospitality," Jacobson said.

Bekbolot expressed his gratitude and hopes for a lasting friendship with military members from the Transit Center.

"Thank you for your hard work and dedication to our school," he said.

Tech. Sgt. Tim Ebbens,

376th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron structural craftsman, was one of many Airmen who helped with the project.

"The school requested assistance through the U.S. Embassy who in turn sent it to the Theater Security Cooperation's humanitarian assistance department, and they sent it to us," he said.

"Once we received the re-

quest, we sent it through a contracting company to see if we could complete the task for a reasonable cost."

Contractors for the project replaced the roof, gutters, flooring and windows. They also updated the electrical wiring, remodeled the gym and painted the building's interior.

