

Randolph chosen as test bed for expansion of Civil Air Patrol's role

By Robert Goetz
Wingspread staff writer

Randolph is one of two bases chosen to evaluate a program that could expand the Civil Air Patrol's role on installations throughout the Air Force.

The program, Volunteer Support to the Air Force, will provide CAP members with an additional non-combat role, filling a variety of needs on bases.

Col. Richard Clark, 12th Flying Training Wing commander, said the program will break new ground for the Air Force.

"Randolph is the test bed along with Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio," he said. "Depending on the pilot program's success, it will branch out to all Air Force bases. This represents a change in history. It may become an everyday occurrence to see Civil Air Patrol uniforms on Air Force installations."

Craig Duehring, assistant secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, said last week the VSAF program "will provide greater volunteer opportunities for citizens through the CAP while enhancing Air Force capabilities as a part of the Air Force's Continuum of Service program."

Continuum of Service is a

Department of Defense initiative that seeks to provide opportunities for service along a continuum from military active duty to civilian volunteer.

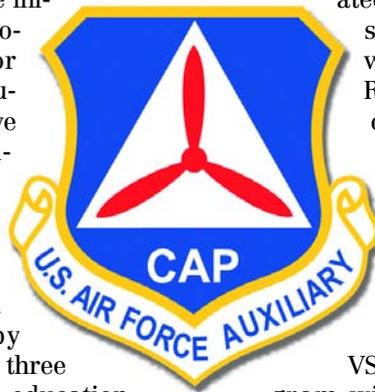
The Civil Air Patrol, the auxiliary of the Air Force, was founded in 1941 and was charged by Congress in 1948 with three missions – aerospace education, cadet programs and emergency services. It now conducts 90 percent of inland search-and-rescue missions in the United States.

A Civil Air Patrol official said the organization welcomes the new opportunity.

"The members of the Civil Air Patrol, all patriotic American citizens, are proud to have this opportunity to help the brave men and women defending our country and the loved ones they leave behind when they deploy," Brig. Gen. Amy Courter, interim CAP commander, said in a statement last week.

The program at Randolph will originate in the 12th FTW, Colonel Clark said.

"We're focusing on the 12th Flying Training Wing to get the process initi-



ated and streamlined," he said. "As it grows, we want to offer other Team Randolph members the option to bring in volunteers to augment their offices. That will take place several months down the road."

Lt. Col. Jack Burns, 12th FTW director of staff and the base VSAF officer, said the program will help fill personnel needs created by drawdowns and deployment. In some cases, services that have been eliminated could be restored.

He said staff has identified 15 possible positions for CAP volunteers to fill, including three administrative support slots and six skilled positions in civil engineering, from interior design to environmental science. In addition, five volunteer opportunities are available in services.

"Our greatest need is in administrative support," Colonel Burns said, "but we will try to employ the volunteers' particular skills sets. If they come and want to give, we will do everything we can to accommodate them."

He said 22 Civil Air Patrol members – all of them from the greater San Antonio area – are already interested

in participating in the program. Local CAP officials will ensure that volunteers meet the criteria that the organization has established for participation in the program.

Colonel Burns said the hours of service they provide will vary, depending on their personal situations.

"Whatever time they can give, we will use," he said.

Volunteers will wear "uniforms identifying them as Civil Air Patrol members" and should be visible in the coming weeks, Colonel Burns said.

Colonel Clark said volunteer opportunities will grow as the program matures.

"We will continue to refine the program until it meets all Air Force requirements," he said. "We'll find those areas where volunteers can feel like they are a valuable part of the 12th Flying Training Wing, that their time is well-valued and well-received."

The program could have a long-term positive impact on the Air Force, Colonel Clark said.

"The Civil Air Patrol is a great organization," he said. "I'm very excited that their members are coming out to Randolph and will put into motion a program that potentially changes the way the Air Force operates for the next 50 years."

ANTHROPOMETRIC from P2

Now there are more women than ever and ethnic diversity is greater. In addition, the pilot population is older because of the larger number of active reservists.

"The bottom line is that the body shapes and sizes for the Air Force of 2008 are drastically different than they were for the Air Force of 1967," Colonel Oates said.

When the last survey was conducted, scientists used tape measures, calipers and other measuring devices. They continue to use those tools.

"Traditional anthropometric measurements are linear," said Scott Fleming, project manager and anthropologist with the AFRL/RH Biosciences and Protection Division, Biomechanics Branch. "We use the traditional measuring tools to compare to the historic database."

But now they're also turned to computer technology and a piece of equipment called the Cyberware Whole-Body Scanner that captures a three-dimensional map of a subject. The result is a more accurate picture because the 3-D map depicts body shape.

"This process gives you shape data," Mr. Fleming said. "You can custom-shape body armor with this data. The process is quite a bit more accurate."

The survey, which is taking place in Hangar 71, consists of three stations. The aircrew member first listens to a briefing describing the data-collection process, signs an informed consent form and answers demographic questions. Then the Airman changes into gray cotton scanning garments – form-fitting shorts for men, form-fitting shorts and sports bras for women.

The last part of the process is the landmarking/scanning station, where the subject is scanned three times in sitting and standing positions.

"We place 72 white stickers on the subject's body that represent anatomical landmarks," Mr. Fleming said. "These stickers are used as reference points for the scanner."

The scanning equipment – two computers and two lasers on each of four heads – completes the scanning process in 17 seconds, collecting data as it descends on rails. The result is a 3-D image with several hundred thousand data points 2 to 5 millimeters apart.

"It's pretty accurate for the whole body," said Mr. Fleming.

The entire process takes about an hour, about half as long as the traditional approach.

Mr. Fleming said scanning technology appeared in the 1990s, when airplane and clothing manufacturers used it to redesign products. But the subjects used for those surveys were from the civilian population and were not representative of aircrews.

Head scanners have also been used to redesign helmets and other headgear.

Mr. Fleming said the survey will take several years to complete. More data will be collected at other bases pending availability of funding.

"We need 2,000 to 3,000 subjects to get a statistically representative sample of aircrew," he said. "There are more women and there is more ethnic diversity, so we have to include that in the database."

Mr. Fleming said the survey will not only update an out-of-date database but will assist in the redesign of "flight equipment from head to toe," resulting in "huge logistical and financial savings" and offering the "best protection and care for aircrews."