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The Enlisted Perspective
By CMSAF Rodney J. McKinley

Monday, May 21, 2007 Our mission requires us to be physically fit. Being fit can prove to be the deciding factor between life and death for Airmen and their fellow Wingmen when combat actions require extreme physical exertion. Airmen must constantly hone their physical abilities to withstand and overcome the demanding rigors of deployment and combat. Its been more than three years since the current fitness program was implemented. I am pleased with the progress our Airmen have made. Physical fitness has truly become a part of our warrior ethos. Fitness facility use across the Air Force is up, and everywhere I travel I see Airmen participating in unit-led and individual physical training programs. I applaud our Airmen who realize the importance of peak physical fitness. However, I realize there are also Airmen who are not living up to their health and fitness potential. With every Airman critical to completion of Air Force air, space and cyberspace missions; we need all Airmen physically capable of performing at the highest level. Maintaining physical fitness and dress and appearance standards are individual responsibilities. Air Force fitness standards must be maintained, and compliance with these standards may soon be documented on Air Force performance reports. As with any area where Airmen dont meet the established standards, failure to meet physical fitness standards can result in a referral performance report. While working to improve fitness levels, its important to realize that passing the annual fitness test is not the Air Force fitness goal. Training to the test wont help as much as a mix of cardiovascular, muscular and flexibility training. To successfully boost fitness levels, we must all make regular exercise and a healthy lifestyle a part of our daily regimen. The benefits of a fitter force extend beyond individual fulfillment. The Air Force spent \$3.9 billion on health care last year. By improving overall Airmen fitness levels, we can decrease these health care expenditures and keep our Airmen out of medical treatment facilities and on the job. I encourage you to establish personal fitness goals as you participate in unit and individual-based physical training programs and provide assistance to those needing encouragement. The rewards will be obvious and beneficial to all.