



# PH Shop Talk

Volume 4, Issue 1

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## Publications Corner:

- **AFI 48-105 Control of Communicable Diseases:** Reviewing MAJCOM comments
- **AFI 48-20 Hearing Conservation Program:** Putting together an SME panel to review
- **AFPD 48-1, Aerospace Medicine Program:** Under review by TA IPT
- **AFI 48-101, Aerospace Medicine Operations:** Under review by TA IPT
- **AFI 48-116, Food Safety Program:** draft in review process

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## STOP LOSS

The AF has authorized the use of Stop Loss on specific career fields to retain the skills needed to meet national security objectives. The targeted Stop Loss:

\* Becomes effective 2 May 03

\* Is implemented across the total force, including active duty, AF Ready Reserve and ANG

\* Retains those airmen who are deployed, regardless of AFSC, for the duration of their deployment

\* Affects the ranks of colonel and below

\* Will end when the AF can accomplish the mission without it

\* Includes a waiver process for people with unique circumstances

### Officer AFSC's include :

43EX Bioenvironmental Engineer

43HX Public Health

43TX Biomedical Laboratory

44EX Emergency Services Physician

44MX Internist

45AX Anesthesiologist

45BX Orthopedic Surgeon

45SX Surgeon

46FX Flight Nurse

46MX Nurse Anesthetist

46NXE Critical Care Nurse

46SX Operating Room Nurse

48AX Aerospace Medicine Specialist

48GX General Medical Officer

48RX Residency Trained

Flight Surgeon

### Enlisted AFSC's include:

4A1XX Medical Material

4A2XX Biomedical Equipment

4B0XX Bioenvironmental

Engineering

4E0XX Public Health  
4H0XX Cardiopulmonary Laboratory

STOP LOSS does not preclude the reassignment of personnel so people can still PCS. STOP LOSS policy will be reviewed every 60 days... however, as our operational requirements change, there may be AFSCs or even categories of people who might be added or released from this list either at this 60 day cycle or sooner.

If you have a situation that you think might lead to a waiver...contact your MAJCOM Functional representative to see if your situation would meet the requirements for that MAJCOM...since the waiver authority is at the MAJCOM Commander or Vice Commander level.

## TAOS UPDATE

As you are all aware of by now... TAOS has been cancelled for March 2003. The world events and the OPSTEMPO of our personnel led to this decision. We were having trouble getting people to attend this event...mainly the speakers and personnel giving special presentations could not make it. The Team Aerospace leadership has decided to wait

until June 2003 to re-evaluate the situation to determine if we will continue with plans to have a TAOS this year. If it is held we will break the event down into three mini-TAOS conferences. The BEE folks will have a 3 or 4 day conference during one week and then the FS (with Aerospace Physiology) will have a similar conference a different week and then PH will have a conference on a different week. However, we will still have the same ple-nary days as we had planned for

TAOS in March. We will look at scaling the time down to 3-4 days as required...so people can travel in on Monday and travel home on Friday. Please keep in mind that topics might change based on the world events and situation. Stay tuned...I am sure there will be more to come on this topic.

# FOOD SAFETY/SECURITY

There is much happening in the world of food security these days. We are diligently working on a 10 series AFI for food security and we hope to have it published sometime within the next six months. We have also hired a contractor to help us further along our work in ensuring our food supply is secure and safe. There are some major goals we are trying to achieve in the Food Security area. These include (but are not limited to):

1) developing risk management plans for food protection based on the threat condition (utilizing both the FPCON and National Security Alert Levels). These plans will give specific guidelines for bases to take certain actions when the Force Protection Conditions levels change and when the National Security Threat Levels change

(Yellow to Orange to Red etc).

2) Development of Base Incident Response and Recovery Plans. These plans will be designed to assist bases with an integrated response process (checklists and guidelines) for responding to and recovering from a local incident to the food supply.

3) Detailed food vulnerability checklists and templates to utilize when performing base level food vulnerability assessments. This will include checklists for a deployed location as well as for a fixed installation.

4) Detailed training materials on how to effectively perform a Food vulnerability assessment.

5) Developing a central team of experts who will perform Food Vulnerability Assessments at each base every three years and provide consultation support as required... and will respond to base level inci-

dents as required to assist with recovery actions (either contract support or AD personnel).

6) Ensure all Food Security Efforts are in line with National plans and programs.

7) Evaluate training needs of our personnel (including Services, DeCA, AAFES, Security Forces, Contracting, medical personnel and others as required).

8) Assessing and obtaining appropriate technologies that will aid our efforts in food security.

Work has begun on all of these initiatives. Some are progressing quickly while others are a much more cumbersome process involving many agencies throughout the United States and abroad. We will try our best to keep you apprised of what is happening in this arena. Stay tuned for policy updates coming out of the Air Staff (from both the line side as well as the medical side as we both have responsibilities to work together to ensure our food is safe and secure).

# IM/IT Process

There was a working group established to build a standardized process for adding, deleting, changing or improving our computer systems we utilize in the team aerospace arena. The group was chartered by AFMOA and it's objective was to establish a process to review, approve, prioritize, and facilitate funding change requests across all key Team Aerospace applications. This group has four distinct goals: 1) Establish a consistent methodology to capture, approve and prioritize user requirements. 2) Set minimum standards for program reviews 3) Develop a coordinated strategy that incorporates IM/IT into the POM process and 4) Establish a TA strategic approach to reduce duplication, increase sharing of information (to

ensure compatibility), and field MAJCOM supported changes.

This group has not finished its work but has started with a basic framework that will include user groups from each functional area and possibly a few user groups that are cross-functional. Some of these groups have already been established while others are yet to be chartered. The proposed process (NOT FINALIZED YET)...will be that anyone can submit new requests or changes to current systems through a standardized submission format (soon to go through the re-

view process for approval)...and this request will be submitted to the appropriate user group who will review and determine validity and feasibility. The request will then go through the appropriate Corporate Board for review and onto the Consolidated IM/IT Working Group (cross-functional group) and onto the appropriate panel for funding and approval as required. This process is for major changes and updates...not for minor corrections to programs...those will be handled at a lower level (most likely between the user group and the programming office). Again, this process is not finalized yet...but should be fully established sometime soon. Stay tuned for more as this group finishes it's work.

## USAFSAM Update

A new Public Health Officer Course started on 6 March 2003 and is scheduled to graduate on 8 June 2003. This is the first course to include a minimal amount of training on our new mission within the Force Health Management area. They will receive approximately two days of training in the new mission (since most of the work in this area is performed by the enlisted staff).

There is an Advanced Public

Health Officer Course scheduled for 28 April with a graduation date of 2 May 2003. This course is designed for Lieutenant through Major with AFSC 43H3/43H1 who have completed course B3OBY43H1-010, Public Health Officer, and worked in the Air Force public health field for more than 12 months and less than 36 months or if deemed eligible by the course supervisor. Members are required to obtain a Secret clearance by class start date.

There is an Applied Epidemiology course scheduled from 31 March to 9 April 2003. This

course is designed for Public Health Officers and enlisted members. ENLISTED REQUIREMENTS: Active duty, ANG, or AFRC enlisted with AFSC 4E071, or 4E051 must have completed the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) distance learning course, 'Principles of Epidemiology'. OFFICER REQUIREMENTS: AD, ANG or AFRC commissioned officers performing duty in AFSC's 43H3 or 48X3. Graduates of the Public Health Officer course (B3OBY43H1-000) in 1998 or later need course supervisor approval.

## Hearing Conservation Program

By Major Joe Narrigan, AFMOA SGZP

*The intent of this article is to provide the reader a foundation for understanding hearing conservation regulatory structure and provide information concerning recent and upcoming changes that affect the AF Hearing Conservation Program (HCP).*

### Determining a Damage Risk Criteria:

The AF's HCP is a component of the Air Force Occupational Safety and Health (AFOSH) Program and is specifically designed to protect workers from the harmful effects of hazardous noise. The AF's plan for protecting workers is an extension of early epidemiological efforts in considering: (1) How much noise can a worker be exposed to and NOT suffer noise induced hearing loss over time?; (2) What level of daily noise exposure WILL cause hearing loss? These early efforts to devise Hearing Conservation (HC) noise standards were based on research studies that looked at prevalence and incidence rates for a variety of noise exposed populations and paved the way for the current noise standards known as Damage Risk Criteria (DRC).

The AF uses several regulatory documents to determine what is an acceptable risk for noise induced hearing loss in the development of its DRC. The federal DRC as established by the Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) sets broad federal standards for safety and health concerns. OSHA allows other governmental agencies to set programmatic DRC's, they may be more but not less restrictive than OSHA

guidance. OSHA's guidance for HC can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), see 29 CFR 1910.95, *Occupational Noise Exposure*. The Department of Defense (DoD), under the authority of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition & Technology, issues policy through Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6055.12, *DoD Hearing Conservation Program*. Using the DoD guidance, the services are tasked with developing policy to plan and implement service specific programs. The AF's current HCP standards are AFOSH Std. 161-20, *Hearing Conservation Program* and AFOSH Std. 48-20, *Hearing Conservation Program*, Interim Guidance (AFOSH Std. 161-20 is currently undergoing revision) and AFOSH Std. 48-19, *Hazardous Noise Program*. Together these standards establish policy and practices that ensure a high level of worker protection but are not so restrictive that they would interfere with the AF's mission.

### Hearing Conservation Program Changes:

Over the past year we've seen many significant changes that have impacted the HCP and this next year promises to be

equally exciting.

The 4E/4F/4N merger drove realignment of many roles and responsibilities. The merger also reinforced the need for the Primary Care Manager (PCM) to be familiar with occupational medicine requirements as described in Preventive Health Assessment and Individual Medical Readiness (PIMR). The School of Aerospace Medicine (SAM) did an outstanding job of identifying and filling the training gaps and we're now seeing a healthy population of active duty 4Es coming through the HC Certification and some for the Recertification courses. For information concerning the FY 2003 HC courses take a look at the SAM website, Course ID for Certification, B3AZY4FOX1 001 and Recertification, B3AZY4FOX1 002.

In the fall of CY 2002 each HC site should have received the Defense Occupational Environmental Health Readiness System-Hearing Conservation (DOEHRS-HC) Build 3.0. Included in the package was a upgrade for the RAM, two Zip discs, and three CDs. The CDs included were the DOEHRSHC Version 3.0 application, a G-2 security disc, and Business Objects. At the time of deployment the AF Communications Agency (AFCA) had not yet granted the application a Certificate of Networkiness (CoN) but the HC sites had permission from the AFMS Chief Information Officer (CIO) to install the DOEHRSHC package as long as the LAN connection was removed.

On 15 March 2003, AFCA granted DOEHRSHC Version 3.0 a CoN. The AFMS CIO's office is now working with the MAJCOM systems community to grant DOEHRSHC Version 3.0 a Certificate To Operate. Once the MAJCOM grant the CTO, which should only take a few weeks, DOEHRSHC should be up and fully functional at all of our HC sites.

As the HC sites become increasingly functional with DOEHRSHC it is also important to establish a DOEHRSHC Net Account. The DOEHRSHC Net Account will allow the HC sites to upload their HC testing data to the data re-

pository, run a variety of reports, download individual audiograms and upgrade application. The AF POC for the DOEHRSHC-Data Repository is Lt Col Robert Shumate, Chief Hearing Conservation Data Registry.

You can request a DOEHRSHC Net Account by following Lt Col Shumate's directions:

To utilize the LAN connectivity with DOEHRSHC 3.0, you must have a password account established with the DOEHRSHC DR. To accomplish this, go to the DOEHRSHC DR web page at <https://dohrswww.apgea.army.mil/dohrsdr/>. On the right side of the page, click on the link that says "Click Here to Apply." Please supply all requested information, to include the level of access that you will need. Once your application is approved, you will receive an E-Mail indicating approval of your request.

The DoD is currently coordinating its efforts to implement a new Standard Threshold Shift (STS) and OSHA Reportable Hearing Loss criteria (the DOEHRSHC application will capture these changes). The new STS criteria will simply consider three frequency averages at 2000, 3000 and 4000 Hertz (Hz). If the average, for either ear, is equal to or exceeds 10 decibels (dB) it is a STS.

Upon implementation of this new standard DoD will no longer consider a 15 dB change at any single frequency (1000, 2000, 3000, or 4000 Hz) as a STS but will be considered an "early warning flag" and the individual should receive additional counseling to ensure good HC efforts are being practiced. The OSHA reportable changes follow a similar decision tree. If the individual has a STS, in either ear, and the pure tone average at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz equals or exceeds 25 decibels, the hearing loss will be reported within 7 days. The decision to determine if hearing loss is OSHA reportable should be made following the second 14 hour noise free test, if there is no medical indication for the hearing loss. If for some reason the individual does not complete the follow-up noise free test(s), within the required 30 days (90 days for ARC), the STS becomes a Permanent Threshold Shift (PTS) and should be reported to OSHA if the OSHA recordability is met.

In example 1 you can see this individual has a PTS (3

Hz average is 10 dB or greater) but the hearing loss is IS OSHA reportable since the three frequency is IS 25 dB or greater.

Frequency	2000 Hz	3000 Hz	4000 Hz	Average
<b>Audiogram</b>	<b>10 dB</b>	<b>40 dB</b>	<b>60 dB</b>	<b>37 dB (25 dB &gt;)</b>
<b>Reference Audiogram</b>	<b>10 dB</b>	<b>20 dB</b>	<b>35 dB</b>	
<b>PTS</b>	<b>0 dB</b>	<b>20 dB</b>	<b>25 dB</b>	<b>15 dB (10 dB &gt;)</b>

Beginning in March 2003 the Defense Supply Center in Philadelphia (DSCP) will carry the newly formulated two-color foam earplug manufactured by New Dynamics. The purpose for the two-colors, 2/3 bright orange and 1/3 teal, is to help ensure proper insertion depth. When properly inserted in the outer ear canal, the bright orange will not be visible. This will help supervisors and safety personnel ensure the device is being worn correctly. The National Stock Number (NSN) for the foam earplug has not changed.



**Conclusion:**

Now that we've resolved the CoN and should have the MAJCOM CTO in the very near future I'll be working more closely with the MAJCOM PHOs to provide HCP status reports. If you're not running DOEHRS-HC Version 3.0 and/or you're not forwarding your HC data to the DOEHRS-DR please do so ASAP. If you need assistance in setting up a DOEHRS Net Account contact Lt Col Shumate at AFIERA. If you need help with DOEHRS-HC operations contact the IBM Help

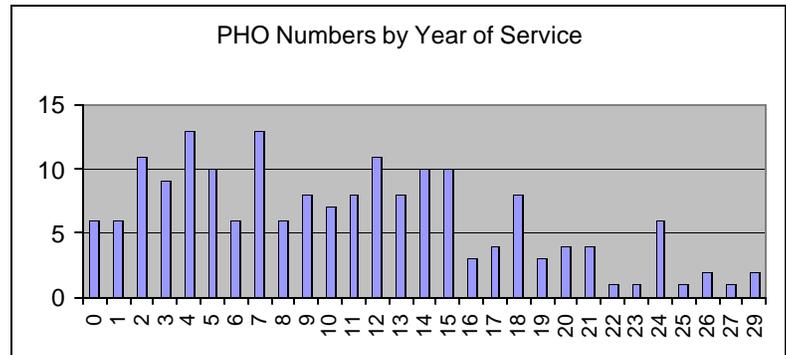
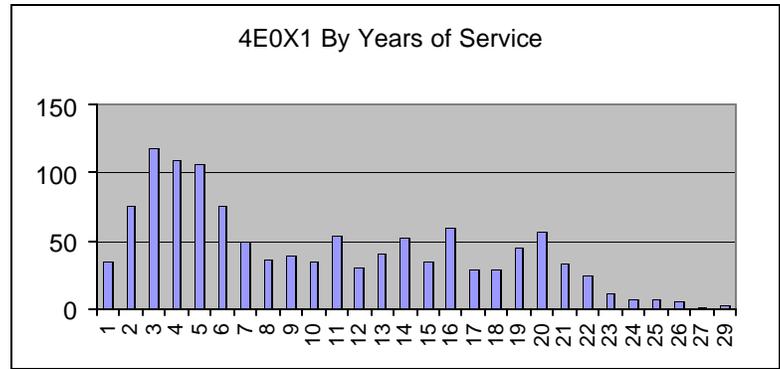
Desk at 1-800-600-9332 or DSN 240-4150.

If you've ever heard me present at a conference you've most certainly heard me state, "We don't do audiograms for the sake of doing audiograms. We do audiograms so we can make good clinical decisions, appropriate safety recommendations, and ensure our hearing loss prevention efforts are effective". DOEHRS-HC Version 3.0 is a good product and gets better with each release. The version that DoD is now testing (3.0.135) captures the upcoming STS and OSHA changes, all of the run-time errors are eliminated, and the application provides excellent guidance concerning hearing profiles, referral considerations, and reporting/notification functions.



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## Final Thoughts— National Call To Service

The Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2003, amends Chapter 31 of Title 10, United States Code, providing the Department of Defense with a new short-term enlistment program designed to promote and facilitate military enlistment in support of national service. This amendment authorizes a menu of incentives for an enlistment term of 15 months following initial entry training.

What this means is that there will be some folks coming into Public Health (after 1 Oct 03) who will be trained at USAFSAM and then only have a short 15 month requirement at a base level job. As of right now there will only be a very few of these folks coming in under this program. We are attempting to ensure we identify these folks and ensure the base receiving them is aware of the program so we can ensure they are given the opportunity to re-enlist at the end of their 15 months. The program requires an 8 year obligation total

service to their nation. However, the program allows a few options at the end of their 15 months of AD obligation: 1) 24 months of duty in the Selected Reserves (minimum if not remaining on AD); 2) remainder of their time up to the 8 year obligation can be in the Selected Reserves; in the Individual Ready Reserves; or in other National Service Organizations such as AMERICORP, PEACE CORPS etc) as approved by the SECDEF. These members can receive one of the following incentives for their service to their country: **1)** \$5,000 bonus upon completion of their AD time; **2)** Repayment of qualifying student loans up to \$18,000 upon completion of their AD time (NOTE: services can lower this amount to \$10,000 if approved for all enlistees for that year); **3)** Education allowance for up to 12 months payable at the monthly rate for basic education assistance allowance under section 3015(a)(1), 38USC. They may start to use this benefit at any time after completion of AD obligation but will cease if Selected Reserve obligation is not completed. NOTE: this option can be given at the half-monthly rate for up to 36 months if desired...but all other re-

quirements must be met as listed above.

We are limiting the numbers of personnel coming into our career field under this program so that we can adequately manage our enlisted retention numbers. Currently we have about a 60% retention rate for 4E but these have been very small numbers and the data is inaccurate due to the merger. We are working to correct this data to ensure we have a good picture of what the retention is really like. We want to ensure we do not have any retention problems at the 20 month time frame (NCS folks) and then again at the 4 year time frame. We can design and ensure both a balanced and experienced enlisted force through proper NCS and training pipeline management and with a good mentoring system for our personnel. The development of a variety of enlisted pathways (to develop experience and training and possible certification) will aid us in obtaining the most effective enlisted force we can build. Together, we can make this happen!