

AIR FORCE

COMPTROLLER

THE ULTIMATE FORCE MULTIPLIER

SPRING 2025



WHY YOU MATTER:
FM IN ACTION



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The *Air Force Comptroller* is an official, non-directive departmental publication distributed three times per year. Its purpose is to provide timely information to Air Force Financial Management and Comptroller personnel relating to mission accomplishment; to assist them in solving problems and improving efficiency of operations; to communicate new developments and techniques; and to stimulate professional thoughts and developments.

Contributions, suggestions, and criticisms are welcome. Opinions expressed by individual contributors do not necessarily reflect the official viewpoint of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, the Comptrollers, or the editorial staff. Final selection of material for publication is made on the basis of suitability, timeliness, and space availability.



THE COMPTROLLER’S
CORNER



Dear FM Team,

As I sit down to write my final Comptroller’s Corner, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to each of you. Serving alongside this exceptional workforce for the last 38 years has been a privilege and one of the greatest honors of my life. Your commitment to excellence, integrity, and service has continually inspired me, and the impact of your contributions has been nothing short of extraordinary.

The Department of the Air Force Financial Management (FM) community plays a vital role in serving the American people by ensuring that our nation’s defense remains strong and prepared for any challenge. This issue of the magazine highlights the breadth and depth of the FM community’s contributions. It emphasizes the importance of professional development to prepare leaders for the challenges of tomorrow, showcases efforts that ensure the strategic alignment of resources with mission priorities, and highlights the indispensable role of civilian professionals in sustaining excellence. Additionally, it explores

how FM professionals safeguard the future of national defense and respond effectively to unforeseen crises, ensuring the Department of the Air Force is resilient and agile in the face of adversity. These stories reflect the impact of your work, underscoring why every member of this community truly matters.

Throughout my career, I have witnessed the extraordinary work of military and civilian FM professionals who consistently rise to the challenge of safeguarding resources and enabling mission success. As we navigate a rapidly evolving strategic landscape that demands agility and adaptability, your expertise will be more critical than ever. We rely on your ability to find innovative solutions, streamline processes, and drive efficiency across all areas of FM.

Never forget that your work has a direct and profound impact on the success of our Air and Space Forces. The stewardship of taxpayer dollars and the responsibility of ensuring our resources are utilized effectively to support the warfighter rests firmly on your shoulders—a charge you consistently meet with professionalism and integrity.

As you read through this edition, I hope you take pride in the critical role you play, the extraordinary value you bring to the Department of the Air Force, and the profound difference you make every single day. Never forget the importance of our mission, the impact of your work, and the legacy that you are creating for the future. Your service, dedication, and commitment to excellence exemplify the very best of our community.

Thank you for your outstanding contributions, your resilience, and your passion for advancing the mission. It has been an honor of a lifetime to serve alongside you.

One Team, One Fight!

Best regards,

Carlos Rodgers
Acting Assistant Secretary
of the Air Force,
Financial Management
and Comptroller



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FM PROGRAMS IMPACT ON DAF

The Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) is home to two financial management (FM) teams based out of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. These FMers support impactful programs which enable Department of Air Force readiness and more. Read insights below from the division chiefs of both the Working Capital Fund and Centralized Asset Management divisions.

DAF FM Strategic Plan Connections:
Goal 2 - Obj 2.1 | Goal 3 - Obj 3.1 & 3.2

THE WORKING CAPITAL FUND DIVISION: Fueling Readiness at AFMC

by Ms. Leslie Cayot, AFMC

The Air Force FM community plays a vital role in ensuring our nation’s air dominance. Often working behind the scenes, FM professionals are the unsung heroes who guarantee resources are strategically allocated and readily available to fuel the fight. This is especially true within AFMC, where the Financial Management Directorate, Working Capital Fund Division (FMR) operates as a critical enabler for the readiness and sustainment of our airpower.

Stewards of the Air Force Working Capital Fund

At the heart of AFMC/FMR’s responsibilities lies the management and oversight of the Air Force Working Capital Fund (AFWCF), a massive financial engine totaling \$19.3B. This fund underpins critical Air Force operations, enabling everything from aircraft maintenance and depot-level repairs to the procurement of vital spare parts.

AFMC/FMR’s role in this arena is multifaceted and demanding. We are tasked with designing and implementing robust financial controls, ensuring compliance with adhering to the stringent standards of the Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) program. Our meticulous efforts aim to achieve a single, paramount goal: a clean audit opinion for the AFWCF, a testament to our commitment to fiscal responsibility and transparency.



Beyond safeguarding the integrity of the fund, AFMC/FMR actively manages its cash balances. We meticulously track inflows and outflows, ensuring sufficient reserves are available to support the varied operational needs of the Air Force Sustainment Center (AFSC), the Medical Dental WCF, the Air Force Academy WCF, and the United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) WCF. Think of us as the guardians of the Air Force’s checkbook, ensuring there’s always enough to cover the bills and keep the mission running smoothly.

Facilitating Flying Hour Program Billing and Analysis

The ability to put aircraft in the air and keep them flying rests heavily on the Flying Hour Program (FHP). AFMC/FMR plays a crucial role in this program, leading the charge on billing, collection, and analysis of approximately \$5.3B annually across the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC), Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), Air National Guard (ANG), USTRANSCOM, and Air Force Active-Duty funds. Our meticulous tracking and analysis of these funds provide leadership with critical insights into flying hour costs, enabling informed decisions on resource allocation and prioritization.

Partners in Modernization and Sustainment

AFMC/FMR’s impact extends beyond financial management to actively shaping the future of Air Force readiness. We work hand-in-hand with AFMC/A4 and Air Force Life

Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC) Program Offices on the requirements review process for both organic depot maintenance and production-funded aircraft or engine modifications. This collaborative approach ensures modernization efforts are financially sound and aligned with the Air Force’s strategic objectives.

Furthermore, we collaborate with AFSC on Programming, Budgeting, and Execution processes to secure funding for critical facility and support equipment modernization initiatives for the Organic Industrial Base (OIB). By advocating for these investments, AFMC/FMR directly contributes to a more modern, efficient, and resilient sustainment enterprise.

An example of the importance of our work is a huge success that was spearheaded by the dedication and determination our FMR team. We successfully garnered Office of the Secretary of Defense approval to leverage \$237M of Total Force prior year Operations & Maintenance funds to clear lingering AFWCF Maintenance losses. This loss recovery package crossed 750 job orders, three appropriations, and 50 program offices to save, dollar-for-dollar, future obligation authority for new investments and readiness.

Advisors and Advocates for Financial Success

AFMC/FMR acts as a trusted advisor to the AFMC Commander on matters related to the AFWCF’s budget and execution. We provide comprehensive briefings on major budget drills, secure AFMC functional and command approvals, and ensure alignment with AF/A3, A4 and SAF/FM directives. Our deep understanding of financial regulations,

coupled with our commitment to Air Force priorities, allows us to effectively advocate for AFSC, helping them overcome financial challenges in pricing, budgeting, programming, and cash management.

A Small Team with a Mighty Impact

The AFMC/FMR team is comprised of a dedicated group of civilian professionals and a force of interim contractors who provide invaluable support to our FIAR initiatives. Despite our relatively small size, our impact is far-reaching. We are driven by a shared commitment to excellence and the deep understanding our work directly enables the Air Force’s ability to fly, fight, and win.

Why You Matter

The work performed by AFMC/FMR, and by extension, the entire Department of the Air Force FM community, is essential to the Air Force’s success. We are the financial stewards, the budget analysts, the policy experts, and the tireless advocates who ensure resources are available when and where they are needed most. Our acute attention to detail, unwavering commitment to ethical conduct, and dedication to continuous improvement are the driving forces behind a ready and resilient Air Force.

The next time you see an aircraft soar overhead, remember the unseen contributions of the FM community. We are the ones who fuel the fight, ensuring our Airmen have the resources they need to defend our nation and prevail against any adversary. We are DAF/FM, and we matter.

About the Author

Leslie D. Cayot is the Division Chief for the AF Working Capital Fund located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.



The HQ AFMC FMR Division located at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. Ms. Marilyn Jankowski (ret), Ms. Amber Smith, Ms. Leslie Cayot, Mr. Darryl McFadden, Ms. Kenyatta Pernell, Mr. Anthony Swain, Ms. Laura Berger, Mr. Jermaine Cassel, Ms. Evangela Knox, Ms. Anessia Carter, Ms. Shelby Newsome, Mr. Patrick Solberg, Ms. LaShanda Jackson, Ms. Audrey Wilson, Mr. Lewis Dagdag, Ms. Rhonda Tubbs (ret), Ms. Abigail Roob, Mr. Douglas Cornelisse, Mr. Steven McMillan, Mr. David Harbaugh.

CENTRAL ASSET MANAGEMENT: Fortifying Air Force Readiness Through Strategic Financial Stewardship

by Ms. Carrie Denny, AFMC

In the complex mission of National Defense, the Centralized Asset Management (CAM) financial management team stands as a critical pillar, responsible for strategically managing the Air Force’s largest Operations and Maintenance (O&M) funding account, a \$21.5B portfolio encompassing Air Force Flying Hour Program and Weapon System Sustainment. The CAM financial team plays a critical role in maximizing taxpayer dollars, driving efficiency, and ultimately bolstering warfighter readiness to meet the demands of the National Defense Strategy (NDS).

The CAM Mission: Readiness Through Fiscal Responsibility

As the Executive Agent for this substantial O&M account, the CAM financial team operates in conjunction with AFMC Logistics Product Support Management Division on behalf of the Air Force as a central hub, integrating requirements from across the Air Force’s Institutional and Service Component Commands and Centers. The team operates with a clear mission: to optimize the allocation of sustainment funds to ensure the highest levels of operational readiness while adhering to stringent fiscal responsibility.

The Weapon System Sustainment (WSS) portfolio, approximately \$15B annually, provides executive oversight and direct financial management support to 98 program groups. The CAM team plays a pivotal role in executing funding on behalf of the entire Air Force. This crucial function encompasses comprehensive WSS activities including Air Force Program Objective Memorandum (POM) and diligent execution year management through robust execution reviews. Ultimately these actions ensure the effective and efficient allocation of resources across the Air Force enterprise.

The Active Duty Flying Hour Program, approximately \$6.5B annually, is a critical component of CAM, directly funding organic costs essential to the launch, recovery, inspection, servicing, and maintenance of aircraft and their components. This budget encompasses multiple Mission Design Series (MDS) aircraft across multiple Commands and is primarily allocated across three major categories: consumable supplies, which include aircraft parts not subject to repair; Depot Level Repairable (DLRs), covering the removal and repair of broken aircraft parts; and Aviation Petroleum Oil and Lubricants (AVPOL), or fuel, vital for sustaining operational flight hours.

The role of CAM is a strategic function that demands collaborative partnerships, data-driven decision-making, and a relentless pursuit of efficiency. Their success is directly tied to the Air Force’s ability to “Fly, Fight, and Win” against any adversary.

The team’s effectiveness is built upon a foundation of strategic initiatives designed to enhance data-driven decision-making, modernize financial operations, and optimize resource allocation. Several key efforts implemented over the last year highlight their commitment to innovation and efficiency.

- Proactive Funding Approach:** Recognizing the importance of agility in addressing emerging readiness challenges, the CAM team partnered with the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget (FMB) to introduce an initiative to gain Congressional approval for a new Readiness Activity Group. This proactive move enabled a rapid \$275M realignment, averting potential readiness shortfalls for critical assets such as the F-35, F-22, and E-4 aircraft.
- Modernizing Financial Operations:** The CAM team played a pivotal role in implementing the largest centralized Defense Enterprise Accounting and Management System (DEAMS) transition to date, encompassing the \$6.5B flying hour portfolio. This undertaking propelled the Air Force towards Financial Improvement and Audit Readiness (FIAR) compliance, a critical step in ensuring fiscal accountability and auditability. The team streamlined processes by incorporating automation, bots, and data analytics, resulting in a 72% reduction in accounting lines and providing a warfighter-focused solution across the entire Air Force.

- Solvency & Execution Solutions:** In a challenging fiscal environment, it is the CAM team’s responsibility to prioritize and optimize resources across 98 programs throughout the fiscal year, including the management of constrained resources through continuing resolution, execution challenges, and emergent funding needs. In FY24, the team prioritized and optimized resources to fund \$1.005B in critical warfighter needs, addressing shortfalls in 63 programs. This targeted re-allocation tackled emerging challenges in parts supportability, depot inductions, pilot throughput, and propulsion, directly increasing Air Force operational and pilot readiness. The team also provided Air Force-wide solvency strategies throughout the year, driving the Air Force over the Congressional 80% July obligation mandate at an impressive 85%. Furthermore, a collaborative partnership with a working capital fund led to the identification and recovery of \$237M in total force depot maintenance losses, freeing significant resources and strengthening the Air Force’s financial position. The portfolio achieved a remarkable 99.99% execution rate, a feat that underscores maximizing every taxpayer dollar.



The CAM financial management team from bottom left to right:

- Carrie Denny, Melanie Craig, Ryan Patrick
- Jenna Rinehart, Samantha Yeihey, Hliary Brown
- Dee Chetty-Alla, Brittney Williams, Bill Wilbanks
- Alison Gahris, Sarah Hofmeister, Sue McNichol, Teresa Yantis
- Steve Spencer, John Hill
- Cody Bradley, Vicki Bonsall, Keith Shouse
- Pat Cahill, Bill Pricci

Data-Driven Decision-Making: The Key to Optimization

The CAM team has fully embraced data and analytics to simplify and more effectively manage funds. To enhance data-driven decision-making, the team partnered with data experts in AFMC Cost & Economics Division to develop data analytic tools that provide leaders with accurate and timely information.

- **Enterprise-Wide Execution Management:** The CAM team deployed a groundbreaking, enterprise-wide tool to revolutionize the management of its \$21.5B portfolio. This powerful tool integrates data from the Air Force Flying Hour Program and 98 weapon systems, culminating in over 2,500 data lines and 100,000 data points. The tool generates the first-ever comprehensive report across all funding sources, providing a holistic view of asset management and allocation.
- **FY25 Disconnect Tool:** Recognizing the need for even greater efficiency, the CAM team developed an innovative, in-house disconnect tool for FY25. This centralized platform incorporates data across six Commands and 98 program offices, providing a data-driven approach to prioritize \$1.8B in disconnects. By analyzing multi-variable data, the tool accelerates decision-making, enabling more efficient resource allocation and enhanced readiness.

Impact on Air Force Readiness

The CAM team’s efforts have a direct and measurable impact on Air Force readiness. By optimizing resource allocation, streamlining processes, and embracing data analytics, the team ensures that the Air Force is equipped to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving global landscape. Their commitment to fiscal responsibility ensures that taxpayer dollars are used wisely, maximizing the return on investment. The CAM team’s dedication, innovation, and unwavering focus on readiness have cemented their critical role in empowering the Air Force to maintain its position as the world’s premier air power.

The CAM team is located within Headquarters Air Force Materiel Command Financial Management Directorate at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

About the Author

Ms. Carrie Denny is the Financial Management Division Chief for the Centralized Asset Management Division located at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

Re-Brand Alert:

The FM Force Development Runway is **LIVE**

Experience the new FM workforce development SharePoint site - now called the “FM Force Development Runway” (formerly the DAF FM Professional Development Hub), brought to you by SAF/FMEW. Explore FM education and training resources, the FM Document & Resource Library, and other FM websites all in one place!

Key features include:

- A repository of links to make visiting your favorite FM sites and online resources easy with the click of a button – simply add to your bookmarked links
- A comprehensive training directory containing free internal and external financial management training courses available on-demand
- An overall refreshed look to enhance user experience and functionality

The FM Force Development Runway is here to help you take off on your professional development journey.

BEYOND THE PODIUM: Building People to Build the Force

DAF FM Strategic Plan Connections: Goal 1 - Objective 1.1

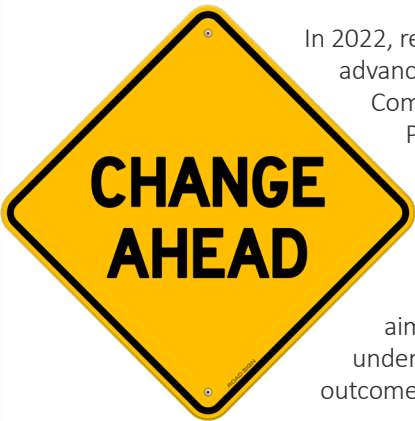
by Maj Willard Mitchell, AETC

Businessman and motivational speaker Zig Ziglar famously said, “You don’t build a business, you build people, then people build the business.” This principle resonates deeply within military organizations, especially when considering the critical role of training. At the Financial Management Learning Center (FMLC), we’ve embarked on a journey to revolutionize how we develop Financial Management professionals, recognizing that investing in our instructors is paramount to building a highly skilled and adaptable force.

From the Military Training Instructors (MTIs) shaping civilians into Airmen, to the Technical Training Instructors honing Airmen’s specialized skills, military instructors have always been a catalyst for transformation. Throughout my 20-year tenure in the Air Force, one constant has been the cyclical nature of change—the cycle being “change, thrash, conform, reminisce.” Currently, we find ourselves in a state of perpetual flux, rapidly bouncing between change and adaptation with little time for consolidation. This rings true at the tactical level within Air Education and Training Command (AETC). Yet again we are called upon to evolve, and our instructors, the architects of development, will undoubtedly be leading the charge.



Responding to the Call for Change



In 2022, recognizing the escalating threat posed by China and the critical need for rapid technological advancement, Kristyn E. Jones, then Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Financial Management and Comptroller, published the Department of the Air Force (DAF) Financial Management (FM) Strategic Plan. It acknowledged the complex challenge of maximizing resource utilization for optimum impact, a challenge requiring highly skilled Financial Management professionals to solve. The DAF/FM Strategic Plan outlined three core goals: developing and retaining a highly skilled FM workforce, leveraging technology and standardized processes to enhance accountability, and optimizing resource allocation while mitigating risk and improving customer service. Each goal was further defined by specific objectives, providing a roadmap for achieving these ambitious aims. FMLC at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, plays a crucial role in achieving these goals, falling under Objective 1.1. to “Implement FM Human Capital Strategy” and specifically focus on the desired outcome of relevant training and competency development.

In 2023, the FMLC began evaluating all curriculum to determine if the material presented was representative of the needs of the field and applicable to the grade, time in service, and potential landing spots for the Total Force Airmen coming through training.



The abbreviated findings are below:

- **Apprentice Course:** The Apprentice course lacked depth and relevance due to the anticipation of the Air Force Integrated Personnel and Pay System, focusing on general skills instead of core financial management functions.
- **Journeyman Course:** The 5-level Journeyman course proved to be resource-intensive with minimal return on investment, leading to calls for a return to the standard Career Development Course (CDC) model.
- **Craftsman Course:** The Craftsman course had eliminated all the pre-requisite CDCs and become overly focused on contingency operations, neglecting the broader skillset required of a 7-level non-commissioned officer.
- **Basic Financial Managers Course (BFMC):** The BFMC relied on outdated systems and practices, which did not address the complexities of modern budget management.

Taking Action: A Two-Pronged Approach

The team’s response was immediate and multifaceted. We prioritized updating the curriculum, but then realized we needed to heed the direction of the DAF/FM Strategic Plan for ourselves. We needed to focus on intentionally developing our instructors.

Our team took immediate action to revamp the curriculum, prioritizing the Apprentice and Journeyman courses. By July 2024, the Apprentice course was rewritten to include two new blocks of instruction focusing on military pay, travel entitlements, expanded core FM functions, and a customer service capstone. The in-person Journeyman course was phased out and replaced with a streamlined CDC-based model, with oversight transitioning to the Air Force Career Development Academy and tactical management falling to supervisors. Concurrently, we initiated updates to the BFMC, incorporating critical thinking components while acknowledging the need for further refinement and modernization. Recognizing the need for a more comprehensive approach to developing our more experienced Airmen, Chief Master Sergeant Leah Anderson, Executive for Enlisted Matters, convened a Training Planning Team in February 2025. This team focused specifically on addressing the limitations of the Craftsman course and developing a curriculum that better equips our seasoned professionals for the complexities of modern financial management.

Our initial curriculum overhaul, while a significant step, was only one part of a much larger transformation. We realized we had become so fixated on *what* we were teaching that we overlooked a crucial element: *who* was teaching. Conversations with our instructors revealed a need to cultivate foundational learning capabilities within the team itself – ambition, reflection, and deep understanding. These capabilities, we recognized, were essential not only for effective instruction but also for our organization’s evolution towards generative learning. We were building the plane as we flew it, committed to continuously refining our instructors’ skills alongside the curriculum itself. This marked not the end of our journey, but rather the beginning of a new phase focused on empowering our instructors as agents of change and lifelong learners.

Our curriculum review exposed a difficult truth: while our instructors were dedicated and capable educators, many lacked the deep subject matter expertise needed to bridge the gaps we had identified. This wasn’t a failing of individual instructors, but rather a systemic issue. The FMLC, by design, prioritized developing expert trainers and instructors, often drawing from a pool of experienced financial managers but not always equipping them with the specific skills needed to teach those same concepts. The result was an instructor cadre composed of enlisted personnel tasked with teaching subjects they hadn’t encountered in practice, and civilian instructors lacking practical financial management experience altogether. This inevitably led to initial training delays as instructors navigated unfamiliar territory, and a lack of standardization across classrooms, potentially creating an inconsistent learning experience for our Airmen.

Cultivating Foundational Learning Capabilities

The path forward is clear; transforming the FMLC into a learning organization is essential to develop the next generation of FM professionals equipped to support the complexities of modern warfare. This requires a shift in mindset, cultivating a culture of ambition, reflection, and continuous learning within our instructor cadre. We are actively taking steps to affect this paradigm shift, focusing on building foundational capabilities that empower our instructors to be both expert educators and financial managers. The strategies we’ve implemented to achieve this vision are detailed as follows:

Ambition

To cultivate ambition and a desire for both personal and professional mastery within our instructors, we are providing diverse opportunities for growth. This includes access to external training programs offered by organizations like Financial Services Office Worldwide and Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, as well as encouraging attendance at relevant workshops and conferences. Furthermore, we’ve implemented a rotating internal training schedule led by the instructors themselves, which fosters a culture of shared learning and expertise within the team.

Reflection

Creating a culture of continuous improvement hinges on reflection and open evaluation. To foster this, we’ve implemented a “Leadership Thought of the Day” to spark team discussions and encourage practical application. Rigorous curriculum evaluation and test analysis are conducted to pinpoint areas for enhancement, empowering instructors to proactively address challenges and refine their teaching methods. We also prioritize feedback, establishing consistent loops with first-line supervisors to gain valuable insights into training effectiveness and ensure it aligns with real-world needs.

Understanding

Developing a systemic understanding of Airman development requires a holistic approach. We foster this understanding by creating an internal professional development platform that promotes knowledge sharing and collaborative learning among instructors. Team cohesion is strengthened through shared experiences, celebrations, and regular engagement in activities that reinforce the warrior ethos and a shared commitment to the mission. This multifaceted approach ensures our instructors model the standard of excellence and develop a comprehensive understanding of their role in shaping the next generation of Airmen.

The Way Forward: A Collaborative Effort

The FMLC is dedicated to equipping our instructors with the knowledge, skills, and mindset to be, and develop, exceptional Financial Management professionals. We recognize this is a continuous journey that requires collaboration and encourage open communication with the field to ensure our training remains relevant and impactful.

We call upon leaders to identify and encourage Airmen with high standards, a strong work ethic, and a hunger for knowledge to consider joining our instructor team. Together, we can build a future where Financial Management Airmen are empowered to navigate the complexities of modern warfare and optimize resources for maximum mission success.

About the Author

Maj Willard ‘Chip’ Mitchell is the Flight Commander for the Financial Management Learning Center located at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi.

CONGRATULATIONS!



WINNER OF THE BEST ARTICLE: FALL 2024

Change Management from the “CEO” Perspective

Ms. Hillary Johnson, TSgt Thomas Morris, Lt Col Gordon Randall

HOW OUR C’S SUPPORT THE MISSION: A Senior Enlisted Leader’s Perspective

by SMSgt Tarkha Barbedo, ACC

It is December 1939, two years before Pearl Harbor: The Air Force is not an independent branch, and the federal government has approximately 977,000 civilian employees. Time-skip three years: December 1942, the United States is one year into World War II, and federal civilian employment grew to 2,799,000. Fast forward to February 2025, the Air Force has approximately 321,000 Airmen and 170,000 civilian employees, with less than five percent in Financial Management. With near-peer competition referenced in every document from the National Security Strategy to funding documents and a push for sustained readiness at an all-time high, there has not been a more critical time to have civilian counterparts by our side.

I am grateful for the relationships, friends, and perspectives I have across many career fields in my 17 years of service. Based on these experiences, I know the financial management (FM) career field is one of the best. We have an easy-to-understand strategic plan with consistent updates on progress as well as a plethora of development tools falling directly in line with what the Air Force and “What FM Values.” Don’t forget the reply-all marathon of holiday card emails allowing us to showcase teammates and share camaraderie between mission sets! The amount of support we see from our civilian, enlisted, and officer—also known as “CEO”—executives (shoutout to Dr. Rutland for the phrase) and the positive impacts FM Senior Leaders provide across all functional commands is second to none. From a Senior Enlisted Leader (SEL) perspective, I’d like to share how and why FM civilians not only offer an insurmountable level of

support towards the mission but why I essentially consider them FM’s “Nervous System,” a critical network of support that touches all aspects and functions.



325th Fighter Wing Team of the Year!

Continuity and Stability

Every Airman’s highest responsibility is defending our nation and its interests. Given today’s operational tempo, when small or large-scale operations occur and we deploy, civilians provide the necessary transitional support to keep home-based missions thriving. A key example comes from serving in the 99th Comptroller Squadron at Nellis Air Force Base (AFB), where we consistently supported anywhere between one to four deployments at a time. Even in the short-term, consistently reappropriating 5-10% of military strength due to deployments can pose significant challenges. Having steadfast and knowledgeable personnel on critical recurring programs and events places a large security net around daily operations. Whether a Budget Officer, Flight Chief, or multiple Airmen deploy, the civilians postured at the 99th never skip a beat in managing funding across three wings that have monthly execution updates, large-scale Financial Management Boards, constant unfunded requirements drills, and timely certification of documents.

Long-Term Institutional Knowledge

Project and program management is challenging when military members change permanent duty stations and deploy. For military personnel, changing duty stations on a frequent basis can facilitate career development and growth with diverse technical experience. However, it requires reoccurring resets each time a member is onboarded at a new location. My time serving at Los Angeles AFB highlighted the importance of institutional knowledge. Government civilians often hold positions for extended periods compared to military personnel, allowing civilians to accumulate valuable knowledge over time that cannot be found in continuity books. While there are expert military financial managers across Space Sensing programs such as the Space Based Infrared System program (SIBRS) or MilComm and Position, Navigation, and Timing (PNT) systems like Wideband Global Satellite Communications System (WGS SATCOM) or Global Positioning Systems III, a civilian’s deep understanding of policies, procedures, and historical context provides a solid foundation on the multi-billion dollar portfolio management of Space Systems Command’s programs, which at times may take years to see from research and development to launch.

Expertise and Specialized Skills

Expertise and specialized skills go hand-in-hand with the long-term institutional knowledge discussed above. Civilians possess unique skill sets that are difficult to reproduce without matching the thousands of hours poured into that associated specialty. The specialized skill of cost analysis, which provides valuable insights into the financial viability of Air Force programs and projects, is a prime example. Other positions and functions, such as non-appropriated funds managers, civilian pay experts, and reimbursement experts, are found at every installation but are difficult to master. Why is that? While a Computer Based Training (CBT), Defense Enterprise Accounting Management System (DEAMS) job aid, or Financial Information Collaboration Space (FICS) Handbooks (highly recommend, by the way!) may walk us through processing actions and overall responsibility, an expert level of understanding can only be obtained through years of consistent hard work and effort in those specific positions, programs, or projects. It’s like what I tell my 8U baseball players, “You wanna make a diving catch? Gotta catch a thousand pop-ups first!”

Training and Education

It isn’t easy to name a Comptroller Squadron that does not have budget analysts, civilian pay representatives, and civilian Deputy Disbursing Officers (DDO) who aren’t providing practical training to Airmen on upwards of 80% of the tasks on 6FOX1’s Career Field Education and Training Plan. Also, I know civilians who taught an A1C how to drive a car, find a place to live, understand gun laws, or even get through Veterans Affairs medical processes. While some take these work and life lessons for granted, every SEL realizes our civilians provide teachings that ultimately lead to increased growth, independence, professional success, and retention of our military workforce. These ‘unscripted pieces’ of education, which go beyond the four cubicle walls, are crucial in shaping Airmen’s holistic development and preparing them for the challenges they may face in their personal and professional lives.

Cross-Cut Collaboration

Collaboration from individuals with varied backgrounds creates new exposure and perspective toward projects when civilians and military members work side-by-side. While it’s true that millennials and post-millennials ask “why” very, very, very often, those same questions spark transitions, create critical thinking, and ultimately lead to innovation and critical thinking. Between events like the Professional Development Institute, FSO Worldwide, and SAF/FM Workforce Development topics, collaboration at this level has helped push FM forward with advancements we utilize daily across the enterprise.

Development

While all the reasons above are significant, the one I hold dearest of all is simple: development. Finance civilians contribute more to the development of our Airmen than individual SELs could ever hope to. They outnumber SNCOs 6-to-1, and about one-third are retirees who bring an extra 20+ years of experience. In my last two assignments as an SEL (at a Data Masked unit and the 325th Comptroller Squadron), I consistently came across unique situations that were difficult to summarize as anything short of baffling. Anytime I hit a brick wall, I found myself surrounded by FM civilians who were retired Shirts, Seniors, and Chiefs who stepped forward to mentor me and provide a different perspective. These situations were not unique; they were just unique to me. Best of all, my entire career has been interwoven with civilians, organically growing myself and those around me when needed. They were often not responsible for supervising Airmen but still stepped in to mold the next generation and carry the torch.

These impactful facets of civilian personnel not only help shape Financial Management but are an integral part of our small community in ways outside of the technical elements listed in a Standard Position Description. Our civilian counterparts ensure the continuity and stability of operations through transitional support and provide long-term institutional knowledge, expertise, and specialized skills. Finally, their genuine take on an Airman’s training and education, cross-cut collaboration, and development come full circle with “What FM Values,” and is the main reason that, in my opinion, if the Enlisted Corps is the backbone, **Civilians are the Nervous System of Financial Management.**



Mixture of hands from the men and women of the 325th Comptroller Squadron, Tyndall AFB.

About the Author

SMSgt Tarkha Barbedo is the Senior Enlisted Leader for the 325th Comptroller Squadron and Fighter Wing Staff Agencies located at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida.

FM LEADING NATURAL DISASTER SUPPORT: Los Angeles County Wildfires

by Capt Jimmy Padilla, SSC

Los Angeles, a city synonymous with sunshine and sprawling landscapes, also grapples with a recurring and devastating threat: wildfires. From the iconic Hollywood Hills to the densely populated suburbs, the region is increasingly vulnerable to these blazes, which not only scar the landscape but also disrupt lives, endanger communities, and pose significant economic and environmental challenges. Emergencies and unusual circumstances can occur with little to no notice and during these times of uncertainty, the role financial of management (FM) at all levels is key to ensuring the continued success of the Department of Defense (DoD) mission and that all personnel are fully supported at their respective bases.

LAAFB on Alert as Palisades Fire Rages

The morning of 7 January 2025 dawned under a red flag warning in Los Angeles and Ventura counties. Strong winds whipped through dry brush, creating tinderbox conditions. While a wildfire threat loomed, a sense of detached confidence pervaded Los Angeles Air Force Base (LAAFB). After all, the predicted fires weren’t expected to reach our immediate vicinity. For the Comptroller squadron, it seemed like business as usual – another day of budget drills and supporting customers.

Around 1000 hours, a plume of dark smoke began to paint the Malibu sky, spreading a distance of 27 miles. The Palisades Fire had ignited. Like many Angelenos, we initially dismissed it, confident it would be quickly contained. However, relentless winds, gusting up to 80 mph with isolated peaks of 100 mph in higher elevations, fanned the flames. Within hours, the Palisades Fire had exploded to six times its original size, consuming over 1,262 acres.

The situation rapidly deteriorated. The evacuations were multiplying and containment was minimal. By 1700, the Space Base Delta 3 (SBD 3) Commander, Colonel Andrew Dermanoski, notified LAAFB leadership with plans to initiate a base-wide phone recall to account for personnel and stand up the Military & Family Readiness Center (M&FRC) the next day, as well as activate a recall via the Air Force Personnel Accountability and Assessment System (AFPAAS). The reality hit home: this was no longer a distant event. LAAFB was potentially in the line of fire. At that moment, the gravity of the situation became clear, highlighting a critical question: what role does the base Comptroller play in such emergencies?

Quick Action by FM Leaders Ensures LAAFB Evacuation Readiness

Minutes after the SBD 3 Commander’s notification, an email landed in my inbox from Major James Monk and Technical Sergeant Lorenzo Singh, from the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center (AFIMSC) Travel and Policy Section, letting me know AFIMSC/FM was already monitoring the wildfire threat. Maj Monk’s email was a lifeline, providing key contacts, the Department of the Air Force (DAF) Emergency and Evacuation Financial Management Guide, a Limited Evacuation Order (LEO) template, and a helpful FAQ sheet addressing preliminary questions should an evacuation become necessary. Shortly thereafter, Colonel Benjamin Jans, the Space Systems Command (SSC) Comptroller, clarified my role as the Installation Comptroller: coordinate with the Force Support Squadron (FSS) and our Judge Advocate (JA) to draft the LEO, outlining evacuation procedures and entitlements.

The urgency was palpable. The LA Fire Department (LAFD) issued a mandatory evacuation order for Pacific Palisades at 1517 local time. This was no longer a threat without impact to LAAFB. The realization that a real-world evacuation was unfolding spurred me into action. I, along with my Budget Officer, Ms. Maria Santoyo-Gonzalez; Senior Enlisted Leader, Master Sergeant Shelby Reynolds; and my Budget Flight Chief, Technical Sergeant Fritz Julian, immersed ourselves in the DAF guidance and the Joint Travel Regulation (JTR), poring over the details late into the night. While I had witnessed hurricane evacuations ordered by local authorities far from my area of responsibility, the intricacies of coordination and execution within the DAF context were entirely new to me and LAAFB.



Photos captured during the Los Angeles County Wildfires document the total devastation to local communities. Source: ABC News.

By early morning on 8 January, I called a meeting with my Flight Leaders. We reviewed my interpretation of the guidance and finalized an action plan to expedite an LEO draft for the SBD 3 Commander’s review.

Blazing New Trails: LAAFB’s Wildfire Response

This was uncharted territory. LAAFB was facing a wildfire scenario unlike any previously encountered by a DAF installation. Existing templates and lessons learned from other natural disasters didn’t quite fit our unique circumstances. This necessitated numerous meetings with our counterparts at AFIMSC and the Ellsworth Travel Center to navigate the complexities of the situation. Questions arose constantly, both from our team as we grappled with the process, and from personnel in the field seeking guidance. Quick decisions were essential to maintain a consistent and accurate message.

Despite the challenges, by mid-morning on 8 January, I briefed the SBD 3 Commander, Squadron Commanders, and Directors, and drafted a LEO. LAAFB presented unique considerations: its geographic footprint, the dispersed locations of dormitories and

base housing, and the fact that most personnel reside off base, some as far as two hours away. Furthermore, LAAFB serves as the supporting installation for numerous smaller units scattered across Los Angeles, Ventura, Riverside, and Orange counties, spanning a 50-mile radius. To address these complexities, we collaborated with FSS to obtain a comprehensive roster of LAAFB personnel, ensuring accurate mileage calculations for entitlements. Simultaneously, we worked closely with the JA to ensure the LEO’s language was legally sound and encompassed all Title 10 members.

Just as we neared completion, the situation escalated. By 1800 on 8 January, the Eaton Fire erupted in Altadena, 38 miles from LAAFB, rapidly consuming 10,600 acres and threatening entire residential communities. Meanwhile, the Palisades Fire raged on, scorching over 15,832 acres and damaging 13,000 structures. Extreme wind gusts hampered firefighting efforts, as crews battled four major fires simultaneously with no sign of relief. Time was of the essence. The pressure mounted as calls from leadership inquiring about the LEO’s status became increasingly frequent. Each time we believed the LEO was finalized, a new challenge or requirement emerged.

Wildfire Threat: SBD 3 Comptroller Team Delivers

Given the numerous variables and the fact that LAAFB itself remained outside the immediate fire zone, the SBD 3 Commander opted for a targeted approach. Rather than a base-wide evacuation order, the decision was made to authorize evacuation entitlements for service members, DoD civilian employees, and their dependents residing in areas under mandatory evacuation orders issued by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). At 1700 on 8 January 2025, the SBD 3 Commander signed and published the LEO. **Remarkably, we achieved this within 24 hours of initial notification, despite having no prior experience or established procedures to guide us, ensuring the protection of approximately 2,000 assigned personnel.**

The publication of the LEO was just the beginning. Over the following week, we refined the process, collaborating with the SSC Comptroller, the ongoing support from the AFIMSC Travel and Policy Section, the Ellsworth Travel Center, my exceptional Comptroller team, and the outstanding SBD 3 leadership. This collaborative effort yielded a comprehensive resource package, including:

- A first-of-its-kind wildfire evacuation handout outlining entitlements, required documentation for manual voucher completion, and answers to frequently asked questions
- Detailed Defense Travel System guidance explaining the orders creation and voucher completion process

This effort ensured 10 LAAFB families impacted by the wildfires received over \$30K in evacuation entitlements, demonstrating the Air Force’s commitment to supporting its most valuate assets: it’s people during crises. This connects the specific outcome to the broader mission of taking care of Air Force families and maintaining readiness.

Perhaps the most significant lesson learned was the unpredictable nature of emergencies. As financial managers, we must remain vigilant, monitoring global events and maintaining close communication to ensure we are not only prepared for future challenges but also positioned to excel in a constantly evolving landscape. By staying informed, connected, and adaptable, we can effectively support our personnel and ensure mission success even in the face of unforeseen crises.

Allowances & Entitlements				
LEO Applicable Authorization Service Member's Dependents must be currently registered in DEDS				
Entitled Personnel	YES/NO			
Air/Space Force Active-Duty Personnel	YES			
Air/Space Force Active-Duty Personnel & Dependents	YES			
Reservist Personnel on Active Duty & Dependents	YES			
Air National Guard (ANG) Personnel on Active Duty & Dependents	YES			
DAF Civilian Employees (APF/NAF) & Dependents	YES			
Authorized Escort for Dependent or Civilian Employee	YES			
Air/Space Force Active Duty on unaccompanied tour dependents - their order must have LAAFB as designated supporting installation	YES			
Contractors	NO			
Reservist or ANG Personnel NOT on Active-Duty Status	NO			

Daily Lodging, Per Diem, and Incidental Entitlements				
Actual lodging cost authorized NOT 100% of the Safe Haven rate (AW the LEO & JTS Table B-17) - this assumes a release on the 10th century				
County	Max Lodging	M&IE	Max Per Diem	(PDS) (JTS)
Los Angeles Ventura Orange Current Rates	\$ 121.00	\$ 98.00	\$ 227.00	A. Service member's DAF Employee's spouse is a dependent
Entitled Personnel	Days 1-49	Days 51+	Dependent's & Return Days	
Service Members	100%	100%	75%	B. A Service member's DAF Employee's spouse is a dependent
Dependents >12 YIO	100%	60%	75%	
Dependents <12 YIO	50%	60%	75%	
DAF Civilian Employees (APF/NAF)	100%	100%	75%	
Dependents >12 YIO	100%	60%	75%	
Dependents <12 YIO	50%	60%	75%	
Safe Haven Computation Examples				

KEY LODGING NOTES

- Non-conventional lodging such as Airbnb is authorized (nightly, cleaning, & service fees) but must request **Reimbursed Invoice (BRI/FOBO)** from host to show daily charges with a \$0 balance (showing lodging was fully paid)
- Late lodging check out fee is authorized
- Save all lodging receipts - **Late Receipt forms will not be accepted**
- The Government Travel Card (GTC) is the mandatory primary method of payment for lodging expenses - must coordinate any credit limit increase with the Unit AIC
- Members without a GTC & eligible dependent may receive a payment advance during the 147 period via RPT Only. Payment advances will be approved on case-by-case basis by the DEDS Comptroller (Finance)

Excerpt from the resource package, which was a collaborative effort.

About the Author

Capt Jimmy Padilla is the Space Base Delta 3 Comptroller located at Los Angeles Air Force Base, California.

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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS SAFEGUARD THE FUTURE OF NATIONAL DEFENSE: WHY YOU MATTER

by Mr. Gerald Kaan, USNORTHCOM

Introduction

Much like the warriors in the Greek phalanx or the Roman testudo, Financial Management (FM) professionals are the unseen guardians who safeguard the future of national defense. These ancient military formations were instrumental in achieving the unprecedented conquests of Alexander the Great and the long-lasting Roman Empire. Both the Greek phalanx, with its tight-knit ranks, and the Roman testudo, which evolved the phalanx for greater maneuverability and success for over 700 years, were forces that dominated the battlefield over 1,000 years. The key to their success was the strength of teamwork—each warrior, from the front lines to the rear, played a vital role in the success of the formation.



Every warrior in these formations was entrusted with a specific duty—whether it was to defend their comrade, wield their weapon, or stand firm in the face of an advancing enemy. If one warrior faltered, the formation could fail. The warriors embodied integrity, skills, strength, and courage—qualities that secured the longevity and effectiveness of these formations.

Similarly, as financial managers in the Department of Defense (DoD), we too must possess these qualities to guarantee the continued success of national defense. We must maintain the moral principle to protect resources, the skills to process those resources properly, the strength to follow procedures rigorously, and the courage to do what is right, even when it’s difficult. Just as in the phalanx or testudo, our success is based on how well we work together, uphold our duties, and ensure the effective use of taxpayer dollars in support of national defense.

The Importance of Integrity in Financial Management

Integrity is the cornerstone of financial management in the DoD. It is the foundation upon which the success of national defense depends. Just as the Air Force’s core values start with “Integrity First,” we as FM professionals must ensure that every decision and action is underpinned by solid ethical principles. Integrity guarantees that resources are properly managed, and financial processes are transparent, accountable, and trustworthy.

One key initiative aimed at ensuring this integrity is the **Financial Improvement & Audit Remediation (FIAR)** mandate. This mandate required that the DoD’s financial statements be audit-ready by September 30, 2017, with the goal of achieving full audit compliance. However, the DoD has yet to achieve this goal. Audit compliance is critical for verifying the accuracy and reliability of financial statements, ensuring the responsible use of taxpayer funds, and maintaining public confidence in the DoD’s financial stewardship.

In practice, this means that every financial manager must validate requirements, formulate budgets, connect budgets to the correct Standard Financial Information Structure (SFIS), and maintain continuity throughout the accounting process. Each FM professional is part of this process, and the accuracy of the data we provide is critical. **Our integrity ensures that financial data is both accurate and timely, allowing for effective decision-making at every level and guaranteeing clean auditability.**

DEAMS and the Role of Financial Data

The **Defense Enterprise Accounting and Management System (DEAMS)** is another essential tool in ensuring the integrity of financial data within the DoD. DEAMS provides

accurate and timely financial information using standardized business rules and processes, ensuring compliance with laws, regulations, and policies. It is integral to maintaining audit readiness by helping the DoD produce accurate and reliable financial statements.

However, DEAMS is only as effective as the information it receives. Financial managers are responsible for inputting accurate data into DEAMS, ensuring that the system can generate accurate reports for senior leadership. **Financial management professionals, through their diligence and integrity, ensure that DEAMS provides a reliable foundation for audit readiness and financial decision-making.**

The PPBE Process: A Holistic Approach to Financial Management

The Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) process is a key aspect of how the DoD allocates and utilizes resources. This process encompasses every stage to allocate funds efficiently and effectively across various DoD programs. Each step is interconnected, and the integrity of each phase is essential to the overall success of national defense.

- **Planning** begins with the National Security Strategy (NSS) and identifies the needs required to close capability gaps and mitigate risks to national defense.
- **Programming** converts these capability needs into financial requirements, ensuring that resources are allocated appropriately.
- **Budgeting** takes these requirements and establishes a baseline for what needs to be funded to achieve mission success.
- **Execution** is where the rubber meets the road: the budget is applied to make the strategic vision a reality.

At each step, financial managers must ensure that integrity and continuity, from previous phases, are maintained so that resources are used efficiently and effectively. Managers within the United States Northern Command J8 call this the “Golden Thread;” when pulling a requirement or an accounting document, the thread should be seen throughout the entire PPBE process, ensuring integrity of its mission. Michael McCord, the former Under Secretary of Defense Comptroller, emphasized the importance of **continuity** in financial operations. Given the constant turnover within the DoD—among military personnel, civilian employees, and contractors—continuity is essential to maintaining the integrity of the FM process.

The Role of Financial Managers: Guardians of National Defense

The safeguarding of national defense is not only about protecting physical resources—supplies, equipment, cash—but also about the proper management of financial processes. Every step in the PPBE process relies on the integrity and competence of FM professionals to ensure the effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

In my 33 years of experience working in FM across the Air Force, Army, and the Department of Commerce, I’ve seen firsthand how critical integrity is at every level of the process. Starting at the grass roots and reaching to the tree tops, from resource advisors to budget officers, from auditing to funds control, the core need remains the same: to uphold integrity in managing government resources. This is how we ensure that funds are appropriately allocated, requirements are met, and execution is done effectively, so that our military can remain strong and ready for the future.

Conclusion: The Future of National Defense

The future of national defense relies on every individual in the financial management community, from the most junior analysts to the senior decision-makers, to uphold the values of integrity, skills, strength, and courage. We are the guardians of the resources that enable our military to protect our nation and safeguard our security.

Through our vigilance, integrity, and commitment, we contribute to a robust and reliable defense infrastructure, ensuring that national defense resources are managed responsibly and that the future of national security is safeguarded for generations to come. The morality we demonstrate in every aspect of the PPBE process guarantees that the next generation of warriors—whether on the battlefield or in financial management—will have the resources they need to defend the nation and maintain peace. **We matter because we are the shield that protects the future of national defense.**

About the Author

Mr. Gerald “Andrew” Kaan is a Command Accountant for USNORTHCOM located at Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado.

BOOK REVIEW

CONVENIENCE STORE WOMAN

by Sayaka Murata; reviewed by A1C Taariq Henry, AFSOC

“A gem of a book. Quirky, deadpan, poignant, and quietly profound, a gift to anyone who has ever felt at odds with the world.”—**RUTH OZEKI**, author of *A Tale for the Time Being*

CONVENIENCE STORE WOMAN

SAYAKA MURATA

A NOVEL



Convenience Store Woman is a novel published in 2016 by Japanese author Sayaka Murata and was translated into English in 2018. It follows the life of a Tokyo resident named Keiko Furukura and her struggle to live her thirties outside of her job at the local corner store. The book won an Atugawa Prize and Murata was later named Vogue’s Woman of the Year in Japan (2016). This book review primarily focuses on my experience while reading and what I think the novel means from a literary and philosophical standpoint.

Breaking It Down

Convenience Store Woman is a story about conformity and becoming a better person through means of professional development. Keiko Furukura, in her youth, does not understand what it means to be human, and you can argue she, as an adult, still doesn’t. Everything she learns is through the blurred line between work and her personal life. In one instance, during primary school, she hands a lifeless bird to her mother saying, “Let’s cook it!” excitedly as she recalls that her father is fond of a grilled chicken dish and wants to surprise him. This alone is our first indication that she is different from other kids and makes it clear she does not understand social norms. There is speculation that she is autistic, but it is not explicitly mentioned within the text. Additionally, she had been

working at the convenience store from the time it opened and quickly adjusted to the obstacles in her life as a result of the job. She finds that the store is the one true place where she fits in and describes everything human in her life linear to the inner workings of the store.

Keiko's severance from societal norms and social cues is also to be kept in mind. It's a testament to how important it is to maintain a sufficient work-life balance. This resonates with me most specifically as someone who joined the military with little-to-no real-world work experience. I had to learn everything from the ground up and prioritized work over my personal life in the process. My primary concern was learning my job and staying out of trouble; it wasn't until months into my career that I got comfortable enough to take care of myself physically and mentally alongside my work. Keiko, however, is different. Everything human about her are attributes she picked up from working at the store, through procedure and her coworkers' mannerisms.

You can argue that her lack of self-awareness outside of her job makes her the "perfect employee." She keeps herself healthy and gets a proper amount of sleep primarily because of her job, and she is okay with that. There is a brief period where she quits her job in search of one more professional to fully support herself and Shiraha-, her ex-coworker who she agreed to marry later on, because he explains that her job at the store would not be enough to scaffold his lifestyle financially. She begins to eat less and sleep in during the brief period where she is unemployed in the process, as she has no job nor reason to maintain wellness. I believe the allegory in this story is that we often follow life "to the manual" and work as a result of following the unwritten rules of life. There comes a time in everyone's life where they transition into adulthood and develop as people, whether through marriage, career, or schooling. Keiko, however, does not understand how to follow the manual of society and instead becomes human through what makes sense to her at the store. She greets the customers and informs them of the day's special items, and even takes after her supervisor's, Mrs. Izumi, sense of fashion as they are relative in age. She believes this is how a woman in her thirties should dress and mirrors her appearance with slight changes.

Conclusion

Overall, my reading experience included many mixed emotions. There are times throughout the novel where you must make sense of the themes, and I was easily able to apply them to my own life in the military. For example, similar to Keiko, I know that a lot of my own routine would fall apart if I were to separate from the military earlier than anticipated. Much of my thought process for eating healthy and getting proper sleep is because it is optimal for performing my daily tasks as a Financial Operations Technician in the Air Force. Obviously, my logical thought process does not mirror that of the protagonist, but I understand an ample amount of the decisions she makes as they are adjacent to her work-life balance. I highly recommend *Convenience Store Woman* as it's a relatively quick read and it gives a lot of insight on the difference between home and work priorities.

About the Author:

A1C Taariq Henry is a Financial Operations Technician for the 27th Special Operations Comptroller Squadron at Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico.



FROM THE DESK OF

COL ANTHONY SMITH

Commander JB MDL and 87 ABW



Greetings, fellow finance professionals, from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB MDL)! What a privilege it is to share my message with you all. Here at JB MDL, every Airman, Guardian, Soldier, Sailor, and Marine plays a vital role in the success of our mission—we "Win as One." As the Installation and 87th Air Base Wing commander of the DoD's only tri-service installation—and a career financial management (FM) officer—I can tell you firsthand that finance isn't just about budgets and numbers. It's about warfighting. Some might wonder how an FM officer finds themselves in the seat of a wing commander. The answer is simple: finance is leadership. Every dollar we allocate, every budget we defend, and every resource we manage directly enables the warfighter. The ability to strategically align funding with mission priorities, understand risk at an institutional level, and advocate for the needs of our people is what ensures our joint team remains ready, lethal, and adaptable.

JB MDL is home to a significant joint force, where multiple services train, operate, and execute missions critical to national defense. The complexity of managing resources across this environment underscores why FM matters. Every funding decision we make affects our ability to sustain joint training, modernize infrastructure, and provide the resources our warfighters need to remain agile and lethal. Without FM professionals, these missions would not happen at the scale or speed required to outpace our adversaries.

One of JB MDL's primary goals as an installation is ensuring that joint warfighters have the resources to remain mission-ready and to go at a moment's notice. That means fighting for funding to maintain airfields, sustain joint logistics operations, and invest in emerging capabilities that ensure our forces remain dominant. Our FM team is at the forefront of this effort, balancing strategic priorities, ensuring compliance, and advocating for the resources necessary to sustain operational excellence.

But beyond numbers and spreadsheets, FM professionals bring something even more valuable to the fight—strategic leadership. As an FM officer, I've spent my career learning how to navigate complex problems, manage risk, and make decisions that balance competing priorities; these are skills I use every day in this job. Those same skills are essential in command at all levels, where understanding the broader implications of financial decisions can mean the difference between success and mission failure. Finance doesn't operate in a vacuum. Our role is deeply intertwined with every aspect of warfighting capability, from logistics to maintenance to personnel readiness. The partnerships we foster across the Air Force, Army, and Navy here on this installation reinforce one undeniable truth: no service fights alone. Just as our warfighters depend on each other in combat, we depend on each other in garrison—leveraging joint resources, sharing best practices, and ensuring every dollar is spent in a way that strengthens our collective lethality.

The FM career field is not just about financial expertise; it's about shaping the future of the force. Whether you're managing a budget, analyzing execution rates, or securing funding for critical programs, your work matters. You ensure that every dollar translates into capability, that our people have what they need, and that our joint force remains ready to fight and win.

Thank you for your dedication to our various mission sets and to the FM community. Your efforts are felt across the entire Department of the Air Force and beyond. I am proud to serve among great finance professionals, and I look forward to seeing the continued impact you make on our joint warfighting capability.

About the Author:

Col Anthony L. Smith is the Commander, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst (JB MDL) and 87th Air Base Wing, JB MDL located in New Jersey.

Contributions From:

Maj Frank Rodela is the Commander of the 87 CPTS and 87th Air Base Wing Staff Agencies, JB MDL located in New Jersey.

Financial Management & Comptroller FISCAL YEAR 2024 AWARDS



**Maj Gen
Faykes Financial
Management and
Comptroller of
the Year**

Lt Col Kevin S Byram
ACC

**The Major General Alfred K. Flowers
Comptroller Organization of the Year**



673 CPTS
PACAF



**Robert D.
Stuart Award
for Excellence
in Financial
Management**

Diana H Zablonksi
SAF/FMB



**The James E.
Short Award
for Outstanding
Contribution
to Mentorship
and Career
Development**

Natalie M Osgood
SAF/FMB

FY2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS



**The Excellence in
Cost Analysis Award**

Burapa Parkjitta
SSC



**Outstanding
Contributions
to Financial
Management
and Comptroller
(MAJCOM/
FIELDKOM/FOA/
DRU Level)**

Capt Dennis J Moten
ANG



**Outstanding
Contributions
to Financial
Management
and Comptroller
(MAJCOM/
FIELDKOM/FOA/
DRU Level)**

Sarah M Carroll
USAFE



**Outstanding
Contributions
to Financial
Management
and Comptroller
(Secretariat and
Air Staff)**

Lt Col Jeremy D Williams
SAF/FMB



**Outstanding
Contributions
to Financial
Management
and Comptroller
(Secretariat and
Air Staff)**

Charles W Barnaby
SAF/FMC



**Outstanding
Contributions
to Financial
Management
and Comptroller
(Outside the
Department of the
Air Force)**

Chiaki Benson
USSTRATCOM

FY2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS



Resource Advisor
of the Year
(MAJCOM, FOA,
or DRU Level)

SSgt Alisha N Dugan
AFSOC



Resource Advisor
of the Year
(Installation
Level)

Ozgur Yasar
AMC



Financial
Management
Officer of the Year

Capt Alexandria L Kahalley
AMC



Financial
Management
Civilian Category I
of the Year (GS-8
and below)

Michelle Lapuhs
USAFE



Financial
Management
Civilian Category
II of the Year
(GS-9 and above)

Maria Santoyo-Gonzales
SSC



Financial Analysis
Office of the Year

81 CPTS
AETC

FY2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS



Acquisition Cost
Analyst of the
Year

Capt Joseph S Moore
SAF/FMC



Non-Acquisition
Cost Analyst of
the Year

Manson S Turner
SAF/FMC



Educator of the
Year

Capt Erica D Craft
AETC



Financial
Operations Office
of the Year

52 CPTS/FMF
USAFE



Author of the
Year

MSgt Samuel Spaethe
SAF/FM



The Chief Master
Sergeant Larry P.
Gonzales Senior
Enlisted Leader of
the Year

SMSgt Abbey J Oladiti
AFGSC



Financial Management Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year

MSgt Stacey R Bell
PACAF



Financial Management Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year

TSgt Ny T Vu
AMC



Financial Management Airman of the Year

AIC Emily C Haskins
USAFE



Outstanding Contribution to Financial Management and Comptroller - Enlisted - (MAJCOM/ FIELDCOM/FOA/ DRU Level)

SMSgt Randall C Rosales
SSC



Outstanding Contribution to Financial Management and Comptroller - Enlisted - (Secretariate and Air Staff Level)

MSgt Marlynn C Cruz
AFDW



The General Larry O. Spencer Special Acts and Services Award

Gundam 22 Recovery Operation
AFSOC

Special Acts and Services Awards

Hill AFB Civilian Pay Flight
AFMC

AFIMSC/FMC Cost Analysis Innovation Team
AFMC

AFMC/FMRA/FMFR - Fund Bal w/Treasury Material Weakness
AFMC

Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) Task Force
SAF/FMB

Flying Hour Program Team
SAF/FMC

Mission Warning/Mission Track Cost Team
SAF/FMC

SECAF Sentinel Nunn-McCurdy Cost Team
SAF/FMC



A U.S. Air Force C-130J Super Hercules aircraft assigned to the 36th Airlift Squadron flies over Yokota Air Base, Japan, during a training mission, April 8, 2025. (U.S. Air Force photo by Yasuo Osakabe)

ACES HIGH AWARDS



SrA Gavin Curry

*39th Comptroller Squadron,
Incirlik Air Base, Turkey*

Senior Airman Gavin Curry is a Financial Analyst assigned to the 39th Comptroller Squadron (CPTS) at Incirlik Air Base (AB), Turkey. He hails from Valdosta, Georgia, where he attended Open Bible Christian School and graduated in 2018. He continued to Wiregrass Georgia Technical

College where he completed two years earning his Certified Nursing Assistant certification. SrA Curry entered active duty in January 2021 and, after graduating from basic military training in March 2021, he headed to Keesler Air Force Base (AFB), Mississippi, to attend Financial Management Technical Training School.

Upon arrival to his first duty assignment to 56 CPTS at Spangdahlem AB in May 2021, he quickly mastered accounting and budgeting, showcasing exceptional financial skills as an analyst. SrA Curry skillfully managed a \$4M budget, securing \$280K to acquire radios that bolstered Agile Combat Employment (ACE) communication infrastructure. During the FY23 closeout, he demonstrated exceptional initiative by securing \$27M in funding for 157 unfunded requirements across six groups. Furthermore, he attained crash recovery lift bags and instrument landing system repairs safeguarding \$480M in wing assets. SrA Curry's accomplishments resulted in a promotion to Senior Airman Below-the-Zone.

Since SrA Curry's arrival to Incirlik AB in May 2024, he spearheaded the wing's transition from the old accounting system and cancelling year documents. He meticulously scrubbed 116 legacy records and converted \$5.7M worth of requirements, paving the way for a more efficient and accurate financial management (FM) system. SrA Curry's outstanding professionalism and dedication to the Air Force and the Comptroller community makes him **ACES HIGH!**



SrA Isaac Dayag

*43d Comptroller Squadron,
Pope Army Airfield,
North Carolina*

Senior Airman Isaac G. Dayag is a Financial Analysis Technician assigned to 43 CPTS at Pope Army Airfield (AAF). His dedication to the Force and his teammates is paramount to mission success, as evidenced through his instrumental role in

43 CPTS earning Pope's 2023 Squadron of the Year.

Born in the Philippines, SrA Dayag moved to Albany, New York in 2017 and enlisted in the US Air Force in 2021. After successfully completing Basic Military Training and Technical School, he arrived at Pope Field and immediately demonstrated his critical thinking and leadership abilities. His keen attention to detail led to process improvements, which resulted in decreased travel voucher rejects. This catapulted 43 CPTS to #1 out of 11 Air Mobility Command FM bases in the travel voucher rejects metric, earning him Team Pope's Senior Airman Below-the-Zone selection by the Air Mobility Operations Group Commander, highlighting his potential for future leadership.

SrA Dayag was selected by the Joint Special Operations Command to fill a critical manning gap in their Resource Management shop for six months, ultimately earning a Joint Service Commendation Medal for his customer service achievements and leadership actions.

Upon returning to 43 CPTS, SrA Dayag was reassigned into the FMA flight, quickly adapting to his budget support role. His expertise helped navigate FY24 spending actions, highlighted by his role in executing \$1.5M in unfunded requirements during closeout, directly supporting multiple local infrastructure and security projects. One notable project ensured 43 AMOG's compliance with federal law by establishing alternative access and egress points for personnel with disabilities. His impressive achievements earned him Comptroller Airman of the Quarter twice, GSA Airman of the Quarter twice, and the 2024 AMOG's Airman of the Year award. SrA Dayag's commitment and work ethic make him **ACES HIGH!**

SPRING ACES HIGH



SSgt Emily Fogall

*140th Comptroller Flight,
Buckley Space Force Base,
Colorado*

Staff Sergeant Emily Fogall began her Air Force career with the 140th Security Forces Squadron, where she swiftly excelled, taking on numerous responsibilities far beyond her rank. Her exceptional performance and dedication earned her the title of

Airman of the Year for two consecutive years. She showcased remarkable courage during an active shooter incident at a local mall, where her quick actions safeguarded civilians and supported first responders. Her courageous actions during the incident earned her an Achievement Medal, highlighting her ability to remain calm and effective under pressure.

In December 2023, SSgt Fogall transitioned to the FM career field. With this career change, she adapted seamlessly and quickly made a significant impact. She revamped the 140th Wing's travel pay program, rectifying years old deficiencies and setting a new standard of efficiency. Her initiative and determination highlight her drive to excel in any role. SSgt Fogall's thirst for knowledge and professional growth is evident, as she graduated as the top student in her technical training class. Beyond her work, she exemplifies selflessness, dedicating time to her community and wing. Her volunteer efforts include organizing events such as the Colorado Air National Guard's annual awards ceremony and a professional development seminar for both Army and Air Guard members. These efforts showcase her leadership and ability to foster teamwork. SSgt Fogall embodies dedication, leadership, and resilience. Her unwavering commitment to her team, community, and self-improvement makes her an inspiration to all. She's a shining example of what it means to be **ACES HIGH!**



SrA Olivia Perez

*35th Comptroller Squadron,
Kadena Air Base, Japan*

After graduation from Technical Training, Senior Airman Olivia Perez hit the ground running as a Separations and Retirements pay technician for 35 CPTS at Misawa AB, Japan. SrA Perez worked with the Force Support Squadron to reshape three outdated Standard Operation

Procedures which reduced aged payments by 50% and cleared a \$49K backlog for 30 Airmen, directly contributing to Misawa AB receiving and maintaining the Air Force's second best 'outstanding payments' metric and her earning Pacific Air Forces/FM Airman of the Quarter. Moreover, she was selected to serve as the Senior Executive Service aide-de-camp for the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center visit to Misawa AB. In addition to her and her team being named superior performers and receiving coins from the 35th Wing Commander, her excellent standards, leadership, and program management culminated in a Senior Airman Below-the-Zone promotion!

In November of 2023, SrA Perez relocated to Kadena AB, Japan. She was chosen to fill an E-5 position, as Customer Service Team lead, overseeing two Airmen and one local national civilian, and guiding daily operations for military pay duties, which supports 18K personnel from two Wings, six tenant units, and four civilian agencies. In her short time at Kadena, she has earned the 18 CPTS Airman of the Year, the 18th Wing Shogun of the Week, and a coin from the 18th Wing Commander. Her natural leadership style transcends that of her peers and SrA Perez is the embodiment of what it means to truly be **ACES HIGH!**



PROMOTIONS & RETIREMENTS

Promotions

AFMC		SAF/FM
Borrelli, Renee, NH-04 AFNWC/FM – Kirtland AFB	Nickell, Philip, NH-04 AFLCMC/WBS – Wright-Patterson AFB	Mitchell, Kelly, NH-04 AFCAA/FMCT – Hill AFB
Dunn, Robert, NH-04 AFLCMC/C3I – Robins AFB	Pachner, Christopher, NH-04 AFNWC/NIF – Hill AFB	Pethtel, KayLee, NH-04 AFCAA/FMCS – JB Andrews
Griggs, John, NH-04 AFLCMC/WAM – Wright-Patterson AFB	ANG	USAFE-AFAFRICA
Juedeman, Jeremy, NH-04 AFNWC/NIF – Hill AFB	Bourdais, Regina, Col JFHQ – NAS JRB New Orleans	Watson, Kristen, GS-14 HQ/FMAI– Ramstein AB
Lykins, Travis, NH-04 AFLCMC/WAC – Wright-Patterson AFB	Fleischman, Faith, CMSgt 166 WG – New Castle ANGB	

ACC	AETC	AFGSC
Campbell, April, GS-13 350 SWW/FM – Eglin AFB	Asiedu, Bernice, TSgt 81 CPTS/FMF – Keesler AFB	Dale, Elizabeth, Lt Col 90 CPTS/CC – F.E. Warren AFB
Clemmens, David, GS-14 1AF/FM – Tyndall AFB	Jenkins, Germaine, GS-12 FMF/FMFB – JBSA-Randolph	Lichtenberg, Brett, Maj 377 CPTS/DO – Kirtland AFB
Kennedy, Paul, GS-13 1AF/FM – Tyndall AFB	Ownbey-Fishel, John, MSgt 71 CPTS/FMF – Vance AFB	Marquez, Alfredo, MSgt 377 CPTS/FMA – Kirtland AFB
Mann, Tameka, SMSgt 23 CPTS/FMD – Moody AFB	Pittman, Chandler, TSgt 49 CPTS/FMF – Holloman AFB	Titus-McGaffick, Andrew, TSgt 90 CPTS/FMF – F.E. Warren AFB
Nowak, Aaron, TSgt 355 CPTS/FMF – Davis-Monthan AFB	Pollard, Lauren, GS-12 FMF/FMFP – JBSA-Randolph	Wooden, Hope, GS-12 AFGSC/FMBO – Barksdale AFB
Ratekin, KC, MSgt 99 CPTS/FMF – Nellis AFB	Thompson, Mark, GS-13 FMA/FMAO – JBSA-Randolph	AFMC
Schuster, Maria, TSgt 355 CPTS/FMF – Davis-Monthan AFB	Walker, Fabiola, GS-12 FMA/FMAM – JBSA-Randolph	Booher, Jeremy II, NH-03 AFLCMC/WBS – Wright-Patterson AFB



Brandenburg, Stephany, GS-12
AFLCMC/FZA – Wright-Patterson AFB

Buule, Elisha, GS-12
AFLCMC/C3 – Hanscom AFB

Chacon-Perez, Danny, SMSgt
AFSC/72 CPTS/WSA – Tinker AFB

Dick, Andrew, NH-03
HQ/FMAO – Wright-Patterson AFB

Foley, Luke, GS-12
AFLCMC/HBA – Hanscom AFB

Fried, Joshua, GS-12
AFLCMC/HNI – Hanscom AFB

Gagnier, David, NH-03
AFTC/AEDC/FMA – Arnold AFB

Galindo, Deja Alexander, GS-13
AFLCMC/HNC – JBSA-Lackland

Gorman, Amberly, NH-03
AFTC/AEDC/FMA – Arnold AFB

Kelm, Heather, GS-12
AFIMSC/FMA – JBSA-Lackland

Kisling, Traci, GS-12
AFIMSC/FMF– JBSA-Lackland

Klump, Jenifer, NH-03
HQ/FMRM – Wright-Patterson AFB

LeVangie, Nicholas, NH-03
HQ/FMFA – Wright-Patterson AFB

Macchio, Kathryn, NH-03
AFNWC/FM – Kirtland AFB

Newsome, Shelby, NH-03
HQ/FMRA – Wright-Patterson AFB

Partanen, Erika, NH-03
AFNWC/NDB – Eglin AFB

Phillips, Jonathan, NH-03
AFNWC/NIXB – Hill AFB

Quintanilla, Lourditha, GS-13
AFIMSC/FMA – JBSA-Lackland

Ramos, Julio, NH-03
AFNWC/NIMF – Hill AFB

Schatzman, Sheldon, GS-12
AFLCMC/WVS – Hanscom AFB

Schuler, Scott, GS-12
AFSC/OO-ALC/FMA – Hill AFB

Stevenson, Gena, NH-03
AFNWC/NCF – Hanscom AFB

Thornberg, Thomas, GS-13
AFIMSC/FMA – JBSA-Lackland

Upton, Emily, NH-03
HQ/FMAH – Wright-Patterson AFB

Waters, Jody, NH-03
AFSC/309 CMXG/MXDSR – Hill AFB

Woodson, Jamiyah, GS-13
AFLCMC/GB – Gunter AFB

AFSOC
Thomas, Corey, MSgt
27 SOCPTS/FMA – Cannon AFB

Watts, Joseph, Maj
1 SOCPTS/DO – Hurlburt Field

Wong, Kristal, Maj
AFSOC/FMA – Hurlburt Field

Yanez, Claudia, GS-13
27 SOCPTS/FMA – Cannon AFB

AMC
Brocksmith, Michael, GS-13
HQ/FMATO – Scott AFB

Cyrus, Jahrod Sr, SMSgt
22 CPTS – McConnell AFB

Fox, September, GS-12
HQ/FMATF – Scott AFB

Limos, Justin, SMSgt
628 CPTS – JB Charleston

Seregon, March, Lt Col
628 CPTS/CC – JB Charleston

ANG
Arriaga, Megan, Capt
159 CPTF – NAS JRB New Orleans

Barker, Joshua, MSgt
186 CPTF – Key Field

Bautista, Francisco, TSgt
144 CPTF – Fresno ANGB

Bohn, Dustin, MSgt
133 CPTF – Minneapolis-St. Paul JARS

Easley, Jamie, Capt
161 CPTF – Sky Harbor ANGB

Evans, Martin, Capt
195 CPTF – Beale AFB

Fischer, John, TSgt
181 CPTF – Terre Haute ANGB

Promotions (cont.)

Folk, Bryant, Capt
121 CPTF – Rickenbacker ANGB

Furlan, Dayna, MSgt
143 CPTF – Quonset Point ANGB

Green, Kenton, TSgt
187 CPTF – Montgomery ANGB

Grouse, Chase, Capt
188 CPTF – Ebbing ANGB

Hernandez, Ana, TSgt
159 CPTF – NAS JRB New Orleans

Kuhn, Tomas, SMSgt
122 CPTF – Fort Wayne ANGB

Lambertucci De Brito, Tamila, TSgt
102 CPTF – Otis ANGB

Mark, Jesse, TSgt
184 CPTF – McConnell AFB

McCusker, Kortni, TSgt
167 CPTF – Shepherd Field

McKinney, Brynna, SMSgt
ANGRC/A3/10 – JB Andrews

Nair, Rajat, TSgt
145 CPTF – Charlotte ANGB

Perreault, Trevor, Capt
104 CPTF – Barnes ANGB

Pillischafske, Courtney, Capt
126 CPTF – Scott AFB

Sibert, Ayla, TSgt
124 CPTF – Gowen Field

Tharman, Blaine, TSgt
190 CPTF – Forbes Field

Thompson, Calvin, Capt
120 CPTF – Great Falls ANGB

Tisdale, Janae, SMSgt
108 CPTF – JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst

Tom, Denice, SMSgt
152 CPTF – Reno ANGB

Trunzo, Tyler, TSgt
171 CPTF – Pittsburgh ANGB

Vincent, Jessica, Capt
134 CPTF – McGhee Tyson ANGB

Wiram, Maeghan, Capt
181 CPTF – Terre Haute ANGB

PACAF
Agnis, Laurita, GS-13
PACAF/FMB – JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam

Carbonell, Josephine, TSgt
PACAF/FMF – JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam

Hill, Camisha, GS-13
PACAF/FMB – JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam

Lock, Yvette, GS-13
PACAF/FMB – JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam

Moore, John, MSgt
8MSG/CCR – Kunsan AB

Pretti, Kyle, SMSgt
354 CPTS/FMD – Eielson AFB

Wu, Warren, GS-13
PACAF/FMB – JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam

SAF/FM
Proctor, David, GS-14
SAF/FMFD – JB Anacostia-Bolling

Whitcraft, Spencer, GS-12
SAF/FMFO – Wright-Patterson AFB

SpOC
Bauer, Garrett, Maj
S8/S8E – Peterson SFB

USAFA
Rodriguez, Reuben, Maj
HQ/FMA – JBSA-Randolph

USAFE-AFAFRICA
Greene, Carl, GS-13
HQ/FMFS – Ramstein AB

Jones, Marshall, MSgt
48 CPTS/FMA – RAF Lakenheath

Santiago, Saiomy, GS-13
HQ/FMAO – Ramstein AB

USNORTHCOM
Rapp, Lisa, GS-13
J83 – Peterson SFB

USTRANSCOM
Davenport, Erica, GS-12
TCJ8-PF – Scott AFB

Elam, Brett, GS-13
TCJ8-AC – Scott AFB

DRUs and FOAs
Badr, Romeh, SMSgt
11 CPTS/FM – JB Anacostia-Bolling

Retirements

AETC
Thurman, Wayne, GS-15
FMF – JBSA-Randolph

AFMC
Howell, William, NH-04
75 CPTS/CFA – Hill AFB

Kain, Shawn, NH-04
HQ/FMAH – Wright-Patterson AFB

AFSOC
Britton, Jennifer, CMSgt
AFSOC/FM – Hurlburt Field

ACC
Kostic, David, GS-14
1AF/FM – Tyndall AFB

AFMC
Ada, Evelyn, GS-12
AFIMSC/FMA – JBSA-Lackland

Anders, Susan, GS-12
AFLCMC/HNC – JBSA-Lackland

Beauford, Melinda, GS-13
AFIMSC/FMA – JBSA-Lackland

Bennett, Karen, GS-12
AFLCMC/WN – Wright-Patterson AFB

Bryant, Arlene, GS-12
AFLCMC/FZA – Wright-Patterson AFB

Cannon, Jamie, MSgt
HQ AFMC/FM – Wright-Patterson AFB

PACAF
Nicholas, Joseph, Col
FM/FMA – JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam

SAF/FM
Bickett, Teresa, SES
SAF/FMB – Arlington, VA

Cramp, Tracey, NH-04
SAF/FMBOO – Arlington, VA

Kvartunas, Michael, NH-04
AFCAA/FMCA – JB Andrews

McVicker, C. Grant, SES
SAF/FMC – Arlington, VA

Carney, Barbara, GS-13
AFLCMC/HBF – Hanscom AFB

Charles, Kenneth, GS-12
88 CPTS/FMA – Wright-Patterson AFB

Clark, Tracy, GS-12
AFLCMC/FZA – Wright-Patterson AFB

Edmund, Robert, GS-12
AFLCMC/WAM – Wright-Patterson AFB

Fain, Michael, NH-03
AFTC AEDC/FMA – Arnold AFB

Ferguson, Connie, NH-03
AFLCMC/WBD – Tinker AFB

Freeman, Valerie, GS-12
AFSC/72 MSG/RA – Tinker AFB

Ison, Nola, GS-12
AFLCMC/WAF – Wright-Patterson AFB

Zablonski, Diana, NH-04
SAF/FMBO – Arlington, VA

USSPACECOM
Williams, Darin, Col
J83 – Schriever SFB

Jackson, Shelia, GS-12
AFLCMC/FZA – Wright-Patterson AFB

Jensen, Mary, GS-12
AFNWC/NIM – Hill AFB

Johnson, Rebecca, NH-03
AFSC/FMRD – Tinker AFB

Lambert, Marnie, GS-12
AFSC/OO-ALC/FMA – Hill AFB

Ross, Kelly, GS-12
AFLCMC/WNS – Wright-Patterson AFB

Smeltzer, Debra, GS-12
AFLCMC/WLD – Hill AFB

Smittick, Jack, NH-03
AFLCMC/GBG – Gunter AFB

Taylor, Daniel, NH-03
AFTC/96 Test Wing/FMA – Eglin AFB



Retirements (cont.)

Tubbs, Rhonda, GS-13

HQ/FMRM – Wright-Patterson AFB

AFRC

Kijek, Kevin, TSgt

482 MXS/MXMPJ – Homestead ARB

AMC

Rey, Lilet, TSgt

60 CPTS/FMF – Travis AFB

Roberts, Simone, MSgt

43 CPTS/SEL – Pope Army Airfield

ANG

Borozinski, Kaitlyn, Capt

189 CPTF/FMQ – Little Rock AFB

Curtis, Jimmy, MSgt

118 CPTF – Berry Field

Lomax, Tara, MSgt

182 CPTF – Peoria ANGB

Maldonado, Jessica, MSgt

128 CPTF/FMQ – General Mitchell Field

Meyer, Luisoly, MSgt

113 Maint Gp/FMF – JB Andrews

Restey, Jennifer, SMSgt

118 CPTF – Berry Field

Roan, Gracie, MSgt

102 CPTF/FMA – Otis ANGB

Swensen, Cynthia, MSgt

157 CPTF/ARPCRET – Pease ANGB

SAF/FM

Hamilton, Mary, NH-03

SAF/FMBF – Arlington, VA

Horne, Augustine, GS-13

SAF/FMIE – Wright-Patterson AFB

USNORTHCOM

DeGenero, Jerilyn, GS-13

J6 – Peterson SFB

USTRANSCOM

Joe, Latasha, GS-13

TCJ8-PF – Scott AFB

WHY WE MATTER

This magazine issue explored the importance of our DAF/FM community and how our contributions are incredibly impactful to DoD and DAF excellence as well as national security. Some of the SAF/FM Editorial Board members and other DAF FMers shared their perspectives on “Why We Matter” in their own words below.

I was born in another country, adopted, and chose to become an American citizen. I worked hard and put myself through college. I had opportunities to work in the private sector, but I chose a life of service dedicated to the American people and the nation I love. I want to give back to our nation and be part of an organization that can make a difference and have a voice in how to protect this country now and for the future.

Additionally, I am also a military spouse and mother of two. I am proud to be an American and serve the people. Whether military, government, civilian, or contractor, we represent an answered call to the American people. We all do our part to serve, and every little action and effort is part of a whole. Having a voice that matters is vital to the integrity of what we do, and instilling warrior ethos by being a part of the military that is called to protect this country’s freedoms now and for the future of our country...and that is why we matter.

Ms. Poppy Harshbarger

Associate Director, HQ ACC/FM

FM matters because in addition to optimizing financial resources (the second most important resource—with people being the first), FMers are expert connectors... We must consistently align strategy, mission, people, regulations, and resources to accomplish our FM mission daily. Having to consistently connect all these factors, inherently raises our collective awareness on what truly matters and enables us to provide superior advice to our leaders. Experts agree that with information abundance, the future belongs to those who can “connect the dots.” Bottomline: the decision-support we bring to the table is invaluable...FM matters!

Col Leria Diaz

Director, Defense Financial Management & Comptroller School

With the advent of AI and other mind-boggling technological innovations on the horizon, people seem to feel afraid that their expertise, or even existence in the workplace, is irrelevant. However, human characteristics are what make these innovations succeed. You cannot inspire a machine to do great things on its own. It will never be creative and unique... only logical. People matter because they can feel excited about their accomplishments and strive to reach goals in their own new and creative ways. We matter because we dream... so keep dreaming.

TL;dr (too long; didn’t read): Impossible things can only become possible with the inspiration and perseverance of a human determined enough to prove the world wrong. We matter because each of us can do things that no one else—or nothing else—can.

MSgt Samuel Spaethe

FM Enlisted Force Development Manager

I believe that we can answer the question of why we matter directly, and that’s because without money nothing is accomplished. Working in finance provides a rare opportunity where we’re able to see all the moving pieces within a program driven by the mission. FMers support these routine and critical requirements in the most basic an essential way; by providing and forecasting funds, keeping track of the budget, and making sure the missions are accomplished legally every fiscal year. We can be proud knowing that we are a piece of the guiding force that protects this country every day.

Mr. Todd Martin

Resource Advisor, NORAD and USNORTHCOM/J83

As FMers we operate our nation’s most volatile weapon system...money.

Maj Willard ‘Chip’ Mitchell

Flight Commander, Financial Management Learning Center

Today’s Department of the Air Force is continually reinventing and reshaping to remain a global power of air superiority, but one thing is constant and never changing: the need for money to accomplish the mission. In the Air Force, every dollar matters, and the financial managers are the guardians of that resource, ensuring the readiness and success of our mission.

CMSgt David Weaver

Chief Enlisted Manger, PACAF/FM

Why We Matter: If we don’t do what we do well - another Airman on the flightline, in vehicle management, or in the cockpit is losing focus or is not prepared properly to do their job. If that Airman can’t focus on their job, the effectiveness of their mission is compromised. If the mission is compromised, Americas sons and daughters are unnecessarily put in harm’s way. There is not another career field you’ll find on an Air Force installation that impacts every single person and mission the way FM does it.

Maj Shawn Hempsey

Strategic Policy Fellow, Air University



SAF  FM
The Ultimate Force Multiplier

AIR FORCE
COMPTROLLER