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Joint...Serving Each Other and Together

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From the E-Ring

JOINT...SERVING EACH OTHER AND TOGETHER

If you think we're becoming more joint, I agree with you...I see it in a lot of places.

Observe that our new Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, CMSAF Roy, came to his position from being the Senior Enlisted Advisor for the Pacific Command...a joint command.

Most of you are aware of our commitment to and need for the F-35 (Joint Strike Fighter), and some know the tentacles our core competency of Agile Combat Support has reaching to the other Services...again, parts of the joint environment.

We are looking to the new Defense Personal Property System (DPS) to manage our PCS household goods shipments. It is a joint system that the AF uses, but the program office is in TRANSCOM. DPS is deployed right now and is serving nearly 30% of our PCSing Airmen. I will quickly add that it hasn't gained all the functionality we need it to have, but we're working that growth with TRANSCOM...as demanding customers.

Many of you have served in Joint Expeditionary Taskings (JET) in the AOR, and most of us have sent some of our folks to JETs. This is the heart of the joint environment. We rightly purged "in lieu of" terminology from our lexicons because these important-to-the-nation mission taskings aren't in lieu of anything...they are vital to why we're fighting in Southwest Asia. I see in each JET an opportunity to become a better, more versatile Airman.

When I fast-forward the experience our Airmen get in the JET domain to when they will become field grade and general officers, I see a huge benefit to their understanding logistics on the battlefield and warfighter support. Add to that their network of joint "battle buddies" and "shipmates" that will help them in years to come. If you were to follow me around, you'd see that some of my closest peers wear different color uniforms.

Others who wear the AF uniform have significant joint experience. One such officer is a munitions and maintenance officer...a graduate of the (joint) Industrial College of the Armed Forces...is working on the Air Staff with peers of the other Services...served as the chief of plans and programs, host nation support and contracting division, US Central Command. What a background, what great effectiveness, what a big-picture leader!

These are some of the more obvious aspects of the joint environment. None, however, is clearer than what happened in the dark of night on two occasions in the recent months. A day or two after each logistics Airman fell on the battlefield; their remains were returned to Dover AFB where I was called on to welcome them home. What a somber occasion. The first was with the Secretary of Defense, the second with our AF Chief of Staff and his wife. In both of these cases, our fallen Airmen returned home with fallen soldiers...together in service, together in sacrifice, together arriving home.

Joint is serving each other and together, and, I have to add, doing our jobs with precision and a reliability on which our joint partners can depend...that's my view.

—LT GEN LOREN RENO

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