

Multimedia merger means more work for units

By Janet Taylor-Birkey
27th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Cannon's Multimedia lab will soon be making a lot of changes in the way they do business.

Not only are they facing the transition to Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), they are also looking toward a merger with the Cannon Public Affairs office.

Photo support personnel will be retrained into journalism and 100 videographers (Air Force-wide) will be retrained into broadcasting. Graphics personnel as well as the remaining videographers will have to cross-train.

"At this point we are waiting on direction ... which we should get in the next couple of months," said LaDonna Beevers, Base Multimedia manager at Cannon, adding that there are a lot of exciting changes on the horizon for the shop.

Currently, multimedia is divided into three shops: photo, video and graphics. When the merger takes place, graphics will no longer be an Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC). "It will be a whole new focus when graphics is gone," Ms. Beevers said.

The common perception of the multimedia lab is that they take photos for anything happening on base, but

there is much more to their responsibilities. According to the Air Force Instructions (AFIs) for their job, they are not allowed to take photos of anything that generates profits, said Staff Sgt. April Wickes, non-commissioned officer in charge of photographic production.

"[The merger] is exciting for me," said Airman 1st Class Randi Flaugh, 27th Communication Squadron photographer. "I really want to learn photojournalism."

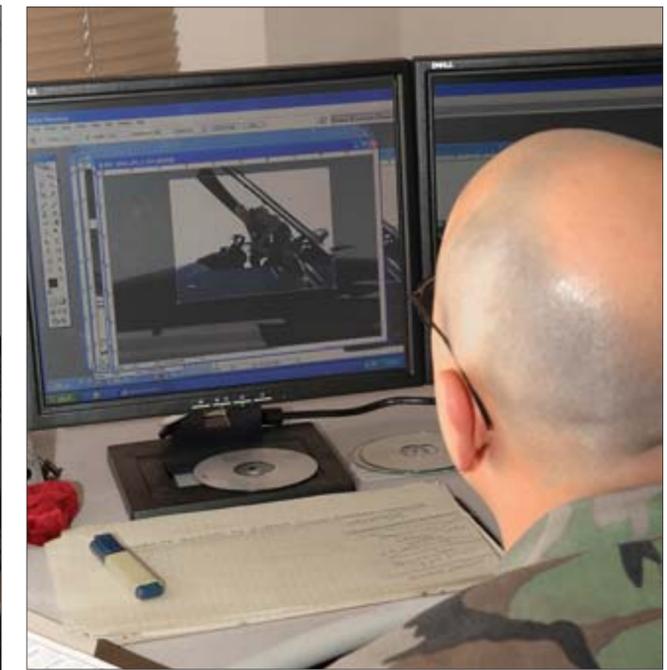
While the Public Affairs office shoots with an eye toward photojournalism, multimedia must focus on documenting information.

"A lot of people don't understand that," said Ms. Beevers. "[Multimedia doesn't] work to tell a story, simply the facts."

Their focus is documenting the assortment of base happenings, such as distinguished visitors to the base and things that are often not made known to the public.

Ms. Beevers said they are on 24-hour call to help base and community offices. Anytime the Disaster Control Group is called out, multimedia Airmen are also called to document. These documentations run the gamut of crime scenes, autopsies, fires or when a jet goes down.

With the changes to the multimedia career field, base units will be responsible for more of their own work, such as creating their own graphics products and photographing unit functions.



Above: Tech. Sgt. Scott Mackay, 27th CS photographer, edits a photo of the 524th Fighter Squadron returning from their Air Expeditionary Force 3/4 rotation. The photographers' focus is documenting the assortment of base events, ranging from crime scenes to promotion ceremonies.

Left: Tech. Sgt. Ronald Flack, 27th Communications Squadron graphic artist, prepares display boards for an upcoming Phase II exercise. The graphics career field will be phased out shortly as multimedia merges with the public affairs career field.



Tech. Sgt. James Elmore, 27th Fighter Wing Historian, watches Airman 1st Class Amy Slye, 27th Communications Squadron videographer, edit a video for the 27th FW Annual Awards banquet. Airman Slye will soon retrain to another position.



Left: Staff Sgt. Tiana Martel, 27th Communications Squadron graphics artist, sets up the Cannon Video Teleconference Center (VTC). The VTC is used by 27th Fighter Wing personnel to communicate more effectively, with Air Combat Command and other higher headquarters officials, than with a regular conference call.

Right: Senior Airman Heather Redman, 27th CS photographer, takes an official photo of Chief Master Sgt. John Wood, 27th Operations Group. Photographers will soon merge into the public affairs career field Air Force-wide.

