

# From the Desk of...

Ms. Melissa Blakesly, SES, AFIMSC/RM



**Greetings from the Alamo City, the Mission City, the River City, Military City, U.S.A., and the home of YOUR Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center (AFIMSC).** In San Antonio and at AFIMSC, not only do you get the best culture, food, and fun, you also find the best place to serve as financial managers in the Department of the Air Force! All day, every day, we are focused on supporting the fight by resourcing our Airmen, Guardians, and Installations. As our motto states, **“Your Success is Our Mission!”** and we take that to heart every single day!

When I found out I had been selected to be the Director of Resources Management at AFIMSC, I was beyond excited and a bit overwhelmed when I considered the vast portfolio. Did you know AFIMSC handles such disparate portfolios including prisons, Military Working Dogs, on-base lodging, dining facilities (DFACs), Child Development Centers (CDCs), environmental concerns, military construction, Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization (FSRM), Chaplains, and even our Olympians? I love that I get to learn something new about AFIMSC’s responsibility just about every day, and that there is a team in AFIMSC Resource Management Directorate (RM) who keep Air Force leadership educated on our many diverse, mission-critical issues. I am honored to support this amazing team of professionals who work daily to support AFIMSC’s \$9B annual budget.

We love hearing from our customers, “What’s going on at AFIMSC/RM this year?” because we are always thrilled to talk about the positive initiatives being developed and deployed. One of the highest priorities we are working on is our support to the Financial Management (FM) Strategic Plan as the champion of Objective 3.3, **“Consistently deliver outstanding financial customer service.”** We look at customer service from two perspectives – 1) the tools our FM analysts need to provide excellent customer service, and 2) the tools our customers need to receive excellent service.

The first includes a series of dashboards with weekly expansions which provide real-time, transparent data to enable better customer support. Many of you are familiar with these dashboards, but you can view all our current dashboards, including the most recent addition of Open Payments, on our AFIMSC/RMF SharePoint.

The second includes the RM Financial Operations Division (RMF) team’s latest launch of an enterprise-wide customer scheduling tool designed to standardize the customer experience and provide important reporting data to comptrollers. Once fielded, our Airmen and Guardians will have the capability to schedule in-person or virtual appointments with their local Comptroller Squadrons (CPTS) by simply scanning a QR code from their mobile devices. The user-centric experience is designed to mirror what customers see in their everyday life while performing tasks like mobile banking. Every customer will have the flexibility to check-in from their location and receive a text notification with either a confirmed appointment time or an estimated wait time if they desire to walk-in. Walk-in visitors will no longer need to spend valuable time in lobbies as this innovative tool employs real-time data to forecast the exact time they can be seen. Phase 1 deployment has started, and we anticipate releasing the full implementation schedule soon!

In a demonstration of our pledge to expand Financial Management Readiness at the installation-level, the Financial Operations (FMF) team has codified their response protocols for all natural disasters. Building upon their achievements in creating a one-page primer CPTS leaders can keep on their desk; the team recently field-tested its Emergency Response Team (ERT) while Hurricane Idalia forced evacuations at MacDill Air Force Base. Grounded in historical evidence that early and frequent communication, combined with collaborative boots-on-ground partnership, leads to excellent results, the Travel Pay Ellsworth team sent two members to MacDill for a two-week period to assist in policy reads and voucher processing. The results were truly remarkable...accuracy of vouchers submitted was 99%, a substantial improvement over the 50% average experienced in previous years. Our goal is to ensure the ERT is there with you before you know you need us!



Our RM Cost Division (RMC) team is getting after innovation through the development of a data-informed execution plan. AFIMSC collects, validates, and allocates funding for 22-27,000 individual Installation and Mission Support (I&MS) requirements. Using contractual/execution data and advanced modeling tools, we’re looking to minimize this labor intensive, error prone financial drill. The team is looking to develop a data- and analytics-driven approach to distribute resources equitably and efficiently to I&MS needs. The end goal is an automated tool that will bridge the translation gap between contract documents and FM-specific data sources. By accurately forecasting requirements, we will reduce the burden of installation requirements collection. During FY24, we plan to develop and test prototypes for three of the ten I&MS portfolios.

The RM Budget (RMA) division has the responsibility of leading and informing budget and execution year funding drills, developing funds distribution/execution strategies, and delivering globally integrated decision support. They collect and assess the requirements needed for planning, fiscal guidance/policy, and analytical support for stakeholders across enterprise management portfolios, installations and subordinate units, and higher headquarters. In addition to this effort and scope, the team continues to innovate as they leverage technology to improve processes that will positively impact the enterprise.

In closing, I would like to share RM’s new mission & vision statements. Hopefully, you will see the items discussed above are nested nicely in these priorities.

**Mission: Standardize financial management for multidimensional partners by deploying innovative solutions throughout the Installation and Mission Support Enterprise**

**Vision: Recognized Leader of Financial Management - Empowered by a Culture of Innovation**

I want you to notice two words in our Mission statement: “Standardize” and “Deploy,” which are at the heart of what we do as an organization. A good example of this is RMF’s deployment of the scheduling tool in which we learned about a local tool during the Spring 2023 Executive Session and worked directly with the contractor to standardize deployment across the enterprise. Continued efforts like this are how we will achieve our vision statement.

AFIMSC/RM is focused on leading the Department of the Air Force FM community through all these transformational activities and is experimenting with innovative ideas to solve complex financial management challenges. Please feel free to reach out to any of us in AFIMSC/RM with questions or inputs.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Ms. Melissa D. Blakesly is the Director of Resources for the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center located at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.*



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OMB Fellowship Experience

By Maj Blair Kessler, SpOC



# Aces High Awards



**TSgt Gerard Doran Jr.**  
Air Force Installation & Mission Support, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland-Kelly  
(Port San Antonio), Texas

Technical Sergeant Gerard Doran is a Financial Operations Policy and Procedures Manager assigned to the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center (AFIMSC), Joint Base San Antonio (JBSA)-Lackland-Kelly, Texas. He was born in Tulsa, Oklahoma and raised in Benton, Louisiana where he joined the Air Force in July 2004. While at his first assignment to the 341st Comptroller Squadron (CPTS) at Malmstrom Air Force Base (AFB), Montana, his knowledge and customer service skills were key to the squadron receiving the “Best Financial Services Office in Air Force Space Command” award for 2006.

During his deployment to Kandahar, Afghanistan in 2010 for operation ENDURING FREEDOM, he served as the 809th Expeditionary Red Horse squadron resource advisor funding 40 critical intergovernmental contracts worth \$1.2M. His efficient processes and partnership with contracting saved the government over \$6M during FY11 end of year closeout, earning him a Navy Achievement Medal.

Since his arrival to AFIMSC in 2022, he has supported nine MAJCOMS and 78 installations across the Air and Space Force. He has provided travel policy interpretations for more than 1,100 inquiries, determining solutions through multiple financial customer service delivery models, while maintaining a less than 24-hour response time. He spearheaded the Robotic Process Automation (RPA) testing for Defense Travel System (DTS) permission level reporting which boosted audit efficiency by 21% and eliminated more than 15.8K research hours for the enterprise. He was pivotal during both Typhoon Mawar and Hurricane Idalia Financial Management (FM) emergency and evacuations guidance. TSgt Doran’s outstanding contributions, excellence, and performance to the FM community is a perfect example of **ACES HIGH!**



**SrA Alysha Richardson**  
325th Comptroller Squadron, Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida

Senior Airman Alysha Richardson is the Special Actions team lead for the Financial Operations flight assigned to the 325th CPTS at Tyndall AFB, Florida. SrA Richardson was born in Olongapo City in the Philippines. She migrated to the United States with her mother when she was 18 years old. Following in her uncle’s footsteps, she enlisted into the United States Air Force in January 2020. Alysha began showcasing her natural leader instincts early in her career, stepping up to serve as an element leader while at basic military training in Lackland AFB, Texas. SrA Richardson attended Financial Management Technical Training School at Keesler AFB in Mississippi, where she earned the academic excellence award.

SrA Richardson arrived at Tyndall AFB for her first assignment in March 2020 where she quickly learned how to complete a variety of skills as a Financial Operations technician. Her prudent capabilities and meticulous attention to detail had her immediately completing tasks such as voucher balancing, voucher audits, and facilitating 135 virtual Zoom in-processing briefings during and immediately following the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, she executed her mission as lead cashier for 1.5 years disbursing \$542,000 and continues to diligently train newly appointed Airmen on cashier requirements. She teamed with the Force Support Squadron to correct 212 pay affecting issues eliminating financial hardships on Airmen and families. Alysha’s expertise proved invaluable while certifying \$318,000 in military pay entitlements. SrA Richardson’s effort and leadership culminated in her earning Squadron Airman of the Quarter three times, 2021 Squadron Airman of the Year, Senior Airman Below-The-Zone, and the John L. Levitow award while attending Airman Leadership School. Moreover, during her time at Tyndall AFB, she has also quickly become the base songbird for the National Anthem, being handpicked for more than fifty events across the installation. SrA Richardson’s devotion to serving the country and Airmen make her a great addition to the United States Air Force and the 325th Comptroller Squadron, clearly earning the title **ACES HIGH!**



# Aces High Awards



**SSgt Angelica Yap**  
1ST Special Operations Comptroller Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida

Staff Sergeant Angelica Yap is a Financial Analyst Supervisor assigned to the 1st Special Operations CPTS, Hurlburt Field, Florida. She was born and raised in Pampanga, Philippines where she graduated high school, and later immigrated to the United States, joining the Air Force in 2018.

Upon arrival to her first duty station, she hit the ground running as a DTS technician reviewing & auditing 12,000 vouchers and \$165,000 in entitlements for the most deployed wing. She also provided personal Permanent Change of Station (PCS) support to two thousand newly assigned Air Commandos before being hand selected for a technical sergeant Disbursing Agent (DA) deployment. While assigned, she managed 190 personnel and executed DA duties for three currencies totaling \$348,000 for air mobility missions in support of three combat commands. Her efforts were essential in executing more than 1,600 sorties, 4,000 flight hours and movement of 33,000 lbs. of cargo across 23 partnered nations.

Upon her return, she was selected to support Naval Air Station Pensacola for two months, where she led the Financial Operations Flight (FMF) and also trained 35 Command Support Staff (CSSs) on military pay for which she was lauded by the Air Education and Training Command (AETC) Financial Management Comptroller.

Sergeant Yap’s superb performance persisted as she transitioned to the FMA Flight. In her new role, she redesigned DTS processes and trained 40 members while executing a \$12 million contingency exercise deployment program. She created over 3,000 authorizations, enabling 12,300 combat sorties across 13 Areas of Responsibility (AORs), effectively disrupting enemy command and control capabilities. Her steadfast professionalism earned her recognition from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget (SAF/FMB), the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) Financial Services Officer (FSO) of the Year in 2019 and 2020, and the USSOCOM Contingency Operations Airman of the Year in 2021.

Sergeant Yap’s determination paired with her dedication to the Air Force and the Comptroller community makes her **ACES HIGH!**



**A1C Lyla K. Price**  
31st Comptroller Squadron, Aviano Air Base, Italy

Airman First Class Lyla Price is a financial operations technician assigned to the 31st CPTS at Aviano Air Base (AB), Italy. She hails from a small town in Ohio, Canal Winchester, where she grew up with her younger brother. After graduating from Canal Winchester High School in 2021, she attended a real estate institute but eventually decided to join the Air Force. After graduating from basic military training as an element leader in April 2022, she headed to Keesler AFB, Mississippi, to attend Financial Management technical training school.

In August 2022, A1C Price joined the 31st CPTS at Aviano AB, Italy, quickly becoming an invaluable Airman to the team. Since arriving, she’s excelled as a customer service technician providing military and travel pay support to five thousand Active Duty Airmen spread across Aviano AB, four Geographically Separated Units and two Expeditionary Squadrons. Her expertise has been utilized by the Judge Advocacy Office to assist with compiling financial evidence for a courts-martial, which expedited the findings and proceeding, earning her the “Top Performer” for the 3rd Quarter 2023. A1C Price is rounding her Financial Operations knowledge while appointed as an entrusted cashier. These duties give her the responsibility for processing travel claims and disbursing over \$9M to Aviano’s local national employees. In addition to her primary duties, A1C Price volunteers her off-duty time as the Wing Staff Agencies (WSA) Event Coordinator and Bowling team head coach. She’s organized six fundraisers and moral events while also leading the bowling team to first place with zero losses. A1C Lyla Price’s unparalleled professionalism and selfless service are why she is **ACES HIGH!**

