

Information Management Airman killed in cyber-combat

5/16/2007 — **BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La.** (AFPN) — Staff Sgt. John "Help" Desk, an information management specialist from the 314159th Computer Security Forces Squadron, was killed May 14 by a logic bomb that was hurled from a computer near Baghdad, Iraq.

Sergeant Desk had logged into Balad.Iraq.af.mil in support of Operation Internet Freedom since September on a 365-day deployment.

"John volunteered for this virtual deployment while he was working on a (Southwest Asia) network upgrade," said Chief Master Sgt. David Felix, 314159th CSFS security forces manager. "We discussed this deployment via e-mail. He said he made his decision to virtually deploy to gain network security experience."

According to reports, Sergeant Desk was logged into a patrol router in Baghdad when his laptop was struck by an Internet explosive device.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with the Desk family as they grieve the tragic loss of this Airman warrior and son," said Maj. John Friel, 314159th CSFS commander. "Any time we lose an Airman, the entire Air Force family suffers that loss."

Sergeant Desk was always aware of the danger he faced as he logged into networks based in Iraq. Chief Felix shared an excerpt from one of Sergeant Desk's e-mails, where the Airman stated: "As far as the heat of danger goes, every time a military member logs into the desert, they're in the heat of danger... It's my job to be in the heat of danger. Whether it's looking for insurgent websites, guarding cyber-terrorist detainees or configuring a firewall, it's all dangerous," he wrote.

He is a native of Redmond, Washington who arrived at Barksdale Air Force Base in March 2004. He is survived by his mother.

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