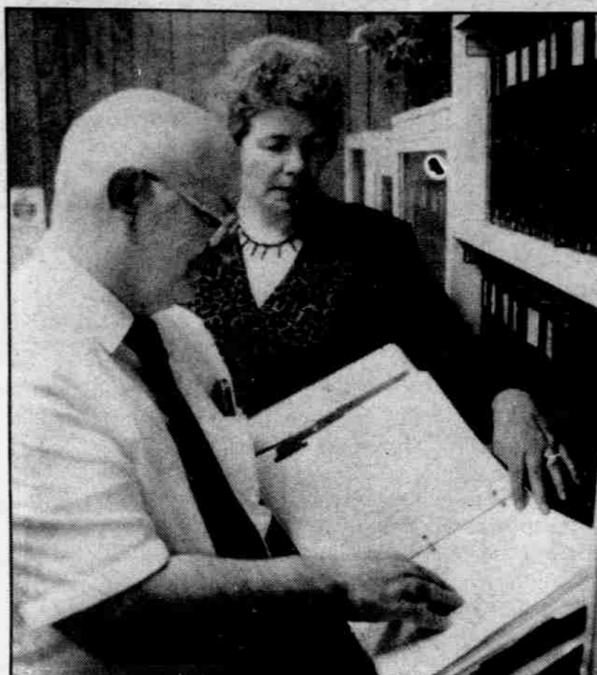


Office helps workers manage information



U.S. Air Force Photo by Donna Brown

Look it up

Marlow Lords, chief of personal affairs in the 2849th Air Base Group Personnel Division, uses the services offered by the publications branch of the Information Management Division to write a regulation supplement. Norma Allred, chief of the publications branch, lends her expertise to people like Mr. Lords to speed up the publication process.

Program aids experts in producing publications

by Donna Brown
Hilltop Times staff writer

Panic. That's the feeling some people get when they are tasked to produce a publication without qualified writing experience.

The publications branch of the 2849th Air Base Group, Information Management Division, has developed a program to ease the frustration of people who are experts in their area but who have had little or no technical writing experience, said Norma Allred, branch chief.

There are nearly 500 Ogden Air Logistics Center and Hill AFB publications coordinated with the publications branch. For example, there are regulations, manuals, pamphlets, visual aids and supplements to higher headquarters publications.

Mrs. Allred described a common scenario seen by the employees of the publications branch. She said the people in the office of primary responsibility, who had never done so before, were being assigned to write publications.

"Say a person has been the expert on an aircraft part for years, and he retires," Mrs. Allred said. "A replacement can't be found and his duties are spread out among several people. Jane is now the expert.

"Poor Jane. She is tasked to write a publication. She's never done that before. She doesn't know the format or even what she should include. She stum-

bles along and finally writes it. She submits it to the publications branch for finalization and when it gets here, it's a disaster. She's wasted four months of her time."

Training classes were offered to OPRs, and although they helped, Mrs. Allred said there were still many problems due to the technicalities of producing a publication. More help was needed to save the writers' time and effort.

A process action team was formed to research the publications procedure. The people on the team looked at the problem areas. They also considered complaints expressed by the writers. Based on that information, some recommendations were submitted and approved to change the publications procedure.

The office went from strictly an editing service to a mandatory writing service. "We determined what we were doing anyway was a writing service," Mrs. Allred said. "It's very hard to tell people that what they have submitted is not proper and we, as management, can't afford that kind of wasted effort."

Now the publications office gets into the writing process at the beginning instead of at the end. It used to be that the technical expert was required to submit a publication proposal to the office typed and in precise format.

With the new changes, the writer must involve the publications office in first-stage development. A writer can write down technical information and submit it to the office to be typed, approved, changed as necessary and prepared for printing.

Mrs. Allred said it's a team effort between the technical experts and the employees of the publications office.

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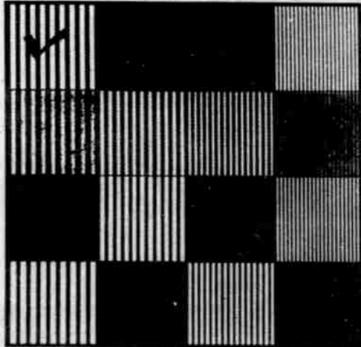
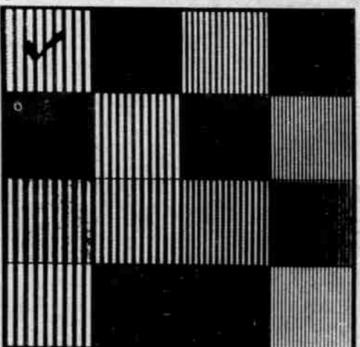
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