

## Recycled at BMT

Recycling at BMT is not sorting plastics, aluminum cans, etc. It has a totally different meaning, a meaning that the MTI's love to use to intimidate trainees. Recycling is when a trainee is moved back to an earlier part of basic training. This means they will have to repeat some parts of BMT and of course they will not graduate with their current flight, but instead with their new flight, at a later date.

You may think that failing basic training is the biggest threat, but you would be wrong. Only a little over 8 percent of trainees fail to make it through BMT. Most of these are not due to reasons of failing any aspect of BMT. The vast majority are due to medical reasons (pre-existing medical conditions that the trainee and Air Force didn't know about), fraudulent information on enlistment documents, or failing the arrival urinalysis.

The biggest threat used by MTI's is recycling. MTI's will make you think that they can recycle you for any reason such as they don't like the way you look or they don't like your breath. In actuality, MTI's don't have the authority, on their own to recycle you. That's up to the commanding officer, and the commanding officer is limited by basic training regulations as to when he can and cannot recycle a trainee. Recycling costs the Air Force money, because you are in training longer, and the Air Force works on a budget.

This does not mean that you shouldn't take the recycling threat seriously. When making the decision as to whether or not to recycle a trainee, the commander relies heavily on the recommendations of your MTI. About 15 to 20 percent of trainees BMT get recycled at one point or another.

Recycling isn't just used for disciplinary reasons. It's also used for trainees who fail a pass/fail requirement of basic. For example, if you fail to qualify with the M-16 rifle on the firing range, you will get recycled. If you fail the final PT test, you will be recycled.

You could also be recycled for medical reasons. If you miss more than two or three days of training because of a medical condition, you will likely be recycled to make up for that training. For example, if you are hospitalized during week 3 of training, when you are medically cleared you would likely be recycled to a different flight who is just entering week 3 of training.

As parents and family members of trainees we need to remain positive in the event your trainee does get recycled. Being recycled will certainly have an impact on the morale of your trainee. You will need to continue to be positive and supportive to help them get their motivation back to complete and graduate from BMT.