

DV The Desert Voice

United States Army Central
"Transforming to Full-Spectrum Operations"



April 23, 2008



Senior military leaders tackle 21st
Century security challenges at

Land Forces Symposium

DV Table of Contents

Page 4

Deployed servicemembers may be eligible for economic “booster shot.”

Page 5

Camp Arifjan and National Bank of Kuwait sign memorandum of agreement.

Page 6

Expeditionary Medical Facility – Kuwait skipper changes hands.

Page 12

Servicemembers reach out to needy refugees through Operation Hope.

Page 14

USARCENT Soldiers win safety awards.

On the cover

Dignitaries and representatives attend the Land Forces Symposium in Atlanta, Ga., April 14 to 17. For the full story turn to page 8.

Photo by Sgt. Beth Lake

Contact us

Comments, questions, suggestions story ideas? Call the Desert Voice editor at 430-6334 or e-mail at desertvoice@arifjan.arcent.army.mil.



On Leadership: NCO Development

Editor's note: This is the fifth in a series of articles by the commanding general and the command sergeant major.

Whether you are a sergeant major or a corporal, every noncommissioned officer has a responsibility to mentor and develop subordinates and anyone else who stands in need of guidance.

The mentoring process goes all the way down from the senior NCOs through the junior ranks. At every level we need to focus on developing the skills in all our Soldiers to help them grow as leaders. This is particularly important when deployed, a time when our privates and specialists don't have the benefit of formal NCO academies – the Warrior Leader Course in particular – that they would normally have when not deployed. They won't get that schooling until they transition back. Mentorship is key in developing and growing Soldiers into leaders. There is also a mentoring piece more senior NCOs, platoon sergeants and above, have in bringing their junior officers along.

The recent Lucky Strike exercise was a good chance for the commander and me to get an appreciation of where the headquarters is now. It gave our NCOs a chance to self-assess and us, as leaders, to assess our subordinates' competencies and see where we need to go over the next few months to prepare ourselves for Lucky Warrior. We made big strides over the course of Lucky Strike. There were some growing pains and a steep learning curve. From that assessment we are building our professional development programs.

Education is key as we help Soldiers mature in the Army and build their skills and knowledge. Everyone in the headquarters should already be tracking on a series of professional development modules



Command Sgt. Maj. John Fourhman
USARCENT command sergeant major

which will help in expanding knowledge and competencies on operating in the joint world. Additionally, beginning in May, we will have battle staff NCO courses that prepare Soldiers at the staff sergeant and sergeant first class level to operate inside a joint headquarters environment.

On a more personal level, the CG and I will also initiate a series of officer professional development and NCO professional development classes that address the doctrinal aspects of full-spectrum operations so everyone has a common understanding of what that means as it applies to USARCENT – from phase zero, or shaping operations, through high intensity conflict, and how the headquarters contributes in each of those levels of conflict. At the same time we will talk about the campaign plan to become trained and ready as a certified headquarters by the time Lucky Warrior is over this fall.

Changes in our structure will create other opportunities for NCOs to develop new skills. In the headquarters over the summer we are looking at recoding about 70 positions traditionally held by captains and majors into NCO positions. It will require some midgrade and senior NCOs to go through a different level of development, because these are non-traditional staff positions for NCOs.

With all the changes and growth there will be some growing pains. If we educate ourselves and continue to develop, mentor and lead our Soldiers at all levels, those pains will be minimal. Remember we are a changing headquarters and a changing Army. The junior Soldiers sitting in your section are the leaders of tomorrow. Make sure as you develop your own skills, you mentor them and develop theirs as well. Each of you is a leader. Be the leader we need.

-Patton's Own

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What you might not know about heat injury can kill you – or someone else

Story by
Col. Jonathan Freundt
USARCENT command surgeon

The temperature in the U.S. Army Central area of operations is rapidly approaching its hottest for 2008, greatly increasing the constant threat of heat injury.

Information about heat injury and its prevention is posted throughout USARCENT’s camps and training ranges, and is available on its web site as well through the ‘Policies’ link.

This information enables commanders and leaders to make informed decisions for training and water consumption guidelines, as well as initiate appropriate responses to suspected heat injuries.

The February/March 2008 edition of the Medical Surveillance Monthly Report, published by the Armed Forces Health Surveillance Center, provides the most recent information on these studies.

Several articles in the publication reported heat injury trends over the past few years, and also reported on other medical conditions found to be related to exertion in heat.

According to these articles, heat injury rates remain relatively high in younger servicemembers, particularly those in the Marine Corps and Army. Commanders, leaders and individuals will benefit from the following information in determining troops at risk for developing one of these serious medical conditions.

Medically reportable heat injuries, which are considered the most severe, include heat exhaustion and heat stroke, terms that commanders find familiar.

Although other heat-related injuries such as sunburn, dehydration, heat cramps and heat rash can be serious, these rarely lead to life-threatening conditions and so the military medical community does not track them as

aggressively as those that present the highest risk.

Three other medical conditions that can be related to working in heat are also considered very serious and therefore “reportable.” These conditions are pneumonia, hyponatremia and exertional rhabdomyolysis. Researchers studied these conditions in military service members to see how they were correlated with heat injuries in recent years. The following information provides a summary of these recent study findings:

Pneumonia/Acute Upper Respiratory Illness – A study on military-related heat injuries that occurred in 2007 noted that heat exhaustion and heat stroke can be made worse or precipitated by an upper respiratory illness such as a cold or pneumonia. Pneumonia fills the air sacs in the lungs with fluid, keeping oxygen from reaching the bloodstream. Typical symptoms associated with pneumonia include cough, chest pain, fever and difficulty in breathing. This infec-

tion is common and can occur from bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites, or chemical or physical injury to the lungs.

In 2007, 4.4 percent of heat stroke patients and 3.8 percent of heat exhaustion patients in one study were found to also have pneumonia or an acute upper respiratory infection. In USARCENT, an event of this type has already occurred in 2008. On March 20, an individual undergoing training at Camp Buehring was evacuated to the hospital for treatment of heat exhaustion. Upon further evaluation, this Soldier was also found to have pneumonia. The key point here is that if you or someone you know has a respiratory illness, you must pay special attention to the heat, water consumption, and activity levels in order to prevent heat injury.

Editor’s note: Check out next week’s issue of the Desert Voice to learn about two other types of injuries – hyponatremia and exertional rhabdomyolysis.

Easy Work	Moderate Work	Hard Work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapon Maintenance • Walking Hard Surface at 2.5 mph, < 30 lb Load • Marksmanship Training • Drill and Ceremony • Manual of Arms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking Loose Sand at 2.5 mph, No Load • Walking Hard Surface at 3.5 mph, < 40 lb Load • Calisthenics • Patrolling • Individual Movement Techniques, i.e., Low Crawl or High Crawl • Defensive Position Construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking Hard Surface at 3.5 mph, ≥ 40 lb Load • Walking Loose Sand at 2.5 mph with Load • Field Assaults

Heat Category	WBGT Index, F°	Easy Work		Moderate Work		Hard Work	
		Work/Rest (min)	Water Intake (qt/hr)	Work/Rest (min)	Water Intake (qt/hr)	Work/Rest (min)	Water Intake (qt/hr)
1	78° - 81.9°	NL	½	NL	¾	40/20 min	¾
2 (GREEN)	82° - 84.9°	NL	¾	50/10 min	¾	30/30 min	1
3 (YELLOW)	85° - 87.9°	NL	¾	40/20 min	¾	30/30 min	1
4 (RED)	88° - 89.9°	NL	¾	30/30 min	¾	20/40 min	1
5 (BLACK)	> 90°	50/10 min	1	20/40 min	1	10/50 min	1

Troop\$ over\$ea\$ benefit from economic boo\$t

Story and photo by
Dustin Senger

ASG – Qatar Public Affairs

CAMP AS SAYLIYAH, Qatar – Tax assistance is at an all-time high at Camp Sayliyah, Qatar.

In February, the Area Support Group – Qatar legal office opened a fully-capable tax center to help deployed servicemembers file 2007 tax returns.

Furthermore, troops may benefit from a recently signed bill, requiring the U.S. Treasury to start sending economic stimulus payments to more than 130 million households in May.

To receive payment, tax payers must have a valid Social Security number and file a 2007 federal return –

the Internal Revenue Service will take care of the rest.

“Helping our economy requires us to take action,” said U.S. President George W. Bush on Feb. 13, minutes before he signed the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 in Washington. According to Bush, the intent is to “provide a booster shot for our economy – a package that is robust, temporary, and puts money back in the hands of American workers and businesses.”

On the other side of the world, the number of servicemembers who filed for taxes has increased.

“Requests for assistance with 2007 tax returns are increasing at Camp As Sayliyah,” said Maj. Theodore P. Byrne, from Relondo Beach, Calif. Byrne provides legal services for the

Camp As Sayliyah installation commander, in addition to offering his guidance as a certified accounting professional and tax lawyer for the installation populace.

“The news of a refund is spreading amongst members of the military. To support the demand, the installation tax center is staying open until the beginning of May, so every service member has an opportunity to get help qualifying for the 2008 economic stimulus refund.”

According to Byrne, a 2007 tax return must be filed in order to be considered for a payment – even if it’s otherwise not required. The criteria used to verify eligibility is based on information provided in 2007 tax returns. Since the IRS needs this documentation, a delay in filing will be met by a delayed payment.

“Most eligible individuals will receive between \$300 and \$600,” Byrne said. “Those filing a joint return can expect to see between \$600 and \$1,200 as a rebate; as well as an additional \$300 for each qualifying child.” Household incomes will determine the amount a tax payer is refunded. Individuals who made less than \$75,000 are entitled to a full payment – as are couples earning less than \$150,000 on a joint return.

April 15 was the official due date for filing 2007 tax returns. Servicemembers in declared combat zones are allowed to delay filing to accommodate overseas deployments, but earnings must be reported after returning to the United States – generally within 180 days. Camp As Sayliyah, situated in the Gulf State of Qatar, is located in a designated combat zone. This year’s tax season presents two great opportunities for service members at Camp As Sayliyah: the chance to qualify for an appreciable rebate, as well as the ability to meet with a legal officer specializing in accounting and tax laws. 



Maj. Theodore P. Byrne, from Relondo Beach, Calif., helps Staff Sgt. Evelyn Hurry, from Brooklyn, N.Y., finalize tax documents at the Camp As Sayliyah legal office in Qatar on April 15. Byrne offers his guidance as a certified accounting professional and tax lawyer to the installation populace.

National Bank of Kuwait opening at Camp Arifjan

Story by
Spc. Giancarlo Casem
Desert Voice editor
and Maj. Michael Berry
ASG – Kuwait Public Affairs

American troops in Kuwait will soon have access to full-service banking, following an agreement between the National Bank of Kuwait and the U.S. Army's Area Support Group - Kuwait at Camp Arifjan.

A memorandum of understanding was formally signed April 10 to allow NBK to build a full-service banking facility on Camp Arifjan sometime in the near future.

"It is a great pride and pleasure to establish a full-service branch at the camp," said Shaikha Khaled Al-Bahar, the deputy chief executive of NBK. "We very much appreciate the contribution of the United States and the Armed Forces in helping us achieve a sense of freedom and liberty in Kuwait."

The agreement allows customers on the camp to enjoy the services of a full-service branch without straining the military work force on the camp. Currently Camp Arifjan contains ATMs but no bank branches to tend the needs of the servicemembers and civilians.

The U.S. Department of Treasury said that NBK was the only



Photo by Spc. Giancarlo Casem

Shaikha Khaled Al-Bahar, deputy chief executive officer of the National Bank of Kuwait, signs a memorandum of understanding between Camp Arifjan and the National Bank of Kuwait April 10.

correspondent bank to the Central Bank of Iraq, according to U.S. Army banking officer Maj. David Smith.

"NBK was clearly the answer that Camp Arifjan needed to meet the installation commander's requirements," Smith said. "They graciously accepted our request to provide full service banking to support and strengthen the already strong bond between our two nations."

The National Bank of Kuwait is the largest bank in Kuwait and one of the leading banks in the Middle East.

"It is the delivery issue," Al Bahar said. "We believe in relationship banking."

Col. John Alexander, the ASG-Kuwait commander expressed his appreciation for the cooperation between the state of Kuwait and the United States.

"Since before the Gulf War and the occupation, and certainly afterwards, the relationship between the United States, the U.S. Army and state of Kuwait has continued to grow," Alexander said. "It has been one of mutual respect, mutual benefit and the security interest that both of us realize as a result of it has been very remarkable."

The agreement has not borne fruit yet, but the seeds have been planted. **A**



New commanding officer takes the helm at EMF – Kuwait

Story by
Navy Lt. Phillip Boyer
EMF – Kuwait Public Affairs

Navy Capt. Kevin D. Moore passed the reins of both the Medical Task Force – Kuwait and the Expeditionary Medical Facility – Kuwait to Navy Capt. Elaine C. Wagner at a change of command ceremony held at a chapel on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, April 17.

Moore, who held the dual-post command for the last year has accomplished much during his time in Kuwait. Under his leadership, the Camp Arifjan hospital moved from tents into a fixed facility. The move was a key component of EMF – Kuwait’s mission to provide combat force health sustainment. He has been tapped to command Naval Hospital Yokosuka in Japan.

Many of Moore’s colleagues said they have been impressed with his dedication to building cooperative relationships between the other services.

“He’s leaving me in a great position to continue the mission here,” Wagner said. “For me, the greatest things Captain Moore has achieved are the inroads and connections he’s made with our Army teammates.”

Wagner was not alone in her regard for her predecessor.

“Every time I had an issue [Moore] made me feel like I was his number one priority,” said Air Force Col. Thomas Palmer, 386th Expeditionary Medical Group commander.

Army and Air Force leaders in the Kuwait area all concur with Wagner’s assessment of the outgoing commanding officer’s fine reputation.

“Speaking on a personal level, I’ll miss [Moore’s] ability to keep his sense of humor while meeting the challenges that came his way,” said Brig. Gen. Luis R. Visot, the deputy commanding general of operations for the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater). “From a professional standpoint,



Photo by Seaman Marcus Suarez

Departing commanding officer, Capt. Kevin D. Moore, passes command of the Medical Task Force – Kuwait and the Expeditionary Medical Facility – Kuwait to the new commanding officer, Capt. Elaine C. Wagner, at the change of command ceremony at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, April 17.

I’ll miss a shipmate who knows what our sons and daughters need in the way of healthcare in the field. The gentle manner in which he approached such a difficult mission was commendable.”

Wagner, the incoming commanding officer, is no stranger to leading a healthcare organization. She has previously held the positions of executive officer at Naval Hospital Jacksonville, Fla., and as commanding officer at Naval Hospital Beaufort, S.C.

Those familiar with her said she is the perfect person to pick up where Moore left off. Navy Capt. Reginald McNeil, deputy force surgeon for Navy Central Command said, “[Wagner] brings a high level of compassion, and steadfast leadership to the job ...

She really knows how to get people to work together.”

Moore said his replacement has qualities that will help her out at her new post.

“I think her strongest qualities are her humility and willingness to learn about her new operating environment – she really takes the time to assess the situation before acting,” Moore said.

Navy Capt. Robin Wilkening, the Expeditionary Medical Facility – Kuwait executive officer, looked forward to working with her new boss.

“I can already see she incorporates visionary leadership and collaborative teambuilding in her approach to command,” Wilkening said. “I look forward to working with her.” 

Countries united in the name of medicine

Story and photo by
Marine Sgt. Sara A. Carter
USARCENT Public Affairs

MANAMA, Kingdom of Bahrain

– Military officers from Europe and countries in the U.S. Central Command area of operations gathered to participate in the first International Military Medical Symposium, themed “Military Medical Care in Conflict and Peace,” March 22 – 24 in Bahrain.

Co-hosted by the Bahrain Defense Force and U.S. Army Central, the objective of the IMMS was to share knowledge and explore opportunities for mutual learning, cooperation and support in the medical care of U.S. servicemembers and others as the mission demands.

“We should always be prepared,” said Lt. Gen. (Dr.) Mohammed Bin Abdulla Al-Khalifa, minister of state for Defense Affairs, Bahrain. “We live in a world where we need strong corporation between all nationalities. Today’s challenges can not be held by one country. With advance communication we can easily come together as a global village.”

The symposium, originally de-

signed as a field grade officer to colonel-level event, attracted nine general officers, in addition to the participation of the Bahraini state minister of defense.

Kuwait, Egypt, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Jordan, Bahrain and Iraq were some of the countries who attended the event. European countries, all member states of the International Committee of Military Medicine, which attended the event were France, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Germany.

“Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, Jordan, Egypt and others have all taken excellent care of U.S. servicemembers,” said Brig. Gen. James Hodge, USARCENT Medical Support and Logistics commander, during his speech at the opening ceremony. “Additionally several European nations routinely provide outstanding medical care for U.S. servicemembers when they fall ill. We sincerely thank you for all the wonderful care you have provided U.S. military personnel.”

While numerous countries attended the symposium only a couple gave presentations. The presenting countries were Bahrain, Jordan, Egypt, the United States, France and Switzer-

land as well as representatives of the International Committee of Military Medicine, of which the United States is a founding country.

Some of the topics discussed were medical operations in recent conflicts, Egypt’s hospital operation in Afghanistan, the roles and objectives of the ICMM, Jordan’s hospital operation in Iraq and medical preparation of military personnel before deployment in peace support operations.

“Sharing information and determining international standards for military medical operations through professional associations and relationships is key to sustaining our service members, caring for wounded on the battlefield and successfully accomplishing humanitarian missions,” said Col. Jonathan C. Fruendt, USARCENT command surgeon. “We hope that their participation will continue and grow.”

“USARCENT has had the opportunity to work with and in many instances rely upon the excellent medical care of our partners and hosts. Conferences like this one in Bahrain will certainly deepen and strengthen that logical inter-dependence,” Fruendt said. 



Nations come together for Land Forces

Story and photos by
Sgt. Beth Lake
USARCENT Public Affairs

In his opening address at the Land Forces Symposium in Atlanta, Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., U.S. Army Chief of Staff, stated the next several decades will be a time of persistent conflict. In order to combat this, countries must come together in dialogue and mutual understanding.

The symposium was co-hosted by Casey and Lt. Gen. James J. Lovelace, U.S. Army Central commander. Lovelace highlighted the need for a symposium such as this to bring senior land forces commanders together.

“Working together and sharing ideas in forums like this makes all of us stronger, more capable, and inclined

towards an even greater degree of cooperative effort in the future, cooperative effort that will give our enemies pause to think before they threaten,” Lovelace said.

Land forces commanders or their representatives in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility came together for this reason at the third annual Land Forces Symposium April 14 – 17.

This year, the symposium’s theme, “Adaptability of Land Forces to 21st Century Security Challenges,” was developed by representatives from 12 of the countries who attended a concept development conference in October.

The security challenges that leaders focused on stemmed from the need to adapt to the changing political, economic and social climate of the world.

“Globalization is already having positive and negative impacts around the globe,” Casey said. “In some countries, globalization can bring prosperity and even within those countries, the wealth that is coming from globalization may be unevenly distributed causing a have and have-not culture that can be exploited by extremists groups.”

As a result of the symposium, leaders will take away ideas and concepts that will help them in the region, whether it is in deterring aggression, deterring threats, supporting humanitarian or disaster assistance operations or dealing with transnational challenges, said Col. Dave Huggins, U.S. Army Central chief of civil and military affairs and political advisor to the USARCENT commanding general.



Col. Mohammad Al Obaid, deputy commander of Kuwait’s 15th Brigade, Brig. Gen. Nabil Nasr, Lebanese military attache to the U.S. Embassy, and Brig. Gen. Hameed Abdul Karim al-Hejri, deputy commander, Qatar Land Forces discuss topics at this year’s Land Forces Symposium, which was held April 14 – 17, at Stone Mountain, Ga. The theme of the symposium, Adaptability of Land Forces to 21st Century Security Challenges, focuses on strengthening joint and multinational capabilities through regional and sub-regional cooperation.

es Symposium

Former commander of U.S. Central Command Gen. (Ret.) John Abizaid spoke of the probability for the increase in transnational threats and humanitarian and disaster assistance operations as he gave the keynote address.

In order to address these issues, he emphasized how crucial it is for countries to come together in tackling mutual concerns. He also emphasized the importance of countries training together.

“We have had good interoperability with many of our training operations in the past, but it is my opinion that we must increase our ability to operate together as we look into the 21st century in order to be more effective against the anticipated threats,” Abizaid said.

He added there are four major issues in the region. First is the rise of extremist individuals groups and organizations like Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. The rise of aggressive Iranian power is destabilizing and impacts on peace efforts in the region. The Israeli-Palestinian problem is divisive and is used by extremists to justify their causes and is a distraction from other problems in the region. Lastly, the distorted balance in global energy supplies draws the attention of many nations who are active in the region trying to protect their energy supplies.

Casey talked of the need for force transformation in order to meet the changing face of warfare today.

“We don’t expect the opposition to come at us at our strength,” Casey said. “It will come at us using asymmetric techniques as any smart enemy would. So, even when we think about what we call conventional ground combat, we will look a lot different than we thought conventional combat would look like in the 21st century.”

Gen. Bismillah Khan, chief of general staff for the Afghan National Army, spoke on these threats by describing the challenges the world and his country deal with in the 21st



A representative from a coalition partner listens in on a discussion during the Land Forces Symposium at Stone Mountain, Ga. April 14 – 17.

century.

“The type of threats that the world and of course my country are dealing with are the terrorism threat, organized crime, and drug trafficking,” said Khan. “Of course, in order to struggle with such a threat, it requires collective coordination in order to overcome these challenges.

“The Land Forces Symposium was fortunately a path, a means to coordinate efforts in order to achieve collective measures and collective solutions,” Khan said.

The symposium provided a venue for dialogue and conversation on these important issues. Delegates left with

the knowledge gained from each other and also the idea and message that strength in collective action is vital to shaping the current and future environment for success in the 21st century.

“This symposium was a great opportunity to come to the U.S.,” said Brig. Gen. Ali bin Rashid al-Khalifa, commander of Bahraini Royal Armed Forces. “It was a great opportunity to listen to General Abizaid and General Casey. We look forward to the next symposium and the opportunity to continue to discuss important points.”

Previous Land Forces Symposiums have been held in Atlanta, Ga., in 2006 and last year in Islamabad, Pakistan. 



Representatives from all over the U.S. Army Central area of operations attended a menu board to discuss issues that relate to the Army's foodservice.

What's on the menu?

Story and photos by
Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer
Desert Voice staff writer

Military and civilian representatives from all over the U.S. Army Central area of operations held a Food Service Management Board April 9 at the Agility warehouse in Kuwait City, Kuwait.

The food service representatives discussed various topics that apply to deployed troops and the meals they receive at dining facilities in theater.

"The purpose of the menu board is to find out if there are any problems with the food troops are receiving and if there are any new meals that they can put in the catalogue," said Sgt. 1st Class Thurman Presley, the theater food service supervisor for USARCENT G4.

One of the main issues discussed was how to properly feed detainees and local nationals. The detainees in Iraq and the local nationals who receive hospital care lack ethnic meals that match their usual diet, said Chief

Warrant Officer Jacob Dingle, the command food advisor for USARCENT G4.

Some of the foods detainees desire include plain yogurt, pita bread, feta cheese, dates, and figs. Some detain-

ees have resorted to making their own yogurt in their holding cells.

Another issue that was brought up is the cost of purchasing individual juices and sports drinks. A solution to this problem brought up at the meeting



Representatives sample various new food service products which could potentially be added to military dining facilities in theater.



Many different vendors attended the menu board to present their products for the representatives to taste test during the menu board held April 9 at the Agility warehouse in Kuwait City, Kuwait.

was switching to CO2 machines to dispense the juices and sports drinks to troops, Presley said. This plan, which is in the process of being implemented throughout theater, is projected to save the U.S. military \$43 million.

Also among the topics discussed were the meals troops are served during holidays. Possible changes to the menu were exchanged during the meeting so as to make the meals more in line with traditional holiday meals.

After the initial meeting was concluded and all issues were addressed, those attending the menu

board had the opportunity to taste test potential additions to the dining facility menu. Self heating coffees, energy drinks and many other products were tested and scored on taste and quality.

“The U.S. Army has come a long way from how we fed our Soldiers in the past and nowadays we’re feeding coalition forces, civilians, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen,” said Maj. John W. Quinene, US-ARCENT G4 theater food service officer. “That old adage holds true today, ‘An Army travels on its stomach.’” 



A vendor prepares fajitas for the food service representatives during the menu board held April 9 at the Agility warehouse in Kuwait City.

Giving hope to those with little

Story and photo by
Spc. Wes Landrum
Desert Voice staff writer

Members of the 160th Signal Brigade have started a drive designed to help the less fortunate here in Kuwait.

Started on April 1, Operation Hope targets needy third-country nationals and provides them with items such as blankets, socks and food.

Chaplain (Maj.) Mark E. Thompson, 160th Signal Brigade chaplain, said Operation Hope reaches out to those less fortunate individuals and helps provide them basic living necessities.

“We see people in need every day and I believe that most people would like to help others. This program is simply providing the opportunity and the mechanism to make that happen,” Thompson said.

Many units have participated in outreach programs such as Operation Hope before but this is the first time that a drive has included all of the camps, civilians and all branches of service in one consolidated effort, Thompson said.

The drive, he said, is in need of perishable items to include clothing, shoes and various hygiene items such as shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes and soap.

Non-perishable are also welcomed. They include tea bags, individually wrapped hard candy, crackers, biscuits, cookies and bags of sugar.

Thompson said the collection point is the 160th Signal Bde. headquarters building located behind the Area Support Group – Kuwait headquarters building.

“You will see the signs on the doors for drop off. We will be accepting

items through the end of the month,” Thompson said. “If someone wishes to donate money, please make all checks payable to St. Paul’s Episcopal Church – Kuwait.”

Thompson said the drive’s goal is simple – provide an opportunity for servicemembers on post to give. He said it’s a win-win situation and so far, the response has been incredible.

“We already have five large bins and are taking more every day,” Thompson said. “That does not include the other camps or the checks that have been sent to the program.”

Distribution of the items is set for the first week in May. ^A

Editor’s note: For more information on Operation Hope, contact the 160th Signal Brigade Unit Ministry team - Master Sgt. Maggie Hammonds at 720-6384 (cell) or Sgt. John Bennett at 430-2246 or 720-6367 (cell).

Put your extra items to good use, donate them to the 160th Signal Brigade. The brigade is teaming up with a local church for Operation Hope, a drive designed to give needy families items to help them survive.





MRAPs – get ‘em while they’re hot

Story and photos by
Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer
Desert Voice staff writer

At the MRAP Deprocessing Facility in Kuwait City, Kuwait, a sign reads “Your work is directly supporting our troops.”

The workers at the MDF do just that, by assembling Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles and sending them downrange.

“Every MRAP that gets sent to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan goes through this facility for final checks and maintenance,” said Lt. Col. Coll Haddon, with the Joint Program Office MRAP.

MRAPs are originally constructed by various contractors in one of two places depending on their final destination, said Haddon.

MRAPs constructed in Charleston, S.C., are made for use in Iraq and come fully constructed with all the sensitive equipment already installed. These vehicles make the trip by sea

to Kuwait where the personnel at the MDF perform all the final maintenance and logistical processes necessary to make sure the vehicle is safe, up to standards, and ready for use in a combat zone, said Lt. Col. Mark S. Kelley, the 401st Army Field Support Brigade S2/3 officer in charge.

The MRAPs needed for operations in Afghanistan are constructed in South Africa. However those constructed there are devoid of the sensitive equipment and communications devices troops need to operate in a deployed environment. All the instruments these vehicles lack are installed and checked at the MDF before they are ready to ship to Afghanistan, said Kelley.

Though MRAPs come in many different variations due to the myriad of different contractors who produce

the vehicles, there are ultimately two categories of MRAPs.

Category 1 Mine Resistant Utility Vehicles are smaller, lighter and designed for urban operations. These vehicles can replace a HMMWV in most respects.

Category 2 Joint Explosive Ordnance Disposal Rapid Response Vehicles can be used in many different mission types such as convoy lead, troop transport, EOD missions or combat engineering. These types of MRAPs can also be used as heavily armored ambulances.

MRAPs of every type and use save lives by protecting troops from the leading killer of deployed servicemembers. IEDs are responsible for about 60 percent of deaths in Iraq and guarding against this threat is one of the military’s top priorities. **A**

USARCENT troops win safety award

Story courtesy of
USARCENT Safety Office

Each year, the chief of staff of the Army recognizes individuals who have contributed the most to Army safety and units with the best safety programs.

This year, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., recognized five organizations and four individuals in this extremely competitive selection.

This week, two U.S. Army Central Safety Officers and one USARCENT



**Chief Warrant Officer
John Green**

unit were announced as winners for the 2007 CSA Safety Awards. Congratulations to Chief Warrant Officer John Green, safety officer for the USARCENT Aviation Task Force, 1st Battalion, 111th Aviation Regiment. Green's command

recently returned to Florida after a year-long deployment. The aviation battalion completed its tour with zero fatalities, and zero Class A, B or C accidents. Green's insight and leadership was critical to achieving this feat. During deployment, USARCENT's TF Aviation flew more than 4,000 sorties, logging nearly 11,000 flight hours. TF Aviation also drove in excess of 40,000 ground miles without a single recordable incident.

This year's Chief of Staff of the Army Exceptional Organization Safety Award (Garrison Level) is Area Support Group – Qatar, commanded by Col. David Cotter. It was rewarded for its outstanding performance in reducing preventable accidents and injuries. ASG – Qatar's success can be largely attributed to the efforts of its safety manager Robert East who was also recognized with the Chief of Staff of the Army Civilian Contractor Individual Award for Excellence in Safety. East has managed a detailed safety program which encompasses a diverse range of missions and activities.

Each year, ASG – Qatar plays host to thousands of Soldiers on Rest and Recuperation leave at Camp As Sayliyah. Soldiers come from around

the entire Central Command area of responsibility to have some fun and blow off a little steam. ASG – Qatar takes exceptional care of these Soldiers and ensures that they return to their units refreshed and in good health.

With the assistance of his safety office staff, Cotter incorporates composite risk management into all ASG – Qatar activities and missions, to ensure the preservation of his force. All of these elements have come together in Qatar to accomplish a 20 percent annual reduction in accidents, with zero Class A and B accidents.

US-ARCENT continues to set the bar, year after year, for Army-level safety awards.

For information on how you and your organization can contribute to this success, contact the USARCENT Safety Office at 430-5035 or e-mail safety@arcent.army.mil. 



Robert East

Prevent Sexual Assault: *Reporting Options* *April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month*

The Department of Defense is committed to providing comprehensive response and care to victims of sexual assault. DoD policy provides two reporting options to military victims: restricted reporting and unrestricted reporting. Victims can receive support, medical care, counseling and a sexual assault forensic examination regardless of which option is chosen.

Restricted reporting provides a victim the opportunity to confidentially disclose a sexual assault to specified individuals, receive medical treatment, and use support services without triggering the investigative process. When a restricted report is made through proper channels, a victim's identity is not released to command officials. The installation sexual assault response coordinator, victim advocates, healthcare providers, and chaplains may receive a restricted report. This option gives victims additional time to weigh their options and to seek guidance about whether or not to participate in a criminal investigation.

An unrestricted report initiates an official investigation of a sexual assault using standard reporting channels. Victims can receive the same medical care and resources available in the

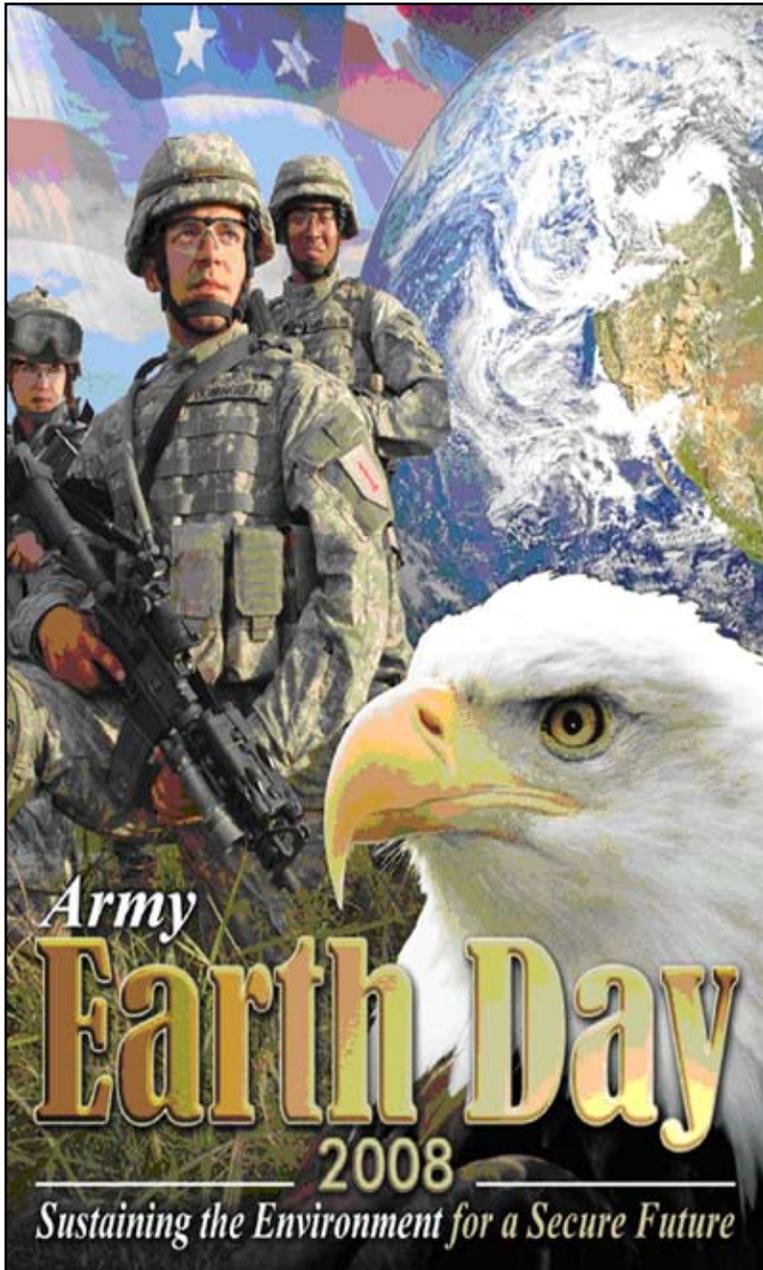
restricted option, but this option immediately alerts law enforcement and initiates the criminal investigative process. Under this option, a victim's commander is notified. SARCs and VAs advise victims on the different reporting options available, explain the benefits and limitations of each, and document the reporting option selected.

A victim must acknowledge his or her reporting preference on a special form, provided by a SARC or VA. Please note that while a restricted report can be changed to an unrestricted report, one cannot change preference selection from an unrestricted report to restricted because the investigative process has already begun.

Both reporting options help DoD mobilize resources to assist the victim and allow commanders to develop a better understanding of and response to sexual assault occurring in their command.

Additional information on sexual assault and reporting options is available from your installation SARC.

Prevent Sexual Assault! Ask! Act! Intervene!



Just One Question ...

“How does sexual assault affect unit readiness?”



“It destroys the cohesion and trust of the Soldiers in the organization.”

Capt. Michael Yourko
1st TSC G-3
Force management officer
Conway, S.C.



“It kills morale. It puts a lot of stress on the individuals around you and the unit.”

Petty Officer 2nd Class Luis Miranda
TSCS unit
Medic
Liberty, S.C.



“Out here, it’s huge. It’s nice to let people know that there are support channels if you are assaulted so you don’t get depressed.”

Sgt. Brandy Burke
109th Transportation Co.
Guntruck escort
Hope, Ind.



“You have to know the boundaries that you are limited to. In an environment such as this, you have to know what you can and can’t do.”

Spc. Tammie Johns
USARCENT Staff Judge Advocate
Paralegal
Opp, Ala.



“It’s a major impact if it’s a problem. If there’s a problem, we need the chain of command to know about it.”

Master Chief Richard Behrens
22nd Naval Construction Regiment
Equipment officer
Fort Worth, Texas

Why I serve: Capt. Emily Sandvig 14th Transportation Company Battle captain



The Tempe, Ariz., native explains why she chose to join the military.

“The opportunities afforded me. Things like travel, seeing places I would not normally be able to see.”

What's happening around USARCENT ...

Helping out



Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Scott Cohen

Sgt. Katherine Olivarez, 354th Civil Affairs Brigade Special Functioning Team, Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa, a Reserve Soldier from Dodge City, Kan., takes vital signs and performs a basic examination of a Djiboutian child. Military doctors and medics work with local Djiboutian healthcare officials to provide basic medical and dental care. The two-day Medical Civil Action Project treated more than 560 patients. Servicemembers from CJTF-HOA, 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit and USS Tarawa provided medical and dental care for villagers of Goubetto, Djibouti, during the MEDCAP.



Photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class John Hulle

Personnel assigned to Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa socialize with villagers after a dedication ceremony for a meat processing facility in Obock, Djibouti, April 14. Seabees from NMCB 74 finished the facility this month to improve the sanitary conditions and strengthen bonds between the U.S. and Djibouti.

Lowering the boom



Photo by Pfc. Christopher T. Grammer

155 mm artillery rounds await to be fired downrange at a test-firing range at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, April 17. Redlegs from the 1st Armor Division conducted a Paladin live-fire exercise in preparation of a deployment to Iraq. For the full story, check out next week's issue of the Desert Voice.

The Camp Arifjan Holocaust Exhibit

30 April 2008 & 1 May 2008
1000hrs-1800hrs
Classroom 44, Zone 1 PX Building