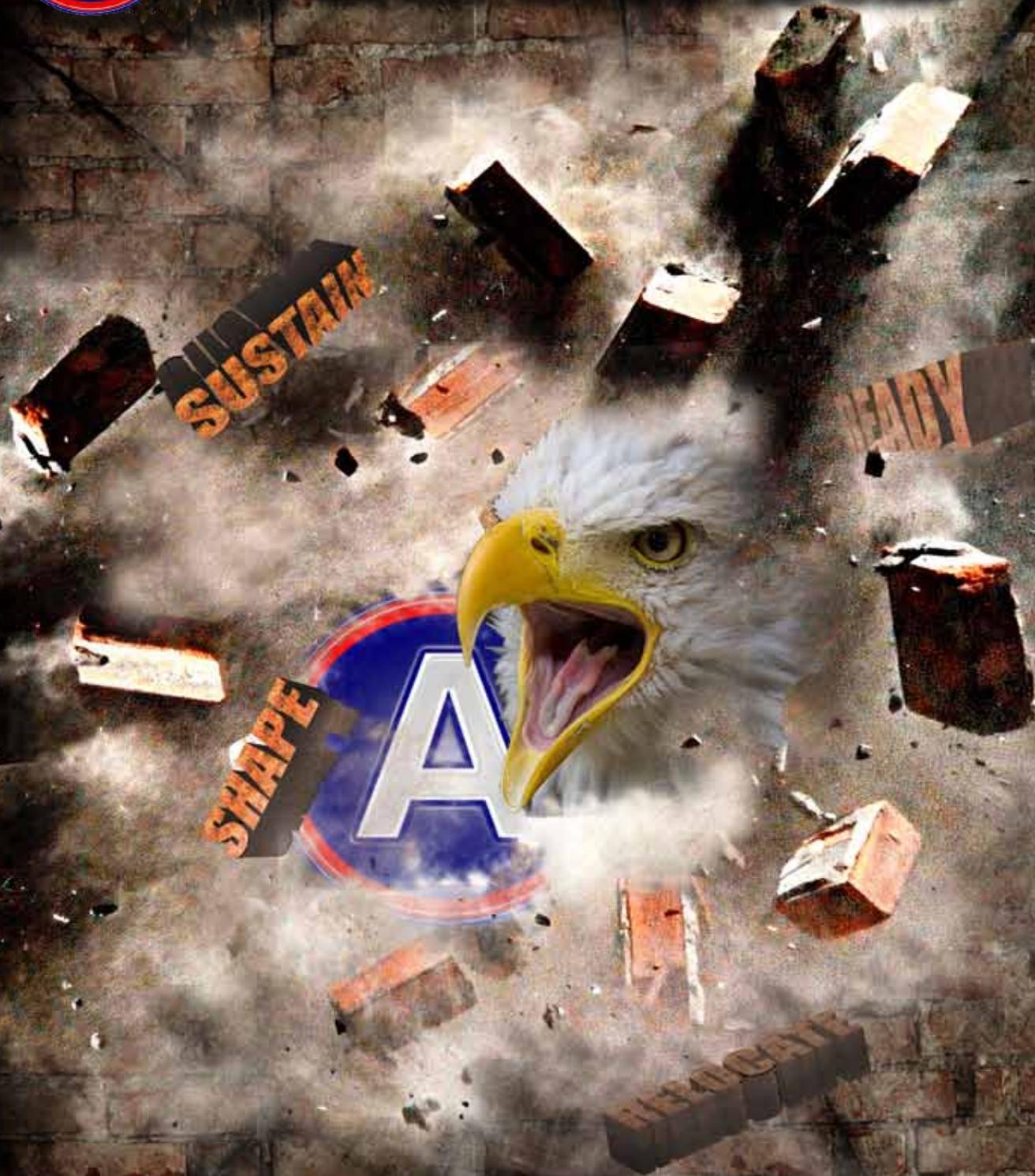




The Desert Voice

Third Army/United States Army Central
"Ready Tonight ... Sustain The Fight ... Shape The Future"

January 6, 2010



2009-2010

DV

Table of Contents

- Page 5
Third Army's new road
- Page 6
Stultz hosts town hall
- Page 7
Amos visits Kuwait
- Page 8
Bright Star
- Page 21
Ammo redistribution
- Page 22
Bastion's big job
- Page 28
Container management
- Page 30
Kuwait's first live fire



On the cover

Photo illustration by Sgt. Daniel Lucas

Contact us

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


**COMMANDING GENERAL
 THIRD ARMY
 UNITED STATES ARMY CENTRAL
 CAMP ARIFJAN, KUWAIT
 APO AE 09306**

January 1, 2009

To the Third Army/USARCENT Team,

Thank you for your hard work in 2009. Together, we have sustained US operations in the Central Command Area of Responsibility by ensuring the steady flow of equipment and troops out of Iraq in accordance with the President's orders. The Responsible Retrograde and Redeployment Rehearsal we hosted at Camp Arifjan in December drew leaders from around the theater, showing everyone the kind of synchronization, energy, and professionalism the Third Army/USARCENT Team brings to the table.

As we begin the year 2010, we must maintain our common focus on the *Mission*, which continues to evolve as the theater changes. Our "overarching goal," in the words of President Obama, is "to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan." Therefore, in addition to our excellent work with the Responsible Drawdown in Iraq, we must continue to increase US capabilities in Afghanistan as we build host-nation capacities for self-governance, security and economic development. In short, it is going to be another busy year, full of extremely important work. We must move as quickly and responsibly as we can.

Between now and June 2010, we are going to see a significant increase in the amount of equipment coming out of Iraq. Today's flow of approximately 100 trucks per day across Iraq's borders will increase dramatically this coming spring and summer. We will reduce rolling stock in Iraq by two-thirds and the number of troops by more than half before the summer of 2010 is over. Concurrently, we are going to assist in the build-up in Afghanistan of 30,000 additional troops and 5,000 pieces of rolling stock. In terms of living space alone, we will nearly have to quadruple tent capacity in Afghanistan by mid-year to sustain the increased force size there.

As the Army Service Component Command in the decisive theater of operations, we are leading from the front: MG Vanjuel and a team of subject-matter experts have established the ARCENT Coordination and Support Element in Afghanistan (ASCE-A) to validate the Army's needs and to ensure that they are met in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. To emphasize the magnitude of our mission, we will welcome a second Deputy Commanding General in January: MG Gregg Martes. Third Army/USARCENT continues to build its reputation as a "can-do" command that is ready to Deploy, Tonight, Sustain the Fight, and Shape the Future through *Teamwork*.

As we think our way through the challenges of a concurrent build-up and drawdown in two theaters at war, remember that *People* are our most valuable resource. We must be sure to prepare our Soldiers and Civilians for what they must do, and we must take care of you. Teammates to ensure another successful year. Our efforts in 2010 will clearly define what future generations will come to know as "setting the theater." We will organize and administer concurrent drawdown and build-up efforts; we will train, equip, and supply US Forces in Afghanistan (USFOR-A); we will build and maintain facilities; and we will service, maintain, refurbish, and move critical pieces of equipment—not just for the use of units in combat, but for CONUS forces that are resetting and preparing for future operations.

During this period of increased operational tempo in the USCENCOM Area of Responsibility you should know that overall, the Army is in much better shape to handle current requirements. Since 2004, we have grown the Army by 70,000 troops—40,000 of which have been added to our rolls in the past two years. Recruitment is strong and critical Military Occupational Specialties are being filled to meet our needs. General Casey's goal of reaching a 1:2 dwell ratio for the Active Component and a 1:4 dwell ratio for the Reserve Component by 2012 is on target. We will be able to meet our needs without extending the 12-month deployment window or continuing Stop-Loss.

We should be proud that in 2009 we trained and conducted operations in 18 of US Central Command's 20 countries. We have sustained combat forces, prepared ourselves to be able to deploy and fight on short notice, and we have increased our partner nations' capacities. We have made many new friends and no new enemies. We have furthered the causes of peace and stability in the region. You, the people of the Third Army/USARCENT Team, have been the reason for our success. 2010 will bring us challenges and we will continue our winning tradition by maintaining our focus on the *Mission*, by taking care of our *Soldiers* and their *Families*, and by employing the *Teamwork* for which we are known. Thank you for your service and for your important contribution to the Team effort.

*Stay focused,
Stay Safe!*

Patton's Own!

William G. Webster
Lieutenant General, US Army
Commanding General

DV

The
Desert
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Safety first when driving a MRAP

Article by
Master Sgt. Angela Clemente
Third Army

The MRAP has been hailed a great success and gets high marks from commanders for protecting U.S. personnel from enemy attacks. The trucks have tall, heavy, raised chassis and V-shaped hulls. The high-rise design diverts the impact of an underbelly blast out and away from the crew inside.

The substantial weight minimizes the vehicle's risk of being hurled into the air by an explosion. And, despite their bulk, the MRAPs have power steering, air brakes and quick acceleration. These features can fool drivers into thinking they are handling a bigger version of the smaller, more agile humvee.

These towering trucks that give the U.S. troops their best protection against roadside bombs and bullets also make them vulnerable to routine hazards like sharp turns, rutted roads and rickety bridges.

Because of its unique driving and handling characteristics, MRAP driver training will continue in importance and must adapt to developing enemy tactics. The more stick time drivers are afforded, the more proficiency and skill they will gain operating it.



A Caiman-TVS Plus is serviced at the MRAP sustainment facility. (Photo by Sgt. David Nunn)

Some of the following controls have been put in place for MRAP operations:

- Rehearse and execute rollover drills in accordance with MRAP GTA 07-09-001.
- Conduct Crew coordination training.
- Route recons to ensure weight, height, and width clearance (power lines, trees, obstacles, waterways, etc.).
- Alert entire crew when operating near canals and waterways.
- Use ground guides when necessary and feasible.
- Plan for alternate lighting in the event of loss of power during night or limited visibility.
- Enforce seat belt use. Not only do they prevent injuries but they also aid in maintaining situational awareness in the first seconds after an accident or IED attack.
- Use caution when opening and closing doors, ramps, and hoods.
- Maintain three-points of contact when maneuvering in or out of vehicle. **A**

Melville receives Safety Award



Col. John G. Melville received the Composite Risk Safety Award from Brig. Gen. William Wolf, commanding general United States Army Combat Readiness Center and director of Army Safety, for exemplary leadership and making a significant contribution to Army readiness through composite risk management, Dec. 9, 2009. (Photo by Capt. Amabilia Hogg)



Ready Tonight
Sustain the Fight
Shape the Future

Third Army/U.S. Army Central

Third Army's Campaign plan

In this special edition of the Desert Voice, we look at Third Army's four lines of effort: Ready Tonight, Sustain the Fight, Shape the Future, Strategic Relocation.

Each unit and operation highlighted in this issue exemplifies an aspect of these points and demonstrates Third Army's success with the drawdown of Iraq and other sustainment operations in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility.

These points are underscored by three basic ideas, the mission, people and teamwork.

The **Mission**. This is why we have an Army. Our team must accomplish the missions we are given by CENTCOM and U.S. Army, as well as answer the legal requirements of forces currently committed in theater.

People are the Third Army's heart and soul. Preparing our people for what they have to do is essential for mission accomplishment.

We must ensure functional operations through **Teamwork**, collaboration and fusion on a daily basis through effective use of our staff processes.



Ready Tonight means we are an expeditionary headquarters, mission focused, CFLCC team, combat-ready to handle tasks across a full spectrum of operations for limited duration missions.

- Lucky Warrior
- Lucky Strike
- Bright Star



Sustain the Fight refers to actions of Third Army and subordinate organizations execute to provide logistics and personnel support for U.S. and coalition operations in theater.

- Responsible Drawdown
- Retrograde



Shape the Future involves what we do for theater security cooperation and military to military activities, which include:

- Command Engagements
- Theater Security Cooperation
- Symposiums/Seminars



Strategic Relocation: in compliance with Base Realignment and Closure Act, the move to Shaw Air Force base is critical for Third Army.

Kuwait opens new road



Third Army Commanding General, Lt. Gen. William G. Webster, cuts the tape while hosts, Col. Hamed Al Sharhan (left), and Maj. Gen. Mustafa Al-Zaabi, deputy undersecretary for operations, Kuwait Ministry of Interior, during the inauguration of a new road funded by the Kuwait government in support of Third Army, Dec. 30. The new road reduces the effect of military vehicle movements on civilian traffic around Kuwait City, and it provides convoys with enhanced safety and security. The project was led by retired Kuwait Lt. Gen. Mohammad Abdelaziz Al-Badr, head of Kuwait's Council of Ministers. (Photo by Cpl. Alex Godinez, Third Army Public Affairs)

Article by
Spc. Jason Adolphson
1st Theater Sustainment Command

U.S. and Kuwait officials met for a ribbon cutting ceremony at a large stretch of road built by Kuwait to create a safer convoy route for U.S. servicemembers stationed in Kuwait, Dec. 30.

"This is not only a ribbon and a piece of asphalt and stone," said Brig. Gen. Mark MacCarley, the deputy commander 1st Theater Sustainment Command. "It's a symbol of friendship between the U.S. and Kuwait. This is good business for all to help traffic congestion."

Prior to the ceremony, U.S. and Kuwait leaders ate breakfast together and toured a new industrial water treatment facility for Kuwait. U.S. Soldiers also set up a display of military vehicles that will be used on the new road.

"I showed one guy my [humvee] and then he showed me

his uparmored Mercedes Benz," said Spc. Mark Kerr, from 110th Transportation Company. "It was pretty cool."

MacCarley spoke about the safety factors on a day prior to the ceremony.

"The problem we have using the civilian roads is these trucks and supporting vehicles are so wide they cause and create a safety hazard for everybody on the road," MacCarley said.

Retired Kuwait Lt. Gen. Mohammed al-Badr corresponded by saying, "We need to help you be safe on the road. This is the main thing the [U.S.] military wants from their friend – the military in Kuwait – and we are doing the best to help you on that side."

The new convoy route is made up of a combination of previously unpaved roads in some of the U.S. military's supply route. [A](#)

Third Army hosts Stultz

Lt. Gen. Stultz talks with Reserve Soldiers during town hall

Article and photo by
Spc. Monte Swift
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

Army Reserve Soldiers serving under Third Army had the opportunity to voice their concerns during a town hall meeting hosted by Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, commanding general of the Army Reserves, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 26.

Stultz covered issues regarding promotions, re-enlistments, military schooling opportunities, annual training, civilian job placement opportunities and the process of transforming the Army Reserves from a strategic to an operational force.

"The only way I can know what's going on is if I get out on the ground with the Soldiers," said Stultz. "We have a lot of Soldiers who are proud of what they are doing. They are professional, dedicated and want to stick with it."

Stultz listened to Soldiers as they asked questions about promotions, switching of commands, availability

issues for schools and changing from Army Reserve to active duty.

"What I want Soldiers to take away from this is to know that I am listening to them and I have the same concerns they do," said Stultz. "When I leave a town hall meeting, I have so many new ideas to present in Washington, and I learn something new as well."

As the Year of the Noncommissioned Officer comes to a close, Stultz pointed out the added importance that NCOs have in mentoring and shaping lower-enlisted Army Reserve Soldiers and even officers.

"What distinguishes our army from every other Army in the world is our NCO Corps," said Stultz. "To see them operate in the wartime environment, stepping up and taking responsibility and accountability, they really are the backbone of the Army. They are not only mentoring our young enlisted, they are shaping and mentoring some of our young officers for the future."

Following the meeting, Stultz had the honor of personally re-enlisting

seven Army Reserve Soldiers and presenting six others with coins for outstanding service.

"It's awe inspiring to me that everywhere I go, Soldiers that are sacrificing time away from their families and jobs this holiday season are stepping forward, raising their hand and saying 'I want to re-enlist,'" said Stultz. "These men and women in uniform are a national treasure. The fact they know the sacrifices and the risks and they are still willing to say 'count me in' is awe inspiring."

With the Army Reserve including approximately 60 percent of the Army's medical force, 40 percent of its logistical support and 90 percent of its civil affairs, it fulfills a vital role in Third Army mission's success.

"The professionalism and the civilian skills that Reserve Soldiers [bring to the fight] are the added values," said Stultz. "All the skill sets Reserve Soldiers maintain at such a high level are what help enable Third Army to do its mission." **A**



Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, commanding general of the Army Reserves, speaks to Army Reserve Soldiers supporting Third Army at a town hall meeting at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 26. The meeting gave Soldiers the opportunity to bring up issues regarding the reserves. "What I want Soldiers to take away from this is to know that I am listening to them and I have the same concerns they do," said Stultz. Army Reserve Soldiers play a critical role in sustainment operations supporting multiple theaters of operations.

Amos views progress of drawdown

Article and photo by
Spc. Monte Swift
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. James F. Amos, toured Kuwait to observe the joint Army and Marine progress of the responsible drawdown of equipment in Iraq, Dec. 22.

While in country, Amos had the opportunity to visit Camp Patriot, and meet with Marines of the Marine Corp Logistics Command who are responsible for receiving equipment from the drawdown and ensuring it makes it out of the country.

“I wanted to get a sense of the effort going into the management of equipment coming out of Iraq and going to the United States,” said Amos.

Amos had the opportunity to meet with Lt. Gen. William G. Webster, commanding general for Third Army, upon his arrival in Kuwait. The generals, along with Congressman Darrell Issa, 49th Congressional District, who was also visiting, discussed the successes and efforts in supporting a responsible drawdown of equipment for Marines and Army alike.

“We could not do this without the brother and sisterhood with the Army,” said Amos. “The relationship we have is

strong and the support we have from them is critical. We couldn’t get the supplies and vehicles down from Iraq without their support.”

A tour of the new ‘Mobile Trauma Bay’ allowed Amos to see new life-saving equipment for the battlefield.

The MTB, a conex-sized hospital made to handle serious combat injuries and surgeries, has already saved many Marines and Soldiers on the battlefield.

Stepping up operations in theater continues to be a primary focus for the Marines and the Army as they overcome new challenges in completing the mission.

“Third Army will end up refocusing the effort they have been providing for us in Iraq into other areas of operation,” said Amos. “I think this relationship will continue to evolve and just gets better and better.”

Before leaving Kuwait, Amos took the opportunity to show his appreciation and pride for the service the Marines have provided through multiple deployments and theaters of operations.

“All I can say is that I am proud of them,” said Amos. “Every one of them volunteered, they didn’t have to sign up. We will be here at Christmas and New Years and I just want to wish them a merry Christmas and a happy new year.”



General James F. Amos (Standing second from left), Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Darrell Issa (Standing left), Congressman for the 49th Congressional District, meet with Marines of the MARCENT Coordination Element Kuwait, during a Dec. 22 visit to Camp Patriot. The Marines sustain operations involving the movement of equipment from Iraq back to the United States in partnership with Third Army. The general used the opportunity to express his appreciation for their service. “All I can say is I am proud of them,” said Amos. “Every one of them signed up and they didn’t have to. I want to wish them all a Merry Christmas and a happy new year.”

Operation Bright Coalition Friendship Jump



Spc. Shawn Brewer, 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, Second Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, packs his parachute after jumping out of a C-17 with Egyptians, Kuwaitis, Germans, Pakistanis and American forces who all participated in a coalition friendship jump during Operation Bright Star 2009.

Article and photo by
Spc. Lindsey Frazier
70th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Egyptians, Kuwaitis, Germans, Pakistanis and American forces participated in a coalition friendship jump during Operation Bright Star 2009.

Bright Star is a multinational exercise that is designed to improve readiness, interoperability and strengthen

military and professional relationships among other nations.

The five countries gathered in Cairo East to prepare for the jump. More than 300 airborne qualified personnel jumped out of a German C-160 and three C-17s for a total of four different jumps.

The friendship jump was the culmination of jump training which began at

Fort Bragg, N.C.

“We did two weeks of training at Fort Bragg ... and a variety of additional training that wasn’t focused on the actual airborne operations,” said Lt. Col. Pat Hynes, battalion commander, 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division.

Hynes stated that there are a lot of commonalities in how they jump. However, the language barrier was the hardest thing they had to overcome.

“The purpose was to foster a spirit of cooperation between the participants,” said Hynes.

Many of the Soldiers found the training new and exciting.

“Working with the Egyptians and Germans is a cool experience and I’ve never done it before, it was my first foreign jump in a foreign country,” said Private 1st Class Iris Torres, Echo Company, 1-325th Abn. Inf. Regt.

Overall success of the mission was dependant upon all the leaders of the units, especially the noncommissioned officers, said Command Sgt. Maj. John Fourhman, Third Army.

“The noncommissioned officer plays a role in everything from the planning, to the execution and the recovery of all the Soldiers. This exercise is being conducted on many levels from the command post exercise and the practical exercises which consisted of the [Combined Arms Live Fire Exercise] and the strategic and friendship jump,” he said.

After the jump was complete, all Soldiers were accounted for and the countries involved presented their jump wings to each other in a show of friendship and partnership defining the purpose of Operation Bright Star. **A**

Star 2009

From ship to shore



Above and Below: A landing craft air cushion vehicle and a light-armed vehicle come ashore while a AH-1W Super Cobra flies by, during a training exercise in support of Operation Bright Star 2009, Oct. 12. The LCAC, LAV and Cobra are part of an the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit that is part of an 11-country coalition participating in the biannual event spear-headed by Egypt and Third Army. (Photo by Marine Staff Sgt. Helen M. Searcy)

Article by
Spc. Lindsey Frazier
70th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Since 1981, U.S. Central Command and the Egyptian Military have partnered in an ongoing multi-nation training exercise.

The exercise is designed to strengthen military relationships and improve readiness between Egyptian, U.S. and other countries in the region.

Airborne operations and an amphibious landing exercise kicked off the first day of events for Operation Bright Star 2009.

The amphibious landing exercise consisted of four major waves. Each wave built upon the previous wave and complemented the next, giving the units involved the opportunity to work together and have a distinguished part of mission success.

“The demonstration showed forcible entry from the sea to seize a beach-

head,” said Col. Gareth F. Brandel, Commanding Officer of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit.

After all the vehicles and personnel landed, commanders communicated their unit’s status and reported when they had secured their section of the beach.

“We use all of our assets to maintain our proficiency in conjunction with our allies in a combined exercise,” said Brandel. “Each one of the nations participate and continue to build on their expertise.”

The Bright Star 2009 amphibious exercise was about team building, emphasizing coordination and communication. The event was executed as planned and was a successful demonstration of the Bright Star participant’s ability to conduct successful operations together. **A**

Bright Star at a glance

Article by
Maj. Cecil M. Henry
Third Army Public Affairs

Military units from around the world formed a common front in a multinational military exercise held near the Egyptian coastal town of Alexandria, Oct. 13, 2009.

Operation Bright Star began nearly 30 years ago as a friendly training exercise to better relations between Egypt, and the United States, maturing into an 11 nation combined exercise; a major joining together of traditional military tactics with modern military technology.

“Bright Star has always been about partnership, it started back in 1981. The first one started out as a biennial exercise between the U.S. and Egypt,” said Maj. Gen. Peter M. Vangjel, deputy commanding general of Third Army. “But it has grown substantially since then, and we have almost a dozen coalition partners that are here participating in one way, shape, form or fashion. Whether or not they come from the sea, jump from airplanes, or Soldiers on the ground- it’s all about partnership.”

Bright Star 2009 included a strategic airborne jump of more than 300 Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division partnering with Egyptian, German, Kuwait, and Pakistani paratroopers, while more than 1,000 Marines from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit landed at Al Amein Beach by amphibious landing with their Bright Star counterparts.

More non-traditional training included a combined computer aided command post exercise introducing partnering Soldiers to each others’ equipment and updated tactics.

MASCAL, oil spill exercise at S-POD



Workers with the Environmental Protection Agency unroll an oil boom, a long, anchored fence designed to contain spills, during a mass training exercise at Pier 17, S-POD, Kuwait.

Article and photo by
Spc. Monte Swift
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

Third Army Soldiers, Navy, civilian firefighters and a spill clean-up team from the Environmental Protection Agency all worked together in a joint mass casualty exercise and oil spill training scenario at Pier 17 at the Sea Port of Debarkation in Kuwait.

Each of the responding units was responsible for accomplishing a mission, specific to their field of expertise, and contributing to the overall goal of responding to a fire aboard a damaged ship with injured people.

The mass casualty exercise began with a call to the Fire Department regarding an explosion aboard the U.S. chartered ship MV American Tern, representing a real situation that could happen on a ship. Chartered U.S. fire boats, Omeed Taher and Shareif Verve, sprayed fire hoses around the ship as part of their training and to create scenario realism.

When firefighters arrived, they boarded the MV American Tern and quickly evacuated the injured down the narrow walkways of the ship to waiting Army Medics on the pier. Upon reaching the safety of the pier, Third Army Soldiers transported the injured to an open location where they could determine the extent of injuries and perform care as needed before being loaded into ambulances.

“The exercise went very well with all participants, meeting their expectations and receiving invaluable training,” said Cmdr. Philip A. Gerard, commanding officer of the Military Sealift Command Office Kuwait. Gerard planned and coordinated the exercise along with the Army’s 1181st Deployment Distribution Sustainment Battalion.

Following the evacuation of the casualties, the spill clean-up team from the Environmental Protection Agency was brought in to respond to an oil spill scenario caused by the damaged ship. Oil booms, long anchored floating fences

that contain the spill, were stretched from the dock to the bow of the ship to block the spill from traveling seaward. Once the booms were in place, popcorn was used to simulate how oil moves and spreads with the current and wind.

“I feel the exercise was a success, because I saw things moving with cooperation and coordination,” said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Swartz of the 1181st DDS Batt. “Another good thing was that there was communication, which is always the weakest link.”

The training exercise was done with the help of the Shuaiba Port Control and Shuaiba Harbor Master. Kuwait boats also took part in the scenario, bringing their own rescue boats, a fire boat and performing a man overboard exercise.

The benefits of this exercise helped to evaluate the emergency response capabilities at the port and ensure that in a real situation responders would be prepared to successfully take care of the emergency. 

Third Army's Lucky Strike

Annual exercise held in Kuwait to prep for Bright Star

Article by
Pvt. Howard Ketter
20th Public Affairs Detachment

Third Army Soldiers have begun to lay the ground-work for an exercise to begin on Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Aug. 24.

Lucky Strike is an exercise used by Third Army to prepare the battle staff to be successful in the upcoming training mission, Bright Star, in Egypt.

"Lucky Strike is a collective training exercise for our command post, where we exercise distributed battle command in a geographically separated location," said Lt. Col. Ardrelle Evans, deputy chief of operations, Third Army. "This particular exercise gives us an opportunity to perform our [Command Joint Task Force] missions and work those core competencies as a battle

staff."

Lucky Strike is an opportunity for the Soldiers involved in the exercise to get to know each other and their roles.

All the systems, personnel and equipment that will be used in Egypt is being set at Camp Arifjan.

"The area was chalked out before we arrived on site," said Staff Sgt. Charles D. Glaze, Fires and Effects, Third Army.

Glaze, who has been at Camp Arifjan for four months now, helped set up Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter tents and run cables through them for network hook ups.

"There are about 100 people out here working together to set up the site," said Glaze. "If we have all of our equipment in order, the rehearsal should go real well."

The exercise allows Third Army the opportunity to setup and operate a deployable scalable command post. The large tents provide climate controlled areas for core competencies to be exercised and to be completed from within.

Third Army Soldiers are working hard, using their motto as the foundation for their perseverance; Ready Tonight, Sustain the Fight, Shape the Future.

"Lucky Strike is in the 'Ready Tonight' line of effort in our campaign plan," said Evans. "And this gives us an opportunity as a team to ensure the core competencies for the functions that are maintained here at the command post are understood and that everyone knows their role, so that we will be Ready Tonight." 



Sgt. Nehemias Serrano, aviation operations sergeant for Third Army's G3, coordinates air space during the Lucky Strike exercise, March 6. The computer-assisted command post exercise started Feb. 25 and was conducted at Fort McPherson, Ga., and Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Lucky Strike is part of the Third Army transformation to a warfighting headquarters that is full-spectrum operations capable. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Rodney Jackson)



Above: A contractor throws sparks while grinding a weld smooth at the MRAP Sustainment Facility. The facility takes MRAPs from the draw-down of Iraq and readies them for other sustainment operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. **Opposite Page:** The MSF services many different variants of the MRAP, preparing them for service in sustainment missions in the CENTCOM area of operations and back in the states.

Workin' on the MRAP

*Article and photos by
Sgt. David Nunn
203rd Public Affairs Detachment*

The United States Armed Forces have fielded approximately 11,000 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles through their facility in Kuwait, just 22 months after the vehicle was first introduced into Iraq in 2007.

The MRAP Sustainment Facility has been transforming since the announcement of the responsible drawdown in Iraq and other sustainment operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. Originally established to receive materials used in the construction and equipping of MRAPs to become mission capable and sent into Iraq, now the facility has grown to receive these vehicles from Iraq and prepare them for the new challenges U.S. Forces are facing.

“That announcement demanded us to transform this facility to offer additional resources for the U.S. Military, becoming a receiving and onward movement facility to support [other sustainment operations],” said Ben Goodrich, Deputy Manager for the Joint Program Office of MRAP in Kuwait, a native of Nashville, Tenn., and a 21 year veteran of the U.S. Army. “Our facility now repairs, does refurbishment, and makes the MRAPs coming out of Iraq mission capable for future uses.”

In addition to the demand for MRAPs, the facility has been tasked to prepare approximately 700 of these armored fighting vehicles for transportation back to multiple training sites in the United States. This mission is aimed to offer additional hands-on training to servicemembers prior to their deployments in support of the War on Terror, according to

Goodrich.

“Many of the troops assigned to units that use MRAPs have their first interaction with these vehicles after they have arrived in their mission areas of operation,” said Goodrich. “Getting these vehicles ready for transportation back to the Army’s training sites back in the U.S. allows Soldiers and Marines to be better prepared for their missions when they arrive.”

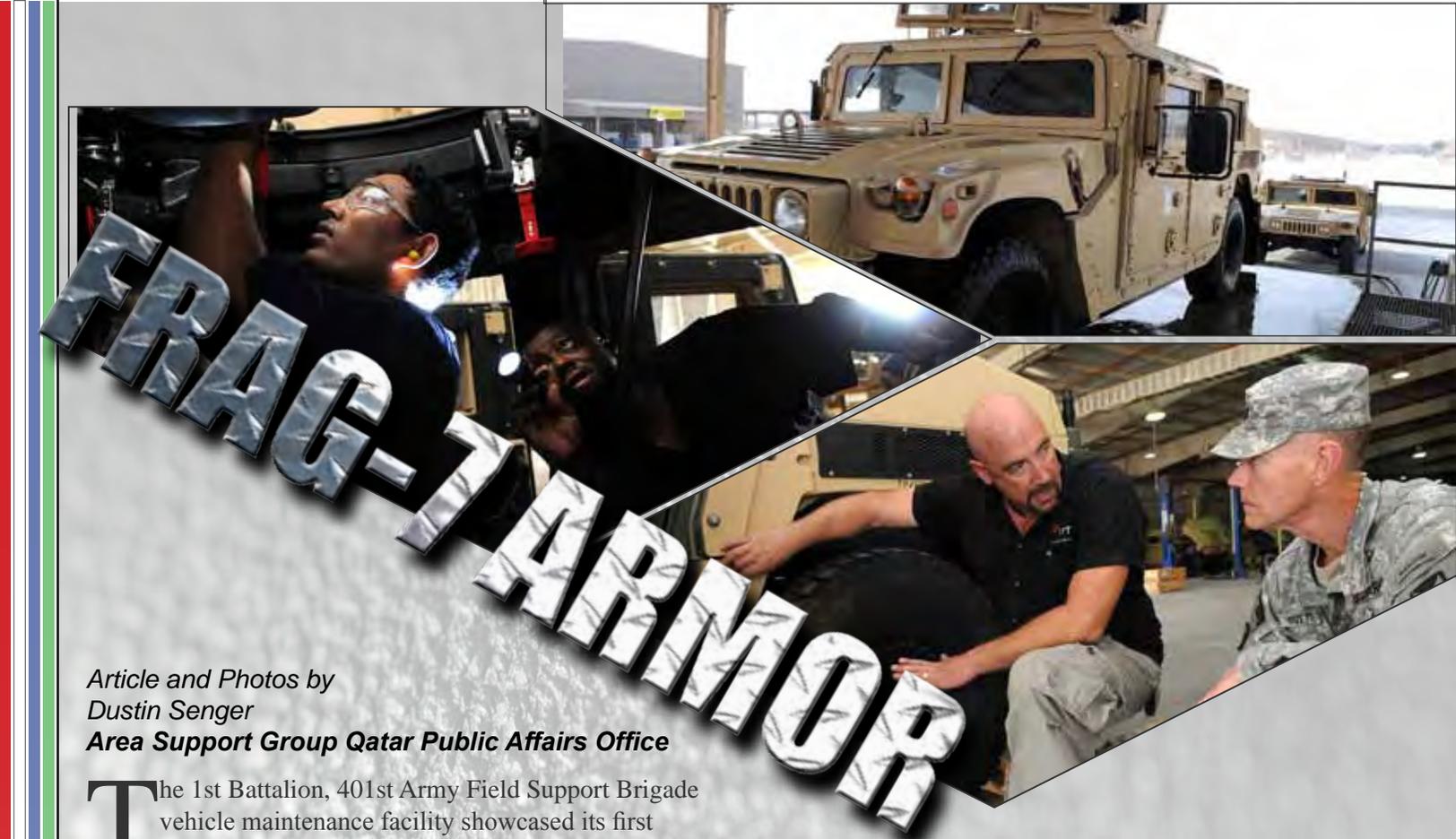
The facility is supported by a unique blend of a Department of Defense civilian workforce and contractors from multiple U.S. companies that offer individual expertise and experiences to the JPO for the MRAP’s success.

“Our primary focus is providing good services to our troops, we are all proud to be helping the military and saving lives,” said Vernon Eavie, a Mechanic Technician assigned to working on the MRAP engines and suspension systems at the facility and a native of Charlotte, N.C. “We are supporting the drawdown by continuing to maintain a high quality of products, superior performance, and getting these vehicles down range as quickly as possible.”

Since this introduction the MRAP family of armored fighting vehicles has been acknowledged by the U.S. Military for its success in protecting thousands of troops from blasts caused primarily by roadside bombs.

“As a combat veteran I have an appreciation for what this facility has done over these last 22 months,” said Goodrich. “We are supporting the warfighter and saving American lives.” 





FRAG-7 ARMOR

Article and Photos by
Dustin Senger
Area Support Group Qatar Public Affairs Office

The 1st Battalion, 401st Army Field Support Brigade vehicle maintenance facility showcased its first uparmored humvee fitted with the Fragmentation Kit Seven at Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar earlier this month. Contracted mechanics finished retrofitting the vehicle, shipped from Iraq to FRAG-7 configurations on Oct. 8, upgrading it from FRAG-5. The Qatar facility is helping expedite the latest uparmored humvee technology for warfighters in Iraq and Afghanistan.

U.S. military personnel depend on humvees for missions such as patrols, convoy security and transporting light cargo on the battlefield. FRAG-7 is the vehicle's latest uparmoring package and began fielding earlier this year. Mechanics at the 1-401st vehicle maintenance facility are replacing obsolete parts and installing several innovations, in accordance with the uparmored humvee FRAG-7 specifications.

"FRAG-7 provides Soldiers more protection," said Sgt. 1st Class Lee Bolding, 1-401st maintenance noncommissioned officer in charge at the Qatar facility from Gulfport, Miss. "It addresses several safety issues like escaping out the window after a rollover."

The FRAG-7 kit offers many advantages, increasing the vehicles safety and capability. Vehicle Emergency Egress window kits integrate releasing levers for independently removing each windshield. Doors are easier to release after becoming jammed. Flame control is more dependable with enhanced fire suppression systems. Fuel filler door cover kits place additional armor and security around gas caps.

The humvees latest uparmoring package protects gunners by implementing an overhead cover, designed by the Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center. The cover uses transparent armored glass for

greater situational awareness without compromising safety. Retrofitted humvees have equipment replaced inside the turret to make battery-powered motorized traversing units much more durable.

Additional occupant protection is offered by a removable roof appliqué, which was jointly developed by the U.S. Government and AM General.

Several add-ons compensate for the increased vehicle weight. FRAG-7 armor suspension kits are installed to enhance driver control and vehicle durability. Load Range "E" tires and replacement wheel assemblies improve vehicle reliability. Stronger brake kits boost stopping power.

"Soldiers like the suspension upgrades – FRAG-7 handles better on and off roads," said Charles Cole, the ITT site manager at the Speicher vehicle maintenance facility in Tikrit, Iraq, from Colorado Springs, Colo. Cole traveled to the Qatar base to support integration of the FRAG-7 mission.

"We usually work in two-person teams but this took three because of the extra weight," said Ray Green, an ITT mechanic from Charleston, S.C. His team finished the Qatar facility's first FRAG-7 retrofit in four days. Now the requirements are understood, each vehicle is expected to be completed within three days.

"Humvees look indestructible now," said Bolding, who has worked on humvees for 20 years. "I remember when they had canvas doors and no armor. Today, they look like something out of a movie. Soldiers will know a FRAG-7 vehicle when they see it – instantly." 

Third Army keeps on Truckin'

Article by
Sgt. David Nunn
Photos by
Spc. Monte Swift
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

The recent presidential order for the responsible draw-down of Armed Forces out of Iraq has tasked transportation units across the U.S. Military to support the removal of equipment and supplies that have built up in the country since the War on Terrorism began.

The Soldiers of the 443rd Transportation Company, an Army Reserve unit based out of Lincoln, Neb., of the 103rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, have been successfully transporting equipment from Iraq and back since their arrival here in February.

“Our missions take us all over the Iraq area of operations,” said Sgt. Patrick J. Oshea, Mechanic and Recovery Vehicle Operator for the 433rd. The native of Plattsmouth, Neb. added, “We all know our jobs and take it very seriously so that we can complete this mission safely and successfully. Our leadership has set a high standard and we do our best to maintain that every day.”

In addition to their support of the draw-down in Iraq by transporting heavy equipment out of the country, these Soldiers have also been supporting the remaining U.S. Forces there with supplies critical to the continued effort of

providing a safe and secure environment for the citizens of Iraq.

“There is a lot of planning that goes into every mission,” said Sgt. Wendy Courser, Mechanic and the Assistant Convoy Leader for many of the 443rd’s missions into Iraq. “We make sure all our equipment is properly maintained with Preventative Maintenance Checks and Services, and have to work with the foreign national truck drivers that drive with us and provide their security.”

The Soldiers of the 443rd do approximately three missions per month that can last 15 days on the roads of Iraq, sometimes taking them as far north as the city of Mosul, located in the northwestern area of Iraq. Their convoys are not just made up of U.S. Forces however; they also augment their convoys with approximately 40 civilian contractors and foreign national truck drivers that aid them in transporting goods in and out of the country.

“My favorite part of this job is the great teamwork and the travel experiences. We get to see so much of this effort and meet the people we are providing for,” said Courser. “Every member of the 443rd works so hard to make sure our missions are a success.”

First Friendship One

Building a friendship that lasts



Capt. Adam Johnson, commander, A Company, 2nd Battalion, 137th Combined Arms Battalion, Kansas National Guard, briefs U.S. and Royal Saudi Land Force Soldiers during a company level combined arms rehearsal for Friendship One 2009 in Saudi Arabia, March 4. (Photo by Spc. Elayseah Woodard-Hinton)

Articles by

Spc. Elayseah Woodard-Hinton
20th Public Affairs Detachment

National Guard Soldiers from the U.S. along with Third Army servicemembers, worked side-by-side with Royal Saudi Land Forces to strengthen military interoperability and relations between the two nations through a field training exercise called Friendship One 2009.

"[Friendship One] has multiple facets to it; but most important, it's a great opportunity to help with interaction with a foreign army to be able to build a friendship with them and a relationship that will be long lasting," said Lt. Col. Anthony Mohatt, battalion commander, 2nd Battalion 137th Combined Arms Battalion, Kansas National Guard.

All exercise participants arrived in Saudi Arabia and began training in the first week of March. However, some training took place earlier for U.S. and Saudi advanced party elements who were responsible for receiving, staging,

training and supporting exercise participants. This training included opportunities for observer controller trainers, to begin to familiarize themselves with different radio and Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement Systems that will be used in the field exercises.

Several events have also taken place allowing the U.S. and Saudi Forces to integrate and show their enthusiasm for this opportunity.

One such event included a gift exchange presentation, which was instrumental in expressing each country's friendship.

Maj. Gen. Rhett Hernandez, U.S. Military Training Mission to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Saudi Northern Area Commander, Maj. Gen. Ahmed Saeed Al Shehri, addressed the 2/137th and RSLF Soldiers who attended the presentation in support of the exercise.

"This is a historic exercise," said Hernandez, "It's been 17 years since the Royal Saudi Land Forces and the United States Army Soldiers have

trained side-by-side together. You are now part of history and when you are part of history, you want to make more history, so I look forward to the training you will conduct together."

In addition to being part of history, Soldiers of the 2/137th were able to share their first-hand experience from previous deployments to help with the field training portion of the operation.

"Many of the Kansas National Guard Soldiers have been in Iraq and have participated in combat operations in Iraq," said Lt. Col. Tony Carbone, U.S. advisor to the RSLF's 6th Brigade, U.S. Military Training Mission. "They are well trained in being able to execute this type of exercise."

Much of the day-to-day focus of the exercise was on maneuver capability and interoperability along with logistical coordination and support between the two nations. The exercise also gave both countries an opportunity to exchange ideas and learn new operational tactics while improving military relationships. **A**



Royal Saudi Land Force Soldiers observe the training battle during a field exercise for Friendship One 2009, March 5. (Photo by Spc. Elayseah Woodard-Hinton)

Exercise 2009

Joint Medevac training



Lt. Col. Simon Nour, 3rd medical Command from Fort Gillem, Ga. is removed from a air ambulance by Saudi Arabian medical personnel as part of medical evacuation training during Friendship One 2009. (Photo by Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Eric Brown)

Articles by
Spc. Elayseah Woodard-Hinton
20th Public Affairs Detachment

U.S. Army and Royal Saudi Land Forces, observer controller and trainers participating in Friendship One 2009, a bilateral field training exercise taking place in Saudi Arabia, rehearsed a medical evacuation on mock-injured Soldiers, Feb. 24.

With a large scale exercise such as FS One 09, several weeks of preparation are necessary to ensure interoperability with the host nation and training objectives are met.

The MEDEVAC training was conducted to help prepare personnel who will observe and provide feedback to U.S. Soldiers and the RSLF during the field training missions that will take place the first week of March.

“We have seen a definite necessity to ensure that we maintain our ties with the Saudis,” said Lt. Col. Tony Carbone, U.S. advisor to the RSLF’s 6th Brigade, U.S. Military Training Mission. “And in all honesty, it is a step up from just doing simulation exercises to now actually putting Soldiers on the ground and executing the missions on

the ground. That’s where you are going to find out where the problems are going to be so you can fix them and be prepared for any contingency [mission] you ever have to form with the Saudis.”

The training included a complete demonstration given by Third Army Surgeons Office on MEDEVAC terminology and first aid techniques used when evacuating injured personnel.

In order to unify U.S. and Saudi MEDEVAC practices, U.S. Soldiers posed as the patients, and Saudi forces and equipment were used to evacuate them. One of the evacuated Soldiers was then flown to a hospital where civilian employees simulated how the patient should be assessed and treated upon arrival to the emergency room.

“It’s a matter of us coming together and blending the two systems so that we can take care of the patient,” said Lt. Col. Michael Ripley, senior flight surgeon, U.S. Military Training Mission. “We really need to incorporate how they see things and how they go about their business to see if we can blend it, so we both get to the same goal.” **A**



Friendship One at a glance

Article by
Spc. Elayseah Woodard-Hinton
20th Public Affairs Detachment

A training exercise between U.S. and Royal Saudi Land Forces, that has been a long time in the making, was finally accomplished in Saudi Arabia through Friendship One 2009.

During the months of February and March, the two nations worked side-by-side in a bilateral training exercise to strengthen military interoperability and relations by working through the necessary steps to get through real war fighting situations.

FS One 09 is a historical exercise for both countries. A large scale deployment of U.S. Forces to Saudi Arabia has not taken place since 1991.

When events such as a war take place, there are many things that must be accomplished to ensure the warfighters have the support they need. Much of this comes from logistical support, interoperability and ensuring proper coordination with host nations of the receiving, staging, onward movement and integration of warfighting forces.

Camp Arifjan, hub of the drawdo

Article by
Cpl. Brandon Babbitt
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

A dusty trail caused by metal machines and their belongings leads south out of Iraq into the neighboring country of Kuwait. The drawdown is starting to take place. Camp Arifjan is the place that makes it happen.

The maintenance facility at Camp Arijan is the sole caretaker for all equipment coming out of Iraq. What happens at Building 450 here is a unique process that includes over 500 civilian contractors working side by side with servicemembers.

“The bottom-line is every piece of metal coming out of Iraq will go through us,” said Sgt. 1st Class George Bayer, Maintenance noncommissioned officer in charge, 2-401st Army Field Support Brigade. “Right now we have over 34 different programs to retrograde equipment coming out of Iraq. This includes mechanical support, painting, washing, tire repair and even transportation.

Bayer went on to comment on the dynamic operation of fixing up a broken piece of equipment at Building 450.

“Basically, we strip them and rebuild them from the ground up,” he added. “We fix things up for the Army, Marines, and even special forces.”

With the drawdown of coalition forces from Iraq already underway, Maj. Anthony Linyard, Support Operations Officer for the 2-401st Army Field Support Brigade, has the busy task of preparing for over 60,000 containers of equipment coming out of Iraq.

“We have been doing war game scenarios in preparation for the drawdown,” said Linyard, a Beaufort, S.C. native. “We here are tasked with having the capability to receive, store, fix and reissue equipment coming from up north.”

The biggest challenge for Linyard and his troops is the unknown. Things coming in from the drawdown have been slower than expected thus far, and they are anticipating a huge surge in equipment from Iraq at any moment.

“When the bow breaks, we expect the worst and we have to prepare for it,” said Linyard. “Right now we have the capacity to handle up to 3,600 pieces per month. Anything over that and we will be stretched to the limit with space and personnel.”

“We alone already repair almost 5,000 tires per month,” added Linyard. “As the drawdown heats up, the goal will be close to 7,200 each month for



Drawdown from Iraq to Kuwait

the war effort.”

With all the vehicles, trailers, and military machines coming out of Iraq, a systematic approach is in place at Arifjan for the needs of the military.

“Lot 58 is the receiving point for all convoys coming in and out of Iraq,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jesse Fields, maintenance officer in charge, 2-401st Army Field Support Brigade. “In just 24 hours of receiving a rolling piece of equipment, a plan is put together for its use. Within five days it is either moved to a holding area, shipped out or the process for it to be retrograded begins with us here at Building 450.”

With the drawdown in Iraq, there is a big emphasis on getting repaired equipment to support other sustainment operations within Third Army’s area of responsibility. With that in mind, the maintenance facility’s focus is on having everything it needs to complete the mission.

“We have over 16,000 parts in our warehouse to support our efforts,” said Fields. “With the drawdown in Iraq, the mission has now shifted on fixing up the stuff coming from the north, and sending it off in support of [other sustainment missions].”

Staff Sgt. Larry Johnson, Systems NCOIC for the 2-401st Army Field Support Brigade, gets a strong feeling of purpose with what he does and those he works with at Building 450.

“This is an ever-evolving process with a lot of involve-

ment from a number of different levels of the military,” said Johnson, a native of Claxton, GA. “Even a lot of the contractors who work with us here are ex-military, and they too know the importance of getting this equipment repaired to send off.”

With the personnel, tools and will to fix and ship equipment from a brigade leaving Iraq, the maintenance facility here will play an important part with the end result in the War on Terror.

“We are here to help out our armed forces brothers and sisters,” said Linyard. [A](#)



Above and below: Contractors use pressure washers to clean a M2 Bradley Fighting Vehicle as part of the assembly line process to repair and service vehicles received from the drawdown for use in other sustainment operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. (Photos by Cpl. Brandon Babbitt)



U.S. Embassy evacuation rehearsal

Article and photos by
Marine Sgt. Michael Knight
Third Army PAO

The U.S. Embassy-Kuwait, recently conducted a Joint Combined Security Exercise that ended on Jan. 21, 2009.

The 13-day event included all the necessary elements needed to make a mass departure successful in a time of crisis. Marines provided security, Embassy employees authenticated passports and the Navy's Assault Craft Unit 4 supplied transportation.

"This was the first time I've been able to experience firsthand how other branches of the military operate," said evacuee role player Spc. Rasheed L. Booker, Supply Specialist, 13th Deployment Support Brigade.

Kuwait Security Forces, Third Army, U.S. Department of State Diplomatic Security Service, U.S. Navy, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit and a Marine Corps Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team all played key roles in JCSE.

While some events of JCSE occurred on Embassy grounds, the main evacuation event took place at an assembly area on the Kuwait coast.

Marine infantrymen guarded the facility perimeter, while combat support Marines screened role players posing



A U.S. Embassy, Kuwait employee screens a pseudo evacuee's passport. This was during a full evacuation drill conducted at a special muster point facility on the coast of Kuwait.

as evacuees. Once Embassy employees processed the group, they were given identification bracelets and loaded onto a Landing Craft, Air Cushion. The LCAC then took the role players several miles out to the USS Carter Hall.

"Riding on the LCAC was the most exciting part of the exercise," said evacuee role player Capt. George B. Hutchinson, G-6, Third Army, Austell, Ga., native. "I only wish they would have let me drive it."

The evacuees boarded the ship, were manifested and granted a full tour. They returned to shore, once the crisis scenario concluded.

"This kind of joint exercise is critical for improving our ability to deal with crisis situations," said U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait Deborah K. Jones. "I am particularly pleased and proud of the excellent cooperation and team-building that occurred between our Kuwait partners, U.S. military units, and the Embassy's Regional Security Office." ^A



Above: A Landing Craft, Air Cushion inflates on the shore of Kuwait. The LCAC is leaving after transporting a group of civilians to and from USS Carter Hall during a U. S. Embassy, Kuwait evacuation exercise. Right: Cpl. Tra C. Neal, fire team leader, Combat Logistics Battalion, 26th MEU, is armed with a squad automatic weapon, keeping an eye on the mock embassy evacuees as they file in front of him for screening.



TARF turns bad ammunition good

Article and photo by
Spc. Monte Swift
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

Ammunition leaving Iraq during the drawdown is finding its way back to the warfighter with the help of the Theater Ammunition Reclamation Facility at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

The mission of the TARF is to receive, identify, inspect and safely refurbish bulk ammunition from forward areas and return to inventory as issuable items.

The operation deals with everything from small arms ammunition and grenades, to rockets and Hellfire Missiles. Much of the ammunition going through the TARF is unused ammunition from Iraq.

All ammunition goes through an inspection process to determine its usability to the warfighter based on physical and working condition and ammunition priority.

The TARF saves the U.S. Military millions of dollars per week in shipping costs to send ammunition to the U.S. by not destroying ammunition that can be repaired. It also ensures

a quick turnaround to the warfighter, since the process of sending it back to the U.S. can take months.

“The facility saves on purchases and transportation to get new ammunition into theater,” said Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Smith, noncommissioned officer in charge, Ammunition Support Activity.

All ammunition coming from Iraq and deemed usable is sent to the TARF where it can be closely evaluated. The facility separates items into three categories; serviceable, unserviceable and unserviceable uneconomically repairable. Serviceable items with minor repairs can be fixed on the spot while others need to be reported to the Joint Munitions Command.

“The TARF has the capabilities to set up a maintenance line for minor repairs,” said Smith. “Minor repairs include paint touch-ups and repackaging to make them issuable.”

The TARF must request disposition from the JMC for items that cannot be repaired. The JMC will then determine if the ammunition can be retrograded or must be destroyed.



Ammunition associate Alexander Kullu polishes a 30mm machine gun round at the Theater Ammunition Reclamation Facility at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Jan. 1. The facility, who handles everything from small arms rounds to Hellfire missiles, is responsible for receiving, identifying and inspecting ammunition returning from forward areas. They then return it to issuable inventory where it is readily available to the warfighter.

The job of inspecting the ammunition falls on the Quality Assurance Specialists Ammunition Surveillance. The QASAS follow a process for determining what ammunition goes bad under what conditions based on factors such as where its stored, metal type, painted or not painted, and environment.

“All of these factors are taken into consideration when we determine the inspection process and apply an inspection cycle interval,” said Robert Wayne, Chief of Ammunition Surveillance for Kuwait. “That is how we know what to inspect more closely.”

The TARFs are just one of the in-theater operations responsible for not only supporting the drawdown in Iraq, but also the support of servicemembers in other areas of operations.

“The facility reclaims ammunition and gets it back into the inventory,” said Smith. “This makes it readily available to the warfighter.” **A**



Ammunition associates at the Theater Ammunition Reclamation facility at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, stack ammunition boxes ready to be returned to issuable inventory after being identified and inspected. The TARF receives ammunition returning from the drawdown in Iraq, and saves the U.S. military millions of dollars a week by repairing and redispersing ammunition to the warfighter rather than having more shipped into theater.

451st ELRS's small crew moves b



A British air force member guides a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III that landed at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, into its parking spot, Dec. 11. The C-17 is delivering MRAPs to provide safety and security during convoy operations. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Angelita Lawrence)



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Joshua McGee, 451st Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron Det. 1 air transportation apprentice stationed at Pope AFB, N.C., deployed to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, takes pallets off of a 60K loader, Dec. 11. The 451st ELRS received 18 pallets for the members of Camp Bastion. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Angelita Lawrence)

Article by
Tech. Sgt. Joseph Kapinos
U.S. Air Forces Central Public Affairs

The team works out of several wooden huts and tents surrounded by pallets, rocks and mud, handling the thousands of passengers, pallets and vehicles flying into the Southern Afghanistan base.

They proudly proclaim they move as much cargo here as their unit does back home.

What is the difference? They have 18 people instead of 200 handling the thousands of passengers and tons of cargo arriving monthly at the air field.

Primarily deployed from Pope Air Force Base, N.C., the team is comprised of aerial porters, vehicle maintainers and leadership. They work loading and unloading 80 percent of the cargo coming on to the U.S. Ma-

rine and British army run base in the Helmand province, the site of recent fighting.

“Our mission here at Bastion is to upload and download all of the cargo coming into the base here, supporting the U.S. Marines and Army, along with our British and coalition partners,” said Master Sgt. Steve Thomas, Detachment 1, 451st Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron. “We do all of this with only 16 people and two vehicle maintainers, which means we are busy all the time.”

Along with their Marine partners, the team works taking care of passenger movement and cargo handling, making sure the right equipment and personnel get where they need to go. Their success lies in their willingness to work together with other units on base to accomplish the mission.

ig loads at Bastion



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Nick Pinette, 451st Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron Det. 1 air transportation specialist, stationed at Pope AFB, N.C., deployed to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, helps direct a 60K loader to a DHL DC8 aircraft, Dec. 11. The members from the 451st ELRS received 18 pallets of mail and supplies for the members of Camp Bastion. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Angelita Lawrence)

“One of the first things we did was get involved with the Marines, making connections with them and moving forward from there, working as a team. Because of our willingness to do that, our success rate has gone through the roof,” said Air Force Capt. Edward Hubshman, commander, Det. 1, 451st ELRS.

The “Port Dawgs,” as they liked to be called, is a small Air Force unit on the base, which is primarily run by the U.S. Marine Corps, British Army along with an Air Force Combat Search and Rescue Unit, they have a small presence on the base, but a large mission, with many units relying on their ability to move cargo.

“On a day-to-day basis, our team will work close to 30 aircraft, each full of cargo or passengers,” said Thomas. “We have to be very flexible because that plane could be a civilian contract plane, or a C-17 Globemaster III. All of them need to be downloaded, and it’s our job to make sure it is done safely, quickly and effectively.”

According to Thomas, his team does that very well, much to the delight of the aircrews flying into the remote base in Southern Afghanistan.

“I have been told by many of the crews that they love to come here;

that we are the best load crew in both Iraq and Afghanistan because of how quickly we get them downloaded and uploaded,” he said.

The team is proud of their accomplishments, and even more proud of the fact they are keeping pace with the much larger units in Afghanistan, especially at Kandahar, where the main squadron is located. With the upcoming surge in people and equipment, the team is ready to handle the increased number of people coming to the region.

“With the plus-up looming, we have seen more and more cargo and personnel being downloaded, but less and less being uploaded,” said Thomas.

But Capt. Hubshman isn’t concerned with the increased workloads on his team. “I have told them to go ahead and send what you need to send; we will take care of it” he said proudly.

It is that pride which is the signature of the Bastion “Port Dawgs,” something which is not lost on surrounding units close to the runway.

Recently, one of the porters took

on the task of building a deck for the hut where a lot of the passengers come looking for travel. The team wanted to make a nice place for people to wait for their flights, something which represented them as a whole.

Working all day, the team labored together to build the addition, when not working aircraft. Seeing how diligently they worked and how much pride they took in their mission, several other people stopped by to help, one of whom was a contractor, who helped put the roof on.

Thomas also recognizes his team’s pride and willingness to take all the challenges on moving the mission.

“The Airmen and noncommissioned officers that have been brought here are great,” said Thomas. “They are doing the mission safely and effectively.

“They are making the mission happen every day, and the Marines and Soldiers here appreciate what we do,” he added. **A**



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Joshua McGee, 451st Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron Det. 1 air transportation apprentice stationed at Pope AFB, N.C., deployed to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, places pallets onto a 60K loader, Dec. 11. The 451st ELRS received 18 pallets for the members of Camp Bastion. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Angelita Lawrence)

Next Generation MRAP-ATV

Article by
Spc. Monte Swift
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

The U.S. Army received the first of 5,244 Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All Terrain Vehicles, the Military's newest addition to the family of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles, in Afghanistan early October to support combat operations in Afghanistan's difficult, mountainous terrain.

The M-ATV features the same life-saving, v-shaped hull that has proven to be successful defending against Improvised Explosive Devices on the larger MRAPs, but in a smaller, humvee-sized package. They will eventually be dispersed between Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force troops serving in Operation Enduring Freedom.

The first M-ATVs were delivered to troops in Afghanistan just three months after the first contract was awarded to the Oshkosh Corporation and one year since the requirement was identified. The need to produce the M-ATV came from a requirement for a smaller, more maneuverable MRAP to travel off-road and navigate the mountainous terrain.

"So we have pulled out all the stops to collapse the schedule and get these vehicles into theater," said Brig. Gen. Michael Brogan, Commander, Marine Corps Systems Command and Joint Program Executive Officer of the MRAP Program. "We are doing everything that's required to ensure that they are safe, that the risk assessments are complete, that they're fully integrated and flown into Afghanistan."

According to Marine Corps Systems Command, the M-ATVs will support small-unit combat operations in highly restricted rural, mountainous and urban environments that include mounted patrols, reconnaissance, security, convoy protection, communications, command and control, and combat service support. It is designed to replace the up-armored humvee in Afghanistan carrying up to five personnel – four plus a gunner.

Only one version, comparable to the Category 1 MRAP but more maneuverable, is planned for Afghanistan. The M-ATV is a separate category within the MRAP family of vehicles due to their off-road capabilities and smaller size which is necessary due to the lack of established roads and bridges in the Afghanistan theater of operations. It will be used to complement other tactical vehicles, including MRAPs, already in country.

The M-ATVs off-road capabilities lie in its lighter weight and independent suspension system that allows for 16 inches of wheel travel. The TAK-4® system developed by the Oshkosh Corporation has already seen over 400,000 miles of government durability testing and is also being used on other MRAPs.



A U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III loadmaster spots the driver of a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected All-Terrain Vehicle as he drives it off the aircraft. (Photo by Senior Airman Susan Tracy)

The military is currently working to ensure that M-ATVs coming off the line are finding their way to combat troops on the ground as soon as possible. Airlift is the fastest way to deliver MRAP and MRAP-type vehicles to the U.S. Central Command area of operations where they are most needed. Air Force cargo aircraft, including the C-5 and C-17 transport planes, and AN-124 commercial aircraft can carry M-ATVs into Afghanistan. Besides using military and commercial airlift, Navy and commercial sealift will also be used to transport M-ATV vehicles.

As with earlier MRAPs, none of the new vehicles will touch down in Kuwait on their way into theater until a significant number fulfills the mission in Afghanistan.

As necessary, the intra-theater transportation system will engage to bring M-ATVs to the servicemembers. **A**

Minn. Guard relies on MRAPs

Article and photos by
Master Sgt. Dave Largent
115th Fires Brigade

The Convoy Escort Teams of the 1st Battalion 151st Field Artillery, 115th Fires Brigade, are using Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles and armored humvees to escort truck convoys from Kuwait to Iraq, ensuring Soldiers have the supplies they need.

The battalion, based in Minnesota, is finishing its second month of running the convoy security missions with safety as a primary concern for unit members when scheduling, planning and conducting their missions concerning the safety of their Soldiers, vehicles and the local population.

Using an MRAP as the lead vehicle has a lot of benefits to the Combat Escort Teams. They have enough MRAPs to have one in each of their CETs with extra to rotate in if they have maintenance problems. They also have a couple configured as ambulances.

The escort teams use MRAPs to add to their survivability.

“We need to keep our Soldiers safe and the MRAP does it,” said Lt. Col. Scott Alan St. Sauver 1-151 FA Battalion Commander, Montevideo, Minn.

“My mission is long haul; we go from North to South Iraq. The missions last anywhere from six to ten days,” said St. Sauver. “We put the meanest, toughest vehicles up front. [MRAPs] are a high visibility platform, have night vision capabilities and is the most survivable platform in case of Improvised Explosive Devices,” said St. Sauver.

Additional advantages are its height; Explosively Formed Projectiles and Improvised Explosive Devices are less effective against it and it’s safer for the occupants with the armor it carries.

“I’ve got a visual of everything and my guys don’t have to relay the situation back to me,” said Staff Sgt. James R. Otto, CET leader, A Battery, 1-151 FA from Tracy, Minnesota.

“The MRAP is an asset we have that provides increased security and protection for our Soldiers to increase their survivability. The MRAP is a lead vehicle that can take a hit and survive. It helps our Soldiers come home safe,” said Capt. Jeff M. Nelson, commander, A Battery, 1-151 FA from Zimmerman, Minnesota.

According to the Soldiers of the 1-151 FA that drive and maintain MRAPs, they’re worth all the time and effort to maintain and keep them running.

“It’s the best platform to keep our crews safe. I want more of them,” said St. Sauver. **A**



After completion of the Pre-Combat Checks and Pre-Combat Inspections an Escort Team member from the 1-151 FA guides an MRAP out of the inspection area.





Putting reflective tape on the steps leading into the cargo compartment of a MRAP shows the attention to detail Soldiers deployed with Third Army have, demonstrating the mindset that keeps the Soldiers safe while operating around the vehicle.

Article and photos by
Sgt. Robert D Walden
115th Fires Brigade

The Security Force and Convoy Security components of the 115th Fires Brigade from Cheyenne Wyo. reached a major milestone Sept. 18 by traveling over one million miles throughout Kuwait and Iraq during their deployment without any serious injuries.

“One million-mission miles in less than 60 days on mission, while maintaining an equipment readiness rate throughout the brigade in excess of 90 percent is a huge success,” said Sgt. Maj. William N. Frost, operations noncommissioned officer in charge, Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 115th Fires Brigade. “The vast majority of these miles are driven at night while escorting large convoys that [in the past] have experienced accidents, medical emergencies and the occasional Improvised Explosive Device.

The Soldiers attribute their safety record to constant training and avoiding complacency.

“We review battle drills and have safety briefs before every mission,” said Staff Sgt. Shawn M. Hauf, a convoy commander, 2-300 FA from the Wyoming National Guard. “There’s always something we are training on to better ourselves and stay prepared so that we can come home safe.”

After every mission, the Soldiers in the convoy meet to discuss the scenarios they faced and point out the good and bad. They talk about how they could have done things dif-

ferently to improve the situation and compile this information into an After Action Report. These reports are used to determine training needs and to establish standard operating procedures.

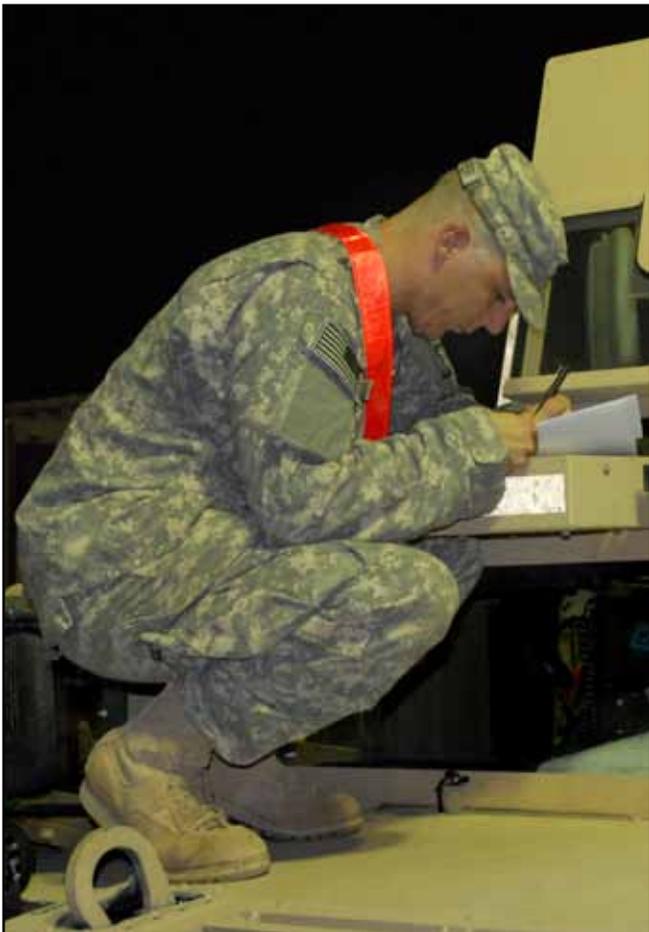
“You learn from each mission because they are all different,” said Hauf. “We escort different trucks, and the terrain and weather change. The training we do on our off time is to better us and will defeat complacency.”

The 115th FiB mileage started accumulating the end of July when the individual units completed their Relief in Place training with the unit they replaced from the 29th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Hawaii National Guard.

“Within the first 30 days, we realized we were accumulating mission miles at an unbelievable rate,” said Frost. “When we started totaling the mileage early after the RIP, the magnitude of the mileage we would accumulate became evident.”

The 1-151 FA from the Minnesota National Guard, the 2-300 FA from Wyoming National Guard, and A Company, 960 Brigade Support Battalion from the Wyoming National Guard are the units conducting convoy security. The 1-147 FA from the South Dakota National Guard and the 151 Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear unit from the Alabama National Guard conduct Security Force missions.

Only the security force and convoy security mission mileage is counted in the brigade’s million miles. This does not count the miles driven from the separate companies conduct-



ing other missions. Travel from commanders and staff members for administrative reasons is excluded as well.

The mechanics performing maintenance on the vehicles have also made a significant contribution to the brigade's first million miles.

"They put 200 to 1000 miles on a vehicle and we spend about four hours checking it out and doing repairs," said Sgt. 1st Class Albert R. Marcus, motor sergeant, 1-151 FA. "If its broke, we fix it. If it needs a new engine, we just replace the engine. If it needs springs, we replace the springs."

"As a rule, we have the vehicles ready by the time the crew is ready to go out again for their next mission," said Marcus.

According to Frost, the brigade will exceed four million miles during the deployment at the current rate of missions. However, the number of convoys is expected to increase due to the responsible drawdown in Iraq.

"Safety will have to be the Soldiers highest priority in completing these missions," said Frost. "The next goal will be for each of the individual units to achieve a million miles."

"This is a big deal for the mechanics as well. If they don't keep the vehicles running we wouldn't have achieved this million mile mark, and we won't reach future goals," explained Frost. ^A



Top of page: Preparing for a mission, a Soldier from the 2-300 FA, Wyoming National Guard, verifies the equipment serial numbers during a pre-combat check at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, Sept. 20. *Above:* An Mrap sits ready to head out on a convoy security mission.

Operation Responsible Cleanup



Tech Sgt. Brandon Blake (right) notates the contents of a container while informing Staff Sgt. Shannon Hause how to place high value items at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 16. This among other operations helps facilitate the Third Army drawdown mission.

Article and photo by
Spc. Jason Adolphson
1st Theater Sustainment Command

Troops in the 1st Theater Sustainment Command logistics team have recovered about \$400,000 worth of equipment for wartime retrograde in the final phase of a container management cleanup project in Camp Arifjan, Dec. 16.

The 1st TSC is responsible for more than 3,600, 8x20 and 8x40 foot, steel containers; some of which are filled with equipment left behind by military elements transitioning in and out of war since the invasion of Iraq.

The goal for "Operation Responsible Cleanup" is to create a clean slate for managing equipment during the drawdown of Iraq. "We are taking to-

tal accountability in the Kuwait area of responsibility posture to support the drawdown from Iraq and redistribute [elsewhere]," said Maj. LaTonya Jordan, 1st TSC, deputy of logistics.

The ongoing cleanup is paying off. "After going through six containers we found 16 new chairs, and several medals and certificates for issuing awards," Jordan said. "In some of the containers you'll find a goldmine and other times it's just garbage."

The cleanup is in its third and final phase. "In phases one and two, we tasked [downtrace] units to identify the containers and then take ownership and responsibility for the containers and equipment," Jordan said.

The extensive third phase is a joint effort with the Mobile Redistribution

Team from Ballad, Iraq. The team of six Air Force personnel is in the process of going through 560 containers that remained unclaimed after phases one and two.

"We are recycling the use of equipment and it is saving the taxpayers money," Tech. Sgt. Brandon Blake said. "Part of the responsible drawdown is saving money and recouping funds back into the system. This keeps the government from reordering equipment that we can redistribute to build up other bases."

The third phase is set for completion by the end of January. The crew says they don't know the dollar amount of material they will recover, but expect it to be in the millions. **A**



Marines manage retrograde lot

Article and photos by
Staff Sgt. Helen M. Searcy
MCLC Fwd-Iraq

In 2006, the retrograde lot opened its gates, and its primary mission was to allow units to turn in their excess equipment as far forward as possible.

Since that date, the retrograde team, comprised of Honeywell Service Technology Incorporated personnel and a handful of Marines, has taken on an additional mission, supporting the Marines in Afghanistan with equipment being retrograded out of Iraq.

When Combat Logistics Regiment 27 took charge of providing Marines in Iraq with logistical support, the Marine Corps Logistics Command Forward Iraq picked up the pace to accomplish their mission.

“The primary mission of the MCLC Fwd-Iraq is to assist moving gear out of Iraq and source it to wherever it’s needed,” said Marine Maj. Charles W. Hill, operations officer, MCLC Fwd-Iraq. “The supplementary mission is determin-

ing what equipment is operational for Afghanistan.”

Equipment turned in by redeploying units to the retrograde lot called, LZ Dogwood, is inspected by supply personnel from CLR-27(Fwd) and MCLC Fwd-Iraq. It is then determined if it can be redeployed or retrograded.

Gunnery Sgt. Jeffrey D. Inman, staff noncommissioned officer in charge, Electronics Maintenance Company, Maintenance Battalion, CLR-27 (Fwd), deployed to Iraq with five other Marines from Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., to help inventory the communications equipment.

“I’m here to identify what’s in good working order and what’s not,” said Inman. “I’m trying to alleviate any problems [with equipment] before going to Afghanistan.”

Once the equipment is identified as ready for issue or retrograde, it is put into containers or loaded on flat racks for follow on movement to either Afghanistan or the U.S. with the Army or Air Force’s assistance determined by priority.

“The Army is critical in providing the truck support,” said Hill. “I am tremendously happy with their efforts.” **A**



Maj. Charles W. Hill, operations officer, Marine Corps Logistics Command Fwd-Iraq, goes over a Limited Technical Inspections form with Master Sgt. Eric Ingram, logistics chief, Marine Corps Element Kuwait, and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Nicholas Tazza, strategic mobility officer, MCE-K, at the retrograde lot.



Rows of radios are lined up waiting to be inventoried by Marines from Electronics Maintenance Company.

Kuwait invites Third Army Soldiers



Members of the U.S. Armed Forces, U.S. Embassy of Kuwait, and Kuwait Air Force, Air Defense sit in the viewing area at Adeira Range, Kuwait, during a live fire drill conducted solely by the Kuwait Air Force, Air Defense, Dec. 13.

Article and photos by
 Capt. Amabilia Hogg
 32d AAMDC Public Affairs

U.S. military leaders were proud to be a part of Kuwait history and witness the first Kuwait Patriot Live Fire Drill, Dec. 13. This unique drill encompassed the fact that it was the first time the Kuwait Air Force fired Patriot missiles in a training environment.

“Today is a great day in that it is the first time the Kuwait Air Force and Air Defense do a live fire drill of the Patriot since Operation Iraqi Freedom in their own country,” said Col. Mike Cosby, U.S. Air Force advisor to the Kuwait Air Force.

32d Army Air and Missile Defense Command has trained with Kuwait Air Defense Forces since Desert Storm, and even credit them to have successfully engaged one of the nine Iraqi ballistic missiles intercepted during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Before OIF operations began, Kuwait Air Defense did a live fire training that took place at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico in 1998.

“Part of this is to demonstrate the ability to defend Kuwait and U.S. interests,” said Col. Mark Conroe, director of the

Kuwait Air Force advisors.

American government members of the U. S. embassy and the 32d Army Air and Missile Defense Command from Fort Bliss, Texas were invited to watch and observe along with Kuwait leadership.

“I’m very excited,” said Lt. Col. Adel Alhafez, operations officer for the Kuwait Air Force, Air Defense. “This is a good opportunity to fire the Patriot [missile] in Kuwait. At first, we had some trouble in finding the right location, but we were able to make it happen here at the range,” said Alhafez.

Although the first day of firing began as a rehearsal, it was very important for four Kuwait Patriot Battalions under the command of Brig. Gen. Younis Al-Banay. In his opening speech, Al-Banay expressed the hard work that led up to the drill.

“As a result of two years of hard work, we have finally come ready to conduct this firing,” said Al-Banay.

Spectators clapped as missile after missile successfully intercepted their Multiple Launch Rocket System like targets, and every impact was displayed on LCD screens within the viewing area.

s to first live fire Patriot Exercise

Along with the Patriot, the laser-based Skyguard system and Starburst, a British man-portable surface-to-air missile system, were also fired, both successful at striking their ground targets.

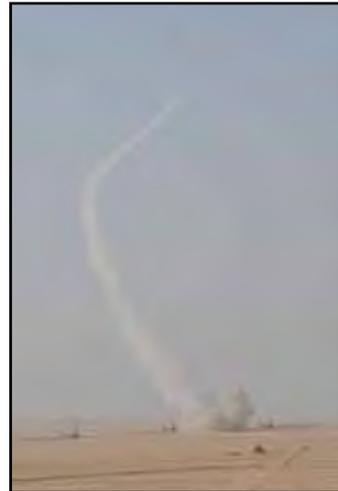
“I’m satisfied with the firing today,” said Al-Banay. “We achieved our goals and I am proud of all the [Kuwait] Air Defense Soldiers, who did successful training for the year and this live fire proved their capabilities.”

Kuwait Air Defenders defended their country in 1990 when Iraq began to invade their small desert land. Desert Storm soon followed and the joint efforts with the U.S. Army Air Defenders that took place during the conflict, revealed Kuwait’s need to improve their air defending capabilities. Both days of firing during the weekend of Dec. 13 and 14 demonstrated the great fire power that the Kuwait Air Defense can provide its country and their allies. **A**



Above: Patriot missile launchers are positioned to track the skies for hostile targets during the first Kuwait Patriot Live Fire Drill.

Below: A series of photos of a Kuwait Patriot missile during a Live Fire Drill the Kuwait Air Force, Air Defense conducted at Adeira Range, Kuwait, Dec. 13 and 14.



Third Army HQ breaks new ground

Headquarters moves to Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.

Article and photo by

Sgt. Beth Lake

Third Army Public Affairs Office

Third Army began a historic step in its move from Fort McPherson, Ga., to Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter, S.C., as leaders from the 20th Fighter Wing, 9th Air Force, City of Sumter, S.C., and Third Army broke ground for the unit's new command and control complex, Aug. 17.

Third Army's headquarters complex is scheduled to open in September 2011 and will include a command and control headquarters, a headquarters and headquarters company facility and a motor pool.

Lt. Gen. William G. Webster, Third Army commanding general, highlighted the importance of the move in the command's history.

"We are excited to begin a new chapter in our distinguished history with you here in South Carolina today," said Webster. "Third Army, when established on Shaw Air Force Base, will significantly add to the military missions and overall military presence in the Sumter community and in the state."

Commander of the 9th Air Force, Maj. Gen. William Holland, also emphasized the impact the move will have on current operations.

"Third Army has a long and proud heritage," said Holland. "We look forward to our times ahead building a shared history here at Shaw [AFB]. Combat experience from the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility has shown the absolute necessity of our services continuing to cooperate at all levels as a joint team. Co-locating our two headquarters at Shaw AFB will further strengthen our partnership and interoperability. We are truly excited as we anticipate our future as one team, one mission and one community."

The move will bring more than 1,000 Soldiers, hundreds of Families and a new economic impact, to Shaw and Sumter, said Webster.

Sumter's mayor, Joseph T. McElveen, Jr. stressed the support and hospitality these Soldiers, civilians and Families will receive from the local community.

"You are going to find in Sumter that we have spent 60 years or more trying to figure out ways to support Shaw Air Force Base," said McElveen. "You are going to find that the same folks that have been doing that for many years are



Lt. Gen. William G. Webster, commanding general, and Command Sgt. Major John D. Fourhman, Third Army, break ground where the headquarter's new command and control complex will be located at Shaw Air Force Base in Sumter, S.C., Aug. 17.

going to do that for our Army brothers and sisters as well. Each time you need us, you can call on us. This community not only says it, we do it."

Before picking up a golden shovel to break ground and move Third Army into a new era, Webster took a moment to offer thanks.

"Today is not just about a shovelful of dirt, a headquarters building, or a new neighbor; it is a significant and positive change in all our lives. We look forward to continuing our work with everyone here as we build our capacities together. We are thankful for the support of the Shaw and Sumter communities. Together our people and their Families will build an even better team, working toward an even brighter future together." 

Third Army, Sumter's locals talk about move

Town hall informs all about the move to Shaw AFB, S.C.

Article and photo by
Sgt. Beth Lake
Third Army Public Affairs Office

When a Soldier changes duty stations, the Army ensures they know where they are going, where they will live and the services that will be available to them and their Family. Being informed helps quell any fears and anxieties.

Third Army took this kind of proactive approach to the Base Realignment and Closure of Ft. McPherson, Ga. and its transition to Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina by hosting a town hall meeting at the post theatre, March 18.

Like a permanent change of station, Third Army is ensuring its Soldiers, Family members and civilians are well informed not only of what will happen in the time that leads up to the closure of Ft. McPherson, but what their new home will be like.

Participants in the town hall meeting were given briefs by representatives from the city of Sumter's Chamber of Commerce and Shaw Air Force Base's health clinic. In anticipation of Third Army's arrival, many changes are being implemented.

Shaw Air Force Base is building a 100,000 square foot Base Exchange that will open in 2011, said Tom Flaherty, Deputy for Support and Installation for 20th Mission Support Group. A 9,000 square foot child development center is also being renovated and a new fitness center will be constructed that holds a basketball court and weight center.

Debra Greene, marketing specialist for tourism for the city of Sumter highlighted guided tours that are available for newcomers. The tours are sponsored by the City of Sumter and offer a detailed view of the city of Sumter and its culture. Those interested in a tour can visit www.sumtersc.gov.

This is one of several town hall meetings that will be held to inform Third Army about its move to Shaw Air Force Base. For more information on Shaw AFB and Sumter, S.C., visit www.usarcentsumter.com.



Steve Creech, Chair, Military Affairs for Sumter Chamber of Commerce, and Susan Wild, Communications Director for the city of Sumter, discuss the education system that Soldiers, families, and civilians will have available to them when Third Army moves to Shaw Air Force Base under the Base Realignment and Closure. Creech and Wild presented the information at Third Army's Town Hall meeting held at the Fort McPherson theatre, March 18.



A

Bringing in the New Year...

Article by
Capt. Kate Schrumm R.D.
U.S. Army Central Surgeon's Office

Internet sites list different success rates for New Year's resolutions, but most agree that one-third to half of those resolutions are out the window by February.

To improve your chances of success with your health related resolutions, focus on specific goals and changes that you can maintain long term. Resolutions like "I will lose weight" or "I will stop eating dessert" are too vague and may leave you feeling deprived. Focus on behaviors you can improve like going to the gym four mornings per week or taking fruit as a morning snack. Make a logical, specific plan with several smaller steps that will move you towards your goal.



Tools You Can Use:

www.mypyramid.gov - Determine your nutrient needs from each food group. Track your food intake and exercise expenditure.

www.diabetes.org - Search for "risk" to take a quiz that determines your chance of getting Diabetes or Pre-Diabetes.

www.eatright.org - The official website of the American Dietetic Association.

www.gssiweb.com & www.ais.org.au/nutrition - Good references for sports nutrition information.

www.fda.gov/Food/DietarySupplements - Reliable information on Dietary Supplements.

www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing - A good site for determining your body mass index (BMI). BMI is not a perfect risk estimator because it does not account for body composition, but having a higher BMI is associated with increased risk of chronic disease for the general population.



Write It Down

People trying to change their diet or exercise routine tend to have better success when they write things down. Use a calendar, excel spreadsheet or online program to track your workouts and food intake. Tracking your eating patterns can help you find areas to improve. Compare your usual intake to the recommendations on the MyPyramid site. Use your activity log to track your mileage or strength improvement and continuously increase your activity week to week.

Want to know how many calories you burn?

Contact 1st Lt. Joe Atkinson and Master Sgt. John Soriero at the 593rd Sustainment Brigade in Zone 6 at Camp Arifjan. They can tell you your body fat percentage using bioelectrical impedance technology and your resting metabolic rate. You can use these numbers as a starting point for your body composition and calorie burn. Check in with them every few months see how these numbers change.

...With a healthier you

Get Healthy

Focus on the keys to a healthy diet:

Variety – Eat foods from all the food groups to make sure you get adequate fiber, vitamins and minerals. Make sure your plate has more than one or two colors on it at every meal.

Moderation – There are no “bad” foods. However, high fat and high calorie foods should be eaten in moderation. Eat until you are satisfied, not overly full. Overeating calories from ANY foods (including healthy foods) can lead to weight gain.

Balance – Balance less healthy foods with healthier foods. If you want dessert or a high calorie food at a meal, make the rest of the meal low calorie. Balance your calorie intake with how active you are. If you become less active due to your schedule or an injury, decrease your calorie intake.

Think Twice About Supplements

While some supplements may be beneficial and others are probably not harmful, there are some that can have negative side effects. Dietary supplements are not regulated like food or medications so we can never be completely sure of their ingredients, interactions or long term effects. Just because something is sold at GNC or the PX does not mean it is safe. If you do decide to take a supplement, pay close attention to how you feel and note any adverse side effects. Do not take more than the label recommends. Talk to a physician or pharmacist if you are on any other medications. Remember that a pill, drink or powder is not a replacement for hard training, proper fueling and adequate recovery.



Skip the Fad

Fad diets might seem tempting especially when they claim to make you lose lots of weight without extra exercise. They tell you exactly what to eat so you don't have to make any decisions. Unfortunately, fad diets rarely teach long term change. They can leave you hungry, tired and feeling deprived. Many of them are inadequate in a variety of nutrients. Focus on small, healthy improvements to your current diet instead of making drastic changes that will likely do more harm than good.



Get Fit

If regular exercise is not a part of your routine right now, try to find ways of being more physically active in the new year. This might include getting a bike instead of driving or going for a 10 minute walk on your lunch break. Take advantage of having free access to exercise facilities and classes. Try a spinning, dance or kick boxing class – it doesn't cost anything so what's the risk? Burning an extra 100 calories per day can help you lose more than 10 pounds in a year. Getting fit can seem daunting if you are out of shape. Start slow and be patient. Every step you take is one step closer to better health.



Call 430-1798 to book an appointment or contact Capt. Schrumm directly to schedule a unit/group class at any of the camps in Kuwait.

katey.e.schrumm@kuwait.swa.army.mil

Operation Gift Basket brings holiday cheer



A Soldier with the 443rd Transportation Co from Omaha, NE is presented with a Christmas Gift at Operation Thanksgiving on Dec. 23 at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The event is sponsored by Third Army, the Gittens Family and local sponsors. It benefits the morale of servicemembers in Kuwait by providing gifts and music during the holiday season.

Article by
Cpl. Brandon Babbitt
203rd Public Affairs Detachment

With the support of Third Army, the Gittens' Family brought early Christmas presents to the servicemembers at Camp Arifjan Dec. 23.

Every year, Operation Gift Basket brings the local community together to show their appreciation to the U. S. Military by distributing gifts to deployed Soldiers thanks to Sheila Gittens and her family.

Servicemembers have received more than 250,000 gift baskets thanks to the event since it started 15 years ago.

"Early in 1994, my son and Desert Storm veteran, Donnie, passed away from kidney problems," said Gittens. "To give back, my husband and I organized a traditional Thanksgiving meal and fed more than 2,500 servicemembers in honor of our late son."

The organization has grown over the years. This year's event at Camp Arifjan featured gifts such as laptops, DVD players, televisions, and car stereos as a way to give thanks to those who serve.

"We are struck by U.S. servicemembers' incredible

resolve and unwavering professionalism," said Gittens.

"We were equally touched by their age. Many of these people who have left their homes are younger than our son, Donny."

The key to Operation Gift Basket being a success is because of the support of volunteers, local leaders and businesses who donate time, money, and gifts to the program.

"Volunteers worked around the clock to wrap each gift and stuff the baskets," said Gittens. "Bolts and bolts of wrapping paper, miles and miles of ribbon and thousands of rolls of tape were used."

Operation Gift Basket began in Kuwait, and thanks to the logistical support of Third Army, reaches Iraq, Qatar and Afghanistan.

Just like these troops who never give up and maintain their resolve, I am also determined," said Gittens. "We do this for the young men and women. We do this for America and the coalition forces. We do this for Donny."

"May God bless our Soldiers, Airmen and Marines that are sacrificing their lives so that the world can live in peace and harmony," she added. 

HEROES

Iowa veterans gain freedom, family through foster program

Des Moines Register
By Tony Leys

If they weren't living in Joe Wymer's house, Vietnam War veterans Ron Marusek and Bob Fenoglio would be in a nursing home by now.

Marusek, 65, has terminal cancer. Fenoglio, 67, has a severe case of multiple sclerosis. Both decided to enroll in a new federal program in which veterans can choose to live with paid "foster families" instead of in an institution.

"They're awfully nice to me," Marusek said of his foster family, which includes local residents whom Wymer hires to come over and help. "They take care of you like you're gold. They treat you with respect and compassion."

The arrangement is organized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, whose nurses and other staff members make regular visits to the foster homes. The idea is new in Iowa, with just four veterans living in three foster homes so far. Nationwide, about 600 veterans have participated in the program since it started in 2000 in Arkansas.

Heroes honored at sunny Rose Parade

L.A. Times
By Jessica Garrison and Cara Mia DiMassa

The 121st Rose Parade came to a peaceful, sunny close at 11:47 a.m. at Sierra Madre and Washington boulevards in Pasadena, capping an extravaganza that featured snowboarding dogs, soul-eyed military mules and an estimated 18 million flowers and 5,000 gallons of glue.

The parade was led by grand marshal Capt. Chesley B. "Sully" Sullenberger, the hero pilot who guided a US Airways plane to a safe landing in the Hudson River last January after a bird strike knocked out its engines.

After a tough year that left many wishing for uplifting news and more

heroes, spectators said they appreciated the choice of "Sully."

"How wonderful to have someone as grand marshal who saved lives. It goes right along with the theme of the parade," said Margo Bishop of San Clemente, who comes to the parade every year with her friend Jan Horner of Altadena.

The 2010 parade, with the theme of "A cut above the rest," honored "everyday heroes."

The lineup offered plenty of other champions to admire, some in the flesh and some made of plants.

The Subway Restaurants float presented portraits of famous athletes, crafted of onion and poppy seed. The West Covina entry honored the Tuskegee Airmen and featured 15 veterans from the original World War II fighter group of African American military men -- as well as airplanes made of carnations and eucalyptus.

Dallas newspaper recognizes Fort Hood heroes

AP

Declining to single out just one, the Dallas Morning News named "the

heroes" of Fort Hood its Texan of the Year.

The recognition comes less than two months after a shooting spree at one of the nation's largest military posts left 13 dead and 29 wounded. An Army psychiatrist has been charged in the deaths.

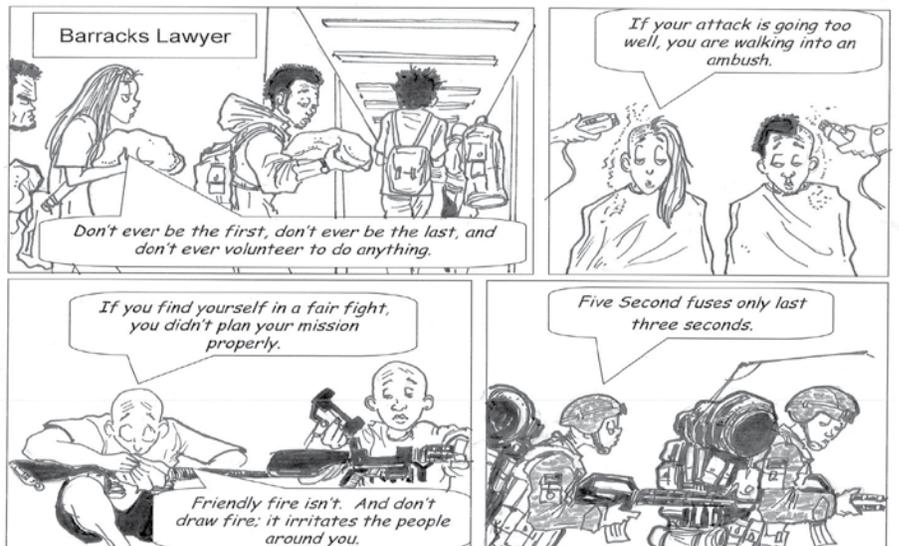
The heroes include civilian police officers Sgt. Kimberly Munley and Sgt. Mark Todd, who shot the gunman and ended the shooting spree, and a number of Soldiers who helped others when they themselves were wounded.

But the list of heroes at Fort Hood "goes far beyond the casualties and responders involved in the Nov. 5 shooting rampage," the newspaper wrote for a Saturday edition story.

Men, women and even children on and off the base have embraced the call to duty and service, the newspaper said. They're not looking for personal glory or attention and they serve because they firmly believe in their mission, it said.

Fort Hood spokesman Christopher Haug said everyone at the post appreciated the award and was grateful for the support they've received. **A**

O.N.E



Staff Sgt. Mark Bennett

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraqis outraged as Blackwater case thrown out

AP
By Rebecca Santana

Iraqis seeking justice for 17 people shot dead at a Baghdad intersection responded with bitterness and outrage Friday at a U.S. judge's decision to throw out a case against a Blackwater security team accused in the killings.

The Iraqi government vowed to pursue the case, which became a source of contention between the U.S. and the Iraqi government. Many Iraqis also held up the judge's decision as proof of what they'd long believed: U.S. security contractors were above the law.

"There is no justice," said Bura Sadoun Ismael, who was wounded by two bullets and shrapnel during the shooting. "I expected the American court would side with the Blackwater security guards who committed a massacre in Nisoor Square."

What happened on Nisoor Square on Sept. 16, 2007, raised Iraqi concerns about their sovereignty because Iraqi officials were powerless to do anything to the Blackwater employees who had immunity from local prosecution. The shootings also highlighted the degree to which the U.S. relied on private contractors during the Iraq conflict.

Blackwater had been hired by the State Department to protect U.S. diplomats in Iraq. The guards said they were ambushed at a busy intersection in western Baghdad, but U.S. prosecutors and many Iraqis said the Blackwater guards let loose an unprovoked attack on civilians using machine guns and grenades.

Taliban infiltrator in Afghan uniform kills 7 from CIA

McClatchy
By Nancy A. Youssef

A suicide bomber who killed seven CIA officers and contractors and wounded six others at an isolated CIA base in eastern Afghanistan Wednesday was a Taliban infiltrator dressed in an Afghan Army uniform, according to U.S. officials and a Taliban claim of responsibility.

It was the deadliest attack on the intelligence agency since the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, in April 1983. An eighth American, a civilian, was also killed.

The victims were working out Wednesday evening when the bomber stepped into the outpost's gym and triggered his explosive vest, the Taliban and U.S. military officials said Thursday.

The CIA confirmed the deaths of the seven, whom one U.S. official described as a "mix" of CIA employees and contractors. CIA director Leon Panetta said in a statement that the families of the dead had been notified, but that the victims' names and what they were doing in Afghanistan wouldn't be released "due to the sensitivity of their mission."

A U.S. intelligence official, who requested anonymity because of the matter's sensitivity, said that one of the dead was the female chief of the CIA's Forward Operating Base Chapman near the Pakistani border and key militant infiltration routes from Pakistan into Afghanistan.

"Those who fell yesterday were far from home and close to the enemy, doing the hard work that must be done to protect our country from terrorism," Panetta said. "We owe them our deepest gratitude, and we pledge to them and their families that we will never cease fighting for the cause to which they dedicated their lives — a safer America."



Airport pat-downs often ineffective security stop

AP
By Michael Tarm

With all the screening technology at U.S. airports, the last line of defense is still the human hand: the pat-down search.

But aviation experts say the pat-down is often ineffective, in part because of government rules covering where screeners can put their hands and how frequently they can frisk passengers. As a result, even if the man accused of trying to blow up a Detroit-bound U.S. jetliner on Christmas Day got an airport pat-down, it probably wouldn't have found the explosives authorities say were hidden in his crotch.

"To have people hold up their arms and just pat them — like I'm really going to carry a bomb there," said industry analyst Michael Boyd, arguing that pat-downs were often of little value. "You know where you're going to put it, and no one's going to go there."

Most travelers at U.S. airports never get a pat-down when they pass through security. A metal detector must be set off first and then screeners would need to find out what triggered the alarm. That often amounts to screeners just lightly tapping on a passenger's arms, legs and clothes.

But even if they go ahead with a pat-down, it likely would not turn up something nonmetallic, small and well-hidden.

A flood of complaints by women prompted the Transportation Security Administration in 2004 to list 'dos' and 'don'ts' on pat-downs, including barring screeners from touching female passengers between their breasts. **A**

Emergency Numbers

911 Emergency DSN – 911/112
From cell phone 2389-9911
Camp Arifjan
DSN 430-3160 / PMO 430-1343
Arifjan Cell 6682-2120
Camp Buerhing
DSN 438-3224 / PMO 438- 3325
Buerhing Cell 9720-5396
Camp Virginia Emergency DSN 832-9111
Camp Virginia DSN 832-2559
Virginia Cell 6705-9470
LSA DSN 442-0189
LSA Cell 6682-2467
K-Crossing DSN 823-1327
K-Crossing Cell 682-0095
KCIA/APOD Cell 6706-0165
SPOD DSN 825-1314
SPOD Cell 9720-5982
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NCO Spotlight

Cpl. Dekisha Rhode
Admin Chief, MARCENT



“Make yourself available to people around you so they can depend on you.”

Cpl. Rhode wanted something different in life, so at age 22 she enlisted in the Marines despite her family urging her not to. She has always enjoyed challenges in life and gets bored easily, so the obstacles becoming a Marine presented appealed to her. “I like what the Marines stand for,” said Rhode. Rhode considers herself to be a risk taker, and enjoys such activities as running and bowling.

Just One Question ...

Whats your New Year's Resolution?



“My goal for next year is to travel to Thailand after this deployment.”

Cpl Conan Aspery
air, ground, task, force planner Marine
Central Coordination Element – Kuwait,
Ashland, Ohio.



“I don't want to eat as much junk food and pop while at work.”

Private 1st Class Morgan Christian
Mil-Pay Clerk, 376th Finance Co.
Ashland, Ohio



“I want to be more involved with college courses so I can apply for an officer program.”

Petty Officer 2nd Class Christina Randle
Corpsman, EMFK
Los Angeles, Calif.



“I would like to make the rank of Master Sgt. and get in better shape.”

Tech Sgt. Jason Bond,
Asst. NCOIC, Mobile Redistribution
Team, Montgomery, Ala.



“I'd like to better myself in everything that I do both personally and professionally.”

FPO Anthony Bundige
CSA civilian employee
Tacoma, Wash.

