

Dragon platoon sustains mission

By Pfc. Adam Halleck
1st BCT PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq — More often than not, the credit behind a combat unit’s success is placed upon the Soldiers who conduct ground operations on a daily basis.

In reality a battalion is comprised of many different flowing parts, with each and every section being a vital asset. Arguably, one the more vital would be the Soldiers who make up the battalion’s distribution platoon.

Long workdays, thousands of miles traveled and many sleepless nights go into a distribution mission, especially when a battalion is spread out in a combat environment. For the 40 distribution platoon Soldiers of Forward Support Company G, 1st “Dragon” Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, sustaining the mission of over five hundred Soldiers brings a sense of pride.

“For me the best part is when we bring supplies to a camp and the guys accept me for what I do to support their mission,” said Selma, Ala. Native, Staff Sgt. James Tyus, a squad leader assigned to Forward Support Company G. “I definitely get that warm and fuzzy feeling when the Soldiers we support express their gratitude.”

The platoon has logged an estimated 15,000 miles thus far in the “Dragons” Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment. At one point in the tour, the platoon was supporting Soldiers at three separate camps with distribution convoys three times a week; delivering everything from food to building



Photo by Pfc. Adam Halleck, 1st BCT PAO

Savannah, Ga. Native, Staff Sgt. Randy Hill, a squad leader assigned to Forward Support Company G, 1st “Dragon” Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, gives directions as he and his Soldiers load a mobile refrigeration unit onto a Heavy Expanded Multiple Mobility Truck, Sep. 9.

materials, fuel, and ammunition.

“If you need it we’ll bring it,” explained Tyus, who has been in distribution for ten years. “Without the things we do [Joint Security Stations] wouldn’t be able to function.”

Since the June 30, distribution has become a more crucial mission. With Soldiers more likely to be stationed at a rural camp instead of the self-sustaining super camps often found in the major cities, distribution convoys are more important than ever. Every camp has different needs. The goal of the distribution platoon is to meet a camp’s needs efficiently and as quickly as possible.

“I can take a bunch of stuff to a camp, but if I bring things they don’t need, it defeats the purpose,”

said Tyus. “If a unit is in dire need of supplies, my guys can push a convoy out within a few hours which would normally take 24 hours to 48 hours for us to prepare if we had a planned mission.”

The platoon understands that their mission is to support the combat troops so that coordinating supply missions is not an extra stress for them, added Tyus.

For any unit, the role that distribution Soldiers play is important. Without the everyday equipment, ground troops couldn’t function to the best of their ability. Even through the long work days and countless convoys required to sustain their mission, the distribution Soldiers love the jobs.

“It may be tiring but at the end of the day when we get our ‘Thank

you,’ and appreciation from the guys it makes our job worth it,” said Springfield, Mo. native Spc. David Schepp, a vehicle driver assigned to Forward Support Company G. “I’ve learned that in the Army we all work as one. It’s a good feeling to know my hard efforts give my battle buddies the extra comforts they need.”

For a battalion like the “Dragons”, a distribution platoon is essential. The 40 Soldiers who sustain the mission for over 500 “Dragon” troopers understand that they fill a fundamental role in the success of the battalion. With many miles and many supply missions to come, the satisfaction that the Soldiers of the distribution platoon receive in supporting the fight is sure to last.

Troops improve skills at joint live fire range

Photos by Pvt. Jared Gehmann, 3rd BCT PAO



BAGHDAD — Pfc. Ryan Short (front left), of Saint Clair, Mo., leads his Iraqi Army partners to the firing line to conduct a reflexive live-fire qualification exercise, Sept. 9, at Combat Outpost Carver, Iraq, located outside of southeastern Baghdad. Short, and fellow Paratroopers, train their Iraqi partners as part of the unit's training academy dubbed "Cold Steel." Short is an infantryman assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Multi-National Division— Baghdad.



Sgt. Cody Rome (left), of Baton Rouge, La., gives pointers to an Iraqi Soldier as he conducts a reflexive live-fire qualification exercise, Sept. 9, at Combat Outpost Carver, Iraq. Paratroopers are training their Iraqi partners on basic soldier skills as part of the unit's training academy dubbed "Cold Steel." Rome is an infantry team leader assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division.



Pfc. Ryan Short (center), of Saint Clair, Mo., demonstrates weapon techniques during a reflexive live-fire qualification exercise, Sept. 9, during a Cold Steel Academy at Combat Outpost Carver, Iraq, located outside of southeastern Baghdad. Short is an infantryman assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

Project awards classroom achievements

By Spc. Howard Alperin
MND-B PAO

VICTORYBASECOMPLEX, Iraq – Fishing in manholes may seem like an unlikely thing to do, but it is routine for one group of Soldiers here. It doesn't mean standing over a hole with a rod and reel; it's more complicated and more physically demanding than that.

To the cable runners of Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, fishing manholes means pushing fiber optic wire through long distanc-

es under the ground to maintain a busy network of computer systems, phone and Internet connections.

High-quality work by these cable runners ensures the network functions as it should and that fiber optic cables go unnoticed around VBC and other forward operating bases.

"Everyone on the team has to be working together, it takes all eight of us," said Sgt. Neki-to Turner, from Orlando, Fla. "From manhole to manhole we're pulling slack and feeding

it, we have to be synchronized. We install a lot of manhole systems on VBC."

Without a solid network to communicate on VBC and throughout Multi-National Division-Baghdad, the military could lose its ability to help build a better Iraq.

"Our job is an essential one for situational awareness," added Turner. "Without the connectivity of the network, we wouldn't be able to inform each other of what's going on. Planning and keeping track of daily events would be more difficult."

The manhole system keeps the cable runners busy under the ground. Digging trenches is not a very glorious job, but it is a necessary one for these cable runners. The most efficient system for running cable includes finding the most direct routes from one place to another.

"First, we recon to make sure the route is functional. We have to be careful not to dig where there are power cables," said Turner. "Then we run cable, fishing it through conduits and up the manholes."

Terminating the fiber optic cable is the final process for installation. The cables are cut and connectors are placed onto the cable hooked into the router or server.

"There's work running cables every day throughout MND-B. We support multiple forward operating bases," said Pierre. "If a new unit comes in, we have to add on new users; this means more lines."

Also, new buildings must be connected to the network, which means making a new conduit system under the ground, Pierre added.

In addition to running, terminating and installing cables, troubleshooting cable problems is also a major responsibility for these Soldiers. After the connection has been made, things can happen to break it.

There are times when the cable gets cut or the connector switch becomes disabled, said Medina. Also, things may not

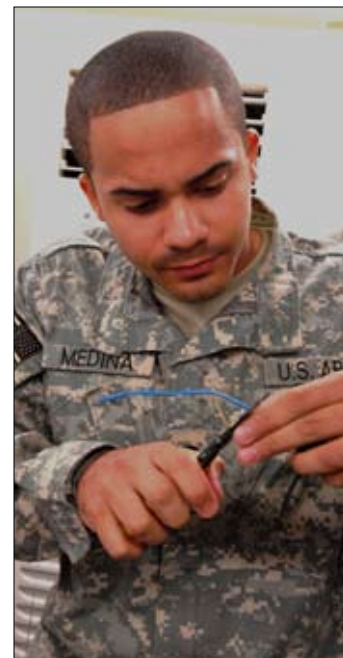


Photo by Spc. Howard Alperin

Spc. Jay Medina, a cable installer, from Quebradillas, Puerto Rico, attached to HSC, DSTB, 1st CaV. Div., cuts fiber optic cable as part of a process to provide network service for people on base, here, Sept. 11.

be configured correctly. It may be time to change out the components to make the connection, he added.

One tool used frequently is a visual fault locator, which indicates if a cable is not working properly.

"If someone says the internet is down, we use the VFL to help us in spotting the problem, said Medina. "A lot of the time, we make the repairs by splicing or fusing the cable."

It takes a diverse amount of skills to run and maintain fiber optic cable. Soldiers must know all aspects of installing the cable to make the connection and they must be ready for any terrain challenge. They want to ensure the cables are not a worry for others on base.

Digging trenches and fishing manholes are part of the responsibilities that go with keeping the fiber optic cables of the network out of sight and out of mind.



Photo by Spc. Howard Alperin, MND-B PAO

Spc. Jean Pierre, a cable installer from Boston, feeds cable over a T-wall barrier to get it to a building in the most direct manner possible, here, Sept. 11. Pierre is part of Headquarters Support Company, Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division.

On This Day In History

September 15, 1858

The first transcontinental mail service to San Francisco begins

On this day in 1858, the new Overland Mail Company sends out its first two stages, inaugurating government mail service between the eastern and western regions of the nation. With California booming, thanks to the 1849 Gold Rush, Americans east and west had been clamoring for faster and surer transcontinental mail service for years. Finally, in March 1857, the U.S. Congress passed an act authorizing an overland mail delivery service and a \$600,000 yearly subsidy for whatever company could succeed in reliably transporting the mail twice a week from St. Louis to San Francisco in less than 25 days. The postmaster general awarded the first government contract and subsidy to the Overland Mail Company. Under the guidance of a board of directors that included John Butterfield and William Fargo, the Overland Mail Company spent \$1 million improving its winding 2,800-mile route and building way stations at 10-15 mile intervals. Teams of thundering horses soon raced across the wide open spaces of the West, pulling custom-built Concord coaches with seats for nine passengers and a rear boot for the mail.

For passengers, the overland route was anything but a pleasure trip. Packed into the narrow confines of the coaches, they alternately baked or froze as they bumped across the countryside, and dust was an inescapable companion. Since the coaches traveled night and day, travelers were reluctant to stop and sleep at one of the "home stations" along the route because they risked being stranded if later stages were full. Many opted to try and make it through the three-week trip by sleeping on the stage, but the constant bumping and noise made real sleep almost impossible. Travelers also found that toilets and baths were few and far between, the food was poor and pricey, and the stage drivers were often drunk, rude, profane, or all three. Robberies and Indian attacks were a genuine threat, though they occurred far less commonly than popularly believed. The company posted guards at stations in dangerous areas, and armed men occasionally rode with the coach driver to protect passengers.

FAMOUS FEATS OF CHUCK NORRIS



DID YOU KNOW?

A Chuck Norris-delivered Roundhouse Kick is the preferred method of execution in 16 states.

MND-B Pic of the day!



Photo by Sgt. Jon Soles, MND-B PAO

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq — Lt. Col. Matthew Karres, commander of Division Special Troops Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, pins a combat infantry badge on Pfc. Nathan Vasquez during an awards ceremony, here, Sept. 11. Fifteen "Maverick" Soldiers received combat awards on the anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Vasquez is an infantryman from Mount Vernon, Ind., assigned to D Troop, DSTB, 1st Cavalry Division. "You should be very honored to get these awards and you're certainly earned them," said Karres.



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Quote For Today

“Teach the young how to think, not what to think.”

—Sidney Sugarman—

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today
100° F | 77° F



Tomorrow
100° F | 75° F



Thursday
96° F | 80° F

TRIVIA TIME!!

What name is given to half of a Byte (4 bits)?

Last Issue's Answer: cows- Because early vaccines were made from cowpox virus to cure smallpox or cowpox

Cav Round-Up radio newscast available

MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD — The Cav Round-Up is a three-minute radio newscast from Baghdad covering military units and events across Multi-National Division — Baghdad.

Today's Cav Round-Up # 123 was produced by Sgt Erik Fardette, MND-B Public Affairs Office.

The July 31 newscast includes the following two stories:

1. Storing good relationships with Iraq's children.

Abu Ghraib celebrated the opening of a school supply warehouse. The project is a great step in developing schools in the area. The school supply warehouse provides a good start to a new school year.

2. Training academy helps National Police.

The academy teaches National

Police new things they will be able to take back to their units and help make improvements. The trust and respect the National police have earned is because of the training they have received at the academy.

NIPR LINK: Cav Round-Up

SIPR LINK: Cav Round-Up

Check out more news at the 1st Cavalry Division's homepage:

www.hood.army.mil/1stcavdiv/

Trigger's Teasers

6	2			4	5
	9	8	6	1	
			2		
1	6	7	2	9	8
			8		
3	9	5	4	6	7
			5		
	2	4	7	6	
8	4			1	9

The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow: **Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.**

Every Sudoku game begins with a number of squares already filled in, and the difficulty of each game is largely a function of how many squares are filled in. The more squares that are known, the easier it is to figure out which numbers go in the open squares. As you fill in squares correctly, options for the remaining squares are narrowed and it becomes easier to fill them in.

Yesterday's Answers

2	1	7	4	3	5	9	6	8
5	8	4	9	7	6	2	1	3
6	9	3	1	8	2	4	5	7
8	2	1	6	4	3	7	9	5
4	3	5	7	9	1	8	2	6
9	7	6	5	2	8	1	3	4
1	6	9	8	5	7	3	4	2
3	5	8	2	1	4	6	7	9
7	4	2	3	6	9	5	8	1



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