

CLB-2 transfers authority to CLB-8

Story and photo by
Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik
1st MLG (FWD)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Marines and sailors with Combat Logistics Battalion 2, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), relinquished their responsibility for providing direct logistics support to Regimental Combat Team 8 to the Marines and sailors of Combat Logistics Battalion 8 during a transfer of authority ceremony here, Feb. 7.

The ceremony included the casing of the CLB-2 colors by the commanding officer, Lt. Col. Brian N. Wolford, and the uncasing of the CLB-8 colors by the commanding officer of CLB-8, Lt. Col. Michael E. McWilliams, symbolizing the transfer of responsibilities involved with supporting RCT-8 and solidifying CLB-8's presence in Afghanistan.

Over the course of the unit's 7-month deployment, CLB-2 worked continuously to provide support to units operating in areas such as Sangin and Musa Qal'eh in northern Helmand province.

"We were able to do almost 150 combat logistics patrols," said Wolford, 41, from Crofton, Md. "Plus another 50 missions including engineering and recovery operations. We transported about 19,000 short tons up north through very brutal terrain."

After seven months in Afghanistan, the Marines and sailors of CLB-2 are ready to head back to Camp Lejeune, N.C., and are glad to have CLB-8 here to relieve them.

"We're very happy to have CLB-8 on deck, they are a great unit," said Wolford. "They will pick up where we left off and take it to the next level, and we're ready to go home."

CLB-8 is ready for the challenge of providing logistics support to the Marines and sailors of RCT-8, who continue to challenge



Marines salute while the national anthem is played during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Feb. 7. During the ceremony, Combat Logistics Battalion 2, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), relinquished their authority for providing direct logistics support Regimental Combat Team 8 in northern Helmand province to Combat Logistics Battalion 8 and will redeploy home after a successful Afghanistan deployment.

the Taliban in northern Helmand province.

"The Marines and sailors are excited to be here in Afghanistan," said McWilliams, 41, from Downingtown, Pa. "They joined the Marine Corps in order to deploy, and that's what they're doing here. They know and understand they are providing logistics support to RCT-8 and they are excited to do that."

The Marines and sailors of CLB-8 have

been training hard in preparation for this deployment and are well prepared to take the reins from CLB-2.

"[The Marines and sailors have] been training for the past five or six months, and they've done an incredible job during that training period," said McWilliams. "I'm very confident in them."

kenneth.jasik@afg.usmc.mil

Follow us on:



Marines begin civil development projects

Story and photo by
Cpl. Daniel Woodall
Combat Logistics Battalion 3

DURZAY, Afghanistan

- Following a recent, large-scale military operation in Durzay, Marines are beginning to conduct civil development projects in an effort to improve transportation and security for military units and Afghan civilians in the rural, southern Helmand village.

In January, Marines with 2nd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division (Forward), conducted a 1-day clearing operation in order to drive out Taliban forces occupying Durzay and surrounding areas.

Immediately following the successful completion of the operation, engineers and heavy equipment operators with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), constructed two bridges and improved several stretches of road leading into Durzay. Working continuously, approximately 25 Marines with CLB-3's Engineer Company completed these engineering projects in less than three days.

These combat engineers have conducted several civil development projects throughout Afghanistan's



Lance Cpl. Jesse Mudd, a welder with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) cuts metal with a welding torch during a civil development project in Durzay, Afghanistan, Jan. 21. Following a recent clearing operation in Durzay, Marines are beginning to conduct civil development projects in the area.

Helmand province since arriving in Afghanistan last October, but this was the first time they have operated in Durzay. Likewise, many Durzay residents had never seen any coalition forces prior to 2/1's arrival and CLB-3's supporting operations.

According to 1st Lt. Elizabeth Stroud, 25, platoon commander, Engineer Company,

CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD), in the nearly 10 years that coalition forces have spent operating in Afghanistan, January marked the first time Durzay residents had seen examples of a U.S. presence in Afghanistan.

"I've spoken with many of the residents in Durzay, and they are very thankful for our work here," said Stroud,

a native of Hutto, Texas. "In talking with them, I found that they realize [our] ultimate goal is to provide them with freedom, and that the Taliban has been driven out. We're also thankful that [the clearing operation] has provided us this opportunity to be some of the first individuals to interact with [Durzay's] residents."

Due to the Marines' interaction and the Afghan citizens' appreciation for CLB-3's support, the engineering operation was an overwhelmingly positive experience for both parties.

One local Durzay resident says he feels much safer now that Marines have arrived in his community to help dispel Taliban forces occupying his village. The Durzay resident is a 28-year-old farmer who had never seen any coalition forces prior to January.

"I am very happy with the Marines because they have provided a huge change in this village," said the Durzay resident, through an interpreter. "The constant patrols and these [projects] will help Durzay. Marines first came here a couple of weeks ago, and already I can see and feel a difference."

daniel.woodall@afg.usmc.mil

Marines gain citizenship while deployed

Story by

Cpl. Paul Zellner

Combat Logistics Battalion 3

CAMP DWYER, Afghanistan – A group of six Marines serving with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), became American citizens during a naturalization ceremony at Kandahar Airfield, Jan. 29.

The Marines went through an expedited naturalization process thanks to legislation that was implemented after the events of Sept. 11, 2001, which allows American service members serving honorably during a period of military hostilities to become citizens without the former stipulations or waiting period.

The Immigration and Nationality Act: Act 329 states that service members can gain naturalization through active duty service in the armed forces during World War I, World War II, the Korean hostilities, the Vietnam hostilities, or in other periods of military hostilities. This opens up opportunities for current and former service members to become naturalized citizens of the United States.

It was a proud moment for all of the Marines, but it was a unique experience for each as they chose to serve America as one of the few, the proud.

Lance Cpl. Anthony R. Henriquez-Santana, 25, an



Lance Cpl. Anthony R. Henriquez-Santana, Lance Cpl. Alex E. Navarro, Cpl. Cesar F. Pardede, Lance Cpl. Jose A. Ruiz-Lara, Cpl. Jonathan A. Carcamo and Lance Cpl. Vernervincent M. Tan, stand on stage after becoming American citizens (Photo by: Staff Sgt. Stanson T. Trindade)

automotive organizational mechanic with Support Company, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD), is a native of the Dominican Republic. He moved to Haverstraw, N.Y. when he was two years old.

"I always wanted to join the Marine Corps and I like the ingenuity that comes with the job I have," said Henriquez. "I've been back to the Dominican a couple times, but I've lived in America almost my whole life, and I serve this country...I figured I might as well make it official and take advantage of the opportunities, especially so I can vote."

Lance Cpl. Alex E. Navarro, 23, a metal worker with Support Company, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD), is a native of Mexico. He moved to El Monte, Calif.,

when he was four years old.

"It was kind of hard to find a job and I knew college wasn't for me," said Navarro. "I wanted to travel, learn a new skill and do something different with my life. I wanted to be a citizen so I could help my family gain their citizenship as well. It also opens up many more job opportunities for me in the Marine Corps."

Cpl. Cesar F. Pardede, 21, a supply administration and operations specialist with Support Company, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD), is a native of Indonesia. He was two years old when he moved to Colorado, but now lives in Sacramento, Calif.

"I joined the Marine Corps for travel, adventure and character-building opportunities,"

said Pardede. "There are a lot more opportunities for me now since I am a citizen."

Lance Cpl. Jose A. Ruiz-Lara, 25, a motor vehicle operator with Motor Transport Company A, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD), is a native of Mexicali, Mexico. He was 15 when he moved to Holtville, Calif.

"My mom lived in California and I wanted to go to school there and learn English," said Ruiz-Lara. "Two of my friends were border patrol agents and former Marines. It really got my interest, and I decided to do the same thing. So my plan is to get some military experience then become a border patrol agent."

The group also includes Cpl. Jonathan A. Carcamo, a 22 year-old motor vehicle operator with Motor Transport Company B, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD) who is a native of El Salvador and Lance Cpl. Vernervincent M. Tan is a 25-year-old motor vehicle operator with Motor Transport Company A and is a native of the Republic of the Philippines.

This is just another way the American people and government show their appreciation to the members of the armed forces. The Marines now have more opportunities in the country they serve and the honor of being both Marines and U.S. citizens.

paul.zellner@afg.usmc.mil



FOLLOW US ON:



COMMANDING GENERAL

BRIG. GEN. CHARLES L. HUDSON

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICERS

1ST LT. JEREMY MCLEAN

1ST LT. REBECCA BURGESS

PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHIEF

STAFF SGT. JENNIFER BROFER

SERGEANT MAJOR

SGT. MAJ. ANTONIO VIZCARRONDO JR.

COMBAT CORRESPONDENTS

CPL. SHANNON MCMILLAN

LANCE CPL. JERRICK GRIFFIN

LANCE CPL. KHOA PELCZAR

LANCE CPL. KENNETH JASIK

CONTACT US: 760-763-7795, 1MLG_PUBLIC_AFFAIRS@USMC.MIL

Security Company Marines awarded Purple Heart

Story and photos by
Cpl. Shannon McMillan
1st MLG (FWD)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan -- Three Marines with Security Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward), 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), were recognized for wounds received in combat during a ceremony here, Feb. 6.

Sgt. Adam D. Snow, Lance Cpl. Alexander H. Nauert and Lance Cpl. Jason C. McKnight were each awarded the Purple Heart Medal for wounds suffered during separate combat operations in 2010.

Snow, a military policeman with Security Company, CLR-15 (FWD), 1st MLG (FWD), was awarded the medal for injuries suffered during a combat logistics patrol on Oct. 4, 2010.

During the patrol, the Marines were escorting local nationals north to distribute seed and fertilizer to local farmers. As they were heading to their location, a vehicle driven by a local national struck an improvised explosive device. As the Marines conducted security sweeps around the damaged vehicle, a second IED went off. Once everything was cleared and they headed to a landing zone to conduct a medevac for injured personnel, Snow's vehicle was sweeping the landing zone area when they struck a third IED. Snow suffered a grade-three concussion from the explosion and was medevaced to the United Kingdom's Bastion Role 3 Hospital.

"I know a lot of Marines out here that put their lives on the line everyday, and to receive this and be standing here, it means a lot," said Snow, 34,

a native of Winston-Salem, N.C.

Nauert, a military policeman with Security Company, CLR-15 (FWD), 1st MLG (FWD), was awarded the medal for wounds suffered during a combat logistics patrol on Oct. 5, 2010. During the patrol, the Marines were on their way to recover another military vehicle that had struck an improvised explosive device. Nauert was in the lead scout vehicle when it was struck by an IED. He suffered a grade-three concussion and was medevaced to the Bastion hospital for treatment.

"Not sure how I feel about receiving the award," said Nauert, 23, a native of Crestwood, Ky. "We are out here to do a job, regardless of IED's. We have to continue on with the mission."

McKnight a military policeman with Security Company, CLR-15 (FWD), 1st MLG (FWD), was awarded the medal for wounds suffered during a firefight on Dec. 16, 2010. During a combat logistics patrol, the Marines were engaged in a firefight with the enemy. During the firefight, McKnight, a vehicle turret gunner, was wounded in the hand by shrapnel.

He remembers returning fire and thinking he got hit but didn't think much of it until he saw blood on his hand, explained McKnight.

"I don't feel worthy," said McKnight, 22, a native of Lexington, Ky. "There are others who are more deserving."

All three Marines have since fully recovered from their wounds and continue to serve alongside their fellow Marines conducting operations in Helmand province.

shannon.mcmillan@afg.usmc.mil



Lance Cpl. Alexander H. Nauert, military policeman, Security Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward), 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), is awarded the Purple Heart Medal by Maj. Kathleen J. Jensen, company commander, Security Company, CLR-15 (FWD), 1st MLG (FWD), during a ceremony at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Feb. 6. Nauert, 23, a native of Crestwood, Ky., suffered a grade-three concussion during a combat logistics patrol, Oct. 5, 2010, after his vehicle struck an improvised explosive device.



Sgt. Adam D. Snow, Lance Cpl. Alexander H. Nauert and Lance Cpl. Jason C. McKnight salute Maj. Kathleen J. Jensen, company commander, Security Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward), 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), after being awarded the Purple Heart Medal during a ceremony on Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Feb. 6. The three Marines were wounded during separate combat operations in 2010.

Marine tanks head to northern Helmand

Story by

Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik
1st MLG (FWD)

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan

— Marines with Combat Logistics Battalion 8, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), helped escort M1A1 Abrams tanks of 3rd Platoon, Delta Company, 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division (Forward), to northern Helmand province, Feb. 2.

“We supported the tanks by escorting them in our combat logistics patrol. We brought them to the fight in northern Helmand,” said Sgt. Curtis L. Minnis, platoon sergeant, 5th Platoon, Bravo Company, CLB-8, 1st MLG (FWD).

The tanks will be



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brian Lautenslager

The 1st Marine Division, 1st Tank Battalion, Delta Company, navigates the terrain of Helmand province, Afghanistan while on a convoy escorted by 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), Combat Logistics Battalion 8, Feb. 1. The 1st MLG (FWD), CLB-8, provided security and maintenance.

used as another tool in waging counterinsurgency operations. Their increased maneuverability and precision firepower, in addition to superior optics, will give coalition forces an added advantage

against the Taliban.

The escort mission was one of the first missions for the Marines with 1st Tank Battalion.

“I enjoyed working with the CLB,” said 2nd Lt. Elliott L. Simpson, platoon commander,

3rd Platoon, Delta Co., 1st Tank Battalion, 1st MarDiv (FWD). “I’m glad this platoon’s first mission was with the CLB. The CLB did very well, and it was good that we did our first missions together.”

The tanks will assist Marines in securing northern Helmand to make it safer for both coalition forces and civilians.

“I feel great about being with the first Marine tanks in Afghanistan,” said Simpson. “The platoon and I are very lucky to have the chance to set the bar for all future tank units operating in Afghanistan.”



Photo by Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik

Marines with Bravo Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 8, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), along with Marines with 3rd Platoon, Delta Company, 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division (Forward), travel through the desert during a combat logistics patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 2. Marines with CLB-8, 1st MLG (FWD), escorted the tank platoon to northern Helmand province where the tanks will assist coalition forces in securing the area.

kenneth.jasik@afg.usmc.mil

Marines prepare for redeployment with alcohol awareness

Story and Photo by
Cpl. Shannon McMillan
1st MLG (FWD)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Marines with 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) attended the Battalion Alcohol Skills Intervention Curriculum course here, Feb. 5.

The course is designed to raise alcohol awareness at the small unit level by teaching the participants about the safe use of alcohol and its effects.

“BASIC is designed to help young Marines assess and question their own drinking habits, decisions and beliefs along with empowering and encouraging young leaders to be more aware of their Marines’ alcohol use patterns,” said Staff Sgt. Emilio J. Belisle, instructor of the BASIC class.

The class wasn’t driven by Power Point slides, but rather a guided discussion on facts, myths and misconceptions about drinking.

The BASIC course was not like other courses where they simply go in-depth about the effects of a bad decision, explained Sgt. Widmive Cessous, radio supervisor, Communications Platoon, G-6, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st MLG (FWD).

The course was designed to learn by others choice’s, where individuals openly discussed past situations and encounters.

Participants of the course openly discussed each other’s past experiences and learned about the effects each drink has on an individual, how to



Marines with 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) listen to Staff Sgt. Emilio J. Belisle, staff non-commissioned officer, SPAWAR/ Container management, Marine Corps Community Service, Headquarters and Service Company, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), as he instructs during the Battalion Alcohol Skills Intervention Curriculum course on Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Feb. 5. The course is designed to raise alcohol awareness at the small unit level by teaching the Marines about safe use of alcohol and its effects.

drink responsibly and how to plan ahead.

“The BASIC class will help junior Marines with their decision making skills,” said Cessous, 28, a native of Elizabeth, N.J. “They will have the [knowledge] to make their own decision now and in the future.”

Making the right decisions can prevent ruining the Marines’ future added Cessous.

Ensuring there is a designated driver is a better alternative than sobering up and realizing you killed someone while driving under the influence.

To prevent Marines from potentially ruining their military careers, senior leadership decided to add the course during

the redeployment training as a preventive measure to make sure Marines plan accordingly before heading out for a night on the town once they have redeployed.

“The time for redeployment has arrived and Marines are already talking about how ‘messed up’ they are going to get,” said Belisle, 30, a native of Staten Island, N.Y. “This is an ideal time to begin training.”

There are six more BASIC classes scheduled for the month of February, which will be available to all noncommissioned officers.

shannon.mcmillan@afg.usmc.mil

Engineers complete repairs to heavily-trafficked route

Story and photo by
Cpl. Daniel Woodall
Combat Logistics Battalion 3

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan
- Approximately 40 combat engineers and engineer equipment operators with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), completed repairs to more than 10 miles of roadway in Afghanistan's Helmand province, Feb. 3.

The road spans nearly 20 miles along the Helmand River and is considered the busiest stretch of road in all of Helmand province. Areas near the Helmand River are densely populated with Afghan citizens who use the road as a means to transport livestock, agricultural equipment and other commercial products. Coalition units also rely heavily upon the road to conduct combat logistics patrols to resupply forward operating bases.

However, the frequency of use throughout the years had damaged several portions of the road, which forced larger vehicles to find alternative routes to reach their destinations, said Staff Sgt. Julio Z. Castro, project foreman, Engineer Company, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD). In order to alleviate these issues for military units and Afghan citizens, CLB-3's combat engineers began repairing the route in November.

After three months of work, the combat engineers had successfully completed repairs on more than 10 miles of the road. These repairs included widening and leveling the road by installing more than 700 meters of retaining walls for reinforcement, constructing several bridges over waterways and spreading approximately 30,000 cubic yards of gravel for stability.

"The purpose of this mission was to make the route trafficable by any kind of vehicle – military or civilian," said Castro, a native of San Antonio. "It is the most significant road in this province. I liken it to the Interstate 5 highway system in California – it's the main north-to-south route in the area. Now, anyone can pass from



Cpl. Steven Artis, a combat engineer with Combat Logistics Battalion 3, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), spreads gravel while an Afghan citizen offers assistance near Katoray, Afghanistan, Jan. 25. Marines with CLB-3's Engineer Company have completed more than 10 miles of road repair on the most heavily-trafficked route in Afghanistan's Helmand province.

the northern part of Helmand to the southern part without having to worry about getting stuck or rolling over into a canal. This road will last for years and our work here will leave a long-lasting impression on the people of Afghanistan."

From a military standpoint, the road project not only increases the capability of military traffic, but in some cases, it completely opens it up, said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Anthony J. Reiter, engineer equipment officer, Engineer Company, CLB-3, 1st MLG (FWD). The road will also have a positive economic impact now that commercial vehicles have easier access to transport goods and provide services to areas in southern Helmand province that had previously been inaccessible by large vehicles.

"With the [newly-repaired] road, we'll start to see ripple effects with increased commerce in certain areas, which will provide the Afghan people with the ability for [economic] growth," said Reiter, a native of British Columbia, Canada. "Beyond that, it also impacts the trust and confidence that

the local Afghans have in the U.S. military. From a counterinsurgency perspective, our work has a larger effect on the Afghans' desire to help us rid the area from any Taliban control. In the three months we were working, we definitely saw an improvement in the local Afghans' perception of us."

"I'm very proud of the road project, but I'm as proud with the relationships we were able to build with the local community," Reiter continued. "I believe the Afghans can see how the U.S. influence can improve their quality of life compared to their lives under Taliban control."

With the repairs completed, the route now fully extends 20 miles – connecting several villages and patrol bases along the Helmand River. With the increased mobility, coalition forces hope to continue improving the lives of Afghan civilians in southern Helmand province by driving out Taliban forces and conducting even more civil-development projects.

daniel.woodall@afg.usmc.mil

Marine promoted by Air Force dad via video teleconference

Story and photos by
Cpl. Shannon McMillan
1st MLG (FWD)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Usually when a Marine is promoted during a deployment, family members hear the news and see photos well after the ceremony is over.

But one corporal with 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward) was promoted, Feb. 9, while his father took part in the ceremony – more than a thousand miles away.

Cpl. Mark A. Leonard, ammunition noncommissioned officer with G-4, 1st MLG (FWD), was promoted to his current rank as his father, Air Force Lt. Col. Mark Leonard, served as the presiding officer for the ceremony. The ceremony was conducted via video teleconference so the Marine's father could witness and take part in the ceremony from Baghdad, where he is currently deployed. Cpl. Leonard is deployed to Camp Leatherneck in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"I realized it maybe one of my last promotions in the Marine Corps, and it was important to have family be part of it," said Cpl. Leonard, 21, from Hampton, Va. "I was really grateful that a lot of people made it happen."

Cpl. Leonard had hoped his father would promote him in person, but due to the high operational tempo, he wasn't able to fly to meet his father, so they decided to conduct the ceremony



Cpl. Mark A. Leonard (far left), ammunition noncommissioned officer with G-4, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), 21, from Hampton, Va., stands at attention as Staff Sgt. Ramon Ortiz and Staff Sgt. Mark Ribott, pin on his current rank during his promotion ceremony at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Feb. 9. The ceremony was conducted via video teleconference so the Marine's father, Air Force Lt. Col. Mark Leonard (right on screen), could participate in the ceremony from Baghdad, where he is currently deployed.

via video teleconference.

"While it would have been great to have met up at some location and spend time together in addition to the promotion ceremony, doing it by VTC was the next best thing," said Lt. Col. Leonard, a strategic planner with Headquarters United States Forces-Iraq.

The last time Lt. Col. Leonard saw his son was in August, just before Cpl. Leonard deployed to Afghanistan, so he was happy for the opportunity to be a part of his son's promotion.

"I was honored that he asked me to be the presiding officer," said Lt. Col. Leonard, 54, from Hyde Park, Vt.

Cpl. Leonard comes from a family with military history; both his parents served honorably in the Air Force. Though his mother ended her military career when he was 5-years-old, his father continued to serve until 2000 when he retired. His father volunteered for a retired officer recall program for a 2-year tour of active duty.

Cpl. Leonard, who joined the Marine Corps in January 2009, said he wanted to join the military to better himself as a person.

Cpl. Leonard's father, who never steered him to join the military, was just proud that his son chose to serve.

"His mother and I were

and are very proud of his decision and his achievements in the Corps," said Lt. Col. Leonard.

Father and son now also share the bond that comes with deployment.

"It makes us closer, sharing some of the same experiences at the same time," explained Lt. Col. Leonard. "I can better appreciate what he's doing, the living conditions, etc., and he knows what I am doing."

This promotion ceremony maybe the last time the father-son duo will see each other before they are once again reunited in the United States.

shannon.mcmillan@afg.usmc.mil

CLR-1 Marines participate in wrecker course



Marines attach the hydraulic lifting arm of a wrecker in an attempt to lift-tow a vehicle during a wrecker-operator course at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 3. The course was designed to provide motor transport operators and motor transport mechanics with the skills needed to become wrecker operators.

Story and photo by
Lance Cpl. Khoa Pelczar
1st MLG

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP PENDLETON, Calif. – Combat Logistics Regiment 1 conducted a 5-week wrecker operator course for 24 Marines representing various commands in the I Marine Expeditionary Force, Jan. 10-Feb. 11.

The course was taught by two instructors from Motor Transport Instructional Company, Marine Corps Detachment at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and was designed to provide motor transport operators and motor transport mechanics with the tools and skills to operate different types of wreckers.

“Vehicle recovery is an important part of any mission,” said Staff Sgt. Herman Crawford, wrecker chief, MTIC, Marine Corps Detachment, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. “Our goal for this course is to train these Marines to become efficient wrecker operators. Meaning that by the end of the course, they’ll be able to look at a situation and figure out a safe and expedient solution for that problem.”

Throughout the course, Marines received classes on what type of wrecker is required for each job, the maximum load each wrecker can tow, the functions of the hydraulic tools, the

different parts of a wrecker, the operation and the most important lesson, vehicle recovery, said Crawford, 30, from Houston.

“The course is entertaining and instructional at the same time,” said Cpl. Dane Davis, motor transport operator, General Support Motor Transport Co., CLR-1, 1st MLG. “We have great instructors teaching the course. We’re having fun and learning a lot of information about the job at the same time.”

While keeping the class fun and entertaining, instructors made sure that everyone’s safety was the most important consideration while operating the equipment.

“We have to check everything and make sure that there’re no mistakes being made,” said Crawford. “If a vehicle comes loose during a towing operation, not only would it damage the wrecker, but also [be dangerous for] everything around it.”

According to Staff Sgt. Francisco Murrieta, instructor, MTIC, Marine Corps Detachment, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., wrecker operator is one of the most important jobs in the motor transport field, and every motor transport operator should participate in a course and learn to become a wrecker operator.

“You’ll become more skilled and

gain more knowledge on vehicle recovery,” said Murrieta, 29, from Yuma, Ariz. “It makes you think outside the box for different solutions, for different situations. No situation is ever the same, so you’ll learn something new every time you go out.”

The vehicle-recovery mission was Davis’ favorite part of the course.

“Jumping into that chest-high water and pulling out the truck, you get a feeling of accomplishing once you complete your mission,” said Davis, 20, from San Antonio. “It’s great to be able to help other people out, and it feels good to know that someone needs you. It puts a smile on my face.”

For Cpl. Justin Chandler, motor transport operator, GS Motor Transport Co., CLR-1, 1st MLG, being able to get a lot of hands-on training helped the learning process. The information and the exercises the instructors provided them with were different every day.

“It feels good to know that I am earning my paycheck,” said Chandler, 21, from Hayti, Mo. “It feels even better knowing that I’m the go-to guy whenever they need help retrieving their vehicles.”

khoa.pelczar@usmc.mil

Storage Marines: providing supplies to troops in Afghanistan

Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Kenneth Jasik
1st MLG (FWD)

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan

— Operating out of the largest storage lot in the Marine Corps, Marines from Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward)'s Supply Company have the enormous responsibility of supporting Marine units operating in Helmand and Nimruz provinces.

"We directly support all Marine Corps units within RC(SW)'s area of responsibilities," said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jason M. Pierce, officer in charge, Storage, Supply Co, CLR-15 (FWD), 1st MLG (FWD). "We provide Marines in every unit with the necessary classes of gear so Marines can repair vehicles, build FOB's and support administrative functions."

Although the storage lot is the largest in the Marine Corps, it is run by fewer than 90 Marines. In comparison, the lot on Camp Pendleton, Calif., has more than 250 Marines.

It is the responsibility of the Marines who work at the Camp Leatherneck storage lot to quickly fill orders so units on the front lines get what they need as quickly as possible.

"The faster we push out our gear, the faster it gets to the guys who need it, the faster they can complete their mission," said Lance Cpl. Courtez L. Ross, warehouse clerk with Storage, Supply Company, CLR-15 (FWD), 1st MLG (FWD). "It makes me feel good that we help save the lives of the people out there."

The storage lot has more than 25,000 different items, all of which are received, inventoried, and shipped by hand. The Marines usually fill between 500-1,000 orders each day. They work 12-14 hours a day, but they do it so their fellow Marines have the supplies they need when they need them.

"We give the gear to the units as they need it," said Ross, 21, from Texarkana, Texas.

The task of moving tons of personal gear and equipment daily is done mostly by hand. Requisitions may be small or large, a hand-carry item or something requiring a fork lift to move. The list of requirements could be short with a few light supplies, or it could be a long list of heavy parts necessary for repairing



Marines with Supply Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 15 (Forward), 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward), scan and log outbound administrative supplies at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Feb. 10. Fewer than 90 Marines are responsible for manually filling orders to provide supplies including personal gear, truck parts and building materials to Marines operating in Nimruz and Helmand provinces.

a Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected vehicle.

"Everything around here is pure manual labor," said Pierce, 32, from Rochester, N.Y. "That's what makes it difficult. There are over 900 containers on the lot, and all of them have to be filled manually. They have to be packed and inventoried every day, and that can make it a long day."

It's a lot of hard work, but the storage

Marines enjoy knowing they are making a difference for service members deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"I love it," said Pierce. "There's probably not a more fulfilling job in the unit. I feel my Marines are making a large impact."

kenneth.jasik@afg.usmc.mil



Lance Cpl. Andrea Bernai enters information into a symbol scanner, a device used to help log and track supplies on the storage lot at Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, Feb. 10. Fewer than 90 Marines are responsible for manually filling orders to provide supplies to Marines operating in Nimruz and Helmand provinces. The supply lot on Camp Leatherneck is the largest supply lot in the Marine Corps.

(Right) Marines and sailors with Headquarters Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, conduct a company 6-mile hike at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 8. (Below) Sgt. Jameson Barron, company clerk, Headquarters Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, raises the company guidon as they conduct a 6-mile hike at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 8.



CLR-17 hosts 6-mile hike, warrior lunch

(Right) Sgt. Nicholas Russell stops oncoming vehicles as the company conducts a 6-mile hike at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 8. (Below) Marines and sailors with Headquarters Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 17, 1st Marine Logistics Group, line up for burgers and hot dogs at a warrior lunch at Camp Pendleton, Calif., Feb. 8.

