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Retaining the Army's Best

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ON THE COVER: Sgt. Maj. of the Army Dominick Ban of the Croatian Army gestures to Command Sgt. Maj. David Davenport, the command sergeant major of U.S. Army Europe, as they join sergeants major of the army and other senior NCOs from 38 different countries June 5 in observing a multinational training exercise in Slunj, Croatia, during the Conference of European Armies for Noncommissioned Officers. PHOTO BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

NCO JOURNAL

*The Official Magazine of
NCO Professional Development*

VOLUME 21, NUMBER 8

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Published monthly at the
**UNITED STATES ARMY
SERGEANTS MAJOR
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The *NCO Journal* (ISSN 1058-9058) is published monthly by the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy to provide a forum for the open exchange of ideas and information pertinent to the Noncommissioned Officer Corps; to support training, education and development of the NCO Corps; and to foster a closer bond among its members. Views expressed by individual authors are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government or the Department of the Army.

The secretary of the Army has determined that the publication of this periodical is necessary in the transaction of the public business as required by the law of the department. Funds for printing this publication were approved by the secretary of the Army in accordance with the provisions of AR 25-30.

Unless otherwise indicated, material may be reprinted provided credit is given to the author and to the *NCO Journal*.

Periodicals postage paid at Fort Bliss, Texas, and additional mailing offices.

The NCO Journal

U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy

Attn.: ATSS-SCN, 11268 SSG Sims St.

Fort Bliss, Texas 79918-8004

(915) 744-1046 · DSN: 621-1046

<http://www.facebook.com/NCOJournal>



The value of an educated NCO Corps

BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. RORY L. MALLOY U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy

FROM THE CSM

Though the Sergeants Major Course continues, as it always has, to instill in its graduates the skills necessary to be a unit's seniormost NCO leader, the students beginning Class 63 this month will experience a far more intense course than the one I graduated from a decade ago. It has been redesigned to produce learned, professional sergeants major who will not only achieve the pinnacle NCO rank, but will be afforded the opportunity to reach the zenith of their education as well.

Today's Army demands leaders who are educated, not just trained. Educated NCOs are critical thinkers, nimble in their decision-making and innovative in their counsel. They are able to apply a multifaceted store of knowledge to whatever problem needs solving, and are thusly trusted as fundamentally proficient and exceptionally competent.

Having NCOs value education as much as their officer counterparts is a major aim of everything USASMA does for today's NCO Corps. From Structured Self-Development to the Sergeants Major Course, the academy educates NCOs of every rank every day.

To me, it is not enough that 155 graduates of Class 62 left Fort Bliss with both a USASMA diploma and a college degree, including 54 master's and 91 bachelor's. I'd like it better if NCOs felt compelled to achieve the same by the time they attended the Advanced Leader Course. To me, it's more than just checking a box or earning promotion points. It's about growing into a more versatile and capable leader.

To build a culture within our ranks that truly values education, senior NCOs must lead by example and demonstrate their own commitment to becoming educated leaders. Show your Soldiers how you've completed your Structured Self-Development courses and make it a priority that they do the same. Display your college diploma proudly and encourage your troops to enroll in college classes now, not some time later. Above all, encourage the next generation of NCOs to pursue excellence in their studies as ardently as they would a higher PT or marks-

manship score. If they do that, the Army's backbone will grow ever stronger.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Leon L. Van Autreve, who was largely responsible for forming the NCO Education System as we know it today, knew well how education enhances NCOs' personal and professional value.

"We're not talking about an entry on a service record," he said. "We're talking about an individual acquiring more tools which will assist in daily living and certainly in the



Sgt. Maj. Robert Sanchez and Command Sgt. Maj. Rory L. Malloy (center) congratulate Sgt. Maj. Paul Biggs of Non-Resident Sergeants Major Course Class 3-12 during a graduation ceremony Jan. 17. PHOTO BY MIKIE PERKINS

performance of military duties. Not a single one of us can afford to limp through our military life on the crutch of limited education."

Don't consign your Soldiers to that crutch. An ethos directed toward lifelong learning is vital to our professional ethic, so that we can develop a new generation of NCO leaders who are ultimately qualified and Ultima Strong. ♡

Command Sgt. Maj. Rory L. Malloy is the 18th commandant of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas.

News and
information
NCOs need to

**BE,
KNOW,
DO**

NCO JOURNAL



Panel urges changes in pay

Recommendations include combat, incentive pay

BY JIM GARAMONE

American Forces Press Service

In a June report, the 11th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation recommended changes to combat pay and changes to special and incentive pay while saying current military pay rates are about right.

Tom Bush, the study's director, said the review also recommended further study of compensation of wounded warriors and their caregivers, compensation for survivors, and making compensation for reserve-component service members consistent.

Bush and Jeri Busch, the Pentagon's director of military compensation policy, spoke with reporters June 20 and stressed that the review's findings are merely recommendations. While some of them may become reality, the review — convened by President Barack Obama — is meant to inform White House, congressional and Defense Department leaders, they said.

The review found that military compensation compares favorably against private-sec-

tor pay, Bush said. Enlisted pay is at the 90th percentile of overall pay, meaning it is ahead of 90 percent of comparable civilian workers' pay. The review graphed enlisted regular military compensation against civilians with high school diplomas, civilians with some college and civilians with associate's degrees. Service members do better than these comparable civilians at any point in a 20-year career, the study found.

Commissioned officers' regular military compensation is higher than that of 83 percent of civilians with bachelor's and master's degrees, according to the review.

The panel recommends an overhaul of combat compensation, Bush said. The review recommends setting hostile-fire pay higher than imminent danger pay and having more

▲ A paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team fires his M4 carbine at insurgents during a firefight June 30 in Ghazni province, Afghanistan. Changes to combat pay were among the recommendations of the 11th Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation. PHOTO BY SGT. MICHAEL J. MACLEOD

than one level of imminent-danger pay to reflect varying levels of danger in different locations authorized for the pay.

A QRMC survey of service members indicates that they believe combat compensation is unfair, Bush said, noting that the longer service members are in the military, the better the benefit is for them. Because they receive higher pay than junior personnel, senior service members receive more benefit from the combat zone tax exclusion for military pay. The vast majority of those under fire are junior personnel — both officer and enlisted — who do not benefit as much from the tax exemption, Bush said.

The review also recommends replacing the combat zone tax exclusion with a refundable tax credit, Bush said. “Even if their tax bill is zero, they are going to get that credit back if it is refundable,” he added. The combat tax credit would be linked to coming under hostile fire, Bush explained.

Another suggestion from the review is a direct-support tax credit linked to imminent danger pay. “We would also suggest that the tax credit ... be prorated,” Bush said. “If you are not in the zone, if you are not exposed to danger, you don’t get it.”

The review also recommends an annual recertification of combat zones, which are designated by presidential executive order, in the same manner as declaration of a state of emergency.

Additionally, the review delved into pay incentives, such as bonuses and monthly incentive pay the services use to manage particularly vital career fields. For example, nuclear officers, aviators and some military medical personnel receive special pay. The

review recommends establishing a general career incentive pay authority that isn’t linked to specific career fields such as aviation or medicine, but could be tailored to grow or shrink as circumstances warrant.

Obama’s letter of instruction on the review panel’s mission specifically cited four examples: special operations forces, remotely piloted vehicle operators, linguists and translators, and mental health experts, Bush said.

The QRMC is looking whether an authority exists to offer a career incentive pay that can be applied to any career field deemed critical. The review recommends that rather than just asking for another special pay category, the Defense Department would have the authority to pay anyone — cryptanalysts, for example — when needed, Bush said. This would require legislation, he added.

The review also made recommendations on wounded warriors and their caregivers, and on surviving spouses. The review found that wounded warriors are well provided for financially, and it recommends continued study of wounded warriors’ earnings and disability payments to monitor long-term financial well-being.

Another recommendation looks to create a seamless transition between the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments for service members leaving the military. The review revealed that the two departments need more empirical data on the financial situation of wounded warriors’ caregivers, and the report recommends more study of this.

Finally, the review recommends modifying the survivor benefit plan to allow surviving spouses to receive the portion of the SBP annuity funded by retiree premiums. ♣

‘Dagger Brigade’ first to align with AFRICOM

As part of an effort to regionally align Army forces with specific unified combatant commands, a Kansas-based brigade will begin serving in March as the go-to force for U.S. Africa Command, Army officials said June 22. The Fort Riley, Kan.-based 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, called the “Dagger Brigade,” will be the main force provider for security cooperation and partnership-building missions in Africa, officials said. The unit will be on deck for its mission for an entire year. The tasking will be to perform security cooperation when needed, not operational or regular warfare missions, officials explained.

More: <http://j.mp/aug12afr>

Reforms shortening security clearances

Reforms in the personnel security clearance process have improved the speed and efficiency of background investigations and adjudications with a direct, positive impact on the Defense Department’s ability to carry out its mission, a senior defense official told Congress on June 21. Reforms also have reduced the time required to adjudicate clearances even lower than the 20-day goal Congress set in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, to as little as seven days, reported Elizabeth A. McGrath, the Pentagon’s deputy chief management officer.

More: <http://j.mp/aug12sec>

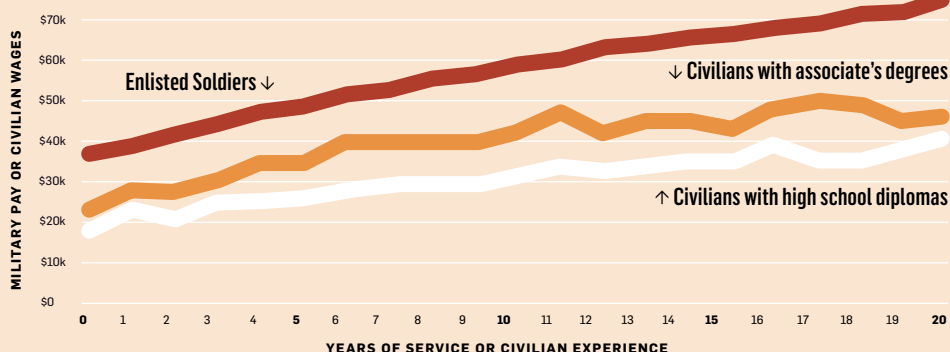
6 hotels remodeled in lodging privatization

The Army is well on its way to accomplishing its goal of building and remodeling lodging facilities at 42 bases in both the United States and Puerto Rico. So far, six hotels have been renovated and ground has been broken for two new ones as part of the Army’s plan to reduce costs to itself and improve lodging facilities for

BRIEFS CONT. ON PAGE 7 →

BY THE NUMBERS

The average enlisted regular military compensation including benefits, compared with the median wages of enlisted-equivalent civilians, as of 2009: — DEFENSE.GOV



Pakistan routes save

Reopened supply routes may result in \$100M savings monthly

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS TYRONE C. MARSHALL JR.
Armed Forces Press Service

Pakistan's decision to reopen ground supply routes on its border with Afghanistan will allow the Defense Department to save tens of millions of dollars transporting material in and out of Afghanistan, a senior Pentagon spokesman said July 5.

Navy Capt. John Kirby said officials estimate that use of the reopened routes will save \$70 million to \$100 million per month.

Kirby noted that Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta had told Congress that since Pakistan had closed the routes in November, resupplying forces in Afghanistan had been costing the United States about \$100 million more per month than before the closure.

"[Panetta] welcomes the decision by Pakistan to open the gates," Kirby said.

Pakistan closed the supply routes after a Nov. 26, 2011, incident in which American troops came under fire from Pakistan. U.S. forces returned fire and killed 24 Pakistani soldiers. Pakistan responded by closing the main overland supply routes for U.S. and NATO forces into Afghanistan.

U.S. logistics specialists quickly shifted to other means, such as the Northern Distribution Network, to supply the forces. However, officials have noted that the routes through Pakistan are the most direct and cost-effective.

"The Defense Department, immediately after the incident in November, expressed our regrets and condolences over it [and] acknowledged the mistakes we've made. And we're sorry for those mistakes," Kirby told reporters last month.

He added that, although the Pakistani ground supply routes are cheaper, coalition forces will continue to use the Northern Distribution Network as well.

"The Northern Distribution Network is still a viable, vital method through which logistics flow in and out of Afghanistan," Kirby said. "One of the things that we're looking at, more [now] than we were in November when the [Pakistani ground supply routes] closed, was retrograde — the need to get material out of Afghanistan. So the Northern Distribution Network will still remain vital as we move forward."

Kirby said that traffic has started to flow through the Pakistan ground gates and that the same agreement in place before the closure still applies.

"The same arrangement we had using the ground gates before they closed are in existence now," he said. "There's been no change to those agreements." No lethal material is permitted to flow through the ground routes, unless it is designed and designated solely for the Afghan national security forces, he explained.

Kirby said the United States and Pakistan continue to work to "get this relationship on better footing."

"My sense is this was just a series of a lot of discussions and negotiations and [a] concerted effort by both sides to move past this and to get the relationship into a better place [as we] start to look at the common challenges in the region," he said.

Kirby re-emphasized the practical benefits and cost-effectiveness of moving logistics through Pakistan's ground supply routes.

"We've always said moving things through the ground gates is cheaper and more expedient," he said. "Because we have that open to us now, it will save money." ♡

◀ Sgt. Barry Dilley, a supply NCO in the 279th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Oklahoma Army National Guard, walks down a path Nov. 28 at Combat Outpost Herrera, Afghanistan. The reopening of ground supply routes in Pakistan is expected to save U.S. forces as much as \$100 million each month. PHOTO

BY AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. DAVID SALANITRI



DoD programs are protecting troops' wallets, Congress told

BY KAREN PARRISH American Forces Press Service

Defense Department leaders recognize that service members burdened with financial problems can't reach full mission effectiveness, and they've made strides to help, a senior Pentagon official told a Senate committee June 27.

Col. Paul Kantwill, director of the department's personnel and readiness legal policy office, spoke before the Senate's Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs committee. Kantwill, who worked for 22-plus years as an Army judge advocate, told senators that while congressional action has curbed troops' exposure to predatory lending practices, military financial counselors and legal assistance offices still occasionally see clients who have fallen victim to them.

Congress passed the Military Lending Act in 2006, authorizing the Defense Department to regulate service members' use of certain "credit" offers that were actually high-interest loans. The department then restricted payday loans, vehicle title loans and tax-refund anticipation loans, Kantwill noted in his remarks.

During his live testimony, Kantwill noted that the department received a report in May from the Consumer Federation of America.

"The report concludes that the Military Lending Act has had the desired effect of curtailing the use of payday, vehicle-title and refund-anticipation loans by service members and their families," he said. "The overriding theme of the report, however, is that we have achieved much, but we have much work to do."

The report and assessments from the field both indicate that lenders still target the military population with payday loans and auto title loans charging excessive interest, Kantwill said.

The primary financial readiness effort for legal assistance programs takes place where it's needed most, he said — at the installation level to individual clients.

"These include tip-of-the-spear services in all consumer law areas, to include [Servicemembers Civil Relief Act] issues, suspect lending and aggressive debt practices," Kantwill said. ♡

TRICARE unaffected by court ruling

American Forces Press Service

The Supreme Court's June 28 ruling upholding the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act "has absolutely no impact on our TRICARE program," a Defense Department spokeswoman said June 29.

Navy Cmdr. Leslie Hull-Ryde, spokeswoman for personnel and readiness, explained that the worldwide health care program for uniformed service members, retirees and their eligible family members is governed by different statutes than civilian health care and is unaffected by the ruling.

"TRICARE remains committed to providing the best possible health care to its more than 9.7 million beneficiaries," she said.

TRICARE officials said in a statement June 28 that the TRICARE and TRICARE Young Adult programs are authorized by an independent set of statutes and remain under sole authority of the secretary of defense.

"TRICARE provides coverage for pre-existing conditions, and serious illnesses; offers an array of preventive care services with no cost shares; maintains reasonable out-of-pocket costs, with no or low deductibles and copayments; and there are no annual or lifetime caps on coverage," according to the statement.

TRICARE officials said that as of May 31, more than 17,000 beneficiaries are signed up for young adult plans, which are designed to cover qualified dependents ages 21 to 26. ♡

← BRIEFS CONT. FROM PAGE 5

Soldiers and their families. The six renovated facilities are at Fort Polk, La.; Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Sill, Okla.; Fort Rucker, Ala.; Fort Wainwright, Alaska; and Fort Hamilton, N.Y. The two still in the process of being built are at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, and Fort Riley, Kan. The goal of privatization is to cut down on renovation costs that are not in the Army's budget but still improve the quality of life at on-base hotels.

More: <http://j.mp/aug12lodg>

New financial guidance may help moving troops

Homeowners with military transfer orders will be immediately eligible for short sales under new guidance to mortgage servicers that may help tens of thousands of military homeowners moving to a new duty station, Consumer Finance Protection Bureau officials said June 21. Military homeowners will be eligible for short sales, even if they are current in their mortgages. They also will be exempt from deficiency judgments from Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac when receiving permission for a short sale and relieved of any request for cash, or contribution or promissory note so long as the property was purchased on or before June 30. More: <http://j.mp/aug12home>

Parks offer military, families free pass

The National Park Service is granting free access to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites, national parks and wildlife refuges to active duty service members and activated Guardsmen and reservists and their families, a park service spokeswoman said June 27. Service members can get a pass, valued at \$80, by showing their military identification cards. Family members can obtain their own passes, even if the service member is deployed or if they are traveling separately, officials said.

More: <http://j.mp/aug12park>

Study offers glimpse into suicide motives

Data collected was also used to design course of treatment

BY KAREN PARRISH

American Forces Press Service

Why? What makes people attempt suicide? It's a vital question, as the answer could help mental health professionals, friends and family better recognize when they need to step in to help to save a life.

Theories about suicide motives abound. But as one presenter noted June 20 at the annual suicide prevention conference in Washington, D.C., sponsored jointly by the Defense and Veterans Affairs departments, not much data exists on the question.

their lives," he said, adding that 21 percent never attempted suicide again and two participants had made five attempts.

Study participants — 66 men and six women — ranged in age from 19 to 44 and had served between one and 19 years in the military. Each person referred to the study had previously been discharged from an inpatient hospital stay for suicide risk.

Bryan noted that the study also served as a course of treatment. Phase 1 focused on crisis management and distress tolerance, Phase 2 aimed at problem solving and restructuring of the participants' suicide belief systems, and Phase 3 was dedicated to relapse prevention.

Each participant built a crisis response plan and underwent sleep therapy as part of the study. Patients completed an average of 12 sessions before "graduating" from the study.

Phase 1 must target emotion regulation, Bryan emphasized. Patients have to learn to deal effectively with painful emotions or they can't progress further in therapy, he explained.

Most theories about suicide motivation assume suicidal attempts primarily stem from emotional distress, Bryan said. He described two models of approach and treatment for suicidal behaviors: the "syndromal model," which assumes an underlying psychiatric disorder in suicidal patients, and the "functional model," which seeks to explain why people attempt suicide so patients can learn how to cope with challenges.

Bryan told the conference audience that the "functional model of self-harm"

Craig J. Bryan, a doctor of psychology, is associate director of the National Center for Veterans Studies at the University of Utah. At the conference, he presented the results of a study aimed at identifying the motives of 72 active-duty service members who attempted suicide.

"They had collectively attempted suicide 136 times over

widely referenced in suicide prevention work notes four major groups of possible suicide motives:

- ▶ Emotion relief, or the desire to stop bad feelings.
- ▶ Feeling generation, or the desire to feel something even if it's bad.
- ▶ Avoidance and escape, or the desire to avoid punishment from others or avoid doing something undesirable.
- ▶ Interpersonal influence, or the desire to get attention or "let others know how I feel."

Identifying the "why" is one of the essential ingredients in work to reduce suicide attempt rates, he said, because once patients understand their motivations, they can



▲ Staff Sgt. Rudolph Juarez, a motor pool NCO with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 224th Sustainment Brigade, California National Guard, role-plays a scenario with Pfc. Anthony Carter during suicide-prevention training Jan. 25, 2011, at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. ARTUR TARADEJNA

develop strategies and coping skills to deal with those challenges.

Bryan said one aim of the study, which used the functional model, was to teach patients “how to suffer in a way that doesn’t require you to die.”

The study asked participants to identify their own motives for a suicide attempt from a list of 33 potential reasons, which were divided among the functional model’s four groups. Each patient chose one to 29 reasons, Bryan said, with 10.43 factors as the mean result, Bryan said.

All participants selected emotional relief, specifically “to stop bad feelings,” as a factor, he noted, though 95 percent also noted other reasons.

After patients confronted the reasons they had attempted or considered suicide, Bryan said, “it was like a light bulb went on.” While every participant originally said they attempted suicide because they wanted to die, 95 percent acknowledged they now realize they had not wanted to die, but wanted to end their emotional pain.

“What this means from a clinical standpoint is we have to start integrating these behavioral [and] functional understandings of suicide attempts into our treatment,” he said. “This is a primary mechanism or ingredient of ... behavioral therapy, which is the treatment that we’re currently testing for active-duty Soldiers.”

As part of the study, participants received a “smart

Reasons for attempting suicide

In a recent study of service members who attempted suicide, participants were asked to identify their own motives for trying to take their own lives. Their responses (participants could choose more than one reason) were then categorized:

100% said they wanted to stop bad feelings

95% said they did not want to die, but wanted to end their pain

82% said it was to get away or escape from other people

80% said it was to let others know their desperation

73% said it was to feel something, even pain

book” during their first 30 minutes of therapy, Bryan said. Patients wrote in the books throughout their course of therapy, adding lessons learned during each session about what was working for them.

At the end of Phase 3, the smart book came out again and participants reviewed the lessons and skills, Bryan said. If patients got “stuck” thinking about how a previous suicide attempt could have been handled differently or how to face a current challenge, he added, the smart books reminded them of approaches they learned in therapy.

“It is a core intervention,” he said. ♡

Army to discontinue NASCAR sponsorship

BY C. TODD LOPEZ Army News Service

After this year, the Army will no longer sponsor a NASCAR team as part of its national branding and accession efforts. But the service will continue other programs to attract new Soldiers and keep itself in the public eye.

“We are in every state and every major market with other marketing and advertising assets,” said John Myers, director of the marketing support element at the Army Marketing and Research Group. “Motorsports, particularly NASCAR, is only one tactic of our overall branding strategy to connect the Army with America.”

During fiscal year 2012, the Army committed about \$8.4 million to NASCAR sponsorship. The relationship between the Army and the NASCAR team it sponsors with driver Ryan Newman will end when the current NASCAR season concludes in November.

Myers said the Army is looking to reach a particular segment of the population, men aged 18 to 24. But the NASCAR audience is “starting to skew older,” he said. “We can’t justify the investment in NASCAR as much as we can in other things that we are doing.”

► Driver Mark Martin powers the #8 U.S. Army car into a turn at Texas Motor Speedway during a NASCAR race in April 2008. The Army has sponsored Ryan Newman’s #39 car since 2009. PHOTO BY LT. COL. WILLIAM (DEAN) THURMOND

The Army isn’t pulling out of motorsports entirely. The Army has a 10-year, ongoing relationship with the National Hot Rod Association and driver Tony “the Sarge” Schumacher. “The metrics are suggesting that it is still a very good market for us,” Myers said.

The Army is looking to market to a more diverse audience, so its efforts include more than just sports. “If you’re going to be representative of the American population, which the Army wants to do, you need to have proper representation of diversity and ethnicity,” Myers said. ♡



TOOLKIT

Practicing good operations security

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

During World War II, it was the job of some Soldiers to black out parts of letters sent home to ensure that if those letters fell into enemy hands, the enemy would not gain any valuable information about the unit's movements, mission or morale.

Today, with communications happening at lightning speed, there simply aren't enough Soldiers to man that type of effort. Instead, it is up to first-line NCOs to ensure that each of their Soldiers knows how to practice good operations security.

Command Sgt. Maj. David Redmon, command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command at Fort Belvoir, Va., said opsec was formalized as an operations function during the Vietnam War, and Soldiers and NCOs can still take proactive mea-

sures to establish and follow good opsec.

"As long as there is a need to maintain essential secrecy, there will always be a need for opsec," Redmon said. "Opsec measures protect our critical information from inadvertent disclosure and ensure mission success."

Opsec violations vary in degree and severity — anything from Pvt. Bradley Manning's alleged distribution of classified information to WikiLeaks to a Soldier inadvertently posting deployment times on Facebook.

"Operations security entails more than just not talking about work," Redmon said. "It is maintaining a state of awareness, which requires active vigilance against social engineers (phishers, con artists, activists), data aggregation capabilities, criminals, the insider threat, as well as foreign intelligence actors and collectors."

With open data sources, the enemy is always watching and looking for different movements and vulnerabilities, Redmon said. NCOs can help combat this by staying informed of opsec news and procedures.

"NCOs at the lowest echelons can raise awareness of opsec trends and techniques by sharing trends and relevant news articles," Redmon said.

When a Soldier does something in violation of opsec, it's the responsibility of his or her NCO to address it at the appropriate level, Redmon said.

"It's just like anything when we find something our Soldiers have done wrong," Redmon said. "As a sergeant, we have to figure out what level it needs to be addressed at. If we make an assessment, and we think our stripes can hold us handling that at the lowest possible



◀ Maj. Yokeitha A. Ramey (left), Eighth Army's opsec program manager, and Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Adkins check trash containers at U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan in Seoul, South Korea, for items that were improperly disposed of. PHOTO BY PFC. KIM GYE-MYONG

Opsec's 5 steps

The "Opsec 5-step Process" is a continual cycle of identification, analysis and remediation. It is most effective when integrated into all planning and operational processes.

1

IDENTIFY AND PROTECT
critical information

2

THREAT ANALYSIS:
Know who the enemies are and what information they might want.

3

ANALYZE VULNERABILITIES:
Look at weaknesses and assess how they might jeopardize the mission.

4

RISK ASSESSMENT:
Find the vulnerability that aligns with the highest threat and see where to implement higher levels of security.

5

APPLY COUNTERMEASURES:
Increase awareness and apply measures to protect critical information.

level, we can counsel our Soldiers ourselves. But if what our Soldier did is going to affect the mission, then it's the responsibility of that NCO to report it up to his chain of command and for the security folks to take a look at whether we need to mitigate it, delete it or whether there was some type of malintent that warrants further action."

Following opsec guidance and rules is a part of the Army's Profession of Arms campaign and something every Soldier and NCO needs to take seriously, Redmon said.

"It's about being a professional Soldier, and professional Soldiers don't share information with the enemy," Redmon said. "NCOs have the best opportunity to take a hands-on approach to ensure opsec is maintained. Each Army activity is responsible for determining opsec measures based on the local threat." ❧

► NEXT MONTH: SUICIDE PREVENTION

What's critical info?

Critical information — anything that the enemy could use to leverage an advantage on the battlefield — must not be discussed with outside sources. That includes:

DETAILED INFORMATION about a unit's mission

LOCATION AND TIMES of unit deployments

SPECIFIC FACTS about military capabilities or equipment, operations, activities or intentions

REFERENCES TO TRENDS in morale or personnel

PERSONAL INFORMATION, including phone numbers, medical records and addresses

SECURITY PROCEDURE DETAILS, including how to enter an installation or secure area or what checks are in place to secure critical information

PERSONAL IDENTIFYING INFORMATION, including Social Security numbers or birth dates

FINANCIAL INFORMATION, including account numbers, user names and passwords

PERSONNEL TRANSACTIONS, including pay information, wills and next of kin notification forms

Violations that warrant reporting

Below are a few examples of when NCOs should report an opsec violation:

- ▶ When a Soldier is identified out of uniform and solicited for work details and further contact
- ▶ Questions about military equipment
- ▶ Favors requiring access to documents or equipment
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CAREER



COUNSELORS

RETAINING THE ARMY'S BEST

BY STAFF SGT. JASON STADEL
NCO Journal

It's been more than six months since the U.S. military completed its mission in Iraq, and troop numbers in Afghanistan are shrinking. With less need for troops, and a smaller defense budget, the Army needs to shrink by tens of thousands of Soldiers. Not only are fewer civilians being recruited in to the Army, but fewer current service members are being retained.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III has made it clear that he wants to keep the best Soldiers in uniform and transition to civilian life those who can't meet the standards or those who are in an overstrength military occupation specialty where re-enlistment might not be possible. The forces behind the push to keep the Army's best and brightest are Army career counselors.

Changes to the Army retention program were announced in a Feb. 2 memorandum from Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh that outlined stricter guidelines for re-enlistment. Phase two (phase

one began Oct. 1, 2011) of the new policy took effect March 1, 2012.

The gatekeepers of this initiative are Army career counselors — noncommissioned officers who serve as special staff advisors to the commanders and command sergeants major of battalion and higher commands and are trained to retain the best Soldiers and NCOs in the Army's ranks. "Career Counselors directly impact Army end strength and are force multipliers," says DA Pamphlet 600-25, *U.S. Army Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Guide*, which governs the occupational specialty. "Their functions are critical to the war fighting effort."

In August 2011, DA Pam 600-25 was revised. In the duties section of the pamphlet, it says Army career counselors are "warriors providing focused recruiting and retention support to sustain America's Army in support of full spectrum operations."

Every day, career counselors prepare and plan re-enlistments; give advice to

Soldiers, their families and command teams; and learn any new or changing re-enlistment policies.

Because of their responsibilities, being an Army career counselor is not an entry-level job. The MOS is open to promotable sergeants and staff sergeants who have less than two years of time in grade. The NCO must be recommended by a command career counselor (a retention sergeant major at division level or higher) and his or her battalion commander, meet Army standards for height and weight standards, and have a current passing score on the Army Physical Fitness Test.

But there are also less tangible characteristics needed in today's career counselors, said Sgt. Maj. Richard Jones, director of the Retention Department at U.S. Army Recruiting and Retention School at Fort Jackson, S.C.

"Career counselors need to be self-disciplined, self-starters, and have a genuine concern for Soldiers and their families," Jones said. "They must be able to work



Staff Sgt. Jessica Gregor, right, prepares re-enlistment paperwork for Sgt. Jamie Spanski on June 8 at Fort Bliss, Texas. Gregor is the career counselor for the 127th Aviation Support Battalion, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Armored Division. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JASON STADEL

alone with little or no supervision.”

Sgt. Maj. Wayne Baker, the 1st Armored Division’s command career counselor, has been in the Army since 1985 and a career counselor since 1998. He said not every NCO has what it takes to be a successful career counselor; they need a “Type A” personality.

“[Our] NCOs are not cookie-cutter; they don’t come from the same mold,” Baker said. “What we tend to do is look for and evaluate NCOs who give the whole Soldier-concept picture. Those who can articulate clearly and have the ability to stand before a large mass and give a briefing, those who are able to sit one-on-one and speak to a Soldier — we’re looking for NCOs who have empathy and sympathy toward Soldiers who have difficult issues.”

Jones said that about 200 NCOs graduate from the Retention Department at the Recruiting and Retention School each year.

The basic job of an Army career counselor — re-enlisting Soldiers — will not change, Baker said. But today’s career counselors will go about their mission a different way than he did when he was a battalion-level career counselor, he said.

“When I was coming up in the field, it was, ‘Go out there and see how many

guys you can re-enlist as fast as you possibly can.’ That’s not the intent now. The intent now is to manage the program in its totality.”

With the changing landscape of Army re-enlistment, Baker said, career counselors need to be “jacks of all trades,” because many different issues require their attention.

“You have to be proactive. Every day you have to establish a solid battle rhythm. You need to be able to think outside the box. You’ve got to be creative, because we have to overcome so many obstacles every day,” he said. “A Soldier might be locked-in and ready to take action, and then something happens. A Soldier comes on assignment, a Soldier is facing a [Uniform Code of Military Justice] action, a Soldier may have personal problems with the family. You have to always be a step ahead and say, ‘How can I overcome this particular situation?’”

The duties of an Army career counselor have grown in recent years, Jones said.

“[We now handle] reclassifications to include medical reclassifications for the entire Army; Post-9/11 [GI Bill] benefits transfer responsibilities; updating [estimated termination of service] dates, and the

authority to reconcile and pay bonuses,” Jones said.

Master Sgt. Matthew Quick is the senior career counselor for the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) and Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, Va. He said Army career counselors are starting to see a few more changes in their day-to-day operations since the Army directive came out in February.

“The Army has placed a greater emphasis on already established tools like the bar to re-enlistment, [Qualitative Management Program], [Qualitative Service Program], [MOS Administrative Retention Review], etc., and career counselors must train their commanders and senior enlisted advisors to understand who may and must be considered for these programs, and train unit clerks on the proper way to complete these packets. [Each] career counselor has a responsibility for 700-plus Soldiers’ careers.”

Quick has been in the military for 18 years, four with the Marine Corps and 14 with the Army. In addition to his duties at Joint Base Meyer-Henderson Hall, he also runs a website — ArmyReenlistment.com. The website is unofficial, and Quick uses his own money to run the site and updates it on his own time. Because he updates it

with the most current re-enlistment and MOS information, it has become a tool for Soldiers, company retention NCOs, and career counselors with re-enlistment questions. He said he invests his money and free time to run a website because he wants to take care of Soldiers.

"I truly believe in paying it forward," Quick said. "I was raised by hard-working parents and a grandmother who instilled quality values in me that I try to live by today. Since my military career began, I've been extremely fortunate to have leaders notice my strengths, and assign and utilize me accordingly. I take nothing for granted. I've learned a tremendous amount in my career and want to assist as many people as I possibly can."

Quick said leading up to the start of phase two fiscal year 2012 re-enlistment on March 1, his website, Facebook page and Twitter feed were constantly being hit with questions about the new retention policies.

"I was inundated with 200 questions," Quick said. "Fortunately, many questions were similar in nature, and I could build template responses, and then add in a personal touch to each. The more specific questions had to be directed to their respective career counselors for detailed and personal answers."

Quick said the best place for Soldiers to get answers to their re-enlistment questions is directly from their unit career counselors. But he hopes social network sites can augment information Soldiers get from their units.

"Several Soldiers' questions were simply searching for second opinions," Quick said. "The correct answer was already provided by their career counselors, but [the Soldiers] were looking for an answer that suited them or gave them confirmations and validations," Quick said.

Master Sgt. Matthew Quick, the Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall senior career counselor (far left), meets with career counselors from the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment and JBM-HH. Left to right are: John Martin, JBM-HH reserve component career counselor; Staff Sgt. Jonathan Brisiel of 1st Battalion, 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment; Sgt. 1st Class William Bastian of 4th Battalion, 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment, and the 2012 active-duty career counselor of the year; Sgt. 1st Class Jason Sauder, The Old Guard regimental recruiter; and Staff Sgt. Jamie Hill, JBM-HH career counselor.

PHOTO BY SGT. JOSE TORRES JR.

Company Retention NCO duties

According to Chapter 2, Paragraph 2-2i of AR 601-280, *The Army Retention Program*, here are a few of the areas a company re-enlistment NCO assists the commander:

- ▶ Serve as an advisor to the company commander on matters relating to the Army Retention Program, typically under the operational supervision of the battalion career counselor
- ▶ Maintain and provide monthly, quarterly and fiscal year statistics for the commander
- ▶ Review and maintain re-enlistment data cards for all Soldiers in the company
- ▶ Screen military personnel file, local training records and rosters to obtain qualification data or retention actions and records; special emphasis will be placed upon reporting and recording current re-enlistment eligibility
- ▶ Assist the commander with preparation of bars to re-enlistment on Soldiers not recommended for re-enlistment, extension or further service
- ▶ Contact and counsel Soldiers recommended for re-enlistment, extension, and/or reserve component affiliation, including those requiring waivers, to give professional guidance

With ArmyReenlistment.com's success and the growth of Facebook as a retention tool, Quick said he has been able to help his fellow career counselors set up their own social networking sites. He said no matter the command, career counselors work together for a common goal.

"I've been fortunate enough to assist many retention teams in setting up their own retention Facebook pages to put out local information on their retention programs," Quick said. "My hope is to align the Soldiers within their footprints to help answer questions from not only Soldiers,

but family members as well."

One of the biggest changes that career counselors with a smaller Army could come from over strength military occupation specialties. If an MOS is even or over strength when a Soldier or NCO wants to re-enlist the commander can deny a re-enlistment for that reason alone, Quick said.

Jones said there will be some tough decisions for career counselors and their command teams.

"It will be hard to look a fully retention-eligible Soldier in the face and tell them



Administrative Review Boards

Qualitative Management Program (QMP) applies to all retirement eligible sergeants first class, master sergeants and sergeants major. Those Soldiers who fall into this category can have their records scrutinized and may be forced to retire if there are issues in their career that are below Army standard.

The Qualitative Selective Program (QSP) uses formal centralized boards to review the records of NCOs for involuntary separation. If an NCO who is not retirement eligible is not selected for promotion during a centralized promotion board, their records will be further scrutinized. The board will then decide whether that NCO should be retained or separated from the Army.

If Soldiers have a permanent “3” or “4” profile indicating they might not meet some physical Army standards, the MOS Administrative Retention Review (MAR2) will check to see if their physical limitations prevent them from performing their primary MOS duties.

There are specific Retention Control Points for each rank. A Soldier can only stay at his or her current rank for a set number of years, without promotion, before he or she either has to get promoted or leave the Army.

they will not be able to re-enlist based on the Army’s and commander’s retention guidance,” Jones said.

If this is the case, there are options for the Soldiers, with re-classification to another, under-strength MOS the most common. But there will be cases in which Soldiers are left with no choice but to leave the Army.

“[It is difficult for career counselors] to explain to fully qualified combat veterans and their families that they are no longer needed in their current MOS, or that they may not be a ‘quality’ Soldier,” Quick said. “Although it’s the commander’s job to define quality, it’s up to the career counselor to explain this to Soldiers and formulate a plan for Soldiers on how to become more

qualified or quality.”

Battalion-level career counselors are on the front lines of Army retention. Career counselors who complete Recruiting and Retention School and are awarded the 79S MOS are then sent to work on a battalion staff. The battalion-level career counselors — typically a staff sergeant, but sometimes sergeants first class or promotable sergeants — are the counselors who work directly with Soldiers.

Most battalion command sergeants major also require each company to have a company re-enlistment NCO, who follows a program usually set up by the battalion career counselor.

Though not formally trained in retention, company re-enlistment NCOs, assist

the battalion career counselor with re-enlistment issues or questions at the company level as an additional duty.

Staff Sgt. Jessica Gregor of the 127th Aviation Support Battalion, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Armored Division, at Fort Bliss, Texas, has been a career counselor for six months and learned of the job as a company re-enlistment NCO.

“Last deployment, I was in Afghanistan, and I had an opportunity to do retention for the company,” Gregor said. “I had a lot of interaction with Soldiers, and I enjoyed that.”

Gregor was a 92A, automated logistical specialist, before she became a career counselor in the

same brigade she serves in now. During a recent deployment to Afghanistan, she excelled at her additional duty as company re-enlistment NCO and was asked by the brigade’s senior career counselor if she was interested in becoming a career counselor.

“I like working with Soldiers and knowing that I can make a direct impact in their life. Whether they want to re-enlist or if they want to transition out of the Army, I have an impact with them, and I enjoy it,” she said.

Newly lowered retention control points have been something Gregor has been trying to counsel Soldiers about. She said she does all she can to make sure troops realize they can’t stay at their current rank forever; they need to progress if they want to stay in the Army.

“We try to do everything we can to make sure the Soldiers who are reaching their RCP are taken care of. But at the end of the day, Soldiers need to take care of themselves as far as promotion, education, etc.,” she said. “That’s my challenge, because I hate to see the Soldiers who have been in for 12 or 13 years, and they can’t get promoted, and they have to get out.”

Gregor said it’s the career counselor’s



Jon Bessellieu of the Department of Veterans Affairs speaks to career counselors from Fort Bliss, Texas, and White Sands Missile Range, N.M., June 22 during their quarterly training. Bessellieu spoke about the VA benefits available to Soldiers who are leaving the Army.

PHOTO BY SPC. ASHLEY ARNETT

job to give every Soldier the tools to make the Army a career. But it's up to each Soldier to use those tools.

"For example, I look at their [Enlisted Record Brief] and I say, 'I see here there aren't any college credits. Have you gone to school yet? Have you improved your GT score? Because that would make a difference for a job,'" Gregor said. "We're just trying to do everything we can to get them where they need to be. But it's up to the Soldier taking initiative to advance their career."

Today's career counselors also help Soldiers transition out of the Army into civilian life. Career counselors ensure transitioning Soldiers know about the programs available to them when they are leaving the Army, such as the Army Career and Alumni Program.

"If they want to get out, I want to make sure they will find jobs out there," said Staff Sgt. Julio Martinez, 2nd Battalion, 501st Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Armored Division career counselor. "I want to make sure they are marketable. We serve this country, and I want the best for them. I say 'Thank you,' because they did their time."

In addition to serving the individual Soldiers, career counselors advise command teams on re-enlistment statuses within their unit, as well as any changes to the Army retention program.

"What we do is a living, breathing daily operation," Baker said. "You have to be up to speed, because policy changes occur so often, and you don't know when they are going to change. You can come in tomorrow, and the Army has decided to go a

whole different way as far as retention is concerned. You've got to be up to speed, because when addressing and providing information to a commander or a command sergeant major, you want to make sure that information is current and that it's pertinent to what their battle rhythm deems necessary."

Career counselors have the duty to keep their command informed of current retention policies and the duty to keep all re-enlistment eligible Soldiers aware of their career options. And in this time of Army transition, they will work to keep the best Soldiers the Army has produced, and help those who want, or have to, become civilians. ♣

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Army recognizes top career counselors at Pentagon ceremony

BY WILLIAM GARBE Army News Service

Four Army career counselors were recognized at the Pentagon, June 19, for their outstanding service in career counseling.

Under Secretary of the Army Joseph W. Westphal congratulated and recognized the honorees in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes. Westphal said the counselors expertly assisted Soldiers who re-enlisted and provided them and their families with all the opportunities and options that come with making the Army a career choice.

"Their contributions significantly help the Army to truly be the strength of the nation," Westphal said.

The career counselors who were recognized were Sgt. 1st Class William P. Bastion, career counselor of the year; Master Sgt. Robert L. Weers, reserve-component career counselor of the year; Sgt. 1st Class Craig A. Wester, National Guard recruiter and retention noncommissioned officer of the year; and Master Sgt. Arnaldo Caban-Cruz, Army Reserve career counselor of the year.

The under secretary noted that career counselors, whose mission is to retain Soldiers, have a difficult mission.

"The challenge is compounded by the fact that we recruit Soldiers, but in many ways we retain families," Westphal said. "To meet this challenge, today's retention program involves a complex support system for Soldiers and their families."

Under Secretary of the Army Joseph W. Westphal presents Master Sgt. Arnaldo Caban-Cruz with the 2012 Army Reserve Career Counselor of the Year award June 19 during an awards ceremony at the Pentagon. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. BERNARDO FULLER

Caban-Cruz echoed the words of Westphal. He said the job of retaining Soldiers is always challenging, yet he encourages Soldiers to stay because of the benefits the Army provides Soldiers and their families.

"This has been an unbelievable experience," Caban-Cruz said. "Knowing that all the work that I have done, and that the mentorship and the leaders that I've had through my career and everything that they have taught me has helped me to get to this point is unbelievable."

For Sibley, the Army Reserve recruiter of the year and second-time participant in the competition, the whole experience was humbling.

"This was the best thing that I've ever seen since being in the military," Sibley said reflecting on his past eight years of enlistment. "It's just amazing."





TECHNOLOGY + STORIES = ADVANCED LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Combining technology with
Hollywood-style storytelling is
helping the Army lead the way
in the training of the
next generation of leaders.

**STORIES AND PHOTOS BY
JONATHAN (JAY) KOESTER**

Orli Belman, public relations and programs manager for the Institute for Creative Technologies, holds a mirror ball in the institute's Light Stage dome. The dome is used for facial scans to help create realistic virtual humans for Hollywood, as well as ICT's Army projects like ELITE and SimCoach.





Leaders who go through the ELITE virtual training sit at a desk like this facing the virtual Staff Sgt. Jacob Garza. They will use the computer screen and mouse to choose responses to what Garza says.

As the Army develops the next generation of leaders, a problem often comes up in this age of social media, online games and digital communication. With so much human interaction taking place digitally or online, many young Soldiers have a hard time initiating difficult conversations face-to-face.

The solution for that lack of interpersonal communication skill is increasingly coming from, strangely enough, virtual humans.

The Emergent Leader Immersive Training Environment, or ELITE, allows officers and NCOs the opportunity to practice having the difficult conversations and counseling sessions that are a part of Army life. But in the case of ELITE, the conversations take place with a virtual Soldier. It's a way for leaders to practice before having to use their communication skills in real life.

ELITE is a prototype developed by the University of Southern California Institute for Creative Technologies, based in Playa Vista, Calif. The ICT was established in

“It’s ironic we’re teaching those skills with a digital character. But it becomes like playing a game, and that’s what this generation is used to.”

— **RANDALL W. HILL JR.**,
executive director of the ICT

1999 and is a university-affiliated research center sponsored by the U.S. Army Simulation and Training Technology Center based in Orlando, Fla.

Randall W. Hill Jr., the executive director of the ICT, said although it may at first seem counterintuitive to use the digital, virtual world to teach Army leaders how to speak with their Soldiers, that’s often where learning can take place most comfortably.

“I heard this at Fort Huachuca, [Ariz.], when I was out there talking to the guys at interrogation school,” Hill said. “They

said, ‘You know, it’s something about this millennial generation, many of them don’t know how to have face-to-face interactions, and we need our interrogators to be able to establish a rapport with the person they are interacting with.’ It’s ironic we’re teaching those skills with a digital character. But it becomes like playing a game, and that’s what this generation is used to doing.”

ELITE is just one of many prototypes being developed by ICT, but it is the one most directly tied to developing Army leaders. The ICT takes technology experts and combines them with the creative people and storytellers of the Southern California-based entertainment industry to create immersive experiences that can inspire and educate.

“We were started because people high up in the Army realized that there’s something more to training than just technology,” Hill said. “They saw the heavy use of video games, and they also began to realize there is this power in story that is almost primal in nature. Stories have been around

for as long as we have. We really believe people are wired to enjoy stories, to engage with them and remember them. The institute was started to bring those creative forces and the technology forces together to create more effective training systems.

"We're a very eclectic group," Hill said. "If you want to think about this place, it's kind of a left brain-right brain shop. The left brain guys are all the engineers and computer scientists who are building the technologies. The right brain people — we have a lot of people from the humanities and from the creative industry — are from the soft-skills side. These are people who take these technologies, and they are able to create an experience that's very holistic that is going to achieve those learning objectives and fulfill the vision for the institute."

How ELITE works

With ELITE, the institute wanted to create an immersive environment where Soldiers could practice their communication and leadership skills with a virtual character named Staff Sgt. Jacob Garza. In a classroom building at Fort Benning, Ga., where the system is set up, officers walk into the Digital Immersive Virtual Environment and sit down at a table facing Garza. The DIVE is made to look like a normal office, with Garza on the other side of a desk.

Garza is having problems with his platoon sergeant, and it is up to the leader to find out why and attempt to help. Though the current ELITE system is designed for officers to practice communicating with their NCOs, the program's success is leading to a similar system designed for NCOs.

As the leader speaks with Garza in the DIVE, he or she comes to conversation points where one of three responses can be chosen in an effort to get Garza to speak more about his behavior since returning from a deployment in Iraq. In the scenario, the officer recently became the platoon leader and doesn't know the Soldiers or Garza very well. The ICT interviewed dozens of officers and NCOs to help make sure the scenario was meaningful and realistic, said Matt Bosack, a special project manager at ICT.

"We wanted to make sure that when we created scenarios for this system, that they're realistic, that we hit the right points and it's based on things that other people have gone through," Bosack said. "We were



Albert "Skip" Rizzo, associate director for medical virtual reality at the ICT, left, puts a visitor to the institute through the Virtual Iraq/Afghanistan simulator.

Virtual environments help Soldiers prepare and veterans recover

The Institute for Creative Technologies is using virtual environments to help Soldiers prepare for combat and to help veterans upon their return.

Soldiers preparing for combat can go through the ICT Medical Virtual Reality Lab's Stress Resilience in Virtual Environments, or STRIVE. STRIVE helps pre-deployment Soldiers understand and train for the combat stress.

STRIVE is a two-part experience. First, the Soldier puts on a headset and is put into a realistic combat scenario. It is designed to bring about physical, social and emotional stress. The ICT puts in lots of small touches to make the experience realistic, including a smell machine to pump out the "smells of war," said Albert "Skip" Rizzo, associate director for medical virtual reality.

After the experience, a virtual mentor explains to the Soldier how the brain and the body react to stress. The knowledge is meant to give Soldiers additional tools to help their resiliency.

Once they return from downrange, the ICT has a similar program to help veterans deal with what they saw in Iraq or Afghanistan. The Bravemind program, also called Virtual Iraq/Afghanistan, is a form of exposure therapy to help Soldiers deal with their memories.

In exposure therapy, the Soldier, guided by a trained therapist, confronts his or her traumatic memories through

a retelling of the experience. Making virtual reality part of the process can often bring back the anxiety, Rizzo said.

"Anything that even kind of resembles what they were traumatized by is enough for them to feel anxiety," Rizzo said. "And you want them to feel a manageable level of anxiety because, as they engage in the scenario over time, that anxiety naturally will extinguish. That's the basis of exposure therapy."

The technology, paired with professional counseling, can help ease post-traumatic stress, Rizzo said.

"It's not about the technology fixing them or changing their brain," Rizzo said. "Rather the technology is simply a stimulus to help them begin to narrate, dispute — basically to process very challenging emotional memories."

With the growing number of Soldiers returning from combat, the push to help their mental health is urgent. That push will help the country in many ways in years to come, Rizzo said.

"Everything we're doing now, driven by the urgency of war, is helping us to evolve and develop technologies that will have significant ramifications in the next decade in civilian health care," Rizzo said. "War sucks, but it does drive innovation in medicine, mental health and rehabilitation that carries on to the military population and the civilian population."

constantly working with our subject-matter experts at Fort Benning, which is where the system is deployed now, to make sure we were hitting all the right instructional points and that everything in this system was going to be legitimate.”

On the technology side of the equation, the ICT team wanted to build a lifelike staff sergeant who could inform the situation through his body language, not just his words, said Kim LeMasters, ICT’s former creative director.

“We realized in interpersonal communication, the oral part of it is 70 percent of it,” LeMasters said. “But 30 percent of what we do in communication is body language. You nodding back to me is communication that I am in receipt of. Somebody yawns, I take note of that. All of it is important. So we wanted to build a virtual human that is giving not only oral responses, but is giving you visual information as well.”

In addition to the one leader going through the training in the DIVE, a whole class sitting just outside the DIVE can participate, as well. There is a camera in the DIVE, so others can watch what goes on.

“We actually allow the students in the classroom to participate as well because we give them clickers,” Bosack said. “As that interaction is taking place, everybody in the classroom is able to say, ‘I would have said this, or I would have said that,’ and all that information is tracked for the instructor to use in the after-action review.”

Creating a story that Soldiers feel invested in is a large part of the experience, Bosack said.

“In each of the scenarios, we want people to feel invested in the character,” Bosack said. “We want you to feel sympathy for him, maybe feel anger toward him at certain points, and really the only way you can do that is if you immerse that person in the scenario completely through the story. In the classroom, you get a full notebook on Garza’s past performance, what kind of commendations he’s received, any sort of infractions he’s received beforehand.

“With Staff Sgt. Garza, they have three scenarios right now,” Bosack said. “The next scenario is a month later, and now Garza’s wife has bounced checks at the commissary. Is there some kind of connection between the two? And the third scenario is he gets picked up for DUI. If you look at the arc of those three scenarios, he’s gone downhill each time.



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III describes a teaching point while ELITE instructor Sgt. 1st Class Ernie Casiano looks on during an ELITE-focused training session in May at Fort Benning, Ga. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE INSTITUTE FOR CREATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

“With a deliberate practice environment done under expert guidance, you have the ability to create mastery in a much faster and more deeply held way.”

— KIM LEMASTERS,
ICT’s former creative director

“If you go through the scenario and ask the right questions, it’s because he’s suffering from post-traumatic stress, most likely because of a fallen comrade and what he went through on his last deployment. It’s caused issues with his family,” Bosack said. “People get engaged with that story, and that’s the idea.”

Surprisingly, the institute’s studies have shown many get more out of working with a virtual human than practicing with a real human — some even find it more realistic.

“During testing, some said they were more comfortable with the virtual human than the real human. And I was often the real human in the scenarios, so that hurt,” Bosack said, laughing.

“When you’re with someone you know, it can be hard to interact with them. In this case, when you’re interacting with a virtual human, this may as well be that subordinate who you barely know. You’re

learning how to react to people you don’t know well.”

The ELITE system is designed to be attention-getting and to have play elements to keep people interested, LeMasters said.

“We purposefully design these things to look good, to be big and to be bright, because that creates attention,” LeMasters said. “The minute I get attention, I’ve already begun the path toward increased acquisition of knowledge. Everybody engages on this, and everybody wants to talk about it afterward.”

The system allows Soldiers to practice skills that people often just read about and don’t try out, LeMasters said.

“There is one thing that is missing from almost all soft-skill training, and that is practice,” LeMasters said. “With a deliberate practice environment done under expert guidance, you have the ability to create mastery in a much faster and more deeply held way. It needs to be done. How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice.”

The ICT has created a system to learn and practice leadership skills in a way that is fun and engaging, Hill said.

“We’re trying to create training products that not only engage the senses, but engage your mind and your heart,” Hill said. “They draw you in, and they’re designed to have a major impact in training, education or leader development.”

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SimCoach allows Soldiers to seek help without stigma

Despite the best efforts of the Army, Soldiers often still feel a stigma when they need help with post-traumatic stress.

No less a source than Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III has talked about the therapy he received at Fort Bliss, Texas, for PTS. Army leaders have attempted to make it clear that Soldiers should seek help, and that seeking help will not hurt their careers.

But for those Soldiers who still feel uneasy about seeking help, the University of Southern California Institute for Creative Technologies has created SimCoach, a virtual human designed to help service members get past barriers to receiving mental health support and finding services available. SimCoach uses a virtual human to get past any stigma, said Randall W. Hill, Jr., the executive director of the ICT.

“Not everybody goes to their first sergeant or to their chain of command with these issues,” Hill said. “There’s a serious stigma that has been identified with (PTS), and they are afraid they will look weak or it will inhibit them from being promoted because they think, ‘He’s broken.’ So people don’t go forward. Instead they deal with it by self-medicating with drugs, alcohol, whatever it is. So the idea behind the virtual human for this application was to create an empathetic character, someone whom you feel you can identify with. It’s going to draw you into the information that is out there in a way that a normal website wouldn’t, because a lot of websites have great information on them, but they are not real ‘sticky.’ You get there, and it’s too dense. You can’t find what you are looking for; you get frustrated.”

SimCoach is important because although there is a lot of useful information on the Internet to help Soldiers, it can be hard for Soldiers to get to it, said Albert “Skip” Rizzo, associate director for medical virtual reality at the ICT.

“When we asked Soldiers and their families, ‘When you want to get information about physical and mental health on the Internet, where do you go?’ most folks picked Google, as opposed to a military-



Where to go

Bill Ford, the ICT's first web-based interactive virtual human, can be used at <http://braveheartveterans.org/SimCoach.htm>

The site is a veteran support initiative of the Atlanta Braves baseball team and Emory University, and is focused on help available in the Atlanta area. But all Soldiers and veterans can use the site and begin seeking the help available to them. More SimCoach websites are expected in the future.

sponsored site,” Rizzo said. “On the military sites, there is tons of well-vetted information that’s tailored for these folks, which they could benefit from. But there’s a resistance, whether it’s fear of being tracked or whatever.

“We’ve got significant data showing service members are hesitant to go to military sites for fear they’re being tracked, it’s going to go on their record, and so on,” Rizzo said. “Even though that’s not the case, it’s still an issue. That’s the point of SimCoach. SimCoach was designed to take all the technology and put it in an online deliverable format, where anybody with any computer can type in questions and

interact with the SimCoach in an anonymous fashion, in order to break down barriers to care.

“There’s something about an embodied agent, even if he’s virtual, that we believe people will be drawn to, maybe be more honest with, particularly if it’s anonymous,” Rizzo said.

Rizzo makes it clear that SimCoach is really a device to help Soldiers take the first steps to getting care and treatment. The virtual human is not meant to serve as a doctor.

“For folks who are hesitant to seek care with a live provider, this is not a replacement for it,” Rizzo said. “SimCoach is not a ‘Doc in a Box.’ It’s a stepping stone. It’s a way for someone to anonymously ask questions, or you can take a test or assessment to see where you are on the scale of PTS or depression. And the SimCoach can make recommendations and recommend, ‘Hey, there’s a great site, AfterDeployment.org, and on the site there is a video about the sleeping problem you mentioned. Would you like to see that video?’”

Once past that initial barrier to care, Rizzo believes Soldiers and their families will be pleased to see the many resources available to them. In that way, the stigma slowly disappears, and Soldiers learn how to cope with post-traumatic stress, depression or other mental health issues.



Senior NCOs from 38 countries observe a multinational training exercise in Stunj, Croatia, June 5 during the Conference of European Armies for Noncommissioned Officers. PHOTO BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS



EUROPE'S NCOS

A EUROPEAN HELPED BUILD OUR NCO CORPS.
NOW, WE'RE RETURNING THE FAVOR.

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS NCO Journal





In 1778, Gen. George Washington hired a drillmaster from Prussia to mold a professional corps of enlisted Soldiers from the shambolic band of colonials that made up the Continental Army. Steeped in the European ways of training soldiers and of instilling discipline among their ranks, Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben is widely credited with instituting the NCO Corps of the U.S. Army.

Some 230 years later, the U.S. Army is returning the favor, helping European armies train, develop and, in some cases, build from scratch

corps of noncommissioned officers who fight alongside their American comrades in Afghanistan. It is all part of an enduring program of collaboration and partnership that benefits NCOs on both sides of the Atlantic.

"The cooperation across the European footprint is unbelievable," said Command Sgt. Maj. David Davenport, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Europe. "The high level of cooperation can be seen in Afghanistan, where the large majority of coalition forces comes from Europe."

Indeed, of the non-U.S. soldiers currently in Afghanistan, more than 91 percent are from Europe — a ratio of about 2 European troops for every 7 from the United States. That alliance is more than just the start of a trend, Davenport said. It reflects a new reality that will affect every American NCO.

"I hope that NCOs in the U.S. Army understand that we will always be part of a coalition. It will no longer be one against one; it's going to be a united effort," he said. "I hope NCOs get from these partnerships the ability to learn from one another. Just because we are the U.S. Army, that doesn't mean we have the best practices exclusively. When we send NCOs to different [NCO Education System] schools, we always talk about networking. Well, why not network and gain different insights from a different army? I think that's going to be hugely important."

Partners in training

Training together in Europe is a natural outcome of fighting together in Afghanistan, said Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, the outgoing commanding general of U.S. Army Europe.

"The way they got there and the way we are able to conduct operations together there is because we all train together here," he said.

Davenport added, "It's better to build that relationship now in a training environment than trying to do it on the battlefield."

For an army the size of Croatia's, partnering to train for missions abroad has been invaluable, said its top NCO, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Dominick Ban.

"The Croatian Army is relatively small, if you are comparing with other armies," he said. "However, we are aware that we have successfully completed our duties outside our nation always with the cooperation and support of larger alliances and joint international training. This is crucial and very important. Why? Because there needs to be mutual understanding in order to successfully complete the tasks that stand before us."

As part of the collaborative effort, thousands of soldiers from partner nations



EUROPE IN AFGHANISTAN

Much of the training the U.S. Army conducts with forces from European armies has its roots in the coalition fighting in Afghanistan. Of the nearly 40,000 non-U.S. troops currently deployed in support of the International Security and Assistance Force there, nearly 36,000, or 91%, are from Europe. The map shows those countries with forces currently in Afghanistan and the number of troops deployed there as of May 15.

SOURCE: ISAF
MAP BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS





Staff Sgt. Dustin French, a Warrior Leader Course instructor at the 7th Army NCO Academy at Grafenwöhr, Germany, explains the M16A2 zeroing target to Staff Sgt. Maciej Rzepka of the Polish Land Forces during a situational training exercise in April 2011. More than 260 Polish NCOs have enrolled in WLC at the academy since 2002. PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS TONYA GONZALES

have trained at U.S. Army facilities in Grafenwöhr and Hohenfels, Germany, to prepare for missions in Afghanistan, said Command Sgt. Maj. Dennis Zavodsky, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Europe's Joint Multinational Training Command.

"Combat training, home-station training, institutional training and simulation — all those things are possible at JMTC, which is unique in our Army, because that is not always the case stateside," Zavodsky said. "That's something specific to U.S. Army Europe that I think our customers find facilitates their training needs."

"USAREUR is uniquely set up to provide the resources to get at the wide range of operations — everything from our maneuver training areas to our live-fire ranges for individual and crew-served weapons," Davenport said. "They give [our Soldiers and those of other countries] the opportunity to interact. I think those combinations really help training."

"You hear about 'smart defense' initiatives," Hertling said. "But this is the kind of smart defense that I think is the smartest — just getting people together for a training opportunity, watching them on the ranges, combining efforts and building trust. That's the real smart defense,

and we've been doing it at USAREUR for quite some time."

Predeployment training is just one way U.S. Army Europe contributes to partner nations' NCO education, Zavodsky said. Incorporating international students into NCOES courses is another. More than 650 students from other countries have graduated the Warrior Leader Course at the 7th Army NCO Academy in Grafenwöhr during the last decade.

"We consider Poland the gold standard as far as training volume is concerned," he said. More than 260 Polish troops have attended the course. "Ultimately, what we're trying to get to with our Warrior Leader Course is we want it to become even more multinational. Our model doesn't fit everybody, but what I think it does provide is an

opportunity for partnership and to work together."

In the future, Zavodsky hopes to begin exchanging instructors with other countries' NCO schools to further share tactics, techniques and procedures. One such swap is already in the works with Germany's NCO school, he said.

"Their course is much longer than ours — about six months long," Zavodsky said. "But we're willing to make that investment to maintain that partnership."

It's a collaboration that is designed to be reciprocal, Davenport said.

"I think we can provide a standard, a way of doing business, and allow them to see that," he said. "They then put their own national identity on that as they develop their NCO corps. We just show one way of doing it."

"If we can learn something from, say, the Croatian Army and can apply it to our Army, we do, and we are," Hertling said. "During our last exercise at Hohenfels, we had a U.S. Airborne unit trying to dig in a defensive position and establish an engagement area. That is a skill required by all our Soldiers, but they haven't done it in 10 years. Meanwhile, the Slovenian army was off to the right, digging foxholes and putting out wire, putting up their aiming stakes, making sure their weapons were sighted. One of our Airborne battalion sergeants major pulled aside one of his first sergeants and said, 'Look at how they're doing it. That's how I want you to do it.'"

"This isn't a one-way street; this is an exchange," Hertling said. "This isn't a top-

"THIS ISN'T A TOP-DOWN, THIS-IS-HOW-YOU-DO-IT THING. IT'S AN EXCHANGE OF BEST PRACTICES BETWEEN ARMIES. IT'S ABOUT GOOD IDEAS."

— LT. GEN. MARK HERTLING

down, this-is-how-you-do-it thing. It's an exchange of best practices between armies. It's about good ideas."

Old but new

At the most recent gathering of the top NCOs from across Europe and beyond, held in June in Zagreb, Croatia (see page 32), conference participants discussed how best to train the next generation of non-commissioned officers within militaries that don't necessarily regard NCOs as the backbone of their organizations. Though the Bulgarian army can trace its origins to the 7th century, for example, its NCO corps is still nascent, said Sgt. Maj. of the Army Lyubomir Lambov, the Bulgarian Land Forces' first SMA.

"The very first thing was to change officers' minds, because some of the officers do not recognize the need to even have a sergeant major of the army," he said. "There is a Bulgarian NCO Corps. But NCOs in the Bulgarian army are more like 'senior soldiers,' not professional NCOs like in the United States. We have an enlisted rank structure now, but that had to be created from nothing."

Like many nations in Europe, Bulgaria had to develop its NCO corps as it shifted away from conscription to an all-volunteer force. Since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, nearly two dozen European nations have abolished or suspended mandatory military service during peacetime. Yet as the militaries shrank, so did budgets for education and training. And noncommissioned officers, if there were any left, were not considered a priority by many countries' military leadership.

"The educational opportunities for NCOs are still not as large as those for officers," Lambov said. "Three years ago, we established a one-year NCO college. But I get the impression from some senior officers and generals that they don't want this college to exist. I don't know why, but it's probably related to old-style thinking left over from the Soviet system."

Croatian soldiers wait for dignitaries to arrive June 5 during the Immediate Response 2012 exercises in Slunj, Croatia. The tactical training involved more than 700 personnel from the U.S. Army's 2nd Cavalry Regiment and the armies of Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Slovenia, Macedonia, and Serbia.

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. ANTONY M.C. JOSEPH

Greece, which still has conscription, has worked to develop NCOs from both its volunteer and conscript forces, said Sgt. Maj. George Papakirykos of the Hellenic Army.

"The difference, based on the other countries that I've seen, is that we're more like the Italian or German style," he said. "We have an NCO corps, but we don't have brigade sergeants major or battalion sergeants major like in the United States. We do have similar positions, but they change from one person in the unit to another regularly. The purpose is mostly to gain experience. In my battalion, for example, I was the battalion sergeant major, and that was for a week. That way, all the senior NCOs have the opportunity to see the du-

ties of the command team."

Papakirykos said experience and education work in tandem to provide NCOs professional development in Greece.

"We try to have an equilibrium between the military's tactical experience and training, and academic qualifications. We believe that this will generally increase our level," he said. "For example, I am a political scientist and am pursuing a master's degree. That gives another perspective to my job as an NCO. But that doesn't mean that a 20-year NCO — especially a sergeant major — can't teach me many things about how to train soldiers."

But what does a country do after it gets rid of all its NCOs? That was the issue the Swedish Armed Forces faced in recent





Sgt. 1st Class Randy Angel, an observer-controller with the Joint Multinational Training Command, gives instructions to Montenegrin soldiers June 1 during Immediate Response 2012. PHOTO BY SPC. LORENZO WARE

decades after it eliminated all NCOs from its military. Today, it is in the middle of rebuilding its NCO corps from the ground up, said Maj. Joachim Blomgren, head of NCO education, training and development for the Swedish Armed Forces.

"Between 1983 and 2008, we only had officers and [junior] conscript soldiers," he said. "This resulted in a lack of well-educated officers and a lack of deep knowledge in each branch profession. In 2006, it was a government decision that we should go back — we should have officers and noncommissioned officers again. Because of that, we have a huge challenge to change this system."

Blomgren explained that part of the process will be to convert more than a thousand officers to NCO ranks, including him.

"Today, we have about 90 percent officers and 10 percent NCOs," he said. "But in two years, we should have 60 percent NCOs and 40 percent officers. For example, my position is an NCO position. Probably, my commander will come to me and say he wants me to become an NCO, and that will be the same

for 400 majors, 300 lieutenant colonels and 500 captains who will have to change to an NCO rank."

In contrast to the lack of respect felt by some countries' NCO corps, Blomgren said Swedish society prizes equality.

"I don't think respect will be a problem," he said. "In Sweden, the CEO, for example, is not as powerful; he's an ordinary guy. If I talk to my commander, a brigadier, it's like talking with anyone else. It's Swedish society; we're not divided into different classes like that."

But he said that equitability makes it harder to attract potential recruits to Sweden's military, which has been an all-volunteer force since 2010.

"I think the hardest thing is to keep the soldiers in," Blomgren said. "In Sweden, for example, everyone can go to college or university and won't have to pay. We have free health care as well. So you don't

have the same incentives [like in the U.S. Army]. And we're not allowed to give free food or free housing, like in the U.S. If I'm out on an exercise, I have to pay for the food, because a civilian working in a factory cannot get free food. In Sweden, everybody is supposed to be equal."

A helping hand

Strengthening the bonds between the United States and its allies begins with the troops on the ground, who all speak a common language, if not the same tongue, Davenport said.

"It's about what we have in common rather than our differences," he said. "There's a universal concern that NCOs have for soldiers, a commitment to make sure that they are well-led, well-trained and well-equipped."

There are also parallels between the process armies are going through to develop their NCO corps and the process by which American NCOs develop themselves, he said.

"I think that sometimes, countries are facing issues that newly promoted sergeants in the U.S. Army are faced with. As they make that transition from specialist to sergeant, they're faced with a lot of new responsibility and expectations. That's what a lot of these countries are dealing with: What is the role of the noncommissioned officer? What can we expect from them?"

Ultimately, the more conversations NCOs from different countries have, the better it will be for all future leaders, Davenport said.

"When you have this dialogue, you're able to teach the next generation," he said. "We owe it to them to give them all our experience and the life lessons we've learned the hard way. Pass it on to them to make our Army and NCO Corps even better." ♡

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"IT'S ABOUT WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON RATHER THAN OUR DIFFERENCES. THERE'S A UNIVERSAL CONCERN THAT NCOS HAVE FOR SOLDIERS."

— COMMAND SGT. MAJ. DAVID DAVENPORT

AMERICA'S EUROPEAN PARTNERS AT A GLANCE

	POPULATION ¹	ACTIVE MILITARY ¹	 EU MEMBERSHIP ²	 NATO MEMBERSHIP	CONSCRIPTION	 USAREUR TRAINING ³
 Albania	2,994,667	14,245	potential candidate	since 2009	abolished 2010	24 WLC, 168 JMTC
 Armenia	2,967,975	46,834	no	no, CIS member	yes, 2 year obligation	—
 Austria	8,217,280	25,758	since 1995	no, neutral	yes, 6–12 month obligation	—
 Belgium	10,431,477	34,336	since 1957	since 1949	suspended 1992	1 WLC, 48 JMTC
 Bosnia & Herzegovina	4,622,163	10,577	potential candidate	planned	abolished 2007	14 WLC
 Bulgaria	7,093,635	31,315	since 2007	since 2004	abolished 2007	52 WLC, 415 JMTC
 Croatia	4,483,804	18,600	acceding 2013	since 2009	abolished 2008	100 JMTC
 Czech Republic	10,190,213	25,421	since 2004	since 1999	abolished 2004	14 WLC, 270 JMTC
 Denmark	5,529,888	18,628	since 1973	since 1949	yes, 4–12 month obligation	6 JMTC
 Estonia	1,282,963	5,750	since 2004	since 2004	yes, 8–11 month obligation	8 WLC, 106 JMTC
 Finland	5,259,250	22,100	since 1995	no, neutral	yes, 6–12 month obligation	—
 France	65,102,719	238,591	since 1957	since 1949	suspended 2001	—
 Georgia	4,585,874	20,655	no	planned	yes, 18 month obligation	2 WLC, 196 JMTC
 Germany	81,471,834	251,465	since 1957	since 1955	suspended 2011	1 WLC, 795 JMTC
 Greece	10,760,136	145,647	since 1981	since 1952	yes, 9–12 month obligation	—
 Hungary	9,976,062	22,587	since 2004	since 1999	abolished 2004	211 JMTC
 Iceland	311,058	0	candidate	since 1949	no	—
 Ireland	4,670,976	9,650	since 1973	no, neutral	no	—
 Italy	61,016,804	184,532	since 1957	since 1949	abolished 2005	113 JMTC
 Kosovo	1,836,529	2,800	potential candidate	no	no	116 WLC, 23 JMTC
 Latvia	2,204,708	4,600	since 2004	since 2004	abolished 2007	162 JMTC
 Lithuania	3,535,547	10,640	since 2004	since 2004	suspended 2008	64 JMTC
 Luxembourg	503,302	900	since 1957	since 1949	no	—
 Republic of Macedonia	2,077,328	8,000	candidate	planned	abolished 2006	2 WLC
 Moldova	3,694,121	5,354	no	no, CIS member	yes, 12 month obligation	8 WLC
 Montenegro	661,807	2,984	candidate	planned	abolished 2006	13 WLC
 Netherlands	16,653,734	37,368	since 1957	since 1949	suspended 1997	96 JMTC
 Norway	4,691,849	24,450	no	since 1949	yes, 6–12 months	34 JMTC
 Poland	38,441,588	100,000	since 2004	since 1999	abolished 2009	262 WLC, 885 JMTC
 Portugal	10,760,305	42,634	since 1986	since 1949	abolished 2004	—
 Romania	21,904,551	73,900	since 2007	since 2004	abolished 2006	9 WLC, 531 JMTC
 Russia	143,056,383	1,027,000	no	no, CIS member	yes, 12 month obligation	12 WLC
 Serbia	7,310,555	28,184	candidate	no	abolished 2011	44 WLC, 6 JMTC
 Slovakia	5,477,038	15,799	since 2004	since 2004	abolished 2006	12 WLC, 249 JMTC
 Slovenia	2,000,092	7,600	since 2004	since 2004	abolished 2003	58 WLC, 396 JMTC
 Spain	46,754,784	143,006	since 1986	since 1982	abolished 2001	2 JMTC
 Sweden	9,088,728	20,263	since 1995	no, neutral	abolished 2010	—
 Switzerland	7,639,961	25,287	no	no, neutral	yes, 5 month obligation	—
 Turkey	78,785,548	666,576	candidate	since 1952	yes, 6–12 month obligation	9 WLC
 Ukraine	45,134,707	129,925	no	no, neutral	yes, to be abolished 2015	16 WLC
United Kingdom	62,698,362	174,030	since 1973	since 1949	abolished 1960	2 JMTC

¹ 2012 figures according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies. ² Status according to the European Commission; includes membership in the European Economic Community, the predecessor of the European Union.

³ Warrior Leader Course students at the 7th Army NCO Academy in Grafenwöhr, Germany, Oct. 2002–June 2012 and troops trained by the Joint Multinational Training Command's Combined Arms Training Center Oct. 2006–May 2012.

STRENGTHENING THE COALITION

SENIOR NCOS FROM 38 COUNTRIES GATHER FOR 6TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BY MASTER SGT. ANTONY M.C. JOSEPH NCO Journal

It has been said that war is the result of a failure of diplomacy; others have said that even if mediation and negotiations were factors in today's global conflict, terrorists cannot be swayed by diplomacy. Whatever the outcome of that discussion is, it is beneficial when soldiers from different, allied countries get together to discuss a joint, combined and cohesive way to combat terrorism and other threats to their nations.

To achieve this, U.S. Army Europe has been conducting a Conference of European Armies for Noncommissioned Officers for the past six years. The gatherings' aim has been to work through the different aspects of forming a unified and productive allied force. This year, at the conference hosted by USAREUR and the Croatian Army in Zagreb, Croatia, the theme was strengthening the coalition that has fought together in Afghanistan by training together in Europe. In attendance were the sergeants major of the army and other senior NCOs from 38 countries, mostly from Europe.

"In the first year of the conference, only 16 countries

participated. But the reputation and success of the conference has grown and encouraged the turnout seen now," said Command Sgt. Maj. David Davenport, USAREUR's command sergeant major.

Davenport said the annual conferences help maintain the momentum that has been built over the years in "leader development and

establishing personal relationships to strengthen the NCO Corps" of the partner nations.

The commanding general of USAREUR, Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, is also a great proponent of building bonds with our allies.

"In Europe, we have a good relationship with the rest of our coalition partners and work well together," Hertling said. "Because we train together and know each other personally and have built trust, not only at events such as this but also during training events, we have a better rapport when we get downrange."

One such training event was being conducted at the Croatian Army's training area outside Slunj while the conference was under way in the capital. Troops from Croatia, Albania, Slovenia, Montenegro and USAREUR's 2nd Cavalry Regiment joined together to attack a fortified position of mock insurgents. The advantages of training together and knowing one another's tactics and procedures was evident as the coalition of forces seemed to work as one, executing the mission flawlessly.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Dominick Ban of the Croatian Army said the exercise was a very visual way to show conference attendees "how important the training together is."

"Though we have modeled our training on the U.S. curriculum, we have our own intricacies, and so do the other countries," he said. "But by knowing each other's differences, we were able to flow together very nicely."

Hertling said that during the past 10 years, American forces have focused on skills needed for counterinsurgency warfare. "We have been focused on that type of skill set, but as we get toward the post-ISAF scenario, we are going to be asked to do other things," he said. "Different skills will be required; skills we haven't practiced for a while now — things such as fortifying our positions, digging in defensive positions. Some of our coalition partners have maintained those skills; I noticed that during the training event. The

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Dominick Ban of the Croatian Army presents a coin to U.S. Army Sgt. Zachary Malphurs of 1st Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, June 5 during a visit to a multinational training exercise near Slunj, Croatia. PHOTO BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS





Above: Ban and Command Sgt. Maj. David Davenport, command sergeant major of U.S. Army Europe, lead a discussion June 4 during the 6th Annual Conference of European Armies for Noncommissioned Officers at Zagreb, Croatia.

Right: Sgt. Maj. of the Army Lyobomir Lambov of the Bulgarian army (left) talks with Sgt. Maj. of the Army Roshan Safi of the Afghanistan army on June 6 in front of the Banski Dvori, home of Croatia's executive branch, in Zagreb.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

relationships we have made here are going to help when we have to refine our skills based on what everyone else in the coalition is doing.”

Though funding for such events is always a concern, Davenport said that because of the close relationships, countries “are able to partner up and use each other’s resources and facilities,” thus defraying the cost.

“The generals have been doing these types of Conference of European Armies for about 18 years or so, but the NCOs’ version has only been in existence for the past six years,” Hertling said. “What we’ve seen is that NCOs don’t just talk about things, they make an action plan and execute it like NCOs do.”

He added that the NCO Corps will force the training in the future. The resources and budget issues will be thrashed out at the officers’ conference; NCOs should concentrate on how best to use those resources.

Many participants said they have learned that no matter where they come from, they have many things in common with their international counterparts.

“The most common sentiment expressed was the genuine concern that NCOs have for their soldiers,” Davenport said. “All of them want to ensure that their soldiers are well led, trained and equipped.”

That more countries are accepting their NCO corps as an integral part of the success of their army has been one of



the significant gains of the CEANCO. The NCOs of most of the countries represented at the conference are gaining more respect and are becoming part of the decision-making process, which was not always the case in years past.

“A good NCO corps is the backbone of the army,” said Maj. Gen. Dragutin Repinc, commander of the Croatian Army. “We have established the Croatian NCO Corps on the U.S. model. We are becoming better and better. At this stage, we are very satisfied in all that the NCOs are doing in the command and support channels. There needs to be more of these types of get-togethers for NCOs.” ♡

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Joe Bartlett, a Department of Defense safety solutions civilian employee, receives instructions from a Soldier with the 178th Engineer Company, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, during a field training exercise at the Combined Arms Collective Training Facility at Fort Polk, La.

PHOTO BY SGT. IDA IRBY



PREPARING FOR DISASTER



When an emergency hits home,
the DCRF stands ready to assist

BY DAVID CROZIER *NCO Journal*

Ask any Soldiers what they do in the Army and most will tell you how they train for combat in far off lands. Ask a member of the 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at Fort Polk, La., the same question and you'll hear, "Save lives and minimize human suffering in the United States."

The 1st MEB is involved in a two-year mission as part of the Defense Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosive Response Force, or DCRF. It is the first to conduct this new mission, established in 2011 to deploy forces in support of Joint Task Force-Civil Support, which provides support to civil authorities, protects personnel and provides the engineering expertise to restore normalcy after a major incident has occurred in the United States. DCRF responds to catastrophic natural disasters,

like major hurricanes or earthquakes, or CBRNE events when requested by a governor, federal agency or the president.

"It is a unique process the way we get called out," said Command Sgt. Maj. Edward Russell, command sergeant major of the 1st MEB. "It has to be something catastrophic ... and only after all other resources — National Guard, federal emergency management assets, and state and local emergency management assets — have been exhausted."

Though the 1st MEB plays a large role in the DCRF mission, it is but a piece of a much larger picture.

Russell said the 1st MEB reports to many command echelons when it comes to the DCRF mission. The unit is a part of JTF-CS, a subordinate unit of U.S. Northern Command, whose mission it is to provide mission command of military

homeland defense efforts and to coordinate defense support to civil authorities. JTF-CS plans and integrates military support with the primary federal agency whenever domestic CBRNE operations require. The 1st MEB also works with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Forces Command, Installation Management Command and U.S. Army North.

JTF-CS responds to CBRNE incidents after civilian resources have been used fully. JTF-CS tasks include incident site support, casualty medical assistance and treatment, displaced populace support, mortuary affairs support, logistics support, and air operations. These are broken into four smaller joint task forces — operations, aviation, medical and logistics.

The 1st MEB has the mission of Task Force-Operations, and provides the technical response in the form of military police, engineering and construction assets, CBRNE units and mortuary affairs — a total of 21 units including some from the Air Force and Marine Corps.

“We have more than 5,000 Soldiers assigned to the DCRF mission,” Russell said. “It is a very simple mission, but it entails a lot.”

He added that the brigade is quite busy, training constantly, with each unit having specific roles and responsibilities.

First responders

“We are like the 9-1-1 of the nation’s highest priority in dealing with any natural disasters,” said Command Sgt. Maj. John Narcisse, command sergeant major of the 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st MEB. “We are kind of like the first responders for the initial response force.”

Narcisse said that, as a military police unit, the battalion’s roles and responsibilities within the DCRF mission are to prevent human suffering, save lives and assist local law enforcement where needed. But like other Title 10 Soldiers, their role is limited by the Posse Comitatus Act, which limits the powers of local governments and law enforcement agencies in using federal military personnel as law enforcement.

“Unless the president directs us and the secretary of defense says that we have established martial law, we cannot perform a law enforcement duty in terms of ap-

prehension authority. We have to leave that up to the local law enforcement,” he said. “For our own safety and security, we are allowed to, in terms of our rules of engagement, protect our equipment and facilities, as well as Soldiers. If a Soldier was fired upon, then we would have to use a gradual use of force to prevent any injury to any one of our Soldiers.”

Because this is not a typical military mission, Narcisse said, training for the DCRF mission has a different focus than in most Army units.

“From a tactical standpoint, we have to have patience — to be compassionate. [We have to] now just think in the capacity of a civilian agency,” he said. “You have to put on that hat of the first responder in terms

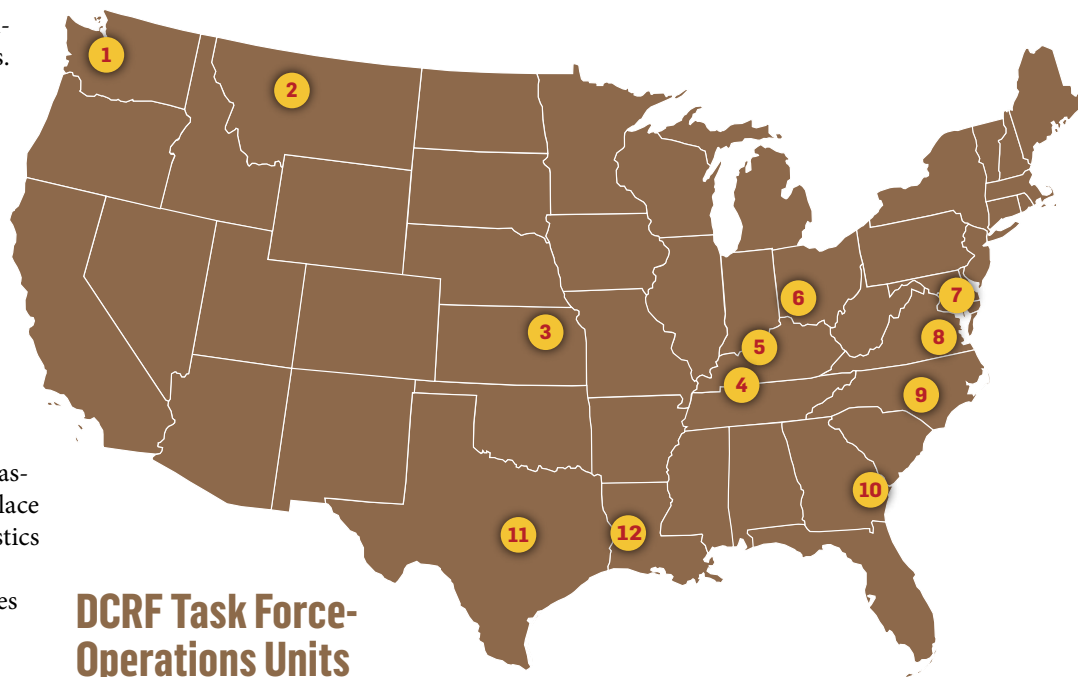
of providing that initial first aid to the community as needed.”

With the unit being located at Fort Polk with the Joint Readiness Training Center, Soldiers have a prime training environment, Narcisse said.

“JRTC gives us the flexibility to use top-notch facilities to do some real-world training and have the role-players, be it internal or external to the installation, testing our troops,” he said. “From where we started to where we are [today], I am very confident that we have the right training.”

Preparing for the DCRF mission, the unit also focuses on ensuring its vehicles are maintained properly and its load plans are right, Narcisse said.

“We didn’t focus directly on the mission



DCRF Task Force-Operations Units

1. Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.

66th Military Police Company

2. Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont.

819th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineers (RED HORSE) Squadron

3. Fort Riley, Kan.

172nd Chemical Company

4. Fort Campbell, Ky.

63rd Chemical Company

5. Fort Knox, Ky.

15th Engineer Company

6. Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio

711th Human Performance Wing Air Force Radiation Team
711th Human Performance Wing Epidemiology Team

7. Indian Head, Md.

Chemical Biological Incident Response Force

8. Fort Lee, Va.

111th Mortuary Affairs Company

9. Fort Bragg, N.C.

21st Chemical Company
101st Chemical Company

10. Fort Stewart, Ga.

546th Military Police Company

11. Fort Hood, Texas

2nd Chemical Battalion
64th Military Police Company
181st Chemical Company

12. Fort Polk, La.

Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade
519th Military Police Battalion
204th Military Police Company
46th Engineer Battalion
178th Engineer Company
687th Engineer Company
337th Signal Company

SOURCE: 1ST MANEUVER ENHANCEMENT BRIGADE; MAP BY SPC. SHANE BRIDGER

itself, because that really is the easy part,” he said. “Instead we started out with the basics of getting load plans and vehicles ready before we even went out the door. We can go either 200 miles or 1,000 miles, and going that far in a military vehicle, they are susceptible to breaking down.”

Earlier this year, the 204th MP Company, part of Narcisse’s battalion, held an exercise in the JRTC training area where it established some facilities to replicate a tornado hitting the area. The exercise included role-players, simulated casualties and outside police agencies.

During the exercise, local law enforcement agencies took command of the scene, while the Soldiers assisted both law enforcement and the Red Cross in helping the families get to shelters and keep the community safe.

“One of the great things we have done so far is partnering with higher headquarters and all the key players,” Narcisse said. “When we started this, we really didn’t have a great understanding of the magnitude of what it takes to get us out the door. We have had to replicate moving the unit to an incident site and even replicated going to the Alexandria International Airport to have the U.S. Air Force put several of our vehicles on their aircraft. ... I have no doubt that if we are called out the door tomorrow, we could do it with our eyes closed.”

Narcisse said that along with the 204th MP Company, and soon the 272nd MP Company at Fort Polk, the battalion has three MP companies assigned to it — the 64th MP Company at Fort Hood, Texas; the 66th MP Company at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.; and the 546th MP Company at Fort Stewart, Ga.

The Soldiers of the 204th

MP Company said they have learned how to be a part of a DCRF mission.

“We are used to being the ones [who] are in charge of the good order and discipline and law enforcement on a post,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jacob Hill, an operations NCO in the 204th MP Company. “Whenever an incident happens [on post], we are the people [who] normally take charge. However in [DCRF], we are the response force. When we get on-scene, whoever the incident commander is for that location — whether it is a police chief or a fire chief — we take direction from them. That is where our training comes in.”

That training helps the 204th MP Company conduct critical-site security, another DCRF function.

“Let’s say there is an area that is deemed to be critical in nature — a DoD site, a bank or a bulk fuel storage area for example — and we get assigned to that location,” Hill said. “We have to get away from aggressively engaging the civilian population and have to understand that we are not in charge; we are there to help. We have to take a less aggressive posture, because we are helping Americans.”

That hits home for Hill who recounted when a tornado hit his hometown in Kentucky in January 2000.

“I remember what it was like when we

had to help our neighbors. My dad and I pitched in, and it touches the heart to help your own,” Hill said. “Because they are Americans and you are an American, and that is what we do in America.”

Sgt. Brandon Smith a public affairs NCO with the 204th MP Company, agreed that helping Americans is a unique mission.

“DCRF is a completely different mindset than a combat environment,” he said. “It is kind of hard once you jump right into it, because for the last 10 years, we have been in the mindset [that] we have an enemy whereas now we are on our home soil, and we are helping our own.”

Tech rescue

When disaster strikes, the Soldiers of the 46th Engineering Battalion, 1st MEB, are prepared to bring in the heavy equipment.

“We are a construction battalion, and we have the tech rescue company,” said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Tate, an operations NCO in the 46th Engineer Battalion. “Tech rescue entails anything from shoring up buildings to helping in recovering of persons or casualties. Our teams specialize in cutting concrete, rappelling and assisting in search and rescue extractions.”

Tate said the 416th Engineer Battalion’s

Soldiers from 178th Engineer Company, 46th Engineering Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, perform rubble-removal training during a weeklong exercise in December at Fort Polk, La. The Soldiers used specialized equipment to remove rubble after a simulated earthquake.

PHOTO BY CAPT. MARTIN MEINERS



job is to work with the incident commanders in designing and developing what needs to be accomplished and then pushing it out to the units to execute. One such unit is the 178th Engineer Company. In the event there is a CBRNE disaster, the 178th Engineer Company has the resources and Soldiers who have been specially trained to tackle the toughest of environments.

"The tech rescue mission is about going into a hazardous environment where the normally qualified tech rescue people cannot go into," said Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Horton, a structural engineer with the 178th Engineer Company. "We go in, help rescue people and give the quickest assistance

we can to get out of that event so that our Soldiers are not exposed to that chemical agent or other biological-type agent."

The Soldiers of the 178th Engineer Company are specially trained to work with hazardous materials and in contaminated environments. Other units outside of the DCRF mission are not certified in hazmat operations, he said.

"We also have some additional training in that we can be exposed to 5 rads (an amount of absorbed radiation) a year. For everyone else, including the civilian side, they cannot be exposed to more than 2.5 rads a year," Horton said. "It's a safety factor, and it is all within the limits. But because we are certified to work in that

environment, we can be exposed to more."

With that special training, Horton said the company can respond to any disaster.

"We also work in confined spaces, which is any area that is not designed to be worked in on a regular basis, like an elevator shaft, a sewer or collapsed structures," Horton said. "The building or structure would be assessed, and then we would go in and shore it up and make sure nothing can move while we are in there."

As the first sergeant of the 178th Engineer Company, 1st Sgt. Jamie Cosey said he has learned a lot about the tech rescue mission since joining the unit in March.

"Tech rescue is probably the most important mission that this battalion has," Cosey said. "I know it is the most focused. We have other companies in the battalion that are DCRF-sourced, but none of them have the mission that we have. I have had the opportunity to observe their training and see them do their trench rescue, confined-space and rope training. It is a lot of hard work."

Cosey said that if a major disaster were to happen, his Soldiers would "play a vital role in getting in there, saving lives and getting people out of situations — keeping people out of harm's way."

To obtain many of the specialized skills needed to perform its mission, the unit trains at the Florida State Fire College in Ocala, Horton said. There, the engineers spend 70 days learning how to work in confined spaces, shore up buildings, work with concrete and wood, rappel and work in trenches.

"This really is a dangerous thing we do," Horton said. "But we do everything we can to eliminate the danger. That is why it is crucial for NCOs to know exactly what is going on and really know their stuff. It takes a lot of work to get to the victims. All it takes, especially in a confined space or a collapsed structure, is something to move, and everything starts crumbling all around you. So it is really crucial that they do everything right."

Getting the job done

If it has to be moved, repaired or communicated, the units of the 88th Brigade Support Battalion provide the Soldiers and equipment to get the job done.

Part of Task Force-Logistics, the battalion's 41st Transportation Company has the role of getting equipment and supplies to

THE CIVIL RESPONSE PROCESS

- 1. DISASTER OCCURS** A disaster of major consequence — including any involving chemical, biological, nuclear or high-yield explosive threats, or a major hurricane or earthquake — affects an area in the United States.
- 2. LOCAL FIRST RESPONDERS REACT** Local fire, police and emergency management teams respond to the event and determine the breadth of community impact.
- 3. CITY OR COUNTY REQUESTS STATE AID** The disaster is considered a major event; officials ask the governor for aid.
- 4. NATIONAL GUARD RESPONDS** The governor activates the National Guard, which responds with its assets, including its own CBRNE forces.
- 5. GOVERNOR REQUESTS A PRESIDENTIAL DISASTER DECLARATION** The disaster has consumed all the resources of the state's response force, and the situation is deemed beyond the state's capabilities to contain or mitigate.
- 6. PRESIDENT DECLARES A MAJOR DISASTER OR EMERGENCY** The president directs the Department of Homeland Security to respond.
- 7. DHS IMPLEMENTS THE NATIONAL RESPONSE FRAMEWORK** This is a tiered, scalable, flexible and adaptable national response effort through a unified command.
- 8. DHS REQUESTS DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SUPPORT** U.S. Northern Command officials are notified of the need for disaster assistance, and they send out an initial warning order. Joint Task Force-Civil Support in turn sends out a warning order to DCRF's Task Force-Operations, and units begin preparing for mobilization.
- 9. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AUTHORIZES DOD SUPPORT** JTF-CS issues movement orders.
- 10. JTF-CS RESPONDS WHEN DIRECTED** U.S. Northern Command notifies JTF-CS to respond with appropriate units — Task Force-Operations, -Logistics, -Aviation and -Medical.

Soldiers in the 204th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, move mock casualties on a stretcher during a simulated mass-casualty evacuation in December at Fort Polk. PHOTO BY SGT. IDA IRBY

where DCRF units need them to function, and feed and care for their Soldiers.

"We pretty much load out the brigade, pick up [shipping containers], water tanks, and supplies," 1st Sgt. Robert Dodd said. "Whenever they are ready to go, we go get it from the different battalions, and then we move it to wherever we are going."

Training for the 41st Transportation Company is rather routine, Dodd said. But it gives his Soldiers an opportunity to get some "road time."

"It's an opportunity to get out and actually burn some diesel, and it gives the Soldiers an opportunity to be in highway convoys," Dodd said. "It also allows us an opportunity to see the NCOs in charge of convoys — actually going to pick up different stuff at different places and moving that stuff out, making sure the load is tied down properly, and obtaining lessons learned from it."

Dodd said the training is important because he has so many young NCOs. It gives them an opportunity to shine, learn from their mistakes and prevent accidents.

Keeping the fleet running is the job of the 546th Maintenance Company.

"My company provides three maintenance support teams that support the different entities within the DCRF mission," 1st Sgt. Curtis Johnson said. "Unless the vehicles are up to par, the DCRF mission doesn't go anywhere."

Johnson said the company conducts a quality assurance and quality control process on all of the 1st MEB DCRF vehicles to ensure they are roadworthy.

"We make certain there are no leaks, no transmission or engine issues, and we certify that each vehicle is capable of driving long distances," he said. "That is a possibility with the DCRF mission. These vehicles can leave Fort Polk and go to Texas, California, anywhere they are needed. So



we have to make sure they are ready to be put on the road."

Because his Soldiers have had an extensive history with many of the vehicles in the fleet, Johnson said, it would take only a few days for his maintenance support teams to certify the fleet for deployment.

"We have a lot of senior NCOs who have been doing this for a long time," Johnson said. "These guys can actually look at a vehicle and say what the problem will be because of their experience and history with these vehicles."

Nothing happens without communication, and the 337th Signal Company provides that vital link.

"We are the brigade's signal asset and provide voice and data communications as well as FM communications to tie into the civilian authorities, the first responders," said 1st Sgt. Everett Gardner, the 337th Signal Company's first sergeant. "[We] ensure that any communications that come down from the task force commander can be shared with other task force commanders as needed. This is what we do normally, so training for us is not that different."

Gardner said that his company ensures that their Soldiers are ready to help people affected by an incident who are displaced or in distress.

"We have teams that go out to remote sites, and if people see a military unit, they will go to it to seek assistance," he said.

"We are prepared to provide some first aid and what food and water we have."

Standing at the ready

"The DCRF mission is one that we hope we never have to exercise," said Command Sgt. Maj. LaMarquis Knowles, command sergeant major of the JRTC and Fort Polk. "It is one of those contingencies that, when things like [Hurricane] Katrina or the earthquake in Japan [happens], that we hope is resourced, and we don't have to exercise it. But we are prepared to do so."

Like many of the Soldiers he has talked to, Knowles said the DCRF mission brings it home in a special way.

"Unlike going off to war, where success or failure will benefit another country, success or failure here will impact the United States, save lives, reduce suffering of our own and maybe [our] own family members," he said. "So I think our Soldiers are exceptionally happy to be a part of this, because they get to contribute to the success of their own country."

At the end of its two-year DCRF mission, the 1st MEB will hand over the reins in late 2013 to the 4th MEB at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. It will have the new mission for two years before it returns to the 1st MEB. ♡

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ACTION IN

Stories of NCOs
**LEADING,
TRAINING,
MAINTAINING,
& CARING**

NCOJOURNAL



NCO honored at Navy university

Master sergeant is first enlisted Soldier to be recognized as grad school's outstanding student

BY AMANDA D. STEIN
Naval Postgraduate School

Master Sgt. Jim Monroe, a recent defense analysis graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School at Monterey, Calif., became the first noncommissioned officer to receive the Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell Association of the U.S. Army Chapter Award for Outstanding Army Student. The award is presented quarterly to a resident Army student who demonstrates exemplary academic achievements and community service.

Monroe was also nominated for an outstanding thesis award for his work, "Deception: Theory and Practice."

"Each of our students brings a unique skill set and background to his or her time here at NPS," said Navy Capt. Alan Poindexter, dean of students at the school. "Master Sgt. Monroe's accomplishments demonstrate that in

academia, hard work, above all else, dictates what one can achieve. The NPS mission is to provide a quality defense-based education for men and women across ranks and services. We are proud to call him an NPS alumnus as he moves forward in his career."

After graduating, Monroe is heading to the 4th Military Information Support Group (formerly the 4th Psychological Operations Group) at Fort Bragg, N.C. He had previously served in the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, and in operational and tactical military information support operations positions at Fort Bragg.

Monroe said he was proud of the support he received from his previous command to study at the Naval Postgraduate School.

"To me, beyond the knowledge gained in the classes, the true values of a graduate education lay in the increased understanding of how to process and synthesize information,

◀ Master Sgt. Jim Monroe (left), a defense analysis graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School at Monterey, Calif., is congratulated on his selection as the quarter's top Army student by Navy Adm. William McRaven, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, June 7 during a campus visit. PHOTO BY PETTY OFFICER 1ST CLASS GRANT AMMON

and in how to approach problem-solving," Monroe said. "As an NCO, the defense analysis program has improved my worth to the force, both as a leader, and as a resource for my commander.

"I was just happy to be able to study here in the first place," he added. "So to be recognized and get the award for Outstanding Army Student was just a humbling experience."

Monroe's thesis explored military deception history and practice, an often-overlooked but important topic, said Dr. Hy Rothstein, a senior lecturer in the defense analysis program. He said Monroe's work was of a caliber not frequently seen in Rothstein's 11 years at the school.

"Today's doctrine does not say much about deception. It's an undervalued and underappreciated tool in war," Rothstein said. "Jim shows very clearly that the benefits of deception, historically, have been remarkable. The return on investment — in training, education and material necessary for deception — have almost always produced benefits that far outweigh the investment."

"Currently there is a void in unclassified deception guidance in the U.S. Army," Monroe said. "So I tried to go over theory and practice [in my thesis], and create an overview designed to be used as an unofficial handbook for deception practitioners."

Monroe was one of 17 enlisted service members to graduate in the spring quarter, the majority of the NPS's military students being officers. But the skills learned at the school are just as valuable for NCOs, Rothstein said.

"This type of education ... is very important for those NCOs who are going to ultimately serve on higher level staffs and for senior commanders," he said. "Those who will be the ones to provide advice to senior military officers need to be capable of providing thoughtful and well-reasoned advice. ... This ultimately helps commanders make decisions, because they have senior enlisted folks around them whose advice is well packaged, well thought out and on target." ♡

DLIFLC building named in honor of fallen corporal

BY AL MACKS Presidio of Monterey

A graduate of the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center at Presidio of Monterey, Calif., was memorialized June 22 with a building dedication in recognition of his making the ultimate sacrifice for his country.

While deployed to Ghanzi, Afghanistan, Cpl. Bernard P. Corpuz died June 11, 2006, from wounds sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated during combat operations as he traveled in a convoy of vehicles conducting a village assessment. He was 28.

In recognition of his high professionalism as a Soldier, community members and leaders gathered June 22 to dedicate Building 607, the Multi-Language School, as Corpuz Hall.

Rep. Sam Farr commented on the importance of the occasion and the building being named after one of DLIFLC's NCO graduates.

"This is what I like about DLIFLC," Farr said. "Most buildings get named after a president, scholar or other famous people."

He said he felt privileged to be part of a ceremony that recognized a fallen Soldier by naming such an impressive state-of-the-art building after him. "I am so proud to be able to dedicate this building to a local Soldier," Farr said.

According to the narration, those who knew Corpuz well described him with words such as "quality," "outstanding," "eager," "hero," "funny," "gregarious," "brave," "inspirational," "passionate," "uplifting," "integrity," "honorable," "lion-hearted," "vibrant," "priceless," "fun-loving," "kind-hearted" and "unique."

"Corpuz contributed great value to the history of DLIFLC with his exemplary service as a translator, with his valiant actions as a Soldier, and by the very strength and positive energy of his personality and lifestyle," Farr said. ♡



Corpuz



▲ Friends and family of Cpl. Bernard P. Corpuz gather June 22 during the dedication of Corpuz Hall at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center at Presidio of Monterey, Calif. PHOTO BY AL MACKS

Drill sergeant graduates entire platoon

BY CHERYL RODEWIG Fort Benning Bayonet

Forty-five Soldiers in 1st Platoon, E Company, 2nd Battalion, 47th Infantry Regiment, 192nd Infantry Brigade, graduated from basic training July 3 at Fort Benning, Ga. Standing in formation on Soldier Field at the National Infantry Museum, they represented 100 percent of the Soldiers who first joined the platoon almost 10 weeks before.

For Staff Sgt. Deon Pearman, their drill sergeant, they represented the realization of a hard-sought goal.

"I make a goal to graduate more and more privates each cycle," he said. "Whatever I did the last cycle, I set my goal a little bit higher the next cycle. What was unique [about this cycle] is all of them are going to graduate — nobody quit."

In Pearman's 15 months as a drill sergeant, July 3 marked the first time all his Soldiers graduated. Pearman said 100 percent is more of the exception than the rule.

"It's uncommon," he said. "People get homesick, and they don't want to be here anymore, or there's some of training they just can't do. It's a good feeling to know that I had a group of young men who helped me achieve the goal I set."

"Telling them to do it kept me motivated," he said. "You have to want to go somewhere. If you don't have goals, you don't know where you're going."

Pearman nearly didn't meet his goal. Two days into



training, one private was ready to turn in his uniform.

"I was concerned about being here," Pfc. David Kranz said. "I had some family stuff going on at home. I felt overwhelmed. I was like, all right, that's it. ... I'm done."

Kranz was worried about his father back in Michigan. He had also recently married and was the first in his family, except for his stepbrother, to join the military. He said it was all a "complete change" for him.

100 PERCENT CONTINUES ON PAGE 45 →

▲ Staff Sgt. Deon Pearman, a drill sergeant at Fort Benning, Ga., graduated all 45 Soldiers in his basic training platoon July 3, achieving a goal he set at the start of the cycle.

PHOTO BY CHERYL RODEWIG

THIS MONTH IN NCO HISTORY

August 20, 1968

Sgt. Paul Ronald Lambers, a 26-year-old from Holland, Mich., was assigned to A Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, and had just established a defensive position alongside a purported enemy infiltration route outside Tây Ninh, Vietnam, when his platoon was attacked by a battalion of Viet Cong. When in the intense firefight his platoon leader was incapacitated, Lambers left his protected position to assume command and direct the defense.

After his radio was damaged, he braved enemy fire to secure the radio of the M67 recoilless rifle crew. Finding its weapon not functioning, he helped the crew repair it and then directed canister fire against the enemy, which had begun penetrating their position. After the M67 was rendered inoperable by enemy fire, Lambers single-handedly employed claymore mines and grenades against the attackers, killing four.

During the rest of the five-hour battle, Lambers moved from position to position to assist and to care

for wounded Soldiers. He personally directed artillery and helicopter fire to, in some cases, within 5 meters of his position. As a result of his efforts, the platoon eliminated the enemy threat and essentially saved Tây Ninh from being attacked.

For his heroic leadership, Lambers was promoted to staff sergeant and awarded the Medal of Honor the next year. Tragically, he was swept away by high waves near his hometown in December 1970. His body was never found. A stretch of U.S. 31 in Holland was named "Medal of Honor Recipients Highway" last year to honor him and three other Soldiers from the town who received the award. — COMPILED BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS



Lambers

‘Practice what we preach’

Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Ginestar leads in the Oregon National Guard by setting the bar high for his Soldiers

Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Ginestar has deployed twice to Iraq, once to Afghanistan and was on federal active status in response to Hurricane Katrina. An infantryman, Ginestar is assigned to the 41st Brigade Combat Team with the Oregon National Guard. He has volunteered for most of his deployments, and continues to serve in Oregon when not deployed.

Why did you join the Army?

I joined in 2001 out of high school. It was something I was always drawn to. I tried to enlist in the Marine Corps, but the recruiter there wasn't helpful, and the Army was. It was something I was always inclined to do. I was 5 years old in the school library trying to find military books with military pictures.

How do you set the example for junior Soldiers?

As much as possible, I try to do what I expect them to do. If I tell my Soldiers to achieve a minimum of 250 on their PT test, I'm shooting for a 290. If I want them to achieve a benchmark, I want to achieve a higher benchmark so I can look at them and say, "You should be up here closer to where I am." As much as possible, I train my next lower Soldiers to take my job. The more you empower your junior Soldiers — your leaders — the better they'll work for you.

What advice would you have for other NCOs?

Don't let individual focus deter from the team focus. Whether the NCO is in charge of a squad or platoon, he or she needs to focus on the good of the squad or the good of the platoon. Take care of your Soldiers, and they'll take care of you. And taking care of them will take care of your own career. I'd caution leaders to not allow themselves to be put before their Soldiers.

What would you like to see NCOs implement across the Army?

NCOs on the individual level need to practice more of what we preach to our Soldiers. Unfortunately, it's become common where we're telling Soldiers what to do or how to do things, and we aren't doing that ourselves. We have standards for a reason. We have benchmarks that need to be made because of the way things are downrange. Some get PT waivers and don't have to do certain things. If you're talking about an infantryman, you can't waive anything when you're doing a patrol or in an engagement with enemy. And



our training is set up the way it is supposed to be for that reason. I've never been a fan of finding loopholes for Soldiers or leaders to get out of meeting certain standards that should apply to everybody. We're all in the same Army. We should be playing by the same rules, and we should be hit with the same training and the same standards.

What role have NCOs played in your career?

NCOs are the backbone of the Army. Officers have their role, too, but the NCOs are the ones the Soldiers hear from; they're the ones who Soldiers see. Even thinking back to when I was a junior Soldier, I knew the NCOs whom I had respect for. They were the ones I looked to for guidance, training, and what to do and how to do it. Take my 2004 deployment; we were kicking in doors and doing raids. You're depending on that NCO to show you how to do life-and-death business. It's important to your survival.

How does your current job impact the Army?

NCOs are kind of like a bunch of links in the chain. Any weak NCO is going to cause some weight being pulled in one direction. My fellow NCOs and I are working together to contribute to the backbone of the Army.

— INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER MATTSON

▲ Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Ginestar conducts a color guard as a staff sergeant for Veterans Day. PHOTO COURTESY OF SGT. 1ST CLASS JESSE GINESTAR

Injured, but not out

After his leg was amputated, a Special Forces NCO continued to serve on active duty and even deployed twice more to Iraq

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

Personal courage can take many forms: sustaining injuries on the battlefield, combating mental wounds or helping Army families to make the right decisions — even when no one is looking.

Sgt. Maj. Christopher Self, the plans sergeant major for 4th Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group, at Fort Campbell, Ky., exemplifies personal courage. He is serving on active duty, despite having his right leg amputated after he was hit by enemy fire in Iraq. Since his injuries, Self has deployed twice to Iraq and remains Airborne-qualified.

“I was injured — not wounded — in the invasion of

his first duty station was at Fort McClellan, Ala. In the fall of 1994, Self applied for and completed the training to become a Green Beret. Since then, he’s had the opportunity to serve in most aspects of Special Forces.

“The best part of being Special Forces is our close interaction with the indigenous forces of whatever country we’re in,” Self said. “The regular Army, they go over there and work with them. But they aren’t embedded. ... You make friends and comrades in different forces and different countries all over the world.”

Self was deployed to Iraq in 2005 when he was shot.

“On Dec. 28, 2005, I was injured during a prison escape at the camp that I was at while I was getting ready to go for a morning jog,” Self said. “We ran into 16 prisoners and got into a little firefight. It was just dumb luck; we were all getting ready to do a quick morning workout, and we got into a prison break, got into a firefight. We stopped about six of them, six more surrendered, and the remaining two or four were rounded up throughout the day. I felt pretty good that we stopped it, but in the process, I got shot once in each leg.”

Self was flown to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., for treatment. His wife, Dana, went there to be with him during his surgeries.

“Family is most important when you’re wounded because they’re the ones who suffer the most,” Self said. “You’re lying in a hospital, and you’re thinking about what you have to do next to get better. Your wife and your kids still have a household to run; you’re not there, and it’s even worse than deploying.”

His family provided him with the courage and commitment to keep moving forward in his recovery, he said.

“Life doesn’t stop while you’re healing,” Self said. “The most important thing to me during the recovery process was the family holding together because of my wife.”

Shrapnel severed his right leg at the sciatic nerve. Self said he couldn’t feel the limb or move it. After two months of being in the hospital, Self said he started to look at his options. Initially, the doctors wanted him to use an ankle-foot orthosis, a type of brace, to help him. But Self said even with the braces, his foot would just fall.

“After several months of working with the neurologist and local doctors, they said, ‘You’re probably never going to run or jump again like you did before,’” Self said. “I had a prosthetist tell me he could get me running and jumping in 12 months. I had the leg removed in July 2006.”

Self said he felt he should serve for the duration of his contract — an additional five years after he was injured — because he and his wife knew there were some things they could still do for the military and in Special Forces.

“I could’ve gotten out; I was at 20 (years),” Self said. “I



Iraq,” Self said. “So I didn’t get the opportunity to go to Afghanistan. But I’ve been to Iraq several times.”

Self joined the Army Reserve 10 days after turning 17. Since he was a kid and played Army in the backyard, he always knew he wanted to serve.

“It took me 10 days to convince my mom to sign the papers,” he said. “As soon as I was old enough to sign the active-duty contract, I joined right out of high school.”

Self entered the Army as a 95B military policeman, and

▲ Sgt. Maj. Christopher Self finishes the 30 km bicycle race first in his category May 1 at the Warrior Games at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. PHOTO BY

JOSEPH ANDREW LEE

► **Self rests May 4 after the Warrior Games' track and field events.** PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON

had just got that Special Forces bonus. But I felt obligated since I signed a contract to stay to 25, and they paid me the money. My wife and I talked about it, and we had an obligation to serve the contract that we had. We weren't ready to get out."

Self returned to Iraq in 2007 as a Special Forces company first sergeant and again in 2010 as a Special Forces team command sergeant major. In addition, Self has completed 20 to 25 aircraft jumps since his leg was amputated. He said he's still able to motivate his Soldiers — sometimes even more so than before his injury.

"I have a profile that says I can run at my own pace — no PT run," Self said. "But I get out there and run and work out with them. ... They see me out there doing what I do, and it motivates them."

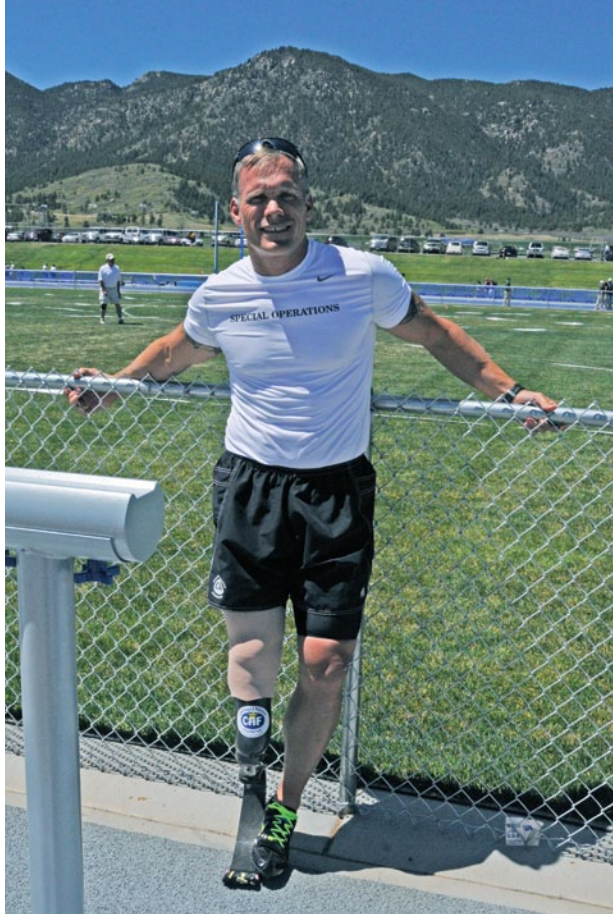
Self said other amputees at Fort Campbell continue to serve and be examples to their Soldiers.

"Some days, it's almost like a parade," Self said. "At least three amputees who I know are at Fort Campbell out running, and I see them. It's motivating. I like to think that it shows guys who've been wounded since I was that there's an opportunity for them to stay if they choose to."

Continuing an active lifestyle is important to the recovery process, Self said. He competes regularly in triathlons and recently competed for the first time at the Warrior Games in cycling and track and field.

"The biggest thing about competition is it gives the guys a chance to feel normal again," Self said. "It really helps in healing the unseen wounds, the mental wounds, the [post traumatic stress] and the mental issues you have post-[traumatic brain injury]. It gives you a focus on that single event [in the competition]."

Self cycles to help him stay fit. He routinely logs more



than 200 miles a week on his bike. He said cycling has helped him start to see himself as capable of competing with the best.

"When I'm on my bicycle, I'm as good as anyone out there," he said. "Mentally, I'm in a zone where I'm everybody's equal. When I get off, I'm reminded that I do have limitations. But it gets you out of the zone."

Self said he plans to retire in March after 27 years of service. ♡

← **100 PERCENT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 42**

"So Day 2, I considered leaving," he said. "I went and talked to Drill Sergeant about it, and he said, 'No.' He said, 'This is something you can do. This is something to better your life, to better your family.' It was a struggle to keep myself going but ... I feel relieved."

When Pearman talked with him, he encouraged Krantz to think clearly about such a decision.

"I told him he was homesick and to start looking at the reasons why he wanted to join," Pearman said, "He wasn't thinking about what he really wanted to do."

Because he stuck with it, Krantz said he's actually in a better position to help his family. He's also learned to adapt to new situations and made several new friends among his battle buddies, many of whom also encouraged him to see the training through.

"I think there's a huge difference," Krantz said, comparing where he was on Day 2 to where he is now. "I feel better about being here instead of worrying about everything

going on back home. I know everything's taken care of. I've got people here I can lean on. The drill sergeants have been helpful for giving us an idea of what we have to look forward to."

Krantz's wife and father-in-law drove from Michigan to attend the graduation. It was a brief visit for Krantz, who headed to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., where he is training to become a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist.

"I'm really glad I stayed," he said. "It's one of those things where the tunnel looks long and dark until you get to the other end. [Pearman] has been probably our most motivational drill sergeant here. So having him, we all feel great about graduating."

Pearman, who will continue training troops until March, said there was a time he, too, wanted to quit. But he reminded himself of what he told his Soldiers.

"I can't quit on them," he said. "I have to show what right looks like." ♡

Army CBRN warriors win joint competition

Pair of staff sergeants best 26 other teams at Leonard Wood

BY AMY NEWCOMB
Fort Leonard Wood

The U.S. Army Chemical Corps Regiment commemorated its 94th anniversary by kicking off a two-week celebration with the Best Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Warrior Competition June 17–22.

Winners of the competition were teammates Staff Sgt. Maliek Kearney and Staff Sgt. Zachery Jones of the 22nd Chemical Battalion at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md. The winners were announced during the Green Dragon Ball on June 23.

Kearney's team placed second in last year's Best CBRN Warrior Competition, so he said he wanted to prove he could go all the way this year with new teammate Jones.

"We motivated each other. We knew from training with each other and knowing each other's strengths and weaknesses and when we needed to pick up the motivation," Kearney said. "We made it happen."

Jones said they complemented each other perfectly.

"It took coordination, prior preparation," Jones said. "So we prepared, and we came out here and did what we could."

Both Kearney and Jones said teamwork is critical during such a competition.

"You have to humble yourself. It's not always about you;

it's about your team," Kearney said. "And as long as you motivate your battle buddy and your Soldiers, you can get the job done."

Jones added, "No matter how much you know or think you know going into something, you never know as much as you think. So you have to rely on somebody to help you out and pick up that slack — we definitely did that."

Kearney and Jones each received a \$1,000 gift card and a George L. Murray bust from the Chemical Corps Regimental Association; a coin of excellence rack from retired Command Sgt. Maj. Pete Hiltner and his wife, Sonny; coins of excellence from various senior leaders from the CBRN regiment and Maneuver Support Center of Excellence; and sunglasses and all-purpose gloves from the Military Police Regimental Association.

Command Sgt. Maj. Gabriel Arnold, the command sergeant major of the U.S. Army CBRN School, said the competition is vital to the Chemical Corps because "it helps identify who the very best is."

"We want our very best leading our formations into the future," Arnold said. "Our regiment will continue to provide combatant commanders with the best trained and equipped CBRN personnel and units in order to protect the nation at home and abroad."

New to this year's competition were competitors from the Army's sister services. That change may lead to opening the competition internationally, Arnold said.

"Our sister services are our unified action partners; we must work together," he said. "We can't call the competition the 'Best CBRN Warrior' unless we give the entire CBRN community the chance to compete."

"That is also the reason why commissioned officers are allowed to compete, as well," he added.

Competitors underwent extensive preparation before competing.

"They must hit the books and study; they must become proficient in all aspects of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear operations, including all

◀ Staff Sgt. Maliek Kearney and Staff Sgt. Zachery Jones, of the 22nd Chemical Battalion in Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Md., carry a "victim" to the finish line during the Joint CBRN Warrior competition. PHOTO BY

AMY NEWCOMB



► **Sgt. Juan Perez of the 379th Chemical Company decontaminates a vehicle during the competition.** PHOTO BY AMY NEWCOMB

equipment,” Arnold said. “Furthermore, they must prepare physically to endure the physical challenges they will face along with the basic warrior tasks they must complete successfully in order to have a chance at winning.”

Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Mat Burks and Marine Corps Sgt. Justin Burkett said they enjoyed competing against the Army.

“We were looking forward to seeing how our skills matched up with [the Army’s],” Burks said. “I think [the competition] reinforced skills that we already learned, just maybe had forgotten or put off to the side for a little while. But it definitely involved some things I haven’t done in a year or two.”

Both Burks and Burkett said they would recommend that more competitors from the Marine Corps join next year’s competition.

“There is strength in numbers,” Burkett said. “I think it did help reinforce several things as far as sister services — kind of that we are all working to a degree on some of the same planes and the same measurements.”

The competition began with 27 teams, and each two-man team was tested throughout the week in several events including the Army Physical Fitness Test, a mystery event and the confidence course.

The mystery event included a team litter shuttle in which teams had to carry a 165-pound dummy for half a mile and complete three events with a 16-pound medicine ball. The last event consisted of a 1½-mile team run that team members had to finish side-by-side.

On days two and three, half of the competitors went to the Lt. Terry Responder Training Facility and the other half went to the Chemical Defense Training Facility to suit up in Level A protective gear.

During the Incident Response Training Department event at the Terry Facility, teams had to complete six stations, five of which were timed.

Master Sgt. Jose Hernandez, IRTD’s NCO in charge, said competitors were tested on tasks performed by first responders.

“They are being evaluated on how to inspect (Level A protective gear), how to mitigate a leaking container, and at the end, how to transport a casualty out of a hazard area,” Hernandez said. “Here, they are doing more of what would be a real-world, consequence management type of incident on the homeland.”

The Dragon’s Peak Course challenge at the CDTF involved each team entering a mock living quarters in an urban living environment somewhere in Southwest Asia, where intelligence indicated weapons of mass destruction material was being produced. Each team had to don Level A protective gear, enter a toxic environment, secure a casu-



alty, take samples and complete the mission with as much accuracy as possible.

Capt. Venancio Castro, the CDTF’s officer in charge, said the tasks competitors had to accomplish were altered from last year’s competition, although each team was still evaluated on their technique during the scenarios.

“There were three areas that we evaluated them in, and one of them was a major area — evaluating a casualty that has been exposed to chemicals,” Castro said. “The others were to conduct proper entry procedures into a known, chemically contaminated room and to conduct the actual sensitive-site assessment with an exploitation portion of it, so we can collect the proper data required to make a determination of what was in the bay or what was going on in that scenario.”

The scenarios conducted at the CDTF were unique because competitors had to enter an environment with live agents. The live agents each team faced during the scenario were both highly toxic chemical warfare agents that can cause death — VX, a reactive nerve agent, and GB, or sarin, a non-reactive nerve agent.

“Right before [competitors] go into the toxic environment, they must be medically cleared,” Castro said. “They go into [the training scenario] and encounter amounts [of VX and GB] that, if you do not have protection, you can potentially die because of the exposure.”

Day four brought a whole new set of obstacles for the CBRN Warrior teams in the form of a land navigation course with six stations.

Teams had to react to a mock chemical attack, treat a nerve agent casualty and complete a nine-line medevac request and successfully evacuate a casualty to the designated landing zone; survey and mark a known chemically contaminated site and submit two separate CBRN reports; clear, disassemble and reassemble an M9 pistol, M4 rifle or M249 Squad Automatic Weapon; decontaminate a vehicle and equipment; and react to unexploded ordnance.

Twenty-six of the 27 teams continued into the last day of the competition, where teams completed a reflexive-fire scenario and participated in a combatives competition. ♡

Top drill sergeants

Active, Reserve staff sergeants endure physical, mental challenges to claim top honors in TRADOC competition

NCO Journal wire reports

The four days of the U.S. Army Drill Sergeant of the Year competition are full of mental and physical challenges — and they can be pretty tough on the feet.

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Heilman, representing Fort Jackson, S.C., told an Associated Press reporter before the competition was done that he had blisters on his feet the size of half-dollars.

“My feet are pretty much just nubs, but I’m able to push through it,” he said. “Pain, shmain. I don’t care. It’s a competition. I’m just going to keep pushing until they tell me I have to stop or until I fall over and stop, but I’m not going to quit.”

Heilman went on to win the title of 2012 active-duty Drill Sergeant of the Year.

The 95th Reserve Division’s Staff Sgt. Jarod Moss, who had his own foot problems during the competition, was named the Army Reserve Drill Sergeant of the Year.

After a 9-mile rucksack march on the first day of the competition, Moss started the second day with a slight limp. The noncommissioned officer in charge of grading events, 1st Sgt. Robert Moss, opened the second day by

telling the six competitors, “I know you’re beat up, you’re tired, but you’re in good spirits.”

“We are good to go,” Staff Sgt. Moss replied as he rose slowly from a bench and walked toward the firing range with a stutter in his gait. “That’s how we roll.”

Overcoming the physical challenges was only a part of the competition. The four active-duty and two reservist drill sergeants were tested on their knowledge of Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills and their ability to teach these tasks to new Soldiers. The competitors also appeared before a

board of command sergeants major that evaluated the drill sergeants’ knowledge of leadership and training tasks.

Each of the drill sergeants competing to be Drill Sergeant of the Year had proved himself before the Initial Military Training, Training and Doctrine Command, competition at Fort Eustis,

Va., a part of Joint Base Langley-Eustis. The active-duty drill sergeants won their respective post competitions at Fort Benning, Ga.; Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.; Fort Jackson; and Fort Sill, Okla. The two reserve component drill sergeants represent training divisions located across the country.

On the first day at the TRADOC competition, the drill sergeants were assessed on their ability to demonstrate and

“It was a lot of preparation, but it paid off. To be the top drill sergeant ... I never expected anything like this.”

— STAFF SGT. JEFFREY HEILMAN, the 2012 active-duty drill sergeant of the year

About the competitors

STAFF SGT. DANNEIT R. DISLA
98th Reserve Division

► Born in the Dominican Republic, Disla entered the Army and completed Combat Engineer Training in 2007.

► Deployed to in Iraq.

► Awards include Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation.



STAFF SGT. JEFFREY B. HEILMAN
Fort Jackson, S.C.

► Born in Philadelphia, Heilman entered the Army and completed Infantry One Station Unit Training in December 2004.

► Deployed to Iraq.

► Awards include ACM (1 OLC), AAM (4 OLC) and Good Conduct Medal (2nd Award).



STAFF SGT. VICTOR G. MARQUEZ-RODRIGUEZ SR.
Fort Sill, Okla.

► Born in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, Marquez-Rodriguez graduated high school in El Paso, Texas, and completed Cannon Crewmember One Station Unit Training in 2005.

► Deployed twice to Iraq.

► Awards include ACM (2 OLC), AAM (2 OLC) and GCM (2nd Award).





instruct urban orienteering, clinches in combatives, and the correct actions to take in response to a role-playing Soldier suspected of being suicidal. A second round of assessments included tests on drill and ceremony and providing care under fire.

On the second day, competitors spent their morning

DRILL SERGEANTS CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE →

▲ **Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Heilman, representing Fort Jackson, S.C., leads Soldiers through a series of drill and ceremony movements on the first day of the Drill Sergeant of the Year competition at Fort Eustis, Va. During the competition, six drill sergeants competed in various events to test their knowledge of Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills and their abilities to teach tasks.**

PHOTO BY STEPHANIE SLATER

**SGT. 1ST CLASS
ADAM M. McQUISTON**
Fort Leonard
Wood, Mo.

► Born in Forest Lake, Minn., McQuiston entered the Army in 2000 and completed Military Police One Station Unit Training in February 2001.

► Deployed to Iraq.

► Awards include Bronze Star Medal, ACM (5 OLC), AAM (3OLC) and GCM (3rd award)



STAFF SGT. JAROD P. MOSS
95th Reserve Division

► Born in Dallas, Moss completed Bradley Fighting Vehicle Maintainer Course, One Station Unit Training in 2002. Bachelor's from University of Texas-Arlington.

► Mobilizations at Fort Sill and Fort Knox, Ky.

► Awards include ACM, AAM (4OLC), and GCM



STAFF SGT. CESAR RUIZ
Fort Benning, Ga.

► Born in Hollister, Calif., Ruiz joined the Army in 2000 and completed the Multichannel Transmissions Systems Operator Course in March 2001.

► Deployed twice to Iraq.

► Awards include ACM (1 Silver, 2 Bronze OLC), AAM (3OLC), and GCM (Bronze Clasp and 2 Loops)



← DRILL SERGEANTS CONT. FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

at two ranges, demonstrating disassembly and assembly of M240B and M249 machine guns and then instructing Soldiers how to fire an M209 grenade launcher. In the afternoon, a round of urban orienteering tasks included evaluations of how the drill sergeants reacted and resolved situations in which Soldiers refused to be trained, as well as their ability to communicate effectively while interacting with members of the news media. The day concluded where it began — at the firing range, where the competing drill sergeants underwent M16 rifle qualifications.

On the third day of the competition, the drill sergeants started on the obstacle course, then conducted another set of round robin battle drills that included instruction on how to break contact, react to near ambush, and enter and clear a room. During the competition, the drill sergeants are not aware of what challenge lies ahead of them, and on Day 3, organizers introduced a new element of surprise to the competition — a seemingly simple mission of road marching to a location where troops needed to be relieved of their security duties turned into full-blown battle scene. As the drill sergeants rounded the corner of their path, smoke was in the air, Soldiers were lying on the ground role-playing injuries and groaning in pain. As grenades punctuated the air, the drill sergeants had to quickly

execute a nine-line medical evacuation. Then role-playing opposing forces opened fire. The competitors moved their Soldiers to cover and then went back to return fire.

“It was meant to be confusing and we wanted to see how they would react,” said Staff Sgt. John Heslin, the 2011 Drill Sergeant of the Year and one of the organizers of this year’s competition. “And it gives them an opportunity to have some fun.”

The boards took place on the final day of the competition.

Even though the Drill Sergeant of the Year events are full of surprises, Heilman said he was able to win because of his extensive preparation.

The eight-year Army veteran initially wasn’t even sure he wanted to compete after being dropped from Army Ranger School for medical reasons. However, he cast his doubts aside and trained for the crucible, taking home top honors at each level.

“I’m glad I did a lot of hard work — running, road marching, studying. It was a lot of preparation, but it paid off,” he said. “To be the top the drill sergeant ... I never expected anything like this.”

The active-duty Army Drill Sergeant of the Year receives the Stephen Ailes Award, initiated in 1969 and named for the secretary of the Army from 1964 to 1965 who was instrumental in originating the first Drill Sergeant School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. The Army Reserve winner receives the Ralph Haines Jr. Award, named for the commander of the Continental Army Command (forerunner of TRADOC) from 1970 to 1972. The awards were to be presented in a special ceremony in Washington, D.C.

The winners will spend a year assigned to the Initial Military Training Center of Excellence, where they will provide input on future Army training and help represent the Army’s 2,400 active-duty drill sergeants and approximately 3,000 reserve component drill sergeants.

Staff Sgt. Moss, who has served as a reserve drill sergeant since 2006, said the competition was a “10 out of 10” in difficulty.

“Carrying that rucksack on the first day, especially when you’re not sure where you’re going, is tough,” he said. “You don’t know how long you’re going to be doing it, and when you hit about the two-hour mark, you just feel like your body is going to give out. I don’t know if I would’ve made it without prayer.”

“The overall goal is to win the whole thing, and I’ve made it here and did that,” Moss said. “It felt great. I look forward to traveling around to talk with and help my fellow drill sergeants.” ❧

Stephanie Slater of TRADOC public affairs and Senior Airman Jason J. Brown of Fort Eustis public affairs contributed to this report.

◀ Staff Sgt. Jarod Moss, 95th Reserve Division Drill Sergeant of the Year, completes the final obstacle of the Fort Eustis, Va., confidence course before sprinting to the finish line on the third day of the Drill Sergeant of the Year competition.

PHOTO BY STEPHANIE SLATER



Roll Call OF THE FALLEN

Operation Enduring Freedom

PFC. TREVOR B. ADKINS, 21
Spring Lake, N.C., July 8, 2012

SPC. ERICA P. ALECKSEN, 21
Eatonton, Ga., July 8, 2012

SPC. JONATHAN BATISTA, 22
Kinnelon, N.J., July 8, 2012

SGT. NICHOLAS C. FREDSTI, 30
San Diego, Calif., June 15, 2012

STAFF SGT. RAUL M. GUERRA, 37
Union City, N.J., July 4, 2012

SGT. 1ST CLASS BARETT W. McNABB, 33
Chino Valley, Ariz., June 12, 2012

PFC. JARROD A. LALLIER, 20
Spokane, Wash., June 18, 2012

STAFF SGT. MATTHEW J. LEACH, 29
Ferndale, Mich., June 26, 2012

SGT. JOSEPH M. LILLY, 25
Flint, Mich., June 14, 2012

CAPT. BRUCE A. MACFARLANE, 46
Oviedo, Fla., July 6, 2012

STAFF SGT. ROBERT A. MASSARELLI, 32
Hamilton, Ohio, June 24, 2012

PFC. CODY O. MOOSMAN, 24
Preston, Idaho, July 3, 2012

CPL. JUAN P. NAVARRO, 23
Austin, Texas, July 7, 2012

PFC. ALEJANDRO J. PARDO, 21
Porterville, Calif., July 8, 2012

SPC. TREVOR A. PINNICK, 20
Lawrenceville, Ill., June 12, 2012

1ST LT. STEPHEN C. PRASNICKI, 24
Lexington, Va., June 27, 2012

SGT. JOSE RODRIGUEZ, 22
Gustine, Calif., June 19, 2012

STAFF SGT. RICARDO SEIJA, 31
Tampa, Fla., July 8, 2012

SGT. JAMES L. SKALBERG JR., 25
Cullman, Ala., June 27, 2012

SGT. MICHAEL J. STRACHOTA, 28
White Hall, Ark., June 24, 2012

PFC. CAMERON J. STAMBAUGH, 20
Spring Grove, Pa., July 8, 2012

MAJ. PAUL C. VOELKE, 36
Monroe, N.Y., Jun. 22, 2012

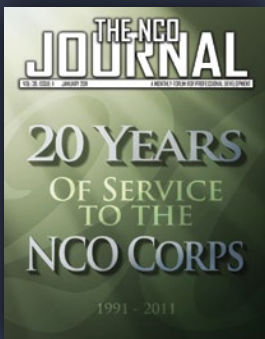
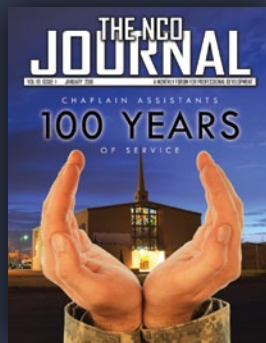
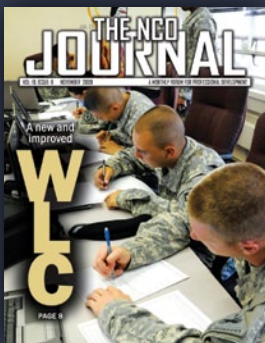
SPC. CLARENCE WILLIAMS III, 23
Brooksville, Fla., July 8, 2012

SPC. STERLING W. WYATT, 21
Columbia, Mo., July 11, 2012

FINAL SALUTES

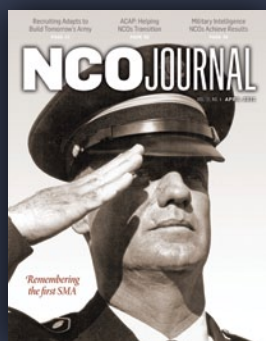
YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

This is a continuation of a list that began in the October 2003 issue of The NCO Journal and contains names released by the Department of Defense between June 13, 2012 and July 13, 2012.



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