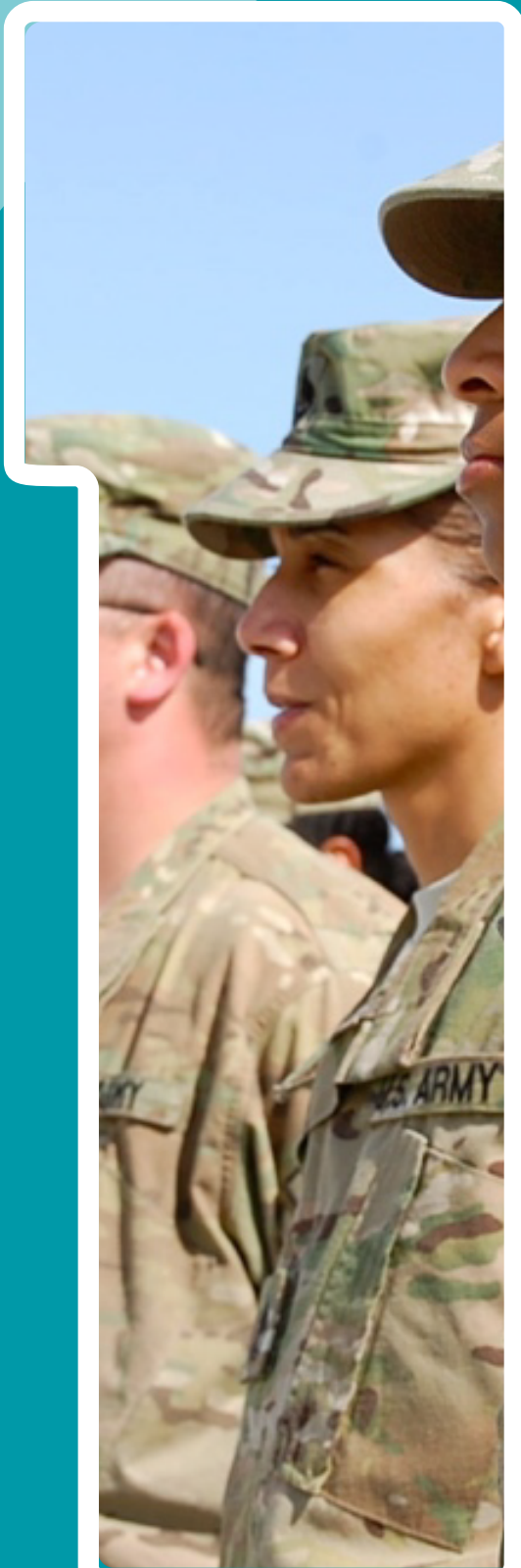


HYDRA HERALD

JAN-SEP



Hydra Herald

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Task Force Hydra
Public Affairs Office

KABUL BASE CLUSTER

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Questions, comments or submissions for the HYDRA HERALD should be directed to the Task Force Hydra Public Affairs Office ATTN: Cpt. Jacqueline Wren, jacqueline.r.wren@afghan.swa.army.mil. Submissions are subject to editing.



ON THE BACK COVER

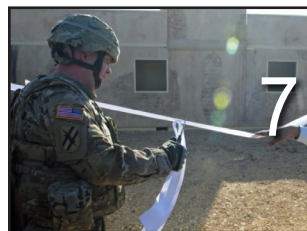
"Building Relationships, Restoring a Nation"

The Commander of TF Hydra Commissioned a painting to mark our deployment that will hang in the Columbus Armory. The artist is Kabul native, M.Akbar Farhaad



In This Issue

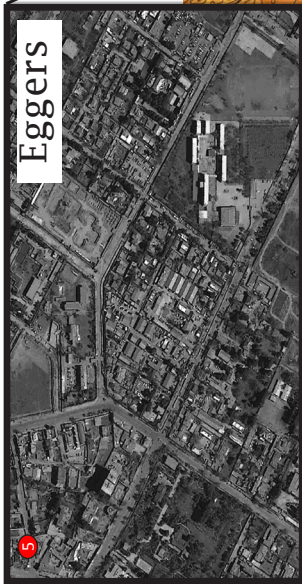
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UNCLASSIFIED



TF HYDRA KBC CAMPS



Eggers



NKC



Qargha



Phoenix



Julien



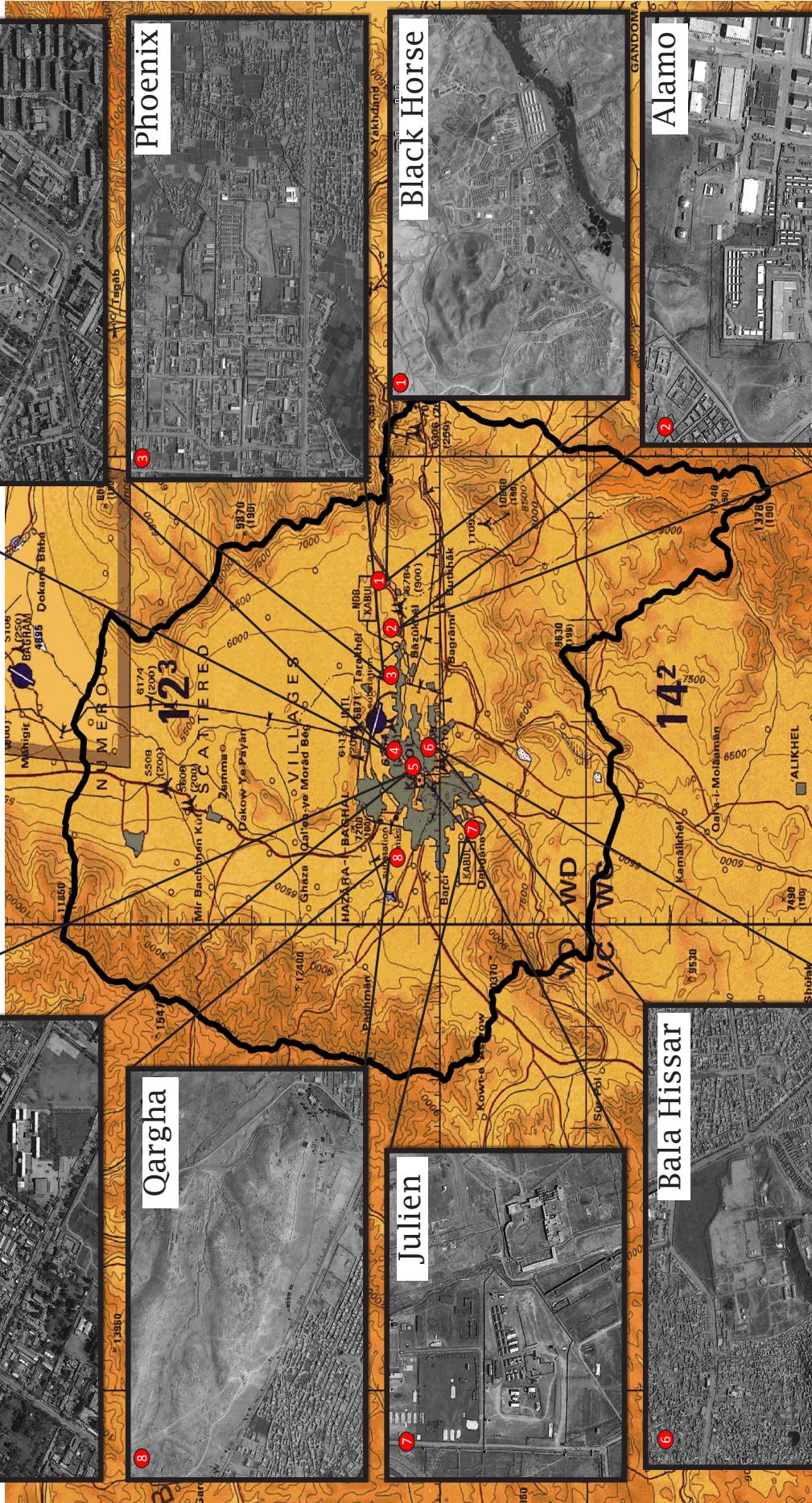
Black Horse



Bala Hissar



Alamo



UNCLASSIFIED

Commander's Corner

Col. Andy L. Hall



We did it! The Brigade Headquarters of the Georgia Army National Guard's, 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade has completed the first deployment in its history. I am proud and reflective as this journey comes

to a bittersweet end. I don't have to remind our Soldiers that the journey to get here was a long one. I took command of this unit in Aug of 2010, only the second commander of the 648th. I joined a team that was off to a running start, but still had a lot of growing to do. We had our mission to deploy but we had leaps and bounds to go before we were ready. The team had worked hard over the previous three years to build a brand new unit and would have to work harder to prove that we were ready for combat.

And work hard we did. The demands we asked of our Soldiers included months of training both close to home and away. Leading up to our departure everything we did focused on readiness, validation and team building. Working as a team became the key to achievement at every turn. By design, we built a diverse team to take on a wide range of mission sets. Diversity of thought combined with an absolute devotion to mission accomplishment, flexibility and a "can-do" attitude became the formula for success.

Our mission here was to synchronize security efforts in the Kabul Province, partner with Afghan Security Forces and Government Officials, conduct base operations support integration and force protection for the eight bases within the Kabul Base Cluster and to mentor Afghan National Security Forces. Every member of the TF Hydra had a specialized role in making us a success. Hydra left its imprint as a professional organization able to consistently fill the needs of a full spectrum mission. In other words, Hydra served as proof of concept for the MEB model.

So that is our legacy, we responded to the call and proved over and over that we were able to go above and beyond to complete the mission. I look forward to going home to my family, friends and colleagues and celebrating our accomplishments.

"All Points"

Command Sergeant Major's Corner

Command Sgt. Maj. John E. Smiley

The members of 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade are very proud of their accomplishments since being called to active duty. It is time now to hand our duties over to the 136th MEB out of Texas as the mission comes to its end. We now look forward to reuniting with family members and taking some well deserved time with them out of uniform.

Our mission was driven by true professional Soldiers, and for many this was their first deployment. I am proud to say that ethics, moral courage and selfless service complemented the experience of being in a combat zone. In the beginning our Soldiers worked tirelessly doing jobs that they were not familiar, which required many hours of just simply learning as we go. I often saw individuals with high morals and enthusiasm impact the day for others and pick them up when times were hard at home or on the job.

This was a very intense and different type of mission which required a great deal of vigilance and attention to detail. Our Soldiers quickly adapted and built relationships with the local populace. I strongly feel having a good relationship with the local civilians and military is what kept our Soldiers safe and allowed all of our CAMPs to accomplish their mission. We handpicked our team for this very reason and it has proven to be a wise and effective decision by our Commander. We were challenged, worked hard, and accomplished task that exceeded our expectations.

Our Soldiers are more mature and have developed both personally and professionally during this deployment. We are now an organization that is postured to serve the Georgia Army National Guard at a much higher standard than we were prior to our deployment. Over twenty

of our enlisted Soldiers have been promoted during the past year thanks to the Enlisted Promotion System. This is huge not only for the 648th, but for the other Georgia units who will be getting a well trained TF Hydra NCO in their ranks.

During the course of this deployment I have witnessed Soldiers face the challenge of coping with tragic and serious issues at home and yet remain focused. Being in a combat environment is a stressful event and often you see Soldiers rise to another level of professionalism. This has certainly been the case for our Brigade. I have personally experienced outstanding support during trying times and have much respect for the Officers and Soldiers of the 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade.

I am honored for the opportunity to serve with a great commander, outstanding staff, professional officers and the disciplined enlisted Soldiers of Task Force Hydra. In my humble opinion, there is not a better organization in the Army to accomplish this mission. We have impacted the Afghan population in a positive manner and raised the bar for those that follow.

H7



648TH MEB COMPLETES PRE-MOBILIZATION TRAINING

By Capt. Jacqueline R. Wren

CAMP BLANDING, Fla., Oct. 27, 2011 – For more than 12 months, the 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (MEB), headquartered in Columbus, Ga., has focused on preparing for its upcoming deployment. Today, that preparation came to an end as the 648th concluded its final pre-deployment training event.

“In the very near future, the Soldiers of the 648th will deploy to Afghanistan, and we are certainly poised for success,” said Col. Andy Hall, commander of the 648th MEB.

The more than 100 Soldiers on the Headquarters team that will deploy, have spent the last two weeks here at Camp Blanding building team cohesion, mastering weapon systems, and getting evaluated on tactical and operational tasks designed by Col. Hall, his command team, and the staff here at the Army Training Center.

“We decided we wanted to train with our own agenda with some provided evaluators. This training tested our staff, garrison teams, and our movement teams on a combination of individual, collective, and staff tasks all in one tactical event that rolled into a computerized event,” said Lt. Col. Raymond Bossert, deputy commander of the 648th.

The National Guard Bureau’s eXportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC) along with evaluators

from 1st Army Division were used to establish tactical lanes, evaluate the training, conduct detailed After Action Reviews, and provide a record of training for the unit. The training package included video and a 3D picture of the battlefield, providing a realistic command picture to help improve tactical techniques as a team.



to help improve tactical techniques as a team.

In addition to providing a realistic battlefield picture, XCTC offered an opportunity for Soldiers on garrison teams and Staff members to work

together on their lanes in a variety of positions. Young NCOs and Soldiers were given the opportunity to step up and lead convoys and tactical movements, while staff members participated as platoon members to get an idea of every position needed for a successful tactical mission.

“For the Soldiers who haven’t deployed, and even those who have but have not been outside the wire, it was a great training tool to see what to expect,” Said Sgt. 1st Class Larry Simons, who will serve as security NCO for one of the Kabul camps.

Now that the training has been completed, the 648th Soldiers will head home to clean and pack their gear and spend some much deserved time with family and friends before heading overseas.

“I believe this unit is fully capable and ready to take on the mission ahead,” Said Spc. Ronneil Brown, a transportation NCO for one the Csmpl Black Horse.



(Clockwise from top) Lt. Col. Raymond Bossert gives an inbrief to 648th Soldiers at the beginning of training at Camp Blanding, Fla.; Sgt. Quinton Evans and Capt. Kevin Holley refresh their knowledge in map reading during training at Fort Stewart; Soldiers of the 648th MEB rehearse clearing a building during training at Fort Stewart; Sgt. 1st Class Deborah Martin participates in vehicle rollover training at Fort Stewart.

Guard troops train for threefold Afghan mission

By Capt. Marvin J. Baker

FORT HOOD, Texas (Jan. 17, 2012) -- A Georgia Army National Guard unit will play a significant role in the expected reduction of United States forces in Afghanistan.

The 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade headquarters staff will have a threefold mission: management of the Kabul Base Cluster, route security to and from camps, and civil affairs in the areas where coalition forces work and live.

Before they will deploy to Afghanistan, the Georgia Soldiers wrapped up nearly 30 days of post-mobilization training at Fort Hood earlier this month with Division West's 120th Infantry Brigade.

During the 648th MEB's culminating training event, to ensure the Guard Soldiers were adequately prepared to deploy, the 120th IN Bde. tested every staff section with events replicating those the Soldiers may face during their upcoming nine-month deployment.

"As we developed the plan to train the 648th MEB nearly a year ago, we talked to and looked at the functions of every staff section, considered the top 10 issues they may face, then made sure the 648th MEB commander's training objectives went into developing the final training exercise," said Col. Gary Brito, 120th Infantry Bde. commander.

The 648th MEB's robust staff includes judge advocate general, civil-military affairs, information operations and directorate of public works sections. The sections will work together to meet the unit's overall top three missions in Afghanistan.

"We have nearly 67 different military specialties and branches in this headquarters," said Col. Andy Hall, 648th MEB commander. "We have a large contracting section, attorneys and engineers we brought on our team that we will use to start and oversee the construction and improvements to living conditions at the nine camps in the Kabul Base Cluster."

While the unit will manage nearly a billion dollars in military construction and local government projects -- also known as commander's emergency response program projects -- in Afghanistan, the 648th MEB's primary mission is base infrastructure, maintenance and safety for its nearly 10,000 customers, Hall said.

Helping to meet this challenge are many Georgia Army National Guard Soldiers with relevant civilian- or military-acquired skills. Hall said one of his goals was to take advantage of the diversity in skill and thought while preparing the unit to deploy.

As the United States plans to reduce its military footprint in Afghanistan, the 648th MEB will face challenges that come with fulfilling base space requirements while also helping to responsibly hand over U.S.-controlled camps to Afghan forces. During the unit's deployment, the United States plans to withdraw some 30,000 servicemembers from Afghanistan. As of last fall, nearly 100,000 servicemembers were in Afghanistan, according to the Department of Defense website.

"We will tie in closely to the base-closure planning in Afghanistan," Hall said. "We may be asked to develop plans to help

decide which camps may close and when and where those servicemembers will live as they complete their tour of duty."

While the drawdown guides the 648th MEB mission toward closing bases, it also focuses the mission toward opening facilities for the people of Afghanistan. Soon after the Georgia Soldiers arrive in Afghanistan, they will take control of several CERP projects, starting with an orphanage and a school, from the Massachusetts Army National Guard's 26th MEB.

"One of the first things I will do when we arrive in Afghanistan is conduct a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the school built by the 26th MEB," Hall said.

The 26th MEB sent the deputy director of its engineering section from Afghanistan to Fort Hood to advise and mentor the 648th MEB's DPW section during the Georgia unit's week-long culminating training event.

"I came back to help train the DPW because the process for the base camps to request construction support can be complicated," said Maj. Ralph Pickett of the 26th MEB DPW section. "It is important that the camps function well, because some camps are also used to train the Afghan Forces' servicemembers so that they can assume the responsibility for securing the country after the coalition leaves."

To help train and validate Army National Guard and Army Reserve units for deployments, Division West regularly brings in trainers and subject-matter experts from various locations. To build a full cadre of observer controller/trainers for each exercise, trainers may come from the 75th Training Division Mission Command, or units currently working in the relevant theater of operations, or from Division West's own pool of experts from its eight training brigades.

Later this year, the Texas Army National Guard's 136th MEB is scheduled to complete post-mobilization training at Fort Hood before the unit deploys to Afghanistan to replace the 648th MEB.





(Clockwise from top) Members of the Movement Team receive a briefing before participating in the convoy live fire exercise where they set a Fort Hood all-time record; Maj. Kenneth Napier participates in a training scenario involving role players during the Culminating Training Exercise; Spc. Brian Butel and other members of the 648th participate in an after actions review of training at Fort Hood; members of the 648th MEB move the unit's luggage off of an aircraft when the unit landed in Kabul, Afghanistan.



Georgia Army National Guardsmen start mission in Afghanistan

By Capt. Jacqueline R. Wren

KABUL, Afghanistan – Georgia Army National Guardsmen participated in a Transfer of Authority Ceremony at Camp Phoenix here today.

Col. Andy L. Hall, Commander of the 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, a Georgia Army National Guard unit from Columbus, Ga. assumed command of the Task Force Hydra and responsibility for the Kabul Base Cluster.

More than 11,000 Service members, contractors and coalition forces live and work on the KBC. The 648th “Hydra” Brigade provides command and control, security and support operations for the nearly 9,000 U.S. and coalition forces operating in the capital region.

Attending the ceremony were contractors from several organizations as well as coalition forces from Bulgaria, Canada, France and Mongolia.

Deputy Commanding General of United States Forces Afghanistan, Maj. Gen. William E. Rapp, discussed the expectations he has of Task Force Hydra. “You have the

technology, the tactics and the know how to excel,” said Rapp.

Hall commented on the magnitude of mission ahead of the 648th and the unit’s readiness for it. “We have been well prepared to

assume this mission, we are a professional organization, we will run hard and work smart and we will play a major role in sustaining the momentum of this campaign,” said Hall.

The 648th replaced the 26th “Yankee”

Brigade, Massachusetts Army National Guard, commanded by Army Brig. Gen. John A. Hammond. The 648th and the 26th Brigades have worked together to ensure a smooth transition of authority in the KBC for over 18 months.

“I look forward to observing your success from the United States this following year,” said Hammond.

Hall also recognized the strong partnership that had been built between the two Brigades saying, “Others have already spoken of the great job you have done. We would like to express our gratitude for the way in which you approached this transition. You began transition with us before you even got here yourself. Unprecedented,” said Hall.





(Clockwise from top left) Task Force Hydra's Human Resource section; Sgt. Roaslyn Msezane, the personnel and mail clerk checks the mail list for a customer; Master Sgt. Roger Greene, S1 NCOIC, at work; Capt. Mark A. Brown and Sgt. 1st Class Darryl Basham prepare for an awards ceremony.

Task Force Hydra S-1

TF-Hydra S-1, Directorate of Human Resources, deploys and mans the force, provides human resources services, coordinates personnel support and conducts human resources planning and operations for the Kabul Base Cluster. The S1 maintains the unit strength through requisition of new personnel and out processing of departing Soldiers. The S1 coordinates and manages all personnel transactions for subordinate units.

S1 conducted DCS briefings, pick up and process mail, process passports, ID Cards, DEERS transactions, awards, voting absentee ballots, ID tags, re-

view Special Immigration Visa Packets, flag certificates, 4100's for promotion, NCOER's and OER's, Personnel Accountability Inventory (PAI), Emergency leave packets and MWR events.

They constructed and remodeled their building to better utilize space and provide better customer service for Soldiers and Contractors who need DEERs assistance. They increased the customer capacity which provided better security of DEERS machine, and improved customer privacy. They also combined the roles of 8 personnel from 13 by the previous unit.

TASK FORCE HYDRA MORALE WELFARE AND RECREATION



Hydra's First 30 days

By Master Sgt. Janet Hill

Task Force Hydra's first 30 days in Afghanistan was a very proud and busy time. The Georgia Army National Guard Soldiers have put their training to the test on several fronts and have learned the importance of being flexible.

Task Force Hydra came in ready to take on base support operations, which would provide life sustainment and support capabilities for seven bases and camps in direct support of ISAF Joint Command (IJC), but soon found out that they had additional missions to take on.

"We picked up the responsibility for security of the capital city of Kabul and the synchronization of all the security elements within Kabul. We picked up a police advisory team mission. In addition to our base operations function we were given, we were asked to pick up two additional large projects; large base camps; one is Qargha and one is NKAIA (North Kabul Afghanistan International Airport), and those two are going to add to our weight on what we were originally doing, and that combined with the security is a lot to swallow in 30 days," said Col. Andy L. Hall, the 648th Task Force Hydra commander and Kabul base commander.

"The task placed upon us seemed almost overwhelming, but with guidance from our leadership, as time progressed we begun getting familiar with the duties and how these things should be performed. All of us here at Bala Hissar are getting familiar with life in Afghanistan and working well together as a team," said Spc. Brian J. Butel, a security specialist at Camp Bala Hissar, one of the camps in the KBC.

"Our first 30 days here have been great," said Command Sgt. Maj. Smiley, the 648th Task Force Hydra command sergeant major. "I don't know if pride expresses my emotions, but it goes beyond pride, and the way I feel about our soldiers and what they are doing for our country and what they are doing here for our unit."

Force protection on these camps are essential to operations in the capital region and this function allows over 11,000 serving members, coalition forces and contractors to effectively perform operations within the Enduring Freedom effort.

When it comes to making changes within the KBC, one of the things that TF Hydra is in the process of doing is to assist in realigning the Coalition Forces in a more efficient pattern that supports the current mission. "What we're doing is, we're moving coalition forces and changing their task organization from what they are used to doing, from what they are comfortable doing, and were making hard decisions about where to move them and how to utilize them. What that's doing is that's freeing up U.S. soldiers from the outside the wire mission, it frees up our MP's and our infantrymen to go out

and synchronize the security effort and to advise our police teams, the Afghan Uniform Police in the city," said Hall.

"Even with the additional missions, and the long days, TF Hydra continues their mission. When the going gets tough, the tough get going", said Smiley as he talks about how the noncommissioned officers are stepping up to meet additional mission requirements.

TF Hydra is advancing the ball on what TF Yankee, the Massachusetts National Guard unit that was previously in command of the KBC, had started. TF Hydra worked closely with TF Yankee so they had a chance to study what was to be expected. There are two major tasks ahead of Task Force Hydra that differ from their predecessors. The first task is to continue to improve the capability of the Afghan Uniform Police through mentorship. The AUP's capacity to secure the city, provide education, training, and to be properly equipped will be the focus of these efforts. The second task is to assist in the draw down here. "Draw down the U.S. footprint, and with that comes base closures, and how we effectively manage that is part of advancing the ball. Working base closures will continue along with how to collapse into fewer bases so that there will be a smaller footprint in the city," said Hall.

"At a minimum, they will significantly improve their ability to secure the city. We have a shot at being able to move them to a comfortable point that they no longer need us. If that does not come in our term, it will certainly come in our replacements term. Regardless, we will certainly move them in that direction very quickly," said Hall.

"Our efforts as a task force are successful when we transfer more accountability to the Afghan population. Through Police Advisory Teams, Humanitarian Assistance Missions alongside Afghan governing bodies and increased interaction with Kabul Leadership, 648th will continue to push our Afghan counterparts to levels of increased responsibility and competency in leading their own into and beyond transition," said Hall.

"I would just like to say that the people at home should be proud of them (the 648th) and the mission they are accomplishing here in theater, and we are making a difference. In the past I wondered if our presence here would make a difference but I am seeing now that it is," said Smiley.

"As always, we'd like to thank the family and friends of the 648th back in Georgia. Our leadership back there has been phenomenal. They continue to support us day in and day out any time of the day, through the holidays and weekends, and I just enjoy the fact that I am able to talk to them regularly and know that we've got the full support of the state of Georgia behind us," said Hall.



(Right) The Combined Operations and Intelligence Center in Patriot Square; (Left from top) Staff Sgt. Joseph R. Ri'chard demonstrates finger printing technique in a criminal science continuing education class taught by Maj. James D. Collie; the COIC having a section breakfast prior to an awards ceremony; Lt. Col. Erik Andersen with an Afghan Uniformed Police Officer during a combined exercise; Capt. Marie Herbolt firing her individual weapon on the qualification range.



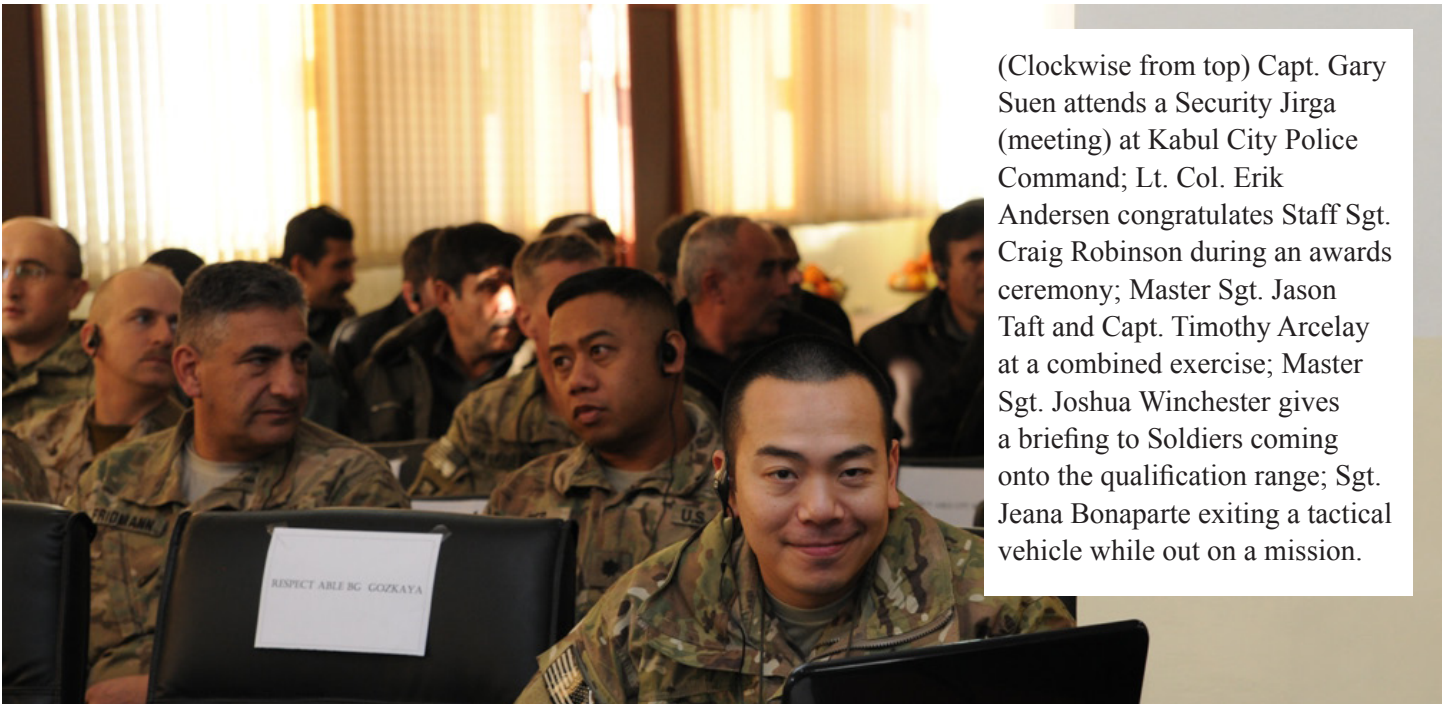
Task Force Hydra Combined Operations and Intelligence Center

efforts with Higher command (ISAF, USFOR-A and IJC) and subordinate entities. TF Hydra COIC supports Operations and Security to include Installation Security, Base Cluster Security, and Synchronization of KBC Security within RC-C. TF Hydra synchronizes and coordinates Police Advisory Operations within Kabul Province with Kabul City Police, Police Districts, RC-C, and other Police Mentors. The COIC Manages all operations in the AO in coordination with the Battle Space Owner RC-Capital (Turks) and IJC while providing operational oversight on all Mounted Combat Patrols, Named Security Missions and QRF response support.

The intelligence team is able to provide daily and monthly intelligence updates for over 2000 through active relationships with higher, lateral, and lower commands to act as a fusion center for information sharing.

The Military Police Operations Cell Developed a Safety Inspection Program and Safety Campaign to increase safety awareness across the KBC. MP Ops provides oversight for the Customs Inspection Program, non-lethal weapons equipment and training and conducts vulnerability assessments of all of the 8 camps within the KBC to promote and enforce safety and security.

The TF Hydra COIC (Combined Operations & Intelligence Center) is comprised of Current Operations, Intelligence, Plans, and Military Police Operations sections. The COIC is responsible for the Security, Intelligence, Operations and Planning efforts for the Kabul Base Cluster (KBC). The COIC coordinates



(Clockwise from top) Capt. Gary Suen attends a Security Jirga (meeting) at Kabul City Police Command; Lt. Col. Erik Andersen congratulates Staff Sgt. Craig Robinson during an awards ceremony; Master Sgt. Jason Taft and Capt. Timothy Arcelay at a combined exercise; Master Sgt. Joshua Winchester gives a briefing to Soldiers coming onto the qualification range; Sgt. Jeana Bonaparte exiting a tactical vehicle while out on a mission.





(left from top) Master Sgt. Ricky Hall and Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Stringfellow on a ride through Camp Phoenix; Staff Sgt. Paul Kellman, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Leroy Lott and Master Sgt. Mary Sanders assist a prepare containers for shipping home; Maj. Jonathan Roscoe and Master Sgt. Stephen Stringfellow are the tough guys of S-4; Master Sgt. Ricky Hall hard at work. (right) Spc. Kandace Hodges is presented with the Afghan Campaign Medal by the Command Team.



Task Force Hydra

S-4

S4 maintains Tactical vehicles maintenance and has increased the operational readiness of the tactical vehicle fleet from 50-90 percent.

The Coalition sponsorship program was established to assign unit sponsors to all of the Coalition units that are assigned to the 648th. This program also includes a comprehensive training plan for sponsors. ACSA billing for the coalition is now a much more accurate program for billing Coalition Forces thanks to the “Brewer Calculator,” which accurately tracks what is owed to the U.S.

RC-C Container Control is a priority for theater wide retrograde. Task force Hydra has been aggressively reducing the number of detention containers on two Afghan container yards.

Additionally, the S4 is responsible for the coordination of fuel movement and capacity between the camps ensuring there is always enough to maintain operations. S4’s Property Book Officer works with other Coalition and US units in the KBC receiving and turning in their excess equipment.

TF Hydra S4 supports the Task Force Commander’s intent by providing oversight, guidance, and system improvements throughout all areas of Logistics, in order to provide tenant units with an increased ability to maintain mission focus while not experiencing a decrease in the quality of sustainment.



(Clockwise from top left) Lt. Col. John H. Groth during a mission at a humanitarian assistance school in Kabul; Sgt. 1st Class John Nesnick on the weapons range; Sgt. 1st Class John Nesnick shakes hand with Gen. John Allen after receiving a coin from him for his performance; Lt. Col. John H. Groth with the Kabul's Mayor, Mayor Nawandish.

Task Force Hydra S-5

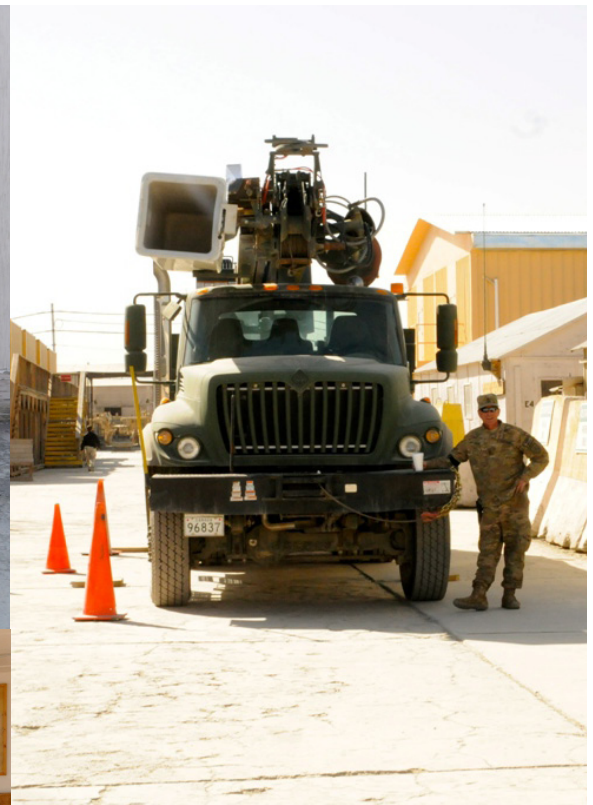
The TF Hydra S5 Plans section's mission is to provide planning support to Maneuver Support Operations, and coordinate all planning efforts within the Brigade. The team performs planning functions for the Brigade to support and develop immediate and long range plans for the Brigade and subordinate units. Additionally they provide consolidated and coordinated staff estimates and related products required for the development of OPLANS/OPORDS within the command.

During the deployment the TF Hydra S5 reviewed and analyzed over 1004 FRAGMENTORY ORDERS (FRAGOS) and OPERATION ORDERS (OPORDS) from all of the higher commands within the Afghanistan Area of Operations.

The S5 plans section also planned, staffed, and wrote 30 FRAGOS and 2 Full Operation Orders for TF Hydra.

The S5 plans section also managed the force flow of inbound and outbound units by coordinating with Transports Command, Central Command and USFOR-A to ensure all Soldiers transportation to and from theater was booked and aircrafts were properly allocated.

The S5 plans section worked with the S1 and ISAF Joint Command in order to maintain and manage the number of personnel assigned TF Hydra during the period of time Soldier redeployment. TF Hydra managed to gain additional positions in order to grow the force.



(Clockwise from top left) The S-6 Team; Master Sgt. Joel Pifer prepares to do wire work on Camp Phoenix; Spc. Dewayne Tillman with Coalition Soldiers; Sgt. Ju Xiong is recognized for his performance.

Task Force Hydra S-6

Task Force Hydra S6 provides and manages communications and information systems support for the Kabul Base Cluster (KBC) in order to facilitate TF Hydra Mission Command, Base Operation Support Integration (BOS-I) for Base/Camp Support Groups, security efforts with the ANSF, and synchronization of operations with Coalition partners.

The S6 completed over 600 work orders relating to keeping both voice and internet connectivity in operation. S6 also liaises with AFN to ensure operability on Camp Phoenix. The S6 provides

COMSEC fills for all of HYDRA. Supported Coalition partners and built a strong relationship with Coalition counterparts. Increased communications interoperability between QRF elements across the AO through cross leveling of equipment. Conducted all necessary coordination for establishment of communications infrastructure and support the opening and sustainment of Qargha LSA beginning June 2012.



(Clockwise from top left) The S9 team; Cpt. Eric Wahner and Staff Sgt. Ryan Archuleta at the Qual-e Girls School, a TF Hydra CERP Project; Cpt. Eric Wahner, Master Sgt. Frances Richardson, Capt. Jacqueline Wren, Maj. Dustin Krack, in the S9 lounge; The S9 team during a visit to Camp Bala Hissar; Civil affairs interpreter, Yama with Capt. Eric V. Wahner, Staff Sgt. Devon Debany and Spc. Donovan Couch on a visit to a finished district center built with U.S. CERP funds.

Task Force Hydra S-9

The TF Hydra S9 section, comprised of Civil Military Operations(CMO), Information Operations, and Public Affairs Officer(PAO) specialties, is responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing all non-lethal effects throughout the Kabul Province.

Specifically, the S9 executes tactical CERP and coordinates Humanitarian Relief activities, with a desired infrastructure development and community stability effect.

In complement to CMO activities, the Hydra S9 also manages the task force key lead engagements and community engagement efforts. Finally, the PAO is responsible for comprehensive public affairs coverage throughout the Kabul Base Cluster.

The S9 assesses new Commander Emergency Response Program (CERP) projects, promote community security

and stability, increase government capacities, as well as bolster the local economy through purchased commodities and hiring local laborers. The S9 CERP projects are also Kabul Leader driven, designed to elevate the prominence and importance of local leaders through a demonstrated initiative to display their competence to their constituents.

The PAO keeps contact with the Family Readiness Group, rear detachment and interested parties through social media updates. The PAO coordinates information release and hold with higher echelon public affairs entities during significant events within the Kabul Base Cluster. They serve as the Kabul Base Cluster spokesperson. The TF Hydra PAO releases command message products to media outlets, higher echelon leadership, and DOD organizations, and bi-monthly newsletter for internal and external communication.

CERP

The Commander's Emergency Response Program has been a mission that will have lasting impact on the Kabul community for decades to come. The Hydra Civil Affairs Team, which includes Soldiers from the 426th CA Battalion, oversaw more than 60 CERP projects. These included schools, district centers, infrastructure, sanitation and other projects. Over the course of Hydra's tour the team executed more than 15 ground breaking ceremonies and over 10 ribbon cuttings. Over \$30 million in CERP funds were used by Hydra to support the initiatives of the Afghan government.



SCHOOL STARTS IN AFGHANISTAN; HYDRA LENDS A HAND

By Capt. Jacqueline Wren

When Americans think of Spring they think of rain, flowers returning from months of hibernation and children getting antsy with the thrill of upcoming summer. In Afghanistan a different excitement stirs in the month of March, and that is of children welcoming the start of the school year.

648th, Task Force Hydra, a Georgia Army National Guard unit from Columbus, is active throughout Kabul as the Kabul Base Cluster Command working with Kabul's political leaders, religious leaders and police to provide humanitarian assistance and funding for projects that both provide better quality of life and employ local Afghan workers. This month the advancement of education was the focus of one of seven current projects that the team is overseeing. On the first Sunday of classes, the TF Hydra civil affairs team, led by Lt. Col. Michael O. Hulsey along with the Task Force Hydra Commander, Col. Andy L. Hall set out for a school with back-to-school gifts for the children.

Darulaman, a community within Kabul, is home to a school that is responsible for educating over 3000 students grades one through twelve. This school is the site of one of the seven current humanitarian projects that Task Force Hydra is currently overseeing. This particular project is to build a privacy wall for the school that will provide protection for girls attending the school.

"In Afghanistan, boundary walls equal security and privacy, which afford a conducive learning environment for this community's youth" said Hulsey about the project that broke ground this week and is scheduled to be complete within 45 days.

Along with checking in on the progress of the privacy wall, the teams brought over 400 bags of school supplies collected by Operation Outreach, a soldier run humanitarian organization, for the school's head master to share with the students.



Hall had an opportunity to speak with children in the classrooms and shared with them that his wife teaches school back home and that he will consider them all friends after that day.

When speaking to the classes of female students, he introduced Lt. Col. Robyn Blader, a member of Task Force Hydra's staff judge advocate team. Blader shared with the girls that she is a lawyer and how important education has been in her life.

An eighth grade female student named Gulnaz who spoke English, shared with Blader that she wants to go on to college and study literature. She also said that it was good to have the Soldiers there to visit them.

"This was one of the best missions I've been on," said Blader. "These kids are learning 15 different subjects in a bare classroom with only a black board and can only attend three hours a day. It's nice to be able to help them."

As the team wrapped up the visit, the school head master shared his gratitude with Hall and Hulsey.

"Very near and dear to our heart is the education of children," said Hall before departing. "I know you share the same thoughts and that creates an educational bond for us."



Left from top) Staff Sgt. Randall Eichelberger with Retired Col. Danny McKnight during the National Prayer Breakfast; the RST receives their Afghan Campaign Medal; Chaplain Capt. Neil Hicks delivers a sermon on Easter Sunday; Lt. Col. Michael Summers gives a sermon to a group of movement team members while visiting a camp (Right) the Camp Phoenix RST.



Task Force Hydra Religious Support Team

TF HYDRA's Religious Support Team (RST) provides religious support to ISAF, IJC, and USFOR-A for the Kabul Base Cluster. The RST sustains the force by posturing for the future in RS facilities, personnel, and logistics and by providing a robust program to build spiritual fitness and cultural awareness.

The KBC RST began its tour by refining the reporting process for KBC Chapels, producing and implementing a monthly KBC RST Training Program, and initiating a weekly KBC Chaplain Update Brief by Adobe Connect.

The reporting process identified religious services that had been previously conducted but had not been reported, and implemented procedures that would produce more accurate numbers, influencing a 15-20 percent increase in Chapel activity attendance during the first two months.

In a typical week, the KBC supervised 45 worship services with 1136 in attendance and 26 Religious Classes with 250 attending.

A renewed emphasis on pluralism and collegiality sustained low-density faith group activities for Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Pagan, and Latter Day Saint Soldiers, while also ensuring that Christian chapel services reflected the beliefs of the respective Chaplains and attendees. An Eastern Orthodox Prayer Room was added at Camp Phoenix. The Eastern Orthodox Prayer Room received attention when the President of Bulgaria visited it in late February.



Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain Lt. Col. Michael Summers



Redefined by Deployment

Deployments redefine a Soldier. We emerge from them as a butterfly escapes from a cocoon, changed and often improved. The deployment exposes Soldiers to exotic sights, sounds and smells; it gives them opportunity to discard prejudices and expand their knowledge base. Deployment reveals our strengths; it exposes our weaknesses. Years ago a Desert Storm veteran told me how that conflict forced him to look within and decide who he wanted to be. Some of us return with new hopes and expanded dreams. Others realize they must change course as they mourn shattered dreams and regret actions they took.

As Soldiers return from deployment, I believe they should address three questions. First, what is the best memory I carry home from this deployment. As Deployment Cycle Support Chaplain at Ft Stewart for almost three years, I discovered that many returning Soldiers had to pause before smiling broadly and revealing the best experience they had had. Many had never considered the positive effects of their deployment. TF Hydra aggressively tackled its mission. Several sections expanded or made dramatic improvements to their areas of responsibilities. Soldiers took education courses and participated in physical fitness exercise groups. Many lost significant weight. Frequent interaction with local nationals and Coalition Soldiers increased cultural awareness. Soldiers who participated in Operation Outreach or projects like Green Phoenix gained a sense that they

were making the local environment better. Several 648th MEB Soldiers assumed leadership roles in worship services and Bible studies. Awareness of positive accomplishment confirms the worth of sacrifices made in leaving home. Second, what is the worst memory I carry home? Some TF Hydra Soldiers saw the remains of people who died violently. Others learned of family tragedies that they could not influence from Afghanistan. Still others faced personal challenges during their deployment. Identifying these low moments will help begin the process of recovery from them. Third, is my family ready for me to come home? Skype, email, and telephone calls have all increased the ability to communicate with loved ones during a deployment. Still, friction can develop during separation. Financial mistakes, health crises, and disagreement over values all can reduce the joy of reunion. Fear of how the Soldier or the Family has changed also can dampen the mood. Several TF Hydra Soldiers took advantage of "The Five Love Languages Class" to improve their awareness of how their spouse's mode of communication may differ from their own. Others sought out counseling to address issues that would confront them when they returned. Strong ethical leadership increased the likelihood of positive reunion.

We return from deployment different people than when we left. Future history will determine the success of our efforts and how our mission in Afghanistan influenced that nation and our own individual lives. Soldiers who took advantage of educational, religious, and cultural growth opportunities will fare better as they go forward. Some will at least know to "call for fire" (pray) when in need of spiritual rescue. Positive shared experiences will forever bind us together.



(Clockwise from top left) The Staff Judge Advocate section after receiving the Afghan Campaign Medal; Lt. Col. Robyn Blader and Col. David Gault with Chuck Yeager; the team with Camp Phoenix shop keeper Hussein; Gault with local children while out on a CERP project visit; Staff Sgt. Anthony Trolinger and Capt. Gregory Vanison during a professional development event.



Task Force Hydra Staff Judge Advocate

The Office of the Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) is dedicated in supporting the Command's mission by providing legal support to members of the 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade and subordinate units throughout the Kabul Base Cluster in Afghanistan.

The team fairly administers the military justice system and provides quality legal advice and various legal services. The Staff Judge Advocate provides comprehensive advice to the command and staff as well as subordinate units within the Kabul Base Cluster on legal issues not limited but including AR 15-6 and FLIPL investigations, accidents, claims, condolence payments, agree-

ments, Memorandums of Understanding, search and seizure issues, Official Representation Fund purchases, and health and welfare inspections.

Legal support includes contract and fiscal law advice focusing on the issues such as proper fiscal year funds to use, modifying or terminating contracts, re-obligating funds after a proper contract termination, funds increases to contracts, opining on whether contract changes were in-scope or out-of-scope, and determining whether requests such as coins, creative, specialty furniture, were proper purchases within fiscal and regulatory guidelines.

The Staff Judge Advocate provides legal oversight to the local JFUB by participating in Board meetings. Requests for services, MHE, vehicle and land lease requests, and commodities purchases ranging from \$10,000 to multi-million dollar private security and power generation buy.



(Clockwise from top left) The medical section after receiving their Afghan Campaign Medals and other awards; Class John Malone receives his combat patch; Class John Malone gets his temperature taken before donating blood; Col. Austin donates blood for the Walking Blood Bank.

Task Force Hydra Surgeon Cell

The Task Force Hydra Surgeon Cell provides medical base support and assistance to the medical assets at the Troop Medical Clinics within the Kabul Base Cluster. It also provides contractual, direct oversight for the Local National Medical Screening Clinic.

During the month of February they coordinated with the Camp Phoenix TMC the implementation of a Walking Blood Bank. The purpose of the WBB is to establish a blood donation program in the event an emergency occurs in which whole blood is needed. 07 MAR 2012 was their first opportunity to test the effectiveness of the system when a Local

National was treated at Camp Phoenix' TMC and whole blood was provided by a TF Hydra Soldier. Due to the success of this event, the Canadians want to participate and have asked for our assistance in helping them set up their own WBB.

The need of care within the KBC continues to evolve and gain complexity. The team leverages medical resources wisely to assure quality care, achieve optimal outcome and recognize operational efficacies. Providing care that is tailored specifically to meet military standards and reduce unnecessary and potential harmful delays.



(Clockwise from top left) the Engineers after receiving their Afghan Campaign Medals; the team receives a safety brief before qualifying on their weapons; Capt. Kevin Holley, Capt. Todd Uebele, and Sgt. Darrel Wilson getting some shade in Patriot Square; Staff Sgt. Nayda Ibarra qualifies with her M9 pistol on the qualification range; Sgt. Darrel Wilson practices his golf swing during off-time.v



Directorate of Public Works

Task Force Hydra's Engineering section, Department of Public Works and Construction Operations (DPW), composed of 16 military and civilian personnel, is tasked with providing continuous engineering services, construction operations, master planning, Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) management, project development, technical advisement, and supporting the eight bases that make up the Kabul Base Cluster (KBC) to improve and sustain quality of life, security, and to support mission accomplishment.

DPW also coordinates and synchronizes all LOGCAP requirements in the KBC, prepares and presents all new project requirements to the Joint Facility Utilization Board (JFUB) for review and

approval/disapproval, and serves as a primary Contractor Officers Technical Representative (COTR) to all KBC CORs, Contracting Officers (KOs), and to the Phoenix Regional Contracting Center (PRCC).

DPW has and continues to work diligently to coordinate with FLUOR and Task Force Power to develop a synchronized power generation program to reduce fuel consumption by 34% at Camp Phoenix. This prototype program, which will extend the life span of each generator by 50% (which equates to an increase from 1.7 to 3.5 years), will be implemented throughout the KBC.

TASK FORCE HYDRA Moving up the Ranks





(Clockwise from top left) The DRM team with their flamingo mascots; the DRM team at the qualification range; 1st Lt. Michelle Meadors receives a gift from the Kabul Police Chief on a visit to his office; DRM presents a gift to Capt. James Asher before his departure.



Directorate of Resource Management

Task Force Hydra’s Directorate of Resource Management (DRM) processes and manages all contracts and commodity requests from camps within the Kabul Base Cluster. This office provides assistance in putting together requirement packets, reviewing and validating requests, processing requests for appropriate signatures, and receiving funding. DRM plays an integral role in interpreting financial management policy, to include directives and procedures, and provides guidance to staff elements. This office also assists the Contracting Officers at Regional Contracting Commands (RCCs) in managing contracting officer representatives (COR) before and during the life of a contract.

The office monitors these contracts and ensures that the renewal paperwork is turned in and funded in time so there will be no lapse in services within the 8 KBC Camps. Oversees and processes services, commodities and construction projects with a combined worth of over \$390 million since January.

DRM works closely with PRCC, DPW, S4, JARB and JFUB.

PR&C Administration assists customers with the purchase of commodities not available through the regular supply system.



In summary, the Directorate of Resource Management provides on-going fiscal contracting management and oversight throughout the KBC Installation Management Command.

FRIENDS OF TASK FORCE HYDRA



TASK FORCE HYDRA PARTNERS WITH KABUL POLICE TO IMPROVE CITY ENTRY POINTS

By Capt. Jacqueline Wren

KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghan Uniformed Police non-commissioned officers operating the City Gates recently received training from U.S. Soldiers at the City Gates headquarters to improve operations at entry points into the city.

The leaders invited to participate in the training will take what they've learned in the two-day training back to their posts and teach their subordinate officers. The City Gates Kandak is comprised of nine entry points into the city that are manned by police departments. Since there are not many highways in Afghanistan these police officer's responsibilities are paramount to keeping the insurgent effort from entering the Kabul city limits.

The instruction included properly conducting searches of people and vehicles, identifying improvised explosive devices and proper use of equipment and how to set up an effective entry control point.

Task Force Hydra, the senior U.S. operational task force in Kabul, conducted the training as a part of its Police Advisory Team (PAT) mission. The unit, which is commanded by the 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade Headquarters, a Georgia Army National Guard unit out of Columbus has the task to advise, assist and mentor the 30 police districts, their special tactical units, and the 14,000 police responsible for law enforcement and security for the capital city of Kabul and its 5 million residents.

Task Force Hydra PAT team is made up of a supervisory element lead by Lt. Col. Andre Edison, a Missouri Guardsman and a former policeman, members of Wisconsin National Guard, and the 1186th Military Police Company, an Oregon Army National Guard unit serving with Task Force Hydra.

"We bring a lot of law enforcement experience to this mission," said Edison about the PAT team. "Because of our background, we have added to Task Force Hydra's ability to impact the officers' training. As the security in the capital city of Kabul increases the government

becomes more legitimate."

The City Gates leader training was held as a part of the second and last phase in the process the PAT has implemented to improve the operations of the City Gates posts and Police District. The first phase included conducting assessments of the 30 police districts and City gate posts within the Kabul Province.

The current phase is to address their opportunities to improve equipment, supplies, training and capabilities that were discovered during the assessments.

"The goal is for Kabul Province police to be more able to keep insurgents out of the Kabul Area," Edison said. "This training is targeted at the NCO level and they are eager to learn."

The partnership between the Kabul City Police Chief and the PAT team is imperative to the success of events like these. The City Gates commander was on hand to observe the training and was welcoming of the professionalism the U.S. Soldiers shared with his officers.

"The impact has been very positive," said Col. Deen Mohammed Sanjani. "They have never had such training and I believe it will make them more professional." Sanjani also spoke highly of the relationship he has built with Lt. Col. Edison over the last month of overseeing training.

"He is now my brother and my friend," said Sanjani. At the completion of training each officer was presented with a certificate of completion. In a brief presentation where each officer raised their certificate above their head with pride, each officer was congratulated by the trainers they had worked with for the time of the training.

The success of the training will be measured through the improvements that are made at the City Gates throughout the Kabul, but Edison is hopeful.

"I don't think there is a long road ahead for these officers," said Edison "They understand the importance of what they're doing, and I'm surprised by the amount of courage they display while learning how to improve."





(Clockwise form to left) The TF Hydra PAT Team; Master Sgt. Angel Nunez with an AUP officer during a equipment demonstration; Capt. John Filiatreau with his Afghan Police counterparts at a training exercise; An Afghan National Police officer demonstrates his ability to conduct a vehicle inspection; Members to the Afghanistan National Police force observe a member of the 1186th MP Company's training team as they enact taking a potential suspect into custody during NCO training.

Task Force Hydra Police Advisory Team

Police Advisory Team, comprised of Commander, Senior Enlisted Advisor, Operations Officer, Logistics Officer, Training Officer, Operations NCOIC, and Operations Specialist. PAT Mission is to increase the Zone 101 (Kabul Province) AUP operational and logistical capabilities in order to support an Afghan Uniform Police led Kabul City safe zone to prevent Insurgents and Criminal elements entry.

The team improved overall capabilities of the named and numbered 30 police districts in the Kabul Province, raised the operational capability, logistical fielding of equipment, and credibility of each Police District. Relationships were established with leadership of all 30

police districts, City Gates, Kandak, and Quick Reaction Force Battalion. Training plans were developed and implemented to teach, mentor and assess Zone 101 AUP Quick Reaction Force (QRF) Battalion regarding proper cordon operations. Supported an IJC prisoner transport mission of ANA and NDS prisoners from Herat to Kabul by providing security of airplane and prisoners in transport. Conducted a Train the Trainer program to all NCO's of the City Gates Kandak on checkpoint operations, individual searches, and vehicle searches. Conducted a Train the Trainer program on proper vehicle maintenance. Supported information campaigns to reinforce the capabilities of the police districts.



(Clockwise from top left) The movement team, together in Patriot Square; Staff Sgt. John Price pulling security while out at a CERP project; Staff Sgt. Jason Schiller out on a mission; Staff Sgt. Timothy Etterling gives a convoy brief before a mission.

Task Force Hydra Movement Team

The original Task Force Hydra Movement Team was comprised of 17 hand-selected combat arms personnel between 2010 and 2011. The team consists of Capt. Marc J. Pfrogner as the OIC and Master Sgt. Michael R. Murphy as the NCOIC. During pre-deployment training, the team worked extensively on mounted and dismounted Infantry tactics and added Protective Services missions. During First Army validation training at Fort Hood, Texas, the extensive training paid off when the team set the Fort Hood Mounted Gunnery Course record in December 2011.

Upon deployment, the team spent 72hrs of continuity training and immediately took over movement missions which encompassed the entire KBC and

many missions outside of the KBC area of operation. This included the setup and execution of the Brigade Tactical Command Center (TACC) Team. The TACC Team was called into action on several occasions, including the high profile murders of 2 field grade officers in February 2012 and as a combat force for the April 15th attack on the Star Hotel in Kabul.

Overall, for the deployment, the team conducted over 800 mounted and dismounted missions throughout the province, moving over 8000 Hydra personnel without any significant injuries or loss of life.

Task Force Hydra Quick Reaction Force

The KBC Quick Reaction Force (QRF) is made up of subordinate elements within TF Hydra including the 1-43rd IN (ABN). In the past 9 months, we have had as many as four standing QRFs at one time and a minimum of two. They are strategically placed throughout Kabul in order to respond to an incident in the Capital Region involving U.S. or Coalition forces. They are also able to support Afghan National Security Forces during an in-extremis event.

Additionally the QRF also provides security for high profile meetings within Kabul. During TF

Hydra's tour, we currently have supported over 30 such events in the RC-C. The most high profile mission supported was President Obama's visit to Kabul in May. The QRF has also partnered with Embassies, Coalition facilities, and other "soft targets" to be prepared to respond in the case of an attack at their location. TF Hydra developed reaction plans for responding to over 50 facilities where the QRF might need to be launched in an in-extremis event. The TF Hydra Commander has launch authority of the QRF.



(Clockwise from top left) Command Sgt. Maj. Maieritch addresses some members of the Quick Reactionary Force; Command Sgt. Maj. Curry with a member of the Quick Reactionary Force; A member of the Quick Reaction Force explains procedures to a group of visitors.

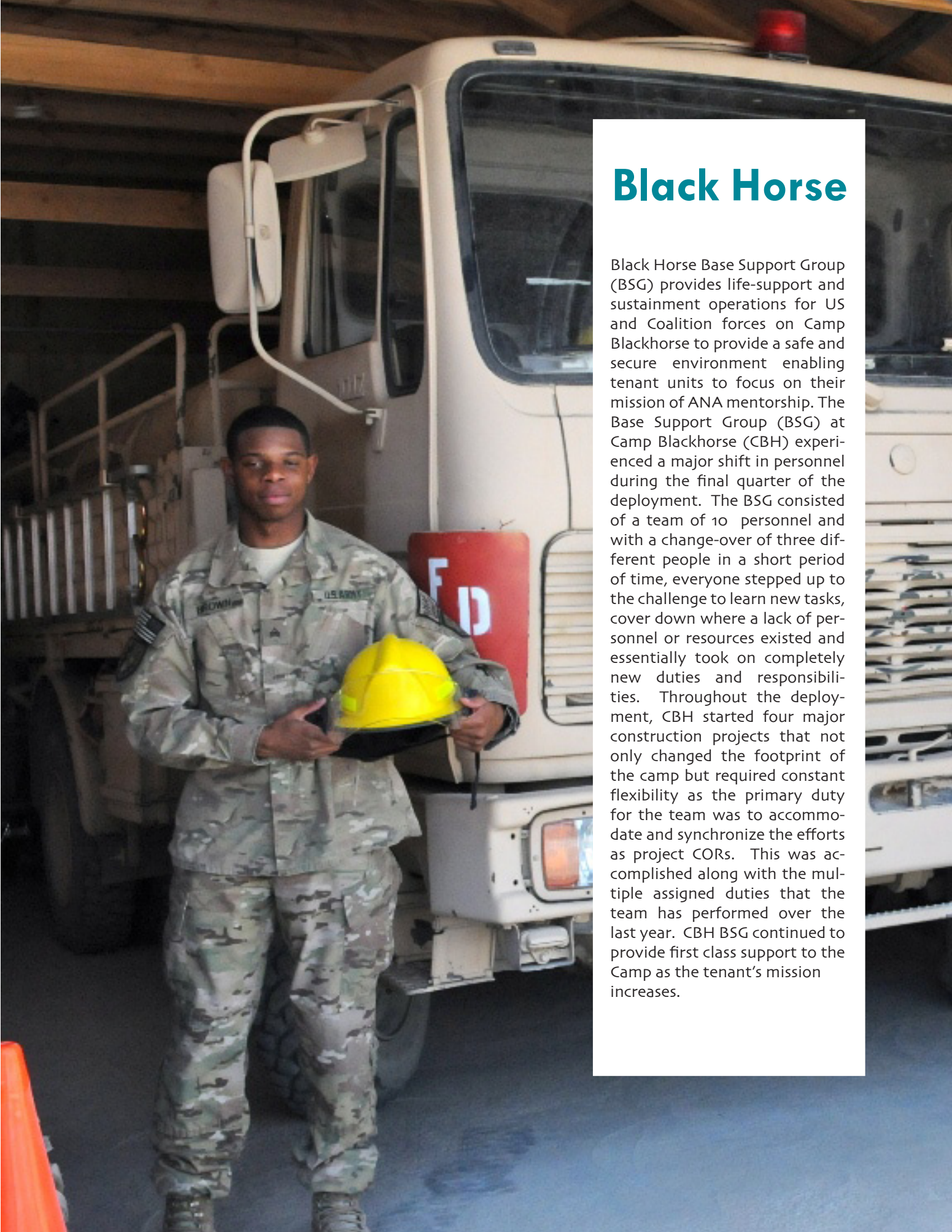
A photograph of two soldiers in camouflage uniforms standing on a rocky mountain peak. One soldier is kneeling on the left, and the other is standing on the right. The background shows a clear blue sky and distant mountains.

Alamo

Camp Alamo was assumed by the 648th MEB from the 26th MEB in JAN of 2012. Camp Alamo's approximately 600 tenants is mostly comprised of Kabul Military Training Center Coalition instructors with the Canadians being the largest contingent and the Senior Tenant Command. The 648th MEB provided two personnel to manage the Base Support Group operations, a BSG OIC and BSG NCOIC. The Canadians provided additional personnel to round out the BSG and BDOC staff.



(opposite page) Sgt. Emory Lee and 1st Lt. William Hosket atop Mount Ghar outside Camp Alamo; (from top) the Camp Alamo BSG comprised of members of 1-143rd Infantry Battalion from the Texas Army National Guard; 1st Lt. Michael Barden utilizing safety equipment while operating a water hose; Sergeant Maj. Jeffrey Crowder, the NCOIC of Camp Alamo.



Black Horse

Black Horse Base Support Group (BSG) provides life-support and sustainment operations for US and Coalition forces on Camp Blackhorse to provide a safe and secure environment enabling tenant units to focus on their mission of ANA mentorship. The Base Support Group (BSG) at Camp Blackhorse (CBH) experienced a major shift in personnel during the final quarter of the deployment. The BSG consisted of a team of 10 personnel and with a change-over of three different people in a short period of time, everyone stepped up to the challenge to learn new tasks, cover down where a lack of personnel or resources existed and essentially took on completely new duties and responsibilities. Throughout the deployment, CBH started four major construction projects that not only changed the footprint of the camp but required constant flexibility as the primary duty for the team was to accommodate and synchronize the efforts as project CORs. This was accomplished along with the multiple assigned duties that the team has performed over the last year. CBH BSG continued to provide first class support to the Camp as the tenant's mission increases.



(Opposite page) Sgt. Ronneil Brown, the Black Horse Fire Marshal, shows off the refurbished fire truck (Clockwise from top) The Blackhorse team after an awards ceremony held at Camp Blackhorse; Sgt. First Class Maurice Stewart, of the Blackhorse Base Support Group, visits a shop owner to ensure the newly opened establishment is running smoothly; Lt. Col. Kevin Daniels, Blackhorse commander, takes time to discuss camp operations with contractors; Maj. Gregory Jones shows off his target after zeroing his weapon on the range.



Bala Hissar

Camp Bala Hissar Base Support Group (BSG) conducts base support operations and coordinates Force Protection for Camp Bala Hissar to provide efficient, effective, and uninterrupted service and a safe, secure environment for all US forces and base tenants. Specific areas of responsibility include: Force Protection, fuel sustainment operations, food management, serve as contracting officer representatives, coordinate acquisition process, communications, and basic supply.

The Force Protection process has greatly improved at Bala Hissar. One hundred twenty meters of new sniper screening has been installed to mitigate sniper and observation threat. Force Protection procedures have been changed and developed for the safety of soldiers and tenants.

The BSG Initiated a new CERP project. The project includes building 16 classrooms, 1 administration building and a well at the Mastori Ghory Primary School in Police District 1 of Kabul.

Bala Hissar BSG created a community of protection by working with local ANA, ANP and Village Elders. By continuing to build relationships with the community, these organizations are working more closely together to help secure their communities in the local area. This relationship is growing and is an essential part of security needed as the US and Coalition forces begin drawing down.



(Opposite Page) Sgt. Blake Money standing above the Camp overlooking the city of Kabul (Clockwise from top left) Cpl. Brad Porter exiting a vehicle on the camp; the Commander and Command Sgt. Major with Bala Hissar BSG Command team, Maj. David Chartier and Sgt. 1st Class Daniel McNeal on ruins that are located above the camp; the Bala Hissar BSG with the Command Team; Spc. Jarrod Brooks taking walk through the camp.





Eggers

Camp Eggers BSG conducts support operations and coordinate force protection efforts for Camp Eggers to provide efficient, effective and uninterrupted services and a safe, secure environment for all US and Coalition tenants of the camp. Provide services in a camp serving about 2,700 personnel in a joint coalition environment, including but not limited to: power generation, trash collection, water and septic services; base security, emergency services (PMO, DES, Fire and Medical response); morale, welfare and recreation; property construction, repair and management; coordinate efforts with entities from inside and outside camp, such as NTM-A, CSCT-A, ISAF, Coalition partner embassies and ANSF.

A 28 day menu board was created to improve the quality of meals on Eggers adding additional meals such as Mongolian grill and pizza nights. The Eggers engineer team oversaw over 100 projects on the camp equaling over \$11 million in camp projects that maintain critical services, construction, and maintenance. The camp improved tenant services by adding a "mini-mall" which included movie and gaming rooms along with local vendor shops.

The BSG worked hard to combat overcrowding on the camp by creating a shipping container yard. This both clears space and is in line with the theater-wide retrograde.



Opposite page) Sgt. Camille Jackson and Spc. Tony Moses taking a ride through camp (from top) Sgt. Jacklyn Hill and Chief Warrant Officer 4 Angela Belding with a local child during a visit to one of the Eggers sponsored CERP project sites; the Eggers team in the snow; members of the Eggers BSG along with members of the Mongolian Expeditionary Forces receive a certificate and chord for earning the German marksmanship badge.



A soldier in camouflage uniform and a cap is operating a skid steer loader. The loader is positioned on a gravel surface next to a white building. The soldier is looking towards the right, and the loader's front bucket is lowered. The background shows a plain wall and a clear sky.

New Kabul Compound

The New Kabul Compound (NKC) Base Support Group (BSB) provides life-support and sustainment operations for US and Coalition forces on NKC to provide a secure environment enabling tenant units to focus on their missions.

The BSG provides DEERS/RAPIDS support for all of the Kabul area and since January has seen a sharp increase in civilian patrons. NKC is simultaneously executing large movements of personnel from old to new billeting while preparing for major shifts of office spaces as new buildings have been/will be occupied and old tents and buildings removed. Major land expansion and construction projects continue on NKC, with the attendant badging/escorting requirements of the construction companies, vehicles and personnel. With the events related to the Koran burnings and increases in enemy activity in the south, the camp has seen an increase in exercises of personnel accountability, force protection and other emergency services.

The BSG has taken mandated steps to 'civilianize' camp security, DEER/RAPIDS, fire services and billeting with an eye on next year's draw-down of military personnel. All of this was on top of the regular duties that the team has performed since arrival at NKC. Despite a decrease in personnel the BSG has experienced an increase in op-tempo and reacted with flexibility and determination to accomplish the mission.



(Opposite Page) Staff Sgt. George Embry working on a camp project (Clockwise from the top) The NKC team after receiving their Afghan Campaign Medals; Staff Sgt. Pamela Roquemore conducting head-count at the NKC dining facility; Sgt. 1st Class Jason Keblish arm wrestles a local boy while on a visit to a nearby village; NKC members with Afghan National Army Soldiers during a visit to an NKC sponsored CERP project.





Julien

Camp Julien Base Support Group (BSG) conducts base support operations and coordinates Force Protection for Camp Julien & Camp Dubs to provide efficient, effective, and uninterrupted service and a safe, secure environment for all US and coalition forces. Specific areas of responsibility include: Force Protection, fuel sustainment operations, food management, policy implementation, serve as CORs, coordinate acquisition process, communications, and basic supply.

The BSG prepared and facilitated the transfer of Camp Dubs to GI-RoA through USFOR-A and US Embassy Kabul. Camp Dubs was the first camp federally transferred to the Afghanistan government. In preparation to receive units moving from Camp Dubs, Camp Julien was expanded through the movement of 17 B-Huts, 112 Containers, 10x40' truck loads of palletized gear, 24 truckloads of trash, & 16 LN Vendors. With the closure of Dubs, Camp Julien's BSG established a Chapel, Container Yard, Maintenance Shop, Cross-fit area, Post Office, & TMC in addition to renovating the Base Defense Operations Center and MWR.



(From top)The guys of Camp Julian take time to show off their Afghan Campaign Medal and Armed Forces Reserve Medal; Staff Sgt. James A. Adams, the Base Operations Center non-commissioned officer in charge; 1st Lt. Russell J. Christopher, the executive officer at Camp Julian, receives a traditional robe from the elders at Quali-E-Moslin after a road dedication (Opposite page) Maj. Kenneth R. Napier, the commander of Camp Julian, with local children during a school visit.

The image shows a group of military personnel in camouflage uniforms. In the foreground, a soldier in a tan uniform with a '1' on his chest is looking towards the right. Behind him, other soldiers are visible, some in tan uniforms and others in desert camouflage. A red truck with a white cab is parked in the background. The truck has '648TH MANEUVER' written on its side. An American flag is flying on a tall pole behind the truck. The scene is set outdoors in a bright, sunny environment.

Phoenix

Provide command and control (C2) for integrated security operations throughout the Kabul Base Cluster and on Camp Phoenix. Facilitates the development and capacity for over 3,600 residents of Camp Phoenix. The Base Support Group at Camp Phoenix is run by the 1-143rd Infantry Battalion from the Texas Army National Guard.

The team developed a concept of integrated base defenses with aggressive dismounted and mounted patrolling, as well as humanitarian assistance (HA) efforts in the unit's urban battle space. They are directly responsible for Kabul's eastern movement corridor, which ensures freedom of maneuver (FOM) throughout the city while conducting Police Assistance Team (PAT) operations, joint Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) missions and KBC-wide QRF responses.

Three maneuver platoons were organized, which conducted dismounted security and reconnaissance patrols, ECP Operations, and QRF operational support. Critical relationships have been established with key persons in the Area of Operations (AO) deterring attacks on Camp Phoenix, collecting intelligence, and assessing vulnerabilities in the base defense systems.

Overall security, efficiency, and throughput of the Main ECP for Camp Phoenix was improved. An unprecedented Afghan National Security Forces QRF Mentor Team was stood up and they developed, coordinated, resourced, and trained the Afghan Kabul City Police QRF and Crisis Response Unit Soldiers in the planning and execution for tactical operations that were vital to the Afghan's ability to defend against, and defeat insurgent attacks within Kabul.



(opposite page) members of the 1-143rd Infantry Battalion during their patching ceremony (Clockwise from top) the Camp Phoenix BSG show their Texas pride; members of Camp Phoenix's cigar club enjoying down time; the vendors of the women's bazaar that takes place at Camp Phoenix monthly; 1-143rd and Camp Phoenix BSG Commander, Lt. Col. Shawn McGrath and Capt. Aaron McKenzie during a ground breaking ceremony for a Camp Phoenix sponsored CERP project

Task Force Hydra: The History

From 8 December 2011 to 1 October 2012 while participating in Operation Enduring Freedom, 648th MEB was assigned to United States Forces Afghanistan (USAFOR-A), and designated NATO OPCON to International Joint Command (IJC), and US OPCON to V CORPS. The 648th MEB subordinate units during this period included: 1-143 Infantry Battalion (-); 1186 Military Police Company; 463rd Military Police Detachment, 3/10 Marines, Mongolian Expeditionary Task Force, and the New Jersey / Albanian Operational Mentor Liaison Team (OMLT).

As a newly formed Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (MEB), and prior to being fully operational, the 648th MEB was requested to provide forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Kabul Afghanistan. The request for forces called for the Brigade Headquarters to provide command and control and base operating and support integration functions (BOS-I), including force protection, for 8 US bases in Kabul. Eight-teen months prior to deployment, the 648th quickly organized and began to develop a clear picture of the operational and strategic environment.

Key to the unit's success throughout the deployment would be the flexibility to take on additional missions as US forces began to draw down. Contrary to the Request For Forces (RFF) mission statement and a recommendation by a previous rotation, to train as an administrative headquarters with a "wire-in" mentality focused on installation command, the 648th made the decision to organize and train their new Brigade for Full-Spectrum Operations. This would eventually posture the Brigade to take on additional Battle Space Ownership (BSO) missions that became a reality as the Brigade was in its final stages of deployment and movement into theatre.

The 648th developed, planned and executed an innovative model for pre and post mobilization training. As a result, the 648th only trained for 26 days at the mobilization station, where the previous two rotations had required 93 and 72 respectively. This impacted the Army's Force Generation cycle allowing for increased dwell time for other units and allowing for a critical 3 week acceleration of the 648th transfer of authority. The 648th's training plan was recognized by the 1st Army Division West Commanding General as the preferred model with the recommendation that it be presented to National Guard Bureau as a new standard for pre/post mobilization training. In addition, the 648th set the all-time convoy live fire range record at Ft. Hood, TX.

Once in theatre, the 648th became known as Task Force (TF) Hydra. TF Hydra quickly assessed the new require-

ments and built a plan that would realign forces and resources and become more efficient to meet the emerging requirements. TF Hydra accepted the following additional three major missions with no additional forces: 1. SECURITY for Kabul Province to include the capital city of Kabul with a population of over 5 million; 2. GOVERNANCE to include economic capacity building and government development; and 3. MENTORSHIP of Afghanistan National Security Forces (30 police district chiefs, Afghanistan Uniformed Police (AUP) Quick Reaction Battalion, 1st Brigade of the Afghanistan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP); and a Kandak within the 111th Capital Division, Afghanistan National Army (ANA).

Maintaining the original mission of BOS-I for 8 US bases, TF Hydra effectively and efficiently managed annual expenditures of approximately \$800 million. In addition, TF Hydra was responsible for cost savings both short-term and long-term that will result in future savings in the hundreds of billions of dollars. There are numerous examples but the most notable are: First, by achieving immediate savings through a process improvement to a badging process that reduced a two month process to one week, alleviated a requirement for four US Soldiers making them available for reassignment, an upfront savings of \$200,000 and an annual savings of \$2.6 million per year. Secondly, within the first month of its deployment, TF Hydra recognized an existing accounting problem regarding billing Coalition Forces for reimbursable expenses, and asked for assistance to properly scope the problem and implement corrective action. A TF Hydra requested Army Audit Agency audit revealed potentially hundreds of billions of dollars in lost revenue. TF Hydra developed a process for recouping these costs and implemented it within Regional Command Capital (RC-C). USAFOR-A decided this process would be implemented throughout all of Afghanistan. In addition to cost savings and process improvement, TF Hydra flawlessly managed all life support functions for the 8 bases serving its over 11,000 tenants.

In order to take on US Battle Space Ownership responsibilities, TF Hydra doctrinally aligned the Kabul Province battle space as the Corps rear controlling movement corridors and managing the area of operations through operational integration of all land owner functions. By defining the battle space in this manner, with the bases integrated through a centrally managed operations center and command post technology, Task Force Hydra fundamentality changed the landscape of command and control in Kabul Province. This change allowed TF Hydra to take responsibility for SECURITY and to maneuver quick reaction

forces in support of ANSF, to provide immediate response in extremist events to save life and limb of coalition forces, defend our bases and provide incident command in a crisis.

TF Hydra was able to effectively provide incident command on location at the Ministry of Interior during an attack that involved US casualties, responded and repelled attacks on US bases, and managed wide spread civil unrest during their deployment. TF Hydra performed countless additional missions to include a large scale and a highly classified mission to secure the President of the United States during travel to the Presidential Palace for the signing of the historical Strategic Partnership Agreement between the United States and Afghanistan; retrieving stolen containers with US equipment, transporting insurgent prisoners, securing strategic supply routes, providing security for high profile strategic events and conferences, conducting vulnerability assessments of the buildings and compounds of over 60 Afghanistan Governmental buildings, complexes and compounds. By the end of the tour, Task Force Hydra conducted a total of over 2300 missions.

As the US battlespace owner, TF Hydra was responsible for GOVERNANCE for all of Kabul Province and established primacy relationships with the Kabul Governor, Mayor, Director of Education as well as the 22 district mayors and 13 sub-governors. Key to success was integrating all CERP activities across the several commands that are in Kabul, working between government agencies to improve processes and develop priorities, and writing an RC-C civil military operations strategic plan. Task Force Hydra developed a strategy of integrated base defense utilizing engagement of the populace through the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). In addition, the strategy called for government development and economic capacity building. The Task Force S9 section, comprised of Civil Military Operations, Information Operations and Public Affairs executed the Commander's Emergency Relief Program (CERP), Humanitarian Relief and Information Operations activities across Kabul province. TF Hydra planned and executed over 120 CERP projects ranging from village drinking wells to basic health clinics, road improvements and school construction. In total, TF Hydra was responsible for over \$30 mil worth of CERP projects.

The Information Operations program was tasked to inform the 5.5 million Kabul residents of pertinent command information and to reinforce an ANSF lead in security and stability. TF Hydra incorporated talking points and command messages into leader engagement forums, CERP site visits, and police mentor interactions. TF Hydra's information operations cell also hosted a regional Shura, or panel discussion, in order to quell civil unrest after a Qur'an burning incident. TF Hydra's information operations cell also incorporated radio, television and magazine coverage into their scheme, promoting local leader credibility throughout the province and nation. The achieved endstate from these projects and initiatives included promoting community security and stability, increasing government

capacities as well as elevating local Kabul leaders to prominence and influence.

In response to previous spectacular attacks in Kabul and an identified void, TF Hydra was formally tasked to assume a new mission of MENTORING the 30 Police Districts and Police Chiefs of 101 AUP, a 400 man Quick Reaction Force of the 101 AUP, 1st ANCOB Brigade, and 4-2 Battalion of the ANA 111th Capital Division. TF Hydra magnificently managed these mentor missions with no additional forces. The overall strategic impact of coaching, teaching, mentoring, training and operationally deploying with these units during this most critical time, has had significant impact on security of Kabul. The fact that TF Hydra was tasked to take on these missions in a period of drawdown while actively engaged in all of its other missions is a testament to the unit's continual ability to adapt in a dynamic environment and a "can do" attitude.

TF Hydra had a very high operational tempo and still managed to turn in an impressive safety record. Of significance, TF Hydra only experienced one non-negligent Class A accident and no Class B accidents. Also, negligent discharges were endemic throughout the theater and TF Hydra's area of operation was experiencing its own unacceptable amount. The Kabul Base Cluster Safety Office along with TF Hydra Public Affairs Office developed a multi-media program to highlight steps to reduce or eliminate NDs. The result was a 78% reduction in negligent discharges. USFOR-A has taken notice of TF Hydra's success and will be implementing portions of the campaign program theater wide.

Not only is TF Hydra operationally sound, it is strong administratively. All evaluations reports and awards were processed in a timely manner. In addition, TF Hydra effectively managed its organic units that were left in the US. Preparing an engineer battalion and a transportation company for deployment, re-integrating an engineer company, providing defense support to civil authorities, and taking care of its families, all just seemed to be par for the course of TF Hydra.

The dedication and teamwork displayed by the Soldiers and units of Task Force Hydra directly contributed to the overall success and security of all units in the Kabul Base Cluster as well as the ability of the Afghan leadership and ANSF within Kabul to achieve independent operational capability. The achievements of Task Force Hydra are a testament to the superior efforts of its staff, commanders, and subordinate units. Task Force Hydra's professionalism, dedication to duty and mission successes were noted by all in which they worked with to include General Officers within USFOR-A, V Corps, IJC, ISAF HQs, coalition partners and our Afghanistan Partners. The efforts of Task Force Hydra and its subordinate units ultimately resulted in furthering the strategic goals of the United States and NATO in developing an independent, free and secure Afghanistan.



Building Relationships, Restoring a Nation