



Volume 1, Issue 4

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## Atop the mountain ...

Members of Task Force Empire recently completed operations on the Salang Road in the Parwan Province, the major north-south connection in Afghanistan. The operation was led by the engineers of Task Force Red Devils and the Afghan Ministry of the Interior in an effort to improve road conditions of the highly used and often treacherous roadway.

Images of Mt. Blade on page 6

Photo by Staff Sgt. Derek M. Smith  
Joint Task Force Empire Public Affairs

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Soldiers aid Afghan girl

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Border Patrol trains on CIED measures

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# General Knowledge

From the desk of the Commanding General, JTF Empire

TEAM EMPIRE,

The key to Afghanistan's future is their future leaders. As we work with the ANA and guide them on their quest for knowledge, we must keep in mind that this is their country. We have begun to enter the next phase of the operation where we assist and mentor them to take the lead. The eventual draw down of ISAF forces, coupled with the improvements the ANA Engineers, will mandate that the ANA take the lead as we move into more of an advisory role. We will transition from out front, to "Shoulder to Shoulder", to "we've got your back", to you're out front and this is your mission.

As this transition occurs, I have seen our Soldiers do outstanding work, not only with the ANA but for the local population. Medical teams have given treatment to locals at the Salang Pass, along roads during RCP missions and helping locals during motor vehicle accidents. I'm very proud of the work you all do. You should be proud of each other and of yourselves. You are making a difference.

I do want leaders at every level to make sure that we are looking after each other. This month is suicide prevention month and it is import to

look out for the potential signs of suicide. The stress that accompanies our deployment can be a great burden. Working together, looking after each other, listening, and watching for the signs of stress and potential suicide are everyone's responsibility. Above all, don't be afraid to ask your battle buddy the difficult question, "Are you thinking about suicide?" Don't be afraid to get involved or put yourself in the middle of that situation. We are a family and we take care of each other. That's the bottom line.

Thank you for all that you do to make this mission a success. Keep up the hard work.

Never Forget!

Essayons!

DAVID L. WEEKS

Brigadier General, USA

Commander

Joint Task Force EMPIRE and

411TH Engineer Brigade

Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan



## THE EMPIRE REPORT

JOINT TASK FORCE EMPIRE - 411TH ENGINEER BRIGADE  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



COMMANDING GENERAL  
BRIG. GEN. DAVID L. WEEKS



COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR  
COMMAND SGT. MAJ. ANDREW C. KROM

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**Editorial Staff**  
JTF Empire Chief of Staff:  
Col. John P. Constable  
JTF Empire IIA Officer:  
Maj. John A. Coppola  
JTF Empire Intelligence Officer:  
Lt. Col. Richard T. McCauley  
JTF Empire Public Affairs Officer:  
Staff Sgt. Derek M. Smith

### Contributing Units

RC-N Engineer Tactical Command Post  
1st Engineer Battalion - Task Force Diehard  
178th Engineer Battalion - Task Force Provider  
120th Engineer Battalion - Task Force Outlaw  
547th Engineer Battalion - Task Force Warhammer  
989th Engineer Battalion - Task Force Lone Star  
133rd Naval Mobile Construction Battalion - Task Force Anchor  
49th Mine Dog Detachment

"Winter is coming."

Media Queries please contact the JTF Empire PAO at  
derek.m.smith@afghan.swa.army.mil

# U.S. Soldiers provide medical aid to young Afghan girl

By U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Juan Delgado  
Task Force Red Devils, Public Affairs

Logar Province, Afghanistan – U.S. Army Spc. Jeffrey McKnight, combat medic, 102nd Sapper Company, 7th Engineer Battalion from Allentown, Pa. provided medical aid to a young Afghan girl while on a route clearance patrol near Combat Outpost Sanchez, Sept. 18.

A five-year-old local national child with an obvious limp approached the U.S. patrol. The platoon leader for the patrol, U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jesse Carter from Somerset, Ky., was in a security posture outside of COP Sanchez. This young girl regularly visits the patrol when they clear this particular route. On most occasions, she is happy to receive candy and water from the U.S. Soldiers who provide peace and security to her village just south of COP Sanchez.

On this particular day, she was looking for more than treats. While pulling security on the patrol's outer cordon, Spc. Corie Dunning, a resident of Colton, N.Y., noticed the young girl approaching with a grimacing limp. He asked to see the bottom of her foot. When she slipped off her sandal, he noticed a deep gash big enough to fit a grown mans thumb in. Dunning quickly called for the platoon's medic. McKnight assessed that the cut was at least a few days old. He cleaned the cut with items from his field kit, treated it with antiseptic and bandaged it up to prevent further infection.

"The cut was deep enough that if it became infected, she could lose her entire foot", said McKnight.

When McKnight was finished patching her up, she was happy to accept her regular bounty of water and candy with the addition of a few extra clean bandages.


"It felt rewarding to be able to make a positive impact on the lives of these people we fight to protect every day", said Dunning. 



Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Juan A. Delgado

U.S. Army Spc. Jeffrey McKnight, combat medic, 102nd Engineer Company, 7th Engineer Battalion from Allentown, Pa. provides medical aid to a young Afghan girl while on a route clearance patrol just south of Combat Outpost Sanchez, Sept. 18.



## COMPREHENSIVE SOLDIER FITNESS

STRONG MINDS ★ STRONG BODIES



PHYSICAL ★ FAMILY ★ SOCIAL ★ SPIRITUAL ★ EMOTIONAL



# GRUFFLY SPEAKING

Straight Talk from the Command Sergeant Major, JTF Empire

It's been a busy month. We have traveled over 750 miles conducting battlefield circulation, visiting the Soldiers of JTF Empire and seeing numerous projects they are working on.

We went to the Salang tunnel to see the great work going on there. Then, we moved on to Ghazni to tour the battlefield where the British took the city from the Afghans in 1839. We went to FOB Fenty to visit 1st Sgt. Thompson and the Soldiers of the 264th Engineer Company, then over to see 1st Sgt. Newton and the Soldiers of the 236th En. Co.

We continued on to FOB Sharana to visit the 178th En. Battalion Soldiers and Command Sgt. Maj. Medlin, where we did a ground movement to Rushmore to witness firsthand and see the Afghan National Army training they are conducting.

We would like to bid a fond farewell to Lt. Col. Rabe and Command Sgt. Maj. Baker from Task Force Mad Dog, and welcome Lt. Col. Dobson and Command Sgt. Maj. Medlin from Task Force Prowler. We also say farewell to Lt. Col. Quander and Command Sgt. Maj. Morgan of Task Force Red Devils and welcome Lt. Col. Hairgrove, and Command Sgt. Maj. Evans of Task Force Diehard.

We would like to congratulate the following Soldiers on their achievements.

Our NCO/Soldier of the Quarter winners are Sgt.

Nicholas B. Johnson, 42nd Route Clearance Company and Spc. Brandon C. Arias, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 411th En. Brigade.

Congratulations to Sgt. Stephen Poandl, HHC, 411th En. Bde., on his promotion to sergeant, Staff Sgt. Francis Robert, HHC, 411TH En. Bde., and Staff Sgt. Noe Vargas, 42nd RCC, on their promotions to staff sergeant.

Also, the 555th En. Bde. has arrived for pre-deployment site survey. We welcome Col. Katers, Command Sgt. Maj. Bryan and their staff. We look forward to the Triple Nickel assuming operations from JTF Empire next year and expect a smooth relief-in-place and transfer of authority as they continue the mission in posturing Afghan Forces to lead their country toward a secure future for all Afghans.

It has been a terrific month visiting all the Soldiers and seeing all the hard work they are doing.

Take care of each other and stay focused ... and, as always, keeps up the great work!



Thank you all for what you do.

CSM Andrew Krom



# Task Force Anchor improves force protection

By Utilitiesman Third Class Drew Verbis

Task Force Anchor Public Affairs



Photos by Utilitiesman 3rd Class Drew Verbis


(Top) Seabees from Task Force Anchor's Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133 discuss the project progress, Sept. 25. The battalion is deployed to Afghanistan to provide engineering support for theater coalition forces. (Above) Equipment Operator 1st Class Michal Shafer from NMCB 133 steps out of her bulldozer to inspect the project while upgrading force protection measures near camp, Sept. 25.

CAMP KRUTKE, Afghanistan – Seabees from Task Force Anchor's Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133 constructed additional force protection measures around the Camp Bastion-Camp Leatherneck compound Sept. 25.

Working day and night for nearly 96 hours, five dozers and two excavators protected by static security teams moved earth to construct a formidable wall more than four kilometers long.

“Before we arrived there appeared to be a flat easy access from a road to the perimeter,” said Equipment Operator First Class Michal Shafer. “What we’re building should definitely strengthen the force protection.”

“Despite long hours with fatigue and heat in full battle rattle, we were able to change the landscape to achieve the grade and slope necessary. It was hard work but Seabees have to be flexible,” said Shafer.

Task Force Anchor's NMCB 133 is currently deployed to Afghanistan in support of Task Force Empire, providing engineering support to coalition forces. 

# Images of Operation Mountain Blade



Photos by Staff Sgt. Derek M. Smith  
Joint Task Force Empire Public Affairs



(Top) Members of Joint Task Force Empire approach the Salang Tunnel in the Parwan Province. (Left) Brig. Gen. David L. Weeks, JTF Empire commanding general, Lt. Col. Greg Wooten, 605th Survey and Design Engineer Detachment commander, and Brig. Gen. Richard Stevens, director of International Joint Command engineers, survey the area on the north side of the Salang Tunnel. (Bottom) A Soldier from TF Hydra stands watch.





(Top) A Chinook departs a nearby landing zone after dropping off troops on their way to the Salang Tunnel. (Inset) A discarded Soviet protective mask lies within the compound from which Afghan and U.S. engineers conduct operations. (Left) A Chinook comes in for a landing to pick up awaiting troops. (Bottom left) Service members share the mountainside with various forms of beast, from the moderately ferocious to the not-so ferocious. (Bottom) A Chinook crewmember watches.

For the full story of Operation Mountain Blade, be sure to read the November edition of The Empire Report !

# EMPIRE

## THUNDER BUDDIES

Courtesy of GoArmy.com

### Fueling A Fit Soldier

In addition to exercise, proper nutrition and hydration play a major part in maintaining total fitness. Good dietary habits greatly enhance your ability to perform at your maximum potential. Water is also important for good health because it plays an important role in maintaining normal body temperature. Reaching your maximum potential is dependant on both nutritional components.

### Making Healthy Choices

In addition to exercise, proper nutrition plays a major role in maintaining total fitness. Good dietary habits greatly enhance your ability to perform at your maximum potential. Eating a variety of foods and maintaining adequate energy balance are basic guidelines for a healthy diet.

For Soldiers to get enough energy from the food they

eat and to obtain the variety of foods needed for nutritional balance, they eat three meals a day. Even snacking between meals can contribute to good nutrition if the right foods are eaten.

Another dietary guideline is to consume enough calories to meet your energy needs. Proper weight is maintained as long as the body is in energy balance, or, when the number of calories used equals the number of calories consumed. The following guidelines may help build lean muscle mass and create more energy.

- Eat high protein, low fat items such as: fish, beans, whole wheat pasta, egg whites, skim or 1 percent milk, and low fat yogurt. Avoid items such as: fried items, high fat meats, egg yolks and whole milk.
- For a good source of vitamins, eat a diet rich in raw or steamed vegetables, green leafy romaine, whole grain breads, and fruits with skin. Avoid fried vegetables, iceberg lettuce (no nutrients), white bread, and canned fruits in syrup.
- Good fats versus bad fats: Try to choose non-trans fat bread spreads and heart healthy margarine. Cook with olive oil or sunflower oil, omit or use less lard and meat fat. Limit or omit creamy salad dressings high in fat content, cookies, cakes, pies and pastry goods. Furthermore, avoiding fast food is always a good way to help cut down on your fat intake.

The most accurate way to control caloric intake is to control the size of food portions you eat. You can

use standard household measuring utensils and a small kitchen scale to measure portions of foods and beverages so you have a better idea of exactly what your portion sizes are. It may also be helpful to keep a daily record of all the foods you've eaten and physical activity you've done so you can balance your calorie intake against your physical output.

A high intake of fats, especially saturated fats and cholesterol, has been associated with higher levels of blood cholesterol, so experts recommend eating less fatty food for better overall health.

### For more information, go to:

<http://www.goarmy.com/soldier-life/fitness-and-nutrition.html>



Photo courtesy of The Library of Congress

# Army's top enlisted leader visits troops on Bagram Air Field

By U.S. Army Sgt. Roland Hale  
RC-East Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The Army's top-ranked enlisted Soldier stopped at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Oct. 2 to meet with several hundred of his troops serving in the country's mountainous eastern region.

Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond Chandler is the Army's 14th senior-enlisted leader, a post that he has held since March 2011. As the Army's top sergeant major he serves as the Army chief of staff's advisor on enlisted and personnel related matters.

Chandler spoke with Soldiers gathered for a townhall style meeting at one of Bagram's MWR facilities. Before taking questions from the audience, Chandler hit on a few of his key issues: suicide prevention, hazing and sexual assault.

Faced with caring for the Soldiers of an Army that is currently losing more lives to suicide than it is in combat, Chandler issued a challenge for the audience to take some of these problems into their own hands.

"I need you to get pissed off about this, team," he said. "Until you own it – that you, as a person, are going to take charge – we're not going to solve the problem."

The Army has suffered 211 potential suicides so far this year, 154 of which were in the first 155 days of the year, according to reports.

Chandler urged both the junior and senior non-commissioned officers in attendance to police their ranks to help affect change.

"Together we can solve this," Chandler said. "Together."



Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Roland Hale

Sergeant Major of the Army Raymond Chandler visits troops stationed on Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Oct. 2, 2012.

"It's all about being a professional," he said. "I believe everybody in this room is a person of character and commitment, but that doesn't hold true in the entire Army – because we still have hazing, we still have suicides, and we still have sexual assaults.


"I expect you to take the time," he said. "Know your Soldiers. That's how we're going to turn this around."

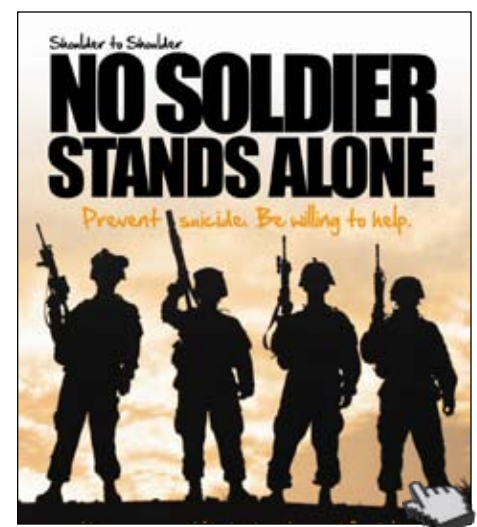
Concluding his speech, Chandler opened the floor to the attending Soldiers to ask him questions about Army-wide issues. Questions ranged from new policies, uniforms, and what it will take to stay competitive in an Army that is quickly drawing down from the large war-fighting force it has maintained over the last decade.

"It takes personal courage, perseverance," he said.

"If you're thinking about staying

in the Army...you've got to continue to push yourself," Chandler said. "If you're staying still, marking time, then you're going to quickly not be among the best."

In addition to his time speaking to Soldiers on Bagram, Chandler presented Purple Hearts to recently wounded troops and visited several small bases in the Army's eastern command here. 



# Legal Matters

## JTF EMPIRE COMMAND JUDGE ADVOCATE

### Political Activity and the Active Duty Soldier

As an Active Duty Soldier, you don't automatically lose all rights with respect to political activities and expression. However, there are important limitations and rules every Soldier should know, particularly in a Presidential Election year.

You may advocate for or against a political candidate, party or issue, so long as such advocacy is in your private capacity. You may not do so in your official capacity or, by words or deeds, imply the DoD supports or endorses your position. In other words, you may engage in the political process by expressing your personal opinions as an individual; but, be careful you are not acting in (or just as importantly, perceived to be acting in) your official capacity.

For example, when wearing your service uniform, you are presumptively acting in an official capacity. Use of Government resources (such as facilities, equipment, communications systems, and time) also creates a presumption of official action.

Acting strictly in a private capacity, you are permitted to engage in the political process by expressing personal opinions, voting (or assisting others to vote), donating money, and attending political meetings, rallies, conventions and other like activities (as a spectator when not in uniform, provided no appearance of sponsorship or endorsement can reasonably be drawn).

Prohibited activities include participating in partisan political fundraising activities and managing campaigns (regardless of uniform or inference of endorsement), using your official authority to solicit votes for a particular candidate or issue, publishing partisan political articles or letters to solicit

votes for/against a partisan political party, candidate, or cause, (excluding letters to the editor expressing only personal opinions), distributing political literature, and speaking before a partisan political gathering.

### Posting Social Media Comments

When posting political comments, the question to ask yourself is whether the content is akin to planting a political sign in your front yard (which is allowed, unless you live on a military installation).

In your private capacity, you may advocate for/against a political candidate, party or issue in your social media wall posts and status updates. You may also (in a private capacity) link to the home page of a political candidate, group, or issue (but not to the contributions page); become a "friend" of, or "like" a political candidate, group, or issue; "follow" a political candidate, group, or issue; and blog in support of, or against, a political candidate, group, or issue.

You may not, however, solicit monetary contributions for a political candidate, group, or issue, or personally direct a subordinate to take actions in support of or against a political candidate, group, or issue (e.g., through Facebook messages, wall posts, Twitter replies, or direct messages). The use of "contemptuous" words is also prohibited (public statements that are insulting, rude or disrespectful in nature).

The key prior to engaging in any questionable political activity is to know the rules. For military personnel, reference should be made to DoDD 1344.10 (February 19, 2008). Any questions should be directed to your servicing Judge Advocate.



# 875th Engineer Company makes a dent in Afghanistan



By U. S. Army Capt. Kent Caldwell  
505th Engineer Battalion



(Left) A loader gathers base material used for roads and other infrastructure at Camp John Pratt, Sept. 20. Soldiers of the 875th Engineer Company work sunrise to sunset readying Camp John Pratt to serve as a major retrograde staging area in northern Afghanistan. (Below) Soldiers of the 875th Engineer Company use scrapers to excavate a storm water drainage pond at Camp John Pratt, Sept. 17.

Photos by  
U.S. Army Capt. William Dudley  
Task Force Hurricane

BALKH PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN –Camp John Pratt construction reached another milestone this week as the 875th Engineer Company (Horizontal) completed the large earthen dining facility pad and started excavation of the storm water retention pond. The storm water retention pond project will be essential to drainage of the 880-acre Camp, which was recently dedicated and named after fallen U.S. Chief Warrant Officer 5 John C. Pratt. The camp is purposed as an alternate retrograde staging area for troops and equipment leaving Afghanistan.


The construction of Camp John Pratt retrograde facilities is currently the largest troop-based construction effort and ranks as the number one construction priority Afghanistan. It has significant stra-

tegic importance as the 2014 International Security Assistance Force withdrawal deadline approaches.

The 411th Engineer Brigade, known as Joint Task Force Empire, manages a joint engineer task force composed of Army and Air Force engineers to accomplish this expansive construction mission. The 875th falls under the direct operational control of Task Force Hurricane, a conglomeration of Active, Reserve, and National Guard engineer units led by members of the 841st En. Bn. out of Miami, FL.

The 875th En. Co. hit the ground running in Afghanistan and continued cut and fill operations where the prior unit left off. The high sense of urgency continued as they transitioned to the storm water retention pond due to the approaching wet weather season. The equipment

operators will move over 675,000 cubic yards of earth in sixty days. The end result will make a large dent in the Afghanistan countryside approximately twenty-seven acres by an average of fifteen feet deep. Capt. William Dudley, 875th company commander, acknowledges the challenges inherent in the project.

“The details of Camp John Pratt construction as an overall mission are very complex. The Storm-water Pond construction, as well as many of the other projects on this camp, allow for the opportunity for me to use all the military occupational specialties under my command and develop each Soldier’s job proficiency and leadership skills.” 

# SAFETY STOP

JOINT TASK FORCE  
EMPIRE SAFETY OFFICE



This Month:

## “Army Combat Vehicle Accidents”

By Mr. Marcus M. Heard  
Joint Task Force Empire Safety Officer



Joint Task Force Empire incurred 6 Army Combat Vehicle-related accidents between between Sept. 7 and 10. Five will probably be considered “near misses.”

The majority of all JTF Empire preventable/recordable accidents are ACV related. Accidents typically do not require an accident report if the estimated cost of damage is below \$2,000 and if treatment of an injury falls in the “first aid” category. These accidents are referred to as near misses.

Although near misses are considered nonrecordable, they are important for trend analysis. A widely accepted accident model states a certain number of near misses or incidents leads to a trend of minor injuries, which will result in one or more major accidents. JTF Empire data suggests we are overdue for a major preventable ACV accident (i.e. fatality).

The most dangerous job in war is typically that of the infantry Soldier. In Afghanistan however, I can make an argument that driving ACVs is just as risky. The mountainous terrain can be as threatening as the enemy. We are in the midst of the fighting season and no part of Afghanistan is considered immune from hostile acts of violence. The roads are narrow and are not maintained, which poses additional challenges during the icy winter months. The local population often drives erratically. Even with our vehicle-savvy Soldiers, the ACVs are wide, top-heavy and difficult to maneuver around corners. The types of accidents seen in Afghanistan associated with ACVs are door crush injuries, dismounting (slips, trips & falls), maintenance related, rollovers, collisions and struck pedestrians.

We can mitigate the risk of ACV-related accidents. Speed is the number one factor in rollovers and hit pedestrians. Speeds in excess of 50 MPH are when the majority of the accidents occur. There have

been a few rollover cases where the ACV was moving slowly on poor roads or near canals that resulted in the shoulder of the collapsing.

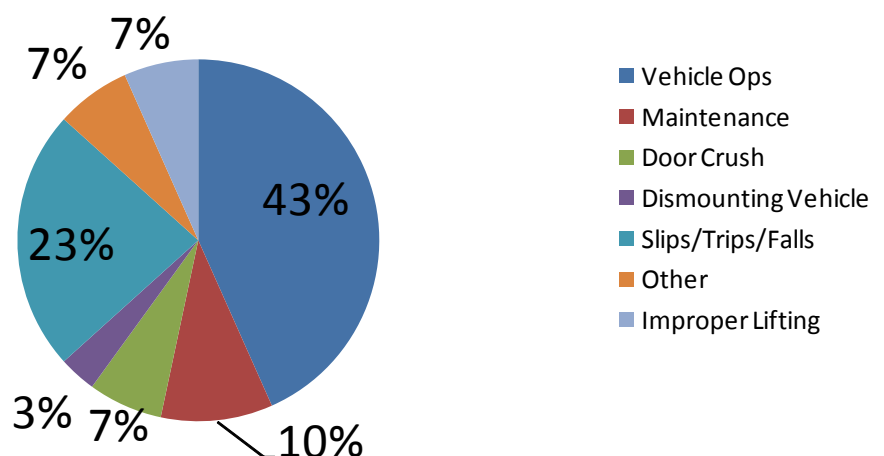
It is incumbent upon the lead vehicle to set the right pace. The driver should be experienced and capable of identifying potential hazards with the maturity level to understand how critical convoy speed is.

A lot of drivers involved in accidents are not licensed to operate the equipment. In many cases, Soldiers are trained in one vehicle variant, but they drive another without the additional training. Experience on one variant does not transfer over to another. Traveling on a mission is not the time to get acquainted with the equipment.

All hazards cannot be engineered out or eliminated, which is always the first option in safety. The key is to maintain safety awareness by constantly putting emphasis on safety hazards. This is essentially integrating composite risk management. Prior to the convoy pulling out, reinforce safety principles and do a quick overview of what to do in emergency situations.

Soldiers and leaders have the opportunity to prevent an ACV-related fatality. We are in the prime position to take charge and reduce the probability and severity of ACV related accidents. Continue to emphasize safety and ensure your Soldiers are adequately trained.

**JTF Empire Recordable Ground Accidents by Type/Cause (20 May-31 Aug)**



# NMCB 133 Seabees create impact at Camp Dwyer

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Steven Myers, NMCB 133 Public Affairs

CAMP KRUTKE, Afghanistan - Seabees from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133's Detail Dwyer hit the ground running upon their arrival Sept. 18.

The 23 members of the advanced party conducted a two-day turnover with NMCB 11 before starting their first projects of the deployment.

Lt. Cmdr. Blake Burket, the detail's officer-in-charge, said the phrase "teamwork makes the dream work" was the core of their turnover and made it a quick, thorough and safe evolution.

Less than a week later, the detail had already made an impact on board Camp Dwyer and with the camp's occupants.

"We have begun the execution of immediate force protection improvements throughout the Camp," said Burket. "Working with the camp's base defensive operations center, we have utilized Seabee ingenuity and a foundation of tactical doctrine to directly support and improve camp defensive operations. Simultaneously,



Photo by Mass Communication Spec. 1st Class Steven Myers  
Rosa Lopez, a member of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133's Echo Company, prepares a steel rebar clip during the construction of a K-span building project.




photo by Mass Communication Spec. 1st Class Steven Myers  
Warner Ward, a member of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 133's Echo Company, drives the first nail of a new base form during the construction of a K-span building project.

we have been supporting the U.S. Forces – Afghanistan directives to reduce footprint by performing demolition and demilitarization of recently vacated areas."

During that short period following turnover, the Seabees completed numerous force protection improvement projects ranging from the installation of anti-vehicle berms, the installation of entry control point gates, the demilitarization of multiple areas, the shifting of 900 cubic feet of four-foot tall temporary barriers, the repair of protective barriers, and a welding repair to a guard tower. This work continued with the ongoing demolition and disposal of temporary barriers, 3,000 linear feet of protective wire, seven wooden structures, and a concrete pad.

"From the beginning of turnover to our current phase of operations," said Burket, "safety and quality have remained hot topics. We embark on making everything count towards a bigger cause. NMCB 133's Det. Dwyer will not only meet, but also exceed, every expectation according to the highest standard."

NMCB 133 is currently deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, providing engineer support to Joint Task Force Empire, headed by the U.S. Army 411th Engineer Brigade, to help the Afghan people create their future. 

# 1039th engineers partner with Afghan troops



Photo courtesy Task Force Outlaw Public Affairs

By U.S. Army Capt Paul Wyckoff  
Task force Outlaw Public Affairs

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Wesley Gautreaux briefs Afghan National Army Soldiers before a route clearance mission in the Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan, recently.

URUZGAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan – The 1039th Engineer Company engaged in its first partnership with Afghan National Army on a route clearance mission in the Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan, recently.


Soldiers from the 1039th from Arkansas, based out of Tarin Kowt, Afghanistan, had the opportunity to work with the Afghan National Army for the first time without their 223rd En. Co. counterparts. The ANA had a small group of soldiers that were attached to a platoon of 1039th for a route clearance mission.

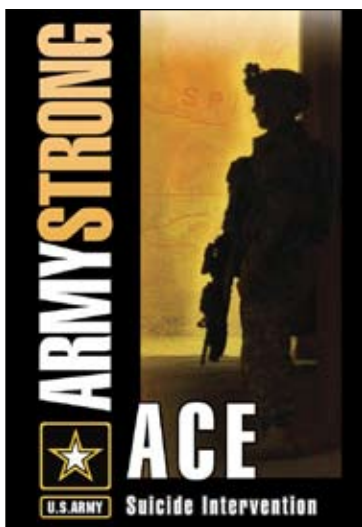
The Soldiers from the 1039th are working with the ANA; assisting them on route clearance and force protection training to better prepare the ANA to take the

lead in operations without U.S. forces.

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Wesley Gautreaux, with the 1039th briefed 1LT Janagha with the 4/205th ANA just prior to the mission. Janagha expressed excitement at the opportunity to work with the 1039th.

The 1039th Soldiers conducted themselves professionally and worked well with the ANA soldiers, conducting a successful mission and building trust and stronger relationships with the ANA.

This experience is just opening the door to better experiences down the road as missions continue and for better cohesion between U.S. and ANA troops. 



# Operations at a glance:

## Images from around JTF Empire



(Top) Bridge crewman from the 132nd Multi-role Bridge Company, Task Force Warhammer, emplace a decking panel during an ACROW bridge build in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. (Right) ANSF Engineer Soldiers from the Route Clearance Company, 2nd Brigade, 207th Corps practice piloting a remote controlled robot under the watchful eyes of their 510th Clearance Company, TF Warhammer and Italian Army, Task Force Genio, Explosive Ordinance Disposal instructors. (Bottom) An ANSF Engineer Company gun truck integrates into a route clearance patrol in support of Operation North Tour, a joint U.S., ISAF, and ANSF operation in northwestern Afghanistan.



Photos courtesy Task Force Warhammer Public Affairs

# Personally, Personnel

## Equal Opportunity

Equal Opportunity Advisor; that title makes a lot of commanders who hear it cringe. The first question they ask themselves is: What did I do wrong? But that isn't the case most of the time.

Equal Opportunity is a program that was developed to assist commanders and leaders in ensuring their Soldiers are treated with respect and fairness. The Equal Opportunity Program primarily uses AR 600-20 (The Army Command Policy) as the directive in training, guidance, and processing of Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment matters. The primary purpose is to make sure that decisions concerning Soldiers are based on their individual merit, fitness, and capability regardless of their race, color, sex, national origin, or religion.

Equal Opportunity is actually a commander's program and it is their responsibility to make sure the policies and guidelines are enforced. A positive Equal Opportunity Program really helps boost morale and Command Climate because Soldiers understand that they will be judged on their level of professionalism and merit without discrimination or sexual harassment. A Soldier who feels appreciated for their work without discrimination will strive to constantly improve, which greatly benefits the commander's unit.

Equal Opportunity Advisors are also called upon to help resolve both formal and informal complaints as well as their expertise is sought in resolving issues, such as Congressional Complaints and Higher Command complaint clarification. Utilizing Defense Equal Opportunity Climate Surveys, interviewing Soldiers, staffing and unit roster data, awards, and evaluations, an Equal Opportunity Advisor can help spot positive or negative climate or discrimination trends in a command and advise the commanders on steps to resolve or improve the climate.

There are three classifications of Equal Opportuni-



ty Soldiers: Equal Opportunity Program Managers, Equal Opportunity Advisors, and Equal Opportunity Leaders.

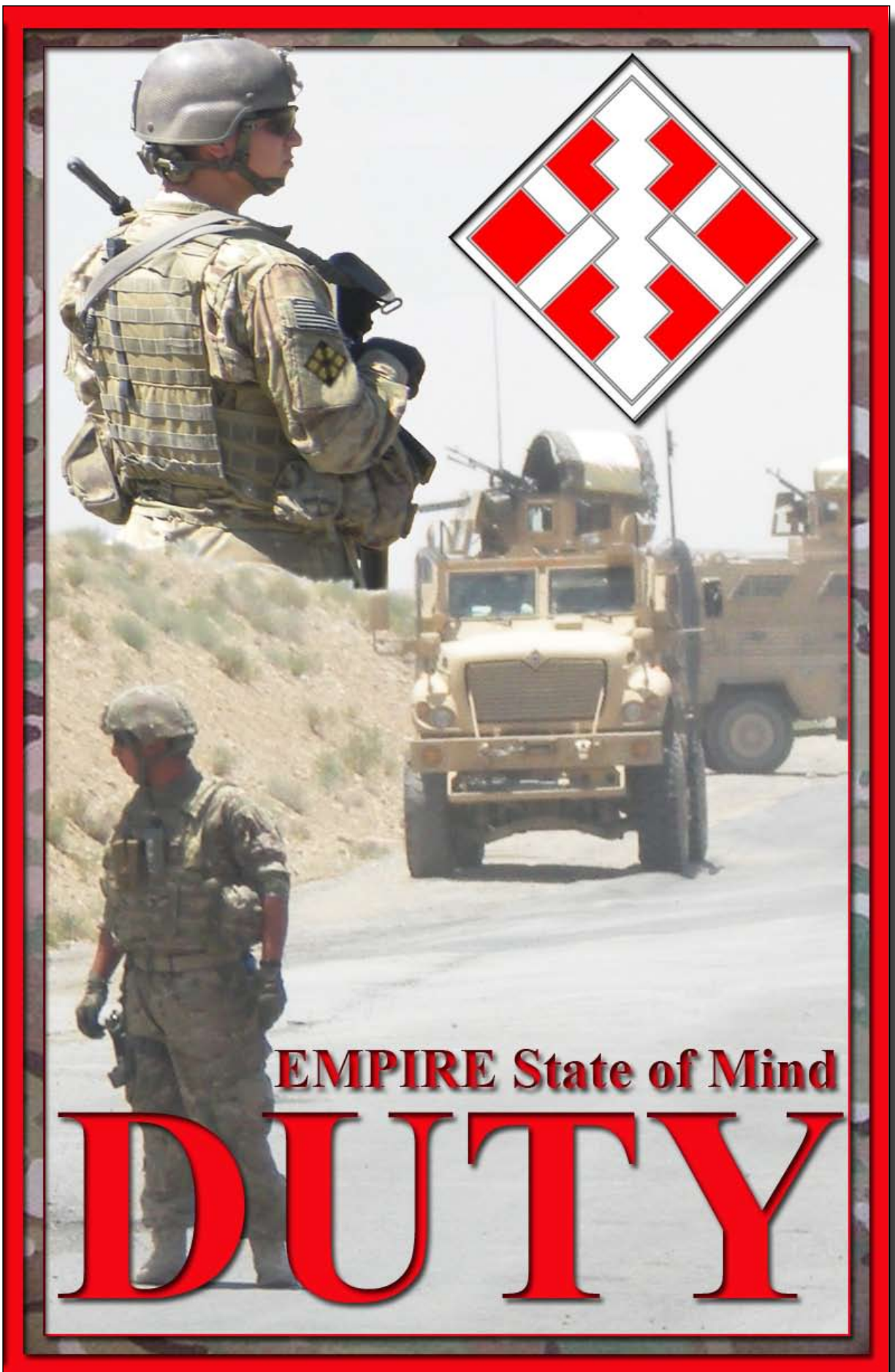
Equal Opportunity Program Managers are Equal Opportunity Advisors appointed at the division level or tech level who oversee the entire Equal Opportunity program for the command as well as their down-trace units. This includes funding, Staff Assistance Visits, program compliance and guidance. They are purely assigned this duty with no additional taskings by their command per regulation.

Equal Opportunity Advisors are appointed at the division and brigade level. They are primarily responsible for ensuring that training, budgeting, the formal and informal complaint process, Staff Assistance Visits, observances, and they are generally Department of Defense certified mediators, which can help resolve conflicts between Soldiers. This is also their only assigned duty per regulation.

Equal Opportunity Leaders are the first line in the Equal Opportunity chain at the battalion and company or smaller level. They are responsible for ensuring that their units are within compliance in regards to regulations and coordinating observances IAW AR 600-20. They also can help resolve informal EO complaints as well as assist their commanders in determining the morale and command climate within the unit. This is an additional duty on top of their regularly assigned position.

Take the opportunity to get to know your Equal Opportunity Leaders and let them know how you think the climate of your command is going. They are your first and strongest ally in keeping your unit, as well as the U.S. Army, a respected and professional organization.







## Afghan Border Patrol receives C-IED training


By U.S. Army Spc. J. Alex Klein  
Task Force Outlaw Public Affairs

KANDAHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan – The Afghan Border Patrol in the northern sector of Afghanistan is under constant risk from improvised explosive devices while patrolling its section of the Afghanistan border.

Task Force Outlaw, part of Joint Task for Empire, worked in conjunction with members of Task Force Paladin, to conduct counter-IED training for agents of the north ABP at the Joint Regional Afghan National Police Center in late September.

Forward Support Company, 120th Engineer Battalion, provided instructors, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Vernon and Staff Sgt. John Shaner, and a personal security detail consisting of Staff Sgt. Garrett Duke and Pfc. Stephen Fadden. This task force was assigned to train eleven ABP officers on C-IED equipment operations to better support their mission.

Master Sgt. Jason Mullennix, the JRAPC point of contact, applauded the efforts of the task force by saying, "Your guys did a hell of a job with the Afghans. The training ended being a first class event and the Afghans are better off for it."

The ABP said they were truly grateful for all of the support and training they received, especially so because this training will allow them to save the lives of those they serve with and be a more effective tool on the battlefield. 



Photos by U.S. Army Specialist J. Alex Klein

(Top) The Afghan Border Patrol class poses for photos after the day's instruction was complete. Forward Support Company, 120th Engineer Battalion's guardians and instructors are at both ends. (Above) Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Vernon gives instruction on specific pieces of equipment. These will be used when patrolling the Afghan border.