

The Voice of Sustainment in the West

Provider Base

13th Sustainment Command
(Expeditionary)

Summer 2013



Commander's Corner

The summer edition of the Provider Base continues the quarterly focus on sustainment regiments and branch related focused areas. This quarter we focus on Ordnance.

When most people think of Ordnance Corps, the first thing that comes to mind is Maintenance, closely followed by Ammunition. These are two very important core competencies of the Ordnance Corps, but there is a third core competency – Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD). I'd like to share a few ideas on some areas that all sustainment leaders should consider across these three core competencies.

Maintenance is critical to all aspects of the combat readiness of our formations. Maintenance is a total team sport and requires the involvement of not only the trained field-level maintenance personnel of the Ordnance Corps, but all crew or operators, the NCO leadership and commanders at all levels. To have a successful maintenance program, you must ensure that Soldiers and leaders at all levels are present for designated maintenance periods, understand the maintenance focus for that period, Soldiers have the required knowledge and skills to execute the required maintenance tasks and the leaders know how to confirm the maintenance tasks are being performed to standard. Successful maintenance programs require preparation prior to the day of execution- if you getting your ducks in line on morning of the maintenance period- you are probably missing some key tasks and will not completely obtain all your maintenance period objectives. I recommend you conduct maintenance preparation prior to executing your maintained period, a separate preparation session at the end of the week or during the previous weeks maintenance meeting. During your preparation session, review the focus for the maintenance period with your leaders, print and review 5988-Es, ensure distractions are removed from the maintenance period. During the maintenance period, leaders should check proper PMCS procedures, with the appropriate -10 level manuals, follow up on 5988-E turn-in and confirm the parts received not installed reports from SAMS-E. The most important thing to ensure success is the presence of your leaders and their active involvement with checking and maintaining standards- maintenance programs need to be executed to standard- not to time.

In the area of ammunition, training for our ammunition MOSs is critical. Sustainment Commanders must make time for training of the ammunition technical skills and find opportunities for ammunition specialist to execute their field craft. Allocate training time during sergeant's time training, field training exercises, and take time to research additional technical training courses that are available on line. Visit the Defense Ammunition Center's (DAC) website, <http://ammo.okstate.edu/>, and take advantage of online materials. The DAC has many products from online courses to applications that you can use to enhance ammunition training. During gunnery and FTXs, direct your ammo Soldiers to set up SAAS-MOD and run field ammunition holding and transfer points. Incorporate the BCT ammo Soldiers into ASP operations at your installation. Also, commanders and sergeants major need to take a hard look at the rotation plan for ammo Soldiers between units on the installation. Where possible, move Soldiers from ammo companies to BCTs and other brigades to allow them to develop their technical skills and experiences. As always, seek out the senior ammo warrant officers and NCOs to help shape your training programs and guide mission execution.

The EOD community does a great job maintaining their skill sets, through aggressive unit training and certification programs and day to day operations. What I would ask all our sustainment commanders and sergeants major to do and look out for our EOD Companies which are not collocated with their battalion or group headquarters. Seek out these EOD units and make sure they are taken care of at your installation. Make sure the EOD company commanders know who the senior sustainment leaders are in order to help them with any issues or concerns they may have. EOD units can assist you as sustainment leaders with training and preparation for deployments. Take full advantage of the skill sets and experiences of our EOD units and leaders. Ensure that your supported units understand that EOD units are a great resource and can add much to home station training. EOD officers and senior NCOs can add much to your deliberate planning process and augment your intelligence sections with additional information on threat and operational environment.

I hope this has given you a couple of ideas to chew on. It's amazing to see all the great initiative and incredible work that all of you do each and every day. Make sure your supported units know who you are and what you can bring to the table to support them. Stay actively involved with all aspects of sustainment at your installation and stay in touch through the Leveraging Sustainment Organizations CONUS (LSOC) West monthly forum.

If the 13th SC(E) can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to come online and let us know. We're working several Fort Hood issues that maybe of interest to you or your installation. Visit the LSOC-W information portal or contact the 13th SC(E) Support Operations Section anytime.

Phantom Support
Brig. Gen. Clark W. LeMasters Jr.
Commanding General



CSM's Corner

In the summer edition of Provider Base, we will highlight the Ordnance Corps to include Maintenance, Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Ammunition.

Maintenance is a wide area that covers ownership of your property to operate at peak performance; everything normally works better when it's cared for through regular checks and immediate action to address early warning signs of less than perfect operation.

Soldiers and leaders alike have manuals, internet resources and other information available to them in order to help navigate the solution of maintenance issues.

EOD is key for protecting the population from a potential danger of mishandling unexploded ammunition.

Ammunition completes the big three of the Ordnance Corps.

However, I'd like to address a different angle of the Ordnance Corps, which is just as important for a well-rounded organization – the Soldiers and Families.

Soldiers in the Ordnance Corps aren't 9 to 5 Soldiers. Our units require ordnance support at all hours of the day, night, weekends and holidays.

With the abnormal mission requirements of our Soldiers, leaders should ask themselves these questions: How does our Ordnance Soldier do his or her mission and still remain current on the Army training requirements? How are they still able to spend quality time with their Families?

Exceptional leaders, who understand the overarching picture of support and Soldier readiness, have a way to handle this. These leaders get the commander's intent/guidance and develop a method to reach the desired objective on time and to standard.

The Ordnance Corps is vital to the operation of the Army through the myriad of services provided. Properly maintained equipment operates as it should; ammunition delivers the desired effect when fired properly and EOD ensures proper disposal of defective Ordnance.

Just as vital as the Ordnance Corps is to the Sustainment community, the Families are just as vital to our ordnance Soldiers. When we support the Families, it helps to relieve stress on the Soldiers to be able to better perform on the job.

This publication shares some great pointers about maintenance, ammunition storage and also showcases EOD Soldiers. I encourage clerks, motor sergeants and maintenance warrants follow proper procedures when they place equipment in the deferred maintenance program. I caution everyone that as funding becomes available to pull equipment from deferred maintenance and closely track your expenditures!

Other hot sustainment challenges I have recently observed include inputting equipment in the Item Unique Identification, or IUID program and overcoming the learning curve of familiarizing ourselves with the Global Combat Support System-Army (GCSS-Army).

I urge everyone to become very familiar with these systems and learn and understand the new acronyms and expressions they bring to our already colorful military vocabulary. None of these are brand new; the requirement of inputting certain equipment in IUID has existed since 2005; GCSS-Army has been in use at Fort Bliss for a while.

This magazine and our information portals are an excellent venue to exchange information. Please continue to share your experiences and lessons learned with the sustainment and LSOC-West community.

Next quarter we will focus on the Transportation Corps and all the great things our Soldiers are doing for the Sustainment Communities across LSOC-West.



Phantom Support
Command Sgt. Maj. Terry E. Parham Sr.
Command Sergeant Major



PROVIDER SAFETY BULLETIN SB-13-001 Motorcycle Braking Procedures

In the best of all worlds the temperature would always be 78 degrees, the wind would be at our backs, and no emergencies would arise. Since it is a slightly imperfect world we live in, we should be prepared for whatever happens.

Sometimes you have to stop as quickly as possible. Here are some tips on how to get you and your motorcycle halted pronto:

- Apply both brakes to their maximum, just short of locking them up. Practice in an open, good-surfaced place, such as a clean parking lot.
- Keep the motorcycle upright and traveling in a straight line; and look where you're going, not where you've just been.
- You don't want to lock the front brake. If the wheel does chirp, release the brake for a split second, then immediately reapply without locking it up.
- If your rear wheel locks up, do not release the brake. If your handlebars are straight, you will skid in a straight line, which is all right. You have a more important priority and that is to get stopped!



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Welder works to prevent casualties along Afghanistan's most important highway



Photo by Sgt. Julieanne Morse, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Sgt. Patrick Lewis, a Queens, N.Y., native and an allied trade specialist in Company B, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, uses rebar to create a culvert denial system at Forward Operating Base Shank, Afghanistan, June 11, 2013. The cone-shaped systems will be placed in culverts to help prevent the emplacement of improvised explosive devices in Wardak Province, Afghanistan, along Highway 1, a main road to Kabul, and help prevent the loss of life.

By Sgt. Julieanne Morse
129th MPAD
 LOGAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan -- In a hot tent on Forward Operating Base Shank with an American flag hanging from the ceiling works an U.S Army welder whose recent project can help save many lives in eastern Afghanistan.

Reggae, soul music and rhythm and blues pours out of Sgt. Patrick Lewis's stereo as he goes to work welding together rebar to create culvert denial systems. The systems will help prevent insurgents from placing improvised explosive devices in culverts along Afghanistan's Highway 1. Lewis, who hails from Queens, N.Y., is originally from Jamaica and moved to the United States in 2001.

He learned to weld at the Apex Technical School in Manhattan, N.Y., and joined the U.S. Army in 2007 as an allied trade specialist. He currently serves in Company B, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. Lewis, the primary welder in Company B, has completed many projects since arriving at FOB Shank such as repairing radio towers and building steel gates, but this project is expanding his reach into Wardak and Logar provinces. Preventing the emplacement of IEDs is essential to help prevent military and civilian casualties. "Highway 1 is a main supply route going from BAF [Bagram Air Field] to Ghazni, and a critical point of our mission here is to keep that safe," said 1st Lt. Shane Hook, Company B executive officer.

The brigade counter IED office passed a sketch of the system's design down the chain of command to Lewis. Then, rebar was shipped from BAF. "We do just about anything," Lewis said. "You name it, if you can come up with a picture and show us that, we can make it. It's as simple as that." The static crackling sound can be heard as



Photo by Sgt. Julieanne Morse, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Lewis welds the rebar together into a cone-like shape. Spc. Jonathan Carpenter, a native of Pendleton, S.C., and a wheeled vehicle mechanic in Company B, who helps Lewis when he's not servicing vehicles, said the culvert denial system will allow water to flow through the culvert, but deny insurgents the ability to plant IEDs inside of them. Lewis said the system would benefit all U.S. forces as well as Afghans who travel on Highway 1. Lewis has a good reputation as a hard worker within the brigade. "He's a measure twice, cut once, type of guy, which is good," said Hook. "That is exactly the type you want."

First Sgt. Robert Walker, a native of Bryant, Ala., and the Company B first sergeant, said Lewis is one of his better noncommissioned officers. "He takes every opportunity he can to teach Soldiers," he added. Lewis' good reputation stems from his enjoyment of his job. "I love what I do," Lewis said. "This is me playing my part. If this is what I can do to prevent the loss of another U.S. service member then I'm more than willing to contribute in whatever way I can."

(Left) Sgt. Patrick Lewis, a Queens, N.Y., native and an allied trade specialist in Company B, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, uses rebar to create a culvert denial system at Forward Operating Base Shank, Afghanistan, June 11, 2013. The cone-shaped systems will be placed in culverts to help prevent the emplacement of improvised explosive devices in Wardak Province, Afghanistan, along Highway 1, a main road to Kabul, and help prevent the loss of life.



Photo by Sgt. Julieanne Morse, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

(Left) Sgt. Patrick Lewis, left, a Queens, N.Y., native and an allied trade specialist, levels a piece of rebar that will reinforce a culvert denial system with the help of Spc. Jonathan Carpenter, a Pendleton, S.C., native and a wheeled vehicle mechanic, both in Company B, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, at Forward Operating Base Shank, Afghanistan, June 11, 2013. The system will be used to prevent extremists from placing improvised explosive devices in culverts in Wardak Province, Afghanistan, along Highway 1, a main road to Kabul, preventing military and civilian casualties.

Warriors tested mentally, physically

Hood, Bliss, Sill, Campbell Soldiers compete for III Corps' Best Warrior

By Erin Rogers
Fort Hood Sentinel Staff

The III Corps Best Warrior Competition winners were named at a banquet June 27, with the noncommissioned officer from Fort Bliss and the Soldier from Fort Hood taking the III Corps title.

The winners, Staff Sgt. Nathan Attwood of the 1st Armored Division in Fort Campbell, and Spc. Alexis Estrada of Fort Hood's 1st Cavalry Division, battled it out June 23-27 with three other NCO and Soldier competitors from III Corps installations Fort Hood, Fort Sill, Fort Bliss and Fort Campbell.

The competition tested the Soldiers and NCOs at every level, consisting of an Army physical fitness test, written exam, essay, hands-on warrior tasks and battle drills, modern army combatives, M4 rifle qualification, day and night land navigation course, night urban orienteering course, eight-mile foot march, obstacle course at Fort Hood's Air Assault Course, a mystery event and a board appearance in front of seven command sergeants major from Fort Hood, Fort Bliss, Fort Campbell and Fort Sill.

"We are trying to find the best NCO and the best Soldier, based on the total Soldier concept," said Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Price, III Corps. "Not just good in their physical fitness, not just good in their technical knowledge, not just good in their tactical knowledge – but all of it together.

"Because if you excel in one



Photo by Erin Rogers, Fort Hood Sentinel Staff

Spc. Alexis Estrada, 4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div., locks together an MK19 40mm grenade launcher at the weapons familiarization portion of the III Corps BWC June 25. The competition began June 22 and concluded the 27th with a banquet at Club Hood.

and not the others, you don't really have a total, complete, all-around Soldier," he added. "What this really shows is that they can survive in combat with all of their tactical knowledge, technical knowledge and everything it takes to be the ideal Soldier."

The bulk of the competition began with the PT test June 24 at Sadowski Field, where the competitors had their first real look at who they'd be competing against all week.

"None of these Soldiers are weak," said Spc. Jonathan Gragert, 101st Airborne Division out of Fort Campbell, Ky. and one of

four Soldiers competing. "These are the best-of-the-best that I'm competing against, so it's not like we can just slide by in any part of the competition. This will be tough from beginning to end. We have to do better than our best."

For many of the competitors, this was their first visit to Fort Hood. Gragert said Fort Hood was just as hot, but not as green as Kentucky.

"It's hot. It's humid – but it's beautiful," said Attwood, currently stationed at Fort Bliss. "At least Hood and Bliss are both in Texas, so I didn't have to adjust to the heat like maybe some of the other competitors did," he added with a laugh.



Photo by Sgt. John Healy, 7th MPAD

Spc. Alexis Estrada, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cav. Div., demonstrates for his evaluator the steps to properly perform the guillotine choke during the modern army combatives evaluation of the III Corps Best Warrior Competition at Keishnick Physical Fitness Center June 24. The combatives portion of the competition required Soldiers to demonstrate complete knowledge of the combatives level 1 drills.

After competing from roughly 5 a.m. to past 6 p.m. for nearly five days at many different locations around Fort Hood, with one day lasting until midnight at West Fort Hood with the night land navigation, the competitors finished out the week with food, fun and relaxation at the banquet at Club Hood where the winners were announced.

"These NCOs and Soldiers represent the spirit and motivation of all the outstanding Soldiers across the entire corps," said Command Sgt.

Maj. James Norman, 1st Cav. Div. command sergeant major. "Each one of these competitors is a leader. And each one of them will take something back to their unit that they will share with their battle buddies, with their fellow NCOs and with their Soldiers of their accomplishments and values that make our corps a better one."

After the competitors and guests at the banquet watched a video about the week's events and challenges, Attwood and Estrada were announced as the Soldier and NCO III Corps Best Warriors and were presented with Army Achievement Medals by Norman and Maj. Gen. Anthony Ierardi, 1st Cav. Div. commanding general and senior mission commander of Fort Hood. They then ceremoniously cut the Best Warrior cake with Ierardi and Norman before parting to be congratulated by the banquet guests.

"I wasn't prepared to win, I was confident that I was close, but not prepared to win," Attwood said of being the NCO III Corps Best Warrior. "I was competing all week with the best NCOs in III Corps, and I try to stay humble so I had to keep reminding myself that I'm in that category with them – the best NCOs in III Corps – and that idea kept pushing me to do the best I possibly could at every corner."

Fort Hood's own Estrada was

equally happy to named the Soldier III Corps Best Warrior, but said he wasn't as surprised as Attwood.

"I worked hard for this," Estrada said. "I had a good feeling about this competition. I was feeling pretty confident after the board because that is my weaker side, and I did pretty good this time. I studied a lot, and had my battle buddies quiz me on everything.

"I knew I was doing well, and I was getting excited to represent Fort Hood at the FORSCOM (United States Army Forces Command) level even before they announced the winner," he added, saying that throughout the week he was gauging every move his competitors made, and took the competition very seriously. "I'm ready to represent."

For the three NCOs and three Soldiers who didn't take home the title, winning at their installations and moving on to the III Corps level was an honor in itself.

"Even though I didn't win, I'm still proud to be the Soldier representing Fort Campbell at the III Corps level of this competition here – I still have a lot to take back to Campbell with me and pass on to my fellow Soldiers, and it's safe to say we all feel that way – we made it this far and that's a big deal.

"Now we'll cheer on Nate and Alex while they go on to represent our corps in North Carolina this year," he added about Attwood and Estrada.

The next step for Estrada and Attwood will be to represent III Corps and compete at the FORSCOM Best Warrior Competition at Fort Bragg, N.C.

"I'm ready to represent our corps at the FORSCOM level," Attwood said, agreeing with Estrada. "I'll definitely be 'eating my Wheaties' everyday for this one. Now it's real."

Wranglers represent Fort Hood in FORSCOM Connelly competition

By Capt. Monika Comeaux
13th SC(E) Public Affairs
 Soldiers from the 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), represented Fort Hood in the U.S. Army Forces Command's 46th Annual Philip A. Connelly Award for Food Service Excellence competition 17-18 July.

The team was selected in February to represent the Great Place, as they won the garrison-level competition.

"The overall goal of the program is to promote and improve professionalism in Army food service, encourage and recognize excellence in the food service profession and reward individuals for stellar management practices," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jason A. Hicks, 13th SC(E) senior food advisor. Teams were inspected on standards in the areas of food preparation and serving, site setup, field sanitation, maintenance, training and administration.

At the FORSCOM-level, a total of six installation teams are inspected, with the inspection team travelling to each team's location, said Sgt. Maj. John T. Womble, a member of the FORSCOM inspection team. So far, the team inspected four installation teams. The winners of the competition will be notified through their chain of command by mid-August. The winners will then represent FORSCOM at the Department of the Army level. The DA competition will take place between October and December of 2013.

Soldiers of the Wrangler team prepared for this particular competition for months. "90 days out, we were pulled out of the dining facility... started labeling our equipment and conducted inventories," said Staff Sgt. Kevin Quiles, a food operations manager with



Photo by Capt. Monika Comeaux, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs
 Staff Sgt. Kevin Quiles, a food service operations noncommissioned officer, serves ribs to a Soldier coming through the food line in a Containerized Kitchen July 18 at Fort Hood's Training Area 110. Quiles and his team set up the CK and prepared meals to represent Fort Hood in the Forces Command-level Philip A. Connelly Award for Food Service Excellence competition, competing with five other units in FORSCOM.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Special Troops Battalion. "We were making sure that the lower enlisted were aware of what is expected."

Quiles said that the inconsistent weather posed the biggest challenge for them. "A week ago, it was a 100+ [degrees Fahrenheit], and this week the rain made it challenging. They overcame because they are Soldiers..."

Spc. Jan Adan, a food service specialist with the 297th Inland Cargo Transfer Company, 49th Movement Control Battalion, 4th Sust. Bde., said the hardest part was putting the camouflage net over the equipment, and setting the equipment up. "We do the cooking all the time," he added.

As for tips on how to prep for a competition like this, Quiles said to stick to the basics.

"Stay motivated, drink water," said Adan in conclusion.

PEO Ammo better buying power nets \$6-billion+ in savings

By Audra Calloway
Army Material Command
 PICATINNY ARSENAL, N.J. -- Since 2010, the Program Executive Office Ammunition at Picatinny has saved the Army more than \$6 billion through better buying power initiatives aimed at strengthening buying power, improving industry productivity, and providing affordable military capabilities.

Launched in 2010, by the Defense Department, better buying power, or BBP, encompasses a set of fundamental acquisition principles to achieve greater efficiencies through affordability, cost control, eliminating unproductive processes and bureaucracy, while promoting competition. The goal is to maximize the ability to deliver critical capabilities to service members as budgets shrink.

"The original premise of BBP was that defense budgets would be flat, neither increasing or decreasing, and that this focus on improving our buying power by improving our business practices was intended as a way to 'do more without more,'" explained Vince Dahmen, a cost analyst with the Program Executive Office for Ammunition.

"It is now three years later and the fiscal environment is even tougher than when better buying power was first launched," he said. "The need to get the most 'bang for the buck' is even more sharply felt, and appropriately senior leaders in OSD (Office of the Secretary of Defense) have not lost focus regarding BBP."

But achieving better buying power is not easy. "A defense acquisition program has many stakeholders, many moving parts and requires the expertise of many different functional experts," Dahmen continued. "So first off, it requires as a prerequisite an acquisition team that is highly skilled and able to meet its primary mission which is to ensure the acquisition program meets its cost, schedule and performance requirements."

EXAMPLE INITIATIVES

Ammunition Cross-Leveling Event

Each year, the military services exchange ammunition stocks that have accumulated beyond their requirement. This seemingly simple arrangement is a win-win for the services and the taxpayer. Not only is the cost of buying new ammunition avoided, but also the storage cost and potentially the demilitarization cost associated with excess ammunition. The fiscal year 2013 "cross-leveling" avoided an estimated \$121 million of ammunition procurement costs across the services.

Husky Mounted Detection System Program Restructure

PEO Ammo will provide ground penetrating radar, deep buried metallic detection and semi-autonomous control of Husky vehicles used in route clearance missions for detecting and marking explosive threats. Systems with only the ground penetrating radar capability were fielded under a Joint Urgent Operational Needs Statement, or JUONS, to support Operation Enduring Freedom. By capturing numerous lessons learned from operations in Afghanistan with the JUONS systems, the PM and the Maneuver Support Center of Excellence optimized the requirements and restructured the program. The restructured program reduces the procurement objective, leverages the JUONS systems and will use a training surrogate system. The restructured program will meet the warfighter's needs and achieve an estimated \$84 million savings and more than \$1 billion of cost avoidance over the lifecycle of the Husky Mounted Detection System.

40 mm Practice Grenades

The PEO Ammunition anticipates reducing the cost of 40 mm target practice grenades substantially by eliminating the fuze and energetics associated with the flash/bang signature. The overall complexity of the high velocity 40mm practice grenade will be reduced from 39 parts to 10 parts. The new round will still meet the user's requirement for training effectiveness during day/night training and using thermal sights. In addition to a potential savings of up to \$42 million per year, the improved round would eliminate the serious problem of unexploded grenades with the current design that can be left on practice ranges.

"To obtain better buying power the acquisition team has to be knowledgeable about how the decisions being made today affect future costs, and they must be willing to take on additional challenges and sometimes additional risks today in order to reduce costs," he said.

Most PEO Ammunition initiatives fall into the focus area of controlling costs throughout the product lifecycle.

"I think this is due to the nature of the ammo portfolio. There are many conventional ammo programs that are in full rate production whose designs have not changed in years, sometimes decades," Dahmen noted. "These programs are prime candidates for engineering changes to simplify designs and reduce unit costs. There are some very innovative proposals out there now to update old designs with the potential to save a lot of money in the future."

"A critical component of PEO Ammunition's BBP process is employing a project management mindset to cost-saving initiatives," said Dahmen. "The initiatives themselves

run the gamut from basic efficiencies of office administration to highly complex plans for the optimization of acquisition programs and processes.

"At PEO Ammo, we have found a peer review forum extremely effective for implementing BBP," Dahmen continued. "On a quarterly basis (the commanding general) meets with all of the PMs (project managers) to review ongoing initiatives. It has become a terrific forum for sharing ideas, successes and lessons learned. Often a cost-saving idea presented by one PM office can have application in another PM office. This is one case where stealing ideas is absolutely encouraged."

"Another important point is that the PMs who are taking on additional challenges to achieve better buying power get recognition from the PEO in the company of their peers," Dahmen added. "I think that becomes a powerful motivator for others to also take on challenges."

The Program Executive Office Ammunition has 41 open BBP initiatives and has completed 54.

Future munitions production cuts must remain conservative

*Editorial by Sgt Andrew C. McAllister
4th Sust. Bde. SPO*

“Whoever said the pen is mightier than the sword obviously never encountered automatic weapons.”

- General MacArthur

“Our trouble will never be raising Soldiers. Our trouble will always be the limit of the possibility of transporting, clothing, arming, feeding and caring for our Soldiers.”

- Elihu Root

The responsibility for supplying munitions to the U.S. Military is a highly specialized production process.

Currently, there is one facility located in Lake City, Missouri slotted for the production of U.S. Military specification small caliber ammunition.

This Lake City Ammunition facility is government owned and operated by Alliant Techsystems.¹ It was opened by then Senator Harry Truman during World War II in order to maximize economies of scale and efficiencies.

In addition to this small caliber plant, there are about a dozen other privately owned ammunition plants providing a range of ammunitions for all of the services.

The current Army ammunition plants each produce specific types of ammunition and have a range of specialized capabilities specific to that depot.²

One ammunition plant produces medium caliber ammunition and shells for tanks and artillery pieces. A handful of plants produce submunitions and much of the Air Force ordnance.

The McAlester Army Ammunition Plant makes bombs for both the Air Force and the Navy.

Explosives and propellants are produced at the Holston and Radford Army Ammunition Plants. The Iowa Army Ammunition Plant produces and delivers component assembly, and medium and large caliber ammunition items for the Department of Defense.

“No part of the defense industrial base is more critical to the success of the U.S. military than that which produces munitions.”³ and the supply could be declining.

With the plans for sequestration currently being put



into place, ammunition production will also likely be downsized in the near future.

However, there are lessons to be learned from our recent past.

U.S. history demonstrates that we must remain conservative and careful when considering how much to downsize this ammunition production.

At the end of the Cold War the U.S. assumed that a period of peace had arrived and adjusted military planning accordingly but that was not the case.

Realistically, it will remain impossible for the United States government to correctly anticipate all world's political developments and how different tensions will develop around the globe.

The current political climate is just as volatile as it was during the Cold War.

The period from the end of the Cold War to the present has seen a significant reduction in the overall capacity of the munitions industry.

With the war in Afghanistan winding down, the objective to have a graceful decline in production is understandable. However, a hefty reserve of ammunition will never go to waste because there is always a strong justification to use ammunition to keep the U.S. Military highly trained and prepared for conflict in an unpredictable world climate.

Ammunition is, and will always be, one of the Army's most essential pieces of hardware.

The across the board spending cuts are affecting every segment of our Army, but analysts must remain conservative and careful when cutting the production and available supply of ammunition to U.S. Service Members.

Creation of the virtual log-synch

*By Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ron Jupiter
4th Sust. Bde. SPO*

The 4th Sust. Bde. Support Operations, Materiel Readiness Branch (SPO, MRB) is an example of big things happening in small places. The 4th Sustainment Brigade Support Operations Materiel Readiness Branch transformed to the only Sustainment Brigade supporting III Corps and Fort Hood. In addition to supporting the Army's largest heavy division, 1st Cavalry Division, Third Cavalry Regiment and 15 separate brigades; U.S. Army Forces Command mandated the establishment of a Sustainment operations Center (SOC).

The SOC creates the architecture to enable synchronization and collaboration within the sustainment community.

According to FORSCOM “the SOC is an environment where sustainment synchronization occurs by co-locating representatives of all sustainment providers in order to assist customers by providing a single sustainment entry point on an installation for the senior commander and units, and by leveraging all available support capacity—tactical, installation and Army Materiel Command—against requirements.”

Because the SOC is a III Corps commodity, the MRB by default was thrust into functioning as a Corps Materiel Management Center (CMMC). The SOC provides support similar to a CMMC in regards to Maintenance Management.

The 4th Sust. Bde. commander mandated that the MRB provide real time data on Fort Hood's fleet readiness along with the use of the most relevant innovation available.

A state-of-the-art business intelligence tool that will be accessible immediately by anyone with common access card access, providing timely maintenance status. This data will be available to all brigade commanders taking us closer to the common operating picture we have been seeking to achieve.

On July 12, 2012, the 4th Sust. Bde. MRB staff contacted Chief Warrant Officer 3 William Alsobrook, the creator of the LMX (Logistic Management eXchange) program, for information concerning implementing the program. We began the process of testing the LMX program within the 4th Sust. Bde. and were quickly convinced that the program met the commander's intent along with an impressive 90 percent time reduction in material readiness management.

As a result of implementing the LMX program in the

Logistic Management Exchange Capabilities

- LMX streamlines the maintenance management process by importing critical data from multiple source files and displaying the data in a user friendly and defined print out.
- Provides the last location (last interrogator hit) of parts that have been shipped and radio-frequency identification tagged.
- Compares requested repair parts on the “026” print with the Authorized Stockade Lists (ASL) for supply support activity's within the users geographic routing identifier code to determine if repair parts are on hand. Note: This is useful for parts acquired by the SSA after the referral process has been initiated.
- Customizes “026” reports that can be filtered by age, unit, fleet, pacers/ERC, support unit.
- Daily archiving of the entire “026” allows managers to look back to any point in time to identify the cause of readiness challenges Allows users at the battalions and brigades to input the most current job status.

4th Sust. Bde. maintenance report processes MRB, have found a major improvement in our reporting efficiency along with the ability to establish maintenance reports using system of records (i.e. Logistics Support Activity/ Logistics Information Warehouse). The LMX program provides the user with numerous capabilities, some of which are highlighted in the graphic box above.

On Oct. 1, 2012, The SOC Dash Board was activated, this enabled the MRB section to produce and post Standard Army Management Information Systems and maintenance critical reports on the Dash Board for III Corps and all brigades on Fort Hood to access.

The MRB section also incorporated the LMX capabilities into two of their critical functions of the MRB; hosting the data collection portal and validating the data for III Corps monthly Logistic Readiness Review (LRR) and the planning and coordinating the by-monthly Fort Hood Maintenance log-synch meeting.

Because of the daunting task of data collection, information validation and slide preparation for three major maintenance-log brief each month, Sgt. 1st Class Richard Ahlers and Sgt. 1st Class Samuel Fazio orchestrated a virtual log-synch product, focusing on system of record data i.e. exchange pricing, man-hour reports, TMDE, maintenance readiness and over 30 days of non-mission capable reports.

The major advantages of the virtual log-synch are, data is pulled from the system of record, easy to populate into a briefing format or can be brief live from server, data in no more than 48 hours old, Brigade commanders can access the data from their work stations (desktop) daily.

¹<http://www.atk.com/locations/small-caliber-systems-independence-mo/>. 2013 Alliant Techsystems website

²<http://www.jmc.army.mil/Installations.aspx?id=Anniston> The Official Homepage of the Joint Munitions Command

³Supplying Ammunition: The Lifeblood of the Military. The US Army Professional Writing Collection. Volume 3, January 2005, p.1.

Deferred maintenance expenditures and reporting requirements

By Chief Warrant Officer 4 Douglas Evans
13th SC(E) SPO

Beginning the second quarter of fiscal year 2013 Headquarters Department of the Army and Headquarters FORSCOM began a series of actions to control expenditures in the face of sequestration and continuing resolutions.

Specific controls and guidance provided have been implemented across Fort Hood.

Instructions concerning standards of maintenance are clear and precise.

In accordance with Memorandum, Headquarters Department of the Army, Waiver for Army 10/20 Maintenance Standards Based on Fiscal Uncertainty, Memorandum, Headquarters US Army Forces Command, subject: Expenditure Reduction Guidance for Fiscal Uncertainty, 17 Jan 13, Forces Command (FORSCOM) Execution Order (EXORD) 221637Z Feb 13, Optimizing Readiness to Ensure a Highly Capable Force Execution Order.

Fort Hood units are directed to maintain ground systems, including missile systems (less Patriot/Theater High Altitude Air Defense [THAAD] systems), communications and electronic systems, and watercraft at fully mission capable plus safety.

Patriot/THAAD systems will be maintained to technical manual standards. Aviation maintenance repairs will be conducted on all assigned aircraft when there is a fault, deficiency, or condition that makes the aircraft, system, or associated equipment inoperative or unsafe to fly their equipment at fully mission capable plus safe condition.

Units are to continue with scheduled services on all equipment. All maintenance actions required to maintain equipment above fully mission capable plus safe condition are to be deferred.

The fiscal impacts of deferring maintenance can be significant and generates a significant fiscal “bubble” in future budget projections. Thus, procedures had to be developed to capture the costs of all deferred maintenance within standard systems of record and to report the projected costs of all deferred maintenance.

Units were directed to defer all maintenance actions, repair part acquisitions, and expenditures that

exceed fully mission capable plus safety criteria for all ground, (less Patriot/THAAD systems), and defer all maintenance actions, repair part acquisitions, and expenditures for aviation end items and systems which are above requirements that render the end item or systems inoperable.

Units must then report deferred maintenance costs monthly.

Using these reports, Commanders can get a good estimate of how much deferred maintenance will cost to bring equipment back to -10/20 standards.

Units are to continue to conduct all scheduled preventive maintenance checks and services IAW applicable technical manuals.

Identify and document all parts, supplies, and other related work required to complete corrective



actions and defer all expenditures that do not result in equipment being rated as non-mission capable or safety related.

Commanders are to review daily expenditure reports, enforce command discipline programs, and ensure compliance with the Army's Campaign on Property Accountability (COPA).

Unit Commanders are also to review and authenticate the Commander's Exception and Financial Transaction Reports before sending requisitions to the Supply Support Activity (SSA).

Unit commanders were instructed to report their current deferred maintenance and its cost to their

higher headquarters after the first working day of the month.

Their reports will document the required information for each previous month; monthly costs and running totals for deferred maintenance repair parts; and supply requisitions and high dollar requisitions not passed by dollar amount.

These reports provide the commanders at all levels with a great tool to help manage the budget and understand the current status of their equipment.

When funds are available, commanders know how much and where they need to spend to improve their equipment condition.

The process starts with the Preventive Maintenance Check and Services (PMCS).

Soldiers perform the normal, (before, during, after, weekly, monthly), PMCS on their equipment using the -10 technical manual. They then annotate any deficiencies on the Equipment Maintenance and Inspection Worksheet DA FORM 5988-E.

Once the deficiencies are verified by the field level maintenance activity, any parts required are noted on the 5988-E.

If the deficiency is not a deadline or safety related fault, it will be loaded into the Standard Army Maintenance System Enhanced (SAMSE) as a deferred work order.

Then, Soldiers must open the work center and place it in “D” status for ‘deferred.’

Next, Soldiers add the task and projected man hours to complete the task. After this step, Soldiers close the work order.

Shop Supply List (SSL) items are deferred by opening shop supply management and changing the funds available to “No.”

This keeps the shop stock list from ordering any parts without input. This process will allow units to use



their shop stock list parts to keep equipment maintained with parts already at the unit without reordering them until funds are available.

Using the Ad Hoc report in SAMSE, units will submit the report to their higher head quarters at the beginning of each month.

This report can be imported into the SAMSE using an Excel Macro (XLM) file already containing the required fields. This report gives us the basic information needed to see the amount of deferred maintenance a unit has and the cost of the parts to repair the equipment. It also provides a list of SSL that is issued and the cost to replenish it.

All of these procedures and reports have been specified in the published III Corps OPERATION ORDER PW 13-04-0349 (DEFERRED LOGISTICS, MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS) 161431 Apr 13 which allows the Corps to work with the United States Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) to maintain visibility of how much deferred maintenance the Corps has accumulated and its cost.

To see step-by-step instructions on deferred maintenance, please go to the following links:

<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/40822279>

[OPORD Deferred Maintenance](#)

https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/40124727_III

[Corps Deferred Maintenance Parts](#)

Developing dual military/civilian contracting systems

By Capt. Melissa Miller

13th SC(E) G3 Plans

Army publications do not sufficiently cover how to create an efficient and effective dual (military and civilian led) contracting system. The regulations (including AR 70-1: Army Acquisition Policy) are hard guidelines that ensure the acquisition and maintenance of a contract is fair, equitable and is advantageous to all concerned.

They do not explain the triumphs and tribulations of creating a culture that promotes productiveness and creates a shared vision and mindset that shapes conditions for mission success. Thus the unanswered question is how to combine the civilian sector and military into a successful entity able to thrive in the most difficult conditions. The observations below are based on experiences in the field of maintenance (which uses both contractors and DA civilians), but the lessons learned can be applied to any industry or contract with a dual operation.

I was the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) in Iraq for a year where I ran maintenance with around 15 Army mechanics augmented by 40 American contractors. The contract provided a variety of skill sets: machinists, armorers, general mechanics as well as Ground Support Equipment (GSE) technicians.

While it would seem that between the two groups I would have ample time to conduct operations, my Soldiers were often tasked with other missions. This left very little Army oversight to a predominantly civilian workforce. The civilian workforce did not always use military systems.

In the parts acquisition process, the parts came from our military system but the contractors' ability to issue them was not the same. This created issues at times; primarily for accountability.

With the workforce established, the challenge was how to meet my mission requirements while balancing the statement of work and mixing the Army maintenance system with a contracted maintenance system. I learned quickly, in a trial by fire, how personalities and systems clash, but this experience helped me to become a stronger logistician as well as a better problem solver and manager. By the end of the deployment, we not only performed like a well-oiled machine, but we also closed down northern Iraq, rebuilding over 7 Heavy Equipment Transporter Systems from the ground up in the process.

The first suggestion that I have to share is "making it a team thing" or the idea of creating a shared vision and mission that both civilian and military personnel can work towards. I did this through sitting everyone down in the beginning and making it clear what I expected and how I expected the mission to be met, creating a chain of command where the civilians were integrated. The key

is to ensure that nothing violates their statement of work, specifically with the number of hours they work and the types of jobs they conduct. Once their statement of work is established and potential violations identified it is easy to assign tasks as necessary.

The hard part in team planning is ensuring the contractors feel wanted and appreciated for the work that they accomplish, mirroring the way we recognize Soldiers for their accomplishments. For example, when we began rebuilding the HET systems, we had no HET experts in our team. I made my case to all concerned, both military and civilian. Much to my happiness, my civilians (and Soldiers for that matter) went out of their way to research these systems! The end state was that my civilians were able (partly due to the large amount of man power) to rebuild the systems and get them back on the road. I was so ecstatic that we got these machines back on the road that we had a little recognition ceremony. This primed the pump so to speak and created an even better, more motivated staff that was hungry for the accolades. This made them work better and improved our production. Another key point in building a team is to tear down barriers. I would have my Soldiers work with the civilians, which built a mutual respect and encouraged knowledge sharing.

Finally, team building works to ensure that civilian and military alike feel that they have a voice with you. That doesn't mean that every time someone complains the world changes. Minor complaints can (and should) be dealt with. This is done through being approachable and amicable towards all parties involved. The colloquialism of, "you get more flies with sugar than vinegar" truly holds in this situation!

The next learning curve was to maintain the line of professionalism as a COR. It seems paradoxical that one can "make it a team thing" while maintaining professionalism but it's not. It is okay to have a cup of coffee with "your guys" and to joke around but that line of professionalism can be the difference between violating the terms of being a COR and being effective in maintaining the contract.

I found this hard at times because the people that worked for me were some of the nicest people I have ever met and given another situation I probably would have made some great friends. However, at the end of the day it was my job to ensure they met the demands of the contract.

I wasn't bending numbers of production or any of the rules in order to keep friendship. The key to being a successful COR is to maintain that line. This can be done through honest and open communication with the civilians and their chain of command. Furthermore, knowing their



next line supervisor helps to ensure compliance with the statement of work, especially if they require monthly reporting. For instance my company was a subcontract of a contract. Thus my productivity numbers (which were tracked in the Standard Army Maintenance System [SAMS]) were sent to the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) supervisor for validation. This kept all parties concerned honest and professional since to the numbers were being reported to higher and it also made it hard to validate mistakes since everything was calculated off Army doctrine.

Even if there isn't someone checking the numbers at the end of the day, professionalism keeps people out of trouble. I learned to adjust my behavior based on how my civilians reacted when I was in the motor pool. If they kept drinking their coffee and goofing around I knew I had an issue (provided it wasn't break time) but if they said hello and kept working I knew I was good to go!

The next key step is to that you have documentation of everything that's happening- both the good and the bad! Thus the next tip is to keep everything. There are times when I would get so frustrated because there was so much paperwork piled in my office. It would drive me nuts, especially since this was supposed to be a paperless Army! However, records need to be kept for several reasons. First and foremost, you may have to justify your numbers to the Army or contracting company. On several occasions (especially as Iraq began to close down) I had to justify my operations.

While physical paperwork wasn't always necessary it was still nice to have historical documentation to back my request for continued support. Second, there were several

occasions where the contractors were not up to standard with their work performance or they had personality conflicts that caused the mission to fail. Keeping the paperwork, including memoranda for record about issues that arose, made it easy to justify a relief for cause in a case where someone wasn't fulfilling the obligations of the statement of work and they needed to be let go. Finally, regulations require most contracting officers to keep the paperwork for a certain amount of years. It is better to be safe than sorry!

Talk to you right and left. I thought this was silly when I first started with the contracting

company but the truth is that when in doubt ask! When we began to close down Iraq LOGCAP III and IV with a lot of us moving out, it was a very intense time, especially for logisticians.

Unfortunately, the removal of the life sustaining concepts was not planned out and if there was a plan, it wasn't pushed down to the lower echelons. Therefore, when it came to removing the contract out of the country there was little guidance from higher headquarters, especially on the COR side. The only way I knew anything was to talk to the other COR's around me and to talk to the higher headquarters (in this case KBR, Inc.). This allowed me to have the most up to date information, which guided my interaction with my contracting officer.

Know your industry; know how their company works and how to get things accomplished through their system. On numerous occasions, the company's higher headquarters visited my contractors. My civilian workforce went crazy trying to ensure their shop looked and acted in the best of their ability. It was exciting because their entourage brought almost as many people as you would see traveling with a commanding general around the Area of Operations. Of course I was a small part on the agenda but I was able to meet their president and find out the background of the company as well as why their systems existed the way they did.

I also showed interest in their lineage, which opened the doors for communication. An example of why this communication was so important would be if there was a

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593rd Sustainment Brigade to become Army's newest ESC



Photo by Rafael Tinsay, Northwest Guardian

Soldiers from the 593rd Sustainment Brigade case their colors during a ceremony at Watkins Field on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., in 2012.

By Christopher Gaylord
Northwest Guardian

JOINT BASE LEWIS-McCHORD, Wash. -- Joint Base Lewis-McChord's 593rd Sustainment Brigade will officially transform into the Army's third active duty expeditionary sustainment command.

The change, which authorizes a third general officer command position on the base, provides the Army and U.S. Forces Command an organization ready to deploy to conduct regional sustainment and support operations.

Having a third active duty ESC allows the Army to continuously keep a mobile sustainment command in each one of three phases of mission readiness, which the Army refers to as force generation pools, said Col. Douglas McBride, who has led the 593rd Sust. Bde. since June 2012.

Army force generation doctrine breaks readiness into three phases: reset, the period after a unit returns from deployment; train and ready, the process of preparing a unit for deployment; and ready for mission, the point at which a unit is trained and available for deployment.

During the past decade of military engagements

in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army was forced to either abbreviate the dwell times between overseas deployments of its two active duty ESCs or mobilize a Reserve component ESC to meet the sustainment demands of combatant commanders.

Standing up a Reserve unit, McBride said, takes longer and costs the Army more than sending an active duty ESC, and sending a recently returned unit often forced the Army to shorten invaluable rest time for Soldiers home from combat.

McBride said the 593rd ESC would align the one-star sustainment headquarters under JBLM-based I Corps, allowing the corps commanding general to tap the unit whenever needed for training exercises and missions at home and abroad.

"It gives the I Corps commander and the Pacific a huge general officer-level planning and operating headquarters that we just didn't have in this region," McBride said.

Already, the 593rd has plans to support I Corps as an ESC in at least one of the corps' training and humanitarian endeavors with Pacific Rim allies: Operation Talisman Saber, a training event this summer with Australian forces.

Talisman Saber will certify I Corps as a joint task force as the corps moves forward with its new mission to partner with militaries across the Pacific against threats from natural disasters to terrorist attacks.

The exercise will be the first of many leading to a certification event in fiscal year 2015 that will confirm the new ESC's readiness for worldwide deployment.

"The Pacific Rim is an incredibly important region in the world, and as critical to the balance of security as any other region," said Col. Joe Gann, currently the 593rd Sust. Bde. chief of staff.

By converting a unit instead of creating an entirely new one, McBride said, the Army saves money while honoring its plan to cut nearly 80,000 Soldiers from its ranks by the end of 2017.

The 593rd will remain the same except for its approximately 275-Soldier headquarters, which will shrink by 16 positions and gain experience by bringing in more senior leadership — a one-star general as its commander, additional colonels and lieutenants colonel, more sergeants major, warrant officers and master sergeants.

Of the Soldiers in the brigade's headquarters, between 15 and 20 percent were relocated in the conversion to an ESC. But in every case, McBride said, the unit was able to keep the Soldiers on JBLM whom it was forced to move. Some were sent to other brigades on base, and some went to battalions or companies subordinate to the command.

"If a Soldier was no longer authorized in the ESC, based on the conversion, we looked to place them here at I Corps and JBLM in an organization that does have their occupational specialty, so we don't have to send that Family packing prematurely," he said.

Shortly after arriving to the 593rd last summer, McBride led the brigade on a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan with the mission of closing out and handing over bases, and spearheading the logistics of shipping equipment back home, as U.S. forces began to withdraw.

Since the beginning of the year, McBride has set the conditions for a new type of headquarters by equipping and manning the unit to meet the requirements of an ESC.

He will officially hand the unit over to its new one-star leader during a ceremony Aug. 22 on Watkins Field. The incoming commander has not been announced as of press time.

Once it's an ESC, the 593rd, once referred to as one of JBLM's "separate" brigades, will oversee responsibility of the base's 62nd Medical Brigade and 42nd Military Police Brigade.

With the majority of JBLM's remaining brigades under the oversight of the 7th Infantry Division, McBride said the I Corps commanding general, Lt. Gen. Robert Brown, can dedicate 100 percent of his focus to strategic operations in the Pacific.

"You have two umbrellas that will answer to I Corps," Gann said, adding that the new one-star headquarters will put a much-needed administrative layer between I Corps, the 7th Inf. Div., and the brigades 7th Inf. Div. doesn't currently oversee.

"7th ID and 593rd are key and essential for mission command of 16 brigades here at JBLM," McBride said. "This is just the missing link."

McBride estimated it would take between nine and 12 months to fully mature the 593rd into a seamlessly operating ESC.

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change in management, especially the boots on the ground. Due to my interest in the company I was able to get first hand information on those changes, which allowed me to account for changes in how business was conducted. Showing interest developed a relationship and opened the doors for communication.

Finally, validate our systems and check theirs! Regardless of how well their system works it still needs to be in sync with the Army system. After all we as COR's are ultimately

responsible for how the contract is executed and that the contract follows all guidelines. For instance, if the parts are acquired a certain way and then installed, the system should follow closely to the Army system.

It still pays to check. Check their documents to ensure that everyone is being treated fairly and that they are doing what they say they are doing. This can include their work logs, their safety logs as well as operational logs.

In conclusion, while the Federal

Aquisition Regulation governs the hard do's and don'ts there are still several items left out. This includes how to build a team between operations, how to increase productions without breaking the rules of the Statement of Work and how to integrate the contract into your existing team.

However, it is through the development of that team, the knowledge of current systems, the constant checks and the even more constant professionalism that this mission can best be accomplished.

Wranglers change command

*By Sgt. 1st Class Chris Bridson
4th Sust. Bde. Public Affairs*

Approximately 300 Soldiers, friends and Family members of the 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) gathered for a change of command and change of responsibility ceremony July 25 on Fort Hood's Sadowski Field.

Col. Timothy Luedecking assumed command of the Wrangler Brigade from Col. Mark Simerly, and the brigade's new command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Alton Haney, assumed responsibility from Command Sgt. Maj. Jessie Bates.

"We say farewell to a commander and his wife who have done a magnificent job today by bidding farewell to Mark and Cindy Simerly, and we welcome in Tim and Kathy Luedecking," Brig. Gen. Clark W. Lemasters, commanding general of the 13th SC(E), said. "I also want to thank Command Sgt. Major Jessie and Tangy Bates for their service as the interim command sergeant major team, and welcome Command Sgt. Maj. Alton Haney, and his wife Mary and their daughter Malia."

On the field, the brigade's Soldiers stood in their formations, enduring temperatures exceeding 90 degrees while waiting for the first glimpse of their new brigade commander and for some, probably the last view of their outgoing commander. They didn't have to wait too long as the official party took to the field to inspect the troops.

The outgoing commander, Simerly, told those gathered that the ceremony was a tribute to the 4th Sust. Bde. Soldiers on the field and their service.

"Ladies and gentlemen, the fundamental purpose of this ceremony is not to mark a transition of leadership. The true purpose is to honor the outstanding service and sacrifice of these great Wrangler Soldiers serving both here and in Afghanistan today," Simerly said. "My heart is filled with both pride and humility," he added.

As the leaders took to the field, the official party boarded an M3 Half-track personnel carrier and proceeded to drive across the front of the brigade's troops for their inspection.

As they approached, the Soldiers were called to "attention" and rendered a salute, dropping it back down as they passed.

After the review, Command Sgt. Maj. Bates passed the brigade colors to Simerly for the last time before conducting a change of responsibility with Haney.

Haney then took up his new position in the middle of the ceremony as the brigade's newest command sergeant major and eventually received the colors from the new brigade commander, Luedecking.

As the official party returned to the viewing stands,

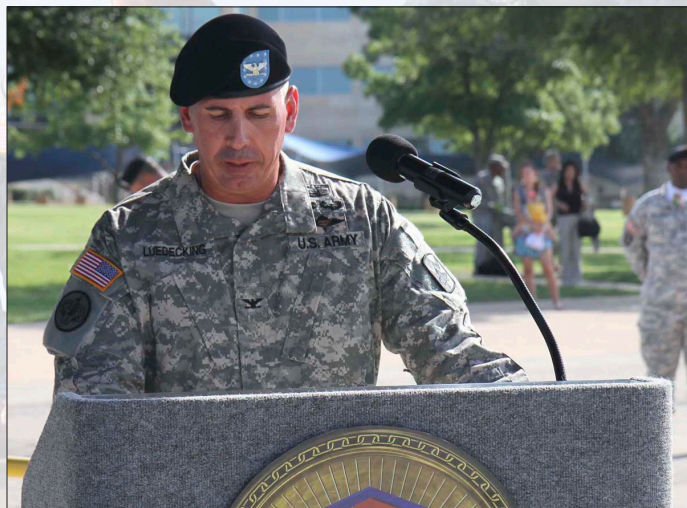


Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Bridson, 4th Sust. Bde. Public Affairs

Col. Timothy Luedecking, the new commander of the 4th Sust. Bde, 13th SC(E), addresses his new troops during a change of command and change of responsibility ceremony July 25 on Fort Hood's Sadowski Field.

the two colonels traditionally crossed paths behind Lemasters, officially trading places as the outgoing and incoming commanders.

"I can't begin to tell you how excited and humbled Command Sgt. Maj. Haney and I are to take command of such a great unit, and a great group of Soldiers, that signify the best sustainment brigade in our Army," Luedecking said. "What an awesome opportunity."

Wrangler 6 then turned his attention to the outgoing commander and his Family, recognizing their outstanding work in making the Wrangler Brigade what it is today, before thanking his own Family Members for making the long trip to Fort Hood from Michigan.

"My Family has always gone out of their way to support our military Family over the last 22 years despite the distances," Luedecking said.

Before leaving the podium, Luedecking took a moment to address the Army's greatest asset, the Soldiers.

"As usual, you look magnificent today," he said. "Command sergeant major and I look forward to leading you and this great unit through the challenge of the next two years. Thank you for everything that you do."

He added that they expected the Soldiers to uphold the highest standards and disciplines and to uphold the Wrangler Brigade motto, "Just Get It Done."

The ceremony was rounded off with a pass-in-review, a tradition that dates back to Roman times when battalion commanders marched their troops past the new commander for inspection.

When the ceremony was complete, Soldiers, Families, and friends were invited into III Corps Headquarters for refreshments and a cake cutting ceremony by Luedecking and Haney.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Bridson, 4th Sust. Bde. Public Affairs

Command Sgt. Maj. Jessie Bates, the outgoing command sergeant major, passes the brigade colors to Col. Mark Simerly, the outgoing commander of the 4th Sust. Bde, 13th SC(E), during a change of command and change of responsibility ceremony July 25 on Fort Hood's Sadowski Field. Simerly was replaced as the commander by Col. Timothy Luedecking, and Bates was replaced by Command Sgt. Maj. Alton Haney.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs

As they took to the field, the official party, consisting of Brig. Gen. Clark W. Lemasters (right), commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Col. Mark Simerly, outgoing commander of the 4th Sustainment Brigade, and Col. Timothy Luedecking, incoming commander of the Wrangler Brigade, boarded an M3 Halftrack and proceeded to drive across the front of the brigade's troops for their inspection.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs

Command Sgt. Maj. Jessie Bates passes the NCO leadership sword to Command Sgt. Maj. Alton Haney to signify the passing of responsibility for the 4th Sustainment Brigade from Bates to Haney.

Wrangler Soldiers provide ammunition, improve combat readiness of units



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Chris Bridson, 4th Sust. Bde. Public Affairs

Sgt. Michael A. Rodriguez, a native of Chicago and the Operations NCO observes as Pfc. Jasmine S. Bunts, the Operations Clerk and native of Albany, Ga., processes the initial paperwork for an ammunition draw at the ammunition supply point on Fort Hood, Aug. 6. Both Soldiers are ammunition specialists with 664th Ordnance Company, 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

**By Sgt. 1st Class Chris Bridson
4th Sust. Bde. Public Affairs**

FORT HOOD, Texas – During the last ten years the main focus for U.S. troops has been the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This has left civilian contracted companies as the driving force behind the Army’s supply of ammunition across the country, with the exception of one place.

For the past 18 months, the ammunition supply point on Fort Hood, Texas has been expertly handled by the Soldiers of 664th Ordnance Company, 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

“We have 45 personnel on ground every day and we are the only ammunition supply point on Fort Hood. We not only supply every unit on Fort Hood, but all the Texas Reserve and National Guard guys get their ammo from here,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sam Gabara, a native of Rogers City, Mich. and the Accountable Officer at the ASP.

Currently, the Texas National Guard is conducting their annual training on Fort Hood and the Wrangler Soldiers of the 664th are responsible for ensuring they get what they need safely.

“Right now, the big thing we are doing is supporting the 36th Infantry Division. They are here for their annual training as a Division, which hasn’t been done in 10 years,” Gabara said.

On an installation as big as Fort Hood, ammunition specialists will handle a plethora of munitions ranging from small 9 mm rounds, all the way up to the rockets

that are used by the Multiple Launch Rocket Systems.

Because of the variety and the amount of munitions used, approximately 5,871 tons of ammunition over the last 18 months, it is imperative that the Wrangler Soldiers are constantly training.

“All of these Soldiers have obviously been through AIT, (advanced individual training) there is an ammo handlers course here on Fort Hood that the majority of them have been to,” said Gabara. “All of our ammunition inspectors have gone through ammunition inspectors and HAZMAT inspection training,” he added.

On average, the 664th Ordnance Company process approximately 14 transactions a day, normally consisting of seven ammunition turn-ins and seven ammunition issues.

But the ammo dogs are not going to be here forever.

The 664th Ordnance Company are pending a deployment to help with the drawdown of combat operations overseas, and to oversee the safe and successful extraction of all munitions back to the United States.

This pending deployment could open the door once again for civilians to step back to the forefront of ammunition supply operations on Fort Hood. Currently, there are a couple of options available for a long-term solution to running the ammunition supply point.

One option is to contract a civilian company to perform operations, which has been practiced on other installations across the U.S.

Another course of action is a hybrid solution. This option would mean augmenting Soldiers with a temporary work force of approximately 15-20 civil service personnel.

Whichever option Fort Hood chooses, the Soldiers of the 664th believe that all ammunition supply points could easily be managed by ordnance units.

“Every ASP should be run by the Soldiers if there is an ordnance unit on that post,” said Staff Sgt. Christopher J. Miserlian, a native of Bonanza, Ore. and the Stock Control Noncommissioned Officer in charge at the ASP. “It comes down to managing every ordnance company and there is no reason that unit can’t run the ASP even with deployments,” he added.

A unit such as the 664th Ordnance consists of three platoons that are independently run and deployable. This could enable the unit to easily run ASPs both here and overseas if managed correctly, according to Miserlian. But for now, it looks like the ASP on Fort Hood will be managed by civilians, at least until these ammo dogs return.

759th EOD wins team of year

**By Spc. Andrew J. Zitka
47th Ordnance Company (EOD)**

FORT HOOD, Texas — Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams from across the western United States converged on Fort Hood this June for the 71st Ordnance Group (EOD) Team of the Year Competition (TOY). The grueling, six-day competition was hosted by the 79th Ordnance Battalion (EOD), which is a tenant unit on Fort Hood, Texas. Four teams representing EOD Battalions from Washington, Kansas, Colorado, and Texas participated in the competition and, in the end, the 759th Ordnance Company (EOD), Fort Irwin, Calif., representing the 3rd Ordnance Battalion (EOD), Joint Base Lewis McChord, Wash., took top honors.

Because of frequent deployments in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, this year marked only the second TOY competition since 2001. Explosive ordnance disposal specialists have the culmination of the best tactical and technical training the Army and civilian academia can provide and the EOD TOY Competition puts this to the test. During this weeklong competition, the competitors

participated in a myriad of challenges in the sweltering Texas heat. It was an assessment of not only EOD skills, but also Soldier skills from physical fitness to combat lifesaving. Only twelve points out of the possible 3,000 separated teams consisting of 3d Ordnance Battalion (EOD), JBLM; 79th Ordnance Battalion (EOD), Fort Hood; 84th Ordnance Battalion (EOD), Fort Riley, Kan.; and 242d Ordnance Battalion (EOD), Fort Carson, Colo. It was not until the last day of the competition that Staff Sgt. Chad Stables, Sgt. Matthew Price, and Spc. Nicholas Munoz secured the lead over the 79th Ordnance Battalion and held on to win.

Though the teams were pitted against each other, they showed their shared commitment to safeguarding



Photo by Spc. Laura K. Foxon, HHD, 79th Ordnance Battalion (EOD)

Sgt. Mike Lambert and Spc. Darren Wheeldon assist their team leader, Sgt. Josh Edmonds, into his bomb suit. The team is from 763rd Ordnance Company (EOD) Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., representing the 84th Ordnance Battalion (EOD), Fort Riley, Kan.

lives. EOD teams are trained to attack, defeat, and exploit unexploded ordnance, improvised explosive devices, and weapons of mass destruction.

The teams faced scenarios challenging their knowledge of improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne IEDs, suicide vests, chemical ordnance, landmines, and caches.

“I got to do a lot of things I have never done before,” explained Staff Sgt. Olson of the 242nd Ordnance Battalion (EOD). Complacency is the biggest enemy to an EOD Technician and EOD Soldiers must be ready to respond to any threat as demonstrated

through these teams’ hard work and dedication.

“The 759th Ordnance Company (EOD) exemplified the motivation and attitude of the explosive ordnance disposal specialist,” said Col. William R. McDonough, commander of the 71st Ordnance Group (EOD). It was a time for these three-man teams to not only showcase their EOD skills but also a time to reflect on their strengths and the areas where they needed work, explained McDonough. Even though the 3rd Battalion came out as the winners, all teams could agree the best award was the ability to further their training and the memories they made as a team.

13th SC(E) hosts battery sustainment training for Fort Hood units

By Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson
13th SC(E) Public Affairs

Soldiers from Fort Hood's separate brigades participated in battery maintenance management training seminars at various motor pools around Fort Hood Aug. 5-9.

The training was sponsored by 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) focused on teaching Soldiers the proper way to use available equipment in order to better maintain and manage lead-acid battery usage in the shop environment.

"The Army, as a whole, is spending incredible amounts of money on lead-acid batteries, and up to 75 percent of the batteries turned in are still serviceable batteries," said Tom Pigorsh, the lead instructor for the training and a field support representative for PulseTech, a battery charging and diagnostic systems contractor. "The batteries used today are a much higher quality battery than what was available in previous years. They are much more of a renewable asset now days rather than expendable."

Pigorsh said that other units, after initiating full battery maintenance management programs based on the training they received, have been able to benefit immediately from drop of expenditures for batteries.

The 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, out of Fort Carson, Colo., has already saved more than \$600,000 since implementing a new program, according to Pigorsh. "Even in the smaller units, when you're spending more than \$300 per battery, it's a big savings when you can make those batteries last a couple more years rather than replacing them."

The 13th SC(E) is spearheading this program for Fort Hood in an effort to provide adequate training for Soldiers to prevent the disposal of these serviceable assets.

"The overall goal is to save money," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Jose Agosto, chief ordnance logistics officer with the Materiel Readiness Branch, Support Operations, 13th SC(E). "One of the easiest methods to do this is to educate our Soldiers and leaders on how to properly service and maintain these batteries so we don't need to replace them when they are still serviceable."

By implementing this program, Agosto said the



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs
Tom Pigorsh, a field support representative for PulseTech, a battery charging and diagnostic systems contractor, discusses the U.S. Army battery maintenance management program with a group of 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and 4th Sustainment Brigade warrant officers and noncommissioned officers during a training event Aug. 5 at the 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion's motor pool.

13th SC(E) in partnership with all other units on Fort Hood hopes to save the Army hundreds of thousands of dollars that would otherwise be spent on replacing rather than renewing batteries.

"If the maintainers are better trained, and are able to properly understand and use the equipment that is available to them, we can minimize the replacement of batteries across the installation," said Agosto. "The Soldiers already have the equipment in their motor pools; we just need to make sure they are properly trained on how to use it."

The process to maintain the batteries can be accomplished during the time that each vehicle is already in the shop for regular maintenance periods and thus would not affect normal time schedules for servicing.

During the week, training was provided for Soldiers from 13th SC(E), 4th Sustainment Brigade, 1st Medical Brigade, 504th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, 21st Cavalry Brigade, 36th Engineer Brigade, 48th Chemical Brigade, 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, 41st Fires Brigade, 89th Military Police Brigade, and 11th Signal Brigade.

This was the second time 13th SC(E) offered the training within the past few months. Soldiers from 1st Cavalry Division and 3rd Cavalry Regiment participated in the same training in May.

Wrangler leadership partners with FHFD for firefighter challenge

By Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson
13th SC(E) Public Affairs

Leaders from the 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), participated in a Firefighter Combat Challenge with firefighters from Station 1, Fort Hood Fire Department, at the fire training tower course here June 19.

The challenge is a national and international physically demanding competition event for firefighters worldwide which tests the strength and stamina of its contestants. Competition events include a stair climb with a high-rise pack, hose hoist, forcible entry, hose advance, and a victim rescue.

Chap. (Maj.) David Kirk, chaplain for the Wrangler Brigade, organized the event for the brigade's staff officers to compete in this unique challenge with a goal to help bring them together for a morning of intense physical training and team building activities.

Kirk said he considered the idea to collaborate with the fire department as he also serves as the FHFD's chaplain in addition to his duties for the Wranglers.

"It was a great opportunity to get the staff out of the office and do something different for PT," said Kirk. "But it was also an opportunity to work together as a staff and build upon our working relationships and bond together as a team."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs
Capt. Benjamin Walker, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, races up three flights of stairs carrying a 40-pound high-rise pack hose during a Firefighter Combat Challenge with firefighters from Station 1, Fort Hood Fire Department, at the fire training tower course here June 19.

Fire Capt. Anthony Griffin, captain of Station 1, FHFD, said this was the first time his station had hosted a unit to participate in the challenge, but was excited at the opportunity, and praised the Wranglers for their performance.

"Overall, everyone did a really good job for it being their first time attempting this," said Griffin. "It is not an easy course, even for our firefighters."

"It was an outstanding opportunity to work together with these guys and not only give them a physical challenge," continued Griffin, "but it also is a chance for us to build

stronger working relationships between the Soldiers and the fire department."

Capt. Benjamin Walker, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sust. Bde., participated in the challenge for the first time since he served as a firefighter while he was attending college.

"I want to do it again," Walker said shortly after completing the event.

"It was great to get out here and get a good workout in. It's not as easy as it looks."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs

4th Sustainment Brigade staff officers gather with firefighters from Station 1, Fort Hood Fire Department, for a group photo after the Wranglers participated in a Firefighter Combat Challenge at the fire training tower course here June 19.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs

LEFT: Runners tread water through a water crossing during the annual mud run sponsored by the 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), at Fort Hood's all-terrain vehicle track July 3.

BELOW: Lt. Col. Keith McVeigh, commander of the 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), runs past the first obstacle in the annual mud run sponsored by 553rd CSSB at Fort Hood's all-terrain vehicle track July 3. McVeigh said this event was an excellent opportunity for his Soldiers to take a break from the normal grind of Soldiering.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs

Mud Run

Gunslingers get dirty during annual

**By Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson
13th SC(E) Public Affairs**

Soldiers, Family members and community partners with the 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), participated in the battalion's annual mud run and obstacle course at Fort Hood's all-terrain vehicle track July 3.

Soldiers ran the three-mile off-road route featuring several mud pits, water crossings, low crawl obstacles and sand bag carries.

The quickest individual was Davis Jefferies, 18, stepson to Sgt. Dan Graves with the Killeen Army Recruiting Station, with a time of 26 minutes, 10 seconds, and the fastest team time for the day belonged to the 62nd Quartermaster Company, 553rd CSSB, with a time of 32:50.

"We motivated each other," said Sgt. Garcia Mebrahte, a squad leader and runner with the winning team from 62nd QM Co. "It was a challenge, but we all had each other's backs. We had a lot of different experience between us, but the most important thing was we stuck together and finished together as a team."

Lt. Col. Keith McVeigh, commander of the 553rd CSSB, said this event was

an excellent opportunity for his Soldiers to take a break from the normal grind of Soldiering.

"I've participated in similar events in the civilian sector," said McVeigh. "I thought it would be a great event not only for our Soldiers to get away from the daily grind of supporting Fort Hood, but also to build esprit de corps, bond together and do what I call a Gunslinger gut check – a challenge to the Soldiers to see if they could push themselves to complete this challenge, both physically and mentally."

"It's been said before, 'Fort Hood could not get out of bed in the morning without the services and support that the 13th SC(E), 4th Sust. Bde., and subordinate battalions do for this installation,'" continued McVeigh. "It is important to step away from that very important mission and allow the Soldiers the opportunity to get out of that environment and get to know each other in a different manner to help build the team as a unit."

Overall, the Soldiers said they enjoyed the event and the challenges inherent in the race.

"It was a lot of fun, a great experience and I would do it again," said Sgt. Serpio Anthony, the command group driver for 553rd CSSB.



Runners tread water at the start of an annual mud run sponsored by the 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), at Fort Hood's all-terrain vehicle track July 3. Soldiers ran the three-mile off-road route featuring several mud pits, water crossings, low crawl obstacles and sand bag carries.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs



Soldiers from the winning team from 62nd Quartermaster Company, 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), celebrate with the trophy after completing the annual mud run with a group time of 32 minutes, 50 seconds, sponsored by 553rd CSSB at Fort Hood's all-terrain vehicle track July 3.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Thompson, 13th SC(E) Public Affairs

63rd Ord. Co. supports the warfighters

By Sgt. Sinthia Rosario
Task Force Lifeliner Public Affairs

Soldiers in Afghanistan require a few things in order to remain mission ready; food, rest, and most of all bullets. For Task Force Lifeliner getting bullets to the troops is a top priority.

Regional commands North, East and Capital all depend on it, which is half the Afghanistan Theater from one ammunition supply point (ASP) operated by one hardworking team.

The Soldiers who run this supply point are with the 63rd Ordnance Company in support of Task Force Lifeliner. These Soldiers arrived in theater back in January, but now the spring fighting is upon them pushing them to the limit with twice the ammunition demands as they've seen in past months.

"We push the envelope, with good customer service and a good turnaround time," said Warrant Officer Alexander A. Arabian, a native of Warwick, R.I., and ammunition technician with 63rd Ordnance Co. "As soon as we get shipping directives, we have to pull the ammunition in order to get it to the warfighter."

With approximately 180 units that they consider their customers, including the Marine Corps, Air Force and the Army, throughout Afghanistan the ammunition supply stays extremely busy.

"They have a big mission with all the ammunition in Afghanistan, receiving as well as distribution," emphasized Col. Charles R. Hamilton, a native of Houston, and the commander of Task Force Lifeliner.

This undertaking is a logistical dance. With the priority being placed on ensuring the warfighters at the outer lying Forward Operating Bases always have ammunition.

This task comes with long hours and tediousness. These troops have an obligation to maintain efficiencies that ensure 100 percent accountability of the Department of Defense's ammunition in theater.

"We want to make sure we have visibility on what types of ammo and how much they [the warfighters]



Photo by Sgt. Sinthia Rosario, Task Force Lifeliner Public Affairs

Warrant Officer Alexander A. Arabian, a native of Warwick, R.I., and ammunition technician with the 63rd Ordnance Company, briefs Col. Charles R. Hamilton, a native of Houston and commander of Task Force Lifeliner, on the operations at the 63rd Ordnance Co. Ammunition Supply Point in support of multiple Afghanistan Regional Commands. The ASP has over 180 customers throughout the Regional Command East, North and Capital.

have, so that way we can do a great job in getting it back here to the ASP... getting that ammunition back into the Army's system for reset," explained Hamilton.

The 63rd Ordnance Co. is charged with keeping this flow of ammunition throughout Afghanistan moving without delay and the TF Lifeliner commander makes sure this happens by consistently engaging the troops on the ground that make these movements happen.

Hamilton enforced, "One thing as leaders that we have to constantly on a fairly consistent basis come out here and visit and make sure these guys have exactly what they need."

Although getting a good night's rest and a hot meal may be on the forefront of every troops mind, ensuring they are equipped with the assets that protect them is on the minds of every Soldier who touches the munitions that get pushed through this invaluable ammunition supply point.

Spc. Joe Stewart (right) a native of Moore Okla., and a mechanic, holds firmly light equipment while Staff Sgt. Albert Arias (left) a native of Pauls Valley, Okla., and a senior mechanic, tightens the bolts onto the mine resistant ambush protected vehicle, July 26, 2013 at Mazar-e-Sharif, Balkh province, Afghanistan.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Peter Sinclair, Task Force Lifeliner Public Affairs

Meticulous Mechanics

By Sgt. Sinthia Rosario
Task Force Lifeliner Public Affairs

Despite a harsh environment, heavy loads and rugged terrain a trio of mechanics work hard and meticulously to ensure their unit trucks are ready to roll at any given time.

Priority for this unique, highly skilled crew with the 1245th Transportation Company, 524th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, is to keep their unit's convoy escort teams on the road through maintenance.

With attention to detail and a willingness to give their all, to provide the best mechanical capability, these Soldiers take extreme pride in the job they perform on a day-to-day basis.

"It's like a car at home, you're gonna take the best care of your stuff, the more attention you spend on your truck, the better your mission is going to go," said Spc. Joe Stewart, a mechanic and recovery driver for the 1245th Trans. Co. in support of Task Force Lifeliner in northern Afghanistan.

It's essential that the mechanics do their job properly the first time. If not, mission readiness and the safety of their fellow Soldiers can be compromised.

"My job is important to me, in my mind lives are in our hands as mechanics," said Spc. Brent York, a wheeled vehicle mechanic with the 1245th Trans. Co.

"These guys, they go on the road like we do, but they run more missions than we do," continued York. "We don't always run short hauls you know, but we do go on long hauls with them. Their lives are in our hands, so there's a certain amount of pride that goes with it, and the responsibility that goes with this job."

He continued to explain that the Soldiers fully trust their mechanical abilities and that whatever truck they drive down the road is going to get them there, and back, safely. The mechanics want to ensure the safety of their Soldiers so they can once again be reunited with their Families.

Staff Sgt. Albert Arias, the senior mechanic for the 1245th Trans. Co. stated, "The most fulfilling thing about my job is after a convoy coming in through the gate and

knowing what we do in this shop helps those guys come in the gate with ten fingers and ten toes."

Learning to work together, developing that skill of knowing what the other crew member is thinking has been a great benefit to this maintenance group.

"Two sets of eyes are better than one, three minds together bouncing ideas off of each other and we can get together and create a common goal," said York.

Although, you don't normally hear about the mechanics and the roles they play to get the mission going, there's a lot to be said about this particular group of three talented Soldiers.

Stewart explained that the diversity of the crew is unique. "Every one of these guys in their own way has this crazy skill set, from one guy being an absolute fabricator, to the next guy knowing every truck in this company."

He continued by recognizing the credit of the team as a whole.

"Us, put together, we've got our own areas and we can handle anything."

Sometimes the Soldiers come by with some issues with their trucks whether it's mechanical or they need some type of improvements done on their vehicles. The maintenance group is up for the challenge and are willing to help at all times.

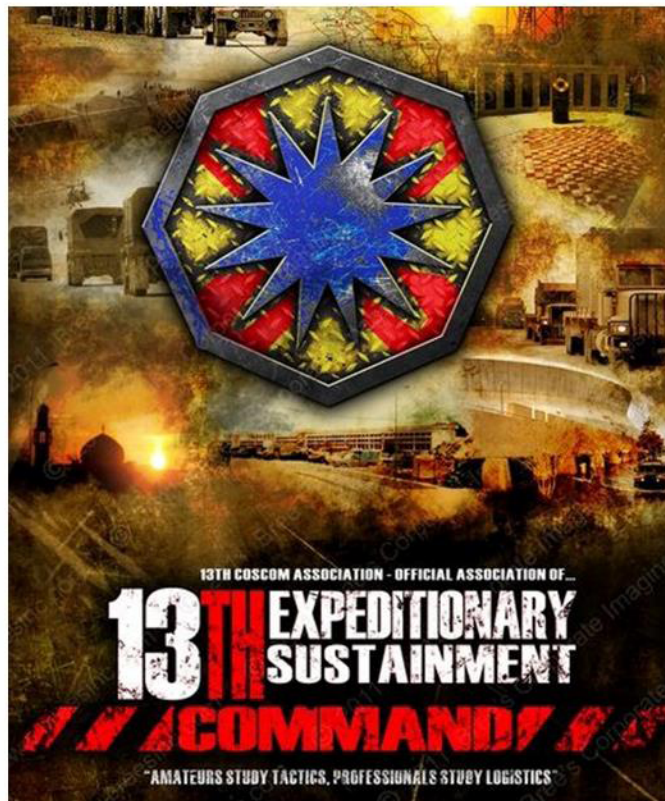
"If we can accommodate, we will to the best of our abilities. It makes us feel good because we take care of people that take care of us," York said. "They are our eyes and ears on the road... So, if it means me coming back here and making their job easier, it's what I gotta do."

The trio understands that what they do means a lot to the Soldiers within their unit. The Soldiers they work for know it's the little things that count and they express their appreciation for all the maintenance team does to keep their wheels on the road.

The mechanics have formed a strong bond during their time deployed in Afghanistan. Loyalty, trust, Family and teamwork are just some of the things that keep these mechanics going.



13TH COSCOM ASSOCIATION



WHO WE ARE:

- Current and former members of the 13th ESC (and predecessor units)

WHAT WE DO:

- Support the soldiers of the 13th ESC
- Maintain a tribute to 13th ESC fallen - the 13th ESC Memorial Pavilion
- Help educate the 13th ESC family - Provide two annual scholarships through AUSA
- Record the history of the 13th ESC
- Be the 13th ESC veteran connection
- Link 13th ESC to the local Community

HOW TO JOIN:

- Sign up for a free membership on our website
- Send an email to Contact13CCA@gmail.com

HOW TO CONNECT:

- Visit our website at www.13cca.org
- Like our page on Facebook (13th COSCOM Association)

HOW TO SUPPORT:

- Make a donation to the Association via our website
- Buy a brick for the 13th ESC Memorial Pavilion (available on website)
- Volunteer to serve on an association committee

www.13cca.org