

August 2013

**Special points of interest:**

- Lt. Col. Hibner Update
- ANA Literacy Center Opening
- Company Updates
- HHC Section Updates

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# THE IRON FIST



## LT. COL. HIBNER UPDATE

The Task Force Iron Fist team continues to set the standard for execution of our missions as we finish the third month of our deployment in Southern Afghanistan. I'm constantly impressed by the professionalism and commitment exhibited by every unit in the Task Force as our missions continue to evolve and change with our environment.

Since our last newsletter we've made some good progress with our partnered Afghan National Army Engineer Battalion. They held the grand opening of the literacy center which they built on their camp. The literacy center provides Afghan Soldiers from across the entire Corps the opportunity to learn to read and write. They are beginning to make improvements on the Corps' base camp, demonstrating that the Corps understands their unique capability and value as a construction asset. We are seeing progress in getting this capability out to execute more missions to improve tactical infrastructure and force protection in support of the other units in the 205th Corps Engineer Kandak of the Afghan Na-

tional Army.

Our route clearance companies continue to provide freedom of movement to all Coalition Forces in our Regional Command. While our mission here is tough and dangerous, I'm always impressed by our ability to anticipate what the enemy is doing and set ourselves up for success. Our find and clear rates are among the very best in Afghanistan; a testament to the quality Soldiers and Leaders we have focused on this particularly important mission.

Our construction engineer effort continues to move forward as we transition away from building infrastructure and toward executing forward operating base improvements to make Afghanistan a little safer to all that live and operate here. We are also executing short term, low cost construction for all units across Southern Afghanistan. I know we are doing this well when I have supported units going out of their way to let me know what a great job our Soldiers are doing and what a difference they make for them every day.

As we make our way into the Fall we are maintaining great momentum in all our efforts - and with some cool weather finally arriving (average high temperatures are only about 100 degrees) I know we will push through the next few months with renewed commitment as we continue to make a positive difference in everything we do.

I encourage you all to check out our Facebook page for more updates and pictures so you can see more of all the great things our Soldiers and leaders accomplish on a daily basis!

Forged in combat!

Iron Fist 6

*“This building will get our soldiers educated. I promise that we will educate our people. This school will prepare the 205th Corps for the future. Everyone will be proud of the ANA soldier.”*

*-ANA Maj. Gen. Ismail*



**The 372nd Eng. Co. provided oversight to the 205th CEK Soldiers while constructing the literacy center. In this picture, Spc. Jeffrey Cabreza of 372nd Eng. Co. oversees as ANA Engineers install lighting into the literacy center. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Michael Maxwell)**

## **ANA, ISAF BUILD LITERACY CENTER**

By U.S. Army Sgt. Eric Glassey

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Afghan National Army Maj. Gen. Ismail, commanding general, ANA Engineer Corps 1, praised 205th Corps engineers for the construction of a literacy center at Camp Hero, Kandahar, Afghanistan, Aug. 24.

“Afghan National Army engineers built this school with their hard work; it is like they built their own house,” Ismail said. “This building will get our soldiers educated. I promise that we will educate our people. This school will prepare the 205th Corps for the future. Everyone will be proud of the ANA soldier.”

The literacy center will provide

ANA soldiers the opportunity to learn how to read and write. It was built by the ANA engineers and International Security Assistance Forces engineers.

Afghanistan’s literacy rate is currently at 28.1 percent, according to the Central Intelligence Agency’s World Factbook. The online database was not the only source to indicate concern about the lack of education in the country.

“The international community found that the ANA was mostly uneducated, so the international community funded this literacy program,” said Abul, director, ANA literacy program.

The literacy center is staffed by six

civilian instructors who all play a role in educating the ANA soldier.

“The ANA soldier that is completely uneducated will be reading in 3 months,” Abul said. “This includes...writing.”

The majority of the construction was completed by the 205th Corps engineers, commanded by Capt. Farmanullah Safi, who thanked his ISAF partners.

“With the help and assistance of the ISAF advisers we’ve been able to read and write; this literacy program is very important,” Farmanullah said. “We can show all the Afghans, that the Afghan National Security Forces will be able to get educated.”



**Afghan National Army Maj. Gen. Ismail, commanding general, ANA Engineer Corps 1, and Maj. Gen. Abdul Hamid, commanding general, 205th Corps, experience the classroom environment of the new literacy center at Camp Hero, Kandahar, Afghanistan, Aug. 24, 2013. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Eric Glassey)**

**Afghan National Army Maj. Gen. Ismail, commanding general, ANA Engineer Corps 1, and Maj. Gen. Abdul Hamid, commanding general, 205th Corps, cut the ceremonial ribbon opening the new literacy center at Camp Hero, Kandahar, Afghanistan, Aug. 24, 2013. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Eric Glassey)**



## 333RD ENGINEER COMPANY CONTINUES CONSTRUCTION MISSION THROUGHOUT AFGHANISTAN

By U.S. Army 1st Lt. Dan Roberts

333rd Engineer Company Executive Officer

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – As the construction operations slow down in Regional Command South (RC(S)), the retrograde operations speed up. This is also the case for the 333rd Engineer Company, from Reading, Penn. commanded by Captain Michael Griffie from Carlisle, Penn.

The company is a horizontal engineer company, organically aligned with the 365th Engineer Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Spurlock, falls under Task Force Iron Fist and Lt. Col. Hibner while in theater.

The vast majority of US construc-

tion operations in theater will be completed this fall, making room for US Soldiers to assist and advise the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) in any construction operation which will take place before all troops are redeployed. Because construction missions will decrease, and troops will be transitioning to another location, all equipment and gear must be retrograded in RC(S) in order to assist the drawdown of US forces.

To date, the 333rd Eng. Co. has retrograded nearly 20% of all its equipment, totaling more than \$7 million. Once the company is complete with all inventory which is scheduled to be retrograded, the unit will move to Regional Command East in order to assist and advise with the ANA construction efforts.

By the beginning of next year, the 333rd Eng. Co. will be one of the few remaining construction assets in Afghanistan. The company has the distinguished honor of assisting the theater of operations in any way the theater commanders see fit.

The Soldiers of the 333rd Eng. Co. are honored to be the distinguished unit that remains.



**Soldiers enjoying a cook-out.**

*“The Soldiers of the 333rd Eng. Co. are honored to be the distinguished unit that remains.”*



**Soldiers of the 333rd Eng. Co. in formation. The Soldiers have been hard at work on various construction projects throughout southern Afghanistan. (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Dan Roberts)**



**Soldiers took some time to relax and enjoy a cookout.**



**Warrant Officer Steven Wincentsen and Spc. Abel Scott work on wiring in electrical boxes as they prepare living quarters. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Michael Maxwell)**

*“I am very proud of the motivation and professionalism of all our Soldiers within the platoon. It was a great opportunity to train our Soldiers on their individual focuses as well as cross-train throughout the engineer jobs.”*

## **372ND ENGINEER COMPANY CONSTRUCTS LITHUANIAN SPECIAL FORCES COMPOUND**

By U.S. Army Sgt 1st Class Kurt Lindenberg  
Platoon Sergeant, 372nd Engineer Company

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – The Task Force 77 compound has everything needed for our Lithuanian coalition partners to perform their mission throughout Regional Command South (RC(S)). The initial planning stages were created by the 181st Engineer Company in May 2013. The actual construction began June 21, 2013, a few days after the arrival of the 372nd Eng. Co, a US Army Reserve unit from Wisconsin.

The compound uses Alaskan tents for their operations and transient tents. There are more permanent structures for living quarters as well as latrine and shower containers.

This was a perfect project for our first project in country. As Reservists we don't always have enough time to hone both of our tactical and technical skills throughout the training year. This project provided work for all of our different job specialties.

This also gave the platoon leadership the opportunity to perform their duties of planning, training, and performing on the spot Quality Assurance/Quality Control corrections and setting a standard of high quality from the very beginning of our tour.

The carpenters of the platoon were able to perform the site layout, foundation preparations, construct tent floors as well as set up the Alaskan tents. They also built decks with railings and staircases.

Our electricians received much of their training from Chief Warrant Officer 2 Steven Wincentsen on how to read code books on proper wire size, grounding, wiring panels, and generators. They also learned how to troubleshoot and install split air conditioning units. Most of the electricians in the platoon had very little experience prior to deployment and have now gained invaluable amounts of knowledge and confidence in their skills and are able to perform many assigned tasks with minimal supervision.

The installation of the shower and latrine units gave our plumbers experience in their jobs as well. They installed an underground septic tank and an above ground water supply tank. Another good learning experience for the troops was installing a water heater, pressure tank, and pump.

Our lone equipment operator also developed his skills by digging a twelve foot deep hole for our septic tank and digging several trenches for electrical wiring and optic fiber.

The final product turned out exceptionally well. I am very proud of the motivation and professionalism of all our Soldiers within the platoon. It was a great opportunity to train our Soldiers on their individual focuses as well as cross-train throughout the engineer jobs. Our Lithuanian partners are happy with their new home and we were happy to help make their lives better here in Afghanistan.



**Sgt. Theisen demonstrates to Spc. Hagen how to properly secure the ropes for an Alaskan tent. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Kurt Lindenberg)**

## 591ST ENGINEER COMPANY CONTINUES MISSION AND PREPARES FOR TRANSITION HOME

By U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jordan Houston  
Company Executive Officer

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – With the 591st Engineer Company's time in Afghanistan coming to a close, Soldiers are beginning to feel the excitement of the transition back home to Fort Campbell, Ky.

The whole company is working hard to pack up containers, boxes, and rooms in preparation to fly back home. This past week, the company shipped off its final containers back to the States, leaving each Soldier with a little more than a rucksack to carry on the plane home.

Although the company is prepared to return home, the Soldiers' mindset still remains mission first. Neither platoon has missed a beat, executing numerous route clearance missions along multiple routes in our area of

operations.

Recently, both of our platoons executed weapons training which allowed every Soldier in the company to re-qualify on his assigned weapon. Many Soldiers were able to familiarize on previously unfamiliar weapons systems. We have conducted several shooting completions, advanced marksmanship drills, and stress shoots.

All in all, the Soldiers are extremely comfortable with their weapons under all types of conditions and in different scenarios.

The 591st Eng. Co. continues to advise and assist our Afghan National Army counterparts. One of our platoons has been the spearhead for the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) development operations, empowering them to perform at the highest level. It has been great to see the forward progression of the ANSF units over the time that we have

been involved with them. We are proud of the efforts from our platoon and can see their hard work paying off.

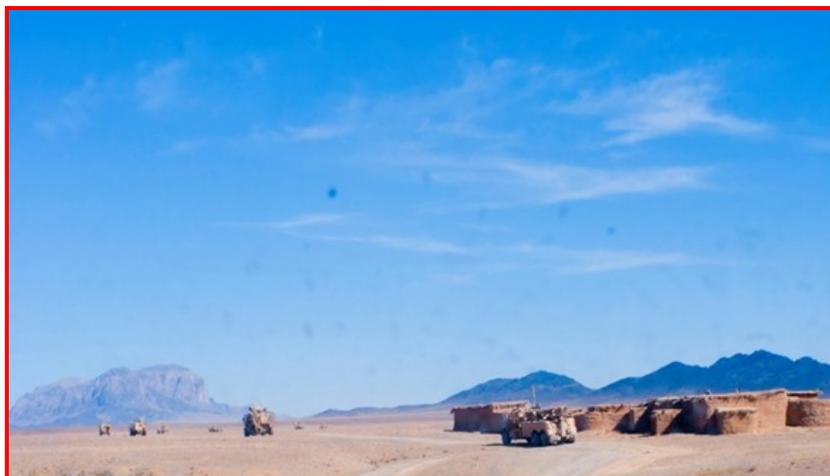
Another one of our platoons has gotten after the assured mobility line of effort by the clearance on the main supply routes in the area, clearing of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDS), Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) and other hazards. The platoon has used a variety of tactics, techniques and procedures to find IEDs on the route and ensured troops can move freely on these routes.

September will be a huge month for the Sappers of the 591st Eng. Co. Many transitions will occur, ensuring we sprint to the finish line. To the last day, the 591st will continue to put forth 100% effort and dedication to the task at hand. We are close, but not home yet!



**Conducting inventories before packing up. This is one of our many tasks before moving. (Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Anthony Torres.)**

*“Many transitions will occur, ensuring we sprint to the finish line. To the last day, the 591st will continue to put forth 100% effort and dedication to the task at hand.”*



**One of our route clearance patrols in southern Afghanistan. (Photo by U.S. Army Pfc. Inthavong)**

*“The ANA illustrated their proficiency, enthusiasm, and discipline in both administrative and tactical tasks.”*



**Command Sgt. Maj. Stanley at the most recent Task Force Iron Fist cookout.**

## **819TH ENGINEER COMPANY (SAPPER) CONTINUES TO FOCUS ON ITS MISSION**

By U.S. Army Capt. Sayward Hall  
819th Engineer Company Executive Officer

ZABUL PROVINCE, Afghanistan – Between sustaining its partnership mission with the Afghan National Army (ANA) and its continued route clearance mission, the 819th Engineer Company (Sapper) has had a very busy past few weeks.

The 819th Eng. Co., commanded by Captain Jared Wagoner of Maricopa, Ariz., falls underneath the 253rd Eng. Battalion of the Arizona Army National Guard, commanded by Lt. Col. Sandison. In theater, the company falls underneath Task Force Iron Fist, commanded by Lt. Col. Hibner of Michigan City, Ind.

On August 20, 2013, 1st Lt. Sean Morrison of Bellingham, Wash. and his team escorted a reporter to the local ANA base to meet with members of the Route Clearance Company of the 2nd Brigade of the 205th Corps Engineer Kandak (CEK) to observe how the ANA has progressed in their field craft as combat engineers. The ANA illustrated their proficiency, enthusiasm, and discipline in both administrative and tactical tasks.

The 819th Eng. Co. has focused on multiple missions in support of Task Force Iron Fist. Partnering with the ANA, training on equipment, and continuing route clearance missions has kept the company occupied over here.

**Congratulations to Capt. Sayward Hall, who was promoted earlier this month!**

# HOOA!

**-Command Sgt. Maj. Stanley**

**Questions or comments?**

**Email 2nd Lt. Erin Jankowski**

**Task Force Iron Fist Public Affairs Officer**

**[Erin.n.jankowski.mil@mail.mil](mailto:Erin.n.jankowski.mil@mail.mil)**

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## AFGHAN COMBAT ENGINEERS PASS THEIR SKILLS

By U.S. Army Sgt. Tim Morgan

FORWARD OPERATING BASE APACHE, Afghanistan – It was only mid-morning, but the heat was setting in for Afghan and U.S. soldiers during a short block of training at Camp Eagle, Afghanistan, Aug. 5.

With the end of Ramadan drawing closer – a month-long period of spiritual reflection and fasting among Muslims – many of the Afghan soldiers were weary.

However, the Afghan combat engineers of the 205th Corps had the responsibility of clearing routes of improvised explosive devices in Zabul province. Their district's security and stability depend on their performance and it was the importance of that mission that kept their mind in the game during a time when rest was expected.

“This is their country and they really take pride in ensuring it is safe for their people,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Harold Dunn, Combined Task Force Paladin. “Their ability to find IEDs and clear them is impressive; they are without question a highly skilled and dedicated force.”

Dunn has deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan with explosive ordnance disposal units multiple times. In 2005, he was the first sergeant of the only Army EOD Company in Regional Command East. Dunn said over the course of his deployments to Afghanistan, it has been an honor to be part of

the process of ensuring the security of Afghanistan. Dunn said he remembers the development of the Afghan National Security Force explosive-hazard-reduction course, counterimprovised explosive device leaders course and improvised explosive device defeat course which has enabled their ability to minimize the impact of the enemies' employed explosive-weapon systems.

“[Afghan engineers'] technical expertise and tactical application as you see it progress from 2005 to today cannot be captured in words,” said Dunn.

The progress Afghan engineers have made are largely due to the embedded training teams the Afghans have partnered with. In Zabul province, located in Regional Command South, three platoons from the 205th Corps partnered with the 819th Engineer Company, Arizona Army National Guard, earlier this year. Within those 205th Corps platoons are embedded trainers from the 162nd EOD, who are partnered with the corps' EOD specialists. The partnerships have lead to a well-rounded route clearance company within the 205th.

“We want to make sure [the 205th] understand the capabilities of their equipment so they can use it to its full effectiveness and save lives,” said Sgt. Andrew Dilello, an engineer adviser with 819th Engineer Company. “That's important.”

It's also important that the Afghan soldiers pass the knowledge they learn to their younger soldiers, Dilello said. To encourage that teaching process, the 819th Engineer Company and 162nd EOD train with platoon leaders and non-commissioned officers from the 205th who are tasked with becoming the subject-matter experts in their company.

The Afghan engineers learn everything from combat maneuvers on the ground to maintenance procedures on their electronic countermeasure equipment. Previously, the Afghans were doing unconventional maneuvers that proved effective, but there were no standard battle drills or operational procedures. Their U.S. partners are teaching them a standard so that everyone is on the same page.

Having proper security, sectors of fire, and dismounts in the right position will have a direct impact on how well they handle an attack, said Dilello. He also stated if they are out of place or jumbled together when something happens, they are going to have casualties.

“This is probably the most important thing we do here in county,” said Dilello. “Soon enough, we are not going to be here and they will be on their own.”

The 819th Engineer Company and 162nd EOD are confident that the 205th route clearance company is well prepared to continue their missions independently and pass the knowledge they learn to their new soldiers.

**U.S. Army Spc. Adam Ostmeyer, a combat engineer with the 819th Engineer Company, Arizona Army National Guard, pulls security during his team's partnership training with engineers of the 205th Corps, Afghan National Army, at Camp Eagle, Afghanistan, Aug. 4. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Tim Morgan)**



*“We want to make sure [the 205th] understand the capabilities of their equipment so they can use it to its full effectiveness and save lives.”*

*-Sgt. Andrew Dilello*

## A MESSAGE FROM THE 837TH ENGINEER COMPANY COMMANDER, "BRUTUS 6"

Believe it or not, nearly eight months have passed since our departure from the great State of Ohio. How time does fly. In some ways it feels like we've been gone a lot longer, but mostly it feels like it has gone by in the blink of an eye. However, at the same time, days seem to be endless, yet gone in a flash. I'm sure some family members and Sappers can relate. It's been a slow blur. I think a lot about what we've accomplished since we've gone, but mainly focus on what has yet to be completed.

We in the Army use the AAR, or After Action Review, where we take the time to critique ourselves after an operation or some other kind of training event, so that we can learn from what we did right and, more importantly, from what we did wrong. If done properly, it is not for the thin-skinned, but it is a big part of how we get better, and why our Army is so strong. The 837th is no stranger to this process. Recently, I sent out a list of questions to the officers labeled, "What Keeps BRUTUS 6 Up at Night?" - sort of an AAR. I offer some of them here to help give people a little insight into what a commander in combat in Afghanistan struggles with on a daily basis.

- Are we making progress towards what we want to accomplish here? Are we making a difference? How do we know?

I think the last part is the toughest to answer, how do we measure "making a difference?" Even measuring effectiveness in an environment like this has proven difficult. Could it be how many KM's are safely cleared or count of IED's that are found? Or perhaps it's assessing how ready our Afghan counterpart's are to take over this mission. The toughest part of this question remains defining the 'what to measure' in order to determine if we are making difference.

- How do we keep Sappers and Leaders focused from getting complacent?

Although we haven't been doing this a long time, Sappers get tired. How do we prevent the "Groundhog Day" mentality from setting in, where every day or mission looks like the one before? Or the dangerous mindset that occurs prior to a mission that Sappers think that nothing has happened, so therefore nothing will happen. This is when I worry about Sappers taking shortcuts and being complacent. Complacency kills, bottom line. I argue that it should be our number one line of effort.

- Are we allotting the right amount of time, effort, and resources to the right areas?

Present war time mission excluded, here, I'm referring to all the additional administrative (pay,

promotions, morale, climate, schools, training, family) and Sapper need type areas. Are we communicating effectively with our stay-behind section and our FRG? Do we provide the families and loved ones at home enough avenues of communication to stay in touch with their loved ones?

- Lastly, I spend a majority of my time thinking about the enemy. Are we winning? Or are they? Is winning even the right word? In this dangerous "cat and mouse game" are we reacting or being proactive? How can we predict, or stay ahead of this very experienced enemy?

I'm competitive, extremely competitive. This deployment is most certainly about winning, the question remains how do we win and do it safely? As you can see from the small sample of questions presented, I ask a lot of questions and do not provide many answers. Searching for these answers makes for a lot of sleepless nights.

It still remains an honor to lead your Sappers.

BRUTUS 6



The "Easy Rollers" of the 837th Eng. Co. of Lorain, Ohio pose for a picture before a mission. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Richard Ventresca, 837th Engineer Company)



A route clearance patrol throughout southern Afghanistan. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Richard Ventresca, 837th Eng. Co.)

*"In some ways it feels like we've been gone a lot longer, but mostly it feels like it has gone by in the blink of an eye."*

## 4TH ENGINEERS FORWARD SUPPORT COMPANY SAVING THE ARMY MILLIONS

By U.S. Army 1st Lt. Johnny A. Garcia II  
Forward Support Company Executive Officer, 4th Engineer Battalion

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – The Forward Support Company, 4th Engineer Battalion, Task Force Iron Fist, known as “Beast” is consistently employed on a daily basis while serving as the Task Force’s primary maintenance and distribution support.

Beast has managed to stay extremely busy as a constant inflow of job orders and resourcing requests are sent in from outlying companies in Task Force Iron Fist, asking for support.

The Forward Support Company as a whole has transported millions of dollars worth of equipment, fuel, and repair parts to

sister companies enabling them to continually stay engaged in their respective missions. These movements are extremely important; as units begin to head back home, one of their essential missions is making sure their equipment and personnel are turned in and transported to the appropriate places.

The bottom line: it is Forward Support Company Beast’s responsibility to make sure these things happen. Staying engaged with the other companies and updated on their statuses has been the bread and butter of our Company operations!

Truly such Warriors are gifted with an aptitude to make this company the best Forward Support Company in country; as we are consistently being outsourced and requested by name from units that are not organic to us.

As Beast continues to provide support, Task Force Iron Fist continues to make headway in the fight.

Thank you to all the Families for your prayers, thoughts, love and hope; it is truly making a difference in the morale of the Soldiers of Beast Company. We understand the important role you all play in our successes and the pains you too feel in our failures. It is your actions that motivate us to do what we do every day. So thank you again from Afghanistan, and we hope we can continue to make you all proud!

Forward Support Company is leading from the front and pushing from the rear. Forged in combat!



**Spc. Cody Marcu from Wendover, Utah and Pfc. Joshua Milne from Wichita, Kan. pose for the camera before convoying back to Kandahar Airfield. (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Johnny Garcia, Forward Support Company, 4th Eng. Bn.)**

*“Forward Support Company is leading from the front and pushing from the rear. Forged in combat!”*



**Forward Support Company Command Team discusses logistics while preparing for the Task Force Iron Fist cookout.**

**Task Force Iron Fist Soldiers enjoying the August cookout.**





**Headquarters and Headquarters Company Soldiers enjoy the Task Force Iron fist cookout.**

*“It is hard to believe that something that we take for granted could have such a profound effect on all of our lives.”*



**Spc. Jesus Olivares from San Antonio, Texas works in the Battalion S-6 shop (technology and electronics) as the help desk operator and automation specialist. (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Anthony, Headquarters and Headquarters Company)**

## **HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY POWERS IRON FIST HEADQUARTERS**

By U.S. Army 1st Lt. Anthony Wrench

Headquarters and Headquarters Company Executive Officer

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan – Outside of the 4th Engineer Battalion Headquarters a large group of angry people begin to assemble in the blistering Afghanistan heat, displaced from their offices due to the most recent power outage. Mechanics are huddled around the battalion’s generators in an attempt to resurrect them. Inside the building, darkness overtakes every office, rendering computers and phones useless. All work ceases across the battalion headquarters.

This scene was a common occurrence for the members of Headquarters and Headquarters Company during the first two months of the deployment as the company struggled with unreliable generators.

Coming to Afghanistan, most members of the company could not begin to fathom a world where turning on a light switch does not immediately turn on a light. This unreliability was especially crippling for the company as most work is done on computers, grinding nearly all progress to a screeching halt during lapses in

power. This is when Headquarters and Headquarters Company Operations, the Battalion S-4 (logistics) section, and the Battalion Construction Management Section sprung into action.

Upon arriving to the battalion footprint in early June, the buildings were powered using a generator and a backup generator. A week into the deployment, the primary generator broke down leaving the battalion with only the backup generator. This generator worked for a while but the sweltering Afghanistan July heat and unreliable fuel deliveries left the battalion with frequent black outs.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company Operations, led by 1st Sergeant Timothy Colon, spearheaded fixing the problem. Using his background of 15 years in Army Prime Power, he assessed that the battalion would be best suited if they were hooked into the Kandahar Airfield power grid. Using his connections with the Prime Power Battalion, Battalion S-4, and Construction Management Section’s connection with the Kandahar Airfield Command, the team was able to get the process to connect our building to grid initiated. It typically takes between three and six months for

the process to be started until the hookup is complete.

Knowing that three to six months was too long to wait, the team began pushing to get the process expedited. Using the strong relationships that the team had built, the project was complete from inception in less than a month. Over the course of ten days, the crew was able to dig all the ditches, lay all the wire, and complete the hook up. Instantly the battalion had reliable power.

Since the change, the battalion has yet to experience a power outage. Productivity has increased across the battalion due to the reliable, uninterrupted power. Because of their efforts, the members of Task Force Power: Sergeant First Class Vernon Hughes, Staff Sergeant Rigney Davis, and Mr. Andrew Frank, were presented awards on August 18, 2013 as a token of our appreciation for their hard work.

It is hard to believe that something that we take for granted could have such a profound effect on all of our lives. The member’s of Headquarters and Headquarters Company will certainly not be taking for granted the electricity that we now enjoy.

## COMPANY OPERATIONS UPDATE

Headquarters and Headquarters Company Operations continues to ensure quarterly training is taking place. We have recently conducted suicide prevention training. As the Unit receives new training requirements the operations section schedules the training to have minimum impact on the varying work hours of all the shops. We have conducted ranges to keep Soldiers in compliance with their qualifications and have an Army Physical Fitness Test on

the calendar in the next couple of months.

The Operations Section has also embraced Afghan National Army (ANA) development. The Commander, Capt. Alberto Baez, has taken a personal interest in training our ANA counterparts and has spent numerous hours planning a good regiment of training subjects across the board for the 205th Corps Engineer Kandak (the ANA unit we partner with).

Supply has been busy with retrograde. They have turned in roughly \$1.4 million in equipment. Staff Sgt. Harrelson and her supply clerks have quickly learned the turn-in process for the different facilities. Pfc. Jeong has really stepped up her Soldiering capabilities by attending several training courses. She and Spc. Velez have taken the initiative to attend the Battalion Soldier of the Month and Promotion Board.

## MEDICAL SECTION UPDATE

Task Force Iron Fist Headquarters and Headquarters Company Medical Platoon has been hard at work since they arrived in Afghanistan over 2 months ago. They share a combined Battalion Aid Station with the 92nd Engineer Battalion, which has grown from a dusty tent to a fully functioning Role I Clinic, and will continue to expand over the next few weeks when renovations to a brand new, improved hard standing building will be complete.

The new combined Battalion Aid Station will be doubled the size and will contain a comprehensive trauma bay, complete pharmacy and triage desk, and at least 4 patient exam rooms. Since arriving to Kandahar, the Task Force Iron Fist Medical Platoon has provided treatment and aid to over 400 patients from at least 15 different companies located throughout Afghanistan. Also, the

medics have revamped their pharmacy, medical storage room, and supply container to accommodate over \$110,000 worth of medical equipment and supplies. Capt. Meiler and Sgt. 1st Class Saunders provide oversight for the medical care of more than 700 Soldiers stationed at eight different Forward Operating Bases, as well as provide leadership and guidance to 32 medics in the seven companies of Task Force Iron Fist.

All organic medics to Headquarters and Headquarters Company are doing well on Kandahar Airfield. Spc. Apacible, the Maintenance Platoon Medic, Spc. Marcu, the Distribution Platoon Medic, and Pfc. Williamson, the roving 333rd Eng. Co. and ANA Development Medic, are all enjoying their missions that involve providing care to Task Force Iron Fist Soldiers and Afghan civilians and contractors. While not engaged in sick call, treatment, or missions,

the medics are continually trained by Capt. Meiler and Sgt. 1st Class Saunders, as well as conduct various tasks such as outfitting vehicles with medical supplies and continually ensuring checkpoints and bunkers are fully stocked with the necessary medical equipment. Also, Cpl. (P) Matula, Spc. Apacible, and Pfc. Williamson are all continuing their education and currently enrolled in several college classes. During downtime, the medics all participate in game nights, movies, physical training, and other various platoon activities to increase morale and welfare and help pass their time while in Afghanistan.

**Pfc. Anthony Williamson, from Yelm, Washington, a medic for the 4th Engineer Battalion, spent the week training medics from the 205th Corps Engineer Kandak. Pfc. Williamson trained the ANA medical team on field sanitation and personal hygiene. His class will be used by the CEK medical team to train the ranks, leading to a decrease in preventable illnesses. Pfc. Williamson's expertise contributed to the overall success of HHC's three week medical training program with our Afghan partners. (Photo by U.S. Army Capt. Steffen Meiler, Headquarters and Headquarters Company)**



*“The Personnel Section has taken great pride in their mission of ensuring all personnel actions are done correctly so Soldiers can remain focused on their daily mission.”*



**Headquarters and Headquarters Company Soldiers in formation. (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Amanda Cooper, Headquarters and Headquarters Company)**

*“We have been working with the companies to assist them in turning-in their property totaling over \$10,000,000 in excess equipment and tactical vehicles.”*

## PERSONNEL SECTION UPDATE

The S1 Shop, Personnel, continues to perform multiple functions. The Personnel Section has been doing a great job with the mail operation, which brings up the morale of the Soldiers. We have been processing a countless number of Awards. Additionally, we

conducted a Promotion Board and NCO/Soldier of the Month Board, and Monthly Report to ensure Soldiers get promoted. The shop has also processed the monthly financial report to ensure Soldiers get all their entitlements correctly while deployed. The

Personnel Section has taken great pride in their mission of ensuring all personnel actions are done correctly so Soldiers can remain focused on their daily mission.

## LOGISTICS SECTION UPDATE

During the month of August, the S4 Shop, Logistics, led by Capt. Daniel Newell, has been busy providing support to the Task Force in several venues. We have been working with the companies to assist them in turning-in their property totaling over \$10,000,000 in excess equipment and tactical vehicles. The Shop has been busy assisting with coordination for multiple flights, bil-

leting for our Soldiers, contracts for constructions operations and Forward Support Company's Combat Logistical Patrols. Our team of 1st Lt. Mike Theubet, 1st Lt. John Tyler, and Sgt. 1st Class Marlon Price, has also been conducting staff assistance visits for the companies for supply accountability, retrograde, and resiliency trainings. The Logistics Shop has been working closely with the

Maintenance Control Shop and Forward Support Company in consolidating the motor pool in preparation for increased retrograde operations. The Section has also been deeply involved in planning the 591st Eng. Co.'s redeployment and 333rd Eng. Co.'s movement to another base.

## COMMUNICATIONS SECTION UPDATE

Over the past few months, the S6 Shop, Communications, has had a promotion of Pfc. Parker. Spc. Olivares proved to be a great addition to the Shop, as he has taken the active role of heading up the Battalion Help Desk and providing support to all those who need it. The team of Spc. Olivares and Pfc. Parker has made a great impact on the Help Desk operations by providing faster service, coordinating the reallocation of fiber optics resulting in a more stable network. They have also begun a

new process in tracking the help tickets that customers bring in.

The tactical team, consisting of Spc. Strickland and Pfc. Chastang, has made drastic improvements on the communication platforms within the Task Force Fleet. They have upgraded systems and trained platoon operators on these new platforms. Besides helping Task Force Iron Fist, they have gone out of their way to help other units on Kandahar Airfield with upgrades and basic trouble-

shooting. The team has worked tirelessly to ensure these vehicles' communication systems stay up and running while our units conduct combat operations.

Happy Birthday to SPC Olivares and 2LT Mullane!!

## INTELLIGENCE SECTION UPDATE

During the month of July, Sgt. Basinger, the Task Force Iron Fist Electronic Warfare Officer (EWO), conducted walkthroughs with each of companies assigned to TF Iron Fist. Sgt. Basinger

works closely with technicians from each company to ensure their systems are up to date and fully functional. During Sgt. Basinger's visits, he provided the technicians with the most current

Counter-IED tactics, techniques and procedures, and shared best practices from his experience and expertise.

## OPERATIONS SECTION UPDATE

On August 15, 2013 a small group of S-3, Operations Section, Soldiers were afforded the opportunity to go shoot with the German Army here on Kandahar Airfield. The shoot was coordinated and facilitated by Staff Sgt. Brian Rudolph. They were able shoot the German's rifle, the HK G36, as

well as their pistol, the HK pistol 9mm usb. The eight Soldiers which participated were Sgt. Maj. Marvin Aucoin, 1st Sgt. Timothy Colon, 1st Lt. Lauren Blanton, Staff Sgt. Brian Rudolph, Staff Sgt. Dennis Paxton, Sgt. Andrew Wasser, Spc. Iain Cunningham, and Pvt. Jason Collins. Since all

eight qualified they earned the German Schutzenschnur to wear on their Army Service Uniform. The shop is also coordinating other shooting events with other countries to earn their shooting award as well.



**Headquarters and Headquarters Company Soldiers enjoying the Task Force Iron Fist cookout.**



**Some of the Chaplains across the theater supporting Chaplain Croak's promotion ceremony. Congratulations to our Task Force Chaplain, Captain Brian Croak!**

**Congratulations to the members of Headquarters and Headquarters Company which recently received awards! (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Amanda Cooper, Headquarters and Headquarters Company)**



*"Since all eight qualified they earned the German Schutzenschnur to wear on their Army Service Uniform."*

**As always, thank you for all of your continued support. We look to your support to motivate us to continue our successful mission completion!**

**Please contact us if you would like us to add anything to next month's newsletter.**

**Check us out on Facebook!**

**4th Engineer Battalion (Official)**

**Staff Sgt. Black's re-enlistment ceremony. Staff Sgt. Black is an NCO in Forward Support Company. (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Amanda Cooper, Headquarters and Headquarters Company)**



**Soldiers of the 837th Eng. Co. before going out on a route clearance patrol. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Richard Ventresca)**



**Afghan National Army and U.S. Army Leadership at the ANA Engineering Conference.**



**Brig. Gen. Wehr with the Task Force Iron Fist Command Team. (Photo by U.S. Army 1st Lt. Amanda Cooper, Headquarters and Headquarters Company)**