

COBRA

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STRIKE



OPERATION

TOGETHER

FORWARD



48-PAGE SPECIAL EDITION



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Commander: Col. Michael F. Beech

Command Sergeant Major: Command Sgt. Maj. John E. Moody, Jr.

Public Affairs Officer: Maj. Mark Cheadle

Editor: Staff Sgt. Brent M. Williams

Staff Writer: Spc. Jason W. Dangel

Translators: D. Saleeh and Ahmed

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Col. Michael F. Beech

COBRA⁶ on POINT

I'm glad to have the opportunity to share some of the progress we have had in the past couple of months in Operation Together Forward, or Ma'an Ila Al-Amam. Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines of the 4th Brigade Combat Team partnered with the Iraqi Army, the Iraqi National Police and Baghdad

Police Forces, have engaged in the largest security operation in Baghdad since the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003.

Working side-by-side with Iraqi Security Forces, we've conducted a systematic clearance of more than 6,000 homes and buildings in Central and Southern Baghdad, with the singular purpose of securing this city to eliminate the murders, kidnappings, assassinations and sectarian violence that has plagued Iraq's capital since the Feb. 22 bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra.

Conducting combined operations in the Doura, Risala and Mansur neighborhoods, this operation is setting the conditions in Baghdad for a secure and prosperous Iraq. We've had significant success in capturing weapons caches and finding the enemy where they live and work.

The results continue to be outstanding. Iraqi Police and National Police Forces are conducting routine patrols in neighborhoods where they were unwelcome. Every day I see the progress that shows we have secured these neighborhoods and the Iraqi people

are returning to a sense of normalcy.

New shops are opening and even businesses that were once closed are re-opening because people are returning to their homes in these areas. We're cleaning and rebuilding portions of these areas, as well as other essential service projects such as repairing water-line breaks affecting these neighborhoods after terrorist attacks and 30 years of neglect.

The citizens of Baghdad are seeing a difference, specifically in the areas we have cleared. The homes, the schools, the hospitals are receiving increases in supplies and electricity. The increased effectiveness of the security operations are allowing Iraqi leaders to focus on economic stability and repair to essential services in our focus areas. Working closely with the local government, we are employing Iraqis from these communities to assist in the repair and clean up of their neighborhoods.

The courageous efforts of the Troopers from 8-10 Cavalry Squadron, Soldiers of 1-12 Infantry Battalion, 2-506 Infantry Battalion; 2-6 Infantry Battalion, 2-77 Field Artillery Battalion; and our newest arrivals to the brigade, 1-14 Cavalry Squadron; working with unrelenting support of the 704th Support Battalion and 4th Special Troops Battalion, has ensured that our mission is accomplished to a standard of excellence.

I also want to thank our Family Readiness Groups, spouses and families who have continued their outstanding and unwavering support. We are stronger because of your sustainment efforts on the home front. The duties your Soldiers perform on a daily basis are in no small part due to your efforts back home. Be proud of your Soldiers. I am continuously in awe of their dedication and heroism.

FROM THE FRONT

Operation Together Forward is the Iraqi Security and Coalition Forces' latest actions to improve and reinforce security in Baghdad.

This organized effort is utilizing the Soldiers of the Cobra Brigade partnered and serving alongside the Iraqi Army, National Police and Police Forces, working together to protect and secure the citizens of Baghdad.

And we are doing just that. Street-to-street, house-to-house and door to door. All our operations to date are focused on protecting the Iraqi people from the murders, kidnappings and violence the enemy inflicts upon the innocent, and our efforts have been a small part of what is ongoing in Baghdad.

The days are longer; the work intense, and the challenges many. And while the operational tempo has increased slightly since the beginning of the latest

phase of this operation, the work, dedication and efforts of our Soldiers remains exactly the same.

During recent weeks, I have watched the Soldiers of the Fighting Fourth, clearing houses and securing neighborhoods and communities within some of the most violent and notorious neighborhoods in Baghdad.

I've seen our soldiers take an active part in the security patrols and cordon and search operations in these communities, working side-by-side with the Iraqi people as they fight for a better life, free from the violence that continues to threaten any kind of future for Iraq.

I have seen firsthand and am



Command Sgt. Maj. John E. Moody, Jr.

proud to be part of a standard of excellence and a commitment to the current and ongoing mission in our battlespace.

At the same time, I am not surprised in the slightest at what I have experienced both during Together Forward and well before the beginning of these operations.

And now, more than ever, we must remain focused; we must concentrate on the mission at hand and not allow the ideal of redeploying diminish our resolve to do things the right way.

New units continue to arrive at our bases and join in our mission. Ensure that these incoming Soldiers have every advantage

afforded to them through the most current and effective training, tactics and procedures available.

Continue to conduct pre-combat inspections and checks. Continue to ensure that your Soldiers are taken care of and remain focused as we get closer to redeployment.

We have good units, a lot of good Soldiers, to include Iraqis, doing great things. Their hard work and commitment to accomplishing the mission is a testament to the training, Soldiering and leadership in our unit and today's Army.

Remember, this mission is a lot bigger than any one of us, and will continue long after we have returned home. A lot of sacrifices have been made along the way and will continue in the days to come. Let's stay focused, be professional and continue to set the standard.

-COBRA7 Out!

Photos by Spc. James Hunter
MNC-I PAO

(LEFT) An Iraqi National Policeman searches through a local Iraqis trunk and checks his identification paperwork in Al Dora during Operation Together Forward, Aug. 10.

(BELOW) An Iraqi National Policeman prepares to break through a door while clearing homes with U.S. troops of the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, in Al Dora, Aug. 10 during Operation Together Forward. They cleared 4,284 homes in Dora, detaining 24 people, registering 339 weapons and confiscating 71 weapons over a five-day period.



MA'AN ILA AL-AMAM

Iraqi National Police police and Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 506th Regimental Combat Team, 101st Airborne division cut the lock off a gate so they can begin searching for illegal weapons and munitions.



FORWARD TOGETHER

Story by Spc. Rodney Foliente, 4ID PAO

Iraqi policemen and Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers continued Operation Together Forward in southern Baghdad Aug. 7.

Policemen from the 2nd National Police Division and Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, attached to MND-B's 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, kicked off the operation with a cordon and search mission.

"The overall goal is to promote security and bring stability throughout the greater Baghdad area," said Capt. Paul Olsen, commander, Company A, 2nd Bn., 506th RCT. "We will accomplish this by interdicting, or disrupting, (terrorist) activities and disrupting death-squad operations and movement."

He added that essential services, in conjunction with combat operations, are also crucial to stability in the region and that MND-B and the government of Iraq will continue to provide and expand those services for the people of Iraq.

Operation Together Forward is a

combined collaboration of Iraqi Security Forces and MND-B.

Working with the NPs has a two-fold effect, said Olsen, who hails from Leesburg, Fla. Running combined operations allows MND-B Soldiers to continue to teach ISF and help them to become more adept in their future role of assuming security for all of Iraq.

"It also provides a clear message to insurgents that they cannot drive a wedge between Iraqi and American Forces because we are committed to doing this together," said Olsen.

Ahmed, a member of the 2nd Battalion, 6th Brigade, 2nd NP Div., said he enjoys working with American Soldiers and is confident that together they will accomplish their mission.

"We are here to catch bad guys, stop (their) intimidation and bring peace (to) Baghdad," he said.

During the search of an apartment building, a family offered their hospitality to the combined patrol of NPs and Co. A Soldiers. After serving chai tea and food, the family stated that they were happy that the Iraqis and

Americans were patrolling and searching the area and for the sense of security that came with the trained professionals being there.

Citizens like these may help decide the future of the city – and the future of the country.

What happens in Baghdad will affect the outcome of the whole nation, said Olsen.

"Baghdad is the center of gravity (for Iraq). Whoever wins the fight for Baghdad will determine the future of Iraq," he said.

ISF and Coalition Forces will continue to take a strong stand and fight for the future of Iraq and the Iraqi people, added 2nd Lt. Jack Irby, fires officer, Co. A. It will be a long and hard fight, but they will keep fighting until the mission is accomplished.

The search yielded three detainees, an AK-47 and two handguns with ammunition, a mortar, anti-Coalition Forces and anti-Iraqi government propaganda pamphlets and more than 60 identification cards and papers that could potentially be used as fake IDs.



An Iraqi National Policeman and a Soldier with the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment talks with citizens of the Doura neighborhood. during Operation Together Forward. INPs and U.S. troops cleared 4,284 homes in Al Dora. They detained 24 people, registered 339 weapons and confiscated 71 weapons over a five day period.



Photo by Spc. Rodney Foliente, 4ID PAO

As a joint patrol makes its way to another building, Capt. Paul Olsen (right), commander, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 506th Regimental Combat Team, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, attached to Multi-National Division – Baghdad, instructs Spc. Chad McDonald, radio, telephone operator, Company A, to pass on orders to the rest of Co. A during a cordon and search mission in southern Baghdad.

*Story by Spc. James Hunter
49th PAD (ABN), MNC-I PAO*

The night is calm in Al Dora. The heat from the day prior still hangs in the air, but is slowly cooling off.

It is still a couple of hours before sunrise and Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, pass around jokes, clearing their minds of anything that may be going on around them.

They patiently wait for the Iraqi National Policemen to gather their equipment and mount their vehicles. The night sky is still upon them. "Let's go," the platoon sergeant says. "Get it on." They put their gear and game face on.

The jokes and stories go away and seriousness takes over.

The Currahee Soldiers, along side the INP, move into the area. They cordon it off and, on foot, move through the muhallahs, searching every home, looking for weapons, caches, ammunition and explosives.

Since August 7, during Operation

Together Forward, the Currahee Soldiers and INPs worked at least 12-hour days as the security in Baghdad heightened, clearing and searching each home in Al Dora.

The 4,284 homes in Dora were com-

pletely cleared early Friday morning. They detained 24 people, registered 339 weapons and confiscated 71 weapons.

"Our main focus was to remove all illegal weapons from Al Dora to reduce



Photo by Spc. James P. Hunter, MNC-I PAO

A medic with the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, treats a young Iraqi girl with burns on her face in Al Dora during Operation Together Forward where U.S. troops and Iraqi National Police cleared homes in Al Dora. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. James P. Hunter, MNC-I PAO)



Photo by Spc. Rodney Foliente, 4ID PAO

An Iraqi National Policeman from 2nd Battalion, 6th Brigade, 2nd National Police Division, swings a sledge hammer at a lock during a cordon and search mission in southern Baghdad Monday. Coalition Forces replaced broken glass, locks and doors after the overall search of the area is complete. The mission kicked off phase two of Operation Together Forward, a joint endeavor by Iraqi Security Forces and Multi-National Division – Baghdad, in an ongoing mission focusing on bringing security throughout Baghdad.

sectarian violence and improve security," said 2nd Lt. Thomas B. Cotton, platoon leader, 1st platoon, Company B, 2nd Bn., 506th Inf. Reg.

Cotton said three to five people a day were dying in Dora alone due to sectarian violence; three to five too many.

Many homes within the area were abandoned because of the fear of sectarian violence, he said.

In one home, during a search on Thursday, there was blood on the floor with ammunition casings covering the ground. Pictures were scattered throughout the home as if the family raided their home for essentials and left it abandoned.

While searching another home, national police found a manual on how to perform a Jihad. An interpreter said to him, "We need not to shed each others blood. We are human beings, and I respect humans."

In each home, Iraqis are allowed one AK-47 and two magazines for protection. Currahee troops registered each weapon kept in the Iraqi homes for accountability and security reasons.

The national police were the main push in the operation, Cotton said. The U.S. troops were simply there to provide guidance, advice and support to the INPs.

Cotton said giving the national police

the lead in the operation, basically gives them on-the-job training because "by working with us, they learn from us."

The INPs were very professional throughout the operation, he said. They are well trained and thorough.

Throughout the operation, the Iraqi local nationals reacted well to the presence of U.S. troops and national police, giving security forces much needed "face time" with the local nationals, said Spc. Patrick A. Blanchard, 203 Gunner, 2nd Bn., 506th Inf.

Their cooperation was much needed

to help secure the area, he said. The national police need the support and trust from the local nationals to take their mission to another level; to have complete control and trust of their communities.

"The national police need to demonstrate to these people they are an impartial enforcer of public security," said Cotton. "The people will trust the police."

The national police and Currahee troops will continue to maintain a presence in the area, keeping sectarian violence to a minimum.



Photo by Spc. Rodney Foliente, 4ID PAO

A Soldier from Company A, 2nd Bn., 506th RCT, uses a red light to review mission essentials prior to a cordon and search mission in southern Baghdad.



Sgt. Peter Schmitt, team leader, Company B, 704th Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division pulls security as his Soldiers emplace road barriers in the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad Friday.

Story and photos by Spc. Jason Dangel

Scores of Iraqi citizens watched as Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers and local Iraqi contractors unloaded dozens of concrete barriers around their homes, in an attempt to keep terrorists out of the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad Aug. 11.

The emplacement of barriers, which is quickly turning the neighborhood into a gated community, is the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division's newest approach to keeping the residents of Al-Doura safe and the terrorists out.

The project, headed by Soldiers from Company A and Company B, 704th Support Battalion, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., working with local Iraqi contractors, is set to last 10 days.

All vehicles leaving or entering the neighborhood will be stopped at designated checkpoints manned by Iraqi Police looking for known terrorists, bomb-making materials and illegal weapons.

The new security method was imple-

mented as part of Operation Together Forward, the ongoing security plan to curb terrorism and sectarian violence in the Iraqi Capital.

"We are in a conjoined effort with the Iraqi Security Forces to block off certain roads in Doura to better establish security of the neighborhood and give the citizens there a sense of security in their government's effort to build this country," said Master Sgt. Ronald Loebel, brigade engineer noncommissioned officer-in-charge, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

The neighborhood has become increasingly violent since U.S. forces liberated Iraq in 2003, where roadside bombs, murders and terrorist attacks on Iraqi civilians happen daily, explained Loebel. The new project with the increased presence of ISF in the area will help mitigate violence in Al-Doura, he said.

"On average we were finding about 25 improvised explosive devices-a-week in and around Doura before we started this operation," explained

Loebel, a native of Killeen, Texas. "So far this week there has only been four IEDs in the area. We have been very successful up to this point."

Murders, car bombs and sectarian violence have also decreased exponentially due to the increased security operations as ISF and Coalition Forces continue to root out the perpetrators responsible for violence in the region, he said.

The neighborhood is not being sealed off as a result of attacks on Coalition Forces, but because it is being used by terrorists to incite sectarian tension between Sunni and Shiite Muslims living in Al-Doura, said 1st Lt. Casey Newell, platoon leader, Co. B, 704th Spt. Bn., of Salem, Ill.

The 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. and their ISF counterparts are attempting to halt attacks directed mainly at Iraqi civilians living in the area, he said.

"We want these people to feel safe by employing a means of control of who goes in and out of Doura. We want to catch the terrorists before they can hurt



Iraqi citizens of the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad watch as a U.S. military convoy and contracted Iraqi construction workers roll into their neighborhood with concrete barriers. Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers and local Iraqi contractors unloaded dozens of concrete barriers around their homes in an attempt to keep terrorists out of the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad Aug. 11.

the citizens," he said.

Working through the night in the cover of darkness, Newell and his platoon are responsible for escorting transportation elements from Company A, 704th Spt. Bn., and Iraqi contractors from a local construction company, as they collectively work together to emplace barriers around the Doura community.

The nightly missions have not come easy to the members of the "Rat Platoon," who up to this point have been constantly targeted by small-arms fire as their convoys roll into the neighborhood, said Sgt. Peter Schmitt, gun truck team leader, Co. B, 704th Spt. Bn.

"We have been receiving a lot of small arms fire out here, that is mostly what we are encountering in terms of attacks," said Schmitt, a native of Columbus, Ohio.

"Even though we are getting attacked we continue mission and keep rocking; it doesn't hinder our ability to get the job done."

Citizens still object to the roadblocks despite the added security the new barriers will provide.

Saad Qadr, a local shop owner, insisted that the barriers will cause problems for the people traveling around the neighborhood but agrees that it will offer additional security for the citizens.

"If our police force ensures the terror-

ists are not entering through the new checkpoints, I think we will have good security," he said.

"Many people might be angry about this but they also know the neighborhood will be safer for their families," Saad said.



Master Sgt. Ronald Loebel, brigade engineer noncommissioned officer-in-charge, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, directs an Iraqi contractor from Pat's Construction Company where to place concrete barriers to prepare them for shipment to the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad Aug. 10.



Maj. Gen. Obd al-Karim, commander, 6th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division and Col. Michael Beech, commander, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, discuss Operation Together Forward during a press conference held at 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi National Police Division, headquarters in southern Baghdad.

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Kevin Lovel
363rd MPAD, MND-B PAO*

The 6th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division commander, and the commander of Multi-National Division - Baghdad's 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, held a press conference at the 6th Bde., 2nd INP headquarters regarding ongoing security operations in the Iraqi capital Aug. 10.

Brig. Gen. Obd al-Karim, commander, 6th Bde., 2nd INP Div., and Lt. Col. Michael Beech, commander, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., highlighted the successes of Operation Together Forward and commended Iraqi Security Forces and MND-B Soldiers' efforts to secure the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad.

The operation has netted 38 terrorist suspects so far, including three foreign fighters, and weapons that could have potentially been used by terrorists to harm innocent citizens of the area, said Beech.

"The important thing is sustaining this effect beyond the clearance and search which is going on now," said Beech.

"Once we have focused and searched the neighborhoods, we must secure them long-term," said Beech. "This is accomplished by assigning Iraqi Security Forces, partnered with Coalition Forces, to patrol particular neighborhoods."

"In this way residents will know who is responsible for the security of their neighborhood," said Beech.

Beech said that the ISF, particularly the 6th National Police Brigade, have been performing superbly in this operation.

Once the area has been completely searched and secured, the ISF and Coalition Forces will focus on helping the local residents improve their working and living conditions, said Beech.

"Overlaying this is the economic and essential services component," continued Beech. "We're working very closely with the district advisory council in Rasheed, employing local labor from the community to clear and rebuild portions of Doura, and to repair water-line breaks in those neighborhoods."

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will also help by removing the large

amounts of rubble normally seen on the streets, continued Beech.

In addition to re-establishing security and providing essential services to the residents in the area, Gen. Karim added another goal to the list.

"We want to stop the migration of residents and bring back the ones who have left before," said Gen. Karim, referring to residents who resorted to leaving their neighborhood due to threats of murder and kidnapping.

"We're trying to set a national example for national reconciliation in Al Doura, and we've had positive results so far."

"We've had the honor of being the first brigade to carry out an operation of this caliber," continued Karim.

"I continue to meet with citizens during this mission, and most say they are glad and comfortable with the level of security offered by this operation," he said.

Beech reminded the assembled journalists that the Doura operation is one small aspect of Operation Together Forward, which is going on throughout Baghdad.



Maj. Gen. Obd al-Karim, commander, 6th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division, shows journalists a home-made hand grenade confiscated during a search during Operation Together Forward in the Doura neighborhood.



An Iraqi television reporter asks a question about Operation Together Forward during a press conference held at 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi National Police Division, headquarters



Local national teenagers from the Al-Doura neighborhood toss trash bags filled by kids into the back of a dump truck. The truck then dumped the bags into the landfill.

*Story and photos by Spc. Curtis Squires
49th PAD (ABN), MNC-I PAO*

Trash has become a common sight in Baghdad. Vendors in markets do not look for Garbage dumpsters to dispose of their waste. Instead, it is discarded next to or behind the shack. Trash collection points are overflowing, leaving residents no other place but the street to leave their trash.

The smell can be almost unbearable at times, but members of the Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, are working to clear the streets of trash, and making Al-Doura a cleaner, safer neighborhood.

Part of the ongoing Operation Together Forward, the cleanup comes roughly a week after Iraqi and Coalition Forces systematically combed through the Al-Doura neighborhood looking for unauthorized weapons in an effort to increase security.

The increased security and cleanup is an effort to restore essential services to the neighborhood, said Lt. Col. Joe Gandara, battalion commander, STB, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Division.

The local government still has to step up, said Gandara. This means the trash

trucks that are currently sitting in Abu-T'schir need to mobilize and move into the Doura neighborhood.

The local workers can not clean up the trash if the trucks are not moving from the parking lots, hauling the waste to the landfill, added Gandara.

"Part of that problem is fuel," he said. "To combat this problem, we drove a tanker down to the truck yard and provided a full tank of gas to any truck that was moving into the Doura neighborhood to pick up trash. The deal with the sanitation manager was if he provided six trucks, we would fill his 15,000 liter tank."

Providing trucks is not the problem. The country of Japan provided Doura with seven brand new trash trucks to pick up garbage, said Gandara.

The problem is finding drivers, he explained.

"Iraq is a country without insurance," he continued. "Therefore, the (district sanitation manager) requires that all drivers own a house as collateral for the trucks, in case something happens to them."

This is a problem, said Gandara, because the people who don't own homes want to work and drive, but they can't.

One worker used to drive a trash truck, but had his truck stolen from him. Now the manager will not let him drive a truck anymore.

In a short timeframe, problems have been overcome, but the future of Iraq is bright, said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Horne, joint fires and effects, Multi-National Corps-Iraq.

What the 4th STB has been able to do in Doura is amazing, said Horne. It will be a hard task, but with the plan the troops battalion has, completing the mission at hand, makes everyone proud.

With the recent operations in Doura resulting in few arrests and few weapons being found, it shows that ISF and CF are on the right road, said Gandara.

Hiring a motivated work force can be a daunting task at times, said Gandara.

Finding adults to work has been a daunting task, but the kids are always willing to work from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. for five dollars, he continued.

"As we have noticed though, once the kids start working, the older kids and young adults are not far behind them," he continued. "I would prefer to not use the kids, but if the adults are not willing, someone has to do it."

The current clean-up of Doura, to include the shanty filled Doura Market, looks beyond the initial cleanup of the neighborhood.

The overall plan is to sustain the trash pickup so it is easier for the Iraqi government to move into the lead on this project, said Gandara.

Garbage dumpsters have been provided in the markets for vendors to dispose of their waste, rather than throwing it next to their shack. And with more and more contracts being given out, trash collection points are no longer overflowing; instead trash is being moved into the landfill just outside Baghdad.

Hopefully, with a little bit of direction, the people and local government will continue to use the facilities and equipment that has been provided to them and continue making Doura a better place, said Gandara.



Lt. Col. Joe Gandara, Commander, Special Troops Battalion, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. speaks with a truck driver. Gandara has overseen the clean up of the Al-Doura neighborhood.



STRYKER COMBAT VEHICLES

Taking the fight to the enemy in Baghdad

Story and photos by Spc. Curtis Squires
49th PAD (ABN), MNC-I PAO

When most people think of military vehicles, humvees, tanks and even the old jeeps come to mind. Most people haven't heard of a stryker, or even what it does. But the 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment knows very well what they are and what they are capable of; they use them everyday.

The 1-14 Cavalry is the first unit to field a battalion sized element of Strykers into Baghdad and feel they have an advantage over humvees in combat.

The stryker has a lot of advantages over the humvee, said 1st Lt. Ryan Nystrom, platoon leader, 2nd Platoon, Crazy horse Troop, 2nd Infantry Division.

"The armament of the stryker is a lot better than that of a humvee," Nystrom said. "The stryker is better at taking a hit and getting you back to base."

In a particular incident during my last deployment, there was a ninety-nine vehicle, 200-passenger convoy that was ambushed, said Staff Sgt. Charles Smith, section sergeant, 2nd Platoon, Crazy

Horse Troop, 2nd Infantry Division. The convoy was receiving fire from four different directions with small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades.

"The stryker vehicle I was in, took five hits from a RPG," Smith said.

One of the rounds hit the fuel tank causing it to explode. Another one penetrated the armor and shot back out the hatch on the roof of the vehicle.

Considering the amount of fire, the numerous directions it was coming from, and the type of rounds, the convoy was lucky to only receive four minor injuries during the ambush, said Nystrom, who was also in the convoy.

The armor is not the only advantage of the vehicle.

The stryker has ten different configurations to better suit the needs of the unit, Nystrom said.

The vehicle can be set up to transport wounded personnel, launch indirect fire, transport troops and various other things, said Smith.

But the vehicle sets up nice

to move troops into battle, continued Nystrom. Unlike the humvee, that can only move five troops including one gunner, the stryker, depending on the setup, can hold up to 11 personnel and has three gunner positions, one in the middle of the vehicle and two in the rear.

Despite the many advantages, the stryker does have a few disadvantages, said Smith.

"The stryker is wider than the humvee," Nystrom said, "That can make it rather difficult to navigate down tight, crowded streets."

The stryker is rather heavy also, said Smith. When it gets into soft sand, it has a tendency to dig into the ground. The eight-wheel drive makes it easy to self-recover though.

The stryker first came into the Army in 2001.

"Getting replacement parts can be difficult at times," Smith said. "With this vehicle being so new, it is difficult to get parts (in Iraq)."

Despite the limited problems, members of the 1-14 Cavalry are happy with the vehicle and look to a bright future using the vehicle in combat, said Smith.



A stryker vehicle covers Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment from a improvised explosive device while the Soldiers prepare to search a house in Baghdad.



WARHORSE JOINS INP TO SECURE ABU T'SCHIR

A Soldier from Company C, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, provides security from his rooftop position during a joint clearance operation by the Iraqi National Police and Co. C, 5-20th Inf. Reg., in the Abu T'schir neighborhood.

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Kevin Lovell
363rd MPAD, MND-B PAO*

Working together to disrupt terrorists and death squad activity in the Baghdad neighborhood of Abu T'schir, Iraqi National Police and Soldiers from Multi-National Division - Baghdad's 1st Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, "Warhorse," conducted a combined

clearance operation here Saturday during a mission in support of Operation Together Forward.

The operation, which began in the early morning hours and continued through mid-day, consisted of the INPs taking the lead on all house searches, with assistance from Company C, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 1-14 Cav.

Soldiers, who provided a tight cordon to prevent anyone from entering or exiting the target clearance area, said Capt. Kevin Hutcheson, executive officer, Co. C.

"They're (INPs) searching for caches or terrorist suspects who have 'holed' themselves up into the community," said Sgt. Jonathan Hammond, combat medic, Co. C, whose hometown is Buffalo, N.Y.

Soldiers from Co. C, commented favorably on the ability of the INPs.

"The INPs are doing a good job," said Sgt. 1st Class Roger Hunceker, infantryman, Co. C, who hails from San Jose, Calif. "We're trying to use



Iraqi National Police prepare to search a house while the "pointman" talks with the homeowner during a joint clearance operation in the Abu T'schir neighborhood.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Jessie Mendez, military working dog handler, 2nd Security Forces, waits while his assigned dog, "King," takes a breather from searching buildings.

them in the front. We build their confidence and the public's confidence in them.

"I think it (operation) went really well. The INPs are a lot better trained than the last time I was here," he continued, commenting specifically on the growth he observed in professionalism, confidence and knowledge that INPs demonstrated during the operation.

The joint clearance operation netted several unauthorized weapons, a fake improvised-explosive device, and at least one terrorist suspect, who was in possession of several weapons and fake identification card-making materials, added Hunceker.



combined patrols focus on securing Doura

2nd Lt. Terry Gambrel, platoon leader, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, patrols the Doura market in southern Baghdad July 25. Gambrel and his platoon, along with Iraqi Police conduct combined patrols to deter terrorist activity in the Doura neighborhood.

Story and Photos by Spc. Jason Dangel

The clamor and the hustle of a Baghdad market is common throughout the city as hundreds of citizens crowd the local streets to purchase necessities for their homes. These thriving venues of vendors are comparable to a super market, with consumers waiting in line to purchase an array of commodities from fresh produce to clothing to electronics.

In a small market in the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad, things are no different, but according to 2nd Lt. Terry Gambrel, platoon leader, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, Iraqi Police are focused on improving the security situation.

The "Currahee" Soldiers of the 2nd Bn., 506th Inf. Reg., currently attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, have patrolled Doura aggressively for months. Working with Iraqi Police at their side every step of the way, the Soldiers hope to restore peace to the violence-

plagued neighborhood, Gambrel said, a native of Mobile, Ala.

According to Gambrel, the police officers from the Doura Police Station are fast becoming more proficient and capable against their enemies due to the extensive training and combined operations conducted daily between coalition and Iraqi Forces.

One of the ways Gambrel and his Soldiers are helping to improve the Doura Police is integrating them into civil-military operations, which means conducting more joint patrols and eventually getting the police to the point where they are operating independently.

Conducting raids, running checkpoints and securing the area from terrorists are all ways the police will achieve public confidence as they continue to work with the Currahee Soldiers, Gambrel said.

Increased presence on the streets will help to provide additional security, but this also means attacks on the IP will increase as well, Spc. Dana Estacio,

infantryman, Co. A, 2nd Bn., 506th Inf. Reg., a native of Susanville, Calif.

"There have been many times when we are out on patrol with the police when they have been attacked. Sometimes only a couple blocks away



An Iraqi Police Officer from the Doura Police Station patrols the streets of the Doura Market with Soldiers from the 2nd Bn., 506th RCT, 101st Abn Div.

from us," Estacio said walking between vendors inside the Doura Market.

"By the time we respond to the attack everything has already stopped," he explained. "The terrorists definitely prefer to target the IP's over us, and I think that's because the police are still learning how to react when they're getting shot at," Estacio said.

Through trial and error the police will become familiar with how to conduct themselves during an attack, said Estacio. The best way to learn is from experience.

Even though the terrorists are increasing attacks against the Doura Police, the boys in blue show resiliency, and still want to do their jobs, said Estacio.

"They do pretty well when they're out here," he said dismounting his M1114 High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle just outside the market July 25.

"Most of them come out here and want to work. They want to do their jobs," Estacio continued.

"Some of the people trust them and want to see them on the streets, and others don't; but, honestly, I don't care who likes them, as long as they take of business," Estacio added. Despite the number of patrols and improvements within the local police department, the Doura neighborhood remains one of the most dangerous areas in Baghdad, said Sgt. Nolan Dawson, infantry team leader, Co. A, 2nd Bn, 506th Inf., Reg.

"We find a lot of (Improvised Explosive Devices), and get into a lot of fires. It's just a rough neck of the woods," Dawson said, walking past an alleyway where, one of his



Iraqi Police from the Doura Police Station and Soldiers from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, patrol the Doura Market in southern Baghdad July 25.

Soldiers reminded the others, the squad found their first dead body in February.

Dawson explained the ability to gain actionable intelligence on terrorists operating in the neighborhood is hard to come by, as most of the people fear that their families will be in danger if they talk to the Soldiers and Iraqi Police patrolling the neighborhood market daily.

"Usually when we talk to the people on the streets we try to get information about the terrorists, but most of the time, the conversation twists back about the water and electricity problems they are having, and that is something that is over our heads," Dawson said.

Dawson explained that the citizens of the neighborhood wait until they are alone with the Soldiers to report violence, in most cases, to late to locate the individuals responsible for the crimes.

As the people of the neighborhood become confident in their police force, Dawson said he expects the citizens will start reporting transgressions to the Doura Police so they can deal with the problems independently.

With the continuous integration of civil-military operations in Doura, the Currahee Soldiers anticipate the citizens will instill trust in the police as they fight terrorism together in the Iraqi Capital.



An Iraqi Police Officer from the Doura Police Station in southern Baghdad patrols the Doura Market during a joint patrol with the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, July 25.

8-10 CAV TAKES ON

MISSION IN AL-JIHAD

Story and photos by Spc. Jason Dangel

On July 9, in a series of violent attacks, residents of the Jihad neighborhood in western Baghdad witnessed the killing of at least 40 Sunni Arabs.

The gunmen set up makeshift checkpoints, stopping cars and buses and checking each person's identification, murdering the Sunnis in the streets.

Later that day, Platoon Leader 1st Lt. Frank Toomey and Soldiers of Troop B, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry, began security operations in Al Jihad, and have since been working hard with the Iraqi Security Forces to defend the area.

The 23 year-old platoon leader from Waldwick, N.J., and his team of approximately 18 Soldiers assumed responsibility of Al-Jihad three weeks ago as the 10th Mountain Division's 1st Brigade Combat Team began redeploying to Fort Drum, N.Y., upon completing their year long tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"In this area of operations my unit's primary mission is to support the ISF while they take control of the situation,"

Toomey explained. "So far it's been a slow process, but it is one that is moving forward."

The platoon leader said his Soldiers have made a smooth transition from conducting infrastructure assessments and atmospherics with local Iraqi citizens into a role supporting Iraq's security forces operating in south and central Baghdad.

"Success in Jihad falls upon the ability of the ISF," Toomey said. "They have to take the lead, and we're pushing them to take that lead."

"We're giving them the ball, and blocking for them, they just have to run with it."

Even though the troop's mission has changed, attitudes among the cavalry scout Soldiers remain the same.

"We are out here doing our job, and that's about it," said Spc. Jory Gasvoda, cavalry scout, 1st Platoon, Trp. B, 8th Sqdrn., 10th Cav., and a native of Great Falls, Mont.

"To me, nothing has changed, just another mission," he said.

The Iraqi National Police is gradually stepping up their secu-



Spc. Charles Johnson, cavalry scout, Troop B, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division patrols the streets of Al Jihad, a neighborhood in western Baghdad July 20.



1st Lt. Frank Toomey, platoon leader, Troop B, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division meets with an Iraqi National Police Captain during a mission in the Jihad neighborhood in western Baghdad July 20.

rity operations in the area, and U.S. Soldiers will continue to support Iraq in its efforts to restore peace to Jihad, Toomey explained.

"Right now we are encouraging the Iraqi National Police to put in more check points while we provide tactical over watch for the checkpoints to help eliminate the violence in the neighborhood," he said.

Toomey expects the Iraqi National Police to take a lead role in defeating the terrorists in Jihad.

At first glance, the residents of Jihad seem to welcome the Soldiers as they routinely patrol the neighborhood streets, said Pvt. Loudon Garvey, a 1st Platoon cavalry scout and M1114 High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle driver from Nashville, Tenn.

"Most of the people generally seem happy when they see us. Especially the kids, that's the biggest thing for me," Garvey said.

Despite all the smiles and waves the Soldiers receive, Garvey and his fellow Soldiers are well aware of the dangers lurking in the streets of Jihad.

There is never a time when the Rough Riders from the 8th Sqdrn, 10th Cav., are not on the streets of Jihad rooting out terrorists and providing security for the Iraqi people and the ISF.

According to Toomey, attacks on his Soldiers have decreased, as the terrorists have increasingly targeted Iraqi National Police working checkpoints in the area.

"We've seen a lot of attacks focusing specifically on ISF

patrols and checkpoints," Toomey explained. "In response to that, we have picked up patrols in the neighborhood, adding a security presence 24 hours-a-day," he added.

Despite the scouts' rigorous patrol schedule everyday, the Soldiers feel they are already making an impact in Al Jihad.

"It gets hard out here sometimes," said Spc. Charles Johnson, a cavalry scout from Grayson, Ky., during a joint patrol with the Iraqi National Police, "but it feels good to know I'm contributing to the mission and helping these guys out."

Editors Note: 8th Sqdrn., 10th Cav. is currently attached and serving with 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division.



Spc. Brian Kelly, cavalry scout, Trp. B, 8th Sqdrn., 10th Cav., 4th BCT, and an Iraqi National Police Officer, ready an x-spray test during a knock and enter operation in the Jihad neighborhood in western Baghdad. The test determines if an individual has previously used explosive materials.



Photo by Spc. Jason Dangel

An Iraqi Soldier from the 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, stands guard as his fellow Soldiers search a residence for illegal weapons in central Baghdad

*Story by Sgt. Brian J. Anderson
49th PAD (ABN), MNC-I PAO*

The Iraqi Army took the lead in major operations in the Mansur neighborhood in central Baghdad, Sunday, giving the Iraqi soldiers an idea of everything the job entails when Coalition Forces are not involved.

The 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, cleared houses, checking for unregistered weapons, and talking with the residents, giving many of them a sense of security.

Although Coalition Forces provided support for the operation, the Iraqi's planned and conducted the search of almost 1,500 homes in nearly two days.

While the operation itself was completed without incident, there was another battle being fought by the IA; they were fighting and winning the trust of their fellow citizens.

Hassan Ali, Mansur resident, said the IA has already proven its worth with him and his family.

"The Iraqi Army is doing very well, we believe in them and we trust them," he said. "They treat us well, with respect, because of this we must respect them."

Ali said his kids look up to the IA, and he said all three of his boys want to be Iraqi soldiers when they are older.

"We hope peace can come through the Iraqi Army," Ali added.

Another local, Ahmed Kareem said he hopes the Iraqi Army continues to grow and strengthen, but he also said he is not ready to see Coalition Forces leave just yet.

"Once we get the security, then they can go home," Kareem said. "We need the security first."

Capt. Hayder Al-Watani, commander, 1st Company, 4th Battalion, 5th Bde., 6th IA Div., said he sees how much the citizens appreciate his men. He added that the U.S. and coalition troops helped get the IA to this point.

"The U.S. troops helped train the Iraqi Army for missions like this one,"

Al-Watani said. "It is good that we do missions like this because the people want security and we are bringing them security."

Although Sunday's mission only turned up an AK-47 assault rifle and a number of 7.62mm rounds, it was a success because of the added respect the soldiers received from the community as a whole.

Col. Abed Alameer, commander, 5th Bde., 6th IA Div., said this mission was good, because of the relationships built with the civilians.

"We build these strong relationships with the civilians, and in return they will help us by providing information they might know about the terrorists and their organizations," Alameer said.

"The civilian and Army relationship is strengthening because we provide security.

The terrorists don't want to be in these areas because they know we are here, and there will be more areas like these with no terrorists."



Capt. Haider Al-Watani, commander, engineer company, 4th Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division collects personal information from a family of the Mansur Neighborhood in central Baghdad during security operations.

Photo by Spc. Jason Dangel



Photo by Sgt. Brian Anderson MNC-I PAO



Photo by Spc. Jason Dangel

Two Iraqi Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division man security positions on the outer perimeter of a large cordon and search operation in the Mansur neighborhood in central Baghdad Aug. 3. During the security operations, the Iraqi Soldiers searched homes for illegal weapons and ensured all weapons being used for home protection were properly registered.

Gators take a bite

out of Risala

Story and photos by Spc. Jason Dangel

Iraqi National Police from the 8th Brigade, 2nd National Police Division, working with Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers completed the search of more than 2,800 buildings and homes for illegal weaponry in the Risalah Neighborhood in southern Baghdad Monday.

Upon completion of the operation, Iraqi Security Forces, working alongside Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Armored Division, currently attached to the 4th Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team, detained 8 suspected terrorists and confiscated more than 60 illegal weapons.

The operation in Risalah, or Operation Relentless Hunt, was originally slated to last four days but because of the cooperation from the Iraqi citizens and the expedient and thorough work of the National Police and MND-B Soldiers the objective was completed in about three, said Capt. Curt Rowland, commander, Company C, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd

Infantry Division, a native of Birmingham, Ala.

"All our guys on the ground did an excellent job clearing the buildings in the neighborhood, so it only made sense to search as many homes as we could so we could finish earlier and free-up combat power for other missions," Rowland said during operations Sunday afternoon.

No building was left unsearched, said Staff Sgt. Jessy Johnston, platoon sergeant, Co. C, 5th Bn., 20th Inf. Reg. If the building was locked the locks were cut, but after the search was complete each broken lock was replaced with a new one.

"Whenever we do an operation like this, we try hard not to be perceived as anything other than a security force. Our goal is to give the people peace of mind and feel safe, so anytime we break something we try to replace it," Johnston said, a native of Brennen, Ind.

The Iraqi National Police and MND-B Soldiers captured 17 AK-47 assault rifles; 22 pistols; one fragmentary grenade; two sniper rifles; one shotgun; two rockets; two mortar base



Staff Sgt. Jessy Johnston, Platoon Sergeant, Company C, 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division attempts to cut a lock on the door of an Iraqi shop during a joint cordon and search operation with Iraqi National Police in the Risalah neighborhood.



Iraqi National Police from the 2nd Battalion, 8th Brigade, maintain security positions during a joint cordon and search operation with Multi-National Division--Baghdad Soldiers in the Risalah neighborhood in southwest Baghdad.

plates and one mortar tube during the door-to-door knock-and-enter operation.

The Iraqi National Police also discovered several weapons caches while clearing the neighborhood located in the western portion of Baghdad's Al Rasheed District.

Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition Forces found bomb-making materials and munitions, to include two 125mm artillery rounds; one 122mm artillery round; one 100mm artillery round; six 60mm mortar rounds; four fragmentary grenades; five rocket-propelled grenade launchers; and 18 RPG rounds.

During the security operation, the Iraqi National Police registered approximately 200 private weapons to families who are using them for home protection, in accordance with the Iraqi law.

The cordon and search operation in Risalah is part of Iraqi and Coalition Forces' ongoing mission to ensure peace and stability to the people of the greater Baghdad area.

The current mission, in support of Operation Together Forward, is the result of the Iraqi Government's continuing efforts to increase security and reinforce peace throughout the Iraqi Capital.

Operation Together Forward is an ongoing security operation between Iraqi Security Forces and Multi-

National Division - Baghdad to enhance existing security conditions and reduce the violence brought on by terrorists and death squads in Baghdad.

Operation Relentless Hunt was one of many large scale security operations that have taken place in neighborhoods throughout Baghdad in support of Operation Together Forward led by the Iraqi Security Forces.



A Stryker Combat Vehicle maintains the inner cordon during a joint operation between Iraqi National Police and Multi-National Division--Baghdad Soldiers. Operation Relentless Hunt was one of many large scale security operations that have taken place in neighborhoods throughout Baghdad led by the Iraqi Security Forces.

SPOT REPORT

Lt. Col Joseph Gandara speaks with Iraqi citizens during a large trash clean-up mission in the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad. The trash clean-up employed Iraqi citizens and contractors as they worked together to beautify the streets of their neighborhood.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel,

An Iraqi National Policeman from the 8th Brigade, 2nd National Police Division, mans a checkpoint along the outer edge of a joint cordon and search operation with Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers in southern Baghdad. MND-B and Iraqi National Police were engaged in an Operation called Relentless Hunt during which they searched more than 2,800 homes for illegal weapons in the Risalah neighborhood.



U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Tom Conning, 49th PAD (ABN), MNC-I PAO

During the second phase of Operation Together Forward, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division arrived in Baghdad to help bring security to the city. The Soldiers became attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and participated in multiple large scale operations. The Soldiers came manned with Stryker Combat Vehicles, which add a unique ability to the fight. Pictured here are 1st Bn., 14th Cav. Soldiers removing home-made barriers and trash from southern Baghdad neighborhoods.

SPOT REPORT

The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Command Sgt. Maj. John Moody gets a view of Baghdad from the gunners seat of a Stryker Combat Vehicle during a security mission with 1st Battalion, 14th Cavalry, 2nd Infantry Division in the Abu T'schir neighborhood in southern Baghdad.



U.S. Army Photo Staff Sgt. Brent Williams



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Iraqi National Police from the 6th Bde., 2nd NP Div., search the trunk of a car during operations in the Abu T'schir neighborhood. The police patrols through the muhallahs, conducting security operations to help rid Baghdad of sectarian violence. The mission was part of Operation Together Forward, the ongoing security push between Multi-National Division - Baghdad and Iraqi Security Forces to rid the Iraqi Capitol of terrorism and sectarian violence.



U.S. Army Photos by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Trash clean-up and essential services has been a key factor in the success of Operation Together Forward, a collaborative effort between Iraqi Security Forces and Multi-National Division-Baghdad. Clean-up and civic action projects are improving the quality of life for citizens of southern Baghdad.



U.S. Army Photo Spc. Jason Dangel



U.S. Army Photo Spc. Jason Dangel

(ABOVE) Sgt. Casey Sands, mechanic, Company B, 704th Spt. Bn., 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., joins 19 other newly promoted sergeants in a traditional toast during an Noncommissioned Officer Induction Ceremony. (LEFT) Lt. Col. Rich Morales, Brigade Operations OIC, and Maj. Richard Applehauns, Brigade Intelligence OIC, conduct an operation brief prior to a mission.



U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Jason Dangel

A young Iraqi child watches search operations conducted by 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Soldiers and Iraqi National Police, as part of Operation Together Forward in the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad Aug. 8.

Making headlines in southern Baghdad

Story by Spc. Jason Dangel

The Rasheed District Advisory Council Chairman and Multi-National Division - Baghdad's 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division hosted national, international and local media at the Rasheed District Advisory Council Headquarters in southern Baghdad Aug. 13.

Mr. Sabah Al-Kaabi, Rasheed DAC Chairman, and Lt. Col. James Danna, commander, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, took the opportunity to discuss recent security operations in the Risalah Neighborhood, while highlighting the successes of Operation Together Forward.

"We had great support from the Rasheed District Advisory Council members who brought up to us their concerns about the situation in Risalah, and what they thought were the causes for the problems, and some potential solutions," Danna said during an opening statement to Iraqi and Western media outlets.

The operation in Risalah, or Operation Relentless Hunt, lasted approximately three days, as Iraqi National Police from the 8th Brigade, 2nd National Police Division and Soldiers from the 2nd Bn., 6th Inf., currently attached to the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., completed the search of nearly in the southern portion of the Risalah neighborhood and

surrounding areas, said Danna.

During that time, Iraqi National Police detained 8

"The more difficult period of the operation is the holding and the building phase which is setting the conditions of

in essential services while simultaneously providing security for the Iraqi citizens living in the Rasheed District, he said.

Now that the neighborhood has been searched, the new focus will be helping the local residents improve their working and living conditions, continued Al-Kaabi.

Plans for new water, sewage, and electricity systems and construction of new schools and hospitals will be put into affect as the DAC convenes and finalizes plans with military engineers from the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., he said.

Al-Kaabi and Danna both said they are optimistic that these upward trends will continue as ISF and Coalition Forces continue to root out terrorists and death squads responsible for civil strife in southern Baghdad.



Mr. Sabah Al-Kaabi, Rasheed DAC Chairman, and Lt. Col. James Danna, commander, 2nd Battalion, 6th Inf. Reg., 1st AD, discuss the recent security operation in the Risalah neighborhood in southern Baghdad, and also highlight the successes Operation Together Forward

suspected terrorists and confiscated more than 60 illegal weapons during the door-to-door knock and enter operation in the neighborhood.

Both officials praised the efforts of the Iraqi National Police, particularly the 8th and 6th Brigades of the 2nd Iraqi National Police Division, who have been working with MND-B Soldiers in neighborhoods throughout southern Baghdad.

"The easy part of the operation has been completed," Danna continued, referring to ongoing security efforts in Risalah, during which Iraqi and Coalition Forces searched more than 2,800 homes and buildings.

confidence in the local residents, so they can get on with life without the threat of terrorists committing violence in their neighborhood," he said.

Since the conclusion of the search operation in the Risalah, citizens once displaced because of violence brought on by terrorists and deaths squads are now beginning to return to their homes, said Al-Kaabi.

This operation, like many of the missions in support of Operation Together Forward, is paving the way for improvements



Lt. James Danna, commander, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf., 1st AD, answers a question asked by a journalist during a press conference in Baghdad Aug. 13.



GRIFFONS donate Heavy Equipment to Iraqi Beladiyats

Story and photos by Spc. Jason Dangel

The 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division's Infrastructure Coordination Element donated approximately \$2 million worth of excavating and clean-up equipment to essential services departments from the Rasheed and Karradah Districts in Baghdad today.

The equipment, purchased from funds seized from former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, will now be used to help restore quality of life for citizens in these Baghdad districts.

Each district or beladiya received a backhoe/loader, a Mitsubishi pickup truck, and a Mitsubishi L200 Bongo truck as well as various other supplies to aid them in their work as they continue to clean-up the streets of Baghdad.

Compressors, diesel generators and welding machines were also included in the donation package provided by the 4th STB ICE team.

"My main focus is building capacity and helping the people of Iraq," said Lt. Col. Joseph Gandara, commander, 4th STB, 4th BCT.

"It makes me feel good that we can actually go out and help people and improve their quality of life," Gandara said. This is the second time the ICE cell and the 4th STB have coordinated for an equipment donation of this size, said Gandara.

Lt. Col. Joseph Gandara, commander, 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, speaks with Iraqi Essential Services Director Generals from the Rasheed and Karradah districts at Forward Operating Base Prosperity July 23. The 4th STB's Infrastructure Coordination Element donated approximately \$2 million worth of excavating and servicing equipment to aid the departments as they continue to clean-up and repair the Iraqi Capital.

"Our job here is to help the Iraqi people," said Pfc. Christopher MacDonald, infantrymen and ICE cell member, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th STB, 4th BCT.

"That is why we are giving away this equipment," he said, "so that they know we are behind them, and we are willing to help, whatever it takes."

Rasheed Essential Services Director General Salas Mesal said he and his men need all the support they can get, and any donations made to them by the U.S. Government are greatly appreciated.

"I'm very glad we received this equipment today," Mesal said. "This will help maximize our efforts in order to better serve our people throughout the city."

According to Gandara, this is the last large donation slated for the 4th STB ICE. The unit will now focus on projects that will increase the capacity of essential services throughout the city.

"We have many other projects we are undertaking right now. It may not be actually donating equipment, but we are building capacity and delivering capability to the Iraqi people."

To date the ICE has managed 94 essential service projects worth over \$48 million within the brigade area of operations.



GATORS bid FAREWELL to FALLEN BROTHER

Story and photos by Spc. Jason Dangel

As silence shrouded the chapel, the sound of taps filled the air and the twenty-one gun salute sounded for a Soldier, a fallen brother, a friend.

July 18, 2006 was a day of remembrance as "Gator" Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, bid farewell to one of their brothers-in-arms.

Spc. Manuel J. Holguin, a native of Woodlake, Calif., assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf. Reg., 1st Armored Div., was remembered for being a man of character, a great friend and a loyal infantryman, said Maj. Jeffrey Grable, executive officer, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf. Reg., speaking to the Soldiers gathered at the Steel Falcon Chapel at Forward Operating Base Falcon.

Holguin, 21, was killed from injuries sustained when an improvised explosive device detonated near his High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle during combat operations in southern Baghdad July 15.

"Specialist Holguin's actions reflect great credit upon him and are the highest traditions of military service," Grable said to a massive crowd of Soldiers attending the memorial ceremony for their fallen brother.

"We can take simple solace in the fact he loved being an infantry Soldier, and he died doing what he loved," Grable said honoring his young Soldier.

Capt. Chanda Mofu, Commander, HHC, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf. Reg., remembered Holguin as a warrior and a proud Soldier who served his country with honor.

"I can stand here in front of you men of HHC and tell you he did everything

that was asked of him, even when his service was complete," Mofu said, his Soldiers mourning their fallen hero.

"Specialist Holguin's actions and demeanor here on earth can be an example for us to follow as we fight a challenging enemy in the long days ahead," he said.

According to friend and squad leader, Sgt. Jason Knapp, he could have never served with a more dedicated and proud Soldier during his time with Holguin.

"As a friend he was always there for you," Knapp explained. "Specialist Holguin could always make you laugh and smile with his broken sentences and crazy sayings."

Knapp said despite his Soldiers light-hearted attitude he always remained focused on the mission and never complained when there was work to be done.

"He was proud to be a Soldier and wear our uniform," he said. "He was

the best friend a man could have been lucky enough to serve with."

Best friend and fellow infantryman, Spc. Jared Israel, HHC, 2nd Bn., 6th Inf., said he and Holguin often discussed what they would do if one of them had to make the ultimate sacrifice.

He explained that both of them made an agreement to not speak on each other's behalf because their lives were too spectacular to put on paper, but after much deliberation Israel gave in because of how important his friend was to him.

"The past few days when I've thought and prayed about this moment, and I know he is sitting up in heaven laughing at me because he knows how hard it is for me to tell you about a true friend, brother, son and an amazing Soldier," Israel said as tears fell from his eyes.

Israel said his best friend was proud to be a Soldier and had a heart of



Maj. Jeffrey Grable, executive officer, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, honors one of his fallen Soldiers during a memorial ceremony at the Steel Falcon Chapel at Forward Operating Base Falcon July 18.



Dozens of Soldiers mourn the loss of a fallen brother-in-arms during a memorial ceremony at the Steel Falcon Chapel at Forward Operating Base Falcon in southern Baghdad July 18.

gold, always displaying a smile on his face.

"He gave willingly of everything, and trust me he had a lot to give because I think he received more care packages than our whole company combined,"

he said as Soldiers smiled remembering their fallen brother.

Holguin's optimistic attitude and friendly nature affected everyone in HHC, and there was rarely a moment when he could not cheer-up the mem-

bers of his platoon.

"We have lost an amazing Soldier and friend," Israel said, crying as he concluded his speech.

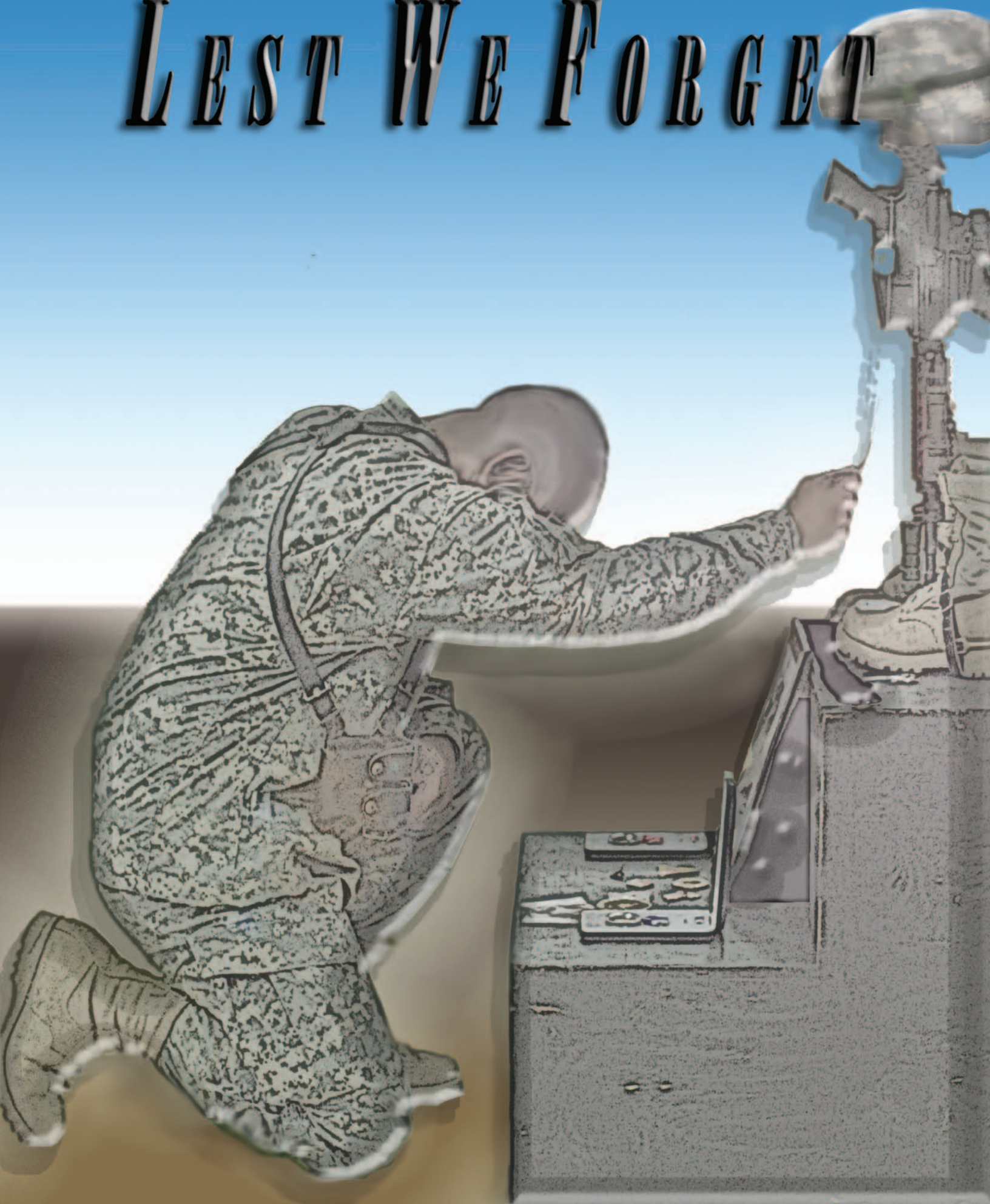
"I know he's up in heaven smiling, looking down on us, trying to put his arms around us for protection, telling us not to worry about him or anything else. He would want us to drive on with our mission and do it honorably because that is what he believed in."

Spc. Manuel Holguin is survived by his father Manuel Holguin Sr., his mother Lydia Holguin, his brother Javier Holguin and many family and friends.

Spc. Jared Israel, infantryman, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, bids farewell to his best friend during a memorial ceremony at the Steel Falcon Chapel at Forward Operating Base Falcon July 18.



LEST WE FORGET



GIVING IT ALL AWAY

4BCT Honored during Grand Opening of New Blood Donation Center

*Story and photos by
Spc. Jason Dangel*

Three battalions from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division were honored for their contribution of the "gift of life," during the grand opening of the 10th Combat Support Hospital Blood Donation Center in central Baghdad Aug. 19.

The 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, the 4th Special Troops Battalion and Soldiers from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 506th Regimental Combat Team, were recognized for continuously donating blood and platelets to help save lives in Iraq.

Each battalion voluntarily screened dozens of Soldiers in order for the donations to occur.

"The 10th Combat Support Hospital uses more blood than any other facility in the

theatre combined," said Col. Dennis Doyle, commander, 10th CSH.

"We have received over 300 units of whole blood and 1,200 units of platelets just from (blood) donations

Iraq.

"There have been more than 3,000 patients committed to this hospital, and once committed there is a 94-percent survival rate," he said.

"This wouldn't happen if it



Col. Dennis Doyle, commander, 10th Combat Support Hospital, awards Sgt. Peenesh Shah, medical supply noncommissioned officer-in-charge, 1st Bn., 12th Inf., 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div, for the "Warrior" battalions continuous donations of whole blood and platelets during a ribbon cutting ceremony for the grand opening of the 10th CSH Blood Donation Center in central Baghdad.

since we've been here, which is about ten months," he said to the group of Soldiers and civilians in attendance.

Some Soldiers have donated blood or platelets more than ten times since May, said Doyle, who also honored his own Soldiers from Company A, 10th CSH, for their platelet and whole blood donations during the ceremony.

Doyle said the massive amount of blood donations contributed to saving the lives of countless U.S. service members and civilians in

wasn't for all of the donations we receive."

Sgt. Peenesh Shah, medical supply noncommissioned officer-in-charge, 1st Bn., 12th Inf., said the Soldiers from his battalion have actively participated in blood donations in honor of Capt. James Funkhouser, the former commander of Headquarters and Headquarters, 1st Bn., 12th Inf.

Funkhouser, 35, of Katy, Texas was killed by a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device on May 29 in central Baghdad.

More than 140 "Warrior" Soldiers from the 1st Bn., 12th Inf., were screened for blood donations in honor of their fallen commander, said Shah.

"Almost directly after the incident, Soldiers lined up to give blood in honor of Capt. Funkhouser," said Col. Todd Dombroski, surgeon, 1st Bn., 12th Inf. "After he passed away, the Soldiers wanted to help people any way they could; they felt like it was their duty."

As Soldiers like those from the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. continue to contribute life-saving blood donations to those in need, the new 10th CSH Blood Donation Center will provide a central location for these miracles to occur, said Doyle.

"The new facility is not unlike something you would find back in the states," Doyle said. "This is a place where Soldiers and civilians alike can help save lives."

Soldiers who wish to make donations can visit their battalion aid station for the proper screening procedures to see if they qualify for whole blood or the platelet aphaeresis donations.

For more information contact the 10th CSH Laboratory and Donor Center located at the Ibn Sina Hospital in the International Zone.



Col. Dennis Doyle, commander, 10th Combat Support Hospital prepares to cut the ribbon to the new 10th CSH Blood Donation Center with a huge pair of scissors

Giving the Gift of Life

Soldiers Stay Focused

AS REDEPLOYMENT NEARS

Story by Spc. Jason Dangel

As a redeployment date tentatively scheduled for the end of the year grows closer by the minute, Soldiers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division say they're ready to go home, but also say they are still focused on the mission that they started more than 9 months ago.

At a point in the deployment when rumors tend to run rampant, many Soldiers work day-to-day, focused on the mission at hand, unaffected by the whispers of early redeployment dates or possible deployment extensions.

"Motivation is the best way to keep Soldiers ready to go," explained Sgt. Matthew Bowman, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. "As a leader, I give my guys as much down time as I can, so they come back every day refreshed with their heads in the game."

A former Marine and a father of two, Bowman said he knows how hard it is to be away from his family, but also said his family understands that he has a job to do and how critical it is for him

Soldiers safe."

According to Bowman, most rumors start with the families awaiting the return of their Soldiers, and it is important that leaders strike a balance between keeping families informed and creating unrealistic expectations.

When Bowman speaks to his wife on the phone, they don't talk about his mission in Iraq. Instead they talk about their children and family issues. Keeping his family and mission separate is the way the combat veteran stays focused 24 hours-a-day in the combat zone.

"I don't like to talk about Iraq with my wife. She knew what my job was when we got married,

and she knows how important it is for me to perform my job at 100-percent at all time," he said.

As Soldiers continue to fight an ever challenging enemy, statistics show that U.S. casualties slightly increase as units begin the process of redeployment, said Capt. Boyce Edwards, adjutant, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div.

When the 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div. arrived in central and southern Baghdad in December 2005, the unit they replaced, the 3rd Infantry Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team, was still fully engaged in the fight against enemy forces.

Only days before the remainder of the "Vanguard" Brigade redeployed to Fort Stewart, Ga., two Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery, were killed while on mission in central Baghdad Jan. 5, he said.



U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Jason Dangel

A Soldier from the 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division stands ready from atop his turret during operations in the volatile Ameriyah neighborhood in western Baghdad.

to stay focused until the plane ride home.

According to Bowman, it is common to start hearing rumors at the beginning and near the end of a deployment, and urges Soldiers to keep their heads up and maintain vigilance as they continue their mission in Iraq.

"We all hear rumors about redeployment, but that happens all the time," said Bowman, a native of Killeen, Texas. "The important thing is to remain focused on what we are doing here; it keeps the



U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Jason Dangel

A Soldier from Troop B, 8th Squadron, 10th Cavalry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division searches a room during operations in western Baghdad.



A Soldier from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 506th Regimental Combat Team, attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, scans for enemy threats with a part of binoculars during a mission in southern Baghdad.

U.S. Army photo by Jason Dangel

A roadside bomb struck a convoy conducting an escort mission killing one noncommissioned officer, and as medical units responded to the incident a secondary device detonated killing a young 4th BCT, 3rd Inf. Div., medic.

Soon after the incident the 4th Inf. Div.'s Cobra Brigade assumed command with full knowledge its Soldiers must complete the mission just as strong as if they had just started it, focused and ready.

Edwards said these incidents should send a clear message to the Soldiers of the Cobra Brigade as they continue their mission in central and southern Baghdad.

"The enemy doesn't have a timeline and will strike whenever and wherever an opportunity is presented, and that is why we must stay focused on the job at hand until we're on a west-bound flight," Edwards said.

Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. John Moody, 4th BCT, said he is impressed with all of his Soldiers' ability to accomplish their missions while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, but stressed the importance of staying ready and focused until the mission is complete.

"Every Soldier's job is a valuable contribution to the mission, and they must take it seriously until the last minute of the last day we are here in Iraq," said Moody, a native of Fort

Lauderdale, Fla.

"From the time this brigade was established, our priority has been to accomplish whatever mission is set

and will be until we leave," he said.

Moody, who is finishing his third deployment to Iraq, said at this point in the deployment, he hasn't noticed any



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, keep a close watch of activities on the ground from the top of a building during a cordon and search mission in southern Baghdad Aug. 30.

before us, and that has not changed," he said.

Traditionally, as redeployment nears, Soldiers become distracted early, and begin preparing themselves for the return home, said Moody, a combat veteran with more than 27 years of military service.

"Even though we have begun preparing for the arrival of our replacement unit, we are still engaged in operations,

negative trends in his Soldiers, even though the excitement of returning home is beginning to build among the troops.

"I can truthfully say that all the Soldiers I've talked to seem just as motivated now as they were when we first got here," he said. "I think most of the Soldiers know not to get too excited yet because anything could happen."

IVY LEAGUE LAWYER TO 'TOP FLIGHT' PLATOON LEADER

Story by Staff Sgt. Brent Williams

The terrorist attacks on Sep. 11, 2001, changed the course of history for America and the world over. Many of the lives of the Soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and officers serving in today's Armed Forces were changed forever as the result of that tragic day.

The fact that 1st Lt. Marc Lindemann, a 30-year old platoon leader, born and raised in the state of New York, joined the U.S. Army to serve his country as a direct result of the coordinated attacks on liberty and democracy is not out of the ordinary.

What makes the lieutenant in the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division unique rather is the fact that prior to the attack upon the American people, Lindemann, a native of Port Washington, NY, first completed his Bachelors and Masters Degrees in Greek History and Archeology, and then proceeded to obtain a Law Degree from Harvard University, where he interned as a prosecuting attorney for the State of Massachusetts.

Upon completing law school, the Ivy League lawyer went straight to work for a prestigious New York City law firm. On his way to the office, the second day of his new job, Lindemann's life was forever changed.

The office where he worked, located in the financial district of Manhattan, a couple blocks from the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center offered the young attorney a harrowing view of the buildings as they burned and smoldered, eventually collapsing and plummeting to the earth under a stifling cloud of dirt, heat and debris.

In the hours that followed, Lindemann joined a group of volunteers to help provide emergency medical treatment to the New York City Police officers and firefighters as they worked to rescue the workers and first responders caught in the ruin at the base of the towers.

"What I saw that day and my own very, very small role in the efforts to take care of the people who survived down there convinced me that everyone does have the obligation to serve the country in some way," Lindemann said.

"The policemen and firemen I saw at the triage unit definitely had served their country, and I figured that it was time for me to serve mine."

"Even though I was getting older, I decided on enlisting and had to get myself physically fit," he explained. "I worked out for a while, and just a year later enlisted into the Army's Delayed Entry Program."

Lindemann reported to Basic Training at Fort Benning, Ga. Sep. 11, 2003.



1st Lt. Marc Lindemann

Eight months into his training, he decided take his oath of enlistment to the Fort Benning Officer Candidacy School, and from there was designated a Field Artillery Officer.

"The hardest school I have ever been through is OCS," Lindemann recalls when asked to pick between Harvard, Yale or the Army, "especially going from a private in basic combat training into basic officer training. It was a real shock to the system."

While Infantry was his first choice, according to Lindemann, the field artillery designation has been more of a challenge than he ever anticipated.

Arriving at Fort Hood, Texas and the 4th Infantry Division's newest unit of action, the platoon leader who likes to work with M109A6 PALADINs, became part of the 2nd Battalion, 77th Field Artillery, 4th BCT.

Lindemann was certain that he would deploy.

"Knew it hands down," he said, remembering early days in basic training, where drill sergeant said there are only three types of Soldiers in today's Army: Soldiers who just go back from Iraq, Soldiers who are in Iraq; and Soldiers who are going to Iraq.

"All of us went in with our eyes open," he explained about his platoon. "All of the privates knew they would be deployed. It wasn't a question of earning money for college or job security. They went into the military knowing they would serve their country in a war zone, and they would be exposing themselves to danger and risking their lives."

"Nobody had any illusions both when I entered, and my platoon right now, to what they would be doing or where they would be going."

Deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, Lindemann and the Soldiers of 1st Platoon work out of Forward Operating Base Union III located in the International Zone.

The Soldiers of the "Top Flight" Platoon—a moniker they chose for themselves—function primarily in the role of a personal security detail and quick reaction force.

"Our platoon especially has a knack for doing what we are doing," Lindemann said, "and even though they have training as cannon crewmembers and fire direction team members they have really taken to their PSD mission."

Like many field artillery units deployed in Iraq, 1st Platoon finds itself serving in an unconventional role operating in a manner similar to military police or infantry tac-

tics.

The only artillery round that the lieutenant has seen since deploying was part of an improvised explosive device alongside the road.

There is no doubt that the number one challenge for Lindemann lies in the safety of his Soldiers, and still the mission has the number one priority.

"We roll outside the "Green Zone" everyday, and the toughest thing for me is that you can train all you want, but actually having your Soldiers' lives on the line and realizing that a mistake that you make could result in the death of one your Soldiers," he said.

This is the number one reason the patrol leader takes the lead vehicle every time the convoy leaves the gate.

"My crew is in the threat area first, so I feel that if we miss something that it is really on us, and the entire platoon is our responsibility as we proceed through the streets of Baghdad," he said.

It is this type of leadership that makes 1st Platoon one of the best platoons in the U.S. Army, said Staff Sgt. Leland Cannon, platoon sergeant, Battery B, 2nd Bn., 77th FA.

Cannon, a 28-year old native of Galveston, Texas, married to Linda, with two children Christian, 6, and Gabriel, 4, has more than nine years service in the Army, and prior to deploying to Iraq had worked as a motor sergeant for the battery.

As Lindemann's platoon sergeant, Cannon spends most of his time with his "PL," and believes that the lieutenant is more than dedicated to his Soldiers and their mission.

"Back in the days, Soldiers were pigeonholed as being unintelligent, but today's Army, he kind of epitomizes that, crushes that stereotype," Cannon said.

Lindemann's attention to detail and dedication to a standard is evident in his Soldiers, said Cannon. The platoon leader works hard to ensure that his Soldiers have all of the resources available to ensure the successful accomplishment of their mission.

"He is standard 'by-the-book'," said Sgt. Dax Gary, lead gunner, First Platoon, Battery B, 2nd Bn., 77th FA, "at the same token, a compassionate man."

Gary's smiles when he recalls a story when Lindemann made it a point to stop at every Iraqi Army checkpoint and give water to the Iraqi soldiers standing in the sweltering July heat.

"He's just got a good heart," he said of his lieutenant. "He is just trying to make it better."

Yet, on the same account, the native of Lafayette, La., who rides with the patrol leader everyday, can't name one instance in ten months, when the platoon leader didn't enforce his standards.

"Anybody who knows him knows he is very uptight, but it's not," Gary said. "It's just doing things as they should be done. I cannot name one instance where he cut the corner. The man don't sway; he don't bend."

It is this commitment to standards that helps make his pla-

toon one of the best in the U.S. Army, said Cannon.

"I am confident that if anything did happen to me in the platoon, my Soldiers from the lowest private to the most high-speed staff sergeant could get us back in one piece," he explained.

He hasn't decided if he will stay with the Army once his contract is completed after the unit's life-cycle ends, but the husband to Candace and a father to his newborn daughter, Lilah Margaret, Lindemann is considering returning to New York, where he is a licensed attorney, and practice law.

In his mind, Lindemann was one of those people, before the events of Sep. 11, who would have supported the troops in Amercia's Armed Forces regardless of whether he enlisted or not, but after that day, he had to join; in his mind, he had an obligation and a duty to serve.

Ten years from now, Lindemann hopes to look back at his Soldiers and see that they are all happy and healthy, and when asked if he has achieved the personal goals set by himself on Sept. 11, 2001, he turns his attention quickly to the mission in Iraq.

Thinking about his mission, he falls back on his studies, his degrees and his knowledge of history.

"It took two centuries for the U.S. to reach some semblance of the democracy it has today," he explained. "It took two centuries for women to get the vote for property qualifications, to vote to be taken off the books for the direct election for senators. The creation of the democracy that we have in America does not happen overnight. It is a long, uphill road."

It is good to see the Iraqis taking charge of their political system and their military and working to forge a new future, said Lindemann.

"I think it can be accomplished over here," he said. "I think the Iraqi people are capable of taking ownership, and we have seen that during our 9 ½ months here."

"We have seen increased ownership of the political process, of the military process," he continued. "So I am very hopeful for the Iraqis' ability to create a functioning democracy in a very dangerous part of the world with very dangerous enemies, not just to America, but also the concept of democracy and the freedoms that democracies bring."

Despite the challenges and the many setbacks along the way, Lindemann can testify to the progress seen in Baghdad and Iraq, especially when talking and interacting with the Iraqi people.

"My platoon's time here, we have managed to add to that foundation, and I think that unit by unit, we all do our part in some small way to get this country on its feet and get its people in power," he explained.

"I've seen abysmal conditions get better just due to our presence over here. We have had a positive effect as far as I've seen, as a coalition, in terms of bringing Iraqi systems out from the dark days of Saddam and into the life of modernity."

Editors Note: For complete story log onto
www.dvidshub.net .

COBRA UNSUNG HEROES

SPC Andrew Indellicate
SPC Donald H Overla
SGT Richard Jack-James
SGT Patrick Trevillion
Geospatial Information Systems
4BCT, 4ID



Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team has a section that is not the spearhead of operations. But, this section is a major contributor from the smallest to Brigade level operations within and outside of the 4th BCT's Area of Operation. This section is the 4th BCT Geospatial Information Systems Team. .

This section has supported every operation within the AO by being directly in the planning stage, providing terrain analysis and tactical decision aids, or even modified operations-based maps.

It is hard to find an element around the Forward Operating Bases that doesn't have a map on the wall that was not made from the GIS Team. The team has answered within the last 4

months at least 600 individual RFI's (requests for information). Each one of those RFIs requests different products for a certain sections, units, or operations in the greater Baghdad AO.

"The work that my team has done is astounding! I cannot or will not take credit for their effort and dedication or give the spotlight to just one Soldier," said Staff Sgt. Craig Bogardus, GIS NCOIC, 4BCT Terrain. "I can say this with unbound pride; my boys have not in the least let anyone down in the fact that they go beyond that 110% threshold and contribute to 4th BCT's operational duties in Baghdad, Iraq."

SPC Sam Salas
HHC, 4BCT, 4ID
Petroleum Supply Specialist



Sam H. Salas, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, joined the Army on June 8, 2004 as a Petroleum Supply Specialist. Salas is from Floresville, Texas and is 20 years old. He has been married to his wife Savannah for a year-and-a-half. He has been a part of the Brigade HHC since January 2005. He also is a Gunner on the Company Executive Officer's M1114 High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicle, and drives the company supply truck. Salas is a hard working Soldier that never complains about any mission given to him. As a part of the Orderly Room Section of the Brigade, Spc. Salas has multiple duties that have a great impact on the day to day morale and operations of the Company. Whether he is on CQ, working in the Supply Room, picking up and or

delivering mail for the Company or out on combat patrols with the first sergeant going to different FOBs in the surrounding Baghdad area, you can rest assured that Salas is giving 110% to the mission accomplishment of the unit. Salas has been a tremendous asset to the 4th Brigade Combat Team. He can be counted on to accomplish all assigned tasks given to him with little or no supervision. Salas plans to make a career out of the Army and will continue to do great things for our Army for years to come.

SPC Sonny Slater **B CO, 4STB, 4BCT, 4ID** **Satellite Operator/Maintainer**



On any hot day in Iraq, you can find soldiers toiling away, trying to accomplish their daily duties before the sun becomes unbearable. As Wolfpack soldiers scramble looking for Kevlars and gear to complete refueling operations, and make it to the motor pool before dispatch hour's end, Spc. Sonny Slater is working methodically to improve the overall operation of the Ku Band Satellite. At any time of the day, you can find him pondering and experimenting with different ideas trying to make the satellite work that much more efficiently. Day in and day out, the Ku Band provides the forward operating base with vital data communications reaching all over the world, this is a job that Specialist Slater takes very seriously. Recently, the weather has been well into the hundreds of degrees and taking a toll on the many, Ku Bands Satellites in theater. The HVA amplifier in particular has been having the most problems. The civilians that

work for DataPath have been working overtime trying to keep up with the demand for technical support. One unit in particular is prepared. With the help of the local wood shop, Specialist Slater has designed an innovative way to keep not only the vital equipment cool but prolong the life of the infamous amplifier that has plagued units. Civilian representatives say that it is only a matter of time before the unit will have to be replaced. Its demise is inevitable. Local units have had to replace the amplifier as many as five times costing the Army thousands and thousands of dollars; Spc. Slater and his team have worked overtime to ensure that Company B does not contribute to the debt.

SPC Jeffrey Ryno **HHC, 2-6 INF, 2BCT, 1AD** **Task Force 2-6 Mail Handler**



Spc. Ryno is the Task Force 2-6 mail handler. He processes all incoming letter and parcel mail for Task Force 2-6 Soldiers.

Though mail arrives on an irregular basis, Ryno always checks with the post office, ensuring all mail belonging to TF 2-6 Soldiers gets distributed as soon as possible.

When asked why he spends so much time processing mail, Spc. Ryno states, "It's such a morale boost for the Soldiers to get their mail. It seems like a Soldier is always waiting for that letter, care package or gadget they ordered off the internet to arrive."

When not processing mail, Ryno is responsible for tracking Soldiers Environmental Leave slots.

He works with the training rooms from each company, ensuring Soldiers receive the proper leave counseling, ensuring the leave form is filled-out correctly and tracking the manifest to ensure Soldiers depart on time.

After taking care of the Soldiers, Spec. Ryno states, "I work-out a lot. There's no better stress relief than lifting weights and it keeps me fit."

By Capt. Gabriel I. Martinez

Public Affairs Officer, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment

Citizens look adversity in the face

NEW IRAQ

Story by D. Saleh and Ahmed

This story of security and the fight against the terrorists in Iraq is different, because the country is different.

Presently, the reactions of the Iraqis concerning their nation's security forces and the security plan has been very positive in recent days, because the people of Iraq feel that Iraq's security forces are working hard to protect them from the terrorism.

This evident in the residents living in the neighborhoods as they call the Iraqi Government to continue the new security operations and purge the terrorism out Iraq.

The people suffered from a long dictatorship for about 35 years. Iraq's was unable to remove this dictator and even the international Community supported the former regime.

So the United States removed Saddam Hussein from power, and we began a new page in the history of Iraq.

So after the collapse of the former regime and the formation of the first governing console in Iraq, the Iraqi people established the base for a democratic country.

But the evil influences from outside countries didn't like it, and began supporting the terrorists in Iraq in many different ways.

People fighting against the freedom of Iraq are trying to destroy this country by helping the intruders and the insurgents get inside Iraq, as they continue to finance them.

The former Ba'athist lost their privileges, and now must resort to supporting the terrorists and committing acts of violence against the people of Iraq in an attempt to undermine Iraqi freedom.

The Ba'ath party ideology has always been used to keep Iraqis under the Ba'ath regime era and to keep the non-Ba'athist Iraqis ignorant, denying them the chance to go to college.

After the war, the government faced real difficulty for rebuilding the Iraqi Army. Recently the Ministry of Defense announced the opening of new volunteering centers, calling the Iraqis to join the new Iraqi Army.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel

Iraq's new army will play a key role in providing security and bringing peace to the citizens of the country. Today more than ever the Iraqi Security Forces are taking the fight to the enemy.

After a new election and several months, the Iraqi Prime Minister announced the national reconciliation and promised to make the Iraqi Army independent, working hard to fight the terrorism.

New efforts have also started to train the Iraqi Police to face the terrorism and to save the security.

The people noted in the beginning a big problem with the Iraqi security forces' loyalty to their parties and not to the laws of Iraq.

In return, the rise of the sectarian violence created pressure on the government, which accused foreign forces of sneaking inside the army.

The new plan is to displace

the Sunnis from the Shiite majority neighborhoods and displace the Shiites from the Sunni majority neighborhoods.

Rivaling groups executed this plan by sending a threatening letter with a bullet enclosed.

Iraqis living for many years at the same house, left their homes after receiving the letter, and rich Iraqis and businessmen left the country rather than face the violence.

So the government fights to put a stop to it by announcing the national reconciliation. Soon after the Baghdad security plan begins its first phase and later moves into the second phase, and the Iraqi people are seeing the sectarian violence has digressed.

bright future for Iraq ahead

OPERATION

TOGETHER

FORWARD



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel

Some of Iraq's future leaders and lawmakers pose for a quick photograph while playing in a field in the Doura neighborhood in southern Baghdad. The neighborhood, once a site of violence, is now safer thanks to Iraqi National Police who have worked tirelessly to provide security to the people there.

In neighborhoods such as Al Doura and Risala Neighborhoods, the people once displaced are returning back to their houses, and that is truly a good achievement for the new government.

During the announcement about the new Baghdad security plan, the security forces played a big role and achieved many goals of this plan.

Still, the people saw some gaps after two days of security, which reflected negatively on the new efforts.

Yet, the government continues to build upon the stability in the second security plan by blockading the

neighborhoods, creating new checkpoints, and imposing a curfew.

The raids and search operations targeted the weapons and the terrorists, and Multi-National Forces continue to play a big role in training the Iraqi army and IP on raids, search operations.

And in the face of success, the government continues to send Iraqi forces to get the modern training in the fight against terrorism.

The end result will be putting the weapons only in the hands of the security forces and dissolving the militias which have been involved in many of the problems in the country today.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jason Dangel

A family finishes a day of shopping in southern Baghdad.

OPERATION

TOGETHER

FORWARD

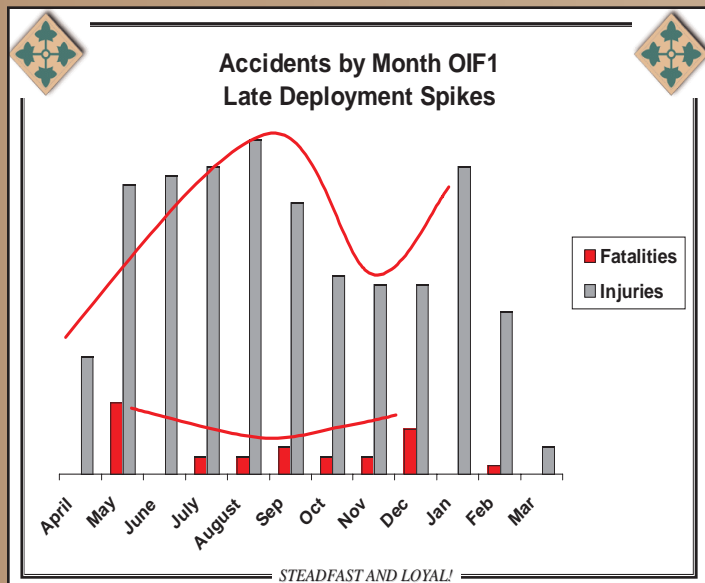
Beating the Late-Deployment Accident Spike



By Sean Morrill, Safety Specialist, 4BCT, 4ID

During the late stages of long deployments units can experience a rash of accidents a few months before returning home.

This chart from Operations Iraqi Freedom-1 shows how 4th Infantry Division fared during that year in Iraq and when



this late deployment spike showed up.

As you can see when units enter a new area of operations there is usually a steady increase in mishaps.

The first few months can be hectic as new missions are conducted, and units get used to their new battle-space and living conditions.

Over time, experience is gained, controls are put in place to prevent accidents, and they taper off to lower levels. Unfortunately as the mission progresses there is a tendency for accidents and fatalities to increase again a few months before redeployment.

This ends up costing lives, results in injuries and damaged equipment, and detracts from the mission after units have hit their stride in operations.

What kind of accidents do we mostly see during a deployment? This second chart from 4ID during OIF-1 shows that

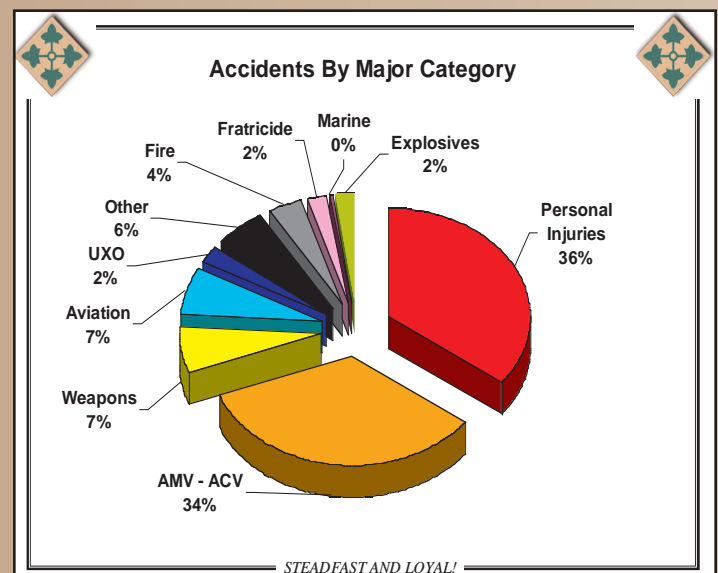
they are usually experienced as Army Motor & Combat Vehicles (AMV/ACV) mishaps and Personal Injuries (PI).

The primary cause for vehicle accidents during deployment is the same as in the United States; excessive speed or driving too fast for conditions.

This is historically and repeatedly the number one reason these mishaps occur. Collisions, rollovers, and hitting dismounted troops are some of the sub category types of AMV & ACV accidents experienced. Motor vehicle accidents are also the largest fatality producing category, time and time again.

Personal Injury accidents while deployed are incurred from things such as falls from elevation (off vehicles and buildings), sporting activities/physical training, maintenance/material handling, and in the use of electricity.

Though this category may sound less dangerous, many of these types of accidents are fatal or cause permanent damage to those who survive them. The root causes of these accidents are Soldiers being overconfident, rushing, or



becoming complacent about everyday hazards like climbing on their vehicles or moving heavy equipment.

So what can we do to prevent the late accident spike?

The primary reason we have these late term accidents is complacency or being too comfortable in doing dangerous jobs.

This is usually caused by successfully performing a task, job, or operating a potentially dangerous piece of equipment for months on end without a mishap.

We gain experience, and become an expert in our own minds on how to do what we are doing. Often times this leads us to subconsciously down play the hazards we know about and not giving them the healthy respect we used to.

Unfortunately this attitude can lull us into a false sense of security and cause us to take short cuts, to be overconfident, or to do things too quickly. This can lead to and end result of us having the accident we thought would never happen to us!

To counter complacency and the downplaying of hazards think about some things you, your section, and unit can do to fight this dangerous mind-set during deployment. Turn the tables and productively use the knowledge and experience you have gained to make the job safer, or "Murphy-proof" if possible. Consider doing things like:

" **Creating a continuity book with emphasis on how to safely do your job**

" **Write down the steps for complex tasks and create a checklist if it can be done using one; then require its use**

" **Label or post signs about hazards in your area that you have learned about over time that haven't or**

can't be corrected

" **Share ways of doing business and lessons learned with others that do your job, especially if they come out of an accident**

" **Review technical manuals and refresh yourself on Warnings, Cautions, & Notes for the vehicles/equipment you work with to fight the "Know-it-all" frame of mind.**

These are only a few ideas on how to fight complacency and the late deployment accident. You can probably think of more or can get ideas from those who have seen these late mishaps.

The main point is that the knowledge gained over time while deployed can also be used to fight the very complacency it breeds.

Knowing that overconfidence and getting too comfortable in your job are real threats, and that these dangerous attitudes can be countered by using what you have learned are the key.

By using experience gained over time, and enforcing the standards for doing what you do, you can prevent history from being repeated.

Attack the problem by applying these and other tactics, and you'll increase the odds of you and your unit safely completing a long deployment tour. You'll also find that flattening out the late deployment accident spike is a battle we can all win.





Energy Production in Muscle

There are different Types of Muscles for slow and fast movements, and different chemical processes used for strength, burst, or endurance. Both the muscle type and chemical reaction used to produce power will depend on whether your movement requires a slow contraction, a short burst of power, longer sustained movement of low intensity, or high intensity contraction for longer periods of time.

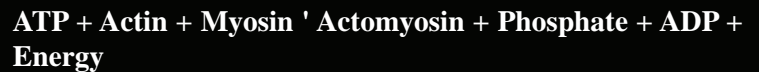
THE TYPES OF MUSCLES: Fast twitch and slow twitch Fast Twitch Muscles

The purpose of this Type of Muscles is to provide rapid movement for short periods of time. Fast twitch muscles do not use oxygen - they use glycogen. Reactions using glycogen require anaerobic enzymes to produce power. Glycogen is stored in the muscles and liver, and is synthesized by the body using carbohydrates. Furthermore, fast twitch muscles provides you with strength and speed.

Slow Twitch Muscles

As their name indicates, these fibers have a slower contraction time. Slow twitch muscles use oxygen for power and have a predominance of aerobic enzymes. This Type of Muscles are large muscles found in the legs, thigh, trunk, back, and hips, and are used for holding posture. Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP) is the main source of energy for all muscle contraction.

There are several chemical reactions that take place to produce ATP. When a muscle is used, a chemical reaction breaks down ATP to produce energy:



This is the chemical reaction that produces energy. However, there is only enough ATP stored in the muscle cell for two or three slow twitch contractions, or one burst of power from a fast twitch contraction. Thus, more ATP must be created. There are three enzyme systems that can create more ATP. The enzyme system that is used depends on whether the type of muscle is a fast twitch or a slow twitch, and whether the muscle is used for strength, burst power, or endurance.

THREE ENZYME SYSTEMS TO CREATE ATP: Strength, Burst Power, and Endurance

The Strength Enzyme System

When muscle strength is required, ATP is created quickly from the following chemical reaction. The enzyme creatine kinase mediates ATP production from the high energy molecule Creatine Phosphate (CP) by an anaerobic reaction:



The CP is depleted in just a few seconds. This is why your

Anatomical Anterior (front) view of skeletal system



1. Galae Aoneurotica
2. Epicranius
3. Orbicularis Oculi
4. Nasilis
5. Levatro Labi Superioris
6. Zygomaticus
7. Orbicularis Oris
8. Risorius
9. Depressor Anguli Oris
10. Depressor Labii
11. Mentalis
12. Omohyoid
13. Sternohyoid
14. Sternocleidomastoid
15. Scalene
16. Trapezius

16. Trapezius
17. Deltoid
18. Pectoralis Major
19. Serratus Anterior
20. Rectus Abdominis
21. Abdominal Oblique
22. biceps brachii
23. brachialis
24. Pronator Teres
25. Brachioradialis
26. Flexor Carpi Radialis
27. Extensor Carpi Radialis
28. Tensor Fasciae Latae
29. iliopsoas
30. Pectineus
31. Sartorius

32. Adductor Longus
33. Gracilis
34. Rectus Femoris
35. Vastus Intermedius
36. Vastus Lateralis
37. Vastus Medialis
38. Gastrocnemius
39. Peroneus Longus
40. Tibialis Anterior
41. Soleus
42. Peroneus Brevis
43. Extensor Digitorum Longus



maximum power can be maintained for only a few seconds. To continue producing high strength power, the speed enzyme system kicks in.

The Burst Power Enzyme System

The enzymes required for this reaction are depleted in less than two minutes. This reaction is called Anaerobic Glycolysis because it uses glucose without oxygen.

Glucose \rightarrow 2ATP + 2 Lactate

To continue muscle usage requires the aerobic system to kick in. The aerobic system uses oxygen and sugar for fuel. Your ability to perform well after about two minutes of maximum exertion depends on the aerobic conditioning of your body.

The Endurance Enzyme System

There are three sources of ATP for aerobic muscle to use: carbohydrates, Fats, and amino acid proteins. Among the three, the most efficient in metabolizing are carbohydrates. Thus, carbohydrates are used first. If carbohydrates are not available,

your body will then metabolize fat and amino acid proteins. All three of these reactions are called Aerobic Glycolysis because they use glucose and oxygen:

Carbohydrate Metabolism: Glucose + O₂ \rightarrow 36 ATP + CO₂ + H₂O

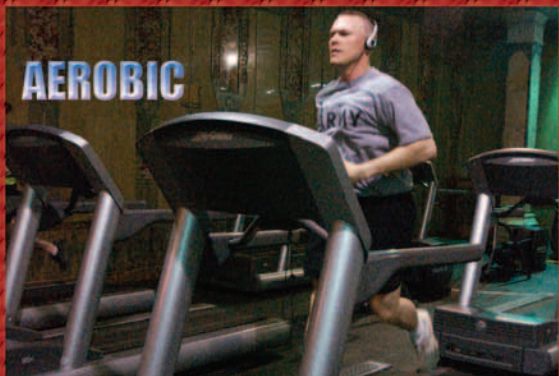
Fat Metabolism: Fatty Acid + O₂ \rightarrow 130 ATP + C₂ + H₂O

Amino Acid Protein Metabolism: Amino Acids + O₂ \rightarrow 15 ATP + CO₂ + H₂O

Your body stores glucose and fatty acids for these reactions. Your cardiovascular system provides a continuous supply of oxygen. Glycogen is stored in the muscles and liver in sufficient quantities for about two hours of strenuous exercise. You can extend this time by aerobic physical conditioning and high carbohydrate diet. After your stored glycogen are used up, your body obtains its energy from fatty acid metabolism and amino acid protein metabolism. However, these reactions are not efficient, which consequently cause your strength and endurance to drop drastically.

Aerobic and Anaerobic Response

A guide to understanding your body's energy systems



Aerobic Response and slow twitch muscle fibers

The human body's aerobic energy system deals primarily with red muscle fibers or slow twitch muscle. The aerobic response is activated when an individual is involved in a cardiovascular exercise. The body will use this system for any strenuous exercise that lasts more than twenty minutes. People who run or bike a lot have a higher count of this type of muscle fiber in their bodies, and usually appear very lean such as a marathon runner. Running on a treadmill is a great exercise to increase your red fiber count.



Anaerobic Response and fast twitch muscle fibers

Anaerobic response is completely the opposite. This system deals with power output, or your body's ability to use strength effectively in short powerful bursts like when an individual is doing a bench press. The anaerobic response uses white muscle fiber or fast twitch muscle during strenuous exercise. This type of muscle responds quickly to heavy weight. Unlike the aerobic system, the anaerobic system usually lasts about twenty to thirty minutes into a workout. At the close of a heavy weight lifting session a person tends to feel "muscle failure" and this is because the anaerobic system is out of fuel, fuel being carbs. SO CARB UP!

RE-UP



CRAZY

Story by Spc. Jason Dangel

The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division surpassed all reenlistment objectives for fiscal year 2006 after swearing in the last Soldier needed to meet the brigade's retention goals.

Sgt. Richard Ousley, Company G, 704th Support Battalion, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., helped push the 4th BCT over the top after he took the oath of reenlistment during a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Union III August 5.

With Ousley's new four year commitment the "Cobra" Brigade became the first brigade in the Division to accomplish all reenlistment objectives this year.

The brigade retention team, led by Sgt. 1st Class Keith Green, brigade senior career counselor, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., achieved all reenlistment goals to include initial-term, mid-term, and career Soldier reenlistees.

"We aggressively attacked our retention mission while informing our Soldiers to always place their families first," said Green, a native of Toledo, Ohio.

"If they had no immediate plans, then the welfare of their own families was a major part of the decision to stay with the Army," he said.

The 4th BCT retention team reenlisted more than 291 initial-term, 174 mid-term, and 121 career Soldiers, well surpassing all assigned objectives set forth by the Department of the



The 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. John E. Moody Jr., congratulates Sgt. Richard Ousley during a reenlistment ceremony at Forward Operating Base Union III in central Baghdad August 5. With Ousley's reenlistment, the 4th BCT Cobra's became the first brigade in the Division to meet all retention objectives for fiscal year 2006.

Army.

"We've actually been prohibited from reenlisting any more initial term and career Soldiers until Oct. 1 since the Army has met its Retention Goals," said Staff Sgt. Jonathan Blue, career counselor, 4th BCT.

"As we enter the new fiscal year, our goal is to reenlist as many qualified Soldiers who are eligible to receive the Deployment Bonus before we return to Fort Hood," explained Blue, a native of Tucson, Arizona.

Proactive retention guidance provided by members of the Cobra Retention Team ensured all Soldiers received the most up-to-date reenlistment information to help them make the choice to stay

with the Cobra Brigade, said Green.

For Ousley, his decision to reenlist was simply because of his deep love for the Army and his job. The deployment bonus wasn't a factor in his decision to stay Army; he wasn't even eligible for one.

The 16-year transportation specialist from Troy, Ala said he loves being a Soldier and reenlisted in order to retire from the service in 2010.

"I enlisted in the Army in 1990 initially for college benefits, but quickly came to love my job and what I was doing," Ousley said.

"The Army has given me a lot," he explained. "I've been able to support

my family, enjoy the benefits and most importantly, I'm happy."

Even as the war in Iraq continues, Soldiers across the Army, like Ousley, reenlist at a phenomenal rate, said Green.

Today's Soldiers are more refined than any before in history, and have been asked to adapt to a new style of warfare, often serving multiple tours all as a volunteer force. This is an amazing feat in itself, he said.

"We usually don't have to ask Soldiers to reenlist, they just do."

COBRAS LIGHT

Words that touch the spirit

*By Chaplain (CPT) Joseph Kingsley Blay
2nd-506th Infantry
101st Airborne Division (AASLT)*

People cannot live without hope. Throughout history, human beings have endured the loss of many things. People have lost their health, their finances, their reputations, their careers, even their loved ones, and yet have endured. The pages of history books are filled with those who suffered pain, rejection, isolation, persecution and abuse; there have been people who faced concentration camps with unbroken spirits and unbowed heads, people who have been devastated by Job-like trials and yet found the strength to go on without cursing God and dying. Humans can survive the loss of almost anything-but not without hope.

Hope is how we live. Hope is what gets us from one day to the next. A person goes to school and hopes that one day he will graduate. That person graduates and hopes that one day he will enter into a great career. If he is single, he hopes that perhaps one day he will meet the right person and get married. He gets married and hopes that one day he and his wife will have children. When they have children, they hope that they will live long enough to get the kids out of the house.

We live by hope, and when hope is gone, endurance and joy and energy and courage just evaporate. Life itself begins

to fade. When hope goes, we start to die. One of the most profound proverbs of the Bible says, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life" (Proverbs 13:120).

For those of us who have been in theater for the past eight months, our hopes are up. We can almost see the light at the end of the tunnel. We are motivated because very soon we will be heading back home to the familiar, to our families and loved ones. We are excited.

The danger though, is that we can be so focused on going home that we become complacent. The cost of complacency could be devastating. Let us heed the advice of the apostle Paul in 1Timothy 3:13-14, "Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do; forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

We have done well so far but we are yet to arrive at our destination. Let us keep up the good work. Let us finish strong so that when the end finally comes, we can be proud of ourselves and say, "We finished the race, we gave it our all."

Stay blessed and stay safe!!!



Spc. Tyler Rollis-Ross, awards clerk, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, is baptized by Chaplain William Horton, brigade chaplain, and Chaplain Tony Sanders, 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th BCT, 4th Inf. Div., at the Forward Operation Base Prosperity Chapel in central Baghdad.

SET'S TIME MEDIA ON THE BATTLEFIELD

LEADERS MUST WORK TO ENSURE THAT U.S. ARMY SOLDIERS HAVE A WORKING UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO CONTROL MEDIA -- WHETHER COORDINATED IN A PREPLANNED MEDIA INTERVIEW OR EVENT, OR UPON A CHANCE ENCOUNTER DURING PATROLS, OPERATIONS OR RESPONSES.



HOW TO CONDUCT A MEDIA INTERVIEW

- Take positive control of the interview.
- Establish Ground Rules for the interview.
- The media is a tool to tell your story to the public.
- Nobody is better prepared to tell your story than you.
- Talk about your Soldiers, your unit and what you are doing.
- Focus on the positives of the Iraqi army and the Coalition.
- Listen, Think, Pause and Respond to the question.
- Always maintain OPSEC and TELL THE TRUTH. DON'T LIE!
- Be brief and concise. Keep responses to 10-15 seconds.
- Avoid military jargon and/or acronyms.
- STAY IN YOUR LANE!!!
- It is okay to say "I don't know," or "I can't talk about that."
- Conclude interview positively. Use command messages.



ENGAGING MEDIA ON THE BATTLEFIELD

- CONDUCT SECURITY CHECK
- CHECK CREDENTIALS / CONFIRM PRESS BADGE
- VERIFY REPORTER'S NAME AND ORGANIZATION
- RECORD MEDIA QUERY OR REQUEST
- ALWAYS NOTIFY CHAIN OF COMMAND!
- MAINTAIN SITUATIONAL AWARENESS
- ENSURE OVERWATCH IF AVAILABLE
- ENGAGE THE MEDIA
- MAKE INTRODUCTION / BUILD RAPPORT
- PROTECT OPSEC AT ALL TIMES
- REMAIN PROFESSIONAL
- EVERYTHING IS "ON THE RECORD"
- USE COMMAND MESSAGES AND TALKING POINTS