

Regional Command Southwest *Round-up*

Biweekly PAO Report

----- March 18, 2014 -----

NEWS

Deployed Marines gather to remember fallen brother

Story and photos by Cpl. Joshua Young



CAMP LEATHERNECK - Marines and sailors with 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, gathered to remember a fallen brother aboard Camp Leatherneck, March 7. Lance Cpl. Caleb L. Erickson, a motor transportation mechanic with Motor Transportation Platoon, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, died while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 28. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Afghans see continued success in Sangin Valley

Story and photos by Cpl. Joshua Young

FORWARD OPERATING BASE ROBINSON, Afghanistan - Marines with Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 2-215 visited Afghan National Army outposts near Forward Operating Base Robinson, Feb. 24. Colonel AbdulHai Neshat, the executive officer of 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps, ANA, invited Col. Christopher Douglas, the team leader of SFAAT 2-215, to visit the outposts and see the progress that was made in a recent operation, Oqab 144.

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Corpsman with 9th Marine Regiment recognized for actions in Helmand province

Story by Cpl. Cody Haas and photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson



PATROL BASE BOLDAK, Afghanistan – If a Marine is seriously injured during a patrol, having a skilled Navy corpsman on the scene can mean the difference between life and death. Seaman Jacob M. Schlauder, a corpsman with 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with combat distinguishing device for heroic actions while serving as a corpsman with 9th Marines by Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James F. Amos aboard Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan, Feb. 18, 2014. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Marine Expeditionary Brigade – Afghanistan Marines attend security shura prior to upcoming Afghan presidential elections

Story and photos by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DELARAM, Afghanistan – Brigadier Gen. Daniel D. Yoo, commanding general, Regional Command (Southwest), and Marine Expeditionary Brigade – Afghanistan staff visited with Afghan National Army officials of the 4th Brigade, 215th Corps, aboard Forward Operating Base Delaram, Nimroz province, Afghanistan, March 4, 2014. During the visit, Brig. Gen. Yoo, MEB-A staff, Marines with Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 4-215, Afghan officials as well as Nimroz provincial security officers held a shura to discuss the upcoming presidential election and security measures being emplaced to ensure the local people are kept safe. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Afghans prove proficiency in artillery training

Story by Cpl. Joshua Young



CAMP SHORABAK, Afghanistan - Soldiers with the 215th Corps, Afghan National Army, completed a six-week D-30 122 mm howitzer instructor course aboard Camp Shorabak, March 12. The culminating day of exercises confirmed the ability of the Afghan soldiers to not only accurately fire the howitzer but also instruct others in the process. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Afghan National Army soldiers familiarize themselves with MOUT techniques

Story and photos by Cpl. Cody Haas

CAMP BASTION, Afghanistan – Afghan National Army soldiers enrolled in the Regional Corps Battle School conducted a Military Operations in Urban Terrain training exercise aboard Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, March 8. An eight-man team of ANA soldiers lined up one in front of the other next to an open doorway along the side of a building. With a gentle nudge from the second soldier, the lead man charged into the building and immediately set up security for the rest of the team.

[\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Afghan National Army soldiers familiarize themselves with mortars, demolition

Story and photos by Cpl. Cody Haas



CAMP SHORABAK, Afghanistan – A trained mortarman brings a strategic advantage to the battlefield, providing the capability to accurately engage enemy firing positions from a far distance. When multiple insurgents attack a squad of Afghan National Army soldiers, a trained mortarman can bring the fight to the enemy from beyond 800 meters away. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Georgians coordinate, lead operation with Marines through village in Now Zad District

Story and photos by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – The sky was black with the exception of a few construction lights illuminating a small compound. Rugged, heavyweight military vehicles began to stage for departure. Voices were heard shouting out of the darkness, ensuring everyone was accounted for and ready to begin the operation. A team comprised predominantly of soldiers with the 31st Light Infantry Battalion from the Republic of Georgia, a small group of U.S. Marines assigned to Alpha Company, Georgian Liaison Team – 11, and soldiers with the Afghan National Army conducted a patrol to an Afghan village in Now Zad District, Helmand province, Afghanistan, March 6-7. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



Cutting Edge transfers authority to 1/7

Story and photos by Cpl. Joseph Scanlan



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – Marines and sailors stood at attention as 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, known as Cutting Edge, handed over the responsibilities for their area of operations in Regional Command (Southwest) to 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, known as First Team, during a transfer of authority ceremony aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, March 15. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Mobile exchange brings comforts to Forward Operating Bases

Story and photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SABIT QADAM, Afghanistan - For most Marines and sailors, a trip to the post exchange for a snack and drink may consist of a short walk or drive, but for the Marines and sailors aboard forward operating bases across Regional Command (Southwest), the PX must come to them. A small group of Marines known as a Warfighter Express Services team travels throughout the RC(SW) battle space and sets up shop inside an empty shipping container to provide postal, disbursing and Marine Corps Exchange services for Marines and sailors on different FOBs. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)



CLB-7 Marines help Afghans prepare vehicles for upcoming Afghan elections

Story and photos by Sgt. Jessica Ostroska



CAMP SHORABAK, Afghanistan – Marines with Combat Logistics Company, Combat Logistics Battalion 7, recently conducted training with Afghan mechanics with the Regional Logistics Support Company, 215th Corps, Afghan National Army, aboard Camp Shorabak, Helmand province, Afghanistan. The training is part of a two-week specialized maintenance surge to assist the ANA mechanics in preparing their vehicles for the upcoming Afghan presidential elections in order to ensure mobility for the security forces. It will also enable the sustainability of their capabilities and equipment. [\(Read the STORY\)](#)

Infantrymen conduct Mission Rehearsal Exercise at FOB Juno

Story and photos by Cpl. Joseph Scanlan

CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – A vehicle convoy stirred the air with dust as Marines with Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, departed Camp Leatherneck, March 13. As the battalion prepared to take over the battlespace controlled by 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, the company conducted a partnered Mission Rehearsal Exercise at Forward Operating Base Juno with Afghan National Security Forces to prepare themselves for potential future operations. ([Read the STORY](#))



Oklahoma natives, Marine brothers reunite in Afghanistan

Story and photos by Cpl. Cody Haas



CAMP LEATHERNECK, Afghanistan – After being separated for more than a year and a half, two brothers were reunited while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Lance Cpl. Donald Rucker, a maintenance administration clerk with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, Marine Aircraft Group - Afghanistan, Regional Command (Southwest), and his brother, Lance Cpl. Ian Smith, a mortarman with Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, RC(SW), reconnected with one another aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, March 11. ([Read the STORY](#))

PHOTOS

3rd MAW assistant wing commander flies with HMLA-369 in Afghanistan

Photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson



Brigadier Gen. Mark R. Wise, assistant wing commander, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, climbs into a UH-1Y Huey on the Camp Bastion flight line as he prepares to co-pilot the aircraft for a mission with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369, March 10, 2014. Brigadier Gen. Wise traveled from Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., to visit the air wing Marines deployed to Regional Command (Southwest) in Helmand province, Afghanistan. ([See the PHOTOS](#))

DOD's top enlisted advisor speaks at Camp Leatherneck

Photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson

Sergeant Maj. Bryan B. Battaglia, senior enlisted advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, addresses the audience during a town hall meeting with Marines and sailors aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, March 16, 2014. Sergeant Maj. Battaglia discussed the future of the Marine Corps and military with service members from Regional Command (Southwest) and met with outstanding Marines from various units. ([See the PHOTOS](#))



Marines of 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment arrive at Sabit Qadam

Photo by Sgt. Frances Johnson



Marines of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, unload their packs and gear aboard Forward Operating Base Sabit Qadam, Helmand province, Afghanistan, March 8, 2014. The Marines are relieving 3rd Bn., 7th Marines on the FOB and will be some of the final Marines in Sangin Valley. [\(See the PHOTO\)](#)

Wounded soldiers return to Afghanistan for Operation Proper Exit

Photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson

Army Capt. Matt Anderson, a soldier formerly with the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, shakes hands with Marines and soldiers who gathered to give Anderson and his fellow soldiers a "Hero's Welcome" at the passenger terminal aboard Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, March 13, 2014. Anderson and four other soldiers were participants in Operation Proper Exit, a program for wounded service members who choose to come back to Afghanistan after recovering from combat injuries in order to find closure. [\(See the PHOTOS\)](#)



1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment conducts live-fire training exercise

Photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson



An infantry Marine with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, takes aim at a simulated enemy position during a live-fire training exercise aboard Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, March 6, 2014. The exercise, which simulated an enemy insurgent attack, increased confidence in locating and suppressing enemy positions. [\(See the Photos\)](#)

Squadron unveils Afghanistan deployment call sign 'Heavyweight'

Photos by Cpl. Joshua Young

The sergeant major of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466, Sgt. Maj. Carlos M. Murcia, and Lt. Col. Timothy Sheyda, the commanding officer of HMH-466, unveil a sign for the unit's new call sign, "Heavyweight," aboard Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, March 17, 2014. On every deployment, HMH-466 chooses a new call sign, which they will be known by throughout the tour. [\(See the PHOTOS\)](#)



NFL players visit troops in Helmand

Photos by Sgt. Frances Johnson and Cpl. Cody Haas



From left to right, Brig. Gen. Daniel D. Yoo, commanding general of Regional Command (Southwest), Pierre Garcon, wide receiver of the Washington Redskins, Brandon Fields, punter of the Miami Dolphins, Sgt. Maj. Douglas Berry, sergeant major for RC(SW), Master Chief Petty Officer Frank Dominguez, command master chief for RC(SW), and Jimmy Graham, tight end of the New Orleans Saints, pose for a photo during a USO-sponsored tour to Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, March 5, 2014. Three NFL players volunteered for the tour to support troops serving in Operation Enduring Freedom. ([See the Photos](#))

VIDEO

Mobile Strike Force Advisors Guide Afghan 3rd MSF Toward Success

Video by Sgt. Frances Johnson



The Marines of Mobile Strike Force Assistance Advisor Team brought their counterparts of the 3rd Mobile Strike Force to Camp Leatherneck for vehicle recovery training with Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles with simulated catastrophic damage, Feb. 23 and 24. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))

Marine Advisors Visit Afghan Outposts in Sangin Valley

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young

Marines with Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 2-215 visited Afghan National Army outposts near Forward Operating Base Robinson, Feb. 24. Colonel AbdulHai Neshat, the executive officer of 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps, ANA invited Col. Christopher Douglas, the team leader of SFAAT 2-215, to visit the outposts and the progress made in a recent operation called Oqab-144.

([Watch the VIDEO](#))



Marines Conduct Site Survey of Afghan Landing Zone

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young



Afghan National Army soldiers with 2nd Brigade, 215th Corps, and Marines with Security Force Assistance Advisor Team 2-215 conducted a site survey of the landing zone aboard Forward Operating Base Robinson in Helmand province Afghanistan, Feb. 24. ([Watch the VIDEO](#))

Afghans Train for Urban Terrain Operations

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young

Soldiers enrolled in Regional Corps Battle School, 215th Corps, Afghan National Army, conduct Military Operations in Urban Terrain training aboard Camp Bastion, Helmand province, Afghanistan, March 8, 2014. Many of the soldiers with the ANA have never had professional guidance on entering an insurgent-occupied compound. Includes sound bites from Capt. Christopher Campagna, RCBS Training Kandak OIC; Sgt. Robert Ritchie, RCBS Instructor; Sgt. Abdullah, Instructor; and Staff Sgt. Ishaq Atul, Instructor. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)



Afghans Prove Proficiency in Artillery Training

Video by Cpl. Joshua Young



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Mobile Exchange Brings Comforts to Forward Operating Bases

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A small group of Marines known as a Warfighter Express Services team travels throughout the RC(SW) battle space and sets up shop inside an empty shipping container to provide postal, disbursing and Marine Corps Exchange services for Marines and sailors on different forward operating bases. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)



Col. Morgan Mann

Courtesy Video



Col. Morgan Mann talks to Deborah Lutterbeck of Reuters TV about current operations in Regional Command Southwest. [\(Watch the VIDEO\)](#)

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