

**228TH THEATER  
TACTICAL  
SIGNAL BRIGADE  
ANNUAL TRAINING  
2014**



**FORT McCOY**

*Signal Ready, Signal Strong*

# Commander's Corner

Message from  
Lt. Col. Richard A. Wholey Jr.,  
Deputy Brigade Commander

Warrior Exercise (WAREX) 86-14-2 was an extraordinary success due in whole to the dedication, determination, and professionalism of the soldiers of the 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade, the 151st Expeditionary Signal Battalion, and the 404th Network Signal Company from Fort Dix, N.J. The TORCH/ADVON, consisting of a small contingent of soldiers from the 228th TTSB and Bravo Co., 151st, off-loaded the equipment and conducted a comprehensive RSOI to validate all the WIN-T equipment and configurations. They installed and validated pushing Internet Protocol (IP) traffic over the High Capacity Line of Sight (HCLOS) radios, a first for the 228th, and most likely the U.S. Army. They single handedly set the tone for the rest of the exercise.

Increment 1, comprised of soldiers from Bravo Co., 151st and the 228th arrived March 20, 2014. They hit the ground running; installing, operating, and maintaining 20 pieces of WIN-T equipment across seven remote locations at Fort McCoy, Wis. Increment 1 endured harsh weather conditions, at times dropping below zero degrees Fahrenheit, while exceeding the expectations of the 86th Training Division and the over 5000 subscribers that traversed the Task Force network. Increment 1 spent some time experiencing the Wisconsin culture, eating on the local economy and touring a local brewery. They culminated their annual training with a group celebration at McCoy's, a



Lt. Col. Richard A. Wholey Jr., deputy brigade commander at Fort McCoy, Wis., during annual training 2014.

Photos by Sgt. Brian Lemieux



Col. Wallace Hall, brigade commander, recognizes Private 1st Class Millard from the S2 (intelligence) section for his presentation during the daily Battle Update Brief.

soldiers club on post with bowling, pool, and camaraderie. Increment 1 redeployed on 1 April proud of what they had accomplished and confident they set Increment 2 up for success.

Increment 2, comprised of soldiers from Charlie

Co., 151st and the 228th arrived March 29, 2014, ready to work. A seamless right-seat, left-seat RIP/TOA was conducted March 29-30. Increment 2 was challenged to improve their foxhole daily, and continue to cross train on their respective equipment sets. During Increment 2's tenure, we were visited by the First Army G6 (communications), Col. Anthony Beck. He was extremely complimentary of the hard work, dedication and professionalism of the 228th soldiers. He reiterated to me the superb reputation we have in the Signal Community, and left Fort McCoy convinced. Increment 2 is currently providing first class customer service, improving network reliability and performance, while planning redeployment operations. Increment 2 is scheduled to conduct multiple MWR events to include; a cheese factory and brewery tour, a Minnesota Twins baseball game, and multiple local tours of museums. We will finish up with a small celebration and awards presentation before we return home

to our loved ones.

During the exercise we were blessed to have the support and augmentation of the 404th NSC, commanded by 1st Lt. Kerekes and First Sgt. Ritter. They played a vital role in providing customer support and augmentation to two of the six Forward Operating Bases. They integrated themselves into our organization immediately and without flaw. I was truly impressed with the caliber of soldiers within their organization and plan to invite them to future missions we embark on. I want to convey a great big shout out to the 404th NSC and thank them for a job well done. It was an honor and a pleasure to work alongside true professionals.

I would be remiss if I didn't specifically recognize Chaplain Poore and Staff Sgt. Nance. They set a goal upfront to visit every soldier at their place of duty on shift. This was no small task, requiring

travel at all hours of the night to visit over 150 soldiers across 6 Forward Operating Bases. He conducted two Chapel Services and Two Mid-week devotionals. We are blessed to have the best Unit Ministry Team in the United States Army.

There is always that small group of individuals that make or break any event/exercise. This time it was the Warrant Officers/Network Engineers for the 228th TTSB, Chiefs Kirby and Porter. I continue to be amazed by the dedication, intelligence, and rigor of these two professionals. They spent countless hours upfront designing and validating this network months before execution. They monitored, optimized, and stretched the limits of our WIN-T equipment. Chief Kirby was the brain child behind the IP push over HCLOS, a first in the Brigade and I believe in the U.S. Army. There is no doubt in

my mind we would have failed without them. We are blessed to have them and grateful they are so passionate about what they do.

I am so proud of the accomplishments, professionalism, and true patriotism of the Soldiers of the 228th TTSB, Bravo and Charlie Companies of the 151st ESB, and the 404th NSC. We have the best trained, most professional, and customer focused organization. The marvelous Soldiers and families of this Brigade are truly one of a kind and what make our organization so special. Thank you all for a job well done. I want to personally thank your families for allowing me to spend quality time with you and supporting your military career. I truly enjoyed this annual training and look forward to returning home and sharing the successes of this event with my friends and family. God bless each and every one of you.

## Sergeant Major's Comments

Sgt. Maj. Jennie Allison, acting command sergeant major, Increment 2, at Fort McCoy, Wis., for annual training 2014.



**"It is not the strongest or the most intelligent who will survive but those who can best manage change."**

**-Charles Darwin**

It has been both an honor and privilege to serve as your task force command sergeant major during WAREX-86 Increment 2 here at Ft McCoy, Wis. Believe it or not, I was extremely intimidated by the responsibility that comes with this position, even if it was only to be for a very short period of time. Fear can be a crippling emotion; fear of the unknown, fear of change, fear of failure. During this exercise, I have been thor-

oughly impressed by the willingness of our Soldiers to face these fears. So many stepped out of their comfort zone and learned new things...sometimes while under fire. The Army as a whole, but especially the Signal Corps, changes so rapidly it is difficult to keep up. However, no matter how hard, we must. The ability to communicate is a warrior's lifeline. It is up to us to provide that lifeline. Fear must never cause us to fail.

# 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade conducts Warrior Exercise at Fort McCoy

Story and photos by Sgt. Bethany Witherington, Public Affairs non-commissioned officer

Soldiers from the South Carolina National Guard 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade arrived at Fort McCoy, Wis., March 20, to execute their annual training during Warrior Exercise (WAREX).

Members of the 228th TTSB, 151st Signal Battalion, Bravo Company and 228th Headquarters and Headquarters Company conducted annual training from March 20 through April 12, with a second group of members arriving March 29.

“With 335th Signal Command supporting six exercises through this mission, which lasts nearly a year, they need assistance. We chose our AT to help support WAREX. In doing so, it allows us to train for federal missions and gives live subscribers,” said Col. Wallace A. Hall, 228th TTSB, commander.

The soldiers have taken the opportunity to support the 335th, no matter the obstacles. They have shown that the 228th TTSB is serious about their position of support and willing to do what



*Private 1st Class Holliday secures the guyline for a Band 3+ antenna, at Forward Operating Base Greenfield, March 22, during annual training at Fort McCoy, Wis.*

it takes to complete the mission.

“Members of 86th Training Division have expressed how we are team players and how it is a refreshing change,” said Command Sgt. Maj. William F. Bostic, 228th TTSB, command sergeant major.

Since arriving at Fort McCoy, the brigade has set up antennas at six Forward Operating Bases. Having done that allows the FOBs to communicate as planned during the ex-

ercise. The antennas will support communications for over 4,500 service members in a tactical training environment.

As a result of careful planning, the soldiers had all FOBs communicating within seven days of arrival.

“With the planning, coordinating and outstanding leadership I have seen, it does not surprise me to see the team building I have seen during my visits to our sites,” said Lt. Col. William Brown,

228th TTSB, brigade operations.

At one of the sites, a food specialist soldier helped to change out an antenna enabling it to send and receive information as it should. Another instance of team building was an automated logistics specialist working as an office administrator, including providing information during the Battle Update Briefing.

The hard work of the soldiers and dedication to the mission, as well as

their willingness to team back. build, made it possible to erect the antennas and get them communicating as they should be.

Although there will be instances where communication goes down, there are soldiers to go into action and work with one another, to include the 404th Network Signal Company (Brigade) and 77th Sustainment Brigade, to bring communications

back. “The combined effort of working 24-hour shifts

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**“The combined effort of working 24-hour shifts at the individual FOBs, and at the command center, has made it possible to keep communications up since the exercise started.”**

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**- Master Sgt. Terry M. Wessinger, 228th TTSB, logistics NCO**

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at the individual FOBs, and at the command center, has made it possible

communications may have failed with one avenue, there was a backup plan

and when one mode of information exchange would fail there was a backup mode of communication transfer,” said Master Sgt. Terry M. Wessinger, 228th TTSB, logistics noncommissioned officer in charge. “The longest time we were without our communications was no more than two or three hours, no matter the time of day we were back up and running.”



*Soldiers from the 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade change out antennas to help forward operating bases communicate as part of Warrior Exercise during annual training at Ft. McCoy, Wis., March 20 through April 12.*

Photo by Sgt. Bethany Witherington



Private 1st Class Pajon and Spc. Walters straighten the line that runs from the antenna to the generator for power at Ft. McCoy, Wis.

# Scenes from around AT 2014

Video by Spc. Sara-Ann Baldwin



Use your smartphone to access the "Communications Operations" video from Fort McCoy.



Maj. Brown saddles up on the Texas Roadhouse horse saddle in La Crosse, Wis., April 8.

Photo provided by Lt. Col. Richard Wholey Jr.



Work hard, play hard.



Photos by Sgt. Brian Lemieux



No matter the weather, the 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade continued operations.



Photos by Sgt. Bethany Witherington



Private 1st Class Pajon and Spc. Walters check their equipment after erecting an antenna at their Forward Operating Base at FT. McCoy, Wis.



228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade soldiers change out antennas to help Forward Operating Bases communicate during annual training at Ft. McCoy, Wis.



Command Sgt. Maj. Bostic and Lt. Col. Brown visit the individual Forward Operating Bases before the Warrior Exercise begins at Ft. McCoy, Wis.

Photos by Sgt. Brian Lemieux



Sgt. Maj. Jennie Allison visits with soldiers at Fort McCoy, Wis., for annual training 2014.



Soldiers with Charlie Co., 151st Expeditionary Signal Battalion get promoted during annual training.



# Increment 1



# Scenes from around AT 2014

# Increment 2



# Words from the chaplain

**2 Timothy 4:2** tells us to be prepared in and out of season. That's just what the soldiers of the 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade have been doing at Fort McCoy since the middle of March.

As members of the Armed Forces, we have to always be prepared to go and serve. This preparedness includes physical, mental and spiritual training. As the Brigade Chaplain, I want to encourage you to continually work on your spiritual development. How can you renew your commitment to spiritual preparedness? I would like to offer three ways:

**F**irst, take time each day to read God's word. If you don't know where to begin, try the gospel of John in the New Testament. This gospel highlights key points in the life of Jesus. Set a specific time to read each day, and read for about 10 minutes or a chapter a day.

**S**econd, commit to a local church body. Find a church that shares God's word and where you can serve. Being a part of a church body is more than attendance; you have to serve others to receive the best benefits. Find a local church, and serve the body of Christ.

**T**hird, make time to pray together as a family. A family meal at the end of the day is almost a thing of the past in our culture, but I would encourage you even if you can't eat together, find five minutes the entire family can be together, and pray for each other.

Try these three ways of preparing yourself spiritually for 90 days, and see if you don't begin to see the changes.

Blessings,

Chaplain Charlie

# HHC leads the way

Story and photo by  
Sgt. Bethany Witherington,  
Public Affairs  
non-commissioned officer

Since arriving to Fort McCoy, Wis., soldiers with the 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company have been practicing team building by helping other sections with non-paperwork related duties and conducting additional training outside of their Military Occupational Specialties.

Soldiers from HHC traveled to the Forward Operating Bases and helped to take down and put up antennas at the FOBs, even though these Soldiers are not trained to do Signal tasks. While also helping other sections with their work, these service members are assigned to the field of office administration - working to get military courses completed and completing a security

clearance application.

Spc. Shaila Evans, HHC 228th, automated logistics specialist, said, "Accomplishing my tasks has been less stressful than anticipated because everyone in the 228th has been very helpful. Being able to complete my [security clearance] and my course for ROTC instructor has really shown me the type of soldiers that I work with and I am proud to be part of this brigade."

HHC's dedication to staying until the job is completed and making sure that the mission is a success is something that Capt. Matthew Harakas, 228 HHC, is proud of.

"I have seen growth and a strong "soldier first" attitude in my HHC soldiers and am very proud to have them in my section," said Harakas. "Sgt. 1st Class Chad Stafford has worked very diligently with 1st Sgt. James Kober to ensure that

our reliefs have a safe trip over here. I have seen new soldiers willing to go out in the weather to assist on missions that are not in their MOS and it makes me proud to see young soldiers so dedicated to the mission and HOOAH!"

Since it is the intent of the 228th TTSB to ensure that all soldiers are safe and knowledgeable, HHC has tried to teach as much as possible to ensure that soldiers have a chance to take their career as far as they would like to. Training soldiers in the process of the Personnel Status Report and the Communications Status Report is just a small part of what HHC has accomplished during annual training, as well as keeping 100% accountability of the 404th Network Signal Company (Brigade), Bravo Company 151st Signal Battalion, HHC 228th and 228th TTSB soldiers.



*Capt. Matthew Harakas trains with Spc. Shaila Evans as she works on her brief for the Battle Update Brief during annual training at Fort McCoy, Wis. Evans is working on office administration training to help with her ROTC instructor position.*

# SAFETY SPOTLIGHT

You have made it through annual training, you do not want to have to delay going home because you were not careful. On the trip home there are going to be many moving parts and not paying attention is a good way to delay seeing family and friends. Just because the snow is gone does not mean that there are less hazards for slips, trips and falls. When the pack up process begins, be mindful of what is lying around. Getting onto the bus, or even the plane can also be a hazard, make sure that the overhead bins are closed and, most importantly, make sure that your battle buddy is present for departure. Let's keep track of our battle and make sure they show up safely and do not create a hazard for someone else. Always remember safety! Your family is waiting for you at home.

## *2014 Annual Training Birthdays*

<b>James Blihar 3-2</b>	<b>Brian Flores 3-18</b>	<b>John Grabowski 4-9</b>
<b>Arthur Dixon 3-7</b>	<b>Savannah Neal 3-19</b>	<b>Justin Pritchett 4-10</b>
<b>Darold Dantzler 3-11</b>	<b>Chad Honeycutt 3-21</b>	<b>Christopher Cantrell 4-11</b>
<b>William Hamilton 3-11</b>	<b>Robert Dendy 3-25</b>	<b>Soferia Crawford 4-11</b>
<b>Jacqueline Allen 3-12</b>	<b>Thomas Allen 3-28</b>	<b>Brian Lemieux 4-12</b>
<b>Chrystal Crawford 3-13</b>	<b>Lois Parker 3-28</b>	<b>Jeffrey Hill 4-13</b>
<b>Michael Skinner 3-13</b>	<b>Teuanna Vanlue 3-31</b>	<b>Michael Coffey 4-14</b>
<b>Larry Bagley 3-14</b>	<b>Joshua Thompson 4-2</b>	<b>Aljarrod James 4-20</b>
<b>Dustin Free 3-14</b>	<b>Daniel Ratliff 4-3</b>	<b>Troy Baughey 4-21</b>
<b>Dennis Rehrer 3-16</b>	<b>James Robinson 4-8</b>	<b>Lorene Littlejohn 4-21</b>
<b>Ricky Shirley 3-16</b>	<b>Myia McClurkin 4-8</b>	<b>Jeffrey Porter 4-23</b>
		<b>Belinda Lang 4-25</b>

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Brigade Commander  
228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade  
Col. Wallace A. Hall

Deputy Brigade Commander  
228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade  
Lt. Col. Richard A. Wholey Jr.

Brigade Command Sergeant Major  
228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade  
Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Campbell

Brigade Public Affairs Officer  
228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade  
1st. Lt. Jessica Donnelly