



CACOM COURIER

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Change 352nd Change Of Command

Brig. Gen. Ed Burley (left), the outgoing Commanding General of the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, receives the command's colors from Command Sgt. Maj. Earl Rocca (right), the 352nd CACOM's command sergeant major, during the 352nd CACOM change of command ceremony held at Fort Meade, Md. Brig. Gen. Alan Stolte (middle) is the new Commanding General.

The Importance of Understanding Culture

As the Army deploys to more areas of the world not familiar to Americans, it becomes increasingly important for chaplains to advise commanders, primary staff, sections and soldiers on the religious/spiritual aspects of the people they encounter. When we make allusion to the term “religious/spiritual” we refer to the system of beliefs and practices that give meaning and purpose to people’s lives. One of the challenges for the any military personnel when performing and fulfilling this task is to understand and assess and to remain significantly objective. It is important for service members to understand how aspects of religion are operational and thus should be analyzed and incorporated into the military decision making processes, as well as template into useable “products” that have real world outcomes, especially in counter-insurgency operations.

When the United States invaded Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, “culture” was not part of the vocabulary of war. There was no cultural training policy in either the to prepare troops to serve in the Middle East or Central Asia in the post-September 11th era. As the U.S. focuses on ensuring the stability of the Middle East and South Asia, it becomes imperative for us to better understand the history and the ethno-cultural and political problems. Each problem and person that you encounter should be primarily considered within the context of the operational concerns and the unique circumstances of each inherently complex situation.

It is important not to rely on stereotypes to guide your interactions with people. Each society is composed of diverse social and ethnic groups with different political,

religious, and personal ideologies. The level of education of a person, his or her religion, social status, profession, and exposure to Western culture, media, and literature, will all impose variance on the cultural patterns.

In the period from 2003 to 2007, the vast majority of the military, both leaders and troops on the ground, saw culture as either irrelevant to the mission or possibly corrosive of military effectiveness. Cross-cultural competence, as proposed by Allison Abbe and Stanley Halpin, contains three components: knowledge, affect and skills that combine to provide capabilities required to work in a foreign culture.

Knowledge begins with an awareness of one’s own culture and includes an understanding of culture and cultural differences, but has to progress toward an increasingly complex understanding of the sources, manifestations and consequences of a particular culture. Skills encompass the ability to regulate one’s own reactions in a cross-cultural setting, interpersonal skills and the flexibility to assume the perspective of someone from a different culture.

“Cultural awareness is a force multiplier. Working in another culture is enormously difficult if one doesn’t understand the ethnic groups, tribes, religious elements, political parties, and other social groupings-and their respective viewpoints; the relationships among the various groups; governmental structures and processes; local and regional history; and, of course, local and national leaders. Understanding of such cultural aspects is essential if one is to help the people build stable political, social, and economic institutions.” said Gen. Petraeus.



**Chaplain (Lt. Col.)
Nicolas Camacho**

Awards



(Above) 2nd Lt. Dan Le is promoted by Maj. Brandon Mills, the 352 HHC CACOM commander during the CACOM's holiday luncheon in December 2013. (Right) Sgt. Louis Mendoza receives award for achievement. (Below) Brig. Gen. Alan Stolte, 352 CACOM commander, recognizes Master Sgt. Carol Hope and her husband during her retirement ceremony. (Right) Lt. Col. Brett Conyers receives an award for achievement.



352nd CACOM changes commanders

Story by Sgt. Erick Yates
352nd Civil Affairs Command



Preparation and hard work set the scene for a fall morning filled with activity at McGlachlin Parade Field as a Maryland civil affairs unit welcomed its new commander during a change of command ceremony Sunday.

With geese flying overhead at one point, the balmy morning gave way to swaying unit colors in the November breeze as Brig. Gen. Alan Stolte assumed command of the 352nd Civil Affairs Command from Brig. Gen. Ed Burley.

With tenured experience from 1994 to 2010 that includes involvement in operations in Haiti, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan, Stolte's responsibilities increased as he served in key leadership roles beginning in the early 2000s.

In command or key leadership positions in civil affairs units from Maryland to New Jersey, Stolte made a significant mark in his career when he became depu-

ty commanding general of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), which was his previous position before assuming command of the 352nd CACOM.

In his remarks during the ceremony, Stolte expressed sincere acknowledgment for his wife, Ermelinda, who was treated for a serious health issue over the past year.

He also focused on his new command.

"To the Soldiers of the 352nd CACOM, I am extremely honored to be your new commander," Stolte said.

Now the 15th commanding general of the 352nd, Stolte gave much credit to the 352nd CACOM for answering the call of duty over the past 12 years.

"We still must remain vigilant," Stolte said as he spoke on the ending of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Radical extremist networks are still rallying around the



PHOTOS BY JEFFREY DURAN

world, and the Middle East is still far from being stable, he said.

Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Jacobs, Commanding General of USACAPOC (A), gave high regard to both the outgoing and incoming commanders during his remarks.

“I often tell anyone who is willing to listen to me that being a CACOM commander is one the toughest one-star commands in the Army,” Jacobs said.

Burley handled both of his responsibilities masterfully -- his position as former commander and a demanding civilian professional, said Jacobs.

There could be no one better to fill this role than Stolte, said Jacobs. Stolte worked directly for Jacobs in his previous position. With all his previous experience, no one understands the civil affairs mission better than Stolte, Jacobs said.

As the 352nd CACOM recently recognized the 10-year anniversary of the Iraq invasion during the unit’s dining out event in May, Burley said farewell to the command with a reminder of the important role that the Soldiers of the 352nd play.

“You are builders, healers, teachers and leaders, who bring order out of the chaos of conflict,” Burley said.





Recruitment
Active Duty Civil Affairs assessment
looks for local Soldiers

FORT HOOD, Texas - Above the zone but below the radar, a little known military occupation specialty, Civil Affairs, is looking to recruit motivated male and female soldiers, enlisted as well as officers. And to do so, the Special Operations Recruiting Battalion here at Fort Hood has developed a program to ensure candidates success.

The program developed and conducted by the SORB concentrates mainly on preparing candidates physically as well as mentally by helping develop a proper mindset in initiating the switch to Civil Affairs and other Special Operation career fields.

“The thing with CA is that many people do not know that we exist,” said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Bentcliff, a Civil Affairs team sergeant on assignment with the SORB. “So I came down here to help spread the word about who we are and what we do. Most of all, I am able to identify an opportunity within the Army.”

Civil Affairs soldiers are specially trained to work directly with civilian and military organizations of other nations to perform common tasks in support of embassies, nation building and humanitarian assistance all while enabling the civil-military operations of the supported commander.

“Like many others, I had no idea what Civil Affairs was until I heard about when I was attending the Warrior Leadership Course,” said Spc. Robert Gollither, a mechanic assigned to the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade. “After learning more about it and what they do I was definitely motivated to switch over.”

Part of the process of becoming Civil Affairs qual-

ified is an initial 10 day assessment followed by the qualification course that can last up to a year along with completing a foreign language course.



“The assessment was much harder than I anticipated,” said Gollither. “Very exhausting, not only physically, but also mentally as they test your ability to think outside of the box and being able to react quickly.”

Gollither credited his success of passing the initial assessment to the physical training program conducted by the SORB. Candidates are put through a strenuous physical training regime from 5:30 a.m. to 7:30 a.m. which incorporates not only your traditional workout methods but introduces the use of logs, tires and sand bags all built around team work.

“While it is not for everyone it is something that

will enable a soldier to not only stay Army in light of the current drawdown but be able to expand their overall knowledge and develop extremely marketable skill sets,” said Bentcliff.

Candidates are also prepared for the day to day operations of Civil Affairs by being selected for a special duty to work at the SORB while awaiting official orders for a class date. Working at the recruiting office, they are not only preparing themselves for the future but are helping pave the way for future candidates.

“Being able to work alongside those that are already Civil Affairs training is a big help in preparing myself,” said Gollither. “I can thank Sgt. 1st Class Bentcliff for answering all of my questions and setting me up for success.”

For others, it is about continuing a tradition.

“Well, I have family that is already in the special operations community,” said Spc. Daniel Sutton. “And after learning about Civil Affairs, I felt it would be a good way to give back to the community, military and civilian.”

Sutton, a heavy equipment operator with the 36th Engineer Brigade, has been in training with the SORB since August and is awaiting a class date in 2014.

“I hear it will be tough but the training we are doing will help prepare me,” said Sutton. “An intense program that will get me physically fit and motivated so that won’t fail my battle buddies or myself. This program will definitely get your mind prepared and get your body prepared. When you come here they will break you off.”

Motown Showdown

***352 CACOM Soldiers
compete in Michigan***

Story and photos by Sgt. Erick Yates

Sgt. Josh Painter, with the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion, makes his way along the 12k ruck march course March 29 during the joint best warrior competition, dubbed "Motown Showdown," hosted by the 352 CACOM from Fort Meade, Md., and the 2nd Psychological Operations Group from Twinsburg, Ohio, March 29 at the Fort Custer Training Center in Battle Creek, Mich.



Spc. Justin Greenhill, with the 310th Psychological Operations Company, makes his way through the obstacle course at the joint best warrior competition.

The quest to find the Army's best warrior this year centered around the Motown Showdown for the Soldiers of the 352nd Civil Affairs Command and the 2nd Psychological Operations Group at the Fort Custer Training Center in Battle Creek, Mich. The Motown Showdown, a brutal 72-hour event filled with fatigue, snow and tough competition, challenged Soldiers through physical and mental tests.

Soldiers from around the country braved frigid temperatures and long hours

to earn the title of Best Warrior. Noncommissioned officers coordinated the Best Warrior Competition to build leadership and groom younger Soldiers. Events included a road march, combatives, land navigation, weapons marksmanship, and Soldier readiness courses.

Once all the scores were tallied, Staff Sgt. Matthew Yelverton and Spc. Evan Robilliard were named the Best Warriors of the 352nd CACOM and now prepare for the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command



Staff Sgt. Coady Schiltz, with the 339th Psychological Operations Company and Staff Sgt. Matthew Yelverton, with the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion, engage in an intense combatives match for noncommissioned officers at the joint BWC.



(Above) Pfc. Robert Gardner, with the 489th Civil Affairs Battalion, makes his way through the obstacle course. (Inset right) Staff Sgt. Daniel Collinsworth, with the 352nd Civil Affairs Command, prepares for the land navigation course.

(Airborne) Best Warrior Competition in April. Sgt. Alexander Sinninger and Spc. Michael Bollis, both with the 312th Psychological Operations Company, were named the Best Warriors for the 2nd POG.

“It’s going on 36 straight hours with naps here or there,” said Spc. Justin Greenhill, a Soldier with the 310th Psychological Operations Company.

Greenhill said it’s been tough, but he would definitely do it again.

“I think the competition was good,” said Sinninger. The overall elements including the fatigue and cold made this a challenging event. The tough as steel idea was present here, he said, referring to the title of this year’s BWC.

The training, intense weather, grueling hours took all the best the warriors could give. As the longer hours of the BWC were reached, the fatigue was apparent.

“We all came here willing to give 100 percent,” said Pfc. Robert Gardner, of the 489th Civil Affairs Battalion and a student at the University of Tennessee.

This year, a sexual harassment assault response and prevention scenario and vehicle maintenance were added to the events cycle to take Soldiers beyond the physical challenge. Participants learned to be leaders, planned for contingencies, taught the understanding of taking care of Soldiers and maintained their equipment.

“This competition has been really challenging and made



Pfc. Hadeel Abujaber, with the 2nd Psychological Operations Group, and Spc. Justin Greenhill, with the 310th Psychological Operations Company, engage in a tense Army Combativites match at the joint best warrior competition, dubbed "Motown Showdown."



(Above) Spc. Sol Lee, with the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion evaluates his zero on the firing range. (Right) Spc. Evan Robilliard, with the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion, salutes the sergeants major of the board during the candidate interview event.



me push harder,” said Yelverton, a Maryland resident with the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion. “Competitors brought a lot to the table,” Yelverton said. The ice and snow made the events more intense, he added, it’s great training and there are a lot of good NCOs out here.

During the night medical mission scenario, competitors worked in twenty-degree temperatures to save an injured Soldier. The weather broke the following morning bringing sunshine and warmer temperatures for the obstacle course and combatives matches.

“There were a lot of really strong competitors,” said Robilliard, a Michigan native and employee for an auto parts company assigned to the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion. He trained for several months in preparation for the Best Warrior Competition. The harsh weather this winter did make it difficult to train, he said.

No event is complete without acknowledging the NCO-organizers who worked diligently planning every detail, including logistics, safety, and funding, said Command Sgt. Maj. Earl Rocca, command sergeant major for the CACOM. He specifically mentioned special thanks to the 414th Civil Affairs Battalion for their support in organizing the competition.

Looking at the surface with the number of competitors and cost, it could seem too expensive. The level of training, learning and Soldiers participating are key items that come from this type of event, Rocca said.

“We have a good program in place,” said Rocca. The goal was to make the competition personal for each participant, and to ensure that Soldiers were proud of their accomplishments and inspired to continue training at exceptional levels.

More photos here:
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/352cacom>

Great White North

**352 CACOM Soldiers
train for arctic
conditions**



37 Canadian Brigade and 352 CACOM Soldiers conducting winter survival skills training make their way back to their tent area to prepare some lunch in the training area of 5 Wing Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador on February 24 during NORTHERN RAIDER.

*Story Maj. Patty Brewer
Photos by Canadian Warrant Off Jerry Kean*

HAPPY VALLEY-GOOSE BAY, Canada —Civil affairs Soldiers are no strangers to international and joint operations and can comfortably work with other nations in almost any situation. This wasn't one of them. Operations Northern Raider and Stalwart Goose pushed the Soldiers out of their "comfort zone" with arctic training and operations with the 37th Canadian Brigade Group from February to March 2014.

The exercises were so far out of the comfort zone as to require special training for the Soldiers of the 401st and 422th Civil Affairs Battalions. Prior to the exercises, the 5th Canadian Ranger Patrol Group taught the Basic Winter Warfare Course which included essential survival skills such as building snow shelters, ice fishing, trail finding and living off the land. The course concluded with a two-day tactical exercise and was a prerequisite for all Soldiers.

During Northern Raider, the 401st Civil Affairs Battalion, of Webster, New York, worked with the 1 Royal New Brunswick Regiment to practice the fundamentals of Civil-Military Cooperation in emergency situations. They relied on skills learned during the Basic Winter Warfare Course to effectively conduct humanitarian assistance in the arctic environment.

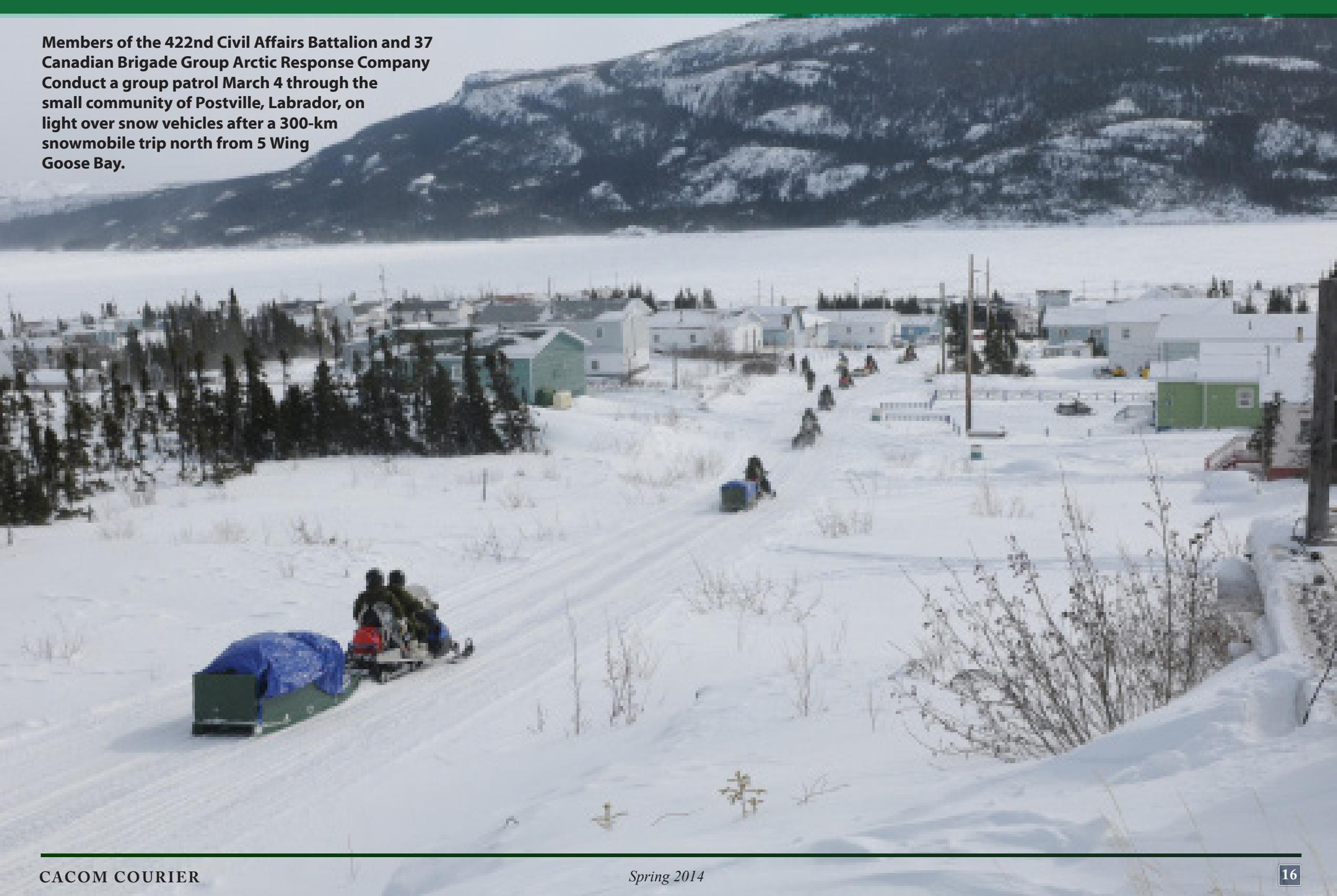
"This is also a great opportunity to bring together soldiers from across the Atlantic region to train and learn from each other and especially learn some lasting skills from the Canadian Rangers. This is the highlight of our training year," said Lt. Col. Andrew Heale, Commanding Officer of 1 Royal Newfoundland Regiment and the exercise director.

As Northern Raider ended Stalwart Goose began with 401st Soldiers conducting a "relief-in-place"



American Sgt. David Nachreiner with the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion adjusts the guide lines of a ten-person tent in the snow covered training area of 5 Wing Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador on February 23 during Exercise Northern Raider. Exercise Northern Raider 2014, took place from February 22 to 28, was a comprehensive winter warfare training exercise involving Soldiers, primarily Reservists, of 37 Canadian Brigade Group (37 CBG) from Newfoundland. The exercise aims to maintain and refine both the Canadian Army's operational capabilities and Soldiers' ability to operate in the Arctic's austere conditions.

Members of the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion and 37 Canadian Brigade Group Arctic Response Company Conduct a group patrol March 4 through the small community of Postville, Labrador, on light over snow vehicles after a 300-km snowmobile trip north from 5 Wing Goose Bay.



with the 422nd Civil Affairs Battalion from Greensboro, North Carolina.

Teams of Canadian Infantry from 1 Royal New Brunswick Regiment and 422nd Civil Affairs Soldiers worked together to conduct civil affairs operations, successfully teaching and learning from each other to accomplish their missions.

“Civil Affairs teams integrated seamlessly within Canadian Armed Forces movement teams. Soldiers learned standard procedures and winter survival from the CAF. The CAF learned how to incorporate civil affairs into operations,” said Capt. Jon Hinchey, 401st Civil Affairs Battalion Operations Officer. “Both sides gained relevant training in the exercise.”

For many Soldiers, Northern Raider and Stalwart Goose provided a first-time arctic training opportunity. For all the Soldiers, the team-work and shared experiences are priceless; a unique opportunity to expand skills and prepare for any challenge.

Canadian Rangers Catherine Turnbull of Black Tickle Labrador and MCpl Samuel Morris of Goose Bay look on as Cpl Justin Bouchard cleans a bunch of smelts on the ice of Lake Melville near 5 Wing Goose Bay, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland Labrador on 25 February on Ex Northern Raider. Ranger Turnbull said the trimming from the fish will be left on the ice for the foxes to eat that night.



Detachment 57 conducts CIMIC Exercise in Kabul

352nd Civil Affairs Command
Story by Maj. Patty Brewer
Photo by Master Sgt. Joshua Bacon

KABUL, Afghanistan -- The Afghan Government needs to quickly respond to a disaster or risk increasing Taliban influence in the region. Extensive springtime flooding destroyed homes, damaged roads, and flooded fields. Your mission is to coordinate Humanitarian Assistance to ease suffering in the affected area.

This was the situation developed by Detachment 57 of the 352nd Civil Affairs Command and tackled by Afghan National Army officers during a recent Civil-Military Cooperation exercise in Kabul.

When Detachment 57 arrived in Kabul, they met with the ISAF Joint Command Stability Operations section and were tasked with developing a practical exercise for a CIMIC course being conducted at the ANA Ground Forces Command. In three days, Detachment 57 produced a Civil-Military Operations driven, scenario-based capstone exercise for the ANA's CIMIC training.

The week-long CIMIC seminar, conducted by the IJC Stability Operations, formalized how the ANA developed civil-military support plans. During the exercise crafted by Detachment 57, senior Afghan officers reacted to the natural disaster by using standard mission planning tools. They developed military plans that incorporated civil affairs, civil-military operations, information operations, public affairs, and humanitarian assistance. Response plans prepared by the Afghan officers were then to be given to ANA brigaded-sized units for implementation at the tactical level in support of their overall

“clear, build, hold” model.

“It was a very successful mission in which everyone involved, ANA, IJC, German CA, civilian CAAT teams and Active Duty CA were all extremely happy and impressed with the product,” said Master Sgt. Joshua Bacon, Detachment 57.



CIMIC participants at the GFC also included representatives from various U.S. Civil Affairs assets in theater such as IJC Stability Ops, the 83rd and 92nd Civil Affairs Battalions, Maritime Civil Affairs Group and Department of Defense Civilian Commander ISAF Advisory and Assistance Team members, as well as CIMIC trainers from Germany and the UK.

“This definitely was a good step forward with training the ANA on CIMIC,” said Detachment 57 Team Chief Lt. Col. Jeremy Crist. He added that the ANA officers impressed everyone with their efforts and final products.

This first CIMIC training is only the beginning according to Crist. From here, the ANA leaders take their lessons learned and begin training their counterparts throughout the ANA. Several Regional Commands with assistance from the 83rd CA BN and Coalition partners, have already started their own CIMIC training. Detachment 57 continues its mission by assisting the 83rd CA BN with the ongoing CIMIC mentorship.

BEST WARRIORS



Command Sgt. Maj. Martin Wolfe, command sergeant major for the 450th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne), and Sgt. Maj. Ronald McGraw, also with the 450th, pose with junior and senior enlisted Soldiers from their unit who were selected to participate in the 450th's battalion level Best Warrior Competition Jan 11 at Fort A. P. Hill, Va. Soldiers selected from the competition will advance to compete in higher levels of the BWC this year. (Pictured from left to right back row – Command Sgt. Major Martin Wolfe, Staff Sgt. Matthew Yelverton, Staff Sgt. Thomas Robinson, Sgt. Raleigh Contreras, Sgt. Loutfi Oussama, and Sgt. Maj. Ronald McGraw; Front row L to R – Spc. Nicholas Cosby, Spc. Sol Lee, and Spc. Richard Handres)

TIGHT SPOT



Detachment 57 at Fort Dix - Maj. Farish gets out of an upside down vehicle during rollover training.

GOING FORWARD



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. STEVE CORTEZ

Detachment 57 Training sets up a satellite at Fort Dix.

GOING FORWARD



Detachment 57 Training pose prior to training - from L to R - Staff Sgt. Brown, Maj. Lanpher, Lt. Col. Crist, 1st Sgt. Bacon, and Maj. Farish.

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. STEVE CORTEZ