

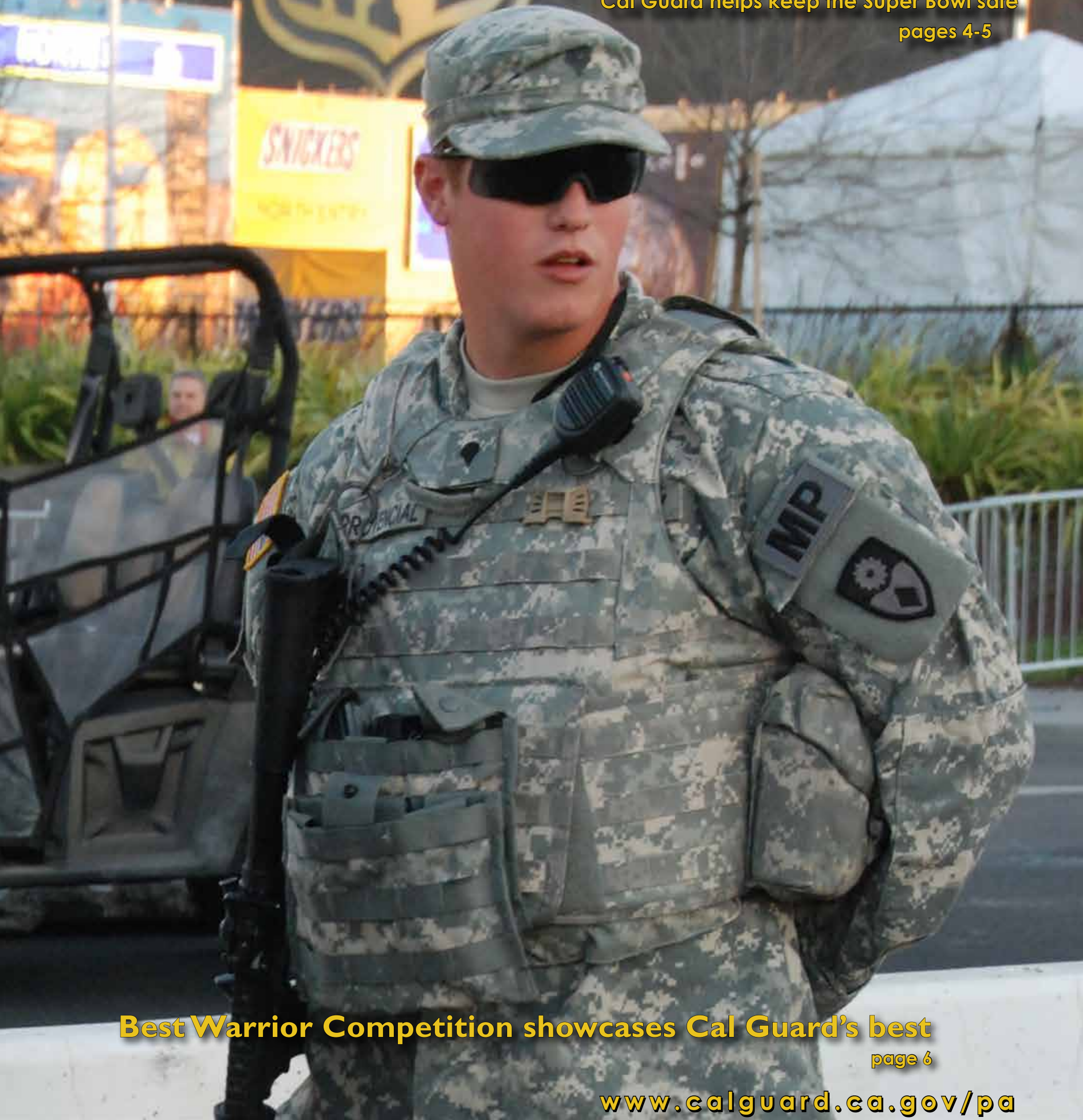
GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard

Guarding the Game

Cal Guard helps keep the Super Bowl safe

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Best Warrior Competition showcases Cal Guard's best

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Leadership Corner

The Guard relies on leaders at all levels

Major General David S. Baldwin



The California National Guard is a fighting and emergency-response force full of brave, skilled warriors. It is also an organization of more than 20,000 people that requires efficiency and accountability to run correctly.

I rely on leaders at every level to make sure troops show up, perform their duties and take care of our resources. A strong force is built from the ground up, and we need NCOs who take charge at the squad and flight level to ensure every troop is on board with our program.

Commanders must pull their heads out of their unit scorecards, get out to the field, and lead on the ground. Are all small-unit leaders properly trained? Are they keeping Leader Books? Do they know their troops?

Teams' stability and integrity depend on their immediate leadership. It may be difficult for commanders to tear themselves away from their duties at headquarters, but ensuring that proper small-unit leadership is in place is essential to building a strong foundation at every level.

On the battlefield and in emergency response, our troops are focused and dependable; that's how we've achieved so much in the modern era. But we can't be one force in the field and another in the office. I expect squad and flight leaders to bring the same aggression, perseverance and attention to detail to their everyday leadership duties as they do when confronting an enemy or natural disaster.

Part of a leader's job is to know their troops and ensure

they are following procedures and regulations. Does one of your Soldiers need to file a travel claim? Is an Airman having employer issues that could lead to an AWOL situation? Is all of your troops' equipment properly stored?

Even if you have only a handful of troops in your charge, failure to take these duties seriously can affect the budget, skills and reliability of the California National Guard. If you or your troops have been putting things off for another day or failing to follow procedures to the letter, things need to change, immediately.

If a Guardsman, for example, initiates a travel request in the Defense Travel System, but does not end up taking that trip, the travel request must be canceled, even if no tickets were purchased. Otherwise the travel request will negatively impact our budget. As a result of that one failed administrative step, money may not be available to send a Soldier to a school or to hire a new employee – and the Guard, the state and nation suffer.

Similarly, money has been lost from our budget because of a lax attitude toward equipment regulations, such as the directive that all Soldiers in the rank of E-6 or below must maintain their equipment in the armory instead of at home. The government has placed its trust in our leaders to ensure property is accounted for, and you have been given a specific list of instructions in order to maintain that trust. Our leaders must make those orders clear to their troops then follow up to make sure they are being followed.

The very least a Soldier or Airman can do is show up to drill and annual training, and yet some troops consistently seem to find a way out. If your troops are not showing up, they are not a viable part of this force.

Occasional absences for good reasons are understandable; a culture that allows absences to become a trend is unacceptable. Troops take their cues from their leaders, and if your troops are not showing up, it's time to look at yourself. What do you need to do or say to motivate your troops, get them to drill and ensure they follow procedures?

In the Guard, we have a limited amount of training time together, and we need our full force to maximize the effectiveness of every event. We cannot and will not allow a culture of laziness and corner-cutting to grow in this organization.

As Guard members move into leadership positions, they find that their commitment can no longer be summed up in that neat phrase, "one weekend a month, two weeks a year." Troops are looking to you for leadership, and the state and nation are looking to you to guide those troops.

It is a weighty responsibility, which requires additional time and effort, and if you step up and fill a leadership position, you had better make sure you are up to the task. Anything less than your full commitment will drag down your unit, and let down your state and nation.

“Troops are looking to you for leadership, and the state and nation are looking to you to guide those troops.”

- Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin



A Soldier with the 649th Military Police Company dons his protective equipment during a drill near Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara, Feb. 7, while his platoon leader, left, observes his progress. The Soldier was part of the Quick Reaction Force staged outside the stadium on Super Bowl Sunday. Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Wade

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Submissions

Articles:

- ★ Articles range from 350 to 2,000 words. All articles should be accompanied by multiple high-resolution images.
- ★ Include first names, last names and military ranks. Always verify spelling.
- ★ Spell out acronyms, abbreviations and full unit designations on first reference.
- ★ Only submit articles that have been approved by your unit's public affairs officer.

Photographs:

- ★ Highest resolution possible: MB files, not KB.
- ★ No retouched photos, no special effects.
- ★ Include the photographer's name and rank, and a caption: what is happening in the photo, who is pictured and the date and location.

E-mail submissions and feedback to:

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Cover photo by
Master Sgt. Paul Wade

Spc. Landis Provençal gets paid a visit by Cal Guard Command Sgt. Maj. William Clark Jr. while providing security at Super Bowl 50.

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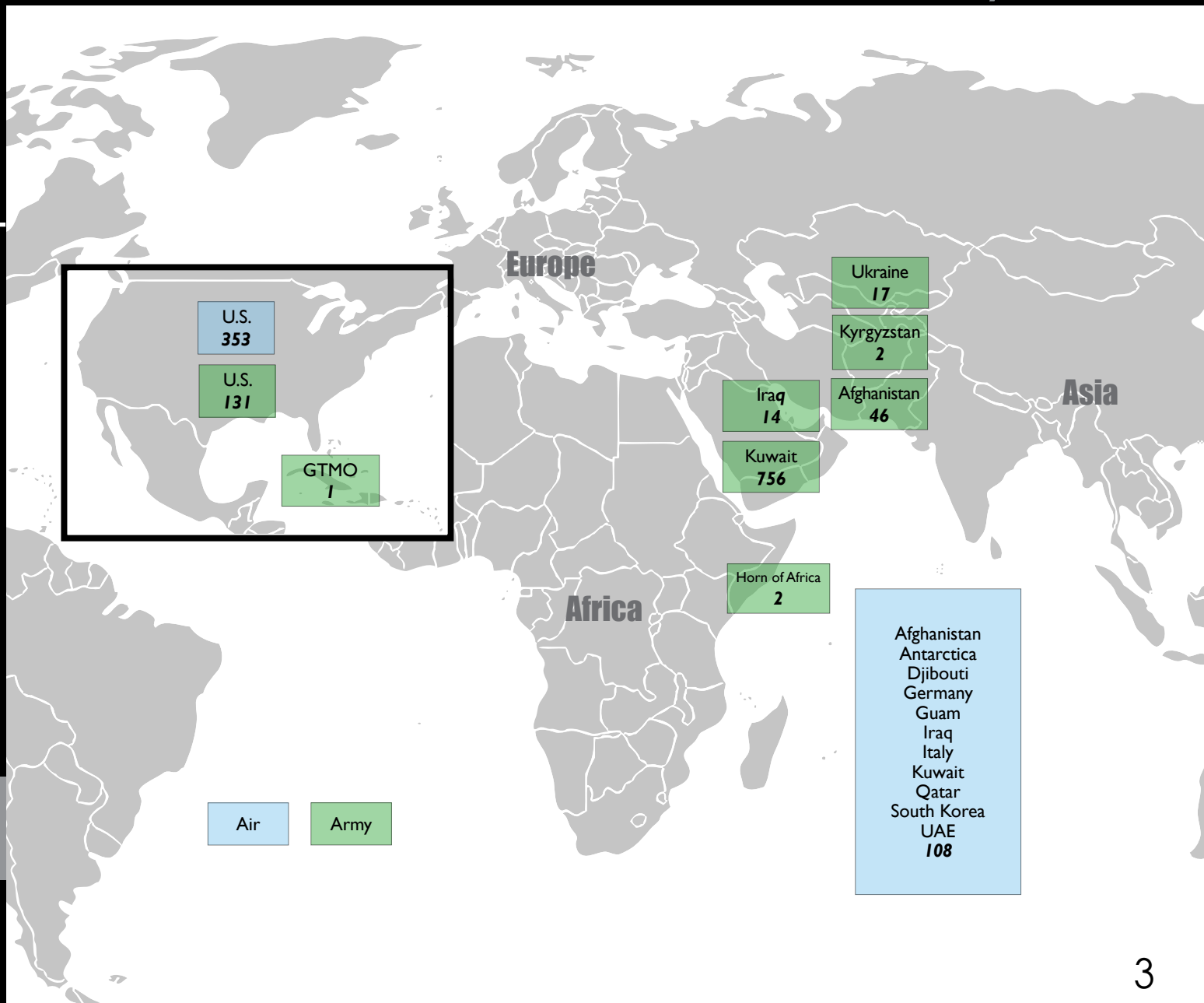
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California National Guard troops mobilized as of February 2016



Cal Guard holds the line at Super Bowl 50

Soldiers and Airmen of the California National Guard provide security and support during the big show

By **BRANDON HONIG**

California Military Department Public Affairs

The California National Guard trains tirelessly for every type of emergency. Its Soldiers' and Airmen's skills are finely honed and wide-ranging, but the best-case scenario is that they never have to use them.

Heading for duty at Super Bowl 50 in Santa Clara, California, troops hoped their mere presence would be enough to keep troublemakers at bay, and to bring a sense of peace to fans who came to enjoy America's biggest cultural holiday.

"As a section supervisor, I can't tell you how many times people walked up to us and said it was amazing – said how secure they felt knowing that [military] security was in place," said Sgt. Kevin Fraser of the Santa Clara Police Department, which was the lead agency for Super Bowl security. "So many people walked up to shake the Soldiers' hands and asked to take pictures with us. The public was very, very appreciative."

From an operational standpoint, he said, the troops were fantastic in their many roles throughout the week leading up to the big game and throughout the year of planning beforehand. With hundreds of thousands of visitors flooding the region for Super Bowl 50, Fraser said the Santa Clara PD knew they could not do it alone, and the National Guard was a vital part of the event's success.

"Fully staffed, [the Santa Clara PD] is authorized 150 officers. If we had every single cop working, it would not have been nearly enough," he said. "This model was so successful at integrating the National Guard troops with local law enforcement ... [that] this partnership was immensely helpful for us."

A trusted presence

Capt. James Stanfield, commander of the 670th Military Police Company, said no serious security concerns surfaced during the operation, and the events that did occur quickly spiraled down because of the security presence. MPs were posted all around the stadium, which Stanfield said showed the level of trust placed in the Cal Guard by the Santa Clara Police Department.

"The Soldiers understood it when they saw it on the map, that we were everywhere, and most positions were not paired up with police officers," he said. "It showed the level of respect and authority, that we were performing that mission in the absence of a police officer."

The fans asking to take selfies with Soldiers at Levi's Stadium were interacting with members of the 49th MP Brigade and its subordinate units. But that was just one facet of the Guard's support, which covered the entire Bay Area, including the Super Bowl City and NFL Experience fan venues in San Francisco, as well as the airspace overhead, protected by the Guard's 144th Fighter Wing.

A full team effort, the Guard's presence included both Army and Air Guard hazardous materials-response specialists, rescue teams, communications units and aviation assets, including three types of helicopters and two types of planes. Law enforcement specialists from the California State Military Reserve also provided training and support, and several Army units, including a quick reaction force and a ready reaction force, were on call at their home armories in case they were needed.

Preparation pays off

The coordination between Guard assets – and between the Guard and other agencies – was top-notch according to task force leaders, and according to troops on the ground. Spc. Jannahann Cho of the 670th MP Company, who guarded a bridge near the stadium, dubbed Checkpoint 11 on game day, witnessed firsthand the benefits of thorough planning and preparation.

"We were told by our command that our fixed point is our point – that we do not move, because a vehicle or fence-jumper could easily be a distraction that would let other people through the perimeter," she said.

When two men climbed over a fence the MPs were guarding early in the day, Cho stayed at her point and called the Santa Clara Police with a description of the men and the direction they were heading.

"The next think you know, [an Army] helicopter started flying overhead in the direction of the golf course where they were running. Then we saw Santa Clara PD rovers run over there in their [utility] vehicles, and then a Santa Clara police car right after," she said. "They were on site quickly. I didn't think it would work that fast, even though we'd been training for it all week."

A third man tried to jump the same fence but was turned back by Cho's partner. Then things calmed down for the rest of the day, Cho said. "They saw people were getting arrested and decided to leave us alone."

The helicopter that flew over Cho's head was an LUH-72 Lakota from 3rd Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, which provided live streaming video to commanders on the ground throughout Super Bowl Sunday. Lt. Col. Dillon Haynes, 49th MP Brigade operations officer, said that in addition to delivering valuable information about what was happening on the ground, the aviation support provided his troops with a rare chance to exercise their skills.

"Our intelligence and operations sections had an opportunity for the first time to look at live video in a Defense Support to Civil Authorities operation ... which gave our personnel a chance to provide real-world, real-time analysis in a domestic support role," he said.

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LEFT: Driving a Santa Clara Police Department vehicle, Capt. James Stanfield, commander of the 670th Military Police Company, left, and Sgt. Edward Day of the 185th MP Battalion lead representatives from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services on a tour of Super Bowl facilities on Feb. 6. RIGHT: Pfc. Gioser Nunez of the 670th MP Company discusses Super Bowl 50 security with Mark S. Ghilarducci, director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, from Nunez' post overlooking Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara on Feb. 6. Photos by Brandon Honig



‘Super Bowl’ from previous page

Working well with others

Working together with other military units is a core skill of the National Guard, and many Soldiers and Airmen also work every year with partner agencies, such as the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) and the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), both of which played important roles at Super Bowl 50.

Super Bowl 50, though, likely involved more local, state and federal agencies than any event the supporting units had previously worked. On the federal side, for instance, Soldiers worked hand in hand with Customs and Border Protection, guarding and escorting shipments to different sites after they had been screened by CBP.

“[The interagency coordination] went very well because we spent time developing those relationships ahead of time,” Haynes said. “The planning sessions paid off during the execution. ... If something needed to happen, we’d already figured it out beforehand.”

Staff Sgt. Nicholas Emmerling was in charge of making sure the different agencies could speak to each other through the Incident Commander’s Command, Control and Communication Unit, or IC4U. A California Military Department invention, the IC4U was first fielded for a military operation during Hurricane Katrina.

“The IC4U is all about interoperability: being able to cross-talk from our ‘green’ networks to their ‘blue’ networks,” said Emmerling, the noncommissioned officer in charge of communications for the 49th MP Brigade. “It’s a very robust platform that has pretty much every citizen band and law enforcement band you can access. Then cross that together with some of our technology that’s in there, and if the stuff ever hits the fan, [the IC4U] will come in very handy.”

When it comes to interoperability, Emmerling is an example of the unique capabilities the Guard brings to domestic operations. A former police officer for two Bay Area departments, Sunnyvale and Mountain View, Emmerling also has worked in sheriff’s dispatch and Emergency Medical Services in San Luis Obispo County.

“We’re here to help the first responders in case there is an incident, so it definitely helps to have that background and familiarity with the systems and also with the people we are working with,” he said. “That’s why we’re so close [to the stadium] but just outside the perimeter – because we’re poised to assist them if we get called.”



“‘Always Ready, Always There,’ right?”

A career highlight

Most of the Soldiers and some of the Airmen who supported Super Bowl 50 set up camp at a BMX track behind Levi’s Stadium, where many of them stayed in tents for more than a week. They weren’t exactly first class accommodations, and some Soldiers were understandably disappointed they wouldn’t be able to watch the game. As the big day crept closer, though, excitement began to build throughout the Bay Area, and the BMX track.

“As the week progressed, and especially the last day, when gear was full battle rattle, we were all pretty pumped up for the Super Bowl and that everything we had been training for was finally happening,” Cho said. “We didn’t come here to have fun. Our mission was to protect and provide security and to help the local PD. You can’t let your guard down because people are having fun [without you].”

Stanfield agreed his Soldiers were pumped. They were excited at the opportunity to employ their craft, he said, and the Super setting only added to it – especially after the game, when they were treated to a walk on the field.

“Some Soldiers expressed that they wished they could have watched the game,” Stanfield said, “but they all appreciated it at the end, when we went on the field and saw the gravity of the event and how much of a difference they had made.”

Senior Airman Steven Williams, of the 147th Combat Communications Squadron, said he has supported a wide variety of domestic missions in his seven years in the Guard, but none quite like this.

“It’s definitely a unique experience. It’s exciting to see all the helicopters going around and all the commotion,” he said. “The whole function of why I joined the National Guard is so I can serve my state in addition to federal missions. It gives you a good warm fuzzy feeling to be able to do that in your community.”

Cho, who deployed to Afghanistan in 2012, said she’s glad she got to use her MP skills to protect people in her home state. Dealing with people who aren’t “bad guys” requires a different mindset, Cho said, and for the MP who joined the Guard at 17 because she wanted to be part of something bigger than herself, this was a mission to remember.

“It’s a great honor to serve Super Bowl 50, for sure,” she said. “This goes down in history.”



TOP LEFT: Soldiers with the 649th MP Company practice responding to a civil disturbance Feb. 6 in Santa Clara before the Super Bowl. **TOP RIGHT:** Master Sgt. Hector Barragan, left, Staff Sgt. James Bivin and Senior Airman Steven Williams of the San Diego-based 147th Combat Communications Squadron set up a wireless antenna mast Feb. 6 outside Levi’s Stadium. **Photos by Brandon Honig** **LOWER LEFT** and **LOWER RIGHT:** Soldiers from the 670th MP Company get a chance to hang out on the field during Super Bowl 50. **Photos courtesy of Spc. Janhannah Cho**

'Best of the best' compete at Camp SLO

California Army National Guard top performers compete in grueling four-day Best Warrior Competition



ABOVE: Sgt. John Rotner, 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, low crawls through a muddy pit in the obstacle course challenge during the California Army National Guard's 2015 Best Warrior Competition Nov. 16-20 at Camp San Luis Obispo. **BELOW RIGHT:** Sgt. Sheridan Low, 235th Engineer Company, nears the finish line of a grueling 10-mile ruck march during the California Army National Guard's 2015 Best Warrior Competition. Low placed first in the ruck march among 12 competitors. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Spc. Aaron Kelsey, 1072nd Transportation Company, completes the Unknown Distance Run Nov. 18 at the 2015 Best Warrior Competition at Camp San Luis Obispo. **Photos by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza**

By SGT. SUSAN WOHLER

California Military Department Public Affairs

The California Army National Guard's finest gathered Nov. 16-19 at the original home of the Cal Guard, Camp San Luis Obispo. These warriors had already finished first in preliminary competitions held by their battalions and brigades and were ready to go up against the Cal Guard's best of the best to earn the title of California's Best Warrior.

The Best Warrior Competition (BWC) tests the mettle of those few Soldiers willing to endure the strenuous four-day competition, which is designed to epitomize the total Soldier concept of brains and brawn. The competition provided 12 competitors the platform to showcase their physical strength, military bearing, acumen and marksmanship skills.

California Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Davis and the staff of



the 223rd Regional Training Institute organized the annual competition.

"The events gradually ramp up from zero to 80 in 3 days," Davis said. "This year we are modeling our BWC after the Sergeant Major of the Army's program. Next year if the warrior does not pass the Army Physical Fitness Test or the land navigation events, they will be disqualified from the competition."

Command Sgt. Maj. Ryon Walters competed in the BWC in 2002 and now serves as the regimental command sergeant major. "The BWC used to be all boards and has evolved to a hands-on event," he said. "It's a beast. If anyone is interested in competing, practice early. The expectation is perfect push-ups, perfect sit-ups and an eight-minute mile maximum."

The competitors began Day 1 by in-processing with weigh-in, event orientation, safety briefings, a written exam, a media engagement event and time to prepare for the appearance board, which took place the next day.

One of the best-kept secrets of the BWC is the role of the sponsor – a Soldier from the competitor's unit who serves as both mentor and guide throughout the competition. Sponsors play an invaluable role in the preparation of the warrior before the event and a team partner to celebrate with when the four days are finally over.

"The sponsor role is extremely important, it allows the warrior to stay focused on the competition," Davis said.

"We set up a week last month and came out to Camp San Luis Obispo to provide our warrior with hands-on time with the weapons and terrain recognition," sponsor Staff Sgt. Alfred Burton, of the 1072nd Transportation Company, said of competitor Spc. Aaron Kelsey's preparation. "We told him that he was already a winner and the only way you lose out here is if you quit."

The second day consisted of the Army Physical Fitness Test, appearance boards with competitors wearing their Army Serve Uniforms (ASU), day land naviga-

tion, an obstacle course and night land navigation.

The obstacle course was originally scheduled for daylight hours into dusk. However, as the sun set over the hills behind Camp San Luis Obispo, the warriors gathered by the infamous obstacle course event, complete with deep, cold mud puddles, monkey bars, a low crawl obstacle under barbed wire, tire runs, a rope climb and a 185-pound casualty dummy on a litter carry event.

As they contemplated the obstacles before them, two of the warriors helped motivate their fellow competitors.

"This is my bread and butter," said Sgt. Wiljohn Santos. "I like this stuff."

Staff Sgt. Miguel Ramirez II looked at the obstacles before them and stated, "Some people pay for this and we get it for free!"

As each warrior finished the course, their sponsors were there to get them to the barracks for a quick change into dry boots. The warriors were exhausted, but still had the night portion of the land navigation to look forward to.

The longest day of the competition, Day 3 began at 5 a.m. with a 10-mile ruck march. The distance for this, and another "unknown distance run" on the training schedule for later that day, was not revealed until the warriors finished.

Road weary and blistered, the warriors moved to the ranges and fired their M4 rifles and M9 pistols to qualification standards.

Next up, the unknown distance run from the range back to the statue at the bottom of the hill at Camp San Luis Obispo. Another grueling four miles under their belt, the warriors moved directly to the weapon stations event.

The culminating event for Day 3 was the "Mystery Event," where the warriors were led to a darkened, smoke-filled warehouse where close combat abilities and swift reactions were tested. This event was a chal-



lenge kept secret from the warriors to test how they would react to the unknown.

With three long days behind them and only one day of competition left, the warriors settled in for the night.

The last day of the competition provides an opportunity for the warriors to show a combination of marksmanship and combat lifesaver skills. They started the morning in a simulated rollover in a Humvee, followed by the "Fight to Your Rifle" event, which tested speed and accuracy against multiple targets with the M9 pistol and M4 carbine, muzzle awareness, target discrimination, tactical problem solving and weapons handling.

With no break in the action, the warriors proceeded to the gas chamber, where they demonstrated their proficiency and confidence with protective masks. Upon exiting the gas chamber, they were escorted to the hand grenade range, then to radio operations, followed by a report called the Spot Report/SALUTE (SPOTREP/Size, Activity, Location, Unit/Uniform, Time observed, Equipment).

As the last of the warriors finished their SPOTREPs, this year's Best Warrior Competition came to a close.

Sgt. Paul South of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery, said it best: "The easiest part of this competition is being with the other competitors. We are more like teammates than competitors."

Capt. Estelle Hong exemplifies Army women who have stepped into traditionally male roles

Cal Guard female Soldiers set to take on combat roles; many are already combat vets and in leadership positions



California Military Department Public Affairs

The California National Guard closed 2015 by celebrating a more diverse future.

On Dec. 21, Maj. Gen. Matthew Beevers, the state's Deputy Adjutant General, joined several elected officials and Cal Guard senior leaders at the state Capitol in celebrating the recent Pentagon decision to lift all remaining restrictions on women's combat roles.

Nearly 300,000 female service members have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, and their performance amid the rigors of combat contributed significantly to the Defense Department's long-awaited move.

"Female military members' remarkable service in Iraq and Afghanistan showed that no military can achieve its full potential without utilizing the talents and abilities of its female citizens," said Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, California's Adjutant General. "Rescinding all combat restrictions was more than a move toward equality, but a tactical advancement as well, as this will ensure each mission is staffed with the best-qualified and most-capable personnel."

Women have attained some of the highest leadership positions in the Cal Guard, including Brig. Gen. Sylvia Crockett, Army Guard Land Component Commander, and Col. Laura Yeager, Chief of the State Military Department's Joint Staff. Present at the event at the Capitol was Cal Guard combat veteran Capt. Estelle Hong, who recently took command of the Petaluma-based 235th Engineer Company (Sapper). Accompanying Hong was Sgt. Sara Brown, the first female NCO for the 235th. Brown serves as the unit's chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) NCO.

Hong is only the nation's second woman to command an Army Sapper company, which specialize in clearing explosives in combat theaters. An active duty Iraq War veteran with West Point credentials, she spoke to the Capitol audience of her experiences thus far as a Cal Guard leader.

"My leadership within the California National Guard gave me the opportunity to lead a combat arms company based on my competency and leadership experience," said Hong. "Never once did they take my gender as a shortcoming."

A representative from California Assemblymember Susan Eggman's office was present. Eggman, who served as an Army medic, stated that though the Defense Department's recent decision was ground-breaking, it was also in keeping with the history of women's participation in U.S. conflicts.

"Women have played important roles in every military conflict in U.S. history, laying the foundation for the tremendous achievement we celebrate today," said Eggman. "We have a stronger, more modern force than ever before, and we will continue to gain power as the contributions of our female service members grow."

March is Women's History's Month. Look for articles about Cal Guard women stepping into combat arms roles in the next issue of the Grizzly. If you have any photos of Cal Guard women deployed that you would like to see in the Grizzly, please send to jason.b.sweeney2.mil@mail.mil.



ABOVE: Capt. Estelle Hong, commander of the 235th Engineer Company (Sapper), talks with political leaders at the state Capitol about women in combat roles on Dec. 21. **Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Wade** **LEFT:** Pfc. Sarah Braun of the 132nd Multi-Role Bridge Company guides pieces of a bridge into place June 1, 2012, during a course at Camp Ghazi, Afghanistan, in which 132nd engineers helped instruct coalition and Afghan forces to build bridges. **Photo by Sgt. Joseph Koktan** **RIGHT:** Spc. Kathy Tanson of the 40th Infantry Division Agribusiness Development Team holds a young goat during a veterinary outreach operation in the Barbur Valley on May 2, 2010, in Kunar province, Afghanistan. **Photo by Spc. Lorenzo Ware**

Cal Guard's 40th CAB takes over in Kuwait

By **STAFF SGT. IAN KUMMER**
40th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

The 40th Combat Aviation Brigade officially took charge of all aviation operations within U.S. Army Central's area of responsibility during a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Dec. 20.

More than 1,000 Soldiers with the 40th CAB have replaced the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade in support of U.S. Army Central's mission of building partner capacity and promoting regional security.

The 40th CAB's command team, Col. Jeffrey Holliday and Command Sgt. Maj. Troy Eck, have officially taken the reigns from the 185th TAB's Col. Ronald Beckham and Command Sgt. Maj. Willie Ross.

"It's a great honor to take over this mission from the 185th TAB," Holliday said. "They did such an outstanding job of building relationships with our partners in the Middle East."

Shortly after the ceremony, the remaining Soldiers of the

185th TAB left for home. The 185th TAB has been deployed to the Middle East since April.

The 40th CAB is headquartered in Fresno, California, but has been joined by men and women from all over the United States, including Arizona, Arkansas, Oregon, Montana, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington and West Virginia.

"The 40th CAB works diligently with our partner nations to stabilize the region, providing a unified front against any threat," said Capt. Robert Rodriguez, the 40th CAB partnership officer.

First Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, 40th CAB has taken control of a fleet of aircraft including UH-60 Black Hawks, CH-47 Chinooks and Gray Eagle unmanned aerial systems. The CAB's 640th Aviation Support Battalion operates the brigade's ground fleet, including Palletized Load Systems, Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks and Humvees.

In the hours and days following the ceremony, the remaining Soldiers with the 185th TAB departed for good,



Spc. Kevin Palomera, from the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, presents the brigade colors for Col. Jeffrey Holliday, commander of the 40th CAB, at the Transfer of Authority Ceremony with the 185th Theater Aviation Brigade at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, on Dec. 20. Holliday relieved his TAB counterpart Col. Ronald Beckham. Photo by Spc. Megan O'Malley

leaving their 40th CAB counterparts to carry on the mission. As a chapter in the 185th TAB's history draws to a successful close, a new one has begun for the 40th CAB.

"It's sad to see them go," said Sgt. Kristen Kaminski, an aviation operations specialist in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th CAB. "They really knew their jobs and they're good people."

40th CAB takes charge of UAS missions in the Middle East

MQ-1C Gray Eagle and RQ-7 Shadow are vital 40th CAB assets in Middle East aerial reconnaissance mission

By **STAFF SGT. IAN KUMMER**
40th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

The 40th Combat Aviation Brigade took command of Army Central's aviation missions in the Middle East in December. One of these missions is armed aerial reconnaissance.

When the 40th CAB deployed to Iraq in 2011, the brigade's primary reconnaissance aircraft were the OH-58 Kiowa Warrior helicopters. When Soldiers of the 40th CAB took on its new mission Dec. 20, the famous Kiowas didn't join them. The brigade's aerial reconnaissance mission is now supplemented by the MQ-1C Gray Eagle and the RQ-7 Shadow.

Company F, 227th Aviation Regiment, 40th CAB, based out of Fort Hood, Texas, flies and maintains the brigade's Gray Eagles. Company F arrived in the Middle East four months ago.

The Gray Eagle is a medium-altitude, long-endurance unmanned aerial system that has been in service since 2009. With a wingspan of 56 ft., improved fuel-capacity and payload, the Gray Eagle is more reliable and flexible than previous UAS aircraft used by the Army.

"When I joined and I first heard 'UAS' I thought of a small plane that you could throw, I didn't imagine it would be something of this caliber," said Spc. Zachary Wikel, a Company F UAS operator.

Unmanned aircraft give ground commanders continuous surveillance for ground threats – and eliminate these threats with precise air-to-surface missile strikes – all without putting American Soldiers at risk.

"The biggest advantage of the Gray Eagles is that they are unmanned, they don't put a flight crew at risk," said Sgt. Chris Runck, a Company F UAS operator.

Flying and maintaining Gray Eagles is not a job that comes without difficulties. Gray Eagle operators face long hours of boredom in a job where even a few minutes of complacency can be deadly. Though all of the action is hundreds of miles away, viewable only through a video feed, even a small mistake can have



Unmanned aerial system repairers from Company F, 227th Aviation Regiment, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, based out of Fort Hood, Texas, inspect an MQ-1C Gray Eagle in the Middle East, Jan. 7. Company F Gray Eagles provide armed aerial reconnaissance for stability operations in the Middle East. Photo by Staff Sgt. Ian Kummer

very real consequences.

"Unmanned aviation is very different from manned aviation," said Staff Sgt. Christopher Howell, a Company F platoon sergeant and UAS repairer from Palm Bay, Florida. "It's a challenge we have to adapt to and overcome."

Anyone who thinks they have what it takes to be an Army UAS operator can find more information about the career field at the Go Army website:

<http://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/browse-career-and-job-categories/transportation-and-aviation/unmanned-aerial-vehicle-operator.html>

Go Army also provides information on what it takes to become a UAS repairer:

<http://www.goarmy.com/careers-and-jobs/browse-career-and-job-categories/transportation-and-aviation/unmanned-aircraft-systems-repairer.html>

CAB Soldiers participate in marathon while deployed

By **STAFF SGT. IAN KUMMER**
40th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

Thirty-nine National Guard Soldiers from the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade participated in the Spark Marathon 2016 in Kuwait City, Jan. 16.

This is the first major off-post recreational event American troops from Camp Buehring have participated in at the beginning of the new year.

"It's a good opportunity to get Soldiers off base into the local economy and culture," said Master Sgt. Todd Pratt, a fire support specialist from Sacramento, California, in Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th Combat Avia-

tion Brigade.

Participants of all ages were welcome to attend the event, and could choose from a variety of distances to run including 5 km, 10 km, a half-marathon and a full marathon route.

"Today is my husband's birthday, and this is my gift to him," said Staff Sgt. Anabel Avendano, a Sacramento resident in HHC.

Avendano left behind a husband and two children when she began her federal tour of duty in October.

Soldiers stationed at Camp Buehring are permitted to participate in command-ap-

proved morale events off-post.

"It's not often we get to see things like this in other countries," Pratt said. "I love it and I appreciate it."

Captain Sherri Gregoire, commander of Company F, 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment, 40th CAB, won third place in the half-marathon event.

"I thought participating in the Spark Marathon was a great opportunity to promote physical fitness to my Soldiers in way that would be exciting, something new and a chance to accomplish a personal challenge that they could be proud of," Gregoire, a San Tan Valley, Arizona, resident, said. "As I came across the finish line, three of my Soldiers were there cheering me on."



Soldiers from Company F, 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, pose for a picture at the Spark Marathon 2016 in Kuwait City, Jan. 16. Thirty-nine CAB Soldiers participated in the event. Photo by Staff Sgt. Ian Kummer

40th CAB and 366th Chemical Co. train for CBRN attack

By **STAFF SGT. IAN KUMMER**
40th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

A line of up-armored trucks rumbled onto the airfield. The vehicles surrounded a landed CH-47 Chinook helicopter. Dozens of Soldiers in full protective gear and protective masks swarmed the helicopter. Over the next several hours they comb over the whole aircraft from front to back, hosing and scrubbing down the 30 meter hull inch by inch.

These Soldiers had just completed a Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear decontamination drill. In an era of asymmetric warfare in which even non-state actors such as ISIS are employing increasingly-effective chemical weapons, safeguarding American forces from attack remains a top priority.

The exercise was coordinated between Army National Guard Soldiers of the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade and Army Reserve Soldiers of the 366th Chemical Company at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Feb. 9.

The 366th, a unit based out of Savannah, Georgia, spent the afternoon practicing decontamination procedures with a CH-47 Chinook helicopter from 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment, 40th CAB. Though the focus of the day's training was a helicopter, CBRN specialists could potentially be called upon to decontaminate any vehicle, equipment, or personnel exposed to CBRN hazards.

"This isn't just for aviation, its support for anyone to decontaminate equipment in any situation," said Sgt. Ashely Bang, a CBRN specialist from Santa Clarita, California, in Company D, 1st Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, 40th CAB.

Prior to the 366th Chemical Company and 40th CAB de-



Army Reserve Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear specialists in the 366th Chemical Co., spray down a CH-47 Chinook helicopter belonging to Company F, 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Feb. 9. Photo by Staff Sgt. Ian Kummer

ploying to Kuwait – April and December respectively – many of the junior Soldiers had not experienced in-depth training like this.

"This is my first time deconning an aircraft," said Spc. Nicholas Groves, a Phoenix resident and the CBRN specialist for F Company, 1st 1-168 AVN, 40th Combat Aviation Brigade.

CBRN exercises like this one are just a part of an airfield's overall pre-accident plan, which covers a wide range of emergencies including fires and crash-landings.

"This is where experience comes into play," said Sgt. Dustin Wallace, a Lexington, Tennessee resident and an air traffic controller with the 1-168 AVN. "We have to have a plan so even unexperienced personnel know what to do."

Groves said. Groves explained that if an actual contaminated helicopter landed on the airfield like during the exercise, other aircraft would need to be rerouted to avoid being affected as well.

"When the rotors are spinning, that's kicking contamination everywhere," Groves said.

Fortunately, the pre-accident plan provides a solution: land an affected aircraft in a segregated location.

"We have alternate areas a quarantined helicopter can land in," Wallace said. "If an aircraft is contaminated and has no-where else to go, we aren't going to turn them away."

The 366th Chemical Company has four platoons. 1st Platoon provides mounted reconnaissance in Stryker vehicles. 2nd Platoon provides dismounted reconnaissance. 3rd platoon specializes in decontaminating heavy equipment. 4th Platoon specializes in decontaminating personnel.

"This vehicle brings wide-range reconnaissance," said Spc. Ben Collins, a CBRN specialist from Lyons, Georgia, in 1st Platoon, 366th CBRN. "We can also pick up samples to send to [higher headquarters]. That would give them an idea of what the enemy is using, and pass on the information to friendly troops.

This CBRN exercise provided all involved Soldiers with improved familiarization of their roles in the event of an emergency.

"It's not just a job, it's what we do, and it's what we enjoy doing," said Staff Sgt. Henry Meza a CBRN specialist from Gonzales, California, with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 40th CAB.

Camp Buehring Soldiers celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day



Soldiers march on Martin Luther King Jr. Day at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 17. Photo by Staff Sgt. Ian Kummer

By **STAFF SGT. IAN KUMMER**
40th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs

Soldiers celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day in a commemorative march culminating in a ceremony at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Jan. 18.

Though millions of Americans fought for the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is recognized today as a key figure with his passionate oratory and non-violent civil disobedience.

King was arrested 29 times, received frequent death threats throughout his campaign for civil rights, and was assassinated less than four years after President Lyndon

B. Johnson signed the 1964 Civil Rights Act into law.

The American armed forces were a significant battlefield in the fight for racial equality in the United States, even a century before the Civil Rights Act.

"We honor MLK Day because it is an opportunity for everybody to celebrate what he gave us with his commitment and the things he did in his life," said 1st Lt. Jason Boatwright, a Madera, California, resident and the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade's equal opportunity advisor. "It's a way for us to honor it and celebrate it, no matter if you're black, white, Hispanic, male or female... regardless, we've all benefited

from his contributions."

The 40th Combat Aviation Brigade element deployed to Camp Buehring is comprised of National Guard Soldiers from nine different states as well as active-duty attachments. Many of these troops came together at the ceremony to celebrate the Army's commitment to the values espoused by King.

"Soldiers can live together and eat together in the same quarters, there is no separation," said Staff Sgt. Brian Hill, a Chehalis, Washington, resident in Company E, 1st Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, 40th CAB. "These are all things that [Dr. King] led the way on."

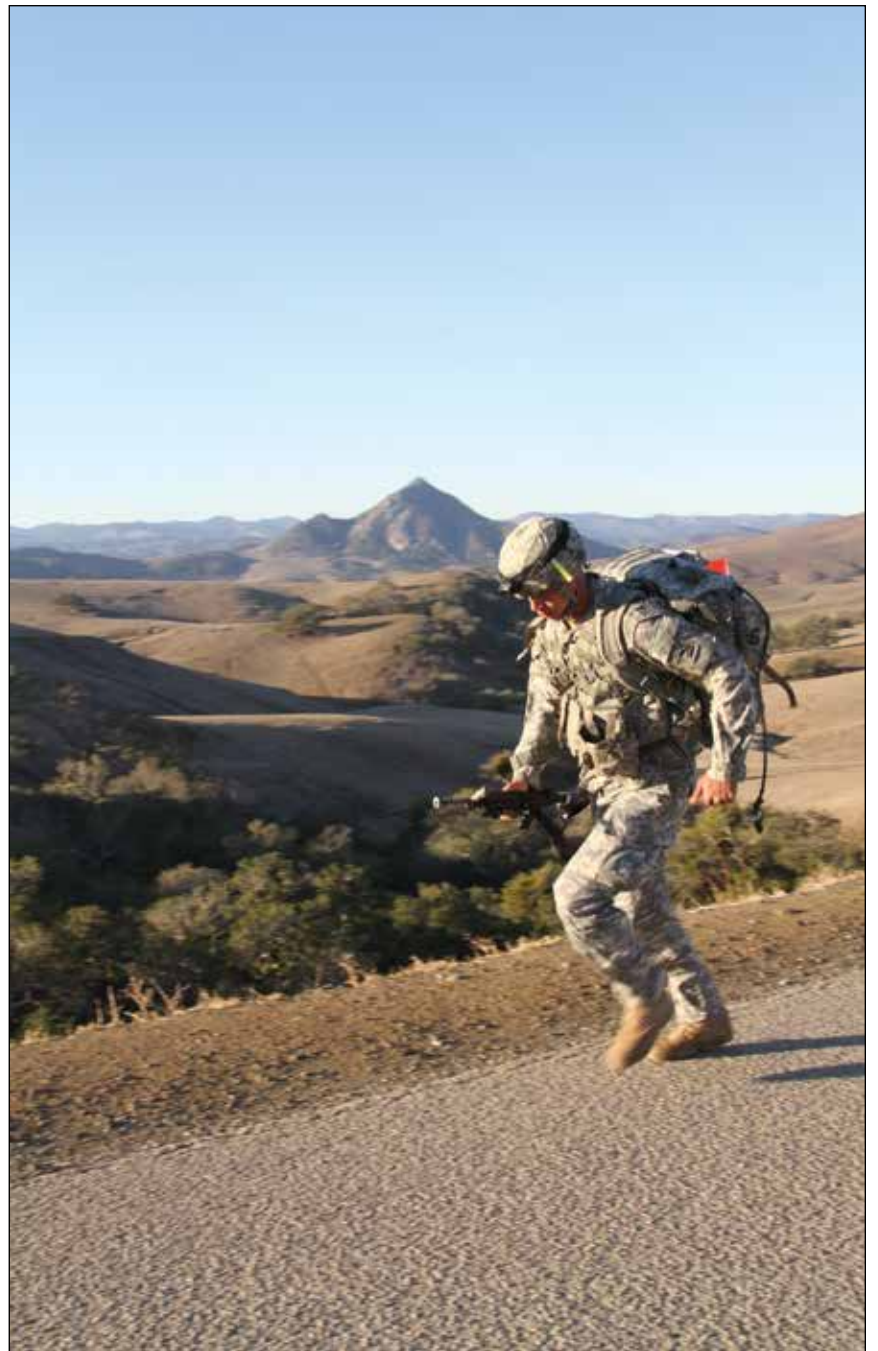


ABOVE LEFT: A medic with the California National Guard's 235th Engineer Company simulates helping a victim during Operation Dark Horse, a disaster response exercise at Camp Roberts Nov. 17. **TOP RIGHT:** Sgt. 1st Class Jarrad Negherbon, the breach team leader with the 235th Engineer Company, directs engineers with the 1401st Engineer Detachment, as they use a forklift to move mannequins onto a rubble pile in preparation for search and extraction training during Operation Dark Horse at Camp Roberts. **ABOVE LOWER RIGHT:** Soldiers with the 149th Chemical Company set up a decontamination tent during Operation Dark Horse at Camp Roberts Nov. 17. See page 13 for more on Dark Horse. **Photos by Sgt. Brianne Roudebush**



ABOVE LEFT: Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza and Spc. Lani Pascual, of the 69th Public Affairs Detachment, cover the action at Exercise Allied Spirit IV at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center's Hohenfels Training Area, Southeast Germany. **ABOVE RIGHT:** The 69th PAD poses with its Italian counterparts Jan. 20 at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Hohenfels, Germany. **Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Caleb Barrieau** **LOWER RIGHT:** Sgt. Jason Beal, left, with camera, gets up close and personal with a robotic pig used for simulating chemical attacks during Allied Spirit IV in Hohenfels Training Area. **LOWER LEFT:** Spc. Lani Pascual, right, of the 69th PAD while interviewing a civilian on the battlefield (COB), or a role player, during Exercise Allied Spirit IV in Hohenfels Training Area. See page 14 for more on the 69th PAD at Allied Spirit IV. **Photos by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza**

At a Glance



ABOVE LEFT: Staff Sgt. Alexis Sanchez, 1106th TASMG, reads a map and plots coordinates during the Cal Guard's 2015 Best Warrior Competition Nov. 16-20 at Camp San Luis Obispo, San Luis Obispo, California. **RIGHT:** Spc. Jeremy Granados, 100th Troop Command, runs to the finish line after finishing second in the 10-mile ruck march at the 2015 Best Warrior Competition. **ABOVE LOWER LEFT:** Competitors in the 2015 Best Warrior Competition fire 9-millimeter hand weapons for qualification. Read more on page 6. **Photos by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza**



ABOVE: Soldiers from the 49th Military Police Brigade watch a perimeter from high ground outside Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara on Feb. 7. The brigade set up a task force operational area with a Quick Reaction Force near the stadium to assist with security during the event. See more about the Super Bowl mission on pages 4-5. **Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Wade**

No simple affair: Bilateral affairs position in Ukraine a demanding, dynamic mission

By **CAPT. WILL MARTIN**

California Military Department Public Affairs

Maj. Alexys Scott speaks in a deliberate manner that betrays his background as an Army officer. His sentences are unhurried, his gestures so intentional they seem calculated to mirror his words.

But when conversation turns to the Euromaidan, the civil unrest that rocked Ukraine shortly after Scott's arrival in Kyiv in 2013 as chief of the U.S. Bilateral Affairs Office, his words carry a more pressing, visceral tone.

"Is this a combat situation, now?" Scott remembers asking himself as his wife and two children evacuated from Kyiv to the care of the U.S. embassy in Warsaw, Poland. "It was a long period of eight months where you lived day to day, week to week, when you didn't know if you were going to get evacuated."

The Cal Guard dispatched Scott to Kyiv as part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program. Under the program, each state's National Guard partners with the armed forces of one or two nations. Through the sharing of best practices and combined training, the nations' personnel work toward shared security objectives. The California National Guard began a partnership with Nigeria in 2006, but its deepest ties are to Ukraine, with which the Cal Guard first partnered in 1993 in the wake of the Soviet Union's fall.

"There was a little concern," said Scott, of the decision to uproot his family and move to Ukraine. "For all intents and purposes, we were going to live in Eastern Europe in a country intertwined with Russia."

His concern turned to outright distress after Nov. 21, 2013, when droves of protesters swarmed to Kyiv's Independence Square to call for Ukraine's integration with Europe – and away from Russia. For several months, the Euromaidan protests cascaded between democratic euphoria and episodes of violent response from then-president Viktor Yanukovich. A Russian empathizer, Yanukovich unleashed Berkut police forces, hired thugs and snipers on the protesters, leading to hundreds of injuries and as many as 100 killings.

"The stress level was high," remembers Scott, who witnessed Euromaidan evolve into the Ukrainian "Revolution of Dignity," a movement that ended with Yanukovich's resignation and self-imposed exile to Russia in February 2014 and the election later that year of a pro-European Ukrainian government. Having weathered a baptism by fire in his first year as a Bilateral Affairs Officer (BAO), Scott quickly found himself again immersed in geopolitical tension when pro-Russian armed forces invaded and seized the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine.

Unfortunately for Scott, the tension did not end with the Euromaidan or Russia's unlawful annexation and claim to the Crimean Peninsula, but continued with a third act of internal conflict when Russian-backed separatists launched attempts at destabilizing Ukraine through armed conflict in the Donbas region (Ukraine's eastern border with Russia). The Donbas conflict continues today, dubbed by the Ukrainian Government as the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO). To date, nearly 10,000 people have been killed in the ATO (including the 298 passengers on downed Malaysian Airline Flight 17) and at least 20,000 more wounded.

Even amid the stirring of revolution and violent conflict, though, Scott welcomes the dynamic tension inherent to his position. Having previously served as a BAO in Guatemala, he embraces opportunities to plunge himself in the intricacies of international development and policy.

"This job provides insight at the strategic level. There are some very fascinating conversations you are privy to," said Scott. "You get to see strategic unification of allies. That's what's the great value ... you could grow up to be an O-6 in the Guard or U.S. Army and not see this."



Maj. Alexys Scott, the California National Guard's bilateral affairs officer to Ukraine, left, shakes hands in 2014 with Ukrainian Colonel General Stepan Poltorak, commander of the Ukrainian National Guard. Poltorak has since been appointed Ukraine's Minister of Defence. Photo courtesy of Maj. Alexys Scott

Scott's "bread and butter" is the coordination of "mil-to-mil engagements," ensuring Ukrainian and U.S. forces are afforded an abundance of opportunities to better each other through dialogue and training. Between exercises, the interaction of subject matter experts, VIP visits and planning conferences, Scott said a typical year can involve as many as 90 events.

"It has a quasi-deployment feel just because of how engaged you're required to be," he said.

As the BAO, Scott leads a multi-national team which includes two operations officers, a defense liaison and a humanitarian assistant. Among them is Dima Moskalenko, a college-educated linguist and lieutenant in the Ukrainian military reserve.

Equal parts operations officer, translator, driver and all-around organizational glue, Moskalenko has served alongside the California National Guard for more than a dozen years. And at 36 years old, he speaks in an earthy yet sage fashion, one cultivated from witnessing his country's near-constant revolution and regime change.

"When the Soviet Union collapsed, I was in Czechoslovakia [as part of a student-exchange program] ... My host family tells me 'Your country doesn't exist anymore,'" said Moskalenko. "I asked, 'Is Kyiv still there? Yes? OK, everything will be OK.'"

Since witnessing the birth of an independent Ukraine as a young teen, Moskalenko, a Kyiv native, has vacillated between frustration and idealism regarding his nation's future.

"Ukraine had a unique chance in 2004 during the Orange Revolution, but the leadership was weak. We wasted 10 years," he said. "[But] it is a positive process, for sure. It takes longer than we all want [but] Ukraine is a very young country. We're not mature yet; just as young people make foolish mistakes, so does a young country."

"Maybe not in our lifetime, but definitely in our kids' lifetime, we will truly have rule of law. It won't matter who your father is, what car you drive – the law will be the same for everyone."

Moskalenko's energy and competence have been a welcome asset to Scott, who in addition to facing a high operational tempo navigates hierarchal challenges in Kyiv. In short, he gets pulled in a lot of directions.

"The BAO has to serve multiple agencies -- Combatant Command, Department of State, California National Guard, civilian agencies -- and you have to be smart enough to balance that. Sometimes the entities don't get along as well as you'd like and you're aware of that. You try

to get them in the same room to get a mutual outcome that helps security assistance and cooperation move forward," Scott said. "Whoever is in this role has to understand these sensitivities... you quickly realize this is a mini-representation of the U.S. government."

But as a California guardsman, Scott is perhaps most keenly aware of his responsibilities to those who instilled trust in him back home.

"You understand and are keenly aware that you are a representative of the California National Guard and the responsibility you have with that," he said. "Much like the president puts his faith in the ambassador at that level, faith and trust is put in you as the Bilateral Affairs Officer by the adjutant general, and you only get one shot."



Maj. Alexys Scott speaks with representatives of Ukraine's armed forces during international planning sessions at the America House Kyiv, a U.S. cultural and educational outreach center in Kyiv, Ukraine, on Dec. 17. Photo by Capt. Will Martin

Cal Guard conducts Operation Dark Horse

The Cal Guard's Homeland Response Force prepares for a large earthquake in a realistic training environment



A medic with the California National Guard's 235th Engineer Company comforts a victim during a disaster response exercise at Camp Roberts Nov. 17. The exercise, called Operation Dark Horse, is a Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IX Homeland Response Force exercise designed to prepare the force for an evaluation in April.

Photo by Sgt. Brianne Roudebush

By SGT. BRIANNE ROUDEBUSH
69th Public Affairs Detachment

On top of a large, man-made rubble pile at the Combined Arms Collective Training Facility at Camp Roberts, Sgt. 1st Class Jarrad Negherbon carefully positions a mannequin into the pilot seat of a crashed helicopter. Negherbon, a team leader with the 235th Engineer Company, is setting up the site for the next day's training exercise.

The exercise, dubbed Operation Dark Horse, was a Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IX Homeland Response Force exercise designed to prepare the force for an evaluation in April.

Negherbon said his goal was to create the most realistic scenarios possible. He recently completed the advanced search and extraction course at Camp Dawson in West Virginia. The course focused on different types of scenarios.

"We learned to think outside the box and use different techniques [for search and extraction,]" he said. "We had to be creative and not always go with the Jaws of Life for every situation."

Negherbon brought those new skills to Operation Dark Horse. Rather than just placing mannequins on top of the rubble pile, he thought about where victims would actually be in a real-world disaster. He put the mannequins in cars, under huge slabs of cement and inside collapsed buildings.

"I based the scenarios off what we've done in the past," Negherbon said. "But I also wanted to create new scenarios [for the teams] and think about what they would encounter in real life."

Long training days in preparation for HRF evaluation

By SGT. BRIANNE ROUDEBUSH
69th Public Affairs Detachment

Operation Dark Horse, Day 3: The sun isn't up yet, but Spc. Lizette Guillen and Pfc. Jacqueline Astorga are. Their alarms went off at 3:45 a.m., the lights in the barracks were flipped on, and they sleepily stumbled out of bed. Knowing they have a long day ahead of them, they quickly get ready and head outside for a 4:30 a.m. formation.

Immediately following formation, the 870th Military Police Company heads over to the mobile dining facility for breakfast. Two companies are already ahead of them in line, so they wait. Being that it's November, it's a chilly morning and the Soldiers have donned their fleece jackets, beanies and gloves as they stand outside chatting and waiting. An hour later, Guillen and Astorga finally make it to the front of the line.

Some Soldiers walk back to the barracks after breakfast; others wait for the bus. They have until 6:30 a.m. to clean the barracks. It's 3rd platoon's turn to clean, so they sweep, mop, clean the latrine and take out the trash.

As 6:30 a.m. approaches, everyone grabs their large red bags of gear and heads back out to the buses.

They stop in to see the medics before heading out to the training site. They need to get their blood pressure and vitals checked to make sure they are physically healthy to wear hazardous materials suits for ex-



ABOVE: Soldiers with the Cal Guard's 149th Chemical Company set up a decontamination tent during Operation Dark Horse at Camp Roberts Nov. 17. RIGHT: Sgt. 1st Class Jarrad Negherbon, the breach team leader with the California National Guard's 235th Engineer Company, helps Sgt. Tyler Stannare and Spc. Jose Galvan, engineers with the 1401st Engineer Detachment, lift mannequins onto a rubble pile in preparation for search and extraction training during Operation Dark Horse at Camp Roberts Nov. 16. Photo by Sgt. Brianne Roudebush

tended periods of time.

By 8:30 a.m., they are on their way to the Camp Roberts Combined Arms Collective Training Facility to participate in Operation Dark Horse, a Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IX Homeland Response Force exercise, which simulates a response to a natural disaster. The exercise is preparation for an evaluation in April.

When they step off the buses, they are met with a flurry of activity – first responder firefighters are already on scene assessing victims, Soldiers with the 149th Chemical Company are setting up decontamination tents,



and Airmen with the 144th Medical Group are setting up the medical tent.

Guillen and Astorga's squad has less than 15 minutes to gear up in full decontamination suits and get out to the 'hot zone,' or training area. The squad pulls security for more than two hours, ensuring that nobody comes in or out of the contaminated area without following proper procedures.

Guillen says they are usually relieved every hour, but they have to wait for the decontamination tents to be fully functional before they can leave the area. Once the tents are up and running, Guillen and Astorga are relieved.

They go through decon, simulating hosing each other off with water. (No water was actually used due to the drought.) By the time they get all their gear off, it is 11:55 a.m.

The behavioral health team has an area set up for Soldiers and Airmen to relax after they come off the line.

"They have water, candy, an area where smokers can smoke, and just relax," Guillen said. "It's pretty relaxing."

Before the training day is over, they go back out to the disaster site again to pull security – this time without the suits on. They are relieved after an hour, and by 4 p.m., the exercise is over.

It only takes the team 30 minutes to tear down all the equipment and get back on the bus. While waiting for leadership to get accountability and make a plan for the rest of the afternoon, Guillen and Astorga fall asleep on the bus. At 5 p.m. they head back to the dining facility for dinner.

After dinner, Guillen and Astorga hang out in the barracks in their uniforms, waiting to hear the call for final formation. They listen to music, make phone calls, check Facebook and Instagram and talk about the events of the day. Finally, they hear that final formation has been canceled and they get ready for bed.

Lights are out at 9:30 p.m. It has been an 18-hour day and they are exhausted. Luckily, they don't have to wake up quite so early tomorrow. Alarms will go off at 5 a.m. Until then, they sleep.

The 69th PAD covers the action in “The Box”

Cal Guard public affairs Soldiers head to Germany to document large multinational exercise, Allied Spirit IV

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

A six-member team from the California Army National Guard’s 69th Public Affairs Detachment braved cold, snow and the challenging terrain of “The Box” during one of U.S. Army Europe’s (USAREUR) major exercises held Jan. 16-Feb. 6.

The 69th spent nearly three weeks covering the exercise at the U.S. Army’s Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels Training Area (JMRC-HTA). Almost every day of the exercise, PAD members trekked into a 40,000-acre training area made up of steep hills, forests and village sets, called “The Box,” where two opposing forces faced off in a combat scenario during Exercise Allied Spirit IV, a multinational training involving more than 2,400 troops from seven countries. The Soldiers of the 69th documented each day’s training events, and, like all participating units, endured sub-freezing temperatures, snow and mud. Line units were tested in their response to simulated tactical threats, while upper command was challenged with decision making and overall operation planning. Both levels were observed with coaches and trainers.

The 69th’s team of videographers and print journalists provided news stories of this fairly new event that keeps in line with USAREUR’s theme of “preparing forces in Europe to operate together by exercising tactical interoperability and testing secure communications with NATO Alliance members and partner nations.”

“While the 69th PAD was smaller than some of our other units — six personnel rather than eight — they did the work of a much larger team,” said Capt. Christopher B. Bradley, JMRC public affairs officer. “They displayed an exceptional enthusiasm and professionalism during their entire training event. They got on the ground in Hohenfels and immediately understood the mission and key themes of our rotation. They also brought fresh eyes and ears to our mission, and helped craft some great stories to tell the unique message of JMRC as a world class venue for multinational training.”

Allied Spirit originated just last year.

In cold, winter conditions, Allied Spirit IV engaged troops from the U.S., Italy, Slove-

nia, United Kingdom, Canada, Latvia and Germany in critical scenarios, such as conventional combat, guerilla attacks and dealing with refugees on the battlefield. The purpose of the exercise was to train high commands — brigade and battalion level leadership — for such scenarios on the real-world battlefield. The 69th was placed on active duty for operational support for this purpose.

“Allied Spirit was a unique opportunity for us to train in Germany alongside active duty and National Guard units in a large multinational exercise,” said Capt. Jason Sweeney, 69th commander. “Our team produced real-world print and video news reports about the exercise for U.S. Army Europe, and also supported the exercise as media role players. The realism of Allied Spirit allowed us to see how media and public perception can affect outcomes on the battlefield.”

California was one of five states that sent National Guard units to Exercise Allied Spirit IV, joining Michigan, Louisiana, Washington D.C. and Ohio. Louisiana had the largest National Guard delegation with close to 130 Soldiers who were part of an opposing force (OPFOR) against rotational units. The Michigan National Guard partnered with Italy’s Garibaldi Brigade, which commanded the exercise.

“The National Guard is vital to U.S. Army Europe’s mission,” said Lt. Col. Walter R. Jones Jr., commander, JMRC’s Reserve Component Affairs Office (JMRC-RCAO). “California sent a small unit here but in our eyes, you tell a huge story about our training. Public affairs keeps the American people and the entire U.S. Army informed.”

Bradley added, “It’s a priority for USAREUR to bring in National Guard and Reservists to support the U.S. Army mission in Europe. We can’t do it without them. But this also allows us to provide a multifaceted training experience for a (continental United States) based PAD, which is potentially well outside their typical yearly training. So, we gain valuable stories, and the PADs are able to practice their full range of MOS skills, and many Soldier tasks while they are here.”

The 69th produced more than a dozen news stories and hundreds of photos that circulated through the USAREUR audience



TOP: Spc. Lani Pascual and Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza interview an Airman during Allied Spirit IV in Hohenfels Training Area, Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Southeast Germany. **Photo by Sgt. First Class Caleb Barrieau** **BOTTOM LEFT:** Sgt. Jason Beal sets up his shot as a U.S. Army Stryker passes during Exercise Allied Spirit, Jan. 25, 2016. **Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza** **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Sgt. Brianne Roudebush, of the 69th PAD, photographs multinational training during Allied Spirit IV. **Photo by Capt. Jason Sweeney**

as well as back in the U.S.

“JMRC is a fantastic host,” Sweeney said. “We were set up for success with all the tools and support we needed for this mission. Not only did we participate in some great training, but we were also allowed the opportunity to visit Nuremberg and experience German culture, which all of us appreciated.”

Allied Spirit gave the Soldiers of the 69th an opportunity to meet various officials. They conducted interviews with Italian Brig. Gen. Claudio Minghetti, commander of the famous Garibaldi Brigade, and Armenian Maj. Gen. Gennady Tavaratsyan, chief of Armenia’s strategic planning department of the armed forces.

The 69th’s last major mission was in 2008-09

when it deployed to Kosovo. It previously participated in Peace Shield and Rapid Trident in Ukraine, which is California’s European partner under NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) program.

Allied Spirit promotes a notable cause, said Col. Clark C. Barrett, commander of NATO Rapid Deployment Corps-Hohenfels (NRDC-H), allowing NATO partners to train together and prepare for potential threats.

“Europe is experiencing lots of unanticipated change — economic crisis, refugee influx, etc., in the last few years. Some of that change has the potential to spark violence or humanitarian crises,” said Barrett. “When living together in a global community, we strengthen our security when we stand together.”



LEFT: Spc. Lani Pascual films participants in Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) training Jan. 25 during Allied Spirit IV at Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, late January. **RIGHT:** Sgt. Brianne Roudebush and Capt. Jason Sweeney play the role of media on the battlefield in a “town” in the notional country of Atropia, during Allied Spirit IV at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center’s Hohenfels Training Area, Germany. **Photos by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza**

Soldiers hone public speaking chops with Toastmasters

By **STAFF SGT. SALLI CURCHIN**
California Military Department Public Affairs

"Ahem, well, uh ladies, gentleman, uh honored guests, welcome, uh, uh, I'd like to talk to you today..."

Has that ever happened to you?

Would you like to become a better speaker and feel more confident in front of large groups? Looking for a self confidence boost? Then the Wednesday Toastmasters International (TI) lunchtime meeting at Joint Force Headquarters (known as the Grizzly Gabbers) might be a club that can help you.

"There are people who are scared to death of giving a speech. This group gets you out of your shell and comfortable in front of people," said Vice President of Membership, 1st Sgt. Josh Baker.

Baker is the first Grizzly Gabber to earn the competent communicator award by giving 10 various but evaluated speeches. He will go on to earn the next level of competency by completing the membership workbooks from TI with guidelines for further self-improvement.

There are more than 330,000 TI chapters



Brian Hatano, immediate past district governor, far right, awards the Grizzly Gabbers a chapter banner. From left, Chief Warrant 5 Artavia Edwards, Penny Knobloch, Col. Laura Yeager, Master Sgt. Joshua Baker and Capt. Jesse Bulaong. Photo by Staff Sgt. Salli Curchin

around the world. JFHQ's Grizzly Gabbers is part of a Northern California and Nevada district of 181 clubs. While TI has been in the U.S. for 90 years, new chapters are popping up in the Middle East, India and Asia, said Brian Hatano, a past district governor.

"TI has changed my life, and I will put it out there that I think a lot of you will be able to say the same thing," said Hatano when speaking to the club. "While a lot of people join to become a better speaker, you learn that you can help others and get as much reward out of that for yourself."

During the first half of the meeting, table topics are introduced and anyone can participate with a one to two minute speech on a surprise topic. During the second half of the meeting, those that are working on their skills present prepared speeches for just a little longer. There is a time keeper, evaluators and a grammarian who keeps a tally of crutch words used, such as "um," "ah," "so," "ahem," etc. At the end of the meeting, prize ribbons are awarded as voted on by the group.

"It does deliver what is promised," said Col. Laura Yeager, chapter president. "The environment is so supportive, when you do anything in the meeting, everyone claps for you. The structure of meetings removes the fear for people."

With a background in theater and 10 years with TI, off and on, Vice President of Education Penny Knobloch, still gets a lot from the organization. "I've given a lot of speeches, been to conventions and even competed and I have done well," said Knobloch. "I've learned that everyone empathizes with you, you make new friends and build trust with others."

"TI offers a dual track to self improvement," said charter member, Col. Mike

Herman. "You get an opportunity to improve your skills, speaking or leadership, in a very low-threat environment. There's not a lot of pressure on you, the audience is smaller, the venue is friendly, and everyone listening is also there to learn, and is very supportive," said Herman.

With their first year under their belt, the group would like to grow their membership, start competing against other local groups and give others a chance to lead by getting new leadership in place, said Yeager.

Anyone interested is invited to the weekly, hour-long meetings on Wednesdays in Room 137, starting at 11:30 a.m. The cost is \$6 per month to join.

"You get better from the repetition of speaking in front of others over and over," said Baker. "Really, it's the confidence that you build. You can't put a price on that".

For more info, email: joshua.j.baker28.mil@mail.mil

Or visit:

www.toastmasters.org/
www.youtube.com/user/Toastmasters

Safety blanket vs. nuclear attack: National Guard troops defend our skies

By **BRANDON HONIG**
California Military Department Public Affairs

When Steve Perez began a temporary assignment at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California, in 2004, it was just him and an officer. But he knew the size of his team didn't reflect the importance of his job – protecting the United States from an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) attack.

"If we weren't here to do our job, it would be catastrophic to the United States," said Perez, now a sergeant 1st class based at Vandenberg. "I mean, could you imagine a nuclear missile hitting Los Angeles? How many casualties would that cause? Millions of people, gone in an instant."

In 2004, Perez was an active duty Soldier acting as a liaison to the 100th Missile Defense Brigade (MDB) in Colorado for the fledgling Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) system, which had missiles deployed to Vandenberg. He spent 90 days in California, then rotated out for a new two-person team.

The mission at Vandenberg grew during the next five years, and in 2009 a seven-person missile detachment was established there as part of the California Army National Guard. That contingent has since grown to comprise 14 Soldiers vigilantly monitoring the skies and space every moment of every day.

With their fellow brigade members at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado, and Fort Greely, Alaska, Detachment 1's Soldiers live by the motto, "300 soldiers defending 300 million Americans."

"We're like a safety blanket," Perez said. "We take out that threat ICBM from wherever it comes at a moment's notice."

Hitting a bullet at 15,000 MPH

About once a year, a test ballistic missile is

launched from a U.S. base somewhere in the Pacific Ocean, triggering alerts at the 100th MDB's three locations. Sensors on land, at sea and in space detect the test launch and begin gathering data to project the missile's trajectory.

Once the missile is deemed a threat, the warfighters of the 100th MDB launch a ground-based interceptor missile to meet the target at a point in the exoatmosphere, the region of space just beyond Earth's atmosphere. As the interceptor approaches that point in space, it opens its own viewer, finds the target and homes in on it.

Traveling at an incredible rate of speed, the interceptor needs tremendous accuracy – but no warhead – to destroy its target.

"We are basically hitting a bullet with a bullet at about 15,000 miles an hour in space, so the margin for error is very small," said 1st Lt. Kevin Weger, who served as the detachment's executive officer until a recent transfer to Schriever. "You're hitting something a little bit bigger than a micro-fridge [in diameter] with an object of the same size in outer space, so we're basically looking to hit the target dead-on."

An Essential Mission

The 100th MDB is headquartered in Colorado, but its interceptor missiles are launched from Vandenberg and Fort Greely. The 14 members of Detachment 1 monitor the system at Vandenberg, manage and maintain the interceptors and their equipment, and communicate any status changes to brigade headquarters in Colorado.

The brigade's training is vigorous and includes elements of physics, astronomy and probability in addition to highly technical training on the missile system itself. And because the GMD system is still undergoing research and development, the train-

ing never ends.

"This system is always evolving, and you have to be constantly learning new things and be on your toes," said Sgt. Jose Montalvo. "Downtime is about educating myself, making myself better at what I do and studying our plan of action."

Soldiers like Montalvo work 12-hour shifts, and real-life threats are rarely detected. But multiple nightly exercises run by U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) keep the troops sharp.

"Those exercises are unannounced, so soldiers here working at 2 o'clock in the morning can get a phone call [or other communication], and they don't know if it's real or for an exercise [initially]," Perez said. "So there's always that heightened sense of alert when you pull a shift, because you don't know what's going to happen until it happens."

The Future is Now

The GMD system got its start in the 1980s under President Ronald Reagan. At a time when "mutually assured destruction" was considered the only way to prevent an enemy's nuclear attack, Reagan launched the Strategic Defense Initiative – better known as "Star Wars" – to create a new line of defense against nuclear missiles.

Technology at the time was not yet capable of striking a ballistic missile on the edge of outer space, however, and the program stalled. In the '90s, the success of the Patriot missile program during the Gulf War proved that knocking a missile out of the sky was possible, and Reagan's vision again gained momentum. Then, in 2002, President George W. Bush issued a directive to set up missile defense capabilities by 2004.

The Ballistic Missile Defense System was



The 100th Missile Defense Brigade and its California Army National Guard detachment at Vandenberg Air Force Base test launch a long-range ground-based interceptor (GBI), which protects the nation from nuclear missile attack, from Vandenberg on Jan. 28. The test launch, which was not designed to intercept another object, successfully evaluated the performance of the alternate divert thrusters on the GBI's Exoatmospheric Kill Vehicle.

Photo courtesy of the Missile Defense Agency

declared operational in September 2004, and it has been running round-the-clock ever since.

"We could face an ICBM threat at any point, especially from a rogue nation that could launch for any number of reasons – grievances they have with the United States," Weger said. "It's important for us to always stay on alert, and this brigade has soldiers on call, on ready, on station 24/7/365."

Life-saver is Guardsman for life: Star recruiter rescues woman from sinking car

By **BRANDON HONIG**

California Military Department Public Affairs

We've all seen it before in the movies: A car flies over an embankment, soars through the air and splashes down, leaving the driver only moments to find a way out before sinking to their watery grave. But Sgt. 1st Class Michael G. Long wasn't about to sit back and watch that scene play out when it unfolded before him in real life.

"The freeway took a turn, and she kept going straight," the California Army National Guard recruiter said. "Her car launched 75 feet straight out into the water, bounced once and nosedived."

Long parked his car on the side of the freeway, climbed a large fence and ran down an embankment to the edge of the water, where he was joined by a retired Airman who had followed similar instincts to help. The Airman was ready to jump in the frigid December water, but Long held him back.

"If we'd gotten in too early and struggled to get her out, then we'd be in trouble too, and she would be in worse trouble," Long said. "I said, 'Let's wait until the fire department gets here, if we can.'"

"But the car started to go down."

'We could see her moving inside the car'

The first uniformed responder on the scene was California Highway Patrol (CHP) Officer Kevin Jeffcoach, who by this time had joined Long and the retired Airman on the bank of Markham Ravine near Lincoln.

"From the shoulder of the road, the car looked like it was kind of stable, so I thought maybe that was as deep as [the ravine] went," Jeffcoach recalled of the Dec. 30 incident. "Then all of a sudden the car

started filling with water, the front end started dipping down, and it started sinking. ... We could see her moving inside the car."

They could see her moving because she was making a "last gasp" effort to save her life by moving into the back seat, where a larger air pocket remained.

"Michael and [the retired Airman] said, 'We gotta go in the water,' and I took off my radio and gun belt," Jeffcoach said. "They were both in the water before me."

A sinking feeling

Long, a former competitive swimmer, was the first to reach the vehicle and pound on a window with a rock he'd brought from the shore, to no avail. Jeffcoach, still on his way to the car, yelled out that his baton could break it, so Long wedged his knees under the rear of the car and tried to keep the vehicle above water until Jeffcoach arrived.

"I kept telling her, 'Ma'am, I'm not going to let this car go down. There's CHP here. The fire department's here. We're going to get you out of there,'" said Long, who credited his military rollover training with teaching him how to handle a person trapped in this situation. "She was having trouble keeping above the water. She was so scared, she was panicked."

With the car sinking toward its front left end, the rear passenger-side window was the only one above water when Jeffcoach smashed it open with his baton.

"I reached in to pull her out through the window, and the water was just gushing in," Jeffcoach said. "She grabbed my forearms and swam out through that window, and once we got her out of there, it completely filled in. The car was completely

filled with water."

Long swam the driver ashore and checked her for injuries, then wrapped her in blankets and jackets thrown down by watching motorists. The driver was hypothermic, but otherwise unharmed, and an ambulance was quickly on scene to help her make a speedy recovery.

A TV news truck wasn't far behind, but Long and the retired Airman were long gone by the time it got there, leaving Jeffcoach to handle the press.

The military mindset

"I really just wanted to get in my car and turn the heater on and change into some warm, dry clothes ... instead of doing an interview," Jeffcoach said, sounding as if he could still feel the biting cold of that windy, 40-degree day in his sopping police uniform. "I told [the reporter], 'I think the real heroes are the two guys who went in with me, because I had an obligation to go in the water. It's my job, but they were just bystanders and not obligated in any way to go in and try to get her out of the car.'"

After the rescue, Long and the other man who jumped in the water both told Jeffcoach they had military experience, which was not a surprise to the officer. For one, it seemed like their military training kicked in when the crisis unfolded. But even more so, he said, it's about the military member's mindset.

"The type of person who joins the military is the kind of person who is going to take action and do what they need to do to help someone in a crisis," Jeffcoach said. "Neither of them hesitated."

"I didn't even think about trying to stop them," he added. "I knew they were going in."



Sgt. 1st Class Michael G. Long

Love for the Guard

Long's Army career began in 1982 as a cook in an active duty infantry unit. He served four years then became an area manager for Jack-in-the-Box restaurants. He served briefly in the California National Guard in the 1990s, then came back to stay in 2003.

"After 9/11, like most people [in the Guard], it didn't take long before I said, 'I've got to serve again.' My right shoulder was missing the flag," he said, referencing the flag patch worn on Army uniforms.

Long landed a full-time position in the Guard's Joint Operations Center in Sacramento in 2003, then filled a variety of jobs in the Guard for the next decade, adding five military occupational specialties to his resume. He was a master sergeant in 2012, when he worked briefly in Fresno for the Guard's 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, but

continued next page

A calling to serve: 30 new Cal Guard Soldiers make a commitment to their country

By **BRANDON HONIG**

California Military Department Public Affairs

For Pvt. Derique Buffin, joining the Army National Guard presented a wealth of opportunity: the chance to get off the streets of South Central Los Angeles, defend his fellow citizens in a way he had always wanted, and stay close to home to take care of his sister who has cerebral palsy.

"I was a hell-raiser," said Buffin, 21, of his younger self. "When I was growing up, all my parents wanted for me was to stay off the streets, so when they heard I was going in the Army, they were pretty proud."

Moses and Tamnika Buffin were among dozens of proud parents in the theater on Joint Forces Training Base Los Alamitos for their Soldiers' battle hand-off Jan. 23, when they watched Derique officially transferred to his new unit after completing boot camp and Advanced Individual Training (AIT). A total of 30 new Cal Guard Soldiers were united with representatives from their first Army units, representing a variety of missions and locations from all over Southern California.

"To have my oldest son in the military is a great opportunity for his future," Moses said. "He has a little brother who just turned 18, so he has a role model to look up to, and he has a 14-year-old sister. I hope this starts a tradi-



Pvt. Derique Buffin is congratulated by Spc. Mikhail Mendoza on behalf of his first unit, Battery B, 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery Regiment, on Jan. 23 at Joint Forces Training Base Los Alamitos. Photo by Brandon Honig

tion [of military service]."

Derique chose the National Guard instead of the active component so he could stay close to home and help take care of his 20-year-old sister who has cerebral palsy. Moses and Tamnika both work, so having Derique available as a part-time caregiver makes a big difference. Derique also works a warehouse job part-time and eventually plans to go active duty or find a full-time job with the Guard.

When Derique enlisted, Tamnika feared for her son's safety, and she's still uneasy about his dangerous new occupation. But Moses

assured her it's for the best: Derique's uncle died from gang violence in 2001, and Moses is proud his son is not going down that road. Instead, he's a cannon crewmember for Battery B, 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery Regiment in Van Nuys.

"Basically I blow up stuff for fun, and we help out the infantrymen too," Derique said with a big smile. "We still go kick in doors and all that too, so we get the best of both worlds."

AIT for Buffin included lots of ruck marches and learning how to carry and load 100-pound rounds. It was hard physical work, and sometimes he wanted to give up, but he learned to do as he was told and "embrace the suck."

For Pvt. John Cho, who also had his battle hand-off at JFTB Los Alamitos on Jan. 23, AIT was a very different experience. A human intelligence collector for the 250th Military Intelligence (MI) Battalion in Riverside, Cho said his AIT was more like college, a familiar setting for the senior at the University of California, Irvine.

"We went to classes every day. It was more relaxing compared to other experiences, like the infantry AIT," said Cho, 23, who lives in Los Angeles. "I honestly didn't expect much, because the Army is so big, they have to generalize their program to meet everyone's

unique needs, which is hard. But I learned a lot."

MI is a natural fit for the criminology major, who said he has been fascinated with three-letter agencies – FBI, CIA, NSA – since he was a kid. Cho may apply to the FBI after college or graduate school, but he wants to serve in the military as well and continue the tradition started by his father, a former captain in the South Korean Army, and sustained by his brother, a lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

The military also appeals to Cho because it's a merit-based organization. In the private sector, he said, sometimes who you know is more important than what you know.

"The military is very straightforward: 'This is what you have to do. Just do it, and you'll succeed,'" Cho said. "People who strive for it will get where they want."

The 30 new soldiers at JFTB on Jan. 23 had many different reasons for joining the California National Guard, but one motivation links them all: the desire to serve.

"I love the military," Cho said. "To know that I'm doing what the 99 percent of the nation isn't doing – to sacrifice – I'm glad that I get to be one of the defenders of freedom and uphold what the U.S. really means."

'Life-saver' from previous page

Long wanted to return to Sacramento instead of uprooting his family.

He agreed to take off a stripe and become a sergeant first class again for the opportunity to move back north and become a recruiter – a job he never thought he would do – and it turned out to be a perfect fit. Long's work ethic, gregarious nature and most of all his passion for the Guard made him ideal for the position.

The prototype recruiter

"When I came back in 2003, the Guard was a gift to me, and I want to share it with everyone," Long said. "I don't care about rank. I love the Guard and I love my job. I can't wait to get to work in the morning."

Long's dedication made him the state's top recruiter in 2015, only his third year on the job. It was also the second

straight year he recruited more high-schoolers than anyone else in the state.

"He's one of our 5-percenters that go over and beyond what they need to do to exceed the mission. Actually, 5 percent might be too much," said Master Sgt. Adam Tsudama, who oversees 10 teams of recruiters as the noncommissioned officer in charge of Regional Command Post North. "His work ethic is the prototype we'd like to have in all our recruiters. If we were able to clone Sergeant Long, California would be exceeding mission every year."

Long cares for each recruit as an individual, not just a Soldier, Tsudama said. Even after recruits sign up, Long keeps in close contact to see them all the way through until they reach their first unit. That caring attitude is one reason Tsudama wasn't surprised to hear about Long's water-borne heroics.

"He was in a bad situation, and I doubt he even hesitated,"

Tsudama said matter-of-factly. "I bet he was the first one to jump in the water."

Having the ability to help people in his own community is one of two main reasons Long cherishes the National Guard. The other is that it provides opportunities for everyone in this country.

"There's no race, creed, color – nothing inside this uniform but green," he said. "Anyone that wants to do well in life, as long as they qualify, can join the Guard. We don't care what you look like or what you do outside of work, as long as you work hard [here]."

Long, now 53, has limited time left in the military, and he is taking full advantage of every moment he can.

"When I turn 60, they will kick me out of this uniform, and I am not leaving until then," he said. "I will be right here at this desk."

What does DPH stand for? What, and who, is the DPH?

The Director of Psychological Health at the 163rd Attack Wing and his trusty sidekick give Airmen a little help through hard times

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

The Director of Psychological Health (DPH) is a position in an Air National Guard wing not many people know about, or know much about what a DPH can provide.

We all experience things differently. Through sharing ideas with our wingmen, we help each other through each season. A DPH provides additional help at Air National Guard wings to give us even more help when we need it.

David Cunningham is the DPH for the 163rd Attack Wing. Cunningham joined the 163rd in May 2014. He is a veteran of the U.S. Army where he served as a clinical social worker, reaching the rank of captain. He has over 25 years' experience in the psychological health field and has worked in both private practice and for Veteran's Affairs. He has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in social work.

Cunningham makes the rounds to the work centers at the 163rd. He can be seen handing out candy and granola bars on a regular basis. He is often with Jax, his German shepherd. Jax is finishing training to become a therapy dog for the wing.

In the following interview, Cunningham explains psychological health and how the DPH supports the wing.

Avey: Since starting your career, what do you find is a common need?

Cunningham: You can find depression and anxiety in any population and someone having it doesn't mean it has to be debilitating. People deal with it every day. It's developing the skills to get you through it that is most important. Sometimes it may be very short-lived, or it could be something that is going to be there for a while. Either way, you need to learn coping skills. If warranted, you may also at times need to access clinical care. It could be a grief-related issue if you have had a spouse or family member that has passed away. You can even grieve a loss of a spouse through divorce. Loss of relationships is an example of what causes depression.

Avey: What are some of the ways you help people navigate through the process?

Cunningham: My goal is to get them the resources they need to be successful in their work and with their families. It could be just having a conversation and pointing them in the right direction for resources, providing feedback or coaching on meditation and breathing techniques. It may be connecting them with a therapist on the outside so they can have more in-depth care. In my role I do not provide in-depth counseling. As the DPH, I will assist with short-term problem solving and resolutions. My goal is to find resources locally either through their insurance, free [such as Military OneSource] or income-based services. My goal



David Cunningham, Director of Psychological Health for the 163rd Attack Wing, poses with his sidekick Jax. The pair regularly make rounds at the 163rd checking in on the unit's Airmen and their families. Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey

is to help Airmen remain functional and operational with whatever they are dealing with. I can also help people find resources for their families, such as tutoring or helping them navigate resources if there are behavioral issues with their kids. I maintain confidentiality and do not share what is discussed with my Airmen.

Avey: Do you feel there is a stigma connected to mental health? What do you feel about this stigma?

Cunningham: Mental health has a significant stigma in the military. The reality is when doing self-reporting, it reflects positively upon you. You are not going to risk things and try to cover it up. When I was in the Army, I saw where the stigma prevented help sometimes. I have not had that happen here. The experience here is overwhelming support from leadership. Their immediate response is, 'What do I need to do to help?' That has not always been the mentality that our Airmen may have dealt with so I understand why the stigma has been there.

Avey: What is it like when Airmen come to you for assistance?

Cunningham: I can have some pretty intense conversations, but usually they are trying to get me enough info to where I can get them the right resource. Sometimes they

just need to vent.

Avey: Why did you take this position with the 163rd Attack Wing?

Cunningham: For me it is an opportunity to work with the military and their families again. People say they feel they have a calling. I would like to say for myself this is what I enjoy doing and I have worked with veterans or active duty for a huge part of my life. Being at the 163rd gives me the opportunity to work with the population I really want to work with but at the same time I feel like my skill set is a match. I feel like it works both ways.

Avey: How did you get started in this field?

Cunningham: I started in the psychological health field in 1990 when I was in college and became a psych tech in the local hospital in a psychiatric unit. It was just a job at the time, but I never knew it was going to end up being what I did. I ended up changing majors, getting my degree in psychology, and later my master's in social work. It is pretty much what I have been doing ever since.

A DPH is available in each Air National Guard wing. For more information or if you are in need of help, log on to: www.calguard.ca.gov/bh.



California National Guard

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Line of Duty (LOD):

A Line of Duty determination is required when a Soldier has an injury, illness, or disease that occurs or is aggravated while that Soldier is in a duty status (AD T-10, AGR T-32, M-day, ADOS). It is imperative that Soldiers identify to the Command that an injury, illness, or disease has occurred and that Commands initiate and process a LOD within the specified timelines for either the Informal or Formal LOD.

Key References:

- CAARNG LOD SOP dated 30 October 2015
- AR 600-8-4 dated 4 September 2008

Line of Duty (LOD)... the Basics

Purpose of LODs

- a. Determine if the Soldier is entitled to medical care and/or military compensation (INCAP Pay, ADME or MRPs)
- b. Assist the Soldier when requesting treatment or benefits from other agencies and branches of service
- c. Provide documentation of an injury, illness, or disease that has occurred on a duty states for future Army benefits
- d. Protect the Soldier and the Army

Soldier Responsibilities – Soldier notifies chain of command **immediately after** the injury, illness or disease occurs. If Soldier is unable to notify chain of command immediately, they should make every effort to notify their command as soon as possible. Soldier provides all supporting documentation.

Unit Responsibilities – Unit administrator notifies unit commander and higher headquarters of injury/illness sustained by Soldier. This can initially be done informally via phone or email, or Serious Incident Report as required. Begins the LOD process with the input into the Electronic Medical Management Processing System (eMMPS). Initiates the request for ADME or Incapacitation pay the next business day for seriously injured or ill Soldiers.

Informal LOD

Definition: An informal LOD is required to document an injury, illness, or disease that a Soldier has clearly been sustained or aggravated while in a duty status

- Injury or illness was clearly incurred while in a line of duty
- No investigation required and no appointment of an Investigating Officer
- TAG delegates State Approval Authority to a field grade officer to approve M-Day Informal LODS. For Title 32 informal LODS, approval authority is the State Surgeons Office (SSO)

Timeliness of LOD Initiation and Completion

- a. LODs will be initiated within eMMPS NLT **ten (10) calendar days** from date of injury/illness.
- b. Informal LODs will be completed NLT **forty (40) calendar days** after incident.
- c. Inactivity: eMMPS will administratively close an LOD with no activity within **180 days** and delete the LOD after **365 days** with no activity. (Same for Formal)

Formal LOD

Definition: A Formal LOD is a more detailed investigations required to arrive at a determination of whether misconduct or negligence was involved in the disease, injury, or death of a Soldier; and if so, to what degree. A Unit may initiate a formal LOD for any incident involving questionable circumstances or outcomes. A Soldier may also request a formal LOD.

- Required when misconduct or negligence is suspected, or under strange or doubtful circumstances
- Requires a commander at the O5 level to appoint an Investigating Officer
- TAG delegates State Reviewing Authority to a field grade officer.
- State Surgeons Office (SSO) / JAG reviews investigation prior to submittal to NGB for final approval.

Timeliness of LOD Initiation and Completion

- a. LODs will be initiated within eMMPS NLT **ten (10) calendar days** from date of injury/illness.
- b. Formal LODs will be completed NLT **seventy-five (75) calendar days** after incident.

Common Delays in the Process

- a. Command not aware of injury, illness, or disease. (Soldiers must inform Command)
- b. Investigation Officers unfamiliar with process (Ensure IOs are trained on conducting Formal LOD investigations)
- c. Soldier does not provide all medical treatment documents, or documents do not show a definitive diagnosis.

LOD Email Hotline: ng.ca.caarng.mbx.msb@mail.mil (Soldiers can check on the status of LOD, INCAP Pay, ADME or MRP2 actions, or medical bills that they believe may not have been actioned or initiated.)



Spc. Nicholas Maness, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, fires a 9-millimeter pistol Nov. 18 in the California Army National Guard's 2015 Best Warrior Competition at Camp San Luis Obispo, San Luis Obispo, California. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

Education benefits info updated

The Army Times reported that the Army regulation governing Soldier education benefits has been updated to include information on the Montgomery GI Bill, the Army College Fund, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, policies unique to the reserve components, student loan repayment programs and the health professional stipend programs.

The revised AR 621-202 (Army Education Incentives and Entitlements) was published Feb. 8, and will take effect March 8.

The previous edition of this regulation was issued Feb. 3, 1992, well before the law that expanded benefits for National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers, and established an entirely new benefits program, the Post-9/11 GI Bill, for veterans who signed up after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The revised regulation provides detailed information about policies that allow certain Soldiers to transfer unused education benefits to dependents, and separate chapters on student loan repayment programs for active and reserve enlisted Soldiers, Army Reserve chaplains and medical professionals.

The revised regulation can be found on the Army Publishing Directorate website: www.apd.army.mil.

Minuteman Scholarship pays for college

All qualified applicants for ROTC scholarships may apply for the four-year Minuteman Scholarship. Each Army National Guard major subordinates command (MSC) has the ability to award six Minuteman Scholarship per year. The scholarship covers full tuition at any college or university served by an Army Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) program, or can be used toward room and board, capped at \$10,000 per year.

Scholarship recipients also receive a yearly book allowance of \$1,200 and a monthly stipend from \$300 to \$500 while attending school, depending on years in the ROTC program. Minuteman Scholarship recipients must participate in the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP), in which they participate in an Army National Guard unit monthly drill and a 14-day annual training and as a paid as a sergeant. After graduation and commissioning, Minute-man Scholarships recipients are guaranteed placement in the Army National Guard.

For more info, email a Cal Guard officer recruiter at: ng.ca.caarng.list.rrb-officer-recruiting@mail.mil.

Space commander visits 195th

The commander and command chief master sergeant of Air Force Space Command recently paid a visit to the 195th Wing here, while meeting with AFSPC units at Beale Air Force Base, California.

During the visit, Gen. John E. Hyten, AFSPC commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Patrick McMahon, AFSPC command chief master sergeant, met with the leadership of the 195th Wing, as part of a larger tour of AFSPC organizations on the West Coast.

Hyten impressed to wing leadership how important the current and future missions of the 148th Space Operations Squadron and the 216th Space Control Squadron are to Air Force Space Command. Both the 148th and the 216th are Geographically Separated Units of the 195th Wing, and are located at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California.

"We are a warfighting command now," said Hyten. "We are building warfighters to fight against the threats in air, space and cyberspace."

Gen. Hyten's visit brought the opportunity for 195th Wing leadership to have a candid discussion about future missions and receive valuable feedback from Air Force Space Command. Some of the other topics discussed during the meeting include the wing's role in total force combat communications and the need to modernize equipment.

"Gen. Hyten's visit to the 195th Wing put an exclamation point on the activation of the newest Wing in the Air Force," said Col. Rick Hern, 195th Wing commander. "His extensive knowledge of the missions of our GSUs conducting space and combat communications missions clearly shows the 195th Wing's relevance in today's modern Air Force."

2016 Soldier and Airmen of the Year Banquet held in Garden Grove

The California Army and Air National Guard leadership, families and supporters gathered at the Garden Grove Hyatt Regency on Feb. 20, 2016, to honor the Cal Guard's top Soldiers, Airmen and State Military Reservists from across the force during the annual Soldier and Airmen of the Year ceremony.

The ceremony honored service members who excelled during the Army Guard's Best Warrior Competition and testing and boards by the Air Guard and State Military Reserve.

Read all about the event and winners in the next issue of the Grizzly.



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Sgt. Jason Beal, of the Cal Guard's 69th Public Affairs Detachment, covers the action during Allied Spirit IV at Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, late January. The 69th PAD supported U.S. Army Europe during the three-week long multinational exercise involving 2,400 troops from seven nations. See the story on page 14 of this issue. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

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