

August 20, 2007

# Freedom WATCH

AFGHANISTAN



Soldiers of the Sky ■ Afghan First ■ Dirty for MWR



## Army

### Army Puts 'Temporary' Back in TCS Orders

WASHINGTON - The Army is putting the "temporary" back into temporary change of station orders that authorize and fund assignments for Soldiers in contingency support positions that are not in a combat zone.

Effective Aug. 15, TCS orders are issued only for assignments of 180 days or less, unless a waiver is granted. Additionally, Soldiers will not be approved for two sets of 180-day orders within the same 365-day period. The changes are intended to ensure Soldiers and families have predictable, reasonable service requirements.

"The 16,000 Soldiers currently on TCS orders and their families deserve a process that makes sense, is predictable, and honors their willingness and commitment to sacrifice and serve," said Ronald J. James, assistant secretary of the Army for manpower and Reserve affairs.

A presidential order dated Sept. 14, 2001, authorized the Army to call on individual ready reservists to fill jobs left vacant by Soldiers deploying into operational theaters. The positions included such missions as staffing operations centers, training Soldiers at mobilization centers and guarding sensitive areas. Though the assignments were expected to be short term, many Soldiers have served on assignments requiring them to extend in TCS status for years.

Being on TCS orders entitles Soldiers to lodging and per diem reimbursements, in addition to their normal housing allowance. Putting Soldiers on temporary duty of 180 days or less on TCS orders is normal Army procedure because they are essentially maintaining a home away from home and entitled to reimbursement.

The changes ensure the TCS program will remain an appropriate and important vehicle for emerging temporary requirements, and the administrative changes will make the program more manageable and efficient, saving dollars for the war effort.

Col. Richard Shrank, commander of U.S. Army Finance Command, said the Army will tap into the Installation Management Command's resources to enhance the TCS process.

"As Soldiers come into a TDY status we're specifically going to be directing them to Installation Management Command to look for government housing solutions," Shrank said. "We're going to be pushing that as one of the cost-control savings."

IMCOM will provide oversight for the redefined TCS policy.

IMCOM will use the Defense Travel System to process orders, manage travel funds, and arrange lodging and meals. It will also maintain an inventory of installation and contract lodging solutions for Soldiers in TCS status, and will be the approving authority for any use of economy per diem lodging.

With IMCOM providing oversight, the revised program will benefit the Army and Soldiers, said Laura Avery, chief of budget execution, IMCOM headquarters.

"In the end it's going to be a lot more cost effective for the government and a more efficient process for the Soldier," she said.

## Air Force

### SERE training to be required for all Airmen

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley met Aug. 10 at the Pentagon with several Air Force leaders to discuss the road ahead for survival, evasion, resistance and escape training.

Air Force leaders plan to broaden the focus of SERE training for all Airmen due to the threat of isolation and capture for Airmen supporting the war on terrorism.

"As we've seen recently, the capture of military personnel has the potential of exploding into a larger strategic event with global impacts," Moseley said. "Today's battlefields are non-linear and non-contiguous; their shape and venue change constantly. I worry we've not prepared our Airmen for the world we're operating in."

In today's ever-changing world, Airmen increasingly find themselves in a non-traditional environment outside the wire. SERE training teaches Airmen principles, techniques and skills to survive in any environment, avoid capture, resist and escape if captured.

SERE training is currently conducted on three levels. All Airmen receive entry-level, or A-level, training. B-level is provided to those with a moderate risk of capture and C-level is reserved for those with a high risk of capture. B- and C-level training are provided primarily to aircrew members, those traditionally in higher-risk duties.

In addition to aircrews, advanced SERE training currently is provided to battlefield Airmen, those with the responsibility for combat control, pararescue, tactical air control and combat weather.

"This is a great day. For the first time in history, we're talking about preparing all Airmen in the total force to deal with the increasing threat of isolation and capture," said Chief Master Sergeant John Myers, SERE career field manager.

"With the issues we've addressed at this summit, we've taken a great step forward in facing this ultimate challenge that confronts our Airmen who fall into enemy hands," Andrews added.

Moseley's new initiative will be to incorporate SERE training throughout the Air Force.

"We need to inject these skills across the entire force," Moseley said. "Whether deployed for combat operations, stationed overseas or even in the continental United States, there are persistent threats to all Airmen. We must ensure every Airman is properly trained to deal with these threats. From the moment Airmen report for initial training until they separate or retire, we must train them to ensure they return with honor."

# Freedom Watch

AFGHANISTAN

**COVER:** An Army Materiel Command's Afghan First program trainee grinds an ammo box in the in the metal shop at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Since its inception in March 2006, the Afghan First program has infused hundreds of millions of dollars into the Afghan economy. (Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel Bellis)

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**Brig. Gen. Mohammad Shafi, Afghan National Army chief of engineers, speaks to his troops during a recognition ceremony at Bagram Airfield.**

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# ANSF provides medical assistance in Sangin

*Courtesy of  
Combined Joint  
Task Force-82*

**H**elmand Province, Afghanistan - Afghan National Security Forces, advised by Coalition forces, brought medical, veterinary and material assistance to Afghan civilians at the Sangin District Center, Helmand Province.

The medical and veterinary assistance were made possible due to diminished Taliban enemy activity in the area. Coalition forces have put heavy pressure on insurgents in Helmand Province since spring, a strategy that disrupted the Taliban's plan for a spring offensive.

"Our mission is to give these people medical treatment, something they otherwise have great difficulty getting access to," said a Coalition medical officer. "A lot of them can't afford the medicine we're giving them, but it's part of a campaign for healthy bodies in Afghanistan."

ANSF and Coalition forces treated 857 villagers, includ-



Photos by Army Sgt. Steven M. Boone

**Coalition Soldiers struggle to hold a cow steady while giving her de-worming medicine during a veterinary assistance visit in Helmand Province, Afghanistan.**

ing 329 men and 528 women and children during the five-day program. Common complaints were musculo-skeletal pain, upset stomach and dehydration, but there were some exceptions. Two victims of a recent Taliban mortar attack were stabilized and evacuated to a nearby Coalition post for further care.

"Most of the people who

come here have problems that are preventable or easy to fix," said a Coalition medical officer. "We can make simple advice and a little bit of medicine go a long way."

A Coalition dentist also provided dental care for the residents of Sangin. Most of his patients required extractions or fillings and each of them received information on how to maintain good oral health.

"This has been a great success," said the governor of the district. "Many people of Sangin have been provided with medical care that they otherwise would not have been able to afford. Many thanks to God and to our friends in the international community for their assistance and may we all have peace."

In addition to medical, dental and material services, the relief team also treated the livestock of Sangin residents. Sheep, goats and cattle made up the majority of the 120 animals that were treated for parasites and given growth supplements and antibiotics.

"The security and assistance for our animals and villagers are a gift from God," said a Sangin area village elder. "Many thanks and blessings for an end to war."

Coalition-aid programs divided 500 bags of rice, 400 bags of beans, cases of tea, powdered milk and cooking oil between villagers. Toys, books and school supplies were also distributed.

"The people of Sangin have seen a large portion of the combat in Afghanistan this year so we do whatever we can to make their lives easier," said a Coalition civil affairs officer. "Most of them are regular working families like you'd see back home, no different from us."

"Although the services provided were limited, there were many encouraging comments from the locals," said a CA officer. "They know we are here to help them and they appreciate that. Sangin residents can expect continued goodwill and care from Coalition forces."



**Coalition Soldiers hand out copies of the Quran and prayer rugs during the visit. Toys, school supplies and basic cooking items were also distributed.**



**A Coalition medical officer examines a face wound on a local girl during a visit to Sangin district, Helmand Province.**



## Sky Soldiers Task Force Saber, ANA land in Nuristan

Story and photos by Army Sgt. Brandon Aird  
173rd ABCT Public Affairs

**NURISTAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan** – Sailing through the clouds, Soldiers from the Afghan National Army and Task Force Saber air-assaulted onto landing zone Shetland during Operation Saray Has.

The LZ was a large meadow near the top of a mountain here. Local Afghans use the area as a grazing pasture for livestock, while Taliban extremists often use it to stage attacks against TF Saber.

The spot the Afghan 3rd Kandak, 201st Corps and Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, landed on was roughly 10,000 feet above sea level. The air-assault was part of a reconnaissance mission to determine the point of origin for rockets which were fired at Forward Operating Base Naray and injured several Soldiers a few weeks prior.

“We came up here to confirm or deny enemy use of the hilltop,” said Army 1st Lt. Chris Richelderfer, HHT executive officer.

“Seven Soldiers were injured from that attack,” said Army Command Sgt. Maj. Victor Pedraza, TF Saber command sergeant major.

After air-assaulting onto the mountain, a patrol was dispatched to an adjacent mountain to scout out the terrain and possible enemy positions.

The rest of the Soldiers secured the area while Army Capt. Nathan Springer, HHT commander, along with the Naray district Sub-Gov., SamShu Rochman, spoke with local people.

“I wanted the government to have the lead when talking with the locals,” said Springer.

Rochman spoke with civilians from the villages of Badermashal and Cherigal about security in the area.

While Rochman and Springer were speaking with villagers, wood smugglers accidentally walked their donkeys carrying stolen wood into the meadow.

“The wood on the donkeys had been stolen from the Naray lumber yard two days before our mission,” said Springer.

Rochman was adamant about bringing the wood smugglers to justice. The wood smugglers were brought off the mountain, back to Naray to face prosecution.

Operation Saray Has was more productive than both Springer and Rochman had planned.

“It validated the need to conduct future operations in the area to deny [Taliban extremists] that terrain,” said Springer.



**Army 1st Lt. Chris Richelderfer, executive officer of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, looks at possible enemy positions during Operation Saray Has.**

**Top: Two ANA soldiers meet with a local during Operation Saray Has near Forward Operating Base Naray, Afghanistan.**

# Afghan children return from Poland

*Polish Minister of Defense sponsors students' two-week stay*

**Story and photo by  
Spc. Micah E. Clare**  
4th Brigade Combat Team  
Public Affairs Office

**B**AGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - School field trips provide critical exposure to new experiences and knowledge about the world, and for nearly 30 Afghan schoolchildren, this was never more true than when they recently visited Poland.

Sponsored by the Polish Minister of Defense, Afghan students ranging from ages 10 to 16 were chosen to spend two weeks sightseeing in the eastern European country of Poland, said Jacek Matuszak of the Polish Public Information Office. The trip not only opened up the world around them, but also showed them a way of life other than the one they are familiar with.

The minister of education chose the most promising students from eastern Afghanistan's Paktika Province, Matuszak explained.

The students were flown to Poland where they visited communities and cities along the scenic Baltic Sea.

"We had the opportunity to take them to either our sea or mountains," said Matuszak. "But we figured being from Afghanistan they had seen enough mountains."

The children were treated on behalf of the Polish government to a variety of child-friendly activities.

"They went to museums, zoos, sport events, dances; they did a lot during their

**"Living in such freedom is something we dream of here [in Afghanistan]. I can't wait for our country to someday become just like that."**

- Imran Jabar  
Waza Khwa Central High School



**An Afghan student, who just returned from a two-week field trip to Poland, shows off his souvenirs while at the Polish military compound at Bagram Airfield.**

stay," said Matuszak.

The kids also interacted with Polish children; playing soccer and volleyball together, as well as becoming familiar with billiards and electronic games.

During their visit, they were also given the benefit of state-of-the-art medical facilities, Matuszak said. They were all given check-ups and some were given treatments for various illnesses.

"It was such a fun experience," said Imran Jabar, a 12-year-old boy from Waza Khwa Central High School, who had never left the country before. "The sights were amazing, especially the big, beautiful cities. [At a military family social event] I enjoyed the dancing the most; the Polish dance so beautifully, very different from traditional Afghan dances."

Yet of all the experiences shown them, perhaps the most valuable was meeting people living in a free country.

"What meant the most to us was how friendly the people there were; they were always smiling," Jabar continued. "Living in such freedom is something we dream of here [in Afghanistan]. I can't wait for our country to someday become just like that."

The children's teachers, who went with them, were very happy to see their students' horizons widened.

"We wish our children to see first-hand the progress of other countries," said Abdul Ghani, Jabar's teacher. "This trip has opened up their minds to learning more about the world like nothing else could. Several of them have already asked about a continued education in Poland."

The trip is something the Polish government made possible. In an attempt to renew historic ties with Afghanistan, Afghans coming to Poland are offered a scholarship by the government, explained Polish Maj. Wojciech Kaliszczak, the public information officer for the Polish Battle Group stationed in Afghanistan.

The two countries have had relations since the 1920s. At that time Polish soldiers came to the rugged Afghan mountains for special training, said Kaliszczak. Later, many Afghans went to Poland for refuge during the Soviet occupation 30 years ago.

"We have always had very good relations with the Afghans, and we want nothing more than to offer them opportunities which will help them rebuild their country," he said.

This is exactly what the government of Poland had in mind when they arranged this "long-range field trip."

"Since we are representatives of the kind of democratic country we are trying to give the Afghans, we want to give them a chance to see what living in such a country is like," Kaliszczak explained.

"Who better to show than the generation growing up in a free Afghanistan?" he said. "We gave them what they need the most; a smile and a helping hand."

# Alpha Company gets dirty for MWR



Army Pfc. Destin Blevins, Alpha Company, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, helps paint the morale, welfare and recreation center at Forward Operating Base Fenty in Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

**Story and photo by  
Army Sgt. Brandon Aird**  
*173rd ABCT Public Affairs*

**J**ALALABAD, Afghanistan - Soldiers from Alpha Company, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, renovated the morale, welfare and recreation center at Forward Operating Base Fenty here.

"We cleaned up the MWR to make it more presentable for Soldiers," said Army Pfc. Destin Blevins, an Alpha Co. Soldier.

The entire inside of the MWR building was painted and new wires installed for additional computer and phone lines.

The MWR center is the primary place provided by the Army at FOB Fenty where Soldiers can keep in contact with their families during Task Force Bayonet's 15-month deployment.

"We're doing as many things as we can to improve quality of life for the Soldiers," said Army Staff Sgt. Harry Miller, Alpha Co.

The MWR facility staff at FOB Fenty is currently expanding the range of activities. The MWR is planning to add televisions along with Xbox 360 gaming consoles for competition nights. Salsa dancing and karaoke nights are also in the works.

Soldiers can find information about upcoming activities through their chain of command. Flyers will also be posted in high-visibility areas.

"Information on MWR activities will be posted on the dining facility door," added Miller.



**The Morning Show  
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*Army program designed to boost national economy, train labor force by putting...*

# Afghan First

**By U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer  
Eric Harrison**  
*43rd Joint Logistics Command  
Public Affairs*

**B**AGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Since its inception, the Afghan First program has infused hundreds of millions of dollars into the Afghan economy. However, the Army Materiel Command and 3rd Battalion, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, have contributed in a different way: through training.

Afghan First, an AMC training program kicked off in March 2006. The first class of apprentices began their schooling June 2006, graduated in January, and training has continued strong since.

Heyward McLendon, 3rd Ba.-401st Bde. deputy program manager, said the program is trying to help establish a baseline for the Afghan economy, so the country will be able to stand on its own with highly skilled people.

McLendon went on to say one of the program's goals is to help foster a working class in Afghanistan.

"We're trying to increase their capability, to allow them to go back into their workforce and create the middle economy," he said.

The first iteration of the apprenticeship program began with 10 Afghan trainees, which consisted of seven mechanics, a supply clerk, an electrician and a billeting clerk. The graduates also received on-the-job training.

"We turned around and offered the graduates of the program employment with the AFSB," he said. "You can walk through our [shops] and see them



**Two AMC Afghan First program trainees conduct inventory in a supply warehouse at Bagram Airfield. Since its inception in March 2006, the Afghan First program has infused hundreds of millions of dollars into the Afghan economy.**

welding, working in supply and other places."

According to McLendon, 3rd Ba.-401st Bde. was able to find the candidates for the apprenticeship program easily, since they were already em-

ployed on site as laborers.

"We picked from the best of the Afghan labor force that we had, the ones who displayed the most initiative."

Another benefit of the Afghan First program is those in the program have an opportunity to expand beyond the AMC workforce to other parts of the community, according to McLendon.

"The Afghan National Army is going to need mechanics and supply personnel. One day, the same people we are training to work on our equipment will be able to go back to their own Afghan National Army to further broaden that base.

One participant in the AMC Afghan First program said that after 30 years of fighting in Afghanistan, the training he has received is good for the future of the country and the Afghan people.

"I like working here," he said. "I'm learning how to maintain vehicles here and I get certification as a mechanical helper; it's helped me because I can work outside the base at a mechanic shop fixing trucks."

Leonel Garza, 3rd Ba.-401st Bde. warehouse supervisor, said the trainees he has worked with enjoy doing the job and using the knowledge.

"They're good people; they're very intelligent and trustworthy people," said the Texas native. "Once they learn this job, they can go on the economy or get a job with another company, and they can feel that we have trained them in a good environment."

McLendon added that AMC is a good environment to work in for all workers from Afghanistan and neighboring countries.

"Everyone has a chance to succeed here."



An Afghan First program trainee works on Humvee components at a Bagram Airfield vehicle repair shop.



Center: An Army Materiel Command's Afghan First program trainee tightens support bolts in a Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, vehicle repair shop. The AMC graduated its first class of trainees in January, and is currently training a second class of apprentices. Right: Two AMC Afghan First program trainees conduct inventory in a supply warehouse at Bagram.



Photos by Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel Bellis

# Bridge-building class comes to close

Story and photos by  
Senior Airman  
Christine Collier

American Forces Network –  
Afghanistan

**B**AGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Approximately 25 Afghan National Army soldiers from 4-3 Kandak, 201st and 203rd Corps Command, completed a U.S. Army engineering training program designed to help the Afghans assemble Bailey Bridges across the country.

“The ANA engineering leadership learned how to recon a bridge site, how big the bridge needs to be and bridge application design,” said Army Maj. Christopher Grose, 70th Engineering Battalion executive officer. “The other engineers learned how to site the bridge in, put it together and slide it over the gap.”

The assembly of the Bailey Bridges, which are portable, pre-fabricated structures that can hold up to 100-ton loads, is part of a larger curriculum of engineering goals for the ANA which also includes mine detection and obstacle emplacement and reduction.

“This training from the U.S. Army is the first step for our engineers,” said Brig. Gen. Mohammad Shafi, ANA chief of engineers. “The second step will be for our engineers to construct bridges by themselves. The most knowledgeable will go on to be instructors to begin teaching the next group of engineers.”



**Afghan National Army soldiers from 4-3 Kandak, 201st and 203rd Corp Command, are presented with a certificate after completing a U.S. Army engineering training course.**

Some corps members had already gained instruction experience, as several of them completed a week-long class in July and remained through August to help teach their fellow engineers.

“We’re training many different types of soldiers here,” said Army Col. Roy Webb,

Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan CJ7 training and education chief. “But a very important type of soldier we’re training is the engineer. Under General Shafi’s guidance, these engineers have made great strides over the last year.”

The Bailey Bridge training came to a close with a ceremony at a newly constructed practice bridge, complete with certificates presented to the engineers by General Shafi; the chief of the Afghanistan Defense Commission; and Army officers.

Although the class has come to an end, the practical application of the training is just beginning, as several sites in Afghanistan are already being prepped for bridges.

“The country of Afghanistan has terrain that is very mountainous and has many seasonal rivers and gullies,” Grose said. “The road-building and bridging that we are teaching these ANA engineers will connect communities and people – something that has not been done before due to the lack of infrastructure.”

In addition to training, the ANA will receive more than \$40 million dedicated to equip soldiers to defeat IEDs, as well as provide bulldozers and heavy equipment to build bridges and make improvements, Webb said.

“Now we will place bridges in places where they are much needed,” Shafi said. “It will be a great service for the ANA and the Afghan people.”

“We will never forget the kindness of the U.S. government helping us,” said Al Haj Sher Mohammad Akhondzada, chief of the Afghanistan Defense Commission. “Afghan people recognize the support of the U.S. Army and their government.”



**Brig. Gen. Mohammad Shafi, Afghan National Army chief of engineers, speaks to his troops during a recognition ceremony at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.**

# IRoA sets reconstruction sights on Farah

*Courtesy of Combined Joint Task Force-82*

**B**AGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – Farah government representatives met with Coalition civil affairs teams and local contractors to discuss modernizing the rural areas of Farah District and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s national development plan.

The city of Farah has always prided itself on being a cultural city and was an island of development, education and human rights in a country ruled by the Taliban prior to 2001.

Farah is one of the more advanced cities in Afghanistan and local leaders are working to make sure the city, as well as the entire province that shares its name, continues toward prosperity and success.

Local elders viewed plans for building roads, new district centers, and a women’s dormitory project for nurses, mid-wives and students living outside the province.

Farah province is one of the largest provinces in Afghanistan. Civil affairs representatives and IRoA officials agreed many residents of the outlying villages, such as the town of Bakwa, feel disconnected from the rapid development in Farah city.

“We’re building a road to connect Bakwa and Farah, as well as a new Bakwa district center,” said a Coalition civil affairs officer. “This will facilitate commerce and prosperity for both cities.”

“This is what we need; to work together to ensure we are meeting the goals set by our government,” said Abdul Raouf, minister of reconstruction and development in Farah district. “We need to take



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army

**Farah area leaders and contractors listen as Coalition and Islamic Republic of Afghanistan officials describe improvement plans for Farah Province.**

pride in the work we do. It is for our people.”

Local workers will do all the work on the projects to stimulate the local economy and provide a sense of pride for the Afghan people, said one Coalition civil affairs officer.

“The work that we do must last for many years,” said one of the contractors. “It is what we leave for our children.”

This project is another example of Coalition CAs continuous work with Afghan citizens to build facilities and infrastructure, which improve the quality of life of the Afghan people.

## Waza Khwa District Center opens despite sub-governor murder

*Courtesy of Combined Joint Task Force-82*

**F**ORWARD OPERATING BASE WAZA KHWA, Paktika Province, Afghanistan – With a somber mood filling the air, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan officials in Waza Khwa District held a ribbon-cutting ceremony, signifying the opening of a new district center here.

The event occurred one day after the Kushamond sub-governor was ambushed and killed by enemy forces while traveling in Paktika.

The news of his death was the topic of conversation when provincial government officials and Coalition forces arrived for the ceremony, but despite this tragedy it was decided the ceremony should continue.

The event was attended by the Provincial Director of Rural Reconstruction and Development, Khalid Bahader; Provincial Chief of Police, Afghan Gen. Zazay; Provincial Council Committee member, Mulawi Shamamood; Sharana Provincial Reconstruction commander, Navy Cmdr. Eduardo Fernandez; and



U.S. Army photo by Curtis Rollings

**Afghan Gen. Zazay, provincial chief of police, cuts the ribbon signifying the opening of the Waza Khwa District Center.**

Waza Khwa shura members.

Shamamood, event master of ceremonies, began with a traditional Afghan prayer. Following that, a number of local leaders and officials spoke about the significance of the new district center.

“The tribes of Waza Khwa greatly appreciate the help of the international community in Afghanistan,” Shamamood said.

He reminded the crowd that despite this one success, there is still more work to be done in the border districts (Terwa, Wor Mamay and Waza Khwa) of Paktika Province.

As the community of Waza Khwa continues to improve its infrastructure, it must also remember to focus on governance, education and communication, Zazay added.

“In the last five years the international community has built schools, medical clinics and government buildings, but unfortunately there are people out there that want to destroy them,” he continued. “The new Waza Khwa District Center is a good place for the people to come to see their government representatives.”

Considering the circumstances surrounding the event, the ceremony was considered a success by all involved, as the event allowed local citizens to interact with provincial government representatives as they explained their plans for future development.

# Army launches stress disorder training campaign

Courtesy of Combined Joint Task Force-82

The Army launched a training program July 17 as part of an aggressive campaign to educate more than 1 million Active, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers worldwide within 90 days about post traumatic stress disorder and mild traumatic brain injuries.

"A lot of Soldiers are suffering from PTSD," said Sergeant 1st Class Brad Moyers, Combined Joint Task Force-82 Surgeon Cell NCOIC of medical training. "It is a real medical problem, but it is treatable, and we have a very high recovery rate."

Combat stress is not uncommon among Soldiers, but those whose symptoms persist may have PTSD. PTSD is a condition that often follows a terrifying physical or emotional event, causing the person who survived the event to have persistent, frightening thoughts and memories, or flashbacks, of the ordeal.

Mild TBI is a physical injury to the head which causes the brain to swell, much like a concussion, Moyers said. Exposure to IED

The PTSD and TBI training is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. Aug. 22 at the Bagram Airfield clamshell and NCOs from all services are welcome to attend.

blasts may cause mild TBIs, and behavioral health symptoms such as sleep problems, memory problems, confusion and irritability may result.

"Combat is inherently brutal and difficult, and it impacts humans in different ways," said Gen. George Casey Jr., chief of staff of the Army. "We have made significant improvements in the identification and treatment of PTSD and mild TBI, but we must aggressively work research, prevention and treatment of these injuries and, most importantly, encourage Soldiers and their families to seek treatment."

The symptoms of PTSD and mild TBI are very similar, Moyers said, which is why the two are being taught in a class together. He stresses the importance of leadership passing the training down to their Soldiers to

have them look out for one another.

"The most important part for leaders is knowing your Soldiers and knowing when to have them 'take a knee,'" said Moyers. "It's not dishonorable to have a soldier stay behind from a mission to get their head back in the game."

The course, taught by Moyers, is designed to train NCOs, who can then go back to their units and educate their troops to recognize signs and symptoms of both PTSD and TBIs. It will also include information on where soldiers can get help for these conditions, both in a deployed location and stateside.

Leaders who have been in situations that could cause a mild TBI, such as being hit by an IED while in a vehicle, should set the standard by getting checked out by a doctor as soon as possible, Moyers said. The same goes for being examined for PTSD.

"Mild TBIs and PTSD are treatable conditions," he said. "It's better to be seen than to put your buddies to the left and right of you at risk."

For more information on this and other behavioral health programs, visit <http://www.behavioralhealth.army.mil>.

## Dari/Pashtu phrase of the week



### Please sit down

#### Dari

**Lotfan banishenead**  
(Lot-fawn ba-ne-she-need)

#### Pashtu

**Mahra bani wakri kakhainai**  
(Ma-ra bonnie wok-ri ka-ki-ni)

Religious holidays in Afghanistan are celebrated according to the lunar calendar, while secular holidays are celebrated based on the solar calendar. On holidays, Afghans usually visit with their family and friends where they prepare lavish meals and have special prayers with extended family.

# Eagle Cash saves time, money

By Army Pfc. Daniel M. Rangel  
22nd Mobile Public Affairs  
Detachment

**F**ORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan – Eagle Cash is an innovative alternative to casual payments. Accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week, Eagle Cash is linked to servicemembers' checking or savings accounts and works just like a debit card.

Soon, casual payments will be scaled down said Army 1st Lt. Todd R. Anderson, a finance officer and a Las Vegas native.

Eagle Cash also solves a serious problem: getting funds to Coalition forces in the field.

"It's a very difficult process to get cash here into theater," Anderson said.

Currency must be shipped from the U.S. Treasury Department under guard then be accounted for. Finance offices have deputy disbursement officers in charge of the funds that are distributed.

"The best part of my job is making sure everyone gets paid," said Army Staff Sgt. Daniel W. Ward III, DDO at the finance office here.

Eagle Cash makes it easier for the DDOs to get the job done.

"It is the solution to the cash problem," Anderson said. "It relieves the amount of actual cash that we have to have on hand here in theater."

Eagle Cash funds are withdrawn from servicemembers' checking or savings ac-



**Army Spc. Henry T. Selzer, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, uses the Eagle Cash machine at the new Green Bean coffee shop at FOB Fenty.**

counts. They can use the funds to make purchases at any of the Army Air Force Exchange Service stores that accept Eagle Cash.

"Pretty much, any AAFES vendor is going to be set up with the ability to accept the Eagle Cash card," Anderson said.

There are plans for turning the local shops and bazaars into AAFES vendors. Plus, as long as there are enough funds on

their Eagle Card, servicemembers can still receive cash back as if it were a debit card, Anderson said.

If servicemembers require more actual currency, they can take Eagle Cash cards to their finance office and receive cash.

"I'd like to encourage every Soldier who is on a base large enough that supports Eagle Cash to go ahead and get the Eagle Cash Card because it's going to be so much easier for them," Anderson said.

To get an Eagle Cash card, servicemembers fill out a form at the closest finance office where they'll include their bank account and routing number. Cashiers register the information with the U.S. Treasury Department to activate the Eagle Cash card.

"You're not charged fees with the Eagle Cash card," Anderson said, unlike your ATM card where you get charged ATM fees every time."

Plus, Eagle Cash can be more convenient than casual payments.

"It's easier and more convenient to be able to go up to a machine and load the funds onto the card rather than waiting in line with 50 to 100 people to get casual pay," Anderson said.

Even servicemembers in the forward areas of Afghanistan will soon see the benefits of Eagle Cash.

"Places like Mehtar Lam and Kala Gush continue to develop, and, as they build their infrastructure, they'll have the Eagle Cash card out there," Anderson said.



**Air Force**

**Master Sgt. Kevin Ritchie**

**Unit and occupation:** 455th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron

**Time in the military:** 15 years

**Home Station:** Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

**Hometown:** Malverne, N.Y.

**How you contribute to the mission**

**on Bagram Airfield:** I am the logistics planner for all incoming and outgoing forces.

**Most memorable moment in**

**Afghanistan:** Seeing friends here whom I met in basic training for the first time since then.

**What do you miss most about**

**home?** Playing with my child.

**Hobbies:** Soccer and video games

**The first thing you're going to do**

**when you get back:** I'm going to Ruth's Chris' Steakhouse for a porterhouse steak.



# Army Chief of Staff visits Afghanistan

By Army Pfc.  
Melissa M. Escobar  
22nd Mobile Public Affairs  
Detachment

**B**AGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - The chief of staff of the Army vis-

ited Afghanistan Aug. 9 to talk with troops currently deployed here in support of the Global War on Terror.

Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr. has been traveling all over the world stopping at Army bases to visit with Soldiers. During his visit here, Casey held a town hall

meeting where Soldiers from the various task forces in country were given the opportunity to speak with him about current issues.

"I get the question all the time, 'When are we coming off of 15 months?' The answer is 'I don't know yet, but it is temporary,'" Casey explained to Soldiers about the current extensions to deployments. "We're not going to instantaneously go from 15 back to 12 and still maintain 12-months dwell time.

"I do feel fairly strongly that 15 months in this environment is not practical. I can't imagine any scenarios where it would go beyond that."

Casey touched on the subject of the Army's ongoing transformation. The transformation he referred to was the "Army's movement from a division-centered organization to brigade combat teams." He feels Soldiers are generally comfortable with the change.

"They see the value of a modular organization. I see the value of a modular organization," Casey said. "They are really much better formations for the types of [operations] we're getting ready to do in the 21st century.

"I have not had one person in town hall meetings [who] has raised their hand and said, 'Why are we going through this transformation while we're fighting the war,'" he continued.

Casey feels this shows a general recognition that the transformation suits the situations the Army is currently involved in.

In closing, Casey expressed his gratitude for the Soldiers' perseverance and constant commitment during the numerous changes the Army is going through.

"Even though the force is stretched, this is a hugely vibrant organization and the commitment I see in all of our Soldiers, leaders and families is mind-boggling and eye-watering," Casey said. "Next month our country will have been at war for six years. What is at stake are the values and ideals [of our] nation.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, among them life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. What's at stake is nothing less than our way of life. So what you all are doing here for the United States of America is preserving our way of life."



**Top: Gen. George W. Casey, Army Chief of Staff, talks to deployed troops at a town hall meeting while visiting Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.**

**Right: Gen. Casey is greeted by Maj. Gen. David Rodriguez, Combined Joint Task Force-82 commander, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Casey visited with troops throughout Regional Command-East.**



*"You must give some time to your fellow men. Even if it's a little thing, do something for others - something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it."*

*--Albert Schweitzer*

**Got a joke, review or top ten list?**

**E-mail it to: [freedomwatch@swa.army.mil](mailto:freedomwatch@swa.army.mil) and you could see them printed here!**



Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Jim Varhegyi

### From the field

**Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Teresa Smith joins volunteers from the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan to sort donations July 23, sent to Camp Eggers, Kabul, Afghanistan from the United States.**

### Last week's solutions:

M	I	S	A	W	A		K	U	N	S	A	N		A		
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C	I	I			I	N	T			R		A	B	L	E	
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A	N	E	W		E	T	A					L		R	O	T
M		S		I	R	A		B	E	L	L	O	W	S		

**Back cover:** A little girl from the village of Kuz Khadow Kheyl, Afghanistan, stares curiously into the lens of a camera while Afghan National Policemen search her village during Operation Maiwan. (Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Justin Holley)



Photo by Air Force Senior Airman Christine Collier

### Cheering for troops

**Jenica and Emily, two members of the Buffalo Jills, spend a few moments learning about broadcasting in the American Forces Network - Afghanistan radio studio at Bagram Airfield while waiting for their interview. The Buffalo Jills are cheerleaders for the Buffalo Bills football team, and nine members of the squad are currently touring military bases in Afghanistan performing variety shows for military members.**

