



THE ARROWHEAD

"PA GADA BARAI"
(Winning Together)



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Issue No. 8



Commander's Column

Greetings from Kandahar and the TAAC-South team. I am continually amazed at the tremendous professionalism and expertise displayed by our Leaders on a daily basis.



BG Charles Aris

Our collaboration with our Afghan counterparts and cooperation with our coalition partners, highlight the ongoing goal of creating a professional and capable Afghan security force.

This effort is of paramount importance, but would not be possible without the continual love and support from home. I know your sacrifices are not easy, but be assured that the support you provide is the strengthening factor that motivates our troops and sustains our efforts.

Our commitment to you is regular communication to keep you connected to your servicemembers our best effort to maximize this opportunity and make best use of the precious time away from our loved ones.



ADVISING IN AFGHANISTAN

TAAC-South's mission is to advise and assist the Afghan National Defense Security Forces (ANDSF) as they defend their country from all enemy forces fighting against the growing democracy. The Security Forces Advise and Assist Teams (SFAAT) have answered our nation's call to serve by directly supporting the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the Afghan National Police (ANP).



36ID TURNS 2 IN AFGHANISTAN; CONTINUES TO MAKE HISTORY

Kandahar Province, Afghanistan—Train, Advise, and Assist Command – South hosted a Transfer of Authority Ceremony Feb. 28 at Kandahar Airfield between Turn 1 and Turn 2 of 36th Infantry Division.

BG Charles K. Aris, TAAC-South commander, assumed authority of the mission from outgoing TAAC-South commander BG Lee Henry during ceremonial passing of the unit's colors.

The ceremony was unique in the fact that the incoming and outgoing are both members of Texas Army National Guard's 36th Inf. Div. "In Spite of Hell".

When Turn 1 assumed the mission of TAAC-South in June 2016, it was the first time in history that a National Guard Division element had ever commanded a Regional Command or Train, Advise and Assist Command in Afghanistan.

On Feb. 28, when Aris took command of TAAC-South, history was to continue being made by the "Arrowhead Division".

Prior to assuming command of Train, Advise and Assist Command – South, BG Aris served as the 36th Inf. Div.'s assistant division commander for maneuver.

During his speech, Aris reassured Afghan partners, both military and civilian government officials present, that Coalition Forces will stand shoulder to shoulder with them through the victories and challenges.

"We are proud to be a part of writing the next chapter here in Afghanistan," said Aris.

Newly arrived 36th Inf. Div. "Task Force Arrowhead" Soldiers are on a 9-month deployment rotation to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces.



Feature Story: 1LT Dillon Horn



(Left) 1LT Dillon Horn performing an engineer site assessment during a mission in Afghanistan. (Right) 1LT Dillon Horn on his first combat deployment attends a "Patching Ceremony" with the Commanding General BG Charles Aris to receive his combat patch.

Kandahar Province, Afghanistan - Upon commissioning in the United States Army as an Engineer Officer in May of 2013, I pictured my military career as one of constant and consistent leadership and training of Soldiers. During my time as a platoon leader of a route clearance platoon, and later, an Executive Officer of a combat engineering company, my duties revolved around conventional line units.

In the summer of 2016, I was notified that I was deploying to Afghanistan. Initially, I was unsure what to think and felt some uncertainty due to having never deployed before. Growing up in a military family, I was used to multiple deployments. My father, a senior Non-commissioned Officer in the Texas Army National Guard, had been called to Active Duty numerous times.

The mission that I was being deployed to support was the current Train, Advise, Assist Command (TAAC) mission in Afghanistan. Due to the structure of this mission, I, like many Soldiers, was forced to change my way of thinking. When I graduated from Texas Christian University, I began working for BNSF Railway as an Operations Manager in Houston, TX. A year later, I took a promotion in Lafayette, LA where I managed a yard of approximately 30 employees and was responsible for over 200 miles of territory.

Working in operations at BNSF taught me a considerable amount in regards to understanding processes and procedures, improving them, putting them into action, and managing the task through completion. With multiple variables in play, in an ever changing environment, you have to think and adapt quickly in order to meet the demands of the industry.

While I was thrust into an unfamiliar environment as a member of the Security Force Advise and Assist Team (SFAAT) as part of the overall TAAC-S, I felt well prepared due to my experiences in operations. The SFAAT team is one that is constantly changing and requires an "outside the box" way of thinking. Bringing a team of Guardsmen to Afghanistan who are well versed in numerous areas of expertise outside of their military career has made us tremendously successful thus far. Throughout this deployment, I have continued to rely heavily on my knowledge of operations and I continue to look for ways to improve our processes every day.

Chaplain's Corner

WHO ARE YOU BECOMING?

CH (MAJ) William J. Sheets

All types of problems face us: downsizing, illness of a loved one, family problems, money problems, and all sorts of other complex local, national, and international challenges that require our best efforts and our enduring courage.

During challenges like these you may hear or have heard the saying: "What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger." Yes, enduring life's hardships can make us stronger and has the potential to strengthen our mental, physical, emotional and/or spiritual fortitude. But writer Max Lucado in his *On The Anvil* goes further with this thought. Lucado likens the challenges and hardships we face to being on a blacksmith's anvil where the metal (us) is pounded and run through the fire in order to become what it is intended to be. The forging of metal can take a lump of steel and shape it into a finished, beautiful object.

As you go through those life experiences that shape you, who are you becoming? Is your character being shaped for the better or for the worse? You know you are not the same after you have suffered a loss or great challenge, but are you stronger in what is good? Are you learning from those experiences and challenges? Or are you becoming negative, hardened, or bitter?

We all have a choice in which path we take. It is true that God has a plan in this shaping process, but I also believe individuals have a choice in letting their character be shaped for the better or for the worse.

Moving to a foreign country for the first time such as Germany or Japan may be a challenging period as you adjust to a new job, culture, language, etc. It is during this time you do indeed have a choice: accept the demands of this new life and be open to learning about new cultures or you can let this rich and maybe once in a lifetime opportunity escape you by refusing to have your horizons broadened.

As you face the challenges before you whether good or bad, remember to think about who are you becoming during this time on the anvil?



*Recognitions
& Honors*

GEN John W. Nicholson Jr., Commander of Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan, presented SSG Dennis Nelson with a coin of excellence during his visit to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan March 13, 2017.

Family Readiness Group: Ears to Hear, Hands to Help

Get linked into Texas Military Forces
Family Support Services on the web:
tmd.texas.gov/tmd-family-support-services

36th ID FRSA Online Contact Info:

Jerrie F. Shaw
jerrie.f.shaw.ctr@mail.mil
512-782-6285

Aubrey D. Powell
aubrey.d.powell2.ctr@mail.mil
512-782-5514

After Hours

1-800-252-8032 (English)
1-888-443-2124 (Spanish)

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