



155th ABCT Draws Army prepositioned stock

Sgt. Brittany Johnson
155th Armored Brigade Combat Team
Task Force Spartan

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — When Soldiers deploy there are several preparations that are essential in ensuring a successful transition, especially when it comes to getting the equipment they need.

For the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team this means drawing equipment from the Army Prepositioned Stock located nearby.

APS is a program that consists of

prepositioned sets of equipment in different places in the world so military units can fall in on what they need to help speed response time for a deploying unit and save on cost.

“There are currently five sets of prepositioned stock that are either land or sea based throughout the world,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 John Strickland, the brigade property book officer for the 155th ABCT.

The process of the APS draw must start in the early stages of planning to make sure everything is in order.

“We (the 155) began our initial planning in September 2017 with a visit to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait,” said Strickland.

“I think drawing APS-5 versus shipping our own equipment is better,” said Sgt. Christopher Holliday, a multichannel transmission systems operator-maintainer, with Company C, 150th Engineer Battalion.

The program is designed to save money and considering that the unit is receiving fairly new equipment it helps to prevent further maintenance problems with the vehicles, said Holliday.

At the APS site, equipment is checked and maintained to ensure it will be ready at a moment's notice.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Brittany Johnson, 155th ABCT, TF Spartan

Soldiers with 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team draw equipment from the Army preposition stock located at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, June 28, 2018. APS is a program that consists of prepositioned sets of equipment in different places in the world so military units can fall in on what they need to help speed response time for a deploying unit and save on cost.

The brigade began its transition into country throughout the month of June 2018 and have started to inventory and inspect the equipment before issuing it out to the battalions.

“Once the inventory begins, units will conduct a component-level inventory for each end item,” said Strickland. “They will then PMCS (preventive maintenance checks and services) the equipment.”

“The progress of inspecting the

vehicles and loading them is moving fairly quickly,” said Holliday. “It takes us collectively as a brigade, to sign for the equipment, inventory it and move to other locations, a little over three days.”

As the 155th ABCT continues to draw their equipment they increase readiness for a successful deployment in support of Operation Spartan Shield.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles

Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles (MRAPs) are staged in preparation for movement to their designated unit location within the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, Task Force Spartan. The Soldiers performed important checks and inspections prior to staging them.

Table of Contents

TF Spartan HIMARS battery excels in 24-hour exercise in UAE, p.3

Soldiers from Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Field Artillery Regiment, 65th Field Artillery Brigade, Task Force Spartan, worked through long hours and the heat of the Middle East to complete exercise Golden Sparrow on June 29, 2018.

35th Engineer Brigade bids farewell to 458th Battalion, welcomes 983rd, p.6

The 458th Engineer Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Johnstown, Pa., also known as Taskforce Maverick, has successfully completed its nine-month deployment in the Middle East in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

TF Spartan, KLF soldiers continue chemical weapons response training, p.8

U.S. and Kuwaiti soldiers sharpened their chemical and biological weapons defense skills during a recent training that focused on decontaminating and caring for casualties of a weapons of mass destruction event. Chemical officers with the Kuwait Minister of Defense Weapons of Mass Destruction Defense Directorate joined Soldiers with the 300th Chemical Company, 40th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 2nd Armored Brigade, Task Force Spartan, for the June 25-27 series of lectures which were followed by a practical exercise.

Around the AO, p.11

A photo tour of other significant events from around Task Force Spartan.

28 ID marks 100th 'Men of Iron' anniversary

1st Lt. James Kane
28th Infantry Division
Task Force Spartan

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait – The 28th Infantry Division is celebrating 100 years of being known as the “Iron Division.” The 28th is America’s oldest continuously-serving division and dates its start to March 12, 1879. It earned the “Iron” moniker in World War I - on July 15, 1918 - when

Gen. John Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force, referred to the resolve of the division’s soldiers.

To mark the centennial, Lt. Col. Garry Hahn, 28th Infantry Division chief of assessment, recently presented after a morning briefing an overview on the actions of the 109th Infantry Regiment, and other division units during the German offensive on Reims, France. The 109th tenaciously held its ground and stopped

the German “Victory Offensive.” The 109th’s line became the high-water mark of the German advance.

On the second day of the fight, a telephone message received from division headquarters stated that Gen. Pershing, when informed of the heroic stand made by the 109th Infantry in its first contact with the enemy, remarked: “Why, they are iron men!”



TF Spartan HIMARS battery excels in 24-hour exercise in UAE

Staff Sgt. Matthew Keeler
28th Infantry Division
Task Force Spartan Public Affairs

SOUTHWEST ASIA – Soldiers from Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Field Artillery Regiment, 65th Field Artillery Brigade, Task Force Spartan, worked through long hours and the heat of the Middle East to complete exercise Golden Sparrow on June 29, 2018.

“A HIMARS (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System) 24-hour dry-fire operation gives the crews a chance to perfect their craft,” said 1st Lt. Elijah Lake, platoon leader for Bravo Battery. “So, they get to go out and have troubles

and have situations that may happen in real life, and they get to figure out a way through that. They get to train their gunners on how to figure those issues out. And, we get to throw a lot of curve balls at them. They get really good training.”

To prepare for Golden Sparrow, the platoon conducted an operation order briefing to prepare the unit for the exercise ahead.

“For exercise like Golden Sparrow, and many of the operations that we have conducted in UAE with our partnered 79th Heavy Rocket Regiment here in UAE, we would typically do [an operation order] so that the crews understand what they are doing, where they are going, and how they are getting there,” said Lake. “It ensures that everybody to the lowest level understands what’s going on, and if their chief goes down they could take over without many questions and continue the mission.”

The day of the exercise, the Soldiers moved to their vehicles to their grid locations based on the operational order. It wasn’t long before the first fire order came down.

“Fire mission,” said Spc. Dakota Whiteman, a fire control specialist (FCS) for Bravo Battery. The announcement of “fire mission” was repeated within the Fire Direction Center (FDC) by Spc. Thomas Johnston and Pfc. Raymond Jeter, also FCSs for Bravo, as the two began coordinating the fire mission with the HIMARS stationed in the field.

“During the 24-hour period, launchers will be shooting dry missions. So, the launcher and crew do everything that they would do during a live-fire up until the point of a rocket exiting the pod; and they will have full contact with the FDC,” said Lake.

The HIMARS crews receive the mission from the FDC, conduct their fire missions, and then, as part of their mission, they move to reload, said Sgt. 1st Class Roberto Morales, platoon sergeant for Bravo Battery. The process of reloading a HIMARS requires excellent coordination between the gunner, driver and crew chief.

“So, the gunner is currently holding the boom controller, and what the boom controller allows him to do is the manual rotation of the LM [launch module]. That way they can position the pod to go ahead and download it and pick up the new one,” said Morales. “The driver currently goes ahead and protects the area. The driver will have a 240B [machine gun] mounted and the drivers’ main duty is to make sure that they pull security for the area while they are

See HIMARS, p. 10



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Keeler, TF Spartan Public Affairs

A High Mobility Artillery Rocket System from Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Field Artillery Regiment, 65th Field Artillery Brigade, Task Force Spartan, prepares to conduct a fire mission during exercise Golden Sparrow

449th Combat Aviation Brigade swaps maintenance expertise with Royal Jordanian Air Force team

Capt. Aaron Rosheim and Sgt. Andrew Shipley
449th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs
Task Force spartan

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Soldiers assigned to the 449th Combat Aviation Brigade were the first to rub shoulders and swap UH-60 Black Hawk maintenance expertise with members of the Royal Jordanian Air Force during their two-month mission to support the U.S. Embassy's military assistance program in Jordan starting on March 16, 2018.

During their mission, soldiers with the 248th Aviation Support Battalion and the 1st Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment (Assault) made up the eight-man team and worked side-by-side with the RJAF team to focus on three main points: phase maintenance inspections of UH-60A Black Hawks, UH-60M Black Hawk maintenance; and aviation maintenance management training to help strengthen the RJAF's mission readiness and interoperability between the coalition partners.

"It was an honor to get the opportunity to go to Jordan on this mission," said 248th ASB Sgt. Christopher Harbeck, the mission's phase team leader. "We trained alongside the Jordanians and built relationships with them as we worked on their Black Hawks."

The team's biggest achievement was completing the phase maintenance inspection of a UH-60A Black Hawk 11 days ahead of schedule. Phase maintenance is a vital part of aviation operations, prolonging the lifetime of valuable aircraft by identifying and fixing maintenance issues on a routine schedule.

Senior leaders of the RJAF Air Lift Wing, including the air lift wing chief of maintenance, also met with the team to discuss ideas incorporating beneficial practices of maintenance management.

"It was interesting to share ideas on maintenance management," said 1-244th AHB Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael Kelley. "I am impressed at how much they do



U.S. Army courtesy photo

Soldiers with the 248th Aviation Support Battalion and the 1st Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment (Assault) – units of the 449th Combat Aviation Brigade – stand in front of a Jordanian UH-60A Black Hawk May 10, 2018 with members of the Royal Jordanian Air Force. The soldiers worked side-by-side over a two-month period facilitating different aspects of aviation maintenance. During their mission, the 248th ASB and the 1-244 AHB made up an eight-man team that worked with the RJAF team to focus on phase maintenance inspections of UH-60A Black Hawks, UH-60M Black Hawk maintenance, and aviation maintenance management training to help strengthen the RJAF's mission readiness and interoperability.

with the number of airframes they own. We met several key leaders who were so welcoming and open to sharing ideas about maintenance. It was a wonderful experience."

The 449th CAB's mission is to provide aviation strategic partnership training with regional military partners throughout the U.S. Central Command's area

of operation.

"This group was a perfect blend of Soldiers and skillsets, which made this mission highly successful," said Kelley.

28 ID commander holds mid-deployment town hall to update soldiers, field questions



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles, TF Spartan Public Affairs
Maj. Gen. Andrew Schafer, 28th Infantry Division/Task Force Spartan commanding general, listens to a question from one of his soldiers during a town hall meeting. The 28th's Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion is midway through an 11-month mobilization and is serving as the Task Force Spartan headquarters element.

Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles
28th Infantry Division
Task Force Spartan Public Affairs

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait – Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 28th Infantry Division received a mid-deployment update from commanders during a June 29 town hall event that also focused on what's next for the unit. The soldiers are deployed in support of Task Force Spartan.

The battalion is serving under U.S. Army Central (ARCENT) as the headquarters

element for the roughly 9,000-soldier task force that conducts training events, subject matter expert exchanges and symposia, to build interoperability. Approximately 500 HHBN soldiers mobilized from Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania in mid-January for the mission. The unit will return to Pennsylvania this fall.

During the town hall meeting, Maj. Gen. Andrew Schafer, division commander, provided an overview of the mission and the area of operations, which comprises much of the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt.

Schafer commended his soldiers on

their hard work so far and encouraged them to take care of themselves and each other. Questions from soldiers in attendance ranged from what determines success on this deployment to what the unit will be doing when it returns home. Schafer said there are several components to success, including building readiness and developing positive relationships with ARCENT counterparts.

“Improving our ‘fight tonight’ capability and providing oversight for transitioning units, that is success,” Schafer said. “I think we have been successful and that we’ll continue to improve.”

TF-Spartan is comprised of a field artillery brigade, an engineer brigade, an air defense artillery brigade and an armor brigade. Lt. Col. Garry Hahn, division chief of assessment, asked Schafer what his biggest challenge has been as TFS commander compared to his normal role as “Iron Division” commander. Schafer said the 28th normally has mission command for four brigades, all in Pennsylvania, whereas Task Force Spartan conducts theater security cooperation in nine countries in the Mideast.

“Besides the Spartan brigades, we have some additional smaller elements. Getting around and seeing them all is challenging,” Schafer said. “When I go somewhere here, it’s a challenge. At the Gap [Fort Indiantown Gap] you can visit three or four battalions on a weekend. You can’t do that here.”

“The amount of information is just overwhelming. You have to count on your staff,” Schafer added.

Schafer noted that the 28th’s division staff doesn’t normally work with theater-level air defense assets. He joked that as he has traveled the area of operations to visit air defense artillery sites, his staff has told



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Keith Hickox
Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 28th Infantry Division/Task Force Spartan, attend a town hall meeting. Maj. Gen. Andrew Schafer, division commander, started the event with a brief overview of the division's storied history.

him that Patriot batteries all look the same.

“But there are different soldiers at each one,” Schafer said. “Eighty percent of that formation is first-time enlistees. I see great work being done by E-1s to E-3s [privates].”

In response to a question about junior officer development, Schafer advised soldiers to keep up with their civilian and military education. He said the unit has pushed hard to have noncommissioned officers complete online coursework that is a prerequisite to attending schools required for promotion.

“We have some junior NCOs and junior officers punching way above their weight. We have lieutenants doing the job of ‘Iron majors,’” Schafer said.

Unit leaders also talked about what the battalion’s soldiers will be doing after this deployment ends. A focus will be on getting soldiers to their next required military schools. HHBN will also reset and begin the ongoing multi-year Army Force Generation cycle of training. A computer-simulated command post exercise is slated for 2019 and is among a number of training

35th Engineer Brigade bids farewell to 458th Battalion, welcomes 983rd

Sgt. Amber Criswell
35th Engineer Brigade
Task Force Muleskinner Public Affairs

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait — The 458th Engineer Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Johnstown, Pa., also known as Taskforce Maverick, has successfully completed its nine-month deployment in the Middle East in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. The unit operated out of four countries and 17 locations providing the full range of engineer functions. The unit’s soldiers completed 350 troop labor construction projects, including six landing zones and nine bridge emplacements and assisted with extensive counter-mobility efforts.

Col. Anthony Adrian, commander of the 35th Engineer Brigade, Task Force Spartan, praised the 458th during a transfer of authority ceremony May 24 in which he also welcomed the incoming unit, the 983rd Engineering Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Ohio.

“Throughout the deployment, Taskforce Maverick provided effective, efficient and professional engineer support to Operation Inherent Resolve during a crucial time in their campaign. They depart with their outstanding reputation intact, and the gratitude of those they supported,” Adrian said.

Commander of Taskforce Maverick, Lt. Col. Stella Carroll commended her soldiers. She said that in the past nine-months the unit executed over 1,500 missions including vertical and horizontal construction, work orders, bridge inspections, repairs, emplacements, area clearance operations, combat patrols, technical surveys, design support requests and engineering assessments. She credited the unit with saving over \$22 million in construction troop labor.

“You gave your heart and soul to the engineer mission. You spent countless hours in austere conditions. There was no project you turned down. You found a way to get it done no matter the challenge. You found a way to acquire building materials, improve design, remove conflicts, get special tools and fix equipment and got soldiers to construction sites by creative means,” Carroll said. “Rain



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Amber Criswell
The unit colors of the Phantoms, 279th Engineer Utilities Detachment, are cased in preparation for travel home following a transfer of authority ceremony May 24, 2018.

or shine, sandstorm or flood, day or night, earthquake or hail storm, it just didn’t stop you! It was an honor to serve with you. I am truly humbled for having this wonderful opportunity.”

Adrian also received the 983rd Engineer Battalion. He told soldiers of the incoming unit that they “enter this fight during a period of operational transition.”

“Welcome to the Muleskinner Team! Your team will be instrumental in enabling these transitions by realigning bases and shaping the battlefield for future operations,” Adrian said. “I look forward to working with you and getting to know you over the next four months as you take the helm and work to advance the engineer fight to the next level.”

Carroll gave some advice to the incoming battalion, saying: “Every day will bring its own challenges. Embrace them and overcome.”

Lt. Col. Kevin Bigenho, 983rd commander, accepted the mission with great confidence.

“I assure you that the 983rd will pick up where the 458th left off, and we will continue to deliver exceptional engineering support to our customers within the areas of operation,” Bigenho said. “To Lt. Col. Carroll and the 458th, you definitely set the bar high. To the 983rd, it’s go time! Strike, Build, Hold.”



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Amber Criswell
First Sgt. Melissa Vine and Capt. Andrew Eshelman with the 387th Engineer Company are ready to start their engineering mission.

The 983rd’s nine-month long mission will consist of engineering projects to provide essential life support and vital force protection, allowing friendly forces freedom of movement and maneuver while denying the enemy the same.

The 279th Engineer Utilities Detachment and 665th Engineer Utilities Detachment, along with the 458th Battalion, a couple of the subordinate companies have also completed their missions. The 279th Engineer Utilities Detachment (EUD), an Army Reserve company from St. Charles, Mo. handed off the reigns to the 665th Engineer Utilities Detachment, an Army Reserve company out of Brookville, Pa.

The commander of the 279th EUD, Capt. Francisco Arocho wished the 665th Engineers best of luck on their deployment.

“Remember that you are only the fourth EUD in support of Operation Inherent Resolve,” he said. “Make us proud and remember those that have paved the way for you.”

Arocho also thanked his soldiers. He said it’s a pleasure and honor to command the unit.

“We challenged the status quo and we did things our way. I wasn’t sure what I was getting into when I

See TOA, p. 7

events leading up to a Warfighter exercise planned for early 2021. Warfighter is a culminating training event for brigade and division headquarters.

Lt. Col. Erik Smith, commander of the headquarters battalion, said there are many soldiers on the deployment who are new to HHBN. He said from the start of the mobilization, through training at Fort Hood, Texas and arrival into theater, the soldiers have coalesced as a team.

“They have done an amazing job, well above and beyond what myself and the command sergeant major [Command Sgt. Maj. Jeremy Strathmeyer] could have expected from when we left Pennsylvania,” Smith said. “They just stepped up their game beyond belief and came together from across the state.”

During the town hall, Smith spoke to soldiers about the performance triad. He said that soldiers at Camp Arifjan have multiple options when it comes to

working out and can choose healthy foods in the dining facilities. But he warned that consecutive nights with five hours or less of sleep leave a soldier as impaired as a drunk driver.

“Sleep is a very important part of the triad though you don’t hear as much about it,” he said.

Schafer and Smith provided a brief history of HHBN and the division at the start of the event. The 28th is America’s oldest continuously-serving division and earned the moniker “Iron Division” in World War I when Gen. John Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force, referred to the division’s soldiers as “Men of Iron.”

During the town hall, soldiers also received briefings about the Army’s Sexual Harassment Assault Response and Prevention program – referred to as SHARP - and the code of conduct during deployment. A briefing about extension and re-enlistment options was also provided.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles, 1F Spartan Public Affairs
Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 28th Infantry Division/Task Force Spartan, attend a town hall meeting June 29, 2018. Maj. Gen. Andrew Schafer, division commander, started the event with a brief overview of the division’s storied history.

assumed command of this unit three months prior to deploying,” Arocho said. “You all instilled a sense of confidence and pride that I never knew I had. You embodied the engineer spirit and overcame multiple challenges and made things happen. Essayons and Ex Visus! Phantom 6 out.”

Carroll congratulated the 279th EUD. She said the unit had an incredible tour. “You exceeded my expectations! You had some amazing projects. Wherever you went, general officers wanted to come and visit and see your outstanding work first hand,” Carroll said. “Your dedication to mission completion, working with all hands-on deck till 0200 hours to ensure a new dining facility was ready and available for 2,000 soldiers to use for their Thanksgiving meal. Great leaders and engineers, going above and beyond to execute missions flawlessly.”

The 279th EUD collectively received over 150 coins of excellence on their tour. The unit also had no safety incidents for the entire deployment, which Carroll found “remarkable based on the number of construction hours you worked.” The 279th EUD executed over 300 missions to include vertical and horizontal construction projects with work orders as well.

The 665th EUD will continue the engineer mission. The unit is led by Capt. John Kennelly. He motivated his soldiers for the new mission, saying: “Let’s show the Army what we can do!”

The 770th Engineer Company and the 387th Engineer Company, an Army Reserve horizontal company, the 770th Engineer Company out of Penn Yan, N.Y., also under the 458th Engineer Battalion is ending its nine-month deployment and passing the torch to the 387th Engineer Company, an Army Reserve unit, from Scottsdale, Ariz.

Capt. Joshua Snyder, the commander of the 770th Engineer Company, started his departing words with the beginning of their deployment. “We suffered through one of the coldest field problems at Fort Dix, N.J., where we started developing skills we used during this deployment. When we finally made it to Kuwait, we were ready for the challenge.”

The 770th had over 200 missions in three different countries, building tactical assembly areas which supported sister services and coalition partners, giving them the ability to defeat U.S. adversaries. The company built retrograde facilities and developed drainage solutions across the theater to combat the rainy season. Force protection of critical assets was increased across the theater and the company ran logistical patrols to assist in resupplying ammunition, food and water to keep the fight moving forward.

“You were innovative, forward thinking, and determined to excel. We say, ‘Dig Deep,’ this is not just the motto of the company. It is a way of life and a promise to ourselves, superiors, subordinates and our customers that we accept and can complete the mission, no matter the challenges,” Snyder said.

Snyder received the 387th Engineer Company. “I have seen your soldiers. They are hungry and ready for this mission! Get out there and ‘Dig Deep!’”

The 387th commander, Capt. Andrew Eshelman, thanked Snyder and the 770th.

TF Spartan, KLF soldiers continue chemical weapons response training



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles
Lt. Col. Dr. Donald Kimbler, deputy chief, Chemical Casualty Care Division, U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense (USAMRICD) lectures on the effects of nerve agents. His audience was comprised of chemical officers with Kuwait Minister of Defense Weapons of Mass Destruction Defense Directorate as well as medics and medical providers with U.S. Army Central.

Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles
28th Infantry Division
Task Force Spartan Public Affairs

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait – U.S. and Kuwaiti soldiers sharpened their chemical and biological weapons defense skills during a recent training that focused on decontaminating and caring for casualties of a weapons of mass destruction event. Chemical officers with the Kuwait Minister of Defense Weapons of Mass Destruction Defense Directorate joined Soldiers with the 300th Chemical Company, 40th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 2nd Armored Brigade, Task Force Spartan, for the June 25-27 series of lectures which were followed by a practical exercise.

Personnel with Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 28th Infantry Division/TFS and the 75th Combat Support Hospital also participated, along with soldiers with 35th Engineer Brigade, Missouri Army National Guard; 65th Field Artillery Brigade, Utah Army



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Keith Hickox, TF Spartan Public Affairs
Capt. Abdul-Aziz Hamad Al-Muteri (left), with the Kuwait Minister of Defense Weapons of Mass Destruction Defense Directorate and Lt. Col. Dr. Donald Kimbler (right), deputy chief, Chemical Casualty Care Division, U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense (USAMRICD) test a simulated casualty for exposure to nerve agent during a training event.

National Guard; and 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade.

Trainings such as this one are critical to maintaining readiness, event organizers said, since medical providers, medics and soldiers in chemical and biological defense sections do not frequently exercise these skillsets jointly. This Medical Management of Chemical and Biological training event was hosted by U.S. Army Central (ARCENT) and marked the latest in a series of trainings designed to improve interoperability between Kuwaiti and U.S. Soldiers for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) cooperative defense.

“The purpose of the training was to

build capability for treatment of chemical and biological weapons casualties,” said Lt. Col. Andrew Franzone, 28th Infantry Division/Task Force Spartan chemical officer. “It’s a capability that is not routinely exercised but is very important, particularly for units, like ours, with a defense support of civilian authorities (DSCA) mission. So, it was a good opportunity to train and exchange techniques with our Kuwaiti counterparts.”

Task Force Spartan personnel leveraged the planned ARCENT training of U.S. personnel by inviting Kuwaiti chemical and medical soldiers to participate, thus turning the event into an informal information exchange.



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Keith Hickox
First Lt. Nawaf Tawfeeq Al-Awadi (center, facing camera), a chemical officer with the Kuwait Minister of Defense Weapons of Mass Destruction Defense Directorate, and Sgt. 1st Class Joel Santana, an instructor with U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense (USAMRICD) observe the treatment of a simulated casualty during a weapons of mass destruction training event. The practical exercise followed two days of classroom instruction.

The overall goal of the series of training events is to ensure appropriate procedures are in place for decontamination, evacuation and treatment of chemical and biological contamination casualties in the event of a WMD attack. Capt. Abdul-Aziz Hamad Al-Muteri, a Kuwaiti chemical officer, said the training is valuable because it provides an opportunity to share knowledge.

“We have the same goals and the same procedures,” he said. “I think it is important to continue training together.”

The participants reacted to different patient decontamination scenarios that required them to follow specific procedures for protecting themselves while treating casualties. Soldiers had to communicate and work together to treat simulated casualties while wearing protective gear such as gas masks and chemical-protective suits.

Lt. Col. Dr. Donald Kimbler, deputy

See CBRN, p. 9

Cont'd from CBRN, p. 8
chief, Chemical Casualty Care Division, U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense (USAMRICD, served as the lecturer. He stressed that responders need to quickly recognize the symptoms of CBRN poisoning and treat casualties while also protecting themselves.

Kimble reviewed persistent and non-persistent nerve agents and explained how nerve agents attack the body. He also reviewed the administration of ATNA (antidote treatment nerve agent) and CANA (convulsant nerve agent antidote) using auto-injectors carried by soldiers. “If a soldier becomes a casualty, you use their ATNAA and their CANAA; yours is for you,” he said. “Immediate decontamination is very important for treatment and care of a

nerve agent,” Kimble said. “Protect yourself. Get used to your MOPP gear,” Kimble said of practicing in the chemical-protective mission oriented protective posture suit. “All this treatment can be done in MOPP four. Practice starting IVs with your gloves on.” Breaks during the two days of lecture gave participants a chance to get to know each other and discuss material presented during the classroom portion of the training. The simulated-casualty exercise was conducted in a nearby parking area to take advantage of an overhead canopy as morning temperatures quickly climbed into triple digits. “Participants’ attitudes were strong for the duration of the training simulations despite the challenging conditions,” Franzone said.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles, 1F Spartan Public Affairs
Lt. Col. Andrew Franzone (right), 28th Infantry Division/Task Force Spartan chemical officer, discusses nerve agent treatment with Kuwait Minister of Defense Weapons of Mass Destruction Defense Directorate officers, from left, Maj. Mohammad A. G. Abdullah, Capt. Abdul-Aziz Hamad Al-Muteri and 1st Lt. Nawaf Tawfeeq Al-Awadi during a break in a series of lectures.

Cont'd from TOA, p. 6
“Congratulations! You built something out of nothing, over and over again. We will continue this mission.” Carroll also had words for the outgoing 770th and the incoming 387th. “Soldiers of the 770th Engineer Company, it is hard to believe your journey has come to an end. Extraordinary work building the largest base in the northern part of the area of operations from scratch. Establishing initial force protection, communications, base life support and then continuing to build every horizontal capability required to operate a base, to standard,” Carroll said. “You had opportunities to train and conduct missions with the Marine Corps, repairing and constructing airfields. You name it, you built it. Your dedication to mission was one of a kind, working 24-hour construction operations under austere conditions, sleeping under the Middle Eastern stars to meet mission requirements. Unbelievable and surreal.” “Soldiers of the 387th Engineer Construction Company, remember your training, leverage your technical experts to coach, teach and mentor others. Maintenance is the center of gravity and make safety part of your culture. Watch out for each other. You have a great company. I wish you the very best,” Carroll guided. The new engineer units will serve roughly nine-months in the Middle East in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. This operation, which began in October of 2014, is aimed at formalizing ongoing military actions against the rising threat posed by terrorist groups in the Middle East. Welcome to the 35th Engineer Brigade team. No Task Too Large!



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Amber Criswell
The 770th Engineer Company stands with colors cased following transfer of authority to the 387th Engineer Company.

actually reloading during the operation.”

While the gunner is handling the boom controller, it is the crew chief who coordinates with him or her the position of the extended pod, for downloading the spent pod and then for loading the new pod, said Morales. Another portion of the reloading process is called a ‘SNVT’, which is a Short No Voltage Test. The test ensures that no stray voltage goes through the system before they download the spent pod, and again before he hooks up the new pod.

“The safety purpose is built in so that nothing happens to the Soldiers,” said Morales. “So, that way they can get in position to be ready to fire for the next mission that comes down.”

After each completed fire mission, the crews would move their HIMARS back into position in preparation for the next one. In preparation for the extended hours and activity, sleep schedules were coordinated in the operation order.

“The sleep rest cycles work in this format because we have a platoon, which is four launchers, and during the afternoon or nighttime it [was] two launchers up at all times and the other two will be in a ‘cold’ status,” said Lake. “So, they were able to bed down and take a nap.”

Utilizing headlights and chem lights, the Soldiers worked



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Keeler, TF Spartan Public Affairs
Soldiers from Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Field Artillery Regiment, 65th Field Artillery Brigade, Task Force Spartan, celebrate the conclusion of exercise Golden Sparrow.

through the darkness and through the night to continue the exercise. For Morales, the exercise is a great way to test not only the equipment but his Soldiers.

“From my aspect, they did outstanding,” Morales said. “With the issues that arose, obviously we spoke about the temperature, but they managed to maintain the fight. They worked hard to get the vehicles up and running – if they were down – in order to provide the actual proper firing support that we needed in the fire plan.”

Over 26 hours passed since the Soldiers had packed their vehicles and readied themselves for the exercise, before the radio message was passed for the exercise to be over. During that time frame, the Soldiers of Bravo Battery worked through issues across the board to maintain their vehicle readiness status, their own well-being, and a chance for these crews to work together one last time.

“So, for us in this stage of the deployment this is kind of our last opportunity for some training before we head back, and we do not have our equipment for a while,” said Lake. “Also, once when we get back, personnel and crews split off. They go to new places and are pulled to different units, so this is kind of our last opportunity to get good training in for these guys so they can carry it forward with them.”



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Matthew Keeler, TF Spartan Public Affairs
Pfc. Taylor Levine, communicates with Staff Sgt. Brian Lang, both High Mobility Artillery Rocket System crewmembers for Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Field Artillery Regiment, 65th Field Artillery Brigade, Task Force Spartan, as they load the pod during exercise Golden Sparrow. Lang, the crew chief, is responsible for the Soldiers of his crew and accomplishing the fire missions sent from the fire direction center.

Sexual Assault Assistance



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AROUND THE AO

Photos from various events at Task Force Spartan



U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Keith Hickox



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Palermo



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Palermo



Dr. Mark T. Esper
Secretary of the Army
visits Camp Arifjan



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Palermo

GERMAN ARMED FORCES Proficiency Badge



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Palermo



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Palermo



U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Palermo



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Doug Roles

Envyng other's triumphs robs us of our potential

Lt. Col. (Ch) Peter Lawson
28th Inf. Div. Chaplain
Task Force Spartan

I Samuel 18:6-16

"Saul has killed his thousands, and David his tens of thousands."

This is the cheer which went forth from the people when the two great warriors, Saul and David, returned to the towns in the Jewish countryside. "The women came out of all the towns of Israel, singing and dancing, with tambourines and with musical instruments. The women sang to one another: 'Saul has killed his thousands, but David his tens of thousands.'"

It's interesting to me that they sung these words. Music has a way of reinforcing meaning. It's one thing to say the words of a great hymn, but it is much more meaningful when the words are put to music. Music can reinforce the joy or the sadness of the moment.

Whatever the tune was, it didn't sound good to King Saul. After all, he was the king. He was the one who by definition should have been the object of the people's affection and devotion. He was the one who appointed David to be his warrior in chief, commander over all of his army. Yet that was supposed to be for his benefit and not David's.

Saul was the first king for the people of Israel. This was the man the people wanted as king because he was tall and strong and was a great warrior. Saul was anointed and appointed to fill this position and he commanded the people's devotion throughout his reign, that is, until the

young warrior named David showed up and dwarfed the king's popularity.

We have all stood where Saul stood. We have had to deal with that new-sung hero who comes onto the scene and is able to impose his influence. What we see here in Saul is a very human reaction and his antagonism toward David a predictable human response. The Bible says, "Saul was David's enemy from that day forward. And from that time on he kept a close eye on David."

Yet, David was loyal to Saul. David was his enemy only because Saul determined him to be an enemy. When David was ordered to the front lines to do battle he unquestioningly obeyed because he was devoted to Saul his king. When the king was despondent and in despair, it was David who went to comfort him, and played his music for him. When Saul went out with his troops to kill David, the Bible says there was a moment when David snuck up on Saul and had the chance to strike him down but did not, because Saul was the Lord's anointed and David would not do it.

In fact David could have been Saul's greatest ally if he had let him. David could have been his confidant and friend. Over the years his loyalty could have grown. He would have protected him against the real threats to his kingdom because he was a great warrior. And while people cheered him on, he would have pointed to Saul on the throne and said, "This is where my loyalty is." As king, over the years, Saul could have groomed David for the throne which he possessed. And generations

could have looked back and said, "What a tremendous friendship this was."

Think back over your life and consider the people, fellow Soldiers, you have known that you have kept at arm's length because you determined them to be your competitors and nothing more. Think of the potential benefit they could have been.

What is tragic about Saul is that he had so much to offer as the king of Israel but all he could see was what David had and he didn't. God does not care one shred about us not using a gift or talent you do not have, only using what we have been given. God didn't care that David had slain more enemy soldiers than Saul. It didn't matter to God that David was more popular. What mattered to God was for Saul to be faithful to the call of being God's king for God's people. Think for a moment about what you have to offer as a person to someone else in your life that no one else can offer. Only you can be a parent to your children; only you can be a spouse to your husband or wife. Only you can be that critical friend at a critical moment in that person's life.

So, whenever we hear the songs of praise being sung for that "other guy," it puts us at a crossroad. We can decide how we will respond. That person can actually be our ally and friend. We can choose to celebrate the gifts we have rather than resenting what we don't have. We can use it as the chance to assess the good things God has given us and how we can best put them to use. We can choose.

Task Force Spartan

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