

13th SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY)

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SUNBURST

Magazine

THE PULSE OF GLOBAL LOGISTICS

Forward

Volume 6, Issue 4
Fall/Winter, 2009

36th SB Soldiers provide school supplies

Pens, pencils and a brighter future for Iraqi children

SMA visits JBB

Top enlisted adviser talks to 13th Soldiers

13th ESC signs \$31 million contract with Iraq

Container Repair Yard set to assist drawdown

Mississippians, Iraqi Army protect Q-West water supply

155th and IA prosper in partnership

Logistics and Technical Advisory Teams

Army logisticians train Iraqi Army counterparts



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Cover: Lt. Col. Clinton Moyer, the chief of civil military operations with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, walks through the new school building with one of the local children Nov. 18 at Al Soonobar School at Jaber Mohamed Village, Iraq. (U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Lisa Cope)

Back Cover: Spc. Calvin Wilhite, a 395th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) wheeled vehicle mechanic, delivers bottled water to a living area Nov. 18 at COL Q-West, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matthew C. Cooley)



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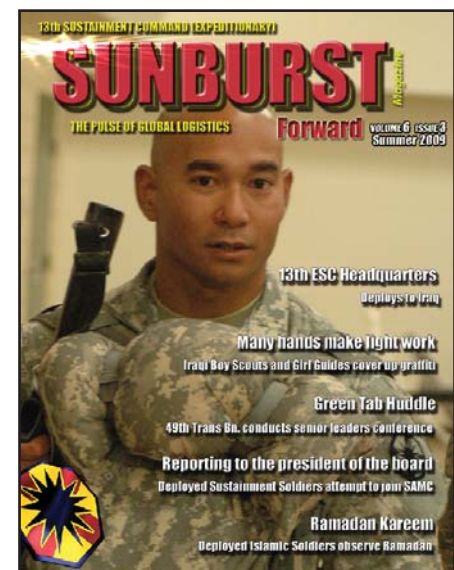


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CG'S COMMENTS

COMMANDING GENERAL

Paul L. Wentz



Happy New Year and Greetings from Joint Base Balad, Iraq!

I hope all of our 13th ESC Soldiers, civilians and Families enjoyed the holidays. Being away from home during the holidays is one of the most difficult parts of being deployed. Nevertheless, the holidays were a memorable and enjoyable time for our team here in Iraq.

2009 was a fantastic year for the 13th ESC. As we prepare for the reduction

worth of parts and excess equipment back into the Army supply system. This has been no easy task but it has been necessary to balance forecasted requirements and capabilities to successfully continue sustainment and support missions in the months ahead.

We are currently underway in reducing our sustainment footprint and right sizing our capabilities. This entails aligning our four Sustainment Brigade's

of forces and equipment from Iraq, we are busy identifying, cataloging, and turning in equipment for retrograde out of theater. We call this event Operation Clean Sweep Iraq. Operation Clean Sweep Iraq has enabled us to return more than \$380 million

areas of responsibility to ensure we have the right capabilities in the right place to support the upcoming drawdown. Eventually, the entire sustainment mission here in Iraq will be command and controlled by an ESC headquarters and executed by our sustainment brigades in the north and in the south. As we near the midway point of our deployment, safety continues to be the most important part of all we do and plan to do. Whether at Fort Hood, Texas or here in Balad, Iraq, I want each member of the 13th ESC team to stay focused and be safe because every member of this team is vital to the success of our mission.

On behalf of our Soldiers, thank you to the 13th ESC Families and the entire Central Texas Community for your unwavering dedication, love and support.

Phantom Support!

BG Paul L. Wentz

Provider 6

Leaders, as 2009, the Year of the Noncommissioned Officer, closes out, I want you all to take a few moments to reflect on individual and unit accomplishments. As a unit, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) has accomplished a great deal over the last year, especially since deploying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, but we still have much more to accomplish.

Keep in mind all of the things we consider normal parts of Soldiering, and their importance to overall mission success. Without physical fitness, we'll lack the strength and endurance to go the distance the mission requires. Without adhering to uniform and appearance policies, discipline goes by the board and integrity is called into question. Every Soldier is entitled to outstanding leadership and regular counseling, never forget that, even when the strains of the mission pull you in every direction at once. Everyone has shown grit, determination and a strong willingness to complete the mission, don't let up as we pass the midpoint of the deployment.

I can't stress enough the importance of keeping in contact with Family members, especially around the holiday season. Many of us are in positions that allow us to keep our loved ones up to date on how we are doing. When you get a chance, make a phone call, write an email, or pick up a pen and write a letter the old fashioned way. Using the postal service might not be as fast as email, but it's more personal and when it arrives, it provides a

tangible piece of communication for a friend, spouse or child to carry around.

The challenges ahead represent the most trying portion of our mission. None of it will be easy, but it will all be worthwhile. Keep up all the good work, your selfless effort humbles me.

CSM Mark D. Joseph
Provider 7

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

Mark D. Joseph



CSM'S CORNER

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

“The 10th Leper”

Last year at this time, I was driving back to church after bringing communion to someone who wasn't able to worship. Just before I turned from the highway into the church parking lot, I got stopped at a red light where I saw him and he saw me. It was a familiar sight that many of you have seen before: An unshaven man standing with a sign that said, “Need work. Broke. Will do anything.” He was standing right next to my car window. He could see that I was “all pastored up” in my clerical collar. There was a desperate look in his pale eyes. In the endless seconds that I sat stopped, several things skated through my mind: “Ignore that look. He's a con. You're on the wrong side of the Good Samaritan Story... just like the priest and Levite. Roll down your window and talk” (which I began to do, but decided against).

Then, we both looked into the other's eyes... really looked. We looked, as if I could see the whole truth about him and he about me. Then we both bowed our heads at each other. We bowed our heads in shame, smiled helplessly at each other, and I drove off. I think we were both ashamed for me.

In one of his reflections, Dietrich Bonhoeffer says, “It is the accursed thanks of the hypocrites when the rich see the table of the poor empty and leave it empty, while giving thanks for what is theirs as God's blessing.” He calls us to pass on the blessings that we have received from God, so that the world knows of God's mercy and abundance. We can also receive God's gifts from others' hands with gratitude.

One person who knew of God's mercy and abundance very well was that 10th leper whom people often read about on Thanksgiving. He's the one who returned to Jesus, fell at his feet, and gave himself back to the Giver. Jesus asks him, “Where are the other nine?” I've heard this story in church every Thanksgiving from the time I was tiny. I've often heard preachers ask the same question to congregations who, like

the 10th, came to give themselves back to the giver.

But last year I heard another question in a Thanksgiving sermon. The preacher said the nine were exactly where Jesus commanded them to go... they were in the temple. And wasn't I going back to church that Sunday I drove past the man? She says that these days we often know where the other nine are. They are in church, with her, with me. Her Thanksgiving question was not, “Where are the nine?” but rather, “Where is the tenth?” “Where is the one who will lead us back to Jesus & show us heartfelt gratitude?” She never answered the question, and concluded that it was safer for her to stay with the other nine. I don't know the answer for sure either. But, the tenth may be closer to us than we imagine... right outside our doors. Even here in this place. If we're brave enough to find him, to share the bounty from our tables with him, to be amazed by what he can teach us, we may find another surprise as well. It's a surprise Bonhoeffer discovered when he met the 10th leper in his day. He said, “Jesus goes incognito, as a beggar among beggars, as an outcast among outcasts, as despairing among the despairing.” In the coming days we may find this true too. And I hope in the coming days that 10th leper (wherever we find him) will find God incognito in us too. When we see each other, maybe we will bow our heads together, though not in shame this time. When we find each other we will bow our heads in silent prayer & in Thanksgiving to the God who unites us, feeds us, heals us, loves us & always comes back for us.



CH (CPT) Kerstin Hedlund 90th
Sustainment Brigade, Special Troops
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SOLDIERS. FAMILIES. ARMY STRONG.
ARMY STRONG

Tiny team performs Army-wide mission

*Story and Photo by Spc. Jason Everett
96th SB*

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Soldiers with the 3666th Maintenance Company took control of the empty container collection point Sept. 23 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

Sgt. Lindsey Ainslie, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the ECCP, leads the five Soldiers with the 3666th Maint. Co., out of Phoenix, 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

“I really feel we are accomplishing something great,” said Ainslie, a Waterford, Miss., native. “Every container that gets shipped out of here puts us one step closer towards accomplishing the Army’s overall logistical mission. I could not ask for a better team. The Soldiers here have really thrown themselves into their work.”

The primary mission of the ECCP is to collect and assess used or damaged containers that need to be repaired and redistributed.

The Soldiers at the ECCP repair damages that can be serviced with tools and methods within the resources of Camp Taji, called level one damage.

“A dent, for instance, is something we can



Soldiers with the 3666th Maintenance Company, out of Phoenix, 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) operate the empty container collection point at Camp Taji, Iraq.

handle rather simply,” said Pfc. David Dekowski, a wheeled vehicle mechanic with the ECCP and a Tempo, Ariz., native. “If the damage is above our level or resources, we process the container for shipping to Joint Base Balad for more extensive work.”

The containers that are already serviceable or have been repaired get shipped back to Kuwait empty or full of retrograde materials. They are then put on a ship and sent back to the United States to assist units in moving equipment, personal and sensitive

items during deployments.

“Our work is starting to get noticed out here and people have actually started to ask us to look at their containers that are still in use,” Dekowski said. “This shows us that people understand the importance of what we do.”

Lt. Col. Paul Dismer, commander of the 541st and a Morgan City, La., native, said he was pleased with the Soldiers’ work.

“When you work with such a great team, morale tends to stay high, regardless of the challenges we see on a daily basis,” said Ainslie.

'Wagonmasters' take command of MND-North sustainment mission

Story and Photo by Sgt. Matthew C. Cooley
15th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq – The 15th Sustainment Brigade Wagonmasters took command of the Multinational Division-North sustainment mission from the 16th Sustainment Brigade, in a transfer of authority ceremony at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation building Oct. 5 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

The Fort Hood-based unit's new area of responsibility spans from the Turkish border at Habur Gate to northern Baghdad, an area roughly the size of Pennsylvania.

"During the course of the deployment in MND-N, (the 16th) planned and executed over 6,000 convoy logistical patrols, driving over 6 million miles delivering supplies to the Warfighter," said Col. Martin Pitts, 16th Sust. Bde. commander. "We issued out over 6 million gallons of fuel, 4.5 million bottles of drinking water and delivered 23 thousand tons of subsistence. We

handled over 40 million pounds of mail. We made facility and structural improvements across the brigade footprint to the tune of 74 completed projects valued at over \$61.5 million."

Col. Larry Phelps, commander of the 15th Sust. Bde., said this is the third time in less than five years the Wagonmaster colors were uncased in Iraq.

"Coach, your team is ready – put us in," he said to Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commander of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).



Col. Larry Phelps, 15th Sustainment Brigade commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Nathaniel Bartee, 15th Sust. Bde. senior noncommissioned officer, uncased their unit flag in the Morale, Welfare and Recreation building Oct. 5 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, as part of a transfer of authority ceremony with the 16th Sust. Bde.

96th Sust. Bde. assumes authority at Camp Taji

Photo by Cpl. Richmond Barkemeyer
96th SB Public Affairs



Col. C.J. Read, commander of the 96th Sustainment Brigade and a Layton, Utah, native, and Command Sgt. Maj. Vicki Briggs, the senior enlisted adviser to the 96th Sust. Bde. and a Roy, Utah, native, uncased the brigade's flag in a ceremony Oct. 14 at Camp Taji, Iraq.

The brigade, out of Salt Lake City, Utah, is taking command from the departing 10th Sustainment Brigade, out of Fort Drum, N.Y. Task Force Deadeye will spend roughly one year at Camp Taji, supporting Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

The 96th assumed command over one brigade special troops battalion and four combat sustainment support battalions, a total of more than 3,800 Soldiers from 34 states, said. The brigade will provide logistical support to more than 120,000 people in Iraq, he said.

Mississippi Guardsmen ramp up excess equipment turn in

*Story and Photo by Capt. Murray Shugars
155th HBCT*

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, Iraq — In preparation for the drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment from Iraq, the commander of a Mississippi Army National Guard battalion conducted an excess property inspection Oct. 11 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman, the commander of 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), inspected four company areas, including motor pools and maintenance shops, scattered across the base.

“We have to get all non-mission-essential equipment off our property books to support a responsible drawdown of personnel and equipment in Iraq,” said Goodman, a native of Meridian, Miss. “We’re turning in over seven years’ worth of accumulated equipment and vehicles, which the Army can redistribute where it’s needed most, such as in Afghanistan.”

The excess turn in is an added duty for a busy battalion. The 2/198th CAB provides Q-West with a force protection company that runs the main entry control point, fields a quick reaction force and secures off-post missions, said Goodman. The battalion also staffs the base defense operations center and the mayor cell that oversees basic life-support needs. Additionally, the Mississippians provide three convoy security companies, said Goodman.

These convoy security companies will become much busier as the transportation of equipment and supplies increases during the drawdown, so it is important for the Mississippians to turn in their own excess property as soon as possible, said Goodman.

Moreover, Goodman said he inspected his companies to place command emphasis on their responsibilities for the drawdown. He said many of the veterans of a previous, 2005 deployment to Iraq needed to readjust their thinking to current realities here.

“This inspection was partly to help change their mentality,” he said. “During the last deployment, companies had trouble getting vehicle parts and equipment, so they got in the habit of hoarding. There is no longer a shortage; parts and supplies go through the system in a timely manner.”



Sgt. 1st Class Randolph Dover (left), a motor sergeant from Sardis, Miss., and 1st Sgt. John L. Beasley (middle), a Henando, Miss., native, both with A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms out of Hernando, Miss., consult with Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman, commander of the 2/198th CAB out of Senatobia, Miss., and a Meridian, Miss., native, during an excess inventory inspection Oct. 11. The inspection was in preparation for the drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment from Iraq.

Goodman did an initial walk-through with the commanders two weeks before the inspection, during which he issued his guidance – company areas needed to meet Army sanitation standards and all excess property had to be identified, he said.

“The companies spent every spare hour since then preparing,” said Goodman. “There’s been great improvement. The companies have identified 100 percent of the excess vehicles and 90 percent of equipment that they need to turn in. The first turn in of more than \$3.7 million worth of excess vehicles and equipment starts immediately.”

Capt. Drew Clark, commander of A Company, 2/198th CAB, out of Hernando, Miss., said his force protection company was well prepared for the inspection.

“We drafted a plan, and the platoon sergeants and motor sergeant began implementing that plan weeks ago,” said Clark, a Madison, Miss., native. “The Soldiers worked hard, and we had extra time to get ready. In fact, when the colonel did his initial walk-through, he didn’t have many

issues with us. So we were just waiting for battalion to pull the trigger and inspect us.”

Capt. Jeremy A. Allen, commander of B Company, 2/198th, out of Greenwood, Miss., said the excess equipment turn-in and inspection changed his perspective on the mission.

“This inspection made us focus on what we need to keep for the mission and what we can do without,” he said. “The more we can do with less, the better we can help the bigger mission. We’re doing a sustainment mission for the short term, but the long-term mission in Iraq is the drawdown.”

Allen, a Memphis, Tenn., native, said preparing for the drawdown has even influenced changes in how he organizes his company’s tasks.

“Preparing for the drawdown, we streamline the company mission, decreasing the number of troops necessary,” said Allen. “For example, we cut the company headquarters section by nearly 50 percent, and we moved those Soldiers to the convoy security and maintenance platoons. That allows us to add truck teams to handle more security missions, because we expect the number of missions to increase as bases across Iraq begin to turn in vehicles and equipment for redistribution to Afghanistan and other key battlefronts.”

Capt. Jeff Mallard, Jr., commander of C Company, 2/198th CAB, out of Oxford, Miss., said his convoy security company will see an increased operations tempo in the coming months, as they begin to haul equipment out of Iraq.

“We anticipate playing a significant role in providing security to convoys during the drawdown,” said Mallard, a Bay City, Texas, native. “Therefore, we are doing all we can to minimize our property now in order to stay focused on our mission ahead.”

Mallard praised the effort of his Soldiers in preparing for the inspection.

“Soldiers like to stay engaged, and this has kept them busy for the last two weeks,” said Mallard. “I am proud of my Soldiers and all the hard work they have put in. The credit for the drawdown rests on the backs of the young Soldiers. This is hard work and they are making it happen.”

Capt. Bradley S. Hollingsworth, commander of A Company, 106th Brigade Support Battalion, headquartered in Magee, Miss., said he sees a lot of work ahead but feels confident that his company is prepared to meet the challenge.

“There will be many more hours spent on this project, but the work we have already done will set us up for success when the order comes to begin drawing down large numbers of forces in Iraq,” said Hollingsworth, a native of Florence, Miss. “It also helps create a safe work place by eliminating clutter.”

The excess equipment drawdown shifts focus from core missions, but Goodman said he believes it is a high priority.

“The sooner the battalion completes its own excess equipment turn-in,” said Goodman, “the sooner it can focus on securing the convoys that transport excess property out of Iraq to our brothers in Afghanistan.”



The crewmembers of Q-West’s 17-meter Aerostat pose for a unit picture Nov. 7. The aerostat crewmembers – all from A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, out of Hernando, Miss., and attached to the Base Defense Operations Center – provide a key element of base defense, maintaining the balloon and surveillance 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



13th ESC signs \$31 million contract with Iraq

Story and Photos by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah 13th ESC Public Affairs

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq –The 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and the Miran Village Company, an Iraqi-owned and operated business, signed a multi-million dollar contract during a ceremony Sept. 29, at the container repair yard here at Joint Base Balad.

The \$31 million contract calls for the repair of roughly 30,000 shipping containers in the course of the next fiscal year, to facilitate the responsible drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment from Iraq.

“The new contract represents a remarkable opportunity and achievement in terms of supporting Multi-National Force-Iraq’s responsible drawdown requirements,”

said Air Force Maj. Jack L. Nemcef, the commander of the regional contracting center here.

The previous contract covered the repair of 3,000 shipping containers annually.

Repairing used containers has proven cost-effective for Coalition forces because, at an average cost of \$5,000 for a new container, the savings add up to anywhere from \$2,000 to \$4,000 per container, said Maj. Brian Steele, the comptroller for the 13th ESC.

MNF-I’s economic engagement strategy calls for Iraqi businesses and industries to receive priority, and this large-scale contract fulfills that requirement, said Nemcef, a Newport News, Va., native.



Thook Kareem Khaliq, an employee with the Miran Village Company, welds a shipping container Sept. 24 at the Container Repair Yard here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



Col. Mark E. Drake (left), commander of the 10th Sustainment Brigade, and Command Sgt. Maj. Allen G. Fritzsching, with the 10th Sust. Bde., prepare to case the brigade’s flag for the trip back to Fort Drum, N.Y., during the transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 14 at Camp Taji, Iraq, marking the end of their mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 09-11.





Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Hashim Abdalmir Mhadi, owner of the Miran Village Company, Air Force Maj. Jack L. Nemcef, commander of the regional contracting center here, and Air Force Col. David DiMartino, signed a historic \$31 million contract that will provide valuable services to facilitate the responsible drawdown of forces in Iraq, while continuing efforts to create jobs and invigorate the local economy.

and well-coordinated effort,” said Nemcef.

Hashim Abdalmir Mhadi, the owner of the Miran Village Company, said the occasion brings good prospects for the families of Iraq.

“We have more than 80 families represented in our work force, with each worker earning an average of \$700 U.S. a month,” said Mhadi. “We hope to have the same salary for more than 600 families in the near future.”

Not only does the new contract provide jobs, but the Ministry of Labor certifies the laborers as carpenters and

contract expires, said Capt. Jason Vivian, action officer for the container repair yard, with the 80th Ordnance Battalion, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th ESC.

“The community surrounding JBB is largely a poor farming community and this influx of money and jobs will allow for expansion and growth,” said Vivian.

The contract faced challenges from its inception.

“The biggest challenges were the constraints placed by the current timeline for withdrawal,” said Steele, a Pittsfield, Mass., native. “We

than 100,000 (Soldiers and contractors) to move out of the country.

“In addition to the timeline, we also wanted to get this done within the fiscal year, so we had to work fast to beat the October 1st deadline,” he said.

Despite the time and effort put into the project and the work ahead, Mhadi said he is grateful the Iraqis will have a chance to rebuild their country and reinvigorate their economy.

Mhadi said, “This is actually a great opportunity for the families of Iraq to make a new, bright future for themselves.”

Soldiers learn to communicate on the job with Iraqis

*Story and Photo by Spc. Michael Camacho
13th ESC Public Affairs*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Every day, local-national convoys with the Iraqi Transportation Network travel through an entry control point to get onto Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Soldiers with the ITN escort platoon, 699th Maintenance Company out of Fort Irwin, Calif., are responsible for escorting the ITN drivers and vehicles during their time at JBB.

When vehicles arrive on base, they are staged in the frustration yard. The drivers then wait in the holding area until all the drivers and trucks in the convoy have been verified.

“We organize them by (transportation movement request) and make sure we have the right trucks

going to the right places,” said Pfc. Joseph Holland, an ITN escort with the 699th.

The 699th provides for the basic needs of the drivers, said Spc. Tyler Norris, an ITN escort with the platoon and a Las Vegas native. The drivers receive water while they wait to get back in their trucks, he said, and if the drivers have to stay overnight in the frustration yard, the unit provides meals.

This partnership with the Iraqi trucking companies led to an intermingling of cultures between Soldiers and local nationals, said Holland, a Columbus, Ohio native.

“Working with the Iraqis really broke down a lot of cultural barriers

and learned biases,” said Holland. “A lot of people think they’re all terrorists and fear them, but that’s not the case. They’re a great group of individuals.”

Waleed Shaker Youssef, a driver for the ITN and native of Baghdad, said, through an interpreter, he has worked with Soldiers at different bases for five years and has enjoyed the experience.

Norris said the language barrier can be challenging at first.

“Most of them understand us,” said Norris. “We use a lot of hands and arm signals, and understanding Arabic is a lot easier than actually speaking it.”

He said most communication is easy enough when gestures fill in the blanks, but there are times they need a translator to convey specific instructions.

The Iraqis are not as different from Americans as some would think, said Holland. There are more similarities than differences, he said.

After drivers have been cleared through security, 699th Soldiers escort them to the central receiving and shipping point, where they wait until their trucks are ready to be loaded, said Norris.

The long hours involved with escorting the ITN drivers are part of a working relationship, Norris said.

The drivers have been given an opportunity to make an honest living through the partnership, said Youssef.

“As far as Iraqi to American, American to Iraqi, they understand our concepts, our goals and what has to go on,” said Norris.



Spc. Tyler Norris, an Iraqi Transportation Network escort with the 699th Maintenance Company and a Las Vegas native, plays a game with an ITN driver as they wait in the frustration yard Oct. 7 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Operation Clean Sweep to come to Normandy

Story and Photo by Spc. Michael Camacho
13th ESC Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION NORMANDY, Iraq – A reconnaissance team for Operation Clean Sweep visited Contingency Operating Location Normandy Oct. 18 to assess the movement of retrograde materials throughout Iraq.

The 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment took control of COL Normandy Sept. 9. Since then, Soldiers in the unit work to identify excess assets in preparation for the mobile redistribution teams supporting the responsible withdrawal of U.S. troops and equipment from Iraq.

“The mobile redistribution team goes out and collects up all excess assets and returns them into the supply system,” said Capt. Daniel Simons, support operations planning officer with the 80th Ordnance Battalion, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

“We came out here to get a picture of how big the mission is,” said Simons, a Missoula, Mont., native. “For instance, how many containers of retrograde (assets) to expect, what assets they need here and what assets they have here.”

Simons said units fall onto equipment or assets left from previous units, and those items may no longer be of use. The MRTs coordinate with units to relocate almost all types of excess assets taking up needed space, including scrap metal and equipment parts, said Simons. Trash is excluded, he said.

Once retrograde materials are identified, sustainment

transportation movement requests are used to relocate them, said 1st Lt. Randell Krug, chief movement supervisor with the 858th Movement Control Team, 49th Transportation Battalion, 13th ESC.

“There’s so much cargo and supplies at these different places that they can’t sort through it all there,” said Krug, a Bad Axe, Mich., native. “So they’re going to put it on a sustainment TMR, which is going to allow the 90th SB to pull all that cargo from these smaller (COLs) into (Joint Base Balad) where we can organize it all.”

Simons said sustainment TMRs allow the MRTs to continue moving retrograde assets until they are all removed from the base, as they require much less paperwork and allow for more time-efficient movement of the retrograde materials.

JBB serves as a central logistics hub for the smaller surrounding COLs, said Simons. Once sorted, retrograde material is either redistributed in Iraq, pushed to Afghanistan or sent to Kuwait, he said.

The MRTs are a proactive step in



Sgt. Corey Bookman, a leader in the 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and native of Newberry, S.C., inventories a container during Operation Clean Sweep in Al Asad.

the responsible withdrawal of U.S. military forces in Iraq, said Sgt. 1st Class Vernon Bigham, COL Normandy mayor with the 2/3 Inf. Reg.

Bigham, a Littlestown, Penn., native, said COL Normandy will be handed over to Iraqi Security Forces when U.S. forces pull out.

“We want to turn over working, functional (COLs) to the Iraqis; the MRT is a big step,” said Bigham. “They got here early, they did an assessment and we’re going to push out 90 percent of our excess now.”

Wounded veterans return to Iraq

*Story and Photos by Sgt. Keith S. VanKlombenberg
13th ESC Public Affairs*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – After stepping on an improvised explosive device during an ambush Nov. 29, 2006, Spc. Craig Chavez nearly died. His face took most of the blast. He lost his left eye and took shrapnel to the right, rendering him blind. He was evacuated to the United States and thought he would never see again.

The medical team at the Air Force Theater Hospital at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, saved Chavez's life and removed the shrapnel from his right eye. Eventually, he saw his world again and, Oct. 11, he saw Iraq again.

Operation Proper Exit, a program run by the Troops First Foundation and supported by the United Service Organization, gave Chavez and seven other disabled veterans the chance to return to Iraq for a week, to visit the locations where they were stationed and even fly over the sites where they were injured.

This was the second trip for Operation Proper Exit, which brought six disabled veterans back to Iraq in June.

"It's really an idea that came from the Soldiers," said Lindsey Kell, program director for the Troops First Foundation and a Laurel, Md., native.

"They just want to interact and be a Soldier again," she said.

The group landed at JBB Oct. 14, to visit the hospital to which most of them were evacuated before leaving the country for treatment in Germany and the United States.

A crowd of hospital workers



Veterans who were wounded serving in Iraq pose Oct. 14 with 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Commander, Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz, and the Air Force Theater Hospital Commander, Air Force Col. Mark Koeniger, under Hero's Highway, the passageway that brings injured Warfighters from the medical evacuation helicopters to the emergency department at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

gathered to meet the wounded Warfighters and thank them for their sacrifices, while the veterans thanked the medical staff.

"My doctors restored my vision," said Chavez, a Temecula, Calif., native. "You guys are the real heroes."

Each of the seven wounded Soldiers and one injured Marine told the story of the day they were injured and the treatment they have received in their ongoing healing process.

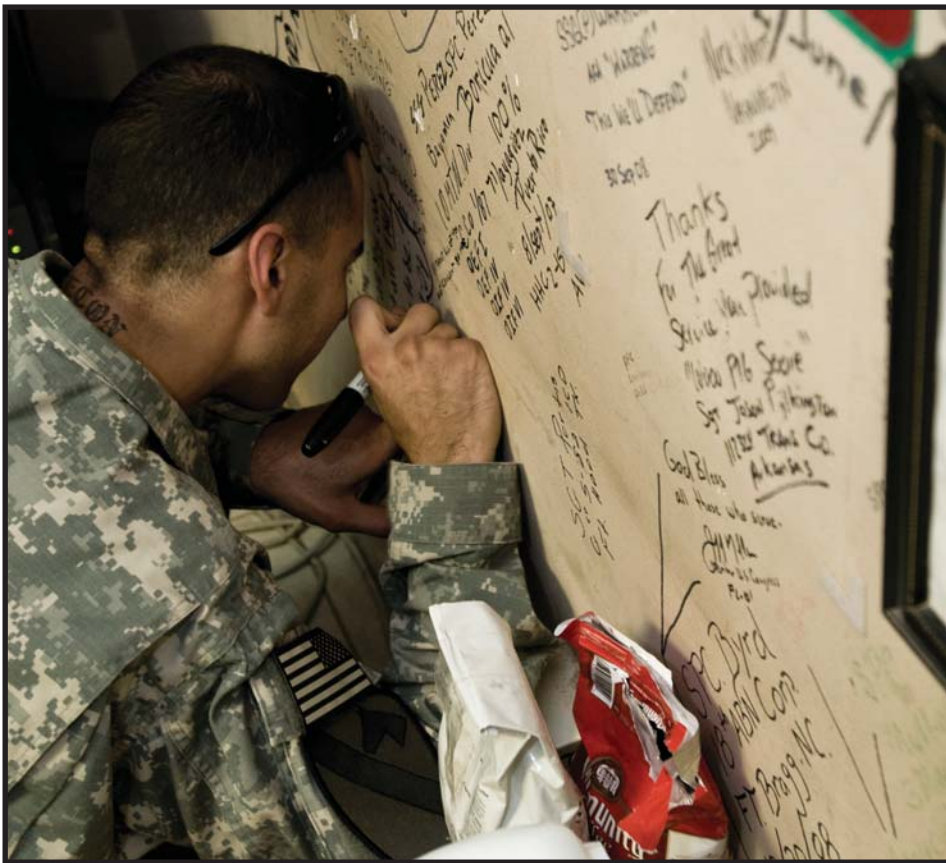
"It's a daily struggle, but I'm one of the lucky ones," said Chavez.

The Warfighters were given a tour of the hospital so they could see the advances that have been made in recent years.

They then moved to the Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility, the final stop for wounded service members before they leave the country. At the CASF, the veterans signed the walls of a room called Heroes Haven.

"The first time I was on my back, this time I am on my feet," wrote retired 1st Lt. Edwin Salau, the charitable organizations and veterans' service organizations program coordinator for the Marine Corps Wounded Warrior Program, who lost his leg serving in Iraq.

After visiting the hospital and the CASF, the group traveled to Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center east to speak to hundreds of



Retired Spc. Craig Chavez, who sustained multiple injuries as a result of an improvised explosive device detonation in 2006 including the loss of one eye and severe damage to the other, signs the wall at the Hero's Haven room of the Contingency Aero-medical Staging Facility Oct. 14 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

service members and civilians about their experiences, and their decision to return to the country that took so much from them.

“My family asked, ‘why do you want to go back, when God gave you a second chance at life?’” said Chavez. “They don’t know what it’s like. It’s a different Iraq and it’s great to see that.”

One Soldier, who said she was friends with the Soldier killed and the others injured in a Sept. 19 helicopter crash at JBB, asked what her injured battle buddies would want to hear from her when she called.

“Let them know they’re still part of the team,” said Salau, a Stella, N.C., native. “In six months their phone is going to stop ringing. Leave here with the reminder that you’re not going to let that happen.”

Even after the paychecks and treatment stops, a big part of the military is still with veterans, Salau said.

“The warrior ethos doesn’t stop,” he said.



Rep. Gene Taylor, a Democrat representing Mississippi’s 4th District, talks about the situation in Iraq with Col. Gary Toney, the chief of staff with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and Command Sgt. Maj. Mark D. Joseph, the senior noncommissioned officer with the 13th ESC, Dec. 14 during a visit to Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Five congressmen, from Mississippi, Minnesota, Iowa, Florida, and Kentucky, brought gumbo, served lunch and visited with their constituents.



General visits US Army Europe Soldiers at Balad

*Story and Photo by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah
13th ESC Public Affairs*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Gen. Carter F. Ham, the commanding general of U.S. Army Europe, visited Soldiers Oct. 25 here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Ham has visited Iraq before, and during this visit he said the progress Iraq has made toward its defense is clear.

“I’ve had the chance to come back to Iraq several times over the past couple years,” said Ham, a 33-year Army Veteran. “Every time I come back I see dramatic change. What’s fundamentally different this time than ... several months ago is it’s very, very evident that the Iraqi’s are increasingly in charge and responsible for their own security. That’s only been possible because of the hard work and the sacrifice of hundred’s of thousands of American Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines.”

During this visit, Ham said he intended to meet his Soldiers, to try and hone in on their needs and gauge their morale.

He visited the 2nd Battalion, 159th Attack Reconnaissance, 23rd Ordnance Company, 72nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion and the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

“My visit this time, particularly here at Joint Base Balad, is to see U.S. Army Europe-based units, some of which are newly arrived, some like the 23rd Ordnance Company here are at the end of their deployment,” said Ham.

The general said he wanted to talk to the troops to gain first-hand lessons, to better serve U.S. Army Europe Soldiers and Families in the future.

“First of all, what do we need to do better to prepare future units for deployment?” said Ham, during a town hall-style meeting with the Soldiers from the 23rd Ordnance Company. “Secondly, what are the things that we ought to be doing better to sustain the Soldiers and their Families while units are deployed? And, thirdly, in preparing to receive units back into U.S. Army Europe, into Germany and Italy, when they come home, what

are the things we need to do to make sure we’ve got the conditions set for their reintegration?”

Thanks to the town-hall dialogue, the general said he will take away lessons learned to further assist units during upcoming deployments and redeployments in support of Operation Iraq Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

“This is a great discussion today with the 23rd Ordnance Company, who has accomplished a lot over the past 12 months that they’ve been in Iraq,” said Ham. “Understandably, as they get ready to leave Iraq and come back to Germany, lots of their questions were about the future of their unit and their community.”

Ham thanked the Soldiers with the 23rd for their hard work and dedication, and delivered a message to them and their Families.

He said, “I know their Family and friends are anxious to receive them in Germany. The Soldiers are ready to come home. They’re coming home with their heads held high, after accomplishing a great mission to very high standards, and I could not be more proud of all that this company has done.”



Gen. Carter F. Ham, the commanding general of U.S. Army Europe, took questions during a town hall-style meeting with the Soldiers from the 23rd Ordnance Company Oct. 25 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

Security forces along Iraq, Turkey border inspect trucks

**Story and Photo by Sgt. Ryan Twist
13th ESC Public Affairs**

HABUR GATE, Iraq – Along the border of Iraq and Turkey, U.S. service members, Iraqi security forces and contractors work together to ensure the safety of Iraq's citizens.

At the validation yard in Habur Gate, Iraq, KBR, Inc., employees, Iraqi Security Forces and U.S. Soldiers check transportation movement requests and validate cargo on incoming trucks, said Sgt. 1st Class David A. Holder, the noncommissioned officer in charge with the 561st Movement Control Team Detachment, out of Springfield, Mo. Holder, a Waco, Texas, native, said they look for anything that is illegal and not on the cargo list.

The 561st MCT is assigned to the 49th Movement Control Battalion, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), to track cargo being moved in and out of the Iraqi theater of operations.

"The main mission here at the border is to get coalition trucks from Turkey, that come through the validation yard; we process those trucks from our yard to go south," said Holder.

If there are items on the truck that are not supposed to be there, the validation yard workers identify those items and prevent them from moving farther into Iraq, he said.

Dlshad Hassin has been an Iraqi security officer for customs for three years.

"You try to cross the border, they have to check your load, because some stuff that crosses the border may be expired," said Hassin through an

interpreter. "Too many times we catch some stuff that (is) illegal."

Hassin said drivers try to hide extra items on their trucks and sometimes try to drive away from convoys altogether to avoid being caught. Iraqi security forces and the U.S. military work together to ensure this does not happen, he said.

Holder said those extra items can be as substantial as cars.

"We've had a vehicle that was inside the truck ... The Kurdish police contacted us and we came over and broke the seal on the truck and found it in there," he said. "That truck did not go farther south. We immediately stopped it and turned it over to the Kurdish police."

The vehicle was inside an 18-wheel semi-truck, alongside other items the driver planned to sell, said Holder. The car was not on the manifest and it was not supposed to be on the truck, he said.

When drivers do not follow the rules and try to sneak items, steal fuel or avoid necessary checks, they are put on a restrictions list, said Holder.

"We have a restrictions list ... we will stop that truck from going south," he said. "We turn them over to the



Sgt. 1st Class David A. Holder, the noncommissioned officer in charge with the 561st Movement Control Team Detachment out of Springfield, Mo., watches a truck driver open his vehicle at the validation yard at Habur Gate, Iraq.

authorities here, to the customs police."

Holder said the military has a working relationship with the local nationals and KBR, Inc., employees, who love the American presence.

"We have a great relationship here, and one thing we want to do is maintain communications with the customs," he said. "I feel without that relationship ... it creates bad vibes."

Holder said after the validation yard, the truck drivers process their paperwork and go to the staging and holding yard to wait for convoys. The main goal is to process the vehicles and get them to their designated contingency operating location as quickly as possible, he said.

"Get them in, get them out," he said.

Roughly 3,000 Iraqi and Coalition vehicles go through the process each week, said Holder.

"I think it's a very good operation here," he said. "We handle our business and we do it very well."

Providers assist with redistribution of armor assets : *49th keeps convoys armored and on the roads*

Story and Photo by Spc. Michael Camacho
13th ESC Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION CALDWELL, Iraq – The mass movement of equipment across Iraq for units leaving and coming to the country is a complex process involving the support and coordination of various elements.

“(Third Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment) is redeploying and we’re repositioning all the equipment down South for the (3rd Brigade with the 3rd Infantry Division),” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Donnie Black, a mobility warrant officer with the 49th Transportation Battalion, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

The vehicles being redistributed were pushed to the Contingency Operating Locations D and E, said Black, a Sweet Water, Ala., native. There the 3/3rd ID will serve as an advisory assistance brigade in that region, he said.

To conduct the movement operations, specialized units made up of three sustainment brigades with the 13th ESC were used, said 1st Lt. Randell Krug, a chief movement supervisor with the 858th Movement Control Team with the 49th Trans. Bn. The 15th Sustainment Brigade and 96th Sustainment Brigade tasked out their heavy equipment transportation assets to move the Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles from Caldwell, he said.

From the 90th Sust. Bde., inbound sustainment convoys bring supplies and leave with cargo. The 49th Trans. Bn. and their MCTs coordinate these convoys from other COLs to Caldwell.

“The complexity of the operation is due to the fact that all the cargo is not going to a single location,” said Krug. “So every detail needs to be checked to make sure all the cargo goes to the right destination.”

Ground operations are led by the MCTs and the 3/66 mobility advisers, who oversee the cargo, said Sgt. Sean Robbins, a movement control supervisor with the 969th MCT. The MCTs track, document and log all cargo leaving COL Caldwell, he said.

“We don’t touch the cargo or move the cargo,” said Robbins, a Belleville, Ill., native. “We make sure it gets onto the right trucks and goes where it’s suppose to.”

Robbins said the MCT in Caldwell coordinates with other MCTs overseeing inbound convoys from the other COLs. This coordination lessens the chance of congested roadways, he said.

“If the roadways have heavy traffic from passing two convoys, this will add even more time to the overall travel,” said



Spc. Carl Raymer, a movement control supervisor with 858th Movement Control team and a Gladwin, Mich., native, and Sgt. Sean Robbins, a movement control supervisor with the 969th MCT and a Belleville, Ill., native, check the serial number of a Humvee Oct. 26 at Contingency Operating Location Caldwell, Iraq.

Robbins.

With coordinating the convoys, the other major task is generating the transportation movement requests to load and transport the cargo, said Krug, a Bad Axe, Mich., native.

“Whatever cargo is going, all the (serial) numbers have to match the ones on the TMRs,” said Krug. “If the cargo is loaded with the wrong numbers to track it, it can get frustrated and then lost in the system.

“The trucks are loaded with what equipment we’ve designated to move. All trucks that come to Caldwell will leave with as much equipment as we can safely put on it. To not put something on a truck is a waste of available resource.”

Managing the paperwork for the convoys and tracking the equipment they carry presents the greatest challenge, said Spc. Carl Raymer, a transport movement supervisor with the 858th MCT and a Gladwin, Mich., native.

Once the trucks are loaded, they are staged and prepared for the next leg of the mission to COLs E and D, said Raymer.

Black said there have been no major delays in the operation, or incidents with the convoy movements.

Logistics, technical advisory team instructs Iraqi Army Soldiers



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Hoover, the officer in charge of the Ur Logistics and Technical Advisory Team with the 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), and a Gatesville, Texas, native, instructs Iraqi Army Soldiers with the Ur Iraqi Army Regional Maintenance Center on vehicle maintenance Nov. 3 at IA Camp Ur, Iraq.

*Story and Photo by Pfc. Lisa Cope
13th ESC Public Affairs*

CAMP UR, Iraq – The Ur Logistics and Technical Advisory Team with the 36th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), works with Iraqi Soldiers at the Ur Iraqi Army Regional Maintenance Center to improve their skills in maintenance and supply.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Hoover, the officer in charge of the 36th Sust. Bde. LTAT, is an automotive maintenance supervisor with the Gatesville Mobilization and Training Equipment Site in Gatesville, Texas, and said he has been working in automotive maintenance for roughly 30 years.

Hoover, a Gatesville, Texas, native, said the mission is not as much about actual maintenance as it is about the logistics and planning of maintenance.

“Their mechanics are good mechanics, but as far as how they maneuver different parts and different equipment to different places is a large issue for them,” he said.

One of the biggest problems the LTAT hopes to

address in the maintenance center is the inefficiency of the parts ordering system, said Hoover. It can sometimes take more than a year to get the required parts to fix a vehicle, and while they wait, the vehicle just sits there unused and gathering dust, he said.

Another one of the LTAT’s goals is to teach the IA Soldiers to cross-train on different jobs within the unit, said Hoover.

Iraqi Army Col. Muthana Sobyh AbdalGabar, commander of the Ur IA RMC, said through an interpreter he is appreciative of the efforts of the 36th.

“In these days, the meeting and the cooperation between us and the advisers over there with the U.S. Army is very helpful for us,” said Muthana, a Basra, Iraq, native. “We gain a lot of things (that are) very useful ... They always support us.”

Muthana said the previous LTAT that worked with the maintenance center helped them to reorganize their center to make it more efficient and effective, but the 36th Sust. Bde. is teaching the Iraqi Soldiers more about safety, vehicle maintenance and using more up to date systems involving computers.

Master Sgt. Bennie E. Grubb, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Ur LTAT, said he has been working with the Iraqi Soldiers at Camp Ur for roughly three months.

“The main thing about the (IA Soldiers) is they want to learn and they want to accomplish their job or mission, but they cannot do it because of lack of tools,” he said.

Grubb, a Copperas Cove, Texas, native, said the IA Soldiers are good at adapting to their conditions, by fashioning makeshift tools to help them accomplish their mission.

“They may get a screwdriver that used to be a Phillips screwdriver, and they will flatten it off to make a flathead screwdriver,” he said. “They make what they have to make.”

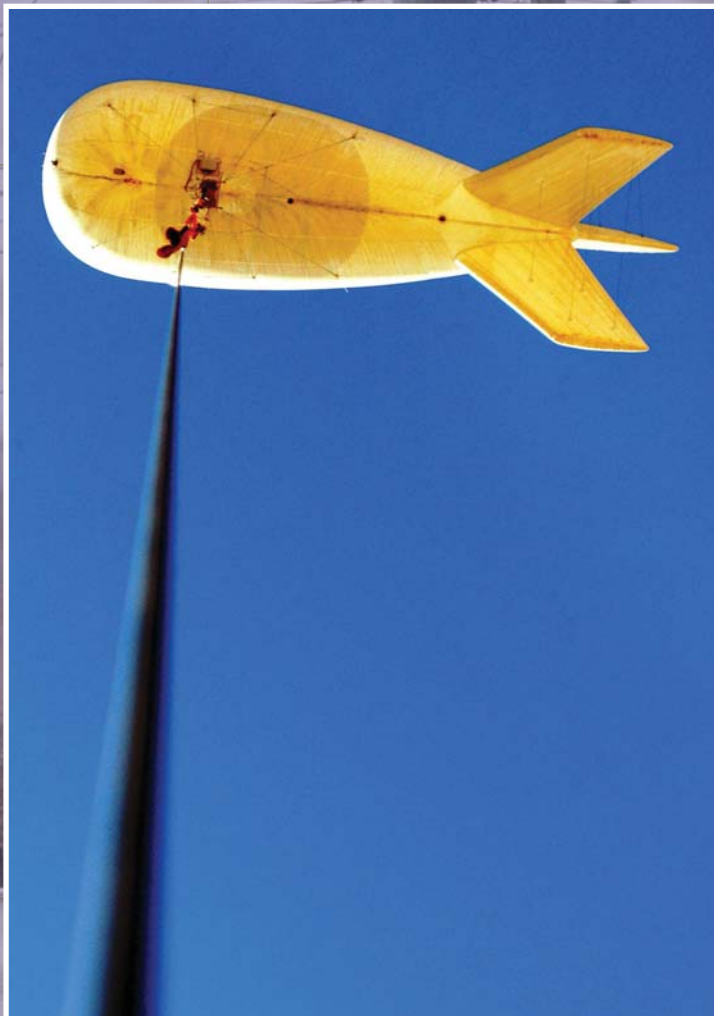


Photo by Capt. Murray Shugars

**CONTINGENCY
OPERATING
LOCATION
Q-WEST, Iraq**
— The 17-meter
Aerostat at
Contingency
Operating
Location Q-
West, Iraq, flies
at full tether
against a clear,
calm sky Oct.
19. The aerostat
— maintained
and operated by
crewmembers
from A Company,
2nd Battalion,
198th Combined
Arms, out of
Hernando,
Miss., with the
Base Defense
Operations
Center —
provides a key
element of base
defense.

PHOTOS THE



Gen. Ray Odierno, c
spoke to the 13th Sust
his Nov. 10 visit to Jo
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said.



Photo by Pfc. Lisa Cope

Soldiers from the 121st Brigade Support Battalion walk toward the ziggurat after their tour Nov. 12 at the archaeological remains of Ur near Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq.

Background: An 1174th Transportation Company, 395th Combat Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) armored truck hauls thousands of water bottles to Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Matthew C. Cooley, 15th

FROM AROUND 13TH ESC

Seen through the rear door of a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicle, Spc. Christopher Shaw, a gunner and a Taylorsville, Miss., native, waits in the Convoy Readiness Center yard Nov. 31 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq, before a convoy security mission to Contingency Operating Location Sykes, Iraq.



Photo by Capt. Murray Shugars



Photo by Sgt. Keith S. VanKolmpenberg

Commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq, Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) during the deployment, while continuing sustainment mission ahead because it never stops," he



Photo by Sgt. John Stimac

Pvt. Michael A. Perez, 287th Military Police Company out of Fort Riley, Kan., and a Clear Lake, Calif., native, and Spc. Elexander Hulinyat, also with the 287th, practice ground techniques during a combatives class Oct. 22. Perez and Hulinyat are stationed at Contingency Operating Location Warhorse, Iraq.

inment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment
es to be delivered to service members Nov. 18 at Contingency Operating
a Sustainment Brigade public affairs)

Provider Soldiers get promoted, re-enlist

*Story and Photo by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah
13th ESC Public Affairs*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Continuing a tradition of excellence, Provider Soldiers earned promotions and re-enlisted in the Army, all while continuing to prepare for the drawdown of U.S. equipment and personnel from Iraq.

Two Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) were promoted for their exceptional service.

“The secretary of the Army has espoused special trust and confidence in the fidelity, valor and personal courage of ...” read Master Sgt. Dorothea Goodson, noncommissioned officer in charge of the support operations administrative section, HHC, 13th ESC, while Brig Gen. Paul L. Wentz, commanding general of the 13th ESC, watched as she named the Soldiers and stepped forward to pin on their new rank.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Crystal Davis, the mobility officer for the support operations land section, 13th ESC, was promoted to chief warrant officer 3 after 14 years in the Army.

“It’s exciting,” said Davis. “I didn’t think I would stay this long, but here I am.”

Davis said she has chosen to stay in the Army because it provides a perspective on life not found in the civilian world.

“It’s like being a foreign exchange student for your entire

life,” said the Antigua and Barbuda native. “I’ve met people from every state in the U.S. and I’m just making the best of this experience.”

Master Sgt. Tanisha Geter, the supply and services NCOIC with the 13th, was promoted to the grade of E-8 after 17 years in the Army.

“My first year in college was basically going nowhere and my dad, who had been in the military, suggested I join,” she said.

Initially, Geter said she expected to serve for four years, earn her Montgomery G.I. Bill benefits and leave the service. But 17 years later, she chose to continue to serve.

“The camaraderie, meeting different people, traveling; I have all these great reasons to stay; why would I want to leave?” said Geter, a Brooklyn, N.Y., native, who had never left the Big Apple until she joined the military.

If that was not enough, she said her children, Todd Geter and Miles Geter, are enough of a reason to stay in the Army.

In addition to these promotions, three Provider Soldiers also re-enlisted to continue serving their country during war time.

Cpl. Mariah Robins, supply clerk, said she re-enlisted to see the world.

“I originally enlisted to serve after 9/11, to help my country,” she said. “Also, for my daughter, I wanted to go to school to give her a good life.”

Robins said her family was very supportive of her decision to re-enlist. She said she chose to re-enlist for an assignment to Japan, a dream destination for her.

“I always wanted to go there and now I have the opportunity available and I took it,” she said.

Staff Sgt. Michelle Batiste, a material supply NCO with the 13th, said she chose to re-enlist for the stability provided by the military.

“I want to take care of my kids, Myron and Dyron,” said Batiste, an Opelousas, La., native. “When I told them I was going to enlist, at first they didn’t believe me, but now they’re glad I’m staying with it.”

Sgt. Jose Graulau, executive assistant with the 13th ESC, said he was not going to re-enlist but a talk with his brother, who is also deployed in support of contingency operations here in Iraq, changed his mind.

“My brother was in the Army,” said Graulau, a Bayamon, Puerto Rico, native. “Seeing how well he was doing made me decide to enlist, too. Talking to him once more recently made me decide to do it again.”



Capt. L. Pilar Restrepo, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), administers the oath of enlistment to Staff Sgt. Michelle Batiste, a material supply noncommissioned officer with the 13th ESC, during a ceremony Nov. 2 here at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Batiste said she re-enlisted to take care of her children.

Balad honors Veterans



JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Throughout the United States' storied history, millions of citizens have risen to answer her call to duty in times of tranquility and turmoil, war and peace.

Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen gathered at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation east gym to honor Veterans, both past and present, in a Veteran's Day observance Nov. 11 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.



Soldiers give supplies to Taji children during holidays



Photo by Maj. Robert Edwards

Col. C.J. Read, commander of the 96th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Layton, Utah, native, passes out candy to students in a school in Taji, Iraq, as part of Operation: Back to School. Read participated in the event along with more than 40 other Soldiers with the 96th.

Mississippians, Iraqi Army partner to protect Q-West water supply

Story and Photos by Capt. Murray Shugars
155th HBCT

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION

Q-WEST, Iraq — Members A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms Brigade out of Hernando, Miss., met with their Iraqi counterparts in 1st Company, 2nd Battalion, 26th Brigade to review the IA's security measures for the Al-Qayyarah pump house located on the Tigris River.

"The pump house is a critical facility in the province because it is the primary source of raw water to Al-Qayyarah and to Q-West," said Lt. Col. Kerry Goodman, commander of the 2/198th CAB and a Meridian, Miss., native. "The 26th Brigade, Iraqi Army, has worked closely with the Q-

West force protection company to provide security."

First Lt. Salah Joad, commander of 1st Co., said the mission is vital, noting that his Soldiers enjoyed it.

"We have to protect the pump house because it helps sustain our operations and the local people in the region," Joad said through an interpreter. "My men like the mission because the pump house has plentiful water, reliable electricity and scenic landscapes. They also can visit Al-Qayyarah when they have time off."

Capt. Drew Clark, Q-West force protection company commander, said he was impressed with the 26th Brigade's performance.



Pfc. Michael J. Slemensky, a medic with 198th Combined Arms Brigade applies a pressure bandage to Cpl. Raad Hussein, a member of 1st Company, 2nd Battalion, 26th Brigade, Iraqi Army.



Spc. William Estavan, from Acoma Pueblo, N.M., and Spc. Rodney Harrison from the Navajo tribe, perform a Native American song during an event to honor Native American Indian Heritage Month Nov. 13 at Camp Adder, Iraq.



Photo by Spc. Cory Grogan

“I’ve worked closely with the 26th Brigade element here since they took over the mission about a month ago,” said Clark, a Madison, Miss., native. “The last Iraqi unit was not serious about this mission. There were times when I had to station my Soldiers here because there was no security element, and we always had to man the towers and entrance when we came to the pump house. The 26th Brigade committed four times the number of troops here and they are eager to do the job.”

The senior noncommissioned officer of 1st Co., Sgt. Major Fadil Abbas, said he visits the pump house regularly to inspect his men and address any needs they might have.

“When I visit, I conduct a hygiene inspection of the area and living quarters,” Abbas said through an interpreter. “I inspect the weapons, check the towers and see if my men need supplies. I tell them how important it is to protect the water supply for the Iraqi people, and they make sure terrorists cannot take over the pump house.”



Members of the Mississippi Army National Guard consulted with elements of the Iraqi Army Oct. 26 at the Al-Qayyarah pump house. First Lt. Salah Joad (left), commander of 1st Company, 2nd Battalion, 26th Brigade, Iraqi Army, briefs Capt. Drew Clark (far right), commander of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms Brigade out of Hernando, Miss., on security of the Tigris River site, which the Iraqi unit took control of last month. Second Lt. Hassan Kalid (second from left), a platoon leader with 1st Co., and Sgt. Major Fadil Abbas (second from right), senior enlisted Soldier for the company, look on.

First Sgt. John L. Beasley, the senior noncommissioned officer in A Co. and a Henando, Miss., native, said he respected the 26th Brigade’s professionalism.

“The 26th is more engaged than the last unit,” Beasley said. “They are more professional and enthusiastic about the mission. Their troops are always in uniform and alert, which is a huge

improvement.”

Second Lt. Hassan Kalid, a platoon leader with 1st Co., said the Mississippians were good partners.

“I like working with the Soldiers from Mississippi,” said Kalid. “They are friendly, hardworking Soldiers, and they welcomed us with a good meal.”

The A Co. Soldiers celebrated the handover of defensive operations by hosting a cook out, said Clark.

“It was essential that we conducted a thorough battle handoff with the Iraqi Army to ensure that they understood the mission,” said Clark. “The initial training took only a day. The next day, they were ready to assume responsibilities and we couldn’t have been happier. That was worth celebrating with a Mississippi cook out.”



Sgt. Joshua Haycraft a member of 198th Combined Arms Brigade, briefs 2nd Lt. Hassan Kalid with 26th Brigade, Iraqi Army, on the workings of the lift station Oct. 26 at the Al-Qayyarah pump house, as Mark Crow, a civil general foreman listens.

Soldiers deliver supplies, view new school

*Story and Photos by Pfc. Lisa Cope
13th ESC Public Affairs*

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION ADDER, Iraq – Soldiers with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, visited Al Soonobar School at Jaber Mohamed Village, Iraq, Nov. 18 to deliver school supplies and stuffed animals to roughly 45 students.

Lt. Col. Clinton Moyer, chief of civil operations with the 36th Sust. Bde., has worked with the school's staff and the local community for roughly a year to build a new school.

Moyer, a Clearwater, Kan., native, said it is scheduled to be completed in January 2010.

“We helped with the plans for the new school; we helped get the project approved; and, as far as the actual building of the school, we have an engineer team, the corps

“I believe that all kids deserve – no matter what country or how bad off they are – they deserve a good education.”

Spc. Elizabeth A. Patterson,

of engineers, as the lead for going out and making sure that everything is done correctly,” he said. “Once the school got approved and they started building it, we were just kind of the conduit for it.”

The new school would facilitate more students at more grade levels and would feature running water and electricity, said Moyer.



Lt. Col. Clinton Moyer, the chief of civil military operations with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, takes a picture with some of the students he worked with for the past year, Nov. 18 at Al Soonobar School at Jaber Mohamed Village, Iraq.



Soldiers with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, and the students at Al Soonobar school gather for a group photo Nov. 18 at the school in Jaber Mohamed Village, Iraq.

“What they have right now at that school is three grade levels, 1st grade, 2nd grade and 3rd grade,” he said. “With the new school they will be able to go up to the 6th grade.”

Shaykh Sultan Kataa Jaber Mohamed, of Jaber Mohamed Village, said, through an interpreter, one of the biggest improvements to the area was a gravel road leading to the school.

“The gravel that America put over here to create a new road for them helps the kids a lot because it is about four kilometers to get to here,” said Mohamed. “It was so full of mud, they wouldn’t be able to do it before. They appreciate what (America) has done.”

Mohamed also said he appreciated the help from U.S. Soldiers with building the new school.

“Without American forces, we would never get a new school like that,” he said.

Spc. Elizabeth A. Patterson, a supply clerk with the 36th Sust. Bde., and an Austin, Texas, native, visited the Soonobar School for the first time Nov. 18.

Patterson said visiting the school helped her have more of an understanding of the local culture and their way of life. She said she thinks all Soldiers should be given the opportunity to see what life is like outside the base.

Patterson said she was amazed at the difference between the old and new school.

“It is crazy how they are going from a mud school to a school with running water, electricity (and) fans,” she said. “I believe that all kids deserve – no matter what country or how bad off they are – they deserve a good education.”



Spc. Elizabeth A. Patterson, a supply clerk with the 36th Sust. Bde., and an Austin, Texas, native, holds one of the local children at the Al Soonobar School Nov. 18 at Jaber Mohamed Village, Iraq.

Logistics Training and Advisory Teams meet at Joint Base Balad

*Story and Photo by Spc. Brandy Oxford
13th ESC Public Affairs*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – For the first time since their units' arrival in Iraq, four sustainment brigades' Logistics Training and Advisory Team leaders met to discuss the Iraqi capacity to self-sustain and the teams' plans in the coming months.

The leaders, from the 15th, 36th, 90th and 96th Sustainment Brigades and the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), met Nov. 18 at Mirage, dining facility two, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to determine which of the four phases of partnership each of the 11 LTATs is in with its respective medium workshop.

“(Brig. Gen. Paul L. Wentz) wanted a fresh-eyes assessment because all of the brigades have just transferred authority; they’re all new,” said Maj. Dennis Utt, Iraqi Security Forces future operation plans officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 13th ESC, and a Fort Hood, Texas, native.

The 11 LTATs work with 10 medium workshops and one general transportation regiment, said Maj. Patrick L. Rowe, chief of the 13th ESC Iraqi Security Forces LTATs and an Owensboro, Ky., native. Medium workshops provide direct maintenance support to Iraqi Army divisions, he said.

Each sustainment brigade has an ISF chief who oversees one to five LTATs depending on the number of medium workshops or missions in their area of operations, he said.

“For most of them, if not all of them, this is the first time they’ve met each other and met the ESC,” Rowe said. “This is just an opportunity for these guys to network and share ideas for what works here and what works there. What really happens, from what I’ve seen, is the opportunity for them to cross-talk, network ... (ask) ‘have you tried this; have you tried that?’ and receive guidance from their higher.”

Utt said the leaders' goal in meeting collectively was to determine how each LTAT is partnering with the workshops, including guidance they give the Iraqis and their guidelines for partnership now and in the future.

“What this conference is designed to do is to find out where they are currently in the partnership phase

and where they intend on going in the next 90 days,” he said.

Phase one of the partnership includes U.S. and ISF embeds, he said.

“We have several workshops that are embedded,” he said. “They live on the same (COL) with the Iraqi forces and they live with the Iraqi Army, the medium workshops.”

In phase two, U.S. forces are not embedded with Iraqi forces but visit a few times a week, Utt said.

They also met to discuss the capabilities of each workshop, its shortfalls, success stories and needs, said Utt.

“The goal is to get the Iraqi Army medium workshops self-sustaining and self-reliant,” he said. “That’s our main goal, is to ... give them the processes and get the tools in place to be able to operate independently, without us having to oversee it.”



Col. Fredrick Brown, operations officer with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, **Maj. Dennis Utt**, Iraqi Security Forces future operation plans officer, with the 13th ESC, **Capt. Kyle Brown**, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 307th Brigade Support Battalion out of Fort Bragg, N.C., and **Chief Warrant Officer 3 Scott Carman**, 751st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Eastover, S.C., discuss the U.S. partnership with Iraqi Army medium workshops through LTATs Nov. 18 at Mirage, dining facility two, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

90th SB trains Coastguardsmen in counter-IED class

*Story and Photos by Sgt. John Stimac
13th ESC Public Affairs*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Counter-improvised explosive device training can mean the difference between life and death for any service member who travels outside the wire on convoys.

A C-IED level two training class was held Nov. 19 at Debro Range at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, featuring members of the U.S. Coast Guard for the first time.

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Alan R. Hoock, a C-IED and electronic warfare officer with the 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Columbia, Ill., native, said the purpose of the training was to teach service members how to protect themselves and their equipment from IEDs.



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Alan R. Hoock, a counter-improvised explosive device officer with the 90th Sustainment Brigade and a Columbia, Ill., native, sets up a mock IED for the C-IED level two training class Nov. 19 at Debro range at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

“This class will give them a perspective of what an IED is, what types are being used and how to protect themselves,” he said.

Hoock stressed vigilance, observance, preparedness and knowing what to look for.

There are three different levels of C-IED training, all of which can be taught at JBB.

Hoock said level one training is an hour-long overview that usually takes place at Camp Buerhing, Kuwait, during the mobilization process.

“In level two, we conduct a class and actually go out and do a walk-through lane and a drive-through lane, in which we place IEDs in various places on or near roads,” he said.

The level three class lasts three days and, in addition to level two training, participants learn how to be instructors themselves, he said.

Hoock said he usually conducts training once a month, but the frequency depends on how many people request the training and on the availability of the range. He also said this was the first time the Coast Guard trained on C-IED level two.

“We contacted them, they said they would be interested in attending and then we scheduled a time and date,” he said.

Petty Officer 1st Class Benjamin D. Rosen, a hazardous materials inspector with the Coast Guard Redeployment Assistance and Inspection Detachment, said he learned a lot about identifying different types of IEDs and how to spot them on the road.

“Overall the day was a success,” he said. “We identified all the IEDs, had good classroom training and, if we are in a convoy, it will be very useful.”

Rosen, a Jacksonville Fla., native, said his favorite part of the class was going out in vehicles to look for mock IEDs and exiting the vehicles to inspect them more closely.

“I like training that is more hands on,” he



Members of the U.S. Coast Guard find one of the mock improvised explosive devices that were set up for training purposes at the counter-IED level two training class Nov. 19 at Debro Range at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. This was the first time Coast guardsmen attended the Level II class at JBB.

said. “This training is very important. The more experience you have in dealing with it, the better.”

Staff Sgt. Phillip Duby, an operations noncommissioned officer for the 90th Sustainment Brigade, and Saginaw, Mich., native, said he wanted the students to always practice situational awareness when they leave the base.

“I want them to know what to look for, what the dangers are and what you can do to protect yourself,” said Duby. “I am happy with giving them the knowledge that could help save their lives.”

Transportation company assists units in preparation for drawdown

Story by 1st Lt. Maria E. Schmitz

HHC, 264th CSSB

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Benoit
1083rd Transportation Company

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION SPEICHER, Iraq – The transportation corps' creed reads: "I am transportation, the spearhead of logistics ... and nothing happens until something moves."

As operational tempo increases to support the upcoming responsible drawdown of U.S. forces and equipment from Iraq, transportation Soldiers move equipment throughout the Iraqi theater, said 1st Lt. Reginald Davis, executive officer with the 1083rd Transportation Company, 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Shreveport, La., native.

Spc. Jamie Gryder, a heavy equipment transport system operator and a Shreveport, La., native, said the significance of her efforts helps her to remain



Heavy equipment transport trailers from the 1083rd Transportation Company sit loaded with tanks from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division tanks, ready to be moved.

mission-focused.

"The highway is extremely dangerous and we are subject to

attack at any given time," she said.

The 1083rd Trans. Co., operating under the motto "The House of the Warrior," spends anywhere from two to 10 days on the road each mission. They drive all night, operating between work and rest cycles

during the day at camps along the route.

Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Levesque, a platoon sergeant and a Bossier City, La., native, had a different experience as a transportation Soldier on his previous deployment.

"Back in 2003, during the initial push, we could not drive after dark in Iraq," Levesque said.

The 1083rd Trans. Co. Soldiers follow a constant rotation of missions on the road such as an operational move for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, which involved hauling more than 50 M1A2 Abrams tanks in addition to other assets Oct. 27 through Nov. 16.

Davis said, "The significance of their efforts becomes more apparent as time draws closer for troops and equipment to be out of the country."



Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Levesque, a platoon sergeant with the 1083rd Transportation Company and a Bossier City, La., native, oversees the loading of tanks during a recent operational move.

Soldiers begin to assemble fuel farm at Adder

*Story and Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tad Browning
36th SB Public Affairs*

CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION ADDER, Tallil, Iraq – Soldiers with the 36th Sustainment Brigade and the 305th Quartermaster Company prepared and installed fuel bags and liners as part of fuel farm operations



Nov. 28 at Contingency Operating Location Adder, Iraq, to consolidate fueling operations in Multi National Division – South.

Capt. Smiley Garcia, the officer in charge of petroleum operations for the 36th Sust. Bde., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said it was the first of three phases.

“This is the first phase of our fuel depot here at (COL) Adder,” said Garcia. “With current operations, the fuel hub for MND-S is at Camp Cedar ... This operation will consolidate Cedar and Adder, with Adder becoming the fuel hub for MND-S. Eventually, the Cedar Hub is going to discontinue and Adder will be the hub for MND-S.”

Operation Throwdown had roughly 80 Soldiers installing the liners, positioning sandbags and installing the fuel bags that make up the fuel farm. The operation was completed

ahead of schedule due to the teamwork on the ground.

Sgt. Dale Fuller, Jr., a fuel specialist with the Texas National Guard’s 36th Sust. Bde., said he was surprised at the team’s efficiency.

“It all happened so fast,” said Fuller, an Austin, Texas, native. “They said three days. I was looking at a week from prior experience. Everything came together perfectly.”

The 732nd Naval Petroleum Detachment and KBR, Inc. contractors worked together for the project, said Garcia.

“It’s important to maintain those partnerships between ourselves and partner units, and also our civilian contractors at KBR and our intra-service components,” Garcia said. “As long as we keep that team intact, everything will run efficiently.”

Consolidating the fuel farm should help the drawdown of Soldiers and equipment from Iraq, Fuller said.

“Recentralizing, cutting down on bases, revamping it all will make this fuel farm more efficient,” he said. “Taking everything that was wrong with Cedar ... taking all of the flaws out of it is going to speed up operations ... Everything will be centralized here. It will give more time for maintenance, more time for convoy (operations).”

Pfc. Gregory Vasquez-Ortiz, a petroleum specialist with the 305th Quartermaster Company out of Fort Campbell,

Ky., did quality control on the placement of the sandbags and said the operation will help logistics considerably.

“All of the fuel that is going to be moving through (southern) Iraq; everything is going to be on one base,” said Vasquez.



13th ESC wins Amaz

**Story and Photos by
Sgt. Ryan Twist
13th ESC Public Affairs**

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Service members ran a race, played golf blindfolded and choked down the “nastiest” food the chow hall had to offer Dec. 5 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, to raise money for the Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas.

Thirteen four-member teams participated in the CFC Amazing Race, to compete to have a \$300 check donated to the CFC in their name. The CFC supports charitable organizations through philanthropy by federal employees.

Senior Master Sgt. Bryan Shipman, a superintendant of protocol with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing and a Norfolk, Va., native, served as the Air Force

CFC representative.

“We noticed there were no combined events with the Army or anyone else,” he said. “We teamed with the 13th (Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)) and the 194th Engineer Brigade and we came together with this alternate Amazing Race event.”

In the past few weeks, the representatives worked together to plan activities and events for teams to raise awareness and money for the CFC, said Shipman.

The planners coordinated the events, set up the stations and made sure there was continuity with the food, event times and reserved locations, he said.

Master Sgt. Kimberly D. Bergman, a 13th ESC career counselor and a Chicago native,

said no other CFC-O event has had all the major commands from their base organized together.

Instead of commanders doing their own events for CFC-O, they came together as a whole – Army and Air Force, said Bergman.

“It was an awesome time,” she said. “Everyone brought their own strengths ... which (were) reflected in the different challenges that we had.”

The 13th ESC created a crossword puzzle event, testing competitors’ knowledge of Army and Air Force history, said Bergman. The 194th Engineers and the JBB Fire Department hosted department specific challenges, she said.

“It was a lot of work on our part but we enjoyed it and it seems all



Team Urban Logistickers, with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, accept a \$300 check from Col. Knowles Y. Atchison, deputy commander with the 13th ESC, for winning the Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas Amazing Race Dec. 5 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The check will be donated to the CFC in recognition of the winners.

zing Race charity run



Sgt. Austin A. Nightingale, an executive administrative assistant with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) out of Fort Hood, Texas, and Maj. Erik A. Enyart, a battle major in the Joint Operations Center with the 13th ESC, eat bread pudding with raisins at the Mirage dining facility during the Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas Amazing Race Dec 5. at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Nightingale, a Missoula, Mont., native, and Enyart, a Radcliff, Ky., native, were part of the winning team, the Urban Logistickers, which won a \$300 dollar check donated to the CFC in their name.

the participants enjoyed it," she said.

Spc. Martha A. Bolt, a paralegal specialist with the 13th ESC and a Sussex, N.J., native, said the event was fun and helped the service members get a good workout.

Bolt, who was on the Urban Logistickers team, said the hardest part of the event was the eating competition at the Mirage dining facility. She drew a number and had to eat banana pudding with raisins. Other numbered items included sardines, refried beans and tuna.

Her teammate, Maj. Erik A. Enyart, a battle major in the Joint Operations Center with the 13th ESC and a Radcliff, Ky., native, said blind golfing and chow-hall eating were the hardest parts

of the event.

Spc. Kimberly N. Dover, a medic with the 248th Area Support Medical Company out of Marietta, Ga., with the 61st Multifunctional Medical Battalion, Task Force 1st Medical Brigade, and a Cartersville, Ga., native, won third place with the Sickcall Rangers and said the food challenge was not her favorite part either.

"I'm just a really picky eater ... and it was gross," she said. "None of it was really difficult; that was just the nastiest part."

Dover said pushing and pulling water hoses at the fire department was the highlight of the competition.

The event mirrored a scavenger hunt combined with a 5 km race, said Dover. The activities were set

up at locations throughout JBB and teams had to accomplish each task before they could head to the final destination, the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center east, she said.

"It was fun and it got everybody out here on their Saturday morning, instead of sitting in their (bedroom) doing nothing," she said.

In the end, service members came together and had a blast to support a great cause, which Bergman said was all she could ask for.

"I think it was great," she said. "I think CFC is very important. I'm looking forward to perhaps maybe doing another one before we get out of here."



Spc. Kimberly N. Dover, a medic at the Troop Medical Center, with the 248th Area Support Medical Company out of Marietta, Ga., tries to eat bread pudding and raisins at the Mirage dining facility during the Combined Federal Campaign – Overseas Amazing Race Dec 5 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Dover, a Cartersville, Ga., native, was part of team Sickcall Rangers, which placed third in the event.

U.S., Iraqi Transportation Network work together during drawdown

Story and Photo by Spc. Michael Camacho
13th ESC Public Affairs



Spc. Edwin Ronquillo, an Iraqi Transportation Network security escort with the 699th Maintenance Company and a San Pedro, Calif., native, stands by as an Iraqi flat bed is loaded for an ITN convoy, at the central receiving and shipping point at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – As U.S. military assets are consolidated throughout Iraq, Iraqi national trucking companies have joined in the transportation effort – experiencing safer travels than their U.S. counterparts.

The Iraqi Transportation Network is an Iraqi civilian-operated, commercial organization that regularly conducts missions supporting the drawdown of personnel and equipment throughout the country, said Capt. Scott Poznansky, operations officer with the 49th Transportation Battalion, Commercial Movement Division.

In roughly the last three months, the 858th Movement Control Team and the ITN have coordinated, increasing the capabilities of the ground movement portion of their mission of transporting military assets, said Pfc. Brian Johnides, a transportation manager with the 858th MCT and a Grosse Woods Point, Mich., native.

“The Iraqi Transportation Network incorporates ground, rail and sea movement types,” said Johnides.

Upon the ITN’s arrival at their destination, they go through strict security inspections of their identification credentials, vehicles and cargo, including checks for contraband, said Pfc. Joseph Holland, an ITN security escort with the 699th Maintenance Company and a Columbus, Ohio, native. Entry control point personnel then search the drivers and allow them on base, he said.

The trucks are then escorted by Soldiers of the 699th Maint. Co. and taken to the central receiving and shipping point, where they upload or download their cargo, said Holland.

The ITN has operated in Iraq for roughly a year and a half and continues to develop, said John Ariaza, an ITN liaison and a Brooklyn, N.Y., native.

The idea was started in al-Anbar

province, said Ariaza. As it showed potential for growth, it expanded to the central, southern and eastern regions, he said.

The network is composed of tribes throughout Iraq, said Ariaza. The ITN business incentive helps the tribes peacefully interact with each other, to work together instead of fighting, he said.

“They’re being led by somebody in their own community and not an outsider,” said Ariaza.

The company employs 16 subcontractors, Ariaza said. When the military sends work or transportation movement requests to the ITN, a travel adviser speaks with local shaykhs to coordinate which subcontractor gets the job, he said.

Local nationals view ITN drivers differently than military personnel, he said. Although ITN convoys do not travel with security teams, they have had no hostile incidents in the time they have operated, said Ariaza.

The ITN is a means of getting the Iraqis to work to better their country and offers secure areas of transportation, said Ariaza.

“Everything is logistical,” Johnides said. “It needs to go from point A to point B. If you don’t have an efficient or organized way of doing it, you have no shipping infrastructure.”

This infrastructure will be important as U.S. forces leave Iraq, he said.

“The idea is to set up the economy for success, to provide and leave behind a middle class,” said Ariaza.

ITN offers jobs and helps its workers provide for their communities while setting positive examples, Ariaza said.

“It’s more of a strategic partnership that the military has with ITN – not only to support the 13th ESC and its subordinate units (as they) move things across the country, but also to help Iraq build an infrastructure,” said Poznansky.

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Memorial Pavilion



Sponsored by the 13th COSCOM Association
The official Association of the 13th Sustainment Command

Honoring Those Who've Sacrificed

The Concept

Artist's concept of the 13th ESC Memorial Pavilion

The 13th ESC Memorial Pavilion will be built on Guidon Parade field on Fort Hood, Texas near the 13th ESC Headquarters and completed in the Summer of 2010.

The design is a marquee that includes a monument, a wall of honor inscribed with the names of their fallen, a walkway tribute constructed of engraved bricks, and a meditation area. The Monument will honor individuals and units who served under the 13th ESC, in both peacetime and in war, since 9/11/01. The Wall of Honor will pay tribute to those who have fallen while overseas with the 13th ESC while serving as part of the Global War on Terrorism. The Brick Walkway will honor all service members and the friends and Family to our nation, and is open to all to participate.



The Monument

The Monument is an obelisk-like octagon of black granite that will be topped with a blasted insignia of the 13th ESC that "overwatches" the Wall of Honor. The Monument will be inscribed with words of comfort and information, and the monument will serve as the anchor to the entire Memorial Pavilion. Supporting the foundation of the Monument near the base will be a lasting tribute to the agencies and corporations, who through their generous contributions represent all the donors who will have made this memorial a reality.

Meditation Area

The Wall of Honor will be flanked by a pair of black granite benches set in to the foundation of the Pavilion. Each bench will be inscribed in honor of the previous designation the Command was recognized as during GWOT, "13th COSCOM" and the "13th SC(E)." The meditation area will be shaded in the summer by a "mighty oak" tree that symbolized the steadfastness of the soldiers of the 13th ESC. The motto "Remembering Those Who've Sacrificed" aptly describes everyone who have been a part of the 13th ESC, whether soldier, family member, or friend. This recognizes that all have sacrificed in some way.



Brick Walkway

Laser engraved bricks are available to soldiers, their family, friends, and those interested in leaving a lasting legacy as part of the 13th ESC memorial. Tribute bricks can be for veterans of other services or from other periods of service, or family members.

The Wall

The Wall of Honor will be a number of evenly spaced black granite panels inlaid into a wall of native limestone, signifying the relationship the 13th ESC has with Texas. Each panel will have names and units of fallen service members who served with a unit that was assigned/attached to the 13th. Units will have been assigned or attachment to the 13th ESC for combat operations; or one of the organic Ft Hood based Brigades, such as CDC, 64th CSG, 1st Med Bde, 15th Sus. Bde and 4th Sus Bde. Names will include all who have fallen, whether under fire or not. All will have occurred overseas while supporting GWOT.

Want more information?

The 13th COSCOM Association is not affiliated with nor endorsed by the US Government, the United States Army or the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). The 13th COSCOM Association is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

Write: 13th COSCOM Association
P.O. Box 5490
Ft Hood, TX 76544

email: president@13cca.org
on the web: <http://www.13cca.org/memorial/>

Sheriff Cell 17 takes care of convoy emergencies

*Story and Photo by Pfc. Lisa Cope
13th ESC Public Affairs*

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – Convoys arrive at, depart from and pass through one of Iraq’s primary logistics hubs, Joint Base Balad, Iraq, every day.

Sheriff Cell 17 serves as the emergency response cell for those convoys and any other convoy in northern Iraq, from JBB to Habur Gate.

Sgt. Charles B. Zamarron, a Sheriff Cell 17 battle noncommissioned officer for the 969th Movement Control Team out of Belleville, Ill., with the 49th Transportation Battalion, 90th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) works the night shift for Sheriff Cell 17 at JBB.

“The sheriff cell is a 911 contact-relay station for all convoys in-coming and out-going to JBB if anything should occur on the road, be it (improvised explosive device), (unexploded ordnance), small arms fire – any type of action that occurs on the main supply routes, we are contacted, and then we contact ... any personnel that they might need,” said Zamarron, a Shiloh, Ill., native.

Service members who work in Sheriff Cell 17 work 12-hour shifts, seven days a week, to monitor the convoys as they travel through Iraq.

“My specific duty is to take care of the (radio transmitter operators) and make sure that they are doing their job to monitor the systems that we have,” said Zamarron.

Zamarron said if any of the convoy commanders come in, it is his job to brief them on the latest intelligence and verify their call signs, start time, destination and number of personnel and vehicles.

Sheriff Cell 17 is one of the operations at JBB that is joint-service operated, he said.

“Teamwork is very important here at Sheriff 17,” said Zamarron. “Everybody works in



Spc. Ryan McClure, a radio transmission operator at Sheriff Cell 17 with the 858th Movement Control team out of Belleville, Ill., and a Bridgeport Ill., native, operates one of the tracking devices, the blue force tracker, in Sheriff Cell 17 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

conjunction with everyone; we’ve got a good rapport going with all the guys. As stressful as it can get, everybody seems to handle it very well. They are very knowledgeable; they have been trained up very well.”

When an emergency arises, his team can usually handle it within 25 to 30 minutes, he said.

Air Force Senior Airman Matthew Martinez, a radio transmission operator at Sheriff Cell 17 with the 52nd Movement Control Team, said working with radios takes him out of his comfort zone because it is not equipment the Air Force uses.

Martinez, an Oklahoma City native, said he enjoys interacting with the convoys and the Army.

“I think it goes well as a joint task,” he said. “I get to learn, myself, from the Army’s perspective ... and then, hopefully, they get to learn from me.”

One of the key things to remember if an incident should occur is to maintain military bearing and not panic, said Martinez.

“It is very important for you to stay calm,” he said. “If you start freaking out, the convoy starts freaking out.”

VP visits VBC, spends time with Provider Soldiers



Vice President Joseph Biden and Spc. Lori Vermillion pose for a quick picture during Biden's visit to the Pegasus Dining Facility on Camp Victory in Baghdad. Vermillion, from Burns, Ore., is a member of the Klamath Falls based C Troop, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry, that provided security for the vice president and the White House Press Corps during motorcade operations in and around Victory Base Complex and the International Zone.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Alan Humphrey

Vice President Joseph Biden talks to Sgt. 1st Class Gavin Bell, a Portland, Ore., native, in the Pegasus Dining Facility of the Joint Visitors Bureau Hotel on Camp Victory, Baghdad. Bell is the hotel's noncommissioned officer in charge and a platoon sergeant with the Klamath Falls based C Troop, 1st Squadron, 82nd Cavalry, that provided security for the vice president and the White House Press Corps during motorcade operations in and around Victory Base Complex and the International Zone.



Official White House Photo taken by David Lienemann



Sgt. Maj. Edward Carlson, operations sergeant major with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) and a Vancouver, Wash., native, and Capt. Sara Leaky, operations officer with the 41st IBCT and a Chicago native, hit golf balls at the Caddy Shack driving range at Camp Adder, Iraq.



Photo by Spc. Cory Grogan

Equal opportunity advisers host course to prevent discrimination

Soldiers at the Equal Opportunity Leaders Course, which ran Nov. 14 through Nov. 21, raise their hands to vote another Soldier off of the boat, during a scenario at Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center east at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. The Soldiers were given real-life scenarios to help them understand the prevalence of discrimination.

Do you have photos of Soldiers in your unit?

13th ESC PAO wants those photos.

Send us your photos at hood.army.mil/13sce



US Army Photo By Sgt. Keith S. VanKlompberg
Your name could be here!

Sergeant Major of the Army visits Balad

Story and Photo by Spc. Naveed Ali Shah
13th ESC Public Affairs



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston accepts a holiday card from Soldiers with the 51st Medical Detachment (Veterinary), 44th Medical Brigade, Dec. 19 during Preston's visit to Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Preston held a town-hall style meeting with junior Soldiers from around JBB, during which he talked about recruiting and retention, suicide prevention, post traumatic stress disorder and deployments.

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – More than 100 Soldiers sat in chairs, nervously fidgeting with their uniforms, when the cry of “at ease” rang out from the back of the room Dec. 18.

The Soldiers snapped to the position of parade rest, hands clasped tightly behind their backs, as Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston entered the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation center east during a visit to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Dec. 18 and Dec. 19, as part of a United Services Organization tour of Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan.

“For the last eight years, the office of the sergeant major of the Army has been sponsoring a USO show coming over here to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan for the Christmas holidays,” said Preston, who has been the Army’s senior noncommissioned officer for five years. “I’m very honored, very humbled to have the opportunity to

sponsor this USO trip.”

The visit was twofold, providing troops with entertainment and appreciation in the spirit of the holiday season and giving the Army’s senior NCO an opportunity to evaluate the conditions of Soldiers on the front lines of Iraq and Afghanistan.

“With this one here in particular, bringing the entertainers over ... it’s an opportunity for them to say thanks to all of our service members over here that are serving, to say thanks for their service, their sacrifices that they and their families are making back home,” said Preston, a native of Mount Savage, Md. “For me, as an individual, as the Sergeant Major of the Army, it’s an opportunity for me to come over and really to talk to Soldiers, talk to leaders and really see how we, as an Army, are doing, not only with the mission, but how we’ve done at manning, equipping, training and preparing our organizations for the missions that

they’re accomplishing over here every day.”

Preston held two open-forum meetings during his visit to Joint Base Balad.

The first was a round-table dinner with senior NCOs from units throughout JBB, during which he talked in depth about the enlisted force structure, senior NCO career management and growing the military in the future. He boiled his leadership philosophy down to one point.

“We have to teach our Soldiers to fix things at the NCO level,” he said. “Put somebody in charge of it and hold them accountable.”

Preston’s other forum focused on junior Soldiers at JBB, during which he talked about recruiting and retention, suicide prevention, post traumatic stress disorder and deployments. Preston offered advice to the future leaders of the military sitting before him.

“The most important thing you’re going to gain from your time in the military is not the technical skills,” said Preston, who enlisted in 1975 as a cavalry scout and has served in every enlisted leadership position in the Army. “Leadership is the one trait most sought after by employers, so each of you should strive to be a sergeant.”

During his visit, Preston also met with Command Chief Master Sgt. Paul Burgess, the senior NCO with the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, and Command Sgt. Maj. Mark D. Joseph, the senior NCO with the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

Preston said he was proud of the service members at Balad, in particular the Soldiers of Fort Hood’s 13th ESC.

“As we now begin to transition this operation to the next stage, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) is the right organization,” he said. “They’ve got the right experience, the right Soldiers, the right leaders in place to make that mission a success.”

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