

# Victory Times



**Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story**

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## Leadership: adapting, evolving, improving

Story and photos by  
Spc. Charlene Apatang Mendiola  
USF-I Public Affairs

Leadership is an essential element within an organization. The military functions and depends on this component to sustain its order and discipline. For more than 200 years, the military has trained its service members to be leaders and pave the path for others to follow.

Over the years, leadership within the nation's military services has evolved. The function of the leader was typically to set up and enforce performance criteria to meet organizational goals. The main focus of a leader was strictly on the needs (mission) of the organization and not on the needs of the individual.

Today, the function of the leader is to facilitate cooperative goal attainments of individuals while providing opportunities for personal growth and development. Their focus has adapted to include individual needs as well as the needs of the organization.

"We have gone from leading service members into combat to a combination of leading, overseeing, and protecting while in combat," said Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, command sergeant major of United

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Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, the senior enlisted advisor to the United States Forces - Iraq deputy commanding general for operations, speaks to senior noncommissioned officers during a sergeants major conference on Camp Victory, April 7. The senior NCOs gathered at the conference to develop a cohesive view on current operations throughout Iraq, as well as to discuss key points affecting their units.

## Sergeants major gather for senior enlisted conference

Story and photos by Spc. Paul Holston  
USF-I Public Affairs

The United States Forces - Iraq's top senior enlisted advisors gathered for the USF-I Command Sergeants Major Conference held on Camp Victory, April 7, to discuss various topics and challenges that leaders face as U.S. forces continue to prepare for final operations in Iraq.

The conference, hosted by Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, USF-I command sergeant major, and Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, the senior enlisted advisor to the USF-I deputy commanding

general for operations, encouraged all top noncommissioned officers, from brigade to higher-level headquarters, to develop a joint operating view on the current operations throughout the country.

The conference was not just about the tactical situation for Iraq, it also was about its strategic situation for the Iraqi and U.S. armies. It also served as a medium for better dialogue for the participants.

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## Intent

By Sgt. Christopher Corbett  
Task Force Dragon Chaplain Assistant

There is a mantra currently used by all ranks in the military: "Perception is everything." What if I told you that is not true? Given, I am only a mere sergeant, and the weight of that rank is not enough to dismiss the said adage. However, everyone reading this article take your rank off right now. Now that you have removed the padding between you and I, let us discuss intent. Don't worry: You can put your rank back on at the end of the article.

Your intent is everything, believe it or not. You are the steward of your intent. You may choose to conceal it, display it, or lie about it. However, your true intent is always known by one person - you. In career

progression, do you work for your subordinates or do you work for your supervisors? Be honest because one writes your evaluation and one displays the fruit of your work. The Gospel of Matthew tells us that, "No one can serve two masters; for either you will hate the one or love the other, or you will be devoted to one and despise the other (Matthew 6:24)." Where does the fruit of your work lie?

The realm of intent does not lie just with leaders. Our intent is in everyday actions, which includes everybody. How many of us can honestly say we do everything for the right reason? When you do physical training, are you doing it to please yourself and for the praise of others? Are you doing it to maintain a healthy lifestyle? Examine your intent. When you donate money or clothing to

a church or a worthy cause are you quick to check that block on the IRS form on how much you donated? Are you intending to make someone else's life better or are you doing it, knowing there is an annual return on giving? Again in Matthew, it says "When you give to the poor, do not sound the trumpet before you...so that you may be honored...Truly I say to you, you have your reward in full (Matthew 6:5)." Our desire should be doing right, for the sake of right.

Examine your intent in everything you do. Do not deceive others for your gain. Stand up for what is right, even though you might be the only one standing. Finally, respect yourself. Respecting yourself has everything to do with being of pure and true intent. You can put your rank back on now.

## SAPR Spotlight

Sexual Assault affects mission readiness! Mission readiness is negatively impacted in three ways:



- 1.) The alleged perpetrators are often placed on administrative hold and may not redeploy with their units.
- 2.) Victims may not be able to fulfill their duties or may otherwise have their ability to perform the mission compromised as a result of the traumatic events.
- 3.) The attention of the unit leadership shifts from the normal duties involved in maintaining readiness to addressing a victim's needs, investigating the alleged perpetration, and restoring the unit's cohesion and trust.

Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or DSARC.



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"They had the opportunity to talk face-to-face to see what works and what doesn't, as well as exchanging ideas," said Allen. "After all, we are all one team."

Key points discussed during the conference included the current U.S. forces' role in Iraq, the importance of leadership, the status of the advise and assist mission with Iraqi counterparts, and the competence of the Iraqi security forces.

Senior NCOs like Chief Master Sgt. Phillip Kristoff, USF-I Joint Intelligence Operations Center senior enlisted advisor, appreciated the chance to participate in the gathering.

"This is an excellent opportunity for all of the senior leaders in Iraq to get together and get on the same sheet of music," said Kristoff. "We're working as a joint force here, so obviously we all need

to be involved and need to understand what everyone else is doing to make sure that all of our actions are coordinated to get through all of this together."

Better communication was a running theme for the conference participants.

"We'll be able to get this information out to our subordinate leaders," said Command Sgt. Maj. William Hain, command sergeant major of 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division. "We can make sure that there is no issue with communication and that everybody is tracking the same thing."

Hain said the important topics discussed during the conference can help figure out future plans for withdrawing from Iraq, as well as keeping the service members safe.

Following the conference, a dinner was held with special guest, Lt. Gen. Riyadh Jalal Tawfiq Ahmed Al-Qassiri,

deputy commander of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command. He spoke to U.S. and Iraqi senior leaders about the importance of U.S. forces assisting the Iraqi army in building their NCO corps.

"I believe that Lt. Gen. Riyadh is probably ahead of his time," said Allen. "He is a pioneer for change in the Iraqi army, because he understands the importance of the noncommissioned officer corps. He's got a reputation of being out there with his soldiers, and he is a breed apart from the rest."

"It's all about teamwork and coming together as one," said Rice. "We have to maximize every capability and asset that we have. The good thing about [this] great organization and [its] leaders is that we know how to adapt, overcome, and make missions successful."



Lt. Gen. Riyadh Jalal Tawfiq Ahmed Al-Qassiri, deputy commander of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command, speaks to top noncommissioned officers of United States Forces - Iraq as a guest speaker during a dinner following the sergeants major conference on Camp Victory, April 7.



Top noncommissioned officer of United States Forces - Iraq look on during a sergeants major conference on Camp Victory, April 7. Senior NCOs gathered for this conference to develop a joint, operating view on current operations throughout the country, as well as discuss various key points.



Leadership, from page 1

States Forces – Iraq.

The military is always changing to improve, enhance and adapt to society, said Sgt. Maj. Joseph Goebel, sergeant major of USF-I Inspector General office. “As we progress, our leadership tactics must follow suit.

Over time, leadership skills are attained through development and practice, said Allen. “The rank and position gives you authority, but it does not make you an effective leader.”

This sentiment resonated with the audience that Allen was addressing recently during a junior enlisted development program.

“An effective leader is someone who has the potential to lead by example,” said Spc. Radnee Anib, an infantryman with command personal security detail. “This individual must be willing and able to perform any mission.”

A leader’s effectiveness is measured by the ability to follow as well as understand others, said Spc. Gregory Sword, an intelligence analyst with Company A., 345th Military Intelligence Battalion. “I expect my leaders to guide me and mentor me as I prepare for my next step in the Army.”

“We have added the emphasis of taking care of Soldier’s needs and the needs of their families,” Goebel said.

Leaders in the armed forces are placed in challenging positions each day. They must address the needs of every person in a peculiar manner that is relative to their issue, Allen said. “I change my cape each time I speak to a Soldier because each one deserves a different perspective depending on their situation.”

It is crucial that leaders know their subordinates for several



Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, United States Forces - Iraq command sergeant major, responds to a Soldier’s question during a conference on Camp Liberty, March 29.

reasons, said Anib. They may identify issues immediately, as well as individual strengths and weaknesses which may assist or hamper promotion and progression.

The ability to listen to an individual is an elusive skill that leaders must exercise, Goebel said, “Sometimes you just have to pause, gather the facts, and then act.”

In deployed situations, service members must contend with multiple stressors that are incorporated with being away from home and working in a hostile environment. Leaders must know how to assess needs and respond to them accordingly.

Leadership is a matter of intelligence, trustworthiness, courage and discipline. No one has a patent on leadership, Allen said, acknowledging that mistakes will be made. But, the results of those errors, he said, will benefit future decisions and enhance leadership skills.



Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, United States Forces - Iraq command sergeant major, speaks with junior enlisted service members during a conference on Camp Liberty, March 29. Allen hosted this conference to provide updates on Iraq’s current mission, address concerns as well as interacting with service members at the junior enlisted level.

TF SAFE promotes electrical, fire safety awareness in Iraq

Story and photo by Spc. Paul Holston  
USF-I Public Affairs

Whether it’s plugging in that cord for your laptop, turning on the air conditioner, or leaving the light on in the CHU, there is always a possibility for a fire or an electrical hazard.

To assure service members and civilians are remembering safety when it comes to electronics, Task Force Safety Actions for Fires and Electricity, also known as TF SAFE, was created to inform personnel of the precautions and actions of electrical safety.

“Task Force SAFE’s mission is to provide the safest possible environment for our service members and civilians,” said Brig. Gen. Rock Donahue, the directorate of United States Forces – Iraq engineering directorate, a native from Andover, Mass. “We do this by reducing the risks of accidental injury and even death in an environment that we can control.”

“Task Force SAFE’s importance to the overall safety mission in Iraq goes back to our purpose which is to mitigate fire and electrical hazards ensuring we are providing a safe environment for our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and civilians,” said Maj. Jason Good, chief of TF SAFE, USF-I engineering directorate, a native from Kent, OH. “We mitigate the fire and electrical hazards for our service members and civilians by conducting facility inspections, fire department operational readiness inspections and fire

and shock investigations as required.”

TF SAFE was created in August 2008 under Multi-National Forces - Iraq because of incident fires & electrical hazards. Since then, it has continued to significantly increase the safety of service members and civilians throughout Iraq.

Because most outlets in Iraq are 220 volt compliant, TF SAFE distributes power supplies, such as power strips and adapters, to ensure service members and civilians are conducting electrical safety in their rooms, as well as their workplaces.

Not everyone understands that most of our devices from the states are not 220 volt, said Donahue. Task Force personnel have gone through and ensured that every single containerized housing unit was removed of any unsafe power strips, as well as handing out free power strips and adapters, he said.

Electrical shocks have also become an important issue.

“Anytime you have a shock, it must immediately be reported through the mayor cell as the first course of action, no matter how minor the shock,” said Donahue.

Posters, screen savers, briefings and television commercials are some of the many ways TF SAFE is spreading its message, ensuring everyone is informed for their safety.

TF SAFE will continue its mission as drawdown of U.S. forces occur, as well as educating Iraqi forces on the dangers and hazards of electrical and fire safety.

“Task Force SAFE’s mission will continue throughout the drawdown process,” said Good. “Our mission will include inspections of facilities we are transitioning to the government of Iraq and the U.S. Department of State. We will continue to conduct our electrical and fire safety inspections and investigations until United States Forces-Iraq fully transitions to United States Mission - Iraq [Department of State].”

“We’re working with our Iraqi partners to help them build the appropriate tools, get the right programs and instructions,” said Donahue. “As we advise and assist on how to do these things, it has become an incremental progress.”

As U.S. forces drawdown from Iraq, TF SAFE continues to remind and inform service members and civilians of electrical and fire safety standards.

“Do not overload extension cords and power strips,” said Good. “Service members and civilians need to ensure they check the voltage capacity of these items. If service members or civilians see damaged electrical outlets or exposed wiring, they need to report it to their respective billeting offices, mayor’s cells or site facilities managers. Hazards that are not reported present an unmitigated danger to everyone.”

“Be it your workstation or living environment, stay disciplined and vigilant, it’s all about protecting the force in an environment that we can control,” said Donahue.





# UNSUNG HERO



Sgt. Sheresa I. Stewart is recognized as this week's Unsung Hero and received a certificate of achievement from Brig. Gen. Michael X. Garrett, deputy chief of staff, United States Forces - Iraq, at Al Faw Palace, April 15.

Stewart received the certificate for her outstanding performance as a senior nodal network system operator-maintainer.

## VICTORY VOICES

What are some ways of preventing sexual assault in the military?



"Always have a battle buddy."

Spc.  
Darryl Johnson  
Company Commo/Armorer  
HSC, XVIII Airborne Corps



"Keeping my fellow servicemembers aware of the effects of sexual assault."

Col.  
Daniel Cain  
Chief of J6 Plans and Policy  
National Guard Bureau



"Leaders and Soldiers have to communicate with each other comfortably in order to spread the word."

Sgt 1st Class.  
Mary Ortiz  
J6 Admin NCOIC  
C Co., XVIII Airborne Corps



"Continue to have constant communication about sexual assault as well as respecting one another."

Master Chief Petty Officer  
Teri McIntyre  
Senior Enlisted Advisor  
NAVCENT

## Safety matters

By Jesse Martin  
USF-I Safety Office

Reflective belts are mandatory for all personnel during the hours of reduced visibility (dusk to dawn) regardless of uniform worn. Reflective belts have proven their value by increasing your chances of being seen by an oncoming vehicle.

We live in a dangerous environment which does not readily forgive mistakes. The roads here are narrow, full of potholes, curvy, dusty or flooded and in a poor state of repair. Large vehicles must take additional precautions when navigating these roadways. If you are walking or running consider these facts and do everything you can to prevent a needless accident. Never assume that a vehicle can see you and yield the right of way. Don't take any chances, minimize your risk and maintain situational awareness at all times.

According to safety trends and analysis, complacency, overconfidence, and disregard of established standards are the most frequent cause of accidents. Our goal is to make this environment as safe as possible for everyone and reduce or eliminate accidents before they occur.

Safety performance starts with individual commitment and discipline. Everyone must do their part in reducing preventable accidents through compliance with standards. Leaders must create a safety culture within their organizations that will ensure our service men and women, civilians and contractors remain aware of risks and make disciplined decisions on their own.

Nothing we do every day is "business as usual." Sound safety practices employed in a disciplined manner will ensure we are ready and able to carry out our mission. We must achieve safety performance through sound prevention, not through investigation.

The greatest offense we can commit is the loss of a service member, civilian, or contractor due to carelessness, complacency, or the lack of applying risk management. For more information refer USF-I Memo 11-1, Annex R USF-I Uniform Wear, Appearance, Conduct and Standards.

### VBC Facility Operating Hours

**Sports Oasis DFAC**  
Breakfast 5:00 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
Dinner 5 - 8:30 p.m.  
Midnight chow 11:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.  
Sandwich bar open 24 hours  
Sunday brunch 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**Education Center**  
8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

**Camp Liberty Post Exchange**  
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

**Camp Victory Post Exchange**  
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

**SFC Paul Smith Gym**  
Open 24 Hours

**Victory Main Post Office**  
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**USF-I Unit Mail Room**  
**Customer Services/Mail Call**  
Daily 3 - 6 p.m.

**Al Faw Palace Post Office**  
Wednesday and Sunday  
12:30 - 5:30 p.m.

**Golby TMC Sick Call**  
Mon. Wed. Thur. Fri.  
8:30 - 10:30 a.m. & 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Tues. and Sat. 8:30 - 10:30 a.m.  
Sunday - emergency only

**Mental Health Clinic**  
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

**Pharmacy**  
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;  
1 - 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

### Websites

Check it out:

**USF-I Web pages**  
[www.usf-iraq.com](http://www.usf-iraq.com)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/mnfiraq/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/mnfiraq/)  
[www.twitter.com/USForcesIraq](http://www.twitter.com/USForcesIraq)  
[www.youtube.com/USFIraq](http://www.youtube.com/USFIraq)  
**Facebook**  
United States Forces-Iraq  
U.S. Army  
XVIII Airborne Corps  
Fort Bragg

## Pick paints from palace

Photo by Sgt. Neil W. McCabe  
XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg PAO

English artist Xavier Pick begins the initial outline of his 30-foot landscape of Camp Victory, Iraq from the east portico of the camp's Al Faw Palace. Pick, who was the British Army's official artist in Basra, altered locations, distances and heights, so the work could not be used for targeting.





# VBC Red Cross facility supports servicemembers

Story and photo by Sgt. TJ Moller  
USF-I Public Affairs

Life happens whether you are deployed or not. Though the timing of major events sometimes seem to coincide with deployments, there are people whose mission is to keep the armed forces informed and in touch with loved ones back home, while bringing a touch of home to those serving overseas.

The American Red Cross was founded in 1881 and has had the mission of communicating with members of the armed forces and their families since 1905. That mission, along with other services that the Red Cross provides, can be utilized here at the Victory Base Complex American Red Cross facility.

"Get to know us, before you need us," is the saying on the facility's brochure encouraging service members and civilians to get to know what the facility and its staff can provide.

"Our little part of the Red Cross service to the armed forces is one of the best kept secrets there is there," said Paul Butler, an assistant station manager at the VBC Red Cross facility. "A lot people back home in the United States don't know that the Red Cross is out here with the deployed service members."

Since the organization's start, the Red Cross has been with the troops and is not leaving until the troops leave, said Felecia Chaves, the new team leader and station manager at the VBC Red Cross facility.

"What we do is help service members stay connected with their families whenever there is something going on at home," said Katherine Jones, the outgoing team leader. Emergency communications is only one part of the role that the Red Cross plays here.

Though the Red Cross is primarily known for their role in emergency communications, there are more services that the facility and its staff provide.

"We do so much more than just bring bad news," said Jones, who is also

the senior station manager at Fort Bragg, N.C. "We do morale and welfare type things. It's our job to bring a little touch of home."

"We do everything from baking homemade cookies to baking fresh bread in the morning," said Jones. "The [dining facility] does a good job but there is nothing like some homemade cookies every once in a while."

The facility has phones available for use, as well as free internet services including wireless. Service members are encouraged to stop by to have refreshments, check out the Friday night movie played outside, or use the legacy room.

A birth- or any type of special occasion- can be a reason to use the private video connection that the legacy room provides, said Chaves. It's important to have that continuity between a spouse and the birth of a child.

"People forget that the small things can affect service members while on tour here," said Jones. "We made a birthday cake in a toaster oven... [and] but we gave it to a service member who had been in for 19 years. It was the first homemade birthday cake that that service member had received since before he joined the military. Hearing that and knowing that I had a small piece in bringing that, it's priceless."

Sometimes service members just need to talk to someone who is not in a uniform, said Jones. "It's a big piece of what we do. We provide that ear and that



*Senior Airman Yevgeniy Shatrovskiy, engineering assistant in the 467 expeditionary prime base emergency engineer force squadron, United States Forces-Iraq, lounges as he watches a movie at the Victory Base Complex American Red Cross facility. Service members are encouraged to use the facility anytime as it is always open.*

support that somebody needs" she said.

Dealing with the crises that go on in people's lives on a daily basis is a difficult thing for anyone to deal with, said Chaves. "It can weigh on you psychologically, emotionally and physically."

"Carrying that emotional weight around and all the while expected to be smiling, happy and energetic, gets tiring," said Jones. "Everybody starts to worry when the Red Cross stops smiling and the chaplain starts cussing, so that's what we keep in mind. It's part of our job to be that friendly face."

The five month tours that Red Cross workers serve are hard, and the hours are long, said Chaves. The expressions of gratitude that we receive from those we serve make the job well worth it.

"We do this because we love it," said Chaves, who has been with the Red Cross for 35 years. "We are looking forward to the challenge of doing our tour here in Baghdad. We are part of the community and our doors are always open."