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ON THE COVER: Soldiers from B Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army Europe, meet with villagers in March 2009 during a key leader engagement near Forward Operating Base Lane, Zabul, Afghanistan. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. ADAM MANCINI

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We owe it to Soldiers to ease transitions

BY SGT. MAJ. OF THE ARMY RAYMOND F. CHANDLER III

Leaders,

Over the next five years, the Army is going to draw down the size of our active force by at least 50,000 Soldiers. This is a huge shift, and we will have to make some tough choices on who we will retain and who we will ask to leave the service.

We're also drawing down at the same time our country's unemployment rate is extremely high. Right now, more than 850,000 veterans are looking for jobs. We owe it to our veterans, the ones who have fought and bled for this country, to give them the necessary tools to find work after leaving our service.

In November, President Barack Obama, the commander-in-chief, signed into law a tax credit for businesses that hire a veteran, saying in his speech, "For businesses out there, if you are hiring, hire a veteran. It's the right thing to do for you, it's the right thing to do for them and it's the right thing to do for our economy."

But more than just a tax credit, the president also announced three executive actions specifically tailored for veterans looking for work.

The first is a Veteran Gold Card, which gives veterans access to career services and includes six months of personalized counseling at one-stop career centers around the United States.

The government also launched an online tool, called "My Next Move for Veterans," that allows veterans to enter information about the skills they've used in the military and how that matches skill sets on the civilian side.

Finally, President Obama announced a new online service, called the "Veterans Job Bank," that partners with leading search engines to directly connect unemployed veterans to job openings.

In the Army, we rely on the Army Career and Alumni Program as a huge part of the transition process. ACAP's goals are simple: reducing the more than $500 million a year in unemployment compensation payments made to recently separated Soldiers and providing detailed job assistance training, counseling and resources to help Soldiers quickly find jobs.

We must allow our Soldiers time to attend the entire program, and not just for a few hours a week or when it's convenient for the command. An Army Research Institute study showed that the full use of all ACAP services reduces the time it takes for a transitioning Soldier to find a job and increases the amount of money he or she earns.

Again, we must manage this transition and give our Soldiers and their families every opportunity to succeed.



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond F. Chandler III meets with Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, during a September visit to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. RICARDO BRANCH

I expect that all our NCO leaders — from the first line supervisors to the nominative sergeants major — are pushing our Soldiers to attend ACAP and are ensuring all Soldiers know the tools available to them during their transition. We owe it to our Soldiers, and we owe it to our veterans.

- **My Next Move for Veterans:** http://j.mp/next4vets
- **Veterans Job Bank:** http://j.mp/vetjobbank

News and information NCOs need to

BE, KNOW, DO

NCO JOURNAL

Study: Suicides are declining

More Soldiers are seeking help as stigma fades

BY ROB MCILVAINE
Army News Service

An Army study on behavioral health released Jan. 19 reported that the number of suicides decreased in 2011 and that more Soldiers are seeking treatment for their problems.

The 211-page report, *Generating Health and Discipline in the Force Ahead of the Strategic Reset*, was discussed at a Pentagon press conference by Gen. Peter Chiarelli, the Army vice chief of staff. The three-year study outlined the problem of suicides in the Army and related issues of substance abuse, spouse abuse and child abuse.

Nearly two years ago, 210,000 Soldiers sought behavioral health practitioners for their problems, Chiarelli said, adding he remembers the public reaction to this number: "'My gosh, you've got that many in the Army? That's not good, is it?'" he said. "I told them we'd like to see that number go *up*. And in fact, it has gone up; it's gone up to 280,000.

"I think we have begun the process in the Army of de-stigmatizing behavior health issues," he said. "That to me is absolutely critical. People who need help get the help that they need." More Soldiers seek help because of the help of commanders and leaders at all levels, Chiarelli added.

Three years ago, then-Secretary of the Army Pete Geren and then-Chief of Staff Gen. George Casey appointed Chiarelli to look at driving down the number of Soldier suicides. Chiarelli found that drug abuse, alcohol abuse, prescription drug abuse and anger management problems are high-risk behaviors common to Soldiers who committed suicide.

In 2011, he said, overall suicide numbers decreased by 10 percent, from 350 to 315. "The only category where we had an increase of five suicides was in the active-duty category," Chiarelli said.

Most important, he said, is that more Soldiers are receiving early intervention and treatment.

"This shows why I think we have arrested this problem and hopefully will start to push it down, because we have leader involvement," Chiarelli said. "They're not walking past the problem, and [they] are getting Soldiers the help that they need. And that, to me, is a very positive sign."

The Army also continues to close the gap in drug surveillance and drug rehabilitation programs, although there was an increase last year believed to be related to increased surveillance, Chiarelli said. Illicit drug use declined by 19 percent from earlier highs in 2006 and 2008, he said.

Army substance abuse programs saw more than 24,000 Soldiers last year. "I know because of the connection of alcohol abuse to post-traumatic stress, many people who go

BY THE NUMBERS

The number of reported suicides in the Army in each of the 32 months up to December 2011:

— DEFENSE.GOV

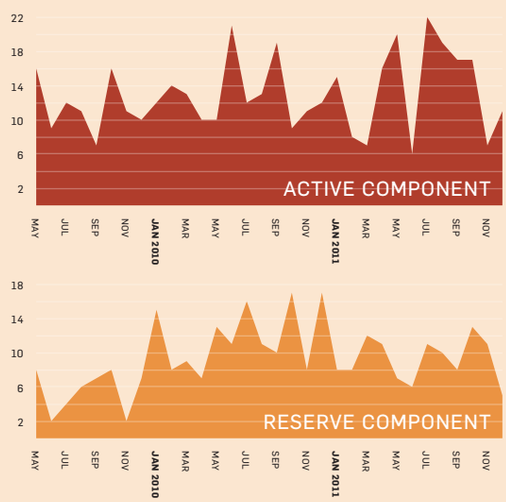




PHOTO BY SPC. SAMUEL PHILLIPS

untreated for PTS self-medicate with alcohol," he said. "I know that after 10 years of war, those numbers have gone up. So seeing an increase in the number who are in the program is a positive step."

Chiarelli said he is most concerned about an increase in violent sex crimes that rose 64 percent from 2006 to 2011. "This is unacceptable. We have zero tolerance for this," he said.

"Army leaders take sexual assault seriously," Chiarelli said. "We're expanding our surveillance and response against these crimes. We've identified numerous sex crime factors, such as alcohol and the newly designed barracks that offer privacy, coupled with a lack of leadership."

Domestic violence among Soldiers increased during the same five-year span by 33 percent, Chiarelli said, while child abuse cases rose by 43 percent. The research also shows that PTS contributes to domestic violence, Chiarelli said, with a person diagnosed with PTS three times more likely to participate in some kind of partner aggression.

"That is why it is so critical to eliminate the stigma associated with PTS and get people in for treatment for their alcohol problem, their drug-abuse problem, prescription drug-abuse problem, or anger-management problems, spouse abuse and child abuse," Chiarelli said. "That, to me, is critical. And the National Institute of Mental Health lays this out as not just an Army problem, this is a national problem."

Resources

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE: Trained consultants are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at **1-800-273-TALK** (8255) or by visiting ***www.suicideprevention lifeline.org***.

ARMY SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM: The Army's comprehensive list of suicide prevention resources and information is located at ***www.preventsuicide.army.mil***.

Similar to any post-war period, reset and recovery must remain focused on the health and discipline of the volunteer force, he said.

"We have an opportunity to avoid mistakes of prior post-war environments by applying science and the many lessons learned to mitigate health, discipline and readiness challenges," he said. "I honestly believe 10 years from now, with some of the things that I'm seeing and the advancements we've made in brain science, that … people are going to look back and say, 'The greatest advancement that was made in these particular conflicts was our understanding of the brain,'" Chiarelli said.

▶ **Read the full *Generating Health and Discipline* report:** http://j.mp/fe12health

2012 defense bill affects pay, bonuses

President Barack Obama on Dec. 31 signed the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, which increases active-duty and Reserve pay by 1.6 percent and governs Defense Department activities from procurement to military personnel policy. Several provisions in the act will potentially affect service members and their families. Section 402, for example, reduces the Army's authorized minimum end strength from 562,000 to 547,000. Section 526 extends voluntary separation pay and benefits authority through the end of 2018. And Section 702 sets mental health assessment requirements for deployed service members.
More: http://j.mp/fe12bill

Forum: Troops need financial empowerment

Potentially career-affecting financial issues are among the top concerns for service members and their families, a military finance expert said at a December forum in Washington, D.C. "For military personnel, the consequences of a bad credit report can be devastating," and may lead to security clearance loss or, in the worst-case scenario, be a career-ender, said Holly Petraeus, the director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Office of Servicemember Affairs. Financial problems, she explained, are now the No. 1 cause for security clearance loss, which may bar troops from doing their jobs.
More: http://j.mp/fe12fin

Aggressive phishing attack targets military

A recent aggressive phishing attack is making the rounds in an email, which appears to be from USAA, a financial services company that serves military members, their families and veterans. The email subject begins with "Deposit Posted." Members are asked to open a Zeus-infected

BRIEFS CONT. ON PAGE 7 →

Dempsey: Hazing, bullying 'intolerable'

DoD officials respond after 8 are charged in Soldier's death

BY DONNA MILES, KAREN PARRISH & SGT. 1ST CLASS TYRONE C. MARSHALL JR.
American Forces Press Service

Emphasizing that bullying and hazing undermine everything the military stands for, the top U.S. military officer said every member of the armed forces has a personal responsibility to uphold its "zero tolerance" standard and intervene to stop any occurrences.

"We are currently investigating several allegations of hazing within our ranks," Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reported in a Dec. 22 posting on his Facebook site and Twitter.



Dempsey



Panetta

Dempsey posted his message after the Army brought charges against eight Soldiers allegedly involved in the death of Pvt. Danny Chen. Chen, an infantryman deployed to southern Afghanistan with C Company, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, was found dead in a guard tower Oct. 3 from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound.

"These appear to be isolated instances of misconduct. But I want to be very clear: Hazing is simply intolerable," Dempsey said. "It undermines our values, tarnishes our profession and erodes the trust that bonds us.

"This cruel form of misconduct requires an audience to achieve its intended effect of humiliation," he noted. "Every service member should be aware that participating in hazing, or even observing it without reporting it, are both wrong. We are duty-bound to protect one another."

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta added his own pointed anti-bullying directive to a message sent Dec. 23 to service members.

"I will not tolerate any instance where one service member inflicts any form of physical or psychological abuse that degrades, insults, dehumanizes or injures another service member," he said.

Panetta directed military commanders to "personally review" policies and ensure compliance.

"This has my personal attention, as we continue our combat mission in Afghanistan, transition from our campaign in Iraq, and continue our global presence performing our nation's duties," Panetta wrote. "I need you to continue to make this a priority within your commands as this has a direct impact on our force readiness."

"It is the obligation of each member in the chain of command to ensure hazing is not allowed and that all service members are treated, at all times, with genuine dignity, fairness, and respect."

"The few that choose the wrong path cast a negative light on our collective ethos, our service, and all that we represent," Panetta wrote.

Navy Capt. John Kirby, deputy assistant secretary of defense for media operations, expressed condolences to Chen's family during a Pentagon news conference earlier in December. "This is a tragic, tragic incident," he said.

Kirby declined to discuss the case, but underscored that bullying and hazing are never tolerated by service members.

"Any single case of hazing or inappropriate conduct to a fellow Soldier, airman, Marine, sailor [or] Coast Guardsman is inappropriate and not acceptable," he said. "Zero is the right number.



Chen

"We treat each other with dignity and respect — that's what this uniform requires," he added. "When we don't, there's a justice system in place to deal with it. And that's what we're seeing here in the case of Pvt. Chen."

Kirby said hazing is not tolerated in the military and "if it's found and it's proven, it's dealt with."

"This is something inculcated in our culture from the moment you join the service," he said. "From the moment you raise your right hand through all your basic training and your first tours of duty, these notions are bred into you in the military.

"We treat each other with respect and dignity or we go home — that's it," Kirby said pointedly. "The tolerance is absolutely zero, and the system itself — because it works and works well — is, in fact, a deterrent to future behavior."

Kirby also cited "training mechanisms" in place throughout all the services designed to help curb these types of incidents.

"Whether you're an officer or enlisted, this is something bred into you when you come into the service," he said.

"Unfortunately, you're never going to be 100 percent perfect in this," Kirby said. "And there's going to be those few who want to flout what the uniform stands for and what the regulations require. … When that happens, they're going to be dealt with."

ASK NCO NET

Should we bring back the SQT?

*Each day, NCOs share their knowledge and experience on NCO Net (*https://nconet.army.mil*) the official forum for NCOs. Summarized here are some recent exchanges:*

There have been three major efforts to measure the skills and knowledge of Soldiers: the Military Occupational Specialty Test in the 1970s, the Skill Qualification Test in the 1980s and the Soldier Developmental Test in the early 1990s. Lately, some have asked to bring such tests back. What do you think?

- "I heard from my NCOs about the old SQTs and how they were poorly done in technical MOS fields, particularly aviation maintenance. Being expected to memorize every step of a complex helicopter repair for a test goes against our principles of referencing technical manuals while working in the hangar or flight line. For our career field, our flight and maintenance history speak for themselves!"
  — STAFF SGT. QUINCE KREB, *D Company, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, Colorado National Guard*

- "We absolutely need to bring back the testing of MOS, leadership and training knowledge. When we had the SDT, NCOs had to hit the books at least once a year if they cared about their career. Now we have NCOs who have never opened the cover of FM 6-22 or their MOS Soldier manual. As we get ready to downsize our Army, bringing back the test will help decide who should stay and who should go."
  — COMMAND SGT. MAJ. THOMAS KIMBALL, *673rd Air Base Wing, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska*

- "Doctrine changes quickly, so this test should evolve yearly and should be designed to round out NCO Education System courses and Structured Self-Development. The goodness of SDT and SQT was that they made NCOs read and prepare. I remember when going to NCOES made NCOs check themselves and made leaders check their Soldiers. The conduct of the course and the content drove it."
  — SGT. MAJ. SCOTT WILMOT, *force management sergeant major, Army G-3/5/7*

Anyone know that senior NCO who waxes nostalgic about the "old" Army, that of payday activities, NCO Club calls and myriad other lost customs and courtesies? Thanks to the Long War, most of us have been a little busy for that stuff. But are there some traditions and basic courtesies we must keep alive?

- "I think that induction ceremonies recognizing huge transitions, such as becoming an NCO, would remain prudent. Many regimental functions should be retained so that the living history of the Army is observed. The more emphasis we place on the troops that will be left in the Army will be crucial in keeping them in boots."
  — SGT. 1ST CLASS SCOTT SCHULTE, *a maintenance control NCO with B Company, 334th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, Iowa National Guard*

- "Some of our junior NCOs and junior enlisted Soldiers don't feel invested because they don't see enough of these kinds of things happening. I'm not talking about balls, dine-ins or dine-outs. I'm talking about things like NCO luncheons, induction ceremonies or anything that shows a sense of 'belonging' to the NCO Corps. I think every NCO should recite the NCO Creed at promotion ceremonies to show rededication to their duties. This is not something we have always done, but old traditions aren't always the best. New traditions can always be established."
  — MASTER SGT. SCOTT MCGEE, *Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, N.C.*

— COMPILED AND EDITED BY JONATHAN (JAY) KOESTER

← BRIEFS CONT. FROM PAGE 5

attached file. Once opened, it launches a malicious virus that could provide access to personal information and may require the user to reinstall their computer operating system. More: http://j.mp/fe12scam

AER changes include dental aid, scholarships

New categories of assistance and new scholarship opportunities are now available through Army Emergency Relief. Included among the new categories of assistance to Soldiers are family member dental care, basic furniture needs, rental vehicles and replacement vehicles.
More: http://j.mp/fe12aer

National Guard unveils peer hotline

The National Guard unveiled its Vets4Warriors service members' counseling program Dec. 13. Vets4Warriors is a toll-free, peer-to-peer counseling hotline — available at 1-855-VET-TALK (838-8255) or online at vets4warriors.com — that lets members of any reserve component speak with counselors, all former service members. The hotline is anonymous and open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
More: http://j.mp/fe12hotline

First-of-its-kind cyber brigade activated

Network warfare, cyber security and the illegal release and posting of classified information on the Internet are all hot topics in recent news headlines. How serious the military takes these threats is evident with the Army's recent activation of its first computer network operations brigade. The U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command created the 780th Military Intelligence Brigade during an activation ceremony Dec. 1 at Fort Meade, Md., to support U.S. and Army Cyber Commands in providing a proactive cyber defense.
More: http://j.mp/fe12cyber

Officials: Guidance guards against multiple threats

BY LISA DANIEL
American Forces Press Service

New military strategy guidance unveiled at the Pentagon Jan. 5 does not change the Defense Department's longstanding commitment to prevail against any adversary anywhere, top officials said.

President Barack Obama joined Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta and Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at a briefing to present the 10-year plan, titled "Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense."

> **"Make no mistake, we will have the capability to confront and defeat more than one adversary at a time."**
>
> **— DEFENSE SECRETARY LEON E. PANETTA**

The plan drops the wording of a longstanding Defense Department paradigm for the military to be capable of fighting and prevailing in two land wars simultaneously. The new guidance stresses an agile and flexible force capable of responding to disparate and complicated threats.

"We will be fully prepared to deter and defeat aggression," it says. "Even if we are committed to a large-scale operation in one theater, we will be able to deny an opportunistic adversary the ability to achieve its objectives in another theater."

"Make no mistake, we will have the capability to confront and defeat more than one adversary at a time," Panetta said at the briefing.

Dempsey said the issue should not be framed as whether the United States will fight its enemies, but how.

"That two-war paradigm has been a bit of an anchor, frankly, in trying to help us figure out the future," he said. "We have to figure out the 'how' without tying ourselves to paradigms that are residuals of the Cold War."

"That remains the fundamental question: Can we confront and defeat any enemy that confronts us?" Panetta said. "The answer to that question, with the joint force we are creating here, is that we can.

"The reality is we could face a land war in Korea and at the same time, threats in the Strait of Hormuz. We have the ability with this joint force to be able to do that — to confront them and be able to win — and that's what counts," Panetta said.

The strategic guidance is the result of a review Obama requested to guide long-term military budget decisions. With budgets expecting to decrease by more than $400 billion — or perhaps as much as $1 trillion — over 10 years, administration officials have insisted that the cuts be done strategically to not "hollow out" the force.

The military will focus on enhanced presence, power projection, and deterrence in the Asia-Pacific region, Panetta said. The region is growing in importance to the United States and will require improved U.S. military technologies and freedom of action, he added.

At the same time, the military will place a premium on maintaining a presence in the Middle East to deter aggression and support political progress, as it continues to strengthen partnerships with key allies, Panetta said.

The military also will continue its commitments to Europe while adapting and evolving its presence in Europe and continuing to share in NATO responsibilities, he said.

The military will use "innovative methods" — including low-cost and small-scale operations, rotational deployments and exercises — to maintain its presence in Latin America, Africa and elsewhere, Panetta added.



Read the full Defense Strategic Guidance document: http://j.mp/fe12guid

President Barack Obama briefs the press Jan. 5 on a new defense strategy with Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta at the Pentagon. Army Secretary John M. McHugh and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Raymond T. Odierno stand behind Panetta and Obama. PHOTO BY ERIN A. KIRK-CUOMO

ALC-Common Core gets an update

Lessons learned influence revisions to online portion of midgrade-NCO course



BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

The Advanced Leader Course-Common Core, taught via distance learning from the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, is in the process of updating its course material to reflect the changing atmosphere on the ground. ALC-Common Core focuses on tasks all staff sergeants need to know, regardless of military occupational specialty.

Sgt. Maj. Scott Denson, director of ALC-Common Core distance learning at USASMA, said the new course focuses more intensely on conducting counterinsurgency techniques, monitoring electronic warfare, counseling subordinates and supporting Soldiers' families.

"We looked at the course, and it is a little outdated based on the lessons learned during the Global War on Terrorism," Denson said. "We're looking at what Soldiers need to be doing when they're in that midgrade-NCO level. In the new course, we tried to incorporate tasks that are more relevant to today's Army."

Though some of the content will change, the purpose, length and facilitation of the course will remain the same: The course will still be taught through distance learning; Soldiers will still have 90 days to complete it; and it will still be broken down into five modules, Denson said.

"The length of the course won't change," Denson said. "Big Army tells us this is a 90-day facilitated course and that it's 80.4 hours [of online instruction]. The only things that change are some of the tasks. We look at what's needed, but we also bring NCOs to a critical-task site selection board every three years. These NCOs come [to USASMA to] sit down, examine the tasks and select the tasks they think are the most critical to the Soldier."

After the last critical task site selection board held September 2010 at USASMA, the group determined some things needed to be taught in ALC to make sure the sergeants and staff sergeants who graduate from the course are equipped with the information they'll need to lead troops at the mid-grade level, Denson said.

"The main focus of our course now is on leadership skills, NCO duties, and on responsibilities and authority, and how to conduct performance-oriented training — that is the nucleus of this course," Denson said. "The tasks that we have outlined in this course feed into one of those areas."

The course remains important and should not be taken lightly, Denson said. Now that the Army is in a slower operational tempo, sergeants will have a harder time being promoted to staff sergeant if they fail to take the course because there will be no more waivers for those who fail to pass the course.

The course had an 82 percent graduation rate for fiscal year 2011. Soldiers fail to graduate the course for a variety of reasons, including not communicating effectively with the facilitator of the course, not staying within the timelines and not understanding that the course is taught to doctrine.

Some sergeants and staff sergeants, though, have failed the course through no fault of their own, Denson said. Soldiers are enrolled in the course by Human Resources Command at Fort Knox, Ky. HRC then sends an email to Soldiers' AKO accounts to let them know they are enrolled in the course.

If Soldiers fail to understand the importance of the enrollment or fail to check their AKO accounts, they can unwittingly jeopardize their careers, Denson said. The leaders of ALC-Common Core are working with HRC to identify a solution in the notification process for these Soldiers, he added.

Graduates of the course receive a DA Form 87 (a certificate of training). The course is part of the NCO Education System and takes the place of Structured Self-Development level 2, Denson said.

"This is part of NCOES; it's not just a correspondence course," Denson said.

"It's a course that people have to complete in order to move on in their career."

Content changes

The revised content of the 80.4-hour Advanced Leader Course-Common Core now features new topics, which include:

- **Communicating effectively**
- **Implementing the Army Family Team Building Program**
- **Integrating newly assigned Soldiers**
- **Counseling subordinates**
- **The history of the NCO Corps**
- **Supervising range operations**
- **Training for unified land operations**
- **Understanding public affairs principles**

Better than real

Training with new, state-of-the-art mannequins is safer than sticking your battle buddy with a needle

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

Darkness envelops the Soldiers as they try to maneuver to a wounded Soldier. A gunfight blares through the smoke, and they see pools of blood on the ground. More blood appears as they round the corner.

These Soldiers aren't in Afghanistan or Iraq or even at the Army Medical Department's home of Fort Sam Houston, Texas. They're at a Medical Simulation Training Center at Fort Bliss, Texas, one of 18 in the Army that provide realistic Combat Life Saver training. The specialized mannequins the centers use are able to simulate shortness of breath, lost appendages and loss of blood, allowing Soldiers to train in actually dressing a wound properly before deploying downrange.



Sgt. 1st Class Warren Wright, the NCO in charge at the Fort Bliss medical simulation center, said the training is critical to helping Soldiers learn CLS tasks properly before they deploy.

"The best benefit from this training is that they can get in and see exactly what it takes before they get into combat," Wright said.

The alternative to the Medical Simulation Training Center is to have Soldiers "treat" each other. This kind of training, though, is oftentimes improperly done. Soldiers can't bandage each other correctly because applying that much pressure can cause bruises or broken bones.

The medical simulation center's mannequins can also have needles stuck in them and can simulate what would happen when a Soldier gives prescription drugs or administers an IV to someone who has suffered various injuries in combat.

The CLS course is a bridge between what is taught at basic training and the medical training a combat medic receives. Because, for example, administering an IV is no longer part of basic training, every Soldier is no longer Combat Life Saver-trained when leaving basic.

In addition to certifying Soldiers in Combat Life Saver skills, the Medical Simulation Training Center also certifies 68W combat medics. Certification is required for both twice a year. Last year, the Fort Bliss Medical Simulation Training Center trained 4,080 students.

Soldiers certified in CLS are trained to address the point of injury, care under fire and tactical combat casualty care. In addition, they become familiar with what's in a typical combat care bag as they go through this training.

"The Soldiers can see the equipment," Wright said. "They can see what's in the bag and how to use it. They can become familiar with the tools they'll have at their disposal when they go downrange."

The Medical Simulation Training Center also addresses the two biggest causes of preventable death on the battlefield: hemorrhaging and tension pneumothorax (trapped air or gas between the lung and the chest wall).

"Commanders and first sergeants really see the value-added benefit of combat life savers," Wright said. "They are a force multiplier, and oftentimes commanders want 100 percent of their Soldiers to be combat life savers.

"The Army usually focuses on beans and bullets, but now we're looking more into blood and guts," he said.

◀ 1st Armored Division Soldiers are evaluated after an exercise Nov. 30 at the Fort Bliss Medical Simulation Training Center. After completing the lanes' tasks, the senior medic conducts an after-action review. PHOTO BY JENNIFER MATTSON

Be smart, injury-free in new minimalist running shoes



BY MAJ. ZACK SOLOMON
U.S. Army Public Health Command

In 1974, Bill Bowerman, a co-founder of Nike, created one of the first modern-day running shoes, the "Waffle Trainer," in an effort to create a lightweight shoe that could grip the road.

The shoe launched a revolution in running shoe design and may have triggered the explosion in popularity of distance running throughout the United States in the 1970s and early 1980s. As people from all walks of life took up running, innovative shoe designs multiplied out of demand for more foot cushioning and motion control. Mid-foot arch construction grew rigid, and heel cushion material was heightened to correct running form and, presumably, prevent injuries.

Three types of shoes emerged: motion-control shoes for runners with low foot arches, stability shoes for neutral arches, and cushioned shoes for high arches. These designs were meant to make shoe selection easy: Runners would first identify their arch type, then they would choose an appropriate shoe and begin running injury free.

Unfortunately, this system of shoe selection hasn't lived up to runners' expectations as running injuries persisted. Multiple U.S. Army Public Health Command studies of basic trainees have demonstrated that shoe selection based on arch type does not reduce injuries.

Now, a new trend, a departure from control and cushioning, has emerged: the minimalist running shoe.

Minimalist shoes are extremely flexible and low to the ground, creating the sensation of barefoot running. By running in a shoe with minimal cushioning, most will naturally reduce their stride length to avoid landing painfully on their uncushioned heel. This change in running form reduces initial joint impact and promotes a return to what some consider a more natural foot motion.

The growing popularity of minimalist running shoes in both the civilian and military communities was sparked by the promise of increased running performance and decreased risk of running injuries. Although the jury is still out on whether minimalist running shoes will live up to these expectations, the trend will surely grow as shoe companies expand and market their latest minimalist shoe product lines.

Soldiers interested in making the switch from a traditional running shoe to a minimalist design should exercise caution in doing so because a sudden change in equipment or training can result in sore muscles and joints, blisters, and injuries, which could include stress fractures. The calf muscles will require the greatest adjustment, followed by the muscles of the foot and hamstrings.

As with any change in training, a planned transition phase is critical to limit the short-term soreness and potential complications from an overuse injury.

Want to start wearing them?

Here are a few tips to make a smooth transition:

PERFORM ONLY 10% of your normal running routine in minimalist shoes for the first 2–3 weeks. For example, if you run 10 miles per week, wear minimalist shoes only 1 mile per week.

NO MORE THAN A 10% INCREASE in distance per week is recommended for at least 8 weeks after the initial transition phase. Some Soldiers may take up to 6 months to get used to them.

AVOID RUNNING 2 DAYS in a row in minimalist running shoes for the first 4 weeks.

RUN ON DIFFERENT SURFACES, such as grass, dirt and pavement, to get used to the feel of the shoes. Make sure the running surface is clear of debris and glass.

STRETCH the foot, calf and hamstring muscles during the first few weeks to alleviate soreness.

REMEMBER that minimalist running shoes with individual toe compartments are not permitted for wear with the physical fitness uniform, per ALARACT 239/2011.

TOOLKIT

Using social media safely, effectively

BY JENNIFER MATTSON NCO Journal

Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Vimeo, Picasa, Skype and YouTube provide outlets for Soldiers and NCOs to share their Army experience.

Putting Soldiers' stories out on these forums allows the general public to connect and experience the Army. But Soldiers should use caution when using these websites and ensure they are following sound operations security measures.

Staff Sgt. Dale Sweetnam works in the online and social media division at the Army's Office of the Chief of Public Affairs. Every day, he works to keep the Army up-to-date in the latest public online forums as well as monitor those forums for abuse.

"Social media is definitely a big part of our culture right now," Sweetnam said. "It goes beyond just Soldiers communicating with their families. Army organizations are using social media to communicate with external audiences as well as their internal audiences. Social media use is becoming incredibly prevalent, and the Army understands that it's not going away. It's important for Soldiers and organizations alike to embrace what social media can provide for you as an individual as well as you as an organization."

Practicing good operations security

Social media allows Soldiers and units to interact with one another, family members and the general public. It also allows the Army to have a presence in forums that most Soldiers are familiar with, but care must be taken.

"Our Soldiers now, the majority of them, have grown up using social media and the Internet," Sweetnam said. "Soldiers coming in now have done this for years before joining the military, so they're pretty savvy as far as what they can and can't do. But still, to this day, on Facebook, on Twitter, on Foursquare and so forth, they're making mistakes. They're giving too much information."

Soldiers aren't the only ones giving away too much information, Sweetnam said. Often it's the families of Soldiers who post status updates that violate opsec.

"The biggest issue is still the violations of opsec that occur not just with the Soldier, but with the family,"



◀ Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Forward, an instructor/writer for the Advanced Leader Course at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, checks out Facebook during a break. The popularity of social media means NCOs need to teach Soldiers the importance of practicing operational security while online.
PHOTO BY SPC. DAVID M. GAFFORD

Do's and don'ts

When using social media outlets, NCOs can practice operations security by following a few guidelines:

✓ **CHANGE PRIVACY SETTINGS** to "friends only."

✓ **DISABLE GEOTAGGING** on cameras and smart phones, especially when deployed or during training.

✓ **REVIEW PHOTOS** before they are published online.

✓ **MAINTAIN PROFESSIONAL** relationships with subordinates, including relationships online.

✓ **TALK TO YOUR FAMILY** and close friends about operations security when it comes to posting in online forums, so they know what is at stake with their posts and why they might not be appropriate.

✗ **DON'T REVEAL** sensitive information.

✗ **DON'T TAG** photos with geographical location, especially during deployment or in training cycles.

✗ **DON'T VIOLATE COPYRIGHT** or trademark material by using a song or linking to unattributed artwork.

✗ **DON'T USE RANK**, job or responsibilities to promote yourself online or for financial gain.

✗ **DON'T VIOLATE** the Uniform Code of Military Justice by commenting, posting or linking to material that violates the UCMJ or basic rules of Soldier conduct.

Social media: Army resources

- **Army Social Media Directory:** *www.army.mil/socialmedia*
- **STRATCOM Social Network training:** *www.stratcom.mil/snstraining*
- **Responsible and Effective Use of Internet-based Capabilities:** *www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/DTM-09-026.pdf*
- **AKO Social Media Portal:** *https://www.army.mil/suite/page/505262*
- **DOD Social Media Hub:** *http://socialmedia.defense.gov*

Source: *U.S. Army Social Media Handbook*, January 2011

Sweetnam said. "The families don't get the same opsec training that the Soldiers do. Our main concern on a daily basis is to mitigate the opsec risk."

Fakes on Facebook

While America's enemies might use information found in online forums to harm Soldiers downrange, there's a prevalent domestic threat as well, Sweetnam said.

"As social media evolves, you're finding individuals who wish to do people harm finding new ways to accomplish those means," Sweetnam said. "For example, we have general officers and high-ranking officials — people will go out there and make fake Facebook pages and pretend to be these people. They do that mostly for personal gain."

The best guidelines when interacting on these forums are to know the people with whom you're interacting, he said. Don't reveal any information online that you wouldn't in person.

"It's advised when you're on Facebook in particular, when you make friends, [ensure] you've had physical contact, you've shaken their hand, you've met them in person," Sweetnam said. "There are a lot of issues with the privacy settings on Facebook where people can access your information, and you don't know that they've accessed your information or who they are. Know who you are friending and lock down your privacy settings."

▶ NEXT MONTH: VOTING IN ELECTIONS

Fixing unsafe posts

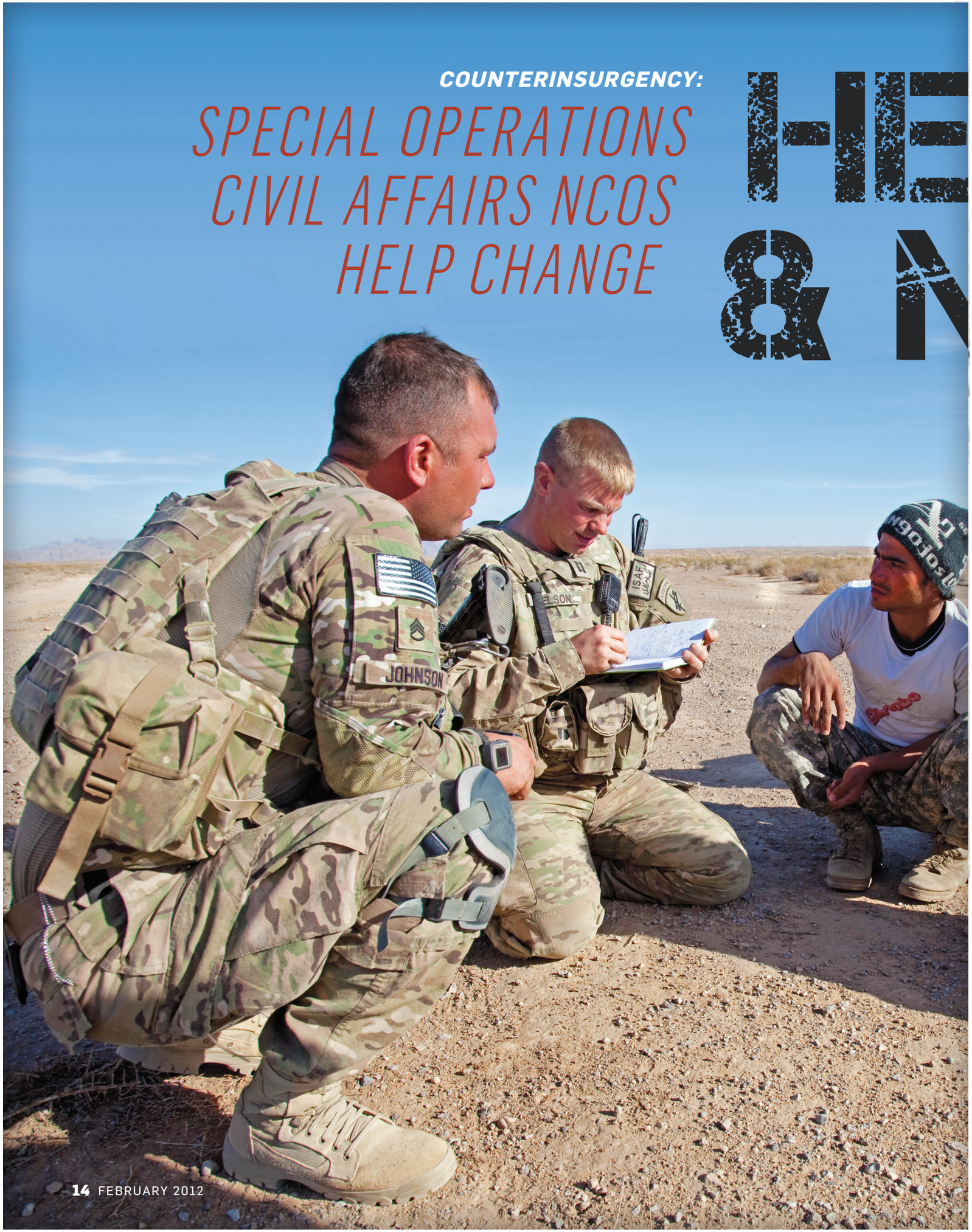
Though social media outlets, especially Facebook and Twitter, are great ways to keep in touch with friends and loved ones, not keeping in mind simple operations security guidelines can reveal too much information about you, your unit or your family. Here are ways to edit sample posts to make them safer:

UNSAFE	SAFER
"I'm in the village of Hajano Kail in Arghandab district in southern Afghanistan."	"I'm in Afghanistan."
"I will be leaving Kuwait and heading to Iraq in three days at 0815."	"I deployed this week."
"I'm coming back at 0200 on Wednesday."	"I will be home this fall."
"My family is back in Dubuque, Iowa."	"I'm from the Midwest."

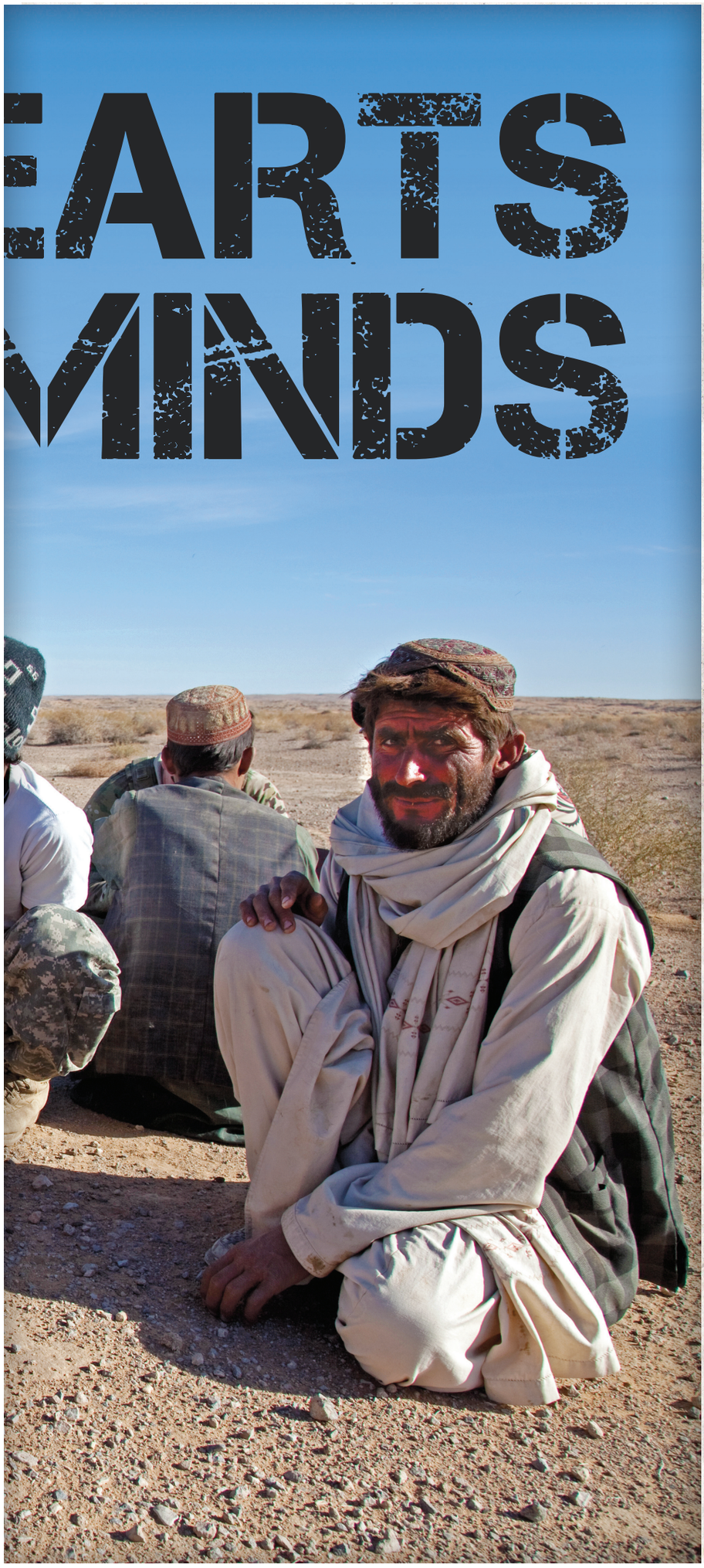
COUNTERINSURGENCY:

SPECIAL OPERATIONS CIVIL AFFAIRS NCOS HELP CHANGE

HE & N



EARTS MINDS



BY JENNIFER MATTSON
NCO Journal

Civil affairs teams harness cultural, religious and regional intelligence to provide combatant commanders with a force multiplier that helps Soldiers across the battlefield.

Master Sgt. Jesse Miramontes, an 11B infantryman who joined civil affairs as a team sergeant, said that civil affairs teams provide insight and input well above most of their pay grades and that civil affairs NCOs must be highly competent, intelligent and able to handle missions with maturity and integrity as they operate in smaller team units.

Being on a smaller team enabled him to have more responsibility and freedom. As part of his job, he has talked with ambassadors, chiefs and village elders, he said.

"The difference in our NCOs compared with some other NCOs in the Army is that our NCOs are on the same level as the officers they work with," Miramontes said. "They're thrown more responsibility; they're able to do things that other NCOs aren't. On a four-man team, they have one officer and three NCOs. At any time, those individuals can switch and do different jobs. Not only the officer would brief the ambassador, but a staff sergeant — a civil affairs NCO — could also brief the ambassador."

Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Johnson (left) of 1st Platoon, C Troop, 2nd Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade; Capt. James Nelson, a civil affairs officer; and Hader, the unit's interpreter, speak with elders Dec. 9 in the Shorbak Desert, Kandahar province, Afghanistan. The regiment deploys civil affairs Soldiers to assist in gathering cultural information. PHOTO BY SPC. PHIL KERNISAN

The team

Each civil affairs team is made up of a captain; a team sergeant; a team NCO, who is usually the team engineer; and the team medic. Though each has their own specialties, the members of the team are able to fill each other's roles, if necessary.

Teams within the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne) are rapidly deployable; advise the combatant commanders or ambassadors on regional, cultural and local issues; and act as liaisons to nongovernmental agencies, information operations and U.S. government agencies. Sgt. Michael Pate, a medic with C Company, 92nd Civil Affairs Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, said teams from the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, to which five of the Army's active-duty civil affairs battalions belong, collect and analyze information from locals based on their extensive knowledge of the region and its religions, traditions and customs.

"All civil affairs Soldiers, NCOs and officers, are language trained, culturally trained and regionally aligned," Pate said. "So when they deploy to a country, they're able to provide insight into the religion, into the culture and into the way a certain country or certain people live their life day-to-day. It can have a huge effect on the way that the combatant commander plays out his ground force, like whether or not to do certain things at certain times of the day based on what's going on with [residents'] day-to-day lives."

First Sgt. Gheorghe Iftime, a medic who switched to civil affairs in 2004, said civil affairs Soldiers are exceptionally adaptable, reliable and competent.

"In civil affairs, everyone has to handle the radio like a [communications] guy," Iftime said. "If the team gets split and two guys have to go and your commo guy can't go, then everyone on the team has to be proficient. Everyone on the team has to know how to be an [emergency medical technician] at a basic level and do emergency medical procedures to save lives. Everybody is trained."

First Sgt. Daniel Anderson, the first sergeant of A Company, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, said civil affairs teams offer a unique mission set and capabilities.

"The team sergeant has been the medic or the engineer before," Anderson said. "The officers run the gamut from (military intelligence) to engineers — all of that plays a pivotal role to what we bring to the table."

Each member of the team needs to be multifunctional and able to perform on an individual basis, Anderson said.

"We do routine things, routinely well," Anderson said. "There's no room to slack off. If I have to send a team to Country X for six to nine months at a time, they have to be mature. They have to be technically and tactically proficient, not only in basic Army skills, but in their specific job on the team, whether that's the medic sergeant, engineer sergeant or team sergeant."

The missions

Civil affairs Soldiers deploy to places including Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and the Philippines.

Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Miller, a medic who joined civil affairs in 2003, said it's important for civil affairs NCOs to constantly learn, train and adapt to changing environments, because they never know what locale they will find themselves in next.

"Every mission I've done has been different; nothing is ever the same," Miller said. "You can take what you've learned in other missions and deployments, but the people you deal with and the places you go are always different. You



First Sgt. Gheorghe Iftime extracts a tooth during Camp Anaconda's clinic outside Balad, Iraq. The clinic focused on general clinic work, veterinary services and dental hygiene.
PHOTO COURTESY OF 1ST SGT. GHEORGHE IFTIME

have to be able to adjust."

Civil affairs missions are separated into two groups: civil military support element missions and tactical coalition joint special operations task force missions. Civil military support element teams work directly with the U.S. ambassador and the host nation's military to help establish legitimacy for the host government. About 37 percent of the civil affairs missions are this type.

"In some cases, you're working directly for the embassy or the military group or partner nation," Miller said. "It's different than working with Afghanistan, where you're working directly for your command.

"Here, you're working for your ambassador, so things are a little more touchy. You don't want to do anything to get the ambassador against you; he can take you out of the country at any time."

Civil affairs teams also work with the military, police and government officials in the host country to provide local people with the resources they need.

"We engage the local police to put the country's face ahead of us, so that the locals know that their military and police help provide security and provide help needed," Miller said.

The majority of civil affairs teams' missions are passed off from one civil affairs team to another; the deployment for civil affairs teams typically lasts six to nine months.

"Most of the time when we go in, we're replacing [another] civil affairs team," Miramontes said.

Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Anderson, an operations NCO with C Company, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, which works in U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility, said he has deployed on civil affairs missions in Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar and Yemen.

"In one day, we can be dealing with the U.S. ambassador [or other State Department officials], and within that same day, we could be working with host nation military privates or general civilians within the country," Anderson said.

"We have the flexibility to deal with very high-ups within our own government and also the general populace within the streets," he said. "That's what makes active-duty civil affairs unique, because civil affairs operators have the maturity and the ability to operate at those levels, understand their culture, their way of life, their religion — essentially blend in, build rapport and establish relationships with them."

Working with combatant commanders

The majority of the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade missions involve working directly with other U.S. Army Special Operations Command forces or

CIVIL AFFAIRS UNITS

ACTIVE COMPONENT

There are two Army **active-duty** civil affairs brigades and four reserve commands. Whether active-duty or reserve component, civil affairs teams will deploy in support of a battalion and act as an outreach to support missions on the ground around the world.

The **95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne)** is the only active-duty, special operations civil affairs brigade in the Army. The brigade is organized by battalions, which coincide with combatant commands.

- The **91st Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)** supports **AFRICOM**.
- The **92nd Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)** supports **EUCOM**.
- The **96th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)** supports **CENTCOM**.
- The **97th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)** supports **PACOM**.
- The **98th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)** supports **SOUTHCOM**.

The **85th Civil Affairs Brigade** is organized under the U.S. Army Forces Command and was activated last September at Fort Hood, Texas. Only one unit, the 81st Civil Affairs Battalion, has activated so far. The other four are scheduled for activation later this year through 2014. The first units will be ready to deploy in fiscal year 2013.

RESERVE COMPONENT

There are four **Army Reserve civil affairs commands** that act as higher headquarters for six civil affairs brigades. Ninety-four percent of the Department of Defense's civil affairs forces are assigned under U.S. Army Reserve Command. Each civil affairs command advises a four-star general who is in charge of a combatant command area of operation. All civil affairs commands fall under the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) at Fort Bragg, N.C.

- The **350th Civil Affairs Command** supports **SOUTHCOM**
- The **351st Civil Affairs Command** supports **PACOM**
- The **352nd Civil Affairs Command** supports **CENTCOM**
- The **353rd Civil Affairs Command** supports **EUCOM**



Sgt. 1st Class John Dominguez, a civil affairs medic with the 98th Civil Affairs Battalion assists in delivering a baby during recovery operations in Haiti after an earthquake in January 2010. PHOTO COURTESY OF 95TH CIVIL AFFAIRS BRIGADE

reporting to a combatant commander.

"Essentially we report into country and report to the headquarters unit," Anderson said. "We help legitimize the U.S. presence there and interact with the Department of State and the U.S. military. We advise the commander on anything, including civilians on the battlefield or civilians within his operational environment."

The missions vary greatly, even day to day.

"One day you could be dealing with riots in the streets," Pate said. "Another day, you could be walking through the markets and getting food to eat for the night. It could be calm and peaceful."

Overall, the civil affairs mission is to help restore the population's trust in their own government so that civilians don't resort to extremism or violence to solve their problems.

"Our mission is accomplished when, regardless of what problem they have, we've legitimized their government," Iftime said. "In 10 years or five years, we'll come back home, but their government will still function there."

Facilitating a clinic

A common mission is to provide medical outreach to the local populace.

"A civil affairs team will put together a team and go there for a day or two," Iftime said. "A lot of times, the locals will open up their houses, set up a clinic there and start treating major and minor problems.

"One of the villages that I was in, they started to complain about gastrointestinal problems. We figured out that they didn't wash their hands. So we developed a little class to convince them that washing their hands will help [combat the disease]."

Though a civil affairs team will have medical, dental and veterinary clinics, the team's real mission is to identify what is causing those problems in the first place, Iftime said.

"Part of our job is to analyze and figure out what some of these root problems are and to send that information up to the commander so he can work with his counterpart to organize and put these things together like a [medical clinic]. That's where we really make a difference."

Medics are critical to the team, as they bring essential knowledge and capabilities to treat disease.

"Medics give the CA team a lot of credibility and buy-in," Daniel Anderson said. "They mesh in with medics from [a special operations team] or the [Navy] SEAL teams; chances are they've probably gone to school together. And it buys in a lot of credibility whether it's a [Medical Command] mission or whether it's a clinical assessment," that determines what a clinic may need.

Training for civil affairs

The 95th Civil Affairs Brigade has a language lab at Fort Bragg that allows Soldiers to brush up on language and cultural skills prior to deploying.

In addition, civil affairs Soldiers are required to have the highest language proficiency rating — fluent in both the written and oral foreign language.

Before a unit deploys to a country,

CIVIL AFFAIRS UNIFORMS

When civil affairs teams deploy to some environments, they often don't wear the Army uniform or don't wear it to standard.

"We won't wear the uniform, because we don't want to stand out in certain areas," said Sgt. 1st Class Shawn Miller, a medic with the 95th Civil Affairs Brigade (Airborne). "There are only four guys in a team; sometimes we're split into two. You don't want to go around with a big 'U.S.' on your chest or a flag on your arm because an area might be somewhere they don't want you. We don't go in waving a U.S. flag, because we want the efforts to be those of the local government."

Master Sgt. Jesse Miramontes, who has worked as a civil affairs team sergeant, NCOIC and first sergeant, said that though civil affairs Soldiers don't always wear the U.S. Army uniform, they are no less professional Soldiers and understand what the uniform stands for.

"Sometimes you wouldn't be working in uniform, but you're still representing those things, and you're still in the military," Miramontes said.

CASE STUDY: YEMEN

Sgt. Michael Pate deployed to Yemen as a civil affairs medic. In the initial planning stages, he and his team reviewed situational reports from Yemen and items that were covered in the national media.

"We started working on screw-worm [eradication] because it was cited as an epidemic in some small column in page 37 of *The Fayetteville* (N.C.) *Observer*," Pate said. "It wasn't anything anyone thought much about, but it jumped out to us immediately as something that we could assist with once we went forward."

The larvae of screw-worms burrow in animals' cuts, living off the host's tissue. Yemen was experiencing a massive infestation of the screw-worm before and during Pate's deployment. Approximately 800,000 cattle, sheep and goats were infected with screw-worms, which caused the price of livestock to go up and hurt the local economy.

After teams identify a problem, they research and brainstorm how to combat it.

"We'd prepared a vignette on how the U.S. treated screw-worm and how it was eradicated here," Pate said. "We had a lot of crowd-sourcing and brain-sourcing sessions as a team where we tried to come up with the most viable option. Logistically speaking, we reached back to distributors (in the United States) and identified who could bring that product to us and how we could get it in-country."

Though the team is able to come up with a solution and can work the logistics to make it happen, a big part of the civil affairs mission is to "sell" its solution to the host nation government, Pate said.

"We were shut down for the better part of our deployment," Pate said. "The ministries there wanted nothing to do with our solution. They wanted this one specific drug that was very difficult to get because of the way it's regulated internationally.

"With their lax customs laws, they could get that in. But they didn't want anything labeled 'U.S. Government' coming in that said 'this is what the U.S. is pushing on us.'"

Civil affairs teams worked with nongovernmental organizations, U.S. foreign aid officials and their own chain of command to help the host nation understand the importance of looking at a viable solution from all angles, Pate said.

"They changed their policy. They accepted the proposal," Pate said. "And when we left, they were in talks with the U.S. embassy to [implement our solution] in the country."

the team does extensive research on what will be needed to accomplish the mission and what tools it will need to have. The team typically trains for three to four months before deployment.

"Any country we go to, we've identified months in advance [what we need]," Anderson said. "So we know what language we need to be proficient in, and we use that language lab. If we know that we're going to Afghanistan, we know we need to be proficient in (Pashto or Dari). We start training months in advance so that we get a good introduction to the language. It establishes credibility with (those civilians). It tells them that we have made an attempt to understand their culture, their language."

The civil affairs mission isn't a glamorous one, Iftime said. It's one in which Soldiers blend in with the population, identify problems and help the local government and its civilians work together to restore lines of communication and identify solutions.

"It's not about us," Iftime said. "It's about their country. It's about their government. If you see that they're making a difference, that's good enough." ⩔

To contact Jennifer Mattson, email jennifer.mattson@us.army.mil.



A civil affairs veterinarian injects a cow with a vitamin supplement Oct. 2, 2008, during a joint coalition forces and Afghan National Security Forces operation in Shinkay district, Zabul province, Afghanistan. Operations like this show the wide variety of civil affairs capabilities, which include not only providing medical treatment for local civilians, but also for animals, which are often communities' livelihood. PHOTO COURTESY OF USASOC

COUNTERINSURGENCY:

PASSING LESSONS



Sgt. Lidya Admounabdfany, from the 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division's Female Engagement Team, writes down information from a local woman Dec. 17 at the Woman's Center near Forward Operating Base Pasab in the Zhari district of Kandahar province, Afghanistan. The information Admounabdfany collects will help the team distribute blankets and winter clothing to the women and their families.
PHOTO BY SPC. KRISTINA TRULUCK

FORWARD



The U.S. Army Irregular Warfare Fusion Cell teaches NCOs the latest counterinsurgency knowledge

BY JONATHAN (JAY) KOESTER
NCO Journal

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have taught the U.S. Army many lessons about "irregular warfare" and how to counter an insurgency by winning over the local population.

The next step is making sure those lessons are passed down to Soldiers and NCOs. To that end, the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center recently activated the Army Irregular Warfare Fusion Cell at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.



Staff Sgt. Gregory Santos chats with a group of boys June 12, 2010, in the Khorma Leq village in Farah province, Afghanistan. Santos is the team chief for Provincial Reconstruction Team Farah Security Forces. PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN RYLAN K. ALBRIGHT

The cell combines and facilitates the resources of six other organizations related to counterinsurgency. The huge growth in knowledge about counterinsurgency created a need for a group to organize that information and make sure it is provided to Soldiers and NCOs, said Master Sgt. John Lucas, NCO in charge of the cell.

"The fusion cell helps tie it all together because there are so many different organizations involved with theater operations," Lucas said. "This is a way of getting information out to everybody who is willing to listen."

What is irregular warfare?

Irregular warfare has been difficult for the Army to define. After more than a year of debate, the Department of Defense arrived at this approved definition in 2006:

"IW is a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence and will."

Insurgents have learned they can't fight the U.S. military force-on-force, so the insurgents' change in tactics have forced a change in our tactics, explained Kenneth C. Coons Jr. and Glenn M. Harned in their article "Irregular Warfare *is* Warfare," published in the June 2011 U.S. Army Center for Army Lessons Learned newsletter.

"Our adversaries are unconventional, and so our approach for defeating them must be unconventional as well," Coons and Harned wrote. "We cannot defeat them solely by force; we must use a blend of political, informational, military, economic and sociocultural approaches, in combination with foreign governments, security forces and populations."

Although military strength remains important, just as important are warfare methods that turn people against an insurgency, aiding the stability of the country's government. But to build support for the U.S. military's counterinsurgency efforts, Soldiers need to do things differently.

Teaching new methods

The U.S. Army has shown it has the ability to win a traditional war, Lucas said,

IRREGULAR INFORMATION

The website for the Army Irregular Warfare Fusion Cell offers contact information and several ways for NCOs to get more information on the latest trends in irregular warfare. It includes a monthly newsletter that provides links to the newest doctrine, latest papers, and upcoming webcasts and seminars.

The website and newsletter can be found at *http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/AIWFC/index.asp*.



Soldiers demonstrate to Afghan border policemen how to "tap out" during combatives training Oct. 4, 2009, on Combat Outpost Herrera in Paktiya province, Afghanistan. The Soldiers from "Apache" Troop, 1st Squadron, 40th Cavalry Regiment, taught the ABP basic soldier skills, including discipline, combatives and patrolling, culminating in a live-fire exercise. PHOTO BY STAFF SERGEANT ANDREW SMITH

but counterinsurgency, or COIN, calls for a different mindset and priorities.

"I think we've proved to the entire globe that we can kick in a door and take down a target," Lucas said. "Instead, in order to reshape a village and provide a government access to that place, we need something more than just a trigger-puller. We need intelligent people who know how to work with human beings. Personality is the complete driver of COIN. If you don't have humanitarian skills, it may not be the job for you."

Working on changing the mindset of Soldiers is one of the first things counterinsurgency instructors do when NCOs arrive for training, said Sgt. 1st. Class Joshua Deuel, NCOIC at CAC's Counterinsurgency Center at Fort Leavenworth.

"We need to sit down and talk about training and how to change a Soldier's mindset, because for the past 10 years the Soldier's mindset has been to [rely on agressive action]: 'Shoot, move, communicate,'" Deuel said. "It's just not like that anymore. It's hard to pull back the reins on those Soldiers who have been like that for so long."

NCOs and Soldiers learning COIN discover that some of the aggressive techniques they have used in the past can cause problems for the mission, Deuel said.

"You have to know the environment, and you have to know the people you're working with," Deuel said. "What is going to make them more pro-American or pro-coalition forces versus being with the insurgency?

"Everything matters," he said. "There are always second- or third-order effects to whatever you do. If you go into a village and you pull all the men and flex-cuff them, then pull out all the women and search them with no female Soldiers around … something like that is going to cause a riot at your front gate. You'll never win that town. Once that happens, it's over. There's maybe nothing you're going to be able to do to fix that.

"It's a challenge for platoon sergeants, squad leaders, first sergeants and commanders to get their Soldiers to focus on not being that way. Pulling the reins back and saying, this is our focus and this is how we're going to do this so that we can get out of Afghanistan," Deuel said.

Lucas said a large part of being successful at irregular warfare is understanding the principles and doctrine, then using



Sgt. Jody Ross (left) and Sgt. Adam Dean (right), both combat engineers with the 832nd Engineer Company, Iowa National Guard, speak with the village *malik* Dec. 30, 2010, in Qalander Khel, Parwan province, Afghanistan. The company visited the village to conduct an assessment of the village and to discuss security issues. PHOTO BY SPC. KRISTINA GUPTON

HOLDING IT TOGETHER

The Army Irregular Warfare Fusion Cell "assesses, integrates, collaborates and synchronizes irregular warfare activities, initiatives and capabilities across the U.S. Army," its mission statement reads. To that end, it facilitates the workings of six Army organizations related to counterinsurgency:

ASYMMETRIC WARFARE GROUP, Fort Meade, Md.

U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND, Fort Bragg, N.C.

PEACEKEEPING AND STABILITY OPERATIONS INSTITUTE, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa.

U.S. ARMY COUNTERINSURGENCY CENTER, Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

U.S. ARMY SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE PROPONENT OFFICE, Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth

CENTER FOR ARMY LESSONS LEARNED, Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth



those principles in a constantly changing environment.

"If we tell [NCOs] exactly what to do, they are going to stick to that only," Lucas said. "And then when they get over there, it's very different and has nothing to do with what we said. We work on the fundamentals of COIN, the principles, a lot of the theory behind it. We always discuss the 'whys.' This is why you do it. If you do this, this is why it's going to happen this way. So they understand better how to do COIN."

It can't just be senior officers and NCOs who understand the ideas behind irregular warfare and counterinsurgency, Lucas said. Soldiers and junior NCOs are the ones on the ground. They are the ones who see what's going on, and if they don't know what to look for, those senior NCOs and officers will never get the information they need.

"The Soldiers are the people to first touch the locals in Afghanistan and Iraq," Lucas said. "The Soldiers are up front, walking through the village. This is platoon level or lower. Those pieces of information are grabbed by those on the ground. If those Soldiers are capable enough to understand what they see, report it to their sergeant, that sergeant reports it on up so the chain is worked … the fight is won."

Seeing the light

Col. Geoffrey J. Slack, the commander of the 27th "Empire" Brigade Combat Team, 42nd Infantry Division, New York National Guard, admits that he had "pedestrian expectations" for the counterinsurgency training organized by the fusion cell before he and members of his division went to Fort Leavenworth in 2011. But he and his team learned so much, he's been spreading the gospel ever since.

"Now COIN doctrine has gotten us all thinking along the lines of specific human engagement and building up your base of understanding of the population, their needs, problems and desires," Slack said. "Your first, and probably paramount, requirement is to understand the people where you're operating. I think that COIN doctrine and the COIN experience, no matter what comes next, is going to have shaped a lot of officers' careers and senior NCOs' careers well into the future."

Sgt. 1st. Class Miguel Arroyo, a platoon sergeant with A Company, 27th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 27th BCT, attended the same training session and said he knew going in that he was going to have to change his way of thinking.

"[Changing tactics] is something that I took personal, because on my first deployment, I experienced some of the things you shouldn't do," Arroyo said. "I was doing some of those things myself. I knew it was important not to fall into the same mistakes of the past. So I first took a personal step and said, 'I know from personal experience that what we had done was not beneficial.' After the training, I was able to elaborate to my Soldiers on how important it is that we gain the respect and trust of the population. We need to work with them so that, at some point, we can get out of there knowing we've done a good job and trained the people well."

Important mission

Though Lucas and Deuel are the only NCOs working as part of the fusion cell and the Counterinsurgency Center at Fort Leavenworth, their role is important: Like many NCOs, they make sure plans match reality.

"We bring the NCO perspective," Deuel said. "We take what we do in a regular unit and bring that here. We advise the instructors how best to teach their points."

"Every meeting I've been to (at the fusion cell), the meeting was stopped, they



Sgt. Adam Dean, a combat engineer with 2nd Platoon, 832nd Engineer Company, attached to 1st Squadron, 113th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, speaks to a group of boys Dec. 30, 2010, in the village of Qalah-ye Boland in Parwan province, Afghanistan. Dean's company visited the village to assess the area and to attend a key leader meeting. PHOTO BY SPC. KRISTINA GUPTON

looked right at me and said, 'What do you think?'" Lucas said. "That means someone has had good experiences with the NCO Corps. They saw, somewhere, an NCO who said, 'Sir, this doesn't make sense; we need to do it a better way.' Somebody did it right, and that carries over.

"NCOs bring adaptability," Lucas continued. "You don't have to ask an NCO to think outside the box; he's already doing it. The perspective is much different. With ideas, they are very focused on functionality."

Though neither knew what to expect when they were told they were joining the fusion cell, Lucas and Deuel said they eventually were glad to be sent some place where they can help Soldiers and NCOs.

"Being here, I have the chance to give back," Deuel said. "I'm still in the fight. We're providing all this information, and we're still learning, so when we go back to a regular unit, we're going to be more knowledgeable. We're not out of the loop."

The fusion cell has a group of experts available to help the Army fight this new type of battle. Whether it's through hands-on training, publications or webcasts, the cell offers a variety of ways to learn.

"This mission is not going away," Lucas said. "It's the way we've been fighting for years; we just didn't understand it. We understand it now better than ever. We've got so many subject-matter experts here to help. Soldiers and NCOs just have to call us, and they're here." ⩔

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A member of the Asymmetric Warfare Group walks Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, through drills during Focused Targeting Force training March 2010 at Forward Operating Base Sharana in Paktika province, Afghanistan. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JIMMY NORRIS

PROBLEM SOLVERS



ASYMMETRIC WARFARE GROUP NCOS HELP ARMY UNITS THINK, ADAPT AND ANTICIPATE



BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS NCO Journal

"No problem can withstand the assault of sustained thinking." —VOLTAIRE

Units downrange encounter a multitude of problems during their deployments: How can we counter the newest improvised explosive devices? Which tactics, techniques and procedures are best when responding to certain attacks? How can we lighten the Soldier's load? Often units figure out solutions on their own. But sometimes, there's a better way.

The Asymmetric Warfare Group is the Army's critical-thinking assault force on problems units run into while deployed. Its personnel — overwhelmingly comprising active-duty and retired senior NCOs with centuries of combined experience in combat — identify the best practices, best ideas and best solutions to close gaps in units' capabilities or exploit enemy vulnerabilities. They then circulate the findings to others encountering similar problems. Though all their knowledge is obtained firsthand while embedded with units before and during deployments, their goal is broader: creating a culture of mental agility and adaptability within the Army.

"We solve problems for the Army in order to get ahead of the enemy," said Sgt. Maj. Mike Masson, the sergeant major of "Baker" Squadron, one of the AWG's two operational squadrons. "The units do a good job staying abreast of what's going on. But if

> **"One of our biggest strengths is the relevancy we bring, because we're in and out of theater constantly."**
>
> **— MASTER SGT. DAVID GONZALEZ**

they've got a question, it can be easy for them to ask us, 'Can you reach forward and figure this out for us?' Or, if we've got a solution, we can provide that for them."

"We're in the knowledge-transfer business," said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Akridge, AWG's command sergeant major. "We bring what one unit is doing superbly well and bring that over to another unit that is experiencing the same problem set."

The AWG's two-man operational advisor teams usually include one active-duty senior NCO — a master sergeant or sergeant major — and one contractor, most often a combat-seasoned retired master sergeant or sergeant major. These "warrior counselors" begin their work with a unit as it trains and prepares to deploy, sharing the latest TTPs that have proven successful where the unit is about to deploy.

"We try to get with that unit early in the [Army Force Generation] cycle to hit all those key training events," Masson said. "That way, we can provide assistance all along the way, based on lessons learned coming from theater."

"One of our biggest strengths is the relevancy we bring, because we're in and out of theater constantly," said Master Sgt. David Gonzalez, Baker Squadron's operations NCO. That allows AWG teams to revise TTPs continuously based on the latest intelligence, he said. "We're able to say, 'Here's exactly what's going on there.'"

Once on the ground, AWG teams aren't sitting behind desks, however. They move with units, patrol alongside them, get shot at and experience exactly what the unit's Soldiers do day in and day out. From their observations — of both the units' successes and areas of difficulty — AWG teams send reports back to the group's Integrated Solutions Team in "Dog" Squadron at AWG's headquarters at Fort Meade, Md. There, the cell builds a macro, birds-eye view of how U.S. troops are interacting with the enemy.

"When they make their observations, make their reports and interact with the unit, that information comes back," said Master Sgt. Mike Crosby, an operational advisor with "Able" Squadron, the other operational squadron. In turn, the solutions AWG devises get pushed back for dissemination to units in-theater.

"The units are talented and do a good job. But our advantage is that we see the whole picture," Masson said. "We travel around and can see something going on in one part of the country that, through analysis, we can say is going to migrate to the area the unit is in — 'This is what you can expect next.'"

As part of this collection and dissemination process, the AWG teams gather and share information with the full spectrum of deployed troops.

"There's a saying here that we interact with privates through generals. That's pretty true," Crosby said. "It really is the whole gamut. That flexibility and that breadth of interaction is very unique."

"One day, you might be embedded with a squad or a platoon, and you're working for that platoon sergeant," Akridge said. "But two days later, you might be briefing a general officer or other senior leader to tell them what you've seen not just on this patrol, but on others in your sector."

But the AWG is not there to critique or grade units, Akridge is quick to point out.

"We always work by, with and through the organization we're embedded with," he said. "We don't write report cards."

"Another misconception is that we're observer/controllers, that we're out there to look at them and evaluate what they're doing," Gonzalez said. "That's not what we do. We do write some reports from the observations that we make, but they're non-attributable. We're not out there to point fingers."



"What we do allows commanders to get that ground-troop perspective from an objective point of view," said Master Sgt. Michael Lahoda, the group's strategic plans NCO. "When we write our reports, we're not looking to implicate anybody. It's about best practices and lessons learned. If there's a capability gap there, we can bring that up. But we don't do it in a pretentious way or try to dictate things."

Though their findings are shared continually with the Center for Army Lessons Learned and vice versa, what makes AWG teams unique is their persistent presence within units, Masson said.

"The difference between us and CALL is we have guys forward, living, breathing and seeing things firsthand," he said.

"Yes, they do solution development and information dissemination," Lahoda said. "But to have a guy come out there who has been there, done that and been in the shoes of that first sergeant, that platoon sergeant or that Soldier, it adds a certain amount of credibility."

SUCCESS STORIES

The Asymmetric Warfare Group has its origins in the Army's IED Task Force. In 2004, desiring to apply the group's rapid solution-development process to future and unknown threats, the Army G-3/5/7 spun the group off as a separate organization. Today, the AWG is a direct reporting unit to the commanding general of U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command.

The solutions the AWG develops are categorized as material or non-material. The former typically involve adapting equipment to better meet units' needs. The latter usually means adapting TTPs to counter newly identified enemy vulnerabilities. Either way, the group's NCOs say their involvement has a direct impact.

"A unit I was with in 2006 was having a hard time with IEDs out in their area of operations," Lahoda said. "We looked at what they were doing, applied some specific targeting methods to the way they were running their patrols and discovered they really weren't far off. Helping them understand better their situational awareness and giving them some techniques and tactics that they could use, as well as some associated equipment, made them more effective. The operations they went on, I heard from emails later, the casualty rate was down, they were cleaning things up, and the provincial government in the town was getting together again."

Crosby recalled the potentially life-saving influence his team had in Iraq.

"During my last deployment, one brigade we were with was driving down this one stretch of road all the time," Crosby said. "They were getting some IEDs and [explosively formed penetrators] there. During our embed, we went out there, patrolled with them and talked with them. Two weeks later, we got an email from the brigade commander who said they had found seven quadruple-rate EFPs — they had this thing lined up to take out the whole convoy. The unit used some techniques we had talked about to find the [devices], possibly saving many lives.

"That's the rewarding part, when you know you actually did something," Crosby continued. "At that Soldier level, you're potentially saving lives. But you're also getting inside their decision-making cycle as they take the fight to the enemy."

Sometimes, the best solution AWG can offer is to help integrate and share information among the disparate parts in an area — letting the right hand know what the left hand is doing, Lahoda said.

"Once you start putting people together, giving them an awareness of what their siblings to the left and right are doing, it not only makes each entity more effective just through awareness, but now they're able to plan and share," he said. "Bringing them together makes them more effective than what individual units can do."

When it comes to material solutions, the group's Dog Squadron coordinates with project managers in the Army's acquisition apparatus to tweak and improve equipment large and small.

"That could mean anything from better spare tires to weapons suppressors," said Sgt. Maj. Marc Griffith, a troop sergeant major in Dog Squadron. "It could mean culvert denial operations up through



An Asymmetric Warfare Group Soldier provides security March 13, 2011, from an observation post overlooking the Kholbesat bazaar in Khowst province, Afghanistan.
PHOTO BY PFC. DONALD WATKINS

> “It’s about thinking through the situations and coming up with creative solutions.”
>
> — MASTER SGT. JOE SCHOCH

small, miniature aerial vehicles. You name it, the gamut has been run. I don’t think there’s a maneuver, fire or effect that we have not touched over the past few years.”

“We’ll go out on operations and ask, ‘What do you think of this?’” Lahoda said. “We’ll hear, ‘Oh, that’s a piece of garbage, and here’s why.’ ‘Well, how can we make it better?’ We’ll take it back to the designers developing these things, and we make it better.”

“We have the ability to do things in parallel as opposed to in sequence,” Griffith said. “Our solution development is much more rapid, but it is not an enduring thing. It is normally designed to fit a capability gap that is niche and could have a timestamp on it requiring us to rapidly exploit. For the things we’ve worked on that do have an enduring characteristic, we try as much as possible to empower the project managers with information.”

“With some of our earlier successes, we had [improved equipment] literally in a Soldier’s hand within six months. It lightened the Soldier’s load, and we worked with [Program Executive Office] Soldier to help field 22 items that reduced Soldiers’ weight by 20 to 25 pounds. But we’ve continued to work with leaders, because whenever we’ve reduced the weight, it’s easy to say, ‘Here’s what you can carry instead.’”

“We’re right there with them; that’s why we’re able to have input on the Soldier’s load,” said Master Sgt. Joe Schoch, who runs the group’s training courses. “Because we’re walking with them up the mountain, I don’t want to carry what I don’t need either.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Sean Bradley, the command sergeant major of Able Squadron, recalled how the group used its collective experience and know-how with one particular unit’s weaponry in Afghanistan.

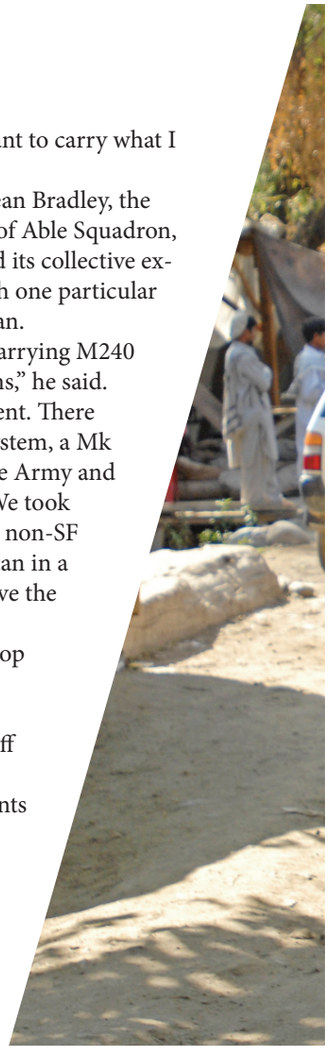
“We saw issues with guys carrying M240 machine guns up the mountains,” he said. “That’s a heavy piece of equipment. There were two machine guns in the system, a Mk 48 and a Mk 46, both tested by the Army and used by special operations units. We took that capability and got it put into [a non-SF unit in] the northern mountains of Afghanistan in a short amount of time, so those guys could have the same capability to conduct assaults.”

However, the AWG’s involvement didn’t stop with equipping just that unit, Griffith said.

“The Army was already working on the M240L, which drops seven or eight pounds off the Mk 48,” he said. “The Army was able to accelerate that program based on the comments we brought to them.

“When a project manager partners with us, he’s getting a combat-experienced NCO who is providing no-kidding feedback relevant to what is going on right now,” Griffith said.

“We bring something to the fight instead of just a big head,” Bradley added.



A UNIQUE MIX

The AWG’s noncommissioned officers attribute much of the group’s success to bringing together the right individuals who possess the ideal blend of backgrounds and skills.

“The way AWG was formed, a lot of the members were in special operations,” Masson said. “But right now, we’ve got a pretty good split of operational advisors that are from conventional [forces] and special operations.”

“We have a unique mix,” Lahoda said. “It’s about your experiences and your leadership capabilities. We want a good mix, all focused on making the Army more effective, more flexible.”

“There’s a holistic synergy here; really, it’s us learning from one another,” Akridge said.

“A guy that grew up in SF has a unique perspective, but so does the infantry guy who has done different things,” Lahoda said. “Here, we merge all that together, and it’s very effective.”

LOSING ONE OF THEIR OWN

Because Asymmetric Warfare Group teams go wherever their units go, they sometimes find themselves in combat scenarios, fighting alongside the members of the unit they are there to advise. During one such encounter, retired Master Sgt. Robert “Pitt” Pittman lost his life — AWG’s sole fallen comrade.

Pittman, a decorated Special Forces operations sergeant who had been hired by AWG as a contractor, was advising a unit in Afghanistan on July 29, 2010, when his patrol was ambushed. In the ensuing firefight, he used his special forces training to help organize returning fire.

“Rob Pittman had become *the* go-to guy for our organization,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Akridge, AWG’s command sergeant major. “He then gave his life in that service while he continued to move to the sound of the guns to make sure he was there when the unit needed him to be. He provided sound advice and counsel to the organization up until his last breath.”

Today, a monument to Pittman stands inside AWG’s headquarters at Fort Meade, Md., and the group’s annual Best Warrior event was named in his honor.



An Afghan boy looks at an AWG team member July 2009 as Soldiers wait for the Afghan national police to escort them to Hajibad in Nishagam, Afghanistan. PHOTO BY SPC. EVAN MARCY

When the AWG recruits NCOs from throughout the Army, it isn't necessarily looking for the "best of the best," Akridge said.

"Our selection process is designed to find that person with the right attributes for the organization," he said. "It's not trying to find the 'ultimate warriors.' We need critical thinkers, those who can look at the problem, define exactly what the problem is and come up with unique, viable courses of action."

"The NCOs who do well here know *how* to think, not *what* to think — guys who can deal with ambiguity," Schoch said. "Normally, the Army isn't very ambiguous; there are training schedules, guidelines, certain things have to be done every day. NCOs who make it here have the ability to deal with that ambiguity."

"That's why we have the selection process," Lahoda said. "It's to get after those attributes that allow people to work well in an accelerated environment where there's not a lot of supervision."

Once selected, all AWG personnel go through a five-month course that hones students' critical-thinking and communication skills. That initial training is reinforced through continuing education events throughout the year, such as "Chicken Fridays," luncheons followed by competitive tasks that require unconventional thinking, Schoch said. "It's about thinking through the situations and coming up with creative solutions," he said.

Each quarter, the group also runs the Asymmetric Warfare Adaptive Leader Program, a 10-day intensive course for non-AWG personnel from throughout the Army.

"They come down to Fort A.P. Hill, Va., and we put them through scenarios and educational processes to help foster adaptability," Akridge said. "It's about expanding their horizons.

"As people learn 'it's not against the rules,' it forces them to think through the problem set they are presented with," he said. "If I don't tell someone, 'No photos,' and it's a memory game, and they have a camera on their kit, then by all means use it. Or assembling and disassembling a number of weapons in the dark. In that darkened room, you can use anything to help you assemble the weapons — there are glow sticks and a small flashlight. But there's also a light switch."

"That's why we don't say 'outside-the-box thinking' here, because it's overused," Schoch said. "Sometimes it's inside-the-box thinking, like coming into a room and turning the light switch on. You don't need to think outside the box to do that."

Though his NCOs' critical-thinking skills are essential to the AWG completing its missions, Akridge reiterates that the group's ultimate goal is to proliferate such skills throughout the Army.

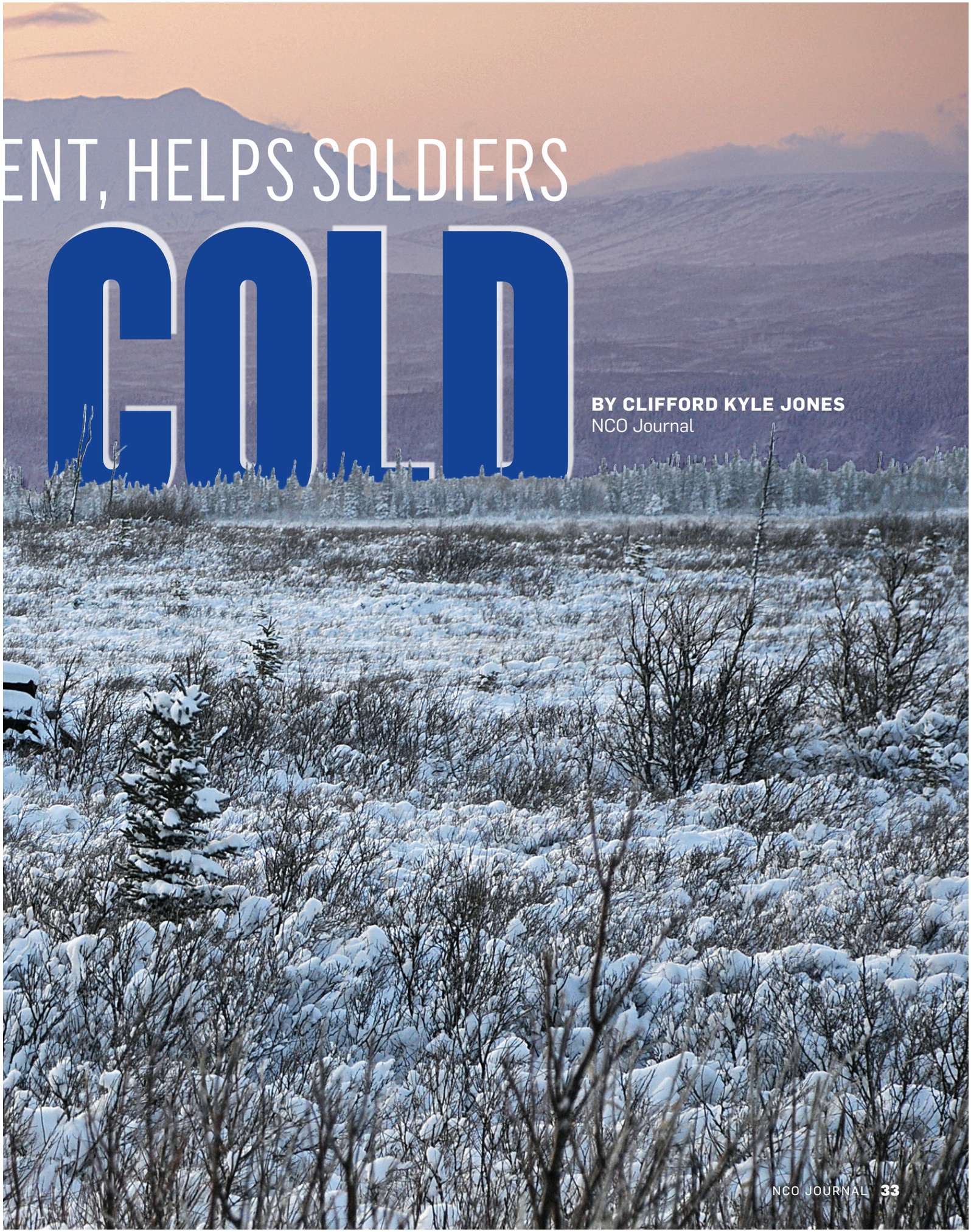
"There's value in having someone come here for, say, four years and then go back and impart what they've learned here to another unit," he said. "It's a constant struggle to keep quality guys here for that core institutional knowledge and, at the same time, the desire to share that knowledge with the rest of the Army." ⩔

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TEST CENTER IMPROVES EQUIPME

COMBAT



ENT, HELPS SOLDIERS

COLD

BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES
NCO Journal



Above: An M1A2 Abrams fires as part of a test for main gun accuracy in subzero temperatures. PHOTO COURTESY OF CRTC
Previous pages: The Cold Regions Test Center at Fort Greely, Alaska, has 670,000 acres for testing, including ranges that offer hard targets, such as the tank shell. Moose, caribou and wolves occupy the land, and test officers take environmental concerns into account before each test. PHOTO BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES

Some of the globe's most politically tumultuous regions also experience some of the world's most extreme cold. Temperatures in Afghanistan and Pakistan can fall below minus 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Uzbekistan reaches minus 40. North Korea, nearly minus 50.

Those temperatures can be tough on personnel and equipment, but the rigorous testing at the Cold Regions Test Center at Fort Greely, Alaska, helps ensure that Soldiers are outfitted with gear that can withstand the cold — from the clothes they wear to the vehicles they travel in.

"The vision is to help the Department of Defense see exactly what extreme cold weather will do to our equipment, and what we can do to counteract it or prepare ourselves and our Soldiers in the battlefield to successfully defeat the enemy," said 1st Sgt. Edward Balboa, first sergeant at the CRTC.

The CRTC offers 670,000 acres of land for testing, with ranges, controlled airspace and a variety of support facilities; however, most importantly, it offers consistently brutal temperatures of 30, 40 or sometimes even 50 degrees below 0 and more than six months of winter weather a year. The genuine arctic conditions — the bitter cold, the frozen ground, the biting wind, the almost 20 hours of darkness every day, the moisture in the air — would be nearly impossible to simulate. Though cold chambers — which CRTC personnel have access to — can drop the temperature, indoor tests have their limits.

"It's a different environment when you're testing in a cold chamber that can drop down to negative 60," Balboa said, "You stick equipment in there and you do your test, and you think 'I got a decent reading' or 'I got some decent feedback.' Then when you bring that same equipment here and put it outside in negative 60, you get a totally different outcome."

If a tester fired a .50-cal rifle in a cold chamber, for instance, he or she wouldn't notice one of the things test NCOs discovered firing the same weapon outdoors at the CRTC.

At negative 50 degrees, Balboa said, "when you fire a weapon such as a .50-cal, what you don't see is that with the heat and the moisture that's in the barrel, as the round comes out, it creates an ice fog, similar to a mist. What it does is it sends out a signal. It's a white cloud. You cannot see through it. You can't see where the round is going, but at the same time you've just identified your position for miles and miles."

Balboa said a cold chamber also can't show you how a mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicle, for instance, slides around in the snow or how it performs on frozen terrain.

The CRTC is currently testing an M1A2 Abrams tank as part of an Armywide examination of the well-worn and much-modified vehicle at several sites in different environments. This is the second recent trip to Alaska for the Abrams, Balboa said.

"Two years ago, we stuck it in cold

chambers, and it wasn't too bad," he said. "Then we stuck it out here (on the ranges at the CRTC), and we did cold starts. We started finding out that the major components weren't being affected; it was the minor components that support the major components that were having issues. So as the tank sat out in the cold more and more, the smaller components — electronics and so forth — were having major issues."

Those smaller components and details are often the biggest revelations during testing at the CRTC. The major elements have usually been well-considered by manufacturers, but myriad things can go wrong in extreme cold — oils and other fluids can cease to lubricate; seals and abutting materials can contract or expand at different rates; certain types of welds that work in temperate climates can fail.

During a test of the M149 water buffalo, the water-carrying trailer continued to function adequately but the components to operate it and turn it on and off had frozen, Balboa said. "You couldn't move any of the mechanisms without breaking them," he said.

"A lot of times it's little stuff," said Sam Porter, a welder in the test center's allied trades section. "A lot of times the big things are thought of: 'Will the engine run at 60 below?' … But sometimes it's the running board that falls off or the plastic key mechanism that turns and shatters. Those are the types of things that come up — smaller things. But for the warfighter, it's all the same: If it fails, it fails."

Porter and the three other craftsmen in CRTC's allied trades section help facilitate testing by standing ready to repair or modify equipment being tested or to build the tools and equipment necessary to conduct the actual tests.

The NLOS Cannon was never tested at CRTC, we actually tested the NLOS-LS (Non-Line of Sight-Launch System and the sets of skis were to transport the equipment/infrastructure for the test.

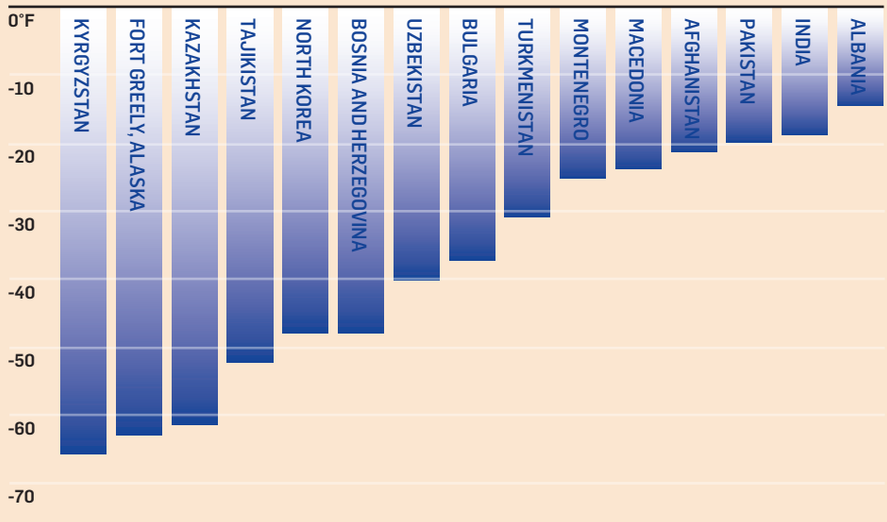
Recent work has included building a lightweight aluminum stand to help the Abrams' crew expedite the daily bore-sighting of the tank's gun during testing; making sets of skis to transport to remote areas of the CRTC range equipment and infrastructure to test the Non-Line-of-Sight Launch System, a proposed self-contained missile launcher system that was part of what was then called Future Combat Systems; modifying several pieces of equipment so they could be transported by a small-unit support vehicle, or SUSV, a tracked all-terrain vehicle used widely in Alaska; and modifying the



Randy Bealer, a civilian who works in the instrumentation section of the CRTC, demonstrates what happens to common engine oil in extreme cold. He was standing in a cold chamber, where the temperature was below negative 50 degrees Fahrenheit. PHOTO BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES

BY THE NUMBERS

Extreme minimum temperatures in selected regions around the world. — CRTC





A robotic vehicle undergoes mobility testing on a bump course at the CRTC's Mobility Test Complex. COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY ALASKA

CRTC'S TRACK

The Cold Regions Test Center provides numerous features and facilities for testing equipment in arctic conditions, but one of the center's most sought-after attractions is its Mobility Test Complex.

While the bulk of the testing at the CRTC is conducted for the Department of the Defense, companies can also contract with the CRTC to test equipment there (as military scheduling allows, of course). Indeed, about half the tests conducted at the mobility complex's 3.26-mile circular track are for the private sector. Companies such as Ford, Honda, Toyota, Chrysler, TRW, Delphi, General Motors, Chevrolet, Goodyear and Michelin have commissioned tests on the Fort Greely, Alaska, track in recent years.

The complex includes five slopes with grades ranging from 15 percent to 60 percent. "And this one will scare you," Sgt. 1st Class Jason Tatro, a test NCO, said as he drove by the 60 percent slope. "When you're at the top of it, you will not see the bottom."



Above: Sgt. 1st Class Jason Tatro, CRTC test NCO, describes some of the features of the center's Mobility Test Complex and its 3.26-mile track. Below: The complex has five slopes with grades from 15 percent to 60 percent that can be covered with snow or ice to test vehicles' performances. PHOTOS BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES



Track equipment includes snow machines to cover the track when the weather doesn't cooperate, equipment to test the performance of tires and vehicles, and specialized vehicles to lay down slick ice (Zambonis won't work because in extremely cold weather, the heated water Zambonis lay down freezes too quickly and creates bubbles that crack.)

The track, its slopes and all the equipment have been extremely helpful to both the Department of Defense and to the dozens of companies that have conducted winter tests on their products. But its usefulness doesn't end there.

The CRTC's NCO in charge, 1st Sgt. Edward Balboa, said that when the Alaska weather and the track's schedule allow, it also comes in handy for the community.

The CRTC opens the ice pad and snow field for employees to conduct winter driver training.

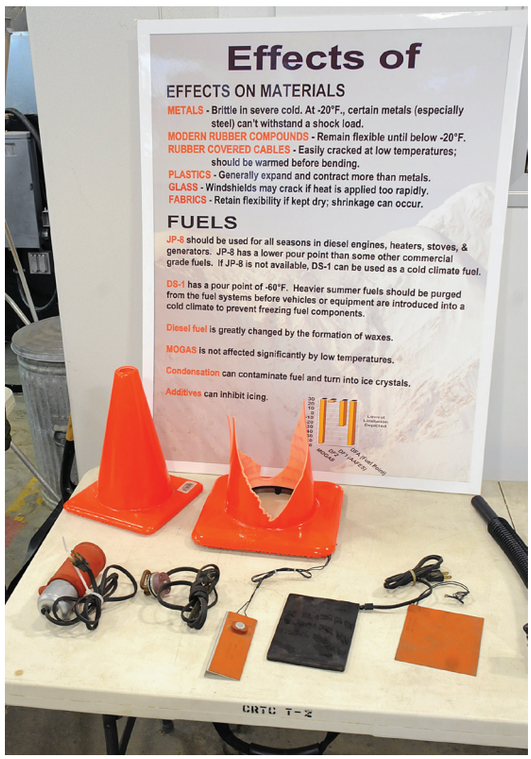
SUSVs themselves to haul the equipment and clear brush.

"If something breaks, we fix it – we figure out how to fix it," said Sgt. 1st Class Jason Tatro, one of the CRTC's test NCOs.

Tatro noted that at certain temperatures and under the right stress, metal can shatter. But the CRTC provides engineering and fabrication services tailored to the arctic conditions.

"Our fabricators are experienced with how to make the right weld for this type of environment," he said. "An engineer from a warmer state may try to keep the same welds that he knows, but it will not work."

Allied trades' and others' fabrication work is also important because it can take a long time to get parts to Alaska. In the Lower 48, "you can get parts overnight or same-day," Porter said. "We'll end up building some of those things because we can actually do it faster than it can be acquired for the test."



A display outside the CRTC instrumentation section's cold chamber shows some of the effects of extreme cold on typical items — normally flexible orange plastic cones can become so rigid they'll shatter when dropped, and electrical cords can become brittle and crack when one tries to fold or unfold them. PHOTO BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES

Temperature and atmospheric conditions must be just right for tests to be conducted, so big dollars can be wasted if test crews are delayed for weeks while waiting for parts.

Most of the CRTC's approximately 60 personnel are Defense Department civilians. Only four are Soldiers, three of whom are NCOs. Although they make up a small percentage of the CRTC's staff, those three NCOs play an outsize role in the center's work.

The CRTC's NCO in charge is an infantryman. One of the test NCOs, Tatro, is from the field artillery branch. The other is a mechanic.

"When you look at our task organization, you see the two test NCOs are on the ground, helping set up the tests," Balboa said. "They're on the ground being the subject-matter experts on equipment."

Working at the CRTC often puts Soldiers in a different role than their military occupational specialties, but their training as NCOs already makes them well-equipped, said the CRTC's commander, Lt. Col. John R. Cavedo Jr.

"The NCOs who come here don't get any formalized training in how to be test NCOs," Cavedo said. [Balboa] is an infantry Soldier, a born and bred infantry Soldier for the last 20 years who has done nothing else but be an infantry Soldier. … They're not trained in how to do acquisitions, how to do program management, how to do testing — they don't get any of that training.

"They come here and sometimes their eyes are wide open, and they say, 'I don't know how to be a test NCO,'" Cavedo said. "I say, 'Do you know how to do precombat checks? Do you know how to do precombat inspections? Do you know how to do backward planning? Do you know how to enforce standards? Do you know how to enforce discipline? Do you know how to enforce uniform policy? Can you read a thermometer and see that the temperature is zero degrees and we're supposed to be in our vapor-barrier boots? Can you do an [operations] order? Can you do a synchronization matrix? Can you help out those test officers do that kind of work?'

"'Well, yes, sir,' they say. 'Then you know how to be a test NCO, don't you?'" Cavedo said. "Because it's all the same stuff. Being an NCO is no different here than" any other brigade or battalion.

Balboa and his two test NCOs, both sergeants first class, are important to the preparation and implementation of every test. As the de facto representatives of the military during the tests, they also provide critical insight and advice.

Like many of the CRTC's civilian employees, test officer Vern Heintz is a former Soldier. He retired as a master sergeant, and his last assignment in the Army was at the CRTC. He noted that having active-duty NCOs be part of the testing is "real advantageous."

"I rely heavily on the insight and experience of our first sergeant and senior test NCOs on how to best suggest improvements on every system that I am involved with testing," he said.

The responsibility placed on each Soldier at the CRTC has only increased in the past decades.

"The first time I was up here (serving at the Cold Regions Test Center), from '94 to '96, we had 120 military here on site. And that was shrunk down from over 300 before I got here. With the [Base Realignment and Closure] of '95, it was shrunk down to four military slots," Heintz said.

"It would be a crime if we didn't have [the Soldiers] up here, because even though I've got 21 years in the Army, my time stopped when I retired in 2007. When we're running tests, we (retired Soldiers) have the military background to do it, but their [tactics, techniques and procedures] have changed enough to where they can pull us aside and say, 'No, no, no. Stop. We don't do that anymore. This is how we use this piece of equipment' or 'This is how it's going to work.' Tactics are changing constantly, and without



Above: Soldiers drive a small-unit support vehicle, or SUSV, at the Cold Regions Test Center. PHOTO BY SGT. TRISH McMURPHY
Right: Sam Porter, a civilian employee in the CRTC's allied trades division, welds a frame to be placed on the front of a bulldozer. The modified frame will allow the dozer to bury cable in the permafrost ground of the CRTC. PHOTO BY CLIFFORD KYLE JONES

these guys' help, the Army would be stuck with us testing to what we still remember.

Balboa noted that it's not just TTPs that have changed. Technology and equipment have advanced so rapidly that having Soldiers with up-to-date experience is invaluable. And frequently, the test NCOs and their first sergeant have to go beyond even their very recent experience.

Balboa said that as the CRTC's Soldiers prepare for a test, they do extensive research on the equipment: poring over manuals, scouring the Internet for information and interviewing subject-matter experts for insight.

"So we do a lot of research as the equipment comes down the table to us and we realize this is what we're going to work on," he said. "What do we know about this? Who do we need to contact? Who do we want to use for test support?"

Test support could come from anywhere in the Army or other services. Units or Soldiers for specific tests are tapped based on what is being tested and which command is requesting the test. Frequently, the Soldiers used in the tests come from Alaska — Fort Greely; Fort Wainwright, near Fairbanks; Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, near Anchorage; or one of Alaska's National Guard units.

For instance, Balboa said, a test scheduled for later this year will outfit a company of military police from Fort Greely with a new design of helmet pads for the Modular Integrated Communications Helmets. The pads are intended to function better in the cold.

"The best thing about [the CRTC] — although it's run by a majority of civilians — is that 90 percent of the time, Soldiers will come and live in these barracks, and Soldiers will get hands-on training with the newest, latest equipment," he said.

The only military personnel at the CRTC are from the Army, but the CRTC tests equipment for the entire Department of Defense and even does some commercial testing.

"We actually are getting ready to do a test on some Navy equipment. … We're in the planning phase right now to gather Soldier support for specific MOSs, specific job titles, that will benefit the outcome of the equipment, that will help the Soldiers on the ground, tomorrow, next year and into the future."

The role of the test NCOs varies with the type of tests and who in the Defense Department is requesting them. They must each be certified to run the ranges, to perform first aid, on safety awareness, and in many other areas.

"Before you even step out of this building and go out into the woods and do what you have to do, you have to have all these requirements knocked out," Balboa said. "It never stops."

In many cases, the test NCOs are integral to the planning and implementation of the tests. In others, they might play a more limited support role. But regardless of who is requesting or conducting the test, "We're right there





with them," Balboa said.

During one recent test, Aberdeen Test Center, at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., sent its own staff to facilitate a test. The ATC and the CRTC are both part of the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command.

"Is it an easier test? Sometimes it is," Balboa said of testing facilitated by other agencies or units. "Can it be a difficult test? Sometimes it can be. You just don't know what group of guys is going to come down, and their personalities and how they take to the cold and how long they can be out there."

Even when Balboa and his test NCOs are playing a limited role in the actual testing, they still provide critical support. Balboa notes that it takes visitors to Fort Greely at least a month to acclimate to the weather and the shorter winter days. "We're out there watching the test and watching you. We're ensuring you're drinking water, you're eating properly, your feet are taken care of, you're always wearing your gloves."

And the NCOs of the CRTC aren't just worried about Soldiers in a strictly official capacity.

"I still believe in showing up, as the first sergeant, being on the ground with the Soldiers. Even though they're not my Soldiers directly — they're just passing through — they're still Soldiers," Balboa said. "So I show up and I provide them with soup and coffee on a cold day. They might not request it. I might just throw a tank of coffee and a tank of soup in the back of my [vehicle], and I'll drive out there. They will be so glad; it's such a motivator for that to show up when it's extremely cold."

The four Soldiers assigned to the CRTC take great pride and care in the work they do, because they know their work will be important to the warfighter in the future, Balboa said.

Cavedo said that before he arrived at the CRTC more than two years ago, "I just had no idea of the importance and the relevance of doing what we do, especially when our Army has to be prepared to go at the drop of a hat, 24/7 around the world.

"It's just absolutely amazing to me to see how much that cold and the combined effects of cold — snow-loading, ice-loading, snow on top of icy roads — what kind of a toll it will take on both people and materiel. It's unimaginable. And if [equipment] will work here, guaranteed it will work elsewhere around the world."

And equipment that makes it through testing at the CRTC is equipment that the Army needs.

"Equipment like that is something we need to push down to the Soldiers," Balboa said. "What can we do to make it better for them, easier for them?"

Balboa said that focus on the Soldier informs the work and work ethic of every employee at the CRTC — Soldiers, civilians and contractors alike.

"This organization will never complain. It will execute," he said. "It's one of the best organizations I've ever had the privilege of working with. It's a blessing to get an assignment and see a different type of operation in the military than what I have to compare it to. Yeah, it's cold, but it's not that cold."

Especially when you're using the right gear. The CRTC has made sure of that.

To contact Clifford Kyle Jones, email clifford.k.jones.ctr@us.army.mil.

IN ACTION

Stories of NCOs
LEADING, TRAINING, MAINTAINING, & CARING

‘A 50-50 shot of dying himself’

10th Mountain Division NCO receives Soldier’s Medal for pulling passengers from burning bus

BY PAUL STEVEN GHIRINGHELLI
Fort Drum

A 10th Mountain Division Soldier who pulled passengers to safety from a burning tour bus was awarded the Soldier’s Medal on Dec. 13 at the Multipurpose Auditorium at Fort Drum, N.Y.

Sgt. Jacob J. Perkins, 28, a forward observer with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, stood before the cheers of his fellow Soldiers; brigade, division and state police officials; and a Canadian family he helped save from the fire.

“This is a momentous occasion,” said Maj. Gen. Mark A. Milley, commander of Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division. “If there were bullets flying and it was the Taliban, Sgt. Perkins would be getting the Medal of Honor.

“This medal is a big deal,” he said. “It is only the second one in the last five years given out in the 10th Mountain Division and [the second in the history] of the 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry.

“This is, in fact, uncommon. [Perkins] chose to do something that most normal human beings would not do. He ran into the back of a burning bus and saved people even though he stood a 50-50 shot of dying himself,” Milley added.

Perkins was on leave after midnight July 21 when he began a 1,000-mile-plus trek to southern Missouri to celebrate his daughter Cadence’s fifth birthday.

While westbound on Interstate 90 around 1:30 a.m., Perkins approached a fireball on the opposite side of the thruway, where a tractor-trailer had rear-ended a Canadian tour bus and buried itself halfway in.

Perkins pulled over, hopped the median



and ran across several lanes of traffic toward the blaze. He was one of the first witnesses on the scene in the dark stretch of country between Syracuse and Buffalo.

Perkins' training and wisdom from wartime experiences immediately came to bear as the sergeant entered and re-entered the burning bus multiple times, braving the flames and intense heat as long as he could, checking every seat for survivors by hand, while also staying low enough to minimize smoke inhalation, Milley said.

By the time the flames had become overwhelming, Perkins had contributed to the survival of five civilians and the safety of 24 others.

The driver of the tractor-trailer was killed on impact, and of the 53 people on board the bus, dozens were injured.

Both the rig and bus were ablaze after the accident, shutting down I-90's eastbound lanes for hours.

Because not enough emergency vehicles were yet on hand to transport the injured passengers, Perkins offered to help.

A Canadian man, Willie Blair, who was severely injured in the crash, was the last survivor Perkins rescued from the bus. While he was airlifted from the scene, Perkins volunteered to take the man's stranded wife, Sandy, and daughter, Michelle, to a Rochester hospital 45 miles away.

When the three arrived in Rochester, they were told Blair had been rerouted to a Syracuse hospital. Perkins drove them the additional 90 miles and waited until other family members arrived later in the morning.

"I'm very grateful for what he did for me," Willie Blair said after the award ceremony. "I was very much out of it. Once he saved me, I was grateful for what he did for my family."

Sandy Blair said that when her husband was taken away that night, she was frightened and had not the slightest idea where she was.

After arriving in Rochester and discovering her husband had been sent to Syracuse, she said Perkins, waiting in his truck outside of the hospital, told her, "No problem."

"He said, 'I'm not leaving you, ma'am. I will take you,'" she recalled. "And he did. He stayed with us until we all were reunited. He wouldn't leave [my husband's] bedside until our family arrived."

PERKINS CONTINUES ON PAGE 43 →

◀ Maj. Gen. Mark A. Milley, commander of Fort Drum and the 10th Mountain Division, pins Sgt. Jacob J. Perkins with the Soldier's Medal during a Dec. 13 ceremony at Fort Drum, N.Y. PHOTO BY ALYSSA HENNESSY



MPs honored at JBLM

BY STAFF SGT. FAIZA Z. EVANS Joint Base Lewis-McChord

The 504th Military Police Battalion, 42nd MP Brigade, held an award ceremony Dec. 6 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., to recognize 13 Soldiers who received awards for service, for valor, for injuries suffered in combat and for saving the life of a military dependent while on patrol.

Six Soldiers of the 504th MP Battalion's 170th MP Company were awarded the Purple Heart for injuries suffered March 7, 2010, when an improvised explosive device detonated while they were conducting dismounted clearing operations in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

"We were clearing an alleyway when the IED went off," said Staff Sgt. Christina A. Holcomb, an instructor at JBLM's Henry H. Lind NCO Academy. "I was 50 meters away, and the blast threw me backward. I am proud to be receiving a Purple Heart, but I'm happy that I can sit here and talk to you and that I have all of my limbs. I was very fortunate."

Sgt. Jeramie Larson, Spc. Geoffrey Correa, Spc. Mathew R. Dahl, Spc. Nicholas R. Klein and Sgt. Jacob L. Wilson were also awarded Purple Hearts for injuries sustained during the blast.

Four Soldiers received awards for valorous acts on the battlefield, including Larson, who was awarded the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device for valor for acts of heroism while defending against a complex attack by insurgents during the deployment. Larson was wounded with shrapnel from a rocket-propelled grenade, yet continued to call up reports and direct his squad in spite of his injuries, said Master Sgt. Marvin E. Locket, the provost sergeant at JBLM.

Sgt. 1st. Class Clint Butler, Sgt. 1st Class Eddie Vader and 1st Lt. Jeffery Moyer were awarded the Bronze Star Medal for their superior actions and leadership throughout the deployment.

An Army Commendation Medal was awarded to Staff Sgt. Robert J. Green who, while on patrol at JBLM, saved the life of a military dependent when the dependent attempted suicide. ⩔

▲ Col. Robert M. Taradash, commander of the 42nd Military Police Brigade, presents Staff Sgt. Christina A. Holcomb with a Purple Heart Medal for injuries she sustained during her deployment to Afghanistan. PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. FAIZA Z. EVANS

BY EXAMPLE

‘Follow the Army Values’

As a platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Roy Hibbetts uses lessons learned as an NCO Academy instructor

Sgt. 1st Class Roy Hibbetts is an infantryman and platoon sergeant with 2nd Platoon, C Troop, 473rd Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, at Fort Bragg, N.C. In 1998, Hibbets, then a musician in Tuscon, Ariz., put away his drumsticks to pick up an M16. He has deployed five times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Why did you join the Army?

I decided to serve in the Army because I was a musician, and I found that eating ramen noodles was not the way of life I wanted for my children and for myself. I wanted to better their lives and mine. The reason I stayed in the Army is totally different than why I joined. As soon as I started training and integrating to Army life, it was a lot of fun. I decided to stay in because it best suited my lifestyle.



▲ **Sgt. 1st Class Roy Hibbetts briefs his portion of the operation order June 18, 2010, for a patrol in Shewan, Afghanistan.** PHOTO COURTESY OF SGT. 1ST CLASS ROY HIBBETTS

What role have NCOs played in your professional development?

NCOs have played a significant part in my career. The role of the noncommissioned officers has definitely changed the way I’ve looked at life. It’s impacted the professional demeanor I have toward younger Soldiers.

How has Army training affected your career?

Army training helped me be a good NCO by building my personal patience, and learning my limitations and how to judge young Soldiers’ limitations — basically, how to transform their weaknesses into a strength, and how to turn that strength into a product that all the Soldiers in the team can learn from and sustain.

What impact have you seen NCOs make?

I learned from Staff Sgt. Walter Gray that you must take in those young Soldiers under your wing and treat them with respect. Because a young recruit does not know how to do his job entirely, you have to show them before you get upset. NCOs are the backbone, and without the NCOs’ backing, without holding the standards and enforcing the standards, you will not have a well-functioning unit.

What is good leadership?

Good leadership means never giving up on your Soldiers. The junior NCOs cannot quit — they can’t pull out of runs, can’t pull out of training events. They have to be at work on time and not drunk. You just can’t quit on these Soldiers. You have to set the right example.

How do you lead Soldiers?

There’s a time to be abrupt, but there has to be a method to the madness. When my Soldiers understand the method to my madness, then everything comes together, and all our training and our combat patrols can run smooth.

How does your current role affect the Army?

I’m a young sergeant first class, so I’m still impacting just my corner of the pie. Every day we’re learning something new and trying out new tactics.

What advice do you have for other NCOs?

Follow the Army Values, and you can’t go wrong. It’s been a system that hasn’t failed and won’t fail as long as you use them correctly. I used to tell my students when I was an instructor at the [NCO] Academy, “If it feels wrong, then it is wrong.”

— INTERVIEW BY JENNIFER MATTSON

← PERKINS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

"Sgt. Perkins was our hero that day," Michelle Blair said. "He treated us like family. He refused to leave our side. And even when (our family arrived), he tried to sneak away without even saying goodbye. I said, 'Don't you dare leave until you at least say goodbye to us.' He just wanted to do his duty and leave."

The Soldier's Medal is awarded to service members who, while serving in any capacity with the Army, distinguish themselves by heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy. The same degree of heroism is required for the award of the Soldier's Medal as is required for the award of the Distinguished Service Cross.

Perkins said receiving the award was a good experience, but he does not feel any different than any other Soldier.

"I don't feel like a hero," Perkins said. "I was just doing what anyone else would've done in the same situation."

Originally from Mountain Grove, Mo., Perkins enlisted in the Army in February 2008. He deployed with 89th Cavalry to Iraq a year later and returned to Fort Drum in 2010.

In early 2011, he was named to the Commandant's List upon graduating from the Warrior Leaders Course at the Fort Drum NCO Academy.

Perkins has been hailed as a hero by federal, state and local officials. But the soft-spoken fire-support NCO is described by many as humble and unassuming.

Gen. Martin Dempsey, then the chief of staff of the Army, called Perkins the morning of the incident to congratulate him, Milley said.

> **"I don't feel like a hero. I was just doing what anyone else would've done in the same situation."**
>
> **— SGT. JACOB J. PERKINS**

"He didn't answer it," Milley said to laughter from the packed room of Soldiers.

"He was tired. He needed to take a knee at that time of the morning. So he let it ring, and he took a voice mail from the chief of staff of the Army.

"He's now the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff," Milley said, turning to Perkins. "Just in case you were wondering."

"But Sgt. Perkins is a humble guy," Milley added. "It's not about Gen. Dempsey calling him or about Gen. Milley pinning a medal on him. Humility — very self-effacing and very humble — is one of the trademarks and characteristics of a true hero."

The senior NCO of Perkins' squadron agreed.

"Sgt. Perkins embodies what all Soldiers should be," said Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Deblois, command sergeant major of 1st Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment. "He embodies the Army Value of personal courage, and I am proud of him." ⩔



Corporal leads Best Missile Warning Crew

BY RACHEL L. GRIFFITH & DOTTIE WHITE
Space & Missile Defense Command

The 1st Space Company has four theater early missile warning detachments located around the world known as Joint Tactical Ground Stations, or JTAGS. In November, the Soldiers at these sites in Germany, Qatar, Korea and Japan were put to the test, competing for the title of the Army's Best Missile Warning Crew.

This year, Delta Crew from C Detachment, based at Osan Air Base, South Korea, took home the title. The winning crew — Cpl. Daniel Romero, Spc. Jonas Knehans and Spc. Trenton Huntsinger — beat out 15 other similar-sized crews.

"It's important to the crews because it gives them a chance to showcase their knowledge and expertise that they are using on a daily basis," said Sgt. 1st Class Andrew B. Brown, the training and evaluations NCO in charge for JTAGS.

Delta Crew is unique, as their crew leader is a corporal. Most JTAGS crew chiefs are staff sergeants.

"I think it's a great honor to recognize excellence, which is what the best crew does," said Col. Eric P. Henderson, 1st Space Brigade commander.

"It's important to point out that our adversaries do not take into account who is on watch as it relates to missile warning," Henderson said. "My thought is that every crew needs to be 'best crew' when the lives of our countrymen and our allies ... are at stake." ⩔

▲ Cpl. Daniel Romero adjusts a dish on Osan Air Base, South Korea. Romero's team was named the Army's Best Missile Warning crew. PHOTO BY RACHEL L. GRIFFITH

‘We are all brothers’

American NCO earns German medal for saving ally’s life

BY C. TODD LOPEZ
Army News Service

In combat, it doesn’t make a difference what language your allies speak; every Soldier who fights alongside you is like a brother, said a German who was saved by Americans in Afghanistan.

The German government highlighted that reality of war Dec. 8 when Germany’s ambassador, Peter Ammon, presented Staff Sgt. Peter Woken with the German Medal of Honor for Gallantry in Action — an award similar to the American Silver Star.

Woken’s actions were instrumental in saving the life of German Cpl. Tim Focken, Ammon said. Addressing Woken’s family at the ceremony, he said an entire nation is thankful for the actions of the noncommissioned officer.

“The German government and the German people are deeply grateful for your husband and your father,” Ammon said. “He will be the first American to receive the German Medal of Honor for Gallantry in Action here in the U.S. You can be proud.”

Seven other American Soldiers involved in saving Focken’s life also received the medal, though it was presented to them in Germany by German Minister of Defense Thomas de Maizière.

Woken had said that he views the recognition as confirmation of what Soldiers know about their comrades — that soldiering together unites service members across language and nationality.

“Even though Germany is honoring me this way, I think what they are conveying is that we are all brothers,” Woken said.

On Oct. 7, 2010, a German ground patrol at Qala-ye Zai, Afghanistan, came under enemy fire; Focken was shot in the conflict.

Woken said teams like his are on call for 48 hours at a time with 24 hours of down time between. On that day in Afghanistan, his team was waiting in a “relaxed state,” he said, to conserve energy until they got the call to do a rescue. Then, he said, “we went from basically zero to 100 in a matter of minutes.”

Focken had been on the ground leading a team of three Soldiers when he got injured. He was able to maintain order among his Soldiers even after he was shot, and his Soldiers applied aid to try to stop his bleeding. Once on the ground, a German medic tended to his wound, and then he was able to get to the helicopter.

“His attitude was probably one of the best I’ve seen out of any injured Soldier,” Woken said. “He was able to speak with me and explain how he was feeling. And at the end of the mission, he walked off the helicopter.”

Both Woken and Focken were present at the ceremony, brought together for the event by the German government. The two had not been in contact with each other since Focken departed Woken’s Black Hawk in Afghanistan.

For Focken, he got a chance to say thank you to one of the American Soldiers who helped save his life.

“It’s a great thing to say thank you personally to Sgt. Woken and to his crew that saved me,” he said.

Ammon said the award ceremony was about more than just a medal. He said it was about an enduring friendship between two allied nations.

“Today is more than just paying tribute to the bravery of one courageous serviceman who saved a fellow Soldier,” Ammon said. “Today we also celebrate the lasting vitality of our alliance in challenging times — an alliance that has roots going back to the American Revolution of 1776, and an alliance that will remain a cornerstone of our security well into the 21st century.”



▲ German Cpl. Tim Focken and Staff Sgt. Peter Woken meet following a ceremony Dec. 8 at the home of the German ambassador in Washington, D.C. During the event, Woken was awarded the German Medal of Honor for Gallantry in Action, similar to the American Silver Star, for saving Focken’s life in Afghanistan. PHOTO BY C. TODD LOPEZ

THIS MONTH IN NCO HISTORY

February 19, 1968



Zabitosky

Fred William Zabitosky was a 25-year-old staff sergeant and assistant team leader serving with the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) on a reconnaissance patrol in Laos when his nine-man team was attacked by a larger North Vietnamese Army unit. Rallying his team members, he organized their defense and movement to a nearby helicopter landing zone for extraction. Though outnumbered and surrounded, the team fought off the enemy onslaught thanks in no small part to Zabitosky's constant encouragement of each man in the tight perimeter.

When the rescue helicopters arrived, Zabitosky was exposed to the enemy's relentless fire repeatedly as he adjusted the helicopter gunships' suppressive fire. Boarding the last helicopter, he fired at the enemy while hanging out the door. However, the helicopter succumbed to a hail of bullets and Zabitosky was thrown from it as it crashed. After regaining consciousness, he ignored the searing pain of his crushed ribs so that he could make his way to the burning wreckage. Despite the intense heat and danger that the downed helicopter could explode at any moment, he was able to pull the wounded pilot from the flames toward a waiting rescue helicopter before collapsing just feet away from it.

For his "extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty," Zabitosky was awarded the Medal of Honor by President Richard Nixon the following year. He retired from the Army as a master sergeant in 1989 after 30 years of service and died in 1996 at the age of 53. Zabitosky Road at Fort Bragg, N.C., is named in his honor.

— COMPILED BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS

NCO awarded for shooting response

BY STAFF SGT. FELIX FIMBRES
Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command

Sgt. Daniel Clemens was waiting in line at a local gas station, getting himself an energy drink, when he heard a gunshot.

"I was honestly thinking that if the [shooter] saw me, I would be the first target since I was in uniform. So I figured I would go see if anyone had been shot, to see what I could do to help," he said.

Clemens is an Army Reserve civil affairs sergeant with the 308th Civil Affairs Brigade in Homewood, Ill. He was preparing for his monthly battle assembly when he found himself inside a crime scene after a shooting with a large-caliber handgun in Minooka, Ill.

He also made a choice that would change his life and save another. Not only did Clemens risk his life by running toward the gunfire, but in doing so, put himself in a situation to apply the training he learned in the Army to save the victim's life.

"I served six and a half years on active duty as an infantryman, and had practiced life-saving skills a thousand times," Clemens said. "I quickly checked for an entrance and exit wound. Since I couldn't find an exit wound, I started treating the heavy bleeding. I knew that pressure alone wasn't going to keep her alive. At this point, a trucker came up to help me. I asked him for his belt and I applied a makeshift tourniquet to her leg."

Minooka's fire chief, Al Yancey, and his lieutenant, Shift Commander Arnold Nolan — who were both at the scene — commended Clemens' actions. Because the shooter's whereabouts were unknown, the area could not be cleared by local law enforcement, which meant first responders couldn't enter the scene. It was during this critical time Clemens worked to save the victim.



Clemens

For his actions, Clemens received the Army's Safety Guardian Award in March. He is the first Soldier in the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) or in the Army Reserve to receive one.

The citation accompanying the award reads in part: "Through extraordinary actions, [he] responded to a shooting incident involving a woman who may have bled to death if not for his assistance."

Gerard Watkins, occupational health and safety specialist for the brigade, was a key advocate in pushing for the award after he heard what Clemens had done.

"I felt that his actions were not only very heroic, but also showcase the quality of noncommissioned officers we have in the Army," Watkins said.

Clemens said he is honored to receive the award, but to him that's not the real reward.

"I found out a month later after the incident, she made a full recovery from the shooting," he said. "That's all that matters to me, that she's OK." ⩔



An age-old rite of passage

Engineer unit keeps NCO induction ceremony alive

BY SGT. CHRISTOPHER GAYLORD
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

For some Soldiers the achievement of sergeant rank comes quickly and easily. For Sgt. Nathaniel Floyd Jr., it was a more arduous journey.

A Soldier in the Army's communications and information management career field, Floyd felt he had the short end of the stick in an organization where points earned toward promotion to sergeant depend on the type of job.

"It was a long road for me and my peers," said Floyd, the communications and information management NCO for the 864th Engineer Battalion, 555th Engineer Brigade, at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. "It takes a lot of heart and dedicated time to actually be a noncommissioned officer, because our points are very high" for promotion.

A higher standard for promotion points meant more work for Floyd if he ever wanted to be a leader, and the fruits of that work officially paid off Nov. 18 during an NCO Induction Ceremony held for Floyd and 27 other sergeants from his battalion.

Floyd has already worn the rank for two months, but on that day the stripes meant a little bit more to him.

"It adds a little fuel to the fire," he said. "It gives you that spark. It makes you want to enforce the standards more than what you usually do."

Following a centuries-old tradition of commemorating the ascent of once-junior soldiers to their armies' NCO ranks, the ceremony honors the hard work and dedication inductees put forth to earn their promotions and spotlights their inclusion into the NCO Corps.

During the climax of the ceremony, inductees cross over a figurative line, portrayed physically by a wooden archway or bridge, that symbolizes their entrance into a group of leaders from the ranks of those they will lead.

"It's basically a rite of passage," said Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Tipton, the 864th Engineer Battalion command sergeant major, who presided over the ceremony. "It's crossing that line from being a Soldier that is led, to now what you would call a leader. It shows, basically, that

◀ **Sgt. Kenneth Francis walks under an archway of crossed sabers Nov. 18 during an NCO induction ceremony for the 864th Engineer Battalion at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.**

▶ **Sergeants from the 864th Engineer Battalion recite the NCO Oath during the induction ceremony.**

PHOTOS BY SGT. CHRISTOPHER GAYLORD



they're a little bit different than what they once were."

Sgt. Jeffery Jones had his own way of putting it.

"It was one thing to be promoted. But this — I became ... actually part of the Corps itself, not just a sergeant," said Jones, a petroleum supply specialist who was promoted to sergeant in late 2010.

"Having these ceremonies gives you something to kind of build toward," he said. "I'm not just going to get promoted; I'm going to have this moment, this time, these few minutes, to be welcomed. Not just promoted, but welcomed."

But some, like Sgt. Robert Deskins, believe the storied ceremony is losing its way in the Army. Like a fading tradition, Deskins says, it's seen less often these days.

"This is one of those ceremonies that's become lost within the ranks," said Deskins, a horizontal construction engineer. "It's one of those 'time-honored corps' things that a lot of people are starting to lose track of."

Deskins said he felt honored to be a part of the ceremony.

"It's nice having a sergeant major who will actually bring something back and let me feel like a piece of history," he added.

As the new sergeants passed one-by-one under an arch of crossed sabers and then ascended the steps to the auditorium stage, some wore smiles, some a solemn and disciplined stare. But in all lay an evident sense of pride.

For Floyd and Jones, at least, it was also a time to come full circle — to reap the benefits of hard work.

"All the points, all the promotion boards ... this was the epitome of my success," Jones said.

"We can train all we want. But it's things like this that are the pat on the back — the 'Hey, you finally made it' — that are important, too.

"We have to keep those traditions alive." ⩔

Combat Stress Control Unit helps keep deployed Soldiers in the game

BY SPC. HAROLD MCGILL
319th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Members of the 113th Combat Stress Control Unit, based in Garden Grove, Calif., and stationed at the Troop Medical Clinic at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan, use modern techniques to handle issues that have plagued warriors as long as there has been war. The 44-person unit, which has been at Kandahar since last summer, is already making quite an impact.

"Everybody is stressed in a war zone," said Col. David D. Rabb, the unit's commander. "The question is, how are you gonna deal with it? Stress is a silent enemy. It will take you out."

The unit is not just at Kandahar. It also has two- to four-man teams established throughout Regional Command South to help service members deal with some of the issues created by war.

According to an April 2008 *Science Daily* report, nearly 20 percent of vets who return home from Iraq and Afghanistan are likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

"About 80 percent of what we do is focused on prevention. About 20 percent is treatment," Rabb said.

Rabb said exposure to combat, concerns at home, and peer-to-peer relationships are the three major issues that Soldiers in-theater are trying to handle.

That last issue is something that one Soldier here knows all too well.

Pfc. Courtney S. Peaugh, an aviation technical supply specialist for the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st

STRESS CONTINUES ON PAGE 49 →

New use for old tech

NCO's shortwave solution a long-term benefit for populace

BY SGT. FRANCIS O'BRIEN
116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Soldiers of the Virginia Army National Guard's 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team are deploying technology in Afghanistan in a revolutionary way using a shortwave radio transmitter that can reach almost every radio in Zabul province.

This is the first time a provincewide transmitter has been used in Afghanistan. The transmitter allows the Zabul provincial and district governments to send messages to rural Afghan homes.

"No other unit in the International Security Assistance Force has ever done this at any level," Master Sgt. Joel E. Fix said of the technology's novel application. "We have the ability to target the signal toward specific districts or the whole province."

Radio and word of mouth are the primary means of spreading news and information in rural Afghanistan. Listening to the radio — thousands of which were distributed by ISAF — is a cultural norm for Afghans, many of whom follow broadcasts from the BBC and Voice of America.

Fix, a 14-year veteran of the Guard on his third overseas deployment, came up with the transmitter solution in response to a problem raised in discussions with Afghan officials: How could the government communicate to its people in remote areas?

It was a particularly timely challenge. As the federal government expanded its influence into every district, its continued legitimacy rested on the ability to reliably reach and involve ordinary Afghans in their parliamentary democracy. Specifically, the district governors of Mizan and Daychopan in Zabul province each wanted to invite the elders of their districts to grand shuras last September.

Daychopan has the highest elevations of Zabul province, with deep valleys unreceptive to radio signals.

The 116th "Stonewall" Brigade, in partnership with Romanian troops and Soldiers of the Alaska-based 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division — all members of Combined Team Zabul — came together to brainstorm a solution. Traditional options, such as leaflet drops, broadcasting radio

▼ A Romanian soldier helps Master Sgt. Joel E. Fix (left) of the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team set up a shortwave antenna Dec. 6 at Forward Operating Base Lagman, Afghanistan. The antenna allows federal and local government broadcasts to reach the rural areas of Zabul province.
PHOTO BY SPC. CRYSTAL DAVIS



transmissions from aircraft and even flying aircraft with loudspeakers attached, were all deemed not feasible.

"The government was looking for ways to communicate with people on a greater scale, but there were gaps in the coverage," Fix said. "Shortwave radio is the solution we came up with."

Though shortwave radio, also known as ham radio, allows two-way communications, the Zabul transmitter is one-way and most radios used by Afghans only receive.

"With this configuration, no matter where they are, there's no reason the Afghans can't get a signal," Fix said. "The frequency is close to the one for the BBC. That makes it easy to find and remember," he added.

The transmitter owes its success to a technique called Near Vertical Incidence Skywave, which involves bouncing radio signals off the ionosphere, a layer of the atmosphere. Two NVIS antennas are placed horizontal to the ground, unlike a traditional vertical transmitter. The second part of the NVIS antenna, a ground wire, helps to boost the signal by forcing it to go straight up, instead of outward and limited by the curvature of the earth.

"Using NVIS, the signal goes up at a very steep angle and straight back down, which can penetrate deeper into mountain valleys," Fix said. "When we were looking at this system, it was a no-brainer."

The transmitter is operated and maintained by coalition forces and broadcasts content from the local government. The goal is to transfer the transmitter to the provincial government as part of the transition, brigade officials said.

Compared with some new technologies developed and used as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, this transmitter is especially inexpensive and effective, resulting in a savings of 3,100 percent, Fix said. "It would take 30 to 32 FM systems to cover the same area," he said. ⩔

← **STRESS** CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47

Airborne Division, at Fort Campbell, Ky., was on her second deployment in less than three years when anger began taking its toll.

"I was having a lot of issues when I first got here. They just all sort of rolled into one," Peaugh said. "I couldn't deal with it anymore."

She said that a new noncommissioned officer in her unit made a big impact on her when the NCO actually escorted her to the clinic and sat in on her first session. After that, it got easier for her to go on her own, she said.

Sgt. 1st Class Jose A. Chavarin, the NCO in charge of the unit, described some of the multiple tools used by the stress control team to help Soldiers.

The unit has smoking cessation and sleep hygiene classes. It uses a therapy dog, Sgt. 1st Class Zeke, to help service members open up in therapy sessions. Zeke is even used for physical therapy at the hospital located just down the road from the clinic.

Chavarin is also the head of the unit's tele-behavioral health program. Therapists use Skype throughout Regional Command South to reach Soldiers in remote locations so they don't have to come to Kandahar.

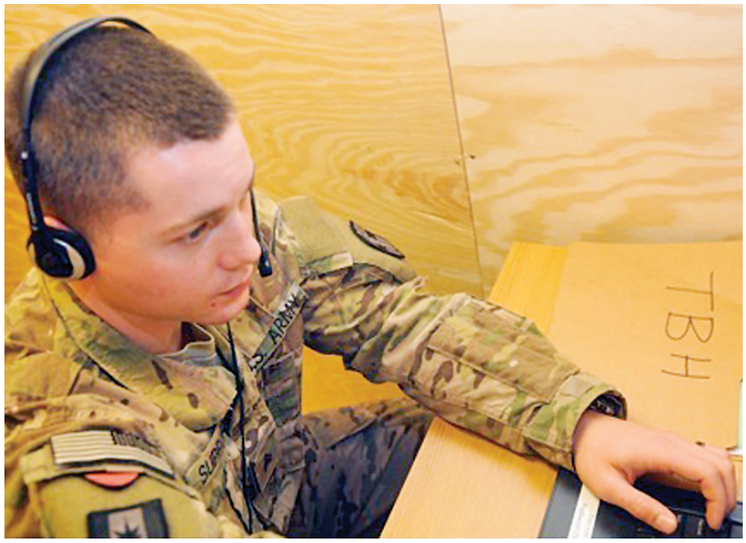
"The sooner they get help, the better off they are," Chavarin said. "Soldiers need to understand that a lot of what they are experiencing is normal. They're dealing with normal reactions to abnormal situations."

Chavarin said some leaders are hesitant to send their Soldiers to get help. They are concerned about losing a Soldier when they send them to behavioral health.

Support from leadership could be one of the most important parts of the process of helping Soldiers. Data suggest that it is hard for people to seek help for combat-related mental issues.

At the time the *Science Daily* report was issued, the RAND Corporation found that only slightly more than half of those who needed help sought it.

"Those Soldiers need to come see us, and we are gonna do our best to get that Soldier back to them (leadership) as soon as possible," he said.



Chavarin suggests that a Soldier who is not getting help is not combat-effective anyway, so units are really a person down as it is.

"We are working to keep people in the game," Rabb said. He said that getting those Soldiers back to the mission was one of the unit's top priorities.

"These guys helped me out more than I could have asked," Peaugh said. "They helped me realize things about myself that I thought I could never solve or ever get through. I wish there were more people like them in the Army." ⩔

▲ Sgt. Kesuma M. Suprobo, assistant NCO in charge of the 113th Combat Stress Control Unit at the Troop Medical Clinic at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan, runs a systems check on a computer used to conduct tele-behavioral health sessions throughout Regional Command South. PHOTO BY SPC. HAROLD MCGILL

Prevent, shape, win

Facing the future, the Army must pay attention to each role

BY GEN. RAYMOND T. ODIERNO
Chief of Staff of the Army

There is much discussion in the halls of the Pentagon these days about the role of the Army, and I'd like to share with you my thoughts on the issue.

Without question, 10 years of war and today's austere economic environment will have a profound impact on our Army. But to put it simply: In these uncertain times — perhaps especially in these uncertain times — the Army is central to our nation's defense.

Specifically, the Army has three roles to play.

First, our Army must prevent conflict. Prevention requires a credible force with sufficient capacity, readiness and modernization. Our ability and will to win any fight cannot be open to challenge.

As part of a joint force, we must be clear that we can fight and win across the full spectrum of conflict. That means realistic training, expert leaders, modern equipment and quality Soldiers.

Prevention is achieved by convincing your potential opponents that armed conflict with your force would be extremely unwise. Our land forces must continue to be a credible force around the globe.

Second, our Army must help shape the international environment so our friends are enabled and our enemies contained. We do that by engaging with our partners, fostering mutual understanding through military-to-military contacts and helping partners build the capacity to defend themselves.

This is an investment in the future, and an investment we cannot afford to forgo. It is cultivating friends before you need them, being a reliable, consistent and respectful partner.

> **"In these uncertain times — perhaps especially in these uncertain times — the Army is central to our nation's defense."**
>
> **— GEN. RAYMOND T. ODIERNO**

Finally, we must be ready to win decisively and dominantly. If we do not, we pay the price in American lives. When Gen. Douglas MacArthur said, "In war there is no substitute for victory," he was making a plain statement of fact. Nothing else can approach what is achieved by winning, and the consequences of losing at war are usually catastrophic.

With so much at stake, the American people will expect what they have always expected of us: to never lightly enter into such a terrible endeavor, but once there, to win and win decisively.

This "prevent, shape, win" construct captures the Army's unique role as part of the joint force, and rests upon the capabilities, depth and vast experience resident within our Army. When combined with the capabilities of the Navy, the Air Force and the Marines, the United States remains — and will remain — a force to be reckoned with.

As we, the Army, continue to adapt to future strategic challenges, including resource constraints, we must ensure sufficient attention to each role.



▲ **Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, chief of staff of the Army, shakes hands with Staff Sgt. Christopher McCuiston of the 10th Mountain Division during an Oct. 25 re-enlistment ceremony at Fort Drum, N.Y.** PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TEDDY WADE

Gen. Raymond T. Odierno was sworn in as the Army's 38th chief of staff in September. Prior to that, he served as the commander of U.S. Joint Forces Command.

Roll Call
OF THE FALLEN

Operation Enduring Freedom

Staff Sgt. Joseph J. Altmann, 27
Marshfield, Wis., Dec. 25, 2011

Spc. Mikayla A. Bragg, 21
Longview, Wash., Dec. 21, 2011

Spc. Pernell J. Herrera, 33
Española, N.M., Dec. 31, 2011

Spc. Kurt W. Kern, 24
McAllen, Texas, Dec. 27, 2011

Sgt. Noah M. Korte, 29
Lake Elsinore, Calif., Dec. 27, 2011

Spc. Brian J. Leonhardt, 21
Merrillville, Ind., Jan 6, 2012

Staff Sgt. Jonathan M. Metzger, 32
Indianapolis, Ind., Jan 6, 2012

Sgt. Christopher L. Muniz, 24
New Cuyama, Calif., Dec. 11, 2011

Spc. Christopher A. Patterson, 20
Aurora, Ill., Jan 6, 2012

Spc. Robert J. Tauteris Jr., 44
Hamlet, Ind., Jan 6, 2012

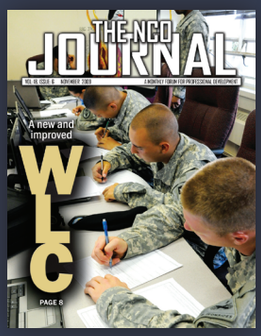
Pvt. Jalfred D. Vaquerano, 20
Apopka, Fla., Dec. 13, 2011

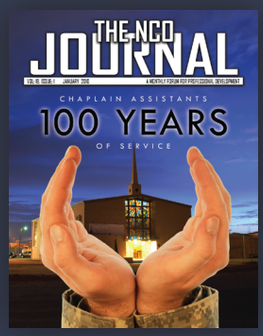
Pfc. Justin M. Whitmire, 20
Easley, S.C., Dec. 27, 2011

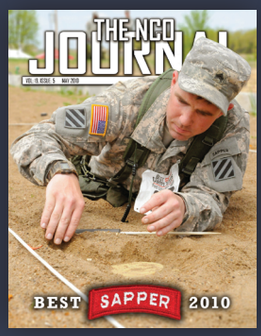
Spc. Ronald H. Wildrick Jr., 30
Blairstown, N.J., Dec. 11, 2011

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

This is a continuation of a list that began in the October 2003 issue of The NCO Journal *and contains names released by the Department of Defense between Dec. 10, 2011 and Jan. 6, 2012.*



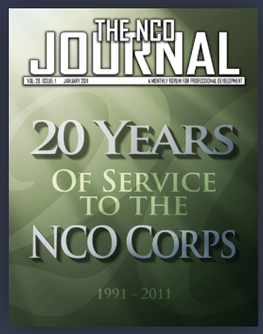










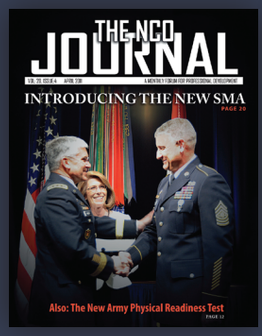


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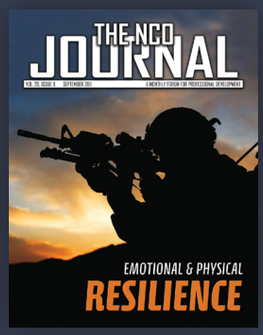
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