

THE NGO JOURNAL

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APRIL 2007

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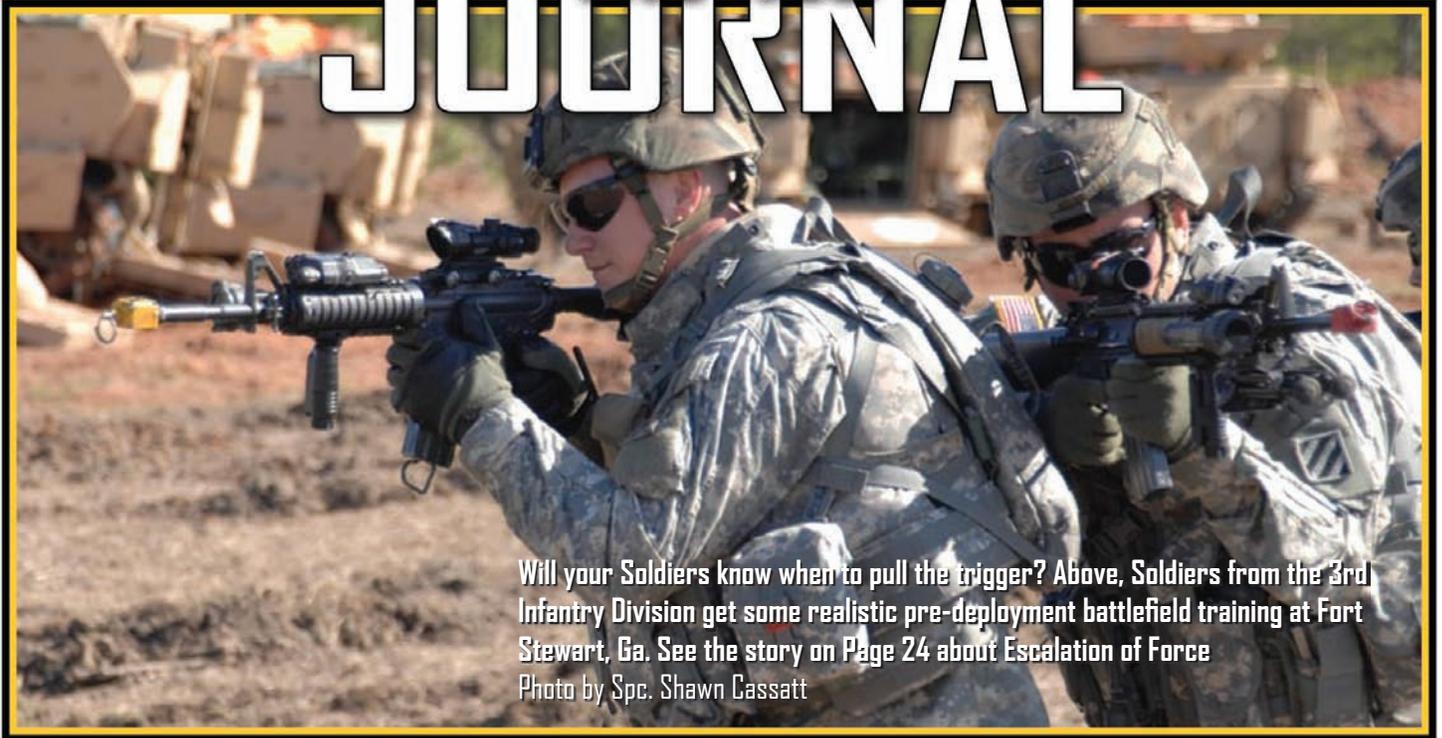
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Fort Dix stays on top of



Special: NCOs face unique challenges at GTMO

THE NCO JOURNAL



Will your Soldiers know when to pull the trigger? Above, Soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Division get some realistic pre-deployment battlefield training at Fort Stewart, Ga. See the story on Page 24 about Escalation of Force
Photo by Spc. Shawn Cassatt

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CAMP DODGE

Using the latest of technologies, the folks who run the Battle Staff NCO Course are now poised to provide digital training via the Internet.

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INSIDE GTMO

NCOs at JTF-GTMO are under a world microscope while guarding those who would kill them at a moment's notice. Still, they maintain their core values.

David Crozier



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Soldiers of the 377th Military Intelligence Battalion lead the way during urban training at the Fort Dix training area known as the Iraqi town Balad, as part of theater immersion training.

Photo by David Moore



TRAINING

TRAIN UP: DIX-STYLE

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Fort Dix personnel are passionate about making sure the Nation's citizen Soldiers are ready for combat and they're good at it, too. They have trained nearly 60,000 warriors since 9/11.

Master Sgt. Eric Pilgrim



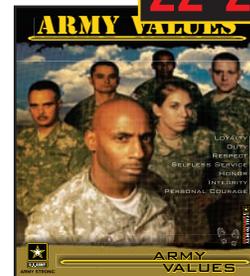
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Following orders and meeting standards is a black-and-white business. When you mix the colors you get gray. Leaders need to be aware of the gray zone.

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ON POINT

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When you find yourself strapped for cash to pay bills, who will you turn to for help? The people at Army Emergency Relief hope it is their organization and not some pay-day lender.

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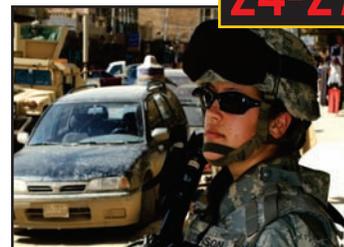


PULL THE TRIGGER?

24-27

Firing a weapon too early in a pressure situation could have disastrous effects. Are your Soldiers trained up on proper escalation of force procedures? Do they know when to pull the trigger and when to check fire?

Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel R. Wood



Have a suggestion, a story, photo or opinion? We want to hear from you. Contact YOUR NCO Journal at ATSS-SJ-NCOJOURNAL@bliss.army.mil.

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APRIL 2007

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Our mission is to provide a forum for the open exchange of ideas and information, to support training, education and development of the NCO Corps and to foster a closer bond among its members.

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APRIL 2007

From the SMA

Caring for America's Warriors

Lapses in the care of wounded and injured warriors have captured national attention. Soldiers and their families are the heart of our organization, and we will not fail them. I realize we did not provide the treatment our Soldiers and families expect and we will fix those shortfalls. All Americans deserve to know that the Army is making corrections and improvements to outpatient and long term wounded warrior care, and improving the medical administrative processes which move our Soldiers through the Army system and potentially into the Veterans Administration.

As the V Corps and Combined Joint Task Force-7 command sergeant major during Operation Iraqi Freedom 1, I have seen the magnificent care our medics provide at the point of injury on the battlefield. I have watched our health care professionals in the combat zone save the lives of many Soldiers and civilians. I have seen, just as many of you have seen or read about, the world class care provided to our inpatients severely wounded warriors in hospitals across the country. In my current duties as sergeant major of the Army, it is my mission to visit the posts, camps, and stations around the world, talk to Soldiers and family members and be their advocate to the senior leadership of the Army. The Army has the finest medical care professionals in the world, and their passion is saving Soldiers' lives. From the point of injury, through triage, stabilization and evacuation to the medical centers, our Soldiers are surviving traumatic injuries that would have been fatal on past battlefields. However, the current system that brings wounded Soldiers back to duty or transitions them to civilian life and long term care, requires an overhaul to thin the bureaucracy and ensure that the needs of sick and wounded Soldiers and their families are met.

Early last year, the Secretary of the Army realized there were deficiencies in the system and directed our Inspector General to conduct a full review. It was readily apparent that problems in a peacetime system were compounded by increasing numbers of Soldiers entering the disability system, the consequence of the first five years of this long war.

The inspection found our medical facilities doing some great things, and we are passing on best practices to all Army medical facilities. But the Inspector General's comprehensive review also recommended some key changes: the Army should update its regulations, improve timeliness standards for processing, standardize training of case managers and liaisons, implement quality controls and improve computer systems to better track Soldiers' medical information and status. This was our Inspector General; this was us – the Army – policing ourselves, and we have gone to work on these recommendations.



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston

In all other areas, too, the Army is taking decisive action. We are implementing an Army-wide action plan to improve care for Soldiers and their families based on the findings at Walter Reed. This action plan is focusing on four areas: Soldier accountability, health and welfare; infrastructure; medical administrative processes; and information dissemination.

At Walter Reed, the Army assigned a top-notch medical officer and command sergeant major as the new commander and CSM. Additionally, the Army created a new deputy commander position, which has been filled by a combat-seasoned general, and it created a new wounded warrior transition brigade led by combat veterans, both officers and noncommissioned officers, serving in the leadership positions. We also set up a one-stop assistance center, a centralized issue point to replenish uniforms, a centralized distribution system for donated goods, improved dining facility access, and we moved all wounded Soldiers to better living quarters closer to the main hospital.

I have visited Walter Reed Army Medical Center countless times since becoming sergeant major of the Army in 2004. I am extremely proud of our medical professionals and their dedication to providing world-class care to our wounded and injured Soldiers.

But the red tape challenge is not just at Walter Reed: it is nationwide and cross-service. So, the Army also launched a team of medical and installation professionals to major medical centers to assess outpatient care at all of our facilities. Some of the immediate improvements made from early reports include establishing a patient advocate at medical centers and assigning and hiring more people to reduce the ratio of patients to case workers. We will continue to work with the rest of the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs and Congress, and are certainly participating in all the external reviews of this system so we can make these improvements nationwide.

I want all veterans of every generation to know the Army "gets it;" we are taking action, and we are working with the Veterans Administration, fighting to regain your trust and confidence. Our Soldiers and families deserve the best inpatient and outpatient care we can provide. We know that if the system is not perfect, it is not good enough. As Soldiers, we vow to never leave a fallen comrade. This applies not only to the battlefield, but in hospitals and outpatient clinics as well. As the sergeant major of the Army, I will work to ensure we remain true to that vow.

*SMA Kenneth O. Preston
13th Sergeant Major of the Army*

Legacy of change:

Overhauling the Enlisted promotion system

By Sgt. Joseph M. Krafft

The U.S. Army enlisted promotion system for the grades of sergeants and staff sergeants is in serious need of change.

Three areas currently account for a majority of the total number of promotion points given to promotable noncommissioned officers: the commander's – or administrative – points, board appearance, and military education. Of these areas, the first has become meaningless, the second arbitrary, and the last prone to fraud. Fundamental changes to the promotion point system are necessary to meet future force demands.

What happens to qualified Soldiers who are not recommended for promotion in a timely manner, or even at all? These overlooked Soldiers often become frustrated and choose early separation from the Army.

The creation of an "Application for Advancement" may solve this problem. Soldiers whose abilities go unrecognized by their supervisors could then state their own case. The application could be submitted and processed when Soldiers enter the primary zone. Along with a command recommendation, it would demonstrate the Soldier's initiative and potential.

This application would also reduce the importance of the promotion board.

Like the commander's points, recently proposed revisions threaten to eliminate the point value system for the board in favor of a "go/no go" status. Further changes could call into question whether a formal board is necessary at all. Boards mostly function as an Army tradition – a right of passage. They are used to test a Soldier's knowledge, military bearing and performance under stressful conditions.

The problem is not merely that the impression gained about the Soldier through a promotion board is formed out of context; it cannot fully test the Soldier's abilities within a 30-minute block of time. Logically, then, daily observation provides a much better understanding of a Soldier's true capabilities.

As an overall test of military knowledge, the board system is flawed as well. The extent to which boards test anything beyond rote memorization is slim. Also, the variation in methods between them renders boards invalid as a centralized, uniform standard of measure. Standardized testing – either MOS-specific or Army-wide – would provide a more accurate idea of a Soldier's knowl-

edge in comparison with peers.

Testing already plays a fairly large role in the promotion system. Soldiers are tested in the areas of marksmanship, fitness, and military education. Currently, military education equals twice the potential promotion points of the other two areas combined. However, the Army's correspondence course program, which accounts for many of these points, is in dire need of change.

Lowering the threshold for military education points may encourage retention of material over speed. Rethinking the testing system can discourage user fraud. Replacing and updating outdated material will make the courses more useful. Emphasizing MOS-related education would make it more relevant. Ultimately, military education should help increase Soldiers' knowledge and skills, rather than just their promotion point totals.

The Army's current enlisted promotion system is far from broken, but it is also far from perfect. An overhaul of the current framework could create a more efficient and equitable system for the entire Army of the future. Tradition is important, but needless adherence to it holds the Army back.

We must remember that the most important military tradition is that of adaptation. The Army must change to meet the challenges of a new era, both on the battlefield and off.



Photo by David Crozier

Sgt. Joseph Krafft inspects the contents of his land navigation kit during the 2006 NCO/Soldier of the Year Competition.

Editor's note: Sgt. Joseph Krafft was selected as the NCO of the Year for the US Army Materiel Command and competed in the 2006 NCO/Soldier of the Year competition held at Fort Lee, Va. This is his essay that he submitted to the board during the competition. He is assigned to the 389th Army Band.

New leaders, transition brigade to steer WRAMC changes

By Beth Reece

Army News Service - The Army's vice chief of staff announced recently that a new group of leaders – all combat veterans - will steer changes in inpatient and outpatient care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Gen. Richard Cody named Brig. Gen. Michael S. Tucker as the new WRAMC deputy commander. Currently the deputy commanding general and assistant commandant for the U.S. Armor Center and Fort Knox, Ky., Tucker will serve alongside new WRAMC Commanding General Maj. Gen. Eric Schoomaker.

"He understands Soldiers. He understands leading in combat. He understands how to run large organizations," Cody said of Tucker, a former noncommissioned officer and drill sergeant. "He's going to be the guy that we look to to be the Soldiers' and families' advocate as they go through inpatient and outpatient (care) but also he's going to be the bureaucratic buster and take on this bureaucracy that at times frustrates our Soldiers."

Col. Terrance McKenrick was also handpicked to stand up the new Wounded Warrior Transition Brigade. He and Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Hartless will oversee the health,

welfare and morale of patients as they recover.

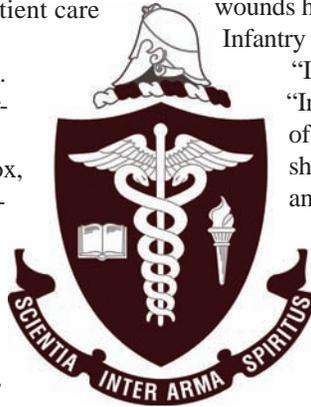
McKenrick and Hartless will "rewrite the book on how we do med(ical) hold procedures," Cody said.

Hartless, himself, spent time recovering at WRAMC from wounds he suffered while serving in Afghanistan with the 173rd Infantry Brigade.

"It's an honor to get chosen to do this," said Hartless. "In combat arms, this is our daily business; to take care of small groups of people, of Soldiers. We take ownership of our Soldiers. We can take care of the problems and let them worry about getting well."

Bringing in leaders outside of the medical field will free up medical specialists and doctors to focus on treating Soldiers, while combat-arms leaders take care of Soldiers' overall needs and help reestablish trust in the system, Cody said.

"I do not want our Soldiers and their families to be burdened by anything other than getting our Soldiers back to the best physical shape and best mental shape that they can," Cody said. That is their focus, and we're going to unload their rucksack. They've been carrying the rucksack in combat, and right now as they go through our system I don't want them carrying the rucksack of bureaucracy."



CID unveils new crime prevention program

The U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (USACIDC), commonly known as CID, recently announced a new Army-wide crime prevention and awareness program dubbed "*CID Lookout*."

The program is a CID initiative to partner with the Army community by providing a conduit for members of the Army family to help prevent, reduce and report felony-level crime. CID simultaneously announced its related "*CID Cyber Lookout*" program initiated by the Computer Crime Investigative Unit (CCIU). *CID Cyber Lookout* is designed to promote Internet safety by educating the Army community about the dangers posed by cyber-criminals on the Internet.

The USACIDC is an independent criminal investigative organization that investigates serious, felony-level crime such as homicide, rape, sexual assault, robbery,

arson, contract fraud and intrusions into Army networks.

"Solving and preventing crimes of this nature takes community involvement and cannot be achieved solely by CID special agents. Together, professional law enforcement officers and the Army community

"The information will cover topics such as identity theft, logistics security, preventing sexual assault and robbery – anything that prevents our Soldiers and their families from becoming victims," said Grey.

CID Lookout also asks Soldiers, family members, and employees to "Be on the lookout" and report crimes and suspicious activities.

"We want people to know who we are, what we can do for them, and what they can do for us to

make our Army even more *Army Strong* and safe," said Johnson. "The new *CID Lookout* program provides that two-way communication mechanism for members of the Army family to get involved."

For more information on CID or to report a felony-level crime or provide information concerning a serious crime, contact your local CID Office, the Military Police, or visit <http://www.cid.army.mil/>.

CID Lookout

On Point for the Army

must work hand-in-hand to fight serious crime," said the Provost Marshal General of the Army and Commanding General of CID, Brig. Gen. Rodney Johnson.

Part of the new *CID Lookout* initiative will be disseminating topical and useful crime prevention and crime awareness information to the U.S. Army via the internal Army media, according to Chris Grey, CID's chief of Public Affairs.

ASMIS-2 reaches across DoD

By Kelly Widener
U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center

A tool used by Soldiers to assess the risk of driving their privately owned vehicles on trips is now the same tool that airmen, sailors, Marines and Coast Guardsmen began using in March.

Formally adopted across the Department of Defense, the tool known to Soldiers as ASMIS-2 officially became TRiPS, or Travel Risk Planning System.

The tool was adopted because of its ability to give users a comprehensive risk assessment based on their travel plans and recommend certain actions to help lower risks.

“ASMIS-2’s greatest value has always been the one-on-one interaction and dialogue it promotes between the supervisor and subordinate,” said Sgt. Maj. David Griffith, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center. “The specific questions asked about an upcoming trip allow supervisors and Soldiers to engage and help identify potential faults in driving plans and help provide other alternatives.”

The online tool was adopted last year by the Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and recently this year by the Air Force. Since its implementation in the Army, more than 1.7 million assessments have been completed by Soldiers, with six fatalities occurring during an assessed trip. These statistics show that those using the tool are less likely to be involved in fatal mishaps. TRiPS is expected to continue with the same results across all service branches.

“Since the release of TRiPS, 29,061 Sailors have registered for accounts and 15,452 risk assessments have been completed,” said Capt. Bill Glenn, director of Shore Safety at the Naval Safety Center. “To date, no Navy personnel who have been traveling on a risk assessment have been involved in a fatal motor vehicle accident.”

While elements of ASMIS-2 remain the same – such as inputting information like the type of vehicle being driven, age, start and end points, expected sleep before traveling, seat belt use and more – TRiPS offers more than just a name change. The tool offers additional features specifically for supervisors. One of the new features allows supervisors to view the TRiPS activity of their subordinates two levels down, which offers more opportunity for leadership engagement and awareness.

“TRiPS will continue to provide users with risk awareness features such as the mapping feature,” said Griffith. “However, the new features make this positive and proven tool even more valuable in the fight against POV fatalities of not only our Soldiers, but all DoD service members and civilians.”

For more information visit the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center’s Web site at <https://crc.army.mil>.

How to get The *NCO Journal*

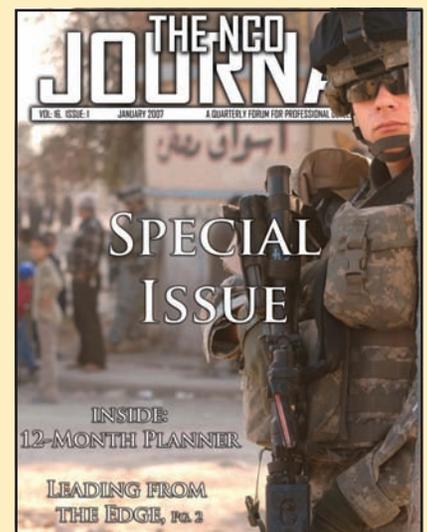
Individual subscriptions to The *NCO Journal* are available through the Government Printing Office at the annual cost of \$16 for domestic and Army Post Office (APO) addresses or \$22.40 for delivery to foreign addresses. The subscription price covers four issues annually. The subscription program is open to all individuals and non-government organizations. Individual copies are available for \$5 domestic or \$7 foreign.

To order online, visit the GPO Bookstore at <http://bookstore.gpo.gov> and type in “*NCO Journal*” at the search

field. After the search completes, click on the shopping cart next to the title and follow the instructions provided.

The GPO also accepts orders by calling toll-free at 1-866-512-1800.

Any unit with a publications account can update their 12 series to request The *NCO Journal* using the same procedure they use to request all other publications. They can update their 12 series at the <http://www.usapa.army.mil> Web site. The IDN for The *NCO Journal* is 050041.



New handbook helps Soldiers survive first 100 days in Iraq

By Paul D. Prince

Army News Service - A new handbook on how Soldiers can survive their first 100 days in Iraq is now available at <https://call2.army.mil/new/toc.asp?document=2393>.

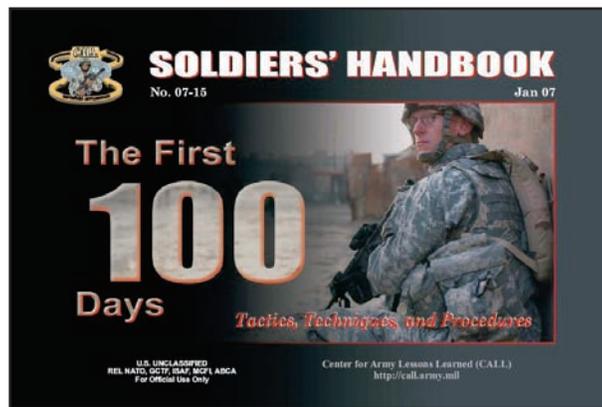
"*Soldier Handbook: Surviving Iraq*," was developed due to the increased casualty rate during the first 100 days of a unit's deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, said Col. Steven Mains, director of the Center for Army Lessons Learned at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

The handbook educates Soldiers on how not to become complacent to potential dangers and to be mindful of resourceful enemies who closely observe U.S. tactics to adapt their attack strategies, said Mains.

The handbook is based on responses from more than 1,700 Soldiers – captains, lieutenants and Soldiers from the ranks of staff sergeant and below. About 1,000 of the responses were taken from interviews

with redeploying units in Kuwait and Soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Carson, Colo. and Fort Stewart, Ga.

The Soldiers were asked questions pertaining to individual Soldier behavior, unit leadership, equipment and pre-deployment training.



"Our intention was to learn from the Soldiers what they thought contributed to their survival in Iraq," said Milton Hileman, senior military analyst for CALL. "We asked them to focus their answers as if they were talking from one Soldier to another."

The remaining responses came from a 23-question survey that CALL placed on its Web site.

"We were pleased with numerous responses we received from many of the Soldiers," said Hileman. "The Soldiers in many cases were very insightful."

"Several Soldiers came up to me after filling out the survey and said 'Thank you for asking,'" said James Gebhardt, senior military analyst for CALL. "They had a sense of self-worth and self-importance."

Among other recommendations, many Soldiers recommended:

- Staying aware of their surroundings
- Listening to their leaders
- Avoiding routine or predictable patterns
- Following standard operating procedures
- Using protective gear and armored vehicles

The handbook is available in paper format. For more information, visit CALL at <https://call2.army.mil>.

TRICARE benefit covers HPV Vaccine

Human papillomavirus (HPV) infection is a concern for girls and young women because it can lead to cervical cancer. TRICARE wants its beneficiaries to know a preventive vaccine is available, and is a TRICARE covered benefit.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that in 2006 approximately 9,700 cases of cervical cancer were diagnosed in the United States, and approximately 3,700 women died from the disease. Nearly all cervical cancer cases are associated with an HPV infection.

The CDC recommends a three-dose schedule for the HPV vaccine with the second and third doses administered two and six months after the first dose. Officials recommend vaccination for girls 11 to 12 years old. Doctors may start the vaccination series in girls as young as 9 years old, and can give a catch-up vaccination to those 13 to 26 years old who have not been vaccinated previously or haven't completed the full vaccine series.

Because the vaccine is new, it may not be available every-

Vaccine ▼	Age ▶	7-10 years	11-12 YEARS	13-14 years	15 years	16-18 years	
Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis ¹	See footnote 1		Tdap			Tdap	Range of recommended ages
Human Papillomavirus ²	See footnote 2		HPV (3 doses)			HPV Series	
Meningococcal ³		MPSV4		MCV4		MCV4 ⁴	Catch-up immunization
Pneumococcal ⁵						PPV	
Influenza ⁵			Influenza (Yearly)				Certain high-risk groups
Hepatitis A ⁶			HepA Series				
Hepatitis B ⁷			HepB Series				
Inactivated Poliovirus ⁸			IPV Series				
Measles, Mumps, Rubella ⁹			MMR Series				
Varicella ¹⁰			Varicella Series				

The above chart is taken from the CDC Quick Guide and illustrates the recommended immunization schedule for persons aged 7-18 years old.

where. Interested beneficiaries or their parents should contact their doctors to find out if they administer the HPV vaccine. The vaccine does not protect against every type of HPV infection and can't prevent all cervical cancers. So getting vaccinated does not eliminate the need for screening pap smears, or reduce the importance of regular gynecological exams.

Visit www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm5551-Immunization.pdf for more information.

Veterans Affairs invites feedback on services, launches Web site

By Department of Veterans Affairs Public Affairs

The Department of Veterans Affairs recently announced the creation of a new Web page dedicated to soliciting input from combat veterans on better ways to access federal services.

Veterans Affairs Secretary Jim Nicholson is leading the charge to streamline services as the head of the new interagency task force examining the process.

“As the task force moves forward in studying how we can enhance services and cut red tape, we believe it’s important to provide veterans, their family members and others with the opportunity to share their ideas and experiences,” said Nicholson.

People can email their comments to the task force at TFHeroes@va.gov or fax comments to (202) 273-9599. Information on the task force, and mailing addresses are available at www.va.gov/taskforce.

The Web page allows active duty service members, veterans, family members and others to comment directly to the task force on the accessibility, timeliness and delivery of services. Comments will be studied by the task force, used in the panel’s evaluation of gaps in service and will form the basis of recommended solutions.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the VA website with links for VA Home, About VA, Organizations, Apply Online, Find a Facility, and Contact VA. A search box is also present. The main content area features a dark blue sidebar with links for Health Care, Benefits, Burial & Memorials, Task Force on Returning Global War on Terror Heroes Home, and Text Only. The main content area is titled 'TASK FORCE ON RETURNING GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR HEROES' and contains the following text:

Task Force on Returning Global War on Terror Heroes

On March 6, 2007, the President directed VA Secretary Nicholson to establish an Interagency Task Force on Returning Global War on Terror Heroes. The Task Force will consist of Secretaries, or their designees, from the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense, Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Education. The Director, Office of Management and Budget, and the Administrator, Small Business Administration, will also serve on the Task Force.

Called the “Task Force on Returning Global War on Terror Heroes,” the panel consists of the secretaries of Defense, Labor, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, and Education, plus the administrator of the Small Business Administration and the director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Under the terms of the executive order creating the task force, the group has 45 days to identify and examine existing federal services for returning combat service members, identify gaps in such services, seek recommendations from federal agencies on ways to fill those gaps, and ensure that appropriate federal agencies are communicating and cooperating effectively.

Spouses to Teachers expands to Pacific

Army News Service - Military spouses living overseas and interested in a professional and portable teaching career now have additional assistance with the Spouses to Teachers (STT) program.

Effective throughout the U.S. Pacific Command since Feb. 1, Spouses to Teachers offers resources and counseling to military spouses searching for employment in Alaska, Hawaii, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Guam and Okinawa.

“This is a career that you can take with you around the world,” said Tylee Roller, STT program manager and education counselor.

Operational in the continental United States since October 2004 and following a successful launch in Europe last October, STT has been contacted by more than 9,000 spouses seeking information.

“Within the Department of Defense Schools, teachers can take their certifications to their next duty stations (where there are DoD schools), avoiding the complicated process of starting over every two or three years,” said Mae Ooka, quality-of-life program analyst and catalyst to STT’s Pacific establishment.

This DoD program provides counseling and guidance on state-specific certification requirements, certification options, scholarships available and state-employment resources. Up to \$600 is also available via a voucher process to reimburse costs of testing fees associated with teacher certification/licensure.

Spouses overseas can now arrive back to the continental United States already certified and ready to teach upon arriving at new locations, said Roller.

“Military spouses can easily identify with children of deployed parent(s), and the working hours are really conducive to family life,” she said.

More than 70 percent of the military spouses registered with the program have a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Eligible participants include spouses of active duty personnel, selected Reserve and National Guard, and Individual Ready Reserve recalled to active duty.

Spouses to Teachers is managed by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support.

For more information, call Brian Miller at (808) 586-5054, STT at (800) 231-6282, DSN 922-6282, or visit <http://www.SpousestoTeachers.com>. You can also e-mail them at stt@voled.doded.mil.

Honor Bound

Core values keep Guantanamo Bay guards on even keel

By David Crozier

Editor's note: The detainee operations at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba began January 2002. Many stories have been written about the operations at Camp Delta. This story is about the Soldiers and sailors who work inside the wire on a daily basis. It's about their professionalism in the face of intense scrutiny and constant threat of bodily harm by the detainees. Because of force protection concerns many of the names used in this story have been changed to protect those whose duty it is to provide the safe and humane care and custody of the enemy combatants they guard.

"Honor bound to defend freedom" is the maxim of those who are a part of Joint Task Force – Guantanamo (JTF-GTMO). The "troopers" that make up the task force know they are an integral part of the Global War on Terrorism. They call them troopers because they come from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and the U.S. Coast Guard. They call them troopers because they all work together as one keeping the core values of the military paramount in all things at JTF-GTMO. It is those values that set them apart from those they guard.

"The performance of the NCO Corps is stalwart to say the least. Everything you hear about professionalism and dedication and understanding, they get it. They truly get it," said Navy Command Master Chief Brad LeVault, command master chief of JTF-GTMO. "They totally understand what it means to be a guard here and to have an affect on, literally, national security and national strategy at the Pentagon level. They get it and they are great at performing their mission."

For the troopers who work inside the wire at Camp Delta or as a part of JTF-GTMO, that mission is to provide the safe and humane care and custody of detained enemy combatants while ensuring their own personal safety at all times. That safe and humane care consists of providing

for the detainees' dietary needs; medical needs, both physical and psychological; respect of their religion; two to 12 hours of recreation every day; and news of the world. The detainees also have access to books, videos, DVDs, music CDs and periodicals.

Camp Delta currently houses about 395 detainees. The detainees live in six camps that make up Camp Delta. Camps 1, 2 and 3 are open mesh camps with shutters that close during inclement weather. The individual cells measure 6 by 8 feet and have sanitary facilities in each cell. These are considered compliant camps and house those detainees who for the most part follow the camp rules.

Camp 4 is a communal camp where each living area has 10 bunks in an open bay that is air conditioned. The detainees here are considered highly compliant and enjoy the freedoms of being able to live and recreate together openly.

Camp 5 is the most noncompliant camp and houses detainees who are considered to be of the highest intelligence value. It is a maximum security facility that is climate controlled, has 100 cells comprised of four blocks, and a control center that monitors everything.

Camp 6 is the newest, with 178 cells in a climate controlled facility. It is designed after a minimum security prison in the United States, but has been reconfigured as a maximum security facility. Detainees here are considered compliant, yet still have trouble following camp rules; hence, they are not given the privileges and freedoms of Camp 4. Since operations began in January 2002, more than 377 detainees have been released or transferred out.

A day in the life

A guard working a cell block in Camp Delta puts in 12 hours of duty per shift actually guarding and dealing with the detainees and another two hours getting ready for duty and filling out reports at the end of their shift. The troopers must also maintain their specific military requirements – weapons training, physical fitness standards, job specialty training and so on – training that can many times lead to a trooper being busy



Photo by David Crozier

The remnants of Camp X-Ray, closed since April 2002, can still be seen by visitors and media.



Courtesy of JTF-GTMO

During prayer time a cone is placed in the cell block signifying to the guards to respect the detainees' religious freedoms.

detainees are moved one at a time, fully shackled and handcuffed, by two guards. There is never a time when a guard is with any detainee that is unshackled or unrestrained.

Even with all the force protection measures, there have been many incidents that involve detainees' misconduct. Between July 2005 and August 2006, there were 3,232 recorded incidents of detainee misconduct that ranged from verbal threats and name calling to physical assaults on the guards. The detainees have fashioned crude weapons, including shivs made from disposable toothbrushes and garrotes (strangulation devices) made from plastic bags and other materials. Of the most heinous of the physical assaults on the guards is the dreaded "GTMO Cocktail."

The GTMO Cocktail, according to officials, is any combination of bodily fluids that a detainee can concoct and throw at the guards. The fluids include urine, semen, loose fecal matter and blood. The detainees also attempt to spit on the guards as they pass by their cells. Between July 2005 and August 2006, there were 432 incidents of bodily fluid assaults recorded.

"In Camps 1, 2 and 3, the cells are open mesh and it makes it easy to have things thrown at you, be called names, taunted and so on. So I am always impressed that regardless of what happens on the block the guards just keep coming to work and acting professionally," Chris, the Navy Expeditionary Guard Battalion commander, said. "They stay focused on what they are doing and they truly believe from what they know of these [detainees] that they want to kill you, your family and their fellow Americans. And because of that they are going to keep walking the block knowing that these are the enemy taken off the battlefield."

"This is a challenging assignment," said Charlie 5, Army noncommissioned officer in charge of Camp 5. "The guys on the guard force here are very professional. They do a superb job

for 16-plus hours.

When on duty the guards walk the block continuously monitoring detainee activities unless they are escorting a detainee to a medical appointment, the recreation yard, the shower facility, or any other appointment. The

working 12 hours a day and still maintain their required military training after work."

Keeping the faith

For the guards who work the blocks and are subjected to the assaults and abuses, it's all about keeping the faith and maintaining their professionalism.

"Daily, we are subjected to name calling and the periodic cocktail that gets thrown in your direction or on someone you know," said Navy Petty Officer Hawk, trained as a fire control technician for Tomahawk missiles. "The cocktails happen once or twice a week, and daily [the detainees] are telling you to go to Iraq and they will cut your head off or cut your throat. The biggest thing is to not take it personally."

"You have to just blow it out of your head and try to not think about it," said Navy MA3 Susan, a military police officer. "Don't think about what they are calling you. You know who you are and what you are there for. Just do your job."

Doing that job for the troopers means also maintaining the core values. For the Army, it equates to loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. For the Navy and Marine Corps, it equates to honor, courage and commitment. In the Coast Guard, it is honor, respect and devotion to duty.

All of it equates to professionalism – NCO and junior enlisted. It means living by the Soldier's Creed, NCO Creed, Sailor's Creed, Coast Guardsman Creed, and Marine Corps Rifle Creed. It means following the rules of engagement and following the guidance that governs operations for JTF-GTMO.

"Every one of these Soldiers lives by the NCO Creed and the professionalism that implies. They have to watch out for their battle buddy," Charlie 5 said. "We have had Soldiers working on a daily basis as block NCOs that are E-3s and E-4s because they are that squared away."

"On the block there is no time off for me as a master of arms," said Navy Petty Officer Charlie 4, NCOIC of Camp 4. "If I see something out of place, I am duty bound not only by Navy regulations and the [Uniform Code of Military Justice], but also by the fact that I am a police officer. I have no choice

but to take care of business. I have to set the example for my sailors and the only way for me to do that is to live by and adhere to the core values at all times – honor, courage and commitment."

Preparing for the mission

For the Soldiers guarding the detainees in Camp 5, their preparation begins in Advanced Individual Training (AIT).



Courtesy of JTF-GTMO

Detainees in the highly compliant Camp 4 enjoy communal living as well as recreational activities like basketball and soccer as a group.

“Within the Military Police branch we have different military occupational specialties. There are the 31 Bravos, who are our military security police, and then we have the 31 Echoes, who are the corrections specialists,” said Lt. Vivian, Camp 5 officer in charge. “So this is what they do on a regular basis, even if they were not here.”

“All 31 Echoes go through AIT at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., where they have training on basic corrections and detainee operations,” said Charlie 5.

“The unit also has a service program that is specifically tailored to this mission as the Soldiers go through AIT,” said Vivian. “They get two weeks of training learning what their mission is at GTMO as well as lessons learned from other operations.”

For the Navy guards it is a vastly different experience than what they are exposed to in their regular jobs.

“Sixty percent of our guards here are Navy policemen. Very few of them have done detention operations. Some have run a brig on an aircraft carrier, but there you only have one and the rest are just sailors assigned to additional duties,” Chris said.



Courtesy of JTF-GTMO Public Affairs

Army Sgt. Joel Pruitt takes a free throw at a Guantanamo Bay Morale, Welfare and Recreation league basketball game.

“So 40 percent of our guard force assigned here works in supply or are cooks, or boatswain’s mates who do something else for their career. Detention operations are new for everyone and everyone that comes here goes to Fort Lewis, Wash., first for training.”

That training is conducted by the 2nd Battalion (Armor), 358th Regiment, 191st Infantry Brigade, First

U.S. Army, commanded by Lt. Col. J.D. Keith.

Once the sailors arrive at Fort Lewis, Keith’s unit quickly introduces them to detainee operations as well as being a part of an Army platoon. Each platoon is guided by an officer and senior NCO provided by the 2-358th.

“We start them off on Day 1 with death by PowerPoint and give them an overview of the training experience; then they have classes on a host of subjects, such as Muslim cultural awareness, resistance to solicitation, basic cell block operations, interacting with detainees, personal conduct and safety and a whole bunch of other things,” Keith said. “We also introduce them to public affairs and show them how to conduct interviews.”

The sailors receive training on the detainee information management system, unarmed self defense, personal safety awareness, how to react to a detainee threat, how to escort detainees and how to care for them in accordance with GTMO rules and regulations.

From there they move to replicated versions of Camps 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6, and begin what Keith calls the crawl/walk portion of the training.



Photo by David Crozier

The long lineage of those who have served at JTF-GTMO is on display outside of Camp America.

“After the initial training, they go through a three- to four-day situational training exercise where they spend a day in each camp where the role playing becomes more aggressive,” said Keith. “This is where they start making decisions, learn how to figure out problems and dealing with the detainees. They don’t get the full [deal] but they do start ratcheting up some of the detainee activities to give the sailors some exposure to what they might face at GTMO.”

After the situational training exercise, sailors are then put through six to eight days of a mission readiness exercise, where everything is escalated even further with very aggressive rules of engagement for both the guards and the detainee role players. They even replicate the GTMO Cocktail.

“We use water to replicate urine, wet toilet paper usually replicates feces and the role players are not actually allowed to spit on the sailors,” said Sgt. 1st Class Cameron Held, one of the instructors. “And although we are not putting them through real situations, we try to inflict the same amount of stress using other means.”

The first part of the stress, said Held, is the master events list which sets the schedule for the trainees which is already difficult to follow from the start, nevertheless having to deal with detainees. Then the role players throw in all kinds of issues, events and situations.

Creating that level of stress during training is the key to preparing the sailors for the worst of days they can expect to face, Keith said. “We stress them out here in hopes they don’t ever have to have a bad day down there.”

Training during the mission readiness exercise also includes replicating events that have actually happened at GTMO: attempted suicides, incidents of self harm, medical emergencies, solicitation of the guards and attacks with crude weapons.

“We make them conduct standard block operations under those conditions,” said Capt. Dale Harcrow, senior officer for training. “The main focus and what we are trying to impart is that the detainees are still conducting operations and we help [the sailors] to develop techniques to control these situations. They are dealing with some pretty bad guys down there and they have to react to all sorts of assaults and abusive-type behavior and we do our best to try and desensitize them before they get there.”

It all starts with leadership

“By the end of the day it is leadership that is going to get the Soldiers and sailors, our troopers, through the very difficult conditions they have to work in,” said Army Brig. Gen. Cameron A. Crawford, deputy commanding general, JTF-GTMO. “In our military that’s what our NCOs are all about. There’s no question that they make the difference.”

Crawford, who holds a master’s degree in corrections and has experience with the penal system in the United States, said the operations at GTMO are “eye-opening” and that he is very impressed with the guards’ ability to maintain professionalism under tough conditions.

“The operation is very unique and if you look at the potential for something really bad to happen that could in turn impact on national policy, it is going to be that E-5 or E-6 that is going to have [control] of that impact,” Crawford said. “The fact that we have been able to maintain our mission of legally and humanely taking care of the detainees for this amount of time speaks directly to the quality NCOs we have here.”

Crawford added there is no “soft shoe” around the mission – it is difficult, both physically and mentally challenging, and the fact that they are meeting mission requirements speaks highly of the NCO Corps and the troopers who do the mission day in and day out.

Army Col. Laura Tucker, deputy public affairs officer for JTF-GTMO, agrees.

“I have never worked with a more professional crew in my almost 20 years. The leaders here are stepping up to this challenge in a phenomenal way,” she said. “We work together as a team and it has been a great team effort.”

Keeping an even keel

When not working the block, troopers are encouraged to use the many services available to them to reduce the stress of the daily grind. The Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division at GTMO offers a variety of activities – open air movie theaters, snorkeling, scuba diving, fishing, boat rentals, bowling, golfing, intramural sports and more. There are also several clubs, restaurants and stores on GTMO.

Support for those who feel over-stressed comes in the form of the command chaplains or the joint stress mitigation and response team. Another area of support comes from battle buddies and shipmates.

“We take care of each other and when we see one of our fellow sailors getting a little stressed out, or the job is getting to them, we will go and replace them; take their spot so they can take a break and get some fresh air,” said MA3 Susan.

“The one thing that Soldiers will tell you here is that they bond,” said Vivian “They grow to be a family. Here, you work together, live together, play together and go back to work together.”

When it’s all said and done

In the end, the high level of discipline and individual pride has kept operations at JTF-GTMO and Camp Delta as professional as possible. In a place that is under the world’s microscope, there is little else to report but the fact that the mission is accomplished above board, which LeVault said leads right back to core values.

“We all live by the core values. Everybody understands that it’s not only who you are, but who you are to the other services,” LeVault said. “They are honor bound, each and every one of them. That is our motto and they live by it and I hear it as I walk though the camps every single day. They want to live up to that; they are ready for what they do and they are committed to what they are doing.” 📌

Recreation and relaxation are a must for those who work inside the wire. U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, has an abundance of recreational opportunities, to include relaxing in the sun on one of its beaches.

Dodging the digital divide

Battle Staff NCO Course combines digital training with VTT

By David Crozier

Since the Global War on Terrorism began, the Army has looked for ways to provide essential training to Soldiers without sending them to learning institutions hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of miles away from their home station. The Army has also searched for ways to train Soldiers who are deployed in support of GWOT. This has led to a change in institutional training methods that were used in the past and has forced the Army to rely more on distance learning, video teletraining and mobile training teams.

This is most evident in the noncommissioned officer education system, where many units have employed VTT to get Soldiers trained through the Basic Noncommissioned Officer. They also use VTT to teach the First Sergeant and Battle Staff NCO courses. In fact, more Soldiers are trained via VTT than attend the resident versions of Battle Staff and First Sergeant courses.

The virtual classrooms allow a single instructor at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas, to teach up to 80 students at a time who are spread across five remote locations around the globe. This has not only helped the Army meet its mission of training the world's most elite military, it has also helped reduce the backlogs created by the operational tempo of GWOT.

While VTT allows students and teachers to interact and see one another, there are some drawbacks. Because the training is done using video technology, the digital computer aspects of some courses are lost; that is until now.

Thanks to an initiative the folks at USASMA call "Camp Dodge," the Battle Staff NCO Course, and soon the First Sergeant Course, will receive digital training on Army Battle Command Systems at their remote

locations through secure Internet connections.

The name Camp Dodge comes from the Iowa National Guard's Camp Dodge, located in Johnston, Iowa. The ability to teach digital systems remotely comes from the Camp Dodge Military Interactive Multimedia Instruction Center and Citrix



Photo by David Crozier

Retired Master Sgt. Earl Melton uses a computer located at USASMA that is logged into Camp Dodge during a course of instruction. Melton was demonstrating the MCS software as Master Sgt. (Ret.) Larry Mincy (upper left video screen) taught the course from Camp Dodge, Iowa.



Courtesy photo

Retired Master Sgt. Earl Melton sits in front of the multiple computer screens at Camp Dodge, Iowa, that display each student's desktop during a recent Battle Staff NCO Course of instruction.

software, which allows the instructors to push the digital systems to the students via the Internet while also using the VTT capabilities to maintain interaction.

"Last year, Camp Dodge came up with an initiative to remote [Army Battle Command System] to the field as a means of instruction," said Master Sgt. Daniel Weis, director of the Battle Command Training Directorate at USASMA. "Between June and September, [Camp Dodge] worked out the issue of how to remote it and then they demonstrated that ability. Prior to that, digital training had never been pushed remotely before."

Weis explained that by using VTT instruction only, the students in remote courses get all of the instruction the resident students get with the exception of the hands-on instruction on the Army's Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below, and Maneuver Control Systems (FBCB2 and MCS). These systems are what the Soldiers use in the Army's new digital Tactical Operation Centers (TOC) and on the battlefield.

Resident students receive 16 hours of instruction on these systems and their use is incorporated into the end-of-course command post exercise (CPX). Because the battle command system is of a digital nature, Weiss said, this instruction was not originally offered via VTT; only an overview of the system was presented during the VTT course. That meant students taught at remote sites had to find other ways to learn the new digital systems.

"That is the first benefit of Camp Dodge," Weis said. "We are going to be able to teach them MCS like we have never been able to do before. We are going to put the digital back into Battle

Staff and the First Sergeant Course. That is one of the biggest complaints from the field is that you teach digital at USASMA, but you don't do it in VTT."

Weis said that Camp Dodge will fill most of the gap between VTT and resident with the exception of the CPX exercise.

"That's the one drawback. Camp Dodge does not have simulation at this time," he said. "So I cannot simulate into the classroom for the CPX, I can only use it for training on the system. We are, however, researching other technologies so that we can incorporate the CPX into the training in the future."

Still, Weis explained, using Camp Dodge is a major leap from just instructing VTT.

Camp Dodge's ability to push the new technology comes from using a 30-connection server farm over a commercial Internet service with Citrix encryption software. This server farm allows one instructor to teach 30 students at a time.

Weis said the initial tests of the system allowed five sites with six students each to log on to Camp Dodge and receive training. The future plan is to have one instructor for 16 students to provide better interaction and control of the instruction.

The instructor sits at a computer that has a bank of monitors and is able to view each of the students' desktops and remotely take over any student's machine to facilitate the instruction.

"This system allows you to actually teach the students, and while they are entering the keystrokes, you as the instructor can pull up student information and see what they are actually doing. You can correct the student right on the spot or actually take over that student's computer and walk them through the steps remotely," Weis said. "You can also stop them from getting ahead of what is actually being trained and keep the training moving at the same pace for everyone."

Since its initial test, Weis and the instructors at USASMA have done several training sessions, one of which was taught to three classes of 10 students located at remote sites in Germany.

Asked how the training went and what lessons have been learned, Retired Master Sgt. Earl Melton, an instruction technologist with General Dynamics, said there were some very positive things that came out.

"After I end a training session, I go around and ask for comments and the majority [have] been positive," Melton said. "They enjoyed the training, hope to see more and ask where they can go to get more information."

In the first session, Melton said that he taught from a computer at USASMA; logging in himself to Camp Dodge via the Internet. The problem that arose from this means of instruction

was Melton did not have the ability to see what the students were doing, nor could he remotely take over a student machine to fix any issues. The subsequent sessions were taught with the instructor traveling to Camp Dodge and using the bank of monitors and the secure Citrix software to teach the MCS system.

One of the benefits Melton sees from this training for Battle Staff students is that the Army has moved towards the digital side of things and the systems taught via Camp Dodge can make life easy in the field.

"If you don't get introduced to them beforehand, you are not going to know what you are doing when you get in front of it out in the field," Melton said.

"Every student gets training on how to do Battle Staff manually; graphics and overlays first. Then we pop in there and show you how to do it digitally and how much easier it makes it and how much time it saves. Besides, this is what they will see when they go to a TOC in the field."

How the system will work in concert with the VTT portion of Battle Staff and First Sergeant Course training, where it is one instructor to 80 students, is simple, Weis explained.

"The gold standard for us teaching MCS and FBCB2 is going to be one instructor for 16 students. Therefore, when it

comes time for us to teach the MCS or FBCB2 to these courses we will use five instructors one for each site; and they will all log on to Camp Dodge," he said. "When we are finished, we will turn it all back over to the one instructor who will continue the VTT portion of the course."

Future plans for the Camp Dodge initiative are to expand the system further at Camp Dodge so that more training can be accomplished through the Army, move the system from a organizational domain to a military domain allowing increased bandwidth capabilities for the system, and possibly establishing a server farm at USASMA. Currently, Camp Dodge will allow the folks at USASMA to increase the classes of MCS instruction to 37 from the current 13 that are taught in residence only.

"The basic need is to get this training out there where every student who goes through Battle Staff gets to touch and use MCS," Weis said, "The remote sites may not get the full 16 hours of instruction the resident students get because of the lack of system capabilities right now, but that is our goal; that every student touches the system."

Anybody can use Camp Dodge as a means to teach MCS as long as they coordinate it with Camp Dodge, Weis said.

For more information about what Camp Dodge has to offer, visit <http://www.iowanationalguard.com/> and click on the Army National Guard link. You can also call the USASMA Digital Training Directorate at (915) 568- 8848, DSN 978. 📍



Photo by David Crozier

Master Sgt. Gerald Roberson, a Battle Staff VTT instructor at USASMA, conducts a class to 80 students at five remote locations. When it comes time to teach the MCS using Camp Dodge, each of the remote sites will have a separate instructor.

From Citizen to Soldier and back

Fort Dix provides full spectrum of mobilization training, reintegration for National Guard and Reserve



Photo by SFC Edgar Jansons, First Army East

Soldiers of the 303rd Military Police Company gain information from a civilian role-player during training at the Military Operations in Urban Terrain site on Fort Dix Oct. 14, 2006.

By Master Sgt. Eric B. Pilgrim

For those at Fort Dix, N.J., who have devoted more than a million man-days each year to prepare nearly 60,000 deploying National Guard and Reserve troops for war since Sept. 11, 2001, one goal motivates them.

It's something they're passionate about - saving lives.

"It's about you and that guy to your left and right getting back safely," said Sgt. Richard Scanterbury, an improvised explosive device instructor at Fort Dix "Anybody can become a victim over there."

The Joint Readiness Center at Dix devotes as many as 54 days in most cases, 112 days in others, to provide an intense, realistic training environment for troops mobilizing overseas, while allowing returning troops a chance to breathe peaceful air again and share their experiences with others before hanging up their uniforms for a while.

Scanterbury knows firsthand what the troops encounter.

Before completing a year of intense combat duty with 106th

Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), throughout Iraq in 2006, Scanterbury suffered the loss of five of his friends. They weren't just casual acquaintances he had met after joining the unit in 2005, they were close friends; school buddies he had known for years - "guys that I had grown up with."

"We all knew each other outside of the military and ended up joining at the same time," Scanterbury said. "We ended up going to different units, but we joined for the same reason - to lead Soldiers."

He recalled listening on the radio one fateful day in October 2005 as one of the five, an NCO he considered a best friend, called up an emergency "nine-line" for a 19-year-old driver who had been in country barely two weeks. His convoy was hit with a rocket-propelled grenade and an improvised explosive device in an attack, and Scanterbury's friend was trapped in his vehicle along with the driver. The gunner was killed instantly.

"We could hear him on the radio and we were like, 'You need to get out of the vehicle because the vehicle's on fire,'" Scanterbury said. "He refused to get out because he was deter-

mined to help his driver – that’s when they were hit again with another RPG. There was no way for us to get to them.”

After de-mobilizing to Fort Dix in 2006, Scanterbury decided to use the memory of his five friends and the tremendous amount of experience he gained as a gunner and convoy commander on daily combat logistics patrols and quick reactionary force missions to help others.

“The reason I do this is to input as much as possible to the Soldiers who are deploying so they can see that they have an opportunity to come back alive and with all their body parts,” Scanterbury said.

Mobilization leaders like Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Young have assembled an army of experienced trainers like Scanterbury in order to give deploying troops the tools they need to succeed in combat. As chief mobilization NCO at Fort Dix, Young said the Army motto “train as you fight” is always forefront in their minds.

“Our goal in all this is to make sure we kill the bad guys and not innocent bystanders,” Young said. “We really focus on safety.”

They received new guidance about four years ago from Third U.S. Army commander Lt. Gen. Russell Honoré, whose troops brought control back to New Orleans shortly after Hurricane Katrina devastated it. He wanted post officials to move deploying troops away from the creature comforts of main post barracks and into a field environment – a concept they call theater immersion.

“Essentially, we try to structure their time at Fort Dix to replicate what they’re going to experience in theater,” said Maj. David Willis, officer in charge of the Champion Main training site. “When they first arrive on ground, they’re in Kuwait; right here in garrison. Then they have to do a ground convoy to what



Photo courtesy of Fort Dix Public Affairs

An Arabic-speaking role player pleads for help from a Soldier during one of the many security operations National Guard and Reserve units must conduct throughout the two-four months they spend at Fort Dix, N.J., preparing for combat.

we’re calling a Victory Base complex, which replicates Baghdad, and that’s where they live for the majority of the time they’re here – in a [forward operating base] environment.”

In the FOB environment, troops carry their weapons at all times, regularly conduct pre-combat inspections and checks, travel in tactical convoys, and abstain from alcoholic beverages; just as they would in combat.

The immersion concept allows leaders to hone their troops’ minds for fighting the enemy without fighting the distractions of garrison life, said Young. “It was one of the best moves we made.”

So for the first two to four months after arriving at Fort Dix, troops learn to live, breathe, eat and sleep military operations at FOB Tiger. They also train at live-fire ranges, IED and unexploded ordnance ranges, and even struggle to bring peace to “Balad” – an urban training environment complete with two mosques, a city hall, and a marketplace full of Arabic-speaking villagers who frequently teeter on the edge of sectarian violence and expect the American troops to protect them from warring insurgents.

Another of Honoré’s ideas was the creation of Operation Warrior Trainer. This program allows National Guardsmen and reservists who have just returned from combat to remain at Fort Dix for a year as trainers.

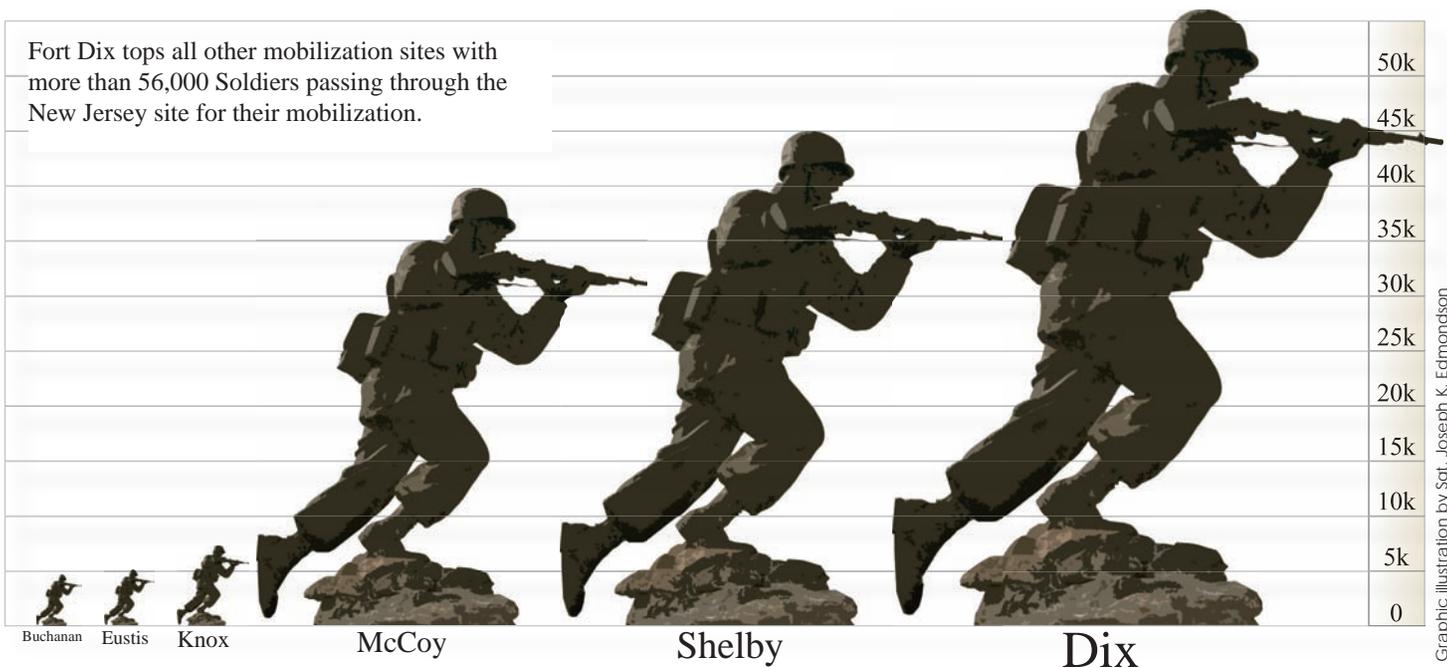
Scanterbury joined the program in



Photo by Ryan Morton, Dix Public Affairs

Soldiers from the 303rd MP Company load a wounded Soldier onto a humvee during a training mission. This is part of the Army Training Evaluation Program in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Fort Dix tops all other mobilization sites with more than 56,000 Soldiers passing through the New Jersey site for their mobilization.



October last year. The Maryland National Guardsman from 1st Battalion, 158th Cavalry Regiment out of Annapolis, Md., said he hopes to extend a year beyond his one-year obligation, if leaders will allow him.

Besides providing an intense training environment, officials have also instituted creative mobilization/de-mobilization solutions to some of the issues unique to National Guard and Reserve troops at the Joint Readiness Center.

Comming Home

One of those is a reintegration program that top Army officials have called for other mobilization centers to model.

In the Dix program, Army Community Services officials like Bonnie Reed work closely with post chaplains and civilian social workers to provide troops more than just something to think about after returning; they get troops talking.

Some of what they discuss involves health and finance issues, along with what troops can expect when stepping back into their homes.

Reed said Soldiers are often shocked to discover how much has changed since they left. The spouse was forced to recreate the family; forced to establish new rules for the children who are forced to rely on only one parent for support. The warrior must come to grips with the fact that their family learned to function without them.

“A lot of them have never really thought about that,” Reed said. “They are going home to a different world.”

Probably one of the biggest changes to the reintegration program has involved

the mobilization center’s focus on helping Soldiers cope with a year’s worth of combat stress they have accumulated and dealt with in the hostile setting – especially now that they are no longer in that environment. Reed said their counselors have learned less is more.

“Instead of trying to work with one hundred or two hundred Soldiers at a time, we break them into groups of 15 to 20 and do small-group reintegration where we have Soldiers talk to us rather than us talking to them about stress from the deployment,” Reed said. “In order to have a good new beginning, you have to have a decent ending.”



Photo by Master Sgt. Eric Pilgrim

Members of the Maine National Guard’s Company B, 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry (Mountain), based in Brewer, listen at the Joint Readiness Center as Elizabeth Quinones and Bobby Jackson explain how to fill out several forms in preparation for their return to civilian life. Two-thirds of the unit spent a year in Talil, Iraq, with the other third operating in and around Baghdad before heading back home in March.

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Lee Hardgrove, the staff chaplain for mobilization, explained that other mobilization centers will devote about 20 minutes to a large group of Soldiers with little integration.

Not at Fort Dix. In their reintegration program, a chaplain and a social worker meet with groups of 20 or less for an hour each.

“We separate single from married because there are different issues, and we pull out the command group so that Soldiers are free to talk if there were command issues and the command is free to talk if they had subordinate issues,” Hardgrove said.

For some units, the conversation may focus on whether their jobs, or even spouses, will be there when they go back. For others, the conversation quickly turns to the loss of comrades and how they will cope with it when they go back home.

Soldiers from the Maine National Guard arrived at Fort Dix in mid-March after a year-long deployment to Iraq. Some quietly followed directions through the demobilization process; others laughed and joked about their plans once they returned to the Pine Tree State.

Like many other units, they had their share of combat losses. In particular, they lost Staff Sgt. Dale Kelly, Jr., a medic, and Staff Sgt. David Veverka, an infantryman. Both died May 8,



Photo by David Moore

Staff Sgt. Becky Henslee, of the 377th Military Intelligence Battalion, leads the way with Sgt. Kenny Ng close behind during urban training at the training area known as Balad.

2006, when insurgents attacked their convoy south of Anaconda.

Fellow medic, Sgt. Daniel Connors struggled to talk about it 10 months later. Kelly was Connor’s roommate in Iraq. That afternoon, Connors’ crew headed south toward Camp Echo while Kelly’s crew headed the other direction. The unit was still fairly new to the area.

“We’d only been there on the road for about a month,” Connors said.

As Kelly and Veverka’s convoy traveled along a road they frequently used for escort missions, the gunner for the trail vehicle had to disable a vehicle that headed threateningly at the convoy, something uncommon for them.

Twenty minutes later, Kelly, Veverka and their gunner, Pvt. Christopher Fraser, observed what appeared to be an Iraqi in a white truck throwing a grenade at them. An infantry Soldier who was at the scene said it turned out to be only a rock but fearing the worst, Veverka grabbed Fraser and pulled him down from the turret.

That action saved Fraser’s life as a roadside bomb exploded in the next instant, killing Kelly and severely injuring Veverka and Fraser. Veverka later died in the medevac ride to the hospital. Connors said a lot came from their deaths.

“It made us understand that, ‘Hey, this is for real,’ and it brought us a lot closer together,” Connors said. “This has taught us to have faith in God, have faith in the team, in each other, and to train as hard as you can – 110 percent. We learned to train as we fight.”

Music to the ears of those at Fort Dix. 🎵



Members of the Foreign Press Association watch atop a building as a unit conducts operations in the Military Operations in Urban Terrain site, known as Balad.

Photo courtesy of Fort Dix Public Affairs

Army Emergency Relief: *Soldiers help Soldiers, others*

By David Crozier

When payday comes around and you start writing checks to cover the bills, do you find out that you have more checks than money? What do you do then? Where do you find the extra cash you need to ensure the lights stay on, the heat keeps pumping, or the cupboards stay full? Do you ask your best buddy who you've hit up several times in the past, but only this time he says he's tapped out? Or do you go outside the main gate to that payday lender who charges an arm and a leg for that quick \$100 you need?

Fortunately there are better places to turn to than your buddy or that payday lender. Your company commander or first sergeant is in a better situation to take care of your financial emergency through the Army Emergency Relief program. There's no interest, no harm, no foul, no adverse actions attached. There aren't any consequences for seeking help through

"I'm living so far beyond my income that we may almost be said to be living apart."

American Poet E. E. Cummings, 1894 - 1962

Emergency Relief program has a single mission: "To collect and hold funds to relieve the stress of members of the Army and their dependents."

A private, nonprofit, charitable organization, AER is headquartered in Alexandria, Va., and has operational requirements implemented at 93 installations worldwide. It is headed up by a board of managers that includes active and retired general officers, senior spouses, the sergeant major of the Army and command sergeants major from the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy and U.S. Army Forces Command.

In its 65-year history, AER has distributed more than \$1

billion to Soldiers and their families with 40 percent of that, or \$400 million, being doled out in the last 10 years. For 2005 and 2006 alone, AER distributed more than \$101 million.

"Even though the Army has gotten smaller, the demands made by Soldiers have increased," Scott said. "That's why we believe it is important for senior NCOs and commanders to understand what we do and how we do it because

when your Soldiers have problems, you know that AER is a possible solution."

To help that education along, both Foley and Scott and the rest of the folks at AER make contacts with the senior NCOs, the sergeants major, first sergeants, pre-command course students, battalion and brigade commanders and their spouses.

One new program that AER is pushing hard is the command referral program.

"We found out that military personnel were sometimes reluctant to use the military relief societies because they felt like there were too many hurdles and paperwork and it took too long to get access to the money they needed," Scott said. "So we wanted to do something that would simplify and streamline the process, yet put it in the hands of the people who were most knowledgeable of the Soldier's needs."

Scott said what they realized was that the first sergeant and company commander were those people.

"So we came up with the command referral program that gives first sergeants and company commanders the authorization to award up to \$1,000 in interest-free loans to Soldiers in their organization," Scott said. "They don't make recommenda-

"The money that exists in this fund does not belong to AER. It is the result of the contributions of Soldiers and it is Soldier money. They have a right to access it when they have a valid problem."

*Retired Sgt. Maj. Dennis Scott
Assistant Director of Administration*



your chain of command and you don't have to hock your stereo system.

"Sometimes there is a perception from Soldiers who have been in the Army a long time that if a Soldier comes to AER, they have financial problems. That is not true," said Retired Sgt. Maj. Dennis Scott, AER's Assistant Secretary for Administration, and former director of Enlisted Personnel Management, Human Resources Command. "Most of the Soldiers who come to AER don't have financial problems; they just have a financial need. They have an emergency that comes up for whatever reason and they simply need the money to resolve that issue."

That perception, said Retired Lt. Gen. Robert Foley, director of AER, said, stems from the old letters of indebtedness a Soldier would receive from his or her command signifying that a financial problem that would end up as being "bad business" for the Soldier.

"Back then, we made Soldiers go outside the gate to the payday lenders so no one would know about it because if the chain of command got wind of your financial problem, you were in trouble," he said. "Any kind of difficulty that a Soldier got into, they didn't want the chain of command to know about it; hence,

tions; they are the actual approving authority for that loan.”

Once the program is introduced at the post level and people become knowledgeable of it, Foley said, the referral rate jumps. This in itself marks a victory because instead of the Soldiers getting those payday loans -- now capped at 36 percent interest by federal law -- they are getting the interest free loans from AER and helping to put a stop to the revolving credit/loan conundrum.

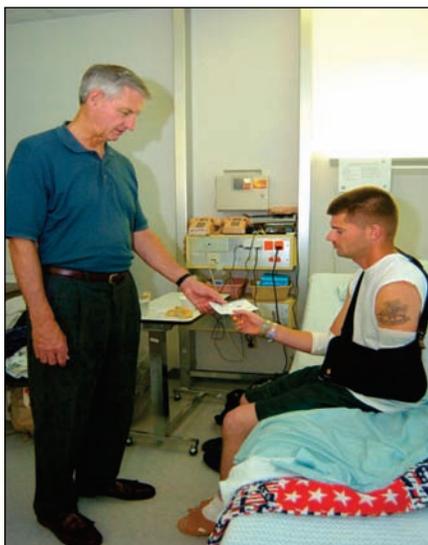
“At Fort Hood for example, 60 percent of financial assistance provided in one year to Soldiers is now from command referral,” Foley said. “That means that the company commander and Soldiers themselves found out that this is a good deal. The more we can get this command referral program being used throughout the Army, the better.”

The \$1,000 authority is due to the fact that the average request for assistance by Soldiers prior to establishing the command referral program was about \$950, Scott said.

“That’s why we made it \$1,000 because it covers the majority of request we see and it simplifies the process,” he said. “Of course, you still have to have a valid need.”

Explaining the program, Scott said the first sergeant looks at the request and makes his approval or disapproval based on knowledge of the Soldier and the situation. If approved, the first sergeant or company commander simply sign the request and the Soldier takes it over to AER. The Soldier gets the check later that day or at the latest, the next day. If there are questions about the validity of the loan, the first sergeant or company commander can request copies of receipts or documentation showing the money was used for the purpose intended -- or they simply disapproves the request.

There are also exceptions to policy where the local AER authority can grant up to a \$3,500 interest-free loan, he added. Above that amount, the approval gets pushed up to the head-



Courtesy Photo

Above, Retired Lt. Gen. Robert Foley, director of AER, hands a wounded Soldier a check for \$200 to help defray the costs of getting needed comfort items while recuperating from his wounds.

quarters in Alexandria. Because AER is a non-profit organization, Scott said even the Army cannot tell them how to distribute money to Soldiers.

“We have a long list of things that we do not do (See graph below). We are not permitted to buy cars, to pay bail to get someone out of jail, to pay for an abortion, or personal property taxes,” he said. “But I will tell you that we have paid for those things in the past. Our regulation provides guidance, but it does not cover everything. There are exceptions to policy. That’s why we say, ‘Don’t let anyone tell you that if it is not in the regulation that you can’t give money for it.’ If it is good for the Army and the Soldier, then there is no reason we shouldn’t be helping the Soldier out. If it [passes] the common sense test, then do it.”

While AER is mainly established to assist Soldiers and their families in financial need, it has expanded its availability of funds to cover scholarships, spouse scholarships and widow assistance.

In 2006-2007, AER handed out 2,333 scholarships for a total of more than \$4.5 million. There are 900 colleges and universities participating in the scholarship program. For spouse scholarships, AER gave \$750,000 to 1,032 overseas spouses in 2005 and \$926,000 to 346 spouses in the United States in 2006. The maximum scholarship for children is \$3,500 per year and for spouses, \$2,500 per year. For widow assistance, all assistance provided by AER is in the form of a grant. There is also a new grant program aimed at helping wounded warriors get personal essentials they need once transported back to the States for treatment.

“AER gives them a \$200 check or debit card to spend on whatever they need,” Scott said. “Mostly they use the money to buy sundry items or books to read – comfort items they don’t have while recuperating in the hospital because when they arrive at the hospital they have nothing.”

Scott noted that since the beginning of the Global War on Terrorism, AER has provided more than \$1 million in grants to wounded warriors. Another group of folks AER is available to are retirees. Scott explained that 10 percent of all assistance given out by AER goes to retirees and family members.

“They have the same eligibility they had while they were on active duty,” he said. “We are here today for people who will be here tomorrow.”

Every year AER gives out more money in grants, scholarships and write-offs than it takes in with its fund raising campaign. The majority of the money that AER gets comes from repayment of loans, investment income; all with an approval rate of 97.5 percent.

“The money that exists in this fund does not belong to AER,” Scott said. “It is the result of the contribu-

tions of Soldiers; it is Soldier money. They have a right to access it when they have a valid problem.”

For more information on AER, visit their Web site at <http://www.aerhq.org/> or visit your local AER office. 

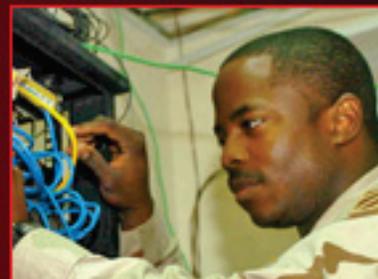
AER Can:

Help with emergency financial needs for:

- Food, rent or utilities
- Emergency transportation and vehicle repair
- Funeral expenses
- Medical/dental expenses
- Personal needs when pay is delayed or stolen
- Give undergraduate-level education scholarships, based primarily on financial need, to children of soldiers

AER Cannot:

- Help pay for nonessentials
- Finance ordinary leave or vacation
- Pay fines or legal expenses
- Help liquidate or consolidate debt
- Assist with house purchase or home improvements
- Help purchase, rent or lease a vehicle



Welcome to another edition of Photo Journal, the place where everyone has the opportunity to put their favorite photos on display. The guidelines for submitting pictures are as follow: the picture should depict NCOs in action, whether it's leading Soldiers in the field, conducting training, or just plain taking care of business. You don't have to be a professional photographer to enter. When submitting photos, please include the name of person(s) in the photo, a brief description of the action to include location, and, of course, your name and unit. Photos may be submitted in either hardcopy or digitally. If you plan on e-mailing a digital photo, make sure it is at least 300 dpi. Mail photos to *The NCO Journal*, Commandant, USASMA, ATTN: ATSS-SJ, Editor, 11291 SGT E Churchill St., Fort Bliss, TX 79918-8002 or e-mail the electronic version to ATSS-SJ-NCOJOURNAL@bliss.army.mil.



Sgt. Tierney P. Nowland

Iraqi army soldiers and U.S. Army Spc. Ismael Gonzalez, from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, finish clearing the second floor of a house during a combined cordon and search in Ghazaliya, Iraq, March 21.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason T. Bailey

photo journal



U.S. Army National Guard Pfc. Jordan Kott, 153rd Engineering Battalion, Madison, S.D., welds part of a new fence being constructed at the ABC Feed the Children orphanage near El Crucero, Nicaragua, March 21, during New Horizons-Nicaragua 2007. The exercise is a \$7.25 million joint humanitarian and training exercise with the Nicaraguan military that will provide a new school, a medical clinic, and free health and veterinary care to the local populace.



Staff Sgt. Christopher Pearce sits next to an Iraqi boy during a visit to Sheik Burhan Al Asee's house during a patrol in Riyahd village, Iraq, March 8. Pearce is assigned to Delta Company, 2nd Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

Air Force Master Sgt. Andy Dunaway

Beware the Gray Zone

By CSM Barry C. Wheeler
 UNC/CFC/USFK/Eighth US Army CSM

Leaders often selectively choose which orders to follow or which standards to meet! These decisions of convenience cause them to fall into a category I like to define as the "Gray Zone!" Each of us understands the following of orders and the meeting of standards is a black-and-white business ... you either do or you don't! When you mix the colors black and white, you get gray!

A discussion and review of our Army's Values are important as one considers the topic of this article. The Army, as an institution, is one based on values. As a values based organization, it prides itself on its members knowing and abiding by the values it insists all members prescribe to. Values tell us what we need to be, every day, in every action we take. Army values form the identity of America's Army, the solid rock upon which everything else stands. They are the glue that binds us together as members of a noble profession. They make the whole much greater than the sum of its parts. They are non-negotiable; they apply to everyone all the time and in every situation. The Army has identified the seven values it feels are most important to it as an institution and defines each for its Soldiers benefit. They are:

LOYALTY: Bears true faith and allegiance to the U.S.

Constitution, the Army, the unit, and the Soldier

DUTY: Fulfills their obligations

RESPECT: Treats people as they should be treated

SELFLESS SERVICE: Puts the welfare of the nation, the Army, and subordinates before their own

HONOR: Lives up to all the Army values

INTEGRITY: Does what's right - legally and morally; even when no one is watching

PERSONAL COURAGE: Faces fear, danger and adversity (physical and moral)

In order to be a good leader, one must first be a good follower. As noncommissioned and commissioned officers within a



values based institution, it is important to remember two of our most important responsibilities as Soldiers: 1) Following orders, and 2) meeting standards

Leaders who fall prey to a selective process of which orders to follow or standards to meet, demonstrate little concern for the Army as an institution or for setting the proper example for their subordinates.

One might ask, "So what does this have to do with Army values?" In a nutshell, EVERYTHING! If we as leaders voluntarily decide to continue our careers as members of the Army, we simultaneously prescribe to the Army's values. Simply stated, we exhibit by our action of reenlisting or swearing our oath of office that the Army's values are important to us as well.

Of the Army's seven values, the selective obedience to orders and meeting of standards touches on all of them, but falls primarily within two: 1) honor, and 2) integrity.

Honor

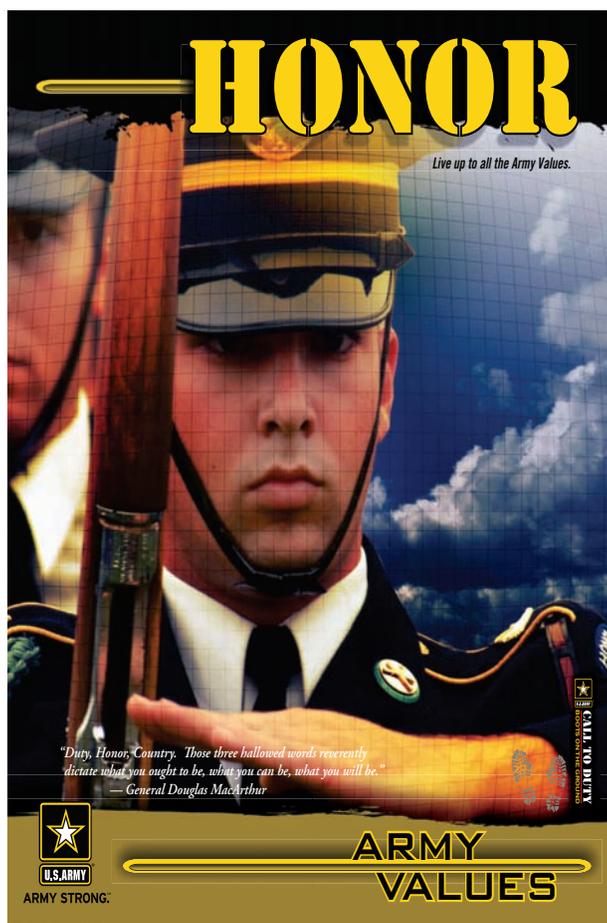
As it applies to honor, FM 22-100, Army Leadership, states it best. "Honor provides the 'moral compass' for character and personal conduct in the army and...that most recognize instinctively those with a keen sense of right and wrong, those who live such that their words and deeds are above reproach." It goes on to say ... "that Honor holds Army Values together while at the same time being a value itself."

Together, Army values describe the foundation essential to develop leaders of character. It means demonstrating an understanding of what's right. Each of us promised to do this when we took our oath of office or enlistment. Paragraph 2-29 of FM 22-100 states: "How you conduct yourself and meet obligations defines who you are as a person."

For you as an Army leader, honor means putting Army values above self-interest, above career and comfort. This honor is essential for creating the bond of trust among members of the Army.

Integrity

Again, FM 22-100 says it best: "People of integrity consistently act according to principles ... not just what might work at the moment. Leaders of integrity make their principles known



and consistently act in accordance with them. The Army requires leaders of integrity who possess high moral standards and are honest in word and deed. Being honest means being truthful and upright all the time, despite pressures to do otherwise. Having integrity means being both morally complete and true to yourself. As an Army leader, you're honest to yourself by committing to and consistently living Army values; you're honest to others by not presenting yourself or your actions as any-

"Discipline is the soul of the military. It makes small numbers seem formidable; procures success to the weak, and esteem to all...."

— General George Washington

ingly, willingly, and selectively choose which orders or standards to follow and which ones to not.

General George Washington stated, "Discipline is the soul of the Army" If true, then those who enter the Gray Zone are undisciplined. Fair assumption? I say it is. We

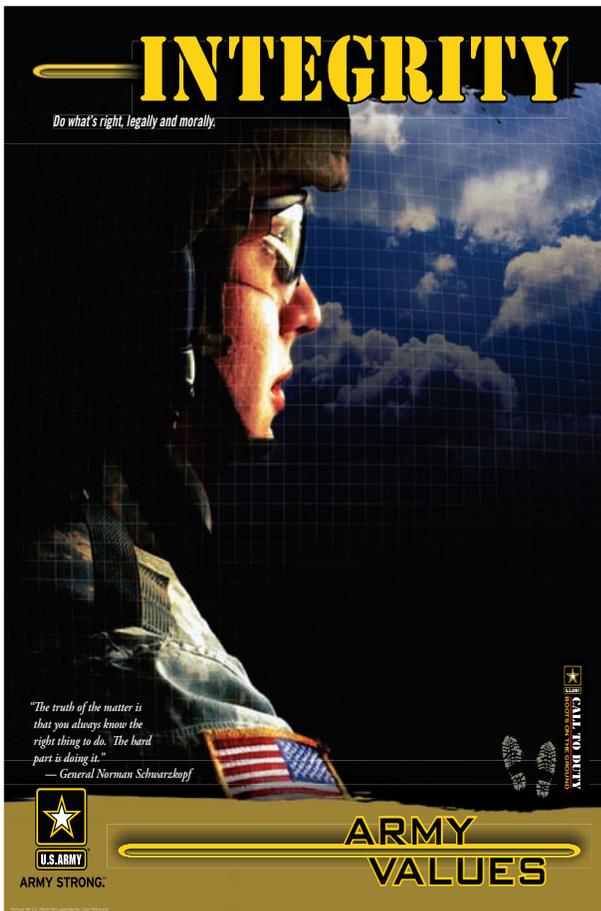
have already proven those who enter the Gray Zone do not live the Army's values.

As it pertains to discipline, all one has to do is to consider General George S. Patton's understanding and definition of the subject (summarized):

- There is only one sort of discipline; perfect discipline. Men cannot have good battle discipline and poor administrative discipline.
- Discipline is based on pride in the profession of arms, on meticulous attention to details, and on mutual respect and confidence. Discipline must be a habit so ingrained that it is stronger than the excitement of battle or the fear of death.
- Discipline can only be obtained when all officers are so imbued with the sense of their lawful obligation to their men and to their country that they cannot tolerate negligence. Officers who fail to correct errors or to praise excellence are valueless in peace and dangerous misfits in war.
- Officers must assert themselves by example and by voice. They must be preeminent in courage, deportment, and dress.
- One of the primary purposes of discipline is to produce alertness. A man who is so lethargic that he fails to salute will fall an easy victim to an enemy.

In summary, the Army will never turn into an "Army of Options." Our subordinates know when we have entered into the Gray Zone. They know when we do, we violate not only our Army's values, but our need for a disciplined Army as well. Leaders at every level would do well to "Beware the Gray Zone."

Editor's Note: The Army Values Posters are available for download at <http://www.army1.army.mil/HR/ARMYVALUES.ASP>.

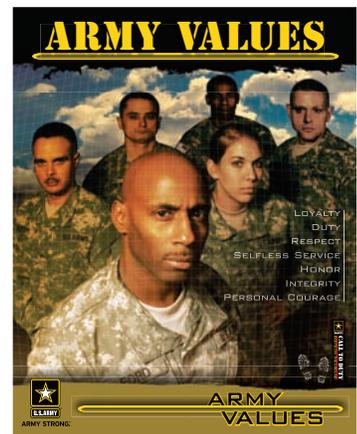


thing other than what they are. Army leaders say what they mean and do what they say ... People of integrity do the right thing not because it's convenient or because they have no choice. They choose the right thing because their character permits no less.

Leaders can't hide what they do: that's why you must carefully decide how you act. As an Army leader, you're always on display ... However, if you're to be an Army leader and a person of integrity, these values must reinforce, not contradict, Army values.

Nobody in our Army expects us to be perfect. Perfection IS NOT the issue of discussion here. To make mistakes is totally natural. The Army as an institution understands this and fosters a climate that allows leaders to grow and learn without fear.

What is the topic of discussion here is when leaders know-



Pull the trigger ... or not

By Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel R. Wood
Freedom 7, CFC-A

In Afghanistan, our warriors face life and death decisions every day as they determine the hostile intent of each person on the road who acts in a way that is not in accordance with our directives. The decision to pull the trigger ... or not, is one that requires tremendous thought, discussion and training among our leaders and warriors.

Firing a weapon too early in a pressure situation could have disastrous effects. The intent of escalation of force is to discourage an action of an individual or group that is or appears to be presenting a threat to friendly forces. The ability to positively identify a threat is not always easy and often places a warrior in a precarious situation. With the advent and increase in numbers of suicide vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (SVBIED), members of convoys are often placed in situations with little time to react, and find they rush through the escalation of force. More often than not, this has resulted in the death or injury of non-combatants.

Imagine this likely situation: The sun has gone down as your convoy nears its destination. You are notified of a break in the convoy and the convoy commander orders the convoy to pull off to the side of the road in order to wait for the trail element to re-establish contact. The lead and trail vehicles are directed to stop traffic to alleviate the opportunity for a SVBIED to attack the halted convoy. Traffic has backed up in each direction and the people are growing impatient.



Photo by Spc. Bem Minor

Pfc. Joshua Correia, from Company D, 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, scans the Afghanistan horizon near the Pakistan border for any signs of insurgent activity.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Alfred Johnson

A Soldier from the 3rd Infantry Division pulls security at a convoy halt during pre-deployment battlefield training at Fort Stewart, Ga. Training is essential to ensuring Soldiers are mentally prepared for war.

The headlights of your M1114 are shining in the direction of the civilian traffic. An impatient driver pulls out and weaves his way toward your convoy, hoping to go around you. The gunner begins waving his hands and has the driver flash the lights, but the vehicle continues forward. The gunner shouts for the vehicle to halt, and fires a warning shot into the road in front of the vehicle yet the vehicle continues. The gunner makes the decision to escalate to deadly force and fires three rounds at the driver, killing him and wounding his son in the back seat. After the incident, it is found that he was not a terrorist trying to kill members of the coalition; instead it was just an impatient local farmer trying to go home.

Our warriors face such a dilemma on a daily basis throughout the combined joint operations area. The scenario may differ – the convoy may be stationary or moving, but the dilemma remains the same – to pull the trigger or not. The potential effects of this decision, and subsequent action, warrant a closer look at how we handle these situations with tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). With thorough evaluation of what we have or will develop, we can work toward a reduction of needless civilian deaths and injuries.

We are engaged in a counterinsurgency -- a competition with

the insurgents concerning who will win the hearts, minds and support of the local populace. The people are neither naïve nor stupid. They have lived under the repressive control of the radical extremists and currently do not fully trust the government or the national security forces. They want what we offer but are not sure they can trust the government and the Coalition to come through with it. The actions of our warriors will either degrade or enhance this trust. Although at times we must accept risk, our actions must lean in the direction of safeguarding the people of this land.

This is their country, their towns and their roads. As we develop TTPs, it is essential that we look at situations through the eyes of civilians who know very little about how our military force operates. We cannot assume that they understand our signs, use of their language, hand and arm signals or plan for escalation of force. Therefore, we must approach potentially dangerous situations regarding civilians from a standpoint that allows for maximum restraint until a positive determination of hostile intent can be made. This is not to say that our warriors should be placed in situations of unnecessary risk of life, limb or eyesight. This is meant to put additional responsibility on leaders and warriors to look at each situation based on actual threats and develop TTPs that precipitate additional time for escalation of force. Once the bullet leaves the weapon, we cannot get it back. We must ensure to the highest extent possible that every reasonable measure has been taken to positively identify the threat of an individual or vehicle before the warrior pulls the trigger.

Our Soldiers must be mentally prepared for each mission. This means it is essential that they clearly understand the tactical situation and comprehend current intelligence as it relates to the area in which they are operating. In this counterinsurgency, the threat is not consistent throughout the country; therefore our TTPs must be flexible as should be the rigor with which they are enforced. The warrior behind the weapon must be provided the latitude to shoot when he is convinced a legitimate threat exists. The baseline for the escalation of force should not be emotion-



Photo by Sgt. Tierney Nowland

Spc. Christopher Harris, from the 2nd Infantry Division, pulls security just outside of Sadr City while members of the division search for insurgents and their weapons. The presence of civilians during these operations requires extreme vigilance in determining the possible need for escalation of force procedures.



Photo by Capt. Sharren S. Fischer

Paratroopers from the 782nd Brigade Support Battalion, Task Force Spartan, listen during a block of instruction given by an Afghan speaker on the customs and culture of Afghanistan. Understanding their customs and culture will go a long way in helping Soldiers make the right decision when it comes to escalation of force.

ally set. Although the stress of a combat environment will apply to the situation, leadership and training remain as the restraints that should temper our warriors' actions at the point of decision. Soldiers are trained to kill and when required, they do it well.

When faced with an individual or vehicle approaching an entry control point (ECP), security position or any side of a moving convoy, our warriors must be equipped with not only the knowledge, but also the equipment that will allow them adequate time to determine the best course of action. Is the baseline for escalation of force the presumption that the subject is a non-combatant? Or is the baseline that all persons or vehicles are hostile until proven otherwise? If all are considered hostile as a baseline, then I submit that in the mind of a warrior, the escalation of force is already well on its way to critical mass. Due to our battle focused weapons training, life-sized training aids and targets, as well as reflexive fire emphasis, pulling the trigger has become second nature. This is a good thing as long as the action is consistent with a confirmed threat.

Vehicle checkpoints have presented particularly difficult scenarios. Given the mission and required time to set up a deliberate checkpoint, you have the opportunity to look at the situation from all angles. When a convoy stops for short or long halts, the level of difficulty rises. You may not have a great deal of time to emplace complex countermeasures. The desired end-state is to allow the gunner the maximum amount of time to determine hostile intent.

Providing for early warning and in-depth observation is critical. The emplacement of observers forward and to the flank allows for an additional perspective. This may allow for additional time and provide a more objective view in determining if the driver is a true threat or merely impatient, or confused. A leader with good observation and communications will also help re-

duce the pressure on the gunner. An additional factor is providing the local national multiple opportunities to understand the situation. Every effort should be made to ensure that the subject fully comprehends the available choices. This requires prior planning on the part of the unit to have the necessary equipment on hand to clearly demonstrate the desired message to the driver.

In a counterinsurgency, the willingness to kill is important but the willingness to exercise restraint is as well. The enemy needs to be separated from the people and either killed, chased off, or convinced to give up and change sides. It is more difficult when the enemy may partially be made up of local nationals who

have joined the insurgents due to fear and threats or in order to make money to provide for his family. Although difficult, we must always keep in mind the strategic effect of a bullet gone wild, improperly placed or mistakenly fired at a non-combatant. We must be careful not to add to the reasons for a civilian to join with the insurgents.

Do mistakes happen? Yes. But the question remains: have we as leaders done all that we can to prevent an unnecessary escalation of force incident? We need to drop the mind set that the local driver should have known better and that it is his fault. You may not like to hear it, but we cause the majority of escalation of force problems.

Leadership presence and involvement are the two most important factors to remember as we look at this very serious issue. When and why do these mistaken escalation of force situations occur? The when is easy – they happen both during the day and during times of limited visibility. They occur when convoys are moving and at the halt, as well as at ECPs and checkpoints.

There are many factors that apply as we look at the question of why these incidents occur. Let's start with new units, replacements or individual augmentees coming into theater. We naturally train our warriors to come into a combat zone with a battle-focused attitude. They receive training in the United States as well as Kuwait.

In training, we understandably stress the escalation of force and ensure the steps are memorized to ensure the safety of our warriors. Perhaps we are not stressing the need to temper the escalation of force based on the reality of the culture and people while keeping in mind the maturity of the theater. A certain amount of uneasiness is associated with coming into a combat zone and having to travel the roads that are known to be littered with IEDs and VBIEDs as well as suicide bombers. The more experienced a vehicle crew member is, the better he is able to deal with the pressure of the unknown.

Escalation of force incidents seem to peak during transfer of authority time periods. The incoming warriors may be overly eager as well as uneasy, leading to a quick trigger finger. The outgoing unit may be over protective, not wanting to take any chances on being injured or killed when they are so close to going home. This also may lead to a very rapid escalation of force. When you add factors of limited visibility – darkness, fog, blowing sand and rain – the situation is exacerbated.

Attitude is an additional reason why we have warriors engaging a person or vehicle without positively determining friend or foe. To put it plainly, some service members think this is the open range and they are the law. Some people equate being in a combat zone and carrying a weapon with a license to pull the trigger with little thought or restraint. The attitude may also be displayed by



Photo by Spc. Elisha Dawkins

Soldiers and an Iraqi National Police officer man a checkpoint. Providing for early warning and in-depth observation is critical in giving Soldiers the needed time to determine possible hostile intent of individuals approaching checkpoints.

running into a local national vehicle that has gotten in your way or simply shooting the tires or radiator with little thought of perceived threat. Many times this attitude stems from not understanding that we are guests in another country. Local national traffic has as much a right to be on the road, if not more, than we do. Some have a perception that every time they reach an intersection or traffic circle they own it and all other traffic must stop or give them the right of way. This senseless aggression needs to be dealt with early and addressed during theater integration training. If it is observed by leaders during missions, this crew member should be immediately pulled from position. Needless or careless escalation of force severely degrades our critical engagement with the people of this nation.

In certain instances, our vehicle crew members just fail to

understand the obvious. Although it may be hard to believe, some local nationals are just bad drivers and are not paying attention to what is happening around them. These poor driving habits are not unlike what we see on US highways. Some just simply choose to ignore your warning signals to back off the convoy or to stay back from the ECP or checkpoint. Our forces have been on the roads there for a long period of time and we may not stick out as much as we think we do. We have to ask ourselves, should the

penalty for bad driving be death? The effects of an arrogant attitude and failing to comprehend poor driving habits can easily lead to the death of an otherwise innocent person. Even if you can live with it, our efforts in this war cannot. We experience a set back every time there is an escalation of force incident that kills an innocent person.

As units develop TTPs that will reduce the preventable deaths of non-combatants, we need to give more time to the trigger puller. Whenever possible, we must build in measures that will allow our warriors ample time to determine whether an actual threat exists. This may be as easy as slowing our vehicles down so gunners have time to clearly determine a threat as you approach it or it approaches you. In some instances it may be better to allow an impatient driver to pass you rather than escalating force to the point of shooting the vehicle. I know that pulling over slightly and allowing a driver to pass is not a step in escalation of force but at some point perhaps we should look at de-escalation of force procedures. When a convoy is moving, speed is the single biggest issue to consider in order to give a gunner more time to think through escalation of force.

As a force, we need to be careful about assumption. Some common assumptions are: "He can see me; he is looking at me;

he understands my pronunciation of the local language; he can hear me; he knows not to pass convoys; he can read; and he is from around here and is familiar with how things are done." I am in no way trying to simplify a very complex problem. As it is important to understand the culture in this complex counterinsurgency, it is also important to look at this issue of escalation of force through the eyes of the local national. Conditions continue to change in this environment and we must be willing to adjust with the conditions. What may have been an acceptable technique a couple of years ago may not necessarily be applicable today.

We have a great amount of knowledge and equipment that will assist with this issue. The use of hand and arm signals, spot lights on turrets, laser markers, flares and VS-17 panels for visual recognition are some techniques. The audible signals of horns, whistles, bull horns and interpreter (voice) may be applied to get attention. Orange traffic cones and concertina wire with colored tape or strobe lights are effective to provide stand off for approaching vehicles or pedestrians. Whatever your unit chooses to use, you must remember that there is no replacement for seasoned and experienced leadership at

the point of decision. This equates to an experienced staff sergeant or above in the lead and trail vehicle of a convoy. A senior leader's presence is essential at the ECP, checkpoint and lead/trail security positions of a halted convoy. The presence of a calm, mature, seasoned leader may be just the de-escalation influence needed to keep a warrior from ramping up too quickly.

When a warrior kills a non-combatant, it is not only a tragedy for that family but also has a negative effect on the warrior and his unit, as well as producing negative strategic impact. There may be some situations where the escalation of force is correctly applied and the use of deadly force is necessarily implemented but an innocent person is still killed or injured. We owe it to our warriors, their families, our nation and the people of Afghanistan and Iraq to adequately address this issue. Because of the situational complexity of this type of scenario it must be adequately addressed in our standard operating procedures, convoy briefs and after action reviews. I encourage you to address it more clearly with your teams and press the need for TTPs that will provide more time for a measured escalation of force. There is no substitute for adequate leadership involvement and participation during all phases of convoy operations.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Dexter D. Clouden

Spc. Daniel Parreira, 102nd Infantry Regiment, Connecticut National Guard, pulls security while Afghan National Police officers investigate a construction roadblock while on patrol in Bagram, Afghanistan.

WE ASKED YOU ANSWERED

Survey says: NCO Journal is on track

By David Crozier

Once every three years or so we try to find out what our readership thinks of the NCO Journal. To find out, we put a readership survey in our October issue and on our AKO Web site asking for your input. You delivered and the results are compiled below. From what we see, you seem to like what we are doing with your magazine.

We did not get the numbers of respondents we hoped for from our readership, but those who did respond carried a common theme throughout the survey ... the NCO Journal is accomplishing its mission of being a quarterly forum for professional development.

It was nice to see that 82 percent of those who responded to the survey said they had looked at the NCO Journal in the last 12 months, and many of you read at least two or three of the four issues produced annually. Most of the respondents also said they read most of each magazine they come across, with many receiving The NCO Journal through their unit or office distribution.

As for the topics we cover in your magazine, most agree that we have a good mix of coverage with many saying they find the information reliable for use in NCO professional development. A vast majority of the respondents replied that The NCO Journal is easy to read and understand, and is well written.

The majority of the respondents also said the information we provide in The NCO Journal helps them be better NCOs, makes them think, helps them on their job, and keeps them informed of changes in the NCO world.

Most of those who responded also said they prefer The NCO Journal in print versus reading it online.





That's pretty much it in a nutshell. Your staff at the NCO Journal is doing what the majority of you want us to do. That doesn't mean that we can't improve. Everyone should always be seeking ways to improve their products for their customers and you are our customers. Therefore, we will keep the survey up on our AKO Web site so that you have a constant avenue for comment. We always want to hear what you think about your magazine and its content. It is your magazine, you do have input on its content and we welcome stories and commentary from the field. So how about it? What do you think?

Readership Survey Results - For complete results, see our AKO web site

1. Have you read or looked at a copy of The NCO Journal in the past 12 months?
82% said yes
2. How many of the four issues of The NCO Journal produced in the past 12 months have you read?
28% said four
3. How much of each NCO Journal do you usually read?
48.7% said all or most
4. How do you usually receive The NCO Journal?
66.6% said unit/office distro
5. After reading The NCO Journal you:
30.7% said pass it on
6. What is the primary reason you read The NCO Journal?
84.6% said NCOPD, History articles, doctrine/policy, Army News Service
7. How often do you find The NCO Journal a reliable source of NCOPD information?
92.2% said always or sometimes
8. How much of The NCO Journal should be devoted to NCOPD?
51.2% said about 1/4
9. How much should be devoted to history articles?
74.3% said about 1/4
10. How much to doctrine and policy?
35% said about 1/4
11. How much to Army News?
71.7% said about 1/4
12. How much to current topics?
66.6% said about 1/4
13. The NCO Journal is easy to read?
92.2% agree or strongly agree
14. The NCO Journal is easy to understand.
84.5% agree or strongly agree
15. Information in The NCO Journal is useful.
89.6% agree or strongly agree
16. The NCO Journal is well written.
89.6% agree or strongly agree
17. The NCO Journal helps me on my job.
56.3% agree or strongly agree
18. The NCO Journal has helped me become a better NCO.
56.3% agree or strongly agree
19. Information in The NCO Journal makes me think.
79.4% agree or strongly agree
20. How helpful is The NCO Journal in keeping you informed on changes in NCOPD?
38.4% said moderately
21. Over the past 12 months how much have you used suggestions, ideas or information from The NCO Journal to better understand your role as an NCO, improve leadership skills or train other NCOs/Soldiers in your unit/organization?
38.4% said sometimes
22. How often do you read the online version of The NCO Journal?
23% said sometimes
23. How helpful is the online version of The NCO Journal?
33.3% said moderately
24. Which do you prefer? The online version or print version?
61.5% said print
25. What is your current duty status?
38.4% said Active Army
26. What is your current status?
82% said Enlisted
27. If you are enlisted, what is your pay grade?
30.7% said SGT-SSG
28. What is your age group?
66.6% said 41 and older
29. What is your gender?
89.7% said male
30. Where are you stationed?
46% said Europe; Middle East/Africa
31. What is your civilian education level?
84.6% said High school/ GED

SGT Army Professional
Deployed around the World
Hometown, USA 11111



Letters to the Editor

The NCO Journal

11291 SGT E Churchill Street

Fort Bliss, Texas 79918-8002

Some duties deserve Elite Pay

I am a retired sergeant major from the U.S. Army Special Forces. I am writing to you because I am concerned with the Army's failure to recognize Elite Soldier Pay that I and several others that served during my tenure received.

I remember sending a message to Army headquarters and addressing this issue to the chief of staff of the Army. My feelings then were that some positions Soldiers hold should be considered elite and should be recognized as a basis for Elite Soldier Pay. Those that should be considered include: jumpmasters, drill sergeants, staff duty personnel, duty drivers, riggers, mechanics, clerks and any Soldier on call to perform 24-hour duties after duty hours.

These Soldiers are elite and should be recognized as such and paid properly to offset the lost time they have sacrificed in keeping our country free. We have gone a long way and have mentioned these compensations to our Soldiers who pull duties while everyone else enjoys their quality of life and whatever else they are doing in their off-duty time.

So I write to you all in the hope that you will continue to bring up this issue so we can continue this trend to make our Army better than it was when I was on active duty.

Thanks, and drive on! I admire the outstanding job each and every one of you continue to do in keeping us informed of all NCO and Soldier matters.

Tony A. Aquiningoc
Fort Huachuca, Ariz.

Enjoyed the Spritual Fitness article

I very much enjoyed reading the article entitled 'Spiritual Fitness' in the October 2006 issue of *The NCO Journal*. As I am not a subscriber, it is only recently that I noticed the article in an issue that someone had left open in our breakroom.

I have been a Soldier for about 11 years now, and an NCO for 4 years. I wholeheartedly agree with the sentiments expressed in the article that the leaders in today's Army face a daunting task

when it comes to maintaining order and discipline among our Soldiers when so many of them come from a culture of spiritual bankruptcy. Even more challenging is the issue of balancing different religious ideologies, secular values, and the pressure for political correctness.

I continue to be amazed that despite the challenges outlined in the article, we continue to be one of the finest, if not the finest, army in the world – and what makes it even more impressive is that we are an all-volunteer force. I remember seeing a quote painted on the wall outside my company commander's office at my initial AIT station, which read, "This is a volunteer army, and Soldiers volunteer to meet our standards. If they don't meet them, we should thank them for trying, and send them home."

I don't remember to whom that quote was attributed, but the basic truth of it sticks with me to this day. And while it can be much more difficult to quantify a Soldier's level of spiritual fitness (how does one test that?) than, say, physical fitness, or vocational aptitude, I certainly am pleased to see that the Army recognizes the need for developing and/or enhancing the spiritual fitness of our Soldiers.

I also agree that it should be done from the earliest stages of the training process. However, and I realize that the magazine did not cover the entirety of what was discussed by the group, and I would also submit that spritual fitness be given the same, if not greater, attention within the existing ranks of the Army. Especially within it's leadership – officer and enlisted alike. After all, as leaders, it is pointless for us to foster any values among our Soldiers unless we first espouse and embody those same values ourselves.

Sgt. Greg Giglio
Det. 2, Co. D, 1-185 AVN
Georgia Army National Guard

Send your comments to *The NCO Journal's* Letters to the Editor by emailing us at atss-sj-ncojournal@emh10.bliss.army.mil or by snail mail to *The NCO Journal*, 11291 Sgt. E Churchill St., Fort Bliss, Texas, 79918-8002. We reserve the right to edit for length, libel and grammar.

America's last known WWI combat veteran laid to rest

By Spc. April L. Dustin
Oregon National Guard Public Affairs

The echo of a 21-gun salute and bugler playing Taps seemingly marked the end of an era as a state and national treasure was laid to rest in Portland, Ore., March 2.

Retired Cpl. Howard V. Ramsey, Oregon's last living World War I veteran and the last known U.S. combat veteran of World War I, died in his sleep Feb. 22 at an assisted living center in southeast Portland. He was honored in a memorial service attended by nearly 200 people at Lincoln Memorial Park exactly one month before reaching his 109th birthday.

"This is a very historic occasion; we lay to rest today our nation's oldest combat veteran," said Pastor Stu Weber, who officiated over Ramsey's memorial service.

In an Associated Press report, Jim Benson of the Veterans Administration said there are now only seven World War I veterans on record with the VA, although it is possible there are unknown veterans who may still exist.

Of the seven known World War I veterans still living, none were shipped overseas, making Ramsey the last known combat veteran of "The Great War."

Ramsey inherited the title two weeks before his passing, when Massachusetts veteran Antonio Pierro passed away Feb. 8.

Ramsey's lifetime spanned three centuries and 19 presidents. He was born in Rico, Colo., April 2, 1898, when the U.S. flag had just 45 stars and President McKinley was preparing to declare war with Spain.

Too young to be drafted, Ramsey tried to voluntarily enlist but was told he was too skinny by Army standards. After gorging on bananas and water to successfully meet weight standards, he was placed in the Army's transportation corps.

Ramsey sailed to France in September 1918 to join General John "BlackJack" Pershing's American Expeditionary Force. Ramsey drove cars, trucks and motorcycles for the Army and trained other Soldiers on how to drive. He was often selected to drive officers to special engagements, one officer "gigging" him for having a dirty truck despite the constant rain and mud

in France. He also drove ambulances, transported troops to the frontlines and delivered water to troops on the battlefields.

Ramsey once recalled his service in World War I saying, "We were under fire a lot at the front, and we really caught hell one time. I lost friends over there."

After the armistice, Ramsey spent several months recovering the remains of American Soldiers who had been hastily buried in the trenches and transported them to the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, the largest American cemetery in Europe.

"You'd better believe it was pretty awful work," Ramsey told *Oregonian* reporter Rick Bella in 2005. "It was tough, but you became hardened to it."

Nearly 90 years later, Ramsey was still haunted by regret for not breaking the rules and keeping a diary that fell from the pocket of one deceased American Soldier. Ramsey told family and friends, "I wanted to keep that diary so badly to send it to his mother, but it was against the rules to keep anything from off the bodies."

Veterans of many generations and wars, and military representatives attended Ramsey's memorial service to pay their respects, including Brig. Gen. Raymond C. Byrne Jr., commander of the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team, and Jim Willis, state director of Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs.

Courtesy photo



Retired Cpl. Howard V. Ramsey (center), Oregon's last living World War I veteran and the last known U.S. combat veteran of World War I, died in his sleep Feb. 22 at an assisted living center in southeast Portland.

"If we are going to end an era, I can think of no better way than to do it with a person who is a model representation of the kinds of Soldiers who served this country in World War I, and someone who would be an example to any combat Soldier serving up to, and including those who serve in Afghanistan and Iraq today. All (veterans) would be justifiably proud to have known Cpl. Howard Ramsey," said Willis.

Retired Army Col. Don Holden, whose father was Ramsey's classmate at Washington High School, shared fond memories of Ramsey's sense of humor. He said farewell to his old friend by reading the epic World War I poem "Flanders Field," which Ramsey could recite from memory well into his late 90s.

Roll call

o f t h e f a l l e n

Operation Iraqi Freedom

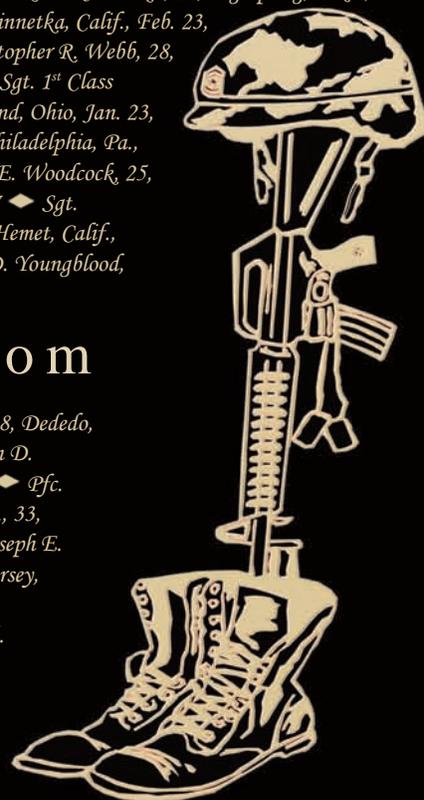
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Madore Jr., 34, San Diego, Calif., Feb. 14, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Randy J. Matheny, 20, McCook, Neb., Feb. 4, 2007 ♦ Pvt. Barry W. Mayo, 21, Ecru, Miss., March 5, 2007 ♦ Spc. Montreal S. Mcarn, 21, Raeford, N.C., Feb. 19, 2007 ♦ Pvt. Clinton T. McCormick, 20, Jacksonville, Fla., Dec. 27, 2006 ♦ Staff Sgt. Jacob G. McMillan, 25, Lafayette, La., Dec. 20, 2006 ♦ Sgt. Phillip D. McNeill, 22, Sunrise, Fla., Jan. 20, 2007 ♦ Spc. Alan E. McPeck, 20, Tucson, Ariz., Feb. 2, 2007 ♦ Pvt. Bobby Mejia II, Saginaw, Mich., Dec. 23, 2006 ♦ Sgt. Christopher P. Messer, 28, Petersburg, Fla., Dec. 27, 2006 ♦ Sgt. Maj. Michael C. Mettelle, 44, West St. Paul, Minn., Feb. 1, 2007 ♦ Pvt. Johnathon M. Millican, 20, Trafford, Ala., Jan. 20, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Brian L. Mintzlauff, 34, Fort Worth, Texas, Dec. 18, 2006 ♦ Spc. Raymond N. Mitchell III, 21, West Memphis, Ark., Jan. 6, 2007 ♦ Spc. Yari Mokri, 26, Pflugerville, Texas, Dec. 6, 2006 ♦ Sgt. Jae S. Moon, 21, Levittown, Pa., Dec. 25, 2006 ♦ Sgt. 1st Class Allen Mosteiro, 42, Fort Worth, Texas, Feb. 14, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Ashly L. Moyer, 21, Emmaus, Pa., March 3, 2007 ♦ Maj. Michael L. Mundell, 47, Brandenburg, Ky., Jan. 5, 2007 ♦ Spc. Shawn M. Murphy, 24, Fort Bragg, N.C., Dec. 10, 2006 ♦ Pfc. Albert M. Nelson, 31, Philadelphia, Pa., Dec. 4, 2006 ♦ Pfc. Andrew H. Nelson, 19, Saint Johns, Mich., Dec. 25, 2006 ♦ Pfc. William R. Newgard, 20, Arlington Heights, Ill., Dec. 29, 2006 ♦ Sgt. Curtis L. Norris, 28, Dansville, Mich., Dec. 23, 2006 ♦ Sgt. Toby R. Olsen, 28, Manchester, N.H., Jan. 20, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Brandon A. Parr, 25, West Valley, Utah, March 3, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Justin T. Paton, 24, Alanson, Mich., Feb. 17, 2007 ♦ Capt. Travis L. Patriquin, 32, Texas, Dec. 6, 2006 ♦ Sgt. Michael C. Peek, 23, Chesapeake, Va., March 3, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Andrew C. Perkins, 27, Northglenn, Colo., March 5, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Karl O. Soto-Pinedo, 22, San Juan, Puerto Rico, Feb. 27, 2007 ♦ Spc. Vincent J. Pomante III, 22, Westerville, Ohio, Dec. 6, 2006 ♦ Spc. Aaron L. Preston, 29, Dallas, Texas, Dec. 25, 2006 ♦ Cpl. Stephen J. Raderstorf, 21, Peoria, Ariz., Jan. 7, 2007 ♦ Spc. Shawn P. Rankinen, 28, Independence, Mo., March 7, 2007 ♦ Spc. William J. Rechenmacher, 24, Jacksonville, Fla., Jan. 18, 2007 ♦ Sgt. James J. Regan, 26, Manhasset, N.Y., Feb. 9, 2007 ♦ Capt. Mark T. Resh, 28, Pittsburgh, Pa., Jan. 28, 2007 ♦ Spc. James D. Rieken, 22, Redmond, Wash., Jan. 14, 2007 ♦ Spc. Michael D. Rivera, 22, Brooklyn, N.Y., March 7, 2007 ♦ Sgt. John D. Rode, 24, Pineville, N.C., Feb. 14, 2007 ♦ Spc. Justin A. Rollins, 22, Newport, N.H., March 5, 2007 ♦ Spc. Adam J. Rosema, 27, Pasadena, Calif., March 14, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Eric Ross, 26, Kenduskeag, Maine, Feb. 9, 2007 ♦ Spc. Ryan D. Russell, 20, Elm City, N.C., March 5, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Jon B. St. John II, 25, Neenah, Wis., Jan. 27, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Paul T. Sanchez, 32, Irving, Texas, Jan. 14, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Ronnie L. Sanders, 26, Thibodaux, La., Feb. 3, 2007 ♦ Cpl. Jonathan E. Schiller, 20, Ottumwa, Iowa, Dec. 31, 2006 ♦ Spc. Collin R. Schockmel, 19, Richtwood, Texas, Jan. 16, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Carl L. Seigart, 32, San Luis Obispo, Calif., Feb. 14, 2007 ♦ Spc. Dennis L. Sellen Jr., 20, Newhall, Calif., Feb. 11, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Edward W. Shaffer, 23, Mont Alto, Pa., Dec. 27, 2006 ♦ Cpl. Stephen D. Shannon, 21, Guttenberg, Iowa, Jan. 31, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Alan W. Shaw, 31, Little Rock, Ark., Feb. 9, 2007 ♦ Spc. Joshua D. Sheppard, 22, Quinton, Okla., Dec. 22, 2006 ♦ Pfc. Darrell W. Shipp, 25, San Antonio, Texas, Jan. 25, 2007 ♦ Spc. Eric R. Sieger, 18, Layton, Utah, Feb. 1, 2007 ♦ Sgt. William M. Sigua, 21, Los Altos Hills, Calif., Jan. 31, 2007 ♦ Spc. Jonathan K. Smith, 19, Atlanta, Ga., March 11, 2007 ♦ Spc. Richard A. Smith, 20, Grand Prairie, Texas, Dec. 31, 2006 ♦ Sgt. Richard A. Soukema, 30, Oceanside, Calif., Feb. 27, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Theodore A. Spatol, 59, Thermopolis, Wyo., Dec. 14, 2006 ♦ Pvt. Clarence T. Spencer, 24, San Diego, Calif., Feb. 4, 2007 ♦ Sgt. 1st Class William C. Spillers, 39, Terry, Miss., Feb. 17, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. David R. Staats, 30, Pueblo, Colo., Dec. 16, 2006 ♦ Spc. Matthew J. Stanley, 22, Wolfboro Falls, N.H., Dec. 16, 2006 ♦ Staff Sgt. Robert M. Stanley, 27, Spotsylvania, Va., March 5, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Seth M. Stanton, 19, Colorado Springs, Colo., Dec. 17, 2006 ♦ Spc. Nicholas P. Steinbacher, 22, La Crescenta, Calif., Dec. 10, 2006 ♦ Spc. Carla J. Stewart, 37, Sun Valley, Calif., Jan. 28, 2007 ♦ Sgt. 1st Class Douglas C. Stone, Taylorsville, Utah, March 11, 2007 ♦ Spc. Brandon L. Stout, 23, Grand Rapids, Mich., Jan. 22, 2007 ♦ Spc. Joseph A. Strong, 21, Lebanon, Ind., Dec. 26, 2006 ♦ Pfc. Roger A. Suarez-Gomez, 21, Miami, Fla., Dec. 4, 2006 ♦ Sgt. John M. Sullivan, 22, Hixson, Tenn., Dec. 30, 2006 ♦ Pfc. Ming Sun, 20, Cathedral City, Calif., Jan. 9, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Nicholas A. Tanton, 24, San Antonio, Texas, Feb. 13, 2007 ♦ Cpl. Timothy A. Swanson, 21, San Antonio, Texas, Jan. 27, 2007 ♦ Maj. Michael V. Taylor, 40, North Little Rock, Ark., Jan. 20, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Robert B. Thrasher, 23, Folsom, Calif., Feb. 11, 2007 ♦ Spc. Douglas L. Tinsley, 21, Chester, S.C., Dec. 26, 2006 ♦ Pfc. David T. Toomalatai, 19, Long Beach, Calif., Jan. 27, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Thomas E. Vandling Jr., 26, Pittsburgh, Pa., Jan. 1, 2007 ♦ Spc. Robert J. Volker, 21, Big Spring, Texas, Dec. 20, 2006 ♦ Spc. Chad J. Vollmer, 24, Grand Rapids, Mich., Dec. 23, 2006 ♦ Pfc. Rowan D. Walter, 25, Wimmerka, Calif., Feb. 23, 2007 ♦ 1st Sgt. William T. Warren, 48, North Little Rock, Ark., Jan. 20, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Christopher R. Webb, 28, Winchester, Calif., March 7, 2007 ♦ Pvt. Raymond M. Werner, 21, Boise, Idaho, Feb. 8, 2007 ♦ Sgt. 1st Class Dexter E. Wheelouse, 37, Winder, Ga., Dec. 25, 2006 ♦ Staff Sgt. Michael J. Wiggins, 26, Cleveland, Ohio, Jan. 23, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Eric R. Wilkus, 20, Hamilton, N.J., Dec. 25, 2006 ♦ Pvt. Wesley J. Williams, 23, Philadelphia, Pa., March 2, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Jamie D. Wilson, 34, San Diego, Calif., Jan. 22, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Daniel E. Woodcock, 25, Glennallen, Alaska, March 11, 2007 ♦ Sgt. James M. Wosika Jr., 24, St. Paul, Minn., Jan. 9, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Gregory A. Wright, 28, Boston, Mass., Jan. 13, 2007 ♦ Chief Warrant Officer Keith Yoakum, 41, Hemet, Calif., Feb. 2, 2007 ♦ Spc. Christopher D. Young, 20, Los Angeles, Calif., March 2, 2007 ♦ Pvt. Kelly D. Youngblood, 19, Mesa, Ariz., Feb. 18, 2007 ♦ Pvt. Matthew T. Zeimer, 18, Glendive, Mont., Feb. 2, 2007

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Sgt. Gregory D. Fejeran, 28, Barrigada, Guam, March 5, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Christopher J.C. Fernandez, 28, Dededo, Guam, March 5, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Ryan C. Garbs, 20, Edwardsville, Ill., Feb. 18, 2007 ♦ Spc. Brandon D. Gordon, 21, Naples, Fla., Feb. 18, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Buddy J. Hughie, 25, Poteau, Okla., Feb. 19, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Jason D. Johns, 19, Frankton, Ind., Feb. 21, 2007 ♦ Chief Warrant Officer Hershel D. McCants Jr., 33, Arizona, Feb. 18, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Long N. Nguyen, 27, Portland, Ore., Feb. 10, 2007 ♦ Staff Sgt. Joseph E. Phaneuf, 38, Eastford, Conn., Dec. 15, 2006 ♦ Chief Warrant Officer John A. Quinlan, 36, New Jersey, Feb. 18, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Kristofer D.S. Thomas, 18, Roseville, Calif., Feb. 18, 2007 ♦ Spc. Travis R. Vaughn, 26, Reinbeck, Iowa, Feb. 18, 2007 ♦ Sgt. Adam A. Wilkinson, 23, Fort Carson, Colo., Feb. 18, 2007 ♦ Pfc. Daniel Zizumbo, 27, Chicago, Ill., Feb. 27, 2007

Editor's note: This list is a continuation of lists printed in all previous editions of *The NCO Journal* beginning in October 2003. The names that appear in this Honor Roll are those that have been released since Dec. 9, 2006 and are current as of March 16, 2007.



"The American Soldier is a proud one and he demands professional competence in his leaders. In battle, he wants to know that the job is going to be done right, with no unnecessary casualties. The noncommissioned officer wearing the chevron is supposed to be the best Soldier in the platoon and he is supposed to know how to perform all the duties expected of him. The American Soldier expects his sergeant to be able to teach him how to do his job. And he expects even more from his officers."

— General Omar Bradley



Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Andy Dunaway

Sgts. Sean Bundy and Dennis First search for IEDs near al Muradia village, Iraq. The Soldiers are from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division. The smoke is from a controlled IED detonation.

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