

Iraqis step up active role

U.S. unit enables local forces to take greater responsibility in supply mission

By Sgt. Joshua Salmons
4TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

LOGISTICAL BASE SEITZ, Iraq – While giving a speech in December, President George Bush outlined a general strategy of the war by saying, “As Iraqis stand up, we will stand down.”

It’s a principal that guides efforts of 4th Sustainment Brigade units as they work with their Iraqi counterparts.

Battery C of the 2nd Battalion of the 5th Field Artillery Regiment, serving as a transportation company at Logistical Base Seitz also has its hand in developing an Iraqi Transportation Company (ITC).

“We’re standing them up and getting them to do more of the runs with flatbeds and tractor trailers,” said 2nd Lt. Tim Culpepper, battery executive officer.

With over 30 trucks, the Seitz ITC runs daily and helps reduce the workload of Battery C in their supply runs. Drivers are recruited from throughout the

SEE ITC • Page 8



2nd Lt. Tim Culpepper walks through the lineup of trucks at the Iraqi Transportation Company staging yard near Logistical Base Seitz Feb. 25. The ITC is used to help deliver supplies throughout the Baghdad area of operation in parallel with American efforts.

Photo by Sgt. Joshua Salmons



Six fuel bags were installed at Forward Operating Base Kalsu by the 227th Supply Company in early January. *Courtesy photo*

Fuel platoon cleans, improves spill area

By Capt. Jamie Stahl
227TH SUPPLY COMPANY

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU, Iraq – The 227th Supply Company's petroleum, oil and lubricant (POL) platoon achieved a distinguished reputation when fixing a fuel system supply point in December. Their reputation gained momentum as they were called up to tackle additional missions.

The platoon is charged with pushing thousands of gallons of fuel to several forward operation bases weekly, but back in December the company leadership had less than 12 hours to respond to replace a fuel system supply point in the Green Zone.

It was a critical mission, due to a massive fuel spill contaminating the ground and causing a hazard for the aircraft that landed at the helipad nearby.

Sgt. Jon Meier, NCO in charge of the mission, with a team of three Soldiers put

together a bundle of fuel hoses and bags and went to the Green Zone to contain the fuel leak on the broken system.

For three days the team worked nonstop and not only salvaged more than 13,000 gallons of fuel, but also improved the berms around the bags and laid the hose so that they could download bulk fuel while aircraft were on the helicopter pad.

This helps the whole platoon and future units, since bulk fuel is delivered at least once or twice a week to that fuel point. Before the improvements, downloading fuel would have to stop until the aircraft was gone, making a short mission into a long night of stop and go.

According to Col. Gustave Perna, 4th Sustainment Brigade commander, the platoon did a superb job containing a massive fuel spill.

A week later the brigade tasked the POL platoon with laying six bags and setting up a 'hot' refuel point at Forward Operating Base

Kalsu. This effort was larger than the previous. Meier, a new sergeant with less than a year time in grade, was called upon once again.

With a team of six Soldiers, he laid down the bags, made the engineer works and shack for the incoming unit that will man the point. They worked tirelessly in the cold, rain and mud.

In less than two weeks, Meier and his team laid six 50,000-gallon fuel bags, set up and improved the 'hot' refuel point, and created a bulk-fuel area for fuel storage. The new bulk fuel area has room for 1.5 million gallons of fuel.

The platoon still delivers fuel and currently runs more than 300 miles a week in the Baghdad area.

The platoon has since been tasked with laying down more fuel system supply points and they are ready to take on the new challenges as they 'fuel the force.'

The WRANGLER

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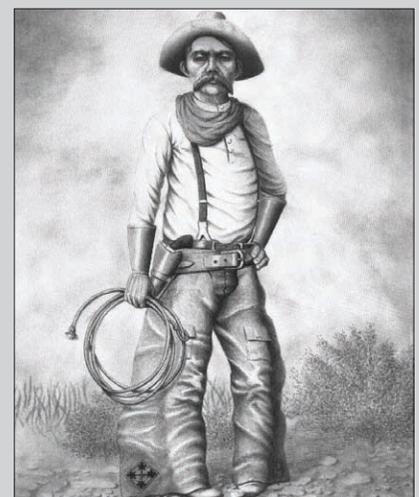
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A Soldier from the 18th Corps Support Battalion scrubs mud off of his boots while standing in a flooded area of Logistical Base Seitz, Iraq, Feb. 4. Heavy rains inundated many operational and living areas on Seitz, forcing units to form flood-control teams. *Courtesy photo*

All washed up: *Seitz endures heavy flooding during Iraq rain season, barracks and offices affected*

By Capt. Evelyn Kempe
18TH CORPS SUPPORT BATTALION

LOGISTICAL BASE SEITZ, Iraq – Rain, rain, rain.

During the months of November to February (the Iraq rainy season), it seems to be never ending days of sludge and muck here on Logistical Base Seitz.

With the weather like this, it can take its toll on operations with slippery roads and no air support. But to the Soldiers here the rainy season brings another important hazardous issue: flooding.

With constant rain coming down, flooding is inevitable, but when the rain hits especially hard, the Flood Mitigation Team goes into action.

Primarily lead by Staff Sgt. Darmi Haughton and Staff Sgt. Wendell Latin of the 1011th Quartermaster Company, this team works day and night to help alleviate the flooding problems in operational and living areas.

“The battalion really came together to help out when Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment barracks and the [Morale, Welfare, and Recreation] area were flooded,” said Haughton.

She added, “Whether it was operating pumps, placing tarps over leaky roofs, or hauling buckets of water, the personnel from [Kellogg Brown and Root] and nearly all the companies of the 18th Combat Support Battalion focused on getting the water out of the building.”

Even when the pumps are down, this team uses everything from

shovels to buckets to get the job done.

Master Sgt. Hiram Kuilanmunoz, from the battalion Support Operations (SPO) section, commented how the team “cross-leveled” equipment to cover down throughout the camp; relocating eight 125 GPM (gallon per minute) pumps from various areas, so operations would not stop.

“Collectively, the flood mitigation team has shown tremendous efforts in less than perfect conditions to aid everyone here on Log Base Seitz; having pumped over 25,000 gallons of water in the less than a 96 hour period,” said Kuilanmunoz.

Pfc. Andrew Rott, a member of the 1011th Quartermaster team, stated that he felt like he was really helping out the Soldiers.

“It was hard, dirty work, but everyone was motivated and glad to do it,” said Rott.

“First time around we weren’t as organized and had only one pump to work with, but the second time around everything went smoothly,” said Spc. Alejandro Valdez with the 1011th Quartermaster team.

He added, “I feel good about our team now and how well we work together; next time we will be even better.”

In the coming months, contractors will be laying out limestone and gravel in certain areas to allow for better working and living conditions.

Also, the battalion headquarters is working to with Victory Base and 3rd Corps Support Command to improve the Soldiers living areas.

Personal Finance Planning

Using IRAs a good way to invest in future

While we are deployed earning all of this extra cash, have you stopped and thought about investing in your future? Instead of buying DVD's, iPods or stereos, why not think about opening an IRA?

Deciding whether to open a Roth IRA or a traditional IRA is a major decision with potentially large financial consequences. Though there are different types of IRAs, traditional and Roth IRAs are the most popular.

So what are the differences between the two?

Traditional IRA

- ♦ Tax deductible contributions (depending on income level)
- ♦ Withdraws begin at age 59 ½ and are mandatory by 70 ½
- ♦ Taxes are paid on earnings when withdrawn from the IRA
- ♦ Funds can be used to purchase a variety of investments (stocks, bonds, certificates of deposits, etc.)
- ♦ Available to everyone; no income restrictions
- ♦ All funds withdrawn (including principal contributions) before 59 ½ are subject to a 10% penalty (subject to exception).

Roth IRA

- ♦ Contributions are not tax deductible
- ♦ No mandatory distribution age
- ♦ All earnings and principal are 100 percent tax free if rules and regulations are followed (see IRS Pub 590)
- ♦ Funds can be used to purchase variety of investments (stocks, bonds, certificates of deposits, etc.)
- ♦ Principal contributions can be withdrawn any time without penalty (subject to some minimal conditions).

The biggest difference between the traditional and Roth IRA is the way the U.S. government treats the taxes. If you earn \$50,000 a year and put \$2,000 in a traditional IRA, you will be able to deduct

the contribution from you income taxes (meaning you will only have to pay tax on \$48,000 in income to the IRS). At 59 ½, you may begin withdrawing funds but will be forced to pay taxes on all of the capital gains, interest, dividends, etc., that were earned over the past years.

On the other hand, if you put the same \$2,000 in a Roth IRA, you would not receive the income tax deduction. If you needed money in the account, you could withdraw the principal at any time (although you will pay penalties if you withdraw any of the earnings your money has made). When you reached retirement age, you would be able to withdraw all of the money 100% tax free. The Roth IRA will make the most sense in most situations.

Here are some more questions:

Q. How much money do I need to open an IRA?

A. Minimum opening fees differ by institution, but are dramatically less than other types of investment accounts.

Q. How much can I contribute to my IRA each year?

A. IRA Contribution Limits:

YEAR	AGE 49 & BELOW	AGE 50 & ABOVE
2005	\$4,000	\$4,500
2006-2007	\$4,000	\$5,000
2008	\$5,000	\$6,000

Q. Where can I open an IRA (traditional or Roth)?

A. You can open an IRA at a Brokerage Firm or your Financial Institution.

For More information on all types of IRA's, refer to the Internal Revenue Service page at:

<http://www.irs.gov/publications/p590/index.html>



Master Sgt. Robin Krieger
BRIGADE FINANCE NCOIC

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Going on Emergency Leave?

Don't forget,



you **MUST**
have civilian
clothes to be
able to fly
out!



Sgt. Danion Ferreira ties down concrete barriers to the back of his palletized load system on Logistical Base Seitz Feb. 24. Ferreria is a truck driver with Battery C 2nd Battalion 5th Field Artillery Regiment. *Photo by Sgt. Joshua Salmons*

Artillerymen find new role sustaining theater FOBs

By Sgt. Joshua Salmons
4TH SUSTAINMENT BRIGADE

LOGISTICAL BASE SEITZ, Iraq – Although trained to be the “kings of battle,” most artillerymen deployed to Iraq find themselves in a myriad of roles.

Battery C of the 2nd Battalion of the 5th Field Artillery Regiment now operates palletized load systems (PLS) as makeshift truck drivers.

“We have 40 drivers and 35 trucks, we push almost all classes of supplies,” said Capt. Andrew Lennox, battery commander. “About the only thing we can’t handle is sensitive items.”

Working with both Kellogg Brown and Root and a fledgling Iraqi Truck Company, the 129 personnel of the field artillery unit have accumulated approximately 165,000 miles in a little over two months, Lennox said.

Their transition began nearly a year ago in May 2005, when the first few battery Soldiers started training on the PLS system at an Army facility in Kansas.

“Before we came out here, we were dealing with 63Ds (artillery mechanics) and 52Ds (power generation equipment repairmen),” said Master Sgt. Edwin Kolb, acting battery first sergeant and maintenance NCOIC. “We were no where near affiliated with PLSs.

“In Kansas they learned how to diagnose and troubleshoot the PLS system.”

The platform training was very beneficial since the unit has not hit any significant maintenance or operating problems that could not be handled within the unit, Kolb said.

“I sort of expected the worst going from Paladins to PLSs,” said Staff Sgt. Brian



Spc. Matthew Hoff untangles a cargo strap used to secure his load to the back of his PLS. Hoff is a truck driver with Battery C 2-5 Field Artillery Regiment. *Photo by Sgt. Joshua Salmons*

Glascie, motor sergeant. “We haven’t had too many problems. We have a metal shop here on Seitz, so we can fix pretty much anything. That’s helped.”

Maintaining the PLS is equivalent with the M109 Paladin, Kolb said.

“With the technology today, it’s more troubleshooting and understanding,” he explained. “You have to learn computers with it. It’s a blessing these guys are very flexible.”

Maintenance efforts, especially, have helped keep the trucks moving.

“These guys are very versatile,” Kolb said. “We also had adequate time to prepare to make sure we had the right equipment here.”

“Without those guys, we wouldn’t be able to push the missions we’ve been pushing,” Lennox added.

Starting with 55 Soldiers while Battery C was still at Fort Sill, Okla., that number swelled to the current total of 129 as troops were continually added, with different MOSs represented throughout.

Spc. Matthew Hoff, a medic-turned-truck driver, said although he doesn’t perform his original job very often, there are circumstances where he’s called on to use his old skills.

“These are my friends, they trust me to take care of them,” he said. “Sometimes it gets pretty busy trying to do both, but I don’t mind. [Truck driving] is what the Army wants me to do – it’s what my country wants me to do.”

All in all, the switch has gone over well, despite the challenges.

“It was a good transition,” said Lennox. “The guys definitely worked hard. From everything we’re pushing, they say we have the mission down.”

A Few Legal Pointers

Children bring parents joy, tax credits

The child and dependent care credit is a tax credit for individuals who pay someone to care for their dependent who is under age 13, or for their spouse or dependent who is unable to care for himself or herself. The credit can be no more than 35 percent of the taxpayer's dependent care expenses.

Taxpayers must pay these expenses to allow them to work or look for work. To qualify for this credit, five tests must be met.

1. Qualifying Person Test:

The child and dependent care expenses must be for the care of one or more qualifying persons. A qualifying person is either: 1) Someone who was under the age of 13 when the care was provided

or 2) A spouse or someone other than your spouse, who was physically or mentally not able to care for him or herself and lived with the taxpayer for more than half of the year.

2. Earned Income Test: The taxpayer and his or her spouse (if married) must have earned income during the year. Earned income includes wages, salaries, tips, other taxable employee compensation, and net earnings from self-employment. If married, both individuals

must have worked, unless one spouse was a full-time student (for at least five months), or incapable of self-care.

3. Work Related Expense Test: To be considered work related, the expenses must allow the taxpayer or their spouse to work.



Staff Sgt. Linda Rupe
PARALEGAL NCO

Expenses to attend kindergarten or a higher grade are not expenses for care. Work can also include actively seeking employment. However, if one does not find a job and does not have any earned income for the year, this credit can not be taken.

Money paid to a relative to care for a dependent, even if they live in your home, can count as a work related expense. However,

there are some limitations. You cannot include any amounts paid to: 1) A dependent if he or she can be claimed as an exemption; 2) Your child who is under age 19 at the end of the year, even if he or she is not a dependent; 3) Spouse; or 4) The parent of the qualifying child who is the taxpayer's qualifying person and is under age 13.

4. Joint Return Test: Generally, married couples must file a joint return to take the

credit. However, if the couple is legally separated or living apart from one another, they may be able to file separate returns and still take the credit.

5. Provider Identification Test: The name, address, and taxpayer identification number (generally the social security number) of the care provider must be identified. Use Form 2441 if using Form 1040, or Schedule 2 if using Form 1040A. If the care provider's information is incorrect or incomplete, the credit may not be allowed. If the care provider refuses to provide information, report whatever information that is available, such as the name and address, on the form to claim the credit.

What is the most I can report as my child and dependent care expense? After meeting the five prerequisites, the maximum amount that can be reported will depend on the lowest of the following: 1) The lower paid spouse's earned income; 2) The single taxpayer's earned income; 3) The actual expenses paid; and 4) The overall limit of \$3,000 for one qualifying person or \$6,000 for two or more qualifying persons.

For further information, visit <http://www.irs.gov> and read IRS publication 503, Child and Dependent Care Expenses.

A Chaplain's Prayer

Power of prayer prevalent as ever in war zone

By Capt. James Key
530 LOGISTICAL TASK FORCE CHAPLAIN

The night before my deployment to Iraq, a war-torn country with deep biblical roots, I sat alone in deep thought and prayer in my empty apartment at Fort Bragg, N. C.

I thought about my children, family and friends who I would be leaving behind. I prayed that I not only be given the strength and power to minister to the Soldiers in my battalion but also for the determination to never give up when the days become too long and nights become too short.

As I conclude my 10th month in country I'm still praying, but

this time it's not for me, instead, it's for the sons and daughters of our country who serve in the United States military. I pray that America never forget the sacrifice they are making and the courage they demonstrate on a daily basis.

Who are they? They are the children of teachers, truck drivers, factory workers, secretaries, shipyard workers, firefighters, police officers, military veterans, small-business owners, janitors, bus drivers, cooks, maids, social workers, nurses and many other professionals. They are the sons and daughters of your neighbors, co-workers, friends and relatives.

They hail from cities, suburbs and the country. They are the MTV,

PRAYER FROM Page 6

BET, CMT, Xbox, Play Station and Game Boy generation who are doing something that most Americans would never dare to do.

Most of these young men and women didn't graduate from private high schools and never considered applying to prestigious colleges such as Harvard, Yale, Howard or Hampton.

They are a true reflection of America in that they come in many shapes, colors and faith and cultural backgrounds.

They rise early in the morning, not knowing if it will be their last day on Earth. They work long hours in the hot sun and go on dangerous missions at all hours of the day. Because of the nature of their work they are forced to grow up much faster than their peers in the civilian world.

They come to chapel service on Sunday morning with a Bible in one hand and their M-16 or 9mm in the other hand. They pray with their eyes closed tightly and they sing songs of praise and worship from the bottom of their heart and depth of their soul.

Unlike the civilian churches back in the states, chapel service in Iraq is dirty, dusty and raw. There are no frills and thrills or glitter and gleam. We don't wear designer suits, fancy hats, alligator shoes, French-cut collar shirts, elegant ties, expensive jewelry or drive expensive cars to service. Instead, we arrive by foot or in military trucks sporting desert combat uniforms.

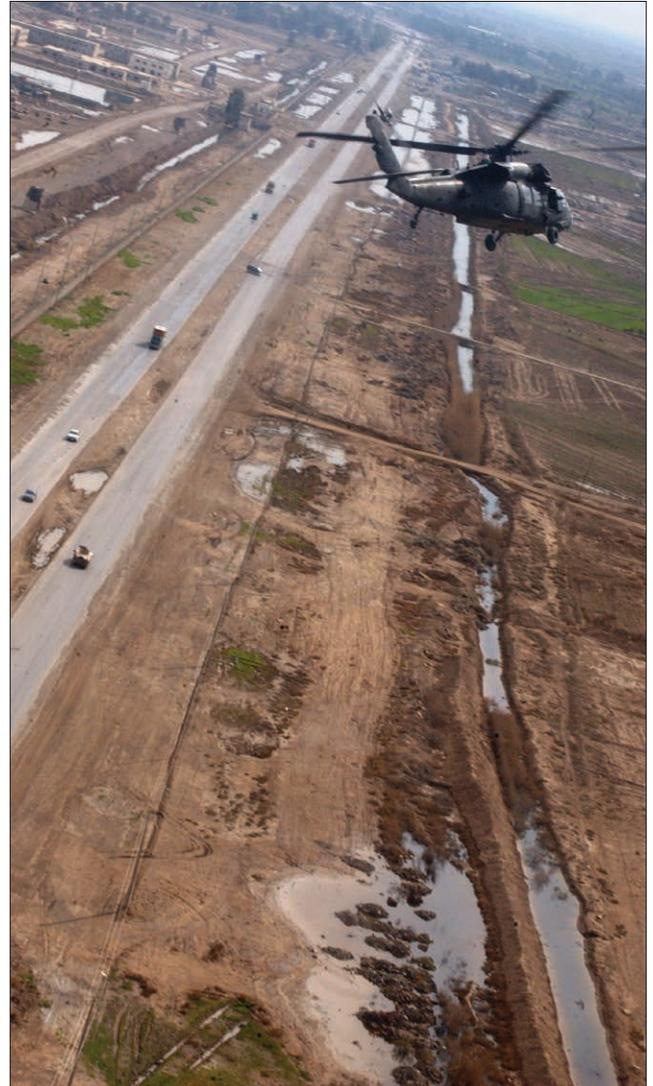
Our chapel is not made with wood or brick. It does not have stained-glass windows, red carpet, chandeliers hanging from the ceiling, expensive pews, a fellowship hall or a pastor's study. Instead we worship in a tent surrounded by a cement wall to protect us from incoming fire.

And yet, it has been in this context that I have seen many Soldiers make radical spiritual changes in their lives. In a land that lies between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and where great biblical personalities such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Noah, Jonah, Amos, Daniel, Ezekiel, Peter and the three Hebrew boys once lived and walked, many Soldiers have discovered the power of prayer while others have renewed their commitment to their faith.

Whether you are a troop in the desert, civilian in America or an Iraqi citizen, faith matters! Unscheduled life events such as death, sickness, tragedy, catastrophe, hardship, war and a host of other issues challenge many individuals to grow closer to their faith. It is true: life will give everyone an opportunity to say 'yes or no' to the question of faith and religion.

Here in the desert many Soldiers have answered in the affirmative and thus are submitting themselves to a higher power. Attendance at Bible study and chapel service continue to increase and religious material such as pamphlets, holy books and other religious paraphernalia disappear shortly after being placed on book shelves. In short, a significant number of Soldiers are experiencing incredible spiritual growth. As a result, I adamantly believe these young men and women will never be the same, and neither will I.

Lastly, I can honestly say that during the past few months I've come to truly appreciate the religious freedom we have in the United States



Morning commute

A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter turns south toward Baghdad during a morning run of the "Ironhorse Express" near Camp Taji Feb. 21. The aircraft is assigned to the Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.
Photo by Sgt. Joshua Salmons

which is sometime taken for granted. We are not a perfect nation but I'm thankful we still have the constitutional right to practice the religion of our choice without fear of persecution.

Conversely, under the Saddam Hussein regime freedom of religion was severely limited. The government exercised repressive measures against any religious groupings or organizations that were deemed as not providing full political and social support of the regime. Hopefully the current Iraqi leadership will continue to work toward creating a democratic representative government that respects the fundamental rights of all its citizens, irrespective of ethnicity or faith.

As Operation Iraqi Freedom continues, please remember to pray or think positive thoughts for those who stand in harm's way day after day. For they truly deserve it...wouldn't you agree?

Troops find running in groups best motivator

By 1st Lt. Krisha Serrie
77TH MAINTENANCE COMPANY

There are few 77th Maintenance Company Soldiers who rally together to stay healthy. 1st Sgt. Thomas Hall's 'running buddies club' helps motivate Soldiers to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Hall started the running group and enjoys pushing the Soldiers to the limit.

"It feels good to motivate Soldiers to stay in shape," said Hall. "I like being around Soldiers."

He added, "It relays a positive impact for their military job, as well as for their health."

The running club consists of six 77th Maintenance Company Soldiers who can be seen every day at 4 p.m. stretching out for a run.

Some may dread the thought of running five or six miles, but with their buddies there, it's easy for club members.

"I think running is fun," said Spc. Timmy Charlton, armor and training specialist. "I always feel better when it is over."

Running has become the new after-work activity that these Soldiers just can't seem to get enough of these days. They started running not only to stay healthy and maintain good physical fitness, but also to create camaraderie.

ITC FROM Page 1

Baghdad area of operation and work in secret to hide their identities.

"They show a lot of courage to come in and work for the Army," said Spc. Preston Jensen, ITC loadmaster. "A lot of these Iraqis live in parts of Baghdad that are really dangerous, but they always say they're happy to work with us."

Local nationals working for the military must take steps to hide what they do from their family and friends, for fear of reprisals from militant groups.

That means would-be workers must travel to the American bases in secret, and still endure the long processing procedures once they arrive.

"It takes hours and hours to get them on and off post," Jensen said. "We try to give them some place to bed down before they go out on mission and make sure they have enough to eat, since they miss meals."

Despite the ITC working outside of Battery C's perimeter, what they do is very much inside of the unit's focus.

"The idea is to let the ITC do more so we don't have to," said Sgt. 1st Class Federico Flores, the ITC NCOIC. "We're extending our yard here, trying to get fuelers here to run fuel missions also."

"The more vehicles we get, the more missions these guys will run."

They show a lot of courage to come in and work for the Army. A lot of these Iraqis live in parts of Baghdad that are really dangerous.

Spc. Preston Jensen
LOADMASTER, BATTERY C, 2-5 FIELD ARTILLERY

The interaction between the U.S. Soldiers and Iraqis involves more than just a provided meal and cot, Americans are also actively training the Iraqis to more effectively transport cargo.

"When we first got here they were trying

to tie down 20-foot containers with one strap," Jensen said, noting the Iraqi's initial inadequate securing standards. "They're picking up on what we're telling them. Even the maintenance on the vehicles has improved dramatically from where we first got here."

The ITC's stepping up will help with the overall goal of letting the Iraqi forces take over.

"They [can] haul everything from barriers to containers to palletized goods," said

Culpepper. "They can haul everything we haul."

"I'm trying to take as many missions as I can from [our] guys," said Flores.

"Pile them on me. The more we run the less they do. Eventually they'll end up taking over on their own."



Soldiers from the 77th Maintenance Company pose for the camera before starting their evening run Feb. 20 on Seitz Annex. *Courtesy photo*

"Running after work clears my mind," said Sgt. Jennifer Rivera, standard automated material management system (SAMMS) NCO. "I am motivated because there is someone to talk to when I run."

Some of the Soldiers joined the running club for many reasons.

"I get my motivation to run when I stare at my gut," said Charlton.

"I don't want to get a heart attack and I want to be alive to take care of my son," said Cpl. David Needleman, re-enlistment NCO.

The club pans on continuing their running workouts when they return to Germany in the next few months.

Overall, these Soldiers help their buddies stay in shape simply by being by their side, said Hall. These Soldiers are far from lazy and they are not forced to run.

They run because they want to, not because someone tells them to do so, he added. If anything it is a stress reliever, because they are running with their buddies.

Some Medical Advice

Moderate doses of caffeine boosts performance

Drug can help energy levels but care is needed when using potent supplements

Quite honestly, I have never thought that the cup of coffee I have each morning gave me any particular performance “advantage.” To me, it just tastes good.

Caffeine intake for Soldiers has traditionally been in the form of coffee consumption; the standard cup contains about 100 mg of caffeine.

Few command centers in Iraq do not have a coffee pot stained around the edges from overuse. Nevertheless, does caffeine consumption lead to improved performance on the battlefield?

During OIF/OEF, there has been an increased use of caffeinated beverages (i.e. Red Bull, RipIt) as well as many nutritional supplements containing high contents of caffeine.

Anecdotally, I once had a commander, who never seemed to sleep, with an affinity for chewing on MRE coffee packets; he believed that caffeine worked, although his intake method was questionable.

Recently, the Department of Defense completed research to see if caffeine (found in high quantities in the coffee I like) actually gives Soldiers a performance advantage during combat operations. In 2001, the U.S. Army Medical Research and Material Command (USAMRMC) conducted a study named, “Caffeine for the Sustainment of Mental Task Performance: Formulations for Military Operations.”

The results of the study may be a surprise for some.

First, let us review some facts about caffeine.

It is the most commonly used stimulant in the world and can be found in coffee beans, kola nuts, tea, and chocolate.

It is absorbed rapidly by the body (99 percent within 45 minutes) maintaining its effect for about 5 hours. Its duration of effect is decreased in smokers and increased if taking oral contraceptives.

Average intake for most Americans is about 180-210 mg per day (about 2 cups of coffee). Individuals with pre-existing hypertension, osteoporosis, or those trying to become pregnant should avoid high intakes.

In normal doses, caffeine acts as a diuretic and can increase the likelihood of dehydration if operating at high elevations or high temperatures.

Doses in excess of 1,000 mg usually cause restlessness, nervousness, irritability, vomiting, tremors, and occasionally convulsions.

Some nutritional supplements, such as those used by body-builders

(i.e. Ripped Fuel, Hydroxycut), contain caffeine doses in the 1,200 mg range, which is roughly equivalent to drinking 30 Diet Cokes.

Caffeine content for some popular beverages follows:

Caffeine Content (Common)	AVG Caffeine (mg)
Brewed Coffee (8 oz drip)	80-120
Espresso (6 oz)	240
Instant Coffee	75
Tea	30
Colas (general)	30-40
Diet Coke	34
Mountain Dew	55
Red Bull/ Rip It	80
Gatorade	0

The USAMRMC study concluded that caffeine intake in the range of 100-600 mg/day enhanced Soldier performance in regards to cognitive tasks and mental alertness. Additionally, when operating at high elevations (whether acclimated or not), Soldiers using caffeine supplements were found to have an increased performance time to exhaustion and had faster reaction times (without a loss of accuracy). Overall, caffeine proved to be an effective combat multiplier.

Some nutritional supplements, such as those used by body-builders (i.e. Ripped Fuel, Hydroxycut), contain caffeine doses in the 1,200 mg range, which is roughly equivalent to drinking 30 Diet Cokes.



Maj. Mark Higdon
BRIGADE SURGEON

While the USAMRMC study clearly outlined the potential benefits of caffeine supplementation, it did not give a specific form with which the caffeine should be delivered to Soldiers.

Two caffeine supplements are currently under consideration for use in the form of chewing gum and food/energy bars. Either form is obviously more palatable than my former commander’s method.

Bottom-line: Soldiers may soon find caffeine supplements (in reasonable levels) readily available and actually encouraged in order to gain the “caffeine advantage” on the battlefield.