



The Convoy

Delivering quality information on the 1st Marine Logistics Group

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CLB-5

cases colors in Afghanistan, heads home



COMMANDING GENERAL
Brig. Gen. John J. Broadmeadow

SERGEANT MAJOR
Sgt. Maj. Antonio Vizcarrondo Jr.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICERS
1st Lt. Tyler Morrison
2nd Lt. Savannah Moyer

PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHIEF
Staff Sgt. Miguel Carrasco

COMBAT CORRESPONDENTS
Sgt. John Jackson
Sgt. Michele Watson
Cpl. Khoa Pelczar

CONTACT US:
760-763-7795
1MLG_Public_Affairs@usmc.mil



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Cover Page:

Lt. Col. Robert Meade (right), commanding officer, Combat Logistics Battalion 5, 1st MLG (Fwd), and Sgt. Maj. Troy Black, battalion sergeant major, CLB-5, 1st MLG (Fwd), cased the battalion colors at Camp Dwyer, Afghanistan, July 30.

Photo by Sgt. Michele Watson

To read the story and see more photos, click here.

1ST MLG'S VIDEO FEATURE

KEEPING OUR HONOR CLEAN: This is part eight of a series of videos about 1st MLG (Forward) NCOs and their professionalism, hard work and dedication to the mission while deployed to Helmand province, Afghanistan. This video features a newsstory about Combat Logistics Battalion 4 loadmasters and the mission they accomplish while deployed.

Produced by Sgt. John Jackson.

CLICK HERE TO VIEW ON YOUTUBE.



Tuition Assistance Class

Every Wednesday at 11:30 a.m., Joint Education Center offers a College 101 class to inform service members about different college offers, on and off base, as well as providing information about tuition assistance and how to use it. For more information, call the JEC at (760) 725-6660.

Motorcycle Safety Courses

An advanced riders course will be held weekly, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. A basic rider's course will be held weekly Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 7:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Both courses will take place at Bldg. 200071. For more information, call Kevin Frantum at (760) 725-2897.

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Social Media Buzz

Photo by
Sgt. Michele Watson
Staff Writer

< Staff Sgt. William A. Lightner, explosive ordnance disposal technician, 1st EOD Company, 1st MLG (Fwd), inspects an improvised explosive device outside Combat Outpost Tabac, Afghanistan, July 26.

Photo stats from 1st MLG's Facebook page:

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Story and more photos on next page.

EOD Marine teaches counter IED techniques

COMBAT OUTPOST TABAC, Afghanistan – Explosive ordnance disposal is not a job field that any Marine can enter following Marine Corps recruit training. Each EOD technician starts their career in a different occupational specialty before they are afforded the opportunity to join the tight-knit community.

“I wanted to pursue a career in law enforcement, so I originally joined to be a [military policeman],” said Staff Sgt. William A. Lightner, EOD team leader, 1st EOD Company, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward).

After serving his first enlistment as an MP stationed in Quantico, Va., Lightner sought out the career planner about reenlisting in a different job in the Corps.

“I honestly didn’t know anything about EOD until the career planner brought it up,” said Lightner, 28, a Nolo, Penn., native. “He explained the whole job field to me, and I wanted to

be the spear head in the [improvised explosive device] fight. I also wanted to try something different with new challenges.”

Lightner is currently deployed to Afghanistan for a second combat deployment, but says being a team leader during his first trip to this country was the most challenging for him.

“In my own eyes, I was kind of a junior EOD [technician], without a whole lot of experience,” said Lightner. “The learning curve was extremely steep for me.”

As an EOD team leader, Lightner was responsible for calling the shots and advising company commanders. Despite the difficult circumstances as a young leader, he considers the tour a victory.

“It was definitely a successful deployment,” he said.

For the second time around, Lightner says this deployment to Afghanistan is much easier than his last. With Marines steadily pulling out of the country, operations are becoming less frequent.

“It’s a lot slower with the

drawdown going on and [we’re] finding a lot less IEDs,” said Lightner.

Working out of Combat Outpost Tabac, Lightner works with members of Dog Company, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, Regimental Combat Team 6, teaching them the most current tactics for counter-IED operations.

“Dog Company has been really easy to work with,” said Lightner. “When I was a junior team leader, it was harder for people to take my advice, but now everything has been a lot smoother.”

Since his last time here, the Marine Corps has adapted and grown from the experiences of war.

“It seems like people turn to the EOD [technicians] more than they used to for advice and training on counter-IED situations,” said Lightner. “To me, EOD seems more valuable because of lessons learned.”

At COP Tabac, Lightner conducts multiple training sessions using counter-IED lanes with Marines of Dog Co.

“We typically do [a training

session] before every operation that the company has as part of their rehearsals,” said Lightner. “We switch the lanes up and have them run through it just to keep them fresh on their [IED] sweeping abilities. We also do basic demolition classes with the guys and cover current [tactics and procedures].”

As a member of the team dedicated to combating the greatest threat to Marines in Afghanistan, Lightner said he is humble, but grateful, for the opportunity to be a part of something greater.

“It’s a really good sense of accomplishment to reduce those explosive hazards and keep the men safe,” said Lightner. “They really look up to you, and that’s what makes it rewarding.”

The challenges, opportunities and accomplishments Lightner has had during his career make it an appealing plan for the long term.

“It’s an [amazing organization] to be a part of,” said Lightner. “I love the Marine Corps, and I’m going to stay in as long as they’ll have me.”

Story and photo by:
Sgt. Michele Watson
Staff Writer



< Staff Sgt. William A. Lightner, EOD technician, 1st EOD Company, 1st MLG (Fwd), observes Marines conducting counter improvised explosive device training at Combat Outpost Tabac, Afghanistan.

To see more photos, [click here.](#)

Marine born in Afghanistan gives back to home nation

CAMPLEATHERNECK, Afghanistan —“I remember the day I heard that America was going into Afghanistan,” said Lance Cpl. Behzad Razzada, a member of the Embedded Partnering Team, Combat Logistics Battalion 4, 1st Marine Logistics Group (Forward). “My parents were happy because it was a chance for Afghanistan to unite and fight for freedom. They said it was the only way that injustice in Afghanistan would be finished.”

The idea of providing a better future for the Afghan people resonated with Razzada, a 24-year-old native of Afghanistan.

“I was born in Kabul and lived there until I was 10,” said Razzada. “I went to school there. It was just a normal school like anywhere else before the Taliban came. I studied until the fifth grade ... and then chaos started. Everyone started leaving the country, all heading in one direction and hoping they didn’t get killed by the Taliban.”

Razzada’s family left the country after the Taliban imple-

mented their harsh policies.

“I was pretty young, but I remember [the Taliban] beheading people, making people wear certain type of clothes and maintain certain hygiene standards,” said Razzada. “People who worked for the previous government were all in danger. Anyone who killed [employers of] the previous government would be rewarded, and my father had held a high position.”

Travelling to Pakistan with his family, Razzada spent the next three years attending school north of Peshawar City, where he studied math, science and English, while his family applied for permission to immigrate to the United States.

“We didn’t know if we were going to come to the United States. People used to say that the chances of successfully making the case to come to the United States were about 10 percent,” said Razzada. “When we left Afghanistan, we couldn’t stay in Pakistan because they were still killing members of the former [Afghan] government there ... and that’s why we were accepted. We came to

America with refugee status, so we were part of that 10 percent who got accepted.”

Razzada’s time in Afghanistan and Pakistan would serve him well both later in life when he returned to the region as a Marine, and more immediately when he began primary school in St. Louis.

“My English was decent, not very strong, but decent ... so I started school right away,” said Razzada. “The culture was extremely different though.”

After graduating high school and attending Yuba College in Yuba City, Calif., Razzada joined the Marines.

“I joined the Marine Corps after two years in college where I majored in psychology,” said Razzada. “I am going to finish my school, so the Marine Corps is a good way to pay for college and be part of the military at the same time.”

CLB-4 was already training for their deployment to Afghanistan and when Razzada joined the battalion.

“I had to talk to my parents and tell them that I was going to get deployed,” said Razzada.

“They told me it was a good chance for me to go there and be a helping hand because I was from the country. They told me to go there and do my best.”

Razzada is in an ideal place to make a difference while assigned to the EPT.

“I speak Dari, a little bit of Pashtun, Hindi and Urdu along with English,” said Razzada. “I had the perfect chance to help, especially having the [chain of command] I did, who let me interact with the [Afghan National Army] as much possible.”

The EPT worked with 2nd Battalion, 5th Kandak, 215 Corps as advisors and subject matter experts to assist in training, as well as planning for and executing operations.

“We were part of a Combat Service Support Kandak. Our mission was to train them... to support forward infantry battalions,” said Maj. Charles E. Parker Jr., officer in charge, EPT, CLB-4.

Taking such a hands-on approach to helping build a better future for the Afghan people suited Razzada.

“Like every other Marine on my team, he is mature beyond his years, and he was always looking forward to helping,” said Parker. “He had a strong bond with our interpreters ... and I would bring him along sometimes to [meetings], and he could help fill me in on ... the perception and mood amongst the ANA.”

Razzada brought his journey full circle when he returned to Afghanistan as a Marine and helped rebuild the country in the aftermath of Taliban rule.

“I’m extremely happy that I had this experience,” said Razzada. “What the EPT has done is make the ANA more confident in themselves and make them more capable when they are out there on their own. We accomplished our mission.”

Story and photo by:
Sgt. Michele Watson
Staff Writer



> Lance Cpl. Behzad Razzada, Embedded Partnering Team, CLB-4, 1st MLG (Fwd), returned to Afghanistan as a Marine 14 years after leaving the country following the Taliban’s rise to power. Razzada used his background and knowledge of local customs and languages to help build a better future for the country.

Marine selected as CNO Gold Disk Awardee, receives \$1,000

Story by: 2nd Lt. Savannah Moyer
Public Affairs Officer

MARINE CORPS
BASE CAMP
PENDLETON,
Calif. – Lance Cpl. Peter James Brink, radio technician, Repairable Management Company, 1st Maintenance Battalion, Combat Logistics Regiment 1, 1st Marine Logistics Group, was selected for the Chief of Naval Operations Gold Disk Award, which includes a Letter of Commendation and \$1,000.

“It feels unbelievable to be recognized like this for just doing my job,” said Lance Cpl. Peter James Brink, a Winston-Salem, N.C., native. “It’s good to know that there are people out there who appreciate even the very small part we play in

the Marine Corps.”

Although Brink describes his work in fourth-echelon repairs as a very small part of the Marine Corps, the Gold Disk Program saves the Corps over half a million dollars each year.

“Instead of buying brand-new circuit cards, which cost approximately \$3,000 a piece,” explained Sgt. Daniel Hendrickson, electronics maintenance technician, 3rd Platoon, RMC, 1st Maint. Bn. “Marines like Lance Cpl. Brink isolate faulty [mechanisms] on circuit cards and repair them all the way down to the component level.”

A beginner technician usually repairs a single circuit card in a day; Lance Cpl.

Brink, who completed his Gold Disk developer certification in March 2012, averages 5 circuit cards a day.

“It’s definitely a learning experience,” Brink responded when questioned about the miniature/micro-miniature repairs. “No matter what training you have, there are always new obstacles to overcome, so every day you learn something new.”

In his letter of commendation, Brink was specifically commemorated for his contributions to improving the availability of the decoder/filter for the AM-7238B/VRC, radio frequency amplifier for the Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System. However, the leadership in Brink’s command

holds him in high regard for more than just his technical expertise.

“He’s very outgoing and ambitious; like a sponge, really, soaking up everything we teach him,” said Sgt. Leverto Olmeado, assistant section head, 3rd Platoon, RMC, 1st Maint. Bn. “As a Marine, he shows a lot of promise. He’s proficient at the technical side of his job as well as being a well-rounded Marine in all aspects.”

Brink says he is proud to have the full support of his family and hopes to continue working in this field, knowing full-well that he is positively impacting the Marine Corps each day he steps into work.

> Lance Cpl. Peter J. Brink, radio technician, Repairable Management Company, 1st Maintenance Battalion, CLR-15, 1st MLG, repairs a radio chip at his workshop aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., July 26. (Photo by Cpl. Khoa Pelczar)



PSD allows CG to travel throughout Helmand province

HELMAND PROVINCE, Afghanistan – A great leader makes for a great team, but when that team is comprised of thousands of Marines and sailors spread out at dozens of different locations, a leader must have an understanding of how each area affects his team members.

The Personal Security Detachment, 1st Marine Logistics Group, is a specific group tasked with escorting Brig. Gen. John J. Broadmeadow, Commanding General, 1st MLG (Fwd), to all areas of operation throughout Helmand Province, Afghanistan.

“Our mission is to provide security for the commanding general while allowing him to conduct his battle field circulations,” said Sgt. Michael Johnson, Personal Security Officer, PSD, 1st MLG (Fwd). “My sole mission is to act as a personal bodyguard for the CG no matter where he goes.”

Although Johnson acts as an individual escort for the commanding general regardless of his method of travel, the whole PSD team is required for ground movements. While aerial travel throughout the province is the fastest way to get around, Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow believes it is also necessary for him to conduct ground travel.

“As the leader of the MLG, it’s important for me to understand what our Marines go through, and I need to see that first hand myself,” said Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow. “A lot of what we do involves being on the road. MLG Marines spend more time on the road than just about anybody.”

As commanding general of the Logistics Combat Element, Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow owns all of the combat logistics patrols that travel to forward operating bases, combat outposts and patrol bases. Since 1st MLG (Fwd)’s arrival in January, Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow has been in charge of multiple combat logistics battalions, whose main missions are to provide general and direct support to members operating at dozens of FOBs.

“By being able to get him out there on these roads, he can have a better understanding of what the CLPs go through,” said Staff Sgt. Vince Reynolds, PSD chief, PSD, 1st MLG (Fwd). “He’s actually able to go from FOB to FOB to see the conditions of MLG personnel and see how they are impacting the

mission. In my opinion, it’s an invaluable tool.”

Thanks to the PSD, Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow is able to travel the area in his own convoy without the usual time constraints of ground travel.

“Embedding in a four-day CLP so I can get a feel for what happens may be good once or twice, but I can’t do that all the time,” said Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow. “I can’t spend all my time on the road. What the PSD does for me, it allows me to experience what our Marines experience day in and day out, but do it in a much more compressed timeline that fits what I do out there.”

Being the sole escort team for the commanding general builds a very personal relationship between the PSD members and Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow.

“Being the lead vehicle, if we’re going out somewhere dangerous, the CG will pull us aside and give us a pep talk,” said Lance Cpl. Taylor Navin, a driver with PSD, 1st MLG (Fwd).

Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow

also said he feels a personal connection to the team who has been by his side throughout this deployment.

It’s not just the CG of the MLG; it’s me,” said Brig. Gen. Broadmeadow. “In reality, what they are there for is to make sure I get from place to place safely. These Marines and their demonstrated professionalism are very important to me personally. You develop a bond with people like that -- who put themselves on the line to take care of me and the things that I have to do.”

The PSD has completed 33 ground missions and traveled almost 4,000 miles throughout Helmand Province since January and is ready to finish their tour.

“They’re excited to be wrapping up a successful deployment but they don’t want to see it end,” said Reynolds. “They enjoyed the mission that they were doing, and appreciate the hard work they have put into making PSD successful.”

Story and photo by:
Sgt. Michele Watson
Staff Writer



< Marines with the PSD, 1st MLG (Fwd), cross a bridge in Helmand province, Afghanistan, while escorting Brig. Gen. John J. Broadmeadow, Commanding General, 1st MLG (Fwd).

For more photos click here.

The **BACKBONE** *Brief*

A message to the NCOs, the Backbone of the Corps

Marine: *1st Sgt. Alejandro Quiroz*

Billet: *Company First Sergeant*

Unit: *Landing Support Company, CLR-17, 1st MLG*

Marine Corps Experience: *20 years*

Hometown: *National City, Calif.*

Favorite Sports teams: *Chicago Bears and University of Oregon Ducks*

Favorite Quote: *“Suck it up” and “Apparently you haven’t read ‘Message to Garcia’”*

Favorite Rank: *Gunnery Sergeant*

- > What do you expect from your NCOs?
- > *The ability to adapt to any environment while utilizing their initiative and strong leadership presence to be a successful “working supervisor.” Come up with solutions and not questions in order to accomplish the missions at hand. Lead from the front and by example, or don’t allow the Corps to promote you!*

- > What makes a good leader?
- > *The ability to ensure their Marine’s follow them by any means possible, regardless of outcome. There are many skills that make up a “good” leader, but if I had to choose a few I would say aggressiveness, assertiveness, and knowledgeable and superb mental and physical stamina.*

- > What challenge do you have for your NCOs?
- > *To lead by example on and off duty, and always have a short and long term attainable goal.*

- > What does an NCO need to learn before becoming a Staff NCO?
- > *Becoming a Staff NCO is a whole different expectation of what Marines should be or act like. You can’t always prepare for the unforeseen, but you can always practice your immediate action drills in order to have a plan to react and succeed. If you continue to lead by example and have an open mind to learn new things, then everything else should fall into place.*

- > Who or what inspired you to stay in the Corps as long as you have?
- > *My family is the overall foundation for my decisions, but the Marine pride, ego to succeed and constant personal challenges allowed me to be where I am today.*

Marine: *Gunnery Sgt. Darrick M. Lowery*

Billet: *Company First Sergeant*

Unit: *Food Service Company, CLR-17, 1st MLG*

Marine Corps Experience: *18.5 years*

Hometown: *Troy, Ala.*

Favorite Sports teams: *University of Alabama Crimson Tide and San Diego Chargers*

Favorite Quote: *“A complacent and undisciplined Marine will get you killed!”*

Favorite Rank: *Gunnery Sergeant*

- > What do you expect from your NCOs?
- > *I expect NCOs to follow the 14 Leadership Traits profoundly and all else will fall in place.*

- > What makes a good leader?
- > *The individual that understands and embraces the whole Marine concept and applies it day-in and day-out by setting the perfect example for others to emulate.*

- > What challenge do you have for your NCOs?
- > *To be better than me!*

- > What does an NCO need to learn before becoming a Staff NCO?
- > *Before becoming a Staff NCO, NCOs need to learn the whole Marine concept. They need to understand it is not about them, but about the institution as a whole.*

- > Who or what inspired you to stay in the Corps as long as you have?
- > *The superb leadership from my past and the love of the Corps inspired me to stay a Marine.*

*I am the backbone of the
United States Marine
Corps, I am a Marine Non-
Commissioned Officer...*