

**TAKING BACK THE YOUTH: U.S.M.C. CIVIL AFFAIRS**

# FREEDOM WATCH AFGHANISTAN

Oct. 20, 2008

## REALISM IN TRAINING

PREPARING UNITS FOR  
OUTSIDE THE WIRE  
MISSIONS



from the kids



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An Afghan National Policeman pulls security at a village in Kohistan District in Kapisa province, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jean-Paul Li)



Members of Joint Task Force Paladin at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan pose for a photo. (Photo by U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Kimberly Crawford)

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## SECAF visit

Secretary of the Air Force Michael B. Donley spent the day at the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing Oct. 12, 2008.

Donley visited the wing to gain a better understanding of the infrastructure and capabilities of one the area of responsibility's most diverse bases.



"I've been looking forward to coming downrange to see how the United States Military, and especially the Air Force, has been doing," Donley said to an assembly of Airmen during his visit. The Secretary's tour included a visit to the 380th's tenant unit, the 363rd Training Group. This group hosts and orchestrates aerial exercises and tactical training in both joint and combined fields.

## Taliban captured

Members of the National Directorate of Security and Coalition forces captured a Taliban commander and three additional persons of interest in Kandahar province.



Hafiz Abdul Khaliq, a known Taliban commander, and three militants were located through intelligence reports in known safehouses in Panjwayi District.

Hafiz Abdul Khaliq is responsible for several attacks against Afghan National Security Forces and Coalition forces.

No NDS or Coalition forces were injured or killed during the operation.



## U.S. provides medical assistance

U.S. Forces - Afghanistan provided medical attention to a local national child who came to a Forward Operating Base in the Khogyani district of the Nangarhar province in northeastern Afghanistan.

At approximately 4:30 p.m. a child was brought to the gate of a Forward Operating Base for medical attention for a gunshot wound. It is unclear how the child was shot; however, prior to him being brought to the FOB the Afghan National Army was conducting a live-fire rifle range on the base, practicing with numerous kinds of weapons. The situation is under investigation.

U.S. Forces-Afghanistan gave immediate attention and then medically evacuated him to a hospital where he was treated and then released.

## Face-to-face visits

The U.S. military now provides routine face-to-face visits between detainees held at the Bagram Theater Internment Facility and their families.



"We understand the positive impact these types of programs can have on the mission here in Afghanistan, particularly in terms of detainee behavior," said Brig. Gen. James McConville, deputy commanding general of support for Combined Joint Task Force-101. "Not only do we meet the standards put in place

by Article III of the Geneva Conventions, we continually work to improve processes that relate to detainees."

This program was created as a result of recommendations made by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The existing video teleconference program, which allows direct video conversations between detainees and family members, has been proven to improve detainee behavior, helping to prompt the creation of this new program of face-to-face visits.

Video teleconferences will continue to be available for detainees and their families.

## Militants killed

Afghan National Security Forces and Coalition Forces killed 12 militants in Shaheed Hasas District, Oruzgan province.



The forces were conducting a security patrol when they were attacked by militants.

Local Afghan villagers told ANSF and Coalition Forces that militant fire killed 10 Afghan civilians in a nearby village.

Militant fire also injured three women and six children who sought out Coalition Forces for medical care. All of the injured were medically evacuated to a Coalition hospital where they are being treated for their injuries.

Shortly after the engagement, ANSF and Coalition Forces met with local leaders and family members of the deceased, who expressed their gratitude for Coalition Forces in treating those injured by the insurgents.

# Afghan forces receive NATO weapons

By Petty Officer 1st Class  
Shawn Graham  
Combined Security Transition  
Command - Afghanistan

Afghan National Security Forces will receive a huge capability and mobility boost throughout the next year.

The ANSF will receive more than 6,000 up-armored vehicles and more than 75,000 M-16 rifles from Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan.

“This is great,” said Army Maj. Charles McPhail, chief of plans and requirements. “The Afghan National Army will become a modernized army with Humvees and NATO weapons. This transformation will help usher their forces into the 21st century.”

McPhail cited the M-16 rifle’s accuracy and durability since its introduction as the primary weapon for the U.S. military more than 30 years ago.

The Russian-built AK-47 has been the primary weapon of the ANA since its formation, but Afghan government and



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Shawn Graham  
ANA soldiers receive M-16 rifles at the Afghan national weapons depot.

military leaders prefer the M-16 rifle.

“Accuracy will always be more important than lots of shots,” said McPhail.

“The Afghan government wanted a weapon that doesn’t waste shots, which is the reason they asked for the M-16.”

## Afghanistan’s solution primarily political, general says

By Gerry Gilmore  
American Forces Press Service

The war against radical Islamists operating in Afghanistan will be won, despite the challenges, the senior U.S. military officer in the country said.

“I am more convinced than ever that the insurgency will not win in Afghanistan,” Army Gen. David McKiernan, commander of NATO’s International Security Assistance Force, told Pentagon reporters.

The White House is conducting a review of Afghanistan operations and strategy, as insurgents there have ramped up operations against U.S., Coalition and Afghan forces.

McKiernan has requested that additional troops be sent to Afghanistan to help quell rising violence in some eastern and southern provinces committed by Taliban, al-Qaida and other terrorists. The four-star general told reporters he is optimistic about defeating the insurgents. Most Afghans, he said, “do not want a return of the Taliban; they don’t want a return of a radical form of government, such as the Taliban.”

He added U.S. military analysts see “greater insecurity” in some eastern and southern sections of Afghanistan.



U.S. Department of Defense photo by R. D. Ward  
U.S. Army Gen. David McKiernan briefs the Pentagon press corps on operations in Afghanistan.

“The idea that it might get worse before it gets better is certainly a possibility,” the general said.

McKiernan cited increased foreign fighter activity in eastern Afghanistan along the border with Pakistan as a key concern.

# New strategy to broaden scope, coordination in Afghanistan

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

The changing situation in Afghanistan, particularly increased violence along the Afghan-Pakistan border, warrants a full review of U.S. strategy there to broaden its scope and improve interagency coordination, the top U.S. military officer said.

Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, noted the increased sophistication of al-Qaida and Taliban operatives in the border region.

Mullen shared concerns expressed by Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and others that the border region has become a safe haven for insurgents.

“Things have changed enough in Afghanistan and Pakistan to warrant a review of our overall strategy there, and in fact, part of the effort is to try to ensure better coordination on both sides of that border, which is a safe haven for insurgents,” the admiral said.

Compounding the problem is Afghanistan’s poverty which creates conditions that fuel insurgencies and the il-



Courtesy photo  
Navy Adm. Mike Mullen says it's time for a new strategy to broaden scope and coordination in Afghanistan.

licit poppy industry that helps to finance the insurgents.

Gates told NATO defense ministers at a conference in Budapest, Hungary, that he wants the alliance to confront the drug lords in Afghanistan.

“Part of the problem we face is the Taliban makes between \$60 million and \$80 million a year from the drug trafficking,” he said. “It is not only corrosive to good governance, it also directly funds

the people that are killing Afghans, Americans and all our Coalition partners.”

Mullen expressed hope that progress in Iraq will continue, enabling force reductions to continue and freeing up forces to meet additional requirements in Afghanistan. But he emphasized that the challenges in Afghanistan demand more than military

might – a point Gates reiterated to his NATO counterparts.

“It is not just about boots on the ground,” Mullen said. “It is really three pieces. There is the security piece, the development and economic piece as well as the political and diplomatic piece, and all of those things have to come together.”

The strategy review will address better ways to coordinate these efforts, he said, while broadening the focus on Afghanistan to include Pakistan as well as India. Mullen noted that both countries have long historic links to Afghanistan and an important role to play there.

“This review comes at a time when, clearly, we are going to have to adjust,” he said.

**“Things have changed enough in Afghanistan and Pakistan to warrant a review of our overall strategy...”**

Navy Adm. Mike Mullen  
**Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff**



## Soldiers, Sailor secure safe passage in Afghanistan

By Air Force  
Tech. Sgt. Kevin Wallace  
Combined Joint Task Force 101  
Public Affairs

“Stay alert and stay vigilant,” shouted a chiseled-face Soldier during a pre-convoy briefing at Camp Eggers.

Army Staff Sgt. Carlos Padilla was one of five servicemembers charged with securing the safe passage of troops from Camp Eggers to Bagram Air Field.

Like the fingers on a hand, each member of the five-man team is paramount to the mission, said Padilla, who ferries troops across Afghan roads.

Moments later, Army Sgt. 1st Class Ramon Curiel ordered the three Soldiers and the Navy Sailor on his team into their respective positions, loaded the passengers aboard an armored bus known as “the Rhino,” and set off on their journey from Kabul to Bagram.



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Kevin Wallace  
Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Matt Hildebrand drives an armored bus from Camp Eggers to Bagram Air Field as Soldiers in a silver truck provide security for an Oct. 4 convoy.

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Matt Hildebrand drove the Rhino as Padilla rode ‘shotgun’ and served as the team’s eyes and ears. Meanwhile, the convoy commander, Curiel, rallied Army Staff Sgts. Ruben Rosas and Eddy Rosales to

provide security and blocking positions during the trip.

“We’ve got to be watchful and ready to act at all times,” said Curiel, who explained that an ever-present threat of vehicle bombs and other threats exist from enemy forces.

Curiel’s team is a hinge pin to allow servicemembers ground transportation between the missions of Combined Joint Task Force-101, with headquarters at Bagram, and the Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan headquartered in Kabul.

Despite the vitality of their mission, not a single member of Curiel’s team is a transportation servicemember by military specialty.

Curiel, Padilla, Rosas and Rosales all proudly proclaimed their “11B” roots as Army infantrymen. Hildebrand normally is an administrative specialist on the USS Boxer, homeported in San Diego.

## New look:

## Freedom Watch Magazine debuts latest redesign

Welcome to the new look of Freedom Watch Magazine. We have just completed a redesign of the magazine in order to better serve our customer.

There will be some things that remain the same, such as bringing you news and feature stories from all over Afghanistan. We have incorporated four new sections into the magazine – a forum for readers to provide feedback, an Afghan culture page, and individual profile and unit spotlight pages.

The feedback forum is this column. This is the place for you to provide feedback to the Freedom Watch staff. If there’s something we’re doing right, let us know. If there’s something we’re missing, drop us a line and tell us.

Contact us at [freedomwatch@swa.army.mil](mailto:freedomwatch@swa.army.mil). All submissions will be edited for content and the writers will be identified by their initials and location.

We have also introduced an Afghan culture page. It is the goal

## Letters to the Editor

of this page to open up the world of Afghanistan – its people, culture and history. Check in every week to learn more about the country and people you are here to help.

Finally, the individual profile and unit spotlight pages are our way of highlighting the people who make the mission. Freedom Watch is accepting submissions for these pages. See the individual profile of Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Glenn Light on page 10 and the unit spotlight on JTF Paladin on the back page. Email us at [freedomwatch@swa.army.mil](mailto:freedomwatch@swa.army.mil) for information on submitting an individual or a unit. Photos must be at least 9 inches x 12 inches, 300 dpi or the highest possible resolution.

Thank you for reading and we look forward to hearing from you.

– The Freedom Watch Afghanistan staff



Have your say - email the editor at [freedomwatch@swa.army.mil](mailto:freedomwatch@swa.army.mil)

Submissions will be edited for content and length. Authors will be identified by initials and location only.



# Realism in Training

Story and photos by Air Force Staff Sgt. Marcus McDonald

Containers housed with large rooms, small rooms and rooms within rooms filled with tunnels and spider holes; hallways equipped with sound systems, cameras and infrared equipment. Movable mannequins remotely controlled and dressed according to the type of enemy combatant- these are part of the potential environments expected by Soldiers “outside the wire.”

Realism in training is the goal of the mobile military operations on urban terrain site at Bagram Air Field, according to William Langley, M-MOUT information management technician.

“It’s important for training units to enhance their skills in an environment with the same settings and cultural surroundings they’ll encounter across the wire,” Langley said. “There are many different scenarios that can be planned and executed, giving the teams a realistic look at the expected or unexpected so they can adjust accordingly.”

Engineers built the M-MOUT facilities to be replicas of the houses some units may find while in Afghanistan.

Since its inception in 2003, several units have used the facility - from special forces to security forces; physical security teams, Army Ranger units and special civilian services units.

“They are the one of two in Southwest Asia,” said Langley. “Each facility is a replica to towns or housing districts in its area of operations, giving the training units a realistic feel.”

A similar facility can be found in Kuwait.

Army Master Sgt. Gregory Boseman of the 101st Sustainment Brigade, said the M-MOUT training his unit received was quite valuable.

“This is as close as to the real thing as we’re going to get ,” said Boseman, a Wilmington, N.C., native.

Boseman’s unit is part of the Afghan National Army Partnership Program.

“We’re mentoring the ANA,” he said. “We not only want to provide logistical support in training them but also train them on how to survive on the battlefield. “I’m really pleased with this training and I’m very proud of my team.”

Army Staff Sgt. Matthew Britton, M-2 gunner for the 101st BDE, said the M-MOUT course is helping his team prepare for their new mission of training the ANA.

“This mission, filled with Soldiers from different MOSs, started about halfway through our deployment,” said Britton, a native of Ashland, Va. “I’m confident this training will help us make the ANA an even stronger force.”



*(Left page) Sgt. Gabriel Scameheorn, left, and Cpl. Axel Arriaga, 101st Sustainment Brigade, prepare to enter the mobile military operations on urban terrain training site as part of a training scenario.*

*(Left) Army Sgt. Ivan Cortes and other 101st Sustainment Brigade Soldiers prepare to clear a building at the mobile military operations on urban terrain training site.*

*(Bottom left) Sgt. 1st Class Lionel Duckworth gives Sgt. Augustine Pekanyande, left, and Sgt. Matthew Britton, right, tips on how to properly enter and clear a building.*

*(Bottom right) Master Sgt. Walter Cash, 101st Sustainment Brigade, conducts an after-action review following a series of scenarios.*



# TAKING BACK THE YOUTH

By **U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Ray Lewis**  
*7th Marine Regiment*

School officials in the Delram District of Farah province were only hours away from reopening a boys' school when Taliban members crept to the school site at night and etched death threats into the newly-constructed concrete walls.

This effort by the Taliban to dissuade school officials from reopening the school proved futile, and the school's opening marked the first cooperative effort between the local Afghan community and U.S. forces to restore the education system.

Together with support from local residents and the Marines of Task Force 2d Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force – Afghanistan, school officials have shown the Taliban they are eager to take back control within their community. They remain committed to strengthening the minds of their youth – young males whom the Marines feel may be more easily influenced by the Taliban.

Despite the threats, hundreds of local school children, ranging from age seven to 15, were excited to get their first look inside the new school.

“It felt absolutely gratifying to go into the school and see more than 650 kids just waiting there with big smiles on their

faces,” said Gunnery Sgt. Omar Palaciosreal, Team 2 chief, 3rd Civil Affairs Group, TF 2/7.

In an effort to ensure a safe environment, the Marines of Company G and Weapons Company maintained security by patrolling outside the school. Members of the Afghan National Police and Afghan National Army were also on hand, but mainly to interact with the children and to show support for their community.

Following the opening ceremony, ANP and ANA officials passed out soccer balls to the children and distributed gifts that included backpacks filled with school supplies.

“We’re just here for support,” said Palaciosreal, a Moreno Valley, Calif., native. “We want them to take the lead. This is their show. It’s their people handing out stuff to them. It’s another image that will be etched in their minds. They’re going to start thinking differently about the Taliban. They’re going to think, ‘The Taliban is wrong.’”

School officials were determined not to let the Taliban death threats scare them or their students away from the school. One teacher said he wanted to send a message to the



*Marine Cpl. Erika L. Garcia meets Afghan kids at the reopening of a boys' school in Delaram, Afghanistan. (U.S. Marine Corps photos by Sgt. Ray Lewis)*

Taliban that nothing can stand in the way of a child's education.

"School is where kids learn right from left and right from wrong," said Abdul Ghariv, a teacher at the boys' school. "It's where we open our kids' minds."

Through the use of an Afghan interpreter, Ghariv was able to express his excitement and tell the Marines how he felt about educating the youth in his community.

"We teach them about math; we teach them about religion and physics; we teach them about everything," Ghariv said. "The school is important because it is for everyone."

The Marines who provided security said the school wasn't always a learning environment for the Afghan children. It was basically left in shambles and used for almost everything but gaining an education. Palaciosreal described the facility as a "run-down, hollow building with no outer wall, broken windows, and old cracked paint."

"It just didn't look like a place where any learning occurred," the CAG team leader said. "The building was dilapidated. Now, the students have an outer wall for protection, and a clean, newly-painted school that is bright and inviting. It's definitely going to create a strong learning environment."

The building is now fully operational thanks to an estimated \$23,000 in grants from Afghanistan Regional Security Integration Command-South (ARSIC-S) and the United States

Agency for International Development (USAID), an independent government agency that conducts foreign assistance and humanitarian aid. Funds for the outer wall construction were provided by ARSIC-S, while various items purchased to refurbish the school's interior were funded by USAID.

"The grant was used to renovate and enhance the inside of the school with desks, chalkboards and school supplies, and for the labor workers to put the desks together," said Staff Sgt. Christopher S. Gonzales, project coordinator, 3rd CAG. "Rather than sitting down on a dirt floor and not being able to study, the children now have a chair and a desk where they can learn."

The Marines expect the school will further benefit the local economy. In addition to providing the children a new and improved learning environment, it creates more job opportunities for Afghan educators and local residents.

"We're facilitating the boys' school project," said Gonzales, a Torrance, Calif., native. "We're making it happen with monetary means, but the ANP and ANA are handing out the school supplies so the children can see the local support and gain trust in their own system."

Although the Taliban continues to force its opinions and ideals on the Afghan people, many of the residents say they are not afraid and they remain committed to making more positive changes within their communities.



Civil Affairs Marine Sgt. Jose Soto interacts with an Afghan boy at the reopening of a boys' school in Delaram, Afghanistan.



## WARRIOR PROFILE

**Rank\First, Last Name:** Staff Sgt. Glenn Light  
**Country, Branch of Service :** U.S. Marine Corps  
**Hometown:** Bristol, Tenn.

**Deployed Unit and Job Title:** JTF Paladin J-1  
 Administration Staff NCO

**Hobbies:** Cleaning my weapons

**Quote from Supervisor:** “Staff Sgt. Light is a superb Marine. He quickly adapts to ongoing changes, leads from the front, is proactive in all tasks and assignments, and takes care of his troops.”

-Army Master Sgt. Keith Stewart, TF Paladin J-1  
**How many times have you deployed?** First time

**What do you enjoy most about this deployment?**  
 Knowing I’m making a difference in the Global War on Terrorism.

**What are some of your goals while deployed?**  
 Ensuring my replacement will be able to transition smoothly into my job and making a lasting impression and impact on this unit.

**How do you spend your free time while deployed?**  
 Sleeping

**What plans do you have once you return from this deployment?** Spend time with my wife and newborn child.



# Introduction to Afghanistan

## BACKGROUND

Ahmad Shah Durrani unified the Pash-tun tribes and founded Afghanistan in 1747. The country served as a buffer between the British and Russian empires until it won independence from notional British control in 1919. An experiment in democracy ended in a 1973 coup and a 1978 Communist counter-coup. The Soviet Union invaded in 1979 to support the tottering Afghan Communist regime, touching off a long and destructive war. The USSR withdrew in 1989 under relentless pressure by internationally supported anti-Communist mujahedin rebels. A series of subsequent civil wars saw Kabul finally fall in 1996 to the Taliban, a hard-line Pakistani-sponsored movement that emerged in 1994 to end the country's civil war and anarchy. Following the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, a U.S., Allied, and anti-Taliban Northern Alliance military action toppled the Taliban for sheltering Osama Bin Ladin. The U.N.-sponsored Bonn Conference in 2001 established a process for political reconstruction that included the adoption of a new constitution, a presidential election in 2004, and National Assembly elections in 2005.

In December 2004, Hamid Karzai became the first democratically elected president of Afghanistan and the National Assembly was inaugurated the following December. Despite gains toward building a stable central government, a resurgent Taliban and continuing provincial instability - particularly in the south and the east - remain serious challenges for the Afghan Government.

## GOVERNMENT

**Official name:** Islamic Republic of Afghanistan  
**Capital:** Kabul  
**Time difference:** 9.5 hours ahead of Washington, D.C. (during Standard Time)  
**Independence Day:** Aug. 19, 1919  
**Constitution:** New constitution signed on Jan. 16, 2004  
**Provinces:** Badakhshan, Badghis, Baghlan, Balkh, Bamian, Daykondi, Farah, Faryab, Ghazni, Ghowr, Helmand, Herat, Jowzjan, Kabul, Kandahar, Kapisa, Khowst, Konar, Kondoz, Laghman, Lowgar, Nangarhar, Nimruz, Nurestan, Oruzgan, Paktia, Paktika, Panjshir, Parvan, Samangan, Sar-e Pol, Takhar, Vardak, Zabol

## Phrases

**Hello**  
 (peace upon you)  
*Assalamu alaykom! / Salam!*

**Response**  
 (and on you, peace)  
*Assalamu alaykom! / Salam!*

**Excuse me / I'm sorry**  
*Wo-bakha*

**Thank you**  
*Ma-nana*

**My name is \_\_\_\_\_**  
*Zma nowm \_\_\_\_\_ day*

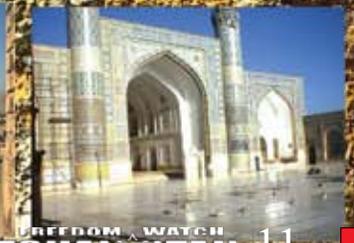
**Okay**  
*Khah/shah*

**What is your name?**  
*Sta nowm tsah day?*

**Who?**  
*Tsowk?*

**Good-bye**  
*Da-khoo-die pah aman*

C  
U  
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R  
E



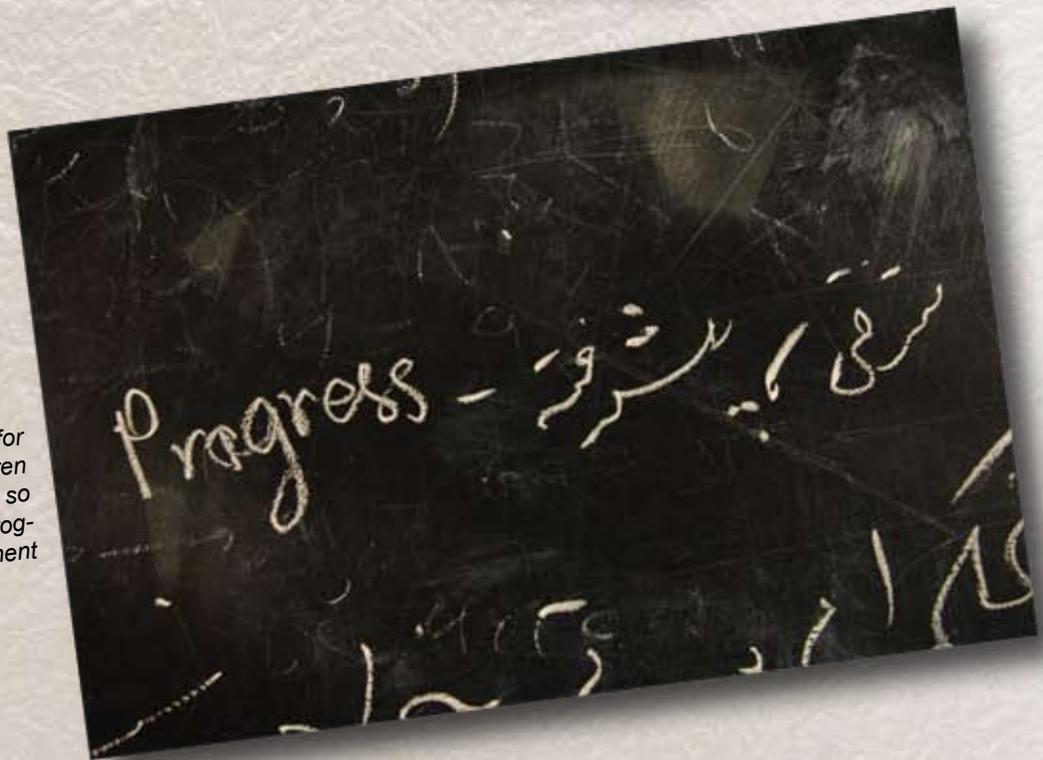


## photos from the field



*New arrivals from the New Zealand Army disembark from a New Zealand Air Force C-130 as they report for duty as the new contingent for Task Group Crib 13 in Bamyan, Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo by Lt. Col. Leslie Pratt)*

*A blackboard in a school for disadvantaged Afghan children displays a word that means so much to so many in Kabul, progress. (U.S. State Department photo by Daniel Wilkinson)*





*Army Maj. Cliff Lopez talks to Afghan workers on a road construction site in Surobi Valley in Southern Tag Ab District in Kapisa province. Lopez is the company commander of the 324th Reserve Psychological Operation Unit based out of Aurora, Colo. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jean-Paul Li)*



*Army Capt. Mark Flitton teaches an Afghan boy to use a radio in Surobi Valley in Southern Tag Ab District in Kapisa province. He is commander of the Tactical Psychological Operation Development Detachment, the 324th Reserve Psychological Operation Unit based in Aurora, Colo. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Jean-Paul Li)*



*A Spanish army paratrooper adjusts the antenna of a Spanish armored personnel carrier at International Security Assistance Force Forward Operating Base Bala Murghab. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech Sgt. Laura Smith)*

# UNIT SPOTLIGHT

**Country, Branch of Service:** U.S. Army

**Name of Unit/Office/Shop:** Joint Task Force Paladin

**Person Making Submission:** Command Sgt. Maj. David Puig, JTF Paladin Command Sergeant Major

**What's the mission of your unit?** The mission of JTF Paladin is to provide intelligence based Counter-IED support to all U.S. forces throughout the theater of operations. This is accomplished through attacking the IED networks, defeating the IED threat, training the U.S.,

Coalition and Afghan forces and information operations.

**Where is your unit deployed from?**

JTF Paladin is a permanent unit assigned to the theater, personnel rotate in and out of the unit but the unit flag stays here.

**What's the history of your unit?**

JTF Paladin was established in 2006 and quickly grew to a brigade-sized command with personnel providing CIED support throughout the entire theater of operations.

