

THE HEARTBEAT

The official magazine of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division



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Maj. Tom Burrell, Top Guns' XO, walks across the COP Terra Nova flight-line while a CH47 Chinook lands, Aug. 4. COP Terra Nova played a key role in the Battle of Bakersfield.



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Any questions or comments the STRIKE PAO can be reached at DSN 312 672 7076.

Words from the Top

STRIKE Soldiers and Leaders,

Sgt. Maj. White and I are extremely proud of each of you. We are doing some incredibly positive work each and every day that improves the security in the Districts of Maiwand, Zharey and Arghandab. Last week we said farewell to "2 FURY," the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, as they transitioned authority and began the process of re-deploying to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. "2 FURY" did a great job during their combat tour here and it was an honor to serve with them as part of Combined Task Force (CTF) STRIKE. The 502nd and the 508th have crossed paths before in the defense of people who were unable to defend themselves. Sixty six years ago during World War II in 1944, the 502nd and the 508th fought together in Operation Overlord, for the exact same months we have fought together today, June, July and August. The teamwork and camaraderie between our two units will always remain strong and it stands as a testament for all others to follow. Again, thank you and a job well done.

We welcome the "KNIGHTs" from 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment and their distinguished and rich history to the STRIKE family. The 66th Armor Regiment is the oldest armor unit in the United States Army, tracing its lineage to the Tank Service in February 1918, under the command of then Col. George S. Patton. During World War I, the 66th AR participated in the battle of St. Mihiel, France. In December 1942, the regiment participated in the amphibious invasion



of French Morocco into North Africa and in 1943, with the invasion of Sicily, Italy and finally landing on Omaha Beach on June 9, 1944. From fighting in the Korean War, providing security in Desert Shield, liberating Kuwait in Desert Storm to improving the lives of the Iraqi people for Operation Iraqi Freedom the regiment again and again proved its worthiness. The 1-66th has already added to their long and rich history, by joining CTF STRIKE in providing security in Arghandab, Afghanistan.

We also are grateful to our Rear Detachment at Fort Campbell, Kentucky who continues to do their best each and every day.

STRIKE, we have had some awful losses and they all hurt, but we are killing a lot of the savages who must be killed in order to improve security across our area. We know this is a tough fight but a fight that we can and will win. I am so proud of each of you.

We are making significant progress each day. We get stronger each day and understand the complexity of this fight. We will not falter and we will not let our guard down. We are STRIKE Soldiers and we win where we fight. The mission continues, keep your head on a swivel, remain switched on and maintain your honor and reputation of yourself, your family, and our regiment.

STRIKE!

The Doctor's Orders with Lt. Col. Michael Wirt

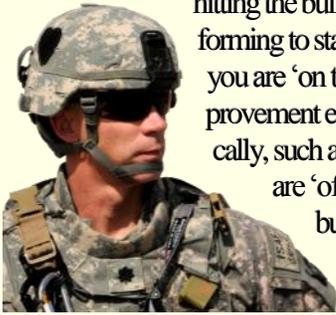
Fatigue is a normal reaction in the combat environment. Fatigue is the state of feeling tired, weary, or sleepy. It results from periods of anxiety, exposure to harsh environments, or a loss of sleep. Since we all experience varying degrees of fatigue during our deployment, we need a way to manage it. Call it a daily 'gut check' or better yet call it Strategic Performance Enhancement.

Cmdr. Robert Obrecht, a PHD and special operations doctor for the Navy SEALs, uses a program to take his SEALs to an even higher level of effectiveness. Cmdr. has shared his program with STRIKE. Here is how it works:

The first step is a self assessment. Take a few minutes each day to look at how your doing. Are you well rested, alert and battle focused? If your performing at your highest level, you are

'hitting the bull's eye' If your doing well, performing to standard and emotionally stable, you are 'on target'. If there is room for improvement emotionally, physically or tactically, such as over alert or under alert, you are 'off target'. If your not hitting the

bull's eye or on target, there is work to be done. What steps to take are determined by four



questions, known as the Big Four.

What do I want? Examples would be: how do I want to be seen by my squad or my platoon? What combat skills do I want to improve? What relationships do I want with myself, my family and my friends? The answers must be healthy, legal, moral and above all attainable.

What am I doing? Examples are: what am I saying and doing to others? The key to building relationships you want is in giving to them, not making demands. When working on a task or skill avoid words like 'I can't', 'I won't' or 'it is too difficult'. We want the enemy to feel this way. Improvement takes effort, are you willing to do what needs to be done to accomplish your goals?

Is it working? Are my actions getting me closer to my goals or am I getting off track. If it's working, stay with it. If it isn't, what is the plan to fix things. Since thing in life change remember to ask yourself "Do I want today what I wanted yesterday?"

What is the plan? What is my plan to do something different so I can get closer to what I want? The plan needs to be simple, attainable and measurable. This way you can track your progress.

Remember, take five to ten minutes a day for a self assessment. Are you on the bulls eye, on target or off target? Ask the Big Four and make adjustments. A little effort each day prevents a lot of work later.

The Chaplain Says... by Chaplain (Maj) David Beavers

Many years ago, I remember a Basic Training Chaplain sharing his opinion about unit runs during one of his weekly messages, "No one is so tired that they fall out in the first quarter mile of a run. No matter the pace, anyone can make it for a quarter mile. Those who fall out are those who have either been struck down by a force from on high or else they're looking for a reason to get out of the run."

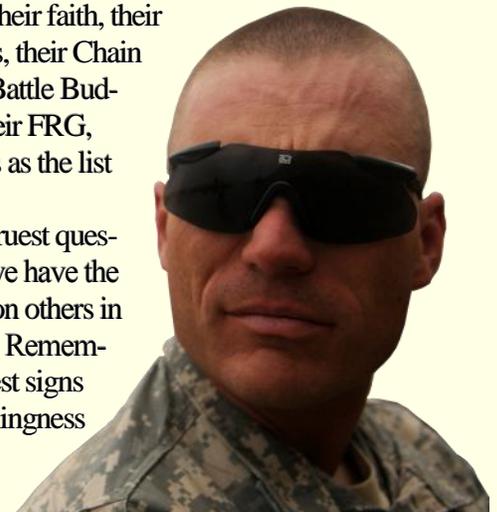
However harsh this may sound, especially coming from a Chaplain, it is pretty accurate. A challenge for all of us, whether military or civilian, can be found in the Book of Galatians, specifically the ninth verse of the sixth chapter which states, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

There are many things in life which are hard, challenging, difficult, or downright painful. The truest mark of who we are, deep down at the core of our being, is how we respond to these events. Paul, the writer of Galatians, encouraged people to persevere, to continue to serve, and never give up. This is the challenge which, in varying degrees, faces all of us on a daily basis. We can find ways to make it through and overcome the challenges in life or we can find excuses.

It is here that I wish to emphasize a key point, "You don't have to go it alone". During runs in basic training, you have a sergeant calling cadence, you have the peer support of battle buddies, and you have your own intestinal fortitude driving you onward. In life it is important to have support to help you during difficult times. Paul emphasized God and a community of believers to assist in times of trial.

STRIKE Soldiers and family members can draw on the support of God, their faith, their Unit Ministry Teams, their Chain of Command, their Battle Buddies, their friends, their FRG, and numerous others as the list continues.

Hence, the truest question becomes, "Do we have the wherewithal to rely on others in order to persevere?" Remember, one of the greatest signs of strength is the willingness to ask for help.



Combat Stress Column

Sleep deprivation affects all aspects of a Soldier's life. Studies have shown that sleep deprivation significantly increases levels of anger, aggression and impulsive behavior. Decision making is impaired affecting the ability to understand long term consequences of actions taken.

This leads to more risk taking and the perception things are more threatening than they are.

The simple solution for these problems is sleep. Leaders shouldn't feel guilty about taking a nap when fatigue overcomes their ability to concentrate. When a leader is irritable, never satisfied or if their vision becomes narrow and negative, sleep deprivation may be the primary cause. A cranky, never satisfied boss crushes loyalty and morale.

Staff and Soldiers need positive energy. Positive reinforcement is a powerful motivator and a force multiplier. Leaders need to stop, rest and refit when the opportunity arises. Soldiers have no problems sleeping whenever they can, wherever they are. They don't feel bad about it and neither should leaders.

For any topic suggestions, please write me at debra.m.stone@us.army.mil



The Mayor's Cell

When a Soldier receives a letter from home during a deployment the effects are immediate. Without even opening the piece of mail, the Soldier's morale is already boosted. Whether it's a letter from mom, dad, a sibling or a spouse, the message lifts spirits. Mail during deployments makes a better Soldier and vice-versa, letters from Soldiers to home comfort their waiting loved ones.



An efficient way to close the communication gap between Afghanistan and back home is through an Army provided website www.Hooah.Mail.us. It is a free, private and secure service where family and friends of deployed Army Personnel in Afghanistan can send a HooahMail letter to be downloaded, printed and ready for delivery to that Soldier, usually within 24-hours.

This system is ideal for the STRIKE Soldiers on the ground in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. To get on board, have your families log onto the website start reconnecting with their loved ones.

Safety Standards with Safety Mike

Am I electrically safe? The answer is... Maybe. Face it, we are an electrically hungry Army with all the equipment used in operations, not to mention all the personal devices that are plugged in. Electrical fires are a real threat to our living area.

Daisy chained surge protectors are a good indicator of an electrical hazard. Do the math. Find the amperage rating of your surge protector, and how much the equipment plugged into it needs. Try to use no more than 80 percent of the amperage rating.

Surge protectors are required to be either UL or CE certified. This is found in the raised lettering in the plastic molding of the protector. Those bought outside the gate are usually not certified and can cause fires.

Conduct a daily check of your electrical equipment and where they are plugged in. If the surge protector is getting warm, replace it immediately. Stay electrically safe!



This Hengpeng 220-Volt surge protector caught fire do to overuse.

Battle of Bakersfield

"TOP GUNS" Push back Taliban

Combined Task Force Top Guns Soldiers conducted Operation BAKERSFIELD against enemy forces outside the Arghandab District city of Jelawur, beginning July 30.

Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), partnered with the 1st Battalion, 1st Kandak, 205th Corps, Afghan National Army to clear a Taliban stronghold at the intersection of route Mariners and Highlife. The area known as Bakersfield is crucial for Top Gun operations.

"We made it our mission to take (Bakersfield) away from the Taliban," said Lt. Col. David Flynn, commander, 1st Bn., 320th FAR. "It is critical for us to have this."

The value of Bakersfield is in its location. Placed at the intersection of routes Mariners and Highlife, it connects COPs Nolan, Terra Nova, Tynes and Jelawur.

"It falls on the road that leads to our COPs and it was one of their strongholds, but we fought through attacks, IEDs and everything the Taliban had



A Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, fires a mortar round toward Taliban forces at OBJECTIVE Bakersfield, July 31.

in the Arghandab River Valley," said Flynn. "The Taliban no longer has control over the area."

Partnered with the Top Guns were its ANA counterparts who brought experience and knowledge to the operation.

"The guys we are fighting with have an eight and a half year history of kicking in doors and taking names," said Command Sgt. Major Rufugio Barrios, the Top Gun sergeant major. "They've been working with special ops units, they've been working with the



A medical evacuation helicopter is landing at OBJECTIVE Bakersfield during the Battle of Bakersfield, taking a wounded Top Gun Soldier to a near by medical facility. Taliban efforts to thwart Top Guns from the area failed as 1-320th continues to control the ground.



Top Gun Soldiers pull security at OBJECTIVE Bakersfield during the Battle of Bakersfield. The battle was intense, lasting for five straight days with Taliban assaulting



Photo by AP

A Top Gun Soldier stands in front of a burning vehicle at OBJECTIVE Bakersfield, during the Battle of Bakersfield. HHB removed Taliban from the area now called Combat Outpost Stout, named after on of HHB's fallen, Sgt. Kyle B. Stout.

Marines and the largest operations in Afghanistan, they've been a part of and it means a lot that we are partnered with this Kandak."

The operation began when Soldiers stepped off from COP Terra Nova early that Friday morning and moved in on the objective.

"When we hit the ground it was kind of quiet and obviously when you're going into an operation like that and it sounds quiet, you know something's about to happen," said Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Jones, a native of Eldon Mo. and an explosive ordinance device platoon sergeant with Co. A, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, attached to the Top Guns. "And then it did."

Flynn's personal security detachment was hit with an IED as they arrived at Bakersfield. Minutes later, a secondary blast occurred hitting HHB, killing Sgt. Kyle Stout, a squad leader for the battery. A third blast followed, but the American and ANA forces continued to engage the enemy.

"When we got out there on the first day, they hit us with everything they had, V-bids, pressure plate IED's; it was non-stop," said Staff Sgt. Benjamin Tivao, a native of Waigahu, Hi. and a platoon sergeant in the battery. "We didn't have a choice, we had to have this piece of real estate. If we don't, the Taliban is going to keep flooding into Jejewur and right into us."

For five straight days, the enemy attacked with snipers, indirect fire and small arms, but the combined platoons remained resolute. With the success of Operation Bakersfield, Taliban forces are denied freedom of movement in an area once under their control and with COP Stout established at the intersection of Mariners and Highlife, the Top Guns control the area known as Bakersfield.

Due to the Soldiers' unwavering will to accomplish their mission, the enemy was demoralized and left the Battle of Bakersfield defeated. With this victory, the Combined Task Force Top Guns and the people of Afghanistan are better off, said Flynn.



Photo by AP

An HHB Soldier raises his arm marking the position of his team to an incoming medical evacuation helicopter at OBJECTIVE Bakersfield.



Combined Task Force Top Guns Soldiers stand in formation during a memorial service for their fallen comrades, Aug. 4. The memorial service was held in honor of Sgt. Kyle B. Stout, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, Pfc. Michael L. Stansbery, HHB, and Mr. Robert Pittman, Asymmetric Warfare, who died of wounds sustained

"Best By Performance" Sends OMLT to ANA



Spc Jason Eller, a medic in Company C, 526th Brigade Support Battalion shows his ANA counterparts some of the proper techniques for casualty assessment.

Soldiers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division are working shoulder to shoulder with their Afghan brothers every day to bridge the distance between the Afghan people and their government.

Following through with this mission, the 526th Brigade Support Battalion, also known as "Best by Performance," sent an Operational Mentor and Liaison Team to work with the 5th Kandak, 205th Corps, Afghan National Army.

Working with their ANA counterparts the OMLT helped develop stronger discipline in the ranks, shared a wide variety of expertise in basic Soldier skills, while streamlining and in some cases jump-starting the supply system.

"Supply discipline was a challenge," said Capt. Pedro Rivera, operations officer, 526th BSB. Supplies ordered were delivered slowly or not all. The team worked with the ANA to ensure supplies were properly ordered and shipped to right soldiers. As for soldier discipline, many of the recruits embraced the training and showed promise for future operations according to Rivera. A functional supply system is needed and with the efforts of "Best By Performance,"



526th BSB and the 5th Kandak, 205th Corps, ANA, develop stronger supply discipline as they look to create more effective supply teams.

CASF Stands Tall with ANA



The Combined Action STRIKE Force stands proudly at FOB Howz-e-madad. The CASF is a team built from both the Falcons and their ANA brothers.



Lt. Col. Peter N. Benchoff, the 2nd Bn., 502nd Infantry Regiment commander, stands next to Lt. Col. Toryalia Sadiqi, commander, of the 1st Kandak, 3rd Brigade, 205th Corps, as he addresses the Combined Action Strike Force at FOB Howz-e-madad.

ARMY VETERINARIAN TEACHES BASIC DOG CARE

The working dogs of the Army serve an important role on the modern battlefield. There are explosives-sniffing dogs, personnel/patrol dogs and guard dogs who all work to help keep Soldiers safe on mission. In return, the dogs are cared for by Soldiers both on and off mission.

Medics of Company C, 526th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, attended a class on canine combat treatment at Forward Operating Base Wilson Aug. 14.

The class was taught by Sgt. Tommie Collier, a native of San Antonio TX and veterinary technician with the 72nd Medical Detachment from Kandahar Air Field. He works to ensure safety for both Soldiers and animals in STRIKE Brigade's area of operation.

"The military working dogs work hard to keep Soldiers safe," said Collier, "Sometimes they get hurt just like we do. It's important to know how to treat them to save their lives."

The class consisted of a hands-on approach with Fausto, an explosives-identification dog with American K9 Protection Services. Fausto was used to demonstrate the proper location for intravenous fluid needles, how to check for pulse, breathing, trauma and basic overall health condition. The methods taught applied to all working dogs, both Army and civilian, said Collier.

"[This class] was about familiarization with medical care and to make sure the medical staff had the proper training on dogs," Collier said.

Understanding the symptoms of trauma, internal damage or illness in a dog are all parts of the process. The dogs can't tell anyone they are injured or sick so it is important the dog handler looks for signs of illness or trauma, Collier said.

Learning the proper method of care in advance was vital, said Pfc. Luke Waite, native of Edgewood, NM, and medic with Charlie Med.

"We haven't trained on what to do if a dog is hurt before," said Waite, "There's now a better understanding of what to do if that happens."

Dog and human anatomy is similar to each other, but has several differences in terms of location; this changes the treatment. Understanding

the basics of dog anatomy, such as veins and organs, helps a lot, Waite said.

"This class could play a part later," Waite said, "There have been a couple of dogs killed at other FOBs, so maybe we can save them because they save us," said Waite.

The working dogs receive the same level of care, respect and professionalism as a Soldier. Medical evacuations occur with the same urgency as their human counterparts.

"I think [this class] is of the most importance due to their job," Collier said, "They save countless lives."

The Soldiers of Charlie Med took the initiative asking for the class. This is the first FOB to express an interest in this training, Collier said.

Getting the information out across Kandahar is very important to STRIKE's mission, said Lt. Col. Michael Wirt, native of Clarksville, TN, and brigade surgeon with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2BCT. Plans to spread this information across STRIKE's area of operation were underway to help ensure the dogs receive proper care at any location.

"The medics learned a good military working dog assessment, basically a physical exam and a first responder trauma care." Wirt said, "This is extremely important because of the critical mission these military working dogs do. The medics who are trained here will be able to teach other medics on FOB Wilson."

The class was an introduction to the process and plans are being made to bring more personnel and equipment out next time, said Collier.

The Soldiers of Charlie Med are training to save the lives of military dogs while the dogs continue to save the lives of Soldiers in Afghanistan. This relationship benefits the mission of Combined Taskforce STRIKE as it works to bring peace to the region.



Sgt. Tommie Collier, a vet tech, demonstrates organ location on Fausto, an explosives-detection dog, Aug. 14, at FOB Wilson.



Sgt. Collier discusses the careful handling of a dog during a physical exam and during trauma care during a class.

What is... ARGHANDAB OCC-D



Built directly into the side of the historic Baba Saheb Garb (mountain) is a small base that affects an entire district. Roughly the size of two football fields in length and just as wide, Arghandab Operational Coordination Center-District serves as the key component in securing the people of the Arghandab River Valley.

The Arghandab District is currently one of the busiest regions in southern Afghanistan and much takes place in and around the OCC-D. From its crucial location, to its day-to-day duties of the District Governor, to the coordination of military operations, to sessions at the courthouse, Arghandab OCC-D's existence greatly impacts the southern Afghanistan region.

"Arghandab OCC-D is the focal point for governance in Arghandab Valley and that is important because Arghandab historically has been the gateway from the north into Kandahar," said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Leidlein, Team Hamsadah (Our Voice) manager, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). "If things go badly in Arghandab, things go badly for RC South."

Arghandab OCC-D is located east of Kandahar City and is in a part of the world that has seen its share of history. Neighboring the base is the Baba Saheed Garb Shrine, a national monument famous throughout Afghanistan and visited by Afghans daily. In late 1970's, the Soviets used the area as a base. The Mujahedeen were successful in assaulting the Russians, pushing them out of the area. The Arghandab River Valley population is made up of religious tribes like the Alikozi and the Mohammadzai. The land is also one of the birthplaces of the Taliban.

Inside the Arghandab OCC-D Hesco walls lies a combination of government establishments and military operation centers. Both groups have many different pieces involved in their day to day functions.

A portion of the Forward Operating Base is dedicated to Arghandab's District Center and is the largest building in the compound. Inside of the recently renovated two story building are the offices of the District Governor, Haji Shah Mohammed, and his executive staff. The District Development Assembly, the official governing body of the district, approves projects inside the Arghandab District. A large meeting hall is set up so that shuras (meetings) can be held to discuss the issues concerning the citizens of the Arghandab Valley. Eleven different line ministries geared toward improving areas like agriculture, education and public health also have offices in the District Center.

On the second floor is the district's radio station, 101.4, reaching audiences across Kandahar. The station, called the voice of Arghandab, has live programs playing local and foreign music, readings from the Koran and updated local, national and international news. Also on the second level is a claims department for the Arghandab citizens for situations dealing with damaged property. The District Support Team, a collection of civilians from the US government, US Department of Agriculture, US Aide and the department of state are located there as well. They assist the areas of the district in need of governmental attention. Projects stemming from the Arghandab DST so far have brought approximately a billion dollars into the Arghandab River Valley.

"When we first got here there was really nothing here and this provides an opportunity for the people of Arghandab to come out and air their grievances or to build governance," said Leidlein. "We are currently residing here hopefully to secure the government so they eventually take over for themselves and provide their own governance for their own people."

The rooftop of the district center overlooks most of Arghandab and the view spans the entire valley. The local bizarre with colorful fruit stands, the



Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), sit on the flight-line at Arghandab OCC-D. Since STRIKE's arrival, Arghandab OCC-D's flight-line is one of the busiest landing zones in the Kandahar Province.

historic Arghandab River, which runs right into the Dalla Damn and was built in the 1950's by the Canadians, are part of the view. From there, sight of the pomegranate trees and grape fields paint the valley green which are both well known and sold throughout the world.

The 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), began its arrival to the OCC-D on June 7, and has been involved with the base's growth.

Arghandab OCC-D's Combined Joint Operation Center is where STRIKE partners with the ANA coordinating and implementing their missions in Arghandab. The base functions as headquarters for the Afghan National Security Forces operating in the district. The ANA have an entire Kandak (battalion) stationed there where they conduct their maneuvers. The district chief of police along with his district ANP is also stationed inside of Arghandab OCC-D.

Strategically positioned at Combat Outposts throughout the district, the units of STRIKE in Arghandab use the OCC-D as a link to higher headquarters. COPs like Terra Nova, Jelawur and Nolen all fall under the OCC-D's reach.

"The COPS in Arghandab have been invaluable to securing the district," said Lt. Col. Joseph Krebs, STRIKE's officer in charge at the OCC-D. "Arghandab OCC-D, what we nicknamed 'The Dab,' is crucial to STRIKE's success."

A unique STRIKE Team also based out of "The Dab" is called Team Hamsadah. The team is made of approximately 40 members each representing a non-lethal section, such as civil affairs, information operations, legal and justice.

"Team Hamsadah was a concept originated by STRIKE and has never been done before," said Leidlein. It is designed for the team to come out to an area controlled by more than one battle space owner and allow that team to take a non-lethal targeting out of the ruck sacks of those battle space owners, do the coordination and do those pieces so the battle space owners can focus on actually fighting the fight.

Some of the units attached to the STRIKE Brigade are based at the OCC-D, like the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th BCT, 82nd Airborne Division. They came to Arghandab OCC-D in December of 2009 and has used the base as its operations center for its missions across the Arghandab River Valley. The 2nd Battalion, also known as the "Red Devils," are currently preparing to redeploy to Fort Bragg, N.C., and are transferring their responsibilities with the 1st Btn., 66th Armored Regiment, 4th Infantry Division.

Since the recent surge of troops into the southern region of Afghanistan, inbound and outgoing flights have significantly increased bringing personnel, supplies and equipment into the OCC-D. The flight-line didn't exist prior to the arrival of the 82nd Airborne Division in December, but with the use of heavy assets like bulldozers and earth movers, the flight-line is operational for military helicopters, including the CH47 Chinook.

The Red Devils also built a dining facility to feed the Soldiers and the local nationals on the FOB, handling about 300 personnel per meal. The base is also equipped with showers, a chapel, a medical facility and a fueling point.

Arghandab as a district has an incredible chance to improve their living conditions for itself and its neighbors. Their growth and increased economics would trickle into Kandahar as a province, then to Afghanistan as a nation. Arghandab OCC-D's intent is to ensure that success and will continue to function so as to bring the needed security to an area with such promise and potential.



Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Leidlein, the manager of STRIKE's Team Hamsadah, operating from Arghandab OCC-D, points to the far side of the base during a tour of the coordination center, Aug. 9. Arghandab OCC-D serves as a place of governance for the Arghandab District as well a operations base for the Afghan National Security Forces and the International Security Assistance Forces.

Wolf Pack, ANP Build-Up Check Point 1

Made up of desert and barren land, Maiwand is the largest district within STRIKE's Area of Operation and traveling in such terrain is extremely difficult. Highway One, Maiwand's main route, runs the width of the district and is used by hundreds of motorists on a daily basis.

Truck drivers deliver goods to and from STRIKE's Forward Operating Bases and Kandahar City. Locals use the road to travel from village to village. Afghan National Security Forces conduct daily patrols on the highway and miles of tire tread are embedded in the pavement left from tactical vehicles conducting operations.

Civilians and Soldiers are not the only ones using the highway; Taliban also drive the route. Acting as normal day to day citizens, Taliban use the freeway to transport destructive items like Rocket Propelled Grenades, IED's and other tools for their attacks. Taliban move up and down Highway One allowing them the freedom to operate within Maiwan said Capt. Jake Balon, the squadron Fire Support Officer, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Calvary Regiment.

To stop Taliban from freely moving throughout the Maiwan District, the Afghan National Police built Check Point 1, on Highway One and along with a platoon from the squadron's Company G, the two forces operate the 24hour checkpoint together.

The ANP partnering with the 3rd Squadron's Ghost rider Company limits the enemy's freedom of maneuver on Highway One, said Lt. Atal Mohammed, the ANP commander of Check Point 1 and a Legion Academy graduate.

"The ANP have proven invaluable in the actual search of vehicles because cultural requirements dis-



Check Point 1, located on Highway One in the Maiwand District, is used by ANP and 3/2 SCR to better enforce security in the area.

courage foreigners from searching vehicles that have women inside," said Balon. "By using the ANP to search these vehicles, we avoid this problem and keep the local populace from coming to resent ISAF presence." The ANP are also extremely useful in personnel searches as they are aware of what items and clothing is out of the norm for the region, said Balon.

Improvements to CP-1 have occurred since the two forces joined. At first, 15 men worked around the clock from a four room, concrete compound. Now platoon sized elements operate the compound. Recently, concertina wire has been added to its perimeters and stronger communication capabilities will enable better coordination with outside forces. Guard towers overlook the area and improvements are being made to enhance each tower's capabilities. A new search area with lighting is also in the works.

"This creates an environment where the police are not only safe to conduct security operations, but feel confident that the ISAF have their best interest in mind instead of solely focused on our need," said Balon.

Since its arrival in Maiwand, the Ghost rider Company has worked with the ANSF and has built good relations with the ANP. Training and improving the security of CP 1 has built a stronger bond between the allies.

"Ghost rider Company has worked hard over the last month to not only engage ANSF, but to improve and partner as often as possible," said Balon. "The platoons have found ways to interact socially with the ANP at checkpoint one." Whether sitting down with a few Soldiers talking over chai, enjoying a Coke-a-Cola on top of the compound or taking a group photo with the ANP at the check point. While the primary mission of the partnership is security, it is important to foster personal relationships, said Balon.

Safe travel on Maiwand's Highway One is a must and by taking away the Taliban's ability to move through the district, Check Point 1 makes the district more safe for its people.



ANP and Soldiers from 3/2 SCR sit on the roof of a compound at Check Point 1.

STRIKE'S Distinguished Visitors



Lt. Gen. Peter Wall, the commander of British military forces in Afghanistan, attended a briefing at FOB Wilson, Aug. 6.



Brig. Gen. Frederick Hodges, Regional Command South director of operations, visits FOB Wilson, June 29.



Lt. Gen. William Webster, commanding officer of United States Army Coalition Component, tours FOB Wilson, July 24.



"Nuts," the 101st Airborne Division's Rock Band, performs for STRIKE at FOB Wilson, Aug. 2.



General David Petraeus, commanding officer of International Security Assistance Force, attends a staff briefing at FOB Wilson, July 9.



Dr. Fredrick Kagan, with the American Enterprise Institute and Dr. Kimberly Kagan, with the Institute for the Study of War, research FOB Wilson, July 24.



Brig. Gen. John Vance, commanding officer of Task Force Kandahar, visits FOB Wilson for a battlefield assessment, June 28.



Lt. Gen. David Rodriguez, commander, ISAF Joint Command, greets STRIKE 6 and 7 at FOB Wilson's flight-line Aug. 21.



CSM Scott Schroeder, csm of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), greets STRIKE 6 and 7 at FOB Wilson's flight-line Aug. 18.

The Faces of STRIKE!



WE WILL NEVER FORGET



Honoring Our Fallen



Sgt. Kyle B. Stout, 25, of Texarkana, Texas, died July 30 in the Arghandab District, of injuries sustained when insurgents attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team.



Pfc. Michael L. Stansbery, 21, of Mount Juliet, Tenn., died July 30 in the Arghandab District, of injuries sustained when insurgents attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team.



Master Sgt. (R) Robert Pittman, 41, of Nashville, Tn., died July 30 in the Arghandab River Valley, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked the unit he was with small arms fire. He was working for Asymmetric Warfare.



Pfc. John E. Andrade, 19, of San Antonio, Texas, died Aug. 7 at DE Khak Chupan Turah, Kandahar, of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit using an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to Iron Company, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.



Pfc. Paul O. Cuzzupe, 23, of Plant City, Fla., died Aug. 8 in Akhtar-Mohammad-Kahn, Kandahar, of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit using an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to Ghost Company, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.



Sgt. Christopher N. Karch, 23, of Indianapolis, Ind., died Aug. 11 in the Arghandab River Valley, of wounds suffered when insurgents attacked his unit with small arms fire. He was assigned to the Company A, 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team.



Spc. Pedro A. Millet Meletiche, 20, of Elizabeth, N.J., died Aug. 22 in the Arghandab River Valley, of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit using an improvised explosive device. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division.





STRIKE ZONE AFGHANISTAN



STRIKE Zone Afghanistan is the brigade's Tv show dedicated to keeping its viewers up to date with unit's events and missions during it's deployment to Kandahar Afghanistan.

Learn about each company, battery and troop and be a part of their high-speed missions by checking out the STRIKE Zone Afghanistan. Look for it on the Brigade Facebook Page.

STRIKE HONORS



*A weekly look
at STRIKE's History*

The Brigade Facebook Page

The STRIKE Brigade is in the social networking world with the Brigade Facebook Page. On it are images and videos of the great missions and actions involving the 2nd Brigade Combat Team. Join to start conversations and leave comments about everything the Team is doing. Watch the Brigade's Tv show, the 'Strike Zone' with monthly updates of our time in Afghanistan, read about the illustrious history of 2nd Brigade in the weekly edition of 'Strike Honors'. The page is an awesome way to stay close your Soldiers, even while they are far away.

To be a part of the STRIKE Brigade via the internet; log onto your Facebook page, click in the search box and type 2nd Brigade Strike. When the 502nd comes up click on it and then click 'like'. Join the already thousands of viewers keeping up with the STRIKE Brigade!



First Name:
Last Name:
I am: Select Sex:
Birthday: Month: Day: Year: