

SIGNAL STRONG

JNCC-A Running on Prime Power Now

By Sgt. Bethany Witherington

Prime power can be defined as: "direct power through normal transmission lines." Not having to utilize a remote generator is essentially much quieter.

Contractors for Inglett & Stubbs International were at the Joint Network Control Center-Afghanistan compound on August 17th & 18th installing power lines to give JNCC-A and two new buildings being built on the JNCC-A compound, prime power.

After five months, three site surveys, two Task Forces and many arduous meetings, the project is underway and near completion.

Once the automatic transfer switch is delivered and hooked up to both the generator and the Base's prime power electricity, prime power will supply electricity at JNCC-A. The current generator will be powered down, allowing residents of JNCC-A to finally enjoy silence, after enduring the constant drone of the generator for the past five months.

During the installation of the transfer switch, there will be a power outage on the compound for a day and a half.

Rowdy Stenmetz, the Inglett & Stubbs Intl. foreman overseeing this project, explained: "The whole process should not take more than three weeks. The initial phase is completed, now we are just waiting for the transfer switch. We will try to do everything we can to prepare for when the switch comes in, to minimize the loss of power."

When asked about a benefit of getting Prime Power to JNCC-A, Sgt. Maj. William Bostic, 228th Theater Tactical Signal Brigade S-3 Sgt. Maj. said, "Prime Power gets the JNCC-A a more reliable source of power with generator backup in case of a power outage. It also ensures that we will not be faced with having to turn NETOPS authority over to another unit because of power failure, while at the same time saving approximately \$160,000 annually in fuel costs."



Those savings are a result of not having to continually keep adding fuel to the generator to keep it running. Through the combined effort of Maj. Lisa Maly, Sgt. Maj. Bostic and CMSgt Paul Wilson, the project has finally become a reality.

Maj. Lisa Maly, 228th TTSB Future Operations OIC said, "This project could not have been accomplished without all three of us working together. Each team member leveraged their strengths together, guiding the Prime Power project forward past many obstacles. We also had a driving force pushing us to do everything we could to achieve a mission complete status."

Having two additional buildings built on the compound also gives more work space to Soldiers. Plus, it brings Soldiers and Airmen closer to the hub of the network operations; allowing essential personnel to be in close proximity to each other, thereby allowing service members to assist each other much more quickly and efficiently than in the past.



Maj. Lisa Maly, Sgt. Maj. William Bostic and Chief Master Sgt. Paul Wilson pose next to the back hoe before prime cable is installed. (Upper right picture) Stephen Dool works the back hoe machine.



Sgt. Bethany Witherington

Spc. Blaine gives a security classification brief to 228th Soldiers

Spc. Blaine ~ S2 Intel Analysis

By Sgt. Bethany Witherington

Spc. Justin Blaine is being recognized as a result of his outstanding technical and tactical acumen as an Intelligence Analyst.

Having worked with Blaine for two years, Maj. Barbara Mesaros compares his knowledge and performance to that of a soldier with many more years of experience.

When asked why Mesaros thinks Blaine deserves the spotlight nomination she said, "Although, all Soldiers go to school for their trade, Spc. Blaine has an innate ability to process and analyze intelligence and consistently produces products beyond what is expected of him."

Blaine's job involves reviewing all intelligence bulletins, reports, and sites to consolidate threat stream information into analytical reports for the command. He also creates and reviews daily intelligence summaries and produces Intelligence Reports for elements traveling throughout the battle space providing them with situational awareness for operational planning.

"Spc. Blaine is on the fast track in the intelligence field. He is one of the best intelligence analysts with whom I have ever had the honor

to work with. He has completed several CBT's on Information Technology so that we can provide threat analysis to the cyber battle space. He has an eagerness to learn and venture out into new areas of intelligence. I appreciate that about him and that is why we have the synergy in our shop that we do. We all continue to learn and create products to help our customers fight this war," said Mesaros.

Blaine is eligible for promotion to E-5, however he holds a slot that will not allow for the promotion; in order to be promoted to E-5 Blaine will have to leave 228th TTSB.

Mesaros said, "Blaine is a natural; his performance is unparalleled by his peers, and more importantly, he loves his job. When he leaves the unit for promotion, it will be a sad day for all of us but a great day for the intelligence community as a whole."

Spc. Blaine has proven himself beyond his pay grade, and therefore deserves the spotlight for the Professional Soldier of the Month nomination.

Congratulations Spc. Blaine!



Sgt. Bethany Witherington

Photo taken in front of the 228th HHC and S2/3 buildings

Soldiers react to 9 month deployments

By Sgt. Bethany Witherington

The Army recently announced a change in the deployment policy. Beginning January 2012, Soldiers will deploy for nine consecutive months without a rest and recuperation period.

This change will affect active duty personnel more than National Guard or Reserve personnel. It gives active duty personnel more down time with their families and less time deployed. It also reduces extra spending incurred by sending Soldiers home for R&R paid for by the government.

Master Sgt. Terry M. Wessinger, JNCC-A Information Assurance/ Computer Network Defense NCOIC, said, "This being my third deployment in seven years, I don't really believe cutting out R&R will have a negative impact on the Soldiers who are deployed. In fact it may be less of a distraction and allow them to maintain their focus on the mission."

Congress realized having Sol-

diers away from their family and friends for extended periods has hurt the morale of the support system and in turn has damaged Soldier morale. Spending more time at home and less time deployed will help morale and in turn help the mission.

When asked about his feelings on the deployment policy change Spc. Bruce Keenon, JNCC-A SATCOM Manager said, "I'm in between. I like the nine months but at the same time I like R&R. But if it will help benefit active duty being with their families more and not being deployed every other year I'm good with eliminating R&R and just doing 9 months. Constantly deploying can be stressful and hurt morale."

Currently, most guard deployments last ten months in theater with additional time on the front and back end for pre and post mobilization training. The new policy states that deployments

will be nine months in theater with additional time for pre and post mobilization training.

Keenon said, "Since this is my first deployment I am not really all that used to having R&R for deployments, however; I think R&R will not affect personnel that have been deployed more than once. I will say first timers like myself, it will because if I deploy again I know I would be looking forward to that two week break, but like the motto goes "mission first."

Where as a veteran Soldier Wessinger says, "I don't believe the new deployment policy will have a major impact on guard members since we will still be mobilized for 12 months. I think it will help active components who are often tasked with extended deployments."

Safety Highlights:

Safety doesn't happen by accident...it's up to you!

Prevent Negligent Discharges

The major underlying reasons for errors related to all accidents and injuries are:

- * Lack of self-discipline
- * Failure to enforce standards
- * Inadequate training

Weapons Safety Tips

Safe muzzle orientation is critical.

Soldiers will always keep their weapon pointed in a safe direction. At no time should any part of the human body be in the likely path of a bullet. This requires constant awareness of the muzzle orientation and frequent the weapon is considered loaded. It is critical that Soldiers learn muzzle orientation as a life skill that becomes second nature and a personal responsibility.

Weapons will be kept on safe at all times when not engaging a target or when enemy contact is not imminent.

Fingers will be kept off of the trigger until firing the weapon is intended.

Leaders will remain involved to ensure ammunition has not inadvertently been left in the weapon or placed in the weapon in a manner that can result in a negligent discharge.

When clearing weapons on ranges, the weapon will be oriented downrange during the clearing process.

During the issue and turn-in of weapons, both the armorer and the Soldier will visually verify that the weapon does not contain any ammunition. This procedure will be conducted whether ammunition was issued or not.



Prevention of Rabies in Afghanistan

Per CENTCOM General Order 1B, Soldiers are prohibited from feeding or keeping stray animals as pets or mascots. It is essential for Soldiers to avoid animals throughout the CJOA-A and treat them as though they are infected with rabies.

Rabies is highly endemic in Afghanistan. The disease is primarily carried by dogs, although cats and other mammals may also carry the disease.

Humans contract rabies through contact with an infected animal. It is not necessary for the animal to bite; rabies can be transmitted

from animal saliva through intact skin. It is often impossible to determine if an animal has rabies based on appearance alone.

In the event a person is bitten by an animal with rabies, the rabies vaccine must be given before the virus reaches the nervous system. The sooner the vaccine is given, the better the chances of survival for the victim. The rabies vaccination is a time-intensive, expensive, and difficult process to accomplish in a deployed theater, requiring multiple daily vaccinations. There is no cure or treatment for rabies once it develops; it is inevitably fatal.

Soldier takes the wheel while driver has seizure

By Capt. Karena Hill

On Wednesday, September 7, Staff Sgt. Roosevelt Downs saw a Toyota pickup truck driving erratically toward the Dragon Laundry Facility around lunch time.

The driver of the vehicle, a civilian contractor, was driving when she began to have a seizure. Inside the truck were three other passengers who unsuccessfully tried to stop the truck.

Downs was able to open the driver's side door and stop the truck prior to it hitting the laundry facility, the jersey barriers or another person.

While Downs worked to stop the truck he was assisted by a medic who was passing through the area. Once the truck stopped, the medic quickly rendered first aid to the driver.

The driver of the truck was taken to Craig Hospital for further evaluation and subsequently referred to doctors in Germany for further testing.



Staff Sgt. stands in front of the Dragon Laundry Drop off point where days before his quick thinking prevented a pickup truck from running into the building.

228th Supports COIN Effort



Photos taken during three different Operation Care humanitarian efforts here on Bagram Air Field

Capt. Karena Hill & Sgt. Bethany Witherington



The COIN (counterinsurgency) effort in the Afghanistan theater of operations involves US forces working as the catalyst for expansion of the host nation's economy, job training, joint ventures and creation of new businesses.

Soldiers who are actively engaged in the COIN effort perform their duties inside Afghan villages away from coalition FOBs. Because 228th Soldiers perform mission duties primarily on Bagram, Soldiers have been creative in how they participate in the COIN effort.

During non-duty hours, members of the 228th TTSB have more than willingly participated in countless volunteer efforts that have benefited the local Bagram population. The types of volunteerism unit members are involved are as varied as the individuals who choose to volunteer.

Established volunteer programs at Bagram include Operation Care, the Wounded Warrior Program, teaching English as a Second Language and assisting with Egyptian Hospital Distributions/Operational Support.

In addition to established programs, members of the 228th have been instrumental in creating enduring volunteer programs where there was not already an established program. These programs include the founding of a shoe distribution program in which 1000 pair of shoes have been given to school aged children throughout the CJOA-A.

228th COIN Initiatives

Operation Care
Nutrition Program
Shoe Distribution
School Supplies
Orphanages

Literacy Program
English as a Second Language
Korean Technical School
Egyptian Hospital Distributions

Craig Hospital Medical Volunteers
Computer Training Program
Wounded Warrior Program

Are you at risk for Identity Theft?

Identity theft is an issue facing all Americans and Soldiers are not exempt. Anyone who has worn an Army uniform in the past 40 years knows social security numbers have served as the basis for personnel and medical administration. In an era of computer file-sharing technologies, Internet access and credit cards, this puts the Soldier at risk of fraud.

Soldiers, Civilians and contractors should be aware of the dangers of identity theft and how to protect themselves from unauthorized release of personally identifiable information.

Precautions everyone can take to deter identity theft:

- Shred documents with personally identifiable information before discarding them. This includes any financial documents.
- Don't provide social security number or other personal information over the phone, through the mail, or on the Internet
- Keep your military ID with you or locked up at all times
- Never lend your credit cards or account information to anyone
- Do not click on links sent in unsolicited emails. Use firewalls, anti-spyware, and anti-virus software to protect your home computer. Keep the software up to date.
- Don't use obvious passwords (like the last four digits of your Social Security number or your birthday)
- Don't let unattended mail pile up

DoD removing Social Security Numbers to protect Soldiers identity:

Changes to military ID card will take place in three phases:

Phase I- Starting December 2008 dependent SSNs will be removed

Phase II- Starting June 2011 Social Security Numbers will be removed from Common Access Cards (CAC)

Phase III- Beginning by end of 2012 removal of Social Security numbers embedded barcodes on CAC

New ID cards will have a DoD ID number in place of your Social Security number

The diagram illustrates the three phases of the DoD's initiative to remove Social Security Numbers (SSNs) from military identification cards. It features three columns, each representing a phase, with sample ID cards and explanatory text.

- PHASE I: Remove Dependent SSN. Started in December 2008.** This phase focuses on the **DEPENDENT ID CARD** (DD Form 1173). A sample card shows a dependent's SSN (XXX-XX-XXXX) being replaced by a placeholder. The sponsor's SSN remains visible. The card includes fields for name, rank, and service branch.
- PHASE II: Remove All Printed SSNs. As of June 2011.** This phase targets the **COMMON ACCESS CARD (CAC)**. A sample card shows the printed SSN being removed and replaced by a **DoD ID Number**. A note specifies that the **DoD Benefits Number** (only on cards that convey DoD benefits) remains.
- PHASE III: Remove SSNs Embedded in Barcodes. Beginning by end of 2012.** This phase also targets the **COMMON ACCESS CARD (CAC)**. A sample card shows the SSN embedded in a barcode being removed. A note states that the **SSN will be removed from barcodes**.

Sending Holiday Care Packages

Thanks

During November and December each year the USPS is flooded with packages. This causes a great delay in the average time the postal service takes to deliver its packages. The recommended mailing deadline for sending economy-priced packages to service members in Afghanistan, Iraq and other places around the world is November 12.

Do your part- to make sure your packages arrive in a timely manner ensure your mailing address is correct and legible. Verify the correct format of your address and ensure it matches your APO Box shipping account information.

Don't forget APO addresses usually require customs forms.

Each five-digit military and post office ZIP code has specific restrictions, but the following are prohibited in the regions of Operation New Dawn in Iraq and Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan:

- *Horror comics and obscene prints, painting, cards, films and videotapes
- *Anything depicting nude or seminude persons, pornographic or sexual items, or unauthorized political materials
- *Bulk quantities of religious materials contrary to the Islamic faith, though items for personal use are permitted
- *Pork or pork by-products

**For specific restrictions contact your local post office or call
800-ASK-USPS**

Ideas for Soldier Care Packages in Cold Weather

- | | | | |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| Warm blankets | Hot coca packets | Instant coffee | Fleece or other warm blankets |
| Thermal under garments | Hand warmers | Flannel sheets | |
| Soup packets | Cough drops | Wool socks | |



Sgt. Michael Rigsby
21 Sept



Staff Sgt. Karl Krousel~22 Sept



Sgt. Matthew Hayes
27 Sept



Lt. Col. James Fender
22 Sept



Lt. Col. Timothy Sellers~7 Sept



Capt. Andrew Philson
27 Sept

September Birthdays

*If you want to be happy, be ~
Henry David Thoreau*



Sgt. Richard Beymer
27 Sept



Staff Sgt. Terrol Williams~9 Sept



Staff Sgt. James Grizzle
9 Sept

The Ramp

By Capt. Dwight Deloach

The C-130 was parked on the tarmac, her rear door open, yawning in the afternoon sun. The small, relatively quiet corner of the runway in which she was parked stood in contrast to the hustle and bustle of the surrounding airfield. The base, elsewhere, was alive with activity. This made perfect sense given that this was a warzone; schedules had to be kept, deadlines had to be met, missions had to be completed. Her crew had dispersed, but she remained, alone and waiting. The plane, a workhorse of her generation, had carried men and machine to theaters across the globe, but at this hour, her four massive props were silent and her bay was empty.

She would not be parked for long. She also had a schedule to keep. She had but one mission this day, one long flight to make before she could settle into a distant hangar and rest her weary wings. She had but one passenger to carry, one VIP to deliver, and though the mission was simple on its face, it would be her most important to date in a career filled with important missions.

Her passenger also waited; waited for the crowd to

gather, waited for the lines to be formed, waited for the music to play, waited to go home. He had come here to do his job, to make a difference, and he had. This would be his last flight and although he had longed for this freedom bird home, he never thought it would come like this. He was young. He had the world in his hands. He had much left to do.

The crowd, a chess set of tan and olive and brown, stood at perfect attention, together, but alone in a hundred different thoughts, a hundred different questions awaiting answers. Some knew him, most did not. It made no matter. On this day, regardless of emblem or camouflage pattern or rank, they were all brothers. They all understood. They all came, not on orders, but out of honor and respect and love.

He would not go alone. None of them do. From his last breath until his shadow no longer made its mark upon the earth, he would not be alone. His brothers, not of blood but borne by it, would carry him and remain by his side. He knew this. He knew that if his name was ever called, he would never be left alone; he would never be left behind.

And then there was the flag. There is always the flag. She would be his closest companion on this voyage, her silent shock of color wrapped as barrier and beacon, screaming to the masses as if to say “I am why”. Like mother to child, she would comfort him on his journey. She would be with him as he made it home. She would provide strength, she would provide hope, she would provide the answers to a hundred different questions. As he had done for her, she would stand as sentry and sentinel and she would give peace to a distraught, but proud family.

And so the plane was loaded, the ramp lifted, the four massive props again set into motion. The last salute was presented, the colors furled, the tears wiped away. The passenger waited no longer. His freedom flight had come, but it had not come only for him. She carried with her every tear shed, every drop of blood lost, every loss endured and every victory won. She carried the hope and the will of an entire country. She carried us. This was not only his freedom flight, it was also ours. We owe it to him to make sure it lasts forever.

*Note This article was first submitted to the Camden Chronicle where Capt. Deloach writes on a freelance basis.

Month in Photos

