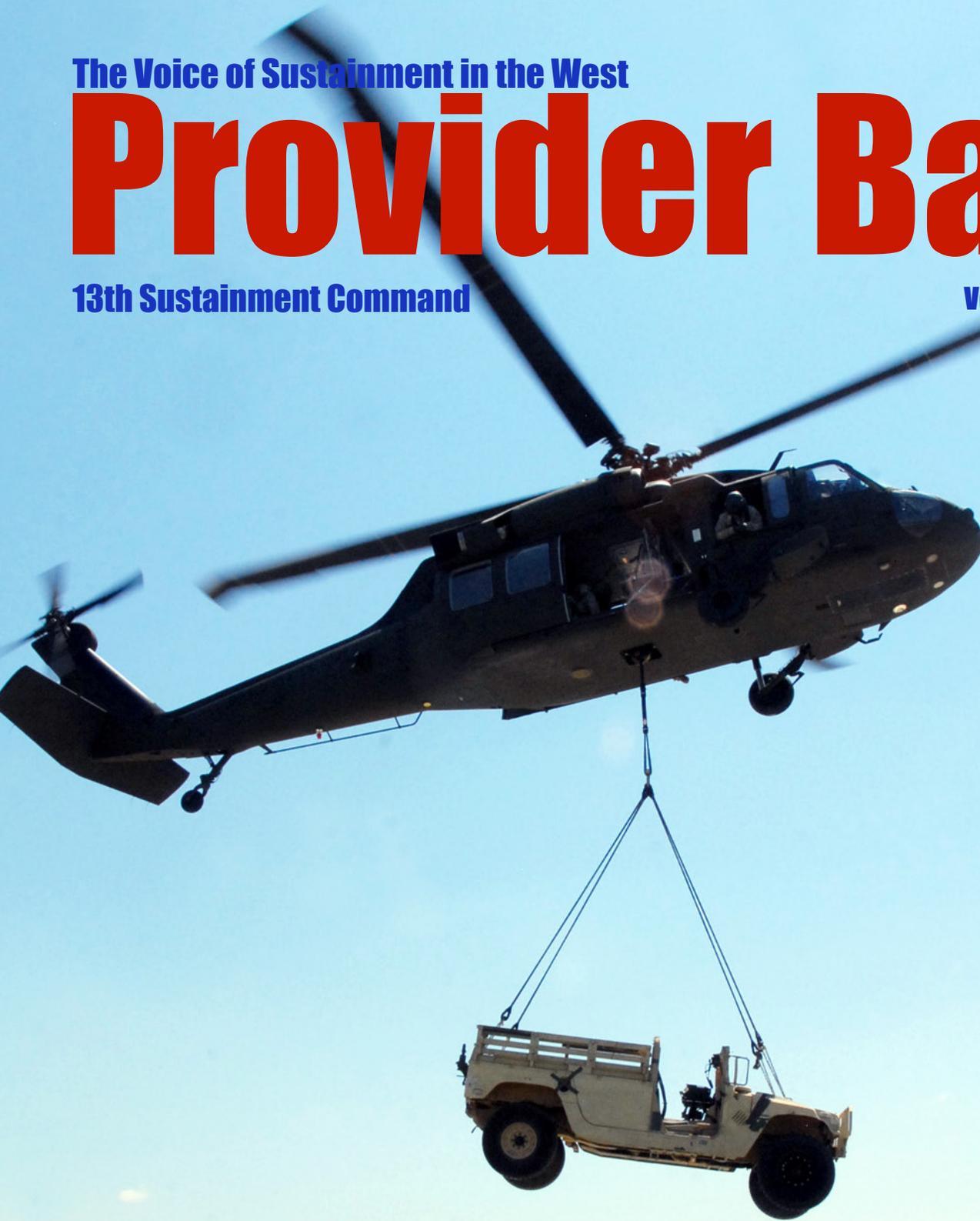


The Voice of Sustainment in the West

Provider Base

13th Sustainment Command

Volume 10, Issue 1
Winter 2012



Sustainer Training

Commander's Corner

Teammates,

This issue of the Provider Base is training focused, and I would like to thank everyone who contributed and shared their TTPs and lessons learned. The Provider Base remains a forum where we can share our experiences, and I continue to invite you to provide your experiences and lessons learned. If you have a good idea, send it our way because together, we will always accomplish more.

Change remains a part of our daily lives, and as the 2011 National Military Strategy suggests,

“Our focus on leadership, not simply power, necessitates that we emphasize our values and our people as much as our platforms and capabilities. The all volunteer force will remain our greatest strategic asset and the best example of the values we represent. In addition, we must continue to find innovative and affordable ways to provide the full range of capabilities necessary to fulfill this strategy while making difficult tradeoffs between modernization, capacity, capability, posture, and risk.”

In my humble opinion, we in the LSOC community are doing just that. Across the spectrum, we continue to find innovative and affordable ways to provide the full range of capabilities for the warfighter. The more we work together and share processes, the better we can support the Army today and in the future.

Thanks for what you do for our Army. I look forward to our continued dialogue in the future.

COLONEL
Charles Kibben



COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
Guitaud Leandre

CSM's Corner



Training is a very important piece to everything we do in the Army. It's what makes us an elite force. As sustainers, we must work hard to ensure we stay on top.

As the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) takes on its mission in Afghanistan, the Leveraging Sustainment Operation CONUS-West mission continues. We should strive to build on the success of LSOC-W.

Last issue, we talked about the importance of materiel management and how LSOC-W is saving the Army money. In this issue, we will focus on some great sustainment training.

In addition, we will also say goodbye to the members of 13th ESC who recently deployed, welcome home and thank the 4th Sustainment Brigade and the Soldiers, and welcome new LSOC-W leaders to the team.

This issue emphasizes the importance of training and the need for sustainers to remain flexible and innovative with training while maintaining the standard. I challenge leaders and Soldiers to not only maintain a high level of proficiency in their warrior tasks and their military occupational specialties, but to also keep up with changes, new systems and new equipment, so they will remain the best logisticians the Army has to offer. The Provider Base is an excellent forum for that.

Cover: A UH-60 Black Hawk lifts a M998 Humvee June 30 during a three-day sling load training exercise hosted by the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Eric Glassey, 4th PAD)

Back Cover: Brig. Gen. Terence Hildner, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commanding general, presents Lt. Col. Richard J. Tate, 13th ESC Leveraging Sustainment Organization Conus – West Fusion Cell chief, the Distinguished Order of Saint Martin Oct. 21. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Steven Schneider, 13th ESC Public Affairs)

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Provider Base

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LSOC-W meets, discusses future

By Sgt. Erik Thurman
15th SB Public Affairs

EL PASO, Texas -- Members of the sustainment community met Oct. 24 to 26 at El Paso's Wyndham Airport Hotel to discuss what's ahead for the U.S. Army in terms of logistical operations.

The 15th Sustainment Brigade hosted the Leveraging Sustainment Operations CONUS-West Conference.

The LSOC-West Conference was attended by all sustainment commanders and command sergeants major across the eastern and western regions as well as commanders and CSMs from Army Field Support Brigades, Combat Sustainment and Support Battalions and both the 13th and 3rd Sustainment Commands (Expeditionary).

"The purpose of this conference is to bring together the sustainment experts who have responsibility west of the Mississippi River and have responsibility providing sustainment to the senior commanders across CONUS," said Brig. Gen. John O'Connor, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-4, Director of Logistics, U.S. Army Forces Command at Fort Bragg, N.C. "And what the intent is, is to identify readiness issues that reside inside the senior command and then leverage opportunities that exist out there, so that we can make sure we best use organic military capability to potentially offset some of the service contracts we have out there."

During a recent interview by Sharie Derrickson, Army Procurement, Pentagon Defense, Brig. Gen. O'Connor said "the Army is moving toward becoming a lighter and more lethal force."

He told Derrickson "commands are going through the process of moving into a more enterprise resource planning solution for logistics automation."

"I am with forces command and as the FORSCOM G-4, I want to make sure that we are leveraging all of the organic capabilities that reside out there," said O'Connor.

He said the intent is to bring leaders together to

collaborate and communicate solutions and to ensure leaders clearly understand there are declining resources out there.

"We establish aim points for our organizations so that they can optimize their available resources and get to solutions rapidly in the most efficient and effective way at a reduced cost," O'Connor said.

He told Derrickson, "We are constantly looking for ways we can leverage new tools to make sure we are getting the best bang for our buck on support in the supply chain and that our forces are getting exactly what they need," O'Connor told Derrickson. "We are constantly trying to be good stewards and we recognize the budgets are changing, and I would say we clearly understand the impacts.

"But a tightened belt could mean looking at different options that ultimately could save the Army and taxpayers money, save lives, and result in fewer casualties in the field. We are going to leverage new tools and technologies in order to take us to the next level as we prepare our forces to get ready for the next potential conflict."

"I think the LSOC opportunity is a great way to leverage resources and people," said Lt. Col. Angie Holbrook, chief of Soldiers support branch enlisted management with Human Resources Command. "Those interpersonal relationships you form at these types of events carry on and when you have a problem when you get back home, knowing that you can go call someone in that network that has been set up is key."

Holbrook said good communication is critical to efficiency.

"One of the things I took away was – if I don't provide the manpower, they are not able to do the mission," she said. "And as a human resources provider for the units – making sure that you get the timing down, making sure that you hear all the issues, don't just make a decision based on what you see in the data base or something like that. It's pretty critical that I make sure that I am listening to the commanders on a regular basis so I get it right."

Holbrook said retention was a key issue.

"We have been an Army at war for ten years and as we are getting out of Iraq and as Afghanistan eventually ramps down, we will have to rebalance the force," Holbrook said. "So it's really important that Soldiers understand that quality and retaining quality is important. You can't just keep doing status quo and think that's going to be enough to get you by."

Portions of this article were used from an article by Sharie Derrickson, Army Procurement, Pentagon Defense.



Photo by Sgt. Erik Thurman

Commanders and CSMs across the eastern and western regions met to discuss the future of logistical operations during the Leveraging Sustainment Operations Conference at El Paso's Wyndham Airport Hotel Oct 24.



Photo by Jim Bryant

Environmental Protection Specialist Victor Rodelo empties JP-8 fuel into a bucket after filling one of the 593rd Sustainment Brigade tanker trucks Oct. 18.

Delivering more fuel mileage

Army gets more bang for its buck using reclaimed JP-8

By Marisa Petrich
Northwest Guardian

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. -- It's not uncommon for military vehicles to dump their fuel. But does anyone ever wonder where it all goes?

Soon Joint Base Lewis-McChord will be reusing the fuel removed from vehicles on the installation — and will save the installation in fuel cost immediately.

“The Army’s actually going to use what they pay for,” JBLM’s Directorate of Public Works Hazardous Waste Program Manager Kyle Greer said.

Whether tanks need to be emptied for maintenance issues or to prepare them for a deployment, sometimes perfectly good fuel is taken out of vehicles. JBLM has been filtering this gently used fuel for further use since the 1990s, when the Army consolidated fuel so every vehicle uses the same kind (JP-8) — but it wasn’t until this week that the 593rd Sustainment Brigade helped establish a system to distribute and actually reuse it.

“We couldn’t give it away,” Greer said of the program up to this point.

In the past, DPW Environmental would filter the JP-8, send a sample to be certified as usable by an

independent lab and try to entice units to come get it — but many were skeptical of the used fuel or reluctant to make the trek to the Installation Fuel Filtering Facility to retrieve it.

Instead, the unclaimed fuel, which is tested for clarity before use, was given away to off-base organizations. There wasn’t much else that could be done.

“Before, it would sit, sometimes for a whole year. After a year it gets wasted out,” Greer said.

Aside from the expense of purchasing new JP-8 for all the previously defueled vehicles, JBLM has to pay to dispose of it as a hazardous waste. This in turn hurts the



Photos by Jim Bryant

Environmental Protection Specialist Victor Rodelo and DPW Hazardous Waste Program Manager Kyle Greer attach a hose before pumping JP-8 fuel into a 593rd SB tanker truck Oct. 18.

installation's annual waste report.

During the last three years, units generated 178,000 gallons of excess fuel, at a disposal cost of \$1,062,889, according to the JBLM Plans, Analysis and Integration Office.

That was then. Now the 593rd SB volunteered to take charge of the fuel. What can't be used internally will be loaded into the brigade's fuel trucks to be distributed to other units. Just as important, it's a training opportunity for Soldiers in the 593rd's 24th Quartermaster Company.

"It is very economic and mission oriented for the 593rd to step up to the plate," Plans, Analysis and Intergration Office management and program analyst Connie Lee said.

It was her job to come up with a way to make the fuel reutilization process more efficient, and one idea was to enlist the help of a unit that could transport the fuel throughout base. When it came up at a monthly working group aiming to streamline JBLM's processes, Lt. Col. Dennis Kerwood, the 593rd's Support Operations Officer, knew immediately it was a mission for them.

"Every time we see an opportunity to assist a unit with their sustainment requirements, that's what we're here to do," Kerwood said.

Aside from knowing his brigade had the means and the manpower to complete the task, he also has the connections to know who needs the JP-8. Also, it's a rare opportunity for the fuel section of his quartermaster company to do what it does best.

"The benefit from my perspective, all of the money aside, is the training for my Soldiers. Because I've got a fuel section in my supply company that right now doesn't get a lot of fuel missions," he said.

Before, the fuel section might have had four fuel missions a year in garrison — but it's something they do every day downrange. Now they'll

have a steadier stream of fuel to collect and distribute.

"The training is always better when you're doing an actual mission, and this was a perfect opportunity to do exactly that," Kenwood said.

After testing the fuel a second time at McChord's fuel lab, the 593rd will begin using it internally. Any excess will be delivered to units in need. If there's any left after that, the reutilized JP-8 will be issued from installation retail points whether units like it or not. The regular fuel point will be shut off until the reused fuel is depleted.

Making the fuel more convenient to JBLM units by delivering it, in turn, will help in other ways. Instead of logging every gallon of dumped fuel as hazardous waste, reusing the fuel will contribute to the JBLM's goal of becoming a net zero installation — that is, to become more sustainable by producing as much as it consumes.

"It actually becomes a recycling credit," Greer said.

Now that a secondary containment system has arrived to keep fuel from leaking into the ground when it's being transferred, the new system can start. The 593rd SB picked up 3,600 gallons of reused fuel from the IFFF for the first time Oct. 18.

There are benefits in just about every imaginable way.

"It was a win across the board," Lee said.



Spc. Charles Gill, left, and Spc. Shaquan Hollaway establish a fuel flow of JP-8 into a hose from the pumping system to one of the 593rd Sustainment Brigade's tanker trucks at JBLM's Installation Fuel Filtering Facility Oct. 18.

CVS training is tried in a new way

13th FMC implements new training initiative to save Army money

By Sgt. Steven Schneider
13th ESC Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas -- The 13th Financial Management Center is trying an innovative way to save the Army money and still keep a high-level of training in place.

The Army spends more than \$200,000 every year sending Soldiers on temporary duty all across the country to teach commercial vendor services to deploying units or is sending Soldiers to Fort Hood to learn CVS, said Staff Sgt. Wendall Bates, 13th FMC senior financial management analyst.

Bates said the 13th FMC has come up with a training plan that encompasses all the training needed and has put the plan on a disc. The FMC plans to send the disc to deploying units and have the units perform the training on their own.

Bates said this new training initiative will have to be monitored closely because of the importance of CVS.

“This is a very difficult subject to learn, so this is going to be a big test,” Bates said.

He said the training should take about three weeks total: two weeks to train and one to certify.

He added that getting CVS correct is of the utmost importance in a deployed environment because downrange almost everything is procured through contracts, so it is important for Soldiers to know the proper way of processing them.

“When in a deployed environment, without CVS, you would have nothing on post,” Bates said.

The training gives troops the tools to maintain a bills register card, identify elements of the fiscal code, prepare routine vouchers for payment, process account payable documents and much more.

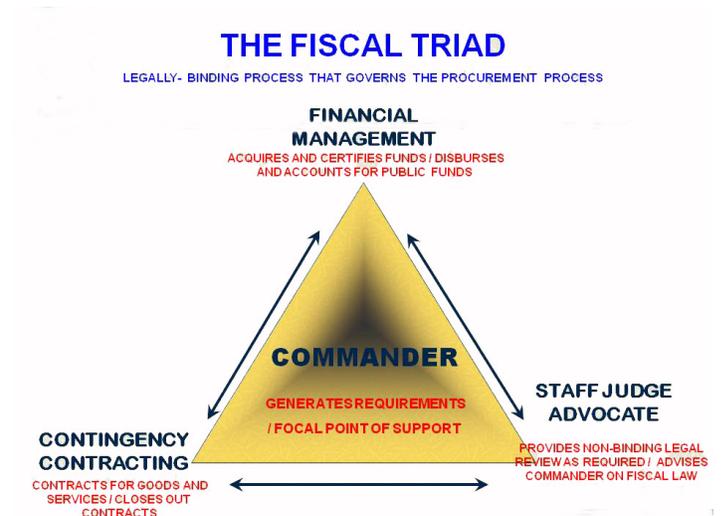
“This training focuses mainly on the finance transactions, but it will also give you the process from the requesting unit, contracting office, resource management, and legal [actions] that needs to happen,” Bates said.

The FMC is performing a test run with the 230th Finance Battalion stationed at Fort Carson, Colo.

The training has been sent to the 230th FB and after the unit performs the training, members from the 13th FMC will travel to Fort Carson to observe how the it was received.

Bates believes the system they have created will be successful.

“It’s very hands on training,” he said. “Everything that is needed is in the training slides, and it teaches them step-by-



A look at the Fiscal Triad and how it effects finance Soldiers.

step how to do it.”

The package has handouts, practical exercises and a CVS situational training exercise lane.

“When we go there, we’ll get feedback on how to improved the training and observe the unit in action,” Bates said.

Units should have the training annually so they are ready to deploy, Bates said.

“I believe CVS training is important because of the fact that absolute accuracy is what makes or breaks the amounts we pay to the commercial vendors,” said Staff Sgt. Rene G. Viray, 13th FMC senior finance management analyst. “Without proper training, commercial vendors could take advantage of the financial system and cause tremendous loss of funds on our part.”

Some common mistakes are not paying attention to detail and not pre-validating payments, and using the foreign currency with the Prompt Payment Act, Bates said.

“This training will ensure all Soldiers have adequate time to prepare and work on the full spectrum of commercial vender services with the training database provided,” he said.

If all goes well, Bates said, the 13th FMC plans to use its new training system for all upcoming CVS training.

The course is important for National Guard and Army Reserve units as well.

“When a finance detachment, company or center deploys, no matter what component they are, they will definitely have the same mission as an active duty finance unit which more than likely will involve CVS,” he said.

Information for this article was taken from the CVS training slides prepared by the 13th FMC.

For more information on CVS training email Bates at cliff.bates@us.army.mil.



Photo by Spc. David Hauk

Brig. Gen. Terence Hildner, the commanding general of the 13th ESC, and Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Parham Sr., the 13th ESC command sergeant major, case the unit's colors Nov. 8 in preparation for its deployment to Afghanistan. The first wave of 13th ESC Soldiers left Dec. 8.

13th ESC cases colors for Afghanistan mission

By Spc. David Hauk
14th PAD

FORT HOOD, Texas -- The 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) cased its colors Nov. 8 in preparation for its deployment to Afghanistan.

With numerous deployments to Iraq in their past, this will be the 13th ESC's first deployment to Afghanistan, bringing new challenges to the force.

"All of our previous missions have been in support of U.S. forces," Brig. Gen. Terence Hildner, the commanding general of 13th ESC, said. "It was always about providing all the supply, transportation and maintenance to U.S. Soldiers in those units. This time it's about teaching the Afghans on how to do it themselves. So for us, instead of being the doers, this time around, we are more of the

advisors or teachers."

Not only is the teaching aspect new to the unit, but the troops also faced other difficulties just to prepare for the trip. First, they found out about the deployment about five months ago, and in that short time, had to learn the Afghan system for logistics along with the normal do's and don't's of working with people from another country.

"Over the last five months, we have studied their equivalent of a regulation, and we have been through some language and culture training," Hildner said. "The last three months, we have been through some exercises that have brought in some natives of Afghanistan, so we could work with them, learn how to interact with them and learn how to influence them on how to make good decisions, which are good for themselves and their army and their police force."

With all the challenges the troops faced, the good news is the Afghans have most of the parts in place and just need the help pulling them together.

"The Afghans have a very solid system of depots and supply warehouses already in place," Hildner said. "What the Afghans don't have is all of these resources integrated together. The 13th ESC will bring them together at the national level and make it easier for them to be managed."

Even with the short notice and a task the 13th ESC has never performed before, Hildner says he is excited to see what his troops can do.

"It is definitely outside our comfort zone," he said. "I think this is a new doctrinal approach for how the U.S. can shape logistics long before bullets fly and Soldiers are committed to the ground."



Lt. Col. Ray Jensen, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), holds his son Christopher, 2, moments before he leaves for Afghanistan Dec. 8 as part of the 13th ESC's mission to help train Afghan Security Forces' senior logisticians.



Photos by Sgt. Steven Schneider
Cpl. David Cortez kisses his 8-month-old daughter Ennalynn at the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) deployment ceremony at Abrams Physical Fitness Center Dec. 8. Seventy-nine 13th ESC Soldiers left for Afghanistan.

13th ESC

Soldiers say goodbye to their friends and families



Soldiers of the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) are stopped by loved ones for hugs before exiting Abrams Physical Fitness Center Dec. 8. The Soldiers were on their way to Afghanistan to support the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan in training the Afghan Security Forces' senior logisticians.

SUSTAINERS COMPETE



Photo by Sgt. Mark Miranda

Spc. Christopher Martin negotiates a rope obstacle during the 593rd Sustainment Brigade's Ultimate Sustainer Competition at Joint Base Lewis-McChord Oct. 3 to 6.

“A lot of times we had to choose the best course of action given the risk factors and given what we know of each others strengths or weaknesses. The team had to come together on a decision as quickly as possible.”

***- Spc. Jimmi Core,
21st Cargo Transfer Company***



Courtesy photo
Soldiers attend to a simulated casualty during the "Ultimate Sustainer" competition held at Joint Base Lewis-McChord Oct. 3 to 6. The four days of competition focused on warrior task training and culminated with a 12-mile ruck march.

Competition tests troops' knowledge, mettle

By Sgt. Mark Miranda
5th MPAD

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash. – With a tight grip, ankles crossed and body suspended on a rope 30 feet above the ground, Spc. Christopher Martin, a Soldier with 295th Quartermaster Company, looked with some apprehension at the only way down. He could hear his nine teammates shouting words of encouragement as he let gravity do most of the work for him on this obstacle.

Without the safety net below and with muscle fatigue setting in, Martin clenched his teeth and clambered the last few yards to the ground. Still reeling from the experience, he followed his team to conquer another obstacle on the confidence course.

This was the second day of a week-long "Ultimate Sustainer" competition for teams of Soldiers from the 593rd Sustainment Brigade, Oct. 3 to 6.

Earlier in the day, some of the ten-Soldier teams were sent to the land navigation course, and the day before was the Army Physical Fitness Test and weapons range portions of the competition. Participants had 40 rounds to qualify without the normal allowance for weapon zeroing.

In all, ten squads were in the competition, one for each company in the brigade; detachments combined to form full teams.

Pfc. Benjamin Padilla, who competed in I Corps' 2011 Soldier of the Year competition, was part of the team fielded by the 497th Transportation Company.

"The confidence course is definitely one of the tougher parts to this, but it's also one of the more fun events," Padilla said.

Squads negotiated the course one team at a time,

receiving points for every obstacle completed by at least eight of the ten team members. Course completion time was the determining factor for tie-breaking.

"A lot of times we had to choose the best course of action given the risk factors and given what we know of each others strengths or weaknesses. The team had to come together on a decision as quickly as possible," said Spc. Jimmi Core, a motor transport operator with the 21st Cargo Transfer Company.

Day three of the competition focused on warrior task training at Sequalitchew Lake. The soldiers were put into some stressful situations – react to contact, react to a suspected improvised explosive device and calling in a 9-line MEDEVAC, among others.

Teams were also evaluated on factors including pre-combat inspections and hasty vehicle recovery operations using a tow bar.

The last day of the competition was a 12-mile ruck march that started and finished at Seay Field, outside of the 593rd SB Headquarters.

In the end, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 593rd SB, took first place. "The march definitely got to a lot of people; I'm glad we came together as a team," said Spc. Russell Horton, a wheeled vehicle mechanic and member of the winning team.

The 542nd Maintenance Company came in second place and the 497th Transportation Company took third.

"It was great non-commissioned officers putting it together with junior enlisted Soldiers taking charge to make this a great event. Each of them learned something, and learned something about each other – their fellow professionals," said Col. Scott Lofreddo, commander of the 593rd Sustainment Bde.

WELCOME HOME WRANGLERS



Photo by Staff Sgt. Angiene Myers
Soldiers of the 4th Sustainment Brigade stand watching an Apache helicopter fly over Nov. 18 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, before the start of their awards, casing and patching ceremony. The first group of Soldiers with the brigade's special troops battalion returned to Fort Hood Nov. 18.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Angiene Myers
Col. Ron Kirklin and Command Sgt. Maj. Erik Frey, the command team for the 4th Sustainment Brigade., case their unit colors Nov. 18 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq.



Photo by Sgt. Steven Schneider
Alessandro Mendoza, 4, gives a fist bump to his father Capt. Sergio Mendoza, the 4th Sustainment Brigade medical operations officer, as his son Sergio Jr., 8, watches. Friends and family crowded Abrams Physical Fitness Center Nov. 28 to greet more than 100 4th SB Soldiers returning home from Operation New Dawn in Iraq.



Photo by Sgt. Steven Schneider

Soldiers' friends and family rush to meet their loved ones after the troops were released to their families at Abrams Physical Fitness Center Nov. 28.



Photo by Sgt. Steven Schneider

Friends and family greet Spc. Clifton Myers, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, at Abrams Physical Fitness Center Nov. 28. Myers' three nieces held a sign for him reading "Uncle Cliff." More than 100 4th SB Soldiers returned home from Operation New Dawn in Iraq Nov. 28.

NTC LESSONS LEARNED



A commander's look at making the most of NTC rotations as an Echelons Above Brigade sustainment unit



Courtesy photo

A Soldier uses biometrics to properly identify a person during the 180th Transportation Battalion's latest NTC rotation.

**By Lt. Col. Stephen J. Riley
180th Transportation Battalion**

If your Echelons Above Brigade (EAB) sustainment unit is anything like ours, you have very little time to conduct the collective training necessary to properly prepare for a rotation at the National Training Center. Like us, your focus is supporting units on your installation.

We attempted to do a TOCEX but because of mission support to Fort Hood, Texas, it turned into a handful of Soldiers erecting tents. We attempted to do a STAFFEX, but only a few officers and noncommissioned officers were able to break away for this training. I as a battalion commander made it over for an hour although it was a three-day exercise. Many times I viewed our NTC rotation as a distracter instead of the awesome training opportunity it really was.

There are several things you can do prior to going to NTC to make your rotation worthwhile, even if your mission at home station never stops. This article will talk about how connecting with your supported unit early, integrating National Guard, Reserve and active duty units, meeting with operations group planners to exploit NTC training opportunities, and setting priorities before and during your rotation will increase the training value of NTC tenfold. I will also discuss a few lessons learned that could make your rotation a little easier.

Build a Relationship with your Supported Brigade Early

Contact the unit that you will support well before the rotation. Don't wait for the Leader Training Program (LTP). I can't stress enough how valuable it was to start building this relationship early on. Four months before our rotation, I called Col. Geoff Slack, the commander of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from the New York National Guard, to introduce myself and discuss our upcoming rotation.

Immediately information began to pass between our units. Two months before the rotation we visited them at their home station and began to work the concept of support and training integration. By the time the LTP came around, we had a rough plan that we were able to refine. Not only did we know the brigade leadership but we were connected at the hip with the brigade support battalion and the maneuver battalion support elements as well. The result was one support network that worked together to solve logistics issues during the rotation.

An integrated concept of support was not the only result of this early partnership. We were seen not as a supporting unit but a unit that was a part of the brigade. Col. Slack asked me what he could do to increase the training value for our rotation. I informed him that as an EAB sustainment unit I had very little time to train my Soldiers in a tactical environment. We knew how to drive trucks, turn wrenches, and palletize ammunition but were not proficient in tactical skills. I told him I want my Soldiers to be able to shoot, move and communicate better on the battlefield. Once he knew my intent he opened up all his

training events for our battalion. It was not uncommon for 27th IBCT officers and NCOs to come into our Tactical Operations Center to make face-to-face coordination concerning training. The 27th IBCT integrated our Soldiers into their weapons ranges, Situational Training Exercise (STX) Lanes, Combat Life Saver (CLS) training and patrols. The 180th Trans. Bn. training objectives became a priority to the 27th IBCT, because of an early phone call.

Like many NTC rotations, ours consisted of a mix of active duty and National Guard Units. We took this opportunity to dispel any perceptions of different standards between the two. The early contact between our units and the willingness to train together helped strengthen the bond among our Soldiers. It helped that I knew many members of the 27th IBCT as they were from my home state of New York. This cohesiveness resulted in our units training side-by-side throughout the rotation. Specifically, the National Guard medics that directly supported us became members of our battalion, not only providing top-notch support but also trained and qualified 25 of our Soldiers to become Combat Life Savers.



Courtesy photo

A convoy from the 180th Transportation Battalion rolls out for a mission at the National Training Center. Although the unit went there to work a support mission, they were able to conduct valuable training with their supported units.

Exploit NTC Training Opportunities

Before going to the Leaders Training Program (LTP) about a month prior to the start of our rotation, I had no idea of all the training opportunities available to our Soldiers. Although not a part of the LTP curriculum, Maj. Jerry LaCross, my support operations officer and I met with the NTC planners and had them lay out all the training available, especially STX lanes. We deconflicted the training with mission requirements. As a result, our Soldiers participated in many STX lanes including Entry Control Point, Convoy Patrol Mounted and Personnel Recovery.

It was a very busy schedule but it resulted in our Soldiers being exposed to training scenarios that greatly improved their ability to survive on the battlefield. Don't just send your Soldiers to STX lanes, go with them. See how the scenarios and lanes are run. Take notes. We discovered how easy it would be to replicate the same training at home station.

Tell NTC what you want. I wasn't satisfied to go to NTC and only set up showers, handle ammo or run convoys. I wanted to exploit everything NTC had to offer. I asked the Combat Trainers (CT) to test us tactically as much as they could. If you want to test your FOB defense, have it attacked. If you want your convoys hit, insist that the CTs hit them. For us, the CTs were more than helpful and coordinated numerous attacks on our units. Every contact with the OPFOR made our battalion better.

Systems Overload

We were unfamiliar with many of the operations and intelligence systems at NTC as they are not part of our Major Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE). Our Soldiers received training on the Command Post of the

Future, Tactical Ground Reporting System, Biometrics Automated Toolset, Handheld Interagency Identify Detection Equipment (HIIDE), Combined Information Dada Network Exchange, just to name a few. They quickly put the training into execution. However, it was painful as many key staff members were training on the systems instead of assisting the battalion during the Reception, Staging and Onward Integration (RSOI) phase. To reduce the 'drinking from the fire hose' effect, find out the systems that will be used and get familiarization training at home station if possible. Don't get overwhelmed with new systems either. We were given more systems than we could possibly use effectively. I needed to remind the



Courtesy photo
Lt. Col. Stephen J. Riley, 180th Transportation Battalion commander, adds to his commander's priority board during the rotation.

staff to focus their efforts on only the systems they need to accomplish the mission.

One system of significance to us as a transportation battalion was the HIIDE system. Many convoys consist of both military and host nation drivers. Therefore, Soldiers need to know how to use the HIIDE devices to ensure insurgents weren't infiltrating into our convoys. Our inexperience with biometrics led to delays in convoy departures. We discovered it takes time and practice to collect biometrics properly. The more we did it the better we got.

Communications

This isn't anything new but communications can make or break an operation. Ninety percent of our problems at NTC were due to poor communication. We found out we weren't as proficient as we thought we were working with the Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System (SINCGARS), the Blue Force Tracker, or even the Movement Tracking System (MTS), a system we use regularly at home station. In hindsight, we should have incorporated training on these systems into every training event we did so it became second nature for our Soldiers to use them effectively. We also discovered that our Soldiers had become extremely reliant on cell phones to communicate both up and down the chain of command. In many cases cell phones had replaced watches and alarm clocks. During the rotation cell phones were not allowed



Courtesy photo
Soldiers carry a simulated casualty during their NTC training exercise. The troops were able to work on their medical evacuation skills during the rotation.

causing considerable pain in the early days. During your train-up to NTC, I would recommend to ban the use of cell phones, so your Soldiers learn how to operate without them. Many of our problems could have been discovered and mitigated before coming to Fort Irwin.

Pre- Combat Checks/Pre Combat Inspections

The lack of thorough PCCs/PCIs made for some long days at NTC. We discovered early on in our rotation that we took resources for granted in garrison to help us run operations that aren't available in a tactical environment. From power generation to automation, we ran into issues that we never thought about until we facing them. Many things were overlooked simply because we were not accustomed to working in a tactical environment. Our OPTEMPO at Fort Hood was very high and it didn't allow us time to work out in the field. Nothing replaces good field training to "shake out" issues like these. However, if time doesn't allow, thorough planning sessions with key personnel is the next best thing. Abraham Lincoln once said: "If I had eight hours to cut down a tree I would spend six hours sharpening my ax." I wish we spent a few more hours sharpening our axes.

Max Participation

Bring as many Soldiers as you can. You'd be surprised how many Soldiers it takes to properly run and secure a FOB. Because of our continued mission at Fort Hood we came to NTC very light. Many of our Soldiers were forced to do both their MOS specific jobs and a multitude of other duties. We had the bare minimum of personnel to conduct operations for the three-week period we were there but we could not have been able to sustain operations for much longer. Another benefit to bringing as many Soldiers as you can is to take advantage of all the great training opportunities at NTC. If you have more Soldiers, you can

run them through as many classes during RSOI and as many STX lanes during the training days as you can while simultaneously continuing to support the brigade in the field.

Set Priorities

During all phases of NTC (RSOI, training days, force on force), set priorities and post them. I didn't do this effectively until several days into the rotation. We had very few Soldiers, and there was so much work to be done. Leaders and Soldiers were going in all directions, thinking they were working issues that I wanted resolved, but they weren't. I grabbed a white board and made a Commander's Priority Board.

I listed a handful of things, in order, that I wanted accomplished. Once the staff and subordinate commanders fdkjslknew my priorities, progress was made quickly. As priorities were accomplished, I replaced them and put new ones up as the situation developed. Some never changed. My number one was always ensuring our convoys were properly resourced with current intelligence, equipment and supplies. Setting priorities kept the staff focused on what was important.

As an EAB sustainment unit, your focus will always be supporting the warfighting units on your installation. Time available to conduct collective tactical training will be limited, even if you have an upcoming NTC rotation. Don't despair. You can have a very successful and worthwhile rotation if you take the time to connect with your supported unit early, focus on the basics prior to deploying to Fort Irwin, and get with the NTC planners prior to the rotation to maximize the individual and collective training that NTC has to offer. Once there, ensure you set clear priorities to keep you staff focused. Hopefully our lessons learned will be of some value to you and your unit and make your rotation all that it can be.

A “bottom-up” approach to intelligence

By Staff Sgt. Casey McGeorge
15th Sustainment Brigade

FORT BLISS, Texas -- The 47th Transportation Company recently completed a successful rotation at the National Training Center located in Fort Irwin, California. During this rotation, the 47th TC baptized its newly trained Company Intelligence Support Team (COIST). Employment of the COIST concept and asset in a transportation company is innovative thinking, which allowed the company to truly leverage the Every Soldier a Sensor (ES2) concept throughout the rotation.

The nature of the Current Operating Environment’s “bottom-up” information feed characteristic demands streamlining the intelligence process and rapidly placing time sensitive intelligence in the hands of Soldiers on the ground. Transporters possess a wealth of information on the operating environment that is now being tapped into through the COIST. Undoubtedly, the COIST met the mark it was designed to by answering the commander’s Priority Intelligence Requirements (PIR) through tailored logistical patrol pre-briefs and debriefs, which greatly enhanced the company’s situational understanding and overall mission effectiveness.

“The COIST is basically a small battalion S2 intelligence section employed at the company level,” said Sgt. Gabriel Garcia, a transport operator, and the NCOIC for the 47th TCs COIST.

“The COIST provides the company with a robust organic intelligence capability that greatly improves situational understanding of the operating environment,” said Capt. Aubrey R. Ashford, commander of the 47th TC. “The COIST allowed the company to readily gain time sensitive information for convoys without having to wait for higher

echelon elements to provide reporting. Employing my COIST asset at NTC allowed me to validate their training and understand how to effectively employ this asset,” he said.

Ultimately, the Mission, Enemy, Terrain, Troops, Time, and Civilians (METT-TC) variables determine the COIST concept of support. Typically, the COIST is found at the company answering the company commander’s PIR, which are nested with the battalion’s. While it is an intelligence team effort from the company level through higher echelons, placement of the COIST at a location where they will provide intelligence of value quickly to commanders and Soldiers is vital. Regardless of the location, the COIST has access to not only the battalion S2 reports, but intelligence reports from team to national level assets within the entire area of operation, improving the intelligence capacity at the company level.

“Having the COIST tied into the battalion S2 gives me and my company predictability,” said Ashford. “I used them more than the battalion S2. They were able to give me the recent trends and highlights anytime that I needed them.”

“Having the COIST is very effective for a transportation company,” said Garcia. “As often as we are on the road, we need the most up-to-date intelligence that we can get. This allows us to paint an effective battlefield picture for the platoon leaders and the company commander.”

The COIST is actively involved in the mission planning process. Through the different tools and databases that the COIST has at its disposal, mission planners know not only what has been going on in their own areas of responsibility for the last 24-72 hours, but can see what is happening in other AORs for the same time period.

The COIST NCOIC is also at the platoon leader’s side during

their platoon back-brief, in the event questions arise and need to be answered.

“The COIST was always at my mission and convoy briefs,” said Ashford.

“Part of the success of the COIST is having a team member out during the mission,” said Garcia. “This helps build confidence in the troops on the ground. They know that whenever they do get information from the COIST, that the people giving it to them have been on the ground and know what the area looks like. It’s not just somebody looking at a map back in the rear giving them information.”

“They were also able to give my convoy commanders the most recent information between checkpoints,” said Ashford. “Knowing that you can call back to the company and get up to date information is a huge relief to these guys on the road.”

Another part of the COIST is debriefing as soon as the mission ends. Getting information from Soldiers as soon as possible, no matter how insignificant they believe that information is, could help save lives.

A prime example of this happened during this recent NTC rotation with the 47th TC. Convoys had been traveling on a certain route for a few days. There had been some insurgent activity in one particular area, resulting in a firefight and a destroyed enemy vehicle on the side of the road. When a convoy returned from this area, it relayed the information about the destroyed vehicle back to the COIST. Feeling that something may not be right, the COIST went to the commander, who asked for assets to check the vehicle out before his next convoy left.

As it turns out, the vehicle was rigged with explosives, waiting for the next convoy.

Continued on Page 21, see COIST

Maintenance officer explains the use of the MILSTRIP system, details importance

By Capt. Andrew C. Whitley
571st Forward Support Company

FORT SILL, Okla. -- In my experience as a maintenance platoon leader, maintenance control officer, and brigade maintenance officer, repair parts shortages and incorrectly ordered repair parts are the main reasons that Army maintenance activities exceed the total logistics response time—maintenance as outlined in Army Regulation 750–1, Army Materiel Maintenance Policy. Parts shortages can exist on a strategic level because of the rapid fielding of a new weapons platform (such as the mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicle) or on an operational level because of bottlenecks at transportation hubs along the lines of communications.

Such systemic parts shortages are often beyond the tactical-level maintenance leader's ability to solve and must be mitigated through controlled substitution, cannibalization when appropriate, and improvisation. In contrast, incorrectly ordered parts are a tactical-level problem that every maintenance leader can solve by understanding how to requisition parts accurately through the Army supply system.

MILSTRIP

The Army supply system uses the Department of Defense (DOD) Military Standard Requisitioning and Issuing Procedures (MILSTRIP) to order many classes of supply, including class II (clothing and individual equipment) and class IX (repair parts). MILSTRIP became the DOD standard in July 1962, replacing 16 different DOD requisitioning systems then in use. MILSTRIP standardized forms, box markings, label markings, codes, and priorities across DOD, helping to eliminate waste, promote efficiency, speed up supply actions, and reduce administrative costs.

Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense from 1961 to 1968, championed the introduction of MILSTRIP as part of his efforts to use modern management techniques to create efficiencies within DOD. Other reforms undertaken by McNamara include the creation of the Defense Supply Agency (later renamed the Defense Logistics Agency) to manage items used by multiple services and the establishment of the Army Materiel Command. DOD actions during the McNamara era laid the foundations of the supply system used today.

How MILSTRIP Works

MILSTRIP is first and foremost a code that communicates critical information between maintenance

activities and supply activities about what supplies are required and where the supplies need to go. When MILSTRIP was first introduced in 1962, Soldiers used 80-position punch cards to transmit information. While the punch cards are no longer in use, the 80-position code system designed for the punch cards still is. Whenever an Army maintenance activity orders a repair part using any of the Standard Army Management Information Systems, such as the Standard Army Maintenance System–Enhanced (SAMS–E), the activity uses the 80-position MILSTRIP system, even if those 80 positions are expressed to the user in terms of drop-down menus on a computer screen.

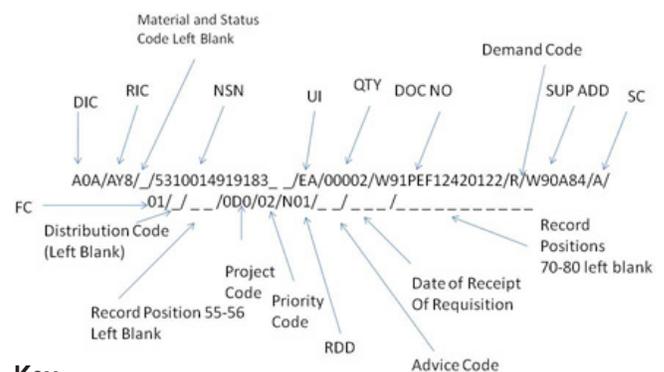
Each 80-character packet of MILSTRIP information, such as an individual repair part requisition through SAMS–E, is called a document. However, requisitions are just one type of MILSTRIP document. Other types of MILSTRIP documents include requisition statuses, requisition cancellations, requisition receipts, requisition changes, and requisition adjustments. Supply activities that cannot satisfy a customer's requisition usually use MILSTRIP documents to forward the requisition to higher-level supply activities to see if the items exist elsewhere in the supply system.

Document Identifier Codes

Each position in MILSTRIP is called a record position. Each record position can contain a number or letter or be left blank. The first three record positions, which contain the document identifier code (DIC), are the most important. The DIC is a three-position alpha-numeric code that allows both human and computer MILSTRIP users to identify the information contained in the MILSTRIP document.

When a SAMS–E user at an Army maintenance activity creates a MILSTRIP requisition and transmits

MILSTRIP Example



Key

DIC=Document Identifier Code
RIC=Routing Identifier Code
NSN=National Stock Number
UI=Unit of Issue
QTY=Quantity Ordered

DOC NO=Document Number
SUP ADD=Supplementary Address
SC=Signal Code
FC=Fund Code
RDD=Required Delivery Date

the requisition to the supporting supply activity, that 80-character requisition gets assigned a DIC, depending on what kind of requisition it is. For example, when a unit located outside the continental United States (OCONUS) requests an item that has a national stock number (NSN), that requisition will receive a DIC of A01. Every MILSTRIP requisition for an NSN part coming from an OCONUS unit has a DIC of A01. Similarly, the DIC for all requisitions of NSN parts by CONUS units is A0A.

Different types of documents get different DICs. There are literally hundreds of DICs, depending on the purpose of the document. The information contained within the document itself, not the DIC, makes each document unique. A listing of what kind of information is found in each type of document, by DIC, is provided in Appendix 3 of DOD 4000.25-1-M, Military Standard Requisitioning and Issue Procedures. For the purposes of accurately requisitioning materials, maintenance leaders should be familiar with the information required by DICs beginning with “A0,” which are used in MILSTRIP to place most Army requisitions.

Essential Elements of the MILSTRIP Document

For requisitions beginning with “A0” to be complete, 17 different unique codes must be included in the MILSTRIP document. However, the MILSTRIP user at an Army maintenance activity does not need to fill out every code to make a requisition. Six minimum-essential elements of data are required to requisition supplies via MILSTRIP:

- The NSN or a combination of the commercial and Government entity code and part number (if the requisitioner wants to order a non-NSN item through an approved vendor).
- The unit of issue.
- The quantity.
- The document number.
- The priority.
- The end item code.

A detailed description of these codes can be found in the Logisticians Smart Book available from the Installation Materiel Management Center on the World Wide Web.

With the aforementioned information provided by

COIST: receiving intelligence from Soldiers quickly

Continued from Page 19

One way to get Soldiers to let the COIST know what they saw was to ask them to look out for and report on anything in one of the following areas: Behavioral, New, Unusual and Different. This resulted in the acronym—BNUD, being developed. If travelling in an area frequently visited, they should be able to notice something in one of those four key areas. If something was out of place in one of them, that information would be relayed to the COIST

the requisitioning maintenance activity, the supporting supply activity will conduct accuracy edits to ensure the documents are properly formatted and prepared. If some of the minimum-essential elements of data are incorrect or missing, the supply support activity may reject the requisition or give the requisition a lower priority, causing a delay in getting the required repair part to the requesting maintenance activity.

A maintenance leader using MILSTRIP should be familiar with four other key codes, including—

- The demand code, which tells the Army supply system if the unit has a broken recoverable item to exchange for a new recoverable item.
- The signal code, which tells the Army which DOD activity address code (DODAAC) to charge for the requisition and where to send the item.
- The supplementary address, which is used when a part is charged to one DODAAC and shipped to another.
- The advice code, which tells the item manager specific information about the required part. For example, if the maintenance activity needs a 100-foot-long piece of 5/8-inch hose, the advice code of “2N” will tell the item manager that 100 continuous feet are needed. Otherwise, the requisitioning unit runs the risk of getting multiple segments of 5/8-inch hose adding up to 100 feet.

A greater understanding of MILSTRIP in the Army maintenance community will reduce vehicle downtime by reducing parts requisition errors at the user level. MILSTRIP is an efficient system for ordering repair parts but only if MILSTRIP’s codes are understood and used correctly to get the right repair part to the right location. Incorrectly ordered parts can be a major headache for maintenance leaders at all levels and impede the rapid regeneration of combat power and increase the total logistics response time—maintenance.

Editor’s note: Capt. Andrew C. Whitley commands the 571st Forward Support Company at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He holds a B.A. degree in philosophy from Louisiana State University. Although, he works at the brigade level, this article can be valuable to logisticians across the board.

during the debrief, noted and possibly followed up on.

“It’s always the small things that people notice that lead to a bigger find,” said Garcia. “Those finds end up saving our Soldiers lives.”

After having used the COIST in as close to a combat environment as you can get, Ashford now truly knows what he has at his disposal.

“This is truly a great asset,” said Ashford. “I have seen it work with my own eyes. I am now a true believer of the COIST.”

13th ESC welcomes new CSM



Photos by Sgt. Steven Schneider

Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Parham Sr., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), takes the noncommissioned officers sword from Brig. Gen. Terence Hildner, 13th ESC commanding general, during a change of responsibility ceremony at Guidon Filed Oct. 6. The passing of the sword symbolizes the change of responsibility from the outgoing to the incoming command sergeant major. Parham took the place of Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Joseph.

Accomplishment of CSM Terry Parham Sr.

- He took over as the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) command sergeant major Oct. 6.
- He has 28 years of Army service.
- He was a member of the world champion Culinary Art Team of 1992, recognized with two gold medals.
- He has been an Audie Murphy Club member since 1988.
- He has an Associate Degree in Applied Science from Central Texas College.
- His awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal (one oak leaf cluster), Meritorious Service Medal (three oak leaf clusters), Army Commendation Medal (five oak leaf clusters) and the Army Achievement Medal (eleven oak leaf clusters).



Command Sgt. Maj. Terry Parham Sr., 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), salutes the flag during his change of responsibility ceremony.

36th Sustainment Brigade Welcomes new command team



Commander



Col. Albert J. Adkinson

- He earned his Bachelor's degree in Management from Faulkner University, Montgomery, AL.
- In 1985, he was commissioned in the Military Police Corps.
- He is a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College, Plans, Operations and Military Support Course and the National Inter-agency Civil-Military Institute.
- He is currently enrolled in the United States Army War College.
- His military awards and decorations include: Bronze Star Medal (one oak leaf cluster), Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal (three oak leaf clusters), Army Achievement Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (four oak leaf clusters).

Command Sergeant Major



**Command Sgt. Maj.
Murphy L. McCardell**

- He has held every enlisted leadership position from Team Leader to Command Sergeant Major since 1992.
- His military education includes the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy (Class 35, Non-Residence Course), First Sergeant Course, Advance Noncommissioned Officer Course, Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course, Primary Leadership Development Course, Equal Opportunity Leaders Course, Instructor Training Course, Mobile Subscriber Equipment Operator Course and Interior Electrical Engineer Training.
- His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star, the Army Commendation Medal (two oak leaf clusters), the Army Achievement Medal (one oak leaf cluster), the Good Conduct Medal, the Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (four oak leaf clusters).



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