

11th Signal Brigade

THUNDERBIRD

Q U A R T E R L Y

VOLUME 16- ISSUE 2

April 2014



**HHC, 11th SIG BDE FTX
40th ESB Military Operations in
Urban Terrain Training
57th ESB Deployment Coverage
62nd ESB Kuwait M4 Range
86th ESB New Network
Technologies**

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April 2014

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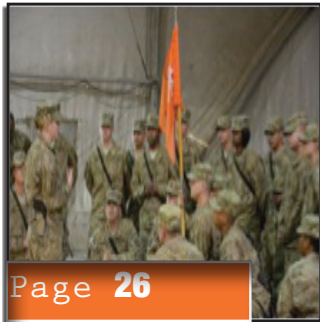
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11th SIG BDE HISTORY



The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade, was constituted on 1 September 1943 as the 3103rd Signal Service Battalion and activated 20 December 1943 at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. The battalion departed for England on 23 January 1944 and to France on 31 August 1944 in support of the war efforts. During World War II, the battalion received campaign credit for Northern France, Rhineland, and Central Europe. After returning to the United States, the battalion was inactivated at Fort Monmouth on 8 October 1945.

The battalion remained on inactive status until 4 September 1964, when Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 11th Signal Group, assigned to Fort Lewis, Washington, was activated. The group was reorganized and re-designated Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Group, 25 April 1966. The following December, the group was reassigned to Fort Huachuca, Ariz. and designated on 1 October 1979 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade.

In October 2001, the 86th Signal Battalion deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) until the spring of 2002. In August 2002, the A Co 40th Signal Battalion, deployed to the Horn of Africa. Thunderbirds supported CENTCOM's largest exercise of the year, Internal Look 2002 from Kuwait and continued their participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in the spring of 2003 deploying over 1200 Thunderbirds to the CENTCOM AOR.

From May to October 2005, the 40th Signal Battalion and the 69th Cable Company deployed to support OIF 05-07. Their redeployment was spread from May to September 2006. In August 2006, the 86th Signal Battalion deployed to Iraq to continue to support OIF. The following year, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade, deployed in support of OIF 07-09, 3 October 2007 through 24 December 2008. In December 2007, the 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion deployed to Iraq for a fifteen month deployment ending in March 2009.

On 1 October 2009, the 11th SIG BDE transferred command authority from the United States Army Network Enterprise Technology Command and the 9th Army Signal Command (NETCOM/9th ASC) at Fort Huachuca, to the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) and III Corps at Fort Hood, Texas.

In the spring of 2010, the 86th ESB deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom 10-11 as "Task Force Tiger" until the spring of 2011. The 40th ESB deployed June of 2010 in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn returning June of 2011. The 62d ESB deployed April of 2011 in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom returning October of 2011.

57th ESB deployed 2 companies to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Bravo Company deployed in August 2011 and returned in July 2012. Meanwhile, Charlie Company deployed in March 2012 and returned in November 2012.

HHC, 11th SIG BDE deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in January 2012 and returned in December 2012.

On June 19, 2013, the brigade headquarters moved from Fort Huachuca, Az., to Fort Hood, Texas.

Thunderbirds have supported contingency operations and training exercises at home and abroad in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Somalia, Egypt, Honduras, Korea, Cuba, Haiti, Afghanistan and Iraq. This operational tempo has given rise to the Thunderbirds' claim of the "Most Active Signal Brigade in the Army." "The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds."

"The Sun Never Sets on The Thunderbirds"



Col. James C. Parks, III

Brigade Commander Thunder 6 Sends

Honoring the Past while Building toward the Future

What a great time for our Army and the Thunderbird Family. CSM Rambert and I recently returned from Fort Huachuca where we had the honor of seeing the warriors of the 40th Signal Battalion depart on their deployment to the CENTCOM AOR. They are the right team, at the right time for that mission and their support team is made up of the best military families that you will find anywhere across the Army.

Seeing Fort Huachuca again reminds us of our roots and where the brigade came from. As Thunderbirds we can look back at our great history with pride. We have been the commander's voice in Europe, Vietnam, East Timor, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, and Afghanistan. We have provided critical communications support during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom while continuing to meet the challenges of integrating new technologies and skill sets. The Thunderbird team has never failed and we can be proud of our past.

While remembering our past we must look toward the future and the challenges to come. Both the 57th and 62nd Signal Battalions will return from deployments soon. We look forward to having them back getting them through reset and preparing them for missions to come. The 86th Signal Battalion continues to support NIE providing the critical new equipment testing and validation that will ensure the Signal Corps capabilities success in the future. The brigade will also take on new mission sets supporting AFRICOM and the Army Contingency Force mission. The CSM and I never cease to be amazed at all the missions the Thunderbirds handle with ease. Whether it is the 16th TIN supporting post communications upgrades across III Corps or the 62nd and 57th Rear detachments providing signal support to numerous CTC rotations we are the Army's communications provider of choice.

Thunderbirds, you continue to be the right team, at the right time, in the right place and as we build toward the future we must always remember, "the strength of our Army is its Soldiers and the strength of our Soldiers are our families". Keep moving forward Thunderbirds and I will see you on the high ground. The Sun never Sets on the Thunderbirds.

Thunderbird 6

Troop Talk

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

Thunderbirds, you have character. You have the commitment and competence to perform any mission, anywhere, anytime. With the successes of our most recent deployments, this statement is proven to be true.

In this ever-changing environment of the Army, Thunderbirds stand ready and able to support and defend democracy around the world. Thunderbirds have the character to do what is right when no one is looking and the commitment to look out for their fellow Soldiers. They accept the mission despite the risk, challenge or adversity, and have the competence to be technically and tactically proficient in order to execute the mission.

As the future of our Army may be uncertain, Thunderbirds remain stewards of the profession and performs it's duties to the Nation in accordance with the Army ethics and with a mission focus that respects basic human dignity.

To our Thunderbird families, thank you for the commitment and scarifies you have made for your Soldiers. This unwavering support allows your Soldiers the peace of mind to perform the Army's mission. We are here for you, thank you for your service.

I'm so proud to serve with such OUTSTANDING LEADERS of the Thunderbird family; it is because of the character, commitment and competence of these Soldiers that I can say with confidence", THE SUN NEVER SETS ON THE THUNDERBIRDS"

Signal Strong!



CSM Maurice Rambert

"The Sun Never Sets on The Thunderbirds"



11th SIG BDE CHAPLAIN

INSPIRATIONS

11th Signal Brigade Family, with units deployed and units redeploying, we truly need to not only pray for each other, but also be there for each other.

Military life can be very difficult, however, it can also be extremely rewarding as we find out that together, as a team, we can accomplish almost anything. Military life is not for the loner. It is a team effort that brings about great camaraderie and fellowship that can build life-long relationships.

Chaplain (Maj.) James Blount

With this in mind let us all look for opportunities, for example, to be of assistance to the Family members of our deployed brothers and sisters. Let us also help our Soldiers and Families as they reunite. Every one of us should be part of the support group for someone else. If you cannot personally help them with a certain situation, then please put them in contact with someone in the chain of Command who can, and you can also contact your Chaplain for assistance.

Please remember to let them know that they will have complete confidentiality with the Chaplain. The Chaplain can also put them in contact with a great number of helping organizations. Making our Family members a top priority is part of the overall Mission of the Army and the 11th Signal Brigade. We are stronger and much more resilient when we all stand together as a team and look after each other. Everybody then is your battle buddy! Finally, as always, we pray for safety, protection, and strength for all of those who are deployed and who are redeploying as well as their Family members. We also pray a special blessing upon all of our children!

May God continue to shower his blessings upon the 11th Signal Brigade!

CH Blount

11TH SIGNAL BRIGADE, HHC FTX Set-Up

Photos By Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold
11th Signal Brigade Public Affairs Office



Clockwise from left:

- (1) Once they arrived at the field site, a forklift was waiting to download the tents from the flatbed.
- (2) Capt. Mintz instructs the Soldiers the proper way to put down the hub flooring.
- (3) Staff Sgt. Moody, Pfc. Passaro and Capt. Guion use teamwork to get the hub arch in its proper place.
- (4) Capt. Mintz, Spc. Reed and Staff Sgt. Wilburn navigate the rope in order to pull the hub cover down.
- (5) Staff Sgt. Wilburn and Spc. Reed continue working on the hub cover.



HHC, 11TH SIG BDE CPT LANTO COC

Photos By Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold
11th Signal Brigade Public Affairs



Counter Clockwise from top left:

- (1) HHC 1st Sgt. Stewart prepares the formation for the start of the ceremony.
- (2) Master Sgt. Cornetti and Sgt. 1st Class Hall take a moment to smile for the camera before the ceremony began.
- (3) Col. Parks, Cpt. Lanto, Cpt. Romero and 1st Sgt. Stewart prepare to receive the company guidon.
- (4) In the final stage of the ceremony, Cpt. Romero passes the guidon back to 1st Sgt. Stewart signaling the changing of command.
- (5) Holding back tears, Cpt. Lanto thanks the Soldiers and his command team for making his tenure as HHC commander painless.



HHC, 11TH SIG BDE NCODP

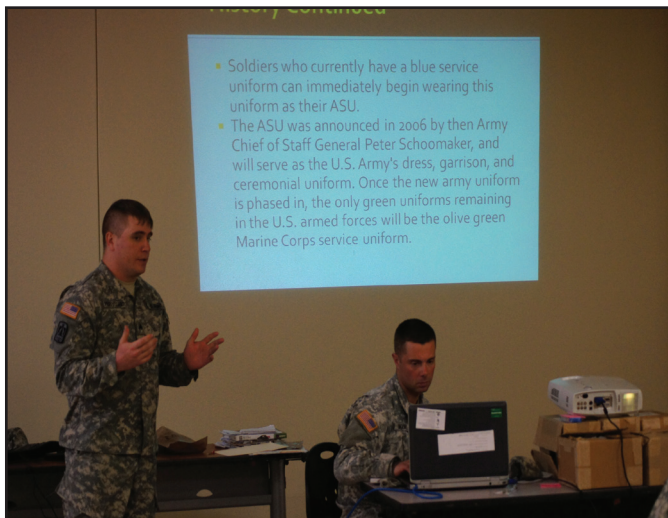
Photos By Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold
11th Signal Brigade Public Affairs



Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade, held their quarterly Noncommissioned Officer Development Program in the HHC classroom.

The classes for the day were; the wear of the Army Service Uniform, Resiliency, Army Weight Control program changes, and proper taping procedures.

The NCODP program is an important training and learning tool for junior and senior leaders alike, and HHC is glad to help keep that tradition alive.



Clockwise from top left:

- (1) Sgt. Peddycoart goes over the Army Service Uniform history and wear during his NCODP class.
- (2) Sgt. Romero prepares to take down notes during the resilient training portion of the NCODP.
- (3) MSG Manning shares his thoughts on how NCOs can bring change to the Corps.
- (4) Sgt. Moore guides First Sgt. Stewart through the proper taping procedures during his class.



"Thunderbirds Lead The Way"



1SG DUVERNAY CHANGE-OF-RESPONSIBILITY

Story and Photos By Sgt. Kalie Jones
40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion

On the morning of March 7, 2014 the Soldiers of Alpha company, 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, stood on Renegade Field for a ceremony. The purpose of this ceremony was to have a Change-of-Responsibility from 1st Sgt Herbert Duvernay to Sgt. 1st Class Sonny Rollins.

Duvernay, who has been with Alpha Company for a year, will continue his career at the Network Enterprise Technology Command on Fort Huachuca. Duvernay was born in San Jose, California and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1989. He attended basic combat training at Fort Jackson and his Advanced Individual training at Fort Gordon.

Sgt. 1st Class Rollins is a 25W, Telecommunications Operations Chief, and was born in Memphis, Tennessee. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1993. He attended basic combat training at Fort Jackson and his Advanced Individual Training at Fort Gordon.

Sgt. 1st Class Rollins who is now officially the Alpha Company "Assassins" first sergeant will be deploying with them to Afghanistan later this. When Rollins was asked about how he felt about taking over Alpha Company he responded, "I feel exceptionally privileged to have the opportunity to take possession of this company. It's an awesome challenge."



40th ESB Command Sgt. Maj Reinburg, outgoing First Sergeant Duvernay and incoming First Sergeant Rollins salute to start off the COR ceremony.



1st Sgt. Duvernay shares words with the Soldiers of the 40th ESB before he officially leaves the unit.



First Sgt. Duvernay examines the sabre before passing it to Sgt. 1st. Class Rollins.

40TH ESB MOUT TRAINING

Story By 1st Lt. Nicholas Kroll
40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion



Soldiers need to be prepared for warfare in multiple areas while deployed. That is why 40th ESB decided to incorporate MOUT training into their pre-deployment train-up.

Military Operations in Urban Terrain training allows the Soldiers to get a realistic feel for being in an urban area, and having to be offensive, or defensive.

MOUT brings a different element to training that most Soldiers have not been able to do yet. When the opportunity to engage the MOUT training lanes came up, the 40th ESB command team did not let it pass them by.





Window Safety Checklist

Preventing window falls

Preventing falls out of windows is just as important as learning how to use one in an emergency. Unattended children run the greatest risk of falls and injuries, so the best first step is to carefully watch your children as they play. Nothing can substitute for careful supervision.



Do you keep windows shut when children are around?

- Keep your windows close and locked when children are around. When opening windows for ventilation, open windows that a child cannot reach.
- Do not rely on insect screens to prevent a fall. Insect screens are designed to provide ventilation while keeping insects out, not to prevent a child's fall from a window.
- Set and enforce rules about keeping children's play away from windows or patio doors. Falling through the glass can be fatal or cause serious injury.

Is there furniture placed under or near windows in your home?

- Keep furniture, or anything children can climb, away from windows. Children may use such objects as a climbing aid.

Do any windows in your home have guards, security bars, grilles or grates?

- If you have young children in your home and are considering installing window guards or window fall prevention devices, be aware that the windows guards you install must have a release mechanism so that they can be opened for escape in a fire emergency. Remember that time is critical when escaping a fire.
- Consult your local fire department or building code official to determine proper window guard placement.

What kind of surface is outside windows in your home to potentially cushion a fall?

- The degree of injury sustained from a window fall can be affected by the surface on which the victim falls. Shrubs and soft edging like wood chips or grass beneath windows may less then impact if a fall does occur.

Emergency fire escape plans

While some falls occur from windows, it is important to realize that in the event of a fire, a window also can save a child's life. This is why windows play a critical role in home safety.

Has your family developed an emergency fire escape plan?

- Windows provide a secondary means of escape from a burning home. Determine your family's emergency escape plan and practice it regularly. In the plan, include two elements of escape from every room.
- Remember that children may have to rely on a window to escape in a fire. Help them learn to safely use a window under these circumstances.

Inspect your home's windows carefully. Is there anything preventing them from being opened in the case of an emergency?

- When performing spring repairs, make sure that your windows are not painted or nailed shut.
- Do not install window unit air conditioners in windows that may be needed for escape or rescue in an emergency. The air conditioning unit could block or impede escape through the window. Always be sure that you have at least one window in each sleeping and living area that meets escape and rescue requirements.

Safety at HOME

National Safety Council

saves lives by preventing injuries and deaths at work, in homes and communities, and on the roads, through leadership, research, education and advocacy.

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At any given daylight moment across America, approximately 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or manipulating electronic devices while driving, a number that has held steady since 2010. In 2012 alone, 3,328 people died on US roadways in distracted driving crashes, and an estimated 421,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes involving a distracted driver.

Texting while driving creates a crash risk 23 times worse than driving while not distracted.

**PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR
BATTLE BUDDIES!**



**Practice
Safe
Text!**



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"The Sun Never Sets on The Thunderbird"

11

**57TH ESB
TASK FORCE**



LIGHTNING WARRIORS

LTC DARLENE M. STRAUB
COMMANDING



CSM MAURICE S. GREENING
COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR

57TH ESB PATCHING CEREMONY

Story By Staff Sgt. La'Shon M. Carethers
Task Force Lightning Warriors

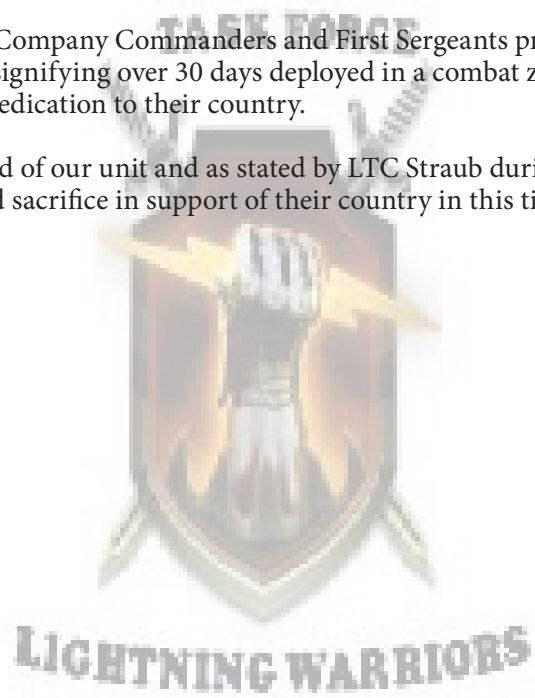


KANDAHAR, Afghanistan- Our Soldiers of 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, joined together during a time-honored Army tradition for a Combat Patching Ceremony on March 11, 2014. During this ceremony at Kandahar Airfield (Camp Lightning) we took the time to recognize not only our Soldiers deployed for the first time, but also Soldiers whom are experiencing their second, third, fourth or even fifth deployment.

Our unit deployed three Companies HHC, Alpha Company, and Bravo Company in January 2014 in order to support the retrograde mission of Operation Enduring Freedom. Our noble Soldiers are currently serving in over 16 FOBS throughout RC- East, RC-West, RC-North, RC-South, and RC-Capital of Afghanistan.

As an Army tradition, our Company Commanders and First Sergeants presented their Soldiers with a Combat Patch on their right shoulder sleeve signifying over 30 days deployed in a combat zone. The combat patch serves as a proud symbol of a Soldier's sacrifice and dedication to their country.

We could not be more proud of our unit and as stated by LTC Straub during the ceremony "Every Soldier out here should be proud of their service and sacrifice in support of their country in this time of war".



57th ESB stands ready to receive their deployment patches.



Lt. Col. Straub places the deployment patch on the right shoulder of her company command teams.



HHC, 57TH ESB THE DEPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Story By Pfc. Scott Hughes
Task Force Lightning Warriors

This deployment so far has been filled with new and great learning experiences. I knew this deployment was going to be challenging but rewarding from the beginning. Coming here I did not know what to expect. I was switched into a new company, from Alpha to HHC, and had to learn how to work with Soldiers who I was not familiar working with. But the company took me and the other nine Alpha Soldiers under their wing and accepted us as their own. Under this new leadership I have been offered many great opportunities to better myself not only as a soldier, but as a person as well, for example certifications, board preparation, physical readiness training, tuition assistance, and overall moral.

Overall, this deployment has been filled with hard work, with rewarding outcomes. It is hard to be away from my family and friends, but being accepted into this new company, has made this transition a lot easier. From the experienced veterans, to the first time deployers, we all have something to share and learn from each other to help us grow as Soldiers and people and to make this deployment as smooth and comfortable as possible. Most importantly, I am grateful to be a part of this team, and to complete the mission we were sent out here to accomplish.

LIGHTNING WARRIORS



Lt. Col. Straub and Command Sgt. Maj. Greening with the noncommissioned officers and officers of the 57th ESB.



Command Sgt. Maj. Greening speaks with some of the noncommissioned officers from the battalion.

57TH ESB PATHFINDERS ON THE ROAD TO RETROGRADE

Story By Staff 1st Lt. Richard Bishop
Task Force Lightning Warriors



“Crack!”
“Boom!”
“Slam!”

The sound of the 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion’s (ESB) retrograde mission rings throughout the cool, crisp Afghanistan air. The HHC Pathfinders, led by Cpt. Brandon White and 1st Sgt. Marlin Jones, have taken charge of Camp Lightning and the retrograde of all the company’s equipment. Since their arrival almost two months ago, the Pathfinders have made tremendous progress and have shown no signs of slowing down. While Cpt. White and 1st Sgt. Jones are leaders of great accomplishment, their tireless efforts are well supported by a shining cast and crew.

Sgt. 1st Class Bryan Brown and Staff Sgt. Willie Baker lead the S4 Movement and Retrograde (MORE) team consisting of Spc. Shelby Christensen, Pfc. Brandon Connor, and Spc. James King. In their short time here, they have successfully deconstructed more than ten company work tents. Primarily working with hammers and crowbars, the MORE team ensures the closure plan of Camp Lightning will stay on course without falter or fail.

While the MORE team has its hands full with demolition and consolidation, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Damond Dannaldson and Chief Warrant Officer 2 William Wilkins took charge of the cataloging, loading, and transportation aspect of the mission. Dannaldson and his team turned in over 40,000 lbs of scrap wood and metal over the course of 30 missions to the appropriate facilities. Additionally, they have repurposed over \$300,000 worth of equipment back into the US Army inventory system for other units to use around Kandahar Airfield.

The Property Book Officer (PBO) Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kim Washington and her clerk, Spc. Kyra Marshall, lead the way for the company supply teams, ensuring the proper turn-in and lateral transfer all unnecessary equipment for the continued mission in Afghanistan upon our redeployment. SPC Marshall confirms that all records are properly updated and filed while Washington provides daily mentoring to the supply sergeants and clerks. The property office is essential for facilitating the proper turn-in and destruction of classified equipment, ensuring that no sensitive items fall into the hands of the enemy.

Movement of our teams around the Afghanistan area of operations proves to be a rigorous task. 1st Lt. Alex Bayer and Staff Sgt. Andrea Gilchrist guide the company movement operation cells through the red tape and successfully deployed Soldiers to all 14 out sites with more than enough time to conduct Relief in Place / Transfer of Authority (RIP/TOA) operations. The movement team’s strict attention to detail and straightforward guidance allowed 198th ESB to successfully redeploy without incident or concern.

Properly balancing our efforts between signal and retrograde operations has become the top priority of the 57th ESB in Afghanistan. Officers, Non-commissioned officers and Soldiers alike are working on a daily basis to determine what equipment is needed and what can be turned in. The battalion commander and command sergeant major continue to set one common operating picture for the 57th ESB Lightning Warriors and facilitate outstanding success as the Soldiers support the warfighter in closing out operations in Afghanistan.

“Voice of the Warrior”



ALPHA COMPANY, 57TH ESB DEPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

Task Force Lightning Warriors

Alpha Company's ADVON element arrived at Bagram Airfield (BAF) on January 26, 2014 with the main body arriving shortly afterward on February 03, 2014 to begin a nine-month tour of duty in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

With the 57th ESB Headquarters element and Bravo Company located at Kandahar Airfield (KAF) supporting Regional Command - South (RC-S), Alpha Company assumed a widespread mission set in Regional Command - East (RC-E). Upon arrival at BAF, Soldiers were pushed to their respective sites which include:

- 6 different RC-East FOBs
- Kandahar Airfield (KAF)
- JNCC-A (BAF)
- RNCC-E (BAF)
- Task Force Signal (160th Signal Brigade)
- 25th Signal Battalion

Nine Soldiers are currently serving in various roles at the RNCC-E located on BAF. Two of these Soldiers, Pfc. Bishop and Pfc. Patterson have done an exceptional job thus far, earning the respect and praise of their civilian counterparts. Kevin Doncaster, a Satellite Engineer working in CJ6 NETOPS, had a lot of positive things to say about the two Soldiers in a recent e-mail to the commander of Alpha Company, Cpt. Ronnie Bush.

Mr. Doncaster was very direct with his praise of the two Soldiers, stating that, "with the addition of Pfc. Bishop and Pfc. Patterson came immediate value added. These two Soldiers are doing what experienced HUB and NETOPS operators have been doing now for over a month. They are doing it in extreme fashion, meaning they can do things unsupervised."

He went so far as to say that, "this is the first time in four years that I can actually decompress without worry because your Soldiers have stepped up and are acting as though they are NCOs." Mr. Doncaster's commendation for Pfc. Bishop and Pfc. Patterson did not stop there as he ended his e-mail stating the following, "Coming from eight years in the Marines and seven years as a contractor split between Iraq and Afghanistan, I have never seen so much promise and potential, and I have seen my fair share of units."

This serves as a slight example of the hard work and dedication that every Soldier in Alpha Company is performing every day during this deployment. The command team continues to receive rave reviews about the Soldiers performance and successes on a daily basis and expect that to continue until the unit redeploys to Fort Hood.

ALPHA COMPANY 57TH ESB PATCHING CEREMONY

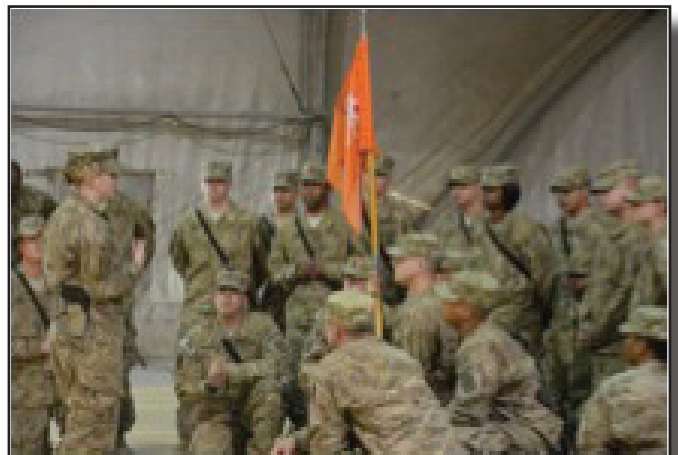
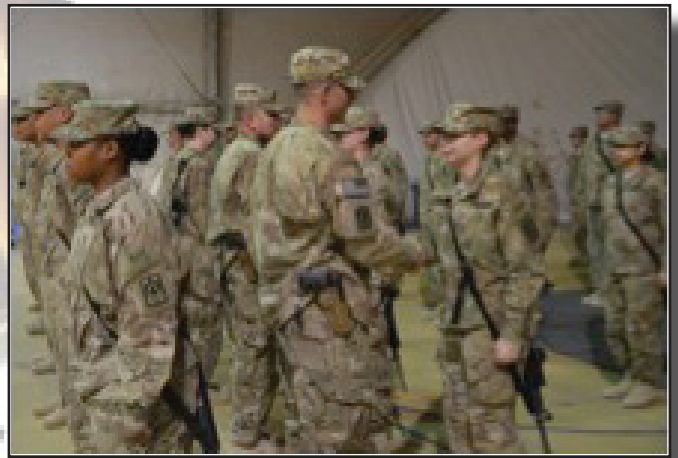
Task Force Lightning Warriors



During deployment, it is tradition for units to undergo a patching ceremony. This is where Soldiers receive their deployment patch on their right arm.

For many without a deployment patch, it brings a sense of great joy and accomplishment.

For Soldiers that have deployed before, it serves as another milestone in their military careers.





BRAVO COMPANY, 57TH ESB COMMAND TEAM

Task Force Lightning Warriors

1st Sergeant's Corner

Hello from Kandahar, Afghanistan. I would like to start by saying thank you to all the families back home for all the support that you provide to your Soldier. You have no idea how beneficial it is to us to have your support through this tough time apart.

I will tell you that your Soldiers have been doing an outstanding job out here. As I have made my rounds across the battlefield visiting with your Soldiers, I am more amazed with the work they are doing. We have several new Soldiers that have never been deployed that have really stepped up and have performed superbly. I could not be more proud of all the Soldiers of the Bravo Bulldog team. As I continue to make my rounds across the battlefield, I will be sure to take photos of your Soldiers doing great work.

I would like to take this opportunity to again say thank you to all the families for all the support that you all provide to the Bravo Bulldog Team. You are definitely appreciated for what you do for us.

Bulldog 7

"Big Dawgs N Da House"

Commander's Corner

Bulldog families, Good afternoon from Afghanistan! The hard work of your Soldiers has definitely paid off as we have successfully assumed a very tough and challenging mission. Right now your Soldiers are doing a tremendous job supporting over 10,000 customers at nine different locations throughout southern and western Afghanistan.

Additionally, our leaders and Soldiers at the Regional Network Control Center-South (RNCC-S) are managing all network activities for Forward Operating Bases (FOB) in southern Afghanistan. Many Soldiers have had the opportunity to attend training and earn COMPTIA certifications at the Kandahar Signal University.

Your Soldiers have exceeded the expectations of 1SG and myself with their work ethic, determination, and desire to meet our ever-changing mission requirements and provide the best possible support to the Warfighter. During our travels around Afghanistan, 1SG and I are truly amazed at the maturity and resolve of our leaders and Soldiers.

I want to personally thank the families for all your support throughout the ramp up and our current deployment. Families of forward deployed Soldiers bear an immense burden and first sergeant and I appreciate the sacrifices you are making during our Nation's time of war. Our leaders and Soldiers are the best trained and best led in this organization. Their ability to perform at their best is a direct reflection of the solid foundation of support you provide back at home.

Thank you and God bless

--BULLDOG 6

57TH ESB TEAM RETENTION

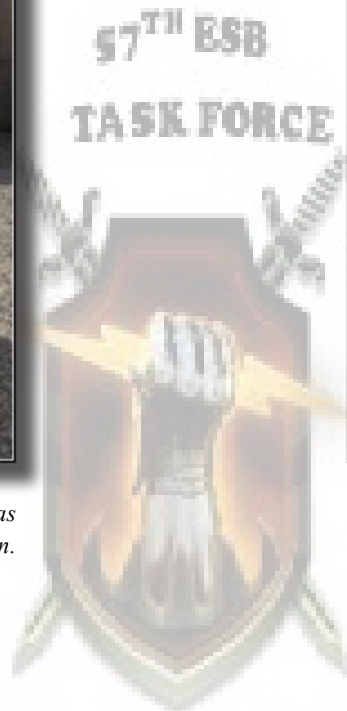
Task Force Lightning Warriors



Staff Sgt. Ryan Gokay from Bravo Company has a reenlistment ceremony at FOB Walton.



Sgt. Letroy Harris, HHC, Reenlistment reenlistment ceremony at Camp Lightning, Kandahar.



LIGHTNING WARRIORS



"Voice of the Warrior"



57TH ESB SIGNAL UNIVERSITY

Task Force Lightning Warriors

When Soldiers are deployed, it is the perfect opportunity to take advantage of courses that will improve them. While many Soldiers take college courses during their downtime, college classes are not the only way Soldiers can improve themselves.

Along with education, Soldiers also take on things that will help them grow professionally. One such program is Signal University. Not only can Soldiers increase their job and professional knowledge, they can also gain valuable awards for course completions.

Staff Sgt. Erica Mitchell Dean of Signal University along with her Soldiers Spc. Christopher Padilla and Pfc. Steven Pilley are doing an outstanding job certifying Soldiers throughout the theater.



LIGHTNING WARRIORS



57TH ESB PICTURE PAGE Task Force Lightning Warriors



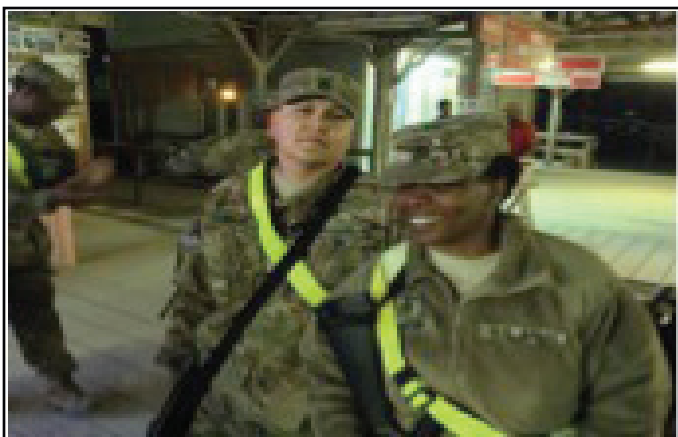
As our team of Signal warriors are deployed in defense of this great nation, we want to show gratitude to our family members, friends and fellow Soldiers for the support you have given us. We appreciate everything and are working hard everyday so that we can complete our mission, and return back to all of you.

Here are a few photos we have taken so that you all can get a glimpse of what we have been up to out here. I hope these photos brings a smile to the faces of those we care about. Even though we are thousands of miles away, know that we hold our families, friends, and fellow Soldiers close. Thanks again for everything, and we will be home before you know it!!

TASK FORCE



LIGHTNING WARRIORS



"Voice of the Warrior"



57TH ESB PICTURE PAGE

Task Force Lightning Warriors



62D ESB
First Sergeant
Frocking Ceremony
Story By Sgt. Jacob Mahaffey
11th Signal Brigade Public Affairs Office



First Sgt. Elizabeth C. Rice and First Sgt. Michael A. Knowlton were frocked to the rank of first sergeant from sergeant first class Feb. 7 on Camp Buehring Kuwait.

Rice deployed with the 62d ESB as first sergeant for the Charlie Company Commandos. Knowlton deployed as first sergeant for the Alpha Company Raptors.

Both were the senior enlisted advisor for their companies while holding the rank of sergeant first class, a position generally held for a master sergeant.

Often in the Army a sergeant first class will be appointed as a company first sergeant and frocked to first sergeant, however it is very rare that two will receive the honor of wearing the diamond from the same battalion, on the same day.

Both have held nearly every leadership position that comes with being a signal Soldier, to include team chief, squad leader and platoon sergeant.

Command Sergeant Major Woody B. Carter, command sergeant major of the 62d, had some words of advice for the newly promoted first sergeants.

“First sergeant, top, first shirt, are just words, those words mean nothing without the person wearing the rank.”

Knowlton spoke to the group with a sense of humbleness and pride, explaining to the group that although he was a first sergeant for now, he wouldn't always be.

“I will carry this rank of first sergeant on my chest for now, but one day I will drop it, and I charge you Soldiers to pick it up.”



“Forewarned is Forearmed”



62D ESB KUWAIT RANGE

Photos By Sgt. Jacob Mahaffey
11th Signal Brigade Public Affairs Office



62nd ESB is currently deployed to Kuwait. They have numerous missions going on, but keeping Soldiers trained in all aspects is always a high priority.

The 62nd ESB command team ensures Soldiers are proficient on their assigned weapons every chance they get.



86TH ESB NEW NETWORK TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT EXPEDITIONARY SIGNAL BATTALIONS

By Amy Walker, PEO C3T



In preparation for the Army's Network Integration Evaluation, or NIE, 14.2 this spring, the 86th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, or ESB, is training with new tactical communications equipment that is smaller in size for easy transport, yet significantly increases capability.

"These new network technologies will increase our readiness and agility," said Lt. Col. Keith Dawson, commander of the 86th ESB, which will be evaluating the equipment at NIE 14.2 in May. "They will enable us to deploy in smaller teams instead of deploying as an entire battalion like we did in the past."

ESBs are modular in nature and primarily support other units that don't have their own communications equipment. As the Army continues to evolve its force structure while becoming a leaner and more expeditionary force, it is looking to increase the capability and versatility of these units. Upgrades and new technologies fielded by the Warfighter Information Network-Tactical, or WIN-T, program, the Army's tactical communications network backbone, are filling these requirements.

In line with the 86th ESB's motto, "The first voice heard," the unit is the first to be fielded with some of the new technologies.

"For NIE 14.2, we will conduct demonstrations with new equipment, such as 4G LTE and a new line-of-sight radio, for a proof-of-concept as to what future ESBs are going to look like," said Maj. Rickie Meers, 86th ESB operations officer (S3).

As part of their training in support of NIE 14.2, a hands-on demonstration of the new equipment, along with WIN-T Increment 1B upgrades, was held at Fort Bliss, Texas, in late February. The event enabled Soldiers and commanders to better understand the capabilities and the space and manpower requirements needed to deploy the equipment.

"This new equipment is good, but we have to take it out into the field and use it; we have to learn how to pack it up in trucks, get it deployed, so we can put it on airplanes," Dawson said. "We hope to provide lessons learned from the NIE to the rest of the Army."

ESBs can support higher headquarters at corps and division, but they also have smaller teams to support units within a brigade combat team, or BCT, or when needed, to provide network support for natural disaster relief efforts or other emergencies around the world. As their name suggests, the expeditionary nature of these units requires an ability to be agile and the new WIN-T technologies and upgrades support those requirements.

"A lot of the equipment is more maneuverable and it's going to make it easier and quicker to deploy; making it a lot easier for our Soldiers to pack up and go when they need to," Meers said. "Plus the capability, the amount of bandwidth and data we can pass through, has also greatly improved."

The Army's semi-annual NIEs, which are held in a realistic operational environment at Fort Bliss and White Sands Missile Range, N.M., provide operational test data for programs of record, validate network baselines for fielding and collect Soldier feedback on promising industry capabilities. NIE 14.2 will include increased joint and coalition force participation, and to help support the coalition aspect of the event, the WIN-T Increment 1 program is introducing the Mission Network Enclave, or MNE, a small baseband package that enables Soldiers to share information with coalition partners. When needed, MNE can also be reconfigured for disaster response to provide commercial internet to first responders.

(Continued next page)

"First Voice Heard"



86TH ESB

NEW NETWORK TECHNOLOGIES TO SUPPORT EXPEDITIONARY SIGNAL BATTALIONS

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During NIE 14.2, the 86th will also evaluate a 4G LTE system that allows Soldiers to use the Secure Internet Protocol Router (SIPR) Network on the battlefield via mobile devices and Wi-Fi. These capabilities could help reduce the many wires and cables cluttering tactical operations centers and further untether commanders and Soldiers in command post areas.

Also being evaluated is a radio-bridging and voice cross-banding module that allows Soldiers to fuse radio and phone networks. Additionally, a new line-of-sight, or LOS, radio reduces size, weight, and power, known as SWaP, and significantly increases throughput from 16 megabits per second (Mbps) to approximately 200Mbps.

“These new LOS radio systems are lighter and easier to set up, so it will make it easier to deploy; throw them in the back of a truck or on an airplane and you’re gone,” Meers said. “The bandwidth is exponentially better. I started 10 years ago and you wouldn’t even have thought about having 200 megabits going through a LOS system; it’s just great.”

The Tropo Lite, a transit case-based tropospheric, or tropo, scatter communications system, is being assessed to replace the Army’s current truck and trailer-based system. Tropo systems shoot microwaves instead of satellite radio frequencies, allowing for secure, high-speed transfer of large volumes of data between sites and over terrestrial obstructions such as mountains. They also reduce the Army’s reliance on expensive commercial and military satellites. Nicknamed “Tropo-in-a-can” by the Soldiers because of its smaller size and transportability compared to legacy capability, the Tropo Lite is also much faster to set up.

“I can put it in a helicopter, take it to a remote site, and hook it up without requiring three trucks and six Soldiers,” said Sgt. Maj. Roberto Marshall, 86th’s former command sergeant major. “Now I only need two Soldiers, a small truck and we are up and running.”

The 86th ESB also received on-going WIN-T Increment 1B upgrades that add a Network Centric Waveform modem, which optimizes bandwidth and satellite utilization. The upgrades also provide a Colorless Core capability that encrypts data as it is transported over satellites and line-of-sight links, enabling Soldiers to send information securely across the battlefield. The upgrades improve the security and efficiency of the network, and since these capabilities are inherent in the mobile WIN-T Increment 2 network, they also increase the interoperability of both increments.

“The 1B upgrades makes it a lot easier for commanders on the ground to plan and execute their missions when they don’t have to worry about interoperability,” Meers said. “With this new 1B equipment it’s not going to be a second thought; it’s just going to work.”

ESBs will be able to support any unit on the battlefield or area of operations within their footprint with the new WIN-T technologies once they are deployed. Vetting the proof-of-concepts through the NIE will help work out any initial bugs and improve tactics, techniques and procedures to provide Soldiers with the best capabilities possible.

“I am excited about the improvements we are going to get from this equipment,” said CW2 Keith Hudson, 86th ESB network technician responsible for implementing the components in the tactical network. “As the equipment is being fielded, it is challenging our Soldiers to think outside the box -- how can I do this and how can I get better performance out of my equipment? That input is going to improve the Signal Corps holistically once the equipment is deployed to all ESBs.”

86TH ESB CHANGES COMMAND

Story By Wendy Brown
Fort Bliss Bugle Staff



Members of the 86th Expeditionary Signal Command bid farewell to one command team and welcomed another at Staff Sgt. Joe N. Wilson Field on East Fort Bliss Feb. 7, 2014.

The outgoing team of Lt. Col. Jason A. Bryan and Command Sgt. Maj. Roberto O. Marshall praised the battalion's Soldiers and told the incoming team of Lt. Col. Keith L. Dawson and Command Sgt. Maj. Morgan Barnett the next two years would go by quickly.

"I have to caution you both to cherish every moment, because two years will go by in a flash, and I'll tell you that during the next two years, if you're not having fun, you're not doing it right," Bryan said. Marshall said it was a pleasure to serve on the battalion's command team, and the fact that he was able to do so in his hometown of El Paso made it even better.

"The last two years have been the best two years of my life," Marshall said. "Every Soldier from the 86th will forever hold a special place in my heart. It is just amazing to reflect back on all the accomplishments of the battalion in the last two years."

Col. James C. Parks III, 11th Signal Brigade Commander, presided over the event, and Maj. Gen. Sean B. MacFarland, Commanding General, 1st Armored Division and Fort Bliss, and his wife, Lynda MacFarland, attended. The 1st Armored Division Band played at event, and Cpl. Blake Cruz, 86th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, sang the National Anthem. The battalion's motto is, "First Voice Heard," and since it began in March 1966 at Fort Bragg, N.C., the battalion has deployed to Vietnam, Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, East Timor, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Saudi Arabia, South Korea and Afghanistan. Parks said that under the leadership of Bryan and Marshall, the battalion has provided unparalleled support to numerous units.

"Over the past two years, this command team has led these magnificent Soldiers through a diverse and challenging array of missions," he said. Not only that, but the battalion was the top battalion on post for most blood donations for two years in a row, and also supported local community by supporting El Paso High School and Jane A. Hambric School through Partners in Education, Parks said.

"The leadership and the Soldiers continually donated to these schools and the generosity was appreciated by students, teachers and parents alike," Parks said.

Due to high winds, Soldiers held up state flags during the 86th Expeditionary Signal Battalion Change of Command Ceremony at Staff Sgt. Joe N. Wilson Field on East Fort Bliss Friday.

Dawson asked for a round of applause for the Bryan and Marshall families and said the battalion's Soldiers looked great.

"As you depart, sleep well tonight knowing the legacy of your style, discipline and mentally and technically tough Soldiers lives on," Dawson said.

Barnett said he looked forward to the next two years as the battalion's senior enlisted leader, and helping transform the way the U.S. Army communicates to a more flexible and self-sustaining signal corps.

Bryan said there was no way he could properly express his gratitude for all the people who made the 86th Expeditionary Signal Battalion a success over the past two years.

"Several people have asked me what I would do differently, looking back over the past two years, and after several weeks of quiet reflection, I'll tell you I would change nothing about this experience — the good, the bad, the highs, the lows — none of it. I would happily do it all over again," Bryan said.



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Resource document **HOME**

Household Threats: Ladders, Stairs and Weapons

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Directorate of Communication and Public Affairs

U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

Feb. 3, 2014

Narrative:

At home, threats pose danger to unsuspecting victims every day. The perpetrators may seem harmless enough but each year, thousands of Americans are injured and some killed while using ladders, stairs and privately owned weapons.

According to the NSC, falls are one of the leading causes of unintentional injuries and result in approximately 8.9 million emergency room visits annually. No one is immune; slips, trips and falls can happen anywhere, but common areas are showers, tubs, stairs and wet floors.

The NSC also reported that falls are the second-leading cause of unintentional death in homes.

Another home hazard not to be taken lightly is privately owned weapons. Most Soldiers handle their assigned weapons routinely enough, and when they're done using it, they turn it back into the armor.

Safety is a factor in all that Soldiers do and implementing some control measures at home is something Soldiers are all capable of accomplishing.

Key Messages:

- Home is where most Soldiers feel comfortable and that they shouldn't let preventable, household accidents compromise that feeling.
- Identify slip, trip and fall hazards and fix them!
- Proper clearing procedures of privately owned weapons are vital – too many Soldiers are dying in preventable, negligent discharge accidents.

THE SUN NEVER SETS ON THE
THUNDERBIRDS

