



TASK FORCE MULESKINNER



July 2014

10th Sustainment Brigade

Issue 5

GUARDSMAN CONDUCT SLING LOAD OPERATIONS

PG. 14



Supporting the Climb!

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The official 10th Sustainment Brigade publication

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COMMANDER'S CORNER



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Fellow Muleskinners, Family, and friends; greetings from Afghanistan. This past month we bid farewell to Command Sgt. Maj. Jose A. Castillo as he departed Afghanistan and the 10th Sustainment Brigade. He is headed to assume the role of command sergeant major for the 19th Expeditionary Sustainment Command in Taegu, South Korea. We wish him and his Family the best of luck as they depart the Muleskinners team and start their new journey.

As Castillo departs we welcome Command Sgt. Maj. Phillip L. Dixon to the team as he takes over as Task Force

Muleskinners' command sergeant major. Dixon is no stranger to the brigade based on his recent assignment as the 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion command sergeant major. His vast operational experience is a great fit for the brigade and I look forward with serving alongside him as we continue our mission with sustaining our teammates across Afghanistan.

Task Force Muleskinners Soldiers and Airmen continue to display a high level of professionalism and operate at a high level. One of the focus areas we will continue to emphasize is safety, especially during the

hot summer months. Conducting risk assessments and ensuring that our Soldiers remain hydrated remain one of our top priorities. For the past four months the brigade has seen a steady decrease in the amount of accidents. This is mainly attributed to the professional leaders across the formations who emphasize the safe well-being of all our Soldiers.

As we approach and set the conditions for Resolute Support, the brigade will play a big part with assisting with the responsible drawdown of forces and equipment while simultaneously establishing a new force structure. We remain on glide path with completing all of our key tasks and I'm confident that the brigade will meet any challenge that comes our way.

The spirit of the American fighting Soldier is alive and well across our formation and I am proud to serve alongside the best fighting

force in the world. Our service members are true professionals and exhibit all that is great about our nation. Muleskinners leaders and Soldiers are what right looks like in our Army: disciplined, skilled and trained warfighting Soldiers and formations.

The brigades command 1 + 5 priorities consist of the following: SHARP, force protection, sustainment, responsible drawdown, Resolute Support transition, and health of the command and leadership development. These priorities provide for a balance between Soldier welfare and mission accomplishment.

I want to thank everyone for your continued support to the Muleskinners brigade. Our Soldiers and Airmen appreciate your continued support.

Finally, thanks to the Soldiers and Airmen who put their lives on the line every day in defense of our great nation.



COMMAND SGT. MAJ.'S CORNER



cherish the memories of two deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and the good times I had with Family and friends at Fort Drum, New York.

Muleskinners, I leave you in the capable hands of Command Sgt. Maj. Phillip L. Dixon, a great leader who is no stranger to the Muleskinner team. Support him as you have supported me for I know he will do his best to ensure the Muleskinner brigade continues to be

the best sustainment brigade in the Army.

Words to live by

Be the leader you want to be led by. It all boils down to leadership by example. There's only one standard. It applies to every Soldier. Be responsible and accountable for your decisions, your Soldiers and your equipment. If it's hard, sucks or risky, be there, be seen, be heard and be relevant.

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Saying goodbye to my task force and the Muleskinner brigade

Bittersweet, what a great metaphor to describe experiencing both elements of happiness and sadness.

I will miss my beloved 10th Mountain Division (LI), the best Soldiers and leaders I have ever served with. It has been my honor to Soldier with you. Climb to glory!

I will forever be grateful for the support I received during my time as a Muleskinner. I will



“CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR SELECTION TO A NOMINATIVE ASSIGNMENT,” SAID STAFF SGT. ROGERIO BRITO, BRIGADE CAREER COUNSELOR. “WE HOPE YOU DON’T CATASTROPHIZE ANY ICEBERGS AT YOUR NEW LOCATION. STAY VALUE ADDED AND CONTINUE TO BE THE LEADER YOU WANT TO BE LED BY. YOU TRULY MADE A LASTING IMPRESSION IN THE BRIGADE.”

“Good luck in your future assignment,” said Spc. Alexandra Ramirez, brigade awards clerk. “You did great things for the brigade and the country. You will be missed.”

“Thank you for your mentorship,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Yessenia Johnson, brigade senior food service advisor. “I wish you and your Family the very best. Send my love to Nanci and the kids and thank them for their support.”

“Thank you for providing the NCOs in the brigade constant mentorship,” said Staff Sgt. Javier Rodriguez, brigade postal operations NCO.

“Not often are there people who impact your life,” said 1st Sgt. Axel Fontenot, 543rd Quartermaster Company first sergeant. “You have definitely impacted the Soldiers of the 543rd QM CO. Thank you for all of your mentorship. We strive daily to be the leaders we want to be led by.”

“Thank you for taking the time to teach and mentor junior NCOs,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Olsen, brigade intelligence noncommissioned officer in charge. “It’s inspiring to see leadership done the right way.”

“Thank you for your support and guidance,” said Master Sgt. Wallace Levy, brigade human resource NCO. “I wish you and your Family safe travels.”

“Go hard,” said Sgt. 1st Class Nelson Cruz, brigade senior food operations management NCO, “Thank you for everything.”

“Thank you for mentorship and leadership,” said Staff Sgt. Michael Braddock, brigade legal NCO. “You will be missed.”

“THANK YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR MENTORSHIP, LEADERSHIP AND GUIDANCE,” SAID SGT. 1ST CLASS SIDNEY HAYNES, BRIGADE SENIOR COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST, BEST WISHES TO YOU IN ALL YOUR FUTURE ENDEAVORS.”

Pfc. Lucille Eifle assigned to the 111th Quartermaster Company, 10th Special Troops Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, briefs the Command Team of the 4th Sustainment Brigade on the draping of the American Flag on a transfer case as she would do in the case of a "Fallen Hero". (US Army photo by Sgt. Alfredo Hernandez)



Professionals provide fallen heroes dignity, respect

Sgt. Alfredo Hernandez
111th Quartermaster Company UPAR

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Soldiers of the 111th Quartermaster Company Mortuary Affairs Detachment, 1st Bagram Team, provides professional mortuary affairs support throughout the theater of operations for all U.S. forces, U.N., coalition forces, civilian contractors and local nationals.

They work diligently to provide world-class mortuary affairs support to the Department of Defense Joint Mortuary Affairs Programs in Regional Command-East, Regional Command-North and Regional Command-Capital.

Despite the grim and unfortunate circumstances associated with fatalities, Soldiers of the 111th QM CO find ways to stay resilient in their profession. Since arriving at BAF, the detachment has not been very busy, a good aspect of one's job when you are a mortuary affairs Soldier.

Daily activities, ranging from policing up their footprint to conducting master resilience training, help the Soldiers stay busy and assist them with their professional development.

The team is composed of less than 20 members and is divided into two teams. Each team is responsible for manning the mortuary affairs collection point for a 24-hour period. During this time, each team leader is responsible for keeping the Soldiers resilient and engaged in training, but most importantly, proficient in their military occupational specialty.

The minute a fallen hero is accepted into the MACP, the 111th QM CO goes to work to process the human

remains in a timely and efficient manner. Whether it's the middle of the day or the middle of the night, they are always ready to honor the heroes and handle their remains with dignity, reverence and respect.

Staff Sgt. Reinaldo Perez, mortuary affairs noncommissioned officer in charge, has been a mortuary affairs specialist since 1996.


Perez said that after a long day of working around the MACP, and training for possible missions, receiving a phone call in the middle of the night with the notification that a hero has fallen is always the most difficult mission.

"Waking up to honor our fallen heroes with the upmost respect is a difficult task for anyone," said Perez. "But our teams are well trained and resilient enough to come through in the moment of truth." Having to face the grim reality of death and the result of fatalities on a regular basis may not be an easy task for some people.

"Being a mortuary affairs specialist is definitely not an easy task," said Sgt. Luis Santiago, mortuary affairs specialist assigned to the 111th QM CO. "I have only been a mortuary affairs specialist for 4 years and, in this short time, I have learned that this type of mission requires a special type of Soldier; a respectful, compassionate, resilient, and anything but ordinary type of Soldier."

People often tour the MACP just to be able to meet and shake hands with the constant quiet professional who is always ready to put others first; the mortuary affairs specialist.

Teams battle for bragging rights at truck rodeo



Soldiers assigned to the 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion place a water can between two rows of bottles as part of the mine resistant ambush-protected recovery vehicle task as part of a truck rodeo June 12 at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan. (Courtesy Photo)

Story by Sgt. Lauren Amey
142nd CSSB UPAR

KANDAHAR AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion hosted their first truck rodeo June 11-14 here to allow Soldiers the opportunity to showcase their expertise in skills that are vital to the unit's mission in healthy competition with other similar experts.

The tasks that were evaluated are critical skills that drivers must be able to perform in order to be subject matter experts in their field.

What made this rodeo differ from others were the various platforms that Soldiers were tested on. Participants were tasked to operate five different vehicles; heavy equipment transporter, line-haul tractor truck, palletized load system, and two variants of the mine-resistant ambush protected vehicle.

Day one began with Sgt. 1st Class Royal Hepburn, 498th Transportation Company assistant truck master, giving a safety brief and going over the standards of the events and scoring criteria.

"The Soldiers were very enthusiastic to begin the competition," said Hepburn. "We really got to see the best of the best out here."

The 26 teams composed of two Soldiers each competed for first place in the PLS event by backing up the vehicle through a lane 12 feet wide and 100 meters long. A team from the 1742nd TC came out on top in this event.

"Although I did not compete in all the events, it was cool to see one of my recently promoted battle buddies take charge and win the PLS event" said Sgt. Reed

Ludwig, assistant convoy commander assigned to the 1742nd TC, a native of Chamberlain, South Dakota. "We are both coming up in the ranks and we keep the competitive spirit among us alive."

One task during the MRAP recovery vehicle event showcased the Soldier's boom-operating skills. The teams were required to position a five-gallon water can between two rows of water bottles, solely with hand and arm signals from their ground guide.

"[Ludwig] knows that truck up and down so I trusted everything he told me to do was right," said Spc. Damian Anderson, a driver assigned to the 1742nd Transportation Company, native of Fargo, North Dakota. "It was Sgt. Ludwig's knowledge and guidance that made a difference. We just worked amazingly together."

HET serpentine was also no easy task when you add on the trailer for an overall length of approximately 68 feet and a width of 12 feet. The Soldiers faced the challenge of driving between cones placed 20 meters apart for a distance of 240 meters.

By the end of the fourth day, the scores from each event were totaled making the 1176th Transportation Company the overall winners of the truck rodeo.

Lt. Col Edward Ivey, 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion commander, presented the 1176th TC company commander, Capt. Daniel Isley, with the first place award.

"I am so proud of the Soldiers for bringing first place back home," said Isley. "This was an excellent way to build esprit de corps among the units under 142nd CSSB."

Retaining quality Soldiers to sustain the Army



Sgt. Danny Kintchen, a Fort Lauderdale, Fla. native, an information technology specialist assigned to the 10th Sustainment Brigade, signs his re-enlistment contract before the ceremony June 21 at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist)

Story by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage
10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 10th Sustainment Brigade was the first brigade throughout the 10th Mountain Division last year to make their retention mission. This year, they remain as one of the top retention teams in large part due to Staff Sgt. Rogerio Brito, a Deer Park, Washington native.

Brito, the brigade's senior career counselor who is responsible for more than 2,900 Soldiers' careers here while deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, believes that it's his sole mission to concentrate on the Soldier and their Family.

U.S. Army career counselors are the subject matter experts on all facets of Army life to include

reenlistment and reclassification.

According to Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, the Army is in the process of reducing the number of Soldiers within the ranks to as low as 440,000 while ensuring the force remains well trained and equipped.

The Army is looking to keep the best qualified Soldiers and one way this will be achieved is through the unit career counselors.

As Soldier's estimated time of separation date nears, they make the decision to transition out of the Army or continue to serve. This is where the career counselor comes into play.

Some Soldiers who enlisted didn't know exactly what they were getting themselves into, regardless of what they thought at the time.

There are Soldiers who love their job in the Army and have no issues when it comes to re-enlisting, but then there are those Soldiers who may strongly dislike their job and need help finding a new career field.

"It's my job to help [those Soldiers] find a job that deals with their interests, hobbies and other things they are good at," said Brito. "It's a win-win for the Army and the Soldier. When the Soldier is happier with their new job, the Army gets a more productive Soldier."

Since fiscal year 2013, making mission has not been a problem for the 10th SBDE career counselors.

"We focus on taking care of the Soldier," said Brito. "For the most part, that helped us become the top

producers in the division.”

The mission is a set number of Soldiers the Army requires units to re-enlist each year. This is one reason the reenlistment bonuses may fluctuate or even disappear throughout the year.

Like most professions, there are difficulties career counselors may run into.

“The drawdown and the Army wanting to lower their numbers makes my mission harder,” said Brito.

Getting numbers down isn’t the complicated part, said Brito. The movement of a Soldier from one career field to another is the difficult part.

An issue career counselors may come across is the lack of military occupation specialties Soldiers may be qualified for. Some MOSs may require higher Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery scores than Soldiers possess.

The ASVAB is a test recruits are required to take, to evaluate their capabilities, prior to serving in the armed forces.

Soldiers may improve their ASVAB line scores through classes like the basic skills education program which is part of the functional academic skills training program. There is also an online class available, the Peterson online course, which can be found at Army Knowledge Online.

Brito said, sometimes it’s just a matter of trying to convince the Soldier to consider other career fields to help them progress in their military career.

Another issue career counselors may have to deal with is a Soldier’s retention control point.

RCP is a time limit Soldiers are authorized to remain a rank. If Soldiers are unable to get promoted

to the next rank and have reached their RCP, they are not allowed to re-enlist but must fulfill their current contractual obligation before transitioning out of the Army.

Brito said, if Soldiers are reduced to a lower rank they may be over the time allotted for that rank and this affects the career counselor’s mission.

Advising Soldiers on their options and providing guidance on career progression is what the career counselors are there for. Being deployed has only created more obstacles for the unit career counselors to overcome compared to supporting Soldiers back in the U.S.

“The lack of communication the Soldiers have with their Families can really slow down the process,” said Sgt. Nick Bozzi, a Philadelphia native, 10th Special Troops Battalion retention NCO. “Making a decision as big as relocating a Family may not be something most Soldiers want to make without talking about it with their loved ones.”

The brigade career counselor makes it a habit of maintaining

calling cards for Soldiers to call their Families on the spot when time is of the essence.

Brito said, he works on building a relationship with Soldiers, to always be there for them and will do whatever he can to help them out.

“They are easy going,” said Jasmyrn Jackson, a Columbus, Georgia native, human resources NCO and recent re-enlistee assigned to the 10th SBDE. “I could go in there any time and they would be able to help me out.”

Career counselors try to make each Soldiers re-enlistment ceremony as memorable as possible.

“It doesn’t always have to happen in the office but anywhere a Soldier wants to do it,” said Bozzi. “Sometimes Soldiers just want a ceremony with their friends and coworkers while others want to be standing in a helicopter.”

Soldiers have choices and the career counselors are charged with assisting Soldier by counseling them on the opportunities, but at the end of the day, providing the Army with the best qualified Soldiers is their main focus.



Sgt. Danny Kintchen, a Fort Lauderdale, Fla. native, an information technology specialist assigned to the 10th Sustainment Brigade, reviews his re-enlistment contract with Sgt. Jeff Desrosier, a Tacoma, Wash. native, before signing June 21 at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Journalist)

Avoiding the frustrations of frustrated cargo



The 415th Military Police Detachment, hosted Central Command Customs Program Manager, Michael Coons, who conducted customs training for 230 Soldiers on June 12 at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. The Soldiers received instruction on customs regulations and inspections requirements which certifies them as having successfully completed the U.S. Customs Senior Agriculture Agent Course. (Photo by Sgt. Zachary Schellinger)

Story by Sgt Zachary Schellinger
415th Military Police Det UPAR

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan - Soldiers assigned to the 415th Military Police Company provided customs training to more than 230 Soldiers from various units at the clamshell here June 12. Customs and border patrol agents assisted with the training.

With retrograde and redeployment operations at full intensity, it is imperative for unit leaders to ensure they know how to efficiently get their assigned equipment and containers back to home station. Part of that process is ensuring 10 percent of unit members are customs certified.

The training was designed to help redeploying units meet the certification requirements and to provide unit leaders with the assets needed to prepare for the customs inspections that are part of the redeployment process.

Customs inspections are not meant to be painful processes but, if not prepared for properly, they can become frustrating. The customs standard for cleanliness during an inspection is that no more than a pinch of dirt can be obtained from any piece of equipment or container. To some that standard may seem frivolously high and impractical in a place such as Afghanistan, but there are many reasons for such high standards.

"Everything comes back to money," said Michael Coons, U.S. Central Command customs program manager and lead instructor for the training. A healthy agricultural industry in the U.S. produces billions of dollars in revenue each year, and employs millions of people directly and indirectly. The job of

customs agents is to protect the integrity of the United States' natural resources from disease and invasive species of insects, plants and animals, which could potentially harm the industry.

If the standards weren't enforced, faith in the American agricultural industry would erode thus impacting the farmers, the food processors, shipping companies, and grocers, which in turn may cause higher prices for the consumer. Moreover, when a disease or invasive species is introduced into our ecosystems the cost of eradication is often very expensive and at times impossible to fully correct.

During the class, Coons illustrated this point by mentioning the emerald ash bore, which has wrecked havoc throughout the eastern U.S. and resulted in the destruction of millions of trees.

"The problem is beyond the ability to eradicate and the government is now trying its best to contain the epidemic," said Coons.

There is another financial loss that results from improperly cleaned equipment and that is the cost of frustrated containers. Depending on the method used to ship a container, its odyssey back to the U.S. or its territories may include stopping at several ports in various countries before arriving at its final destination. If not properly cleaned, customs officials from those countries, to include the U.S., can refuse the containers entry until it is properly cleaned.

The cost of cleaning and fines is a needless expense the Army ultimately has to pay for. Thus, when time comes to ship unit equipment back to the U.S., knowing the standards and adhering to them can save people time and money.

Armament reset team supports redeploying units

1st Lt. Sylvia McDonald
514th SMC UPAR

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 514th Support Maintenance Company, 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, armament shop provides field level maintenance support for all units throughout Afghanistan in need of vehicle maintenance and repair of weapons systems.

The shop is one of five commodity shops in the only maintenance company in Afghanistan.

In addition to providing field level maintenance and annual gauging services, the shop has conducted nonstop reset missions for several redeploying units. According to Army Regulation 750-1, equipment reset activities are conducted to restore the Army's personnel and equipment to a desired level of combat capability commensurate with future missions. The purpose of reset operations is to reverse the effects of combat stress on equipment and return a unit to fully ready status. In support of the Army's reset program, the shop created mobile teams to travel across Afghanistan to outlying units.

"A small arms reset mission is no easy task especially when it is performed in a deployed environment," said Warrant Officer Jason Gresham, a Dallas, Texas native, 514th SMC armament technician. The importance of the armament section is beyond compare and is a combat multiplier for the entire force."

Gresham is able to strategically manage his shop and ensure



Spc. Jose Torres, a small arms/artillery repairer assigned 514th Support Maintenance Company, performs 10/20 level reset on an M9 pistol. Performing reset on any weapon system requires expertise, which the armament section continues to provide to units throughout Afghanistan. (Courtesy photo)

maintenance support is continuously provided.

"We have a Bagram team and a mobile team that is able to reset any unit at any location throughout Afghanistan," said Gresham.

The 514th SMC provides the mobile teams to allow units flexibility and to minimize disruption in daily battle rhythm events.

"The 514th Support Maintenance Company was an integral asset to the 159th Combat Aviation Brigade's ability to execute unit level reset tasks while deployed to Afghanistan," said Maj. Centrell Jones, brigade logistics support team chief for Task Force Thunder, 159th Combat Aviation Brigade. "The 514th SMC's leadership and Soldiers were flexible and extremely accommodating to each aviation task force's mission and location."

The 159th CAB is one of many customers the armament shop has worked with both on and off Bagram.

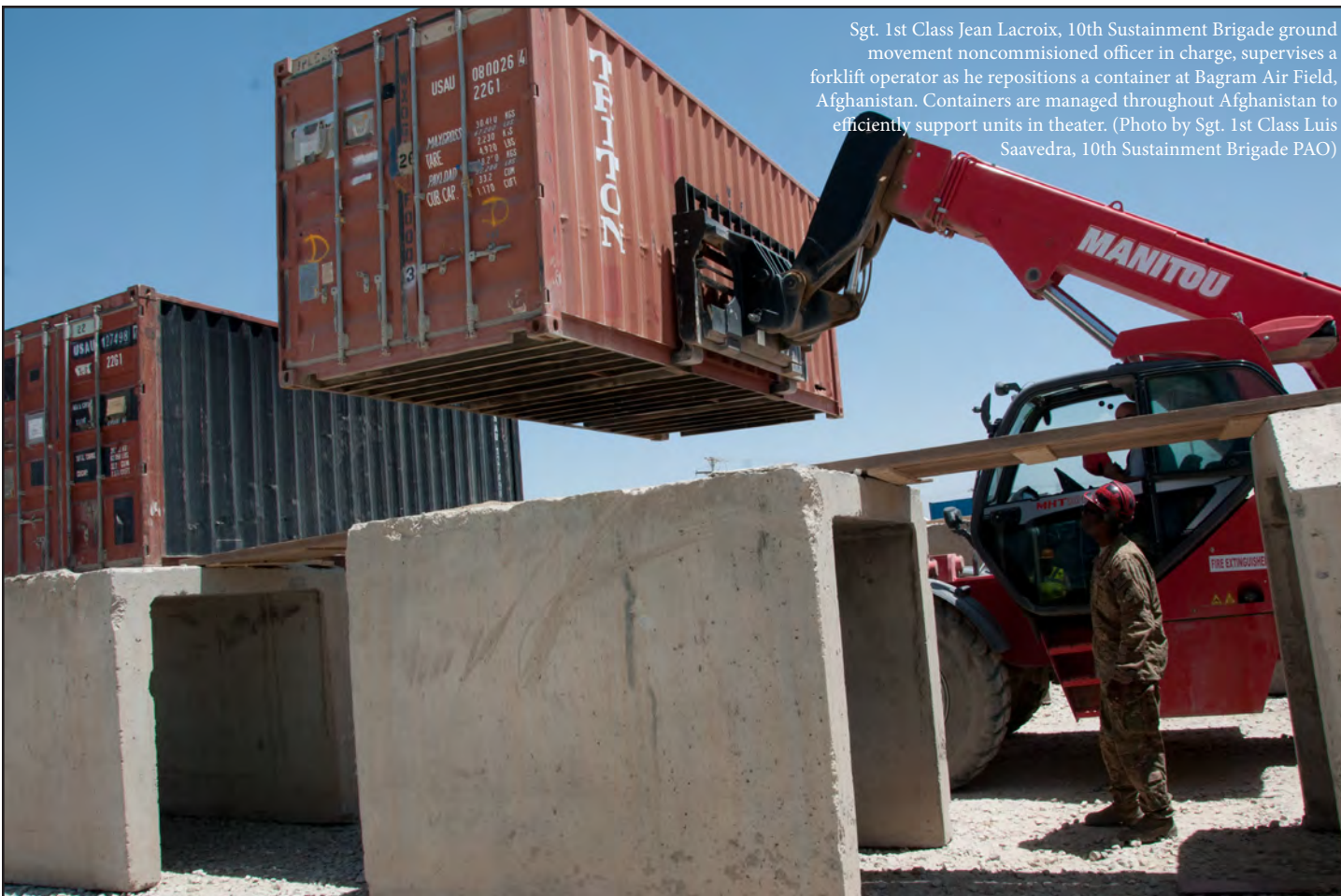
"The 514th SMC exuded the qualities of a very professional and

technically proficient team," said Jones. "As a result of the 514th SMC's diligence and dedication, the 159th CAB will redeploy with approximately 35 percent of all reset requirements complete and well on its way to being postured for the next mission anywhere in the world."

The armament shop has saved the Army nearly \$6 million by conducting the reset mission in theater.

"To date, we have saved each unit more than \$270,000, which is the cost of hiring a civilian reset team upon redeployment," said Gresham. The armament shop has multiple reset missions still scheduled for the remainder of their deployment. It is their mission to support and sustain the warfighter by allowing them to be prepared and ready for any upcoming missions.

The 10th Sustainment Brigade's logistics and sustainment efforts are good stewardship of taxpayer funds and protecting the American taxpayer's long-term investment in its high-quality military equipment.



Sgt. 1st Class Jean Lacroix, 10th Sustainment Brigade ground movement noncommissioned officer in charge, supervises a forklift operator as he repositions a container at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. Containers are managed throughout Afghanistan to efficiently support units in theater. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra, 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)

Container management facilitates retrograde mission

Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra
10th Sustainment Brigade PAO

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – The 10th Sustainment Brigade manages containers throughout Afghanistan daily to ensure equipment is retrograded in a timely and efficient manner.

The container management operation consists of tracking, delivering, receiving and repairing containers if needed.

Sgt. 1st Class Jean Lacroix, 10th SBDE ground movement noncommissioned officer in charge, a Brooklyn, New York native, oversees the operation in Bagram. Even with the challenges he has faced, he remains optimistic.

“I foresee a huge improvement as we reduce forces within our footprint,” said Lacroix. “The less we have, the easier it will be to control and manage [containers]. With the retrograde focus, we are increasing repair operations to facilitate the process.”

The importance of the container management mission is theater-wide.

Personnel and equipment will be redeployed and retrograded in a phased approach during 2014, managed by the commanders on the ground and the military chain of command. This phased approach will allow the U.S. to maintain a robust capability to support the Afghan National Security Forces through the remaining International Security Assistance Force mission while sustaining our force protection posture.

In order to accomplish the mission, containers need to be properly accounted for, which has been an issue the 10th SBDE has been working on since its arrival in January. Ensuring units understood container accountability processes took time. The challenge provided an opportunity to educate units and empower Soldiers to do their part.

Lacroix said customers have increased their understanding of the importance of effectively managing containers, which increased the brigade’s inventories from 70 to 94 percent.

“The challenges we face are few,” said Lacroix. “But the main challenge we have right now is

accountability.”

Another reason units might have trouble with container management might be the need for assistance in getting a system in place to get going in the right direction.

Lacroix oversees a class Tuesdays that teaches customers how to properly manage their containers within their geographical location and add them to the Integrated Booking System-Container Management Module.

The class assists with units’ goals to support the brigade’s effort to remain on the path to reduce rolling and non-rolling stock while sustaining the current campaign and organizing equipment for future needs. The identification of containers that may not be needed at the unit level can be key to increasing efficiency in the mission.

“The commanders must ensure their container control officers conduct their inventories every month,” said Lacroix. “When the inventory is done, some containers might get identified as empty and they can be used to support the retrograde mission.”

Items from several containers may also be consolidated to empty some out. Some containers may just need to be repaired to be used.

“We only have one thing in mind,” said Lacroix. “We need to have containers that are sea worthy.”

Containers need to be able to travel via sea without water getting inside and ruining the cargo.

Materiel and equipment recovered from Afghanistan will increase the readiness of U.S. forces at home and prepare them for future operations.

In the past, Soldiers assigned to the 514th Support Maintenance Company, 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, were able to repair approximately 30-40 containers a month. The need for more sea-worthy containers arose and a contract was awarded to assist with the mission.

“We established the first NATO Support Agency contract in Regional Command-East and Capital,” said Lacroix. “We embedded the contractors to fix containers so units have them available to retrograde equipment.”

The process to get a container repaired is fairly simple. Units may contact Lacroix to schedule a date for containers to get picked up. Lacroix takes the container to the yard to ensure the repairs get done to sea-worthy standards. If a container is deemed to be unrepairable, they are used for scrap metal and spare parts.

Once the containers are repaired, Lacroix has the containers inspected by a U.S. Coast Guard Redeployment Assistance and Inspection Detachment team. The RAID team inspects the containers to ensure they are serviceable.

When the containers are ready to be used, they are distributed to units after they fill out a transportation movement request.

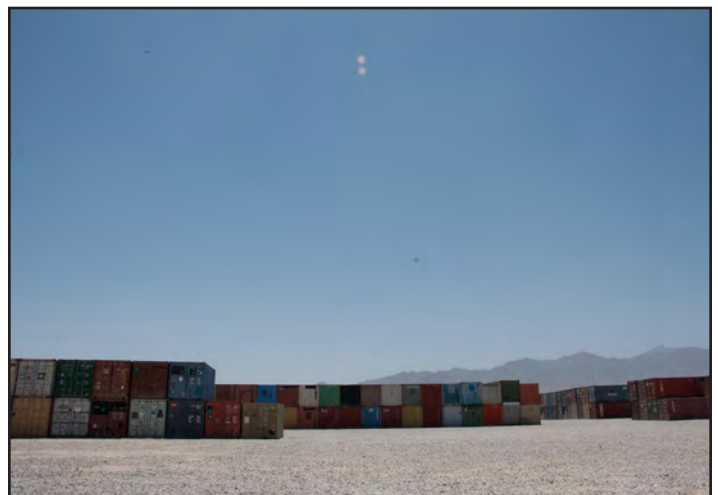
One of the biggest customers at BAF is the supply support activity. Retrograde items get sent to an SSA where they are taken care of before being placed in a container.

“We clean the items, get them inspected by customs and seal them inside a sea-worthy container so they can be shipped back to the depots in the U.S.A.,” said Capt. Nicholas Penna, 10th SBDE brigade supply support activity accountable officer. “We generally prepare about 20 containers a week.”

Penna gets his containers from Lacroix to accomplish his mission. Although there have been a shortage of containers, he said he expects that to be a thing of the past due to the new contract.

The 10th SBDE supports the entire theater of Afghanistan as the sole sustainment brigade as they continue to assist with the retrograde mission in a deliberate and efficient manner.

“Redeployment and retrograde are responsible, measured processes to reposture our military resources in coordination with the government of Afghanistan,” said Col. Willie Rios III, 10th SBDE commander. “The Afghan forces still need assistance but they are able to do the job. We will continue to provide support until the transition is complete.”



Containers stack up at the container yard at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan awaiting repair or transport to a unit for use as part of the retrograde mission. Materiel and equipment recovered from Afghanistan will increase the readiness of U.S. forces at home and prepare them for future operations. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Luis Saavedra, 10th Sustainment Brigade PAO)

GUARDSMAN CONDUCT SLING LOAD OPERATIONS



Soldiers assigned to the 1569th Transportation Company make their way out from under the Chinook. As soon as the instructors ensured the cargo was hooked up, they made their way out from under the Chinook and signaled to the crew team that everything was ready to go. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist)

Story by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage
10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist

CAMP MARMAL, Afghanistan – Soldiers assigned to the 1569th Transportation Company, a National Guard unit out of New Windsor, New York, conducted sling load operations training here June 30.

With the help from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 169th General Support Aviation Battalion, a CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift helicopter unit comprised of Georgia and Alabama guardsman, the Soldiers of the 1569th TC, 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, were able to conduct sling load training with helicopter

support, which is something not always available.

The training consisted of a day and night portion to better prepare the Soldiers of the obstacles they may have to overcome to accomplish the mission.

Soldiers met up with the Chinook crew to go over a safety brief, the planning and preparation portion of the training.

Once the Soldiers had a solid grasp of the mission they moved out to the training area to conduct the hands-on portion of the sling load training.

The instructors were members of the crew team and would lead the Soldiers to the equipment that was ready to be hooked up to the Chinook.

They practiced how to correctly prepare and hook up cargo to the aircraft as well as how to communicate with the pilots and crewmembers inside.

Staff Sgt. Mike Wolff, a Marlboro, New York native, motor transport operator assigned to the 1569th TC, said that it was great training to have for the Soldiers. This is something he had to do on a previous deployment and was excited to have his Soldiers get the same experience.

When the Soldiers were in place, the crewmembers signaled to the pilots they were ready.

The pilots maneuvered the Chinook directly over the equipment before hovering approximately nine feet off the

ground.

With the rotor wash throwing sand, rocks and anything loose on the training area, the Soldiers kept their eye on the prize and were determined to secure the cargo correctly.

As soon as the instructors ensured the cargo was hooked up, they made their way out from under the Chinook and took a knee to signal to the crew team that everything was ready to go.

The Chinook's hooks released the cargo connections when the crew members inside received the signal from the ground instructors. After the ropes fell to the ground the pilots gracefully manipulated the Chinook back into the staging area to await the next set of Soldiers.

"I was blown away by the power of the Chinook's rotors," said Pfc. John Bowman, a Hopewell



Soldiers assigned to the 1569th Transportation Company secure the cargo line to the Chinook's load hooks underneath the aircraft with the help of the instructors. The pilots maneuvered the Chinook directly over the equipment before hovering approximately nine feet off the ground. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist)

Junction, New York native, motor transport operator assigned to the 1569th TC.

Soldiers may be required to use air assets as part of the retrograde mission throughout Afghanistan and sling load training is one way

to help prepare Soldiers.

The 10th SBDE's logistics and sustainment efforts are good stewardship of taxpayer funds and protecting the American taxpayer's long-term investment in its high-quality military equipment.



Crew members assigned to Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 169th General Support Aviation Battalion, a CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift helicopter unit comprised of Georgia and Alabama guardsman, prepare the Chinook before conducting the night portion of the sling load training with the 1569th Transportation Company. The instructors were members of the crew team and would lead the Soldiers to the equipment that was ready to be hooked up to the Chinook. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist)

Blood, sweat, summa cum laude



Sgt. 1st Class Sidney Haynes, a Baton Rouge, Louisiana native, senior communications specialist for the 10th Sustainment Brigade, graduated from Grantham University with honors and summa cum laude. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Journalist)

Story by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage
10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Being a leader in the Army and taking college classes can be a challenge, but graduating top of the class just sounds bizarre.

Sgt. 1st Class Sidney Haynes, a Baton Rouge, Louisiana native, senior communications specialist for the 10th Sustainment Brigade, graduated from Grantham University with honors and summa cum laude.

Being a full-time Soldier, father and husband can be a lot to handle by some, but Haynes decided he needed more of a challenge, so he started to take college courses.

“There just has to be a balance,” said Haynes. “The needs of the Family have to come first.”

He said his Family knew what he was doing was for the Family’s benefit as well as his career.

“They were understanding of the situation and let me achieve my goals,” said Haynes. “Family first, then the Army and then college; I just kind of focused on that triangle. When one didn’t need my attention, I was able to shift my attention to the other one.”

He started working towards his bachelor’s degree in 2009 using the military tuition assistance, which is a program that provides financial assistance for military service members for college courses that are offered in the classroom or by distance learning.

He said it worked out so that when he used up the TA for that year, the next year was just starting.

“The majority of the time working toward my bachelor’s degree, I was a recruiter,” said Haynes. “It was rough, sometimes we would work 12-14 hours a day.”

He said there were days where he knew he had assignments due but his Army responsibilities had to come first.

“At times it was hard leaving a long day at the office only to return home and do six more hours of school work,” said Haynes. “Lots of late nights.”

Haynes would get home late and spend some time with his Family before he started school work. Saturday and Sunday was when he would do the majority of his work.

After recruiting, Haynes was assigned to the 10th SBDE at Fort Drum, New York.

"I've been a platoon sergeant since I arrived to the 10th SBDE," said Haynes. "I've also been the section noncommissioned officer in charge for a year, making me dual hatted."

The brigade deployed for a year to Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2011. He is currently deployed again in support of OEF.

While deployed, he continued to work towards his degree, never letting up.

"Because my Family isn't here, it's basically back and forth between work and school," said Haynes. "Work is a steady 12-14 hour day."

He said the mission always came first.

"Some days you will be in a position where you don't have a lot of mission work so you can shift your attention to college," said Haynes. "But just like recruiting, you could have a 12-14 hour day but still have assignments due; you just do what you have to do to get things done."

When he returned from the deployment, he went to Advanced Leaders Course and Senior Leaders Course back-to-back. He earned honor graduate while attending both courses. He also competed for and won a student leadership and the student first sergeant while at SLC.

"I completed 12 credit hours while I was at ALC and SLC," said Haynes.

He said he doesn't compete against other people, he only competes against himself.

"When I do something like get honor grad, it's because I'm competing against myself," said Haynes. "I like to find my limits and I try to be better than that."

Haynes said raising his grade point average slowly started turning into a fun challenge.

"I started playing a little game with myself about getting a 4.0 GPA," said Haynes.

His goal was a 3.95, but he ended up graduating from Grantham University summa cum laude in February 2014 with a 4.0.

"I would say that the last four years of my life have been the busiest, time consuming and schedule-intensive time ever," said Haynes. "My whole drive and motivation is to be better than I was yesterday."

Joseph G. Govocek III, the brigade communications

officer, said Haynes has pushed himself and never let his school work interfere with his duties as an NCO. Recently he was supposed to start working towards his master's degree.

"I can't seem to bring myself to do it," said Haynes. "I'm really just taking a knee and catching my breath. I've done so much in the last three years putting myself in a position for success."

Haynes received a multidisciplinary degree.

"It's like a general studies degree but it has more layers to it," said Haynes. "There is a concentration in digital forensics."

The last seven classes he took were focused on digital forensics and criminology.

"The growing trend in today's market place is cyber security," said Haynes. "A lot of people are moving towards cyber security. I'm basically the digital detective that goes behind the cyber guys and figures out the who, what, when, where, why something happened and to collect evidence and build a case for the prosecutor."

He said he is a little tired after recruiting, two deployments, more than 70 credit hours of college, two professional development schools and balancing his Family and work load.

"I'm just sorta burnt out," said Haynes. "But it's a good burnt out. I gave myself a six month break because I really just needed it to be honest."

He said he is going to start working towards his master's degree in August.

Haynes said none of this would have been possible without the support he received from the TA program.

**"When I do something like get honor grad, it's because I'm competing against myself. I like to find my limits and I try to be better than that."
-Haynes**



Sgt. 1st Class Sidney Haynes, senior communications specialist for the 10th Sustainment Brigade, provides guidance 1st Lt. Casey Schroder, 10th Special Troops Battalion communications officer. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Journalist)

SOLDIER PAYS RESPECT WITH EVERY MEAL



Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Crossman, a Hancock, New York native, force protection NCO for the 10th Sustainment Brigade, eats at the Koele dining facility as a way to pay respect to his fallen comrade every day. Although Crossman has deployed to Afghanistan four times, this is his first time stationed at Bagram. He always took the time to eat at Koele DFAC when he could. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs NCO)

Story by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage
10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – As Soldiers head back from a range, someone asked if anyone was interested in going to Koele, which is a dining facility here.

Normally, mispronouncing a peculiar name would go unnoticed or unchallenged, but for Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Crossman, a Hancock, New York native, force protection NCO for the 10th Sustainment Brigade, the proper pronunciation matters.

“It’s pronounced koo-lee,” Crossman said sharply. He then raised his sleeve to show the name “SSG Koele Shane M.” tattooed just above his wrist. Throughout a Soldier’s time in the military, there is a chance they may have come across a building, sports field or park dedicated to some

Soldier they may know nothing about.

However, in this case, it’s the complete opposite for Crossman.

The Koele DFAC was dedicated in memory of Staff Sgt. Shane M. Koele, a squad leader assigned to the 212th Military Police Company. Koele died March 16, 2005, as a result of injuries suffered when his humvee was struck by a roadside bomb. Crossman was also in the truck with Koele at the time.

A ceremony was held to award injured Soldiers with The Purple Heart Medal and to dedicate a compound in Koele’s name.

“I was here when this area was dedicated as Camp Koele back in 2005,” said Crossman. “Koele was the first friend I lost while deployed. We had only been in country for about a week.”

Crossman talked about how he

got to know him and the kind of man Koele was.

They became friends while they were both members of the military police warfighter team for the 793rd Military Police Battalion out of Kitzingen, Germany. They continued to get assigned to details together like pulling security during D-Day’s 60th Anniversary in France.

“Staff Sgt. Koele was an awesome NCO who really cared about his Soldiers,” said Crossman. “He trained hard and was a great leader in combat.”

Although Crossman has deployed to Afghanistan four times, this is his first time stationed at Bagram. He always took the time to eat at Koele DFAC when he could.

The 10th SBDE manages the operations of the Koele DFAC. More than 10,000 U.S. service

members, coalition forces, department of defense and civilian contractors from all over Bagram are served by the DFAC every day, which are more than 3,285,000 meals a year.

Koele DFAC provides jobs for approximately 250 people. The workers range from U.S. civilians to Afghan local nationals.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Yessenia Johnson, a Newark, New Jersey native, brigade food service advisor, said currently the DFAC operates at a utilization rate of 118 percent.

"Koele DFAC provides great service by going above and beyond with all of the U.S. holidays and events," said Johnson. "[The workers] go above and beyond by creating many decorations which

are in line with the holidays."

She said Koele is the special DFAC on Bagram because the brigade provides contracting officer representatives, which are monitoring safety, sanitation and policies.

All the meat served at the DFAC is sent from the U.S.; however, the vegetables are grown in Afghanistan.

Crossman has made arrangements with Johnson to receive the signs, plaques and keepsakes from Koele DFAC.

He contacted Command Sgt. Maj. John F. McNeirney, military police regimental command sergeant major, to work out a plan to have a sign from the DFAC displayed in the U.S. Army Military

Police Corps Regimental Museum at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

He also contacted Koele's wife, Cheryl Koele, to inform her of his intent. He plans to send her a sign from the DFAC with her husband's name as a way to honor his fallen squad leader.

Crossman said Koele is more than just a place to eat to him. It's another way for him to pay his respects every day.

"I'm going to take a couple of things back to my house as well," said Crossman. "I want to be able to hang something on the wall so I don't ever forget him."

Crossman said he wants to ensure Koele's legacy lives beyond his death.



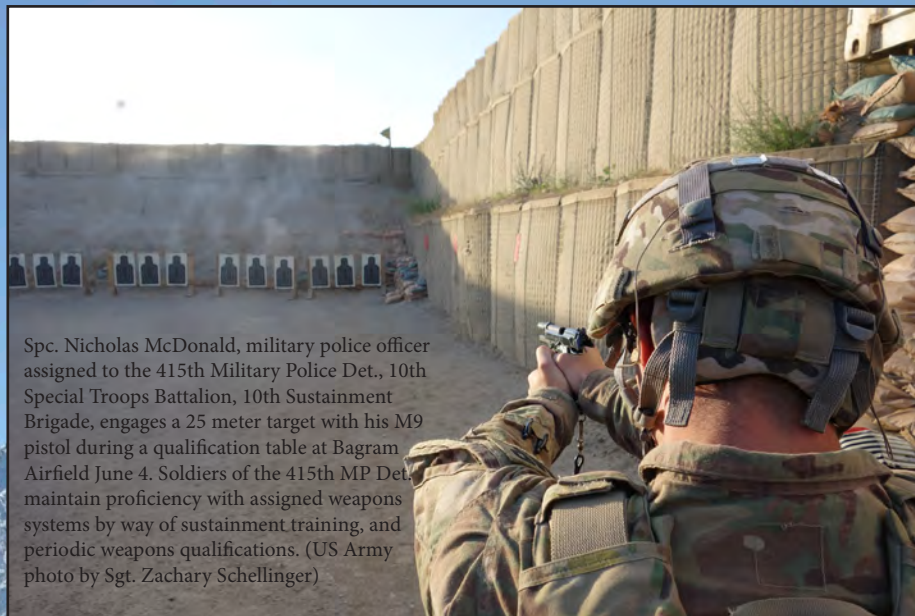
Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Crossman, a Hancock, New York native, force protection NCO for the 10th Sustainment Brigade, heads into the Koele dining facility for lunch June 24 at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. Koele DFAC was dedicated in memory of Staff Sgt. Shane M. Koele, who was Crossman's squad leader during a deployment in 2005. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs Journalist)



Crew members assigned to Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 169th General Support Aviation Battalion, a CH-47F Chinook heavy-lift helicopter unit comprised of Georgia and Alabama guardsman, prepare the Chinook before conducting the night portion of the sling load trianing with the 1569th Transportation Company. The instructors were members if the crew team and would lead the Soldiers to the equipment that was ready to be hooked up to the Chinook. (Photo by Sgt. Michael K. Selvage, 10th Sustainment Brigade Journalist)

Staff Sgt. John Davis, assigned to the 1460th Transportation Company out of Midland, MI. downloads flight pallets for a maintenance platoon at Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan June 17. (Courtesy photo)





Spc. Nicholas McDonald, military police officer assigned to the 415th Military Police Det., 10th Special Troops Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, engages a 25 meter target with his M9 pistol during a qualification table at Bagram Airfield June 4. Soldiers of the 415th MP Det. maintain proficiency with assigned weapons systems by way of sustainment training, and periodic weapons qualifications. (US Army photo by Sgt. Zachary Schellinger)

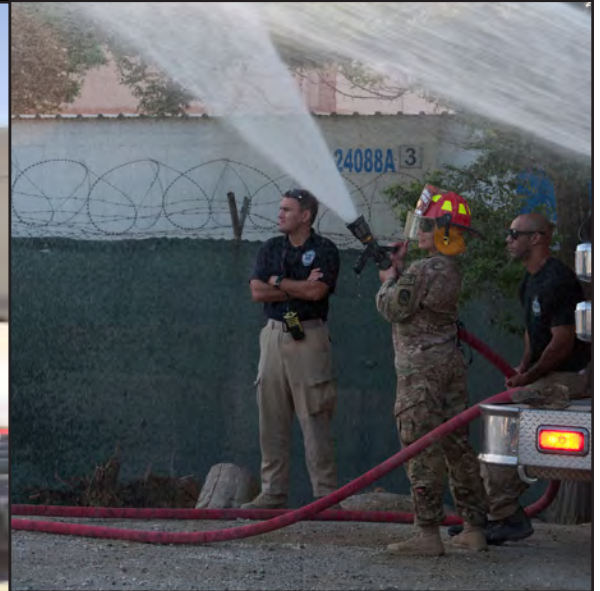


Soldiers assigned to the 226th Signal Company, fire the 240B machine gun at a familiarization range conducted by the 1st battalion, 41st Infantry regiment. Soldiers train on the weapons systems to ensure they are knowledgeable on the equipment they work with. (Photo by Pfc. Daisey Ward)

MULESKINNERS GET'N IT!



MULESKINNERS GET'N IT!





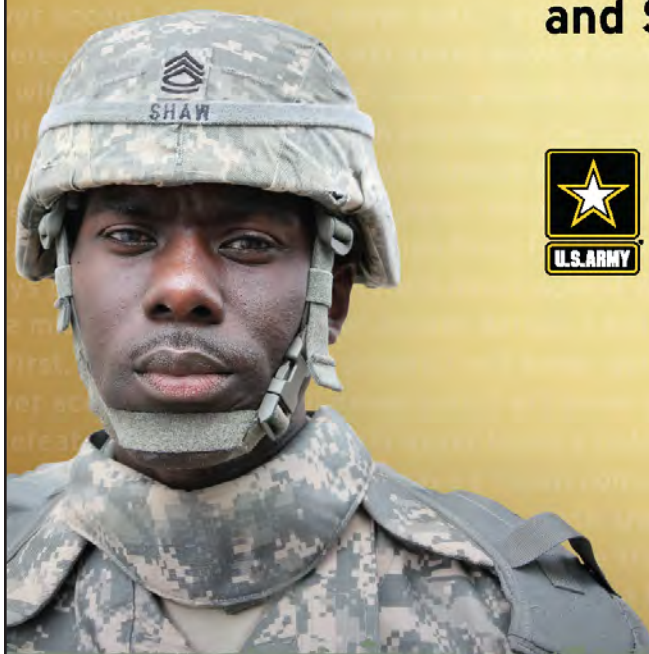
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SEXUAL HARASSMENT/ASSAULT RESPONSE & PREVENTION

ACHIEVING CULTURAL CHANGE TO STOP SEXUAL ASSAULT.

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and we must remain committed in protecting our most
precious assets—our people and our values.

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I AM Army Strong,
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