



Vol. 1, Issue 20

THE RESPONDER

Telling the Joint Task Force-Haiti story

a call to duty
April 26, 2010

General sees continuous improvement

by Pvt. Samantha D. Hall
11th PAD

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti- Jan. 12's 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti and the world witnessed some of the worst damage the country had ever seen. Now, almost four months later, the world watches as Haiti improves day-by-day.

"There's great support for the government of Haiti and the Haitian people," said Gen. Douglas M. Fraser, commanding general, U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM). "I see that [improvement] everywhere. People are focused and improving their conditions."

Fraser visited the Port-au-Prince area on April 21 to witness first-hand the improvements and changes from his previous visit several weeks ago.

"Every visit I see more progress; I see more return to what I would term as a normal way of life," Fraser said. "People [are] adapting and people [are] continuing to adjust to their situation."

Fraser said the focus of the international community continues to center around improving the conditions for the people of Haiti.



Gen. Douglas M. Fraser, commanding general, U.S. Southern Command, speaks with Shaun Scales, Corail Cesselesse camp planner, on the progress and conditions of the new resettlement camp April 21. Fraser visited to witness first-hand the continued Haiti relief efforts. It was his sixth visit since Jan. 12's earthquake. (U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Samantha D. Hall/11th PAD)

During his visit, Fraser sat down and spoke with Gen. Luiz Guilherme Paul Cruz, force commander, MINUSTAH, and showed his continuing support in the relationship between the U.S. and MINUSTAH. He also sat down and spoke with the U.S. Ambassador to Haiti.

"It was great; it's always nice to see Gen. Fraser," Ken Merten, U.S. Ambassador to Haiti, said. "The fact that we got to go out and visit [Corail Cesselesse] was good to see."

Gen. Fraser and his party took a Blackhawk ride out to the resettlement camp, Corail Cesselesse. It was not the general's first visit to the site, but much had changed.

"I still see improvement on a visit-to-visit basis," Fraser said. "When I visited here last time, I just flew over the site. There was nothing here, it was still under construction. I come back in a little over two weeks and now there's 3,000 people living in a very well organized,

well planned, well constructed campsite. It's very impressive to see the continual improvement."

Fraser was not the only one to see the vast improvement in the camp.

"I'm amazed at the amount of work that's been done in the past couple weeks," Merten said.

Fraser has visited Haiti multiple times to show his continuing support for the troops on the ground and see first-hand the relief efforts of Operation Unified Response.

"This is my sixth visit to Haiti since the earthquake, so I'm coming back on a routine basis just to make sure the needs of the U.S. government, as well as our support to the international community, are being maintained," Fraser said. "I will continue the visits, maybe not on the same frequency because of the number of people who will be here, but this will remain a focus point for the Southern Command."

With so many promising plans ahead, Fraser is optimistic for the small country.

"I hope that every time I visit, everything we do just continues along the progress of improving the living conditions and the quality of life for the Haitian people," Fraser said.

Southern Command announces continued assistance to Haiti

U.S. Southern Command
Public Affairs

MIAMI - U.S. Southern Command announced April 22 a New Horizons humanitarian assistance exercise in Haiti that will provide much needed medical and engineering services to several communities

outside of Port-au-Prince, including Gonaives, beginning June 1 through September.

According to Lt. Gen. Ken Keen, SOUTHCOM's military deputy commander and previous commander of Joint Task Force-Haiti, the robust U.S. military humanitarian assistance mission consists of

approximately 500 troops led by the Louisiana National Guard.

The New Horizons projects and medical assistance sites are at locations selected in coordination with the Government of Haiti and U.S. Agency for International Development to fit within post-earthquake requirements.

Engineering projects include: renovation of a school roof; new construction at three schools; water well improvements; and a sports recreation area.

Free medical care will be provided at five different sites. U.S. military medical staff will

see SOUTHERN on p. 5

“en Fomme”

by Col. Richard Gary Moore
JTF-Haiti Command Chaplain

Greetings are cultural ... they show awareness and respect for the other person. If you want to bring a smile to a Haitian, say, “en Fomme...bien!” You will receive a smile and an “en Fomme,” in return. The phrase means “Strong,”... it’s a double sided, declaration - question... “I’m strong – Are you strong also?”

Just reflect for a moment on the past and recent history of this island nation in the Western Hemisphere. They see what the western world has via the

media and they experience devastating earthquakes with hundreds of thousands of casualties ...yet, if you listen, you will hear their greeting, “en Fomme!”

David, in Psalm 3, speaks of overwhelming personal opposition, “O Lord, how many are my foes! How many rise up against me.” Yet many times throughout his life, David caused his own problems because he had an intense temper. Here in Psalm 3, David has planted, watered, and accumulated his own troubles. He goes on to say, “But you are a shield around me, O Lord; you bestow glory on me and lift up my head.” The shield around David is double sided, protecting him from outside foes and protecting David from the results of his own disposition!

Even then, God lifts David’s head! Let your imagination ruminate on this humble confidence a human being can have in God. Sometimes, you and I might think, “I messed things up royally ... again, but Lord thank you for loving me through it all.”

We put our family name and the name of America on everything we say and do here. Providing support to the international community may seem like a new paradigm that has evolved from our humanitarian assistance mission ... however, we are stronger together. Commit to respect, commit to strength so that when you look back on this mission in the years ahead you may say quietly to yourself, “en Fomme!”

Renewing commitment 350 ft. above Port-au-Prince

by Sgt. Maj. Rick E. Black
JTF-Haiti Public Affairs

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - As the engines of the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter fired up and the crew chief finished his safety briefing, one passenger on this mission was particularly anxious as she was boarding the aircraft to complete her first reenlistment in the U.S. Army.

On April 24, Spc. Sarah Lystra, administration specialist, U.S. Army South, took advantage of her deployment to Haiti to reenlist while flying 350 feet above Port-au-Prince on a helicopter from the 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment deployed from Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras.

“At first I wasn’t going to reenlist but after weighing all of my options this was the best decision for me and my family,” Lystra said. “Since I made that decision, I wanted my first reenlistment to be a unique and memorable experience.”

Not only was this event a memorable experience for Lystra, it also was unique to

Capt. Christopher Feliciano, political military analyst, U.S. Army South and reenlistment officer for her ceremony.

“It is always an honor to have a Soldier request you as their reenlistment officer and this is my first time to administer the oath during a deployment and also on a Blackhawk,” Feliciano said. “This unique reenlistment not only boosted her morale, but it boosted mine as well.”

Coming from a joint service family with her father and brother serving in the U.S. Navy and her husband in the U.S. Air Force, it seemed fitting that Lystra reenlisted during her deployment in a joint environment with JTF-Haiti supporting Operation Unified Response. While she says the different branch of service jokes are plentiful among her family members, they still support her choice of service to the United States.

“We are a military family and we are all proud of each other’s service,” said Lystra.

After Lystra reaffirmed her commitment to the U.S. Army for three years at 350



Capt. Christopher Feliciano, political military analyst, U.S. Army South, congratulates Spc. Sarah Lystra, administration specialist, U.S. Army South, on renewing her commitment to the U.S. Army for three additional years after her reenlistment ceremony aboard a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Maj. Rick E. Black, Joint Task Force-Haiti Public Affairs)

feet, she was afforded the opportunity to take in a bird’s eye perspective of the contrasting views of Haiti from the devastation caused by the earthquake within the city to the serene beaches and pristine waters off of the island nation’s coast line.

While Lystra stated that she is excited about her future military career, she’s already thinking about

how to conduct her next reenlistment ceremony.

“I’ll have to come up with another way to top this one... It will be hard,” Lystra said. “I think it’s important that Soldiers make their reenlistment memorable because it’s an important and personal commitment that shouldn’t be taken lightly.”



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Army Pfc. Justin Baldwin, 209th Military Police Company, deployed from Ft. Polk, La., finished the 4.2 mile Pat Tillman Memorial Run around the airfield at the Toussaint Louverture International Airport on April 22. As a Soldier in the Army, Baldwin was charged with carrying the American flag as a way of showing honor to Pat Tillman, who was also in the Army. Pat Tillman Memorial Runs are held throughout the U.S., Iraq and Afghanistan to honor the former NFL player who joined the Army and later died while supporting Operation Enduring Freedom. (U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Samantha D. Hall/11th PAD)

Pat Tillman's memory runs on

by Pvt. Samantha D. Hall
11th PAD

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti- At barely 7 a.m., the morning heat was already strong at the airfield in Port-au-Prince. He looked to the side, wiped the sweat off his forehead, and gave a half grin.

"That flag was heavy," said Pfc. Justin Baldwin, 209th Military Police, deployed from Ft. Polk, La.

Baldwin, who was charged with carrying the American flag, and almost 30 other service members took part in the first running of the Pat Tillman Memorial Run in Haiti. The 4.2 mile run stretched out along the airfield at the Toussaint Louverture International Airport before doubling back to the start.

"It was easy and I'd certainly run it again," said Staff Sgt. Emmanuel Emekaekwue, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, deployed from Ft. Bragg, N.C.

Emekaekwue, who finished the run first with a time of 28 minutes, 47 seconds, said he ran just to remember Tillman.

Staff Sgt. Colin Cathrew, 24th Air Expeditionary Group, and organizer for the run, said he did not expect that many people to turn out.

"I wasn't expecting [this turn out]," Cathrew said. "I thought it was a little too early but I was really surprised by the turn out. I'm really happy."

Master Sgt. Elva Marquez, chief medical NCO, surgeon cell, JTF-Haiti, deployed with U.S. Army South, was the first of three females to finish the run.

"It was enjoyable and good to see all the services," Marquez said. "[Honoring Tillman] was a good [reason] to run."

The run, which is held across the U.S., Iraq and Afghanistan, was the first of its kind for Haiti, thanks largely in part to Cathrew.

Cathrew attended college with Tillman and wanted to organize the run in his memory.

"I was inspired because Patrick Tillman died on this day [April 22] six years ago," Cathrew said. "He's an individual that I look up to because of the sacrifices he made and what he stood for."

Tillman played football for Arizona State University and later played for the NFL Arizona Cardinals.

According to the Pat Tillman Foundation website, Tillman never let the success get to his head. He competed in marathons, pursued his master's degree in history and volunteered with the Boys and Girls Club of Arizona, Boys Hope Girls Hope, and the March of Dimes.

Following his death, Arizona State University honored Tillman by retiring his jersey number, 42. The number 42 is also why Tillman's memorial run is 4.2 miles.

Cathrew said he tried to model his life after that of Tillman. He added that Tillman made many sacrifices in his life and these sacrifices are what made him a great leader and someone to look up to.

"He gave up millions of dollars to stay with the Arizona Cardinals and then he left the Arizona Cardinals and gave up millions of dollars to get a

paycheck just like us [service members] when he enlisted in the Army," Cathrew said.

Not more than a year after the Sept. 11 attacks, Tillman and his brother, Kevin, enlisted in the Army. He served multiple tours in Iraq and in Afghanistan. During his last deployment to Afghanistan, Tillman's unit came under attack. Tillman was killed during the fire fight by friendly fire.

"The two things that struck me about [Patrick Tillman] were how down to earth he was and the great sacrifices he made as a person and as an Army corporal," Cathrew said. "He made the ultimate sacrifice for his country."

Cathrew took the opportunity to sacrifice a little to honor his fallen friend.

"I felt like a run is something that we could sacrifice a little of our time for, just to honor him," Cathrew said. "That's what we're really here for today, to honor the life he lived."

Two militaries work as one

by Capt. Jose R. Emperador
377th TSC Public Affairs

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti- It's almost as if the multi-national team of Haitians, Colombians and Americans, who began working less than one week ago to offload humanitarian cargo inbound from Colombia, have been working together for years.

The complex effort of transferring cargo from the anchored Colombian Armada Navy ship, Cartagena Indias, to two alternating U.S. Army landing craft utility (LCU) vessels, the Matamoras and the Hobkirk, near a small port at Killick, Haiti seemed like a routine effort to the novice mariner.

Representatives from all organizations credit teamwork, cooperation and motivation as the catalyst for the successful operation which ended April 22. And no matter which language was being spoken, be it Creole, French, Spanish, English or a mangled combination of all four, everyone involved seemed to agree that the cooperation was "excelente."

Colombian Armada ship Commander Jose Guillermo Rodriguez says a chance meeting at Port-au-Prince's main port with U.S. Navy and Army officers began the discussion of a possible joint cooperative mission between the two allies. Rodriguez, skipper of the Cartagena Indias, a ship used by Colombia primarily for counter drug patrols off the South American country's coast, said the partnership began forming during the initial encounter.

"As soon as I met the officers from the [U.S.] Navy and Army, we began discussing how

we could help each other," Rodriguez said. "After further discussion, we determined they could help us offload cargo from the Cartagena and get it ashore to waiting representatives from the Colombian Red Cross."

Rodriguez added that the partners between the various organizations were motivated and committed to the effort.

"The Colombian Red Cross in conjunction with the Haitian Red Cross and your Soldiers [U.S. Army] came with the LCU of the Army ...and every day they came to help unload," Rodriguez said.

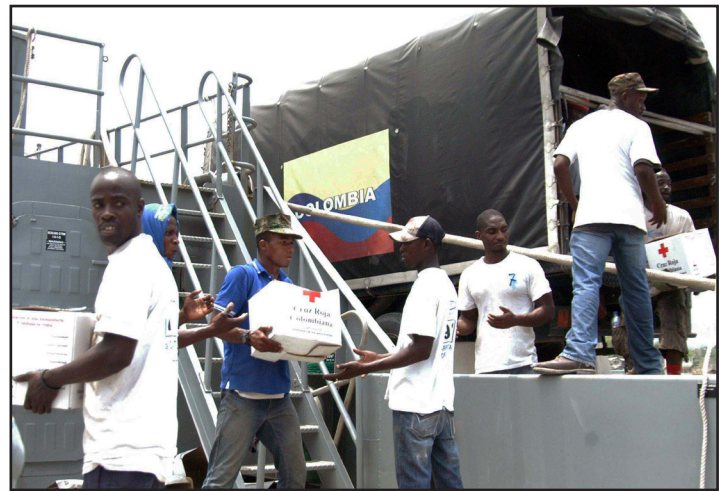
The Hobkirk's vessel master, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Willis Allen, says the small, damaged port facility at Killick isn't conducive to a ship the size of the Cartagena. Allen says his vessel, with a flat bottom and shallow draft, is capable of pulling up right to the beach if needed. This quality, unique to LCU-type boats, allowed him to complete those final legs to shore that the Cartagena previously had to do with its utility skiffs.

"We moored alongside the Colombian ship... we tie up, they take a crane and put a gang way down to our vessel and we just start a chain and start the food down to the vessel," Allen said.

Allen joined the consensus of opinions in saying there was excellent cooperation between all the agencies involved.

"It shows a lot of hospitality between two countries to make things happen," Allen said.

He also said the Haitian workers, the Colombian Red Cross and the crew of the Cartagena, along with his



Haitian workers help unload humanitarian aid cargo transferred from the Colombian Armada ship, Cartagena de Indias, to U.S. Army landing craft utility (LCU) vessel 2026 - the Hobkirk - to an awaiting Colombian Red Cross truck April 22. The multi-nation effort resulted in several thousand tons of humanitarian cargo, most of which was transferred from vessel to vessel and offloaded by hand, to reach the Haitian people. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Jose R. Emperador/377th TSC Public Affairs)

Soldiers, worked extremely well and efficient together. Prior to the use of the two LCU's, the Colombians offloaded a load similar in size but that effort took 18 days.

"It is my understanding that when they unloaded the first shipment they had to unload everything to small boats all by themselves by hand," Sgt. 1st Class John Gaviria, the Hobkirk's 1st mate, said about his newfound Colombian friends. "The experience that I've had with the Colombian Armada, the Colombian Army, and the volunteers of the Colombian Red Cross has been excellent."

Representatives from the Colombian Army also shared similar sentiments. Maj. Diego Pastrana, second commander, equivalent to an executive officer, of the Disaster Awareness and Prevention Battalion, said their job has required a lot of effort taking

into account that they could have used some much-needed resources.

"Here, the American Army has been the fundamental logistical part to all the support necessary," Pastrana said. "At this moment, we've been supported greatly and thanks to that, we are able to continue our support for the Haitian people."

"The humanitarian supplies that the Colombian Red Cross is providing to the Haitian Red Cross as well as the interaction with the American Army and that great friendship and great team that we've now created has created an excellent rapport between us all," Rodriguez, said. "As the commander of this ship, it is one of my hopes that all our crew remember the images we see on land and learn to better appreciate what we have back in Colombia because, in reality, we live in a paradise."

Mother's Day Greetings

Friday April 30-

0800-1000 LSA Dragon, by DFAC
1100-1300 Soccerfield, by DFAC
1400-1600 377th side of airfield,
by DFAC

Saturday May 1-

0800-1000 24th AEG side of airfield,
by AAFES trailer
1100-1300 LSA Hope,
by AFFES trailer
1500-1700 SP0D, by DFAC

Don't know what to do for your mom on May 9? Want to send your mom a hello for Mother's day from Haiti? JTF-Haiti PAO will be videotaping Mother's Day greetings April 30 and May 1.

Progress made through new building

by Pvt. Samantha D. Hall
11th PAD

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti- As the dust and rubble settled in the days after Jan. 12's earthquake, it was evident that relations needed to be formed between the military, the government of Haiti and the people of Haiti, and that communication between the groups needed to move smoothly.

"From the onset of Operation Unified Response, a partnership was forged between U.S. forces and Port-au-Prince mayor Muscadin Jean Yves Jason and the deputy mayor, Madeje Joachin Augustin," said Army Maj. Mike Farmer, company commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 325th Infantry Regiment (Airborne).

The mayor of Port-au-Prince met with non-governmental organization (NGO) officials at FOB Falcon but as the drawdown of U.S. troops began they needed another place.

"We hosted meetings on behalf of the mayor and deputy mayor here at our camp [Falcon] because the mayor's building was flattened," said Maj. Eric Flesch, battalion operations officer, 2-325th Infantry Regiment (Airborne). "We knew the only way for us to progress in the city was to get the mayor involved in the joint task force."

Planning for a temporary building that would serve as



Maj. Gen. Simeon Trombitas, commanding general, JTF-Haiti, greets Port-au-Prince mayor Muscadin Jean Yves Jason during the grand opening of the civilian military operations center. The building was handed over to the mayor's office as a new work area. (U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Samantha D. Hall/11th PAD)

the mayor's office quickly began. Farmer, along with light equipment engineers from Alpha Company, 2-325th Infantry Regiment (Airborne) and troops from Bravo Company, 2-325th Infantry Regiment (Airborne) and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-325th Infantry Regiment (Airborne), assisted in the planning and building of the civil military operations center (CMOC).

"Now with immediate relief operations at an end and reconstruction of the city in full swing, the opening of the Port-au-Prince Civil Military Operations Center comes at an ideal time," Farmer said.

One condition in order to

build the CMOC was that the supplies needed to be able to stay behind. There was no point in building something if it was going to have to come right back down, Flesch said.

"We used donated material that was all left behind [like] wood from other task forces that had pulled out," Flesch said.

The construction of the building, once all the supplies were gathered and everything was under way, took just one week.

"We're not Seabees; we're not construction guys," Flesch said. "It was a unique challenge for infantrymen."

Flesch said the construction

took longer than expected but that the project was very worthwhile.

On April 16, a ceremony was held officially opening the CMOC and turning it over to the mayor's office. Operations out of the new CMOC quickly began.

"In less than a week of operations the new site has proven effective in increasing the visibility of current reconstruction efforts, and provided increased access to both JTF-Haiti representatives and local civic leaders," Farmer said.

The CMOC was a joint effort between 2-325th Infantry Regiment (Airborne), the Port-au-Prince Mayor's office and World Concern, who provided the generator for the building.

The goal was to establish an area, similar to FOB Falcon, for the mayor to hold meetings and move forward, Flesch said.

The main office building contains two separate offices complete with lights, electrical outlets and air conditioning. An additional framed tent beside the CMOC provides the Mayor's office with an extra conference room.

It was a great opportunity to give back to the city, especially after watching the mayor and his office work out of cars since the earthquake, Flesch said.

"We felt like we were contributing back to the community," Flesch said.

SOUTHERN continued from p. 1

be at each site for 10 days and will provide general medical, dental and optometry care for up to 700 patients daily.

Veterinary care will also be available.

The New Horizon team continues the Department of Defense commitment to helping the people of Haiti and

supporting USAID, which is leading the overall U.S. assistance effort in Haiti.

The assistance from New Horizons is in addition to the over \$1.03 billion dollars in emergency humanitarian assistance already provided to the Haitian people by the U.S. government in the aftermath of the January 12 earthquake.

New Horizons began in the mid-1980s as an annual series of joint and combined

humanitarian assistance exercises that U.S. Southern Command conducts with Latin American and Caribbean nations. Typically, New Horizons exercises last several months, providing medical services and infrastructure projects, while giving deployed U.S. military forces invaluable opportunities to work with Partner Nations.

POSTCARDS FROM HAITI



Spc. Mahoney, 16th Quartermaster Company, 530th CSSB, explains the accountability process for Soldier's clothes received by the laundry facility to Command Sgt. Major Gabriel Cervantes, command sergeant major, Joint Task Force Haiti, and Col. Richard Basset, deputy commander, Joint Task Force Haiti. (U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Patrick Budjenska/JTF-Haiti Inspector General)



At the new resettlement camp, Corail Cesselesse, two children jump rope during some free time. Many girls jump rope while the boys spend the day flying kites. (U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Samantha D. Hall/11th PAD)



A Haitian Boy Scout and Girl Scout assisting in the relocation of internally displaced personnel take a moment to talk while waiting for the next group of people to arrive at the resettlement camp, Tabarre Issa. More than 1800 internally displaced persons have relocated to Tabarre Issa over the past few weeks. (U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Jake Marlin/11th PAD)



Internally displaced persons from Valle de Bourdon register with the International Organization for Migration in preparation for their move to the Tabarre Issa Resettlement camp. Valle de Bourdon, one of the nine high risk IDP camps, sits in a ravine and is prone to flooding during the rainy season. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debra Thompson/11th PAD)