

56TH THEATER INFORMATION OPERATIONS GROUP 2024 ANNUAL REPORT





COMMAND TEAM’S MESSAGE

The 56th Theater Information Operations Group (TIOG) proudly presents its 2024 Annual Report, showcasing the accomplishments of our diverse team of Information, Intelligence, Public Affairs, and Special Operations professionals. Our team’s achievements reflect our commitment to partnerships and pursuit of strategic impacts that enable our global mission success. Our Soldiers, with the steadfast support of their families, employers, and communities have made this another year of excellence.

In 2024, the 56th TIOG continued its vital contributions to contingency and theater security operations, deploying units to countries across six continents and supporting missions in all six Geographic Combatant Commands. From Washington State to the Indo-Pacific and Middle East, and from Maryland to the Horn of Africa, the 56th was at the forefront of maintaining a competitive edge in today’s complex and dynamic global security environment. Our participation in joint and multinational exercises strengthened regional and global security, fostered trust, and deepened cooperation with our partners—particularly through enduring relationships with our State partners in Thailand and Malaysia.

While our focus on overseas security cooperation remains paramount, the 56th TIOG also upheld its commitment to domestic response operations. In 2024, we continued to prepare and position wildland firefighting response teams, ensuring readiness to protect and reassure our citizens when called upon.

Looking ahead to 2025, the 56th is primed for success with Soldiers who are ready to execute both state and federal missions. Our unique culture drives us to prioritize people, build excellence, and promote trust while achieving mission readiness. We value relationships, collaboration, and innovation, embracing the creativity needed to meet the demands of evolving competition across all domains. These principles underpin our commitment to strategic priorities that help Washington State and the nation maintain a decisive competitive advantage.

Finally, our success would not be possible without the unwavering support of our Soldiers’ families and employers. Their encouragement enables us to meet the rigorous training and operational demands essential for our nation’s defense and our state’s needs. To them, we extend our deepest gratitude for their commitment to the Soldiers of the 56th TIOG.

Together, we will continue to rise to every challenge and deliver excellence, wherever and whenever we are called to serve.

Defending Mercury!

COL Casey De Groof
Commander

CSM Tom Wickesser
CSM



TABLE OF CONTENTS

COMMAND TEAM’S MESSAGE - 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS - 2

HISTORY OF THE 56TH THEATER INFORAMTION OPERATIONS GROUP - 3

UNIT BREAKDOWN - 5

STRATEGICALLY ALIGNED UNITS - 7

INFORMATION OPERATIONS READINESS CENTER - 8

BATTALION COMMANDER’S MESSAGES - 9

ENGAGEMENTS, TRAINING AND DEPLOYMENTS - 11

RETIREES - 17





HISTORY OF THE 56TH THEATER INFORMATION OPERATIONS GROUP



When you think of Army Information Operations, you rarely think of Infantry, Artillery or Ordnance, but that is where the 56th TIOG started its path 100 years ago.

On September 30, 1918, Company D, 3d Infantry was organized and federally recognized in Seattle, Wash. The short lived Infantry Company was converted to Field Artillery in May 1921, under the flag of Battery D, 146th Field Artillery Regiment.

As tensions grew in the European and Pacific Theater during World War II, Battery D was called into federal service on February 16, 1940 for mobilization training in Seattle. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the unit conducted outreach to the community, preparing them for a possible attack in the Puget Sound area all while preparing to mobilize.

In February 1942, Battery D, was reorganized for mobilization to New Guinea at Battery A, 167th Field Artillery, under the 41st Infantry Division.

From 1942 to December 1945, the men of Battery

A would fight in Luzon, Southern Philippines and travel to Japan for inactivation and demobilization back home.

After returning home, the unit moved from Seattle to Vancouver and continued to serve at Battery A until a consolidation in April 1959. Battery A joined with Service Battery to create Company A in the newly developed 241st Signal Battalion with a focus on communications. As part of the 41st Infantry Division the unit worked alongside other Washington National Guard units; 1st Battalion 161st Infantry and 2nd Battalion 146th Field Artillery.

The 1960s saw a lot of changes for the unit, as it would undergo multiple reorganizations, consolidations and moves. In October 1971 the unit saw one of its most important consolidations when it joined together with 115th Transportation Group, to become the 116th Support Center, stationed in Olympia before moving to Camp Murray.

In August 1990, the world saw a new threat emerging in the Middle East, as Saddam Hussein's Iraqi military invaded Kuwait, causing a reaction by the United States to mobilize more than 700,000 troops for Operation Desert Shield from January 17,

1991 to February 28, 1991. Eight members of the 116th Support Center (Rear Area Operations) traveled to the Middle East on a 90-day tour in August 1991. As tensions on the Iraq, Saudi Arabia border heightened, the entire 80 member unit was mobilized on December 6, 1990 for a six-month tour in the Middle East. On June 24, 1991, all members would return home to Camp Murray. The unit was relocated to the Ellensburg armory in September 1992.

One more consolidation in September 2006 prepared the unit for its future reorganization as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 56th TIOG, which was federally recognized in January 28, 2009, under the 96th Troop Command.

As conflicts around the world changed, a greater need for synchronizing the non-kinetic battlefield began to take shape. Unit commanders were asking more from non-traditional warfighters, like public affairs, civil affairs and psychological operations. The Army noticed that Information Operations was becoming as important to the combatant commanders as traditional means.

During a major transformation in July 2015, the Washington Army National Guard found the perfect opportunity to stand up the 56th TIOG as a Brigade-sized element.

"Placing units with similar missions in the same MSC provide better opportunities to support one another," said Col. (Ret) Curt Simonson, former commander, 56th TIOG in 2016. "This benefits our soldiers, the Washington Army National Guard and the commanders we support in the Pacific Theater."

The 56th TIOG, would now combined specialized units under one umbrella. Soldiers in the Military Intelligence, Special Operations and Information Operations career fields would work together for better collaboration and planning while completing their individual missions.

"Another commonality of these units is engagement in the Asia-Pacific region," said Simonson. "A significant portion of the Washington Army National Guard's participation in this region comes from special forces, military intelligence and information operations units. Bringing them together will make it easier to synchronize efforts in support of commanders in the Pacific."





56TH THEATER INFORMATION OPERATIONS GROUP

UNIT BREAKDOWN



56TH THEATER INFORMATION OPERATIONS GROUP

Federal Mission: On order, the 56th TIOG provides trained and ready, tailored Information Operations, Military Intelligence, and Special Operations forces to Army Service Component Commands and Combatant Commands to synchronize efforts across all phases of operations.

State Mission: On order, the 56th TIOG conducts Domestic Operations within the State of Washington and maintains an expeditionary capability to respond outside the State in order to support state and local agencies in response to civil unrest or natural disasters.

Location:
Joint Base
Lewis-McChord



COL Casey De Groof
CSM Tom Wickesser



122ND THEATER PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPPORT ELEMENT

Federal Mission: To provide direct public affairs support through planning, coordination, execution, and supervision of public affairs operations in support of Theater Army, joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational operations.

State Mission: To inform and educate Soldiers, prospective Soldiers, and members of the public by providing public affairs coverage and support to higher headquarters public affairs offices to tell the story of the WAARNG during IDTs, Annual Trainings and Domestic Operations.

Location:
Joint Base
Lewis-McChord



LTC Joseph Siemandel
CSM Jeff Dvorak



110TH INFORMATION OPERATIONS BATTALION

Federal Mission: 110th Information Operations Battalion provides trained, deployable, culturally aware, and regionally focused Information Operations Teams, including cyber, in direct support at all echelons to perform tactical through theater/strategic IO tasks.

State Mission: 110th Information Operations Battalion remains prepared to conduct limited, approved Information Operations (including Defensive Cyber-space Operations-Internal Defensive Measures (DCO-IDM)) tasks ISO state and local authorities during Governor-declared state emergencies.

Location:
Annapolis,
Maryland



LTC Adam Kavalsky
CSM Ramon Burks



SPECIAL OPERATIONS DETATCHMENT - PACIFIC (SOD-P)

Federal Mission: Special Operations Detachment - Pacific (SOD-P) provides trained, prepared, and equipped augmentation to the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) and the Special Operations Command Pacific (SOCPAC). On order, conduct command and control, staff integration, and synchronization of joint special operations forces as a unit or as individual augmentees as determined by USASOC and SOCPAC.

State Mission: On order, deploy Special Operations Detachment - Pacific (SOD-P) to conduct interagency coordination as directed in support of Domestic Operations (DOMOPS)

Location:
Joint Base
Lewis-McChord



COL David Coughran
CSM Brendan Headrick



156TH INFORMATION OPERATIONS BATTALION

Federal Mission: On order, the 156th IOB provides trained and ready, tailored IO forces to Army Service Component Commands, functional task forces, and Combatant Commands to synchronize IO effects in concert with other lines of effort across all phases of operations.

State Mission: On order, 156th IOB provides expeditionary units of action to support state defensive cyber operations, OPSEC assessments, and all hazard responses to supported headquarters and functional task forces.

Location:
Joint Base
Lewis-McChord



LTC Joseph Trudeau
CSM Andrew MacKay



ALPHA COMPANY, 1ST BATTALION, 19TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP

Federal Mission: Company A, 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne) mans, trains, equips and deploys to conduct full spectrum irregular warfare missions in support of Theater Special Operation Command's.

State Mission: Company A, 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces provides specialized equipment and personnel to facilitate command and control, search and rescue and liaison elements ISO state operations.

Location:
Buckley



MAJ Will Wright
SGM Charles Irving



341ST MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION (LINGUIST)

Federal Mission: On order, the 341st Military Intelligence Battalion (Linguist) provides the Army with CI, HUMINT, SIGINT and foreign language support for all Army echelons, and serves as a center for language training and development.

State Mission: On order, the 341st Military Intelligence Battalion (Linguist) provides National Guard Civil Support to State and local civil authorities in response to a natural or man-made disaster or emergency. Civil Support tasks include, but are not limited to, providing general disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, armory support, civil liaison, security and traffic control, firefighting, and incident analysis and assessment.

Location: JBLM,
Fairchild Air
Force Base,
Vancouver



LTC Robert Goertzen
CSM Laurie Graham

56th Theater Information Operations Group , 6205 Pendleton Ave. Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. 98433
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STAFF

XO - LTC Dan Wessman
S1 - MAJ Beth Quiniones
S2 - LTC Serena Stagnaro
S3 - LTC Michael Camerota
S4 - MAJ Matt Worley
S6 - CW3 Jeffrey Immer

Chaplain - MAJ Denise Denniston
JAG - CPT Brian Baker
OPS SGM - SGM Andrew McKay
Medical - LTC Jason Reese

Website: <https://www.mil.wa.gov/national-guard/army-guard/56th-information-operations-brigade>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/56thTIOG/>



STRATEGICALLY ALIGNED TO ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION



INFORMATION OPERATIONS READINESS CENTER

Broke Ground - October 24, 2013

Ribbon cutting - Sept. 29, 2015

Cost - \$27 million

Builder - Burns McDonnell

This 127,100-square-foot facility provides administrative, operations and specialized telecommunications spaces to serve as the headquarters of the 56th TIOG for the Washington Army National Guard. Designed for LEED Silver certification, the new facility features specialized administrative, planning, briefing and support areas to support the five operational units who occupy the facility. The work areas contain a mixture of command suites with self-contained private offices for each unit and large, open-plan workstation areas configured for a collaborative work environment. The facility at Joint Base Lewis-McChord reflects the character of the historic red brick facilities in the Old Fort District. The project was designed under contract with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Seattle District in collaboration with small business subconsultants Helix Design Group and AHBL. The project received a Seattle Society of American Military Engineers Project of Excellence Award and an Excellence in Masonry Award from the Masonry Institute of Washington.





BATTALION COMMANDERS' MESSAGES



110TH INFORMATION OPERATIONS BATTALION

Soldiers from the 110th Information Operations (IO) Battalion participated in the joint military exercise Ulchi Freedom Shield in South Korea, enhancing their IO skills. Units HOA 17, 18, and 19, along with ILIAD 2, conducted IO operations in their respective Areas of Operation (AOs). CPT 169 validated multiple CPTs nationwide and engaged in military-to-military engagements with the MDNG State Partnership Program (SPP) at the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina (AFBiH) Cyber Operations Center (COC). These efforts support Bosnia and Herzegovina's progression toward meeting NATO membership requirements.

The Maryland State Veterans Caucus visited seven armories, including the Annapolis Readiness Center, to observe how the 110th prepares for the future and how the state legislature can support the Maryland National Guard (MDNG) in these efforts. Additionally, the 110th IO participated in several recruitment and outreach initiatives, helping the state recruit for the National Guard and strengthen public trust and support.

Looking ahead the 110th IO Battalion will host the IO Symposium on 5 April 2025 at Fort Meade. HOA 19 & 20 and ILIAD 3 & 4 deployments will continue IO operations in their respective AOs. Soldiers will participate in PAC SENTRY, TALISMAN SABER, YUDH ABYAS, and the IO Olympics. The battalion will also train soldiers for FA30 and P4 qualifications, as well as conduct an IO Field Training Exercise (STX). CPT 169 will continue validating CPTs nationwide and supporting partnerships, such as the SPP with AFBiH COC and the Innovative Readiness Training Program with Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS).

- LTC Adam Kavalsky



122ND THEATER PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPPORT ELEMENT

2024 was a year of change for the 122nd Theater Public Affairs Support Element, changing out both commander and command sergeant major during the summer months. That didn't slow down the unit however, covering more than 45 events statewide, highlighting service members, units, and training. Most notably, stateside coverage of the 205th Regiment-led Officer Candidate School Phase III and multiple 81st Stryker Brigade Combat Teams Annual Training events. The unit also led the Thai-U.S. co-sponsored Cobra Gold 2024 Combined Joint Information Bureau, as the core component of the Joint function, in the Kingdom of Thailand, contributing to communications that built upon the long-standing friendship between the two allied nations and highlighted the robust multinational exercise promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific. In November / December the 122nd TPASE took part in Yama Sakara 87 supporting U.S. Army Japan and sent a PAO to Thailand and Malaysia for the Senior Enlisted Leader exchange. In 2025 the unit is posed to support multiple ODTs and SPP engagements as they continue to support the Washington National Guard.

- LTC Joseph Siemandel, Apollo 6



156TH INFORMATION OPERATIONS BATTALION

The 156th Information Operations Battalion continued its ongoing support to SOJTF-Levant while also deploying to USARPAC. Despite the demands of continuous deployments, the battalion successfully conducted OPERATION ATHENS, a complex, multifaceted collective training event. This exercise tested Soldiers' skills across a wide range of Soldier tasks, Army Warrior Tasks, and IO-specific tasks in both field and garrison environments. It challenged the scholarship, athleticism, and leadership of the Serpent Battalion while serving as pre-mobilization training. The event enabled the completion of numerous 1A-directed tasks and pre-validation requirements for mobilizing teams under the 1st IOC MRX.

As the battalion transitions from a staff augmentation role to units of action in FY25, it will continue planning comprehensive training events that meet diverse requirements within fiscal and time constraints. The 156th will remain the IO unit of choice for USINDOPACOM.

"We own the narrative"

- LTC Dan Wessman, Serpent 6



341ST MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION (LINGUIST)

341st Military Intelligence Battalion (Linguist) continued to strengthen its relationships with active duty and reserve units while fully implementing a sustained augmentation model in support of global missions. In FY24, the battalion supported USARPAC training objectives and partner relationship-building through participation in Yama Sakura, Cobra Gold, and Orient Shield. Additionally, the 341st deepened its integration with the 500th Military Intelligence Brigade - Theater, contributing to its LRPC and supporting the Asian Studies Detachment's OSINT mission.

Soldiers further developed their individual and team skills through collaboration with the 300th Military Intelligence Brigade (Linguist), engaging in the Polyglot Language Games, Panther Strike, and organizing the inaugural Valor Language Games. Expanding beyond the Pacific Theater, the 341st supported various agencies through the Federated Intelligence Program (FIP).

Looking ahead the 341st looks forward to supporting Yama Sakura again while building a new partnership with the 201st EMIB. The battalion will participate in Vigilant Pacific, a premier CI/HUMINT training exercise hosted by the 500th. Additionally, the 341st will continue leveraging real-world training opportunities through FIP and the newly created SIGINT Mission Manager position with NSA-Hawaii and the 715th Military Intelligence Battalion.

- LTC Rob Goertzen, Valor 6



SPECIAL OPERATIONS DETACHMENT - PACIFIC (SOD-P)

Special Operations Detachment-Pacific (SOD-P) continues to stay ahead of emerging challenges, preparing for any situation. In FY24, SOD-P executed Cobra Gold (CG) 24 CPX and CG25 Joint Exercise Life Cycle (JELC) events (ISS/IPC, FSS/FPC) in preparation for CG25 STFX. The detachment provided STAFF support to the Multi-National Force (MNF), facilitating synchronization and interoperability across forces in a Multi-Domain Operations (MDO) environment. SOD-P, with support from the 1161st, conducted Airborne Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEE) under the State Partnership Program (SPP), sharing expertise in airborne, pathfinder, rigger, and air assault operations with the Malaysian 8th & 10th PARA Forces.

As the warfighting environment evolves, so does SOD-P. A recent TDA change, incorporating Cyber and Information Operations (IO), has enhanced SOD-P's capabilities, ensuring it is well-equipped to tackle challenges in the Multi-Domain environment. With support from the 1161st, SOD-P stands ready for any mission, in any arena.

Looking ahead in FY25, SOD-P will continue to lean forward, planning and executing operations like Cobra Gold, Bersama Warrior, and supporting the Airborne SMEE exercise under SPP. The detachment is also preparing for an upcoming deployment in support of PACOM AOR forces.

- COL David Coughran, SEVEN 6



ALPHA COMPANY, 1ST BATTALION, 19TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP

A Co 1/19th SFG (A) continues to refine individual skills during its post-mobilization/reset cycle to meet buildup requirements for ongoing deployments across various theaters. The company successfully redeployed from CENTCOM, conducted BALANCE MINT, performed multiple airborne operations, and participated in several exercises to revalidate SOCCOM 350-1 skills requirements. A Co 1/19th SFG (A) is also advancing expertise in the SOF Space Cyber triad, focusing on multi-domain operations and integration.

Looking ahead A Co 1/19th SFG (A) is preparing for BALANCE TORCH with Thailand and initiating its CV2 Pathway for pending mobilization to SOCPAC.

- Maj. Will Wright, Ronin 6



56TH THEATER INFORMATION OPERATIONS GROUP

ENGAGEMENTS, TRAINING AND DEPLOYMENTS



NORTHCOM

WASHINGTON
UTAH
MARYLAND
PENNSYLVANIA
WASHINGTON D.C.



Soldiers from the 341st MI BN (LING) competed in the 2024 Polyglot Games held in Salt Lake City, Utah, February 2024. SGT Maria Hennessy was named Language Professional of the Year.

EuCOM

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
ESTONIA
GERMANY
POLAND



Four soldiers from Special Operations Detachment - Pacific and 1161st Rigger Detachment took first place at the 2024 LEAPFest in North Kingstown, Rhode Island.

CENTCOM

KUWAIT
IRAQ
SYRIA
JORDAN
AFGHANISTAN



110th Information Operations Battalion soldiers pose for a photo while supporting Ulchi Freedom Shield Exercise, South Korea.

AFRICOM

HORN OF AFRICA



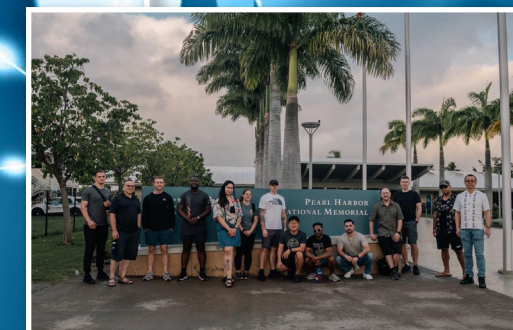
141st Military History Detachment, and 56th Theater Information Operations Group took Yama Sakura 87 (YS87) exercises in Japan from November to December of 2024.

INDOPACOM

KINGDOM OF THAILAND
MALAYSIA
SOUTH KOREA
HAWAII



Soldiers from Special Operations Detachment - Pacific attended a Joint Special Operations University Joint Planning Process course and subject matter expert exchange before Joint Exercise Cobra Gold 24 in Lopburi, Kingdom of Thailand, Feb. 19 through Feb. 22, 2024.



Soldiers from the 341st Military Intelligence Battalion travel to Pearl Harbor Memorial on Veterans Day prior to a two-week exercise with U.S. Army Pacific in Hawaii.



ENGAGEMENTS, TRAINING AND DEPLOYMENTS



Royal Thai 1st Special Forces Division and U.S. Special Operations Detachment - Pacific (SOD-P) attended a Joint Special Operations University (JSOU) Joint Planning Process (JPP) course and subject matter expert exchange before Joint Exercise Cobra Gold 24 in Lopburi, Kingdom of Thailand, Feb. 19 through Feb. 22, 2024.

The JSOU JPP course focused on aspects of special operations forces' (SOF) integration for Cobra Gold 24. The JPP determines how to use military capabilities in time and space to achieve objectives within an acceptable level of risk.

"Cross cultural communications present challenges and opportunities for special operations and this 43rd iteration of Cobra Gold is no different," said JSOU Professor Christian Ramthun. "Our bilateral partner the Thai Special Forces are without a doubt one of our strongest partners and their reputation of excellence is well deserved."

These subject matter expert exchanges, which JSOU in support of SOCPAC has participated in for over a decade, give both nation's forces the time to discuss and explore ideas prior to the execution of the exercise itself.

"This extra time can be invaluable in allowing the combined team to hit the ground running," said Ramthun.

Kingdom of Thailand soldiers saw JPP from an operational level for the first time.

"Normally we use JPP at the tactical level," said Lt. Khunanon Kumchan, assigned to Royal Thai 1st Special Forces Division. "It's good to focus on the operational level because it's a much bigger picture and more complicated, but it's good that we trained with the U.S. because they have a lot of experience to share."

The JSOU JPP course was important to Thai and U.S. SOF participants, helping to understand each other's missions and goals

"We can't separate into Thai only and U.S. only," said Kumchan. "When we come together we can have a shared understanding of what we're doing here, and it's that shared understanding that helps us work towards our goals."

There were some challenges while operating in a classroom environment but both the Thai and U.S. forces were able to synergize and work together.

"The communication barrier can be difficult to overcome," said U.S. Army Col. Dave Coughran, commander of SOD-P, which provides trained, prepared, and equipped augmentation to U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) and U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific. "However, time and proximity ultimately leads to synergies. We're excited to apply those during the exercise itself."



In an effort to build strong relationships among active duty and National Guard units, two teams from the 56th Theater Information Operations Group (TIOG) supported I Corps during Warfighter Exercise 25-02 (WFX) and Yama Sakura 87 (YS87) simultaneously in Japan from November to December of 2024. The two teams sent to the exercises – one two-person team that was mobilized in support of the USARPAC Theater Information Advantage Detachment (TIAD) and one eight-person Field Support Team (FST) consisting of traditional National Guard Soldiers from the 156th Information Operations Battalion (IOB) conducting their annual training.

"The mobilized team worked with the I Corps G39 (Information Operations) team for several months leading up to the exercises including participating in two Command Post Exercises (CPX) which gave the team an opportunity to work alongside the Corps G39 and subordinate division staffs and conduct planning for Non-Kinetic Effects alongside their active-duty counterparts," said LTC Serena Stanargo, Intelligence Officer for the 56th Theater Information Operations Group. "Their efforts to integrate with I Corps and subordinate divisions allowed continuous engagement with the scenario and provided critical connective tissue between I Corps and the incoming FST. This also enabled the FST to access planning documents and training events and ensured the travel and reception process for Army National Guard augmentees went smoothly."

During the exercise, 56 TIOG/156 IOB personnel filled critical positions on the I Corps G39 staff, serving as Deputy Chiefs of Information Operations (IO), Current Operations (CUOPS) OICs/NCOICs, Assessment Team Leads, Protection IO planners, and Multi-Domain Effects Cell (MDEC) IO planners. The team's hard work prior to the exercise enabled the incoming FST to quickly onboard to the team and learn the tactics, techniques and procedures used by I Corps to plan and execute Non-Kinetic effects including how to utilize Maven software to view and update the Corp's common operating picture. Additionally, the high-caliber FST brought practical knowledge from multiple deployments along with invaluable civilian experience, which offered unique perspectives to the active-duty team.

56 TIOG personnel serving as the CUOPS Non-Kinetic effects OIC and NCOIC represented I Corps G39 operations and activities during daily briefings to the I Corps commander. CUOPS personnel consolidated information force operations, coordinated G39 operations with other directorates, and managed the collection, notification, and reporting of significant activities (SIGACTS) in the operational environment.

"Our soldiers served a vital role in ensuring friendly forces captured reflections in the information environment that fed the Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) in the assessment process," said Stagnaro.

56 TIOG personnel also received training for Maven Smart Systems (MSS) C2 technology, which was deployed as the Corp's Common Operating Picture management system.

"The TIOG personnel served as subject matter experts for the I Corps G39 leading up to and during WFX and could be a valuable resource to train 56 TIOG teams that support I Corps in the future," said Stagnaro.

56 TIOG personnel were tasked to develop, document, and train Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) for I Corps G39 with the intent to create lasting processes that optimize capability and coordination. This included tasks related to assessment, collection management, targeting, CONOP development, approvals and authorities, and the integration, and synchronization of Information Forces. The resultant TTPs and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) enabled I Corps G39 to standardize their processes and rapidly integrate augmenting forces without disruption to the mission. Established procedures optimized collaboration between directorates, enhancing mission support to G39 planning and operations.

"TTPs and processes developed by 56 TIOG personnel produced demonstrable benefits to the Compo 1 force's capability to rapidly integrate augmentees, and to streamline planning, preparation, and execution of administrative and operational tasks in an operational environment of rapidly evolving crises and conflict," said Stagnaro. "Due to the constant turnover of active-duty personnel, a clear benefit of routine Compo 2 support is these TTPs, SOPs, and lessons learned will be retained at the 56 TIOG, where we can exploit the experience of our longstanding IO experts and ensure we carry the torch during transitions between our active-duty counterparts."





ENGAGEMENTS, TRAINING AND DEPLOYMENTS



COBRA GOLD 2024 - MARCH

10 members of the 122nd Theater Public Affairs Support Element provided coverage during Cobra Gold 24 throughout the Kingdom of Thailand. Special Operations Detachment - Pacific also provided support to an Subject Matter Exchange during the two week exercise as well.

Cobra Gold is a Thai-U.S. co-sponsored training event that builds on the longstanding friendship between the two allied nations and brings together a robust multinational force to promote regional peace and security in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.



KEITH L. WARE PUBLIC AFFAIRS AWARDS

Staff Sgt. Adeline Witherspoon, 122nd Theater Public Affairs Support Element was named the U.S. Army Military Photographer of the Year for the second time in just five years.

Every year, the Army recognizes the best of the best in Public Affairs during the annual Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Communications Awards Competition. With the amount and level of competition, making the cut for an award is considered an honor, and winning in a category is prestigious.

341ST VALOR GAMES

Soldiers with the 341st Military Intelligence Battalion (Linguist) put their language skills to the test during the annual Valor Language Games on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., Dec. 7, 2024. The Valor Language Games, named after the battalion's call sign and motto, "Vigilance and Valor", consists of three events, each testing intelligence soldiers on their expertise in tactical questioning, voice intercept/analysis, and briefing a senior office on the commander's priority intelligence requirements (PIR) they found during their questioning. Linguists are tested as individuals and as a team on their abilities to read, speak, and listen to the languages including Russian, Korean, Chinese, Spanish and French.



In September the Cyber Protection Team (CPT 169), 110th Information Operations Battalion hosted members from the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina Cyber Operations Center during a military-to-military state partnership program exchange. The Maryland National Guard and Bosnia and Herzegovina have been SPP partners since 2003.



FIELD SUPPORT TEAM OLYMPICS - JULY

During July drill the 156th Information Operations Battalion executed the annual Field Support Team Olympics. The winning Field Support Team was recognized during a Battalion MWR event for their hard work and dedication. The Battalion was able to execute a leaflet drop that had not been exercised by both the Aviation community or Military Information Support Operations community in more than ten years. Events during the Olympics included, air movement, physical fitness event, Information Operations related lane training.



A team from Special Operations Detachment – Pacific took top honors during Leapfest 2024, the largest military parachuting competition of its kind, hosted at North Kingstown, Rhode Island, July 29 to August 5, 2024.

Lt. Col. Denny Frey and Command Sgt. Maj. Brendan Headrick from Special Operations Detachment – Pacific supported by Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Phipps and Sgt. Jennifer Hernandezdiaz, 1161Rigger Detachment, took top honors against approximately 50 teams from 17 countries.

“To be the top paratroopers in a competition like this, going against some of the absolute best in the world is an incredible honor,” said Frey. “We continue to find ways to showcase the incredible talent and professionalism we have in SOD-P and the proficiency that exists within the National Guard.”

Hosted by the Rhode Island National Guard, Leapfest is the largest, longest-running international military static line parachute competition in the world. The purpose of Leapfest is to promote the camaraderie and esprit de corps of the airborne soldier through international competition. The competition is routinely attended by representatives from allied foreign militaries, as well as from the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps.

In addition to the Washington Army National Guard team taking home the top honors, the team also welcomed two teams from the Malaysian Army’s 10th Rapid Deployment Force which participated in the competition for the first time. In May, Frey, Phipps and other Washington National Guard members took part in the first hands-on airborne and air assault subject matter exchange with more than 75 Malaysian Army soldiers from the 10th RDF. Guard members were able to bring their expertise to Malaysia and focus the exchange on air assault planning and execution, including loading and unloading procedures from UH-60 Black Hawks and CH-47 Chinook aircraft, ground tactical planning, landing zone selection and other air assault planning considerations. The State Partnership Program subject matter expert exchange helped the Malaysian team gain proficiency that they were able to demonstrate during the event.

“Leveraging the SPP relationship and Airborne Operations SMEE to conduct a follow-on engagement at Leapfest was lauded by the Leapfest staff” said Frey. “While this was the Malaysian Army’s 10th Rapid Deployment Force first time participating in Leapfest, they competed well and are hungry for more state partnership engagements and opportunities to grow the relationship between Malaysia and the Washington National Guard.”

FAREWELL To OUR 2024 RETIREES



CSM Erik Clarkson
CSM Thomas Davis
MSG Angel Alvaradotorres
1SG Craig Gocha
1SG James Peters
SGT David Alexander
MAJ Servando Maldonado
MAJ Bobby Kelly
CPT Ben Burbank
CW2 Ben Steele



56TH THEATER INFORMATION OPERATIONS GROUP

110TH INFORMATION OPERATIONS BATTALION

156TH INFORMATION OPERATIONS BATTALION

341ST MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION

SPECIAL OPERATIONS DET. - PACIFIC

ALPHA 1ST BATTALION, 19TH SPECIAL FORCES

122ND THEATER PUBLIC AFFAIRS SUPPORT ELEMENT

~ *DEFENDING MERCURY* ~