

The Outpost

U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365

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YPG's Ammunition & Armaments Division provides full cycle handling of ammunition from cradle to grave

By Ana Henderson

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Ammunition & Armaments Division has the dynamic critical responsibility of handling every piece of ammunition at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground.

A&A is meticulous about the process that involves tracking ammunition from cradle – its arrival at YPG, to grave—its final disposition, whether that ends in detonation during test, shipping the item or in local demilitarization. This complete oversight ensures safety, accountability and readiness for every test program conducted at the Proving Ground.

Recently the Division managed by Anthony Gingras, received recognition for the quality of its ammunition processes and inspection procedures.

"YPG had zero findings for Explosive Safety, Ammunition Accountability and Surveillance during the September FY25 Department of Defense Munitions Logistics, Surveillance and Explosive Safety Review," explained Gingras.



U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground Ammunition & Armaments Division has the dynamic critical responsibility of handling every piece of ammunition at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG). The meticulous process involves tracking ammunition from its arrival at YPG, to its final disposition, whether that ends in detonation during a test, shipping the item or in local demilitarization. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Samantha Howerton Chief of the Ammunition Management Branch, leads the dedicated team who manages, tracks, codes, issues, prepares, transports and helps test officers in posttest required analysis in support of the installation's mission.

Initial drop off inspection

The first stop involves the drop-off, where the ammunition and the transporting truck is inspected and the ammunition inventoried. The truck is then escorted along a designated explosive transportation route to a

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ATEC Command Sgt. Maj. awards ATEC coins to YTC Soldiers & employees

U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command Sgt. Maj. Bradford Smith visited Yuma Test Center the week of Oct. 19 and spend time with the Soldiers from the Airborne Test Force. During the visit he toured their compound seeing how they pack, repair and rig parachutes. He then observed them jump. Smith also presented coins to those who stood out during the recent Falcon Peak demonstration.



Airborne Test Force Soldiers Sgt. 1st Class Cody Lavalla and Staff Sgt. Luis Espinoza.



Data Processing Branch's Coty Wright and Tyler Roberg and Capability Integrator David Bates.



Test Parachutist Program Manager for Airborne Test Force Joe Castillo for the exemplary work preparing ATF Soldiers for their mission. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

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Members of the Yuma Proving Ground workforce who use the Walker Gate for access to the installation will be rerouted starting Nov. 23, 2026. Instead of turning onto Imperial Dam Road (IDR), motorists will need to continue to Martinez Lake Road and use the Ocotillo Road (left) or the Laguna Road (right) access control points. The detour is due to a security project at Walker Gate with completion expected in May of 2027. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

Walker Cantonment gate security upgrade will cause detour

By Ana Henderson

Members of the Yuma Proving Ground workforce who use the Walker Gate for access to the installation will be rerouted starting Nov. 23, 2026.

Instead of turning onto Imperial Dam Road (IDR), motorists will need to continue to Martinez Lake Road and use the Ocotillo Road or the Laguna Road access control points.

The detour is due to a security project at Walker Gate, explained Acting Engineering Chief Stephen Hauser with the Directorate of Public Works.

"This is an Army-wide physical security project. U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground was selected as one of the sites to install active vehicle barriers."

Hauser notes that this is the first of three being installed at YPG. Each cantonment access control point will get this security upgrade.

While plans hope to mitigate backups, they are possible because the access point is a one lane in each direction and there's not as much standoff room from the road as the Walker entrance. The placement of the temporary guard shack will allow up to approximately 20 cars before backing up to Martinez Lake Road.

Chief of the Guards Isaac Soliz explained, "At the beginning we will be observing and seeing how traffic patterns are for those trying to get access to the gate and then we will find a contingency to make things smoother for everyone."

The plan also includes reducing traffic speeds so cars can safely turn left from Martinez Lake Road to access Ocotillo Gate.

Motorists should keep in mind that road work is still active on Highway 95, which is currently using flaggers and a pilot car to guide traffic each way using one lane.

IDR will remain open. There will be no interference accessing the Howard Gate for Main Post.

Hours for the Ocotillo Gate will remain the same as the Walker Gate, which is Monday through Thursday, 4 AM to 6 PM.

Laguna Gate hours are Monday through Thursday 3 AM to 9 P.M. and Friday 3 A.M. to 5 P.M.

The project is expected to take five months with completion anticipated in May of 2027.



Industry leaders wowed by YPG

YPG senior leaders gave a comprehensive briefing and tour to more than 20 industry and academia representatives in late October. The Army Permissive Test Range Expansion Initiative spearheaded by the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command prioritizes commercial access to specialized environments ideal for testing unmanned aerial systems (UAS), counter-UAS technologies, long-range fires and low-cost interceptors at several facilities, including West Cibola Range, a newly opened component of YPG within YPG's existing boundaries. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

The Silent Engine: How the Directorate of Public Work's people and teams sustains, operates, and maintains Yuma Proving Ground

By Donnett Brown

Do you ever wonder who keeps our installation running 24/7/365? From power grids and housing to testing ranges and flight lines, an installation is a fully functional city. Behind the scenes, the Directorate of Public Works (DPW) works around the clock to maintain, build, and protect the infrastructure our warfighters depend on.

An installation cannot provide power downrange if its critical infrastructure fails. From structural blueprints and 24/7 utility operations to environmental conservation and housing, the DPW is the force sustaining the garrison's built and natural environments. To provide a clearer look at how these complex operations directly enable warfighter readiness, this article series spotlights the leaders behind DPW's core divisions: Master Planning, Engineering Services, Operations & Maintenance, Environmental Sciences, Housing, and Business Operations. Through direct conversations with the division chiefs, we examine the everyday challenges, technical expertise, and silent dedication powering our installation's mission today and decades into the future.



Richard Trelease is the Division Chief of Master Planning / Real Property at U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground. The Master Planning & Real Property develop and maintain the Installation's Master Plan, executes Area Development Plans, and maintains strict legal accountability over real property assets, including land tracts, facility records, leases, and rights-of-way. (Photo by Donnett Brown)

Blueprinting tomorrow's Garrison: Inside Master Planning & Real Property: How real estate specialists map the installation's physical footprint decades before the first foundation is poured

The Master Planning & Real Property (MP/RP) develops and maintains the Installation's Master Plan, executes Area Development Plans, and maintains strict legal accountability over real property assets, including land tracts, facility records, leases, and rights-of-way. They also provide the foundational data and forward-looking framework that guides where facilities are built, how land is used, and how the installation will evolve to meet future mission requirements. Accurate real-property records enable proper funding, maintenance prioritization, and compliance reporting. Effective master planning prevents haphazard development and ensures infrastructure investments aligning with operational needs decades ahead. The result is an installation whose physical layout remains coherent, efficient, and mission-focused over time. Their primary impact lies in securing Military Construction funding, phasing out obsolete facilities, and preventing incompatible land use, thereby ensuring the installation's real estate directly accommodates evolving mission demands and new force structures. Operating as DPW's strategic compass, the team projects requirements five to 20- years into the future to guide all capital investment and construction priorities.

DPW chiefs shared some insight.

1. *Your team provides completely behind the scenes that most people on the installation take for granted—until something goes wrong?*

Behind every physical structure is a digital twin and a legal record. Our team manages the Real Property Inventory database. We ensure every square foot of land, utility line, and facility is accurately accounted for, properly categorized by Category Code (CATCD), and legally bound to the correct occupying unit.

Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization funding is directly tied to the square footage and CATCDs recorded in the database. If a building's record is inaccurate or outdated, the installation loses thousands (or millions) of dollars in maintenance funding.

2. *What is an unsung service your team provides that people rarely notice?*

Land actions and Encroachment Control: While people notice new construction, they rarely notice the preventative planning that keeps the installation's boundaries secure as well as keeping the installation within the legal guidelines regarding land use. The MP/RP team spends a large amount of time quietly managing land actions as well as interfaces between the installation and the outside world so that the military mission can continue without interruption.

3. *What is the biggest challenge your planners are tackling right now?*

Constant Policy and Guideline Changes: In an environment where rules and guidelines are constantly changing, planners struggle because they are trying to build permanent, long-term designs on shifting sand. This constant state of flux forces teams to stop looking ahead and instead spend all their time reactively fixing plans to meet the latest rule, which slows down projects and wastes valuable time.

4.*When personnel look at this installation a decade from now, what major footprint or facility changes will they see because of what your team is doing today?*

"While the MP/RP division directly influences the installation's physical footprint through strategic initiatives like the Facility Investment Plan, much of our critical work occurs behind the scenes. Although the direct connection between our daily operations and visible facility modifications may not always be obvious to the general population, the strategic impact is clear: our continuous efforts to refine real property record accuracy directly secure Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) annual sustainment funding. Ultimately, maintaining precise, audit-ready data not only preserves our current infrastructure but also significantly strengthens YPG's competitive position for future Military Construction project funding", explained Richard Trelease.

Coming up: In Part 2 we go inside the Engineering Plans and Services Division to see how civil, electrical, and structural engineers translate conceptual designs into durable, code-compliant, and energy-resilient facilities that stand the test of time.

Yuma Test Center Commander mentors local JROTC cadets

By Mark Schauer

New Army recruits are the future warfighters U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground's (YPG) developmental test mission will serve.

Most prospective recruits' knowledge of Army service is secondhand. If they're part of the lucky few, perhaps a parent or other close relative served. Others know of it entirely from television and movies.

One group of Yuma's young people has a better grasp of what the military offers. Though the Army's first presence in Yuma dates back to 1847, the community only recently became home to its first Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC). U.S. Army Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Kevin Hicks spoke to an assembly of the two-year old program's cadets at Yuma High School on October 21.

"If you want to do something, the Army and the other services will enable you to do that," said Hicks. "They will teach you how to be disciplined and how to take care of each other."

The Yuma Army JROTC program has more than 100 cadets and is led by James Branch, a retired Army Major who served at the Military Freefall School at YPG from 2011 to 2013, first as executive officer, then as commander. He had previously trained as a student in the school's basic course in 2009.



U.S. Army Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Kevin Hicks (left) speaks to Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) students at Yuma High School in late October. The Yuma Army JROTC program has more than 100 cadets and is led by James Branch, a retired Army Major who served at the Military Freefall School at YPG from 2011 to 2013. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

The program is a rigorous elective that requires cadets to maintain a respectable grade point average to participate in the program's extracurricular activities. From air rifle and drill teams to academic and physical fitness competitions, maintaining good grades allows a cadet to travel across Arizona competing against their counterparts in other high schools. The JROTC cadets also participate in various local ceremonies and other community service. Though successfully completing three or four years of the program allows a cadet to enter the Army as a Private First Class (E3), students with no intention of joining the military when they come of age also benefit from participating in the program.

"JROTC is not a recruiting tool of the Army," Branch said. "Some cadets do go on to join the military, but they also go on to be very successful in college or the civilian job world with the discipline and leadership they learn in the program."

At the conclusion of his presentation detailing YPG's vital developmental test mission, Hicks spent more than 45 minutes answering questions about Army life, his experiences as an infantry officer, and the different paths to joining the armed forces.

Senior Elisa Sanchez, the JROTC's executive officer, has been in the Yuma High program since its inception but got more heavily involved last school year when she joined the color guard.

"I thought it was really good," said Sanchez of Hicks' presentation. "I'm trying to start my process to join the Army and he gave me a different perspective of doing ROTC and going to college instead of joining right out of high school."

"The Q and A at the end really brought it home," added Branch. "It let the kids drive the conversation and ask the questions at the top of their mind to someone who is still serving. The more people you can bring in to talk to them opens their eyes to the opportunities that are in front of them."





HANDLING

FROM PAGE 1

secure location for further in-processing.

Offloading the ammunition

The next stop is Ammunition Logistics for checking in and offloading explains Howerton.

"Personnel either unload it at fixed docks or use portable docks that can be attached directly to the tractor trailer."

The ammunition's type and quantity will be verified and then taken to a storage facility.

Storage

The magazines, which are earth covered, are where the ammunition is stored. Howerton explains, "They are sited and engineered so that an incident in one will not set off neighboring magazines. Their doors are designed to blow outward, directing any force away from other storage sites and personnel."

Heading out for use

When a program is preparing to fire a test event and needs ammunition the process is started with a request.

"A test officer submits a request through the RTSS system. Stock-control specialists and ammunition planners review the request against the scheduled firing date and any required preparatory work, then determine when the rounds will be issued to an ammunition preparation plant," explained Howerton.



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The Ammunition Recovery Section better known as "Demo," are a section of specially trained veterans from all branches of service who provide support in the safe testing of ammunition at Yuma Test Center. Depending on test requirements, Demo has specialized tools, personnel, and procedures to safely retrieve ammunition that has impacted the range to further provide important test data. (Loaned photo)

Issue documents are created by stock control and verified by quality assurance personnel, then provided to the Storage personnel at the magazines so they can issue the correct type and quantity of ammunition.

Preparation at the Ammunitions Plants

At the Ammunition Plant the team prepares the ammunition to the specifications required by the test.

Howerton explains, "Specialists at the three Ammunition Plants prepare all the ammunition that is fired or tested at YPG. The New Plant handles everything from small arms to large caliber munitions and charges and supports most research, development, test and evaluation projects. The Old Plant focuses on MACS programs, as well as fuzes and mortars. The Inert Loading Facility fills inert rounds with wax, so they accurately simulate the weight and balance of high-explosive munitions without the hazard."

Howerton adds, "the three plants can do anything from modification, disassembly, reassembly, weigh, measure, or perform any other work a program requires."

Once the ammunition is prepared for firing it's transported by Chamber's personnel to temperature-controlled conditioning chambers until a test officer calls upon it for firing.

Firing time

Armaments Branch or Systems Test Branch Gun crews then fire the rounds at designated gun positions. At the conclusion of the test, Chambers personnel will return any unused ammunition to the plant for re-preparation or return to ammo storage.

Ammo Recovery, Range Clearing or Demil

When a round is fired the work doesn't end there.

"A test event doesn't end when the firing stops; it's just shifting gears to return leftover ammunition, reconciling the count, and possibly learning more about the item that was fired."

Depending on test requirements, the Ammunition Recovery Section has specialized tools, personnel, and procedures to safely retrieve ammunition that has impacted the range to further provide important test data. They are also specially trained to clear the ranges for personnel movement as well as perform demilitarization operations utilizing YPG's Open Burn/Open Detonation site – a munitions treatment facility permitted by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality- that allows safe and environmentally compliant disposal of residual test materials.

Through every state-arrival, storage, preparation, and final disposition-the Ammunition and Armaments Division ensures that the ammunition supporting Yuma Proving Ground's test mission is handled with precision, safety and accountability.

Children trick-or-treat at YPG headquarters





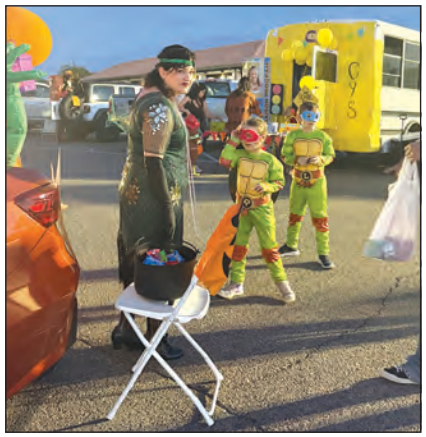


Children who take part in Yuma Proving Ground's Child and Youth Services after school program had a special Halloween "Trick-or-Treat" at the BROC building. On the afternoon of Oct. 28, the children made their way around the building making stops at the Command Group which sported Mario Brother's themed costumes, the S1 Directorate which decked out their hallway with a creepy Halloween vibe and the Plans and Operations Directorate who were happy to receive the tiny visitor. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

YPG Fall Fest a huge hit!



The U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground community came out by the hundreds for the annual Fall Fest on Oct. 30. More than 250 people enjoyed 15 different carnival games. MWR Outdoor Recreation took over the gym to run an indoor inflatables arena with bounce houses and obstacle courses, and IHG Army Hotels hosted the costume contest. A huge thank you to the BOSS Soldiers, Desert Oasis Communities, and the USO and Commissary for handing out free water, juice, and snacks. YPG Fitness Facility Manager Dani Compton said, "Events like Fall Fest really showcase what makes Yuma Proving Ground such a tight-knit community. Seeing our service members, civilian workforce, families, and garrison partners come together so seamlessly creates lasting memories and reinforces the supportive environment we strive to build every day across MWR." (Photos by Dani Compton)





Annual Spooky parade brings out all types of characters







Children filled the streets of U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) for the annual Spooky Costume Parade on the morning of Oct. 29. Children from YPG's Child Development Center and James D. Price Elementary School paraded around the community as they collected candy from community members lining the streets to see the display of spooky, funny and unique costumes. The YPG Fire Department, Police Department, Military Freefall School, Commissary, Army Community Services, IGH Army Hotel and other entities handed out candy. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

YTC Commander recognizes Maintenance employees

Yuma Test Center Lt. Col. Kevin Hicks visited the Combined Maintenance Branch on Oct. 21, for a town hall with employees. During the town hall he recognized several employees for their years of service and exemplary work.

Certificate of Appreciation



Robert Pinkerton

For Pinkerton's extraordinary performance while serving as an Industrial Engineering Technician. (Photos by Ana Henderson)



Jason Trepanier

For Trepanier's extraordinary performance while serving as an Industrial Engineering Technician who supported the design and fabrication of a prototype propellant canister remote drilling stand.

Certificate of Achievement



Jose Guevera

For Guevera's extraordinary performance while serving as an Equipment Specialist and supporting the Abrams, Light Weight Carrier project.

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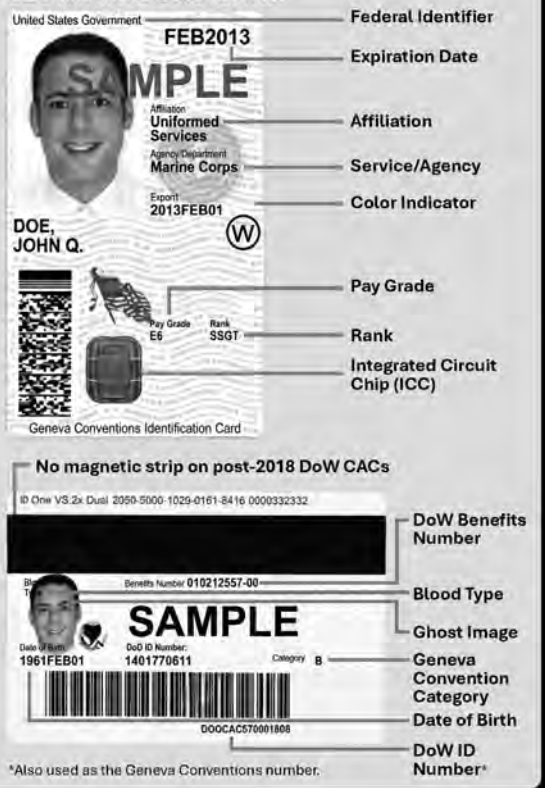
RED FLAGS

PRIMARY ID SUBSTITUTION
Suspect presents a Military/Civilian government ID (CAC) or VA card as primary identification and defers or refuses standard state-issued driver's licenses or state IDs.

COVERT COMMUNICATION
Suspect actively communicates with outside co-conspirators via hidden or discrete wireless earbuds/mobile phones while conducting the transaction.

TARGET PROFILE
Focuses on unauthorized withdrawals or drawdowns against established, high-balance HELOC accounts.

LEGITIMATE CAC CARD



*Also used as the Geneva Conventions number.

FRAUDULENT CAC CARD: Figure 1

Presented at a Georgia Heritage Credit Union in Pooler, GA



FRAUDULENT CAC CARD: Figure 2

Recent cards are difficult to detect with casual observation.



None of the cards collected have functioning ICC chips, so they cannot be used to access the DoW computer networks.

SUBMIT A TIP

REPORT SUSPECTED FRAUD: Contact local law enforcement and submit a tip to Army CID at cid.army.mil/Submit-a-Tip.

988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE
1.800.273.TALK

YUMA PROVING GROUND
SEXUAL ASSAULT 24-HOUR HOTLINE
928.920.3104

YPG observes Red Ribbon Week at Price School







Say no to drugs! That was the theme of Red Ribbon week, which students at James D. Price Elementary School observed Oct. 26, through the 29th, at. U.S. Army Garrison Yuma Proving Ground. The Army Substance Abuse Program Manager Bill Lloyd led the charge in organizing events each day for the children to get the message that drugs are dangerous. The week kicked off with a flag raising and opening remarks by Acting Deputy Garrison Manager Ron Van Why. McGruff the Crime Dog made an appearance, and the students signed a pledge to be drug free.





The educational fun continued with an obstacle course, where students wore goggles that simulated being under the influence. Students learned in a fun way why it's unsafe to perform activities while under the influence. Three Airborne Test Force Soldiers helped with the activity. (Photos by Ana Henderson)







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