

# Victory Times



*Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story*

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## U.S., Iraqi SGMs confer on enlisted corps



*Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, command sergeant major for the deputy commanding general for operations, United States Forces - Iraq, shakes hands with Iraqi soldiers after a training exercise on an Iraqi training site in Besmaya, Iraq, March 15.*

Story and photos by  
Spc. Charlene Apatang Mendiola  
USF-I Public Affairs

Working towards a common goal, the combined efforts of two international military organizations are achieving positive results.

For over eight years, U.S. forces and Iraqi security forces have functioned in a joint operating environment. The U.S. mission of advising, training and assisting will allow Iraqi service members to gain the skills to sustain their military force.

Although the results are progressing, the initiative to receive additional training and assistance is by far gratifying, said Command Sgt. Maj. Earl L. Rice, command sergeant major for the deputy

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## One step closer: property transfers to Iraqis continue

Story and photo by. Spc. Paul Holston  
USF-I Public Affairs

As the U.S. and Iraqi forces continue to further strengthen their cohesion, an official building and equipment transfer between the United States Forces – Iraq joint civil-military operations staff and Iraqi Ground Forces Command civil-military operations staff took place, March 12, at Camp Victory, Iraq.

The transfer of four modular office

structures was the first of its kind under Task Force Dragon, XVIII Airborne Corps. Col. Charles Heatherly, deputy chief for strategic effects, joint civil-military operations, USF-I. Iraqi Brig. Gen. Yassine Ali, director of IGFC's CMO, and 1st Lt. Mohammed Shakir, administrative officer for IGFC, signed the documents for the transfer of ownership to the Iraqi forces.

"We're transferring these buildings over to the Iraqis to increase their

capacity, especially towards the civil-military operations," said Sgt. 1st Class Keith Smith, a native of Toms River, N.J., the civil affairs noncommissioned officer-in-charge. "They're going to use these buildings for their own civil-military operations school."

"Staff Brig. Gen. Ali is responsible for the training of all civil affairs and operations in the Iraqi army as a whole,

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# Commanding General's Message

## Women's History Month Observance 2011

By Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III  
USF-I Commanding General



National Women's History Month gives us the opportunity to celebrate the achievements of American women. Women have honorably served in the defense of our nation from the days of the American Revolution to today's overseas contingencies operations. Women have willingly responded to their country's call in times of war and peace. Many contributions are characterized by individual and collective acts of self-sacrifice, patriotism, dedication, and personal heroism. The history of women is intrinsic to our nation's history.

The national theme for this year's celebration is "Our History is Our Strength." This year's theme will provide a special opportunity to celebrate women's contributions in a variety of venues.

This celebration provides a great opportunity to remember the many struggles for equality and dignity that women throughout history have endured. The efforts of many women have enabled our military to maintain combat readiness and become the nation that we are today.

The 2011 Women's History Month Observance will be held on March 24, from 4 p.m. until 5 p.m. at the Victory Base Camp Stage and all are welcome. All Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, Coast Guardsmen, and civilians are encouraged to participate in this event. Contact MSG Ronnie E. Blount Jr., USF-I Equal Opportunity Office, at 318-435-2235, or email: [ronnie.blount@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:ronnie.blount@iraq.centcom.mil) for more information and reservations.

## Chaplain's Corner

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) David Tish  
116th Garrison Command Chaplain

### Strengthening the soul

What is in your pocket or on your belt? Many of us carry with us a knife or utility tool of one nature or another, like a Gerber, Leatherman, or Swiss army knife. These tools have multiple uses. No one item can be used exclusively.

For example, I carry a simple pocket knife, worth about \$2.50. On a good day I can cut a piece of string or open a package. But say I want to repair a hinge that needs a screw tightened, or I need to hold a bolt

from turning with a pair of pliers. My knife doesn't have the means to do that, but with my utility tool, I just might be better able to accomplish the task. I need to use a tool that is designed to accomplish the mission.

Now let's say I want to work on who I am. I want to strengthen my soul. How do I strengthen my soul during my time spent in Iraq?? Can I go to the gym and work out on the elliptical machine, power bars, and treadmill or just go for a walk or run? Some of those might build my muscles or add flexibility to my joints, but I am not sure they would get the job done for my soul.

To strengthen the soul takes an

outside source. For many of us it is God. God strengthens us because he is full of riches. In the Bible, the book of Ephesians 3:16 says "I ask the Father... to give you the power to be strong in your spirits." As we face the battles of the day and the stresses of Iraq, the separation from family and loved ones, we need a helper. So just as you need the utility tool, so too do you need someone to strengthen your soul.

I challenge each one to take the time to look outward as well as inward. Look at yourself - to who you are and what you have to give. If you find you are coming up short, God is waiting there for you, willing to help.



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## Transfer, from Page 1 –

they're just beginning to build this capacity," said Heatherly, a native of Greenville, S.C. "He's got to have a place to train, so this provides a great opportunity to transfer what we have here that we're no longer using to Camp Iraqi Hero."

With the buildings now officially owned by the Iraqi forces and plans to use them for training, U.S. service members see how the Iraqis have made strides toward building a better force.

"It's kind of exciting and a unique opportunity to be here and witness this right now," said Smith. "When we work ourselves until the mission is complete; that makes success. I think we've accomplished that here."

"This signifies United States Forces – Iraq's commitment with the IGFC G-9, to further the expansion of their civil military operation," said Heatherly.

This handover is one of the many that service members will participate in as transfers to Iraqi forces continue and U.S. forces draw down throughout the year as part of Operation New Dawn. The receipt of buildings such as these, will allow Iraqi forces to continue to expand their area of operations further than the IGFC.

"This is just one small segment of the full transformation," said Heatherly. "They understand the impact that their army



*Iraqi Brig. Gen. Yassine Ali, director of IGFC's civil military operations, looks on as Col. Charles Heatherly, deputy chief for strategic effects, joint civil-military operations, USF-I, signs the documents for the building transfer of ownership to the Iraqi forces, March 12, on Camp Victory. The transfer symbolizes the first of its kind under Task Force Dragon, XVIII Airborne Corps.*

makes on their people."

"It's very exciting when I see this kind of cooperation between the USF-I Soldiers and our military," said Maj. Hamdan Laieth, chief of staff for IGFC's CMO. "We will use these buildings for our own training and this will help us establish a foundation that will expand throughout our Army. We will get started as soon as possible."

## *SAPR Spotlight*



American Soldiers are members of a band of brothers and sisters, bonded by Army values, duty to country and loyalty to each other.

As Soldiers and Leaders, it is our responsibility to set the climate and conditions where safety is promoted and where a fellow Soldier is not hampered by fear of sexual assault or reprisal against reporting a sexual assault.

**Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help. Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or DSARC.**

## SGMs, from page 1

commanding general for operations, United States Forces – Iraq, during a conference hosted by the Iraqi Ground Forces commanding general at the Iraqi Ground Forces Command, March 15.

Stemming from an invitation by staff Gen Ali Ghiedan, commanding general of the IGFC, both U.S. and Iraqi command sergeants major gathered together to share the roles and responsibilities of their positions in the military.

The gathering of senior enlisted leaders of both forces began at a training site in Besmaya where they observed Iraqi soldiers performing a training exercise. The briefings were later conducted by U.S. sergeants major on their duties and responsibilities within their divisions.

“In order to prepare them for internal and external defense, we must assist them with improving their NCO corps.” Rice said. “It is a powerful message to have the commander of the Iraqi forces make this request.”

As the Iraqi and the U.S. sergeants

major come together to discuss their duties and responsibilities, this will hopefully be the basis of a foundation for building a strong and stable force.

“We have put a lot more focus on the train-the-trainer mode,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Dailey, command sergeant major of United States Division – North. “One of our primary focuses is to not only provide the Iraqi army with a professional training setting, but also the capability to do that beyond our tenure here.”

“When we leave here, we don’t want it to end there,” he said. To accomplish that, the plan is to preserve our military traditions by training Iraqi NCOs as we do our own.

“We are here to give them the skills and abilities to conduct the training for follow-on battalions and brigades so that the Iraqi army will be able to sustain their proficiency,” he said.

Operation New Dawn holds a new focus and meaning to the collaborative efforts of the joint forces, said Command Sgt. Maj. Jonathan Hunt, command

sergeant major of the 18th Regiment, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, USD-South.

“We had gone from conducting unilateral operations – the U.S. was fighting counterinsurgency without the Iraqi assistance – to conducting bilateral operations – the U.S. and Iraqi partnering to fight counterinsurgency,” Hunt said. “The Iraqi army is now fighting counterinsurgency alone. “We are now at the support role of advising, training and assisting.”

As U.S. forces prepare to relinquish all responsibilities to the Iraqi forces, this conference could become one of many that will leave behind a legacy and empower Soldiers to look back at their contributions to this mission.

“Our Soldiers take pride in what they do,” Dailey said. “They feel rewarded for training the Iraqi soldiers and watching them advance.”

“The Iraqi army has developed tremendously over the years,” Hunt said. “This means that we are doing exactly what we were sent out here to do.”



*Iraqi soldiers stack along the outer perimeter of a building as they prepare to enter and clear the building on an Iraqi training site in Besmaya, Iraq, March 15. The soldiers participated in this exercise as a training observation for the Iraqi and U.S. command sergeants major from different divisions.*



# USF-I Soldiers teach Iraqi service members intelligence techniques

Story by Sgt. TJ Moller  
USF-I Public Affairs

Seventy Iraqi military personnel graduated from a military intelligence training partnership held at the Iraqi Ground Forces Command compound on Victory Base Complex, March 12.

The four-week course, taught by the United States Forces-Iraq military intelligence staff, covered topics including the intelligence cycle, advanced analysis, security program management and operational security.

The course was derived from the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence in Fort Huachuca, Ariz. said Chief Warrant Officer 2 LaMesha Harris, an all-source intelligence technician and officer-in-charge for the United States Division-Center operations team, USF-I. The program was implemented at the Taji training site, and then modified for this class.

Iraqi students learned basic military intelligence processes, said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Sharrod M. Bennett, senior intelligence advisor for the northern Iraq operations team, USF-I.

"The Iraqis were very receptive to learning new processes," said Bennett. "I

think the cultural and language barrier was difficult at first, but we fought through that. They didn't have a hard time understanding anything we were teaching them."

A concept the students grasped quickly was the red team analysis, said Harris. Red team analysis is taking all the information and thinking about how the enemy would use it, or how they would conduct an attack.

The course included Iraqi army and air force officers and enlisted personnel with a wide range of experience.

There were younger inexperienced soldiers who were willing to learn and there were older soldiers and officers that were in during the Saddam regime, said Harris. The experience levels varied greatly.

"I knew some of the information already, but I also learned a lot of new things," said Sgt. Usama Mohammad Hassan, an intelligence and security noncommissioned officer with IGFC. "We learned how to collect information and use it for my daily job."

"The teachers taught the class well," said Hassan. "The instructors set a good example for our intelligences officers."

Along with learning intelligence operations and procedures, the Iraqi service members learned about the different assets that the Iraqi Army and Iraqi Air Force had to offer.

"The class displayed the capabilities of both the (Iraqi) army and air force," said Lt. Mohammad Ghazi Abdula, intelligence officer with Iraqi Air Force Intelligence Headquarters. "The class showed that the (Iraqi) air force has imagery and reconnaissance capability that the Iraqi Air Force can use. We are going work together to support our daily operations in the future."

The course covered many topics and members involved with the partnership training learned more than the course intended as the American and Iraqi relationship strengthened. Intelligence operations were the focus, but the class members also learned about the capabilities that their military branches can provide.

"We did this joint partnership training to have a bilateral sharing," said Bennett. "Anytime we are able to get together and learn from each other I think that it solidifies the bond and commitment between our two countries."

## Wear Eye Protection



### Eye Hazards

- Harmful dust particles
- Chemical splashing or spraying
- High-intensity heat or light
- Direct or reflected sunlight
- Flying objects and projectiles

More than 90 percent of the Soldiers who sustained an eye injury either wore no eye protection at all or did not wear the appropriate eye protection for the mission.

Commanders and leaders must ensure all personnel are provided proper PPE, to include eyewear, for each job or mission. Personnel must understand "stylish" eyewear might not meet strict DoD standards that provide maximum protection. We cannot afford any more senseless accidents. The proper protective equipment is provided, WEAR IT!

# UNsung HERO



Spc. Devin Trujillo is recognized as this week's Unsung Hero and received a certificate of achievement from Brig. Gen. Michael X. Garrett, deputy chief of staff, United States Forces - Iraq, at Al Faw Palace, March 18.

Trujillo received the certificate for his exemplary performance as the United States Forces - Iraq, Joint Visitors Bureau, Personal Security Detail Team Leader and displayed the competence and confidence required of a noncommissioned officer.

## VICTORY VOICES

What team do you think will win the NCAA tournament?



*"UNC will win it because they're fundamental players and are familiar with the road to victory!"*

**Staff Sgt.  
Samuel Robinson**

*BN S-4 NCO  
HSC, XVIII Airborne Corps*



*"I'm going to go with Georgetown, because of my loyalty to the team."*

**Lt.  
Joseph Martin**

*Liason Officer  
Combined Task Force-Iraqi Maritime*



*"Pittsburgh from the Big East, the number one seed from that conference."*

**Maj.  
Tom Amodeo**

*Liason Officer  
4th Infantry Division (USD-N)*



*"Duke, they're the best team in the NCAA!"*

**Legalman 2nd Class  
Calvin Gordon**

*Paralegal  
Navy Legal Service Office*



# The USF-I Equal Opportunity/ Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office presents “Ask the EO”

Your equal opportunity advisor is here for you! However, sometimes the EO office is not the first place to find the solution you are looking for. The EOA will always try to help steer you in the right direction. There are a few things you can do before making the decision to seek the advice of the EOA.

First, and most important, be sure your issue is an EO issue. Does the problem fall into one of the protected categories? Is the issue discrimination based on color, national origin, race, religion, or gender? Are you being sexually harassed?

If it is discrimination based on one of the protected categories, you still have some steps to take before going to an EOA. Did you attempt to confront the offender? This can be done in a few ways: directly, indirectly or through a third party. Also, have you given your chain of command an opportunity to resolve the issue at hand? If you cannot resolve the issue yourself or with the help of your chain of command, contact your unit's equal opportunity leader. Your unit EOL is a valuable asset and should be utilized.

Finally, if assistance is still needed, it's time to contact your EOA. Service members have the right to visit the EO office to voice their complaints of unlawful discrimination and/or harassment. However, service members are encouraged to first try to resolve their issues at the lowest level.

## VBC Facility Operating Hours

**Sports Oasis DFAC**  
Breakfast 5:00 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
Dinner 5 - 8:30 p.m.  
Midnight chow 11:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.  
Sandwich bar open 24 hours  
Sunday brunch 7:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

**Education Center**  
8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

**Camp Liberty Post Exchange**  
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

**Camp Victory Post Exchange**  
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

**Paul Smith Gym**  
Open 24 Hours

**Victory Main Post Office**  
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**USF-I Unit Mail Room  
Customer Services/Mail Call**  
Daily 3 - 6 p.m.

**Al Faw Palace Post Office**  
Wednesday and Sunday  
12:30 - 5:30 p.m.

**Golby TMC Sick Call**  
Mon. Wed. Thur. Fri.  
8:30 - 10:30 & 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.  
Tues. and Sat. 830 - 1030  
Sunday - emergency only

**Mental Health Clinic**  
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

**Pharmacy**  
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;  
1 - 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

# Safety m a t t e r s

By Jesse Martin  
USF-I Safety Office

Safety doesn't happen by accident. Safety happens due to the presence and application of good leadership. Leadership is setting an example and once the example is set, good or bad, the organization follows suit.

Regular daily tasks such as driving to Baghdad International Airport, picking up the mail, cleaning your weapon or loading equipment must have safety as a first priority. The decision to be safe not only maintains good discipline and sets the standard, but it prevents accidents from happening.

Throughout Iraq service members are becoming safer, but the work is far from complete. Accident prevention and composite risk management are important, but the bottom line is readiness. When someone gets hurt in an accident, it directly affects the unit's readiness. Leaders understand the value of creating, promoting, and fostering a safe environment within their organization, promoting good health, morale and productivity.

A proactive approach to accident prevention demonstrates the importance of working safety into the culture of the organization. Anyone can make an on-the-spot correction, stop a potential personal injury, or life-threatening situation before it happens. It is important not to walk away, pretend that you didn't see it, assume someone else will intervene, or think it's not your job.

Safety is everyone's responsibility and requires the active involvement of all.

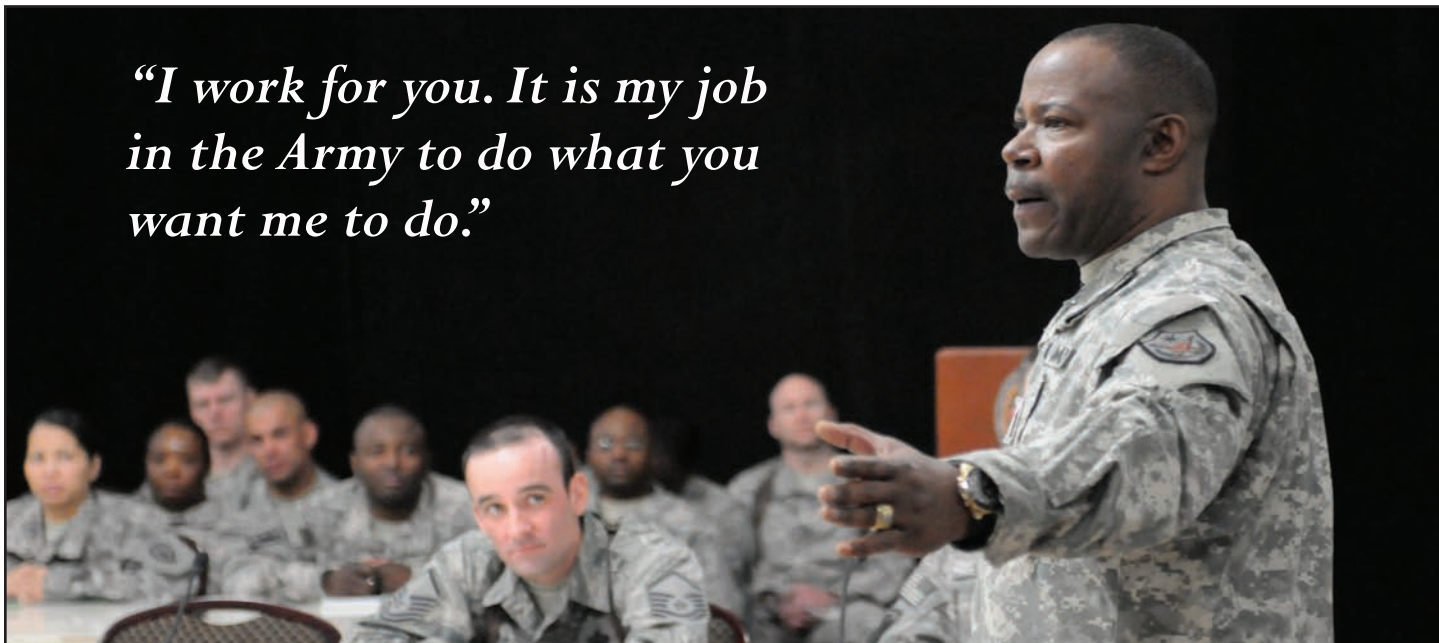
## Websites

**Check it out:**

**USF-I Web pages**  
[www.usf-iraq.com](http://www.usf-iraq.com)  
[www.flickr.com/photos/  
mnfiraq](http://www.flickr.com/photos/mnfiraq)  
[www.twitter.com/  
USF\\_Iraq](http://www.twitter.com/USF_Iraq)

**Facebook -**  
United States Forces-Iraq  
U.S. Army  
XVIII Airborne Corps  
Fort Bragg

*“I work for you. It is my job in the Army to do what you want me to do.”*



*Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, United States Forces-Iraq command sergeant major speaks to senior noncommissioned officers during a noncommissioned officers' professional development conference on Camp Victory, March 14. Allen hosted the conference to discuss upcoming changes in the military as well as address concerns from service members.*

## USF-I top NCO hosts professional leadership development

Story and photo by Spc. Charlene Apatang Mendiola  
USF-I Public Affairs

Quality professional development is a key component of a successful organization. The ability to learn and enhance oneself is a process that can be achieved through focused effort within the organization. Noncommissioned officers in the military are charged with upholding that responsibility. This self-improvement is the basis of strengthening the NCO corps.

Professional growth is the key to building an elite military force. To show the importance of that requirement, Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph R. Allen, United States Forces – Iraq command sergeant major, hosted a conference to meet with senior NCOs at Camp Victory, Mar. 14.

Hosting this conference is an opportunity to meet and interact with NCOs, said Allen. His primary focus is to ensure and verify that NCOs have a clear understanding of current operations and the changes the military is implementing.

The conference also served as a reminder that noncommissioned officers have a critical responsibility to develop and mentor future leaders.

“I expect you to take the points I give to you and share them with your Soldiers,” Allen said to the attendees. “It is your responsibility to keep them informed as it will help them accomplish their mission and end all rumors.”

“It is important that Soldiers are informed of the mission and current changes,” said Sgt. 1st Class Avery Fergerstron, first sergeant with Co.B, 86th Combat Support Hospital, Task Force 86. “The more your Soldiers know, the better well-rounded

they will be which will ensure their dedication to the mission.”

Throughout the conference, Allen pointed out issues that he has recognized throughout his deployment. They ranged from promotions, physical fitness, and awards to equality, suicide, and other service member concerns.

“I agree with Command Sgt. Maj. Allen about being focused on the mission and trying to get things done,” said Master Sgt. Rondall E. Burt, a human resources noncommissioned officer-in-charge with USF-I command group, “But we tend to forget about our Soldiers and their needs.”

“You are an elite group of people,” Allen said. “Develop yourself to the level that your Soldiers expect you to be.”

“NCOs are encouraged to meet frequently,” said Sgt. 1st Class Rhonda Shortsbrinkerhoff, an assistant joint inspector general with USF-I. “When NCOs come together, a distinct wealth of knowledge and information is shared which will benefit other Soldiers and the unit itself.”

“This business is all about experience,” Allen said. “If you learn from the right person, then you will get the best training you can get.”

Towards the end of the conference, Allen opened the floor to answer questions and address concerns. He encouraged the service members to speak out on what they expected of him.

“I work for you. It is my job in the Army to do what you want me to do,” he said. “If you don’t talk to me then I can’t help you.”

“It is not every day that we have this opportunity to talk with our senior enlisted officer,” Shortsbrinkerhoff said. “He wasn’t there to just give a lecture but to also listen to Soldiers.”