



401st Army Field Support Brigade

Task Force Sabre

Forward Deployed

“Strength and Honor”



Building it so they can leave—RPAT in Afghanistan

By Summer Barkley
Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM Afghanistan— A line of heavily armored mine-resistant ambush-protected (MRAP) vehicles is one of the iconic images of Operation Enduring Freedom.

These behemoths weighing upward of 25 tons are only one type of equipment that will eventually have to be moved out of the theater of operations. While highly visible, MRAPs are a relatively small number of the millions of items comprising theater-provided equipment that will be retrograded by the Responsible Property Assistance Team yards managed by the 401st Army Field Support Brigade’s battalions. Compounding this logistics issue is the fact that until very recently there were no RPAT yards in theater.

Theater-provided equipment is defined as specific line items designated by Department of the Army as permanent theater assets. Theater-provided equipment is essentially loaned to units while they are deployed and then managed by AFSBs for repair, reset or retrograde depending on condition and continuing need for the equipment in theater. Units generally turn in their TPE as they are completing their deployment and getting ready to return home.

“If we needed to pack up today, we would have to evacuate approximately 24,000 pieces of rolling stock and two million pieces of non-rolling stock,” said Mark R. Illg, 401st AFSB S-3/5 director and Sabre Operations Center chief.

“There was some retrograde equipment from units through theater provided equipment yards where equipment was staged,” said Illg. “There were no processes or site development in place when I arrived four months ago.”

Illg was put in charge of developing RPATs by Col. Richard B. O’Connor II, 401st AFSB commander to establish a Responsible Reset Task Force cell to track the original Army Force Generation process. R2TF was established in 2009 to ensure property accountability, enable total asset visibility, triage equipment forward, and provide timely disposition for equipment and materiel coming out of Iraq and may be extended to deal with equipment forecasted to leave Afghanistan. RPAT yards take a unit’s theater-provided equipment that has been deemed to be excess to the theater or in need of repair at depots that fall under the U.S. Army Materiel Command’s Materiel Enterprise framework.

Answering the initial question of should the 401st use the RPAT model developed by the 402nc AFSB in Iraq or develop a new design, O’Connor decided to leverage the best practices and after action reports and apply them to Afghanistan.

“As much as possible we will use the Iraq model of a 15-acre brigade combat team sized RPAT yard,” he said.

“Land is the biggest challenge,” he said, “but we’re moving forward.”

“It’s a lot to build from the ground up,” said Cheryl Wilkerson, deputy S-3 and RPAT subject matter expert. “There are many issues to be resolved – land, communications, software. We’re trying to build a solid foundation.”

Wilkerson said the 401st program benefitted from a visit by Lt. Col. Jeffrey Osadnik and Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Lamb who were instrumental in building up the RPAT program in Iraq.

“They flew out and brought all the lessons learned from Iraq,” she said. “They helped us determine all of the requirements for our RPAT program – how much land, how many people, what material handling equipment, in short, everything.”

“Based on the amount of theater provided equipment and the size of the area of responsibility, we determined that we needed 280 personnel to support 10 RPAT sites,” Illg said.

Wilkerson said getting qualified personnel is a challenge. The RPAT personnel still in Iraq would be ideal

staff for the 401st RPAT program, but they’re still involved in their own drawdown. Wilkerson hopes some of the veteran RPAT staff from Iraq will be able to accept positions here because they have the “knowledge of what right looks like,” she said.

People and land were only two of the issues to be resolved. RPATs also need material handling equipment, communications infrastructure, facilities and life support for the personnel.

Standing up the RPAT yards has required extensive work with Army Sustainment Command, Army Materiel Command, U.S. Forces Afghanistan, Joint Sustainment Command-Afghanistan and the Department of the Army Illg said.

“Our operational needs statement for MHE was the number one priority for DA and USFOR-A,” he said. “We got about 90 percent of the MHE we needed.”

Illg forecasts that the RPAT program will have about 150 people in place by April and expects to have the program at full operational capability by October.

“It may not be the perfect footprint, but we will be able to do what we’re charged to do – bring the equipment to wholesale,” Illg concluded.

The RPATs being put into place in the Afghanistan theater are pivotal actions for effectively and efficiently managing large volumes on equipment to support the Army Materiel Enterprise.



Vehicles in the Bagram RPAT yard await repair, reset or retrograde depending on condition and continuing need for the equipment in theater.



Task Force Sabre Command Group

"Strength and Honor"



Sabre 6 Overview



Task Force Sabre – it's a great team with an awesome mission! We're a huge organization made up of individual augmentees who came forward accept the challenge to support our Warfighters. I'm like the coach of a Pro Bowl football team charged with keeping 30,000 plus men and women of Task Force Sabre moving in the right direction. My roadmap for success is outlined in the Commander's Placemat. It's a simple tool for leaders and management that articulates what the Commander believes in and guides his strategic vision. It can take us as a unit where we need to be to provide excellent support to our Warfighters; and it's a tool that can take us as individuals to where we need to be to excel as leaders and accomplish our personal and professional goals.

My philosophy is summed up in two words – Strength and Honor. Our people are our Strength and it's an Honor to be here. Underlying my philosophy are the core values of being competent, confident and compassionate. Competence requires the technical ability or educational foundation to be able to carry out your part of our Brigade mission and the intellectual drive to continually learn and expand your skill set to better serve the Soldiers we support.

Confidence begins with competence and grows from the challenges we undertake.

Compassion, or putting yourself in someone else's shoes and thinking how we want to be treated, will lead us to treat everyone with dignity and respect and it values the strengths and differences of the individuals who come together to make up a strong team.

A strong team must be dynamic, ever-growing, ever-learning and quick to adapt to the changing environment in which we operate. Our strong team must also ALWAYS remember that we work for the Soldier on point who relies on our support every minute of every day.

Strength and Honor!

Command Sergeant Major's View



As my time here at 401st AFSB draws to a close, I want to thank each one of you for the support, guidance and time that we shared. The support you all provided me over this past year during this Global War on Terrorism was essential for all of us accomplishing the many missions we faced.

As I depart this assignment and prepare for my new assignment as the Brigade Command Sergeant Major for the 4th Sustainment BDE at Fort Hood, Texas, make no mistake - I have no regrets about this opportunity. I must say that this has been a challenging, educational and rewarding experience. I have had the honor and pleasure to serve with the Army's finest; those who also show their patriotism for our War-fighter by their many sacrifices to serve in theater away from their loved ones.

As I traveled around Afghanistan and had the opportunity to meet with many senior leaders and Soldiers across the Combined Joint Operation Area Afghanistan, many would mention to me how they appreciated what the 401st AFSB was doing or what a great job the Army Materiel Command was doing by providing them with great equipment and then sustaining that equipment. This gave me a sense of mission accomplishment as we support U.S. and coalition forces by providing them with what they needed to fight, win and survive. Everything we do in some form or fashion is to facilitate saving lives on the battlefield. The innovations of technology, fielding, training and sustainment of this equipment are only few of many things we do. Our continual interaction with the leaders and Soldiers, getting their feedback, suggestions and recommendation for improvements has made a difference.

Our Officers, Noncommissioned Officers, Soldiers, DA civilians and contractors are dedicated to what they are doing. However, one thing that I will ask for your support in is ending the false expectations from one theater to the next or deploying for the first time. If you're coming to Afghanistan and have spent most of your time in Iraq or deploying for the first time, don't expect to move directly into a CHU, be patient because the housing system does work. Traveling across Afghanistan can be challenging. Don't expect for one minute you can move easily or quickly from one place to another in the CJOA. You will soon find out that this is not the case here. It will take longer to get to where you want to go and you may have to wait a couple of days in order to back.

Finally, continue to provide the great support to the war-fighters, their success is ours. Additionally, continue educating units on what we do in supporting the Materiel Enterprise. Always remember to remain focused and vigilant. The enemy has a vote.

Strength and Honor!

Farewell Command Sergeant Major Rex A. Ray



Best of Luck at the 4th Sustainment Brigade!!!

Afghan shared maintenance mentor program produces new mechanics

By Sharon Strickland, AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade and Summer Barkley, 401st AFSB Public Affairs. Photos by Sharon Strickland.

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — An historic collaboration between 01st Sustainment Brigade, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, AFSBn-Bagram 401st AFsB and the Afghan National Army began March 1 when four hand-picked Afghan Soldiers began working side-by-side with U.S. military and contractor personnel at Bagram Airfield in a maintenance mentorship program designed to sharpen the skills of the Afghan Soldiers as vehicle maintainers.

The Afghan Soldiers from Forward Operating Base Gamberi are perfecting their vehicle maintenance skills to be able to maintain M1114 High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles being sold to the Afghan Army under a foreign military sales agreement. The program fulfills one of the top priorities for 401st AFSB Commander, Col. Richard B. O'Connor II and supports the overall counterinsurgency strategy outlined by Gen. David H. Petraeus, NATO International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces Afghanistan commander, in Field Manual 3-24, "Counterinsurgency."

"One of the most important missions in Afghanistan is to build the capacity and capability of the Afghan National Security Forces," said Lt. Col. Grant L. Morris, AFSBn-Bagram, 401st AFSB commander. "By establishing a shared maintenance program between Army Materiel Command and the Afghan National Army, Afghan Soldiers gain proficiency to perform maintenance tasks, from routine preventative maintenance to depot level repair on the M1114."

"AMC [Army Materiel Command] went from a strategic mission to a mission to grow maintenance capability," said Col. Michael P. Peterman, 101st SDBE commander. "Colonel O'Connor and the 401st are growing an Afghan logistics system."

Steve Crane, supervisor of the ANA M1114 shop said the Afghan Soldiers are eager to learn and they are covering drive train components, electrical troubleshooting and transmission troubleshooting. In all they worked more than 30 skill areas.

"They're learning almost everything on the 1114," he said.

"We came to learn very quick, time is short" said Afghan Staff Sgt. Hafi Zullah. "We learned how to fix transmissions, differentials and engines."

"When we go back to Gamberi, we can train other Soldiers," said Afghan Staff Sgt. Gul Rahman. "We are increasing our knowledge of basic maintenance for the vehicles."

Crane said each Afghan Soldier keeps a mentor book that is signed every day to certify that they have performed and understood the various maintenance tasks.

The Afghan Soldiers are accompanied by two U.S. Army mission maintenance mentors who began learning to speak Dari about six weeks before they arrived at Bagram. They live in the same tent with the Afghan Soldiers, eat meals with them and are with them in the shop area all day.



Above: Lt. Col. Grant L. Morris, AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade commander, meets Afghan Soldiers who will be in the inaugural session of a 45-day maintenance mentorship program designed to increase their skills and knowledge for maintaining M1114 High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles on March 4.



Afghan Soldiers participating in a 45-day maintenance mentorship program with AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade work with contractors to increase their knowledge and skills for maintaining M1114 High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles. Two vehicles that are being sold under a foreign military sales case were completely rebuilt by the Soldiers during the program.

"We learned a lot more (Dari) by living with them," said Staff Sgt. Kelly L. Green, one of the mission maintenance mentors from 277th Service and Maintenance Company, Georgia National Guard, assigned to 101st SBDE.

Kelly went on to say that the Afghan Soldiers read English language books every night after work and chow.

Spc. Matthew Todd, the second mission maintenance mentor from 277th said it's been an interesting experience and he will have a lot of stories to tell when he redeploys.

Editor's note: see related stories, Maintenance mentorship collaboration graduates Afghan vehicle maintainers on page 5 and Watching history unfold on page 10.

Maintenance mentorship collaboration graduates Afghan vehicle maintainers

By Summer Barkley, 401st AFSB Public Affairs.

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – Four Afghan Soldiers graduated from the inaugural session of the M1114 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle 45-day maintenance mentorship program during a ceremony held here April 13.

The mentorship program, a collaboration between 401st Army Field Support Brigade, 101st Sustainment Brigade and Afghan 201st Corps Logistics Kandek, is an example of the counterinsurgency or COIN strategy of Gen. David H. Petraeus, NATO International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces Afghanistan commander.

The vehicle maintainers worked on more than 30 skill areas that encompassed every aspect of maintaining the M1114 vehicles. These skills will be critical as the Soldiers maintain a fleet of M1114s being sold to Afghanistan under a foreign military sales agreement.

“The COIN strategy is all about the development of Afghan Security Forces,” said Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McHale, U.S. Forces Afghanistan deputy commander for support. “This is a classic partnership and a great initiative from the 401st, the 101st and CSTCA [Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan].”

McHale added that he hopes to see the program continue to grow and noted that the next class will have six Soldiers.

Col. Michael P. Peterman, 101st SDBD commander called the mentorship program a “prototype with potential to move out to all AMC [Army Materiel Command] locations.

“We are leveraging AMC civilians and contractors to grow Afghan logistics maintenance,” Peterman added. “This was good work by the AMC team.”

“We are looking to you to set the standards for those who will follow,” Col. Richard B. O’Connor, 401st AFSB commander said in his speech to the graduates and guests. “These Soldiers are truly the future of the Afghan nation.”

Col. O’Connor added that the next class will include more Soldiers and expand the skill areas. The execution of the maintenance mentorship program was managed by AFSBn-Bagram. Col. O’Connor said there are plans to expand to other FOBs (forward operating bases) supported by AFSBn-Bagram and to also expand to AFSBn-Kandahar and the FOBs they support.

The graduates received congratulations and coins from Maj. Gen. Hale, Brig. Gen. Phillip R. Fisher, Joint Sustainment Command—Afghanistan commander, Col. O’Connor, Col. Peterman and Lt. Col. Morris in addition to the congratulations of all attending the ceremony.



Four Afghan Soldiers from 201st Corps Logistics Kandek (kneeling) pose with distinguished guests including Maj. Gen. Timothy P. McHale, U.S. Forces Afghanistan deputy commander for support, Brig. Gen. Phillip R. Fisher, Joint Sustainment Command Afghanistan commander, Col. Richard B. O’Connor II, 401st Army Field Support Brigade commander, Col. Michael P. Peterman, 101st Sustainment Brigade commander, Lt. Col. Grant L. Morris, 3rd Battalion, 401st AFSB commander, and two Afghan commanders following the inaugural graduation ceremony held April 13 at Bagram Air Field for a shared maintenance mentorship program under the auspices of JSC-A, 101st SBDE and 401st AFSB

Engineer's idea saves time and money

By Timothy Wright, Aviation Engineering Directorate Theater Liaison Engineer, and Summer Barkley, Public Affairs Officer



Timothy L. Wright, Aviation Engineering Directorate theater liaison engineer, shows the CH-47F 08-08051 aft left side fitting tool to Lt. Gen. James E. Rogers, commanding officer, Army Aviation Life Cycle Management Command, during Rogers' visit to the Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group at Bagram Airfield March 14.

Photo by Summer Barkley

KANDAHAR AIR BASE, Afghanistan—A new mission-critical Chinook CH-47F helicopter sat idle at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan destined to be returned to a repair facility in the United States until a Department of the Army civilian came forward with a better idea.

The aircraft sustained damage to one of the aft pylon tension fittings critical to keeping the aircraft in one piece during flight. The damage consisted of two elongated bolt holes and one gouge located at the intersection of two holes within the fitting. The initial assessment indicated that the aircraft was not repairable in theater and would need to be evacuated back to the United States at great expense as well as removing the aircraft from the operations area for an extended period of time.

The fittings are integral to the Station 594 crown frame, which supports the pylon and tail cone. The damaged fitting is not replaceable by itself meaning the entire crown frame must be removed and replaced. This could cost hundreds of thousands of dollars in replacement parts and man-hours, including the cost of returning the aircraft to the U.S.

Timothy L. Wright, Engineering Directorate theater liaison engineer, developed a unique repair solution. To repair the aircraft, a machinist would ream the holes in stages gradually increasing the hole diameter until just past the depth of the damage. The fitting would be reamed on-aircraft, so a unique tool was necessary to assist in aligning the reamer with the damaged fitting while maintaining the hole positions. Wright designed the CH-47F 08-08051 aft left side fitting tool to augment the engine lug repair kit, which is readily available in theater. The alignment tool was fabricated and assembled by the Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group at Bagram Airfield and the repair was performed by the TASMG Soldiers at Kandahar Airfield.

AED approved the repair procedure and the installation of bushings into the oversized holes. The alignment tool and procedures performed as expected. The fitting dimensions were returned to their original state, allowing the release of the aircraft to the unit for immediate utilization. Coordination between the TASMG elements in Kandahar and Bagram was exemplary, and resulted in a complete repair of the Station 594 frame fitting within a three week timeframe. This effort was critical to keeping a valued asset in the fight, and resulted in significant cost savings.

Master Sgt. Gregory T. Kecken, noncommissioned officer in charge, Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group Kandahar (DET 3) uses the CH-47F 08-08051 aft left side fitting tool developed by Timothy L. Wright at TASMG at Bagram Airfield to repair a CH-47F aircraft at Kandahar Airfield on March 18.

Photo by Timothy L. Wright



Boston Marathon Shadow Run



BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Four runners and one walker from 401st Army Field Support Brigade and Logistics Civil Augmentation Program joined 313 others at 2 a.m. April 16 for the 2011 Boston Marathon Shadow Run for U.S. military held at Bagram Air Field. Following a controlled detonation of ordnance instead of the usual starting gun, the race began at 3 a.m. with runners dodging potholes, vehicles ranging in size from golf cart sized 'gators' to Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected vehicles and each other as they circled the installation three times. Shown above are Deborah K. Davis, Col. Richard B. O'Connor II, 401st AFSB commander, Maj. Virgel F. Christian, Raymund D. Manaois and Imogene (Jean) Brasic. Not pictured is Col. Eric Bermudez.



Feresher "Lesa" Rollins, a contractor for 401st Army Field Support Brigade AFSBn-Bagram volunteers at a water stop and provides a bit of refreshment to Debbie Davis during the Boston Marathon Shadow Run April 16.

TPE Planner debuts in Afghanistan theater

By Summer Barkley
Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan—Close to two dozen pieces of U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Life Cycle Management Command non-rolling equipment issued to 10th Combat Aviation Brigade went into the history books on March 20 at Bagram Airfield when they were put into the theater provided equipment planner web-based program. This was the initial step in the proof of principal for retrograde operations in the Afghan combined joint operations area.

TPE planner is a web based tool that automates tracking, vetting, redistribution and disposition of theater provided equipment. Like all equipment in TPE planner, these pieces of equipment were vetted at the division, U.S. Forces Afghanistan and Army Central Command levels. When determined to be excess, or not required by other units in the operations area, the information was relayed to U.S. Army Materiel Command and CECOM LCMC and disposition instructions were prepared at the LCMC level. After receiving the disposition instructions and gaining approval from the unit property book officer, the unit was allowed to schedule an appointment to take the equipment to the Responsible Property Assistance Yard where the responsible officer verified the equipment list and the wholesale responsible officer signed for the equipment. At this point, the equipment was no longer the responsibility of the unit that had been using it during their deployment. The equipment was then entered into the Army War Reserve Deployment System (AWRDS) which manages Army Prepositioned Stock. The last step was the equipment being shipped to the source of repair depot, in this case Tobyhanna Army Depot, designated by CECOM LCMC. Key throughout the entire process is that there is property accountability and visibility at multiple levels from the first keystroke of the TPE planner until the last piece is unloaded at the source of repair.

“This was the first total success, start to finish,” said Crispin A. Banda, Logistics Support Activity Liaison Officer for Operation Enduring Freedom. “This set the stage for success.”

Banda said TPE planner was deployed in OEF on Jan. 1, 2011 and he immediately began training and working with his team who will be working with the Soldiers. Units began using it soon after.

“I personally observe and certify all the instructors in theater,” he said.

TPE planner is part of the overall retrograde process but cannot be successful without all of the other parts functioning according to Banda. All the pieces must be in place – but he said the RPAT yards are the most critical. The RPAT yards are managed by the two battalions of the 401st Army Field Support Brigade.

Banda credits a team of people with this initial success: Rosemary Christman, inventory management specialist; Isaac Villareal-Carrillo, senior supply specialist, who input the equipment into AWRDS; Karen Sagaribay, wholesale responsible officer at the 3rd Battalion, 401st AFSB; and, Kevin Slaughter, general supply specialist, who is the TPE planner for the battalion.

Banda said this initial success will enable him to focus on developing his resources in other areas of the CJOA. Although he will be redeploying in less than two months, Banda is setting the stage for the thousands of items that will be retrograded from the operations area as coalition operations wind down and missions are transferred to Afghan Soldiers.



Crispin Banda, Logistics Support Activity liaison officer for Operation Enduring Freedom, (center) stands with the Rosemary Christman, AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, inventory management specialist, Isaac Villareal-Carrillo, senior supply specialist, Karen Sagaribay, AFSBn-Bagram, 401st AFSB wholesale responsible officer and Kevin Slaughter, AFSBn-Bagram, 401st AFSB general supply specialist, March 23. The team completed the proof of principle for Theater Provided Equipment Planner on March 20 when they successfully used the web-based tool to complete the first step in the retrograde, redistribution or reset of property excess to the theater.

New Stryker infantry combat vehicles arrive

New Stryker Double V-Hull infantry combat vehicles began arriving at Kandahar Air Field April 9. The new vehicles will be added to the Stryker family of vehicles to enhance Soldier survivability. Shown below are Stryker infantry combat vehicles already in use by units supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.



New MRAP recovery vehicles fielded

By Summer Barkley, Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Soldiers in Afghanistan whose job is to recover damaged or disabled Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected (MRAP) vehicles got a new tool in March when the first M1249 MRAP Recovery Vehicles (MRV) arrived in theater.

The M1249s don't fit into a standard tool box as they are military variants of wreckers used to tow commercial tractor trailers. Weighing more than 25 tons, the MRVs will enable Soldiers to recover every MRAP in use today.

Military instructors from U.S. Army Ordnance School, Track, Metalworking and Recovery Department deployed to support fielding the M1249s and are providing several training classes for the Soldiers who will be using the new vehicles.

The first class began April 4 with military instructors working with contractor instructors and two Soldiers slated to receive the first MRVs at the end of the 80-hour course said Sgt. Maj. Gene A. Sousa II, U.S. Army Ordnance School, Track, Metalworking and Recovery Department Sergeant Major.

"This is an 80-hour operator's new equipment class," Sousa said. "Future classroom instruction includes a 30-hour Fundamentals of Recovery Course and the 80-hour Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Course where Soldiers will earn the H8 recovery operations additional skill identifier."

"They're learning to use a new piece of equipment," said Ben Davis, lead contractor instructor for the first class. "There is a learning curve for the MRV ... but it's a bit more user-friendly [than other recovery vehicles]. It's designed to be very efficient for recovering MRAPs."

Davis called the MRV a "plus-up" that will compliment current vehicle recovery systems.

The MRV features a large capacity boom that can perform rear, front and side recovery operations in places where other recovery vehicles would not be able to maneuver efficiently.

Sgt. 1st Class Alvin V Beehler, chief instructor at U.S. Army Ordnance School TRMD and in theater, said he was surprised at the side pull capability of the M1249.

"My platoon will get the first one to be dispatched," said Spc. Billy H. Leach, 10th Platoon, 1221st Engineer Clearance Company, South Carolina National Guard. "There's not a recovery truck on the road that has these capabilities."

"The MRV will let Soldiers get in quickly and get heavy equipment out," said Staff Sergeant LeJuan D. Taylor, U.S. Army Ordnance School, instructor. "Soldiers will be trained to have a damaged vehicle connected and ready to tow within five minutes from dismount."

Henry Dick, a contractor instructor, said its good working with the Soldiers from U.S. Army Ordnance School, TMRD because they speak the same language as the unit Soldiers who are being trained. Additionally, contractors are picking up pointers on working with the Soldiers.



Above: Spc. Billy H. Leach, 10th Platoon, 1221st Engineer Clearance Company, South Carolina National Guard, watches the M1249 Military Recovery Vehicle rolls a derelict vehicle during new operator equipment training April 9.



Above: Staff Sgt. LeJuan D. Taylor, U.S. Army Ordnance School, Track, Metalworking and Recovery Department instructor, remotely operates the boom on a M1249 Military Recovery Vehicle April 11.



Right: Staff Sgt. Michael L. Lampley, U.S. Army Ordnance School, Track, Metalworking and Recovery Department instructor, demonstrates cutting a door from a vehicle to facilitate recovery operations April 9. This skill is part of the H8 Wheeled Vehicle Recovery Course.

Serving together



Deployments often mean family separation but some members of the 401st Army Field Support Brigade manage to hold family reunions in theater. Shown far left are James Hawk, SPO transportation and his son Sgt. Michael Hawk who was deployed with the 3-320th Field Artillery, 3-101st Airborne at Forward Operating Base Salerno. Shown near left are Martin Utzig, 401st deputy to the commander with his son-in-law Staff Sgt. J. Bradley Brown, 164th Military Police Company.

Those interested in submitting serving together photos can email them to mary.s.barkley@afghan.swa.army.mil. Photos will be used as space permits.

Lean Six Sigma graduates first class in Afghanistan

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Four 401st Army Field Support Brigade personnel were among the 20 graduates of the first Army-sponsored Lean Six Sigma training in Afghanistan on March 27.

Majors Frank Campana and David L. Padgett, Capt. Christopher Hoover and Melvin Outen completed the 40-hour class is the first step to attaining green belt certification. Certification also requires that prospective green belts compete a project using what they learned to deliver the results required by the project sponsor.

“They will leave a legacy,” said Martin Kennedy, black belt and instructor for U.S. Army LSS team. “They are working on projects that directly correlate to their jobs.”

All of the projects focus on logistics and have the potential to change the way both brigades do business on a daily and enduring basis.

Padgett and Outen are assigned to 401st AFSB and Campana and Hoover are assigned to AFSBn-Bagram.

The remaining green belt candidates are from the 101st Sustainment Brigade



Martin Kennedy, black belt and instructor for U.S. Army LSS team looks on as Capt. Christopher Hoover, AFSBn-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade is congratulated by Lt. Col. Grant L. Morris, AFSBn-Bagram commander, March 27 upon completing the first Lean Six Sigma training class to be held in Afghanistan. Maj. Frank Campana, AFSBn-Bagram; Maj. David L. Padgett and Melvin Outen, 401st AFSB, also graduated from the class.

LOGSA supports Warfighters wherever they're deployed

By Summer Barkley
Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM, Afghanistan—Crispin A. Banda is about two-thirds of the way through his sixth deployment as a Logistics Support Activity liaison officer. Far from counting the days until he returns to home and job at Redstone Arsenal, Al., he is introducing the Theater Provided Equipment planner tool to the Afghanistan theater of operations. That means training as many people as possible, setting conditions for success, and putting out fires and responding to unusual requests on a daily basis.

Fresh from completing the first complete TPE planner process from entering excess equipment into the TPE planner software to equipment heading to sources of repair back in the United States mission, Banda is looking forward to getting his program up and running at Kandahar Airfield. It's far from being just a desk job.

Banda and his team willingly fly out to remote units to provide remote TPE planner training and mission support throughout the combined joint operations area.

“There's a constant training need due to personnel changes,” he said referring to the need to train units for each redeployment. He also said the TPE planner system is being continuously updated in response to feedback from users.

Being forward deployed also comes with challenges such as complicated travel plans and routes; dealing with weather from snow-covered mountains, blowing dust, rain and extreme heat; and coming under fire while training units.

Then there are the completely unexpected things like an email he recently received from the Bagram Provost Marshal. A weapon had been found and the Provost Marshal's office had no way of knowing who the weapon belonged to. Banda was able to leverage LOGSA's data bases to discover that the weapon belonged to a National Guard unit that redeployed last

year. The weapon was on a Financial Liability Investigation of Property Loss report meaning that someone was potentially liable to have to pay for the lost weapon. But now, the weapon can be returned to the unit and another piece of Army property is properly accounted for.

Contact LOGSA: LNO DSN (318) 481-9649; BAF Lab 318-481-8578; KAF Lab 318-421-7713; email: AFSB_AF_LOGSA_SECTION@afghan.swa.army.mil



Crispin A. Banda, Logistics Support Activity liaison officer for Operation Enduring Freedom, talks to Command Sgt. Maj. Tom Geddings, 2nd Engineer Battalion and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Carmina D. Quintanilla, 2nd Engineer Battalion property book officer, at the 3rd Battalion, 401st Army Field Support Responsible Property Assistance Team yard. The 2nd Engineer Battalion is redeploying soon and has been working with Banda inputting their excess theater provided equipment into TPE planner. Quintanilla said Banda has helped the unit with their issues. This is the first time she has used TPE planner and the processes were new to her and other members of her unit.

Central Issue Facility—far from a routine mission

By Summer Barkley, Public Affairs Officer

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — One U.S. Army Civilian assigned to the Army Field Support Battalion-Bagram, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, deals with catastrophic and unusual circumstances on a regular basis.

Cherylann Mcfadden has been the property book officer for the Central Issue Facility at Bagram Airfield since June 2009. In that capacity she deals with more than 440 line items that fill 168 containers and a warehouse. Mcfadden also has annexes located at outlying locations. The items are “everything a Soldier gets for initial issue to come to a combat area,” Mcfadden said. Central Issue Facilities are normally managed by a Sustainment Brigade, but the 401st AFSB has been assisting the 101st Sustainment Brigade by providing the accountable officer for nearly three years.

While Soldiers receive a complete initial issue, there are many times when they need to turn to CIF for new equipment.

At one forward operating base, a container filled with Interceptor Body Armor and the protective plates used with the vest was hit by enemy fire and was destroyed. Mcfadden was able to have replacement gear assembled and flown in within one day.

“Having gear at the annexes makes that kind of difference,” she observed.

“An annex is a B-hut and 20 containers of sustainment stock.”

Mcfadden recounts a time when a patrol scheduled to last three days ended up snowbound and they ran out of clean and dry clothing. She was called at around midnight and at 3:48 a.m. Mcfadden and her team had 498 uniforms in duffel bags ready for a ‘speed ball drop’ to the unit from air support.

When President Barack H. Obama made his first visit to Afghani-

stan, Mcfadden and the CIF team assembled sets of Improved Outer Tactical Vests and helmets for the official party and had the equipment loaded on a truck to be available for use during the historic visit.

On a routine day, a supply sergeant brought his new commander to the CIF to introduce him to Mcfadden. Shortly into the conversation, she advised the new commander to send her a memo requesting a special type of boot required for his Soldiers. The boots, not available through Army direct ordering, would be critical when winter weather sets in and Mcfadden advised him to list the Soldiers names and sizes required because that will help her obtain the boots. Mcfadden’s approach was professional and her conversation for the Soldiers was so obvious that the only possible response was “Yes ma’am.”

Moments after the supply sergeant and commander left, a unit rolled in to turn in some excess and outdated equipment. Mcfadden’s team went outside to begin sorting Interceptor Body Armor, plates and helmets so they could be cross-checked against the paperwork and then turned in.

“I could not do the work I do without my team,” she said. “Most have been here for my whole tour (over three years). They have my back.”

Some of the unusual situations Mcfadden faces are somber such as the time an outpost was attacked and overrun by enemy forces. The unit suffered a number of casualties and lost virtually all of their clothing issue. The CIF team had to resupply the unit immediately. They were able to go online to access each Soldier’s clothing records and within 12 hours had filled duffel bags tagged with each Soldier’s name ready to fly out.

The CIF team is currently working on exchanging the standard Army Combat Uniforms for new Operation Enduring Freedom Camouflage Pattern (OCP) uniforms. They are also exchanging the ACU digitized pattern IBAs for OCP patterned IBAs. These exchanges will be handled at the main CIF, annexes and by personal visits to outlying bases.

Plans are in place for the CIF mission to transition to the sustainment brigade at the end of the current fiscal year.



Inset above and photo far left: Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Sharana participate in a direct exchange of unserviceable and damaged uniforms during Cherylann Mcfadden’s, Central Issue Facility property book officer, visit to the FOB in late January. Mcfadden will typically work with 800-1,100 Soldiers during a visit to an outlying FOB.

Left: Cherylann Mcfadden (center standing), Central Issue Facility property book officer, and some of the CIF team work with Soldiers from 1-134th Cavalry Nebraska National Guard, who are turning in excess and outdated equipment. Also shown are Maurice Shaw who is sorting helmets by size while Nanette Hartley checks paperwork.

401st Logisticians meet for first Integration Logistics Workshop

KANDAHAR AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – More than 40 members of the 401st Army Field Support Brigade gathered at the Kandahar Air Field AFSBn-Kandahar headquarters for the brigade commander's Acquisition Integration Logistics Workshop from March 7-10.

"The goal was to provide a forum to talk about where we are now as a brigade and where we need to be 12 to 18 months out," said Col. Richard B. O'Connor II, 401st AFSB commander. His plan was to "get things down on paper – what we do, how we do it and lessons learned."

"We have to create an organization to support this theater," O'Connor said. He added that the 10th Mountain Division is the 'main effort' and "our job is to support the main effort."

"You take care of every Warfighter in the CJOA [combined joint operations area]" said Command Sgt. Maj. Rex A. Ray. "We are a unique organization. We're not robust in green suiters [Soldiers] or DACs [Department of Army Civilians] but what everyone does makes the 401st unique."

The two-day conference was devoted to briefings covering the gamut of 401st functions from life support to logistics on the battlefield, but also provided a time for networking and putting names and faces together.

Focus on BLST Chiefs

The Brigade Logistics Support Team chiefs found the networking and opportunity to ask questions especially valuable. As a group, the majority were fairly new in the BLST chief role, their tenure ranged from about one week to 20 months, and took advantage of the opportunity to "drink from the fire hose" of logistics experience and begin shaping the future of the BLST chief role and function.

The BLST chief is the critical point linking the supported unit with the materiel enterprise. BLST capabilities and mission include providing Logistics Assistance Representative technical support from across U.S. Army Materiel Command; coordinating Acquisition, Logistics and Technology support; and, providing technical reach back for the supported unit.

"This is an opportunity to provide input into our own design," said Maj. Edward L. Sleeper, 4th Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) BLST chief since February 2010. "There are many variations on the BLST chief theme."

Sleeper also said he saw the conference as a chance to pay forward and shape the future by mentoring new BLST chiefs.

"This is especially informative because I just got here," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Joseph J. Neilko, 170th Heavy Brigade Combat Team BLST chief for about a week prior to the conference. "I can see what's coming up and capture lessons learned by others."

During a briefing on the Logistics Assistance Program, Martin T. Utzig, 401st deputy to the commander, said BLST chiefs are "the eyes and ears of AMC [U.S. Army Materiel Command] and technical conduits between AMC and their units."

Maj. Julius L. Boyd, 4th Infantry Division Combat Aviation Brigade BLST chief said he was glad to get to know "who's tracking LARs [Logistics Assistance Representatives] in my area and that they have my interests in mind." Boyd said he will continue as a BLST chief at his projected next assignment at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin and was interested in learning how to balance the training and establishing a knowledge share center.

Maj. Mary E. Fogarty, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) BLST chief since July 2009, was the most experienced



Above: Col. Richard B. O'Connor II, 401st Army Field Support Brigade commander, with Brigade Logistics Support Team chiefs and Logistics Task Force commanders March 8 at the 401st Acquisition Logistics Workshop at AFSBn-Kandahar.

Left: Col. Richard B. O'Connor II, works with Mark Illg, S3 director and Cheryl Wilkerson, S3 deputy during the 401st Army Field Support Brigade Acquisition Integration Logistics Workshop March 8.

BLST chief attending and said she benefited from the conference by talking to everyone in person. She said there is so much new right now with the introduction of TPE planner into the operations area and the stand-up our RPAT yards.

Property Accountability

Maj. Gen. Peter M. Vangjel, Third Army, U.S. Army Central Command deputy commanding general, Coalition Forces Land Component Command, attended several sessions and recognized some of the issues BLST chiefs and the RPAT yards face.

"Your standard should be a complete vehicle," he said in response to a question about units wanting to turn in equipment in an 'as is' status. "You issued a complete vehicle and you should receive a complete vehicle."

He added that the Theater Provided Equipment planner is the standard and provides internal controls.

"All eyes will be on Iraq at the end of 2011, to get people and equipment out," he said and then added that the focus will then shift to Afghanistan.

In a briefing on the 401st AFSB managed theater property book, Dennis M. Rutherford emphasized the size and complexity of property accountability.

"TPB [the theater property book] is now here from Iraq and is the largest property book in the history of the Army," he said. "Asset visibility is the heart and soul of the TPB."

Rutherford said the theater property book consists of 1,242 hand receipts, 1,960,343 line items and is valued at over \$14.9 billion.

Way Ahead

O'Connor said he was pleased with the outcome of the conference. He called it well-attended and said all of his objectives were accomplished. He also commented on the camaraderie that pervaded the two days.

"We leveraged the experiences of the BLSTs, LTFs [logistics task force], commanders, civilians and contractors to talk through challenging issues," he concluded.

Coalition partners overcome language barriers to get the job done

CAMP MARMAL Afghanistan — Scarce resources and a language barrier did not deter Maj. Julius L. Boyd, II in his mission to move containers at Mazar-e-Sahrif.

Boyd, Brigade Logistics Support Team chief for 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, had some office containers that needed to be moved, but he did not have the material handling equipment required to accomplish that mission. What he did have was access to services and material handling equipment of a German unit. The potential language barrier was overcome in the person of Mike Wood, a Communications -Electronics Life Cycle Management Command logistics assistance representative.

Tony Daniels, 4th CAB BLST logistics management specialist, orchestrated the moving pieces that included borrowing equipment and personnel from LogUBtL Instkp (MeS), a German unit in the area.

Woods initially coordinated with them in German in order to request the support required to complete this job and allowed all agencies to conduct daily and routine activities.

“With the assistance of the CECOM IT Switch LAR [logistics assistance representative] Mike Woods and his ability to communicate in German allowed a smooth transition and exceptional support from the German National Soldiers,” said Daniels. “A job well done!”

The German Soldiers assisting were OR-4 Jan Friemann, Oberstabsgefreiter, OR-4 Danai Golla, Stabsgefreiter, and OR-3 Sebastian Wartig, Hauptgefreiter. The German Battalion told the BLST team they look forward to working with our American organization again.

"I'm just glad Mr. Mike Wood can speak German!" Boyd said. "But I am proud and honored to be working side by side with the German Army to establish our layout the way it should have been."

Boyd’s BLST team is composed of specialists from four life cycle management commands that fall under U.S. Army Materiel Command, a logistics management specialist, contractors and the chief. Their mission is to support 4th CAB units in the northern region of Afghanistan.



Maj. Julius L. Boyd II, Brigade Logistics Support Team chief for 4th Combat Aviation Brigade works with a German Soldier at Camp Marmal to move office containers. Boyd was assisted by LogUBtL Instkp (MeS), a German unit in his area. He credits Mike Woods’ language skills as critical to making the move happen. Woods is a Communications and Electronics LCMC IT Switch logistics assistance representative.

Awards and recognition

Awards were presented to 401st Army Field Support Brigade personnel during ceremonies across the 401st area of operations in recent weeks.

An **Army Commendation Medal** was presented to Sgt. 1st Class Billy J. Graves on February 23 for exceptionally meritorious service in support of military engineer operations at Bagram, Afghanistan during the period Oct. 19, 2010 to Feb. 5, 2011.

End of tour awards were approved for the following departing personnel:

Army Commendation Medal

Master Sgt. Terry Walker

Superior Awards for Civilian Service signed by Maj. Gen. Yves J. Fontaine

Neil Euliano	Michael Guster	Mark Illg	Laurie Klevan
Darrian Gailes	Benjamin Harris	Bradley Jan	Ronald Slaughter

Commander’s Awards for Civilian Service

Thomas Anderson	Lena Cochran	James Hall	Tony O’Neal
Marvin Armour	John Cox	Marcel Hensgens	Jorge Rosales
William Barnes	Anthony Culbertson	Loyd Hodges	James Rowell
Wayne Beutler	John Curtis	John Hyatte	Robie Scott
Peggy Blakeney	Carlos Disla	Dale Kraning	Les Sermons
Gail Booker	Bradley Elkins	Erik Martin	Bob Smith
Steven Borkowski	Robert Enquist	Sergio Maldonade	Rodney Thomas
Brian Cannon	James Graham	Jerome McNair	Mark Vereen
Rosemary Christman	David Grissinger	James Michaud	James Wilson

Combat Action Badges awarded

KANDAHAR AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — A normal meal in the dining facility on January 19 led to Combat Action Badges for four Soldiers assigned to AFSBn-Kandahar, 401st Army Field Support Brigade at Kandahar Airfield.

The Monti dining facility was hit by an enemy rocket at approximately 6:30 p.m. and Chief Warrant Officers 2 Matthew P. Dress, Joel J. Hounshell, Jay L. Strande, and Sgt. 1st Class Timothy J. Sutter, who were eating dinner, were suddenly thrust into a scene of chaos and confusion.

The Soldiers joined others exiting the building after lying on the floor for the required two minutes.

“I then consoled the Soldiers that were worried about their buddies that were inside,” said Strande.

Strande said he had seen a Soldier crying because he didn’t know about his buddies who were still inside. He stayed with the Soldier until some members from his unit showed up and then helped direct ambulances to the casualty collection point.

The Combat Action Badges were awarded on March 9 by Lt. Col. Lee G. Lienemann, AFSBn commander during the 401st AFSB Commander’s Acquisition Integration Logistics Workshop held at the battalion headquarters at Kandahar Airfield. Brig. Gen. Philip R. Fisher, 184th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) commander and Brigade Commander, Col. Richard B. O’Connor II were among the first to congratulate the Soldiers and express their thanks for their quick thinking and action.

“Right after the explosion I thought how did that suicide bomber get in here. I thought that because the flash from the explosion was so high off the ground and I didn’t hear the rocket come through the roof, the first thing I thought was it had to be a suicide bomber,” Strande said. “When there wasn’t a huge reaction I also thought maybe it was a test for a mass casualty exercise. But then when people starting rushing over to the impact site, I realized it was real.”

The Combat Action Badge was approved by the Chief of Staff, Army on May 2, 2005 to provide special recognition to Soldiers who personally engage, or are engaged by the enemy. The badge recognizes Soldiers who do not qualify for the Combat Infantry Badge or the Combat Medic Badge. Unlike the CIB and CMB which require assignment to infantry, Special Forces, or medical branches the Combat Action Badge requirements are not branch or Military Occupation Specialty specific.



Chief Warrant Officers 2 Matthew P. Dress, Joel J. Hounshell, Jay L. Strande, and Sgt. 1st Class Timothy J. Sutter, AFSBn-Kandahar, 401st Army Field Support Brigade, wait to receive Combat Action Badges from Lt. Col. Lee G. Lienemann, Battalion commander, during an awards ceremony held March 9 at Kandahar Air Field.

AMC: the Army’s Lead Materiel Integrator

By Cherish Washington
AMC Public Affairs

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala. — The Secretary of the Army has designated the U.S. Army Materiel Command as the Army’s Lead Materiel Integrator in a March 22 memorandum, which changes how the operational Army will receive its equipment in the future.

With the designation of an LMI, the Army will standardize the process of providing materiel to the warfighter that was once managed by multiple organizations, databases, and people.

“The Army’s new approach for managing materiel is being designed to effectively and efficiently distribute and redistribute materiel to support the generation of trained and ready forces,” McHugh said in the memorandum. “It must represent a different way of doing business that will foster open communication, improve collaboration and eliminate redundancies in the process.”

This designation allows AMC to develop the single authoritative materiel data repository for the Army through an initiative called Logistics Information Warehouse, said Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody during a recent town hall meeting.

At one point in time, Warfighters needed to coordinate with multiple Army organizations to determine how to fill equipment shortages.

With the implementation of this designation, AMC is now the one point of contact for all materiel through the U.S. Army Sustainment Command (ASC), a major subordinate command of AMC.

ASC’s role will be to operate as the Army’s single materiel readiness synchronization point: receiving materiel requirements from the Army, and employing its Distribution Management Center, Army Field Support Brigades, and Directorates of Logistics.

The benefits of the LMI designation include the ability to provide total asset visibility and transparency, predictive analysis, elimination of redundant capabilities across the Army, and integration and synchronization of multiple efforts, enabling AMC to manage materiel at best value for the entire Army.

“This is probably one of the most transformational adaptations we have had at the institutional level that is really going to impact ARFORGEN [Army Forces Generation] and our ability to sustain and equip forces,” Dunwoody said.

401st Army Field Support Brigade

Col. Richard B. O'Connor II
Commander

Command Sgt. Maj. Rex A. Ray
CSM

Martin T. Utzig
Deputy to the Commander

Summer Barkley
Public Affairs Officer

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Strength and Honor

Watching history unfold

By Summer Barkley,
401st AFSB Public Affairs

BAGRAM— Afghanistan,

While all the focus was on four Afghan Soldiers who were graduating from the inaugural session of the M1114 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle 45-day maintenance mentorship program during a ceremony held here April 13, one U.S. Soldier stood quietly watching with a great deal of pride.

First Lt. Christopher E. Smith, 277th Service and Maintenance Company, Georgia National Guard, watched as the Afghan Soldiers, who he and his unit had worked with for more than 10 months, accepted the accolades that went with being the first to complete this new maintenance mentor program that was a

joint venture between 401st Army Field Support Brigade, 101st Sustainment Brigade and Afghan 201st Corps Logistics Kandak. While deployed, Smith's unit was assigned to 101st SBDE.

"I feel these are my kids growing up," said Smith. "There's a real value added here. Now they have the proper tools to continue learning."

Smith was part of a training team selected to go out and mentor Soldiers from the 201st CLK. Smith, the officer-in-charge of a combined action team, was charged with mentoring Afghan Soldiers in five skill areas – vehicle maintenance, allied trades, armament, power generation and communications and electronics.

Smith said he had 11 Soldiers who were mentors for the various sections but only two came to Bagram as escorts.

"We were told to drink the tea," Smith said jokingly. He added that his unit drafted memoranda of instruction and letters of instruction that will be left in place for follow-on units.

"I feel like we're part of history," Smith said.

Smith and his unit are scheduled to redeploy soon, but he said he is planning to switch to another National Guard unit and deploy to Afghanistan again later this year. He wants to continue helping to build self-sufficiency capability for his Afghan counterparts and continue to make history.

