



POWER LINE



Last convoys leave Iraq, turn-in ops surge 402ND AFSB relieves units in retrograde of historic proportions



Story and photos by David Ruderman, 402nd AFSB Public Affairs

CAMP VIRGINIA, Kuwait — The last U.S. Army convoys rolled out of Iraq Dec. 18 to meet a year-end deadline for the withdrawal of American armed forces from the country.

Units making their final runs down to Ku-

wait had been streaming into the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade's Redistribution Property Accountability Team (RPAT) yard at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, for weeks, and the last half dozen to arrive began pulling in during the early morning hours of Dec. 19.

POWER LINE

Moment of change for Power Team Forward

Commentary by Col. John S. Laskodi, Commander, 402nd AFSB

With the completion of Operation NEW DAWN and the arrival of a New Year, the Power Team Forward begins a new chapter in our history. The 402nd Army Field Support Brigade played a huge role in the successful retrograde of equipment from Iraq, one of the most demanding logistics operations in the history of our Army. The movement of more than 19,000 pieces of rolling stock supporting almost 50,000 Soldiers was conducted under an extremely compressed timeline between late October and mid-December. Complicating matters, this movement of equipment was conducted while forces were still conducting operations un-



der combat conditions.

The 402nd AFSB supported the retrograde with velocity required, while maintaining accountability and visibility of all the equipment. This operation will be studied for a long time to come and the team is proud to have played such a central part in such a tremendous accomplishment.

The job is not over until the equipment that must be reset is moved back to depots and arsenals, which will take several months. However, while we continue the process of moving this equipment back to the United States, the 402nd AFSB will shift our focus to supporting residual forces left in Kuwait and the other countries in the region we support. There is still a significant mission in Iraq under the U.S. Department of State that must be supported.

As we transition from the mission in Iraq, it is critical that we retain the lessons the Brigade has learned over the years so we can apply them to other situations. The experience and expertise gained dur-

ing Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and Operation NEW DAWN will be invaluable as our Army considers how to leave other areas, such as our planned transition of operations in Afghanistan.

The Brigade will concentrate on identifying and gathering those lessons and sending them to the institutional Army to train and educate future generations of logisticians. After a quick moment reflecting upon our accomplishments, we adjust our focus upon the continuing mission in the region and our next moment in history.

I was recently inspired by a ceremony in which Soldiers assigned to 227th Quartermaster Company re-enlisted. It is the kind of selfless service I see every day among the more than 15,000 Soldiers, Department of the Army Civilians and contractors of the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade. I am proud to be on the Power Team, with those who continue to volunteer serving our Army and the nation while Forward deployed.

POWER LINE



402nd Army Field Support Brigade
Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

Commander

Col. John S. Laskodi

Command Sgt. Major

CSM Robert A. Canterbury

Public Affairs Officer

David Ruderman

Submissions and suggestions can be forwarded to the editor, 402nd AFSB Public Affairs Officer:
david.j.ruderman@kuwait.swa.army.mil

This newsletter is an official publication authorized by Army Regulation 360-1 and does not reflect the views of the 402nd AFSB, Department of the Army, or Department of Defense.



POWER LINE



Soldiers from 3rd-1st Cavalry, one of the last half dozen convoys to cross Khabari Crossing out of Iraq, wait for the start signal to pull out of Four Corners and into the motor pools at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, Dec. 19.

LAST CONVOYS . . . From Page 1

Rolling down the camp's well traveled Ashburn Drive, scores of vehicles staged at the Four Corners, where safety and orientation briefings were conducted in advance of the equipment handover.

Once procedures were established and ground guides were in place, Soldiers began the slow drive into the Redistribution Property Accountability Team (RPAT) yard to begin the orderly disposal of their vehicles and their contents.

After disposing of diverse trash items, the returning units moved in the 402nd AFSB's Motor Pool 9 for joint inventory inspections of Basic Issue Items (BII). The designated hand re-

ceipt holder for each vehicle worked together with the RPAT yard officer in charge to verify their documentation, then staged the rolling stock by unit and vehicle type.

Soldiers staged their vehicles to prepare for lay out inventory and serviceability checks, then

conducted joint inventories and received in return a signed DA-

1348-I, their Issue Release Receipt, certifying the turn-in of Theater Provided Equipment (TPE), at which point they were relieved and released to find their billets and begin processing for flights to the United States.

Soldiers from 1st Regiment, 73rd Cavalry, arrived at Virginia after leaving from Camp Adder, Iraq, around 2:30 p.m.

They were among the last half dozen units to cross the Khabari Crossing into Kuwait.

"It was rough," said Sgt. Marcus Vela of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop. "I'm just happy to be here, to get it over with."

Vela and a handful of Soldiers were waiting around 3 a.m. to wrap up accountability process paperwork while most of their comrades had gone on to their temporary billets, showers and a meal at the camp's dining facility.

"It's been about an hour," said Vela. "Since they started it's taken them about 10 minutes to get to us. It's less than an hour at each station," he said.

The slight delay for the 1-73rd was due to weather, said 1st Lt. Robert Durr, 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion's night shift officer in charge at Motor Pool 9.

More LAST CONVOYS . . . Page 5

***"I'm just happy to be here, to get it over with."
Sgt. Marcus Vela,
1-73rd Cavalry***



Photos by David Ruderman, 402nd AFSB Public Affairs

New power from salvaged sources

Command Sgt. Maj. Kennis J. Dent (left to right, above), U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM), Command Sgt. Maj. Jurgen Williams, CECOM Logistics and Readiness Center, and Maj. Gen. Randolph P. Strong, CECOM commander, examine metal work during a tour of the CECOM Generator Repair Facility at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Dec. 16 as Allen Moffett, CECOM senior command representative, and Ken Thomas, generator facility manager, look on. Machine repairman Manjunath Mallya (left) works on restoring a muffler in the generator repair shop.



Photo courtesy of 541st CSSB

Re-upping at Camp Virginia

Capt. Lashell Davis (left), 227th Quartermaster Company commander, poses with Spc. Gregory Willis after re-enlisting Willis, Spc. Donquados Ponder and Spc. James Grohmann in a ceremony outside the company headquarters at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, Dec. 10.



Rolling stock awaits disposition in an overflow area at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, in the wake of Operation New Dawn. Between October and December, 402nd AFSB received more than 15,000 vehicles from units leaving Iraq.

LAST CONVOYS . . . From Page 3

“We got delayed by the heavy fog. They weren’t releasing anyone from K-Crossing (Khabari Crossing, on the Iraq-Kuwait border), but these groups we’ve got coming through tonight, we got them through quickly. These guys have been making up for lost time, trying to get these folks relieved,” said Durr.

“They treated us alright,” said Sgt. Justin Addison of FST, 1-73rd. “I’m ready for a shower.”

RPAT operations were quiet for a few hours after the 1-73rd were processed, but started getting busy again as the night faded and the final units began making their way down Ashburn Drive shortly after dawn.

Most Soldiers were clearly in buoyant moods as they worked their way through the final stage of handing off their equipment and getting ready to fly, among them Staff Sgt. David Salceda of Company C, 3rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion, who was finishing his fourth deployment to Iraq.

“This is the first time I’ve done this in Kuwait,” said Salceda. “They’re very proficient, having the various stages. It’s actually 100 percent better than when I came back in ’04; everything’s in stages.”

“It wasn’t tough at all, Sir,” said Staff Sgt. Jermaine Williams, squad leader with the company’s 3rd Platoon.

“You just play it by ear. Too easy, Sir, too easy. It’ll be even happier in a couple of days,” he said.

An NBC News crew was interviewing Staff Sgt. Justin Casson, also of Charlie Company, 3rd BST Battalion. He had spent most of his fourth deployment to Iraq as a combat engineer, hunting for IEDs on convoy routes.

“Up and down Route Tampa, the whole year and then some,” he said.

“It’s just like my first deployment, but reversed. Then, all the attention was on going in. It’s such a turn around. Now we want to make sure we document it for the history books,” said Casson. “But everybody sees the light at the end of the tunnel because we’re going home.”

As units processed through the RPAT lanes, Sgt. Grady Allen of 774th EOD, attached to the 3-1st Cavalry, was signing a DA-3161 with Deborah Martin, master supply technician with the 402nd AFSB’s Theater Property Equipment cell.

“I’m actually impressed with this office – the TPE office, RPAT office – how fast they get it turned around and pull it off our property books,” Allen said.

“No complaints here.”



Deborah Martin, master supply technician with the 402nd AFSB’s Theater Property Equipment cell, finishes up paperwork with Sgt. Grady Allen, 774th EOD, attached to the 3-1st Cavalry, at Camp Virginia, Kuwait, Dec. 19.