



DESERT VOICE

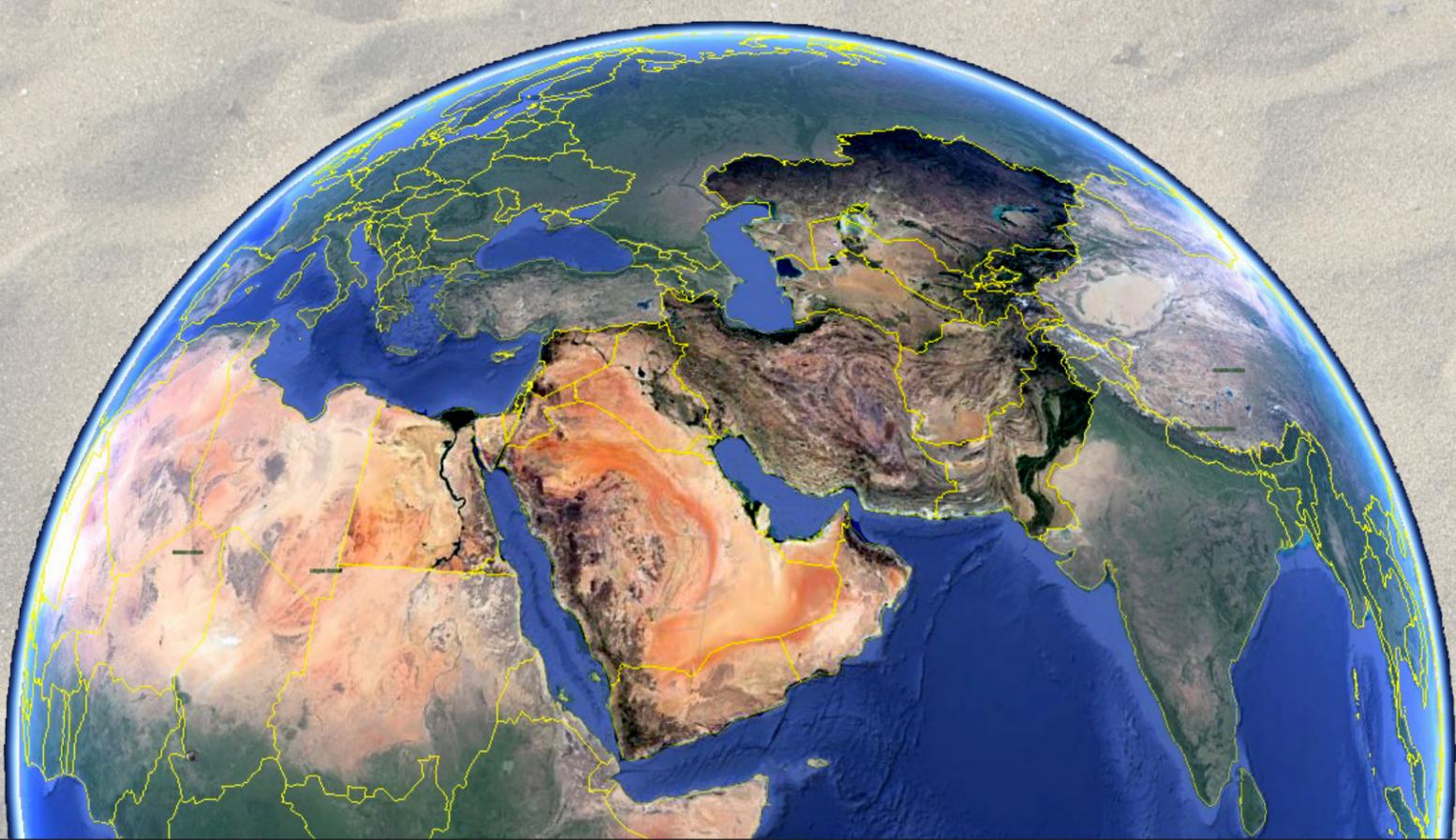


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U.S. ARMY CENTRAL

WINTER 2016

<<On the Front Cover



Troopers with the 2nd Squadron, 13th Cavalry Regiment, maneuver a Bradley Fighting Vehicle through the desert at Udairi Range, Kuwait, Sept. 27, 2016. U.S. and United Arab Emirate forces trained together during a multi-day exercise designed to test armored vehicle maneuver and reaction capabilities.

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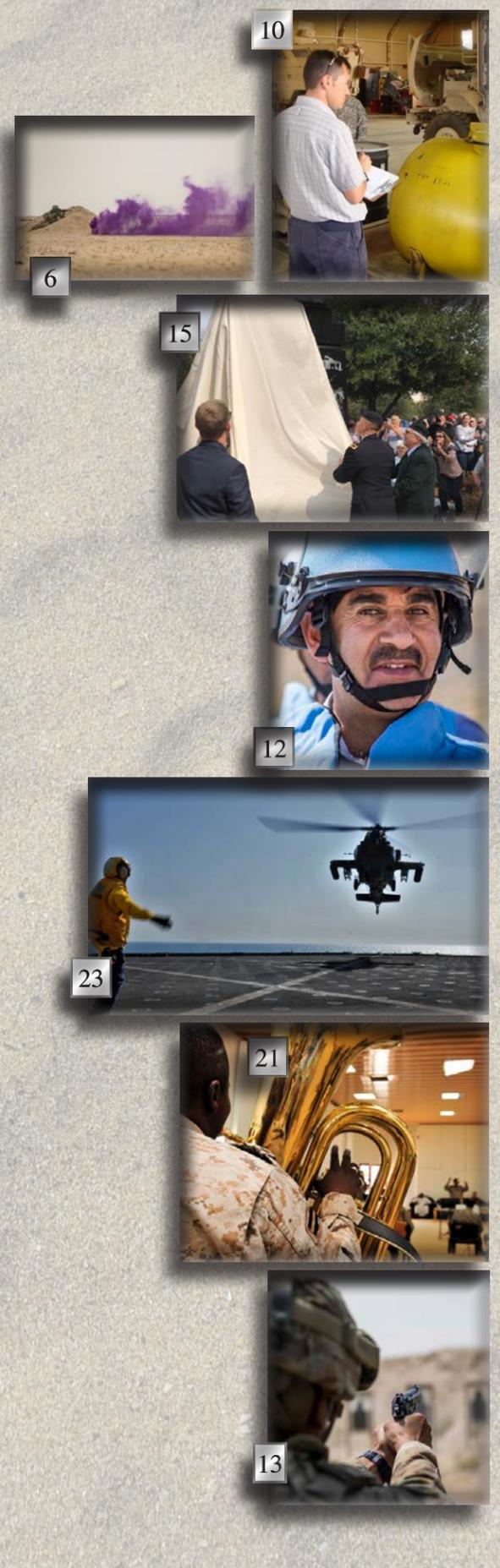
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Lucky 6: On Point

This assessment comes after one year in command of U.S. Army Central and I am proud to tell you that, thanks to your hard work, we are accomplishing all of our assigned missions. We are doing what USARCENT always does, prevailing in a tough environment. Over this year, USARCENT successfully transitioned from a primary focus on the Combined Joint Task Force-Operation Inherent Resolve mission to regaining our stride as a fully functional Theater Army/Coalition Forces Land Component Command postured through enduring presence and persistent partnerships to protect U.S. national interests in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility.

Last year I gave you four enduring priorities and in this assessment I will let you know how we are doing as a team. Hopefully this assessment will help you to more clearly understand my priorities and will help you execute your piece of mission command. To increase the communications value of this assessment, it is unclassified, so that we can share widely with all members of the team.

Due to all of the organizational changes and the AOR developments, our biggest challenge has been Transition and managing risk. Last month the headquarters converted to the smaller 5.4 Theater Army structure, but your efforts mitigated the possible negative consequences and are allowing us to regain our strategic focus. Headquarters, Department of the Army heard your communications and in response they raised our manning guidance category to “Urgent Forces,” considered our request for forces for a Regional Support Group, and gave us the provision of overseas contingency operations funds to hire both temporary and term civilian employees.

In a time of decreasing resources, that is significant support from above. From now on we need to be measured on what we ask from HQDA and ensure it is a mission critical requirement. The default, even if painful, is to source shortages internally. The fact is that this HQ will be manned with 539 Soldiers—we need to work on how, with only the structure we have, we are going to be able to meet our requirements to

CENTCOM and HQDA. The structure and organization of USARCENT may still change, and we must be open-minded to that change. We need to figure out what the much smaller forward footprint will be. We need to validate the contingency command post, understanding that without immediate joint augmentation we do not have the ability to transition rapidly to a joint task force or Joint Force Land Component Command.

Next month the 29th Infantry Division will take over as our first intermediate division headquarters (IDHQ) to mission command the five Operation Spartan Shield brigades. Designated TF Spartan, the IDHQ resolves our primary mission command issue, but will cause some fundamental changes to the HQ USARCENT structure and processes. This is a big change and I realize that we won’t get it exactly right at first. That is OK.

So far the transition to the 29th ID is going very well. We need to focus on improving the IDHQ, assessing the tasks we have given the 29th ID, and improving the transition to the 35th Infantry Division next spring and summer. We are grateful to HQDA and the Joint Staff for sourcing these IDHQs, but this needs to be a conditions-based requirement, enduring as long as the current conditions endure.

We are currently well postured to protect our national interests. We have opportunities to improve our footprint, and we are working with our partners, higher HQ, and Department of State to ensure an effective posture. We need to continue to work on gaining and maintaining the appropriate access and capabilities in theater including Integrated Air and Missile Defense, fires, transportation networks, and prepositioned stocks. We need to work harder to leverage the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation Management and Installation Management Command expertise including at Camp Arifjan, at the Kuwait Naval Base, as we look at improving Camp Buehring, and at our emerging requirements across the AOR.

Readiness, including preparing the environment, is always a priority, and I assess that we are on track. You are ready to fight tonight, and I am confident that

you will prevail in conflict—but we can get better. We will continue to build readiness in our assigned and allocated units, but readiness comes at a cost. We need to continue to work with Forces Command and First Army to ensure all units deploying to our AOR arrive with personnel and equipment that meet all Army standards. We also have to identify requirements earlier, particularly with Reserve and National Guard units who require more mobilization lead time.

We are providing all requisite support to OIR and Operation Freedom’s Sentinel and we will continue to do so, even at risk to our other missions. But we need to manage and clearly articulate that risk. And we need to capture and understand where we put Soldiers, and under what business rules, or we will lose accountability. Readiness also includes sustainment and I appreciate the entire team’s continuing emphasis on the many facets of sustainment across the AOR. Your efforts continue to make us the premier land force in the region.

For the past year the staff has been working on the specifics of a Regional Land Power Network that will build partner interoperability. I am waiting to see the analysis and specifics on how the new IDHQ and this HQ’s reduced forward presence affects this concept. Notwithstanding that analysis, I am directing the staff to continue to look at other ways to improve interoperability with our partners including relooking our entire liaison officer structure and our use of partner network communications.

The third enduring priority is Protection and I assess we are on track. Though overall this is going well, there have been several recent incidents directed against U.S. servicemembers, and that potential trend concerns me. Leaders need to be vigilant, and all member of the command need to be aware of their surroundings. Continue to coordinate our force protection practices including with our sister services and with the various embassies. We worked with the Multinational Force and Observers to adjust their footprint and posture, and now they are in a good place.

We are also analyzing specific force protection capabilities such as countering unmanned aerial systems and countering rockets and mortars. Don’t focus on systems as much as capabilities. Our AOR has great need for these capabilities, so we need to continue to work with higher HQ defining these requirements. Protection also includes caring for people and in this area we are doing ok. We continue to have isolated Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention training incidents—any incident is unacceptable and I need leaders to renew their focus on this area.

The fourth priority area is Communications. We are getting better at this, but there is much room for improvement. We need to stay synchronized across geography and time zones. My vision continues to be one command with one staff, dispersed with multiple nodes, but synchronized at all times. We also have more work to do to ensure we are consistent in voicing our concerns to the Army. We have many challenges, but none of them are insurmountable. As CENTCOM

Commander Gen. Joseph Votel has directed, we need to be comfortable with transparency and flat communications. Internally, the new SharePoint Portals and the Commander’s Communications Strategy processes are helping the headquarters, but we need to enforce predictability by following the battle rhythm and the standard six- week calendar lock in for events to the best of our ability.

One area in which we recently discovered a communications disconnect is in the lack of a common understanding of Operation Spartan Shield. Not everyone in this HQ, or in the Pentagon, understands that the purpose of OSS is to deter regional aggression and malign influence across the Middle East. The Joint Staff, through CENTCOM and HQDA, has allocated about 10,000 combat troops to that mission. While the exact mission statement is classified, I need you to reiterate that purpose and, via appropriate communications channels, communicate the specific mission. While assigned to USARCENT those OSS forces conduct training, and develop and maintain regional military-to-military relationships, but their primary purpose is to deter aggression.

Command Sgt. Maj. Eric Dostie and I have travelled to almost every country in the AOR and will continue key leader engagements. These KLEs and your senior leader engagements are critical to our theater security cooperation success, but we need to pursue opportunities for purposeful and useful interactions resulting in improved relationships, access and basing. We also need to ensure that we are consistent and fully disseminate the results of our engagements. We need to continue to strengthen allies and partnerships, Shape the environment and leverage mutually beneficial exercises, exchanges and interactions.

The future is uncertain, and change is constant, but in our AOR some things remain the same: both protracted struggles and conflict, and our work toward improving security and stability. In OFS, all elements of national power will stay engaged and integrated with the Government of Afghanistan to defeat al-Qaida and the Taliban. In OIR, the coalition will continue to gain momentum against Daesh. Iran will continue malign aggression. Russia will continue to be unhelpful. The Syrian regime will continue to cause mass dislocation. We will prevail, but I need you to be innovative and help identify solutions to the many problems in our AOR.

In conclusion, overall the command is doing great and you have made tremendous progress. Leadership is personal, and people, you, are our most valuable asset. I need your feedback on this assessment. Come talk to me, use my virtual open door on the portal, speak up in our commanders update briefs and battle update briefs, or send me an email. I am proud to be part of the USARCENT team. I will endeavor to give you my best effort every day and ask only the same of you in return. 🇺🇸

“Third, Always First!”
LTG Mike Garrett



Lucky 7: From My Foxhole

Greetings team! This has been a fast paced and exciting seven months for me here at U.S. Army Central. As I make my way through our area of operations, one thing always stands clear; you, the Soldiers on the ground, are having a huge impact on our mission success. I am very proud, and quite frankly, humbled when I get the opportunity to get out and talk with you. The incredible group of young men and women serving inspires me every day, and is truly the motivation that drives me to continue to serve.

The organization has been going through a challenging transition as we implement a new structure within the headquarters. For many of you this will be transparent, as you are out there accomplishing all that is assigned to you, but for all of the staff, dramatic changes are occurring. I ask that all of you be patient and remain focused on why we are deployed forward.

USARCENT is forward postured to shape the environment and set the theater in order to support operations in U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility. USARCENT is also tasked to ensure access and build partner capacity through exercises, engagements and exchanges that many of you continue to participate in. And while accomplishing all this, we must still be ready to deter adversaries within the AOR.

I commend you for the great work that you have accomplished and remind you of the impact you make on our partner nations. When a sergeant trains a squad of Soldiers from another country, that sergeant is the face of America. Those Soldiers will remember the professionalism, competence and abilities of the American Army. So I ask you to continue to "Export Excellence."

As I go around and talk with Soldiers, I often speak about individual readiness. This is an area where I could use everyone's help. As our commanding general lays out his vision and priorities, readiness is first and foremost. Where you can help is ensuring everything that you can influence is taken care of. Areas like medical readiness and dental readiness are easy to track on Army Knowledge Online, as well as immunizations and periodic health assessments. These are some examples of individual readiness that are easy to keep up with, yet we still fall short at times.

Physical fitness, rest and a healthy diet are also extremely important in regards to readiness. To maintain good health we must strive to find a good balance within this "Performance Triad."

When I am visiting with Soldiers, I always end my conversations with setting goals. For those of you in Kuwait, most of you will be here for nine months, giving you quite a good amount of time to set and achieve goals, but many have not sat down and thought about it. Take a hard look at those areas you would like to improve in your life. Be creative and take a holistic look at improving as a person and Soldier. You have the time, you just have to get after it.

Again, thank you for all that you do. I wish you all Happy Holidays, and hope each and every one of you have a safe, healthy and prosperous New Year.

"Patton's Own!"
CSM Eric Dostie



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/arcent/>

SQUAD LIVE-FIRE SYNCHRONIZATION

Story and Photos by Sgt. Angela Lorden

Infantry Soldiers, indirect fire infantrymen and forward observers with 77th Armored Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, conducted a squad live-fire exercise Oct. 31 through Nov. 3 at Udari Range near Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

The four-day training event synchronized the capabilities of ground infantry assets and indirect fire support to prepare for any mission U.S. Army Central requires.

“This exercise enhances USARCENT’s readiness,” said Capt. Chris Grauel, the commander of Charger Company, 1st Battalion, 77th AR. “We’re ready to fight tonight.”



Mortar Soldiers with the 77th Armored Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, hang a 120mm mortar round to provide indirect, suppressive fire for infantry Soldiers during a squad live-fire exercise Nov. 3, 2016, at Udari Range near Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Mortar fire was part of the four-day training exercise synchronized the capabilities of infantry Soldiers, indirect fire infantrymen and forward observers.

Soldiers were required to tactically move as a squad, react to enemy contact, call for indirect fire, assault and clear a bunker and hastily assume defensive positions.

“We have to be ready to fight where the Army needs us,” Grauel said. “Training maintains our ability to be ready at a moment’s notice.”

All of Charger Co.’s nine-man squads rotated through the training lane over the course of the exercise. Each squad reinforced their proficiency by executing a walk-through phase, a blank-ammunition phase and a live-fire phase.

“People learn through repetition,” Grauel said. “(Training) in this environment, in this climate, on this terrain, is great for us.”

While infantrymen performed their tactical movements, mortars were used to provide indirect, suppressive fire. Mortars are weapons that fire high-angle projectiles.

“Indirect fires allow us to get in close to the objective, so we can be effective with our machine guns and our small-arms fire,” Grauel said.

The mortar rounds were coordinated through radio communication by forward observers.

“When they call for rounds, I call the mortars,” said. Spc. Daniel Landry, a fire support specialist with 4th Battalion, 1st Field Artillery Regiment and a forward observer during the exercise.

“Everybody has to be on the same page in a live-fire shoot like this.”

Landry said the live-fire exercise provided him with authentic, hands-on training.

“We have simulators back in the rear, but out here we put that training to good use,” he said. “The best part is when it all comes together. You’re calling for those rounds and you see the impacts. You see the targets getting obliterated.”

Infantrymen heard the percussion of 60mm and 120mm mortar rounds hitting their targets as they assumed their tactical positions, adding to the realism of a combat scenario.

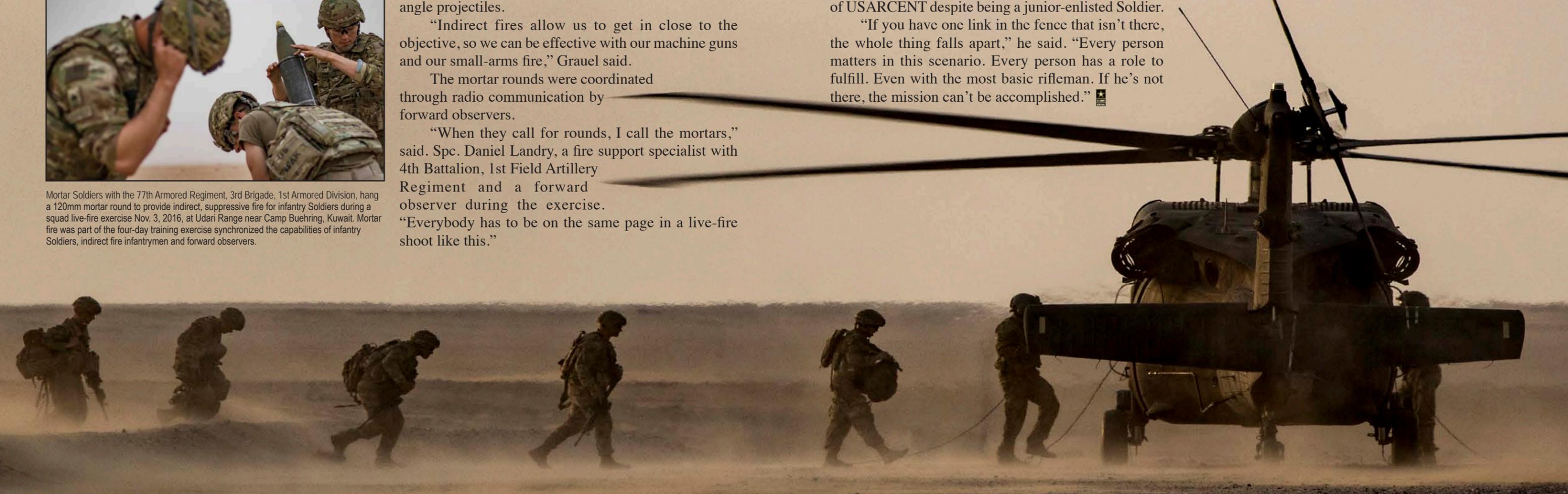
“This training is the best way to prepare for an actual event we’d have to respond to,” said Pfc. Michael Cameron, an infantry Soldier with the unit and grenadier of his squad. “It brings up our morale when we’re in an environment like this.”

Cameron said he believes he is an important part of USARCENT despite being a junior-enlisted Soldier.

“If you have one link in the fence that isn’t there, the whole thing falls apart,” he said. “Every person matters in this scenario. Every person has a role to fulfill. Even with the most basic rifleman. If he’s not there, the mission can’t be accomplished.”



Soldiers with Charger Company, 1st Battalion, 77th Armored Regiment, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, bound toward the enemy during a squad live-fire exercise Nov. 3, 2016, at Udari Range near Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The four-day training exercise required Soldiers to tactically move as a squad, react to enemy contact, call for indirect fire, assault and clear a bunker, and hastily assume defensive positions.



NCO WEEK

Story and Photos by Sgt. Brandon Hubbard

Sergeants from around the U.S. Army Central area of operations traveled to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, for the inaugural 160th Signal Brigade Noncommissioned Officer Week.

The weeklong celebration focused on junior and senior enlisted Soldiers with a special focus on their career development and the physical readiness that makes them the backbone of the U.S. Army.

“The best part was seeing the interaction of some of my noncommissioned officers — even some of the NCOs that came from different units — coming together to show the camaraderie and esprit de corps we need in the NCO corps to be together as one team and one fight,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Tara Washington, the senior enlisted adviser for the Camp Arifjan-deployed 160th Signal Brigade.

The week started with professional development courses, which included classes in financial planning and noncommissioned officer career instruction. The final two days were dedicated to welcoming new Soldiers in a traditional noncommissioned officer induction ceremony, followed by the NCO games.

“I would say another highlight, to me, was the NCO induction ceremony, because some noncommissioned officers haven’t been to a ceremony or even witnessed one in 10 or 12 years,” said Washington, of Goose Creek, S.C. “It was great to get back to what we do as an NCO corps.”

Washington said after years of being deployed to war zones, the Army has lost some of the traditions and standards it previously lived up to because of the high-tempo deployments schedules. Functions like NCO Week can help the

corps refocus, she said.

Top NCOs from the 392nd Expeditionary Support Battalion, 54th Signal Battalion and 25th Signal Battalion in Afghanistan traveled to Kuwait for the week, as well as Soldiers from Qatar and other bases in Kuwait.

Sgt. 1st Class Greg Ronquille, headquarters and headquarters detachment sergeant for the 25th Signal Battalion in Camp As Sayliyah, Qatar, was on hand to support his Soldiers.

“I was very proud of our Soldiers out here,” Ronquille said. “In this kind of environment, I find that we have more time to get in shape than when we are out in the field and providing communications in those conditions. So, we take the time to focus on that and build our NCOs.”

Fitness has become an increasingly important trait for signal corps Soldiers, he said, because of the expeditionary nature of missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

“From a grassroots perspective, I’ve been in for 19 years and this really brings it back to when I first pinned on E-5 (sergeant rank), but it is important for us NCOs to reinvigorate ourselves,” he said. “One of the things I plan to bring back to my guys is that NCOs are Soldiers who stay hungry and need to be competitive in their career fields to enable all Soldiers to be better.”

The final day was undoubtedly the most challenging for the four-Soldier teams who competed in the NCO Week games.

The sun was raising temperatures into the mid-90s when the teams started the competition with a four-mile ruck march with 35-pound packs. Some Soldiers opted to push the pace, running the distance before dropping their gear and starting the second event — a golf cart push around a softball field. A back-crawl, tractor-tire flip for 50-meters, mental challenges, a 100-meter water sprint and team water pallet move were among the list of the events that took between two and three hours to finish as a team.

Spc. Michael Machara, Sgt. Junior Lovo and Staff Sgts. Omar Gutierrez and Arnell Raynor from the 56th Signal Company won the overall competition.

“I’d say the hardest part was the ruck march, because the sun was out and I don’t do well in the heat,” said Machara, of Gaithersburg, Maryland. “When I got to the second hill, I definitely had to slow down and focus. But, just had to keep pushing.”

The specialist promotable said he enjoyed

working alongside senior NCOs and getting to see their dedication — especially because he sees physical fitness as very important in meeting his goal to serve at least 20 years in the Army and achieving the rank of sergeant major.

“It was an awesome experience,” he said. “Soldiers look up to their NCOs, so when they see them out here competing, I’m sure they will want to do it one day when they become senior leaders.”



Soldiers push a golf cart around a softball field as part of the NCO Week games at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Oct. 14, 2016. The subordinate units in the 160th Signal Brigade from Afghanistan and Qatar fielded teams to compete in the games.



Staff Sgt. Chris Polanco, from the Southwest Asia Cyber Center, pushes down a tractor tire during the 160th Signal Brigade NCO Week games Oct. 14, 2016, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The U.S. Army Central Soldiers, who support communications throughout the Central Command Theater, were competing for top honors as noncommissioned officers in four-Soldier teams.

Story by | Sgt. Aaron Ellerman

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental issues are an increasingly important concern for U.S. forces at home and abroad. If left unaddressed, these issues may cause negative impacts to the environment potentially creating life, health and safety risks.

Working with host nation partners through ongoing projects this past summer, such as the implementation of refined incinerators in Iraq, U.S. Army Central has paved the way to becoming a more Eco friendly force throughout its area of operations. In Kuwait alone several current projects are underway including construction of solar powered carpools at Camp Arifjan and planned distribution of a fleet of electric automobiles this fall.

“We must address the environmental issues happening around the world today because they don’t just effect us they effect everyone and its our responsibility to help,” said Jeffry Tripe, environmental program manager for USARCENT.



A Soldier inspects a soil sample at Camp Al Taqaddum, Iraq. U.S. forces are readily deployable to anywhere on the planet and have the capability to set up operations under very harsh conditions to meet the required objectives. A set of environmental guidelines is followed to minimize initial impact and alternatives that are more protective of human health and the environment are constantly implemented as operations transition from initial deployment into sustainment. (Courtesy Photo)

USARCENT is currently addressing environmental concerns by spearheading a cumulative effort overseas that is focused on mitigating impact, rehabilitating damage, promoting education, and implementing innovative solutions to better care for the environment that it is responsible for.

MITIGATING IMPACT:

The U.S. Army has an international presence with numerous installations and operations throughout USARCENT’s operational footprint. Caring for these facilities and the environment they inhabit is a top priority.

Hazardous waste storage areas and material redistribution centers play a major role in mitigating environmental impact to the surrounding areas. These facilities ensure proper disposal or reissue of unneeded or expired hazardous materials from around USARCENT’s area of operations.

These facilities have issued 2,393,264 Kg of supplies serving more than 27,000 customers resulting in \$25 million worth of savings and cost avoidance since 2011.

“Being good stewards of our operational areas reflects a positive image of how much we care for the host nations environment and shows our own desire to preserve and protect the environment,” said Col. Jeff R. Stewart, Area Support Group-Kuwait commander.

Working alongside host nation partners to create solutions to environmental challenges proves mutually beneficial and promotes strong relations.

“It is important to take care of our facilities and the environment of our installations abroad because we are utilizing borrowed land. At any time, the host nation can claim back the land they let us borrow, and it is our responsibility to return everything better than when we received it in order to keep good relations with the host nation,” said Stewart.

Waste streams originating from USARCENT facilities are continually monitored, tracked, and managed by USARCENT personnel through implementation of detailed policies, procedures, and command directives.

REHABILITATING DAMAGE:

U.S. forces are readily deployable to anywhere on the planet and have the capability to set up operations under very harsh conditions to meet the required objectives. A set of environmental guidelines developed by the U.S. Army and host nation environmental protection agencies are followed stringently to minimize initial impact and alternatives that are more protective of human health and the environment are constantly implemented as operations transition from initial deployment into sustainment.

“Initially, we may use treatment methods that are not ideal such as burn pits, but once operations become more stable we transition to optimal methods like incinerators whenever possible,” said Tripe.

USARCENT’s goal is to appropriately manage available resources, while maximizing operational capability, resource availability and well-being. This includes initiating actions to limit damage to the environment caused during full-spectrum operations wherever and whenever possible.

Recycling is one way USARCENT is limiting negative environmental impact and saving money.

Through the command driven Quality Recycling Program, Soldiers are able to help the environment and themselves through an individual effort.

“Soldiers should want to contribute on an individual level because it creates a healthy living, working and training environment. Additionally, funds that are received from the Quality Recycling Program go toward Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs,” said Stewart.



The importance of personnel participating in environmental stewardship cannot be emphasized enough. According to data collected by ASG-K during the past four-plus years, the Commander’s Qualified Recycling Program has returned over \$1.5 million to funding for MWR activities, and saved the U.S. Government more than \$20 million through cost savings and cost avoidance in ASG-K.



Spc. Zackary Larrabee, a U.S. Army Central Soldier with the 268th Engineer Battalion picks up trash at a beach cleanup hosted by Kuwaiti volunteers Oct. 15, 2016, at Umm al Maradim Island, Kuwait. The project allowed five USARCENT Soldiers to support the environment and spend time with their host nation. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Angela Lorden)

PROMOTING EDUCATION:

USARCENT has developed and implemented training to educate its current and future leaders about better ways to care for their footprints and understand their impacts.

“Our warfighters and environmental officers are our first line of defense when it comes to environmental stewardship,” said Sean Tucker, environmental training coordinator manager for Kuwait-Base Operations and Security Support Services.

The environmental training enables ARCENT to have a vast environmentally aware and informed presence throughout their area of operations, which spans 20 countries.

“We train those that have been appointed as the environmental officer so that the mission can be completed hand-in-glove with environmental compliance. Our training course is comprehensive and detailed. It focuses on compliance within the requirements outlined by the EPA, Army regulations and host nation requirements,” said Tucker.

The environmental training team performs over 180 monthly environmental assessments and annual audits on activities in ASG-KU alone and has trained hundreds of new officers during the past year.

The numerous environmental officers located throughout the area of operations work in conjunction with the USARCENT environmental training team to assess and provide regulatory guidance and assistance throughout the region ensuring department of defense and host nation environmental regulatory compliance.

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IMPLEMENTING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS:

The military has multiple programs that help improve the environment through innovation and technology, such as the Net Zero Program, where the goal is to reduce overall energy use, optimize energy efficiency, recovery and cogeneration opportunities, as well as offsets the remaining energy demand with the production of renewable energy.

“Treat the land, air and water as if it were in your own backyard.”

“Technology has to be at forefront to help address some overarching environmental issues,” said Tripe.

Within the past year, USARCENT has implemented several solar and wind powered generators across several installations, reducing carbon emissions, gas consumption and man power required.

Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, has more than 250 solar powered generators currently and plans to implement 1,000 in the near future. According to engineers replacing every lighting system alone with a solar and wind powered model would save approximately \$56 million a year.

USARCENT is also looking forward to several electric powered cars and has started installing solar panels on many existing carports to further harness clean energy.

“We must conserve our limited resources here on earth and utilizing clean energy is a great way to do that,” said Tripe.

USARCENT encourages everyone to do their part in helping to make a better environment for the future and employs numerous personnel to help facilitate this priority throughout the region.

“It takes a cumulative effort with a common sense approach to solve this issue. Treat the land, air and water as if it were in your own backyard,” said Tripe. 🇺🇸



A U.S. Army Central environmental waste employee checks the condition of a wastewater lagoon operation and management facility at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait. A lack of environmental protection, long-running conflicts, natural conditions and industrialization issues prove to be daunting challenges that the military is constantly working to overcome. USARCENT's goal is to appropriately manage available resources while maximizing operational capability, resource availability and well-being. This includes initiating actions to limit damage to the environment caused during full-spectrum operations wherever and whenever possible. (Courtesy Photo)

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Multinational Demining

Soldiers teach Demining Procedures in Tajikistan

Story and Photo by Sgt. Angela Lorden

“Fire in the hole!” a U.S. Soldier shouted behind a sandy berm.

A translator echoed the warning to the others also crouched behind safety.

A moment of silence.

The silence was followed by a deafening explosion that boomed through the mountains of Tajikistan.

This was just an exercise. No one was hurt in the explosion. But land mines, unexploded ordnance and explosive remnants of war contaminate millions of square meters of the Central and Southeast Asia region with the potential to maim and kill children, women and men.

U.S. Soldiers instructed 39 service members and civilians from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Armenia about proper demining procedures as part of the Humanitarian Mine Action training course Sept. 19-30 in Tajikistan.

“This course enhances regional security by training these individuals how to take care of enemy remnants of war that litter their lands,” said 1st Lt. Joe Gianino, an explosive ordnance disposal officer from the 723rd Ordnance Company in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and instructor for the course. “It makes their communities much safer. It makes their governments more stable when they’re able to give these lands back to their civilians.”

The program consisted of four phases. The first three phases included ordnance education and identification and explosive safety. The U.S. Soldiers taught the fourth and final phase of this year’s HMA course, which focused on improvised explosive device awareness and recognition.

“It’s giving different perspectives from different countries,” said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Wells, a U.S. Army Central EOD officer and the program manager of the course. “The way I solve an EOD problem is not the same that an Afghan would. It encourages that learning environment.”

Participants graduated the course with an international certification, qualifying them to ease human suffering by serving their countries in a mine-action capacity. The certificate is in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards.

“This is the second class that has finished our program,” Wells said.

The program was initiated late 2014, following

USARCENT’s and the U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan’s recommendation. With U.S. Central Command’s permission, the program was coordinated with the embassy and Defense Security Cooperation Agency.

“By utilizing overseas humanitarian, disaster and civic-aid funding, we are able to provide training aides, equipment and develop material,” Wells said.

The program was designed around the “train the trainer” model.

“We are creating instructors that return and teach future classes,” Wells said. “The end goal is to have a sustainable and self-enduring regional explosives hazards center, ran by the Tajikistan Ministry of Defense with partners from Kazakhstan, Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan.”

The center is scheduled to be finalized by 2018.

“Landmines, unexploded ordnance and ERWs are not just problems throughout the region, but throughout the world,” Wells said. “They limit economic prosperity and they also kill and maim innocent children, women and men. The only way to improve this is through education. People we educate and train to safely handle explosives can spread that education throughout their homelands.”

Wells said all in attendance came together for one collective, humanitarian goal.

“We have one common goal: to get rid of explosive hazards and to create a more stable region.” 🇺🇸



Two students participating in the Humanitarian Mine Action training course measure an improvised explosive device blast hole during a practical exercise Sept. 29, 2016, in Tajikistan. U.S. Army Soldiers, in support of U.S. Army Central, certified 39 participants from Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Armenia on explosive hazard mitigation in accordance with the International Mine Action Standard.



Story and Photos by Sgt. Angela Lorden

Sixty-five service members from U.S. Army Central's area of operations earned their German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge by participating in a competition that tested Soldier speed, agility, strength and endurance Aug. 1-5 at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

The GAFPB competition, hosted by 10th Combat Support Hospital with the support of German soldiers, spanned over four days and consisted of four events.

"It was a teamwork event," said Capt. Michelle Maust, a psychiatrist for the 10th CSH. "Coalition forces with the U.S. Army. It brought us together."

The GAFPB is a uniform decoration authorized for German armed forces and soldiers from allied nations. U.S. Soldiers who are awarded the badge are authorized to wear the decoration on their Army Service Uniform. The badge comes in three colors: gold, silver and bronze. Each color corresponds with a level of military proficiency.

Maust, who earned the gold badge, said earning gold was no easy feat.

"It was a challenge to push our bodies," Maust said. "Getting up at 0300 most mornings and working hard for four days in a row. Our bodies were exhausted afterward."

Soldiers dove into the first event on day one:

a swim test. Competitors swam 100 meters within four minutes while wearing the duty uniform, top and bottom. To complete the event, competitors were required to remove their top and bottom while treading water.

"I did swim before the actual event because I heard that made or broke a lot of people out here," said Capt. Josh Sparks, the Dental Detachment officer in charge of the 502nd Dental Company, assigned to the hospital with the 10th CSH.

Sparks said he earned his chance to compete for the GAFPB. Soldiers in his unit were placed on an order-of-merit list based on individual performance during a pre-competition.

"You definitely see the cream of the crop of our Soldiers," Sparks said. "What I see here are physically fit Soldiers wanting to do their best."

The second event the next day was a basic fitness test. The fitness test consisted of three exercises: sprints, a flexed-arm hang and a 1,000-meter run. The average score of these exercises determined the badge level service members would qualify for in the final two events.

"Coming out and giving it your all, your 100%, it's definitely evident when you see them go through all of the events," Sparks said.

On the third day, competitors woke up hours before sunrise to complete a ruck march.

Participants were required to carry at least a 33-pound load and ruck approximately 7.4 miles in 120 minutes for the gold badge, 5.5 miles in 90 minutes for silver and 3.7 miles in 60 minutes for bronze.

"A 12k ruck in this heat and humidity it made us sweat and work hard," Maust said. "It was a physically and mentally challenging ruck march."

One of the most memorable moments of the event for Maust was crossing the finish line, she said.

"Jogging along with our buddies; finishing that challenge," she said. "We pushed together really hard."

The fourth event on the last day was M9 pistol marksmanship at a 20-meter range. Soldiers were required to shoot five targets for the gold badge, four for silver and three for bronze.

"I think it's hard to get the gold badge," said Maj. Annika Heusinger, a German army officer who participated in and assisted with the event. "It's even better to see that many will receive the gold badge."

The awards ceremony recognized six soldiers for bronze, 37 for silver and 22 for gold.

Sparks said while he didn't get gold this time around, he was happy with silver and looked forward to the opportunity to compete in another GAFPB event during his military career.

"I'm absolutely going to go for gold," he said. While the GAFPB competition events were

unique compared to U.S. Army physical training requirements, German soldiers are required to meet the event's minimum standards annually.

"We do the proficiency badge on a regular basis," Heusinger said. "This event was very special to me as this was (during) a deployment. ... I think that it is beneficial for the overall mission as it creates good comradeship and relations."

Heusinger said the American Soldiers were highly motivated and not afraid to try something new.

"They trained for it a lot," she said. "It was a good feeling to see how aware they are of the importance of that badge and take it very seriously. For a German officer, very good to see."

This particular competition presented a unique obstacle for all the participants.

"I think it was even harder than back in Germany because the weather was very humid," she said. "The temperature was very high. We are not used to that. I think for everyone it's a challenge to get the best out of him or herself in that situation."

At the end of the event, Heusinger said the competition wasn't just about earning the badge. She said she believes it was also about working together, regardless of nationality.

"In a multinational environment, to work together. That is what we did here." 🇺🇸

A Heartfelt Tribute

Story by Leticia Hopkins

Brig. Gen. Viet X. Luong, U.S. Army Central chief of staff, gave an emotional speech before helping unveil a monument dedicated to the Army at a Veterans Day ceremony in Florence, South Carolina, Nov. 11.

“General Luong’s speech yesterday was so moving and so emotional,” said Barry Wingard, Florence Veterans Park Committee chairman. “People had tears in their eyes. It was really, really well done.”

Invited as a guest speaker, Luong spoke about service and sacrifice to a crowd of almost 600 people who gathered at Florence Veterans Park to honor and pay tribute to veterans, and watch the unveiling of the Army monument.

“Today is a special day,” said Luong. “It is a day that we honor all veterans for their service, so it is fitting that we are standing on the hallowed grounds of the Florence Veterans Park in the shadows of the World War II Memorial to mark this year’s Veterans Day.”

For Wingard, who is also a retired Army colonel, there were two comments that really resonated well with him. The first one was when Luong said his father replied: “It means nothing in this world can harm you now” in response to Luong’s question about what it meant for them to be aboard the USS Hancock after being airlifted from Vietnam in 1975 during the final days of the Vietnam War. The other part of Luong’s speech he felt stood out was when Luong said he was not born an American but chose to be an American.

Luong spoke to the crowd about the days leading up to him and his family leaving Vietnam and how at nine years old he decided one day he would serve in the military. He also told the crowd that for veterans, service and sacrifice go hand in hand, and in some cases require the ultimate sacrifice.

“The last 15 years of war have been nothing more than sacrifice and steel resolve for our military,” said Luong. “Since 9/11, more than 6,800 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines have made the ultimate sacrifice in Afghanistan and Iraq.”

Overcome with emotion, Luong tearfully recalled memories of Soldiers he had the honor to serve with and their actions leading up to them making the ultimate sacrifice - sacrifices in the form of limbs and even their willingness to risk their own lives in order to make sure no Soldier was left behind.

“You know, it’s really hard for me to retell these stories,” said Luong. “But I think it’s important that they be told. You will not see these stories often in the press or in the mainstream media, so I believe it is my duty to preserve these Soldiers’ legacy and honor their sacrifice and service.”

After the remarks, Luong and other distinguished guests unveiled the U.S. Army monument, the last monument in the series dedicated to the five branches of the military. While it was the fifth monument in the series, it was the eighth monument unveiled in the park since its opening eight years ago.

Wingard said Luong’s remarks were well received and even more remarkable because they tied in well with the “Alone with Memories” sculpture that was also unveiled during the ceremony. He added that several people called, emailed and stopped him to let him know General Luong gave one of the best speeches they’ve heard at the park’s Veterans Day ceremonies.

“It was something that touched a lot of people, and brought back memories for many and maybe shed light to some of the people there that had not experienced military life – what it can be like when a loved one is lost,” said Wingard. “It was particularly interesting because yesterday we dedicated a new sculpture which is dedicated to some people who have lost loved ones in service.”



Brig. Gen. Viet Luong (right), USARCENT chief of staff, greets WWII Veteran David Phillip at the Florence Veterans Day Celebration Nov. 11, 2016, at the Florence, S.C. Veterans Park. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Angel Jackson)

The three other monuments unveiled during the ceremony were: a sculpture titled “Alone With Memories” in honor of people whose loved ones made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of the nation, the Wall of Honor to which more than 30 names were added, and the relocated World War I Monument.

“I really enjoyed the ceremony,” said Sgt. 1st Class Tianeka Croker, career counselor for 4th Battalion, Army Reserve Career Division. “General Luong has a very inspirational story that reminds me of the many reasons why my sisters and brothers in arms joined the military. I am very proud to serve with someone like him.”

As for the guest of honor, Wingard said choosing

the well-received speaker was actually a suggestion from Luong’s former college friend, Regi Armstrong, who introduced the general before he gave his heartfelt patriotic speech.

At the end of his speech, Luong left attendees with this message: “My message to you is while this is a date that will forever serve as a solemn remembrance and tribute to our veterans, please also take time to honor the spirit of our nation and her ideals,” said Luong. “I think we have our issues and challenges, but we live in the best country in the world. And there’s simply no other place like it.”

A PRESCRIPTION FOR SUCCESS

Soldiers of the 31st CSH pharmacy strive to return patients to action

Story and Photo by Sgt. Aaron Ellerman

A dosage of help enters the bloodstream. The pain subsides. Now it’s back to the fight.

The 31st Combat Support Hospital pharmacy team and their Army of tiny pathogen killing medicines are helping keep the U.S. Army Central force ready to effectively accomplish their mission.

“I wish I could say that everyone is healthy enough to not take medication, but that is unfortunately not the case so we must provide them comparable care to what they would receive back home,” said Capt. Sarah Steger, 31st Combat Support Hospital pharmacist.

Based in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, the team provides pharmaceutical support to patients suffering from injuries and illnesses throughout the USARCENT area of operations. The drugs and supplies issued here help patients during their recovery process by mitigating pain and curing ailments.

“We process more than 3,500 outpatient prescriptions a month to service members and civilians while providing support to our inpatient care and other facilities throughout the region,” said Steger.

Steger and her team of technicians are always on call to meet the demands of the region and have to overcome numerous challenges the deployed environment presents.

“Ordering supplies and medications is definitely a challenge here, because we may not be able to get the exact medication in a timely matter,” said Sgt. Justin Sayre, a pharmacy specialist with the 31st CSH.

According to Sayre, the pharmacy works with the prescribing doctors to recommend similar or alternative products to be prescribed when there is a shortage, allowing the patients to continue treatment.

The 31st CSH pharmacy is one of the only

pharmacies in theater equipped with a Laminar Flow Hood. The hood allows the capability to make intravenous products and mix compounds in a sterile environment.

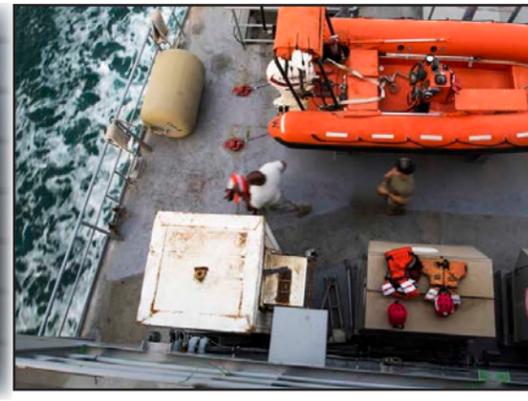
“We manufacture compounds and IVs here, which greatly increases our ability to accomplish our mission and provide more care to our patients,” said Sayre.

Steger said the goal of the pharmacy team is to provide much more than just prescriptions to patients.

“Our main focus is making sure the patient is aware of their own health and the ways to treat it effectively. It’s important to create trust between the patient and the pharmacy. I want them to be able to come in and feel comfortable asking us whatever questions they may have about the medications we have whether it be the dosage, side effects or just general treatment questions,” said Steger.



Sgt. Jessica Evans, pharmacy specialist with the 31st Combat Support Hospital, hands out a prescription to a Soldier Oct. 25, 2016, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Evans, along with a small team of Soldiers, operate the 31st CSH pharmacy providing pharmaceutical support to patients suffering from injuries and illnesses throughout the USARCENT area of operations. The team processes more than 3,500 outpatient prescriptions a month to service members and civilians while providing support to inpatient care and other facilities throughout the region.



Army Mariners Hone Skills

Story and Photos by Sgt. Brandon Hubbard

Most Soldiers practice marksmanship at a weapons range. For the U.S. Army's 411th Transportation Detachment from the 1st Theater Sustainment Command (Theater), the crew aboard the MG Charles P. Gross (Logistics Support Vessel-5), a range day means cruising out to international waters.

The ship left for the Arabian Gulf in the dark-morning hours Oct. 3 from Kuwait Naval Base with its heavy crew-served weapons at the ready.

The Army mariners aboard the massive-decked ship are charged with using the largest transportation ship in the Army's fleet to transport dozens of trucks and up to 15 M1 Abrams tanks. About 900 tons of cargo can be loaded on the vessel. So, the 30-plus Soldier crew has to be ready to defend the ship and its valuable cargo with machine guns.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Kevin Toomey, 411th TD third mate and a Port Tobacco, Maryland, resident, said his Soldiers are comfortable shooting a variety of weapons from the hull and bridge of the ship.

"Just like doing a live fire off a truck in a truck company, this is where we live and this is how we have to go out to shoot," said Toomey, who is the officer in charge for range operations on the logistics vessel.

Mk-19 grenade launchers, .50-caliber machine guns, M249 squad automatic weapons and M4 carbine rifles are used to form fighting positions in a 360-degree perimeter around the vessel, similar to the turrets in a convoy.

"We are prepared for enemy forces," said Toomey, who has spent two years in the unit based at Fort Eustis, Virginia. "People are counting on us. Moving place to place in these waters is very important. If we can't move, it hinders everyone else's capabilities."

During the past year, the ship has transported equipment to Bahrain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, as well as other destinations in the 20-nation area of operations for U.S. Army Central.

The Gross navigates busy shipping lanes throughout the Arabian Gulf through dense fishing areas filled with Kuwaiti fishing boats to the Strait of Hormuz. That means the crew has to be ready to defend against any threat, from another military-grade Iranian speedboat to a small suicide boat attack like the al Qaeda bombing of the USS Cole in 2000 that killed 17 U.S. service members.

Every Soldier

A voice comes over the radio, echoing over the open waters: Battle stations.

The crew races to get in place. Body armor and helmets are strapped on. Teams move to their fighting positions.

"From the time we make contact, we try to get everybody in place as quickly and as safely as possible to execute," Toomey said. "According to the station bill, we are all one team and everybody plays a key role in vessel defense — even if you are a cook or a medic or whatever. We involve everybody."

Pfc. Robin Davis, a 411th TD culinary specialist from Waldorf, Maryland, fired the Mk19 grenade launcher for the first time with mixed reviews.

"It wasn't the sweet music of my .50 cal," she joked.

The Soldiers fire at giant "Killer Tomato" targets that are similar to a bright orange bounce house at a county fair. Except, the Soldiers get to gun down the inflatable behemoth until it disappears into the waves.

Every Scenario

A range day at sea also means the Soldiers get to test the skills necessary to keep the crew and ship safe.

The Army mariners run through a fire drill, where each Soldier dons fire equipment to battle a mock blaze, an abandon ship drill and a "man overboard" drill.

The varying scenarios mean each Soldier has to be a fireman, lifeguard and ready to lead during a bad situation.

"Firing these weapons today means the young Soldiers get to experience weapons and drills they might not see on a regular line unit," said Staff Sgt. Tony Burnette, the ship boatswain for the 411th TD.

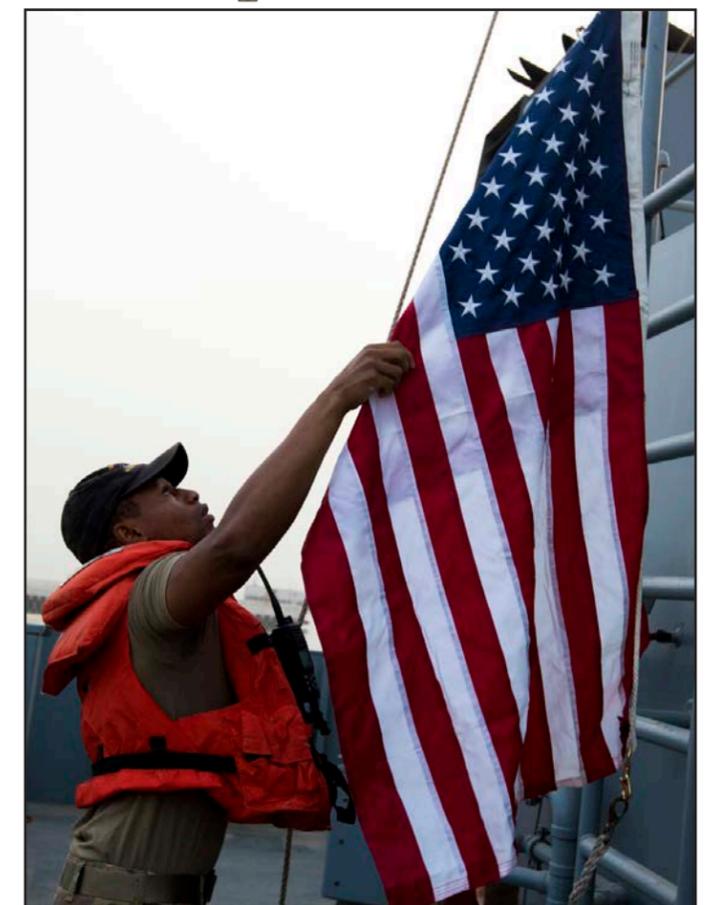
Burnette, of Cuthbert, Georgia, said requiring each Soldier to be responsible for the safety of the vessel and fellow Soldiers makes them closer — even like a small family.

"Everybody is a sister, a brother, a father, a mother. We look out for one another," he said. "We are a tight-knit group, which you might not get in some other units because we are so small."

He has the unique job of being in charge of all the equipment and Soldiers above the waterline of the vessel. He has been in the job for the past 13 years, starting as a private on the deck.

Being a Soldier at sea, Burnette said, is one of "the best jobs" in the Army.

"I love it," Burnette said. "Once you get on the water, it is just you and the gulf. You see the sunrise and the sunset." 



Sgt. Malcom Hilbert, a food service specialist from the 411th Transportation Detachment and a Tupelo, Mississippi resident, raises the flag on the MG Charles P. Gross (Logistics Support Vessel-5) during a range exercise in the Arabian Gulf, Oct. 3, 2016. The ship supports the U.S. Army Central mission to move cargo and large vehicles throughout the Middle East from Kuwait Naval Base.

Launching Into Readiness

Story and Photos by Sgt. Aaron Ellerman

A roar echoes across the desert as a speeding bright light rips through the sky leaving a white smoke trail as it disappears into the rising sun. Seconds later it reports from the distant horizon with a thunderous boom.

Soldiers of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, certified on the M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System during a decisive action training environment exercise Oct. 4, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

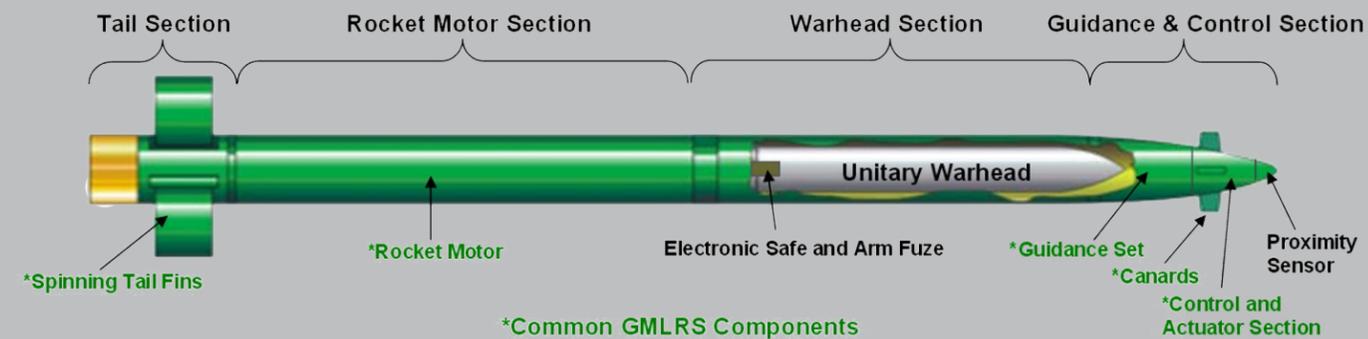
The HIMARS is a U.S. light multiple rockets launcher mounted on a standard Army medium tactical vehicle truck frame and has been utilized to provide fire support in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan. The launcher can fire up to 6 rockets at a time or a single missile to effectively destroy targets from 2-300 kilometers away.

“This exercise was a great way for the Soldiers to get real deployed experience and training that covers many facets of our mission,” said Capt. Jamie Holm, commander, Alpha Company.

The decisive action training environment enables Soldiers to solve tactical problems during a wide range of real-world scenarios applicable to current threats facing the Army.

“The training we implement includes not only the operation of the HIMARS but how to implement it into action with regards to movement, types of fire support, ammunition requirements and preparation, maintenance, and fire coordination,” said Holm.

“I like events like these, because they help us stay ready for whenever and wherever we are needed to help protect the force,” said Spc. Jose Mendez, a multiple launch rocket system crewmember with 1st Bn., 94th FAR.



During the exercise the unit certified four HIMARS operator crews and a contingent of forward observers.

“This was a great opportunity for us to get more experience in this environment and maintain our quarterly certification,” said Mendez.

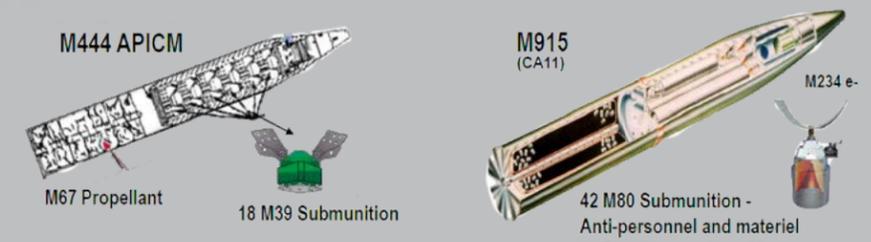
“Our mission is to provide general fires support throughout the U.S. Central Command area of operations and events like these certifications ensure we remain more than capable of accomplishing our mission,” said Holm.

U.S. Army Central deputy commanding general of operations, Maj. Gen. William B. Hickman, made a trip out to see the unit certify and offered some motivational words to the troops.

“You’re all doing great things out here and I will tell you what you’re doing is an important part of the ARCENT mission,” said Hickman.



Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Galimberti, a forward observer with 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, scans the firing site and impact zone for possible interferences during a decisive action training environment exercise Oct. 4, 2016, near Camp Buehring, Kuwait.



The MLRS family of munitions includes three rockets and four missiles with an additional six variants. The Army is currently in the process of transitioning usage of the dual purpose improved conventional munitions from the M444 to the M915. The M915 has increased range and lethality against light forces and a 99 percent reliability rating in accordance with Department of Defense policy. The new round also leaves less unexploded ordnance on the battlefield.

A 'Note'worthy Engagement

U.S. Army Central and Royal Saudi Land Forces Unite Through Music

Story and Photos by Sgt. Aaron Ellerman

Two figures stand in a room after meeting for the first time, abundantly contrasted through culture, language and appearance, clearly representing opposite sides of the world. The camouflage adorning them, although different in color and pattern, is seemingly the only similarity. Together the figures move to study the many dots and symbols strewn about the lines of a manuscript laying on the nearby table. Intently motioning to one another through gestures and elated expressions, it is apparent they share the same passion and understand a familiar language, a universal language, music.

Capt. Richard Winkels, U.S. Army Central music liaison officer, and Col. Sultan M. Al Moneef, director of the Royal Saudi Land Forces music department, met for the inaugural, bi-lateral music engagement between U.S. and Saudi military forces at the RSLF music facility in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Sept. 18.

“We may not speak a common language, but there is a universal language in music,” said Winkels.

The RSLF music department invited Winkels to collaborate on musical initiatives and provide insight and guidance to help further their curriculum and build their program.

“This event was very important to us, because it allows the U.S. Army to share their experiences and expertise with us so we can implement what we like into our program here,” said Moneef.

“They have a strong curriculum and foundation, and I am glad to provide them with insight into how we operate so that it may help to accomplish their goals,” said Winkels.

USARCENT has been partnering with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through several programs for many years however, this meeting marked the first time that a U.S. Army musician has worked directly with KSA Soldiers in Saudi Arabia.

“We’re able to collaborate and exchange ideas on how we implement music into our militaries, which is paramount because music is an important part of the military; it preserves the heritage and tradition and represents the greatness of ones’ military from an auditory standpoint,” said Winkels.

Music plays a key part in most militaries around the world and its significance is illustrated on the U.S. Army Flag. Music has been involved

in battle for centuries, to intimidate the enemy and encourage combatants, and has been used to assist in organization and timing of actions in warfare. It has kept troops motivated during long marches and during times of hardship.

“Music is important in the military because it displays our spirit and pride to the public and increases morale within the organization,” said Moneef.

The RSLF music department gave Winkels a tour of the facilities and briefed him on their operations and goals during his visit. RSLF musicians also surprised Winkels and the U.S. entourage with several group and solo performances showcasing their talents.

“I get excited being around these Soldiers and seeing their pride and passion for music, which sends a message to whoever they’re engaging,” said Winkels.

The two music departments are keen on future engagements and plan to continue this new partnership.

“Music should not be an exception in our partnership with the U.S. Army and these experiences today and in the future will help us grow professionally,” said Moneef.

The two had a passion for music and military duty, which united them despite their obvious differences.

“Music has no borders. I believe that it brings people together and encourages them to bond and work collectively through cultural differences,” said Moneef.



(Above) A Royal Saudi Land Forces musician and instrument technician gives Capt. Richard Winkels, U.S. Army Central music liaison officer, a tour of the RSLF music facility in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Sept. 18, 2016.



(Left) U.S. Army Central music liaison officer, looks through music pieces with the Royal Saudi Land Forces musicians during the first ever bi-lateral music engagement between U.S. and Saudi military forces at the RSLF music facility in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Sept. 18, 2016.





Soldiers from the 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, fire an M1A2 Abrams Tank during a qualification range at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Oct. 18, 2016. Photo by Sgt. Aaron Ellerman



A service member plays a bugle during an Armistice Day remembrance ceremony Nov. 11, 2016, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Service members from several different countries participated in the ceremony by laying wreaths in honor of all military veterans. Photo by Sgt. Angela Lorden



Lt. Gen Michael Garrett, the commander of U.S. Army Central, and Command Sgt. Maj. Eric C. Dostie, USARCENT senior noncommissioned officer, serve Soldiers Thanksgiving cuisine during a Thanksgiving Day feast at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Photo by Sgt. Brandon Hubbard



Soldiers assigned to Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 111th Aviation Regiment, 77th Combat Aviation Brigade, conduct deck landings in the Arabian Gulf Oct. 11-12, 2016. The UH-60 Blackhawk and AH-64 Apache crews took turns landing their aircraft aboard the USNS Alan Shepard to qualify their crews in this type of maneuver. Upon completion of the qualification each set of aircraft was refueled by the vessel and flown back to Camp Buehring, Kuwait. Photo by Sgt. Aaron Ellerman

Lt. Col. Kirk John Junker, seminar lead instructor and director of the Joint Targeting School in Dam Neck, Va., discusses key points and principles of joint targeting during a targeting seminar at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Oct. 12, 2016. The open forum seminar allowed key leaders to learn and discuss important strategies and doctrine concerning the concept of joint targeting. Photo by Sgt. Aaron Ellerman



U.S. Army Secretary Eric Fanning, center, takes a selfie with Soldiers from U.S. Army Central and the 77th Combat Aviation Brigade in a hangar Sept. 19, 2016 at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The Army's top civilian met with U.S. Army Central units at Camp Buehring and Camp Arifjan as part of a larger tour that also included meeting Soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq. Photo by Sgt. Brandon Hubbard

Frank Kendall, U.S. Department of Defense undersecretary for acquisition, technology and logistics, tours the Army Prepositioned Stocks in Kuwait (APS-5) managed by the 401st Army Field Support Brigade, 1st Sustainment Command (Theater), at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Oct. 15, 2016. Photo by Sgt. Brandon Hubbard



An ammo abatement team member from the 401st Army Field Support Brigade explains the purpose of unique ammo abatement tools to Command Sgt. Maj. Eric C. Dostie, U.S. Army Central senior noncommissioned officer, at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan Nov. 11, 2016. Photo by Sgt. Aaron Ellerman.



For these stories and more check out the USARCENT DVIDS page at <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USARCENT>

Troopers with the 2nd Squadron 13th Cavalry Regiment maneuver Bradley Fighting Vehicles through the desert at Udairi range, Kuwait, Sept. 27, 2016. Photo by Sgt Aaron Ellerman



The signs are all around.
It's up to YOU to recognize and act on them.

KNOW WHAT'S RIGHT
know the
signs
DO WHAT'S RIGHT

**Training, Discipline
and Standards**

Training, discipline and standards are the bedrock of our Army, and as Soldiers, you've been taught what right looks like. As leaders, you have a duty and a responsibility to maintain standards in your formation. You also have an obligation to your Soldiers and their families to manage risk and take action to correct problems. In our fight against accidental fatalities, knowledge is the weapon of choice.



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