



18th Engineer Brigade United States Army Unit History



The 18th Engineer Brigade (Combat) was constituted on 29 July 1921 in the organized reserves as the 347th Engineer (General Service) in the Seventh Corps area. The regiment was ordered into active military service on 6 May 1942 at Camp Claiborne, LA, and redesignated the 347th Engineer General Service Regiment. On 29 June 1944, the regiment entered combat, in France, and participated in the campaigns of Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, and Central Europe. The regiment also earned the Meritorious Unit Commendation for service in the European Theater of Operations from 1 July 1944 to 1 October 1944.



347th Engineer Regiment Soldiers work to repair tracks destroyed by retreating Germans in Sarralbe, France—28 December 1944.

After V-E Day, the regiment inactivated in Germany on 1 June 1946. On 15 June 1947, the regiment reactivated in the organized reserves with headquarters at Salt Lake City, UT. The regiment remained at Salt Lake City until its inactivation on 16 March 1949. On 25 October 1954, Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company, 347th Engineer General Service Regiment re-designated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company. The 18th Engineer Brigade activated as a regular army unit at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, where it remained until it inactivated on 26 March 1963.

The 18th Engineer Brigade reactivated on 16 July 1965. It moved to Vietnam in September 1965. While serving in Vietnam, the units of the 18th Engineer Brigade constructed everything from depots to seaports, airfields to orphanages throughout central and northern Vietnam. On 20 September 1971, while in Vietnam, the Brigade was inactivated.

The 18th Engineer Brigade reactivated on 16 July 1965 at Fort Bragg, N.C. and prepared for deployment to Vietnam. The 18th Engineer Brigade entered Vietnam in September 1965 with the responsibility for overseeing all Army Engineering operations in Vietnam until the establishment of the U.S. Army Engineer Command, Vietnam, in late 1966.

Under the command of Colonel C. Craig Cannon, the Brigade prepared for deployment to Vietnam. The Advance Party of the 18th Engineer Brigade arrived at



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Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Air Base on 3 September 1965. Three days later, Brigadier General Robert R. Ploger assumed command of the Brigade. Within two weeks, the Brigade Headquarters at Tan Son Nhut became fully operational. It had been preceded by the 35th Engineer Group, which built Cam Ranh Bay on a peninsula of sand and in a hostile environment. The brigade assumed responsibility for I Corps and II Corps in the northern part of South Vietnam. The 937th Engineer Group (Combat) at Qui Nhon was assigned to the Brigade in June 1966.

The initial activities of the 18th Engineer Brigade centered around rapid development of the port facilities, ammunition dumps, base camps and airfields necessary to support the build-up of US combat forces rapidly deploying to Vietnam. During its initial construction phases it also provided support for combat search and destroy missions and defensive operations with the 101st Airborne Division near Ninh Hoa and the 4th Infantry Division at Pleiku.



84th Engineer Battalion provided early construction at Cam Ranh Bay, 1965

The 18th Engineer Brigade completed construction of an ammunition storage area at Cam Ranh Bay on 18 January 1969. It took two years for the 18th Engineer Brigade to build this complex, which covered over 191,700 square feet (17,810 m²). English Airfield was completed on 21 March 1969 near Qui Nhon. The runway of this field was 3,600 feet (1,100 m) long, 60 feet (18 m) wide, and was complete with a 150—foot by 150—foot turn around area.



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Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam

On 3 May 1969, Brigadier General John W. Morris assumed command of the 18th Engineer Brigade. Soon afterwards, Brigade engineers finished construction of a cold storage warehouse at the Qui Nhon Support Command, the first of its kind in Vietnam. Construction of the Tandem Switch Building at Vung Chau Mountain was also completed about this time. This 4,000-square-foot (370 m²) building housed almost \$1 million dollars of communications equipment. During the summer months of 1969, Brigade engineers completed the 200,000-barrel (32,000 m³) capacity Air Force tank farm at Cam Ranh Bay, after laying over 12,000 feet (3,700 m) of pipe to complete the project.

The beginning of 1970 saw the initiation of the 18th Engineers Brigade's Operation Last Chance, a program of command emphasis and organization for motivation and success of that years engineer operations. The goals of the program were to maintain primary missions of the combat support as well as insure the completion of the many projects planned for the 1970 construction operations.

February 1970 saw the completion of a project begun in the summer of the previous year at Qui Nhon that replaced a temporary floating steel dock with a more permanent structure, which could accommodate six ammo barges at once. The port of Qui Nhon became one of the few supply points where ammunition for the First and Second Military Regions could be handled in bulk quantities simultaneously. Prior to the completion of this new facility, the handling of ammunition there had to take place in other areas, near public housing and fuel storage depots.

On 3 May 1970, Brigadier General Henry C. Schrader assumed command of the 18th Engineer Brigade. Shortly after this, the most difficult stretch of the roadway that the Brigade had ever undertaken—the 27-kilometer stretch of National Highway QL-11 South in the central highlands region known as Tây Nguyên, commonly referred to as the "Good View Pass," was completed. This road had been carved out from a dangerous mountain pass to a national road in less than one year.



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The Lines of Communication Program, which represents the most significant contribution that the 18th Engineer Brigade had made to the economic growth of Vietnam, consisted of about 1,500 kilometers of road upgrade from 1967 to 1972. After a slow start in the beginning of this work, the Brigade finished some 560 kilometers of highway reconstruction, and improvement in 1970 and another 450 kilometers were scheduled for completion in 1971 by brigade units.

In conjunction with the brigade efforts on the Lines of Communication Program, 18th Brigade engineers were involved in a program of affiliation with ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) engineers. In addition to continuous training programs that the brigade established to train ARVN equipment operators, the engineers of the 18th provided technical assistance and logistical support to several projects undertaken by the Vietnamese Army, most notably in the construction of the 3,600-foot (1,100 m) bridge at Tuy Hoa. Upon its completion and opening on 13 February 1971, this bridge became the longest overpass of its type ever constructed in the Republic of Vietnam. It would be one of 77 such bridges that the brigade would construct in the country.

In support of the XXIV Corps, the 18th Engineer Brigade mounted what was described as the "most ambitious engineering effort in Vietnam" at the end of January 1971. The brigade engineers pushed a roadway across the rugged terrain of the northern Quang Tri Province to the Laotian border and constructed a 3,200-foot (980 m) by 60-foot (18 m) airfield in little more than a month at Khe Sanh. This construction effort was part of Operation Dewey Canyon II.

On 20 September 1971, the 18th Engineer Brigade inactivated. Over the six years that it served in Vietnam, the 18th Engineer Brigade was involved in 14 of 17 campaigns, earning four Meritorious Unit Commendations and the Republic of Vietnam Civic Action Medal First Class.

The 18th Engineer Brigade was reactivated at Karlsruhe, Germany on 21 October 1977. For the next 15 years, the Brigade served as the principal construction brigade for the United States Army, Europe and 7th Army. Additionally, the Brigade was responsible for providing topographic support to the European Theater.



293rd Engineer Battalion—1987



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During Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990 and 1991, the 18th Engineer Brigade provided rail and sea deployment support to the VII Corps and in addition, deployed a Combat Heavy Battalion and Topographic Company to support VII Corps operations in Southwest Asia.

In April 1991, the Brigade Headquarters, along with a subordinate Combat Heavy Battalion, deployed to Zakho, Iraq in support of Operation Provide Comfort. While there, the Brigade coordinated all engineer efforts of a Joint and Combined engineer force providing construction and relief support to the Kurdish refugees. As part of the reduction of forces in Europe, the Brigade inactivated on 15 October 1992.



18th Engineer Brigade during Operation Provide Comfort, Iraq

On 18 October 2002, the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army approved the USAREUR and 7th Army Concept Plan to activate the Theater Army Engineer Brigade (TAEB), culminating a process began in 2000. The 18th Engineer Brigade (TA) activated on 21 January 2003.

Portions of the Brigade deployed to Turkey in February 2003 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). While serving as part of ARFOR-Turkey, the Brigade played a significant role in the establishment of a 700-mile line of communication stretching across southern Turkey. In July 2004, the 18th EN BRIGADE (TA) deployed to Bulgaria as the Command and Control element for all U.S forces involved in Bulwark 04, involving U.S. and Bulgarian forces. This exercise set the stage for what is now known as Joint Task Force East.

In April 2005, 18th Engineer Brigade deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom VI as Task Force Sword. Task Force Sword, made up of over 1,800 Soldiers representing all three components of the Army along with Engineers from Slovakia, Poland, and Korea, was responsible for reconstruction of the country's infrastructure and the assured mobility of Coalition Forces. After redeployment, the 18th Engineer Brigade transformed into a functional engineer brigade and began train-up for the next deployment in support of the Global War on Terrorism.



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18th Engineer Brigade at end of tour awards ceremony in Afghanistan

In April of 2008, the Brigade deployed to Tikrit, Iraq in support of OIF 08-10. Over the 15-month deployment, the brigade planned, coordinated and tracked force protection construction, base expansion and closure, and quality of life improvements throughout Multi-National Division-North.



(left to right) Command Sgt. Maj. J. A. Gliedman and Col. Matthew H. Russell, 18th Engineer Brigade, command sergeant major and commander, uncase their colors during the Transfer of Authority ceremony May 29, 2008 at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, located in Tikrit, Iraq.

While deployed to Tikrit, in May 2008, the brigade rear relocated to Tompkins Barracks, Schwetzingen Germany. In August of 2008, the brigade re-located to Kirkuk to conduct Key Leader Engagements, and additionally was the senior Army Command on the Forward Operating Base. The brigade took on the duties of the base Joint Visitors Bureau, Mayor Cell, Medical Support, Law of War, and topographic support. In January 2009, the brigade received a change of mission and in February 2009 moved to COS Marez to take on the mission of the Mosul Reconstruction Operations Center. During this time the 18th Engineer Brigade conducted over 100 key leader engagements, completed over 150 technical inspections and site visits, and tracked over 200 construction projects estimated at \$241 million. In July 2009, the 18th Engineer Brigade redeployed to Germany to prepare for future missions.



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Upon redeploying from Operation Iraqi Freedom, the 18th Engineer Brigade quickly began preparing for its next rendezvous with destiny. Already on the patch chart for a deployment to Afghanistan before the brigade returned from Iraq, one thing was clear: it was not a matter of if the brigade would deploy again, but a matter of when.

After completing reintegration and block leave, the brigade uncased its colors at Tompkins Barracks, Schwetzingen, thus symbolizing that the headquarters had officially returned to Germany and was fully operational. Shortly thereafter, COL Russell relinquished command to COL Paul M. Paolozzi.

In February 2010, the brigade led the European Best Sapper Competition to vet Soldiers to send to the Fort Leonard Wood Best Sapper.

In March, the brigade hosted the Maneuver Support Conference to gather engineers and discuss lessons learned. More than 300 Soldiers from across U.S. Army Europe and select individuals from the Army's engineer branch came together to participate in the Maneuver Support Conference, March 24-26, at Patrick Henry Village, Heidelberg, Germany.

Engineer, infantry and sustainment command leaders shared their lessons learned from previous deployments as well as their experiences in garrison at the conference, which was sponsored by the 18th Engineer Brigade. "This conference is about training and going back to the unit to apply it," said Col. Paul M. Paolozzi, the commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade, at the start of the conference. "It is only when you apply what you learn that it becomes useful."

Top leaders from around the Army were present, including Brig. Gen. Bryan Watson, the commandant of the U.S. Army Engineer School, Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston, and Command Sgt. Maj. Micheal L. Buxbaum, the command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.



Brig. Gen. Bryan Watson, the commandant of the U.S. Army Engineer School, speaks to Soldiers of the 18th Engineer Brigade after an Esprit de Corps, March 26, at Tompkins Barracks in Schwetzingen. (Photo by Capt. Sonie Munson)



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Members of the German army were also in attendance to share their partnership experiences with the U.S. Army engineers. German army Col. Otto Radlmeier, the director of the Military Engineering Center of Excellence, discussed the mission of his organization and how its purpose is to direct interoperability of military engineering.

A Brigade Combat Team commanders' panel featured infantry and sustainment brigade commanders, who shared their experiences in a deployed environment and gave suggestions on how to better utilize engineer forces in a unit's area of operations.

Audience members also had the chance to gain knowledge from a route clearance panel, which featured platoon leaders and other officers from the 40th and 9th Engineer battalions. These leaders shared their deployment experiences and touched on aspects in the garrison environment, which leaders should strive to improve upon.

"Have duplicity in everything you do; ensure your systems have two belly buttons — a primary and an alternate," said Maj. Carrington Stoffels, the 9th Engineer Bn.'s plans and operations officer, during his brief.

After three days of sharing experiences and interacting with members of the German army, the leaders agreed that they were able to gain valuable knowledge from their counterparts and implement the lessons learned in their daily operations. As Paolozzi said in his introductory speech, "No sane commander would go into combat without the engineers."

During the Summer of 2010, the 18th Engineer Brigade staff experienced a large overturn of personnel and quickly began forming a new team with the influx of new Soldiers. In July, 2010, a group of 15 Soldiers from the brigade staff travel from Germany to Fort Drum, New York in order to participate in Unified Endeavor 10-3 exercise. While the staff played a support role in this exercise, it was an opportunity to gain insight for what to expect at the brigade's upcoming certification exercise.

In September, the brigade hosted the European Castle Ball in Wurzburg, which was shortly followed by the deployment of the 15th Engineer Battalion to Kuwait and the 54th Engineer Battalion to Afghanistan.



Soldiers from 15th Engineer Battalion post the colors during the 2010 European Castle Ball hosted by 18th Engineer Brigade at the Fortress Marienburg in Wurzburg, Germany, September 24. Engineers from across Europe were invited to attend the event.



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Also in September, the 18th Engineer Brigade Warrior and Warrior Leader of the Year Competition was held. Soldiers participating in the three-day event were tested on various Soldier skills such as night land navigation, the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer and a 12-mile ruckmarch.



Sgt. Ernesto Juarez, Forward Support Company, 54th Engineer Battalion fires his M16A2 rifle during the stress shoot portion of the 18th Engineer Brigade Warrior and Warrior Leader of the Year Competition in Schweinfurt Sept. 22, 2011.

The brigade Warrior of the Year was Pvt. Christopher Bidwell, 42nd Clearance Company, 54th Engineer Battalion and a native of Port Orange, Fla. The Warrior Leader of the Year for the brigade was Sgt. Terrance Barton, 370th Sapper Company, 54th Engineer Battalion, and a native of Houston. Both were awarded Army Commendation medals for their warrior spirit and represented the brigade at the 21st Theater Sustainment Command's competition.

From September 27-29, 2010, senior leaders from the 18th Engineer Brigade toured World War II battle sites during a battle staff ride to develop a more comprehensive understanding on the operational art of combat engineering. Staff rides were developed to enable a commander and his staff to explore significant battle sites and reflect on what decision they would have made. These tours require active participation by the staff in order to analyze past command and management decisions and judge the effectiveness of a decision.

As preparation for deployment to Afghanistan, 45 commissioned and non-commissioned officers learned from the experiences of engineers during the Lorraine Campaign fought by the U.S. Third Army during World War II. These leaders explored sites along the Moselle River near Nancy, France, and rediscovered that all battles – past and present – require planning, reconnaissance, and an understanding of the terrain. Retired Lt. Col. Jim Gabelman led the staff ride through where Third Army engineers followed the initial river crossing assaults and constructed bridges to enable supplies to reach the troops on the front lines.



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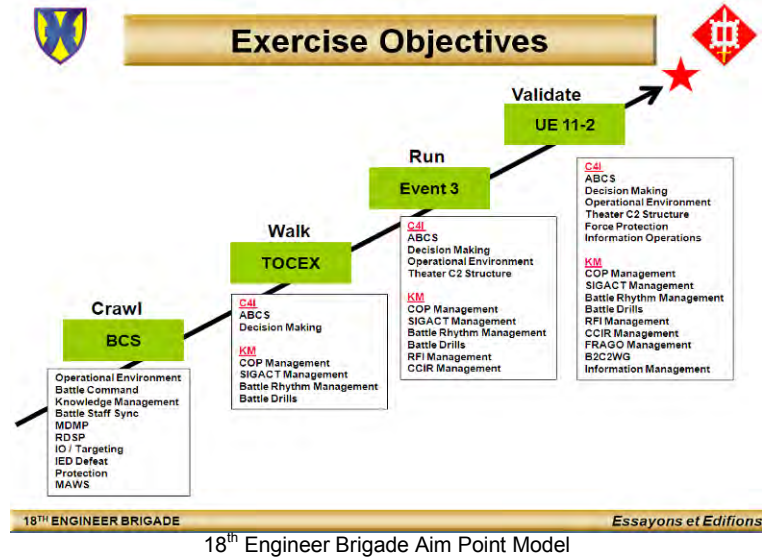
Senior leaders of the 18th Engineer Brigade on a battle staff ride pose for a photo in front of a monument memorializing Sgt. Jacob Sadowski, a tank commander in the 37th Tank Battalion, 4th Armored Division. Sadowski was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for returning to his burning tank to assist his gunner in escaping at the cost of his own life.

Today, engineers perform the same task and when the 18th Engineer Brigade Soldiers emplace bridges in Afghanistan, the staff ride will help them to remember the consequences of poor planning. At the end of the staff ride, leaders discussed some of the important factors that affected the battle in 1944. These included the planning of logistics on the battlefield, using reactive communications, applying strong leadership and remaining adaptable.

In order to become validated for deployment, the brigade developed an aim point model to lay out the exercise objectives with the deployment as the end state. Although the initial objectives were based on the Mission Essential Task List (METL), the staff learned to use the Combined Arms Training Strategy (CATS) and Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) to identify tasks and subtasks for each objective. Each staff section also identified section-focused tasks based off the initial training objectives. At the After Action Review (AAR) for each training event, each subtask training level was identified as Trained-Needs Practice-Untrained (T-P-U) and the way ahead was noted, thereby giving a consistent and logical approach to planning future training.



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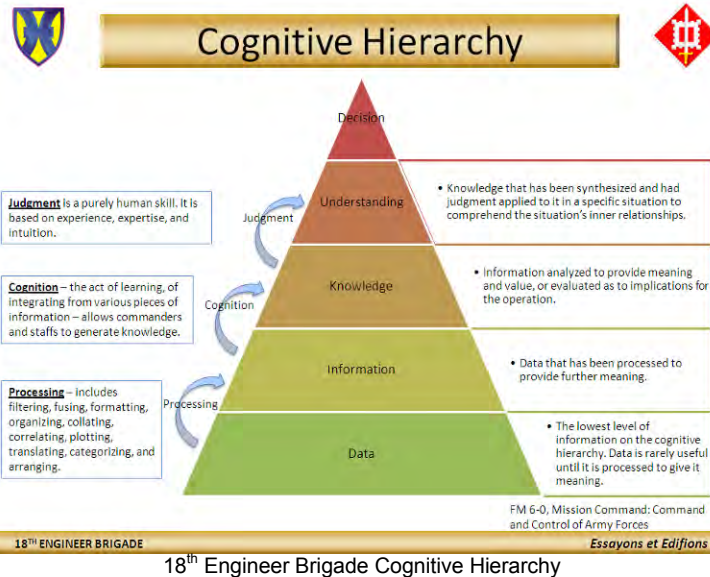
In September 2010, the staff participated in a Battle Command Seminar (BCS) for the crawl phase of deployment preparation. Members of the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) Operations Group Foxtrot (OPSGRP-F) came to Schwetzingen, Germany to lead a series of workshops for the brigade staff, known as Event 2. In preparing for the BCTP, the brigade developed a list of topics that the staff would initially conduct internal professional development workshops, then interact with during the BCTP seminar and finally carry that knowledge into theater. Remaining on course with the aim point would keep the brigade on its glide path to deploy fully trained and on time.

Discussion topics led by BCTP included the Operational Environment (FM 3-0, Ch 1), Battle Command (FM 3-0, Ch 5), Knowledge Management (KM) (FM 6-0, Ch5), Battle Staff Synchronization (FM 5-0, App A), Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) (FM 5-0, App B), Rapid Decision-making and Synchronization Process (RDSP) (FM 5-0, Ch 5), Information Operations (IO) & Targeting (FM 6-20-10), Improvised Explosive Device-Defeat (IED-D) & Assured Mobility, Protection, and Money as a Weapons System.

In discussing knowledge management, the staff was able to interact with the commander to understand the best way to transfer the knowledge the commander would need to make a decision. This was based on the cognitive hierarchy, which became a focal point for all brigade briefings to the commander throughout the train up. While having data and trackers is essential, that must be transformed to information and later knowledge so the brigade can maintain a holistic picture of operations.



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18th Engineer Brigade Cognitive Hierarchy

Several members of the 372nd Engineer Brigade staff, who were redeploying from Afghanistan, also attended the BCS. Their knowledge of the battlefield and current practices tied into the seminars and brought the first glimpse of the deployment to the BCS. At the brigade level, they suggested having a budget section and as many personnel trained as Contract Officer Representatives (COR) as possible. This amounted to the need for additional personnel and training.

Also adding to the staff's advantage was the BCTP's continued involvement in the deployment process as the instructors continued to teach and mentor members of the staff to the completion of the validation exercise. At the validation exercise, BCTP drew from the original aim point to tailor training events specifically to the brigade.



Col. Paul Paolozzi, 18th Engineer Brigade Commander from Utica, N.Y., meets his senior mentor, retired Gen. Hendrix and Col. Cox, in Sep. 2010 before the Battle Command Seminar in Schwetzingen, Germany. Yingling continued to mentor Paolozzi through the end of the validation exercise in Feb. 2011 at Ft. Hood, Texas. (Photo by Spc. Aislinn M. Amig, 18th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs)



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Throughout the brigade's train-up, numerous partnership training events were conducted with German Soldiers. From ruck marches to shooting competitions, physical fitness tests to sporting events, the 18th Engineer Brigade and the German 464th Special Engineer Battalion have been busy developing an enduring partnership here since August. The German 464th Special Engineer Battalion began the partnership experience by hosting a German Sports Badge, or Deutes Sportabzeichen, qualification event August 12. Soldiers from both nations participated in a shot put, stone put, long jump, high jump and multiple distance runs.



German army 1st Lt. Thomas Löwer, the second company commander of the 464th Special Engineer Battalion, awards the Schutzenschnur to Sgt. Rennato Lopez, the maintenance non-commissioned officer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Engineer Brigade and a native of Houston, Oct. 7 in Speyer, Germany. Soldiers from the 18th Engineer Brigade participated in a shooting range Sept. 23 in Speyer with their Bundeswehr partner unit, the 464th Special Engineer Bn., earning the German Armed Forces Badge of Marksmanship for weapons proficiency for enlisted Soldiers.

“It gives us an opportunity to practice the English language,” said German army 1st Lt. Thomas Loewer of 464th Special Engineer Battalion. “We learn to work with our international partners and build strong relationships.” In order to fully qualify for the Sportabzeichen, Soldiers must also finish a 200-meter timed swimming event, which could not be completed that day because of the pool location.

Other events were coordinated between the two engineer units so that Soldiers could also earn the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency, or Leistungsabzeichen. This badge requires Soldiers to have already earned the Sportabzeichen and complete a commander's evaluation report, first aid course, pistol marksmanship and a foot march.

1st Lt. Jeff Johnson, the 18th Engineer Brigade medical operations officer from Los Angeles, participated in many of the partnership events with the 464th Special Engineer Bn., eventually earning the bronze Schutzenschnur for his qualification with the German weaponry. Johnson served as an American liaison for three Bundeswehr units prior to his arrival at the 18th Engineer Brigade, earning the gold Schutzenschnur as well as the Leistungsabzeichen, and said that “doing events like these and talking to our partners is the best way to get comfortable working with them.” Johnson said partnership events are important because “it helps Soldiers get out into the community



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that we are living in and interact with Soldiers from NATO nations we'll be working with (while deployed).”

The Swords Up brigade and the 464th Special Engineer Battalion continued to strengthen their bond by participating in one another's ceremonies and socials, such as the New Year Reception hosted by the commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade, Col. Paul Paolozzi of Utica, N.Y.

From September 27 to October 1, 2010 and again from November 1 through November 12, Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Engineer Brigade, trained on Military Operations on Urban Terrain at the MOUT site at Grafenwoehr, Germany. Members of the 18th Engineer Brigade combat security team focused on dismount procedures during the training and further sharpened their skills in first aid, radio communications and room clearing techniques. Spc. Michael Wilson, a bridge crew member with the 18th Engineer Brigade and a native of Pocatello, Idaho, said during some of the training scenarios vehicles were inoperable and “we learned how we needed to react and work through it.”

“Having the Ultimate Training Munitions rounds provided the most realistic training that we have experienced during training missions,” said Pfc. Ethan King, an 18th Engineer Brigade combat engineer from Fayetteville, N.C. The UTM are paint-filled 5.56 rounds that resemble live ammunition with reliability and accuracy in order to give Soldiers a better understanding of getting shot at. The team also used smoke grenades to simulate a realistic combat environment. “Being able to practice proper placement and throwing of the smoke grenades was something not many of us were familiar with, and this gave us a chance to develop those skills,” said Wilson.



Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Engineer Brigade remove a casualty from the building during a training exercise on Military Operations on Urban Terrain in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

The Soldiers were also given the opportunity to play the opposing force at several points throughout the exercise. “We got to see



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what it would look like through the enemy's eyes, so we could learn from that the next time we were going through the training ourselves," said Pfc. Eric Goldenthal, an 18th Engineer Brigade combat engineer from Baltimore. The training gave the Soldiers a better idea of what they will encounter in a deployed environment.

On October 15, 2010, the 15th Engineer Battalion, 18th Engineer Brigade cased its colors at Conn Barracks, Schweinfurt in preparation for their upcoming deployment to Kuwait. "They're going to accomplish any mission," said Col. Paul M. Paolozzi, the commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade. "Anything can be expected, and they'll hit it with a 'drive on' spirit."



The 15th Engineer Battalion prepares to case its colors Oct. 15 at Conn Barracks in Schweinfurt, Germany, in preparation for deployment. The deployment will be the battalion's first contingency operation since its return from the Mekong Delta in Vietnam in 1969. (Photo by Pfc. David Huddleston, 18th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs)

"The road leading us to today has been a challenging one. However, the Soldiers who stand before you faced each challenge head on with the determination and will necessary to build this great team," said Lt. Col. Craig Baumgartner, the commander of the 15th Engineer Battalion, during the ceremony. Baumgartner also stressed the importance of each Soldier to "keep your faith, celebrate your patriotism, care for one another and relish this opportunity to make an indelible mark on the world."

The 15th Engineer Battalion was reactivated July 16, 2008, and this deployment, in support of Operation New Dawn to conduct general engineering operations, will be the battalion's first contingency operation since its return from the Mekong Delta in Vietnam in 1969.

Surveyors from the 18th Engineer Brigade's Technical Headquarters Section (THS) conducted a mission at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, October 22-26 with the intention of helping their residents upgrade fuel farms. Staff Sgt. Robert Owens Jr., a senior technical engineer noncommissioned officer from Hornbeck, La., Staff Sgt. Shaun Emmett, a technical engineer noncommissioned officer from Pittsburg, Pa., and



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Spc. Darius Cooper, a technical engineer specialist and native of Portsmouth, Va., used their survey equipment and computer software programs to provide a graphic representation of the fuel farm to the Director of Public Works at Camp Bondsteel. The 18th Engineer Brigade's THS, headquartered in Schwetzingen, Germany, has provided continual technical engineering support to other countries throughout the past year. "I spent about four months looking for missions for us this year" said Master Sgt. Kevin Bardy, THS noncommissioned officer in charge from LaGrange, Ill.

The three technical engineers brought Trimble R8 Global Positioning Systems to collect information on the terrain. The systems use satellites and blue tooth capabilities as well as computers loaded with Terramodel, a program used to apply the information gathered to create a computer generated representation of the site. "They wanted us to give them a chart of the different elevations of and around the fuel bags so they could see how much fuel they were using on a daily basis and ways they could improve the whole site," said Cooper. "I feel we helped them with that, and they can go ahead and analyze the data we gave them and get a nice project from it."



Spc. Darius Cooper, a technical engineer with 18th Engineer Brigade from Portsmouth, Va., surveys a bulk fuel farm Oct. 23 at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, to help the Director of Public Works come up with a better plan to help store fuel. The results of the mission gave the DPW a way of accurately accounting for the fuel contained or lost. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Robert Owens, 18th Engineer Brigade)

The engineers from THS worked in Croatia during the exercise Immediate Response 2011 Aug. 23-27. This mission required Sgt. 1st Class Marcus Young, senior technical engineer noncommissioned officer from Hampton, Va., and his team of two Soldiers to conduct surveys and create designs for other military units. Sgt. Allan Bonello, a technical engineer noncommissioned officer from Newport, Wales, United Kingdom, and Spc. Mark Grabow, a technical engineer specialist from New York Mills, Minn., overcame an initial setback when their original survey site was changed to one that was larger and more difficult to survey due to thick vegetation. The change of location left Young, Bonello and Grabow with only two days to survey the new area.

"It was an excellent training opportunity," said Young, whose team received a lot of design experience using concrete masonry unit blocks rather than the typical wood



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structures the Army builds with. Though they only spent two days on the survey, the designs produced from the data were constructed from August to mid-October with delays due to changes and revisions. They had to produce designs for residential and government structures, religious buildings and an open air market, Young said. These missions to Kosovo and Croatia not only helped the 18th Engineer Brigade build relationships with other nations, but also helped to train the THS Soldiers and noncommissioned officers. "Soldiers get training from doing the work, and the NCOs get training in leadership," said Bardy. "I have gained so much knowledge from the equipment alone and from the NCOs around me. They have helped mold the Soldiers in our section to where we all feel pretty confident that we can go out with a small group and accomplish any mission they give to us," said Cooper.

In October 2010, the unit set up a Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter (DRASH) to simulate a deployed environment and give the staff the opportunity to execute a staff exercise. In addition to the topics addressed in the BCS, the staff added skills to include Army Battle Command Systems (ABCS), Decision Making, Common Operating Picture (COP) Management, Significant Activity (SIGACT) Management, Battle Rhythm Management and Battle Drills.

During this exercise, known as Event 2, the staff moved from PowerPoint based briefings to Command Post of the Future (CPOF) to centralize all information and generate the brigade Commander's Update Brief (CUB). Having all the information for the CUB on the CPOF was the first step to generate the COP, which had to be accessible in any location because of units spread throughout north-eastern Afghanistan as well as being an applicable tool for staff planning. As the COP was developed further in the training, it would become a tool for mission analysis. At the walk phase, creating the overlays, understanding the system and beginning to populate it with data was the first step to a comprehensive COP. Soldiers and leaders alike were able to receive training on the CPOF to create initial products for the COP.

With the transition from PowerPoint to CPOF, the staff experienced growing difficulties of transforming their data to knowledge for the COP and the CUB. By the end of the exercise, data was refined so information was briefed in accordance with the aim point, but the way ahead was to be able to transfer knowledge. The transfer of knowledge would be addressed after the exercise and refined so upon deployment, the brigade will easily move into tracking combat operations.

Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Engineer Brigade battled the cold, wet, and foggy weather to conduct Army Warrior Task Training from November 2-7, 2010 at the Grafenwoehr Training Area. Soldiers from the company and the staff focused on tasks such as weapon familiarization, land navigation skills, squad movement techniques, radio communications, first aid, and nuclear, biological, and chemical decontamination.



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“This training reinforced the Soldier tasks that we were all taught at the earlier part of our careers,” said Maj. Charles Hall, 18th Engineer Brigade adjutant and a native of Wake Forest, N.C. “It gave us, as leaders, the opportunity to work with Soldiers outside our normal staff sections, assess their skills, knowledge and abilities, and execute the task to standard.” On the final day of training, Soldiers were tested on their ability to move through certification lanes as a squad. They had to react to contact, transmit reports over the radio and evacuate casualties, all while trying to occupy their objective.

“I think it was important for team building,” said Capt. Ingrid Bruning, a battle captain for 18th Engineer Brigade and a native of Waterport, N.Y. “Everyone’s experience level is different, and it was good that we could all add something and apply our knowledge to a real-world scenario.”



Pfc. Joseph Rogers, a supply specialist for the 18th Engineer Brigade and a native of Riverside, Calif., takes cover during the unit’s Army Warrior Task certification lanes Nov. 5, 2010 at the Grafenwoehr Training Area. Soldiers from the unit qualified on their assigned weapons during the week-long event and were certified on annual Army Warrior Tasks.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Felix SanMiguel, a prime power technician for 18th Engineer Brigade and a native of Guam, said the certification was a great opportunity to learn as a leader, and it emphasized the importance of planning and preparation when conducting a mission. Multiple ranges were coordinated so that Soldiers could qualify not only on their assigned weapons, but also on the M-240B machine gun, MK19 automatic grenade launcher, M2 .50-caliber machine gun, and M249 squad automatic weapon.

Following the range density week, the Soldiers of the 18th Engineer Brigade conducted a command post exercise at Grafenwoehr from November 8-12 to validate their Army Battle Command Systems and prepare the staff for their upcoming validation exercise. The final training exercise prior to the validation exercise was a Tactical Operations Center Exercise (TOCEX), known as Event 3. New exercise objectives included Operational Environment, Theater Command and Control Structure, Request for Information (RFI) Management, and Commander’s Critical Information Requirement (CCIR) Management. Although the staff had previously generated CPOF material, returning to daily operations had also caused a return to PowerPoint. By the close of the exercise, the staff had created a living document in CPOF. The material in the



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CPOF could be updated by any staff section as information flowed in. In this manner, the COP, projected for all to view in the TOC, had up to date information for any recent SIGACT.

This exercise was the first opportunity for the staff to react to events on the battlefield. All training injects were initiated by a designated white cell, giving staff members a chance to interact with very limited 'outside' units. This created the need for RFI and SIGACT management and set the stage for other staff activities, such as FRAGO management. The brigade Tactical Operations Center Standard Operating Procedures (TOCSOP) was put to use in response to SIGACTs. Walking through the battle drills in response to SIGACTs required the staff to begin exercising its cohesion. Different sections realized the need to overlap in order to cover all requirements. Later, in the validation exercise, the staff would not only execute the battle drills but also refine them towards current operations.

Although RDSP had been discussed at the BCS, this event was the first opportunity to train during an operational event. RDSP provides the staff with a tool to make a quick and informed decision versus MDMP which will produce the optimal decision but with a much deeper and longer process. When time is key, producing a good decision and enabling troops on the ground to execute in a timely manner becomes more important than finding the perfect solution with no time to execute. As the staff became aware of the value of time, RDSP became a more comprehensive process to produce an order and initiate movement.

The staff also focused on developing an initial Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIR). CCIR continued to be developed throughout the remainder of the exercises as the brigade pulled from existing CCIR and theater CCIR but overlaying the concept of keeping only things that the commander would need to make a decision on, tying back to the cognitive hierarchy.

During the exercise, issues of communications between the staff sections in various locations became apparent. This trend would continue through the validation exercise as the staff trained on CPOF with Ventrillo, Adobe Connect, and speaker phones.

The 18th Engineer Brigade sent key leaders to Afghanistan to conduct a Pre-Deployment Site Survey (PDSS) in December 2010. Twelve Soldiers traveled to Forward Operating Base Sharana, Afghanistan to meet with the 176th Engineer Brigade, the unit they would eventually replace. The brigade commander traveled to Bagram, Kabul, and a number of other sites to conduct key leader engagements with fellow commanders. The rest of the staff gain valuable insight from their counterparts and brought back to Germany a wealth of knowledge. Lessons learned from the PDSS were incorporated into the brigade's training to make it more realistic.



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The 565th Engineer Battalion (Provisional), 18th Engineer Brigade activated at Tompkins Barracks on December 17, 2010 under the command of Lt. Col. John G. Dupeire from Thibodaux, La., and Sgt. Maj. David Morgan from Wagoner, Okla. Maj. Gen. Patricia McQuiston, the commanding general of the 21st Theater Sustainment Command, attended the ceremony, as well as the last commander of the 565th Engineer Battalion before it deactivated in Germany in June 2005. His name is Col. Jose Ramos, and he currently serves as the deputy assistant inspector general at the Pentagon.

Col. Paul Paolozzi, the 18th Engineer Brigade commander, said the purpose of the 565th Engineer Battalion is two-fold. Not only will the battalion serve as a headquarters for non-deployed units within the 18th Engineer Brigade, but also it will hold the responsibility of setting precedence for Soldiers arriving to their first duty station.

Dupeire previously served as the 18th Engineer Brigade executive officer and said he looks forward to serving with all the Soldiers of the 565th Engineer Battalion and caring for the Soldiers and Families of the 18th Engineer Brigade's deployed units.

Morgan served as the divisional engineer for the 1st Armored Division prior to arriving at the 565th Engineer Battalion and will use his institutional knowledge and prior experiences with rear detachments to set the standard for the battalion.

The 565th Engineer Battalion will serve as the headquarters for the 60th Engineer Detachment, the Emergency Management Assessment Team and the 243rd Construction Management Team, located in Schwetzingen. The battalion will also be responsible for rear detachment operations for the 18th Engineer Brigade headquarters, as well as Company G and the 42nd Clearance Company of the 54th Engineer Battalion in Bamberg, and Company D, 15th Engineer Battalion in Schweinfurt.



Lt. Col. John Dupeire of Thibodaux, La., and Sgt. Maj. David Morgan of Wagoner, Okla., the 565th Engineer Battalion command team, unfurl the battalion colors during the battalion's activation ceremony at Tompkins Barracks in Schwetzingen, Germany, recently. (Photo by Spc. Aislinn M. Amig, 18th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs)

The preparation required to activate a provisional battalion is extensive. Months before the actual ceremony, approval was granted from McQuiston to activate the



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battalion. Once the 565th Engineer Battalion was approved, the 18th Engineer Brigade worked extensively to assign personnel to the new unit. A special balance was required to man the unit so it would be able to fully operate and support the brigade while at the same time leaving the appropriate personnel within the brigade in order for it to fulfill its upcoming mission in Afghanistan.

Once the personnel were assigned, new office space was allocated and as the 565th Engineer Battalion was activated, they moved into their new offices and began independent operations. Standing up the battalion prior to the brigade's deployment allows the battalion to establish their independent operations and support the brigade. These operations will continue throughout the 18th Engineer Brigade's deployment.

In December 2010, Soldiers from the 18th Engineer Brigade provided construction support to the Patrick Henry Village, Heidelberg area by constructing an add-on to the Lion's Den. The Lion's Den is an after school facility where students can go to enjoy their free time together. The 18th Engineer Brigade's Technical Headquarters Section took over this project from Child Youth Services to help improve the area by means of designing and constructing a deck behind the Lion's Den.

Employing an automated computer design program, site surveys and other resources the engineers designed and constructed the deck using basic construction tools such as saws and drills. "Prior to starting the design we first conducted a site survey to see what actually existed in the area," said technical engineer non-commissioned officers Staff Sgt. Shaun Emmett, from Pittsburg, Pa.

One obstacle they discovered was a concrete masonry unit block wall that local children were using as a graffiti wall. The deck was designed to extend from the back of the Lion's Den to the location where the concrete masonry unit wall would be running alongside of the deck. However, during the survey, they discovered that the wall was not at a 90-degree angle from the building that would cause difficulty in the construction process. "The biggest problem I had while drafting and designing the deck was working with the European metric system rather than the U.S. standard system for measuring," said Pfc. Billy Joe Johnson, III from Salem, Ore. "I started designing it in standard board sizes and units but then we had to switch to metric sizes. I had to redraft what I had already done using the metric system, which I was not accustomed to."

"After the designs were complete, we had to go through the acquisition process," said Emmett. "This is where we received approval and attained the funds and all the materials that were needed in order to begin the construction." Following the approval and gathering of the funds and materials from the Department of Public Works, CYS gave the go ahead for the 18th Engineer Brigade's Technical Headquarters Section to begin constructing the deck.



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As a Military Occupation Specialty 12T, technical engineer, with the 18th Engineers, Emmett's job usually stops at the designing or acquisition phase of construction. Having the unit construct the deck allowed them to compare the result to the original designs they created, a huge advantage to doing projects like this. "Some of the greater problems we came across were the result of nothing being really square," said Emmett about the site. "We had to cut the wood at different angles and we made custom forms so that we could cover the entire surface of the working space since there weren't any already made for that size and shape." The deck was completed by the end of December 2010 with the 18th Engineer Brigade's Technical Headquarters Section closing out the project and opening it for use.

On December 4, 2010, after several months of training, the 54th Engineer Battalion took the reins from 27th Engineer Battalion at a transfer-of-authority ceremony at Forward Operating Base Shank, Afghanistan. The 54th Engineer Battalion began its mission of engineer support in Regional Command-East through counter-improvised explosive device missions within six provinces. The battalion, based at Bamberg, Germany, assumed the task of route clearance in Wardak, Logar, Nangahar, Konar, Nuristan, and Laghman provinces from the Fort Bragg, N.C.-based 27th Engineer Battalion, Task Force Tiger. During its deployment, the 54th Engineer Battalion will be known as Task Force Dolch, a name reflecting the unit's history as well as its roots in Germany. Dolch is the German word for dagger.

During the ceremony, the Soldiers of both task forces gathered to signify the change of the mantle from TF Tiger to TF Dolch. "There is no real permanence to a military organization except for the colors," said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Angelita Bridges of Tupelo, Miss., TF Dolch retention noncommissioned officer. "It is the colors that bear the history of the unit, its battles, its campaigns, and its accomplishments." The uncasing of the battalion's colors signifies the completion of the TOA and the assumption of responsibility for route-clearance operations in RC-East. It is an important occasion, one that shows the commitment and dedication of the unit to its new mission in Afghanistan. Both battalions did their best to prepare for the transfer, with TF Tiger passing TF Dolch Soldiers and leaders much of the knowledge they had acquired over the past year to ready the 54th for its job during the year to come. "That way, they won't have to reinvent the wheel," said U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Malcolm Simons of Fayetteville, N.C., TF Tiger command sergeant major.



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Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Suber from Jonesville, S.C. (left), 54th Engineer Battalion and Task Force Dolch command sergeant major, and U.S. Army Lt. Col. Timothy Holman of Marks, Miss., TF Dolch commander, uncased the battalion colors during a transfer-of-authority ceremony on Forward Operating Base Shank Dec. 4. The ceremony marked the transition from TF Tiger to TF Dolch as the primary route-clearance asset throughout Regional Command-East. (Photo by US Army Sgt. Robert Larson, Task Force Dolch)

Task Force Tiger helped train Soldiers of the 54th Engineer Battalion on multiple tasks ranging from day-to-day operations to using some of the newest equipment in theatre, including the newest two-passenger Husky route-clearance vehicle. Soldiers learned the tactics, techniques, and procedures that were effective for TF Tiger and how to implement them in their own operations. The learning experience gave the outgoing Soldiers a sense of closure and the incoming Soldiers knowledge needed to execute properly during their deployment.

The 243rd Construction Management Team (CMT), 18th Engineer Brigade, cased its colors January 6, 2011 at Tompkins Barracks in preparation for their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. The 18th Engineer Brigade deployed the 15th and 54th Engineer Battalions within the last few months. Following the 243rd CMT deployment, the brigade headquarters will also deploy. It has taken many months of training for the small unit to be fully prepared to deploy. The 243rd CMT Soldiers executed realistic mission readiness exercises by providing survey support to future land owners.





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Maj. Aaron Wolf, the commander of the 243rd Construction Management Team, and Sgt. 1st Class Scott Mays, the detachment sergeant, case the unit colors during its deployment ceremony Jan. 6 on Tompkins Barracks in Schwetzingen, Germany. (Photo by Pfc. David Huddleston, 18th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs)

“A key focus of our training was project management since we aren’t actually the ones swinging the hammers or pushing the dirt with the bulldozers,” said Maj. Aaron Wolf, the 243rd CMT commander who is from Poynette, Wis. “We are the ones who make the big plan and then do the quality control.” When the 243rd CMT receives a mission, the team of Soldiers must first survey the area they are working in. This involves getting accurate elevation readings via global positioning systems. From there, the team uploads the data and generates map information of the terrain. Once they have an accurate map, they can begin the design process. When their mission is complete, the customer has a design and a set of experts to provide an additional set of eyes for quality control.

“We plan on using our expertise to make upgrades and improvements to the facilities,” said Sgt. 1st Class Scott Mays, the detachment sergeant who is from Beckley, W.Va. The improvements will increase the size and therefore the occupancy and quality of living on select forward operating bases in Afghanistan. This will be the 243rd CMT’s second deployment since its reactivation December 16, 2006, with its first deployment in 2007 to Iraq.

On 14 January, COL Paul M. Paolozzi, the 18th Engineer Brigade Commander hosted the Commander’s New Year Reception at the Village Pavilion on Patrick Henry Village. Various German style gourmet H’orderves and fine wine marked the event. The event drew engineer officers from all over Germany within and outside of the brigade.



Officers of the BDE gather around the table for some great camaraderie and exquisite food.

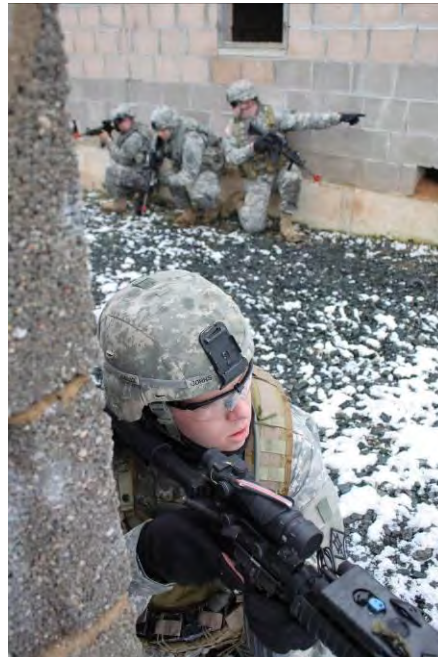
The Commander’s New Year Reception is a long standing Army tradition of commander inviting his unit officers and their spouses to his home. It stems from the days when it was customary for officers or NCOs new to a post to pay a social call to their superior on holidays. BG Patricia E. McQuiston, the 21st Theater Support Commander, along with several other German dignitaries also attended the event.



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Soldiers from 18th Engineer Brigade's personal security detachment sharpened their combat readiness skills at the Grafenwoehr Training Area from January 18-21. During the four-day event, the Soldiers trained round the clock on Military Operations on Urban Terrain, rifle marksmanship, hand grenade procedures and night operations. "One focus during this exercise was on the team's ability to move through urban terrain as a cohesive unit," said 2nd Lt. Thomas Malejko, the 18th Engineer Brigade assistant to the chief of staff from Hackettstown, N.J. "I saw a dramatic change between day one and day four in the team's ability to move throughout the site and rapidly clear each room." For a lot of the Soldiers, the highlight of the exercise was using night vision devices for the first time. "It was a good opportunity for them to learn how to operate under those conditions without losing their depth perception," said Malejko.



Spc. Brandon Johns, a dismount team member with 18th Engineer Brigade's personal security detachment, from Eustis, Fla., pulls security so another team member can cross a roadway during Military Operations on Urban Terrain training Jan. 19. The team spent a week in Grafenwoehr, Germany, training on MOUT procedures, marksmanship, and night operations. (Photo by 1st Lt. Joseph Caperna, 18th Engineer Brigade)

"When working on our movement techniques at night, we realized it was a lot more difficult than we anticipated, but it gave us more realistic training," said Sgt. Brandon Vergien, an 18th Eng. Bde. team leader from East Aurora, N.Y. On the team's final day in the field, a practice range was coordinated to ensure each Soldier learned proper hand grenade techniques and placement. After each Soldier became proficient with practice grenades, they ended the day with a live grenade qualification. For



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Vergien, the training helped to enhance the team's bond and strengthen their capabilities. "This exercise helped us work as a team and actually become familiar with the equipment that we'd never used before," said Vergien. "We learned what our weaknesses were and focused on them to improve ourselves and make the team operate better as a whole."

The brigade's validation exercise, Unified Endeavor (UE) 11-2, took place in January and February at Ft. Hood, Texas alongside the future Regional Command-East (RC-E) team, 1st Cavalry Division (1CD). During UE, relationships were established between brigade counterparts with 1CD, future members of Task Force LaFayette who will fall under the RC-E area of operations and members of I Corps, the future IJC (ISAF Joint Command). Creating the link between the staffs will allow smoother transitions once arriving in theater because dialogue is already open.



MG Allyn, CG of 1CTJF-1, recognizes HHC, 18th Engineer Brigade Soldiers who have contributed significantly during the Brigade's Certification Exercise, Unified Endeavour 11-02 at Fort Hood, TX.

Additional training objectives for UE included Force Protection, Information Operations, Fragmentary Order (FRAGO) Management, Boards, Bureaus, Centers, Cells and Working Groups (B2C2WG) and Information Management.

The initial push of the exercise was to generate the Engineer Campaign Support Plan (CSP) through MDMP. Although this trained the staff on the MDMP process, the real success occurred once the campaign plan was disseminated throughout the staff. The final product enabled Soldiers to quickly grasp what the brigade's focus is going to be down range. Additional value was gained from learning how to use Central Command Regional Exchange System (CENTRIX), a Secret releasable to ISAF platform, and understanding the CSPs for the current engineer brigade and RCs. Although the staff will continue to develop and refine the product, it has enabled a holistic view of what the commander wants to accomplish in theater.

From the CSP, a 'Commander's Card' was developed. This one page slide showed the task organization through icons overlaid on the brigade's area of operations, as well as the brigade's mission, intent, lines of effort, shaping and sustaining operations. Not only did this give a quick reference to the staff, but anyone



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briefing outside units was able to do so in a comprehensive and understandable manner.

This training exercise was the first that had CENTRIX access in addition to working with units that the brigade will work with in theater. The coordination required to respond to the training has established a firm base for all levels to continue to communicate and learn from one another. The systems at UE, including the CENTRIX network with CPOFs, allowed the staff to utilize the SharePoint, a website that allows files to be posted, checked-out and modified, and information management more effectively across the brigade. Staff sections based away from the main body were able to access up to date information via CPOF, tie in to working groups, and update their information for the main body to see. The transfer of information using SharePoint and CPOF expanded to the point that it was knowledge management instead of data and information saved on individual computers.

The arrival of members of the 176th Engineer Brigade from Afghanistan, who the 18th Engineer Brigade will eventually replace, augmented CENTRIX accessibility. The addition of the Operations Officer and IJC Liaison officer enabled the brigade to better understand current operations in addition to the systems that the staff were now able to link into online. With access to CENTRIX, research could be done into the various portals in addition to having personnel with a firm grasp of current operations present at the training. Seeing and working with real world data and information allowed the staff to better grasp what the brigade will be doing in theater.

By the end of the exercise, the brigade was able to display a COP with pertinent overlays and running estimates. Running estimates were tailored to each staff section under the idea of what others need to know in order to execute in the leader's absence. Through this transformation from crawl to validate, the brigade had steadily developed its targeting process as a means to direct operations. Although the deliver may not be direct fire, the Decide-Detect-Deliver-Assess concept has been applied to how the brigade decides which projects or route clearance routes take priority and the support necessary to be completed. At the close of the exercise, sections exported their products and processes for future use while deployed.

Following the Unified Endeavor exercise, the brigade staff returned to German, except for the command group. The command group remained in Texas and visited the 111th Engineer Battalion from the Texas National Guard. The 111th Engineer Battalion would fall under the 18th Engineer Brigade once both units deployed to Afghanistan in the near future. The command team of the 18th Engineer Brigade saw the 111th Engineer Battalion during their mobilization and train-up. This successful visit allowed the command group to form relationships with the 111th Engineer Battalion even before they deployed and became attached to the 18th Engineer Brigade.



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From March 7-11, 2011 Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Engineer Brigade participated in a convoy live fire exercise at the Grafenwoehr Training Area. Using the Army's tried and true crawl, walk, run phases, the Soldiers began the five-day exercise by maneuvering through a dry run on the convoy live fire course. A dry run is when Soldiers execute the course without ammunition. Once Soldiers were comfortable with their responsibilities in the convoy, they moved on to the live fire range. Each vehicle had a crew served weapon mounted within a turret, which allowed Soldiers to gain experience firing from a mounted position.

"As a mechanic, I don't usually get to shoot the (crew served) weapons, outside of just typical weapons qualification," said Pfc. Kevin Marberry, an 18th Engineer Brigade wheeled vehicle mechanic from San Antonio, Texas. "It was nice to work outside of my usual job for a while." Throughout the exercise, vehicles were sometimes disabled by roadside improvised explosive devices. Once a vehicle was deemed inoperable, a team of dismounted Soldiers were called upon to assist in the recovery phase of the operation.



2nd Lt. Thomas Malejko, an assistant to the chief of staff for the 18th Engineer Brigade, from Allamuchy, New Jersey, gives a convoy brief to truck commanders, March 9, at the Grafenwoehr Training Area. During the five-day exercise from March 7-11, Soldiers practiced convoy live fire operations, mine resistant ambush protected vehicle egress procedures and sharpened their warrior skills. (Photo by Spc. Aislinn M. Amig, 18th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs)

Two Soldiers were tasked with retrieving the tow bar and hooking it up to the disabled vehicle, while the rest of the dismounts maintained security with the help of the gunners. Often times dismounted teams sustained casualties throughout their mission and Soldiers were required to perform combat lifesaving techniques. Soldiers from the unit's personal security detachment also gained experience by conducting a convoy live fire exercise at night.

"It was more challenging using night vision devices," said Spc. Justin Palmer, an 18th Engineer Brigade combat engineer from Fayetteville, N.C. "It was harder to see and manipulate around the battle space." Soldiers who participated in the event explained how getting to work with others outside of their duty section was beneficial to them. "It helped to build a bond with everyone and gain trust among all of us," said Marberry. Following the convoy live fire training, 18th Engineer Brigade Soldiers spent time



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practicing their rollover drills and egress procedures from a mine resistant ambush protected vehicle as well as qualifying on their individually assigned weapons.

In March, the brigade staff conducted language training in preparation for the upcoming deployment. While most of the staff conducted the language training online, several key leaders had the opportunity to receive a week-long classroom instruction, taught by a native Dari speaker. Also in the month of March, the brigade honed its medical skills by conducting Combat Lifesaver training.

April marked the transition of responsibility from the 18th Engineer Brigade staff to the 565th Engineer Battalion (Provisional). The 565th Engineer Battalion assumed duties of brigade operations, allowing the brigade staff to focus on preparing for deployment. This transition also allowed the 565th Engineer Battalion to establish their systems and conduct a handoff prior to the brigade deploying.

In May 2011, the 18th Engineer Brigade sent its torch and advance party (ADVON) forward to establish nodes to facilitate the onward movement of the main body in. The torch and ADVON personnel created nodes at Manas, Kyrgyzstan and Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. This would set the conditions to allow the main body of the brigade to easily flow through once they deployed. The brigade staff conducted a final weapons qualification in May to ensure their weapons and optics were zeroed prior to deployment. The brigade also conducted block leave in May, allowing Soldiers time to spend with their families before deploying.

On May 18, 2011, Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Engineer Brigade gathered for a farewell dinner prior to their upcoming deployment and to celebrate Asian-American Pacific Islander Heritage Month at the Spanferkelhof restaurant in Heidelberg. The Family Readiness Group sponsored the event and based the evening's activities on a luau theme. Guests were greeted at the door with leis, a traditional Hawaiian wreath of flowers draped around the neck when arriving or leaving an event to show appreciation or affection. "Pacific Islanders are usually very proud of their ancestors," said Capt. Orlando Fraser, an assistant intelligence officer from Honolulu, Hawaii. "It is nice when we can recognize people and their heritage. The event was a great success."

"The luau is a way for the Soldiers and families of the 18th Engineer Brigade to join hands and celebrate our upcoming deployment to Afghanistan," said Capt. Po Tsui, the HHC, 18th Engineer Brigade Commander, and a native of Honolulu, Hawaii." Pam Nelson from Campbell, N.Y. wife of Maj. Kurt Nelson, 18th Engineer Brigade plans officer in charge, said that not only was the event beneficial to the Soldiers, but equally beneficial to the friends and families. She believes the social atmosphere of the event provided family members an opportunity to meet new people, form relationships prior to their spouse's departure and learn about the many resources the FRG can offer them throughout the deployment.



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In keeping with the Hawaiian theme, the evening began with a feast including authentic Hawaiian foods such as crab potato salad, mixed tomato salad and whole roasted pig. Following dinner, Soldiers and family members dressed in Aloha attire performed traditional Hawaiian dances beginning with the females performing the Hukilau and Hawaiian lullaby. The Haka, a traditional dance performed by the Māori of New Zealand, was demonstrated by male Soldiers in the form of a war dance that consisted of vigorous movement, feet stomping and rhythmical shouting.

The Tauluga, a Samoan dance performed by a son or daughter of a tribal chief, was the final dance of the evening. Throughout the dance, Samoans “lafo,” or throw money at the dancer to acknowledge her skills and status as the child of a chief. Additional entertainment was provided by Soldiers from the U.S. Army European Band who played a variety of lively Hawaiian and island music that got the crowd involved. Also, there were multiple activities for the children including a bounce house, lei making stations, face painting and a display of farm animals.



A group of Soldiers and family members were part of the entertainment during the 18th Engineer Brigade farewell luau as they demonstrated a native Hawaiian warrior dance, May 18, in Heidelberg, Germany. The Hawaiian themed event, sponsored by the Family Readiness Group, not only gave Soldiers and their families the opportunity to bond together prior to the unit's upcoming deployment, but also serve as a celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. (Photo by Pfc. David Huddleston, 18th Eng. Bde. Public Affairs)

“The whole program was just fun and enjoyable, and the costumes and decorations were outstanding,” said Lt. Col. Terrence Hayes, the 18th Engineer Brigade Chaplain and originally from Grants Pass, Ore. “I give it two thumbs up!” “These Soldiers (Pacific Islanders) have fought foreign enemies and prejudices at home and have contributed significantly through the years to the armed services. It is with this framework that we celebrate their accomplishments with our luau,” added Tsui.

On 7 June 2011, the Headquarters, 18th Engineer Brigade and the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, cased its colors at Tompkins Barracks in preparation for their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. The headquarters will join their already deployed subordinate units in theater, the 54th Engineer Battalion and 243rd



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Construction Management Team in Afghanistan, as well as the 15th Engineer Battalion in Kuwait. “We’re the last to deploy, and we’ve been leaning forward so far at times I think we’re about to fall over with anticipation,” said Col. Paul M. Paolozzi, commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade.



Capt. Po Tsui, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th Engineer Brigade and a native of Honolulu, HI, stands in front of his formation during the headquarters deployment ceremony, June 7 on Tompkins Barracks in Schwetzingen, Germany. The unit is preparing for a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in June 2011. (Photo by Pfc. David Huddleston, 18th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs)

The 18th Engineer Brigade has been training and preparing for this deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom for the past year and is ready to take on the mission at hand. “We have done a lot of training,” said Pfc. Chad Finholt, 18th Engineer Brigade technical engineer specialist and a native of Denton, Texas. “Sometimes it was rough and frustrating, but it was good training.”

Training has taken the unit to several places throughout Europe, as well as Fort Hood, Texas for their participation in Unified Endeavor 11-2. “I feel that our unit has properly trained us and adequately prepared us from all levels, from the brigade level down to the section and MOS [military occupational specialty] level,” said Sgt. Darius Cooper, 18th Engineer Brigade technical engineer sergeant and native of Portsmouth, Va.

“The training plan was well thought out, planned, and executed,” said Capt. Joseph Caperna, 18th Engineer Brigade command group tactical officer from Huntington, N.Y. The unit “started at a crawl phase and progressed over the last year to a walk and then a run phase.”

The 18th Engineer Brigade will be leaving behind the 565th Engineer Battalion as its rear detachment here in Germany. “The 18th Engineer Brigade will be missed,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Annette Weber, United States Army Garrison Baden-Wurtemberg command sergeant major and a native of Havelock, N.C. “Our loss is another nations benefit.”



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The evening of June 14, 2011 the main body of the 18th Engineer Brigade deployed. Bused from Tompkins Barracks to Ramstein Airbase, the Soldiers of the 18th Engineer Brigade endured a long night of loading and unloading their bags and waiting for the flight. Prior to boarding the plane to travel to Manas, Kyrgystan, MG McQuiston addressed the Soldiers, offering a motivation speech. The brigade flew in the middle of the night to Manas. With only a few hours in Manas spent checking body armor plates for serviceability, the brigade boarded another plane to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. The following week was spent conducting Reception, Staging for Onward Movement, and Integration. The brigade conducting counter-IED training and received theater-specific briefings on operations in Afghanistan. At the end of the week, the majority of the brigade staff continued from Bagram to Forward Operating Base Sharana, with the S-4 section remaining at Bagram because it is a logistical hub. The Soldiers at Bagram would form Command Post-East.

After conducting left-seat/right seat transition, on 29 June 2011, the 18th Engineer Brigade, Task Force (TF) Sword, assumed responsibility of Afghanistan's North Engineer Region, consisting of Regional Command-East, -Capital and -North, in a transfer of authority ceremony at Forward Operating Base Sharana, Afghanistan. Col. Paul M. Paolozzi, commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade, Task Force Sword, assumed authority from U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Lester Simpson, commander of the 176th Engineer Brigade, TF Hammer, Texas Army National Guard. Lt. Gen. David M. Rodriguez, commander of the International Security Assistance Force Joint Command, officiated the ceremony and expressed thanks to Simpson and TF Hammer for their hard work and commitment and welcomed Paolozzi and TF Sword into the command stating they have big shoes to fill. Not only did TF Hammer hand over authority but they also handed over responsibility of improving and expanding partnerships across the region.



Col. Paul M. Paolozzi, commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade from Utica, N.Y., and Command Sgt. Maj. David M. Clark, 18th Engineer Brigade command sergeant major, from Knoxville, Tenn., uncase the brigade colors during the transfer of authority ceremony on Forward Operating Base Sharana, Afghanistan, June 29. The 176th Engineer Brigade, Task Force Hammer, cased its colors and transferred authority to the 18th Engineer Brigade, Task Force Sword.



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“We’re eager not to just assume a mission but to make enormous strides and leaps forward with our Afghan partners,” said Paolozzi. TF Sword will provide engineering oversight planning and conducting combat, construction, and partnership engineering operations throughout the NER, which consists of the north-eastern half of the country. Spanning over 100,000 square miles, the NER is slightly larger than the state of Colorado. Key to its success will be continuing existing and creating new partnerships with Afghans to enable them to operate independently of coalition forces. COL Paolozzi closed his speech with, “I’ll boldly state to our senior leaders, American and Afghan, we will meet and exceed your expectations. We are honored to be a part of Afghanistan’s success.”

In July 2011, the brigade continued to refine its systems and published its Campaign Support Plan and base deployment operations order. These two documents provided clear guidance to the units the brigade commanded and controlled as to the commander’s intent, priorities, and expectations. The 18th Engineer Brigade was in charge of its organic 54th Engineer Battalion, which formed Task Force Dolch. Additionally, the brigade had non-organic units consisting of the 111th Engineer Battalion and the 1249th Engineer Battalion, an Oregon National Guard unit. With over 2400 Soldiers under its charge, Task Force Sword’s mission was to provide synchronized combat and construction engineer effects through combined actions from Transfer of Authority in June 2011 until relieved in Regional Commands East, North, and Capital in support of IJC operations to improve security, development, and governance of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). With 19 Route Clearance Packages under its belt, Task Force Sword’s combat engineer assets cleared roads of explosive hazards on a daily basis.

The 18th Engineer Brigade, unlike its predecessor reported directed to the IJC as a theater asset. The 176th Engineer Brigade had reported to the Regional Command-East headquarters. This change allowed the 18th Engineer Brigade – Task Force Sword greater authority in prioritizing efforts and capabilities throughout its area of operations and not solely focused on Regional Command-East. During the month of July, Task Force Sword brigade staff established their systems and produced a common operating picture on CPOF. As in Germany, the brigade staff focused on presenting the commander knowledge instead of data, as was seen in the Commander’s Update Brief.

In July, TF Sword undertook a massive construction project at Forward Operating Base Gamberi. FOB Gamberi is home to the 45th IBCT, TF Thunderbirds. This mission was deemed by Combined Joint Task Force-1st CAV (CJTF-1) as their number one priority. Due to increased coalition troop presence at FOB Gamberi, increased life support was required. CJTF-1 and TF Thunderbird requested troop engineer assets from TF Sword to rapidly design, develop, and build facilities on FOB Gamberi. The construction project called for an expansion of the base in two phases. The first phase was the Northeast Area Location, to satisfy billeting requirements in addition to administrative and tactical operations center (TOC) requirements for 210 personnel.



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The second phase required design for drainage plans and bill of material (BOM) list for the northeast and southwest areas of the FOB, Southeast Asia (SEA) Hut design and BOM list, and a multi-purpose facility design and BOM list. Altogether, TF Sword engineers constructed six 40' x 90' buildings in addition to 20 B-Huts. To facilitate command and control, TF Sword provided a TAC at FOB Gamberi under the TF Sword S7 OIC, MAJ Samuel Volkman, who served as the FOB Gamberi project officer in charge. The project was completed in October 2010.

On July 12, the 18th Engineer Brigade, Task Force Sword received a visit from their major Command's senior enlisted at Forward Operating Base Sharana, Afghanistan. Fleet Master Chief Petty Officer Roy M. Maddocks Jr., command senior enlisted leader with United States European Command from Hartford, Conn., visited TF Sword, as they begin their second deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He received a brief at TF Sword's command post, but was more interested in speaking to soldiers. He said he wanted to know what enlisted leaders had to say about the constantly changing circumstances in the region and how they were adapting.

Maddocks reiterated President Obama's intent for the U.S. military transition to support and withdraw from Afghanistan by 2014. He stressed in order for it to happen, coalition forces must sufficiently train the Afghan National Security Force to be fully capable of taking over responsibilities sooner rather than later. TF Sword Command Sgt. Maj. David M. Clark, of Knoxville, Tenn., expanded on Maddocks point, "There's no doubt about it-we are engaged in combat; we must relentlessly pursue the enemy; and we must be aggressive at times. However, we must remember that in order to win this war, we must stay focused on our mission and continue to build our partnerships here."



Fleet Master Chief Petty Officer Roy M. Maddocks, Jr. (left), command senior enlisted leader with United States European Command of Hartford, Conn., is met by 18th Engineer Brigade, Task Force Sword Command Sgt. Maj. David M. Clark (right), of Knoxville, Tenn., and Sgt. Michael S. Wilson (middle) personal security detachment non-commissioned officer, TF Sword of



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Pocatello, Idaho, July 12. Maddocks met with enlisted leaders of TF Sword and toured Forward Operating Base Sharana to get a better understanding of what the Soldiers were doing.

TF Sword's campaign plan focuses on creating enduring partnerships with both military and civil Afghan units. Route clearance patrols will teach and mentor their Afghan counterparts to be able to patrol the rounds independently and construction units will create similar partnerships within the construction arena. Throughout the visit, Maddocks passionately said, "We'd rather fight, than write!" He explained the task force is not here to sit in the office to do paperwork. Instead, he insisted, it is here to get out and work hand in hand, to teach the ANSF to operate without NATO assistance, and to show Afghans how to secure their own routes and construct and maintain their environment.

Rounding out his visit, Maddocks met with the 370th Engineer Company (Sapper) and Paktika Provincial Reconstruction Team. The 370th Eng. Co. showed Maddocks some of their specialized equipment, how it is operated, and some of the drawbacks to each. Paktika PRT, whose goal is to advise Afghans and prepare them to be independent in the future without coalition involvement, visited and discussed some of their current projects with Maddocks. Although Maddocks visit was short, Clark said, "It was great to have our senior enlisted leader from EUCOM visit our task force. I am extremely proud of the hard work and very long hours each Sword soldier has put in up to now, but many challenges still lie ahead of us."

Also in July 2011, TF Sword engineers from the 1430th Engineer Company constructed a staging area for vehicles at the Torkham Gate border crossing. This staging area alleviated traffic congestion while allowing border officials to inspect vehicles for contraband and collect taxes. This project will allow the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to collect more easily the well-needed revenue from vehicles paying taxes and tolls to enter the country.

In August, TF Sword engineers responded to a collapsed bridge near Combat Outpost Honaker Miracle, in the Kunar Province of Afghanistan. TF Sword Bridge NCOIC, SFC Rico Williams, along with engineers from the 200th Bridging Company were able to construct a Mabey-Johnson Bridge, thus allowing the local populace to traffic across the river.



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Sword 6, COL Paolozzi (middle) with Soldiers from the 200th Bridging Company stand in front of the newly emplaced bridge near COP Honaker Miracle.

Also in August, the bridge staff, along with battalion commanders conducted the first Commander's Assessment. Upon Transfer of Authority on 29 June 2011, TF Sword published the North Engineer Region (NER) Campaign Support Plan (CSP). This plan served as a baseline for conducting engineer operations in support of IJc and the NER. Every 60 days, TF Sword conducted an assessment of the CSP to provide feedback that allows the plan to be adjusted. During these assessments, the staff provided command teams across TF Sword an assessment of where the unit stands in mission accomplishment and provided a plans update to keep the task force leadership aware of planning efforts and potential future missions. During these assessments, socials were held for commanders and staff to socialize.

In August, the decision was made by TF Sword, to field a mobile training team (MTT) to train and validate the newly arrived engineer units. The mission of the MTT was to travel from throughout the North Engineer Region (NER), composed of Regional Commands East, North, and Capital, to Forward Operating Base (FOB) Deh Dadi II (DDII) to conduct phased individual and collective training for a route clearance company on current equipment, threats, and operational knowledge. After conducting mission analysis, TF Sword pulled available experienced personnel to support the MTT mission.

When the 1014th Engineer Company, Puerto Rico Army National Guard, prepared for deployment, they completed their validation exercise at Ft. McCoy, Wis. However, their training did not fully address engineer specific mission sets for the route clearance missions they would be conducting. Additionally, they established their area of operations in Regional Command (RC) North and had no unit with which to conduct relief in place (RIP) training, to include local TTPs, prior to taking control of the area. Consequently, they called upon their higher future headquarters, 111th Engineer Battalion, Task Force (TF) Roughneck, and 18th Engineer Brigade, TF Sword, to



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develop a solution to fill the gap in training and validate the unit prior to receiving mission sets.



A Route Clearance Patrol from the 1014th Engineer Company, TF Roughneck, TF Sword, practices interrogation techniques during the run phase of their training at Forward Operating Base Deh Dadi II. Their higher headquarters, TF Sword, sent a mobile training team to validate the company's route clearance patrols for combat operations in northern Afghanistan. (Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Maj. David Crews, TF Sword S3 Sgt. Maj.)

Task Force Sword staff identified the training needs of a Route Clearance Platoon (RCP) and 1014th Engineer Company. The training plan consisted of two phases: prerequisite training and on-site training, both of which could be conducted by the MTT. Prerequisite training is normally conducted prior to mobilization, at the mobilization station, and during the first two weeks after arrival in country. All remaining training is conducted during the RIP process, something the 1014th Engineer Company did not have. The training prerequisites included Explosive Ordnance Clearance Agent (EOCA) training, ground penetrating radar (GPR) training, weapons intelligence team (WIT) training, the route reconnaissance and clearance course (R2C2), and PUMA operations.

The MTT training plan used the standard crawl, walk, run cycle. During the crawl phase, Soldiers learned individual tasks such as Goldie and AN-PSS 14 operations. In the walk phase, they moved to collective training that included MEDEVAC operations and combat TTPs. The run phase concluded the training with validation exercises for both day and night operations in which trainers conducted a right-seat/left-seat ride. At the completion of the training, the 1014th Engineers walked away with an increased understanding of their mission and how to accomplish it using proven route clearance TTPs.

In September 2011, TF Sword re-organized the Command Post-East (CP-E), located at Bagram Airfield. Based on the IJC Surge Recovery directive, it was essential that TF Sword adjusted and reduced its force structure; reorganize personnel, staff functions, and workspaces at CP-E in order to maximize organizational effectiveness and efficiency. TF Sword brigade S4 section, along with battalion S4 personnel were situated at Bagram Airfield, because it was a logistics hub. However, the brigade S4 personnel were segmented both physically and operationally from their battalion counterparts. In order to increase efficiency, CP-E was reorganized, with brigade and battalion logistical personnel being re-located into cells. Instead of having the brigade PBO in one building and the battalion PBOs in another, CP-E was restructured so that all PBOs were in the same office. The same thing was applied to supply and services,



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maintenance, and transportation cells. Additionally, non-essential personnel were re-assigned and given new positions back at their battalions.

October saw TF Sword construction engineers building out Combat Outpost Dashe Towp in support of TF Patriot and Regional Command East security objectives. TF Sword elements, comprised of construction elements from TF Dolch, a survey and design team from TF Gridley, the 243rd CMT, and the 577th Engineer Prime Beef Group (EPBG), built an Ammo Supply Point (ASP), rebuilt the Entry Control Point (ECP), constructed a Helicopter Landing Zone (HLZ), and completed seven buildings. This construction project allowed TF Patriot to house a battalion-sized element whose mission was to partner with the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and secure Highway 1 in the Wardak Province.

Also in October 2011, TF Sword responded to a vehicle-borne IED attack on combat outpost (COP) Sayed Abad, which resulted in numerous damaged facilities and infrastructure. The combat outpost was of importance because Regional Command-East utilized Sayed Abad to house TF Warrior's battalion headquarters, who partnered with ANSF to secure Highway 1. TF Sword developed the projects, constructed the facilities, and repaired the battle damage at COP Sayed Abad in support of TF Bulldog operations in the Wardak Province of Afghanistan. TF Sword engineers built 33 B-Huts and removed battle damage and rubble from the VBIED attack.

In October, TF Sword construction engineers constructed a ford site at Ghormach to provide freedom of movement in the western portion of Regional Command-North. TF Sword built the ford site because the old ford site used by both civilian and military traffic was susceptible to being cut or blocked during the March to May snowmelt and rainy seasons. In the course of construction, the ford was elevated and armored to provide continuous mobility. Continuing economic development and ongoing military operations increased traffic and required timely use of the Ring Road. If TF Sword did not complete the Ghormach ford site, the effectiveness of military operations would continue to be hindered during the months of April to May. Additionally, economic activity would languish during this timeframe. Before TF Sword constructed the improved ford site, light traffic utilized the adjacent wadi during the dry season. However, during the wet season, this traffic had intermittent mobility. The heavy traffic that accompanied military supply operations and economic activity had limited access year round, especially during the wet season. TF Sword's ford site improved strategic mobility, while improving economic conditions.

November was a dynamic month for TF Sword in terms of force flow. TF Sword saw two battalions, TF Dolch and TF Gridley in addition to 12 companies redeploy. TF Dolch was replaced by the 7th Engineer Battalion from Fort Drum, NY, who formed TF Red Devils, while the 578th Engineer Battalion, from the California National Guard replaced TF Gridley.