



Symposium brings logistics players to table

Story and photo by
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More than 170 senior logisticians and Iraqi advisors from across Iraq gathered Sept. 4 and 5 at Hope Chapel to discuss the best practices, policies and the way ahead during Multi-National Corps – Iraq's second quarterly logistics symposium.

Military Transition Team commanders and advisors from the battalion, division and brigade levels, and G4s from each division and Multi-National Force – West, briefed on the Iraqi partnership, training, maintenance and issues occurring in their areas of operation.

"We gathered everybody from

across theater to check the progress of our logistics partnership initiative," said Col. Ronald Pulignani, G4 advisor, Military Transition Team, Iraqi Ground Forces Command. "All the MNDs provided an update on their logistics partnership programs."

"The briefings were to provide a common viewpoint of all the different people working with Iraqi security forces, and hopefully they'll walk away with an idea of where we are going and how to take logistics off the table," said Col. Edward Dorman, C4, MNC-I.

Taking logistics off the table as a primary inhibitor to Iraqi army effectiveness is a top concern for Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III, commanding general, MNC-I, Dorman said.

Brig. Gen. Keith Walker, commanding general, Iraqi Assistance Group, hosted the conference and provided Iraqi logistics partnership updates for MNC-I. Maj. Gen. Timothy McHale, CJ1/4/8, Multi-National Force – Iraq and the senior logistician in country, gave updates on his role in the overall partnership.

Breakout sessions occurred Sept. 5 to hash out any concerns, and make clear the areas of focus and roles of responsibility.

"Day two consisted of ten breakout sessions where the group examined areas the Iraqi army wants to improve in," Pulignani said. "We will work with the IA to continue to improve their systems."

The symposium laid the groundwork for an Iraqi army staff exercise occurring in October to examine and improve IA logistics systems, during which the IA will look at its systems from the strategic and tactical levels.

Some of the Iraqi army's systems observed included its repair parts system, reporting systems, standards to evaluate logistics systems, national requirements needed to maintain its army, how to develop mobile training teams for its divisions and how to incorporate logistics into its warfighter exercises.

"Overall, it was an outstanding conference," Pulignani said. "Everyone left better informed and ready to move the logistics partnership initiative forward."



Brig. Gen. Keith C. Walker, commanding general, Iraqi Assistance Group, provides opening remarks Sept. 4 during Multi-National Corps – Iraq's second quarterly logistics symposium.

270th changes command, starts new chapter

Story and photos by
Cpl. Frances L. Goch
MNC-I PAO

A change of command ceremony on Aug. 12, held outside of the Joint Visitors Bureau at Camp Victory, Iraq, started a new page in the history of the XVIII Airborne Corps.

Before Maj. Jack W. Sander III relinquished command of 270th Signal Company to Maj. John Meek, the company merged with Multi-National Corps - Iraq's communications section to become Company C, Special



The newly formed Company C stands behind its first sergeant, 1st Sgt. Adam Tweedell, outside of the Joint Visitors Bureau at Camp Victory, Iraq Aug. 12, during the change of command portion of the ceremony. Maj. Jack W. Sander III relinquished command to Maj. John Meek.

Troops Battalion, Task Force Dragon. "Leading a brand new company that has absolutely no history is very exciting," said 1st Sgt. Adam Tweedell, first sergeant, Co. C, STB, TF Dragon.

This new company will provide efficiency and a smoother transition between the planning and operational phases to the physical execution of the communications mission, said Lt. Col. William J. Wanovich, battalion commander, STB, TF Dragon.

"This merging falls under the Army wide transformation," he added.

According to Wanovich, this merger will allow cross training between the different specialties in the unit because of the similar backgrounds,

which will expand the capabilities of the unit as a whole.

Meek, who was previously the operations officer-in-charge for the STB, has a wealth of signal experience on his side, which makes him ideal to take charge of the newly formed Co. C Wanovich said.

"Major Meek has done a great job working in operations for STB," he added. "This will give him the chance to fill a key position in STB for MNC-I and XVIII Airborne Corps."

"It is really an honor to command this unit. There are no words," Meek said.

The Corps will complete its transformation with the scheduled stand up of Company A in November.



Maj. Jack W. Sander III, outgoing commander, Company C, and 1st Sgt. Adam Tweedell, first sergeant, Co. C, Special Troops Battalion, Task Force Dragon, unfurl the guidon for the newly designated unit Aug 12, at Camp Victory, Iraq. Co. C is the product of the merging of 270th Signal Company and MNC-I's communications section.



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MNC-I deputy commanding general holds conference

Story by
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Marine Maj. Gen. Paul E. Lefebvre, deputy commanding general, Multi-National Corps – Iraq, spoke with representatives of various veterans' associations Aug. 22 during a teleconference from his office in Al Faw Palace. Lefebvre thanked the organizations for what they have done for Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines and updated them on current operations in Iraq.

Lefebvre said, "We have had a very strong presence here for the last five plus years and as you've followed for the

last several months, it's been a pretty tough fight."

For the past 10 out of 11 weeks, there have been less than 200 attacks per week nationwide, Lefebvre said. "This is impressive considering that this same time last summer we were experiencing over 800 attacks per week," he said. "We are encouraged by the trends, but the war is not over. There is still a lot of work to do, we still have some pretty big tasks ahead of us."

Coalition forces have to continue improving the professionalism of the Iraqi security force, who have been pretty active, Lefebvre said. Another thing Coalition forces

have to do is continue to increase the number of jobs. "These jobs allow us to get into a situation where military aged males are not picking up weapons, and are pursuing peaceful resolution of issues to include the elections which are in front of us."

Allen W. Dowd, American Legion Magazine, asked Lefebvre how his Iraqi counterparts felt about the situation in Iraq. Dowd especially wanted to know if the Iraqi government feels any anxiety, fear or eagerness about moving to a new stage and the eventual departure of Coalition forces.

The relationship between the Coalition forces and the Iraqi forces is extremely strong, Lefebvre said. "We are partnered with them at a whole host of levels, both in the planning and execution of operations." The sharing of the ideas that goes on between Coalition and Iraqi forces is substantial and both understand their role in this country in terms of security. "It is a good news story in terms of what we are doing today and what we're going to do tomorrow in terms of partnership to continue the great advances the government of Iraq has made over the seven months," Lefebvre said.

Army stresses importance of suicide prevention

U.S. Army Press Release

In conjunction with its observance of National Suicide Prevention Week, Sept. 7-13, and the National Guard and Army Reserve's month-long observance, Sept. 6 - Oct. 5, the Army is promoting the need for leaders at all levels to be more proactive and take greater responsibility to prevent suicides through increased training, intervention and access to behavioral health resources.

For this year's observance, the Army has chosen the theme, "Shoulder-to-Shoulder: No Soldier Stands Alone," to emphasize

the strength of the Army Family when it works together to tackle tough problems. The theme is also a solemn reminder that sometimes the toughest moments for Soldiers occur away from the battlefield.

"Army leaders are fully aware that repeated deployments have led to increased distress and anxiety for both Soldiers and their Families," said Secretary of the Army Pete Geren. "This stress on the force is validated by recent studies of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans reporting symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder or major depres-

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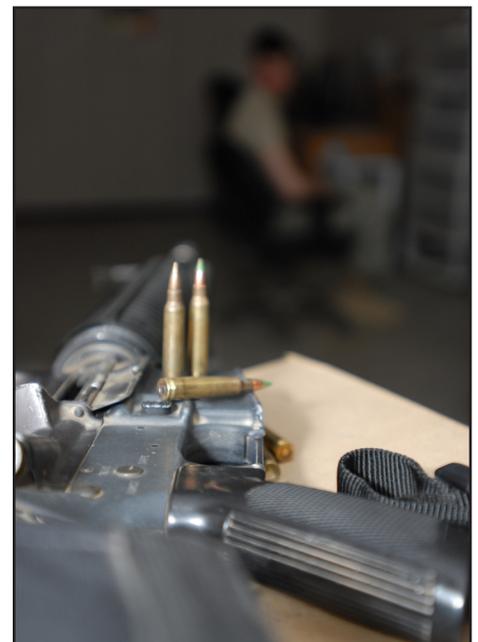


Photo Illustration by Pfc. Eric J. Glassey, 13th PAD

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sion. The Army is committed to ensuring that all Soldiers and their Families receive the behavioral health care they need.”

The Army considers one suicide one too many. In 2007 there were 115 suicides in the active Army. This is an increase from 102 suicides in 2006. To date, the Army has 62 confirmed suicides for 2008, with 31 pending confirmation of cause of death.

The 2007 suicide incidents include 93 active-duty Soldiers and 22 reserve-component Soldiers on active duty. When not on active duty, the National Guard and Army Reserve track suicide incidents separately, and reported a loss of 57 additional Soldiers.

While the suicide rate is higher than where the Army was last year at this time, the Army’s immediate actions are to enhance intervention skills and increase the awareness of leaders and Soldiers across the force.

The Army is placing special emphasis on first line leaders to raise their confidence in their ability to prevent suicide through targeted training programs. Intended outcomes include better recognition of stressors such as failed relationships, legal and financial problems, and occupational and operational issues that can contribute to suicidal behavior.

The Army’s Suicide Prevention Program is part of a larger effort to effect change in how leaders and Soldiers view behavioral health care in general. This behavioral health strategy is centered on whole life fitness and is designed to better prepare

Soldiers to cope with the challenges of daily life as well as during times of intense stress.

“One key thing that will help Soldiers seek the care they need is changing the stigma associated with seeking behavioral health care,” said Lt. Col. Thomas Languirand, Chief, Army G-1 Command Policy and Programs Division. “It is critical for Soldiers, Family members, and Army Civilians to know that seeking help during times of stress is a sign of strength, not weakness.”

As part of the effort to remove any stigma that is attached to behavioral health care, Soldiers no longer have to report counseling undertaken to deal with stress from combat or related to marital, family or grief issues when they apply for a security clearance unless the treatment was court-ordered or was the result of violence.

The Army’s reserve compo-

nents (ARNG, USAR) are also coordinating education and training resources with local community agencies that support suicide prevention efforts. These support resources, which are available to active duty Soldiers as well, include Veterans Administration coordinators, primary care providers, local law enforcement agencies, hotlines and crisis centers, local churches and other religious organizations.

“Suicide prevention, like all leadership challenges, is a commander’s program and every leader’s responsibility,” said Lt. Gen. Michael D. Rochelle, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 (Personnel). “However, the success of the Army Suicide Prevention Program rests upon proactive, caring, and courageous people who recognize the imminent danger and then take immediate action to save a life. Suicide prevention is everybody’s business in the Army.”



Photo courtesy of U.S. Army