



Final Inspection: (From left) Sgt. Jeremy Borrell and Sgt. Waylon Lippold, Detachment 2, 165th Quartermaster Company (Light Air Supply), prepare final inspection paperwork before a Nov. 20 cargo drop.

Seward riggers practice preparing, dropping supplies

By Maj. Kevin Hynes
Editor

When it comes to picture-perfect days for a parachute jump, members of the 195th Special Operations Forward Support Company (Airborne) and Detachment 2, 165th Quartermaster Company (Light Air Supply) couldn't have picked a much nicer one than Nov. 20.

Light breezes and temperatures ranging in the upper 50s made the afternoon's jump at the Husker Drop Zone near the Mead Training Site one of the most enjoyable in recent memory.

"Today was an absolutely perfect day," said Sgt. Jeremy S. Borrell, an airdrop sergeant from Seward's 165th QM Co. who completed his 10th parachute jump that afternoon.

"Normally when we're jumping in the summer it's too hot and if we're jumping in the winter, it's too cold. A day like today, it's absolutely beautiful. Not very heavy winds, so



How'd It Do? Spc. Chad Holmes 195th Forward Support Company (Special Operations) (Airborne) and Spc. Luke Katz, Detachment 2, 165th Quartermaster Company (Light Air Supply), inspect a cargo pallet after the air drop.

it's a really good opportunity to make a good parachute landing fall and to have a really soft landing."

While the weather may have had the Airborne Soldiers smiling, what



Photos by Maj. Kevin Hynes

On The Way: Four packages begin to deploy their parachutes as they drop away from a U.S. Air Force Reserve C-130 aircraft during a parachute drop over "Husker Drop Zone" near Mead, Neb., Nov. 20. The cargo was prepared for the drop by members of the Nebraska's Detachment 2, 165th Quartermaster Company (Light Air Supply.)

really had Borrell and other riggers from his unit grinning ear-to-ear was the fact that they'd just completed a major milestone in their unit. Prior to launching dozens of paratroopers into the cloudless sky, members of a U.S. Air Force Reserve C-130 aircraft crew first dropped five parachute-equipped supply pallets onto the drop zone from a height of 500 feet, all of which landed safely within meters of the planned target.

According to Staff Sgt. Wayne Johnson, 165th QM Co. readiness sergeant, the drop was a successful test of his unit's ability to prepare cargo pallets – which weighed between 330 and 900 pounds – for aerial delivery using G-14 cargo parachutes.

Johnson said it was a critical test for the unit, which is still gaining practical experience after transitioning to its new mission a little over a year ago.

"Today, the mission is to support the 195th out of Omaha," said Johnson earlier in the day as his crew of parachute riggers worked to make the final preparation on the

cargo before they were moved onto the C-130 aircraft from the 94th Airlift Wing, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.

"Basically we're doing a personnel and cargo drop resupply. This is (the type of) operations that are overseas. Almost 70 to 75 percent of resupply overseas right now is by aerial delivery and that's what we're going to be demonstrating today out at Husker DZ," he added.

Johnson said this wasn't the unit's first opportunity to prepare and drop cargo from an aircraft, the first being in September when the unit conducted a drop as it returned to Nebraska after supporting the 195th SOFSC's two-week annual training in Montana. This time, however, the unit was actually going to test its ability to drop a heavier load requiring two parachutes to successfully float the cargo to the ground.

The day was also an opportunity for newly qualified riggers to apply their skills to a real cargo drop problem, he added.

"This is a refresher," Johnson said. "What we are doing is basically

working with the materials supplied to us by the state... working with that and trying to figure out our configurations."

He said it's a stressful exercise. "It definitely makes your heart-rate go up when you see it come out of the aircraft... making sure that everything is operable so it doesn't go straight down to the ground," Johnson said.

Fortunately, everything worked well, with all of the cargo pallets hitting almost exactly where they'd been targeted to hit. According to Borrell, who was aboard the aircraft when the cargo was launched, it was exciting to see the unit's hard work pay off.

"Everything went fantastic," he said. "Everything went smooth. We had great openings of the parachutes. Everything hit the target."

"There's nothing better than seeing it go out of aircraft," Borrell added. "I'm looking forward to seeing the video... I'm looking forward to seeing if there's anything that we can do better, but from where I was sitting, everything looked fantastic."

State legislative staffers spend day walking in Guardsmen's boots

By Tech. Sgt. Alex Salmon
Assistant Editor

With an early morning fog blanketing Lincoln, 28 Nebraska state legislative staff assistants arrived at the Nebraska National Guard air base, Sept. 23, and were given an opportunity to walk a mile in the boots of Nebraska National Guard Soldiers and Airmen.

Called the Legislative Staff Brief, the day was meant to provide the staff members with a better idea of what the Nebraska National Guard and the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency do.

"The primary goal was to introduce the staffers to the Military Department and NEMA, and give them a good understanding of the benefits and the things that we bring to the state," said Terri Kattes, the Nebraska Military Department state legislative liaison and special projects coordinator. "I want them to have an appreciation for the military and the people that we have here, and the professionalism in how they do their jobs."

The staff members, who hold positions ranging from administrative assistant to legislative fiscal office advisor, began their day with informational briefings about the Nebraska Military Department and Emergency Management Agency and the direction of the Nebraska National Guard from Brig. Gen. Judd Lyons, Nebraska adjutant general. They were then given a tour of an Air Guard KC-135 refueling airplane and an up-close view of various Army equipment including decontamination tents and first responders' equipment.

With the fog burning off throughout the morning's briefings and tours, the staff members boarded either a CH-47 "Chinook" or UH-60 "Black Hawk" helicopter and then flew to the Greenleaf Training Site near Hastings, Neb. There, staff members furthered their Soldier experience by dining on the military's



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alex Salmon

Battle Rattle: Sheila Page, legislative aid for Nebraska State Senator Colby Coash, gets outfitted with personal protective equipment prior to riding in a Humvee during a convoy training mission through a training lane at the Greenleaf Training Site in Hastings, Neb., Sept. 23.

finest cuisine: Meals Ready to Eat.

Following lunch the staff members received a tour of the newest Armed Forces Readiness Center at the Greenleaf Training Site; a demonstration of the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer that teaches Soldiers how to get out of a Humvee following a rollover; a chance to sharpen marksmanship skills in the Engagement Skills Trainer, which uses laser-fitted weapons to improve accuracy; a chance to use the Virtual Convoy Operations Trainer that uses virtual reality to simulate various positions held during a convoy; and finally, a chance to don body armor and ride with Soldiers in a Humvee through the IED training lane.

According to Kattes, this was the first legislative staff briefing in eight years, so most participants hadn't seen anything like this before. Their favorites varied.

"The helicopter rides were a big highlight and they really liked going through the Air Guard tanker as well," said Kattes.

Mike Lovelace, legislative fiscal office advisor, said he really enjoyed riding in the Chinook, but also liked seeing how the Nebraska National Guard is using its resources.

"It's nice to see the different construction that is going on, the facilities that have been built recently," he said.

"I think my favorite thing so far has been the helicopter," said Noelle Badeer, an

administrative assistant for State Senator Tony Fulton, District 29. "But I would also say the most eye-opening – the thing that I felt like put me most in the position of the Soldier – was the Humvee ride because you're wearing part of what they wear, you're in the Humvee... it's like you're there."

The staff members said they also gained an appreciation for the training Soldiers and Airmen must go through just to perform their jobs, adding they were impressed by the Soldiers and Airmen they interacted with.

"The training that our Nebraska National Guard members get looks to be excellent, the facilities look good and everybody has been very knowledgeable and very helpful," said Lovelace.

"I think I got a new appreciation for what Soldiers do in combat, but also all the work that it takes to train people," said Badeer. "I didn't realize how much infrastructure, how much funding, how many people it takes to prepare people to go to battle."

In the feedback Kattes has received from the participants, she thinks the goal was achieved.

"Everyone really enjoyed their day. They felt like they learned a lot and were very impressed with the Soldiers that they met and their experience and their knowledge and their professionalism," said Kattes. "The Soldiers sold it themselves."

Kattes said Nebraska Military Department leaders hope to make the legislative staff brief an annual event because the day's activities clearly left an impression on the participants.

"What our men and women in Nebraska are doing, and what all the Soldiers are doing overseas, is preserving the freedoms we take for granted and frankly, today has brought that home for me," said Badeer.

"The impact of being in a Soldier's shoes for a day was incredible and I'm not going to forget that."