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404th AFSB 'hits the reset button' on Strykers

JOINT BASE LEWIS-MCCHORD, Wash.—If a printer doesn't work or a scanner acts strangely, we hit the reset button in an effort to eliminate errors. Here at the 404th Army Field Support Brigade mechanics do a similar thing with Strykers. They reset them.

In early February, the 404th had its hands full resetting Strykers from a brigade recently returned from Iraq, said John Burns, a contractor who supervises repair facility operations.

"There're constantly vehicles coming through here, going to one brigade or another. We deprocess them, we prepare them, we issue them, we train on them, and then we take care of them after the Soldiers are done," said Burns.

The AFSB has six months, including travel time to and from JBLM, to take hundreds of vehicles, clean them up, take them apart, repair or replace broken parts, and put them back together. Once they've been inspected and road-tested, they are ready to be returned to their units. To get the work done, the 404th maintenance line runs six days a week, said Burns.

"They come in various [states of] repair and disrepair. They've been used for a year, and they need a lot of work," he said.

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Throughout the JBLM reset facility, Strykers stand in various stages of disassembly – hulls over here, impressive but impotent hunks of metal lined up like toy trucks on a shelf. The engines lay over there, ready for repair and whatever modifications they require. The rest of the parts are moved to other maintenance shops for repair or replacement as needed.

Production like this uses a lot of repair parts. A mini-warehouse with the most-needed parts is located in the production area. A larger warehouse of about 1 million square feet is located near Seattle, said Burns.

The end result of all the work is a fully serviceable Stryker, complete with a remote weapons station on top, and every bit as lethal as it was when new.

After completing the Strykers for this unit, the facility is getting out of the reset business for a while, said Burns, who noted Strykers will be sent to Anniston Army Depot, Ala., in the future. However, the people at the 404th will not be idle; they'll be receiving vehicles for distribution to other returning combat units, he said.

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