

DEMON



Making History

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becomes first eCAB**

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Brigade Public Affairs Officer	Capt. Efrem Gibson
Brigade Public Affairs NCOIC	Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth
Demon Staff Writer	Spc. Roland Hale

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"No army has ever done so much with so little." --- General Douglas MacArthur, U.S. General

Introduction



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

New Dawn Rising. Demon troopers finish the war.

"Last combat troops leave Iraq." That was the headline on many papers around the world in August.

Which left the question for many on what the role of the COMBAT Aviation Brigade is if there is no longer any combat for us. There has even been jokes that the C in CAB now stands for Contingency.

But, while all other units may have been drawing down, leaving

just 50,000 U.S. troops for stability operations, the CAB has grown into the Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade.

Task Forces Storm and Redhawk have joined us to cover all of Iraq.

Just because "combat" Soldiers have left Iraq, does not mean that we, the Soldiers and Civilians of the eCAB have any less of a task in front of us. Quite to the contrary.

As Operation New Dawn raises over this

country every Soldier, every aircraft is even more important.

With this increase of responsibility for the eCAB, comes an increase to ensure that each of our almost 250 aircraft are mission ready.

The "combat" troops may be gone, but there are still Soldiers and Civilians that are counting on our helicopters to keep them off the IED-strewn roads, and to give them air coverage when they do have to go by ground.

There are six brigades of U.S. forces which are part of stability operations

in Iraq. They must leave their bases in order to accomplish their mission of advising, assisting and training Iraqi Security Forces. They can not do their job if we do not keep our helicopters maintained and in the air.

For this reason we must remain vigilant at the FARPS, on the flight lines, in the hangars and in the offices. We must continue to maintain the professionalism and dedication that we have shown over the past six months.

What four aviation brigades used to cover is now up to us – the eCAB.

Demon 6. Col. Frank Muth addresses the Soldiers and Families of the Demon Brigade, speaks on the enhanced CAB, Operation New Dawn, individual resiliency.

Congratulations Demon Brigade! We are half way through our deployment, and accomplishing everything we have set out to do thus far. I need each and every Soldier of the Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade to remain resilient and continue to pursue excellence for the remainder of our deployment.

Yes, we are no longer just the CAB; we are an eCAB. What does this mean? This means we officially made history by being the largest Combat Aviation Brigade and most capable in Army Aviation history. In addition, our area of responsibility is the largest ever tasked to an Army Aviation Unit. We are now the U.S. Army's sole aviation asset for all of Iraq. What four brigades used to cover is now up to us – the eCAB.

As our unit has transformed, so has the United States mission in Iraq. You can be proud to know that you were on hand for the end of combat operations in Iraq, and you are now a part of Operation New Dawn. This transition represents the U.S. commitment to the government and people of Iraq as a sovereign, stable country that will be an enduring strategic partner with the United States.



Operation New Dawn also signifies the success of the responsible drawdown of forces and the redeployment of thousands of U.S. Soldiers. This is something that this brigade – the eCAB – had a direct role in supporting. It was our Chinooks and Black Hawks that transported thousands of troops throughout the IJOA. It was our Apaches, Kiowa Warriors and UAVs that secured the routes and flew recon for the convoys that drove to Kuwait. We were in the sky on Aug. 19 when that

final Stryker brigade rolled south. The hard work and phenomenal performance by the Soldiers of this brigade in support of RDOF has been nothing less than extraordinary.

Although the operational name has changed, our mission has not – supporting the Soldier on the ground. We still have a mission to do. US Forces will continue to be on the ground advising and assisting Iraqi forces in order to continue facilitating stability within Iraq.

In August the Demon

Brigade opened the Taji Warrior Resiliency Campus. This is a unique campus within our area of operations that has been built by Soldiers for Soldiers. We have some talented carpenters and painters within our team that have transformed 1-6 CAV's former HQ into a place where one can relax, unwind and build resilience. There is no other place like it in Iraq; not only does the Taji Warrior Resiliency Campus have computers, phones, movie theatre and exercise equipment, but also an obstacle course and a boxing ring. The Taji Warrior Resiliency Campus is also staffed with professionals equipped with tools and resources to help Soldiers build resilience in an environment that incorporates a holistic mind, body, and spirit approach in order to enhance the lives of Soldiers in theatre and their Families upon return.

As we continue to accomplish the mission our country has asked of us, remember that you are making history with the Demon Brigade. There truly is no other eCAB in existence. We are flying, fueling, fixing, and feeding more; all with excellence by the Soldiers who support this great organization. I am proud to serve among you.

No Mission Too Difficult! No Sacrifice Too Great! Duty First!

Demon 7. Command Sgt. Maj. James Thomson addresses the Soldiers of the Demon Brigade, speaks on reaching halfway point, keeping eye on battle buddy.

As we fast approach the halfway point of our deployment, I am pleased to report that the Soldiers of the Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division are doing an outstanding job, consistently exceeding expectations as they go about executing their daily tasks. Day in and day out the men and women of this outfit are accomplishing the mission with integrity and honor and I couldn't be more proud to serve alongside them all.

Six months is a long time and it can seem daunting just to think about having to drive on for another six more. I'm sure that everyone's ruck sack is feeling a little heavy right about now and at times can seem downright burdensome.

The things we carry during these long deployments are not just the tangible items that we pack before we leave, but those intangible stresses and emotional scars that we pick up along the way. And even though intangible, they often seem just as heavy, if not heavier. This is true for our Families back home as well. At times we may feel as if the weight of the world is upon our shoulders and wonder whether we have the strength to carry such a load. It is important that we recognize and understand that these experiences are not uncommon and that there are resources and programs available to help shoulder the load.



Across the Army we're seeing a disturbing trend of increased suicides and suicidal ideations. Soldiers and Family members are struggling with intense feelings of loneliness, hopelessness and helplessness and sadly too many are choosing to end their suffering by taking their own lives. I'd ask all reading this to help end this trend and remove the stigma associated with seeking help. If any one of us came across another Soldier who was injured, maybe with a broken leg, we'd immediately render first aid and seek medical assistance. Why then don't we do the same for a battle buddy who is struggling with emotional or mental

pain? Likewise, most of us would go to sick call when our ankle is sprained, swollen and painful. Why then don't we see a mental health professional when we find ourselves in emotional crisis? We are all, Soldiers and Families, important members of a championship team and I am convinced that together, shoulder to shoulder, we can conquer any challenge or carry any load placed in our ruck.

It takes an incredible amount of strength to wear the Army uniform and to support a Soldier spouse, child or parent. You are in my eyes all very special people and I am humbled by your grit despite the sacrifices you've made and

continue to make. But even the strongest among us can become fatigued when the load gets to be too much. The leadership across the Army and throughout the eCAB is absolutely committed to building resiliency and strengthening each of the five pillars of fitness. I encourage everyone to visit the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness website and take the Global Assessment Tool (GAT) to learn about your own five pillars of fitness at <http://www.army.mil/csfi/index.html>. There is a GAT for Family members as well. Additionally, I recommend all visit the Military One Source website <http://www.militaryonesource.com>. There you will find a wealth of services, private and confidential, available to Soldiers and Families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and all free of charge. Lastly, I ask that we all do what we can to eliminate the stigma associated with seeking help and not be shy about offering help to our battle buddies.

There will be tough times ahead I am sure, but I am just as confident that with the continued unwavering support of our Families and loved ones and the commitment to standing with one another, we will prevail and finish strong. Together we will shoulder the load of our heavy ruck sacks and march into the hangar with pride in accomplishing our mission just six short months from now.

No Mission Too Difficult! No Sacrifice Too Great! Duty First!

Accepting the Truth. Chaplain (Maj.) Thomas Bruce talks about necessity of attending worship service. The Combat Aviation Brigade chaplain speaks from the land of Jesus' birth

"I don't need to go to church to worship God!" I can't tell you how many times I've heard this phrase. It seems to be the most popular opinion on this subject.

The reasons people make this statement may vary. Without contradicting their opinion I would like to ask, "Is worship the only reason we meet with people of our faith group?" "Do the sacred writings of your religion urge or even command it?" If so, it then becomes an opportunity to receive the good feelings that come when we do what we believe is the right thing. Aside from that though, aren't there some other good reasons for having a worship assembly?

Within my religion of Christianity I find another reason in the Bible. There we find that each believer is given a special gift. Scripture says, "Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us... (Romans 12:4-6a, NIV)."

You see each of us has different God given abilities. Considering that, the question is, "Can we say we don't need each other?" The answer is "no." Just like parts of the human body, people of faith truly depend on one another. If I'm not worshiping with other people, the body is divided. We can become "spiritually challenged" people if we cut ourselves off from our sources of help.

Another tragic consequence of not assembling with like-minded people is that others will not benefit from our gift. Even if we're



Holy Gathering Chaplain (Maj.) Thomas Bruce kneels in front of a Chinook and the rest of the CAB, 1 ID, unit ministry team

not aware of it, we have been selfish. We have failed to share our spiritual gift with others of our faith group. Sometimes I'm not hungry but my kids are. I feed the kids because I realize it's not all about me. Maybe I'll sit with them at the table even if I don't eat just to be company for them so they won't be eating alone. Or perhaps I'll serve them acting as the table waiter. The bottom line is that practical religion involves both receiving and giving. If you won't go to worship for yourself, go for the sake of others. After all, Jesus said, "It is better to give than to receive."

A few years back a woman named Theresa boarded a plane in New York. She was seven months pregnant. Thirty minutes into the flight she doubled over in pain and began bleeding. Flight attendants announced they needed a doctor, and an internist volunteered. Theresa soon gave birth..

The problem was that the

umbilical cord was wrapped tightly around his neck. He wasn't breathing and his face was blue. Two paramedics rushed forward. One of them specialized in infant respiratory procedures.

He asked if anyone had a straw, which he wanted to use to suction fluid from the baby's lungs. The plane didn't stock straws but someone remembered having brought a juice box.

The paramedic inserted the straw in the baby's lungs while the internist administered CPR. The internist asked for something he could use to tie off the umbilical cord. A passenger offered a shoelace. Then the little baby whimpered and the crew joyfully announced that it was a boy. The father later said that the people on board "were all god-sends." If that plane had been a worship service, would you have been there to help?

Maybe your gift will be needed this week. See you at chapel.

Aviation News. Afghanistan air wing to learn offensive operations using Soviet helicopter and U.S. assistance. Afghan pilots to receive training on use of air-to-ground missiles

STORY AND PHOTO BY PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS ERNESTO HERNANDEZ FONTE

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Afghan airmen of the Kandahar Air Wing are learning how to take the offensive from advisors assigned to the 738th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group.

The KAW received its first variant of Mi-17 helicopter equipped with rocket pods this August. However, it will take the help of the 738th AEAG for the Afghan air wing to effectively use this new air-to-ground missile capability and even the advisors need training before they can teach Afghan pilots.

"There aren't a lot of American pilots that have shot rockets off of Mi-17. So we need to get our training first," said U.S. Air Force Maj. William Dorsey, 738th AEAG operations officer. "Developing this new capability will take time and we need to train our mentors first before we pass these lessons to the Afghan pilots. We need to practice our tactics, techniques and procedures in the air before we teach them to the Afghans."

To test the new weapon system and train the trainers, the mentors conducted the first live fire Aug. 27 and Aug. 28.

Additionally the KAW had its chance to test this new capability with ground crews, whom both the Afghan and American pilots depend on to keep the Mi-17's ship shape. The new Mi-17 was maintained, fueled and armed by Afghan Airmen.

"We are building our own trainer skill and creating the physical capability of shooting rockets," said Dorsey. "The Afghans will have that capability, building



Afghan Offensive An Afghanistan Mi-17 launches its rockers during a live fire exercise near Kandahar Airfield

capabilities is part of building an Air Force."

The goal of the 738th AEAG is to mentor the KAW into a self-sustaining operational unit. Sustainable does not mean a U.S. or coalition way of doing business; the Afghans will do things their own way and as long as it is a working system the advisors will have accomplished their mission in Afghanistan.

"It's the same way with everything," said Dorsey. "Rockets: can they load the rockets on their own, maintain the rockets on their own, and maintain a supply chain on their own? All that is what we are working towards and we can't go home until they get it done."

The Afghan pilots will have to

conquer hurdles too. Many of them aren't formally trained and currently there isn't a school for helicopter pilots in Afghanistan. Some are very skilled while others are still struggling.

It hasn't been determined when Afghan pilots themselves will shoot the rockets. There are many areas where the pilots need to improve on before mentors will teach them to fly and shoot rockets.

The KAW will receive several more of the variant Mi-17's over the next couple of months. Additionally, the Afghan air wing will play a key role moving officials and materials in support of the upcoming provincial elections Sept. 18.

Enhanced CAB ^eCAB comes to life with expansion in Iraq

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC ROLAND HALE

A U.S. Army aviation unit continued its expansion across Iraq July 23, completing two transfers of authority ceremonies on U.S. bases in the country's northern region.

The ceremonies transferred responsibility for aviation operations in northern Iraq from the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade to the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, a one-of-a-kind aviation unit from Fort Riley, Kan.

Iraq is divided into three U.S. divisions: northern, central and southern. The CAB, 1st Inf. Div. now supports two of these three divisions.

The brigade is serving as the aviation asset for northern and central Iraq and is the designated aviation unit for U.S. Forces-Iraq. The brigade is scheduled to assume responsibility for U.S. Division-South in August, according to Col. Frank Muth, brigade commander.

The CAB, 1st Inf. Div. is the Army's first enhanced combat aviation brigade, commanding nearly 4,000 troops and several hundred aircraft. It is scheduled to be the Army's sole aviation asset supporting Operation New Dawn this September.

Now, the unit's main focus is the reduction of forces, said Muth.

The unit is heavily involved in the drawdown of troops and equipment in Iraq. It has moved around 40,000 people and over one million pounds of cargo in the four months of its deployment.

Even with the brigade's support, however, many U.S. forces are still required to leave the country by road. The brigade's attack and reconnaissance helicopters provide security for these movements, said Muth.

The number of service members in Iraq is scheduled to drop to 50,000 by the end of the summer, in accordance with the U.S.-Iraqi security agreement.



Seeking Guidance Chaplain (Capt.) Tom Searle says a prayer during 3-1 TOA



Colors up Lt. Col. Kenneth Chase and Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Wright unfurl the 1-6 CAV colors



CAV country 1-6 CAV Soldiers raise their unit's flag at their TOA ceremony

^eCAB covers Iraq

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT CODY HARDING
1ST INF DIV, USD-S PAO

After playing a pivotal role in transitioning troops and equipment out of Iraq in preparation for Operation New Dawn, the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade said farewell themselves in a Transfer of Authority ceremony with the 1st Infantry Division's Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade at Memorial Hall Aug. 25th.

The Task Force 12 'Griffins' were responsible for air operations in United States Division-South, comprising nine provinces and a total area comparable to Washington state.

During their nine month tour in southern Iraq, they were instrumental in moving thousands of tons of equipment and personnel out of Iraq as part of the drawdown in U.S. forces.

Other highlights of the Griffins' deployment included flying overwatch over polling sites during Iraq's national elections in March, conducting air assault training with the Iraqi Army, and initiating an advise and assist partnership with the 70th Iraqi Air Force Squadron.

Retired Lt. Gen. John Cusick, former commander of U.S. Army Aviation and Troop Command was present at the ceremony along with members of the Iraqi Air Force. He thanked the Griffins for their aid and assistance in training the force at COB Adder.

Col. Robert Doerer, the 12th CAB commander, thanked the personnel in attendance for their support to his brigade. He noted the connections between the outgoing and incoming brigades, since many of the 12th CAB's units used to be a part of the 1st Infantry Division's Aviation Brigade when the 'Big Red One' was stationed in Germany.

"There are many great leaders in the organization," Doerer said of the ^eCAB, "but none finer than my good friend Frank Muth, the commander. Frank and I go back a ways, and I know he's the right officer at the right time for the mission he's assumed."

The 1st Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade is one of the largest aviation units in U.S. Army history. Their mission comes during a shift in operations as the mission changes from combat operations led by U.S. Forces to advising and assisting their Iraqi counterparts.

The ^eCAB's presence in USD-S also marks the brigade's command of the entire airspace in Iraq, having assumed control of USD-Central and USD-North already. The 2nd Squadron, 285th Assault Helicopter Battalion, one of the units attached to the ^eCAB, assumed the role for air control at COB Adder, while the ^eCAB's headquarters is stationed at Contingency Operating Base Taji, Iraq.

Col. Frank Muth, commander of

the ^eCAB, highlighted the unit's importance as the 12th CAB colors were cased, marking the transfer of authority to the 'Demon Brigade.'

"Today marks a historic day for Army Aviation," Muth said. "Never, in our history, has there ever been an enhanced combat aviation brigade. The ^eCAB consists of almost 250 aircraft and more than 3,600 Soldiers flying full-spectrum aviation operations across an area as long as California and as wide as Texas."

Muth said this daunting task will rely on all of his Soldiers down at the lowest levels.

"This will be accomplished by the privates, the sergeants, the warrants, the junior leaders; doing the right thing, making the decisions, instilling pride and enforcing standards and discipline," Muth said. "With the largest Army aviation formation in history conducting operations across a vast area, we must entrust our Soldiers and empower our leaders to make decisions, find deficiencies and develop systems that ensure mission accomplishment."



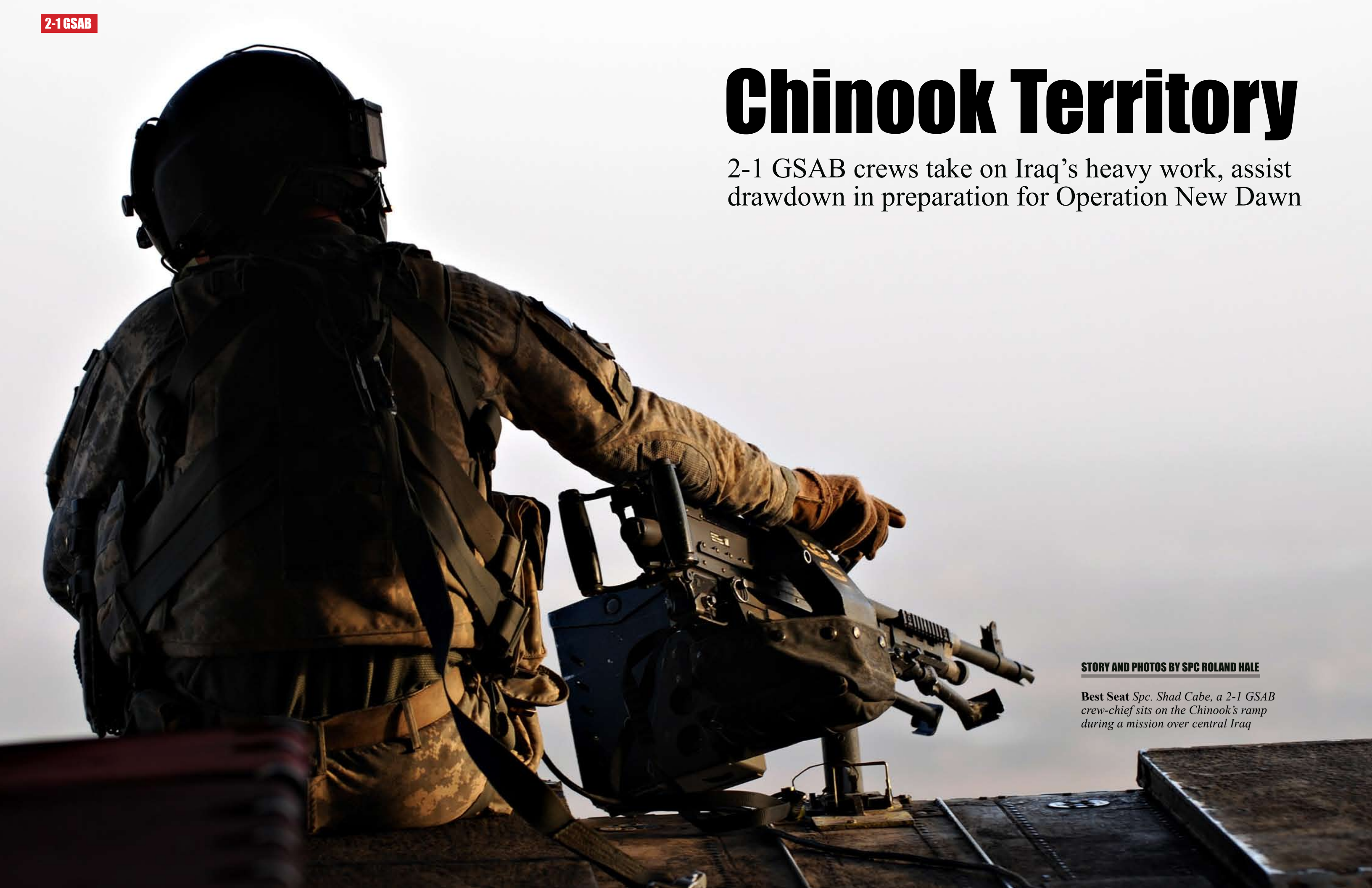
Making History Col. Frank Muth delivers his speech during the TOA ceremony on COB Adder

Chinook Territory

2-1 GSAB crews take on Iraq's heavy work, assist drawdown in preparation for Operation New Dawn

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC ROLAND HALE

Best Seat Spc. Shad Cabe, a 2-1 GSAB crew-chief sits on the Chinook's ramp during a mission over central Iraq



The 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, an all-in-one aviation unit from Fort Riley, Kan., deployed this March to Camp Taji, Iraq. The unit is one of the Army's last active-duty aviation battalions to deploy to Operation Iraqi Freedom and is playing a key-role in the reduction of U.S. forces this summer.

As the Army draws down in Iraq, nobody takes the brunt of the logistical monster more than this battalion's aviators.

Three hours before take-off July 7, one of the battalion's crews gathered to prepare their aircraft for a night of punishment. For many of the crew it was their seventh mission that week - in just four months their unit moved over one million pounds of cargo. On this mission they would contribute 17,000 pounds to that total.

Their ride is the Chinook, the Army's 13 ton, several-thousand horse power work-horse. It is the largest and fastest in the Army's arsenal and can carry 28,000 pounds of cargo, 33 troops or 24 medical litters.

In addition to two pilots, the massive helicopter has a crew of three enlisted crew-chiefs, whose duties range from securing cargo to directing the pilots through precision maneuvers.

After a briefing and a check of the aircraft's systems, the crew set out for their first stop of the night. Under the cover of darkness, the crew took the bird to several stops around Baghdad, shuttling passengers and equipment between bases. The crew welcomed the cooled night air, as the aircraft often



Big Gun Spc. Shad Cabe, a Chinook crew-chief with 2-1 GSAB, prepares the tail gun before a mission

serves as an unintentional sauna during the mid-day Iraqi heat.

"Ninety-percent of the time we're like a bus flying around Baghdad," said Spc. Shad Cabe, a Chinook crew-chief on the flight, "but sometimes it can get exciting."

During the mission, the crew spotted two bursts of tracer fire and an explosive flash that no one could identify.

The Soldiers remember a much more violent time in Iraq - when air assaults were nearly as common as supply runs and every "mission

complete" felt like an answered prayer. But now, Cabe said, the Chinooks are making their living with heavy lifting.

The Chinook uses three hooks on its fuselage to carry cargo, or sling-loads. On this night, Cabe guided the pilots to a hover above



Window View A Chinook receives a load of cargo during a mission in the Baghdad area

a 17,000 pound armored-truck, which ground crews attached to two of the Chinook's hooks. Cabe then laid down to monitor the load through a hatch in the aircraft's floor.

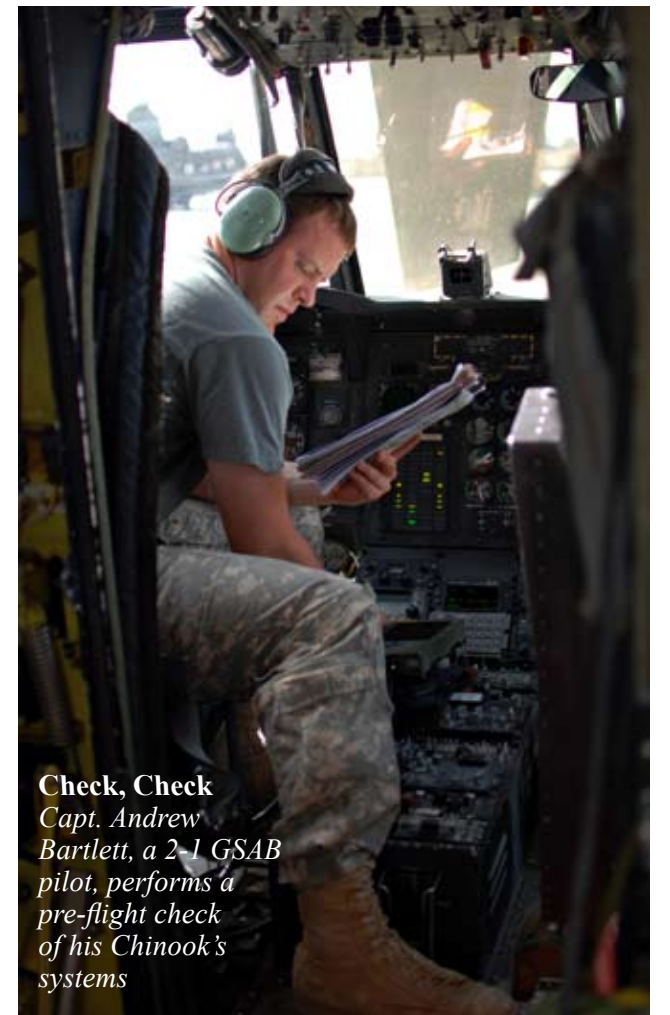
The Chinook flew naturally with the added weight, but when the load swayed beneath it, the oscillations felt like a tug-of-war between the aircraft's twin engines and the truck. The pilot's calculations indicated their load pushed the aircraft to within a thousand pounds of its maximum weight.

Also special to the mission was the presence of Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Thomson, the senior noncommissioned officer of the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. Even though his senior position entails primarily administrative work, Thomson has crewed about a dozen missions this deployment, he said.

Thomson added that at a senior level it's easy to forget what the troops are doing daily. Crewing flights is the best way to keep in touch with their experiences and needs, he said. All but one of the crew onboard had flown with Thomson at least once before.

"With the responsible draw-down of forces in Iraq and a limited number of aviation assets available, these guys are flying day-in and day-out," said Thomson. "It's not how many times or how many missions they fly, but rather the contribution they're making by moving people around."

The missions will increase as the draw down progresses, meaning more long hours for crews like this. The Army is scheduled to reduce the number of troops serving in Iraq from 82,000 to 50,000 by Sept. 1. Their brigade alone moved 1,200 people that night.



Check, Check Capt. Andrew Bartlett, a 2-1 GSAB pilot, performs a pre-flight check of his Chinook's systems

Soldiers granted citizenship

Gunfighters become citizens at Saddam's Palace

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC ROLAND HALE

Saddam Hussein's Al-Faw Palace stood for years as an example of Iraqi corruption – its grandeur almost mocking the nearby slums of Baghdad. But the palace stood for something different this Independence Day. Its marble walls were draped in red, white and blue and its rotundas shook with the roar of “The Star Spangled Banner” as American troops held a special Fourth of July ceremony.

Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Dr. Jill Biden, attended a naturalization ceremony in the palace on Camp Victory, watching as 156 U.S. service members became naturalized U.S. citizens. The service members became citizens through the naturalization process, which requires applicants to show good moral character and live in the U.S. for five years.

“The one lesson every country has to learn... is what you symbolize here today,” said Biden, “and that is that there is strength in diversity. Our Iraqi brethren are learning that right now as they held a free election.”

Biden also thanked the service members for choosing America as their new home and credited them with contributing to the success of the Iraq war.

“We owe all of you. And we owe your families,” said Biden.

Three of the participants were Soldiers from the 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, which is deployed to Camp Taji.

“To finally become a U.S. citizen – in a combat zone, in Saddam's

palace, on the Fourth of July – I think it's wonderful, a great experience, something you dream of,” said Pfc. Jose Murcia, a 30-year-old native of El Salvador.

Murcia came to the U.S. in 2001 on a student visa, studying in California. He joined the Army in 2009 and like the two other Soldiers in his unit, applied for citizenship through an Army Community Services (ACS) program on Fort Riley, Kans. Citizenship is not a requirement to join the military, but non-citizens cannot get security clearances or become commissioned officers.

During the ceremony, Murcia and the other service members were led in the oath of citizenship by an official from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services office. This is the 17th such ceremony in Iraq coordinated by the USCIS and the military.

The ceremony ended with a message from President Barack Obama, which was broadcast to

troops in Iraq and Afghanistan:

“We need only to draw upon the perseverance of those before us,” said Obama, “our Founders who declared and fought for their ideals; our ancestors who emigrated here and struggled to build a better future for their children.”



Proud Moment Pfc. Edwin Rivera, a native of Venezuela, receives an American flag from U.S. Forces-Iraq Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Wilson



Great Experience Pfc. Jose Murcia, a native of El Salvador, shakes hands with Vice President Joe Biden after becoming a U.S. citizen

Keeping Kiowas on warpath

1-6 CAV NCO keeps birds mission ready

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT 1ST CLASS JEFF TROTH

As U.S. forces draw down in Iraq, the Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, becomes the sole Army aviation asset in country. Responsible for what three aviation brigades used to cover. With only a third of the aircraft every helicopter in the brigade is even more vital.

This is true for the 1st Cavalry Squadron, 6th Aviation Regiment, whose OH-58 Kiowa Warrior helicopters are split between four bases to provide reconnaissance and scout support all of central and northern Iraq. In order to ensure the Kiowas are mission ready Soldiers from Troop D maintain the helicopters at each base.

Sgt. Jason Maggard has the mission to ensure that the Kiowas on Camp Taji are ready when the pilots need them.

“I maintain the aircraft, their electronic, avionic and armament systems,” said Maggard, who is on his second deployment with the 1-6 CAV. “By me doing my job, this lets the pilots provide scout security and convoy security for the forces on the ground.”

Because the Kiowas are on multiple bases, Maggard has half the helicopters to take of than he had last time at Contingency Operating Base Speicher. But less helicopters does not equate to less work for Maggard and his other Kiowa maintainers.

Fewer helicopters mean that each aircraft is even more important. If one is down for maintenance that means a higher percentage of helicopters is unavailable. To ensure the Kiowas are mission ready at all times the four Troop D Soldiers on Taji work two 12-hour shifts.

Besides having fewer helicopters

to work on, Maggard said that the change in the United States' overall mission in Iraq has increased his workload. As the Iraqi forces become the primary security force for their country, US forces are taking a supporting role.

“It is a misconception that the less a weapon is fired the less maintenance there is,” the armament sergeant said. “When the pilots don't fire the 50 cal machine gun you have to take care of them more because you don't know when they are broken. So you have to constantly check them to make sure they are still operating.”

Part of those checks includes keeping it loaded, counting ammo and making sure the sights are aligned. While at Taji, one Kiowas sighting system gave Maggard and his crew a challenge.

The sight wasn't working properly. It kept turning on and off every five minutes or so. The normal fix to such a problem is to replace parts, starting with the part which most commonly causes the problem.

But being such a small contingent, Maggard didn't have all the parts that he might need to switch out. Without the parts, Maggard and his counterpart on the other shift spent over nine hours looking through manuals on what was causing the malfunctioning sight.

“I ended up finding a loose wire on a relay at the very back of the aircraft normally something that we would never look at,” said Maggard. A couple turns of a screwdriver fixed the sight.

“I have been fortunate so far and haven't had to call for help,” Maggard said. “There have been some difficult issues and I have dug into the TMs (technical manuals) pretty deep trying to figure out what is wrong with the aircraft, but nothing I haven't been able to overcome to keep my Kiowas flying.”



Engine Check Sgt. Jason Maggard checks a OH-58 Kiowa Warrior before it goes out on mission over Iraq

U.S., Iraqi aviators fly joint mission

STORY BY SPC ROLAND HALE

U.S. Army aviators flew with aviators from the Iraqi Army July 19 for a training mission in the Baghdad area intended to strengthen relations between their units and train the Iraqi aviators on VIP transportation.

This is one of many aviation missions conducted with the Iraqi Army this year as they take a more active role in the war's aviation operations. The U.S. aviators belong to the 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, an

all-in-one aviation unit that deployed this March from Fort Riley, Kan. The battalion is also involved in training Iraqi air traffic controllers, with whom they share Camp Taji's air traffic control tower.

On this mission, the U.S. aviators flew a UH-60L Black Hawk while the Iraqi aviators flew a UH-1 Huey. The Iraqi Army, which recently took control of their military's rotary-wing assets from the Iraqi Air Force, uses the Huey primarily as a scout and reconnaissance aircraft. This mission, however, showed the Iraqis how to use the aircraft to transport VIP's

around the battlefield.

2-1 GSAB's Company A is responsible for the transportation of commanders, dignitaries, and other VIP's around Baghdad. Over the course of the war, units like this have been busy keeping personnel off Iraq's roadside bomb infested highways. But with fewer Black Hawks flying in Iraq, the need for Iraqi aviation to pitch in is increasing.

"One thing I've seen change since the war started is the Iraqi's participation in everything," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Christian Frobenius, one of the Black Hawk pilots. "They want to

'It's an important step for them to take.'

---Chief Warrant Officer 3 Christian Frobenius, Black Hawk pilot

do this, and we're here to facilitate that."

In addition to flying the mission, the U.S. aviators included their Iraqi partners in the planning and coordination phases of their mission. They spent two weeks preparing for the flight to explain its purpose and other considerations, said Frobenius.

Frobenius, who is serving his third tour in Iraq, said that he thinks the war is ready to end. He also said increased Iraqi participation in the war is an indicator of success. Frobenius has flown around 200 missions in Iraq but this is his first mission with the Iraqi Army.

"It feels great and it's an important step for them to take," said Frobenius.

It's not the only step, however, and Frobenius' unit will continue to train with their aviation counterparts over the length of their deployment. The battalion belongs to the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Inf. Div., which is scheduled to be the Army's last active-duty aviation unit supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Photo by Spc. Roland Hale

Pilot Chatter Maj. Aric Raus, 2-1 GSAB executive officer, and an Iraqi Army officer discuss the joint mission over Baghdad



Photo by Spc. Roland Hale

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

When Operation New Dawn begins this September, the brigade will become the Army's sole aviation unit in Iraq. With just under four thousand troops and several hundred aircraft, the brigade will be tasked with putting some

of the final touches on the training of Iraqi aviators.

In an Iraqi office already filled with gifts from U.S. commanders-symbols of partnership and even friendship-Iraqi Army Col. Nagem invited the pilots to discuss future cooperation.

The lights were out in the office during their conversation-the eight hours a day of electricity available to the Iraqi camp seeming a testament to the work still to be done as the country emerges from a seven-year war.

Air Buds An Iraqi Army UH-1 Huey and a U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk take-off for a joint training mission above Baghdad

Father, son serve together

Family reunited during tours at COB Speicher

STORY BY CAPT HEATHER CUCK
135TH MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

“It’s exciting when you have a son or daughter who wants to follow in your footsteps,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gregg Waterman, of his newly promoted son Spc. Tim Waterman.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Waterman, 40, is serving under Task Force Marne as the 3rd Infantry Division mobility officer. He currently resides in Midway, Ga., and has served in the Army for 18 years. Shortly after being stationed in Germany, CW3 Waterman decided that the Army was the way of life for him.

Specialist Waterman, 23, a crew chief with 3rd Attack Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment,, Company C, out of Fort Riley, Kan., has almost mirrored his father’s career. They went to the same basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., - even stayed in the same barracks - and both attended advanced individual training at Fort Eustis, Va. Now, they are serving on Contingency Operating Base Speicher together.

At the age of 9, Spc. Waterman’s love for the Army sprouted when his father, who he refers to as “his idol,” was assigned to Germany. This was the beginning of an



Family Bonds Spc. Tim Waterman and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Gregg Waterman are in different divisions but are both deployed to same Iraqi base

inseparable bond that ultimately resulted in his decision to join the Army.

This deployment has only strengthened the Watermans’ existing bond as memories and experiences are added daily.

Since CW3 Waterman is stationed at Fort Stewart and Spc. Waterman is at Fort Riley, they try to find time to see one another while together in Iraq.

“There isn’t one day that goes by ... if I have an opportunity to spend time with my father, that doesn’t remind me of my mom or brother,” said an appreciative Spc. Waterman.

When CW3 Waterman knew for certain that his son was going to join him in Iraq, his excitement increased as each day grew closer to his arrival.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Waterman said with a laugh, “I love seeing the reactions on people’s face when they’re like ... two Watermans?”

When the Watermans were asked about the advantages of being deployed together, CW3 Waterman explained, “For my wife, Tammy ... to know that her son is at a location with the father ... she feels a lot more comfortable that someone is looking out for him.”

“For me, it’s the opportunity to talk to somebody when needed,” Spc. Waterman replied.

That confidant was needed shortly after Spc. Waterman arrived in theater. While temporarily stationed at Camp Taji, he experienced a mortar attack. He was appreciative of the opportunity to share his experiences and thoughts with a father who could relate to his situation.

“Kids that grow up in a military family don’t always understand what their parents do,” CW3 Waterman said. “I don’t have to answer that question anymore ... I think he understands. He understands what dad does and has been trying to tell him for the last 17 years.”

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Waterman is so thankful that he and his son will redeploy and forever have their shared experiences and understandings that came along with being deployed.

“I’m very proud of Tim, and there’s something to be said about [sons and daughters who] take after their parents’ occupation. He’s doing very well and I’m proud of him.”

Woodworkers build shop

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT 1ST CLASS JEFF TROTH

Aviation and wood are two words that usually do not go together. But Non Commission Officers in the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division are changing that.

The need for a place to store equipment on Camp Taji turned n aviation mechanic into a carpenter.

“It started out as building a shack to give us additional work area

and to store equipment that is too big to keep in the shop,” said Sgt. Nickomas Williams, a hydraulic specialist with Company B, 601st Aviation Support Battalion.

His company first sergeant was so impressed by the quality of the shack that he turned it into a woodshop for the company, with Williams as the shop foreman. Since its opening the shop has produced items for almost every section of the 300-man company.



Arms Work Pvt. 1st Class Jared Ray cuts wood for a weapons rack at the 601st ASB woodshop



Game Time Sgt. Nickomas Williams installs a monitor stand for a multi-screen gaming center he helped build

“We have built lots of things to help out the company,” Williams said. The woodshop’s projects include not only shelves, benches and desks, but also ramps to load an Apache helicopter onto a C-17 airplane and drive-shaft stands for the Chinook maintainers.

As their work load increased, so did their tool room inventory. When they built the shack they had a power saw, a drill and a hammer; the redeployment of a National Guard unit left a table saw and several other woodworking tools for Williams and his crew.

The woodshop has no full-time employees. If the hydraulics shop has work for Williams, then the woodshop projects are put on hold. The same is true for his five part-time employees – they do their primary job first and when the workload slows down their supervisors release them to the woodshop.

Word about the

woodshop has spread across the brigade. Williams’ crew has made signs for the front of the 601st ASB headquarters and trophies for a brigade volleyball tournament.

The woodshop crew has also joined forces with other woodworkers in the Demon Brigade to create a place for Soldiers and civilians on Camp Taji to relax.

“I am working on the movie room for the Taji Warrior Resiliency Campus, putting up railings (for the elevated seating area), laying linoleum and putting up a big screen,” Williams said. “NCOs from the other battalions are working on shelves for the library and booths for the phone and computer rooms.”

Just like Williams’ woodshop was created out of nothing, the CAB woodworkers will continue to build a better life for themselves and their fellow Soldiers one nail at a time.

CAB builds resiliency in Iraq

STORY BY SPC ROLAND HALE

Soldiers on Camp Taji, Iraq are days away from finishing construction on a one-of-a-kind resiliency campus that will offer several resources to deployed Soldiers and civilians. The Taji Warrior Resiliency Campus is scheduled to open later this month and will be a source of recreation and resources to help Soldiers learn to cope with the stresses of deployment and separation from family, said Col. Frank Muth, Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division

commander.

The campus will be the first of its kind in Iraq, and is designed to address all five areas of the Army's concept of Soldier Total Fitness: physical, social, spiritual, emotional, and family. Similar to an MWR center, the campus will offer recreation and leisure to Soldiers, but is intended to go one step further in providing them the resources to strengthen the five pillars of Soldier Total Fitness.

Last year 211 Soldiers committed suicide, a record-high number that accounts for twenty percent of national suicides. The campus is

in accordance with the Army's efforts to address this problem.

"To construct a facility is a preemptive

strike against the mental, emotional, and physical challenges a Soldier can face because of deployment," said Muth. "In 2009, 18 veterans committed suicide daily, on average. Our aim is to prevent even a single Soldier in the brigade from adding to this number during or after our deployment."

Muth also addressed the perceived stigma of weakness that many Soldiers face when they seek guidance from chaplains and counselors.

"In this center, Soldiers will have confidential, private access to the counseling they need without having to justify to peers, subordinates, or superiors why they are going to the center," said Muth.

Before its doors open, however, the brigade is busy renovating the building, which was originally used by one of the brigade's squadrons. Now, CAB, 1st Inf. Div.

Soldiers are gutting its insides to accommodate the campus's needs.

The campus did not receive external project funding, hence the need for the brigade's Soldiers to work on its construction. The Soldiers working on the campus have backgrounds ranging from personal security to mechanics

"The main hindrance to the construction of the TWRC was the time we spent vying for contract approval," said 1st Lt. Cait Fernholz, the officer overseeing the construction. "However, I believe that the denial of funding was a blessing in disguise. Our Soldiers and NCOs are taking ownership of this project as though they were building something for their own home and family."

"It'll be a nice little spot when we're finished with it," said Staff Sgt. Shaun Wakeman, a Soldier working on the campus. "My

favorite part of it is probably the theatre, where the Soldiers will be able to sit down and relax."

Wakeman, who works as a mechanic in one of the CAB's battalions, said that he feels at home working on the campus.

"This is what I like to do," he said. "I know what I'm doing here, and we're doing a good, quick job getting it up."

"The NCOs have worked together to create some amazing pieces," said Fernholz. "They've engineered everything from a multi-console gaming hexagon to private phone booths to a huge housing-case for the movie theater screen."

"They have been working at the campus at least eight hours daily since July 28. They are constantly creating things and it's pretty incredible to watch as their projects evolve," said Fernholz.

"The skeleton is in place," said Fernholz. "Soon, the finishing touches will be added and we'll be open for business."



Wood Worker Sgt. Tim Foley cuts a piece of wood for the campus' call center

such

Photo by Spc. Roland Hale



Cutting Corners

Sgt. Tim Foley cuts 2x4s for construction of phone booths

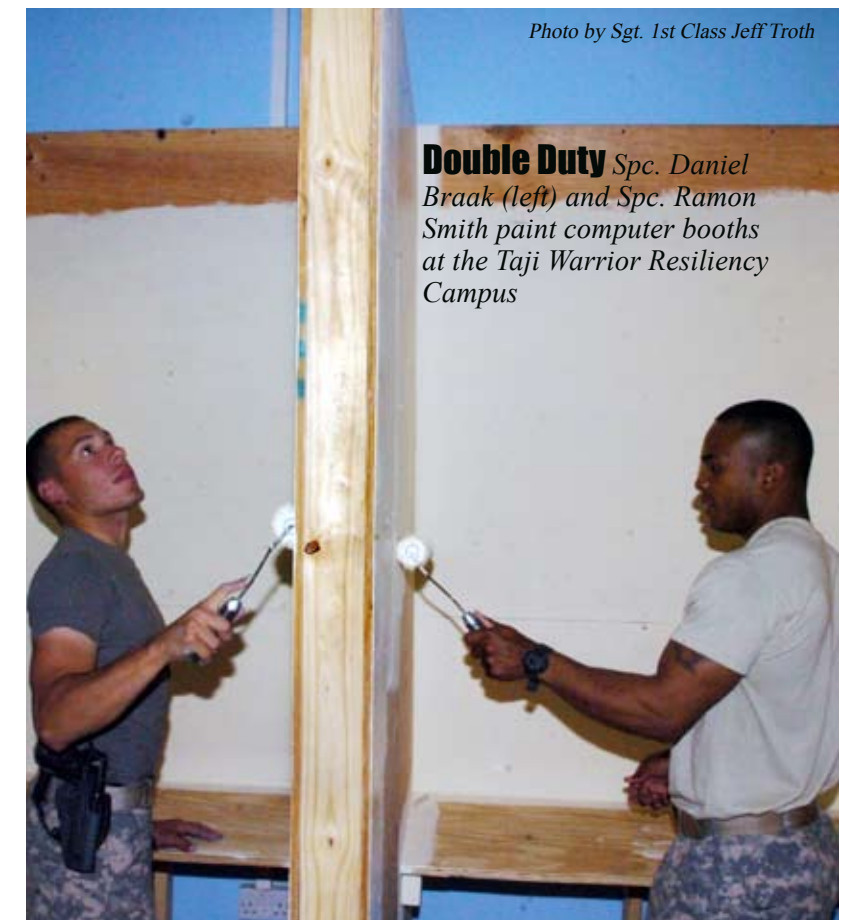
Photo by Spc. Roland Hale



Sticky Situation

Soldiers apply adhesive to flooring for the movie room

Photo by Spc. Roland Hale



Double Duty Spc. Daniel Braak (left) and Spc. Ramon Smith paint computer booths at the Taji Warrior Resiliency Campus

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth



Photo by Spc. Roland Hale



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth

**ECAB HARD
AT WORK
ACROSS
IRAQ**



Photo by Spc. Roland Hale



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth



Photo by 2nd Lt. Matthew Brown



Photo by 2nd Lt. Matthew Brown

