

News Call

82nd CAB to Deploy to Afghanistan in Spring

The Department of Defense has announced that approximately 2,800 soldiers and the fleet of helicopters of the 82nd Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB), 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C., will deploy to Afghanistan in late spring, several months earlier than planned. In January, Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates approved the 12-month deployment at the request of commanders on the ground; it will increase the level of forces and military capability of the International Security Assistance Force.

Although battalions of the CAB have completed repeated deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq, this will be the first time since 1990 that the brigade has deployed in its entirety. The brigade has requested accelerated fielding of the F model of the CH-47 Chinook cargo helicopter, which features a modernized airframe, avionics and survivability. Brigade commander Col. Paul Bricker told the *Fayetteville* (N.C.) *Observer* that the F model can be successfully landed in conditions with no visibility and that “in Afghanistan, the dust is so intense that capability on that aircraft will be of great value to us.” The CAB also flies Apache attack, Black Hawk multipurpose and Kiowa reconnaissance helicopters as well as the medevac version of the Black



Army Sgt. Tobias Harris, Company A, 201st Brigade Support Battalion, demonstrates to Afghan security guards how to search a nonenemy combatant.

U.S. Army/Sgt. Charles Brice

Hawk, essential for medical evacuation in Afghanistan.

The 82nd CAB is currently assigned to U.S. Northern Command, headquartered in Colorado. Col. Bricker said that assignment will probably continue until the Army identifies a replacement

unit. Some 3,500 paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne’s 3rd Brigade Combat Team left Fort Bragg in November and December for a yearlong deployment to Iraq, and the 4th Brigade Combat Team and 1st Brigade Combat Team expect to deploy in mid-2009.

ARNG to Command in Iraq. An Army National Guard division headquarters will deploy to command active duty forces in combat for only the second time since 9/11. DoD has announced that the 34th Infantry Division headquarters, based in Rosemount, Minn., will deploy to Iraq in April. More than 1,000 soldiers of the division, known as the Red Bull, will mobilize for training this month for the yearlong deployment.

The unit will provide command and control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities for more

than 16,000 U.S. and other Coalition troops in the southern third of Iraq. The 34th Division headquarters will partner with and support more than 40,000 Iraqi soldiers and policemen across eight of the country’s 18 provinces that have been returned to Iraqi control. The wide range of civilian experience of members of the division—business, agriculture, law, law enforcement, medicine and other city services—will prove vital to their mission. They will focus on working with embedded provincial reconstruction teams from the U.S. State Department to improve

infrastructure, build essential services, and help local governments stimulate the economy and provide jobs.

The division’s headquarters, special troops battalion, division band and 34th Military Police Company will train at Fort Lewis, Wash. The unit will relieve the 10th Mountain Division headquarters as Multi-National Division-Center.

New Training Manual. The Army recently released Field Manual (FM) 7-0 *Training for Full Spectrum Operations*, which challenges leaders to train for

the full breadth and complexity of today's missions, including stability as well as offensive and defensive operations. The new manual, which replaces the 2002 edition of FM 7-0 *Training the Force*, reflects the Army's recognition that the operational environment has changed. FM 3-0 *Operations* and FM 3-07 *Stability Operations* were released in 2008.

The release of the new training manual marks the first time that the Army has synchronized the manuals for operations and training. FM 7-0 challenges leaders to keep sight of the Army's first priority—fighting and winning the nation's wars—as they train to fight in a full spectrum operations environment. Leaders must be able to conduct simultaneous offensive, defensive and stability or civil-support operations along the spectrum of conflict from outright war to stable peace.

According to Training and Doctrine Command officials, the principles and concepts of the new manual are intended to produce agile leaders who can adapt easily and rapidly to ambiguous and changing situations.

Lt. Gen. James D. Thurman, deputy chief of staff, G-3/5/7, told reporters at the Pentagon that the Army will re-

lease FM 7-1, an addendum to the new training manual, this spring. Titled *Battle Focused Training*, the manual will be web-based and will provide training lessons, examples of concepts presented in FM 7-0 and best practices for implementing those concepts.

AFRICOM Airlifts to Darfur. In one of his final acts in office, former President George W. Bush authorized U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) to airlift heavy equipment to Sudan to support African Union and U.N. peacekeepers involved in the conflict in the nation's Darfur region. AFRICOM will ship 240 containers of water tankers, fuel tank trucks, forklifts and other oversized cargo—about 75 tons in all—from Kigali, Rwanda, to Darfur aboard two C-17 Globemaster III aircraft. The mission will help protect civilian lives and deliver humanitarian aid to areas of western Darfur currently inaccessible due to security concerns.

The airlift operation would be the first large-scale peacekeeper-support mission for AFRICOM since it became fully operational in October 2008. AFRICOM plans to incorporate Africa Deployment Assistance Phased Training (ADAPT) into the airlift operation.

The ADAPT initiative, first used last summer in transporting peacekeepers to Somalia from Uganda, aims to teach militaries the logistical skills required to deploy in support of peacekeeping missions. The U.S. military first transported troops and cargo in support of the mission in Darfur in 2004 and has provided peacekeeping training in Africa for more than a decade.

Policy Changes in Korea. The Pentagon plans to increase the number of accompanied tours in South Korea and to lengthen most of them from two to three years. Longer tours will improve regional security objectives, benefit training and reduce costs.

Accompanied tours in Seoul, Daegu, Pyeongtaek, Osan and Chinhae will extend from 24 months to 36 months, and command-sponsored slots will roughly double in the next year to 4,350. Uijongbu and Dongducheon, which do not currently offer standard accompanied tours and lack the level of U.S. services of the cities farther south, will begin offering 24-month tours in as many as 2,100 command-sponsored slots. Standard unaccompanied tour lengths will remain at 12 months for most troops and 24 months for key personnel.

The change is the culmination of a long campaign by U.S. commanders in Korea, and the first of the new tours could begin as early as this spring. Gen. Walter L. (Skip) Sharp, commander of U.S. Forces Korea, and senior theater service representatives will jointly determine the number of command sponsorship vacancies at each of the seven locations. Some 28,500 American servicemembers serve in Korea, 90 percent of whom now serve a yearlong unaccompanied tour.

U.S. officials plan to build enough infrastructure, schools and day care centers to accommodate servicemembers, expecting that at least 80 percent of those with families will opt for accompanied tours. Such tours have been limited; as of December, there were 2,135 command-sponsored families living in South Korea and another 1,909 noncommand-sponsored families living at their own expense.



Fort Bliss Public Affairs

Year of the NCO. Secretary of the Army Pete Geren, U.S. Congressman Silvestre Reyes (D-TX), Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George W. Casey Jr. and Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston announce the Year of the Noncommanded Officer during a January press conference at the Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

Ten Green Berets Earn Silver Stars. Ten soldiers from Operational Detachment Alpha 3336 of the 3rd Special Forces Group, Fort Bragg, N.C., were awarded Silver Stars for their heroism in fighting insurgents in Afghanistan. It was the largest number of such awards given to the elite troops for a single engagement since the Vietnam War.

On April 6, 2008, Capt. Kyle M. Walton led the 12-man unit and a few dozen Afghan commando counterparts on a mission to capture or kill several high-value targets at an insurgent stronghold in the mountains of the Shok Valley, north of the city of Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan's Nuristan Province. No roads lead to the Shok Valley; the helicopter that took the team in could not land. Near daybreak, with temperatures in the low 30s, the men, most carrying 60 to 80 pounds of gear, jumped about 10 feet from the helicopter, some landing in the icy river.

Capt. Walton had wanted to fight down the mountain; instead, the men split into three maneuver units to climb a draw up to the village at 10,000 feet. Using agricultural terraces as switchbacks, they edged upwards, but the noise of the helicopters had alerted the insurgents, who attacked from all sides with sniper fire, machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades as the lead element neared the compound.

The unit called for close air support, and F-15s arrived. The insurgents, about 200 of them, were so well dug in that they continued firing. Capt. Walton and his men returned fire as bombs fell and heavy gunfire came from all around. The lead unit, with Capt. Walton, moved out onto a ledge against a cliff to try to protect the wounded. Trained sniper SSgt. Seth E. Howard and medic SSgt. Ron-

ald J. Shurer fought their way up the mountain. Under cover of fire from the Afghan commandos, SSgt. Howard got into place with his sniper rifle and began to pick off the insurgents. Apache gunships strafed the enemy while F-15s dropped 2,000-pound bombs within 350 yards of the unit's position.

As their ammunition stores grew low and clouds moved in, the Green Berets knew they had to get out or take the chance of being stranded overnight in enemy territory, but the insurgents had their entry route covered. The only option was to climb down the cliff into the valley. MSgt. Scott Ford set up medevac operations and directed the less severely wounded to carry the critically injured. Clinging to rocks and branches, the group made its way down the mountain. Most of the men dropped the last 20 feet to the streambed.

The pilot of the first medevac helicopter, its rotors pounded by bullets, hovered only long enough for the in-flight medic to jump out; the second had to land in the icy stream, and it took two men to carry each casualty through the water. By the time the battle ended—six and a half hours after it began—the Special Forces detachment and Afghan commandos had sustained 15 wounded and two Afghans killed; they had eliminated some 150 insurgents.

Lt. Gen. John F. Mulholland, commander of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command, presented the Silver Stars to the Green Berets of Alpha 3336 at Fort Bragg.

The 3rd Special Forces Group awarded nine additional Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars, two Army Commendation Medals for Valor and four Purple Hearts for actions undertaken in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The following members of Operational Detachment Alpha 3336, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), were awarded the Silver Star for actions in a battle in the Shok Valley of Afghanistan:

Capt. Kyle M. Walton, MSgt. Scott Ford, SSgt. Dillon Behr, SSgt. Seth E. Howard, SSgt. Luis Morales, SSgt. David J. Sanders, SSgt. Ronald J. Shurer, SSgt. John W. Walding, SSgt. Matthew O. Williams and Spc. Michael D. Carter.

Army Casualties in Afghanistan

The following U.S. Army soldiers were reported killed in Operation Enduring Freedom from December 1 to December 31, 2008. All names have been released through the Department of Defense; families have been notified.

Cpl. Charles P. Gaffney Jr., 42
Pvt. Colman J. Meadows III, 19
Capt. Robert J. Yllescas, 31

Army Casualties in Iraq

The following U.S. Army soldiers were reported killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom from December 1 to December 31, 2008. All names have been released through the Department of Defense; families have been notified.

SSgt. Jonathan W. Dean, 25
Spc. Tony J. Gonzales, 20
PFC Coleman W. Hinkfent, 19
Spc. Stephen M. Okray, 21
Maj. John P. Pryor, 42
SSgt. Solomon T. Sam, 31
Sgt. John J. Savage, 26
SSgt. Christopher G. Smith, 28
Spc. Stephen G. Zapasnik, 19

Changes to BCTs. Based on a review of the Army's modular brigade structure requested by the Army G-3 last August, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) has proposed a number of changes to the 43 infantry brigade combat teams (BCTs), 25 heavy BCTs, seven Stryker BCTs and one armored cavalry regiment that make up the active and National Guard operational force. The review considered some 7,900 personnel requests submitted by BCT commanders and settled on roughly 5,100 personnel changes to the BCT structure. The changes involve moving personnel spaces—not soldiers—from one job to another.

Among other changes, the Army

GENERAL OFFICER CHANGES*

Brigadier Generals: **R.B. Abrams** from Dep. CG, CAC-T, TRADOC, Fort Leavenworth, Kan., to CG, NTC and Fort Irwin, Fort Irwin, Calif.; **G.E. Couch**, USAR, from Cmdr. (TPU), 316th ESC, Coraopolis, Pa., to Dir., Ops. and Plans, TCJ-3 (IMA), USTRANSCOM, Scott AFB, Ill.; **D.J.H. Pittard** from CG, NTC and Fort Irwin to Dep. CoS, G-3/5/7, TRADOC, Fort Monroe, Va.

CAC-T—Combined Arms Center for Training; **ESC**—Expeditionary Sustainment Command; **IMA**—Individual Mobilization Augmentee; **NTC**—National Training Center; **TPU**—Troop Program Unit; **TRADOC**—U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command; **USAR**—U.S. Army Reserve; **USTRANSCOM**—U.S. Transportation Command.

*Assignments to general officer slots announced by the General Officer Management Office, Department of the Army. Some officers are listed at the grade to which they are nominated, promotable or eligible to be frocked. The reporting dates for some officers may not yet be determined.

wants to strengthen battalion staffs by cutting 380 captain spaces from larger brigade headquarters units. In most cases, battalion staffs have only one captain to manage operations; this move would ensure that each maneuver battalion has three battle captains to manage current operations. The review also recommends increasing the strength of mounted reconnaissance platoons in each BCT by adding six

scouts to the 18–30 soldiers usually assigned.

Another proposal would remove more than 1,000 spaces from various jobs—such as cooks and maintenance specialists—within BCTs and add one military intelligence (MI) soldier to each company to supplement the five- or six-member intelligence support teams that work for the company commander. An MI soldier placed in each battalion headquarters would float among the companies as needed. TRADOC also recommended shifting 380 slots from inside BCTs in order to add five soldiers to every tactical unmanned aerial vehicle platoon.

Two changes to the BCTs would not come out of the unit structure. One is the shifting of 60 personnel spaces to create a signal company within the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment; the other is the creation of a four-person technical intelligence support team in each BCT to provide expertise on capturing enemy weapons and equipment.

2009 BAH Rates. New 2009 Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) rates took effect on January 1. The average housing allowance increased by 6.9 percent. BAH increases for soldiers

with dependents average \$95 a month. For example, a typical junior enlisted member with dependents will receive a BAH of about \$68 a month higher than last year, while a senior NCO with dependents will receive an increase of about \$93.

BAH rates are computed based on three components: median current market rent, average utilities and average renter's insurance. First, total housing costs are calculated for six housing profiles, based on the type of dwelling and number of bedrooms, in each military housing area. Then, the BAH rates are calculated for each pay grade for members with and without dependents.

In 2009, nearly 950,000 servicemembers will be paid an estimated total of \$17.4 billion. Individual rates are protected in the BAH program. An individual soldier in a given location will never see a BAH rate decrease no matter what happens to housing costs there. If the area's housing costs decrease, for example, a soldier who has made long-term commitments by signing a lease or contract will not be penalized. For more information on BAH, visit <http://perdiem.hqda.pentagon.mil/perdiem/bah.html>. ★

U.S. Army/Benjamin Faske



Soldier-Heroes Honored. Soldier-heroes who received the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star or Purple Heart enter the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, in January before the start of the Army-sponsored All-American Bowl high school all-star football game. A total of 85 active duty, Army Reserve and National Guard soldiers represented Operations Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom.