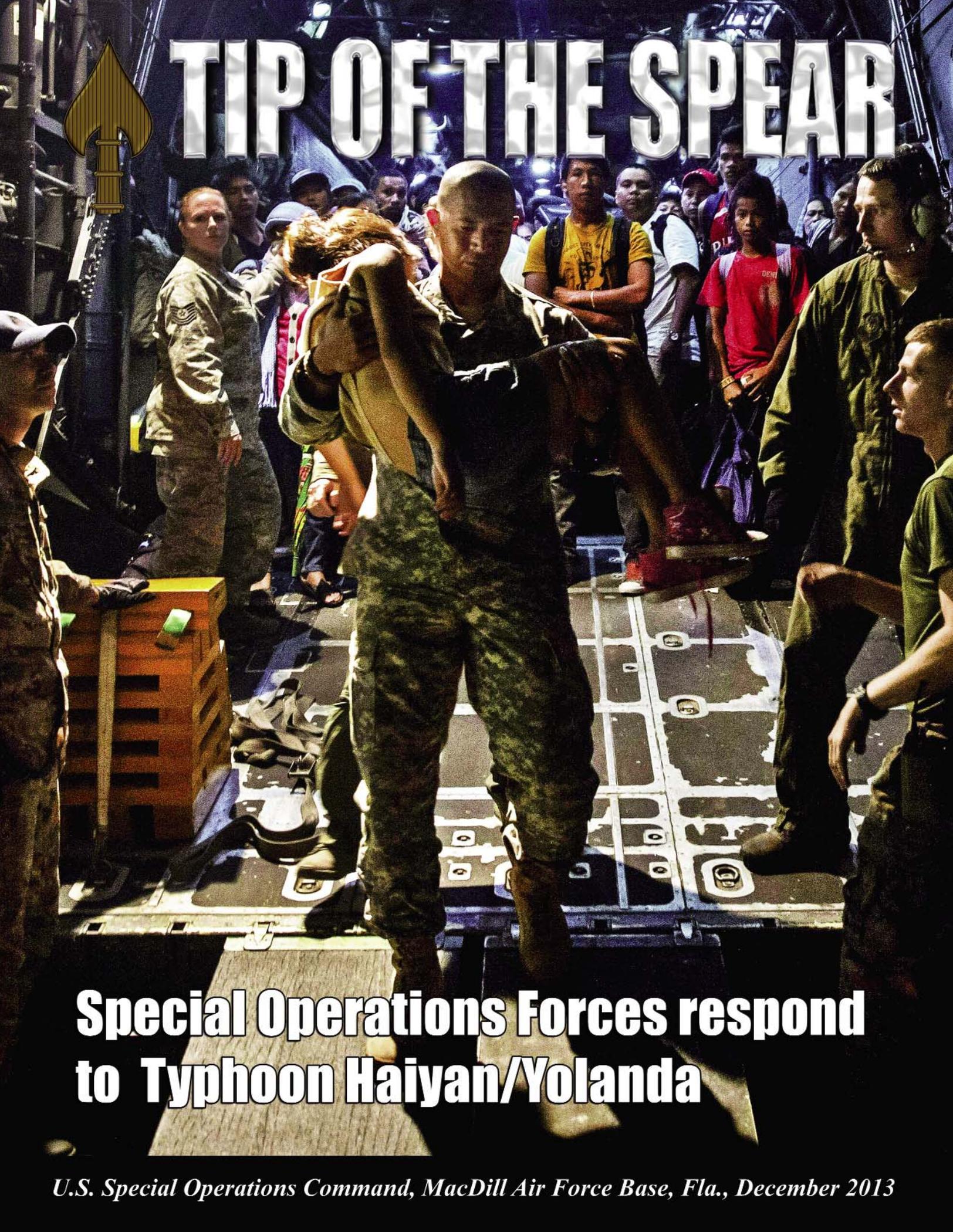




# TIP OF THE SPEAR



**Special Operations Forces respond  
to Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda**

*U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., December 2013*



# U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



## Special Operations Forces respond to Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda ... 10

### Tip of the Spear



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*(Cover) Families from Ormoc, Philippines, affected by Typhoon Haiyan, exit an MC-130 Combat Talon II from 1st Special Operations Squadron after being transported as part of Operation Damayan, Nov. 21. The Philippine government is closely coordinating ongoing relief efforts including search and rescue, supply drops and personnel airlifts with military and civilian organizations in response to Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Daniel M. Young.*

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**SOF AROUND THE WORLD - PARAGUAY**  
**SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND – SOUTH**

# **SOC SOUTH helps with Medical Civic Action Program in Paraguay**

*After several months of planning and with support from the Office of Defense Cooperation at the U.S. Embassy in Paraguay and U.S. Special Operations Command South personnel, thousands of residents received much needed medical assistance during the two-day Medical Civic Action Program.*

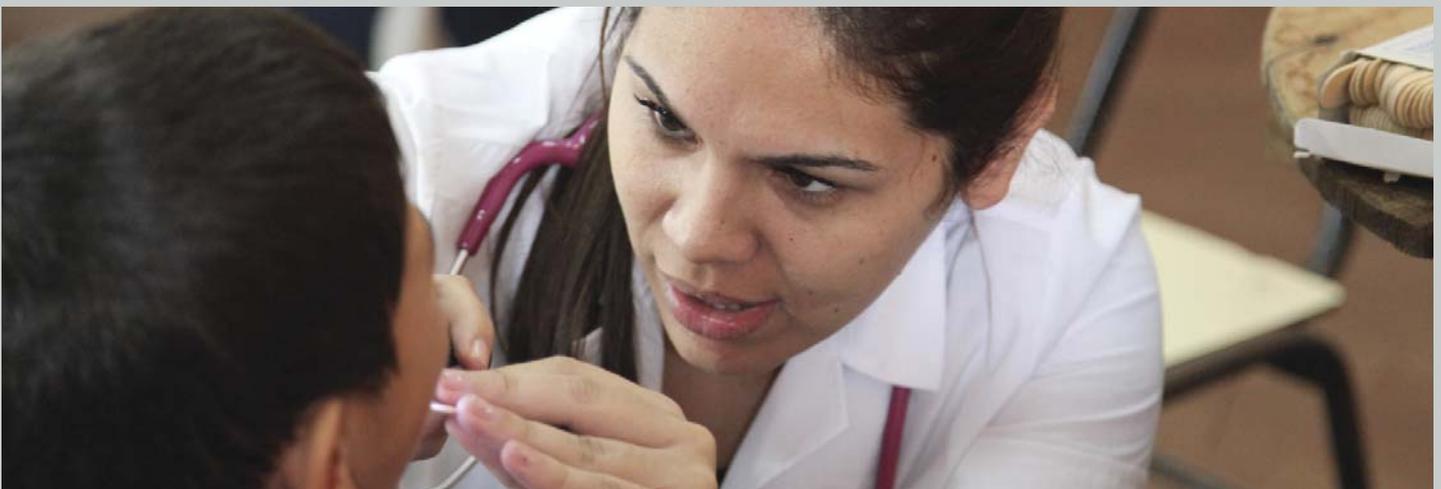
*Photos by Spc. Curtis Hinkel*



**Members of the Paraguayan military and its civil affairs elements unload several boxes of medicine and medical equipment for a two-day Medical Civic Action Program or MEDCAP, in the San Pedro Department of Paraguay, Sept. 27.**



**A Paraguayan military medic checks the blood pressure of a local woman as part of the initial medical screening process during a two-day Paraguayan-led MEDCAP conducted Sept. 28.**



**A Paraguayan military pediatrician performs a medical check-up on a boy during a general medical screening Sept. 28.**



*A Paraguayan military dental hygienist examines the teeth of a young woman Sept. 28.*



*A soldier from the Paraguayan military helps a young boy get out of a truck in order to receive free medical and social services Sept. 29.*



*A Paraguayan military medic and a doctor rush to the aid of a child with a serious arm injury Sept. 28.*



*U.S. Special Forces cross a wide river during a clearance operation conducted Dec. 11, in Gaza Valley, Arghandab district, Zabul province, Afghanistan. The clearance operation was conducted by Afghan National Security Forces and U.S. Special Forces to disrupt insurgent movement in the area. Photo by Army Pfc. David Devich.*

# Afghan National Security Forces, U.S. Special Forces patrol Gaza Valley



*Afghan National Army soldiers patrol during a clearance operation conducted Dec. 11, in Gaza Valley. Photo by Army Pfc. David Devich.*



*An Afghan National Army officer commands troops over a radio Dec. 11, in Gaza Valley. Photo by Pfc. David Devich.*



*(Left) An Afghan National Army soldier provides security Dec. 11, in Gaza Valley, Arghandab district, Zabul province, Afghanistan. (Top) A U.S. Special Forces Soldier with the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan crosses a small creek Dec. 11, in Gaza Valley. (Bottom) A U.S. Air Force Combat Controller reviews a map Dec. 11, in Gaza Valley. Photos by Army Pfc. David Devich.*



*The new unit patch worn by members of Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan/NATO Special Operations Component Command. The patch was officially approved in a ceremony Sept. 20. Courtesy photo.*



# JSOTF-P leads initial relief operations at remote locations impacted by Typhoon Haiyan

By JSOTF-P Public Affairs

Amid the bustling recovering efforts and throngs of international support pouring into the Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan, one quiet contingent of U.S. personnel led the way in establishing conditions during the initial aftermath. These professionals were members of the Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines; their mission was to insert small teams immediately into the post-disaster chaos, open the airfields, and enable follow-on forces. These quiet professionals used their ability to operate in the most austere and uncertain environments to alleviate human suffering, enable the local governments, and bridge the gap between local and external organizations.

“The U.S. forces have been a huge help, and the transition has been moving very smoothly,” said Ruben R. Capahi, a council member with Ormoc City Hall. “It is ultimately the little things that are helping the people the most and are making things better. It’s the handshake, the smile, the hug, and the positive demeanor of the U.S. forces.”

Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines Nov. 7 with estimated wind gusts reaching 230 mph, left a path of destruction spanning 36 provinces and affected an estimated 4.2 million people, according to the Philippine



*Philippine Congresswoman Lucy Torres-Gomez, Maj. Herb Daniels, Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines and Col. Rafael Valencia, 802nd Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army, examine a map of relief distribution and villages in areas affected by Typhoon Haiyan in Ormoc City, Republic of the Philippines as part of Operation Damayan, Nov. 17. The government of the Philippines closely coordinated ongoing relief efforts with military and civilian international agencies in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda. Photo by Spc. Andrew Robertson.*

National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council. Ormoc City itself sustained substantial damage with up to 90 percent of the structures affected, according to Capahi. “We were ready for the typhoon in the sense that we prepared as best as we could, and were very

aggressive with our preemptive evacuation,” said Capahi. “But with a typhoon of this scale, everything in this city was damaged if not destroyed.”

Australian forces assumed responsibility for assisting the Government of the Philippines in aiding survivors of Typhoon Haiyan in Ormoc, Leyte, Nov. 23, as they replaced U.S. Special Operations Forces that had been on the ground for seven days.

“While working with the local government and Philippine Security Forces, we were able to identify key individuals and capabilities,” said U.S. Army Maj. Herb Daniels, a JSOTF-P officer who served as the commander of JSOTF-P forces operating out of Ormoc City Airport.

JSOTF-P’s airfield operations and network moved supplies off the airfield to those in need, enabling Joint Task Force-505 to orchestrate the delivery of approximately 48 tons of relief supplies into Ormoc. More than 1,700 tons of aid were delivered to affected areas within the first few days by JSOTF-P, and approximately 18,000 people were evacuated as of Nov. 21.

“Our biggest challenge was receiving so many different aid organizations and international groups at once and linking them up with the local government,” Daniels said. “We have a lot of people who want to do

good, and with the guidance and direction of the local government, they will do an even greater good because it will be a planned effort.”

After conducting a thorough turnover, the Australian forces are confident in their ability to provide assistance to the local government as they continue to help the citizens of Ormoc recover from the typhoon.

“Once the U.S. military forces depart the area of operations, we will take responsibility of aiding the government...ensuring that all major routes are clear within the area, which will allow aid to reach those municipal areas outside of the city region,” said Australian Army Capt. Francois Nozaiz, a watch officer Joint Task Force-505. “The American team that has been on the ground has provided us with a lot of valuable data.”

The Australian forces conducted site assessments and plan to stay in the area for the immediate future to assist with relief efforts and further coordinate the synchronization of supplies and relationships.

“The local government, with continued assistance from their Australian military partners and international aid organizations, is prepared and ready to face the challenges of long-term recovery into the future,” said Capahi.



*An Armed Forces of the Philippines soldier leads Ormoc residents affected by Typhoon Haiyan to a Philippine Air Force C-130 prior to departure from Ormoc Airfield as part of Operation Damayan, Nov. 18. Photo by Spc. Andrew Robertson.*

Ormoc City residents gather at Tacloban Airfield, Philippines, in preparation for boarding a Philippine Air Force C-130 that will airlift them to Manila as part of Operation Damayan, Nov. 14. Photo by Spc. Andrew Robertson.



# Special Operations Forces help with Typhoon Haiyan/Yolanda relief effort



(Left) Sgt. 1st Class Jason Rosado, Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines, assists in distribution of relief goods at Guiuan Airfield, Republic of the Philippines as part of Operation Damayan, Nov. 17. Photo by SPC Andrew Robertson.



(Right) Air Force Staff Sgt. Alicia Chavez, 353rd Special Operations Support Squadron, an independent duty medical technician, passes out ear plugs to displaced people onboard an MC-130P Combat Shadow Nov. 14, as they are transported from Tacloban Airport to Manila, Philippines. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kristine Dreyer.



*Tech. Sgt. David D. Wheeler, a loadmaster with the 17th Special Operations Squadron, carries a displaced person off an MC-130P Combat Shadow, Nov. 14, at Tacloban Airport, Philippines. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kristine Dreyer.*



*Senior Airman Joshua Rody and Sgt. 1st Class Mike Adzima speak with members of a Philippine aid agency regarding food packs for distribution to families in the Ormoc area at the Ormoc Airfield as part of Operation Damayan, Nov. 18. Photo by Spc. Andrew Robertson.*



*From left, Air Force Staff Sgt. Aaron Davis and Air Force Master Sgt. Tobin Berry, combat controllers with the 353rd Special Operations Group, along with an Armed Forces of the Philippines service member, direct air traffic Nov. 17 at Guiuan Airport. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kristine Dreyer.*



*Members from the 353rd Special Operations Group, deployed from Kadena Air Base, Japan in support of Operation Damayan, direct air traffic at Guiuan Airport, Republic of the Philippines, Nov. 17. The special tactics Airmen directed more than 100 sorties a day to ensure airlift of more than 1,000 Philippine citizens daily in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Kristine Dreyer.*

**AIRBORNE**

**U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND**



*Army Lt. Gen. John F. Mulholland, deputy commanding general U.S. Special Operations Command, places a ceremonial wreath in front of the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Memorial Wall, Nov. 7, in honor of those men from Task Force Dagger that made the ultimate sacrifice.*

# Historic Task Force Dagger Afghanistan memorialized in stone

*Story and photos by Army Staff Sgt. Marcus Butler  
USASFC (A) Public Affairs*

Family, friends, and Soldiers both past and present, gathered at Meadows Memorial Plaza, Fort Bragg, N.C., Nov. 7, to commemorate the sacrifice, patriotism and heroism of the service members of Task Force Dagger, during a memorial stone dedication ceremony.

It was the actions of the men of Task Force Dagger in Afghanistan from October 2001 to April 2002 that led to the fall of a terrorist government and the eviction of al Qaeda leadership from Afghanistan.

"I would like to thank each and every one of you who made it out here today to honor this great event in honor of some great men," said Lt. Gen John F. Mulholland,

deputy commanding general, U.S. Special Operations Command. "This day, the men of Task Force Dagger are truly walking in the footsteps of giants as we are recognized with the other members of Special Operations Forces in this memorial plaza."

Soon after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Task Force Dagger was directed to conduct Special Operations missions in support of a number of Northern Alliance commanders in Afghanistan, and to work with them to gain their active assistance in overthrowing the Taliban regime.

"As we rolled that task into one machine it was absolutely phenomenal. All of our joint brothers-in-arms were absolutely amazing," said Mulholland.

Mulholland chronologically described each and every moment of emphasis that changed the outcome of the

task force and the importance of each of them. One point made was that of the role of the families.

“We are 12 years into this and we have a very solid process and great support. But, that was not the way it was when we had our first casualties – it was all starting from scratch,” said Mulholland. “The ladies of 5th Special Forces Group had to figure that out, all of whom were exceptional, and figured it out is just what they did. For the exceptional job that they accomplished, I would like to say thank you.

“This day is about the commemoration of Task Force Dagger. This represents our place in history. We have extraordinary men who took on our nation’s most difficult and dangerous enemies.”

“It was the men on those Alpha-teams and their interagency counterparts figuring it out on the ground – guiding us, informing us, and letting us shape and bring things

together when we saw opportunities.”

For its actions, Task Force Dagger earned the Joint Meritorious Unit Award while its subordinate units earned six Presidential Unit Citations and four Valorous Unit Awards.

“The nation is truly in debt to these men, to 5th Special Forces Group, and the Night Stalkers who flew incredibly perilous missions; to our AFSOC [Air Force Special Operations Command] brothers in the fixed-wing world, combat controllers, Para Jumpers and weathermen, and all of this coming together with our interagency partners to get the job done on behalf of our country,” said Mulholland. “If there is one strategic lesson to take away from this is when the United States brings all of the elements and capability powers together

there is nothing that can stop us – nothing can stand in our way.”

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*“This day is about the commemoration of Task Force Dagger. This represents our place in history. We have extraordinary men who took on our nation’s most difficult and dangerous enemies.”*

— Lt. Gen. John F. Mulholland

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**The memorial stone for Task Force Dagger is unveiled Nov. 7, during a ceremony honoring the men of the task force. The memorial stone was placed in the U.S. Army Special Operations Command’s memorial plaza alongside other stones telling the history of Special Operations Forces.**

AIRBORNE



# 'Call-for-Fire'

*Special Forces train at Eglin Range, Fla.*



*Army Special Forces members conduct "Call-for-Fire" training with an AC-130U "Spooky" Gunship over Eglin Range, Fla., Oct. 30. The reverse arc is the flight path of Spooky which fired a 105mm round causing the explosion seen on the bottom left. Photo by Senior Airman Christopher Callaway.*



An AC-130U "Spooky" Gunship 105mm round hits a target on Eglin Range, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Oct. 29. Photo by Airman 1st Class Jeff Parkinson.



(Left) An Army Special Forces member fires an M320 grenade launcher on Eglin Range, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Oct. 29. Photo by Airman 1st Class Jeff Parkinson. (Above) An Army Special Forces Soldier practices "Call-for-Fire" training with an AC-130U "Spooky" Gunship on Eglin Range, Fla., Oct. 30. Photo by Alton Dunham.



*Army Special Forces members train on the M2 Browning 50-caliber and M240B machine guns on Eglin Range, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Oct. 29. Photo by Airman 1st Class Jeff Parkinson.*



*(Above) A Special Forces Soldier locates a target for 'Call for Fire training' on Eglin Range, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Oct. 29. Photos by Airman 1st Class Jeff Parkinson.*



*(Right) A Green Beret fires an AT4 during heavy weapons training on Eglin Range, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., Oct. 29. Photos by Airman 1st Class Jeff Parkinson.*



# The Undercover Agent

*Soundless. Lifesaving.  
This robot may not look like much,  
but it is proving its worth as an operator's eyes and ears.*



**A SEAL operates a Throwbot, developed by Recon Robotics and largely tested by the U.S. Army in Operation Enduring Freedom. Named for its main purpose – it's designed to be thrown – this lightweight robot has the capability to enter a foreign space containing unknown threats and mitigate the risk for operators worldwide.**

**Story and photos by Petty Officer 2nd Class Megan Anuci  
Naval Special Warfare Command Public Affairs**

The small motor softly whirs as the device smoothly travels across the concrete. The small antenna waves back and forth as it hits tiny rocks, but the device's course stays true, due to its powerful, gripping wheels. Its operator swiftly steers the device with a remote controller, or Operator Control Unit II (OCU II), tracking its moves on a small screen that is the device's eyes. As the device paces the room, searching for threats, its controller, a Navy SEAL, assesses any possible threats seen by the video camera or heard by the small microphone on the top of the device.

This device is commonly known as a Throwbot, developed by Recon Robotics and largely tested by the U.S. Army in Operation Enduring Freedom. Named for its main purpose – it's designed to be thrown – this lightweight robot has the capability to enter a foreign space containing unknown threats and mitigate the risk for operators worldwide.

"The operator sees exactly what the robot is seeing," said Maj. Andrew Christian, the U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command liaison to Naval Special Warfare. "They see it on a digital display and can control the robot with a joystick, kind of like a video game."

Due to the unique risks associated with the terrain and infrastructures of modern combat environments, the military was in need of a device to combat the threats of entering enemy territory. Improvised explosive devices hidden in small spaces or on the higher floors of decrepit buildings couldn't be easily spotted, and increased operator's risk of being wounded or killed.

"There was a special need for this robot," said Christian. "The men in Afghanistan wouldn't carry a 25-pound robot; they needed something lightweight."

The Throwbot weighs a mere 1.2 lbs. and is able to be thrown up to 120 feet in the air. Its compact build gives operators the ability to carry it almost anywhere and can start patrolling in under five seconds with the pull of a pin and a toss into an unknown space.

Another feature of the Throwbot is its audio capability – it operates at just 22 decibels and at a distance of 20 feet, which means an operator can hear what the robot is picking up simply by wearing headphones plugged into the OCU II.

In addition, the robot can swivel to point straight up to the ceiling to reduce overhead threats to operators. Its camera has a wide angle view, giving operators a full picture of the space to be infiltrated. This is extremely important when entering a space, as threats can be placed in the corners of rooms.

"You can look directly up or down," said Ernest Langdon, Recon Robotics, director of military programs.

"You can also flip it over and drive it upside down if you need to. Ideally, you want to drive it straight, so the antennas point straight up, but it does have that capability."

The Throwbot has an infrared optical system, or night vision setting. In the cover of darkness, certain visuals can be lost, causing a mission to fail. If not for the Throwbot, operators may not realize the threats hiding in the darkness. This system is automatically adjusted whenever the ambient light is too low. In addition, the robot is water-resistant for up to five minutes.

"The screen [OCU II] is black and white in the night time," said Langdon. "The reason this is, is that the night time use is with infrared. Once it's dark, you turn on the illuminator and the controller can only see in black and white, to get a clearer picture."

As if this wasn't already a powerful tool in an operator's arsenal, the Throwbot may be specified as a certain transmitting frequency, which allows operators to deploy up to three robots at once. This way, more ground is covered in a shorter span of time, giving threats less time to react and a better chance for the operators.

"The best deployment concept is to have multiple robots," said Christian. "If you needed to clear a room and you thought there was a suspected shooter in the room, obviously you could send a dog forward, but the robot gives you capabilities in lieu of a dog. It's just another tool."

This tool has many capabilities that operators can use to combat or deter threats of an unknown space. Explosives, enemies, weapons or any other harmful element in a hostile environment are detected by this soundless, can-shaped robot.

"Its scope and application is really to be a first responder," said Christian. "It's your eyes and ears."



**A SEAL practices tossing a Throwbot. The device is designed to pace a room, search for threats seen by a mounted video camera, and listens with a small microphone.**



## NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE COMMAND

# Cultural Engagement Unit: NSW's diverse enablers

*By: Petty Officer 1st Class Dominique Canales  
Naval Special Warfare Command Public Affairs*

Every city and country has its own niches, slang and culture, and tapping into local knowledge can pay dividends in the way one navigates and understands a local environment. That same concept can be seen in the enablers assigned to Naval Special Warfare's Cultural Engagement Unit.

The CEU, a component of NSW Group 10, trains former foreign nationals, both male and female, to become enablers fit to assist NSW operators with language, regional and cultural barriers the operators may face overseas. Originally established as a troop under NSW Support Activity 1 in 2010, the unit was designed around Language and Regional Experts; in practice, a Sailor native to a Special Operations Forces area of operation that speaks the local language and can assist deployed operators with cultural knowledge the operators themselves might lack. The LRE concept was developed utilizing a larger Department of Defense program called Military Accessions Vital to National Interest. This DoD program allows foreign nationals living in the United States legally the opportunity to expedite their naturalization by serving in the military.

In 2009, Lt. Jason Booher and former SEAL Dan Gearheart were tasked with tailoring the MAVNI program to create a new cultural combat support enabler for NSW.

"So we expanded past MAVNI," said Booher. "[NSW] realized there are already a lot of native-born individuals – folks born overseas that immigrated here themselves – serving in the Navy. So we built a process that would capitalize on that expertise and provide NSW with someone that can deploy next to SOF, advise leadership, and really educate operators on the second, third order of effects of our missions in certain regions."

In mid-2011, NSW recognized that Village Stability Operations in Afghanistan had a need for women to work alongside SEALs. Cultural Support Teams were established with women trained to support SEALs during VSO missions. While women deployed with NSW have assisted teams before, the female enablers developed by the CEU were trained to not only assist in Afghanistan, but to set the standard for a long-term female combat support enabler capable of supporting



**A Female Support Technician receives weapons training. Courtesy photo.**

NSW across its multiple mission areas. To this end the CEU created a broader training program to produce what NSW now calls Female Support Technicians.

"So that mission was also tasked to us - as a secondary mission here at the CEU - because it really tied in neatly with the program that was already developed," said Booher. "It was an easy fit."

NSW Female Support Technicians are currently NSW's answer to U.S. Special Operations Command's requirement for a female support to SOF program. These two parts, the LRE and the FST, work and train side by side and sometimes produce a dual-qualified enabler to deploy with operators. This means a Sailor who makes it through the training could be both an LRE and an FST.

The screening and training processes for LRE and FST candidates is selective, difficult and unique to the NSW community. Currently, the recruitment for both divisions of the unit is done mainly by word of mouth. Hearing about the program is what interested Builder 2nd Class Gilbert Nalelia and led to his eventual application. Born in Kenya, Nalelia found out about this program in 2009 through former SEAL and friend Paul Zimmerman while attending Gonzaga University's business school in Spokane, Wash. Nalelia, fluent in three languages, including Swahili, has since earned his citizenship and deployed where he was able to use his cultural and language skills in direct support of NSW operators.

"I went for a six-month deployment but I wish I was there longer," said Nalelia. "It was fulfilling after a long training schedule."

Word of mouth also helped the officer in charge of a deployed CST find the CEU. In her case, she heard about the CEU from a former NSW employee at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

“She had previously worked with NSW and heard about this program and put me in touch with the folks here at the Cultural Engagement Unit, and I came down and screened for the program and got selected,” said the lieutenant.

It just seemed like a great opportunity to branch out; a very different kind of leadership which was something that I wasn’t used to; just venturing a little bit outside the box,” the lieutenant said. “It’s the chance to learn and grow and do something different. This is small unit leadership and it is just completely different, especially leading a team of all women. It’s like night and day when compared to the surface Navy. [The CEU has] a lot of strong personalities, and it’s been a great challenge and I think it’s made me more well-rounded as a leader.”

#### **Training for the mission**

Having an enabler turn into a hindrance rather than an asset is a risk operators take every time anyone accompanies them on a mission. The standards for operators are set high, and enablers built at the CEU are treated no differently.

“We’re not building SEALs here and we are not building shooters. And, frankly we don’t need them to be shooters,” said Booher. “What we need are cultural enablers that understand NSW and that can function in the field.”

CEU candidates must undergo three stages of a training program lasting more than six months. During the first stage, or assessment phase, candidates endure two weeks of physically strenuous team-building training.

“What we’re doing here that’s different, is making the support person earn his or her spot on the NSW CEU team, which is different from the other NSW groups and support activities,” said Booher. “They will experience slivers of what SEALs experience during BUD/S. They will be getting wet, doing pushups, remediation and team building. The intent is not to make anyone quit - the intent is team building.”

The second stage focuses on soldiering skills, known as “green skills.” This is the longest portion of training, because unlike the Army or Marine Corps, the Navy does not teach these skills in boot camp. The members attend the basic soldiering course and a direct support course, learn rope and rappelling skills, attend fast rope training, and spend a few weeks doing land navigation and field work. In addition, another three weeks is devoted to weapons training and range time, all instructed and supervised by operators.

“During this portion of the training, they receive field

skills that will enable them to go out and work with Navy SEALs,” said Booher.

The final stage is academic. Among other things in this stage, the candidates are taught about SOF and its history.

“Once we’ve done that,” said Booher, “we focus on NSW.”

The instructors then start teaching the candidates their jobs and what will be expected of them as a LRE or FST. Until this point, the two groups train together. Booher explains that the academics are ultimately broken up between LREs and FSTs because of NSW’s different needs.

“We provide LREs the interpretation/translation techniques, the core of how to do it correctly, and conflict resolution,” said Booher.

LREs and FSTs are also taught to be instructors to better teach other SOF members how to use their unique skills correctly and to their advantage. Where the FST training differs is in its mission. Currently, most FSTs train to deploy as CSTs in support of VSO in Afghanistan.

“We are bringing in folks from the Defense Intelligence Agency who teach at the current Village Stability Operations academic weeks that all other SOF components attend,” said Booher. “We bring the same people here, they teach onsite; cross culture communications, Afghanistan and Pakistan culture and governance and all those courses taught at the current academic week, we do here onsite.”

#### **Future of the unit**

The Cultural Engagement Unit training pipeline is still evolving, but upholds the reputation and expectations of the NSW community: it is highly selective, features difficult physical training and maintains high standards.

“One of the most salient lessons learned from counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan was that SOF operators lacked the micro-regional expertise and access to the population required to most effectively conduct those operations,” said Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Bingham, the Cultural Engagement Unit program director at NSW Group 10. “The CEU will provide this capability to NSW in advance of future conflicts, in compliance with the fundamental SOF truths that SOF operations require SOF support and you can’t build capability after a crisis occurs.”

Booher expects that future CEU recruitment will be even more tailored to the needs of NSW.

“In the future what we want to do is have the NSW community provide us their prioritized requirement list,” said Booher. “Then we want to go out there and target those exact requirements and fill each seat to the best of our ability, with the language and gender that’s needed.”



## AIR FORCE SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND



**Staff Sgt. Johnnie Yellock Jr., a 23rd Special Tactics Squadron combat controller, prepares for his final jump before being medically retired Oct. 16, at Hurlburt Field, Fla. Yellock endured 28 surgeries and two years of intense physical therapy to be able to walk again after his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device during a 2011 deployment to Afghanistan. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. John Bainter.**

# Wounded warrior makes final jump

**By Capt. Victoria Porto**  
**AFSOC Public Affairs**

One by one, Airmen from the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron lined up at the back of a C-130, paused, then stepped off the aircraft Oct. 16, completing their free fall training jump into the picturesque water of Florida's Emerald Coast near Hurlburt Field, Fla.

For Staff Sgt. Johnnie Yellock Jr., this jump was two years and 28 surgeries in the making.

In 2011, Yellock, a 23rd STS combat controller, was deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. While on a mission checking Afghan local police outposts, his vehicle was struck

by an improvised explosive device.

"When I opened my eyes, I was on top of the truck with my legs hanging down onto the bed," Yellock said. "I had open fractures on both of my feet through my boots."

Despite his injuries, he continued to pass information to his team, including the details for a helicopter landing zone for his own medical evacuation.

"I'd been in the career field for years and I was trained for this type of situation, trained on medical trauma care," he said. "I took pride in the knowledge I had, and I was confident I'd be able to help a teammate if needed. I didn't expect it to be myself."



**Staff Sgt. Johnnie Yellock Jr., a 23rd Special Tactics Squadron combat controller, parachutes during his final free fall jump before retiring Oct. 16. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. John Bainter.**

For two and a half months his parents and sister stayed by his side while he was recovering in the hospital in San Antonio, Texas. Once released, he began his outpatient rehabilitation and the long road to recovery. The first year, he stayed mostly in a wheelchair before he was finally able to walk, first with crutches, then unassisted.

The idea for the jump originated in the 23rd STS as his leadership was coordinating his return to Hurlburt Field to outprocess and medically retire Oct. 18.

“We have a lot of wounded warriors in various stages of recovery, and maintaining care and contact with our wounded brothers is important to us,” said Lt. Col. Mason Dula, 23rd STS commander. “Of course, the jump is important for (Yellock) and a nice exclamation point for his career, but it’s also equally

important for the guys in our squadron to see him come back and see the commitment we have with all of our wounded warriors. They are still our teammates.”

Yellock said his leadership made sure his doctors approved and that he could accomplish multiple tasks to prove he was ready, like swimming 100 meters with his gear on and going to wind tunnel training to show he could handle a free fall.

“People have said this is a symbol of resilience – my attitude – since the injury hasn’t gotten me down,” Yellock said. “But I tell them anybody in my situation, any of these other special tactics operators would handle it in the same way. I just hope they wouldn’t have to.”

During the jump, Yellock was surrounded by his fellow operators and teammates from the deployment, and supported by the same leadership that was there when he was hurt. He said that was even more meaningful than the jump itself.

“It just represents (Air Force Special Operations Command’s) never-ending support for our wounded guys and our fallen comrades,” he said. “I may be retired from the military but I’ll always be a combat controller.”



**Staff Sgt. Johnnie Yellock Jr., a 23rd Special Tactics Squadron combat controller, swims after completing his final free fall jump before retiring Oct. 16. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. John Bainter.**

# Special Tactics Airmen complete CV-22 night mission



*Photos by Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeff Andrejczik*



*(Above) Air Force Staff Sgt. Daniel Johnson, 23rd Special Tactics Squadron combat controller, jumps into the Santa Rosa Sound near Hurlburt Field, Fla., Oct. 17. Johnson was on standby as part of the emergency response team for an upcoming CV-22 Osprey night mission. (Below) Johnson swims in the Santa Rosa Sound.*





*Two pararescuemen from the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron are hoisted up by a CV-22 Osprey out of the Santa Rosa Sound Oct. 17. They were pulled from the water as part of a night training exercise.*



# Korengal Valley: Special Tactics Officer receives Bronze Star with Valor for combat actions

*By Staff Sgt. Erica Horner  
AFSOC Public Affairs*

“I was only attached to these guys for just one mission but it was the most important mission of my life,” said Maj. F. Damon Friedman, an Air Force Special Operations Command special tactics officer who was briefly assigned to an Army task force while serving in Afghanistan.

For his actions, Friedman was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor during a ceremony Nov. 13, at Hurlburt Field, Fla.

It was April 2010 and the Korengal Valley, a two - kilometer “kill-box” located in northeast Afghanistan, had already claimed the lives of more than 40

American service members since the start of Operation Enduring Freedom. The compact valley with extremely high terrain was difficult to maneuver, earning the name “Valley of Death,” and it needed to be cleared of enemy forces immediately.

“It was a very high profile mission. There were several Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha teams assigned to one battalion and also an Army Task Force,” said Friedman, then a captain on his third deployment in Afghanistan since becoming a STO. “Our unit was responsible for going in and

conducting disruption operations so the current Army unit would be able to start taking out enemy forces in the middle of the night and ultimately close that place down.”

Because of his expertise, Friedman was appointed as the lead joint terminal attack controller with a team of three combat controllers. He was also

tasked as the “fires guy,” the subject matter expert for all close air support and calls for fire during that mission.

“When we came in, there were about 100 enemy forces in the area. I was up for three days without a second of sleep conducting close air support with numerous aircraft overhead,” said Friedman.

This was nothing new for Friedman;

using his elevated location to his advantage, he provided fire support and cover for the men moving through the valley.

“I had the greatest situational awareness,” he said. “I was able to receive the aircraft and push them out, or conduct close air support and call for fire because my position was much safer and I could see the entire valley.”

According to the medal citation, for seven days, often under direct and indirect hostile fire, Friedman maneuvered to exposed positions to improve the

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*“When we came in, there were about 100 enemy forces in the area. I was up for three days without a second of sleep conducting close air support with numerous aircraft overhead .... I had the greatest situational awareness, I was able to receive the aircraft and push them out, or conduct close air support and call for fire because my position was much safer and I could see the entire valley.”*

— Maj. F. Damon Friedman

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coordination and deconfliction of more than 200 attack aircraft.

He also controlled and directed the delivery of 4,000 pounds of bombs, AC-130 rounds, and repeated rocket and strafe attacks. On two accounts, he controlled bombs and rockets within 100 meters of pinned-down friendly forces, thereby saving the lives of his teammates.

“I wanted to be as accurate as possible,” he said. “I wanted to make the right calls and I didn’t want to be overzealous, especially when it came to danger close. You want everyone to be safe on your side. You want everyone to come home and everyone did come home.”

No friendly forces were killed and Friedman was credited with 40 enemies killed and wounded.

“The “V” is something very special,” said Brig. Gen. Albert “Buck” Elton, AFSOC director of plans, programs, requirements and assessments, referring to the

valor device on the Bronze Star. “It’s difficult to earn and they protect that device. To have three Bronze Stars is a big deal, especially one with valor.”

Friedman credits his team for this achievement.

“Honestly, when I look at this medal with the “V” device, it’s for the guys; it was a team effort,” said Friedman. “These men, they go out and do extraordinary things; the operators and the controllers, they’re amazing and this is as much of theirs as it is mine. I’m just honored to be a part of it.”

The BSM is the fourth highest individual military award. It may be awarded for acts of heroism, acts of merit, or meritorious service in a combat zone. When awarded for acts of heroism, the medal is awarded with a valor, or “V” device.

*Editor’s Note: A “kill box,” a common term used by Special Operations Forces, is a three-dimensional area used to facilitate the integration of joint fires.*



**Lt. Gen. Eric E. Fiel, Air Force Special Operations Command commander, poses with Maj. F. Damon Friedman, AFSOC special tactics officer, after presenting him with a Bronze Star medal with Valor Nov. 13, at Hurlburt Field, Fla. Friedman was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor for his actions against enemy forces in Afghanistan in April 2010. Also pictured is his wife, Dayna, and son, Hunter. Photo by Air Force Master Sgt. Carlotta Holley.**



*The Mountain Warfare Training Center near Bridgeport, Calif., has begun teaching an advanced horsemanship training course in order to teach Special Operations Forces personnel the necessary skills to enable them to ride horses and move through terrain that can't be navigated by motor vehicles. Conditioned horses are able to travel more than 30 miles per day and can gallop at up to 40 miles per hour for short periods of time.*

## Mountain Warfare Training Center teaches advanced horsemanship

*Story and photos by Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Robert Storm  
MARSOC Public Affairs*

The Mountain Warfare Training Center near Bridgeport, Calif., has begun teaching an advanced horsemanship training course in order to teach Special Operations Forces personnel the necessary skills to enable them to ride horses, load pack animals, and maintain animals for military applications in remote and dangerous environments.

“We’re taking this course so that we can integrate irregular warfare into the Marine SOF horsemanship program ... as vets we can help educate the Marines and other SOF on these matters,” said a SOF veterinarian assigned to U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command. “It’s a very unique course because it combines the conventional warfare tactics of the Marine Corps with the irregular warfare used by SOF.”

The course is designed to aid small specialized units in operating with indigenous personnel who ride and/or

pack animals. This includes riding horses and packing animals for transporting crew served weapons, ammunition, supplies, and wounded personnel to and from terrain that is inaccessible to mechanized and air mobile transportation.

“We teach Marines how to use pack animals and riding animals as a means to transport people and supplies when ground vehicles or air support isn’t possible,” said Anthony Parkhurst, 49, Director Animal Packing Program, from Hagarstown, Ind. “Even though we use mules and horses here the course teaches principles that can be used on any pack animal; camels, llamas, and donkeys can be used depending on the environment.”

Other course subjects included animal care, anatomy of working animals, animal packing techniques, casualty evacuation techniques, animal first aid, bivouac considerations, and horsemanship techniques as well as capabilities of the different animals.

“A typical pack animal weighs 800 to 1,000 pounds and can carry one-quarter to one-third its body weight. Of course the best pack animal is still a Marine, since they routinely carry more than half their body weight,” laughed Parkhurst, who retired from the Marine Corps and speaks from personal experience.

The Marine Corps quit using pack animals in 1953. In 1983, the course to use pack and ride animals began again as the Department of Defense started a program to test the value of pack animals. Originally the program was only to last three to five years but the success of the course resulted in its continuation at MWTC. The program taught at MWTC is currently the only one of its kind in the Department of Defense. The course simulates the difficulties of mountainous terrain. The training is essential to help Marines and other military members understand the capabilities of the animals and the influence and considerations of both terrain and climate. For many of the Marines this is a unique experience and something different than the normal type of infantry training.

The factors that can dictate the use of pack animals vary, many countries have terrain without roads or are otherwise impassable with motor vehicles. Countries that have heavy rain may make many roads impassable.

While almost any animal can be trained to pack, the Marine Corps uses nine basic pack species: Dog, elephant, llama, camel, horse, ox, donkey, mules, and even reindeer, while every animal is different, basic mule packing skills are needed to pack any other species.

Consideration for each animal is slightly different, dogs and oxen are considered freight animals and are better used for pulling heavy loads.

“The course gives commanders a force multiplier. The animals can traverse any type of terrain; they can reach places that vehicles can’t. They make a unit quicker, quieter and more mobile than foot movement alone,” said Gunnery Sgt. Andrew Balcunas, 32, staff noncommissioned officer in charge, animal packing program, from Campbell, Calif. “They never have to use a road or set trail so they never have to worry about IEDs (improvised explosive device) or ambushes or things of that nature.”

This course is available to all Marine Corps and SOF units.

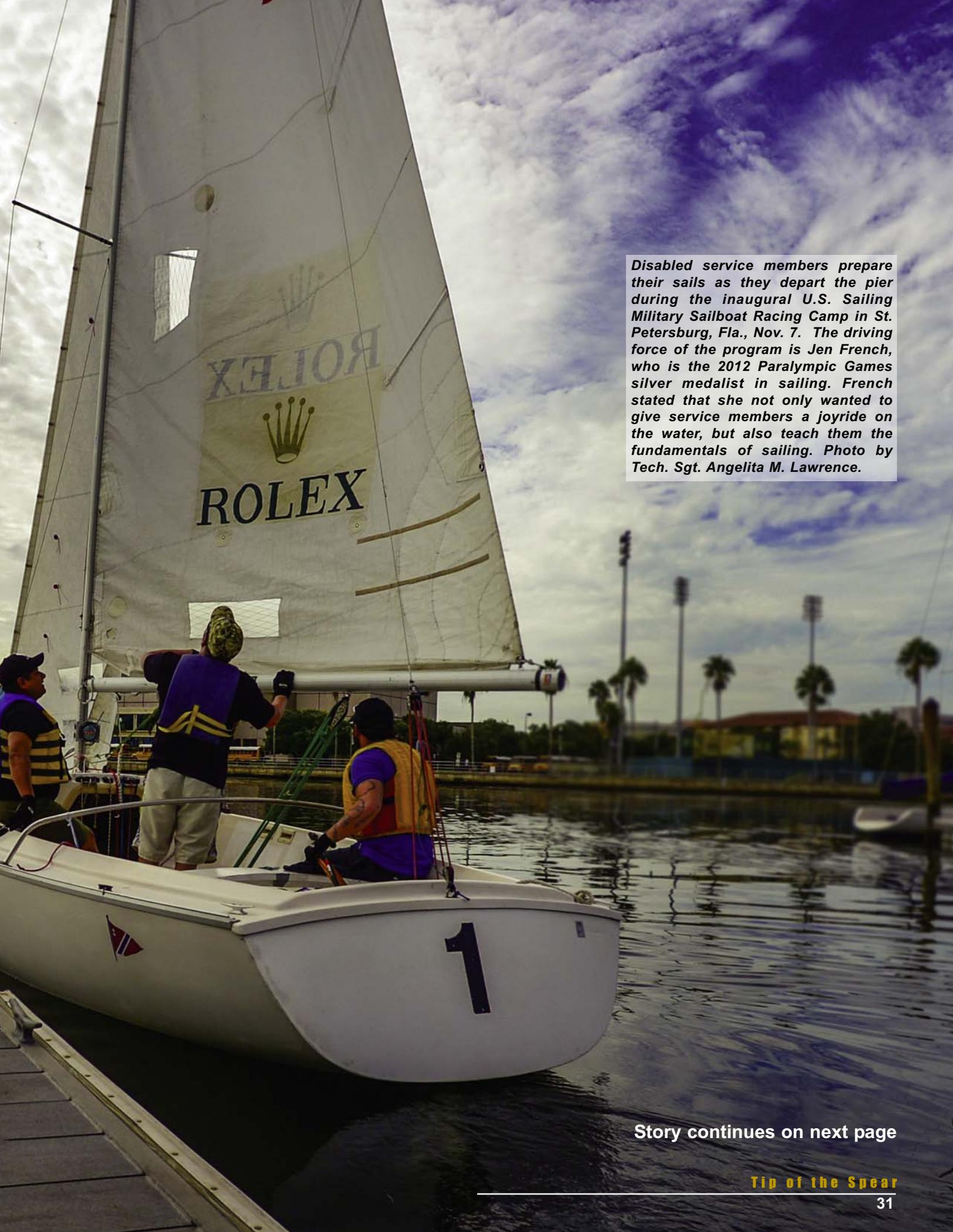


*A Special Operations Forces member cleans a horse's shoe at the Mountain Warfare Training Center near Bridgeport, Calif.*



# Sailing to Recovery





*Disabled service members prepare their sails as they depart the pier during the inaugural U.S. Sailing Military Sailboat Racing Camp in St. Petersburg, Fla., Nov. 7. The driving force of the program is Jen French, who is the 2012 Paralympic Games silver medalist in sailing. French stated that she not only wanted to give service members a joyride on the water, but also teach them the fundamentals of sailing. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Angelita M. Lawrence.*

Story continues on next page



## U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND - HEADQUARTERS



**The inaugural U.S. Sailing Military Sailboat Racing Camp in St. Petersburg, Fla., Nov. 7, was a three-day long intense course that taught the fundamentals of sailing while promoting physical/mental fitness, camaraderie and mentorship. The camp is designed to enhance the overall health and welfare of wounded, ill or injured service members.**

**Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Angelita Lawrence  
USSOCOM Public Affairs**

As 15 knot winds with gusts up to 20 filled the sails of the numerous boats on the water, propelling them quietly on Tampa Bay Nov. 7, 18 service members and veterans serving as crewmembers were getting much more than a joyride, they were receiving therapy.

The injured service members were taking part in the inaugural U.S. Sailing Military Sailboat Racing Camp, which was organized through St. Petersburg Yacht Club, U.S. Sailing and U.S. Special Operations Command's Care Coalition. The driving force of the program is Jen French who is the 2012 Paralympic Games' silver medalist in sailing. After returning from the 2012 games, she was determined to reach out to disabled veterans and wanted to host a training camp that was more than just taking veterans on a sailboat

ride, but teaching them the skills and techniques of sailing.

"I think this is a way to give back to those who have served us so well." said French, who was paralyzed from the waist down from a snowboarding accident 15 years ago. "This is a great life skill that we can give to them. The benefits of this boot camp (for the participants) are not only leadership and teamwork, but they are learning how to be self-reliant."

French worked with Cory Kapes, who is the Military Adaptive Sports Program (MASP) Site Coordinator for SOCOM, and Shawn Macking, the Waterfront Director of the St. Petersburg Yacht Club. MASP is designed to enhance recovery by engaging ill, injured, and wounded warriors early in individualized physical and cognitive activities outside of traditional therapy settings. The program hopes to inspire recovery and physical fitness and encourage new opportunities for growth and achievement.



***U.S. Army Sergeant Roosevelt J. Anderson, wheels himself down to the pier Nov. 7 during the inaugural U.S. Sailing Military Sailboat Racing Camp in St. Petersburg, Fla. Anderson injured his T4 and T5 vertebrae in a motorcycle accident on Nov. 4, 2012.***

“It’s overwhelming and pleasing to see the community come together to be able to do a camp for these men and women,” French said.

The St. Petersburg Yacht Club has supported Paralympic sailing events and community sailing for many years. Their sailing facility, fleet of sailboats, and equipment is uniquely adapted to increase accessibility for people with various disabilities, Macking stated.

“The benefits of physical activity for injured service members include reduced stress, increased quality of life, lower blood pressure, weight management, and enhancement of the rehabilitative process,” Kapes said.

French, Kapes and Macking developed the three-day “intense” sailing boot camp, which they hope will continue and possibly expand across the country.

“Simply put, participating in this program gave us an opportunity to give back to those who have served our country and allowed us to share the sport we love with a group of people who otherwise may not have had this opportunity,” Macking said.

One of the participants of the sailing boot camp was U.S. Army Sgt. Roosevelt J. Anderson Jr. During the sailboat boot camp, Anderson celebrated his “life-day.” His “life-day” is like a birthday for most, but to him, it’s the day he received another chance at life – it’s the one-year anniversary of his accident. On Nov. 4, 2012, Anderson was in a motorcycle accident that left him

unable to walk after his T4 and T5 vertebrae were injured.

“This program has allowed me to progress,” Anderson said. “This injury is not the end of the world and it’s awesome to be able to socialize with other Soldiers going through the same ordeal.”

The course taught the service members basic sailboat safety, grounding remedies, sailing in currents, finding wind direction, boat balance and other procedures needed to operate a sailboat. On the final day, service members were performing all tasks required to maneuver through the water and were sailing on their own.

“Through engagement in adaptive sports and recreation, the Wounded Warrior Athlete Reconditioning Program promotes physical/mental fitness, camaraderie/mentorship, and enhances the overall health and welfare of wounded, ill or injured Special Operations Forces,” Kapes said. “SOCOM’s program specifically will provide monthly training camps in various sports and other opportunities throughout the year to engage SOF service members in adaptive recreation and sports.”

For more information about Military Adaptive Sports Program please visit:  
<http://warriorcare.dodlive.mil/wounded-warrior-resources/athletic-reconditioning/>



***Disabled service members prepare their sails as they depart the pier during the inaugural U.S. Sailing Military Sailboat Racing Camp in St. Petersburg, Fla., Nov. 7.***



# **SOCOM members participate in 9th Special Operations Forces run**

*Story and photos by  
Air Force MSgt Larry W. Carpenter Jr.  
USSOCOM Public Affairs*

Members of the U.S. Special Operations Command participated in the 9th Operation One Voice (OOV) Special Operations Forces run from Lawrenceville, Ga., to the SOF memorial located outside USSOCOM headquarters on MacDill AFB, Fla. from Nov. 4 - Nov. 8.

The Special Operations Forces Run brings public safety, military and civilian runners together to honor America's Special Operations Forces and all veterans.

"Together, we are creating awareness and community support for those serving in our nation's Armed Forces," said Bill Stevens, retired lieutenant from the Duluth Police Department and chief executive officer of OOV. "One of the primary focuses is to the wounded and fallen SOF warriors and their families."

The main goals of OOV are to strengthen the bond between those in homeland security and those fighting the war on terrorism abroad, specifically those serving under USSOCOM, honor America's Veterans, honor past SOF warriors and honor those men and women serving in USSOCOM.

Each year, OOV picks a service member or service members to honor during the SOF run, rotating between the different branches of the military. This year, the OOV team ran in honor of three Air Force Special Operations Command Airmen who paid the ultimate price for freedom on August 6, 2011, when the CH-47 Chinook they were on was shot down in Afghanistan: Tech. Sgt. John Brown, Tech. Sgt. Daniel Zerbe and Staff Sgt. Andrew Harvell.

Stevens originally started the run to remember the 373 firefighters and 72 police officers who lost their lives on 9/11. Since then it blossomed into the SOF run expanding the route down to Tampa, bringing attention



***Tabitha Brown, wife of Tech. Sgt. John Brown, rings the ceremonial bell at Busch Gardens in Tampa Nov. 8 officially bringing the Operation One Voice 9th Special Operations Forces Run to an end. This year, the OOV team ran in honor of three Air Force Special Operations Command Airmen, Tech. Sgt. John Brown, Tech. Sgt. Daniel Zerbe and Staff Sgt. Andrew Harvell, who made the ultimate price for freedom on Aug. 6, 2011, when the Chinook helicopter they were on was shot down in Afghanistan.***

to the warriors that put it on the line every day.

"Our SOF troops have continued to deploy leaving their families behind and many of our citizens seem to have forgotten that our SOF families continue to sacrifice on our behalf," Stevens said. "We think it is important for the SOF families to know that our law enforcement officers and firefighters haven't forgotten and will continue to work within our communities on their behalf."

The run is a 24-hour a day leapfrog style run covering a distance of approximately 550 miles in 73 hours. This year's running team consisted of both active duty military members as well as public safety officers from Georgia and Florida; the SOCOM runners were from SOCOM headquarters, its deployment cell and the Joint Communications Support Element.

This year, the team was met by Tabitha Brown, wife of Tech. Sgt. Brown, in Tallahassee to complete the remainder of the run into Tampa.

“Having Tabitha Brown, widow of Tech. Sgt. John Brown run with the team was huge; just to sit in the bus and hear stories of John and Tabitha’s life brought it all back home,” said Stevens. “For me personally, growing up in Tallahassee and then running to Doak Campbell Stadium with Tabitha and John’s brother was great.”

On Nov. 7, as the team formed up to run from the front gate of MacDill and to the SOF Memorial for a Veterans Day ceremony, Air Force Maj. Gen. Timothy Leahy, the director of operations for SOCOM, came out to lead the formation.

“One of the most rewarding parts of the run is always running into the SOF Memorial at SOCOM, it’s just a feeling of pride and humility,” said Stevens. “Having Maj. Gen. Leahy come out to run with the team, only goes back to show the leadership within the SOF community.”

The conclusion to the run occurred Nov. 8 as the team ran into Busch Gardens in Tampa, allowing Tabitha Brown to ring the ceremonial bell officially ending the 9th SOF run.

The run is challenging and the runners cover many miles through the hills of Georgia to the long flat stretches of Florida, but according to Army Lt. Col. Joel Aoki, J8-Air Requirements branch chief, it’s very simple why he did it.

“This event allowed me the opportunity to thank a group of volunteers committed to helping our SOF personnel and their families,” said Aoki. “It also provides a venue to share experiences with the people we serve.”

Just recently OOV sent 300 gift cards, valued at \$30,000, to support 300 children of fallen and wounded Special Operations Forces troops, and to date the organization has provided just under \$700,000 to 3,869 SOF families.

“An enormous part of our success as a military is the support we receive from our citizens. OOV, and organizations like it, provide those citizens a venue to be part of the effort and to thank our service members and their families for their sacrifices,” Aoki said.

Mr. Stevens is hoping with continued support, the 10th Anniversary will be something pretty special and include honorees from all branches of the military.



*The Operation One Voice 9th Special Operations Forces Run runners are led by Air Force Maj. Gen. Timothy Leahy, director of operations for U.S. Special Operations Command, Nov. 7, into the Special Operations Forces Memorial located outside of the USSOCOM headquarters, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.*



# SOCOM holds first ever wargame exercise with partner nation

*Story and photos by Air Force Master Sgt. Larry W. Carpenter Jr. SOCOM Public Affairs*

United States and Norwegian Special Operations Forces held an exercise in the Wargame Center inside the USSOCOM Headquarters building on MacDill AFB, Fla., Oct. 28-30.

During this time, they practiced a scenario in which the Norwegians conducted a hostage rescue operation, and require assistance from the United States, allowing both sides to rehearse the actions they would take in the event of such a situation.

This is the first time the Wargame Center has been used with a partner nation, and is unique because it also involved cooperation between senior level leadership from both countries.

“NORSOF and Norwegian civilian leadership regularly participate in national field training exercises focused on a scenario like this,” said Norwegian Lt. Col. Petter Hellesen, SOCOM Liaison officer. “What was unique about this exercise was that we were able to gather so many of the Norwegian senior leadership and action officers, civilian and military, in one room with their U.S. counterparts. This in my opinion, is unprecedented for NORSOF.”

The goals of the exercise were to refine Norwegian crisis action planning procedures and standard operating procedures; identify legal authorities and the decision making processes necessary to execute operations; to identify gaps and seams for future training and exercise events; streamline Norway/U.S. bilateral crisis action procedures, and strengthen partner-nation integration.

Having the opportunity to work through the scenario allowed both sides to identify problem areas, identify lines of operations, and provide rapid response to a very fluid situation.

“By responding properly in a timely fashion, NORSOF will be able to present the Norwegian civilian and military leadership with the best possible options for a rescue, if necessary,” Hellesen said. “As a corollary to



**Adm. William H. McRaven, USSOCOM commander, briefs attendees during an exercise in which the United States and Norwegian Special Operations Forces practice a hostage rescue scenario for the first time in USSOCOM's Wargame Center, Oct. 28, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.**

this, it is imperative that the procedures for such operations are well rehearsed and understood at all levels involved. This wargame served exactly this purpose.”

Hellesen went on to say the Norwegian Senior Leader Dialogue (NSLD) was a great facilitator to gathering senior leaders from both countries where they could have frank discussions about the issues at hand.

“Real world experience demonstrates over and over again the importance of personal relationships,” said Hellesen.

To allow U.S. and partner nations to work together during the exercise, the current and future exercises will operate using BICES, the Battlefield Integration Collection Exploitation System. This system allows partner nations to communicate using secure video teleconferencing capabilities, therefore allowing all parties to communicate and make decisions face to face.

This event also provided USSOCOM a secondary opportunity; it allowed the Wargame Center team to highlight the capabilities that it is able to provide

leadership.

“The SOCOM Wargame Center is an environment that allows senior leaders to think together, develop a shared understanding of the way ahead (of a problem), and make decisions,” said Lt. Col. Gregory Reck, USSOCOM Wargame Center assistant operations officer and planning team leader. “In doing so, it refines the process by which complex problems may be portrayed which enables the integrated planning efforts between stake holders and further creates an environment for the commander and other senior leaders to make critical decisions.”

This is accomplished through the state-of-the-art Wargame Center, the first of its kind. It encompasses a 20-foot by 30-foot Digital Terrain Model, supporting two- and three-dimensional projections from four professional grade movie projectors.

“This replaces the old terrain model paradigm and allows senior leaders a greater (ability to) drill down onto a problem, which allows for an interactive capability that allows the manipulation of data by multiple users,” Reck said. “It expands the collaborative capability of multiple users (SOF Enterprise or other) on- or off-site, to view and interact; and includes a 3D capability to enhance the briefing and increase situational awareness.”

But Reck is quick to add the new technology is merely an enhancement, but it is the personnel involved throughout the process of the wargame and those that run the Wargame Center that make it work so effectively.

“Our real capitol is the OSRA (Operations Research and Systems Analyst) and planners that we have, who facilitate wargames and assist in the stakeholders producing the best product that they can,” Reck said.

In addition, the process leading up to and during the NSLD provided an opportunity to add updated information to revise existing USSOCOM-Norwegian Special Operations Command memorandum of understanding and the implementation agreement.

“This led to an increased mutual understanding of strategic decision and planning processes necessary for conducting Special Forces operations in crises like this, and encouraged thoughts and discussions for other future use of SOF,” Mr. Henning Vaglum, director of the Department of Security Policy in the Norwegian Ministry of Defence said.

At the end of the day, the wargame allowed both

sides to enhance their abilities to contend with future threats, and also allowed both sides to work on their interpersonal connections and build strong working relationships.

“As commander of USSOCOM, Admiral McRaven constantly emphasizes, ‘you can’t surge trust,’” said Hellesen. “Even though U.S. SOF and NORSOF have worked together for many decades, and thus built a solid base of trust, I think the NSLD served as a powerful tool that can cement, and maybe even increase this trust.”

At the end of the exercise, everyone gained a clearer understanding of how the two nations would work together to successfully support one another in a crisis situation.

“This event brought increased knowledge of all the processes required to request assistance from our main ally,” said Vaglum. “We are now significantly more prepared to handle a crisis where we may have to request support from the United States.”

Those sentiments were echoed by Hellesen.

“This was an extremely useful exercise for Norway and NORSOF,” Hellesen said. “We are in great debt to the USSOCOM Commander, Admiral McRaven, for hosting this event at the USSOCOM Wargame Center.”



**Lt. Gen. Morten Haga-Lunde, Norwegian Joint Headquarters commander, provides opening comments during the Norwegian Senior Leadership Dialogue to Adm. William H. McRaven, U.S. Special Operations Command commander inside the USSOCOM Wargame center during an exercise Oct. 28–30. Senior level military and civilian leaders worked together to smooth out the processes of working together during a crisis situation.**



# SOF history: Operation Enduring Freedom - Philippines

By Tom Neven

*USSOCOM History & Research Office*

This January marks the 12th anniversary of Operation Enduring Freedom - Philippines, the first mission after the 2001 Afghanistan campaign that targeted al Qaeda and its affiliated terrorist groups.

Even before 9/11, the commander of Special Operations Command Pacific, Air Force Brig. Gen. Donald Wurster, had identified several groups as a threat to Filipino and American interests, including Jemaah Islamiya, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and the al Qaeda-affiliated Abu Sayyaf Group. In response to a request from the Filipino government, SOCPAC deployed a mobile training team from 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) between March and July 2001 to help the Armed Forces of the Philippines develop a counterterrorist capability.

After 9/11, the United States planned to aggressively attack terrorist groups in Southeast Asia, particularly in the Philippines. In January 2002, SOCPAC deployed Joint Task Force-510 to Zamboanga City on the island of Mindanao, which would be a jumping-off point for the introduction of forces onto nearby Basilan Island, the Abu Sayyaf stronghold.

From February to July 2002, elements from 1st SFG (A) and Naval Special Warfare Command provided training, advice, and assistance to the AFP. Prohibited from conducting combat operations and performing advisory tasks below the battalion level, American SOF focused on helping the AFP to deny enemy sanctuary by controlling lines of communication, improving the infrastructure for the local populace through civil affairs programs, and bolstering the government in the eyes of citizens through information operations. Both the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion and the 4th Psychological Operations Battalion participated in these efforts. By July 2002, Abu Sayyaf had fled Basilan. After completing operations by late summer 2002, JTF-510 departed Zamboanga, leaving in place a Joint Special Operations Task Force headquarters, JSOTF-P, to continue advising and assisting the AFP.

In 2003-04, SOCPAC supported the AFP by training a larger number of Filipino forces in counterterrorist activities. This involved, again, 1st SFG (A) as well as Air Force Special Operations Command rotary wing assets. Members of

the 6th Special Operations Squadron from Hurlburt Field provided training in flying with night vision goggles, helping to create a night-infiltration capability for the AFP. At the same time, NAVSOF elements trained Filipino naval units on maritime patrolling and interdiction.



***On March 20, 2003, a Green Beret rests with his Filipino counterparts on the Zamboanga Peninsula of the Philippine Islands in Operation Enduring Freedom. Photo by Petty Officer First Class Edward G. Martens.***

In 2005, SOCPAC and AFP pushed for an expansion of American assistance to the counterterrorism effort. In the summer of 2005, terrorists from the Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiya had moved from Mindanao to the island of Sulu, where they sought refuge. Sulu was predominantly inhabited by Muslims and was where Islam had been introduced to the Philippines centuries earlier. Accordingly, many members of both the Philippine and American governments believed that introducing American forces onto Sulu would be met with resistance.

Using the 2002 Basilan template, JSOTF-P developed three main lines of operation: capacity building; information operations; and targeted civil-military operations, including deployment of an AFSOC Special Operations Surgical Team. JSOTF-P conducted advisory assistance down to the battalion level, where the goal remained to conduct all operations by, with, and through AFP forces. These combined efforts succeeded in separating the terrorists from the population.

In August 2006, JSOTF-P's Task Force Comet launched Operation Ultimatum to capture the Abu Sayyaf and Jemaah Islamiya leadership on Sulu. The Task Force synchronized joint operations for more than 90 days, supplying logistics in the field and maintaining continuous pressure on the terrorists, all without losing the support of the local population. The ongoing OEF-P demonstrates how a small SOF footprint can combine with the partner nation's collective resolve to defeat terrorists.



**Army Sgt. Patrick C. Hawkins**  
75th Ranger Regiment



**Army 1st Lt. Jennifer M. Moreno**  
Supporting the 75th Ranger Regiment



**Pfc. Cody J. Patterson**  
75th Ranger Regiment



**Army Sgt. Joseph M. Peters**  
Supporting the 75th Ranger Regiment



**Army Staff Sgt. Patrick H. Quinn**  
10th Special Forces Group (Airborne)



**Army Staff Sgt. Richard L. Vasquez**  
7th Special Forces Group (Airborne)



**Army Staff Sgt. Alex A. Viola**  
7th Special Forces Group (Airborne)

**Editor's note: Honored are Special Operations Forces who lost their lives since October's Tip of the Spear.**

**An Army Special Forces Soldier fires an M110 semi-automatic sniper system on Eglin Range, Fla., Oct. 30. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. John Bainter.**

