

5th Signal Command

2006



# ECHO

*Dragon Warriors*



Summer

**Agents  
of Change**

# From the Commanding General

**A**s our Nation and its Allies continue to prosecute the Global War on Terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other parts of the world, our Signal Warriors in U.S. Army, Europe and 5th Signal Command are engaged at every level delivering critical Command and Control communications capabilities to the Warfighter.

Currently, the 22nd Signal Brigade, along with the 32nd, 440th, 29th, and 72nd Signal Battalions are deployed to Iraq and Kuwait in support of Multi-National Corps - Iraq (MNC-I) and CFLCC, while the 17th and 44th Signal Battalions recently redeployed from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom respectively.

It goes without saying that we are very proud of these Soldiers and their combat service, and especially thank their families, for their enormous selfless service and sacrifice in support of our Army and our Nation. We all owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Whether forward deployed in combat operations in support of OIF or OEF, operating a satellite communications data terminal at a logistical support base, or monitoring and defending the European Command's portion of the LandWarNet in a Theater Network Operations & Security Center, our Signal Soldiers and Department of Defense Civilians continue to excel in meeting every mission and operational requirement.

During a recent visit to the AOR with Command Sgt. Maj. Johnson, we were extremely impressed with the morale, commitment, and professionalism of our Soldiers, many of whom were on their second deployment.

Every operational commander I met expressed their personal gratitude for the commitment and professionalism of our Signal Soldiers and their contribution to the war effort. Clearly, these Signal Warriors are demonstrating that they are versatile, adaptive, proactive, and mentally agile leaders who embrace our Army Values and the Warrior Ethos.

**"At War and Transforming"** is the current steady state of our Army, USAREUR, and 5th Signal Command. The Signal Regiment in Europe is currently undergoing the most complex and significant transformation and restructuring of our Signal forces and organizations since World War II.

The deployment of the 72nd Signal Battalion to OIF, the Army's first ITSB, the 17th Signal Battalion's redeployment from OIF and preparations for inactivation, the redeployment, reintegration, and conversion of the 44th Signal Battalion to the ITSB construct, the stand-up of USAREUR's and our Army's first of four Area Processing



Centers in Belgium, along with the restructuring of 2nd Signal Brigade's Operational Base Battalion's Network Operations Centers were the initial actions to set into motion Signal transformation in Europe.

During the next 12 months, we will continue to aggressively execute modernization of our fiber-optic infrastructure, implement new Army Knowledge Management enterprise initiatives, and continue to accomplish our 24/7 Network Operations mission for this 91 country EUCOM AOR, while setting the conditions and enabling USAREUR transformation and restructuring and rebasing efforts.

Success in all of these operational missions, significant efforts and transformation initiatives, will require the focused and engaged leadership and professionalism of every Soldier and Civilian in the command, along with the selfless and extraordinary support of our family members.

This edition of the ECHO profiles "Boots on the Ground" - and highlights our magnificent Signal Warriors. We continue with the theme of our command priorities - **PEOPLE FIRST; WAR-WINNING READINESS; and QUALITY OF LIFE / WELL-BEING.**

This is truly an exciting time to serve in our Army, and especially in USAREUR and 5th Signal Command. I am especially proud of every member of this command, and commend you for your extraordinary service, personal commitment, and professionalism during these challenging times.

Thanks to you and your families for all you do in support of our Soldiers.

**Dragon Warriors, Any Mission, Anywhere!**

**DENNIS L. VIA**  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

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Photo by Sgt. Anissa Soto-Feliciano, 5th Signal Command PAO

**Cover Photo -- The 5th Signal Command Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Staff Sgt. Mark Bonaudi, 43rd Signal Battalion, looks through a lensatic compass during the land navigation event of the command's NCO and Soldier of the Year competition. For more about the event and winners, see page 24.**

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The image features a sunset background with a gradient from orange at the bottom to purple at the top. In the foreground, there are black silhouettes of signal soldiers. One soldier is on the left, looking towards the right. Another soldier is on the right, wearing a large, circular satellite dish antenna on their back. The text is overlaid on the silhouettes.

# Boots on the ground

*Signal Soldiers:  
At War While  
Transforming*



*Photo courtesy of 22nd Signal Brigade*

**A 22nd Signal Brigade Soldier works on computer circuits in Iraq. The unit deployed in October 2005.**

**5th Signal Command PAO**  
*Staff Report*

**S**ignal Warriors of the U.S. Army, Europe, and the 5th Signal Command kept up with the demanding pace of providing communications in numerous operations around the globe since last summer.

A new rotation of deployments sent 22nd Signal Brigade and 72nd Signal Battalion to Iraq while 17th Signal Battalion, 44th Signal Battalion and 578th Signal Company were welcomed home from their year-long deployments.

As 72nd was ramping up for their deployment, a package from 44th's rear detachment was sent to Pakistan to provide communications to a hospital treating earthquake victims.

Meanwhile, the command was sending augmentees from various units throughout the organization to support separate missions world-wide.

**'Ready Company' provides communications in Pakistan**

*By Capt. Fred Hair*

On October 8, 2005 an earthquake hit northern Pakistan killing more than

80,000 and injuring 50,000 people.

This tragedy left many people homeless, injured, stranded, and requiring the need for immediate assistance for humanitarian aid. In response to this emergency, USAREUR quickly mobilized the 212th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital.

Providing communications support to this task force was a platoon from Company C, 44th Signal Battalion.

The mission began on Oct. 25. For four months, Platoon Leader 1st Lt. Kristine Kenan and her platoon provided communications support to Task Force 212.

"The support which my platoon provided played an important role to the success of the mission," said Kenan. "The quick response of the 212th MASH in the deployment to Pakistan left no time to spare for the Soldiers of Charlie Company, 44th Signal Battalion, and we immediately set up once on the ground with all our equipment and did the job effectively providing 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, continuous communication services. This enabled the doctors and nurses to better do their jobs."

This mission was also notable because the 212th was the last MASH unit in the U.S. Army to deploy on a mission.

**Task Force Adler tackles missions downrange**

*By Staff Sgt. Nicole Blakeslee*

Troops from the 22nd Signal Brigade who deployed in October 2005 have been very productive downrange since their departure.

While in Iraq the unit is providing reliable communications for the Multinational Corps.

"The Soldiers of Task Force Adler are simply amazing," said Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Clark, senior brigade non-commissioned officer in charge.

"Assuming responsibility for the largest tactical and strategic network in the history of warfare is a monumental task in itself and it requires incredible communication and coordination between the thousands of Soldiers."

Task Force Adler's accomplishments, however, stretch much further than simply maintaining a network, according to Clark.

The Soldiers reestablished the Baghdad Signal University, held an NCO and Soldier of the quarter board, worked on countless commercialization projects, tactical networks, and force modernization projects across the entire country of Iraq.



Photo by Cpl. Serge Batoryshin, 44th Signal Battalion

**Spc. Farhad Smith, Company B, 44th Signal Battalion, tests telephone circuits while deployed to Jalalabad, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.**

“How can you not be proud to be a Signal Warrior?” said Clark.

**‘Always fit to fight’ Soldiers deploy to Iraq**

*By Monica Tullos and Spc. Autumn Sword*

“This battalion is the personification of the phrase, ‘At war while transforming,’” said Col. Mike Thorne, commander 7th Signal Brigade, about the 72nd Signal Battalion who was headed downrange after only being home a little over a year.

The 72nd, whose motto is, ‘Always fit to fight,’ deployed during November 2005 and are in the midst of transformation.

As a matter of fact, the unit had a 60 percent turnover in personnel, a change in mission and recently became the Army’s first Integrated Theater Signal Battalion.

However change is no challenge for this battalion; months of training on their warrior tasks and battle drills prepared the

Soldiers for their year-long mission in Iraq and Kuwait.

The battalion, known as (Task Force Desert Fighter), has been spread across the country in more than 15 locations providing signal support to the warfighters and coalition forces downrange.

**2nd Signal Brigade supports various missions downrange**

*By Capt. Christopher McClure*

As our nation continues to fight the War on Terrorism, it remains certain that Soldiers fit into two distinct categories -- those currently deployed and those preparing to deploy.

Soldiers of the 2nd Signal Brigade are no exception to this rule.

Last year, several Soldiers from the brigade prepared for individual augmentee missions in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

Staff Sgt. Frederick Montgomery,

102nd Signal Battalion, Network Operating Service Center, deployed for six months to Afghanistan; Spc. Charles James, 102nd Signal Bn., deployed to Iraq for more than four months; and Spc. Wesley Richardson, 509th Signal Battalion, deployed to Afghanistan for over ten months.

When Montgomery deployed, he quickly realized how important his prior training would be in a combat zone.

“I was able to see first hand the preparation and execution needed to come back alive,” he said.

Montgomery was assigned to a joint headquarters in Afghanistan where he was the Joint Tactical Operations Coordination Cell, noncommissioned officer in charge.

“I am a better Soldier for my experiences,” said Richardson, who deployed to Afghanistan as a cable team member of the C2FEM team.

“It was an experience I will never for-

get,” said James, referencing his deployment to Iraq. When asked about how prepared he was to deploy with only three weeks notice he said, “Between the Individual Readiness Training, deployment processing and short notice, I did not have much time for refresher training. I relied on the training I received during CTT, Sergeant’s Time Training, and Warrior Skills Training.”

While in Iraq, James served as an information systems operator and maintainer with U.S. Army, Special Operations Command.

Soldiers must remember that training is the key to mission success and survival on the battlefield.

These Soldiers from the ‘Brigade of Excellence’ exemplify the ability to provide communications support downrange and to return home safe.

### Augmentees deliver automation support to Africa

*By Capt. Fred Hair*

Since November 2005, Augmentees from 7th Signal Brigade have been providing automation support to Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa.

Initially this mission was supported by Headquarters and



*Photo by Seig Heppner, USAG Mannheim PAO*

Headquarters Company, 7th Signal Brigade, but it is currently being supported by Company C, 44th Signal Battalion.

The mission is part of the ongoing operations being conducted in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility in support of the Global War on Terror. CJTF-HOA is made up of U.S. joint forces, the U.S. Department of State and more than two dozen coalition forces from around the globe.

The group conducts operations and training to assist host nations with establishing a secure environment and enabling regional stability.

### Task Force Lightning returns from Afghanistan

*By Staff Sgt. Nicole Blakeslee*

More than 170 Soldiers of the 44th Signal Battalion were welcomed home after a year-long deployment to Afghanistan Feb. 25.

Hundreds of families and friends lined the bleachers of the Sullivan Gym waiting for the first glimpse of their Soldier.

“I am so proud of my husband,” said Spc. Jacqueline Iager, wife of Sgt. Daniel Iager. “He was here for the birth of our son, Matthias, but has been gone since. I can’t wait for them to finally be together.”

The battalion’s rear-detachment Soldiers and the advance-party Soldiers who returned during November 2005 were also anxious to see their comrades.

Elements of the unit deployed during the spring of 2005 and linked with elements of the 509th Signal Battalion to comprise Task Force Lightning.

While downrange the task force provided communications support for both American and coalition forces, participated in many humanitarian missions, and provided radio support for Afghanistan Elections.

**Pfc. Rosa Izurieta, Company B, 72nd Signal Battalion, cuts a piece of cable conduit during an installation project at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq. Above, Lt. Col. Keith Nicoletti, commander 44th Signal Battalion and Command Sgt. Maj. Vernetta Lewis, battalion CSM, uncuse the battalion Colors at an official Welcome Home Ceremony May 3 at the Sullivan Barracks Parade field.**



*Photo by Capt. Brad Grane, 72nd Signal Battalion*

# Proud Americans Support Troops



Barbara Sarringer, fourth from right, and her colleagues from FSU.

Photo by K.S. Coley, Farmingdale State University

# Operation Shoebox

**Staff Sgt. Nicole Blakeslee**  
*ECHO Editor*

You never know how much you appreciate an Oreo cookie until you're in the desert far from the comforts of home.

Troops supporting Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom are reminded by one group of proud Americans that they are not alone in the fight against the war on terrorism with a taste of home in a shoebox.

It started three years ago when Barbara Sarringer's brother was sent to Iraq.

She then embarked on her own mission - Operation Shoebox: Support our Troops.

Sarringer began by rallying her colleagues at Farmingdale State University in Long Island, N.Y., and right away they wanted to help with the project.

"When my colleagues found out about my brother's departure to Iraq, as well as other service men and women, they wanted to support them," said Sarringer.

Once her brother, Sgt. Maj. Donald Sarringer, was settled in Iraq, she communicated with him about things that the Soldiers might like.

Some of the items were simple things from home that were difficult to obtain downrange, such as high demand personal items and goodies.

So, the operation began. Sarringer and her co-workers, along with other volunteers from the community, collected shoeboxes and stuffed them with a variety of items, from Oreo cookies to letters from local school children and the college staff.

"We at Farmingdale wrote: 'Our deepest respect and gratitude for your service and dedication ... We cannot put into words our great regard for the sacrifices you willingly make to eliminate to world of terrorism and for your efforts to secure

peace and freedom for the Iraqi people,'" She said.

What started as a small project soon became an adventure.

To date, volunteers from Operation Shoebox: Support our Troops - have mailed more than 4,000 shoeboxes to the troops.

Thank you notes began pouring in from Soldiers after packages were received. One of the letters from an Army captain shows how much a taste of home can mean.

*It said, I would personally like to thank you for sending care packages to the Soldiers in Iraq. Your heartfelt contribution and caring letters did not go unnoticed by those serving overseas, away from home. I had just arrived on a flight to another air base in Iraq for a two-day meeting. The weather was unusually cold and it was raining. Everything turns to mud here when it rains, so the evening was particularly miserable and we were all wet. I entered the personnel processing building and saw several of your packages on a table. It was a welcomed break to have a snack and we helped ourselves to the other items you provided. Your packages made our arrival and stay more comfortable and raised our spirits. Due to the patriotic and caring efforts of citizens like you, Soldiers across Iraq are reminded we are not alone.*

Today, donations from the students and college staff, church groups, other local organizations and the community keep the program going. Efforts of groups like the Suffolk County Veterans of Foreign Wars, who donated a \$1,500 check, also help the cause.

"Efforts of the volunteers," Sarringer said, "have been wonderful. They are so willing to help with the packing of shoeboxes and with buying items. It has been difficult at times, but definitely worth it."

"I am ready do to another shipment in November," she added. "We are proud of our servicemen and women."

# An 'Outstanding'

# Quilt

Todd Kulhanek  
44th Signal Battalion

It was a symbol of love, pride, and joy that greeted the Soldiers of Company A, 44th Signal Battalion and the rest of the 'Outstanding' battalion when they redeployed in February from a year-long tour in Afghanistan.

In fact, it was a symbol that was impossible to miss, because the quilt, a collection of one-yard squares sewn together, stretched nearly the entire length of a wall at Sullivan Gym.

The idea of the quilt came from Marianne Abel, a member of Company A's Family Readiness Group, who suggested she could quilt a banner with each Soldier's name.

"We wanted to give spouses a chance to do a panel for their Soldier, and then make sure that each single Soldier had a panel as well," she said. "The spouses wanted to make sure each Soldier was recognized as they redeployed."

According to Kim McElwain, the Alpha Gator's FRG leader, Abel spearheaded the plan.

"An e-mail was sent out detailing the goal and gave the FRG members the option to purchase a panel of material to paint for their spouse or a single Soldier," said McElwain.

"We even had spouses back in the states wanting to be involved and who planned to come back in time to make a panel," she added.

Armed with a roster of every Co. A. Gator, married or single, the FRG set to the task. The significant size of the project loomed in front of the spouses. With 58 individual square-yard panels assembled around a six-square-yard center panel and more than 500 meters of thread, the quilt became a full-fledged mission.

It was a mission not without challenges.

"Making sure each spouse was aware of what we were doing, so as to not feel left out, was very important," said Abel. "The project was as much for the spouses as it was for the Soldiers."

Keeping track of everyone who deployed was another challenge the Gators faced and overcame. Along with every Gator in



Photo by Todd Kulhanek, 44th Signal Battalion

**Karyn Harnden, spouse of Spc. Daniel Harnden, paints welcome home panels for her husband and other Soldiers of the 44th Signal Battalion. The panels were sewn together to make a quilted banner. Below, the quilted banner spanned an entire wall of the Sullivan Gym. In all, 58 panels were stitched around a six-square-yard center panel that represented the Alpha Gators.**

the company being recognized with a panel, the FRG ensured each single Soldier that deployed with the unit also had a section of the quilt.

Each panel displayed a variety of style, color, and decoration that presented a further hurdle when assembling the quilt.

"I had to take a picture of each panel to arrange them so they would look good together before I sewed them," said Abel.

According to McElwain, the unit was always there to support them during the deployment and the project.

"The building was available at the FRG's convenience, and the rear detachment would come out and see we had everything we needed," she said.

With the quilt complete, the final challenge was determining how to display it.

"It took effort and good old teamwork," said Abel. The quilt was hung on a wall for all the Soldiers to see as they entered the gym to reunite with family and friends.

From conception to final assembly, the quilt took four months to complete and represents the spouse's commitment to the Soldiers of an 'Outstanding' battalion.

Photo by Sgt. Anissa Soto-Feliciano, 5th Signal Command PAO





German Soldiers from the Donau-Iller work at rescuing a casualty from a collapsed building during a catastrophe training exercise with the 52nd Signal Battalion. Below, Pfc. Shannika Taylor works at the first-aid station, providing first response medical care to Pfc. Shane Phalen, who was role playing as a casualty.

Photo by A.M. Wachter

# First Response

**Maj. Mary Campbell**  
52nd Signal Battalion

PATCH BARRACKS, Germany -  
“Wow! Rescuing people is hard work.”

Comments like that could be heard in English and German as Soldiers participated in a catastrophe training exercise in Donau-Autal, southwest of Ulm, with the Technischen Hilfswerks organization.

Eight Soldiers from the 52nd Signal Battalion along with their German Partnership Unit, Kreisgruppe Donau-Iller, participated in the exercise.

All Soldiers had the opportunity to rescue and be rescued during the realistic training.

The Technischen Hilfswerks is a Germany-wide organization that trains citizens to respond to a national crisis.

For example, during earthquake relief

efforts, the THW assists with rescuing personnel from collapsed buildings, provides first aid and gains personnel accountability.

The exercise was held at THW’s training area, where participants actually used mock earthquake destroyed buildings, to give the U.S. and German Soldiers realistic catastrophe response training.

The scenarios involved participants arriving at a location after an earthquake had occurred.

They immediately established a command post, rescued trapped people, set up a first aid station and provided appropriate medical attention to those rescued.

The 52nd Soldiers participating in the event found the training to be realistic and highly motivating.

Sgt. John Frank, 52nd Signal Bn., said he enjoyed the training and wished there could be training like it, more often.

“(The exercise) was timely, considering the earthquakes in Pakistan,” he said.

“Soldiers should learn how to work with other forces and civilian agencies (in these situations,” he continued, “It’s important we train so we’ll know what to do if we’re really called to help.”

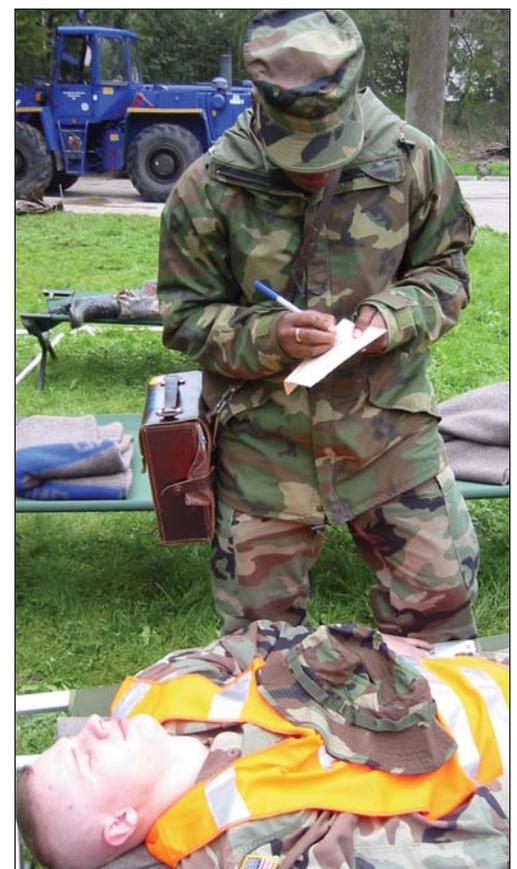


Photo by Maj. Mary Campbell, 52nd Signal Battalion

**“Soldiers should learn how to work with other forces.”**

**-- Sgt. John Frank**

# Supporting Troops OUTSIDE

Capt. Benjamin Baughman  
69th Signal Battalion

With Afghanistan and Iraq dominating the headlines, we often overlook the United States' continuing peacekeeping operations in Kosovo.

In December 2005, however, the 36th Infantry Division from Austin, Texas left its home station for a year rotation to Kosovo. Enroute, they made a training stop at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany.

Here, the Hohenfels Network Service Center provides complete data, SIPR and NIPR, and voice communications support to units rotating through the training grounds.

The scale of the KFOR mission rehearsal exercise grew beyond the scope of an ordinary training rotation and required support from higher headquarters.

"The 36th ID signal personnel were very supportive during the setup and provided some of their own people to assist with the initial infrastructure installation," said Steve Eckert, NSC Grafenwoehr Network Manager. "They also ran a unit help desk to troubleshoot basic problems before elevating them to our help desk. This allowed us to work on the more pressing problems that needed higher level support. I think the training unit and our team received good training during this rotation."

Essentially, the NSC replicated the communications operating environment that the division will receive in Kosovo.

To achieve this, individual augmentees from across 5th Signal Command set out to Camp Albertshof for over a month as a commu-

nications support team in support of the exercise. The team augmented NSC Hohenfels with expertise in vital areas.

Because KFOR mission rehearsal exercises are anything but typical, they depend heavily on network access and bandwidth while communicators provide tactical operations center support down to the cell level.

The network enables Blue Force Tracker, C2PC, maps, briefings and real time video feeds to be synergized with the latest updates from the commanders on the ground.

Combined, these tools provide the commanders with a powerful weapon against the enemy: **information superiority.**

A month prior to the main body's arrival, the NSC began modifying fiber connections and switches in each building.

As the exercise drew near, the communications support team arrived, began the final checks of the buildings, and completed base lining of the computers. This allowed the team to install most of the infrastructure prior to the division's arrival.

By the conclusion of the exercise, the team created over 1000 accounts, installed 50 switches, 200 phones and 300 computers.

"This is the best support we've seen so far," said Capt. Greg Hubenak, division G6.

With the restructuring of forces in Europe, technology will play an ever-increasing role facilitating JMRC's new responsibilities. The expeditionary force and the Dragon Warriors stand ready to answer the call.

# THE BOX

Photo courtesy of 69th Signal Battalion

*"This is the best support we've seen so far."*

36th Infantry Division Soldiers provide security during checkpoint operations at Hohenfels Training Center. The unit made a training stop there before heading to Kosovo for a year deployment.



# Europe & Beyond

# Endeavor builds communication

**LeAnne MacAllister**  
PAO, 5th Signal Command

The word 'interoperability' is a mouthful, both spoken and conceptually. Yet interoperation, utilized between branches of the U.S. Armed Forces and militaries of multiple nations, is indispensable to the modern day warfighter.

Signal Soldiers and civilians are only too aware of this imperative nature of communications.

Military members from across the globe are working side by side in missions such as Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Simply stated, to work together they need to be able to talk to one another. To accomplish this, their systems must be tried and tested as compatible.

## Enter Combined Endeavor

42 Nations from three continents gather in Baumholder, Germany for two weeks annually to test concepts utilized in creating our ever-more interconnected military network.

The U.S. European Command-sponsored exercise is now in its 12th year. Over 15,000 tests have been conducted between various nations in order to improve communications capabilities.

"It's the farthest reaching security effort of its kind," explained exercise director Lt. Col. Joseph Angyal, U.S. European Command. "Not one nation has the best of everything, and sometimes economies of scale come into play. We can all learn from each other."

This year over 1,200 personnel participated in the exercise May 12-25. The main test audience, based at Camp Aulenbach, a German military caserne in Baumholder, Germany, was supplemented by 200 personnel supporting the forward deployment site out of Bosnia.

Approximately 1000 tests, based on future deployments, new hardware and software developments, and policy changes, were conducted across military branches and nations.

5th Signal Command served as the exercise's system administrators and the 44th Signal Battalion participated as a part of the U.S. delegation in the testing audience.

"We set-up, installed, operated and maintained the entire Combined Endeavor system and domain, to include formatting all servers, desktops and PCs used in the exercise," said Sgt. Al Cianfrani, a 44th Signal Battalion participant who was detached to Combined Endeavor's Network Operations Support Center.

The NOSC, internet café, and calling center was organized by Soldiers from 5th Signal Command who arrived on site a month before the exercise commenced to ensure facilities had connectivity in place prior to the arrival of participants. National Guard Soldiers from Puerto Rico and New York also assisted the 5th Signal team.

The 44th Signal Bn., Company C, 1st platoon, served as a part of the U.S. testing delegation in conjunction with Airmen and



Photo by LeAnne MacAllister, PAO, 5th Signal Command

Marine Corporals Andrew Reiplinger and Luke Alley, Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity, Camp Pendleton, Calif., brief Army Sgt. Al Cianfrani (center), 5th Signal Command, on the results of a joint exercise at Combined Endeavor.

# ations bridges

Marines. Delegations from 42 nations, broken into regional groups for exercise purposes, worked together in the tent city to test the interoperability of signal equipment, including satellite systems, video teleconferencing equipment, and telephone and computer connectivity.

"In order to stand up all of our equipment, we do tests that make us interoperable," explained 2nd Lt. Odene Brathwaite, 44th Signal Bn. "One of our jobs was to provide a satellite link to the forward site run by the U.S. Air Force in Bosnia. This connection allowed us to conduct tests between our forces and foreign militaries participating in the exercise."

Brathwaite added that the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marines and U.S. Army delegation had a strong working relationship. "We are different branches that support the military with similar missions. Even though we compete for communications support missions, when we put competitions aside we work very well together to complete the bigger overall mission," he said.

The overarching goal of ensuring multinational information sharing capability was met, at speeds never before achieved between the delegations present.

44th Signal Bn. Provided a 6 Mbps link to a forward site in Bosnia. According to Brathwaite, it was the first time in 7th Signal Brigade history it was executed in a mission environment.

"It's operational now, not just a test," he said.

Corporals Andrew Reiplinger and Luke Alley, Marines based out of the Tactical Systems Support Activity in Camp Pendleton, California, worked with the 44th Signal Battalion at Combined Endeavor while standing up a Command and Control Personal Computer (C2PC) unit.

"This was the first time we've been able to connect to all these

**"It's operational now,  
not just a test."**



Photo by LeAnne MacAllister, 5th Signal Command, PAO  
**2nd Lt. Odene Brathwaite, 44th Signal Battalion, works with Austrian Soldiers at the 12th annual Combined Endeavor interoperability exercise in May.**

countries with C2PC. This experience is indescribable. It showed us the willingness of everyone to work together for a single mission. (5th Signal Command) Soldiers were very responsive and good to work with," said Reiplinger.

"To take it one step further, we are all part of a greater network laid down by the multinational delegations here. We are all interconnected and we need to make sure our equipment is as well," said Brathwaite.



Photos by Combined Endeavor's Combat Camera team

**Soldiers from Company C, 44th Signal Battalion, participated in exercise Combined Endeavor 2006, a U.S. European Command sponsored multinational exercise representing 41 partner nations.**

# Paving the Future of Signal in Europe

**LeAnne MacAllister**  
*PAO, 5th Signal Command*

“We must become the change we want to see,” said Mahatma Gandhi.

True, Gandhi was not talking about the future of the Signal Regiment in Europe, but his words may be as applicable to technological advancement as they were to India’s independence and civil rights movement.

In serving the world’s most powerful Army -- an institution driven by intelligence and technological savvy -- change is the only constant. United States Army, Europe is undergoing the most comprehensive and aggressive transformation undertaken since World War II.

5th Signal Command is leading the process in this critical and crucial period.

“We needed to be in front of the change process,” said Brig Gen. Dennis L. Via, commander, 5th Signal Command. “The communications infrastructure must be in place before USAREUR transforms, and we have had to build systems that implement new Army Knowledge Management goals that enable transformation while continuing to support the global war on terror and our warfighters. We are truly a command at war while transforming.”

The restructuring of USAREUR’s signal forces is a key proponent in the Army’s campaign to Network Centric Warfare and Army Knowledge Management Goal 3, the Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy, and USAREUR Global Rebasing and Restructuring initiatives, as well as a constantly increasing demand of seamless information flow to combatant commanders.

While USAREUR designs the future of the Army’s presence across the footprint -- to include Europe and Northern Africa -- its communication arm is taking the lead in ensuring the most efficient and effective network operations are in place to meet forthcoming needs of its customers. Simultaneously, 5th Signal Cmd. must continue to realign and restructure in sync with the U.S. European Command end-state mission requirements.

Throughout the transformation, 5th Signal must also remain poised and ready to quickly support all USAREUR mission requirements, contingencies and commitments.

Following guidelines outlined by the Department of the Army and U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command, a centralized system is replacing the decentralized Network Service Center model in the 2nd Signal Brigade.

Current NSCs are being restructured into four new regional operations centers. These ROCs will be supplemented by multiple, but smaller, operational centers.

Simultaneously, systems administration functions are currently being organized into Area Processing Centers. APC’s are state of the art server consolidation facilities for file storage, email accounts and internet access.

The centers increase network security, bandwidth, reliability, and efficiency of services provided, while supporting information sharing and collaboration in a protected environment.

“This restructuring streamlines services, ensuring that the customers’ information is safely stored, managed, and backed-up in four centralized facilities,” said Via. “The new system provides disaster recovery and continuity of operations capabilities that did not exist in the decentralized system.”

Services will not be compromised, despite reducing the number of employees required in systems administration. Because of emerging sensor technologies incorporated into the APCs, these centers will have the capability to diagnose, repair, and conduct recovery operations that had previously required hands-on support.

In January of 2006 the first APC opened at Daumerie Casern, Chievres, Belgium. The 39th Signal Battalion led the way with the process to ultimately consolidate over 100 file, print, web and database servers currently servicing over 1,700 customers in the Belgium-Netherlands-Luxemburg footprint.

“The battalion’s effort leverages improved installation infrastructure, new network and desktop hardware, software, and support procedures enabling our customers to embrace transforma-



Photo by Spc. Krystal Stone, 39th Signal Battalion

**Commanders Lt. Col. Thomas Mahoney, 39th Signal Battalion, Brig. Gen. Dennis L. Via, 5th Signal Command and Col. Robert Ferrell, 2nd Signal Brigade cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony for the Area Processing Center on Caserne Daumerie, Chievres, Belgium in January.**

tion and achieve the Army Knowledge Management goals,” said Lt. Col. Thomas J. Mahoney, 39th Signal Battalion commander.

The official transition to operations centers is ongoing throughout 2006.

The APC in Caserma Ederle, Italy opened June 15, and the largest center is slated to open in Kaiserslautern later this summer.

Employees are receiving specialized training on new technologies, to include storage area networks, power path technology, control center functions, and time finder foundations.

As the 2nd Signal Bde. completes this transition, the 7th Signal Brigade is also completing its own conversion.

5th Signal’s two Integrated Theater Signal Battalions, 44th and 72nd Signal Battalions, are currently being outfitted with new communications resources, to include Phoenix terminals, to best meet the

needs of USAREUR. These battalions will serve as enduring units in USAREUR to support any contingency, humanitarian, training or exercise mission. The ITSBs will also compliment the ROC in supporting the 2nd Cavalry Brigade Stryker Combat Team that recently moved into Grafenwoehr, Germany.

While incorporating these significant changes across the European Signal footprint, 5th Signal Command is also utilizing ‘lean six sigma’ initiatives within the command to ensure efficiency throughout its operations management.

Lean six sigma helps a commander enforce current policies and regulations, and, in effect, provides substantial cost savings and cost avoidance. These savings are then reapplied to meet additional operational requirements.

According to Via, the restructuring of Europe’s communications arm will be seamless; regardless of location, no customer will be without communications capabilities or service, and the end-state will be a smaller, more effective system.

New locations will be stood up and fully functioning while still maintaining 100 percent of the services under the previous system until the transition is complete.

5th Signal Command continually takes advantage of new advances in technology, ensuring that it is always ready to support the mission and needs of Freedom’s Expeditionary Force.

“These are just a few of the biggest steps,” said Via.

Although the nature of the signal corps is based in technology and advancement, 5th Signal Command’s mission sets people as its top priority.

In addition to providing training and position re-assignments, the civilian employees affected by the transformation receive comprehensive assistance from the Civilian Human Resources Agency.

“Our focus is to ensure that all our employees are cared for while we restructure the U.S. Army in Europe communications services, ultimately making 5th Signal and the Army more efficient and effective in mission success,” stated Via.

Soldiers are continuously trained on new technology utilized within the command, thus making them highly proficient as they pave the way for the future Army.

Just as Gandhi served as an agent of change in his generation, 5th Signal Command is taking the leap for the Signal Corps.



# 72nd Signal Battalion's

# OPERATIONS

# DOWNRANGING



## 72nd Signal Battalion Staff Report

The essential need to have signal capabilities is just as true today in the desert as it was in the trenches of World War II.

Thanks to units such as the 72nd Signal Battalion, the war fighter is communicating. In fact, not only is the war fighter connected, but a variety of organizations all over Iraq and Kuwait are able to communicate because of the support provided by the unit.

The Battalion is spread over 15 different sites in the Middle East, performing a wide variety of missions and services.

One of their most high-profile missions in Iraq has been wiring the Iraqi Tribunal Courthouse for the Saddam Hussein trials, which provides Iraqi legal officials with the communications necessary to document and broadcast the trial of the former dictator.

Elsewhere, the Soldiers of Company B created the first ever Counter-Insurgency Center of Excellence -- better known as the COIN Academy.

Students who attend the Academy receive five days of intense training in Arab history and culture, low intensity conflict, gathering intelligence, and the effectiveness of Special Operation Forces and Information Operations.

The classes are taught by dedicated instructors and guest subject matter experts such as brigade combat team commanders and the Deputy Commander of Detainee Operations.

The program is punctuated by a visit from Multi-National Force-Iraq Commanding General, Gen. George W. Casey, Jr., who speaks to every class.

In Kuwait, a group of 72nd Soldiers has



taken over the strategic communications for the Aerial Port of Debarcation on the Ali Al Salem Air Base.

Whereas most of the Soldiers who deployed expected to conduct tactical communications, they saw the challenge of running this strategic site as an opportunity to excel. After all, routers, switches, servers and multiplexers in strategic sites are the same ones we use in tactical sites.

Through on-site training and learning by trial and error they have become proficient in their jobs and even developed their own standard operating procedures to keep things running smoothly.

All of these additional duties as assigned have been executed while maintaining daily signal service.

“In the last five months, the theater gateway has processed more than 310,000 service-members and civilians through their personnel processing center. As they undergo continual changes and the incorporation of Area 51 into our battle space, the 72nd Signal element continues to enable us to serve all of our customers in accordance with Lt. Gen. Whitcomb’s vision,” said Maj. Joseph Adamson, Task Force 90th Personnel Support Battalion executive officer, whose unit relies on the support of the 72nd Signal Bn.

While the weather continues to warm and the Soldiers face the second half of their deployment, they are mentally preparing for the work and physical stresses that will come with the changing weather.

“As we prepare for the summer, we know that we will be faced with extremely hot temperatures, ranging from 100-140 degrees Fahrenheit, and sand storms which play havoc on our satellite dishes and signal support systems. Needless to say, we are ready for it,” said Maj. Mike Wise, the battalion executive officer.

As the sun sets each night on the desert, Soldiers supported by the 72nd can rest assured that their signal needs will be met, enabling warriors across OIF to continue the mission.



*Photos courtesy of 72nd Signal Brigade*

**Above, Soldiers from the 72nd Signal Battalion practice detainee operations in Iraq. The battalion deployed in November and is providing communications support at 15 different sites. Top of page, Spc. Jennifer Kuhn, Company B, 72nd Signal Bn. practices her IV techniques on her platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Alvin Hamilton during Combat Lifesaver Class at Camp Taji, Iraq. Left page top, Pfc. Joshua Ingram, Sgt. Philip Lewis, and Spc. Taylor Stewart perform duties as 72nd Signal Battalion color guard during the battalion’s Combat Patch Ceremony in Iraq. Left page bottom, Spc. Rachel Jaeger, 72nd Signal Battalion’s chaplain assistant, gives a thumbs up before boarding a UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopter for a mission.**

*Green to Gold*      *Officer Candidate School*  
**Reserve Officer Training Corps**  
*USMA*      *Warrant Officer School*      *OCS*  
**Officer Candidate School**      *Green to Gold*  
*United States Military Academy*

# Becoming an Officer



**5th Signal Command**  
*Staff Report*

**H**ave you ever thought to yourself, “If I were in charge, things would be different around here.” If so, stop thinking about it and do something about it.

The Army is looking for qualified individuals to become officers. Each year many of those individuals come from the enlisted ranks.

In FY05, the Army accessed approximately 4,600 active duty officers. Of that total, 55 percent came from Reserve Officer Training Corps, 22 percent from Officer Candidate School, 21 percent from the U.S. Military Academy and the remaining 2 percent were direct commissions in the Special Branches (Chaplain, Judge Advocate General and Army Medical Department).

Each of the various commissioning sources is available for enlisted Soldiers who wish to earn their gold second lieutenant bars.

Every year about 200 Active Duty, Reserve and National Guard Soldiers are offered admission to the U.S. Military Academy or the Preparatory School at Fort Monmouth, N.J. Most attend the Prep School before entering the Academy; however, some do enter the Academy directly.

Officer Candidate School has a goal to commission 750 enlisted Soldiers in FY06. In addition, Human Resources

Command has a goal in FY06 to appoint 1390 enlisted Soldiers to the warrant officer mission. Of course each commissioning program offers a variety of benefits and incentives. Whether you decide to apply for a commission through ROTC, OCS, West Point or the Warrant Officer Program will depend on your personal circumstances, qualifications and goals.

Several 5th Signal Command Soldiers have applied for and have been accepted for some of the commissioning programs.

It does require some effort on the individual’s part to put together an application package, but in each case below, the chain-of-command and other individuals have been more than willing to assist and encourage Soldiers in their efforts.

**Sgt. First Class Ryan Boileau**

Sgt. First Class Ryan Boileau worked in the 5th Signal Command G-3 Plans section. He applied for OCS using the Direct Selection Program. He began the application for OCS in May 2005 and was notified of his selection in August 2005.

He reported to OCS at Ft Gordon, Ga. on Feb. 19 and has a follow on assignment as a Signal Officer to Headquarters Detachment, 1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division in Ft Stewart, upon successful completion of OCS and Signal Officer’s Basic Course.

OCS was the right program for Boileau as he already had a Bachelor’s degree from Touro University in Computer Science and is already working on his Master’s Degree in Information



*Photo by Sgt. Anissa Soto-Feliciano, 5th Signal Command PAO*

**Spc. Nina Barnhart, 2nd Signal Brigade, studies in preparation for her attendance to the U.S. Military Preparatory School at Fort Monmouth, N.J. She is crossing over to the officer corps and will be attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.**

Technology Management.

On looking forward to becoming an officer, he said, "It's going to be a lot of responsibility, more than anything else, to live up to what's expected of an officer, even more than an NCO or even a senior NCO. Officers are expected to take responsibility and accomplish the mission. When I was on the NCO side, I've always had an officer providing protection as it were, and now, when I make that change, it's going to be a shift in my perception. I am going to have to remember the awesome responsibility that comes with that."

His wife, Tamara, fully supports her husband's decision, "He always wanted to be an officer, since he came in. He said that he wanted to do it and I thought it was a very good opportunity for him."

Boileau recommends that other qualified Soldiers look into becoming officers, "I think that anybody that is a leader already or wants to be a leader would benefit by exploring this avenue, if they have their degree or are close to finishing their degree. It's a tremendous opportunity. The Army needs leaders."

### **Spc. Nina Barnhart**

When Spc. Nina Barnhart was thinking of joining the Army, her aunt, Kari Martin who is a Sergeant First Class in the California National Guard, suggested that she apply for West Point.

This summer, after almost three years in the Army, Barnhart

will enter the U.S. Military Academy Preparatory School at Fort Monmouth, N.J. and following her year there, she will enter the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. as a member of the class of 2011. Upon graduating, she is considering going either into Military Intelligence or the Chemical Corps.

Working in the 2nd Signal Brigade Information Management Office, Barnhart has a wide variety of interests including playing the flute, singing, writing poetry, blogging, running and gymnastics. She has taken about a year's worth of classes with the University of Maryland University College.

Her advice to others considering going to West Point, "I say go for it. I haven't been there yet and of course it's going to be difficult, probably more difficult than ROTC, but it opens up a lot of doors for people even if they aren't sure of their career in the Army."

Sergeant Maj. John McCleary, 2nd Signal Brigade, S-3 minces no words when talking about Barnhart, "She has a passion for what she does in her computer skills and beyond that, a love and devotion to our country. She's a remarkable young lady."

### **Staff Sgt. Charles Coker**

A native of Sumter, S.C., Staff Sgt. Charles Coker was an Installer Noncommissioned Officer for the 5th Signal Command, G-3. Married with two sons, he enjoys spending his free time with his family.

He has completed college classes at several schools including Benedict College in Columbia, S.C., Central Texas College, and the University of Maryland University College.

Currently enrolled with Touro University, he is pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Information Technology Management.

Coker applied and was accepted to become a warrant officer. He will attend a four week Warrant Officer's Course at Ft. Rucker, Ala. followed by 19 weeks at the Signal Warrant Officer Basic Course at Ft. Gordon, Ga. Upon completion of school, he will be assigned to 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, Ft. Bragg, N.C., working in network management.

When asked why he decided to apply for a Warrant Officer's Commission, he said, "I'd like to try something new and challenge myself. I encourage more Soldiers to go out and do it."

### Staff Sgt. David Hamlin

Staff Sgt. David Hamlin was the Training NCO for 2nd Signal Brigade. He is married with one daughter.

The Waverly, Ohio native applied for and was accepted for OCS through the Direct Selection Program. Following completion of training, he will return to 5th Signal Command.

Hamlin has an Associate's Degree in Computer Studies from the University of Maryland University College and is continuing work toward his

Bachelor's degree in History. He must earn his Bachelor's degree before he can be selected for captain.

A 12-year Army veteran with deployment experience in Bosnia and Operation Iraqi

Freedom II, Hamlin credits his wife for motivating him to succeed, "Before her, I was more into going out and having a good time as opposed to advancing my career. When I met her, she was more goal-oriented, she was going to college; she's an architect now. She stressed the importance of education and advancing yourself. It greatly contributed to my drive to succeed. It's very important to know the people you surround yourself with, because if they are successful, you'll want to be successful."

The future lieutenant already has plans for his career as an officer. He wants to have the opportunity to command.

"I want to do the best I can. My goals in the Army are that I want to make the Army the best type of job that a Soldier could have, the type of place where he loves to come to work everyday, the morale is high," he said. "I want to promote Soldiers for doing good things. I'd also punish soldiers for doing bad things. Leadership is not a popular position. You have to do what is right for the Army."

**"I never thought I would take this route and now that I have, it is very energizing."**

**-- 2nd Lt. Ryan Boileau**



*Photo courtesy of Ryan Boileau*

2nd Lt. Ryan Boileau (former Sergeant First Class) stands with his children, Ryan Boileau Jr., Allison and Brenna, after they pinned his second lieutenant rank on him at his Officer Candidate School graduation May 25.

## RESOURCES

### Commissioned Officer Programs

[www.goarmy.com/about/officer.jsp](http://www.goarmy.com/about/officer.jsp)

### U.S. Military Academy

[www.usma.army.mil](http://www.usma.army.mil)

### USMA Preparatory School

[www.usma.edu/USMAPS](http://www.usma.edu/USMAPS)

### Warrant Officer Programs

[www.usarec.army.mil/hq/warrant](http://www.usarec.army.mil/hq/warrant)

# Junior Officer Forum

## Building tomorrow's leadership bridge today

**LeAnne MacAllister**  
PAO 5th Signal Command

**T**he 5th Signal Command took a new approach to tackling retention at the Weinheim conference center this spring with a Junior Officer Forum.

With an underlying theme of 'Why I stayed Army' combining formal presentations with a casual atmosphere, the forum provided the next generation of Army leaders an opportunity to swap war stories and take home lessons learned from senior leadership.

Approximately 100 lieutenants and captains serving the Signal Corps came together from across Europe for event.

"The purpose of this forum is to provide our future leaders with the opportunity to interact with senior leaders on a personal level," said Brig. Gen. Dennis L. Via. The 5th Signal Cmd. event is the first of its kind for signal officers in U.S. Army, Europe.

"This was a great way to open everyone's eyes to possibilities. We get tunnel vision in our field from time to time. There's a lot more out there in the bigger picture," said 1st Lt. Crystan Allan, 2nd Signal Brigade, 5th Signal Cmd. "The forum gave me a lot to think about."

Seven general officers - Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Robert Gray, Maj. Gen. Mark Hertling, Brig. Gen. Anne MacDonald, Lt. Gen. Gary Speer, Brig. Gen. Michael Tucker, and Brig. Gen. Dennis Via - and various subject matter experts served as

presenters during the forum. Some traveled from as far as Washington, D.C. and Kuwait to provide the company-grade officer group with their perspective of why they stayed in the Army, while painting a current and comprehensive picture of the potential opportunities for future success.

Each speaker provided a unique perspective - from Capt. Gregory Nowak, a prior-enlisted Soldier who has gotten out of the Army and rejoined twice over the last 14 years, to Lt. Gen. Gary Speer, Deputy Commander of USAREUR, who attended the U. S. Military Academy at West Point during the Vietnam era - of possibilities in military careers.

Speer focused on the leadership opportunity of a military career, people, and sense of duty to service.

"If you don't stay, who else is trained to do this job? It is an awesome responsibility - mothers and fathers are entrusting the care of their sons and daughters to you," he said.

Brig. Gen. Anne MacDonald, deputy director for operations, National Military Command Center, related to the concerns of the junior officers. "I went through the same thing. The four years of college and five years following were a long time. I know there are concerns; there are family issues," she said, while reflecting on her 26 years of service.

Discussions touched upon financial comparisons, medical care, educational opportunities and other benefits of military careers. Yet the heart of the two-day forum was



**Brig. Gen. Anne MacDonald, deputy director for operations, National Military Command Center addresses 5th Signal Command's junior officers at Europe's premier Junior Officer Forum.**

allowing generations to interact, "to see the military through another set of eyes," said Via.

Medical care and retirement benefits were laid out, providing participants the opportunity to see differentials between the civilian sector and the military on paper.

Reflecting on the health care benefits, 1st Lt. Jarrod Shingleton, Headquarters, 5th Signal Command, said, "If people are still thinking about getting out after hearing all this, at least they are better informed about the hardships and realities of the civilian world. For instance, no one in the military or retired from the military ever worries about health care -- for themselves or their family -- and that's a big deal."

Overall, the junior and senior officers voiced their satisfaction with the event. In addition, entertainment provided by the USAREUR chorus, social hours and casual meals provided the officers with an opportunity to laugh, relax and address their own personal concerns.

"It was a great opportunity to reflect on what the senior leaders had to say and to learn from their career experience. It was definitely beneficial and it reinforced what I had already planned to do," said Capt. Christopher Gonzales, 1st Armored Division, 4th Brigade, S6.

Junior officers scheduled branch interviews between briefings on day two, allowing them to immediately look into options discussed during the forum.

The event provided officers with the opportunity to be well informed prior to making their decision.



*Photos by LeAnne MacAllister, PAO 5th Signal Command*

**More than 100 junior signal officers across the U.S. Army, Europe, attend the Junior Leader's Forum hosted by the 5th Signal Command. The event highlighted speakers who reflected on 'Why I stayed Army'.**

# Smart Riding



Photo by Sgt. Anissa Soto-Feliciano, 5th Signal Command PAO

Jon Bogachoff, USAG Mannheim, demonstrates “what right looks like” by showing an audience how far a motorcycle can safely lean.

## Safety on two wheels

**Jason Van**  
*2nd Signal Brigade*

Summer is upon us, the days are longer, the flowers are blooming and yet, another sound can be heard ... a raspy exhaust of a sport bike or that ‘potato, potato’ sound of a large cruiser.

The rider, safety gear and motorcycle are ready for another year of camaraderie and memorable rides throughout Europe, or are they?

Although all the boxes are checked prior to the ride -- safety brief, T -CLOCK inspection and proper riding gear, there are several unique challenges to riding safely that cannot be ‘checked’ prior to the ride.

The sun may be shining and the road may be dry, but shade from overhanging trees can mask a potentially deadly hazard -- water. A sudden loss of traction due to a wet patch can be fatal.

“Water from melting snow had been running off the rocks and then across the road,” said Sean O’Connor, 5th Signal Command, as he reflected on a spring riding experience. “Due to the runoff, I crashed and slid across the oncoming lane.”

Water, mud, rocks, and sand can be washed into the road providing another opportunity for a potentially fatal loss of traction.

Simply decreasing speed can give that buffer for proper reaction, mitigating the risk of crashing.

Weather in Germany can change as quickly as the Euro rate. Sunny and mild temperatures can change to wind, rain and snow within a matter of minutes, so be prepared.

Reduced traction while riding in rain requires a certain amount

of finesse. Gradually apply the brakes and start braking earlier than normal. Dress accordingly and pack a wet weather riding suit regardless of current weather conditions.

Automobiles also continue to be major driving hazards for motorcyclists. Riders must predict what the other drivers will do and position themselves to take action whether it is slowing down or lane position.

A recent Motorcycle Safety Foundation study found that two-thirds of the motorcycle accidents involving other vehicles were caused by the other vehicle violating the motorcyclist’s right-of-way. A driver looking but not seeing the cyclist is regarded as the main cause of intersection accidents.

There are numerous accident reports where the motorcyclist said, “The driver looked right at me and still pulled out.” Do not assume the other driver will see you. Use defensive driving techniques. Slow down, clear the intersection and continue to ride. The additional seconds that were used by slowing down will not be missed at the end of the ride, but you would be missed if a potentially fatal accident were to occur.

These are only a few of the many techniques that can mitigate the risks involved with riding a motorcycle. For more information visit the MSF Web site at <http://www.msf-usa.org>.

Remember, there is no prize for first place on the street, no trophy for the longest wheelie and no hero’s welcome for the first one to the rest stop.

If you do not adhere to a simple rule of slowing down, you could be remembered by a stranger saying, “I once saw a motorcycle accident; I don’t think the driver made it.”

# 17th Signal Battalion leads the way with ...

# Inactivation

**Maj. Nicholas Jordan**  
17th Signal Battalion  
**2nd Lt. Myra Waldher**  
7th Signal Brigade

Day after day another Soldier changes duty stations and another piece of equipment is transferred as the 17th Signal Battalion inactivates.

The few left in the unit have watched their friends, loved ones, equipment, and weapons leave them.

This comes after a string of deployments. The unit initially deployed to Kuwait in fall of 2002 for a training exercise. This 'training exercise' later became known as Operation Iraqi Freedom as the troop build up eventually led to the fall of dictatorship in 2003.

For the Soldiers of the 17th, this was the beginning of a long march toward inactivation. After the unit arrived home in 2003 and after a brief reconstitution, it came as no surprise when the unit was notified about deploying again to Iraq in 2004.

However, in terms of the lives involved, this meant that nearly 70 percent of the combat veterans from OIFI would again return with their comrades to the war.

In the Army today multiple deployments are not unusual. What is unusual is this family of Soldiers has been together throughout.

In other units many Soldiers have transitioned from one deploying unit to another, but for a group this large to be together for so long at war made this team a success. And so,

with redeployment for the second time in three years, the notification that the unit would inactivate came as bittersweet news.

"This is the most unique group of Soldiers that I have ever come across and worked with. The personalities are all diverse but they all complement each other. It will be a long time before another group of Soldiers like the ones here end up in the same unit again," said Lt. Col. Glenn Kennedy II, commander of the 17th Signal Battalion.

The long hours of inactivation are not scaring off the Soldiers, however, many are doing what they can to stay longer and help see it to the end.

Chief Warrant Officer Frank Fleming pushed off his advanced course to help the battalion with a successful inactivation and Staff Sgt. Curtis Mosely deferred surgery until he could complete his mission as the unit movement officer and get the battalion's equipment back home.

The personnel office, property book section, logistics office, and maintenance sections worked long hours to repair, condition code, and prepare the paperwork needed to move all the equipment and people out of the battalion.

The companies spent untold hours collecting and consolidating the many physical fragments of the history of the unit that reach back to the last activation in 1981.

Aside from the efforts of individuals and teams in the unit, they credit the military decision making process and clear guidance from

## USAREUR units inactivating FY07

HHC, 16th Corps Support Group, Hanau.  
1st Transportation Movement Control Agency (1st TMCA), Kaiserslautern.  
27th Movement Control Battalion [27th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control)], Wiesbaden.  
19th Material Maintenance Command [19th Support Center], Wiesbaden.  
71st Combat Support Battalion [71st Corps Support Battalion], Bamberg.  
Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 485th Combat Support Battalion [485th Corps Support Battalion], Hanau.  
Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 181st Transportation Battalion, Mannheim.  
260th Transportation Company, Mannheim.  
77th Ordnance Company (Maintenance), Babenhausen.  
23rd Ordnance Company, Ammo, Miesau.  
529th Ordnance Company, Grafenwoehr, is reflagged as the 23rd OD and remains in Grafenwoehr.  
26th Supply Company, Hanau.  
Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 2-502 Aviation Intermediate Maintenance (AVIM) Battalion, Mannheim.  
C Detachment, 55th Personnel Services Battalion, Friedberg.  
619th Movement Control Team (PORT), Wiesbaden.  
626th Movement Control Team (AREA), Hanau.  
633rd Movement Control Team (DIVISION), Hanau.  
634th Movement Control Team (DIVISION), Bamberg.  
147th Ordnance Company, Illesheim/Ansbach.  
Army Health Clinic, Butzbach, and Friedberg.  
Army Dental Clinic, Friedberg, and Giessen.  
93rd Medical (DENTAL) Battalion, Heidelberg.  
67 Combat Support Hospital, Wurzburg.

higher for the smooth process.

"The 17th Signal Battalion and the 578th (Signal Company) are inactivating as part of the Army's reorganization and movement toward a more modular force. Our inactivation is just a necessary part of the big picture," said Kennedy. "Hopefully, our Soldiers will take the things they learned here and apply them at their next unit, so even though the 17th is inactivating, it will live on as a part of the Soldiers who were all assigned to it in the past."

The inactivation ceremony is scheduled for Aug. 17 and the last few people will filter out over the next few months.

Pfc. Timothy Tennell has been with the 17th for the last two years. His father was in the Army and always told stories of the transition to the Battle Dress Uniform. Tennell remembers how proud his father was to be a part of that. Now he will have stories of his own to tell about inactivating his unit.

"I know the inactivation is something no one has really done before on this scale. It is kind of nice; I'll be here to close it down. I move the day after it closes, so I'll be the one turning out the lights," he said.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Myra Waldher, 7th Signal Brigade

**Soldiers from the 17th Signal Battalion prepare camouflage and tents for equipment turn-in. The unit is inactivating as a part of the plan for a more modular force.**



A decade in  
Mannheim:

## 5th Signal Command's move from Worms remembered

**5th Signal Command**  
Staff Report

*The New York Yankees won their 23rd World Series title, Atlanta hosted the Summer Olympics and 5th Signal Command moved to Mannheim. The year was 1996.*

2006 marks the tenth anniversary of the command's move from Worms to Mannheim. Though it only took a little over three months to physically move the command, the work to plan the move and prepare Funari Barracks in Mannheim for the command's arrival began 18 months before the move started.

The decision to close Worms was made in August 1994 as part of round 16 of the drawdown of U.S. forces in Europe. 5th Signal Command at Worms was the largest of more than 24 European military sites selected for closure in that round.

"Worms was one of the hidden jewels. It was a great community. It was a lot of fun there," said Butch Carlo who was the deputy headquarters commandant for the command in 1996 and today works as a civilian at Headquarters, U.S. Army, Europe, GR2/G6. "There was no fence in the housing areas. You went from the German neighborhood to the American neighborhood and you really could not tell the difference. You lived closer to the Germans and fellowshipped with the Germans a lot more. That is what made that community unique, unlike any other one in USAREUR."

Doug McGrath, who was the command stationer for 5th Signal Cmd. in 1996 and was the chief planner for the move to Mannheim agrees, "We loved the city, but the facility was falling apart." Many of the buildings on Taukkunen Barracks in Worms were built in the 1890's and were considered historical buildings and could not be

modified externally. Other buildings were added in the 1930's, 50's and 60's.

So with the decision made to close U.S. facilities in Worms, where was the command to go?

Joe Wetzl, the political advisor for 5th Signal Cmd. recalls, "After the first drawdown in the early 90's, Mannheim was pretty much vacated. The big units moved away. Practically all facilities were vacant. The senior mission commander at that time, used to be the USAREUR Provost Marshal. Then the 5th Signal Commanding General became the senior mission commander for Mannheim; however, the headquarters was still in Worms. Eventually USAREUR said, you need to be in Mannheim if you are to be the senior mission commander for both, because this (Mannheim) is a larger area."

Logistically, the move was challenging. Leaving USAREUR without the ability to command its units by simply unplugging circuits and move them down the road was not an option.

"We had to have redundant capability at both locations before the move actually took place. That was a big concern," said Carlo. "You could not shut down services at Worms until the circuits and systems were in place here. That's key because we were not allowed to stand down mission, so people had to work longer, because you had to do the mission, but at the same time you were moving."

Carlo continued, "The command assembled several teams to focus on various issues involved in the move. There were about eight or nine teams of different specialties. Teams included Connectivity, Theater Network Operations Security Center, Physical Security, Personnel, Movement, Closure, and Hazardous Waste. In the plans shop, there were four or five sub teams dedicated for different parts, one had NATO circuits, one had the US circuits only. There was enough work

for everybody. The physical movement team was 20-30 people, every director was represented and the community was represented, Director of Logistics was represented, so you didn't have a meeting just to have a meeting. Each meeting had a purpose. At the In Progress Review's every team chief briefed the CG on the progress of each team. So it was really monitored."

Renovating facilities on Funari involved hundreds of details that most of us take for granted on a daily basis.

"The biggest hassle that we had was fighting to ensure that the facility was brought up to a suitable standard that we could enjoy, because it was a run down facility. We had to fight for every dollar, for every piece of renovation, for every cent that we spent." McGrath said.

From renovations in Mannheim, to the physical move of people and furniture, to construction and communications infrastructure, the process required years of planning and logistical support.

Once renovations were completed, it took about three months for the command to make the physical move to Funari.

Carlo said it took about four or five moving trucks a day to move the command, "We had guards on some stuff. You carried your own classified. The contractors moved the safes. We had three trucking companies working for us."

So how did Funari Barracks compare to Taukkunen?

Carlo added, "It added class to the headquarters. The headquarters really became a general officer type."

With the move to Funari nearly completed, it was time to say goodbye to Worms, which was the home of 5th Signal Command for 20 years.

Wetzel added, "The headquarters moved in August of '96 from Worms to Mannheim and the town threw a big, big farewell ceremony at the city hall on the market square."

The mayor of Worms, Lord Mayor Fischer, presented a memento to Brig. Gen. Robert Nabors, the 5th Signal Commander, which is still prominently displayed near the entrance to the command conference room. Even though the command moved to Mannheim, personnel continued to reside on Thomas Jefferson Village in Worms for four or five years after the command moved. The housing area has since been returned to Germany.

Dragon Warrior Soldiers will always wear a remembrance of the command's association with the city of Worms. The green dragon in the command insignia is associated with the legendary hero Siegfried and the saga Nibelungenlied, set around the Rhine River and the city of Worms.

As for the facilities on Taukkunen Barracks, Wetzel said, "The city, the historical society of Worms, and the state historical preservation office surveyed the installation and designated those buildings that were of historical value, to include cast iron stairwells in the old buildings. They determined that the traditional buildings, built in the 1890's, were preserved. The other buildings were taken down, to include the headquarters building."

Some of the remaining buildings were renovated and became part of the four-star Prinz Carl Park Hotel complex [www.parkhotel-prinzcarl.de](http://www.parkhotel-prinzcarl.de).

The move to Mannheim was completely finished in September 1996. A dedication for the Pitts Building was held on November 4, 1996 and an official welcoming ceremony was held in March 1997.

Even today, a decade after the move, the 5th Signal Command enjoys a warm relationship with both Worms and Mannheim. The commander holds his annual reception at the Herrnsheim Castle and officials from both cities are invited to important 5th Signal Command events.



Left, 5th Signal Command in Taukkunen Barracks, Worms. Many of the buildings there were built in the 1890's and were considered historical and could not be modified externally. Above, the move from Building 5813 in Worms. The command's move was completely finished in September 1996. Below, the 5th Signal Command Headquarters on Funari Barracks, a decade after the move from Worms.



Photos courtesy of 5th Signal Command



Staff Sgt. Mark Bonaudi



Spc. Tia Hall

## ***Bonaudi, Hall win top 5th Signal Command honors***

**Staff Sgt. Nicole Blakeslee**  
*ECHO Editor*

5th Signal Command named its top troops for 2006 at a recognition ceremony at the Schuh Theatre on Sullivan Barracks June 7.

Staff Sgt. Mark Bonaudi, 43rd Signal Battalion, 2nd Signal Brigade, is the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year and Spc. Tia Hall, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th Signal Command, was named Soldier of the Year.

The two wedged out their peers not only at their assigned unit's NCO and Soldier of the Year boards but also at the command-level board.

This was not an easy task.

"Good mentorship and the support I received from the leaders in my section helped prepare me for this difficult task," said Hall. "Long hours of studying and preparation were key to helping me win this event. I hope to use these experiences to help other Soldiers be their best."

Hall currently serves as a computer technician in the Information Management Office. She enlisted in the Army in September 2004 as an Information Systems Operator Analyst. HHC, 5th Signal Cmd. is her first duty station.

The 5th Signal Cmd. Board, held on May 30, 31, was a two-day event where both Soldiers were judged on their board appearance, marksmanship skills, land navigation, level of physical fitness, a 50-question test and an essay.

Bonaudi currently serves as the Standardized Tactical Entry Point manager for the Media Gateway Facility in Landstuhl. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Management from Northwest College Kirkland, Wash., and has earned a Masters in Business Administration from Touro University International.

This high-speed NCO has been a pace setter since he joined

the military in 2001. He was the Distinguished Soldier of the Cycle for his basic training unit, he graduated with Distinguished Honors for his Advanced Individual Training and Primary Leadership Development Course and also earned the Distinguished Leadership Award at PLDC, and he has won numerous boards from Soldier of the Month to NCO of the Year for the past three years.

He credits his road to success to his faith in God, the support of his family and his unit.

"Every peer or senior leader that I have worked with has challenged me to achieve and I am thankful for that," said the NCO of the Year. "I feel as an NCO whatever I do sets an example for others and that drives me to succeed. My goal has always been to achieve the highest standard and be the best at whatever I am doing at the time."

His advice to others wanting to follow the same path, "Make sure you align your priorities and work at them. My highest priority is my faith and God. If you keep your priorities in check, the rest will fall into place."

He continued, "Also, mentorship is very important. You should find someone who is honest, who will truthfully tell you about yourself, and someone who you can share yourself with. All the drive and ambition I have doesn't come without the help of my mentors."

The winners each received an Army Commendation Medal and awards from a line of sponsors comprising representatives from AAFES, AFCEA, the Commissary, SGM Association, USAA, Service Credit Union, SATO, the Auto Exchange, Overseas Military Sales, SCRA, Mannheim Trophy Shop and 1st Sgt. Erika Gholar.

Bonaudi and Hall compete at the Network Enterprise Technology Command NCOY/SOY Board at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. in July.

# Signal Soldiers earn Bronze Order of Mercury medals

The Bronze Order of Mercury recognizes those people who have demonstrated the highest standards of integrity, moral character, professional competence and selflessness, and who have contributed significantly to the promotion of the Signal Corps and the Signal Regimental Association. Brig. Gen. Dennis L. Via awarded the medals to several key leaders the 121st Signal Battalion at their final dining out in April. The unit is inactivating as part of the Army's reorganization and movement toward a more modular force.



Photo by 2nd Lt. Myra Waldher, 7th Signal Brigade

# Senior USAREUR IT professional retires

**Dwayne Viergutz**  
HQ USAREUR7A, G6

On April 21, 2006, the U.S. Army, Europe, G6 staff bid farewell to Gary C. Miller, who retired on July 1 after 35 years of federal service.

Over the years, Miller held a variety of positions, culminating in that of the Regional Chief Information Officer -



Photo by Sgt. Anissa Soto-Feliciano, 5th Signal Command PAO

**Gary Miller the Regional Chief Information Officer for Europe Retired in July after 35 years of federal service.**

Europe. While serving as RCIO-Europe, he modernized information technology programs in Europe by transforming them to Enterprise and Knowledge Management Programs. Many of his accomplishments are being adopted as Army standards.

"It's all about the people," said Miller, referencing his motto and leadership style. Serving as the senior Information Technology professional in Europe, one of Miller's most visible contributions was a program he developed to train, certify, and maintain a workforce of highly competent IT professionals.

In addition to his people-centric philosophy, Miller worked to modernize the 50-year-old copper-based network infrastructure in Europe by developing and marketing a requirement for nearly \$1 billion. This resulted in the Headquarters, Department of the Army giving the U.S. Army, Europe \$755 million to support new IT infrastructure.

He also developed and marketed the requirement for Enterprise Consolidation, which resulted in his securing nearly \$200 million from DA to transform IT services in Europe.

Miller spearheaded the creation of a theater plan to reduce nearly 2,800

servers at hundreds of locations to about 300 servers at four locations. The first Area Processing Center (APC) went into operation on Jan. 31 at Chievres, Belgium, with a corresponding COOP and disaster-recovery site in Kaiserslautern, Germany. By October 2007, all four APCs will be operational and provide the Army in Europe the most efficient IT support available in the Army.

In addition to modernizing the Army in Europe's IT environment, Miller made great contributions to strategic planning by supporting tactical exercises that prepared Soldiers for deployment. He also contributed to the Army's stationing plans in Europe to ensure that IT will be available wherever the Army needs it in the future.

All of these accomplishments were achieved while Miller continually provided one-on-one guidance to hundreds of employees. He lived his motto and has made an impression on many. The technical competence, forward thinking approach and guidance he provided will live on in the accomplishments in the providers and services of the European Signal Corps for years to come.

# Snapshots



## Signal Ball 2006

HEIDELBERG, Germany (May 20, 2006) -- Gen. David McKiernan, commanding general USAREUR and 7th Army, and Brig. Gen. Dennis L. Via, commander 5th Signal Command, are joined by the youngest Soldier, Officer and Civilian to cut the cake during the 2006 Signal Ball. Left, Ball attendees dance after the official events.

--Photo above by Sgt. Anissa Soto-Feliciano  
5th Signal Command PAO  
--Photo left by Staff Sgt. Nicole Blakeslee  
ECHO Editor

## Community Run

MANNHEIM, Germany (May 5, 2006) – Brig. Gen. Dennis L. Via, commander 5th Signal Command, speaks to units from across the Mannheim Community footprint after the bi-annual community run at Wood's Field.

--Photo by Sgt. Anissa Soto-Feliciano  
5th Signal Command PAO



## Memorial Day

DINOZE, France (May 28, 2006) -- Brig. Gen. Dennis L. Via, commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Roderick D. Johnson, CSM, 5th Signal Command, present a wreath at a Epinal American Cemetery in commemoration of Memorial Day. The command team also had the opportunity to meet with French veterans at the ceremony.

--Photo by Leanne MacAllister  
PAO, 5th Signal Command

## Stay Army

IRAQ -- Spc. Randy Buttram shakes hands with Capt. David Shwiff, commander Company C, 72nd Signal Battalion after reenlisting for six years. He will stay with the 72nd for another tour and received a \$20,000 bonus.

--Photo by Sgt. Eric Butcher  
72nd Signal Battalion



## Annual Reception

WORMS, Germany (June 9, 2006) -- Brig. Gen. Dennis L. Via and his wife and Lord Mayor Michael Kissel and his wife welcome visitors to 5th Signal Command's annual reception at the Herrnsheim Castle.

--Photo by Alfredo Barraza  
Visual Information Services Europe

## Retirement Ceremony

FUNARI BARRACKS, Germany (May 31, 2006) -- Brig. Gen. Dennis L. Via, commander 5th Signal Command, pins the Legion of Merit on Col. Stephen L. Walker at the community retirement ceremony.

--Photo by Sgt. Anissa Soto-Feliciano  
5th Signal Command PAO



## Improved calling plan saves USAREUR \$1 million

**Gary Crusan**  
*5th Signal Command, G3*

5th Signal Command provides a wide array of telephone services to the European theater and forward deployed forces.

One of these services is Dial Service Assistance or telephone operator assistance for official telephone calls, as well as morale calls.

These DSA services have traditionally been manpower intensive, manual operations with no additional resources provided to support Soldiers requesting morale call service.

Additionally, as the number and duration of military deployment operations increased, the volume of morale calls skyrocketed to the point where available resources were stretched extremely thin and equitable access to these limited resources could not be guaranteed.

A small team of Information Technology professionals from 5th Signal Cmd. took on the task of analyzing current business practices and operational procedures with a goal of streamlining processes and applying the latest technology to provide vastly improved DSA services with less resources.

Through accumulation and comprehensive analysis of detailed telephone traffic data, G3 personnel determined that additional efficiencies could be achieved by implementing a 3-phased action plan.

Phase 1: Establish full-time DSA facility operations at Patch Barracks, Vaihingen, and subsequently realign the Heidelberg DSA operating hours.

Phase 2: Coordinate with U.S. Army, Europe, G6 to modify

Army in Europe Regulation 25-22, Use of U.S. Government Telecommunications Systems for Health, Morale, and Welfare Purposes, to establish policy that mandates use of the Automated Attendant server for all morale calls and ceases DSA operator-assisted morale call service.

Phase 3: Upgrade the AA call servers to increase telephone call capacity, and develop a new automated process for issuing Personal Identification Number codes to deploying Soldiers that provides morale calls within the prescribed duration and frequency, specifically, two 15-minute calls per week.

The changes result in significant cost savings. First, the expanded AA functionality reduces the operator workload 40 to 50 percent. Second, the 5th Signal Command-developed Web interface provides unit telephone control officers the means to automatically request and receive PIN codes, similar to commercial calling cards, for issuing to deploying personnel. For the deployed Soldier, the PINs ensure fair and equitable distribution of limited telecommunications assets at forward deployed locations. Third, the PIN codes provide a control and auditing mechanism that will eliminate abuses currently possible on the unregulated system or through an operator-assisted call. Fourth, PIN codes provide MWR call features to those most deserving: deployed Soldiers.

The anticipated reduction in call volume will slash the commercial telephone bill USAREUR-wide an average of \$90,000 per month-over \$1 million per year saved through innovative thinking and process improvement implemented by the G3, Dragon Warriors.

## War on terror campaign participation credit available

**WASHINGTON** (Army News Service, May 15, 2006) – The Army began recognizing the heroic contributions of its units toward the Global War on Terror June 15 with the award of campaign participation credit to units that served and/or are serving in the theater of operations supporting the GWOT.

Three new streamers are being awarded to those units who qualify: one for service in Afghanistan, embroidered “AFGHANISTAN;” one for service in Iraq, embroidered “IRAQ;” and one for service in other such geographic regions as Kuwait, Qatar or the Horn of Africa, embroidered “GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM.”

This brings the total number of campaign streamers displayed on the Department of Army flag to 178.

This is the first time since the Kosovo Defense Campaign in 1999 that the Army has awarded campaign participation credit and streamers to eligible units.

More than 616 unit awards have been processed for GWOT to date, and 497 have been approved. To receive campaign credit, eligible units must submit applications.

For eligibility criteria and application instructions, visit the Military Awards Branch Web site, or call (703) 325-8700.

# From the CSM:

I would like to take this opportunity to tell you how excited I am about being the senior noncommissioned officer of this command and to share some thoughts with you about change.

Someone once said, "Change is inevitable; nothing is constant except change."

Our philosophies change ... Our gas prices change ... Our cultures change ... Even our military changes. And, the 5th Signal Command is also changing.

Certainly, we have all experienced many adjustments since the September 11th terrorist attacks. We all know these are challenging times to be a Soldier, Civilian or family member supporting this great nation at war, but we must continue steadfast in our leadership and loyalty.

Our command philosophy supports change as well. As the Army becomes a more modular force, we are focusing on People First, War-winning Readiness and Quality of Life.

Since my arrival to the command, I have seen firsthand our support in these three key areas.

Our Soldier's and Civilian's warrior spirit and achievements reflect the initiative, hard work and integrity of the people we have in our command.

Just recently, we held the command NCO and Soldier of the Year competition. The competition was tight and we had the best and the brightest leaders in the command represented at the event. These Soldiers did an outstanding job and they had great mentors by their sides teaching and coaching them, as all leaders should.

Within the last few months we have also, experienced restructuring, and in the midst of this transformation, we have change that effects people.

We are determined to ensure all our employees are taken care of as we transition by providing training and re-assignments for these valued people in our command.

During my recent travels, I have had the opportunity to visit every unit and meet some of the finest Soldiers and Civilians serving our Army. I have experienced one constant from unit to unit -- MOS is immaterial. We have Soldiers performing in jobs outside of their MOS and they are doing them well. This happens as we phase out some MOSs and grow other ones that support the Army's transformation initiatives.

Regardless of MOS, we are all Warriors first. With that in mind, leaders must train Soldiers to be better prepared to fight and survive on the battlefield. Skills such as warrior tasks and battle drills, communications skills, combatives training, teamwork events and first aid, should be taught to all our Soldiers regardless of MOS as they are essential for mission accomplishment.



Another leadership responsibility is families. All leaders should express their care and concern about our Soldiers and their families. As we continue to support the GWOT, we have had one battalion deploy and another one return. I am proud to see some of the outstanding Family Readiness Groups we have in this command. However, I know that deployments and redeployments can both be challenging. As leaders, we need to ensure the physical, mental, and spiritual health of our dedicated Soldiers, Civilians and family members are monitored and that their well being is top on our list of priorities.

In closing, I am proud to be your Command Sergeant Major.

**RODERICK D. JOHNSON**  
Command Sergeant Major, USA  
5th Signal Command



<http://www.5sigcmd.army.mil>