



POWER LINE



Volume 2, Issue 5

Readiness Power Forward

April, 2012

RPAT Academy rolls into Camp Shelby

By Lt. Col. William J. Cain Jr., 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

CAMP SHELBY, Miss. — The critical role of Redistribution Property Assistance Team (RPAT) skills to the timely execution of retrograde operations in last year's Operation New Dawn, coupled with the scarcity of the skill set across the Army brought a team of Soldiers from the 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 402nd Army Field Support Brigade, from Kuwait to Camp Shelby, Miss., last month to train deploying Soldiers in their area of expertise.

The 427th Brigade Support Battalion, 27th Brigade Combat Team of the New York Army National

Guard's 42nd Infantry Division mobilized to Camp Shelby without a clear mission set based upon the changing requirements in theater. With roughly one month left to go with their training, the unit was notified that they would be split up into small teams in order to support the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) CENTCOM Material Retrograde Element (CMRE) mission in Afghanistan.

The 177th Armor Brigade, the unit responsible for training the 427th BSB as part of a Brigade Combat Team, did not have the resident expertise needed to train the 427th BSB on the core function of the CMRE, which revolves around RPAT operations.

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Photo by 541st Combat Sustainment Support Command

A mobile Kalmar container handler rolls onto the RPAT Academy training site at Camp Shelby, Miss., March 20 for use in the practical exercises segment of RPAT Academy training conducted by the 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion.

POWER LINE

No place for sexual threat on Power Team



By Command Sgt. Maj. Robert A. Canterbury, 402nd AFSB

Normally, when people read "Page 2" of the Power Line, they see an uplifting or insightful story on

something the Power Forward Team has accomplished.

Power 6 and I always try to recognize the accomplishments of the team because we are truly proud of what each and every one of you do on a daily basis. But we would be remiss if we didn't also bring attention to bear on some of the problems we face as well.

One of the primary focus points the senior leadership of the Army has identified for this year is eliminating sexual assault. Last year there were 1,641 cases of reported sexual assault in the U.S. Army, with 1,645 reported in 2010. That is a reduction of only four reported cases. This is unsatisfactory in this proud institution we serve.

We have accomplished so much on the battlefield that sometimes we forget that we have an equally daunting challenge before us in our own ranks. The Power Team has been fortunate that none of us have suffered this terrible crime, but must remain vigilant in our efforts to eliminate this threat.

Sexual assault violates every one of the Army Values we hold so dear. This is a crime from within, where we are most vulnerable, where we least expect it. But there are ways to combat this problem.

The Department of Defense (DoD) says it will soon require that sexual assault response coordinators and victim's advocates get trained and credentialed. It is vital that we report any and all sexual assaults that occur.

A recent military investigation found that many victims of sexual assault say they don't report the crime, and more than a third who report do not press charges against their alleged attackers. Until we aggressively pursue and eliminate this threat, we will always be vulnerable.



I fully expect every member of the Power Team to attack this problem and work toward making our Army a better place for our Soldiers, DA Civilians and Contractors.

We can most certainly make a difference, and I know we will.

Power 7



An emergency call box on Camp Arifjan. No member of the Power Team should ever have to deal with sexual threats or assault. Watch out for your teammates.

POWER LINE



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POWER LINE

Hawker Battery mission ends at Arifjan

**Story and photos by David Ruderman,
402nd Army Field Support Brigade
Public Affairs**

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — A two-man team working in a tent at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, saved the Army more than \$6.2 million over the past 18 months by charging batteries for re-use.

But now that American forces have departed Iraq and the bulk of associated retrograde operations are winding down, the time has come to pull the plug on the Hawker Battery program. The shop received its last deliveries from the field March 18 and will be out of business by the end of April.

"It's pretty much mission complete," said Michael Rogers, a turbine engine mechanic from Anniston Army Depot, Ala., who has served as the Hawker Battery project lead from its inception.

"Part of the equipment is going to OEF (Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan) to help them get a handle on their operations up there. Part of it's going to be divided up here in Kuwait. They're going to disperse it out to the units; it's unit level maintenance," he said.

The Hawker Battery program is structured as a cost-savings operation of the TACOM (U.S. Army Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command) Life Cycle Management Command that receives, inspects, services, exchanges and disposes of non-mission capable (NMC) wheeled and tactical vehicle batteries, and revitalizes those that can be to a fully recharged and fully mission capable (FMC) status in support of all units in South West Asia, said Michael Cohorst, quality assurance officer with



Steven D. Morris, a machinist from Anniston Army Depot, Ala., serving as assistant to the Hawker Battery program at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, looks over pallets of 12-volt batteries stacked for recharging.

Army Field Support Battalion-Southwest Asia (AFSBn-SWA).

"When we started this project we had an excess of about 10,000

batteries here in Kuwait," said Rogers. "You could call it a wartime situation. A lot of the units

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Photo by 541st Combat Sustainment Support Command

Lt. Col. William J. Cain (second from right), 541st Combat Sustainment Support Command commander, gives Soldiers last minute instructions before the start of a practical exercise segment of RPAT training at Camp Shelby, Miss., March 17.

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Based on this training shortfall, the 402nd AFSB was tasked to provide a mobile training team to take on the mission.

The 402nd AFSB in turn tasked the 541st CSSB to export their RPAT Academy to Camp Shelby on a short fused suspense to start training RPAT operations. Along with Soldiers from its subordinate unit, the 227th Quartermaster Company (227th QM), the 541st CSSB team arrived in Mississippi to set up the program on March 13.

"1st Theater Support Command, Third Army and ASG-

Kuwait were very helpful with quickly approving the funding in order for us to accomplish this mission," said Capt. LaShell Davis, 227th QM commander.

"We received this mission on short notice, but due to the efforts of the whole Camp Arifjan team and the 402nd AFSB we were able to meet the training requirements. We went from no orders, no government travel cards and no idea as to how the mission was going to come together to 29 personnel at Camp Shelby, Miss., within seven days of notice. It took total teamwork to make this happen," she said.

The first task the 541st CSSB had to accomplish was how to condense the nine-day

RPAT Academy course into five days to meet a tight training timeline. The solution was to extend the training day to a 12-hour format and to delete some classes that would not be applicable to the unit based upon how RPAT operations are being conducted in OEF.

This condensed training timeline ensured that Soldiers of the 427th BSB would be properly trained on RPAT operations before the start of their pre-deployment block leave on March 25.

The 541st CSSB launched a five member advance liaison (ADVON) to prepare training and

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support conditions for the main body, which would comprise two dozen Soldiers. The ADVON hit the ground running, coordinating classrooms, computers, containers, light sets, blocking and bracing material, and Mine Resistant, Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles to ensure the students would experience quality learning environment and the culminating practical exercise would simulate the functions of an actual RPAT yard.

The ADVON pulled the diverse resources together in less than a week and assisted the arrival of the 24-member main body, including Soldiers from 227th Quartermaster Company who had honed their RPAT skills in Iraq and Kuwait during Operation New Dawn. The RPAT Academy was up and running, beginning the training of 209 Soldiers from the 427th BSB as directed on March 13.

The first two days of the RPAT Academy focused on training Soldiers on the roles and responsibilities of a Wholesale Responsible Officer (WRO) at the RPAT yard. Students were taught to understand the process of assuming accountability of equipment by identifying, verifying, correcting, signing and distributing all documents required to complete the WRO process. The next two days revolved around the roles and responsibilities for each function in an RPAT yard. They were instrumental in ensuring that Soldiers understood the process they would be required to demonstrate during the practical exercise at the finale of the RPAT training.

Key areas studied in these two days were Army Reset Management Tool (ARMT), Theater Property Equipment (TPE) Planner, Primary Hand Receipt Holder, Responsible Officer, transportation, customs, rolling stock (RS) and non-rolling stock (NRS). The consensus of Soldiers attending the academy was that the training was not specific to any particular Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). It was taught in such a manner that, regardless of MOS, any Soldier could learn the material and feel comfortable with performing RPAT duties.

Wholesale versus retail

Getting the difference between the wholesale and retail sides of the accountability process posed the greatest hurdle for some students, but everyone came away with a good grasp of the process as a whole, said instructors from 227th QM.

It took a while "to understand the difference between the retail side and wholesale side, how it worked and the documentation involved with both



Photo by 541st Combat Sustainment Support Command

Sgt. Jenai Griffin, 227th Quartermaster Company, instructs a section of 427th Brigade Support Battalion Soldiers on how to find and record a generator serial number during RPAT Academy training March 16 at Camp Shelby, Miss.

processes," said 1st Lt. Elvin Santos.

"In my class it was hard for them to grasp the difference between the retail and wholesale equipment, and the different forms," said Staff Sgt. Gene Taylor.

"It's not easy for someone who has never worked supply to just start processing paperwork and understanding the different forms," said Sgt. Jenai Griffin. "The practical exercise gave them a better understanding of the whole operation and of the slides that the RPAT personnel used to brief them beforehand."

The practical exercise acted as a

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didn't have the equipment you need to recover these batteries."

For an individual unit to handle such a high volume of recharging it would have needed the proper equipment and the time to do it right, and that was simply not the case as American forces rolled out of Iraq.

"The amount of rolling stock coming through here was tremendous," said Rogers. "It's actually an offline operation that became established for a mission to handle a problem that came up. Now that the volume is under control they should be able to handle it."

The Hawker mission got rolling Dec. 1, 2010, at Camp Arifjan, said Rogers. He has teamed up as a duo with a series of assistants along the way, working with 36 PulseTech HD Pallet Charger recharging units. Each unit recharges 12 batteries at a time. Since getting started the Hawker team has received 29,610 units of which they have tested 28,160 through the middle of March.

"This was a challenge because it was never done on this scale before," said Rogers. "That's what they're running into in Afghanistan. They do have equipment, but what they have is single-battery chargers and it's just not enough to meet their demand."



Mike Rogers, a turbine engine mechanic from Anniston Army Depot, Ala., has lead the Hawker Battery program at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, since its inception in December, 2010, racking up a cost savings to the Army of nearly \$6 million.

The Camp Arifjan team recovered 54 percent of the inventory on hand. Each battery costs the government slightly more than \$400, and that adds up when they are disposed of in the tens of thousands. The total savings to the government to date in cost avoidance amounts to \$6,214,518, Rogers said.

"What we did for the Army was put together a full circle for the batteries," he said. "Plus it takes care of your excess inventory. There are no excess batteries on Arifjan, where there used to be 10,000 to 20,000."

To be returned to the active inventory, each battery must

meet two criteria: It must meet a crank-and-amp requirement, and a voltage requirement.

"When it won't meet those it goes out on a recycling contract," said Rogers. "Either way the Army gets paid."

As the program approached the goal of putting itself out of business, the charging units have been slated for recycling as well to missions where they can deliver a similar effect. Rogers said he has sent 16 of his 36 pallet chargers to units in Afghanistan. Several more will follow and the balance will be turned over to units in Kuwait to be distributed around the region.

"It's busy, lifting 88 lbs. all day," said Steven D. Morris, a machinist from Anniston who will be the last to serve as Rogers' assistant before the program closes out. "I wouldn't want to do it for 18 months, but it's something new to learn."

"We're on one of them other duties as assigned," said Rogers.

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HTTP://WWW.ASCHQ.ARMY.MIL/HOME/402.ASPX

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Photo by 541st Combat Sustainment Support Command

Master Sgt. Jerry Ross (left) and Spc. Renee Rostocil prepare Wholesale Responsibility Officer certificates during RPAT Academy instruction March 16, at Camp Shelby, Miss.

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catalyst to merge the four days of classroom training into an event that reinforced the ultimate learning objectives for each class. The practical exercise employed real equipment and produced actual 1348s (DD Form 1348, Documentation for Turn In) to support numerous Master Event Sequence Lists (MESLs) during the practical exercise.

The 1348s contained numerous errors that students had to identify and correct. They also had to identify the missing paperwork with each individual packet before they could start the physical turn-in of their equipment. Once the paperwork was straightened out, the equipment was

brought into the training RPAT yard where the Inventory Management Specialist validated the 1348 information was correct for the actual vehicle being turned in before accepting the piece of equipment. Only after that confirmation would the WRO sign off on the turn-in. The cadre of the RPAT Academy role-played customers during the turn-in process to add realistic stress to the transaction and to illustrate shortcuts that customers will try to take when turning in a piece of equipment.

Furthermore, the practical exercise focused training on loading procedures emphasizing the need for proper ground guides to ensure safety and efficiency.

Soldiers of the 427th BSB stated that the RPAT Academy

was the best and most realistic training they received during the entire mobilization process, and the most pertinent to their actual wartime mission.

The end state of the RPAT Academy's nine days of instruction on ground was 209 Soldiers trained and certified as WROs with a clear understanding of the skill set they will need to execute their mission in support of retrograde operations once they hit the ground in OEF.

This will allow the 427th BSB to leverage their capability in support of the CMRE mission and to make a positive impact immediately once in country.

Ready to roll out

"They have the basic knowledge to set up an RPAT yard, and I think it will depend on the mission, resources available and the RPAT yard configuration," said Santos.

"I think they will be able to grasp their job a lot better because they will have the knowledge they need to take over the RPATs there," said Taylor.

Within weeks of the training the 427th Soldiers were already in theater, putting their new skills to use.

"The ironic part about this entire story is, once the 427th personnel arrived in Afghanistan, they were greeted by and received additional training from some 227th QM personnel that were sent to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, said Davis, the 227th QM commander.

"According to the 227th QM personnel in Afghanistan, the 427th personnel . . . identified the patch with the training they received in Mississippi and spoke highly of the instructors and training they received from 227th QM at Camp Shelby."