



Redeployment Issue

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TALON



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By Major General Kevin P. Byrnes
*Multinational Division (North) and
1st Cavalry Division Commander*

I want to thank all the soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines for their hard work and dedication throughout our deployment in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Because of your tenacity and selfless service, we continue to maintain peace and stability in a region that has experienced

conflict for many years.

Now, as your stay here grows short, it's time to start thinking about redeployment to your home station, and transitioning to life back home. The leaders and staff at all levels have been working hard to make this transition as smooth as possible.

The units that will replace you will be arriving at staggered intervals. Upon their arrival, one week of right-seat ride training will take place. During this time, you will take your replacement under your wing and teach them the ropes. The week fol-

lowing is left-seat ride training; they will assume responsibility while you ensure they are ready for their mission. During right and left-seat ride training, you will be accomplishing a variety of redeployment tasks required before the plane ride home, such as cleaning Milvans, going through the soldier readiness process and packing.

My intent for this special issue of the Talon is to serve as a reference guide for you and your family. In it, you will find answers to many of the questions you might have about the upcoming redeployment, to include subjects such as finance, personnel records and awards. Keep this issue around as a quick reference guide, and send one home to family and friends so they can understand the redeployment process. They can also view the Talon On-line from the Task Force Eagle webpage at www.tfeagle.army.mil

This is a very exciting time for soldiers returning home. Following a smooth transition of authority, your replacements will be prepped for success, and you will be able to go home and recover before returning to your unit fresh, and ready to drive on. Thank you for a job very well done. **First Team!**



By Command Sergeant Major Paul M. Inman
Multinational Division (N) CSM

I want to take this time to thank all the leaders and soldiers, sailors, Marines, airmen and our civilian personnel of Task Force Eagle, for the best support that anyone could ask for during the deployment of the 1st Brigade Combat Team. I also want to thank the Chain of Command for making tremendous world-class quality of life improvements, and best of all, accomplishing the upgrades with the soldiers' welfare in mind. This allowed the 1st BCT to maintain its focus on the mission at hand, and plan for the redeployment of our soldiers **safely and efficiently.**

I ask that all leaders — from first line supervisors to company commanders — keep soldiers informed as to their return date to Fort Hood. This will allow soldiers to make plans for their reunion with their loved ones, and our single soldiers can make plans for reoccupation of their quarters. If planned right, our soldiers living in

the barracks should have their hold baggage delivered within the first day or two of their return. This is an important issue for single soldiers, and we as leaders must do everything we can to make this transition go smoothly.

We must continue to communicate with our rear detachments daily to provide them with guidance, and get things in motion for us. Our Family Readiness Group has done a superb job for us, and they can help with the reintegration of the BCT. To facilitate our departure from the theater of operations, the Division and Brigade staff sections have provided us with a well-planned redeployment order that has specified what tasks must be completed prior to departure, and when we return to Fort Hood. I ask that all leaders know what is expected of them and their soldiers to include weapons qualifications, SRPs and property and individual equipment inventories. **We must do all of this to standard!**

Lastly, we must ensure that the 2nd BCT is fully integrated during our right seat ride so that their leaders and soldiers can continue the high standards you have set: **The standard of the First Team! Thank you for all that you do everyday. FIRST TEAM! IRONHORSE!**

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1st Brigade Combat Team Commander

Redeployment is just around the corner for many soldiers assigned to Multinational Division (North); but while you are thinking about family and friends back home, it's important to stay focused on the tasks ahead.

I first want to say that you've all done a fantastic job. Everyone should be proud of the contributions they have made to the peace and stability of the region. Our deployment and operations were executed to the highest standard, and we've been working hard for a strong finish. This includes getting home safe with as little difficulty as possible.

A safe return includes preparing soldiers for their return to home station, including Soldiers' Readiness Packets, medical screenings, and the relief in place of the incoming troops. It also includes reception and soldier service, where soldiers are welcomed back, and go through a special "re-acquaintance" period to ensure that their equipment and administrative needs are in order. Block leave will follow. Finally, there is the recovery phase. Recovery includes equipment maintenance and 100 percent accountability of all deployed and home-station equipment.

Every soldier must establish the conditions to receive their replacements, and efficiently transfer the mission so the new combat team can continue the high standards that we have set. We must establish a thorough and precise process to make the transition as seamless as possible, and this will entail a deliberate plan that includes all our daily tasks. It is imperative that we make sure that the equipment that your replacements will be signing for is in top condition.

In addition to all the tasks associated with handing off the mission, soldiers will be required to complete the SRP, which has three main parts:

- **Finance.** Soldiers' finance records are verified to ensure that they have been receiving their entitlements.
- **Servicemembers Group Life Insurance.** Beneficiary's data may have changed either through a change in beneficiary, or a change in the address of the beneficiary of next of kin.
- **Medical Screening.** Medical screenings apply to all the soldiers that have served in Bosnia.



The entire SRP process should take less than two hours. Soldiers will also attend a chaplain reunion briefing that will address family issues; they will receive this briefing no earlier than 10 days prior to redeployment.

Before you can get on the plane home you must complete tasks such as packing, prescribed in the redeployment order, inventorying TA-50, cleaning weapons and accounting for equipment and property. You should also plan ahead by notifying your car insurance company of your return before redeploying so you can operate your vehicle immediately upon return to home station. Make leave plans in advance by setting aside money for travel to and from your leave destination, and develop a good travel itinerary that will allow you to travel safely to and from your leave destination.

When it's finally time to get on the plane home, we will fly out from Tuzla Air Base, where customs will perform its inspection. Following final manifest, soldiers will board a plane, which will fly to the closest airfield near your home station. If weather conditions will not allow aircraft to fly directly from Tuzla, soldiers will board busses and drive to Taszar and board flights there. This will make going home a lot quicker and less painful than it was coming here.

When we get back, we will get soldiers off the airplanes, get the weapons turned in, ensure proper accountability, and then release soldiers to their friends, family and loved ones as soon as we possibly can. You will come back the next morning to begin the process of getting back in the home station environment, which will include inprocessing, household goods delivery to the soldiers in the barracks, and personally owned vehicle retrieval from storage lots.

After all that is done, you will have earned a chance to take some time off, in the form of block leave. I encourage everyone to enjoy the spring season — go back and visit families, travel some, and take the opportunity to enjoy some well-earned time off. Keep yourself and your fellow servicemen focused on the tasks at hand, and the upcoming redeployment will be successful. First Team!



Personnel Info

By Captain Rick D. Wesler
Detachment A Commander
15th Personnel Services Battalion
3rd Personnel Group, III Corps

Congratulations to those servicemembers whose deployment is coming to an end. Questions concerning promotions, records and reassignments are no doubt coming to mind, and your friends and family will have questions.

While here in Bosnia in support of Operation Joint Forge, the Task Force Personnel Services Battalion will ensure all active duty records are updated accurately, and reflect each soldier's deployment. This includes tour credits, awards and duty assignments. However, it's in the best interest of each soldier to review their records at their respective home station to ensure that their tour credit, awards and duty assignments are annotated properly. At Fort Hood, soldiers can review their records either by appointment, or on a walk-in basis.

Giving credit where credit is due

Sergeant First Class Edna Dansby
Headquarters and Headquarters
Company, 1st Cavalry Division

TOUR CREDITS

Personnel who complete nine months in a continuous Temporary Duty Station (this includes Temporary Change Station status), or in isolated areas where tour lengths have not been established (includes Hungary and the Former Republic of Yugoslavia), may be credited with a completed short tour.

AWARDS AND RIBBONS

■ All soldiers that have participated in Operation Joint Guard or Operation Joint Forge for 30 continuous days are qualified to wear the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Medal.

■ Another award, the Armed Force Expeditionary Medal (AFEM), has been recommended and passed by Congress, and is currently under review by the Joint Chiefs of Staff as a Service Medal for Operation Joint Forge. The TFE personnel section will immediately disseminate a message to all units upon receipt of the AFEM when ap-

PROMOTION POINTS

Soldiers must verify promotion points awarded while deployed within the first 60 days of returning to their respective home station. Promotable soldiers must bring in documentation dated prior to their board so their total promotion points may be adjusted. *Promotion point increases will not be back-dated.* If the promotion points were not added at the appropriate time, and it's not the soldier's fault, and he or she could have met the Department of the Army cutoff scores, the soldier may request an exception to policy for promotion.

STABILIZATION

Soldiers deployed for 120 days or more are ineligible for unit deployments for a period of 120 days upon return to home station. Soldiers who served in "Operations other than War" for a period of 30 consecutive days or more are ineligible for OOTW deployments for the same period of time. *Local training exercises, major training exercises and the National Training Center are not considered OOTW deployments.*

Please do not hesitate to visit or call the 15th Personnel Services Battalion if you have any further personnel questions or concerns. The Sprint line number here in Bosnia is 762-7267.

proved for presentation.

■ Soldiers that have participated in Operation Joint Forge are authorized to wear the Armed Forces Service Medal.

Your supporting deployed or home station PSB will update and report your personnel records with the appropriate tour credit. Keep all source documents you are issued, such as unit move or TCS orders or endorsements, or any memorandum from your unit stating the date and duration you were deployed.

Your G-1 section can answer your questions, and may be reached here in Bosnia at 762-0043 on a Sprint phone.

Mission first, safety always

By Major Bobby R. Arrington
Task Force Eagle Safety Officer

It's time for redeployment, and most people can't wait to get home. Redeployment operations aren't limited to load planning, convoys or railhead activities.

Leaders must consider many elements of redeployment planning, such as risk management, movement preparation, and home station re-acclimation.

Proper preparation through sound planning, training and risk management can keep these operations from becoming an accident waiting to happen.

Unit redeployment operations should include risk management in all activities that involve soldiers. Analyze each operation and identify potential haz-

ards. Assess these hazards, and develop workable controls to reduce or eliminate them.

Railhead operations usually result in long workdays. Fatigue can be a killer when soldiers are moving vehicles onto railcars, and working high off the ground.

Leaders must be conscious of their unit's "OPTEMPO" status. Soldiers have a natural tendency to want to get home as soon as possible after a long deployment. Leaders must avoid the potential danger of shortcuts, especially when long hours and a stressful work environment may induce soldiers to hurry through their tasks. The results of hurrying could show up in improper maintenance procedures, dangerous

materials storage or injury fostered by fatigue. Leaders must ensure each soldier receives proper safety briefings, and that each soldier is held to standard at each phase of the redeployment.

Don't forget the risks associated with adjusting to an unfamiliar environment. Risks involved with returning to one's home station can't be neglected. Traffic back home isn't going 15mph. Allow yourself to become reoriented to the traffic conditions in your community.

The Task Force Eagle Safety Office has resource materials on the Local Area Network in the Exchange Public Folders under "1CD Safety." Other training materials are available through the Safety Center on the World Wide Web at <http://safety.army.mil>

You can contact the safety office in Bosnia by Sprint phone at 762-3382, or by MSE at 551-3382.

Staying on top of your finances

By Captain Kathy A. Underwood
Detachment A, 215th Finance Battalion

Right now, redeployment might seem like a complex blur. As matters start to come into focus, you'll no doubt have questions concerning pay entitlements and procedures. Hopefully, the following will help answer some of your questions.

You will see several differences on your Leave and Earnings Statements upon your return. Any affect deployment is going to have on your pay should occur *within 30 days* of your return to home station. If your extra entitlements for duty in Bosnia continue after your return, contact your unit PAC immediately and if necessary, your finance office, to correct overpayment.

Soldiers should look for the following entitlements to start or stop upon redeployment.

Start:

- Federal Tax Withholding (on the month after departure)
- State Tax Withholding when applicable (on month after departure)
- Rations Not Available (RNA), when soldier received it prior to deployment
- Partial Basic Allowance for Subsistence (BAS), when soldier received it prior to deployment

Stop:

- Per Diem
- BAS stops on issuance of a unit meal card, if applicable
- Certain Places Pay (formerly known as Foreign Duty Pay, enlisted only)
- Family Separation Allowance
- Hostile Fire Pay, on day of departure, but paid for full month
- Combat Zone Tax Exclusion, on day of departure, but exclusion is for the full month

SAVINGS

Savings Deposit Program (SDP) eligibility stops on the day of departure, but interest accrues for up to 90 days after Eligibility for SDP stops. If the 90-day limitation period ends on any day other than the last day of the month, interest will accrue through the last day of the preceding month. For example, if the soldier permanently departs the designated Certain Places Pay area on March 20, 1999, interest stops accruing May 31, 1999. To claim your SDP money, you must submit a written request to:

**Defense Finance and Accounting Service
Cleveland Center (DFAS-CL)
ATTN: Code FMCS
1240 East 9th Street, Cleveland, OH 44199-2055**

Include your name, social security number, branch of service, redeployment date, amount requested and when the payment is desired. If you request payment by check, you must provide your mailing address. If you desire your payment sent to your financial institution, include the account number, type of account (checking or savings), and the routing number. You must also indicate the reason for the request; such as to close out the account because the 90-day period after deployment is over, or to close out the account because you are no longer in the Operation Joint Forge Area of Responsibility. Telephone inquiries concern-



ing SDP accounts may be made to the following numbers: (216) 522-6545, or toll free at 1-800-624-7378, or DSN at 580-6545.

The \$80 Per Diem you received on your LES was only a partial payment. At the conclusion of your deployment, you must file a travel voucher to receive all remaining Per Diem. Most soldiers will initiate this travel voucher at their unit SRP and complete it during their final leg of travel home. Unit representatives will submit the completed vouchers for the entire unit to a finance representative as soon as they return to home station. *If a travel voucher is not filed, all interim payments of Per Diem become outstanding, and can be collected back.*

Upon return to home station, each soldier must submit a final Temporary Duty settlement voucher, which will contain the following items as enclosures:

- A completed DD Form 1351-2 (Travel Voucher), starting on initial date of departure from home station through redeployment.
- Copies of all TCS orders and amendments, if applicable.
- Copies of the unit manifests, departure and arrival.
- Copies of all DD Forms 1610 (TDY Orders) issued during deployment, and copies of the paid vouchers for the TDY settlement, if applicable.
- Copies of all advance, accrued or interim Per Diem and travel payments received since departure from home station.
- All Copies of DA Form 31 for leave taken during deployment.
- All receipts over \$75.
- All lodging receipts, regardless of the amount.

Reserve Component soldiers will receive a final finance briefing at their demobilization station. Reservists will receive a travel voucher, information on the settlement process, and the requirements for receipts and other documentation.

Your supporting finance office can convert Deutsche Marks to U.S. Dollars. We expect to be able to convert Bosnian Konvertible Marks to USD by March 1, 1999. Hungarian Forints will only be exchanged in the Tazar Finance Office and Croatian Kuna in the Zagreb Office.

As redeployment draws near, you may have other questions and concerns; that's fine, that's what we're here for. Pay a visit to your friendly neighborhood finance office for any help concerning these matters.

Legal matters – a little preparation goes a long way for returning troops

By Captain Steve Patoir

Task Force Eagle Claims Officer
Headquarters and Headquarters Company
1st Cavalry Division

And by Captain Jacquelyn Branham

Task Force Eagle Legal Assistance Attorney
Headquarters and Headquarters Company
1st Cavalry Division

As you prepare for your return home, there are a variety of legal issues that could arise. When it comes to legal matters, some simple planning now will minimize potential problems when you arrive home. There are two areas — shipment of personal items and Powers of Attorney — where preplanning is especially important.

SHIPMENT OF PERSONAL ITEMS

If you purchased items such as small televisions, VCRs, stereos or bicycles during the deployment, you may be authorized to ship them to your home station in containerized shipments on a Space Available basis. Soldiers are only authorized to ship items of a reasonable size and nature.

If you ship items in an authorized shipment, and the items are damaged or lost during shipment, you may be able to file a claim for the damage or loss. In order to file a successful claim, you must be able to prove that you initially possessed the item, and that the item was lost, damaged or destroyed during the shipment. You must also show that the damage was not the result of negligence on your part. Following these simple steps will make the claims process much easier if your property is damaged or destroyed.

You need to inventory the items you plan to ship, and record the inventory on a DA Form 4986. Then you must make sure that a member of your chain of command properly inspects the items on your inventory sheet, ensures that they are in working order, and annotates the inventory on the DA Form 4986. Once the inventory is complete and verified by a command representative, you need to make sure that you receive a copy of the DA Form 4986. Do not lose your copy of the inventory. You need to carefully pack the items you intend to ship since you are responsible for the careful packing of your personal property.

Upon arrival at home station, you must compare the items you receive with those listed on the inventory. At the time of delivery, you must have a command representative note any obvious loss or damage on their DA Form 4986. You have 70 days to notify the claims office of any loss or damage found that wasn't obvious after initial receipt. However, if you are returning to USAREUR, *you only have 10 days to notify the*



claims office of lost or damaged items. If you are returning to Fort Hood and need to file a claim, you may contact the III Corps Claims' Office at DSN 737-7722.

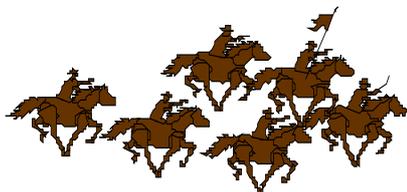
Do not throw away any damaged items. The claims office may want to inspect your property. Failure to provide the goods for inspection can jeopardize an otherwise successful claim.

POWER OF ATTORNEY

A second legal issue that requires consideration prior to redeployment is the Power of Attorney. If you made a POA prior to deployment, that POA is still effective until the expiration date on the POA expires. The person to whom you gave the POA can still use it as long as he or she has it in his or her possession, you have not revoked it, and the expiration date hasn't passed.

If your POA is still effective, you need to consider whether the person you gave it to still needs it. If not, you should consider revoking the POA. The best way to revoke it is by getting the original document from the person you gave it to. If you are unable to get the original POA back, you should fill out a revocation form. Upon your return home, you need to go to all the businesses, financial institutions, and other organizations where the person may use the POA, and show them the revocation form. This gives them notice that you have revoked the POA. If the business or other organization disregards the notice, you might have a cause of action against them. You should also put an advertisement in the legal notices' section of your local newspaper to show that you have revoked the POA. This will serve as additional notice to businesses and other organizations that you have revoked the POA.

If you have any questions or concerns about your POA, ask to consult with a member of the Legal Assistance Office.



FIRST TEAM

National Guard and Reserve

Redeployment for the Army Reserve and National Guard



By Staff Sergeant Dianna Leinberger
Task Force Reserve Component Liaison NCO

Army Reserve and National Guard units, and individual soldiers, will outprocess in nearly the same way as Active Army soldiers. However, there are significant differences upon return to the United States of America.

Most Reserve and NG soldiers will outprocess through the Continental United States Replacement Center at Fort Benning, Georgia; however, NG units that mobilized directly from their home station will return to that home station to out process.

There are five areas NG and Reserve soldiers should focus on for their return home:

MEDICAL

Army Reserve and NG soldiers will go through the Medical Surveillance Program prior to departing Bosnia. Soldiers processing through the MSP will be asked if they belong to the Reserves or NG. If so, his or her medical documentation will be provided for the trip to Fort Benning.

At Fort Benning, NG and Reserve soldiers will receive a medical screening. This will include a mandatory physical for the NG, who are required by law to have a "REFRAD Class A" physical before they are released from active duty. Reserve soldiers may receive a physical if a doctor directs it, or if they wish to receive one. Soldiers must sign a statement stating they have no medical conditions before they're released. Any Soldier that requires further medical care will remain as a medical holdover.

The soldier must have a Tuberculosis Tine Test 90 days after re-deploying. At Fort Benning

they will receive a letter authorizing a TB Tine at the
FINANCE

Finance is the next step. Each Reserve and NG soldier will file a final travel voucher at Fort Benning. It is important that soldiers keep track of any unresolved finance problems, and keep their supporting documentation, such as their Leave and Earnings Statement.

LEAVE

Reserve and NG soldiers must be re-deployed in time to take any accrued leave prior to their 270th day. Soldiers have the choice of either selling back their leave, or taking it as terminal leave. They will complete all outprocessing prior to being released on terminal leave, and will not be required to return to Fort Benning.

AWARDS

It's important that soldiers carry all supporting documentation with them to Fort Benning. For example, CRC cannot document the NATO Medal on the DD214 if the soldier does not have the NATO Certificate with them.

EMPLOYER SUPPORT

Employer support of the National Guard and the Army Reserve will also have representatives at CRC to assist soldiers when they return to their civilian careers. Their address is:

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
1555 Wilso Blvd., Suite 200
Arlington, Virginia 22209-2405

They can also be reached by phone at 1-800-336-4590, or by fax at (703) 696-1411.

For further information here in Bosnia, call the Task Force Eagle Reserve Liaison Office at 762-7185 on the Sprint phone.



Medical Redeployment issues



1st Lieutenant Sean S. O'Neil
Division Medical Operations Center

Redeployment conjures up a multitude of positive images in a soldier's mind. Home is instantly transformed from a distant memory to an anxiously anticipated destination a mere plane ride away. Often lost in the euphoria of redeployment are practical considerations such as medical check-ups and health assessments. Fortunately, the 1st Cavalry Division Medical Operations Center has a program in place to address the medical needs of redeploying peacekeepers.

While every effort has been made to limit the health risks associated with deployment to Operation Joint Forge, there are always risks associated with exposure to a new environment. In light of this, a medical surveillance program has been established for personnel deployed to the Balkans.

Medical and scientific professionals have evaluated the air, water and soil samples from several areas in Hungary and Bosnia. These studies, in conjunction with constant monitoring of health trends among deployed personnel, suggest no evidence of significantly increased health risks related to deployment to Operation Joint Forge. Nevertheless, in a continued effort to monitor and treat the health of personnel serving in this region, all soldiers and DoD civilians will complete the Medical Surveillance Program.

The redeployment Medical Surveillance Program is designed to accomplish several objectives. First, it will identify at an early stage any medical issues soldiers may have. It will provide prompt evaluation of health concerns, and early treatment of disease and injury. Also, this program will assess the success of preventive medicine interventions that have been instituted in Bosnia. Finally, the information collected will assist in preparation for future operations.

The Medical Surveillance Program will be conducted as part of the Soldier Reintegration Process within thirty days of the unit's redeployment to home station. The MSP will evaluate the soldier's mental and physical health status, track the occurrence of illness, injury and disease, as well as identify and assess potential hazards and actual exposure to environmental contaminants and

stressors.

Every soldier will complete three steps in the MSP process. During the first step of the MSP, soldiers will receive a Medical Threat Brief from a physician. This brief will inform soldiers about some of the medical threats they may have been exposed to during Operation Joint Forge, as well as the medical interventions instituted by the Task Force to minimize these threats. Also, the physician will brief soldiers on early warning signs of potential health problems that should be brought to the attention of medical personnel. Each soldier will receive a Medical Threat Fact Sheet for his or her personal records. There will not be a serum collection or "blood draw" during the MSP.

In the next two steps, soldiers will be required to answer a Mental Health Battery and a Medical Health Assessment Form. These forms are designed to assess a soldier's mental and physical health on the day of the MSP. The forms will be administered and then immediately reviewed by medical personnel. Various health care providers, including physicians, physician assistants and mental health providers will be present to review the soldier's health, discuss concerns and make referrals for further medical treatment.

Though dental screening will not be conducted at the MSP, it is an important aspect of medical readiness. Any person who has not had their annual checkup must go through their chain of command to obtain an appointment to see a dentist. Soldiers who are overdue for a dental exam are classified as Category IV and must complete the dental examination prior to redeployment.

In addition to the three-step MSP, soldiers and commanders must take certain actions to maintain medical surveillance and readiness. Every soldier deployed to Operation Joint Forge will complete a TB Tine skin test between three to 12 months following return to home station. Also, soldiers will complete an HIV test within two years of their last test. Finally, commanders will ensure that immunization standards are met.

Medical Surveillance is essential to ensure a fit and healthy force, and to prevent illness, disease, adverse stress responses and injuries that degrade mission effectiveness and warfighting capabilities. Active involvement in the medical screening process will ensure that health care concerns are promptly and properly addressed, and help make the return home as joyous as anticipated.

*The Task Force Eagle Web site
is located at
www.tfeagle.army.mil*

The Task Force Eagle web site offers breaking news and photos on its web site. The web site provides information concerning the Turk, Russian, and NORDPOL Brigades assigned to Task Force Eagle, as well as U.S. soldiers stationed in Bosnia. The web site also has a link to the Talon On-line. This site can be accessed from anywhere around the world and this issue can provide valuable information to family and loved ones back home.

Tips from the Provost Marshal

By Captain Twila Howard
Deputy Provost Marshal
1st Cavalry Division

PRIVATELY OWNED VEHICLES

After several months of driving only military vehicles, a personally owned vehicle can seem quite thrilling. Understanding the following information regarding your vehicle will make your POV retrieval a whole lot easier.

Coordination for vehicle pickup times will be arranged by the Rear Detachment Commander and the Provost Marshal's Office at Fort Hood. Information regarding pickup will be posted at a soldier's unit upon the soldier's return. The unit commander will coordinate pickup times prior to departing Bosnia, and ensure that the vehicle manager retrieves all of the vehicle packets from the logistics. The Rear Detachment Commander will coordinate transportation to the vehicle storage site. The vehicle pickup will not be a 24-hour operation.

Soldiers who stored their vehicle at the government vehicle storage site must have the following documentation available before the vehicle will be released:

- Inventory and documents prepared at the time the vehicle was parked
- Proof of current and valid auto insurance
- Current registration for the vehicle
- Valid driver's license

Before departing the vehicle lot, soldiers must complete an inspection of the vehicle for damage, dents, scratches or missing items. In the event that the inspection sticker has expired for their vehicle, the soldier must renew their registration within 24 hours. Soldiers should keep a copy of their deployment orders, a current and valid driver's license, and vehicle registration with them during this process in case they are stopped by the police.

It is recommended that servicemembers bring screwdrivers, pliers and an adjustable wrench to reconnect anything that was disconnected, such as batteries, to the lot. The lot will not have any gas, oil, air or anything else pertaining to vehicle maintenance.

BARRACKS

Returning to a place you can call home can be just as thrilling as getting your POV back; however, there are some guidelines you should follow to help make your transition to barracks' life go well.

Soldiers returning to the barracks need to conduct an inspection of their room as soon as they return. If any sealed item has a broken seal, items are missing from inventory, or any item shows evidence of tampering or entry, the servicemember needs to contact his or her chain of command immediately. Also, the military police must be notified to investigate the break-in. The servicemember and the chain of command must do a complete inventory for missing or damaged items.

CLEARING CUSTOMS

Before soldiers can get back to the states, equipment must be clean of Bosnian dirt and dust — and there's probably a lot of it.

Here are some areas that are commonly found deficient during customs inspections. Be sure to pay close attention to these areas of special interest while you clean your equipment and personal effects.

■ **Vehicles:** Ensure a thorough cleaning under the quarter panels (where the metal lip is), inside of the back bumper, inside the back seat storage areas, and the entire engine compartment.

■ **Milvans:** Commonly missed is the top of the Milvan. Remember that 100 percent of all items inside the Milvan are subject to search. Units must provide an area to layout all items for inspection. Suggestion: find a large tarp (or similar item) and set it in front of the Milvan. Have the detail put on rubber boots once

on the tarp; this will keep the tarp from getting soil or dirt on it. *Make sure a U.S. Customs Inspector is present and checks the Milvan prior to loading it.*

■ **Pallet:** Make sure a U.S. Customs Inspector is present during pallet building. Mixing civilian and military items is prohibited.

■ **Personal Baggage:** Remember, 100 percent of all items are subject to search. It helps if the following items are placed on top: footwear, sporting equipment, tents and e-tools.

One of the most common questions asked by soldiers is, "Exactly what can I bring back with me?"

The following is a list of items that have been declared **prohibited** by the United States Department of Agriculture and Customs, and cannot be taken back to the United States of America

from any foreign country:

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Dirt
- Soil
- Meat
- Cheese
- Illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia
- Plant material
- Untreated animal material such as furs and skins, dairy products or anything stuffed with straw or hay
- Untreated wood such as plaques or frames that are not stained or varnished (look for wood-worm holes)
- War trophies like weapons, parts of weapons and protective gear. This includes knives or bayonets and helmets
- Pornography showing penetration or child pornography, gambling devices or lottery tickets
- Treasonable material against the United States of America
- Switch blades or any private weapons.

Any violation of this policy will delay the customs process, and may result in criminal proceedings.



Post office redeployment issues

Captain Darrell K. McKown
15th Postal Unit Commander

Redeployment is drawing near, and that light at the end of the tunnel is getting brighter all the time — but don't let that light blind you. Take a good look around your personal areas. Notice anything new?

You may notice that you have more personal items than when you first began this journey. Most of you don't want to drag around your newly acquired collection of treasures, and you're probably looking for a solution.

Turn to the post office to ease your burden. There are guidelines and restrictions, however, that everyone must follow.

A parcel's size cannot exceed 130 inches girth. The measurement is once around the parcel, and one side. If you have any doubts as to the size or procedure, bring the parcel to the post office prior to packing it, and we will measure it for you to see if it meets the size requirements. Parcels may not exceed 70 pounds.

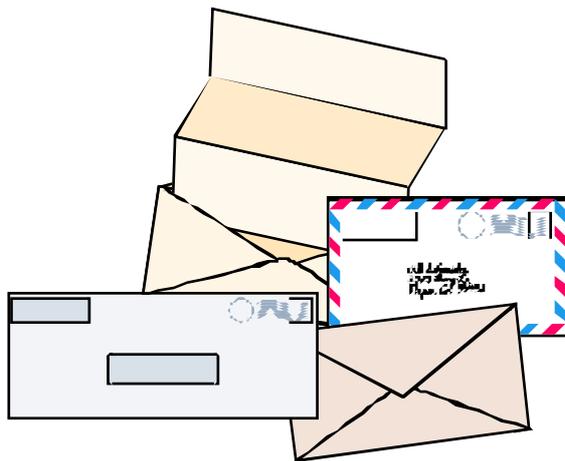
The United States Parcel Service now has a fee for oversized parcels. Priority Parcels can't exceed 108 inches girth. Oversized parcels have to go as Space Available Mail.

MAILING TA-50

If you want to mail TA-50, your commander must submit a letter of authorization to G-6. Your unit representative must call G-6 to make the appointments for official mail, and once G-6 has given your unit a date, a G-6 representative will assist you at the APO. G-6 appointments at the APO begin daily at 10:45 a.m., except Sundays.

REGULAR MAIL

You must put a return address on all letters you intend to mail. For the Free Mail privilege, you must use an Operation Joint Forge return address; otherwise, the letter will be forwarded as postage due or not forwarded at all. Return addresses are required on all letters and parcels sent through the mail. Mail going to the United States of America meets the criteria for Free Mail if it weighs less than 11 ounces and is personal correspondence, which includes letters, postcards and audio or video tapes. Free mail cannot be used to send mail to another APO.



3D PERSONNEL GROUP

MILITARY POSTAL SERVICE

Military Postal Service mail is for inter-APO addresses only. Properly identifying your mail is important; your mail could be returned to you if you do not place the proper designation in the upper right hand corner.

Other mail services

Services offered by the APO include Registered, Certified and Insured Mail. The fees are different for each due to weight, destination and how much insurance you want to purchase.

To speed the process for mailing parcels, we ask that you fill out and attach a customs label to the parcel prior to bringing it to the postal window. The customs label must include all contents of the parcel. Failure to properly label your mail could result in delay. Either customs label 2976 or 2976-A is acceptable.

Don't wait until the last minute to mail your belongings.

You may need time to correct parcels that are over the maximum allowable weight or that don't meet size restrictions. Please utilize the original container, bubble wrap and Styrofoam when possible to mail fragile items such as TV's and stereos. Remember, mailing items using Space Available Mail takes three to six weeks for delivery.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Fill out two DA 3955's (Change of Address and Directory Card) forms with your unit mail clerk two weeks prior to redeployment. Your mail clerk should keep one copy, and forward the other copy to the servicing Army Post Office. In the case of units redeploying, the mail clerk will pass off all DA 3955s to the incoming unit for redirection of mail. It is the unit's respon-

sibility to redirect mail.

Following these guidelines will help make your transition home easier, and will help you reach that light at the end of the tunnel.

The following items can't be mailed:

- Matches of all kinds. Lighter fluid and lighters containing fluid.
- Alcohol and intoxicating liquors.
- Explosive and flammable materials which may ignite or explode.
- Pistols, revolvers or any other type of firearms.
- Devices which are powered by dry-cell batteries, unless the batteries are removed or deactivated before mailing.
- Pens, bottle caps, and similar odd-shaped items when mailed in letter-style envelopes.
- Controlled substances such as any anabolic steroid, narcotic (cocaine, opium, synthetic narcotics), hallucinogenic (marijuana), stimulant or depressant drug.

The following list of items has been deemed contraband, and may not be mailed through the MPS.

- War trophies or souvenirs.
- Drug paraphernalia.
- Pornography.

For any questions regarding postal issues in Bosnia, please call 762-7104 using a Sprint phone.

It's a soldier and family reunion

Chaplain (Major) Eric Erkkinen
Task Force Eagle Chaplain

Your family is no doubt excited at the prospect of reunion. Reuniting with loved ones should be a happy and joyous occasion – a time to celebrate. By carefully considering a few important issues before returning to home station, soldiers can enjoy a successful transition home.

The Perfect Family

First of all, let me say there is **no** such thing as a perfect family. If there were, you would find...

- No emotional letdown
- Things haven't changed a bit
- Everything in the home works
- Finances are all squared away
- Every expectation is realistic
- Communications are clear and accurate
- Children are patient and understanding
- Spouses and children have adjusted well

THE REAL PICTURE

Things **have** changed. Because you stepped out of the stream does not mean that the water quit flowing. Since you are normal, this is what you may expect upon return ...

- You have adjusted to one schedule, family and friends have also
- Routine jobs that used to be yours were done while you were gone
- You may feel like an intruder
- Children, especially younger ones, have had a hard



time with your absence and will be demanding and impatient

- Spouses will act more independently
- Communications will be difficult
- Marriages that were troubled before deployment are not all better now
- Some things have "piled up" while you were away

WHAT DO YOU DO?

Be real! Understand that there will be some stress, frustration, and difficulties upon return. Every family experiences some transition woes. That does **NOT** mean things are "broke." Let me use the family car as an illustration:

If you did all the checks and maintenance on your car before you deployed and, over the past six months, your spouse had someone else check the oil, change the filters, rotate the tires, and all the other normal stuff, then the car should run fine when you return.

If your spouse ignored your car, it may still run, but not as well had it been cared for. In this scenario, you would have to do a lot of maintenance when you get home even if the car just sat in the garage the whole time. The battery may need a jumpstart, in addition to some other tinkering, just to get it started. Of course, you'd have to find the keys first ...

The keys to a successful reunion are:

- Do the best maintenance of relationships during the deployment period.
- Be patient upon return.
- Spend time and energy with each family member.
- Be sensitive in communication.
- Get help. If things still do not run smoothly upon return, call in some expertise. By that I mean the unit chaplain, the Family Life Center, or a counselor.

Your transition home can be all you've hoped for with a little careful consideration before your return, and patience during the reunion. Good luck and God bless.

