

The Outpost

U.S. ARMY YUMA PROVING GROUND, YUMA, ARIZONA 85365

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Air Delivery Branch performs realistic emergency scenario

By Ana Henderson

The saying goes, practice makes perfect and that was the intention of the recent medical evacuation full-scale exercise (FSE) hosted by the Air Delivery Systems Branch.

The practical training scenario held on Jan. 31 served as the culmination of a week-long safety stand down, where personnel took a week to review the standard operating procedures (SOP) through class work and hands-on learning.

"We take these opportunities to update our own SOP, get the care flight teams trained up as well as our own people up to speed, as far as the differences in protocols, tactics and procedures," explained Staff Sgt. Ahmed Elinbabi Airborne Test Force's (ATF) outgoing senior combat medic who served as an evaluator in the exercise.

The ATF falls under the Air Delivery Systems Branch which

tests cargo and personnel parachutes —meaning the crew has an inherently dangerous job. Some on the team have seen this scenario in real life.

"This started about six years

ago when we had a situation up here where we had a real-world emergency. We had a jumper who got hurt and we had to go through the procedures of getting life flight out here to get the jumper evacuated

from the drop zone," recalls Thomas Hall an Army veteran who now works as a test officer and test jumper with Air Delivery.

Hall goes on to explain, "The chain of command and leadership at the time thought it would be good to do exercises as we have Soldiers and civilians that rotate in and out, new folks coming on to get them exercise so if we do have a real-world emergency that makes things go smoother and everybody knows what they should be doing."

ATF's new Senior Medic Staff Sgt. Jonathan Harris took over on Feb. 1, so the training allowed him and ATF medic Spc. Christian Ramirez to familiarize themselves with the process. The last time the FSE took place in 2021 was when outgoing senior medic Elinbabi started his role at YPG.



The Air Delivery Systems Branch held a full-scale training exercise with a medical evacuation of a parachute jumper scenario on Jan. 31. The exercise served as the culmination of a week-long safety stand down, where personnel take a week to review the standard operating procedures through both class work and hands-on learning. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

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YTC Commander serves as keynote speaker at the 28th annual Camp Bouse Days ceremony

By Mark Schauer

U.S. Army Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering served as keynote speaker at the 28th annual Camp Bouse Commemoration Ceremony in the La Paz County town of Bouse on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2024.

The modern-day mission of Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) has a direct lineage with the Soldiers of the 'Greatest Generation' who tested the Canal Defense Light, a 13 million candlepower arc searchlight mounted in the turret of an M3 tank at Camp Bouse during World War II. The system was never fielded, but at the time the project constituted the second-most secret Army program after the Manhattan Project.

YPG is the last active Army installation within the World War II-era California-Arizona Desert Maneuver Area, of which Camp Bouse was a part.



U.S. Army Yuma Test Center (YTC) Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering served as keynote speaker at the 28th annual Camp Bouse Days Commemoration Ceremony in the La Paz County town of Bouse on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2024. (Photos by Mark Schauer)



"I'm proud that the work done at Yuma Test Center today is at the forefront of current Army transformation efforts," said Dering. "The cutting-edge artillery, combat

vehicles, and unmanned aircraft we test at Yuma Test Center today will ensure our Army retains overmatch against any aggressor nation in the world to keep our nation secure far into the future. It is an effort that I

feel is in keeping with the spirit of each generation of Soldiers that has served—from those of 'The Greatest Generation' who saved the world during World War II, to all that served in the following decades."

The Outpost

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Lt. Col. Shane Dering enjoyed mingling with the event goers before and after he served as keynote speaker at the 28th annual Camp Bouse Days Commemoration Ceremony in the La Paz County town of Bouse on Saturday, Feb. 10, 2024.

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Yuma Proving Ground Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Millare interacted with the Yuma community during a presentation at the Foothills Branch of the Yuma County Library, where he discussed the proving ground's position at the forefront of Army modernization efforts and sterling safety and environmental stewardship records before fielding questions from the audience. (Photos by Mark Schauer)

2024 YPG Distinguished Speakers Series



Community partners visit YPG to learn more about mission and bolster relationships



Employees from agencies including the Arizona Game and Fish Department, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge visited the proving ground on Feb. 13 to learn more about the installation's vital role in testing equipment for the Warfighter. Following a briefing by Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson, the community partners witnessed an artillery test featuring a Paladin self-propelled howitzer. "The visit is good for us and the visiting agencies because it bolsters our relationship and helps our mission and their mission at the same time," said Omar Silva, Chief of the Range Operations and Training Division. "The large amount of participation signifies how valuable the relationship is to our partners." (Photos by PAO staff)



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Systems Test Branch reestablishes itself as part of the Ammunition and Armament Division

By James Gilbert

U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground, which has contributed greatly to national defense and technological advancement through its testing the past 80 years, has undergone restructuring and a branch that was dissolved almost a decade ago has been reformed and brought back.

What used to be the Armor System Test Branch was deactivated in 2014 and re-established in April of 2023 as the Systems Test Branch (STB) with three of the group's original four components — and now part of the Ammunition and Armaments Division under Division Chief Tony Gingras.

“We, unfortunately, are basically having to rebuild the Branch again from scratch. It has been a challenge, but we are getting there,” said Chief John Bacon. “We are getting help from other sections and people are doing what they can to get us to be where we need to be.”

Bacon went on to describe it as a “growing concept,” saying “It is like being an infant. We must crawl before we walk.”

In its current configuration, the STB is responsible providing trained operators for testing tanks and other combat vehicles, and the firing of everything from 9mm small arms all the way up to 120mm tank rounds, including rocket propelled grenades, semi-automatic sniper rifles, Bradley Fighting Vehicles, and Counter-Unmanned Aircraft System known



Charles Lott, of the System Test Branch, (center) performs a bore sighting of the gun barrel of an M1-A1 Abrams tank prior to a firing test. Also pictured are Direct Fire Team Lead Hector Vergara (top right) who is speaking to the driver of the tank while a coworker (bottom right) looks on. (Loaned photo)

as CUAS platforms.

The Branch, which has 14 team members augmented by contractors, also conducts direct fire tests at a variety of range locations on post and around the world and maintains sophisticated software, electronics, targeting equipment, and GPS, as well as a variety of tactical communication systems.

“We shoot, move, and communicate. We support about

everything except artillery,” explained Mobility Lead Chris Ades. “Just about any system that can see its target, we shoot it. If it is moving and has a turret, we are using it. If there are communications systems being used, most of the times it is us doing it, whether it is long-range radios or using satellites.”

Bacon, who has been in his position for ten months now, stressed that all the testing the STB does,

whether it is production acceptance or developmental, is meant to simulate a mission a Soldier is likely to experience on a battlefield.

To reform the STB mobility, direct fire and tactical communications all had to be brought back together. The only original component that was not included was armor system test team (turret equipment specialists), which is still a part of the Maintenance Division.

Armor systems test team was essentially the mechanic component and not having them attached to the STB anymore has slightly changed the mission. Now, instead of fixing problems on their own as they once used to, operators must report it and then work closely with turret mechanics so that they can make the repairs.

“The guys out in the field, doing the actual testing are all experienced systems operators,” Bacon said. “They are combat veterans who have been on the battlefield. They have the experience and know what they are doing.”

Although STB currently still shares office space inside the Armament Branch building, Bacon said they have always been able to complete their vital missions, which is testing weapons systems and equipment the warfighter depends on.

“As the Branch Chief I’m just here to take care of them and make sure they have everything they need,” Bacon said. “We are still essentially trying to build our space, get our shop together, and create a high-performing team, while getting everything up and running.”

In the meantime, Bacon said he has been developing standard operating procedures for the branch and reviewing the policies and procedures that were once used to see if they can be repurposed and put back in place.





Two Soldiers from Yuma Proving Ground's elite Airborne Test Force recently re-enlisted for six more years. Standing at attention with fellow Soldiers looking on, and silhouetted by an American flag, Sgt. Casey Simmons (front right), and Sgt. Efrain Laureano (back right) raised their hands once more and repeated their oaths to support the Constitution of the United States. The ceremony was held at the Airborne Test Center on Feb. 7, 2024, with Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Perry administering the oath. (Photo by James Gilbert)

Airborne Test Force holds dual re-enlistment ceremony

By James Gilbert

Two Soldiers from Yuma Proving Ground's elite Airborne Test Force (ATF) re-enlisted for six more years each so they could continue their service to the nation.

Standing at attention with fellow Soldiers looking on, and silhouetted by an American flag, Sgt. Casey Simmons, and Sgt. Efrain Laureano both raised their hands once more and repeated their oaths, saying that they solemnly swore to:

"Support the Constitution of the United States, against all enemy's foreign and domestic," and that they would "bear true faith and allegiance to the same."

The ceremony was held at the Airborne Test Center on Feb. 7, 2024, with Chief Warrant Officer David Perry administering the oath.

Before reciting the oath to Simmons and Laureano, he told them that he thought they both showed promise and potential for their futures in the Army, and that their commitment provided security for their families.

"I'm glad you are doing this," Perry said. "I'm looking forward to hearing about how you have decided to use your time in the military."

Although Laureano, who has been in the Army seven years, and

Simmons, who has served eight, had their own reasons for reenlisting, the two Soldiers both spoke about what they have enjoyed the most about the profession of arms they had chosen.

"It is easy and straightforward about what to do every day, and you meet some lifelong friends," Simmons said. "What we do is fun. We get to skydive for free."

Laureano, who said he liked his job and wanted to continue doing it added that, "we forge bonds and create connections between our different duty stations, forming a lifelong brotherhood that even extends to those we no longer serve alongside."

As for their plans for the future, Simmons hopes to become an instructor with the Military Freefall School, so he can pass along his hard-earned knowledge to the next generation of paratroopers.

Laureano, however, imagines himself soaring through the sky, executing flawless maneuvers, and inspiring crowds around the nation, so he hopes to join the Golden Knights, which is the Army's renowned demonstration and competition parachute team.

Both also acknowledge that they are considering becoming career Soldiers.

Airborne Soldier reenlists while in flight



Amidst the roar of engines and the gusts of wind, jumpers from the esteemed Airborne Test Force witnessed the remarkable reenlistment ceremony of fellow Soldier Staff Sgt. Kwame Scaife. The ceremony took place Feb. 13, 2024 inside a C-130 aircraft soaring 12,500 feet above Yuma Proving Ground. (U.S. Army photos)



Scaife, who has served 15 years in the U.S. Army, reaffirmed his commitment to continue serving the country by signing up for another three years. Chaplain Maj. Ryan Pearse officiated, with his words echoing throughout the aircraft. Afterwards, both Scaife and Pearse parachuted out. Master Sgt. Donald Bullock said afterwards that while this type of ceremony is common for an airborne unit adding that, "this is the first time in the year that I have been here that this has happened."

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Yuma Proving Ground 2024 Organization Day!

Yuma Proving Ground employees took a pause from work on Feb. 15, 2024 to participate in the 2024 Organization Day to build some esprit de corps. The workforce was spread between Cox Field, the Fitness Center, and the Coyote Lanes Bowling Alley as they competed in a variety of games to claim the coveted Commander's Cup trophy. (Photos by PAO Staff)

Commander's Cup Champions



1st Place
M&W 67 points

2nd Place **3rd Place**
ASET 52 Points **CASD 27 Points**

| Game: | Winning Team/Player: |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Cornhole..... | M&W1 |
| Basketball Free Throw | Health Clinic |
| 3-Legged Race | ASET/Air Delivery1 |
| 3-On-3 Basketball | M&W/M&W1 |
| Ping Pong | M&W/Lu Nguyen |
| Football Thow Relay | M&W/M&W1 |
| Longest Football Throw | ID/Marcus Neal |
| Family Feud..... | ID/Team Biscuit |
| Bowling | S2/The Leftovers |
| Drunk Cart | |
| Obstacle Course | ASET/Air Delivery1 |
| Tire Flip..... | M&W/Kermit Okamura |
| 2-On-2 Volleyball..... | M&W/M&W1 |
| Land Ski | ASET/Atf1 |
| Closest To the Pin Chip | CASD/Isaac Rodriguez |
| HMMWV Push..... | M&W/M&W1 |
| Sandbag Buddy Relay | M&W/M&W2 |
| Tug-O-War | M&W/M&W1 |
| Wacky Relay | CASD/Las Flamas Blancas |





Civilian Service Commendation Medal



Yuma Proving Ground Commander Col. John Nelson and Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Millare presented Jonathan Olbert with a Civilian Service Commendation Medal on the afternoon of Feb. 15, 2024. Millare also presented Olbert with a coin. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

40 Years of Service



Yuma Test Center Commander Lt. Col. Shane Dering presented Ronald Brown with a certificate and pin for his 40 years of service to the U.S. government on Feb. 15, 2024. Brown served 19 of those years at Yuma Test Center in the Test Support Division. (Photo by Ana Henderson)

Blind date with a book



The Yuma Proving Ground Library team hosted a "Blind Date with a Book" event on Valentine's Day. The event featured books with their titles covered and only a brief description. They were divided up by genre and age categories. Participants would then select a book to take home, but not before taking a picture with their match. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

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Antiterrorism Awareness Corner

Know your vulnerabilities

By Robert Barocio

Vulnerability assessments are an essential tool for identifying potential risks and hazards in your daily household activities. By conducting a vulnerability assessment, you can identify potential hazards and take steps to mitigate or eliminate them.

The first step in conducting a vulnerability assessment is to identify potential hazards. This can include anything from fire, electrical or even hazards like natural disasters. Once you have identified potential hazards, you can then assess the likelihood and potential impact of those hazards. This will help you to prioritize your efforts and focus on the most significant risks.

Once you have identified potential hazards and assessed their likelihood and potential impact, you can then develop and implement strategies to mitigate or eliminate those risks. This can include anything from installing smoke detectors to securing loose electrical cords to creating an emergency preparedness plan.

Another important aspect of vulnerability assessments is resource management. You must be able to manage resources effectively to ensure they are being used in the most efficient and effective way possible. This includes managing personnel, equipment, and other resources to ensure that they are being used to their fullest potential.

Effective communication is critical to the success of a vulnerability assessment. You must be able to

communicate potential risks to key stakeholders, including family members, neighbors, and emergency responders. This will help to ensure that everyone is aware of potential risks and is taking appropriate steps to mitigate them.

Finally, it is important to be flexible and adaptable when conducting a vulnerability assessment. You must be able to adapt to changing circumstances and respond quickly to emerging threats. This requires a high degree

of flexibility and the ability to think creatively to develop effective strategies for mitigating risks.

Vulnerability assessments are an essential tool for identifying potential risks and hazards in your daily household activities. By identifying potential hazards, assessing their likelihood and potential impact, and developing and implementing strategies to mitigate or eliminate those risks, you can help to create a safer and more secure environment for yourself and your loved ones.

For question contact me, Robert Barocio, your Army Test and Evaluation Command Antiterrorism Officer at (928) 328-3232.

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TEST

FROM PAGE 1

“It’s really good for us to get this type of training in. I think it’s good for everyone to see what we are capable of, what we can do, and it shows us what we need to work on as well,” remarked Harris.

Key players in the exercise were those who would be involved if the remote medical evacuation scenario happened in real life. Air Delivery Systems Branch personnel, ATF Soldiers, civilian riggers/test jumpers, range control, mission control, a Military Freefall medic and Air Methods care flight.

When an emergency happens the Drop Zone Safety Officer (DZSO) calls Range Control. The operator there calls in the care flight. Hall explains, the DZSO plays a pivotal role as the sole communication on the ground.

“Once the aircraft gets near the scene, range control will patch their frequency over our DZSO ground frequency so our DZSO can talk directly to the helicopter, so he’ll exercise getting the aircraft in here.”

Dangers of landing in a rugged environment include a safe location to land the helicopter and possible brown out conditions where dust kicks up and the pilot cannot see.

At the drop zone, the first set of jumpers landed with no issue. During the second flight a jumper landed far from the intended drop zone and stayed on the ground. The ATF DZSO and medics immediately mobilized jumping on their off-road



The Airborne Test Force (ATF) falls under the Air Delivery Systems Branch which tests cargo and personnel. In the training scenario at the drop zone a jumper landed far from the intended drop zone and stayed on the ground. The ATF Drop Zone Safety Officer and medics immediately mobilized jumping on their off-road vehicles as the Mobile Medic Unit followed. (Photos by Ana Henderson)

vehicles as the Mobile Medic Unit followed.

Each role player had evaluators alongside them with a clipboard assessing their actions and feeding them information on the patient’s condition for the scenario. Once the medics knew the extent of the mock injuries the Soldiers and civilian riggers worked to stabilize the mock injured jumper for transport to a trauma center. The ground crew had 25 minutes or so to prepare the patient for transport. Having the patient prepared for loading on to the aircraft makes the pickup more time efficient for the helicopter crew. This is where one of those lessons learned came into play.

“Today a big issue we had was the spine board. Realizing that it doesn’t fit is really good for us to know, so the next time something real happens

we are prepared and have that patient on the bird a lot faster than we did

today,” explained the senior medic.

Overall, those involved appreciated it’s value.

DZSO Staff Sgt. Anthony Apadaca said after the exercise was over, “Today was pretty realistic training, it was really good training for everyone on the ground, not just the medics and myself, but all the other jumpers. It keeps us sharp and ready for real life incidents.”

Harris added, “The best thing for us to do is treat everything as if it’s real, regardless of if it’s training or not; we train how we fight. If we go into this like it’s fake and don’t take it seriously, it really diminishes our capabilities as medics. So, we do our best to always go into every scenario as if it’s real. It really helps when everyone else is taking the training serious as well. It was really good practice for us.”



Key players in the full-scale exercise were those who would be involved if the remote medical evacuation scenario happened in real life. Air Delivery Systems Branch personnel, Airborne Test Force Soldiers, civilian riggers/test jumpers, range control, mission control, a Military Freefall medic and Air Methods care flight. During the training scenario as in real life, the ground crew had 25 minutes or so to prepare the patient for transport. This is where one of those lessons learned came into play. “Today a big issue we had was the spine board. Realizing that it doesn’t fit is really good for us to know, so the next time something real happens we are prepared and have that patient on the bird a lot faster than we did today,” explained Senior Medic Staff Sgt. Jonathan Harris.

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