



NATO
OTAN

HEADQUARTERS
Allied Force Command Heidelberg



THE 2012 SUMMER EDITION
OBSERVER



SERVING HQ FC HEIDELBERG
CAMPBELL BARRACKS, HEIDELBERG, GERMANY

Commander's Corner



LTG John W. Morgan III

It has been an exciting year filled with a wide assortment of missions which showcased the headquarters' incredible dedication and hard work. I would like to focus on and highlight the headquarters' unique efforts as a force provider. It is truly befitting a headquarters with such a remarkable history.

Most notably, Allied Force Command Heidelberg successfully supported the operational missions of the International Security Assistance Force, Operation Unified Protector and Kosovo Force. We have relentlessly prepared the NATO Response Force to undertake crisis management operations, and

we continue to professionally execute our duties for Combat Readiness Evaluations. We have been steadfast advocates for the land component within the NATO Command Structure, while demonstrating outstanding leadership through our participation in a myriad of conferences and exercises across the NATO Command Structure and the NATO Force Structure.

We now begin to look forward to the headquarters' final chapter as NATO transforms its Command Structure. Allied Force Command Heidelberg, with all of its NATO and Partnership for Peace contributing nations, will be decisively engaged over the next nine months with the transition, deactivation and ultimate closure of this headquarters. We have excellent plans to accomplish these extensive and difficult tasks. In the midst of this process, it is my expectation that Senior National Representatives work with their respective Nations to take care of personnel and families.

The articles in this edition promote reflection on the many successful accomplishments of Allied Force Command Heidelberg. We are a valued member of the NATO Command Structure because of what this headquarters does routinely for the Alliance. It is an honor and indeed a great pleasure to serve with you as contributors to international peace and security. Thank you for a job well done!

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Command Sergeant Major's Corner

Eighteen months ago I put pen to paper and produced my first article for the Observer. Since that time I have watched this HQ grow and transform from an ISAF focus, to NATO Response Force (NRF) certification, and now we're transferring capabilities to a new headquarters and closing the doors on this one.

Our ISAF contingents are safely home with our last two remaining members due home very soon. We also have four members supporting NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR) and we are watching over them closely.

NRF is on standby to go out the door if the need arises and I know they will do so without failure. This great success resulted from preparations made by our Forward Support Element (FSE) in Lithuania.

The FSE itself demonstrated its own value and now FSEs are a desired commodity in other NATO HQs. I want to say job well done by all of our FSE members under the dynamic leadership that they have.

A year ago the SACEUR charged his Command Senior Enlisted Leaders (CSEL) with the task of implementing the NCO guidance within units. His intent was NATO-wide recognition of the relevance of the NCO Corps. I believe we have made great strides in this area.

We are monitoring schedules and scheduling training and education for NCOs in both Switzerland and the NATO School Oberammergau (NSO) so that members obtain qualifications and receive accreditation. In doing so, we have put more tools in our toolbox and we can do our jobs to a higher degree of proficiency.

We hosted a first of its kind Bi-Force Command, Senior Enlisted Conference (SEC) in concert with the Bi-Force Command, Corps Commanders Conference. The SEC resulted in two NATO Force Structure units formalizing a Peacetime Establishment (authorized duty position) change that created a CSEL position as a primary position within the unit - a great outcome!

Another rare event which was only made possible by the collective efforts of our NCOs was our Professional Development session at Normandy. My goal from this training was to create an environment to strengthen our communications with each other and to return with a more effective and cohesive NCO Corps.

We organized, managed and executed this task without problem. We raised funds to offset the cost to all of our members, ensuring we produced a first class event. Our NCOs briefed at every venue to a very professional level with no outside assistance.

I am very proud to announce we achieved success. This HQ reaps the benefits of that training every day. The results are in every subunit and office I go to visit, and we also achieved "buy in" from the Officer Corps which has strengthened our HQ even more.

We have a well established Sergeants Major council and a National Representative council which is becoming very productive. These two councils allow us to inform, and be informed to support the chain of command at all levels - another show of solidarity by the NCOs to support our leadership.



CSM, Chief Warrant Officer Mark Saulnier

In closing, I look forward to working on the details of our closure and transition with each and every one of you with a view of having some very special fall events to mark this historical time we are part of.

Until the next time, be safe and remember, job first - family always!



Allied Force Command Heidelberg non-commissioned officers participate in a remembrance ceremony as part of their Professional Development Exercise at Normandy, France, April 16-20.

COS Operations



Maj. Gen. Hubert De Vos

Allied FC Heidelberg faced quite some challenges in the last 12 months. It was an extremely dynamic second half of 2011 and without any doubt an exciting first half of 2012.

This Headquarters contributed tremendously to several NATO missions. Our two-year engagement in ISAF, where our HQ filled 97% of its foreseen slots, ended beginning of 2012 with the return of Rotation 2B. In 2012 our HQ continued to assist the ISAF mission with expertise during several training events. During the second half of 2011 we also contributed to Operation Unified Protector with up to 25 Staff officers and NCO's. In addition we supported other missions like KFOR with five people until Aug 2012.

The second half of 2011 was the culminating period of our intensive NRF preparations for the NRF standby in 2012 with a team of 205 members of the HQ. The roadmap to success for NRF certification was executed by our HQ providing the FwdE and JFC Brunssum the main HQ together being one seamless HQ. Our FwdE did a tremendous job in building up and organizing the FwdCP 156 in Lithuania. This was done with great skill and was key to the success for the exercise SFJE.

In 2012 we continued our NRF effort with mainly the OLRT exercises, our Focused Functional Training in May and our Theatre Engagement Cell of the FwdE sending a team to the CIMIC Centre of Excellence in Enschede during the month of July.

We also provided support for the NRF certification of NDC-GR as NRF LCC and supported this same exercise "Brilliant Ledger" with our JLSG as Secondary Training Audience.

2011 and the first half of 2012 were extremely challenging, but the objectives were met with success to perform all our duties. We needed to task-organize ourselves in order to have the Human Resources set for success and continue with the same professionalism and ambition to support the execution of the three main remaining HQ priorities: Transition, CREVAL and HQ Closure.

COS Transition



Maj. Gen. Richard Rossmanith

Starting December 2012 NATO will again have a dedicated Land Command within its Command Structure. The aim is to strengthen the Alliance's Land Competency at the strategic level.

While the overall transition process is under the ownership of SHAPE, Force Commands Heidelberg and Madrid have been tasked to ensure that all available Land expertise is being transferred from the current structures to future Land Command Izmir (LCIZ). Therefore all land-related tasks and activities between both Force Commands had to be identified, categorized and coordinated, and will finally be transferred to the new NATO Command Structure entity.

To ensure that no land-specific knowledge is lost during the Heidelberg and Madrid deactivation and closure process, a Stand-Up Team will be established in Izmir already from July this year. Its main task is to absorb, apply, translate and internally distribute the

information gained.

The knowledge transfer cannot be done within a couple of weeks, but will take several months. The planning started late last year, and is currently still ongoing. This task is occupying all functional teams and working groups within our HQ, under coordination by the Transition Working Group.

The transfer requirements can range from a simple hand-over of files up to the establishment of a left seat/right seat mentorship relationship, allowing for a close cooperation between the two existing Force Commands and the Stand-Up Team.

To recognize and strengthen the Bi-Force Command aspects of transition, soldiers from both Heidelberg and Madrid regularly met over the last months in order to ensure a seamless coordination.



Maj. Gen. Richard Rossmanith and Brig. Gen. Olivier Rittman exit the aircraft after completion of tour support of HQ International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

Allied Force Command Heidelberg Headquarters Personnel Return Home



Allied Force Command Heidelberg service members stand proudly as they wait to reunite with their families after returning from a deployment to International Security Assistance Force – Afghanistan, Jan. 26.



Allied Force Command Heidelberg service members and their families gather together after redeployment from Headquarters International Security Assistance Force – Afghanistan, Jan. 26.

Service members from Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg welcome the second group of Rotation 2B to return from HQ International Security Assistance Force – Afghanistan.

Article by
Capt. Tamara Gonzales

Photos by
Staff Sgt. Dwight Chaney

January served as a historic month for service members of Allied Force Command Heidelberg as they completed a two-year rotation in support of International Security Assistance Forces — Afghanistan Headquarters.

“Our team did really great, providing added value to the headquarters and delivering what was expected, a highly-capable team,” said Maj. Gen. Richard Rossmanith who served as the International Security Assistance Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Stability. “The battle is fought by the troops on the ground who need the right guidance and support. We provided that. We created the right framework for our troops so they could do their job.”

Throughout the past two years, the headquarters personnel filled more than 350 duty slots with a goal of creating conditions so that Afghans can regain stability in their country. The headquarters personnel’s deployments ranged from three to sixteen months with Rossmanith being deployed the longest.

Other general officers deployed during this tenure included Belgian Maj. Gen. Hubert De Vos, serving as Deputy Chief of Staff, Resources, Dutch Brig. Gen. Leo Beulen and

French Brig. Gen. Olivier Rittmann who alternatively served as Chief of Combined Joint-Operations for one year each.

While these officers served for their countries and the common good of the region, so did many others. The United States, Germany, Canada, the Czech Republic, Spain, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway, Italy, Belgium and Poland contributed to the headquarters role in the ISAF mission during this time. Additionally, service members from Greece, Romania, Turkey, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Bulgaria also deployed.

Furthermore, personnel from other NATO headquarters volunteered including Joint Force Command – Lisbon, FC-Madrid and JFC-Naples.

This mix of nationalities shows a commitment to peace and stability by the NATO member nations that contributed to the ISAF mission during the headquarters deployment.

“Our headquarters had to be more flexible, supporting four deployment cycles including deployments and redeployments,” said Belgium Commandant Filip De Craemer serving as a liaison officer with the unit’s human resource office.

Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) issued the mission in mid-summer 2009 and Heidelberg began the mission in January 2010. Prior to the mission, service members conducted national pre-

deployment training as well as international exercises over a six-month time frame and continued with this training over the past two years ensuring the headquarters personnel were battle ready.

Force Command Heidelberg (FCHD) service members were the first NATO unit to lead the ISAF mission from August 2003 to February 2004. The Headquarters personnel took over the mission again from July 2007 to August 2008. During this time, approximately 200 soldiers and civilians deployed in support of the Standing Headquarters of ISAF in order to fill core battle staff positions in support of ongoing military operations.

There will remain a small contingent of headquarters personnel in Afghanistan in support of the ISAF mission.

“Congratulations on a job well-done”, said Allied Force Command Heidelberg Commander LTG John W. Morgan III. “You have a lot to be proud of.”

Allied Force Command Heidelberg service members, having just returned from Afghanistan, attend reintegration training in order to equip themselves with the tools to support the unit's mission.

Last ISAF Rotation Reintegrates into Headquarters

By
Lt. Col. James Cole

Photos by
Staff Sgt. Dwight Chaney

The last rotation of Allied Force Command Heidelberg members returned from Afghanistan in support of the International Security Assistance Force there. Now these service members begin a new part of their lives, reintegration.

ISAF rotation 2B members conducted reintegration training 5 to 8 March 2012 at Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg.

The event was kicked off by welcoming remarks from Allied Force Command Heidelberg Commander LTG John W. Morgan III who offered a warm welcome home and a "job well done". He further spoke to the returning members about his priorities for 2012 and how he wants all of them to hit the ground running, starting with this training. He also emphasized the importance of each returning member of this headquarters, knowing exactly where he or she fits into the organization, whether in a working group, functional team or in a leadership position. He also stressed that each individual is to know the specific requirements expected of them.

The first two days of reintegration training consisted of collective classes including 17 briefings ranging from the headquarters' new task organization to the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) Combat Readiness Evaluation later in the year.

Other subjects of note were the headquarters' transition of land competencies to the new Land Command Izmir and the organization's responsibilities during the current NATO Response Force standby period. The headquarters closure working group lead gave a briefing to include a timeline of what the unit plans regarding its future transformation.

The training and exercise functional team lead also gave a 2012 calendar overview including an exercise participation summary. The remainder of the reintegration training

was conducted at the working group, functional team and cell level, focusing on the daily scope of individual responsibilities. At the week's conclusion all of the training objectives were met and all rotation 2B members were comfortably "back in the saddle" and efficiently performing their jobs in support of the Allied Force Command Heidelberg mission.



Commander Allied Force Command Heidelberg LTG John Morgan III welcomes home the headquarters members recently redeployed from Afghanistan in support of International Security Assistance Force.



Allied Forces Command Heidelberg Play Role in Operation Unified Protector

Article by
Capt. Tamara Gonzales

Photo by
Staff Sgt. Dwight Chaney

Operation Unified Protector ended at midnight on Oct. 31st following deliberation and agreement by the North Atlantic Council, the lifting of mandates by the United Nations, a campaign by NATO to prevent threats to civilians in Libya, and after a little help from Allied Force Command Heidelberg.

In the final four months of Operation Unified Protector, thirty-eight members augmented the Combined Joint Task Force Unified Protector headquarters in Naples Italy.

They represented twelve different nations. A total of 28 NATO countries and four OUP partner nations: Lebanon, Qatar, Sweden, and United Arab Emirates contributed to the ad hoc command that has now dissolved with the successful completion of its historic mission.

FC Heidelberg members served in myriad positions including logistics, psychological operations, intelligence, maritime planning, targeting, public affairs and other staff support billets. While most deployed to OUP for one set time, one actually returned to Italy on two subsequent deployments. Tours ranged from a couple of weeks to one with over 131 days, or about two-thirds of the total time for the operation.

None knew for sure how or when the operation would end before deploying but the final group expressed satisfaction with their part of the operation to Brigadier General Wojciech Grabowski on Tuesday.

Netherlands Army Adjutant Ronald Snijders served the longest and was a signal intelligence analyst. He analyzed signal communication and provided reports to targeting officers daily. For Snijders, the deployment was an opportunity to contribute through his craft by improving processes. He upgraded the former system from a manual to an automated database system. This provided more time to analyze data and allowed for a more thorough and accurate product.

OUP also provided an opportunity to meet other personnel from the Heidelberg headquarters in a less formal way and he valued that time as well. "This also served as a time to build camaraderie as we worked and enjoyed time together. It was good to be there when it ended," said Snijders.

While Snijders' job slowed in pace towards the end, Italian Army Lieutenant Colonel Marco Marulli's increased. Marulli

Lt. Col. Randy Martin, the Deputy Chief PAO for CJTFUP said that he had heard repeated praise by the command group in Naples for the work of all the personnel from Heidelberg. "There were lessons learned but every member played an important role from the beginning of the mission until the end," Martin said.

Norwegian Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Gunn Elizabeth Haabjoerg worked as a sen-



Maj. Frank Tordeur receives a certificate from LTG John W. Morgan III for his service in support of Operation Unified Protector.

served in the civil military cooperation center as section chief for the joint effects management cell. Marulli managed information concerning humanitarian assistance, food, water, movement of displaced persons, and oil and gas production. He combined information with intelligence reports in order to give context for the commander's daily update.

Marulli said that his workload increased as cities were liberated, giving civil organizations the opportunity to provide humanitarian assistance to Libya's citizens.

"When one stronghold fell down, we saw an increase in civil actors," said Marulli. "It was really rewarding to work with CIMIC."

ior media planner and executive officer in the public affairs staff. She contributed to operational plans by integrating operational aspects of information. At the same time, she freed the chief PAO from day-to-day tasks so that he could focus on communicating with worldwide audiences.

"NATO did what we said we would do. We went by the U.N. mandate," said Haabjoerg. "The best part was that the U.N. closed the mandate for us to go out. For me this means that the U.N. said our mission was complete."

Reshaping NATO's Future



LTG Morgan presents Commander Rapid Reaction Corps-France, Lt. Gen. Gilles Fugier, with FCHD Cherokee Warrior, March 14.



LTG Morgan introduces the Bi-Force Commands Corps Commanders Conference with Commander Rapid Reaction Corps-France, Lt. Gen. Gilles Fugier, (left) and Commander Force Command Madrid Lt. Gen. Alfredo Cardona Torres (right), March 14.

Article by
Capt. Tamara Gonzales

Photos by
OR6 Alexandre Bansard

NATO Command Structure and Force Structure commanders gathered in Lille, France, to determine the future of NATO members at the Bi-Force Commands Corps Commanders Conference, March 13 to 15.

"This is a venue for exchanging ideas about our future," said the commander of headquarters Rapid Reaction Corps-France Lt. Gen. Gilles Fugier.

The event served as a means for commanders' to discuss NATO's evolving environment. As such, Allied Command Transformation and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe leadership took away key points to discuss at their elements.

Participants included NATO Corps commanders, component commands and representatives from Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe. Other organizations were also present such as the Joint Warfare Center, Counter Improvised Explosive Devices Centre of Excellence and Allied Command Transformation.

Headquarters Rapid Reaction-France hosted the event and commanders from Allied Force Command Heidelberg and Force Command Madrid co-chaired it.

"Our goal is to develop the conceptual framework for command structure coordination and synchronization of integrated land, air and maritime training support to your corps headquarters," said Commander Allied Force Command Heidelberg LTG John W. Morgan III, who co-chaired the event. "This is the future of alliance land capability."

NATO subject matter experts provided information about joint training support, support to air, maritime and land operations, and synchronizing training to requirements amongst many other topics.

In conjunction with the commander's conference, the command's senior enlisted advisors also met, joining the commanders at the beginning and at a certain point having their own talks.

"The main focus was to discuss the intent of command senior enlisted within the force structure, the NCO strategy within that structure and lay the groundwork for how NCOs can influence the future structure," said Command Sergeant Major Allied Force Command Heidelberg Chief Warrant Officer Mark Saulnier.

The conference also served as an opportunity for attendees to reunite with old friends and acquaintances with an ice breaker and later a commander's dinner and a command sergeant's major dinner. The spouses had a chance to visit the Textile Museum at Roubaix, the Museum of Beaux-Arts, and tour Lille.

"The commands coming together like this fits well with the SACEUR's (Supreme Allied Commander Europe) intent of building a team together," said Senior Noncommissioned Officer, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe Command Chief Master Sergeant Richard Small.

Conference results will be discussed at the upcoming Allied Chief of Army Staff Talks.

"Along with the Allied Chief of Army Staff Talks, these meetings provide a valuable source of common voice for Land Command and the structure," said Commander Force Command Madrid Lt. Gen. Alfredo Cardona Torres.



Attendees are ready for the beginning of the 7th Allied Chief of the Army Staff Talks in Tirana, Albania on 9 May 2012.



Commander Allied Force Command Heidelberg, LTG John W. Morgan III, (left) addresses attendees of the Allied Chief of Army Staff Talks. Morgan and Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe, General Sir Richard Shirreff, (right) both discussed issues of NATO's future land command during the conference held in Albania, May 8 to 10.



Attendees of 25 NATO countries, 10 Partnership for Peace countries, two Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and two Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) countries participate in the hosted dinner during the 7th Allied Chief of Army Staff Talks in Tirana, Albania on May 9th.

Shaping NATO's Future Land Command

Written by
Capt. Tamara Gonzales

Photos by
Staff Sgt. Dwight Chaney

General officers and their representatives from across 25 NATO countries, 10 Partnership for Peace countries, two Mediterranean Dialogue (MD) and two Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) countries and representatives from Allied Command Operations (ACO) and Allied Command Transformation (ACT) gathered together to discuss NATO's future at the Allied Chief of Army Staff Talks (ACAST)/ Land Commanders Conference (LCC), 8 to 10 May in Tirana, Albania.

"The people in this room represent the body of land expertise within NATO. My fellow Force Command commander, Lt. Gen. Alfredo Cardona Torres, and I are your land advocates within the NATO Command Structure, but we are preparing to hand that mantle of responsibility to the new land command in Izmir, Turkey," said LTG John W. Morgan III, Commander Allied Force Command Heidelberg. He continued describing the conference as an opportunity for increasing the linkages between the NATO Command Structure and the NATO Force Structure headquarters and the national headquarters of allied armed forces.

Albania's armed forces served as host for the ACAST, providing coordination, logistical support and working in close coordination with Allied Force Command Heidelberg.

Commander of the General Staff of the Albanian Armed Forces, Maj. Gen. Xhemal Gjunksi, welcomed the Army representatives and stated, "This conference is important proof of how NATO is working together in building structures. NATO structures need training capabilities and new means to support these capabilities. Transformation is a process of putting this into order."

This theme was elaborated further during the visit by the Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha. During his address to the participants, he acknowledged Albania's armed forces transformation and their admiration while operating under NATO command. "When you look, in this world, NATO is by far the best of the best that nations have; this transatlantic alliance is the grandeur, I do believe, the best international organization the western world has ever had. Furthermore, while acknowledging the budgetary challenges currently facing Europe and the upcoming NATO Summit in Chicago, Prime Minister Berisha referenced NATO Secretary General's initiatives of Smart Defence and the Connected Forces, which ACAST embodies, as key concepts for truly addressing present shortfalls.

Topics also addressed on the first briefing day included Allied Command Operations transformation, the results of the Bi-Force Command Corps Commander's Conference and NATO's post 2014 joint training policy and support as well as a solid programme for the attending partners revolving around aspects of training with NATO.

The highlight of the conference was the presentation by Gen. Sir Richard Shirreff, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe (DSACEUR), who discussed ACO transformation and challenges of command and control in NATO operations. The DSACEUR reinforced for the audience the need for pragmatism to solve future challenges and the necessity of building links between the command and force structure. Remarking also on how we guarantee deployability within the force structure, Gen. Shirreff observed, "Land Command Izmir will be the only structure that can be called upon with ultimate deployability not being reliant upon a specific country."

After a morning of briefings and discussions, the participants had the chance to



Prime Minister of Albania, Mr. Sali Berisha, highlights the importance of NATO for his country and the whole world during his welcome speech, May 9.

gain insight and experience Albanian culture at the Skanderbeg castle in the town of Krutje. Later that evening, they participated in a formal dinner.

The main topic of the final day was training with NATO and the ACT and how training plays a crucial role in maintaining the land command's and the NATO Response Force's highly deployable status.

In his concluding comments, LTG Morgan confirmed, "ACAST was an important meeting for the NATO Command Structure, the NATO Force Structure and its nations because they looked in holistic ways at training, readiness, evaluations and structure including the partner countries." He continued his assessment stating, "To discuss the importance of training and working together and understanding one another in order to provide security that endures throughout Europe. It was indeed a success."

The Transition Process to a Land Command in Izmir

Article by
Maj. Cyrille Zimmer

In late summer 2012, the transition execution phase begins for Land Command Izmir (LCIZ) with the arrival of the LCIZ Standup Team (SUT). Land Command Izmir will achieve Initial Operational Capability (IOC) at the end of 2013. Currently, Izmir is the home of Air Command Izmir, who will provide the needed administrative support to LCIZ. Transition support to LCIZ will be a complex task that will require significant FCHD personnel effort. To achieve NATO's goal, Force Command Heidelberg (FCHD) built a specific transition team, under the lead of Colonel Christopher DeLaRosa.

The team has ten people and two sub-teams. The "plans" team prepares the basic and detailed guidelines for FCHD, coordinates with Force Command Madrid (FCMD), and sets conditions for LCIZ to achieve its IOC. The second sub-team manages the compilation of all important documentation. This "Doc" team checks, update and adapts all the documents that will need to be given to Izmir. In addition, the initial part of their

job was to identify all the competencies that will be transferred.

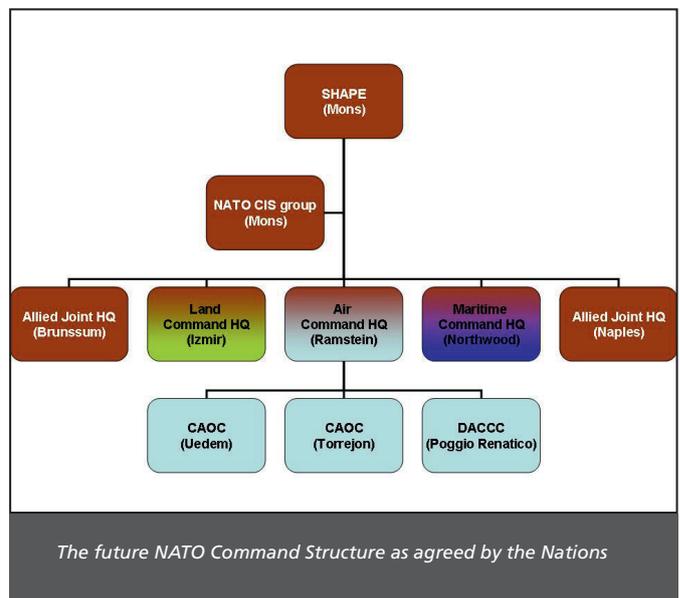
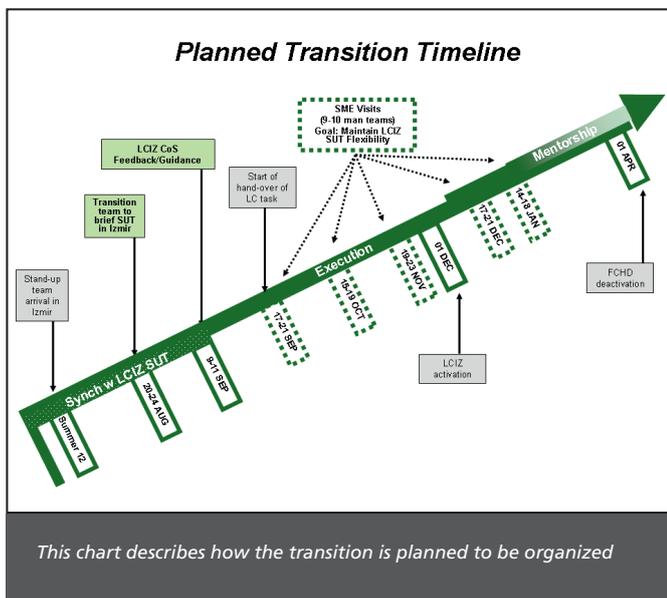
Every task that the headquarters has is now identified and grouped by "competencies" or areas of competence. There are 63 tasks distributed in 11 areas of competence. FCHD has responsibility for assisting LCIZ with 40 tasks and FCMD has responsibility for the remaining 23. These tasks cover all the missions a Land Command might have to face that our HQs have expertise in, starting with doctrine/policy, training, unit certification, military engagement, and budget and finances.

In order to transfer this knowledge properly, three different methods were designed. The most intensive technique is for a team from FCHD and FCMD to spend time with counterparts at various NATO meetings and conferences and work side by side with them (the left seat-right seat strategy) so that they "understand what right looks like". Another technique will require regular visits to Izmir to explain how the job is currently done at FCHD and FCMD. The third technique is provision of necessary documents to LCIZ for their review and possible implementation.

Initially FCHD and FCMD teams plan to visit LCIZ at the end of the first month of arrival of the SUT (Stand-Up Team), currently planned for late August. The aim is to review the transfer planning in detail, and to determine the dates of the next visits, the content of visits and the exact composition of the teams that will assist them. Then the next step will occur in September, with the start of the hand-over of Land Competency tasks. This will give three months before LCIZ is activated on Dec 1st 2012, but will continue until FCHD and FCMD deactivated in April and July 2013, respectively.

As stated by ACO, starting with activation 1 Dec 2012, LCIZ will have 24 months to reach Full Operational Capability. In the meantime, FCHD and FCMD will have closed. NATO will have achieved its new NATO Command Structure as decided at the Lisbon Summit in 2010 with two strategic Commands, two Joint HQs and three Component Commands.

A leaner and more agile NATO will remain able to face new threats and accomplish its mission well into the 21st Century.



NATO Headquarters Prepare for NATO Response Force 2012

Article by
Adj. Aurélie Auzas

Photos by
Staff Sgt. Dwight Chaney and
Adj. Aurélie Auzas

Pabrade, Lithuania – Service members from Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg and NATO Allied Joint Force Command Brunssum Headquarters earned their certification for the NATO Response Force 2012 during Steadfast Juncture 2011, 1 to 13 Nov at



A Lithuania security company demonstrates its capability to conduct security operations during Steadfast Juncture 2011 conducted 1 to 13 November in Lithuania.



Leadership from Allied Force Command Heidelberg welcomes Commander Allied Joint Force Command, General Wolf Langheld during his visit to Steadfast Juncture 2011 at Lithuanian Armed Forces Training Area in Pabrade. The training took place 1 to 13 November in preparation for the FCHD headquarters' NATO Response Force mission.



Lt. Col. Georg Annen, the COM, and COS Ops tour the training site during Steadfast Juncture.

effectively with its component commands and function despite the geographical separation of the main and forward headquarters.

pabilities, practicing multinational medical support, exercising communication linkages against cyber attacks, and media planning.

Additionally, service members interacted and practiced cooperation with partners, nations and international and non-governmental organizations. Command and control as well as constant exchange of information played a significant role in the headquarters mission.

During the exercise, key authorities and journalists frequented the training providing a challenge of balancing the exercise with these visits.

In order for the mission to be a success, NATO service members required various logistical and facility support. Engineers and sup-

Lithuanian Armed Forces Pabrade Training Area. Lithuania, through the Lithuanian Ministry of Defense, provided significant human and materialistic support for proper conduct of the exercise.

NRF is a multinational, command and control headquarters. It is a rapidly deployable force that is made up of land, air, maritime and special-forces. It is designed for quick reaction when called upon in case of a crisis response operation.

Heidelberg's joint headquarters forward element participated in the computer simulated exercise to train and certify the execution of such an operation. Additionally, the headquarters tested its ability to interact ef-

Heidelberg's headquarters consisted of a Joint Headquarters Forward, a Joint Logistic Support Group and a Land, Air, Maritime and Special Operations Component Command. The JLSG exercised its ability to coordinate the logistic support for the Component Commands.

With a complex, fictitious scenario, NATO's staff was tested by reacting to various events in support of a United Nations mandated peacekeeping operation based on an asymmetric environment. Service members faced challenges such as piracy, contingency planning, security and environmental threats and interaction with key leaders and refugees.

Other exercise objectives included planning and executing NATO intelligence ca-

ply staff of the headquarters' forward support element deployed a month in advance to build and develop the infrastructure and remained a month after to dismantle them. During the exercise they, along with NATO Management Support Agency (NAMSA), supported participants with accommodations, showers, bathrooms, dining facilities, welfare activities and much more.

While SFJE 11 was a success, NATO Response Force members must continue training in order to maintain their achieved level of readiness and reactivity of rapid troop deployment and reacting to crisis situations in the area of operations in any place of the world.



Reconnaissance Team Conducted Crisis Response Exercise and Explored NATO's Future Deployability Concept

Article and photos by Inci Kucukaksoy, Joint Warfare Center Public Affairs Office

A 15-person Operational Liaison Reconnaissance Team (OLRT) led by NATO's Allied Force Command Heidelberg (HQ FC Heidelberg) conducted a crisis response exercise from 27 January to 1 February 2012 at the Joint Warfare Centre (JWC) in order to prepare for the NATO Response Force (NRF) exercise STEADFAST JOIST 12 (SFJT 12), which will take place in May this year.

Under the command of Dutch Brigadier General Leo Beulen, the exercise aimed to help develop an effective Operational Plan (OPLAN) for the standing Joint Force HQ and conduct a detailed study of the mission and tasks NRF forces might undertake during SFJT 12 in the fictitious theatre of operations based on the Cerasia scenario.

The simulated OLRT deployment to JWC further highlights structural changes to the NRF concept. HQ JFC Lisbon has been leading the NRF since July 2011. In his "Commander's Vision 2012", Lieutenant General Philippe Stoltz, Commander of JFC Lisbon, states that his HQ will play a critical role in shaping NATO's future Deployability Concept, in close liaison with Joint Force Command Brunssum and Joint Force Command Naples. HQ JFC Lisbon, indeed, is tasked to develop NATO's new Deployed Joint HQ (DJHQ) model, an initiative which could become a benchmark in support of NATO's expeditionary operations in the future. The SFJT 12 will be a test-bed for the new DJHQ concept and its different steps and processes.

Brigadier General Beulen said: "Currently, Allied Joint Force Command Lisbon (HQ JFC Lisbon) is busy preparing for the exercise in May and developing the exercise OPLAN. Based on the exercise scenario, they are holding an OLRT, represented by us, a reconnaissance team deployed to identify critical regional information, as well as lo-

cal challenges and risks, in order to advise the decision-making process prior to force deployment. HQ JFC Lisbon needs this information and advice for their theatre awareness and for implementation in their OPLAN. That's why we were sent to 'Cerasia', which is replicated by the JWC."

The OLRT is a small team of specialists who deploy to a theatre of operations (unstable due to political failure or natural disaster), bilaterally or through NATO, under a usually complex mandate, in order to understand that environment, assess what is needed there and establish relationships to determine the success of a future operation or relief effort. In SFJT 12 the OLRT deployment takes place under the United Nations (UN) mandate.

In Stavanger, the JWC has set up an environment for the reconnaissance team so

OLRT performs a very important mission. It is one of the first elements that would deploy to a contingency area. We formed as a team in Heidelberg and then came together in Stavanger with individual roles to do the necessary research on the semi-austere environment of the fictitious country of Tytan, which is replicated by the JWC, together with the role players and Subject Matter Experts here. Simply put, we are doing the Mission Analysis before we deploy back to Lisbon and pass the crucial information to them."

JWC's Officer of Primary Responsibility for this exercise, Royal Air Force WG CDR Mark Atrill said: "In the early stages of the exercise planning process, the OLRT phase of SFJT 12 presented us with several challenges, which I am pleased to say we have been able to turn into opportunities. Foremost amongst these challenges was the need to find an operating location for the OLRT and to conduct an early test of the new training facility at Jatta. The Norwegian military authorities kindly allowed us the use of Madla Recruit Training Centre to simulate the 'austere' environment in which an OLRT may find itself. And the physical dislocation of the training audience from EXCON (located here at Jatta) provided further realism to the exercising of the OLRT concept. There can be little doubt that these small but significant changes in the way in which we delivered this phase of SFJT 12 further improved the training experience for the OLRT"

During the After Action Review on 31 January, US Air Force Brigadier General Steven DePalmer, Chief of Staff JWC, thanked the reconnaissance team for their support to enhance the current NRF structures while underpinning potential challenges that may arise to deployability, sustainability (including Force Protection, Real Life Support, Computer and Information Systems), manning levels, logistics and other resources.

Brigadier General DePalmer said: "Your deployment to the JWC has added realism to the exercise. It has been a collaborative undertaking and I am impressed with everybody's efforts to make this deployment a success. It is, again, a step forward for us and NATO."



Members of the Allied Force Command Heidelberg Joint Operational Liaison Reconnaissance Team discuss observations with Joint Warfare Center cadre following the Steadfast Joist Training Exercise in Norway conducted January 27th to February 1st.

that they can collect data on everything" in theatre" and function as the "eyes and ears" of the Joint Force Commander before his deployment. A creation of the JWC Scenario Section, the exercise scenario, Cerasia, has been available to train the NRF since 2008. In order to train different skills for different missions, the JWC validates a wide range of role players within its Grey Cell exercise structure to include United Nations (UN) representatives as well as members of International and Non-Governmental Organizations (IOs/NGOs). The JWC will also be the venue of the SFJT 12 execution phase in May and will provide the Exercise Control (EXCON) structure.

The SFJT 12 will be directed by French Army Major General Jean Fred Berger, Commander JWC.

HQ FC Heidelberg spokesperson US Army Lieutenant Colonel Randy Martin said: "The



Allied Rapid Reaction Corps senior leaders participate in planning for their Combat Readiness Evaluation during visits to FCHD.

Headquarters Members Continue CREVAL Certification Process

Article by
Lt. Col. Thomas Fischer

Photos by
Staff Sgt. Dwight Chaney

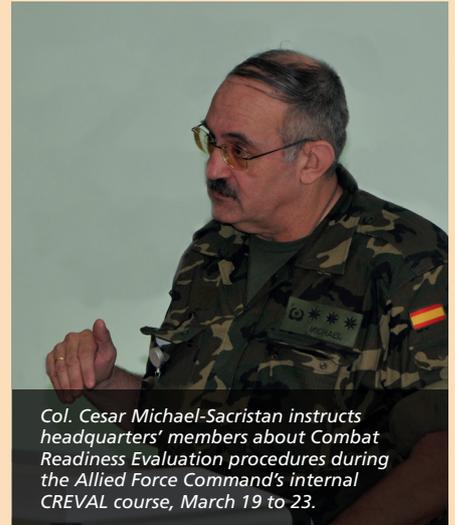
Assessments of how service members and their units conduct training are critical in improving their skills and capabilities. Select members of Allied Force Command Heidelberg (FCHD) will have the opportunity to assist in this process for the Headquarters Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (HQ ARRC) later this year.

In order to become members of a Combat Readiness Evaluation (CREVAL) team, they attended the FCHD internal CREVAL course,

I (UK) Corps in 1992 in Bielefeld, Germany, but moved in 1994 to the Rhein-Dahlen Military Complex (Germany).

In 2011 the headquarters moved back to United Kingdom and now has its garrison in Innsworth. Even if the Corps basically is an army organization it is also capable to act as joint headquarters during operations, which have air and/or maritime aspects as well. Each NATO assigned corps-level headquarters has to go through a CREVAL process every three years. During this process they have to demonstrate their skills and capabilities related to the required NATO standards.

During the course, which included two representatives of HQ ARRC, the prospective



Col. Cesar Michael-Sacristan instructs headquarters' members about Combat Readiness Evaluation procedures during the Allied Force Command's internal CREVAL course, March 19 to 23.



Lt. Col. David "Dark" Vautor and Lt. Col. Dominique Rigaud find new ways to incorporate Combat Readiness Evaluation standard operating procedures into their fields of expertise.

March 19 to 23, at Campbell Barracks, building 99.

LTG Morgan introduced the course which served as the start-up for a series of events to prepare for the upcoming evaluation.

Altogether 55 participants from across FCHD participated in the training at Campbell Barracks, building 99.

The HQ ARRC is one of the multinational corps level headquarters provided by the nations for the NATO Force Structure. It was initiated as a follow on organization of the former

members of the evaluation team received their qualification and certification to act as NATO evaluators. Several briefers from the nations and SHAPE supported the course.

After the basic training provided by this course, the several functional areas will conduct their internal preparation to become more familiar with the HQ ARRC environment and the functional area specific requirements of this CREVAL.

The training and preparation phase will be finalized with another one week of com-

prehensive training as final warm-up for the CREVAL at the end of August. The whole training and preparation concept has been developed and is executed by a multifunctional working group under the leadership of Col Michael-Sacristan.

The evaluation team under the leadership of the Commander FCHD will then be ready to execute the HQ ARRC evaluation. The execution of the CREVAL itself will happen in two phases. The first phase will be a so called "In Barracks" phase, where all HQ ARRC basic internal documents, orders and procedures will be reviewed by the evaluators in relationship to the required NATO standards. This phase will take place in Innsworth, UK

The second phase then will be a Command Post Exercise, where the headquarters will demonstrate its skills and capabilities in the field. This phase will be executed on a British training area close to St. Mawgan, UK, in Cornwall.

During his address at the beginning and the end of the course LTG Morgan addressed the importance and relevance of the CREVAL process for NATO and the nations. He expressed his expectation that the FCHD CREVAL team will prepare and execute the HQ ARRC CREVAL in a professional and accurate manner.

Allied Force Command Heidelberg Conducts Operation Overlord Staff Ride



French Professor of University of Caen Mr. Jean Quellien explains to NATO members the different phases of the Operation Overlord during a staff ride conducted Sept. 26 to 30, 2011.



Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg senior officers lay a wreath at the Normandy American Cemetery as part of the unit's staff ride to Normandy.



FCHD leaders paid respects to fallen at the cemeteries of Normandy

Article and photos by Adj. Aurelie Auzas

Senior officers and non-commissioned officers of Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg conducted a staff ride to Normandy from Sept. 26 to 30.

The primary purpose of the event was to learn more about the strategic and operational aspects of the Allied invasion, particularly the challenges of multi-national planning, which still apply to NATO allied operations today. The staff ride also offered a unique team building opportunity among the 37 military members and eight spouses from the armies of 12 nations that attended the event.

Operation Overlord is the code name given to the landing operation launched June 6, 1944, a massive direct attack against the Reich through Northern France. The purpose was to rapidly advance in the direction of the Ruhr, the industrial heartland of Germany.

The group visited different landing sites such as Caen Memorial, Pegasus Bridge, Mulberry harbours, Pointe du Hoc, Juno Beach and Omaha beach. Participants discussed the technological and human challenges that confronted this massive military operation.

"The tide is high today at Juno Beach but in 6 June 1944 at 0600 hours in the morning the tide was low," said Mr. Jean Quellien French Professor of University of Caen. "The beach was strewn with bunkers built by Germans. It contributed to the difficulties of the landing operation."

The FCHD group also honored the service and sacrifice of all soldiers who fought on both sides, with visits to the Normandy American Cemetery on Omaha Beach, and the German Cemetery at La Cambe. The visit to the Normandy American Cemetery included wreath laying and flag lowering ceremonies.

"Beyond the historical reminders, visits of museums and sites, the most significant impression for me as a senior NCO is to think

about the heroism and sacrifice of these young – very young – Soldiers who gave up their lives to defend a territory which was not their homeland and to liberate the same territory which was not their fatherland," said Fabien Le Camus acting command sergeant major. "Cemeteries will remain for future generations the testimony of the extent of this sacrifice."

Allied Force Command Heidelberg non-commissioned officers take a quick moment for a photo during their Professional Development Exercise at Omaha Beach Normandy, France, Apr. 18th.



Commitment And Memory

Article by
Adj. Aurélie Auzas

Photo by
**Staff Sgt. Guus Ruijsbroek and
Adj. Aurélie Auzas**

Force Command Heidelberg (FCHD) Non-commissioned Officers conducted their Professional Development Exercise to Normandy (France) Apr. 16th to the 20th in order to study the multinational aspects of the D-Day landings (June 1944) at the operational and tactical level.

Following the Commander's staff ride in September 2011 to Operation Overlord beaches and sites, the decision was made to conduct the same for the NCO community in FCHD. This has been identified as a necessity and essential to team building. Conducted under the guidance of the Command Sergeant Major (CSM), Chief Warrant Officer Mark Saulnier, and led by the Adjutant-chef Fabien Le Camus. This exercise was open to all NCOs in FCHD, NCHD, a few B-grade civilians and National Support Element personnel in Heidelberg. The aim of the CSM was to "develop briefing skill, practice and improve English language skills, gain historical background on Operation Overlord, and seek cohesiveness, fellowship and respect."

Ground knowledge and intelligence are essentials when you want to conduct a military operation.

Therefore, one of the objectives of this exercise for Le Camus was to "improve NCOs understanding of tactical and operational requirements for conducting combat operations". During the week, all the NCOs and civilians went on different sites: Pointe du Hoc, Ste-Mère-Eglise, Juno and Omaha beaches, Merville and Longue Gun Battery, etc. Those locations had their own advantages and disadvantages due to the landscape and tactical importance during the phases of Operation Overlord. For example Pointe du Hoc was a strategic location for the German gun battery. It provided to them a wide edge of sight and fire. The Normandy coast's landscape presented the Allied force difficulties such as cliffs and tides.

NCOs were asked to take an active part in this staff ride by developing briefing skills and improving their English. NCOs served as briefers on every location. No guides were requested so the group relied on the personal commitment of participants. Each shared their knowledge during all the week. Adjutant Chef Catherine Sorin was one of the briefers at Ste-Mère-Eglise. She realized that the Staff ride gave her a better historical knowledge. "During my preparation for

my speech, I noticed that I did not have a good background about this subject. I took a lot of pleasure in my personal research. For a non-native English speaker like me, it was a real challenge to talk in English but I really enjoyed trying it."

Another aim of the staff ride was to foster teamwork and cooperation between international NCO's community. During the exercise, two wreath-laying ceremonies were organized by the FCHD NCOs. The purpose was to let the NCOs be aware of the commitments and the sacrifice of those young soldiers on both sides. One took place at the German Cemetery of La Cambe the Apr. 17th, and on the next day, at the American Cemetery of Colleville-sur-Mer.

Each participant had a unique and personal experience that they will remember forever. A German and a Belgian NCO each found the grave of one of their relatives. OR-7 Manon Trudel said of her experience "it was very impressive for me, being in uniform, in a parade formation in a wartime military cemetery. At one cemetery there was an audience of young students from Germany. At the US cemetery there were tourists from all around the world. It means a lot for me and I noticed it was very impressive for the people also. It was definitely the right thing to do. It will be a memory for the rest of my life."



NATO Families Join in Annual

Article by
Capt. Tamara Gonzales

Photos by
Peter J Gonzales

Families of NATO Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg gathered in a spirit of camaraderie for food and fun at the unit's annual Family Fest held Sept. 7. "This event brings together our 20 nations of NATO and gives us the opportunity to recognize the unique diversity that is part of this headquarters," said Commander Headquarters Allied Force Command LTG John W. Morgan III as part of the introduction welcoming families to the event.

The event was a sea of national colors as families were greeted by different nation's representatives offering them food, drink and information about their countries.

The food spanned for more than one could eat and was unique to each country. As families entered, e.g. the Netherlands greeted them offering a dish of fish and onion. This was just the start as at each tent there was something new to try.

For example, at the Belgium tent, families had the opportunity to try homemade chocolate mousse made of Belgium chocolate, while they had the chance to eat hummus and Baklava from Turkey as well as ribs and grilled burgers from the United States. Families tasted French wine, bread, cheeses and Rosette, a specialty meat from Lyon and dined on Italian mozzarella with seasoned tomato, prosciutto, Italian wine and Frutti di Mare, salad of the ocean, a dish made with octopus and celery. There were many other foods and drink with each country providing a unique experience.

Additionally, at the Italian tent families had the opportunity to participate in a lottery with the first place winner receiving two roundtrip tickets to Rome, Italy. There were another 49 prizes awarded of various sized baskets of Italian foods, depending upon where each person placed in the lottery.

Money earned during the lottery was donated to the University Children's Hospital at Heidelberg. This specific hospital program takes care of healthy children of parents who have children with cancer or other illnesses. This provides parents the opportunity to take care of their sick ones.

The lottery was also representative of NATO family unity as families from different countries donated to the program.

"Every day in the hospital we're in contact with all nations," said Ms. Margit Bösen-Schieck who represented the hospital. "For me it was important to be here and to see the nations together."

There were also events for the kids as they went on pony rides, a jumping balloon, a merry-go-round and had their faces decorated at the face painting booth.

The headquarters' Family Support Center and International Support Kaserne sponsored the event.

"This is all about us and our respected nations," said LTG Morgan.

1 An Italian member cuts chunks of cheese from a wheel of Permignano Reggiano for families to taste.

2 The Crazies, a band from Frankfurt, provided live entertainment setting the background.

3 Staff Sgt. Kenneth Francois, enlisted aid to Commander Headquarters Allied Force Command LTG John W. Morgan III, grills ribs giving families a taste of traditional American food.

4 Children play in a bouncy balloon.

5 Dutch prepare biscuits for families to taste.

Family Fest



Spring Ball Honors Time Together

in Allied Force Command Heidelberg



1



2



3



4



5



6

Article by FCHD Public Affairs

Allied Force Command Heidelberg maxed out attendance for its Spring Ball May 24th.

Candles lighted the path in Heidelberg Castle through a receiving line and created an elegant ambiance worthy of the finely dressed attendees. After a warm greeting by the hosts, spouses and selected guests received a freshly cut rose that hinted of the exciting events to come.

"It is a privilege and honor to work and serve with each of you and your nations," said LTG John W. Morgan III, Allied Force Command Heidelberg's commanding general. "Tonight is a night to celebrate the success of our nations, to sit back and to enjoy each other's company."

LTG Morgan and Chief Warrant Officer Mark Saulnier, the command sergeant major each paid tribute to all the people that had made the night so special noting, in particular the great turn-out of noncommissioned officers and the organizers from the Forward Support Element.

In the grand dining room, guests took their places at tables filled with flowers, more candles, glasses and bottles of wine and sparkling water. The courteous staff served from a menu that included prosciutto, tortellini, beef and a delicious desert of fresh strawberries with white mousse.

The Commander and his wife opened the dance floor with the Happy Ness Voice and Brassband providing musical entertainment.

"It was fantastic altogether. I absolutely loved it," said Tanja Niks secretary of the NATO Spouse's Club. "The band was tremendous and professional. Every musical number was like the original. The mood was good and the reception on the terrace was like a beautiful summer island night."

Dancing, dining, and socializing continued well into the evening ending on a caution to travel home safe and enjoy the long weekend.

One spouse, Becky Riding, the mother of five children, described her evening. "It was so nice, the rose, the food, the music and not having to worry about anything. It was a lot of fun."

1 Couples from Allied Force Command Heidelberg flood the dance floor.

2 Capt. Bernard West talks with Heidelberg City Councilman Ernest Gund.

3 Capitaine de frigate Alain Richard and his sister, France, dance to an upbeat tune by Happy Ness Voice and Brassband.

4 Colleagues Sgt. Chef Monique Dethal and Adj. Peter Mondelears dance.

5 Maj. Jose Chaves-Bermejo and his wife (on left) and Lt. Col. Luis Quintas-Gil and his wife (on right).

6 LTG Morgan sings "New York New York" with Happy Ness Voice and Brassband during the Allied Force Command Heidelberg Spring Ball 2012.

Commander's Holiday Reception

Article by
PAO Staff

Photos by
Staff Sgt. Dwight Chaney

On Dec. 7th, Lieutenant General John W. Morgan III, Commander Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg hosted the Holiday Reception at the Village Pavilion on Patrick Henry Village.

More than 250 guests attended the very festive and delightful occasion which symbolized the spirit of the Holiday Season. After the individual welcome in the receiving line guests enjoyed the evening and met with friends and colleagues from FCHD as well as distinguished guests from selected organizations throughout the region.

In his brief address LTG Morgan reminded everyone that 2011 was a busy year, with FCHD supporting NATO operational deployments as well as the usual busy training exercise schedule. He also talked about the next year. He said that 2012 will be a time of great challenges for the Headquarters. While the mission to support ISAF shifts to Force Command Madrid, in some cases, some FCHD personnel may augment that headquarters in its important mission. Also in 2012 we transition to the new Land Command in Izmir as part of a greater NATO transformation. In 2012 FCHD will also serve as the NATO Response Force. With a toast and best wishes for a Merry Christmas and good holidays the General ended his address.

Throughout the evening all guests truly enjoyed the delicious food and drinks. The United States Army Europe Band and Chorus created the right "Christmas mood" by singing a selection of Christmas as well as Top Ten songs and chorals. At the end all guests took their songbooks and sung together "We wish you a merry Christmas" and other songs.



Allied Force Command Heidelberg service members get ready to dine on a plentiful holiday meal during the Commander's Holiday Reception.



The United States Army Europe Band and Chorus sing a compilation of Christmas and top ten songs and chorals at the Allied Force Command Heidelberg's Commander's Holiday Reception held 7 December.



Leadership from Allied Force Command Heidelberg welcomes their guests to the Commander's Holiday Reception held 7 December. The event provided an opportunity to headquarters members to gather in a spirit of camaraderie and dine on an exquisite Christmas meal.

A young boy sits on Santa's lap during a visit to Force Command Heidelberg on 14 December 2011.

Christmas Address and Santa Claus Event



Children and family members with Allied Force Command Heidelberg await the arrival of Santa Claus at the Family Support Centre's sponsored traditional Christmas party.



Command Sergeant Major Allied Force Command Heidelberg, Chief Warrant Officer Mark Saulnier, forms up the headquarters for the upcoming holiday address.

**Article by
PAO Staff**

**Photos by
Staff Sgt. Dwight Chaney**

On Dec. 14th two important events took place at FC Heidelberg. First, the Commander of FC Heidelberg, LTG John W. Morgan, gave his Christmas address to the entire staff of FC Heidelberg.

This was also an occasion for the Commander to present an award to all those staff members who took part in Operation Unified Protector, the NATO air and maritime operation in Libya, which our Headquarters supported for many months. Nine staff members also received a certificate of commendation from the Commander for the outstanding

services they rendered to FC Heidelberg and to the NATO Alliance.

On a less formal note, the ceremony was followed on the same afternoon by the Family Support Centre's traditional Christmas party with Santa Claus, an event organized each year by the Family Support Centre for all Headquarters staff and their families. No less than 160 guests attended this event this year, among those at least 80 children. As in previous years Santa Claus did not forget to bring along a present for each one of those children. Some music and a delicious buffet with a wide variety of delicacies also awaited the guests, so that everybody was able to take home the best possible memory of this event.

We would like to take this moment to thank the NATO spouses' club for their invaluable support to the preparation of this event

and the decoration of the premises. Without their support such a successful event would hardly have been possible. And let us also take this occasion to think of all those who cannot be at home with their loved ones this Christmas because they are still deployed to ISAF in Afghanistan. It will not be long anymore before they return home, but they will not be back early enough to be able to celebrate Christmas and New Year at home. A very happy Christmas to them and a very happy New Year!

And last but not least, the Family Support Centre would like to wish all staff members and their families a merry Christmas, a happy holiday and an excellent start to the New Year 2012!

Visit to the Christmas Market in Michelstadt



On Nov. 27th, the Family Support Centre of Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg organized an outing for Headquarters personnel and their families to the Christmas market in Michelstadt. This Christmas market is known as one of Germany's loveliest and begins each year at the onset of Advent. The picturesque old town of Michelstadt with its many timber-framed houses and beautiful town hall provides a perfect backdrop for such a market and it was a delight for our families to discover and admire the many Christmas items on display on the various stands. Every street, nook and cranny in the old town held a booth or a kiddy ride, and the 'Hessische Landesmuseum' had its own little market square marked by a huge nativity and a classic candle fan.

There was ample time for our families to hunt for goodies and to enjoy a hot cup of 'Glühwein' or a 'Bratwurst', or to visit one of the town's many lovely cafés. All the participants were in agreement during the bus ride home that they had thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon. Such outings are an invaluable opportunity for the Heidelberg Community to get together and enjoy a day out with friends, colleagues and families and to make everybody feel truly at home in their host nation.



NATO Spouses Club

Rolls Out Bowling Balls



Debbie Morgan, wife of Commander Allied Force Command Heidelberg LTG Morgan, prepares to bowl a strike at the NATO Spouses Club, Feb. 15.

*Story and photo by
Corinna Mientus*

It was a night of camaraderie and competition as NATO Spouses Club members came together over bowling. Thirty-eight spouses participated in the event at Patrick Henry Village bowling alley, Feb. 15th. In three games, each person tried to get as many points and strikes as possible. Each roll of the bowling ball was marked by cheers and shouts of joy and fun dances. As the sport required much energy, the participants dined on salad, pizza and wonderful self made desserts to regain their strength.

Julie Ryan hosted the event, making all the preparations and coordinating with the bowling alley and the participants. The club's members from America brought many home-made delicacies and desserts.

The NATO Spouse's Club offers many events to bring together its members, strengthening their bonds and relationships to one another.

*Article by
Capt. Peter Mientus and Capt.
Tamara Gonzales*

*Photo by
Sgt. 1KI. Guus Ruijsbroek*

For the third time the ladies of the Spouses Club supported the Wohnoase with a financial gift. This institution is specialized in taking care of seriously mentally and physically challenged persons and is located in Wiesloch.

This small home with warmth is arranged to offer professional and friendly care for a temporary stay for people with special needs whose family members need rest for some days or weeks during the year.

This is the reason that three years ago the NATO Spouses club decided to support this little institution. We were very happy to offer this year a 1000 Euro check that was the result of charity raffles during our Opening evening in September and our Luncheon early December in Reilingen.

The check was handed out on Jan. 31st by Mrs Hedwig Huybrechts, president of the Spouses Club, in presence of Mrs. Debby Morgan, Mrs Martine De Vos, Honorary Board Members and Mrs Ewa Robak, Mrs Silvia Redeker, Mrs Julie Ryan and Mrs. Allison Grover, board members of the Spouses Club to Mrs Arnold, director of the Wohnoase.

Charity from the NATO Spouses Club Heidelberg to our now Traditional Partner Wohnoase in Wiesloch



NATO Spouses Club President Hedwig Huybrechts, along with other NSC members, donates a 1,000 euro check to Wohnoase of Wiesloch, an institution to help physical or mental disabled and their families, Jan. 31. This is an annual event, one of many in which NSC members donate time and money to charities.

NCO Staff Ride



Normandy



Croatian flag raising ceremony



COS Address



Holiday Pics



Family Fest



Spring Ball 2012



Steadfast Juncture



Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg



The Observer

Serving the military, civilians and family members of Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg

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Suggestions for articles, comments and contributions are welcome and should be directed to the editor. The editor reserves the right to edit submissions.

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