Editorial

Dear readers,
when you will read this edition of our magazine Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg (HQ FC HD) has provided key personnel for the ISAF Headquarter in Kabul/Afghanistan for more than one year and there will be one more year to go. Therefore it is a good point in time to present you with the experience Major General Hubert de Vos as Deputy Chief of Staff Support (DCOS Support) has gained during his one year deployment. Back in our HQ he will be the Chief of Staff Deployable Staff Element 2 (COS DJSE 2) as well as COS for the HQ itself. Meanwhile Major General Richard Rossmanith has taken over responsibility as DCOS Resources and keeps the continuity in the support from Heidelberg to “NATO’s most challenging operation”.

But since deployability and high readiness are brand marks for Force Command Heidelberg soldiers and civilians have no time to relax but are facing the next big task: for 2012 and 2013 we will provide the Forward Element (FE) and the core of the Headquarter for the NATO Response Force (NRF). Intensive training and exercises will cover most of 2011 while parallel we will still send personnel to ISAF. The training and exercise branch (TREX) has summarized those facts and figures for you.

This puts a lot of burden to our spouses and families. Therefore from the beginning we stood up a Family Support Centre (FSC) which on the one side keeps contact to the deployed personnel and on the other side assists their families in all matters. The feedback we have got up to now is that this organization is well accepted and giving great support. The activities described in our magazine are just a snapshot of the work FSC has provided for our personnel. A lot of events are happening in and around our HQ every day and since information is key to success we not only provide these via our website (www.nato.int/fchd) but since summer 2010 we are also available on FACEBOOK (www.facebook.com/pages/Headquarters-Allied-Force-Command-Heidelberg). So come and find us and also pass information to us anytime. My team and I are happy to get onto the net.

I hope we have stimulated your interest and we have offered you again an interesting OBSERVER. Feel free to give us feedback, comments and information. It’s for you!

Yours
LtCol Götz Haffke, DEU A
Chief Public Affairs Editor

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Commander’s Message

Since assuming command this past May, it has been an exciting and dynamic time in Force Command Heidelberg (FCHD). It has also provided sufficient time and personal experience for me to share some observations. I think these first six months are indeed essential because they allow us to determine what is going well and what needs improvement as we enter a New Year that will surely prove as eventful and significant as the last.

What continues to govern my actions and what is the basis of my initial assessment are the five priorities developed in my initial message.

If I had to present what I’m especially proud of, I would without any doubt laud our contribution and support to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan. With more than 200 personnel deployed in 2010 and 150 in 2011, FCHD has done a tremendous effort, probably unique within the NATO Command Structure.

But FCHD has not simply designated personnel; it has prepared and trained them superbly for this vital mission. With the experience gained from previous rotations, the ISAF training delivered currently to FCHD personnel is probably the best one ever done and it will allow them to immediately conduct their individual duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. Finally, all the experience gained will be handed over to our sister ship FC Madrid as they prepare to take the ISAF mission from us in 2012. While nations are discussing how to have a leaner NCS, but more responsive and deployable, FCHD serves as an example of what should be a NATO HQ in the future.

I’m also particularly satisfied on how FCHD has energized its “land advocacy” mission and insured all land-related matters, particularly doctrine, receive their due attention within NATO. With the support of NATO Force Structure Commanders, we have mapped a way ahead to incorporate the Corps’ contribution to doctrine and procedures development via the different Working Groups but also using for the first time the corps exercises to test and validate these new concepts. I have great expectations for this dynamic approach which should enable the land HQs to move beyond the theoretical and develop detailed and meaningful doctrine for NATO. However, I’m deeply convinced that FCHD would not have been so successful in its operational missions if we didn’t pay a special attention to the Family care. The resiliency we demonstrated during the last 2 years is the direct consequence of the balance we succeeded to find between our professional and personal lives. In particular, I would like to praise the wonderful job done by the Family Support Centre and the Spouses’ Club.

Aside what I consider our three success stories, we must recognize our limitations in some domains such as the Peacetime Establishment (PE) and the structures of the HQ itself.

With roughly 380 personnel assigned instead of our authorized 450, FCHD suffers manpower issues which require tough choices as we support ISAF and soon prepare for NATO Response Force (NRF). Of course, I will continue to engage this issue as often as possible during my visits and my participation in main conferences but this will continue to challenge us and always necessitate a delicate balance.

The other main consequence is that PE shortfalls jeopardize our structure. FCHD is set up with two independent DJSEs which should be able to work independently. Currently, this is not true. Each and every rotation to ISAF is a mixture of personnel from both DJSEs. The challenge is then how to manage the remaining personnel of a deployed DJSE when all the key leaders are gone. This will be my main effort in terms of command and control for the upcoming months especially to prepare for the NRF 2012 rotation.

Finally, I challenge all of us to “spread the word” of FCHD. I believe our Headquarters is one of the most successful within the NCS. It is lean, deployable and professional. But all this is not well known and all the daily efforts done by all of you are not fully recognized or appreciated. Hence, like I do today through this Commander’s message, I encourage you to diffuse the mission and accomplishments of FCHD. Engage amongst your nations the accomplishments and capabilities of FCHD so as I can successfully advocate your cause when the post Lisbon discussions start.

As I wrote three months ago, the year ahead poses many challenges for our Headquarters and I still have every confidence in our ability to meet these challenges.
With the New Year well upon us, I sincerely hope that everyone enjoyed the holiday season to the fullest. Reflecting back on my short time as part of this team I recall a very successful family day, and more recently our Com’s Christmas address in early December where we had the opportunity to recognize some of our outstanding members and even had a visit from St Nickolas himself. We in Heidelberg are truly the lucky ones, and every effort was made to ensure support to the families of the deployed was a priority for the Family Support Centre and the Moral and Welfare Section. Their constant work in the background is often unseen, but always appreciated.

As we welcome Roto 1B safely home and send off 2A to continue their good work, I am reminded of the dedicated members I have the privilege of working with. In no other profession in the world, including the police and fire protection services, can a member be legally ordered into herm’s way. Yet we do this without question or reservation, that’s the profession of arms. Members returning with 1B will have the well deserved opportunity to spend some time with their families and loved ones before returning to assist with our constant work load.

I believe we have reason to be proud of a successful year of 2010 and I think the future will be even more challenging. Looking ahead to this year will bring a transition period from ISAF to NRF allowing us to build the capabilities needed to meet our upcoming task. I am confident this will be accomplished in short order to meet the Com’s intent to a high military standard based on the professionalism of our officers and NCO’s.

The NCO communication network is thriving within FC HD thanks to the work of my Sgt’s Maj team, OR9 Geib and Booij, OR8 Schmidt, and OR7 James who are instrumental in the success of this network and often in the lead in my absence from the HQ. My first NCO staff ride with this HQ was a great success to Speyer for a cultural visit, a bit of professional development, a nice dinner with friends and even an opportunity to visit the local Christmas market. During this staff ride I took the opportunity to introduce the NATO NCO strategy and recommended guidelines as issued by Shape. This historic document truly puts the professional NCO Corp on the radar of every NATO unit and subunit. Working together with OR8 Huon from TREX, I plan on pushing forward and developing our NCOs to the highest standard we possibly can. You will be hearing more on this initiative in the near future as we develop a solid business plan.

In closing I look forward to working with each and every one of you during the upcoming months and I hope we can all find a balanced amount of time between our multinational colleges at work and our families at home.
The Observer
2011 ED.01

by LTC Sven Osan

36 members of the Deployable Joint Staff Element (DJSE) from Force Command Heidelberg supported the almost 1,000 personnel from HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) and other agencies who met up in Cornwall for a key NATO training exercise at Royal Air Force Base, St Mawgan.

The ARRC is a high readiness NATO HQ prepared for rapid deployment worldwide, and a large contingent of their personnel have deployed down to RAF St Mawgan for Exercise ARCADE SPEAR 2. The exercise is one of the final stages of their pre-deployment training for operational service next year. This Command Post Exercise (CPX) was aimed at training mainly ARRC staff in the cross-functional nature of the HQ ISAF Joint Command. ARCADE SPEAR 2 is based on an authentic Afghan scenario, and has been using ‘real world’ problems and challenges of the type NATO forces face every day, with support from numerous subject matter experts (SME).

The SMEs included General (Retd) David McKiernan, a former commander of ISAF, as the Senior Mentor, and UNAMA’s Deputy Special Representative, Mr Robert Watkins, as an adviser. Other SMEs were invited to take part from NATO’s Multinational Corps North East and the US V Corps all of whom have recently returned from operations in Kabul.

Based on a ‘snap shot’ of real events which took place in Afghanistan over one week in July, so authentic is exercise play for the hundreds of military and civilian staff it is difficult for them to remember that this is an exercise and not the real thing. To create a realistic environment the ISAF Regional Commands (RC) were played by teams from 1 (UK) Armd Div and 1 (DEU) Pz Div; both of which will also deploy to ISAF as HQ RCs in 2011/2012. Working together during the exercise refined processes and procedures which will be important during the ISAF deployment. Lastly it was a great opportunity for the new DJSE members to integrate into the team.

For the soldiers from Heidelberg it was not only an event to bond as a team, but also to set the stage for the following training at the Joint Warfare Centre in Stavanger (JWC), Norway and to become “Mission Ready”.

ARRCADE SPEAR 2010 – another milestone up to the ISAF deployment
by MAJ Guido Laurent

He was appointed as Deputy Chief of Staff Resources (DCOS RES) of HQ ISAF on December 07, 2009.

In addition to the five functional branches (Personal, Logistics, Communication and Information Systems, Engineers and Medical), DCOS Res commands and controls the Base Support Group (including the Force Protection Coy and the contractors), the Financial Controller, the Joint Coordinating Body, the chaplain and the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) Liaison Officer. DCOS RES is numerical the largest division within HQ ISAF with 460 military and civilian. The Resources Division de facto covers all resources related issues from the strategic level down to the tactical Real Life Support (RLS) level.

The Resources Division identified five major Lines of Effort (LoE) in support of COMISAF’s Counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign:
• Set the conditions for Force Sustainment.
• Man the Force efficiently and effectively.
• Build the Afghan Mission Network to enhance information sharing and support the development of the Afghan Telecommunication Industry and its capability.
• Provide/Improve Infrastructure and developing ISAF Theatre Strategic Basing coordinated with US Forces Afghanistan (USFOR-A) and the Troop Contributing Nations (TCN). Direct and enable Strategic Basing Requirements became one of the 19 COMISAF Strategic Priorities.
• Oversee the provision of medical support to the Force and assist in the development of the Afghan Health System.

Logistics being just one of his responsibilities, the logistic sustainment of the Force in Afghanistan was clearly the main effort. Important efforts were made in the area of the logistic supplies, the Ground Lines of Communication (external and internal) and the throughput at the border crossing points.

Although the DCOS RES is not officially considered a strategic partner of one of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) Ministries, DCOS RES and the various branches have a de facto partnership at the working level with multiple Ministries and other entities:
• Logistics (CJ4): Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Interior (Taxation – supply throughput – border activities etc...)
• Communication and Information (CJ6): Ministry of Information, Tech and Communications
• Medical (CJMED): considered as the strategic partner of Ministry of Public Health
Since NATO and the Troop Contributing Nations have adopted the outsourcing of logistics through commercial solutions, linking contracting and the contractors to a winning COIN campaign has become a major effort at the strategic level. The Resources Division is closely involved in this effort through the COIN Contracting Executive Steering Committee. This forum is instrumental for the implementation of the COIN contracting guidance.

The “up and out” part of the daily activities being operational, a key partner in the daily endeavours is without doubt HQ ISAF Joint Command (IJC), the 3 star operational HQ.

The direction and the follow up of the Crisis Response Operation (CRO) Urgent Requirement (CUR) process is another responsibility of the Resources Division, a key process trying to cover the high cost urgent ISAF needs.

General De Vos was instructed to set up a Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) in order to be able to mitigate the friction points between GIRoA and ISAF related to the MTA. Through several working group meetings and formal JCB boards (co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of Finance and DCOS RES) this intent has been met. The Body so far has been instrumental to install mutual confidence, to create an understanding of the position of the MTA.

Another big achievement has been the continuous effort on the realisation of the Afghan Mission Network (AMN) able to link all national and international networks in one and the same “Communication cloud” or “System of Systems”.

Independence of bottled water importation needs to be achieved as much as possible, by creating water bottle plants and using the local market for resupply of water. This is another step in the direction of the “Afghan First Program”, meaning using as much as possible local goods and services.

Promoting “Afghan First” is another opportunity to support the development of Afghanistan.

One of the highlights was that the Engineer Branch of DCOS RES, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, HQ IJC, and the Engineer Branch of Headquarters Brunssum successfully handed over the Southern part of Kabul Airport Airfield to the Afghan authorities.

After an interesting, but very challenging one-year deployment, MG De Vos will take again Command of the Deployable Joint Staff Element 2 (DJSE2) to prepare the Heidelberg HQ for the NATO Response Force (NRF) 12 standby phase in 2012. The operational experience he gained during his deployment will for sure be a great benefit for that task.

“Linking Contracting to a winning COIN Campaign: if you don’t know where the dollar you want to spend is going, don’t spend it”
(MG De Vos)
**Family Support Centre**

**Belgian BBQ**

With each new ISAF Rotation the Family Support Centre is organizing a get-together for all dependant families of former rotations as well as for future rotations. This will give everyone involved the possibility to connect with other family members of this Headquarters to socialize and exchange experiences.

This last June, the Belgian Support Unit offered to organize a special BBQ for all dependant families whose partner/spouses were currently deployed with Rotation 1A and who were going to be deployed with Rotation 1B to ISAF.

The weather was great while everyone gathered at the International Support Kaserne (ISK) for lots of good food prepared by the friendly staff of the Belgian Support Unit. All participants enjoyed the company of each other and the BBQ was a great example of how each nation can contribute to the families of deployed personnel by giving them the opportunity to attend a social event in order to escape their daily routine at home which is not always easy with the partner or spouse being deployed.

**BRUNCH**

A new idea rose up! Usually, the FSC and the Nato Spouses Club organized a Sunday Coffee apart from each other month. Instead of having two Sunday’s Coffees each month the idea was to do something for the spouses of deployed soldiers and civilians during the week and school hours. Something pretty simple which could distress the spouses. In a small talk with the concerned women and the President of the NATO Spouses Club we decided to organize a monthly brunch!

The first one was organized nearly immediately after the departure of rotation 1.b. on 29th of July. And yes it was a “bingo”, twenty-five partners showed up. After being welcomed by the Chief Family Support Centre, the guests were invited to enjoy their time. And they did! They had also the pleasure to meet our Commander General Morgan III and to have a short conversation with him. His appearance was very appreciated by the spouses.

After a good glass of champagne on the health of all spouses, their partners and on Hedwig Van Geldorp’s Birthday the first brunch ended at 1:30 PM. It was a real pleasure being there and to organize it! The impression is that the brunch is well-received and successful.

See you again next time!
Family Fest

For the first time Family Support Centre was represented at the Family Fest which was also a main event for the families of deployed personnel. With the help of NCHD we were able to set up a Skype connection with ISAF.

General Morgan III opened the session punctual at 4 o’clock PM. After his friendly and respectful words the families had the opportunity to have a small talk with their loved ones in mission. We saw some smiling and happy husbands but also some tears in the eyes! Yes, it was an emotional session. However we had the impression that all “skypers” were happy!
The annual “Family Fest” is a social event very welcomed in Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg (HQ FC HD). Every year colorful, attracting theme stalls run by each Nation and furnished accordingly are set up in the International Support Kaserne (ISK), providing a unique occasion for promoting cohesion, integration and mutual understanding between the HQ-members (belonging to more than 20 Countries), their families and their guests.

The festival was opened by the Commander Allied Force Command Heidelberg Lieutenant General John W. Morgan III. In his welcome remarks he stressed that the families are a priority of this command. Soldiers can do the job better if they now everything is good with their family back home. General Morgan added: “It is not only that the Soldiers work and live together, but that the families come to live, work and enjoy together, that we support each other and meld into one team, soldiers and families”. He also thanked all soldiers and civilians involved in the preparation which put a lot of energy and work to make this happen.

After the opening the more than 300 participants didn’t waste any time to have a look and taste what the different countries have to offer: from Spaghetti to Hamburgers, Fries to chocolate, cheese to herring. A variety of refreshments including lemonade, wine, beer and some the stronger drinks completed the consumption.

The children were also not forgotten. Pony rides, face painting, car rides, using water from the Fire department to move balls in a course and plenty more of games were setup to give them an enjoyable time as well.

This year the Italian contingent, led by Brigadier General Salvatore Albore – Director Joint Logistic Support Group 2 (JLSG 2) - and currently composed of 10 Officers and NCOs (None Commissioned Officers), made a great effort to adequately support the event and spread the traditions of generosity and fellowship, as well as good food and tasty wine, which constitute a well-known peculiarity of Italy. The military personnel were supported by Italian fellow countrymen from the area. So one could meet in the front of the stand Mr. Giovanni Scurti and his son Gianluca (owners and managers of “Augusta” restaurant in Mannheim) preparing and serving delicious “lasagna” and other national specialties, perfectly matched with the enjoyable, tasty wines served a few steps further and offered by “Carpene’ Malvolti”. Pasta, olive oil and other typical products presented by Italian brands “Divella”, “De Cecco” and “Monini” were distributed to our kind guests, together with promotional hand-outs and gadgets provided by several Italian touristic agencies (special thanks to the Province of Rome, and the Tower of Treviso) as well as by the Italian Defense General Staff.

If you walked around there was Canada serving their famous “Moose Milk”.

Sweden was in the same tent with its neighbor Norway and Austria shared the tent with Germany. Norway presented food of the Vikings, which was very good and therefore the stand was always crowded. The Netherlands had their raw herring and the well known pancakes “Poffertjes” including party snacks. Turkey also had a great amount of home made food (including all the famous sweets) while France offered a wide variety of premium wines and cheese. Belgium attracted more young people to their tent, due to there famous fries and chocolate. Poland had a great display of foods and drinks and information about their country.

Since January 2010 FC HQ is supporting ISAF Headquarters in Kabul with around 90 soldiers. Therefore the Family Support Centre (FSC) established a Skype connection with our soldiers in Afghanistan and family members could talk to their loved ones while watching them on a big screen. Even the Commander used the opportunity to have a quick chat with the Brigadier General Leonard Beulen, working in the Operations Branch in ISAF HQ.

When the loudspeakers informed all the guests that the event was coming to an end, a lot of people still lined up at the stands, waiting for the last glass of refreshment. Talking to participants and guests all expressed their appreciation: “Family Fest 2010 was a great success and we have to repeat it again next year.”
Families are our priority!
On the 1st November 28 staff officers from Deployable Joint Staff Element 1 (DJSE1) left Heidelberg and flew to Stavanger, Norway, to attend the mission rehearsal exercise (MRE). This marks the culmination of their training and preparation for their deployment to Headquarters International Security Assistance Force (HQ ISAF). Following the exercise, these staff officers will spend Christmas and New Year with their families and in January they will fly to Kabul, Afghanistan, and relieve the personnel from DJSE2 who are currently deployed there. This will mark the half way point in Heidelberg Force Command Headquarters’ (FCHD) current commitment to HQ ISAF.

Half way points are significant in many endeavours. They provide an opportunity to review what has been achieved so far, to draw breath and reinvigorate your motivation and, if necessary, to revise plans and expectations. Reviewing what the personnel of DJSE2 have achieved so far in HQ ISAF demonstrates the value of Heidelberg’s contribution. FCHD has deployed formed teams with substantial knowledge, and in many cases previous experience, of the theatre into a composite headquarters that is mainly filled with individual augmentees. Sun Tzu said that “if you know your enemies and know yourself; you will not be imperilled in a hundred battles.” The training and preparation that FCHD provided for its staff meant that they knew Afghanistan, and its challenges, better than some of the experts that briefed them. The exercises that they had done together meant that they knew each other; and though, as staff officers, they did not have to
fight a hundred battles they did have to survive a hundred working groups and several thousand PowerPoint slides! The contribution that FCHD personnel have made has been commended by the ISAF Commander and the Chief of Staff.

The change over from DJSE2 to DJSE1 will mark a collective intake of breath for FCHD and DJSE1 personnel will reinvigorate Heidelberg’s commitment. The change of commanders in ISAF has brought a change in emphasis and FCHD has reviewed its contribution to HQ ISAF accordingly. General Petraeus has put greater emphasis on governance and development, and FCHD’s contribution to HQ ISAF reflects this change of emphasis. The MRE in Stavanger provided the perfect opportunity for DJSE1 personnel to finalise their preparation for deploying and the presence of DJSE2 personnel (some of whom flew directly from theatre to support the MRE and others, who had been deployed in the first half of the year, came from Heidelberg) further demonstrated the importance of FCHD’s commitment. It was a large staff exercise with a training audience of more than 350 and a further nearly 400 in exercise control and support functions, from 32 nations. It was also very complex with there being 41 different functional programs. The complexity of the exercise mirrored the complexity of operations in Afghanistan. The importance was demonstrated by the attendance of Brigadier General Pashston of the Afghan National Army (ANA); Major General Lyon and Brigadier Generals Baczkowski and Saint Chamas from HQ ISAF; and Lieutenant General Rodriguez, Major General Boag and Brigadier General Scolo from the ISAF Joint Command (IJC).

But what now for the personnel from DJSE2 who have redeployed? After Heidelberg’s commitment to ISAF is complete in early 2012 it will assume the responsibility for providing a DJSE on standby for the NATO Response Force (NRF). This means that DJSE2 will do NRF preparation throughout 2011. In addition there will be tasks associated with training component headquarters, preparing and conducting Partnership for Peace exercises as well as the conferences that maintain the cohesion of the Alliance and ensure the readiness and interoperability of forces. Some may say that such tasks are routine and mundane but they are as essential to maintaining the capability and the credibility of the Alliance as being deployed to Afghanistan.

Heidelberg’s current commitment to HQ ISAF is almost half way over but that does not mean that Heidelberg’s commitment is in any way diminished. Heidelberg is fully committed to HQ ISAF and, when the time comes, Heidelberg will be fully committed to NRF. That’s the Heidelberg way.
by StFw Peter Knöringer

On 30 Sep 2010 the German National Contingent of Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg (HQ FC HD) invited for its annual ceremony to celebrate the Day of German Unity. As 2010 also marks the 20th anniversary of the peaceful reunion of Germany in 1990 more than 250 guests from civilian as well as military life followed the invitation. The reception, lead by the German Senior Officer, Colonel Wolfgang Mika, traditionally took place in the “Zirkelsäle” and the Garden of Schwetzingen Palace. After the individual welcome by Colonel Mika in the receiving line the guests enjoyed the reception and met with friends, colleagues and representatives from all 24 Headquarter nations as well as honoraries and distinguished guests from all areas of the civilian life around Schwetzingen and Heidelberg.

All participants truly enjoyed the delicious food and drinks provided by the ABC Abwehrregiment 750 from Bruchsal and the German National Support Element of FCHQ Heidelberg.

In his welcome address Colonel Mika started to remember the around 100 members of the Heidelberg NATO Staff that are currently supporting the ISAF mission in Afghanistan. He then showed the connection between the 17th June, the old day of German unity and Memorial Day for the revolt of the 17. June 1953 in the former sowjet occupied zone, to the 3rd October, which are both memorial days and official German holydays.

He thanked all nations and organisations which took part in the reunion. He especially mentioned the citizens of the former German Democratic Republic and their brave and farseeing actions.

After the economy crisis our target should be to go together toward a bright future.

Ending his speech Colonel Mika took the chance and honored LTC Sven Osan with the German Honor Cross in Gold and also promoted Freiherr Felix von Sinner to Lieutenant of the Reserves.

After sunset torches were lit and the “Luftwaffenmusikkorps 2” from Karlsruhe under the lead of Major Martin Wehn played a serenade.

A serenade is mainly instrumental with an entertaining character. It consists of several sets and is mostly played outside.

This year the Musikkorps started with the “Fridericus-Rex-Grenadiermarsch”, composed by Ferdinand Radtke in 1867. It was followed by several traditional well but also not so well-known marches and each explained before to the audience by Major Wehn. The Day of German Unity celebration was concluded by the German National Anthem.
NCSA Squadron Heidelberg Supports NCSA Mission Detachment ISAF

by Mr John Boyd

The ‘D’ in DJSE signifies the members of the two Heidelberg DJSEs are no strangers to Afghanistan. Yet, while NCSA Squadron Heidelberg’s primary mission is to support the Force Command Headquarters in Heidelberg, it does its part as well to support the NATO mission in Afghanistan by providing manpower to fill positions within the NCSA Mission Detachment ISAF or NMD-I, pronounced NIM-DI.

NMD-I was born from the vision of the Director of NCSA, Lieutenant General Herrmann. He believed it would greatly benefit ISAF if NCSA could leverage its full range of capabilities to ensure the best CIS support to ISAF possible. While NCSA had long provided a quarter of the CIS personnel supporting ISAF, with NMD-I NCSA will bid and fill as near as possible 100% of the CIS CE posts at ISAF Headquarters, IJC Headquarters, KAIA (Kabul International Airfield), Kandahar Airfield, and the NATO Training Mission – ISAF.

With NMD-I, NCSA will be more than a force provider. One such additional capability is the ability to provide surge teams to handle short term missions. For instance, last summer NCSA deployed a team to re-organize and label the wiring and cabling technical rooms at ISAF HQs. With the turn-over and frequent re-organization of ISAF HQs, the ISAF Communication Support Team (CST) could never catch its breath enough to keep its technical rooms up to standard. It would not have been feasible to ask for an increase in CE manpower to do a short term project. Before NMD-I, there wasn’t an organization to whom the CST could turn for support either. NCSA was able to quickly deploy a team to Kabul for six weeks to handle this project. Other teams have deployed to provide an IT Management Framework and to assist with the running of Functional Systems.

NMD-I was IOC July 2010 and will become FOC in the Spring of 2011. NCSA Squadron Heidelberg has strongly responded to the call for volunteers, even though it is one of the smaller NCSA elements. Currently Maj Yves Voitassak, Commander of the Squadron’s Service Support Branch, is deployed to IJC Cj6 in support of NMD-I. He will be followed in the next 15 months by at least three other Squadron soldiers and civilians who have answered the call.

Don’t be surprised, then, if the face who comes to answer your trouble ticket is a familiar one. It could be a member of NCSA Squadron Heidelberg who is in Afghanistan to support NMD-I.
On 6 December Lieutenant General John W. Morgan III invited soldiers, civilian employees and their families for the annual Christmas address to Campbell Barracks. About 60 children and more than 300 adults followed his invitation to the festively decorated hall.

General Morgan was delighted that so many family members and children had come to not only hear his Christmas message, but more importantly, to also meet St Nicholas. In his brief speech he emphasized that Force Command Heidelberg is supporting the ISAF Headquarters in Kabul since early 2010 with over 80 soldiers in a semi-annual rotation and will continue to do so until the end of 2011. At the same time he thanked all the spouses who have been alone and are still alone for their understanding. “Today my thoughts go to those who are not present in Heidelberg, far from their families and I am sure that they know that they are in our hearts.”

The Headquarters has created a family support organization that works around the clock for the families.

But the next year will also have big tasks for Force Command Heidelberg: the ISAF support and the preparation for the NATO Response Force (NRF), the rapid reaction force of NATO, will go simultaneously.

Finally, General Morgan honored outstanding achievements of servicemen and women. For the Belgian Adjutant Vansummeren he had an extra “Christmas present”: the ISAF commander General David H. Petraeus, in whose staff Vansummeren as one of the „Heidelbergers“ worked for six months, awarded him for “excellent performance of all members of the RDC with dramatic impact on the functions of ISAF HQ and the entire ISAF mission”.

The Christmas address ended with the arrival of St Nicholas and the bright eyes of children and the best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a prosperous 2011.
X-mas address
by LTC Nathan Hoepner

The NATO Response Force (NRF) provides NATO with a robust and credible joint high readiness force, able to deploy quickly to execute the full spectrum of Alliance missions, either within or beyond the Euro-Atlantic area. The NRF includes Land, Maritime, Air and Special Operations Component Commands (CC), led by a single Joint Headquarters (JHQ), which has both a Main and a Forward element (JHQ Main and JHQ FWD).

The members of the Alliance contribute trained and ready component forces via a force generation process, while the NATO Command Structure provides the JHQ and headquarters of each CC. Once contributed, assigned, and certified, these forces are held on "stand-by" for a one-year NRF rotation, kept in continual readiness to deploy on short notice in support of Alliance objectives anywhere in the world.

The NRF for 2012 will be led by Joint Force Command Brunssum, which provides the JHQ Main for the force. The JHQ FWD, as well the Joint Logistics Support Group core staff, will be provided by Allied Force Command Heidelberg’s Deployable Joint Staff Element (DJSE) number two, or DJSE 2. The JHQ FWD includes a Forward Element that performs as an extension of the JHQ Main staff, and a Forward Support Element that sustains the DJSE during its deployed operations.

The JLSG is the coordinating authority overall responsible for Logistics for the deployed NRF including its component commands. Contributions to the NRF, whether from the nations or the NATO Command Structure, must be trained and mission capable in accordance with NRF requirements and qualification standards established by NATO. These forces therefore undergo an extensive training process in the year leading up to their NRF Standby rotation, culminating in a series of exercises by which the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) certifies the readiness of the NRF. For FCHD, the culminating exercise is Steadfast Juncture 2011 (SFJE 11). The DJSE and its component elements
will carry out a series of exercises as well as local training to prepare for SFJE 11.

The focus of SJFE 11 is to train and certify the ability of the JHQ to execute a Crisis Response Operation (CRO), interact effectively with its component commands, and function seamlessly despite the geographical separation of the Main and FWD. The JLSG will be exercised on its ability to coordinate theater-wide Logistics and support the component commands.

Upon successful completion of SFJE 11 and certification by SACEUR, the NRF forces go on “Standby” and may be activated on short notice for missions within the NRF scope. The NRF will of course continue to train during the standby period in order to maintain the level of readiness achieved in the train-up period. However, they will take on no other commitments in that year that could inhibit their ability to rapidly respond to a NATO decision to deploy the NRF.

While FCHD has been part of the NRF before, the train-up period for this rotation will be especially challenging given the commitment of one DJSE to ISAF through 2011 and into the early months of the 2012 stand-by period. FCHD will therefore be the first to test the ability of the recently established Force Commands to execute two DJSE missions simultaneously.
The “Volkstrauertag” (German national day of mourning) is a public holiday in Germany. It is observed two Sundays before the first Advent and commemorates those who died in war and the victims of violent oppressions. In its modern form, it was first observed in 1952.

This year representatives from Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg, US Army Europe, German Armed Forces, the City of Heidelberg and the Christian Church paid their respect to all those who died in war. The ceremony took place at the Heidelberg war memorial and was supported with a Trumpet quartet from the Heidelberg “Musik und Singschule”.

by StFw Peter Knöringer
Bulgarian Flag Lowering Ceremony

by SSG Dwight Chaney

On 24 November 2010, personnel from Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg gathered for the official lowering of the Bulgarian Flag. The ceremony symbolized the departure of Bulgaria’s last assigned soldier to Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg related to the previous peace time Establishment.

Under the watchful eyes of LTG John W. Morgan III, Commander, HQ FC Heidelberg, a formal flag-lowering ceremony was carried out to recognize all that we owe to Bulgaria and its willingness to assume all the responsibilities of a NATO membership. Bulgaria joined NATO in 2004 however initiated its transition to a democratic government as early as 1989.

Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg is a multinational NATO Headquarters with an established strength of approximately 450 military personnel and International Civilians from 20 NATO nations and 3 Partnership for Peace (PfP) nations.

NCO Staff Ride to Speyer

ROTO 1A Redeployment
HEIDELBERG, GERMANY – On 11 August 2010, personnel of Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg, formed up in front of Building 8, to welcome the incoming Command Sergeant Major, Chief Warrant Officer Mark D. Saulnier, CAN Army.

Escorted to the front of the formation by the Commander, Lieutenant General John W. Morgan III, CSM Saulnier was first introduced by a small address from the COM, and then CSM Saulnier took the opportunity to address the formation to thank all those in attendance for the warm welcome. CSM Saulnier stated that over the next couple of weeks, he would endeavor to get out and meet all the personnel of the HQ, and looks forward to the duties and responsibilities enacted upon him as the CSM.

The Command Sergeant Major (CSM) is the principal advisor to the Commander (COM) on all enlisted matters for both the Force Command HQ Staff and the two Deployable Joint Support Elements of the Headquarters in Heidelberg.

Duties of the CSM include:
- To provide advice and recommendations on all Non Commissioned Officers (NCO) and enlisted matters to the COM;
- To execute established policies and ensuring NCO and enlisted personnel comply with NATO and National standards of performance, training and conduct;
- To ensure standards of NCO leadership, professional development, management, and supervision are maintained;
- To plan, co-ordinate and participate in ceremonies and events as directed by the COM;
- To advise the COM on issues concerning morale and quality of life issues of all members of the Headquarters and their families; and
- To serve as the senior NCO mentor on all PfP and NATO exercises and to lead the HQ’s efforts to further develop professional NGOs with expertise and authority.

Chief Warrant Officer Mark Saulnier comes to the HQ from his previous position as the Regional Chief Warrant Officer of Joint Task Force North in Yellowknife, North West Territories, Canada. As a Field Engineer, he has extensive background on demolitions and demining, including a 13 month tour in Cambodia conducting Demining operations, and Kosovo as Sr Mine Technical Advisor. In addition, CWO Saulnier has held the position of Regimental Sergeant Major of the Canadian Parachute Centre, in Trenton, Ontario, Canada.
by MCpl Sherry Schmidtpeter

HEIDELBERG, GERMANY – On 23 July 2010, Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg (HQ FC Heidelberg) conducted a Farewell Ceremony for the second rotation of HQ personnel to be deployed to Afghanistan in order to support NATO’s continuing ISAF mission.

The whole HQ staff, deploying and remaining personnel of the HQ, as well as families and next-of-kin of the personnel to be deployed were present at the ceremony, since the event was as much intended for them as for the deploying personnel.

In his address, Lieutenant General John W. Morgan III, the Commanding Officer (COM) Allied Force Command Heidelberg, expressed his strong conviction that this second rotation from Heidelberg is ready to deploy, after six months of dedicated mission-tailored pre-deployment training. Building up a cohesive team for Afghanistan is a prerequisite to successfully fulfil the mission.

“The mission is of vital importance to each of your nations and the NATO Alliance – I have the utmost confidence in the training you have received, and I am certain that you are fully prepared for this deployment”, General Morgan III pointed out.

He ensured the deploying personnel that their families staying behind will have the utmost support of the HQ, while being deployed. Although the primary purpose of this ceremony was to recognize the deploying personnel, the COM also took the time to honour a few individuals for their contribution to the HQ during the last few months.

The ceremony ended with an invocation by the US chaplain. The Heidelberg contribution, consisting of men and women, military and civilian personnel, has been providing operational capabilities to the core staff of HQ ISAF in Kabul, commencing January this year.

To facilitate personnel sustainment as well as continuity of ISAF operations during the required 24-month period, HQ personnel will in most cases be deployed on a six-month rotational basis, thus leading to four successive personnel rotations for HQ FC Heidelberg.

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Headquarters Allied Force Command
Heidelberg Delegation Supports
World Peace Day

by SSG Dwight Chaney

On 13 September 2010, the German Military Pastoral Care (Katholische Militärseelsorge) Bruchsal had a Church Ceremony in Germersheim to commemorate World Peace Day. World Peace Day occurs annually in September and is dedicated to peace, specifically to the absence of war. Also known as International Peace Day, it is observed by many nations, political and military groups, and people throughout the world.

During the ceremony of more than 200 military and civilian attendants, Dr Karl-Heinz Wieseman the 96th Bishop of Speyer and his Clergy delivered a message of peace and freedom. The Bishop addressed the audience on how the world has changed since September 11, 2001. He also spoke of the peaceful revolution of Germany after tearing down the Berlin wall. Bishop Wieseman gave his blessings and prayers to the many soldiers deployed throughout the world for their many sacrifices for world peace.

Headquarters Allied Force Command Heidelberg was represented by a 23 member team of Flag Bearers supporting 21 NATO nations, the NATO and Headquarters flag. Led by Command Sergeant Major (GSM) Mark Sauliner, the delegation ceremoniously marched into the Cathedral and posted the flags.
You can also find us on the Internet (www.NATO.int/fchd)