



A combat medic restocks the aid station shelves after sick call.

The practice of split-based medical operations is not new. It has proved to be successful across multiple rotations in Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom,

and New Dawn. The Soldiers of C Company continued to use this framework and make it their own to provide superior, comprehensive, and responsive level II medical support across RC North to the Soldiers of the 170th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and others who needed care.

Through the deliberate application of assets and resources, the dangers of distance were diminished and the intent to keep Soldiers in the fight through the provision of support as far forward as possible was met. Daily, C Company Soldiers' efforts directly contributed to the sustainment of the medical readiness and health of the 170th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, serving a critical role in mission accomplishment.

CAPTAIN ERICA L. KANE IS THE COMMANDER OF C COMPANY, 24TH BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION, FROM BAUMHOLDER, GERMANY. SHE WAS DEPLOYED TO REGIONAL COMMAND NORTH, AFGHANISTAN, FROM FEBRUARY 2011 TO FEBRUARY 2012. SHE HOLDS A BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME. SHE IS A GRADUATE OF THE ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OFFICER BASIC COURSE; THE PLANS, OPERATIONS, INTELLIGENCE, SECURITY, AND TRAINING COURSE; AND THE COMBINED LOGISTICS CAPTAIN CAREER COURSE.

campaign, medication dispensing and management education, class VIII (medical materiel) management training, and routine medical maintenance within each facility. By providing specialty services and care as far forward as possible, the medical service providers maximized the combat readiness of the brigade's most valuable weapon, the Soldier. To keep Soldiers in the fight, these providers logged hundreds of patient encounters, serviced more than 500 pieces of equipment, and conducted more than 200 inspections.

Effects of Split-Based Medical Operations

Operating across such a large area presented many challenges, including a reduced ground evacuation capacity because the combat medics assigned to maneuver battalions came from the brigade evacuation platoon of C Company. However, it also presented many opportunities for joint and international cooperation.

Training prospects were limitless, ranging from base-wide mass casualty incident response exercises that included all medical personnel from sister services and coalition partners to medic exchange programs within the aid stations to education and training blocks of instruction with Afghan partners to opportunities for shifts within the German role III medical facility. Each of these events furthered C Company Soldiers' medical knowledge through the exchange of clinical practices and fostered the greater goal of cooperation. The Soldiers took advantage of the chance to develop relationships across national borders in order to provide the best care possible.

Property Accountability Challenges in a Headquarters Company

BY CAPTAIN BLAKE K. HUFF

The Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 24th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB), 170th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, deployed to Regional Command North in Afghanistan in February 2010. Shortly after deploying, the company underwent a change of command while simultaneously assuming a new mission set. This article is focused on establishing and maintaining property accountability and should assist anyone preparing to manage property within a decentralized and widely dispersed environment akin to Afghanistan.

The Right Sub-Hand Receipt Holders

In his book *Good to Great*, business guru Jim Collins states that the right place to start building an organization is not "where" but rather "who." Although we do not always have the option of choosing our personnel, the importance of selecting the right Soldiers to serve as sub-hand receipt holders cannot be overstated. The obvious requirements for sub-hand receipt holders are the ability to correctly identify end items and associated components using the appropriate technical manuals, an understanding of the hand receipt process and Department of the Army (DA) Form 2062 (Hand Receipt/Annex Number), and the means to properly secure equipment.

Additional requirements that are less obvious include time management skills (being available to assist with inventories) and the maturity to prioritize property accountability within mission requirements. Commanders must choose their sub-hand receipt holders carefully. Commanders must also be prepared for sub-hand receipt holders to conduct joint inventories for the outgoing and incoming sub-hand receipt holders as individuals arrive at the unit, redeploy, or change for any reason.

The Right Procedures

Our company conducted change-of-command inventories shortly after deploying. Because of travel times, distances, and the requirement to inventory both organizational property and theater-provided equipment (TPE), the change-of-command inventories took approximately 2 months. Keeping detailed notes on inventoried property and ensuring equipment was hand-receipted to end users were of the utmost importance.

TPE can be a problem area. TPE often includes equipment that Soldiers are unfamiliar with or for which the Army has not published a technical manual. It is important to remember that there is always someone within the formation with the expertise to identify equipment and components and assist with inventories. Field service representatives and logistics assistance representatives often can provide manuals and

component listings from the manufacturers, which can be used to generate Property Book Unit Supply Enhanced user-created component listings in order to properly inventory and account for Army property. Seeking the right expertise can greatly reduce the number of property accountability problems.

Units in Afghanistan often operate while dispersed across multiple installations, which sometimes are several days of travel from the headquarters element. This presents obvious challenges for cyclic and sensitive item inventories. One technique we developed was to require inventory officers to travel to inventory all local items personally. For these purposes, we defined "local" to mean up to 1 day of travel.

For items located farther away, we required the inventory officer to confirm the validity of the DA Form 2062 and to contact the senior liaison on the installation in order to confirm the serial number. This is a less than ideal situation, but the dispersed nature of the mission and significant travel distances prevented an inventory officer from traveling to each item every month.

Of lesser concern from a property accountability perspective—but of significant concern for Soldiers and officers—is Army direct ordering. We allowed platoon sergeants to create orders for their Soldiers based on Soldier needs and mission requirements. We also identified one Soldier at each outlying location to order for his location. Allowing decentralized ordering permitted those Soldiers to fill requirements for their unique missions. However, when ordering in such a decentralized manner, it is important to communicate clearly to each location what the Soldiers are allowed to order and maintain contact if the order exceeds the maximum allowable amount for that location.

Following these simple procedures for correctly accounting for and maintaining accountability of equipment while deployed will significantly reduce the time spent on financial liability investigations to establish accountability for lost items. Property accountability can be a significant force multiplier. When it is done correctly, Soldiers will have the required equipment for their missions, which is the ultimate goal of property accountability.

CAPTAIN BLAKE K. HUFF IS THE COMMANDER OF THE HEADQUARTERS AND HEADQUARTERS COMPANY, 24TH BRIGADE SUPPORT BATTALION, 170TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, STATIONED IN BAUMHOLDER, GERMANY. HE HAS A BACHELOR'S DEGREE FROM THE UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY AND IS A GRADUATE OF THE AVIATION OFFICER BASIC COURSE AND AVIATION CAPTAINS CAREER COURSE.