

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE BLOGGERS ROUNDTABLE WITH STUDENTS FROM THE COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE VIA TELECONFERENCE SUBJECT: LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES AND THEIR EFFECTS ON OPERATIONS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN TIME: 2:04 P.M. EDT DATE: THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2010

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SPECIALIST ASHLEY MCCALL-WASHINGTON: (Public Affairs Specialist Online and Social Media Division, Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Army): Good afternoon, again, and thanks to everyone for dialing in.

Today, our roundtable is with the students from the Command and General Staff College. They'll be discussing and answering your questions about logistical challenges and their effects on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. And I'll pretty much leave it there and pass it over to our participants.

If you have any opening statements and also, I think, there's about seven people on the line, you can just give us a brief introduction and we can move from there.

LT. CMDR. DAVID COLLIS (SP): Yes, Ashley, this is Lieutenant Commander David Collis (sp), U.S. Navy. My experience is primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan as a Special Operations forces logistics. We have six people here right now, one may be joining us. But right now there's six.

Yan (sp), on to you.

MAJ. YAN KIMBALL (SP): Good afternoon. My name is Major Yan Kimball (sp). My command is in Afghanistan. I serve with the Special Operations forces.

MAJ. COLLEEN CARR (SP): My name is Major Colleen Carr (sp), Army. My experience is both in Afghanistan and Iraq. I worked at the Theater Sustainment Command level as an HR planner.

TIM DRAVIS (PH): Good afternoon. My name's Tim Dravis (ph). I'm a field artillery officer. Two tours in Iraq, both the initial combat and then last year with the transition team.

MAJ. VALERIE JOHNSON: Good afternoon, my name is Major Valerie Johnson. I bring to you experience from Iraq as a planner in a(n) area support group.

MAJ. JONES: Good afternoon. My name is Major Jones, and I bring to you experience as a force preparing for deployment to Iraq and deploying other Reserve units for mobilization to Iraq.

MS. MCCALL: Okay. Well, thank you.

Colonel Collis, would you like to begin with a brief opening statement?

COL. COLLIS (SP): Yes, please. Basically, we have, as you heard, a wide breadth of experience here. It's mostly concentrated in the logistics field. We do have a BYERS (ph) officer here who can talk about the operational impact and the logistics and what he's experienced in both Iraq and Afghanistan, as you -- as you heard. And as put out in the blog advisory, the impact on how material, personnel and so forth flow in and out of both countries. Those challenges, some of what may be ahead of us in the future.

MS. MCCALL: Well, thank you, sir. Has someone else joining us on the line before we begin questions? Okay, maybe not.

Q Yeah. Sorry. Hi, this is Dina Maron, a reporter from Greenwire. I just joined.

MS. MCCALL: Okay. No problem. Thank you, Dina.

Q Thank you.

MS. MCCALL: We can begin now. John, do you have our first question for today?

Q John from 4G War. I was kind of hoping you folks -- (chuckles) -- would make an opening statement first so I'd have a little bit better idea of some of the issues you're facing. But -- oh, I have my mute button on, I think. But perhaps you could all go around and say, especially specific to either Iraq or Afghanistan, what are some of the logistical problems that you faced in your deployments?

MR. : Sure. We went pretty broad on this because of the amount of experience here and to give an opening statement would be kind of long, so we'll hit it just as you recommended.

For myself, it was -- in Iraq, it was actual building of detachments, because I worked with field teams out there. It was building of detachments, the movement of material and equipment on the ground in small groups, and utilizing Iraqi personnel to do that, and some of the challenges with the Iraqi forces out there while that was occurring.

In Afghanistan as well, it was setting up new detachments. The expeditionary nature of the effort that we were involved with out there and moving the goods from Pakistan up into Afghanistan, the routes there are pretty challenging and the air passage required to do a lot of movement once you're in the theater.

MAJ. KIMBALL: My experience is mainly in --

Q I'm sorry, could all of you identify who you are since we can't see you so we have a name to go with the voice?

MAJ. KIMBALL: Yes. My name is Major Yan Kimball (sp).

My experience is in Afghanistan, and the biggest challenge there was the road infrastructure, which -- that there is really hardly any, if none, and also the weather, as well as the terrain impact -- the weather impact on the terrain because of the snow and because there is no -- (inaudible) -- roads. It is really hard to move goods during the winter months, so your time to conduct any type of mission is pretty limited. And as well as during the winter months, you would have to do a lot of area supply, but then again there is another weather impact that would kind of reduce being able to do the resupply all the time.

Q Thank you.

MAJ. CARR (SP): This is Major Colleen Carr (sp). I was a human resources planner in theater.

Some of the major issues that we had to deal with were mostly airlift of personnel into and out of theater -- and Iraq and Afghanistan are significantly different areas of operation for us -- as well as things like mail movement, how to get things to soldiers within a reasonable amount of time. So that -- you know, we actually follow -- we try to get mail from the United States, basically Newark, over to theater, to the soldiers' local mail hub with seven to 10 days. And we've actually been pretty good with that.

But to be able to do something like that in those two theaters, especially Afghanistan now, with it surging somewhat, just requires some intricate planning, both locally, and also with the Air Force and other strategic-level assets in the United States so that we can get that -- those sorts of things done.

So that's mostly where I can speak to, is human resources.

MAJ. DRAVIS (PH): Good afternoon. My name is Tim Dravis (ph).

My primary mission in Iraq was a military transition team. It was assisting and advising and training an Iraqi force. It was also helping with the fielding of humvees and M4 weapons, and then also I could talk to probably the resupply on combat outposts in remote locations.

Q I'm sorry, sir. What's your rank?

MAJ. DRAVIS (PH): Major.

Q Thank you.

MAJ. JOHNSON: Good afternoon, again. My name is Major Valerie Johnson.

As a planner in Iraq for area support groups, our main concentration was providing supplies to the force, building the area of operations, and supporting forces as they deploy in and throughout our area.

MAJ. JONES: Okay. My name is Major Jones, and my experience and the area to which I'll speak is specifically in Kuwait, in preparation to movement into Iraq.

My mission was a little bit different from the rest of the officers that are participating on this roundtable, as our mission was to follow Reserve formations from their mobilization training centers to Kuwait, and then on -- to continue training there for deployment across the (berm ?) into Iraq.

Some challenges that I faced during the planning phases as a logistician was establishing a logistical account in Kuwait and also developing that support relationship in Kuwait.

Q Thank you.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (sp): This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp). I was the last person. So if you want to go ahead with questions now, or if you have any more questions about the background or experience, please go ahead.

Q I guess I'll let the next person go, to be fair.

MS. MCCALL: Okay. We'll come back to you, John.

Sandra, do you have a question?

Q Yeah. This is a question for anyone who would like to comment on this. We've been hearing a lot from the services -- the Army and the Navy, pretty much everyone -- about a desire to be more energy-efficient and consume less fuel, especially battlefield fuel. And I was wondering if -- from where you are, if you think that would help you if, overall, you had less fuel consumption in the military? Would that help in the logistics operation, which -- would it help make things more efficient and make it not -- make the job less difficult as far as managing fuel supplies and all that goes along with the energy issue?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (sp): (Inaudible) -- question. This is Lieutenant Commander David Collis (sp). (Inaudible) -- thing that reduces the flow of goods into theater helps. It cuts down on the material required. It cuts down on the expense.

The other aspects we'd have to consider is the maintenance of those green technologies and being able to maintain them there. At the current levels, green technologies aren't quite as widely embraced. So the support legs, I suppose you could call it, for those aren't as robust.

So if you're in a combat theater with those, the people who have them may have difficulties getting repair parts and other sustainment parts needed for them.

But again, that just depends on how it's deployed and how it's put into the force.

Does that answer your question?

Q Yeah. What specific green technologies are you referring to?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (sp): In general, any of them. It doesn't matter what type it is. Those are the kind of the major concerns that you worry about to ensure that it can be viable for you.

Q Yeah. But I mean, are we talking about solar panels? Are we talking about electric vehicles? I mean, what are the -- you know, it makes a difference, you know, what specific green systems you're talking about.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (sp): I don't really know --

Q Like which ones -- which ones are the ones that are hard to maintain?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (sp): Right. I'm not saying that they're hard to maintain. What I'm saying is if -- you know, if I have -- let's say I have a hundred pieces of equipment in country or I have something that's, you know, spread throughout all the units there, my support side of that, the maintenance side of that is much more robust because everybody has it. So my spare parts for it, my technical skills for repairs, my expertise in (participating?) is more widespread.

Where if it's something that's not widely distributed or widely used, only a few key units have it, then they're probably the only ones that have the expertise and the amount of repair parts, therefore, them -- as they move throughout the theater, are limited.

So there are opportunities to get repair parts, and to get them in country is much more difficult. It makes the maintenance of them more difficult.

Q Okay. Thank you.

MS. MCCALL: And Tyler, from Federal News. Do you have a question? (Pause.) Okay. Sebastian, do you have a question for him, too?

Q Yeah, sure. The upcoming ISR surge -- if you want to call it that -- describe the efforts that are under way now and the challenges you see with that.

MR. : Can you -- can you rephrase the question again? I didn't understand what you were asking.

Q Well, the -- one of the IED Task Force, at the DOD level, has come -- plans to field a ton of ISR capabilities to Afghanistan in support of the counter-IED mission. That's supposed to go alongside the influx of 30,000 folks over there. I'm just curious as to how this all will go down, and the timing of it and the challenges associated with it that you see.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (sp): This is Lieutenant Commander Commander Collis (sp). I'm afraid we don't have anybody here with the experience or expertise on that particular topic.

Q Okay, can I do another one, then, real quick?

MS. MCCALL: Yes. Go ahead.

Q And I understand there was a proof-of-concept effort done to ship M-ATVs on a land route through Pakistan in January. Does anyone of you know what the outcome of this was and how the results will affect the M-ATV fielding in the future?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (sp): This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp) again. We don't -- the last person who was in theater here was last fall. We weren't there in the January time frame and don't know the results of that test.

Q Okay.

MS. MCCALL: Dale, Military Avenue, do you have a question?

Q I sure do. Dale from MilitaryAvenue.com. I'm a former Air Force airlifter, and I would like to hear any problems you had with airlift or any success stories that you had with airlift, in both theaters, but primarily in Afghanistan, because I know we're using a lot of the intra-theater airlift to move people around. And I was also a former Special Ops guy, so I've talked to a lot of SEALs and have moved them around out of Charleston Air Force Base a lot. So there's a lot going on there, and I just want to hear some of the good stories or the bad stories.

MAJ. KIMBALL (sp): This is Major Kimball (sp). I actually mainly served in Afghanistan in Bagram, and I served with the Special Operations guys there. The good-news story was that we were able to conduct a lot of containerized resupplies to -- out to FOBs. So -- and

also using parts -- using parachutes that eventually we wouldn't have to recover because they were more or less disposable type. So stuff like that takes less man to receive on the other end, so -- and still being able to resupply. I think that's a good-news story.

MAJ. CARR (sp): This is Major Carr (sp). From a human resources perspective, we couldn't survive without strategic airlift and both "Grey Tail" Air Force as well as contracted airlift within the Afghan theater. Due to the nature of things like mail, those things can't be put on the back of jungle trucks. So in order to get those things out to remote FOBs and COBs, they have to go out via -- like STOLs, short takeoff and landing aircraft. And actually we have our own small fleet of helicopters that only do mail airlift in Afghanistan.

So we've -- airlift is one of the ways that we're surviving right now.

Wolf (sp)?

MAJ. JONES: This is Major Jones (sp). As far as airlift, when I was planning our operation for deployment, I had nothing but success stories reference that -- from corporation to actually planning. Again, as the other participants mentioned, airlift was not an issue for me -- neither.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS: This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp). My experience, being with Special Forces, we were moving people from theater to theater as tasked for different missions. And we were very successful, without having high priority assignments for our movements, in moving people and gear back and forth from one theater to the other and within the theater. I think, you know, it was a good thing and everybody liked it. And like with any good thing, you can never get enough of it.

Q Was there any shortage of C-17s or C-130s for anybody?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS: This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp). There was. I mean, it's just not enough aircraft to handle the demand there. And everybody would prefer to move things by air because it's faster, and a lot less issues with that than on the ground, and it's safer. But it was just a matter of, you know, you wait a week and one'll come through, and you can get it loaded and moved on.

MAJ. JONES: And I think -- this is Major Jones (sp) again. As Lieutenant Commander Collis just mentioned, that last little piece: It wasn't about the assets; it's just the scheduling, making sure everything was properly sync'ed and coordinated.

MAJ. KIMBALL: And I have to tell you -- this is Major Kimball (sp) again. I have to tell you, working with sister services, we had Air Force guys working with us on the -- on the lifts. And I tell you, being able to organize and just get them -- get them a schedule.

But the way -- the relationship that we come out of these operations -- it's just amazing, because we work so well together. So there is really no issue with airlift other than, you would have to wait to unload it, because that was the priority mode of transportation.

Q That's great to hear. Thank you very much.

MS. MCCALL: Dina, do you have a question?

Q I do, thanks.

I was wondering if anyone would be able to speak to a trash question. Specifically outside of using burn pits and incinerators, are there any other modes of trash disposal that were in use in these -- in these folks' experience in Iraq and Afghanistan?

And are they aware of other research that's being undertaken right now, to dispose of trash?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp).

I can't speak to any research going on right now. I'm not aware of that. But as far as the other methods there, I am aware that contracting with locals in Iraq, to take the trash and dispose of it in proper means, that was starting to happen.

A lot of that started to occur when the Iraqi First direction came out. And that I think was a big alternative, as the burn pits became --

Q I'm sorry, when was that?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): That would have been in 2009.

Q Okay, and are you aware of any programs like that in place in Afghanistan?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): I am not. I'm not saying there's not. I'm just saying I don't know if there is.

Q Okay, thank you.

MS. MCCALL: Okay, before we go back around the room, I actually had a question from Andrew. (Inaudible.) He's an energy blog writer. He asked, what are the most significant differences in fuel logistic challenges between Iraq and Afghanistan?

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp).

The biggest challenges with Afghanistan is the fact that you're landlocked up there on the other side of Pakistan and Iran.

So you have to truck it up. And you got two ways to get it in, the southern pass or the northern pass, which goes up through the Federally Assisted Tribal Areas, or FATA, as the acronym is, or Administered Tribal Areas, and that can be dangerous. There's a high threat. It's a long route. There's many cultural difficulties in moving things across that area. It takes a long time to get it there and you're using locals to move it.

So that raises other potential problems as far as, you know, also fuel. Once you get it in and distributing it, as Major Kimball had said earlier, the road network in Afghanistan itself is very limited. So that makes it hard to distribute.

So you get to your major bases or FOBs there in Afghanistan and you'll have the fuel there. The farther you get out from them, the harder it is getting fuel, and you may be relying on air to bring it in in bladders or something of that nature.

In Iran -- or, I'm sorry, excuse me, in Iraq, Iraq, not such a problem with the long hauls that were happening out of the port of Aqaba in Jordan into Iraq. It's pretty continuous, pretty reliable supply of fuel, and I'm not aware of any problems with the shortage of fuel in the last few years at least.

MAJ. JOHNSON: Major Johnson. As far as fuel in Iraq, I'll tell you, we had many successes due to our contractors' assistance --

Q I'm sorry, could you raise your voice, please?

MAJ. JOHNSON: Major Johnson. I just wanted to -- can you hear me now?

Q Yes. Yes. Thank you.

MAJ. JOHNSON: Thank you. Major Johnson. Just to tie in to the successes in Iraq with fuel, most of our success can be contributed to our contractors that assisted in pushing that fuel from Kuwait up through Iraq itself.

So that was pretty much our main force use there. No problems that we saw there in the Area Support Group. We had timely delivery of fuel. So when units passed through our (MSR ?). It was pretty much on-time fuel delivery. There were no delays or distraction of fuels when convoys came through our area.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp) again. One other thing I could add for Iraq that we experienced. The fuel primarily delivered there is JP-8. So you have equipment that runs on JP-8 or diesel, such as the MRAPs, and then you have equipment that's primarily diesel-oriented. And with only JP-8 being delivered -- it runs hotter, it's a much more astringent fuel than diesel is. Diesel has a natural lubricant in it. So when you start feeding generators and other things of that nature with JP-8, it's very hard on those generators. In the summer, they seem to overheat a lot more on JP-8 than they do on

diesel, and they wear out faster, the equipment does. That was one of the problems I did experience in Iraq with fuel.

MS. MCCALL: Thank you.

And going back around the call, John (sp), do you have an additional question?

Q Yes, I do. Given the fact that you're delivering goods and services into a theater of war, what kinds of problems are there not just getting the stuff from point A to point B and getting it -- (inaudible) -- need it, but actually securing it in transit, either from hijacking or pilferage or damage in some sort of way? What kind of unique security does the logistic officer face?

MAJ. KIMBALL (SP): This is Major Kimball (sp) again.

I have to tell you we had a little pilferage but not too significant, so maybe that was -- I'm hoping that was not an isolated unit. But we had pretty good success with being able to deliver our goods.

MAJ. JOHNSON: Major Johnson. Just to tie into that, delivery of goods once in country, mainly by military convoy security, whether it be by multinational forces or military police or just security forces designated by our commanders in theater. But most of our (units ?) did have a detachment of security with them, which prevented a lot of pilferaging (sic) and delay of convoys and attacking of convoys.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp). From my experience with Afghanistan, the pilferage, if it happened, was on the land routes that it went up through Pakistan, because you're using locals there to take it up. The Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command handled most of that.

And what they started doing is putting R by D (ph) tags, or satellite trackers, on the equipment or the material that was in the truck, that is normally goods that weren't of a priority going those routes. They put it in and then tracked the vehicles, and they'd see where a vehicle stops for three days, and then they would track the vehicle to see what happened to it at the end station, and it would be full of salt or rocks, and all the goods would be gone.

But at the same time, you know, another vehicle would come through, and that vehicle would go off the road in the same place or disappear for three days, and then that vehicle would show up with the material that disappeared in the first one. So if they emptied a truck and decided they didn't want the goods, they didn't just throw it away. They'd load it on the next truck that they pilfered. It was a very small percentage of goods that was being pilfered, less than 1 percent. But it was just an interesting story.

And in Iraq, we started using the Iraqis; we were one of the first groups to start using Iraqis to move goods. Prior to that we would

either do it ourselves -- again, I was Special Forces -- or we would use conventional convoys to move things.

And when you're using U.S. forces or coalition forces, there weren't any problems. We started using the Iraqis, we had a high pilferage rate. For instance, when we had moved camps, from one place to another, we would load tractor trailers with some of the containerized housing units, or CHUs, and other material.

And one time we ourselves were on a convoy. And we're coming back, and we come up to an Iraqi police checkpoint. And we see all these Iraqi tractor trailers pulled over, and it looks like all of our stuff on it. We recognize it. There's a crowd of about 30 Iraqis standing outside the CHU. The doors are all open on the housing units.

And the Iraqi police are standing there, and we see all the drivers off in a crowd on the other side of the Iraqi police. So we stop our vehicles, we jump out. The Iraqi drivers of those trucks coming running over to us, stand behind us. They're crossing their hands and they're saying "No, no" in Iraqi, and it was pretty obvious they were saying, you know, "Don't let us get arrested."

We approached the Iraqi police. They're holding the drivers' licenses and the IDs of the drivers so that they can't go on. And in the meantime, they busted open the living units. They're taking the beds out, the nightstands, anything sitting in there. And they're handing them out to the local Iraqis, that were selling them. It was kind of like a free-for-all auction.

But we were able to bust that up pretty quickly and get our -- get that convoy back on the road, because there was no U.S. security force -- (inaudible). We were just hiring Iraqis to move it themselves.

After that, we started escorting those Iraqi trucks. And the Iraqi truck drivers liked that so much that they asked us to escort them to the destination and back, because what that prevented them -- they didn't have to stop at the checkpoints, and they didn't get shaken down, going through the checkpoints, for money.

So if they went through with us getting there, and we didn't escort them back, they would get shaken down on the way back, because the checkpoints would remember -- hey, you guys came through with the Americans, you still need to give us a little something to get through here.

Q Thank you.

MS. MCCALL: Thank you.

And Sandra, do you have an additional question?

Q Yeah. I wanted to follow up on the issue of equipment and how you support equipment.

We were told by Army officials that one of the problems they face in logistics is the use of batteries, and the fact that so much of the equipment requires so many batteries that it's really very difficult to keep up with the supply -- with the demand that you need.

And they said, well, we would like to maybe go to more rechargeable batteries, because that's just less burden on the logisticians. And I was just wondering if anyone -- any of you who's been involved, in the support of equipment, has an opinion as to how this problem can be addressed, and whether rechargeable batteries would be better than conventional batteries.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp).

I can't speak on the sustainment side of bringing it in country. But on the operational end of it, I can speak to that. And as a person who has been using night vision goggles, and you're out in the field doing things and you're relying on this stuff, I myself would personally be -- this is just my personal opinion -- would be reluctant to rely on rechargeable batteries, because of the fact that their ability to retain a charge goes down.

And if I'm out there relying on this equipment, I want a battery that's got kind of a known lifespan to it. I know how long it's going to last.

I don't need to track how many times it's been recharged. I don't need to -- because you're talking lives are at stake there. So I'm not saying it's a bad idea and it can't be done. It's just maybe a new concept that we'd have to get used to, with an implementation to go with it.

Q Do you -- I mean, do you suspect that a lot of your fellow soldiers agree with that view?

MAJ. JOHNSON: This is Major Johnson. We cannot speak on behalf of other soldiers. We can only speak on our own personal experiences of equipment in country. Given the fact that rechargeable batteries do not have the charge that an actual -- you know, or capacity of an initial battery charge, that's very important to missions, the conduction of a mission in an actual wartime or in a conflict environment. Depending on what the actual mission is, we definitely don't want to risk a mission based off of a loss of -- a possible loss of a charge in a battery when the equipment's actually needed at a critical time during a conflict.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp) again. I mean, I can understand the sustainment side of that and bringing that in, because you go through a lot of batteries when you're out there. And that's a lot of weight, takes up space, and it would require a lot of effort moving those in country. So I can definitely understand that side. But, you know, as far as the research that was done on that, I can't speak to it and I'm not aware of the results of it.

Q Okay. Thank you.

MAJ. JONES: Sandra, this is Major Jones. Just speaking in general as a logistician, one of my concerns after hearing that comment would be -- I would think that, yes, rechargeable batteries, that's a good idea, that's a good initiative, even though I would still rather depend on the conventional batteries or the regular batteries.

But one concern for me as a logistician would be making sure I have and can properly acquire the capability to actually recharge those batteries and ensure that those units have that capability as well.

Q Mm-hmm. That makes sense. Thank you.

MS. MCCALL: And Sebastian, did you have an additional question? (No Response.)

Okay. Dale Kissinger, did you have another question?

Q I have one quick one. The experiences they've all had in Iraq and Afghanistan in logistics, do you feel like it's being -- that experience is being used there at the Command and General Staff College? And are the instructions for the operators and other people being included for logistics?

MAJ. DRAVIS: This is Major Dravis (sp). All right, from our standpoint, we try to incorporate both sides of it, but we're trying to look future (basing ?). And from CGSC and -- Command and General Staff College, we're trying to look for the next conflict or next operation we want to do, possibly, and just trying to think future (basing ?), not rearward (basing ?) operations. We want to look forward, how we're going to do the operations.

Yes, we'll take lessons learned from logistics, but we also want to look -- future, and how we can apply these lessons learned towards our next operation.

Q Okay, that's great. Thank you.

MS. MCCALL: And Dean, are you still on the line? Do you have an additional question? (No response.)

Okay. Are there any additional questions from anyone on the line?

Q Yes. This is John with 4G War blog. Following up on the question and answer we just had, I'm just wondering if all of you perhaps could go around and say what takeaway you have from logistical operations in either Iraq or Afghanistan, or both if you have been deployed to both.

But just, you know, what unique thing came up that can be a lesson learned down the road?

MAJ. CARR (sp): This is Major Carr. To be honest with you, probably the most, the unique thing learned from Afghanistan and Iraq was basically how to react to Haiti. I know that may sound a little odd, but due to the experiences of what we're learning with both the surge in Iraq previously and now the new surge in Afghanistan and how to get that stuff done, that actually assisted in us being able to go into Haiti, from our planning standpoint.

Q I'm sorry. Did you say Haiti?

MAJ. CARR (sp): Yes, sir.

Q Oh, okay.

MAJ. CARR (sp): I mean, literally, you know, talking about taking lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan and having to apply them in a new situation, we learned a lot from those two events that we were then able to put into practice in Haiti, which was a very austere environment. So that was a gigantic lesson learned, was how to basically go in there and try to set that situation up. So that's kind of how we applied lessons learned to -- (inaudible).

MAJ. JONES: John, this is Major Jones. I know you want everyone to go around the table, but as a logistician preparing to go into theater, one takeaway that I had was making sure I had a thorough understanding of the support structure in theater and understanding how that support structure would apply to me or to my unit.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS: This is Lieutenant Commander Collis (sp). For me, being with Special Forces, it seemed like every day was pretty unique and challenging.

The biggest thing for me being in Navy Command was getting in country on the ground and then integrating with the Marine Corps and the Army, the conventional support networks there.

It's a different language. It's a different way of operating. And you kind of come in and you're kind of that third wheel that nobody's expected or really aware of because you're a small unit. So it's a matter of getting that aligned, speaking a joint language and understanding each other. For me, that was the biggest challenge.

MAJ. KIMBALL (sp): This is Major Kimball. I, too, worked with the Special Operations. And the biggest takeaway I have is the importance in joint operations, because without the Air Force guys, we could not have been able to resupply to, you know, outer -- forward operating bases. So just being able to work with our sister services and coordinate for the support, that was a huge, huge takeaway. And that's actually paying off here in CGSC as we're conducting our mock operations and mock exercises.

MAJ. JOHNSON: Major Johnson. As with any conflict, deployment, communication is the key to any logistical operation; communication between the logisticians, communication between the logisticians and

those combatant commanders and the supported commanders and the supporting units; knowing that communication helps in identifying what assets, capabilities are needed and what resources are required to meet those capabilities and assets as commanders project their forces throughout Iraq, where my particular experience is, and now Afghanistan.

MAJ. DRAVIS (ph): My lesson learned, from Major Dravis (ph) standpoint as a transition team, was I couldn't live without logistics.

x x logistics. I had a hard time understanding that principle early on. Simply from a combat outpost, it's kind of austere at times; you're required to live on logistics and, you know, die by them, basically. They provide everything from your fuel to generators to your T-walls for your combat outposts to your food, and they take care of everything for you. So it was a hard lesson learned.

Q That was the last person.

MAJ./LT. CMDR. : Thank you. I wish I could have a conversation with all of you individually. I'm sure there'd be a lot of good stories.

MS. MCCALL: And are there any additional questions from anyone on the line?

Okay. Commander Collis (sp), do you have any closing remarks, or anyone -- any of your colleagues have any closing remarks or statements?

MAJ. KIMBALL (SP): This is Major Kimball. I just want to thank you all for giving us this opportunity, because I think some of the questions we'll take back, and that will be food for thought, especially with the green technology and green ideas. We may not be able to or may not have green technologies in any ideas that we're practicing now, or maybe little of it, but that will be something we could take back and keep it in -- put it in our kit bag for future possibilities.

Thank you.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP) (?): Thank you.

Ashley, can you make sure that we get everybody's correct spelling of their first and last names and their units when this goes up on the website?

MS. MCCALL: I sure can. And it'll also be in the transcript. So with that, I'll send a bio in addition to the transcript from today's roundtable.

LT. CMDR. COLLIS (SP): Oh, thanks. That'd be very helpful.

MAJ. : Great. MAJ. KIMBALL (SP) (?): Thank you.

MS. MCCALL: Not a problem.

Okay. Well, if that's all for everyone today, thanks again to all of our participants and our bloggers. And that ends our roundtable today.

END.