

**13th COSCOM Fort Hood Town Hall Meeting  
1 April 2003**

The meeting was opened by COL Roll and quickly passed to General Lenaers. General Lenaers gave a short commentary on the Operation Iraqi Freedom. He reminded the audience that US strategy in this conflict is quite different from Desert Storm. Coalition forces in Desert Storm bombed Iraq for 47 straight days before the first ground troops started. He praised the quick movement to Basra to contain the oil fields and estimated that this saved the U.S. forces at least a one year commitment to put the oil fires out (had they been ignited.) He also displayed a map of Texas with a map of Iraq superimposed on top of it ... it was helpful to see that the distance between Baghdad and Kuwait as it closely compares to the distance between the Killeen area and Corpus Christi.

General Lenaers also made the following comment, "We're not in a hurry - we're powerful enough to take our time." We are using a methodical approach to do it right. He said that while there has been personally significant (to families involved) resistance in the rear of our forces, militarily this resistance would be designated insignificant.

The general then turned the floor over to the G2 and G3 of the COSCOM.

The G2 (LTC Nelson) gave us specific information about the conditions and threats to our forces. He showed climate information, stating that the temperature rises to a high of 125 degrees in July. The harshness of the climate is amplified by wartime conditions. He commented that it is a little bit early to judge the sentiment of the Iraqi people about receiving our troops. He then showed a slide detailing the variety of threats to our forces:

Rockets (SCUD and Al Samoud)/repelled by patriot system  
Chemical weapons/we are well-trained/equipped for this possibility  
"Stay behinds" (Fedayeen, etc.);  
Civil Unrest (lots of refugees can be a hinderance to accomplishing the mission)  
Accidents (this is a dangerous business, safety very important)  
Terrorists.

LTC Nelson also reminded us that while our soldiers are working in Iraq, the War on Terrorism is still going on worldwide. Our enemies include Al-Qaida, Hamas, Hizballah, and Al Dawa al Islamiya. He commented that it is "no small thing" that we haven't had another attach ... and that vigilance, expert training, and increased security are a significant deterrent.

The G3 (LTC Richardson) produced interesting information on a typical deployment timeline. His talk included the names of the 5 base camps (ones the 4th ID is going to now): Udari, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Wolf. He reminded everyone that the services (phone, email, tents, etc.) available at each camp is highly variable. Currently, the 21st CSH is located at another camp, Camp Victory, and has fest tents with cots, wooden floors, a shower that doesn't work, and 3 hot meals per day.

LTC Richardson then displayed an unclassified map of the region with specific divisions and even our 126th unit noted on the map. This map was just used for giving a global idea of where the troops were currently - and truly for our purposes, we already have a good idea of where the 126th is located (behind the 3d Infantry frontline troops.)

The format of the meeting then changed to Break Out Sessions. The first break out session I attended was led by our Deputy Garrison Chaplain. Chaplain Phillips discussed his "General Rules for Change." He defined three kinds of life changes - ordinary, new roles and special. He

categorized military deployments as a "special" change.

#### General Rules for Change

- Expect Change
- Stress is the signal that change **is** needed
- Expect to feel resistance in you and others
- Take one new step at a time
- Use outside help when you get stuck

The second break-out session was led by LTC Wilhite, Chief of Managed Care at Darnall. He conducted a rather in-depth discussion of the TRICARE system for dealing with travel outside of your military treatment facility area - both for short-term travel and for travel with long-term duration. Should you decide to travel during this time, please be sure to call me (698.3271) and I will be happy to give you the information from LTC Wilhite and also the phone numbers you need to make sure you are covered.

Another piece of valuable information shared by LTC Wilhite was the DEERS website address: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil> DEERS is the database used to determine medical eligibility.

The final break-out session was led by LTC Lohman of the 215th Finance Battalion. The 215th is the LOCAL servicing finance battalion for COSCOM soldiers. Keep in mind that there is also a finance battalion for our soldiers located in theater. This battalion is duplicating LES information for us - to make it available to you, should you not have MYPAY access.