

Building Trust and the unbeatable Joint Team

Today's blog entry includes two examples about one of my Commander vectors ... Taking care of each other to build trust and an unbeatable team ...PATRIOT Missile System

I went over to visit one of our tenant units — the 31st ADA Brigade to learn more about the Army's very capable **Patriot missile system**. COL Dan Karbler commands the 31st ADA "Unleash Hell" Brigade. Dan has a big, demanding mission — guarding the skies against air and missile attacks throughout the AOR. In his J.O.B. jar he has a huge swath of people and hi-tech equipment to care for -- not just at this base but numerous bases in the AOR. Dan leads a really extraordinary group of Soldiers. One of Dan's Battalion Commanders (1-43 BN) stationed here is LTC Janice Chen – an equally impressive officer and terrific leader.



Our base's relationship with Dan and Janice and their Soldiers is built around trust and respect. Every person on this base realizes the importance of the 31st ADA BDE to defending this base and the entire region against air and missile threats ... and the Soldiers here are equally thankful for the support and service they receive from our Wing personnel – from communication, security, housing, services, food, etc. You'll find Dan's Soldiers totally integrated and involved throughout the base ... from First Sergeants Council, Chief's Group, intramural sports, etc. So, while the 31st ADA BDE Soldiers wear Army green and we wear Air Force blue, we are truly one joint team. I speak for all here that we are honored and proud to have the 31st ADA "Unleash Hell" Brigade as a critical part of our team.

Here's another example of what some terrific young Airmen here did to build trust and an unbeatable team. We recently got a short-notice request for 3 aerial porters from 8 EAMS to help out some Marines in Afghanistan. SSgt Fox, SrA Stokes and SrA Rivera were enthusiastic volunteers and headed out the door a day later to an austere Afghanistan airfield. The team then met up with the Marines that were running the Arrival/Departure Airfield Control Group

(A/DACG). The amenities were austere — Afghanistan FOB standard ... tent (no cots, no air conditioning, and no lights), MREs and standard 18+ hour days. External communication and In-Transit Visibility (ITV) were virtually non-existent. After a couple days the team moved in with Marines A/DACG unit. The relationship flourished even more when the Marines realized just how hard SSgt Fox's team was working at winning the Joint fight. They trained 8 Marines on how to operate the 25K loaders — walking 2 at a time through proper MX procedures, pulling up to a mock C-130 ramp, providing training, and practicing until the Marines felt comfortable with the equipment.

The 8 EAMS was able to send SSgt Fox and his team some critical supplies and assistance, like dunnage to create a cargo yard, inbound cargo calls from the ATOC here and even a few care packages. While our maintainers are certainly world-renowned 'scroungers', the traveling "Port Dawgs" know how to turn small items into big payouts as well. After breaking bread with their hosts, the team was able to parlay some of those care package 'treasures' into tangible mission benefits, like satellite phone access and even priority diesel fuel distribution for the loaders. Ingenuity at its finest!

Despite the great teamwork and attitude, it was still dangerous work. SSgt Fox's team routinely came under mortar fire throughout their tour. Fortunately, they were able to find some humor in the fact that the enemy was much better at timing the attacks to coincide with the team's bathroom breaks than they were at actually aiming the mortars.

In their 2+ weeks in Afghanistan, SSgt Fox's team worked a total of almost 40 inbound aircraft, split between USAF and USMC C-130s, unloaded more than 600,000 pounds of cargo and nearly 900 passengers.

I've seen many examples of how every member of the 8 EAMS exemplifies excellence ... you can add SSgt Fox's team to that list. Their motivation, work ethic and professionalism were critical components of opening a much-needed bare base and showed the importance of building trust — and how that trust translates into a truly unbeatable joint team.