

54th Signal Battalion sets performance benchmark

By MAJ Lincoln F. Williams

According to MAJ Lincoln F. Williams, battalion S-3, the 54th Signal Battalion has made history as the first deployed Signal battalion to successfully pass the Department of the Army Inspector General Information Assurance inspection.

In the Fall of 2011, "The Voice of the Desert" faced inspectors for the second year in a row. During the previous inspection the battalion's evaluation indicated 12 of 14 functional areas failed to meet standards established by one of the most rigorous Army inspections. During fiscal year 2010 only four of 18 organizations met the standards established by the DAIG IA.

LTC D. Kelvin Green, battalion commander and CSM Darris Curry were notified of the upcoming inspection less than three months before inspectors were scheduled to arrive in Kuwait. With the USF-I withdrawal from Iraq in full swing and other mission priorities on the increase, the command team redistributed resources to meet the new challenge without losing sight of ongoing missions.

Significant pre-inspection coordination was a key factor in achieving a successful inspection. Direct communication and coordination with the DAIG IA team members before their arrival allowed the unit to gain a sense of the inspection's scope and assign personnel to specific areas of concern. The pre-inspection evaluations revealed that the unit needed to be more inclusive and

detailed to successfully cover all 14 functional areas.

Subject matter experts were assigned to each functional area. Oliver Jones and Gabriel Johnson, U.S. Department of the Army civilians, orchestrated the team assignments which included 1LT Kevin McFerrin, SFC Reginald Cox, SFC Kiteola Jackson, SSG Carlton Stephens, Keith Creiglow and LeAndra LaMons and three contractors.

The SMEs were responsible for more reviewing and inspecting their prospective area to ensure compliance with required standards. As the team members' familiarity with each functional area increased, they realized that DAIG inspectors would search for answers in areas outside of the battalion's direct control. Other organizations, such as Army Central Command, 335th Theater Signal Command, Southwest Asia Cyber Center and 160th Signal Brigade, played a big part in the overall success of the inspection, since each organization was responsible for compliance within their prospective work areas.

As a result of coordination and synchronization with local units, the team member's confidence grew and expectations were high. On 18 September 2011, the DAIG inspection commenced. Just as in the previous year, the inspection was extremely challenging, but the team was well prepared. Five days after the inspection began, DAIG inspectors presented the results: 54th Signal Battalion "met the standards" in 12 of the 14 functional areas—a remarkable

turnaround from the previous year's results.

Most impressive according to LTC Green is that the passing score was achieved by a deployed unit in austere conditions. This is remarkable because deployed units don't always have the ready resources like CONUS units, he said.

"This achievement is truly remarkable, and it will definitely leave a mark in time," said MAJ Lincoln F. Williams 54th Signal Battalion S-3, "because the 54th Signal Battalion was the first deployed theater Signal battalion to pass the DAIG [inspection]. Many will remember this achievement."

According to its leaders, the battalion's success can be directly attributed to the networks established through building relationships based on exceeding the needs of customers throughout the region. Members of the Signal community repeatedly demonstrate an unlimited potential whenever leveraging resources to achieve a common goal.

MAJ Lincoln F. Williams currently serves as the S-3, 54th Signal Battalion, Kuwait, Arifjan. He manages the operations for 9 camps consisting of 14 sites throughout Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain. In his previous assignment, he served on the staff of the 160th Signal Brigade as the Engineer and Integration OIC. MAJ Williams is a 2010 graduate of the resident Command and Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.