

4-5 Maint. Btry.'s call of duty - to be best maintenance outfit

CAPT. MICHAEL HIGGINS

4-5 ADA Maintenance Battery

As the new direct support element for 4-5 Air Defense Artillery of Fort Hood, Texas, the unit simply known as "The Maintenance Company" strives to be the best maintenance outfit.

"The challenge is to change the mindset of everyone involved that we're a maintenance element and no longer trigger pullers," stated Capt. Michael Higgins, commander of the unit.

The maintenance company transformed from 4-5 ADA's Delta Battery this February, and has been preparing for the integration of several Patriot batteries later in the year.

Higgins added, "We're putting together an organization that will provide world-class maintenance support for five line batteries to help make 4-5 ADA the Army's premiere Air and Missile Defense Battalion."

The unit must stand up all aspects of maintenance operations, in addition to a supply activity section, from the ground up.

"When we get to our end state, we will provide complete 30-level support without having to depend on another unit for assistance," remarked Chief Warrant Officer 3 David Dubay, the battalion maintenance officer.

But along with the big change, there are also great challenges. The unit must wait for several more months to receive the majority of their equipment and personnel.

"Basically, we're doing a full company's job with only a fraction of our tools and people," said 1st Sgt. Leonel Garcia.

Regardless, the Soldiers are motivated and looking forward to the day that the unit is fully functional.

"I can't wait for this transformation to be complete. We're working our tails off to make this happen so it'll be nice when it's finally done," said Spc. Zachary Martin. As short manned as the unit is right now, it is fortunate to have five dedicated Soldiers who re-

enlisted over the past three weeks.

"It was a proud day for me and my family to be able to reenlist to do what I enjoy" said Staff Sgt. Bildad Jean, who was one of three noncommissioned officers that re-upped. Not only are the low-density military occupational specialty personnel reenlisting, but so are the Avenger gunners as well. "It is a priority right now to encourage the reenlistment of Avenger gunners to other MOS's across the Army," remarked Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Williams.

An outstanding example of this is Spc. Craig Chenault, who recently reenlisted through the Bonus Extension and Retraining program.

Chenault said, "It will be nice to be able to have a second set of job skills to use in the Army."

Overall, the maintenance company is doing what they are trained to do best — maintaining 4-5 ADA's equipment. This unit is also executing another critical mission for their future — grooming quality Soldiers who want to remain in the Army.



SPC. BROOKS FLETCHER

Soldiers donate blood in support of war

Spc. Alejandro Ortiz of WBAMC's Donor Center applies pressure to the arm of Pfc. Corey Thompson of HHB 31st ADA Brigade, after collecting blood during the Armed Service Blood Program's blood drive held at Stout Gym here April 7. Fort Bliss Soldiers participated in the blood drive as a way showing support for fellow troops and to help increase the blood supply. The blood received from the drive is sent overseas, to support the war efforts in Operation Enduring Freedom. The Donor Center holds blood drives every week at set locations on post and throughout El Paso, New Mexico and Arizona.

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