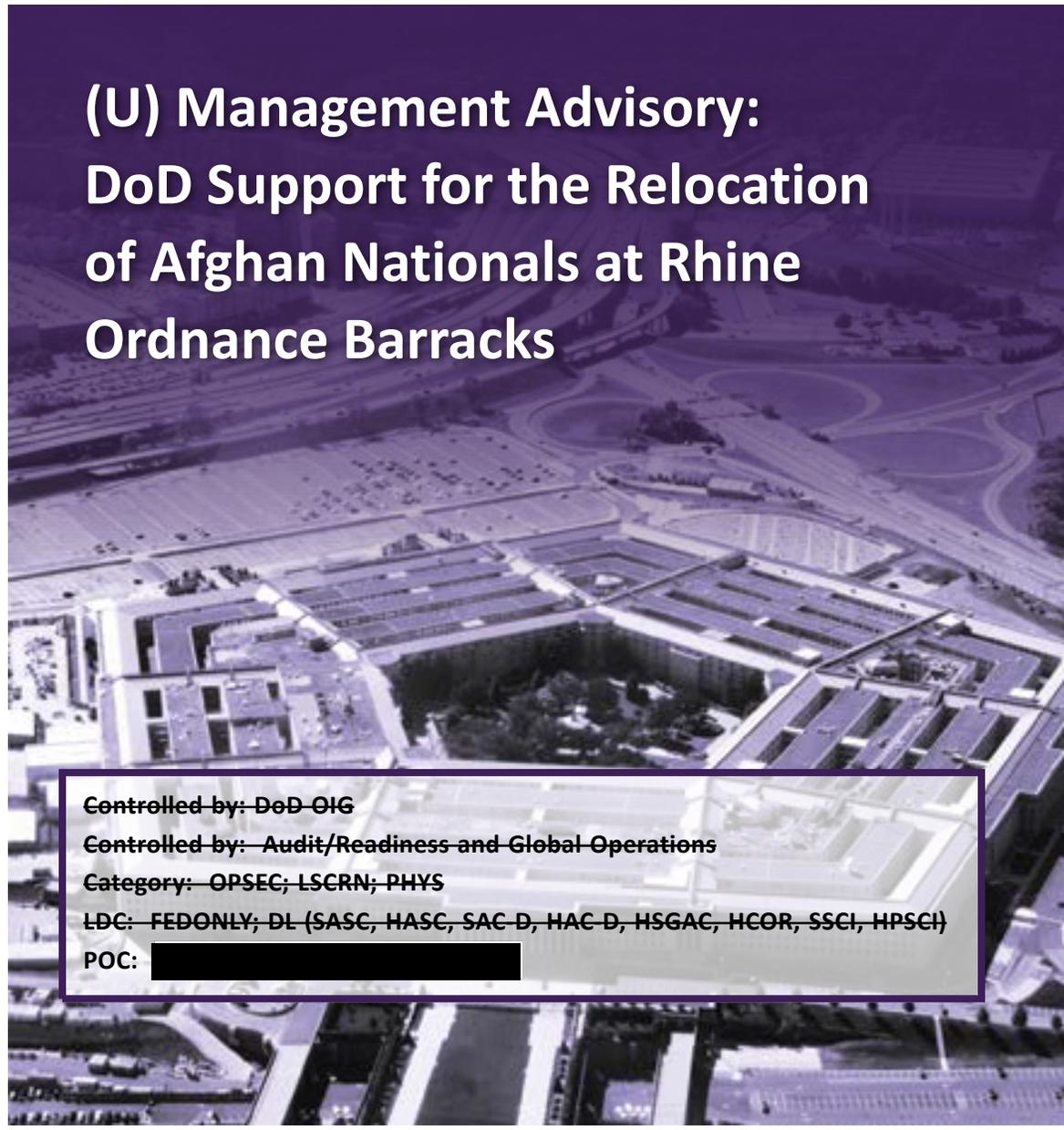


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# INSPECTOR GENERAL

*U.S. Department of Defense*

DECEMBER 17, 2021



## (U) Management Advisory: DoD Support for the Relocation of Afghan Nationals at Rhine Ordnance Barracks

~~Controlled by: DoD-OIG~~

~~Controlled by: Audit/Readiness and Global Operations~~

~~Category: OPSEC; LSCRN; PHYS~~

~~LDC: FEDONLY; DL (SASC, HASC, SAC-D, HAC-D, HSGAC, HCOR, SSCI, HPSCI)~~

~~POC: [REDACTED]~~

INTEGRITY ★ INDEPENDENCE ★ EXCELLENCE

CUI





**INSPECTOR GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22350-1500**

December 17, 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

**SUBJECT:** (U) Management Advisory: DoD Support for the Relocation of Afghan Nationals at Rhine Ordnance Barracks (Report No. DODIG-2022-045)

(U) The purpose of this memorandum is to advise officials responsible for the relocation of Afghan evacuees of results from our site visit to Rhine Ordnance Barracks (ROB), Germany, on September 23, 2021, where the audit team observed the housing conditions and support of Afghan evacuees. We conducted the work on this project with integrity, objectivity, and independence, as required by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's Quality Standards for Federal Offices of Inspector General.

(U) Our review of the ROB evacuee facility was conducted as part of the DoD OIG "Audit of DoD Support for the Relocation of Afghan Nationals."<sup>1</sup> The objective of this audit is to determine whether the DoD has adequately planned and provided support for the relocation of Afghan nationals. The audit team visited ROB to review sustainment, including housing and medical care, and physical security support associated with this effort. In addition to the site visit, the audit team reviewed documentation provided by 21st Theater Sustainment Command (21st TSC) and 16th Sustainment Brigade (16th SB) personnel, such as briefing charts, funding documents, and event schedules.<sup>2</sup>

***(U) Operation Allies Refuge***

(U) On July 14, 2021, the President announced Operation Allies Refuge (OAR), with the Department of State (DOS) as the lead agency, to support the relocation of Afghan evacuees who previously supported the U.S. Government and were in the process of completing their Special Immigrant Visa application.<sup>3</sup> Applicants' immediate family members were also included in the relocation effort. During Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Freedom's Sentinel, the U.S. Government employed Afghans in supporting roles to these

<sup>1</sup> (U) "Audit of DoD Support for the Relocation of Afghan Nationals (Project No. D2021-D000RJ-0154.000)," announced on August 23, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> (U) The 21st TSC executes mission command of operational sustainment across the European theater; conducts reception, staging, onward movement and integration; sets the Atlantic Resolve joint operation area; executes theater opening, theater distribution, and theater sustainment in support of U.S. European Command and North Atlantic Treaty Organization operations; and, as directed, executes joint security and support to U.S. Africa Command operations.

(U) The 16th Sustainment Brigade is the Army's only European-based sustainment brigade and provides a full range of sustainment support to U.S. Army Europe units.

<sup>3</sup> (U) In 2014, Congress amended the Special Immigrant Visa program to provide U.S. visas for translators and interpreters who performed "sensitive and trusted activities" for the U.S. Government in Afghanistan.

(U) operations. Due to that employment, some Afghans, their families, and close friends faced ongoing, serious threats. According to a statement by the President on August 30, 2021, the DoD executed the largest airlift in U.S. history, evacuating over 120,000 people from Afghanistan in just 17 days. The DOS activated the Afghanistan Coordination Task Force and requested and received DoD-provided support in the form of temporary housing, sustainment, and other support at suitable DoD facilities both within and outside the continental United States.<sup>4</sup>

**(U) The Role of ROB in OAR**

(U) Ramstein Air Base in Germany served as one of the major hubs for Afghan evacuees between their departure from Afghanistan and their next destination at one of eight military installations in the United States.<sup>5</sup> Initially, the Army provided security forces and medical support to augment Air Force staffing needs at Ramstein Air Base. However, as Afghan evacuee projections for Germany continued to increase, ROB leadership was tasked with standing up an evacuee facility at ROB, less than 15 kilometers from Ramstein Air Base.

(U) The timeline below illustrates the sequence of events that led to the establishment of the ROB evacuee facility.

- ~~(U)~~ The 86th Airlift Wing Historian’s report identified that on August 18, 2021, Ramstein Air Base leadership learned that they had to prepare to receive a total of 2,500 Afghan evacuees. [REDACTED]
- (U) On August 20, 2021, according to the 86th Airlift Wing Historian’s report, Ramstein Air Base received its first evacuees and a total of 1,083 evacuees had arrived by the end of the day.
- (U) On August 24, 2021, contractors and military personnel began standing up a facility to house and sustain Afghan evacuees at ROB.
- (U) By August 25, 2021, ROB personnel had constructed a 3,000 bed facility for Afghan evacuees and was already housing 480 evacuees. These numbers would continue to grow throughout the OAR mission.
- (U) On September 23, 2021, according to 16th SB personnel, ROB was housing and sustaining 5,522 Afghan evacuees at its facility.

<sup>4</sup> (U) The Afghanistan Coordination Task Force is led by the DOS and includes experts from various Government agencies, including the Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Health and Human Services.

<sup>5</sup> (U) Fort Pickett, Virginia; Fort Lee, Virginia; Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort McCoy, Wisconsin; Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia; Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico; Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey; and Camp Atterbury, Indiana.

(~~CUI~~) Upon landing at Ramstein Air Base, evacuees were subject to standardized in-processing procedures by military personnel.<sup>6</sup> After in-processing, those assigned to ROB were transported by bus to the ROB facility where, per an agreement with the German government, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Figure 1 is an aerial photograph of the ROB evacuee facility capable of sustaining over 8,000 Afghan evacuees.



## (U) Sustainment Procedures and Observations

(U) After undergoing in-processing procedures at Ramstein Air Base, Afghan evacuees assigned to ROB were transported with a military escort to the ROB facility where they were assigned a specific living area. The ROB facility was composed of 5 pre-existing structures, which ROB personnel called Primary Housing Areas, and 6 temporary, contractor-built living areas, referred to as Life Support Areas (LSAs). Table 1 depicts the capacity of the living areas and the number of Afghan evacuees in each living area as of September 23, 2021.

<sup>6</sup> (U) See DoD Office of Inspector General Report No. DODIG-2022-040 for additional information on the in-processing procedures at Ramstein Air Base.

(U) Table 1. Afghan Evacuees and Living Area Capacities at Rhine Ordnance Barracks as of September 23, 2021

(CUI) Living Area	Number of Afghan Evacuees as of September 23, 2021	Capacity
[REDACTED]	2,160	3,500
LSA 1	475	720
LSA 2	1,590	1,800
LSA 3	415	570
LSA 4	287	464
LSA 5	579	750
LSA 6	16	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,522</b>	<b>8,004</b>

\*(CUI) [REDACTED]

(U) Source: 16th SB.

(U) Sustaining Afghan evacuees in each of the living areas was a joint effort between military, civilian, and contracted personnel. Resources provided to Afghan evacuees in each living area included food and water, clothing, housing, restrooms and shower facilities, medical tents, worship areas, educational opportunities, and entertainment options.

- (U) Food and Water.** All food at the ROB facility was prepared at the ROB dining facility and transported to the ROB Afghan evacuees’ living areas for distribution. ROB personnel provided three meals per day to Afghan evacuees, including a hot breakfast in the morning, a pre-packaged meal ready-to-eat (MRE) in the afternoon, and a hot dinner in the evening.<sup>7</sup> During their walkthrough of the Primary Housing Areas, the audit team observed a main dining area where food and water was served to Afghan evacuees living in the 5 Primary Housing Areas. The audit team observed that the dining facility was clean, orderly, and free of any long lines and noted that Afghan evacuees had the option of eating in the dining area or taking food back to their housing area. A 16th SB representative explained that there were no dining areas in the LSAs and that contractors delivered meals directly to Afghan evacuees in their

<sup>7</sup> (U) An MRE is a self-contained meal ration consisting of a full meal packed in a flexible meal bag. It was designed to sustain an individual engaged in heavy activity such as military training or during actual military operations when normal food service facilities are not available.

(U) living areas. The 16th SB representative explained that ROB personnel used lessons learned from Ramstein Air Base to design a food and water distribution process that avoided long lines, which helped prevent potentially tense or hostile situations. The representative also noted that Afghan evacuees were accustomed to hydrating from tea consumption, and that even though ample water was provided, ROB personnel were finding many Afghan evacuees were dehydrated. As a result, ROB personnel developed tea stations in each living area, which 16th SB personnel stated immediately eliminated dehydration issues.

- **(U) Clothing.** Clothing, shoes, and baby supplies were available to Afghan evacuees at a Red Cross-developed supply station before Afghan evacuees were moved to their assigned living area. In addition, the 16th SB set up facilities that resembled stores in each living area. The facilities were managed by volunteers and stocked with clothing and shoes that were donated by the local community. All Afghan evacuees had access to the facilities and were provided the opportunity to browse and select desired goods. During its walk-through, the audit team observed volunteers opening and sorting recent donations in the storage section of the facility and observed a clean, orderly, and well-stocked area where families were browsing merchandise that was neatly presented on tables, separated by gender and size.
- **(U) Housing.** The 5 Primary Housing Areas were existing buildings at ROB that were converted into living areas for Afghan evacuees, whereas the 6 LSAs were large tent-like structures built specifically for the OAR mission. Each of the 11 living areas at ROB provided electricity, heating, and cooling, while the Primary Housing Areas also provided wireless internet connection. A 16th SB representative explained that the Army used lessons learned from Ramstein Air Base to determine the best way to house Afghan evacuees. Therefore, knowing that initially separating all Afghan evacuees by gender created challenges at Ramstein Air Base, ROB personnel instead kept immediate family members together and only segmented genders when necessary. As a result, eight of the living areas were co-mingled with families, while two were male-only and the remaining one was for single females.

(U) Figure 2 depicts a 21st TSC member preparing a temporary housing area at the ROB evacuee facility.



(U) Figure 2. Preparing a Housing Area at Rhine Ordnance Barracks

(U) Source: 21st TSC.

- **(U) Restrooms and Shower Facilities.** Each of the 11 living areas at ROB contained portable restrooms, hand washing stations, and showers. All comingled living areas contained separate facilities for each gender. The audit team observed that many of the facilities were vacant and there were no lines of Afghan evacuees waiting to use the facilities, which led the team to believe there were an adequate number of restrooms and shower facilities for the Afghan evacuees on ROB.

(U) Using lessons learned from Ramstein Air Base, ROB personnel taught guests about proper restroom use and instilled in guests and group elders the importance of cleanliness at the facility. Therefore, according to a 16th SB representative, restrooms at ROB have generally been clean and in good order. The audit team also observed residents picking up litter throughout the facility during its walk-through.

- **(U) Medical Tents.** Each living area contained a medical tent that was continuously staffed by military medical personnel, to provide care for the Afghan evacuees. Personnel from the 16th SB stated that when the medical needs could not be met within the medical tents, Afghan evacuees were transported by ambulance to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center and other local medical facilities. The 16th SB kept track of Afghan evacuees sent to hospitals, as well as those returning, and maintained an isolation facility to accommodate individuals with medical conditions that required isolation from the general population.

(~~CUI~~) A medical worker from the 16th SB noted that, as of September 23, 2021, ROB medical personnel had seen over 14,000 patients. He also noted that the most recent notable medical undertaking was the vaccination of 10,000 Afghan evacuees for Measles, Mumps, and Rubella, and Varicella (Chicken Pox). Personnel from the 16th SB stated that the vaccination effort, [REDACTED] caused by measles cases among Afghan evacuees already living in the United States, extended Afghan evacuees' stay at ROB by at least two weeks. On September 25, 2021, two days after the audit team's walkthrough, ROB medical workers began providing COVID-19 vaccinations to Afghan evacuees. Figure 3 depicts a Soldier vaccinating an Afghan evacuee at the ROB facility during a vaccination event on September 28, 2021.



(U) Although military personnel were required to wear masks to reduce the spread of COVID-19, Afghan evacuees were not required to wear masks. During our September 23, 2021, site visit, the audit team observed that all Service members and volunteers, with the exception of instructors that were teaching classes, were wearing masks.

- **(U) Worship Areas.** Each living area contained a worship area for Afghan evacuees to use. In addition, the ROB facility had designated prayer times throughout the day and provided externally donated prayer rugs to Afghan evacuees.

- **(U) Educational Opportunities.** ROB personnel developed and provided general education lessons to school-aged Afghan evacuees. Classrooms were set up in living areas and Afghan evacuees were provided schedules of classes. Educational lessons were provided by volunteering DoD Education Activity teachers and included writing, geography, and English. Figure 4 depicts a DoD Education Activity teacher providing an English lesson to children housed at ROB.



(U) Figure 4. DoD Education Activity-Provided English Lesson  
(U) Source: 16th SB.

(U) English as a second language and American culture lessons were also developed and available to help adults and children prepare for their transition to the United States. Figure 5 depicts a 21st TSC representative teaching a culture lesson in a living area at ROB.



(U) Figure 5. 21st TSC-Provided Culture Lesson  
(U) Source: 21st TSC.

- (CUI) Entertainment.** [REDACTED] the 16th SB also focused its efforts on accommodating Afghan evacuees to make their stay as enjoyable as possible. A 16th SB representative explained that the Army coordinated with the cultural team from Ramstein Air Base to plan culturally-appropriate events. The 16th SB published a weekly entertainment schedule, which included performances by an Army band, a dance event with a disc jockey and refreshments provided by United Service Organizations, movie nights, a puppet show, and games, such as bingo and cards. Additionally, the entertainment schedule listed recreational sports matches including volleyball, soccer, and handball. Figure 6 depicts a member of an Army band interacting with an evacuee child at the facility. Figure 7 shows a dance event with a disc jockey and refreshments.



(U) Figure 6. Army Band Event at the Rhine Ordnance Barracks Facility  
 (U) Source: 16th SB.



(U) Figure 7. Disc Jockey at a Rhine Ordnance Barracks Event  
 (U) Source: 16th SB.

***(U) ROB Experienced Limited Sustainment Challenges***

(U) According to a 16th SB representative, ROB had major advantages over Ramstein Air Base when preparing facilities and sustaining Afghan evacuees. Specifically, ROB personnel benefitted from lessons learned at Ramstein Air Base, experienced a controlled population flow, and was not responsible for in-processing Afghan evacuees, which made sustainment easier at the ROB facility and resulted in few sustainment challenges.

(U) Personnel from the 16th SB worked closely with their Air Force counterparts at Ramstein Air Base from the beginning of OAR and, as a result, were able to incorporate lessons learned from the first week of operations at Ramstein. The lessons learned, specifically from planning facilities and developing sustainment procedures, enabled ROB personnel to avoid some of the initial challenges experienced at Ramstein Air Base.

(U) In addition, in contrast to the inability to control the quantity and timing of Afghan evacuees that landed at Ramstein Air Base, the arrivals of Afghan evacuees at ROB were paced. The buses transporting Afghan evacuees from Ramstein to ROB typically held only 40 to 50 passengers and could only run every couple of hours. Also, the agreement with the German government required that buses traveling from Ramstein Air Base to ROB be escorted by military or German police, further slowing the incoming flow of Afghan evacuees into the ROB facility and making the processing of Afghan evacuee arrivals more manageable.

(U) Finally, all Afghan evacuees residing at the ROB facility initially landed at Ramstein Air Base, where Air Force personnel were responsible for in-processing. In-processing was a time-consuming process that involved medical, physical, and biometric screenings. Without the responsibility of in-processing Afghan evacuees, Army personnel at ROB were able to focus on sustainment at the facility.

(U) As a result, the 16th SB did not experience major sustainment challenges. The 21st TSC Commander developed a lessons learned document, which 21st TSC personnel reported was distributed to senior leaders in U.S. Army North, U.S. Army Sustainment Command, and U.S. Army Materiel Command. The lessons learned document includes tactics, techniques, and procedures identified at the ROB facility to enable a safe, secure, and compassionate environment for Afghan evacuees at their next destination. Topics addressed in the ROB lessons learned document include ways to address command and control coordination, the need for cultural awareness and consideration, expectations of medical and dental needs, safety concerns, and health and welfare of facility residents. See the Appendix for the full-length lessons learned memorandum.

**(U) Sustainment Summary**

(U) Personnel at ROB incorporated lessons learned at Ramstein Air Base into their overall sustainment procedures. Afghan evacuees were provided food, water, clothing, housing, restrooms, showers, medical resources, and worship facilities. In addition, 16th SB personnel offered Afghan evacuees educational resources and culturally-sensitive entertainment that better prepared Afghan evacuees for life in the United States and increased their comfort and morale at ROB.

**(U) Physical Security Procedures and Observations**

(U) In addition to the physical security controls provided at Ramstein Air Base during in-processing, which included security screenings of Afghan evacuees and luggage, ROB personnel initiated physical security controls to ensure the environment at the ROB facility was safe. During their September 23, 2021 walk-through, the audit team observed the following physical security procedures at the ROB facility:

- ~~(U)~~ [REDACTED]
- ~~(U)~~ **Living Area Security.** The 2nd Cavalry Regiment, which was assigned the responsibility of security at the ROB facility, [REDACTED]

~~(U)~~ [REDACTED] In addition, ROB personnel stated that preventing sexual assault was an important security topic often discussed and planned for within the ROB evacuee facility. [REDACTED]

<sup>8</sup> (U) The 2nd Cavalry Regiment is a U.S. Army brigade combat team, headquartered on Rose Barracks in Vilseck, Germany. The 2nd Cavalry Regiment conducts steady state garrison operations in order to prepare for future operations throughout U.S. European Command's area of responsibility.

- ~~(U)~~ **Departure Screening.** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**(U) ROB Experienced Limited Physical Security Challenges**

(U) Similar to its sustainment procedures, 16th SB personnel used lessons learned from Ramstein Air Base to implement security procedures at ROB. In addition, according to a 16th SB representative, any lessons learned in one living area were continuously shared with the military police in other living areas to ensure safety and security was constantly improving. As a result, ROB personnel have not experienced any major security challenges.

**(U) Physical Security Summary**

~~(U)~~ ROB personnel took steps to ensure its facilities were safe for Afghan evacuees, Service members, and volunteers. By enacting proactive measures, [REDACTED] and continuously sharing and using lessons learned, ROB has only experienced minor, infrequent security incidents.

**(U) Conclusion on ROB Afghan Evacuee Support**

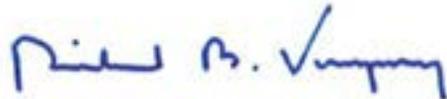
(U) With limited time to plan for the massive effort, ROB personnel implemented lessons learned from Ramstein Air Base efforts to sustain and provide security at the ROB facility. Specifically, ROB personnel provided sustainment resources and made an intentional effort to make the stay for Afghan evacuees as enjoyable and useful as possible. This was apparent through the educational courses and culturally-sensitive activities offered at the ROB facility that were intended to better prepare Afghan evacuees for life in the United States and improve their comfort and morale. In addition, security at the ROB facility was designed to ensure that Afghan evacuees, Service members, and volunteers were safe. Finally, by developing and sending a lessons learned document to counterparts in the United States that are also supporting OAR efforts, ROB leadership was proactive in making the OAR mission more efficient and effective.

(U) However, the successful execution of the OAR effort at the ROB facility did come at a significant cost to the DoD. As of September 30, 2021, the 21st TSC reported it had obligated \$37.5 million in support of OAR. In addition, as the OAR mission continues into FY 2022, the 21st TSC stated it will continue to incur costs. Personnel from the 21st TSC stated that the majority of incurred OAR-related costs from FY 2021 had been replenished with Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster, and Civic Aid funding.

(U) We are providing this management advisory memorandum for information and use. This memorandum identifies observations from our site visit to ROB in Germany.

(U) The interagency partners, as well as the commands directly and indirectly responsible for the relocation of Afghan evacuees, should read this memorandum to be aware of the challenges and opportunities for improvement regarding the sustainment and physical security support for the relocation of Afghan evacuees. The DoD OIG will issue additional management advisory memoranda for each site visited to the appropriate organizations responsible for the Afghan relocation effort, for their review and use.

(U) We considered management's comments on a discussion draft of this memorandum when preparing this final memorandum. A written response is not required. If you have any questions, please contact me at [REDACTED].



Richard B. Vasquez  
Assistant Inspector General for Audit  
Readiness and Global Operations

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## (U) Appendix

### (U) Lessons Learned at the 21st Theater Sustainment Command Afghan Evacuee Facility



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
21ST THEATER SUSTAINMENT COMMAND  
UNIT 23203  
APO AE 09263-3203

AETS-CG

13 September 2021

#### MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: 21st Theater Sustainment Command Operation Allied Refuge (OAR) Base Camp Life Support Area (LSA) Lessons Learned

1. Purpose: These 21st Theater Sustainment Command Operation Allied Refuge (OAR) Base Camp Life Support Area (LSA) lessons learned are provided for Army Materiel Command (AMC) and CONUS senior leaders engaged in the same supportive effort. Quality assurance is important and ensuring the travelers security, safety, and wellbeing are essential. Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) established and discussed below, enabled a safe, secure, and compassionate environment for the travelers.

#### 2. Military:

##### a. Command & Control, Mission Command

(1) Establish Command Relationships, C2, and Mission Command. Identify and clearly articulate upfront who has C2 of each aspect of the mission. Developing and clearly communicating the intent and purpose are crucial to empowering junior leaders to take charge and move forward with the mission.

(2) Joint interoperability. A Joint Task Force (JTF) is necessary if multiple-services are involved. Inherently these types of operations will be Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, or Multinational (JIIM) in nature; but liaison, coordination, and support to the Air Force is a common denominator when tied to strategic and joint bases. Understanding lead agency support, executive agents, and the intricacies of a joint sustainment enterprise are critical to developing a cohesive concept of support, especially as both the Air Force and Army manage contracted services. This reinforces a clear requirement for a JTF HQ for C2, which will adjudicate and support critical linkages between multi-service headquarters and staffs to create unity of efforts across Air Force & Army Functional areas.

(3) Interoperability of mission command systems and networks. Diplomatic, civil-service information systems, and military service systems and networks don't communicate efficiently, especially on separate networks and installations, overseas. Building and creating redundancy thru commercial backbone infrastructure (5G, Wi-Fi, etc.) is a must. Embedding communications support personnel and establishing joint (reciprocal) accounts and access, flattens communication. Familiarity with

## (U) Lessons Learned at the 21st Theater Sustainment Command Afghan Evacuee Facility (cont'd)

AETS-CG

SUBJECT: 21st Theater Sustainment Command Operation Allied Refuge (OAR) Base Camp Life Support Area (LSA) Lessons Learned

USTRANSCOM and U.S. State Department systems of record (if you have or can pull subject matter experts), enables your command to forecast inbound and outbound personnel and categorize and process them faster by creating efficiencies with the through-put of diplomatic and personally identifiable information vis-à-vis systems like NEO Tracking System (NTS) in terms of joint and service-based operations.

(4) NTS must be used at every stage and location of the operation to provide the intended traveler accountability and visibility to the Department of State. NTS was effectively utilized at Kosovo, Sigonella, and Rota, but faced some challenges once deployed at Ramstein Air Base (RAB).

(5) Expect disruption to Patriot Express flights when there is a heavy demand for aircraft, either graytail or contracted. Patriot Express diversions and cancellations became the norm during OAR as flight assets were re-purposed to support the operation. This was extremely disruptive to PCSing Soldiers and their Families; recommending getting left of TRANSCOM's decision cycle if and when Patriot Express flights are perceived to be at risk.

(6) Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Response (HA/DR), Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA)-like role: Push for involvement early, often, and without gaps, international and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), diplomatic, and volunteer entities. Pulling and pooling their representatives shapes both the informational lens of what you're accomplishing and keeps the focus on support to civil authorities. Similarly, inclusion of the U.S. State Department's USAID early and often in the decision-making process and driving prioritization for HA/DR efforts across the task forces conducting security, sustainment, and life-support.

(7) Establish liaisons with all stake-holders and support elements. Include non-military, NGOs such as Red Cross, USO, and others to facilitate critical support. Having someone (MIL/green suiter) assigned as an NGO Coordinator helps synchronize support operations. Red Cross and the USO are your moneymakers. Red Cross will be providing kits for all travelers the day they arrive. Assisting Red Cross with a break down for men, women, and children helps tremendously. USO will be able to accept the donations for the community. They will also ensure the Service Members are taken care of.

(8) Open-source research. It is advantageous to establish Open-source research requirements (in coordination with G2, PAO, G39) to monitor social media activity of personnel in the PODs. This will enable the command to remain situationally aware of

## (U) Lessons Learned at the 21st Theater Sustainment Command Afghan Evacuee Facility (cont'd)

AETS-CG

SUBJECT: 21st Theater Sustainment Command Operation Allied Refuge (OAR) Base Camp Life Support Area (LSA) Lessons Learned

negative/positive sentiments and/or threats to or from the travelers. Utilize tools such as Dataminr and Recorded Future.

(9) Interagency cooperation. The local analytical element should work closely with partners within the community of interest to form an Inter-agency Task Force. Recommend to tie in with Counter Intelligence/HUMINT Elements, Local/state/federal law enforcement, and Civil Affairs/Civil engagement teams to stay ahead of potential force protection threats. The intelligence reporting processes move much slower than events on ground.

(10) CUOPS Analysis. Maintain a SIPR and/or NIPR running estimate that includes: linguist tracker based on each task force, civil considerations, current intelligence, risk assessment, and manning capabilities. Additionally, provide a visual graphic depicting the linguist locations if located in multiple areas.

(11) MAPS. Utilize local geospatial engineers to build maps that depict the LSA's, Public Health Areas, Main Supply Routes, and Alternate Supply Routes. Up-to-date maps were the most requested product from the G2.

(12) Evacuees who arrived with specific paperwork through NATO channels were identified with a Red Wrist band. Once identified, these individuals were transferred to ROB LSA #4 for further processing in order to reach their final destination. The single location of NATO evacuees and the partnerships established, allowed systems for quick identification and movement of these personnel.

b. Cultural Awareness:

(1) All Service Members (E1 and Up) and volunteers (mostly Dependents) should receive a Culture and Communications Brief covering:

(a) Cultural Awareness - Know your audience, Situational Awareness, Do's and Don'ts

(b) Communication Guidelines - Themes and Messages, OPSEC, FAQs

(2) Meaningful dialogue, dignity, and respect. The U.S. Army is a Family and organization of values, to include guests and their Families. Cultural understanding of differences and nuances is a must. Empowering the traveler population's Elders to be a link and authority in intermediate staging locations is a key task. The benefits include:

## (U) Lessons Learned at the 21st Theater Sustainment Command Afghan Evacuee Facility (cont'd)

AETS-CG

SUBJECT: 21st Theater Sustainment Command Operation Allied Refuge (OAR) Base Camp Life Support Area (LSA) Lessons Learned

self-policing, leveled understanding, and good order and discipline. Most of all, this fosters the respect and dignity these friends and allies deserve. We wanted to keep areas clean and maintain cooperation in housing/feeding/hygiene/medical care protocol; this was accomplished by empowering the leadership of the population we have hosted to take care of and lead their own. We showed them we care by giving them the materiel and support they need to transition through the theater and on to their future destinations. This was specific to military personnel providing support.

(3) Cultural Engagement Team. Formed a Cultural Engagement Team at the housing sites that consists of: PAO, IO, SF, CA, USAID, Female Engagement Teams (FET), linguists, and an Afghan Cultural Advisor. This entity was a center of gravity in the Allies Refuge Operation to advise operational leaders on cultural and human considerations in executing this mission. They developed TTPs and best practices to effectively empower key influencers in the traveler population-this assisted in camp management and informed POD leadership of atmospherics within individual POD populations.

(4) Cultural Awareness. Provide personnel with a small hip pocket cultural awareness book to include: basic phrases, "Do's and Don'ts," common courtesy, and information such as common terms or phrases to help with the socio-cultural and language barriers.

(5) Linguists. Linguists should be identified ahead of time to have a combination of Pashto, Dari, and female linguists. Understanding the population density ahead of time facilitates the alignment of linguist capability to mission requirements (Medical, in processing, Mayoral Cell Duties, Interviews, etc.). Not all linguists are of the same capability. Orders should explicitly state the requirements for CAT-1 (native/proficient) linguists. Otherwise, you will get a mix of capabilities that are not sufficient for the population.

(6) Culturally appropriate meals. Strive to provide Halal certified items and culturally appropriate meals. Ensure contractor is capable to provide quality Halal certified meals for OAR travelers.

c. Medical:

(1) Define MEDROE at the beginning of the operation. The MEDROE determines the CL VIII needed for the operation and helps establish forecasting data, develop lead times and requirements, and decrease CL VIII shortfalls. Include

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discussion of medical staff, supplies, and Emergency Room visit processes and accountability. Consider providing female escorts for female travelers to leave their living areas to seek medical care. Discuss importance of isolation areas for transmissible diseases (measles, COVID-19, chickenpox, etc.).

(2) Designate personnel to clean and disinfect any large contamination around the privacy fenced female latrine areas on a regular basis. Large piles of feces were found outside of female latrines and pose significant health hazards to the traveler population. It is unknown, but unlikely, that the porta-john contract covers this requirement.

(3) For future humanitarian operations a greater emphasis on identifying, equipping, and utilizing field sanitation teams are recommended. Most findings were directly related is sanitation.

(4) Provide classes on how to properly utilize the latrines and the ONLY place for appropriate bathroom use. Ensure hand washing stations are adequately filled and stocked with soap. The tents, fence lines, sides of buildings, immediate areas surrounding the latrines, etc. are not appropriate places for going to the bathroom. This information should be provided during in-processing or immediately after since this was a huge challenge within the camps. Adding classes about how to wash clothes when laundry options are available to the travelers would also be helpful. Ensure disinfected bedding is provided to inbound travelers. Previously used sleeping bags should not be used before they are cleaned or disinfected.

(5) The need for isolation areas for diseases such as chickenpox and measles. Something we are considering now. A treatment capability was concentrated around a core Role 1 medical asset per LSA/the DPC, operating on a 24 hour basis. An evacuation process for both routine and urgent/emergent to LRMC for further care and triage to Host Nation care was developed if required. The need for patient escorts were identified early as the means to not place a support burden on LRMC. Care tracking was captured on a daily DNBI tracker which was submitted to USAREUR-AF and EUCOM.

(6) Communicable diseases, especially those that have been largely reduced or eradicated in the US, was a focus of medical surveillance and a dedicated LSA was eventually established to house these cases and known contacts in isolation. Life support, to include showers and latrines were segregated by each disease type. Access is controlled to this area, with the MEDPROS records of all support personnel for the

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LSA checked for immunization status. PPE requirements are identified in advance and stocks are confirmed prior to traveler interaction.

(7) Camp set up and operations were monitored closely by preventive Medicine personnel. Frequent spot checks are made of the area. Keep the flexibility to expand isolation areas to account for multiple infectious diseases at a time. Establish requirements and resources in the planning phases to quickly isolate multiple patients and close contact in segregated spaces. Order confirmatory tests as soon as possible.

d. Dental:

(1) Many travelers have unaddressed significant oral health conditions. They are eager to receive dental care from a licensed professional and can consume sick call resources and manpower.

(2) Maintain access to a dentist who can help triage oral issues and provide role 1 dental care. Have access to appropriate armamentarium for emergency care treatment.

e. Safety:

(1) Focus efforts on the safety of children (playing around moving equipment, port-a-john trucks, or items that are unsafe).

(2) Recommend Soldiers that are vaccinated work the mission, due to unknown status of travelers. Provide PPE, N95, etc. to personnel.

(3) Beware of matches in MREs. Utilize Elders to help police them up. Ensure safe usage of water heaters. Some individuals have attempted to drink the water directly from the pouch. Supply kettles for hot water. Tea is important to their culture. Hot water is also used to help warm baby formula.

f. Welfare and Wellbeing Considerations:

(1) MWR. Incorporate the garrison's MWR/Sports Directorate in setting up play areas for the children. Due to the legal restrictions for donations, etc., it would be prudent to link in the organizations authorized to accept these items with the LSA staff & garrison. Additionally, attempt to standardize the LSAs to ensure equity across the various sites.

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(2) Laundry Facilities. Initially, the travelers were not expected to be on the ground for longer than 48-72 hours. However, some travelers have spent longer than 10 days at the various LSAs. Providing laundry services is an enormous challenge based on the following factors:

(a) Presently the travelers use the donation centers for new clothing and just discard their old clothing in the sleeping areas.

(b) Accountability, the fact that we never know when the travelers will be called forward to their available flight, laundry turnaround times, ID of garments, possible allergic reactions to detergents, etc.

(c) Laundry area location is extremely critical as we have observed in the DPC/TF Home. These areas must be set up far from the designated men's areas. Several men have not allowed their wives to wash clothes close to these areas.

(d) As a proof-of-principle, we set-up up a laundry area for the travelers to use including a bulk water site, washing tubs, and clothes lines. We are observing some use, but will continue to monitor and refine to provide best practices for the outlying LSAs.

(3) Contracts. Develop a working group for all commodities to assist in identifying direct POCs and establishing positive relationships with all stakeholders (including 16th SB, 405th AFSB, 409th CSB, the DPC, the Garrison [including DPW, USAMMCE, LRMC) as soon as possible. This facilitates the conversations necessary for leveraging these contracts quickly to meet needs of the mission and population.

### 3. Travelers:

#### a. Cultural Considerations:

(1) Male and Female Elder Council Meetings. Identified key Elders and English speaking personnel in the traveler populations to liaison with the Task Force and provide leadership at the traveler level. Male and Female councils were held daily at 1200 and 1300 respectively to provide guidance to the travelers, increase transparency, and receive feedback on traveler's needs. A key consideration in forming the councils was ensuring representation from all tribes, factions, or armies in the traveler pool. This allowed the Task Force to reduce friction amongst the travelers, message equality, and meet the needs of a diverse population.

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(2) Elders/Group Representatives. Identify Elders early on (some call them "brothers"). Not all speak English, but they are in a position of respect within their group. Immediately organized traveler volunteers that were well represented from all factions to assist in camp management and resource distribution. This select group of travelers provided a round-the-clock workforce to manage donation distribution with military oversight. However, it was critical to select the right personnel to ease communication with the military, understand traveler's needs and ensure distribution equality. Additionally, this group assisted with linguist support in medical, mealtime management, and manifesting for exfiltration.

(3) Compassion, Emotional Intelligence: Sensitize your force to what these individuals have been through. Provide follow-thru and remain cognizant of the emotional and mental toll this event has had on our travelers, our troops, and our families. Soliciting unbounded feedback from all involved, including their families touched by this event, and having a contingency plan for additional counseling, medical, behavioral, and religious support has helped our task force keep and maintain resiliency. Establish a donation center and assign manpower to manage volunteers and the travelers. If combat power can be carved out to provide the supported task force with personnel to entertain, watch over, and interact with the younger traveler population, more good will is created between host and guest. Candy, sports equipment, and media go a long ways. Setting up impromptu movie theaters with a projector (if agreed upon by the Elders and families), providing snacks and games, and giving parents and older travelers much needed rest by keeping children occupied, all help to ease tension and stress.

(4) Establish Red Cross Distribution on site. Preferably, locate it to facilitate "first impression" for Travelers when they arrive for in-processing. Having the ability to distribute Red Cross comfort and humanitarian items (such as toiletries, foot wear, baby formula, diapers, etc.) increases morale.

(5) Utilize Civil Affairs teams to engage with guests. Civil Affairs may be invaluable in determining "social temperature" and defusing potential issues.

(6) Coordination or religious support. Identify and verify the capabilities the local community has to assist in short falls, i.e. prayer rugs, blessing of worship space.

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b. Health and Welfare:

(1) Identify and manage high-risk personnel during in-processing. Awareness of pregnancies, serious illnesses, single women, and others that may become victims, should be tracked and determine where these personnel will be housed.

(2) Nutrition. Forecasting meals and understanding Halal dietary requirements is essential. We found that using our DFACs are the more efficient way to get the Travelers to eat. Initially, meals provided through contracts and the DFAC were not sufficient not culturally sensitive or easily recognizable which caused low acceptance by the travelers. Contracts should be thoroughly and deliberately reviewed to ensure Halal options were available while considering accurate consumption and usage planning factors. Most meals contained a starch, bean or vegetable and protein. Canned fruit has only been provided on rare occasions. Milk or dairy products were seldom observed during breakfast or dinner hot meals. Travelers may have arrived nutritionally deficient and were unsure of relying on OAR to provide 100% of their food and beverages. Provide meal enhancements at least once a day to bridge any nutritional gaps; specifically dairy (milk or yogurt), fresh fruit, and tea. Continually adapting to and improving traveler throughput during meals allowed us to decrease serving time from 5 hours to 2 hours. The majority of Ensure and PediaSure products are Halal.

(3) Tea. The travelers value hot tea like America's youth value soda. Establish hot water pots at all living areas and make sure there is always plenty of tea available. This aided in creating a caring atmosphere towards the travelers and helped create calmer dispositions within one day of providing tea.

(4) Tents. It is essential to clean and disinfect the unoccupied tents. Tents became contaminated and unusable due to large amounts of human waste. The tents must be blocked off and sealed. During one occasion, children were seen playing in the fenced-off area and two individuals had moved into the tents. Upon inspection, it appeared that the tents could be cleaned and sanitized for use, if required. This would add back three tents with a capacity to house approximately 81 travelers or be used as transition space.

(5) Trash. Identify the need for additional trash containers, more durable trash bags, and assistance picking up trash. If trash receptacles are full or not available, travelers will throw their trash in the latrines or on the ground. Unemptied trash receptacles may contain food and other debris that could attract vermin, potentially increasing the spread of disease. Obtain additional trash receptacles to stage

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throughout each POD and ensure they are emptied regularly, particularly after mealtimes.

(6) Housing. Originally housed women and children separately from their male family members. But have since changed the TTPs to house families together in the hangar. This method appears to lessen the travelers' general anxiety and increase cleanliness. It also reduces the need for female service members to be assigned to a specific area. We continue to keep families together as much as possible.

4. The point of contact for this memorandum is [REDACTED]

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