



DES Newsletter - September 2011

Greetings Everyone,

Do you remember where you were and what you were doing on that fateful morning when five hijackers crashed Flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center? I was serving as the Provost Marshal (military chief of police for you non-military types) in the beautiful German region of Baden Württemberg. Military bases in Germany are spread all around and not collocated like they are in the States (my thought is that they wanted to make it difficult for any invader to find all the bases if they ever decided to attack). So there I was at the Army Hospital on Nachrichten Kaserne (yes...that's the same hospital where General George S. Patton succumbed back in 1945 after being injured in a traffic accident in Mannheim) having physical therapy on my back when a sergeant came into the room and told us what had just happened. I then received a telephone call from one of my desk sergeants who simply told me, "Sir, you better get in here now!"



It's hard to believe that 10 years ago, we all went through one of the most horrific episodes in modern history. For those of us who were serving in Emergency Services back then, we all know how our lives and the way we do our business changed on that day. I remember standing in the 4-star general's office listening to a briefing on the German Polizei's (Police) response and seeing them coming out of the woodworks (so to speak) to stand at our gates with MP5's at the ready to protect our bases and our families. And then there was the Polizei van parked in front of the American High School in Heidelberg (yes...the same one that General 'Stormin Norman' Schwarzkopf Jr. went to as a teenager) with an American flag attached to the back window as a show of support and solidarity. Overall, what I remember most is the tremendous spirit and efforts of Soldiers and civilians to protect their installations. The men and women of DES have demonstrated that they have the same spirit by continuing to protect people on Picatinny Arsenal and within the surrounding area. Many of you have similar experiences from 9/11 and I think it's fair to say that this is a very humbling time for those of us in Emergency Services, but as professionals...we will drive on and continue the mission.

On behalf of the people of Picatinny Arsenal and our surrounding communities, I want to thank the members of the Police, Fire, and Security Departments who responded during Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee. Whether you were standing at the gate when we had the strong winds and heavy rain or rescuing someone from a flood ravaged home, you were there to answer the call to serve and protect. Many of you, including myself, had to deal with damages to our own homes. But, as first responders you were there when you were needed and for that you have our sincere gratitude.





As the DES, one of the things I love to do is to kill rumors. We've all heard the rumors that the Army is going to open up the gates on installations and make them open posts. After returning from the DES Conference, I'm here to tell you that it ain't going to happen anytime soon. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (which is a law) requires the Secretary of Defense to have standards for allowing access onto all military installations in the United States. This includes determining the fitness of individuals to enter a base and verifying their identity. With that, remember that the mission that our security guards and motor vehicle inspectors perform at access control points (ACPs) is very important to maintaining our Force Protection. As always, I'll let you know if there are any changes.

I've said this before and I'll say it again...the best way to do training is "Hands-on." That's exactly what the Fire Department did with their new 100' tower-ladder. The instructor challenged me to go to the top and take a picture looking straight down. Always being up for a challenge and thanks to the flying abilities of Firefighter Steve Shatzel, that's exactly what I did. The last time that I had this kind of view, I was parachuting down back at Fort Benning (go ahead and say it Captains Frutchey and Champa...a "5 jump chump"). But you know what...this is the way you learn...getting out there, overcoming adversity (like heights), and actually doing the job.



Have you noticed that there have been a lot of incidents in the U.S. recently involving the use of the AK-47 assault rifle? Two recent incidents spring into mind...the subject who fire on police officers after being denied entry onto Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri back in May and now the active shooter at the IHOP in Carson City, Nevada. In this recent incident, the shooter killed four people (including three uniformed National Guardsmen) and wounded seven others before taking his own life. As always, I cannot say enough about the importance of training and utilizing proper officer safety tactics in handling any type of incident...which leads to me our next topic...

As always, I cannot say enough about the importance of training and utilizing proper officer safety tactics in handling any type of incident...which leads to me our next topic...

Our annual All Hazards Exercise will be conducted the week of 19 to 23 October 2011. Police and Fire can expect to respond to a variety of incidents while our Security Guards can expect to handle incidents at the ACPs. This is important for all of us and you can expect to be briefed beforehand to ensure we safely conduct our operations.



And finally, General Raymond T. Odierno has taken the helm as our 38th Chief of Staff (CSA) of the Army. You might remember him from the time when he commanded the 4th Infantry Division during the early stages of the war in Iraq. As the new CSA, he's already acknowledged that we will face many challenges in the near future (including the budget). But, we've been through this before and we'll get through them again so stay tuned.

Richard J. Karlsson, DES