

DISPATCH

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Vol. 39, No. 36

437th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, SC

Friday, September 15, 2000

Plans officer 'goes home'

By Staff Sgt. Michael Duhe
437 AW Public Affairs

It was the TDY of a lifetime for Capt. Ita Udoaka.

Udoaka, chief of logistics plans for the 437th Airlift Wing, recently traveled to his home country of Nigeria to play an important role in President Clinton's trip there. He was selected by the Tanker Airlift Control Element to serve as a linguist and interpreter in during the mission.

Udoaka and 10 other Team Charleston members arrived in Abuja, Nigeria, Aug. 13, anticipating Clinton's arrival Aug. 26. Udoaka had a wide range of responsibilities for the mission. He was troop commander for the contingency of Charleston-based airmen that included maintenance and supply members. He coordinated with local police to provide security along the route from the group's hotel to the flightline. He worked with White House staff members, Secret Service and the Office of Special Investigations, and he acted as a liaison between the contracting officer and the host nation support to secure jet fuel for the mission. He

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Dead in the water

Staff Sgt. Michael Durkee, 437th Logistics Support Squadron, pushes his stalled vehicle through base housing. The heavy rain last week caused minor flooding in some areas of the base.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodier

Retired Army general says defense logistics is challenging

By Lt. Col. Ed Memi
437 AW Public Affairs

It's a challenging task for defense logistics professionals to get the right items to the right place at the right time, said retired Army Gen. William Tuttle, Jr., during the Charleston chapter of the National Defense Transportation Association meeting Sept. 6 at the Charleston Club.

Tuttle, the president and chief executive officer of the Logistics Management Institute and former commander of Army Material Command, toured the base and received a number of briefings along with members of the LMI board of trustees Sept. 7.

Tuttle was the senior Army

logistician during the invasion of Panama and the Gulf War.

"Every year the trustees go visit one of the armed forces facilities," said Tuttle. "Last year, we visited NATO for the first time. We rotate among the services and it was the Air Force's turn. We're in the logistics business and the C-17s deploy many times. It was fascinating for them to see the real instrument of deployment, the C-17, and the Army's major way of getting into the war.

"It's a great show (C-17 demo) and I've seen enough of it to know everyone was impressed," Tuttle said. "You have a first class group of folks here."

LMI provides management consulting and research and

analysis to government and other non-profit organizations with the goal of improving efficiency of public sector operations and the effectiveness with which public resources are used. LMI has done more than 200 studies for the Department of Defense on base closures, warehousing, supply chain management, military traffic management, business process management and many other topics.

There are some constants in the business of logistics and there are some changes, Tuttle said to the 100 or so NDTA members in the club.

"We logistics folks have two simple tasks," said Tuttle. "First, employ forces. Second, sustain the systems and

people."

Tuttle explained one of the constants is the importance of the supply chain, which must be geared to the customer's (warfighter's) needs. "There is a need to manage that flow of sustainment and it needs to be seamless." He added that logistics relies upon good information systems.

"The conflict objectives are to get early resolution to the conflict or humanitarian crisis," said Tuttle. "Early resolution is key.

"The longer we stay, the riskier it becomes and people's patience runs short. We have compositional issues where we don't always know what kind of forces will be needed and how to pack-

age them up. It was easier when we had the Soviet Union, but now the package that has to be moved is more a function of the threat."

Conflicts can range from a major theater war, like the Gulf War, down to the small-scale conflicts like in Somalia. "We need to package the force to meet that, but not too much nor too little," said Tuttle. "More is better usually, but you have to get it in there first and early resolution is always better."

Tuttle praised the Air Force for its development of Air Expeditionary Forces where it is known in advance what units will be deployed should a conflict arise. He added the

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