



A soldier assigned to Task Force Talon, 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command, observes as a missile pallet is lowered during a reload and unload drill of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense system at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. The THAAD battery, equipped with a state-of-the-art missile defense system, is tasked with defending Guam and its surrounding areas against ballistic missile threats. (U.S. ARMY/CAPT. ADAN CAZAREZ)

IN THIS ISSUE

VOLUME 6 NUMBER 14
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Troops Train, Provide Feedback on the Go

3

DoD Leaders Focused on Improving Health Care

4

Member Benefits

Education Savings

6



Chapter Highlight

Greater New York-Statue of Liberty

7

Guam critical to Indo-Pacific security

Defending Guam, a tiny but strategic U.S. territory in the Western Pacific that is most vulnerable to “the pacing threat of China,” is critical to the joint force operating in the Indo-Pacific theater, senior Army leaders said.

“The [People’s Republic of China] has the ability to mass a number of different threats against a lot of places in the Pacific,” Brig. Gen. Patrick Costello, commander of the Honolulu-based 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command, said Tuesday during an event in the Strategic Landpower Dialogue series co-hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army and the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Noting that “there is no sanctuary any longer in the Pacific,” Costello touted the benefits of a new composite battalion that, when it becomes operational, will comprise several weapon systems to provide a layered defense capability against enemy missiles.

“We need to be able to defend this important, ... one of the most important combat power projection hubs and spokes that we have within the Pacific,” Costello said, adding that “if deterrence should fail, the theater Army requires capabilities, posture, signaling and will, and this composite battalion that the Army is providing for the defense of Guam meets all of those requirements.”

Lt. Gen. Robert Rasch, director of

the Rapid Capabilities and Critical Technologies Office and executive officer of the Joint Program Office for the Guam Defense System, said China is a “complex threat” from both an operational and materiel perspective.

“We’re looking at the pacing threat of China, which has offensive capabilities unlike anything we’ve been seeing in [Central Command], unlike anything that we’re seeing in Europe, and it requires us to think differently,” Rasch said.

Rasch warned that the defense of Guam, a 210-square-mile island whose biggest land owners are the U.S. Navy and Air Force, cannot be left to chance.

See **Guam**, Page 5



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25th Infantry Division soldiers adapt to new capabilities

As the Army fields autonomous capabilities throughout the force, Hawaii-based soldiers demonstrated that new technologies can be incorporated on the move and while in contact, senior leaders in the Indo-Pacific said.

Just back from a six-month Operation Pathways rotation, having spent most of their time training with their counterparts in the Philippines, soldiers with the 25th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team were observed "changing their mentality" as they adapted to the new technology, said Maj. Gen. Marcus Evans, the division commander.

During their rotation, the soldiers focused on warfighting readiness and "transformation in contact," an initiative driven by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Randy George to help the Army adapt more quickly to evolving technology. As part of that effort, the 25th Infantry Division soldiers worked with advanced sensing, striking and protection capabilities.

The soldiers adapted to the new



Spc. Adam Finley, assigned to the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, runs to the firing line with a Carl Gustav M4 recoilless rifle during an anti-tank subject-matter expert exchange with Philippine army soldiers as part of Exercise Balikatan 24 at Fort Magsaysay, Philippines. (U.S. ARMY/SPC. EVAN WILSON)

capabilities easily, but "now they're also looking up ... and they're asking questions about the small unmanned aerial systems they're seeing, so watching them incorporate these new technologies at the earliest phases of training is really changing their mentality to integrate these additional assets, to see farther, to sense better, to strike farther and protect the formation," Evans said July 26 during a call with reporters.

One piece of equipment that proved popular was the Silent Tactical Energy Enhanced Dismount, or STEED, said Command Sgt. Maj. Shaun Curry, the division's senior enlisted adviser. A cart that the soldiers called the wheelbarrow, the STEED was quickly used to perform a multitude of tasks that helped soldiers move farther and faster while lightening their load.

"You can put up to three casualties on it. One person can move this equipment back by itself, so no longer do you need a whole squad to move one casualty," Curry said, noting that "what the soldiers have been do-

ing during transformation in contact is playing with that piece of equipment and the manufacturer to see what else it can carry."

Soldiers began to use the wheelbarrow to carry a company's communications equipment for mission command and mortar systems, Curry said. "The next thing we're starting to play with now is power generation, and how do we maintain our power systems, which is always going to be a limiting factor for [us] as we are a light brigade combat team, so less vehicles and less equipment," he said.

Transformation in contact, Evans said, "is a way to adapt formations to get new technology into the hands of soldiers with a clear acknowledgement that the battlefield has changed."

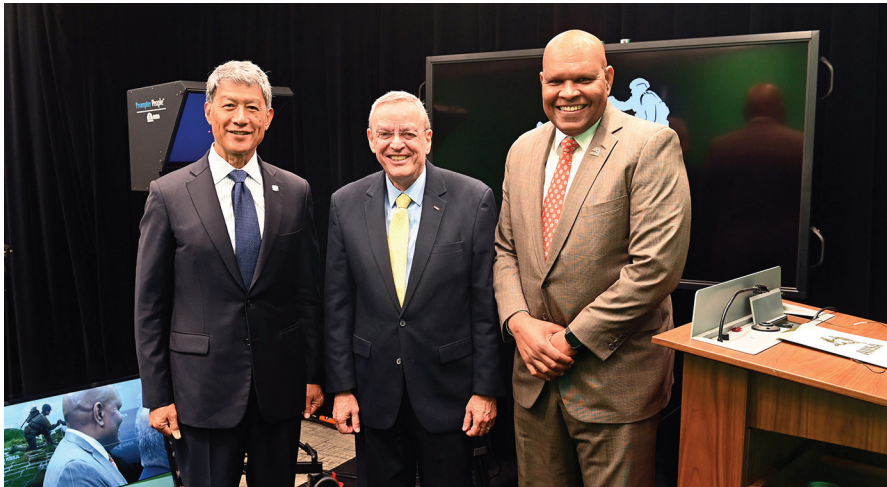
"We are striving each and every day to be more lethal and more mobile as part of the cornerstones of warfighting readiness," he said. "We acknowledge that with the changes of technology and tactics that are prevalent, there's a requirement to rapidly transform."

ARMY magazine August issue



AUSA Basic Members can now view a selection of articles from the August issue of *ARMY* magazine. To read the articles, click here.

DoD works to boost medical readiness, improve troops' access to health care



From left to right, retired Maj. Gen. Joseph Carvalho, Dr. Lester Martinez-Lopez, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, and retired Lt. Gen. Leslie Smith, AUSA's vice president for Leadership and Education, prepare for a Noon Report webinar on Tuesday at the association's headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. (AUSA PHOTO)

Leaders in the Defense Department are focused on improving medical readiness and access to care in the Military Health System, the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs said.

"The [Defense Health Agency] is a new enterprise, ... so we are in [a] growing stage," Dr. Lester Martinez-Lopez said Tuesday during an Association of the U.S. Army Noon Report webinar. "There are a lot of negotiations between the services and Defense Health Agency to make sure that ... we're going to deliver the right care to every service member that is wounded or injured."

A retired Army major general and family medicine physician, Martinez-Lopez was the first Latino to head the Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. He is a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine and has a master's degree in public health from Johns Hopkins University.

To ensure that soldiers and other service members get adequate access to care, DoD is working to bring patients back to its military treatment facilities. "We're going to move to

critical MTFs first to reattract patients," he said. "The places where we have the [most] patients and the active-duty and service members, we're going to put investment in those places first, so we start attracting patients back. As we succeed in that, then we will keep expanding."

To improve readiness and brain health, DoD also is looking to minimize exposure to blast overpressure, which are shock waves generated by firing heavy weapons such as mortars, rockets and rifles.

"The department is being proactive and trying to minimize the risk," Martinez-Lopez said. "Our first target on blast overpressure is training. Can we minimize the exposure of blast overpressure in training?"

Military health care needs to "go back to the basics" and build trust among patients, Martinez-Lopez said. "Health care for me is about taking care of family. Anyone in uniform is family," he said. "That's the way we need to approach it. This is not a business, so we need to sustain that ... family culture. That starts in the military treatment facilities, and that starts in the clinics."

AUSA Extra

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Guam

From Page 1

“We’re looking at a small space, we’re looking at a potential adversary that has a lot of capability and capacity, so we have to be very efficient with how we utilize the capabilities we have,” Rasch said. “It’s causing us to think differently.”

The integration of air and missile defense capabilities “makes the whole of the capability much greater than the sum of its parts,” Brig. Gen. Frank Lozano, program executive officer for Missiles and Space, said, explaining that individual systems may operate “suboptimally” in a contested environment against the “massive threats” presented in the Indo-Pacific theater.

“The sum of the components is typically how we would fight, but we’ve realized that that’s not adequate nor sufficient for fighting against the PRC in the future,” Lozano said.



Guam Army National Guard soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, currently assigned to Task Force Talon’s Security Forces Company, patrol the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense site ‘Excalibur’ in Dededo, Guam. (U.S. ARMY/MAJ. TREVOR WILD)

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This month, I want to highlight three organizations the Association of the U.S. Army has partnered with that provide services to help veterans get the most out of their benefits and certifications for career advancement.

MyVet BENEFITS

If you are a veteran or service member, check out MyVet BENEFITS, an app that matches veterans, military members and their families with a personalized list of benefits and services they've earned.

After completing a brief profile, the system connects you with benefits at the federal, state and local levels, as well as those from nonprofit organizations. You can quickly compare, filter and save benefits specific to you and your family.

Member Benefits

The founder of MyVet BENEFITS is Todd Ernst, an Air Force veteran who spent five years leading the fight to change U.S. law to provide equal survivor benefits for reserve component families that lost loved ones in the line of duty.

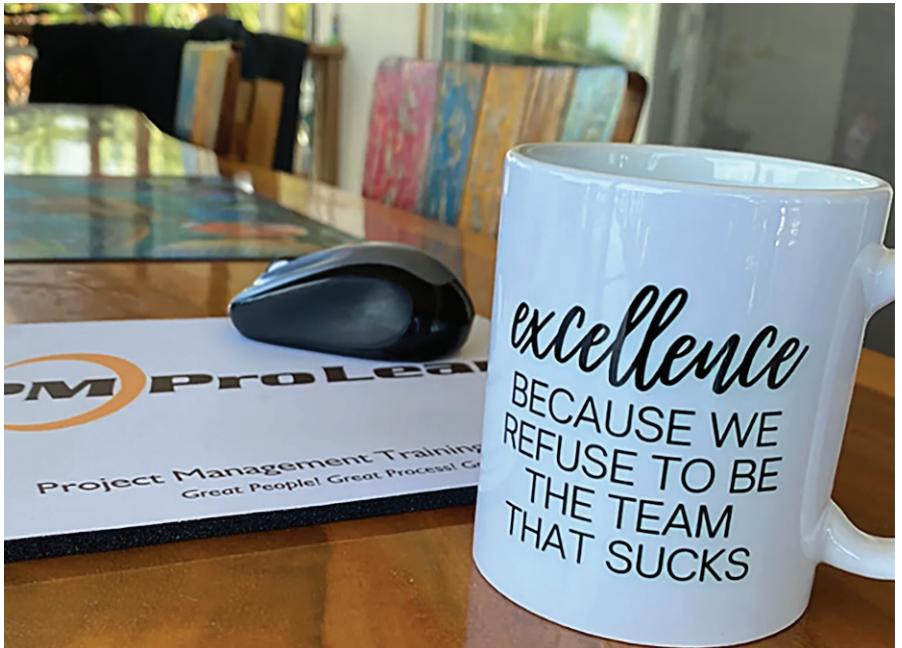
The team at MyVet BENEFITS is composed of veterans and military spouses and family members who have experienced the same frustrations you have trying to navigate the complex maze of military benefits.

Learn more, review the privacy policies, download the app and more at <https://www.myvetbenefits.com/>.

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Susan Rubel is AUSA's Association and Affinity Partnerships director.

Chapter hosts send-off ceremony for deploying soldiers

In July, the Association of the U.S. Army's Greater New York-Statue of Liberty chapter hosted a mobilization ceremony for soldiers of the 423rd Military Police Company at the St. Patrick School in Smithtown.

The Army Reserve unit, headquartered in Shoreham, is beginning a yearlong deployment in the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility.

Retired Lt. Col. Gary Port, the AUSA chapter president and an Army Reserve Ambassador, spoke to the hundreds of attendees—soldiers, family members, community leaders and more—about his own deployment experience, when his daughter called to inform him that his wife was ill. Port's commander offered to fly him home, but his wife told him to “finish the mission.”

“That's the kind of support that they are giving to you [soldiers] ... and I want you all to remember that,” Port said about military families.

Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mario Terenas, deputy director of AUSA's Center for Leadership and the event's keynote speaker, agreed. “The strength of our nation is the Army, and the strength of our Army is the



Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mario Terenas, right, deputy director of AUSA's Center for Leadership, speaks to soldiers of the 423rd Military Police Company during a mobilization ceremony hosted by AUSA's Greater New York-Statue of Liberty chapter. (AUSA PHOTO)

soldiers, and the strength of our soldiers is the family,” he said.

Terenas, who previously served as the senior enlisted leader for the 10th Mountain Division, gave the departing soldiers four pieces of advice from his military career.

“No. 1, do not be average. I don't want to be next to an average soldier. ... I don't want to be led by average leaders. Our country doesn't deserve to have an average Army,” Terenas said. “Not being average means that you give everything it takes.”

Second, provide aid if a fellow soldier asks for help, he said. “Any of

your friends, your battle brothers, if they ask you for help, you better go to the fight.”

It also is important to deal with troublesome issues quickly, Terenas said. “Through this next year, you're going to be posed with situations and problems. Don't walk past it,” he said, whether it's increased stress, a person in need of help or difficulty completing a mission.

Finally, Terenas encouraged the soldiers to press on in the face of failure. “You're defined by how you overcome loss and defeat, and how you rise to the occasion,” he said. “You are going to fail this next year, at one point or another. What will define you as an individual, as a soldier, as a leader, is the way you rise from that and overcome it.”

The send-off ceremony—which included a barbecue, live music, displays and social engagements—showcased the Army Reserve to the community and provided an important morale boost to the deploying soldiers and their families, Port said.

“Partnering with AUSA allowed the event to move beyond the drill hall and become a large family- and community-oriented affair,” he said. “This event shows what AUSA can and should be doing with our Guard and Reserve soldiers.”



From left to right, retired Lt. Col. Gary Port, president of AUSA's Greater New York-Statue of Liberty chapter, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Mario Terenas, deputy director of AUSA's Center for Leadership, and New York State Sen. Mario Mattered attend a mobilization ceremony hosted by the chapter for the 423rd Military Police Company. (AUSA PHOTO)

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