



THE OUTPOST

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ATEC commander says TRTC testing "incredible"

By Mark Schauer

Maj. Gen. Daniel Karbler, commanding general of the Army Test and Evaluation Command (ATEC), spent nearly three full days in Panama late last month visiting U.S. Army Tropic Regions Test Center (TRTC) activities.

Karbler's visit to Panama was the first by an ATEC commander in more than a decade. He was escorted by YPG commander Col. Randy Murray, Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher Prosser and TRTC director Ernest Hugh.

"It's been a productive visit for the whole team," said Murray. "It's Major General Karbler's first



Army Test and Evaluation Command commander Maj. Gen. Daniel Karbler (left) and YPG commander Col. Randy Murray (right) ride in a Stryker Combat Vehicle under test at Tropic Regions Test Center. Karbler is the first ATEC commander to visit TRTC's test facilities in more than a decade. (Photo by Mark Schauer)

opportunity to come to TRTC and see first hand the kinds of testing we do and the facilities available to conduct it. This is a great team with very professional people."

Karbler paid particular interest to a current test of the Stryker Combat Vehicle, having lunch with the crew, many of whom are stationed in Yuma, and riding on the challenging jungle test course saturated with mud and jungle biomass. Karbler thanked the team for their professionalism and hard work, and wished those from Yuma safe travels when they returned home.

"It's not often a commanding

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Owning the environment: Flying aircraft in "brownout" conditions

By Mark Schauer

Takeoff and landing are the two most dangerous periods for any aircraft.

The danger is compounded when

a helicopter is caught in a degraded visual environment (DVE) such as a brownout.

Caused by rapidly blowing sand and dirt thrown into a vortex by

the rotor blades of a helicopter, a brownout's swirling dust gives pilots the illusion they are moving even if they are hovering stationary. Hazardous in any situation, it is

particularly risky when landing in a combat zone.

"We are visual creatures," said Maj. Joe Minor, Degraded Visual

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TESTING

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general sets aside time in a busy schedule to visit us,” said Julio Zambrano, TRTC test officer. “We appreciate it.”

Karbler also paid visits to facilities hosting long-term storage tests of equipment and was extensively briefed about recently concluded test projects. Most of these briefings were at the sites themselves, and were not passive affairs: among other places, Karbler trekked through TRTC’s rigorous manpack course, a steep, muddy jungle trail suffused

with thorny vines, in a driving tropical rain storm.

“It’s uplifting to have a visit from the CG,” said Hugh. “The workforce did a tremendous job briefing him and showing him around. You could see the pride as they did their presentations and explained tests they have performed.”

Unlike the other two test centers over which YPG manages, TRTC owns no land and conducts operations in foreign countries, with Panama being a primary location. Personal diplomacy and TRTC’s long track record in Central and South America go a long way in garnering support for test projects, and this



Karbler showed particular interest in a current test of the Stryker Combat Vehicle, having a box lunch with the crew at the test site. “It’s not often a commanding general sets aside time in a busy schedule to visit us,” said Julio Zambrano, TRTC test officer. “We appreciate it.” (Photos by Mark Schauer)

THE OUTPOST

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Julio Villegas, electronics engineer, discusses with Karbler an exposure test underway deep within the Panamanian jungle. Panama receives well over 100 inches of rain per year.

facet of TRTC’s efforts was palpable during friendly visits with high ranking officers in Panama’s Office of Defense Cooperation and the Panamanian Public Forces.

“The breadth of things we do in terms of testing and relationships that we’ve built with different elements of the Panamanian government are very positive,” said Karbler. “The regard Panamanian officials have for our ATEC teammates is great.”

All involved thought the visit was highly successful.

“It appears to me that he left with a

good impression of what is available at TRTC, as well as some of the things we could do more of, given our equipment and capabilities,” said Hugh. “Panama offers a deeper, less benign tropical environment than Hawaii or most other places.”

“The briefings and pictures don’t do justice to being in the humidity, in the sun, in a hot tropic environment,” said Karbler. “Being able to walk around in this aspect of the unforgiving crucible of ground combat that TRTC presents to us is incredible.”



Eric Nicolaisen (left), TRTC’s resident jungle expert, escorts Karbler through TRTC’s steep, muddy manpack course during a late-morning thunderstorm in Panama’s rainy season. Three kilometers long, the course boasts iron-fisted muck and thick, thorny vegetation that requires caution and sure-footedness.

Popular YPG tours to resume soon

By Mark Schauer

What do you call an 868,000 acre facility that tests virtually every piece of equipment in the ground combat arsenal?

Many people don't know that the answer is U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground, which has impacted the lives and safety of every American Soldier for over 65 years.

It might seem hard to believe, given the daily crump of artillery fire and ever-present sound of aircraft, that many folks have little understanding of the breadth of the proving ground's mission. Yet YPG's geographic isolation and mission sensitivity make the post obscure far beyond its impact on national security. However, a series of 10 winter tours of the proving ground offered in cooperation with the Yuma Visitor's Bureau offer the public a chance to glimpse what goes on behind the scenes.

"When the public travels on Highway 95, they see very, very little of YPG," said Chuck Wullenjohn, YPG public affairs officer. "We're a mystery to many people, so these tours allow us to open our doors in a careful, security-sensitive way and give them a solid picture of YPG.

We've done these tours for several years now and the response has been extremely positive: people are bowled over by the importance of YPG to our nation's security."

YPG participates in multiple community events throughout the year, but nothing brings the reality of the proving ground's impact into focus quite like seeing it in action.

"It's important for every military base throughout the country to interact with the local community," said Wullenjohn. "Especially in YPG's case, for we're part of the local community: that's where the primarily civilian workforce lives. They are residents who pay taxes, patronize businesses on a year-round basis and elect community leaders."

The tours come in two flavors: an "At-Ease" tour that involves little walking and is concentrated mostly on YPG's Howard Cantonment Area, and the "Behind the Big Guns" tour that offers a more comprehensive and walking-intensive visit to multiple areas. Both include stops at YPG's Heritage Center Museum, which is open to the public free of charge from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday.

"The history of YPG is something most people aren't aware of, in part because most of the people who work out here aren't supposed to talk about what they are doing," said Bill Heidner, curator. "There are so many cool stories about what took place out here, from training raw recruits to defeat the Third Reich to developing GPS and other technology programs."

Both tours stop for lunch at YPG's Cactus Café, though the "Behind the Big Guns" tour makes also stops at places like shops where mechanics work on military vehicles or parachutes are packed and examined for testing. Wullenjohn says the brief time the tour groups spend on site is only marginally disruptive to the work being performed there, and that YPG employees are accustomed



The Behind the Big Guns tour includes visits to work sites at the proving ground. "We've found that workers in these areas love having an audience who are interested in what they do and that looks up to them," said Wullenjohn. "People who normally only read about tanks are impressed to meet people who are experts about them." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

to putting up exhibits for visiting military officers, congressional leaders, and the like.

"We've found that workers in these areas love having an audience who are interested in what they do and that looks up to them," said Wullenjohn. "People who normally only read about tanks are impressed to meet people who are experts about them."

The military is one of the three economic legs of Yuma County and the tours represent an important part of YPG's community outreach effort.

"Many military installations have issues of encroachment that are

potentially show-stoppers," said Heidner. "We don't have that problem at YPG, and the museum is a great place to let the public in on what we do here and why we need that space."

"Anything we can do to keep a strong, positive relationship with the local community is beneficial to this command and its mission," added Wullenjohn. "Every person in Yuma should take pride in what their friends and neighbors at YPG accomplish. Our testing has saved an untold number of lives and prevented numerous injuries to American troops."

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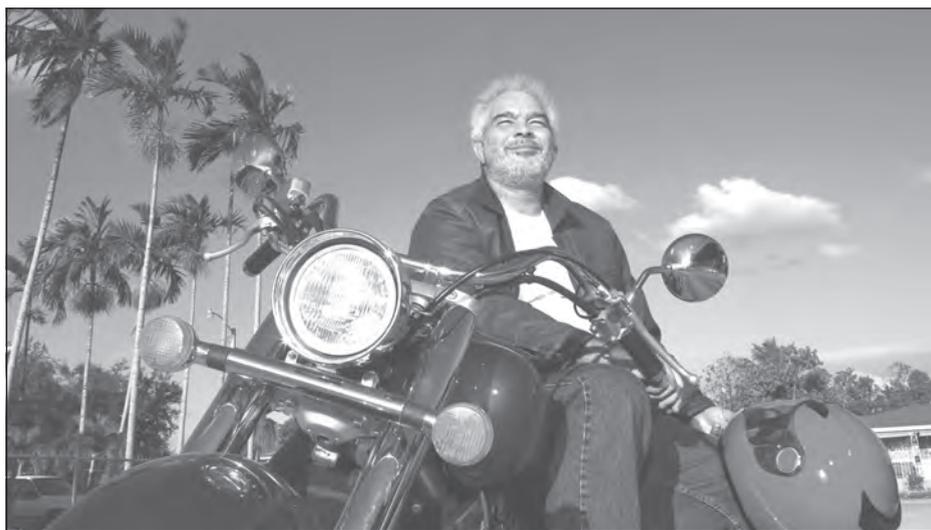
If I have to explain, you won't understand...

By David J. Horn

You've all seen it. You're heading back to Yuma in the middle of the YPG 500 after a hard day's work, and you happen to be following a motorcycle. All of a sudden, another motorcycle approaches in the opposing lane, and as the two bikers meet, you notice that they "wave" to each other.

And, it's not just any wave. That wave is an affirmation of the camaraderie and respect extended to your fellow rider. For that wave, the hand could be out-stretched up or down, with any number of fingers sticking out or not, because it's a wave that's as personalized as their individually personalized motorcycle. Of course, the rider coming at you pulls in their hand by the time they meet you, because you...are in a car.

I've been riding motorcycles out to YPG off and on since the mid-'80s. In spite of the heat of the summer, the cold of the winter, the dust storms and the rain, there's just something special about tossing your leg over that saddle seat, firing up that big sputtering engine, and heading out into the wind across the American West.



While riding alone is one of the best ways to sooth the soul, there's a unique excitement when riding in a group. The cadence of all those loud engines flying in relatively close formation easily invokes images of a squadron of WWII fighter planes roaring across Europe.

For many years, the riders of foreign bikes got a little bit of a hard time from the riders of the American V-Twins. Not so much anymore. We have several guys that join us at the Sturgis Rally each year riding that foreign brand whose advertisements used to say that on their bike you would "meet the

nicest people." As for me, though, if you're on two wheels, you're a biker.

Anyway, if any of you cage drivers want to join in, please first buy a machine that's at least able to keep up with our YPG commuter traffic. Then, dedicate whatever time you need to bond with that thing so you don't have to spend a lot of time, in a clutch situation, trying to decide which one of those handles is the front brake. Wear all your safety gear, and don't forget... to practice your wave.

Preparedness fun



September was National Preparedness Month, and YPG recognized it by teaching students at YPG's Child Development Center and Price Elementary School about earthquakes. "This is the most seismically active area in all of Arizona," said Robert Barocio, emergency manager. "Many of the kids come here from areas where earthquakes don't happen, so we want to raise awareness." After a lesson in earthquake safety and an earthquake drill in the classroom, the students toured an ambulance and fire truck outside, and handled some of the gear that emergency personnel use. "We're getting them familiar with the truck and its sights and sounds," said Rod Borgerding, driver. "We have one of our firefighters dressed in full gear to tell the children that if their house is ever on fire, someone like this will come to help you, and to not be afraid." (Photo by Mark Schauer)

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The Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club of Yuma dedicated the newly renovated and greatly expanded boys and girls club center early this month. Boys and Girls Clubs throughout the nation perform a vital function in creating the America we all want, and they have a proven record of success. Caring adults at the now first class Yuma facility will be able advise, lead, mentor, and act as role models for young people desperately needing these qualities. Col. Randy Murray, YPG commander, spoke at the dedication ceremony. "One of the lessons of our world is that, to make it a better place, you have to be personally involved," he said. "People know this intellectually and often talk about how important it is. But there's a big difference between saying something and actually doing it. The Salvation Army has gone far beyond the nice-sounding words. They actually do it." (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

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BROWNOUT

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Environment Mitigation Program Manager who has flown multiple missions in Afghanistan. “80 percent of the information we take in is visual. You have to fight that impulse and trust the aircraft’s symbology and guidance, which takes some training.”

YPG has conducted tests of multiple technologies to mitigate this risk, but recently hosted the first portion of a significantly more comprehensive effort to gain knowledge of how best to technologically confront all manner of DVEs, from snow and fog to smoke and the flat, endless white light of the world’s snowiest places.

“This is not a panacea,” said Dr. William Lewis, director of the Aviation Development Directorate at the Army Aviation and Missile Research and Development Center. “This is something near-term and real, where everyone recognizes its importance.”

“This DVE mitigation program is a concerted effort to attack not only brownouts, but to build the capability



YPG testers are looking at three different facets of the pilot’s flight tools—sensors, cueing, and flight control—to find the best mix for flying in all types of degraded environments. For example, advanced flight controls and cueing may reduce an aircraft’s reliance on sensors in some situations.

of being able to fight in all weather conditions,” added Col. Steven Braddom, director of the Aviation Applied Technology Directorate.

Braddom observed that with modern infrared sensors and other

technologies, night time, perhaps the most degraded visual environment of all, is now prime time for American military operations.

“Dark night went from being a hazard to our greatest tactical advantage,” he said. “Now we prefer to operate in the darkest night we can find. We’d like to transform operating in other weather environmental conditions to our advantage, just like this.”

The testers are looking at three different facets of the pilot’s flight tools—sensors, cueing, and flight control—to find the best mix for flying in all types of degraded environments. For example, advanced flight controls and cueing may reduce an aircraft’s reliance on sensors in some situations. The testers are also aware that a comprehensive solution meant for all types of DVEs will likely involve trade-offs, and want to identify what the potential consequences of each could be.

“The project is trying to investigate

what makes more impact in solving the DVE problem,” said Hi-Sing Silen, test officer. “The sensor is something that can see through the degraded environment. Cueing is flying virtual reality—the pilot is given a display, either head-mounted or dash-mounted, with a lot of cues that tell things like altitude and velocity.”

Though highly technical, the most visible aspect of cueing comes from symbol displays on a flip-down visor pilots look through in a DVE. There are also audio and tactile cues, such as vibrations in the seat or safety harness if flying too close to an obstacle.

“Cueing is a good solution to fly safely to a given point, but not a complete solution,” said Silen. “The advantage comes if you have accurate profiles of known terrain; but if you’re in a tactical scenario, you likely don’t have a lot of situational awareness as to what is going on down there. If you are in a dynamic landing zone with adversary



With modern infrared sensors and other technologies, night time, perhaps the most degraded visual environment of all, is now prime time for American military operations. Testers hope to enable pilots to operate in the same manner in other degraded visual environments. (US Army photos)

vehicles coming in, the cueing will guide you to that point but won't have the SA of what is going on around you."

The focus of YPG's portion of the testing is on brownout conditions, which are multi-faceted. Aside from different models of helicopters producing different types and degrees of brownouts, the conditions on a landing zone obscured by standing dust are different than one caused by multiple aircraft landings in short or simultaneous sequence.

"Our focus to this point has been single-ship, but on the sensor side we have looked at multi-ship operations," said Minor. "Successive aircraft have to go into an area that already has been browned out. We're looking at the ability of the sensors to see through existing poor conditions to find obstacles."

YPG's DVE landing zone (LZ) has multiple tilled lanes meant to

maximize the grit and dirt kicked up by a helicopter's rotor wash, and also includes target areas and obstacles. Flying successive tactical sorties through on multiple days takes a great deal of planning to ensure safety.

"We have a robust obstacle field that the team at YPG has put together that incorporates a number of poles, wires and vehicles, all at different angles and sizes," said Minor. "Because of the need to detect obstacles inside of a dust cloud, we have Humvees drive into the dusted-out scene to check the radar and sensors' ability to see an obstacle when already in an obscured environment."

Every test day, experimental test pilots fly tactically realistic scenarios across the proving ground, utilizing the DVE LZ and various mountain ranges along the way from Laguna Army Airfield. The DVE LZ in



YPG's degraded visual environment landing zone has multiple tilled lanes meant to maximize the grit and dirt kicked up by a helicopter's rotor wash, and also includes target areas and obstacles. Flying successive tactical sorties through on multiple days takes a great deal of planning to ensure safety.

particular is a challenge even to the most experienced of these pilots.

"It's a fairly tight squeeze for a Blackhawk, especially in a degraded visual environment," said Maj. Mike Osmon, experimental test pilot. "It takes varsity-level moves to land safely."

In addition to giving reports on their experiences using the system, the pilots can be accompanied by a test observer and a chase helicopter that gathers data during each flight. The effort commonly requires the support of between 20 and 25 personnel. YPG test officers coordinate helicopter re-fueling at the isolated DVE LZ to maximize the testers' range time and ensure that the wide-ranging missions can take place without interference from other test programs in progress on the range.

"YPG support is amazing," said Minor. "There is nowhere else we can get the terrain and mission support we get here. Flexibility isn't enough: you have to be fluid, and YPG has always gone the extra mile accommodating our tests safely within the limits of the test plan."

"It is a great capability and a great center of hospitality," agreed Lewis. "The broader Yuma community was very gracious to us as well."



YPG has conducted tests of multiple technologies to mitigate the risk degraded visual environments pose to helicopter pilots and recently hosted the first portion of a significantly more comprehensive effort to gain knowledge of how best to technologically confront all manner of DVEs, from snow and fog to smoke and the flat, endless white light of the world's snowiest places. (US Army photos)

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YPG testing a highlight of Congressional tour



A delegation of ten staffers representing the offices of numerous Congressional leaders from a number of states visited YPG in early October to learn about the importance of testing to ensuring a robust national defense posture. Aside from attending a command briefing, they witnessed testing of the M777 155mm howitzer, several members even having the rare opportunity of pulling the lanyard, rode in an armored vehicle, and learned about a number of tests in the aviation arena. The visit proved a real eye-opener, as most of the visitors knew little about the YPG mission. One remarked it was the best visit of their trip. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)

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Managing your anger - done

Submitted by Paul J. Kilanski,
Family Advocacy Program Manager

It is important to separate the emotion of anger from the behavior that is so often displayed by angry people. If you can express your anger in a healthy way, you can demonstrate that it is possible to be angry without being aggressive.

How do you manage anger? Anger management is a skill, and, like any skill, it requires practice. Here are some guidelines:

Be aware of your body's response to anger.

When you feel yourself getting angry, notice how your body is responding physiologically. Anger isn't just a psychological response that exists only in your mind.

Anger has physical aspects as well. You may notice that your heart is beating faster, your breathing is shallow and there may be a knot in the pit of your stomach.

Breathe deeply.

Deep breathe will help to calm your body and increase the supply of oxygen to your brain—oxygen that will help you think clearly

and calmly. Don't discount the old advice to "take a deep breath and count to ten." It really does have a purpose.

Ask yourself, "Why am I angry?"

Take a brief break to calm down and ask yourself: Why am I allowing this person or event to trigger my anger? Have they hit a "sore spot?"

Made me feel frightened, insecure or inadequate in some way? Could I be overreacting because of other stresses in my life—trouble at home or financial concerns?

Decide if you want to speak up.

Do you want the person to know that you are angry? At times, it may be an opportunity to show that you can express anger without sarcasm, yelling or other undesirable



behavior. At other times, you might decide not to discuss your anger, but simply to carry on in a calm manner. If you want to express your anger here are some steps to follow:

Be direct, specific, and brief.

Stick to one issue at a time and don't bring up the past. It is difficult enough to resolve one problem at a time; don't get out your laundry list. Past issues are likely to cause

confusion and resentment.

Focus on your feelings, not blame.

Don't blame others for your actions or feelings. You are the only one that has control over these.

Listen to the other person's response.

Listen to what the other person is saying. Try to hear the real message they are conveying.

Be realistic about your expectations.

The other person has a right to an opinion that is different from your opinion. Recognize that you can not change the other person's behavior, only your own.

Anger is a difficult emotion for many of us to deal with, and it is one that can be easily triggered by challenging individuals. By improving your own ability to manage your anger and express it in a productive way, you can become a positive and powerful role model for others.

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Celebrating Hispanic heritage



September 15 through October 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month, and YPG celebrated with several events culminating in a luncheon attended by over 100 people that featured a panel discussion between, from left, Tina Manns, chief of manpower and force management; Luis Arroyo, training exercise management office chief; Lena Altamirano, project analyst; Dina Mabry, lead sexual assault response coordinator; and Ernesto Elias, project engineer. Meant to showcase the fundamental contributions Hispanic Americans have made to the military, science, engineering, and education, the panelists discussed their diverse life and career experiences. "Events like these remind us that over the past two and a half centuries, people from every corner of the world have come here to live the American Dream," said Julio Dominguez, technical director, in opening remarks. "That dream is not reserved for any single group of Americans—it belongs to all of us. As we claim our version of the American Dream, we must also share responsibility for its protection—that responsibility also belongs to all of us." (Photo by Mark Schauer)



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