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# "You Go To War with the Army You Have", Not the Army You Might Want or Need: A Case Study in Army Mediated Crisis Management

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*University of Tennessee - Knoxville*

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Charles M. Spears entitled ""You Go To War with the Army You Have", Not the Army You Might Want or Need: A Case Study in Army Mediated Crisis Management." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in .

Dorothy Bowles, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Dwight Teeter, Carolyn Lepre

Accepted for the Council:

Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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Dorothy Bowles, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and  
Recommend its acceptance:

Dwight Teeter\_\_\_\_\_

Carolyn Lepre\_\_\_\_\_

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Carolyn R. Hodges  
Vice Provost and Dean of  
the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

“YOU GO TO WAR WITH THE ARMY YOU HAVE’,  
NOT THE ARMY YOU MIGHT WANT OR NEED”

A CASE STUDY IN MEDIATED CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN THE U.S. ARMY

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Charles Monroe Spears

May 2008

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## **DEDICATION**

There is no way that I can limit myself to dedicating this work to any one person or idea. This is not simply the culmination of an experience in school or the military. It's one small piece of a culmination of a lifetime of experiences and encounters that in some way made me the person I am today. To my wife, sons, parents and Savior I dedicate this work and thank them for their encouragement and reminding me that anything can be accomplished if one is willing to work for it.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis could not have been written without the help of many people. First I want to thank Dr. Dorothy Bowles for her unending patience, advice, and mostly her friendship. She is a true asset to the University of Tennessee and to those of us who have had the pleasure of working with her. To Dr. Dwight Teeter and Dr. Carolyn Lepre, I offer my gratitude for serving on my committee and offering their insight into how to improve this project.

I want to thank Lieutenant Colonel Martin Downie. Without him, this thesis would lack much of the historical detail with regards to planning and operations in CFLCC during the armor crisis. My thanks also to former Sergeant Scott White for enabling me to be an integral part of the media response campaign that this thesis is about.

My family has endured a lot of missed time with me over the last four years due to my career and academic aspirations. I want to thank my wife Lori and our sons Charles Xavier and Daryl Austin for their patience and understanding while I was locked away in the office working on this thesis. I would also like to thank my parents for always believing in me and encouraging me to be ambitious.

Finally, I want to thank my Savior, Jesus Christ. Without Him, all is without lasting purpose.

## **ABSTRACT**

In December 2004, an enlisted soldier challenged the Secretary of Defense on international television and caused a media crisis situation in Kuwait and Washington D.C. that created a historic opportunity for military public affairs professionals to react to the press with electronic news gathering (ENG) technology. This case study examines how the Army responded from Kuwait and subjects these events to models of response generated by Coombs (1995) and Hale et al (2005). The intent is to examine the media crisis response strategies employed by the Coalition Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC) and to compare them with strategies that have been identified and addressed in contemporary crisis management literature.



## PREFACE

After the town-hall style meeting concluded, the Public Affairs Detachment (PAD) broadcast team stayed at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, for several hours to prepare for a live interview between a stateside news channel and Major General (MG) Joseph Taluto, the Commanding General of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division.<sup>1</sup>

It was a cold day in the northern Kuwaiti desert and the 14<sup>th</sup> PAD broadcast team was ready to load up and drive back to base at Camp Arifjan in southern Kuwait. After packing the broadcast equipment into a humvee<sup>2</sup> and having dinner, we drove out into the dark desert night for what would be a long, uncomfortable ride through a heavy rain storm back to Camp Arifjan. We were tired and just wanted to unpack and get some sleep. Sergeant Scott White<sup>3</sup> and I had no idea that while traveling south on the Kuwaiti highways, the West was waking up to a full-blown media scandal about an Army soldier challenging the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) at a town-hall meeting in Kuwait.

After getting back to the office and unloading the humvee in the cold, damp night, we were exhausted. It had not yet dawned on anyone in the office that we had played a direct role in what would become the biggest Army news story in December, 2004. I walked into the office and looked at the television that we used to monitor the cable news networks. I saw the video that we had shot several hours earlier. The Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was on cable news telling Specialist Thomas Wilson that America went to war with the Army it had, not necessarily the Army it might want or

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<sup>1</sup> The 42<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division is part of the New York National Guard. At the time, this Division was in Kuwait preparing to deploy into Iraq.

<sup>2</sup> The actual designation is HMMWV: High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle.

<sup>3</sup> Scott White was my supervisor, the senior broadcast producer in Kuwait at the time.

need. Suddenly it hit me. Our work was making international headlines. I had not guessed, however, that putting the SecDef on television from Kuwait would be an opening round requiring a substantial public information response that would define my deployment.

This study is somewhat unusual in that it is being explored from a first-hand perspective. I am an Army Officer serving on active duty. At the time of the events described in this study, I was an enlisted Specialist broadcast producer working for CFLCC in Kuwait. I witnessed the exchange between Specialist Thomas Wilson and Secretary of Defense Don Rumsfeld, which elicited part of the response appearing in quotes on the title page of this thesis. I went on to be an integral part of CFLCC's response strategy. Admittedly, that does present a possible conflict of interest. That said, perhaps my immediacy of experience, coupled with a desire to compensate for conflict of interest, could be useful to future students of crisis response situations.

First, I no longer work for CFLCC and have not for two years. If I ever return to CFLCC, it is unlikely that anyone described in this study will still be a part of the organization. Furthermore, it is highly unlikely that I would work for the Public Affairs Office again because I have left the Public Affairs Branch and am now a Signal Corps officer.

Second, in today's Army soldiers are encouraged to speak openly about the military so long as they do not disrespect their commanders or release information that could jeopardize operational security. This study will not release any information deemed to be classified or for official use only. Rather, this study will rely mostly on materials that were released to the press in 2004 and 2005. All other materials used to build a

timeline and give a first-hand account can be used without violating those standards and without fear of retribution.

Conducting this study is for personal and professional development, as well as to create a useful record of an Army public information challenge. It will not be endorsed by any U.S. government agencies. It will be used purely for my academic interests. While I am a career soldier, I am conducting this study on my own time, based on personal academic interest.



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## NOMENCLATURE

### Abbreviations

AFN	American Forces Network
ASG	Area Support Group
B-roll	Unedited supporting video
BG	Brigadier General
CFLCC	Coalition Forces Land Component Command
DINFOS	Defense Information School
DVIDS	Digital Video Imagery Distribution System
ENG	Electronic News Gathering
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
HMMWV	High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (more commonly referred to as a Hummer or Humvee)
LTG	Lieutenant General
LTJG	Lieutenant Junior Grade
MG	Major General
MSB	Main Support Battalion
NCOIC	Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIC	Organization in Crisis
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
PAD	Public Affairs Detachment

PAO	Public Affairs Office
PR	Public Relations
PO3	Petty Officer 3 <sup>rd</sup> Class
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade
SecDef	Secretary of Defense
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SPC	Specialist
SRTV	Soldiers Radio and Television

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION TO THE CRISIS

It is common knowledge around the military that humvees and other military tactical wheeled vehicles were not designed to operate on the front lines of an armed conflict. They were originally meant for rear echelon transportation. In war, however, the rules can always change. U.S. forces had quickly overcome the uniformed Iraqi military in the opening days of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). The Army's fleet of unarmored, wheeled vehicles quickly became a common sight on the streets of Iraq. Unarmored, these trucks proved susceptible to the improvised explosive devices (IED), rocket-propelled grenades (RPG), and other weapons used by the insurgency. As a result, the Army began to devise ways to make humvees safer in the event of an attack.

In late 2004, among the three levels of armor, the most rudimentary was level 3. Soldiers jokingly called it "hillbilly armor." Senior leadership called it hardening. It consisted of armor plating that was cut into specific pieces that could be fit onto specific sections of tactical trucks that were considered most vulnerable in an attack. These level 3 pieces were cut to shape and size on location in Kuwait, and then installed on trucks hours later. Level 2 armor came in custom-built kits with armored doors, ballistic glass and plating for various parts of the truck. Level 1 was the newest and most desired form of protection. Level 1 trucks were built as armored vehicles, model 1114 humvees. As such, they came designed to handle the extra weight of armor. In essence, level 1 armor provided a protective bubble around the occupants of the vehicle; whereas, levels 2 and 3 provided more limited protection.

In late 2004, level 3 trucks were being used extensively in Iraq. The rule was that

no truck would go into Iraq without some form of armament. Stateside armor factories were not producing enough vehicle armor to meet the increasing level of demand. Older, unarmored models were arriving in Kuwait regularly. The Army needed a stopgap solution to protect soldiers driving through the streets of Iraq without the comfort of level 1 protection. This left a group of service members and civilian contractors to build and install add-on armor on tactical trucks before they were to be driven into Iraq. When units returned to Kuwait from Iraq, this added armor would be removed and stored for reuse on other trucks that would eventually come through Kuwait on the way to Iraq.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Question about Protection**

On December 8, 2004, the United States Army was thrown into a full-blown media crisis. The Secretary of Defense had traveled to Camp Buehring, a logistical support camp in Kuwait. The purpose of his visit was to hold a town hall meeting with soldiers who were making final preparations for deployment to Iraq. The rules of this meeting were simple: no question is off limits. The event started with a brief speech by Secretary Rumsfeld in which he praised the courage and will of the soldiers fighting in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). At the conclusion of this speech the floor was opened for questions. During the town-hall meeting with approximately 2,000 service members, Don Rumsfeld faced several questions ranging from pay issues to a humorous request for a trip to Disney World. However, it was a question by Specialist Thomas Wilson<sup>5</sup> that made headlines.

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<sup>4</sup> These used armor piles are what Spc. Wilson referred to in his comments to the SecDef.

<sup>5</sup> Spc. Thomas Wilson is a member of the 278<sup>th</sup> Regimental Combat Team, Tennessee National Guard.

Q: Yes, Mr. Secretary. My question is more logistical. We've had troops in Iraq for coming up on three years and we've always staged here out of Kuwait. Now why do we soldiers have to dig through local landfills for pieces of scrap metal and compromised ballistic glass to up-armor our vehicles and why don't we have those resources readily available to us? [Applause]

SEC. RUMSFELD: I missed the first part of your question. And could you repeat it for me?

Q: Yes, Mr. Secretary. Our soldiers have been fighting in Iraq for coming up on three years. A lot of us are getting ready to move north relatively soon. Our vehicles are not armored. We're digging pieces of rusted scrap metal and compromised ballistic glass that's already been shot up, dropped, busted, picking the best out of this scrap to put on our vehicles to take into combat. We do not have proper armament vehicles to carry with us north.  
(U.S. Department of Defense, 2004)

In an audience that had been otherwise friendly to the SecDef, this question brought rousing applause from hundreds of service members. What made Wilson's question salient is that it communicated a crisis. Phrases such as "compromised ballistic glass" and "digging through landfills" conjured visions of soldiers preparing to enter a combat zone without the most basic and necessary equipment. Rumsfeld's reply only amplified the controversy.

SEC. RUMSFELD: I talked to the General coming out here about the pace at which the vehicles are being armored. They have been brought from all over the world, wherever they're not needed, to a place here where they are needed. I'm told that they are being – the Army is – I think it's something like 400 a month are being done. And it's essentially a matter of physics. It isn't a matter of money. It isn't a matter on the part of the Army of desire. It's a matter of production and capability of doing it.

As you know, you go to war with the Army you have. They're not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time. Since the Iraq conflict began, the Army has been pressing ahead to produce the armor necessary at a rate that they believe – it's a greatly expanded rate from what existed previously, but a rate that they believe is the rate that is all that can be accomplished at this moment.

I can assure you that General Schoomaker and the leadership in the Army and certainly General Whitcomb are sensitive to the fact that not every vehicle has the degree of armor that would be desirable for it to have, but that they're working at it at a good clip. It's interesting; I've talked a great deal about this with a team of

people who've been working on it hard at the Pentagon. And if you think about it, you can have all the armor in the world on a tank and a tank can be blown up. And you can have an up-armored humvee and it can be blown up. And you can go down and, the vehicle, the goal we have is to have as many of those vehicles as is humanly possible with the appropriate level of armor available for the troops. And that is what the Army has been working on.

And General Whitcomb, is there anything you'd want to add to that?

GEN. WHITCOMB: Nothing. [Laughter] Mr. Secretary, I'd be happy to. That is a focus on what we do here in Kuwait and what is done up in the theater, both in Iraq and also in Afghanistan. As the secretary has said, it's not a matter of money or desire; it is a matter of the logistics of being able to produce it. The 699<sup>th</sup>, the team that we've got here in Kuwait has done [Cheers] a tremendous effort to take that steel that they have and cut it, prefab it and put it on vehicles. But there is nobody from the president on down that is not aware that this is a challenge for us and this is a desire for us to accomplish.

SEC. RUMSFELD: The other day, after there was a big threat alert in Washington, D.C. in connection with the elections, as I recall, I looked outside the Pentagon and there were six or eight up-armored humvees. They're not there anymore. [Cheers] [Applause] They're en route out here, I can assure you. (U.S. Department of Defense, 2004)

This response came across as an admission that senior military leadership sent soldiers into a war zone unprepared. This was not the first time in Operation Iraqi Freedom that such an allegation had been made against the Army. Early in the war, there was talk of soldiers being sent to war without body armor and other equipment such as night vision gear. The question could not have been asked to a harder character to defend. Donald Rumsfeld has never enjoyed overwhelming popularity. He made an easy media lightning rod to fill news space. This combination of words and personalities made great fodder for the 24-hour news cycle.

## Immediate Reaction

The media reaction to the dialog between Donald Rumsfeld and Spc. Wilson came quickly and continuously. A news transcript search on LexisNexis returned a total of 234 broadcast events, mentioning the Rumsfeld-Wilson dialog and the beginning fallout, that were aired on dozens of major news stations within 72 hours of the armor question<sup>6</sup>. In Kuwait, it was obvious that soldiers were concerned. In an audience of approximately 2,000, several hundred soldiers applauded Wilson's question. The lack of armor on trucks destined for Iraq had been a concern prior to December 8, 2004. One week before, I had taped a story about the 699<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company, which was deployed to Camp Buehring. In the absence of direction from a higher command, leaders in this unit had taken it upon themselves to install armor on as many unarmored trucks as they physically could. Due to the events of December 8<sup>th</sup>, that story was never produced.

No one was more concerned about the lack of armored trucks than the soldiers who were destined to deploy north to Iraq. Prior to the December 8<sup>th</sup> meeting, CFLCC had ruled that no unarmored truck could be driven into Iraq. All unarmored trucks had to be hauled into Iraq and were only to be used in secure areas. This didn't completely alleviate concerns that soldiers had about driving through Iraq with less than completely armored trucks. Soldiers in transportation units that drove into Iraq daily were not happy driving level-2 humvees, while watching level-1 trucks roll north into Iraq on flatbed haulers.

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<sup>6</sup> The list of broadcast news networks includes, but is not limited to the Fox News Channel, CNN, MSNBC, ABC, CBS, NBC, CNBC, CNN International, and NPR.

## **A Problem of their own Making**

What was particularly ironic about this town meeting as a media event is that the Army's own equipment and personnel were responsible for the live telecast of Wilson's confrontational question. In May 2004 the Army launched a program called the Digital Video Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS)<sup>7</sup>. This system comprises several public affairs units operating in Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar and Kuwait, each equipped with ENG equipment to include a portable satellite uplink system capable of sending live video to any technically compatible receiver around the world, via the DVIDS Hub in Atlanta, Ga. The CFLCC public affairs office (PAO) was one of the first Army elements to use the DVIDS system to beam real-time video to the United States.

The CFLCC PAO did not have its own broadcast production team and thus required a Public Affairs Detachment (PAD) to provide actual media services. It did have public affairs officers assigned to the organization. Their primary responsibility was to plan strategy and escort civilian media representatives around military sites in Kuwait. From August 2004 through July 2005, the 14<sup>th</sup> PAD was deployed to Kuwait to provide CFLCC with a trained, professional staff of print and broadcast practitioners. The 14th PAD provided a public affairs officer, a non-commissioned officer in charge of the detachment (NCOIC), four Army print journalists and two Army broadcast professionals. All 14th PAD print and broadcast practitioners were present to provide media coverage for the SecDef's meeting. For the CFLCC PAO, this meant print coverage of the meeting in its Kuwait-based weekly magazine *The Desert Voice*.<sup>8</sup> However, the main focus on

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<sup>7</sup> More information can be found online at <http://www.dvidshub.net>.

<sup>8</sup> *The Desert Voice* is a weekly command information magazine aimed at U.S. military personnel serving in Kuwait.



this event was for television. Army broadcasters from the 14<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment were on hand for this event with the necessary satellite equipment to make the Rumsfeld town hall meeting a live media event.

The question asked by Specialist Thomas Wilson was beamed live to a central communications hub in Atlanta, Ga. where any interested news carrier could downlink the signal live and for free. While CBS, the Chattanooga Times Free Press and the Associated Press were represented at the event, none of them had live capabilities. The video of Specialist Wilson confronting Don Rumsfeld about truck armor was made available to any interested media outlet live and at no charge, using Army resources.

### **Purpose**

This study will assemble the events that occurred as part of CFLCC's mediated response and create a timeline to determine the stages of response as identified by contemporary crisis response literature. Second, this case study will analyze the themes that CFLCC used in an attempt to influence press coverage and minimize public relations damage that was likely to result from the televised exchange between the SecDef and Spc. Thomas Wilson. This leads to the research questions.

- RQ 1: What category of strategies, from Coombs (2005) did the CFLCC PAO use in its Armor Crisis Response?
- RQ 2: Did the CFLCC PAO Response attempt to place blame or accept a degree of responsibility on the part of the Army?

## **Justification**

A scholarly exploration of the CFLCC media response campaign of 2004-2005 is important for several reasons. First, there is a lack of scholarly case studies of how the military responds to the media in crisis situations. Stephens et al. (2005) cited the need for more in-depth case studies in crisis communication that could use a wide range of materials such as notes and oral communication. Regardless of precautions, bad things will happen. Negative events will make the news and require a concentrated organizational response. The fields of public relations and journalism would both be well served to have a better understanding of what works and what doesn't. PR practitioners can benefit from a better understanding of what strategies will do the most good for their organizations. Journalists can benefit from this study by knowing how an organization's PR insiders work to mold the story and use the press to get a corporate message out.

Second, this case study is valuable from a historical standpoint. CFLCC's up-armor information campaign was unprecedented for a small military unit working in a forward operational environment. It was the most visible use of the new DVIDS system up to that point in time. The public affairs staff at CFLCC was charting new waters. Never before had a military command in a deployed environment had the capabilities of live media interface. This gave a small staff an incredible capability to lead the DOD's media response from the Kuwaiti desert.

Third, this case study is relevant to military commanders. The U.S. military is still at war for the foreseeable future. Stories that could have a negative impact on the DOD will continue. Leaders on both sides of the War on Terror both acknowledge that much of the actual war is being fought in the media. Al Quada knows how to use the media to

further its purpose using extremist propaganda. Military commanders could look to this case study as an example of how CFLCC was able to get its message to the American public by interfacing with worldwide media.

Finally, there are few opportunities for a case study about such a widely known event from an inside point of view. Many studies rely on data collected from news stories written about the crisis event. This study presents an opportunity to gather data from the original materials used in crisis mitigation effort.

## CHAPTER 2

### AN INTRODUCTION TO CRISIS COMMUNICATION LITERATURE

Business communication writer Avery Wise wrote, “You never know when or where a crisis will strike, so you should prepare as if you would have to respond at any moment” (Vise, 2005, p. 28). With a continual parade of corporate and government organizations experiencing all too visible failures, the study of crisis management is gaining importance (Hale et al, 2005; Schoenburg, 2005). Managing a crisis is about far more than just getting a company through a temporary moment of bad publicity. Schoenburg asserted, “managing events in order to protect the product, brand or reputation of a company has the potential to far outweigh any potential legal costs or stock price decline” (2005, p. 3). According to Stephens et al., when times are bad, “the organization’s choice of message strategy affects both how people perceive the crisis and the image of the organization experiencing the crisis” (2005, p. 391). In short, a crisis is an event that has the potential and likelihood to bring negative publicity that can alter reputation or even threaten an organization (Coombs, 1995; Dean, 2004; Nelson, 2004). Air Force Major Tyrone Woodyard wrote that a crisis could have negative effects on an organization to include “shock, surprise, disbelief and confusion” (1998, p. 1). The variety and intensity of crisis scenarios and dynamics are endless (Stephens et al, 2005; Lyon and Cameron, 2004).

In 1986 and 2003, a flawed internal culture left NASA reeling from small individual equipment failures that doomed two space shuttles and cost the lives of 14 astronauts. In 1989, the Exxon Valdez tanker accident left Exxon unprepared to do war in the court of public opinion against endless pictures of dying birds and animals, and once

unspoiled shorelines covered in crude oil. More recently, Michael Brown, director of the Federal Emergency and Management Agency (FEMA), resigned amid a perfect storm of media scrutiny about FEMA's challenged response to hurricane Katrina in 2005. What these events all have in common is that they happened unexpectedly, leaving little time to draw up a crisis response plan from scratch. This is a universal fact that crisis response experts just have to deal with. To err is human. To be caught on camera: unforgivable. The fact of the matter is that all organizations at some point will receive some sort of negative coverage (Brown, 2003; Lyon and Cameron, 2004; Schmidt, 2005, Woodyard, 1998). How the crisis is managed will determine how long the crisis lasts and how much damage is done.

Hale et al (2005) simplify crisis management into three stages: prevention, response and recovery. Many organizations have been ruined as a result of how communication was managed during a time of crisis. Others, like NASA, have weathered bad times successfully because of an already existing, well-executed crisis-response plan (Kauffman, 2005). No two crisis situations are alike (Brown, 2003); thus, each instance should be examined separately (Lyon and Cameron, 2004). However, many common strategies exist that can be used across a broad spectrum of scenarios involving a mediated crisis response.

In times of crisis, an organization has to satisfy multiple stakeholders, often including stockholders, employees, government officials, pressure groups, politicians and customers (Brown, 2003; Lyon and Cameron, 2004). For the U.S. government, there is an extra challenge to satisfy its citizens. To complicate matters, the organization in crisis (OIC) must carry on with the usual pace of business while dealing with a distracting and sometimes painful crisis. During times of crisis, the organizational leadership has to

decide whether and how to respond or whether to simply sit by and hope the crisis simply blows over. Woodyard (1998) stated that the organizational leadership must take a visible stand to help an organization survive a crisis. In these times, management figures have to answer many questions about how to respond in the way that will most benefit the organization in crisis (Dean, 2004). Huang (2006), Lyon and Cameron (2004) and Wise (2005) recommend a proactive reaction that makes the most of a response opportunity. In their critiques of NASA's handling of the 2003 Columbia tragedy, Kauffman (2005) and Martin and Boynton (2005) credit NASA's immediate proactive stance with the media as the first in a series of correct moves that helped the space agency get its message through to the media, thus lessening potential damage among stakeholders.

According to Woodyard, "initial contact is critical because it gives the organization the first opportunity to gain and maintain control of the crisis" (1998, p. 18). "Crisis managers must not only respond but also select an appropriate communicative response if they hope to protect their organization's image" (Huang, 2006).

Sturges (1994) defined one problem of crisis communication as organizations' tendency to view crisis communication techniques as being mainly reactionary, instead of looking for ways to be proactive and thus averting future crisis situations. More recent literature has implied that the key to surviving a crisis is to always have a reaction plan in place (Clarke, 2005; Kauffman, 2004; Nelson, 2004; Schmidt, 2005). Crisis management should be a continual, proactive process (Lyon and Cameron, 2004; Schoenberg, 2005). Even with the best of planning, however, no plan is foolproof. Woodyard noted that "research seems to support the idea that despite preparation and prevention efforts, a crisis will occur" (1998, p. 10).

Dean (2004) pointed to three important issues that Ulmer and Sellnow (2000)

think an organization in crisis will have to confront:

1. The crisis can be a threat to the organization's social legitimacy.
2. Evidence will be scrutinized to find out what happened.
3. There will be a question of where to place blame

### **Power of Prior Reputation**

Lyon and Cameron wrote that a company may own its image; however, the public owns reputation. "A good reputation is created and destroyed by everything a company does, from the way it manages employees to the way it handles complaints" (Lyon and Cameron, 1994, p. 215). Reputation is built on trust, a key element those public relations professionals seek to build and maintain between organizational leaders and their audience (Schoenberg, 2005). Even prior institutional crisis events can affect how the public interprets a current crisis (Lyon and Cameron, 2004; Coombs, 2004). Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) suggests that a history of prior crisis situations is likely to complicate the response to a current crisis, while a clean past record is likely to make it easier to respond to a current crisis situation (Coombs, 2004). For members of the court of public opinion, Hale et al (2005) simplify crisis management into three stages: prevention, response and recovery.

### **Crisis Prevention**

The old saying goes that it is better to be safe than sorry. Over the years, scholarly literature has had little to say about crisis prevention, or preparation. Instead, the focus

has traditionally been on response, which Hale et al (2005) said was the most important part of crisis communication. Other studies note that preparation is just as important a step in crisis management as response (Kauffman, 2004; Nelson, 2004; Schmidt, 2005). Put to the common sense test, this makes perfect sense much in the same way as wearing a seat belt when driving.

No one expects a crisis to occur. The most obvious commonality that most crisis situations share is that they happen unexpectedly and without warning. Crisis situations by definition fit traditional news values, making them very salient to news reporting. In the modern age of 24-hour information, the public often knows about a crisis as soon as, or sometimes before, the affected organization's internal management learns of the situation (Stephens et al, 2005; Nelson, 2004).

When the story breaks, it is in the best interest of the organization in crisis to be an active participant in the story, rather than a passive reactor (Vise, 2005). Immediacy of the response is a key element of crisis survival (Stephens et al, 2005; Vise, 2005; Woodyard, 1998). Kauffman (2004) credits much of NASA's success in dealing with the crisis communication caused by the disintegration of space shuttle Columbia in 2003 to the fact that NASA had a crisis response plan laid out years in advance. When a story breaks, the news media will find people to speak about the issue at hand, regardless of their actual knowledge. A truly prepared organization will have a plan in place so the appropriate officials can play an active role in shaping the story for stakeholders, rather than allowing the talking heads, pundits and analysts to be the sole framers of the issue at hand. Nelson wrote, "what the news media report in their first stories – and how they view your coping skills – will often set the tone for the entire crisis" (2004, p. 70).

Another case study highlighting the importance of crisis preparation comes from



the electric power industry. After hurricane Isabel disrupted power service to more than 400,000 customers in New Jersey, PR planner Timothy Brown noted that having a plan in place gave Conectiv Power “a framework in which to prioritize and make sure that we were actively managing the communications function rather than merely responding to the unrelenting internal and external communications demands” (2003, p. 32).

Some crisis situations can be avoided and happen because of a failure somewhere within the organization. Other crisis situations happen and are beyond the realm of prevention efforts. All organizations should do what they can to prevent a crisis situation from happening, period. However, the best efforts may fail at some point and a crisis may be born. It is at these times that having a written and rehearsed response plan can pay off. A mechanical failure or act of God may not be avoidable. Regardless of the situation, having a crisis response plan laid out in advance of a contingency will affect the usefulness of any response effort. All organizations can prepare to deal with a crisis.

Some basic preparations should include:

- Identifying key leaders in the organization to work with the press;
- Ensuring all management and spokespersons are prepared to communicate the core values and mission of the organization;
- Preparing themes and talking points specific to situational possibilities that can be used in press conferences and press releases;
- Writing out mock crisis situations and identifying the personnel who would have the specific information needed to help management communicate accurate information regarding the incident;
- Training key personnel in the basics of dealing with the media (i.e.:

interview techniques);

- Making a plan that includes basic information such as who to call, how to modify operations and what to say initially if specific information takes extra time to assemble before release;
- Rehearsing the plan, reviewing effectiveness of the plan and updating the plan based on lessons learned.

### **Crisis Response**

Hale et al (2005) considered crisis response to be the most important of the three stages of crisis communication. There are many decisions to be made at this time. Among them are timing of response, choice of spokesperson and method of information delivery. “Response is the point when crisis managers make decisions that may save lives and mitigate the effects of the crisis” (Hale et al, 2005, p. 112). This is the point at which an organization will most likely attempt to modify public opinion regarding the crisis situation (Hale et al, 2005).

Traditionally, the response phase has been the most mentioned aspect of crisis management. Most likely, this is because when the crisis hits, members of the public do not notice the past preparation, if any, that occurred. According to Stephens et al, “In response to a crisis, organizations need to recognize that a broad number of their stakeholders including customers, competitors, and other members of their environment can be affected” (2005, p.394). Within the response stage, organizations must convey information to stakeholders and make decisions regarding what information to share (Hale et al, 2005). In life and business, making the right impression is extremely

important. During a crisis, the OIC must appear forthcoming to have any hope of emerging from the crisis with head held high. The press will find negative facts, regardless of whether the OIC is forthcoming with such information (Woodyard, 1998).

In a case study of how NASA dealt with the press storm surrounding the Columbia disaster, Martin and Boynton (2005) point to five key elements of a crisis response plan that they think helped NASA get through a second shuttle disaster: (1) prompt response, (2) truth/avoidance of absolutes, (3) constant flow of information, (4) concern for victims and their families, and (5) choice of appropriate spokesperson(s).

### **Choice of Spokesperson**

It is essential that an OIC puts the correct person on the front line as spokesperson. The spokesperson should be someone who is skilled in dealing with the press and understands the consequences of making wrong statements (Woodyard, 1998). According to Woodyard, “The spokesperson must know how to deliver unfavorable news while emphasizing the positive actions the organization has taken to resolve the crisis...The spokesperson must have the intestinal fortitude to know when ‘I don’t know or we’ll do everything possible to find out why this happened’ is the only appropriate response” (Woodyard, 1998, p. 20).

In an essay discussing how events in the Gulf of Tonkin led the Johnson Administration to expand the military mission in Vietnam, Ball noted that the ability to organize and communicate information properly allows stakeholders to properly frame the issue at hand (1991). This is important when it comes to the role of a PR professional. Even the most confident and competent leader may not know all of the facts, so the

public affairs officer is responsible for ensuring that the chosen leader-spokesperson is adequately prepared with the facts and talking points to frame the issue favorably. According to Woodyard the prepared leader can instill public confidence by using presence, concern and comments to “help the organization gain control of a crisis” (1998, p.3).

In the military, the role of unit spokesperson most often goes to a commissioned officer, rather than the enlisted public affairs practitioners. Woodyard (1998) wrote that military officers familiar with the principles of war should have little trouble dealing with the media. In fact, he proposes that Umansky’s (1993) eight principles of crisis communication share many characteristics with the principles of warfare (See Table 1).

The Principles of War are concepts that every military officer is trained on during a career. However, these concepts are used in planning for armed conflict, not communication strategy. In the Army, officers are specifically trained in one field for most of a career. Public affairs is a secondary assignment that comes after years in the tactical side of the Army. While Air Force public affairs officers, like Woodyard, receive media training from the beginning of a career, most Army officers receive very little training when it comes to mass media communication strategy.

### **Internal Communication**

In the rush to respond publicly, crisis managers must be careful to remember that internal stakeholders have the same right to timely and accurate information as the public

**Table 1. Correlation between Principles of War and Crisis Communication**

WAR	CRISIS COMMUNICATION
Objective	Define the problem and objective concern
Offensive	Concern, answer what happened, direct communication
Economy of Force	Centralize information flow, crisis team
Maneuver	Crisis team, contain the problem
Unity of Command	Centralize information flow, crisis team, spokesman
Security	Centralize information flow, direct communication
Surprise	Answer what happened, concern
Simplicity	Centralize information flow, crisis team
(Based on table composed by Woodyard, 1998)	

and other external stakeholders. Brown (2003) states that information gatekeepers wield great power during crisis situations. “The key is to share that information with others in an open and organized way, leveraging your power to help your colleagues more effectively play their respective roles in responding to a crisis” (Brown, 2003, p. 34). This sort of effective communication can lessen the crisis and even save lives (Brown, 2004; Hale et al, 2005). This can serve to soothe internal concerns and keep the organization together as a team. Along with helping morale, having internal stakeholders feel like part of the team can buy the organization in crisis extra positive PR through their private communication with acquaintances who are stakeholders to the issue.

Most soldiers deployed in Kuwait didn’t have regular access to the news through television. For deployed soldiers who did not work in the CFLCC or ASG-Kuwait headquarters areas, Internet access was limited. The most common way for soldiers to get news when deployed in Kuwait was by reading *Stars & Stripes* and the *Desert Voice*.

CFLCC used the *Desert Voice* magazine to reach the internal service member audience in Kuwait. The internal military audience stationed in other locations around the world was targeted with television and radio news packages produced in Kuwait by the author. Those packages were distributed to AFN outlets via Soldiers Radio and Television (SRTV) in Alexandria, Virginia.

### **Timing of Response**

No matter how dire the circumstances during a crisis situation, it is extremely important to get your message out quickly. According to Woodyard, the correct information disseminated within the first 24 hours after the crisis becomes widely known

has the power to restore order or create chaos; heal and soothe or heighten tension and cause friction; clarify and reassure or cast doubt and increase uncertainty. It can forever shape the image, reputation and destiny of the company, person or product involved (1998, p. 13).

Immediacy of information lends credibility to the organization in crisis. To appear less than forthcoming creates the impression that there is something to hide and harms the organization in the eyes of the press and public. Another reason to respond quickly, according to Paul Grey, CEO of Audience Central, has to do with anchoring (Vise, 2005).

Anchoring refers to the likelihood that the public will quickly view an organization in crisis as being a villain, an attitude that is hard to change once it is settled into stakeholder opinion (Vise, 2005).

When a crisis breaks, the organization in crisis needs to take charge of the issue before others do. In journalism, the old saying is that if it bleeds it leads. The public will always hear more negative news stories than positive. People tend to recall negative

details of a story over the positive, which leads to the negativity effect. According to Dean the negativity effect causes “a tendency for negative information to be weighted more than positive information” (2004, p. 193). Thus an organization in crisis will almost always have to work much harder to repair a reputation than others who desire to tarnish it. When a crisis hits, an organization has a small window to make a good first impression (Woodyard, 1998). To miss this opportunity could do permanent damage to the OIC’s reputation. The 24-hour news cycle makes it imperative that organizations provide a prompt response and continual, accurate flow of information to stakeholders (Kauffman, 2005; Nelson, 2004). Sturges (1994) took it a step further by saying that timing of response should play a direct role in the kind of response used. He asserted that the kind and amount of information needed by stakeholders during a crisis situation is partly dependent on the stage that the crisis is in at a given time.

### **Theories of Response**

Every day, negative events transpire that have the potential to be seen as a crisis. Some of these events develop into full-blown crisis situations, while others do not. Some scholars believe that Attribution Theory can help to explain the reasoning for differing outcomes (Coombs, 1995; Coombs, 2004; Dean, 2004). Attribution theory proposes that people seek to exert control over their environment by acting as experts and placing blame for negative events in life based on individual perception (Coombs, 2004; Dean, 2004). Further research by Coombs (1995; 2004) takes it a step further with the locus, stability, and controllability model (See Table 2). Coombs believes that “people make judgments about the causes of events based upon the dimensions of locus, stability, and

**Table 2. Coombs' Model of Locus, Stability and Controllability.**

<b>Locus</b>	Internal	<b>Perception of increased liability</b>
	External	Perception of reduced liability
Stability	Stable conditions	Perception of increased liability
	Unstable conditions	<b>Perception of reduced liability</b>
Controllability	Cause is controllable	Perception of increased liability
	Cause is uncontrollable	Perception of reduced liability

controllability” (1995, 448). In this model locus refers to control: whether the cause of the negative event in question was caused by internal or external factors (1995; 2004). Stability refers to whether the conditions that set the stage for the negative event to happen are stable and predictable or unstable (1995; 2004). Controllability refers to whether the organization in question can “affect the cause or if the cause is beyond the actors control” (1995, p. 449). According to Coombs, if an organization can show the factors leading to a crisis to be beyond its control, stakeholders will be less likely to place blame on the organization in crisis. This reduces hostile public sentiment and allows the OIC to emerge from the crisis quicker.

Dean (2004) took a similar approach with his “Could, Would and Should” counterfactuals. In this model “Could” refers to organizational control over the actual crisis event: “Should” compares organizational actions surrounding the event with ethical and moral standards: and “Would” looks at how the affected parties might have been affected differently if the organization had taken different action.

With that in mind, organizations in crisis need to attempt to persuade stakeholders that the crisis is genuinely something that is beyond their control, while avoiding the



appearance of refusing to accept responsibility. Further research by Coombs (1995) identified five categories of strategy used by organizations that have had to respond to a crisis in the past (See Table 3). These strategies are: Nonexistence Strategies, Distance Strategies, Ingratiation Strategies, Mortification Strategies and Suffering Strategies. Other researchers (Allen and Callouet, 1994; Benoit, 1992; Dean, 2004; Ice, 1991; Lyon and Cameron, 2004; Marcus & Goodman, 1991; Metts & Cupach, 1989; Sharkey & Stafford, 1990) have cited similar strategies in other crisis communication studies.

Benoit (1995) has a different take on crisis response with his own set of five strategies: denial, evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness of the event, corrective action and mortification. While Benoit (1995) and Coombs (1995) identify a multitude of response options, Huang (2006) recommends that crisis managers use a combination of strategies to achieve their organization's survival goals. In 1995 Bradford and Garrett found that a response of accepting responsibility to be the optimal crisis response. Coombs (2004) wrote that an organization in crisis should indicate some degree of responsibility for a crisis event. Huang (2006) recommended using appropriate explanations in a response plan in order to influence stakeholders to refute the negative allegations made against the OIC. Dean (2004) notes that a response that attempts to shift blame can have a negative effect. There is also the matter of context. Most crisis situations are presented to the public without the benefit of full context. According to Huang (2006) crisis responders should use response opportunities to lay the context for the event(s) in question as part of the crisis mitigation effort.

Despite all of the available literature about commercial or governmental agency crisis response, scholarly material about military crisis response doesn't exist. Yet, tasked

**Table 3. Coombs' Five Crisis Response Strategies**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p><b>Nonexistence Strategies</b> (Seeks to eliminate Crisis. If there is no crisis, there can be no ill will toward the organization)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Denial (There is no crisis here)</li> <li>2. Clarification (Attempts to explain the crisis away)</li> <li>3. Attack (Confronts those who report that a nonexistent crisis exists)</li> <li>4. Intimidation (Threatens to take action against an actor)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Distance Strategies</b> (Acknowledges crisis, but seeks public acceptance while weakening link between crisis and organization)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Excuse (Attempts to minimize responsibility for crisis)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Denial of Intention</li> <li>B. Denial of Volition</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Justification (Attempts to minimize the damage associated with the crisis)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Minimizing Injury</li> <li>B. Victim Deserving</li> <li>C. Misrepresentation of the crisis event</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p><b>Ingratiation Strategies</b> (Seeks to gain public approval of organization)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bolstering (Reminds public of positive attributes of the organization)</li> <li>2. Transcendence (Attempts to place crisis in more desirable context)</li> <li>3. Praising Others (Attempts to win approval from target of praise)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Mortification Strategies</b> (Attempts to win forgiveness and acceptance of crisis)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Remediation (Offers something to victims of crisis)</li> <li>2. Repentance (Seeks to lessen bad feelings by apologizing)</li> <li>3. Rectification (Seeks to prevent future crisis by taking preventative action)</li> </ol> <p><b>Suffering Strategy</b> Seeks to portray organization as victim of circumstances beyond organization's control</p>
	<p>(Adapted from Coombs, 1995)</p>

with using armed force to carry out the will of the president, the military simply cannot avoid being in the middle of some form of crisis communication situation from time to time. This thesis will present a case study of how a military unit responded to the press during an actual PR crisis situation and make recommendations on what units can learn from this example.

## CHAPTER 3

### PURPOSE AND METHOD

#### **Crisis Survival and Reputation Repair**

Crisis situations can vary depending on the amount of damage done to include deaths, injuries, property destruction and environmental harm (Coombs, 1995). Most organizations embroiled in a crisis are concerned about repairing reputation among members of the public, stockholders, stakeholders and customers. Other researchers, however, suggest that corporate reputation can also affect internal organizational moral (Lyon and Cameron, 2004; Schmidt, 2005). This was one of the key points the Army had to consider. With an ongoing war that required a continual flow of service members through Kuwait into Iraq, CFLCC officials had not only to repair reputation damage among the general public but also to soothe the fears and frustrations of soldiers preparing for deployment to Iraq.

The purpose of crisis communication, according to Sturges, is “to influence public opinion development to the point that opinions held in the post-crisis period are at the same level or greater in positive opinions and at the same level or lower in negative opinions” (1994, p. 303). Like any other government agency, the U.S. Army suffers or benefits from public opinion polling which can be dependent on the current political climate. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Army was a popular institution. By 2004, with public opinion for the war in Iraq eroding, the Army’s senior civilian leadership in Washington, D.C., faced increased skepticism. With soldiers dying nearly every day in Iraq, the last thing Army brass needed was to experience a full-blown

media crisis about trucks driven all over Iraq being susceptible to insurgent attacks.

Crisis management literature suggests that having a foundation of positive public opinion prior to a crisis can reduce the potential damage (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000; Dean, 2004; Lyon and Cameron, 2004; Sturges, 1994). However, this can also cause the public automatically to expect more from the organization. In this instance, senior Pentagon leadership started off without a rock-hard foundation of positive public sentiment because of prior crisis situations concerning the war in Iraq and an unfriendly political landscape around President George W. Bush. However, organizations in crisis with a prior history of negative press need not feel defeated. In his 3-point model Coombs (2004) suggests that an organization can shape the way it is viewed by stakeholders. If external information can be crafted to show the crisis event to (1) be unstable, (2) have an external degree of locus, and (3): be beyond the control of the principle actor, then the publics might be swayed to believe the organization was actually a victim of the crisis rather than the perpetrator (See Table 2). Furthermore, in crisis response, an organization may be able to use the opportunity to further its cause by sharing its “mission, values and operations” (Lerbinger, 1997) with stakeholders as cited in Stephens et al (2005, p. 395).

## **Research Method**

As stated in Chapter One, this study will assemble the events that occurred as part of CFLCC’s mediated response and create a timeline to determine the stages of response as identified by contemporary crisis response literature. Second, this case study will analyze the themes that CFLCC used in an attempt to influence press coverage and minimize public relations damage that was likely to result from the televised exchange

between the SecDef and Spc. Thomas Wilson. This will be analyzed through two research questions.

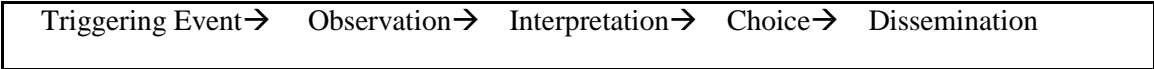
- RQ 1: What category of strategies, from Coombs (2005) did the CFLCC public affairs office use in its armor crisis response?
- RQ 2: Did the CFLCC public affairs response attempt to place blame or accept a degree of responsibility on the part of the Army?

This is important because how an organization in crisis handles the responsibility question in its crisis response can have a significant impact on how it emerges from the crisis (Bradford and Garrett, 1995; Dean, 2004).

The case study method was used in this project to give readers a fuller sense of what happened, with whom, when, why and how. According to a study by Stephens et al (2005) that explored response messages used during times of organizational crisis, the case-study method allows the researcher to explore wide ranges of material to include written and oral accounts of events that transpired.

Guiding this case study will be the Linear Crisis Response Communication Model, generated from a 2005 study in which Hale et al (2005) analyzed information from 15 crisis situations to determine how organizations respond. As seen in Figure 1, this model indicates that crisis response communication follows a pattern of four interdependent steps.

Observation is the first step in the Linear Crisis Response Communication Model. Once the triggering event occurs, the organization moves to the observation stage, where it must gather as much information as possible regarding the crisis event. Interpretation



**Figure 1. Linear Crisis Response Communication Model**

involves taking all gathered information and synthesizing it into one large understandable picture. Choice is the step in which crisis managers take the picture from the interpretation step and put together a response strategy. Dissemination, the final step in this model, involves crisis managers interacting with stakeholders and the public regarding the crisis. These events must be performed in sequence to be the most successful (Hale et al, 2005). Simply put, a crisis manager needs to do some homework before stepping up to a microphone. All of these steps present challenges on a good day. However, trying to complete them in a high-stress environment with no preparation time and little response generation time in conjunction with a nine-hour time difference between the OIC and its target audience added to the challenge.

The next phase of the study will extract the themes used in CFLCC’s crisis response and match them against crisis response strategies identified in contemporary literature. In 2005, at the same time this Army-crisis was occurring, Coombs assembled a list of Crisis Response Strategies based on prior research into how organizations respond to crisis situations (See Table 3). This study will examine the strategies employed by CFLCC to determine which of Coombs strategies were used. The data gathered will be used to address the research questions.

This study will also examine the chronological order of events and facts of the CFLCC PAO response effort to determine how CFLCC’s response compared to the order of response stages cited in Linear Crisis Response Communication Model (See Figure 1).

Finally, this study will make recommendations on how public affairs officials can be better prepared to handle a similar crisis in the future, based on the lessons learned in this instance.

This study will approach the subject from two angles. First, it will tell the story of how CFLCC carried out the media response campaign from a factual and chronological point of view. This will rely on personal experience, notes taken from December 2004 through March 2005 and correspondence between the author and Lieutenant Colonel Martin Downie, who was the primary architect of CFLCC's response to the storm of media scrutiny about the Army's up-armoring efforts. Second, this study will extract the talking points and themes that the CFLCC broadcast team pushed to internal military and external civilian media. This part of the study will use the original material put together by the 14<sup>th</sup> PAD broadcast team and pushed to media outlets via DVIDS and e-mail. The response strategies identified will then be compared against recommended courses of action found in contemporary crisis communication literature.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **A CRISIS FINDS ITS AUDIENCE**

#### **Blindsided**

In that brief moment on December 8, 2004 in the Kuwaiti desert, Specialist Thomas Wilson, a member of the Tennessee National Guard, made history. By taking on the most powerful man in the Pentagon, he gave the press a picture-perfect opportunity to fill news space for weeks to come. To say he caught everyone by surprise is an understatement. The entire CFLCC public affairs organization, stretching all the way back to main headquarters in Atlanta was caught unprepared. The town hall meeting was planned as a positive occasion, one where soldiers could talk openly with the Secretary of Defense. While most of the interaction was positive and constructive, Specialist Wilson's question is the one that made the news that day. With other interviews to conduct later in the afternoon and the task of tearing down and moving back to Camp Arifjan that night, the broadcast team didn't immediately consider the implications of what had happened. We soon found out.

#### **CFLCC Goes into Crisis Control**

As a federal agency, the Army must answer to everyone: the public, Congress, and the President. After the media armor crisis began, several members of Congress traveled to Kuwait to personally observe what efforts the Army was making to protect

troops deployed to Iraq.<sup>9</sup> While in Kuwait these Congressmen made use of the DVIDS system to conduct live interviews with news stations in their congressional districts.

Being a public affairs representative for the Army presents many challenges. To begin with, the military is prohibited by law from conducting official public relations operations. The DOD public affairs policy boils down to maximum disclosure with minimum delay. On paper this means that the military is barred from trying to manipulate public opinion. In practice, military public affairs personnel are trained to distribute information in frames designed to elicit the most favorable response possible. The Army, like most organizations, communicates to the public through the media. Information filtered through the media is generally considered to be more reliable than information coming directly from an organization in crisis (Dean, 2004). This meant that CFLCC's only option was to put forth as much information to the press as possible, without jeopardizing operational security. That information had to be packaged in such a way as to make the Army look good, while being credible enough to be reported in the news.

Once the armor story broke, the CFLCC PAO immediately began putting together a proactive strategy that was designed to frame the story before the talking heads permanently defined the story in a negative frame. Unfortunately, there was no prior plan for dealing with such situations. In the military, personnel are constantly moving to a different job at a different location. Frequently moving seasoned personnel from one assignment to another creates a lack of continuity that one would not find in most other organizations. At most, members of the CFLCC PAO work in Kuwait for 12 months. Many are there for shorter periods of time. In the transition process, much experience and

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<sup>9</sup> These include Senators Sam Brownback (KS), Jim DeMint (SC) and House Representative Bob Inglis (SC)

continuity is lost. There was simply no public affairs expert that was a veteran of CFLCC and its operating environment on hand. This was part of a larger problem that left the PAO staff unable to put a plan into action until several hours after the story broke.

Kauffman stated, “Typically, an organization facing a crisis lacks reliable information” (2005, p. 266). This was the first challenge the CFLCC PAO officers had to deal with. In the Army, no central clearing house exists that one can go to for information on short notice. Like any other government bureaucracy, many offices are staffed and managed by different commands in different locations. A further complication that is part of dealing with military matters is the classification of information. While the Armor response had to put out maximum information with minimal delay, PAO personnel had to ensure that any information released would not put operational security at risk.<sup>10</sup> Before the response could be fully implemented, the proper information had to be obtained and plugged into the response effort correctly.

Like NASA (Kauffman, 2005), the CFLCC PAO had a response advantage with the in-house production and DVIDS capabilities. Having this capability allowed the CFLCC PAO, in conjunction with the DVIDS marketing team in Atlanta, Georgia, to aggressively market live interviews and B-roll of up-armored vehicles to interested news agencies in the United States. This proved to be the most important tool in the response campaign. This was the first time that a military unit could participate live and directly with worldwide news networks in an information response campaign of this magnitude.

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<sup>10</sup> A natural consequence of showing how the up-armor protected the soldiers inside the vehicles is that the deficiencies in less armored vehicles becomes easy to discern. One morning in north Kuwait, CNN’s Pentagon Correspondent visited troops at Camp Navistar, Kuwait, to tape a story about a convoy that would drive into Iraq that day. During this visit, Barbara Starr was shown the varying levels of up-armored humvees. One soldier was showing the correspondent how some vehicles in his unit were still vulnerable. For force protection reasons, the demonstration was quickly ended and Barbara Starr agreed not to show the vulnerabilities that had been pointed out during her visit.

Nelson (2004) states that crisis response managers must remember their target audience. CFLCC had three primary audiences to reach. First, the general public had to be convinced that the Army was taking the safety of soldiers seriously. Second, soldiers in Iraq, soldiers waiting to move north from Kuwait, and soldiers back in the United States waiting to deploy to Iraq needed to be reassured that the Army's senior leadership took their safety very seriously. Third, lawmakers had to be convinced that the Army was being a responsible steward of the massive financial resources that Congress had given the Department of Defense.

Coombs' research (2004) suggested that the CFLCC public affairs office should have taken into account the effect of past military crisis situations when crafting the response strategy. This is perhaps easier done in a company that sees only occasional press coverage. In time of war, the Army makes headlines on a daily basis, for better or worse.

### **Stages of Response**

The overall broadcast response can be broken down into three stages:

1. Immediate Response (Reactive)
2. Sustained Response (Proactive)
3. Residual Closing Response (Reactive)

The immediate response occurred when Rumsfeld responded to Wilson's question by saying "you go to war with the Army you have... not the Army you might want or wish to have at a later time" (U.S. Department of Defense, 2004). According to the Linear Crisis Response Communication Model (Hale et al, 2005), this was the Triggering

Event. The Immediate Response included a press conference conducted the very next day between Lt. Gen. Steve Whitcomb and the Pentagon press corps. This initial response was reactive. The sustained response is categorized as the unsolicited production and distribution of broadcast materials to include live interviews, B-roll, taped interviews and produced television and radio news packages. This began on December 9, 2004, and lasted through February 17, 2005. The sustained response was proactive. The residual closing response happened as a sit-down interview conducted in Kuwait between CNN's Wolf Blitzer and Lt. Gen. Steve Whitcomb on March 20, 2005. This final response was reactive.

### **First Responders**

Following the incident at Camp Buehring, the CFLCC public affairs staff in Kuwait knew it needed to get on this story immediately. The public affairs operations officers in Kuwait, and the chief 3<sup>rd</sup> Army public affairs officer in Atlanta, began prepping Lieutenant General Stephen Whitcomb<sup>11</sup> for a press conference with the Pentagon press corps the following day. From Atlanta, Colonel Michael Phillips<sup>12</sup> proposed the press conference to Lt. Gen. Whitcomb and Pentagon leadership, both of whom agreed.

On December 9, 2004, Lt. Gen. Whitcomb held a press conference with the Pentagon press corps in Washington, D.C., live via DVIDS uplink. This was the first shot in the CFLCC response. According to Martin Downie, who has now been promoted to

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<sup>11</sup> Lt. Gen. Whitcomb was the Commanding General of CFLCC, the highest ranking officer in Kuwait.

<sup>12</sup> Colonel Phillips was the Chief public affairs officer for CFLCC-3<sup>rd</sup> Army at the time.

the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, Colonel Phillips directed the public affairs officers in Kuwait to assemble a full court press response. “We had no measurable communication objectives other than that, nor did we really have any mechanism in place to measure our success or lack thereof” (Martin Downie, Personal Communication, July 21, 2005). This left a very small staff of public affairs officers to generate and implement a response model, all while continuing with all other public affairs functions in support of CFLCC.

While many may think that all Department of Defense press material is created at the Pentagon, a small, understaffed office in Kuwait took the lead in this instance. There was no crisis response plan on the books and no in-theater training for such a contingency. There was no master plan given from the main CFLCC PAO office in Atlanta either, nor from the Pentagon. The beginning of CFLCC’s response began as a small team of public affairs officers in Kuwait generating communications points that should be released. “The messages were generated here and were captured by the Pentagon, which shared them across DOD” (Martin Downie, Personal Communication, July 21, 2005). CFLCC’s response was simple and proactive, using a staff of fewer than 10 people to execute the communication plan.

### **Response Generation**

Before fully implementing a press response plan, the PAO Operations team had to face two immediate challenges. First, talking points that would favor the Army’s side of the story had to be created. Second, the information had to be credible. This phase of response matches the observation stage of the Linear Crisis Response Model (See Figure 1). In Kuwait, several military and civilian organizations worked around the clock to

harden vehicles. All of these organizations worked under the CFLCC C-4 office, which was responsible for ensuring that all needed supplies and transportation assets are delivered to units participating in OIF. In Lt. Col. Downie's words:

C4 had all the real facts around which the messages were developed and the institutional knowledge to tell us when we went too far with a statement. They were essential to the process because they made their boss BG [sic] Leonard comfortable with the statements we provided him because they could explain their genesis (Martin Downie, Personal Communication, July 22, 2005).

This was the interpretation step in the Linear Crisis Response Model (See Table 4). From this information, talking points were generated and used from Kuwait. These also were sent to the Pentagon Office of Public Affairs, which, according to Downie, "were taken in by DOD and revised slightly and sent back out to all DOD" (Martin Downie, Personal Communication, July 22, 2005). At this point CFLCC had reached the choice step in the Linear Crisis Response Model.

Once the communication objective had been identified, it was time to take CFLCC's case to the press. At this point the CFLCC PAO entered the final step of the Linear Crisis Response Model: dissemination. The broadcast team was directed on a three-phase effort:

- Live interviews with major media outlets in the U.S;
- B-roll and taped interviews to be available to domestic media via DVIDS;
- News Packages for broadcast on DOD media networks.

### **Live Interviews**

Following the hurried Pentagon press corps interview, Lt. Gen. Whitcomb

appeared next on *At Large with Geraldo Rivera* on the Fox News Channel. This was used as a chance to show the newest armor kits and to describe the varying protection of the each level of armor.

Brigadier Generals Kevin Leonard and Bill Johnson conducted the next set of live interviews on February 18, 2005. Both of these general officers oversaw large sections of the overall vehicle hardening projects occurring in the Middle East. These men were prepped for the interviews by CFLCC PAO officials and staged in front of a ship arriving to Kuwait with a fresh load of brand new level 1 armored humvees. The power of image was taken very seriously. These live interviews were conducted individually for The Fox News Channel, MSNBC, KRIV-TV (Fox 26, Houston), KWTX (CBS, Waco, Killeen, Temple), WFTX (Fox 25, Boston), WCGL (CBS 46, Atlanta), and WUSA (Washington, D.C.).

### **DVIDS Pool Material**

The second phase in the CFLCC PAO response model was to provide a pool of interviews and B-roll sequences to be available to any interested media stations via DVIDS. Taping began in February of 2005. The broadcast team conducted 11 on camera interviews with soldiers, sailors and civilians who worked in support of vehicle hardening operations in different locations around Kuwait. The generals gave their view of the armoring process from the top. The taped interviews helped to tell the story from the blue-collar perspective, where the actual physical processes to harden tactical vehicles happened. To support the spoken content of these interviews, six B-roll sequences were shot from armor support facilities around Kuwait. The purpose was to lend credibility to



the interviews by giving visual representation of the up-arming processes. Both the interviews and B-roll were compiled with an external U.S. civilian audience in mind. The final phase was designed for a military audience.

### **American Forces Network Packages**

In addition to all other efforts, the CFLCC broadcast team produced two television news packages and two radio news packages for distribution across Soldiers Radio and Television, the American Forces Network and The Pentagon Channel. All of these packages emphasized efforts that the military as a whole was working around the clock to harden vehicles to help protect soldiers convoying in Iraq.

### **Communication Strategies**

In all CFLCC provided or participated in 25 broadcast opportunities to disseminate information about the Army's up-armor program to the public (see appendix A). These broadcast events included nine live television interviews, two television news packages for the American Forces Network, two radio news packages for the American Forces Network, 11 taped DVIDS interviews to be marketed to interested media outlets and one taped interview that was used on a CNN production marking the second anniversary of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Through these interviews, CFLCC disseminated 30 separate talking points (see Appendix B) that can be identified with 10 of the Crisis Response Strategies identified by Coombs (2005), as shown in Table 4. These 25 broadcast events can be broken down into three categories.

1. Interviews with Major Media;
2. DVIDS Taped Interviews for external media marketing;
3. News Packages for DOD Media Distribution across the American Forces Network.

Ten major media interviews were conducted as part of the public affairs up-armor response information campaign. These reached regional markets and international cable news. The most prevalent themes CFLCC officials presented in these interviews were Ingratiation-Transcendence Strategies and Mortification-Rectification Strategies. These talking points tried to sell the Up-Armor Campaign as a project that the Army was in control of, a challenge being won. CFLCC used these strategies in an attempt to place the armor shortage in a more desirable context by portraying the Army as being in the process of adapting to a new enemy threat and giving soldiers what they needed to fight in a continually changing battlefield.

The second part of CFLCC’s broadcast information campaign centered on 11 interviews conducted with service members in Kuwait. CFLCC public affairs soldiers

**Table 4. Percentage of Total Broadcast Strategies based on Coombs (2005) Model**

RESPONSE STRATEGIES	PERCENTAGE OF USE
Ingratiation (Transcendence)	24.56%
Ingratiation (Praising Others)	11.85%
Ingratiation (Bolstering)	5.08%
Mortification (Rectification)	29.64%
Mortification (Remediation)	11.85%
Justification (Minimizing Injury)	0.84%
Justification (Misrepresentation)	1.69%
Nonexistence (Denial)	6.77%
Nonexistence (Clarification)	6.77%
Suffering	0.84%
<b>Total</b>	<b>99.89%</b>

conducted these interviews. The purpose was to provide a pool of material that could be marketed to news carriers by the DVIDS marketing team in Atlanta. Personnel selected for these interviews represented a broad spectrum of rank and service experience. Soldiers who had lived through insurgent attacks on armored vehicles were chosen based on their personal experience with the armor being supplied by the Army. Service members who helped install armor on trucks were interviewed because of their personal experience with the positive reaction they encountered from soldiers receiving armor. Officers who oversaw aspects of the up armoring of trucks in Kuwait were interviewed to talk about their view of how successful the Army's Armor Program had been in a short period of time. The most common of Coombs' communication strategies in this phase of CFLCC's reaction were Mortification-Remediation and Ingratiation-Praising Others. The main focus of these interviews was to sell two primary talking points. First, the Up-Armor Campaign was a success story of partnership between the DOD and commercial industry to design and implement drastic modifications to thousands of tactical trucks in a very short period of time. The second point presented by soldiers who had lived through insurgent attacks against their armored vehicles was that add-on armor was saving lives in Iraq on a regular basis.

The third category of CFLCC's campaign consisted of news packages produced in Kuwait and distributed across the American Forces Network. These four stories highlighted the partnership between the Army and Navy to increase level 3 armor production and announced that the Army was adding its fleet of medium and heavy-duty tactical trucks to the list of vehicles to be fitted with level 2 add-on armor. While all personnel participating in CFLCC's broadcast events were prepped with background

information, facts and talking points prior to rolling tape, these produced packages provided CFLCC PAO the most editorial control because these packages were completely scripted for production. The most used of Coombs' strategies in this case was Mortification-Rectification. The main theme for these packages was that the Army was being creative and proactive to ensure that every soldier driving into Iraq had armor protection.

During analysis, it became clear that the types of response strategies used by CFLCC differed based on type of broadcast event. For major media interviews, the primary strategy was Ingratiation-Transcendence. DVIDS interviews conveyed talking points that most often mirrored Mortification-Remediation strategies. AFN packages were written to primarily convey Ingratiation-Transcendence and Ingratiation-Praising Others strategies (See Table 5).

**Table 5: Percentage of Strategy Use by Category of Broadcast Event**

<b>Communication Strategies</b>	<b>Major Media Interviews</b>	<b>DVIDS Interviews</b>	<b>AFN Packages</b>
Ingratiation-Transcendence	34.8%	6.52%	16.68%
Ingratiation-Praising Others	5.8%	22.82%	16.68%
Ingratiation-Bolstering	4.35%	9.78%	0%
Mortification-Rectification	29%	16.3%	55.6%
Mortification-Remediation	2.9%	32.6%	11.12%
Justification-Minimizing Injury	0%	3.26%	0%
Justification-Misrepresentation	2.9%	0%	0%
Nonexistence-Denial	8.7%	6.52%	0%
Nonexistence-Clarification	10.15%	3.26%	0%
Suffering	1.45%	0%	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.05%</b>	<b>101.06%</b>	<b>100.08%</b>

## **Choice of Spokespersons**

With the number of military personnel assigned to Kuwait, or moving through Kuwait at the time, CFLCC had no shortage of personnel involved in the up-armor process. It was a process that involved lower enlisted personnel all the way through the highest-ranking officers in country. During the communication reaction process CFLCC PAO officials had to decide who would step in front of the camera to carry CFLCC's story to the press. During the armor information response, CFLCC used a variety of spokespersons, ranging from the senior commanding officer in Kuwait all the way down to young enlisted soldiers and sailors who spent their days cutting ballistic metal into pieces of level 3 hardening for unarmored trucks scheduled to drive into Iraq. A total of 14 service members were put on camera, from the rank of Specialist to Lieutenant General (see Appendix A).

Lt. Gen. Steve Whitcomb started and ended the communication effort. On December 9, 2004, Lt. Gen. Whitcomb concurred with PAO that he should conduct a live press conference from Kuwait to cooperate with stateside media. He concluded the communication effort by sitting down with CNN's Wolf Blitzer in Kuwait in April of 2005. Lt. Gen. Whitcomb used his time on camera to be open about the progress of the up-armor process. While he insisted that the up-armor story was a success story for the Army, he also admitted that the amount of trucks armored was not to his satisfaction yet. He was honest, admitting there was a problem while detailing what had and would be done to fix the problem.

For the live interviews, senior leaders at the rank of Brigadier General and above were used. Brigadier Generals Bill Johnson and Kevin Leonard both oversaw large

aspects of the up-arming process in Kuwait. As such they were recruited to play a large part in the live interviews with U.S. media. These men were very charismatic and gave upbeat interviews using phrases like “It has happened. Every vehicle that operates outside of a forward operating base in Iraq has at least level 3 armor or better to conduct those operations” (See Appendix C). These interviews were conducted with a ship unloading brand-new level 1 humvees in the background. CFLCC PAO officials understood the power of visual imagery and used it as much as possible. These interviews were also very personal. BG Leonard used an emotional tone when talking about his daughter who is serving in the Army. He referred to soldiers serving in Iraq as friends, husbands, wives and children that the Army wants to protect.

All mid-level leaders and low-level soldiers who participated in the communication response appeared on the DVIDS pool interviews. No record exists regarding how, when and where these interviews were picked up by the press and broadcast to the public.

Martin and Boynton’s 2005 study into NASA’s handling of the 2003 Columbia tragedy credited NASA with using all levels of leadership and officials to interact with the press regarding the loss of Space Shuttle Columbia. CFLCC did use all levels of service members in its response effort. However, only senior leaders were put in front of the microphone for live interviews that were certain to have a large audience. All other leaders and military members were used for SRTV news packages destined for an internal audience, and DVIDS interviews.

Perhaps one of CFLCC’s greatest missed opportunities with spokespersons happened during the December 9, 2004, press conference with the Pentagon press corps. Two Sergeants First Class who had survived insurgent attacks against their armored

trucks traveled to Camp Arifjan to join Lt. Gen. Whitcomb when he answered questions from the Pentagon Press Corps. These men had stories of how CFLCC's up-armor efforts had saved their lives. They were never presented during the press conference. Stories of first-hand survival were relegated to the DVIDS pool of interviews.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

#### **When the dust settled, what happened?**

In Chapter Three, I promised to answer two research questions:

1. What category of Coombs' response strategies did the CFLCC PAO use in its response campaign?
2. Did CFLCC's response attempt to place blame or accept a degree of responsibility for the lack of armor?

Of Coombs' Response Strategies (2005), CFLCC's strategies mirrored 10 of them (see Table 4). The most used strategies mirrored the Mortification-Rectification and Ingratiation-Transcendence strategies. In this case, these strategies were used to communicate that the armor shortage was actually a good news story of how quickly the Army could react to a changing battlefield and that concern for soldier safety had necessitated new and unusual methods for force protection that ensured no soldier went into harm's way without some form of armament on his or her vehicle.

The second RQ gets to the question of responsibility. In any crisis situation there is a question of where to place blame. Someone must always be held accountable, no matter what. Studies have shown that how an organization handles the factor of controllability and responsibility can have very serious effects on how that organization emerges from the crisis (Coombs, 1995; Bradford and Garrett, 1995; Dean, 2004). Someone from the inside is expected to take the blame. While Lt. Gen. Whitcomb did openly admit in his live media events that he was not satisfied with CFLCC progress in



the up-armorings process, he did not take responsibility for the shortage of armored vehicles. No one did. The only time responsibility was addressed came when the SecDef blamed the lack of armor on the physics involved in manufacturing armor on a large scale. CFLCC stayed away from the question of blame altogether, opting instead to address what role it played in trying to fix a problem that admittedly existed.

## **Discussion**

No organization can possibly prepare for every single crisis possibility (Schoenberg, 2005). In today's environment, with increasing threats from "legal action, negative media coverage, online rumors, societal pressures, and regulatory actions" (Schoenberg, 2005, p. 6), many organizations that once thought themselves immune from a major media crisis should rethink that assumption. Who would have thought that the American Red Cross would face criticism for some of its actions in response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001?

Lyon and Cameron (2004) warn against scholars viewing crisis response without considering prior institutional history. "Practitioners need to not only be aware of the overarching goals of a crisis response plan, but they should also consider the various stakeholders and the venues where their messages will likely appear" (Stephens et al, 2005, p. 413).

Part of CFLCC's problem is that no plan existed for dealing with a media crisis. There were plans for conducting last-minute interviews, packing and loading gear for trips into Iraq and plans for how to safely deal with a vehicle failure when traveling between camps in Kuwait. However, nothing was planned for any sort of media response

campaign. Even if a plan is flawed, it is easier to modify an existing plan than to come up with one on a moment's notice (Clarke, 2005). James Shea, the director of information and press at NATO, says that organizations should conduct practice drills to deal with crisis situations (as cited in Clarke, 2005). This would have been time well spent for CFLCC's public affairs staff. Instead public affairs soldiers were drilled in practices such as calling in a medical evacuation helicopter and convoy procedures, tasks that are rarely, if ever, performed by public affairs soldiers in Kuwait.

DVIDS gave the Army a new tool to use in public outreach. On December 8, 2004, the risk inherent with such technology became painfully clear. To this day no Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) has been devised for using this system. This can be good because it allows military broadcasters in theater to be creative in its use. These broadcasters who live in country for a year, and work with and around other soldiers can more effectively reach out to the American public through the eyes of soldiers than brass suits inside the shelter of the Pentagon. However, by choosing to use DVIDS to televise a "no question is off limits" meeting with a Cabinet-level official showed that the Army had not fully considered the risks involved. In general, public affairs officers in a war zone are tasked with handling external media representatives. In Kuwait, the PAO dealt mostly with escorting civilian media representatives around Kuwait and prepping the CFLCC leadership for how to deal with interviews. Dealing with a crisis response campaign was by no means just part of the routine.

CFLCC PAO officials simply didn't know what to expect once they began the response communication campaign. Althaus (2001) suggested that a government-initiated spin campaign can be highly effective in shaping news content while not necessarily impacting the directional bias of the coverage. Unfortunately for CFLCC, no tracking

mechanism was in place to measure whether the PAO's response effort was having an impact on the news.

Perhaps the greatest missed opportunity was one that only a change in personnel assignments and lengths of tour would change. The point of the crisis response plan was immediate survival and reputation management. The Army's culture demands a review of nearly everything that happens. It's called an AAR: After Action Review. That wasn't the case in the CFLCC's armor campaign. After the dust settled neither CFLCC Headquarters nor the Department of the Army attempted to learn anything from what happened in Kuwait. There was no review. No crisis plan was written for future personnel to follow in the event of a future Army media crisis from Kuwait. Nothing was learned. I hope this study will change that.

Unfortunately, no one knows exactly how the CFLCC response altered public opinion during the armor crisis because there is no way to fully measure how all the different talking points were transmitted across different networks, different stories, during weeks of coverage or absorbed by the public. Furthermore, no effort was made to measure audience reaction to the messages conveyed by CFLCC.

### **Limitations of Methodology**

In a case study, the information is subjective and dependent on the researcher for interpretation. It is not statistical and can be challenging to replicate. However, qualitative methods yield a more personal look at what transpired and allow researchers to document and study events that lack the statistical characteristics for quantitative methods.

Hale et al (2005) acknowledged that another challenge to this method is a lack of reliable information. CFLCC public affairs officials found this to be true. In the military, information can be very hard to obtain. In an organization like the Army, which has a specialized paper form for nearly every event or occasion that one would encounter in life or career, there was no single strand of sequential documentation regarding the CFLCC up-armor project. Information for the PAO response had to be pieced together from many people, places and departments across the CFLCC area of responsibility, the Pentagon, and contracting companies in the United States. What many senior officials referred to as a “Good News Story for the Army” was a jigsaw of information that had to be assembled after Specialist Wilson brought the problem to international attention. Likewise, there was no common place for me to pull a strand of information for this document. This study is a patchwork, a final place of assembly for documented events, notes, correspondence and memories from my involvement.

A further challenge to this method is that there are many sources of information about the Army’s overall effort to harden vehicles. This study was purposely limited to the information generated within the CFLCC area of responsibility and distributed through CFLCC’s PAO office. However, it should be noted that Pentagon press releases during that time closely mirrored the information generated by CFLCC’s public affairs office.

### **Lessons Learned**

Two years after the fact, it was finally time to conduct an after action review to identify what lessons can be learned based on CFLCC PAO’s crisis response effort.

First, any major military unit should have a crisis response plan laid out in advance. Military personnel are constantly trained for the unexpected and even the unlikely. Training for how to interact with the press during a media barrage should be included in this training. Military public affairs personnel are trained in contingency communication at the Defense Information School (DINFOS). However, most service members in line units are not regularly trained for media interaction. Since the Army already trains for the likelihood of contingencies, training for a media communication response plan would not require a major cultural shift. This preparation should include measurable communication goals and a predetermined method to achieve those goals. In some parts of the Army, techniques for interacting with the press are now being included in field training events. The Army should expand this kind of training and require that public affairs leaders include developing crisis response plans as part of their professional development process.

Second, senior leaders should include junior leaders and soldiers in their crisis response efforts. CFLCC wanted to sell the point that its effort to harden thousands of vehicles was saving lives. However, the only time CFLCC PAO officials put soldiers who could tell their survival stories on camera was for DVIDS interviews. These same soldiers should have been included in the live interviews. On February 17, 2005, Spc. Jordan Scanian said “no shrapnel nor round penetrated the inside of this vehicle, so, I have the utmost confidence in this armor. I wouldn’t be here talking to you without it” (See Appendix C). On the same day Staff Sgt. Ricardo Rivera said, “Something hit the truck itself. Why it didn’t hit the tires, why we didn’t go flat, why it didn’t punch a hole in the gas tank you know, that’s for anyone to say. If the armor wasn’t there, you know, it could have been a different story. I’m happy to have it” (See Appendix C). Staff Sgt.

Jerry Hineman also told his story during the DVIDS interview process. “Yeah, if the armor plating wouldn’t have been there, all that metal and shrapnel would have come right on through the door and it would have ripped me up and maimed me for life or I would have been dead, bottom line” (See Appendix C). With all due respect to the commanders, the stories from soldiers who lived because of armored protection would likely have sold CFLCC’s point to the American public better than general officers telling the armor success story at a distance from where the bullets were flying.

Third, the military should increase the size of its public affairs force. CFLCC had a very small staff that was overextended before the SecDef’s controversial statements in Kuwait. All available personnel had to be in a reactive state of mind. They had no room or time to develop strategy or plan for the next big crisis.

Fourth, military public affairs personnel should be required to assemble and maintain a current list of issues being faced by their unit and contingency plans for dealing with press attention associated with those issues. This should be updated regularly and made available during personnel transitions. This would help to reduce the amount of hard-learned knowledge lost when the Army moves people from one assignment to the next.

### **Implications for further research**

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of this case study is its heuristic nature. This is a story of how a communication strategy was conceived and executed from within an organization in crisis. Further research into the news coverage of this event could provide insight into how effective an organization in crisis can be at getting the press to adopt

talking points and carry those talking points to the intended audience. The Army's information campaign about CFLCC's up-armor effort can be thought of as part of the stimuli. A follow-up study into how this story was carried in the press would be the reaction. This would create a unique opportunity for public relations professionals to gauge the effectiveness of the techniques used by CFLCC in 2005.

### **Closing Thoughts**

Having worked for several weeks embroiled in the armor information response, I remain interested in continuing to watch how the Army handles mediated crisis when they happen. Personally, I believe our first two mistakes were not having a media contingency plan and not letting junior soldiers and non-commissioned officers have a more high-profile role in helping us tell the Army's story about truck armor. Soldiers who were alive because of armor on their assigned vehicles were more than willing to tell their story. For lack of vision on our part, or lack of network interest, these soldiers were relegated to taped interviews for after-the-fact marketing. Another mistake was that when the dust settled, we did not start preparing for contingencies. At that point, it was time for most of the CFLCC PAO staff to start focusing on redeployment. Finally, our biggest mistake was not passing on our lessons learned. The Army as a whole tends to suffer from institutional forgetfulness. Crisis situations are nothing new to the armed services. Learning from them and applying lessons learned, however, seems to be a new and unpracticed concept when it comes to using media technology.

The most successful part of the armor information response campaign was our ability to push information to the press regularly. It took weeks to get fully up to speed.

Once we gained momentum, the PAO was successful at pushing information aggressively and continuously.

To this day, when I talk about my experiences in Kuwait, people tell me that they remember seeing the Wilson-Rumsfeld moment in the news. They remember the news stories about a lack of up-armored trucks for soldiers in Iraq. This was a well-known event due to many factors, not the least of which was the use of DVIDS system and the capabilities it gave the 14<sup>th</sup> PAD and the CFLCC PAO in 2004 and beyond. I hope this study will prove beneficial to those who want to apply knowledge from the past to benefit the future.



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## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A: List of Broadcast Projects**

### **8 December 2004**

-SecDef Town Hall Meeting from Camp Buehring, Kuwait

### **9 December 2004**

-Lt. Gen. Steve Whitcomb press conference with the Pentagon Press Corps

-B-roll of soldiers armoring HMMWVs at the level 2 armor shop at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait (Sgt. Angel Rivera. 1569 Trans, Harlem Hellfighters from NYC. Attached to B-Co 50th MSB; Sgt. James Neighbors. Attached to B-Company, 50th MSB)

### **20 December 2004**

-Lt. Gen. Interview with Geraldo Rivera "At Large" on Fox News Channel

### **5 February 2005**

#### **Level 3 Armor Interviews at Camp Buehring**

-Interview with Maj. John Murillo (Support Operations Officer for 158th Core Support Battalion. National Guard unit from Tucson, AZ)

-Interview with Lt., Col., Craig M. Dickinson (Operations Officer for 43rd ASG, Ft. Carson, CO)

-Interview with Lt., Jr. Grade, Christopher O'Leary (Officer in Charge of Naval Detachment at level 3 armor shop, Camp Buehring, Kuwait).

-Interview with Po3. Jessica Curtis (Welder at level 3 armor shop, Camp Buehring).

-Interview with Spc.. Matt Truchinski (mechanic with 276th Maintenance Company. Reserve unit from Puerto Rico.)

### **5 February 2005**

-B-roll of new model 1114 HMMWV vehicles at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

-B-roll of Army and Navy Personnel cutting and moving armor pieces for level 3 armor operations at Camp Buehring, Kuwait (B-roll of Army personnel from 276th Maintenance Co, reserve from Puerto Rico. Navy personnel from USS Emory S Land, Lamaddelena, Italy)

### **6 February 2005**

-B-roll of model 1114 HMMWVs driving off of USS Altair at Shuaibah Port, Kuwait

### **11 February 2005**

-USS Emory S. Land welding detachment helps soldiers to armor Army vehicles at Camp Buehring Kuwait ( TV Package: AFN-Iraq version, Pentagon Channel version and SRTV version)

**13 February 2005**

-Army adds level 2 armor to heavy-duty tactical trucks (TV News Package: SRTV, AFN-Iraq and Pentagon Channel Versions)

**15 February 2005 (as released by SRTV)**

-Heavy Duty truck armor radio package

**17 February 2005**

-Selected clips from up-armor interviews at Camp Navistar, Kuwait and Camp New York, Kuwait.

-Spc.. Jordan Scanian (227th Transportation Company)

-Staff Sgt. James E. Shackelford (1836th Transportation Company)

-Unidentified NCO Interview

-Staff Sgt. Ricardo Rivera (227th Transportation Company)

-Sgt. Jimmy Hineman (227<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company)

-Lt., Col., Robert Roth interview at Camp New York, Kuwait (Commander of 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 4th Brigade of 3rd Infantry Division)

**17 February 2005 (as released by SRTV)**

-Naval Detachment helps to armor Army vehicles radio package

**18 February 2005**

-Brig. Gen., Bill Johnson and Brig. Gen. Kevin Leonard Armor interviews from Shuaibah Port, Kuwait

-Fox News Channel

-KRIV-TV (Fox 26, Houston)

-KWTX (CBS: Waco, Temple, Killeen)

-MSNBC

-WFTX (Fox 25, Boston, MA)

-WGCL (CBS 46, Atlanta)

-WUSA-TV (Washington D.C.)

**External Media**

**20 March 2005**

-CNN Wolf Blitzer Special: "A General's View" with Lt. Gen. Steve Whitcomb



## **Appendix B: List of Talking Points**

### **Ingratiation Strategies (Transcendence)**

IT-1: The Armor story is a success story for the Army

IT-2: The Armor Program is part of how the Army is adapting to new enemy tactics

IT-3: Vehicle Armor is not a new issue. The Army has been addressing it since 2003

IT-4: Wheeled vehicle armor production has come a long way in a short period of time

IT-5: Spc. Wilson's question was a good one. The Army has been addressing it for months

### **Ingratiation Strategies (Praising Others)**

IP-1: The Armor Program is a great story of partnership between the military and commercial industry

IP-2: The Armor Program is a multi-military service effort

IP-3: Service members are using their creativity to find ways to upgrade wheeled vehicle protection

### **Ingratiation Strategies (Bolstering)**

IB-1: CFLCC sends troops into Iraq fully prepared to execute their missions

IB-2: Truck armor that CFLCC provides helps soldiers to better focus on the mission

IB-3: CFLCC takes safety seriously and is working to protect soldiers with better armor

### **Mortification Strategies (Rectification)**

MR-1: CFLCC and the Army are doing everything possible to protect soldiers

MR-2: Level 3 armor production is being reduced because level 1 and 2 armor production is catching up with demand.

MR-3: The Army responded to insurgent tactics with a 3-tiered armor program

MR-4: Armor installation is happening at many sites around the world

MR-5: Level 3 Armor is a temporary measure meant to bridge the gap between demand for more armor and availability of level 1 and 2 kits

MR-6: No wheeled tactical vehicle is driven into Iraq without possessing some form of armor

MR-7: CFLCC continues to increase the wheeled vehicle armoring effort

MR-8: CFLCC has not reached its full goal for wheeled vehicle armor; however, CFLCC is making progress toward the armor goal

MR-9: CFLCC's goal is for all wheeled vehicles driven into Iraq to have armor protection

MR-10: CFLCC is not satisfied with the current lack of armored wheeled vehicles, but is working to improve

### **Mortification Strategies (Remediation)**

MM-1: Having armor improves soldier morale

MM-2: Add-on armor is protecting soldiers and saving lives

### **Justification Strategies (Minimizing Injury)**

JM-1: Add-on armor increases survivability for the vehicle in case of attack

### **Justification Strategies (Misrepresentation)**

JS-1: Soldiers do not have to pull armoring materials from landfills. Spc. Wilson was referring to the used armor stacks at the Logistical Support Area.

### **Nonexistence Strategies (Denial)**

ND-1: CFLCC has all resources it needs to armor wheeled vehicles en route to Iraq

ND-2: Level 1 humvees are providing complete protection for soldiers

ND-3: Soldiers feel comfortable with the armor that CFLCC is giving them

### **Nonexistence Strategies (Clarification)**

NC-1: Wheeled vehicle armor is just part of a larger package of protection that includes training and after-action-reviews

### **Suffering Strategies**

SU-1: Level 1 armor shortage is simply a matter of physics

## Appendix C: Broadcast Transcripts

### CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date of release: 5 Feb. 2005

Length:08:27

Name: Maj. John Murillo

Title: Support Officer, 158 Core Support Battalion

-Corps Support Battalion 158 Corps Support Battalion is the higher headquarters for four quartermaster companies and three maintenance companies currently. Two of those maintenance companies are redeploying back to the United States. Do I mention units?

-We're the higher headquarters for the 276 maintenance company that you see in the background.

-The 276 went in to their battle handoff with the 699 maintenance company in the middle of December and they've been on this operation for this is their eighth week involved in the level three armor operation.

-That is correct. 15 individuals from the U-S-S Emory Land, their ship U-S-S Emory Land is in the Mediterranean Sea right now off the coast of Italy. They have a 15 member welding team including Senior Chief Dale Peory and a Lieutenant J-G O'Leary along with 13 other welders and metal fabricators that are assisting with the level three armor mission.

-Well there are a few things and a few methods that we do that are a little bit different that they ask about. But when it comes to the level three armor, the welding the fabricating the cutting and everything that we need to do to provide the essential protection for these units that are rolling north into Iraq, they're fitting right in. They're grasping the mission and they're jumping right on board.

-Right, the level three armor mission started up about March of last year and it has been growing every since. It got to the point in October where there was so much more demand than what the 699 Maintenance Company could handle. There was a large requirement for armor protection that level one and level two could not meet at the time. The pipeline for getting the level one and level two into theater was not as large as the demand is, like it is as we're moving in that direction. Level one level two pipeline for delivery of those kits into theater has grown incredibly over the last three or four months. It's been continuing since about September of last year. They've been finding improved ways to increase production throughout the United States and get those kits over here and get the facilities set up to do the installation of those kits. And we're seeing that now because our mission is tapering off. During January and December, December of last year that's when our mission was at its peak, the greatest amount. We had well over 6,600 vehicles last month, in the month of January and well over 4,000 vehicles in the month of December. Now that we're seeing less of a demand or a workload, we're able to add some additional panels of protection and we're able to do additional work for some

of the vehicles that are gonna stay the longest in theater before they get level two, which is the five-ton trucks.

-Well as far as the armor for the humvees, we've absolutely seen a big jump in the amount of level one and level two armor. We're practically seeing no humvees where we were seeing about 160 humvees per night coming through throughout January. And now we're getting about 30 or 40. So we've seen like a five-fold increase in the amount of level one and level two humvees in theater. The other areas are the trucks. We've seen a lot of L-M-T-Vs. That continues to be ramped up with having a larger pipeline of level one and level two in theater. Same thing with the other vehicles: Hemmets, P-L-S, five-tons is probably the, probably the furthest behind. They're increasing that also.

So our mission is dying down. We've sort of met the gap between the demand and what was available, and so we see our mission going into the future is just filling what is necessary. We do some additional protection for the turret shields the ring mount that are not included in the level two. They are included in the level one and assisting the main thing that the 276 Maintenance Company does, and they help out the units that are deploying to make sure that all of their equipment is fully mission capable, from their wheeled vehicles, tracked vehicles and their weapons systems and will continue to do that. Some of our work has been machining the machine gun mount pieces that they may or may not have and we've been able to get those to them so that when they move north they have a fully capable machine, vehicles that are fully protected and all of their weapons systems are fully mission capable.

-Well that is what the theater is moving to is level one and level two in all of the vehicles that are moving in theater. What we needed, there was a need for essential ballistic and I-E-D, limited I-E-D protection in theater and that demand was a lot greater than what level one and level two, the amount of level one and level two that we're getting in theater. So this filled the gap and it basically provides the essential protection for the soldiers that are traveling in Iraq against the small arms fire and the limited amount of I-E-D.

-I don't have the exact figures on level one and level two. I do know that there are several facilities down here in Kuwait in which they're installing the level two, and we're getting level one vehicles that are manufactured in the United States into Kuwait. I know that a portion of that is being diverted to locations in Iraq so that they can get the level two kits there as well as the level one vehicles, and swapping those out with vehicles that have been operating in theater with level three.

-The good news is that there has been an ongoing effort to for the Army and the industrial base to ramp up their production of level one and level two kits in theater. We're seeing that here in that the level three demand and our amount of vehicles that we're armoring level three is being reduced, and level three has been an interim solution all along.

-The level three armor mission has been, the portion that we've done has been pretty grilling. The units, three maintenance companies and two maintenance contact teams that have been working on this have been working in shifts, 24 hours a day, seven days a week making sure that we got all of our deploying units with their essential protection

they needed and there is a great satisfaction in knowing that units that are going north have that essential protection that they need to do their job.

-The good news is that the industrial base in the United States has really picked up their production in getting the level one and level two kits and vehicles in theater and we have seen that as a, a reduction in our requirements in the amount of vehicles that we are installing level three on.

-The good news is that there has been an ongoing effort to for the Army and the industrial base to ramp up their production of level one and level two kits in theater. We're seeing that here in that the level three demand and our amount of our vehicles that we're armoring level three is being reduced. And the level three has been an interim solution all along.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 5 Feb. 2005

Length: 07:26

Name: Lt., Col., Craig Dickenson

Title: Operations Officer, 43<sup>rd</sup> Area Support Group

-We are the Brigade Headquarters for the 158 C-S-B. They're out of Tucson Arizona. Their subordinate company is the 276th Maintenance Company and the 699 Maintenance Company who has been doing this level three hardening for the last three months.

-From my vantage point we, we looked at this mission on the first of November. Had a new Battalion come in, new Maintenance Companies come in and we've had the 699<sup>th</sup> here from Fort Irwin California been doing this for nine months, but nowhere close to the level that they're gonna have to do it during the surge period. What we've seen is about 11,000 vehicles and they go through this site. We've had about 15,000 sheets of steel that have been produced to provide level three hardening. As you see, well if you could see from where we started off in December to where we are now the production has dropped off considerably as the industrial base from the United States has picked up with both the level two kits and the level one kits. Obviously that's the preferred solution. But from a minimum protection, with a proven template, these guys have done tremendously working 24 hours seven days a week since about mid November making sure that we've got soldiers protected as they go up north to their forward operating bases.

-Well what I've seen is when we first started the first week of November, we ordered 15,000 sheets of steel -- that hardened steel that provides basic protection for soldiers -- knowing that's a stop gap measure. We expected to have this go through all the way through March timeframe but what we found is that through just an aggressive approach from the industrial base in the United States we're getting a lot of level two kits, a lot of level one humvees up here and I will tell you the reduction of what we've had to do on a daily basis has been considerable over the last few weeks and hats off to the industrial base for making it happen in such a quick fashion.

-We started in the first week of November ordering thousands of sheets of steel for a temporary fix for the, to make sure that our soldiers that are going up north are protected until they get to their forward operating base. What we've seen in the interim is just an outstanding effort by the industrial base and the Army to bring level two kits, hardening kits for both the humvees and for heavy trucks into this theater so our requirements have been reduced dramatically over the last three or four weeks. It's just an outstanding effort by both the industrial base and the Army to make it happen.

-I'll say what Major Murillo did, I tell you what I want to be obviously a small portion of it, but the effort from these guys working 24 hours seven days a week in the cold, in nasty conditions that you can see around you with the dust blowing out, I will tell you, both the ingenuity and efforts these guys put toward improving the template and putting it on thousands of vehicles before they go up to forward operating base. Obviously when they get up to forward operating base and here they're getting the level two kits on. They're getting the level one humvees, but for that short period of time when our soldiers had to make it happen, they did. It's just been an impressive array of what we can do when we put our minds to it.

-Well I tell you, it gives these guys a lot of confidence. We've got some templates up to the front there just before we put it on their vehicles where it shows that there physical proof that it has, offers ballistic protection to them. I'm telling you, we've got testimonials from at least 17 to 19 folks who have come back to this location indicating their thanks that what we've produced for them is saving their lives as they go up north.

-We started in the first week of November ordering thousands of sheets of steel for a temporary fix for a to make sure that our soldiers are going up north protected until they get to their forward operating bases. What we've seen in the interim is just a outstanding effort by the industrial base and the Army to bring level two kits hardening kits for both the humvees and for heavy trucks into this theater so our requirements have been reduced dramatically over the last three or four weeks. It's just an outstanding effort by both the industrial base and the Army to make it happen.

-Well what I've seen is when we first started it in the first week of November ordering 15,000 sheets of steel that hardened steel that provides basic protection for soldiers knowing that's a stopgap measure. We expected to have this go through all the way through March timeframe but what we've found is that through just an aggressive approach for the industrial base in the United States and getting a lot of level two kits, a lot of level one humvees up here and I will tell you the reduction in what we've had to do on a daily basis has been considerable over the last few weeks and hats off to the industrial Base for making it happen in such a quick fashion.

## **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 5 Feb. 2005

Length: 3:28

Name: Lieutenant Junior Grade Christopher O'Leary

Title: Officer in Charge, U.S. Naval Detachment from U.S.S. Emory S. Land

-Lieutenant Junior Grade Christopher O'Leary, O-L-E-A-R-Y, U-S Navy.

-I'm on a ship the U-S-S Emory S. Land.

-Lamaddelena, Italy.

-Sure, L-A-M-A-D-D-E-L-E-N-A

-The Emory S. Land is a repair ship. We do repairs on submarines and surface ships anywhere in the Mediterranean, Atlantic or the Arabian Gulf.

-Well apparently a lot of the structural welding we do on the ship is very similar to the armor plating we put on here. Somebody thought it was a good idea and a good use of resources to send us here. Turns out we're pretty ideally suited for this mission. We picked it up pretty fast. We work well with the 276<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company who owns this shop and we work three shifts, 24 hours a day and we make pre-made armor kits and then we weld armor right on the vehicles themselves too.

-Well in the first week we armored about 500 vehicles. We're in our second week now and we're gonna do about another 500 vehicles this week, plus about 1,000 pre-made armor kits per week.

-But we're all of us are really glad to be here. The closest we every got to seeing this stuff was on T-V and we knew a lot of guys were getting hurt, and there's a big gap in demand for stateside armor being put on the vehicles and this shop and the sailors and soldiers here are filling that gap and we're armoring lots and lots of vehicles before they go up north.

-Nope, I don't think so.

-Buffalo, New York

-Christopher O'Leary.

-On the ship?

-On the ship I'm the mechanical repair officer. Here I'm the officer in charge of the Navy Detachment, 15 sailors from the U-S-S Emory S. Land.

-Well, they're all welders so we kind of picked all the welders, or not all the welders but

we have about 80 welders on the ship. We took 15 of them here.

-Nope, never worked with the Army before, but our first two weeks here it's been great, very supportive. A lot of things that are obviously different than being on a ship, but the Army people here have been great to us. We've got a place to stay, some food and some work to do and that's pretty much all we need.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 5 Feb. 2005

Length: 3:43

Name: HT3 Jessica Curtis

Title: Hull Maintenance Technician, U.S. Naval Detachment from U.S.S. Emory S. Land

-Well, basically as an H-T one of the jobs that you can do is to work with metal that is 1/8<sup>th</sup> an inch or larger and that is a ship fitter. And everybody that's here actually is a ship fitter and what happens is we normally build things for other people for submarines for other ships, for things like that, so really it was an easy transition to make because we're still working with the same stuff that we would be working with on the ship.

-There are 15 of us that are working here right now.

-Right now we're working with the 276<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company and that's actually been great. They guys in 276<sup>th</sup> have been extremely helpful with whatever we need in getting us whatever for cutting, welding, anything that we need in order to be able to put this armor on the vehicles.

-Actually I find it to be an extremely exhilarating experience. I find doing this is just great. I, I'm extremely happy that I've actually had the chance to come out here and help the Army with doing this. This is a one in a lifetime opportunity and I'm very glad that I.

-Actually everybody that's involved including the Chain of command from our ship is actually all very proud of us. They're very happy that we got to come over here and help. Right now our ship is doing its own thing and they're okay without us for a little while, so they're very glad that we could be of any help.

-The ship that we're originally from is the U-S-S Emory S. Land, A-S 39.

-It's a submarine tender. It allows us to take all the. It allows us to take all the services to and from submarines power and potable water and stuff like that and it also allows us to do any repairs on submarines.



## **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 17 Feb. 2005

Length: 3:34

Name: Spc. Matt Truchinski

Title: Mechanic, 276<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company

-I'm with the 276<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company from Puerto Rico.

-I'm a mechanic and right now I'm doing cutting on armored doors.

-I've been doing it for two months now.

-We weren't really sure what we were going to do and when we landed they told us we were going to be doing armored doors and, and that's what we've been doing. I've been cutting plates of steel into armored doors.

-Just briefly, the ones that are leaving.

-It seems like they're a lot happier to have a little bit of armor around them when they're going to be going up there.

-Okay, basically the quick process, we just get 4x8 sheets of ¼ inch steel and then mark out with a template the shape of the door and mark it out with a piece of chalk, cut those doors out with a oxyacetylene torch and stack them in piles and they bring them over to this shop and they mount them onto the vehicle.

-Absolutely, that's why I do my job. I, if I was going up there I would hope that I had some armor around me too.

-Um basically I think it helped improve the morale of the troops going up there and having to live in that environment everyday. You never know when a stray bullet is just going to come flying at you. It's uh, we've seen the results. There's a, there's a door on display where they've hit it multiple times with 7.62. It just dings it a little bit, so, I'm sure it's good stuff.

-I'm from Los Angeles, California.

-Good, they're professional welders and they do an awesome job.

-It does a little bit. It's more Army than anything else, but just follow commands and get it done.

## **CFLCC TV Package Transcript**

Station: SRTV, Pentagon Channel, AFN-Iraq)

Date released: 11 Feb. 2005

Length: 01:17

Producer: Chase Spears

Title: CFLCC Broadcast Producer

### **Suggested Lead:**

The same skills that keep the Navy afloat can save soldiers' lives in Iraq. Specialist Chase Spears reports that a group of Naval welders are helping the Army to meet its up-armor goals.

### **Narrative:**

The Kuwaiti desert isn't a place you'd expect to find a Naval ship repair Detachment. But at Camp Buehring service members in Navy blues have joined with soldiers from the 276<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company to put armor on vehicles driving north into Iraq. When the Army needed more metal workers to help harden vehicles, 15 sailors from the U.S.S Emory S. Land volunteered to leave ship and put their talents to use on dry land.

### **Sound bite:**

We normally build things for other people, for submarines, for other ships, for things like that. So really it was an easy transition to make because we're still working with the same stuff that we would be working with on the ship.

### **Narrative:**

The 15 member Naval detachment works side by side with soldiers to make sure that no vehicle needing armor goes into Iraq without it.

### **Sound bite:**

It turns out we're pretty ideally suited for this mission. We've picked it up pretty fast. We work well with the 276<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company who owns this shop. And we work three shifts, 24 hours a day and we make pre-made armor kits and then we weld armor right on the vehicles themselves too.

### **Narrative:**

These sailors normally help to keep ships afloat. For now they're glad to help keep troops alive. From Camp Buehring Kuwait, I'm Specialist Chase Spears

### **Suggested Tag:**

With stateside armor production increasing, the Naval Detachment should be able to return to their ship within a couple of months.

## **CFLCC TV Package Transcript**

Station: SRTV, Pentagon Channel, AFN-Iraq)

Date released: 13 Feb. 2005

Length: 01:29

Producer: Chase Spears

Title: CFLCC Broadcast Producer

### **Suggested Lead:**

Contractors and service members are working around the clock to put armor on tactical vehicles before they drive into Iraq. Specialist Chase Spears reports that their efforts are giving the Army's fleet of heavy-duty trucks a tough new look.

### **Narrative:**

As part of an overall Army effort to make sure that no vehicles go into Iraq without armor, armor shops across Kuwait are giving the Army's fleet of medium and heavy-duty trucks an armored makeover. Now with more level one armored humvees coming out of factories in the states, the Army has been able to scale back on level three humvee armor and focus more on armoring the Army's fleet of heavy-duty trucks.

### **Sound bite:**

The good news is that there has been an on ongoing effort to for the Army and the industrial base to ramp up their production of level one and level two kits in theater. We're seeing that here in that the level three demands and our amount of vehicles that we're armoring level three is being reduced.

### **Narrative:**

In the last few months armor shops in the U.S. and Kuwait have been able to design and build armor kits for several heavy-duty truck models that are used every day in Iraq. The overall up-armor effort has come a long way in a short period of time.

### **Sound bite:**

If you go back to the genesis of the program the Army was tasked with providing protection for our soldiers about 23 months ago. So we've taken a process that normally takes five to seven years to accomplish. We've accomplished that in about 23 months with light medium and heavy vehicles.

### **Narrative:**

The Army's efforts to armor everything from humvees to large trucks and even fuel tankers is making the road ahead safer for troops serving in Iraq. From Kuwait I'm Specialist Chase Spears.

### **Suggested Tag:**

With production of level one and two armor kits in the states quickly catching up with demand, the Army plans to completely phase out level three armor production in the near future.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 17 Feb. 2005

Length: 2:30

Name: Spc.. Jordan Scanian

Title: 227<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company

-I'm a combat lifesaver, so I provided first aid to the wounded and after that we went to asses the vehicles and that's when I realized that yes I had taken rounds to the door. The armored doors had shot the rounds off in directions other than my midsection and my head because that's exactly where the ping marks on the door are, so. It definitely puts things into perspective you know. Your life flashes before you and, uh... you... um... you really thank God everyday. And the armor that we have has paid off.

-Well the rounds, for instance, that one individual, that one day that I spoke of. Without it I wouldn't be here. I'm certain of that. The pockmarks in the metal explain it. But uh, it kind of makes my job, I feel a little bit safer. Everybody, a frequent question around here is are you scared to go north? Yeah everybody that gets in a truck and goes up there is scared. If they're not, they're crazy or just stupid. I don't know which, but. It makes me feel a little bit safer, being behind armor.

-Certainly, I took rounds right in here from head to just below the shoulder area, not in this particular vehicle obviously. But I did take rounds right in here; as well my rear tire on this side was either blown by the I-E-D or small arms of some sort. But no shrapnel or round penetrated the inside of this vehicle, so, I have the utmost confidence in this armor. I wouldn't be here talking to you without it.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 17 Feb. 2005

Length: 0:56

Name: Staff Sgt. James Shackelford

Title: 1836<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company

-Like when you get that black and heat and it kind of bows in, both windshields was bowed in on us. And so what I had to do to continue to drive, I stuck my head out the window I was driving like this because we couldn't see out of the windshield.

-To the plates, the um, the up-armor kit that they gave us, the side plates, the level three up-armament, I think it played a very important part especially to the \_\_\_ because then they been here today, got hit right there and I think it would have been, if we'd have had the regular doors on there, the shrapnel would have came through them doors.

-To give you a small sense of security that if you get shot at or get in that first punch someone is giving you that first punch you're gonna duck behind something and it gives you the sense that you can duck and look to the enemy and then gather yourself and get a

accurate shot out, so it give you a sense of security.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 17 Feb. 2005

Length: 0:38

Name: Unidentified NCO

-If it wasn't for this window it would have killed Sergeant Ramon', the driver, and the door so like I said it depends on how bold they get and what they use, the size, how good your armor is. We've seen some stuff that we brought up from up north. One window like this and there was a big hole. An R-P-G went right through it, so. Thankfully that day God was looking out for Sergeant Ramon'. That was like the second time that he's been in a situation.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 17 Feb. 2005

Length: 2:56

Name: Staff Sgt. Ricardo Rivera

Title: 227<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company

-I proceeded to get out of the vehicle and there is a step on the gas tank on (unintelligible) and apparently during one of the attacks that night it had been blown off. I didn't know obviously until you get off. I had my flack vest on, my helmet. I went to, you know, it's second nature. You know where the step is. You don't even have to look. I went to step on it and the step wasn't there so I, I wasn't even holding on, three points of contact, my bad. I figured the step was going to be there. I went to step and I just completely, you know, there's nothing there. My foot went underneath the tank and I fell straight on my back, and kind of lied there. It was a dark night and the stars were up. I can remember looking up at the stars on my back and it kind of knocked the wind out of me because the flack vest had sappy plates in it and it kind of put a good bit of pressure on my back and kind of knocked the air out of me and I say to myself you know I made it through three attacks in one night and they were awful close and here I am paralyzed and lying on the rocks at L-S-A Anaconda, looking up at the stars and how would that look. You know he'd have to say you know he was injured you know climbing out of his truck, rather than getting hit by I-E-D's or mortars. I was thankful to be alive.

-At first I thought I was thankful after I was able to get up, that whatever had hit the step, and it had to have been a piece of sharp metal to tear it off because it, it was only a chunk of the metal left on it. If that didn't hit the gas tank itself, and shrapnel from and I-E-D or mortar, it's very hot, and um and J-P 8 it's kind of, a little flammable. I was thinking that if this would have went in there and it may, it could have blown up the truck or it could have left a hole in the gas tank and I would have run out of gas in the middle of Baghdad.

That wouldn't have been so good. But I was happy that that was the only damage that we had, that the armor on the vehicle itself, this armor. I don't know where the vehicle is now actually but it's been in a couple of incidents that same vehicle. Nobody likes to drive it pretty much. It has, you know little divots in it and I can still see them from back on that day that all three of those attacks you know something hit that armor. Something hit the truck itself. Why it didn't hit the tires, why we didn't go flat, why it didn't punch a hole in the gas tank you know, that's for anyone to say. If the armor wasn't there, you know, it could have been a different story. I'm happy to have it.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 17 Feb. 2005

Length: 00:33

Name: Sgt. Jerry Hineman

Title: 227<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company

-I've been shot at since been four months with the 518<sup>th</sup> Guntruck Company and I've been double small arms fire. I-E-D's, I've had them in front of me and behind me but the first time actually getting hit, yeah it was my first time.

-Yeah, if the armor plating wouldn't have been there, all that metal and shrapnel would have came right on through the door and it would have ripped me up and maimed me for life or I would have been dead, bottom line.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 17 Feb. 2005

Length:

Name: Lt., Col., Robert Roth

Title: Battalion Commander, 4/64<sup>th</sup> Armor Regiment, 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 3<sup>rd</sup> ID

-These are the new, the newest off the line of the 1114s, the Army's up-armored vehicle program. The Army has kicked into high gear since O-I-F one. I can tell you that when we were, when we transitioned from combat to peacekeeping operations, I can tell you that we did a lot of our patrols in soft skinned vehicles and we didn't have the proper armor protection. If you look at these vehicles behind me you'll see even the turret, the gunner that sits up in the turret, he has armor protection around him. We didn't have that even for the first gulf war. So the gunner was vulnerable to an attack. This, he is no longer vulnerable. He has protection he needs to engage targets and to receive that first blast from a, either from an explosive device planted along the road or an R-P-G that potentially could hit the vehicle, so the protection level is much, much greater than what we had before. When we were doing, part of my scout platoon, when we were doing an operation and the scouts were moving covertly into an area to get eyes on what we believed to be a meeting location for A-I-F forces. They were compromised and in that process received fire from some of the security guards in the area. On the exfiltration out

one of the vehicles received a direct R-P-G hit. It hit the gunner's mount up top. The mount, the weapon mount 50 cal took most of the blast and the shrapnel though penetrated his arms pretty much because he had no ballistic other ballistic protection around him. If he would have had that ballistic protection at that time, it would have helped immensely. I can't say for sure if it would have absolutely 100 percent protected him but it would have done a lot better so you can tell the difference between what we had then and what we have now, much better.

-The Army has done a superb job of looking at what we had before and what we need now based upon the threat adaptor and how the threats trying to attack us. They've given us the equipment. They've given us the training that we need to go out there and take the fight to the enemy, not just obviously in a protection role, but in the training we need to deal with these insurgents that like to use explosive devices. We're much more confident to get off the vehicle, move mounted dismounted and better trained. So I just think all around it's a win-win situation.

-I can tell you that when we redeployed, we personally provided, we had some 1114s that we brought back with us. Those 1114s were quickly upgraded, sent over here in theater, to the soldiers that were in here. I can tell you that the speed that I saw, the urgency that the Army put into it and this is in 2003, was superb, was fantastic. My conversations to some of my counterparts over here that are getting ready to leave theater tell me that these vehicles provide excellent protection to the soldiers out in the field right now.

-Especially when you're talking about the new optics. You talk about the new add-on armor, and not just in these vehicles but in the 113 fleet, in the Bradley fleet. Across the board what they see the Army fielding is the equipment that allows them to do the job. That raises their morale and allows them to be much more aggressive in taking the fight to the enemy.

### **Defense Link Transcript**

Station: DVIDS Distribution

Date released: 9 December 2004

Name: Lt. Gen. Stephen Whitcomb

Title: Commanding General 3<sup>rd</sup> Army, CFLCC

(U.S. Department of Defense, 2004, December 9)

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: Fox News Channel

Date: 20 Dec. 2004

Length: 05:54

Name: Lt. Gen. Steve Whitcomb

Title: Commanding Officer, U.S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Army

-Good morning Mr. Rivera or evening on your time. Thanks for the opportunity to come to you and come to America and give you a quick burst on our efforts here in Kuwait. As

you mentioned I'm here in Kuwait at one of our field repair forward repair activities here in Kuwait that has a responsibility for up-armorizing our humvees and wheeled vehicles that we send north into Iraq. It's one of 10 facilities that we've got both in Kuwait and in Iraq and this one happens to be run by our great soldiers in slacks, our civilian workforce that works for Army Materiel Command. As you know sir this is not a new problem. In August of 2003 we saw the enemy beginning to take a different tactic as an approach to our force. They were not winning in head to head confrontations so they began to use the improvised explosive devices to attack our convoys, primarily our logistics convoys as they moved throughout the Iraq theater. So this effort, this realization that we had equipment that didn't meet the requirement of this new enemy was one that the Army recognized and began a full court press to expand our capabilities and build those capabilities to adapt to the enemy's fight. What we do at this facility is we add armor kits that are factory produced back in the United States to humvee vehicles, the vehicles that you see to my right and left rear. These are the types of vehicles that travel throughout Iraq, convoy escort vehicles, patrol vehicles, the types of light vehicle that's out on the road on a daily basis up in the Iraq theater or in Afghanistan where we also have responsibility. We've got roughly three types of armor that we provide on vehicles Mr. Rivera. One is as you see here. This is the level one up-armored humvee. It's a state of the art piece of equipment. It provides the occupants full 360-degree protection, protection a bubble if you will. Both the sides the tops and the bottoms as well as the special glass, ballistic glass gives the soldiers marines riding in this vehicle pretty much full protection. And as you can see we've also added a gun cupola, a protection for that soldier that's riding up observing where the vehicle is headed. This is our state of the art. We have.

-Yeah, the second that we have is what we call level two. It is a, also a factory produced armor kit that is provided. It provides protection as you can see on the doors, down along the crew compartment front back. It also provides ballistic glass and that's the type of vehicle that this facility and the other nine facilities in Kuwait and Iraq are strapping on to existing humvees. The one on my right is a new production vehicle. It comes out as you see it.

-Well there's a third type of vehicles Mr. Rivera that we haven't talked about that gives you a level three hardening. It is strap on, welded on, bolted on steel that offers protection to our forces that are up in Iraq. Our goal and it has been for several months. This is not a new effort. As I've said it's been an ongoing one. Our goal is no vehicle is going into Iraq from Kuwait that does not have some type of armor protection or hardening on it. And we're meeting that goal and have been for the last several months.

-Well the humvees and trucks that go forward, I wouldn't say 100 percent but if they don't have it they are not driven. We have trucks haul them up into theater and in those cases where we don't put it on those vehicles in all probability will stay on a base camp. They may be a supply truck. They may be a signal van or the type of vehicle that is not going to be running the road in Iraq so it's in the high 90 percent level.

-Thank you sir.



## **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: Fox News Channel

Date: 18 Feb. 2005

Length: 4:15

Name: Brig., Gen., Kevin Leonard;

Title: Commanding General, Army Materiel Command, Forward Southwest Asia (C-4)

Name: Brig., Gen., Bill Johnson

Title: Commanding General, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group

-BG Johnson:

Well, you did pretty good. Good morning from Kuwait. We're actually at the port and behind me you see the U-S-N-S Capella, which just brought in 302 of the brand new up-armored humvees.

-BG Leonard:

Right they are, they do provide 360-degree protection for our soldiers against small arms fire, rocket propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices.

-BG Leonard:

Well absolutely, we were well on our way in this effort long before that question was asked to the Secretary of Defense. Since then we've continued this effort. In fact, if I could take you back to 2003 there were about 250 of these up-armored humvees in the theater. Today there are more than 6,000 up-armored humvees and more than 28,000 tactical wheeled vehicles that have protection on them.

-BG Johnson:

And although the armoring is the big story it's, there's much more to it than that. We're adjusting our training as we send convoys into Iraq. We interview the convoy commanders when we come back. We learn from what they've learned. We adjust our tactics, techniques and procedures and incorporate anything we can incorporate including the armor to protect our soldiers.

-BG Johnson:

Steve, I'm gonna let Kevin answer that.

-BG Leonard:

We're talking about the up-armored humvee. When we're talking about the up-armored humvee, all of that is done with really two manufacturers in the United States: A-M General and Ogera Hess and then those vehicles are shipped over here where we do what we call here in Kuwait dealer prep. We kick the tires, check the fluids and prepare that vehicle for issue to our soldiers. We're talking about add-on armor kits. Those are manufactured throughout the United States at various locations. Some kits are applied in the United States before a vehicle is shipped. Other kits are applied right here in Kuwait.

-BG Leonard:

The final product for an up-armored humvee is around 150,000 dollars. For the level of

protection it provides our soldier, I think it's priceless.

-BG Johnson:

Right, our responsibility here in Kuwait is to support all of the soldiers up in Iraq so they can focus on the fight.

-BG Leonard:

This armoring effort, I want to stress that this armoring effort is a great part, story of partnership with American industry throughout the Department of Defense and then of course those of us here deployed, a great team effort. If you thought about a new car for example, it takes industry maybe about two years to plan a new car and then bring it out. We've done, completed this part so far, this effort. We've turned this around in under 18 months and I think that's a tremendous success story.

-BG Johnson:

Thank you very much.

-BG Leonard:

Thank you very much.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: KRIV (Fox 26, Houston)

Date: 18 Feb. 2005

Length: 2:35

Name: Brig., Gen., Kevin Leonard;

Title: Commanding General, Army Materiel Command, Forward Southwest Asia (C-4)

Name: Brig., Gen., Bill Johnson

Title: Commanding General, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group

-BG Johnson:

Good morning, greetings from Kuwait. I'm Brigadier General Bill Johnson and I command these ports, like the one you're in, you see us in here as well as all the transportation assets and services Iraq.

-BG Leonard:

I'm Brigadier General Kevin Leonard. I'm in charge of logistics here in Kuwait.

-BG Leonard:

Well if we look back to 2003 there were about 250 up-armored humvees operating in this theater. Today we have more than 6,000 up-armored humvees and more than 28,000 tactical wheeled vehicles with armor on them. So we've come a long way in a relatively short period of time, a great partnership with American industry, the Army Materiel Command, throughout the Department of Defense really as we've taken on this task of protecting our loved ones, our sons and daughters our friends.

-BG Johnson:

And if you look behind us you see the U-S-N-S Capella. It left Charleston, South Carolina the end of January and it's berthing as we speak. On board it has 302 brand new up-armored humvees that we've brought over for force protection and to protect our soldiers.

-BG Leonard:

I think it's hard for us to say whether or not the media has blown it out or proportion. What I can say is that we're doing everything humanly possible to protect our soldiers. My daughter is a soldier. I want her to come home. The rest of us, all of us here are in this together and again the support from the American people back home has been fantastic.

-BG Johnson:

But it's also a package. The armor is very important. But we also interview every convoy as it comes back out of Iraq and we, based on what we hear from those convoy commanders, we adjust our training. We adjust our tactics, techniques and procedures to equip our soldiers as best we can for their safety and security in Iraq.

-BG Leonard:

Absolutely, again everything possible.

-BG Leonard:

Thank you Sir.

-BG Johnson:

Thank you.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: KWTX (CBS: Waco, Temple, Killeen)

Date: 18 Feb. 2005

Length:

Name: Brig., Gen., Kevin Leonard;

Title: Commanding General, Army Material Command, Forward Southwest Asia (C-4)

Name: Brig., Gen., Bill Johnson

Title: Commanding General, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group

-BG Johnson:

Good morning. I'm Brigadier General Bill Johnson and I command the ports, as well as all of the transportation assets in Kuwait that feed into Iraq. Welcome to the port. This is one of three ports that we have in Kuwait that actually deploy and redeploy and sustains all of the forces up in Iraq. Over my left shoulder in a few minutes you'll see the U-S-N-S Capella which is a fast sealift ship which will be berthing here shortly. It's coming from Charleston, South Carolina with 302 uparmored humvees, and this is very important cargo one of our fastest and most capable ships that is bringing in equipment that will protect our forces. General Leonard.

-BG Leonard:

Good morning, I'm Brigadier General Kevin Leonard. Bill has told you where we are today. I'd like to take just a second to tell you about where we came from. If you go back to 2003, there were about 250 armored vehicles operating in this theater. Today there are more than 28,000 armored vehicles operating throughout the theater. It's a success story. It's about partnership with industry, the Department of Defense and the combatant commander.

-BG Leonard:

Well absolutely. Again the words I used were team effort, industry back home. For example, when this effort began the production of uparmored humvees was probably around 50 a month. That was back in 2003. Today we're at 450 uparmored humvees a month moving to 550 uparmored humvees a month: tremendous success story.

-BG Johnson:

Kevin if I could maybe start with that. I'll tell you, it's not just the armoring. I command about 5,000 soldiers who are driving into Iraq on a daily basis. It's about interviewing convoy commanders as they return from every mission and adjusting our training to what we find out. It's also evolving our tactics, techniques and procedures so that we are sending soldiers up as best trained as we can send them into Iraq. And it's also using any method at our disposal in order to maintain the safety of our soldiers. We take this very very seriously.

-BG Leonard:

I would only echo Bill's comments here. We're doing everything humanly possible to protect our soldiers. We want our soldiers, our sons and daughters, husbands and wives to come home.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: MSNBC

Date: 18 Feb, 2005

Length: 3:40

Name: Brig., Gen., Kevin Leonard

Title: Commanding General, Army Materiel Command, Forward Southwest Asia (C-4)

-Thanks Randy, it's good to be here.

-Randy, it has happened. Every vehicle that operates outside of a forward operating base in Iraq has at least level-three armor or better to conduct those operations, so we've met that objective. I just would like to take a moment to talk about how far this has come, this whole effort. If you went back to 2003, there were about 250 armored vehicles, tactical wheeled vehicles operating in the theater. Today there are more than 28,000 tactical wheeled vehicles with some form of armor on them operating throughout the theater.

-Absolutely not, there are no discrepancies whatsoever. The Marines on the ground are treated the same as everybody else. There is a fair and equitable distribution of the up-

armored humvees. By the way, I should add that I'm not at Camp Arifjan. I'm at the port here, one of our ports here in Kuwait, where behind me one of our ships is about to download 300 brand new up-armored humvees.

-Well the first thing I'd like to do is take a little bit of exception with the description hillbilly. We call that level three armor. It's about ¼ inch rolled homogeneous armor, and it was designed as a stop gap measure to help us bridge the gap in our tactical wheeled vehicle protection effort as we develop the kits and bought more up-armored humvees to protect our soldiers. It does a good job of defense against small arms and the common prevalent threat that we're operating in.

-Well, we work long days, hard days as you know. I, as a logistics officer here in Kuwait, I don't have a lot of soldiers directly underneath my command, but I think my friend Bill Johnson who commands the 143<sup>rd</sup> Transportation Command here would say that his soldiers get up in the morning. They conduct services on their vehicles. They conduct mission rehearsals and then they move forward with the various convoys into Iraq, fully prepared to execute those missions.

-There is absolutely nothing I would ask for or from the Secretary of Defense. In my view we're doing everything humanly possible to protect our soldiers, our sons and daughters and to get them home safely.

-Thank you sir.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: WFTX (Fox 25, Boston)

Date: 18 Feb, 2005

Length: 2:35

Name: Brig., Gen., Kevin Leonard;

Title: Commanding General, Army Materiel Command, Forward Southwest Asia (C-4)

Name: Brig., Gen., Bill Johnson

Title: Commanding General, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group

-BG Leonard:

Yes, the new humvees are here. They've been arriving really since last year. Right now they're arriving at a rate of about 450 a month. We expect that to increase to 550 a month. When we just talk about up-armored humvees there are a little more than 6,000 in use in the theater at this time.

-BG Johnson:

And if you look over behind us, you see the U-S-N-S Capella. The Capella left the United States at the end of January and it sailed and has berthed just a few minutes ago. And on board the Capella are 302 brand new up-armored humvees to go north to protect our soldiers.

-BG Leonard:

So Bill has told you where we're at right now today downloading these humvees. If you went back to 2003 we had about 250 total. Today if you look at all of our wheeled vehicles we have about 28,000 wheeled vehicles that have some level of armor on them.

BG Leonard:

The up-armored humvee makes a tremendous difference in the amount of protection that it provides to our soldiers. It has ballistic glass and it has protection against small arms fire, rocket propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices, so we know that it helps keep soldiers alive.

BG Johnson: And armoring is a big part of the overall protection plan, but we also incorporate training techniques where we interview every convoy as it comes back out of Iraq. We incorporate everything that we learn from these convoy commanders. We adjust tactics, techniques and procedures to ensure that our soldiers are as prepared as they absolutely can be on their next trip into Iraq over.

BG Johnson:

Well I command about 5,000 soldiers here in Kuwait who drive daily from Kuwait into Iraq and I'll tell you, based on what I've just said about the training, the tactics, techniques and procedures and what we're doing for them in armoring both the level one, two and three, they feel very comfortable with the package that we're giving them and that it's going to protect them as they engage the enemy.

BG Johnson:

Thank you.

BG Leonard:

Thank you.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: WGCL (CBS 46, Atlanta)

Date: 18 Feb, 2005

Length: 6:45

Name: Brig., Gen., Kevin Leonard;

Title: Commanding General, Army Materiel Command, Forward Southwest Asia (C-4)

Name: Brig., Gen., Bill Johnson

Title: Commanding General, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group

-BG Johnson:

Well Charles, this is Bill Johnson. I command the port which you see us located at right now, as well as all of the trucks that service Kuwait into Iraq. We do the deployment, the redeployment and the sustainment of all the forces who are fighting up in Iraq. So yes to us, logistics is a very important part of what we do. We do our job here in Kuwait so the warfighters up north can focus on doing their job.

-BG Leonard:

Well Bill, I'd like to respond to that at least initially. Let me take you back to 2003. In 2003 there were about 250 armored wheeled vehicles operating in the theater. Today there are more than 28,000 tactical wheeled vehicles with armor protection on them operating throughout the theater. We talked about the ship behind us downloading some uparmored humvees. We've been receiving uparmored humvees at about 450 a month. That number has gone up to 550 a month. I believe that the American soldiers is about the best equipped that he has ever been and clearly we're moving forward doing everything humanly possible to provide the best protection possible to our soldiers.

-BG Johnson:

And If you look behind us you see the U-S-N-S Capella. The Capella left Charleston, South Carolina at the end of January and it sailed here at over 30 knots to get 302 brand

new uparmored humvees here to the port so that we can distribute it to the forces up north.

-BG Johnson:

Well it's a constantly evolving process. I send convoys up into Iraq everyday, and as they come back into Kuwait we interview the convoy commanders to see what they have encountered. We adjust our training. We adjust our tactics, techniques and procedures to make sure that the next convoy going up is as protected. They key word here is we're evolving. We're constantly evolving our training and we're constantly evolving our force protection for our soldiers.

-BG Leonard:

There is another word that I would add and that's partnership. We're in partnership with American Industry throughout the Department of Defense. As we deal with the emerging threat or the changes in threats that have occurred throughout this campaign.

BG Leonard:

First let me say that I'm glad that I serve in an Army where we can ask the difficult questions of our leadership. And so the answer, the first part, the answer to that question is absolutely, it was on okay question, no doubt about it. Now, our effort at armoring and

protecting our soldiers have begun long before that question was asked and continues even to this very day. Again, if I took you back to 2003, we had about 250 tactical wheeled vehicles that were armored, and now more than 28,000, so a tremendous progress in this effort.

-BG Johnson:

Absolutely, Atlanta is also home of Third Army, Patton's Own, which is the Army headquarters here in Kuwait. But yes, there are a lot of Georgia National Guard soldiers as well as Army Reserve soldiers and of course our strong active component that is at Fort Benning, Fort Stewart. The Third Infantry Division is just deployed into theater and they are almost completely up into Iraq at this point. In fact my son in law is in one of the convoys headed up to Baghdad as we speak.

-BG Johnson:

Oh absolutely, we just sent home the aviation detachment from the Georgia National Guard. They served honorably and flew us safely for many hours and to many destinations here in Kuwait. They just went home so hopefully they were welcomed home with due ceremony.

-BG Leonard:

Absolutely, I've passed through Fort Benning more than once and it was a great part of my life and the soldiers here from Georgia are doing a fantastic job.

BG Johnson:

Well I tell you, I command about 5,000 soldiers here in Kuwait. They go up into Iraq everyday on convoys carrying deployments, redeployments as well as sustaining the force up north. We look at every convoy. We do an interview with the convoy commander, make sure that we've learned from what they've experienced up north. We're adjusting our training. We're adjusting our tactics, techniques and procedures and we're using anything that we can in order to protect our soldiers. And that's in addition to the armoring effort that General Leonard was just talking about.

### **CFLCC Armor Interview Transcript**

Station: WUSA (Washington D.C.)

Date: 18 Feb, 2005

Length: 6:24

Name: Brig., Gen., Kevin Leonard;

Title: Commanding General, Army Materiel Command, Forward Southwest Asia (C-4)

Name: Brig., Gen., Bill Johnson

Title: Commanding General, 7<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group

-BG Leonard:

The way I would answer that question is this. Back in 2003 as the war changed if you will and we moved into a counter insurgency, the Army began to recognize that problem. At that time there was a production of about 25 or so uparmored humvees a month coming off the production line. The Army quickly took action and today there are about 450 a month coming off the production line moving to 550 a month. I would phrase this as a success story. If you look to where we were then and where we are now, today there are more than 28,000 armored tactical wheeled vehicles in theater.

-BG Leonard:

Well there are somewhere around 7,000 that don't have armor. Now none of those that, those without armor rather, do not operate off of an operating base. And we're continuing to work this every single day as much as is humanly possible to protect our soldiers. I think the effort will continue as long as we continue to receive kits and we have the level three steel.

-BG Johnson:



And I would add to that, it's not just armor; although armor is very very important, but it's a complete package. We interview every convoy commander once they come off of a convoy and we see what they've encountered, and we adjust our training to where we adapt to that. We adapt our tactics, techniques and procedures as we train to where they're ready for anything that the enemy has also evolved and changed to. We're incorporating any mechanisms that we can to protect our soldiers, including the armor.

-BG Leonard:

It's a whole list of.. Keeping our soldiers alive. Getting folks, Taking care of our friends, our sons, our daughters, our husbands and wives. That's what we want to do.

-BG Leonard:

Well I've certainly heard the soldiers describe, use that term hillbilly or mad max. I would take issue with that. The level three armor that we have is an approved D-O-D pattern that is cut to specification and provides a level of protection against small arms and improvised explosive devices. Now, what it lacks is the ballistic glass and that's the main difference between level three and level two. So we say it's level three hardening and our intent is to move away from that, level three as more level two kits become available. We're just going to keep working on that until we can get just every tactical wheeled vehicle to level two or above.

-BG Johnson:

And I command all of the assets in Kuwait that move into Iraq and I have a lot of soldiers who are riding in level three hardening. I've gone on several convoys personally and I have ridden in vehicles that have level three hardening and I felt very comfortable.

-BG Leonard:

Well I don't know if you can see it but behind us there is an uparmored humvee and then there is another humvee with level two armor on it. So that's just the humvees. Beyond that, the rest of our tactical wheeled vehicle fleet, our five-tons, our heavy equipment transporters are also receiving add-on armor. So when you talk about wheeled vehicles, that's what we're doing. We're getting that level of protection, ballistic glass and armor added to each and every one of those. That's the goal and that's the stated purpose of the Secretary of Defense, the Chief of Staff of the Army on down.

-BG Johnson:

And I don't think you can see it coming into the shot yet, but over my left shoulder is the U-S-N-S Capella, which is a fast sealift ship. It left Charleston the end of January and it's arriving right now and it has 302 new uparmored humvees for our soldiers.

-BG Leonard:

That's a difficult question to answer. Insurgencies are difficult. I'm not gonna stand here and pretend that I have all the answers. What I will say is this, that here in Kuwait, our job is to support the warfighter and we're going to continue to do the very best we can at providing that level of protection for our soldiers.

-BG Johnson:

And we do that so that the combatant commanders up in Iraq can focus on the fight. They know that we've got their support. We've got their supplies. We've got their force rotations. They can focus on the fight.

-BG Johnson:

I'm a commander of, as I've said earlier, about 5,000 troops and, here in Kuwait. We're making runs everyday into Iraq both for deployment, redeployment and sustaining the force. And I'll tell you that the morale of the soldiers are high, particularly after the elections. They feel like we're over here for a very definite purpose. They feel good about the mission. They feel good about their training and their protection and I would again judge the morale high.

-BG Johnson:

Again, I don't go up into Iraq as a matter of course. I've been up on several occasions. We're hearing news reports just as you're hearing from Iraq and I'll have to let you judge from that over.

### **CFLCC Radio Package Transcript**

Station: SRTV

Date released: 15 Feb, 2005

Length: 01:50

Producer: Chase Spears

Title: CFLCC Broadcast Producer

### **Suggested Lead:**

Contractors and service members are working around the clock to put armor on tactical vehicles before they drive into Iraq. Specialist Chase Spears reports that their efforts are giving the Army's fleet a tough new look.

### **Narrative:**

As part of an overall Army effort to make sure that no vehicle goes into Iraq without armor, armor shops across Kuwait are giving the Army's fleet of medium and heavy duty trucks an armored makeover. Now with more level one armored humvees coming out of factories in the states, the Army has been able to scale back on level three humvee armor and focus more on armoring the Army's fleet of heavy duty trucks. In the last few months armor shops in the U.S. and Kuwait have been able to design and build armor kits for several heavy duty truck models that are used every day in Iraq. The overall up-armor effort has come a long way in a short period of time. Chuck Wentworth is the programs manager and liaison officer for add on armor programs in Southwest Asia.

### **Soundbite:**

If you go back to the genesis of the program the Army was tasked with providing protection for our soldiers about 23 months ago. So we've taken a process that normally takes five to seven years to accomplish. We've accomplished that in about 23 months

with light medium and heavy vehicles.

**Narrative:**

In that short time the Army has worked closely with industry to armor everything from humvees to large trucks and even fuel tankers. These efforts are making the road ahead safer for troops serving in Iraq. From Kuwait I'm Specialist Chase Spears.

**Suggested Tag:**

With production of level one and two armor kits in the states quickly catching up with the demand, the Army plans to completely phase out level three armor production in the near future.

**CFLCC Radio Package Transcript**

Station: SRTV, Pentagon Channel, AFN-Iraq)

Date released: 11 Feb, 2005

Length: 01:17

Producer: Chase Spears

Title: CFLCC Broadcast Producer

**Suggested Lead:**

The same skills that help keep the Navy afloat can save soldiers' lives in Iraq. Specialist Chase Spears tells us how a group of Navy welders is helping the Army meet its up-armor goals.

**Narrative:**

The Kuwaiti desert isn't a place you'd expect to find a Naval ship repair Detachment. But at Camp Buehring service members in Navy blues have joined with soldiers from the 276<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company to put armor on vehicles driving north into Iraq. When the Army needed more metal workers to help harden vehicles, 15 sailors from the U.S.S Emory S. Land volunteered to leave ship and put their talents to use on dry land. The 15 member Naval detachment works side by side with soldiers to make sure that no vehicle needing armor goes into Iraq without it. Lieutenant Junior Grade Christopher O'Leary is the officer in charge of the Naval detachment.

**Soundbite:**

It turns out we're pretty ideally suited for this mission. We've picked it up pretty fast. We work well with the 276<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company who owns this shop. And we work three shifts, 24 hours a day and we make pre-made armor kits and then we weld armor right on the vehicles themselves too.

**Narrative:**

These sailors normally help to keep ships afloat. For now they're glad to help keep troops alive. Specialist Chase Spears, Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

**Suggested Tag:**

With stateside armor production increasing, the Naval Detachment should be able to return to their ship within a couple of months.

**CNN Interview Transcript**

Date released: 20 March, 2005

Producer: CNN Late Edition with Wolf Blitzer  
(CNN Transcripts, 2005)

## VITA

Charles M. Spears was born in Orlando, Florida, on December 12, 1980. He attended Hiawassee Christian Academy through the third grade. He was then home-schooled and graduated in 1998. He attended Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee, and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Telecommunications, Summa Cum Laude in 2001.

In 2003 Mr. Spears enlisted in the U.S. Army to work as a Public Affairs Specialist: Broadcaster. He was assigned to the 14<sup>th</sup> Public Affairs Detachment at Fort Carson, Colorado. From there he deployed to conduct broadcast operations and assist with media on the battlefield training events in the countries of Kuwait and Jordan. In 2006 he graduated from the Army Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia, and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. In all, Lieutenant Spears has completed six military schools and graduated with honors from the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Maryland, and the Signal Officer Leaders College at Fort Gordon, Georgia.

Lieutenant Spears is currently assigned as a Platoon Leader with the 55<sup>th</sup> Combat Camera Company at Fort Meade, Maryland. He completed the Master of Science degree in Communication with a major in Journalism at the University of Tennessee in May of 2008.

The author is married to the former Lori Boden. Together they have two sons: Xavier and Austin.