

Tip of The Point

"Teamwork and personal rigidity just don't mix."

- John C. Maxwell

Calendar

Jan. 9 – Space-A travel briefing at 10 a.m. in Quantico's Little Hall

Jan. 18 – Female Marine cover survey concludes

Jan. 21 – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday

Jan. 21 – Presidential inauguration

The Point

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MC2S gains feedback from patrol leaders

"The fundamental problem DOD faces is that the deliberate process through which weapons systems and Information Technology are acquired does not match the speed at which new IT capabilities are being introduced in today's information age." – Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Department of Defense Policies and Procedures for the Acquisition of Information Technology

As the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Command and Control Systems and Applications (MC2SA) Tactical Service Oriented Architecture (TSOA) project officer, Major B.J. Sams traveled to Afghanistan's Regional Command Southwest (RC-SW) to capture feedback on the latest rapid response and integration (R2I) developed application for the PM Marine Enhanced Rifle Squad Enhanced Company Operations (ECO) software suite.

The driving objectives for R2I efforts are to provide command-and-control (C2) capability to the operational forces in a faster manner than traditional acquisition approaches and constant interaction with C2 operators throughout the development process. A significant portion of these objectives involve validating nascent products to Marines, capturing their feedback and incorporating their responses into the next iteration while employing agile software development methods. By working closely with warfighters, software developers adjust the direction and outcomes for particular software products.

Typically, Marines can see the changes based upon their feedback within the next three to four weeks, dependent upon the scope of their comments. By adhering to a three-to-four week timeline, R2I retains the Marines' trust that their input is being included in the development, which in turn assures their continued involvement.

For this particular trip, according to Major Sams, Marines from Lima Company, 3rd Battalion 9th Marines provided "valuable and relevant remarks" concerning the latest build of the Patrol Planning application being built by SPAWAR Pacific software developers. Based upon the Company Movement and Assessment Tool (CMAT) developed in Afghanistan last summer, the Patrol Planning application lets Marines visually map out their patrol routes, build their warning orders and search patrols from previous squads. Information provided can be updated in the company COC during actual patrol execution or as part of the patrol debrief once operations are complete.

Additionally, Marines can download their "honesty traces" from a handheld GPS device and display their actual patrol routes taken instead of trying to recall specifically where they traveled. The Lima Company participants noted this as a key capability. They said they typically have to guess on a two-dimensional map where any significant activity or event occurred post-patrol.

Future versions of the patrolling application might include the ability to retain pictures and/or biometric data related to the patrol. This data could then be queried to build the situational awareness of the next patrol within the company or for the next force that occupies the area of operations.

For more information concerning TSOA and other command-and-control R2I developed applications, contact Major Sams at bradley.sams@usmc.mil or 432-4022.

MCTSSA welcomes new Sergeant Major

MCTSSA received a new Sergeant Major in a relief and appointment and retirement ceremony held Nov. 30 under rainy skies. There Sergeant Major Phillip Fascetti, who joined MCTSSA in June 2011, relinquished his post to Sergeant Major Kenneth Warren.

“From my perspective,” said MCTSSA Commanding Officer Colonel Chris Snyder, “the Sergeant Major is the heart and soul of every unit. The Sergeant Major is the core of what goes on; the feeling that comes from the unit; the success or failure that any CO might achieve in their mission...that’s really the bottom line.”

At the retirement ceremony, Major General Joseph Osterman – describing Sergeant Major Fascetti as “one of the finest Marines” he had ever met – spoke of Fascetti’s many accomplishments during his career, especially his tenure and efforts in Afghanistan:

“Take a look at it from a tactical prospective,” Osterman said. “I had 13,000 Marines spread all over the battlefield. [Fascetti] knew me so well; he knew exactly what the tactics were. All I had to do was give him two or three sentences, and he was gone. [He’s] a phenomenal man who has done phenomenal things throughout his career and made an incredible impact on Marines throughout our Marine Corps.”

Prior to joining MCTSSA, Warren was the Sergeant Major for Security Battalion, Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

MCTSSA’s education junkies

Driven by its unique mission, Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Agency’s (MCTSSA) workforce is one of the most highly educated groups within the Marine Corps. Many Marines selected for the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) are, upon graduation, routinely assigned to MCTSSA’s high-tech operations as a “payback” for the opportunity to receive the advanced degree. Notwithstanding the NPS graduates, however, many of MCTSSA’s personnel have earned multiple higher degrees. This includes David and Nancy Rathgeber.

Nancy, Technical Support Officer for the Common Aviation Command and Control System, described her husband, Dave, MCTSSA’s Deputy Director of Test and Certification Group, as “an education junkie.”

Last September, Dave received a Bachelor of Science (BS) degree in computer science, adding to his previously earned Doctor of Business Administration, Master of Business Administration, Master of Military Arts and Sciences and two other bachelor’s degrees in science and music – as well as a certificate in systems engineering.

Graduating with Dave, however, was Nancy – adding this new BS in computer science to her previously earned bachelor’s degrees in Spanish and French and certificate in systems engineering.

Completing their computer science degrees took four years, taking one course at a time. The knowledge gained, Nancy said, is even more valuable than she anticipated: “The computer science skills I use regularly,” she said. “The degree definitely helps me in the technical aspects of my job and in managing technical people on my team.”

As for Dave, “I’m done with formal degrees, but I will always do things for my own interest,” he said, referring to a vintner certification he has been eyeing at a local community college.

Space-available travel brief by Air Mobility Command

Are you interested on learning how to fly all over the world for almost no cost to you? Air Mobility Command will hold a space-available (Space-A) briefing from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Jan. 9 at Quantico’s Little Hall. The presentation will include Space-A information and tips covering eligibility, locations, document check, registration, flight schedules and checking in.

The briefing is open to all units, military personnel and family members. No RSVP is needed. For more information, contact Frances Seybold, MCCDC and CD&I Family Readiness Officer, at Frances.seybold@usmc.mil.

Command conducts female Marine cover survey

Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) is conducting a survey to find out what female Marines think about new dress and service covers or caps. According to the MCSC Product Manager for Infantry Combat Equipment, the purpose of the survey is to obtain user feedback. The acquired data will be used to formulate recommended changes to the current caps. All female Marines are invited to take the Improved Female Dress and Service Cap survey online at one of these links:

Command Access Card (CAC)-enabled users, use this site:

<https://usmcsurveys.natick.army.mil/>

Non-CAC-enabled users or those with CAC issues, use this site:

<https://surveys.natick.army.mil/marines/cap.nsf>

The survey ends Jan. 18.

[Panetta thanks Congress, seeks end to sequestration](#)

Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta expressed his gratitude to U.S. lawmakers for delaying sequestration and voiced optimism for finding a permanent way to avoid an additional \$500 billion in budget cuts.

[DOD heightens training, prevention to target human trafficking](#)

To spark awareness and vigilance against a growing global human rights crisis, President Barack Obama has proclaimed January as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.

Submissions accepted for *The Point*

Each month, the Command's electronic newsletter *The Point* brings Marines, Civilian Marines and families the latest news in Marine Corps Systems Command. Topics include security, safety and features from contingency organizations, program management offices, program managers, deputy commanders, assistant commanders, support staff and many other teams. To submit an article for this newsletter, send it to mcscpao@usmc.mil. Photographs and graphics are not published. Submission deadlines are the second-to-last Thursday of the month. The next deadline is Jan. 24. *The Point* is distributed the first Tuesday of each month.