

49th Transportation Battalion

Truck

On 1 May 1936, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 1st Battalion, 49th Quartermaster Regiment was constituted in the Regular Army. It was redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 1st Battalion, 49th Quartermaster Truck Regiment on 1 April 1942, and then activated at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri on 1 May 1942. It was reorganized and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 49th Quartermaster Battalion, Mobile on 14 December 1943 and its lettered companies, A-D, were redesignated 3541st – 3544th, respectively and followed different lineages.

The 49th Quartermaster Battalion subsequently deployed to France as part of the follow-on forces in the wake of the Normandy invasion. The battalion took part in the Allied campaigns in Northern France and Central Europe, earning campaign streamers for its colors, in both. The 49th remained in Europe and after the war and was inactivated in France on 8 April 1946.

Quartermaster truck units were given to the Transportation Corps following World War II. While on the inactive status, it was converted and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 49th Transportation Corps Truck Battalion on 1 August 1946. It was later redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 49th Transportation Battalion on 11 June 1954.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 49th Transportation Battalion (Truck) was reactivated at Camp Gordon, Georgia on 3 August 1954, and then inactivated at Camp Gordon, Georgia a year later on 1 September 1955.

The 49th was reactivated in Wurzburg, Germany on 5 December 1955 and then reorganized and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 49th Transportation Battalion (Movement Control) on 21 September 1959. It was inactivated in Germany on 1 March 1968.

Movement Control

The battalion was redesignated as the 49th Transportation Center and activated at Fort Hood, Texas, as part of the 13th Corps Support Command (COSCOM) on 1 March 1982. It became the Movement Control Center for III Corps.

In August of 1990, the subordinate movement control teams deployed to Saudi Arabia, where they were attached to the 330th Transportation Center in support of XVIII Airborne Corps. The 49th Transportation Center eventually deployed to Saudi Arabia and was initially assigned to the XVIII Airborne Corps and then to the 22nd Support Command in support of Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. The 49th Transportation Center earned the Meritorious Unit Commendation, streamer embroidered SOUTHWEST ASIA, and campaign streamers for both the Defense of Saudi Arabia and the Liberation and Defense of Kuwait.

During 1993-94, LTC Mary Patricia Capin served as the Battalion Commander. In 1993, elements of the 49th deployed with other units of the 13th Corps Support Command as part of the Joint Task Force supporting Operation RESTORE HOPE in Somalia. The 49th was awarded the Joint Meritorious Unit Award, streamer embroidered RESTORE HOPE.

In December 1995, the 49th Battalion deployed a planning team to Europe to help plan the deployment into Bosnia. This team then became the nucleus around which the Joint Movements Center for the operation was built. From then until the fall of 1998, the battalion has had Soldiers continually deployed to different regions of the world.

The 256th Movement Control Team, commanded by CPT Matthew M. Schwind, served as MCT Tuzla in Hungary from December 1996 to May 1997.

In April 1997, the 49th had six subordinate units deployed to six countries, performing movement control operations in support of various exercises and contingency operations.

In December 1998, III Corps hosted a War Fighter exercise at Fort Hood, Texas. This event introduced Force XXI concepts onto the Corps battlefield. The exercise was a computer simulation of a battle in Korea. Corps Battle Simulation (CBS) and the Combat Service Support Training Simulation System (CSSTSS) were the combat and combat service support models used during the exercise. One of the many III Corps units participating in the exercise was the 49th Transportation Center. The 49th was the movement control center (MCC) for the Corps.

Its units consisted of the following:

- 80th Trans Detachment
- 151st Trans Detachment "Battlin Bowlers"
- 259th Trans Detachment "Desert Phantoms"
- 571st Movement Control Detachment (Deployed)
- 289th Quartermaster Company
- 565th Quartermaster Company
- 263rd Maintenance Company

It was redesignated as the 49th Movement Control Battalion (Corps) in October 1999.

Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) I

Although the 49th Movement Control Battalion would not deploy to the war, all of its movement control teams (MCT) would. In September 2002, six soldiers of the 80th MCT, Commanded by MAJ Steven Shea, deployed to Djibiuti, Africa to run a port operation in support of the Global War on Terrorism. On 14 December, it deployed straight to Kuwait to fall under the 53rd MCB to run the airport of debarkation (APOD) operation at Kuwait City International Airport (KCIA). The 259th MCT, commanded by CPT Clinton Bohannon, the 151st MCT, commanded by CPT Desiree Ledan, and the remainder of the 80th MCT, led by CPT Swanke, also deployed from Fort Hood to join MAJ Shea at the

APOD. The 80th MCT provided command and control for as many as seven MCTs operating at the APOD. This was the largest movement control node in Kuwait.

The 259th MCT manifested the passengers for convoys. The goal was for the arrivals to depart within three hours of their arrival. No one remained over night at CAMP WOLF. This was made difficult by the fact that some units arrived with no further destination than Kuwait. The TOC had to call around to identify what command and camp the unit was assigned.

The 151st MCT organized the trucks and buses into convoys to move the new arrivals and their equipment to their assigned camps. Another problem arose over the fact that some of the units arrived with only orders for Kuwait with no further destination. The terminal facilities were not designed to hold soldiers overnight so the MCTs had to move them on as fast as they could.

OIF II

The 49th Movement Control Battalion, under the command of LTC Susan Davidson, deployed to Iraq and replaced the 27th Movement Control Battalion at LSA ANACONDA. It fell under the control of COL James Chambers' 13th COSCOM, also from Fort Hood. The 49th MCB assumed responsibility for coordinating requests and providing in-transit visibility for all air and ground transportation with 31 MCTs throughout Iraq, from Umm Qsar in the south to the Trukish border. The MCTs had to coordinate requests and track transportation in their areas. They tracked 250 convoys of over 3,000 vehicles daily. They also had to monitor enemy activity to ensure convoys were safe to travel down the routes. The 49th MCB also controlled the air movement of US Air Force C-130s, C-141s, C-17s and C-5s in and out of Iraq. It has an air movement operation called "Spearhead Aviation" which involves the transportation of Soldiers and supplies on Army C-23 Sherpas. They had only limited success with Iraqi Rail System since the enemy had blown several bridges.

The 13th COSCOM held a VTC every morning Monday through Friday and COL Chambers would always turn back to LTC Davidson for confirmation. 1LT Abel Hernandez was the night battle captain on duty Thursday night, 8 April 2004, when the reports of the blown bridges came in. After the first bridge was blown, another came in. At first, he thought it was the same report until he checked the grid coordinates. He realized they were two different bridges and then another report came in of a blown bridge. By the fourth blown bridge, he realized he had to wake up BG James Chambers, 13th COSCOM Commander, and also called the MCTs to stop all traffic. By the report of the sixth blown bridge, Chambers arrived. That Good Friday, the engineers laid down a temporary bridge. They also had to fly Soldiers down to Scania to drive the fuelers since KBR drivers had quit. Anaconda was going black on fuel. LTC Davidson came up with the alternate routes. On Good Friday, the insurgents ambushed convoys all through the Sunni Triangle causing the greatest loss of life among truck drivers. In one ambush on Good Friday, the 724th lost eight KBR drivers and three military truck drivers captured or killed. During the VTC when Chambers announced the loss of life, Hernandez remembered that he looked like he had lost one of his own sons.

As a consequence of the roads having been closed, a backlog of supplies built up in the Corps Distribution Center waiting for delivery and when the trucks could roll again there were not enough assets to deliver all the supplies needed. LTC Davidson initiated a meeting between the combat units and Transporters to determine the priorities of what needed to be hauled to the FOBs. LTC Cotton Henderson and LTC Holm of the Corps Distribution Center hosted the nightly meeting at 2100 hours in a conference room in the back of the 13th COSCOM headquarters. The 1st Infantry Division, 1st Cavalry, and MEF sent representatives to provide what their needs were. Representatives from the 167th, 172nd and 593rd Corps Support Groups provided what truck assets they had available. They worked out the details to provide the Classes of Supply as well as inform everyone which combat unit had priority on any given night. The combat units could also make a request on the spot and the Transporters would adjust, although not always for the next day. CPT Brian Patnode was nominated by his former company commander, MAJ John Hornberger, to represent the 49th MCB. After the meeting, Patnode would enter the data in a spreadsheet developed by 1LT Robert Coltarci called the "Commodity Tracker." It tracked both convoys and cargo. Before, they tracked each separately. This meeting became known as the Joint Distribution Board (JDB) and grew in importance and was formalized by COSCOM. On occasion, the meeting also added rail movement. Later that spring, a Sherpa company arrived and high priority cargo and passengers could also fly by fixed wing aircraft. The objective of the Joint Distribution Board was to assign missions 72 hours out.

After the bridges were spanned and MSR TAMPA was reopened, the 49th MCB kept using the other two alternate routes in addition to the main supply route (MSR). The idea was to change the routes every three or four days to confuse the enemy. It did not confuse the enemy, they recognized the pattern and knew that when the convoys quit rolling along one route, they had up to week to bury and camouflage the mines. A one-mile stretch of the eastern route became known as "IED Alley." Around September 2005, long after the 49th MCB left, the east and west alternate routes were abandoned and convoys just ran up MSR TAMPA.

After Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans in August 2005, elements of 49th Transportation Battalion deployed to Louisiana in support of JTF-Katrina to help Facilitate relief efforts for hurricane victims.

The 49th MCB again deployed to Iraq again this time to manage the surge of troops in 2006-2007

The 133rd MCT (Division Support) performed the role of a port MCT at Umm Qasr, Iraq.

LTC Peter M. Haas' 49th MCB deployed to Joint Base Balad (former LSA Anaconda) Iraq in April and assumed authority on 16 May 2009 where it fell under the command of the 13th Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC). The Battalion provided command and control for over 1,500 Soldiers, Airmen and civilian contractors. It assisted in the preparation for removing all combat forces out of Iraqi cities by June 2009, conducted 43 unit ministry team visits, managed \$45 million in recurring contracts and \$78 million in

al Sequir contracts, established a communications center capable of processing over 30,000 automated system work order requests, processed over 55,753 transportation movement requests, planned and coordinated the movement of over 824,292 common user land transportation (CULT) assets, supported 273 unit deployment and redeployments, and successfully planned the retrograde of 10,489 containers in preparation for the responsible drawdown of forces out of Iraq by midnight the last day of December 2011. On 14 April 2010, the 49th MCB completed TOA with the 14th MCB.

After nearly three years of command, LTC Hass passed command of the 49th MCB to LTC Lillard D. Evans in July 2012.

Contributing authors

Richard E. Killblane

Natasha Boucicaut

Campaigns

World War II: Northern France; Central Europe

Southwest Asia: Defense of Saudi Arabia; Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Operation Iraqi Freedom

Decorations

Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army) for SOUTHWEST ASIA

Joint Meritorious Unit Award for RESTORE HOPE