

## Enabling helicopter pilots to 'see' through clouds of dust

By Chuck Wullenjohn

The Army chief acquisition executive, Heidi Shyu, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, spent a full day at U.S. Army Yuma Proving Ground in late June to learn about technologies being developed and tested that allow helicopter pilots to “see” through otherwise obscure clouds of blinding desert dust. Shyu received detailed briefings from senior program officials, but the highlight was flying downrange to view that technology in action in a real world setting.

Extensive efforts are being made to devise a solution enabling helicopter pilots to navigate through what is called a “degraded visual environment” (DVE) caused by swirls of dust or snow. Huge clouds of dust, for instance, are kicked up by helicopters when landing in the desert, thwarting the ability of the pilot to view obstacles and accurately know the location of the aircraft in relation to surrounding terrain.

Obviously, this is a dangerous situation responsible for causing numerous accidents. A DVE is the number one cause of non-combat Army fatalities.

YPG workers have designed a realistic obstacle and target array for the testing, which includes power lines, posts and poles of varying composition, trees, foliage and much more. The des-

ert soil is disked regularly to assure that helicopters create huge clouds of dust, blinding the ability of pilots to safely land without the aid of newly developed sensor systems.

“We’re the perfect place within the Army Test and Evaluation Command to test DVE sensor technology,” said YPG Technical Director Julio Dominguez. “Of the non-hostile helicopter accidents overseas, over 30 percent were caused by dust. The work taking place here is vital to improving safety.”

The system being developed to remedy the problem is called the Degraded Visual Environment Pilotage System. The system fuses together, assembles, in other words, data gathered from a variety of sensors (forward looking infrared radar, light detection and ranging systems, multi-mode radar, and others) and displays a visual image to the pilot. This image is surprisingly crisp, detailed and accurate.

The goal is to enable helicopter pilots to navigate successfully and safely amid adverse conditions.

“We already operate at night better than our adversaries, hence the motto ‘we own the night,’” said Bert Evans, YPG Sensor Test Branch Team Lead. “The objective is for us to own ‘all environments’, enabling us to perform rescue or combat missions amid dust or snow storms.” The dusty environment



**Sitting in the cockpit of a helicopter, Army chief acquisition executive Heidi Shyu, says her interest in helicopter operations in degraded environments goes back a long way. (Photo by Chuck Wullenjohn)**

is the harshest and most challenging environment for sensors, he said. The success of this technology will be useful in the development of similar capabilities for other air and ground systems.

Many research studies have been performed on soils in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as soil at YPG, and there are many similarities regarding the size of dust particles and their exact composition. One study he hopes to perform in the near future is to quantify dust clouds –looking at dust density, particle size, and visibility within the cloud. The

intention would be to accurately record the environmental factors that affect sensor performance, and replicate that environment for more accurate sensor-to-sensor comparison in future test activities.

Acquisition executive Shyu got an eyeful at the YPG test site located about 50 miles from the proving ground headquarters building.

“Spending a full day at a military base is absolutely huge,” she said. “Instead

SEE **CLOUDS** page 2

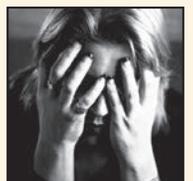
Helping small business get the job done /Page 4



High performance aircraft bolster YPG operations /Page 6



Ten things everyone should know about DEPRESSION /Page 9



# CLOUDS

FROM PAGE 1



**Heidi Shyu, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, said that instead of viewing a collection of power point slides, she was able to see the actual system in use.**

of watching a collection of PowerPoint data, I was able to see the actual system in use. This is far more important than listening to presentations. You must do this.”

Shyu says her interest in helicopter operations in degraded environments goes back a long way. “Solving the brownout problem would be a huge capability enabler for warfighters. What is taking place at Yuma Proving Ground is critical.”

From her perspective, military budgets in the future will continue to be tight due to sequestration. “Particularly in this fiscally constrained environment, we must be judicious in how we spend our money. What is going on at the proving ground is extremely high priority. I saw

a great job here, performed by dedicated folks. I’m very impressed.”

Shyu said she now has a broader perspective of the capability that exists at Yuma Proving Ground and looks forward to an opportunity to return in the future.

Lt. Col. James DeBoer, Yuma Test Center commander, piloted the aircraft Shyu took to the test site and discussed the various ranges over which the helicopter passed. He explained the diversity of YPG’s test programs and highlighted the proving ground’s history.

“She seemed impressed by the vast variety of tests we perform,” said DeBoer. “She viewed a very important program for the Army, so this was a good experience for everyone involved.”

## THE OUTPOST

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*From the ATEC G-1 Director's Office*

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Issue 15-21  
20 July 2015

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*Cindy Kane*

*G-1, Human Resources Director (Acting)*

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# YPG introduces new mass communication system

## A new solution for communications between agencies

By Yolie Canales

Yuma Proving Ground's Director of Plans, Training, Mobilization & Security (DPTMS), Ron Rodriguez and staff are bringing the installation an efficient and safer form of emergency mass notification referred to as AtHoc. This new system which is already in place at YPG, will notify anyone, anywhere, on any device when a mass warning needs to be sent to the workforce.

The questions and answers below explain how the system will work at the proving ground.

**What does AtHoc mean? Briefly describe the system. Is AtHoc in use anywhere now?**

AtHoc is the name of a company that provides networked crisis communication. AtHoc is also the generic name for their subscription web-based mass warning notification system.

AtHoc allows communication with personnel across networked computers, mobile devices, sirens, radios, and other media. It facilitates individuals to be able to communicate and interact from a mobile phone, tablet, laptop, desktop computer, IP phone, email, text, interface or pager dependent on roles and permissions. AtHoc allows emergency management personnel to share information, and create situational awareness: e.g., incident locations and evacuation routes.

AtHoc is used throughout much of DoD and, with the inclusion of YPG, will be used at all installations that primarily support the ATEC mission.

**Why is YPG launching this new communication network?**

YPG is launching AtHoc as part of the Army's Emergency Management Modernization Program (EM2P). AtHoc is a designated Mass Warning Notification System that in conjunction with other

systems such as Giant Voice provides multi-mode warning notification to installation personnel.

**How important is this for our country, post, etc?**

AtHoc provides a rapid emergency notification process that will cut down on time taken for personnel notification, and accountability. The AtHoc system will enable Yuma Proving Ground to meet established emergency mass notification requirements with a system to communicate fast and efficiently with military and civilian personnel.

**Is this program mandatory for members of the workforce? If not mandatory, what is the benefit of taking part in it?**

Basically, AtHoc software will be placed on all government systems on the YPG Intranet and associated with the user of that system. All organizations will have operators assigned responsible for ensuring that Soldiers, and government civilians self-enroll in the AtHoc system. Registration of personnel will generally include government supplied equipment including computers, land-line or VOIP phones and Blackberry. These users can voluntarily enter other means of notification such as personal cell phones, e-mail addresses, and social media accounts. Select non-government personnel can sign-up for AtHoc on a case-by-case basis.

The benefit to all users is immediate notification of incidents as long as they are in contact via one of their designated or chosen means of communication. Examples of incidents that may spark notifications would be gate closures, road closures due to running washes, areas to avoid due to an, fire, or major accident and other potential incidents that may spark an emergency message. An example of a benefit would be if Fortuna Wash

is closed due to rain, employees can be notified of the closure and what alternate routes are open before driving there to be turned around by DPS and then having to figure out what to do next. It will not remove the employee's responsibility to communicate his/her situation with a supervisor.

**How secure will the workforce information be kept?**

The subscriber information is maintained on a stand-alone secure server at a location on the east coast. The only personal information maintained on the server is the subscriber's name, government numbers, e-mails and whatever other information the employee voluntarily provides. Again providing personal communications data is completely

voluntary and must be done by the employee.

**When does the AtHoc system become operational?**

After training is completed on 30 July, AtHoc will be available to employees as soon as they enroll.

**How is it going to work in the long run? How often will people need to update their information?**

Based on feedback from other installations, quarterly updates are the norm. This is nothing more than the employee going into the system and either updating information or ensuring it is correct

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# Helping small business get the job done



**Col. Randy Murray, YPG commander, welcomes participants to Yuma Proving Ground's Mission-Installation Contracting Command (MICC) 3rd annual Acquisition Forecast Open House in early July. (Photos by Chuck Wullenjohn)**

**By Chuck Wullenjohn**

An organization may sponsor the best program imaginable, but without adequate communication, that program loses a tremendous portion of its effectiveness.

To prevent this, YPG's Mission-Installation Contracting Command (MICC) held its 3rd Acquisition Forecast Open House in early July to present information regarding future contracting opportunities traditionally set aside for small business. These meetings take place twice each year. The meeting enabled over 60 company representatives to learn



**Members of the YPG workforce joined participants attending the MICC open house where over 60 company representatives learn about and, hopefully, compete for future contracting opportunities set aside for small businesses.**

about and, hopefully, compete for those opportunities.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our nation," said Mike McDaniel, YPG MICC director. "This meeting is important to the economic health of the entire county, for labor is provided locally and many of the supplies purchased by YPG come from the local area."

The business opportunities discussed incorporate a large variety of professions and services. They include opportunities in: custodial; installation support services; facilities maintenance such as carpentry and high voltage electrical work; road maintenance; and much more. Detailed briefings of future requirements from senior officials at YPG were provided, along with presentations by experts from outside agencies, including the Small Business Administration.

"Once again, we had an outstanding and immensely successful event with 62 participants at this year's open house forum," said Georgette Dilworth, small business specialist from Yuma Proving Ground's MICC. "In addition, the informative presentations given by Grant Ware, Director of Air Combat Systems on the U. S. Army Test & Evaluation Command; Gordon Rogers, garrison manager, who spoke on the U. S. Army Installation Management Command, and YPG's Public Works Directorate who briefed the audience on their requirements, were extremely appreciated."

"Small businesses are the largest employers in the United States," commented McDaniel. "A great deal of innovation comes out of small businesses, so getting the word out of future opportunities at YPG is definitely something

we want to do."

"Overall, I feel the event was excellent and the Small Business community was able to receive a lot of useful information," said Dilworth. "I'd like to express my appreciation to the Contracting team, directorates and the YPG Public Affairs for their great support."

The MICC stands committed to ensuring the promotion of early exchanges of information about future acquisitions. An early exchange of information among industry and the program manager, contracting officer, and other participants in the acquisition process can identify and resolve concerns regarding the proposed acquisition and remedy any other industry concerns or questions. "This exchange is what this open house was all about," said Dilworth.

# VIEWPOINTS

By Mark Schauer

Heroes open our eyes to possibilities, and inspire us in good times and bad. We asked members of the workforce which historical figure they admire most.



**Lt. Sean Underhill,  
YPG Police Department:**

Abraham Lincoln. He brought together a nation that was tearing itself apart. He was a self-motivated person who focused on education and brought the nation forward into new beliefs and ways of treating people that should have always been the norm.

**Heather Goyette,  
Librarian**

Franklin Roosevelt. He created jobs when we needed jobs and built a lot of infrastructure and national monuments that exist to this day. His leadership during World War II secured the world from fascist aggression.



**Jose Lopez  
Auto Skills Manager:**

Chesty Puller. He epitomized who and what a Marine is. Being a Marine and learning about him was really captivating to me. You want to be the best Marine you can and go above and beyond, and he was the Marine's Marine.



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# High performance aircraft bolster YPG operations



**Since late last year, a U.S. Army Special Operations Command flight detachment has operated at the proving ground to support the expanding operations of the Military Freefall School, the tenant unit that trains elite parachutists. The C27J aircraft seen here can achieve altitude more quickly than the aircraft formerly used to support the school, and also accommodates two to three times as many jumpers at a time. (Photos by Mark Schauer)**

By Mark Schauer

YPG's 2,000 square miles of restricted airspace is getting busier.

Home to a wide variety of combat helicopter and unmanned aircraft testing, the proving ground also flies thousands of air drop test sorties in a typical year. Yet, since late last year, a U.S. Army Special Operations Command flight detachment has operated at the proving ground to support the expanding operations of the Military Freefall School, the tenant unit that trains elite parachutists.

"We have active duty pilots and active duty crew members from the Army flying an Army cargo plane," said Sgt. 1st Class Cody Gustin, detachment sergeant. "No contractors are involved except for maintenance."

The Casa-212 aircraft that currently ferry freefall students for their jumps are being replaced by C27Js, a larger and faster aircraft that more closely resembles the type of planes Special Forces operators use around the world.

"We can get two to three times as many jumpers in a plane at a time, get

to altitude quicker, and get back down quicker," said Gustin. "The Casa is a capable aircraft, just not that fast."

The C27J, formerly used as a niche cargo plane to supplement the larger C-130, was extensively tested at YPG prior to being fielded and is regarded by many as a high performance aircraft.

"It's got the same engine as a C-130J, with a great deal less drag and mass," said Gustin. "It's an extremely capable aircraft."

The first of the high performance planes arrived in mid-June, with a second, joining it shortly after Independence

**"We've got a good start. Hopefully, we can save the Army money and get in lots of good training," said Eicher.**

Day. The detachment expects to fly numerous sorties per day, and enjoys the mission immensely.

"Working for the freefall school here is like working for an Operational Detachment Alpha for the 20-something years I was in the Regiment," said Chief Warrant Officer Christopher Eicher, unit commander. "I have a specific mission, a specific team I'm working with, and every day we are doing something important."

The detachment expects an additional C27J by the end of the year, and YPG's Laguna Army Airfield already shows the detachment's presence. A new operations building, tensioned fabric hangar and large sunshade are in place, and another sunshade will be built in the near future.

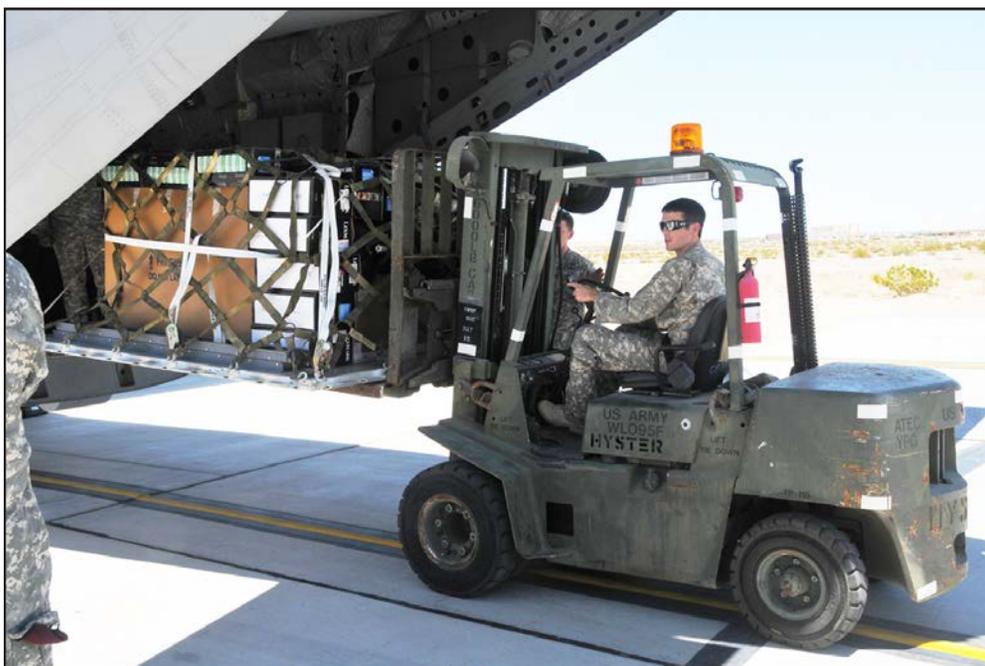
"We've got a good start," said Eicher. "Hopefully we can save the Army money and get in lots of good training."



**Chief Warrant Officer Christopher Eicher, unit commander, is greeted by his family after arriving with the first of the C27J aircraft.**

# OPERATIONS

FROM PAGE 6



**The C27J, formerly used as a niche cargo plane to supplement the larger C-130, accommodates palletized loads in addition to parachutists, as seen here.**

**Here, the first of the high performance C27J aircraft in support of the Military Freefall School arrives at Laguna Army Airfield in mid-June. A second arrived in July, and a third is expected by the end of the year.**



**The C27J is a larger and faster aircraft that more closely resembles the type of planes Special Forces operators use around the world.**

# Improve communication skills with employer

Improve communication skills with employer class

Interested in improving your communications skills with your employer, co-workers, family members, as well as your efficiency and effectiveness by learning more about what makes you who you are? If so, you may want to read further!

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## Session 1:

4 Aug 15 - 0900-1100  
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\* Be Proactive  
\* Begin w/the End in  
Mind  
\* Put First Things First

## Session 2:

11 Aug 15 - 0900-  
1100 Palm Garden Bldg.  
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\* Think Win-Win  
\* Seek First to Under-  
stand  
\* Synergize  
\* Sharpen the Saw

## Session 3:

18 Aug 15 - 0900-  
1100 Palm Garden Bldg.  
530 - Topics covered:  
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\* MBTI Small Groups

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# Ten things everyone should know about DEPRESSION

Submitted by Paul J. Kilanski,  
Family Advocacy Program  
Manager

More than 20 million people in the U.S. suffer from depression each year. Depression is not simply feeling sad. Like heart disease or diabetes, depression is a medical illness. The good news is that depression can be treated.

**1. Depression affects the mind and the body.** It affects a person's thoughts, feelings, actions and health. It affects the way a person sleeps and eats. Depression can make it hard to go to school or work and can also affect relationships with other people.

**2. There is no single cause of depression.** Depression can be triggered by changes in the brain, stress, illness or a painful life event. It can run in families and sometimes the cause is not always clear.

**3. Depression is not a passing mood.** If not treated, depression can last for weeks, months or years. People who are depressed cannot "make" themselves get better.

**4. Anyone can become depressed.** Depression can affect men, women, children and older adults of every ethnicity and background.

**5. Some people have only a few symptoms of depression.** Others have many. Symptoms can come on suddenly or happen gradually over time. Some common symptoms are: Feeling sad or irritable for no specific reason; extreme tiredness; changes in sleeping or eating habits; a loss of energy or enthusiasm; trouble thinking, concentrating and remembering; lack of interest in activities that once brought pleasure; physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment such as headaches, stomach problems and pain; feelings of guilt and despair; thoughts of death or suicide. If symptoms persist for longer than a few weeks, depression may be the cause.

**6. Talking to a health care provider is the first step in treating depression.** The health care provider will give a physical exam and ask questions about symptoms. A physical exam can rule out other causes such as another illness or medications that can

cause depression-like symptoms.

**7. With treatment, most people find relief from depression.** There are a variety of treatment options.

Sometimes more than one approach is needed. Common treatments include:

- Antidepressant medication- There are many types of antidepressant medications. You will need to work with a health care provider to find the medication that works best. It may take several weeks or longer for the antidepressant to start working.
- Psychotherapy or counseling- Therapy can help people change thought patterns and manage stress.

**8. Healing from depression takes time.** While a person with depression cannot make himself get better, he or she may be able to help the process. Set small goals. Break big tasks into smaller ones. Stay active. Physical activity can help lift spirits. Eat three meals a day. Get plenty of sleep. Stay away from alcohol and other drugs. Try being around supportive people.

**9. Family and friends can help.** The most important thing anyone can do



for someone with depression, is to help them get treatment. It is also important to show care and concern. Do not ignore comments about suicide. Stay with the person until they get help. For people who are depressed, the hardest thing may be to reach out for help. This is, however, the first step toward getting better.

**10. For more information talk with your health care provider or contact your local mental health services.** Visit the following websites:

National Institute of Mental Health at: [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov), National Alliance on Mental Illness [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org), Mental Health America [www.mentalhealthamerica.net](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net).

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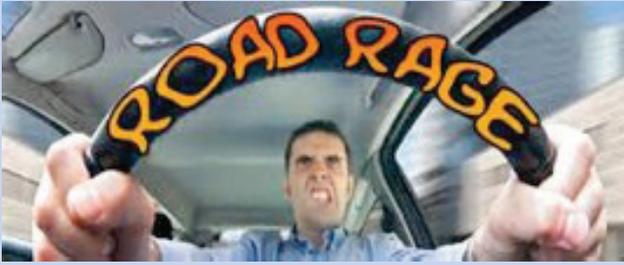
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## Chief's Corner



### The Yuma 500

By Chief of Police Dennis Brown

As I prepare myself to come in each morning, I often take a moment to think about the short drive to Yuma Proving Ground. I do this for the safety of my spouse as well as for my own self-control.

As a law enforcement officer, I consistently observe aggressive driving demonstrated by fellow Yuma Proving Ground employees and other motorists in their quest to negotiate Highway 95. This is often demonstrated through excessive speeding, tailgating, inappropriate gestures, unsafe passing, and so on. We are a community and, to be honest, sooner or later someone is going to get hurt.

National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration statistics show that 66 percent of accidents are caused by aggressive driving and that half of drivers on the receiving end of an aggressive behavior, such as horn honking, rude gestures, and/or tailgating, admit to responding with aggressive behavior themselves.

The following information is provided for reference:

According to Arizona revised statute 28-695. Aggressive driving; violation; classification; definition

A. A person commits aggressive driving if both of the following occur:

1. During a course of conduct the person commits a violation of either section 28-701, (A); Speed or section 28-701.02 Excessive Speed, and at least two of the following violations:

- (a) Failure to obey traffic control devices.
- (b) Overtaking and passing another vehicle on the right by driving off the pavement or main traveled portion of the roadway.
- (c) Unsafe lane change.
- (d) Following a vehicle too closely.
- (e) Failure to yield the right-of-way

So the next time you want to speed, shout an expletive, or whatever, because someone cost you 10 seconds more on the road, think about this: Those 10 seconds could be time that you spend singing along to your favorite song, telling a joke to a passenger or even be the reason you arrive at your destination safely. Do your part to keep our roadways safe, so we can all arrive alive.

## Rob Turner

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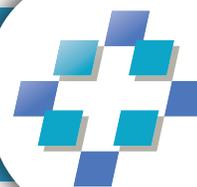
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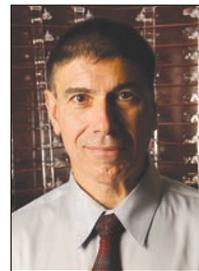
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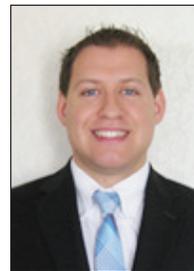
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