



# INSIDE STRI

DECEMBER 2007

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## WORTH REPEATING

“When we first got to Ramadi, the place was bad. We were seeing 10 to 15 attacks per day, and that was normal. Since then, we've galvanized the tribal leaders, and they've basically ousted al Qaeda. A lot of it is due to U.S. Soldiers, but a vast majority of it is due to the cooperation with community sheiks and them not allowing al Qaeda to take safe haven anymore.”

— *Spc. Gerald Bradner, serving in Iraq*



U.S. Army Photo

Robots perform crucial missions in combat by detecting, identifying and disarming IEDs and keep Soldiers at a safe distance from the bomb. The robotic vehicle is one of the Future Combat Systems technologies that has been leveraged for the current force. PEO STRI recently acquired the iRobot PackBot 510 to aid Warfighters in Iraq.

# Robotics Contract Awarded to Save Lives and Limbs In Theater

By Kristen A. Dooley, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

The U.S. Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI) awarded iRobot Corp. a \$286 million firm, fixed-price indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract Dec. 12 on behalf of the Robotic Systems Joint Project Office at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., for up to 3,000 robots, spare parts, training, and repair services over the next five years.

The robots procured under this contract, known as xBots, will be primarily used for explosive ordnance detection, identification and reconnaissance. Until now, these

robots were provided only to military bomb disposal specialists. This contract allows for a wider-range deployment of xBots so that general infantry forces will be able to utilize these devices.

“This is a critical combat need in theater and is immediately and directly linked to reducing casualties.”

— **Dennis Schneider,**  
PEO STRI project director  
for robotics support

“The value of a man-transportable robotic system with camera and manipulator arm used to counter the Improvised Explosive Device (IED) threat and minimize risk to personnel cannot be over emphasized,” said Dennis Schneider, PEO STRI project director for robotics support.

“This is a critical combat need in theater and is immediately and directly linked to reducing casualties.” As such, PEO STRI will provide the

ALL GOOD WISHES



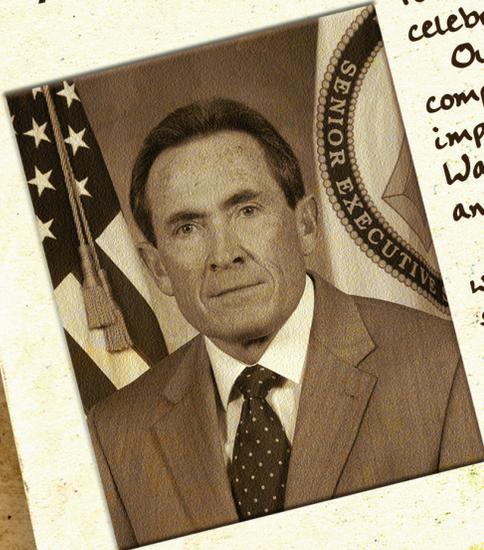
## A Holiday Message from the PEO

The holiday season is upon us. This time of year gives us an opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation for our blessings, and to celebrate our accomplishments of the past year.

Our families and friends give us the strength and support we need to complete our mission. The work we do at PEO STRI has a far-reaching impact, and each one of us plays a key role in taking care of our Warfighters. We would not be able to do what we do without the love and support of those closest to us.

We have a dynamic workforce at PEO STRI. We work side-by-side with hard-working and talented people who are dedicated to supporting our Warfighters. The teamwork and camaraderie that I see every day is amazing. There is nothing you cannot accomplish in our quest to provide our Soldiers with the training edge they need to sustain the world's best fighting force.

On behalf of my wife, Sharon, and the entire Blake family, I extend our wishes to all of you for a safe and happy holiday season.



# Top Army Acquisition Chief to Step Down

By U.S. Army Public Affairs



**Claude M. Bolton**

Secretary of the Army Pete Geren received and accepted the resignation of Claude M. Bolton, assistant secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology (ASA(ALT)), Nov. 30.

Bolton served six years in that capacity

as assistant secretary. His resignation is effective Jan. 2.

"I sincerely appreciate the efforts of our military, the civilian employees, and contractors that have supported our mission during the past six years," Bolton said. "Their dedicated efforts are a tribute to the strength of our nation and I am honored and humbled to have served with them."

"We thank him for more than 38 years of dedicated service to our nation," Geren said. "Claude has been a valuable leader in Army acquisition for the past six years; his presence will be deeply missed. He always strove to meet the needs of the Soldier while innovating to respond to a rapidly changing environment. We wish Claude all the best as he moves on to the next chapter in his life."

Bolton was sworn in as assistant secretary of the Army Jan. 2, 2002, and has served longer than any of his predecessors as ASA(ALT). In this capacity, he serves as the Army acquisition executive, the senior procurement executive, and the science advisor to the secretary.

During his tenure as ASA(ALT), Mr. Bolton guided the transformation of Army acquisition into a more responsive and

best business practice process, allowing rapid fielding of critical equipment and technology. He spearheaded the Army's modernization efforts, including the further development of the Future Combat System and the restructuring of Army aviation acquisition after the cancellation of the Comanche program.

"Mr. Bolton always kept our Soldiers as his foremost priority," said Gen. Richard A. Cody, vice chief of staff of the Army. "He strove every day to give them a technological edge over an aggressive asymmetrical enemy, and focused his considerable energy and leadership on Soldier force protection. He fought hard to get the best equipment, as quickly as possible, into the fight. I will miss him as we continue to build on his accomplishments and modernize our Army."

Mr. Bolton, a retired two-star Air Force general, was commissioned into the Air Force in 1969 through the University of Nebraska ROTC program. His commissioning began an extensive honored and distinguished career as both an active Air Force officer, and Air Force and Army executive. ■

# Wounded Warrior Program Provides Enduring Support to Army Families

By Kristen Noel, American Forces Press Service

There's no set limit on how long the U.S. Army Wounded Warrior program will provide one-on-one service to severely wounded Soldiers and their Families, a U.S. Army official said Dec. 12.

"We assist and advocate for severely wounded Soldiers and their Families for as long as they need us, wherever they are located," Army Col. James Rice, the Wounded Warrior program's director, said in a conference call with online journalists and "bloggers."

The Wounded Warrior program is for Soldiers who are considered 30 percent or more disabled, as found by the Army disability system, to ensure their Families

receive all the benefits and support they are entitled to, Col. Rice explained.

The 30 percent threshold is based on the level of disability rating above which Soldiers and their Families can maintain the Tricare retirement benefit, he said.

Almost 2,400 injured Soldiers are enrolled in the program. Each is assigned a Soldier-Family management specialist, the equivalent of a case manager, "who gives them personalized recovery assistance in navigating government and nonprofit organizations on their behalf to ensure they get the help and support their families need," Col. Rice said.

"We make the connection as soon as that Soldier arrives at a treatment facility, and our

Soldier-Family management specialist, our care manager, establishes a relationship with that Soldier and Family that continues as long as it takes," he explained.

Support continues even after the Soldier leaves the hospital and either continues on active duty or departs the service. "We're still with them to help them through vocational rehabilitation, through the education process and ensuring that they are fully employed to the greatest extent possible so that they're integral members of their community," he said.

The program's staff of about 100 includes Soldier-Family management specialists who are dispersed throughout the United States

*Continued on page 4*

# STRI Plays Key Role in Software Improvement

By Barbara Pemberton, PEO STRI Engineering Division

The Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI) is an active participant in the Army Strategic Software Improvement Program (ASSIP), an effort to dramatically improve the acquisition of software intensive systems. The ASSIP is focused on acquisition programs, people, production/sustainment, and institutionalizing continuous improvement.

The ASSIP is a long-term partnership among the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology ASA(ALT), the Army's PEOs, direct-reporting Program Managers (PM), and the Software Engineering Institute. The ASA(ALT) has also invited the participation of the Software Engineering Centers, the Training and Doctrine Command, and Army Test and Evaluation Command.

The ASSIP has three primary objectives for fiscal year 2008. First, the program intends to improve the acquisition process of software intensive systems. Second, the ASSIP plans to improve software products. And third, the group aims to enhance software skills for the workforce.

PEO STRI will incorporate the ASSIP

objectives into the PEO STRI Software Acquisition Improvement Plan in fiscal year 2008. The four areas of the PEO STRI plan include software acquisition process, software development and monitoring process, software collaboration process, and software acquisition training.

Specific ASSIP products, processes and training will be tailored and incorporated into the PEO STRI Plan, to include language recommendations for Request for Proposals for software acquisition, Architecture Tradeoff Analysis Method evaluations for major PEO STRI programs and two training courses in Orlando.

Current PEO STRI individuals who have received ASSIP training include Bob Dixon, Will Samper, Barbara Pemberton, Vidal Acevedo, Brian Kemper, Gar Leung, and Dean Runzel.

For PEO STRI senior leaders and PMs, ASSIP will provide leadership seminars and a Lean Six Sigma and Capability Maturity Model Integration seminar. PMs will also be able to take a software survey to set the direction for future ASSIP initiatives.

PEO STRI will be hosting the Army Strategic Software Improvement Plan Action Group February 2008 in Orlando, Fla. ■

## Wounded Warrior Program... Continued from page 3

to accommodate Soldiers and Families in person. "Wherever there is a significant population of wounded warriors, we have a Soldier-Family management specialist on the ground," Col. Rice said.

This decentralization of the Wounded Warrior program is its most significant change in recent years, according to Col. Rice.

The program has existed since 2004, initially under the name "Disabled Soldiers Support System," and historically only provided support from its headquarters in Alexandria, Va., Col. Rice explained.

He added that the Wounded Warrior program is part of a larger Army initiative focused on providing more comprehensive medical services to Soldiers and their Families.

"We are in the forefront of an important transformation that is building the health

care model for the future for the military's wounded warriors," he said. ■



U.S. Air Force/Staff Sgt. Samuel Bendet

U.S. Army Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 10th Mountain Division, and Iraqi Army soldiers from an emergency service unit, walk back to their tactical operations command center Nov. 11, 2007, after completing a two-day cordon and search air assault mission in the village of Al Kahn in Kirkuk, Iraq. The Wounded Warrior program will protect wounded Soldiers and their Families.

## Walt's GOLF COLUMN



With the annual PEO STRI golf challenge right around the corner, the organization's golf ranking official, Walt Pezzolo, weighs in on this year's top players.

1. Dr. James Blake
2. Dusty Woodlee
3. Roger Weber
4. Maj. Don Stewart
5. Jim Newkirk
6. Claude Abate
7. Maj. Marc Dorrer
8. Jim Godwin
9. Col. Kevin Dietrick
10. Kristy Murray

For information about the calculation of rankings, please contact Walt Pezzolo directly at 407-384-3515.



# PEO STRI'S 2007 ANNUAL TEAM GOLF TOURNAMENT

**DATE:** December 26, 2007

**TIME:** 8:30 a.m. Shotgun Start

**LOCATION:** Eastwood Golf Course

**COST:** \$40.00 includes tax, green fees, cart, range balls and awards

**FORMAT:** Best ball scramble, women and juniors under 10 play red tees, men 60+ and juniors from 11 to 13 play gold tees, everyone else plays white tees

**ELIGIBILITY:** All PEO STRI current and former employees, in-house support contractors, and immediate family members

**SCORING:** Low net with teams receiving .25 stroke handicaps for every current PEO STRI employee and in-house support contractors playing in the event

**POC:** Walt Pezzolo x3515

Eddie Brewer x5404



**R.S.V.P by December 21, 2007**





# I/ITSEC 2007 in Review

**LEAD SERVICE: U.S. AIR FORCE**

**THEME: MAINTAINING THE EDGE...TRANSFORMING THE FORCE**

**NUMBER OF ATTENDEES: 16,500 TO 17,000**

**INTERNATIONAL ATTENDEES: 2,000 FROM 54 COUNTRIES**

**EXHIBIT HALL SPACE: 175,000 SQUARE FEET**

**NUMBER OF EXHIBITS: AT LEAST 435**

**GET READY! THE U.S. ARMY PROUDLY LEADS THE WAY TO I/ITSEC 2008. MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW... PEO STRI TAKES THE REIGNS OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST MODELING AND SIMULATION CONFERENCE DEC. 1, 2008 THROUGH DEC. 4, 2008 AT THE ORANGE COUNTY CONVENTION CENTER IN ORLANDO, FLA. LOOK OUT FOR THE MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO "LEARN. TRAIN. WIN!"**



# Travel Information: Know Before You Go



By Bill Osborne and Donnette Hart, *PEO STRI Security Office*

The Security Office offers classified threat assessment briefings to the workforce so long as the traveler has the proper level of clearance. But did you know there are many other websites that contain useful information and are readily available to you and your family? If traveling is in your plans over the upcoming holiday season or perhaps a later time, we hope the following information helps make your holiday travel a little easier.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) website ([www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)) contains a wealth of information covering both domestic and foreign travel issues. Most of us are familiar with the Homeland Security Advisory System. In addition to the current national threat level, DHS also contains information on travel security procedures, news updates and bulletins. You will also find links to other useful sites, such as Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CPB).

One bit of news that is important to those traveling out of the country, but not far away is a recent change to passport requirements. Beginning January 31, 2008, it will be a requirement for travelers going to Canada, Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean to have a valid passport for re-entry to the U.S. This requirement is for travel by air, land and sea, so it affects cruise ship travelers as well. The change was made based on recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to improve security within the U.S. Information on obtaining a passport can be found on the State Department website ([http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)).

The DHS website has a link for overseas travel that takes you to the U.S. CPB website. This site contains everything you've ever wanted to know about overseas purchases, duty and duty free items, and prohibited and restricted items. This is a must-visit site if you plan to purchase anything while on travel overseas because it will help you avoid problems when you return to the U.S. You can also find

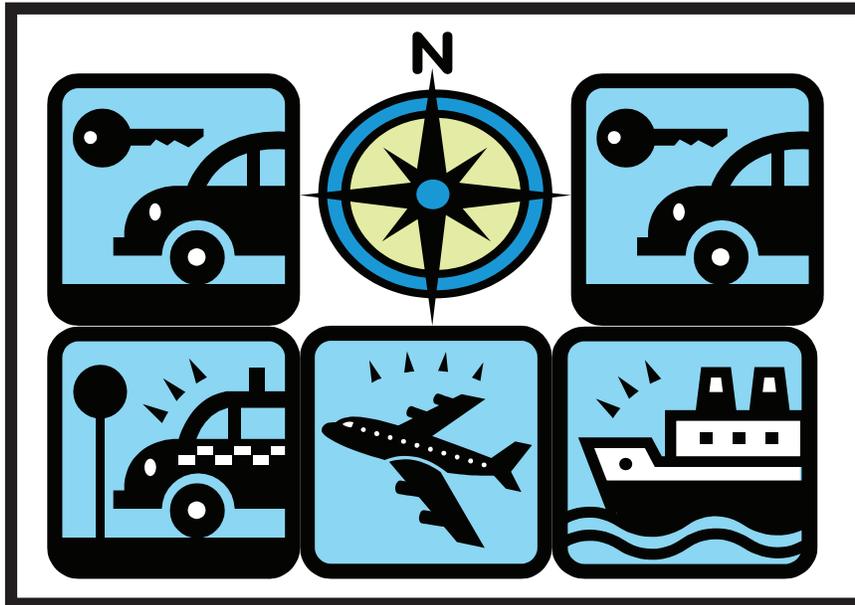
guidance for travelers with disabilities and those persons traveling with small children. Another feature available on TSA is the wait time calculator for airport security check points throughout the country. This is a useful tool to help you plan ahead on your travel time.

In addition to the websites and related links we have mentioned, we want to remind all travelers that we always

recommend visiting the State Department website prior to all overseas travel. The State Department features travel warnings and announcements along with consular information for international travel destinations. Included in the warnings are issues regarding safety, security and public health overseas. The consular information pages list addresses and contact information for all embassy locations within each country. The sheets also contain information regarding specific issues travelers may face within the country such as safety

concerns, potential driving hazards and even common issues with currency and credit card use. Even if you come in to the Security Office for a classified travel briefing, the State Department page is a valuable supplement to your travel preparation. We feel it's a good idea to carry an extra copy of the consular pages as you travel.

To assure your personal safety and enjoyment while traveling, we highly recommend using all resources available to you as you plan your trip. Many of us overlook the unclassified public sources and ignore readily available valuable information. We hope this helps with your travel planning and wish you a safe and happy holiday season. ■



information on overseas travel restrictions regarding pets and procedures for trusted traveler programs. Another useful feature on the CPB website is checklists and tips to assist you in assuring that you are completely prepared prior to your departure.

Another link from the DHS website is the TSA page. This is the place to go when you have questions regarding air travel, to include restricted items. Most of us know by now that we are restricted on the quantities and amount of liquid items we can carry with us on the flight. TSA has a section entitled "Carry-on 311" with specific guidance on the amount of liquid products allowed in carry on luggage along with a printable brochure and card for reference when packing. The site also offers





# CITIZEN STRI

What are your plans during the holidays?



Courtesy Photo

“ I will enjoy the holidays with my wife, Magdalis, and son, Jason. We will enjoy a traditional 'American' Christmas with friends and family! ”  
**Felix Marrero, Acquisition Center**



Courtesy Photo

“ During the holidays, I plan to spend quality time with my family and friends. My parents always throw a Christmas Eve party, and my husband and I will be having a New Year's Eve bash at our house again this year. I just want to relax and enjoy being with the people I love! ”  
**Melissa Valmores, BOO**



Want your opinion heard? Answer January's Question!  
*What is your New Year's resolution?* Send your response to [kristen.dooley@us.army.mil](mailto:kristen.dooley@us.army.mil) and put Citizen STRI in the subject line.



## Holidays & Events

**January 1**

New Year's Day

**January 4**

Colors

**January 21**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**February 4-7**

Capitol Hill Demonstration

## Protocol Tip of the Month

By Marge Hadbavny, Protocol Officer

### HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

On Christmas morning, a mother in Oviedo, Fla., watched her four sons take in the sight of all their Christmas presents from Santa and heard one of the children say, "Mom, I simply must send him a Thank You note."



This holiday season remember to be thankful for all that you have. Also, don't forget to send Thank You notes soon after receiving a gift.



# 'Tis the Season for Security

By Bill Osborne and Donnette Hart, PEO STRI Security Office

We are approaching that special time of year. You can just feel it in the air. The excitement is building.... Yes, it's that time once again. All military, civilians and support contractors will need to complete the annual Anti-Terrorism (AT) Awareness Training. And yes, even if your job doesn't require you to travel, you must still complete the training.

Persons who travel in support of the

Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation outside the continental United States to include its territories and possessions, otherwise known as OCONUS, must receive a destination-specific update within two months before travel. This is satisfied by the overseas travel briefing provided by the Security Office.

Also, the traveler must have completed AT Awareness Training within the past 12 months. On numerous occasions, the

Security Office needed to provide certification of AT Awareness Training completion and currency, therefore it's important for you to forward course completion certificates to the Security Office.

Within the next few weeks, the Security Office will task all personnel to complete the online AT Awareness Training. The module asks you to provide specific information before you begin. What you may not realize is that based on your response, the program is then customized based on data input (e.g., your assigned location).

The Department of Defense (DoD) defines "antiterrorism" as "defensive measures

used to reduce the vulnerability of individuals and property to terrorist acts." This is different from "counterterrorism," which refers to "offensive measures taken to prevent, deter and respond to terrorism." Both are part of the DoD concept of "force protection" that brings together all the security disciplines into a broader program to protect service members, civilians, family members, facilities and equipment.

The threat of terrorism must be taken seriously by all personnel, especially those who travel regularly. It is clear that no U.S. installation can be considered low risk. The attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon have shown that we must always be vigilant, even within the continental U.S. As Americans, we are all targets whether or not we are dressed in military uniforms.

Terrorist incidents over the years show a trend toward increasing numbers of attacks and sophistication in methods. Terrorist methods include threats, bombing, kidnapping, hostage taking, hijacking, assassinations, sabotage, arson, armed attacks, and other measures to disrupt daily activities. Such actions occur rather routinely in some parts of the world and almost anyone can become a potential victim.

The AT Awareness Training addresses the threats and how to handle yourself if you are ever a victim in such a situation. Although antiterrorism training cannot guarantee your safety, the goal is to increase awareness, help you avoid becoming a target, and improve your chances of emerging unharmed if you do become a victim. ■

*Let Me Make Sure*



*You Aren't on Security's  
"Naughty" List!*



## Robotic Contract... Continued from front page

first 101 robots for urgent deployment immediately. The urgency of deploying these robots to theater lies in the fact that they allow Soldiers to perform critical missions at a safe distance away from an actual or potential IED.

The acquisition approach for this contract was also performed in an expeditious manner to get the device in the hands of the Warfighter quicker.

"The immediate fielding of an acceptable product that met specification requirements was of paramount

importance," said Joanne Byrd, PEO STRI contracting officer for the xBot.

iRobot was selected to expeditiously produce the iRobot PackBot 510 with FasTac Kit, a light, small robot equipped with a manipulator arm and low-light capable zoom camera.

The iRobot contract was the second one awarded for xBots. Initially, the contract was awarded to Robotic FX on Sept. 14, as they were the lowest priced bidder who fulfilled all the qualifications.

The federal district court in

Massachusetts issued an injunction Nov. 2 on Robotic FX, therefore the company cannot provide the identical robot that it demonstrated during the source selection process.

Since Robotic FX cannot manufacture the same product that was awarded under the contract, they have terminated the agreement without cost to PEO STRI.

As a result, PEO STRI awarded iRobot, the next lowest priced, technically qualified bidder, with the contract for the explosive ordnance robots. ■

# LEGAL

# CORNER



## Top Ten Tax Tips for the End of the Year

By Laura Cushler, Associate Counsel

As the end of the year approaches, you want to start thinking about your taxes. These are some tips to minimize your tax bill and increase your refund.

1) **Maximize your contribution to your Thrift Savings Plan.** Contributions to the TSP are before taxes, so they lower your adjusted gross income for the year. The maximum amount authorized for calendar year 2007 is \$15,500. That means that you could contribute up to \$596.00 per pay period throughout the year. If you have not yet contributed that amount and would like to take maximum benefit of your TSP, you can go into EBIS and increase the amount deducted through the end of the year.

2) **Use up your Federal Health Care Flexible Savings Account.** If you have a Health Care Savings Account for 2007, make sure you use up all of the dollars in it by March 15, 2008. (If you do not have one, sign up now for 2008 at [www.FSAFEDS.com](http://www.FSAFEDS.com).) These accounts allow you to pay for health care expenses with pre-tax dollars. Not only does this lower your gross income for 2007, but it also allows you to stretch the value of the dollars you spend on healthcare all year.

3) **Pay your January 1 mortgage payment before December 31.** This allows you to take an additional interest deduction for 2007. Check your Form 1098 when you receive it from your mortgage company to ensure that it includes the interest from the last mortgage

payment. If not, be sure to add that amount to the deduction on your taxes.

4) **Bump up your charitable donations.** Now is the time to give to charity for a 2007 tax deduction. If you recently filled out a Combined Federal Campaign form to allow for automatic deductions from your pay, those deductions will not kick in until after January 1. Be sure that your donations all go to charities that are qualified under Internal Revenue Code chapter 501(c) (3) so that they are eligible for a tax deduction. Also be sure that you obtain receipts or keep your canceled checks for cash donations.

Remember that you cannot deduct a cash contribution, regardless of the amount, unless you keep as a record of the contribution a bank record (such as a canceled check, a bank copy of a canceled check, or a bank statement containing the name of the charity, the date, and the amount) or a written communication from the charity. The written communication must include the name of the charity, date of the contribution, and amount of the contribution. In addition, non-cash donations, such as clothing and household items, must be in "good used condition" in order to take a deduction.

5) **Review your portfolio and take a loss.** If you anticipate receiving capital gains income from your investments, you can sell investments before the end of the year that have decreased in value at a loss in order to offset the gain. You may offset up to \$3,000 in gain this year, unless you

are married filing separately, in which case the maximum offset is \$1,500.

6) **Pay property taxes now.** If you can, pay your property taxes before the end of the year and take the deduction for 2007.

7) **Defer income.** If you happen to be a part-time member of a Reserve Component, such as the National Guard, you may want to defer your annual training until after January 1 to lower your income for 2007. This could save you money by keeping you in a lower tax bracket.

8) **Do not buy an actively-managed mutual fund now.** Most actively-managed mutual funds kick out capital gains and dividends at the end of the year, triggering a taxable event and lowering their share values. Wait until after the capital gains and dividends pay out to save on taxes and buy more shares with the same amount of money.

9) **Pay doctor bills.** Pay medical bills, insurance premiums, buy eyeglasses, contacts, or stock up on prescription medications. You can take a deduction for medical expenses exceeding 7.5 percent of your adjusted gross income.

10) **Organize your financial records.** Good record-keeping can really pay off at tax time. Not only will it make your tax preparation easier and faster, but you might uncover enough tax deductions to be able to itemize. More importantly, the IRS will require receipts and other records in the event of an audit. ■

For more information: [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)



# Employee Spotlight:

## Maj. Scott Meehan

By Kristen A. Dooley, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

*It's not very difficult to look around the organization and find seemingly ordinary employees doing very extraordinary things. Whether it's on the battlefield, in the community or at the workplace, you can find many Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI) employees going beyond the call of duty. Take Scott Meehan, for example. He has deployed to Iraq three times, twice as an Army officer and a third time as a civilian. He's quite an asset to PEO STRI as he has first-hand experience on contracting in the combat zone.*



Courtesy Photo

In 2003, now retired Army Maj. Scott Meehan deployed to Iraq for the first time shortly after the initial invasion. While there, he was responsible for meeting the needs of 25,000 Soldiers by contracting out a variety of goods and services from local Iraqi vendors.

He stated that in December of that year, one of the Iraqi vendors told him that their cousins obtained valuable intelligence, but were fearful of sharing that information with the Americans.

"This vendor assured [his cousins] that they could trust me," Meehan said. "So, they came to tell me where some safe houses were in Baghdad containing former Saddam loyalist."

Meehan explained that he connected the sources up with contacts in the intelligence field. And a few days later, he said, raids were conducted on the safe houses in Baghdad and one of the captured was a relative of Saddam Hussein.

"Less than a week later, American forces were pulling Saddam out of a spider hole just north of us. His relative was considered to be the source who fingered his location," Meehan stated. "Lesson learned? Establish trust."

Meehan attributes the trust he established with his Iraqi vendors to building good business relationships. As a contingency contracting officer stationed in Camp Anaconda, Iraq,

Meehan was responsible for a full-spectrum of contracting actions.

Meehan fondly recalls one acquisition in particular.

“Never forget those over there, even the civilian contractor, Everyone is away from their home and comfort zone, yet they are making the best of a chaotic situation to ensure a successful mission.”

Before the Humvees were equipped with up-armored kits, Soldiers sought protective solutions for their vulnerable transportation vehicles. "Some units rigged whatever they could find for protection, but I solicited a need for

armored plates to hundreds of local vendors," Meehan said.

He worked with the potential vendors to test out their products by allowing various battle captains to shoot rounds from a 7.62mm assault rifle and 5.56mm M-16.

"Most all of the metal plates came back full of holes. There was one piece, however, that stopped all the rounds and the bullets barely made even a dent," Meehan remembered. "When the captain came in beaming from ear to ear, holding the successful piece, we matched the vendor who declared that he had a factory in Baghdad and the supply was endless."

The vendor quoted Meehan a price of \$600 to cover an entire Humvee with the protective metal. The vendor signed an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract that supplied armor for thousands of vehicles.

"The word reached back to me on numerous occasions from Soldiers who exclaimed that the new armor saved their lives during an ambush," he said.

In 2005, Meehan deployed to Iraq again. He was assigned to the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq and oversaw the auditing and close-out of contracts valued at more than \$2 billion.

"We uncovered more than \$150,000 in excess funds to redistribute to the provisional government," Meehan acknowledged.

Continued on page 12





Courtesy Photo

During his first deployment to Camp Anaconda in 2003, Meehan contracted the Iraqi vendors pictured above to add protective metal to thousands of Humvees to guard the Soldiers from ambushes before up-armored kits arrived in theater.

**Employee Spotlight...** *Continued from page 11*

Soon after returning from this assignment, Meehan retired from the Army. This did not deter him from a third tour in Iraq, however. From 2006 to 2007, he was a financial program manager who oversaw the contracts, insurance policy and payroll for more than 50 local Iraqi advisors.

Meehan stated much of the experience he received in theater is an asset to the work he performs at PEO STRI as a procurement analyst for contracting acquisition.

"It provides me the opportunity to stress how important the role of contracting administration is...to ensure a rapid and smooth transition of goods and services to the Warfighter on the ground," Meehan said.

Before reviewing and interpreting contract policy for PEO STRI, though, Meehan held a previous position with the organization. From 2000 to 2003, he was assigned to the Project Manager for Training Devices as the assistant product manager for Combat Training Instrumentation Systems.

"When I was in program management, like most of us, I greatly underestimated the role of contracting," Meehan confessed.

During that time, he saw the development of the Military Operations

on Urbanized Terrain (MOUT) training system. He explained that this is one of the direct implications of PEO STRI's support of the Soldiers in theater.

"MOUT has been very instrumental in training the Warfighter for the current type of warfare they face in Iraq," he said. "This training system has paid huge dividends."

Meehan expressed that the PEO STRI workforce should remain diligent in supporting the Warfighter with training devices.

"Never forget those over there, even the civilian contractor," Meehan said. "Everyone is away from their home and comfort zone, yet they are making the best of a chaotic situation to ensure a successful mission."

Americans tend to take their freedom and way-of-life for granted, Meehan added. "The Warfighter is both relieved and puzzled when he or she [comes home and] can go to a café in Waterford Lakes and eat a meal without worrying about a rocket or mortar landing in the parking lot," he explained.

Since Meehan has returned home, he and his wife have a new-found love for cruising. He and his family also enjoy going out to eat, watching movies, going to amusement parks, drinking coffee, and going to church. ■

# Hails and Farewells

## Hails

**Felix Marrero**  
Acquisition Center

**Laura Parsons**  
Acquisition Center

**August Rankin**  
Acquisition Center

## Farewells

**Michael Livaudais**  
PSG

**Nancy Potts**  
Acquisition Center

**Scott Syring**  
Acquisition Center



## INSIDE PEO STRI

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