



Sierra Army Depot, Herlong California

July 2019

Vol. 74 No. 7

The CHALLENGE



**Lt. Col. Russell Henry assumes
Command of SIAD
pages 4 & 5**

**Message to the Workforce
page 2**

**Change of Command
pages 4 and 5**

**Awards & Recognitions
page 8**

Commander's View

As the incoming Commander, it is an absolute privilege to serve as the 42nd Commander of Sierra Army Depot. Sierra Army Depot undoubtedly has a long esteemed legacy and for me to be a part of that legacy moving forward, it is truly humbling for both me and my family.

With Sierra Army Depot's valued history since in 1942, our most critical assets have, and always will be, YOU ... our dedicated workforce, teammates, and your families ... all who are an extremely important part of Team Sierra.

You are proud distinguished members of the Army Profession serving in highly skilled career fields requiring proficiency and commitment to your craft ... and with that you have an opportunity to impact the strength of today's Army ... while making a difference for our future Army and Joint Force. Thank you for your dedication and your service. I look forward to meeting each and every one you.

We must continue to realize the importance of our mission at Sierra Army Depot as the



Lt. Col. Russell E. Henry

U.S. Army's premiere and largest facility dedicated to equipment retrograde, regeneration, reutilization, and redistribution ...

known as the "End of First Life Center"... and we must never underestimate our vital role in delivering Army Readiness now and into the future. For us, it is all about Army and Joint Force readiness!

My family and I are truly honored just to be a part of Team Sierra. Sierra Army Depot has an admired reputation like no other and as the Commander I will strive to continue that legacy.

Rest assured that I will never forget where I come from and I will never forget why we do what we do every day for our Soldiers, our Army, and our nation. You will get 100 percent, and then some, from me every day. I am committed to you, this organization, our Army, and our nation. I truly believe that the Army is the strength of our nation, and WE at Sierra are a part of that!

Remember, "We are only limited by our potential, but our potential is limitless" ...

"Excellence is found in the pursuit of perfection" ...

Pride in Excellence ... Army Strong!

This is the nation's 233rd Birthday ... what does independence mean to you?



Steven Balmer

When I think of what Independence means to me, I immediately think of freedom. I remember that the independence and freedom that we enjoy today were paid for by the Blood of Patriots during the American Revolution, and maintained by the Blood of Patriots in the War of 1812, the American Civil War, the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, September 11, 2001, Iraq, and Afghanistan.



Kathy Ayers

Being able to live my life as I choose and be able to depend upon myself. True Independence can only exist in doing what's right. Independence means enjoying freedom and empowering others to do the same. Self-reliance: Having trust in my efforts and abilities, being responsible for my actions. The ability to speak my mind.



Laurence Rose

All things red, white and blue! To me (a naturalized citizen originally from France), Independence Day is the occasion to celebrate and show pride in our flag, history and traditions, and to rejoice in public and private events. It marks the beginning of democracy in the US and it reminds me of Bastille Day which marks the end of feudalism in France. I was so excited to see the US Women's soccer team win the World Cup title on July 7 (in France). Perfect timing!



Staff Sgt. Jonathan Brookfield

It is the celebration of independence of these great United States of America. Independence and freedom have been sustained by our amazing military and civilian support past and present. Always remembering those who have paid the ultimate price. We also keep close in our prayers, those men and women who man the walls sacrificing around the globe daily, defending the constitution, delivering freedoms to those who cannot do it for themselves and keeping the American dream alive and achievable.

**The
CHALLENGE**

Depot Commander/Publisher
Editor-in-Chief
Graphic Design/Photographer

On the Cover: Lt. Col. Russell Henry delivers his acceptance speech during Sierra Army Depot's 42nd Change of Command, July 17 at the Depot's parade field. (photo credit: Lloyd Gubler)

**Lt. Col. Russell Henry
Aric Manner
Lloyd Gubler**

Graphic design by Lloyd Gubler

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Sierra Army Depot gets a new Commander

By **Randy Tisor**
TACOM Public Affairs

U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armament Command’s commanding general, Maj. Gen. Daniel Mitchell officiated a Change of Command ceremony July 17 at Sierra Army Depot.

During the ceremony, depot command was officially transferred from Lt. Col. Benjamin Johnson to Lt. Col. Russell Henry.

In his ceremony remarks, Mitchell praised the work performed at the depot under Johnson’s command.

“Two years ago, Lt. Col. Johnson took command of Sierra Army Depot and he’s done an exceptional job managing this highly specialized workforce comprised of more than thirteen-hundred Soldiers, civilians and contractors and directing an operating budget of nearly a quarter of a billion dollars,” Mitchell said.

He added that, under Lt. Col. Johnson’s leadership, the Sierra Depot team further developed the workforce through the implementation of the

Leader Development Program within the Sierra Leadership Academy. The program contributed to a reduction in employee turnover from a 2017 rate of 15 percent to a current fiscal year level of just over 12 percent.

Johnson also oversaw the continued improvement of depot facilities at the rate of \$20 million to \$30 million per year.

Mitchell noted that Johnson “did a fantastic job in fostering partnerships with industry, helping to preserve and promote Sierra Depot’s capabilities far into the future.”

The general also had high praise for Henry, the incoming commander, citing his enlisted service, commissioning in the Transportation Corps upon completion of Officer Candidate School, his combat tours and several staff leadership and command positions.

“Lt. Col. Henry, you have my confidence,” Mitchell stated. “As you take command of this remarkable team, I am confident that you will move this depot successfully forward and will handily deal with new challenges and obstacles

as they may arise. I know you understand the needs of the warfighter and that what you do here directs, and greatly, impacts the Army mission on a daily basis.

“I know that the Sierra Depot family has already extended a warm welcome to Desiree and your sons, Russell, Robert, and Ryan, and we’re all thankful that you’re here.”

Johnson and his family will relocate to Fort Lee for his next assignment.



Photo by Terence Sterba

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) at SIAD

By **Karen Cervantez**
Records & Information Management Specialist

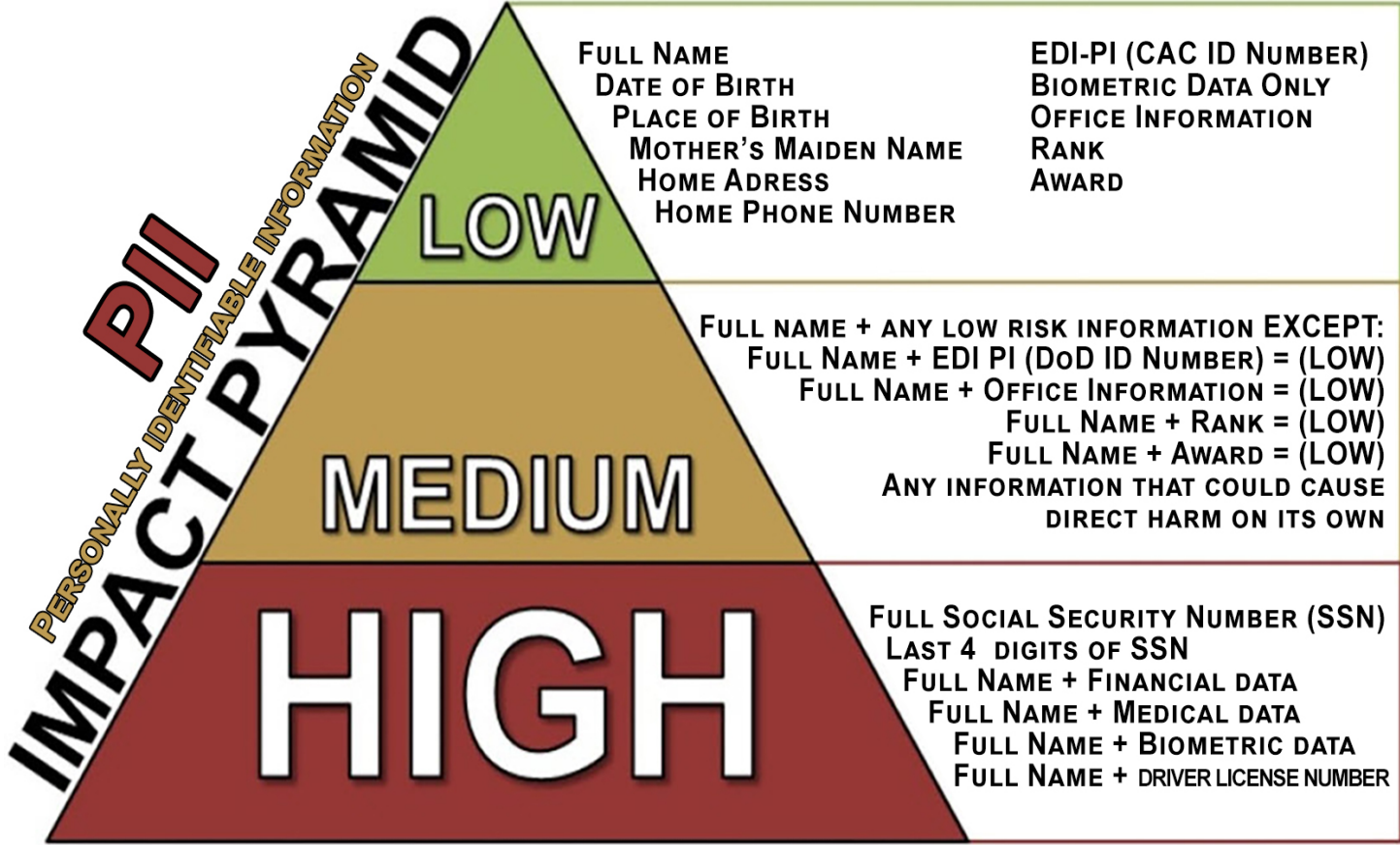
Do you know what PII is and how to protect it? PII is a combination of information that can be used to distinguish or identify or trace another individual. It can include your full name, Social Security Number (SSN), driver’s license number, date and place of birth, home address, mother’s maiden name, private phone numbers and/or personal email address. It can also include financial or health information. The best way to protect PII is to limit who you give the information to. If it isn’t collected and/or stored, we don’t need to protect it. PII can only be stored in special PII folders on SharePoint. It should only be accessible to individuals who have a need to know in order to complete their job requirements.

At SIAD we have had a few breaches or incidents pertaining to PII this past year. Examples include: Printing your Leave & Earnings Statement (LES) to a printer not in your area; Badge

request forms found in a dumpster; A photo with a name and SSN were posted in the newspaper; Someone had leave slips with their SSN posted on SharePoint; And a resume with name and home information were posted in a folder on SharePoint. All of these could have been pre-

vented. Please remember if you collect it, you NEED to protect it. Use cover sheet DD 2923 to protect PII. Lock PII in a locked cabinet or desk drawer. Mark email messages with FOUO in the subject line and encrypt the email so that it cannot be intercepted. When PII is destroyed, it should

be “unrecognizable and beyond reconstruction”. We have special shredders to shred PII very small, not the long strip scanners. Please treat PII as if it were your own personal information and protect it. Watch what you print out, where you print it out, and how you store it.



SIERRA ARMY DEPOT

Change of Command July



17th, 2019



To Dig, or not to Dig

By Terry Lee White
Facilities Engineering Division

How important is it to report an excavation? It is important enough to rank in the ten #-1-1 phone numbers. Everyone knows 4-1-1 and cell phone users (pretty much everyone) know 6-1-1, but do you know the other #-1-1 phone numbers?

Not all #-1-1 numbers are implemented in all areas, and “1-1-1” appears to have no specific meaning in the United States at all; but each state has its own 8-1-1 call center to help you get digging (<http://call811.com/>). Here in northern California and Nevada our actual call center is “USA North 811” with the phone number 800-642-2444 and it is located in Concord CA. (In this case USA stands for Underground Service Alert.) You can call the center directly, or simply dial 8-1-1 and be redirected.

Why should you call 8-1-1? For one thing, it is the cheapest insurance you cannot buy. Placing a call to 8-1-1 puts the burden of utility location on the utility companies and takes it off from you. For example, if you call 8-1-1 a few days before you dig and the utilities are all marked

out for you, then if a utility is either not marked or marked incorrectly, and as you are digging you hit the utility, you are not at fault, the utility company is. So, how much does it cost to call 8-1-1? Nothing but a little time. You should call 8-1-1 a minimum of 48 hours before you plan to dig and the markings are good for four weeks.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

What happens if you do not call 8-1-1? Remember that free insurance? It is gone. If you hit a utility while digging, you are at fault and you will need to pay for the damage, which could include fines and repair costs. A quick look at the types of underground utilities should make us want to know where they are. The list includes pressurized water lines (messy), sewer lines (stinky), storm drain lines (if you have to hit something, this is probably the best one to hit), electrical lines (shocking), steam lines (burning),

gas lines (explosive), telephone, cable television and internet (expensive).

Make the smart choice, call 8-1-1 before you dig.

At Sierra Army Depot (SIAD), make the call to DPW at 4-4-4-8 to create a Demand Work Order (DMO) if you need to dig. Our service technicians will obtain all the information necessary for us to call 8-1-1 for you. Since we own and operate many of our utilities, we will mark our utilities in coordination with the USA-marked public utilities.

Make the smart choice, call 4-4-4-8 before you dig at SIAD.

United States #-1-1 Numbers

0-1-1— Exit Code for USA to call internationally
1-1-1 -
2-1-1 – Essential Community Services
3-1-1 – Non-Emergency Phone Number
4-1-1 – Directory Assistance
5-1-1 – National Traffic and Road Closure
6-1-1 – Cell Phone Customer Service
7-1-1 - Telecommunications Relay Service
8-1-1 – Call Before You Dig
9-1-1 – Emergency Phone Number

These soldiers will have a drone in their pockets during their Afghanistan deployment

Military Times, July 5th
Todd South

The three-year goal of putting a mini-drone in the hands of squad-level soldiers will finally see action in theater when “Fury” paratroopers with the 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment take the “Black Hornet” miniature helicopter drone to Afghanistan this month.

The drone capability was first requested by the Army to industry in early 2016 when leaders at the Maneuver Center of Excellence sought a “pocket-sized drone” for low-level reconnaissance.

“We’ve had numerous studies as well as experimentation within our battle labs. We continue to see that soldiers are kind of lacking at the squad level for relevant information that’s immediately around them,” Phil Cheatum, deputy branch chief of electronics and special developments at MCoE told Army Times in 2016.

The gap was in short-range recon.

Higher echelon units could and still do call up Gray Eagle or Shadow drones for situational awareness. But a squad of soldiers simply trying to see what’s around the corner or over the next hill was left without a quickly deployable asset.

“Using this system, Soldiers can understand their operational environment better so they can make better decisions and make these decisions quicker than ever,” John Paul Kruszewski, lead engineer for the unmanned systems at the U.S. Army Combat

Capabilities Development Command Soldier Center said in an Army



Photo by Corporal Daniel Wiepen/MOD

release. “It makes Soldiers more effective while reducing their tactical risk.”

Kruszewski described the drone as a pair of flying binoculars.

“I was really impressed with the system, its capabilities, and what it offers Soldiers in terms of risk reduction,” Sgt. Ryan Subers, drone operator, said in the same release.

“This kind of technology will be a life-saver for us because it takes us out of harm’s way while enhancing

our ability to execute whatever combat mission we’re on. I’m very grateful for technology like this and to be a part of the first unit to use it.”

The PD-100 Black Hornet was in use in Afghanistan by both British and Norwegian forces since at least 2012. Army testing at the Maneuver Battle Lab Expeditionary Warrior Experiments at Fort Benning began in 2015.

The hurdle? Cost.

Cheatum told Army Times back in 2016 that the Black Hornets were handmade, which made them pricey.

The Army’s first batch order for fielding came in 2018. The device weighs 18 grams, can shoot video and take photo snapshots. Older versions had an estimated 25-minute flight time at a distance of about 1,000 to 1,500 meters.

The newest one purchased by the Army is twice the size of the original, partly so it can also carry light payloads. The Army did not specify what kinds of payloads it would use on the tiny aircraft.

Marines have also tested the drone, and early concepts called for it to be a part of the kit of the newly reconfigured 15-Marine squad. But the most recent training and pre-deployment training for those squads includes a quad copter but no mini-drones for

Marines.

That initial order was part of a \$2.6 million contract with FLIR Systems. The full contract issued earlier this year was for \$40 million.

Neither the company nor the Army previously divulged the quantity of the order but a rough estimate based on listed individual prices translates to at least 1,000 mini-drones to spread across the force. The company told Army Times that the mini-drone “bridges the gap between aerial and ground-based sensors,” and it offers the same situational awareness as larger drones and the “threat location capabilities” of unmanned ground vehicles.

“It is the start of an era where every squad will have vision beyond their line of sight,” Nathan Heslink, assistant program manager, Soldier Borne Sensors, PEO Soldier said in the release.

“The squad will not have any dead space within its area of operations and this allows Soldiers to detect threats earlier than ever, meaning it is more likely Soldiers won’t be harmed during their missions.”

Sierra Army Depot: Ensuring Army Readiness

By Scott Wakefield,
TACOM Public Affairs

In 1940, the United States faced its most direct threat of invasion since the War of 1812. Tensions between America and Japan were at a boiling point, as war in Europe had erupted into full-blown open warfare.

Due to these threats and the fall of France, the U.S. government decided to expand ammunition storage facilities across the country. The initial plan was to place a facility in each of the four corners of the United States to repel an invasion should it occur. Sierra Army Depot was one of those facilities.

Construction began on the depot in early 1942 near Honey Lake on the California and Nevada border. By the end of the war, there were 1,021 buildings on the installation with a primary focus of storing ammunition. Of those buildings, 802 were ammo storage igloos.

Fast-forward 50 years to another time, requirements for the Army have changed and all sections of the Department of Defense had to examine what missions needed to continue. During the Base Realignment and Closure Commissions 1995 round of talks, DoD leadership decided that the ammunition storage mission at Sierra Army Depot was no longer needed and the depot was set to close.

According to Kathy Ayers, the Production Operations manager for the depot, the commander of the installation during the draw down was successful in convincing the Department of Defense to keep the depot open by drawing attention to the general supply and storage capabilities that Sierra had to offer.

The ammunition storage mission at Sierra fully drew down before the end of the 1990's then picked up its new mission of receiving, storing, upgrading, configuring, assembling, shipping, and accounting for a wide range of Army supplies, vehicles, and equipment.



Photo Credit: U.S. Army Photo

Ayers has been at the Depot since the 90's and she says the mission has grown to a point where every building on the installation is either used for production or storage, including the 801 surviving igloos.

The igloos, which are 26.5 feet wide and up to 50 to 60 feet long, have blast doors that were narrow, thick, and reinforced around the sides by thick concrete walls. The doors were so narrow that forklifts were unable to move in and out and workers had to move everything stored there by hand.

Due to the increase in the depot's mission, Ayers says that the commander decided to renovate the igloos to make it easier and faster to access the equipment and materials inside.

Steve Balmer is the manager of the Reutilization Operation Group at Sierra. He says depot

leadership decided to remove the blast doors on the igloos, cut away some of the concrete wall, and widen the door opening. They also decided to replace the blast doors with lighter weight roller doors that would allow forklifts to move in and out of the structure more easily.

Although only 50 of the igloos have undergone the retrofit, Balmer says, "they can store major assets and the deterioration [inside them] is not as bad as it would be in other places...because of the low humidity...it arrests the deterioration of materials that are stored here."

Through ingenuity on retrofitting the base facilities to accommodate and expand the depot's current mission, Balmer says that Sierra is now in a better position to assist with bringing equipment back from Iraq and Afghanistan. He says, "with the retrograde and reutilization mission bringing things back from Southwest Asia, inspecting them to determine what is serviceable and what is not...cleaning them and putting them back in the inventory saves the taxpayers money."

Kevin Pasley, Sierra Army Depot budget officer, says the decision to retrofit the igloos was the only plausible decision to consider at the time because there were too many administrative and financial obstacles to building newer facilities and the renovations saved a lot of money.

The renovated igloos will allow Sierra Army Depot to contribute to two of the seven key Army Materiel Command focus areas of Industrial Base Readiness and Supply Availability and Equipment Readiness. AMC has the overall goal to ensure the Joint Force is prepared for large-scale combat across land, sea, air, space and cyberspace in support of joint, Multi-Domain Operations.

Report Suspicious Activity or Behavior

iWATCH ARMY

iREPORT **i KEEP US SAFE**

See Something Say Something

ARMY ANTITERRORISM

UXO
Unexploded ordnance

Remember 3R's
Recognize
Retreat
Report- Call 911

See Something, Say Something

AFGE
PROUD TO MAKE AMERICA WORK
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES • AFL-CIO

Leadership Academy XV Graduation

“Leaders become great, not because of their power, but because of their ability to empower others.”

-John Maxwell



Daron Bloom, Leadership Development Program



Terence Sterba, Leadership Development Program



Leadership Academy XV Graduates

Pride in Excellence

Commander, Lt. Col. Benjamin Johnson presents employees awards, commendations, and medals for service.



Mike Murphy, Civilian Service



Gaosa Tautolo Jr, 40 Years of Federal Service



Melinda Cardenas, 15 Years of Federal Service



Larry Mossi, 15 Years of Federal Service



Kevin Pasley, Sales & Operations (S&OP) Award



Henry Bownes, Service Contract Process



Sierra Army Depot, Lean Six Sigma Excellence Award



Devin Ransom, Sales & Operations (S&OP) Award



Jimmy Newton, Certificate of Retirement