



DLA Distribution Red River's Mine Res keeps battle-damaged vehicles in the

By Emily Blubaugh, DLA Distribution Public Affairs

The buildup of troops in Afghanistan is resulting in an increase in support from the Defense Logistics Agency, and its Red River, Texas, distribution center is doing its part to ensure those troops stay safe by keeping Mine Resistant Ambush Protected, or MRAP, vehicles mission-ready.

The Special Commodities Branch at DLA Distribution Red River, Texas, fulfills requirements for spare parts to maintain MRAP vehicles in Iraq and Afghanistan. The sustainment spare parts maintain assets needed to keep vehicles in the fight and meet theater demand. Readiness remains high in Operation Enduring Freedom and this was reflected in early May, when DLA surpassed over \$1 billion in MRAP

support sales.

MRAP vehicles are a family of armored fighting vehicles designed to survive land mines and improvised explosive device attacks and ambushes. DLA Distribution Red River, Texas, currently has approximately 4,500 MRAP National Stock Numbers in stock to support MRAP provisioning. To date, the center has shipped approximately 300 Authorized Stock List Packages, over 1,000 Prescribed Load List Packages, over 60 De-processing kits, approximately 90 Battle Damage Assessment and Repair kits, over 250 Special Tools kits, nearly 8,200 Basic Issue Item kits, and several hundred critical piece parts needed in support of dead-lined MRAP vehicles.

DLA Distribution Red River sends MRAP parts to fill MRAP repair part orders from various units. The majority of the shipments of parts and supplies are being shipped out on air pallets. Materiel is placed on the air pallets by forklifts and by hand in what is called the "building process." When the air pallets are built, a team of employees assigned to the netting process place large plastic bags over the materiel and then use cargo nets and straps to secure the materiel to the air pallet. The air pallets are packed and a Radio Frequency tag is assigned to the air pallet. The packing labels and packing list are placed on a placard board, which is attached with the RF tag to the netting of the air pallet. The air pallet is then loaded onto a 53 ft. roller bed van or a flat bed trailer for transport to the airport. Kits and packages are then shipped to units across Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the MRAP Sustainment Facility in Kuwait.

DLA Distribution Red River operations demand constant open communications to ensure that the mission is met. "Communication between the areas is excellent. Sometimes Shipping may help Warehousing, or Warehousing may help Receiving, or vice versa. Transportation helps us by making sure we have the trucks, vans or shipping containers that we need and when we need them," said Frances Dixon, DLA Distribution Red River packing supervisor. "Our groups work together as



The Special Commodities Branch at DLA Distribution Red River, Texas, fulfills requirements for spare parts to maintain Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles in Iraq and Afghanistan.

istant Ambush Protected vehicle mission fight in Afghanistan

a team to help each other to accomplish our common goal-supporting the Warfighter through maintenance of battle-damaged vehicles," he continued.

Approximately half of the workload for DLA Distribution Red River's MRAP area is in support of the new MRAP All Terrain Vehicle, or M-ATV. The M-ATV is the newest addition to the MRAP family, and is lighter and more maneuverable than standard MRAPs to aid forces in Afghanistan in navigating the country's rugged terrain.

Some of the material is issued as large kits with 90 pieces of varying construction, size and weight. Depending on pallet configuration, it takes 12 air pallets and one flat bed trailer, for pieces that are too long for air pallets, to ship these kits. The pallet builders build the air pallets with the same boxes each time for consistency so the soldier or civilian receiving the kits will know what to expect on each pallet.

Another large area of support within MRAP operations are Rocket Propelled Grenade kits. Recently, the organization went above and beyond its normal support to expedite the shipment of 600 RPG protection kits to the waiting Warfighter. From the moment the center learned of the requirement until the last of the kits were delivered to Dover Air Force Base, they had two things in mind - the Warfighter, and the satisfaction

that what they were doing was saving lives.

RPG Net Kits are designed for the M-ATV. The RPG netting is made of Kevlar and provides the M-ATV and Warfighter with improved protection from RPGs.

DLA Distribution Red River employees reacted swiftly, skillfully and with a sense of urgency as if their own lives depended on the mission.

"When the requisition came in, I explained to employees that this was extremely high visibility, but what made it truly important was that it was urgently needed by a soldier downrange. They really took ownership and pride in their work and I was astounded at the output," said DLA Distribution Red River commander United States Army Lt. Col. James Bass, III.

Perhaps most importantly, DLA Distribution Red River employees understand the importance of their



A large area of support within DLA Distribution Red River Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle operations are Rocket Propelled Grenade kits. Recently, the organization went above and beyond its normal support to expedite the shipment of 600 RPG protection kits to the waiting Warfighter.

special mission. Onis Wilson, DLA Distribution Red River, Texas, packer leader recalled a special meeting with a customer, "The soldier told me when his unit receives inbound air pallets from our organization, they know everything will be there, be right and in good condition. He told me that he hoped our workforce understood how much our work means to his unit. I told him we absolutely know what it means because we understand the importance of our mission, and this support is why DLA Distribution Red River exists."