

# Change of Mission Not Change of Dedication

By LTJG Adam Johnson, SC, USN

On March 26, 2003 the Defense Distribution Depot, Susquehanna, PA (DDSP) third shift crew that normally builds pallets of food for the troops in the field were given a new mission. Although their previous mission is very important, the new mission would prove just as important and require the same dedication and enthusiasm. This crew of professionals recognized that and hit the floor running.

The crew had to open 15,456 boxes and insert 1,545,600 individual instruction sheets into boxes containing Pb tablets (Pyridostigmine Bromide). These tablets are a pre-treatment for nerve agents used in chemical and biological warfare. Without these instructions the troops would likely take the incorrect doses, thus not providing the required protection they are intended for.

The third shift from the Special Operations Food Division shifted their priorities from packing food to accomplish this mission. There was no deterioration in morale, dedication or enthusiasm for the task at hand.

They set up a plan that was not only the most effective, but also more efficient. They would have over a million instructions inserted in three days, getting this much-needed medication to the field where it can be used. The crew understood the importance of their new mission and accomplished this meticulously and rapidly.

Talking with these individuals they had one goal in mind and that was supporting the Warfighter and getting them what they need whether that be food or medicine. Although they were out of their element, their regular building, regular job, and regular surroundings they were not out of their dedication to their job, and to the troops.

“Because of the dedication and enthusiasm of the Special Operations Food Division this important medication will be shipped to protect our Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airman,” said CAPT Robert Ritchie, SC, USN, DDSP Commander. “They can be and should be proud of their contribution to the war on terror.”



*DDSP third shift employees insert over a million instruction sheets into boxes containing Pb tablets destined for the Warfighters.*