

Garrison Commander Colonel Noah Cloud, USAG Wiesbaden

Good evening Garrison Wiesbaden. I'm Colonel Noah Cloud the Garrison Commander. I'm here with:

Garrison Command Sergeant Major Christopher Truchon, USAG Wiesbaden

Sergeant Major Chris Truchon, Garrison CSM

COL Cloud

Your wonderful Command Sergeant Major here in Garrison, so thanks for being here tonight, once again. Doing another town hall for our community. It's important that we maintain good communications and we were doing these very frequently early on. Matter of fact, so frequently we didn't know when the next one was going to be.

CSM Truchon

Or when the last one was

COL Cloud

Or when the last one was. They just emerged as conditions changed, but you know it's been quite some time since we've had a (Covid 19) positive (case) in our community.

CSM Truchon

We're doing really well.

COL Cloud

Knock on wood. We've been doing very well. We don't talk numbers specifically in our community obviously for a variety of reasons but it's been over a week and I want to thank you as a community for your efforts and for keeping good faith with the efforts collectively to secure and protect one another. You know we talked a lot about teamwork early on and it really has been a team effort across the board and we've tried to recognize our "Hometown Heroes" to recognize those members of the team that are shouldering the load. And it's not lost on us that everybody is shouldering the load. Whether its parents at home just dealing with a new environment and new conditions or it's the wonderful folks in DODEA who transitioned very quickly to figure out very quickly how to do virtual school. Or even our great Jimmy, who is here from the commissary, along with an assortment of folks. Brian Smith from AAFES is here, Task Force Clay has a representative, Major Sobalvarro, Lieutenant Colonel McGraw, Commander of the 1st 214 Hainerberg and Chaplain team. A lot of folks here tonight on the show, each and every one of them leaders in their new environment where it's been challenging. They face unique challenges. I mentioned Jimmy earlier He's going to be our first guest tonight. I mention him because, I tell ya, the commissary has experienced a lot of change in connection with Covid 19 and we're going to talk a little bit about that tonight. But, certainly, those folks working to keep the food flowing in our commissary and those in 214th keeping us safe when we get injured. Those are all heroes, people that, are very representative of what we're facing today in this new environment.

Before we invite our guests up there are a couple of things I wanted to share: Masks are a big deal. Matter of fact, I carry one with me in my pocket. It's "at the ready" so to speak. If I need to go in somewhere, I keep it in my pocket. Folks are wondering, "Hey..." It was a late arrival. It made its debut

not too long ago and it's a "thing" as part of the Covid -19 effort, and now its continuing to roll out across Germany. What are you hearing about how we're going to be postured locally in the German community, Sergeant Major?

CSM Truchon

Well, It looks like the German states of Hessen and Rhineland Pfalz are actually following the Garrison's lead and starting, on Monday, everybody in both of those states is going to be required to wear a mask or some sort of face covering whenever they're on public transportation, entering a public shop, a bank, a post office. And folks here in Hessen, where we are located, need to be aware that there is going to be a fine for non-compliance if they catch you at any one of those locations without a mask on, you're potentially facing a 50 Euro fine. So it might be painful to forget to have your mask when you run into one of these locations. So I'm sure right now our community is fully prepared for that as long as we have these procedures in place.

COL Cloud

So what you're saying is I've got to remember my mask AND my wallet.

CSM Truchon

Yes you do, sir.

COL Cloud

Just in case....

CSM Truchon

And we won't fine you this time because that particular mask matches your uniform much better than the one you had on last week.

COL Cloud

Good. So, you heard it here first from your Sergeant Major, so its reliable information. Starting Monday make sure you have your masks at the ready as you go on to the community stores, and shops, and banks and make sure you don't get a fine for non-compliance which is 50 Euros. So, that's very important as we move around.

Another thing I wanted to point out besides that is: General Order #1 is still in effect. All of the restrictions we initially put down are still in effect. Although the Host Nation is starting to reset in many ways, we, as a Garrison and in many ways across Europe, have not begun to reset. We are at the same posture that we have taken, starting about six weeks ago, in our efforts. Now, I think that the good news and we can keep faith with the great community members in Wiesbaden is for you to be confident and aware that leadership is watching very carefully and having many discussions on how our garrison and garrisons across Europe can begin to emerge also. We're watching very carefully what's going on in the Host Nation and how this is impacting the spread of Covid-19. And so that's a good thing, I think it's good to be cautious and careful and to be mindful of the world around us and how things are happening and at what pace and then to use that information to make the best decision for our community. I think this week there will be discussions at senior levels to understand how we all look, individually, as

garrisons compared to one another, in general, what our posture is. By this weekend we will have a good idea of where the host nation is and how all that's happening and I think very shortly we will be able to make some decisions one way or the other on how we are going to modify the standards that we put in place to be able to emerge from this in a safe way. I think that's important for folks to know that every day we get new information. We're watching the statistics, we're watching the behaviors. We're trying to understand what it means and how it impacts our community. What we ask is for your continued good faith in supporting all of the measures that are put in place to protect our community here and to make sure we're doing the right things and keeping others safe.

One of the things that I wanted to highlight and (to CSM Truchon) maybe you can share in this is, "How do people, if they see others that are not keeping good faith with the standards that are established in accordance with General Order #1 in being safe, what are some ways, Sergeant Major, that they can address this without tying up the MP line?"

CSM Truchon

OK, Well, I will say, Sir, that certainly each of us, we're all members of the same community here so, first thing: If you see something, say something. Some of us need a little reminder, we've been doing this for a little bit of time now and there's not a problem with just going up and saying, "Hey, ya'll might want to spread out a little bit there. Remember? Our community is on the downhill slide at this point from positives and we're now releasing more people from quarantine than we have going into it by a very great margin so we want to keep it that way. So that would be my first suggestion, Sir, would be, just go up and say something. Be polite. Be courteous. Those of us who wear a uniform know all about making an on-the-spot correction. It doesn't matter what rank you are, you're simply doing something for the good of the community and that's the whole reason we continue to have these in place is for the good of the community.

Our MPs are very busy, and on top of that they're under the very same constraints that most of us are with teleworking and having to practice social distancing, minimal manning, etcetera. In order to keep them safe, keep the rest of the community safe, they're following the same rules and requirements. If you're not comfortable walking up to somebody, my suggestion would be for you to contact one of the great task forces that we have: Task Force Hainerberg or Task force Clay. They both have command posts. They both have established telephone numbers and they will respond. You know, say, (for example) Clay Kaserne, my son likes to go down to the park and kick soccer balls on the field. A couple of weeks ago there was an issue with a large group of folks out there playing football. You know, a little too large of a group to be in compliance with General Order #1. It's a health concern because of the virus threat but it's not a situation where we necessarily need to tie up our Emergency Management Personnel with. So, reach out to one of those two tasks forces and they will send out their enforcement team to go out and say a little something to try and break that up. So if you're on Clay, you can reach out to the Task Force Clay Enforcement Team at their command post at 0611-143-546-4334. Or if you here on Hainerberg: 0611-143-546-8501. And I ask that all members of the community, if someone asks you, "Hey, you mind spreading out a little bit, remember the situation we're in?" Please be polite. Be respectful. Because these troops who are out here doing this are tasked to do this they're doing what they're told to do. They're doing it to protect you, and that includes everyone, even the folks that might have forgotten. So let's treat them with the respect they deserve for having to come out and sometimes having to do the hard right when you do wrong.

COL Cloud

That's right. There's no shortage of eyeballs out looking and watching, that's for sure. That's a good thing because we've got to keep each other safe. No shortage of eyeballs or communication. Watching one another, so we all want to do the right thing.

Folks are growing impatient. I'm impatient. I don't like it. I can't stand it as a matter of fact.

CSM Truchon

My wife's had enough, I tell you what.

COL Cloud

I've had enough frozen drinks you know, there some Covid things out there that I just can't stand. I took way too much for granted. You know. I like having a little more freedom and I know everyone in the community does. I know everyone is in a unique circumstance. Especially if you've got a bunch of children. But everybody has their own things that they enjoy doing. It could be that your whole life was something that now you can't do. It sucks. It really does. There's no other way to put it. But I think the more we do to protect one another the faster we get closer to normal

CSM Truchon

Yes, Yes,

COL Cloud

You know, that's the world of opposites or counter-intuitivism that's associated with this. "The more I'm obedient, the better off I'll be" You may not think that way but that's how it is.

Let's do a "Hometown Hero" before we talk about our last little topic and invite our special guests.

I've got to start with Wiesbaden High School. Man, I think they've been putting in a lot of work into thinking about how to make something of this graduation. This graduating class.

CSM Truchon

Mm-hmmm. LOTS of email traffic and phone calls.

COL Cloud

I've got two kids graduating from Wiesbaden High School. I love Wiesbaden High School. I think it is an absolutely fabulous, well run wonderful place for students to attend and they've got Lee Carter, Marcie Grayson, teachers there that have been Senior Class sponsors along with Heather Tyler who is a High School supply tech and Senior parent in the Tyler family. And they've all worked together to do some unique things to help the students create some semblance of a senior year, whether it's helping them bond in one way or another and become more connected as they are physically disconnected. Or thinking through... Mrs. Ramaglia, the wonderful principal, they're all thinking, Peter Witmer's helping them and the Garrison we're all working together to figure out how do we create a Senior Graduation opportunity. And I haven't seen the final plan yet but I've heard some talk and I'm excited and I wanted to give a "Hometown Hero" shout out to those wonderful individuals and the school there.

Before I leave schools, I wanted to mention Aukamm Elementary School Skyla Seltzer. She made masks for the staff at Hainerberg Elementary School and Aukamm Elementary School and for the folks supporting the Student Meal Program. Not only has she made masks for the staff but she's made masks for other community members.

So we've seen a lot of mask making. (to CSM Truchon) Is this a dream come true for you? Finally being able to wear a mask out I the open?

CSM Truchon

You don't know how long I've been waiting for this, Sir. Years.

COL Cloud

You get to be Zorro. When I think about the masks-

CSM Truchon

Or a bank robber

COL Cloud

Or a bank robber, you know, when you go to the bank with a mask on. But, Aukamm Elementary Hometown Hero Skyla Seltzer, thank you, ma'am and thank you to all the High School, Middle School, and Elementary School. You're all part of the team and you're all working hard to nurture and develop our most precious people in our lives: our children.

Sergeant Major, I'm going to throw it over to your court, if you can give us a hometown hero

CSM Truchon

Hometown Hero. Alright, I've got 1..2..3 pages worth but we'll spread it out over the remainder of our town all over here. I want to start off with our great LRC: Logistics Resources Center in particular, our transportation office. Ms. Birgit Smith, Mr. Edgar Schauss and Mr. Michael Fuhr. They have continued to help out the soldiers civilians and families in our communities who have been affected by what's happened over the last six or seven weeks. There were hundreds of individuals in our community who had transportation appointments scheduled both inbound and outbound when the travel ban occurred and this great group of professionals continues to keep in touch with all the customers, the moving companies and all of the other agencies and the variety of moving parts that determine the best solution for the folks. They're all caught in a real tough limbo right now.

16:11 we've also got on here Ms. Annette McKerrell. She's also been assisting our civilians with their travel plans as this has gone on. We all probably know someone whose got stuck in the United States while they were making their plans for PCS over here and she actually works securing Patriot Express flights for our folks and she has continued to serve setting up those reservations and serve as liaison with our official travel office. And it notes on here both how quick her service is and how pleasant she is while she provides it, so Thanks a lot Ms. McKerrell.

COL Cloud

We could all use a little more "pleasant" in our day to day life.

CSM Truchon

Yes we can.

COL Cloud

That's for sure, I'll take some more of that. And I'll tell you, sometimes a smile can make all the difference. A little bit of smile. A little hometown smile a little familiarity can make all the difference. And since you mentioned LRC and people trying to move, I think everyone's aware, at least if you're in a PCS cycle that the Army moved the stop date back to 30 June. And with that comes a little more anxiety, apprehension, uncertainty, anxiety, unknown and all that.

But have no fear. There's a smile right around the corner in Mr. Christopher Curtis who is our Stop Move Customer Service Team Leader. And he has worked tirelessly to help those who are trapped in that gap where they're supposed to PCS and there's a lot of uncertainty and he answers the questions and so he has his tentacles into the far reaches of all the services that help soldiers and families move and PCS. And so I, for one, am looking to PCS this summer, potentially if everything works out in accordance with the Army's plan. And so I'm starting to look at: what do I need to do? And luckily I'm not in that 30 June window but there are certain folks who are in that window and are wondering, "Can I leave now?" "How do I leave now?" "Is there an exception to policy for my specific circumstance?" His number is 0611-143-548-1201. And if you go to our Covid web page on our garrison webpage you'll find his email.

And as we look at those who are authorized to move without exception to policy, those who are deploying, those that had initiated travel already and had begun movement, they do not need to stop. Those that are moving to seek medical treatment or those that are healthcare providers being moved to provide treatment, those who are trapped in the middle of this and are in a TDY status can go ahead and return to their location, those, of course, who are retiring or separating and then there are lots of soldiers out there, to include my son in law, who is off to basic training. So, he's going to have to travel during this time. So, lots of individuals, there is a process to take a look at to whether or not you are qualified for an exception to policy, Chris Curtis leads that team and they're putting a lot of energy into that.

So with that, Sergeant Major, let's open up the aperture on our screen and bring in Jimmy Ephran

Jimmy Ephran

OK, thank you, Sir for the intro

COL Cloud

Yeah, thanks for being here tonight Jimmy.

Jimmy Ephran

No problem.

COL Cloud

Do you have a message you want to deliver to us on the commissary?

Jimmy Ephran

I'll just do a few talking points about the commissary.

COL Cloud

I'll tell ya, I love our commissary. I've been here since 2014 and it's a fabulous commissary. You know, we put a lot of energy into finding a new space for the commissary right next to the PX and we're just waiting for DECA to pony-up the cash to build that new facility. You know, a lot of folks watched as we dug up the ground and moved the utilities and we prepped the site. One of these days Wiesbaden we're going to get a new commissary. And it's going to go right next to the PX. BUT, it's not because we don't have a wonderful commissary. We have a wonderful commissary and I thank you for being here tonight. I thank you for your leadership over there and everything you do to support the community because in this time of Covid 19 we've got to make sure that the food keeps coming and that the folks have a place to go within our community to shop.

And so with that, Jimmy I'll just ask you to say a few words, an introduction and share some thoughts

Jimmy Ephran

OK thank you, my name is Jimmy Ephran the store director of the Wiesbaden Commissary. Two talking points I have is people want to know where we get our food/ our groceries. Well, our local buyer orders – each week they order 6-8 weeks out. So that's our time frame for the groceries that come from the states to the entire European theatre. 80 percent comes from the US. 20 percent comes from local purchase. So our produce and our pork comes from Germany. Our fresh chicken comes from France, and our eggs and milk come from Denmark. OK? So that's how that goes.

Our food supply status: we have a stable food supply status. Our stock we continue to receive via airlift and ocean liner. That's how we receive our groceries. OK, you may have seen a few (empty) rows of the chill last week. They're now starting to come in. So you'll see that area back up to par where it once used to be. OK our sales, our store sales have increased from 30 to 50 percent daily and that's a lot for the size commissary that we have. Our employees are working overtime. They're working seven days a week and we're trying to do emergency hiring. We're trying to bring those people aboard to relieve the staff. And the volunteers that have been helping with the restocking everything so we appreciate them as well

COL Cloud

Man, I tell you Jimmy, I don't think I've ever been on an installation where the commissary is open seven days a week. I'm used to having one day closed. You've always been open seven days a week since I've been here so that a good resource to have. You mentioned 30 to 50 percent higher buying rates. I remember the first couple of days it was even higher than that.

Jimmy Ephran

IT was.

COL Cloud

So, it's been an adventure for a commissary manager hasn't it, to say the least. I can tell you I have confidence every time I go into the stock room and I see these new pallets coming in off the truck. And I always say this, you can't stop it. That truck is gonna come, it's just how fast can you move those pallets

out of the back of the truck so that folks can get the stuff on the shelf and people keep buying and it keeps coming and when something's not there, it's because it's out worldwide. Right? I mean it's out worldwide. And I know we've talked about people at the registers being sort of a bottleneck and how we believe that and DECA immediately went into an emergency hire position to try and get more folks there. And, how many folks did you get to apply for that? Do you remember?

Jimmy Ephran

We had 10 initial and we have 9 so far.

COL Cloud

9 so far, so they're coming in. So anything that you see that's constrained, its temporary in nature and the leadership of DECA is fully engaged. I'd say twice a week I get to see all the charts that show all the flights coming in and our stock levels in Kaiserslautern where its centrally stocked and all very managed and no indicator that there is going to be any shortage of toilet paper or chicken. And if there is, there is an immediate plan put in place, like you said, we'll local purchase it, we'll rebound stockage across Europe.

So I don't want to eat up too much time because we've got a cast of folks here that we want to bring in but I wanted to thank you, Jimmy and please share your last thoughts.

Jimmy Ephran

You made mention our Wiesbaden Commissary Hometown Heroes: our hometown heroes are all volunteers who come and work at the commissary every day that we fill our shelves with available groceries that we have in order to keep the food on the tables of the community members, so thank you all volunteers for providing great support and our filling need during this critical time

COL Cloud

Yes. Thank you very much, all of our volunteers. Jimmy and thanks for leading the commissary like you do. We appreciate your continued efforts and if there is anything we can do in this community to support you, well I think this is a wonderful community willing to help and volunteer in any way. I can't see the turnaround point yet, so I think there is going to be a sustained need for volunteers each evening or early in the morning. As much as you can give or whenever you can give in terms of volunteerism. So thanks for being here tonight Jimmy

Jimmy Ephran

Thank you sir,

COL Cloud

And I'll transition now. We've got this really new fancy capability, just shift things around and- no one can see you anymore Jimmy! You can walk away and no one can see.

Alright. I am fortunate to have Brian Smith here with us. Thank you very much, sir for being here. Really appreciate it.

Brian Smith

Pleasure is mine sir, thanks for the Invite.

COL Cloud

We are glad to have AAFES as a partner to this Garrison and I'm glad that you're here to lead the effort. I fully acknowledge that AAFES has really had to modify and change in a short amount of time to support, protecting folks while enabling/having that wonderful resource available to us. Can you talk a little about those challenges or just some of the things you have experienced or gone through or even some of the things you're having to think through today to manage this new environment

Brian Smith

I think one of the things that we did well with this partnership with the Garrison is we put our minds together to try to figure out what were the best ways to mitigate the way that we were going to handle this new virus, this new situation and so some of them were the signage that we put on the ground, the protective shields that we put out, people are wearing masks in the store now. 1st 214th is managing everything, their washing their hands before they come in. and so really I think it has been a huge community effort to get us from where we were to where we are. You know Sergeant Major commented before about how numbers are starting to curl off and we have more recovered than we have positives so I think that's just a community effort and it's not anything attributed (solely) to my team but the community as a whole.

COL Cloud

Yeah, I echo that and certainly we have a wealth of volunteerism and hard work and leadership and I've noticed that one of the things people are wondering. First of all, we've covered base #1 which is people can still get Popeye's right? That's number one. I remember a couple of months ago, maybe it was a year ago we had a ventilation problem with the grease fan and we had to shut Popeye's down and there was no scunion that I experienced like the scunion I experienced when Popeye's shut down for a few weeks. So I fully recognize that and as we look on the horizon of where we're going as a Garrison, and we look to do it safely, I know that I can count on AAFES to kind of... go from a delivery service.. to a to-go service in this next phase. Being able to do it safely. Any thoughts on that?

Brian Smith

Well, first I'll say that some of the steps we took were necessary. You know this is a city environment with/ we're on top of each other. Social distancing is a little bit more tricky out here and so we collectively came up with some good ideas to go ahead and make the changes necessary. And so that included shutting down some of the operations. Now some of the challenges that we had in the beginning- we still have a lot of folks that work for us and we've done our best to not cut any hours or not have a financial burden pushed on anybody, so I think we've done a really good job with that so far. And now, as you say, we're looking towards that horizon and we're looking at potentially... I don't want to jinx anything, we don't know what's happening but looking at potentially opening things up again in the future and then hopefully we can get some normalcy back (after) what's going on in our world.

COL Cloud

Yeah, no kidding.

I'm a big fan of the bean burrito. I'll be the first one trying to get some of that Taco Bell.

Brian Smith

Right behind you.

COL Cloud

We're looking –AAFES is a good partner. AAFES took, obviously, very necessary steps really quickly to some wonderful things and really was sort of, the first to the table with some of those one meter stickers that you put out and Plexiglas up and paid great attention to the health of your employees and also how to impact social distancing. A good partner in communicating very well on a daily basis, what were your needs and we appreciate that.

Are you experiencing any unique aspects or supply chain types of issues that you have concern or anything that you'd like to share with us?

Brian Smith

Very similarly with the commissary as we also experience the same. 80percent of our stuff comes from stateside and 20 percent that comes from over here. And so when many people came out to the facility to make initial purchases, obviously our supply chain is depleted pretty quickly. So we do have a lot of ideas on how we could fix it. Our local buyers got creative and they found other sources where they could go ahead and source them out and get it in, as a matter of fact, yesterday we were able to receive 16,800 tubes of disinfectant. We received thermometers, so we're starting to get stuff back in. Not quite as quickly as we would like, but we do have the challenge of being over here away from where our primary distribution is on the East coast so, it makes it challenging

COL Cloud

No, I appreciate those thoughts. Thanks Brian for being here. I think it's important for-

Brian Smith

-I'm prepared to answer this. The thing is, I'm excited because we have a new program that we rolled out. I have this question, "why don't they serve pre-made pizza at the shoppette anymore?" And so, that was part of the take out that we basically turned off for the time being which was a good measure and what we're doing right now is we're actually offering a frozen pizza option: The same Hunts Brothers Pizza that you can order from the Clay Troop Store (shoppette on Clay), you can actually buy it frozen right now and then make it at home. So, not as nice as having someone make it for you but if you got tired of Tombstone (pizza) I think this is a great option.

COL Cloud

I've got to tell you Brian. I've eaten frozen pizzas for breakfast. I've eaten an assortment. You know, in the old days, before Covid when I didn't eat so many frozen pizzas, I kind of just got one type of pizza. I was a creature of habit. But now I've actually started looking in the freezer case and go "hmmm. I'm going to try that pizza" and I pull it in and I'm like, "OK" and so I am kind of a connoisseur of frozen pizzas. So, I don't know what that's useful information but I suspect there's some folks out there who are probably doing things just a little bit different or trying things that they may not have tried in the

past because they've finally found a little more time on their hands and... it's a unique setting. I can tell that AAFES, like DECA, has been a world class partner in this time and although we can't see the turnaround point, I'm glad you're in the saddle and helping us out as we get through this and thanks for being here tonight

Brian Smith

Thank you, Sir, appreciate it.

COL Cloud

And I appreciate you getting to know the community a little bit better and letting them see who you are and acknowledge all of the hard work you're doing and thanks for all of the acknowledgement you've given to the hard working folks here in the 1st 214th who have been supporting you

Brian Smith

They have definitely been supporting us, so we appreciate it.

COL Cloud

Thanks Brian, and with that I'm going to grab a "Hometown Hero" and then move to... sorry, we've got so many of these. I'm going to have to go to the clinic. Have we shifted the screen (makes noises?)

Thanks Brian.

COL Cloud

The Wiesbaden clinic. I can't say enough about our Red Cross Volunteers. Boy, I tell ya. From our trace team to working in the clinic 2-3 days a week, helping to answer the public health line, checking in on all of those who were (Covid-19) positives and making sure they're in good health and everything's going well. I tell you there's not a symptom that emerges or a condition that changes that we don't know about if it's someone in our community that is experiencing Covid 19 or being tracked by the Public Health team. And our Red Cross volunteers have been there the whole time. Also, Ms. Lynn Bentz Fontaine, she's continued to provide stellar behavioral health care for all those that she is working with and providing commanders with proactive tips on how to enhance the resiliency of your troops and how to participate in virtual meetings to help people in terms of Behavioral Health. So thank you Ms. Lynn Bentz Fontaine for all you do to support our community. You are a Hometown Hero for sure.

And with that I'm going to change my chair and, how do you pronounce your name, Sir?

Major Sobalvarro, 66th MI Brigade, Task Force Clay Kaserne

Major Sobalvarro

COL Cloud

Sobalvarro. I apologize for that

Major Sobalvarro No worries.

COL Cloud

You represent Colonel Hogan and his wonderful Task Force: Clay.

Major Sobalvarro

Yes. Sir,

COL Cloud

And you guys have done a fabulous job, and I thank you as the Garrison for all of the hard work you did. One of the things I'll say about the 66 (M.I. Brigade) and the 214th is they recognized early on that there was a challenge that lay at our feet and they took the initiative to reach out and find ways to help solve problems. And they took a lot of these challenges under their own leadership umbrella and they've worked hard to put together a fantastic portfolio of protection measures. And If I could just ask if you could share with the community: What is your role as a Task Force Clay in terms of the Covid 19 effort?

Major Sobalvarro

Yes, Sir, so Task Force Clay, we've taken the opportunity to break out the personnel assigned. We have 68 soldiers who are across the 66th M.I. Brigade working on Task Force Clay. We've broken them out into three teams. The first team that has had a great impact on our community is the Cleaning Team, sir. So far we've done about 23 different cleans across Clay Kaserne, most of those having been the testing clinic that the medical folks are running for all of the Covid tests. So every day they go in there before the testing clinic opens up and they give it a deep clean with disinfectants and bleach. They've also done some community access areas, specifically Andrews Bank this past weekend. The Trace Team traced someone who had tested positive who had been in that bank recently. So we were able to go and clean the bank so it could open for business on Monday. We've done a couple of other public access areas as well. But they're there to help keep the community safe by going in and cleaning those areas where we know there is some potential exposure and risk of Covid still being in the environment.

Second, Sir, we've broken down our teams into a care team. So we have our Chaplain's Assistant to the Brigade, Staff Sergeant Devin, who I think is one of the first ones to come down here, as you mentioned, to one of these meetings. He took on a team of six soldiers and he's been doing meal deliveries to our soldiers in the barracks. So we started to have almost 40 soldiers that were in a quarantine status in barracks across the brigade and that number has gone down significantly, and actually we're kind of looking at standing down the Care Team this coming week. They've delivered over 1400 meals so far to the soldiers in the barracks for the past month. Additionally they have done some grocery runs to the commissary for civilians and family in our formation that have been stuck at home and were not able to do those runs themselves. So they have been a great help and morale booster for our Brigade and Covid operations.

And finally, sir, we have the Enforcement Teams. And this is kind of the "face" of Task Force Clay: the people that you're seeing at the Post Office, the Shoppette, if you work at the MCC or the command Center at USAEUR, you see them as you come in. They're the ones that are asking questions about your health at those public access places and reminding you to wash your hands, enforcing the use of mask wearing. We've had some issues with that. I would ask what Sergeant Major Truchee said before, if you see enforcement issues, please, try and handle it at the lowest level first. That is always the best way, please, if we can enforce General Order 1 at peer level, that's preferred, obviously, it doesn't have to go any further. If you can remind people to be responsible. But we have those enforcement teams out

there to enforce General Order #1. As mentioned, the MPs are getting overwhelmed, so we're going to put out our number again 0611-143-546-4334. So if you have a concern about people not abiding by the established rules that have been placed to get the community healthy and keep us healthy, please give us a call and we can send out an enforcement patrol to try to handle the situation and not have to get the MPs involved. Nobody wants an MP walking up to them or their kids and sometimes that has been the issue that we see specifically around the barracks and again in Newman Village. So, if we can handle it at the lowest level and we never get a call and the MPs never get a call that is preferred but we're here to help.

So, I would ask though, if MI patrol comes up to you, please be respectful. It's awkward. Nobody likes to make a correction. Nobody likes being corrected, but just be professional and be respectful, that's all I ask. And then finally sir, as you know, we briefed you on the standby mission you asked us to take on for an isolation facility. So, Clay Kaserne, right now we don't have a large issue as we've been seeing everything going down but if for some reason there's a spike in the local community, where people need to be quarantined, 66th MI Brigade and Task Force Clay stands ready to stand up an isolation facility and provide the care just like our care teams have been doing for soldiers and all those things that are necessary for people who need to go into quarantine status for 14 days or more.

COL Cloud

Major Sobalvarro, thank you so much for being here tonight. Thank you for the Mighty 66th. I tell ta, Colonel Greg Holder and Sergeant Major Matthews, you guys are fabulous, your whole team is fabulous. Thank you for taking this seriously for showing the initiative that you've shown and for sharing your thoughts tonight and just helping to put a face into context, to WHO is doing this mission and what it is all about I think it is important for the community to see who you are and to hear you say these words to connect with the soldiers and the units that are performing these missions during these times. Because it's going to be around a while. And it is going to be taxing. It's not easy for someone to maintain some of these types of services over a long period of time. People's patience might be tried and so it's all part of one team, one fight, one thing. And so thanks for being here tonight

And with that we'll move over to

LTC McGraw, 1-214 Aviation, Task Force Hainerberg

1-214, Lieutenant Colonel McGraw, thank you for being here.

LTC McGraw

Yes Sir, Thank you for allowing me the time to be here. I did notice that we don't have a lot of time available because I am on the right and apparently all of the bald guys sit on the right, so it's something that we don't know about.

COL Cloud

There's a reflection off (his bald head), onto the camera here. If anyone can't see, I apologize. LTC McGraw will only be here for a minute. Thanks for being here, the 1-214, I tell ya what a wonderful unit. Thanks for standing up and so kind of briefly describe, what is your mission? Because it is different than working on Clay in some regards because of the nature of this. Please share some of your thoughts on the mission here at Hainerberg

LTC McGraw

Yes Sir, One of the big differences –and we have a Clean Response and Enforcement Patrols very similar to what Task Force Clay has. One of the big differences here is the direct engagement with both AAFES and DECA. So 1-214 has a company, D-Company (D-CO) that is aligned against the commissary. They are doing the enforcement outside the commissary ensuring that people are maintaining their physical distance while waiting in line to get into the commissary. And maintaining and managing the throughput through that facility.

Additionally, Headquarters Company (HQ-CO) is aligned against AAFES, so HQ CO is managing soldiers at both the shoppette and at the PX proper. And providing those soldiers to maintain those same capabilities. I think the commissary is where the soldiers, over time, have encountered the most challenge, just because it is such a critical resource for the garrison. There are so many people trying to get in there. We've obviously, over time, had to limit the number of people who can be in the commissary at one point in time and so that causes a delay and it causes frustration like we mentioned earlier. So I just want to say that I appreciate everybody's patience. The soldiers have said to me today that the people are still very respectful when they tell them they have to maintain their distance, maintain their separation, so I just appreciate everyone's help in the commissary area.

The other thing is not knowing where our headquarters is located. We've set up a coordination cell. So the coordination cell is located in the ACS cafeteria and the phone number is 0611-143-546-8501. And if you call that number because there is an issue on Hainerberg then they'll dispatch one of our courtesy patrols to go handle that issue. The motto for the soldiers working outside of the facilities and for the patrols is that "we're courteous but strict" in enforcement of G.O. #1. So, we're going to be courteous with you at all times but hold up the letter of the law and the intent behind General Clark's letter.

COL Cloud

Excellent, excellent. Well you've just done a fabulous job. You reacted quickly under your leadership and the leadership of your NCOs. I can't thank you enough. I know the community, the out pouring from the community has been nothing but positive even sometimes when its "tough love" I can remember being in line, myself, at the commissary and I had my children with me and they started to get a little bit close to another family and luckily the gentleman turned around and kind of gave him a look and it was sort of that "you need to be stepping back a little bit" look, and I was like, "Hey, come back."

So we've set the right tone and culture in the measures that you've put in place so that people have just started to just "get it" and act appropriately. They're starting to wash their hands on their own because they just know that's the standard. And all of that has come about because of the hard work and implementation that you have communicated with your folks on the ground. SO thank you very much for being here tonight, thank you for sharing. I'll reinforce: If you've got specific concerns you're seeing on Hainerberg, call that local spot first before you call the MPs because you have people at the ready to work that.

LTC McGraw

Yes, Sir. We do and the last thing that I would mention, is just watching things for the past couple of weeks, particularly at the commissary: Friday afternoons, Saturday mornings. If there was a time to avoid going to the commissary its Friday afternoons and Saturday mornings. That is when the line is

going to back up on the outside. Remarkably there's people lines up from 9am until noon and right around 1pm it tapers off into the afternoon until right before closing so if you avoid the peak times, you'll have a much more pleasant experience.

COL Cloud

That's good information! Thanks for putting that out. And thanks for being here tonight I appreciate everything you've done.

LTC McGraw

Yes sir thanks for having me

COL Cloud

Alright, we've talked through with our wonderful chaplain. Chaplain team, thank you so much for being here tonight.

Chaplain Maj. Terry King

Thank you, so much, Colonel Cloud for inviting me. First of all may I convey the gratitude of Second Signal for everything the Task force has done? I can say that this product you have created, the community initiative and wellness guide has made a big impact in Signal land and we're very grateful for it.

COL Cloud

Good. That's good feedback, you know it was Chaplain Dillard along with John Kaiser and Greg Holsinger, another hometown hero our great DFMWR leader and his staff of garrison DFMWR employees that put that together. So I'm glad that you found that to be useful thanks for pointing that out because it is on our webpage, our homepage and it is on our Facebook page where you can access this taskforce wellness. So if you would, just share with us some of the- you represent- I asked Chaplain Dillard please each week send a chaplain because you're such a valuable resource and commodity not only you as the Chaplain for the Second Signal Brigade but each of the units have chaplains and we have Garrison chaplains and you bring a special skill set and certain characteristics that are so beneficial to our community. SO I just wanted to ask you if you could share what some of your thoughts on what some of the religious support opportunities are available to people in our community.

Chaplain King

Absolutely, thank you sir. Actually, there's a lot of opportunities that we have right now. I wanted to highlight in the wellness guide, there information on every single thing going on in this post in here. But there's the section, actually, slides 10-14 capture a whole variety of options and worship services that are taking place through our Facebook RSO (Religious Support Office) Wiesbaden Page. One thing I would like to highlight, Sir, is that we are still doing 24/7 Chaplain care so after hours emergency care is still very much available and I want to give a shout out to that phone number in case you don't have it ready. It's in the wellness guide on page 10, but it's also 0162-274-7337 and that line is available 24/7 and where possible we're able to do distancing counseling, pastoral counseling and when not, we can certainly speak over the phone and do what we can to help in the situation. Services are still going. Not in person of course, because we are trying to be safe with everybody else. Keeping our neighbors safe a

value that chaplains that I believe we embody. But the services have not stopped. In fact, our online attendance has quadrupled, if not more. Not only in Wiesbaden but in Europe. So we are being seen and you're curious how to check us out, the Wiesbaden RSO page throughout Sunday our services are released and throughout the week our Chaplains are posting little videos, devotionals, health and wellness tips, pretty much, you name it. RSO Wiesbaden is your one stop shop for spirituality across the platforms, and so, yeah, that's what's going on.

COL Cloud

Well, it's fabulous. There's a lot of opportunities, Chaplain, and no one knows better than you and the Garrison RSO team. So, thanks for sharing that and thank you for sharing that folks are putting a lot of energy into doing just unique little tidbits, little videos, little devotionals, little Bible studies, matter of fact I got invited to one just recently by your commander. And I'm looking forward to attending. I haven't been able to hit the last two but I look forward to it and I appreciate the offer. Spirituality and spiritual health is an important tenant of resiliency its one of many but do you just have some thoughts, or can you share some thoughts on how spiritual health is a part of resiliency?

Chaplain King

Spiritual health is like any health aspect. What you eat, and how often you exercise. Spirituality is the part that impacts your being. So, how does one practice spirituality. It's not always as obvious as going on a run or hitting the gym. But it's very much a muscle and if you want to build and develop your spirituality, this opportunity you have with the Covid/Isolation is just that. A new opportunity.

So, a way you can begin is by watching some of the video platforms that have been done, but another way is just to take a mindfulness moment. We call that "centering prayer" in the Christian tradition, but you can reach it as meditation, as mindfulness, but it's that moment where you stop everything and just sit and you let the moment speak to you. Sometimes that's prayer. Talking to your Creator if you believe in a creator. Sometimes it's just letting those inner voices calm down to stop speaking so loudly and that can be a beginning place for developing spirituality. For opening yourself up to something that is bigger stronger and more able to sustain us sometimes than we feel we're capable of on our own.

COL Cloud

Wow that's wonderful. And really it doesn't matter what your denomination is or your particular faith. As a Garrison, we want to make sure that whatever you're looking for within that wellness guide or links that can take you to specific things you might be interested in, or like you said, you just take a moment to find something new, to try something new. And again, Resiliency is being able to live in difficult circumstances and still have a high level of well-being. And chaplains are a big part of that so... How do you think chaplains can assist folks in particular during this time?

Chaplain King

Sir, I think we have a variety of options. First of all, give us a shout-out. Your unit Chaplains, your Garrison Chaplains. We don't always know what you need or what is the most valuable use of your time right now. So we're as live on YouTube and Facebook and every other platform you can imagine, you know, email, cell phone. You name it. Shoot us a note. Let us know what topics do you need help with? Chances are, we have some training from our various traditions perspectives and we're perfectly

capable of developing something that would address that are out there. But again, we don't know if people don't let us know. So that's a starting point.

We obviously do a lot of work with families and pastoral counseling. We can listen. We can journey with you through this time. We're going through it too. Our families are also going through the, "I don't know what to do with you because I keep seeing you. This is more than I've seen you in ten years." So I think we are going to go through this together. So I think we offer resources not only in training, teaching, learning opportunities ranging anywhere from finances to various scriptures, but also listening, presence. And sometimes that's just what you need. You just need someone to listen to your own voice and go, "oh that is just genuinely different. Okay, I'm not losing my mind yet"

COL Cloud

Good thank you Chaplain. And because you are here tonight representing the Chaplains I also see here that of all the services that we offer from our general protestant menu of services, you are introducing a new service. Can you speak about that for a moment?

Chaplain King

Absolutely. We're beginning something called "Tapestry Christian Fellowship" It's an open, affirming, Christian group. We're getting together to explore faith together Its Christian orientation but everybody's welcome. If you have questions, if you have a solid faith, if you are trying to figure out how to grow in your faith we're you. So help us shape this space and this time. Once we're all able to meet again, it's going to be at 1300 on Clay Chapel on Sundays. Right now we are going to roll out our first service, virtually of course. We'll be on the RSO Wiesbaden Facebook page hopefully around 1300 on Sundays but you know how it goes: sometimes the digital platform cooperates. Sometimes not. So, Sunday afternoon you'll be able to see our first service. We're not able to live stream yet, but hopefully we'll have that capability soon. And let us know, give us your feedback. Like I said, we don't know if you don't tell us.

COL Cloud

Thank you and that was a wonderful video that was put out from all of the Chaplains introducing their service and time slot and how to connect virtually and when you would meet otherwise if we weren't living in our virtual world. But, thank you very much for being here tonight. It was really good to hear a few words on how we can draw near to one another and find comfort in challenging times and I liked your comment on "sometimes we just need to be still". Thanks Chaplain,

Chaplain King

Thank you very much.

COL Cloud

Alright Sergeant Major, we find ourselves at the end of another Covid-19 Town Hall. Before I pass it over to you to give a shout out I'd be remiss if I didn't mention Sergeant Cooper as a hometown hero. For making a ton of masks to deliver across all sorts of units throughout the Garrison and our community. So I'm told over 500 masks with tons of effort and outreach to make that happen. So thank you very much for that effort, Sergeant Cooper. And he's a Hometown Hero. And with that we've got a

couple more hometown heroes to hit before I get to a few questions and then we'll close out. Hometown Heroes.

CSM Truchon

OK, aaah. Actually I'm going to mention two. First one I want to start off I think you will recognize from previously but I want to recognize our great PAO staff and our great staff for this great presentation that you've seen. This town hall once again. I am sure that everyone has noticed the progression in our presentation, it has gone to this, we've had about 6 or 7 chances now to work through this every time it gets a little bit better. Now we're doing these fancy pans and fades and you're not seeing people sneak off different sides of the stage while we're up here and it's really impressive. I think pretty soon we'll have rolling credits at the end and something behind door number 3 for the seventh caller. So great shout out for what they're putting together here for the community.

Also I want to recognize our Hometown Heroes are the Post Office Team. Every time I go into the post office even prior to what's going on right now its...everyone loves going to the post office, especially when getting that little yellow slip, when you've got a package. What'd I get? You know its Amazon making big bucks. But, there's something great about getting mail. One thing you don't want to mess with the soldiers with is their mail. And they have remained just incredibly, upbeat throughout everything that has been going on. And there are a lot of challenges in there, running that gauntlet and washing their hands and snaking around. There's the markers separating everyone as they stand in line to mail a package or if you go around to the other side of the post office to retrieve that package because you've got that yellow slip and they've got you separated there behind that table. They have remained incredibly upbeat despite some of the challenges they face. Their job has certainly not gotten easier with what's going on and it's just super impressive and it's just super motivating to go in there and seeing all the great things they are doing.

COL Cloud

Well thank you for mentioning the Post Office. I got Private PV2 Caitlin Barts from the 24th MI Battalion, they're supporting the Post Office ECP where you go in and wash your hands and making sure people are staying protected as they get ready to go in there so thank you Caitlin for all your efforts and for being a hometown hero. The mail is a lot like the food at the commissary. It just keeps coming. Every day at 2oclock the truck rolls up and I just don't know how you do it at the post office because bags and bags and every year it's more bags and bags and this Covid world, people keep shopping.

CSM Truchon

EH. I can't imagine how much- I know at my house

COL Cloud

Amazon Wins

CSM Truchon

I'm helping your investment in Amazon stocks. Let me tell you.

COL Cloud

I can't afford a share of it.

OK, so, a couple of questions. Will the golf course re-open?

I can assure you that Covid 19 is a temporary thing. The golf course will eventually re-open. And we're thinking about how to do that. The question is "when". That is something that I've, obviously, asked MWR to take a look at how we could do that safely, and the state of Rhineland Pfalz is rumored to be investigating how to do that. So it will be something in the horizon that we do. I can't give you a time but we are definitely thinking about it.

Soldiers are wearing masks at the gates but why aren't the Ponds guards?

I can tell you that I left it up to the chain of command for the soldiers at the gate as to whether or not they would wear masks because I believe they can do social distancing as they do their mission. They can maintain six feet, they can probably maintain 20 feet. It's just how loud they want to talk. And so, really, they made that decision to do it and as long as the Ponds guards can maintain good social distancing too, but that is something that the Ponds COR Contracting Representative, because that is a contract. They are thinking about, in terms of the protection, to maintain good protection for their contracted work force, which is a very important part of our team.

If my family of five wants to go for a walk in the fields around Clay and Hainerberg, do we need to carry our SOFA passports or should we limit our exercise to on-post only?

I would encourage you to find places to exercise where you can do it safely and in a protected way and in many ways that's in places not on the installation so, I recommend that you find places where you can go on long walks, clear your head, get some exercise. There are no checks being done locally in and around our community where we require you to maintain these items. I think it's a good practice if you leave or go in general just as a precaution, but I see no imminent requirement at this time to carry those things with you. If conditions change or something happens would make that problematic, we will definitely come on board and let all of you know through Facebook and websites and town hall messaging that we could.

Are people PCSing at all?

Yes they are people PCSing. Matter of fact we had one come in and process on Monday. There is a process right now. You heard me mention some categories in which you can PCS earlier. And I mentioned those specifically by category. But in terms of how people leave right now there is an exception to policy process. There are certain requirements or there are certain processes for that and it goes up through your chain of command. So if you are in a position where you believe you may require an exception to policy- the approval authority is the First General Officer in your chain of command. (The First General Officer) is the approval authority to receive an exception of policy to PCS. There are exceptions where this is not required. An exception to policy is if you're retiring or separating from the service. That is one of the categories in which you don't need an exception to policy.

Um... Yes, the shuttle bus driver should be wearing a mask. That's something I'll take a look at if it's not already happening.

Are we required to enter the ACP (Access Control Points = the entry gates) as they are at Ramstein?

No, we do not require masks to enter the ACP. I believe that is what has been required there. At Wiesbaden, you should have a mask with you because we require it in certain buildings where social distancing is not something you can do in a reasonable way. And so you'll see it at the commissary, the shoppette, the nature of the halls. And how we organize for success there- we need to have masks. So bring your mask but you do not need to wear them as you come into the gate.

Can I take my family with me on a hike?

Absolutely. If you're with people other than your family then you need to have no more than two. They have the rule of two in Germany. So that is how – social distancing with two people when they're not of the same family. If you have family or people who live in your household with you then the number is unlimited. Obviously you want to try to maintain your social distancing with those who are around you (on a hike)

Will Crestview and Aukamm be opened up?

Like the golf course, this is temporary. It's just we can't see the turnaround point right now. All of this is temporary. Things will return to normal. They will do so gradually. We got into this predicament and this posture very quickly. We will uncoil, I think, more slowly. There are some things that we are looking at right now very carefully on how they emerge as services safely. And I would not be surprised if we start to talk about those certainly in the next week or so but I think that I want to be careful not to get in front of General Clark and General Kavoli because ultimately it's our Senior General Officer, General Clark, in concert of General Kavoli who made these decisions. I will prepare what I believe is the reasonable way how we can safeguard the community and I approach General Clark with these measures and in concert with General Kavoli we are going to re-emerge from this. I think it's important that we think about what we are going to do, what the next measured step are: what's the next step and we plan accordingly. General Order #1 is in effect. I ask you to adhere to it. To keep us all safe and let's watch the host nation as they begin their journey of resetting themselves in this environment. And let's learn from it and let's be cautious together as a team. We will continue to communicate. I may have a Facebook town hall earlier than next Wednesday if I see a need to do so and present any new information. Anymore hometown heroes before we close out?

CSM Truchon

Sure thing.

Hopefully the majority of our community hasn't received a phone call from the Trace Team. Those of you who have received a phone call knows exactly who they are: If you were someone who was potentially exposed to one of the diminishing positives that we have in our communities. Hopefully there haven't been any phone calls in the last week and a half because we have not had any positives. But in particular on the Trace Team: PV2 Wilson was recognized. He has been on every trace cleaning mission that has taken place except for the first one way back on the 8th of March when we had our first phone call. When there was any opportunity, when they needed an extra set of hands, he was the first one to volunteer. Even though he was -everywhere he went. It's tough wearing a set of Mosquito Wings, for those of you who have worn them -he was consistently the lowest ranking member on the team, he had everyone's complete trust and confidence to take charge of the team and accomplish the mission if

that was what was needed. So a big shout out to Private Wilson and all of the great things you've done to help keep our community safe along with the rest of the cleaning team.

COL Cloud

Absolutely, Sergeant Major. Sergeant Major Truchon, thank you for being here tonight, we are well teamed in this effort and I appreciate your leadership and everything you're doing. And there are folks behind the scenes, Scott Mowry is the deputy for the Garrison. You don't really get to see his face a lot but he's the deputy for the Garrison and does a lot of the work to make things flow smoothly. Not everything is perfect. We've made some mistakes along the way, I've only had one Covid haircut to date.

CSM Truchon

I'm about due sir, its coming.

COL Cloud

You feel it on your neck?

CSM Truchon

Maybe not quite so short this time

COL Cloud

In this world we are all seeking adventure in our own special way. And for some of us it's sitting in the Barber chair. With that ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your attention. I know we went a bit long tonight but we had a great run of special guests. Thank you to the community for all you do.

Have a great night and a great week.