

Knox Reserve Battalion Assists With In-processing

Reprinted with permission, *Inside The Turret*, Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph Rusch and Lt. Col. Robert Whaley—46th Adjutant General Battalion

The “Army of One” is not just a motto for the 46th Adjutant General Battalion and the 1st Battalion 399th Regiment 7th Brigade 100th Division (IT). Each unit, one active the other reserve, have a similar mission, in-process soldiers into the army. The 1st of the 399th is an Army Reserve unit located at Ft. Knox that augments the 46th AG Bn on drill weekends and on annual training missions. Reserve soldiers of the 1st Bn assist the 46th AG Bn with their mission to receive, process and ship all categories of Initial Entry Training (IET) Soldiers. The personnel of the 1st Bn are capable of administrative and drill sergeant support for the 46th AG. The majority of the reserve soldiers from the 1st Bn will perform their annual training mission during the summer months but the battalion is also capable of providing personnel support for the 46th year round. Recently, in January the reserve soldiers helped process over 2900 soldiers. Throughout the year 1/399th has provided support to process new soldiers at the Copple Reception Center, augmenting the 75H's (Personnel Specialists) assigned to the 46th. In addition, support was also provided periodically to the Airport Liaisons by the 1/399th. Manning the airport helped the assigned personnel work around leaves and time-off needed by soldiers on active duty for required appointments. “Without the support of the 1/399th we could not complete this mission on time with 99% accuracy that we do,” Command Sgt. Maj. Rusch proclaims; “1/399th saves us every year in processing and with the hold-under mission.”

Currently reserve soldiers from the 1st Bn are manning a hold-under company for the 46th AG Bn. Hold-under soldiers have completed the four days of in-processing and are awaiting transfer to their basic training unit or one station unit training (OSUT). Periodically, soldiers are held up in the 46th AG Bn due to not enough IET soldiers to fill basic training company or basic training units not ready to accept the shipment of the IET soldiers. Some trainees are awaiting shipment to OSUT because no seats are available in 19K (Armor) or 19D (Cavalry Scout) training units. IET soldiers will stay in a hold-under status until their assignment to the basic training unit or OSUT. The 1/399th cadre provide the 46th AG the flexibility to keep the IET soldiers motivated by providing a modified basic training atmosphere. During the IET soldier's stay in the Hold-under Company, they are instructed in most classes applicable to a basic training unit. For example, IET soldiers are taught drill and ceremony, map reading skills, military courtesy, barracks maintenance, physical training, consideration of others and the Army Values (respect, loyalty, honor, selfless service, duty, integrity and personal courage). These soldiers also are afforded opportunities to see post retirement ceremonies, band concerts, and holiday celebrations. The IET soldiers of the Hold-under Company will benefit from the opportunities available for additional instruction provided by the hold-under cadre. This gives them a head start over their counterparts that are shipped immediately after the four days of in processing.

The benefits of this active duty and reserve association are two-fold. Lt. Col. Whaley, the 46th AG Commander comments, “we are able to maximize our capabilities by utilizing the expertise and assistance that is offered by the reserve soldiers.” In addition, Lt. Col. Noble, 1/399 Commander, says “this relationship offers productive training opportunities for reserve soldiers within her command. This augmentation provides the opportunity to train for their actual ‘war time’ mission should they be activated. Additionally, it also insures that the transition from reserve status to active duty would be enhanced because the reservists are already ‘trained up.’” This partnership also insures that should the 46th AG be mobilized, 1/399 could replace critical personnel to assist in the daily operations and minimize possible processing disruptions. It also provides the reservists with continuous hands-on training in their specific MOS's. In addition to the primary mission of processing soldiers, 46th AG and 1/399th also conduct Common Task Training (CTT) together. Allowing these units to not only work and do their mission together; but also train side-by-side for their wartime missions as well. No differences between the units were discovered during the CTT testing. The only thing different on most of the soldiers was the patch on their uniform.

Reserve soldiers enjoy the opportunity to work with their active duty counterparts. This has been a very effective recruiting and retention tool. Keeping soldiers ‘gainfully employed’ and ‘mission ready’ is insured with the current relationship of the 46th AG and 1/399. Command Sgt. Maj. Meredith, 1/399, exclaims, “that soldiers who feel they have a ‘purpose’ are much happier and much more productive.” The unit (1/399) recently underwent a TDA change and now has openings for grades from E1 to E6. Any soldiers from Fort Knox that are talking about getting out should talk to the 1/399th about joining the Army Reserves. This is a perfect opportunity for spouses of active duty soldiers or soldiers leaving active duty to serve their country by becoming members of a reserve unit and still remain close to home. It also allows supplemental income for prior active duty soldiers who want to remain with a military ‘family’ and build on their retirement. Because 1/399 provides support to the 46th AG Battalion on a continual basis, it allows more flexibility for the reservists who cannot do duty on a designated weekend by allowing them to drill anytime during the week. This allows 1/399 to provide continual support or additional support to the 46th AG Bn every day of the year.

Historically, the 1/399 has provided personnel to support several missions other than the 46th AG. Soldiers of the 1st BN have traveled to Ft. Jackson, South Carolina and Ft. Leonardwood, Missouri to assist in the in-processing of soldiers. Other Bn support missions have included common task training and evaluation for Camp Challenge ROTC missions and drills sergeants working with the basic training units here at Ft. Knox, KY.

