



U.S. ARMY CIVIL AFFAIRS & PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS COMMAND (AIRBORNE)

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HISTORY · Aug. 31, 2009

History of USACAPOC(A)

Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne)

Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations have been a part of U.S. military operations since the formation of the Continental Army during the American Revolution. Leafleting and radio broadcasts were part of the engagement strategy during all of the major conflicts of the 20th Century, and Civil Affairs Soldiers were called upon to help restore order and rebuild war-torn nations following World War II through the present day.

The more recent history of the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) began in October, 1985 with the formation of the 1st Special Operations Command Augmentation Detachment. This unit of 30 Soldiers formed the nucleus that evolved into the United States Army Reserve Special Operations Command. USARSOC had operational control of Army Reserve Special Forces, Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units.

Within days of activation as a major subordinate unit of the United States Army Special Operations Command, Operation Just Cause in Panama thrust the command into action. USARSOC identified and mobilized individual volunteer Reservists for duty in Panama and the succeeding Civil Affairs operation known as Promote Liberty.

As Promote Liberty concluded, Operation Desert Shield required the new command to alert, mobilize, validate and send Soldiers to the Persian Gulf. In the midst of this activity, on Nov. 27, 1990, USARSOC was redesignated USACAPOC(A). On that date, the command gave up its proponentcy for Reserve Special Forces units and picked up responsibility for all active and Reserve Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units. More than 2,650 Active and Reserve Component Soldiers from Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units were deployed in support of Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Provide Comfort.

In Provide Comfort, USACAPOC(A) Soldiers were instrumental in the largest humanitarian assistance operation since the Berlin Airlift, providing relief to 500,000 Kurdish refugees in Turkey and Iraq.

During Operations Distant Haven and Safe Haven, USACAPOC(A) Soldiers supplied Haitian migrant camps with interpreters and produced print and broadcast news. In Operation Uphold Democracy and Maintain Democracy, Civil Affairs Soldiers worked in ministerial advisory teams helping re-establish Haitian government ministries. Using all types of media, to include billboards, Psychological Operations informed Haitians of positive changes made by the Civil Affairs teams

From Operations Joint Endeavor to Joint Guardian, Civil Affairs Soldiers coordinated efforts to restore Bosnia's infrastructure. Additionally, informing and educating Bosnians of land-mine dangers is an ongoing mission for PSYOP Soldiers

USACAPOC(A) Soldiers are involved worldwide in mine awareness and de-mining projects. PSYOP troops introduced a mine awareness comic book in Central America similar to one used in Bosnia. About 500,000 Superman comics were distributed to school-age children.

Following the terrorist attacks on New York and the Pentagon, Civil Affairs and PSYOP Soldiers deployed almost immediately to begin their role in the hunt for international terrorists linked to the Al Qaeda network. PSYOP Soldiers dropped tens of millions of leaflets and broadcast thousands of hours of radio programs to ensure the Afghan people knew the reason for the invasion. The PSYOP effort also helped to pave the way for extensive assessments by Civil Affairs Soldiers that led to reconstruction and humanitarian aid projects in the embattled country. The unique training, experience and abilities of USACAPOC (A)'s Soldiers make them an ideal asset in dealing with national priorities.



USACAPOC(A) Shoulder Sleeve Insignia

The sword represents the military nature and strength of the Command. The flashes suggest speed and electronic communications. The colors of the insignia reflect the units within the Command. Purple is traditionally associated with Civil Affairs and dark green with Psychological Operations and Special Forces. The color gold denotes excellence.