

American troops work out ways to beat Saudi Arabian heat

From Associated Press reports
 DHAHRAN, Saudi Arabia — This volleyball game, like those on California beaches, is played in the sand. But there's no ocean in the Saudi desert, and the troops at play are wearing boots and bulky uniform pants.

Several miles away, at another camp for American troops, the helicopter mechanics are just getting up as the sun goes down — if they were lucky enough to catch some sleep during the scorching hot day.

Further down the road, some Marines are adopting an Arab custom, covering their heads and necks, mostly with T-shirts, to block the sun.

To beat the heat and the boredom, American troops are sleeping during the day, working at night and trying to organize recreational activities to make a far-away place a bit more bearable.

The helicopter mechanics are among a growing number of troops who do their work at night to escape the heat of day, which often reaches 120 degrees. One maintenance worker, 35-year-old Gary Stutz from MacGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey, says he and his co-workers slowly are adjusting.

He says the Air Force is helping by getting the men desert uniforms and lighter boots, with a cloth upper body

instead of leather.

Three weeks into the deployment of troops, some say they're getting used to the heat. Others say they never will.

Air Force Sgt. Alan Wagner of Davenport, Iowa, is among those who say they are beginning to get used to it.

"It was unbearable at first," he said. After arriving, Wagner said he worked 40 hours and nearly passed out. "I don't normally sweat, but I was getting dizzy,"

he said.

Military hospitals and medics are treating dozens of people a day for heat-related ailments, mostly minor cases of dehydration.

Some troops are out in the desert during the day, training under the hot-test sun to get acclimated.

Others are taking some steps to ease the load on the weary troops. At the 82nd Airborne camp, physical exer-

cises — primarily walks and jogging — are done in the early morning and late afternoon.

"We found that water consumption went way down when we started doing it that way," said Maj. Baxter Ennis, the division's public affairs officer. "We've learned to adjust, to get the guys used to the climate but then to try to do most of the other work at times other than the middle of the day."

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Budget

serials and a reduction of other library materials, he said.

Financial aid disbursement delayed

Eleanor Morris, director of scholarships and student aid, said Monday the most immediate impact of budget cuts on her office was reduced staff and resources. She said her staff was affected more than other departments because they have to follow strict federal guidelines.

In recent years those regulations have

become more extensive and more complicated, although the student aid office has not received extra staff to meet the increased demands, Morris said. If the office fails to meet them, it would have to repay federal monies or could lose the power to loan further funds.

The office is doing more work with the same number of employees and therefore cannot deliver money as quickly or as efficiently as in the past. Morris said those delays could be as

long as 30 days, but would not affect students' status for registering or starting classes.

The delay could affect whether some students have money to eat or pay rent, she said, but mainly would mean students would be short on pocket money for a while.

Maintenance and housekeeping curtailed

Charles Davis, director of the Physical Plant's housekeeping depart-

ment, said Tuesday that his department was already feeling the effects of the budget crunch through a 30 percent reduction in staff which would have a significant effect on the entire campus.

At least 80 vacancies have accumulated in the department since the hiring freeze went into effect in January, Davis said. That freeze prevents department heads from replacing vacated positions at any level in the department without permission from state personnel officials.

"What it does is it cuts down the daily routine," Davis said. "Now we're having people do what two or more people used to do and obviously it's not getting done."

Davis said he had to write justifications to fill the vacated positions and only one out of four justifications filed received a favorable response.

"We cover the entire campus, we're in everybody's office, we're in everybody's kitchen, so to speak," he said. "It will have an effect on everybody in this campus. If you don't get the quality of housekeeping, the campus will become a health risk."

Davis said he was particularly concerned about the health risks of research wastes disposed in labs that his staff cleans. "Everything is safe when we do it normally, but I have no idea what

could happen if we're not able to do it properly," he said. "Unless someone steps in and says 'enough,' we are going to have some major problems."

"We're at the point where we can't

afford to have more vacant positions. If it continues, the staff and administration of the University would have to take on some of the housekeeping responsibilities."



Southern culture

Debbie Bosworth, a junior transfer from Boston College, explains the Yogurt Oasis menu to Ben Browning,

Cristina Heggarty and Denise Dickenson. The Yogurt Oasis opened on Franklin Street in May.

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