

Tilley Preaches Communication at Ground Zero

by Staff Sgt. Raymond Drumsta, 138th MPAD, New York National Guard

Ground zero was the focus and communication the theme of Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack L. Tilley's visit here September 28.

After receiving a situation briefing at Battery Park, Tilley spoke with soldiers and toured ground zero.

Tilley said communication was the all-important factor during the current crisis—whether it was NCO to soldier, or soldier to family.

“Talking to families right now is more important now than it has ever been—making sure they're informed about what's going on, because they are scared about what's going on,” Tilley said.

Tilley spoke about his experiences stemming from the terrorist attack on the Pentagon, saying that the best thing to do for people suffering from the attacks was to “just let them talk”.

“If you see someone off by themselves, just talk to them,” Tilley said. “Right now, more than any other time, a hug and a ‘God bless you’ means a lot.”

Tilley also spoke to the role of NCOs and soldiers in the current crisis, emphasizing that leaders should stay concerned with their own responsibilities—not the responsibilities of others.

“Right now, more any other time in the history of our great country, and our great Army, they need to stay focused in their lane,” Tilley said. “They need to talk to their people, they need to communicate with them, because people are scared.”

Tilley also said soldiers guarding ground zero should remember that they are dealing with emotional, sensitive people. He said soldiers should treat everyone with dignity and respect and “be compassionate about what's going on.”

“A lot of people are hurting,” said Tilley.

Tilley said the National Guard brings a special sensitivity to the crisis, noting that many of them aiding initial rescue efforts at ground zero were New York City natives.



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley and soldiers of D Company, 1/127th Armor, talk tank gunnery at Battery Park during his visit to ground zero September 28th.



Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley, right, tours ground zero with Command Sgt. Maj. Wavne Hines. 1/127th Armor. left.

“We can’t get the job done without the guard, reserve, and active duty [soldiers],” Tilley said. “This is the Army...all of us working together.”

Tilley also praised the numerous other organizations which have come forward to aid the rescue and recovery efforts, such as the Red Cross, The Salvation Army, and the FBI. Tilley said that as a soldier he was used to doing things by his own means, and was surprised at the rescue organizations’ solidarity.

“Here’s one time in history that everybody has pulled together are helping out,” Tilley said. “This is not just the National Guard—this is the United States of America.”