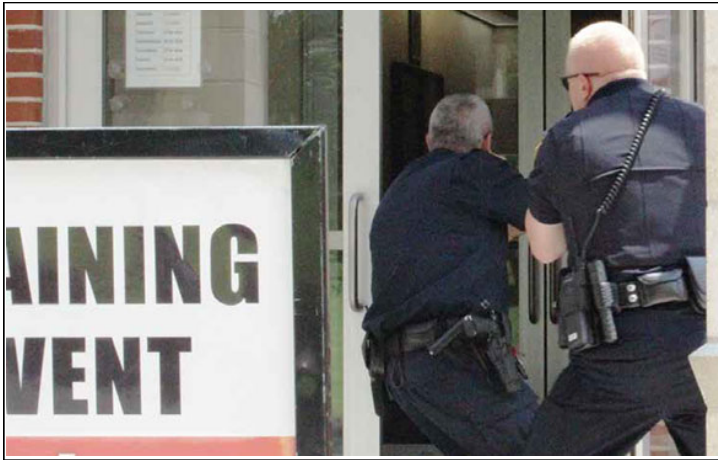


# Carlisle Barracks team delivers security, emergency services

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*Carlisle Barracks police enter Dunham Army Health Clinic during a recent force protection exercise. The police along with other post and local emergency responders train to ensure the security of Carlisle Barracks Families and employees.*

Emergency services at Carlisle Barracks come in three flavors: security guards, post police, and firefighters. Each set of emergency responders are Dept of Army Civilians, each with distinctive background requirements. “To be a Security Guard for the US Army, you need a campaign medal signifying that you’ve served in a combat zone, or during the Vietnam era,” said **Bob Suskie**, director of Emergency Services. They complete a local 3-week training program, and must pass a physical annually and a physical fitness test, he added.

Since 2001, the access control point at the Claremont Visitors’ Gate has been in place to safeguard the student population, the families who live on post, and the workforce. Since then, the check-point has been studied and modified multiple times – working with community leaders and with higher headquarters to make it as efficient and effective as is possible.

“The process is smoother and faster when people cooperate and show patience with the security force as they implement Army and Carlisle Barracks policies,” said Suskie. The lane for ID card holders is speediest; random checks are possible. Visitors are asked to show valid identification, and all visitors’ cars are inspected – averaging 3 minutes per car.

**James “Chess” Chesser** has been police chief here since October 2009 when he relocated from Savannah, Georgia. An Army brat originally, from a long line of Army Soldiers, Chess served in the Army as Military Policeman and MP Investigator, and retired to serve as chief deputy for a

sheriff's department in Georgia. "I took a break from the Army for about three years and took the chance to work for the government again.

"I call it coming back home," said Chess for whom this is his hometown. He lives on Marshall Road and has many reasons to care about the expertise of the police force.

"In May, a vehicle ran into the perimeter fence and left the scene," he said. "The two officers working midnight shift found the breach, and then found the vehicle parked at the nursing home. Working with local police, we were able to secure the fence and bill the driver.

"**Officer Jason McCoy**, the third shift patrolman, is the officer who puts on the bike rodeo and repairs our police bikes. He came to us from a small Pa. town where he was the police chief," said Chesser.

"**Officer Jeffrey Matthews** is our most experienced incident-command officer. He came to us from the Pentagon where he was working as a DOD Police during the 9/11 timeframe.

**Det. Sven Sheppard** received a lost cell phone recently, tracked down owner Sgt. 1st Class Burns, and returned it to him the day before he left Carlisle to retire to Washington state, said Chesser, ready with a host of stories about his force.

"It's the quality of all of the proactive patrolling and policing we do. If we find a broken window, we make sure it's reported and follow up – so the whole wall doesn't fall down," said Chesser, referring to the "Broken Window" theory of policing.

**DA Civilian Police** operations here create a visible presence for a proactive deterrence and for fast response to calls for assistance. Keeping kids safe is a primary responsibility for the police officers, who prepare for this assignment at the 9-week Army DA Police Officer Academy at Fort Leonard Wood. Kids on bikes and bouncing balls on narrow streets are the reason for the 15 mph speed limit.

Bicycle patrols get the police officers out of patrol cars and out with the kids, the runners, the walkers – the community. "We conduct walk-throughs of the Youth Center, movie theater, Exchange, and Commissary so we can get to know the community – important when much of the community turns over each year," said Suskie. "They'll walk through the skate park to get to know the kids and so the kids know them."

Emergency services here are stronger because of agreements with several neighboring law enforcement agencies. Suskie and Chesser both belong to the Cumberland County Chiefs of Police Association. "We share information and do a lot of work with the Carlisle Borough Police Dept and Middlesex and North Middletown townships," said Suskie. "We have a good partnership with them, the county Emergency Operations Center, and the Cumberland County Special Reaction Team."

Throughout the year, first responders exercise responses and cross-agency coordination in a series of exercises on post. Once a year, for example, they train together with the SRT. This year, they've educated and supported employees in Collins Hall, Root Hall, and Dunham Army Health Clinic in 'active shooter' response exercises. Residents will notice DES's monthly training events. For each shift, the firefighters, police and guards will train together once a month in a on-post training site marked with "Training Event" signs.

**Carlisle Barracks Firefighters** must meet Army requirements to be part of the force here, and they are among the few exempted from the furlough. The fire company here has agreements with surrounding townships and Carlisle borough to support, as 2nd responders, other firefighting when there is a need. There when they are needed, they exercise firefighting skills and processes as they build good will and mutual support. The fire department sponsors an annual fire prevention program in October, complete with open house.

The security guards and post police are included in furlough, and they're maintaining security through a series of interim measures. The bike rodeo and the DES open house were cancelled, 4th quarter training has been suspended; all shifts have been reviewed and rearranged with police chief, captains & detective taking shifts on the road. Reduced manning on the gates occasionally results in backed-up traffic and slower entrance times. The construction site for the new YS is an enclave, cut off from the rest of the post by the post perimeter fence so that construction trucks can come and go without adding to traffic at the checkpoint while keeping the post secure.