



# Paraglide

## **Large Vehicle Inspections Now At Access Points**

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In early 2004, Fort Bragg will become the first military installation to be certified for the inspections of large buses and trucks, and agents will be able to keep unsafe motor carriers off the road.

After seeing the condition a lot of semis and big rigs were in when coming through post, Staff Sgt. Edwin Wilhoit, traffic noncommissioned officer in charge, said enough was enough.

“One day I was working traffic and I saw this dump truck that looked like it was in pretty bad shape; so I pulled it over,” said Wilhoit. “The truck itself had over 40 violations and I didn’t know what to do, so I suspended the driver’s license. Next thing you know, two days later I saw the same driver driving the same dump truck; I just couldn’t believe it.” Wilhoit said that there was nothing he could do to keep the truck off the road because he, nor anyone on post, was certified to inspect drivers for operating their trucks while the vehicles were out of compliance with safety regulations.

After doing some research and investigation into the overall safety problem that large trucks on base posed, Wilhoit said he got with one of his Soldiers in the Traffic Department to coordinate how to become certified in the inspection of large trucks. “Staff Sgt. Wilhoit sat me down one day and told me that we had a major problem with the safety of trucks in the area. He then directed me to find out what the qualifications were and what it would take to be able to perform inspections on big rigs and other trucks,” said traffic accident investigator and motor carrier enforcement officer Christopher J. Cozzi.

Cozzi said he then got in contact with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration in Washington, D.C. The FMCSA is a separate administration within the U.S. Department of Transportation, and its main mission is to reduce crashes, injuries and fatalities involving large trucks and buses.

In October 2003, Cozzi went to Arlington, Va., and took a rigorous two-week course that taught him all the rules, regulations and standards the FMCSA has established, and how to spot these problems in larger motor vehicles like trucks and buses. “The course was long,” said Cozzi, “but I learned a lot of good technical information.”

Although Cozzi finished the first step on the road to carrying out inspections and making the people on post safer, he said