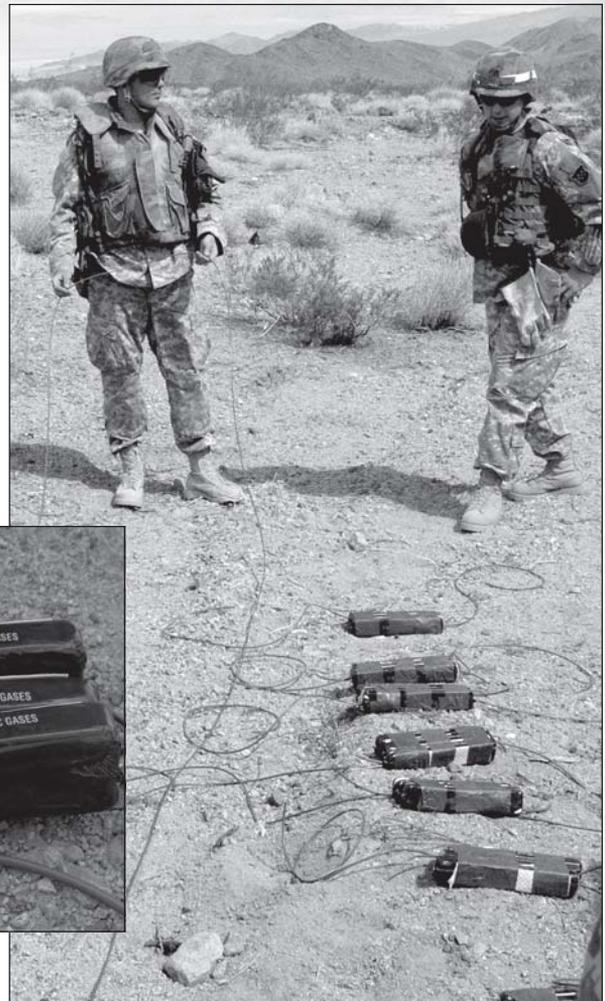


## Engineers Send NTC Skyward

*By Private First Class Christine Samples*

**T**he Soldiers of the 459th Engineer Company out of Bridgeport, West Virginia, sent large pieces of NTC airborne with C4, shaped charges, and cratering charges when they took advantage of an opportunity to practice basic familiarization and refresher training in demolition during Operation Sand Castle 2007. “Demo” does not have as high a priority as building bridges, so the Soldiers don’t often have an opportunity to do it.

Each Soldier was issued three 1-pound blocks of C4, a pliable and versatile explosive that can blow up anything from a single door to a steel building, depending on how much is used. The first step in preparing C4 for detonation involved taping each Soldier’s three blocks together and knotting them with detonation cord. Instead of burning, detonation cord



**Far Right: Soldiers from the 459th Engineer Company survey a line of C4 bundles to make sure they are properly connected for the detonation.**



**Right: The 459th Engineer Company sent NTC airborne with the help of C4.**

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actually explodes, which then sets off the C4. Each Soldier then took his blocks downrange and connected them to other Soldiers' blocks with more detonation cord to create one huge blast. Well back from the blast site, at a safety area 500 meters away, the Soldiers watched as the C4 was detonated. For the engineer Soldiers in the safety area, the boom created by the C4 more than made up for the lack of flash. Even though everyone knew it was coming, the blast still caused more than one Soldier to jump.

After everyone had detonated C4, the Soldiers moved on to training with shaped charges and cratering charges, which are used to demolish construction or damage surfaces. All of the explosives had to be detonated before the unit could leave the demolition range. It was a long but beneficial day for the Soldiers.



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