

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

US Army Reserve - United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) - USACAPOC (ABN) – August 2025

For continued career progression, LTC Neil Edgar transferred from the NC Army National Guard to the US Army Reserve in August 2025. He temporarily accepted a Legislative Liaison assignment before assuming the position of Assistant Chief of Staff – G2 (ACOS G2) of the United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) (USACAPOC [ABN]).



Department of the Army

14 August 2025

Order Number: 0024024600.00

EMPLID: 0002266963

Assignment ID: 227630085

LTC EDGAR, NEIL ERIC 1014936609 W7VNAA - Ft Bragg, NC 28310-0000

Action: Permanent Change of Assignment

Reason: Reassignment

Effective Date: 11 August 2025

Report To: W7VNAA - W7VN USACAPOC

4037 PRATT STREET, BLDG A5585, FT BRAGG, NC 28310-0000

Position Number: 02496763

Position Title: ACOFS G2

Assignment Loss Reason: IE - INACTIV, REORG/RELOC

Major Personnel Action: ED - INACT/REORG/RELOC

Additional Information:

System Entitlements:

94 - Failure to comply with this order may subject you to UCMJ action.

By Authority of The Adjutant General, Department of the Army

Approved By: CPT CINDY SAKALOUSKI, COMMANDANT, W7VNAA

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

Due to a permanent change of station, he received two awards for his prior service:



The U.S. Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) recognizes outstanding meritorious achievement or service by U.S. Armed Forces members, established in 1969 as the non-combat equivalent to the Bronze Star Medal but can now also be awarded for service in combat theaters after 9/11, signifying service comparable to the Legion of Merit but in lesser roles, often for senior personnel in key staff or command positions, with Oak Leaf Clusters or Stars denoting subsequent awards. .



CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

Four specific achievements were noted as justification for this award:

1. Over the past 63 months, L TC Edgar expertly supervised the NCNG J2 Section and ensured state-wide requirements for intelligence readiness in the areas of training, mobilization, deployment, and warfighting were successfully achieved. He built partnerships with NGB J2, ARNG G2, NCEM, Risk Mngt, 82nd ABN DIV G2, FORSCOM G2, INSCOM, CYBERCOM, ARCYBER, sister state G2s, and local civilian entities with classified information handling
2. LTC Edgar was instrumental in Intelligence Training and Mentorship for Military Intelligence Soldiers, NCOs, and Officers throughout the organization. He provided career development guidance and to Soldiers, supported MSC intelligence sections, and provided subject matter expertise and guidance to senior leaders.
3. LTC Edgar oversaw the execution of the NCNG ARFICOM Federated Intelligence Program (FIP) mission and planning. He was instrumental in ensuring the program provided real world, real-time intelligence in support to State Partners. These relationships and proven results led to NCARNG Military Soldiers and Unit Sections participation in multiple large scale joint training exercises.
4. L TC Edgar led the yearly State Military Intelligence Workshop throughout his tenure as the NCNG J2. This training and collaboration were critical to ensure Military Intelligence Soldiers, NCOs, and Officers were proficient in Intelligence Warfighting Function to include Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield, intelligence collection, security requirements, PERSEC, INFOSEC, TARP, SCIF operations, and classified information handling.

CITATION: For meritorious service while assigned as the NCNG J2 Senior Intelligence Officer during the period I July 2019 through 30 September 2024. Lieutenant Colonel Edgar's outstanding performance, professionalism, and dedication to Intelligence Training and Mentorship was vital for the readiness of the North Carolina Army National Guard. Lieutenant Colonel Edgar's outstanding service and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the North Carolina National Guard, and the United States Army.

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON



The North Carolina Meritorious Service Medal recognizes members, former members, or deceased members of the North Carolina National Guard for extraordinary heroism or exceptionally meritorious service to the state, distinct from federal awards, and is a state decoration featuring a bronze medallion with an eagle and laurel branches, symbolizing exceptional service to North Carolina.



The Governor or the Governor's designee is authorized to award this medal upon the recommendation of the Secretary of Public Safety in consultation with the Adjutant General and a board of officers appointed by the Adjutant General.

Three specific achievements were noted as justification for this award:

1. LTC Neil E. Edgar, North Carolina Army National Guard, distinguished himself by exceptionally superior service as the J2 to Joint Task Force-North Carolina from 07 October 2024 to 20 October 2024.

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

2. LTC Edgar's Leadership as the JTF-NC J2 (Night) was instrumental in enhancing collaboration between the J2 Staff and the Incident Area Assessment Cell (IAAC). Under His guidance, they effectively analyzed 1,660 square miles of Ortho Imagery and over 1500 CAP Images.
3. LTC Edgar and his team demonstrated the ability to readily sort through and analyze large amounts of data. This allowed them to inform the NCDOT of 78 roads and bridges that were closed due to storm damage, facilitating timely responses and recovery efforts.

CITATION: For exceptionally meritorious service as the J2 for Joint Task Force - North Carolina, from 07 October to 20 October 2024. Lieutenant Colonel Neil E. Edgar displayed the highest levels of professional expertise, charged with responding to rescue and recovery efforts in western North Carolina as a result of Hurricane Helene. Lieutenant Colonel Edgar's exceptional performance, professionalism, and dedication to duty reflect great credit on himself, the Joint Task Force, and the state of North Carolina.

Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (ARCAM) 7th Award - December 2025



The Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (ARCAM) is a Good Conduct Medal that is issued to a member of the United States Army Reserve and National Guard. The ARCAM was

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

originally required that a reservist completed four (4) years of honorable service as an active member of a reserve unit, however in 1995 that time requirement was lowered to three (3) years of qualified service. This change was not retroactive. Additional awards of this medal are represented by a bronze oak leaf cluster. The medal may be awarded to all enlisted soldiers, warrant and commissioned officers up to and including the grade of Colonel.

This award for LTC Edgar in 2025 is his seventh recognition. For a seventh award of the Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal (ARCAM), you wear a **Silver Oak Leaf Cluster** on the ribbon; you don't use separate loops like the Good Conduct Medal, as the ARCAM uses Oak Leaf Clusters for subsequent awards, with a Silver cluster replacing five Bronze ones for the 2nd through 5th awards, and a Silver cluster for the 6th through 10th awards.

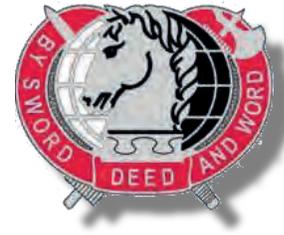


	<h3>Department of the Army</h3>
Order Number: 0023039007.00	30 May 2025
LTC EDGAR, NEIL ERIC 1014936609 W7VNAA - Ft Bragg, NC 28310-0000	EMPLID: 0002266963
Actual Award: Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal	
Reason: Service	
Effective Date: 23 January 2025	
Additional Information:	
Authority: AR 600-8-22	
By Authority of The Adjutant General, Department of the Army	
Approved By: CPT CINDY SAKALOUSKI, COMMANDANT, W7VNAA	

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

USACAPOC

Now in the Army Reserve, by the end of 2025, LTC Neil Edgar was officially the Assistant Chief of Staff – G2 (ACofS – G2) of the United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), headquartered out of Fort Bragg, now Fort Liberty, North Carolina. A major Army Reserve command responsible for providing Civil Affairs (CA) and Psychological Operations (PSYOP) capabilities, focusing on shaping environments and influencing populations to support conventional forces. It's a key tenant of Fort Liberty, supporting global operations with specialized soldiers in information operations, cultural understanding, and community engagement, leveraging the Airborne status of its units for rapid deployment.



Civil Affairs - The primary mission of Civil Affairs is to conduct civil-military operations. Civil Affairs soldiers are responsible for executing five core CA tasks, Civil Information Management, Foreign Humanitarian Assistance, Nation Assistance, Population and Resource Control, and Support to Civil Administration. Some sub tasks to these core tasks include identifying non-governmental and international organizations operating in the battlespace, handling refugees, civilians on the battlefield, and determining protected targets such as schools, churches/temples/mosques, hospitals, etc. The mission of Civil Affairs can be summed up by the motto of the post World War II Civil Affairs School: *SEAL THE VICTORY ...*



Psychological Operations (Psyop) - The primary mission of Psychological operations is to deploy anywhere in the world on short notice, and plan, develop, and conduct Psychological operations in support of Unified Commanders, coalition forces, or other government agencies as directed by the National Command Authority. Psychological operations are a vital part of the broad range of U.S. political, military, economic and ideological activities used by the U.S. government to secure national objectives. PSYOP is the dissemination of information to foreign audiences in support of U.S. policy and national objectives.

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

Used during peacetime, contingencies and declared war, these activities are not forms of force, but are force multipliers that use nonviolent means in often violent environments. Persuading rather than compelling physically, they rely on logic, fear, desire, or other mental factors to promote specific emotions, attitudes, or behaviors. The ultimate objective of U.S. military psychological operations is to convince enemy, neutral, and friendly nations and forces to take action favorable to the U.S. and its allies.



Historically, USACAPOC(A) was one of four major subordinate commands composing the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC). In May 2006, the reserve component of USACAPOC(A) was administratively reorganized under the U.S. Army Reserve Command. The administrative move, however, does not detract from the capability of Army Reserve Civil Affairs Soldiers ability to carry out missions in support of unconventional environments or special operations. Both Active and Reserve component Civil Affairs Soldiers are products of the special operations community, they must go through qualification training at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. The Army Reserve Civil Affairs is considered to be more dynamic than that of their Active duty counterparts. The largest difference being, while the Active component's focus is mainly on unconventional environments, individual Soldiers from the Army Reserve Civil Affairs may be tasked with supporting both conventional or unconventional operations. In addition, the Army Reserve Civil Affairs largely maintains functional skills or specialties that the Active Component is typically unable to, due to the nature of a separate civilian career or the professional backgrounds of many Reserve Soldiers. LTC Edgar is a good example given his technical career in the private sector at Cisco Systems.



The Cisco Team

The Army's active duty Special Operations Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations units, along with the Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Force Modernization/Branch Proponents, continue to fall under the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, respectively.

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

U.S. Army Reserve Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations constitute 5% of the U.S. Army Reserve's total force, but account for approximately 20% of Army Reserve deployments. Reserve Civil Affairs are deployable specialized forces within the Reserve. Reserve Soldiers often bring civilian expertise and education that is typically not found among active-duty soldiers. The projects these elements coordinate are worldwide, but more recently have focused on Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa regions.



USACAPOC HEADQUARTERS, FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

Operation Toy Drop – December 8-12, 2025

Operation Toy Drop is an airborne operation training event coordinated by the United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) and the United States Army Reserve. First organized in 1988 by Sergeant first class Randy Oler, the operation occurs yearly in December at Fort Bragg in North Carolina. In addition to the Army participants in North Carolina, United States Air Force crews from Joint Base Charleston in South Carolina and Altus Air Force Base in Oklahoma have collaborated in the event.



The operation is the largest combined airborne exercise in the world, featuring jumpmasters from nations including Brazil, Canada, Ecuador, Germany, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Netherlands, Poland, Qatar, Spain, United Kingdom and Columbia. In 2025, American paratroopers earned parachutist badges from Spain², Portugal³ and the Netherlands⁴ by participating in Operation Toy Drop.



² The Spanish Air Force instituted in 1946 their own uniform regulations, which included the parachutist badge known as Rokiski, awarded to all the soldiers who completed the Basic Airborne Course in the Paratrooper Military School (Escuela Militar de Paracaidismo) "Méndez Parada" along with the title of Paratrooper Hunter (Cazador Paracaidista). Personnel with this badge can only wear it while in service in a paratrooper unit or if the *permanent status* is awarded.



³ The Portuguese Military Parachutist Badge is a two-piece insignia featuring a central parachute, often with the Portuguese national crest (or similar emblem) in the center, flanked by stylized, stamped wings. These badges are awarded to personnel who have completed the necessary parachute training, with distinct versions for active duty and reserve, or specific, higher-level qualifications.



⁴ The Netherlands military parachutist badge, or *brevet*, represents qualification in parachute jumps, often awarded to airmobile brigade and special operations personnel. Key types include the basic B-wing for static line jumps and the A-wing/C-wing for advanced or free-fall operations, often featuring a gold star for specialized service.

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON



The operation consists of soldiers donating toys in exchange for an opportunity to jump from an aircraft. The toys are then donated to local charities to be distributed to children for Christmas.

Approximately 4,000 paratroopers donate toys annually. In the past, soldiers were given a lottery number with a chance to be drawn for parachuting, although beginning in 2022 units were given allotments to submit soldiers by name to participate. Paratroopers sometimes dress as fictional Christmas characters while parachuting, including Santa Claus, Christmas elves, Santa Claus's reindeer, and the Grinch.



CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. – The 25th annual Randy Oler Operation Toy Drop was hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), or USACAPOC(A), at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, from Dec. 8–12. The event provided joint airborne operations training with partner nations while supporting the local community through toy donations for children.

As a G2 assistant chief of staff and intelligence officer (35D), USACAPOC(Airborne), Lt. Col. Neil Edgar supported the event and had a unique tie to the operation: he participated in the very first execution early in his Army career in 1998.

In honor of the 25th Anniversary of this annual event, Army Public Affairs posted a story about LTC Edgars long time association with Airborne and this event.



Edgar was an E-4 assigned to the 511th Parachute Infantry Regiment at Fort Bragg, having joined the Army in 1997. At the time, his company was tasked with testing an anti-tank weapon for the Army. He had no idea he would also get to take part in the inaugural Randy Oler Operation Toy Drop in December 1998.

“We found out about Operation Toy Drop through our company first sergeant,” Edgar said. “He had a relationship with somebody at USACAPOC(A), so he picked several of our lower-enlisted Soldiers to attend, and I was one of the lucky chosen ones.”



Neil E. Edgar – OTD 1998

He was excited to have the opportunity. Operation Toy Drop was first organized by Sgt.

1st Class Randy Oler, a USACAPOC(A) Soldier. It combines building Soldier readiness in basic warrior tasks with conducting a collective airborne operation that coordinates activities from units in the active and Reserve Army and Air Force, jumpmasters, paratroopers from partner nations, and civilian service organizations. The effort pulls off Fort Bragg’s largest annual combined joint training and airborne operation.

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

This year, 14 partner nations participated in the exercise that jumped more than 2,500 paratroopers. Exercises like this help prepare Soldiers for large-scale combat operations that require moving large numbers of personnel in a timely manner for actions on the objective.

Edgar later transitioned from the North Carolina National Guard to the Army Reserve. His most recent assignment brought him full circle back to USACAPOC(A) in 2024, where he found himself participating in Operation Toy Drop again after more than two decades of service. He feels it is an honor to be participating in the exercise again, this time in a support role.

“This is an extremely significant event,” Edgar said. “Not just for me, but for USACAPOC(A) and the Army airborne community as a whole. Toy Drop showcases our interoperability with our allies and partner nations, making this an extremely valuable event.”



When asked if he would jump again if given the opportunity, Edgar replied, “Heck yeah!”

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CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

At the Threshold – February 2026

By the fall of 2024, nearly three decades after first raising his right hand, Neil's military career entered a phase that few officers ever reach — not because of a decision he made, but because of one the Army would now make about him.

In September, LTC Edgar transferred from the North Carolina Army National Guard to the United States Army Reserve and assumed duties at Fort Bragg as Chief of Staff and senior intelligence officer for one of the Army's most strategically oriented commands. It was a role normally held by a full colonel. He was still, officially, a lieutenant colonel — but in practice, he was already doing the work of the next rank.

In the Army, rank and responsibility do not always advance together. Sometimes responsibility comes first.

Promotion to colonel is not something an officer applies for, campaigns for, or negotiates. It is decided behind closed doors by a board of senior officers who review an entire career — not just the highlights, but the patterns. The board looks for consistency under pressure, judgment earned through experience, and the ability to operate at a level where decisions carry strategic weight rather than tactical immediacy.

In early December, such a board convened. Its members reviewed decades of service: enlistment out of college in 1997; airborne and special operations training; early separation before the world changed; re-entry into uniform after September 11; deployments to Iraq and Kosovo; security cooperation work in Africa; specialization in military intelligence; leadership roles across North Carolina; completion of the Army's most demanding intelligence qualification course in 2024; and finally, assignment to a senior intelligence leadership position at Fort Bragg.

The board deliberated. Its decision was sealed. And then — nothing.

This silence is deliberate. Months pass while results move through layers of administrative review, legal certification, and congressional approval. Even senior commanders do not know the outcome until it is formally released. For officers under consideration, the waiting is part of the process — a final test of patience and professionalism.

If selected, promotion does not arrive with fanfare. It comes first as a line of text in an official personnel bulletin, then as orders quietly filed in a digital record system, and only later — sometimes much later — as a ceremony where an eagle replaces a silver oak leaf on a uniform collar.

If not selected, the work continues unchanged.

That reality underscores a central truth of his career: advancement has never been the goal. Service has been. Each transition — from civilian to soldier, from guardsman to reservist, from

CHAPTER 2 – MOVING ON

intelligence officer to senior advisor — has been driven less by ambition than by readiness when called.

As this volume closes, his future rank remains undecided. What is not undecided is the role he occupies, the trust he has earned, and the responsibility he carries. Whether the next chapter bears the title of colonel or not, the arc of his service has already reached a level few achieve.



He will turn fifty-eight in July. The door ahead remains open.

And so does the story.

The Difference Between Rank and Authority

As this volume closes, one fact remains unresolved.

At the time of this writing, his promotion to Colonel has neither been confirmed nor denied. The decision rests with an institution that measures careers not in moments, but in patterns — not in promise, but in proof accumulated over decades. The Army will decide, in its own time, whether to confer the next rank.

That uncertainty is not a flaw in the story. It is the point.

Because by now, the distinction between rank and authority has become impossible to ignore.

Rank is granted by orders and confirmed by Congress. It is worn on the uniform and recorded in official files. Authority, however, is something else entirely. It is granted informally, continuously, and often invisibly — by peers who trust your judgment, by subordinates who believe you will not waste them, and by superiors who quietly place weight on your shoulders because they know it will hold.

By the time an officer is being considered for Colonel, the question is no longer whether he can lead. The question is whether others already follow.

That answer rarely appears in a promotion packet. It appears instead in moments that never make it into official records: who people turn to when things go wrong; whose counsel is sought when the stakes are high; whose presence steadies a room rather than dominating it.

Those moments do not end when a ceremony does.

They accumulate.

And sometimes — long before an eagle is pinned to a uniform — they reveal something more enduring than rank.

That is where this story now turns.