



RAINBOW PREPS FOR FINAL VALIDATION

MRX brings Rainbow Division one step closer to launching Task Force Liberty

Story and photos by MSG Corine Lombardo, 42nd ID

FORT DRUM, NY -- For Soldier's of the 42nd Infantry Division and supporting units participating in the Mobilization Readiness Exercise or MRX, the cool air and fall foliage of Ft. Drum is a part of the past. The focus over the past week has been Iraq, March 2005. In the training scenario it's hot, dusty and the new Iraqi government is in place. The priority for Task Force Liberty is ensuring peace and prosperity remains a constant for the Iraqi people.

The MRX took place at Ft. Drum's Battle Simulation Center where hundreds of senior and retired Army leaders came together, as observer trainers, to test and oversee the Division staff. Every training scenario was designed to challenge Division leaders' abilities to gather information, plan and execute mission orders and stress the command and control systems of the units. It also simulated the computer and communications technologies that the Task Force will use in Iraq and culminated the predeployment mobilization training.

"What we try to do in the MRX is replicate the battle conditions in Iraq", said retired General Jay Hendrix, former FORSCOM Commander, "from there, the Division leadership will fight that fight for a brief period of time."

Each unit and staff section worked through their respective tasks and focused on dealing with and adapting to hundreds of incidents and scenarios that the taskforce expects to encounter while in Iraq. Everything from roadside bombs and supply issues to building schools and repairing water and sanitation facilities which will enable the emerging democratic government of Iraq to thrive and prosper.

The training exercise is doing more than preparing Soldiers for deployment. It is linking up counterparts, putting faces to names and building relationships that will allow Soldiers to function quicker and easier once they begin operations in Iraq. The MRX brought together Soldiers from Rainbow units; the Idaho Army National Guard's 116th Brigade Combat Team; the Tennessee



Soldiers from various units within Task Force Liberty develop strong working relationships during the Mobilization Readiness Exercise at Ft. Drum, NY

Army National Guard's 278th Regimental Combat Team and the Army's 1st and 3rd Brigade Combat Teams from the Fort Stewart, Georgia-based 3rd Infantry Division, the basic make up of the division task force of more than 18,000 Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve elements which will be the Army's third rotation for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"It really breaks down the National Guard, Reserve and active duty barriers", said COL Mark McKnight, 1st Brigade Combat Team Commander, 3rd Infantry Division. "We're all one division here at this exercise, just like we'll be one division when we get to Iraq.

"This is an opportunity to build relationships before we go, said MG Joseph Taluto, Commander of the 42nd Infantry Division. "The team is full, this is the best representation and the best training event yet. We're now able to get a good benchmark of where we're at", said Taluto.

Rainbow Division base units mobilizing for Operation Iraqi Freedom consist of the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters, the Aviation and Engineer Brigade Headquarters, the Division Artillery Headquarters, the Division Support Command Headquarters, the 1st Battalion, 150th General Aviation Support Battalion, the 50th Main Support Battalion, the 642nd Division Aviation Support Battalion, the 250th Signal Battalion, the 642nd Military Intelligence Battalion, the 42nd Military Police Company, the 272nd Chemical Company, the 42nd Division Band, Battery E (Target Acquisition) of the 101st Field Artillery, the 42nd Rear Operations Cell and the 173rd Long Range Surveillance Detachment.

Following the completion of unit training this fall, the Rainbow Division Task Force will deploy to the Central Command area of operations in sequence. This phased deployment allows Soldiers to conduct their training, reception of equipment and onward movement into Iraq for a relief in place with the Army's 1st Infantry Division early next year.



Rainbow Division Commander, MG Joseph Taluto receives a battle update from Division Chief of Staff COL Gordon H. Mereness

Training becomes reality for 69th Infantry Medics

Story by SGT Rachel Brune, 361st PCH

FORT IRWIN, Calif. -- A training scenario became a real-world mission for New York National Guard medics when two Soldiers were injured during convoy operations in late August, at the National Training Center.

Evacuation 4, a medic team from the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Medic Platoon, was traveling in a convoy with the battalion's Mortar Platoon when the vehicles stopped, and a call came on the radio for medical assistance, according to PFC Daniel J. Silberstein, medic, of Queens, NY.

Silberstein and fellow medic PFC Gerald A. Mariscal, of the Bronx, NY, arrived and took over the scene. The medics determined one Soldier had suffered facial trauma, and another Soldier suffered possible spinal compromise.

The medics stabilized the injured Soldiers and began treating secondary wounds, while their fellow convoy members called for helicopter medical evacuation, according to Silberstein.

"We got him in the bird and got him out of there," said Silberstein.

"We have to be ready, no matter what," said SPC Wilfredo Cordova II, Evac 4 track commander. Cordova, from Staten Island, NY, has been training with his team in preparation for the unit's deployment to Iraq.

"This was my first real patient," said Silberstein, who only recently graduated from advanced individual training, or job training, four months ago. As a civilian, Silberstein is a student at Queens College in New York.

"Mariscal, who works as a hospital investigator for Lincoln Hospital in New York, is also a recent addition to the unit, having graduated AIT last June. This is their first deployment.

Training for these medics usually consists of treating "fake" casualties during evacuations in the training scenario. Each

Soldier carries a casualty card, which details possible injuries he or she may suffer.

When a Soldier is "hit," the medics are called in to treat the casualty according to the card and perform the evacuation, according to Cordova, who as a civilian works for the New York Police Department in Brooklyn, NY.

Teams also practice their skills on the "sim-man," a dummy hooked up to a computer, said Cordova.

The evacuation teams operate out of the 1st Bn., 69th Inf. aid station at Forward Operating Base Denver. The aid station is a small emergency room that provides first line medical care to the 700 soldiers at the FOB, according to CPT Daniel Dudziak, medical platoon physician assistant, from Springville, NY.

In addition to providing acute trauma care the station provides routine sick call and basic injury care. It is designed to stabilize patients and care for them for up to 12 hours, according to Dudziak.

The station provides real-world care for injuries such as sprains, strains, lacerations and routine illnesses to about 25 to 30 patients per day, in addition to the simulated casualties, which include gunshot and shrapnel wounds.

The numbers of Soldiers seeking care have actually been low, according to Dudziak, who attributes that to proactive preventive medicine measures that encourage proper hydration and nutrition.

"This is the perfect environment," said Cordova, as he rested with his team in the shade of their armored personnel carrier (APC) with a large red cross painted on the side. In addition to the training scenario, the desert heat is helping to accustom the teams to working in conditions similar to Iraq.

"It's teamwork – we have to work together," said Cordova. As the troops watched, another evacuation team left on a call, and Evac 4 moved one spot up the ready list.

The troops, mobilized since May, 2004, will complete their training scenario in mid-September, after which they will depart for Iraq, where the missions will be real-world all the time.

The 1-69th will deploy to Baghdad later this year as part of the 3rd ID deployment.



USO to visit Rainbow Soldiers

Rainbow Division CSM Richard Fearnside encourages all Rainbow Division Soldiers at Ft. Drum to attend the free "2004 USO Show" at McGrath Gym on September 22 at 6 p.m.

The 60 minute-performance will feature the USO Troupe of Metropolitan New York.

The troupe has been performing since 1941. The troupe's performers this year are Genna Griffith, Josette D'Ambrosi, Lynelle Johnson, and Tad Emptage. The show will be a musical revue spanning several eras. Concessions will be available when doors



open at 5 p.m.

Contact your unit for transportation.

Show information is available from the Fort Drum MWR Marketing Division at 315-772-6724.



USO invites Rainbow Division's Sr. NCOs to Bar-B-Q

NCOs, E-7 and above are invited to a Barbeque hosted by the USO at Ft. Drum's Officer loop pavilion at 6:00 p.m. on September 21, 2004.

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