The Dagger's Edge

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Dagger Vision

The Dagger Brigade Combat Team will be trained and ready, fully deployable, disciplined, confident, dedicated and serving selflessly with pride.

We are caring of one another and sensitive to the needs of our soldiers, family members and DA Civilians.

We communicate accurately across the chain of command and work together as a combined arms team of teams.

We are responsible stewards of our nation's Treasure.

We are professionals and ambassadors of our nation and responsible and respected guests in the Schweinfurt community, and wherever we find ourselves.

We are flexible, motivated and fully capable of executing any assigned tasks to standard regardless of the challenges.

Commander's Net Call

Recently the Dagger Brigade Combat Team completed an accelerated, intense, and mission-focused Live Fire Density at Grafenwoehr Training Area as part of our ongoing effort to remain trained and ready for our deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF). From my foxhole, our great Soldiers performed magnificently and are truly ready for any mission, anywhere! What started as a very challenging and already condensed Live-Fire density became much more accelerated upon our receipt of notification to deploy to OIF. Our great Soldiers accepted this new mission and immediately got down to the business of meeting the standards that the Dagger BCT has become well-known for in United States Army Europe. It was a prideful thing to witness first-hand as our great Soldiers and Leaders accomplished the mission--never flinching. Everywhere I went, I saw leaders with their Soldiers, heavily engaged in meeting and exceeding training standards.

As a result of this most-recent Live Fire Density, I am proud to report that this great Brigade Combat Team is fully trained and ready. This training event was what we needed to fully ready this great BCT for any mission. This event focused the team. It assured our soldiers that their weapons and equipment would operate as expected in the heat and dust and dirt. We fully exercised our Command and Control, Reconnaissance and Surveillance and Logistics Systems. It allowed newly assigned Soldiers and Leaders to participate fully in a robust training experience, thus solidifying the team at every echelon. This training event assured everyone that this Brigade Combat Team is ready now for any mission.

We now know that we are on a very fast track to execute our deployment into the Central Command Area of Responsibility. We will execute that deployment over the next few weeks by first deploying a robust, tailored, and full-spectrum capable Task Force under the colors of the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, followed very rapidly by the remainder of the Brigade Combat Team.

While final locations and exact dates of deployment are currently unavailable for release, we know that we are ready for any mission that we may receive. We remain committed to ensuring that our soldiers and family members are informed as quickly and as accurately as possible throughout this mission.

This final training exercise also allowed us to fully exercise the tremendous capabilities of Task Force Guardian, our Rear Detachment Command. This formation was hand picked by the commanders of the BCT, consists of the best soldiers and leaders available, and they have been effectively formed, trained, exercised and validated through a robust training program and unfortunately through 3 real world actions in the past few weeks. We can all be extremely proud and confident of what Guardian brings to this Brigade Combat Team.

As we finalize our preparations for deployment, it is important that we all seek opportunities to find time for ourselves and our families, to make our personal farewells as special and as memorable as we can, within the time available. I encourage every member of this great Brigade Combat Team to remain linked with their Family Readiness Groups, their Rear Detachment Command Teams, and the host of expert agencies across the Schweinfurt Military Community.

We will conduct a formal farewell ceremony for the Brigade Combat Team on the 9th of August at 10a.m. I hope that you all can join us on the airfield at Conn Barracks for this very special and memorable event.

I want to personally thank each and every member of this Community for everything that you do every day, to help make this the Greatest Brigade Combat Team Ever Formed!

WE CONTINUE MISSION!
DUTY FIRST!

DAGGER 6

Chaplain's Focus on Faith

Dealing with the Unexpected in Life

Brigade Chaplain, MAJ Mikkelson, delivers a sermon about the Lord's Prayer during the Protestant service on Sunday.

Joseph was a young man who had everything going for him. Tall, handsome, and smartly dressed, he had plans for a great future in the family business. But one day, his comfortable life was disrupted when the unexpected happened. His own brothers quite literally "sold him out," and all his plans were suddenly ruined. This is a 3800-year old story from the Old Testament, and you can read about Joseph's fascinating journey in Genesis 37-48. Interestingly, his story has a lot in common with what we are going through today. After several months of "waiting for the word" on deployment, many of us had become quite comfortable as we enjoyed the Bavarian summer. Many believed the deployment was "down the road" sometime, and some even spoke of not deploying at all. I think we were all a bit shocked when the deployment orders came with a much shorter timeline than any of us imagined or wanted. So, how do we respond when hit with the unexpected in life?

It's natural to be disappointed when our plans are disrupted, especially when the surprise involves a loss of family time or money. Some of you are quite angry about it, and that is a natural response. I hope by now you have been able to work through those initial emotions, and perhaps we can glean some good advice from Joseph's story.

After being betrayed by his brothers, he was taken to a foreign country and sold into slavery. He could have continued to be angry and plotted how to get even, or spiraled downward in depression or reckless behavior that would just make it worse. But Joseph chose to make the best of a bad situation. He worked hard, demonstrated great loyalty and integrity in all that he did, and slowly his lot in life improved. Sometime during the 10 years that he was there, Joseph was placed in charge of all the other servants. He did the best with what he had, maintained his character and composure, and things improved. This is good advice for us today as well.

Then came another unexpected event – he was falsely accused of assaulting his master's wife, and thrown into prison for two long years. Again, Joseph made the best of a bad situation, used his talents as best he could, and he eventually made it out when he accurately interpreted Pharaoh's dream about an upcoming drought and food shortage. Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph that he was made second in command of the whole country - good things can come from bad situations!

Then came the toughest test of all that revealed how Joseph was really handling the unexpected adversity in his life. His long-lost brothers made the week's journey from Palestine to Egypt to buy food. Joseph was in a perfect position to exact his revenge – he could literally do anything he wanted to them! But in one of the most dramatic scenes in the Bible, Joseph forgave them and made generous provisions to care for them and their descendants for generations to come. Joseph never lost his faith in God, and pursued a life of godly character that helped him succeed even in the most unexpected events.

As we travel this road together as a Dagger family, I hope you will not be overcome by these initial emotions. Make the best of what you have, and believe that God will use this situation to build character into our lives, improve the world around us, and increase our faith in him.

Soldiers listen attentively during the Prtotestant service .

Steel Tiger Chaplain holds a field service at the range on Sunday.

Lifeline Chaplain leads a hymn during the Protestant service.

Operation Spartan Flail

The Vanguards deployed to the Grafenwoehr training area on 7 July to accomplish several key collective tasks, preparing them for an upcoming deployment. The decisive operation was the revalidation and qualification of Bradley and motorized crews, along with Platoon LFX certification. In addition to this operation, the Vanguards continued to train on combat logistics patrols and validation of the Mortar Fire Control System (MFCS). With these objectives clearly established, the Vanguards left Conn Barracks three days prior to any other battalion and hit the ground running to accomplish their mission in 2 short weeks

Platoon Live Fire Exercise

The platoon live fire exercise was designed as a challenging mission to test the platoon's leadership to conduct a Sphere of Influence (SOI) engagement, test their ability to adhere to the Rules of Engagement (ROE) in a crowded market, react to an IED, and culminating in a raid on an enemy safe house to capture a High Value Target (HVT). Each platoon conducted the live fire mission motorized (utilizing HWMMVs) to simulate the day-to-day conditions of an upcoming deployment. The platoon live fire was as much an exercise in an individual rifleman's ability to engage the enemy as it was an exercise in the leadership's ability to maintain command and control. The team leaders maintained control of their teams as they moved from room to room and building to building. Squad leaders relayed information to the PL and P SG as they pushed their teams forward. The PL and PSG coordinated with the company headquarters and maintained control over the entire situation. In the end each rifle platoon, including the Scout and Mortar platoons, were certified and gained confidence in their ability to accomplish any mission.

Vanguards maneuver from one building to the next as they search for the HVT.

Bradley and Motorized Crew Qualification

Another key component to this Grafenwoehr training was the revalidation and qualification of Bradley and motorized crews. The Bradley crews executed Bradley Table VIII, and motorized crews executed Light Cavalry Table VIII to revalidate crews and qualify new crews. Gunners soon realized the differences between firing from a vehicle turret versus firing from the prone. New Bradley gunners experienced the difference between firing live rounds versus computer simulation. Furthermore, Bradley gunnery allowed crews and mechanics to identify and fix mechanical faults with vehicles under austere conditions. The realistic training helped prepare the soldiers for future operations.

Vanguards qualify on LCT VIII engaging targets from a HMMWV while stationary and moving.

Mortar Fire Control System (MFCS) Certification

The newest addition to the Vanguard arsenal is the MFCS. The system was recently fielded on Conn Barracks to each Mortar Platoon in 2BCT and was certified at GTA. By adding this system, the Mortar Platoon can "talk" digitally to the Field Artillery's AFATADS System. Linking the MFCS into the digital indirect fires communication network, the MFCS can process call for fire missions and conduct counter-battery missions immediately upon target acquisition. Congruent with the transformation of our "Legacy Force," the lethal, digital capability of the Mortar Fire Control System is one of the many steps the 2BCT is taking towards achieving the Army's vision for change.

SGT Valadez demonstrates the capabilities of the new MFCS.

GRAF 2006 PART DEUX

The call was made on a warm, balmy, and slightly humid Tuesday afternoon, for the Blue Spaders to deploy to Grafenwoehr as part of the greatest Brigade Combat Team ever formed in the history of the world. The focus for training remained on honing our warrior skills.

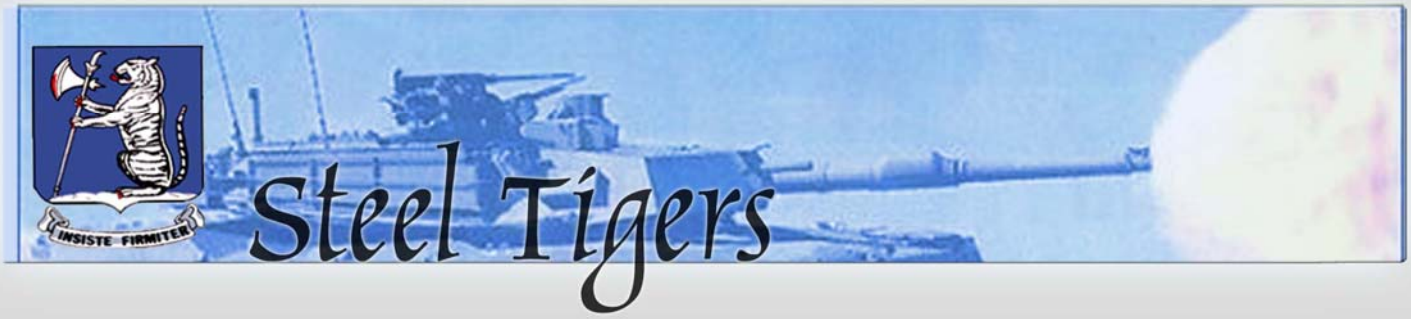
The Soldiers of 1-26 Infantry took advantage of this last minute training opportunity to sharpen their skills in a final preparation for deployment. Soldiers qualified on rifles, four different types of machine guns, and sniper rifles. The Soldiers also used the ranges as an opportunity to train on entry control and flash traffic control point procedures. Leaders new to the Blue Spader family re-inforced their training on inspecting all their Soldiers before each mission to ensure they had the proper gear and equipment. As the Soldiers lay on the rocky gravel to prepare for zeroing they each had a coach watching over them. The soldiers placed their newly issued M4 rifle barrels on the sand bags and made the proper adjustments as they prepared to fire. The coaches ensured that the Soldiers used proper mechanics and breathing techniques. The Soldiers of 1-26 Infantry Battalion truly felt ready for war because they were not rushed through qualifications. Truly understanding marksmanship and the fundamentals of shooting a rifle was end state of the training. The Soldiers continued to prove they owned the night as they qualified on their rifles during limited visibility conditions using their night vision equipment. This was the first time since basic training that many of our newly arrived Soldiers had the opportunity to use their night vision equipment to qualify with the M4 rifle. "Prepared and ready" ...those were the words of the Blue Spaders when asked; they were ready to go to Iraq in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Stealth, discipline, patience; these are the words used to describe the difficult and demanding job of the sniper, the Blue Spader snipers had a special mission for this gunnery. The snipers would train specially selected Soldiers from each company on the critical marksmanship skills, to support the Battalion's designated marksmanship program. One soldier described the feeling of looking through a scope and being able to hit a target almost a thousand meters out as the "...most exciting feeling that I have ever felt."

The July Gunnery density culminated with the Platoon Live Fire Exercises. This was what the Soldiers were looking forward to the most. GTA built a new shoot house. This two story complex building completely resembles an apartment complex that can be found in any part of the world and something the terrorists often use as their base of operations. The platoons maneuvered in a platoon size element using armored HMMWV's. This helped train the drivers on how to handle the handling and weight differences between the armored HMMWV's and the ones they use at home station. Their mission was to capture a high value target. As they maneuvered closer to the shoot house, the gunners laid suppressive fire as the dismounted Soldiers exited the vehicles and ran to the entry point.

As the Soldiers formed a four-man stack, you could sense a little bit of nervousness from the lead man (the first man in). That nervousness dissolved into confidence as the soldier pushed through the door and started to clear each floor systematicall The teams training kicked in and their movements were fluid and filled with purpos From muzzle discipline to the tap on their team member's shoulder that lets him kn they were to either the left or the right, and they were ready to move. This was t most realist training the Soldiers have gotten yet. As one soldier put it, "you rea don't understand the concept of 4 man stack and points of domination until you ha actually experienced it in a realistic setting using live bullets."

CPT Koonankeil, Jaison



1-77 ARMOR CONDUCTS INTENSE TRAINING DENSITY AT GTA

Today's Contemporary Operating Environment (COE) requires a Disciplined, Skilled and Lethal force in order to fight, build and win. In preparation for our upcoming deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Task Force 1-77 Armor "STEEL TIGERS" is exploiting every opportunity to deliver such a force which is also razor-sharp, extremely flexible, and agile. As we enhance our combat proficiency through an intense pre-deployment training density at GTA, the task force not only focuses on our core competencies through the Tank Crew Proficiency Course (TCPC), and Tank Table VIII crew qualification, but also on motorized platoon tactics from Light Cavalry tables, and motorized platoon live fires to Scout motorized qualification courses and Mortar platoon live fire exercises. Utilizing the Crawl, Walk, Run methodology; we initially focused on individual weapons qualification and Close Quarters Marksmanship (CQM) training in order to ensure combat lethality at the individual soldier level. As we proceed through collective training gates, a focus on cross training ensures that all elements in the task force are proficient and adaptable warriors; equally deadly whether on M1A1 Main Battle Tanks or in a HMMWV based motorized configuration.

Crew-served weapons mounted on vehicles must be accurate while the teams qualify during convoy situations.

Providing 360 degrees of security, Steel Tiger warriors learn techniques of infantry skills in order to be "Dual Capable"

Soldiers must be profieient on their personal weapons and qualify in various scenarios.

In addition to the honing of combat skills, the task force is also exercising our maintenance and logistics systems in order to ensure the lethal and disciplined platoons and companies are continually sustained and supplied with the vehicles to get them to the fight; ammunition to close with and destroy the threat, and supplies to ensure we win. At the completion of this density, whether tracked or wheeled, whether stationed at a plentiful Logistical Support Area (LSA) or remote Forward Operating Base (FOB), the "STEEL TIGERS" will be ready, trained and able to fight wherever assigned, in any environment, at any hour in order to deliver an indisputable VICTORY!!

In closing, our families are under the BEST support and sustainment system available, as TF Sentinel (our Rear Detachment) and the Battalion Family Readiness Group (FRG) work hand-in-hand to provide our families timely and accurate information on our activities, the Schweinfurt community, and other developments. I once again salute our volunteers, and can't thank them enough for what they do, and contribute to the fight, and lives of our families and Soldiers. We love you for all you do.

BLOOD ON THE AXE!!

-TIGER 6

First Lightning

A First Lightning Soldier grins as he reads the celebratory scrawling on a field latrine wall, "Last Graf Feb '06." The feeling is mutual among the members of 1-7 FA as they return to Grafenwoehr this July in order to retrain the perishable artillery and mounted infantry skills they exercised on the same frozen ground six months earlier.

A crew from Charlie Battery practices engaging targetss from their vehicles.

They expected to be patrolling Iraq's streets and slinging 155mm rounds from a FOB (Forwar Operation Base) by this time of year. But while the Department of Defense decided where and when to best employ the 2BCT, its training shelf life was slowly approaching the August 15th expiration date. In order for the Dagger Brigade to be eligible to throw its hat in the ring, it would have to head back to the field to sustain its combat readiness.

To qualify their crew-served and individual weapons, Soldiers must react quickly while conducting convoy operations.

The logistics and support elements will train their teams by conducting a Combat Logistics Patrol exercise and will continue to provide great support to the First Lightning Battalion. Now armed with newly acquired M-4's, the 1-7 warriors will also head to the range and qualify on their individual weapons.

SSG Skepwith, TF 1-18 Fire Support Element, fires 40 rounds to qualify on his M4 Rifle.

The focus of 1-7's two week, high density exercise is the qualification of new crews on Paladin Tables, Light Cavalry Tables, individual and crew served weapons. Soldiers in the line batteries will shoot over 1500 155mm rounds in order to refresh the crew drills that grow rusty with timeThe same soldiers will then mount 240B and .50 Cal machine guns in HMMWV turrets and conduct moving live fire ranges while a sister battery supports them with artillery fire.

With the support of our Rear Detachment Command and Family Readiness Group, the First Lightning Battalion is confident our families will be well taken care of during our deployment.

Checking his score, SSG Skepwith has qualified on his personal weapon with an Expert score.

When the smoke clears, First Lightning will be primed and ready to deploy, fight and win in support of the Global War on Terror!

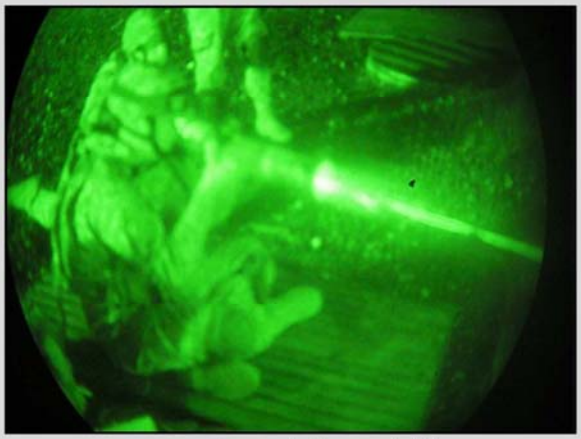
"First Lightning!"

9th Engineer Battalion July 2006 Grafenwoehr Gunnery

In preparation for deployment to the Iraqi Theater of Operations (ITO), the 9th Engineer Battalion "Gilas" hit the ground running with a whirlwind of activity which culminated with all individual Soldiers, squads and platoons certified in the skills required to accomplish the mission and survive on the battlefield.

The primary training objective for the Battalion was to qualify every Soldier on their assigned weapon and to conduct collective squad and platoon live fire exercises (LFX). The exercise called for deliberate planning in order to ensure the right resources were available at the right time and to develop battle focused training scenarios to prepare the Soldiers and leaders on their warfighting tasks. The exercise was a resounding success as the Gila Battalion tactically conducted qualification on the following equipment: M16 Rifle, M4 Rifle, M9 Pistol, Hand Grenade, M203 Grenade Launcher, M249 Machine Gun, M240B Machine Gun, M2 Machine Gun, MK 19 Grenade Launcher, AT 4 Rocket Launcher, and Shot Gun. Additionally, the Battalion executed demolitions training, Light Cavalry Table V, and Combat Logistic Patrol live fire exercises. The weapons training culminated with squads and platoons conducting live fire exercises, which are scenario based training event that challenge their assigned mission. The LFXs sharpened the Soldiers ability to shoot, move, and communicate.

Although the Gila Battalion successfully prepared its Sappers to face the battlefield for its forthcoming deployment, the Battalion mourns the loss of one of its Sappers. SPC Joshua Mulinix from Alpha Company, died as a result of a tragic incident during the exercise. His loss has affected the Battalion greatly and challenged us in many ways. This challenge; however, in the end, will form us into a tighter team as we work our way through it together. We held a memorial ceremony on 14 July to render final honors to a fallen friend, battle buddy, Sapper, and Soldier. He will be sorely missed.



Bravo "Outlaws" master the AT-4 at night.

Alpha Company Soldiers PVT Sumka and SPC Williams practice close quarter marksmanship between ranges.

SGT Anderson, HHC, prepares to engage targets during M4 qualification.

Grafenwoehr Training Area:

It's a cold, dark and snowy place in southern Germany. Fortunately for the Soldiers of the Lifeline Battalion, we aren't here in the winter again. During the past week and a half of the summer, we have sweated on the weapon ranges of Graf with dust and gunpowder the only things carried in the wind. The intrepid soldiers of Alpha Company "Assassins!" have been able to focus on weapons qualifications almost exclusively during the exercise. CPT Jeff Scott and 1SG Shawn Nelson have made their #1 priority getting all of their soldiers qualified with their individual weapons.

SPC Cooper (C/299) checks her combi-tube before qualifying on her ACMS-VT tests

1LT Skidmore (C/299) fires at targets with his 9mm pistol at Grafenwoehr range 122.

Bravo Company "Bandits" have maintained their maintenance mission to support the maneuver battalions while simultaneously c ompleting their drivers training requirements and weapon qualifications. CPT Ken McCrory and 1SG Eddie Harris' NCOs have been the subject matter experts during the conduct of larger weapon qualification ranges such as the M2 .50 caliber Heavy Machine Gun. CPT Chris McLean and 1SG Horace Tyson of Charlie Company "Grave Robbers", have been pushing their combat medics to excel during the last nine days by training them to complete their ACMS-VT (Annual Combat Medic Skills Verification Training). This ensures that our Brigade's infantrymen, tankers and other warriors have the best medics possible to support them. The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, commanded by CPT Polacek and 1SG Angel Baez, have been busy with providing support to the battalion through the various staff sections and specialty sections.

The DFAC has provided the best food on Camp Aachen for our warriors, and the Personal Security Detachment has been there to provide as much support as possible for the weapons ranges we've conducted. All of this training would not be possible without the support of our families in Schweinfurt, where CPT Kelly Johnson and 1SG Peggy Montgomery-Hall are keeping us in contact with help from the personnel supporting us in the Delta Company (Rear Detachment). Delta Co has been an indispensable asset for keeping our families informed about our training as well as providing personal enrichment activities for our loved ones in Schweinfurt. In closing I would like to say that I could not be prouder of this fine battalion of Lifeline Warriors, and that I deeply appreciate the support we receive from our family, friends and community. It is this cohesion that has made our unit, as well as the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, a successful unit now and continuing into the months ahead.

-Lifeline 6

"In the absence of orders, attack!"

Renegade

E-4 CAV
(2BCT Reconnaissance Troop)
July 2006 Grafenwoehr Gunnery

As promised, the month of July delivered quality training opportunities in Grafenwoehr. The BRT along with their brothers from the combat observer lasing team (COLT/1-7 FA), and the Dagger Brigade's military police platoon completed two weeks of intense battle focused training. As a result, all squads and platoons within these organizations are not just certified to deploy, but possess the skillset required to fight and win on the contemporary operational environment battlefield.

Training began with already trained gunners getting day and night repetitions on Scout Table VIII with the M2 Machine Gun, M240B Machine Gun, MK 19 Grenade Launcher, and M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. Engagements mirrored a COE enemy with scenarios complete with civilians on the battlefield to allow for target discrimination amongst crews. Not only were primary crews qualified, but numerous drivers were also qualified as we continue to build the bench for our future Army. Training continued with individual weapons qualification and close quarters marksmanship training, both day and night, to ensure that our Soldiers can engage the enemy under multiple circumstances and conditions.

The culminating training event was the Scout Platoon Live Fire Exercise (LFX) where platoons had to conduct troop leading procedures, react to direct fire contact, conduct reconnaissance of a built up area, conduct a cordon and search, react to an IED strike, and recover a damaged vehicle.

Additionally, all LFX iterations included combat lifesaver and casualty evacuation training and were conducted under day and night conditions. All platoons conducting this training demonstrated a high level of proficiency in all of the above tasks.

Although we came into the training rotation trained, we continued to sharpen and hone our skills especially while conducting limited visibility operations. Scouts in the BRT mastered night marksmanship engagements and using our technology, especially at night, to ensure that we keep our lethal advantage over the enemy.

Quality training of this magnitude is nothing new for the BRT or the entire 2BCT. As a result of the BCT's multi-echeloned and battle focused training strategy, the Brigade Reconnaissance Troop is fully trained and prepared to conduct operations in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

2nd Platoon, E Troop, conducts rehearsals at the Grafenwohr MOUT site prior to conducting their Scout Platoon Live Fire Exercise.

SGT Kirk conducts surveillance on target buildings during the Scout Platoon Live Fire Exercise.

SPC Alexander, Dagger MP platoon, qualifies on the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon while dismounted.

2LT Kronick conducts a Platoon OPORD brief prior to conduct of the MP platoon's mounted react to contact live fire exercise.

Crusaders

C/101 MI July 2006 Grafenwoehr Gunnery

As the Crusaders moved in GTA there were several requirements needing to be met in order for the company to deploy to Iraq to support the Global War on Terror. The most daunting task was to qualify each of our Air Vehicle Operators on their newly fielded Block 1B Tactical Unmanned Aerial System. The TUAS Platoon moved out to Grafenwohr on the 13th of July and was informed that the already short timeline was shortened an additional seven days. Without losing a moment's opportunity, the platoon began coordinating flights in support of the platoon live fire exercises being conducted by the maneuver units. Not only did the platoon meet their objective, but they completed certifying 15 of their 16 Air Vehicle Operators on their new system, became the first TUAS platoon to observe fire missions for artillery and close air support (Air Force A-10's), completed over 31 qualification tasks for each pilot and they linked with the Common Ground Station in order to provide the complete picture for decision makers.

The company also deployed its headquarters platoon which qualified five on the MK-19 and went through the Combat Logistics Patrol Live Fire exercise with C/299th on RG 117. While the HQ's and TUAS platoons were at Grafenwohr, the company's Analysis and Control Team coordinated for and executed training via a Mobile Training Team from the Joint Analysis Center in Molesworth, England. The Training Team provided the analysts in the ACT with an over-view of intelligence gathering and databasing at the National level. The Human Intelligence Platoon (HUMINT) was already in Grafenwohr training in conjunction with the 501st MI BN. The training focused on source operations and reports writing. The SIGINT Platoon conducted advanced rifle marksmanship and put the final pieces in place for the live environment training they will be conducting in Darmstadt with the 66th MI GRP.

From several different locations the company's platoons trained in each of their intelligence disciplines and are ready to support the Brigade.

The Ground Control Station (GCS) for AV flights.

The AV Launcher is prepared to sling the AV to the sky.

View from the TUAS as 1-7 FA fires rounds to the grid loacted by the system.

SGT Jack, SPC Clark and PFC Moore prep the first Air Vehicle (AV) on the Launcher for preflight checks.

Voice

57th Signal Company's Grafenwoehr Deployment

written by 1LT Michael A. Martin

On 07 July 2006, the 57th Signal Company deployed to Grafenwoehr Training Area in support of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's Gunnery Exercise. Although the unit had participated in smaller missions, this was the first time the 57th had deployed as an entire unit in support of a major exercise. This was a no fail mission and expectations ran high.

The mission of the 57th was simple; provide tactical voice and data communications to the Brigade Headquarters and all of its' subordinate units. By using the newly fielded Joint Nodal Network (JNN), they were able to do this to near perfections. The equipment worked flawlessly and the Soldiers that operated it performed at a level of technical expertise unmatched by other Signaleers within the Army. This also included the fielding of TOCNET, a communications integration system that allows FM, HF and Single Channel TACSAT to be monitored simultaneously over existing computers in order to extend the range and capabilities of these systems. Soldiers from the 57th installed and trained individuals from each unit to operate this new system, further developing the communications infrastructure within the Brigade.

Yet these were not the only missions that the 57th accomplished during its' time in Grafenwoehr. The unit engaged in both individual qualification ranges and Convoy Live Fires to remain ready to deploy to any theater of operations. In the end, 100 percent of the units deployable Soldiers re-qualified with their weapons and moved through the Live Fire scenario. Also during this time, the units Rear-Detachment turned in 68 major pieces of excess Mobile Subscriber Equipment (MSE) through rail and convoy operations to MMC in Kaiserslautern. This places the unit one step closer to the completing it's transformation to a total digital satellite network.

When everything was said and done, the 57th Signal Company completed all assigned missions to standard and beyond. Whether it was providing superior communications, maintaining tactical proficiency or unit transformation; their achievements were unmatched. What ever the mission, the 57th has proved that it is ready to respond and excel.