

V Corps units splash across the Main

502nd Engineers, 12th Aviation Brigade bring a bridge too far to 1st Armored Division



A helicopter from the 12th Aviation Brigade drops a bridge bay into the Main River while boats from the 502d Engineer Company stand by.



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MAINFLINGEN, Germany – On a balmy autumn day in mid-November, elements of the 1st Armored Division trained on river-crossing operations on the Main River with help from the 502nd Engineer Company and the 12th Aviation Brigade.

“River crossing operations are a major mission in the real world, especially here in Europe where there are so many rivers,” explained Col. Don C. Young, commander of the 1st

Armored Division’s Engineer Brigade. “We can expect that existing bridges will be knocked out before we get there. So we have to have the capability to build our own.”

The training included a two-hour classroom session on river-crossing operations, followed by a live demonstration where an actual bridge was built across the Main River with support provided by V Corps assets.

The classroom portion was important because it explained the Army’s doctrine on river-crossing operations, according to Maj. Allan L. Webster, Engineer Brigade S-3. “The purpose of this training is to educate leaders on the doctrinal

guidance on river-crossing operations,” said Webster.

Webster explained that it’s vital for commanders to understand the synchronized flow of equipment to the river-crossing site to achieve mission success. “We’re teaching all aspects of river crossing, to include Engineer Equipment Parks (EEPs), Engineer Regulating Points (ERPs), raft loading, call-forward areas and bridge-crossing procedures. All are essential parts of a successful river-crossing operation.”

After the classroom instruction, the division leaders moved down to the Main River to observe an actual river-crossing operation and train with units they normally don’t interact with.

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