



America's Heroes



Army Rough Riders Lead the Way in Iraq

Elite Convoy Security Unit Provides Protection For Coalition, Iraqi Government VIPs

(NAPSA)—As the Coalition's role in Iraq has gradually shifted towards supporting Iraqi security forces, American soldiers continue to battle terrorist insurgents in the streets of Baghdad, Fallujah and beyond. As seen in the recent attacks on military personnel, members of the new Iraqi government and civilian contractors, convoy operations remain a constant target of terrorists as they look to disrupt supply lines and damage the Coalition's reconstruction of Iraq.

In an effort to reduce attacks on crucial supply convoys, the Army has created an elite convoy security unit, nicknamed the Rough Riders, specifically designed to provide top-notch force protection for personnel, equipment and assignment teams traveling in and around Baghdad's often volatile International Zone. Just as Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders stormed San Juan Hill in liberating Cuba from Spain, these modern-day Rough Riders are doing their part to keep the roads safe and supplies moving to help win the peace in Iraq.

"Our mission is to provide convoy security throughout the whole country of Iraq," said Rough Riders convoy commander, Army Reserve Sgt. 1st Class Steve Davis. "We're out here for one goal: to make sure everyone makes it home safely, everybody does their



job and the bottom line of it is that the mission gets accomplished."

Each day, Army soldiers transport thousands of pounds of supplies such as food and water, ammunition and fuel to U.S. forces in highly volatile areas and isolated outposts throughout Iraq. Troops receive state-of-the-art training in convoy operations before deployment so they can remain safe in-theater while accomplishing their missions.

The Army has made convoy training a key aspect of its basic training regimen for all soldiers so they can be prepared to successfully complete convoy operations under any circumstance. For example, Ft. Sill, Okla., operates a state-of-the-art convoy training program for soldiers that utilizes real-time lessons learned from Iraq and incorporates the latest in Army technology to simulate, as close as possible, enemy attacks on American military convoys. Before actual live-fire training, Ft. Sill trainers take visiting Army units

through extensive training, complete with classroom lessons and battle drills before taking them out onto the live-fire convoy range.

"This convoy exercise is about as realistic as we can get it within the safety restraints," said 1st Lt. Joe Miller, Ft. Sill Observer-Controller. "The exercise teaches them how to shoot from a moving vehicle, react to explosives and maintain convoy intervals."

Soldiers face a number of simulated terrorist attacks while firing machine guns at targets placed sporadically along the route. In addition to live-fire target practice, soldiers learn other important lessons: how to deal with a disabled vehicle, navigate checkpoints, handle anti-American protesters and manage an enemy prisoner-of-war situation, including a focus on Geneva Convention rights. Each unit is taught how to deal with these varied situations, is graded upon its performance, and given every opportunity to eliminate any weaknesses to ensure unit success and cohesiveness during in-theater operations.

Through such stateside training, as well as through lessons learned in theater, the Rough Riders are prepared to successfully complete convoy missions throughout Iraq safely and securely.

For more information, visit GoArmy.com or GoArmyReserve.com.