

# U.S. ARMY NEWS AND NOTES

## Convoy Training Makes For Preparation In The Field

(NAPSA)—As the Coalition's role in Iraq gradually shifts towards a support role for Iraqi 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 is transforming its state-side training before troops deploy, preparing soldiers for such assaults so they can defeat the insurgency in Iraq and accomplish their missions.

Army Reserve soldiers, who specialize in convoy operations, are the Army's main source of combat support forces, with a significant focus on logistics.

Each day, Army Reserve 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.

Thus, it has become increasingly necessary that troops receive state-of-the-art training in convoy operations before deployment so that they can remain safe in-theater while accomplishing their missions. Convoy operations have become such an important part of Army training that it is now a part of the Army's revised basic training course. "This convoy training at Ft. Sill is absolutely



### "Gun Truck Alley" prepares deploying troops for modern battlefield

critical because every time that you turn on the television and watch the news, you see convoys coming under enemy fire," said Capt. Boyd Sharp, Ft. Sill Convoy Training Observer-Controller. "It's one of the single most important training events that we can do to get soldiers ready for combat."

The convoy training exercise at Ft. Sill, Okla., 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.

The course uses normal size silhouettes to represent insurgents, grenade/artillery simulators and smoke to represent the chaos and bedlam of modern urban warfare. Before actual live-fire training, Ft. Sill trainers take visiting Army units through a three-day training

session, 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."

At the range, a two-mile stretch of dirt road known as "gun truck alley," 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 the Geneva Convention rights.

Each unit is taught how to deal with these varied situations, is graded upon their performance and given every opportunity to eliminate any weaknesses to ensure unit success and cohesiveness during in-theater operations.

This exercise demonstrates the continuous transformation of the Army's stateside training taking lessons learned from Iraq to update its training and ensure that every soldier is prepared, supported and well-trained for any combat scenario.

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