



PRESS RELEASE

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Dragoons augment OCs

Story by: Sgt. Jerry Wilson

2CR Public Affairs

VILSECK, Germany – The last time Dragoons of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment interacted with the Observer Controllers of the Joint Multinational Readiness Center they were preparing for a deployment to Afghanistan. Now their paths have crossed again as some Troopers work alongside the OCs as augmentees to help prepare 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team their deployment with a full spectrum training exercise.

In the past, most European-based military training focused on Counter-Insurgency operations. These exercises helped prepare Soldiers to conduct operations in direct support of ongoing operations or assisted the local government in establishing their own self-sustaining capabilities. The FSTE is a departure from this mindset and combines offensive, defensive and stability operations against a modern enemy threat and uses more traditional Army methods. This exercise also has the distinction of being the first ever to utilize an opposing force largely made up of coalition partners. Soldiers from Slovakia were added to the 1-4 Infantry to serve as the enemy in this scenario.

More than 100 Officers and Noncommissioned Officers from 2CR went through training in order to operate as the eyes and ears of the OCs during this exercise.

“We are assisting the observer controllers in enabling the 173rd to train in preparation for their rotation to Afghanistan,” said Sgt. Howard Amaya of 4th Squadron.

Though he and his colleagues are there to help evaluate and teach the unit they are observing, Amaya admits that he has learned a lot from the experience.

“I have been learning how to observe and evaluate training the way it should be properly conducted,” he said. Before starting the exercise each augmentee went through training to familiarize them with their duties.

“We were given a class that basically outlined the duties of an OC and what right looks like,” said Staff Sgt. Tobias Henry of 2nd Squadron, 2CR. “During the class we were told not only what the Soldiers could and could not do but also what the opposing forces were allowed to do.

During the force on force exercise each Dragoon follows a unit as they plan and execute various missions they may encounter downrange. Each augmentee observes and notes the actions of the Soldiers as it pertains to doctrine. Each observer pays attention to various traits exhibited by the unit and adjudicates their actions in terms of posture as well as tactical proficiency. The observers then recommend various actions the unit should continue to do and things they could do to improve in other areas.

“It’s a learning process for everyone involved,” Amaya said. “As long as we steer them in the right direction everybody wins.”



Soldiers from 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team run through a STX lanes for their Full Spectrum Training Event held at Hohenfels and Grafenwohr Training Areas Germany. Augmentees from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment acted as observers for events such as these US Army Europe Public Affairs photo by Richard Bumgardner.