



# STORY RELEASE



**2d Cavalry Regiment Public Affairs Office Vilseck, Germany**

PHONE: DSN: 476-5080 COMMERCIAL (49) 09662-83-5080 [www.2CR.army.mil](http://www.2CR.army.mil)

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## **Multinational partners assist 2CR Troops, SFAATs to prepare for OEF rotation**

Story by: Spc. Joshua Edwards  
2nd Cavalry Regiment Public Affairs

**ROSE BARRACKS, Germany** – There are many ways for troops to prepare for deployments to combat zones and numerous training and safety standards have to be implemented to ensure overall success of the mission within the areas of operations.

The 2nd Cavalry Regiment conducted a Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE) March 3-22 at Hohenfels, Germany in preparation for its upcoming deployment where they will advise and assist Afghan National Security Forces as they prepare to assume responsibility of their own security at the end of 2014.

It has been more than five months since 2 CR's completion of the Decisive Action Training Environment rotation designed to promote interoperability between U.S. and multinational forces on today's modern battlefield. The training was well received by the troops and gave the Regiment a chance to train throughout the maneuver rights area, which includes the Hohenfels and Grafenwoehr Training Areas and the local communities.

Security Force Advisory Assistance Teams (SFAATs) have been added to the organization and have become a key element of the upcoming deployment. The teams will be responsible for advising and assisting ANSF during their operations and help them to become independent in their daily security operations. The overall goal is to allow ANSF to maintain security of their country without the help of U.S. Forces.

“What we are really trying to do is enable the ANSF to get to a level where they can take over responsibility for security of their local area, either at the independent level or, at the level where they are independent with advisors,” said Lt. Col. Jesus D. Garcia, Field Artillery Squadron SFAAT team leader. “What they need from us is mentorship in terms of having better command and control, how to maximize the use of their enablers and how to promote the legitimacy of their organizations.”

The Mission Readiness Exercise was one of final trainings in preparing the Regiment's troops for its future mission in Afghanistan. More than three weeks of convoys, foot patrols, multinational partner training, close combat air and squad trainings, land reconnaissance, key leader engagements, SFAAT training, live fire exercises, observer-controller mentorship and crew drills provided important combat education that is sure to effectively help produce an overall effective mission completion during the Regiment's upcoming rotation.

There are Troops in the Regiment who have never deployed before and who used the exercise as an opportunity to learn as much as possible about what they will be doing in support of OEF.

"The troops have been very receptive," said Command Sgt. Maj. Malcolm D. Parrish, senior enlisted advisor for the Regiment. "We have a lot of new soldiers in the unit who have never deployed, so they are eager and they are absolutely listening to what's being told to them. They are paying attention and trying to learn the right things the first time."

The training event was a chance for the new SFAAT members to get a feel for each other and become effective as a team. Continuing to improve the relationship with partner security forces is essential and the teams will be able to effectively execute that.

"The first thing they had to do was learn each other in order to form the team amongst themselves and that happened within the first week of us arriving down here in the Hohenfels Training Area," said Parrish. "What they physically do with the ANSF is very important, its something they have had the opportunity to practice since we have been down here and that relationship is what they will build on and make them successful for the deployment."

The Regiment was provided with an understanding of what an SFAAT truly is because of the three-week exercise. Although the concept was unfamiliar at first, the training provided important knowledge necessary to execute the future mission.

"We really didn't have a true understanding of how a security force assistance brigade would work before we got here," said Col. D.A. Sims, commander of 2 CR. "The chance to execute operations as an SFAAT was monumental. So we leave here with a real understanding of how to do that. I think the SFAATs we trained here are very ready."

Multinational troops from more than 15 nations trained with the Regiment during the exercise and played the role of ANSF. Training with troops from other countries provides for a type of training that can facilitate in breaking down barriers of communication that exists between Troops and the population in an area, in which, they are unfamiliar. In another instance, foreign troops get to see how 2 CR trains for the upcoming mission.

"Anytime that you can involve a multinational partner in any type of training is an absolutely positive thing," said Parrish. "They give us the opportunity, specifically the new soldiers, to tell someone how they are going to have to communicate with someone that doesn't speak their language. They, being our multinational partners, get to see the training we are doing because they might have to do it in the future as well."