



SPARTAN SENTINEL

TASK FORCE SPARTAN | May 2019 | Volume 2, Issue 6

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US, Qatar conduct live-fire
artillery exercise

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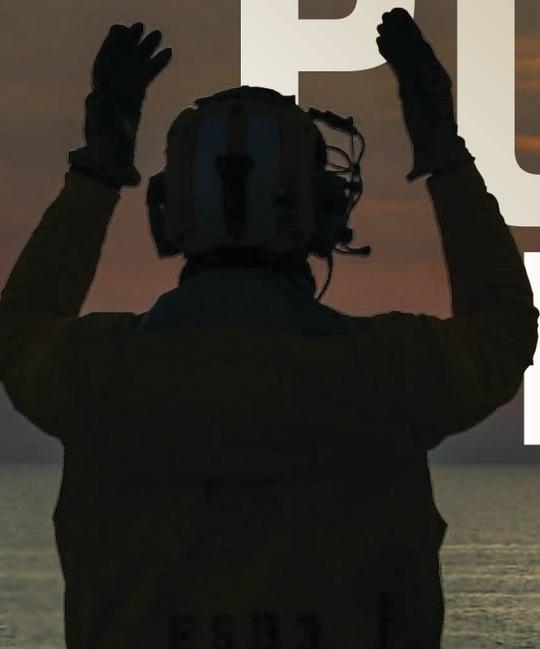
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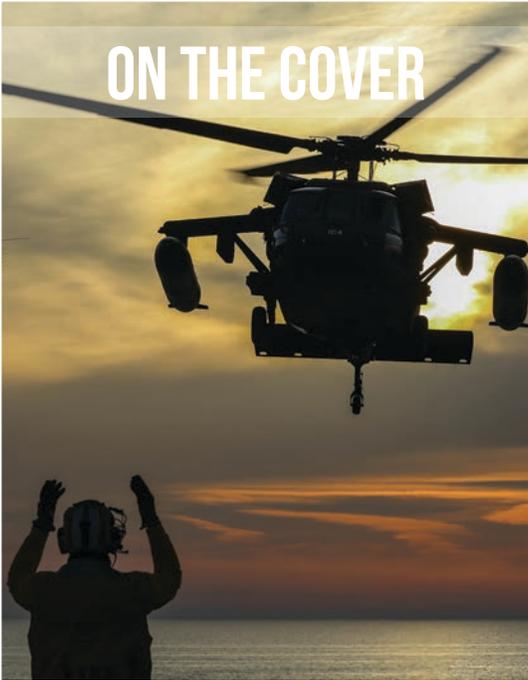
UNMATCHED

POWER PROJECTION



US Army aviation assets maintain air support of
Operations Spartan Shield and Inherent Resolve.

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A U.S. Navy Sailor directs a U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, assigned to the Kansas National Guard's 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment (1-108th AHB), from a U.S. Navy ship in the Arabian Gulf, March 29, 2019. The 1-108th AHB was deployed to the Middle East to complete aviation missions in support of Operations Spartan Shield and Inherent Resolve. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Emily Finn with illustration by 1st Lt. Eric Jungels)

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Task Force Spartan is a unique, multi-component organization, made up of active Army and National Guard units, rounded out by U.S. Army Reserve support units.

Through Operation Spartan Shield (OSS), Task Force Spartan maintains a U.S. military posture in Southwest Asia sufficient to strengthen our defense relationships and build partner capacity.

Units supporting OSS provide capabilities such as aviation, logistics, force protection and information management, and facilitate theater security cooperation activities such as key leader engagements, joint exercises, conferences, symposia and humanitarian assistance/disaster response planning.

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@TFSpartan  

TASK FORCE SPARTAN

Commanding General

Maj. Gen. Benjamin Corell

Command Sergeant Major

Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Hjelmstad

Major Units

- 34th Red Bull Infantry Division
- 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 4th ID
- 18th Field Artillery Brigade
- 225th Engineer Brigade
- 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade
- 8th Battalion, 229th Aviation Regiment
- 242nd Ordnance Battalion
- 158th Military Engagement Team

SPARTAN SENTINEL

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- Sgt. 1st Class Ben Houtkooper
- Sgt. Bill Boecker
- Sgt. Linsey Williams
- Spc. Samantha Petersen



34TH RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION

@TheRedBulls   
@TheRedBulls34id 



LEADERSHIP

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF U.S. ARMY CENTRAL

To all the members of Task Force Spartan, thanks for your service and for the great job you are doing for your country.

Today I have the privilege of being entrusted to command this great theater army, but I'm really no different than any of you; I've just served longer and with phenomenal leaders and Soldiers who helped me get to where I am today.

There is very little that is predictable about our theater other than it is predictably volatile. But the nature of war hasn't changed, and the nature of effective leadership hasn't changed.

Leadership is the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction and motivation to accomplish the mission and improve the organization. Good leadership is the heart of a good organization. Recently the Army has had a small crisis about Family housing. Fixing that problem is a leadership issue. The Department of Defense just released a report on sexual harassment and assault in the military. Fixing that is also a leadership issue.

In ADP 6-22 "Leadership," Chief of Staff of the Army General Ray Odierno lays out his expectations for leaders:

- Have a vision and lead change

- Be your formation's moral and ethical compass
- Learn, think, adapt
- Balance risk and opportunity to retain the initiative
- Build agile, effective, high-performing teams
- Empower subordinates and underwrite risk
- Develop bold, adaptive and broadened leaders
- Communicate—up, down, and laterally; tell the whole story

If you live up to those expectations you will be a good leader.

From my 30 years of service and especially my two tours leading Soldiers in combat, I have also learned the importance of trust in leadership. And trust is a two-way street. Leaders have to trust subordinates, especially in complex organizations such as U.S. Army Central and Task Force Spartan. Likewise, Soldiers will freely follow those they trust.

An old military quote talks about knowing yourself, and knowing your enemy. Good leaders know themselves and they know the extent of and limits to what they can and cannot do in the time available. An 80 percent solution delivered at the opportune time is better

than the perfect solution that never gets executed because it did not survive the decision space.

Finally, I want to reiterate that all the uniformed members of this command are just Soldiers—there is no difference between Regular, Reserve or Guard Soldiers. All I see when I look at you is a proud, ready U.S. Army Soldier serving his or her country faithfully and well. Having been in command of U.S. Army Central for two months, I have met all of the senior leaders of Task Force Spartan and they are superb.

I am proud to serve alongside all of you.

Third, Always First! 🇺🇸



Lt. Gen. Terry Ferrell

Commander
U.S. Army Central

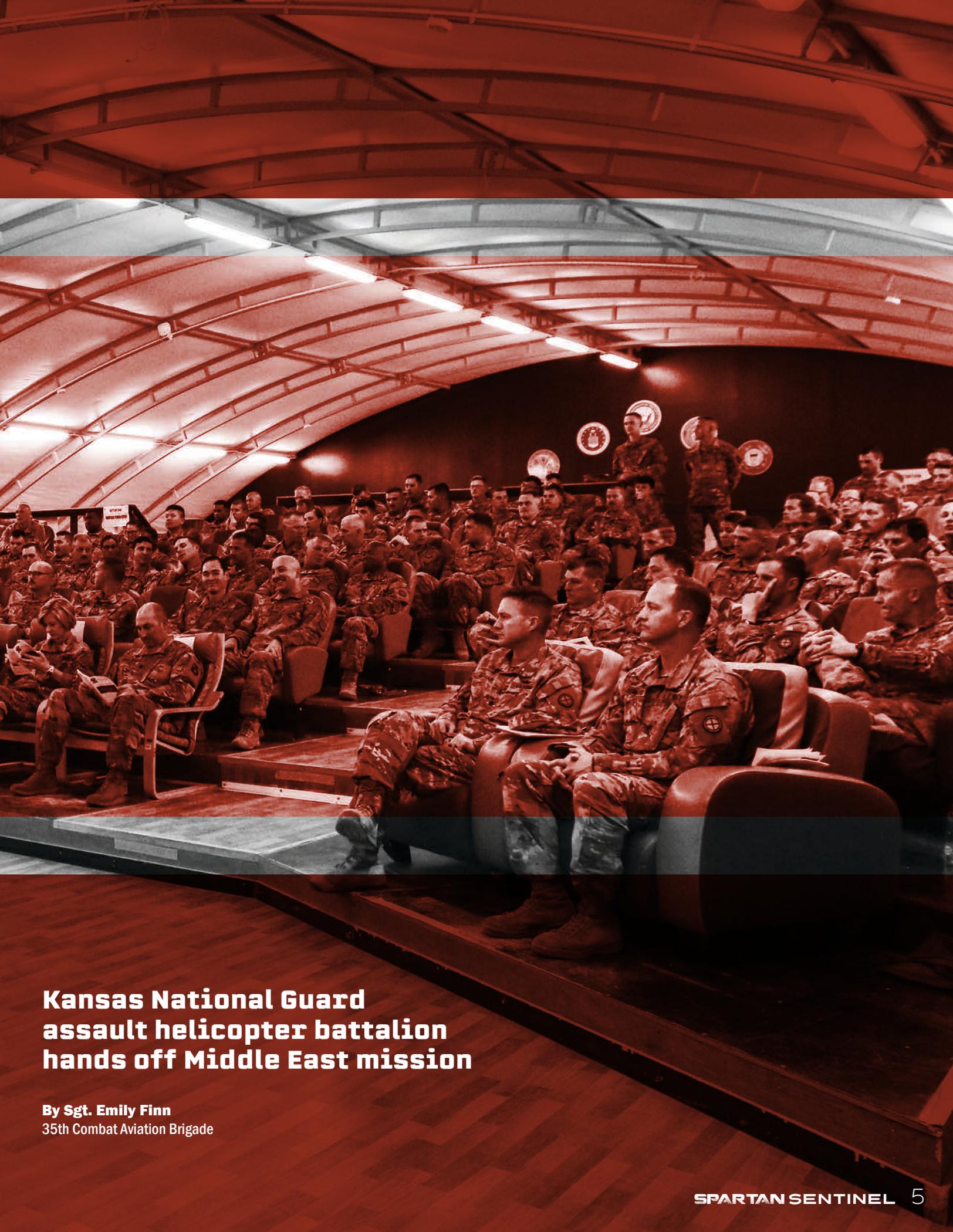




TASK FORCE SPARTAN

AVIATION PROWESS ENDURES





Kansas National Guard assault helicopter battalion hands off Middle East mission

By Sgt. Emily Finn
35th Combat Aviation Brigade



U.S. Army Lt. Col. Todd Loughney, commander of the Kansas National Guard's 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment (1-108th AHB), and U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. Darrian Campbell, encased the battalion colors signifying the completion of their nine-month deployment to the Middle East in support of Operation Spartan Shield (OSS) and Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve.

Soldiers participated in a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, April 29, 2019.

The 1-108th AHB consisted of Kansas, Texas, Minnesota and Utah Army National Guardsmen. Throughout their mobilization, they worked with joint and multi-national forces enhancing partnerships. As the sole U.S. Army aviation asset under OSS, the 1-108th AHB supported Task Force Spartan's mission to maintain stability and security in the region, according to U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Ben Corell, commander of the Minnesota National Guard's 34th Red Bull Infantry Division and Task Force Spartan: "The 1st of the 108th truly embraced this mission."

They provided support to U.S. Marine paratroops and completed deck landing qualifications with the U.S. Navy. Through MedEvac 101, an aeromedical evacuation familiarization course, the Soldiers trained many U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, and Kuwaiti military and civilian personnel in the essentials of calling in an aeromedical evacuation request. They also conducted multiple types of aerial gunnery, including a sniper shoot with U.S. Army snipers.

A MULTIFACETED AND GEOGRAPHICALLY DISPERSED AVIATION MISSION



“I would like to express my gratitude, on behalf of the command team, to all the Soldiers and leaders of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation, and Task Force Javelin for a job well done,” said Loughney. “You have accomplished a multifaceted and geographically dispersed aviation mission in a challenging environment.”

The 1-108th AHB operated in nine different locations across the Middle East. During their rotation, they flew nearly 8,000 hours using both rotary and fixed-wing aircrafts. They completed more than 100 aeromedical evacuations. They also facilitated the movement of more than 5,000 personnel, approximately 700 distinguished guests and nearly 1 million pounds of cargo.

Corell congratulated Loughney and Campbell on the accomplishments made throughout the deployment.

“Your battalion can leave this theater knowing you’ve made a difference in the lives of U.S. military, and in the lives of our regional partners’ formations,” said Corell.

Task Force Spartan’s aviation capabilities persist, as the 1-108th AHB transferred authority of the mission to the 8th Battalion, 229th Aviation Regiment, a U.S. Army Reserve aviation command headquartered in Fort Knox, Kentucky, and led by Commander Lt. Col. Clinton Williams and Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony Gray. 



(Pages 4 and 5) U.S. Army Soldiers fill the USO theater at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, in preparation for a transfer of authority ceremony Apr. 29, 2019. The Kansas National Guard’s 1st. Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment, provided aviation support to the Missouri National Guard’s 35th Combat Aviation Brigade and its subordinate units during their 2018-2019 deployment to the Middle East, supporting Operations Inherent Resolve and Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Emily Finn)

(Opposite page and right) Sniper teams of the Kansas National Guard’s 2nd Combined Arms Battalion 137th Infantry Regiment, 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, take to the air as part of an aerial sniper training exercise at Camp Buehring, Kuwait on Jan. 29, 2019. The training familiarized snipers with the effects of bullet drop when firing from different altitudes. The Soldiers fired at targets while their aerial platform moved through the air at various speeds. As flight crews from the 1-108th AHB, provided lift capability for the training, sniper teams used verbal and non-verbal communication techniques to make on-the-spot firing adjustments. (U.S. Army National Guard photos by Sgt. Bill Boecker)

(Above) U.S. Army aviation Soldiers of the Kansas National Guard’s 1-108th AHB, high five between iterations during training at the Udairi Landing Zone, Camp Buehring, Kuwait, Feb. 9, 2019. The crew members conducted training ahead of providing aviation support for an air assault course. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Emily Finn)



SPARTAN SNAPSHOTS



U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to the Kansas National Guard's 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment, conduct deck landing qualifications with U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters aboard a U.S. Navy ship in the Arabian Gulf, March 29, 2019. The 1-108th AHB deployed to the Middle East to complete aviation missions in support of Operations Spartan Shield and Inherent Resolve. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Emily Finn)



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DECK LANDING BY DAY

SPARTAN SNAPSHOTS



U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to the Kansas National Guard's 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation Regiment, conduct night deck landing qualifications aboard a U.S. Navy ship in the Arabian Gulf, March 29, 2019. The UH-60 Black Hawk is a four-bladed, twin-engine, medium-lift utility helicopter. The versatile aircraft can carry 11 troops with equipment and carry thousands of pounds of cargo externally by sling. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Emily Finn)



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DECK LANDING BY NIGHT



Army Sgt. Daniel Tanco, a human resources specialist assigned to U.S. Army Central, participates in tryouts to compete for the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFPB) at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Soldiers of Task Force Spartan took part in a series of challenging events in April 2019 in hopes of earning the right to wear the GAFPB, a decoration of the Bundeswehr, the unified armed forces of Germany. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. Christopher Lindborg)



SPARTAN
SNAPSHOTS





A U.S. High-Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), left, and Qatari Artillery Saturation Rocket System (ASTROS) prepare for a bilateral live-fire exercise at Umm Hawta, Qatar, April 3, 2019. Members of the North Carolina National Guard's B Battery, 5th Battalion, 113th Field Artillery, loaded their HIMARS onto a Qatari C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft in Kuwait. From there, the C-17 flew to Qatar, where the U.S. rocket system was unloaded and transported to Umm Hawta for the bilateral live-fire exercise during Al-Adheed 2019. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Linsey Williams with illustration, including sharpness and a colored vignette, by 1st Lt. Eric Jungels)





SPARTAN
SNAPSHOTS 

HIGHLY MOBILES



ROCKETRY HIGHLY LETHAL

US Army deploys rocket system via Qatari aircraft for live-fire exercise

By 1st Lt. Eric Jungels
34th Red Bull Infantry Division

AL UDEID AIR BASE, Qatar – U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to the 18th Field Artillery Brigade trained on rocket systems during live-fire exercises with the Qatar Armed Forces in early April at the Al Qalail range in Umm Hawta, Qatar.

The live-fire exercises were one component of Al-Adheed – a multilateral exercise led by the Qatar Emiri Land Force. The overall exercise included forces from Qatar, Turkey, Mongolia and the U.S., who conducted maneuver and live-fire exercises and subject matter expert exchanges.





(Left and above) Members of the U.S. and Qatar armed forces move rocket system into place for the nighttime portion of the bilateral live-fire training event. U.S. forces employ the High-Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) and Qatari forces utilize the Artillery Saturation Rocket System (ASTROS); (Opposite page) Qatari ASTROS rockets take flight during the nighttime portion of the bilateral live-fire exercise during Al-Adheed 2019. (U.S. Army National Guard photos by Sgt. Linsey Williams)



During the rocket training, U.S. field artillery Soliders employed the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), while the Qatar Emiri Land Force fired the Artillery Saturation Rocket System (ASTROS) II – a self-propelled multiple rocket launcher.

As part of Al-Adheed, and for the first-time ever, a U.S. light HIMARS package was loaded onto and traveled via a Qatari C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft to the State of Qatar where the exercise took place.

“The multilateral exercise is an excellent training opportunity to test and demonstrate the ability to deploy and maneuver strategic weapons systems through a collaborative effort with our partner nation of Qatar,” said U.S. Army Brig. Gen. Michael Wickman, deputy commanding general for the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division and Task Force Spartan.

U.S. military objectives included coordinating a field artillery raid and conducting deployment activities with regional partner nation of Qatar. Task Force Spartan, the lead element for

the U.S. Army’s training activities in the region, successfully executed a live-fire exercise with multinational partners and encouraged all partners to enhance interoperability and gain knowledge in fires synchronization.

“The U.S. and Qatar have many shared interests,” Wickman said. “Exercises like this improve the combined capability of the U.S. military and the Qatar forces, and enable military-to-military engagements intended to expand levels of cooperation and interoperability, enhance mutual capabilities, and promote long-term regional stability. It is critical that the U.S. stands side-by-side with our partners in the Middle East to maintain tactical superiority and increase lethality against future threats.”

Approximately 50 personnel from the U.S. military participated in Al-Adheed. Supporting units included U.S. Army Central (Coalition Forces Land Component Command), U.S. Air Force Central, Task Force Spartan, 242nd Ordnance Battalion (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) and the 18th Field Artillery Brigade. 🇺🇸

IT IS CRITICAL THAT THE U.S. STANDS SIDE-BY-SIDE WITH OUR PARTNERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST TO MAINTAIN TACTICAL SUPERIORITY AND INCREASE LETHALITY AGAINST FUTURE THREATS.



BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL WICKMAN
DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL
TASK FORCE SPARTAN



BEARDS & FATIGUES

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

THE INJUNCTION

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE
TASK FORCE SPARTAN JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL

By Capt. Alan Kennedy-Shaffer
Task Force Spartan

On Jan. 29, 2019, the commanding general of the Task Force Spartan approved a Muslim Soldier's request for a religious accommodation to wear a beard in accordance with his Islamic faith, the first religious accommodation request granted on this deployment under the current 34th Red Bull Infantry Division leadership. Four more requests are pending, including a request by a Muslim Soldier to wear a beard and kufi, a request by a Jewish Soldier to wear a beard, and two requests from Norse Pagan Soldiers to wear beards. Word is spreading that the Army's process for religious accommodations has improved. As a result, Soldiers are increasingly growing faith-based facial hair.

The growing number of religious accommodations are consistent with Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17 and other regulations, which place a high value on military service

members' rights to observe the tenets of their respective religions (or no religion at all), and protects the civil liberties of military personnel and the public, consistent with military requirements. Requests are to be resolved in a timely manner and approved when they do not adversely affect mission accomplishment, including readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, or other military requirements. Whereas requests previously required approval by Secretary of the Army or designee, our commanding general, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Corell, may now approve requests from Soldiers in Task Force Spartan.

Religious accommodations for Soldiers of varied faiths are not without precedent. In November 2018, the Air Force approved an Airman's request to wear a beard, per his Islamic faith. On May 2, 2018, the 28th Infantry Division received a Nazarite Soldier's request to wear a beard, though the request was

ultimately withdrawn. Also in 2018, the 795th Military Police Battalion approved a Norse Pagan Soldier's request to wear a beard. In 2017, the Army approved a 34th Infantry Regiment trainee's request to wear a turban and beard pursuant to Sikh beliefs. In 2009, the Army approved two similar requests from medical officers to not cut their hair and beards pursuant to Sikh beliefs.

How does a Soldier request a religious accommodation to wear a beard, a hijab, headscarf, kufi or turban with uncut hair? The Soldier submits a written request. The chaplain interviews the Soldier to determine if the request stems from a sincerely held religious belief. Commanders weigh in; and the request is legally reviewed. Army offices in Washington are consulted. Finally, it goes to the commanding general. If approved, accommodation is permanently filed. Questions? Ask a judge advocate — there's no need to lose your religion. 🇺🇸

References: AD 2018-19, 8 November 2018; AD 2016-34, 6 October 2016; ALARACT 002/2019, 11 January 2019; Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17; AR 670-1, 25 May 2017; AR 600-20, 6 November 2014; Simkins, J.D. "Airman becomes the first Muslim to be granted service's beard waiver for observing religion." Navy Times, 20 November 2018, <https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-air-force/2018/11/20/muslim-airman-granted-air-forces-first-beard-waiver/>; Myers, M. "A soldier just got authorization to wear a beard because of his Norse pagan faith." Army Times, 25 April 2018, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2018/04/25/this-soldier-just-got-authorization-to-wear-a-beard-because-of-his-norse-pagan-faith/>; Myers, M. "New Army policy OKs soldiers to wear hijabs, turbans and religious beards." Army Times, 05 January 2017, <https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2017/01/05/new-army-policy-oks-soldiers-to-wear-hijabs-turbans-and-religious-beards/>; and Elliot, S. "Sikh Soldiers allowed to serve, retain their articles of faith." U.S. Army, 25 March 2010, https://www.army.mil/article/36339/sikh_soldiers_allowed_to_serve_retain_their_articles_of_faith.



AVOIDING ATTACK

SIMPLE STEPS TO PROTECT YOUR PERSONAL DEVICES AND INFORMATION FROM HACKERS AND MALWARE

By Staff Sgt. Daniel Malecha
34th Red Bull Infantry Division

THE COMMUNIQUE TASK FORCE SPARTAN CYBERSECURITY UPDATE

As we integrate more technology into our everyday lives, we open ourselves up to more risk when it comes to the information stored on our mobile devices and personal computers. We continue to put more and more personal information online and in our personal devices, putting it at risk for loss, theft or ransom. There are several basic steps that everyone should take to protect their information and their devices from malicious attackers.

It starts with authentication credentials and password complexity. Hackers have easy access to databases with millions of commonly used passwords. With those databases and automated tools, hackers can help themselves to any accounts and information that are protected with only weak passwords. That is why it has become common for websites to enforce complex passwords. Users can also install password manager software and browsers additions, which assist them to generate and store strong, unique passwords for each site, protected by a single master password. Many websites also allow you to use multifactor authentication to further protect your account. One example is Google Authenticator, an app you can install on your mobile device.

Moving away from the internet to your personal computer, there are some basic steps you should take to protect yourself from infection. It is critically important that you keep your operating system (OS) up to date by allowing Windows (or another OS) to automatically check for and install updates on a regular basis. At minimum, built-in tools such as Windows Firewall and Windows Defender should be activated for your protection. Third-party software such as McAfee or Norton are better options. As a Soldier, the Army allows you to download

McAfee on one device at no cost to you (see link at the bottom of this article).

You should also consider using a virtual private network (VPN) when connecting to public Wi-Fi. There are many attacks that can happen through the use of open public Wi-Fi. A VPN provides an additional layer of security to protect your credentials and other traffic from interception.

Another simple way to protect yourself is by having two accounts on your computer. You should have one administrator account that you only use to install software and to make changes to your OS. Then, create another account, without administrator privileges, to use on an everyday basis (to view email, surf the web, etc.). Limiting the privileges of this account helps protect you from hackers by limiting the damage they can do if they compromise the account while you're online.

Lastly, let's round this off with your mobile devices. Nothing is impervious to malware. You should keep your mobile devices up to date with software updates and install antivirus software on it, no different from your personal computer. Some providers offer mobile antivirus to their subscribers at no cost. You should also be looking at the permissions requested by the apps that you install. Just because an app is in the app store that does not mean it is safe to install; just because the app asks for certain permissions that does not mean it needs all of them to function.

Obtain free antivirus software here: <https://www.disa.mil/Cybersecurity/Network-Defense/Antivirus/Home-Use> 

SPARTAN NOTES

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OPSEC OPERATIONS SECURITY

TASK FORCE SPARTAN

REPORTING THREATS

If something seems suspicious, report it!

Report suspicious behavior if you experience any of these key indicators:

- Observe someone taking pictures of facilities/areas that prohibit photography.
- Witness someone executing a deliberate security violation.
- An individual asks you probing questions regarding troop movements, mission activities and events, personal information, etc.
- Email phishing attempts.
- Harassment or threats from local people.

Soldiers should contact their local counterintelligence office or OPSEC officer. **If you have any OPSEC questions or concerns, email Capt. Jodine Pfaff, Task Force Spartan OPSEC Program Manager, at jodine.l.pfaff.mil@mail.mil.** 

NEWS BRIEF

US, Jordan Armed Forces plan for Decisive Spear exercise

By Capt. Natasha Fultz-Castro
18th Field Artillery Brigade

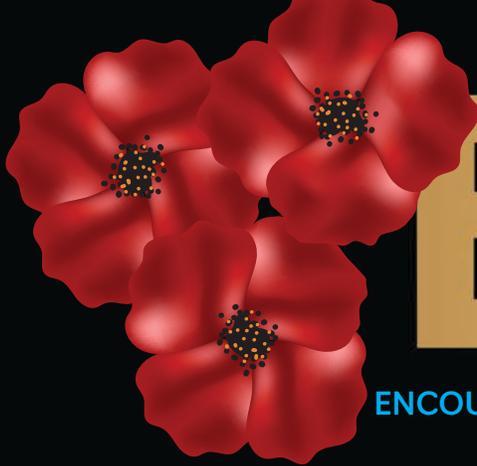
Soldiers from 18th Field Artillery Brigade, Task Force Spartan, and U.S. Army Central Command participated in a planning conference with the Jordan Armed Forces (JAF) April 2-4, 2019, at the JAF field artillery brigade headquarters to begin preparations for Decisive Spear.

Decisive Spear will be Jordan's first-ever field artillery-focused simulations exercise. Planning for the exercise focused on creating training objectives and designing an in-depth scenario to test brigade-level staff functions. It is set to include coordinating fires assets, conducting airspace clearance, and synchronizing intelligence and fires during operations.

Decisive Spear will also provide demanding and realistic scenarios by adding field artillery brigade staff assets, to include legal, air force joint tactical controllers, civil and military considerations, and public affairs representatives.

The Royal Jordanian Artillery Corps facilitated the conference, and the exercise will allow JAF and U.S. forces to plan, prepare, execute and assess together as they move toward future joint operations and live-fire exercises.





E4I

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR INFLUENCERS



By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Buddy Winn
34th Red Bull Infantry Division

Ancient Israel had won numerous battles over the Philistines — King Saul, his son Jonathan and their friend David were all top-notch commanders. Any one of them could lead the army of Israel to victory. Granted, Saul's judgement had been slipping ever since he'd started suspecting that David was a threat to his throne. But his paranoia shouldn't have caused him to lose — even if he did think that David was fighting against him. David's battle buddy, Jonathan, had fallen in battle. A truer friend could not be found. Now he was gone. How the mighty have fallen!

After the tears, the only thing to do is remember. When the war is over and all the bodies are buried, remembering continues. And somehow, the memories give life, as if remembrance is a form of resurrection.

Memory brings life. If you've been to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Arlington, Virginia, you know that it's a place of holy remembrance. The slabs of black granite, known as "The Wall," bear the names of Soldiers declared dead or missing in action in connection with the Vietnam War. The list of names goes on and on, each name belonging to some mother's child, some person's friend.

If you stand at the wall, seeing your own face reflected behind those names, you feel the lives they gave. It doesn't matter if

you never knew a soul who fought in that conflict — now you know them all. And even though you can't possibly read every single name, you are aware of every single life.

Remembering makes the Soldiers a part of you. What a sacred thing it is to remember the fallen Soldier — not because all Soldiers are necessarily heroes, and not because all who give their lives die for a good cause — but because in handling the memory of God-given lives, we participate with God in the healing of the world.

Remembering the Soldiers of any war — friends and enemies alike — and calling out their names, singing their songs, or just thinking about the fact that they fought, makes it difficult to send people into battle again. The voices of the dead cry out to us for peace.

It is a sacred thing to remember the fallen, to allow their lives to place a claim upon us. We are privileged to pursue peace on their behalf.

More than 1 million U.S. military members have died in conflict. How the mighty have fallen! As we approach Memorial Day, and everyday, remember them. 🇺🇸

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E4I
ENCOURAGEMENT FOR INFLUENCERS

"If you are a leader, you should never forget that everyone needs encouragement. And everyone who receives it — young or old, successful or less-than-successful, unknown or famous — is changed by it."

– John Maxwell



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