

United States Forces -Iraq CHRONICLE

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Wounded Warriors
return to combat
zone for Proper Exit



During an Operation Proper Exit welcoming ceremony, wounded warrior, retired Sgt. 1st Class Joe James, is assisted onto the stage by Sgt. Forante McMillan. James, a Bethpage, Tenn., native, deployed four times before losing both legs in an IED attack in Sadr City in 2008. McMillan is a transmission team chief and native of Lemon Springs, N.C., with Company C, Special Troops Battalion, III Corps, USF-I. (U.S. Army photo by Lee Craker)



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U.S. trains Iraqi forces in air-to-ground intergration



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U.S. military doctors partner with Iraqi delivery room nurses



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U.S. Security Forces Squadron trains Iraqis in advance confrontation techniques

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An **Iraqi Army Aviation Command Soldier** services the feathering hinge reservoir on the tail rotor of a Mi-117 helicopter, Dec. 11, in Taji. Maintenance air advisors from the 721st Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron, are continuing to work with Iraqi maintainers to ensure the implementation of a proper checklist and regular maintenance. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Andrew Lee)

U.S. and Iraqi Air Forces partner for helicopter operations

AEAS and AAC working together

Master Sgt. Lawrence Shaw (left), 721st Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron, observes as an Iraqi Army Aviation Command Soldier services the tail rotor of a Mi-117 helicopter, Dec. 11, in Taji. Air advisors with the 721st AEAS worked with the Iraqi AAC advising and assisting them in building a safe and creditable Iraqi rotary wing force. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Andrew Lee)

TAJI, Iraq – As part of American efforts in Iraq to continue strengthening a long-term partnership, Airmen assigned to the 721st Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron, train, advise and assist the Iraqi Army Aviation Command with all helicopter operations.

“The air advisors are applying their technical skill and knowledge in a whole new way, and it’s having a significant impact on the Iraqis,” said Lt. Col. Scott Curtin, 721st AEAS commander. “We have seen great leaps forward in what the Iraqis were able to do when we got here to what they are able to do now.”

Senior Master Sgt. Maurice Moore, 721st AEAS superintendent, said the 29 air advisors assigned to the squadron mentor Iraqi pilots and maintainers on a daily basis to help them build a safe, self-sustaining rotary-wing force.

“They are going out of their way to help the Iraqis, and the Iraqis have come a long way to making things better,” said Moore. “It’s great to be a part of that.”

As the main hub for helicopter operations in Iraq, Taji is home

to more than 45 helicopters. Air advisors use those aircraft to train pilots new to this model, as well as to teach experienced pilots new skills to further their capabilities.

“For the new pilots, this is their initial qualification on [this] helicopter. We teach them the basics,” said Capt. Kate DenDekker, 721st AEAS combat air advisor. “For the older generation of Iraqi pilots, we are teaching them precision maneuvering. They are practicing things that they normally wouldn’t do and are becoming really good at it.”

The training syllabus is filled with a myriad of instructions ranging from proper emergency procedures and tactical and formation flying, to how to fly using only the helicopter’s instruments during inclement weather. The objective is for these aviators to be prepared for anything on a long-term basis.

“Our goal is for them to be able to support all their own missions in Iraq after we leave,” said Maj. Brandon Deacon, 721st AEAS director of operations. “The air advisors are doing a great job ensuring that

happens. I am really proud of all the work they have done here.”

Pre-flight planning for the Iraqi pilots and air crew is a high priority to help instill a safer, more efficient way for them to carry out their orders. In the past when these pilots received orders for a mission, they would simply head out with no pre-flight planning for contingencies and how to react to them, according to DenDekker.

“Now with the briefing skills we have taught them, they plan ahead for a lot of things that they otherwise wouldn’t have talked about,” she said. “They brief everything, so if it actually happens while they are in the helicopter, there is no question as to what they need to do.”

A heightened sense of readiness during the training missions is very important because the air advisors have experienced real-world altercations.

“Crew coordination is an area where we focus our advising efforts,” said Curtin. “For example, our door-gunner instructors work with Iraqi trainees to best employ the defensive firing capability of the Mi-117 when

they come under attack from ground fire.”

The teaching hasn’t been a one-way road; air advisors are learning a thing or two from the Iraqis as well. DenDekker explained that she has learned something on every sortie.

“The older generation of pilots has a lot of hours in these helicopters,” she said. “I’ve flown with a lot of pilots that have flown these helicopters in a way that I have never seen before. The Iraqi pilots really know their helicopters and what the limits are.”

DenDekker said the language barrier with the younger pilots has taught her to be more specific and straightforward with her instructions.

“I have to be specific about what I mean. I can’t use euphemisms because they don’t know what they mean,” she said.

Because pilots and air crew wouldn’t be able to complete their missions without properly maintained helicopters, the 721st AEAS maintenance air advisors work with Iraqi mechanics to ensure

the pilots and air crews have safe and reliable helicopters. Thanks to the Iraqi maintainers’ extensive experience, the air advisors spend their time helping to improve their current methods.

Although civilian contractors handle the bulk of the maintenance, advisors mentor the Iraqis on a variety of tasks ranging from simple upkeep like washing the helicopter, to more technical jobs like adjusting the feathering hinge reservoir on the tail rotor.

“We have more of a hands-off role,” said Master Sgt. Laurence Shaw, 721st AEAS maintenance air advisor. “We look for ways to help them improve what they are already doing [and] help them incorporate safer, more efficient practices.”

Because the advisors operate outside of their normal comfort zones established on American soil, the mission of working side by side with their counterparts at the Iraqi base comes with its fair share of challenges.

“They have had some of these

helicopters for a long time,” said Shaw. “We are trying to overcome set practices, and get them to do things a little bit different than they are use to. It can be a bit difficult at times.”

American Airmen have proven themselves up to the challenge.

“These are some of the best Airmen I have ever worked with,” said Capt. James Kepka, 721st AEAS director of maintenance. “The Airmen here put a lot of hours in to make sure we get the Iraqis knowledgeable on the right maintenance procedures.”

Overall, the combination of operations and maintenance leads to one set goal for the advisors - to leave a lasting impression in Iraq.

“On a day-to-day basis you don’t think about it, but we know the impact will be huge,” said Curtin. “The younger pilots and enlisted personnel will affect the way helicopters are used in Iraq for generations to come. The air advisory role will continue to grow. This is something we can do to build enduring relationships in this region and around the world.”

Capt. Kate Dendekker, 721st Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron, gives instructions to two Iraqi Army Aviation Command pilots during a pre-flight mission brief, Dec. 12, in Taji. Air advisors from the 721st AEAS, instruct and advise AAC pilots to help build a safe and creditable Iraqi rotary wing force. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Andrew Lee)

Six wounded warriors returning to Iraq for the first time since they were injured, received a hero's welcome during a ceremony at Al Faw Palace on Camp Victory, Dec. 6.

About 300 United States Forces-Iraq service members and leaders greeted the combat veterans and their military mentor with cheers and applause as they entered the palace rotunda to begin their trip back in country.

This event was part of Operation Proper Exit, which provides service members who were injured during their deployment in Iraq the opportunity to return to and see the changes that have occurred because of their service and sacrifice and to continue their healing process.

OPERATION PROPER EXIT

*Wounded Warriors
return to combat zone
to find closure*

Story by Staff Sgt. Edward Daileg
Photos by Lee Craker
USF-I Public Affairs



The last time retired Spc. Derek Bradshaw was in Iraq, the final thing he remembered was being tossed around inside a humvee as it rolled over.

After the traumatic incident, Bradshaw wasn't aware of anything else that happened until he woke up at Walter Reed Medical Center.

Bradshaw shares this similar story with five other Soldiers who returned to Iraq, Dec. 6, to seek closure and see for themselves how their efforts have changed this country.

The six service members who were previously injured in Iraq, returned for Operation Proper Exit. OPE was created in 2009 which has helped 49 service members deal with their injuries by affording them the opportunity to return to Iraq. During their time in Iraq, they are able to travel throughout the country to see the changes that have occurred because of the sacrifice of service

members like themselves.

Rick Kell, executive director of the Troops First Foundation and a member of the group, escorts the wounded warriors back to Iraq. Co-founder of the program, David Feherty, said they created the program with the goal of helping the service members get a sense of closure and a chance to experience the positive changes that are happening in Iraq today.

"We hope to provide the opportunity for them to see that their sacrifices have great meaning. They have equity in this country and it's not being wasted," Kell said.

"The wounded warriors come out here to look for something that fills their need and when they find it, they move on and become better emotionally," he said.

During this OPE visit, the eight overall, the wounded warriors visited the three United States division

headquarters and a few of the outlying bases.

Soldiers like Bradshaw and Spc. Carlos Ortiz had the opportunity to visit the place they were injured. In Forward Operating Base Gains Mill at U.S. Division - North, both Soldiers met with their comrades and saw the majority of that area of responsibility had been turned over to the Iraqi Army.

"This place is a lot smaller than before. I am very happy to see that they are able to train the Iraqi Army to take over the most of the area," said Bradshaw. "It's safer for the Soldiers because they don't go out as much as we used to before."

"Coming back out here to put my boots on the ground at my old FOB helped me clear my mind, he said. I was able to see the progress that my fellow Soldiers achieved through our sacrifices."

The service members also had the

The wounded warriors of Operation Proper Exit (Master Sgt. Tony Carpenter, serving as military mentor to the group; Spc. Carlos Ortiz, Spc. Derek Bradshaw, Marine Cpl. Michael Campbell, Air Force Staff Sgt. George Campbell, Sgt. 1st Class Joe James and Sgt. Alexander Reyes) stand before about 300 cheering service members in the rotunda of Camp Victory's Al Faw Palace, Dec. 6. All are medically retired. They will visit different parts of Iraq during their week-long visit to see the progress made in the wake of the service and sacrifice of service members like themselves.

opportunity to visit the Joint Base Balad Hospital. The hospital is where all of them were treated before they were flown out of Iraq for further medical treatment.

"When I came through here before, I could only remember so much at that time," said retired Sgt. Alexander Reyes. "Today, I was able to see the people who helped save my life and thank them for what they do."

Although not all of them had the chance to step foot on the area they last saw, this tour gave a sense of clarity and closure to them. Whether it's just a fly over or an actual stop, all the service members did one thing they never had a chance to do on their last deployment; leave Iraq on their own terms.

Sgt. Alexander Reyes (right) was surprised by his brother Spc. Euri Reyes, who traveled from Balad to Camp Victory to surprise his wounded warrior sibling. Sgt. Reyes, and the rest of his group, were back in Iraq seeking a sense of closure and a proper exit.



U.S. troops lend firepower to Iraqi Army

Story and photo by
Spc. Roland Hale
eCAB Public Affairs



MOSUL, Iraq – U.S. Army scout helicopters participated in an exercise near Mosul, Iraq, Dec. 6, designed to train Iraqi ground troops on the basics of coordinating attacks from an aircraft.

The helicopters used rockets and machine guns to neutralize mock targets as Iraqi Soldiers directed the air support. The pilots in turn guided the Iraqi troops as they engaged the same targets with mortars and other weapons.

The exercise follows a month of mortar training between U.S. and Iraqi ground troops. Soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division provided the training and also participated in the exercise.

The helicopters are property of the 1st Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, a Kiowa Warrior helicopter squadron from Fort Riley, Kan.

The squadron is part of the Enhanced Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. As the Army's only aviation brigade in country, the unit is spread across the country and has conducted several similar training events since deploying to Iraq this March.

The exercise focused on teaching the Iraqi forces the basics of what the Army calls air-to-ground integration, said Capt. Kurt Hunt, one of the pilots who participated in the exercise.

The Army's air-to-ground integration tactics revolve around the cooperation of ground and air forces. The training taught the Iraqis how to designate targets for the helicopters to engage.

Hunt and other pilots fired more than 30 rockets and 800 rounds of .50 caliber machine gun ammunition during the five-hour exercise, he said.

Hunt, who has now participated in three such exercises, noted improvement in the Iraqi troops.

"It was nice to hear a confident voice giving us exact details on a target," he said.

Lt. Col. Kenneth Chase, the squadron's commander, said that the training mission has progressed well since the reduction of forces in Iraq this summer.

"They are doing unilateral operations by themselves every day without us," he said. "At this point we're focused on maintaining a friendship."

Iraqi Soldiers watch Kiowa Warrior helicopters from the 1st Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, pass overhead during a live-fire exercise between U.S. and Iraqi ground troops earlier this year. The squadron has conducted several such training exercises, most recently with Iraqi Soldiers near Mosul, Dec. 6. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Roland Hale)

Neonatal Resuscitation: Training to breathe life into babies at risk

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas
USD-C Public Affairs



AL ANBAR, Iraq – U.S. Army medics have long been teaching life-saving skills to their Iraqi Security Force counterparts. Now these military doctors are extending their expertise into the delivery room.

During a two-day class, Soldiers with United States Division-Center, taught about 20 Iraqi nurses and midwives neonatal resuscitation techniques Nov. 28-29 at the Al Anbar Provincial Government Center, Iraq.

“Iraq has a high birth rate, but also a high infant mortality rate and this training will help,” said the lead instructor for the class, Lt. Col. Vincent Barnhart, 1st Armored Division surgeon, and a Chambersburg, Pa., native.

The Army doctors taught the Iraqi nurses basic steps of handling an infant after birth and the appropriate interventions, through lectures and hands-on practical exercises.

“Initial medical care the first few minutes after a baby is born is crucial,” said Capt. Baruch Zobrist, a physician assistant with Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center. “Statistically, nine out of every 10 babies are born healthy births, and the one percent of infants who experience problems can usually be cared for through proper ventilation.”

The medics introduced positive pressure ventilation with a bag-valve mask to the nurses who said they typically use antibiotics to treat non-responsive infants.

“The bag-valve mask is a piece of equipment they don’t normally use,” said Capt. John Pillen, physician assistant with the 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th AAB. “That was something new to them—a new skill, a new idea. They were a little bit hesitant at first to accept it, because it was new, but I think they’ve come to embrace it and are excited to take it back home to their communities and use it to improve the lives of infants.”

The attendees were provided a training kit and a

Lt. Col. Vincent Barnhart (second from right), division surgeon with 1st Armored Division, USD-C, and native of Chambersburg, Pa., demonstrates to 20 Iraqi nurses and midwives how to apply positive-pressure ventilation with a bag valve mask, during a neonatal resuscitation class. Also pictured are instructor-doctors: Capt. Baruch Zobrist (left), physician assistant with Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, USD-C, Adel Hansen (second from left), medical advisor with United States Forces - Iraq and Capt. Joseph Roarty (far right), brigade surgeon with the 4th AAB.



delivery room kit, donated by a U.S. non-government organization. The training kits include a stethoscope, bulb suction device, bag-valve mask, towels and a baby mannequin.

“They now have all the tools they need,” said Barnhart, who encouraged the nurses to teach others in their community and potentially increase the odds of saving lives.

Osama Abdulrahman, Al Anbar director of health, said the neonatal resuscitation training now serves as the nucleus for future medical training in the province.

“Depending on the outcome of this ‘train-the-trainer,’ we will establish a second workshop and invite more attendees to do this again,” he said. “These students have made me proud, and I hope this will continue.”

One of the students, a nurse of 29 years, said the neonatal class was very beneficial.

“Before this class, I needed to see a doctor when a baby stopped breathing,” she said, “but now I feel confident that I can handle any baby (experiencing birth complications) on my own.”

The self confidence and the success of the students gave a greater sense of accomplishment to Pillen.

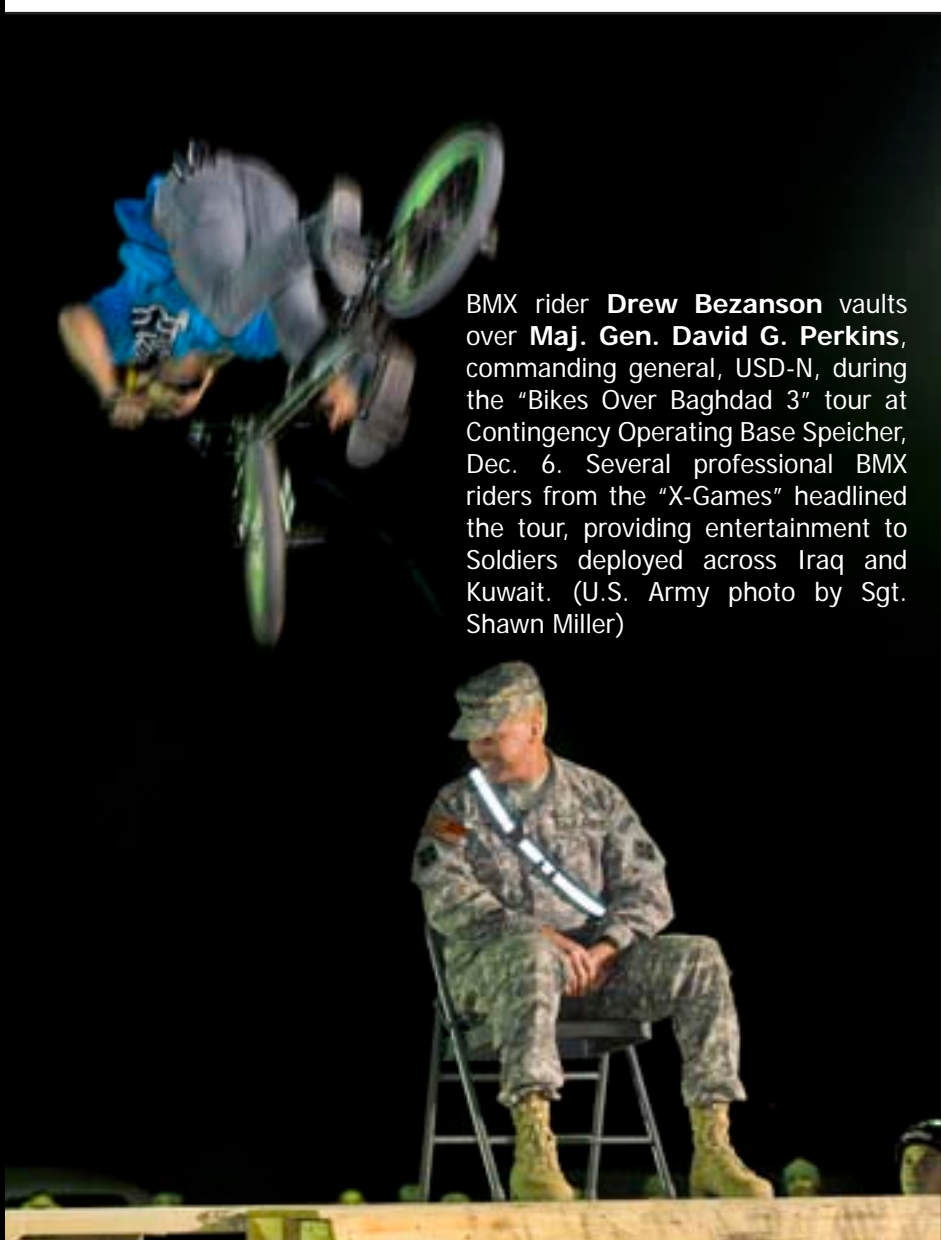
“I really appreciated working with them,” he said. “They surprised me at how much they embraced the training, how enthusiastic they were, how strong their participation was and how interested they were in the material. They were really involved and wanted to learn. I think this is one of the most significant things I’ve done here in Iraq, and I really appreciate the opportunity to take part in this training.”



Capt. John Pillen, physician assistant with 1st Battalion, 76th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, teaches resuscitation techniques to an Iraqi neonatal nurse during a class held at the Anbar Provincial Government Center, Iraq.



An **Iraqi nurse** uses a bulb suction device to provide proper positive ventilation to a simulated newborn baby during a neonatal resuscitation class taught by USD-C medical Soldiers at the Anbar Provincial Government Center, Iraq.



BMX rider **Drew Bezanson** vaults over **Maj. Gen. David G. Perkins**, commanding general, USD-N, during the "Bikes Over Baghdad 3" tour at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Dec. 6. Several professional BMX riders from the "X-Games" headlined the tour, providing entertainment to Soldiers deployed across Iraq and Kuwait. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Shawn Miller)



Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. answers questions from USD-C Soldiers, Dec. 25, during a holiday visit to Camp Liberty, Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Kimberly Johnson)



Left: **Spc. Jessica Jernigan**, administrative assistant and a Hampton, Va., native, reenlists aboard a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in flight above southern Iraq, Dec. 1. Brig. Gen. Ricky Gibbs, USD-S deputy commanding general for maneuver, administered the oath of enlistment to Jernigan. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Nathaniel Smith)



Right: **Army helicopter crew chiefs** of C Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment, stand outside an HH-60M medical evacuation helicopter as it spins up on Camp Taji, Iraq, Jan. 3. The unit is the first to receive the HH-60M, which is the Army's newest MEDEVAC helicopter. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Roland Hale)



Above: **Staff Sgt. Travis Hill**, from Freemont, N.H. and the logistics noncommissioned officer in charge, 220th Transportation Company, 394th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 103rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, helps an Iraqi child try on a new pair of shoes during a Children's Day held at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center-North, Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Dec. 17. Soldiers handed out the shoes, collected and donated from "Let Them Walk in Our Shoes," a charitable organization led by local citizens from Palmerton, Pa. and surrounding communities. The organization donated approximately 3,500 pairs of shoes and shipped the footwear to the 4th Infantry Division, to be distributed to local Iraqi communities. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Coltin Heller)



A crew chief serving in Iraq looks out of the HH-60M medical evacuation helicopter's new crew window. The sealed bubble window is used to keep a clean environment inside the helicopter when transporting patients. The HH-60M is being used for the first time here by C Company of the 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Roland Hale)

Medics from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Advise and Assist Task Force, 1st Infantry Division, supervise emergency medical technician training during a classroom session with Iraqi students at Contingency Operating Site Warrior. The students of the class, all medical professionals, represent the Iraqi Police, the Ministry of Health and the Emergency Service Units. The U.S. medics focused the week of training on controlling bleeding, applying a tourniquet and using pressure dressings on open wounds. Iraqi Police, Iraqi medical professionals are attending classroom sessions during a five-week emergency medical technician course during the month of December to become EMTs in the Kirkuk area. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Kandi Huggins)



Below: **Lt. Gen. Robert W. Cone**, USF-I deputy commanding general for operations, jokes with comedian Robin Williams, Dec. 13, before the start of a USO show at Camp Liberty. Williams, along with other celebrities including Lance Armstrong, Lewis Black and Kix Brooks made an overseas visit as part of a USO holiday tour for the troops. (U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Daniel Eddy)





Cpl. Devlin Lassiter with Company B, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, United States Division – Center, and a Hobbs, N.M., native, provides marksmanship instruction to a group of counterterrorism task force candidates from the 11th Iraqi Army Division, Dec. 13, at Old MoD, Iraq. (U.S. Army Photo by 1st Lt. Lucas McDonald)

Right: **Senior Airmen Michael Bartelheim** (front) and **Brian Rickert**, 64th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron pararescue jumpers, offload a simulated patient from an HH-60G Pavehawk helicopter at the Air Force Theater Hospital helo pad during an exercise, Dec. 2. The exercise was part of training for pararescue teams to prepare them for missions during their deployment. Bartelheim and Rickert, of Reno, Nev. and Waterford, Va., respectively, are deployed from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Stacy Fowler)



Maj. Gen. Jerry Cannon (left), USF-I deputy commanding general for detainee operations and provost marshal general, and **Pfc. Jacob Wood** of Troop B, 2nd Squadron, 116th Garrison Command, USD-C, and Sandpoint, Idaho, native, cut a cake with a sabre, Dec. 13, to celebrate the National Guard's 374th birthday inside Al Faw Palace at Camp Victory. Cannon is currently the most senior ranking National Guard service member and Wood is currently the most junior ranking National Guard service member at Victory Base Complex. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. April Davis)

Below: **Lt. Col. Matthew R. Moore** (back to camera), commander of 5th Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, USD-C, and an Ophelia, Va., native, and **Capt. Jay Droessler** (center, facing forward), commander of Troop B, 5th Sqdn., 4th Cav. Regt., and a Kieler, Wis. native, say goodbye to **Staff Brig. Gen. Faisil**, commander of 5th Federal Police Brigade, 2nd Federal Police Division, after meeting with the Radwaniyah sheiks council, in an effort to bring the 5th Bde., 2nd FP Div., and the council closer together, to strengthen security in the rural areas of southwest Baghdad. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Joseph Malins)



MAJOR IRAQI OIL REFINERY SHOWS SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Story and photo by
Sgt. Raymond Quintanilla
USD-S Public Affairs



Abdl Husain Qasim (hand raised), the South Refinery Company director general in Basra, provided a tour on company grounds to **Brig. Gen. Randal Dragon**, the deputy commanding general for support with the 1st Infantry Division and USD-S, and **Barry Kountz**, the senior oil advisor with the Basra Provincial Reconstruction Team.

BASRA, Iraq – The South Refinery Company, an Iraqi Government-owned oil company in Basra, has gained the attention of United States Division-South for its ingenuity and resourcefulness in repairing parts of the facility that had been inoperable for decades.

Brig. Gen. Randal Dragon, the deputy commanding general for support with the 1st Infantry Division and United States Division-South, and Barry Kountz, senior oil advisor with the Basra Provincial Reconstruction Team paid a visit to the SRC to see the refinery's progress firsthand.

Without any American assistance, the Iraqis repaired the refinery's industrial wastewater treatment facility, which had been out of commission for more than two decades.

Abdl Husain Qasim, the director general for the oil company, said he and the company's senior engineer started working on solutions eight

months ago to resolve the wastewater problem, which had been forgotten during years of war.

"We found that most of the pumps were not working," said Qasim. "Five pumps were idle and all the spare parts were depleted."

Qasim said that the majority of the parts needed to make the repairs were manufactured through the skillfulness of the company workers and the use of their machinery.

"We repaired all of the pumps," Qasim said. "We were successful in completely separating the oil from the water, channeled the oil back to the tanks for processing crude oil, and the wastewater is very clear, free of oil content."

"To this day, we are not encountering any problems with the wastewater treatment facility."

Kountz commended them for their resourcefulness.

"This was a total Iraqi-manned project. They took the initiative

to assess the problem and fix the problem on their own," said Kountz of the second largest oil refinery in Iraq.

The repairs made to the facility allowed the company to avoid an \$18 million fine that would have been imposed by the Ministry of Environment.

The company has also gone the extra mile the last several months by cleaning up areas outside its boundaries.

The SRC produces liquified petroleum gas (LPG), kerosene, benzene, gasoline, and has a lube oil refinery, which produces a variety of lube oil.

The company is preparing for the future with new installation plans being discussed, said Qasim.

"We currently have signed contracts and plans to install a Maysan refinery," said Qasim. "We are also studying and discussing the installation of the largest refinery in the Middle East."

IRAQI CORRECTIONS TRAINING CENTER CELEBRATES MILESTONE

Story and photo courtesy of
USF-I Detainee Operations

Iraqi corrections leadership celebrated the first graduation of a joint-instructed correctional training class during a ceremony Dec. 9 at the National Corrections Training Center on Forward Operating Base Future, Baghdad.

The graduation marked the first joint correctional training class led by instructors from the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Interior.

Previous classes were taught only by MOJ instructors however, MOI recently assigned two certified instructors to NCTC who will continue to remain part of the staff.

Members of the International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program also provided invaluable assistance and guidance throughout the course.

The 55 Iraqi corrections cadets, from both the MoI and the Ministry of Defense, completed the Jail Operators Course, which focuses on bringing a unified doctrine

to Iraqi Detainee Operations. The 50-hour course emphasized topics including human rights, ethics and professionalism, and jail security.

The cadets also learned about international law as it pertains to detainee operations.

Senior representatives from all three ministries attended the graduation ceremony to celebrate the occasion at the country's premier center for correctional excellence.

Mohammed Hammadi, the director of the NCTC, opened the ceremony, congratulated the cadets on their graduation, and talked about the significance of the joint training.

Ibrahim al-Jibori, deputy director general of the Iraqi Corrections Service said the course provides the cadets with information that will ensure the corrections officers treat the detainees with dignity and respect while also keeping Iraq safe now and in the future.

More than 4,200 cadets have graduated from various corrections courses at the NCTC. The organization's goal for 2011 is to train more than 10,000 cadets.



Maj. Gen. Jerry Cannon, USF-I deputy commanding general for detainee operations, Ibrahim al-Jibori, deputy director general, Iraqi Corrections Service, and Mohammed Hammadi, director of the National Corrections Training Center, congratulate a graduate of the Jail Operators Course during a ceremony at the NCTC on FOB Future, Baghdad, Dec. 9.



Staff Sgt. Timothy DeTerra, New Al-Muthana Air Base Transition Team member, defends himself from a baton attack by a member of the Iraqi Air Force during a training session, Dec. 23.

to pass this on to these men who are brave enough to enlist and serve their country just as I have done for mine,” he said, adding that the training will have long-term effects on the quality of SFS personnel in Iraq.

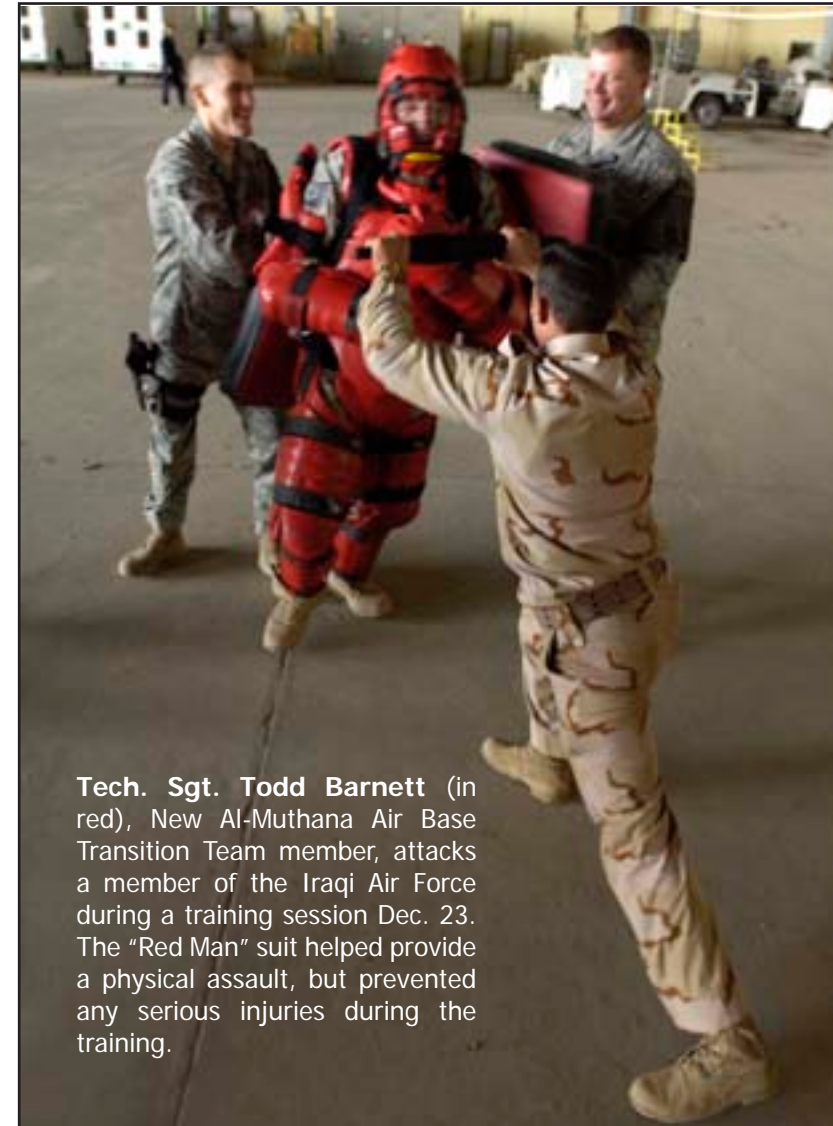
“Training in this manner allows us to leave something behind, and we know that ... we as a unit can give something to the people that we will entrust with the security and safety of this country when we are gone,” said Bronson.

Tech. Sgt. Todd Barnett is a firefighter currently deployed as an advisor for the Iraqi Air Force. He volunteered to put on a padded suit and take a beating from the Iraqis. He feels that the best part of the ITAM is being able to get away from his routine job tasks.

“In this case it literally was outside of my ‘comfort zone.’ I had a blast helping my co-worker, Master Sergeant Driver, and his crew of volunteers,” said Barnett. “It’s always a good time training with any IqAF Airman, but this training has been the funniest yet. If you’ve never experienced gearing up in the ‘Red Man’ suit... I say go for it!”

To date, about 10 Iraqi Air Force members have received certification on the use of the baton, and Driver said they plan to continue with classes in the future.

“I’ve been in-country for eight months now ... I have built a very good working relationship with the Iraqis at several bases throughout Iraq,” said Driver. “Many Iraqis want to better their country for their families so they can live in peace. That’s my motivation to train them to be able to defend themselves and their family if need be.”



Tech. Sgt. Todd Barnett (in red), New Al-Muthana Air Base Transition Team member, attacks a member of the Iraqi Air Force during a training session Dec. 23. The “Red Man” suit helped provide a physical assault, but prevented any serious injuries during the training.

U.S., Iraqi Air Force go one-on-one in advanced training scenarios

*Story and photos by
Tech. Sgt. Randy Redman
321st AEW Public Affairs*

NEW AL-MUTHANA AIR BASE, Iraq – Airmen from Security Forces Squadron recently trained a small detail of Iraqi Security Forces Airmen in order to teach several advanced techniques for one-on-one confrontations.

Master Sgt. Grady Driver, Security Forces Squadron advisor, is a member of the Iraqi Training and Advising Mission. He said their mission is to assess and advise the Iraq Air Force, then execute a plan of action to build a safe, credible and self-sustaining organization.

“This training is not intended to replace what the Iraqis currently do, but to possibly open their eyes to a different approach and give them ideas to making their job better and increase the security of the IqAF resources,” said Driver.

The training focused on the use of an expandable baton, which is designed to end an altercation quickly without excessive injury.

Using a building-block method of teaching, the

instructors began by simply explaining what the baton was. Then they gave examples of how to use the baton, and eventually lead the Iraqis into defending themselves from the all-out assault of an attacker.

Staff Sgt. Jason Bronson, currently deployed as an Expeditionary SFS member and combat arms instructor, said the training adds to the capabilities of the troops in the security forces field for the Iraqi Air Force.

“They learn skills that are not available to them - taught in a simple, uniform manner that helps them look and act professionally in their daily operations,” said Bronson.

Back in the states, Bronson stays busy with his day-to-day job as a police officer with the Fort Wayne, Ind. Police Department. He said that he has seen firsthand the benefit and advantage that training like this can give someone who is confronted by an individual with superior size and basic fighting skills.

“This definitely levels the playing field and I am proud



Staff Sgt. Timothy DeTerra (right), New Al-Muthana Air Base Transition Team member, attempts to kick a member of the Iraqi Air Force during a training session Dec. 23. This training is the first of its kind held at NAMAB, and promises to help the Iraqi Air Force build a reliable and secure force in the year ahead.

First Navy EOD Brigade Assumes Key Iraq Mission

Courtesy Story
EODGRU 1 Public Affairs



Petty Officer 1st Class Jay Smith, of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 2, Company 2-2, discusses components of the mini Remote Ordnance Neutralization System robot with Iraqi EOD Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Warhorse in August. EOD Group 1 will now serve as the first brigade-level Navy unit to command TF Troy. (U.S. Army photo by SPC Brandon D. Bolick)

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group 1 departed Naval Air Station, North Island, Dec. 28, to assume duties as the first Navy EOD brigade to command Joint Task Force Troy in Iraq.

Approximately 25 Sailors deployed for Baghdad to form the core staff of JTF Troy, which is responsible for exercising command and control of operational EOD forces throughout Iraq.

As JTF Troy, EODGRU-1 will command specialized joint counter-improvised explosive device and Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear forces, and conduct weapons technical intelligence collection and exploitation to assist Iraq in defeating IED networks.

Capt. Edward Eidson, commander of EODGRU-1, said this mission is critical to the safety and security of the people in Iraq and long-term stability for the country and the region.

"It is the job of the joint task force to protect coalition forces and assist Iraq's counter IED forces in maintaining the conditions that allowed a sovereign, stable and self-reliant Iraq," said Eidson. "We are here to advise, train and assist Iraq forces in the conduct of counter-IED operations."

"The Iraqi security and military forces have demonstrated robust EOD capabilities. We will assist them in honing their skills while we continue to provide force protection for coalition forces."

EODGRU-1 has been training and qualifying to assume this mission over the past year.

From completing the Major Combat Operation certification in April to the pre-deployment sight survey in October, EODGRU-1 has achieved major milestones throughout the certification process, said Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Haywood, operations officer for JTF Troy.

"The training and preparation doesn't stop," said Haywood. "EOD Group One will integrate with coalition forces to support the JTF Troy mission and finalize transition of the mission to Iraqi forces."

On Feb. 27, 2009, President Barack Obama directed that U.S. troops will leave Iraq by Dec. 31, 2011. Eidson said that EODGRU-1 is ready to ensure that the Iraqi security forces have the skills and training required to protect and defend their country.

"The Iraqi security and military forces are ready and are assuming responsibility for internal security," said Eidson, "We are here to build on the work already accomplished by those that came before us, who helped create the conditions for a sovereign, stable and secure Iraq. We will help the Iraqi security and military forces ensure they have the right skills to protect Iraq in the counter IED fight for years to come."

IN MEMORIAM

NAMES OF SERVICE MEMBERS WHO DIED BETWEEN DECEMBER 1 AND
DECEMBER 31, 2010 WHILE SERVING IN OPERATION NEW DAWN

**GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS: THAT A MAN LAY
DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.**

JOHN 15:13

December 8
Pfc. David D. Finch, 25

Maj. Jorge Melendez, executive officer with 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 4th Advise and Assist Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, USD-C, looks on as residents take home bags of food and blankets, Dec. 4, from the Tash Iraqi Police Station. Melendez and other members of his unit joined their Iraqi Police counterparts to take part in a humanitarian assistance mission that provided about 200 residents with much-needed items. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tanya Thomas)

