

DESERT MONTHLY

NOVEMBER 2014

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**Peacekeeping training begins
with a blaze**

Desert Monthly

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Command Sgt. Maj. Ronnie Kelley, U.S. Army Central senior noncommissioned officer, observes the opening ceremony of Steppe Eagle 2014, Sept. 24, in Almaty, Kazakhstan. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tracy R. Myers, U.S. Army Central)

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On the Cover A Kazakhstani Peacekeeping Battalion soldier withstands the heat of fire during fire-phobia training the second day of Steppe Eagle 2014, Sept. 30, at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Tracy R. Myers)

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Kuwait Naval Base



U.S. Army photo by Spc.... Jessica Nemec

Qatar



U.S. Army Photo by 1st Lt. Christopher Legette

Kazakhstan



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Tracy R. Myers

TOP LEFT: A swimmer climbs into a basket to be lifted by F Company, 2-147th Assault Helicopter Battalion, a medevac unit deployed with the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade, during personnel recovery training in the Arabian Gulf near Kuwait Naval Base Oct. 19, 2014. TOP RIGHT: U.S. Army Medical Materiel Center-Southwest Asia of the 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support) Operational Command Post (Forward) hosts a three-day exercise, "SHOTEX," influenza vaccination drive for all U.S. forces in Qatar, Oct. 6, 2014. RIGHT: A Tajikistan Ministry of Defense Soldier raises his national flag during the opening ceremony of Steppe Eagle 2014, Sept. 24, in Almaty, Kazakhstan, to commence the beginning of the exercise. LEFT: Spc... Elizabeth Kittle, an automated logistical specialist, flips Spc... Margret Kossman, an allied trade specialist, both with F Company, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st ABCT, 1st Infantry Division, while defending herself from a simulated rear choke hold during Sexual Harassment/Assault Response Prevention Program Oct. 2 at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, helping females avoid being victims of sexual assault. BOTTOM LEFT: A Patriot missile is launched by Soldiers of C Battery, 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 4th Air Defense Field Artillery Regiment, 108th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, at an airborne target during a joint live-fire exercise held Oct. 1, 2014, at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia. BOTTOM RIGHT: 1st Lt. Adam Greiber, base support group, and Sgt. Maj. Joshua Paullus, operations, both of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry, Oregon Army National Guard, inspect a wall around Bagh-e-Omomi Park in Paghman, Afghanistan, Oct. 2, 2014.

Camp Buehring, Kuwait



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Bernhard Lashleyleidner

Southwest Asia



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Kyle Fisch

Afghanistan



U.S. Army photo by Capt. Leslie Reed

U.S. Soldiers dominate multinational competition

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. THOMAS DUVAL**

EL GORAH, Egypt —
A three-day quest for the most well-rounded team of Soldiers within the Multinational Force and Observers came to a close Oct. 1 when Cavalrymen from the 4th Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Sinai took home top honors during an award ceremony on North Camp, in Sinai, Egypt.

The ceremony was the culminating event to the MFO's 2014 annual Force Skills Competition.

During this grueling competition, teams from 10 different nations came together on one stage to compete in a number of events which included a rules of force scenario, IED recognition lane, combat life-savers exercise, a 3km run, stress shoot and an obstacle course.

The countries represented in this year's competition were Australia, Canada, Colombia, Fiji, Hungary, Italy, New Zealand, Uruguay, the United Kingdom and the United States.

These teams were separated into three categories based on their formation size; Minor units, major units and officer-noncommissioned officer teams.

For the minor units Australia took home first place while 4-3 Cav... Soldiers captured top prize for the major units, Officer-NCO unit as well as the best overall score. Also taking home hardware were U.S. Army Sgt. Gary Martin and Pvt. Taylor Ritchie who received 2nd and 3rd place in the "Top Shot" category.

Since 2009 Team Fiji has dominated the competition more than any other contingent but fell short this year as the U.S. claimed the top spot for the first time in more than five years.

Although it was a podium day for the Fort Hood Cavalrymen, they weren't the only U.S. team to be recognized. Soldiers from the 1st Support Battalion were recognized by the MFO Force sergeant major as the team with the best overall NCO support and leadership.

"The Force Skills Competition is the premiere event every year here and I am very proud as the chief of staff in the performances of the 1st Support Battalion as well as the 4-3 ACR Soldiers," said Col. Clark Lindner, Task Force Sinai commander. "The Fijian Soldiers always do a phenomenal job, but this year the U.S. battalion gave them a run for their money."



U.S. Army cavalrymen from the 4th Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Sinai negotiate an obstacle course as part of the Multinational Force and Observers annual Force Skills Competition Oct. 1, 2014. During the competition, 10 nations came together on one stage to compete in a number of events. At the end of the day, the 4-3 Cav. Soldiers took home top honors.



ABOVE: Fijian Soldiers, deployed to Egypt with the Multinational Force and Observers, negotiates the obstacle course during the annual Force Skills Competition Sept. 29, 2014. Fiji placed second place. **RIGHT:** U.S. Army Soldiers from Task Force Sinai maneuver the MFO's Force Skills obstacle course Sept. 29, 2014.



ABOVE: An Italian sailor, deployed to Egypt with the Multinational Force and Observers, negotiates the MFO's Force Skills Obstacle course during the annual Force Skills Competition Sept. 30, 2014. **LEFT:** Sgt. 1st Class Ebou Wadda, Aviation Company, 1st Support Battalion, Task Force Sinai, negotiate the obstacle course portion of the Multinational Force and Observers annual Force Skills Competition Sept. 30, 2014.

Despite being pitted against one another, each team regardless of country or contingent affiliation showed their support by sharing in each other's traditions throughout the competition, which included singing with the Fijian Soldiers and blowing air horns with the Colombians.

The fierce competition coupled with the unmatched camaraderie displayed throughout the three days is what Lindner

says makes the MFO such a successful team.

"The MFO is truly a team of teams," said Lindner. "Though we get here on the field of friendly strife and everyone wants to do their best, at the end of the day it's about everybody doing their best and not doing so at the expense of someone else ... we want to see everyone succeed because when we go outside the wire we rely on each other for our safety and security." ★

BELOW: U.S. Army cavalymen, 4-3 ACR, Task Force Sinai, pose with Multinational Force and Observers command team after winning the MFO's 2014 Force Skills Competition Oct. 1, 2014. Ten nations came together on one stage to compete in a number of events.



Peacekeeping training begins

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SGT. TRACY R. MYERS

HOHENFELS, Germany

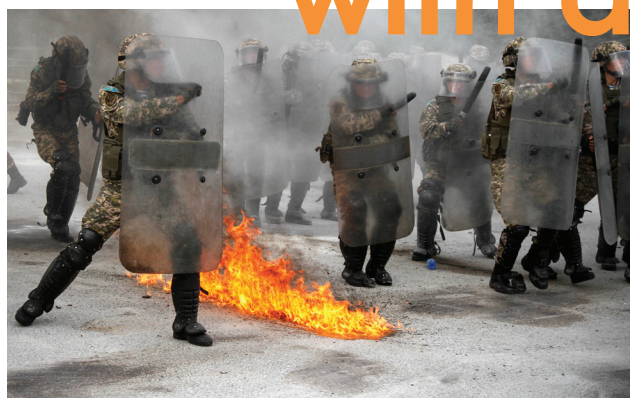
Kazakhstani Peacekeeping Battalion soldiers learned new crowd riot control techniques Sept. 29 and 30, the first two days of the Steppe Eagle 2014 exercise. They will use these techniques during the culminating training event which will demonstrate their ability to provide United Nations peacekeeping operations support.

“Kazakhstan’s contribution to international peacekeeping is increasing with other international contingent according with the UN requirements,” Kazakhstan Peacekeeping Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Bakhytzhan Zhetpissov. “We are checking our readiness and cooperation with multinational contingents.”

The UN requires peacekeeping troops to be trained on crowd riot control because it is an essential part of public order, security and stability. Kazakhstani peacekeeping troops are training to fulfill the UN requirement to help provide a surge capability in the case of large-scale civil disturbances.

“Whenever we are called for a peacekeeping mission we act in a peaceful manner to get control,” said Kazakhstani Airborne Warrant Officer Ruslan Burkitbay. “There is no need to shoot and kill, because we are there to make peace.”

This is the first Steppe Eagle exercise in twelve years that has taken place outside of Kazakhstan. This year it is being con-



A platoon sized element of the Kazakhstani Peacekeeping Battalion maneuvers around a fire during fire-phobia training the second day of Steppe Eagle 2014, Sept. 30, at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany. The UN requires peacekeeping troops to be trained on crowd riot control because it is an essential part of public order, security and stability.

ducted at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center here, which provides realistic training for partner nation units in an international environment.

“This is a high priority,” said Burkitbay. “We are doing crowd control because it is important to keep peace everywhere. That is why it is so important to do this training.”

Steppe Eagle 14 prepares partner nations for future peacekeeping and peace support operations in tumultuous areas and fosters greater regional cooperation. The situational training exercise following the tactical skills training will allow the Kazakhstan military to validate its readiness to face realistic modern challenges in peacekeeping scenarios.

“I really enjoy making conversation with people from other countries here, doing training together and making friends,” said Burkitbay. “It’s a good experience improving our training, our relationships and mental capabilities.”

Multinational participation increases interoperability of nations and reaffirms the partner nations commitment to regional security and stability.

“We have come here to show our training, discipline and character,” said Burkitbay.

Steppe Eagle also promotes mutual understanding and interoperability between partner nations and is an opportunity to build relationships and exchange ideas.

“This is a big deal to us who are involved in this training,” said Burkitbay. “We are doing this for our country first of all, and second for ourselves. It was our wish to join the army and do these types of things.”

The Kazakhstan military and other partner nations participating are working to achieve the common goal of contributing to regional and world stability, improving operational readiness and enhancing mutual understanding. ★



A Kazakhstani Peacekeeping Battalion soldier stomps his feet to put out the fire rising up his leg during fire-phobia training the second day of Steppe Eagle 2014, Sept. 30, at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany.



Kazakhstani peacekeeping forces learn and practice new crowd riot control techniques during the first day of training at Steppe Eagle 2014, Sept. 29, at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany. Kazakhstani peacekeeping troops are training to fulfill the UN’s requirement to potentially provide a surge capability in the case of large-scale civil disturbances.



A squad of Kazakhstani Peacekeeping Battalion soldiers overtake the fire produced by a Molotov Cocktail attack during fire-phobia training the second day of Steppe Eagle 2014, Sept. 30, at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center, Hohenfels, Germany.

American, Kuwaiti aviation work toward partnership



TOP LEFT: Sgt. David Newton, C Company, 2/147th Assault Helicopter Battalion crew chief, shows Kuwaiti air force Search and Rescue wing crew chiefs how they slingload using the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during a partnership building visit Oct. 14, 2014, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. **LEFT:** Newton shows Kuwaiti air force crew chiefs the first-aid kit in his flight vest Oct. 14, 2014. **ABOVE:** Staff Sgt. David W. Clarence, F Company, 2/147th Assault Helicopter Battalion flight medic, shows Kuwaiti air force crew chiefs a jungle penetrator on a medevac Black Hawk during a partnership visit Oct. 14, 2014, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The jungle penetrator was used extensively during the Vietnam War and can also be used in the water if necessary.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY
SPC. JESSICA NEMEC

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait —

Service members of two partner nations came together during a partnership visit to exchange ideas about aviation operations, increasing bilateral cooperation of forces.

Three Kuwaiti air force Search and Rescue Wing crew chiefs visited 2nd Battalion, 147th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 34th Combat Aviation Brigade, Oct. 14, 2014, to strengthen the interoperability relationship between the U.S. Army and Kuwait air force.

“Our goal is to increase the aviation partnership from which we can build cross training and mission training relationships,” said 1st Sgt. Randall Carter, C Company, 2/147th AHB.

The Kuwaiti crew chiefs and U.S. Army Soldiers spent time at Udairi Airfield inspecting a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. The Kuwaiti crew chiefs had seen a Black Hawk up close before, but they discovered the differences in how they slingload.

The Kuwaiti air force search and rescue unit flies a larger helicopter.

“Ours is much bigger,” said Wakil Awal Rodan al Enezi, Kuwaiti crew chief, gesturing with his arms spread apart when referring to the opening of the slingload hook-up.

They fly the Eurocopter AS-332 Super Puma, which have the space to carry up to 15 passengers and three crewmembers.

“It is a smooth ride, like a Mercedes,” said Raqib Awal Ahmed al Sarraf, Kuwaiti air force crew chief.

Staff Sgt. David W. Clarence, a flight medic with F Company, 2/147th AHB, showed the Kuwaiti crew chiefs some of the personnel recovery equipment the U.S. Army uses.

The Kuwaiti crew chiefs mostly conduct over-water rescue operations, so they were particularly interested in the hoist the Army used, also known as a winch, as well as how many patients the medevac could hold.

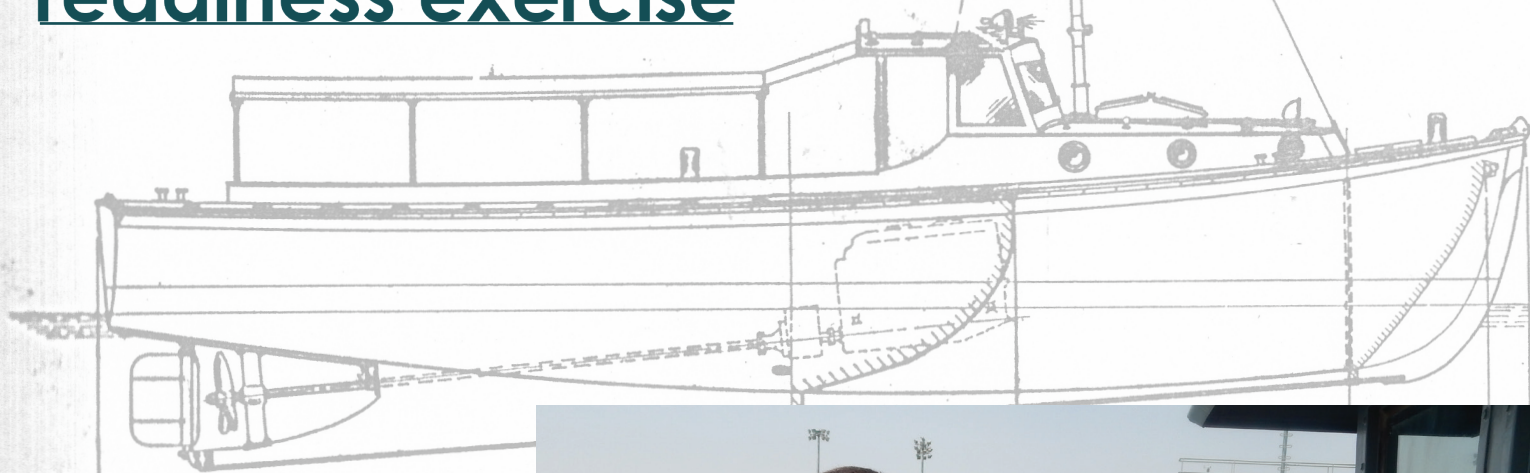
The Search and Rescue Wing crew chiefs familiarized themselves with the Black Hawk medevac aircraft and shared their training and mission experiences with the Soldiers.

“The visit was a huge success,” said Sgt. David Newton, C Company, 2/147th AHB crew chief. “It was a great experience being able to learn what they do as well.”

“We hope to follow up with a crew chief visit,” said Carter. This partnership visit may be the first of many to come. ★

Sustainers conduct maritime readiness exercise

TYP	INSTAL	Nº PER V	H. P.	TYPE OF	ENGINE	REDUCTION	PROPELL
GRAY, CA. 1863		225	DSL	2200	3-1	68	68
METALUSCH-TYPE		50	"	1000	1-1	100	100
CADILLAC		114	PET.	3500	3-1	118	118
CHRYSLER ROYAL		143	"	3200	4-5-1	70	70



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RIGHT: Brig. Gen. Daniel Mitchell, deputy commanding general, 1st Sustainment Command (Theater), speaks with Army watercraft crew members Sept. 1 at Kuwait Naval Base, Kuwait. (U.S. Army photo by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kevin Willis)

STORY BY
STAFF SGT. MICHAEL CAMACHO

KUWAIT NAVAL BASE, Kuwait — Army mariners within units throughout the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater) successfully completed the first-ever Brigade Inspection Reconnaissance Exercise Program Sept. 1 to Sept. 28 in the United States Central Command area of responsibility here.

“It’s a program set up for Army Materiel Command and the Army field support brigade managing Army pre-positioned stock in a given area of operations to test maintenance and readiness for the equipment in their care,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kyle



Darling, Support Operations Mobility Maritime officer, 1st TSC. “The BIREP evaluated the issue of Army watercraft pre-positioned in Kuwait.

Darling said the 1st TSC oversaw the issue process, and the BIREP helped leaders and Soldiers understand the mechanics of the process itself.

“The strategic mobility triad includes what we can move by sea or air, along with pre-positioned stock,” said Darling. “This exercise ensures that Army pre-

positioned stock is ready and available for issue anywhere in the world.”

The 1st TSC operations rely on watercraft to aid in the movement of supplies and personnel throughout the region where waterways are accessible,” said Brig. Gen. Daniel Mitchell, deputy commanding general, 1st TSC.

Army watercraft, allow the First Team to better execute the plans given to it by the joint staff and the secretary of defense.

PROF L	FUEL CAPA	SPEED (	RANGE (
60			
20			
57	215	9	600
10			

RIGHT: Army mariners within units throughout the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater) successfully completed the first-ever Brigade Inspection Reconnaissance Exercise Program in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility Sept. 1 to Sept. 28. (U.S. Army photo by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kevin Willis)



“As you’re moving into a theater to conduct operations you have to be able to move forces. Sometimes there are situations where movement is limited or restricted,” said Mitchell. “Army watercraft gives a commander the ability to move forces where he needs, protect them and sustain them when they get there.”

Mitchell said the BIREP exercise played a vital role in assessing mission readiness. While there is a process on vessels drawn from the APS it has never been tested or validated in the U.S. CENTCOM area of responsibility. This process allowed for issues to be identified and changes made to the BIREP to make it more efficient and effective.

“Over the last 12 years the operational tempo hasn’t allowed us to take the time to exercise this process in an operational environment, so this is the first time we’ve done this in U.S. CENTCOM,” said Darling.

The BIREP included Soldiers from U.S. Army Central, 1st TSC, 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), 492nd Theater Harbormaster Operations Detachment, 108th Sustainment Brigade, 402nd Army Field Support Brigade and 108th Special Troops Battalion.

Cramer Claxton, a contracting officer representative with Army Watercraft, 402nd AFSB, said the exercise proceeded step-by-step to validate the process map used for the BIREP in case additional boats are needed to support maritime sustainment operations. The units involved work out issues and learn

the best method to make it a smooth and seamless transition.

The BIREP process involves multiple units and civilian contractors under the 1st TSC. These organizations all have to work together throughout the entire process. Claxton said the interaction of all the organizations involved was a good learning experience for units and contractors to learn their roles in the BIREP process.

“Each person teaches each other,” said Claxton. “To make sure the process works the way its supposed to work.”

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Terry Senn, 411th Transportation Detachment, said the BIREP provides the process needed to prepare and move a watercraft team or teams anywhere in the world to a pre-positioned vessel.

“If a situation came up and we needed to issue additional watercraft assets to support the war effort, USARCENT would give the order to the APS. The APS would then prepare the vessels to be issued, the crew would fly in, conduct inventories, take possession of the vessel, conduct the mission and then reverse the process coming back. They would bring the vessel back and after inventory, sea trials and dock trials, APS would take ownership of the vessel from the crew, and the crew would fly home; mission complete.”

Senn said the BIREP exercise at KNB was set in a compressed schedule. For training purposes, one crew conducted the process on two vessels. Working with KNB personnel they conducted

a 100-percent inventory check, dock trials and sea trials.

Senn said representatives from all the organizations involved in the BIREP would come together daily and evaluate the process map.

“After every day’s iteration we conducted an (after action review) to see what could be improved, what should be sustained or what’s good about it,” said Senn. “We would adjust the validation process from there.”

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Ezekial Coffman, Logistics Mobility Sea Branch master with U.S. Army Central, praised the Soldiers who participated in the BIREP.

“They really showed the ability to take on a mission that is different than what they normally do, and excel at it,” said Coffman. “They were able to work their way through problems and maintenance issues. At the end of the day our success was due to the hard work of our Soldiers.”

Mitchell said validating the BIREP is just the first step in improving Army watercraft readiness in the region. He said a similar exercise was held in the South Pacific, but the Southwest Asia region presents unique and different challenges.

This exercise helped to identify the difference and began fine tuning a process that works for this part of the world. The Brigade Inspection Reconnaissance Exercise Program will allow units involved to maintain readiness and increase available support to Soldiers across the area of operation. ★

“Indian people fought for this country and we had a good reason — because this is our country, too,” said Choctaw Indian Frank Henry, a World War II veteran.



NATIVE AMERICAN
HERITAGE MONTH

