

TRAINING NOTES



TRAINING FORWARD

The Expeditionary Training Center in Bulgaria - BULWARK 04

MAJOR MICHAEL A. BODEN

The uncertain future of American military presence in Western Europe has provided not only challenges, but also opportunities, for the Seventh Army Training Command (ATC) in Germany. During the Cold War, units throughout Europe regularly conducted training at Grafenwöhr and Hohenfels. This high training tempo continued in the 1990s during the initial years of American military presence in the Balkans, despite the decade-long drawdown of forces. After September 11th, however, the landscape of training in Europe changed, first with the departure of many of the USAREUR-based units to lengthy deployments around the globe, and second, through the national announcements of force restructuring in Europe, with the projected endstate a considerably smaller military force in Germany. An aspect of these new circumstances, however, provided an opportunity for the Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) at Hohenfels, Germany, to demonstrate its capabilities as part of the 7th ATC's Expeditionary Training Center (ETC) by deploying and conducting training to other, former Eastern Bloc countries in Europe. The initial deployment and mission in this endeavor was exercise BULWARK 04. In



Sergeant Teodora Mocanu

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry (Air Assault), Illinois National Guard, conduct urban operations training during BULWARK 04.

July and August, 2004, observer/controllers (O/Cs) from CMTC's Timberwolf Team and the 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry (Air Assault) of the Illinois Army National Guard, deployed to Bulgaria to conduct training for the first time at Novo Selo Training Area.

Far from demonstrating how difficult a forward deployed training rotation could be, BULWARK 04 fulfilled a key function in the continuous development of an Expeditionary Training Center. The exercise validated the company/team-level training model, providing insights and lessons learned that will assist USAREUR in execution of the FY05 planned battalion task force force-on-force event, leading to

the end state expeditionary BCT training model. BULWARK 04 also proved that a highly effective and successful training density could be conducted using on-hand resources hundreds of miles from an established U.S. military combat training center. The ETC leadership and support structure addressed and minimized the unique challenges of such an enterprise through standard training programs and application of doctrine. While this exercise admittedly involved only a single battalion training on small unit collective tasks and battle drills, there is no reason why the principles and practices applied by the ETC to this exercise cannot be successful when training companies and battalions. The

Expeditionary Training Center Mission Essential Task List

- * Train tailored forces and headquarters for full spectrum, joint, and combined operations
- * Train adaptive Soldiers and leaders to dominate the joint operating environment (JOE)
- * Provide relevant and timely training support to deployed forces for any mission, anywhere
- * Provide training and training resources to include:
 - Strategy and policy development
 - State-of-the-art live, virtual, and constructive exercises
 - World-class training facilities comprising the Grafenwohr Training Area/ Hohenfels Training Area Joint Main Operating Base
 - Key training resources (training aids, devices, simulators, and simulations [TADSS], observer controllers/trainers, ranges, instrumentation)
 - Institutional training for Soldiers and leaders (NCO Academy/Combined Arms Training Center/International Special Training Center/Leader Development Course)
- * Integrate and team with Warrior Preparation Center/Battle Command Training Program/ Joint Forces Command/NATO trainers to provide multinational joint task force and NATO Headquarters high resolution training
- * Support European Command's security cooperation strategy
- * Ensure the well-being of all personnel to include Soldiers, civilians, and families

Table 1

proof will occur in the summer of 2005, when the ETC again deploys and trains forward, this time to Romania for exercise ROMAR 05.

The objectives for this mission were numerous. The 18th Engineer Brigade served as exercise control (EXCON) with the mission to “deploy to Novo Selo, Bulgaria, to enhance partnership with a new NATO ally by conducting BULWARK 04 in order to assess exercise infrastructure

and provide CTC quality training for the 2-130th IN (ILARNG).” The 18th Engineer Brigade Headquarters concentrated on the first aspect of the mission. To meet the objective of providing “CTC quality training” for the rotational unit, many different agencies from throughout 7th ATC worked closely together to coordinate all events, from the set-up of the actual training facilities to the instrumentation of the Soldiers and the conduct of training.

The Expeditionary Training Center concept has developed in the past few years with the mission to “provide world-class training to joint, combined, and service component forces and leaders in support of the combatant commands, and to serve as USAREUR’s focal point for training support, and contribute to EUCOM’s Security Cooperation Strategy.” Simply put, in today’s fluid and volatile world situation, the Combat Training Centers (CTCs) must be able to project fully capable training teams and packages that can provide training support to not only the American Army, but to other allied nations as well. Such deployments may be forecast far in advance of the actual mission execution, or they may be short-notice targets of opportunity. In either case, they can and will occur at a myriad of different locations around the globe. It is noteworthy that simultaneously with BULWARK 04, CMTC also conducted two “standard” CTC rotations at Hohenfels, convoy live-fire exercises at Grafenwohr, and maintained two training teams in Iraq which were training the new Iraqi Army as part of the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT).

Table 1 portrays the ETC METL that

gives the charter for such training exercises. While BULWARK 04 assessed each of these METL tasks, to some degree, the deployment to Bulgaria primarily focused on the third of these METL tasks. In support of the deployment, 7ATC deployed a robust training resource package to Novo Selo. Twenty-nine Soldiers from Hohenfels were present to provide O/C support as well as the associated maintenance and audio-visual support. From Grafenwohr, approximately two dozen personnel were present to facilitate range operations and instrumentized feedback on the training.

The exercise itself occurred during the end of July and first few weeks of August 2004, focusing on specific squad and platoon tasks determined by the 2-130 IN “Blackhawks.” These tasks centered on around four different training events: a squad and platoon live-fire lane, an urban training (MOUT) exercise, individual marksmanship ranges and assault courses, and a convoy security lane. For the first three of these events, the rifle companies in the battalion rotated through five-day schedules, while select elements of the Blackhawks executed the convoy security lane throughout the 15-day training density (See Table 2). D Company and Scouts were integrated in each lane with specific tasks designed to enforce not only collective training tasks, but to encourage and necessitate cross talk between platoons and sections as well. Specifically, the Scouts conducted zone reconnaissance on the live-fire lane and observation post activities at the MOUT site, while D Company established outer cordon positions at the MOUT site and conducted escort missions for the convoy STX lane.

Range Facilities

The Novo Selo training complex

Table 2: BULWARK 04 Rotation Schedule

	July 28; Aug. 2, 7	July 29, Aug. 3,8	July 30, Aug. 4,9	July 31, Aug. 5,10	Aug. 1, 6
	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
Convoy Security (Day)	Executed according to unit training level. HHC/2-130 is the primary unit to be trained. Other units may be trained as a target of opportunity/ throughout based on one convoy every three hours as per unit schedule.				
MOUT (Day/Night)	Team/Squad MOUT Techniques (basic enter & clear tasks)	Squad MOUT (movement/recon/integration/enter & clear)	Squad MOUT (advanced techniques/execution)	Platoon MOUT (walk)	Platoon MOUT (run)
Live Fire (Day)	Squad LFX (staggered with rehearsals & TLPs; culminating with sequential blank/live iterations.			Platoon LFX (blank)	Platoon LFX (blank/live)
ARM/OPFOR	OPFOR Support/Weapons Qualification and Familiarization/Small Unit Individual and Collective Training				

possesses characteristics that both facilitate and hinder training. Many of these same traits will be present at any Eastern European nation's facilities to which the U.S. Army chooses to deploy for extended training. On the positive side, the training area itself is very large (approximately 125 square kilometers), and provides ample space to conduct training without any of the prohibitive environmental constraints which too often adversely affect training exercises in Central Europe. A number of control towers dot the landscape and for this exercise were utilized to help the OCs and Range Control personnel manage training. Additionally, Novo Selo possesses a small MOUT site, consisting of approximately 40 concrete, roofless, structures replicating a small town. The Bulgarian Army garrison at Novo Selo provided a great deal of logistic support, and the Bulgarian military was very helpful and easy to work with.

The range itself, the targetry, and all range resources, however, were extremely outdated and in many cases unsafe. Although we were afforded the opportunity to use the existing targetry on the range, because of safety concerns we opted to construct the range "from scratch." Additionally, while the towers and MOUT complex proved adequate and useful, approximately half of the structures (both towers and buildings) were unsafe and unusable. Common to all former Eastern Bloc military training sites, range upkeep and maintenance is severely lacking at Novo Selo. We must be prepared to construct, from the ground up, any range complex we wish to utilize in the near future. Fortunately, the resources of the ETC proved more than adequate for the task and were able to construct the necessary facilities before the arrival of the training unit.

To meet these challenges, the 7ATC deployed a full range package set of over one hundred target lifters. Mr. Joe Neubauer, head of 7ATC Safety, and Sergeant First Class Robert Anderson, the USAREUR Master Gunner, oversaw range construction and set up. With much of the foundation for the range construction conducted prior to the actual deployment following range recon, the set up of these facilities took less than two weeks.

Instrumentation and Training Simulations Equipment

BULWARK 04 afforded the opportunity for the various military units involved to evaluate the different technological training simulation tools utilized during a deployment. In using these systems, we not only assisted the training by providing the unit detailed, individual, feedback, but also assessed the feasibility of



Sergeant Teodora Mocanu

Bulgarian and U.S. Soldiers complete training during BULWARK 04. Note the use of DIS-E by the Bulgarian Soldier at center.

deploying different systems for similar missions in the future. For BULWARK 04, the system used was the Deployable Instrumentation System-Europe (DIS-E). BULWARK 04 provided a suitable testing ground for this new equipment. DIS-E is a home station/deployed training capability used as an interim capability pending the fielding of the Expeditionary Instrumentation System (EIS) to the Combat Maneuver Training Center in FY06.

The system itself proved very useful in the conduct of after action reviews and hot-washes by providing individual soldier movement, engagements, and activities during all training events. The clarity of the system was relatively easy to issue, maintain, and use. Each training lane integrated DIS-E playback into the unit AARs. The individual tracking also gave the OCs on site an additional safety feature which could alert leadership to potential unsafe

situations prior to their occurrence. It did, however, draw a large amount of attention from higher headquarters and visitors, which caused a distraction from the actual training that, while seldom affecting the Soldiers and leaders training on the ground, consumed significant amounts of time from the battalion leadership and the 7ATC leadership. The focus of distinguished visitor briefings and agendas eventually turned away from the conduct of the actual training and towards the training aids and systems. True, when dealing with both local national civilian leadership and other military personnel, both U.S. and allied, the focus on training simulations provides "something shiny" that visitors can observe and at which they can express wonder. It does not, however, replace the value of the actual training and should at no time become the reason for the exercise. Such distractions will be common allowances that training units must come to grips with. However, by conducting a skillful information operations campaign focusing on the potential of the new system, in addition to careful visitor management (removing the guests from direct interference with the conduct of the training) the distractions can prove of more benefit in the long run.

The training demonstrated clearly that DIS-E, and other simulations equipment, can be deployed with relative ease and utilized effectively in a forward training site. This success has led to the Army's decision to field the aforementioned Expeditionary Instrumentation System to the CMTC to provide the full brigade combat team capability for the ETC. This includes

	Civ. on the Battlefield	OPFOR	Civ. Clothing Sets	NTVs	Interpreters	AK-47's (M16/AR)	AK-47-RD (R)
Convoy Security (Day)			3				2
MOUT (Day/Night)	4 / 4		11 / 11	15 / 15			8 / 1
Live-Fire (Day)							
Total (Day/Night)	4 / 4		14 / 11	15 / 15	0	0	10 /

Figure 3 - BULWARK 04 Resource Matrix

coverage over a 20 x 40 km area with full instrumentation, a reachback distributive capability via satellite and/or T1 lines, and embedded video and audio capabilities. But the key lesson learned from the integration of the training devices is that while simulation equipment can be a valuable asset to the training of a unit, it cannot replace the actual execution of training; it is not a magical talisman that single-handedly determines the success or failure of training. The focus of a deployment such as BULWARK 04 must remain on those individual and collective skills that together form the core of infantryman (in this case) skills.

Conduct of the Training

For the actual conduct of training, there were few special considerations for conducting operations as the ETC in Bulgaria as opposed to Hohenfels, or any other U.S. training site, for that matter. The 15-day cycle was broken down into 3 five-day training periods, during which each line company rotated through each training lane. Additionally, for the second iteration of the cycle, a Bulgarian Rifle Platoon trained with 2-130 IN on the MOUT site. While enhancing the teamwork between the U.S. and Bulgarian militaries, the exchange also provided an opportunity to demonstrate the compatibility of the present instrumentation systems (DIS-E) with weapons from other, allied countries. The Bulgarian Soldiers were equipped with organic equipment, but instrumented with the same devices as their American counterparts. The AARs were fully

<p>MOUT STX LANE Conduct a Combat Patrol (Urban Operations)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a Rehearsal (07-3-5000) - Conduct Tactical Movement (07-3-1270) - Employ Fire Support (07-3-3009) - Assault a Building (07-3-1000) - Enter and Clear a Building (Platoon) (7-3-D108) - Search a Building (07-3-1414) - Report Tactical Information (07-3-2054) - Conduct Consolidation and Reorganization (07-3-5009) - Process Captured Documents and Equipment (07-3-4027) - Treat and Evacuate Casualties (07-3-4045) 	<p>LFX Lane Conduct a Combat Patrol (Rur)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct a Rehearsal (07-3-5000) - Conduct Tactical Movement (07-3-1270) - Employ Fire Support (07-3-3009) - Conduct Movement to Contact (07-3-1090) - Report Tactical Information (07-3-2054) - Conduct Consolidation and Reorganization (07-3-5009) - Process Captured Documents and Equipment (07-3-4027) - React to Contact (7-3/4-D103) - Break Contact (7-3/4-D104) - Treat and Evacuate Casualties (07-3-4045)
<p>OPFOR Urban (MOUT) and Rural (Convoy STX) OPFOR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct Strongpoint Defense of a Building (07-3-1162) - Conduct Actions in Accordance with Enemy TTPs (OIF scenario) 	<p>Convoy STX</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conduct Tactical Road March (07-3-1186) - Conduct Convoy Escort (07-3-1225) - React to an IED (07-3-D9013) - React to RPG (07-3-D9013) - React to an Ambush (07-3-9015) - Treat and Evacuate Casualties (07-3-4045)

Figure 4 - BULWARK 04 Collective Training Tasks

instrumented and resourced in exactly the same manner as the American platoons.

The resourcing of the actual training was relatively simple as well. For opposing force (OPFOR) Soldiers, the battalion resourced themselves out of the company in the five-day ARM cycle of training. For specific equipment and training aids, the few remaining requirements were provided by CMTC, and transported as part of our MILVAN equipment, taking a minimal amount of space. With the assets shown in Table 4, it was easy to resource a full range of training opportunities and events for the rotational unit.

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Jackson, commander of the 2-130 IN, commented during the final days of training that this is the first annual training event he recalled where Soldiers were complaining about having to depart. This attitude is a testament not only to the leaders and Soldiers

of 2-130 IN, but also to the focus of the entire 7ATC team and their commitment to the ETC concept and dedication to the guarantee of effective training. With the ongoing pace of combat operations, the assurance of quality training, worldwide, is critical for the successful preparation of units. BULWARK 04 demonstrated the Expeditionary Training Center (ETC) preparedness and ability to conduct such training events with relatively little support at forward training bases in Eastern Europe.

Lieutenant Colonel Mike Boden is currently the Senior Operations Observer/Controller on the Timberwolf (Infantry) Team at the Combat Maneuver Training Center, Hohenfels, Germany. An Armor officer, he has served in various command and staff positions, most notably as a company executive officer with 3-67 Armor, 2nd Armored Division, during the Gulf War and as the task force XO for 1-77 Armor, 1st Infantry Division, during KFOR 4A.