



Range Helps U.S. Personnel Practice Skills Needed in Iraq

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

UDAIRI RANGE, Kuwait, May 3, 2006 – Training never stops in the push to ensure American soldiers and Marines are ready for duty in Iraq.



As part of a training scenario at Udairi Range, Kuwait, actors playing an Iraqi policeman and drivers argue at a traffic accident while an American convoy waits to enter the village. The scenario gives a realistic look at what challenges lie ahead for the soldiers when they move north into Iraq. Photo by Jim Garamone (Click photo for screen-resolution image); [high-resolution image](#) available.

Servicemembers polish their skills here just prior to deployment "up north."

Earlier this week it was the Georgia National Guard's turn in the barrel as members of the 1st Battalion, 214th Field Artillery Regiment, practiced convoy skills and anti-improvised explosive device tactics at the range, which is set up and administered by Military Professional Resources Inc.

"We give them realistic scenarios of what they will encounter in Iraq," said Jason Algarin, an observer/controller with MPRI.

One course is 13.5 kilometers long and runs servicemembers through a gamut of scenarios they will likely encounter. The play is free flow and allows for many different outcomes.

"There's no textbook right answer to these," Algarin, a former Marine, said. "But some do better than others."

Among things that should be second nature to servicemembers are traffic control, handling the IED threat, tactical movement to contact, and dealing with civilians on the battlefield.

After the first scenarios, which dealt with control at a traffic circle and cars trying to butt into a convoy, convoy commander Army Staff Sgt. Matthew Miller said problems with radio procedures are a big problem. "Just say who you are, what you see and your reaction," Miller told his men in an after-action review. "We don't need your life history."

The unit continued on and faced such things as car bombs and a traffic accident that blocked a road. The convoy had to wait to enter an Iraqi village. Three women pestered the troops in the convoy trying to gain information about procedures for collecting payment for losses incurred due to military action. Other "villagers" came out to see the excitement. Actors hired from Egypt play Iraqis in the training.

The convoy commander had to deal with Iraqi police to try to get around the blockage. "No, Mister. This is my country," the actor playing the policeman said. "We will move when finished."

The unit is due to move up to Iraq in the next few days. "They are focused here," an MPRI expert said. "But they still are thinking in the peacetime, training mode. They need to get over that."

"Train like you fight; fight like you train," Miller said in reminding his troops to get their head in the game before heading out on the live-fire section of the course.

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An operational expert from Military Professional Resources Inc., a contractor that runs Udairi Range, in Kuwait, to train U.S. forces heading into Iraq, makes a point to convoy commander Army Staff Sgt. Matthew Miller during live-fire exercises in the Kuwaiti desert. Miller, with the 1st Battalion, 214th Field Artillery Regiment, said he learned a lot from the training exercise.

Photo by Jim Garamone

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American soldiers guard their convoy while actors playing Iraqi women try to get information from the men. The scenario is part of training at Udairi Range, Kuwait. Photo by Jim

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Actors role-playing Iraqis gather at an American convoy stopped in a make-believe village on Udairi Range, Kuwait. The soldiers are attempting to maintain order. Photo by Jim Garamone

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As part of a training scenario at Udairi Range, Kuwait, actors playing an Iraqi policeman and drivers argue at the scene of a traffic accident, while a convoy commander speaks with another policeman. The scenario gives a realistic look at what challenges lie ahead for the soldiers when they move north into Iraq. Photo by Jim Garamone

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An operational expert from Military Professional Resources Inc., a contractor that runs Udairi Range, in Kuwait, to train U.S. forces heading onto Iraq, reinforces lessons learned during an after action review at the range. The soldiers, of the 1st Battalion, 214th Field Artillery Regiment, had just gone through the improvised explosive device course at the range. Photo by

Jim Garamone

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Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 214th Field Artillery Regiment, practice convoy skills at Udairi Range, Kuwait. The unit is getting ready to move into Iraq. Photo by Jim Garamone

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