



Soldiers from the 101st Military Police Company build a division central collection point in Iraq.

101st Military Police Company Supports Operation Iraqi Freedom

By First Lieutenant Jessica E. Donckers

The 101st Military Police Company (Air Assault) supported the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) in a variety of missions—from combat to stability operations—throughout Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Initially, the company was to act as general support for the division but was immediately put to work upon arrival at Camp Udairi, Kuwait. The unit was tasked to move the division from the port to each brigade combat team (BCT) staging area and provide security to personnel moving to and from the port.

After combat operations began, the company received an influx of security missions to escort critical supplies—Class I, Class III, Class V, and Class IX. The unit performed more than 500 security convoys—covering over 1,200 kilometers—and quickly and safely delivered critical supplies and ammunition.

In addition to running the Division Central Collection Point, the company processed 449 enemy prisoners of war (EPWs) and assisted with transfer operations. In other EPW operations, 1st Squad of 1st Platoon constructed a brigade holding area.

In April 2003, the company shifted its focus when three platoons were organized into BCTs and given the mission to provide security for the rebuilding of

the Iraqi police force. Initially, 1st Platoon assisted with area security in Forward Operating Base Q-West, south of Mosul, Iraq. Taking a nonexistent perimeter, the platoon worked closely with the brigade commander, executive officer, assigned engineers, and air defense artillery personnel to determine how to turn a looted and abandoned Iraqi air base into an effective, secure, and self-contained operating base for the brigade. This was no easy task. It required the physical marking of new camp fence lines and close coordination with psychological operations and civil affairs personnel to convince the local Bedouins to leave the area. Additionally, until the sector was secure, 1st Platoon conducted patrols around the surrounding area, covering a 15-kilometer distance. These patrols—which uncovered weapons caches, unexploded ordnance, and abandoned Iraqi military equipment—proved to be a great aid in securing the sector.

The platoon conducted raids with the 327th Infantry Regiment to seek out and interdict black market operations within the regiment's sector. In particular, acting on a human intelligence (HUMINT) source, they conducted a raid on the town of Al Barit and ended a black market arms ring. The platoon

detained 9 civilians and confiscated more than 30 weapons, including rocket-propelled grenades, which were turned over to local police. Intelligence gained from the detainees led to information about other black market arms rings.

Additionally, 1st Platoon was involved in joint patrols with local Iraqi police and intelligence personnel, initially focusing on the areas around civil-military operations centers (CMOC), and developing basic instructions to aid the Iraqis in reestablishing their own independent police forces. The joint patrols eventually grew to include four cities, covering an area larger than Rhode Island.

The 2d Platoon conducted mounted and dismounted presence patrols and built rapport with the citizens of Mosul. The unit conducted intelligence operations and developed a highly reliable HUMINT source. In particular, it apprehended a fugitive in less than 12 hours, with no injury or loss of life. The fugitive, the self-declared “governor” of Mosul, was wanted because of his ability to act as a destabilizing element in the city’s government. Upon platoon notification, orders were immediately issued to squad leaders to gather information from all possible sources on the fugitive’s location. After obtaining information from a local national, platoon personnel formulated a plan to use a local taxi driver to guide them to the compound. Once located, the compound was found to be guarded by approximately 100 armed personnel. Squad personnel maintained watch while a squad leader spoke to the guards, gaining their confidence and access to the compound. Under the watchful eye of the guards, the squad leader managed to talk the fugitive into coming with him to the CMOC—under the guise of civil affairs interests—to discuss his role in the new Mosul government. The platoon then delivered the fugitive to the 2BCT commander.

Working closely with the Mosul police chief, 2d Platoon mentored the Iraqi police in law enforcement operations and put the Mosul Police Department,



Military police prepare to escort a convoy.

which was in almost complete disrepair, back into operation in just a few days. Once the department was operational, joint patrols were conducted to rid the city of weapons dealers and destabilizing elements. In 2 months, the unit apprehended more than 300 suspects in crimes ranging from black marketing weapons to murder. The 2d Platoon also provided testimony and statements against apprehended suspects.

When 3d Platoon linked up with 3BCT, the unit immediately began conducting missions in Baghdad. One squad provided escort and security services for the BCT counterintelligence element and assisted with intelligence gathering on local tribes. Additionally, the platoon conducted presence and area security patrols up to 20 kilometers around the BCT tactical operations center. The platoon’s patrols focused on the edge of the Tigris River. This area provided valuable intel-



Soldiers practice search techniques at Camp Udairi, Kuwait.

ligence information leading to the identification of several high-ranking officials' homes, a possible chemical site, and two large weapon caches. Finally, the platoon conducted joint patrols with the local police and participated in a raid with the 3-7 Cavalry.

At Tal Afar and Rabeea'a, 3d Platoon's primary mission was to train and conduct joint patrols with the local police force. The police force in Rabeea'a was in such disarray that a mini-boot camp and a rigid training program had to be constructed to get them on their feet again. The 3d Platoon was often included in the planning process of raids and was appointed the quick-reaction force for the brigade support area during limited visibility.

The 4th Platoon continued its general support for the division by providing daily convoy security escorts from Mosul to Turkey—a distance of 260 kilometers—to establish supply lines. Escorts for Class I, III, and IX supplies, with an average of 70 trucks per convoy,

provided much-needed propane and benzine to the city of Mosul.

Finally, throughout Operation Iraqi Freedom, the company provided protective services details (PSDs) for the division's general officers. All PSDs logged many hours of flight time, provided ground security for all vehicular movement, and worked hand in hand with general officers. The commanding general's PSD provided security during flights to Kuwait, Syria, Jordan, and Turkey.

The 101st Military Police Company performed exceptionally in all areas of operation. It learned many valuable lessons and contributed greatly to the mission success of the 101st Airborne Division. The number of completed missions by the company throughout Operation Iraqi Freedom further bolsters the success of the Military Police Corps and proves that it really is the "Force of Choice."

Army Values

"We are, have been, and will remain a values-based institution. Our values will not change, and they are nonnegotiable. Our Soldiers are warriors of character. They exemplify these values every day and are the epitome of our American spirit. They are the heart of the Army."

— General Peter J. Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff, arrival message July 2003

Loyalty—Bear true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit, and other soldiers.

Duty—Fulfill your obligations.

Respect—Treat people as they should be treated.

Selfless Service—Put the welfare of the nation, the Army, and your subordinates before your own.

Honor—Live up to all the Army values.

Integrity—Do what's right, legally and morally.

Personal Courage—Face fear, danger, or adversity.