
Rhode Island Army National Guard Activates, Inactivates Units

By Sergeant John Cervone

1207th Forward Support Company

On 5 October 2008, two Rhode Island National Guard units were reorganized and reactivated into the newly developed 1207th Forward Support Company (FSC). The 1207th Transportation Company and the 1043d Maintenance Company were inactivated as individual units and reactivated as the 1207th FSC in a ceremony held at the Camp Fogarty Armory, East Greenwich, Rhode Island. (The mission of an FSC is to provide combat service support to Army operational forces.)

When a unit is inactivated, it does not simply fade away into the sunset. The colors of the unit may be retired, but its history lives on long after the final formation is held. The 1207th and the 1043d have proud and honorable histories, and that pride is being transferred to the new unit. The military tries very hard to preserve its heritage and keep past traditions alive. Many may scoff at these traditions, but anyone who has served in the Army knows that the past is something to be remembered and reviewed.

The 1207th Transportation Company was originally organized in 1818 as the First Light Infantry Company, 2d Regiment, Rhode Island Militia. The unit entered federal service in 1861 during the Civil War and again in 1898 during the Spanish-American War. During World Wars I and II, the 1207th was inducted into federal service in the coastal defense of Narragansett Bay, along the north side of Rhode Island Sound. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, the 1207th was transformed into a missile battalion and, later, into a howitzer battalion. Finally, in 1968, the unit was converted and redesignated as the 1207th Transportation Company. The 1207th was called into federal service in 2006 and deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, serving under the 82d Airborne Division.

The 1043d Maintenance Company was originally constituted into the Rhode Island National Guard as Company A, 743d Ordnance Battalion, on 27 October 1952. The unit was subsequently reorganized and redesignated as the 1043d Ordnance Company on 18 March 1963. Finally, on 1 March 1972, it was redesignated as the 1043d Maintenance Company. The 1043d has provided numerous Soldiers to other Rhode Island National Guard units deploying in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom; these Soldiers have served with distinction in support of the War on Terrorism.

The 5 October 2008 ceremony was not an ending, but a true beginning—the beginning of a new, proud heritage for current and future Soldiers of the 1207th FSC.

119th Military Police Company

On 4 October 2008, the 119th Military Police Company was inactivated and its members were integrated into the 169th Military Police Company. The ceremony was held at Camp Fogarty, East Greenwich, Rhode Island. Many past and present members of the 119th were on hand to pay homage to a unit that truly distinguished itself.

The 119th Military Police Company was constituted as Company D, 118th Engineer Combat Battalion, in 1949. In 1950, the unit was called to active federal service and sent to Germany, where it was part of the 43d Infantry Division until it was demobilized in 1954. The unit was converted and redesignated as Company C, 118th Military Police Battalion, in 1968 and redesignated as the 119th Military Police Company in 1972.

The unit's lineage can be traced through many of our nation's modern conflicts. It was activated into federal service in 1991 in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, serving under the 800th Military Police Brigade. It was activated again in 2000 to serve as a stabilization force in the Balkans and to conduct operations in Hungary and Bosnia. Finally, the 119th Military Police Company deployed to Iraq in 2003 as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

We should all be proud of what the 119th Military Police Company has accomplished over the years and remember that even though its colors have been retired, the unit will always live on in our hearts.

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