



Task Force Protector Assumes Responsibility for Detention and Law and Order Operations in Afghanistan

By Captain Thomas Cieslak

A military police brigade headquarters comprised of paratroopers is now responsible for oversight of detention operations at Bagram Airfield and law and order operations throughout Afghanistan.

Task Force Protector, led by Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th Military Police Brigade (Airborne), Fort Bragg, North Carolina, assumed responsibility of the Bagram Theater Internment Facility and theater law and order operations from Task Force Guardian in a transfer-of-authority ceremony conducted 15 August 2009.

This is the first time that a military police brigade headquarters has deployed to Afghanistan. The 16th Military Police Brigade paratroopers deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in late July and had been preparing for the transfer of authority ever since. The unit assumed leadership of eight subordinate units that contained Army, Navy, and Air Force personnel and became known as Task Force Protector, reflecting their partnership with units from across the U.S. military.

The leaders of Task Force Protector will provide senior level oversight for detention and law and order

operations, while the brigade special staff will support subordinate units with expertise in areas such as logistics, public relations, and personnel actions.

Previously, the brigade headquarters oversaw detainee operations in Iraq at the height of the surge, providing care, custody, and control of approximately 26,000 detainees. Due to its extensive experience, the headquarters element has been integral in developing a doctrine of “counter-insurgency operations inside the wire.”

“It is the right time, the right place, and the right mission for Task Force Protector. We are charged with the awesome responsibility of ensuring the safety and humane custody and control of detained persons. We are trained, ready, and eager to accomplish all our tasks safely and professionally,” said Colonel John Garrity, commander of Task Force Protector. “We will make a difference, and we will make it matter.”

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