

Battle ready

32nd AAMDC prepares for war

CAPT. ENRIQUE T. VASQUEZ
32nd AAMDC

As thousands of United States servicemembers ready for a possible conflict with Iraq, the 32nd Army and Air Missile Defense Command, Fort Bliss, Texas, prepares for war.

"Mechanics, cooks, clerks, early warning operators and every staff section within the 32nd are working together as a strong cohesive outfit in preparation for a probable conflict with Iraq," said 1st Sgt. Bryan Steele, first sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 32nd AAMDC.

"The 32nd has been training on a variety of soldier tasks to include Nuclear, Biological, Chemical training and SCUD drills," said Staff Sgt. Mark Nelson, training NCO, HHB, 32nd AAMDC.

Soldiers state training and preparations for a possible conflict have been occurring across the command.

"We've been doing training since we arrived here (Nov 27). Soldiers are wearing their MOPP gear around. The squad leaders have been giving lessons on how to use the M8 and M9 chemical detection paper," said Pfc. Charles Christman, chemical operations specialist, 178th Maintenance Co.

In particular 32nd AAMDC soldiers are doing their part to prepare

for war and each has a unique story to tell.

"As the chaplain's assistant during war time, I have to ensure the chaplain's re-supply kit has plenty of rosaries, St. Christopher's, bibles and spiritual literature from all religious denominations," said Sgt. Carlos Benitez, chaplain's assistant 32nd AAMDC.

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Williams personnel specialist, 32nd AAMDC talks about what he has to do to prepare for war.

"My section maintains up to date accountability and by name rosters of personnel," said Williams.

"We have had several rock drills to ensure everyone knows how to pass casualty information between units," said Williams.

Spc. Juston McDaniel, unit supply specialist, HHB, 32nd AAMDC explains his concerns in preparation for war.

"I am responsible for insuring our weapons have been serviced or turned in for repairs if needed. I also help manage the ammunition issue," said McDaniel.

Drivers training is also considered important says Sgt. Frankie Rodriguez, motor transport specialist, HHB, 32nd AAMDC.

"Drivers training includes knowing anti-terrorist driving tactics, route



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Soldiers with the 32nd Army Air and Missile Defense Command load ammunition onto a HUMVEE at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia.

planning and familiarization with force protection rules of engagement," said Rodriguez.

32nd AAMDC soldiers throughout the area of operations consider training an important step in preparing for war.

"As a staff we must continue to battle track and synchronize the efforts of this unique but lethal organization," said Col. James Williams, operations officer 32nd AAMDC.

"Realistic training takes the guess work out of the actual event, so much so our jobs become second nature during a SCUD drill," said Lt. Col. Tim McKenna, staff officer, 32nd

AAMDC.

Likewise, other soldiers had their own philosophy on the importance of training.

"This day in age the threat of chemical warfare is out there, so soldiers need to learn to protect themselves," said Nelson.

"Training is a great way to prepare for anything that might happen in war," said Pfc. Katherine Vidal, legal specialist, HHB, 32nd AAMDC.

"I think training is important because we need to learn to survive. I want to live through war," said Vidal.




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