

# 1-9 Cav troopers use Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer

**SPC. PAULA TAYLOR**

*4th BCT, 1st Cav. Div.*

Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, spent time on the Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer on August 3 here.

Fort Bliss was given the VCCT in August 2004, said Renee Young, Central Tasking Office, Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security.

The post was chosen as one only four sites to have the simulator, mostly because of the CONUS Replacement Center here, said Les Wilson, the on-site training specialist for the system, Raydon Corporation.

After spending the afternoon in the simulator, the troopers from 1-9 Cav. seemed pleased with the training they received. I loved it, said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Smith, cavalry scout and platoon sergeant, 1-9 Cav., 4th BCT, 1st CD. It was realistic training on a simulator. That's the best part because there at the VCCT, you can make your mistakes and move on. But on the battlefield, you don't have that option.

The VCCT teaches Soldiers basic convoy tactics, how to shoot on the move, how to avoid potential danger zones and ambushes, how to call for fire and close air support, and how to react to enemy contact, said Young.

The training was pretty good, said Staff Sgt. Corey Isaacs, cavalry scout and section sergeant for the 1-9 Cavalry. Guys [enemies] were on the



**Sgt. 1st Class Robert Smith, platoon sergeant, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, engages enemy combatants with a .50 caliber machine gun simulator at the Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer.**

rooftops shooting RPGs. It was really good and realistic for the most part, he added.

The purpose of the VCCT is to train Soldiers on basic through advanced convoy skills. During the training, Soldiers are required to maneuver and react appropriately in the contemporary operating environment, said Young.

In using the trainer, Soldiers will learn key convoy skills in a simulated

combat environment, said Young. Immediate after action review feedback is available, enhancing training to identify strengths and overcome weaknesses.

The best part of the training was talking to everyone when we got done and the feedback we received from each other, said Isaacs. By talking after each scenario, they learned what they need to improve on, what they could get better at and what they need

to sustain, he added.

Scenarios are adjustable based on unit skill level and to ensure they are receiving training relevant to their unit mission, said Young. In convoy operations, of course one size does not fit all. Military police, for example, often face situations far different from Air Defenders. The system offers varied scenarios and is designed to ensure Soldiers in any unit, and at any level, from beginner to advanced, can benefit, she said.

One of our claims-to-fame so to speak, is the multi-level of training that can be done in the trainer, said Wilson. From the very basic level of just driver training all the way up to command and control of a convoy on company or even a battalion level can be achieved, Wilson added.

The Fort Bliss VCCT is currently training an average of 1,200 Soldiers each month, said Young. Since receiving the trainer last year, approximately 12,000 Soldiers have used the simulator, she added.

The scenarios are designed to be exceptionally realistic and can be adjusted based on unit objectives and mission, said Young.

Any unit with a need to enhance convoy skill operations can schedule use of the simulator, said Young.

Any training is going to better us on the battlefield, said Smith. Everyone needs to go through it.

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