

# IED shock videos a wake-up call for cavalry troops

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4th BCT Public Affairs

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait – Soldiers of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division received instruction on how to counter the biggest threat to troops serving in Iraq, improvised explosive devices, and coalition forces fratricide Nov. 11.

The basic counter IED class, taught by Sgt. Reynaldo Berrios, counter IED instructor, 115th Engineer Battalion, opened the session with shock videos which demonstrated the severity and danger of the devices being used and that have taken the lives of hundreds of coalition troops to date.

“I like that the videos showed the truth,” said Pfc. Guadalupe Forcado, supply specialist, 27th Bde. Support Battalion. “They were a hard thing to see, but I like that they were specific about what really happens.”

After the videos, Berrios explained the three types of materials used to make IEDs: military ordnance, home-made explosives and incendiaries and commercial explosives.

One 4th BCT Soldier said that during his tour in Afghanistan, he saw first-hand incendiaries and military ordnance. “I’ve seen a soda pop can with a fuse coming out of it that would probably just burn someone and I

have seen a 155mm round used,” said Sgt. William Fitzpatrick, Howitzer and Humvee gunner, 5th Bn., 82nd Field Artillery Regiment.

The three types of IEDs, Berrios said, are victim operated, command operated and timed. In one video example he showed, several people were gathered around a wounded insurgent. When they tried to turn him over, the IED exploded. “The victim operated are the most dangerous,” said Berrios. “You set them off. They are booby traps.”

Unlike the victim operated IEDs, the command operated IEDs are set off by the enemy. These are in the form of suicide vests, radio controlled, cell phone controlled or controlled by key fobs or car alarms, he said. “The use of cell phones to detonate IEDs is the most common right now,” he said.

The final type Berrios discussed was the timed IEDs, which use devices such as washing machine timers or alarm clocks.

Other topics covered in class included the placement of IEDs, concealment methods, and what to do if you discover an IED.

“I learned IEDs are a lot more sudden than I thought they’d be,” said Pfc. George Marinakes, wheeled vehicle mechanic, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Special Troops Bn. “It was a wake-up call for



PFC. BROOKE MURPHREE

British Sgt. Maj. Lee Middleton, left, liaison/instructor, 40th Regiment, Royal Artillery, takes time to answer questions after teaching a fratricide class to troops of the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Nov. 10 at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

those of us who have never been to Iraq before. Someone who’s never seen it happen in real life.”

The IED training was followed by a fratricide class, taught by British Sgt. Maj. Lee Middleton, liaison/instructor, 40th Regt., Royal Artillery. Middleton said this was his second tour in Iraq, the first being in 2003. He has served with the 7th Armor Bde. and a Marine Expeditionary Force.

The main focus of his class was to “teach tactics, techniques and procedures of coalition forces to prevent fratricide so troops will have an understanding of the military fleet in Iraq,” Middleton said.

He began by showing the numbers of forces from each of the coalition countries serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. “There are a total of 154,000 coalition forces in Iraq. Of those, 133,000 are American forces.”

Soldiers were shown several slides and videos during Middleton’s presentation of coalition vehicles and uniforms. He also taught how to identify friendly forces, how to reduce the risks of fratricide, what to do if a Soldier is engaged by friendly fire and what to do if a Soldier observes fratricide.

“He was funny,” said Forcado. “His humor kept me awake.”

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