

MNC NE exercising in Fort Bragg, North Carolina USA

Written by AG

Thursday, 16 November 2006 09:00



48 members of MNC NE are currently taking part in the exercise Unified Endeavour in Fort Bragg. Fort Bragg is the home of the XVIII Airborne Corps, 82nd Airborne Division and US Army Special Operations command.

On a daily basis 30 - 40.000 soldiers are serving on the base, which with its app. 650 km², compared to European standards, is huge. On the base families to the soldiers are living, and it has everything from highways, elementary, middle and high schools, two 18-hole golf courses, shopping malls to Burger King and other restaurants. So, there is no need to leave the base, except for trips into the nature of North Carolina.

Exercise Unified Endeavour is a US led Command Post Exercise (CPX) conducted to train the US units deploying to Afghanistan as Regional Command East (RC (E)) in the NATO-led ISAF force structure, and for some units to continue the Coalition Operation Enduring Freedom which is US led. The Primary Training Audience (PTA) is the Headquarters of 82nd Airborne Division.

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Over 850 personnel are being trained within the PTA. The US Joint Warfighting Centre (JWFC) is the organization supporting Unified Endeavour (UE 07-1). UE 07-1 is not only conducted in Fort Bragg but also in three other places. The exercise organization includes about 1300 persons, of which civil contractors form a large part. Also supporting the exercise is personnel from ISAF IX, who bring the latest experience and know-how to support both MNC NE and RC (E). Other NATO HQs are represented as well as NATO Centers of Excellence such as Joint Warfare Center from Stavanger, Norway. In total, no less than 15 nations are represented in the exercise.

For HQ MNC NE this exercise, which runs in the period 9th - 20th November, is the last part of MNC NE preparations for the deployment to HQ ISAF. MNC NE members will fill 165 positions, which is approximately 1/5 of HQ ISAF.

MNC NE was tested and declared operational in November 2005, so the ISAF X mission is the first live operational task given to MNC NE. Over the last six months MNC NE has focused on preparing for this important task. MNC NE has conducted own exercises and taken part in exercises planned and conducted by NATO. Beside the exercises, members of the HQ have participated in NATO courses, national training as well as internal training conducted in Szczecin. This training has been supported by experienced personnel coming from almost all over the world, and in particular by personnel from HQ ARRC, which currently is forming the major part of ISAF IX.

During Unified Endeavour, MNC NE personnel under the lead of Major General Jan B. Andersen, is exercising the role as HQ ISAF, which allows the PTA to get accustomed to ISAF procedures, and not least allows key personnel of MNC NE within the core of ISAF X - and 82nd Airborne (RC (E)) to get to know each other before deploying to Afghanistan. Being under command of NATO as a subordinated RC, is a rather new experience and eye-opener for the PTA, as well as for some of the US personnel supporting the exercise, but there is no doubt, that the co-operation will be enhanced during the exercise, and that the exercise will create a good basis for a common approach to the common task in Afghanistan during ISAF X.