

News From the Front

Train the Trainer: Kuwaiti Police Special Forces Female Very Important Person Protection Team



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 02 FEB to 13 FEB 2020, female Soldiers from the 114th Military Police (MP) Company, 112th MP Battalion, and 66th Troop Command within the Mississippi Army National Guard in direct support of the Directorate of Emergency Services within Area Support Group-Kuwait, conducted a train the trainer event for the incoming instructors of the Kuwaiti Police Special Forces (SF) Female Very Important Person (VIP) Protection Team at the Kuwait Ministry of Interior.

The 114th MP Company instructors included:

- Officer and enlisted personnel with civilian law enforcement experience and civilian level-one combatives certification.
- Personnel with military training from MP Advanced Individual Training.
- Personnel with military training from the Basic Officer Leader Course.
- Personnel with military training from the Protective Service Training (PST) Course D7 Additional Skill Identifier (ASI).
- Personnel with military training from the Inter-service Non-Lethal Individual Weapons Instructor (INIWIC) Course 2A ASI.

The purpose of this training was to provide instruction on law enforcement operations, PST fundamentals, non-lethal capabilities, and combatives, to provide the VIP Protection Team a baseline needed to teach incoming members of the team. The greatest limitation was lack of training equipment and access to classroom training materials caused by the deployed environment. Another challenge was the lack of planning time from finalization of training plans to execution of the training.

LACK OF TRAINING EQUIPMENT AND ACCESS TO CLASSROOM TRAINING MATERIALS BECAUSE OF THE DEPLOYED ENVIRONMENT

Because the garrison operates on two posts, the company was able to get enough equipment together to complete the training. The company used range targets for Taser certification targets so the trainers could practice probe placement and distance. The company had access to excess Taser cartridges and handcuffs in the arms room because of their mission set. The Kuwaiti Police SF allowed the company to use their combatives mats, pads, punching bags, and sprawling dummies.

There was also an issue of classroom space and materials. Because the unit was at the Kuwait Ministry of Interior, it had to work with the Kuwaiti training officer to find an available classroom for the classroom portion on Tasers. The classroom portion included a PowerPoint presentation and an end-user test. All PowerPoint presentations, tests, answer keys, Taser end-user certificates of completion, and other required training material had to be re-downloaded because the unit did not have those materials readily available in a deployed environment. The unit was able to find a classroom, as well as a projector and screen that were compatible with the computer system the PowerPoint was downloaded on.

Lesson

Now that training has been established and it will be a recurring event, the company can coordinate with the incoming units to ensure they bring necessary training equipment, or coordinate with the deployed battalion supply officer to purchase equipment for future use. The company can also coordinate to ensure classroom space and classroom training materials are available. All digital training materials and training plans have also been placed on the shared drive so that incoming units will be able to access it for any future certifications completed with the Kuwaitis.

EQUIPMENT DIFFERENCES

The Kuwaiti Police SF females used different types of equipment than standard MP-issued gear. Three main differences discovered were Taser models, Glock versus Beretta pistols, and flex cuffs versus handcuffs. Trainers did not know about equipment differences until the day prior to Taser end-user certification and weapon-retention training. Trainers had to teach both Taser model classes because the Kuwaiti's supply of Taser cartridges were limited. Trainers brought the Beretta training aid pistol rather than the Glock. The Beretta pistols fit in their holsters but did not lock in. It was difficult to run scenarios and teach weapon retention when they were trying to keep their training pistols in the holster. The Kuwaiti females had never used handcuffs before, only flex cuffs. This added additional training days needed to teach the basics of handcuffing and how to use them as a tool rather than solely a piece of equipment.

Lesson

During the planning phase, initially meet with the training officer. Next, invite someone who has first-hand knowledge of the training needs, the equipment used by trainees, the equipment needed for training, and any extra training that needs to be added to meet the end state.

LACK OF PLANNING TIME

Because of other training requirements for the Kuwaiti Police SF VIP Protection Team, there were only three days between the finalization of the training plan and the beginning of the class. The 114th MP Company noncommissioned officer in charge (NCOIC) of the train the trainer event met with the Kuwaiti Police SF training officer on 29 JAN 2020, to have the training plan approved. The Kuwaiti Police SF training officer requested that the event begin on 02 FEB 2020. This did not allow the normal length of time to plan for a major training event, especially because this was the first time the company had a class like this. The three-day planning event focused on the first week of the course. The trainers completed the remainder of the course planning during the course execution, at the end of each day.

Lesson

Units attempting to plan an in-depth training event like this should request additional time to prepare and ensure all eight steps of the training model can be achieved. This training event was a task that was not expected prior to mobilization, however, it is now a sustained requirement. Incoming units can be assisted in the future by making sure they are prepared and willing to instruct the VIP Protection Team, and that they continue to build on the relationship between the United States Army and the Kuwaiti SF VIP Protection Team.

BASELINE KNOWLEDGE

The unit was not prepared to do non-lethal training because all Soldiers had only been certified for deployment prior to mobilization. Additional requirements such as this, were not a part of the certification process for deploying. The unit's baseline knowledge and the trainees expertise were unknown prior to the start of the class. The first day of training was spent determining what the Kuwaiti Police SF females' strengths and weaknesses were, any additional training they wanted to request, what equipment was still needed to provide the training, and what equipment was available to use. As discussed previously, it would have been beneficial to meet in advance with the Kuwaiti Police SF female training captain or one of the team members the company was requested to instruct. This would have allowed alterations to the training schedule to best fit the trainees' needs prior to beginning training.

Lesson

Early and frequent coordination will lead to success. Prior to mobilization, the company was unaware of the task to train the females of the Kuwaiti Police SF VIP Protection Team. It is now a sustained requirement. Through direct coordination with the host nation liaison NCOIC, the company was able to establish rapport with the Kuwaiti Police SF training officer, and begin the initial planning phases. This course of action worked, but it required many long nights to ensure training was planned, the equipment was ready, and the training was executed according to plan. The overall success of this training is a credit to the trainers, and the amazing will to learn and drive to succeed that the Kuwaiti females brought to the table.

LENGTH OF INITIAL CLASS

Ten days of half-day training (0800 to 1200) was enough for the baseline requested, but needs to be extended for trainees to become confident in their techniques and to cover more advanced tactics. The Kuwaiti females began their team in 2010, and the last time they had trained instructors was in 2016. At that time, a group of female Marines taught the instructors self-defense tactics. This is the first time that U.S. Army females taught Kuwaiti Police SF females tactics that any of the Kuwaiti Police SF leadership is aware of. The Kuwaiti Police SF females replaced their team instructors over the years, and most of the team had not trained together. This training was an opportunity to get all of their instructors on the same page regarding level of training, and to create a cohesive team. The Kuwaiti females will take this training and use it to instruct their lower enlisted team members for upcoming missions. The Kuwaiti female instructors had different levels of training. For example, the warrant officer was already a black belt in karate, and had taken self-defense classes before. Whereas, the lieutenant was not as experienced, and had only taken a few self-defense classes. The two sergeants major were seasoned from previous mission work.

The lieutenant took charge, and filmed each take-down maneuver, handcuffing procedure, and so on. The trainees and instructor can use the film in the future for practice sessions with one another after the training day is over. The film can also be used as a reference when they instruct lower enlisted. The linguist was able to translate the steps into Arabic so everyone could understand them. The linguist was a huge asset to the training team, because of the streamlined training and communication. Although a couple members of the team could understand some English, it was very difficult for them to speak it.

Lesson

Despite the challenges with the planning and training execution, the overall mission was accomplished. The Kuwaiti Police SF females were comfortable executing the training, and were proficient in all events: PST formations, law enforcement operations, non-lethal capabilities, and combatives. A culminating training event was conducted for both Army leadership, and Kuwaiti leadership to display their proficiency. This training opened the door for the Kuwaiti females to begin incorporating the use of handcuffs rather than flex cuffs, and gave them the Taser as a non-lethal option, rather than only having lethal force options available.

CONCLUSION

This training had a two-fold purpose. It enabled the Kuwaiti females to meet their training objectives, and strengthened the bond of the U.S. Army and the Kuwaiti SF VIP Protection Team. The two have created amazing friendships that otherwise would have been nearly impossible. The company still speaks to them at least weekly, and are currently planning future operations to build on skills, and continue tactics proficiency. The Kuwaiti Police SF females were thankful for the assistance, because training is limited for them. It is not appropriate in their culture for males to be in the training environment with females, because of the close physical contact. Their culture is still strict regarding male and female interactions. Without training from outside sources, the Kuwaiti Police SF Female VIP Protection Team would have to be self-reliant, which could potentially affect training. When equipment is limited, becoming skilled in hand-to-hand combat is critical for safety and survival. The endstate for the company is to introduce incoming U.S. Army MP units to the Kuwaiti females, and continue the ability to train them for many years to come.



Figure 1. Kuwaiti SF VIP Protection Team member applying handcuffs to a U.S. MP trainer. Photos courtesy of CPT Karla Crayne, USARCENT PAO OIC (FWD).



Figure 3. Kuwaiti SF VIP Protection Team members responding to threat with a U.S. MP trainer. Photos courtesy of CPT Karla Crayne, USARCENT PAO OIC (FWD).



Figure 2. Kuwaiti SF VIP Protection Team members conducting medical evacuation (MEDEVAC) with a U.S. MP trainer. Photos courtesy of CPT Karla Crayne, USARCENT PAO OIC (FWD).