

# The Daily Roar

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## Mechanics make it happen

**By Cpl. Benjamin Washburn**  
4th IBCT 1ID PAO

BAGHDAD – When Soldiers get into their vehicles there should be no question whether or not it will start. They know the turret works properly, the gears will shift correctly, and their vehicle is fully mission capable. What they might not know is that there are Soldiers who work around the clock to make sure that's the case.

The soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, are some of these Soldiers. In the event that a vehicle does go down, they are always there to assist and get that vehicle back in the fight.

“Our mission out here in the motor pool is to give assistance to all of the supporting units; Iron Claw, Brigade, HHC, Alpha, Bravo, Charlie (companies), and giving them maintenance support,” said Spc. Jairus Ruff, a Team Leader with HHC.

The three year Army veteran, who is on his first deployment, said that there is no schedule for when a vehicle will break down, even with preventive maintenance.

“Trucks or vehicles break not necessarily at the best time for you, but you just have to suck it up and drive on with the mission,” Ruff said.

Pfc. Steven Gordon, a mechanic from Orlando, Fla., concurred; emphasizing it could be any hour of the day when you have to get a vehicle up and running.

“Here it's an ongoing process, seven days a week. You've got to make sure the vehicles are ready to go, so you're up all times of the night,” the two-year Army veteran said.

Working long hours throughout the night aren't the only challenges that deployment brings these Soldiers.

“Of course there's a higher stress level,” Ruff said. “Working around people that you may not know that well for an extended period of time may be difficult. You have to get used to the way they operate, they have to get used to the way you operate.”

When people spend a lot of time together, eventually strong bonds are formed. That's exactly the case for the Soldiers of the motor pool. Gordon likens his fellow mechanics

to a family.

“I wouldn't be any other place than right here with the people I'm working with. It's like family, they're like my brothers and sisters,” he said.

Despite the challenges faced, the Soldiers work hard and enjoy their jobs.

“I like being a mechanic, I like what I do. My job is rewarding when a vehicle comes in and I get it fixed and the vehicle rolls back out,” Gordon said. “When you're underneath the vehicle, you're kind of in your own little zone; you're just one with the vehicle.”

It's that rewarding feeling that makes it all worthwhile, even when other people don't notice the work these Soldiers do.

“I think maintenance or support in general is underappreciated, but that's just the way it goes,” Ruff said. “You don't do this job for the recognition, you do it because you enjoy it.”

So, the Soldiers of the motor pool drive on to accomplish their mission without the notoriety that other units get. However, they are no less critical than anyone else, and are an essential asset that allows others to complete their mission.

“Without us a lot of the missions, essential movement, even communications would not be accomplished,” Ruff said.



by Cpl. Ben Washburn, 4 IBCT 1ID PAO

Zion, Ill., native Spc. Jairus Ruff examines a wheel on a HMMWV at Forward Operating Base Falcon in Baghdad.

# Patriots assume command from Strike Force

by Spc. Grant T. Okubo

4th IBC, 10th Mtn Div. PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LOYALTY, Iraq – The leadership of 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Light) conducted their first official duty in Baghdad as they accepted command from 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division in The Tomas Sotelo Jr. Soldier’s Theater here, Dec. 29.

The Patriot (4th Inf. BCT) and Strike Force (2nd Inf. BCT) brigades have been working side by side for the past month, with Strike Force Soldiers preparing the Patriots to take control of operations. Now, after the official relief-in-place/transfer of authority (RIP/TOA) ceremony, Strike heads home after a 15-month deployment and Patriot’s work begins.

“Today, the Patriot Brigade takes over the responsibilities of Karada, Rusafa and 9 Nissan (eastern Baghdad) from Strike Force,” said Col. Mark A. Dewhurst, 4th IBC, commander.

“Through their efforts, in partnership with the Iraqis, they have established a much more stable environment that has opened a window of opportunity for the Patriot Brigade to seize upon,” said Dewhurst. “We realize that we now have the ball, and

we must keep moving it down the field. From day one of our arrival, they have treated us as a band of brothers and sisters, imparting their expertise, lessons learned and TTPs (tactics, techniques and procedures) to all of us.”

“For the Patriot Brigade, security is our watch word and is job number one,” declared Dewhurst. “Only when the population feels secure can we get after essential services, sustainable employment and improved governance. We can only accomplish this with our Iraqi partners.”

One significant act that took place during the ceremony was the casing and uncasing of the unit colors. The colors are a part of a time-honored tradition, which represent the Soldiers comprising the unit and the lineage and traditions of the unit. The act of casing the outgoing unit’s and uncasing the incoming unit’s colors symbolizes the transfer of responsibility for the operational environment from the outgoing unit to the incoming unit.



by Spc. Grant Okubo, 4th IBC, 10th Mtn Div., PAO

Col. Mark A. Dewhurst and Command Sgt. Maj. Christopher K. Greca, uncase the brigade colors during the relief-in-place/transfer of authority ceremony.

## Baghdad Three Day Weather Forecast

Thursday

Clear

HI: 64F/18C

LO: 42F/6C



Friday

Clear

HI: 64F/18C

LO: 48F/9C



Saturday

Clear

HI: 59F/15C

LO: 37F/3C



## The Daily Roar

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# Beast unleashed



by Staff Sgt. Mike Pryor, 2nd BCT, 82nd ABN Div. PAO Los Angeles, Calif. native Spc. Mike Land, a forward observer with 'Beast' Company A, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd BCT, 82nd Airborne Division, gets into position on a rooftop to get a bird's eye view of the action on the street below during a search operation in Baghdad's Suleikh neighborhood Dec. 28.



by Staff Sgt. Mike Pryor, 2nd BCT, 82nd ABN Div. PAO Omaha, Neb. native 1st Lt. Evan "El Lobo" Wolf, a platoon leader with 'Beast' Company A, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd BCT, 82nd Airborne Division, gives instructions to Lincoln Park, Mich. native Sgt. Timothy Jacobs just prior to an operation in Baghdad's Suleikh neighborhood Dec. 27.



by Staff Sgt. Mike Pryor, 2nd BCT, 82nd ABN Div. PAO Lincoln Park, Mich. native Sgt. Timothy Jacobs, a squad leader with 'Beast' Company A Special Troops Battalion, 2nd BCT, 82nd Airborne Division, gets moving during a foot patrol.