

5-5 ADA BN Mission Readiness Exercise

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FORT SILL, Okla.- 5th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade completed their mission readiness here last week. The MRE was conducted to ensure that the Soldiers of 5-5 ADA were ready to assume and execute their mission in Afghanistan later this year.

5-5 ADA is currently stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. and is the U.S. Army's newest Indirect Fire Protection Capability/Avenger Composite Battalion.

Before converting to the composite battalion, they were strictly an Avenger battalion, but the need for indirect fire protection capability caused them to transform their battalion.

The Soldiers of 5-5 ADA are now responsible for operating and maintaining the land-based phalanx weapons system or LPWS which provides crucial counter-rockets, artillery and mortars fire protection.

This transition wasn't met without a few obstacles in the road, "When we first initiated the conversion we all had to come together, new and not knowing the aspects of this new system," said Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Bogle, platoon sergeant, 2nd Platoon, Alpha Battery. "I have seen a massive improvement in my Soldiers, we are trying to give our Soldiers real-life scenarios from other Soldiers who have been down range and experienced it."

For some, like Pfc. Brandon Ozuna, this is their first deployment and he is ready to conduct this crucial mission, "We have been training for the last couple of months, but coming here has sparked up all the training that I need to conduct this mission. My favorite part of this training is learning all the new practices and techniques needed to run this system. I want to leave here and be able to go down-range and help people sleep better at night and protect their lives."

This MRE was crucial for the Soldiers of 5-5 ADA, as it validated their ability to perform this mission, "This training is going to greatly impact our mission, we are receiving the training we need to go down-range and protect the lives of the ones living on the FOB," said Spc. Aaron Palmer

"I think this training has brought our collective skills up, to this point we really only have been able to focus on individual skills. This has definitely strengthened the sections, platoons and

batteries confidence in each other, they have been able to tweak and solidify their battle drills,” said 5-5 ADA Command Sgt. Maj., Brian Damron.

“This has been the first true collective training exercise this battalion has had and we have been able to replicate the command and control environment we will be operating at once we are down range. The Soldiers are enthusiastic about getting to do their mission and frankly just excited about getting to get out to the field and practice their trade,” said Lt. Col B.J. Herman, commander, 5-5 ADA.



Soldiers conducting Mission Readiness Exercises on Fort Sill