

# 4-3 ADA conducts live fire exercises

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“NO TRESPASSING. USE OF DEADLY FORCE AUTHORIZED.” This is the sign that leads onto the PATRIOT site that the “Spartans” of C Battery, 4th Battalion 3rd Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade is operating in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility or CENTCOM AOR. The sign is there to serve as a quick reminder to all who pass by that the time for training and hypothetical situations is no longer at hand. While PATRIOT operations are on-going, a group of dedicated Soldiers guard the gate 24 hours a day and control entry, protecting the Soldiers on the site and allowing them to focus on potential threats from the sky instead.

These Soldiers are known as the “Force Protection”. They are the front line defense that prevents any enemy threat from infiltrating the PATRIOT site. Their mission is clear and concise and consists of three tasks: defend, suppress or destroy. There is no room for error as the Force Protection Soldiers play a critical role in ensuring the Spartan Battery Air Defense Crews can perform their wartime mission of deterring and defeating 100 percent of all air breathing and tactical ballistic missile threats to their defended assets in the AOR. One of the trainers and mentors of the Force Protection Staff Sgt. Harrison said, “The overall goal of Force Protection is to keep the Soldiers safe and protected against any kind of ground threat.” The PATRIOT site that the Spartans operate is located on the life support area or LSA in Kuwait.

The LSA serves as the gateway for getting service members to and from Afghanistan as well as getting them back home for rest and recuperation and re-deploying them upon mission completion. Air Defense

Soldiers must stay current on their certifications and skill base while deployed, as well as master and apply their force protection skills. Before deploying, the Spartans focused on training more than anything else. The training was mostly in air defense-related skills but Soldiers also trained on squad battle drills and basic Soldier skills and tasks. Leading up to deployment,

the Spartans implemented Force Protection Operations into their training schedule to cover topics including but not limited to: detainee operations, personnel searches, dealing with the media, and the five S's of Search, Silence, Speed, Segregate, and Safeguard. Staff Sgt. Kinnee commented on his Soldiers by saying, "They are very well trained at what they do. They do it every day; weekdays, weekends, holidays...every day." CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait- Soldiers of the 4th Battalion 3rd Air Defense Artillery Regiment the "I Strike" battalion conducted a remote live fire exercise this month with their Kuwaiti host nation partners. When the Kuwaiti Military conducts a live fire exercise they have the option to request U.S. support. This was a unique opportunity for the "I Strike" Soldiers to interact with their Kuwaiti counterparts and continue to develop and foster an enduring partnership.

Theater security cooperation has been a very high priority for the "I Strike" battalion, while they conduct their Air and Missile Defense mission within the U.S. Army Central Command area of responsibility. This mission allowed the "I Strike" battalion to perform a remote launch live fire exercise, which resulted in 100 percent coverage success with great communication and effective theater security cooperation.

"This is the first time a remote-live-fire or RL3 has been conducted with our host nation partners. It's a great step forward in demonstrating our commitment to build partner nation capacity, allowing them to test their systems while entrusting us to protect their assets," said Maj. Daniel Swanson, the 4-3 battalion operations officer. "I Strike" Soldiers were enthusiastic about the mission and the responsibility entrusted to them. "I've worked very closely with the weapon system for several years now, but this was the first time I was able to see our main weapon system engage," said 1st Lt. Cody Biggs.

This live fire exercise was the first opportunity for many soldiers to see their main weapon system effectively engage and destroy an enemy threat. "The live fire exercise demonstrates the physical capabilities of our system. We often train in simulation, but demonstrating the intent of the weapon system plays an important role in deterrence and showcasing our Soldiers' skills," said Maj. Sharon Aseron, 4-3 ADA battalion executive officer.

The "I Strike" battalion looks forward to future exercises and opportunities to further enhance relations within Kuwait and demonstrate commitment to build host nation capacity and promote regional stability.