

DRAGONS TRAIN TO "FIGHT TONIGHT" WITH ANNUAL EXERCISE

Article and photos by Spc. Shawn Denham, 35th ADA Brigade Public Affairs



At left, Pfc. Lee, Jang-Hun, a Korean Augmentation to the United States Army (KATUSA) with C Battery, 6th Battalion, 52nd Air Defense Artillery (C/6-52 ADA) Regiment, conducts a media engagement session during the 35th ADA Brigade's field training exercise at Camp Humphreys on 23 October 2013.

Osan Air Base, Republic of Korea – The 35th Air Defense Artillery (ADA) Brigade conducted their annual field training exercise (FTX) across the Republic of Korea from 20 through 25 October 2013.

Dragon Brigade elements from across the peninsula took part in this regularly scheduled exercise, designed to ensure the brigade is trained and ready to serve alongside joint U.S. forces, as well as our Republic of Korea (ROK) and other allied nations' militaries.

The FTX started with early-morning movements of the brigade's subordinate units, the 6th Battalion, 52nd Air Defense Artillery (6-52 ADA) Regiment and the 2-1 ADA Regiment. Once at their respective tactical operations locations, the air defenders emplaced their Patriot missile systems and practiced their main mission of defending their assigned sectors from airborne threats.

The scenarios facing the air defenders weren't just limited to their air defense capabilities. Soldiers acting as opposing forces carried out simulated small-arms attacks on strategic locations throughout the brigade.

"We were 'attacked' Friday night," said Sgt. Shawn Dixon, supply sergeant assigned to the 35th ADA Brigade.

At right, Command Sgt. Maj. John Troxell, command sergeant major with United States Forces Korea, visits with air defenders at D/6-52 ADA's operations site on 24 October 2013. Troxell toured the battery's facility during the 35th ADA's field training exercise following a briefing at the brigade headquarters.

The Soldiers defended their positions with rifles, using training rounds to simulate the sights and sounds of actual combat, said Dixon. The brigade was able to repeatedly repel 'enemy assaults' while learning how better to operate and plan for possible future engagements.



“I think it was a success, I think it went really well,” said Dixon. “We learned how to secure the brigade better than when we first planned the exercise.”

A media engagement scenario provided the air defenders with training on how to interact with media journalists, videographers and photographers. It also gave them training in how to tell the Army story while conducting video recorded interviews, and the importance of maintaining operational security at all times.

Soldiers assigned to D/6-52 ADA also participated in decontamination training with their ROK counterparts. The combined forces operated a spray-station to wash vehicles, simulating the removal of chemical, biological or nuclear contamination. They also worked together to exchange contaminated protective suits for clean replacements.

The brigade battle staff operated for the first time out of its new operations center, verifying that it was fully functional and capable of directing the air and missile defense efforts in the Korean Theater of Operations.

“The upgraded capabilities of the new operations center made our battle tracking and staff coordination much more effective,” said Capt. Josh Mitchell, a battle captain with the 35th ADA Brigade.



Above, Soldiers with the 35th ADA Brigade and their Republic of Korea Air Force counterparts operate a nuclear, biological and chemical decontamination exercise during the Dragon brigade's field training exercise at Osan Air Base on 24 October 2013.