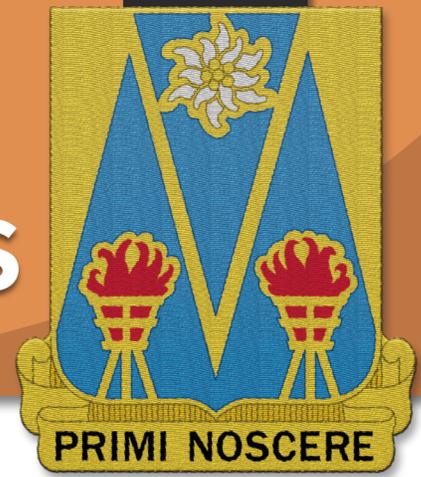


# BUILDING INTERROGATION AND DETENTION OPERATIONS CAPABILITIES IN AREA OF OPERATIONS VICTORY

by Chief Warrant Officer 5 Beau Christenson and Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kyle Clark



## Introduction

In the fall of 2022, the 303<sup>rd</sup> Intelligence and Electronic Warfare (IEW) Battalion (BN) and the 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade deployed in support of V Corps as Task Force Ready. The task force's mission was to conduct intelligence operations in support of U.S. Army Europe and Africa's (USAREUR–AF) Operation European Assure, Deter, and Reinforce. For the first 60 days, Task Force Ready focused on defining the operational environment, understanding the needs of decision makers, and developing a plan of action for effectively employing Task Force Ready's assets to answer V Corps, USAREUR–AF, and European Command (EUCOM) requirements.

In early November 2022, at the USAREUR–AF-led Theater Intelligence Symposium, senior military intelligence (MI) leaders identified a need for the theater to conduct an interrogation and detention operations exercise. The exercise would refine plans, inform NATO policies, and build readiness with partners. Because the headquarters for Task Force Ready and V Corps Forward were at Camp Kościuszko, Poland, a combined event with the Polish Armed Forces seemed the best path forward to conduct this event. The 97<sup>th</sup> Military Police (MP) BN, with their deployment headquarters also at Camp Kościuszko, had a similar requirement to train on detention operations. Following the Theater Intelligence Symposium, Task Force Ready engaged the 97<sup>th</sup> MP BN commander regarding the two organizations hosting a certifying event for interrogation and detention operations.

Task Force Ready and the 97<sup>th</sup> MP BN conducted an initial planning conference to develop a draft concept of operations

and to establish a schedule of in-progress reviews. The commands agreed that the exercise be a Military Intelligence Training Strategy Tier 2 certifying event for the 303<sup>rd</sup> IEW BN by conducting detention facility-based tasks as prescribed in the mission-essential task—*Collect Relevant Information*, while the 97<sup>th</sup> MP BN evaluate their own readiness with tasks listed in mission-essential task—*Establish Detention Facility Operations*. The scope and planned intent were to integrate as many NATO partners as possible in a realistic detention and interrogation scenario against the backdrop of seizing the initiative in the defense of Eastern Europe (Suwalki Gap). An additional intent was providing a foundational basis for discussions to shape NATO detention and interrogation operations, including informing concept of operations plans and refining standard and tactical standard operating procedures for combined operations in support of USAREUR–AF and EUCOM.

## Exercise Concept and Design

Operation Ready Anvil was briefed to the V Corps Commander as a combined event supporting three V Corps lines of effort (LOE):

- ◆ LOE 1: Integrate V Corps enablers into EUCOM and USAREUR–AF campaigns and plans; Increase combat readiness.
- ◆ LOE 2: Develop infrastructure improvement, force protection, and sustainment modernization.
- ◆ LOE 3: Interoperability (human, procedural, technical); Enable partner and allied capacity at echelon; Enable interagency operations.

Additionally, this event would allow both the 303<sup>rd</sup> IEW BN and the 97<sup>th</sup> MP BN to validate mission-essential tasks. The 303<sup>rd</sup> IEW BN mission-essential tasks were—

- ◆ Collect relevant information.
- ◆ Conduct human intelligence (HUMINT) support operations.
- ◆ Conduct counterintelligence (CI) activities.
- ◆ Conduct HUMINT collections at a detention facility.

The 97<sup>th</sup> MP BN mission-essential tasks were—

- ◆ Establish detention facility operations.
- ◆ Coordinate police operations.

At the conclusion of the briefing, the commander of V Corps approved Operation Ready Anvil. Notification of intent to conduct a corps-level combined interrogation and detention exercise was provided to the United States Embassy in Warsaw, Poland, the intelligence staff of impacted United States military commands, and the Department of the Army G-2. In early December 2022, Task Force Ready and V Corps G-2 Forward briefed the Polish Armed Forces General Staff and Operations Command on the intent to conduct Operation Ready Anvil and received a commitment to support the exercise and provide a training location.

The limited time window of the 270-day deployment orders led Task Force Ready and the 97<sup>th</sup> MP BN to quickly hold the first in-progress review for Operation Ready Anvil prior to issuing the warning order. During the in-progress review, the training window for the operation was set for early April because this period allowed the longest planning lead-time,

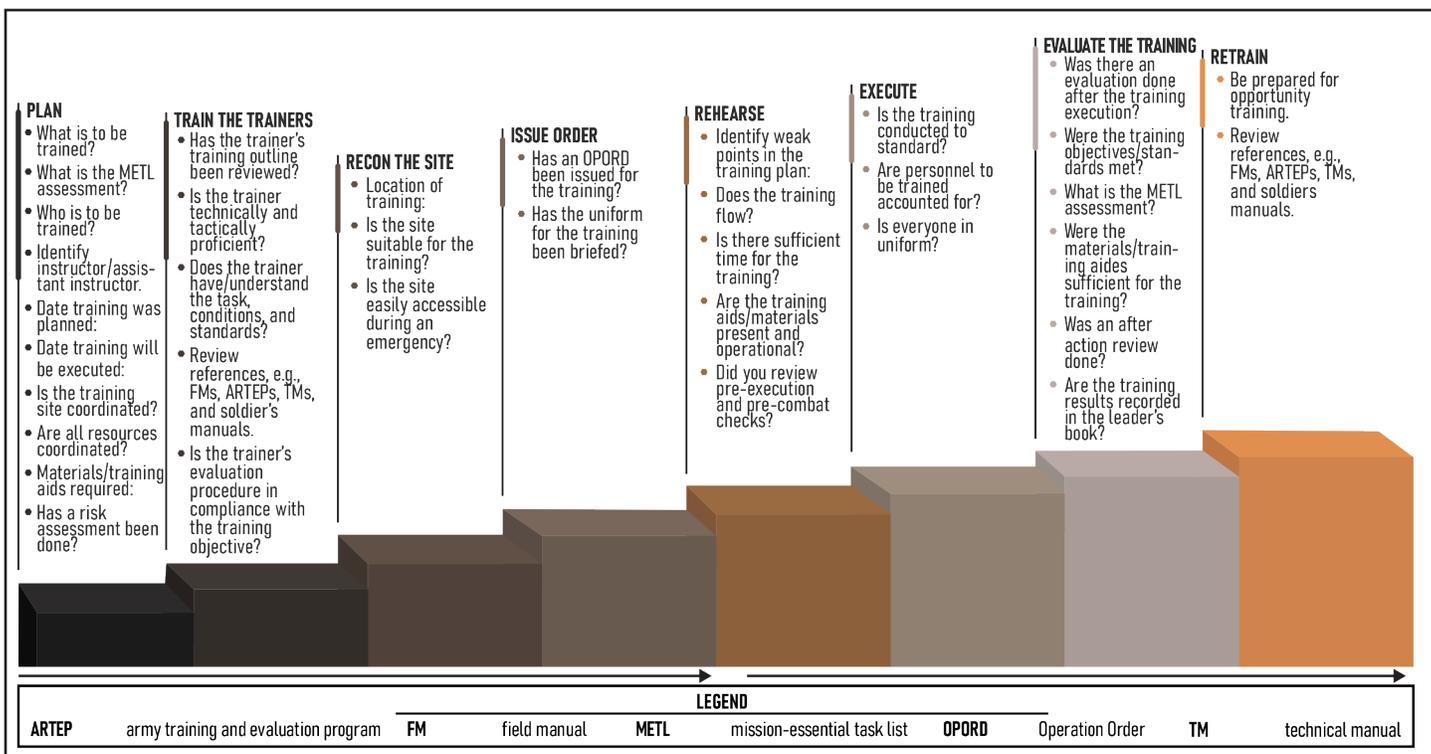
yet it concluded before both units would begin heavily allocating resources toward redeployment activities. This training date offered approximately 120 days to plan an event that typically requires a minimum of 365 days for adequate preparation, along with the additional constraints of requesting role players, coordinating linguist support, and maximizing inclusion of partners.

Task Force Ready's S-3 led the planning effort because the 303<sup>rd</sup> IEW BN and the 97<sup>th</sup> MP BN were fully engaged with operational requirements. The task force S-3 administered the 8-step training model, ensuring timely planning, in-progress reviews, site reconnaissance, orders production, rehearsals, and execution. (See Figure below.)

### Planning Considerations

Because of the abbreviated planning window, the task force command chief warrant officer began coordination for scenario and role development, a training location in Poland, external evaluators, linguist support, and additional partner participation and observation immediately following the initial planning conference.

**Scenario and Role Development.** Task Force Ready could not internally develop the scenario and supporting role player scripts within the abbreviated planning window. The exercise required a minimum of 36 detainee role player scripts to adequately facilitate learning for the training audience that included HUMINT collectors, CI agents, and MPs. In mid-December 2022, the task force submitted a request to the Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) Intelligence Training Center for 24 detainee role player scripts based on



8-Step Training Model<sup>1</sup>

Soldiers from the 97<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion, guide U.S. European Command and U.S. Army Europe and Africa leaders on a tour of Camp Kościuszko in Poznan, Poland. (U.S. Army photo by SGT James Alegria)

a large-scale combat operations scenario and replicating a corps-level holding facility. Task Force Ready committed to developing the additional 10 role player scripts to specifically account for the training requirements of CI agents and MPs. INSCOM also committed to providing three exercise control personnel to support the operation; however, this dropped to one individual when Poland became a prohibited travel area for contractors due to increased threat levels.

Upon receipt, Task Force Ready conducted a full review of the exercise scenario and roles for accuracy and edited the order of battle, locational data, and naming conventions to better reflect the operational picture. Additionally, Task Force Ready ensured all products associated with the exercise received foreign disclosure clearance for release prior to the start of the exercise. Once the initial products were scrubbed and cleared for release, Task Force Ready scripted an additional five roles to account for MP-specific training objectives (nuisance roles), while CI warrant officer technicians from the 163<sup>rd</sup> MI BN at Fort Cavazos prepared nine detention scenario-based CI roles. The inclusion of MP- and CI-specific roles within the interrogation scenario were critical because they accurately captured real-world situations CI agents and MP personnel routinely encounter.

**Location.** During the initial briefing of Operation Ready Anvil to the Polish Armed Forces General Staff, Task Force Ready requested a Polish training location capable of replicating a corps-level holding facility with adequate housing for up to 150 personnel and requisite life-support infrastructure. The Polish Armed Forces agreed to find a training location; however, Task Force Ready underestimated how long this process would take. Task Force Ready planned to confirm a training area by early January 2023 but did not receive the location for training, a site in the Drawsko Pomorskie Training Area (DPTA), until the first week of February. DPTA Range Control required a 14-day lead time prior to granting access to the base for site reconnaissance. Once observed, the training site met the exercise training requirements with several multi-story buildings to replicate the detention facility, office spaces, and adequate lodging for 150 personnel. The training site was also less than a mile from one of the MP BN's subordinate companies on DPTA, which allowed the MP BN to lead coordination of local logistics.

Task Force Ready confirmed the training site approximately seven weeks prior to the exercise. However, an increase in operational training requirements at DPTA to support the Russia-Ukraine crisis resulted in the loss of some training buildings and space. The planning team conducted three additional site reconnaissance visits to refine lodging plans,



communications plans, and exercise design. The team adapted the training scenario to replicate a more expeditionary style, which required both the MP and MI training audience to coordinate and deconflict working and living locations.

**External Evaluators.** Task Force Ready did not have access to external evaluators because of the forward deployed training location in Poland. The scope of the event required several subject matter experts from a range of disciplines to accurately evaluate the 303<sup>rd</sup> IEW BN and the battalion's MI company. Task Force Ready engaged both the V Corps G-2X and the USAREUR-AF G-2X as soon as V Corps approved Operation Ready Anvil to express the need and opportunity for evaluators. Both V Corps and USAREUR-AF recommended direct coordination with their down trace units to request support. The 66<sup>th</sup> MI Brigade-Theater and the 4<sup>th</sup> Security Force Assistance Brigade committed to providing HUMINT evaluators.

The remainder of the required evaluators came from continental United States-based units. Task Force Ready initially intended to request evaluators from III Corps; however, in early January 2023 the U.S. Army Reserve emerged as a viable option. Coordination efforts with the Military Intelligence Readiness Command resulted in the Army Reserve Intelligence Support Centers (ARISC) providing one all-source, one CI, and two HUMINT subject matter experts, as well as two military intelligence officers (military occupational specialty 35A) as evaluators. The ARISC personnel were trained evaluators, which was invaluable. Task Force Ready was fortunate to obtain their support on short notice; normal lead time is one year.

**Linguist Support.** The use of interpreters for both interrogation and detention operations was a key component for Operation Ready Anvil to provide realism and complexity for the training audience. Again, the Russia-Ukraine conflict directly impacted the ability to easily obtain linguist support because all available linguists in theater were already committed. Through coordination with the USAREUR-AF G-2 Training, Readiness, and Exercise section, Task Force Ready was able to obtain a contracting solution for 16 Category I civilian Russian linguists.<sup>2</sup>

The initial intent was to conduct the exercise with 40 Russian linguists—6 interpreters and 34 detainee role players. However, the limited availability of linguists forced an adjustment to the exercise design resulting in the contract linguists serving as 5 interpreters and 11 Russian-speaking detainee role players. U.S. service members in theater from Task Force Ready and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment became the source of an additional 23 English-speaking detainee role players. While less than optimal, this design allowed each interrogator to conduct at least one interrogation using an interpreter.

Task Force Ready planned the exercise around 12-hour days because of the limitation imposed by using contractors as role players. While this was sufficient to meet the needs of the MI training audience, the MPs needed role players in detention 24 hours each day to accomplish all their evaluation criteria. By having 23 of the role players sourced from U.S. Soldiers, Task Force Ready adjusted the training exercise to include 24-hour interrogation and detention operations. This change also allowed the 303<sup>rd</sup> IEW BN to conduct operations with two 12-hour shifts, employing split staffs, and executing shift changes and turnovers. Conducting detention and interrogation operations on a continuous schedule provided an additional layer of realism and complexity not seen in most interrogation or detention exercises.

**Additional Partner Participation and Observation.** Understanding the importance of the first-ever combined detention and interrogation event held in Poland, Task Force Ready extended invitations across the theater for observers, subject matter expert advisors, and visitors. The task force extended an invitation to USAREUR–AF G-2X for their participation and for them to invite other NATO partners, as appropriate. The task force coordinated with HUMINT elements from the British Armed Forces and Canadian Armed Forces. Additionally, Task Force Ready invited the following organizations to observe the exercise:

- ◆ NATO Multinational Corps Northeast.
- ◆ NATO HUMINT Center of Excellence.
- ◆ V Corps command team.
- ◆ USAREUR–AF G-2.
- ◆ EUCOM G-2.

The expressed interests in Operation Ready Anvil and its outputs were high; however, the limited time between the invitations going out and the start of the exercise hampered outside organizations' ability to send participants and observers. Many organizations had commitments to other requirements or were tasked to support emerging requirements as the exercise approached. The following organizations participated with observers or distinguished visitors during Operation Ready Anvil:

- ◆ V Corps: members of the corps senior leadership including the Deputy Commanding General-Support, Deputy Commanding General-Interoperability, and the Deputy Chief of Staff-Forward/Corps Provost Marshal.
- ◆ NATO Multinational Corps Northeast J-2X: three Polish field-grade officers.
- ◆ NATO HUMINT Center of Excellence: one Polish HUMINT officer and one Romanian HUMINT noncommissioned officer.
- ◆ USAREUR–AF G-2X: one U.S. Army HUMINT warrant officer.

The feedback received by observers and distinguished visitors was positive in nature and echoed the need for events like Operation Ready Anvil to provide realistic training replicating operations in a NATO Article 5 event. Operation Ready Anvil represents a foundational event for further interrogation and detention operations discussions within NATO.

#### NATO Article 5 Collective Defense

"In 1949, the primary aim of the North Atlantic Treaty was to create a pact of mutual assistance to counter risk from the Soviet Union seeking to extend its control of Eastern Europe to other parts of the continent. Every participating country agreed that this form of solidarity was at the heart of the Treaty, effectively making Article 5 on collective defense a key component of the Alliance. Article 5 specifies that if a NATO ally is the victim of an armed attack, every other member of the Alliance will consider this act of violence an armed attack against all members and will take the actions it deems necessary to assist the ally attacked."<sup>3</sup>

#### Partner Integration

Polish Armed Forces Operations Command committed four Polish HUMINT soldiers to participate in Operation Ready Anvil (one major, one lieutenant, and two warrant officers). They received notification three weeks before the start of the exercise and did not participate in planning. These Polish Armed Forces participants were relatively new to interrogations, with an average of two years in the field, and the basis of their knowledge originated from attending NATO HUMINT Center of Excellence courses. Task Force Ready pre-planned to integrate our Polish partners fully into the United States HUMINT teams—a plan the Polish Armed Forces participants fully supported. This arrangement produced quick team development with ideas shared and discussed openly by the second day of training.

The Polish Armed Forces participants received an introduction to and briefing on the roles of all United States MI personnel in the training audience at Operation Ready Anvil. As a first-ever event of this kind in Poland, it was important to educate partners about how the United States conducts intelligence operations and establish a base layer of mutual understanding for future events of this type. Additionally, the Polish Armed Forces participants shared their focused

understanding and knowledge about how the regional enemy thinks and fights. This knowledge assisted the U.S. HUMINTers in their development and implementation of effective interrogation approach strategies and questioning plans.

## Conducting the Exercise

Operation Ready Anvil began with 4 days of site setup, role player training, evaluator certification, rehearsals, integrated academics and battle drills with the MPs, and other preparations. A 30-hour warm start prior to a mandatory one-day pause for the Easter holiday followed. After Easter, continuous operations resumed for the next 4 days. Participants conducted an after action review and began site tear-down following the end of the exercise. All participants cleared the training area by noon of the following day.

Ready Anvil was intentionally limited in duration because both the 303<sup>rd</sup> IEW BN and 97<sup>th</sup> MP BN were assigned to active missions, which operated at minimal manning during this event. A 2-week event was the minimal amount of time needed to successfully achieve the commanders' intent for the exercise. Additionally, a longer event was not feasible because of the high demand for training sites in Poland to train Ukrainian forces.

## Ukraine Impacts

Throughout planning the Russia-Ukraine conflict was an ever-present challenge. First, most of the training audience was already committed to real-world operations in support of the conflict, so both planning and conducting Operation Ready Anvil stressed the organizations involved. Second, the British Armed Forces and Canadian Armed Forces each expressed interest in sending HUMINT personnel to support the exercise, but both countries had to withdraw their support prior to the exercise because of operational requirements. Finally, the increased support requirements for training Ukrainian personnel in the spring led to a loss of time and space at the training site. This forced continual refinement of the exercise until the start of the training event.

## Outcomes

Operation Ready Anvil was effective in driving forward discussions on interrogation and detention operations both during large-scale combat operations and in the event of a NATO Article 5 declaration. Observers from both the NATO Multinational Corps Northeast and the NATO HUMINT Center of Excellence highlighted processes and lessons learned during this event to capture in NATO policy. The Polish Armed Forces participants identified United States tactics, such as the screening process, that would be beneficial in their tactics, techniques, and procedures. A white paper is currently in the submission process, which captures the importance of conducting combined interrogation and detention exercises to help shape and refine NATO policies. Finally, lessons learned from this event will be briefed to the U.S. Army

Intelligence Center of Excellence, Directorate of Training and Doctrine; U.S. Army Forces Command, G-2; and Department of the Army, G-2.

## Conclusion

Preparing for any interrogation exercise is a major planning effort. The inclusion of detention operations led by an MP BN, the integration of partners, and the establishment of a detention facility at a partner training facility away from home station is magnitudes more difficult. Additionally, this was a first-ever event of this type conducted in Poland within the V Corps footprint. There was not an existing blueprint or timeline outlining how to conduct Operation Ready Anvil. Multiple staff elements had to work through the problems by effectively using the 8-step training model and by careful and continuous coordination with the Polish Armed Forces, higher headquarters, INSCOM Intelligence Training Center, ARISC, United States Embassy Warsaw, and others. The lessons learned were of equal or greater importance than the event itself; they provide a framework, not only for V Corps but for the larger force, on how to conduct realistic training where Active Duty forces execute detention and interrogation operations prior to the mobilization of the Army Reserve and National Guard MI and MP units. 

## Endnotes

1. Figure adapted from original. See "8 Step Training Model," Office of the Chief of Armor (OCA), U.S. Army Armor School, U.S. Army Fort Moore and the Maneuver Center of Excellence, last updated August 15, 2023, 06:22:55, <https://www.moore.army.mil/Armor/OCA/content/References%20and%20Guides/8%20Step%20Training%20Model.pdf>; and Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 7-0, *Training* (Washington, DC: Government Publishing Office [GPO], 14 June 2021), 3-9.
2. Department of the Army, FM 2-0, *Intelligence* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1 October 2023), E-5. Appendix E of FM 2-0 provides additional information about the three categories of civilian contract linguists. It also provides information about other sources of language support.
3. "Collective defence and Article 5," What We Do, North Atlantic Treaty Organization, last updated 04 July 2023, 11:47, [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_110496.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_110496.htm).

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