



The Road to Law Enforcement

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In August 2011, the 591st Military Police Company, Fort Bliss, Texas, participated in a month-long training program to prepare for a community law enforcement mission at Fort Bliss. The “Road to Law Enforcement” training program was conducted as a result of lessons learned from a previous community law enforcement mission. The training—which focused on paperwork procedures, crime scene security, drug recognition, officer safety, traffic stops, basic vehicle operations, marksmanship, active-shooter response procedures, responses to domestic disturbances, and hostage situations—was instrumental to the success of the 591st Military Police Company in carrying out their community law enforcement mission at Fort Bliss from September 2011 through the beginning of January 2012.

Fort Bliss consists of 1.1 million acres of land, several access control points, and 170,000 Service members, families, and civilians; therefore, it is an extremely demanding post to police. As a result, the

company approach to law enforcement training was similar to the way in which units conduct “Road to War” training.¹ For their Road to War training, Fort Bliss military police units enter



A Soldier from the 591st Military Police Company conducts a traffic stop during a practical exercise.

a “black cycle” (a predetermined training period) in which they focus on the specific tactics, techniques, and procedures needed for the upcoming mission. Upon completion of the training, Soldiers and units are confident, certified, and qualified to assume their designated mission. The 591st Military Police Company placed that same emphasis on preparing for the community law enforcement mission.



A Soldier from the 591st Military Police Company initiates a traffic stop during a practical exercise.

The 591st Military Police Company law enforcement training covered the scope of the primary daily duties of military police. The 591st coordinated with on-post law enforcement agencies, the Directorate of Emergency Services, Military Police Investigation, and the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command (commonly referred to as “CID”) and also resourced outside agencies. The company conducted unprecedented joint training with state troopers from the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS).

The 591st Soldiers began their training with Directorate of Emergency Services instruction on the proper procedures for completing paperwork, including Fort Bliss (FB) Form 1303, *Information Worksheet*; Department of Defense (DD) Form 1408, *Armed Forces Traffic Ticket*; and the Central Violations Bureau (CVB) citation, *United States District Court Violation Notice*. FB Form 1303 is an information worksheet used by military police specifically for investigating an incident at Fort Bliss.

The DD Forms 1408 and CVB citations are commonly used across the Army. Military police must be capable of correctly completing these documents to ensure the proper prosecution of offenses. Classroom training was reinforced by scenario-based practical exercises in which the students’ paperwork was used in a mock trial. This further emphasized the importance of following proper procedures and the significance of second- and third-order effects of military police statements.

Military Police Investigation staff conducted training on military police investigation requirements and expectations when dispatched to a scene. The training covered securing a crime scene, sketching a crime scene, and conducting field interviews.

CID representatives presented drug recognition training and described the ever-changing variety of synthetic drugs such as Spice



The 591st Military Police Company and Texas state troopers conduct joint training on high-risk traffic stops.



A Soldier from the 591st Military Police Company is shadowed by a Texas state trooper during a traffic stop practical exercise.

and Bath Salts. The training also included types of packaging and the methods and tactics used to conceal drug paraphernalia and other contraband items.

State troopers from the Texas DPS provided in-depth instruction on basic officer safety. They covered the nine deadly “kill zones” of a motor vehicle, vehicle positions when conducting a traffic stop, the proper approach to and stance at a suspect vehicle, and the process of conducting felony traffic stops. The students of the 591st were then placed in a variety of Directorate of Emergency Services and Texas DPS vehicles and required to conduct multiple traffic stop scenarios ranging from speeding stops to felony traffic stops. During this training, the students were shadowed by Texas state troopers, who provided them with detailed feedback on their performances. Once this stage of training was complete, the class moved on to more complex tasks requiring

partners or teams—the intent being to train and certify individual Soldiers and teams.

Next, the Soldiers of the 591st completed a modified Emergency Vehicle Operations Course led by unit leaders and the



A Soldier from the 591st Military Police Company prepares for his final modified Emergency Vehicle Operations Course practical exercise.



The 591st Military Police Company and Texas state troopers conduct joint driver's training.


Texas DPS. The modified Emergency Vehicle Operations Course consisted of 3 grueling days of intensive driving, focusing on simple, applicable vehicle skills—rather than on conducting high-speed maneuvers such as J-turns. Together, the company and the Texas DPS developed driving courses designed to meet the specific challenges that military police face while performing their duties at Fort Bliss. For example, students were required to perform simple tasks, such as backing a vehicle with the mirrors folded in—which forced the Soldiers to turn around to negotiate the course. To further improve Soldier confidence, the training was conducted on improved and unimproved surfaces. The vehicle training ended with a driving course that tested each of the instructed tasks. The course consisted of more than 400 traffic cones arranged over a distance of 150 yards. Soldiers were expected to maneuver through the course without making contact with more than five cones. Those who were unsuccessful were immediately informed of their deficiencies, provided with remedial training, and required to again attempt to negotiate the course to standard. At the end of the driver training week, the Texas state troopers indicated that they were extremely pleased with the progress of the 591st Soldiers and with their enthusiasm throughout the training. Leaders of the 591st concluded that the driver training was an extremely beneficial composite risk management control measure for the troops as they prepared to assume the lengthy community law enforcement mission. Due to the success of the modified Emergency Vehicle Operations Course, the 93d Military Police Battalion adopted the training for their subordinate units who were preparing to assume community law enforcement missions.

Following driver training, the 591st Military Police Company conducted a week of training on the M4 and M9 weapons systems. Soldiers completed advanced marksmanship training using shoot–don't shoot scenarios.

1 day of classroom training followed by 2 days of intense, active-shooter lanes. The various training scenarios challenged the Soldiers to respond to a domestic disturbance, a barricaded subject, and a hostage situation. During the training scenarios, instructors and role players used airsoft munitions to add realism and provide students with immediate feedback. In addition, instructors continuously critiqued the Soldiers' response tactics.

The Road to Law Enforcement training proved extremely valuable to the 591st Military Police Company. The training greatly enhanced the confidence and competence of the Soldiers and the unit. The 591st now consists of motivated law enforcement professionals who *Assist, Protect, and Defend*. In addition, the training has also strengthened the partnership between Fort Bliss and the Texas state troopers.

Endnote:

¹Road to War training is a specified training routine conducted by a unit before it is deployed. 

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