

The mission of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment is to conduct ARFORGEN Operations to restore combat capacity in order to support Seventh US Army and future Central Command contingency operations. Prior to its reorganization as a Stryker unit of action, the Regiment's mission was to, upon receiving orders, rapidly deploy and execute reconnaissance and security operations anywhere in the world and be prepared to fight upon arrival and win.

The 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment had the distinction of being the "Longest Active Serving Cavalry Regiment in the United States Army." The 2nd Stryker Cavalry was first constituted on 23 May 1836 as the 2nd Regiment of Dragoons to fight in the Florida Seminole Indian Campaigns. The Dragoon, a mounted infantryman, was deemed the most capable to defeat the agile and elusive Seminole. Following action against the Seminole, the Regiment went on to serve in the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, the Punitive Expeditions in Mexico, the First World War and the Second World War. Following the end of World War II, what had become the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment remained in Germany, where it would be stationed for almost a half century.

During the Cold War era, what was then the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment was responsible for surveillance of 731 kilometers along the Iron Curtain. Its section included 375 kilometers of the border separating West and East Germany, as well as the entire 356 kilometers of the West German-Czechoslovakian border. From a distance the border area appeared deceptively peaceful and scenic. Closer inspection however revealed the Iron Curtain's massive and deadly barrier system. Its series of metal mesh fences topped with barbed wire and equipped with sensitive warning devices, guard towers with interlocking fields of observation, and concrete walls similar to those found in Berlin were an imposing deterrent to those on both sides. Only a few legal crossing points existed and these were heavily guarded and fortified.

The former East German and Czech border commands consisted of hand picked individuals who were considered politically reliable and were well-trained in marksmanship and surveillance skills. The low number of successful escapes from East Germany, normally about 25 a year in the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment sector, testified to the deadly efficiency of the barrier system. The Walt Disney feature film "Flight to Freedom" depicted a successful escape by a family from East Germany into the Regiment's border region.



To conduct continuous border surveillance in sector, the Regiment operated 6 border camps in addition to the home garrisons of the squadrons. Camp Harris located in the town of Coberg, Kingsley Barracks in Hof, Camp Gates in Brand, Camp Pitman in Weiden, Camp Reed in Rosts, and Camp May in Regen. From the border camps, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment units patrolled their border sectors both by vehicle and on foot. Helicopters from the 4th Squadron assisted from the air. At each border camp, a reaction force was kept on standby around the clock and could clear the camp within minutes of the alert horn sounding.

The Regiment also worked closely with the German border agencies, the BGS (Bundesgrenzschutz) and BBP (Bavarian Border Patrol), and the ZOLL (customs) Police, sharing

intelligence information and conducting joint patrols. The mission of the Regiment demanded the constant vigilance and dedication of all the soldiers stationed along the wall.

In November of 1989, the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment witnessed the opening of the Iron Curtain. With the fall of the communist bloc in Eastern Europe, regular border patrols were discontinued on 1 March 1990, ending the Cold War phase of the Regiment's history.



On 8 November 1990, the Regiment was in the process of redefining its post-Cold War mission when it was alerted for deployment to Saudi Arabia. On 11 November 1990, what had been VII Corps' initial instructions to "move no earlier than 20 November" became "begin movement tomorrow."

Leading the VII Corps deployment to Saudi Arabia, the Regiment occupied assembly areas deep in the Saudi desert by mid-December. There, intensive training and planning for the ground offensive took place for several months. The 210th Artillery Brigade, AH-64A Apache helicopters of the 2-1st Aviation, the 82nd Engineer Battalion, and other assets were added to form the 8,500 strong "Draagoon Battle Group."

This battle group, which had worked together in Europe, continued to train and to provide security for the Corps through the commencement of hostilities. The Regiment, commanded by Colonel Leonard D. "Don" Holder, the 65th Colonel of the Regiment, was given the following mission: "At G-day, H-hour, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment attacks through the western flank of the enemy defenses and conducts offensive cover operations in order to develop the situation for VII Corps." On 23 February 1991, artillery fire prepped the area and the Regiment attacked, breaching the Iraqi-Saudi border berm and moving north into Iraq. It was the first time the Regiment had seen combat in over 45 years.

For the next 72 hours the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment spearheaded the VII Corps' attack as it advanced into southern Iraq. On 26 February 1991, the Regiment fought a series of fierce engagements with elements of 4 Iraqi divisions, 3 of them armored or mechanized. Best known was the "Battle of 73 Easting" in which G, E, and I Troops destroyed an entire armored brigade. By the end of its covering force mission, the Regiment had broken the defensive line of the Republican Guard's Tawakalna Division and led 3 heavy divisions into the fight. During the 100-hour war, the Regiment moved over 250 kilometers, captured over 2000 prisoners, and destroyed 159 enemy tanks and 260 other fighting vehicles. Its actions against the Iraqi divisions have become textbook examples of modern tank warfare. The Battle Group had limited its casualties to 7 soldiers killed in action and 19 wounded.

After the cease-fire, the Regiment moved into Kuwait, and then back into Iraq, occupying a position along the demarcation line south of the Euphrates River. From there, it monitored the border for compliance with the cease-fire and provided humanitarian aid to thousands of Iraqi refugees escaping the ravages of the conflict.

The Regiment was relieved on the demarcation line on 7 April 1991, and returned to Saudi Arabia for redeployment to the Federal Republic of Germany. The Regiment earned 2 more tan colored streamers for the Regimental standard and the red with blue streamer of the Valorous Unit Award for actions in Southwest Asia.

As part of the draw-down of forces in Europe after the Cold War, the Regiment relocated to Fort Lewis, Washington, in 1992. The unit was redesignated as the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment (Light) and tasked with developing a new organizational structure for a lethal, yet more rapidly deployable cavalry.

In the summer of 1993 the Regiment moved again to Fort Polk, Louisiana. The Second Dragoons became the cavalry regiment for the XVIII Airborne Corps, serving as part of a rapid deployment force able to move quickly anywhere around the globe. In addition, the Regiment played an important part in cultivating the war fighting skills of the Army's light forces through its continual support of the Joint Readiness Training Center. By augmenting both opposing and friendly forces, the Dragoons helped to provide the light soldiers with the most realistic training they can receive.

In January 1995, the Regiment was called upon to reinforce American foreign policy through the aptly named and highly successful United Nations mission "Operation Uphold Democracy." The Second Dragoons were an essential part of a multinational force that helped the Haitians reestablish democracy. The soldiers of the Regiment provided security for legislative and presidential elections and ensured the first democratic transition of power in that country's history.



The Regiment rotated Headquarters Troop and all 3 of its maneuver squadrons to the fledgling democracy between January 1995 and March 1996, with the Support Squadron providing logistical support. While in Haiti, the troopers of the Second Dragoons operated in a variety of roles. They guarded humanitarian relief convoys filled with food for the Haitian people and served as the United Nations Quick Reaction Force (UNQRF). By assisting in the seizure of illegal weapons and conducting security patrols, the Regiment helped to restore civil order to the capital of Port-Au-Prince and throughout the Haitian countryside. They provided protection not only to the Haitian president, but also to the US president and vice president on their state visits. In all of these missions, the Second Dragoons displayed the professionalism and dedication to duty that have characterized the Regiment since its inception.

In April of 1997 the Regiment received a Warning Order to be prepared to deploy to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Following the first Mission Rehearsal Exercise held at the JRTC in June 1997, the unit moved to Germany to begin integration with the 1st Armored Division. Meanwhile, all its equipment was shipped to the Intermediate Staging Base at Tazar, Hungary.

The Regiment's participation in Operation Joint Guard began when the 2nd and 3rd Squadrons moved across the Sava River into Bosnia in August 1997 to augment the 1st Infantry Division (Forward) in support of Bosnia-Herzegovina's first free municipal elections. The Regiment's air

cavalry squadron, the 4th Squadron and the Regimental Support Squadron also moved into the country. The Regiment's separate companies, the 502d Military Intelligence Company, 84th Engineer Company, H Company (Aviation Maintenance), 159th Aviation Regiment, and the Air Defense Battery, completed the Regimental troop list.

While the ground squadrons were in Bosnia, the Regimental headquarters deployed to Germany to train with the 1st Armored Division Headquarters in preparation for assuming command in Bosnia. During August and September 1997, the Regiment was spread across 5 countries on 2 continents, and was under the direct command and control of 3 different general officer commands. This period included another first for any army unit during a 12-month period: The Regiment participated in major training exercises at all three of the Army's Combat Training Centers: The National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, and the Combined Maneuver Training Center (CMTC) at Hohenfels, Germany. In October 1997, the remainder of the Regiment rode into theater, assuming responsibility for the American sector of Multinational Division (North), which stretched from the war-torn bridge at Brcko in the north to the shattered city of Srebrenica in the south.

The first major action of the Regiment in Bosnia was the seizing of Serbian radio-television towers to prevent the broadcast of inflammatory propaganda into the Republic of Srpska. Other significant operations that the Regiment conducted included: the restructuring of the Republic of Srpska Specialist Police; the creation of the first multiethnic police department, in the city of Brcko; security for the announcement of the Brcko Arbitration Decision (an effort to resolve the status of this Serb-dominated city within Bosnia); institution of common license plates and currency in Bosnia, and the opening of the Bosnian rail system. In conducting operations in sector, the Regiment executed an estimated 12,500 patrols and 480 weapon storage site inspections, supervised the removal of over 12,000 mines, and oversaw 350 training exercises for the Former Warring Factions.

The Regiment's redeployment to Fort Polk, Louisiana marked the end of its eighth operational overseas deployment in the service of the country. It returned home to reassume its mission as the armored cavalry regiment of the XVIII Airborne Corps and to await the call to service.



B Troop, 1st Squadron, deployed to Southwest Asia on 13 April 2002 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and the Global War on Terrorism. There, the unit served in Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan, and Djibouti providing port and site security. The unit was relieved by L Troop, 3rd Squadron, in October 2002.

With deployments beginning in April 2003, the Regiment deployed as a whole to Iraq in May 2003. The 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment spent a year in the eastern part of Baghdad, helping the people of that city rebuild their lives and regain their livelihood. When the Regiment received orders to move south, they assumed responsibility for the city of Najaf.

An increase in the number of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED's) found in November 2003 was a clear indicator that the enemy was getting frustrated with 2nd Armored Cavalry's success

and sought to interrupt the ongoing progress to rebuild the post-Saddam Iraq. The Regiment continued to conduct combat operations to capture or destroy the enemy. The unit came to face a different environment with the start of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. As a command, the unit focused on this important holiday season for the Iraqi people in an effort to gain more cultural awareness. With increasing unrest among the local Shiia leaders resulting in increasing violence in the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment's zones the men and women of the Regiment faced severe challenges and rose to the occasion.

The Regiment continued to take the fight to the anti-Coalition forces by conducting daily patrols and raids to disrupt the terrorist cells operating in our area of operations in Baghdad. Although progress continued Baghdad was still a dangerous place. The first priority remained conducting combat operations to capture or destroy the enemy. Numerous raids in the Regiment's zone continued to result in the capture of dangerous criminals/terrorists intent on disrupting the transition of authority to the Iraqi people. In addition, the Iraqi Civilian Defense Corps continued to play a larger and more central role in Regimental operations. The Regiment, under direction from higher headquarters, has continued to expand this successful program.

In January 2004, the Regiment received a visit by the senior leadership from the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, which was slated to replace 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment upon its redeployment. The Regiment did everything in its power to take care of them and to make the transition a smooth one.

In support of Army initiatives to meet evolving security requirements, the Army designated the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment to transform as an element of the Interim Force to the 2nd Interim Cavalry Regiment, a medium-weight force that was strategically responsive and more rapidly deployable by air. In October 1999, the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army articulated a vision to posture the Army to meet the demands of the 21st century: The Army Vision is about people, readiness, and transformation. Transformation addresses the need for change based on emerging security challenges of the 21st century. Chief among these challenges is the need to be able to respond more rapidly to different types of operations requiring military action. Toward these ends, the Army will field an Interim Force to address strategic near-term capability gaps and to validate and develop operational concepts on which subsequent transformation planning and implementation activities can logically build. Ultimately, the Army will field an Objective Force designed to render the Army more responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable, and sustainable.

The Army announced on 23 July 2004, that a Brigade Combat Team Unit of Action (BCT/UA) would be located at Fort Polk, Louisiana. This unit, the 4th Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, was a new light infantry unit that will be formed in 2005. The 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, then stationed at Fort Polk, would move to Fort Lewis, Washington.

The Army announced on 14 May 2004 that 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment (Light), would begin the transformation to an Infantry-based Stryker Brigade upon its return from Operation Iraqi Freedom. At that time the Army signed a Record of Decision related to transformation of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment into a Stryker Brigade Combat Team. The Army remained committed to taking care of its soldiers during the transition. This decision supported Army

efforts to transform to meet existing and future challenges in the War on Terror. The unit was expected to attain an initial operational capability (IOC) as an infantry-designed SBCT by late 2006. The conversion of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment to an infantry-centric SBCT supported the Army's transition to modularity, standardized the design for all 6 planned SBCTs, and increased the number of Army infantry formations available to combatant commanders worldwide to set the tempo of battle and act decisively against enemy forces.

At a press conference on 13 August 2004, Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee pointed out that Fort Lewis, Washington as home of the first 2 Stryker Brigades, was well suited to support the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment's transformation. Additionally, the stationing of modular BCT/UAs was operationally imperative now to ensure the Army was properly postured to fully support its strategic commitments and to transform to a campaign-quality force with joint and expeditionary capabilities that meet the demands of the Combatant Commanders. The locations for BCT/UA were selected based on existing capacities, available training space, and existing locations of similar units. The Army would address permanent stationing through the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) 2005 analysis.

On June 1, 2006 at Ft Lewis, WA, a large Army reflagging ceremony occurred. The 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division's colors were cased, the colors of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment were transferred, and the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division colors were uncased. Two respected military units conducted a joint reflagging ceremony at Gray Army Airfield. The 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division deactivated to be reflagged as 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, while the Regiment, in turn, joined the 2nd Infantry Division, reflagging as the new 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division. In its history that began in 1917, 2nd Infantry Division had never included a 4th Brigade. The former 2nd Cavalry Regiment would begin a fresh set of traditions as a brand new Stryker brigade combat team in the Indianhead Division.

The newly constituted 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment completed its move to Germany in the summer of 2006. There it joined US Army Europe (USAEUR) as part of V Corps. This was part of the transformation of USAEUR to a lighter, more agile force.

On 20 October 2009, the Department of Defense announced additional planned Afghanistan Deployments. The 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division, Fort Campbell, Kentucky; 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, Vilseck, Germany; and 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, Iowa National Guard would begin deployment to Afghanistan starting in Spring 2010.

The spring/summer rotation of the 1st BCT, 101st Airborne Division (3,700 personnel) and the 2nd SCR (4,000 personnel) continued the U.S. commitment to maintain the existing level of forces assigned to the NATO-International Security Assistance Force (ISAF).