



# News Release

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## Island Warrior tests joint military skills

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POHAKULOA TRAINING AREA, Hawaii—The mission was to kill or capture Al Quida and Taliban high value target elements at the Afghanistan village, destroy the weapons training facility, and set conditions for the reconstruction, economic development and adhere to the laws of the government.

Island Warrior, a U.S. Army/U.S. Marine Corps joint combined arms exercise at Pohakuloa Training Area's (PTA) training ranges, on Oct. 22 and 23, was based on that Afghanistan combat scenario mission.

The conceptualized exercise was executed to test the Marine Air Group 24's training capabilities for assault support missions and Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) procedures, equipment, and capabilities.

It was also an exercise to test the joint tactical and communication capabilities of the U.S. Army's 25<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment that took part as the air raid assault lead with its OH-58D helicopters.

The key players included MAG-24 as the mission command unit, HMM-463, raid air mission command unit and assault flight lead, HMM-362, as the assault flight lead with recon and inserts, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marines, 3/3 as the raid force command unit and opposing force, U.S. Army's Combat Aviation Brigade, 2<sup>nd</sup> Squadron, 6 Cavalry Regiment as detached escort with their OH-58D Kiowa helicopters, and the U.S. Navy's CPRW-2 with their P-3C airplanes.

The scenario on the raid, at Pohakuloa's POW camp range, initially had the Marines' HMM 362, "Ugly Angels", insert snipers and reconnaissance personnel prior to the assault. The enemy units had a weapons training facility located in the area.

"My understanding of the exercise is there is a high value target at the village, and there's a raid force trying to capture and kill the individual target, said Capt Jason Hansen, 3/3 Marines, Weapons Company commander. "We are using PTA's POW camp range as an Afghanistan village scenario and using the integration of the Marines' 442, 81mm. blocking positions, and the integration of the Army's CAB Kiowa helicopters in conducting this raid.

"At this time, we are transitioning to the portion where the high value target had enemy supporting units coming to reinforce them while the Army's Kiowa helicopters are going to displace the enemy units and hold off any threats."

Soon the Army's 25 CAB, 2/6 CAV swept in with a blanket fire in the area as the Marines HMM-463's CH-53 helicopters brought a platoon to conduct the assault lead.

The helicopters would also see action at another range location as the crew tested their communication and coordination capabilities while shooting their objective targets at the PTA's southern Range 20.

At another training range, just south of Pu'u Ahi, Soldiers and Marines prepared to coordinate an air assault on target locations.

"The Marines' forward air controllers, with their tactical radios, atop of the pu'u, would communicate with the Army's OH-58D helicopter crew, directing them toward the intended target locations," Hanson said. "Marines personnel would use vectors, laser range finders, as they communicated with Marine mortar platoons, set up at the bottom of the pu'u, with distance identifications and the grid locations and prepare to fire."

They did this to provide mortar fire to mark the locations prior to the Army helicopters arrival on the scene. Soon the Army helicopters swept the air from left to right as the crew aggressively flew by and fired up the intended target locations.

In addition to the Army and the Marines, the U.S. Navy did have a part in the exercise, even though it was hard to notice, as the flight crew of the Navy's P-3C planes shot imagery of the exercise from a distance of 16,000 to 20,000 feet above the Pohakuloa, according to Gunnery Sgt. Andrew Yellope, PTA's USMC liaison.

As the tactical objectives were tested and area tactics, fires, logistics, and communication concluded at PTA's training ranges, Island Warrior strengthened the operational capacity and capability for the C4ISR and joint force integration of

military assets. Success has been achieved during this joint exercise through sustained operations excellence and combat operations for the future battlefield.

“It’s been a great opportunity for the Marines to do joint training with the Army, coming together to do a training raid as well as integrate communication and live fire with Army air support,” said Hansen.