



News Release

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403rd AFSBn-NEA supports Korea exercise

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ROCK ISLAND, Ill. – Putting its wartime mission to the test, a key element of the 403rd Army Field Support Brigade delivered combat-ready equipment to troops participating in the second annual Key Resolve / Foal Eagle Exercise March 9 - 20.

Exercise KR/FE 09, involving forces from the United States and Republic of Korea, is designed to demonstrate support for the ROK Army against external aggression, while evaluating and improving combat readiness and joint/combined interoperability in the Korean Theater of Operations.

Approximately 13,000 personnel poured in to Korea, including 305 Soldiers from Task Force Hawkins II, comprised of troops from 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Ga., and 2nd Battalion, 5th Field Artillery Regiment, 214th Fires Brigade, Fort Sill, Okla.

“This exercise demonstrates U.S. commitment to the ROK/U.S. alliance and enhances combat readiness of ROK and U.S. forces through combined and joint training,” Lt. Col. Ross Coffman, Task Force Hawkins II commander, said at the press conference. “During the exercise Task Force Hawkins II team members will perform all stages of reception, staging, onward movement and integration, further strengthening our readiness and ability to help defend the Republic of Korea against external aggression.”

Soldiers and civilian employees of Army Field Support Battalion - North East Asia at Camp Carroll were standing by to hand off battle-ready

vehicles and equipment to TF Hawkins II troops, who took it to Rodriguez Live Fire Complex, near the DMZ.

The ready-for-issue equipment Coffman's troops took to the field is part of Army Prepositioned Stocks - 4, located in Korea and Japan to support operations in the Pacific Theater. AFSBn-NEA is responsible for the maintenance and storage of APS-4 equipment located here and at the Busan Storage Facility in Korea, as well as at Sagami Army Depot and the Yokohama North Dock in Japan.

The battalion is subordinate to the 403rd AFSB, headquartered at Camp Henry in Daegu. The 403rd falls under the U.S. Army Sustainment Command headquartered at Rock Island Arsenal, Ill.

APS-4 equipment includes a full brigade set of tracked and tactical vehicles ranging from High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles to M1A2 Abrams tanks and Paladin 155mm self-propelled howitzers.

The stocks sustain forward-deployed and initial follow-on ground forces. They include major end-items such as engines, repair parts, medical supplies, packaged petroleum products, barrier and construction materials, operations rations and clothing required to sustain combat operations.

The Army Prepositioned Stocks concept exemplifies the United States Forces - Korea motto "Ready to Fight Tonight" by being ready and waiting to go at all times. Soldiers simply need to fall in on the equipment, inspect it, sign for it and then hit the road. With the stocks prepositioned, only Soldiers and their personal gear have to be transported from off the peninsula, saving taxpayer dollars and precious time.

The exercise's unofficial kick-off was March 5, when the AFSBn-NEA began its issue of APS-4 equipment to the task force. The issue consisted of vehicle inspections and equipment inventory, signing for and loading ammunition, testing vehicles on the test track and loading the vehicles onto rail cars for the trip to Rodriguez Range.

More than 40 media outlets, including the Associated Press and the BBC, were present for the equipment draw and media day. Large-scale military exercises in Korea garner heavy media interest due to the political tensions on the peninsula.

Also on hand were five members of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission. The NNSC was established by the armistice agreement signed July 27, 1953 and is part of the Military Armistice Commission which regulates relations between the parties that participated in the Korean War.

“The Army Prepositioned Stocks - 4 draw demonstrates the United States’ commitment to the ROK/U.S. alliance through combat readiness by strengthening our ability to put stocks where they are needed most - in the hands of the Warfighter,” Lt. Col Raymond P. Jensen Jr., AFSBn-NEA commander, said at the media day press conference.

After the vehicles were loaded onto rail cars, the equipment was shipped to the railhead at Camp Casey in Dongducheon. The Soldiers of Task Force Hawkins II were bused to Camp Casey where they met up with their equipment and convoyed to Rodriguez Range, about 10 miles away, for several days of live fire exercises.

“We’ve had tremendous support from everyone here. The reception portion of this exercise was top-notch and the execution of the equipment draw was flawless. The onward movement portion was not only extremely efficient, it gave my Soldiers confidence knowing that they can deploy from the United States and quickly draw equipment and move north to defend this country,” Coffman said during the live-fire portion of the exercise at Rodriguez Range. “I commend the Army Field Support Battalion - North East Asia and the 403rd (Army Field Support Brigade) for the support they have provided. Their Soldiers, civilian employees and contractors are extremely knowledgeable and highly motivated to serve the Soldier in any way possible. Their efforts helped make our transition from CONUS to the Korean Peninsula as smooth as possible.”

Soldiers were impressed with the process and the APS-4 equipment.

“The equipment draw was very smooth; the support was incredible. I’ve never participated in a draw that went so well and went so quickly,” said Spc. Charles Kim, a Task Force Hawkins II member. “The vehicles and equipment are in great shape and have been working fine. There were a few very minor glitches, but that is why we do this - to learn and to improve each time we deploy. Overall, we are very happy with how things have gone.”

Although the formal exercise dates were March 9 - 20, the 403rd AFSB’s participation started long before and lasted well after that time frame.

Following the live-fire exercise, the APS-4 vehicles were cleaned, loaded and shipped back to Camp Carroll, providing the Soldiers of Task Force Hawkins II another valuable opportunity to gain additional experience.

“We are very happy with how the exercise turned out,” Jensen said. “The deployed Soldiers got plenty of quality, hands-on experience with our equipment and our workforce here got the opportunity to train on one of our key mission essential tasks. We take great pride in the readiness of the APS-4 stocks and look forward to every opportunity to issue this equipment to Soldiers.”

Others were pleased with the 403rd AFSB’s performance during the exercise as well.

“This annual exercise provides the 403rd AFSB and its subordinate units the opportunity to test our procedures and refine how we do business, said Mark Illg, chief, Plans and Operations Division, 403rd Support Brigade. “This year has been no exception. From our perspective, the exercise has been a great success and we will incorporate what we have learned into our day-to-day operations to expand our capabilities and make us an even more nimble and responsive organization.”

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