

2nd BATTALION UPDATE - DECEMBER 2008

The 2nd Battalion has now completed a period of leave, adventurous training, recruiting and reorganisation within 11 (Light) Brigade. Key members of the battalion have changed over and all now fully integrated into the unit. We welcomed back some previous members of the battalion as well as some new faces. The primary focus has been on the recuperation of the battalion on completion of a challenging but rewarding tour. Of particular note were the recent Honours and Awards the Battle Group received a significant haul, including two Military Crosses.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY

A Company. A new Company Commander and Second in Command are in place and the company is now preparing to take part in Exercise GRAND PRIX (in Kenya) as a training support element.

B (King Harald's) Company. Has prepared for and assumed the role of the Operation HELVETIC PO Company in support of 2 R WELSH Battle Group. During this commitment, they will be on a reduced notice to move and are prepared to deploy to Northern Ireland to support public order duties as required. They are also currently running the Potential Junior NCO (PJNCO) Cadre and about to deploy to Otterburn for the field training element.

C Company. All key appointments have recently changed. They have prepared for and deployed to the Falkland Islands as the Falkland Island Roulement Infantry Company (FIRIC). This deployment took place from 1 October -15 November and included demanding patrolling tasks as well as valuable training opportunities.

Support Company. Have given support to all the current commitments as well as maintaining a pool of trained personnel. Plans are made for Support Weapon cadres in the New Year as well as continuation training as part of the Pre-Deployment Training (PDT).

TRAINING

The Battalion is now coming to the end of its recuperation phase and is very much looking towards Operation HERRICK 11 in September 2009. Soldiers are already on long lead courses with two on a 30-week language course and driver and combat medic deficits constantly addressed to meet the large requirement.

The Battalion will commence PDT in April 2009, with the sub-units concentrating on the myriad of courses and tasks that are required in the Operation Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) role. Collectively the Battalion will initially train as a conventional manoeuvre Battle Group including procedural exercises and tests at Command and Staff Trainer (CAST) and field exercises on WESSEX WARRIOR and DRUIDS DANCE. Towards the latter end of the training period, the Battalion will re-structure into the OMLT ORBAT and exercise on Combined Arms Life Fire Exercise (CALFEX) and Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE) with supporting elements fully integrated.

The training will be progressive but demanding and by virtue of the environment and equipment increasingly technical. The necessity to train will balance against the need to maximize family time as much as possible in preparation for the tour.

CHANGES OF APPOINTMENT

The following changes in appointments have occurred:

- a. Lieutenant Colonel ED COLTHUP appointed as Commanding Officer.
- b. Major MJ RUSSELL appointed as Second in Command.
- c. Major R PALFREY appointed Officer Commanding A Company.
- d. Major A ROE appointed Officer Commanding C Company.

FUTURE

A full programme awaits the Battalion. Following CAST, FIRIC, Ex GRAND PRIX and Op HELVETIC comes the true build up to Operation HERRICK 11. This will be balanced against the requirements to support a further Ex GRAND PRIX 5 and 6 in the New Year as well as Company Level (CTC3) training and PDT. There is never a dull moment and despite the pace of life, the Battalion is buoyant, confident and ready to face the challenges ahead.