Building readiness: Soldiers assess, adapt to land combat

Soldiers with 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, prepare to enter a simulated town during Exercise Bayonet Focus at Yakima Training Center, WA., June 24, 2017. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Samuel Northrup)

By Staff Sgt. Samuel Northrup, 1st Stryker Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs, 2ID
YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER, Wash. — As the Army’s number one priority, readiness means more than just the ability to spring into action for a quick fight. It also means being prepared to sustain operations in the field for as long as necessary, often in the midst of unfriendly terrain and an agile enemy.

To prepare for these rigors of sustained land combat, more than 6,000 Soldiers from 22 units across the Army and National Guard conducted Exercise Bayonet Focus 17-03, from June 15 – 29, at both the Yakima Training Center and Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

The purpose of the exercise was to prepare the 2-2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team for their upcoming National Training Center rotation at Fort Irwin, California, and was the largest exercise the 7th Infantry Division has conducted since its reactivation in 2012.

The training included force-on-force engagements using MILES gear, blank ammo and simulation ordinance. Soldiers acting as role-players in multiple roles such as civilians, detainees, and reporters, and conducted live-fire training with small arms, vehicle-mounted weapons, Apache helicopters and artillery.

“Our mission is deploy, fight and win decisively anywhere and in order to do that we have to focus on our decisive action and mission essential tasks,” said Maj. Gen. Thomas James, commanding general of 7th Infantry Division.

“The culminating training event is Bayonet Focus, where we focus on the brigade combat team and of its attachments and subordinate units. We create an operational environment at Yakima Training Center that allows us to get after those mission essential tasks.”

FORSCOM in the news
First Army Soldiers and civilians recently celebrated the promotion of First Army’s deputy commanding general for support at Rock Island Arsenal, IL.

The Ga. Army National Guard’s 3rd ID Main Command Post Operational Detachment, held a departure ceremony recently at Fort Stewart, Ga.

The Chief of U.S. Army Reserve Command Operations, Plans and Training, retired in a recent ceremony at Marshall Hall on Fort Bragg, N.C.

For the first time since the 2nd Infantry Division Artillery reactivation, the DIVARTY massed 33 M777 Howitzers on a single target at Yakima Training Center, Wash.

The Fort Drum community gathered recently to pay tribute to more than 300 10th Mountain Division Soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice since 1992.

100 Years of Service

14th Public Affairs Detachment - Members of the 4th Infantry Division and Fort Carson Mounted Color Guard participate in a ceremony commemorating both the 4th Infantry Division and WWI’s centennial year on Fort Carson, Colo., June 13, 2017. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Micah Merrill)
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**Above** Capt. Alexander Eadie, a UH-60M Black Hawk helicopter pilot assigned to Task Force Warhawk, 16th Combat Aviation Brigade, 7th Infantry Division, conducts pre-fight checks at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, June 21, 2017. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Brian Harris)

**Left** Spc. Emily Curran, a Combat Medic assigned to 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, looks out the window of a UH-60M Black Hawk while taking part in a MEDEVAC response exercise during Saber Strike 17 at Kazlu Ruda Air Base, Lithuania, June 18, 2017. Saber Strike 17 is a U.S. Army Europe-led multinational combined forces exercise conducted annually to enhance the NATO alliance throughout the Baltic region and Poland. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Matthew J. DeVirgilio)

**Right** Staff Sgt. Gideon Schwartz, explosive ordnance disposal specialist, 53rd Ordnance Company (EOD), 3rd Ordnance Battalion (EOD), 71st Ordnance Group (EOD), sweeps for explosives during a minefield extraction training scenario at Fort Carson, Colo., June 14, 2017. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Anthony Bryant)

**Above** Soldiers assigned to A Company, 4th Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, practice room clearing, June 28, 2017, at Fort Bliss, Texas. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Killo Gibson)

**Left** A Soldier with 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, fires an 81mm mortar during Exercise Bayonet Focus at Yakima Training Center, Wash., June 26, 2017. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Samuel Northrup)

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**Top Shots**