

28th Transportation Battalion



*28th Transportation Battalion crest(l) and coat of arms(r)
Mouseover each for a description*

World War II

The 28th Transportation Battalion was originally constituted on 10 February 1936 in the Regular Army as the 1st Battalion, 28th Quartermaster Regiment. It was activated as an African-American unit at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, on 10 February 1941 where it was organized and trained until 1 August 1941 when it moved to Oberlin, Louisiana for the Louisiana Maneuvers. After the maneuvers the truck regiment returned to Camp Shelby for more training on 4 October.

It was redesignated as the 1st Battalion, 28th Quartermaster Truck on 1 April 1942. On 26 May 1942, the regiment traveled to Camp Blanding, Florida and arrived two days later to preparation for overseas deployment. After a two-day train ride north, the 28th Regiment arrived at the New York Port of Embarkation on 23 June 1942, for final processing to ship out. On 1 July, the men boarded a Liberty ship NY-205 and sailed from New York for the European Theater of Operation, landing at Liverpool, England, on 11 July where it staged for Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa.

On 31 July 1942, while the 28th Regiment was training in England that the US Army Transportation Corps was created to manage transportation. Its job, to grow as the war went on, was to direct and execute port operations and some phases of motor transportation. The 28th Regiment itself remained for a time in the Quartermaster Corps, but the process of evolution of quartermaster truck units to the Transportation Corps had begun.

In September 1942, the 28th Regiment left England to support the North African Campaign by landing in Algeria on 11 November. In May 1943, the war in North Africa ended and the 28th Regiment had earned two campaign streamers one for the Algerian-French Morocco Campaign and one for Tunisia. From North Africa, the 28th Regiment sailed to Italy and earned two more campaign credits; Naples-Foggia and Rome Arno. The battalion was broken up 5 December 1943 and its elements reorganized and redesignated as follows: Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment as Headquarters and

Headquarters Detachment, 28th Quartermaster Battalion, Mobile. Companies A, B, C, and D as the 3421st, 3422d, 3423d, and 3424th Quartermaster Truck Companies. From then on the companies and battalion would follow separate lineages. After the fall of Rome in April 1944, the 28th Battalion was sent to assist in the invasion of Southern France. On 28 August 1944, the Regiment went ashore between Toulousse and Nice. It continued its resupply mission to Lyon, Dijon, and Besancon. The 28th Quartermaster Battalion, Mobile, inactivated 12 November 1945 in France.

On 29 October 1942, the 28th Regiment sailed out of England to support the North African Campaign. The Allied forces stormed the beaches on 8 November and the seaport city of Oran fell to Allies the next day. The 28th Regiment landed in Oran on 12 November. From there the trucks of the 28th Regiment conducted port clearance until 2 January 1943, when the Regiment relocated to Mateur, Tunisia. In May 1943, the war in North Africa ended and the 28th Regiment had earned two campaign streamers one for the Algerian-French Morocco Campaign and one for Tunisia.

The Quartermaster truck regiments were reorganized and redesignated into separate numbered units, so that they could be task organized for specific missions. On 5 December 1943, the 1st Battalion, 28th Regiment its companies were reorganized and redesignated as follows into Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 28th Quartermaster Battalion, Mobile; and Companies A, B, C, and D as the 3421st, 3422nd, 3423rd, and 3424th Quartermaster Truck Companies. From then on the companies and battalion would follow separate lineages. The 28th Quartermaster Battalion left Ferryville, Tunisia on 18 December 1943 for the port city of Bizerte, Tunisia where it staged for invasion of Italy.

The US Fifth Army landed at Salerno, Italy on 9 September 1943 and took control of the port city of Naples on 1 October. The 28th Quartermaster Battalion arrived in Naples on 21 December, went to Staging Area #3 the next day, moved to Aversa on 24 December, and then Crispiano on the other (British) side of the boot on 26 December where it conducted port clearance. On 8 March 1944, the 28th Battalion relocated back to Naples. On 17 May, the Battalion set up operations at the nearby Bagnolia and then a little further north to Nisidia on 21 August where it boarded a ship bound for the invasion of southern France. The 28th Battalion had earned two more campaign credits; Naples-Foggia and Rome Arno.

On 15 August 1944, the Allies landed on the coast of southern France for Operation Dragoon; and on 26 August 1944, the 28th Quartermaster Battalion went ashore at Camel Beach (Saint Raphael Harbor) between Toulousse and Nice. From there it conducted port clearance from Cogolin the same day it arrived, and then Septemes on 4 September. By 25 September the rail line extended as far north as Lyon, and on 19 October the Battalion drove inland to Lyons, then the next day to the railhead at Dijon where it operated until 30 January 1945. The Battalion then moved to Luneville and the next day to Tomblaine closer to the German border where it operated until 16 February. Then it moved further up the Southern Line of Communication (SOLOC) to Lenoncourt until 8 March when it

moved to Art-a-Meurthe. There the 28th Quartermaster Battalion, Mobile was inactivated on 12 November 1945.

Effective 1 August 1946, the Quartermaster Corps transferred the functions and responsibilities of truck and aviation units to the Transportation Corps completing the transition of responsibility for management of all modes of transportation. While on inactive status the 28th Battalion was converted and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 28th Transportation Corps Truck Battalion, on 1 August 1946. On 23 December 1948, it was again redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 28th Transportation Truck Battalion.

Cold War: Line Haul Europe

After World War II, Russia occupied the East European nations with the idea of establishing buffer countries between it and the democratic Europe. The constant threat of war between the Soviet Union and Western Europe created what was then known as the “Cold War.” In preparation for that the United States and European nations created the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in April 1949. The US Army established a comprehensive Communication Zone (COMZ) in France to support the defense of West Germany from an attack by the Soviet Bloc armies. This COMZ included a line of communication that stretched from the ports of Northern France to Germany and supply depots scattered throughout France.

On 24 June 1948, the Soviet Union blockaded rail and road access through Soviet controlled East Germany to Allied controlled sectors of Berlin. In response, the Allies launched a massive airlift to provide West Berlin the needed supplies. During the Berlin Airlift, the 6th Transportation Battalion had pushed cargo to the Rhein-Main and Wiesbaden Airports of Embarkation (APOE), but the 6th Transportation Battalion was inactivated on 19 January 1949 and HHD, 28th Battalion was activated at Mannheim, Germany on 20 January 1949 with its motto, “En Temps” Latin for “On Time.” On 12 May 1949, the Soviets lifted the blockade and allowed rail and road traffic back into Berlin. The 28th Battalion was reorganized and redesignated on 2 December 1949 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 28th Transportation Truck Battalion and continued to operate out of Mannheim until 2 March 1959, when it was transferred to Poitiers, France.

The 28th Battalion headquarters moved to Poitiers, France and became part of the line of communication that stretched from the French ports of La Rochelle or Saint Nazaire, through Ingrandes, Orleans and on into Germany. With the Soviet threat, the lines of communication were safer stretching back to France than lateral across Germany. The way the operations in Europe worked were as followed. The 106th Transportation Battalion operated in the Base Sector and conducted port clearance from La Rochelle and Saint Nazaire delivering cargo-laden trailers to the trailer transfer point at Ingrandes General Depot or sometimes to Vitry la Francois where the drivers would spend the night and return the next day. There an M-52 5-ton tractor from the 28th Battalion would pick up the trailer and deliver it to Orleans, where another would take it to Vitry Lefrancois.

The 28th Battalion ran the relay in the Intermediate Sector. A tractor from the 53rd Transportation Battalion would take it the rest of the way into Kaiserslautern, Germany.

The Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment was reorganized and redesignated on 1 April 1953 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 28th Transportation Battalion. On 19 June 1959, it was again redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 28th Transportation Battalion.

In August 1961, the 28th Transportation Battalion was commanded by LTC Don Davis and was part of the 37th Transportation Command. The 598th Medium Truck Company was attached to the battalion in October 1961. The battalion had four truck companies:

1st Transportation Company "First Truck" at Maison Fort, Orleans

68th Transportation Company in Ingrandes

76th Transportation Company at Maison Fort, Orleans

598th Transportation Company in Ingrandes

Truck Terminal Platoons at Ingrandes and Maison Fort.

The 1st Transportation Company had been reactivated at Fort Eustis, Virginia as a heavy truck company on 21 May 1952. The 68th Transportation Company had been reactivated in Germany on 20 June 1947. The 76th Heavy Truck had been under the 24th Transportation Battalion, which was inactivated on 25 December 1957.

On 13 August 1961, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics blocked the lines of communication extending into Berlin. Consequently, President John F. Kennedy deployed two additional combat divisions to Europe in October. Some troop ships arrived at Cherbourg, which was far from the ports that the 37th Transportation Group normally cleared. This new line of communication increased the line-haul distances by the drivers to transfer their cargo and return to home base. LTC Davis had planned that route while he worked at COMZ.

The total miles operated by the battalion in FY 61 was 5,859,038 and 8,531,077 in FY62. As part of ROUDOUT, the 598th Medium Truck personnel transferred to the Continental United States beginning in July 1962. The company became non-operational. A large number of replacements, mostly privates and privates first class, arrived in August to bring the company back up to strength. It, however, lacked in qualified NCOs and officers. The company was placed in a training status and returned to full operational status on 23 October 1962.

LTC Richard Rantz assumed command of the battalion in June 1962. In August 1962, COMZEUR staff suggested that the 28th Battalion relocate its battalion headquarters to Ingrandes. After the battalion headquarters studied the feasibility it determined that Ingrandes could not provide the required communication facilities, building space and family quarters. The battalion also hosted the 37th Transportation Command Annual Rifle Marksmanship Competition at Montmorillon Range from 4 to 7 December 1962. This was a major undertaking which involved approximately two thirds of a company man month in order to provide for the proper conduct and support of the matches.

Most transportation units lacked traditions or rituals that give them an identity. When LTC Rantz arrived, the officers held the usual “hail and farewell” dinner to welcome him to the battalion. Other than that, they did not have many other social interactions. Rantz believed that social activities forged a bond among the officers. Europe, unlike the United States, offered greater opportunities for social activities. The different culture made even simple aspects of life such as eating out in restaurants more interesting. He held six to eight social functions in addition to hail and farewells during his one-year command tour. The officers gathered at the location of one of the companies for picnics or barbecues. Although hard work to plan and coordinate, the social functions quickly became a tradition in the 28th Battalion.

LTC Rantz brought with him a businesslike management system. He broke the functions and tasks of the battalion down and quantified them into measurable goals and objectives. Identify the problem, then develop a solution. For example, Rantz wanted to speed up the turnaround, thus reducing the driving time on the relays. The delays resulted from mismanagement at the terminal transfer points. The drivers would wait anywhere from two to three hours to hook up to an empty trailer. Rantz tasked one of his operations officers, CPT Edward Honor, to fix the problem. Honor restructured the terminals and pressured the managers to have an empty trailer waiting to hook up for the return trip. The driver’s round-trip was reduced to around eight hours, a savings of four to six hours per trip.

The drivers had to drive every day except Saturday and Sunday. A routine drive took about twelve to fourteen hours. Tractors from the 28th Battalion would drop off cargo-laden trailers at the terminal transfer point, and then return with an empty trailer. Each relay of the line of communication averaged about a 250-mile round-trip. The trailers were relayed from one transfer point to the next so that the drivers could end the day back at their home station. If not done properly, this transfer resulted in an accountability problem for trailers. The battalion could easily come up short. The measure of achievement for drivers was the number of safe miles driven. The battalion operations section focused on accountability of the trailers and keeping the accident rate down.

In August 1963, SP5 Benjamin F. Rosamond pulled in to his base at Orleans and was greeted by COL Jack Knox, Commander of the 37th Transportation Group. By completing his safe journey, the 1st Transportation Company had logged in over one million safe miles of safe driving.

In August 1963, LTC John Policastro assumed command of the 28th Battalion. In 1963, French President Charles De Gaulle evicted the American military units out of France. The lines of communications had changed. The 106th Battalion ran the relay from the Port of Bremerhaven to Kassel. The 53rd Battalion operated out of Kassel and delivered cargo to the Mannheim Terminal. The entire 28th Battalion set up operations out of Mannheim and ran the relay to Nuremburg on 6 May 1964.

The 595th Transportation Company deployed to Turley Barracks at Mannheim, Germany in the fall of 1961 where it was later transferred from the 106th to the 28th Transportation Battalion. The company started out with M26 “Dragon Wagons” and then by 1964 received the new 10-ton M123 tractors. This tractor had two wenchers on the back to pull loads onto the trailers. The company hauled tanks and armored personnel carriers around Germany and made two runs a year to Berlin just to exercise their right to do so.¹

The Vietnam War escalated in the summer of 1965. The three successive buildups of troop units placed a drain on transportation units in Europe. The 28th Battalion, like others, suffered from a lack of drivers. The post Vietnam period was a lean time for the US Army Europe (USAREUR). USAREUR could no longer afford to transport M-60's to the field by rail. The solution was the 377th Transportation Company (Heavy Equipment Trailer) and a KEGE HET company also located in Mannheim.

By 1975, the 28th Battalion, commanded by LTC William A. Heizmann, at Spinelli Barracks, Germany, had the following units:

- 68th Transportation Company
- 69th Transportation Company
- 109th Transportation Company
- 150th Transportation Company
- 377th Transportation Company
- 595th Transportation Company
- 598th Transportation Company

The 595th Transportation Company (Heavy Truck), “Dragon Wagoneers,” won the National Defense Transportation Award in 1973 and was later inactivated on 30 June 1975.

On 23 September 1974, the 69th Transportation Company at Spinelli Barracks was reflagged to the 40th Transportation Company and traded its IHC 2000D tractors for M818 tractors and 5,000-gallon tankers to haul JP4. The 40th Transportation Company had been re-activated on 14 April 1947, and was at Karlsruhe, Germany in 1956 where it hauled fuel for the PX gas stations. It was later stationed at Turley Barracks, Germany, in 1963. It was transferred to the 15th Quartermaster Battalion. It was stationed at Turley Barracks, Germany in 1963. The 40th POL was later redesignated B Company, 97th Quartermaster Battalion in September 1965.

The soldiers in the 377th HET virtually lived on the road, eating C-rations and sleeping in their trucks much of the time. Since routes the HETS could take were limited by the size and weight of the HETs, routes were not always the most direct and unexpected detours could stop a convoy. Operating Procedures required an officer on every HET convoy; even moving two HETs constituted a convoy by the time you added escort and support vehicles. During the time LT Linda Shelley was with the unit, in 1977-78, the company had five lieutenants assigned to handle the workload generated by the convoys. It was rare to have two lieutenants in garrison at the same time. (LTC Linda E. Shelley)

¹ Don Winstead email to Richard Killblane, October 30 and 31, 2009.

In 1979, the 28th Transportation Battalion contained the following companies:

- 40th Transportation Company (POL)
- 68th Transportation Company (Postal)
- 109th Transportation Company (POL)
- 150th Transportation Company (General Cargo)
- 377th Transportation Company (Heavy Truck)
- 598th Transportation Company (Medium Truck)

The 598th Transportation Company (Medium Truck) hauled Lowboy trailers. CPT Robert T. Dail commanded the 598th Transportation Company from 1981-83 and was seen as the commander who got things done, and he seen as the Golden Child. Dail would rise up to become the Chief of Transportation and rose to three-stars. (CSM C. J. Florence)

Although the 28th Battalion did not participate in during Operation Desert Shield/Storm, some of its companies augmented other battalions. The 377th HET participated in the defense of Saudi Arabia and the Liberation of Kuwait. LTC Charles W. Fletcher, Jr. commanded the battalion after his return from Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

The peace dividend of winning the Cold War was paid for by the US Army. Since the Soviet Union, which was falling apart, no longer poised a threat across the border, transportation in Europe was scaled down to just what it needed to supply the US Army units still active. A number of units were inactivated and the remaining companies reshuffled into the two remaining truck battalions, the 28th and the 181st Battalions.

After the war the battalion had the following:

- 68th Transportation Company
- 109th Transportation Company
- 150th Transportation Company
- 377th Transportation Company (HET)
- 598th Transportation Company
- 260th Transportation Detachment (TTP)

During the downsizing, the 53rd Battalion was inactivated and the 106th Battalion was sent to Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The remaining battalions were reorganized. In October 1993, the 1st Truck Company was transferred from the 106th Battalion to the 28th. In addition, the 150th was reflagged as the 69th Transportation Company and the 598th was reflagged as the 70th Transportation Company, since they had the longest lineage. Both had belonged to the 106th Battalion.

On 16 September 1994, the 377th HET was transferred to the V Corps and assigned under the 181st Transportation Battalion. In 1995, the 28th Battalion picked up the 66th Medium Truck Company and the 15th Trailer Transfer Detachment from the inactivation of the 53rd Transportation Battalion. That left the 28th Battalion with five line haul companies and two trailer transfer detachments with 300 M915 line haul tractors and supporting elements along with 900 soldiers.

1st Transportation Company
66th Transportation Company
68th Transportation Company
69th Transportation Company
70th Transportation Company
109th Transportation Company
15th Trailer Transfer Detachment
260th Trailer Transfer Detachment

During this period, the battalion supported the retrograde of units, ammunition and war reserve stocks during the draw down in Germany and the Netherlands. The 15th Transportation Detachment was a split based unit, with personnel stationed at Kaiserslautern and maintaining a team at Rhein Main to manage the German Air Mail Terminal operations.

Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR

In 1991, the former Republic of Yugoslavia had disintegrated into civil war between the different ethnic groups. After four years of fighting, the Bosnian Serb, Croat, and Muslim ethnic factions in Bosnia-Herzegovina were ready to cease hostilities. They agreed to terms of a cease-fire at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, on November 21, 1995 and signed the Dayton Peace Accords in Paris on December 14, 1995. After the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords, NATO-led forces would deploy into the former Yugoslav republic to implement the peace plan. The two remaining transportation battalions would have to support that operation.

LTC James D. Sharpe, Jr. assumed command of the 28th Transportation Battalion in July 1994. In September, the 21st Theater Army Area Command (TAACOM) began planning for the support mission. The line of communication that normally ended at Mannheim would extend to the Intermediate Staging Base (ISB) at Taszar, Hungary then into Bosnia. The line of communication from Mannheim to the ISB was over 1,000 miles, a three day drive with two convoy support centers (CSC) along the way. These CSCs provided billeting, meals, and fuel for 50 vehicles and 150 soldiers. The 28th Battalion deployed a squad-sized element to each CSC on a 90-day rotation to run the facilities.

In late October, the 37th Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) became the theater executive agent for the Reception, Staging Onward Movement, and Integration (RSO&I). They tasked the 28th Battalion to run the Arrival/Departure Airfield Control Group (A/DACG) at both Rhein Main and Ramstein Air Bases. LTC Sharpe picked two of his officers with A/DACG experience. CPT Mike Frego took his 69th Transportation Company to Rhein Main and 1LT Mike Johnson took his 15th Trailer Transfer Detachment to set up the A/DACG at Ramstein. The air line of communication from these air ports to the theater became critical as delays as the engineers tried to rebuild the bridge across the Sava River.

The need for the new Palletized Loading System (PLS) required the 28th Battalion to chop its 70th Medium Truck Company to the 181st Battalion. They planned to draw 48

PLS systems from the CEGE on 1 December, but on 15 November, they received instructions that the 70th Medium Truck Company would deploy with its M915 tractors and M872 trailers. This last minute change created serious problems in preparation as Sharpe had directed CPT Woody Willis to place his M915s in admin storage, in other words, only provide enough maintenance for long term storage. The short notice almost did not provide enough time for the maintenance preparation and accumulation of parts to deploy to Hungary and conduct subsequent line haul missions. CPT Mike Dunn, the Battalion Motor Officer, developed a maintenance surge team consisting of key maintenance NCOs and mechanics from all the units to inspect and repair the vehicles in a timely manner. The 28th Battalion also attached the 260th Trailer Transfer Detachment to the 181st Battalion to run the trailer transfer point at the ISB. On 11 December, the two elements self deployed to Hungary.

The 1st Armored Division convoy started at the battalion motor park and the 109th Transportation Company had the mission to escort the convoy. They borrowed wreckers from sister companies to provide the maintenance trail party. The first two convoys of Operation Convoy Escort departed on 11 December and they completed the move by 20 December.

The remaining two companies of the 28th Battalion, the 66th and 68th Transportation Companies, were left to do the work of four companies. The 28th Battalion's partner unit, the 6966th Civilian Support Center, had to pick up most of the 28th Battalion's theater mission support commitments.

Upon completion of the Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration (RSO&I) in February 1996, the 69th Transportation Company and the 15th Trailer Transfer Detachment returned to the 28th Battalion. On 1 February, the 21st TAACOM directed the 37th TRANSCOM and the 28th Battalion to deploy to the ISB. On 15 February, LTC Sharpe deployed with half his headquarters staff to Hungary and left the rest under his Executive Officer, MAJ Donnie Horner, in Mannheim. One of the benefits of the split based operations was the return of the 70th Medium Truck Company and the 260th Trailer Transfer Detachment to his control. Sharpe had under his control the 70th and 109th Transportation Companies and 260th Trailer Transfer Detachment, while Horner provided command and control for the remaining three truck companies and trailer transfer detachment. Sharpe also received operational control over the HETs of B/701st Main Support Battalion.

The 28th Transportation Battalion continued to provide line haul transportation in support of the contingency operations in Bosnia through 1998. 39,970 line haul missions were completed and the 28th Battalion pulled more than 112,000 tons of U.S. mail, ammunition, and general cargo throughout Germany, the BENELUX, Hungary, Croatia, and Bosnia. This was accomplished while operating with only 80-85 percent of their authorized soldier strength and without sacrificing mission, training, or safety.

The 28th Battalion also participated in humanitarian relief operations in Kosovo. According to CPT Linda Steinholtz, chief, highway operations, "In the first five days of

the humanitarian relief operations, the 37th Transportation Command accumulated more than 13,000 miles to support the Kosovo refugees.”

The 28th Battalion continued to be stationed in Europe and won the “Unit of the Year” award in 1999 for its service provided in 1998 as an integral part of the Eagle Express. The Eagle Express was the overland supply route that the 37th Transportation Command ran from 1995 to 1999. It went from Kaiserslautern to Taszar, Hungary, to Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Eagle Express was the longest lasting overland supply route in U.S. Army history. It supported U.S. Military Combat Operations in the Yugoslavia Region. At that time the unit consisted of a Headquarters Detachment, two Trailer Transfer Detachment, and five Medium Truck Companies and had its headquarters stationed at Coleman Barracks in Mannheim, Germany. It fell under the 37th Transportation Command, which was in charge of all transportation units through out Europe. That year the 28th Battalion drove 6,900,000 miles in performing its operations. On a daily average, the 28th Battalion would have 159 trucks committed to its missions.

Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom

On 11 September 2001, Al Queda terrorists flew two planes into the World Trade Towers in New York City and another into the Pentagon. The passengers overpowered the hijackers of a fourth plane and it crashed in Pennsylvania, never reaching its intended target. The United States was at war with the terrorism and invaded Afghanistan in November for harboring the Al Queda. By 2002, Saddam Hussein failed to comply with the UN Resolution to verify that it had disarmed all efforts to build weapons of mass



HETs in the motor pool of the 28th TC Battalion. The 28th Battalion deployed to Kuwait in 2008 under its parent headquarters from Germany the 37th Transportation Group. This was the first time both headquarters had deployed since World War II The 28th Trans Battalion had responsibility for all Kuwait-based HETs .

destruction. The United States, Great Britain, and a few other allies staged in Kuwait for an invasion into Iraq with the purpose of removing Hussein from power. This would lead to a long war in both Afghanistan and Iraq that would require multiple rotations of the same transportation units to both theaters of war over the next ten years.

By 2002, Saddam Hussein failed to comply with the UN Resolution to verify that it had disarmed all efforts to build weapons of mass destruction. The United States, Great Britain and a few other allies staged in Kuwait for an invasion into Iraq with the purpose of removing Hussein from power. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld did not like CENTCOM's war plan and had them modify it to an economy of force operation. He would also order the war to begin before all the assets were in place. This had consequences on the transportation and logistics operations during the war.

The 68th and 109th Medium Truck companies deployed to Kuwait for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. The 53rd, the 27th and 450th MCBs fell under to operational control of 377th Theater Support Command (TSC). Because the TPFDD was modified and the ground war began on 20 March with a rolling start, movement control was almost non-existent in the beginning. Trucks just lined up behind the 3rd Infantry Division and took off resulting in a major traffic jam.



The 28th Trans Battalion had LMTV Gun Truck with cab armor kits.



LMTV Gun Trucks lined up for the 28th Transportation Battalion.



Because of the constant threat of Energy Formed Projectile (EFP) and convoy ambushes, the 28th Trans Battalion required gun trucks to escort their convoys. The M1114 up-armored Humvee was the preferred escort vehicle for the 28th. By the time the Battalion had arrived the Army issued angular bumper on Humvees, only problem is when it had to ram a vehicle so it could push obstacles out of the way. (photo by Richard Killblane)



The “Monster Garage” customized bumpers for ramming and deflecting vehicles so that they would just slide over instead push along. The Warlocks antenna on the back could detect the direction of enemy fire. (photo by Richard Killblane)

In 2002, the 28th Battalion had the following units:

Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment

66th Transportation Company

68th Transportation Company (Medium Truck)

69th Transportation Company

70th Transportation Company

109th Transportation Company

15th Transportation Detachment

260th Transportation Detachment

CPT Edward J. Gawlik III’s 68th and CPT Todd Terrell’s 109th Medium Truck companies deployed to Kuwait for Operation Iraqi Freedom in early March 2003 and fell under the 106th Transportation Battalion at Camp Navistar, Kuwait. The trucks of the 106th Transportation Battalion picked up cargo from the Port of Shuyabah and Kuwaiti Naval Base and pushed it to the trailer transfer point at Convoy Support Center Cedar in Iraq run by the 6th Transportation Battalion. The 6th Transportation Battalion then pushed cargo up to the V Corps. The 6th and 106th Transportation Battalions departed in July and turned their companies over to their replacements. The 68th Transportation Company fell under the 419th Transportation Battalion (USAR) and the 109th fell under the 495th Transportation Battalion (USAR). Starting in July 2003, Iraqi insurgents began attacking convoys with improvised explosive devices (IED) hidden alongside the road, either behind guard rails, in trash or even dead animal carcasses. Most of the IEDs were artillery projectiles, which could be stopped by sheets of steel, so this began the phase of improvised “hillbilly” armor. The companies that had

deployed in the early part of the war expected to just spend six months in country but the date of their redeployment was pushed back and in July, the drivers heard the bad news – they had to spend one-year “boots on the ground.” So they did not return until October 2003.

Meanwhile back in Germany, the 28th Transportation Battalion morphed from a functional line haul truck battalion into a multi-functional battalion by adding a Direct Support Maintenance Company and Theater Supply Company to its ranks in September 2004. The 51st Maintenance Battalion was inactivated as part of the restructuring of US forces in Europe, so the 512th Maintenance and 574th Supply and Services Companies were attached to the 28th Transportation Battalion. The 28th Battalion then provided command and control over the following units:

- 66th Transportation Company
- 68th Transportation Company (deployed)
- 69th Transportation Company
- 70th Transportation Company
- 109th Transportation Company (deployed)
- 512th Maintenance Company
- 574th Supply and Services Company (deployed)
- 15th Transportation Detachment
- 260th Transportation Detachment

The 574th Supply and Services Company was deployed to LSA Anaconda, Iraq when it was attached to the 28th Transportation Battalion and returned December 2004.

The 66th Transportation “Raise Up” Company also deployed to Iraq in 2004. Prior to the deployment, the 66th had the advantage to learn from the 68th and 109th Truck Companies that had just returned from theater. 2004 was the year of complex ambushes against convoys. Anticipating the need for gun truck support and command and control, the 66th deployed with four M1109 factory up-armored HMMWVs, four M1097 Military Police fastback HMMWVs, four M1097 HMMWVs, two up-armored 5-tons, and two 5-tons with ring mounts in addition to the equipment on their MTOE.

The main body of the 66th arrived in Kuwait on 9 January 2004 and went through mandatory convoy live fire training at Udari Range; and then on 30 January, the 66th Medium Truck left Camp Udari in three serials to Camp Navistar on the border then convoyed north with stops at Logistical Support Area (LSA) Cedar, Convoy Support Center (CSC) Scania and Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) and arrived at Forward Operation Base (FOB) Speicher on 1 February. There the company relieved the 846th Transportation Company and fell under the 232nd Corps Support Battalion (CSB) (NG IL). The drivers learned the routes and method of operations by right-seat-rides with the 846th. During the months of February and March, the company primarily helped redeploy units back to Kuwait and others deploy north.²

² 1LT Emily Sandvig, “66th Transportation. Company, Road Kings - Raise Up!” draft article written for the TC PB.

On 5 April 2004, the radical young cleric, Muqtada al Sadr, called for a jihad against coalition forces and launched an attack to seize control of three cities. He already controlled an Najaf and easily drove the Ukrainians out of al Kut, but the 1st Cavalry Division stood in the way of gaining control over Sadr City, the suburb named after this father. By 8 April, his Madhi Militia dropped eight bridges and overpasses around Scania thus severing all northbound traffic into the Sunni Triangle. The next day (Good Friday), his militia ambushed any convoy trying to get in or out of BIAP. This April Uprising introduced larger complex ambushes and it would take the rest of the month to quell the rebellion. For the next year, truck drivers spared with the insurgents for control of the road. Since Speicher was near Tikrit, the birthplace of Saddam Hussein, the surrounding area was always a hot spot for convoy attacks.

After Al Sadr's April Uprising, the 232nd CSB spearheaded a campaign to armor all of their vehicles. The 323rd Maintenance Company received HARDOX steel then fabricated pre-cut, bolt on kits for every model truck in the Battalion's inventory. Not until mid-July did the 66th Transportation Company receive armor fabricated and cut specifically for its M915A3s. The 232nd CSB then fabricated enough armor kits to support all OIF III units.³ The 13th CSB replaced the 232nd CSB, and the 66th Transportation Company was extended until March 2005 and earned the Army Meritorious Unit Commendation for its one-year tour in Iraq.

In 2005, the 512th Maintenance Company and 574th Supply and Services Company also completed their deployments.

CPT Tim Zetterwall's 70th Transportation Company deployed to Kuwait in January 2005. The 70th replaced the 308th Transportation Company and fell under LTC Darry Johnson's 354th Transportation Battalion at Arifjan, which had responsibility for escorting Third Country National (TCN) contract drivers of the Heavy Lift contract for 7th Transportation Group. These convoys performed Common User Land Transportation (CULT) missions that delivered cargo to all forward operating bases (FOB) throughout Iraq. The 70th Transportation Company arrived in Kuwait in time to participate in the deployment surge. All redeployments of units in Iraq was postponed until after the Iraqi national elections on 31 January 2005. Since units scheduled to depart after the elections did not want to move their redeployment dates to the right, the 7th Transportation Group had to move in just two months the same number of units that normally took three months to redeploy. 7th Group began migrating all non-mission essential equipment out of Iraq prior to the election and then maximized use of back hauls making sure no truck came back with an empty trailer. This required them to drive all over Iraq to pick up a backhaul, spending as many as 12 days on the road. During the next two months after the election, the truck drivers were on the road almost without breaks. The convoys averaged 60 vehicles and the 70th Transportation Company ran one convoy with as many as 112 vehicles.

³ Sandvig, "66th Transportation Company."

The 70th Transportation Company arrived during the last rotation to deploy with its own trucks. Kuwait had a lower priority for up-armored vehicles than units in Iraq, even though all the trucks from Kuwait drove regularly into Iraq. In fact the trucks of the 70th had to routinely drive through the most dangerous area of Iraq for convoy ambushes - the Sunni Triangle. When the 70th arrived, it picked up HMMWVs with add-on-armor kits as command and control vehicles for the convoy commanders and assistant convoy commanders, but also doubled as gun trucks. COL Jeff Miser, the 7th Group commander, did not like the legacy of Vietnam gun trucks so he was opposed to 5-ton gun trucks. The 70th did not have internal gun trucks but relied on escorts from the 1-178th Field Artillery.

In 2005, the 69th Transportation Company also transformed into a light/medium truck company and deployed to Afghanistan in March 2005 to support the 1st Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division. It operated out of Bagram Air Base and FOB Salerno under the 307th Forward Support Battalion.

Because of the long war, the US Army was exhausting its availability of truck battalion headquarters. In 2005, the 28th Battalion received its deployment orders and split its headquarters to provide USAREUR/EUCOM's supply, maintenance, distribution and transportation support, while leading battalion and company level rear detachment operations, and training follow-on line companies to deploy in the process. The other part of the headquarters prepared for its mission in Kuwait.

On 1 August 2005, the 37th Transportation Group deployed overseas for the first time since the 37th Transportation Highway Transport Division had arrived in Europe in 1951. It also deployed with LTC Stephen E. Farnen's 28th Transportation Battalion. The 28th assumed responsibility for all the HETs in Arifjan, Kuwait and became the Logistics Task Force (LTF) 28. When the Battalion headquarters first arrived it had six HET companies under its command to conduct the next surge of deployments, caused by units rotating in and out of Iraq over the same three months.

- 96th Transportation Company (HET)
- 233rd Transportation Company (HET)
- 778th Transportation Company (HET) (USAR KS)
- 1158th Transportation Company (HET) (USAR WI)
- B Battery, 1-77 Field Artillery (CBT HET)
- B Battery, 5-3 Field Artillery (CBT HET)

CPT Jackson's 778th Transportation Company (HET) had previously been a Chemical Company. It redeployed in November 2005 and was replaced by CPT Bault's B Battery, 1-77 Field Artillery. B Battery had been a Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) unit and deployed to Kuwait as a HET company from October 2005 to October 2006. CPT Tyler's B Battery, 5-3rd Field Artillery replaced CPT Stebbies' 1158th HET Company which redeployed in December 2005. This overlap in HET companies allowed for the maximum available movers when the surge began in November. Because a HET company was the larger than most normal MTOE companies, 5-3 FA Battalion had to consolidate to form the HET company. CPT Kahne's 96th and CPT Schoef's 233rd HET Companies rotated every year through Kuwait on six-month deployments to augment the

HET battalion during the surge. Consequently, some of the drivers of those companies were on their third deployment.

Coincidentally, the 70th Transportation Company was under the 354th Transportation Battalion at Arifjan along with the 28th Battalion, so LTC Farnen could check in with his company and make sure LTC Johnson was taking good care of his Soldiers. The 828th Transportation Battalion completed its transfer of authority with the 354th on 12 September 2005 and the 70th sewed on its new 37th Transportation Group patch made for the unit just for this deployment. That month the 70th also received brand new M1114 factory built up-armored HMMWVs and the 70th completed its year-long tour on 5 January 2006 and signed over its fleet of trucks to the US Air Force truck company that had been recently assigned to Arifjan. The Air Force truck companies traditionally took the numerical designation of the units they replaced, and this one became the 70th Medium Truck Detachment (MTD). Upon the 70th Transportation Company's return, the company, as well as the others in the 28th Transportation Battalion, received an issue of brand new M915A4s.

The HETs hauled equipment for deploying and redeploying units in Iraq driving to all forward operating bases (FOB) in Iraq. LTF28 first moved the 4th Infantry Division forward to Camp Speicher in November 2005. By this time the enemy had reverted to attacking convoys with IEDs, in particular the new Energy Formed Projectile (EFP). HETs fortunately were the most survivable vehicles on the road because of their height. They redeployed in March 2006 and upon completion of the surge, LTF28 was reduced to just two "in lieu of" HET companies – the two B Batteries. The two Field Artillery batteries performed very well and were robust and good at radio discipline. Prior to their departure, the 28th Battalion asked the two Army Reserve companies what was needed to train the Field Artillery men to drive HETs, and they produced a Program of Instruction (POI).

The 336th Group replaced the 37th Group, and the 24th Transportation Battalion out of Fort Eustis, Virginia replaced the 28th Battalion in July 2006. The 28th Battalion returned to Germany on 28 July.

In 2006, the 574th Supply and Service Company also deployed again, inside its 12 months dwell time. The 69th Transportation Company returned from Afghanistan in March. The 109th Transportation Company was at Q-West, in northern Iraq, and the 68th Transportation Company was serving at Al Asad, in western Iraq.

On 18 January 2006, the 15th Transportation Detachment consolidated its operations in Kaiserslautern as a single Trailer Transfer Point. It and the 66th Transportation Company were transferred to the 39th Transportation Battalion.

On 9 August 2006, the 66th Transportation "Raise Up" Company deployed to Iraq on its second tour and completed its transfer of authority with the 828th Quartermaster Company (USAR PA) on 15 September at Q-West in MND-North. About 30 Soldiers of the company had served with the company during its first deployment and half the

Soldiers were on their second deployment. Around five were on their fourth deployment. The commander, CPT Trahan Mashack, was promoted to major when he arrived, and the 66th fell under the control of the 524th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB).

The 66th Transportation Company converted to a convoy escort company with ten M1117 Armored Support Vehicles (ASV), and an assortment of M1078 LMTV gun trucks, and M1114 and M1151 HMMWV gun trucks. They escorted contract convoys driven by Third Country Nationals to Joint Base Balad, FOBs Speicher, Marez, Warrior, Sykes, and Urbiel; and just drove to Harbur Gate on the Turkish border to pick up convoys. The main threat in MND-North was victim and command detonated IEDs. The 66th placed the ASV up front as the lead scout because of their survivability. They also liked the LMTV gun truck up front because the victim detonated IED exploded behind the cab, allowing the crew to survive. They usually placed a wrecker and M1114 gun truck in the rear because the gunner could depress the .50 caliber machinegun for escalation of force and the ASV could not. The 66th agreed with the escalation of force rules and rolled with an amber status where the weapon was not chambered. Other companies rolled with a red status, rounds chambered in the machinegun.

In April 2007, the Army changed its boot-son-the-ground policy to reduce US Army Reserve and National Guard tours to no more than one-year away from home. The one-year-boots-on-the-ground policy actually added several more months to the time the citizen soldiers spent away from home because of their time mobilizing and demobilizing. To limit their time away from home to no more than one year, their tours in the CENTCOM Area of Operations were reduced to nine months. The other three months were added to the 12-month tour of active duty units increasing their tours to 15 months. This, however, eliminated the surge of every unit deploying and redeploying during the same three months, but staggered out the deployments across the year. Unfortunately, for battalion commanders, they did not have the opportunity to establish their standards up front, but had units coming in all the way to the end of their tour.

The 109th Transportation Company redeployed to Arifjan, Kuwait on 12 July 2007 to become one of two theater-wide gun truck companies. The 109th logged 256 convoy security missions totaling 2.1 million miles throughout Kuwait and Iraq. The company awarded 25 Combat Action Badges for engagements with the enemy. The 515th Transportation Company arrived at Camp Taji, Iraq on 23 July 2007. During the deployment, the unit conducted a threefold mission to deliver bulk-fuel on Camp Taji, and in Baghdad and surrounding areas; transport various classes of supplies, and provide gun truck security for convoys. The 515th delivered of 19 million gallons of fuel, transported 7,500 short tons of equipment, and completed 600 convoys, logging in a total of 500,000 miles. The company awarded 13 Bronze Star Medals and two Combat Action Badges. On 17 December 2008, 109th and 515th Transportation Companies returned from 15-month deployments to Iraq and uncased their colors.

In March 2008, the 68th Transportation Company deployed to Camp Taji, Iraq on a 15-month deployment where it fell initially under the 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion until April 2008 when the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

replaced it and then the 419th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion after it arrived in December 2009. The 68th provided convoy support throughout Multi-National Division-Baghdad. Then from September 2008 through February 2009, the 68th Transportation Company served as a Logistics Training and Advisory Team to train, advise, and mentor the Iraqi Army's General Transport Regiment (GTR). The 68th established a Driver's Training Academy to train and license the Iraqi truck drivers assigned to the GTR. On 1 March, the company returned to running convoys and redeployed to Germany in June 2009.

The 28th Transportation Battalion arrived in Arifjan, Kuwait for the second time on 20 March 2008 and completed its transfer of authority (TOA) with the 1144th Transportation Battalion on 7 April. It fell under the 4th Sustainment Brigade. This time the 28th Battalion had responsibility for the medium trucks and the 6th Transportation Battalion had responsibility for the HETs. The 6th and the 28th Battalions moved into large dome tents in their motor pools instead of the temper tents in the old living area. The 28th Battalion picked up control of its 109th Transportation Company and C Company, 167th Infantry as its two gun truck escort companies.

Kuwait provided a unique situation in that the Sustainment Brigade (SB) did not support any Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) and initially provided command and control over battalions with a transportation function. The first Sustainment Brigade to replace the Transportation Group headquarters in Kuwait was the 640th SB. The 640th SB had converted to a modular design just prior to its deployment with a lot of augmentation from other units (to include the 7th SB) and was considered a "Band-Aid solution" to modularity. COL Terence Hermans' 4th SB, which replaced it in March 2008, was the first true Sustainment Brigade to assume the line-haul mission out of Kuwait. Unlike the Sustainment Brigades in Iraq, the Kuwait mission was sole transportation function with two Transportation Battalions and two convoy escort battalions. The 4th SB had converted to a Sustainment Brigade from the 4th DISCOM and had a preponderance of Ordnance officers. Not surprisingly, they brought a more realistic understanding of the maintenance challenges. COL Hermans also wanted to exercise greater control over operations and consequently, the two Transportation Battalions complained the 4th SB did not fully understand the transportation function.⁴

The 4th SB brought a multifunctional perspective to a formerly functional transportation operation and had the desire to do more than just manage distribution. The 4th SB brought in a Brigade Troops Battalion (BTB) and wanted responsibility for the full-range of logistics functions that had previously been controlled by the 1st Theater Support Command (TSC). The 1st TSC was supportive, but brought in the 311th Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC) in April 2008 to fill in until the 1st TSC could return again in February 2009 with a full deployment staff. The 311th ESC wanted to retain responsibility for as many of the Reception, Staging and Onward Movement (RSO) functions and commodities as it could. Gradually, the 4th SB gained responsibility for Reception, Staging and Onward Movement (RSO) and all commodities. Then the BTB

⁴ Richard Killblane and Steve Anders, Operation Iraqi Freedom/Enduring Freedom Trip Report 2009, April 2009.

assumed responsibility for financial management, and the postal, fuel, and supply contracts. It also picked up the 7/824th Air Drop (Rigger) Platoon at Qatar, which rigged bundles for supply drops in Afghanistan. The 28th Trans picked up oversight for ammunition since its M915s haul the ammunition. The 1st TSC also brought in the 332nd OD Battalion headquarters to control Deployment/Redeployment Operations (D/ROPS) and gave it to the 4th SB. It also attached the Movement Control Battalion to the 4th SB giving the 4th SB a multifunctional logistics mission and providing command and control over five sustainment battalions, after losing control of the two escort battalions.⁵

Whether by design or by accident, convoy security was taken from Transportation Corps units and given to the combat arms. In Kuwait, successive Transportation Battalions consolidated their gun truck assets into convoy escort companies for simplification in training and maintenance, and standardization of tactics, techniques and procedures (TTP). For the 2008 rotation, the National Guard sent battalions with the warning that if the companies were broken up and piecemealed to other battalions, the states would no longer send any more units to Iraq. The Ohio National Guard deployed the 1-126th Cavalry and the 1-148th Infantry to Kuwait. In April 2008, the 1-126th Cavalry replaced the 1-160th Infantry at Camp Virginia, which had been a consolidated escort battalion since 2004; however, three companies of 1-148th Infantry replaced the three convoy escort companies of the 167th Infantry in the 6th and 28th Transportation Battalions at Arifjan, thus taking the escort mission from the line-haul battalions. The 6th Transportation Battalion (HET) had one remaining escort company as it had consolidated its gun truck platoons under its HHC for training and maintenance, but the platoons only escorted their companies and the 28th retained the 109th Transportation Company.⁶

The 1-160th Infantry trained the 1-126th Cavalry and passed off their bad habits to their replacements. With only two weeks between their relief-in-place (RIP) and the infantrymen departed for home, the 4th SB was afraid the “cowboys” would do something stupid, so the Brigade sent over 20 officers and NCOs up to Camp Virginia to shadow the infantrymen until they climbed aboard the plane. The 1-126th Cavalry started off wild chasing people off in the desert, so COL Hermans sent up 20 people from brigade to conduct a health and welfare inspection looking for contraband. The intent was to send a signal to the 1-126th Cavalry that the 4th SB was watching and would not tolerate any bad behavior. The 4th SB established SOPs to put the 1-126th Cavalry in a box and get them under control. The 4th SB changed travel times to the night and let the Iraqis own the road during the day. When the 1-160th Infantry ran the road, they had lots of IED attacks because they deliberately pissed off the Iraqis. The change in performance of the 1-126th Cavalry cut down on the IED attacks from K-Crossing to Baghdad, and there had only been two IED attacks south of Scania. However, there has been plenty of rock throwing incidents from kids outside Cedar.

Right after the 4th SB arrived, SSG Jesse A. Ault, E Company, 429th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) (VA NG), was killed on 9 April 2008 by an IED between Scania and Victory Base Complex (VBC) (former BIAP), so COL Hermans decided to put a HET

⁵ OIF Trip Report 2009.

⁶ OIF Trip Report 2009.

out as the lead vehicle in every convoy, to include those of the 28th Battalion. The Brigade developed a lift package that consisted of one HET, four M915s, another HET and a M915 bobtail. It was originally five M915s and two bobtails. The 6th Trans was required to provide 24 HET packages and the 28th Trans was required to provide 34 flatbed packages. The 4th SB required the 28th Battalion to provide 40 lift packages.

President Bush's surge of 20,000 additional combat troops during 2007 increased the number of patrols in the Baghdad area thus reducing the enemy's time to set up and conceal the EFPs. COL Don Farris, Commander of the 2nd BCT, 82nd, had become fed up with the casualty losses of the 1-26th Infantry at Adhamiyah across from Sadr City, so he wanted Adhamiyah walled off with barriers. From February through May 2007, A Company, 407th BSB emplaced 1,600 barriers around Adhamiyah and in a few weeks the violence dropped by 75 percent. COL Farris then tasked the 407th BSB to completely wall in Sadr City leaving only one exit. A Company began emplacing barriers on the four roads surrounding the city. In October 2007, the 1103rd CSSB, 1st SB from Taji was tasked to assist the 407th BSB to emplace the barriers around Sadr City, at combat outposts (COP) and along all the major routes where the enemy places IEDs. This was a high-risk mission but very successful. So by 2008, the barriers initially reduced the number IED/EFP attacks, but then the enemy began using the wall around Sadr City as a fortress from which to attack. The threat to convoys had declined significantly and the convoys had to share the road with civilian traffic.⁷

The summer of 2008 required the 28th Transportation Battalion to field 28 convoy packages at a time and could not put any more on the road because of the shortage of gun trucks.

Since the limiting factor to the number of convoys fielded depended upon the number of gun trucks, the 4th SB required each battalion to come up with a number of escort packages. The 4th SB asked both the 1-126th Cavalry and 1-148th Infantry to each provide 36 escort packages. The 4th SB required the 6th Trans to provide 10 escort packages and the 109th Transportation Company could provide the 28th Trans enough gun trucks to field 8 packages. Out of 89 packages, the 4th SB would field on an average of 58 convoys on the road on any day.⁸

The new Brigade policy required the truck companies to build the convoys and a field grade officer in Battalion made the key decisions whether to move or not move. The 28th Battalion signed for M1151 HMMWV gun trucks from the 126th Cav and 148th Infantry and converted the 1844th Transportation Company into a gun truck/lift company that would maintain six gun truck and two lift packages. The 1844th then went to Udari Range for situation lane training and sent their convoy commanders out to ride with the 109th Transportation Company to get certified. The 539th Transportation Company replaced the 109th in December.⁹

⁷ OIF Trip Report 2008.

⁸ Killblane, OIF Trip Journal 2009.

⁹ Killblane, OIF Trip Journal 2009.

In December 2008, the 29th BCT deployed from Hawaii to Arifjan with all three battalions: the 299th Cavalry, 100-442nd Infantry Battalion, and the 487th Field Artillery. The 299th Cavalry replaced the 148th Infantry at Camp Arifjan and the 100-442nd Infantry replaced the 126th Cavalry at Camp Virginia, and the 487th FA assumed the security force mission at Camp Buerhing. Since the battalions deployed with their brigade headquarters, the escort battalions were pulled from the 4th Sustainment Brigade (SB). The 29th BCT felt that sustainment units should support the combat arms not the combat arms should support sustainment units as they had in Kuwait. So for the first time, the logistics brigade headquarters responsible for convoy operations no longer provided command and control of the escort battalions. The 4th SB had to task the 29th BCT for assets and says the system works. Consequently, the 4th SB has required each of the two Transportation Battalions to build internal escort assets and the battalions should first exhaust their resources before they tap into external escorts.¹⁰

In March 2009, the 28th Transportation Battalion finally received the latest in gun truck evolution, the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles as replacements for the M1151s.

In preparation for the retrograde of troops and equipment out of Iraq in keeping with President Barrack Obama's campaign pledge, the 28th Battalion sent deadheads (empty trailers) up to Joint Base Balad (former LSA Anaconda) and VBC to clean out the container receiving and shipping point (CRSP) yards. The 28th Battalion also began to reduce the lift packages from five gun trucks and two bobtails to three gun trucks and two bobtails on convoys to VBC. This would free up four Soldiers and two gun trucks and increase to 48 lift packages. With the smaller FOBs closing, this reduced the number of destinations the 28th Battalion drivers had to drive to.

The 69th Transportation Company also deployed again to Iraq.

CPT Patrick Henrick's 70th Transportation Company originally trained and deployed to Al Asaad Air Base, Kuwait in July 2008 to execute a line-haul mission transporting fuel. However, in September 2008, the 70th Transportation Company relocated to Contingency Operating Base (COB) Speicher and its mission tasked in multiple ways requiring the line platoons to have separate mission focuses. Only the 3rd Platoon continued to run convoys and escort Third Country Nationals (TCN) hauling fuel and water on Speicher. The 70th Transportation Company fell under the control of the 264th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, and returned in October 2009. It completed 161 missions for a total of 256,000 miles. As part of that mission, the 70th Transportation Company had to maintain a recovery team on 24-hour alert ready to recover any US convoy vehicle in the vicinity of their camp.

The 28th Battalion returned to Mannheim, Germany after a 15-month deployment and uncased its colors on 17 July 2009. LTC Chris Benoit turned command of the battalion over to MAJ Nicole Heumphreus who would prepare the battalion for inactivation.

¹⁰ OIF Trip Report 2009.

Inactivation

As part of the downsizing of forces in Europe, the 109th Transportation Company relocated to Fort Wainwright, Alaska in April 2009. The 28th Transportation Battalion was identified for inactivation as part of the restructuring of US Forces in Europe and four companies of the 28th Battalion; 512th Maintenance Company, 574th Supply Company, 66th and 70th Transportation Companies, were transferred to the 391st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB), 16th Sustainment Brigade in December 2009. The 69th Transportation “Roadrunners” Company held its inactivation ceremony April 29 on Coleman Barracks on 29 April 2010. The 68th Transportation Company “Eagle Express” cased its guidon on 30 April 2010 at Coleman Barracks, Germany and the company was transferred to the 142nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion at Fort Bliss, Texas. The 28th also graduated its last batch of drivers from its Drivers Training Academy in February 2010 and turned the school over to the 391st CSSB. The 28th Battalion under the command of MAJ Heumphreus finally inactivated on 15 August 2010, thus ending the line haul mission in Germany. The 70th Transportation Company inactivated on 15 September 2011 leaving just the 66th and 68th Transportation Companies and the 68th was scheduled to inactivate on 15 September 2012.

Campaign Participation Credit

World War II: Algeria-French Morocco; Tunisia; Naples-Foggia; Rome-Arno; Southern France; Rhineland

Decorations

None

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