

## U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

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### U.S. SOLDIERS SHARE COMMUNICATIONS KNOW-HOW WITH COUNTERPARTS FROM REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA

By Spc. Crystal Abbott

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**VAZIANI TRAINING AREA, Republic of Georgia --** Setting up coalition communications networks is a complex challenge that has become common in places where the military forces of several nations work together. To help meet that challenge, U.S. Soldiers here have been sharing their network skills with their counterparts from the Republic of Georgia.

Soldiers from the 509th Signal Battalion gave troops of the Georgian 4th Infantry Brigade a lesson in preparing and laying network cables to set up a communication system July 15 as part of exercise Immediate Response 2008.

Staff Sgt. Melina Gardner, the cable team NCO-in-charge, and Sgt. Rashad Jenkins, the battalion's help desk NCO-in-charge, led the class.

"I know that these Soldiers are about to go 'downrange,'" said Gardner. "Their being able to hook up a communication system will save lives on the battlefield."



SPC CRYSTAL ABBOTT

(Left to right) Staff Sgt. Melina Gardner, cable team NCO-in-charge for the 509th Signal Battalion, shows Republic of Georgia Soldiers Sgt. George Tsikolia, Cpl. Zaza Macharoghvili and Sgt. Irakli Aleqsandria the proper order of wires for a straight network communications cable during a training session to prepare the Georgians for deployment to Iraq. The training took place in Georgia as part of exercise Immediate Response 2008, an annual bilateral security cooperation exercise conducted by the U.S. and its coalition partners.

"This training will make the Georgian Soldiers self-sufficient," agreed Jenkins. "When they learn this training they won't have to rely on anyone to get the things they need."

The Georgian Soldiers who participated in this training program said they enjoyed the class and found the training helpful.

“The U.S. has the most developed equipment and technology,” said Georgian Sgt. Irakli Aleqsandria. “This training will help us become the best we can be.”

The Georgians’ interest in the subject matter and their desire to make the most of their training has been evident in the way the Soldiers participate in classes, Jenkins said.

“(The Georgians) are great learners,” he said. “I just give them the instructions once and they get it. Seeing their appreciation of the class and how quickly they catch on is very exciting.”

Georgian company commander Capt. Archil Korganasvili said he is thankful for the training U.S. troops taking part in Immediate Response have offered his Soldiers.

“It is important for us gain experience in working with other nations, especially NATO members. We are going to deploy to Iraq, so it is important to get to work with the Americans in these training environments,” said Korganasvili. “The first experiences working with the U.S. Soldiers have been very good and we are looking forward to the rest of this exercise.”

“This training is helping both Georgia and the U.S. build closer relationships as allies,” added Capt. Adolph DuBose, the information systems cell officer-in-charge. “We are really becoming friends. The Georgians are very hospitable.”

Immediate Response is an annual bilateral security cooperation exercise conducted by the U.S. and its coalition partners. The exercise is focused on interoperability training and is designed to promote understanding and cooperation between U.S. and allied military forces.



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