

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

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RELEASE #2008-07-23-02

July 23, 2008

### U.S. PARATROOPERS SHARE AIRBORNE SKILLS WITH ROMANIAN COUNTERPARTS

By Maj. Jennifer Johnson

Joint Task Force-East Public Affairs Office

**MIHAIL KOGALNICEANU AIR BASE, Romania --** A team of U.S. Airmen and Soldiers spent a day at Joint Task Force-East here training Romanian troops in airborne operations skills July 15.

Airmen from the 786th Security Forces Squadron and Soldiers from their partner unit, the 5th Quartermaster Company, trained troops of the Romanian Special Operations Battalion as part of Carpathian Summer 2008, an annual air force training rotation.



MAJ JENNIFER JOHNSON

Sgt. 1st Class Elijah Acklin of the 5th Quartermaster Company (right) guides Romanian paratroopers through airborne pre-jump training at Joint Task Force-East on Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base, Romania, July 15.

“We are parachute riggers. We came here as a jumpmaster team to help the Air Force conduct airborne operations between U.S. and Romanian paratroopers,” said Sgt. Malkeld Quartes, a 5th Quartermaster Company jumpmaster from Kaiserslautern, Germany.

Every year U.S. Air Forces in Europe selects a different location to conduct its training rotation, and this year USAFE chose to train at JTF-E. In contrast to last year’s “proof of

principle” rotation, which tested the feasibility of operations at JTF-E, the task force can now accommodate a variety of unit training.

Under the tutelage of Tech. Sgt. Mark Hawsey and Senior Master Sgt. John Storms, U.S. personnel demonstrated the steps necessary to prepare for a jump for the Romanian students, who then practiced those steps themselves.

“It is a good experience from both sides to work hand in hand to see our counterparts do the same thing we do,” said the 5th QM's Sgt. Todd Harrell.

Following pre-jump training, the troops were taken to a C-130 aircraft to practice static line control, activation of reserve parachutes, red light, jump refusal, and exiting procedures, commonly referred to as SARJE by airborne personnel.

“Basically, (the training is) performance-oriented. We actually talk them through the actions in the aircraft,” said Sgt. 1st Class Elijah Acklin, a primary jumpmaster for the 5th.

JTF-E leaders said this type of training is important to strengthen the ties that bind the U.S. military with its foreign partners to enable both to conduct seamless operations in the future.

Col. Adrian Ciolponea, the Romanian Special Operations Battalion commander, said training with the Americans at JTF-E allows Soldiers to practice their skills in a partnership environment that offers less stress and risk than real-world situations.

“We enhance the friendships with other forces and other airborne units,” Ciolponea said. We get used to (each other's) procedures.”

While the training has strategic importance, Romanian paratrooper Lt. Roland Tirdea summed up best what it means to the troops.

“It’s good for tactical training. And it’s fun.”



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