



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command
16th Sustainment Brigade
Public Affairs Office**

Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq

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“Knights” learn how to tell brigade’s story

UPAR

By Sgt. Keith M. Anderson

16th SB Public Affairs

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Soldiers from the 16th Sustainment Brigade got the scoop on public affairs operations and learned how write news articles and take photographs here Nov. 25.

“The purpose of UPAR training is to make unit public affairs representatives aware of their roles and responsibilities,” said Maj. Paul Hayes, public affairs officer, 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Joint Base Balad. “It also helps them understand the importance of a UPAR program in telling the stories of their units.”

Hayes, who is in charge of the Fort Knox-based 3rd ESC’s public affairs office, instructed the one-day class and stressed the importance of the UPAR program to the future story-tellers.

“What unit doesn't want their hometown to know what they are doing?” Hayes asked. “I would tell you it is one of the CG's (commanding general’s) and Army-leadership's priorities that hometowns are kept abreast of all that our Soldiers are doing on a daily basis.”

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The classes will add to the capabilities of the unit, Hayes said.

“This training will provide the unit a Soldier who knows what the command is looking for, as far as news, who has the basic skills to go out and cover a newsworthy event, and who knows how to get that product to the right public affairs office so that it can be seen by hometown and internal audiences,” he said.

The training was organized by the 16th Sust. Bde.’s public affairs chief, in order to enhance the visibility of the unit’s mission in Iraq.

“We have to create understanding as to what we do in public affairs,” said Sgt. 1st Class Adam V. Shaw, public affairs chief, 16th Sust. Bde. “The training gives our UPAR’s the confidence and knowledge they need to carry out the mission, and that is to put the 16th Sust. Bde. on the map.”

The 27-year-old Garden Grove, Ca., native, who is the brigade’s first-ever public affairs chief, said that the training went better than expected, and hoped that the trainees go back to their units and use their new skills.

“When we get stories from these UPARs, we send them all over, whether it be to the New York Times, Washington Post or some tiny paper in who-knows-where North Dakota,” said Shaw. “The fact is the UPAR is telling their battalion’s story and therefore the brigade’s story, so it’s important for them to write. Now they realize how much impact they can potentially have.”

Many of the participants had never written a news story before, and felt that they personally benefited from the training.

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“I learned many things in the training, such as the basics of writing an article for a newspaper,” said Capt. Jacqueline Baird, UPAR, 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion. “Having no previous experience in journalism, which is different than just writing a typical paper for college, I learned many tips and also the minimums of what to include. I now have the confidence and tools to write more effective articles through the teaching and mentoring of the UPAR class.”



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Maj. Paul Hayes, center, public affairs officer, 3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command, Joint Base Balad, explains how to write a lead to Capt. Angela Velasco, left, unit public affairs representative, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Capt. Jacqueline Baird, right, UPAR, 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sust. Bde., during UPAR training for Soldiers of the 16th Sust. Bde. at Contingency Operating Base Q-West Nov. 25. (Photos by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)