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Public Affairs Office**

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## **Washington Guardsmen hand off mission to Mississippi Guard**

By Capt. Murray Shugars  
2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Washington Guardsmen handed off Mayoral and base defense operations to Mississippi Guardsmen during a transfer of authority ceremony at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex here July 27.

Soldiers of the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade Special Troops Battalion, headquartered in Everett, Wash., and the 181<sup>st</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, headquartered in Seattle, furled their unit flags and passed their duties, responsibilities, and legacies to the newly-arrived 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms, a Mississippi Army National Guard unit headquartered in Senatobia.

The two Washington units, sister battalions in the 81<sup>st</sup> Heavy Brigade Combat Team, headquartered in Seattle, performed different but complimentary roles at Q-West.

The 81<sup>st</sup> BSTB oversaw base defense operations, such as fielding a quick reaction force, conducting presence patrols, manning the main gate, and maintaining and improving defenses.

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The 181<sup>st</sup> BSB sustained basic “life support” for Q-West, including supervising all public works projects, managing business operations, and building an active Moral, Welfare, and Recreation program.

“Our most significant accomplishment is that we completed our force protection mission with no serious incidents or injuries,” said Lt. Col. Ken S. Garrison, commander, 81<sup>st</sup> BSTB. “We kept COB Q-West secure during our tenure, and we are all returning home together.”

The 81<sup>st</sup> accomplished nearly 200 force protection projects, installing and improving walls, bunkers, and sandbags. The battalion’s force protection company conducted more than 1,000 combat patrols. Hundreds of those provided security during missions to water pumping stations that feed water to Q-West and villages in the Ninawa Province, enabling other base Soldiers to make necessary repairs and renovations, and to monitor the water system.

“To do this job well, you have to keep a long-term perspective, looking beyond your time here, which is brief — just a season in your life,” said Garrison, a native of Vancouver, Wash., to the formation of Soldiers. “You have to build for the future, plan improvements that following units help achieve.”

The Mayor Cell Soldiers also performed well, said Lt. Col. Alan K. Dorow, commander, 181<sup>st</sup> BSB, and Q-West Mayor, a municipal appointment overseeing basic life-support on the base.

“I am proud of how well my guys and gals came together as a team,” said Dorow, a native of Roy, Wash. “They forged a bond with our higher headquarters, the 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade, and with the civilian contractors who help sustain quality of life.

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That was the key to our success.”

The 181<sup>st</sup> BSB delivered more than 140 million gallons of water to the base, perhaps its most important accomplishment. The battalion’s department of business operations initiated an Iraqi hiring program that employed hundreds of Iraqis, and its badging section issued thousands of identification badges to contractors and others entering the base. The Soldiers in the battalion’s department of public works oversaw hundreds of projects across Q-West, such as constructing the education center classrooms and numerous offices, installing street lighting, pouring sidewalks, and repairing roads and buildings.

“My goal was for us to make a difference, to leave this place in better shape than when we arrived,” said Dorow. “We achieved this goal through teamwork, building solid relations with everyone involved.”

Col. Martin B. Pitts, commander, 16<sup>th</sup> Sust. Bde., congratulated the Washington Guardsmen for their steadfast work and mission accomplishment.

“To the Soldiers of both the 181<sup>st</sup> and 81<sup>st</sup>, we wish you all the best in your future endeavors,” said Pitts. “Your friends and family anxiously await your safe return to Washington. Your mission here is complete, job exceedingly well done!”

The Soldiers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms, took over the missions of the two units, but also added a third mission. They have taken responsibility of securing the bulk of convoys flowing in and out of Q-West, with four convoy security companies. One battalion will now do the job of three.

Lt. Col. Kerry W. Goodman, commander, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms, accepted

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the challenge, but he foresees long days and nights for his Soldiers.

“We’ll do our part, which is to do more with less,” said Goodman, a native of Meridian, Miss. “We will continue to improve the security and basic life support of Q-West, as our predecessors have done, and we will safely escort all sustainment missions to and from the base. Ultimately, the goal is to return this base to the Iraqi people, to leave them a secure country. We’ll do our part.”

Lt. Col. William B. Smith, Jr., a native of Hattiesburg, Miss., and the incoming Q-West Mayor, echoed Goodman’s sentiment.

“We will build on the success of our predecessors with the ultimate goal of turning this base over to the Iraqi people as part of a secure nation,” said Smith.



Washington Army National Guard Soldiers from the 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade Special Troops Battalion, headquartered in Everett, and the 181<sup>st</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, headquartered in Seattle, stand in formation to pass their duties, responsibilities, and legacies to the newly-arrived 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms, a Mississippi Army National Guard unit headquartered in Senatobia, during a transfer of authority ceremony at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex here July 27. (Photos by Capt. Murray Shugars)



Lt. Col. Ken S. Garrison (left), commander, 81<sup>st</sup> Brigade Special Troops Battalion, headquartered in Everett, Wash., and Command Sgt. Maj. David W. Nunn, command sergeant major, 81<sup>st</sup> BSTB, case the battalion guidon during a transfer-of-authority ceremony at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex here July 27. The 81<sup>st</sup> BSTB and its sister battalion, the 181<sup>st</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, headquartered in Seattle, relinquished duties and responsibilities to a Mississippi Army National Guard unit, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms, headquartered in Senatobia. “The most important thing is that we accomplished our mission without anybody getting severely hurt,” said Nunn, a native of Olympia, Wash. “We stayed vigilant. Complacency gets people killed.”

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Lt. Col. Kerry W. Goodman, of Meridian, Miss. (left), commander, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 198<sup>th</sup> Combined Arms, 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade, and Command Sgt. Maj. Perry T. Campbell, command sergeant major, 2-198<sup>th</sup> CAB, and native of Senatobia, Miss., unfurl the battalion guidon during a transfer of authority ceremony at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation base complex here July 27. The 2-198<sup>th</sup> CAB, a Mississippi Army National Guard unit headquartered in Senatobia, took on three missions at the ceremony, including the Mayor Cell, the Base Defense Operations Center, and convoy security.