

Task Force 1-4

1-4 ADA Soldiers Defend Baghdad International Airport

by CPT Scott Dellinger

Operation Iraqi Freedom has not been a typical combat operation, and every branch in the Army has adapted to meet the mission. The 1st Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery, assigned to the 1st Armored Division in Baghdad, Iraq, was no exception. During peacetime, the 1-4 ADA Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, two Bradley Stinger Fighting Vehicle (BSFV) batteries, and an Avenger battery were stationed in Wiesbaden, Germany. A third BSFV battery was located at Fort Riley, Kansas, assigned to the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division. The entire 1st Armored Division



Task Force 1-4's Bradley Stinger Fighting Vehicles were an intimidating presence during raids in the vicinity of Baghdad International Airport.

deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom and was consolidated in Kuwait to conduct combat operations in Iraq in April 2003.

The 1-4 ADA's mission was to conduct the ground defense of Baghdad International Airport and carry out offensive combat operations in a 160-square kilometer area adjacent to the airfield. The orders to defend the airport called for the battalion to consolidate as a maneuver unit and not "slice" the batteries to the brigades, as is the norm for a maneuver air defense battalion. In addition, the orders for this mission task organized 1-4 ADA to be a subordinate unit to the Division Artillery, which was acting as a brigade combat team. 1-4 ADA quickly transformed its battalion battle staff to support operations as a consolidated unit and report directly to a brigade combat team commander in lieu of the division commander.

As the deployment progressed, 1-4 ADA changed from a maneuver battalion into a maneuver task force. Increased mission requirements called for the attachment of a motorized cavalry troop, an airborne infantry company, a signal extension node, and tactical human intelligence teams. Throughout the deployment, other units, including Field

Artillery, Army Aviation, Military Intelligence, Special Operations and Air Force units, were integrated into the battalion's scheme of maneuver to complete the task force. All of these units from the 1st Armored Division, 82nd Airborne Division, and 2nd Light Cavalry Regiment were attached to—or under the operational control of—1-4 ADA for no less than a month and operated as if they were habitual parts of the ADA battalion. That combination of combat and support units created Task Force 1-4, the first maneuver task force ever

commanded by an ADA headquarters.

Task Force 1-4's mission was more complex than protecting coalition forces on Baghdad International Airport and executing offensive operations in zones surrounding the airfield. Other combat missions assigned 1-4 ADA included: logistical convoy security, Combined Joint Task Force-7 personal security details, counter-indirect fire missions, suppression of enemy air defense, route clearance, improvised explosive device (IED) reconnaissance, cordon and search missions, and raids. The battalion also conducted humanitarian missions to rebuild and supply children's schools, provide medical care for civilians, establish medical clinics, support mosques, restore power and water supplies, improve sanitation, and establish the foundation for a local government.

In May 2003, 1-4 ADA relieved the 1st Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery, 3rd Infantry Division. The 1-3 ADA had conducted offensive combat operations and maneuvered with their batteries sliced to 3rd Infantry brigades during the liberation of Iraq. The 1-3 ADA had consolidated as a battalion on the airport and established the first entry control points (ECPs) and observation posts (OPs)



Entry Control Points with only one lane of traffic and sufficient obstacles to deny high speed-access offered the best defense against vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers.

around the perimeter of the airfield. The accomplishments of 1-3 ADA securing the airport, conducting reconnaissance in the local area and establishing relations with local community leaders laid the foundation for Task Force 1-4's successful combat and humanitarian operations.

Baghdad International Airport is not unlike most commercial airports in the United States. The 30-square kilometer facility consists of two parallel runways, each longer than 10,000 feet and capable of receiving C-5 or Boeing 747 aircraft. The ramp consists of a modern passenger terminal with 18 gates, a separate terminal for dignitaries, hangars large enough to service most large aircraft, and a military ramp that could simultaneously service dozens of aircraft. Within the perimeter of the airfield is the industrial, commercial, military, and residential infrastructure necessary to operate an international and military airfield. The airport is accessible on the ground by a six-lane highway that leads to downtown Baghdad, and several other multi-lane, paved entrances around the perimeter.

Securing the Perimeter

The defense of Baghdad International Airport required the establishment of OPs around the perimeter to ensure that it was not breached by the enemy and the construction of ECPs to control access along the roads. 1-4 ADA established OPs with interlocking fields of observation and fires. Soldiers manning them could all observe the terrain at least 300 meters away from the OP. Each OP also had dual means of communication with their headquarters. The OPs were overt; there was no attempt to hide the positions. This displayed overwhelming force and observation around the perimeter to deter the enemy from attempting to infiltrate the facility. Because the OPs were not concealed, they were hardened to absorb small arms fire, rocket propelled grenades (RPG), and mortar attacks. In most every case, 18 inches of sandbag cover on the sides and on top of the OP was more than adequate to protect Soldiers and equipment. Special care was taken to ensure that the overhead cover of each position was supported in a way that it would not collapse after being hit. The enemy engaged some of the OPs with small-arms fire,

which the fortifications withstood. However, none of the positions ever sustained a direct impact from explosive munitions, even though they did protect soldiers from blast effects.

The most challenging aspect of defending the airport was the construction and occupation of ECPs. Vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs), or car bombs, are commonplace in Baghdad, and insurgents and terrorists use them to attack civilian, government, and coalition military assets. Suicide bombers conceal explosives in their clothing to attack coalition forces. The best method of defense against the VBIED or suicide bomber was to construct an ECP in depth with several layers of mutually supporting defense and only one lane of traffic with sufficient obstacles to deny any high-speed access through the ECP. 1-4 ADA constructed ECPs that were at least 200 meters in length to ensure depth and a serpentine to force vehicles to constantly change directions the entire way. The serpentine forced vehicles to travel through the ECP at a walking pace.

A vehicle or individual on foot approaching the ECP encountered a drop-arm gate that controlled the flow of traffic. Soldiers checked identification prior to allowing any vehicle into the ECP. If the vehicle occupants were authorized access, the drop-arm gate was lifted, and the vehicle entered the serpentine and proceeded towards a search bunker, where it was inspected for contraband and weapons. Once cleared, the vehicle was allowed to proceed through the serpentine until it encountered a second drop arm gate that controlled access. Once this gate was lifted, the vehicle continued in the serpentine past a Bradley Stinger Fighting Vehicle that kept its 25mm cannon trained on the vehicle throughout the entire journey. Soldiers in fortified bunkers along the serpentine also monitored the vehicle's trek through the checkpoint. If there was any indication of danger while a vehicle was in the serpentine or the search area, all of the drop arm gates were immediately closed, and the BSFV blocked the only lane entering the airfield. The drop arms also served as triggers for all the shooters on the ECPs. If the drop arm was ever breached, that would indicate that a vehicle en-



At left, a Task Force 1-4 Bradley guards an entry control point into Baghdad. At right, Task Force 1-4 Soldiers man a roadblock in the vicinity of Baghdad International Airport.

tering the checkpoint could be a threat; therefore, each drop-arm gate was covered by direct-fire automatic weapons.

Each ECP was constructed with bunkers well reinforced with Hesco-brand commercial bastions, because, unlike the OPs, many of the ECPs around the airport were engaged directly with small arms, RPGs or mortar fire. The Hesco bastion is a square basket from two- to 12-foot tall, made out of thick wire mesh with its sides covered in cloth. Soldiers placed empty bastions where ballistic protection was required and then filled them with dirt from a scoop loader. Almost every unit in Iraq uses the Hesco bastions as efficient substitutions for sandbags to construct bunkers, walls or other protection. These methods proved effective, as the bunkers on the airport perimeter were never destroyed or breached by enemy forces.

Reconnaissance in Zone: Offensive Operations in Support of a Defensive Mission

Another reason the airport perimeter was never breached was due in part to continuous reconnaissance patrols in the area that surrounded the airfield. Combinations of dismounted Soldiers, BSFVs and Humvees with mounted machine guns or grenade launchers cleared the terrain of enemy forces and developed actionable intelligence. Most of the Task Force 1-4 area of operations consisted of rural farmland on an arid desert plain with scattered groves of palm trees. Numerous irrigation ditches supplied water to the farmland, and these canals were typically as deep and wide as a standard tank ditch with meter-high berms on either side. The canals crisscrossed the countryside every 500 to 1,000 meters. Several large villages with dozens of two-story buildings and narrow alleyways were scattered throughout the zone.

The enemy was well versed at using the terrain to his advantage in countering the task force's reconnaissance patrols in zone. Enemy forces attacked the patrols in ambushes with IEDs, small arms, and RPGs from behind the cover of irrigation canals and from within built up villages. Patrols had difficulty maneuvering against the enemy because the ditches and villages were significant obstacles. However, the patrols became more effective when

they employed their combat system's technological advantages—mainly the BSFV thermal sights, Avenger forward-looking infrared (FLIR), the Long-Range Scout Surveillance System, and the FLIRs from OH-58D Kiowa Warriors and AH-64 Apaches. These "own-the-night" (OTN) technologies greatly enhanced the task force's target acquisition and surveillance capabilities.

In addition to OTN equipment, patrols developed a movement technique of bounding-envelopment. Whenever the patrols encountered terrain in the farmland that favored the enemy attacking in an ambush, a combat vehicle in the patrol with OTN technology established an attack-by-fire position as another vehicle in the patrol maneuvered on a secondary route, most likely on the far side of a canal, to envelope the suspected position of enemy forces. Once that combat vehicle was in a position to overwhelm the suspected enemy location, the remaining vehicles maneuvered through the area under the security of at least one combat vehicle with OTN equipment. Once those forces were in a dominating position, they covered the movement of other vehicles past the suspected enemy location. In densely populated villages, the same technique was applied, but the vehicle with OTN equipment maneuvered to a flanking position perpendicular to the movement of friendly forces and over-watched their maneuver through the congested area. In all cases, Kiowa Warriors or Apaches added to the commander's tactical situational awareness and weapons density.

SCANNING

Defense Science Board Task Force Rates Patriot a Substantial Success

The Patriot battalions operated reliably, and the two variants of the interceptor missile worked well against these Iraqi tactical ballistic missiles...In an overall sense, the Task Force assessed the Patriot missile defense in OIF to be a substantial success.

—Defense Science Board Task Force Report
Patriot System Performance, January 2005

Other methods used to defeat the enemy included the establishment of dismounted OPs in zone that could also serve as ambushes. Task Force 1-4 engaged terrorists rather than a standing army; the enemy did not wear uniforms or operate tactical combat vehicles. Insurgents looked like local villagers and drove sedans and pickup trucks that resembled the majority of civilian traffic. Therefore, after an attack occurred, the enemy could easily blend into the population or normal automobile traffic. Establishing covert OPs in zone around templated enemy positions allowed Task Force 1-4 to identify suspicious activities and defeat the terrorists by attacking them as they were establishing their own attacks. Quick reaction force patrols and attack aviation almost always assisted the OPs when they discovered suspicious behavior. Standing operating procedures that were clearly understood by patrol leaders ensured effective air-ground integration.

The Counter-Fire Fight

Using bounding envelopment and placing covert OPs allowed patrols to defeat the enemy on many occasions during offensive reconnaissance missions. Most of the reconnaissance missions were tasked with finding enemy forces in zone directly threatening the airport with shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles, surface-to-surface rockets, or mortars. The most frequent threat to the airport was indirect fire. To defeat the indirect-fire threat, the division supplied Fire Finder Radars to observe the Task Force 1-4 area of operations. These radars were linked to a platoon of towed 105mm and 155mm howitzers that was ready to shoot immediate counter-fire or illumination. If the OPs, patrols, or aviation in zone identified an enemy point of origin (mortar or rocket launch point), they would observe the fires and adjust fires as necessary. As those patrols identified more suspected enemy indirect-fire points of origin, the Field Artillery shot harassing and interdiction (H&I) fires to deter and deny the enemy the ability to lay indirect fire systems against the airport. The H&I fires were very effective, and great care was taken to directly target the enemy and not to disturb any noncombatants.

Counter-fire and aggressive patrolling discouraged the enemy from consistently attacking the airport, and the enemy started using more desperate tactics. As Task Force 1-4 grew more successful against the indirect-fire threat, the enemy adapted by firing mortars hastily and without precise aiming. Most of the hasty mortar shots originated from vehicles stopping on high-speed avenues of approach. The insurgent mortar crews would quickly lay the mortars and shoot three or four rounds in the general vicinity of the airfield. Fire Finder Radars and crater analysis almost always identified the launch points of uncoordinated indirect fire attacks as being adjacent to improved hard-surfaced roads.

Insurgents launched surface-to-surface rockets against the airport even more hastily. The enemy would place individual rockets in canted slit trenches, lay rockets against the slopes of canals, slide rockets into irrigation pipes, or

place the rockets on a shoddy wooden platform pointed towards the airfield. The enemy would then use a timer to ignite the rockets' fuses, so that the rockets would launch after the assailants had left the point of origin. This method of shooting rockets resulted in a high misfire rate for the enemy. Civilians in the area were almost always eager to lead Task Force 1-4 to the point of origin to prevent H&I fires from targeting their farmland.

Suppression of Enemy Air Defense

Another important mission for Task Force 1-4's offensive reconnaissance patrols was denying the enemy the ability to engage aircraft landing or departing at the airport with shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles. This mission was an ironic one for an ADA unit normally tasked with shooting down enemy aircraft. Indeed, had the enemy known that fact, he would not have been as bold as to encroach in Task Force 1-4's zone with shoulder-fired missiles. The battalion staff embarked on a reverse battlefield operating system analysis to determine how to thwart the enemy's activities in zone. Analysis of the threat surface-to-air missiles was conducted to determine their ranges, effectiveness, and methods of employment. As a result, the battalion learned the missiles were capable of being employed in similar ways as the Stinger, but the enemy's missiles had a shorter range and were less accurate. That analysis allowed the battalion to establish a boundary that included the area in the aircrafts arrival and departure flight paths where they would be in range of enemy surface-to-air missiles.

An exclusion zone was created in that boundary by blocking all routes into the area with obstacles or traffic control points in an effort to keep missiles out, or capture the responsible individuals after an engagement. Coordination was made with the Air Force to define the boundaries of the exclusion zone so aircraft would be protected while they were in the vicinity of the airfield. Whenever there were scheduled flights, Task Force 1-4 increased occupation of the exclusion zone and set up multiple OPs to scan the area for enemy activity. Once the exclusion zone was in place, no aircraft were ever again engaged with shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles.

Improvised Explosive Devices

The continuous presence of Task Force 1-4 Soldiers conducting offensive operations presented a lucrative target for enemy forces targeting the patrols with IEDs. The enemy improved their IEDs over the task force's 12-month deployment to include more sophisticated methods of camouflaging the IED, using different kinds of explosives, detonating the IEDs in different ways, and coordinating IED attacks. Almost every unit in Task Force 1-4 encountered one or more IEDs while conducting operations. The first IEDs that the task force encountered were merely a single artillery shell or mortar round placed in a hole on the side of a road with a detonator connected to a wire that stretched out to a power source. Most of these IEDs were not successful because of the way that they were



Task Force 1-4 patrols relied heavily on their technological advantages, using the Bradley Stinger Fighting Vehicle's thermal sights and the Avenger's forward looking infrared system.

placed. Most were laid on the reverse slope of a shoulder along a road, or in a large hole to conceal the weapons. Therefore, the slope of the road or the hole would consume most of the blast effects, allowing the targeted vehicles to pass unharmed. To target vehicles on the road, the enemy had to place the IED in a spot where the blast effects would consume the victims. That meant that the IED would have to be closer to the road and within line-of-sight of the target.

To accomplish that, the terrorists concealed IEDs in creative ways. They disguised IEDs as roadside garbage or concealed them in sandbags or tires abandoned on the shoulder of roads. Some IEDs were even concealed in the carcasses of dead animals littering the highways. Some of the most complex methods of camouflage consisted of placing the explosives in concrete shaped like a curb along the side of the road, placing explosives in the supports of highway road signs, or placing explosives into highway guard rails. The methods of camouflage dictated what types of explosives could be used to attack coalition forces. Mortar rounds were typically concealed in trash, dead animals and in sandbags. Trash and sandbags were also used to conceal antitank mines placed in the middle of roads. Terrorists used large artillery shells, as big as the 70-pound 155mm round, fastened to the guardrails on the highway or stacked inside light poles or the supports to signs. They created other types of IEDs by packing metal containers, truck tire rims, or brake cylinders with PE4, C4, or other explosives that would create shrapnel by tearing apart the metal containers.

To detonate the IED, the enemy set a fuse or blasting cap in the munitions and stretched wire from the detonator to a power source. Some IEDs would not detonate because the power source did not have enough capacity to trigger the weapon, or the lead wire was too long, or was the wrong gauge for the current to pass through. The direct-wire method also required the assailant to be close to the IED and left him vulnerable to counter-attack. In an effort not to be in the same vicinity of the IED, the enemy utilized many different means of triggering their devices.

Power sources were made smaller and integrated into the IED, creating more shrapnel, and the detonator was triggered from a remote source. Some examples of the remote detonators discovered by Task Force 1-4 included remote doorbells, car alarm remote controls, remote control toy receivers, garage door openers, or cellular phones.

The most dangerous IEDs were set in series or were detonated in a coordinated attack using several different IEDs. It was not uncommon to find a row of two to 10 artillery shells spaced apart along a road and connected in series with detonation cord. The engagement zone of an IED in series could be longer than 100 meters and could effectively target two or more vehicles, depending on the distance between the explosives. IEDs were also often set in a coordinated attack. For example, insurgents would place an IED in an obvious spot where it was likely to be found, and once the site was secured and explosive ordnance disposal teams were there, the insurgents would trigger other IEDs close to the spot where forces were overwatching the first suspected IED. Insurgents would also trigger one IED, disabling one vehicle, and then set off a second IED when others came to the aid of the wounded or attempted to recover the first vehicle.

The best ways to avoid the complex IEDs was to be vigilant, constantly aware of the environment, and maneuver against the enemy instead of merely driving around the zone. Task Force 1-4 Soldiers usually patrolled the same areas and were able to recognize when something was out of the ordinary. It was also important to develop a positive relationship with the local people, so they could identify hazards or individuals not from their village. In all cases, it was best to err on the side of caution and stand off from suspicious items on the side of the road.

Cordon and Search Operations and Raids

Other offensive operations in zone consisted of conducting cordon and searches and raids. These missions were the best example of the air defense battalion operating as a task force. Most of the targets for raids and cordon and search missions were developed through human

intelligence gained by the patrols interacting with and appealing to local community leaders, or by exploiting intelligence collected on previous operations. Other targets were developed by the Tactical Human Intelligence Team attached to the task force, Army Special Forces, or Air Force Office of Special Investigation officers. Regardless of who gathered the information, it was always important to establish two independent sources against one target to ensure that it was a viable objective.

Most of the operations were cordon and search missions to identify weapons caches or find physical evidence of anti-coalition activities. These missions started by segregating the target with an outer cordon that blocked roads and other avenues of approach leading into the objective area. An inner cordon was established to isolate the objective and keep anyone from leaving the area. Once the cordon was set, search teams cleared and then explored the buildings, using metal detectors to search for buried weapons in haystacks, compost piles, or in underground septic pits.

The task force conducted raids when there was specific intelligence to secure a known target or when the enemy was expected to resist and fight. Raids were different than a cordon and search because the assault team did not necessarily wait for an inner or outer cordon to set prior to execution on the objective. Cordon and searches could last hours, whereas in most cases a raid was completed very quickly. Task Force 1-4 was able to expertly execute both missions as a result of combined arms coordination. For example, in a cordon and search or raid, the cavalry troopers would conduct the initial reconnaissance and ensure that the conditions were set on the objective for the mission to be executed. Bradley Stinger Fighting Vehicles established inner cordons, breached walls or entrances, and securely delivered Soldiers onto the objectives. The BSFV was a very intimidating tool to use during a raid or cordon and search. On most missions when a BSFV was used as a part of the inner cordon or to insert a building clearing team, there was no resistance on the objective.

During these operations, Kiowa Warriors or Apaches

over-watched the objective, looking for any signs of resistance or individuals fleeing the objective. Also, the Field Artillery was on call to deliver illumination or to suppress an enemy counterattack. On other occasions, the Air Force delivered close air support, Security Forces' sniper teams were a part of combat operations, or intelligence officers

from Special Forces or the Office of Special Investigation participated in operations to conduct sensitive site exploitation of the objectives.

Convoy Security

Task Force 1-4 Avengers also protected logistical convoys, making daily trips on military supply routes through hostile territory. Convoy security well suited the Avengers, which were able to use their FLIR and M3P .50-caliber machine gun to defend convoys while on the move. The Avengers FLIR enabled them to identify enemy positions at long range and engage the insurgents with the M3Ps before convoys entered ambush kill zones. The enemy feared the menacing looking Avengers with its rotating turret, intimidating Stinger pods and deadly accurate machine gun. Air Defense Artillery Soldiers became so proficient at identifying enemy positions and IEDs with the

FLIR that ADA vehicles were sent ahead of convoys to clear routes and identify IEDs or other threats along routes throughout the entire 1st Armored Division zone. Once the route was cleared, other Avengers and Military Police linked up with the convoys and protected them on their way. Avengers were also used in personal security details for dignitaries and other high-ranking officials in the Baghdad area. For months, the Avengers successfully protected convoys and also safeguarded important officials.

Task Force 1-4 was tremendously successful conducting combat operations in the Baghdad area as a result of combined arms and joint service cooperation. The air defense, cavalry, and infantry Soldiers ensured the perimeter of Baghdad was never breached, and coalition forces living and operating on the airfield remained secure. Soldiers in the task force conducted offensive operations resulting in the capture of dozens of former regime loyalists and terrorists; they seized thousands of pounds of ammu-



Civilians were almost always eager to lead Task Force 1-4 to "ghetto rocket" launch sites.



The most dangerous improvised explosive devices were expertly camouflaged and set in series or detonated in coordinated attacks using several devices.

dition and explosives, large numbers of small arms weapons, machine guns, RPGs, mortars, and rockets; and they denied the enemy the ability to target aircraft with missiles.

Air Defense Mission

In addition to the variety of missions the task force conducted, 1-4 ADA still had an air defense mission to accomplish in Iraq. The battalion established an air surveillance radar picture and planned for contingency operations. From the very first day 1-4 ADA arrived in Baghdad, the battalion established Sentinel radar coverage of the local area. The radar was then integrated, as it should have been in a combat zone, with the Air Force Airborne Warning and Control System, Control and Reporting Center radar and Airfield Approach Control radar to provide a comprehensive and consolidated air picture for the theater commander extending from the center of Baghdad International Airport out to 250 nautical miles.

The Sentinel was also used to maintain situational awareness for the rotary wing assets supporting the division. Close air support, combat air patrols, and rotary wing reconnaissance were all monitored on the Air and Missile Defense Workstation in the division and battalion tactical operations center. The air defense Soldiers in the task force also enjoyed radar connectivity because they always had a digital air picture available to them on their Handheld Terminal Units around the airport perimeter or out in zone on missions. Patrols had the opportunity to observe air traffic patterns in and out of the exclusion zone, and the patrols were always aware of the nearest air support assets in the area.

Air defense plans were validated by conducting digital rehearsals and tactical exercises...

Air surveillance for situational awareness was a vital part of the task force's contingency planning. The task force staff planned operations that protected several coalition high-value targets from air attack, namely the deliberate collision of an aircraft into a building or structure. Planning and coordination extending from the fire-unit level to Central Command mitigated the risks presented by a terrorist attack of this nature on coalition assets around the Baghdad area. Joint coordination between the Air Force and Marine Corps incorporated Task Force 1-4 air defense assets into existing force-protection measures. Communications and operations links disseminated early warning information from the radars and ground observers to the joint team protecting high-value targets. Air defense plans were validated by conducting digital rehearsals and tactical exercises involving fire units occupying preplanned positions and using a mix of air defense systems. All of the plans involved using several systems, each

firing multiple missiles and taking advantage of early engagement envelopes to destroy the threat well before it reached its intended target.

Ensuring Iraqi Freedom

The Soldiers of Task Force 1-4 accomplished many things during their 12-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The air defense battalion received attachments of other combat arms and operated as a true maneuver task force in a combat environment, and it sustained those operations for an entire year. The task force successfully protected Baghdad International Airport from enemy infiltration or ground assault and conducted offensive operations against terrorists and former regime loyalists. Task Force 1-4 Soldiers also protected convoys, dignitaries, and aircraft using the airfield. Task Force 1-4 demonstrated its versatility and operational utility by adapting to the needs and realities of the current operational environment, providing core air defense capabilities, while simultaneously executing maneuver task force missions, in an effort to bring stability to Iraq and ensuring Iraqi freedom became a reality.



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