

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

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### AFGHAN ARMY MECHANICS GET MAINTENANCE TRAINING FROM U.S. ARMY EUROPE SUPPORT SOLDIERS

By 2nd Lt. Monica Comeaux  
173rd Brigade Support Battalion

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE FENTY, Afghanistan --** Soldiers from U.S. Army Europe's Company B, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion paid a visit to Forward Operating Base Hughie Dec. 29 to train Afghan army mechanics.

More than 20 Afghan National Army Soldiers assigned to 5th Kandak, 3rd Brigade, learned how to perform Humvee preventive maintenance checks and service.

The brigade has only a few Humvees in its fleet, but is scheduled to receive more in the future.

The training was presented to the Afghan troops following U.S. Army standards and in the same manner as American personnel are trained.



2ND LT MONICA COMEAUX

Spc. Jason P. Holstein, a light wheeled vehicle mechanic with U.S. Army Europe's Company B, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, teaches Humvee preventive maintenance checks and services to Afghan National Army Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Hughie, Afghanistan Dec. 29.

“You go from the crawl to the walk to the run phase,” said Sgt. 1st Class George V. Castillo, a vehicle maintenance supervisor from the U.S. Army Reserve's 95th Training Division. “You sort of hold them by their hand and show them everything. A lot of these guys can do a lot more things than we can.”

During the maintenance training the American instructors also shared some tricks of the trade used by U.S. mechanics.

“We gave them some quick troubleshooting guides on things,” said Staff Sgt. Jabar C. Steward, a light wheeled vehicle mechanic with Company B, 173rd BSB. He cited one example: “If the vehicle overheats, we let them know that they can unplug the time delay (so the fan runs continually) and they will be able to continue the mission.”



2ND LT MONICA COMEAUX

Staff Sgt. Jabar C. Steward, a light wheeled vehicle mechanic with U.S. Army Europe's Company B, 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, uses a bit of sports drink on his fingertip to demonstrate fixing leaks on a Humvee, during a training session with Afghan National Army Soldiers at Forward Operating Base Hughie, Afghanistan Dec. 29.

Castillo expected less than half as many ANA troops would attend the training, but said he was pleasantly surprised when he saw the small crowd anxiously awaiting the arrival of the U.S. Soldiers.

One of the participants, ANA Sgt. Azbullah, speaks fairly good English, and was able to ask questions and take detailed notes during the class. The sergeant said he had a great time attending the training.

“The Humvee is a very good vehicle,” Azbullah said.

ANA Lt. Col. Shamsuddine, commander of the Combat Service Support Battalion, 3rd Quick Reaction

Forces Brigade, 201st ANA Corps, said he welcomed the training, noting that as soon as his brigade received the trucks he requested assistance in training the operators and mechanics.

“I like the cooperation between the U.S Army and the ANA,” said Shamsuddine through a translator. “As you know, there has been a war in Afghanistan for the last 30 years. We lost everything we had. Now we can have a stabilized government. With the assistance of the U.S., we can continue to improve.”

Steward says he jumped on the opportunity to train the ANA Soldiers and brought two of his best mechanics with him.

“I enjoy working with other cultures,” said Steward. “It would make the job real easy if I could speak Pashto, but that is not going to happen.”

Soldiers from both nations said they are looking forward to future training events, and plans were agreed upon to translate parts of the Humvee technical manuals and set up more detailed maintenance training.

Azullah said the training is part of the future for Afghanistan.

“It is very important for the ANA soldiers to learn how to use these vehicles, because we will one day independently provide security for our whole country,” he said.



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