

South Dakota National Guard

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October 19, 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

211th Engineer Company trains with United Kingdom soldiers

By Spc. Bruce Jones

211th Engineer Company Unit Public Affairs Representative

MADISON, S.D. – The South Dakota Army National Guard’s 211th Engineer Company (Sapper), of Madison and De Smet, sent 38 Soldiers to train with engineers from the United Kingdom’s Territorial Army (Volunteers) in the exercise Tyne Sapper 12 near Paderborn, Germany, Sept. 8-23.

The 211th and UK soldiers from the 72 Engineer Regiment participated in an exchange program, where they shared different tactics, techniques and procedures on engineer operations during the exercise.

“This exchange exercise with the UK Army was an excellent training event for our Soldiers,” said 1st Sgt. Gary DeVries, of the 211th. “Being able to work with our closest ally and develop our knowledge of each other’s training environments was a valuable experience as we continue to support one another in conflicts across the globe.”

The two week exercise, organized into two phases, held at the Sennelager Training Area in Germany included training on bridging, infantry tactics, water purification, urban assault, weapons qualifications and demolitions.

Sennelager Training Area is a NATO training facility operated by the British Army and is the home of the British Army’s 20th Armored Brigade.

Phase one of Tyne Sapper 12 consisted of hands on, practical and classroom learning along with weapons qualifications using the HK SA 80A2, the standard issue British military assault rifle. Phase two included a five day Field Training Exercise (FTX).

“Training with the soldiers of the 72 Engineer Regiment in Germany was a great experience,” said Staff Sgt. Mark Poncelet, a squad leader with the 211th. “A lot of the training was very similar to what we would do as Sappers, but they do different tasks such as bridge building, water purification and supply.”

During the FTX, the 211th and 72 Regiment soldiers integrated into a mixed unit of two troops, each with two sections running simultaneous missions both day and night. FTX night operations consisted of bridge building and demolitions with daylight operations covering water purification and infantry tactics, while the training culminated in an urban assault mission.

“Most of our Soldiers had little experience with bridge building and none with water purification and supply,” said Poncelet. “It was a great change of pace for us to be doing these different tasks that we would not normally do. Overall, it was a great training experience, and I hope that we can continue our relationship with the 72 Engineer Regiment.”

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High resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/southdakotationalguard



120915-A-AB123-001: Spc. Austin Slaughter, of the 211th Engineer Company (Sapper), fires the HK SA 80A2, the standard issue British military assault rifle, during the United Kingdom Territorial Army’s exercise Tyne Sapper 12 near Paderborn, Germany, Sept. 8-23, 2012. The 211th and UK soldiers from the 72 Engineer Regiment participated in an exchange program, where they shared different tactics, techniques and procedures on engineer operations during the exercise. (SDNG photo by Spc. Bruce Jones) (RELEASED)



120915-A-AB123-002: 211th Engineer Company (Sapper) Soldiers receive water point and water purification training from the United Kingdom’s Territorial Army’s 72 Engineer Regiment during the exercise Tyne Sapper 12 near Paderborn, Germany, Sept. 8-23, 2012. (SDNG photo by Spc. Bruce Jones) (RELEASED)



120915-A-AB123-003: Members of the South Dakota Army National Guard’s 211th Engineer Company (Sapper) and the United Kingdom Territorial Army’s 72 Engineer Regiment trained together during the exercise Tyne Sapper 12 near Paderborn, Germany, Sept. 8-23, 2012. The 211th and UK soldiers participated in an exchange program, where they shared different tactics, techniques and procedures on engineer operations during the exercise. (SDNG photo by Spc. Bruce Jones) (RELEASED)