

# 2004 An Intense

by Maj S. COX, UK Army G7 Training



*Updating the situation map during Exe Sharp Dagger '03.*

## TRAINING CALENDAR

When I was asked by Media to write an article about the HQ's Training Programme, 2 questions immediately sprung to mind. Firstly, as I had at the time just received the Commander's training guidance for 2005, I wondered which year they were referring to. Secondly, if they indeed wanted an article that covered 2004, everything was contained in the Commander's Training Directive for this year. But 2004 it is, and I therefore offer the following.

I am sure that we all returned from a well-earned Christmas holiday, ready to embark on the progressive programme that would lead us into our NRF Standby period. The theory was that the series of EAGLE exercises (NEST, ENTRY and LANDING) would flow from one to another, with us as the Primary Training Audience (PTA) almost imperceptibly gaining in our knowledge of NRF operations as we travelled along the conveyor belt of education that had been laid before us. Better still, opportunities would be provided for us to break away from the central path offered by the EAGLE series to consider special-to-branch issues, then reconvene collectively in order to get our teeth into the next major training task. To cap it all, just in case all this cerebral activity would be too much for us to bear, our route was to be punctuated with events such as a skiing exercise in Passo Tonale, a battlefield tour in Normandy and various Ugo Mara Cup sporting events.

So much for the theory. Unfortunately, in true military fashion, a number of challenges had also been placed in our way, presumably as reminders that no plan survives contact with the enemy, and that we must there-

fore remain flexible! These included the change of command, the move from our current offices to the "Starship" (is this what trainers mean by a "building block approach"?), the transformation from an insecure LAN to CRONOS, and various NRF certification commitments.

I am assured by Media that, as this magazine hits the streets, Ex EAGLE LANDING will be behind us, and that we shall therefore be contemplating how we can perform even better on Ex ALLIED ACTION. I have no idea what our "Lessons Identified" during EAGLE LANDING will be, but I am sure that we shall conduct a re-appraisal of our short-term training priorities so that we can develop our internal procedures. Following ALLIED ACTION, we shall have opportunities for further development during Ex EAGLE NEST 2 and for the culmination of our readiness preparations during Ex EAGLE PREENING as the critical date of 1 July approaches.



*A female Corporal of the Support Regiment during the winter training.*



# Training Year

This will by no means allow us to stop training. As the old maxim goes: "Unless you are going forwards, you must be going backwards." And in the words of ACOS G7: "Training is the engine that never stops!" In order to maintain our NRF readiness during our Standby period, the themes that started at the beginning of the year will continue: a second EAGLE ENTRY and a third EAGLE NEST (in the best traditions of successful films!), with even more branch study periods (including a study of the implications of Effects Based Operations). Again, recreation and fun will not be overlooked, with more adventure training and sport scheduled for the summer and autumn.

The injection of Ex DESTINED GLORY, which is expected to involve our Early Entry (EE) and Rear Support Command (Forward) (RSC (Fwd)) HQs, plus the EE CP and an entire Battle Group from the NRF Brigade, in a "live" demonstration of the NRF's Interim Operational Capability (IOC) during October has forced a re-think of our training programme. This is likely to involve the bringing forward of Ex EAGLE ENTRY 2 in order that we can rehearse and develop our internal procedures beforehand. Towards the end of the year, we shall again send a team to join HQ ARRC, one of our mutually supporting HQs, on their capstone exercise, ARRC-DE FUSION.

At the time of writing, this all seems to be relevant and accurate. However, I would be one of the first to recognise that, as professional soldiers, we must always expect the unexpected, and that all planning must therefore be subject to change. The very nature of our NRF Standby commitment reinforces this point, and I would be surprised if we reached the end of the year without further amendments to the training programme. However, it is largely through the programme itself that we intend to prepare to meet our NRF commitments. I hope that those readers who have made it to the end of this article have enjoyed the journey!



*NRDC-IT Staff operating in NBC environment.*



*A GPM nest during the winter training.*



*Operational briefing at the Rear Alternate and Step Up (RAS) Command Post during Exe Light Ship '02.*

