

## HQ NRDC-ITA completes Exercise EAGLE RECCE 2008

by Maj. Graham Cable

Staff and troops from HQ NRDC-ITA and its Support Brigade have spent the last week training in the Italian Army's Candelo Masazza training area, near Biella.

The aims of the command post exercise were to deploy the HQ's Recce Team and test its capability to report back to and interact with the HQ's Permanent Operations Centre and Operational Planning Group; to activate and deploy the follow-on Early Entry Team; and finally to deploy the Rear Support Command and test its ability to conduct Reception, Staging and Onward Movement (RSOM) operations.

The HQ's Evaluation Team has closely monitored the exercise, particularly as this deployment has differed from other training activities in a number of respects.

"Unlike most exercises this HQ conducts, EAGLE RECCE 08 tested our ability to plan for, recce and set the conditions for rapid deployment right from the outset of an operation.



"This was a large undertaking in terms of the fact we tested diverse, yet significant elements of our deployed and permanent staff structures.

"In so doing, this was a complicated exercise to develop, which involved immense effort from all elements of the HQ and Support Brigade in bringing it to fruition.

"The results have been impressive, but of course the purpose of the exercise is also to identify areas that we need to refine. This is what my team has been focusing on", says Colonel John Rouse, the Evaluation Team's chief.

Deploying on Thursday 10 April, the Recce Team handed over to the Early Entry elements two days later, to be followed by the Rear Support Command on Monday 14 April 2008.

The scenario upon which all phases of the exercise was based was NATO operations in Afghanistan from 2003 – 2006. This enabled all elements to test their ability to deploy during the relevant stage of an operation, as well as refresh the HQ's ability to prepare for future operations in the country.

This same scenario will be used for the HQ's next major exercise, EAGLE ACTION 08, in June this year.

Speaking at the end of the exercise, the Commander of the Rear Support Command, the HQ division involved in the final phase, Brigadier General Finokaliotis said "RSOM is a mechanism to deploy forces into an area of operations and this is a very demanding and complicated process.

"Generally speaking this exercise has been a success for us, particularly as it the first time we have delved into this difficult and complicated area".