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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## Training meets real life in Rapid City

*By Pfc. Phil Regina, 305th Public Affairs Detachment*

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The high-noon Iraqi sun sits hot and heavy in the sky, as the sweat from your brow stings your squinting eyes. You’ve been providing security for an entry control point for hours, and the day is beginning to drag. Suddenly, in the distance, what begins as a glimmer becomes fast-approaching danger; an unidentified vehicle begins barreling full speed toward your location.

While nothing can truly prepare a person for such an experience, for the Soldiers of the 495th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion of the Montana Army National Guard, West Camp Rapid has proven a sufficient substitute.

The 495th conducted base defense exercises at the west camp on Monday, June 9. The 166th Aviation Brigade of Fort Riley, Kan., served as trainers for the exercise.

“The exercises revolved around general base defense operations,” explained Sgt. 1st Class Garth Swisher of the 166th and non-commissioned officer in charge of the base defense exercise. “Some of these operations include: operating an entry control point, assembling a quick-reactionary force and reacting to vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices”

The goal of the 166th was to help familiarize the 495th with tasks that may be unfamiliar to some of them.

“Our basic goal is to teach the fundamentals of these types of operations,” said Capt. Jane Gumataotao, officer-in-charge of the exercise and member of the 166th. “Though the exercises conducted in this mock environment may seem far removed from real life, familiarizing the Soldiers with these situations is an invaluable training tool.”

“Going through the training has been a great opportunity for the 495th,” said Capt. Renea Dorvall, 495th Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander. “This is the first time we’ve ever done this type of training and I think it will truly prove its worth if and when we’re deployed.”

For some of the Soldiers of the 495th, the exercise served as more than just a training tool; it also served as a way to bond.

“Doing things like this helps build unit cohesion,” said Pfc. Carly Stapley of the 495th. “You get a chance to get to know your Soldiers and see the way they act in these types of situations. I think feeling comfortable around your battle buddies is important when you actually deploy.”

As the unidentified vehicle approaches, you recall the lessons you learned months ago during your base defense exercise and react accordingly, stopping the vehicle and seamlessly performing the required tasks. Thankfully, you had the opportunity to familiarize yourself with situations such as this – where training meets real life.

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**High resolution photos will be available at the following Web site:**

**LINK:** <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/sites/GC2008/default.aspx>

**Photo Cut Lines:**

**080609-A-8403H-007.JPG:** Pfc. Carly R. Stapley, a human resource specialist for the 495<sup>th</sup> Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Kalispell, Mont., uses a metal detector to find possible hidden weaponry on an exercise role player during a base defense exercise Monday, June 9, at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (National Guard photo by Spc. Danielle Hash) (RELEASED)

**080609-A-8403H-008.JPG:** Staff Sgt. Cody Lummus, unit supply non-commissioned officer of the 495<sup>th</sup> Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Kalispell, Mont., performs a full-body search on an exercise role player after discovering a weapon during a base defense exercise Monday, June 9, at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (National Guard photo by Spc. Danielle Hash) (RELEASED)

**080609-A-8403H-010.JPG:** A cluster of exercise role players make their way toward a mock checkpoint during a base defense exercise Monday, June 9, at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (National Guard photo by Spc. Danielle Hash) (RELEASED)

**080609-A-8311R-002.JPG:** Soldiers from the 495<sup>th</sup> Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Kalispell, Mont., maintain a vigilant watch over a cluster of exercise role players during a base defense exercise Monday, June 9, at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (Army Reserve photo by Pfc. Phil Regina) (RELEASED)

**080609-A-8311R-003.JPG:** An exercise role player stands with arms out awaiting a full-body search at a checkpoint during a base defense exercise Monday, June 9, at West Camp Rapid,

Rapid City, S.D., as part of the 2008 Golden Coyote training exercise. (Army Reserve photo by Pfc. Phil Regina) (RELEASED)

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION about the South Dakota National Guard, please visit our Web site at <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/default.aspx>

**NOTE:** The South Dakota National Guard will host the annual Golden Coyote exercise from June 7 – 21 in the southern Black Hills. More than 4,000 service members from 92 units representing 27 states and four foreign nations are participating in the exercise. The Golden Coyote exercise has been conducted for the past 24 years. The exercise provides relevant training opportunities in support of the war on terror and homeland defense.

Residents should be aware of an increase in military traffic throughout the Black Hills and an increase in the level of noise due to military operations. Aviation activity will be operating out of Camp Rapid and the Army Aviation Support Facility next to the Rapid City Regional Airport.

Aircraft will be primarily training on equipment and personnel transport missions as well as medical evacuation. Aircraft will respond to real-world emergencies during the exercise and remain in an all-hours-ready status during the exercise.

Spectators to military training are welcome, however caution is warranted and spectators are asked to remain at a safe distance from all moving military vehicles and aircraft to prevent injury to personnel or damage to property.