IED blast leads NCO to find calling in EOD

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It was a pitch black night in Talifar, Iraq, when an improvised explosive device hit Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dyer's Humvee and killed two passengers.

Before Dyer, explosive ordinance disposal team leader, Victorville, Calif., 787th Ordnace company (Explosive Ordnace Disposal), Camp Liberty, was an EOD technician, he was a tanker.

"When we are out on missions attacks are likely and tactical awareness is very important," Sgt. Russell Ho, Mililani, Hawaii, EOD technician, 787th EOD, said. "Staff Sgt. Dyer has experience in making tactical decisions from his previous MOS. Which makes him a huge asset to us."

After being knocked out by the IED explosion Dyer wondered what he could have done to prevent the situation and was led to a decision.

Photo by Pfc. Karin Leach

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Dyer, Victorville Calif., explosive ordinance disposal team leader, 787th EOD, practices disarming an improvised explosive device at Camp Liberty.

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"IED's are big killers in Iraq," said Dyer. "I felt like my calling was with EOD. I knew I could do more to help prevent events like that from occurring by being in EOD."

Dyer's vast experience with combat situations has earned him respect from the Soldiers whom he leads.

"You can only train on events happening so much; actually having experienced it is a much better basis of knowledge for leading," Ho said.

Dyer strives to set the standard for others as a non-commissioned officer.

"Being an NCO means a lot," Dyer said. "I enjoy setting the example for others and being able to lead them."

Soldiers of higher and lower rank agree that he displays stellar leadership and displays the Army NCO Creed, "No one is more professional than I. I am a Noncommissioned Officer, a leader of Soldiers."

"He is very focused on his job and always mission oriented," 1st Sgt. Raymond Ertle, a Brookfield, Mo. Native, 787th EOD First Sergeant, Camp Liberty said. "I believe his previous experiences motivate him to be a good leader. His great tactical knowledge has allowed him to be very successful and excel among his peers."

Dyer's leadership skills have convinced Ho that he is an important asset to the team.

"One of EOD's jobs is to take control of the scene; Staff Sgt. Dyer is quick to take charge of the scene," Ho said. "He can make good decisions quickly and looks out for his Soldiers constantly.

"We are fortunate to have a leader that has so much combat experience."