

Dear family and friends:

Brigadier-General Colin Keiver, Commander Joint Task Force – Iraq (JTF-I), and I are happy to once again provide you with some news from the Operation IMPACT. October was a busy month. Hope this letter finds you in well and good spirits.

Weather

Finally, it has cooled down. We have had a little bit of rain and a few “last” sand storms, fingers crossed. Temperature during the day were in the low thirties while going down to as low as 10°C at night. A very welcomed change.

Promotions

On 2 October, a member of the All Source Intelligence Centre received his first hook as a Private trained. Commander Air Task Force – Iraq (ATF-I) promoted one of their member to Major on 7 October. A member at Detachment Qayyarah West (Det Q-West) was accelerated promoted to Corporal on 14 October.

Honours and Recognitions

The United Kingdom Defense Minister visited the Explosive Threat Training Team (ET3) in Besmaya, Iraq on 2 October and presented his coin to Sergeant Read.

While visiting troops in Iraq on 10 and 11 October, I had the privilege to present the Command Team JTF-I coin to three deserving members of our Task Force. Sergeant Preus from the Role 2 Bravo Hospital, Corporal Guarnaccia from Detachment Erbil, and Corporal Ouellet from Det Q-West demonstrated exemplary leadership and initiative.

On 19 October and again on 30 October, the Commander presented the General Campaign Star – Expedition (GCS-Exp) to the outgoing ET3 folks who have done a tremendous job at Camp Gran Capitain Besmaya Iraq with training Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). One of their most outstanding work was to help providing power to the Iraqi Army Bomb Disposal School for the first time in many years; they had been working off a generator for the longest time.

Training Iraqi Security Forces

On 11 October, the Deputy Commander, Colonel Sean Trenholm, and I were at Det Q-West, to attend the first graduation for the Wide Area Security Forces Basic course. Thanks to the training team, 270 Iraqi Security Force (ISF) completed the course and are now better prepared for what lays ahead.

Role 2 Bravo in Action

Within two days, members at the Role 2 Bravo hospital in Erbil, put their skills in action, once again, with real life Mass Casualty situations. Everyone performed his or her task with synergy, expertise and professionalism.

NATO Mission Iraq

On 29 October, Major-General Fortin, Commander for the NATO Mission Iraq (NMI), arrived in Kuwait with his Leadership Team partner, Chief Warrant Officer Merry, as they start their mission in Bagdad. Over the next few months, there will be an increase in personnel throughout the region.

Activities

Most stations were able to celebrate thanksgiving on 8 October. There was turkey in Q-West, local food for those in Erbil, and chicken and ribs in Kuwait. We are all thankful for the support you, our families and friends, provide us while we must be away to make the world of ours a better place.

There is an association of Canadians who reside and work in Kuwait, Canadians in Kuwait (CiK). On 12 October, approximately 15 members from Camp Canada at Ali Al Salem Air Base (AASAB) were invited to the CiK annual Thanksgiving dinner. Yes, there was turkey on the menu.

On 19 October, Camp Canada members participated in a Yoga class as part of the Canadian Armed Forces Sports Day while in Erbil they had a hockey tournament!

To celebrate their end tour, the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing at AASAB organized a day of activities for those about to return home. This year's theme was "Camping in the Eighties". Coalition partners were invited to participate and, of course, we had Canadians in the mix. Below you will find a picture of the Cardboard Box Boat race, with Captain Henning and Lieutenant Arnold aboard HMCS Biever! They finished in third place overall but they won the best designed boat! We are now a truly Joint Task Force.

AASAB organized a Mini Triathlon on 25 October, it could be completed individually or as a team. It consisted of 12 km on mountain bikes, 5 km run, and 600m swim.

October always ends with Halloween and the same occurred at Camp Canada in AASAB. Many had great costumes!

Social Media

Remember to follow us on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/TaskIraq>) and on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/JTFIraq>).

Until next time,

Eric

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