Press Release

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“Transformation in contact” at 10th Mountain Division’s 2024 Counter-Unmanned Aerial Systems Symposium

FORT DRUM, N.Y. – More than 40 organizations from the U.S. Army, as well as representatives from the Department of Defense, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, service members from Canada and the United Kingdom, and counter-unmanned aerial system industry partners gathered at Fort Drum to discuss lessons learned by 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (LI), during their deployment to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, at the 2024 Counter-UAS Symposium, May 28-30.

“Transformation in contact is our method of [innovation] by liberating commanders and putting the ‘rifle’ back in their hands to learn,” said Brig. Gen. Kendall J. Clarke, 10th Mountain Division (LI) deputy commander of operations. “Because counter-UAS is such an important topic, we deemed it necessary to widen the aperture to this vast audience.”

The primary purpose of the symposium was to not only prepare and arm participants with lessons learned from 2nd Brigade’s recent deployment to Iraq and Syria but also to continue shaping new ideas to inform Army leadership decisions and better enable future deploying units.

“It takes ownership by senior leaders across our brigade formations to continue to improve and be effective,” said Col. Scott Wence, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (LI) brigade commander.

In addition to sharing battlefield lessons and new ideas, participants experienced mock Battle Drill Operation Center (BDOC) battle drills during attack scenarios throughout the symposium.

“Cursory knowledge is great, but you’re graduating to the PhD level,” Wence said during his opening remarks. “I challenge you to ask hard questions, and whether or not you see one or 100 [drones], we want you ready.”

Other topics discussed during the symposium included system improvements, outstation hardening, and crisis response, which played a critical role in saving lives both during and after attacks. Throughout its deployment, 2nd Brigade was attacked more than 170 times — 114 of which were from UASs since Oct. 7, 2023.

Of the roughly 2,000 deployed Soldiers from 2nd Brigade, while 29 Soldiers received Purple Hearts resulting from non-life-threatening injuries, not one was lost because of UAS attacks during the rotation.

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