

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

May 20, 2010

Minnesota National Guard Alerted for Deployment

~More than 2,700 troops to Deploy in 2011~

The Department of Defense announced today the alert of approximately 2,700 Minnesota National Guard Soldiers to prepare for a deployment for operations throughout Kuwait and Iraq in 2011. The Minnesota Army National Guard's Bloomington-based 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, has been alerted to prepare for a deployment in support of Operation New Dawn. Operation New Dawn is the name of the U.S. drawdown phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division are currently scheduled to begin their one year deployment in the summer of 2011. Soldiers are receiving notification now in order to provide the maximum time to complete their military deployment training and inform family members and employers.

"The Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team have the unique experience and knowledge required to successfully complete this mission," said Major General Larry Shellito, Adjutant General of Minnesota.

The 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division consists of 37 units from 42 Minnesota communities. The final list of deploying units will be determined and announced in early 2011. During this deployment, Minnesota Army National Guard Soldiers are expected to provide security operations in support of U.S. Forces.

The following units are in the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division:

- 1st Brigade, 34th Division Headquarters, based in Bloomington;
- the 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry, based in Moorhead;
- the 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry, based in Mankato;
- the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 194th Armor, based in Brainerd;
- the 1st Squadron, 94th Cavalry, based in Duluth;
- the 1st Battalion, 125th Field Artillery, based in New Ulm;
- the 1st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, based in Bloomington;
- and the 1st Brigade Support Battalion, based at Camp Ripley.

EDITORS: THE MEDIA IS INVITED TO ATTEND A PRESS CONFERENCE today at 3:00 p.m. in Rochester, Minn. The 1st Brigade Commander, Colonel Eric Kerska, will formally announce the alert and will answer questions on the 1st Brigade Combat Team.

Colonel Eric Kerska is a battalion chief in the Rochester Fire Department in his civilian job. The press conference will take place immediately after a fire department training exercise at the Rochester Fire Department Training Burn Site, 4805 Highway 63 North, Rochester MN.

Media is invited to acquire video of the Rochester Fire Department live burn training exercise between 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.

Alerted Soldiers will be available on-site at the Rochester Fire Department Training Burn Site for interviews between 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

The alert announcement will take place at 3:00 p.m. at the Rochester Fire Department Training Burn Site, 4805 Highway 63 North, Rochester MN. Colonel Eric Kerska will be available for questions immediately after the announcement.

Television outlets are invited to generate live remotes for 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. broadcasts from the Rochester Fire Department Training Burn Site.

For directions, or more information on the Rochester Fire Department Training Burn Site, contact Vance Swisher, 507-328-2815; or email vswisher@rochestermn.gov

For more information on the Minnesota National Guard visit www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
public.affairs@mn.ngb.army.mil or call 651-282-4410.

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