

# Detainee ops commander visits 402nd TF Outlaw

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Fort Bliss Public Affairs

Maj. Gen. Douglas M. Stone, incoming commanding general for Task Force 134, the group in charge of detainee operations in Iraq, visited the 402nd Field Artillery Brigade's Task Force Outlaw at Fort Bliss. TF Outlaw conducts detainee operations training for deploying units.

"What I'm seeing here is some of the best training that I've ever seen," Stone said. "I could not be more impressed."

Stone, who was promoted to major general today, also assumed command of TF 134 on the same day. Stone has trained more than 35,000 Marines going into theater. In his previous position, he was the commanding general for the Marine Air Ground Task Force, where he was responsible for the pre-deployment training of all units going into both the Afghanistan and Iraqi theaters.

This was Stone's second time visiting TF Outlaw. He said these visits have afforded him the opportunity to see Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen engaged in training that will prepare them for one of the most escalating challenges today.

"Detainee operations requires a bigger focus," he said. "The kinds of

things the servicemembers are learning in Task Force Outlaw will allow us to do things in a humane and appropriate manner."

TF Outlaw's leadership, as well as troops undergoing detainee ops training, said everyone who completes the training acquires the skills to understand and know the continuum and use of force. Command Sgt. Maj. William Venneman, TF Outlaw, 402nd FA Bde., said they also have the situational awareness necessary to have the presence of mind to be aware of where they are and the skills they need to use in any given situation.

"You would not want someone going in working with detainees with an offensive mindset," said Venneman. "You want them to treat the detainees as humanely as possible, so the focus is on defensive and control operations."

Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Guderjan, 384th Military Police Battalion, said troops receive training on how to deal with the effects of namecalling and verbal aggression they may encounter from some detainees.

"Detainees or anybody you come across may try to rattle you," Guderjan said. "They [the instructors] instill the knowledge that this is your job, perform your duties and you'll go



LARRY OBREGON

Maj. Gen. (select) Douglas M. Stone, the incoming commanding general for Task Force 134, visits TF Outlaw at McGregor Range, N.M., to observe troops conducting detainee operations training.

home safe every night."

"As long as no physical action is being taken against you, you just continue on," said Sgt. Alicia Szumski, 384th MP Bn.

TF Outlaw Soldiers and leaders stay abreast of what is occurring in theater and adapt training accordingly, said Stone.

"I was just here about a week-and-a-half ago, and the training has already changed to adapt to what's going on in country," Stone said.

Stone said families of armed servicemembers should feel over-the-top and pleased with the kinds of training

their loved ones are receiving before going into theater.

"This is preparing them to do the right job," Stone said. "This will make the difference between their success and our ultimate success. My ardent hope is that the 'American will' stays with us through this difficult time because the ultimate threat is not going away."

Stone said he is very excited about serving in theater.

"This is where I need to be assigned," he said. "I'm really looking forward to the assignment."

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