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Dyersburg's 168th Military Police Battalion Returns from Iraq

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Nearly 60 Soldiers assigned to the Tennessee National Guard's 168th Military Police Battalion in Dyersburg returned home Saturday, Sept. 26, after a 10-month deployment to the Middle East.

“Our Tennessee Soldiers did a phenomenal job,” said Lt. Col. Mark Tyndall, the commander for the 168th. “Their resiliency and professionalism during the deployment exemplifies the caliber of the men and women who serve in the National Guard.”

Originally mobilized in November 2019, the Tennessee Soldiers first traveled to Fort Bliss, Texas, where they conducted additional training and preparation for the deployment. Once their training was completed in early 2020, they flew to Kuwait and later convoyed north into Iraq.

When the 168th arrived, they served as the base defense operations center for Camp Taji, a U.S. led coalition training center 12 miles north of Baghdad. The Tennessee Soldiers were responsible for protecting the military base from enemy attacks and managing the base response with coalition forces from various nations.

“The 168th rapidly took command of a combat base in Iraq with over 4,000 personnel from 16 different countries. Their efforts directly led to the accomplishment of strategic-level objectives,” said Tyndall.

In April 2020, the 168th transferred base defense responsibility to another unit and became a part of the base closure team. The Soldiers then spent the next few months closing down and preparing to transfer Camp Taji to Iraqi Security Forces. The unit had to ensure thousands of U.S. and multinational forces were safely relocated as they transferred \$347 million in equipment and property to the Government of Iraq. The base transfer ceremony took place on Aug. 23.

Once their mission was complete, the Soldiers returned to Fort Bliss to undergo demobilization procedures and perform a 14-day quarantine required for all Soldiers returning from overseas.

“We're all really excited to be home,” said Tyndall. “And I am incredibly proud of all the hard work our Soldiers did this past year and the difference they made. They truly represented everything that is great about Tennessee.”

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