



Operation Atlantic Resolve



1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division
2014 Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Competition
Category E
Digital Communication Campaign

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why we need a message



The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of Defense website. At the top left is the Department of Defense seal. To its right is the text "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE". A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: HOME, TODAY IN DOD, ABOUT DOD, TOP ISSUES, NEWS, PHOTOS/VIDEOS, DOD SITES, CONTACT US, and RESOURCES. The main content area features a large heading "Operation Atlantic Resolve" with the subtitle "AMERICA'S CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO EUROPEAN SECURITY". Below this is a paragraph: "The United States is demonstrating its continued commitment to collective security through a series of actions designed to reassure NATO allies and partners of America's dedication to enduring peace and stability in the region, in light of the Russian intervention in Ukraine." To the right of this text is a quote from Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, accompanied by a small photo of him. The quote reads: "Without deep engagement in the world, America would face more conflict, not less - and on the terms of our adversaries, not on our own terms. That is why America's commitment to its allies - in Europe and around the world - is not a burden ... it's not a luxury. But it is a necessity. And it must be unwavering." Below the quote is the text "Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel" and a link "Read Full Speech".

In the spring of 2014, the U.S. responded to Russian aggression by deploying the 173rd Airborne Brigade to Poland and the Baltic nations establishing a “Persistent Presence.”

Soon after, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, having recently completed a National Training Center rotation, moved a combined arms battalion, enablers and the brigade staff to Germany to conduct Combined Resolve II, a programmed training event at JMRC in Germany. This exercise provided the brigade an opportunity to train with partnered nations and conduct a brigade level live-fire operation.

As Combined Resolve II came to a close and the Ironhorse Brigade began redeployment to Fort Hood, TX in July 2014, the brigade began planning for CbR III, and US Army Europe began planning for the replacement of 173rd ABN with elements from 1st BCT.

While the brigade was able to conduct planning in July 2014, the employment of the Ironhorse Brigade was not approved until August 1, 2014. The short notice for movement required simultaneous loading of equipment, mission refinement, and movement planning.

Being regionally aligned with Europe as the NATO Response Force allowed the brigade to expeditiously deploy an armored force wherever the combatant commander deemed necessary – and that is exactly what happened when we kicked off with Atlantic Resolve.

For a better understanding of 1st Brigade’s role in the Army’s over-arching Regionally Aligned Forces concept, watch this video produced by the 1st BCT Public Affairs office: <http://tinyurl.com/kwwpxcd>

building our message: commander's intent

As with any messaging effort, the public affairs team started with the brigade commander's intent – the initial launching point for our message creation. Ironhorse 6 was very hands-on, which greatly aided our ability to produce strong message that would reach our audiences. Through daily collaboration and discussion, the public affairs team and the commander worked together to create a solid message.



Purpose:

To reassure allies of US commitment and demonstrated resolve to support our NATO allies, specifically the Baltics and Poland

Key Tasks:

- 1) In OAR, distributed small units conduct partnered training to high level of proficiency to reassure allies
 - Live up to our reputation as the best Army in the world
 - Be the lasting vision and symbol of the United States in the Baltics and Poland
 - Provide leadership and direction at lowest level while units and individuals demonstrate discipline and standards
- 2) Represent the United States of America in everything we do and maintain our professional standing
- 3) In CrB III, execute Unified Land Operations with partnered nations to win

End State:

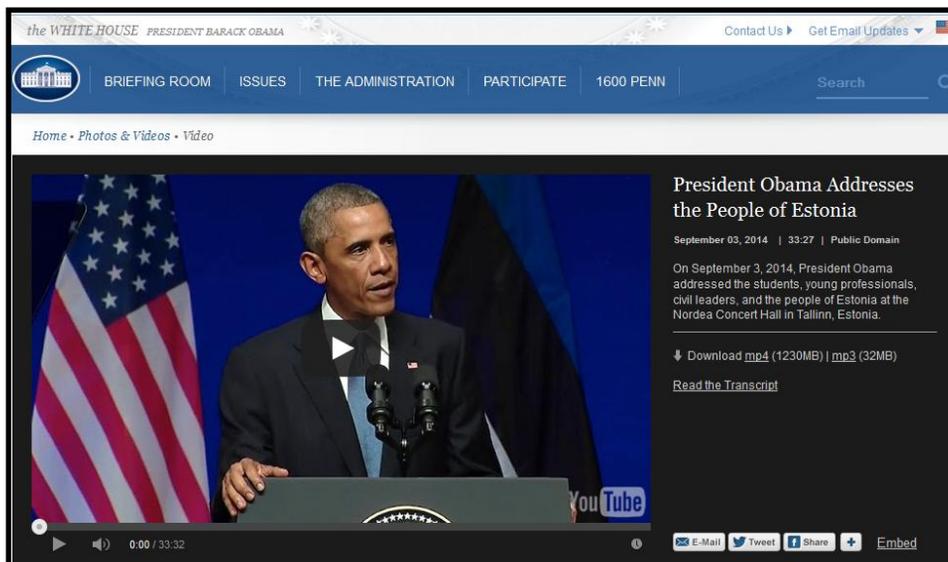
1BCT, 1CD exceeds the current standards, further improves relations with our partnered nations through training from squad to BCT, and hands over the mission at higher level than received.

building our message: public affairs guidance

In order to present a coherent message, the PAO team created the brigade-level public affairs guidance. To do that, we pulled from the newly-created Atlantic Resolve PAG (see Enclosure 2: Atlantic Resolve PAG), as well as information, ideas and concepts from the Regionally Aligned Forces PAG (see Enclosure 1: RAF PAG) as well. This allowed commanders to speak not only to our mission in Europe but also to tie back to the new direction the Army is going with regionally aligned brigades.

Since Ironhorse was the first brigade to be regionally aligned with Europe, the RAF concept became a key element of our messaging efforts for Atlantic Resolve. This large-scale training mission was only possible because the brigade was ready to deploy quickly to support the EUCOM commander's requirements, tactical or otherwise.

The other key aspect of our messaging criteria was to connect what Ironhorse was doing at the brigade level, with what our nation was doing on the international stage. In order to do this we pulled key messages and quotes from the commander-in-chief. It was crucial that our audiences see the connection between the President speaking about our nation's resolve to reassure our NATO allies and our brigade arriving in Europe only weeks later.



The screenshot shows the White House website interface. At the top, it says "the WHITE HOUSE PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA" with navigation links for "Contact Us" and "Get Email Updates". Below is a menu with "BRIEFING ROOM", "ISSUES", "THE ADMINISTRATION", "PARTICIPATE", and "1600 PENN". A search bar is on the right. The main content area features a video player showing President Obama speaking at a podium with an American flag. To the right of the video, the title is "President Obama Addresses the People of Estonia", dated "September 03, 2014 | 33:27 | Public Domain". Below the title is a short description: "On September 3, 2014, President Obama addressed the students, young professionals, civil leaders, and the people of Estonia at the Nordea Concert Hall in Tallinn, Estonia." There are download links for "mp4 (1230MB)" and "mp3 (32MB)", and a "Read the Transcript" link. At the bottom of the video player are social media sharing options for "E-Mail", "Tweet", "Share", and "Embed".

“And I say to the people of Estonia and the people of the Baltics, today we are bound by our treaty Alliance. We have a solemn duty to each other. Article 5 is crystal clear: An attack on one is an attack on all. So if, in such a moment, you ever ask again, “who will come to help,” you’ll know the answer -- the NATO Alliance, including the Armed Forces of the United States of America...We’ll be here for Estonia. We will be here for Latvia. We will be here for Lithuania. You lost your independence once before. With NATO, you will never lose it again.” - President Obama

watch the President's speech: <http://tinyurl.com/l9g7jak>

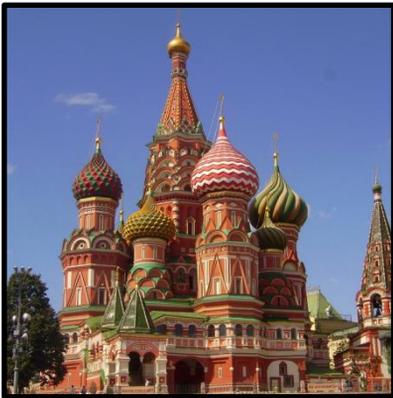
building our message: audiences & objectives



Audience: US and NATO allies

Communication objective: Inform the audience of our nation's resolve to reassure our NATO allies.

Atlantic Resolve is designed to reassure our European partners and NATO allies of our resolve to stand by them and our commitment to the alliance - 1st Brigade Soldiers became a visible manifestation of our nation's resolve.



Audience: Russia

Communication objective : Deter further Russian aggression in Eastern Europe.

The US, NATO and other nations condemned Russia's actions in Crimea as illegal and unsanctioned. Therefore, it was paramount that Russia understand the degree of resolve the US and its allies shared together.



Audience: Ironhorse Soldiers

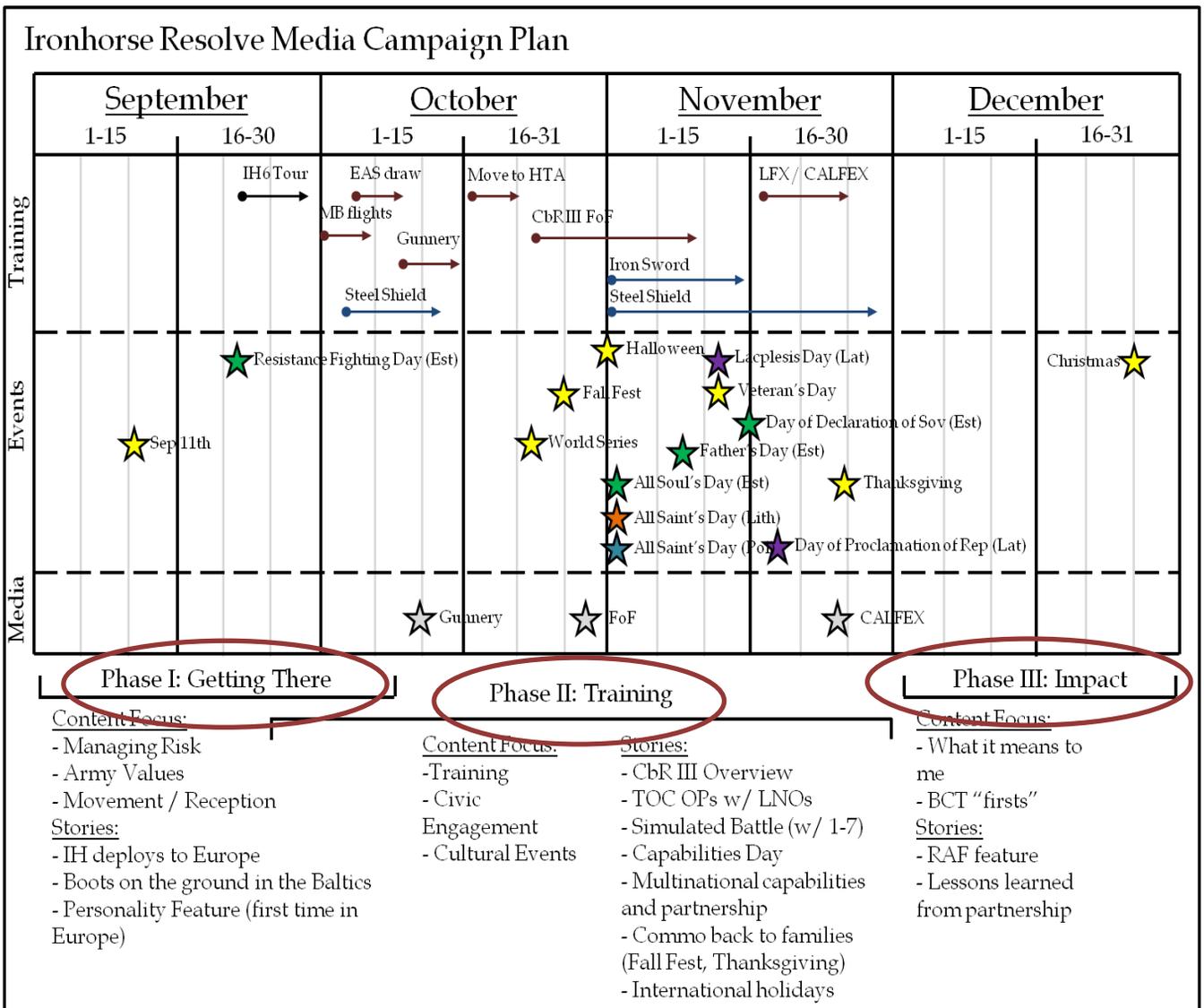
Communication Objective: Inform Soldiers about the importance of what we're doing in Europe

It was crucial that we get our Soldiers' buy-in on our mission in Europe. For many of them it was just another two-month training exercise away from their families. However, we wanted to make sure they knew that they were contributing to something historic and significant.

delivering our message

The team created an over-arching media campaign plan, which enabled us to visualize the major events and associated content we would need to produce in order to tell our story (see figure below).

We broke Atlantic Resolve into three phases enabling us to focus our story more clearly. We needed to tell our audiences about how we got there, the training we were doing, and the impact.



By working directly with USAREUR PAO, multiple National Guard MPADs, and Ministries of Defense and Embassy PAOs we were able to produce content with a plan in mind as opposed to slapping posts up on Facebook willy-nilly.

delivering our message: fort hood

The brigade received its marching orders for Atlantic Resolve on August 1st and the official DoD announcement didn't come until August 13th.

Before deploying in September, we had a little time to prep the communication battlefield by speaking directly with our Soldiers and their families face-to-face. This was key because it enabled us to garner support for what our Soldiers were going to be doing in Europe.

We held a town hall meeting for the brigade and the battalion responsible for executing training in the Baltics held one as well.

The brigade commander took on the responsibility of discussing the importance of the mission and spoke to every individual battalion.

Key to the commander's comments were that we were the first. We were literally blazing a trail into unknown territory and everyone in the Ironhorse brigade would be part of history. He wanted his Soldiers to know that this was so much more than another standard rotation to the National Training Center



Colonel John DiGiambattista shared a link via 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.
Posted by Keith Anderson [?] · August 14, 2014

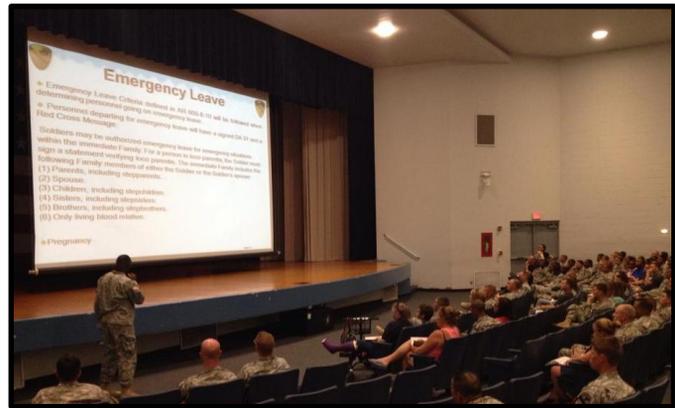
#AtlanticResolve is going to be a phenomenal opportunity for us to represent the American people in Europe, and to reassure our allies of our commitment to them.



1st Cavalry soldiers headed to Poland, Baltics
www.stripes.com

Approximately 600 soldiers from the Army's 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division will deploy to Poland and the Baltic States to help reassure European allies who feel threatened by Russian military moves, the Pentagon announced Wednesday.

read the article:
<http://tinyurl.com/kqpdwxm>



delivering our message: phase 1 – getting there



watch the video:

<http://tinyurl.com/mt6dws4>



read the article:

<http://tinyurl.com/ok7k4c3>

Phase 1 of the communication campaign was important because we had to convey just how massive an undertaking it was to move a combined arms battalion from Fort Hood to Eastern Europe.

In the 1970's and 80's during the REFORGER exercises, the Army never sent heavy armor to the Baltic states, because that area was still under communist Russia control. Our brigade was the first to conduct a large-scale deployment to these former Soviet-block countries.

The logistics of transporting the tanks, Bradleys and associated equipment were mind-boggling and it was important we highlight that portion of our story. However, it wasn't enough just to talk about our trip to Europe. We had to discuss with our audiences the partnership and teamwork with our host nations that went into the making this deployment a success. This move was a massive undertaking and the brigade couldn't have done it alone and it was the public affairs mission to ensure our audiences knew that.

In the first weeks of 1st Brigade's arrival in Europe, everyone, including Russia, was talking about the impact of the brigade's deployment.

Army Times, Reuters and several other outlets were spreading the message of our resolve to reassure our NATO allies.

"The purpose is to be a very visible demonstration of commitment to our allies. We may take slightly longer to deploy than lighter forces, but there's nothing like a tank if you really want to achieve effect," said Captain John Farmer, public affairs officer for Ironhorse.

delivering our message: phase 2 - training



see more photos:

<http://tinyurl.com/kscmfjz>



Relationships matter and focusing on the relationships our Soldiers forged with our NATO allies was one of the crucial aspects during phase 2. Everyone loves to see a fireball at the end of a tank barrel, but if in order to successfully tell the story of our nation's resolve, we had to discuss the importance of the connections we were making in Europe.

There were many "firsts" during our mission in the Baltics: first main gun round fired in Latvia and Poland, first armored unit in the Baltics, etc. Capitalizing on those success stories became crucial because it showed our American audiences back home that we were truly making history over here and that this training mission was bigger than 1st Brigade – it represented the future of how the US and NATO will train together.

We maintained release authority at the brigade level for content relative to our 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div. units – everything produced by US personnel went through the brigade public affairs officer for release. Doing this ensured a smooth content flow, which allowed us to maintain a coherent message.

Our PAO worked with several National Guard MPADs, who had teams in each of the four countries, which greatly increased our ability to capture content. We also developed strong working relationships with the PAOs at the embassies and ministries of defense in the Baltic nations and Poland. Using our unit PAO reps, we were able to directly liaison with those nation's PAO teams to bring in outside media to cover our Soldiers working with theirs.

delivering our message: phase 3 - impact



read the story:

<http://tinyurl.com/m7wx5x4>

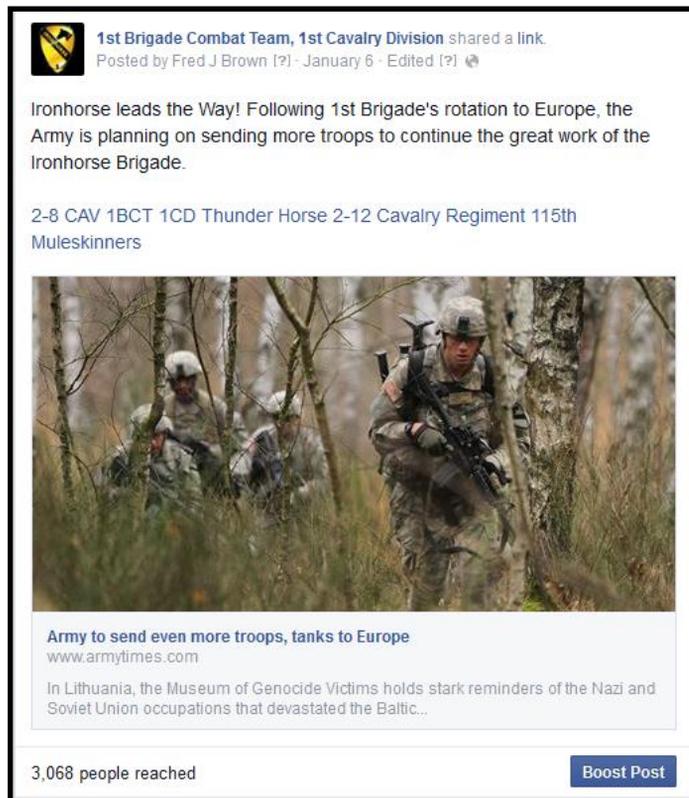
Over the course of our brigade's mission in Europe during Atlantic Resolve, we produced dozens of print stories, dozens of video news packages and hundreds of photos (see Enclosure 5: Ironhorse Resolve Content Tracker). In fact, a large portion of the story-telling came from outside media agencies within the Baltic nations and Poland. Thanks to the strong relationships we had formed, the message was in sync with ours.

We interacted with media and public affairs professionals in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Sweden, Russia, Canada, Norway, Germany and the US.

Our content was shared on Army.mil, US Army social media, Defense.gov, NATO social media, Russian news, Baltic news outlets, Reuters and more.

Atlantic Resolve saw Soldiers from 1st Brigade Combat Team had Soldiers conducting partnered multinational training in 5 countries, which included troops from more than 25 different nations during multiple large-scale training exercises. This was the first time in our Army's history that a US armored brigade was deployed to and trained in Eastern European countries.

We had message. We had a goal. We had a plan to achieve that goal. Through our tireless efforts and constant communication with the multiple public affairs professionals working for and with us, we were able to send the world a crystal clear message of our nation's resolve to reassure our NATO allies.



read the story:

<http://tinyurl.com/pyaussc>

supporting documents

Enclosure 1: Regionally Aligned Forces Public Affairs Guidance

Enclosure 2: Operation Atlantic Resolve Public Affairs Guidance

Enclosure 3: Ironhorse Resolve Proposed Public Affairs Guidance

Enclosure 4: Transcription of President Obama's speech in Estonia

Enclosure 5: Ironhorse Resolve Content Tracker

Enclosure 6: Ironhorse Resolve Media Smart Card

Enclosure 7: Digital Communication Campaign Form

to view the enclosures, go to the google drive: <http://tinyurl.com/qadfjx5>

