

3rd Brigade Combat Team

The "Bronco" Brigade was organized at Schofield Barracks on August 12, 1963, along with the "Lancer" and "Warrior" Brigades. At the time of its activation, the Bronco Brigade consisted of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry and the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry. The brigade's motto became "None Better."

The Broncos remained at Schofield Barracks for the next two years before receiving orders to deploy to Vietnam on 10 December 1965. On December 24, while the main force of the division prepared to move out by sea, Air Force Military Airlift Command planes began transporting the 3rd Brigade's men and 2,000 tons of equipment to the northern province of Pleiku located in the Central Highlands of Vietnam as part of Operation "Blue Light." This operation was, at that time, the largest movement of Soldiers and equipment by military aircraft in division history. The Brigade remained in Pleiku from 28 December 1965 to 17 January 1966, operating along the Cambodian border.

The 3rd Brigade established a foothold in the rugged terrain around Pleiku and created a blocking force against Viet Cong personnel and supplies infiltrating south along the Ho Chi Minh trail and the Cambodian border. Their primary mission was to destroy any possible crossing sites along the frontier and disrupt any attempts by the North Vietnamese Army to conduct major combat efforts in the Central Highlands.

In April 1967, the BDE was attached to Task Force Oregon and engaged Viet Cong units in Quang Ngai province, receiving a Valorous Unit Award. The Broncos remained an independent brigade, under the control of the Second Field Force, until August, 1967, when it was re-established in Cu Chi. The Bronco battalions remained in the central highlands and were reassigned to the 4th DIV. Based at Dau Tieng, the 3rd BDE, 25th DIV assumed command of the former 3rd BDE, 4th DIV units, the 2-12th INF, 2-22 INF (MECH) and 3-22nd INF. The 2-14 INF replaced 3-22 INF in February, 1970. The BDE received credit for 12 Vietnam campaigns.

On 8 December 1970, the brigade returned to Schofield Barracks and was inactivated on 24 July 1972. The 3rd BDE was reactivated on 16 November 1985 at Schofield Barracks as part of the 25th Infantry Division's reorganization to a light infantry division.

The Broncos deployed to Haiti in support of Operation Uphold Democracy in 1995. On 16 August 1995, the three infantry battalions were replaced by the 2nd BN, 5th INF, the 2nd BN, 27th INF and 2nd BN, 35th INF; the 3rd BDE Combat Team was organized as Task Force (TF) Bronco and also included the 3-7 FA and 3-4 CAV. All of these units were also organized as Task Forces.

In 1996, 2-27 Infantry deployed to the Sinai for a rotation of Multi National Force and Observers (MFO) duty, and 2-35 Infantry deployed to Australia in support of PACOM theater engagement strategy. In the years prior to 9/11, the Brigade deployed around the world taking part in such exercises as Tandem Thrust, Orient Shield, PACBOND and

Cobra Gold.

In support of the Global War on Terrorism, the Bronco Brigade deployed in April, 2004 to Afghanistan and entered combat for the first time since Vietnam. The brigade became a multi-national combined task force, CTF Bronco, based at Kandahar Air Field. Soldiers from the brigade's three infantry battalions were joined by other US military forces as well as Romanian, French, and Afghan military units.

The brigade initially conducted operations in seven provinces: Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, Oruzgan, Paktika, Khowst and Paktia. Later, the brigade consolidated operations in five provinces: Nimroz, Helmand, Kandahar, Zabul, and Oruzgan.

CTF Bronco conducted military operations and facilitated other efforts to secure and stabilize southern Afghanistan to deny enemy influence over the population and to facilitate reconstruction. The brigade focused on counter-insurgency operations and partnered with the State Department, the United Nations, the Afghan government, and Afghan Security Forces.

During this deployment, the brigade conducted hundreds of combat patrols and destroyed more than 14 tons of contraband ordnance. Bronco Soldiers also participated in the first national election in October, 2004, helped build a road to link Kandahar to Tarin Khowt, and assisted local governments and security forces to establish security for the population. The brigade concluded its 13-month deployment in May, 2005.

After transforming into a modular brigade combat team, the Bronco Brigade deployed more than 3,500 Soldiers to the northern Iraqi province of Kirkuk from August, 2006 through September, 2007 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) 06-08. Kirkuk is an ethnically diverse province at the center of a long-standing dispute between the central government and the Kurdish Regional Government over control of the oil-rich area. The brigade trained and partnered with Iraqi Police, Iraqi Army, and the provincial government to increase security for the population.

During the Bronco's time in Kirkuk, their partner unit, the 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, was the first and only unit in the Multi-National Division-North Operating Environment to achieve a training readiness level certifying it to operate independently. In addition, the Broncos helped train and certify nine Iraqi police stations to operate independently and oversaw the training of 3,000 new policemen.

Bronco Brigade Soldiers participated in more than a thousand partnered operations with Iraqi Security Forces; completed 127 civic infrastructure improvement projects worth over \$50 million; found and destroyed more than 12,000 kilograms of explosives; conducted 625 route-clearance missions, eliminating countless improvised explosive devices; and secured and opened every commissioned oil pipeline in the province, allowing for the export of more oil during the brigade's tour of duty than in the previous four years. The brigade concluded its 15-month deployment in October, 2007.

Approximately 3,400 Soldiers of the Bronco Brigade deployed to northern Iraq in October, 2008 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) 09-11. The Bronco Brigade initially had security support responsibilities in Kirkuk and Salah ad Din provinces with a total land area of approximately 14,000 square miles and a combined population of almost 2.5 million people. After three months, the brigade consolidated operations in Salah ad Din province, an area almost the size of the state of Vermont with 9,556 square miles and a population of 1.2 million people.

In the Spring of 2011, the 3rd Brigade Combat Team deployed to eastern Afghanistan where they partnered with over 15,500 members of the Afghan Security Forces, as well as provincial governance and development personnel. Through this partnership, they successfully reduced the insurgent's momentum and started to create the conditions for the Afghans to provide sustainable security for the people of Nangarhar, Kunar, Nuristan, and Laghman provinces.

In 2012, the 3rd Brigade Combat Team returned to Hawaii from Afghanistan and began the transition from the Global War on Terrorism to the United States Pivot to Asia Pacific. The Bronco Brigade trained up combat readiness through the newly formed Jungle Operations Training Center (JOTC) and later assumed the 25th Infantry Division's Contingency Response Force mission to deploy and conduct contingency operations anywhere in the PACOM AOR. In March 2013, North Korea threatened imminent missile attacks on Guam, Japan and Hawaii. Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team deployed with the 94th AAMDC during the first ever operational deployment of the Theater High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) weapons system on the United States territory of Guam to protect military bases and partners in Asia Pacific.

In 2014, 3-4 CAV (Task Force Raider) deployed to the Philippines for exercise Balikatan, while 3-7 FA deployed to New Zealand for Live Fire Exercises during Alam Halfa. 3BSTB (Task Force Bayonet) deployed to South Korea in support of exercise Foal Eagle. 2-27 Infantry and 2-35 Infantry remained on the 25th Infantry Division's Contingency Response Force mission, while the 3rd Brigade Headquarters deployed to Australia for a multinational coalition exercise with ABCAN armies (Australia, Britain, Canada, America and New Zealand) to enhance interoperability and Theater Security Cooperation Program capabilities.