



1ST CAVALRY DIVISION

HISTORY



The 1st Cavalry Division was formally activated on 13 September 1921 at Fort Bliss, Texas. The Division's early duties included rough-riding and patrolling the Mexican border. Technological progress of the 1940s diminished the usefulness of horse-mounted Soldiers, and the Division served as dismounted cavalry in World War II's Pacific Theater.

In March of 1944, the 1st Cavalry Division stormed the beaches of Los Negros Island, fighting a fierce campaign against the Japanese Empire. The Division's next action was a few months later on the Philippine Islands of Leyte and Luzon. The 1st Cavalry Division was "First into Manila" in February of 1945. Major General William C. Chase gave the Division its nickname "First Team", it was well-received and remains today. In September of 1945, the "First Team" led occupational forces in to Japan's capital city, earning the distinction of "First in Tokyo".

Next, the 1st Cavalry Division stormed ashore at Poe-Hongdong, South Korea, in the Korean War's first amphibious landing. By July of 1950, the Division began offensive operations to the north and crossed the 38th parallel on 9 October 1950. Closing on North Korea's capital 10 days later, the "First Team" was "First in Pyongyang".

In July of 1965, the 1st Cavalry Division was re-stationed to Fort Benning, Georgia and organized for new missions in Southeast Asia. The unit became the Army's first "Airmobile" division and initially saw combat in the Republic of Vietnam during the thirty-five-day Pleiku Campaign, earning a Presidential Unit Citation. The enemy launched the famous Tet Offensive in late January of 1968. Already on the move, the "First Team" rushed north, liberating cities and boldly repelling the enemy offensive. The Division's sky troopers flew in to relieve the besieged Marine base at Khe Sanh and the Division was "First into Cambodia" in May of 1970.

Redeployment to Fort Hood began one year later where the "First Team" reorganized into a "Triple Capability" or "Tricap" Division, incorporating an armor brigade, an air mobility brigade, and an air cavalry brigade. In 1990, the Division deployed to Southwest Asia to help deter Iraqi aggression during Operation Desert Shield. In January of 1991, the "First Team" staged elaborate deceptions in support of the main ground effort in Operation Desert Storm. The "First Team" was exploiting the Iraqi withdrawal when the U.S. commander, General Norman Schwarzkopf, halted offensive operations.

In 1998, the 1st Cavalry Division assumed the mission of Task Force Eagle, conducting peace support operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Following four months of highly successful and intensive planning, training, and maintaining, America's "First Team" assumed the mission of ensuring peace and stability throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina for over a year.

From the beginning of the Global War on Terrorism, the 1st Cavalry Division and its Brigades continued this tradition of service by deploying six times to Iraq in support of Operation Iraq Freedom and Operation New Dawn. These deployments would include engaging anti Iraqi and Al-Qaeda forces throughout the country, the first free elections in Iraq and providing training to Iraqi security forces and support to the people. The Division's four BCTs deployed to Iraq in 2010-2011 as Advise and Assist Brigades and their goal was to strengthen Iraqi sovereignty, stability, and self-reliance while supporting counter-terrorism operations. Operation New Dawn marked the Division's last deployment to Iraq.

The 1st Cavalry Division and its brigades would deploy to Afghanistan four separate times in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. In 2011, the Division distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious achievement from 19 May 2011 to 19 April 2012 in Regional Command - East, Afghanistan. The command created a unified team that was integrated in all operations and committed to working by, with and through Afghan institutions. The First Cavalry Division Headquarters deployed to Afghanistan to assume command of Regional Command-South on July 7th, 2014 and later the Train, Advise, Assist Command-South. United States' and Coalition Forces, under the command of the 1st Cavalry Division in Southern Afghanistan, conducted train, advise, and assist missions so that the Afghan National Security Forces would be sustainable and capable of protecting their population and government into the future.

With the 1st Cavalry Division Headquarters and elements of the 3d Cavalry Regiment deployed to Afghanistan, events required the Division's remaining units take on new missions around the world. Units deployed to areas where no 1st Cavalry Division Troopers have ever been or had not seen for decades. These areas included Europe, Korea, Africa and Cuba. First Team Troopers demonstrated their excellence while performing a wide variety of missions during multiple operations.

The Army's finest Soldiers and best equipment, the hard-riding spirit of the United States Cavalry is alive and well in the 1st Cavalry Division. Our more than 26,000 Soldiers combine the spirit of the Cav's heritage with challenges facing an alert, combat-ready, armored division. The "First Team" remains ready to fight anywhere, anytime, and win.