

EX TRADE WINDS

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Ex TRADE WINDS is an annual U.S. Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) exercise that promotes regional security and cooperation in the Caribbean. This year's exercise, named Ex TRADE WINDS 2014, saw the focus of Tactical Site Exploitation (TSE), individual weapon skills, and the conduct of urban operations. The exercise was held at Las Calderas Naval Base in the Dominican Republic from 16-25 June 2014. Lt Francescutti, MCpl Innocent, MCpl Ridgeley, and MCpl Ruth represented 4 Engineer Support Regiment's (4 ESR), working closely with the United States Marine Corps (USMC) to teach TSE techniques.

The exercise involved 12 nations from South America, Central America, and the Caribbean with members from the Army, Navy, and Special Forces. The participating nations were: Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. Each nation sent approximately 12 personnel.

The TSE training was split into two parts, classroom theory which lasted half a day and practical exercises for another day. The USMC was responsible for teaching the overall theory of TSE while the 4 ESR personnel taught lessons on crime scene photography, evidence handling, personnel and vehicle search, and Vehicle Check Point (VCP) setup. After the lectures were completed, the lessons moved outside where training involving search of a USMC Humvee and personnel search.

Once the basic search skills were practiced, the focussed switched to the construction of VCPs, where each nation to setup and operate a VCP. Nations were required to validate identification, conduct vehicle searches, and search any passengers. In order to increase realism, training contraband in the form of rubberized rifles and simulated narcotics were hidden in the vehicles and amongst the passengers.

Following training, a sports day with each team consisting of one member from each nation took place. The sports day tested technical skills and physical prowess from the previous weeks training with the top three teams being announced at the end of the day. Ex TRADE WINDS 2014 concluded with a parade involving all participating nations.

