Ravens fly over Schofield

U.S. Army

SCHOFIELD BARRACKS, Hawaii (Aug. 23, 2012) -- Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division participated in Unmanned Aerial Vehicle training, Aug. 21.

The training was conducted by instructors from the Small Unmanned Aircraft School based at Fort Benning, Ga. The Raven platform used in this training is a small hand launched system capable of 90-minute flight times on battery power with a range of more than 10 kilometers.

"The Raven payload includes an infrared camera system to allow night operation as well as front and side day cameras," said Sgt. Gustavo Nogueira, an instructor from the Small Unmanned Aircraft School. "There is also a laser illuminator that allows target to be designated from the air to allow ground troops to identify and engage targets."

The Raven system has been used by the 2nd BCT in combat and is a valued asset to a ground force.

"This system was employed by the brigade during the last deployment to Iraq," said Chief Warrant Officer Matt Roman, the brigade's Master Raven Trainer. "It provides situational awareness to the commander instantaneously from an aerial perspective."

The system is extremely portable and can easily be deployed into a combat situation by a two-man team.

"The system is ruck sack portable and can be launched within 15 minutes from the ground or a moving tactical vehicle," Nogueira said. "A two-man team is capable of launching and conducting Raven missions from anywhere on the battlefield."

The information that can be gathered and relayed instantly is a valuable asset to any ground commander. It provides information critical to making an informed decision on where and when to employ other combat assets.

"This system provides the commander with a bird's eye view of the battle ground and can be used for reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition among other capabilities," Nogueira said.

The training was new for some of the Soldiers and provided them with a realistic view of the system's capabilities on the battle field.

"We can throw one of these up and get eyes on target," said Sgt. Zachery Kumler, and cavalry scout with the 2nd Squadron, 14 Cavalry Regiment. "It provides us with

valuable intel such as the GPS coordinates of a target."

"This training will help Soldiers understand the capabilities of the system and enable them to coordinate targets and perform reconnaissance for the command," Roman said.

Training such as this is another way the 2nd BCT is preparing Soldiers to conduct contingency missions in the Pacific Region to ensure security.

"This system is another way we are able to meet the commander's intent," Kumler said. "We can use this to provide full-spectrum intelligence on a target to the commander in an instant."

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