



## **13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)**

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# **96th SBDE assumes authority at Camp Taji**

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Public Affairs

**CAMP TAJI**, Iraq – The 96th Sustainment Brigade made history Oct. 13 in a Transfer of Authority Ceremony held here, officially marking the brigade's entrance into Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The brigade, which is headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah, is taking over for the departing 10th Sustainment Brigade from Fort Drum, New York. Task Force Deadeye will spend approximately one year at Camp Taji supporting Multi-National Division – Baghdad. The 96th assumed command over one brigade special troops battalion and four combat service support battalions, totaling over 3,800 Soldiers from 34 states. The brigade will provide logistical support to over 120,000 people in Iraq.

In a speech given shortly after the transfer of authority was complete, Col. C.J. Read, commander of the 96th SBDE, and a resident of Layton, Utah, thanked the outgoing brigade, and promised to maintain the high standards set by the 10th SBDE Muleskinners. Read also challenged his Soldiers to lead by

example, live the Army values, and “make life-changing goals that leave a legacy that they and their families will be proud of.”

Col. Mark Drake, commander of the 10th SBDE, and a St. Paul, Minn., native, also spoke during the ceremony, thanking his troops for their hard work over the previous year. “All your efforts focused on the single objective to support and sustain the customer, and you did that magnificently,” said Drake.

This is the first deployment to Iraq for the 96th since being reorganized into a sustainment brigade in September, 2008. The 96th SBDE traces its history back to World War I and the creation of the 96th Infantry Division. Transformed several times over the years, the 96th became a Regional Readiness Command in 1996, maintaining control over Army Reserve units in Utah, Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, and North and South Dakota. Units of the 96th RRC or its predecessors were deployed to Vietnam, Germany, the Persian Gulf, and the Balkan peacekeeping operations of the 1990s. Since Sept. 11, 2001, over 5,000 Soldiers of the 96th RRC have deployed in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom.

On July 5th, 2009, the newly formed 96th SBDE deployed to Fort Hood, Texas, for mobilization and deployment in-processing and training, achieving full mission capability in August, 2009. Shortly thereafter, the brigade travelled to Camp Buehring, Kuwait, for theatre-specific training, before arriving at Camp Taji.



Col. C.J. Read, a Layton, Utah native and the 96th Sustainment Brigade commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Vicki Briggs, from Roy, Utah and the senior enlisted advisor to the 96th SBDE, unfurl the brigade's colors in a ceremony held here Oct. 14. The 96th SBDE is replacing the 10th Sustainment Brigade, and will provide support to Multi-National Division – Baghdad over the next year.



Col. C.J. Read, commander of the 96th Sustainment Brigade, addresses the crowd at the Transfer of Authority ceremony held here Oct. 14. Read, a resident of Layton, Utah, said he is “proud and honored to take the reins, mission, and legacy of supporting Multi-National Division – Baghdad” from the 10th Sustainment Brigade, which is returning to Fort Drum, N.Y., after a year-long tour at Camp Taji.

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