

History of the 155th ABCT

The 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT) is the largest unit in the Mississippi National Guard with approximately 3,500 Soldiers. The ABCT is headquartered in Tupelo and contains subordinate units covering the entire Magnolia State. The 155th ABCT has a rich history dating back to the mid-20th century. Its origins can be traced to March 16, 1951, when it was constituted as the Headquarters Company of the 108th Armored Cavalry Group. This unit was organized and federally recognized on April 12, 1951, in Tupelo, Mississippi. Over the subsequent years, the unit underwent several re-designations, becoming the 108th Armor Group in 1953 and later the 108th Armored Cavalry in 1955. In 1968, it was reorganized as the HHC of the 1st Brigade, 30th Armored Division.

On November 1, 1973, the brigade was designated as the 155th Armored Brigade, adopting the numbers from the 155th Infantry Regiment, the oldest unit in the Mississippi National Guard, with roots dating back to 1798 as the seventh-oldest Infantry regiment in the U.S. Army. This reorganization aimed to create a powerful independent striking force, comprising two armor battalions, a mechanized infantry battalion, a field artillery battalion, an engineer battalion, a support battalion, an armored cavalry troop, an air defense battery, and a military intelligence company.

The 155th ABCT was mobilized on December 7, 1990, during the Gulf War but remained stateside and was de-mobilized on May 14, 1991. In 1993, it became an Enhanced Separate Brigade, receiving specialized training and higher priority for resources to provide flexible reinforcement to Active Army units during wartime.

The 155th ABCT deployed a Task Force to support NATO operations in Eastern Europe from August 2001 through April 2002. The Task Force consisted of two mechanized infantry companies, one armor company, headquarters company and additional support elements.

From August 2004 to January 2006, the brigade deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III, serving under the II Marine Expeditionary Force and experiencing 15 fatalities during this tour. Upon returning, the brigade transitioned into a Heavy Brigade Combat Team. This change improved mobility, flexibility, and overall combat effectiveness, aligning with modern military doctrine.

Three years later, the brigade once again was called to active duty in support of operations in Iraq. From May 2009 to March 2010, the brigade was forward in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom 9.2. This deployment during the surge period provided invaluable experience in counterinsurgency operations.

In March 2018, the 155th ABCT began a three-month training period at Fort Bliss, TX in preparation for a nine-month deployment supporting Operation Spartan Shield (OSS) based in Kuwait. On July 15, 2018, it relieved the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, becoming the first

National Guard ABCT to deploy as an in support of OSS. While headquartered at Camp Buehring, the brigade had units deployed forward to various locations within the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR), to include Syria as part of Operation Inherent Resolve.

In 2023 the 155th ABCT was tasked with providing two Task Forces to support Operation Spartan Shield and a Brigade Headquarters in support of the Joint Multi-National Training Group-Ukraine (JTMG-U). The first Task Force in support of OSS deployed to Kuwait May 2023 to March 2024 and the second Task Force deployed from January 2024 to November 2024. During these rotations, both Task Forces were headquartered at Camp Buehring, but had force forward deployed in various countries within the CENTCOM AOR to include Syria as part of Operation Inherent Resolve. The Brigade Headquarters deployed in support of JTMG-U from December 2023 to October 2024.

Throughout its history, the 155th ABCT has demonstrated adaptability and commitment, evolving through various organization changes and actively participating in significant military operations both domestically and internationally.

CHANGE OF COMMAND

COLONEL
MICHAEL G. DYKES
&
COLONEL
CHRISTOPHER W.
COOKSEY



CAMP SHELBY PARADE FIELD

CAMP SHELBY, MS

SATURDAY

12 APRIL 2025



COLONEL MICHAEL DYKES

Colonel Michael Glen Dykes grew up in Wayne County, MS. He is a 1995 graduate of Wayne County High School. He currently resides in Ocean Springs, MS.

COL Dykes graduated from Marion Military Institute with an Associate Degree in May 1998. He earned his Bachelor's Degree from Mississippi State University in 2000, his Juris Doctorate from The University of Mississippi School of Law in 2009, and his Master's in

Strategic Studies from the United States Army War College in 2018.

As an Attorney, COL Dykes worked as a Law Clerk for the 16th Chancery District Judges in Pascagoula, MS, and as a Public Defender in Harrison County, MS. He presently serves as an Assistant District Attorney for the 19th District (Jackson, George, and Greene Counties), MS, prosecuting felony criminal cases.

COL Dykes received his commission as an Infantry Officer from Marion Military Institute ROTC in 1998. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Airborne School, the U.S. Army Infantry Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the Cavalry Leaders Course, U.S. Army Command and Staff Services Schools, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the United States Army War College.

COL Dykes' service includes twenty-five (25) years as an Infantry officer in the United States Army on Active duty and in the Mississippi National Guard. His many assignments include hazardous duty tours to Bosnia-Herzegovinian, from 2000-2001 with 3-15th Infantry, 3rd Infantry Division; Iskandarya, Iraq, from 2005-2006 with 1-155th Infantry, 155th ABCT; and Tikrit, Iraq, from 2009-2010 with 1-98th Cavalry Squadron, 155th ABCT. From 2023-2024, he was assigned as the Task Force Commander for the Joint Multinational Training Group - Ukraine in Grafenwohr, Germany. He has commanded or served in key staff positions in Maneuver units at every level to include a Battalion Command with 1-155th Infantry Regiment "Mississippi Rifles".

His awards and decorations include two (2) Bronze Star Medals, Four (4) Meritorious Service Medals, three (3) Army Commendation Medals, the Army Achievement Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Overseas Service Medal, the Reserves Overseas Training Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Iraqi Campaign Medal, the NATO Medal, the Mississippi Magnolia Medal, the Mississippi War Medal, three (3) Mississippi Natural Disaster Response Medals, the Basic Parachutist Badge, the Expert Infantryman Badge, and the Combat Infantryman Badge.



COLONEL CHRISTOPHER COOKSEY

Colonel Christopher Wayne Cooksey is the Commander of the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team (ABCT), headquartered in Tupelo, MS and commands seven battalions across Mississippi and Kansas.

COL Cooksey is a native of Jackson, Mississippi. He holds a Bachelors of Science from Mississippi State University and a Masters of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps and served as a Reconnaissance Marine with 2nd Reconnaissance Battalion, 2nd Marine Division. Later, he attended Officers Candidate School at the 11th Infantry Regiment, Fort Moore, Georgia, commissioning in the Infantry branch. After completing initial Infantry training, he was assigned to 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry, 155th ABCT. He is a graduate of the Dual Status Commanders Course, Joint Task Force Commanders Course, Armor Captains Career Course, U.S. Navy Scuba School, the French Foreign Legion Jungle Commando Course, and the U.S. Army SERE School Level C.

COL Cooksey's operational assignments include: Scout Platoon Leader, 1-155th Infantry; Commander, Bravo Company 1-155th Infantry; Operations Officer, 1-155th Infantry; XO, 1-155th Infantry; Operations Officer, 155th ABCT; Commander, 2-198th Combined Arms Battalion; and Deputy Commander, 66th Troop Commander, MSARNG.

COL Cooksey's combat and operational deployments include Iraq, Kuwait, Jordan, Syria, Haiti, and multiple other countries throughout Europe and the Middle East.

COL Cooksey's awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, The Global War on Terrorism Service and Expeditionary Medals, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Ranger tab, and the Parachutist badge.

COL Cooksey resides in Bogue Chitto, MS with his wife of twenty (20) years, Allison, and their two children, Sophia and Jackson.



SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

ENTRANCE OF
SECURITY TEAM

ENTRANCE OF
BATTALIONS AND
STAFF

INVOCATION

ENTRANCE OF
OFFICIAL PARTY

NATIONAL
ANTHEM

PRESENTATION OF
FLOWERS

PASSING OF THE
COLORS

POSTING OF THE
ORDER

THE ADJUTANT
GENERAL REMARKS

OUTGOING
COMMANDER
REMARKS

INCOMING
COMMANDER
REMARKS

BENEDICTION

RECEPTION