

The History of the Army Mountain Warfare School



The Vermont Army National Guard Mountain Warfare School was established in Jericho, Vermont on April 5th, 1983 to train Alpha Company, subsequently the 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry (Mountain) as the first unit in an Army Regimental Mountain Concept Plan. The 3rd Battalion later expanded to become the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain), headquartered in Jericho, Vermont.

TRADOC (Training and Doctrine Command) approved the Mountain Warfare School's POI (Program of Instruction) in 1986. The School now teaches basic, advanced and specialty mountain warfare courses, and provides additional mission specific training to United States and foreign military forces in a variety of countries.

In 1994 the Vermont Army National Guard Mountain Warfare School was designated the producer of the Skill Qualification Identifier – E "Military Mountaineer."

In 2003 the Vermont Army National Guard Mountain Warfare School became the United States Army Mountain Warfare School. As such it was designated the Executive Agent for military mountaineering with the United States Army Infantry School (USAIS) as its proponent and became responsible for teaching both active and reserve component soldiers.

In 2005 members of the Army Mountain Warfare School deployed to Afghanistan in support of CJTF-76 and provided mountain warfare and cold weather training to a variety of US and Afghan conventional and special operations forces. The team also contributed to the OEF high-altitude/high-angle personnel recovery plan for downed aircraft crew and passengers.

TRADOC approved single phase qualification for the BMMC (Basic Military Mountaineer Course) in 2008. Previously a soldier had to attend both a winter and summer phase in order to complete the course, earn the SQI-E and be awarded the Ram's Head Device.

In 2010 the Army Mountain Warfare School began sending instructors on deployments to Afghanistan with the Asymmetric Warfare Group to serve as subject matter experts on mountain warfare for units in combat and to gather lessons learned to incorporate into courses upon their return.

The Army Mountain Warfare School has been designated a "School of Excellence" multiple times through USAIS accreditation and continues to provide relevant, sustainable, mission focused mountain warfare training worldwide.

"The Gods of the hills are not the Gods of the valleys." – Ethan Allen