AFGHANISTAN, 10 April 2010 (The Times) - RAF firefighters help Army to clear Helmand road of IEDs

When heavy floods caused problems for a Royal Welsh unit clearing a road in Helmand of IEDs recently, they turned to an RAF firefighting team to give them a hand.

(10.04.2010)

The Fire Support Company of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh (The Royal Welch Fusiliers) had been trying to clear Route Dorset in the Nad-Ali district of central Helmand from IEDs for 23 days so that people could get to schools and bazaars. But farmers had dammed up drainage ditches to irrigate their fields and water had flooded the road. Not sure whether or not IEDs were beneath the water, 28 Engineering Support Group, attached to the Royal Welsh unit, and the RAF firefighters hatched a plan to use a reinforced digger as a platform for a fireman to stand on while they lowered their hoses into the pool to suck away the water. The firefighters Corporal Mike Broadley and Corporal Jim McInally worked all day in 35C (95F) heat in full body armour breathing in generator fumes. At one point Cpl Broadley came under fire, with rounds luckily hitting the digger and not him. But the firemen drained 100,000 litres of water, allowing the counter-IED team to discover two explosive devices lurking in the sludge.

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