



Óglaigh
na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES



127 INFANTRY BATTALION **BRIEFING NOTE**

The 127 Infantry Battalion (127 INF BN) will deploy in November 2025 to South Lebanon as part of UNIFIL (United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon). The Unit was formally activated on 25 AUG 2025 following completion of Phase 1 training. This marked the commencement of Phase 2 training, where personnel from across the Defence Forces reported to Custume Barracks, Athlone, to begin administrative, logistical and tactical preparations for both Phase 3 training and overseas deployment to Lebanon. Phase 3 training, commenced in Coolmoney Camp, Glen of Imaal in Co. Wicklow, on the 13 OCT 2025 and ensured personnel were fully prepared to participate in Chapter 6 Peace Support Operations, and execute their allocated tasks in the mission area in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1701 (2006) and UNSCR 2749 (2024).

127 INF BN will deploy to the UNIFIL area in three (3) Chalks to Lebanon throughout November.

On deployment, 127 INF BN will commence operations as part of a multinational Battalion, comprising of Irish, Maltese, Polish and Hungarian personnel, collectively referred to as IRISHPOLBATT.

1. Officer Commanding 127 INF BN

Lieutenant Colonel Mark Lennon is the Commanding Officer of the 127 INF BN. A native of Ballymahon, Co. Longford and son of Jimmy & Rita, Mark joined the Defence Forces on 01 OCT 1996 and was commissioned as part of the 73rd Cadet Class, to the 27 INF BN in Dundalk in JUL 1998. Lt Col Lennon is an Infantry officer and has accumulated 29 years of experience in a wide variety of command and training appointments in both Ireland and overseas which include; Officer Commanding 6 INF BN & Custume Barracks; Staff Officer with responsibility for DF Evaluation & Lessons Learned, J7 Training & Education Branch, DFHQ; Staff Officer Instructor, Command & Staff School, Military College, DFTC; School Commandant, DFPES, Military College and Company Commander B & HQ Coy, 6 INF BN.

Lieutenant Colonel Lennon holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Sports & Exercise Science from University of Limerick and holds a Master of Arts Degree in Leadership, Management and Defence Studies from Maynooth University.

This will be Lt Col Lennon's eighth overseas tour of duty having previously served in UNIFIL in 2011, 2020 & 2021. He was Platoon Commander with the 91 INF BN UNMIL, Liberia in 2004, Staff Officer in the FHQ MONUC, in the DRC in 2007/08, Staff Officer in ISAF HQ in Afghanistan 2014 and served for 18 months with FHQ EUBG in Strasbourg in 2015/16. His most recent overseas tour was in 2020-2021 where he spent a year in UNIFIL Force Headquarters where he served as Deputy Chief Liaison Officer, Liaison Branch, FHQ, UNIFIL.

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Mark is a keen sportsman with a love of GAA, having previously represented Ballymahon and Longford and has a strong interest in all sports. He is currently active in golf & fishing when he gets time and enjoys cinema, crime detective series and reading. He lives now in Milltown, Rathconrath, in Co. Westmeath with his wife Carmel, who is a primary teacher and their two children, daughter Cadhla (12) and son Seán (10).

3. **Senior NCO 127 Inf Bn – Battalion Sergeant Major John Kennedy**

Sergeant Major (BSM) John Kennedy is the senior Non-Commissioned Officer travelling with the 127 INF BN. BSM Kennedy joined the Defence forces on the 29th Jan 1990 and has served in a wide range of appointments both at home and overseas throughout his long career. BSM Kennedy has significant operational experience across the spectrum of appointments within infantry units including the 2nd and 7th Inf Bn & 2 Brigade HQ.

BSM Kennedy has extensive previous overseas service and has completed a total of eleven overseas tours of duty, to Lebanon (UNIFIL), East Timor (UNTAET), Kosovo (KFOR), CHAD (MINURCAT) & Liberia (UNMIL). His experience ranges from appointments at section level right up to company, battalion level and Multi National Force HQ levels. His current home unit is 2 Bde HQ. BSM Kennedy is married to Joan and they have four children. They currently live in Marino, Dublin.

4. **Senior NCO 127 Inf Bn – Battalion Quartermaster Paula Quinn**

Battalion Quartermaster Sergeant (BQMS) Paula Quinn is the Senior Non-Commissioned Logistics Officer supporting the 127 Infantry Battalion on its current deployment with UNIFIL. BQMS Quinn enlisted in the Defence Forces in June 1999 and has served with distinction across a range of appointments. A qualified Emergency Medical Technician and experienced Medical Orderly, she has provided critical medical support in both domestic operations and on multiple overseas tours of duty with UNIFIL, UNMIL, MINURCAT.

After eighteen years in the Medical Corps, she transitioned into logistics, becoming a quartermaster in 2019 Serving in UNDOF as CQMS In 2020, she broke new ground as the first female Battalion Quartermaster in the history of the Defence Forces in 2024. Her professional career reflects a strong record of leadership, reliability, and service excellence throughout more than 26 years in uniform. This will be BQMS Quinn's sixth Tour of Duty. She takes immense pride in her work, with a vast depth of logistics and security knowledge to support the Battalion's mission.

5. **Youngest and Oldest Soldiers**

- a. CQMS Martin O'Connell, serving in Battalion Headquarters, is the oldest member of the contingent travelling at 57 years old.
- b. Pte Kyle Hynes, serving with A Coy, is the youngest member of the Battalion at 19 years of age.

6. **Most Overseas Deployments**

Sgt John Siggins, serving with the Battalion Support Group (BSG), has the most overseas deployments with a total of 16 deployments.