

1 EXPEDITIONARY CIVIL ENGINEER GROUP



MISSION

Build Warfighting Platforms and Deliver Emergency Response Capabilities

The 1 ECEG was established to deliver direct engineer support capability to the Combined Forces Air Component Commander (CFACC) by providing over-the-horizon (OTH), agile engineer forces, in both permissive and non-permissive environments, across the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR). The 1 ECEG capabilities are executed by two squadrons: a Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineer (RED HORSE) Squadron and a Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force (BEEF) Squadron.

The RED HORSE squadron provides the U.S. Air Force with a highly mobile, self-sufficient civil engineer response force. The primary missions of RED HORSE units are to assess, plan, and build facilities and infrastructure to support contingency operations and combat missions at any location in the world. Engineer capabilities include rapid airfield damage assessment, heavy damage repair, bare-base construction, and heavy construction operations such as airfield runways, parking aprons, munitions storage and pads, and forward operating location assault landing zones. RED HORSE also executes vertical construction for airfield support facilities like K-Span facilities, pre-engineered buildings, and other expeditionary structures.

The Prime BEEF mission is to provide civil engineer support for beddown of personnel and aircraft. Prime BEEF capabilities include airbase site surveys, establishing bare-base camps

including utility infrastructure sustainment operations and maintenance. Prime BEEF forces specialize in airfield operations and are the primary units considered when establishing and sustaining airfield operations at locations where U.S. Air Force aircraft operate. Prime BEEF forces are responsible for command, control and communications to support beddown; fire emergency services; expedient construction, and other specialized teams. The 1 ECEG's Prime BEEF squadron currently executes Crash-Fire- Rescue (CFR) missions and is postured to receive forces to expand mission capabilities including Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Emergency Management as required in support of AFCENT missions.

The 1 ECEG is built with a rotational force structure of Active Duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard Airmen. The 1 ECEG ranges in size from 400 to 600 Airmen and consists of a Group with two Civil Engineer Squadrons: The 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron (557 ERHS) and the 577th Expeditionary Prime BEEF Squadron (577 EPBS). The 1 ECEG is a direct reporting unit to U.S. Air Forces Central (USAFCENT) Command.

LINEAGE

1 Civil Engineering Group (Heavy Repair) established and activated, 8 May 1967

Organized, 15 May 1967

Redesignated 1 Civil Engineering Group, Heavy Repair, 15 Oct 1969

Inactivated, 1 Nov 1971

Redesignated 1 Expeditionary RED HORSE Group, converted to provisional status, and

assigned to the Air Combat Command to activate or inactivate at any time after 26 Nov 2001

Redesignated 1 Expeditionary Civil Engineer Group, 23 Mar 2012

STATIONS

Tan Son Nhut, South Vietnam, 15 May 1967-16 Mar 1970

Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 16 Mar 1970-1 Nov 1971

Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar

ASSIGNMENTS

Seventh Air Force, 15 May 1967

Air Force Logistics Command, 16 Mar 1970-1 Nov 1971

COMMANDERS

Col Darren Daniels

Col John Allen

Col Matthew H. Beverly

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II 1967-1967

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III 1968

Vietnam Air/Ground 1968
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV 1968-1969
TET69/Counteroffensive 1969
Vietnam Summer/Fall 1969
Vietnam Winter/Spring 1969-1970
Global War on Terrorism: GWOT-E

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device
1 Jan 1969-16 Mar 1970

Meritorious Unit Awards

2 Apr 2013-1 Apr 2014

2 Apr 2015-1 Apr 2016

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

15 May 1967-16 Mar 1970

EMBLEM



MOTTO

OPERATIONS

In October 2001, in the aftermath of the terror attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the group immediately provided beddown and combat construction operations at bases all over Southwest and Central Asia in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF). Mission

taskings surged again with the initiation of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF) as Air Force units opened new bases, expanded additional bases, and recovered captured Iraqi bases.

The group hit the ground running and completed an astounding \$90 million of construction within its first 12 months of existence. The group has been at the forefront of OEF, OIF, and Operation NEW DAWN. In support of those operations, the 1 Expeditionary RED HORSE Group has completed more than 370 projects valued at over \$240 million dollars at more than 50 sites in 12 countries.

In March 2012, the 1 ERHG was transformed back to its original designation, the 1 ECEG, as changing needs in the Combined Joint Operations Area-Afghanistan (CJOA-A) necessitated a reorganization of the light and heavy construction capabilities in the AFCENT area of responsibility. Simultaneously, the 577th Expeditionary Prime BEEF Group (EPBG), based at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, was inactivated, transferring its two squadrons to the 1 ECEG.

The 1 ECEG has supported numerous tasking's throughout the AOR for joint operations, most notably Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (OIR), North Atlantic Treaty Organization Resolute Support Mission (NATO-RSM), and Operation ALLIES REFUGE (OAR). In support of OIR, EPBS and ERHS repaired numerous airfields damaged by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria. Both squadrons designed and constructed various dirt landing zones that opened new Air Lines of Communication (ALOCs) to remote regions throughout Syria and Iraq. During NATO-RSM, 577 EPBS special capabilities teams helped close down bases during the withdrawal from Afghanistan by deconstructing expeditionary structures and mobilizing a Crash-Fire-Rescue Quick-Strike-Team (CFR QST) to airfields during their final closure phases. The CFR QST also played a significant role in Afghanistan during OAR. The CFR QST was mobilized by the CFACC to Hamid Karzai International Airport, Afghanistan under significant, credible, and sustained threat of imminent enemy attack. The team had less than 48-hours' notice to mobilize to the airfield which ultimately kept the only ALOC in Afghanistan open in support of a Presidential Non-Combatant Evacuation operation that resulted in successful execution of the largest human airlift evacuation in history. At the same time the 1 ECEG performed OAR beddown operations, emergency and expeditionary sanitation operations and other evacuation operations for Afghanistan evacuees at Al Udeid Air Base.

Four U.S. Air Force engineers with the 1 Expeditionary Civil Engineer Group arrived in northern Iraq to conduct a reconnaissance mission for what would become a historic undertaking. Their mission: mitigate runway damage caused by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. The engineers were informed their task had never been attempted in Iraq. The 1 ECEG took the mission anyway, and when the telltale cadence of the four turboprop engines grew louder and louder the evening of Oct. 21, they knew their hard work had paid off.

Over the last two years, ISIL severely damaged the runway at Qayyarah West Airbase - a major strategic airfield in northern Iraq's Ninawa province. ISIL detonated explosives, used an excavator with a hammer attachment, and creating deep trenches to damage the runway in several different ways. Logisticians deployed in support of the Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command - Operation Inherent Resolve are currently enabling Iraqi security forces

(ISF) as they push to retake Mosul. To expeditiously move larger amounts of supplies to the ISF, they need larger, fixed-wing aircraft and a proper runway to get the job done. In order for a C-130 cargo plane to land, it requires a runway that spans over 33 football fields end to end.

Maj. Jason Stevens, the 1 ECEG officer in charge of the project, detailed the project during its outset. "We'll be on the ground for about three weeks to fix the damage," Stevens said. "It's been a long time in the planning process. The guys are doing amazing work. They are making excellent progress. We are on schedule and we are moving forward every day." During the planning process, the Airmen were trained on how to operate the newly fielded Rapid Airfield Damage Repair System and Super Kit to complete the mission. The kit consists of a comprehensive set of equipment necessary to quickly repair a damaged airstrip. "The project was practiced and perfected in training, so when boots hit the dusty ground the mission would be in full swing," said Staff Sgt. Tyler Charles, an engineer on the team. "We show up, clear the debris out, get all the junk and everything out of there," Charles said. "Then we dig down, if we have to, until we hit hard surface ground."

The engineers had to systematically identify damaged areas of the airfield, cut those pieces of concrete out, and then start from scratch from the bare ground up. After that, there is earth tamping, concrete filling and curing - a process that takes about a day to complete. Virginia Air National Guard Master Sgt. Reid Burns, the lead NCO of the team, realizes that his job is vital to the ISF on the front lines who need supplies to continue their push toward Mosul. A project this large takes a team to complete. The total force concept is played out on the project, bringing together qualified Airmen from the ANG, the Air Force Reserve and active-duty components.

"It makes me really proud -- especially the Guard, Reserve and active-duty guys coming together, pooling our resources," Burns said. As if the task at hand wasn't already difficult, the mantra "the enemy always gets a vote" came into play. Airmen had to complete the demanding task under the persistent threat of indirect fire. "Due to our location and the threat that is here, we are wearing our full kits and our helmets at all times," Stevens said. This may slow the process down a bit, but did little to discourage the Airmen who recognized the value of their mission. Stevens enjoyed the process and watched his team thrive in the face of adversity. "When boiled down, the Airmen completed their task a lot faster than ISIL was able to complete theirs," he said.

It took two years for ISIL to damage the airfield beyond what they believed repairable. It took a small team of 1 ECEG engineers three weeks to make it fully operational. Now the coalition can quickly supply the ISF on the front lines of Mosul, enabling the defeat of ISIL.

USAF UNIT HISTORIES
Created: 12 Apr 2012
Updated: 19 Feb 2019

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.