

918 CIVIL ENGINEERING FLIGHT

MISSION

918 Civil Engineering Flight mission was to deploy a Prime Beef (Base Engineer Emergency Forces) Team on short notice to perform an emergency of combat support role as directed by higher headquarters.

LINEAGE

918 Civil Engineering Flight constituted
Activated and organized, 25 Oct 1969

STATIONS

Dobbins AFB, GA

ASSIGNMENTS

918 Military Airlift Group

COMMANDERS

Maj George. W. Haley

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

918th CE Eight Personnel reported for duty 10 Jun 72 at Dobbins AFB, Georgia. The day was spent in making final preparations for the deployment of the flight to Eglin AFB, Florida for the period 11 June 72 through 23 June 72. An attempt was made to procure all supply items and tool kit items believed necessary for accomplishing three days of Prime Beef Training from 11 June 72 until 13 June 72 and the remaining renovation of existing structures at auxiliary field 3 on Eglin AFB. Due to advance preparation, test of the necessary items had already been obtained; however, none of the more illusive items included walkie talkie and a transit. Approximately twenty members of the flight also accomplished training on the M16 rifle at the firing range on Dobbins AFB. This training was particularly valuable since everyone participating in the Prime Beef Training exercise at Eglin was required to carry an M16 at all times during the exercise with blank ammo for use against unfriendly training forces made up of members of the Red Horse Squadron at auxiliary field 3, Eglin AFB.

After obtaining all available supplies, crates were fabricated by CE Flight Personnel for transporting administrative files, typewriters, fire fighter bunker gear and other contingency equipment by C-7 caribou. 918th CE Flight Personnel transported mobility kits, tool kits and contingency equipment to four C-7 caribou aircraft after weighing these items for load distribution. Three aircraft carrying fifty-four airmen and four officers and one cargo aircraft departed Dobbins AFB at 0930 on 11 June 72 and arrived at Eglin AFB at 1130 on 11 June 72. In addition, three personnel MSgt. Bobby Williams, MSgt. John C. Tate and Lt. James Criggs departed Dobbins AFB on 8 June 72 to act as members of an advance party to coordinate the role of our flight in the construction plans and Prime Beef Training Exercise plans at auxiliary field 3. A report of the Prime Beef Training Exercise is included as Attachment 1 to this report.

The primary mission of the 918th CE Flight is to deploy a Prime Beef (Base Engineer Emergency Forces) Teams on short notice to perform an emergency of combat support role as directed by higher headquarters. To train for this mission, the Red Horse Squadron at auxiliary field 3 on Eglin AFB monitored a three-day training exercise. Seven basic tasks were designated to be accomplished by the team prior to the arrival of the main force commander. These tasks included:

1. Construction of an aircraft parking area of A-2 matting and Republic Steel revetments.
2. Design of an air base layout for an 1100 man unit.
3. Construct 6 squad tents and one hard back tent with lighting.
4. Install and operate one 600 gallon per hour water purification unit, one field bath unit and a field latrine large enough for 60 men for three days.
5. Develop a fire alarm and protection systems.
6. Install 2000 feet of airfield lighting.

After unloading all aircraft, personnel gear was stored in the airmen's barracks while Prime Beef equipment and personnel were transported to auxiliary field 2, home of the 557th Civil Engineering Squadron. Upon arrival at auxiliary field 2, two separate briefings were conducted. The Prime Beef Officer, 2nd Lt. Donald V. Wallace, 2nd Lt. Patrick Ryan, and 2nd Lt. Charles T. Fuqua were given a

fifteen minute briefing by members of the Red Horse cadre on the exercise plan. Following this briefing, a general briefing was given to all participants on matters such as safety, operation of the M16 rifle and the rules of the exercise. Members of the cadre who wore white hats were considered friendly forces and were to act as advisors if their help was requested by flight personnel. After issuing M16 rifles to members of the 918th CE Flight, Personnel loaded buses for transportation to the exercise area and the exercise officially began.

The 918th CE Flight had decided to divide itself into five teams: "A", "B", "C", "D", and "E" team. Prior to the trip to Eglin, our unit had practiced functioning in teams. This training paid off from the outset in coordinating action by personnel along lines which differed from normal section type activities. For example, one of the first objectives of the exercise was to scout and secure the exercise area. This was accomplished in a systematic fashion in spite of a driving rainstorm.

After securing the exercise area, our Prime Beef Officer, Lt. Wallace and Bobby Williams, began to delegate responsibility for accomplishing each phase of the exercise. On the first day of the exercise, work had already begun on the assigned tasks. Our success in the exercise was enhanced due to the great effort by all personnel on the first day. All available matting was laid after grading the landing strip site. Five of the six tents required were put up during the first day; the field shower unit was installed; the water purification unit was near operational; and the latrines and the tent lighting system had been installed. Guards on the perimeter defense to the exercise area were rotated every two hours according to teams. After moving supplies to a central location, we were able to draw in our perimeter defense and dig permanent foxhole positions to secure the area.

Throughout the exercise, our unit was subject to Insurgent activity from Red Horse Training Personnel. At intermittent intervals work on the tasks could be slowed down or stopped by simulated attacks. These simulated attacks were made realistic by use of one quarter pound whistling explosives thrown by Red Horse personnel with subsequent attempts at capturing insurgents by 918th CE Flight Personnel bearing M16 rifles with blank ammo. Attacks were made on all work areas at all hours of the day or night.

The second day of the exercise consisted of finishing the work started on the first day of the exercise while beginning work on several new phases. The new phases of work were 1) hard backing a tent, 2) installation of airfield lighting, 3) the design of an 1100 man cantonment area and 6) the installation of lighting systems in the tents. One of the major tasks begun during the day was the building of a revetment around the aircraft landing matting.

On the third day of the encampment, all the assigned tasks for the deployment exercise had been accomplished by the 918th CE Flight. An inspection of the area was conducted by members of the Red Horse Training cadre, followed by the dismantling of all equipment and structures. A briefing was conducted the following morning in which all phases of the deployment were graded. The overall score of the 918th CE Flight was the grade of excellent. We achieved an outstanding rating in four categories but did only marginal in some categories, thus reducing our score to the excellent rating.

The project undertaken at auxiliary field 3, Eglin AFB, Florida, consisted of renovation and conversion of five existing barracks into office space for operations, aircraft maintenance, commander's office, and other support functions. Also included in the project was the renovation of one aircraft maintenance Hanger.

The major categories of work proposed in the barracks area consisted of the following items:

- 1) Wrecking existing features not Incorporated in renovations.
- 2) Renovation of plumbing fixtures and additions to plumbing system.
- 3) Grouting concrete floor slabs and replacing floor tile.
- 4) Installation of doors and trim work around base, windows and at top of wainscoat.
- 5) Meet rock patchwork, new drywall, taping and sanding of drywall.
- 6) Painting of interior walls and trim work.
- 7) Installation of air conditioning units.
- 8) Interior electrical work Including installation of light fixtures.
- 9) Reworking duct work to conform with now floor and ceiling plane.
- 10) Installation of suspended acoustical ceiling.

The 918th CE Flight work on the hanger renovation was primarily concerned with interior electrical installations and sheet metal work.

After completion of our three day Prime Beef exercise, working hours were established between 0700 and 1800 for 18 June 1972 and 19 June 1972 with breaks for lunch and dinner. On 18 June 1972, the work day began with a safety briefing, followed by a briefing on the project by the auxiliary field 3 base civil engineer. Rocky Stitlings. Major Haley designated two officers as project managers, 1st Lt James Griggs and 2nd Lt. Charles L. Fuquea and delegated the responsibility for project supervision to MSgt. Bobby Williams.

Priorities were established during the first day such that building 3015 was first in priority, followed by building 3013 and building 3006. Work on the aircraft maintenance hangar was limited to electrical and sheet metal work so our electrical and sheet metal personnel began work on the aircraft hangar during the first week. Ike allocation of these personnel to the maintenance hangar slowed down progress on certain work areas in the barracks such as reworking the heating duct distribution system in all three buildings and roughing in electrical work in building 3006; however, progress was made toward completion of the total project.

Work was confined to these three buildings and the aircraft maintenance hangar to have some of the structures near completion. During the first week, work on building 3015 consisted of: grouting the concrete floor slab, replacing tile, cutting, and installing millwork, installing doors and installing plumbing fixtures. An excessive amount of work was required on door installation because pre-hung units were not used, and it was necessary to plane off millwork to fit the door jambs. Work on building 3013 consisted of: Installing lighting fixtures, grouting floor slabs, and replacing tile. Work on building 3006 consisted of wrecking wall lockers, removing partitions, and roughing in plumbing.

Supplies were distributed from an on base storage hanger at auxiliary field 3 and by requisitioning

items from Eglin. Some small items were slow to obtain through normal supply channels which could have been purchased from outside if a petty cash fund were available. These material shortages caused some delay in work since it was necessary to reallocate work until materials or tools were available.

During the second week beginning on 22 June 72, new working hours were established from 0715 until 1645 with one break for lunch. On 22 and 23 June 1972, work on building 3015 consisted of finishing millwork, preparing millwork and sheetrock for painting and finishing the plumbing system. Work on building 3013 consisted of finishing repairing drywall. Work on building 3006 consisted of roughing in interior electrical work. On Wednesday, 24 June 72, we began hanging suspended acoustical ceiling in building: 3015 and began painting millwork and drywall in building 3015; Several slowdowns were experienced during the second week due to a slow working supply system. Computer cancellations of back orders on previously ordered supplies were found to be one reason for the disorder. The plumbing system in buildings 3015, 3013 and 3006 were completed by 26 June 72.

During both weeks, members of the 557th Rod Horse Civil Engineering Squadron worked on several phases of work in the barracks. For example, installation of light fixtures and air conditioning units was accomplished in building 3015. Work on the project by the 918th CE Flight was concluded on 25 June 72.

The 918th Civil Engineering Flight has continued to work on the Prime Beef rating and as of this date the unit remains C-4, but with all vacancies filled. The flight participated in bivouac on Dobbins AFB, Georgia in accordance with requirements for PRIME BEEF training. The bivouac consisted of setting up a generator, sanitary slit trench, water supply, 10-man tent and individual tents. During the bivouac a member of the 918th Dispensary briefed the flight on snake bite and first aid techniques

The 918th CEF "Prime Beef" unit commanded by LT. Col. George W. Haley, completed their encampment at Rhein-Main AB, Germany. The men participated in the German Offset Program in which funds are provided by the German government for reconstruction and improvement of on-base facilities. Their efforts were concentrated on insulation of buildings and construction of sidewalks and latrines. 1974

Summer camp was performed in June at Rhein-Main AFB, Germany. The unit's projects were the insulating of various base buildings and the construction of sidewalks. The Military Airlift Command transported the 63-member unit in a C-141 Starlifter. About 80,000 sq. ft. of area were insulated and over 650 feet of sidewalk were laid, an effort which involved over 3,000 man-hours. Firemen of the 918th CE trained the military and civilian firemen of the 322 CE Flight from Rhein-Main. 1974

The 918 CE Flt performed their summer encampment at Rhein-Main AFB, Germany. The basic project was to insulate various base buildings and construction of sidewalks. The unit left Dobbins AFB on 2 June 74 after all the sign-in procedures were accomplished. The unit was transported on a C-141 Starlifter provided by the Military Airlift Command. The unit carried 63 men over including

one man from the base information office. On arrival at Rhein-Main the flight was met by Captain Provost and 2Lt McWeeney of the base civil engineering squadron. Lt McWeeney was assigned project officer. The flight was quartered in the Rhein-Main Hotel located on the base.

On June 3, 1974, the officers and key NCOs were given a briefing by Lt. McWeeney on the project. There were 80,000 sq ft. of area to be insulated. These buildings ranged from 5000sq ft to 15,000 sq ft. The insulation to be used was batt R-7, aluminum backed. In addition to this, the unit was to locate the utilities and layout two latrine facilities in the IP area on base. Finally, there were various sidewalks needed on base.

Work began the next day with each team getting a feel of the was slowed by lack of proper clothing for the men. The latrines in the IP area were located batters boards set. The footings on these buildings would have been poured but Friday 14 was a German holiday and no concrete was available. Over 650 feet of side walk was completed during the two week period, walks would have been completed but unavailability of concrete also project. During the entire project over 3000 man-hours of work was accomplished

While the 918th"Prime Beef" firemen trained 322nd CE firemen in the use of rescue ropes, knots and rescue techniques the 322nd gave 918th CE Reservists simulated EGRESS Mission Training. An Egress Mission is the rescue of pilots, crew and passengers from burning or wrecked aircraft as well as the extinguishing of fires and insuring fires stay extinguished.

In addition to simulated exercises using real aircraft the Reservist Firemen of "Prime Beef" were tested at a "Pit Fire" exercise using a simulated aircraft. The Firemen managed to extinguish the fire in about fifteen seconds and were then able to enter the aircraft. As well as field training the Firemen of the 918th CE Flight maintained their required OJT manual training while at Rhein Main

Air Force Reservists from the 918th Civil Engineering Flight, Commanded by Lt. Colonel George W. Haley and based at Dobbins Air Force Base, Georgia, completed their annual two week summer encampment at Rhein-Main, AFB during the first weeks of June. The 918th Civil Engineering Flight is part of the 94th Tactical Airlift Wing and the 918th Tactical Airlift Group based at Dobbins Air Force Base.

The Reservists of the 918th Civil Engineering Flight, "PRIME BEEF", participated in the German Offset Program whereby funds are being provided by the German Government to help offset the cost of the American government maintaining its military forces in Germany. Funds provided by the Offset program are being used for reconstruction and improvements of on-base facilities. Manpower for these projects is being provided by United States Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units. Each unit participating in the program will be assigned a different construction project to be completed during their two week encampment. The 918th Civil Engineering Flight is the only Air Force Reserve Unit to receive the honor of being a part of this mission.

Each Civil Engineering Team that is assigned to Rhein Main will be assigned a different work project that will help to complete the overall Offset Program project that encompasses improvements in

energy conservation, safety, modernization of public facilities and comfort improvement. As a bonus, utilization of National Guard and Air Force Reserve units to do the job will be a savings and cost reduction bonus for the Air Force.

The 918th "Prime Beef" team completed three projects during their tour at Rhein-Main. Their first project was the insulation of eleven buildings that have a high rate of energy use and heat loss from having been built with no insulation. Aerial photographs using Infra-Red photography were taken of Rhein-Main to determine which buildings had energy use and conservation problems. Secondly, the "Prime Beef" constructed sidewalks along the worn paths in the Headquarters area of the base. For their final project, the 918th CE Team did the site development and began the foundation work for two new latrines in the base IP area. Existing latrines are old and in frequent need of repair so the construction of these new latrines will make the base camping area a much nicer and enjoyable area for recreation.

918th CE Flight has been reorganized from the previous designation and mission to a PRIME BEEF (FF) Team. This was accomplished by the transfer of men with the CE crafts AFSCs to the Civil Engineering element of the Combat Support Squadron and transferring men from combat support squadron with fire protection AFSCs into the 918th CE Flight. This provided a maximum of qualified personnel for both units, with a minimum of cross training being involved. This transaction is complete with the involved personnel reporting to and performing in their respective unit. This new mission assignment results in the 918th CE Flight being one of four (FF) teams currently assigned.

Due to the limitation of space and equipment at the present fire station, the Flight has been divided into four teams, each training on different week ends under the supervision of an Asst Fire Chief.

During the reporting period, reorganization of the 918th CSS Civil Engineering Section and the 918th CE Flight was completed. The Civil Engineering Section was set up functionally along shop lines with an officer-in-charge and a non-commissioned officer-in-charge for each shop area. Following reorganization, the section has been combining training with accomplishing needed Civil Engineering jobs around the base. All shop personnel have been issued tool boxes and draw materials as needed. Heavy equipment is supplied by the Base Motor Pool. In addition, the Navy provides heavy equipment on an as needed basis. The section completes Job Orders developed between UTA's and also handles service calls on UTA weekends. Service calls have included such items as relamping buildings, sweeping pavements, collecting refuse, performing emergency plumbing repairs, repairing roof leaks, plus performing electrical and mechanical repairs. Several major job orders have been undertaken and completed or are close to completion including construction of the Barbeque Shed at the airman's barracks; construction of a basketball court at the airmen's barracks; construction of a jogging track at the base gym; replacing of fencing at the base number; Resign of a parking lot addition for the Officer's Club; removal of Quonset Huts; construction of a storage area in the BCE building and the securing of two rooms in Hanger #2.

USAF Unit Histories
Created: 29 Jul 2020
Updated: 20 Aug 2021

Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.