

1 SPECIAL OPERATIONS CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON



MISSION

The 1 Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron fulfills a variety of missions supporting the entire wing. Much of the 1 Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron's work is focused on the construction, maintenance, and protection of all base infrastructure, which includes buildings, roadways, airfield pavements, utility services such as water, gas, sewage treatment and electricity and the surrounding environment. They also provide complete services for fire protection, explosive ordnance disposal, disaster preparedness, war readiness support, military family housing, and various other base-wide needs such as custodial cleaning and refuse disposal.

The total base infrastructure inventory includes 948 facilities containing over 4.8 million square feet; 10,000 lateral feet of runway; 740,350 square yards of various aircraft taxiways and parking ramps; 38 miles of base roadways; 188 miles of various utility service lines; a new state-of-the-art million gallon per day wastewater treatment plant; and 680 military family housing units. This entire infrastructure is located on over 6,600 acres of land, of which 70 percent is considered environmentally sensitive wetlands.

LINEAGE

16 Aviation Squadron (Separate) constituted, 6 Apr 1942

Activated, 14 Apr 1942

Redesignated 16 Aviation Squadron, 1 Apr 1943

Disbanded, 30 Apr 1944

Reconstituted and redesignated 16 Civil Engineering Squadron, 31 Jul 1985

1 Special Operations Civil Engineering Squadron constituted, 23 Feb 1993

Activated, 24 Mar 1993

16 Civil Engineering Squadron and 1 Special Operations Civil Engineering Squadron consolidated and designated 16 Civil Engineering Squadron, 1 Oct 1993

Redesignated 16 Civil Engineer Squadron, 1 Mar 1994

Redesignated 1 Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron, 16 Nov 2006

STATIONS

Spence Fld, Moultrie, GA, 14 Apr 1942-30 Apr 1944

Eglin Air Force Auxiliary Airfield #9 (Hurlburt Fld), FL, 24 Mar 1993

ASSIGNMENTS

AAF Southeast Air Corps Training Center (later, AAF Eastern Flying Training Command), 14 Apr 1942-30 Apr 1944

1 Special Operations Support (later, 16 Support, then 16 Mission Support) Group, 1 Oct 1993-15 November 2006

1 Special Operations Mission Support Group, 16 November 2006

COMMANDERS

Maj Walter R. Lee

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II

American Theater

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device

1 Jun 1997 - 31 May 1999

1 Jul 2003 - 30 Jun 2005

1 Jul 2005-30 Jun 2007

Meritorious Unit Awards

1 Jul 2007 - 30 Jun 2009

1 Oct 2009 - 30 Sep 2011

1 Oct 2011 – 30 Sep 2013
1 Oct 2014 – 30 Sep 2015

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
[24 Mar 1993] - 15 Apr 1994
1 Jun 1995 - 31 May 1997
1 Jul 1999 - 30 Jun 2001
1 Jul 2001 - 30 Jun 2003

EMBLEM



1 Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron emblem: On a disc Sable, as a stylized bull's head detailed Gules, eyed Azure, winged Argent, centered thereon a dagger Proper, grip detailed Gold Brown; all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached above the disc, a Black scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "ALWAYS THERE ANYWHERE" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Black scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "1 SOCES" in Yellow letters. Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The bull is a traditional Air Force Civil Engineer symbol representing "Prime BEEF" (Prime Base Engineer Emergency Forces), the basic description for all civil engineer career fields. The wings of the bull are also a traditional Air Force symbol representing the global reach of Air Force Civil Engineers. The dagger is derived from the AFSOC patch and is emblematic of the unit's "commando engineer" heritage in support of Air Force and Department of Defense Special Operations worldwide. The background supports the Squadron's unique role in Special Operations, which are often conducted under the cover of night and in a covert nature.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

2003 Given short notice for a big task in a U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, a team of Air Force Special Operations engineers got the job done ahead of schedule and then quickly redeployed to Turkey as part of a bigger task in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The 16 Civil Engineer Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Fla., sent a team to the AOR to build an Air Operations Center for the Combined Joint Special Operations Area Command three days after notice of the tasking.

On January 8, 2003, a 13-member team from the 16 CES arrived to start building the AOC to be used by coalition forces during OIF. Given three weeks for the task, the CE team took only 17 days to finish the job: 5,000 square feet of office space and a 4,100 square-foot, 5-level theater with stadium seating, a work area and a 1,400 square-foot screen, all completely finished and carpeted.

A 14-member communications team from the 16 Special Operations Wing flew over with the civil engineers and installed all the technical equipment and wiring for the theater. With the job at the primary location still in progress, preliminary work began on a bigger task given to the 16 CES; constructing a special operations site at an existing air base in Diyarbakir, Turkey. SMSgt Chuck Dewar, chief of the 16 CES heavy repair section, left the rest of the team in early February to meet with Lt Col Jeffrey Pitchford, commander of the 16 CES, at Aviano AB, Italy.

Both were members of the advance on-site team sent to Diyarbakir to do initial site surveys and evaluations for needed equipment and manpower. Plans for Diyarbakir were for a beddown of 7,700 soldiers to provide northern support for OIF. Based on site characteristics, plans were made for three tent cities. The 16 CES was tasked to be the lead CE team and given responsibility for the basic expeditionary airfield resources. Plans called for two 25-person CE teams from Langley AFB, Va. and Little Rock AFB, Ark., to join the 16 CES at Diyarbakir. Leaving four members behind at the primary deployment site, eight members of the original 13-person team from the 16 CES joined Lt Col Pitchford and SMSgt Dewar in Diyarbakir. They were the first CE forces at the Diyarbakir site, arriving in mid-February to begin their mission.

A joint team composed of the 16 CES crew, Brig Gen Mike Worden (the deployed base commander) and 11 members of his staff, began initial work at the site. The Air Rapid Response Kit, or ARRK, was used for the first time for the command and control area and part of the beddown. Meanwhile, back home at Hurlburt Field, the 16 CES was coordinating people, equipment and supplies in order to send the rest of the lead CE team to Diyarbakir for the mission. Stringent clearance procedures created some difficulties for quick movement of people and equipment.

Traveling on commercial aircraft and carrying whatever tools they could fit in their A-3 bags, the team from Langley AFB and 20 members of the 16 CES large team finally arrived in mid-March. Although the new arrivals reinforced the team already on site, a complete team never materialized. The expanded CE teams continued work on the air base site, including preparing land for the anticipated additional 7,000-plus soldiers and handling all readiness responsibilities and most of the services tasks. The base eventually included 77 TEMPER tents with wood floors and environmental control units, a 750-kilowatt power plant and distribution systems, two shower and two latrine units, and a field kitchen.

Personnel had begun to arrive and only one services member was on the site, but CEs pitched in to provide at least one hot meal a real boost to morale. Because local policies did not allow bringing in heavy equipment, plans for a ramp construction by RED HORSE teams were changed. Much of the equipment, supplies and labor had to be contracted out locally; the Air Force Contract Augmentation Program was used to provide any assets that could not be brought into the country. Some problems occurred when contracted assets arrived before they could be used.

Before work on the base at Diyarbakir could be finished, the Turkish Parliament voted to refuse the United States permission to base OIF forces in Turkey. But before leaving Diyarbakir, CE teams had to un-do all of their previous hard work. The new facilities were torn down and reconstituted in less than seven days. Events prevented the mission from being completed as planned, but didn't stop the 16 CES commando engineers from demonstrating their capability and flexibility in a contingency situation.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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

Cpt Michael Dunlap. Air Force Civil Engineer, Volume 11, number. 4 Winter, 2003.

Spence Field, Moultrie, GA, 1942. Army and Navy Publishing Company of Louisiana. Baton Rouge, LA. 1942.