

419 CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

419 Installations Squadron constituted, 8 Sep 1950

Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1950

Ordered to Active Service, 1 May 1951

Inactivated, 2 May 1951

Redesignated 419 Civil Engineering Squadron, 24 Aug 1984

Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1984

Redesignated 419 Civil Engineer Squadron, 1 Mar 1994

STATIONS

Scott AFB, IL, 1 Oct 1950-2 May 1951

Hill AFB, UT, 1 Oct 1984

ASSIGNMENTS

419 Air Base Group, 1 Oct 1950-2 May 1951

419 Tactical Fighter (later, 419 Fighter) Wing, 1 Oct 1984

419 Support (later, 419 Mission Support) Group, 1 Aug 1992

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

[1 Oct 1984]-2 Aug 1985

1 Jul 1987-31 Aug 1989

1 Apr 1994-31 Mar 1996

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Under the larger umbrella of agile combat support, Prime BEEF teams provide a full range of civil engineering support required to establish, operate, and maintain garrison and contingency air bases. Prime BEEF forces maintain the necessary equipment and personnel to support beddown fire emergency services; expedient construction; explosive incident response; emergency management; chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear response; and many other specialized mission duties. From a historic perspective, the Prime BEEF team concept originated in the 1960s. World events in the 1950s (Korean War) and early 1960s highlighted the need for mobile civil engineer teams to perform wartime duties at airstrips and locations requiring support facilities for aircraft, personnel and equipment. Prime examples of these events include the Lebanon Crisis of 1958, Berlin Airlift in 1961, Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, 1965 Dominican Republic Crisis and the Vietnam War.

Through AFRC's associations with the regular Air Force, its Prime BEEF units have been extremely active during wartime, humanitarian and home-station taskings. Whether in an associate partnership with the active-duty Air Force or as a host civil engineer squadron, AFRC Prime BEEF units have proven their worth time and time again through home station accomplishments and the many feats achieved during deployments overseas. Lt. Col. David Konshok, 419th Civil Engineer Squadron commander at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, recently returned from a Prime BEEF deployment to Afghanistan. "What a tremendous career and life experience to have served six months on this expeditionary deployment to Bagram with some of the best civil engineers and American patriots in uniform," he said.

Serving as the 577th Expeditionary Prime BEEF Squadron commander, Colonel Konshok tells a story of extreme pride and accomplishment by the AFRC and regular Air Force Prime BEEF members under his command during the tour. "Our specialized teams of carpenters; electricians; heavy equipment operators; heating, ventilation and air conditioning technicians; and plumbers were instrumental in the maintenance and construction of facilities in support of US military and multi-national coalition troops," the colonel said. Colonel Konshok spoke of the expeditionary squadrons in the theater, with the 877th supporting northern Afghanistan, the 777th supporting the southern region and the 577th with responsibility for the eastern area.

He noted whereas the 877th is an Air National Guard lead element, the 777th is an active duty lead element, while the 577th is an AFRC lead element. "What an amazing opportunity to

command, not just for me, but for AFRC,” Colonel Konshok said. “All three EPBSs have a ‘rainbow’ mixture of active-duty and air reserve component personnel assigned. ... truly a great example of the total force,” he said. “At the 577th, where I commanded, I had elements of all three Air Force components. However, two-thirds were AFRC assets. Joining members from the 419th CES, I was privileged to also command officers and enlisted members from AFRC’s 507th CES out of Tinker AFB, Okla., and the 931st CES from McConnell AFB, Kansas. Prior to our tour, our command’s CE lead elements at Bagram were from Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind., and Hickam AFB, Hawaii (the 434th CES and 624th CES, respectively.)” The 577th EPBS provides direct support to the battle space owner, the U.S. Army’s 101st Airborne Division commanding general, who is in charge of all coalition forces in Regional Command-East, Afghanistan.

During Colonel Konshok’s deployment, the squadron’s efforts to improve the quality of life and force protection for forces at Bagram were not confined to the base. It completed more than 60 construction upgrade projects at forward operating bases and combat outposts throughout the region. In addition, the 577th’s engineering assistants surveyed and designed more than 300 new projects. “This was not our usual base maintenance deployment; we were actively working where they needed us most,” said Senior Master Sgt. Joseph E. Moulton, 419th CES and deployment chief of the support flight. “When we would arrive at an FOB, we saw our military personnel eating meals outside in the snow or showering with baby wipes. When we left our tour of duty there, our forces were eating out of a dining facility and took hot showers. Just knowing we made our folks’ time there a little easier makes the sacrifice of our being away from home and our families easier to handle.”

Villagers from the remote town of Newtok, Alaska, greeted a team of 23 personnel from the 419th Civil Engineer Squadron Aug. 8 with traditional food and dancing. The team is made up of heavy equipment, utilities, planning, electrical and heating ventilation and air conditioning, or HVAC, experts who will help rebuild the recently relocated town after melting permafrost left it uninhabitable. Staff Sgt. John Ohlwiler, heavy equipment noncommissioned officer in charge, called the endeavor a “great opportunity” for reservists to put their training and skills to use while helping to safely rebuild a community.

With the nearest interstate highway roughly 600 miles away, 419th CES personnel were transported to the village by helicopter. Their tools and supplies were brought in via a barge on local waterways. The massive project is part of the Innovative Readiness Training initiative that joins together Army, Air Force and Navy forces to support key community services across the United States. IRT pairs local resources with military manpower who benefit from the hands-on training. 2019

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

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