

# **442 CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON**

## **MISSION**

### **LINEAGE**

442 Installations Squadron constituted, 8 Sep 1950  
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1950  
Ordered to Active Service, 10 Mar 1951  
Inactivated, 12 Mar 1951  
Activated in the Reserve, 15 Jun 1952  
Redesignated 442 Civil Engineering Squadron, 1 Jul 1960  
Ordered to Active Service, 1 Oct 1961  
Relieved from Active Duty, 27 Aug 1962  
Discontinued and inactivated, 17 Jan 1963  
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1984  
Redesignated 442 Civil Engineer Squadron, 1 Mar 1994

### **STATIONS**

NAS Olathe, KS, 1 Oct 1950-12 Mar 1951  
NAS Olathe, KS, 15 Jun 1952  
Grandview (later, Richards-Gebaur) AFB, MO, 3 Apr 1955-17 Jan 1963  
Richards-Gebaur AFB, MO, 1 Oct 1984  
Whiteman AFB, MO, 1 Apr 1994

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

442 Air Base Group, 1 Oct 1950-12 Mar 1951  
442 Air Base Group, 15 Jun 1952-17 Jan 1963  
442 Tactical Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1984  
442 Combat Support (later, 442 Support, 442 Mission Support) Group, 1 Dec 1986

### **COMMANDERS**

Maj Joseph Herold  
Maj Mark Davison

### **HONORS**

**Service Streamers**

## **Campaign Streamers**

## **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

## **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jun 1987-31 Jul 1988

1 Nov 1989-31 Oct 1991

1 Oct 1997-30 Sep 1999

1 Mar 2003-28 Feb 2005

1 Mar 2005-28 Feb 2007

## **EMBLEM**



442 CES morale patch

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

Reservists from the 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron are scheduled to deploy to Southwest Asia in August. The Citizen Airmen will support U.S. Army and coalition forward operations. Lt. Col. Mark Davison, commander of the 442<sup>nd</sup> CES, and Senior Master Sgt. Nathan Hooton, 442nd CES operations superintendent, are preparing their unit for its first mobilization. "I've been here 12 years," Sergeant Hooton said, "and this is the first mobilization ever for this unit. Our primary mission here at the 442nd CES is to prepare for deployment."

The squadron does not have a stateside base-sustainment mission filling local work orders like its active-duty counterpart here, he added. Usually, the 442nd CES deploys and accomplishes their mission at overseas installations. The upcoming mission is new to the squadron because the 442nd will be operating in forward locations. "This is absolutely not a traditional CE deployment where you go to a base and maintain facilities," Colonel Davison said.

"This is the first time we've had such a critical tasking of going outside the wire." Sergeant Hooton said this mission would be new for the squadron. "On this mission we are starting to do some specialized things," Sergeant Hooton said. "Now we're going out to other people and fixing things outside of a base. The requirements are the same, but how we're doing the job and how we are implementing and utilizing those skills is a little more different than it's ever been." Colonel Davison agreed.

"I've told the guys, this is pretty much going to be the peak opportunity of your career to use your skills," he said. "There will be no other time in your career when you use more of your skills and tactics than on this deployment." Before deploying to Southwest Asia, the deploying reservists will first attend combat skills training at Fort Bliss, Texas. "We will be going for several weeks of training," Sergeant Hooton said. "This is deployment-specific training for the mission we are about to perform." Colonel Davison said the squadron is supporting the Army on this deployment. "CST is meant to get us in line with Army tactics," he said. "We need to work closely with them in this training." Three other CE units from across the United States will be integrating with the 442<sup>nd</sup> at CST.

"A key element of the combat skills training we will be going through is to meld together as one cohesive unit," Colonel Davison said, "In order to function properly in a wartime environment, it would be beneficial to get to know the habits and skills of the people before you get (there.)" Preparing for a deployment of this nature does not happen overnight, Sergeant Hooton said. The 442<sup>nd</sup> CES was notified of the deployment almost a year ago, and since then the unit has been preparing almost daily for not only the deployment, but also the operational readiness inspection in August. With the ORI next month, the 442<sup>nd</sup> CES has found itself preparing for two deployments: one actual and one simulated.

"To juggle deploying as many people as we are and also getting people ready for the ORI and the unit compliance inspection down the road," Colonel Davison said, "it's been very challenging and very demanding, especially on Sergeant Hooton and his (air-reserve-technician) team here." Sergeant Hooton agreed. "In the past several months," Sergeant Hooton said, "we have simultaneously trained real-world deploying reservists and ORI-simulated deploying reservists. Some of the requirements are the same, but everything we are simulating for the ORI, we are doing for the people going on actual deployments." Recently, members of the 442<sup>nd</sup> CES were issued most of their equipment, most of which the unit inventoried and stored for transport. "There are a lot of gear requirements," Colonel Davison said.

"You'd never imagine the amount of equipment you need issued to you for this type of environment." Colonel Davison said the varied temperature of the deployment site necessitates specialized equipment. "You have to take cold-weather boots. You have to take hot-weather boots. It takes up a lot of room," he said. "You have personal protective gear; it's just a lot of equipment, especially when you're trying to handle weapons." All of this equipment serves a purpose due to the unique forward operating locations of the mission. Sergeant Hooton says he is excited about the deployment. "An exciting part about this deployment is we are taking some of our brightest and sharpest people. I'm excited to see what we do, because I know we're capable of some pretty awesome stuff," Sergeant Hooton said. The reservists will be deployed for approximately six months.

442nd Civil Engineer Squadron members are now on the downhill side of an expeditionary combat support deployment to Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq, but have shown no sign in slacking off of a full work schedule. In typical 442nd CES fashion, the engineers have had a busy deployment providing base operating support at an airfield their wing mates help open during Operation Iraqi Freedom three years ago.

The Engineering Flight has programmed more than \$4.25 million in infrastructure projects to improve the base and airfield, as well as ongoing maintenance projects such as road repair. The projects include runway seal and spall repair which involved closing an active runway and moving a Mobile Aircraft Arresting System and a project to improve the roads and drainage around the Army living area. On the operations side of the engineering business, each of the shops are heavily involved in work projects.

The Electrical shop is converting existing systems from US style 110 volt, 60 Hertz power to European style 220 volt, 50 Hertz enabling the base to use native power, simplifying and standardizing power generation requirements. The Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning troops are working hard getting things ready to keep folks warm while Structures, Power Production, and Utilities shops are busy filling work orders. Entomology is taking care of snakes and stray dogs.

Rounding out the group, the firefighters, also known as the "Fire Dawgs," have had a full plate too with controlled burns, fire prevention week activities and responding to calls. The Engineers kept up the pace even when not on duty and typical of their "above and beyond" attitude was Staff Sgt. Mark Kuhaneck. "(We) agreed to take on the project to improve the quality of life of the people – Army and Air Force – who used the (laundry) facility. We asked for volunteers and Sergeant Kuhaneck offered his assistance," said Senior Master Sgt. Eric Osen, 506th CES utilities superintendent.

"I had some experience in this type of repair work, so I volunteered," Sergeant Kuhaneck said. He and his crew spent numerous hours over three days inspecting and cleaning each unit. They repaired the ones that could be "saved" and replaced those that couldn't. The group inspected 40 washers and 70 dryers, replacing 10 washers and repaired 29 dryers. During the inspection and serving, they also cleaned the dryer vents, eliminating a potential fire hazard and improving their efficiency. "The work needed to be done," said Sergeant Kuhaneck. "So we stepped up and did it

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Out of sight, out of mind. That's how some of the firefighters of the 442nd Civil Engineer Squadron describe their 24-man team at Whiteman Air Force Base. But 15 of their members were anything but out of sight or out of mind during their 120-day tour of duty from September 2006 to January at Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Citizen Airmen left a lasting impression at Kirkuk and, in turn, their efforts and experiences left a lasting impression on them, as they took care of their primary duties and helped other civil engineer units, medical personnel, wounded troops and civilians. The benefactors go on and on.

"The commanders there loved us," said Staff Sergeant Mike Booker, fire protection journeyman. Bringing a wealth of civilian and military experience to their Operation Iraqi Freedom mission, the Citizen Airmen were more than willing to help where needed. "Everything in a contingency environment is the mission," said Senior Master Sgt. Ralph Loar, fire protection

assistant chief. "On a rest cycle, you may be stringing concertina wire, helping the rest of the civil engineer squadron, helping a mechanic repair a truck. It's different from peacetime. But in Iraq, we're trying to turn stuff over to the Iraqis and the Iraqi Air Force. We don't want to be there for the next 15 years."

Fortunately, the Airmen didn't have to tackle much actual firefighting, but Sergeant Loar said fast-moving grass fires, fueled by high winds, posed a constant and significant threat to the base. "We had one fire in a weapons storage area that was caused by someone shooting at us during daylight hours. While most everything is protected, there are still expeditionary assets. That fire, for example, could have burned through a communications cable that controls a commander's radar. You have to limit the risks," he said.

Of all the jobs the Airmen helped with, the one that affected them the most was helping medical troops with their work. "We did a lot of medical dust-offs where we'd help unload wounded patients and get them into the hospital," said Master Sgt. John Esser, fire protection crew chief. "Some of the helicopters had a hard time landing. I saw one almost veer off. There were 40-, 50-, 60- mile an hour winds hitting it.

"Many of our EMTs (emergency medical technicians) and paramedics would assist in mass casualty events. We'd have 20 or 30 patients at a time coming in. We even had guys helping in surgery suites, maybe holding down a leg or an arm. It was pretty eye opening." "It was basically controlled chaos," said Staff Sgt. Angela Doughty, a fire protection craftsman. "They treated more than our guys. There were Iraqi civilians, EPWs (enemy prisoners of war), Iraqi soldiers, kids, adult, whoever got wounded. The medical group was awesome."

"They provided for our fire department, helping to spin up our EMTs, so we could help them," Sergeant Esser said. "One EOD (explosive ordnance device) guy got shot in his butt and it came out his stomach," Sergeant Esser said. "That was his second purple heart in theater. Seeing those things gives you more emphasis on training so we can be more efficient and hopefully do more for the wounded the next time we see them.

"That was quite a deal as far as our personnel working with the medical folks," said Sergeant Esser, a state trooper with the Nebraska State Patrol. "It was chaotic as far as people running around, civilians running around, Army troops, interpreters, medical folks and my fire department guys. One guy they brought in had been wounded in an explosion, but his bodyguard took the brunt of it. I couldn't tell you to this day if he lived."

The Airmen said they saw major and minor injuries being treated. Some people lived, but some, unfortunately, did not. "You're happy you get them stable so they can fly out," Sergeant Doughty said. "But I remember watching them carry one casket out. I felt a tear running down my cheek and I wiped it away. I felt so bad that I dropped my salute to wipe the tear away."

Even though the Airmen were working and living on a military installation, they said they had to practice the virtue of prudence 24-7. "You have to go off your gut feelings," Sergeant Booker said. "If it doesn't feel right, it's probably not right." "You have to get rid of your prejudice," said Staff Sgt. Josh England, a fire protection journeyman. "Not everyone's with the insurgency and wants to blow you up. But you never know who's going to do what. "You'd see kids coming toward you taking their backpacks off (to show they weren't laden with explosives) hoping we'd throw them candy or a bottle of water," he said. "Maybe some cans of Spam. It's sad to see that. Most of that stuff we'd hand to the chaplain and they'd distribute it.

"There's a lot of shepherding out there and we'd see them get close to the fence," Sergeant

England said. "Then we'd be taking fire and we'd find out later that it was from the same guy who was shepherding." The Airmen's efforts pleased but didn't surprise Chief Master Sgt. Bob McChan, chief of resource fire protection. "We have people who are firefighters in Columbia, Kansas City, Lees Summit," he said. "There are people who are students, factory workers, workers at Wal-Mart and K-Mart, the whole gambit. It doesn't make a difference, though, because when we're here, we all do the same training.

"We have people who take this profession seriously, who know what needs to be done and are ready to do their job," Chief McChan said. "We have to do the same training the active duty does and they have 365 days a year to do theirs. If you add up the hours, with all the ancillary training, there aren't enough hours in the day. But we have to get it done." The Citizen Airmen's time at Kirkuk gave them much to think about regarding themselves, each other and their families.

"It helped our department," Sergeant Booker said. "We got to do our job. You knew he's going to help me and I'm going to them him." "You find out what you're capable of and how well we meshed as a team," Sergeant England said. "I'd only been gone for four months, but when I got home and looked at my family and friends, I realized how much I missed out on," Sergeant Doughty said. "I'm trying to be more positive and appreciative of what I have here."

442nd Civil Engineer Squadron Airmen deployed to Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq, from mid-January to June to help maintain that base's infrastructure and carry out several building projects there. Their collective efforts garnered the Engineers a Meritorious Unit Award. The deployment included the majority of the squadron's command group and many of the tradecraft sections such as structures, heating ventilation and air conditioning, and plumbing. Upon arrival, the Whiteman reservists joined Airmen from other bases around the Air Force. HVAC troops kept busy installing and repairing air conditioning units for Kirkuk while others took on projects designed to expand Iraq's growing Air Force.

"We did a lot of work with the Coalition Air Force Training team," said Maj. Ross McAfee, operations officer. "Their job is to help the Iraqis stand up their own Air Force, both training-wise and operational." A project allied to this mission included the construction of a 34,000 square foot aircraft parking ramp for the Iraqi Air Force to use for parking their aircraft. The ramp accommodated 17 aircraft, enabling the training of 100 additional Iraqi pilots annually.

Master Sgt. Andy Weeks, one of the "dirt boys," had a scare as he cleared a five-acre site strewn with debris remaining from previous combat actions. His D-8 bulldozer unearthed some unexploded ordnance. "As I went along I noticed, out of the corner of my eye, a fin of some type kick up in the air," Sergeant Weeks said. "As I looked down at it, it rested on top of my track. It was the fin of a 120 millimeter mortar." After some tense moment, Kirkuk's explosive ordnance disposal team arrived to remove the UXO.

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USAF Unit Histories  
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#### Sources

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