



AFRC CEs Support PATRIOT WARRIOR

For the first time, Prime BEEF and EOD CEs join firefighters in joint exercise.

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AFRC/A7XE

Exercise PATRIOT WARRIOR, an accredited joint service exercise operation, is a premier Air Force Reserve Command deployment for training. It is a great opportunity for Air Force Reserve Command civil engineers to get hands-on experience, skills and training not available at home station. The exercise also stresses joint operations and interoperability with other Department of Defense components and international associates.

2014's PATRIOT WARRIOR took place from the end of April through mid-May with the U.S. Army regional training site at Ft. McCoy, Wis., as the primary location. In past years only Reserve firefighters participated in the exercise, but this year teams from CE Operations (3EO through 3E6 AFSCs) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal joined them to take care of bare base beddown, sustainment and redeployment activities.

"This exercise was Operation GLOBAL MEDIC, focused on moving injured warfighters out of a war zone to a higher echelon of care," said Chief Master Sgt. Timothy Pittman, Aeromedical Evacuation, Operations and Training superintendent at AFRC headquarters and the exercise's director. "It has been refocused to Exercise PATRIOT WARRIOR, an AFRC

air component integration exercise to move equipment and supplies for all involved. We are supporting a 5,000 personnel Army force by establishing a full air base on a dirt air assault strip."

This is the first time AFRC CE Operations and EOD personnel have been able to participate in and support an exercise of this caliber. In the past, the U.S. Army provided base support, but wartime missions have exceeded soldier capability to support Air Force flying operations from a forward operating base.

AFRC's CEs not only got a valuable training opportunity, but they will also be able to receive major command Silver Flag credit for their efforts. Maj. David Jane, the chief of contingency training from the Air Force Civil Engineer Center was embedded with one of our deploying units, and through his observations, experiences and recommendations, validated that what AFRC's CEs do during PATRIOT WARRIOR meets or exceeds the required training for Silver Flag. This is a huge accomplishment for our CE units and their SORTS reporting.

AFRC Prime BEEF personnel, sourced by UTC, were some of the first on the ground, finding an empty dirt air assault field — a true bare base. Within 72 hours the Fire Emer-

gency Services and Operations CEs turned the empty field into an operational forward operating base to support 500 Air Force personnel who provided support to the Army as a force multiplier once the exercise kicked off on May 7.

"The first few days were rough with cold, rainy weather, no heat, limited food and clean water," said Capt. David Shaw, who deployed from the 433 Civil Engineer Squadron as the Base Civil Engineer. "Our people got right to work, not only setting up the base camp for themselves to live comfortably and establishing fire protection capability, but also getting it ready for the main body of participants. They arrived to heated tents with power, hot food and warm showers. Morale was high throughout, and we could not be more proud of the work generated by these Airmen."

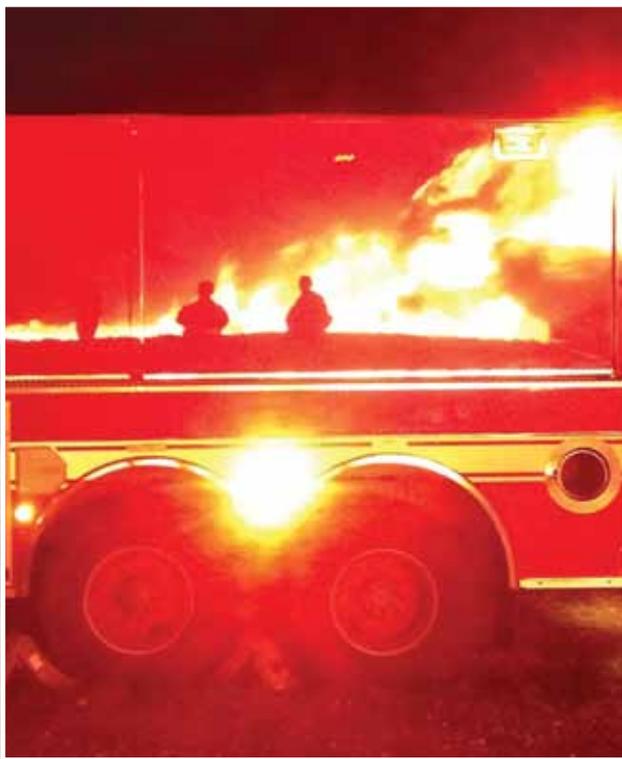
Once the beddown was complete, CEs moved into the sustainment phase, the upkeep and maintenance of the FOB, which provided them time to complete critical status of resources and training system, or SORTS, reportable training. The Prime BEEF Airmen were able to do upgrades as well as computer-based training modules, live fire training and weapons qualification. They installed boilers for hot water and set up laundry facilities. CEs set up a field kitchen allowing Services personnel to serve hot meals

daily. Firefighters were able to do live firefighting training using JP-8 instead of propane, a definite plus since this type of training is not available at any of the Reserve home station locations.

AFRC is supporting the Army in real-world wartime missions and this exercise is as close to real world operations as it gets while providing a training platform not available at home station. The bare base beddown was a great success for the Reserve CEs: There was literally nothing there when they arrived and nothing there when they left. The Prime BEEF engineers built and sustained a contingency operating base for 500 personnel and then took it down when the exercise was over.

Next year's Exercise PATRIOT WARRIOR is planned to get even bigger and better for Air Force CEs. Reserve Emergency Management personnel should join Fire Emergency Services, CEO and EOD, making a total Prime BEEF package of AFRC participants.

Mr. Browning is the Air Force Reserve Command Prime BEEF Fire Emergency Services Fire Protection Specialist, Robins AFB, Ga. He was one of the 2014 Exercise Patriot Warrior deputy directors.



Air Force Reserve civil engineers in engineering and operations, fire emergency services and explosive ordnance disposal participated in Exercise PATRIOT WARRIOR at Ft. McCoy, Wis., in late April and early May.

Opposite and this page: During beddown, CEs battle the wind to erect a tent and a CE helps lay down a path to move equipment at Young Air Assault Strip.

Insets, this page: left, firefighting operations continued during the night and right, an EOD Airman prepares an explosive charge to detonate an IED. (U.S. Air Force photos)

