

AFCENT Stands Up 1st ECEG

TSgt Beth Del Vecchio
USAFCENT/PA

On March 26, U.S. Air Forces Central redesignated the 1st Expeditionary RED HORSE Group to the 1st Expeditionary Civil Engineer Group (ECEG). The new group comprises the 777th and 577th Expeditionary Prime BEEF Squadrons (EPBSs) and the 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron (ERHS).

With the completion of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, AFCENT had an opportunity to reorganize Air Force civil engineer units in the area of operations, officials said.

"There is a need for a theater engineer command that is capable of supporting emergency repair, construction, and theater security cooperation," said Col John Allen, the new 1 ECEG commander, who took over the command from Col Darren Daniels. "This new engineer command will allow us to continue to provide vital expeditionary engineer capability for the AFCENT commander, as well as provide support of U.S. Forces-Afghanistan from over the horizon, in an effective and efficient manner," he said.

The 1 ECEG provides troop construction and repair and engineering technical services within the CENTCOM theater of operations in order to establish and sustain combat platforms for AFCENT and U.S. Forces-Afghanistan.

"For those Airmen who have previously served in an Expeditionary Prime BEEF or RED HORSE Squadron, this new organization won't feel any different," Col Allen said. "The mission sets for these squadrons is not new. We will continue to provide the installation engineering core competencies for which we have become so well regarded."

The 777 EPBS will provide professional engineering services like master planning, project programming, design, contract development and oversight, and surveying. The 577 EPBS will conduct light troop labor construction and repair, including smaller-scale expeditionary projects. The 557 ERHS will conduct heavy vertical and horizontal construction.

The colonel said that although the Airmen of the command will be charged with significant responsibility and will face unique challenges, he knows they will continue to step up and deliver mission success.

"Our craftsmen will build and repair, our engineer assistants will survey and inspect, our logisticians and controllers will feed the fight, and our officers and senior non-commissioned officers will lead," he said. "We will rely on their ingenuity, tenacity, and perseverance to deliver

mission success — all traits for which Airmen are so well known."

The 1 ECEG will be headquartered in Southwest Asia, while maintaining forward operating "hubs" in Afghanistan. These hubs will serve as the embarkation points for 1 ECEG Airmen moving deeper into the battle space to perform missions.

"The legacy built by the tens of thousands of Airmen-engineers who have deployed to Southwest Asia over the last two decades is superb and firmly intact," the colonel said. "As Airmen come into theater, they should remember they're here to continue to sustain and grow the legacy of those that came before them, to continue to make things better. I have no doubt that is exactly what they will do."



On March 26, 2012, the 1 ERHG was redesignated the 1st Expeditionary Civil Engineer Group in a ceremony that included a change of command from Col Darren Daniels to Col John Allen. Maj Gen James Jones, U.S. Air Forces Central deputy commander, presided over the event. (photo by SSgt Nicole Manzanares)