

50 Years of Can Do, Will Do!



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This year we are beginning a celebration of 50 Years of Can Do, Will Do, recognizing the Golden Anniversary of Prime BEEF and RED HORSE. You will begin seeing this logo on a variety of products related to this year-long celebration.

Dr. Ron Hartzler, AFCEC




Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force (BEEF) History, 1964-2014




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We kick off 50 Years of Can Do, Will Do by celebrating Prime BEEF's 50th Anniversary in October. Prime BEEF has a long and proud heritage and we will cover some of the high points in this briefing.




Origins



- Pre-1964, no Air Force organic CE contingency capability
- Prime BEEF Program established October 1964
 - Base-level CE contingency mission/mobile teams
 - Recovery
 - Contingency
 - Flyaway
 - Missile



Lt Col Tom Meredith



Brig Gen Oran Price

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- When the Air Force was established in 1947, the Army was given responsibility for providing contingency engineering to the service. By the early 1960s, Army engineering support was not meeting Air Force requirements. CE began testing mobile team concept in U.S. Air Forces in Europe.
- In 1964, the Air Force decided to give base-level military engineers a contingency role. They were organized into teams and trained and equipped for deployments. These teams were called Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force, or **Prime BEEF**.
- Air Force leaders divided the teams into four types:
- BEEF-R, Recovery Team – Ensure a base could operate following natural disasters or attacks.
- BEEF-C, Contingency Team – Handle unanticipated requirements and special wartime air operations to support Air Force missions worldwide. Not tied to a flying unit.
- BEEF-F, Flyaway Team – Attached to flying units and responsible for supporting those units. Both Contingency and Flyaway Teams prepared for Rapid Deployments.
- BEEF-M, Missile Team – Provide support to missile maintenance organizations, particularly in projects exceeding daily missile upkeep. Missiles such as ICBMs, were just being fielded in early 1960s.

*Photo: Then Lt Col William “Tom” Meredith, known as “The Father of Prime BEEF.” Meredith would later reach the rank of brigadier general.
Brig Gen Oran Price, the man who came up with the name Prime BEEF.*



Early Deployments



- **First deployments**
- **Santo Domingo**
- **Vietnam**
 - Overcrowded bases
 - Built revetments (Aug 1965)
 - 50 Prime BEEF teams 1965-69
- **Combat Fox - Korea**
- **ANG/Reserve teams**
- **Women in Prime BEEF**



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- The new Prime BEEF teams were soon called into action to support a deployment of American forces to the Dominican Republic in May 1965. The first Prime BEEF team from Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C., bedded down Air Force personnel and aircraft at Santo Domingo.
- Also in 1965, Air Force planes were deploying to over-crowded bases in Vietnam and were vulnerable to enemy attack or accidental explosions. After a deadly incident at Bien Hoa [BEN WAH] AB, Prime BEEF teams deployed to build protective revetments at three bases. The teams installed 12,000 linear feet of revetment to protect the aircraft.
- Their success led to further Prime BEEF deployments. 25 teams deployed to Southeast Asia over the next year providing badly needed engineering support for the U.S. build-up.
- Prime BEEF soon began deploying elsewhere. In 1968, Prime BEEF teams deployed as part of Operation Combat Fox to South Korea after the *USS Pueblo* was seized by the North Koreans.
- Between 1965-1969, nearly 100 PB teams deployed around the world, including Antarctica, and the program was well established within the Air Force.
- Air National Guard and Reserve Prime BEEF teams were established in 1968.
- In 1975, the Air Force allowed women to be part of Prime BEEF teams.

Photos: (Top) Members of the first Prime BEEF Team in Vietnam build aircraft revetments. (Bottom) Prime BEEF engineers measure airfield matting in preparation for repairing a runway.



Natural Disaster Recovery



■ Welcome sight

■ Hurricanes:

■ Betsy (1965), Agnes (1972), Andrew (1992), Katrina (2005)

■ Alaska Flooding (1967)

■ Rapid City Flash Flood (1972)

■ Haiti Earthquake (2010)



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- Prime BEEF teams also have an outstanding record of support to bases and communities hit by natural disasters. Engineers bring a capability that can help rebuild broken lives and damaged homes.
- Just a few months after Prime BEEF was established, Hurricane Betsy hit Homestead AFB, Fla. Within 36 hours, 91 Prime BEEF engineers were on site helping restore utilities and rebuilding damaged buildings.
- This was repeated in 1992, when Hurricane Andrew hit Homestead and in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina hit Keesler AFB, Miss.
- Prime BEEF deployed to Haiti in 2010 following the destructive earthquake to bed down deploying forces and assist in recovery.
- Prime BEEF engineers also have participated in humanitarian efforts around the world.
- In 1970, PB team assisted the local populations on remote Pacific islands by repairing roads and building schools.
- In 1991, 450 USAFE engineers deployed to Turkey and northern Iraq to provide base support to thousands of Air Force, Army and Marine personnel assisting Kurdish refugees during Operation PROVIDE COMFORT.
- In 2008, a Prime BEEF team from Minot AFB, N.D., teamed with Navy Seabees to provide humanitarian and civic assistance to Caribbean islands.

Photos: (Top) Homestead AFB following Hurricane Andrew. (Bottom) Ellsworth Prime BEEF engineers remove debris following massive flooding in Rapid City, S.D.



Humanitarian Support



■ Humanitarian Support

- Pacific Trust Territories (1970)
- Operation Provide Comfort (1991)
- New Horizons (2001)
- Continuing Promise (2008)
- Afghan Provincial Reconstruction Teams



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- Since late 1990s, they have participated in New Horizons deployments to Latin America to provide clinics, schools and quality of life improvements.
- In 2008, Prime BEEF team from Minot AFB, N.D., teamed with Navy Seabees to provide humanitarian and civic assistance to Caribbean islands.
- Engineers were also part of Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Afghanistan, where they helped build personal ties and rebuild the country's infrastructure.

Photos: (Top) Airmen help unload supplies during Operation Provide Comfort. (Lower) Prime BEEF engineers participate in a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan.



Operations Desert Shield/ Desert Storm



- **Deployments to SWA**
 - Initially two sites
 - Grew to 30
- **3,000 Prime BEEF**
 - Bedded down 55,000 people and 1,200 aircraft
 - Erected 5,000 tents
 - Constructed 300,000 sq ft of buildings
- **Al Kharj AB**



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- Prime BEEF engineers demonstrated their flexibility during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. Teams who had been training to fight the Soviet Union in Europe suddenly found themselves in the desert with Harvest Falcon basing equipment. Like all engineers, they figured things out and got to work.
- Between August and December 1990, the 3,000 Prime BEEF personnel bedded down 55,000 personnel at 30 bases stretching from RAF Fairford in the United Kingdom to Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.
- The engineers erected 5,000 tents and constructed 300,000 square feet of expeditionary buildings.
- One of the great achievements was at Al Kharj (now known as Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia), where a combined Prime BEEF/RED HORSE team converted a stretch of sandy desert to an operational air base with 6,000 people in just a few weeks. Al Kharj became the model bare base beddown for CE.

Photos: (Top) Firefighters stand watch during refueling of an F-16 at a DESERT SHIELD base. (Bottom) Prime BEEF engineers erecting Temper Tents during Desert Shield deployment.



The Busy '90s



- **Provide Comfort**
 - Northern Watch
- **Joint Endeavor**
 - Bosnia
 - Hungary
- **Allied Force**
 - Kosovo



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- The 90s were supposed to be a quiet time with the end of the Cold War, but the decade was a busy one for Prime BEEF.
- Just a few days after the end of DESERT STORM, Prime BEEF personnel in USAFE returned to Turkey to support Kurdish refugees during Operation PROVIDE COMFORT, which became Operation NORTHERN WATCH that lasted until 2003.
- In the mid-90s, the Balkans heated up with the break up of Yugoslavia. During Joint Endeavor, Prime BEEF deployed to bases to help beddown Air Force and Army personnel in Bosnia and Hungary.
- If you have seen the movie, Blackhawk Down, you may not have known that Prime BEEF teams
- In 1999, Prime BEEF teams deployed to Aviano and Albania to beddown forces to conduct the air war over Serbia during Operation ALLIED FORCE.

Photo: Prime BEEF engineers from Spangdahlem assemble a Harvest Eagle shower and wastewater distribution pump for a tent city at Aviano AB, Italy, during Operation ALLIED FORCE.



U.S. AIR FORCE

Operations Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom



- **Enduring Freedom**
 - Deployment to “Stans”
- **Iraqi Freedom**
 - Record of achievement
 - EOD role
- **Expeditionary Prime BEEF Group/Squadrons**






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- Prime BEEF engineers were among the first to deploy to the “Stans” and Arabian Peninsula for Operation ENDURING FREEDOM following 9/11. They established bases at austere locations, often playing “catch-up” by providing housing and utilities to forces already deployed.
- By 2010, Prime BEEF personnel were assigned in more than 90 localities in Afghanistan.
- Engineers played an important role in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. During the first phase of the Operation, 4,500 engineers established 12 new bases and expanded 10 existing bases on the Arabian Peninsula. They put up 3,200 bare base tents, installed 190 miles of expedient water piping, and built 200 million gallon POL storage and distribution systems.
- When the U.S. pulled out of Iraq in December 2011, Engineers had opened 206 operating locations and then closed them all ahead of schedule.
- EOD personnel had conducted over 36,000 missions with 13,400 of these being IED defeat operations in Iraq. They completed 19,847 missions in the Afghanistan theater of operations.
- Prime BEEF engineers also supported other services. In Afghanistan, the Air Force established the first-ever Prime BEEF group and squadrons — the 557th Prime BEEF Group and 557th, 777th and 877th Prime BEEF Squadrons — the first numbered units that used the Prime BEEF name, representing the culmination of the Prime BEEF concept established back in 1964.

Photos: (Top) An ANG Prime BEEF team poses at an Operation ENDURING FREEDOM base (Bottom) Engineers lay AM-2 matting in a dust storm in preparation for OIF.



Cost of Freedom



23 CEs Killed in Action Since 9/11 First American Casualty in OEF Prime BEEF

Master Sgt. Evander Andrews
Maj. Rodolfo Rodriguez
Tech. Sgt. Phillip A. Myers
Staff Sgt. Bryan D. Berky
Tech. Sgt. Anthony C. Campbell, Jr.
Tech. Sgt. Adam Kenneth Ginett
Senior Airman Michael J. Buras
Senior Airman Daniel Johnson
Tech. Sgt. Kristoffer Solesbee
Staff Sgt. Joseph Hamski
Tech. Sgt. Daniel L. Douville
Senior Airman Bryan R. Bell

Tech. Sgt. Matthew S. Schwartz
Airman First Class Matthew R. Seidler
Staff Sgt. Ray Rangel
Tech. Sgt. Walter Moss, Jr.
Master Sgt. Brad A. Clemmons
Capt. Kermit Evans
Tech. Sgt. Timothy R. Weiner
Senior Airman Elizabeth A. Loncki
Senior Airman Daniel B. Miller Jr
William N. Newman
Tech. Sgt. Anthony Capra

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Prime BEEF members have also paid the highest price for their duty. Since 9/11, 23 civil engineers, nearly all serving on Prime BEEF deployments, have been killed in action. This includes Master Sgt. Evander “Andy” Andrews, the first American casualty of Operation Enduring Freedom, the victim of a construction accident while building Al Udeid AB, Qatar, in October 2001. While we remember the impressive history of Prime BEEF, let’s also remember and honor the memory of these and other individuals who have lost their lives in the line of duty.



Nearly 50 years after Prime BEEF first began, it has become an enduring symbol of expeditionary engineering excellence. Engineers continue to build on this proud heritage for the future.