

433 CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON

MISSION

Provide direct combat support of Air Force Operational Forces by deploying postured Prime BEEF teams worldwide to accomplish mission tasking which include force bed down, construction management, operations and maintenance, base recovery after attack, readiness/disaster preparedness, and fire protection. Supports essential EOD war fighting requirements at in route and stateside bases, ranges, and aerial ports.

LINEAGE

433 Installations Squadron constituted, 6 Sep 1950
Activated in the Reserve, 9 Sep 1950
Ordered to Active Service, 15 Oct 1950
Constituted 433 Installations Squadron, 6 Sep 1950
Relieved from Active Duty, 3 Jul 1952
Inactivated, 14 Jul 1952
Activated in the Reserve, 18 May 1955
Redesignated 433 Civil Engineering Squadron, 1 Jul 1960
Discontinued, and inactivated, 17 Jan 1963
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Sep 1984
Redesignated 433 Civil Engineer Squadron, 1 Mar 1994

STATIONS

Cleveland Muni Aprt, OH, 9 Sep 1950
Greenville (later, Donaldson) AFB. SC, 16 Oct 1950-20 Jul 1951
Rhein-Main AB, West Germany, 5 Aug 1951-14 Jul 1952
Brooks AFB, TX, 18 May 1955
Kelly AFB, TX, 1 Nov 1960-17 Jan 1963
Kelly AFB (Later, Kelly Fid Annex, Lackland AFB), TX. 1 Sep 1984

ASSIGNMENTS

433 Air Base Group, 9 Sep 1950-14 Jul 1952
433 Air Base Group, 18 May 1955-17 Jan 1963

433 Tactical Airlift (later, 433 Military Airlift) Wing, 1 Sep 1984
433 Air Base (later, 433 Combat Support; 433 Support) Group, 1 Dec 1985

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Oct 1981-30 Sep 1983

1 Oct 1986-30 Sep 1988

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Getting an opportunity to work somewhere pleasant and build something real for friendly people is a privilege. For civil engineers, it's a rare privilege. Civil Engineers usually can be found at bases working in the heat, repairing runways, old sewer systems, and roofs among other maintenance and repair actions. Otherwise, they can be found at either Silver Flag receiving expeditionary engineer training or at an Operational Readiness Inspection demonstrating their Base Emergency Engineer Force skills highlighting their combat capability. In the case of the 433rd and 445th Civil Engineer Squadrons recently, annual tour is being spent on the southernmost tip of the Eastern Caribbean island nation of Saint Lucia.

The job is to build a facility for the Saint Lucia Special Services Unit, a branch of their police that resembles a cross between a S.W.A.T. team and the U.S. Marine Corps. But the nice location doesn't take away from the seriousness of the job. "It's a bonus that they are able to do the job in a nice location but the job has to come first," said Lt. Col. Richard Matthews, commander of the 433rd CES. "To their credit, each rotation has put the project a little farther ahead of schedule." Lt. Col. Matthews said that the first group of 12 planned annual tour rotations immediately got the project jump-started and each rotation added to the lead time on the completion schedule.

The work days are about nine hours long and the tropical sun can be "SPF-75" intense. The reservists are only promised one day off during their rotation and their time off is spent on basic important issues. "My first thing (when I got off work) is a shower and eat," said Staff Sergeant Troy Brock, a heavy equipment operator with the 433rd CES. Even though the project is ahead of schedule, the consistent pace is necessary due to the sheer size of the project. "We have been tasked to construct a 5,300 square foot building which will include a dormitory, operation center, offices, laundry, restrooms, kitchen and a conference room for the marine police in Saint Lucia,"

Senior Master Sgt. Sergio Medellin, the project manager from the 433rd CES, describes in his weekly reports.

According to Master Sgt. Steve Roper, the U.S. Southern Command project manager, usually a project of this scope would be contracted out or an active-duty unit would lead and reservists would play in an augmentation role. On this project, all the work is being done by Reservists on annual tour including the airlift of equipment and supplies. Flyers are performing currency training while flying the supplies too expensive or unavailable locally. Sergeant Roper explained the project came up on the schedule near the end of the fiscal year and there were limited funds available. The call for bids from civilian contractors was made and the bids came in way over budget. Sergeant Roper said the next step for SOUTHCOM was to put out the project to reserve units to see if they could help.

“When we put out the help wanted, we got all we could handle,” Sergeant Roper said. In fact, the reply gave a \$600,000 savings in direct costs to SOUTHCOM. There is labor augmentation on the project – that too is an Air Force Reserve function. “Due to the large scale of this project and the limited time we will be on site, the 445th CES from Wright-Patterson, AFB was asked to support us in this mission,” wrote Senior Master Sgt. Sergio Medellin. So far, the group from Ohio makes up 35-50 percent of the project manning on each rotation. “Our last IGX (Inspector General Exercise) was with them (the 445th CES),” said Master Sgt. Jade Villareal, a heavy equipment supervisor who recently returned from Saint Lucia. “There were a lot of familiar faces and we meshed very well.”

The familiar faces of the Wright-Patterson reservists aren’t the only friendly faces the Alamo Wing CES troops are meeting. “It is truly a nice little clean island and these people are very supportive,” said Sergeant Roper. “They are proud of what they have.” The local population and tourists are very friendly to the Airmen working on a project that will help them keep their island clean and the crime low. Sergeant Brock, who worked on the first rotation, credits the reception by the locals to the very basics of human relations. “First impressions are important and I think we made a good impression,” said Sergeant Brock. The good impression wasn’t only on the local citizens but also on their officials.

“The police commissioner and his assistant, the airport manager and a facilities engineer all toured the project and there is a lot of positive feedback (about construction methods),” said Lt. Col. Matthews. Lt. Col. Matthews said the local government representatives are now working to arrange to have their personnel observe the Prime BEEF construction. More formal hands-on training sessions for the Saint Lucians on construction techniques may happen before the July completion date. For all involved parties this annual tour is a positive experience by broadening skills across the varied career fields under the CES squadron. For example, firefighters, working on site as Emergency Medical Technicians, have been learning construction skills while assisting on the project, heavy equipment operators are learning about construction techniques and reservists are learning skills useful to their civilian employers. “I learned a lot about concrete, and from the plumbers,” said Sergeant Brock who also has experience to take back to his civilian job as an equipment mechanic in San Antonio. His experience helped him see the equipment out in the field and helped him understand what the operators need. “I can see the equipment working on the job, see how they use it,” said Sergeant Brock.

“Like on a backhoe with its electronic controls. In the shop I’d think ‘what do they need that for’. Now I see how helpful it is.” The civilian experience reservists bring to the Air Force mission

also helps on the project and with the first impressions left on the local population. "You have to be able to deal with people in that environment," said Sergeant Villareal, about his civilian job as a corrections officer at the Dominguez State Jail. Sergeant Villareal acknowledged that having people skills really helps in getting to know the local population and the customers for the project 2006

Construction Begins on Lackland C-5 Galaxy Schoolhouse Contractors broke ground June 27 on new facilities that will allow the C-5 Formal Training Unit to move from Altus Air Force Base, Okla., to its future home at the 433rd Airlift Wing, Lackland AFB, Texas. The on-going commotion near the flight line at Lackland signals the first stages of a new era. Two new buildings are planned — a three-story, 69,000-square-foot ground training school and a 25,000-square-foot flight training school. Both facilities received a combined, single-contract bid costing about \$17 million. The contractor should complete the projects by September 2006. "Groundbreaking was postponed for about three months while we waited for the BRAC (base realignment and closure) decisions," said Lt. Col. Richard Matthews, 433rd Civil Engineer Squadron commander.

"We're going to try to make up for lost time and finish construction in 15 months rather than 18." The new schools will train pilots, flight engineers and loadmasters in C-5 Galaxy cargo aircraft operations. Academics and flight simulator training are just some of the items that will be taught at the Ground Training School. The Flight Training School will teach all initial and instructor qualifications as well as aerial refueling training. Instructors at the GTS will also teach the basic flight engineer course for C-130 and KC-10 flight engineer candidates. The 433rd AW will not receive any additional aircraft and will remain at its current inventory of 16 C-5s, according to Lt. Col. Frederick McMahan of the 433rd Operations Group.

The Army Corps of Engineers is administering the project, and the 37th Training Wing and 433rd AW are providing base and user oversight. According to Colonel McMahan, students will begin attending ground and flying training classes in October 2006. The transition of students from Altus to Lackland will be gradual, culminating in July 2007. At that time the 433rd AW will assume total training responsibility for about 650 students per year with about 150 on campus in various stages of training on any given training day. The Alamo Wing will add approximately 155 new full-time positions to staff the new mission as well as about 100 contractors and 130 traditional Reservists. "The advent of the C-5 schoolhouse will begin a whole new era for the 433rd," Col. John Fobian, wing commander, said. "It will bring Airmen from every active-duty, Air National Guard and Reserve C-5 unit to the Alamo Wing for all facets of aircrew training." 2005

USAF Unit Histories
Created: 19 Nov 2010
Updated: 13 Aug 2021

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
Unit history. *Kelly AFB, TX, Heritage of Service, Seventy-Five Years of Military Aviation at Kelly Air Force Base, 1916-1991*. Office of History, San Antonio Air Logistics Center. Kelly AFB, TX. 1991.