



37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne) Joint Task Force Eagle



Commander



LTC Paul Huszar

Mission Statement

Joint Task Force Eagle conducts full spectrum engineer operations “By, With, and Through” Iraqi Engineers ISO U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces to maintain all military bridges north of the Bridge Work Line, provide assured mobility and general engineering support to 3-2 SBCT and 1-28 IN, support the responsible drawdown of forces, and provide civil support and capacity development in order to influence and secure the population and achieve sustainable security.

Command Sergeant Major



CSM Wayne Durham

BATTALION HISTORY

The 37th Engineer Battalion has a proud history dating back to World War I. The unit was first activated on 16 January 1918 in the National Army at Fort Myer, Virginia as the 1st Battalion, 37th Engineer Regiment. The unit first served as an Electrical and Mechanical engineer Battalion. During WWI, the battalion served in both the St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonne Campaigns as part of American Expeditionary Force. In the mood of isolationism that followed the war, the regiment was deactivated in March, 1919.

World War II brought another call to duty for the stalwart engineers. The 37th Engineer Regiment was reactivated in January, 1941. On 18 March, 1943, after training in several locations in the United States, the regiment was reformed into the 1106th Engineer Combat Group, the 209th Engineer Battalion (CBT)(ABN), and the 37th Engineer Battalion (CBT)(Amphibious). The 37th Engineer Battalion was made part the 5th Special Engineer Brigade for the invasion of France (Operation Overlord). Supporting the 16th Infantry Regiment, the Battalion landed with the assault waves on Omaha Beach. For its performance on Omaha Beach, the Battalion was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm.

Numerous tales of valor stand out but none more than privates Vinton Dove and Willie Shoemaker, who without concern for their own personal safety, exposed themselves and their bulldozer to enemy fire in order to clear a tank ditch obstacle and cut a lane off of the beach. This lane was the primary exit from the beach on D-Day. Privates Dove and Shoemaker each earned the Distinguished Service Cross for their

valor and efforts. The battalion did more than contribute with engineering skills. Three platoons were dedicated as infantry and significantly contributed to the reduction of the pillboxes and machine gun positions on the hill surrounding the beach. 1LT Robert P. Ross, one of the platoon leaders, took charge of an Infantry Company whose commander had been killed. Under his leadership, the infantry company and engineer platoon killed 40 German troops and forced the surrender of two machine gun positions. For his leadership and decisive actions, 1LT Ross was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. These are only two examples of valorous performance of the 37th Engineer Battalion. Many others remained untold as the unit took the most casualties of any unit in the 5th Engineer Special Brigade.

Following the invasion, the battalion spent several months on the beach unloading troops and equipment, clearing roads, and repairing port facilities. For this, the battalion received the Meritorious Unit Commendation. When released from the beach, the battalion moved through Belgium and Holland supporting the Allied advance with bridging, road clearing, and other required missions. The battalion entered Germany in March, 1945 where it remained until its return to the United States in November, 1945. In December 1945, the battalion was again deactivated.

On 28 October 1954, the battalion was re-designated the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) and activated on 17 December 1954 in Germany. The battalion was later deactivated on 31 December 1958 in Germany

On 16 August 1987, the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (Airborne) was reactivated at Fort Bragg, NC as part of the 20th Engineer Brigade. On 13 October 1990 the battalion deployed to Saudi Arabia for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm during the war against Iraq. The battalion distinguished itself by conducting numerous XVIII Airborne Corps theatre level projects and conducting many combat engineer missions to include munitions reductions in Iraqi ASPs. The battalion redeployed to Fort Bragg on 5 April 1991.

On 27 September 1994, the 37th Engineer Battalion deployed to the island of Haiti in support of Operation Uphold Democracy. The battalion went to Cap Haitian to construct a 2000 soldier base camp for the 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division and the United Nations Peacekeeping force. The battalion also assisted the local Haitians by restoring their drinking water, utilities and repairing existing roads. The battalion redeployed in November 1994.

On 11 May 2001, Bravo Company and HHC (minus) deployed to Kosovo to participate in Operation Joint Guardian (KFOR 3A). The Eagles were attached to the 11th Engineer Battalion and supported the 101st Airborne Division (C)(AASLT). While in Kosovo, the Company team performed many combat construction missions to include existing road repairs, LZ construction for Infantry units, MSR upgrades electrical work with local nationals, and vertical construction both on and off Camp Bondsteel. The Eagles also participated in QRF mission in Kosovo and on the Serbian border. The Company team redeployed to Fort Bragg on 22 November 2001.

On 22 September 2002, the 37th Engineer Battalion deployed 20 Vertical and LE soldiers to Kuwait to serve in support of Operation Enduring Freedom where they supported the Combined Joint Task Force at Camp Doha. The Eagles redeployed to Fort Bragg on 22 March 2003. Every soldier deployed received a Joint Service medal and the Joint Meritorious Unit Citation for permanent wear.

On 22 March 2003, the 37th Engineer Battalion deployed to Northern Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The battalion supported the 101st Airborne Division (C) (AASLT). The battalion constructed an airfield in Irbil, conducted airfield repairs at Q-West, conducted highway construction, demolition reduction operations in the V Corps Iraqi ASP, and participated in quality of life projects to help deployed soldiers. The battalion assisted the local Iraqis through Operation Task Force Neighborhood. The battalion also

conducted many QRF and EOD support missions. The battalion redeployed back to Fort Bragg on 23 January 2004. For its accomplishments in Northern Iraq, the Battalion received the Meritorious Unit Commendation (1st Oak Leaf Cluster).

On 10 March 2006, the 37th Engineer battalion deployed to Afghanistan in support of the Global War on Terrorism serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Battalion was based out of FOB Sharana in support of Combined/Joint Task Force 76, 10th Mountain Division and formed Task Force Eagle, the first US, Joint and Coalition Engineer Task Force in the CJOA. The battalion executed daily airfield and security operations on FOB Sharana, constructed over 200 KM of improved roads, built or expanded five Forward Operating Bases, and cleared over 10,000 KM of routes in the eastern and southern regions of Afghanistan. The battalion was engaged by the Taliban and enemy forces during IED strikes and ambushes on numerous occasions. During these attacks, the battalion was credited with over 105 enemy killed in action. The battalion redeployed back to Ft Bragg on 11 March, 2007.

On 22 May 2009, the 37th Engineer Battalion (Combat)(Airborne) deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The battalion serves as an echelon above BCT unit assigned to the USF-1' EN BDE, operating throughout Iraq with mission focused in northern Iraq primarily in support of 3-2 SBCT in Diyala province and 1-28 Infantry in Salah Din province. The Battalion primarily based out of Joint Base Balad and Forward Operating Base Warhorse, became the command element for a 1000 service member strong Joint Task Force Eagle. The joint task force includes the 887th Engineer Support Company, Fort Campbell, KY; 50th Multi Role Bridge Company, Fort Leonard Wood, MO; the 739th Multi Role Bridge Company, Granite City, Ill; Terrain Team, 70th Topographic Engineer Company, Schofield Barracks, HI; Air Force Detachment 6(TACON); Facility Engineer Team 2 (DS); 732nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron and 266th Military Police Company (OPCON), Manassas, VA. Joint Task Force Eagle's mission focus is on partnering with Iraqi Army engineers, building civil capacity, IED defeat operations, construction, bridging, general engineering, and security.

Campaign Participation Credits

World War I, World War II and Southwest Asia

St. Mihiel Normandy with Arrowhead Defense of Saudi Arabia

Meuse-Argonne Northern France Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Rhineland and Central Europe

Decorations

Presidential Unit Citation (Army) - for participation in the Normandy Campaign

Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army) - for participation in the European Theatre

French Croix de Guerre with Palm (French WWII) - for participation in the Normandy Beaches Campaign

Meritorious Unit Commendation, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster (Army) - for participation in

Operation Iraqi Freedom

CURRENT OPERATIONS (Unclassified)



Assured Mobility

Currently Joint Task Force Eagle conducts route clearance, assured mobility operations in two major provinces in northern Iraq. In the Salah ad Din Province, Alpha Company 'Outlaws' supports 1-28 Infantry Battalion and in the Diyala Province, Charlie Company 'The Rock' supports 3-2 Stryker Brigade Combat Team. These are major efforts which provide freedom of mobility for U.S. Forces, Iraqi Forces and civilians. Bravo Company 'Bushmaster' also conduct route clearance operations in both provinces in conjunction with their transition to focus on civil capacity.

Currently to date, JTF Eagle has cleared over 50,000 km of road, conducted over 735 RCPs, operated over 4,000 hrs and made roughly 4,000 interrogations.



Civil Capacity and Development

As a Joint Task Force equipped with highly capable and technically proficient engineers, the 37th Engineer Battalion is able to provide a great deal of support to the civil development of both the Salah ad Din and Diyala Provinces. Current projects include the Baqubah Landfill, which is currently being executed in partnership with the 5th IA FER and through our professional relationships with Director Generals and leaders within the local government. In the Diyala Province, trash is the number one issue as identified by the Provisional Government of Iraq. The landfill is completed in conjunction with other trash collecting

efforts executed by the Operational Environment Owner. Both are efforts to help create a cleaner, safe Diyala which people can be proud of.



The ‘Bushmasters’ of Bravo Company have also taken on a great deal of responsibility in the growth and development of local enterprise throughout the Diyala Province. As Pay Agents and the representatives for Quality Control and Assurance, Bravo Company has traveled all over ensuring projects completed by local engineers and labor are completed to standard. With responsibility for Quality Control and Assurance on everything from water treatment facilities and roads, to city parks, these combat engineers have exhibited great flexibility and dedication to a very different mission than expected when the unit arrived in Iraq.

Bravo Company has overseen the opening and closure of over 15 projects for the Commander’s Emergency Response Program (CERP) that totaled over \$3 million in relief for the people of Iraq.



Civil Development and Capacity does not stop there for Joint Task Force Eagle. Since August 2009, the JTF has been working diligently with our Iraqi partners in the GoI and the 4th and 5th IA FERs to refurbish and rebuild the most complex canal system in the world. Based off of canals the GoI identified as priority, engineers conducted reconnaissance of these complex systems in Diyala and Salah ad Din. These larger canals have smaller ones that branch off into separate canals that support the entire region. Blockages, damage caused by little, or no maintenance, IEDs, or illegal taps have hindered the canal’s capacity to supply adequate water to farm land and the local community. By working with the 4th IA FER, Alpha Company has already taken huge steps by assisting the Iraqi Army to get out in the public’s eye with

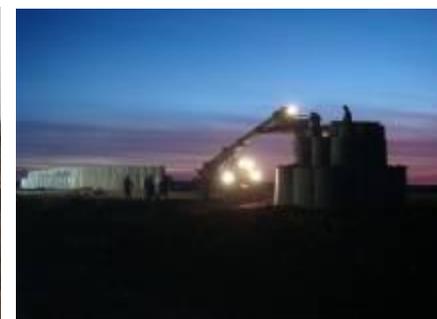
engineer equipment to clean out canals that are suffocated with an overgrowth of reeds.



As engineers, we have the internal ability to identify and reduce hazards imposed onto civilians and to also assist significantly in the civil progress we all want to continue to see happen in Iraq. This in turn supports our partnership with the 4th and 5th IA FERs, as we play a supporting role to the Iraqi Army's mission by enabling their success with our capabilities. This is something JTF Eagle does during daily missions which focus on delivering essential services to the population by building capacity to operate and maintain, and in turn, create opportunities for sustainable employment.

Construction

Our Vertical Construction Platoon and Utilities Detachment 6 has completed construction on 5 South West Asia Huts (SWAHUT) COICs, each one done in partnership with the 5th IA FER. Our S-3 Tech/Construction Cell has created the plans for these SWAHUTs in addition to the Disputed Internal Boundary Check Points that 887th Engineer Support Company built in northeast Diyala. These check points were recognized by the USF-I commander as his number one priority and we executed violently.



Alpha and Bravo Companies Light Equipment Platoons, once in Iraq, had a change of mission. Alpha LE took on route clearance and the Canal Campaign with the 4th IA FER. Bravo Company LE, along with 1st and 2nd Platoons, conducted the QA/QC and PPO/PA missions. When needed, and in efforts to maintain their MOS proficiency, both companies take on route upgrade missions in support of the OEO and mission

on the FOB in support of other units and the Responsible Drawdown of Forces.

Charlie Company LE however, has continued with horizontal construction missions and has done so with full force. Missions such as the Baqubah Landfill and route upgrades have proven them to be a huge asset to any maneuver unit. Many of the earth moving missions that Charlie LE executes are done so with the 5th IA FER.

Bridging Operations

Currently JTF Eagle maintains all military bridges north of the Bridge Work Line. We were honored to have the opportunity to serve with the 50th Multi Role Bridge Company, but when it came time for them to redeploy back to Fort Leonard Wood, we were very pleased to welcome the 739th MRBC onto the team.

Currently we are supporting 16 military bridges and as the rainy season hit us over the past month, the Tigris began to flood and things became very busy for the staff and the 739th. Since arriving in December

The 739th MRBC has executed 13 emergency bridge repair missions, 3 emergency bridge breaks, 2 emplacements and 5 emergency resupplies.

September brought on one of our biggest success in bridging operations. The 50th MRBC emplaced a Mabey Johnson Float Bridge with the 4th, 5th and HQ IA FERs. The Partnership Bridge, as it was named, bridge is a symbol of the progress of the U.S./Iraqi transition and the responsible draw down of U.S. Forces. It also supports the June 30th Security Agreement by allowing freedom of mobility for both U.S. Forces and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) without having to travel through built up areas. The Iraqi Army Engineer Corps felt this bridge to be a huge accomplishment, and rightfully so. JTF Eagle feels the training that the IA received throughout the entire mission, from prefabrication to putting in the bays, will benefit them for future bridging operations they take on independently.



Partnership

Joint Task Force Eagle continues to support the USF-I commander's intent by continuing to partner with our engineer counterparts from the 5th Iraqi Army Field Engineer Regiment. Our Military Transition Team, located at FOB Warhorse with our TAC and Charlie Company, works daily with the 5th IA FER at Ghalibiyah, the unit's base. Our current training focus is on developing construction and general

engineering skills through combined programs. The JTF Eagle staff assists in building staff capacity through staff visits. Through this projects our staff has helped develop effective maintenance and supply systems. In addition the BN S2, S3 and Counter IED officers work closely on a weekly base with the operations and intelligence officers from the 5th IA FER, to synchronize operations throughout Diyala.

Other partnership efforts include strengthening the NCO Corps by running an NCO training course. The NCO Corps is not yet where it needs to be in the 5th IA FER and it is our mission to help build their own capacity through basic leadership techniques. After we ran the course for 2 sessions, the 5th IA FER took on the course as their own and is now conducting monthly classes.



Influence

The mission isn't complete unless you inform the public of the great things their Soldiers are doing. "If you don't tell the Army's story, someone else will" is the motto of LTC Huszar, and it's true. Influence Operations include everything from a hometown news release a Platoon Leader writes for his Soldier who made the decision to continue serving his country by reenlisting, a hard news release on the ribbon cutting ceremony of a Combined Operations and Intelligence Center which was built in partnership by U.S. and Iraqi Forces, to inviting local Iraqi media to cover an event which will put our counterparts and their efforts in the public eye. Our influence efforts also include working with the Operational Environment Owners on developing products which can be distributed in efforts to inform and educate the public of what is going on in their communities, something that supports the overall success of our missions and supports our efforts to Operate and maintain. JTF Eagle supports the USF-I commander's intent to ensure every message we send through the media channels tells the story of our partners in the 5th IA FER. By promoting their success through Influence Operations, we support the success for a better Iraq.



Professional Development

Influence Operations also play a large role in professional development. Throughout the first 6 to 7 months of the deployment, the Public Affairs Officer was executing every influence mission. However, in recent months, more and more leaders are taking on the mission to tell their Soldier's and their unit's story. Many Platoon Leaders have written hometown news releases to their Soldiers local papers, which in turn develops their writing skills, interpersonal skills and situational awareness when they interact with the media. An ongoing influence target is the weekly Radio Lia interviews with a radio station from Seattle, Washington. Leaders from the JTF have had the chance to explain their job description, what missions we are conducting, the aspects of partnership and where they are from back in the states.

A larger influence target that JTF Eagle has hit recently is much better known in our regiment and the engineering community. In February, JTF Eagle submitted 5 articles to the Army Engineer Association Magazine ENFORCE edition. These articles, written by Platoon Leaders, Commanders and Staff Officers are current accounts of what operations and interactions are like in Iraq from the perspective of combat engineers who are currently executing a wide variety of missions in Northern Iraq.

Other professional development opportunities happen every Friday afternoon, a chance for Officer and NCOs to keep their minds sharp to learn. Some of these include a brief on the MJB by SGM (Ret.) Allen Pearson from Mabey and Johnson Bridge. Other professional development classes range to command supply discipline and career management.



Morale and Welfare

While we continue missions and operations, Low Battle Rhythm Days and MWR activities are always a high priority. The JTF conducted a Saint Michael's Jump at the Al Bakir Airfield pool in October. It was a great way for Soldiers to reach back in their kit bags and use their Airborne knowledge, something they hadn't had to use in 6 months. All personal, Airborne qualified or not, had the opportunity to go through a MACO brief, RIGEX, Sustained Airborne Training and then to take the plunge off the high dive in true Airborne fashion.



In addition, the JTF has participated in every sports season so far. Our flag football team, the Roughnecks, has had a successful season and even took home the trophy! Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, HHC and 887th ESC have each taken on their own Organizational Days where they set up volley ball teams, play a nasty game of horse shoes and even have HMMWV pulling events! No matter what is going on, and where we are, JTF Eagle is having fun and focuses on strong esprit de corps.

