

819th RED HORSE Squadron deploys nearly 200 members

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9/10/2007 - MALMSTROM AIR FORCE BASE, Mont. -- Nearly 200 members of the 819th RED HORSE Squadron have departed Malmstrom in the past two weeks to spend 30 days at Fort McCoy, Wis., learning combat skills in preparation for a six-month deployment to the Area of Responsibility.

An advanced team of approximately 20 members left in late August; the remainder departed from Holman Aviation Sept. 11 on two separate chartered flights.

"It is a requirement each time we deploy to attend the combat training with the Army, whom we will be directly supporting down range," said Capt. Chad Wright, 819th RHS section commander. "Once we complete that training, we will depart for one of eight different locations in Iraq, Afghanistan or Qatar where we will support the Global War on Terror for an addition six months."

Their deployed missions will include heavy construction and civil engineer-related work, he said.

"Normally, the 219th RHS supplements us when we deploy, but this time, they are unable to do so due to their own taskings," Captain Wright said. "We will be supplemented by the 307th RHS, a Reserve unit from Barksdale [Air Force Base, La.], as well as the folks already in theater."

The unit will not be taking any of their heavy equipment with them, most of it is already in place, said 1st Lt. Jeffrey Klein, an electrical engineer with the 819th RHS who is preparing for a permanent change of station move in October.

"There will be about 40 to 50 [819th RHS members] left here who can arrange for the shipment of additional equipment if it is needed," he said.

Those not deploying will continue with their daily missions.

Projects underway prior to this deployment include expansion of the coal pad at the heat plant and construction of a facility for the Airborne RED HORSE unit.

"Work on those projects will continue as it can while we are gone," Captain Wright said, "But with certain specialties unavailable, completion will have to wait until we return."

The last time the 819th RHS deployed to the AOR was in June 2006.

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