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Engineer Brigade stands up at JBER

2nd Engineer Brigade Public Affairs Office



Command Sgt. Maj. James Dickens of the 2nd Engineer Brigade, furls the 3rd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade's colors, signaling the 3rd MEB's inactivation Sept. 21 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. (Photo by 2nd Engineer Public Affairs Office)

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF – RICHARDSON, Alaska -- The colors of the 2nd Engineer Brigade were uncased for the first time in 56 years during an activation ceremony here Sept. 21.

The ceremony also signaled the inactivation of the 3rd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade.

Col. Thomas J. Roth, 2nd Engineer Brigade commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. James E. Dickens formally ushered in the next chapter of the unit's history with help from Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo, commanding general of U.S. Army Alaska.

The guests of honor were Jack Reed, a World War II veteran who served with the brigade's original incarnation, the 2nd Engineer Amphibious Brigade, and Edwin Leard III, whose grandfather Edwin Leard was killed in action during World War II while serving with the unit.

In remarks, Maj. Gen. Palumbo highlighted the brigade's new role.

"The Army has been transforming lately," Palumbo said. "Especially, since 9/11. We had to change. We had to change because the enemies changed and we had to meet the new challenges that the enemies presenting us around the world. That's why we had to introduce this engineer brigade into our Army formation, to bring yet another capability that we need on the battlefields."

The engineer brigade is a modular deployable headquarters able to function as a higher headquarters for several subordinate engineer units and could potentially function as a joint headquarters including Army, Navy, Air-Force or Marine components.

"The 2nd Engineer Brigade becomes the sixth of its kind in the Army," Palumbo said. "It's capable of planning and controlling diverse missions associated with assuring mobility, enhancing protection by building things, enabling logistics and developing infrastructure."

Palumbo thanked the troops and their families.

"Today an engineer brigade is reborn and proudly begins a new chapter in an already long and illustrious history," Palumbo said.

Roth acknowledged the good weather, which belied a rainy forecast, in his remarks.

"I couldn't ask for a better day," Roth said. "The sun wasn't going to show up, but here it is. I think that's an indicator."

Roth reviewed the accomplishments of the 3rd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade.

"All I can say is what a great privilege for me to have commanded this brigade for over two months," he said, "but I'm equally honored to open the next chapter on the 2nd Engineer Brigade, the Arctic Trailblazers, which again is one of six war-fighting active engineer brigades in the Army. The engineer brigade headquarters will actively train and prepare to serve the nation's needs. We stand dedicated to leading, training, preparing our subordinate commands to do likewise."



Col. Thomas J. Roth, commander of the 2nd Engineer Brigade, unfurls the newly activated brigade's colors with help from U.S. Army Alaska Commander Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo Sept. 21 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

(Photo by 2nd Engineer Public Affairs Office)



2nd Engineer Brigade command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. James Dickens, holds the newly reactivated brigade colors at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's Pershing Field, Sept. 21.

(Photo by 2nd Engineer Public Affairs Office)



Edwin Leard III, grandson of a 2nd Engineer Amphibious Brigade Soldier killed in WWII, chats with World War II veteran Jack Reed and U.S. Army Alaska Commander Maj. Gen. Raymond Palumbo after the 2nd Engineer Brigade's activation ceremony Sept. 21 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson's Pershing Field.

(Photo by 2nd Engineer Public Affairs Office)