

1 ESU Exodus

by Maj Ulpiano V. Honorio

After 18 years of presence in the community, 1 Engineer Support Unit ceremonially lowered its flag for the last time during the Unit departure parade, presided over by BGen John Mackay, which took place in Moncton, NB, on the 30th of May, 2013. Driven by the 2010 Strategic Review, 1 ESU has begun packing and preparing for its exodus to Kingston whilst maintaining its high readiness posture throughout the process this Summer.

In 1995, 1 Construction Engineering Unit, moved from Winnipeg to Moncton and was stood up as an operational field unit under command of the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff and under functional control of the Director Military Engineering, and began to concentrate on supporting operations, providing national level, specialist and general military engineering services. To reflect its new mandate of support to operations, the Unit was officially renamed 1 Engineer Support Unit on 1 April 2003.

Falling under command of Operational Support Engineer Group in 2007, the Unit continues to be involved in engineering assessments, studies, design and project management for the Canadian Armed Forces and other government departments worldwide. The recent amalgamation of the three Level 1 commands into the Canadian Joint Operations Command, and the consequent transfer of command authority of the Unit, 1 ESU is now one of the operational units under the Canadian Forces Joint Operational Support Group.



1 ESU, accompanied by the Comd and CWO of OS Engr Gp, receiving the distinguished Canadian Forces Unit Commendation from the CDS and CAF CWO in 2012. (Photo: 1 ESU file.)

by the Chief of the Defence Staff, 1 ESU received the distinguished Canadian Forces Unit Commendation in 2012 for the “dedication and exceptional performance of every crew member towards the operational effectiveness of the mission in Afghanistan, (from) 2002 to 2011.”



WO Mark Stasiuk, MWO Tony Pemberton and Sgt Pierre Sheppard folding the 1 ESU flag at Moncton Garrison for the last time. (Photo: 1 ESU file)



Comd CFJOSG and Dir Engrs accompanied by OC 15 Engr Sqn and CO 1 ESU inspecting the troops during the Unit departure parade. (Photo: 1 ESU file)

Indeed, the Unit’s motto *USQUAM*, which means “anywhere”, is truly reflective of its engineering capability. Specialist Engineer Teams and engineering subject matter experts can be sent anywhere in the world on short notice to work autonomously or with other units to support operations.

While in Moncton, 1 ESU provided specialist engineering services on most Canadian Armed Forces missions, most notably in the Balkans, East Timor and Eritrea in the late 90s and early 2000s. The Unit also provided support during disaster relief operations in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake, the Red River flood and the ice storm in Central Canada. Awarded

Known uniquely as *the engineering consulting firm of the Canadian Armed Forces*, 1 ESU continues to provide specialist engineering support in the Canadian Arctic, most recently in support of Operation NANOOK. But unbeknownst to many, the Unit has been an important asset to Canada and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trades, providing technical engineering support to Canadian embassies and consulates around the world, including Moscow, Russia; Tokyo, Japan; and most recently in Beijing and Chongqing in China.



With looming dark clouds over the Maritimes, the rain held off long enough for the departure parade to proceed without a hitch. The event coincided with the Change of RSM ceremony, where CWO Gordon Aitken handed over the ceremonial drill cane to MWO Stephen Hatfield. A unit mess dinner concluded the day, where Col Richard Dickson, himself an alumnus of the Unit, gave the *Salute to the Engineers*.

CWO Gordon Aitken hands over the Unit drill cane to CPO1 Geoffrey McTigue (Fmn Chief CFJOSG), with MWO Stephen Hatfield poised to receive the Unit RSM duties and responsibilities. (Photo: 1 ESU file)

A solemn celebration, many of its members, military and civilian, and their families are sad to see the Unit go after so many years of being part of the community. Former retired members of the Unit, many residing in the region, attended the ceremony and expressed their regrets.



Last Out! 1 ESU members at Moncton Garrison, taken December 2012. (Photo: 1 ESU file)

The 1 ESU flag will be raised again at its new home in Kingston in the Fall, where the Unit will continue its longstanding tradition and mandate of providing infrastructure, environment and force protection engineering in support of Canadian Armed Forces operations and other government department projects anywhere in the world. *Chimo!*