

14 CE Sqn Deploys



14 Airfield Engineering Flight Lunenburg was established in 1994 as a deployable Total-Force construction engineering unit that was based on the Reserve Force. At that time, ways were found to create several Airfield Engineering Flights whose broad support benefitted from partnerships with the local community. 14 Airfield Engineering Squadron (now named 14 Construction Engineering Squadron - 14 CE Sqn) was established in 1997 to provide command and control after the formation of more such Flights.

Recruiting, training and deploying Reserve airfield/construction engineers can be a real challenge whether it is in developing the necessary set of technical skills and teamwork against the additional or the challenge of finding the time for deployment within the demands of a primary job. But, within a year of the first stand-up there was a Reserve journeyman plumber serving on the Golan Heights. Since then, members have served on most major deployments - both domestically and internationally.

14 CE Sqn became known as a unit that could quickly deploy personnel. This was the result of a training regime wherein all members were constantly training to remain current on all technical and "soldier" skills required to deploy on short notice. Success of this readiness posture was seen during Operation GUARANTOR (1998-99) 14 CE Sqn was able to deploy 12 members to Macedonia on only seven days notice. Smaller missions, CF Station Alert, Technical Assistance Visits (TAV), embassy projects, Air National Guard projects and support to various Wings were normal but the first deployment of a Flight was to Camp Mirage on Operation APOLLO in 2002. This was the first deployment of a Reserve Flight, not only for the Squadron, but also the first for Canada since WW II.

14 CE Sqn deployed a Reserve Heavy Composite Flight to Afghanistan on a five-month TAV (October 2006 - March 2007). That TAV comprised 17 members of 14 CES and was pulled together, trained, equipped and deployed in 56 days. They constructed a recreation and morale centre in Kandahar named "Canada House" that played an important part in the off-duty lives of Canadian Forces personnel deployed to Afghanistan. Their completed work was considered "outstanding" by the Air Force and the squadron was awarded the 2007 Patton-Cunnington Airfield Engineer Trophy for "the successful completion of a project of significant magnitude." In 2010 the Squadron was also awarded the Canadian Expeditionary Force Commander's Commendation for this work. That citation made note of the unit "...overcoming considerable difficulties to complete numerous critical infrastructure projects.." and the "...outstanding dedication and relentless effort of each member...."

The work of the new Construction Engineering Squadrons proved the concept that a Total-Force construction engineering unit that was based on the Reserve Force could contribute significantly to the Air Force's operational capability.