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Sustainment Soldiers case colors for deployment to Iraq

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16th SB Public Affairs

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — Soldiers, family members and friends said goodbye to the troops of Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the 574th Quartermaster Company, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, during a colors casing ceremony at the Grafenwoehr Parade Field here May 8.

“To the 574th and HHC, you performed magnificently during your wartime preparations, and I’m confident that you will excel and continue the proud tradition of the 18th CSSB as it is again called upon to serve the nation,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Roscoe, commander, 18th CSSB.

About 200 Soldiers and leaders from the two companies will deploy to northern Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom VIII to provide logistical support to US, coalition and Iraqi security forces.

The battalion was the second of the brigade’s three battalions to case its colors for deployment to Iraq.

“This year marks a significant time in the history of the 16th Sustainment Brigade, as all

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three of our battalions will case their colors in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom,” said Col. Martin Pitts, commander, 16th SB. “This casing is even more remarkable and significant for me, as I will continue to have the privilege and the honor of serving as your brigade commander downrange.”

The brigade’s other combat sustainment support battalion, the 391st CSSB, cased its colors at the Basics Building, Bamberg, Feb. 28, and deployed March 10. The brigade is scheduled to hold its deployment ceremony at Warner Barracks June 26.

Roscoe also addressed family members at the ceremony.

“To the spouses, parents, siblings and children of those units, thank you for your continued support of your Soldiers,” Roscoe said. “Many would argue that the emotional stress of a deployment can be even greater on you than on a service member, and that fact is not lost on any of us that wear the uniform. We’re only able to complete the mission in front of us because we know we have you behind us.”

For one dual-military couple of the 18th CSSB, the hardest part of the upcoming deployment is leaving behind their daughter.

Capt. Eugene Williams, logistics officer in charge, 18th CSSB, and his wife Capt. Natalia Mercedes-Williams, material management officer, 18th CSSB, will leave their 19-month-old daughter Victoria with Natalia’s parents in New York. They are both deploying to the same forward operating base.

“Everybody’s going to have a hard time leaving their kids behind,” Mercedes-Williams said, and her husband added, “Victoria’s at a phase where she’s learning so much and we don’t want to miss that.”

But both officers agreed that the mission was important, and that they were proud to deploy for their country.

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Roscoe offered a final thought for the families of deploying Soldiers.

“Your Soldiers are well trained and highly motivated, and their leaders will take every precaution to ensure the safety of our Soldiers,” he said. “We’re leaving behind a strong team to ensure families have the support they need.”

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Casing

Lt. Col. Christopher Roscoe, commander, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Command Sgt. Maj. Bryan Kroontje, command sergeant major, 18th CSSB, case the battalion colors during a colors casing ceremony at the Grafenwoehr Parade Field May 8. The Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the 574th Quartermaster Company cased their colors during the ceremony for a 15-month deployment to northern Iraq. The 18th CSSB will provide logistical support to U.S., coalition, and Iraqi security forces. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)



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Lt. Col. Christopher Roscoe, commander, 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Command Sgt. Maj. Bryan Kroontje, command sergeant major, 18th CSSB, case the battalion colors during a colors casing ceremony at the Grafenwoehr Parade Field May 8. The Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the 574th Quartermaster Company cased their colors during the ceremony for a 15-month deployment to northern Iraq. The 18th CSSB will provide logistical support to U.S., coalition, and Iraqi security forces. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)