



18th Engineer Brigade
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18th Eng. Bde. provides survey support to European allies

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Have you ever wondered how roads and buildings begin?

Surveyors from the 18th Engineer Brigade's Technical Headquarters Section could not only explain how, but they could also show all the work and attention to detail that is necessary to begin such projects.

The 18th Eng. Bde.'s THS, headquartered in Schwetzingen, Germany, has provided continual technical engineering support to other countries throughout the past year.

"I spent about four months looking for missions for us this year" said Master Sgt. Kevin Bardy, THS noncommissioned officer in charge from LaGrange, Ill.

THS conducted a mission at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Oct. 22-26 with the intention of helping their residents upgrade fuel farms. Staff Sgt. Robert Owens Jr., a senior technical engineer noncommissioned officer from Hornbeck, La., Staff Sgt. Shaun Emmett, a technical engineer noncommissioned officer from Pittsburg, Pa., and Spc. Darius Cooper, a technical engineer specialist and native of Portsmouth, Va., used their survey equipment and computer software programs to provide a graphic representation of the fuel farm to the Director of Public Works at Camp Bondsteel.

The three technical engineers brought Trimble R8 Global Positioning Systems to collect information on the terrain. The systems use satellites and blue tooth capabilities as well as computers loaded with Terramodel, a program used to apply the information gathered to create a computer generated representation of the site.

"They wanted us to give them a chart of the different elevations of and around the fuel bags so they could see how much fuel they were using on a daily basis and ways they could improve the whole site," said Cooper. "I feel we helped them with that, and they can go ahead and analyze the data we gave them and get a nice project from it."

The engineers from THS worked in Croatia during the exercise Immediate Response 2011 Aug. 23-27. This mission required Sgt. 1st Class Marcus Young, senior technical engineer noncommissioned officer from Hampton, Va., and his team of two Soldiers to conduct surveys and create designs for other military units.

Sgt. Allan Bonello, a technical engineer noncommissioned officer from Newport, Wales, United Kingdom, and Spc. Mark Grabow, a technical engineer specialist from New York Mills, Minn., overcame an initial setback when their original survey site was changed to one that was larger and more difficult to survey due to thick vegetation.

The change of location left Young, Bonello and Grabow with only two days to survey the new area.

“It was an excellent training opportunity,” said Young, whose team received a lot of design experience using concrete masonry unit blocks rather than the typical wood structures the Army builds with.

Though they only spent two days on the survey, the designs produced from the data were constructed from August to mid-October with delays due to changes and revisions. They had to produce designs for residential and government structures, religious buildings and an open air market, Young said.

These missions to Kosovo and Croatia not only helped the 18th Eng. Bde. build relationships with other nations, but also helped to train the THS Soldiers and noncommissioned officers.

“Soldiers get training from doing the work, and the NCOs get training in leadership,” said Bardy.

Young said a big advantage to doing missions in other countries is the experience of working with that nation’s soldiers, which, in turn, helps to prepare everyone involved with their missions during deployments.

“I have gained so much knowledge from the equipment alone and from the NCOs around me. They have helped mold the Soldiers in our section to where we all feel pretty confident that we can go out with a small group and accomplish any mission they give to us,” said Cooper.



Sgt. 1st Class Marcus Young, a senior technical engineer noncommissioned officer for the 18th Engineer Brigade from Hampton, Va., and Sgt. Allan Bonello, 18th Eng. Bde. technical engineer NCO from Newport, Wales, United Kingdom, survey an area in Croatia. The survey was part of exercise Immediate Response 2011, which allowed the surveyors an opportunity to work for other nations, surveying and designing multiple sites. (Photo by Spc. Mark Grabow, 18th Eng. Bde.)



Spc. Darius Cooper, a technical engineer with 18th Engineer Brigade from Portsmouth, Va., surveys a bulk fuel farm Oct. 23 at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, to help the Director of Public Works come up with a better plan to help store fuel. The results of the mission gave the DPW a way of accurately accounting for the fuel contained or lost. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Robert Owens, 18th Eng. Bde.)