Nearly 20 Soldiers Mobilize June 21 As Part of an Embedded Training Team

SPRINGFIELD, IL (06/14/2011)(readMedia)-- A deployment ceremony is scheduled for approximately 20 Soldiers who will deploy to Afghanistan as part of an embedded training team. The ceremony for the Bilateral Embedded Staff Team (BEST) A8 will be June 21 at 1 p.m. at the Illinois Military Academy at Camp Lincoln in Springfield.

The BEST Soldiers will train for a brief time at Camp Atterbury, Ind., before deploying to Poland for approximately two months to train with the Polish Land Forces. The unique mission allows Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers to train and deploy side-by-side with their Polish counterparts. Following the training, the Soldiers will deploy to Afghanistan for a six-month mobilization. The Soldiers are from various parts of Illinois and were selected for the mission based on their training and skills.

"This mobilization illustrates the diverse skill sets and training of our Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers and the variety of missions we support in today's challenging international environment, as well as in our state and community," said Maj. Gen. William Enyart, Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard. "These troops are instrumental in helping train foreign Soldiers to defend their country while polishing our Guardsmen's skills."

The team will assist the Afghan government to extend its authority across the country, perform security operations and help stabilize the war-torn nation. The Soldiers will also mentor and support the Afghan National Army and support Afghan government programs to disarm illegally armed groups.

News media attending the event should arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the ceremony and are required to notify the Public Affairs Office by 8 a.m., June 21 or they will not be allowed access onto Camp Lincoln. For more information call the Public Affairs Office at 217-761-3569 .

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