

Specialized Springfield Based National Guard Team Returns from Afghanistan

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Nearly 20 Soldiers Return Oct. 28 After Deploying As an Embedded Training Team

BLOOMINGTON, IL (10/25/2011)(readMedia)-- A homecoming ceremony is scheduled for approximately 20 Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers with Bilateral Embedded Staff Team (BEST) A7. The ceremony for BEST A7 will be Oct. 28 at 11 a.m. at the Bloomington National Guard Armory, 1616 S. Main St. in Bloomington.

The team was mobilized in January. It deployed to Poland for approximately two months to train with the Polish Land Forces before departing for Afghanistan. The unique mission allows Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers to train and deploy side-by-side with their Polish counterparts. The Soldiers are from various parts of Illinois and were selected for the mission based on their training and skills.

The team provided operational, intelligence, logistical, communications, engineering and planning support to the ninth rotation of Polish Forces to Afghanistan. The task force it supported was composed of almost 4,000 Polish and U.S. forces assisting more than 9,000 Afghan security forces in one of the largest provinces in eastern Afghanistan.

The team completed several ongoing construction projects designed to improve the safety and expand the reach of all security forces in the Ghazni Province.

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The Soldiers also established development and transition programs for several of the less violent districts.

Most of the team participated in convoy and combat operations supporting Polish and Afghan Forces.

News media attending the event should arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the ceremony. For more information call the Public Affairs Office at [217-761-3569](tel:217-761-3569).

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