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Corps activates Forward Engineer Support Team at Hunter Army Airfield

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA – An elite group from the [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Savannah District](#) officially activated Feb. 9 to form one of only eight specialized teams of its kind across the nation. This mobile, engineering support team stands ready to deploy with the Army on missions around the globe.

Known as the Forward Engineer Support Team - Advance, or FEST-A, Savannah's newest team is stationed at Hunter Army Airfield. As part of the 542nd Engineer Detachment, they join the Corps' national FEST-A effort with other teams in Baltimore, Seattle, Los Angeles, Honolulu, New York City, Fort Worth, Texas; and Anchorage, Alaska.

Like other FEST-A units, Savannah's team is a "one stop shop," providing professional solutions to complex engineering problems America's military may face. Comprised of one officer in charge, a non-commissioned officer and six Corps of Engineers civilians, the team has the capability to deploy worldwide and provide a range of engineering support to military forces – from design, construction management and contracting to real estate, environmental and geo-spatial support.

For example, FEST-A teams deploy in the wake of natural disasters to assess structural damage, recommend plans for reconstruction and secure contracts to rebuild. The team performs similar roles in combat situations, such as assessing war-torn buildings and infrastructure, providing planning and design support and managing re-construction.



"Although this team is only eight people deep, it has unbelievable capability," said Maj. Gen. Todd Semonite, Commander of the Corps' South Atlantic Division. "You've got a war fighter who understands combat and resourcing and planning, you've got an NCO who is an expert in execution on the ground, then you also bring this great depth of disciplines that the Corps' civilians represent. We have created a team that goes far beyond the talents of eight people – it's a network of synergy of great importance to our military."

The Feb. 9 ceremony also served as a change-of-command between former FEST-A leader, Sgt. 1st Class William A. Griffith, and newly-appointed officer in charge, Maj. Jared E. Runge.

PHOTO CAPTION (photo attached):

Sgt. 1st Class William Griffith (left), outgoing commander of the Savannah FEST-A, passes the guidon to Col. Ed Kertis (right), Corps of Engineers Savannah District Commander, during a change of command ceremony at Hunter Army Airfield, Feb. 9. Maj. Jared Runge was appointed as the new commander of the FEST-A unit. USACE photo by Tracy Robillard.

For additional photos, see our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/savannahcorps> or see our gallery on Savannah Morning News Spotted page at: [Spotted@: Savannah, Georgia photos | Corps activates FEST-A unit at Hunter AAF](#)