

Did you know?

The Charleston AFB payroll for Fiscal Year '99 was \$374 million



Source: CAFB economic impact statement

Airlift DISPATCH

Vol. 39, No. 6

Friday, February 18, 2000

Charleston AFB, SC

Charleston facts

The President's budget in Fiscal Year 01 includes \$2.5 million for a third C-17 simulator facility at Charleston AFB.



Practice makes perfect



Senior Airman Corey Clements

Senior Airman Ehren Schneider, 437th Civil Engineer Fire Prevention Flight, attaches a hose line to the structural panel of the P-23 Crash Rescue Truck in support of certification practices for five-skill level candidates.

Ties yes, U.S. Troops no in Africa, Cohen Says

Charleston troops can expect a break from deployments, at least for now, after Secretary of Defense William Cohen announced that the United States is strengthening ties in Africa, but he sees no significant role for the U.S. military in settling disputes on the continent.

The U.N. Security Council currently is considering sending a 5,000-member peacekeeping force to the Congo.

Cohen, in Marrakech, Morocco on the first stop of a weeklong three-nation trip, said Feb. 10 that he does not anticipate U.S. ground troops taking part in this U.N. mission.

"To the extent that there are any kind of transportation needs, I'd have to look into that," he noted. U.S. forces are already "stretched" by ongoing missions in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor, and overseas deployments in Europe, the Persian Gulf and Asia, he said.

When asked to join the U.N. mission in East Timor, he said, DoD officials "had to point out that we were limited in what we could do and not make another major commitment and put that much more stress on our forces."

High operations tempo has had a great impact on recruitment and retention, the secretary said. "We act where we can ... but other countries have to pick up a much bigger share of the load," he said. "We are carrying that load right now."

Cohen departed Washington Feb. 10 for visits in Morocco, South Africa

and Nigeria. The secretary told reporters en route that the United States hopes to promote stability and economic reforms and is not trying to intervene in or dominate African affairs in any way.

He pointed to the African Crisis Response Initiative, an effort to help train African nations' militaries for multilateral peacekeeping missions. The United States budgets about \$20 million a year for the program, which U.S. defense officials hope will ultimately lead to the creation of a peacekeeping brigade of about 12,000 troops.

So far, U.S. Special Forces teams have conducted initial training for battalions in Senegal, Uganda, Malawi, Mali, Benin and the Ivory Coast. Along with instructing the African troops in peacekeeping and individual soldier skills, the United States provides nonlethal equipment such as uniforms, boots, generators and radios.

The United States also has set up an African Strategic Studies Center in Dakar, Senegal, to offer courses in the rule of law, civilian control of the military, national security strategy and defense economics.

Throughout the region, Cohen told reporters, local leaders are trying to modernize their militaries, develop prosperous, free-market, economies and promote stability. U.S. defense officials hope to help them through the International Military Education and Training program. "It's in their interest and it's in our interest as well," he said. (AFP)

Charleston offers space shuttle support

By Capt. Tracy Velino
437 AW Public Affairs

Three pilots and two loadmasters from the 14th Airlift Squadron, and a crew chief from the 637th Aircraft Generation Squadron, stood by for an hour Feb. 11 in case anything went wrong during the space shuttle Endeavor launch.

The aircrew and maintenance crew chief waited at home by their phones for the alert from command post. Following the successful shuttle launch, the stand-by crew and assigned C-17

Globemaster III were released from Bravo alert status.

The Shuttle Bravo is a standard mission for Charleston Air Force Base, said Jim Moore, 437th Operations Group current operations planner. "We've done it for as long as I've been here in current operations, so at least as far back as 1992."

If the shuttle encountered difficulty during takeoff, it would abort its mission to space and divert to a launch abort site. The shuttle Endeavor was prepared to divert to one of ten pre-determined locations worldwide.

The aircrew and C-17 would then be alerted to transport a NASA rapid response team and mishap investigation team to the abort site.

The C-17 inherited the Shuttle Bravo mission from the C-141 Starlifters last fall when NASA made the C-17 the platform of choice for the mission, according to Moore.

If alerted, the C-17 mission was to pick up a five-man Tanker Airlift Control Element from McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., and 85 NASA personnel from the Kennedy Space Center near Cape Canaveral, Fla., before pro-

ceeding to divert location.

The rapid response team would join pre-positioned NASA personnel to assist with landing and performing post-landing shuttle maintenance.

The Air Force Tanker Airlift Control Element's role in Shuttle Bravo missions is to provide command and control of all air mobility assets at the divert location.

In addition to 90 passengers, total cargo planned for the mission was 6,000 pounds of equipment, including one vehicle.

see Shuttle, page 2



courtesy photo

Six Charleston members and a C-17 were on standby during the Feb. 11 Space-Shuttle Endeavor launch.