



News Advisory

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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CHARLESTON AFB PERSONNEL DEPLOY TO FORWARD LOCATION; TENT CITY

CHARLESTON AIR FORCE BASE, SOUTH CAROLINA – As Charleston AFB personnel set up Expeditionary Airlift Squadrons, one unit is settling into a toned down lifestyle of tents, cots and roommates.

Charleston deployed more than 150 people to this location, including aircrews, maintainers and an operations staff, said Lt. Col. Jim Barr, deployed commander and 437th Operations Support Squadron director of operations. They are living in a tent city with a robust support group that's providing great services.

"If it wasn't for the great services and support structure provided by the support group, this place would be pretty miserable," said Master Sgt. Timothy Lomas, deployed first sergeant and 14th Airlift Squadron first sergeant.

The base, which can't be named for security reasons, was in care-taker status before troops were deployed there shortly after Sept. 11, said Lomas.

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“The chow hall used to have vehicles parked in it and the Morale, Welfare and Recreation building hadn’t been used for 10 years,” said Lomas. Now the MWR building has a computer room with 60 computers, a library, gym, barber shop and small shoppette.

The sleeping arrangements consist of green tents, with air conditioning tubes running through them, said Lomas. They’re sleeping on cots and everyone is issued sheets, a pillow and a comforter to make it feel a little more like home.

“It’s wet,” said Lomas, referring to weather they’ve gotten this year. “It’s hot as heck and humid!”

But, he said, despite the weather, people are in high spirits.

“Morale is good, and operations are starting to pick up,” said Barr. “Everybody’s excited to get the stuff to the fight.”

Media interested in telephone interviews with deployed personnel should contact Capt. Krista Carlos at 963-3383 or 2nd Lt. Jennifer Andrews at 963-5588 no later than Feb.1.