



**JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER
AND FORT POLK
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*Press Release***



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**285th Engineers returns from Iraq:
Ceremony set for Friday**

Fort Polk, La.--- A welcome home and demobilization ceremony to honor approximately 125 members of the 285th Combat Support Equipment Engineer Company is set for Friday, April 16, at 8:00 a.m. at Warrior Brigade Field here.

These "Citizen Soldiers" of the 285th Engineers, an Army Reserve unit from Baton Rouge, Louisiana and El Paso, Texas, were mobilized January 24, 2003 and deployed to Iraq April 10, 2003. The 285th is a combat engineer unit with the Army's largest horizontal construction unit.

The Soldiers of the 285th were initially part of the 4th Infantry Division's Task Force Iron Horse initial attack into Iraq.

The unit was instrumental in the rebuilding of the Al-Sahra airfield in Tikrit; the building of the new Iraqi Army training complex, the construction of Forward Operation Bases in remote locations along the Iranian border as well as the construction of multiple major highway projects and staging areas in southern Iraq.

"The Soldiers of the Fightin' 285th Engineer Company have met every challenge head on and excelled past every conceivable expectation and won," remarked Capt. Jerome Garcia, commander of the 285th. "The mission was always foremost in every Soldier's mind and correction completion the only course of action."

"I am extremely proud of the outstanding performance of each Soldier and what the unit accomplished during our deployment. We are happy to be back and reunite with our families that have supported us so well while we were deployed."

The event is open to the public and the local community is encouraged to attend. Come out and support your troops.

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Media wishing to cover the ceremony should contact Maj. Ron Elliott at (337) 531-1418 or Samantha Bingham at (337) 531-4630. Media need to be at the PAO office at 7:30 a.m. or at the field by 7:50 a.m.