

New BEAR sets help Air Force deploy faster, smarter

by Airman 1st Class
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The 49th Materiel Maintenance Group is building 89 new Basic Expeditionary Airfield Resource sets valued at over \$400 million to increase the group's authorizations to 62 percent.

BEAR assets, developed in the late 1970s, will replace the existing Harvest Eagle and Harvest Falcon sets that are used to establish initial bases at locations worldwide.

The sets will provide billeting, kitchens, power distribution, water distribution, vehicle maintenance, supply warehouses and aircraft maintenance hangars.

Col. Michael Arnold, 49th MMG commander, said BEAR will revolutionize the way the Air Force deploys for war by giving the combatant commanders more flexibility to meet their needs.

BEAR is designed to meet the Air Force's force module concept of bringing a base to the combatant commander in a measurable and modular way.

"BEAR gives us the ability to mobilize faster," Colonel Arnold said. "We deploy it, put it on the ground and tailor it to suit the needs of the combatant commanders. It gives us a more logical and flexible way to build up an airbase."

To support the assembly of BEAR sets, the 49th MMG will add additional storage facilities on 96 acres.

During the next four years, BEAR sets will be built and sent to Pacific Air Forces, United States Air Forces Europe, Air Mobility Command and Central Air Forces.

The new storage space area will total approximately 500,000 square feet. A portion of the space will be filled by 6,000 square foot buildings called K-Spans.

The arch-type structures will be joined with pre-fabricated

buildings and military construction facilities over the next four years according to Colonel Arnold.

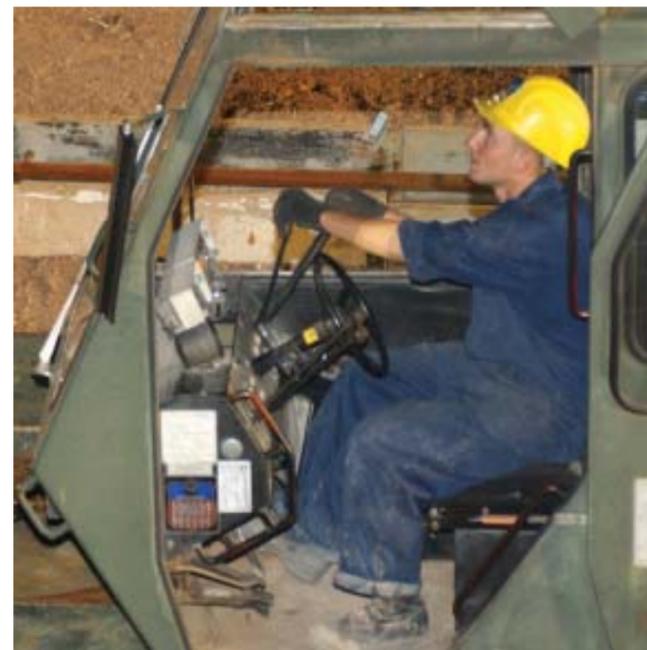
The 49th MMG will build approximately 34 percent of the Air Force's new BEAR set inventory Colonel Arnold said.

Although the majority of these sets will be stored at other locations, Colonel Arnold said the 49th MMG will still be responsible to deploy, set-up, and help maintain them.

"This is a great opportunity for the men and women of the 49th MMG to make an even greater impact on the Air Force's expeditionary mission," he said. "The professionalism and dedication of these outstanding men and women are one of the hallmarks of the BEAR Base program. What we do here will make a huge difference in the way the Air Force deploys."



Members of the 49th Materiel Maintenance Squadron hold in place a section of a K-Span building before the cement foundation is poured.



Staff Sgt. Robert Dwyer, 49th Materiel Maintenance Squadron structural maintenance journeyman, uses a crane to hoist a piece of a K-Span building.



Members of the 49th Materiel Maintenance Squadron construct a K-Span. Construction of the arch-type buildings is being completed at night as day crews are black flagged due to the area's high heat index.



Photos by Airman 1st Class Erik Somppi

Airman 1st Class Darell Miranda, 49th Materiel Maintenance Squadron utilities systems apprentice, braces a section of a K-Span before its raised for placement. K-Spans are arch-type structures that will hold incoming equipment.