



MEDIA RELEASE

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Eleven Additional Soldiers from 105th Personnel Company deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom

NASHVILLE, TN – A select group of soldiers from the Tennessee Army National Guard's 105th Personnel Company accepted a mission last February that would eventually send them across the Atlantic in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Now after a full year of intense training, eleven of those soldiers waved goodbye as they departed Nashville-International Airport today for pre-deployment training at joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., enroute to Afghanistan.

The eleven will join six additional members of the 105th who preceded them to the training site. Overall they comprise about twenty percent of their company.

"The majority of this group volunteered," 1st Lt. Justin McQueen, 105th's Training Officer, said this morning. "They all wanted to go. It was nice that we had that luxury."

McQueen said the group's positive initiative and willing self-sacrifice was the key to the overall success of their pre-deployment training. "There's so much that goes in to getting qualified to deploy," he said. "These soldiers made a lot of personal sacrifices in order to make that happen."

1st Lt. Erika Ortega, the deploying team's officer in charge, said that her soldiers are ready to take on the challenging and often sensitive casualty liaison mission they accepted.

"We've been training together for over a year, and they couldn't be more ready than they are now," she said. "It's an honor to be able to represent Tennessee in such an important mission to support a greater cause."

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PHOTO CAPTIONS FOR ALL PHOTOS: Soldiers of the Tennessee Army National Guard's 105th Personnel Company prepare for deployment to Afghanistan.