

DDDE Responds to Request for Aid The Source Behind the Force

By Bob King, DDDE Deputy Commander, with Jessica Walter-Groft, DDC Command Affairs



DDDE's Willie Payne collects MREs to be shipped to Chad.

At 4 p.m. on Thursday, March 18, it was business as usual at Defense Distribution Depot Europe (DDDE)—a busy workload, but nothing out of the ordinary.

Then the phone rings in DDDE Deputy Commander Bob King's office.

European Command (EUCOM) J-4 Contingency Plans needs 10,000 Humanitarian Daily Rations (HDRs) packed on air pallets and transported to a C-130 plane waiting at an airstrip in Ramstein by 10 p.m. to support peacekeeping operations in Chad. "And, oh, by the way, can you please set the air pallets up evenly in case they have to be combat offloaded?" Combat offloading involves opening the back of the aircraft and allowing the pallets to slip off the back when the pilot lurches the plane forward by throttling the engines then releasing the brakes.

Kings responds, "Sure, no problem, just remember us at Christmas time."

Racing against the clock, DDDE employees rushed to process the order.

Midway through, EUCOM called back and requested that the order for HDRs be changed to 10,000 Meals Ready to Eat (MREs). Flexible and willing to do whatever it takes to meet the customer's needs, DDDE employees worked together to get the job done. The shipment



DDDE employees (left to right) Frank Schlindwein, Juan Pablo Sierra von Hausen, Willie N. Payne, Christopher Evans, Eddie Harris built the air pallets of MREs to be shipped to Chad.

departed DDDE for Ramstein by 7:30 p.m.

"As the center of gravity for European distribution, DDDE employees have a tremendous responsibility, and they have met the challenge and the mission requirements head on. This team has hustle! They know what they have to do, and they do it well because they are Rock Solid . . . Solid as a Rock! HOOAH!" said LTC Douglas Nomura, USA, DDDE Commander.

When the supplies arrived in Chad, the plane did in fact have to be unloaded using a combat offload method because no equipment was available and the zone was not secure.

Chad, located in Central Africa, has become an important ally in Operation Enduring Freedom, working to eradicate terrorism in Africa.

