
Preface

Although many books about the Persian Gulf War have been published, none adequately deal with the importance of the Army engineers during that conflict. My primary goal is to document and evaluate the activities of just one Army engineer agency—the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps' role, however, must be placed in the broader context of Army engineer activities. Thus I have included some discussion of the engineer force structure and the activities of the engineer units that supported the echelons above corps. The story of the important contributions of the combat engineers who breached Iraqi obstacles on the battlefield, detected and removed mines, and constructed roads and facilities in support of the two Army corps in the Kuwait theater remains for another historian to write.

This book provides an overview of the Corps' critical missions during Operation DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM. As the Department of Defense's contract construction agent for the Kuwait theater, the Corps prepared and administered contracts for construction and construction design and leased real estate. Later in the operation, the Corps administered many contracts for the Saudi Arabian government under host nation support and a large contract for the Japanese government. Corps laboratories provided technologies that enabled U.S. forces to function more effectively on the battlefield.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civilians who voluntarily deployed during Operation DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM gave the United States military capabilities and expertise that it would not otherwise have had.

Since the end of the Persian Gulf War, the United States has been involved in several military contingencies, such as Operation RESTORE HOPE in Somalia and Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY in Haiti. In these contingencies, the U.S. military has again drawn on the Corps' extensive contracting and real estate leasing expertise. My hope is that this book will provide some lessons learned that will enable policy makers and planners to respond more effectively in future military contingencies.