

# Reserve Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 17

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## *Historical Information*



*“Construimus, Batuimus”  
“We Build, We Fight”*



## **Reserve Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 17 Command History**

U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion SEVENTEEN was commissioned on August 9, 1942, in Norfolk, VA. They received quick training in Virginia and Mississippi on skills such as Quonset Hut erection, pontoon assembly, welding, pipe fitting, diesel mechanics, and demolition. The Battalion was then split into two sections for deployment overseas.

Section One departed to Argentia, Newfoundland, on September 30, 1942, to work on a large Naval Station/Air Base complex. By April 1943, after absorbing Construction Battalion Detachment 1004, they were mustering over 1000 men, both enlisted and officers. Section Two landed on November 7, 1942, as part of the North Africa Invasion Force, establishing detachments in Morocco and Algiers. On February 19, 1943, Section Two merged with CB-53 to form CB-120.

CB-17 returned home for ten months, first stationed at Davisville, RI, then at Port Hueneme, CA. On September 12, 1944, CB-17 deployed to Saipan (Marianas Islands) along with three other battalions. Working sometimes under Japanese attack, they built a naval base, three hospitals (Navy and Army), a mine assembly plant, supply depots and warehouses, wells, roads, and other projects. CB-17 departed on June 20, 1945, aboard five amphibious tank landing ships (LSTs). They arrived in Okinawa on June 27th and proceeded to build Chimu Air Field. Construction also included an 80-foot timber bridge over the Ishikawa River, roads, camps, and medical facilities on Okinawa and two neighboring islands. Soon after the Japanese surrendered in August, 1945, the battalion began demobilizing. NMCB 17 was formally de-activated on Okinawa on November 24, 1945.

In August, 1962, the battalion was reborn as Reserve Naval Construction Battalion SEVENTEEN and headquartered in Port Hueneme. In January 1990, NMCB 17 prepared for mobilization for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Active and Reserve Seabee units were integrated into a unified organization in the fall of 1993, dropping any "Reserve" designations. The re-organized NMCB 17 moved their headquarters to their current location at Fort Carson, Colorado, on February 1, 1995. Presently made up of ten Detachments over six western states, NMCB 17 is known as "The Desert Battalion."

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion SEVENTEEN has earned the following unit citations:

- American Campaign Medal
- Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal
- World War II Victory Medal
- European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal
- Occupational Service Medal
- Battle Efficiency Ribbon (three awards)
- 1996 RADM John R. Perry Award

NMCB 17 is proud of the legacy built with the "Can Do!" spirit. The Seabees continue to be the military construction force of choice.



**NO  
LOGO  
AVAILABLE**







