

# South Dakota National Guard

## Public Affairs Office

Phone: 605-737-6721 Email: [ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil](mailto:ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil)

Web: [sd.ng.mil](http://sd.ng.mil)

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **Deployment ceremony held for 196th MEB Soldiers**

HARRISBURG, S.D. – A deployment ceremony was held for 39 Soldiers of the South Dakota Army National Guard’s 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade of Sioux Falls, Saturday, Feb. 27.

Hundreds of family members, friends and community supporters gathered at the Harrisburg High School auditorium to support their loved ones as the unit deploys to Kuwait for up to one year in support of Operation Spartan Shield.

The unit’s mission will be to conduct security and force protection operations at several bases in Kuwait. The unit will report to Fort Hood, Texas, to complete several weeks of theater-specific training prior to deploying overseas.

“We will be responsible for ensuring security and providing life-support services, some contracting, and emergency management,” said Lt. Col. Doug Bogenhagen, task force commander for the 196th. “We’ve had a full year to prepare for this mission and we are ready to complete the remainder of our training and certification at Fort Hood before transitioning to Kuwait.”

This will be the second mobilization for the 196th, which deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in 2010-2011.

“We have a lot of skills and talents that the Soldiers bring from both their civilian jobs and their military jobs,” said Bogenhagen. “We have a diverse group on the team and we are going to do great, and I’m really proud of what we have accomplished so far.”

Speakers for the ceremony included Gov. Dennis Daugaard, U.S. Senators John Thune and Michael Rounds, Rep. Kristi Noem and SDNG Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch.

“I thank you, the men and women of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, for the sacrifice you are making to serve our country and defend freedom,” said Gov. Daugaard, while addressing the audience. “Words cannot express how grateful we are for you.”

While the 196th Soldiers are prepared for their mission, it doesn’t come without some worry about leaving their families behind.

“I’m really excited about deploying but that doesn’t come without a little bit of uncertainty,” said Maj. Ryan Brekke, communications officer. “This is my second deployment away from my family and it’s always tough leaving them and getting ready to go. But there are a lot of us that have deployed together before and there is a lot of comfort in that.”

“It’s bittersweet,” said Capt. Brendan Poore, of the deployment. “This is part of the job, but I have my kids that I’m not going to see for nine months. I’m going to miss them, but I know they are set up here to do what they need to do while I’m gone.

“I’m lucky to be able to serve the country that I live in and I hope I’m able to do some good,” added Poore.

With the support of their families and the communities they leave behind, the Soldiers of the 196th are ready and know they will be successful in their mission.

“I want to thank everybody that wears the uniform – mostly because they always answer the call,” said Bogenhagen. “I also want thank everybody here at home. I know it’s hard when our Soldiers are gone but it’s the support of our family members and our communities that allows us to focus on our mission, complete it safely and return home.”

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High resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard)



**160227-Z-FO377-001:** Thirty-nine members of the South Dakota Army National Guard’s 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade stand for roll call during the unit’s deployment ceremony at the high school auditorium in Harrisburg, S.D., Feb. 27, 2016. The Soldiers will deploy for up to a year to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Chad Carlson/Released)



**160227-Z-FO377-002:** Gov. Dennis Daugaard, U.S. Senators John Thune and Mike Rounds, and Congresswoman Kristi Noem express their thanks to U.S. Army 2nd Lt. Julieanne Morse and the Soldiers of the South Dakota Army National Guard’s 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade during the unit’s deployment ceremony at the high school auditorium in Harrisburg, S.D., Feb. 27, 2016. The Soldiers will deploy for up to a year to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Chad Carlson/Released)



**160227-Z-FO377-003:** Members of the South Dakota Army National Guard’s 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade pose for a unit photo before the unit’s deployment ceremony at the high school auditorium in Harrisburg, S.D., Feb. 27, 2016. The Soldiers will deploy for up to a year to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Chad Carlson/Released)



**160227-Z-FO377-004:** U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Jason Tebeest, a member of the South Dakota Army National Guard’s 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, kisses his granddaughter, Hensley, two months, during the unit’s deployment ceremony at the high school auditorium in Harrisburg, S.D., Feb. 27, 2016. The Soldiers will deploy for up to a year to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Chad Carlson/Released)

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**160227-Z-FO377-005:** U.S. Army Capt. Michael Warkenthien, a member of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, holds a family friend, Londyn, during the unit's deployment ceremony at the high school auditorium in Harrisburg, S.D., Feb. 27, 2016. The Soldiers will deploy for up to a year to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Chad Carlson/Released)



**160227-Z-FO377-006:** U.S. Army 1st Lt. Martin Pierce, a member of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, stands with his wife, Carly, daughter, Kylee, 8, and son, Landen, 2, during the playing of the National Anthem at the unit's deployment ceremony at the high school auditorium in Harrisburg, S.D., Feb. 27, 2016. The Soldiers will deploy for up to a year to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Chad Carlson/Released)



**160227-Z-FO377-007:** U.S. Army Lt. Col. Doug Bogenhagen, task force commander of the South Dakota Army National Guard's 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, addresses the audience during the unit's deployment ceremony at the high school auditorium in Harrisburg, S.D., Feb. 27, 2016. The Soldiers will deploy for up to a year to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Chad Carlson/Released)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:** Please contact Maj. Anthony Deiss at (605) 737-6721 or cell (605) 431-8753, or e-mail [ng.sd.sdarnng.list.pao@mail.mil](mailto:ng.sd.sdarnng.list.pao@mail.mil)