

# Army's Continuous Transformation seen as 44th ESB-E Begins Fielding Phoenix E

*First to field*

**Candy C. Knight**  
*2nd Theater Signal Brigade*

The 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion-Enhanced, 2nd Theater Signal Brigade, embarked on a significant mission in June 2024, fielding the Phoenix E, a crucial step in replacing the older Phoenix D system.

The Phoenix E system is a flexible, diverse multi-band, satellite communications (SATCOM) system with the ability to operate with various military and commercial satellites and multiple satellite networks as per mission requirements. Housed in transit cases and operated from a shelter on standard military vehicles, this system offers deployment flexibility by repackaging into transit cases alone or reducing the number of vehicles needed for transportation and operation. Older systems were returned, marking the beginning of Phoenix E inventories that will now be accounted for on the Global Combat Support System-Army battalion property list. The Phoenix E is designed to seamlessly interface with the other equipment fielded by ESB-E formations across the Army. This includes the Scalable Network Node (SNN) baseband equipment, which provides connectivity to other satellite systems in the Integrated Tactical Network (ITN).

"The Phoenix E terminal is a transportable, quad-band, multi-tactical satellite communications terminal operating in the SHF band," said Mark Owens, supply and service branch chief, 2nd TSB. "It incorporates internet protocol capable frequency division multiple access and time division multiple access net-centric waveform modems to increase network diversity,



*The 44th ESB-E began fielding the Phoenix E over the summer. (U.S. Army photo)*

robustness, and capacity along with the addition of a dual head upgrade to access two satellites and/or bands simultaneously."

The primary difference between the Phoenix D and E models is the type of equipment with which they can interface. The Phoenix E can seamlessly interface with internet protocol baseband equipment that the Army is transitioning to, which the Phoenix D cannot. It is a simpler design with reduced equipment but with the same high throughput capabilities. It also eliminates several obsolescence issues with the Phoenix D, which has been in the field for nearly 20 years.

This transition is not just a change in equipment but a testament to the vital role played by the battalion in the fielding process. The battalion's efforts were acknowledged and recognized with the receipt of 12 M1165A1 vehicles and six 5K generators. The transition is an indication of the scale and impact of the operation and a testament to the importance of the battalion's mission. The 44th ESB-E is the [United States Army Network Enterprise Technology Command's](#) second overseas unit to receive Phoenix E and the first to be fully automated.

The battalion is conducting two weeks of new equipment training. The battalion provided the Project Managers Tactical Network SATCOM team with sufficient workspace to conduct fielding and assist Soldiers with system setup and tool inventory layouts.

"Program Manager Tactical Network has a specific fielding plan," said William Campbell, SATCOM engineer, PM Tactical Network. "The process takes up to 60 days, not including system travel time to the unit location. Initially, the logistics team will in-process the Phoenix E systems at the unit being fielded after the systems arrive. A technical team follows to configure, validate and test each system to ensure it meets the system baseline and operates correctly. The logistics team then inventories and hands off the equipment to the fielded unit. A training team then conducts the 80-hour New Equipment Training, and the 12-hour Planners and Managers Training."

Located in Baumholder, Germany, the 44th ESB-E builds, operates and defends mission command systems and networks in support of unified land operations.

The 2nd TSB delivers integrated and interoperable theater communications and cyber capabilities to enable decision dominance across all levels and phases of war in support of combat forces and mission partners in Europe and Africa.