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San Gabriel Valley TOS Ernie Paredes Will Deploy to Iraq

- It's the second call-up for the Army Reserve staff sergeant

BY JIMMY STROUP

(Jan. 3, 2006) For the second time in five years, Ernie Paredes has been called on by the U.S. Army to deploy to Iraq as part of his commitment to the Reserves.



Metro TOS and Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Ernie Paredes has been called into active duty for the second time in five years. After some training in Texas, Paredes is bound for Iraq and an 18-month tour. Photo by Jimmy Stroup

And, as the San Gabriel Valley transportation operations supervisor – and Army staff sergeant – usually responds when asked to get the job done, Paredes said, “OK.”

A Metro employee since 1983, Paredes was called to active duty after Sept. 11, 2001 for an 18-month tour.

The Army wanted again to call him up again in 2003, but decided not to after once it was clear he'd just come home from the first deployment.

Still, after only being home a few years, Paredes isn't upset

about being activated again.

'It's my turn'

“It's my turn,” he said simply. “I'm OK with it. My family's OK with it.”

Aurora Jackson, San Gabriel Valley assistant transportation manager, isn't happy to lose him, but said she — and everyone in the service sector office — is proud of Paredes' commitment to the Army Reserve and to Metro.

“Truly, he performs exceptionally,” she said. “We, his coworkers, are really proud of him.”

After some time for himself and his family, Paredes will leave next week for Texas and two months of training.

After that, he's off to Iraq for 18 months. But, through it all, Paredes maintains the no-nonsense pragmatism that has become his signature.

“It's my job,” he says.

