

109th AIRLIFT WING



MISSION

The 109th Airlift Wing employs the Department of Defense's only ski-equipped aircraft to conduct operations in remote Polar Regions. We train, equip and deploy premier, combat-ready Airmen to support state and national objectives.

LINEAGE

109th Fighter Group, 1 May 1956
109th Air Transport Group, Heavy
Redesignated 109th Tactical Airlift Group
Redesignated 109th Airlift Group, 15 Mar 1992
Redesignated 109th Airlift Wing

STATIONS

Schenectady, NY

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

LC-130

Support Aircraft

C-12J

COMMANDERS

Maj. William J. Flavin 1948-1950

Lt. Col. Frederick J. Zilly Jr. 1950-1962

Col. John C. Campbell 1962-1971
Col. Stanley W. Hemstreet 1971-1985
Col. Douglas B. Morey 1985-1990
Col. John F. Ammerall 1990-1991
Col. Archie J. Berberian II 1991-1995
Col. Jonathan E. Adams 1995-1998
Col. Marion G. Pritchard 1998-1999
Col. Max DellaPia 1999-2006
Col. Anthony P. German 2006

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Midway during our Active Duty tour, a severe medical problem caused Lt Col Frederick J. Zilly Jr. to be removed from flying status. Since it was a requirement for the Group Commander to be on flying status, a change of Command was necessitated. Lt Col John C. Campbell, Jr. was assigned the Group Commander's position and on 1 March 1962 assumed command. In the fall of 1950, Capt Campbell had reported to Major Zilly. It had probably never occurred to either one at the time that their positions would be reversed. Maj David C. Ormiston assumed

Command of the 139th Air Transport Squadron, the position vacated by Lt Col Campbell.

1987 The 109th TAG continued to perform its annual resupply mission of the distant early warning radar sites located on the Greenland Ice Cap. The resupply operations for 1987 took place during May and June. As in previous years, the Group's four LC-130H were deployed to Sondrestrom Air Base, Greenland. The 109th's aircraft transported aircrews, maintenance and support personnel, and necessary equipment between home station and Sondrestrom during the two month operation. The mission of the Group is to resupply northern tier forces requiring ski-equipped capability. The 109th flies missions throughout the northern tier from Alaska to Greenland to maintain this capability. Beyond the 109th's Greenland operation, the Group's personnel and aircraft participated in a number of other operations and training missions during 1987. Twenty-five members of the Aerial Port Flight trained at Hickam AFB, Hawaii, while another 13 members of the flight trained in aircraft cargo handling at Norton AFB, California, in early February. February also saw 15 members of the Communications Flight go to Hickam AFB, Hawaii, for training. During the same period, 35 officers and airmen of the Combat Support Squadron deployed to Gulfport, Mississippi, for training. As the Group's personnel trained in the locations noted, aircrews took part in airlifting members of the NYARNG's 210th Armor to Idaho and return for their training. In late spring, 60 members of the AEF deployed to Lackenheath, for annual training. Members of the CES and Weapons Systems Security Flight were also on the move as they went to Eglin AFB, Florida, and Charleston, South Carolina. During autumn, 23 members of the Clinic moved to the Weisbaden Germany Medical Center for annual training. Late in the year the 109th completed planning for sending two of its LC-130H to Antarctica during January 1988. The mission is in support of the National Science Foundation which operates research facilities in Antarctica. The 109th has assisted the Foundation in the past with its meteorology, climatology, and geology research on the Greenland Ice Cap.

1988 The 109th Tactical Airlift Group continued its unique mission by performing resupply of the distant early warning radar sites located on the Greenland Ice Cap. As in previous years, the Group's four ski equipped LC-130H were deployed to Sondrestrom Air Base, Greenland, from which they airlifted supplies and equipment to the remote sites. The 109th's four C-130H were used to transport aircrews, maintenance and support personnel, and necessary equipment between home station and Sondrestrom A B in the two-month operation. The 109th fly missions throughout the northern tier from Alaska to Greenland to maintain this capability. Beyond the 109th's Greenland operation, the Group's personnel and aircraft participated in a number of other operations and training missions during 1988.

Two LC-130H and 12 aircrew members and support personnel deployed twice on a familiarization mission to Antarctica in support of the National Science Foundation and its U. S. Navy support aircraft. In February, 60 members of the Aeromedical Evacuation Flight traveled to Travis AFB, California, for training. During the same period, members of the 109th Mission Support and Resource Management Squadrons deployed to Gulfport, Mississippi, for annual training. In March, two teams of 20 personnel each, from the 109th Mobile Aerial Port Flight deployed to Europe for training. One team worked with its active duty counterparts at Torrejon AB, Spain, while the other worked primarily at Rhein Main AB, West Germany. Fifteen members

of the 109th Accounting and Finance Office deployed to Travis AFB, California, for training with their active duty counterparts in the spring.

In April the Group flew a humanitarian airlift to northern Greenland. The Group airlifted 220 sled dogs from southern Greenland to north of Thule AB, Greenland, at the request of the Danish government. The canine population had been ravaged by rabies and the livelihood of the local population was threatened. In separate operations 109th aircrews and aircraft airlifted elements of the Army's 10th Mountain Division while members of the Weapons Systems Security Flight deployed to Mildenhall AB, England, for training. The 139th Tactical Airlift Squadron, the flying unit of the Group, successfully passed a Standard Evaluation Inspection administered by the 22nd Air Force in June.

The "Northeast Flight '88" Air Show, held at Schenectady County Airport, celebrated the 40th anniversary of the 109th TAG. In August, the Group provided emergency lighting to local municipalities during power disruptions in the Capital District area. During autumn, 22 members of the Aeromedical Evacuation Flight deployed to Ramstein AB, West Germany, in support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Exercise REFORGER '88 and supported QUICKFORCE '88. The Group also transported 24,000 pounds of humanitarian relief supplies to the island of Jamaica in humanitarian airlift operations similar to those performed by the 105th MAG at Newburgh. The 109th ended the year by supporting the Air Force and Navy operations during FLEETER 1-89 with aircraft and aircrews. In all, the 109th conducted 15 deployments, nine OCONUS and six CONUS.

2005 3 Sep

Three Aeromedical Evacuation crews (fifteen personnel) and two In-Flights kits from the 109th Airlift Wing, New York ANG, deployed in SAD status to Kelly AFB, Texas to support hurricane relief efforts in Louisiana.

5 Sep

The 109th Airlift Wing, New York ANG, deployed three Aerial Port squadron personnel in Title 32 orders to NAS New Orleans to support hurricane relief efforts.

6 Sep

Twelve Aerial Port Squadron personnel from the 109th Airlift Wing, New York ANG, deployed in Title 32 status to Stennis IAP.

15 Sep

One C-130 and two Aeromedical Evacuation crews assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing, New York ANG, returned to home station at Schenectady County Airport, New York. Unit aircraft and members were deployed in Title 32 status to Kelly AFB, Texas for hurricane relief operations.

New York Guardsmen, Skibirds Return from Greenland Some 70 Air National Guardsmen and two ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules aircraft from the 109th Airlift Wing at Stratton ANGB, N.Y., recently returned home from a four-day mission to Kangerlussuaq, Greenland. The airmen flew

to Greenland in late June to train for Operation Deep Freeze, a joint-service effort to provide support to the National Science Foundation. This is the fourth rotation to the Arctic region-only two more are left before the end of the 2014 season, states a July 3 release.

The 109th Airlift Wing flies to Antarctica in the winter to support ODF. Weather can easily affect aircraft in the Arctic region, so the maintainers "primary mission is to fix the aircraft so they [can] fly their missions while here," said MSgt. Joseph Deamer of the 109th Maintenance Group. "The other part of our mission is [to train] out of Raven Camp," said Capt. Rachel Leimbach, the supervisor of flying for this rotation. "There is minimal science that we do at Raven, making it primarily a training site, which is how we get the crews ready for Antarctica," she said. 2014

Seven LC-130 Skibirds of the New York Air National Guard wrapped up the five-month Antarctic summer research support season and returned to Stratton ANGB, N.Y., this week. "We flew over 155 on-continent missions in Antarctica as well as intercontinental missions from New Zealand to Antarctica" since last October, said Lt. Col. Clifford Souza in a Feb. 25 release. The unit's aircraft hauled a total of 2,250 tons of cargo and 3,000 passengers over a total of 241 missions, according to the unit. Unit aircraft also flew nine scanning sorties with the experimental IcePod sensor package to measure ice density and fluctuations. "These were the final tests before the IcePod is fully commissioned," said pilot Maj. Joshua Hicks. "Overall it went very well," he added. A total of 575 Guardsmen rotated to McMurdo Station, Antarctica, maintaining a 120-strong contingent on the continent. The first aircraft returned Feb. 23. 2015

A pair of New York Air National Guard LC-130 ski-equipped transports supported Operation Nunavut, a Canadian Arctic exercise, for the second consecutive year, announced Air Guard officials. In light of Russian belligerence toward NATO and increased military activity in the Arctic, "we feel that these exercises are ever-more important to exert our sovereignty and our ability to respond," said Canadian associate defense minister Julian Fantino in a report by the Canadian Nunatsiak News. "We're looking to continue standing up against any threat to our sovereignty and stand ready at any moment to defend our people, land, and interests," he added. The LC-130s are practicing operating from ice runways and working with the Canadian forces during the exercise, which concludes on April 22. Approximately 200 Canadian troops and 30 US airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing at Stratton ANGB, N.Y., are taking part in the exercise.

2015

The last of the airmen and LC-130 aircraft supporting the National Science Foundation's Antarctic research returned home to New York last week. Members of the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing transported 3,900 people, carried four million pounds of supplies, and 1.2 million pounds of fuel around Antarctica during the wing's five-month mission, according to a March 11 release. The wing's six LC-130s-the only US military ski-equipped aircraft-began returning to Stratton ANGB, N.Y., in late February, but the NSF mission didn't end until last week. A total of 500 airmen deployed to McMurdo Station in support of the operation.

2016

In January 1960, the jet fighters gave way to the Global Transport mission as the first of eight C-97 Stratocruisers landed at Schenectady County Airport. The Global Transport mission, along with a new Aeromedical Evacuation mission, was totally new for the Air National Guard and the 109th. With transition from single engine jet fighters to four engine transports, our capabilities were soon tested. On 1 October 1961, President John F. Kennedy activated a large number of ANG units and filler Air Force reservists, including the 109th, for one year to support the now legendary Berlin Airlift Crisis. Our unit was placed under the USAF major air command called MATS (Military Air Transport Service). The 109th Air Transport Group (H) became a global transport unit performing missions to Europe, South America, the Caribbean, Hawaii, Japan, Australia, Southeast Asia, the Philippines and numerous places and military installations within the United States. The unit airlifted a total cargo tonnage equivalent to the weight of a navy destroyer escort 45 times around the earth; more than a million miles! To the 109th's credit, this was accomplished without a single aircraft accident. One of the flying highlights of this period was transporting cargo to South Vietnam in support of US forces. The flyers logged a record 1050 flying hours in a single month.

During this period of extended active duty (1 March 1962), Lt. Col. John C. Campbell, Jr. assumed command when Lt. Col. Zilly had to be removed from flight status for medical reasons. New facilities marked that year with the construction of two new aircraft "nose docks," a new dining hall, a new firehouse and a larger aircraft parking ramp to accommodate four more airplanes. These additions were sorely needed to support the demands of the mission that continued until 31 August 1962 when the 109th Air Transport Group (H) was deactivated and reverted back to New York State control. General Joe W. Kelly, MATS Commander, expressed his personal pride and appreciation to the unit and stated, "They have met every task placed upon them." The New York Air National Guard ended the Berlin Crisis with the largest number of fully trained personnel in its history to that time. The dedication and professionalism arising out of that demanding period was to be carried on into the proud future of the capital district's own unit.

With Brigadier General Stanley W. Hemstreet's retirement in May 1985, Lt. Col. Douglas B. Morey became commander of the 109th. General Hemstreet's almost 14 years as commander stands as the record for longevity in that post.

January 1988 saw our first mission to Antarctica. Two of our LC-130Hs took part in Operation Deep Freeze. February 1988 marked the arrival of our first C-12J, which was headquarters NYANG support aircraft. On 4 March 1989, our base became officially known as Stratton Air National Guard Base, named for Congressman and former Mayor of Schenectady, Samuel S. Stratton. Congressman Stratton passed away in September 1990.

In August 1990, 200 unit members deployed for support of Operation Desert Shield which soon became Operation Desert Storm. Colonel Douglas B. Morey relinquished his command and was assigned to Headquarters NYANG in November 1990. Lt. Col. Jack Amerall assumed command of the unit at that time. In December 1990, our small arms range construction was completed, marking the first time we could qualify with small arms without leaving the base. January 1991

saw us holding a "Welcome Home" reception for our Desert Storm veterans.

Lt. Col. Archie J. Berberian II was selected 109th Commander in April 1991. November 1991 saw our organization attain its second Outstanding Unit Award.

March 1992, we achieved a unit membership of 1,000 airmen and returned to training for the airdrop mission.

The 109th and Stratton ANGB grew by leaps and bounds in 1994. New facilities and improvements included: new main gate entry, aerial port facility, fire station, security police facility, new parking lots. Renovation projects included: roof for operations facility, heating system for Hangar #2, and expansion of medical and aerospace equipment (AGE) facilities. An original C-130D ski bird, aircraft #490, returned home to Stratton in October of 1994 to become a permanent static display at the main entrance to the base. 1995 saw the unit redesignated as the 109th Airlift Wing on 1 October. In December, Col. Archie Berberian was selected to the top position in the New York Air National Guard as the Chief of Staff. Col. Jonathan Adams was selected as the new Wing Commander.

Also, in December, approval was announced to design and construct a new ten million dollar hangar, which was dedicated in early 1998. The new hangar was needed to support the three additional new LC-130's arriving in December 1995 and January 1996. Early in 1996 it was announced that the 109th AW was assigned the Antarctic Mission, thus beginning a three year transition process. The 109th AW would now provide single point management to the National Science Foundation scientific research mission in both the Arctic and Antarctic. Col. M. Graham Pritchard was selected as Vice Commander and full time Air Commander of the 109th AW in April 1996.

On February 20, 1998, responsibility for Airlift Support to the U.S. Antarctic Program (USAP) was passed over to Col Graham Pritchard and the 109th from VXE-6, during a ceremony in Christchurch, NZ. The 109th will now be the only LC-130 ski unit in the world.

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 29 Sep 2010

Updated:

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit yearbook. *109 Tactical Airlift Group, 25th Anniversary. 1948-1973.*

Unit yearbook. *109 Airlift Wing, Stratton ANGB, 1948-1998.*