

135th DIRECT AIR SUPPORT CENTER SQUADRON

Direct Air Support Center Squadron

LINEAGE

STATIONS

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Lt. Col. Dick Lynch continued to command the Group while Lt. Col. Roy Bands became the first and only commander of the DASC.

The Direct Air Support Flight (later renamed the Direct Air Support Center Squadron) was a new type of unit for the Air Guard. The DASF was essentially a command post that coordinated requests from Army commanders for close air support. In combat, these requests would be routed through Air Liaison Officers (ALO) assigned to each Army combat unit. The ALOs would then send the requests to the Direct Air Support Center for prioritization. The DASC would then scramble attack fighters from alert status to attack the targets under control of an airborne Forward Air Controller, usually flying an O-2. The DASC was outfitted with the latest

communications gear to be able to talk with the ALOs and FAGs.

Many of the displaced aircrew members became "ROMADs." This acronym stood for Radio Operator Maintenance and Driver. ROMADs were issued MK 107 or Mk 108 jeeps that were outfitted with UHF, VHF, FM and HF radios. The two-person team of ALO and ROMAD were a formidable team with the ability to instantly communicate vital battlefield information from almost any place on earth. They were assigned directly to the S-3 Army Operations Officer of front line combat units. Their communications gear was so advanced that the Army frequently used them to communicate between their own units in rapidly changing battle situations.

But the 135th's mission would undergo a dramatic change later that decade. From the mission of Tactical Air Support, the unit began a transition into another highly demanding mission: Tactical Airlift. The 135th Tactical Air Support Group was reorganized as the 135th Tactical Airlift Group under the Military Airlift Command. Subordinate units included the 135th Tactical Airlift Squadron (TAS), 135th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (CAMRON, or later CAMS), 135th Aerial Port Flight, 135th Combat Support Squadron, and 135th Weapons Systems Security Flight. This change in mission required another change M aircraft as the unit began a conversion to the C-7A Caribou. The 170th Tactical Airlift Group, McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., was transitioning into another aircraft and sent sixteen C-7s to the 135th. The C-7 was used in Vietnam by the U.S. Army for the insertion of troops and supplies into unimproved areas. This conversion involved a major personnel change for the members of the 135th. For the last five years, the unit had been flying the O-2A, usually with only one crewmember in the aircraft. The C-7 was a three-person aircraft. These were exciting times for many of the men who had been grounded with the introduction of the O-2s, as the position of flight mechanic was reinstated. Others were less excited as they would be on the road again after several years of home based duty.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources