

## 818 MOBILITY SUPPORT ADVISORY SQUADRON



### **MISSION**

### **LINEAGE**

818 Mobility Support Advisory Squadron constituted, 29 Mar 2011  
Activated, 15 Apr 2011

### **STATIONS**

McGuire AFB, NJ, 15 Apr 2011

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

818 Contingency Response Group, 15 Apr 2011

### **COMMANDERS**

### **HONORS**

#### **Service Streamers**

None

#### **Campaign Streamers**

None

#### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

None

### **Decorations**

Meritorious Unit Award  
1 Oct 2011-30 Sep 2012

**EMBLEM**

Approved, 22 Jun 2011

**EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE****MOTTO****NICKNAME****OPERATIONS**

Twenty airmen assigned to two recently activated Air Mobility Command advisory squadrons graduated from Air Education and Training Command's inaugural air advisor basic course tailored for missions in Africa and South America. The course is taught at JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. These airmen—members of the 818th Mobility Support Advisory Squadron at McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst and the 571st MSAS at Travis AFB, Calif.—learned how to train, advise, and assist partner nations' military personnel in the development of air mobility systems. With the course behind them, the airmen are scheduled to begin missions later this year. During the month-long course, the airmen learned skills like mentoring techniques and acquired foreign language skills and region-specific cultural knowledge. Course instruction also focused on building diplomatic skills needed to work in cultures where one-on-one relationships are highly valued. The airmen graduated last month. 2011

Travis Wing Stands Up Advisory Squadron: The 615th Contingency Response Wing at Travis AFB, Calif., last week activated the 571st Mobility Support Advisory Squadron. The new unit, only the second of its kind in the Air Force, will employ teams of expeditionary air mobility air advisors throughout the Caribbean, and Central and South America to build relationships with partner air forces and help them increase their mobility capacity to respond to humanitarian crises and disasters, reported The Reporter of Vacaville, Calif. The unit stood up on May 20. By December 2012, the squadron will have more than 100 airmen; today, there are about 15. Travis' new squadron mirrors the 818th MSAS that began operations in April at JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., to work with partner air forces in Africa. 2011

4/27/2011 A new air mobility unit activated April 19 in a ceremony here, marking the genesis of a new mission for the expeditionary air mobility specialists of the 621st Contingency Response Wing. By order of the secretary of the Air Force, members of the 818th Mobility Support Advisory Squadron will provide air mobility advisory and training assistance in support of the Air Force goals of building partner capacity. It is assigned to the wing's 818th Contingency Response Group. An identical unit will have its activation ceremony in early May in the 615th CRW at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. It is one of only two such squadrons of air mobility dedicated air advisers in the Air Force and was the first unit of this type created within Air Mobility Command. "There is a demand for air mobility trained air advisers," said Lt. Col. Thom Adkins, the new 818th MSAS commander. "But until this point, there hasn't been an entire

squadron dedicated to air mobility specific skills, trained and capable of deploying in cohesive teams." The creation of the unit gives Air Force leaders the ability to employ teams of knowledgeable, expeditionary air mobility air advisers from a dedicated squadron. Once fully operational, the squadron will support combatant commanders and provide continuity with partner nations for years to come, he said. The 818 MSAS is expected to focus the majority of their efforts in Africa. "This isn't a sprint. It is a long term approach focused on building relationships. Our hope is to mutually benefit from our interactions," Colonel Adkins said. "Not only will we help our partner nations develop and improve their air mobility capabilities, but we will learn from what they have to offer as well. "The MSAS' parent wing is designed around expeditionary air mobility operations and is a natural choice to host the new squadron," he continued. The 621st CRW is a rapid response unit of air mobility, command and control, communication and security experts that are tasked with establishing emergency or contingency airfields in remote, damaged or dangerous locations worldwide on short notice. Previous missions conducted by 621st CRW Airmen include humanitarian relief operations to Pakistan, Haiti and Japan in response to earthquakes, floods and tsunamis. In addition, the wing supported military mobility surge operations in Bahrain, Afghanistan and Diego Garcia. They have also performed special airlift support missions for the space program and the President of the United States. "The specific skills required to accomplish the MSAS mission are already well-honed in the CRW, but the speed and purpose to which they are employed is fundamentally different," said Lt. Col. John Cairney, the 818th CRG deputy commander. "The difference is an evolution from a reactive contingency response mindset to a very proactive and intentional outreach."

The new squadron is scheduled to achieve initial operational capability by December 2011 with the certification of one nine-member air mobility assessment team and one 11-Airman advisory team, officials said. "The assessment teams will start by meeting with counterparts in a partner nation's Air Force to evaluate their air mobility-specific needs and capabilities," Colonel Cairney said. "This will focus the efforts of the follow-on advisory team and build the basis of a long-term relationship." Advisory teams will take the next step in building the partnership, moving from handshakes to classrooms. These 11-man teams will be tailored to the specific requests of a partner nation and will mentor, advise and instruct the partner nation's Air Forces in air mobility-specific skill-sets such as airfield operations and security, aerial port cargo and passenger movement, communications and aircraft maintenance. "It is important to remember we are teaching air mobility skills and methods, not necessarily providing hardware," Colonel Cairney said. "This isn't a program intended to equip partner nations; our stated mission is to make them more effective in the ways they need to operate according to their specific requests."

Colonel Adkins said his new squadron will use outreach and education to help nations help themselves. "The overall goal of the 818th MSAS is to enhance the Air Mobility operations of partner nations," he said. "The more capable a partner nation is in regards to its own air mobility capacity, the less likely they will need a contingency response team to assist in the future."

While the skills and expeditionary mindset of the MSAS mission will be familiar to the CRW, many of its new Airmen will not be. A key aspect of participation in the squadron mission is knowledge not normally put into practice on a humanitarian deployment--the skills of an air

adviser. Part diplomat, part technical instructor, part cultural interpreter, the title often brings years of experience with it. The Air Force has a growing base of air advisers with knowledge and real-world experience in Iraq and Afghanistan. The goal is to capitalize on this base of talent and hopefully recruit them into the new MSAS team, said Colonel Cairney, who himself served as an air adviser in Iraq. "We are scheduled to have around 42 fully-trained Airmen from 25 different career fields by the end of this year, but eventually the squadron will have approximately 73 air advisers," he said. "We have jobs coming up on the assignment management system constantly and will be actively recruiting from current active duty sources for quite some time." Airmen must attend an air adviser training course before being qualified to deploy on an assessment or advisory team. Preparation and training is a major aspect of the mission of the MSAS, said Col. Dean Bridger, the 818th CRG commander. "Unlike contingency response forces that have only 12 hours notice to respond to crises, the MSAS is in the prevention business - they're charged with preventing a crisis," the colonel said. "This team may have months or even a year's notice before entering a country. This will give them ample time to study the history, culture and languages of that country so their educational efforts will have the greatest chance of success with the partner nation. "When everything comes together, our partner nations will be able to provide dependable airlift to access even the remotest regions of their sovereign territory," he continued. "This means the ability to transport political leaders, police or military into regions that might otherwise be inaccessible or in conflict; stabilizing nations and possibly saving lives."

Air Mobility Command's two air advisor squadrons tasked with mentoring partner nation air forces recently declared full operational capability, announced command officials. "To date, our role has been to train ourselves in the art of air advising," explained 571st Mobility Support Advisory Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Gabriel Griess in a Jan. 8 release from Travis AFB, Calif., home of the unit. "Going forward, we will execute the mission . . . in conjunction with US military groups in each respective country," he added. To reach FOC, airmen of the 571st MSAS and 818th MSAS at JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., completed air advisor and instructor courses, as well as survival, evasion, resistance, and escape training and language instruction, according to the release. Travis advisors completed studies in Spanish for assignment to Latin America, while the McGuire unit trained in French for assignment to Africa. Both of the squadrons report to the 621st Contingency Response Wing at McGuire. They attained the FOC milestone on Dec. 1. 2013

Eight air advisors from the 621st Contingency Response Wing at JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst N.J., participated in a 10-day joint aerial supply and medical-readiness exercise in Douala, Cameroon, announced wing officials. Exercise Central Accord 2013, held from Feb. 20 to March 1, was meant to enhance the Cameroon military's and neighboring central African partner nations' logistical and resupply capabilities, according to the wing's March 5 release. During the

exercise, Cameroonians' airdrop. 2013

Members of the 818th Mobility Support Advisory Squadron at JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., traveled to Dakar, Senegal, to instruct Senegalese airmen on safety issues. The four air advisors met with 33 Senegalese airmen during the week-long mission, which concluded in early August, according to an Aug. 14 release. They discussed topics like "crew resource management, operation risk engagement, guidance for fire and emergency services, airfield safety, response safety, foreign object damage, and bird hazards," with the Senegalese, states the release. "Safe practices are paramount to sustained operations. Sustainment is a fundamental principle of building partnership capacity," said Lt. Col. John Scott, 818th MSAS operations officer and team leader. The training was "a reflection of the 818th MSAS' unique capability to provide air mobility advisory and training assistance," said Lt. Col. Pete Larsen, MSAS commander. This is the squadron's third training mission with the Senegalese. The previous exchange, in May, dealt with disaster-relief contingency planning. 2013

Mobility support advisors from the 621st Contingency Response Wing at JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., last month visited Luanda, Angola, to exchange ideas with Angolan airmen on airfield security and flight-line safety. These air advisors from the 818th Mobility Support Advisory Squadron exchanged best practices in bird-avoidance-strike hazards, operational and crew-resource management, flight-line safety, and fuels safety during the Sept. 9-13 visit, according to McGuire's Sept. 26 release. "The enrichment of our procedures in these areas is not only crucial for our operational capacity, but is also a critical aspect for our contribution to the promotion and development of our economy," said Lt. Gen. Domingos Adriano da Silva Neto, Angolan air force chief of staff. This visit was part of US Africa Command's ongoing efforts to build partnerships in the region. "Angola is one of only a few countries in Africa that can support international peacekeeping operations," said Col. David Poage, AFAFRICA's international relations division chief. "Exchanging knowledge and experience strengthens the relationship between our air forces," he said. 2013

Members of Mauritania's air force, known by its French acronym FAIM, recently visited JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., for a week's worth of partnership-building exchanges with airmen of the 621st Contingency Response Wing. They shared practices involving maintenance, security, communications, fuels, and logistics with their American hosts, according to McGuire's Oct. 15 release. The mid-September visit marked the first time that FAIM members toured the wing's operations at McGuire, a wing spokesman told the Daily Report on Thursday. "It is very impressive how they do their job," said FAIM Capt. Ahmed Babow, commander of Atar base in northwest Mauritania. "Their processes in security and communications are really good. We have exchanged so many good ideas that we can now bring home with us," he said. On their most recent trip to Mauritania this summer, members of the wing's 818th Mobility Support

Advisory Squadron "identified a number of engagement opportunities for future visits," said TSgt. Tenniller Preston, 818th MSAS air advisor. The squadron is slated for another visit to Mauritania in December, states the release. 2013

Members of the 818th Mobility Support Advisory Squadron at JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., traveled to Lusaka, Zambia, recently to train and share ideas with the Zambian air force. The training was the "first of its kind" since the passage of the Fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill, which included language enabling "air advisors to build partnerships with a strategic US ally while expanding their unit's air advising capabilities," according to a release. Before the new NDAA language, units could only upgrade "a maximum of two" air advisors per trip, said Maj. Michael Morrow, 818th MSAS mission commander. "But due to the nature of the ... mission we were able to upgrade six team members," he said. "No single country has all the knowledge and resources needed to rapidly and efficiently mitigate every potential disaster around the world. We need to work together and learn from each other," said Morrow. "The need to share best practices for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief principles is critical." 2015

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Air Force Lineage and Honors

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#### Sources

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