

25 AERIAL PORT SQUADRON



MISSION

The 25 Aerial Port Squadron is the unit responsible for all management and movement of cargo and passengers transported on any of the 908 Airlift Wing's nine C-130s. They do this by providing such functions as: processing personnel and cargo, rigging for airdrop, packing parachutes, loading equipment, preparing air cargo and load plans, loading and securing aircraft, ejecting cargo for inflight delivery, and supervising units engaged in aircraft loading and unloading operations.

The squadron's mission is to deploy highly trained, equipped, professional Airmen in support of worldwide aerial port operations and our national security priorities.

In order to accomplish those priorities, the squadron takes its nearly 100 members, six of which are full-timers and more than 90 being traditional reservists and divides them into six different sections including the air terminal operations center, the load planning section, the special handling section, the ramp section, the passenger section, and the cargo section.

The air terminal operations center works as a command element in charge of information control and dissemination.

The load planning section is in charge of configuring all of the aircraft loads.

The special handling section inspects and processes hazardous materials transiting aircraft.

The ramp section has our material handling equipment operators that load the aircraft.

The passenger section runs the passenger terminal, processing passengers for air travel.

The cargo section is in charge of pallet buildup and cargo manifesting.

LINEAGE

2 Air Cargo Resupply Detachment constituted, 17 Jul 1944

Activated, 1 Aug 1944

Inactivated, 15 Nov 1945

Disbanded, 8 Oct 1948

Reconstituted and redesignated 25 Mobile Aerial Port Squadron, 17 Mar 1983

Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1983

Redesignated 25 Aerial Port Squadron

STATIONS

Greenham Common, England, 1 Aug 1944

Dreux, France, 17 Mar 1945

Reims, France, 5 Jul 1945

Marseilles, France, 15-23 Aug 1945

Camp Patrick Henry, VA 2 Sep 1945

Baer Field, IN, 5 Sep 1945

Lawson Field, GA, 8 Oct-15 Nov 1945

Maxwell AFB, AL, 1 Oct 1983

ASSIGNMENTS

Ninth Air Force, 1 Aug 1944

IX Air Force Service Command, 2 Aug 1944

IX Troop Carrier Command, 26 Aug 1944 (attached to IX Troop Carrier Service Wing
[Provisional], 26 Aug 1944-28 Jan 1945)

I Troop Carrier Command, 2 Sep 1945

50 Troop Carrier Wing, 8 Oct-15 Nov 1945

908 Tactical Airlift Group, 1 Oct 1983

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Grady C. Edwards

Lt Col William N. Veale, Sr

Lt Col Jason Johnson

Maj Lester E. Smith

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Oct 2003-30 Sep 2005

1 Oct 2009-30 Sep 2011

1 Jan 2014-31 Dec 2015

EMBLEM



On an ultramarine azure disc, an or lightning bolt is positioned at the honor point and streaks across the disc. A vert globe rests on a sable forklift, which is placed at middle base. The globe is supported by a gules parachute. The disc is bordered with or. Two argent scrolls are attached above and below the disc. The scrolls are bordered with or. The scroll above is blank and is reserved for the unit's designation. The one below is lettered with sable and bears the unit's motto "Anytime Anywhere." **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and air force yellow are used in the design. Blue represents the sky, the primary theater of air force operations. Yellow signifies the sun and the excellence required of air force personnel. The black of the forklift, scroll lettering and detail of the emblem reflects the dignity and determination of unit personnel. The qualities of adaptability and wisdom are reflected in the green of the globe. The red of the parachute symbolizes the courage and patriotism exhibited by members of the unit in their daily task. The white lines of the longitude and latitude, and background of the scrolls, define maturity and steadfastness to the mission.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

In April 1944, the detachment was activated to support the D-Day push. The original complement was 109 enlisted and four officers at a small airfield at Membury England. The task to airdrop supplies in the D-Day battle zone was massive. The unit provided its assigned C-47 aircraft an experienced dropmaster. As the number of missions increased so did the number of plans and dropmasters that didn't return. It was not unusual for one officer and a small crew to

accompany the crew a forward airbase and help move the cargo to the forward areas; many times under enemy fire.

In December 1944, the 2nd Detachment assisted in air dropping supplies to the trapped 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne. The resupply allowed the encircled troops to hold Bastogne.

On 15 November 1945, the 2 Air Cargo Resupply Detachment, was inactivated at Fort Benning, GA. This detachment had served valiantly during WWII primarily in England and France as a resupply unit that provided much needed cargo and personnel to support the allied invasion of Europe. The brave men that had served so faithfully were released from duty and eagerly returned to their families were dutifully recorded and deposited in the historical annals and left to lie dormant for 37 years. But on 1 October 1983, this Army Air Corps unit arose like Lazarus with a new life and new name. The 2 Air Cargo Resupply Detachment was activated designated the 25 Mobile Aerial Port Squadron and assigned to the 908 Tactical Airlift Group at Maxwell AFB, AL. The first commander of the unit was a salty strong willed Lieutenant Colonel named Grady Edwards who was a 30 year veteran of both the Army and Air Force. His job was to create a squadron from nothing but a name. As he gathered his personnel, William Veale was chosen as one of his first staff officers.

On 1 Oct 1983, the 908th will have a new squadron added to its organizational chart. But, as Lt. Col. Grady C. Edwards can tell you, there is no such thing as an instant squadron. You don't just add water and stir. Edwards and a cadre of 908th people have been building the new 25th Mobile Aerial Port Squadron since last November. It is a painstaking process, made no less difficult, he explains, by the fact that the unit is at this point only a phantom.

"When we went to the host organization to set up our property accounts," Colonel Edwards said with a smile, "they told us we didn't exist." He and his Air Terminal Operations Center NCOIC, MSgt, Charles Hesse, have been interviewing prospective 25th MAPS members for months, but as a not-yet-activated unit, they could have no aerial porters actually assigned. Colonel Edwards and his people seem to be taking all this in stride, however, they see problems like these as but temporary obstacles. Indeed, by the April UTA weekend they had their property accounts all set up, and property custodians appointed. And 60 members of the fledgling unit were identified and assigned temporarily to the 908 Combat Support Squadron.

"That is out of an authorized strength of 138," Colonel Edwards, said, "we feel like we are making a lot of progress. Most of the people we've selected have had prior experience with aerial ports. Many were former 908th Aerial Post Flight people.

The unit will be peopled with Cargo Specialists Transportation Specialists, loadmasters and a complement of administrative support personnel. For those already selected there is no shortage of things to do. "In January the people we had identified deployed to Charleston to get some hands-on training Colonel Edwards explained. "It was a refresher for some; an initial experience for the recruits." The admin people have been ordering publications and getting files set up, section NCOs have been making up lesson plans and doing research they'll need for on-the-job training. Most members of the 25th MAPS must drive, so they are using this time to get the proper government licenses needed to operate the unit's equipment.

Virtually everybody will go to school: A two week Airlift of Hazardous Materials course; a two week Transportation of Dangerous Materials course, and a four week Fabrication of Delivery Loads course. The first two will teach specialists what they will need to know to certify cargo as safe for loading, and how to categorize loads properly so pilots and crew will understand what they have on board and how to treat it emergencies.

Course according to Sergeant Hesse, teaches specialists "how to build up pallets that can be air deployed." That's a reminder that C-130s can be unloaded without an aerial port.

Colonel Edwards is hoping that a field training detachment can be sent in to do some of the formal training during the unit's annual tour. Unit members are also getting as much of their ancillary training out of the way as possible. "We are not an official unit yet," Colonel Edwards said, "but we are functioning as one. The idea is to get as much of our training and preparation out of the way as possible before we are officially organized. That way we'll be ready to start accomplishing our mission as soon as the aircraft arrive."

That mission, surprisingly, is not to load up the 908th TAG for deployment. "Our role would be to go to some forward base, perhaps a bare base, and receive equipment from many incoming flying units," Colonel Edwards explained.

He expects his people to begin getting practical experience as soon as the 908th C-130 arrive. By then, too, the 25th MAPS' facilities should be ready. "They're renovating the whole inside of a hangar for us," Colonel Edwards explained, "building office space and setting up for load and unload rigging, even building a motor pool." The hangar is Bldg. 846, near Maxwell's base operations areas. "We've been very fortunate because the host base went to great lengths to work with us," he said. "They gave up a lot of space."

On October 1, the 25th will officially come into being. By then Colonel Edwards, his Aerial Port Operations OIC Maj. Bill Veale, his Terminal Services Section OIC Capt. David Culpepper, Sergeant Hesse and others involved in the building program now underway expect to be ready to hit the ground running.

"On the day we are officially formed I expect to be short only about 30 people," Colonel Edwards said. "And while we are supposed to be C-5 on that day, I think I'm being realistic when I say I believe we'll be C-2 by then easily."

Not a bad year's work for a squadron that doesn't exist. The 25th MAPS is proceeding at a rapid rate toward becoming a highly functional aerial port. The entire squadron and especially those individuals in key leadership positions have made concentrated efforts to establish functional and academic training programs to reach a state of mission preparedness as quickly and efficiently as possible. The first air drop practice mission was completed in November 1983. Since that first drop, the training has escalated to 12 heavy equipment drops and nine container delivery system drops this quarter which totals 32.8 tons of cargo.

In February 1984, 25th MAPS sent 25 reservists to Charleston AFB for hands-on training. The March UTA was one in which all supervisors were preparing their sections for the squadrons first staff assistance visit from 14th AF and 21st AF.

1985 Fourteen lucky people got a chance to receive training at Howard AFB, Panama, 17-31 August, with the 6th Aerial Port Squadron. Training was for cargo processors, ramp specialist and air terminal operations specialist. This training included a variety of aircraft, unusual loads

and load configurations. 25th MAPS also learned that on Friday nights when the "C-5A Special" arrived, there was no rank, or job field everyone became "ramp tramps" and helped unload the aircraft.

The January UTA 1986 followed a Management Evaluation Inspection in December 1985. The squadron took the evaluation's report and made adjustments and answered the discrepancies. The overall impression of the MEI was that it was a valuable tool and the information gained will be used to make us better. LTC William Veale was pleased with the squadron's efforts, but strongly urged each individual to rectify the areas needing corrections and strengthen the strong points.

A 25 member team from the 25th Mobile Aerial Port Squadron deployed to Charleston AFB, SC for training during the February UTA. Also, a 12 member team deployed to Mildenhall, England from 26 April to 1 May 1986. All participants were excited about the training received. During this period the 25th was tasked with supporting exercise PATRIOT PEACH at Gulfport, Mississippi. The unit had the responsibility of ramp, ATOC and transportation control for the exercise. Members found the training to be realistic and productive.

MSgt Woodham Foxworth, 25th MAPS, was the team chief for a 12-man annual deployment to Mildenhall England from 26 April to 1 May 86. Each participant came back excited about the great amount and range of training that was available. The consensus opinion was that this was the best training deployment since the unit was reactivated. There was some concern about traveling to Europe so soon after the American attack on Libya with British support, but other than the British airport being evacuated and a bomb discovered, the tense situation created no problems.

The major emphasis during the May UTA for 25th MAPS was the Patriot Peach exercise. The dates of the exercise were 17-23 May 86. MAPS was tasked to provide cargo, ramp, ATOC and transportation control unit functions for the exercise. Four C-130's were loaded and departed on time. The training was realistic and productive. Ten 25th MAPS personnel also were processed and mobilized to Gulfport MS for the exercise. The 25th MAPS ATOC was not normally tasked for TCU duty during a mobility exercise, so the training was a good experience.

1986 Training for 25th Mobile Aerial Port Squadron (MAPS) was excellent. For annual tour in July, five members deployed to Pope AFB, North Carolina and worked with the Army's 82nd Airborne; and a 24-member team went again in late summer for their annual tour. In August, twenty-five members deployed to Ramstein AFB, Germany for their annual tour, and the remainder of the squadron trained at home station. Joint air drop exercises, with Dobbins AFB, were conducted at the new drop zone - Barnett Drop Zone. In-house training remained top priority, and plans were made for the upcoming 14 AF and 21 AF Staff Assistance Visits.

January 1988 was preparation for a mobility exercise to be conducted during February. Such preparation included: a practice loading exercise by Air Terminal Operations Center (ATOC) and

terminal services sections; outbriefing fifteen personnel who were scheduled to depart for Howard AFB, Panama (30 Jan - 14 Feb 88); to support a major training exercise, Patriot Tiger at Westover AFB MA, a deployment team was selected; and supporting an airdrop mission to the Barnett Drop Zone, Montgomery, AL, was the Ramp, ATOC, and Aerial Delivery sections. Patriot Tiger was an annual tour exercise with training in on- and off-loading running aircraft, hazardous and sensitive cargo such as explosives and blood, perimeter defense, chemical warfare defense and combat arms training. It was conducted in "bare base" or field conditions.

February consisted mainly of a mobility exercise which went well although it was abbreviated and less than ORI criteria. That is, only fifty-nine people were processed. A twenty-five man deployment team left for Rhein Main AB, West Germany on 27 February and also a thirty man team deployed on a UTA flyaway, 12-14 February, to Charleston AFB SC. MAPS also supported a three airship airdrop to Barnett DZ .

During the March UTA, airdrop became the primary aim due to changing flight schedules and load times. Training was hectic and thus realistic. Yet the men successfully met this challenge. The deployment team to Germany returned after participating in an exercise called "Arrowhead Express" which was from Germany to Norway.

April's training included a practice loading exercise that paralleled an actual loading which planned to deploy to Westover AFB MA on 22 May - 4 Jun 88. Airdrops were also conducted. MAPS was also disappointed to learn of the cancellation of Rodeo because of budgetary cutbacks. They had six members on the team.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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

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