

39 AIRLIFT SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

39 Transport Squadron constituted, 2 Feb 1942
Activated, 22 Feb 1942
Redesignated 39 Troop Carrier Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Redesignated 39 Troop Carrier Squadron, Heavy, 21 May 1948
Inactivated, 14 Sep 1949
Redesignated 39 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 3 Jul 1952
Activated, 14 Jul 1952
Redesignated 39 Troop Carrier Squadron, 1 Mar 1966
Redesignated 39 Tactical Airlift Squadron, 1 May 1967
Inactivated, 31 Jul 1971
Activated, 31 Aug 1971
Redesignated 39 Airlift Squadron, 1 Jun 1992
Inactivated, 1 Jun 1992
Activated, 1 Oct 1993

STATIONS

Duncan Field, TX, 22 Feb 1942
Bowman Field, KY, 9 Oct 1942
Lawson Field, GA, Oct 1942
Maxton, NC, 2-12 Dec 1942
Garbutt, Australia, 22 Jan 1942
Archerfield, Australia, 22 Feb 1942
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 28 Sep 1943
Finschhafen, New Guinea, 23 Apr 1944

Hollandia, New Guinea, Jul 1944
Leyte, 19 Nov 1944
Clark Field, Luzon, 28 Mar 1945
Okinawa, Japan, 19 Aug 1945
Fukuoka, Japan, 11 Nov 1945
Tachikawa AB, Japan, 15 Jan 1946
Yamato, Japan, 17 Jul 1946
Carelus AAFld, Japan, 6 Sep 1946
Tachikawa AB, Japan, 16 Oct 1946-21 Sep 1948
Wiesbaden, Germany, 30 Sep 1948
Celle RAF Station, Germany, 23 Dec 1948-14 Sep 1949
Rhein-Main AB, Germany, 14 Jul 1952
Neubiberg AB, Germany, 23 Mar 1953
Evreux-Fauville AB, France, 24 Jun 1956-20 Jun 1964
Lockbourne AFB, OH, 20 Jun 1964-31 Jul 1971
Pope AFB, NC, 31 Aug 1971-1 Jun 1992
Dyess AFB, TX, 1 Oct 1993

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Evreux-Fauville AB, France, Feb-May 1965
RAF Mildenhall, England, 13 May- 18 Jul 1968
Rhein-Main AB, Germany, 15 Apr-22 Jul 1969
Rhein-Main AB, Germany, 12 Dec 1973-17 Feb 1974, 12 Apr-14 Jun 1976, 1 Oct-15 Dec 1977
RAF Mildenhall, England, 12 Jul-14 Sep 1975, 4 Jan-Mar 1977, 5 Jun- 14 Aug 1979, 8 Oct-Dec
1980, 3 Feb-14 Apr 1982, 4 Jun-13 Aug 1983, 1 Oct-12 Dec 1984, 2 Feb-15 Apr 1986, 3
Mar-15 May 1987, 3 Jun-10 Aug 1988, May-11 Jul 1991, 3 Apr-31 May 1992

ASSIGNMENTS

317 Transport (later, 317 Troop Carrier) Group, 22 Feb 1942-14 Sep 1949
317 Troop Carrier Group, 14 Jul 1952
465 Troop Carrier Wing, 12 Mar 1957
317 Troop Carrier Wing, 8 Jul 1957
322 Air Division, 25 Sep 1958
317 Troop Carrier (later, 317 Tactical Airlift) Wing, 15 Apr 1963-31 Jul 1971
317 Tactical Airlift Wing, 31 Aug 1971
317 Tactical Airlift Group, 1 Oct 1978
317 Tactical Airlift Wing, 1 Apr 1980
317 Operations Group, 1 Jan-1 Jun 1992
7 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1993
317 Airlift Group, 1 Apr 1997

ATTACHMENTS

Detachment 1, 322d Air Division, Feb-May 1965
513 Tactical Airlift Wing, 13 May-18 Jul 1968

7310 Tactical Airlift Wing, 15 Apr-22 Jul 1969
322 Tactical Airlift Wing, 12 Dec 1973-17 Feb 1974
513 Tactical Airlift Wing, 9 Jul-15 Sep 1974 and 12 Jul-14 Sep 1975
435 Tactical Airlift Wing, 12 Apr-14 Jun 1976 and 1 Oct-15 Dec 1977
435 Tactical Airlift Group, 4 Jan-4 Mar 1977
313 Tactical Airlift Group, 5 Jun-14 Aug 1979
313 Tactical Airlift Group, 8 Oct-13 Dec 1980, 3 Feb-14 Apr 1982, 4 Jun-13 Aug 1983, 1 Oct-12 Dec 1984, 2 Feb-15 Apr 1986, 3 Mar-15 May 1987, 3 Jun-10 Aug 1988, May-11 Jul 1991
313 Tactical Airlift Group, 3 Apr-31 May 1992

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-47, 1942-1946
C-46, 1946-1948
C-54, 1946-1949
C-119, 1952-1958
C-130, 1958-1971
C-130, 1971-1992

COMMANDERS

Unkn, 22 Feb-23 Jun 1942
Capt William A. Williams, 24 Jun 1942
Maj Joseph C. Ford Iii, 26 Jun 1942
Maj Frank S. Monk Jr., 8 May 1944
Maj James G. Tuley, 27 Nov 1944
Capt Donald T. Baker, 3 Jul 1945
1st Lt Earl G. Yarbrough, 2 Nov 1945-Unkn
1st Lt Leslie Good, Unkn
Cpt Fred C. Simpson, Feb 1946
Maj Elmon R. Cobb, 16 Oct 1946
Lt Col Hudson M. Schieber, 1 May 1947
Capt Jack C. Bickford, 29 May 1947
Maj Joseph F. Nesmith, 20 Jun 1947
Lt Col James M. Johnson, 14 Jul 1947
Lt Col Walter E. Chambers, 15 Jun 1948
Lt Col Robert J. Duval, 11 Mar 1949
Maj John D. Garlington, Apr 1949
Maj Wilbert E. St John, Jun 1949-Unkn
Lt Col Robert H. Murray, 14 Jul 1952
Lt Col John W. Blalock, 23 Mar 1953
Maj Walter H. Lamb, 22 Feb 1954
Maj Floyd K. Shofner, 1 Oct 1954
Lt Col Elmer Cryer, 8 Jul 1956
Lt Col Jess R. Nickols, Mar 1958
Lt Col Harry J. Thompson, 12 Feb 1959

Lt Col John P. Jones Jr., 4 Jan 1960
Col Eban D. Smith, 5 Jul 1963
Lt Col Guy E. Ridgeway Jr., 14 Oct 1966
Col John R. Delmore, 1 Nov 1968
Lt Col Robert E. Parry, 10 Feb 1969
Lt Col Robert C. Vrastil, 11 Jan 1970
Lt Col Leo C. Wurschmidt, 18 Jan-1 Jun 1971
Lt Col Frederick R. Jacobs, 31 Aug 1971
Lt Col Derwent Langley Jr., 10 Aug 1972
Lt Col Robert L. Biggs, 1 Jun 1973
Lt Col Frank J. Kelley Jr., 28 Jan 1976
Lt Col Donald L. Koch, 27 Mar 1978
Lt Col John T. Payne, 1 Apr 1980
Lt Col Byron R. Hooten, 27 Jul 1981
Lt Col George A. Gray Iii, 19 Aug 1983
Lt Col Gerald G. Iverson, 23 Jan 1985
Lt Col Ross P. Van Lerberghe, 30 Jun 1986
Lt Col Jack P. Holbein Jr., 5 May 1988
Lt Col Jon M. Swanson, 29 Dec 1989
Lt Col Randy E. Honnet, 15 Jul 1991-1 Jun 1992
Lt Col Thomas L. Bowdin, 1 Oct 1993
Lt Col Byron Mills, 25 May 1995
Lt Col James P. Sturch, 7 Feb 1997
Lt Col Robert L. Reneau, 18 Jun 1998
Lt Col Derek P. Dickey, 12 Jul 1999
Lt Col Jeff Newell, By Dec 2001
Lt Col Charles K. Hyde, By Dec 2002
Lt Col Patrick Mordente, 9 Jan 2004
Lt Col Lee Flint, Jan 2005
Lt Col Andrew McIntyre, Jun 2007
Lt Col Charles M. Howard, 8 Jun 2009

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Air Offensive, Japan
Papua
New Guinea
Northern Solomons
Bismarck Archipelago
Western Pacific

Leyte
Luzon
Southern Philippines

Southwest Asia
Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989-1990

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Papua, [Jan 1943]
New Guinea, 30 Jan-1 Feb 1943
Philippine Islands, 16-17 Feb 1945

Meritorious Unit Awards

1 Jul 2008-30 Jun 2009
1 Jul 2009-30 Jun 2010
1 Jul 2011-30 Jun 2012
1 Jul 2012-30 Jun 2013
1 Jul 2013-30 Jun 2014
1 Jul 2014-30 Jun 2015

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

8 Jul-10 Aug 1960
1 Sep 1962-15 Apr 1963
1 Apr 1964-30 Jun 1965
1 May 1972-30 Apr 1973
1 May 1973-30 Apr 1975
1 May 1975- 30 Apr 1977
1 Jun 1979-31 May 1981
1 Jun 1982-31 May 1984
1 Mar 1987-31 Mar 1988
6 Oct 1989-13 Jan 1990
1 Jun 1996-31 May 1998
1 Jun 1998-30 Jun 1999
1 Jul 1999-30 Jun 2000
1 Jul 2000-30 Jun 2001
1 Jul 2001-30 Jun 2002
1 Jul 2002-30 Jun 2003
1 Jul 2003-30 Jun 2004

1 Jul 2004-30 Jun 2005
1 Jul 2005-30 Jun 2006
1 Jul 2006-30 Jun 2007
1 Jul 2007-30 Jun 2008

Meritorious Unit Award
1 Jul 2011-30 Jun 2012

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation (WWII)

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
10 Mar-28 Nov 1972

EMBLEM





A disc, upper segment Ultramarine Blue, lower segment Jasmine Yellow, separated by a White cloud formation, on which is placed a winged Lemon Yellow covered wagon Jasmine Yellow. (Approved, 27 Oct 1942)

On a disc Azure and Or, a covered winged wagon of the second detailed Tenné on a cloud formation in demi-base Argent, all within a narrow border Black. Attached above the disc, a Red scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "TRAILBLAZERS" in Black letters. Attached below the disc, a Red scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "39 AIRLIFT SQ" in Black letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The covered wagon harkens back to the pioneer days when prairie schooners blazed new trails across the Great Plains, promising a better life for all who dared to make the journey. Today's trailblazers carry on this proud tradition with a winged wagon flying through the clouds, bringing hope to the unit's allies around the globe. (Approved, 1994)

MOTTO

TRAILBLAZERS

OPERATIONS

Paratroop drops on Noemfoor, Tagaytay (Luzon), as well as aerial transportation in South, Southwest, and Western Pacific in World War II.

Berlin Airlift, 1948.

Mission of this much travelled 39 Troop Carrier Squadron is to maintain a state of training and proficiency that will insure combat effectiveness in the support of U.S. and N.A.T.O. forces in Logistical Airlift Operations. Other facets of their mission are Aeromedical Evacuation Airlifts, Airborne Operations, and Special Airlift Operations. Currently operating under the command of Lt. Col. Elmer J. Cryer, the 39 Troop Carrier Squadron have many scheduled and unscheduled Air Logistical Support Missions to their credit, flying to England, France, Germany, Italy, Greece, Turkey and North Africa.

In addition, the 39 has participated in numerous airborne operations with British, French and American personnel and equipment, and has earned praise from all quarters.

Some idea of the impressive number of special missions flown by the squadron can be gained from their relief-mission activities to the Netherlands and as far away as India during the floods of 1953 and 1955,

The Greek earthquakes of 1953 saw the squadron again help to aid a stricken area, and during the severe winter of early 1956, the squadron was again in the forefront flying special missions to storm stricken, isolated areas of Italy.

Airlift missions to Grenada, in Oct 1983; to Panama, Dec 1989-17 Jan 1990; and to Southwest Asia, Aug 1990-Mar 1991.

A misplaced night vision goggle case led to the C-130J crash that killed 14 at Jalalabad Airport, Afghanistan, in October, Air Mobility Command investigators found. After landing at Jalalabad, the crew conducted engine-running on-load/offload operations. To assist with offloading, the Super Hercules' pilot placed the hard-shell case in front of the yoke to hold the horizontal stabilizer elevators in a raised position, but did not remove it before the nighttime takeoff. The aircraft entered an excessive upward pitch just after takeoff, and the copilot misidentified a trim malfunction as the cause, resulting in improper recovery techniques. The aircraft crashed just off the runway 28 seconds after liftoff and struck a perimeter guard tower, killing all personnel aboard and three Afghan Special Reaction Force (ASRF) members on the ground. The crew consisted of the pilot, copilot, and two loadmasters assigned to the 39 Airlift Squadron at Dyess AFB, Texas. Two fly-away security team members assigned to the 66th Security Forces

Squadron at Hanscom AFB, Mass., and five civilian contractor passengers were also onboard.
2016

Members of the 317th Airlift Wing at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, trained in airspace over Nevada and California, August 8–16. This training was designed to prepare 39 Airlift Squadron aircrew for future deployed operations in mountainous terrains. Pilots experience higher atmospheric pressure at high altitudes which change the way landings feel, said Capt. Matthew Rounds, 39 AS C-130J Super Hercules pilot. Newer pilots were able to train on operating in these conditions for the first time. “We operated out of Reno-Tahoe International Airport, which has similar elevations to areas we operate overseas,” Rounds said.

Aircrews worked on various airlift procedures such as the combat offload. The combat offload is a method used by C-130 aircrew to deliver cargo in hazardous environments. It involves a fast landing and is followed by an abrupt takeoff that allows for cargo to roll out of the back of the aircraft to support missions on the ground. “One of the biggest wins of this training was building rapport within the units involved in our deployments,” Rounds said. “Our loadmasters were in sync with pilots and our maintainers kept our aircraft good to go. Deployers were able to work side-by-side with the same people they’ll work with overseas.”

The 39 AS also built relationships with Marines assigned to Camp Pendleton, California. “We had the pleasure of working with over 200 Marines, for high-altitude, low-opening (HALO) and static-line parachute drops,” Rounds said. The HALO drops consisted of five to 10 Marines jumping out of the rear of the C-130J at altitudes higher than 3,500 feet. Static-line drops were conducted at 1,250 feet. For each static-line pass, approximately 20 Marines jumped one-by-one with parachutes deploying immediately upon their departure. Marines were able to make multiple jumps during the week and became up-to-date on their requirements for deployment readiness, said Staff Sgt. Carlos Camacho, 1st Transportation Support Battalion jump master.
2019

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.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit yearbook. *317th Troop Carrier Wing*. @1955.