

249th AIRLIFT SQUADRON



MISSION

The 249th's mission was strategic airlift of troops and cargo to main operating bases or forward locations worldwide. It also conducted theater airlift, aeromedical evacuation and tactical airdrop missions. Tactics to accomplish the mission include air refueling, low-level contour navigation and use of night vision goggles. Its crews mix with crews from the active-duty Air Force 517th Airlift Squadron to fly eight C-17s around the world. In the event of mobilization the squadron would become an element of Pacific Air Forces.

LINEAGE

249th Airlift Squadron established and allotted to the Alaska Air National Guard
Activated, 1 Sep 2009
Inactivated, 4 Aug 2018

STATIONS

Kulis Air National Guard Base, AK, 1 Sep 2009
Joint Base Elmendorf–Richardson, 18 Feb 2011–4 Aug 2018

ASSIGNMENTS

176th Operations Group

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-17

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



On a disc as a globe Celeste, land masses Azure, charged over all by an Arctic tern, wings displayed Argent, detailed Sable, beaked Gules, in chief a mullet Or, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "249TH AIRLIFT SQUADRON" in Yellow 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 globe signifies the Squadron's vast area of responsibility. The North Star represents a beacon over land and sea and the Squadron's home in the Last Frontier. The unit embraces the qualities of the Arctic tern. With the tern being the longest migrating bird on the planet, it symbolizes the Squadron's mission of global mobility and reach.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Based at Elmendorf Air Force Base, the 249th Airlift Squadron works hand-in-hand with the 517th Airlift Squadron to operate eight C-17A. Specifically, the 249th's mission is to recruit, train and provide combat-ready C-17 aircrews for global mobility missions that supply and sustain America's armed forces. It conducts the rapid strategic delivery of troops and all types of cargo to main operating bases and/or direct-delivery to forward locations throughout the world.

Global mobility mission sets performed include intercontinental and theater airlift, aeromedical evacuations, humanitarian assistance, and tactical airdrop. All aircrews maintain a high state of mission readiness in air refueling, low-level contour navigation, Night Vision Goggles, and airland operations to support wartime taskings. The 249th Airlift Squadron's authorized unit manning consists of 70 total personnel with 34 officers and 36 enlisted members, mostly comprised of C-17 aircrew members.

The unit began operations in the summer of 2007 as a detachment of the 176th Operations Group, flying the C-17A in association with the 517th Airlift Squadron of the 3rd Wing. The 249th Airlift Squadron was officially constituted and allocated to the State of Alaska for activation and assigned to the 176th Operations Group, with the Pacific Air Force as its gaining Major Command, on 1 Sep 2009. The 249th Airlift Squadron declared Initial Operational Capability on 17 Sep 2009 and expects Full Operational Capability the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2012.

Pacific Air Forces' investigation into the 28 Jul crash of a C-17 near JB Elmendorf, Alaska, has found clear and compelling evidence that pilot error caused the mishap that claimed the lives of the four airmen aboard. "The pilot violated regulatory provisions and multiple flight manual procedures, placing the aircraft outside established flight parameters at an attitude and altitude where recovery was not possible. Lost in the crash were Maj Michael Freyholtz, Maj. Aaron Malone, Cpt Jeffrey Hill, and MSgt Thomas Cicardo. These airmen took off that day to practice for an upcoming air show. Their C-17, tail number 00-0173 and call sign Sitka 43, was assigned to Elmendorf's 3rd Wing. The crash destroyed the aircraft, valued at \$184 million, and did damage to a part of the Alaska Railroad. 2010

Air Force Lineage and Honors

Created: 6 May 2020

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.