

330th AIRDROME SQUADRON

MISSION

330th Airdrome Squadron was organized, equipped and trained for tactical employment as ground servicing units to support the Combat Cargo units in the combat zone. Their mission is to furnish all of the necessary "housekeeping" functions such as administration, mess and security, chemical and medical services, furnishing and supplying first and secondary echelon maintenance and supply, and to organize and operate airdromes. Airdrome squadrons are organized to meet the demand for a new type of servicing squadron. Which would permit the higher degree of mobility that is desirable for present day warfare.

LINEAGE

330th Airdrome Squadron constituted, 11 Apr 1944
Activated, 15 Apr 1944

STATIONS

Bowman AAF, KY
Dinjan, India
Myitkyina, Burma
Calcutta, India
Shanghia, China

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 3d Combat Cargo Group was assigned the 329th, 330th, 331st and 332nd Airdrome Squadrons. These four Airdrome Squadrons would not depart for the CBI with the 3d Group; they first would undergo training. The 3d Combat Cargo Group's assigned Airdrome Squadron finally arrived in theater three months after the group had begun flying combat missions.

The 330th ADS was the FIRST aerodrome squadron formed and trained together as one cohesive unit. The aerodrome consisted of all support personnel for the operation and function of the combat cargo squadron: doctors, mechanics, cooks, clerks, etc. As with the 10th CCS, these personnel were expedited to the CBI with little training to answer Stillwell's immediate need for air transport and supply in Burma. The squadrons were to return stateside and receive the prescribed and proper training their counterparts had gone through, once they were relieved. These guys never went back, they were there for the duration.

The 330th ADS earned the War Department's Meritorious Service Unit Plaque: for maintaining 94% of the aircraft operational during a nonstop four-month Hump airlift operation into China and Myitkyina, Burma. On 6/2/45, the 10th CCS/330th ADS moved operations to Myitkyina. Upon arrival by C-47, they got caught in the middle of a battle at the airfield between the Japanese and the Chinese. While at Myitkyina, Dad earned the Soldier's Medal for saving the life of a fellow soldier from drowning in the Irrawaddy River, which was adjacent to the airfield and camp.

On 10/2/45, the 10th CSS/330th ADS relocated to Shanghai, China. On 12/20/45 they were relieved from duty and sent to Seattle to start their respective journeys home. Dad was fortunate enough to be selected in a lottery of 200 soldiers to be expedited home and discharged by Christmas. Dad arrived in Chicago on 12/24/45, and made it home to his mother's in Petoskey, Michigan on Christmas Day.

This unit was activated and trained by the 1st CCG. The training they received was very short but under a very rigid training program operated by the 1st CCG. A great deal was accomplished in the very limited amount of time. The training program was divided into four phases: Service, Basic, and General, Advanced Military, Technical, and Sectional. The greatest emphasis was placed on the Sectional Training, as each section had to be self-sufficient in all technical duties. Discipline and the spirit of the work is continuously emphasized and developed. This had taught the men of this unit to place the mission of the unit well above his personal welfare and to conform his action to the will of the leader. The training program was conducted under the command of the 1st Combat Cargo Group to which this organization was attached for training.

The function of the CO of the Airdrome Squadron was that of supervision and accomplishment of all training. Time being the essence of the program, every available hour was utilized to the best advantage. Constant coordination among all sections of the unit and the Combat Cargo Squadron was maintained. Morale of the organization has been exceptionally high. This is due to the fact that the organization is the first of its kind to be activated and the men were willing to strive to meet the high goal set for them.

The 330th Airdrome Squadron was designated and activated as per paragraph 2 General Order No 7, Headquarters Army Air Base, Bowman Field, Louisville, Kentucky on the 15th of April 1944. The squadron was organized at Bowman Field on 24 April 1944 when the first enlisted personnel were assigned. Personnel were requisitioned from all installations of the 1st Troop Carrier Command. High qualifications were established for personnel of the 330th and as personnel arrived from Troop Carrier Bases they were assigned to the 808th AAF Base Unit for screening and processing before assignment to the 330th thus assuring the high level required of personnel.

The 330th was reorganized on 20 June 1944, under T/O and T/E 1-487 dated 31 May 1944, per paragraph 1 b G.O. 37 Headquarters 1st Troop Carrier Command. Under this reorganization surplus personnel were eliminated, making an organization that could perform its mission must faster and more effectively.

Personnel did not arrive until 24 April 1944 when the original cadre of twelve men were assigned and joined per paragraph 14, special order No. 2 Headquarters 1st Combat Cargo Group, Bowman Field, Louisville, Kentucky. Major Francis T. Martin was attached as acting commanding officer per paragraph 4, Special Order No. 3, Headquarters 1st Combat Cargo Group, Bowman Field, Louisville, Kentucky, dated 25 April 1944 until the commanding officer of this organization arrived. On 25 April 1944, 27 enlisted men, assigned and joined increasing the strength of the organization to 39 enlisted men. On 27 April 1944, 5 more enlisted men assigned and joined per paragraph 12 and 13, Special Order No. 6 Headquarters 1st Combat Cargo Group, Bowman Field, Louisville, Kentucky. On the 28 April 1944, with an enlisted strength of 73, Major Leslie L. Gwaltney arrived and assumed command on the organization and Major Martin was relieved as acting commanding officer. Strength on 30 April was 75 EM and 1 officer. The month of May showed an increased 90 EM and 5 officers. In June the enlisted strength reached 171 filling the T/O. In July enlisted strength was 170 and commissioned was 6. There was no change in August. In September the enlisted strength increased to 182 EM and the commissioned strength remained at 6. On 29 September 1944, Major Gwaltney was relieved as Commanding Officer and placed on Special Duty as Base Executive Officer at Dinjan Air Field. Captain Stanley F. Wasung, assumed command of the 330th Airdrome on 29 September 1944.

On the 24th April 1944 the 330th Airdrome Squadron was activated at Bowman Field, Louisville, Kentucky. After undergoing a month and a half of vigorous training departed Bowman Field, 9 June 1944 for the staging area at Baer Field, Fort Wayne, Indiana, arriving there 1 June 1944. On July 7 1944 after spending nearly a month at Baer Field departed for Camp Anza, Arlington, California, arriving there on 11 July 1944. Thirteen days were spent at Camp Anza awaiting overseas transportation and getting equipment. Unit departed from Camp Anza on the 24 July

1944. On 25 July 1944, the organization departed from LAPS for the Asiatic Pacific Theater. For the next 33 days our station was the U.S. Ship General H. W. Butner. The enlisted men's quarters were very crowded and unhealthy for the number of men on the ship. Toilet facilities were not adequate. The morale of the men was not the best while on the boat, but this was due to the fact that there was no work to be done and very little recreation for them. The poor food plus the fact that only two meals a day were allowed contributed greatly to the drop in morale. On the second half the trip the entire squadron along with the 331st Airdrome Squadron was given the job of running the mess for the enlisted men. This gave the men work and at the same time they received all they wanted to eat, if they wanted it. Even though the men were on KP, morale increased 100%. The officers of the Squadron were given staterooms but they too were very crowded. The ship's lounge was available to them for recreation.

After debarking at Bombay the trip across India was made in 3d Class Troop Trains. Morale was good all the way. The "K" rations that were given the men were superior to the rations they received while on the Butner. Books were given to the men in each car by the ARC so there was plenty of reading material. Conditions on the train were not the best, but the fact that no one was crowded was a big improvement over the conditions on the Butner. There was a shortage of water at the time but only while the water was being made drinkable. The only difficulty experienced by anyone was sleeping because that was done on wooden benches. The troop train did not have tracks all the way to Dinjan so the men were transferred to a river steamer and the journey was resumed up the Brahmaputra River as far as Pongu where debarkation was made and the last leg of the trip was made again on a 3d class troop train to Dinjan where we were met by the 10th Combat Cargo Squadron with trucks for baggage.

All activities were directed toward the training of the unit. The 2d Combat Cargo Squadron was designated as the Cargo Unit for this organization to train with. Basic training for individuals lacking in certain phases was completed in accordance with AAF Itr 50-18. General training included Orientation and physical training. Technical training was stressed in the Engineering Section and the Communications Section. Individuals not meeting the requirements were eliminated. Proficiency was considered the orientation rather than the number of hours spent in formal instruction. Upon completion of the minimum training of the unit, a phase of training was established which would let the squadrons operate as they would in the theater of operations. Each section stood on its own merits. Failures were few. All problems were overcome with a minimum of difficulty. The Engineering Section made an outstanding record in maintenance of aircraft. Double engine changes were made in 24 hours. This phase of the training proved beyond all doubt the readiness of the unit for the performance of its mission in the theaters of operation.

Morale at first was very low because of the policy on passes. Enlisted personnel were allowed off the post once a week for 6½ hours. This was overcome by having squadron parties off the post at Lighthouse Lake. Swimming, dancing and refreshments were available for all. Orientation on the mission of the unit also raised the morale of the men and challenged the individual.

Activities at Baer Field were a final polishing of the "on the job" training and squadron training, putting the men in shape for field duty. At Baer Field, Scheduled Training, which consisted of "on

the job" training in the Engineering, Communications, Transportation, Supply, Medical, Administrative, and Guard Sections of the base. Squadron Training which consisted of drilling, marching, firing of weapons, etc. was scheduled and conducted by each squadron. In addition to this, special training was accomplished, utilizing picked men from this squadron, set up as teams, in the loading and lashing of cargo in C-47s, field sanitation installation, squadron aid, fighting aircraft fires and malaria engineering.

Engineering training consisted of Pre-flights, 25, 50, and 100 hour inspections, general maintenance on instruments, hydraulic, electric and all other systems.

Communication training consisted of Radio and Radar mechanics handling maintenance of radio and radar equipment. Radio operators received practice training in the briefing code room and also on the line. In addition they set up and operated for 4 days in the field a radio net, using SCR-188 and M-209.

Driver schools were set up by the base motor pool for training in transportation. Lectures were given and training films shown on convoy problems (night and day) and care and use of automotive equipment including study of combat tires and tubes.

Guard training consisted of lectures on general and special orders given by the Base Provost Marshall. Guards were given actual training on the regular guard posts of the Base.

The activities here were final administrative duties prior to departure overseas. A review of basic training was given with emphasis on road marches. Men were given orientation on all theaters. Censorship was again stressed. Special debarkation training was given all officers and enlisted men. A review of gas training was given.

The arrival at Dinjan, India placed the 330th in its first test for the performance of its mission. The first week was spent setting up housekeeping functions such as housing facilities, enlisted mens mess and sanitation control around the quarters, mess hall and working areas. While setting up the necessary housekeeping details the entire effort of the squadron was also directed toward its mission, that of servicing the 10th Combat Cargo Squadron. Difficulty was encountered because organizational equipment had not arrived. There was an acute shortage of transportation, engineering equipment and no communication equipment. The splendid cooperation of the 10th CC Sq helped overcome the transportation and engineering problems. The squadron carpenter built crew chief stands and other stands and racks for the engineering section. The transportation problem was corrected with a few items of old equipment and two new jeeps. The old equipment had to be made serviceable and only a problem of maintenance remains for the old equipment now on hand. The refueling section was taken over by the 330th and the 331st. There again the old equipment had to be made serviceable.

During the month of September the 330th Engr Section helped keep 88% of the 10th's aircraft in commission, enabling the 10th to carry more tonnage, completing more missions, and delivering

the most cargo per hour of flying and by further comparison, the average total tons carried daily per aircraft in commission was greater than any of the other three Cargo Squadrons in the Group.

The Communications Section with no equipment, constructed and set up the night lighting system for the engineering section, set up a mock-up system, set up 100 hr inspection system for aircraft radios and supplied personnel to "Domino One" which was operated by the 3d CC Grp.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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