

356 AIRLIFT SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

356 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 28 Jan 1942
Activated, 1 Jun 1942
Inactivated, 10 Apr 1944
Redesignated 356 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 27 Jun 1944
Activated, 7 Jul 1944
Inactivated, 15 Apr 1946
Redesignated 356 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 16 May 1949
Activated in the Reserve, 27 Jun 1949
Inactivated, 28 Jan 1950
Activated in the Reserve, 14 Jun 1952
Ordered to Active Service, 28 Oct 1962
Relieved from Active Duty, 28 Nov 1962
Redesignated 356 Tactical Airlift Squadron, 1 Jul 1967
Redesignated 356 Special Operations Squadron, 25 Jun 1970
Redesignated 356 Tactical Airlift Squadron, 26 Jul 1971
Redesignated 356 Airlift Squadron, 1 Feb 1992
Inactivated, 30 Jun 2006
Activated in the Reserve, 9 Jan 2007

STATIONS

Geiger Field, WA, 1 Jun 1942
Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 23 Jun 1942
Wendover Field, UT, 30 Jul 1942
Pueblo AAB, CO, 30 Sep 1942

Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 1 Dec 1942
Clovis, NM, 29 Jan 1943
Langley Field, VA, 17 Dec 1943
Chatham AAFld, GA, 27 Jan-10 Apr 1944
Dalhart AAFld, TX, 7 Jul 1944
McCook AAFld, NE, 22 Nov 1944-8 Apr 1945
Northwest Field, Guam, 12 May 1945-15 Apr 1946
McChord AFB, WA, 27 Jun 1949-28 Jan 1950
Clinton County AFB, OH, 14 Jun 1952
Lockbourne (later, Rickenbacker) AFB (later ANGB), OH, 26 Jul 1971
Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 1 Apr 1993-30 Jun 2006
Kelly Field Annex, Lackland AFB, TX, 9 Jan 2007

ASSIGNMENTS

302 Bombardment Group, 1 Jun 1942-10 Apr 1944
331 Bombardment Group, 7 Jul 1944-15 Apr 1946
302 Troop Carrier Group, 27 Jun 1949-28 Jan 1950
302 Troop Carrier Group, 14 Jun 1952
302 Troop Carrier Wing, 14 Apr 1959
907 Troop Carrier (later, 907 Tactical Airlift; 907 Special Operations; 907 Tactical Airlift)
Group, 11 Feb 1963
302 Tactical Airlift Wing, 1 Sep 1975
907 Tactical Airlift (later, 907 Airlift) Group, 1 Apr 1981
907 Operations Group, 1 Aug 1992
445 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1994-30 Jun 2006
433 Operations Group, 9 Jan 2007

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24, 1942-1944
B-17, 1944
B-29, 1945-1946
C-54, 1949-1950
C-46, 1952-1957
C-119, 1956-1973



356 TAS C-123 (USAF photo)

C-123, 1972-1981

C-130, 1981-1992

C-141, 1992

C-5, 2007

COMMANDERS

1LT Ronald V. Kramer, 21 Jun 1942

Capt Earl D. Carlson, 4 Jul 1942

Capt Walter Cross, 23 Jul 1942

Capt Benjamin M. Sheldon, 23 Sep 1942

Capt Horace S. Carswell, 23 Jan 1943

Capt Frank L. Smith, 20 May 1943

Capt Zane L. Abbott, 23 Aug 1943

Unkn, 5 Mar-10 Apr 1944

Maj Thomas E. Whitson, by Aug 1944

Maj Joseph S. Grimm, by Oct 1944

Capt Louis C. Carr, by Jun 1945

Maj Andrew F. Gordon, 18 Jul 1945-unkn

Unkn, 27 Jun 1949-28 Jan 1950

Robert Lubbe, 1953-1955

Maj Darl C. Brickner, Dec 1955

John Rockenstein, 1957
Maj Carl B. Yerian, Dec 1959
Lt Col Richard M. Griswold, Nov 1961
Lt Col Carl B. Yerian, Jun 1964
Lt Col Justin L. Townsley, Dec 1965
Lt Col James K. Riddle, Jun 1970
Lt Col David R. Laird, 21 Jun 1972
Lt Col Richard D. Evans, Jul 1975
Col John A. Hellwege, 17 Feb 1976
Lt Col Morris J. Turkelson, 22 Oct 1979
Lt Col Virgil P. Fryburger Jr., Jun 1981
Lt Col James Maurer, by Feb 1982-unkn
Lt Col Earnest M. Conant Jr., Oct 1984
Lt Col Jerry E. Trott, 23 Jul 1986
Lt Col Paul M. Lavin, 1 Dec 1991
Lt Col Kirk A. Baker, 18 Aug 1992
Lt Col John Wilson, 1992
Lt Col Robert G. Shondel, 1 Oct 1994
Lt Col Keith D. Kries, 1 Dec 1999
Lt Col Brian Dominguez, 1 Apr 2002
Lt Col Fred McMahon

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Japan

Eastern Mandates

Western Pacific

Southwest Asia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation

Japan, 22-29 Jul 1945

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1 Jan 1977-31 Dec 1978

1 Oct 1999-30 Sep 2001
1 Jan 2007-31 Dec 2008

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm, 14 Feb-11 Mar 1968

EMBLEM



356 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy emblem: On a light blue green disc, edged black, a caricatured "stripped down" duck yellow orange, in flight toward dexter, with red feet, black wing tips, and light magenta eyelids, wearing a brown aviator's helmet, and having a knot tied in the neck, while holding a large black aerial bomb in the feet, and having a small, black cannon lighted at the fuse, proper, tied on back with brown string, beside six, small, black cannon balls resting on duck's back, all between a white cloud formation in chief and a like cloud formation in base. (Approved 21 Mar 1945)





The 356 Tactical Airlift Squadron emblem: features the winged horse, "Pegasus". It was the logo of the Fairchild Aircraft Company, the builder of the C-119. The Latin phrase, "VICTOR VIAM DUCAT", (Let a Winner Lead the Way) was added to give the patch a touch of class. Emblem designed by Ken Race. (Approved, 7 Jul 1969; modified, 29 Jul 1996)

356 Airlift Squadron emblem: Per fess Azure and Or, on a fess Sable a Pegasus courant Argent; all within a diminished bordure of the second. Attached above the disc a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed " 356TH AIRLIFT SQ " in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed II VICTOR VIAM DUCAT II in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Blue and 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 divided disc suggests the unit's round-the clock operations. The Pegasus symbolizes the unit's swift reaction time in performance of its missions. (Approved, 29 Jul 1996)

The white horse against a black sky symbolizes day and night operations. A white winged parachute against a blue sky points out the air drop function of the unit. Gold horizontal stripes represent the many operational bases used in the airlift mission. The squadron's motto is VICTOR VIAMDUCAT, "Let a Winner Lead the Way."

The focal point of the emblem is the flying horse "Pegasus", inspired by the logo of Fairchild Corporation, manufacturer of the Squadron aircraft. The white horse against the black sky symbolizes day and night operations. The white winged parachute against the blue sky area points out the air drop function of the squadron. The gold horizontal stripes represent the many operational bases used in the airlift mission.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Trained aircrews for bombardment missions, Jun 1942-Apr 1944; combat in the Western Pacific, 1 Jul-14 Aug 1945. Trained for C-54 airlift operations, 1949-1950 and for troop carrier missions, 1952-1967.

Airlifted troops and their equipment during the Cuban missile crisis, Oct-Nov 1962. Since then, except for the period 1970-1971 when the squadron trained for special operations, it trained for and flew airlift missions, participating in exercises, supporting unit deployments, taking part in special assignment airlift missions, and rotating periodically to Panama in the 1970s and 1980s.

A 356th TAS C-130A made its first overseas mission from 6 to 14 July 1982. 9 personnel (7 aircrew and 2 maintenance) participated in the mission. Its various airlift missions included stops in Italy, Denmark, Spain, and the Azores.

The 356th TAS provided one aircraft and aircrew in support of eight personnel of the 11th Special Forces from Ft. Devins, MASS. The itinerary of the deployment included Westover AFB MASS; Goose AB Laborador; Keflavick AB Iceland; Rhein-Mein AB Germany; Pisa, Italy; Copenhagen (Vaerlose AB) Denmark; Torrejon AB Spain; Lajes AB Azores, St. Johns Newfoundland and McGuire AFB New Jersey. The aircrew departed 6 July 1982 and returned 13 July 1982 with airdrops at Vaerlose and Pisa. The aircrew consisted of the following individuals: Capt Ted Hand, Capt Ed Pence, Maj Robert Barry, MSgt Ron Conn, SMSgt Dale Davis and TSgt Robert Jamison.

The most significant event of the quarter was a rotational tour of duty to Howard AFB, Panama Canal Zone, by aircrews and support personnel of the group who were participating in exercise Volant Oak. The exercise began for the group on 25 December and would continue through 22 January 1983. On 3 December, it was announced at the Group Commander's Staff Meeting that the crews and support personnel had been selected to fill all authorized positions and that the first three aircraft would depart on Christmas as planned. For the most part, there were two different contingents of three C-130s, four flight crews and approximately twenty-eight maintenance specialists each. The first contingent departed Rickenbacker on Christmas Day while the second contingent departed 1 January 1983. Most of the personnel involved spent two weeks of active duty in support of the exercise. This was the first time that the group used C-130 aircraft in Volant Oak but it was not the first time that 'Buckeye' reservists participated in a similar exercise. For nearly three years, the former 302nd TAW supported the Panama U.S. Southern Command entirely by themselves during the 1973 — 76 period. Most of the missions involved embassy deliveries, troop drops, and cargo delivery throughout the southern hemisphere. The aircraft travelled to Caracas, Venezuela; Bogota, Columbia; Quito, Ecuador; Lima, Peru; Asuncion, Paraguay; Montevideo, Uruguay; Santiago, Chile; LaPaz, Bolivia; San Jose, Costa Rica; Managua, Nicaragua; San Salvadore, EL Salvador; Tegucigalpa, Honduras; Guatemala City, Guatemala; Roosevelt Roads NAS, Puerto Rico; and St Croix.

The 907th TAG contingent continued to provide airlift for the Air Force Southern Command and operated out of Howard AFB as the 2400th Reserve Readiness and Mobility Squadron. Most of the missions flown by Rickenbacker crews dealt with deliveries to American embassies located throughout Central and South America. However, there were several static line and high

altitude, low-opening (HALO) parachute drops of U.S. Army troops — a part of a training operation for defense of the Panama Canal. The first three C-130's returned to Rickenbacker on 15 January and the final three aircraft returned on 22 January. When the Volant Oak exercise came to an end, the Rickenbacker C-130's had hauled 250,719 pounds of cargo and 947 passengers in support of it.

Personnel and two aircraft from the 907th TAG participated in Operation RED FLAG at Nellis AFB, Nevada from 18 June to 2 July 1983. Realistic combat environment training was conducted, with the aircraft using 300 feet 'below radar' altitudes in mountains, canyons, and valleys. Fighter escorted missions were also conducted, with the 907th Group planning two days of the exercise. 100% of all scheduled sorties were flown." A contingent of forty personnel and two aircraft participated in the Nevada exercise. Aircrews of the 356th TAS flew eighteen sorties. According to Lt Col Terry D. Norris, who served as Mission Commander for the 907th, this year's Red Flag was the best training he has seen in the Air Force Reserve. The C-130's flew at 300 feet altitudes through mountains, canyons and valleys against an "enemy" force, and for two days the 907th Group planned the entire attack for all of the C-130's and forty fighter aircraft which also participated. The Group logged 47 hours of exercise time and the total mission time resulted in nearly 71 hours. The lessons learned from the Red Flag experience were detailed by Col Norris as follows: (1) without air superiority there would be a very high loss rate, (2) defense equipment was needed against the ground threat, (3) the point-to-point navigation training needed changing, (4) low level terrain masking, single ship, offered the best survival chance, (5) the temporarily installed overhead bubble on the C-130A was a great aid, and (6) the Reserves need more similar missions for training.

In another exercise, twenty-six members of the 907th Group represented the 94th TAW in the Volant Rodeo competition 12-18 June at Pope AFB, NC. The affair brought together 43 aircraft and crews from the Active, Reserve, and Guard MAC units as well as airlift units from throughout the free world. Facing tough competition, the Rickenbacker team, under the leadership of Maj Charles D. Watson, was able to finish in 18th place out of 25 entries among the C-130 units. Three routes were flown and terminated with personnel, container delivery system (CDS), and heavy equipment drops. The heavy equipment drop of 29 feet was the best of its class and the second best equipment drop overall (the first place in the bullseye competition was taken by a 28 foot CDS drop). The effort of the maintenance personnel was outstanding throughout the entire exercise, commented Maj Watson. For example, one of the C-130's came very close to being "red-lined" due to a hairline crack in a strut support bracket rivet located in the wheel well. Without this aircraft, the team would have been at a great disadvantage. Only 20 hours of continuous maintenance attention managed to save the day and return the aircraft to flying condition. For the first time, the 907th entered the Engine Running Onload/Offload event.

On Saturday, 9 April, three C-130A's of the 356th TAS and numerous aircrew and mobility personnel were deployed to Fort Campbell, KY. They were joined in the flight by three C-130H's of the 700th TAS at Dobbins AFB, GA. The purpose of the exercise was to gain proficiency in unfamiliar route and drop zone situations in preparation for an ORI at a later date. CDS and live night personnel drops were accomplished. The heavy equipment drops which were planned had

to be cancelled due to the deep mud in the drop zone. Generally speaking, the exercise went well although some problems were experienced with command and control procedures and weather on the route and drop zone. There were also some minor problems experienced with flying both C-130A and H models in the same formation. The "A" model accelerated and decelerated more rapidly than the "H" model. At best, the ORE evaluation showed that 907th Group mobility and deployment can basically be accomplished.

On 22 September, a 356th TAS aircrew participated in a training exercise conducted by the US Navy's Special Warfare Group off the coast of Virginia. The Reserve crew dropped two complete sets of rubber landing craft with Navy SEAL personnel on the same pass. According to Navy personnel involved, only one rubber landing craft plus personnel had ever been dropped before on any given pass. Each rubber landing craft was loaded with equipment and weighed approximately 2200 pounds. 1983

Most of the flying accomplished by the 356th was for aircrew flight training requirements. Other missions flown by the tactical squadron included three troop drops, two ferry missions, two opportune cargo missions and five airlift missions. 174.1 tons of cargo were hauled for a total of 103,441 total miles and 756 passengers were flown 263,845 passenger miles. 162 troops and 44 tons of cargo were airdropped during the quarter. Systems training for all crew positions was emphasized with classes conducted separately for pilots, navigators, engineers and loadmasters.

Activities for the 356th TAS included a second practice ORI and mobility exercise. Deployment originally planned to Fort Campbell, KY was changed to Wright-Patterson AFB, OH. Aircraft were staged from both Rickenbacker ANGB and WPAFB with airdrops at Rickenbacker and Mansfield, OH. Some maintenance problems were encountered which prevented the generation of all scheduled aircraft, however, the practice exercise overall was satisfactory and a very valuable experience for all personnel involved.

8 February 1984 356 TAS tasked to airlift a 12 year old girl who had meningitis. The girl was flown from Sheppard AFB, Texas to Kelly AFB, Texas. The Rickenbacker C-130A was the only immediately available aircraft in the area. The crew had been flying local, low level routes out of Dyess AFB near Abilene, Texas when the request was received from MAC to fly an air evac mission. A nine member medical team of Rickenbacker's 67th AEF, which was also in the Texas area at the same time, was given permission to join the airlift for training purposes. A doctor and nurse, who were picked-up at Kelly AFB to administer to the child, had no air evac experience. Therefore, more responsibility and involvement was placed on the reserve 67th AEF team during the flight. The C-130A arrived safely at Kelly AFB where the young girl was transferred to an awaiting ambulance.

In September, a 356th TAS aircrew airdropped equipment and personnel of the Navy's Special Warfare Group. The mission was in support of a training exercise off the coast of Virginia. The airdrops were unique in that two sets of rubber landing craft and SEAL personnel were airdropped from the aircraft on the same pass. According to Navy personnel, only one rubber landing craft plus personnel had ever been dropped on a given pass previously. Each rubber landing craft was loaded with equipment and weighed approximately 2,200 pounds.

The squadron supported the AFRES Band during the period 5-7 November 1983. Twenty-eight members of the band were picked up at Macon, Georgia on 6 November and transported to St. Croix, Virgin Islands. The band was taken to the Virgin Islands so that they could give a series of concerts on St. Croix and St. Thomas during the coming week. During the flights to and from St. Croix, overwater navigation training and check rides were accomplished.

Missions flown included flights to El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Ecuador and Bolivia. Frequently Embassy runs, the missions were in support of South American Area Mission. Volant Oak was considered successful in terms of support and training for Reserve crews and maintenance, although several problems were identified. One such was the load restrictions placed on the C-130's. Several missions originally scheduled for C-130A's had to be rescheduled to E or H models, causing last minute scheduling confusion. Another problem encountered was the inadequacy of hand-held radios for communication, as natural and physical barriers frequently made transmissions unintelligible. It was suggested that a radio relay station for Operations and Maintenance. A problem with changes made to the mission after the scheduling meeting and the changes do not relay to Operations, 1300th MAS, and MAC Command Post led to the recommendation that such changes require coordination in the future. Members of the 907th deployed to Europe for Volant Partner, an exercise held in conjunction with Coldfire, Display Determination, and Reforger '84. 907th members worked with the 934th TAG from Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, to operate a total of eight aircraft out of Kaufbeuren, Germany (near Munich). The 345th TAS flew 105 sorties and logged 160.2 hours of flying time. Deployment and redeployment accounted for an additional 127.3 flying hours. More than 35 airfields in ten countries were utilized by crews to haul 202.4 tons of cargo and 622 passengers

A 356th alert crew flew an emergency mission from Frankfurt, Germany, to Athens, Greece, in support of personnel wounded during the bombing of the Beirut Embassy in Lebanon. The crew was given special permission to fly over Switzerland to gain time.

The first major event was the Volant Oak deployment to Howard AFB, Panama, 22 July - 11 August. Eight different aircrews of the 356th TAS and 71 maintenance personnel of the 907th CAMS along with other various Group support personnel rotated through Howard and supported the U.S. Southern Command by moving troops and cargo throughout Central and South America. As many as three 356th TAS C-130s were on station at one time to support the mission requirements. Twenty-one missions were flown for a total of 130.7 hours and only one Joint Army Airborne Tactical Training (JAATT) mission was lost due to maintenance. The unit carried 96.5 tons of cargo, 595 passengers and airdropped 79 personnel. Missions were flown to Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and a number of the Caribbean Islands.

On one particular mission a 356th crew, who had arrived only twelve hours before in Panama from the U.S., was tasked to fly a Search and Rescue (SAR) mission over the deep, tropical rain forests of southern Venezuela. A single-engine plane had crashed more than two weeks before with six persons aboard, including relatives of the Venezuelan President. Previous SAR efforts by other American military forces and civilian authorities failed to locate the crash site. According

to the 356th SAR aircraft commander, the first hour of the search showed some hope when a crewmember thought he had spotted some metallic material hanging in trees. But after further searching, nothing positive was identified. From that point on the search was frustrating for the crew and the aircraft commander decided to cease operations and return to Panama. Meanwhile, the Venezuelan authorities continued with their own search.

While the Volant Oak participation was overall successful, some problems did occur. There were two home station delays, one due to maintenance and the other due to some first-time Army jumpers who were not ready at take-off time. There were five enroute delays caused by three minor maintenance problems and two attributed to the late show of Embassy passengers.

There was insufficient space in the briefing room to give air- crews their first "full" briefing and this crowded condition led to much confusion among the crews. Also, crew quarters for flight engineers and loadmasters on alert status were not separated from other personnel. What resulted was unnecessary disturbances to non- alert status crewmembers. Among the maintenance personnel, some came down with colds caused by the extreme humidity outdoors and the air conditioning indoors while others developed allergic reactions to mangoes. Administrative personnel were under great pressure at times to complete flight manifests and flight orders.

Several recommendations were made to prevent these problems from recurring in future Volant Oak deployments. They included: (1) Install a radio relay station for both Operations and Maintenance so as to eliminate the communications problem with the hand-held radios. (2) Any change to a mission after the scheduling meeting has been conducted should require coordination with Volant Oak Operations, the 1300th MAS, and the MAC Command Post. (3) Army jumpers should be scheduled to show thirty minutes earlier than original to insure on- time take-offs. (4) Only one crew at a time should be briefed at the first full briefing in order to allow more meeting space and to eliminate confusion. (5) A separate quarters with telephones for flight engineer and loadmaster alert crews should be established in order to keep disturbances to a minimum during an alert. (6) A small computer or word processor could greatly aid the administrative personnel in preparing crew and personnel manifests as well as flight orders.

The deployment to Panama was successful due largely to the harmonious relationship between the aircrews. Maintenance and Operations. Active duty Air Force personnel of the 1300th MAS were especially cordial, helpful and enthusiastic. All of these factors contributed to the mission success rate attained by the Group.

There was one emergency mission flown by a 356th alert crew. Between 11:30 PM on 15 September and noon of 16 September, the crew flew doctors, nurses and medical supplies from Frankfurt, Germany to Athens, Greece in support of personnel wounded during the bombing of the Beirut Embassy in Lebanon. To gain time, the crew was given special permission to fly over Switzerland during this emergency.

From the standpoint of maintenance, the Volant Partner deployment was a big success. The

aircraft held-up well and only one JAATT mission was lost due to maintenance when an engine oil seal went defective. Of the four home station delays, two were charged to maintenance. Most problems were either electrical or communications navigation related. The German maintenance shops were very willing to help but essentially could not provide repair assistance.

However, in cases where mechanical support was needed, things went quite smoothly. There was a general consensus that, given the low meantime between failure of the avionics-related equipment on the C-130A, the War Readiness Spares Kit (WRSK) is inadequately stocked with those items. In many cases, the unit brought more than the WRSK authorized and still ran out in essentially ten days of moderate tasking. Procuring Mission Incapable (MICAP) items was exceedingly frustrating, time consuming and cumbersome because of the inadequate communication network.

The weather contributed to the realism of the training in that it was miserable most of the time. However, the fact there were no safety incidents reflects the good judgement and discretion exercised by the aircrews and maintenance personnel, particularly considering the crowded parking and narrow taxiway situation that existed at Kaufbeuren. The size of the ramp necessitated a great deal of towing and neither the tow tractor nor the tow bar were ideal for the conditions.

1986 Three hundred and eight-eight sorties were completed and 891 landings made. Over 376 troops were airdropped, 1750 passengers airlanded and 67.9 tons of cargo airlifted during this time. The 356th supported the Army Golden Knights from 19-24 January in their annual desert training at the Laguna Army Airfield, Arizona.

The 907th TAG activated two remote Drop Zones (DZ) for tactical aircrew training. Given the names Trapshooter and Helen, the DZ were built on property owned by a 907th navigator.

From 13 June to 11 July, the 907th TAG completed a VOLANT OAK rotation in Panama. Approximately 180 personnel were involved. Six C-130As were flown by 356th TAS aircrews to various parts of Central and South America in support of the United States Southern Air Division. Approximately 800 passengers and 250 tons of cargo were hauled and more than 300 Army paratroopers were airdropped. The mission required 64.8 deployment hours, 260.1 empty flight hours, and 63.1 redeployment hours. An excellent rating for overall reliability was earned in Panama by the aging C-130As. The 907th CAMS continued to support the 356th with outstanding results in maintaining the aging C-130As in a ready status.

The 356th TAS assisted the Army Golden Knights from 19-24 January in their annual desert training at the Laguna Army Airfield, Arizona.

Three hundred and seventy-six paratroopers were airdropped which required 4112 passes, 22 lifts, and 17.1 hours of flight time.

The 907th TAG inaugurated two remote Drop Zones (DZ) for tactical aircrew training. Given the names Trapshooter and Helen, the two DZs were built on farm property owned by a 907th TAG navigator. To mark the occasion, two C-130As of the 356th TAS flew the first time route to the

Trapshooter DZ and made a SATB-C airdrop on 18 February. The aircraft then flew on to the second DZ named Helen and then proceeded to an older DZ where a final SATB-C airdrop was made. Three day acquisition signals were displayed to the aircraft to mark the drop area and various techniques were used for the first time to enhance the day signals. The Group Commander completed his first C-130A tactical checkride on this mission.

Modification of the DZ at Rickenbacker was also completed which would provide year round and all weather capability. As a result, day and night tactical missions were able to proceed this winter in a timely manner. New timing light boxes, which were added to the DZ allowed for a self-contained unit and simpler operation than the previous system.

Converted from tactical to strategic airlift aircraft in 1992.

6/6/2006 - WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio -- The 356 Airlift Squadron furled and cased its squadron guidon during a small ceremony June 3 as the unit will inactivate on June 30. The ceremony was held this pasted drill weekend for reservists to participate and say good-bye.

"The squadron leaves a tremendous legacy," said Brig. Gen. Bruce Davis, 445th Airlift Wing commander. The squadron is a subordinate unit to the 445 AW. Col. Jim Blackman, 445th Operations Group commander followed along the same lines as the wing commander. "Since 1942 the 356 AS has been in every operation since. It's never been better than the last mission you've flown. It's a great credit to the people in the squadron." The reserve airlift squadron last mobilized mission for two and half years was transporting wounded, sick and injured patients on C-141 aircraft out of the Middle East and back to the states for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The guidon was furled and cased by squadron commander Lt. Col. Steve Johnson, signifying the end of the unit's mission which serves as a final symbol of closure for those past and present that were a part of this organization. "Thank you all from the bottom of my heart for your support," said the last squadron commander. "Thank you for your service to our country." Although the 356 AS inactivated assigned pilots, loadmasters, flight engineers and support personnel will be transferred to the existing 89th Airlift Squadron to fly and operate the C-5 Galaxy aircraft. The 89 AS is also assigned to the 445th Airlift Wing.

Two new squadrons were added to the 26 existing units of the Alamo Wing. A ceremony marking the occasion was held February 6. The 356 Airlift Squadron and the 733rd Training Squadron are now a part of the C-5 Formal Training Unit, Kelly Field, Lackland AFB, TX. The 356 AS, previously assigned to Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio, operated the C-141 weapon system. The 733rd TRS is a new designation activated at Kelly Field to provide administrative oversight to the students at the C-5 FTU. Both units gain traditions from the former C-5 FTU at Altus AFB, Okla., where C-5 aircrew training began in the 1960's. The process bringing the new squadrons to the Alamo Wing was a long one. Initially the concept was briefed to Congress in 2002, according to Lt. Col. John Martino, 733rd TRS Commander. "It (bringing the new squadrons and the C-5 FTU to Kelly Field) was challenging and fun," said Lt. Col. Fred McMahon, 356 AS Commander. Colonel McMahon's squadron is responsible for the formal flying training courses and the instructors. "The initial Cadre is an awesome group of people," said Colonel McMahon. He explained the instructors and evaluators come from all across the Air Force. "Altus built a proud tradition," said Colonel

Martino. "Here we are, the Reserve, with help from the active-duty (to take on the C-5 aircrew training mission). Quite a team." Colonel Martino spent some time working at the Air Force Integration office and knows first-hand that the mission requires more than just one unit doing a great job to be successful. "There were a lot of relationships built along the way," said Colonel Martino. He listed cooperative efforts from Air Mobility Command, Air Force Reserve Command and the 37th Training Wing, the host unit at Lackland.





USAF Unit Histories

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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.