

## 514 OPERATIONS GROUP



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE

4 Combat Cargo Group established, 9 Jun 1944

Activated, 13 Jun 1944

Inactivated, 9 Feb 1946

Disestablished, 8 Oct 1948

Reestablished and redesignated 344 Military Airlift Group, 31 Jul 1985

514 Troop Carrier Group established, 13 May 1947

Activated in the Reserve, 29 May 1947

Redesignated 514 Troop Carrier Group, Medium, 26 Jun 1949

Ordered to Active Service, 1 May 1951

Inactivated, 1 Feb 1953

Activated in the Reserve, 1 Apr 1953

Inactivated, 14 Apr 1959

Redesignated 514 Military Airlift Group, 31 Jul 1985

Redesignated 514 Operations Group, 1 Aug 1992

Activated in the Reserve, 1 Aug 1992

344 Military Airlift Group and 514 Operations Group consolidated, 26 Jan 2001. Consolidated organization designated 514 Operations Group.

#### STATIONS

Syracuse AAB, NY, 13 Jun 1944

Bowman Field, KY, 17 Aug 1944

Baer Field, IN, 6-16 Nov 1944

Sylhet, India, 28 Nov 1944  
Agartala, India, late Dec 1944  
Chittagong, India, 31 Jan 1945  
Namponmao, Burma, 10 Jun 1945  
Ondal, India, Nov 1945-9 Feb 1946.  
Marietta AAFld (later, AFB), GA, 29 May 1947  
Birmingham Muni Aprt, 26 Jun 1949  
Mitchel AFB, NY, 10 Oct 1949-1 Feb 1953  
Mitchel AFB, NY, 1 Apr 1953-14 Apr 1959  
McGuire AFB, NJ, 1 Aug 1992

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

I Troop Carrier Command, 13 Jun 1944  
Army Air Forces, India-Burma Theater, Nov 1944 (attached to Combat Cargo Task Force, 29 Nov 1944-31 May 1945 and to India-China Division, Air Transport Command, 15 Jun-13 Oct 1945)  
Eastern India Air Depot, 15 Jan-9 Feb 1946  
302 Troop Carrier Wing (later, 302 Air Division), 29 May 1947  
514 Troop Carrier Wing, 26 Jun 1949-1 Feb 1953  
514 Troop Carrier Wing, 1 Apr 1953-14 Apr 1959  
514 Airlift (later, 514 Air Mobility) Wing, 1 Aug 1992

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

C-47, 1944  
C-46, 1944-1945  
Unkn, 1947-1949  
C/TC-46, 1949-1953  
T-6, 1949-1951  
T-7, 1949-1951  
T-11, 1949-1951  
C-119, 1952-1953  
C-45, 1953  
C-46, 1953-1954  
C-119, 1954-1959  
C-141, 1992  
KC-10, 1994

### **COMMANDERS**

Lt Col Stuart D. Baird, 13 Jun 1944  
Lt Col Lucian S. Rochte Jr., 24 Aug 1945-unkn  
Lt Col Warren E. Cerrone, 1 Feb 1951  
Lt Col John H. Lackey Jr., 21 Jun 1951  
Lt Col Phillip N. Loring, Jan 1952  
Col Benton R. Baldwin, 1 May 1952-1 Feb 1953  
Unkn, 1 Apr 1953-14 Apr 1959

Col Thomas Brown, 1 Aug 1992  
Lt Col James K. Moran, 5 May 1993  
Col Alfred E. Cronk, 25 Jul 1993  
Col Anthony P. Capoccia, 8 Jun 1996  
Col James K. Moran, 1 Oct 1996  
Lt Col Donald W. Sloan, 28 Aug 2000 (Interim)  
Lt Col James R. Muscatell, Jr., 11 Feb 2001  
Lt Col Jim DiFrancesco

## HONORS

### Service Streamers

### Campaign Streamers

World War II  
India-Burma  
Central Burma  
China Offensive

### Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

### Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award  
1 Oct 1995-30 Sep 1997

## EMBLEM



514 Operations Group patch



514 Operations Group emblem: Per pale Gules and Azure surmounted in pale by a diminished pallet Argent, in dexter chief a globe of the second, gridlined Or, in sinister base two stylized

aircraft in formation, in bend sinister pointed up of the last, issuing contrails from nombril and elevated nombril of the third, overall four mullets in bend sinister of the like, all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "514 OPERATIONS GROUP" in Blue 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 alludes to the unit's presence in the world at large. The two flight symbols represent the 514's dual airlift and refueling missions. The four stars denote the excellence in operations, maintenance, mission support and medical functions of the global air mobility missions.

Group will use the wing emblem with the group designation in the scroll.

## **MOTTO**

### **OPERATIONS**

Trained in the U.S. with C-46 and C-47 before moving to India in Nov 1944, beginning operations in early Dec as part of the combined Combat Cargo Task Force. Transported reinforcements and supplies for Allied forces in Burma until May 1945. Operations included moving equipment and materials for the Ledo Road in Dec 1944; transporting men, mules, and boats when the Allies crossed the Irrawaddy River in Feb 1945; and dropping Gurkha paratroops during the assault on Rangoon in May. Moved to Burma in Jun and hauled ammunition, gasoline, mules, and men to China until the war ended.

The new groups original specifications were to: (1) "carry ground troops and auxiliary combat equipment to effective locations in a combat zone", (2) "maintain combat reinforcements, supply and resupply units in the combat zone", and (3) "evacuate casualties and other personnel from such zones." To this end a maximum of four (4) new cargo groups were planned. Seeing that these new units were to be carrying cargo into the heart of the battle, the new units were called Combat Cargo Groups.

The Combat Cargo Groups were to be self-contained groups, capable of being 100% operational and always ready to go at a moment's notice. To that end, each Combat Cargo Squadron was to have an Airdrome Squadron assigned with it. Each Airdrome Squadrons mission was to supply all tasks, including everything (from cooking to aircraft maintenance), necessary for the Combat Cargo Squadron to be self-sufficient. Both of these groups would function as one unit. Each of the Combat Cargo Groups was to consist of four Squadrons, each with 25 aircraft (originally C-47's). To fly these aircraft, 25 compete crews were assigned along with 25 extra Flying Officers.

The 4th Group had an interesting background. At about the same time the 3rd Combat Cargo Group was activated and sent to the fighting in and around Imphal India, the 4th Combat Cargo Group was also activated and directed to begin its training program. The Group was officially activated June 13, 1944, at Syracuse AAB in New York. the 4th Combat Cargo Group was enrolled in the training program of the 1st Troop Carrier Command. On June 14, 1944, each of the 4th Combat Cargo Groups, Squadrons was assigned an individual Airdrome Squadron. These Airdrome

Squadrons had actually been activated on May 10, 1944, and had been under a training regime with the 2nd Combat Cargo Group. The 13th Combat Cargo Squadron received the 348th Airdrome Squadron; the 14th Combat Cargo Squadron the 349th Airdrome Squadron; the 15th Combat Cargo Squadron claimed the 350th Airdrome Squadron, and the 16th Combat Cargo Squadron fell heir to the 351st Airdrome Squadron. This early joining of each Combat Cargo Squadron with its own Airdrome Squadron avoided many of the problems that the 3rd Combat Cargo Group had in its early days in the CBI. The newly formed 4th Combat Cargo Group and its four Squadrons were attached to the 2nd Combat Cargo Group during their training.

Lt. Col. Stuart Baird was the commanding officer of the 4th Group. His combined flying Echelon and Airdrome Squadrons were authorized 370 officers and 1,128 enlisted men. The airplane assigned to the unit was the Douglas C-47-A. Colonel Baird's Squadron Commanders were Maj. Lucian Rochte, 13th Squadron; Maj. Edwin Hatch, 14th Squadron; Maj. Thomas Fields 15th Squadron; and Capt. Leslie Bray, Jr., 16th Squadron. The Airdrome Squadrons were commanded by Maj. David Grossner, 348th ADS; Maj. George Cox, 349th ADS; Maj. Robert Franey, 350th ADS; and Maj. Jacob Holcomb, the 351st ADS. The 4th Combat Cargo Group enjoyed all of the privileges and training facilities of the Troop Carrier Command at Syracuse. The 4th Combat Cargo Group stayed at Syracuse for eight weeks flying C-47s. These weeks were not without problems. In July there were two crashes of C-47s that cost the lives of seven men – all from the 14th Combat Cargo Squadron. Except for the accidents, the training program, like that of the 2nd Combat Cargo Group went well. After eight weeks at Syracuse NY., the entire 4th Combat Cargo Group was transferred to Bowman Field in Louisville, Kentucky.

Ten days before this transfer to Bowman Field, Gen. Hap Arnold informed Colonel Baird that the 4th Combat Cargo Group would be trading in their C-47s for new Curtiss C-46s. From this point on, the main effort of the 4th Combat Cargo Group flying echelon and the Airdrome Squadrons was directed at learning about the new, larger, faster Curtiss airplane. To help in this transition, the ATC (Air Transport Command) sent a mobile training unit from New York to help the Flight Engineers and Airdrome Squadron mechanics. In addition twenty-four ATC pilots from Reno arrived to act as Flight Instructors and help check out the pilots and crews in the new airplane. A civilian staff from Curtiss-Wright, in Buffalo, NY., was also added to the program to demonstrate the capabilities of the airplane. At the end of three weeks, each pilot had at least eight hours dual instruction and was checked out. The Group moved to Kentucky and where their rigorous training continued. There were minor accidents such as gear-up landings due to hydraulic system failure and some taxi accidents but no fatalities. One man was killed by lightning while trying to cover an exposed engine on a C-46 during a severe thunderstorm.

While at Bowman Field the pilots of the 4th Combat Cargo Group were aquatinted with the art of towing gliders. This training would come in handy very early on as they arrived in the CBI. The 4th Combat Cargo Group Pilots and Co-pilots also brushed up on their instrument flying. Valuable training for the Theater of Operations they soon would be flying.

Training for the 4th Combat Cargo Group was well programmed and carried out according to plan. When their training ended on September 26, 1944, the 4th Combat Cargo Group pilots averaged

118:35 hours each in the Douglas C-47 and an average of 114 hours in the Curtiss C-46. Each pilot also had an average of 50:25 hours instrument training. Flight Engineers, under the Crew Chief Specialist Program, averaged 245:40 hours on the C-47 program and an average of 303:35 hours under the C-46 program.

The result of this intensive training program, plus selective culling of unqualified personnel, was a highly trained group of both Officers and Enlisted men, who made up the 4th Combat Cargo Group. On October 14, 1944, orders were cut directing the 4th Combat Cargo Group and its Airdrome Squadrons to Baer Field, Fort Wayne, Indiana, which was the overseas staging area. The 4th Combat Cargo Group began its move on November 6, 1944, and it was completed on the November 9, 1944

The 4th Combat Cargo Group was only at Baer Field for a few days when orders were issued for the Groups immediate departure to Asia on November 12, 1944. The 4th Combat Cargo Groups overseas trip followed the same route as that of the 3rd Combat Cargo Group. At Borinquen Field in Puerto Rico, one of the crews had a taxi accident resulting in a damaged airplane wing. This C-46 was deleted from the inventory. A C-46 from the 13th Squadron crashed at Kano, Nigeria, resulting in another aircraft loss. No injuries occurred in either of these accidents. The flight of C-46s continued and after crossing Africa, they eventually reached Aden. On the morning of the November 26, 1944, one of the 4th's planes crashed on takeoff resulting in five crew members killed and nine passengers injured. There were no more accidents en route and two days later the entire Group reached Karachi. Here, the Group rested for two days, doing 50-hour inspections and repairing minor damages to the aircraft. Departing Karachi most of the Groups planes towed gliders. The long trip across the Indian Desert, stopping for a short time at Agra – the site of the Taj Mahal – eventually came to an end. Some of these gliders were released at Ondal. While the remainder of the Gliders were towed on to Sylhet, the 4th Combat Cargo Groups new home, for a while. On December 1, 1944, the 4th Combat Cargo Group and it's 97 C-46s had arrived in Theater and were ready for Combat Operations.

Sylhet had changed little since the 3rd Combat Cargo Group had left for Upper Assam, and the 2nd Combat Cargo Group had moved to the Imphal Valley. The jungle that surrounded the airstrip still swarmed with thousands of green parrots and the trees were still full of screaming monkeys. It didn't take long for the newly arrived 4th Combat Cargo Group to get settled in. They as the previous occupants soon employed natives to do take care of their basha's.

The 4th Combat Cargo Group original orders placed the Group under the command of Headquarters, AAF, India-Burma Theater of Operations. , soon after the Groups arrival they were reassigned to the Combat Cargo Task Force whose headquarters was in Comilla. The purpose of the Combat Cargo Task Force was specifically "... to support the British XIV Army with provisions, equipment and ammunition, reinforcements and evacuation of casualties...." This project became a "first" in aeronautics; an army completely dependent on air-support for its very existence.

Immediate plans for the 4th Combat Cargo Group called for a two-week period where the Groups aircraft were to be overhauled, and men indoctrinated about the CBI Theater. It only took three

days to scrap these plans, when 15 C-46's of the Group were sent north to Ledo and Sookerting in Upper Assam to haul barrels of tar down to Myitkyina, Burma. While these 15 aircraft were on this detached service mission, the 4th Combat Cargo Group also suffered its first combat fatalities. One plane, returning from Burma to the staging area, was lost and never found.

The crew members were listed as "... missing in action...." At the same time these detached crews were hauling tar, the rest of the 4th Combat Cargo Group began hauling war materiel and troops into the Imphal Valley. Tons of supplies were stockpiled to serve the British XIV Army, which was now fighting south of Imphal, across the Chin Mountains in the Arakan-Chindwin River region. This was not an efficient operation because Sylhet was not a British supply terminal. The standard procedure called for aircraft to leave Sylhet very early in the morning, and fly empty to Comilla where the plane was loaded, and then haul the materiel over the high mountains to the airstrips on the Imphal Plain.

From Imphal the aircraft usually flew back to Comilla for another load unless they transported casualties or passengers to another destination. After the last sortie of the day, the 4th Combat Cargo Groups aircraft would return to Sylhet, empty. They would then repeat this procedure the next day. On December 13, 1944, the 4th Combat Cargo Group started following the British Army Advance and began transporting large amounts of materiel and men into a new jungle airstrip at Yazagyo which was 150 miles south of Imphal in the Kawbaw Valley. This airfield was close to Kalewa where the British XIV Army was engaging the Japanese. To aid in the British XIV Army advance toward Mandalay and Rangoon, the 4th Combat Cargo Group's bases would have to be somewhere in India, roughly in line with their advance.

So beginning on Christmas Day 1944, the 4th Group loaded all of their belongings into their C-46s and moved farther south to the recently deserted British airfield at Agartala. The British XIV Army was composed of two Corps, the 33rd and the 4th, and both engaged in the fighting at Kalewa. After claiming a victory the British XIV Army split. The 4th Corps continued down the Kale Valley while the 33rd Corps crossed the mountains to the Chindwin River Valley and the Great Plain of Burma. At Indaingale, south of Kalewa, the 4th Combat Cargo Group landed tons of combat materials almost to the point of oversupply.

The Group was now operating at almost full strength, with the return of 9 of the 15 aircraft on detached service. The six remaining C-46's were needed to help move the 1st Combat Cargo Group to its new China bases.

Early in January, the monsoon rains pounded away at the dirt landing strips in Burma. The airstrip at Indaingale became impossible to use and supplies were needed there. While the C-47 had proven itself as good aircraft for airdrops, the C-46, which was larger, was also harder to handle at slow speeds, almost to the point of being unstable. , an airdrop was considered for the field at Indaingale. Capt. Clayton Doherty of the 15th Squadron and the 4th Groups Operations Officer Capt. Steve Ehrhardt made the first test airdrop, which was successful. The next day the 4th Combat Cargo Group dropped many bundles on this flooded airstrip.

Move to Chittagong At the end of January, the 4th Group moved from Agartala to Chittagong, India. Chittagong, a large cosmopolitan city on the Bay of Bengal was a major port, rail and highway terminus. This move was accomplished without reduction of the cargo flights to Burma.

During the latter part of February, the 4th Group went on an almost constant flying schedule. Copilots, radio operators and crew chiefs were rushed in from B-24, B-25 and P-47 units to help support the 20-hour daily operations. Some planes would return to Chittagong after the fourth trip of the day only one hour before they were to take-off on the next day's missions.

The 4th Group flew a total of 18,412:35 hours during April. Personally, during April, I logged 117:05 hours flying time. When loading, unloading and ground turnaround times are added, the result was some very long days. Considering the Group had about 90 or so planes at this time, each one had to average nearly 190 hours flying time during the month. Each plane also had down time for the required 50 and 100 hour inspections. The maintenance personnel did a superb job keeping the planes in the air. March was the second highest flying hour month which was 1200 hours less than April.

As May came to an end, so did the requirement for round the clock support of the XIV Army. During the first eight days of June, the 4th Group did haul 5,192 tons of supplies, logging 3822:40 hours flying time. The 4th Group's support of the XIV Army ceased at this time.

After the war ended, some units of the 4th Group were moved to Shanghai, China. There they assisted in moving Chinese troops to areas in northern China where the Communists were beginning to rebel. In February 1946, the 4th Combat Cargo Group was moved back to Panagarh, India, where it was ultimately inactivated.

Trained in the Reserve for troop carrier operations, May 1947 to Feb 1953 and Apr 1953 to Apr 1959.

Participated in several exercises and operations, airlifting personnel and equipment of various operational wings between bases within the United States. Activated in the Reserve in Aug 1992 to fly strategic airlift missions. Provided trained personnel to augment active force in emergencies.

Personnel assigned to its squadrons participated in contingency airlift operations, some to Africa, and in training exercises. The group also began flying air refueling missions in 1994.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 25 Jun 2021

Updated:

Sources

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