

## 709 AIRLIFT SQUADRON



### MISSION

The 709 Airlift Squadron mission is C-5 global strategic airlift with 29 combat-ready aircrews flying over 4,000 hours annually in support of National Command Authorities on overseas airlift missions, joint service exercises, humanitarian relief, presidential movement and aircrew training.

### LINEAGE

709 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 6 Apr 1943  
Activated, 1 May 1943  
Redesignated 709 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 20 Aug 1943  
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945  
Redesignated 709 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 24 Oct 1947  
Activated in the Reserve, 10 Nov 1947  
Inactivated, 27 Jun 1949  
Redesignated 709 Military Airlift Squadron (Associate), 19 Jun 1973  
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1973  
Redesignated 709 Airlift Squadron (Associate), 1 Feb 1992  
Redesignated 709 Airlift Squadron, 1 Oct 1994

### STATIONS

Ephrata AAB, WA, 1 May 1943  
Rapid City AAB, SD, 13 Jun 1943  
Harvard AAFld, NE, 1 Aug-11 Nov 1943  
Rattlesden, England, 1 Dec 1943-c. 3 Aug 1945  
Drew Field, FL, 18 Aug-7 Nov 1945

Bergstrom Field (later, AFB), TX, 10 Nov 1947-27 Jun 1949  
Dover AFB, DE, 1 Oct 1973

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

447 Bombardment Group, 1 May 1943-7 Nov 1945  
447 Bombardment Group, 10 Nov 1947-27 Jun 1949  
512 Military Airlift (later, 512 Airlift) Wing, 1 Oct 1973  
512 Operations Group, 1 Aug 1992

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-17, 1943-1945  
Unkn, 1947-1949  
C-5, 1973

### **COMMANDERS**

Maj Lloyd W. Sheppard, 31 May 1943  
Lt Col Robert G. David, 5 Feb 1944-unkn  
Unkn, 10 Nov 1947-27 Jun 1949  
Lt Col William J. Cox, 1 Oct 1973  
Lt Col Stanley Schneider, 17 Jun 1974  
Lt Col George A. Resh, 27 Feb 1976  
Lt Col Michael A. Melvin, 5 Jun 1978  
Lt Col Ralph H. Oates, 6 Feb 1983  
Lt Col Russell E. Mullen, 30 Sep 1986  
Lt Col Gary E. Davis, 9 Sep 1989  
Lt Col Quentin Smith, 1 Jul 1992  
Lt Col James W. Schultz Jr., 1 Feb 1993  
Lt Col Warren J. Wetherbee, 24 Jul 1993  
Lt Col Robert A. Bell Jr., 24 Aug 1996  
Lt Col Theresa Cave  
Lt Col Donald H. Schmidt, 16 May 2020

### **HONORS**

#### **Service Streamers**

#### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II  
Air Offensive, Europe  
Normandy  
Northern France  
Rhineland  
Ardennes-Alsace  
Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

### Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989-1990.

### Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

13 Oct-14 Nov 1973

1 Jan 1974-30 Apr 1975

1 May 1975-31 May 1976

1 Jun 1976-31 May 1978

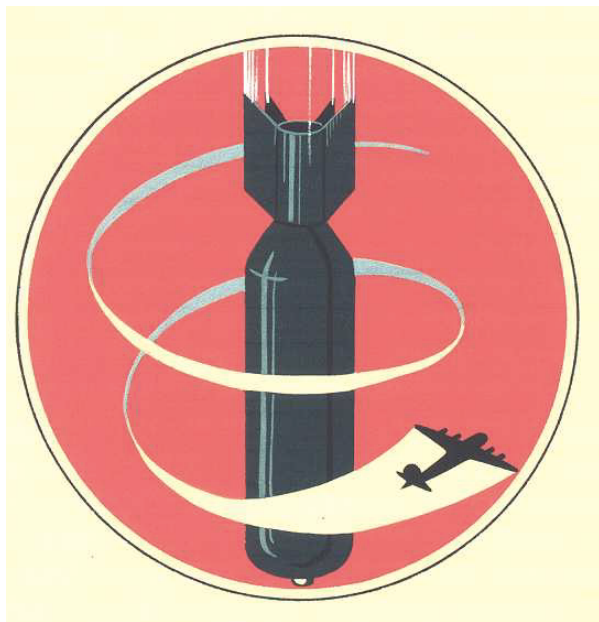
1 Jun 1978-31 May 1979

1 Jan 1988-30 Jun 1989

1 Jul 1993-30 Jun 1995

1 Sep 1996-31 Aug 1998

### EMBLEM



709 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy emblem: On an orange disc, bordure white, edged black, a large black aerial bomb palewise, point to base, enclosed in spiral white reversed light gray, trailing as wake behind black four-motor silhouette aircraft in sinister base, as per record drawing. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The design portrays the bombing mission and accuracy of the Squadron at high altitude.



709 Military Airlift Squadron The emblem bears the Air Force colors, golden yellow and ultramarine blue, and is symbolic of the Squadron. The aquamarine globe represents the planet Earth and is indicative of our worldwide airlift capability. The four cardinal compass points and three radiating arrows indicate the extent of our mission requirements -Anywhere, Anytime. The silver falcon head and yellow gold wings allude to our method of operation -Flying. On a blue disc edged with a narrow white border a yellow four pointed star surmounted by a light blue globe, gridlined black, with axis bendwise, the globe bearing the head of a gray falcon in profile garnished white and detailed black with white eye surmounting the globe and lower point of the star in base a pair of stylized yellow wings from the center of which radiating upward are three yellow arrows, terminating below the head of the falcon. Attached above the disc a yellow scroll edged black and inscribed "GLOBAL AIRLIFT" in black letters. Attached below the disc a blank yellow scrol edged black,





On a disc Azure, a mullet of four Or surmounted by a globe, axis bendwise Celeste gridlined Sable charged with a falcon's head traversed erased bendwise Silver Gray, eyed Argent garnished of the fourth; overall in base three arrows radiating from between a Vol Yellow; all within a narrow inner White border and Blue outer border. Attached above the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "GLOBAL AIRLIFT" in Blue letters. Attached below the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "709TH AIRLIFT SQ" 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 is indicative of the unit's world-wide airlift capabilities. The four-pointed star behind the globe suggests the cardinal compass points and denotes the Squadron's precision in accomplishing its mission. The falcon represents the swift and accurate response to the call for airlift. The arrows and wings symbolize the unit's support of the Air Force mission. (Approved, 29 Sep 1980)

## MOTTO

Global Airlift

## OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 24 Dec 1943-21 Apr 1945. Trained in the Reserve for bombardment operations, 1947-1949. Since 1973, trained for and flew airlift missions, participating in exercises and global humanitarian and contingency operations.

19 April 1945 During an Eighth Air Force raid on a rail marshaling yard at Aussig, Czechoslovakia, *Luftwaffe* Messerschmitt Me 262s shoot down five Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses. The fifth, Boeing B-17G-5-BO Flying Fortress, 42-31188, named "Dead Man's Hand", of the 709th Bomb Squadron, 447th Bomb Group, piloted by Lt. Robert F. Glazener, on its 111th combat mission, becomes the last heavy bomber of the 8th Air Force lost to enemy fighters in the European theatre. Seven of eight crew escape the falling bomber, although no chutes were reported being seen (by this point, the two waist gunners were not being carried.)

Reservists with the 512th Airlift Wing at Dover Air Force Base, Del., spent about a year working hard getting ready to receive a new and improved version of the C-5 aircraft. All their preparations came to an end in February with the arrival of the wing's first C-5M Super Galaxy. Gen. Arthur J. Lichte, Air Mobility Command commander, personally delivered the aircraft to Dover Feb. 9. The base received its second C-5M four days later. In addition to the C-5M training flyers and maintainers received at the Lockheed Martin Aeronautics plant in Marietta, Ga., they prepared for the aircraft's arrival by writing and validating operating procedures, manuals and technical orders. Fourteen aircrew members have completed C-5M Type One training since January 2008. The 512th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron began sending people to training in May 2008.

"We learn about the aircraft's upgraded systems and how they operate," said Lt. Col. Mike Semo, manager of the C-5M integration project and chief pilot. Chief Master Sgt. Fred Eason, 512th AMXS maintenance superintendent, said after the maintainers who received the training in Marietta returned to Dover, they began training others in the squadron. A C-5 undergoes two upgrades to become a C-5M Super Galaxy.

The first phase is the Aircraft Modernization Program performed at Dover and Travis AFB, Calif. The aircraft receives a modernized glass cockpit and avionics upgrade, featuring a digital all-weather flight control system and autopilot, a new communications suite, flat-panel displays, and enhanced navigation and safety equipment. The second upgrade is the Reliability Enhancement and Reengining Program performed at the Lockheed Martin plant. This program replaces the old engines with quieter and more powerful General Electric CF-6 engines. The aircraft also undergoes 55 system and equipment improvements to increase the C-5's reliability. Some of the modifications include improvements to the airframe structure, flight controls, and hydraulic, electrical and fuel systems.

The Air Force Reserve's 709th Airlift Squadron and regular Air Force's 9th AS at Dover AFB will spend the next six months familiarizing themselves with the C-5M, training on aerial refueling and tactics, and maintaining currency, Colonel Semo said. In August, the C-5Ms are scheduled to begin operational testing and evaluation. All C-5s in the Air Force inventory are undergoing AMP modifications. After the C-5M aircraft at Dover are tested and evaluated, 51 more C-5s are scheduled to undergo the RERP upgrade to complete their conversion to the C-5M Super Galaxy. 2009.

Dover AFB, Del., received its 11th C-5M Super Galaxy on June 21. Maj. Gen. Craig Gourley, vice commander for the Air Force Reserve Command, flew the newly modernized aircraft alongside pilots of the 709th Airlift Squadron from Lockheed Martin's Marietta, Ga., facility on June 21. It was the first time an all Reserve crew delivered a C-5M to Dover, states the June 24 release. "From the Reserve perspective, today's delivery was nostalgic for our unit," said Lt. Col. Patrick Egan, one of the pilots with the 709th AS. During World War II, the then 709th Bombardment Squadron flew B-17s, including one aircraft dubbed "Blue Hen Chick." Later, a C-5B assigned to Dover had the name "Spirit of the Blue Hen." This latest C-5M carries on Blue Hen tradition. Dover will receive seven more C-5Ms. 2013

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE 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.