

817 EXPEDITIONARY AIRLIFT SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

817 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 14 Sep 1943
Activated, 20 Sep 1943
Inactivated, 25 Sep 1945
Redesignated 817 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 15 Nov 1952
Activated, 1 Jan 1953
Redesignated 817 Troop Carrier Squadron, 8 Dec 1965
Redesignated 817 Tactical Airlift Squadron, 1 Aug 1967
Inactivated, 15 Jun 1970
Redesignated 817 Expeditionary Airlift Squadron and converted to provisional status, 12 Jun 2002

STATIONS

Ephrata AAB, WA, 20 Sep 1943
MacDill Field, FL, 7 Nov 1943-2 Mar 1944
Sterparone Airfield, Italy, 9 Apr 1944
Pisa, Italy, 15 May-25 Sep 1945
Ashiya AB, Japan, 1 Jan 1953
Naha AB, Okinawa, 25 Jun 1960

ASSIGNMENTS

483 Bombardment Group, 20 Sep 1943-25 Sep 1945
483 Troop Carrier Group, 1 Jan 1953
483 Troop Carrier Wing, 8 Dec 1958
315 Air Division, 25 Jun 1960
374 Troop Carrier (later, 374 Tactical Airlift) Wing, 8 Aug 1966-15 Jun 1970
Air Mobility Command to activate or inactivate at any time after 12 Jun 2002

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1943-1945

C-119, 1953-1959

C-130, 1958

COMMANDERS

Unkn, 20 Sep 1943-3 Oct 1943

Cpt John C. Reid, 4 Oct 1943

Maj William A. Lanford, 11 Dec 1943

Maj John J. Gorman, 8 May 1944

Maj William J. Kilpatrick Jr., Nov 1944

Maj Darrel G. Burgeson, 7 May 1945-Sep 1945

Maj Richard E. Knie, c. Jan 1953

Maj Paul J. Buckley, 1953

LTC Charles B. Westbrook, 1953

LTC Harry V. Bankard, 1955

LTC George D. Samson, 1958

LTC Frank Hatten, 1960

LTC George J. Nied, 1961

LTC George F. Owen, 1 Feb 1962

LTC Ralph S. Saunders, 11 Feb 1964

Maj Theodore P. Crichton, Aug 1964

LTC Warren G. Abolt, 1966

LTC George M. Dwight Jr., by Mar 1968-15 Jun 1970

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Rome-Arno

Normandy

Northern France

Southern France

North Apennines

Rhineland

Central Europe

Po Valley

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Korean War

Third Korean Winter

Korea Summer-Fall, 1953

Vietnam

Vietnam Advisory

Vietnam Defensive

Vietnam Air

Vietnam Air Offensive

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III

Vietnam Air/Ground

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV

TET 69/Counteroffensive

Vietnam Summer/Fall 1969

Vietnam Winter/Spring

Sanctuary Counteroffensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Germany, 18 Jul 1944

Germany, 24 Mar 1945

Republic of Korea

Presidential Unit Citation

[Jan]-27 Jul 1953

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

6 May 1953-10 Sep 1954

1 Jan-30 Jun 1961

1 Jul 1964-30 Apr 1966

8 Aug 1966-7 Aug 1967

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

[Jan]-27 Jul 1953

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Sep 1969-15 Jun 1970

EMBLEM



817 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy)



817 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium emblem: On a medium blue disc a white winged unicorn in flight, horn Air Force yellow, shaded golden brown; outlines and details black throughout. (Approved, 19 Aug 1958)

817 Expeditionary Airlift Squadron emblem: On a disc Azure, a winged unicorn in flight Argent to dexter, outlines and details Sable, horn Or, all within a narrow border Black. Attached above the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "AD ASTRA ET ULTRA" in Black letters. Attached below the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "817TH EXPEDITIONARY AIRLIFT SQ" in Black 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 winged unicorn, symbol of power and speed, represents the unit fulfilling its mission. The confidence and strength displayed by the unicorn in flight signify like qualities in Squadron personnel. The unicorn's golden horn indicates the unit's unlimited capabilities in accomplishing assigned missions.

MOTTO

AD ASTRA ET ULTRA--To the Stars and Beyond

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Continued flying airlift missions in the Far East after the Korean War. In 1965, the squadron began rotating aircraft and crews to South Vietnam for tactical airlift missions, such as transporting combat troops, dropping paratroops, lifting and dropping supplies and equipment, and dropping leaflets.

2009 More than 120 Airmen from the 8th Airlift Squadron here returned home Thursday after a 120-day deployment in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The Airmen operated as the 817th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron at various locations throughout the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility and Europe, though they were primarily based at Incirlik Air Force Base, Turkey. "It's so good to be back," said Tech. Sgt. David Thomas, 8th AS loadmaster. Sergeant Thomas said he didn't sleep a wink on the flight home — thanks to the anticipation of seeing his bride of just five months when he got off the plane.

While deployed, the squadron executed more than 2,800 sorties, racked up 4,600 flying hours, and moved more than 130,000 passengers and 40,000 short tons of cargo. "When we got there, we hit the ground running," Sergeant Thomas said. "You know you're busy while you're doing it, but to get back and look at those (cargo delivery) numbers, it's like 'wow'". The squadron also flew multiple aeromedical evacuation missions, delivering wounded warriors from the frontlines to advanced medical treatment facilities. Additionally, the 8th AS flew 13 combat airdrop missions delivering more than 400 bundles of resupply material to 23 remote forward operating bases in Afghanistan. The combat airdrop missions improved force protection for U.S. forces by eliminating some resupply convoys to forward locations. "While we're extremely proud of our deployed accomplishments, we would be remiss if we didn't recognize and thank our families for the tremendous job they did on the home front," said Lt. Col. Al Miller, 8th AS commander.

"They managed all the issues back home so we could focus on our deployed mission. From the very time we left Germany, we were all looking forward to a long awaited and greatly anticipated reunion with our families and friends." And that message could not have rang more true for Sergeant Thomas, whose wife endured her first deployment less than a month into her marriage. "She did a great job," said the 12-year Air Force veteran. "She kept everything together." The 7th AS left here last week for a 120-day deployment, effectively replacing the 8th AS.

Two C-17s Make Precedent-Setting Airdrop Over Afghanistan While the US military presence in Afghanistan is drawing down, mobility aircrews continue to set airdrop records. On Oct. 11, a pair of C-17s operating with the 817th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron at the Transit Center at Manas, Kyrgyzstan, delivered 62 bundles over a drop zone in two passes, according to an Oct. 21 Manas release. "This was the first time a combat cargo drop of this magnitude has taken place from two C-17s in formation over one drop zone," states the release. The bundles were fitted with the Precision Air Drop System that is designed to deliver them precisely to the drop zone. 2013

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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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.