

15 AIRLIFT SQUADRON



MISSION

The 15 Airlift Squadron, "Global Eagles," operate the C-17A Globemaster III aircraft and provide combat-ready aircrews for strategic airlift, airdrop, air refueling, tactical ingress, emergency nuclear airlift, Presidential support, and humanitarian relief missions worldwide. The 15th Airlift Squadron also maintains a cadre of aircrew to support Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed contingency missions, including sensitive operations and unconventional warfare.¹

LINEAGE²

15 Transport Squadron constituted, 20 Nov 1940

Activated, 4 Dec 1940

Redesignated 15 Troop Carrier Squadron, 4 Jul 1942

Inactivated, 31 Jul 1945

Activated, 30 Sep 1946

Redesignated 15 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 1 Jul 1948

Redesignated 15 Troop Carrier Squadron, Heavy, 15 Aug 1948

Redesignated 15 Military Airlift Squadron, 8 Jan 1966

Redesignated 15 Airlift Squadron, 1 Jan 1992

Inactivated, 26 Jul 1993

Activated, 1 Oct 1993

¹Official unit website. <https://www.jbcharleston.jb.mil/About-Us/Fact-Sheets/Article/233024/15th-airlift-squadron/#:~:text=The%2015th%20Airlift%20Squadron%2C%20%22Global,and%20humanitarian%20relief%20missions%20worldwide>. Accessed, 6 Jul 2024.

² Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

STATIONS

Duncan Field, TX, 4 Dec 1940
Augusta, GA, 12 Jul 1941
Pope Field, NC, 24 May 1942
Lubbock, TX, 25 Sep 1942
Pope Field, NC, 27 Feb–2 May 1943
Lourmel, Algeria, 15 May 1943
Kairouan, Tunisia, 24 Jun 1942
Licata, Sicily, 2 Sep 1943
Siccia, Sicily, 5 Oct 1943–12 Feb 1944
Barkston, England, 17 Feb 1944
Abbeville, France, 13 Mar–13 May 1945
Waller Field, Trinidad, 19 May–31 Jul 1945
Eschborn AB, Germany, 30 Sep 1946
Rhein-Main AB, Germany, 9 Feb 1947–21 Jul 1950
McChord AFB, WA, 26 Jul–4 Dec 1950
Ashiya AB, Japan, 13 Dec 1950
Tachikawa AB, Japan, 26 Mar–18 Nov 1952
Larson AFB, WA, 21 Nov 1952
Donaldson AFB, SC, 25 Aug 1954
Hunter AFB, GA, 1 Apr 1963
Norton AFB, CA, 1 Apr 1967–26 Jul 1993
Charleston AFB, SC, 1 Oct 1993

ASSIGNMENTS

61 Transport (later, 61 Troop Carrier) Group, 4 Dec 1940–31 Jul 1945
61 Troop Carrier Group, 30 Sep 1946
63 Troop Carrier Group, 8 Oct 1959
63 Troop Carrier (later, 63 Military Airlift) Wing, 18 Jan 1963
63 Military Airlift Group, 1 Oct 1978
63 Military Airlift Wing, 1 Jul 1980
63 Operations Group, 1 Jan 1992–26 Jul 1993
437 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1993

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-33, 1941
C-39, 1941–1942
C-47A, 1942–1945
C-47, 1946–1948
C-54, 1948–1952
C-124, 1952
C-141, 1967–1993

COMMANDERS

Lt Col William T. Jenkins, #1953³

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Sicily

Naples-Foggia

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Central Europe

Korea

CCF Intervention

First UN Counteroffensive

CCF Spring Offensive

UN Summer-Fall Offensive

Second Korean Winter

Korean Summer-Fall, 1952

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989–1990

Decorations

³ Unit yearbook. *Larson AFB, WA, 62 Troop Carrier Wing, 1953*. Army and Navy Publishing Company. Baton Rouge, LA. 1953.

Air Force Distinguished Unit Citations

Sicily, 11 Jul 1943

France, [6–7] Jun 1944

Korea, 13 Dec 1950–21 Apr 1951

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1957–10 Dec 1962

1 Jul 1968–30 Jun 1969

1 Jul 1970–30 Jun 1971

1 Jun 1978–31 May 1980

1 Jan–31 Dec 1983

1 Jan–31 Dec 1987

1 Jan 1990–30 Apr 1991

1 Jul 2011–30 Jun 2012

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

1 Jul 1951–[18 Nov 1952]

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966–8 Jan 1973

EMBLEM



15 Transport Squadron emblem: The flat plains and rolling hills of Texas have played host to practically every type of military development known to modern warfare. While the assembly lines of the huge production plants of the nation have been fed by the blast furnaces of the middle East, the testing grounds of Texas, with their more than elbow room, have given space to the trying out of the finished products. Now that cannon and paratroops and trains of fast freight gliders are taking to the skies, it is understandable that the 15 Transport Squadron should base in Texas. Walt Disney has given its insignia an appropriate "Lone Star State" identification affixed to the top of a descending parachute. Under its canopy a serious-faced donkey drifts earthward with a roll of freight attached to his back. When his feet have touched the ground he will have learned how to fall so that when dropped from a plane he will land in

one piece.⁴



The 15 insignia is overall light blue with white longitude and latitude lines superimposed. All land masses are yellow. There were three eight-pointed stars on the globe which are in white with red borders. They signify the three major airlifts supported by the 15 TCS, and they represent the actions in Berlin, the Pacific and Korea. The eagle on the globe is in natural colors (assumed to be white and brown) with gold beak and claws, highlighted in black. The sphere was bordered in red and dark blue. (Approved, 14 Jun 1977; replaced emblem approved, 16 Jul 1952)⁵

⁴ *War Insignia Stamp Album Vol 4*, Postamp Publishing Co., 1942.

⁵ The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.



MOTTO

GLOBAL EAGLES

OPERATIONS

Squadron missions included airborne assaults on Sicily, Normandy, Holland, and Germany; aerial transportation in MTO and ETO.

On 28 November 1947 C-47B 43-48736, piloted by Wesley B. Fleming, en route from Pisa to Frankfurt-Rhein-Main AB, thirty miles off-course, crashes in the Italian Alps near Trappa, Italy. All five crew and 15 passengers KWF. Wreckage discovered eight months later.

Berlin Airlift, 1948–1949.

Korea: Aerial transportation from US to Japan, Aug–Dec 1950, and between Japan and Korea, 13 Dec 1950–Nov 1952.

Worldwide airlift, 1953–1993, including to Southeast Asia, 1966–1973; Grenada, Oct–Nov 1983; Panama, 18 Dec 1989–8 Jan 1990; and Southwest Asia, Aug 1990–Jan 1991.

More than 130 members of the 15 Airlift Squadron returned home to Charleston AFB, S.C., Jan. 3 after a four-month deployment to support US military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa. The Post and Courier, a Charleston newspaper, reported Jan. 4 that these airmen flew more than 3,000 sorties, dropped more than 103 million pounds of cargo, and carried 79,000 military personnel during their time in the war theater. "Putting cargo out there, bullets out there, supplies, food, water out there in mountainous terrains in Afghanistan, anything you can think of, we dropped it," said Capt. Roosevelt Loveless, a C-17 pilot from the unit. Replacing the 15 AS in theater is Charleston's 16th AS which headed out Dec. 29, along with members of the base's 437th Operations Support Squadron. "We have trained for almost a year and are now ready to go out and do the mission," said Maj. Todd McCoy, 437th Operations

Group assistant director of operations⁶

JOINT BASE CHARLESTON, S.C. (AFNS) -- Members of the 15 Airlift Squadron and 437th Airlift Wing, flew a C-17 Globemaster III to Fort Drum, New York, Sept. 28, 2017, to pick up aid supplies before flying to San Juan, Puerto Rico, after Hurricane Maria, a category 4 hurricane, battered the U.S. territory. Joint Base Charleston aircrew members were placed on alert status mid-August in the event they were called upon to respond to hurricane relief efforts. Since then, the 437th AW has flown numerous humanitarian missions throughout this year's storm season. "We have launched more than 70 missions supporting response and relief efforts after hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria," said Lt. Col. Erin Meinders, 437th Operations Group deputy commander. "Currently we are conducting relief operations into and out of multiple airfields in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, as well as airports in the Florida Keys and MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida."

The 15 AS, along with help from the Army, delivered 12 Soldiers, three Humvees, three trailers and four pallets filled with relief supplies for the citizens of Puerto Rico. "We were activated Sept. 27 to help the citizens of Puerto Rico who suffered damages from Hurricane Maria," said Army Sgt. James Munoz, 510th Human Resources sergeant. "We're finishing the final stages to go support them. The officers in our division and brigade have worked hand-in-hand with the Air Force and received aircraft for the mission in less than 24 hours. We play a major role in each other's missions, and without the Air Force we wouldn't be able to get there." Working in a joint environment is nothing new to the Airmen of JB Charleston. With the uniqueness of each mission, something new can be taken away each time, such as seeing how members from other units and branches learn on the job.

"Even in the upload the Soldiers wanted to learn and work just as hard as we did," said Airman 1st Class Patrick Schmidt, 15 AS loadmaster. "It was great working with them, they were eager to help." Although the missions went smoothly, it took a lot of time and effort planning for both services. "It's a long line of planning to go through. We get the call that the Army needs to move something and our schedulers do a great job of putting a team together and getting us out there," said Schmidt. "We went up north to pick them up and they were ready to go. Our command did a great job getting everybody on the same page." Delivering humanitarian supplies is rewarding for all involved, no matter the branch, said Schmidt. Helping those in need after the devastation from Hurricane Maria helps make missions worthwhile.

"It's a critical mission," said Schmidt. "In this area, they're all islands so they're cut off from everything. With the C-17 we can get lots of cargo, food and water here quick and easy." Since relief efforts began, aircrews from JB Charleston delivered more than 2.5 million pounds of humanitarian supplies to the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico to assist with recovery operations and Soldiers to aid in the distribution of relief items. Supplies included water, food, and equipment. "This hurricane season has impacted numerous U.S. states and territories," said Col. Patrick Winstead, 437th AW vice commander. "Throughout the time, the aircrews of the 437th Airlift Wing and 315 Airlift Wing have remained steadfast in providing support and

⁶ Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

relief to these areas. Through the power of rapid global mobility we were able to continue to provide relief supplies, medical teams and equipment to devastated areas.” 2017⁷

⁷ Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.