

1502 AIR TRANSPORT WING

MISSION

LINEAGE

1502 Air Transport Wing designated and organized, 1 Jul 1955
Inactivated, 8 Jan 1966

STATIONS

Hickam AFB, HI, 1 Jul 1955-8 Jan 1966

ASSIGNMENTS

Pacific Division, MATS, 1 Jul 1955
Western Transport Air Force, (WESTAF), 1 July 1958
Headquarters, Military Air Transport Service, 1-8 Jan 1966

WEAPON SYSTEMS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 1502d Air Transport Wing is a discontinued United States Air Force unit, last assigned to Western Transport Air Force in January 1966. The 1502d ATW was a heavy cargo transport wing of the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), formed at Hickam AFB on 1 July 1955.

The wing was organized in mid-1955 with five C-97 squadrons established; squadrons again redesignated as part of the Wing realignment. In 1955 two squadrons were upgraded to very heavy lift C-124 Globemaster II which gave the wing a worldwide airlift capability. Also beginning in 1955, the wing operated VC-97s for VIP/Special Air Mission flights supporting HQ Far East Air Force (Rear), later HQ Pacific Air Forces, 1957-1966.

The 1502nd Air Transport Wing Rodeo team under the command of Major Joe Lodrige win the 1962 Military Air Transport Service Rodeo at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. The C-124 team from Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, devised a new airdrop system to use in that first active-duty Rodeo, which helped them claim the title of the "best of the best. Several members of the 1502nd including Major Lodrige, went on to very distinguished service flying in the elite 89th Airlift Wing stationed at Andrews Air Force Base flying our nation's most senior civilian and military leaders to locations around the globe.

The wing assumed responsibility for aircraft and personnel of 1503d Air Transport Group at Tachikawa Air Base, Japan in 1964 when 1503d reduced from Wing to Group level. The 1503d was a support organization and had no flying units assigned despite its name. The wing remained flying worldwide transport missions with the Globemasters until 1966 when MATS was inactivated and the wing assets were transferred to the Military Airlift Command 61st Military Airlift Wing.

Discontinued on 8 Jan 1966, personnel and equipment assigned to 61st Military Airlift Wing

During the Taiwan Strait crisis of 1958, MATS flew 144 airlift trips to the Far East when the crisis arose in the Formosa Straits, supporting the move of a Tactical Air Command Composite Air Strike Force, and airlifting a squadron of F-104 Starfighters to Taiwan.

MATS supported nuclear weapons testing at the Eniwetok Proving Ground by airlifting more than 14,000 tons of cargo and 13,000 personnel, as well as providing 1,100 of its own technical personnel.

In February, 1961, MATS participated in Long Pass, the first strategic deployment airlift exercise of its size to the Pacific. It used 132 aircraft to move a battle group of the Strategic Army Corps (STRAC) and equipment for a Tactical Air Command Composite Strike Force (CASF) to Clark Air Base, the Philippines, and back again.

In February, 1962, MATS used 120 airlift aircraft of all types in a similar exercise, Great Shelf, to Clark Air Base. This time it moved 2,300 Army paratroops of STRAC and 1,100 tons of their equipment over the 7,600-statute-mile (12,200 km) route.

In 1962, Devastating 175 miles per hour (282 km/h) winds of Typhoon Karen had barely subsided when the first of 50 MATS jet and prop-driven aircraft began landing on the rain-soaked runways of Anderson Air Force Base, Guam, with relief supplies and equipment. MATS

airlifted more than 970 tons of material — from huge electric generators to blankets and clothing. Returning aircraft evacuated more than 760 dependents and servicemen whose homes had been shattered by the island's most severe storm in recorded history.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.