

45 AERIAL PORT SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

915 Aerial Port Flight constituted and activated, 28 Jan 1964

Organized in the Reserve, 15 Feb 1964

Inactivated, 1 Jul 1972

Redesignated 45 Aerial Port Squadron, 20 Jul 1981

Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1981

STATIONS

Homestead AFB, Fla, 15 Feb 1964-1 Jul-1972

Travis AFB, Calif, 1 Oct 1981

ASSIGNMENTS

Continental Air Command, 28 Jan 1964

915 Troop Carrier Group, Medium (later, 915 Military Airlift Group), 15 Feb 1964

90 Aerial Port Squadron, 29 Jun 1971-1 Jul 1972

349 Military Airlift Wing (Associate), 1 Oct 1981

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



On a disc divided per bend sinister blue and yellow a light blue globe grid lined blue; overall in sinister a blue and white stylized demieagle with red elevated wings, detailed blue and white; in dexter chief an arc of five yellow stars; all within a narrow blue border. Attached above the disc a white scroll bordered blue and attached below the disc a white scroll bordered blue inscribed PRO PATRIA in blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Blue and yellow arc 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 symbolizes the worldwide aerial porters. The eagle depicted in national colors represents flight in general) indicating the unit's support of a variety of aircraft. The live stars are symbolic of a guarantee of quality and the manner in which the unit performs its tasks. (Approved, 6 Aug 1986)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Provided air cargo, mail, and passenger capability as directed by the 915th Troop Carrier Group, Medium (later, 915th Military Airlift Group), Continental Air Command, 90th Aerial Port Squadron, Military Airlift Command, and Air Force Reserve. Carried out a continuous stream of actual and simulated aerial port operations.

Four Air Force Reserve aerial port squadrons, including the 45th APS, participated in a joint Patriot Partner exercise with two Navy reserve units in Norfolk, Va., recently. Originally, the two-week exercise held at the naval air station was exclusively for Air Force reservists, but in the past couple of years, it has become a joint endeavor. In fact, this year was the first year the exercise was operated under a Navy commander. "This exercise is invaluable," said Lt. Cmdr. Kevin Parker, exercise commander. "It gives our reservists real-world experience in the day-to-day running of an operational aerial port.

We're learning how to pick up on the best of how both the Navy and the Air Force operate and create a cohesive system that works and I would be proud to serve with everyone here." During the exercise, the reservists took command of all mission aspects of the Norfolk Air Mobility Command terminal, which is the only Navy-operated AMC terminal. "Employing all of the logistics involved in bringing a group of almost 200 people together at a host location is an exercise in itself," said Capt. Thomas Lessman, 45th APS exercise deputy director.

"The added ability to put our people into action right away, gives both the Air Force and the Navy confidence that when they mobilize these specialists, they'll know exactly what to do when activated in an unfamiliar environment." The reservists were able to step in and assume control from their full-time counterparts in just three days. In addition to the daily mission requirements, many of the participants underwent classroom training for certification on certain mission essential vehicles and procedures such as the 60K ramp transport vehicle and the electrical transfer vehicle.

"This is both an operational exercise and a training evolution so there's a lot going on at one time," said Lt. Cmdr. Thomas Harwell, exercise operations officer. "Being positioned in the largest naval installation in the world gives us the chance to utilize some unique pieces of equipment." Mission centers that make up the terminal include: Cargo & Special Handling: Driving forklifts into the bellies of 18-wheel trucks to pull out supplies, checking manifests to make sure what was ordered was delivered and ensuring goods are serviceable and sorting them by type are only some of the activities you'll find if you visit the cargo work area.

Once it's all accounted for and the destination route is known, items are built onto pallets designed to interlock like puzzle pieces into aircraft cargo holds for safe transport. It's like a well-organized hive – there's so much activity going on at one time and everyone is intently focused on their portion of the action. Two pallets of watermelons, bulging mail bags and ammunition are examples of cargo that falls to the special handling team. The most important responsibility special handling has is the transport of human remains. "We take care of them, our brothers and sisters in arms, until we get them home," said Capt. Trent Spencer, 94th APS exercise Air Terminal Operations Center officer. Once the pallets are built, they belong to the ramp specialists who are responsible for transportation to and from the flightline and loaded or unloaded from aircraft.

Each pallet can support 10,000 pounds of cargo, so having the ability to interlock pallets in order to support heavier items like Humvees is vital. Moving pallets this heavy takes unique equipment and special training on vehicles like the 60K – which as its name suggests can move up to six fully-loaded pallets. Communication and trust are some of the more vital skills being honed during this exercise. "We often work in extreme temperatures with large aircraft, large pieces of equipment, thousands of pounds of cargo lifted sometimes 30 feet in the air – and we have to get it all lined up within inches to get it loaded or unloaded correctly and safely," said Capt. Spencer. "Safety is always our largest concern and since our margin for error is so small, we rely on each other greatly."

Walking into passenger services is like coming into a commercial airport. There's a security checkpoint, check-in counter, cafeteria and two jet ways. "We perform every function commercial terminals provide," said Senior Master Sgt. Todd McCammon, 45th APS exercise passenger services superintendent. "We've really been able to integrate with our Navy and

civilian counterparts and we've all been able to learn from each other and work well as a team." During the exercise the team processed more than 3,100 passengers traveling to and from locations around the globe.

The ATOC is the central nervous system of the whole operation. "We monitor flights, safety, security, personnel, customs and immigration, load planning and all of the others sections," said 2nd Lt. Raymond Ng, 70th APS exercise ATOC officer. "We're known as the problem solvers, but one of the most important functions we serve is as a communication hub. We make sure all sections are updated about mission status – so if there's a problem in cargo, we'll let passenger services know a flight may be delayed." There were two prominent themes echoed by the participants when asked what they were finding most beneficial about the exercise – getting to work on real-time missions and being in a joint service environment. "There's always been a lot of stereotyping and misconceptions that exists between all services that can make people uncomfortable about serving together," said Chief Master Sgt. Claude McKenzie, 94th APS exercise superintendent. "Those walls will be gone for these guys if they find themselves deployed in a joint environment and the adjustment period will be significantly shorter because they have this positive experience under their belts. 2007

USAF UNIT HISTORIES
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Sources

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