

317th AIRLIFT GROUP



MISSION

LINEAGE

317th Troop Carrier Wing, Heavy, established, 10 Aug 1948
Activated, 18 Aug 1948
Inactivated, 14 Sep 1949
Redesignated 317th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium, 3 Jul 1952
Activated, 14 Jul 1952
Inactivated, 25 Sep 1958
Activated, 13 Mar 1963
Organized, 15 Apr 1963
Redesignated 317th Troop Carrier Wing, 1 Mar 1966
Redesignated 317th Tactical Airlift Wing, 1 May 1967
Redesignated 317th Airlift Wing, 1 Jan 1992
Inactivated, 18 Aug 1993
Redesignated 317th Airlift Group, 31 Mar 1997
Activated, 1 Apr 1997

STATIONS

Tachikawa AB, Japan, 18 Aug-2 Dec 1948
Celle RAF Station, Germany, 9 Jan-14 Sep 1949
Rhein-Main AB, Germany, 14 Jul 1952
Neubiberg AB, Germany, 17 Mar 1953
Evreux-Fauville AB, France, 17 Apr 1957-25 Sep 1958
Evreux-Fauville AB, France, 15 Apr 1963-20 Jun 1964
Lockbourne AFB, Ohio, 20 Jun 1964
Pope AFB, NC, 31 Aug 1971-18 Aug 1993
Dyess AFB, TX, 1 Apr 1997

ASSIGNMENTS

Fifth Air Force, 18 Aug 1948
1st Air Lift Task Force, 8 Jan-14 Sep 1949
Twelfth Air Force, 14 Jul 1952
322nd Air Division (Combat Cargo), 1 Aug 1955-25 Sep 1958
United States Air Forces in Europe, 13 Mar 1963
322nd Air Division (Combat Cargo), 15 Apr 1963
United States Air Forces in Europe, 1 Apr 1964
Ninth Air Force, 20 Jun 1964
840th Air Division, 1 Oct 1964
Ninth Air Force, 24 Dec 1969
839th Air Division, 31 Mar 1970
Twenty-First Air Force, 31 Dec 1974-18 Aug 1993
Fifteenth Air Force, 1 Apr 1997
Eighteenth Air Force, 1 Oct 2003

ATTACHMENTS

322nd Air Division (Combat Cargo), 1 Apr 1954-31 Jul 1955
322nd Air Division (Combat Cargo), 1 Apr-20 Jun 1964
Operating Location A, Headquarters Twenty-First Air Force, 31 Dec 1974-30 Jun 1975

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-46, 1948
C-54, 1948-1949
C-119, 1952-1957, 1957-1958
C-130, 1957-1958
C-130, 1963-1964, 1964-1971, 1971-1993
C-124, 1963-1964
C-123, 1969-1971
C-130, 1997

COMMANDERS

Col Thomas K. Hampton, 18 Aug 1948
Col William A. Ross, 15 Aug-14 Sep 1949
Col Donald J. French, 14 Jul 1952
Col Harry M. Pike, 23 Jul 1954
Col Clarence B. Hammerle Jr., 29 Jul 1954
Col Joseph A. Cunningham, 9 Sep 1954 (additional duty only, 8-16 Apr 1957)
None (not manned), 17 Apr-7 Jul 1957
Col Robert D. Forman, 8 Jul 1957
Col John B. Wallace, 11 Sep-25 Sep 1958
None (not manned), 13 Mar-14 Apr 1963
Col Arthur C. Rush, 15 Apr 1963
Col George W. Kinney, 20 Jun 1963

Col Harry S. Dennis Jr., 27 Dec 1965
Col Robert M. Levy, 29 Jul 1966
Col Jack J. Schneider, 13 Sep 1967
Col James A. Giles, 28 Sep 1967
Col Bill M. Richardson, 18 Dec 1967
Col James A. Giles, 20 May 1968
Col Bill M. Richardson, 19 Jun 1968
Col Richard J. Downs, 2 Jan 1970
Col Thomas G. Cline, 14 Jul 1971
Col Billie J. Norwood, 31 Aug 1971
Col Edwin F. Rumsey, 13 Apr 1973
Col Stewart Young, 14 Sep 1973
BG Robert F. Coverdale, 6 Jun 1975
Col Benjamin Kraljev Jr., 8 Aug 1977
BG Duane H. Erickson, 28 Feb 1979
Col Robert B. Patterson, 29 Mar 1980
Col Edsel R. Field, 27 Feb 1981
Col Frank E. Willis, 18 Feb 1983
Col Rolland F. Clarkson Jr., 29 Feb 1984
Col Ronnie C. Peoples, 23 Sep 1985
Col Edward N. Brya, 26 Mar 1987
Col Frederick N. Buckingham, 19 Apr 1988
Col Daniel E. Sowada, 20 Jun 1989
Col Maxwell C. Bailey, 18 Jun 1990
Col George N. Williams, 20 Jul 1992
Col Thomas A. Samples, 29 Mar-18 Aug 1993
Col Jimmie C. Jackson Jr., 1 Apr 1997
Col Douglas L. Miller, 26 Aug 1998
Col John A. Tappan, 10 May 2000
Col Richard C. Johnston, 9 Jul 2002
Col Paul J. Montgomery, 15 Mar 2004
Col Kevin E. Jackson, 10 Jan 2006

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Berlin

Berlin Airlift

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Grenada 1983

Panama 1989-1990

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Apr 1964-30 Jun 1965

1 May 1972-30 Apr 1973

1 May 1973-30 Apr 1975

1 May 1975-30 Apr 1977

1 Jun 1979-31 May 1981

1 Jun 1982-31 May 1984

1 Mar 1987-31 Mar 1988

6 Oct 1989-13 Jan 1990

1 Jul 1997-30 Jun 1999

1 Jul 1999-30 Jun 2000

1 Jul 2001-30 Jun 2002

1 Jul 2002-30 Jun 2003

1 Jul 2003-30 Jun 2004

1 Jul 2004-30 Jun 2005

Meritorious Unit Award

1 Jul 2011-30 Jun 2012

Bestowed Honors

Authorized to display honors earned by the 317th Troop Carrier Group prior to 18 Aug 1948

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Japan

Papua; New Guinea

Northern Solomons

Bismarck Archipelago

Western Pacific

Leyte; Luzon

Southern Philippines

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Papua, [Jan 1943]
New Guinea, 30 Jan-1 Feb 1943
Philippine Islands, 16-17 Feb 1945

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

EMBLEM

Or issuant from chief a dexter arm, fist clenched inflamed proper, in base a fire of seven tongues of the last, on a chief nebully azure, three piles of the first. (Approved, 22 Dec 1942)



Tenné issuant from chief a dexter arm, fist clenched inflamed Gules and of the field, in base a fire of seven tongues Or, fimbriated of the second, on a chief nebully Azure, three piles of the first, all within a diminished bordure of the third. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "I GAIN BY HAZARD" 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 numbered designation of the 317th Wing is indicated by the three wedge-shaped piles, the single arm, and the seven tongues of flame. The nebully division of the shield is the heraldic representation of clouds and air.

MOTTO

I GAIN BY HAZARD

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The traditions of the 317th Airlift Group were forged in the crucible of World War II when, on 22 February 1942, the 317th Troop Carrier Group (TCG) was formed at Duncan Field, San

Antonio, Texas, with 83 personnel led by Captain Samuel Payne. The 317 TCG spent the remainder of 1942 moving to different training locations in the United States, growing in size and experience as it prepared to join in the battle to defeat the Axis Powers. In July 1942, the 317th moved to Bowman Field, Louisville, Kentucky, where it increased in size to 950 personnel and began instrument flying training. While at Bowman Field, the 317 TCG's original orders to Europe were changed to the Pacific. In October 1942, the Group moved to Fort Benning, Georgia, where it began intensive airdrop training and increased in size to its wartime strength of 1,280 personnel assigned to four C-47 flying squadrons, the 39th, 40th, 41st, and 46th Troop Carrier Squadrons, and a headquarters squadron.

In November 1942, the 317 TCG moved to Maxton, North Carolina, where it was to begin glider towing training; however, due to an Atlantic storm the gliders were damaged beyond repair. After less than a month in Maxton the flying squadrons departed for Mobile, Alabama, in early December, to pick up brand new C-47s. The 317 TCG suffered its first fatal aircraft loss on 5 December 1942, when one of six C-47s headed for Mobile from Maxton crashed in bad weather trying to land at Maxwell Field, Alabama, with the loss of all twelve Group personnel aboard the aircraft.

The new C-47s in Mobile were each fitted with eight internal 100 gallon auxiliary fuel tanks for the upcoming long flights across the Pacific Ocean. While the flying squadrons were taking a southern route across the country, the 1,000+ person ground element of the 317 TCG took troop trains across the central U.S. on their way to Camp Stoneman, Pittsburg, California in the East Bay area near Oakland. Air and ground elements of the 317 TCG met up at Camp Stoneman in mid-December. While at Camp Stoneman, gyro compasses were installed in the new C-47s, followed by intensive navigation training flights along the Pacific coast. On one of these training flights a C-47 crashed into a mountain in Northern California with the loss of five personnel.

On 31 December 1942, 1,108 317 TCG personnel boarded the USS Maui and departed San Francisco with "destination unknown" orders, arriving 24 days later in Townsville, Australia. On 5 January 1943, the four flying squadrons started the long journey to Australia beginning with a fifteen hour flight from California to Hawaii. 317 TCG C-47s began arriving in Townsville and Brisbane, Australia, on 15 January and were quickly committed to the battle against the advancing Japanese forces in Papua New Guinea. Within two weeks of their arrival in Australia, the 317 TCG took part in the 29-31 January 1943 Battle of Wau, air-landing critically needed Australian Army infantry troops who proved the decisive factor in turning the tide of battle against advancing Japanese forces. The close-in fighting had exiting soldiers firing their weapons as they disembarked from the 317 TCG C-47s, inspiring the squadron emblem for the 40th Troop Carrier Squadron (now the 40th Airlift Squadron). The 317 TCG earned its first of two Distinguished Unit Citations for the key role it played in winning the Battle of Wau and stemming the Japanese advance towards Australia.

In September 1943, the 317 TCG began the long journey towards victory over Japan, moving from its Australian bases to a series of bases in Papua New Guinea. In September, the 317 TCG contributed 53 aircraft as part of the 250 aircraft airdrop mission to Nadzab, Papua New

Guinea. This was the first large scale airdrop of the Pacific War.

In 1944, as part of Gen MacArthur's Pacific Island hopping campaign, the 317 TCG moved north to the Philippines, supplying Allied forces via both air-land and airdrop missions. The 317 TCG earned its second Distinguished Unit Citation as the sole airlift force inserting the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment into the island fortress of Corregidor on 16 and 17 February, 1945. Fifty-one 317 TCG C-47s made a total of 600 airdrop passes over the two day operation, onto two extremely small drop zones which abutted a 500 foot cliff leading to the Pacific Ocean. The precision and skill of the "Jungle Skippers" led to a 95 percent airdrop effectiveness rate despite over half of the aircraft receiving battle damage from anti-aircraft fire.

During World War Two the 317 TCG took part in every major airborne operation in the Pacific Theater from the beginning of 1943 until the end of hostilities in August 1945. The 317 TCG has the unique distinction as the being the first of the conquering Allied forces to set foot on Japanese soil. On 28 August 1945, a 16-aircraft formation of 12 317 TCG C-47s and four other C-47s, one each from the four other troop carrier groups, landed at Atsugi Air Field, Tokyo, Japan, delivering Gen MacArthur's advance party in preparation for the 2 September unconditional surrender ceremony aboard the USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

After the end of the war the 317 TCG settled into occupation duty at Tachikawa Air Base, Japan, flying missions throughout Japan and Korea. In 1947, the Group converted to the larger four-engine C-54 "Skymaster" transport. On 18 August 1948, the 317th Troop Carrier Group came under direct assignment to the newly activated 317th Troop Carrier Wing (Heavy). A month after activation the entire wing deployed to Germany to support the increasing demands of the ongoing Berlin Airlift.

When the fledgling Cold War heated up and the Soviet Union blockaded vehicle and train access to West Berlin, the United States and its Allied partners reacted with a massive airlift, which lasted 15 months and ultimately delivered 2,326,406 tons of food and supplies on 278,228 flights. The 317 TCW was transferred from Japan to Germany in September 1948 and participated in the airlift until July of 1949. A typical Berlin Airlift day for the 317 TCW's 36 C-54s was 100 round trip missions to Berlin delivering 1,000 tons of supplies (mainly coal) to the 2,500,000 isolated Berliners. The 317 TCW was placed in inactive status following the Berlin Airlift in 1949 then reactivated in 1952 in Germany as the Cold War increased tensions between NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries.

From 1952-1957, the 317 TCW served the fledgling North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) from various bases in Germany. In 1957, the Wing moved to Evreux-Fauville Air Base, France, where it participated in numerous humanitarian and training missions. After arriving in France with its C-119 "Flying Boxcar" aircraft the 317th transitioned to the C-130A "Hercules" in April 1958.

The always evolving restructuring of the United States Air Force led to the inactivation of the 317 TCW once again in September 1958 as the Wing's flying and maintenance squadrons were

placed under the 322nd Air Division and 317th Air Base Group. Under this command structure the squadrons continued to fly their C-130s from Evreux-Fauville until the reactivation of the 317 TCW in March 1963. The wing continued to operate from Evreux-Fauville until June 1964, when it was reassigned to Lockbourne Air Force Base, Ohio.

In the early 1960s, as France moved to distance itself from the NATO military structure by pursuing an independent defense system, the number of US military personnel based in France began to decrease. As part of this drawdown the 317 TCW relocated to Lockbourne AFB, Ohio, in June 1964 where it operated until August 1971. On 1 March 1966, the 317th Troop Carrier Wing (Medium) was redesignated as the 317th Troop Carrier Wing (dropping the Medium designation) and a year later on 1 May 1967 the 317 TCW was again redesignated as the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing (317 TAW).

From Ohio, the 317 TAW maintained a busy operational schedule which included unit deployments to Europe and Central/South America and responding to domestic and international crises. Additionally the 317 TAW, amongst other wings, served as a replacement training unit (RTU) for USAF C-130 aircrew before the C-130 RTU mission was consolidated at Little Rock AFB, AR, in 1970. From 1969 to 1971 the wing trained crews in the C-123 transport aircraft including Vietnamese Air Force crews from late 1970 through mid-1971.

On 29 April 1965, the 317 TCW took part in the largest airlift formation mission since WWII, when a 150-aircraft formation of C-130s and C-124s departed Pope AFB, North Carolina with 12,000 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers and 7,500 tons of equipment for the Dominican Republic to support government forces as they battled rebel forces. President Johnson ordered Operation POWER PACK to “avoid a second Cuba.”

The 1960s and early 1970s was a period of social unrest across America that, at times, developed into large protests and riots. Between 1967 and 1971 the 317 TAW took part in six Operation GARDEN PLOT mobilizations that on short notice rapidly moved large numbers of National Guard and active duty troops to Selfridge AFB, MI and Andrews AFB, MD to protect civil order in the cities of Detroit and Washington D.C. During the 1967 Detroit riots the 317 TAW was re-routed from a fly-away no-notice Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) to take Fort Bragg, NC, and Fort Campbell, KY, soldiers to Selfridge AFB. The wing successfully passed the ORI rescheduled a month later. Following the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. in May 1968, the wing deployed thousands troops to Andrews AFB in anticipation of protests in the nation’s capital. During this operation the wing flew 458 hours and moved 451 tons of equipment.

With the move to Pope Air Force Base in 1971, the 317 TAW shed its primary role as a replacement training unit and added regularly scheduled rotations to Southeast Asia to support the Vietnam War along with on-going European and Panama rotations. Soon after arriving at Pope AFB, the Wing became the test bed unit for the Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System (AWADS) which allowed for all-weather formation precision airdrops without reference to any ground aids. The AWAD System was pressed into service during the April/May 1972 Battle for

An Loc, Vietnam, to ensure delivery of critical supplies to the besieged defenders.

On 4 March 1973 a 317 TAW aircraft, flown by Lt Col Edwin Jackson, flew from U-Tapao, Thailand to Tan Son Nhut airport in Saigon and then on to Gia Lam Airport in Hanoi to transport the members of the International Commission for Control and Supervision of the prisoner-of-war (POW) exchange. It was an emotional time as the 317 TAW crew watched each of the American POWs being welcomed to their awaiting C-141 transport. The 317 TAW was proud to be a part of the POW return operation and to have been in the vanguard of USAF aircraft to fly into Hanoi following the cessation of hostilities between the United States and Peoples Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

The 1980s and 1990s were a busy period for the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing, as normal rotations to South America and Europe were punctuated by contingency operations from Grenada to Bosnia. 317 TAW C-130Es flew 82nd Airborne Division troops for the initial airborne assault of Point Salines Airport, Grenada, during Operation URGENT FURY to rescue American medical students endangered by civil unrest. 317 TAW C-130s delivered troops and supplies for the operation and airlifted out captured Cuban soldiers.

The 317 TAW was called upon once again to support combat operations in 1989 during Operation JUST CAUSE, the invasion of Panama to remove President Noriega from power following his failure to relinquish power after elections. Fifteen C-130Es loaded with Army Rangers performed a night assault on Rio Hato Airport, Panama on 19 December. The first few aircraft flew unscathed across the drop zone, but Panamanian soldiers quickly found their range and poured withering anti-aircraft fire into the formation damaging several aircraft. Despite this intensive ground fire the formation did not waiver, delivering the Rangers on target. The formation flew to Howard Air Force Base, Panama for refueling and hasty repairs before launching back to the United States. Notably, several of the returning C-130s diverted to commercial airfields in Florida due to complications from their battle damage.

Following the August 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the 317 TAW was the first airlift force to arrive in the Middle East for Operation DESERT SHIELD. During the Wing's eight-month-long deployment it provided airlift throughout the region during the massive buildup to Operation DESERT STORM, the liberation of Kuwait. In January 1991, the 317 TAW was a major force in General Schwarzkopf's, Commander, U.S. Central Command, "Hail Mary" surprise flanking attack by the 82nd Airborne Division as part of the invasion of Iraq. This massive movement of troops and supplies to the western border region between Saudi Arabia and Iraq was carried out under strict radio silence and without ground navigation aids.

The end of the Cold War led to the reawakening of historical ethnic and border conflicts through central Europe in the early 1990s. In early 1992, the 317 AW provided airlift assistance to the newly independent republics of Latvia and Lithuania. In 1992 and 1993, the Wing flew airdrop missions to United Nations safe areas during the Bosnia crisis. Intense fighting led to the reintroduction of high altitude airdrops using the AWAD System initiated by the 317th at the end of the Vietnam War.

In 1993, the 317th Airlift Wing was inactivated at Pope AFB, with the 39th and 40th Airlift Squadrons moving to Dyess AFB, Texas to become part of the combined B-1B/C-130 7th Wing.
Return to Texas

On 1 April 1997 the 317th, now designated the 317th Airlift Group, returned to its state of origin when it was reactivated at Dyess Air Force Base, in Abilene, Texas. In April 2010, the 317 AG began a 40-month long transition from 33 1974 C-130H1 models to 28 brand new C-130J-30 "Super Hercules," which are 15 feet longer than the outgoing H models with eight pallet positions to the H's six pallet capacity. This 40-month long transition was completed in July 2013.

Col Jeffrey S. Brown commands a group of five squadrons consisting of the 39th Airlift Squadron, the 40th Airlift Squadron, the 317th Operations Support Squadron, the 317th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, and the 317th Maintenance Squadron. The group works to maintain and operate both at home and overseas supporting the United States and its allies while maintaining its readiness and supporting the people of the United States in humanitarian efforts.

The 317th Airlift Group at Dyess AFB, Tex., has received its fourth new-build C-130J transport. The unit is building toward having a fleet of 28 C-130Js by 2013. The new airlifters are replacing the group's aging C-130Hs. Dyess received its first C-130Js in April. The newest one arrived Dec. 8, according to base officials. 2010

The fifth new-build C-130J Super Hercules transport destined for beddown at Dyess AFB, Tex., has arrived at the northcentral Texas installation. Dyess' 317th Airlift Group is slated to receive 28 C-130Js by 2013 to replace its C-130H airframes, which the unit plans to transfer to Little Rock AFB, Ark., by the end of 2012. "The C-130J has earned the reputation for being able to do anything," with its ability to fly "higher, farther, and faster than any previous C-130 model," said Col. Dan Dagher, 317th AG commander. Col. Lawrence Martin, head of the 6th Air Mobility Wing at MacDill AFB, Fla., piloted the new C-130J on its flight to Dyess Jan. 21. The Super Hercules will continue Dyess airmen's long run of flying C-130s. In April, the base will celebrate five decades of C-130 operations. 2011

Officials at Dyess AFB, Tex., last week inaugurated a \$21 million large-aircraft hangar that is capable of simultaneously servicing the base's B-1B and C-130J. "A house should reflect those who live in it" said Col. Walter Ward, commander of Dyess' 317th Airlift Group, during the Sept. 5 ribbon-cutting ceremony. The modern, two-bay, 57,000-square-foot facility replaces several 50-year-old structures. It incorporates specialized ventilation and a bisecting bay isolation firewall, according to base officials. The hangar will support the group's C-130Js and the B-1s of the 7th Bomb Wing. 2012

Dyess C-130J Airmen Hone New Tactics for Contested Scenarios The 317th Airlift Group at Dyess AFB, Texas, has developed new tactics, techniques, and procedures for C-130J operations

in contested, degraded, or operationally constrained environments that could inform operations across the mobility fleet, according to Dyess officials. Though the J-model features an improved global positioning system and navigation system, which eliminated the need for a navigator, an enemy could deny the airlifter's ability to use GPS in certain environments. The 317th AG airmen practiced operating the C-130J without using GPS or a dedicated navigator. "We took it upon ourselves to develop this program for our aircraft to optimize its usability in degraded scenarios," said Col. Jeffrey Brown, the 317th AG commander. Crews practiced pinpointing their location on a pre-determined route and updating their instruments as the mission progressed. Pilots and crews practiced the new TTPs in their simulator, then at low-level live training events where pilots used visual updates. In a few weeks, crews were able to contact their targets with two of five training bundles in simulated CDO scenarios, with the furthest landing within 60 yards. The 317th AG recently completed the first draft of a new syllabus for C-130J pilots, and once complete will be proposed to Air Mobility Command to integrate into fleet-wide training. 2015

Air Force Order of Battle

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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.

Unit yearbook. *317th Troop Carrier Wing*. @1955.