

# 135 AERIAL PORT FLIGHT

## MISSION

The 135th APF mission includes both the ability to conduct air terminal operations at a fixed base and the capability to set up, operate, and defend a Forward Operating Base close to the battlefield. The unit consists of an Air Terminal Operations Center (ATOC) and Cargo, Ramp, and Aerial Delivery Sections.

The Cargo Section processes cargo for aerial shipment. This function includes "building" palletized loads of cargo, preparing rolling stock (vehicles and other wheeled cargo) for aircraft loading, and ensuring the necessary inspections, manifesting, and hazardous material documentation is accomplished.

Loads intended for airdrop are built by the Aerial Delivery Section. Qualified riggers construct Heavy Equipment (HE) and Container Delivery System (CDS) loads for parachute delivery. Airdrop procedures are used to deliver supplies and equipment to locations where aircraft are unable to land safely. HE and CDS loads may include anything from small training bundles to the M-551 Sheridan tank.

The actual loading and unloading of aircraft is carried out by the Ramp Section. Depending on the type and size of cargo, this may entail driving a vehicle on or off the aircraft, operating a "k-loader" or a forklift to remove palletized cargo, or downloading loose items by hand. Arriving and departing passengers are also handled by Ramp. ATOC is the controlling authority for Aerial Port operations. It coordinates and supervises the various functions of the port, including dispatching loading crews and ensuring that cargo and passengers are processed and loaded in a timely fashion.

## LINEAGE

135 Mobile Aerial Port Flight, 1976-1993

135 Aerial Port Flight, 1993-1996

135 Aerial Port Flight, 1999-present

Inactivated

## STATIONS

Warfield ANGB, Middle River, MD

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

135 Airlift Group

## **COMMANDERS**

Maj. James E. Teabo 1977-1979

Lt. Col. James E. Orlando 1979-1986

Maj. Ronald Decker 1986-1992

Maj. Salvatore J. Demarco IV 1992-1998

Maj. Kevin G. Murray

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

## **EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

As long as there have been cargo planes, there have been "Aerial Porters." Although the 135th APF only dates back to 1976, their lineage extends in spirit all the way to the 135th Airborne Materiel Assembly Squadron (AMAS). This forerunner of today's Aerial Port was one of the two squadrons that originally comprised the 135th when it was created in 1955. They developed packaging techniques for airdrop loads, testing the survivability of the loads by placing eggs in the bundle (if the egg survived the drop, it was workable).

When the MAPF was formed in 1976, the base was transitioning from the Tactical Air Command to the Military Airlift Command. Therefore the new MAPF was assembled from all types of personnel. SSgt Dean H. Turek was the only Air Transportation Specialist (605xx) assigned to the 135th at the time and became the first NCOIC of Operations in the Aerial Port. Aerial Port operations were initially run out of the old supply building (now Clothing Issue).

Early in 1981, the unit moved into the old Engine Shop behind the Fire Department. The era of Aerial Delivery began with the added space and airdrop mission of the Hercules. In the Spring

of 1982, the 135th MAPF moved again, this time to the Fuel Cell Hangar. Makeshift offices and work areas were constructed from begged, borrowed, and appropriated materials. In the fall of 1985 construction of an Aerial Port building were completed and the 135th MAPF finally had a home of it's own.

7 Dec 1990 - 135th Mobile Aerial Port Flight activated by Presidential Order in support of Desert Shield and Desert Storm and remained in the CONUS. Demobilized, 30 May 1991.

In late 1977, the 135th Mobile Aerial Port Flight (MAPF) under the command of MAJ James E. Teabo was formed. At the time, this base was transitioning from the Tactical Air Command (TAC) to the Mobility Air Command (MAC), therefore the new MAPF was assembled from all types of personnel on the base with the exception of SSG Dean H. Turek, who was the only Air Transportation Specialist (605xx) assigned to the 135th and became the first NCOIC of Operations in the Aerial Port. Unit Training Assembly (UTA) meetings were held on both sides (135th & 175th) of the base, due to not having a proper facility designated. As the unit started to grow in numbers, the port occupied space in the old supply building (now Clothing Issue).

From there they conducted their mission responsibilities, with the new C7A. In 1979, MAJ Teabo retired and transferred command of the 135th MAPF to MAJ James E. Orlando. Early in 1981, as the unit continued to grow in strength and mission responsibilities, the unit moved into the old Engine Shop behind the Fire Department, and began supporting the operations of the C130B replaced the C7A.

The era of Aerial Delivery began with the added space and airdrop mission of the "Hercules". In the Spring of 1982, the 135th MAPF moved again, this time to the Fuel Cell Hanger. Make shift offices and work areas were constructed from begged, borrowed, and appropriated materials in order for the sections to operate. MAJ Orlando kept the unit together through three moves, and it still wouldn't be the last. Plans for the base to grow in size included the building and areas for Aerial Port.

In the fall of 1985 the 135th MAPF finally had a home of it's own. It was quite apparent that the "M" in MAPF really meant "Mobile". MAJ Orlando was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, and due to his promotion was required to retire. The command of the unit was now transferred to CPT Ronald Decker. In 1989, the 135th AG to include the 135th MAPF, along with other Air National Guard (ANG) units from Texas, and Missouri, conducted a Wing Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) at Ft. Campbell, KY.

In December of 1990, the 135th MAPF was called to active duty for Desert Shield/Desert Storm, reporting to the base 2 days after Christmas, and then moving onto Dover AFB, DE. To date the 135th MAPF is the only unit from this base to be fully activated for Desert Shield/Desert Storm. During the call-up, 57 members of the 135th MAPF pulled together to show the active duty that the Maryland Air National Guard could pull it's weight and perform as well as the active duty forces. Work shifts were long and hard consisting of 12+ hours per shift, 7 days a week, with an unbelievable amount of cargo handled per shift. On January 1,

1991, a team of 25, lead by MSG Mark N. Stadler, and comprised of SSG Tina Davis, SSG Phyllis Robertson, SSG Dwayne Miller, SSG Raymond Zale, as well as other ANG, AF Reserve, and active duty personnel were sent TDY to McGuire AFB, NJ. Their mission was to assist/augment the remaining AF Reserve personnel in relieving their backlog of channel cargo and mail for the desert. This team was assigned TDY for 90 days, but were able to complete their mission and return to Dover AFB in 27 days. On February 3, 1991, the 135th MAPF was involved in moving 3,606,130 lbs. (1803 tons) of cargo in a 24 hour period.

On March 20, 1991, while still TDY at Dover AFB, a composite team comprised of members of ANG, AF Reserve, and active duty personnel were deployed to Al Jabail, Kingdom of Saudia Arabia. On that team were 4 members of the 135th MAPF they were CPT Salvatore J. Demarco IV, TSG Patrick G. McFaul, Jr., SSG Dwayne Miller, and SGT Phillip Wheeler. Their purpose was to relieve the Marine contingent, and other Air Force personnel, and perform rollup operations of the cargo and equipment for redeployment to Europe and the US. While there the team worked 12 + hour shifts, 7 days a week, in extreme temperatures, ranging from 100+ temps in the day time to 40 and below at night. While in the desert they traveled into Kuwait City, Dhahran, King Fadd, King Kalid Military City, and Bahrain. About one third of the 135th MAPF personnel were released from active duty around the middle of May 1991. The personnel in the desert returned home several weeks later, and along with the remaining 135th MAPF personnel were released from active duty on June 30, 1991. Later in this year the first members attended the Voliant Scorpion course at Little Rock AFB, AR. Training consisted of ground evasion tactics, perimeter defense, combat lifesaving, patrol and reconnaissance, communications, and camouflaging techniques, which would be required to setup and defend a Forward Operating Base (FOB) as part of the Mobile Aerial Port mission.

In 1992 MAJ Decker retired and CPT Salvatore J. Demaco, IV, assumed the role as commander of the 135th MAPF. He was joined shortly thereafter by CPT Kevin G. Murray as his Transportation Officer. Training is always key to the unit's success and performing field exercises is an integral and valuable portion of the overall mission, to include a 4 day deployment to Northfield, SC, where the unit trained in establishing perimeter defense, ground evasion, camouflaging, and survival techniques. A training film was produced out of this exercise, with the help of the base Audio Visual section, Life Support, Security Police, and the 135th Operations Group. In 1995, the 135th AG with the 135th Aerial Port Flight (APF), along with the 910th AG with the 76th APS from Youngstown, OH, conducted the first ever in the US Air Force, joint Guard/Reserve ORI in Savannah, GA, and received an overall Excellent rating.

In 1996, the 135th Airlift Group (AG) was deactivated as the base was formed into one of the first US Air Force composite wings consisting of the 135th Airlift Squadron (AS), and the 104th Fighter Squadron (FS) into the 175th Wing. As a result of the formation of the 175th Wing, the 135th APF became the 175th APF.

In the summer of 1998, MAJ Demarco moved on with his military career, with CPT Murray taking command of the 175th APF. On March 14, 1999, the 135th Airlift Group (AG) was

reactivated and the 175th APF became the 135th APF again. This was especially gratifying to the older members of the unit as they had a long history with the 135th name. MAJ Murray and his staff have taken the 135th APF into the next millennium. The 135th AG is currently going through an airplane transition from the C130E model to the new C130J model aircraft. The 135th APF will be ready to meet these new training requirements, missions, and challenges presented by the new aircraft. As times are changing with budget cuts, increased training and mission requirements, senior personnel retiring, and new personnel arriving, the 135th APF will continue to be highly skilled and qualified professionals, trained to travel the globe to complete their missions whether the missions are humanitarian, disaster relief, diplomatic, NATO, logistical support, strategic and tactical airlift, or community involvement we will always strive to perform in the highest traditions of the Maryland Air National Guard, Air Mobility Command, and the United States Air Force.

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USAF Unit Histories

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#### Sources

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit history. *Maryland National Guard, A history of Maryland's Military Forces, 1634-1991.*