

816 EXPEDITIONARY AIRLIFT SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

816 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 14 Sep 1943

Activated, 20 Sep 1943

Inactivated, 25 Sep 1945

Redesignated 816 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 15 Nov 1952

Activated, 1 Jan 1953

Inactivated, 18 Sep 1956

Redesignated 816 Expeditionary Airlift Squadron and converted to provisional status, 12 Jun 2002

Activated, 1 Oct 2006

STATIONS

Ephrata AAB, WA, 20 Sep 1943

MacDill Field, FL, 7 Nov 1943-2 Mar 1944

Sterparone Airfield, Italy, 9 Apr 1944

Pisa, Italy, 15 May-25 Sep 1945

Ashiya AB, Japan, 1 Jan 1953

Tachikawa AB, Japan, 17-18 Sep 1956

Al Udeid Air Base, Doha, Qatar, 1 Oct 2006

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Clark, Philippines, 16 Apr 1954-25 Jun 1954

ASSIGNMENTS

483 Bombardment Group, 20 Sep 1943-25 Sep 1945

483 Troop Carrier Group, 1 Jan 1953-18 Sep 1956

Air Mobility Command to activate or inactivate at any time after 12 Jun 2002

385 Air Expeditionary Group, 1 Oct 2006

379 Expeditionary Operations Group

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1943-1945

C-119, 1953-1956

C-17, 2006

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Rome-Arno

Normandy

Northern France

Southern France

North Apennines

Rhineland

Central Europe

Po Valley

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Korean War

Third Korean Winter

Korea Summer-Fall, 1953

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Germany, 18 Jul 1944

Germany, 24 Mar 1945

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

[Jan]-27 Jul 1953

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
6 May 1953-10 Sep 1954

EMBLEM



816 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium



On a light turquoise blue disc, border medium blue, a skeleton proper, in flight, winged light yellow orange, wearing a light red violet robe, and hurling a light turquoise blue aerial bomb, shaded medium blue, highlighted white, point toward center base, with upraised right hand, all behind small white cloud formations, outlined medium blue. (Approved, 22 Mar 1944)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Combat in MTO and ETO, 12 Apr 1944-26 Apr 1945; transported redeployed personnel from Pisa, Italy, to Casablanca, French Morocco, May-Sep 1945. Transported troops, supplies, and equipment to, and evacuated casualties from, Korea, 1953.

A C-119 could fly the one thousand miles from Clark to Haiphong in six hours. In mid-April, the 816th Troop Carrier Squadron of the 483d Wing moved to Clark with fifteen C-119s, tasked to make six round trips daily to Indochina. The 119s were flown to Ashiya periodically for maintenance, blending into the rotation system set up for Iron Age. Cargo handling personnel at Clark, some of them shifted

from other jobs, worked double shifts, breaking down cargo for separate destinations, preparing shipping forms, and loading aircraft.

On 23 January 2012, at approximately 0749 Zulu (1219 Local), a C-17A Globemaster III aircraft, tail number 07-7189, assigned to the 437th Airlift Wing, Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina, landed on runway 34R at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Shank, Afghanistan. The mishap aircraft (MA) was unable to stop, departed the prepared runway surface, struck an embankment, and came to rest approximately 700 feet from the end of the runway. The MA sustained damage to the landing gear, cargo floor, undercarriage, antennas, and main structural components. There were no passengers, fatalities, significant injuries, or damage to civilian or other military property. The estimated cost to repair the MA is \$69.4 million. The 816th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, operated the MA from A1 Udeid Air Base, Qatar. The mishap crew consisted of the Mishap Pilot (MP), Mishap Copilot (MCP), Mishap First Pilot, Mishap Loadmaster 1, and Mishap Loadmaster 2. Additionally, a Mishap Flying Crew Chief was assigned as mission essential personnel. The accident investigation board (AIB) president found, by clear and convincing evidence, that the cause of the mishap was the MP and MCP failed to identify that the landing distance required to safely stop the aircraft exceeded the runway length. Additionally, the AIB president found by the preponderance of evidence, that failure to assess runway conditions for fixed wing operations at FOB Shank substantially contributed to the mishap.

On 24 July 2002 at 1335Z, a C-17A, S/N 98-0055, attached to the 816th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron and supporting Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in central Asia, impacted the runway at a classified location during an attempted go-around. The C-17A was assigned to the 62d Airlift Wing, McChord AFB, Washington, and the aircrew was assigned to the 437th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, South Carolina. There were no injuries to personnel but the aircraft sustained major damage. The aircraft commander (AC) flew three visual approaches that were too close to the runway on downwind before beginning his turn to final, causing him to overshoot all three final approaches. During the third (mishap) approach he overshoot but corrected to centerline.

At approximately 50 feet above the ground, the aircraft was on approach speed with a 15 ft/sec descent rate when a right bank occurred with an increase in descent rate to 18 ft/sec. The AC recognized the unstable approach and called for a go-around. As he initiated the go-around, he applied power and raised the nose. The aircraft impacted the runway nose high with close to six degrees of right bank. The impact occurred on the right aft main landing gear at a descent rate of 16.13 ft/sec, beyond the limit of 7 ft/sec for that aircraft configuration (gross weight, pitch, and bank angle). The aircraft sustained major damage upon impact. The go-around was continued after impact and the aircraft landed uneventfully on the fourth attempt.

Postflight inspection revealed major damage to the right rear main landing gear pod, the right rear outboard main landing gear door, the cargo ramp door, and the #12 tire. In addition, the outer skin of the aircraft had seven areas that were worn through, while one bulkhead and one rib experienced failure and buckling. The right bank was probably due to either a correction for a sudden right tailwind or crosswind, or a sudden wind shift. The descent rate increased because of either poor power management while attempting to remain on glidepath, raising the nose or a possible tailwind. The AIB President found clear and convincing evidence that the primary cause of this accident was

the AC's failure to control the aircraft's descent rate for the heavy gross weight while on final approach, thereby making it impossible to successfully execute a go-around from a low altitude. This resulted in significant impact with the runway.

Airmen of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing turned a typical transport mission into a lifesaving effort for a critically injured Soldier where time was of the essence and there was no room for error. Airmen from across the area of responsibility -- a C-17 Globemaster III aircrew, two KC-135 Stratotankers and medical evacuation teams -- immediately responded when members of the 816th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron were alerted to transport the injured Soldier and other wounded Soldiers. The Army sergeant, who was conducting a ground operation in Iraq, was stabbed in the head and in need of a brain surgeon in the states in order to stay alive.

The afternoon of July 3, Capt. Corbett Bufton, 816th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron C-17 aircraft commander planned to fly what he called a routine cargo run in Iraq. From the time he left his dorm room to arriving at the squadron, the mission changed into a high-priority medical evacuation to Balad Air Base, Iraq. "The last thing I heard as I left the building was 'This is a time-critical mission,'" said Captain Bufton, a native of Lake Forest, Calif., and assigned to Charleston Air Force Base, S.C. "A last minute change like this can set you spinning and you have to change gears. Instead of preparing myself for a mission making four stops in the box (Iraq), now we have to make it to two tankers and get halfway around the world."

Meanwhile, squadron members were busy making quick decisions on how to accommodate for a longer-than-normal flight. They immediately scrambled to put another pilot on board to split shifts, augmenting the aircraft commander. The 8th Expeditionary Air Mobility Squadron assisted by switching the aircraft for one with more fuel tanks, which meant removing 50,000 pounds of cargo from the replacement aircraft and filling the tanks with JP-8. Not only were Airmen in Southwest Asia responding to the emergency, but also tanker units from Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, and Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England, were called upon right away to be available for aerial refueling support for their long haul across the ocean. Medics in Iraq kept the Soldier stable anticipating the C-17's arrival.

Upon landing at Balad AB, medics reconfigured the cargo compartment to hold the incoming patients, which included one with a gunshot wound to the neck. "They weren't talking at all," said Senior Airman David Methvin, an 816th EAS loadmaster who served as a liaison between the pilot and the medical team. "They were hooked up to about 7,000 pounds of equipment. It was stressful at first. Little things like carrying him onto the plane, little bumps could make his head bleed and we couldn't let that happen." By this time it was nightfall and they had a trek ahead of them over Turkey, the Black Sea, Europe and the Atlantic Ocean. The flight proved to be challenging.

The first refueling attempt was not successful, making the crew thankful for the provisions they made to carry extra fuel. Their next challenge was keeping the patients safe while airborne. "When we carry patients, we have to fly at a lower altitude in order to keep the cabin pressure steady and to minimize turbulence -- both of which could exacerbate the Soldier's head trauma," Captain Bufton said. "We had a little (rough) weather over Eastern Europe, so we had to work closely with the air-evac team to get clearance to climb over it. Our concern was the patient, so we had to make the right decisions -- turbulence or higher cabin pressure. We chose to avoid the turbulence."

Once they made it over the weather, they hit the second tanker, got a full load of gas to make it down the homestretch, and landed at Andrews AFB, Md., at 4 a.m. on the Fourth of July. Within five minutes the patients were swept away by a team of doctors and the rest was in their hands. "We

don't usually get feedback on the outcome of the patients," said Airman Methvin, a native of Vinemont, Ala., and based out of Charleston AFB. "From what we were told the patient was going to make it. They said he made it through the flight really well." Seeing the knife-wound patient brought the realities of war to life for Airman Methvin. "We couldn't have had a better mission to do on the Fourth of July," he said. "It was a good feeling to do our part to transport the Soldiers to safety in such a short amount of time."

Later, the squadron received word the patients were in stable condition. This mission would have been impossible to pull off a few years ago, a testament to the progress of air mobility, said Lt. Col. Paul Eberhardt, the 816th EAS commander. "When you have a Soldier with head trauma that requires the care of a neurosurgeon, you can't afford to waste any time, make any mistakes, or cause harm to their body during the flight," Colonel Eberhardt said. "From the C-17 and aircrew to the support of the tankers to the air evacuation team -- we saved lives through the use of airpower. It's amazing what we can do in such a short amount of time. What it took them to do in 24 hours could not have been done during operations Desert Storm or Desert Shield."

The C-17 crew for the mission was Captains Bufton, Scott Frescette and Justin Herbst, Staff Sgt. Matt Nemeth, Airman Methvin and Lt. Col. Jesse Strickland, all based out of Charleston Air Force Base, S.C. For the aircrew, this mission is what it's all about. "The pressure was definitely on -- the stress, the priority -- it's at the top," Captain Bufton said. "We're glad we could do our part to help these Soldiers." 2007

The Air Force is changing the way the service deploys C-17 airmen, according to a Joint Base Charleston news release. In the past, an entire C-17 flying squadron would deploy at once, as a unit, for 120 days. But now, members of several different Air Mobility Command squadrons will deploy to fill slots in the expeditionary airlift squadron, to perform both support and flying functions. "This change offers the chance to integrate our C-17 community in a completely new way," said Lt. Col. Sam Todd, 816th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron commander at al Udeid AB, Qatar. The new method will allow squadrons flexibility in manning the EAS, he said, which will allow airmen to better plan for life events, training, and other activities. Nine of the 10 AMC C-17 squadrons are represented in the current 816th EAS. The change means that non-deployed units will be able to support deployments with "minimal impact to the squadron, although it does mean [fewer] crews flying traditional mission sets," said Lt. Col. Patrick Farrell, 16th Airlift Squadron commander at Joint Base Charleston, S.C. 2015

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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