

## 156 AIRLIFT SQUADRON



### MISSION

The 156 Airlift Squadron provides tactical airlift for airborne forces, other personnel, equipment, and supplies. The squadron also provides evacuation of refugees and aeromedical patients within a theater of operations.

### LINEAGE

360<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron constituted, 8 Dec 1942

Activated, 12 Dec 1942

Inactivated 11 Nov 1945

Reconstituted and redesignated 156 Fighter Squadron (Single-Engine) and allotted to NC NG, 24 May 1946

156 Fighter Squadron (SE) extended federal recognition, 15 Mar 1948

Redesignated 156 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 10 Oct 1950

Redesignated 156 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 10 Jul 1952

Redesignated 156 Aeromedical Transport Squadron, 1 Feb 1961

Redesignated 156 Air Transport Squadron, Heavy, 25 Jan 1964

Redesignated 156 Military Airlift Squadron, 1 Jan 1966

Redesignated 156 Tactical Airlift Squadron, 15 May 1971

Redesignated 156 Airlift Squadron, 16 Mar 1992

### STATIONS

Westover Field, MA

Trumbull Field, Groton AAFld, CT, 9 Mar 1943

Grenier Field, NH, 6 Jul-15 Aug 1943

Goxhill, England, 26 Aug 1943

Martlesham, England, 10 Oct 1943- 27 Oct 1945  
Camp Kilmer NJ, 10-11 Nov 1945  
Charlotte, NC

### **DEPLOYMENT STATIONS**

Goodman Field, KY  
RAF Manston, England

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

356 Fighter Group, 12 Dec 1942-10 Nov 1945

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

#### **Mission Aircraft**

P-47, Oct 1943  
P-51, Nov 1944  
P-47, 28 Feb 1948  
F-51, Jan 1950  
F-86, 17 Jan 1954-13  
C-119, 18 Apr 1961  
C-121, 1 Jun 1962  
C-124, 12 Dec 1967  
C-130, 11 May 1971

#### **Support Aircraft**

T-6  
T-33, 1953  
A-26  
C-47  
VC-47  
C-45  
U-3

### **COMMANDERS**

LTC William J. Payne  
LTC David J. Hatley, #1998

### **HONORS**

#### **Service Streamers**

None

#### **Campaign Streamers**

Offensive, Europe  
Air Normandy

Northern France  
Rhineland  
Ardennes-Alsace  
Central Europe  
Air Combat, EAME Theater

### Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

#### Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation  
Holland, 17, 18 and 23 Sep 1944

#### EMBLEM





On a green disc, a sword argent, point to dexter, winged of blue, all inflamed proper, as per record drawing. The insignia will face toward the front of the aircraft. Aircraft marking (Approved, 11 Jun 1943)

156 Airlift Squadron emblem: On a disc Azure, a sword bendwise sinister throughout Proper, hilted of the field highlighted Argent, winged as an aircraft White, the leading edges garnished Sable and Silver Gray, the trailing edge emitting a solid band of stylized flame to sinister Gules, detailed with parallel shafts of flame Or, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "FIRST IN FLIGHT" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "156 AIRLIFT SQUADRON" in Yellow 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 flaming pattern of the winged sword is from the historical emblems of the unit's predecessors. The stylized aircraft formed by the wings and the sword signify the Squadron's airlift mission.

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

On 20 Aug 1943, the 360th departed New York aboard the "Queen Elizabeth."

While in the European Theatre of Operations, the 360th participated in the Air Offensive, Europe; Campaign Ardennes; Campaign Central Europe; Rhineland Campaign; Northern France Campaign; Air Action in Holland and the Normandy Invasion.

For its outstanding performance of duty over Holland, the 360th was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation.

The 360th Fighter Squadron's WWII service came to an end on 27 Oct 1945 when it departed Southampton, England aboard the "King S. Woolsey."

Arriving in New York on 10 Nov 1945, the 360th was inactivated at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey on 11 Nov 1945 and placed on inactive status under control of the War Department.

Roots of the North Carolina Air National Guard were first put down during the year 1947. It was in this year that Col Paul Younts, Chief of Staff of the North Carolina Army National Guard, had a meeting with then LTC William J. Payne, a young Charlotte furniture executive who had a distinguished World War II record, to discuss the possibility of establishing a fighter squadron for the North Carolina Guard.

Afterwards, Col Younts and LTC Payne met in Raleigh to discuss with Adjutant General J. Van B. Metts the foundation of a North Carolina Air National Guard. General Metts made the decisions to form the unit at the old Morris Field Army Air Base in Charlotte and to appoint Col Payne as the first NCANG Commander. Col Payne was directed to move forward with the organization of a fighter and support units at Charlotte.

In order to have a base for the newly created North Carolina Air National Guard, it was necessary to negotiate a service contract with the City of Charlotte. After a lengthy delay, Maj Willard Bloxton, Administrative Assistant to General Metts, called Col Payne to advise him that a service contract with the City of Charlotte had been consummated. This was during the latter part of Dec. 1947.

During this same period, the Air Force had assigned Maj Leroy Gover, Master Sergeant Richard Paden and Technical Sergeant William Caffee to advise the newly formed NCANG units in flying operations and administrative functions. Maj Gover was a decorated World War II pilot who checked each NCANG pilot before their solo flights. MSgt Paden coordinated all administrative matters while TSgt Caffee supervised maintenance activities.

In Jan, 1948, an organizational meeting was held and a list of names of individuals who might be interested in joining the new unit was initiated.

Having been allocated to the State of North Carolina originally on 21 Aug 1947 with personnel authorization of 130, the 156 Fighter Squadron (SE) was federally recognized on 15 Mar 1948.

The first state duty performed by members of the NCANG was to battle a sawdust fire at the Peachland Lumber Company in Peachland, NC on 5 Mar 1949.

Following Federal Recognition, units of the North Carolina Air National Guard concentrated their efforts in two areas recruiting and training. Although many members of the NCANG's newly formed units were prior service personnel with World War II military experience, re-training on new or different aircraft and other equipment had to be accomplished. Also, many new non-prior service personnel were joining the units which required extensive basic military training. Despite these challenges, members of the 156 Fighter Squadron, 156 Utility Flight, 156 Weather Station and 218th Air Service Group deployed to Savannah, Georgia in Sep 1948 for its first of many annual field training exercises.

In late 1949, the 156 transitioned to F-51. By Dec of 1949, the NCANG had grown to over 700 officers and airmen.

In 1949, Charlotte units of the NCANG deployed to Eglin Air Force Base, Florida for their annual field training

In 1950, Charlotte Air Guard units performed their annual field training at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina at what later became Myrtle Beach Air Force Base. Badin units deployed to Bleunthel Field, Wilmington, NC for their annual training that year.

The 156 Fighter Squadron was activated and transferred from Charlotte to Godman Air Force Base near Louisville, Kentucky on 10 Oct 1950, and assigned to the 123rd Fighter Bomber Wing. During the next thirteen months, approximately 25% of the officers and 15% of the airman were assigned to Korea as individual replacements for units already in Korea. The 123rd Wing, of which the 156 was a part, was equipped with F-84 jet fighters and transferred to Mansion Royal Air Force Station in southeastern England in Nov 1951, and remained there until its release from active duty. The 156 was returned to the State of North Carolina in 1952.

156 Fighter Squadron (SE) was ordered to Active Duty on 10 Oct 50 and released from Active Duty effective 10 Jul 52 per Section II of General Order Number 5, Headquarters, Third Air Force, APO 125, US Air Force, dated 23 Jul 52 and returned to the National Guard Bureau and the State of North Carolina.

North Carolina Air Guardsmen remained on active duty during the remainder of 1951 and into 1952, while peace negotiations were under way in Korea. On 10 Jul 1952, the 156 Fighter Bomber Squadron was returned from active duty status and re-established as part of the North

Carolina Air National Guard at Douglas Municipal Airport in Charlotte.

Personnel of the 156, 118th and subordinate units began being released from active duty in Jul and continuing on into the Fall of 1952, ending the Korean Conflict era of the history of the North Carolina Air National Guard.

On 10 Jul 1952, the 156 Fighter Bomber Squadron was returned from active duty and re-established as part of the North Carolina Air National Guard located at Morris Field, Charlotte, North Carolina. The 156 was assigned an air defense mission under operational control of the Air Force's Air Defense Command. LTC William J. Payne returned from Korea in Aug, 1952 to command the 156. Although NCANG personnel returned home after the Korean War call-up, all jet aircraft were retained in the Air Force, and as a result, the 156 was re-equipped with the F-51D, the first of twenty-four which began arriving in the Summer of 1952.

No annual training was scheduled for 1952 with the exception of several gunnery training sessions for 156 pilots and maintenance crews. These gunnery missions took place at Travis Field, Savannah, Georgia, later to become a Permanent Field Training Site for the Air National Guard.

The first annual field training exercise for Charlotte units of the North Carolina Air National Guard since their return was conducted at Travis Field ANG Permanent Field Training Site, Savannah, Georgia in the summer of 1953. A Maj part of this training was the cleanup and rehabilitation of the buildings and barracks at Travis in order that they could be used to support the mission and safely house the troops. Pilots of the 156 used this time to become more proficient in the bombing and gunnery features of the F-51 while support personnel honed their maintenance, medical, cooking and other skills.

In Oct 1953, the 156 Fighter Squadron received its T-33. Following the arrival of another T-33, pilots and maintenance personnel began intensive jet aircraft transition training in preparation for the F-86 which were soon to come. Air Force Mobile Training Units were assigned to the NCANG to facilitate this training.

In Jan 1954, the first of twenty-four F-86A arrived in Charlotte, flown by First Lt Jack Senneff of Rome Air Force Base, New York. The F-86

The ever expanding North Carolina Air National Guard in Charlotte suddenly found itself outgrowing its facilities. Most of the buildings at that time were old non-permanent type World War II structures which had been used by the Army Air Corps' Third Air Force in its mission as a B-26 training base. As a result, during 1954, \$231,000 was allocated to upgrade existing facilities at the Charlotte Air Guard Base.

Early in 1955, tragedy struck the North Carolina Air Guard when one of its pilots, First Lt Woodrow L. Haynes, was killed as his T-33 crashed near Lexington, North Carolina. A former World War II pilot, Lt Haynes had been a member of the NCANG for only six months and had

made his first solo flight in the T-33 four weeks prior to the crash.

On 7 Jul 1955, the mission of the 156 Fighter Squadron was changed to fighter-interceptor. As part of this new mission assignment, pilots of the 156 began flying their F-86 on dawn to dusk interceptor missions as part of the United States Air Force's air defense network. This was the first time reserve components had been given a Maj air defense role as part of the nation's defense strategy.

Annual training for units of the North Carolina Air National Guard was conducted at Travis Field, Savannah, GA and at Robins AFB, GA.

1955 was the last year that unit training assemblies were held on week nights. Beginning with 1956, unit training assemblies were scheduled for one weekend each month with UTA schedules from 0800 to 1700 on Saturdays and Sundays.

The year 1956 saw continued expansion of the Charlotte Air Guard's facilities with the announcement of plans for a new \$300,000 parallel taxiway. Construction of this Maj improvement was begun in 1956 and completed in 1957.

1957 was a year of Maj expansion of the Charlotte Air Guard facilities. 3,700 feet of the main runway was repaved and repainting of the entire main runway with all-weather markings completed, at a cost of \$132,000. A \$58,000 Motor Service Shop was built, and plans to construct a \$350,000 Operations and Training Building were finalized. This building was completed in 1959 and dedicated by the then Governor of North Carolina, Luther H. Hodges, Jr. (This Building was later named the William J. Payne Headquarters Building in honor of Brigadier General Payne, the first Commander of the North Carolina Air National Guard).

In early 1959, the North Carolina Air Guard's 156 Fighter Interceptor Squadron received a new mission aircraft, the F-86L

FORT KNOX, Ky., Jan. 2 plane carrying 31 passengers crashed while landing at Godman. The public information office listed the injured, all from Charlotte, as Maj. Jean P. Doar, pilot, fractured leg. First Lt. Dan Rice, co-pilot, legs fractured and possible fractured skull. He was the most seriously injured. Cpl. W. F. Braswell, crew chief, lacerations about the face and hands. The transport landed on the runway in a normal manner about 4:15 p m. then, without warning, it nosed over and cartwheeled. The plane was a total loss, the PIO reported, adding that a board of officers was appointed to investigate and attempt to determine the cause of the crash. Passengers were saved from injury by their fastened seat belts. Bad weather prevailed at the time of the accident, the PIO said, with visibility restricted to three-quarters of a mile. The PIO said all the passengers were Air Force personnel. The plane was returning here from Charlotte. The passengers were members of the 123rd Fighter-Bomber Group, most of them from Charlotte and vicinity. The plane made the flight to Charlotte on official business and the men had been given week-end passes for the trip home. National Guard Unit Called Last Oct Members of the 123rd Fighter Bomber Group, many of them from Charlotte and Mecklenburg

county, were attached to the 156 Fighter Squadron of the National Guard, based at Morris Field. before being summoned to active duty last Oct. The unit, when called up, reported directly to Godman field Kentucky. Maj Jean Doar, pilot of the ship in yesterday's crash, is well known in aviation circles. At one time he had planned to make a world 'flight in a specially built plane. Plans for this venture were abandoned shortly after his craft cracked up during takeoff for a test run. The Observer was unable last night to get in touch with Charlotte relatives of the crew members who suffered injuries in the crash. The National Guard, when contacted last night, said that records of the members of the unit were not available.

In Oct 1960, it was announced that the 145th Fighter Group's mission would change from air defense to aeromedical transport. By this time, the NCANG had grown to over 800 assigned personnel. The first C-119C, arrived in Jan of 1961. Effective 1 February 1961, the unit's designation changed from Fighter Interceptor to Aeromedical Transport with its gaining command from Air Defense Command (ADC) to Military Air Transport Service (MATS).

The new aeromedical evacuation and transport mission created a need for both nurse's quarters and an aeromedical training facility. Over \$200,000 was spent by the NCANG to remodel and construct these required facilities. The new mission also created a need for a sizable contingent of flight nurses and aeromedical technicians. The unit immediately launched extensive recruiting and training programs. As a result, more than 30 flight nurses and 60 aeromedical technicians were recruited and trained.

The 156's C-119s were not ideally configured for the evacuation, treatment and transport of sick and wounded military personnel; they were used as an interim training aircraft until they were replaced in 1962 by eight C-121.

25 Jan 1964 brought still another mission change for the 145th Group from Aeromedical Transport to Air Transport Heavy), with the aeromedical mission becoming secondary.

In Nov 1966, the 145th Military Airlift Group received notice of an upcoming conversion from their C-121 s to the C-124, the Super Connies had served the North Carolina flying unit well with 22,546 hours being logged in the C-121s flying cargo and support for the Air Force, Army and Army National Guard throughout the United States, to many countries of the free world, and to Southeast Asia.

NCANG instructor pilots and engineers were sent to Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma in late 1966 to be checked out on flying and maintaining the C-124. They returned to Charlotte in February 1967 to begin transitioning the balance of the Tarheel aircrews and maintenance personnel into the Globemaster.

The 145th Military Airlift Group attained C-2 Operationally Ready status in Aug 1967 with all crews checked out in their assigned positions. In preparation for the soon to arrive C-124s, the NCANG began a project in 1967 to modernize its facilities including a million dollar C-124 nose dock and maintenance facility to replace the old World War II hangar. Construction of the nose

dock, new taxi ramp and additional parking were completed in 1968.

The first flight in a C-124 to Cam Rahn Bay, Vietnam was made by the North Carolina Air Guard in Apr 1967. The last trip to Vietnam in the C-124 was made in February 1971. The last C-124 to depart from the Charlotte Air Guard Base was on 14 Jul 1971. During the time the C-124s were flown by the North Carolina Air Guard, 23,028 flight hours were logged to 51 countries airlifting cargo and supplies to our armed forces.

Between Jan 1964 and May 1971, the C-121s and C-124s of the 145th Military (later Tactical) Airlift Group airlifted over 23 ton miles of cargo, 18.5 million passenger miles, 1.1 million patient miles, over 11 million air miles, and over 65,000 flying hours without an aircraft accident, a truly remarkable record. Additionally, the 145th earned eight Tiger Awards given to MAC aircrews flying into DaNang for cutting turn-a-round time below the three hour standard.

The beginning of the end of the North Carolina Air Guard's C-47 came on 23 Jul 1963 when a freak thunderstorm snapped its moorings, and the old bird flew backward into the brick-walled parachute shop 30 feet to the rear of the aircraft. The extensive repairs necessary were too costly to justify restoration so the old bird was stripped of all the serviceable parts,, leaving a once proud old plane a shell of its former self. Death came quickly to the NCANG's beloved old C-47 on 8 Jul 1967 as four drums of oil were placed under and around it and set afire by an electric torch. The burning of the Gooney Bird provided realistic training for NCANG rescue crews as they "rescued" four dummies from the plane and extinguished the fire.

Sixteen aircrews consisting of 3 pilots, 2 navigators, 2 flight engineers, and one loadmaster are authorized in the 156 Military Airlift Squadron to operate mission aircraft. This constitutes an increase of one pilot and one navigator per basic crew over authorization for C-121 aircraft. Authorization is based on two aircrews for each of the 8 C-124 aircraft. Operational readiness is based on an aircrew consisting of 2 pilots, 1 navigator, 2 flight engineers and one loadmaster. Sixteen aircrews are formed and 15 are operationally ready. Additional operationally ready crew members are in other assignments with the 145 Military Airlift Group and State Headquarters. In addition, 10 aeromedical crews, consisting of 2 flight nurses and three aeromedical technicians for each crew, are authorized for the aeromedical airlift function.

The flying unit continued its accident free record during this period and was again given special recognition by the National Guard Bureau and Military Airlift Command. In November 1969, the NC ANG completed 10 years of accident free flying and, on 30 June 1970 has accumulated 60,498 hours of accident free flying time. The last major aircraft accident occurred in August 1958. These records are most impressive; however, they become even more so considering that the flying unit has been involved in five major aircraft conversions . . . from F-86E Jet Day Fighters to the F86L All Weather Jet Interceptors, to two different models of the twin reciprocating engine C-119 to the four engine C-121 Super Constellation, and finally the four engine C-124 Globemaster.

Early in 1971, the 145th Military Airlift Group was advised that they would be changing missions from MAC to TAC and would be equipped with C-130B. The unit immediately started making plans for the conversion and a slow decrease in the number of overseas missions. The last C-124 trip to Vietnam was flown in February 1971 and the last overseas trip to Taiwan in Apr 1971, ending the Group's overseas mission under the Military Airlift Command. The first C-130B arrived on 11 May 1971 to start another new era for the NCANG. On 1 Mar 1971, the first aircrews had started their C-130 training at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas and a total of 11 crews, pilots and flight engineers had completed Combat Crew Training at Little Rock AFB as of 1 Jul 1971. The remaining pilots and flight engineers were scheduled for C-130 school starting in Jul 1971 at home station, conducted by Mobile Training Teams of the Air Training Command.

The unit received the C-130B simulator, completed set-up and had the simulator ready for crew checkout starting on 17 Jul 1971.

During 1978, the NCANG continued to be deployed to world-wide bases as part of the Air Forces Total Force Concept. The 145th Tactical Airlift Group participated in the successful Panama Canal rotation, Volant Oak, in the Spring of 1978. Providing three aircraft and crews, the NCANG moved troops and equipment throughout the US Southern Command. The Panama rotation was to become an annual Air Guard mission.

The 1980's for the North Carolina Air National Guard began with the exciting news that the 145th Tactical Airlift Group had been awarded the prestigious United States Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. The award when presented on 12 Jan, was accompanied by a citation which read, "The 145th Tactical Airlift Group, North Carolina Air National Guard, Military Airlift Command, distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious service from 1 Aug 1977 to 31 Jul 1979. During this period, the Group excelled in maintaining an outstanding combat readiness posture and exceptional management of personnel and material resources in support of the tactical mission thus providing a significant contribution to the Total Force Concept. During the same period, the unit provided superior support as a Geographically Separated Unit and to other military and governmental agencies thereby contributing to the fulfillment of the national objectives."

1985 began with a bang for the 145th Tactical Airlift Group which was notified it had been selected for the prestigious United States Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. In February, eleven NC Air Guardsmen participated in Operation Wintex, a Maj winter military exercise conducted out of Torrejon Air Base near Madrid, Spain. In Apr, Spring forest fires near Morganton, NC threatened to jump Interstate 40 and endanger hundreds of homes and property around and in the city of Valdese, NC. The 145th MAFFS equipped C-130s responded and assisted the Forestry Service in quenching these wide spread fires thus saving hundreds of millions of dollars in property as well as potentially human lives.

The Summer of 1985 was extremely busy and hazardous for planes and crews of the 145 TAG as they spent weeks fighting the most severe forest fires in California history. During 13 days and nights, the MAFFS crews flew 2-C sorties (323 hours flying time) and dropped over 6,563,000

pounds of the fire retardant Phos-Check (equal to 678.000 gallons)

Sentry Tarheel was the watchword of the day as 675 NCANG personnel and five aircraft deployed to Torrejon AB, Spain, Aviano AB, Italy and Ramstein AB, Germany for two 15 day periods of training. During this deployment, NCANG crews flew 538 hours and 170 sorties, airlifted 1,869 passengers, carried 465 tons of cargo, and dropped 1,855 Italian paratroopers in 57 airdrops. Personnel and aircraft of the NCANG also participated in Operation Rapid Response, a European Command triage and trauma exercise involving the British Royal Air Force, the United States Air Force and the United States Army. In Jun, a 145th Tactical airlift crew and aircraft won the title of "Best In the Free World" as they took first place in the worldwide C-130 airlift competition, Volant Rodeo. Tail number of the 145th's winning aircraft was 59-1528. The World Champ Air Crew and Maintenance Team members were: ILt Quincy N. Huneycutt, III, Team Chief; Capt William B. Moose, Pilot; ILt Stephen Estes, Jr., Co-pilot; Lt Col Jesse Deal, Navigator; MSgt Jimmy L. Richardson, Flight Engineer; TSgt Andrew M. Huneycutt, Loadmaster; SSgt Walton G. Dellinger, II, Loadmaster; MSgt William A. McKay, Maintenance Team Chief; TSgt Joseph M. Rhyne, Crew Chief; TSgt Archie L. Gaskins, Aircraft Mechanic; TSgt William B. Klutz, Hydraulic Mechanic; TSgt Barry W. Byrum, Radio Repairman; TSgt Roger J. Luffman, Radar and Navigation Repairman; TSgt Larry R. Cook, Aircraft Electrician; TSgt William F. Robinson, Sheet Metal Repairman; TSgt James C. Kennedy, Jr., Aircraft Engine Mechanic; SSgt John W. Murphy, Propeller Mechanic; TSgt Joe B. Atchley, Joint Airdrop Inspector; MSgt Roy E. Smith, Engine Running On/Off Load; TSgt James L. Wescott, Engine Running On/Off Load; SSgt Price B. Brown, Engine Running On/Off Load and SSgt Richard L. Carter, Engine Running On/Off Load.

In the Fall of 1990, many units of the 145th Airlift Group were involved with Operations Desert Shield and Storm. Significant interruptions and sacrifices were endured by North Carolina Air National Guard members and their families.

The flying unit of the 145th Airlift Group, the 156 Airlift Squadron, received 12 new C130(H-3) in 1994 to fly in support of their worldwide tactical airlift mission for the United States Air Force. The 156 Airlift Squadron provides tactical airlift for airborne forces, other personnel, equipment and supplies. They also provide evacuation of refugees and aeromedical patients within a theater of operations. The updated aircraft allows the 156 Airlift Squadron to fly in formation and airdrop equipment and supplies in all weather conditions.

In Apr 1997 during a reorganization of the Maj Commands, the 145th Airlift Wing was assigned to the 21st Air Force in the Air Mobility Command (AMC).

In May 1997, the 156 Airlift Squadron provided airlift support for the 156 Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron mission to Moldova, a former province of the Soviet Union.

C-130s Continue to Battle Wildfires: Four specially configured C-130s continue to operate out of Kirtland AFB, N.M., in support of efforts to contain wildfires in New Mexico, including those threatening the Los Alamos National Lab in the northern part of the state. Through Wednesday, these Modular Airborne Firefighting System-carrying airplanes had flown a total of 122 sorties

since Jun 16, completing 133 airdrops, Air Forces Northern spokesman Tom Saunder told the Daily Report Thursday. The aircraft have released 308,989 gallons of fire retardant (2,811,804 pounds) in those airdrops, he said. On Tuesday, two MAFFS-equipped C-130s and their crews arrived at Kirtland from Air Force Reserve Command's 302nd Airlift Wing at Peterson AFB, Colo., relieving two MAFFS C-130s from the California Air National Guard's 146th AW at Channel Islands ANG Station. They joined two MAFFS C-130s from the North Carolina Air Guard's 145th AW in Charlotte, keeping the strength of the aerial firefighting force deployed to Kirtland at four airplanes. 2011

Firefighting C-130s Conclude Mission: After flying 242 sorties and dropping 609,960 gallons of fire retardant over wildfires in Arizona and New Mexico since Jun 16, airmen and their specially equipped C-130s concluded their mission. On Thursday, personnel and two Modular Airborne Firefighting System-carrying C-130s from Air Force Reserve Command's 302nd Airlift Wing returned home to Peterson AFB, Colo., from Kirtland AFB, N.M., their temporary operating base as they battled the fires. Over the mission's course, the North Carolina Air National Guard's 145th Airlift Wing in Charlotte and the California's ANG's 146th AW at Channel Islands ANG Station each also dispatched two MAFFS-fitted C-130s to Kirtland to help. "The team success over the past 30 days demonstrated the professionalism and effectiveness of the citizen airmen who volunteer for this vital mission," said Lt. Col. Dave Condit, deputy commander of the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group that oversaw this aerial firefighting operation. 2011

For the MEDLITE 12 exercise, members of the North Carolina Air National Guard's 145th Airlift Wing in Charlotte have been at Thebephatwa AB, Botswana, providing hands-on training to their Botswana Defense Force counterparts in aeromedical evacuation operations. Like the North Carolina Air Guardsmen, the Botswanans operate C-130s. Members of Charlotte's 156 Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron are sharing knowledge about evacuation procedures and how to configure C-130s for AE through classroom instruction and simulated emergencies. The Botswanans have a high degree of professionalism, but they are still obtaining the necessary medical equipment to perform the AE mission, according to an Aug. 13 Air Forces Africa release. "I have no doubts that if the BDF gets the funding for the [aeromedical] equipment, they will do a phenomenal job," said Maj. Chuck Scronce, a 156 AES flight nurse. MEDLITE 12 began on Aug. 6 and concludes with a mass-casualty exercise on Aug. 14. 2012

On 1 July 2012, at approximately 1738 Local time, a C-130H3, Tail Number 93-1458, assigned to the 145th Airlift Wing, crashed on public land managed by the United States Forest Service (USFS), while conducting wildland firefighting operations near Edgemont, South Dakota. At the time of the mishap all members of the Mishap Crew (MC) were assigned or attached to the 156 Airlift Squadron, based at KCLT. The Mishap Crew (MC) consisted of Mishap Pilot 1 (MP1), Mishap Pilot 2 (MP2), Mishap Navigator (MN), Mishap Flight Engineer (ME), Mishap Loadmaster 1 (ML1) and Mishap Loadmaster 2 (ML2). For the mishap sortie, MP1 was the aircraft commander and pilot flying in the left seat. MP2 was in the right seat as the instructor pilot. MN occupied the navigator station on the right side of the flight deck behind MP2. ME was seated in the flight engineer seat located between MP1 and MP2, immediately aft of the center flight console. ML1 and ML2 were seated on the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System

(MAFFS) unit, near the right paratroop door. ML1 occupied the aft MAFFS control station seat and ML2 occupied the forward MAFFS observer station seat. MP1, MP2, MN and ME died in the mishap. ML1 and ML2 survived the mishap, but suffered significant injuries. The mishap aircraft (MA) and a USFS-owned MAFFS unit were destroyed. The monetary loss is valued at \$43,453,295, which includes an estimated \$150,000 in post aircraft removal and site environmental cleanup costs. There were no additional fatalities, injuries or damage to other government or civilian property. The Accident Investigation Board (AIB) president found by clear and convincing evidence the cause of the mishap was MP1, MP2, MN and ME's inadequate assessment of operational conditions, resulting in the MA impacting the ground after flying into a microburst. Additionally, the AIB president found by the preponderance of evidence, the failure of the White Draw Fire Lead Plane aircrew and Air Attack aircrew to communicate critical operational information; and conflicting operational guidance concerning thunderstorm avoidance, substantially contributed to the mishap.

A North Carolina Air National Guard C-130 from the 145th Airlift Wing in Charlotte is scheduled to rejoin aerial firefighting operations in the northern United States on Aug. 14. This will mark the first time that the wing is back fighting the wildfires across that region since the fatal crash of another of the wing's specially configured C-130s during a mission in South Dakota back in July. The unit's remaining Modular Airborne Firefighting System-equipped C-130-dubbed MAFFS 8-will replace a California ANG C-130 currently operating from Boise Air Terminal, Idaho, that is slated for maintenance, according to an Aug. 10 release from MAFFS officials. "It is extremely important for our people to get back to this critical mission and we will carry the memory of MAFFS 7 in our hearts," said Col. Roger Williams, 145th Operations Group commander. A total of four MAFFS C-130s from the California ANG's 146th AW and Air Force Reserve Command's 302nd AW are currently activated. 2012

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USAF Unit Histories  
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