MISSION
The mission of the squadron is to deploy trained personnel and serviceable equipment to provide aerial support of airland operations in high threat areas; operate c-air interface; augment aerial port of embarkation/aerial port of debarkation; and operate unit move, on-load and off-load locations.

LINEAGE
80th Aerial Port Squadron
Redesignated 80th Mobile Aerial Port Squadron

STATIONS
Dobbins AFB, GA, 1 Apr 1972

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS
LTC John L. Fitter
Maj Todd R. Laughman
Maj Teresa Dutcher

HONORS
Service Streamers
Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

2006 Eighty-eight members of the 80th Aerial Port Squadron returned to Dobbins Air Reserve Base last month after nearly a year on active duty working in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Happy families and friends patiently stood by as the reservists were officially welcomed home by Brig. Gen. Thomas Stogsdill, 94th Airlift Wing commander, Col. Steven Slick, 94th Mission Support Group commander, Lt. Col. John Fitter, 80th APS commander, and Chief Master Sgt. James West, 94th Airlift Wing command chief.

Lt. Col. Fitter thanked the squadron for a job well done and for their dedication to the mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. “I am extremely proud of every one of you and am glad to have you back home,” Lt. Col. Fitter told the group. “You did an outstanding job. You went above and beyond and did more than what you were deployed to do. We are all so happy to have you back home with your families and are looking forward to integrating you back into the unit. Welcome home.”

The deployment was the first for the 80th APS and it presented some challenges for the reservists and their families. “Leaving my family was hard,” said Staff Sgt. Ralph Cordy who left behind his wife and three sons. “My wife is a full-time nursing student and runs her own business. I felt guilty leaving her with three boys to handle but she understood.” Although he is a firefighter for Dekalb County, in the Air Force Reserve, Sergeant Cordy is a cargo specialist and regularly deals with exporting and importing supplies and equipment.

However, while deployed, Sergeant Cordy worked primarily in passenger services handling troop movement for U.S. and Spanish service members heading to and from Iraq. “It was different but it was a good learning experience,” he said. According to Senior Master Sgt. Sandra Wright, 80th APS first sergeant, the squadron is made up of several entities including a joint inspection section; an air terminal section; an operation center; a passenger services section; a ramp section; a cargo section; a fleet services section; and load planning section. The mission of the squadron is to deploy trained personnel and serviceable equipment to provide aerial support of airland operations in high threat areas; operate c-air interface; augment aerial port of embarkation/aerial port of debarkation; and operate unit move, on-load and off-load locations.

Squadron members spent their deployment in several locations including Kuwait International Airport, Kuwait; Manas International Airport, Kyrgyzstan; Rhein Main Air Base, Germany; Pope Air Force Base, N.C.; Incirlik Air Base, Turkey; and Bagram Air Base,
Afghanistan; and Dover Air Force Base, Del. before returning to Dobbins in staggered groups. Sergeant Cordy drove from Dover AFB and headed straight for a football field in Henry County to see one of his sons play in a pony-league football championship game. “My boys were totally surprised to see me,” he said. “And, when I got home the house was decorated. It was nice.” The 80th APS was activated to active duty under the presidential authorization to call up members of Air Force Reserve Command in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Although the reservists will not continually rotate in and out as a squadron, according to Sergeant Wright, they will continue to support (air and space expeditionary force) missions as needed.

Making sure cargo is delivered in a timely and safe manner to any location in the world is central to what the men and women of the 80th Aerial Port Squadron here do very well. But what sets them apart from any other Air Force aerial port is their commitment to their work and to each other. “Everyone here is like family,” said Staff Sgt. Tamara Franklin, an aerial porter and passenger service representative who joined the squadron in 2003. “We call it a team but we’re more like a family.”

Made up of several entities, the squadron is comprised of a joint inspection section, an air terminal section, an operation center, a passenger services section, a ramp section, a cargo section, a fleet services section and a load planning section. Together they provide aerial support of air-land operations in high threat areas, augment aerial ports of embarkation/debarkation, and operate unit moves as well as on-load and off-load locations. It’s definitely a team effort said Sergeant Franklin. “Everyone pitches in,” said Sergeant Franklin. “We can clown around with each other but when it’s time to get the job done, it’s all business. It feels great knowing when it’s time to get the job done; we get it done in the safest way, the best way.”

Master Sgt. Xavier Sanford, assistant non-commissioned officer in charge of cargo, said collaboration is primary to mission accomplishment. “Every job ties in to the other,” said Sergeant Sanford. “We need each other to make the process work. I’ve seen a lot of positive change happen over the years. The focus is on being mission ready. That’s good.” Helping to make them a stronger, more professional organization is the squadron’s steady contribution to the global war on terrorism. In 2005, 88 Airmen were put on active duty under the presidential authorization to call up members of Air Force Reserve Command in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

They were deployed to several countries including: Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Germany, Turkey and Afghanistan. Both Sergeant Franklin and Sergeant Sanford were among the squadron’s initial 88 Airmen to deploy. Twenty aerial port Airmen are currently preparing for a deployment rotation. Since 2006, 80th APS has earned the distinction of having served the most man-days in support of The Global War on Terror of any aerial port in the Air Force Reserve Command according to their commander, Lt. Col. Todd Laughman. “We’re incredibly proud of that distinction,” said Colonel Laughman. “Our mission is very important to the Air Force, unloading, loading and tracking everything coming in and out. Everything runs through aerial port. “We’re also really proud of our sister units who constantly help us do our jobs,” he said. “Without their hard work we wouldn’t be as effective as we are.” 2008
Ten members of the 94th Maintenance Group and the 80th Aerial Port Squadron, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, returned home May 17 after a 120-day deployment to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The returning Airmen performed vehicle maintenance and assured the safe and timely delivery of supplies to the region. “Think about the sacrifice these Airmen have made,” said Col. Marshall S. Irvin Jr., 94th Mission Support Group commander. “It was important for the country, and will go down in annuls of history.”

Family members, senior staff and members of the Airmen and Family Readiness Office were present to welcome the Airmen home and brief them on programs such as the Yellow Ribbon Program and TRICARE plans. Is it important for returning Airmen to be aware of and take advantage of the TRICARE plans available to them and their families, said Adamor Rodriguez Jr., Georgia National Guard health benefits advisor. Some plans are available at no cost to the returning Airman.

The base has been so helpful, said Denise Howard, wife of Tech. Sgt. Dallas Howard. Family readiness has called on all the holidays and gave us plenty of information on how to deal with the deployment. “Take some time to get re-acclimated to your families,” said Irving. “Let them get re-acclimated to you. You received a briefing on yellow ribbon. This program is good for you and your family. I highly encourage you to go to yellow ribbon.” The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is a Department of Defense-wide effort to promote the well-being of Reserve members, their families and communities, by connecting them with resources throughout the deployment cycle. Reintegration during post-deployment is a critical time for members of the Reserve, as they often live far from military installations and members of their units. 2012

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**Air Force Order of Battle**

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**Sources**
