

920th Rescue Wing

2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



Not for self but for country

943rd, 920th Medical Airmen deploy for COVID response

By Mr. Andre Trinidad, 943rd Rescue Group Public Affairs

On April 5, 2020, the 920th Aeromedical Staging Squadron (ASTS) and the 943rd Aerospace Medicine Squadron (AMDS) sent several highly trained medical personnel in support of a COVID-19 response team from the Air Force Reserve. The 943rd AMDS is part of the 943rd Rescue Group at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona, and the 920th RQW at Patrick AFB, Florida. The 943rd AMDS supports the medical needs of over 1200 Airmen.

Critical Care Respiratory Therapists are enroute to the Javits Conference Center in New York to support the converted hospital. These personnel are also members of a Critical Care Air Transport team, pronounced C-CAT. Additionally, their Chief nurse was sent to New Orleans in response to that critical need location.

CCAT is a highly specialized and uniquely skilled three-person medical team that augments standard aeromedical evacuation crew members and turns an aircraft into a flying intensive care unit, ICU. They are experienced in the care of critically ill or injured patients with multisystem trauma, respiratory failure, multiple organ failure, and other life-threatening complications.

Some of the most common procedures and medications CCAT members administer in-flight include anti-blood clot medications, painkillers, and providing oxygen and ventilation. These CCAT teams are specially trained to adapt to in-flight challenges, such as turbulence, space limitations, limited resources, and supplies.

The 943rd AMDS motto is “Non sibi sed patriae,” which is Latin for “not for self, but for country.”

The 943rd AMDS commander said, “I’m just very proud to be associated with these talented people.”

“We have more people that I expect will volunteer and I wouldn’t be surprised if every last one of us would do something if asked,” said AMDS commander. “That’s just the nature of the squadron that we have here.”

It isn’t easy to mobilize civilians into military status normally, much less within hours. However, the leadership across the Air Force Reserve leaned forward to pre-identify volunteers from the Selected Reserve - which are Reserve Citizen Airmen currently actively serving in the Reserve.

“You don’t expect the front of a war to come stateside but that’s exactly what’s happened with this particular pandemic,” said AMDS commander.

Next week their Emergency Room Physician, who is also a Flight Surgeon, will be heading to New York. Additionally, a lab tech and med-tech are currently augmenting the active-duty Air Force on Davis-Monthan to meet the increased workload.



Due to increased social distancing, the 943rd AMDS was utilizing telework and minimal manning to comply with current safety measures, yet still accomplish mission requirements.

Fortunately, when the request came down on Saturday morning to mobilize there were three Personnel Specialists in the office who were able to facilitate a critical need. They quickly accomplished medical readiness procedures and generated official travel documents for the deployment.

“We had the right people in the right place to react immediately,” said AMDS commander.

This deployment is part of a larger mobilization package of more than 120 doctors, nurses and respiratory technicians in Air Force Reserve units across the nation provided over the past 48 hours in support of COVID-19 response to take care of Americans.

“The whole idea of training is to be prepared for when the day comes,” the AMDS commander said. “And it has arrived.”

LRS building renovations complete

By Senior Airman Brandon Kalloo Sanes, 920th RQW Public Affairs

The 920th Rescue Wing’s Logistics and Readiness Squadron (LRS) celebrated the completion of nearly two million dollars’ worth of renovations to their facility on June 7 with a special ribbon cutting ceremony.

LRS is the ultimate logistics organization, combining planning, supply and transportation skills into one organization, under one commander, with all the resources to keep pace with the swift demands of deployment, employment, and sustainment support requirements.

According to Don, 920th RQW facility operations specialist, these renovations was crucial in getting the LRS building back up and running after it was heavily damaged by Hurricane Irma in 2017.

The restorations included a new roof, walls, electrical repairs and more.



Reserve 308th RQS PJ volunteers for COVID-19 response in NYC

By 1st Lt. Amanda Ling, 920th RQW Public Affairs

NEW YORK, N.Y. -- A hospital within a hospital, a first of its kind, was the response needed to combat a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans and was rapidly affecting New York, the country and world.

This strain of coronavirus, known as COVID-19, is proving to be as devastating as the 1918 Spanish Flu claiming the lives of over 570 thousand people worldwide since the first known case was reported in Wuhan, China, in November 2019. The virus has since affected more than three million people in the U.S. and over 12 million worldwide according to data gathered by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), World Health Organization (WHO) and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.



In March, the WHO declared the COVID-19 outbreak as a pandemic.

On April 3, Joseph “Joey”, a paramedic and 308th Rescue Squadron reserve Pararescueman (PJ), was contacted by Dr. Melissa Givens, Medical Director of the Ryan F. Larkin Field Hospital, and Dr. Steven Rush, a retired 103rd Rescue Squadron Flight Physician. Dr. Givens, also a retired Army doctor, along with Dr. Rush, understood the value in bringing aboard special operator force (SOF) medics. They asked Joey if he would be willing to help alleviate the growing pressure on New York hospitals to meet the increasing demand to treat a rapidly growing number of patients experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

New York was one of the most heavily impacted states with rapidly rising numbers of positive COVID-19 cases reported between March and April. The state had just over one thousand positive cases of COVID-19 in mid-March but that number sky rocketed to over 240 thousand positive cases by mid-April, according to the CDC and WHO. This outbreak began to quickly overwhelm the states entire medical system.

Joey didn’t hesitate to agree to the call for help and immediately arranged for a flight to New York. “I was ecstatic to have been called by Dr. Givens and Dr. Rush, Joey said. “I wanted to be a part of the solution and to help people. Helping people is my passion.”

As a traditional reservist, Joey was able to accept the request from the New York doctors in their time of need. Agreeing to use his knowledge, experience and pararescue expertise, Joey flew to NY - putting his life in harm’s way against an invisible adversary; COVID-19. Upon arrival, Joey and a handful of medics were requested by the Medical Director of the New York Presbyterian Milstein Center, Dr. Laureen Hill, to create a side unit within the wing of the hospital known as Riverview Terrace. This new unit was to act as a “relief valve” to the main field hospital in the city.

“Riverview Terrace was a conference and banquet space that was converted into a 47-bed ward to support Milstein Hospital,” Joey said. “We were fully capable of providing full-spectrum patient care to those experiencing symptoms as well as those diagnosed with COVID-19.”

Unfortunately, the overwhelmed and understaffed hospitals in the area were unable to provide the personnel required to support this unit inside Riverview Terrace. That’s when Joey stepped in and was asked to recruit and form provider teams while identifying and meeting the logistical needs to accommodate incoming patients.

Luckily, he had amassed an extensive network of fully qualified individuals to fit that need which he’d gathered over the course of his military career. He handpicked Air Force Reserve and National Guard PJ’s, Army medics, SEAL’s, and civilian professionals to perform their duties as medical providers in this uniquely improvised field hospital. This newly integrated team flew to NYC, immediately established the field hospital and began receiving their first patients within 96-hours of notification. Although this team of 55 professionals had never all met or interacted with each other, they worked with ease and understanding.

Other members from the 308th RQS also answered the call to help to including; Josh, Chaney, Louis, Tyler and Gavin.

Under the directive of the local New York Presbyterian Hospital doctors, this joint force team was able to perform at an elevated scope. They provided a rapid response force with dynamic medial capabilities able to adapt to their environment and the needs of the field hospital as well as other medical professionals.

Riverview Terrace field hospital operated for five weeks and as a result of their efforts, 60 patients received the care they desperately required.

“When the surge dissipated, the hospitals were less burdened,” Joey said. “But our team remained in place and interspersed themselves into other areas of the hospital to continue to provide medical care for another four weeks, wherever they were needed.”

Joey explained how grateful he feels to have been given the opportunity to bring together a team of operators and civilians to help accomplish such a monumental task

“We integrated well with the hospital system,” he said. “I’m thankful for the positive results and helping the cause.”

Joey has been a PJ for six years, during which time he has completed two combat deployments. His first four years he served in the active duty Air Force but he now calls the 308th RQS home, serving in a traditional reserve capacity.

The 308th RQS is a unit within the 920th Rescue Wing and consists of Combat Rescue Officers (CRO), Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) and Pararescuemen (PJ) which is also known as Guardian Angels. While many candidates enter the 920th from the active duty Air Force, others are accessed directly into the Air Force Reserve. All candidates must pass a physical assessment test which has about 15% success rate.

An Air Force PJ is a special warfare operator, trained to recovery and medically treat personnel in combat and humanitarian environments, at any time, all over the world. They are considered the “Jack of all trades.” On top of being nationally registered Paramedics, their extensive training includes tactical scuba diving, static and freefall skydiving, high angle mountain rescue, austere survival skills and cold weather training.

The mission of the 308th is to train and maintain the Air Forces only dedicated rescue capability for Department of Defense personnel, in support of Combatant Commander’s wartime objectives as well as peacetime humanitarian and disaster relief activities. They can provide this capability under the harshest of circumstances to include, day/night, inclement weather and all terrain rescue conditions.

Editors Note: The Ryan F. Larkin Field Hospital is named for decorated Navy SEAL Ryan F. Larkin (1987-2017) who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

920th Respiratory Therapist recognized for COVID-19 efforts in NY



On April 30, 2020, General Terrance J. O’Shaughnessy, Commander, United States Northern Command, conducted a visit with members on the front lines of various hospitals in New York City. While there, General O’Shaughnessy, presented SSgt Marja, a commanders coin to recognize her hard work. SSgt Marja, a respiratory therapist from the 920 Aeromedical Staging Squadron, Patrick AFB, Florida, is currently assigned to the 64th Air Expeditionary Group, Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey. She has exemplified herself by continuously providing an expert level of care in one of New York City’s hardest hit areas. SSgt Marja quickly incorporated herself into the operational staff at Lincoln Medical Center in the Bronx, lending her respiratory therapist skills to ventilated patients in the fight against COVID-19.

Upon arrival, in the hospital, she immediately established liaison with hospital administrators and facilitated emergency privileging for 30+ Health Care Providers in less than 48 hours.

Additionally, SSgt Marja had a remarkable patient save on April 16, 2020. She was able to respond to an alarm for a patient that was not

assigned to her and quickly recognized an emergent situation related to an endotracheal tube which had become dislodged in an unstable patient. She promptly provided lifesaving interventions, re-intubation and then elicited additional assistance to provide more definitive care. Her attention to detail and quick thinking prevented almost certain and imminent death for this patient.

Wing honors Khobar Towers victims

Rescue Wing members honored five Rescue Airmen and 14 other Airmen killed in a terrorist attack 24 years ago known as the Khobar Towers bombing June 25.

The Khobar Towers bombing of 1996 was a terrorist attack on a U.S. Air Force housing complex in the town of Khobar, near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on June 25, 1996. The individuals identified as members of Hizballah Al-Hijaz drove a tanker truck packed with 5,000 pounds (2,268 kg) of explosives near the complex and then jumped into waiting vehicles, escaping just before detonation. The explosion, which was so loud that it was heard some 20 miles (32 km) away, left a crater 85 feet (26 metres) wide and 35 feet (10.6 metres) deep. Nineteen U.S. service members were killed, and some 500 people were injured.

In all, 19 U.S. servicemen and one Saudi were killed and 372 of many nationalities were wounded. Several of the wounded were members of the 920th RQW.

The fallen are:

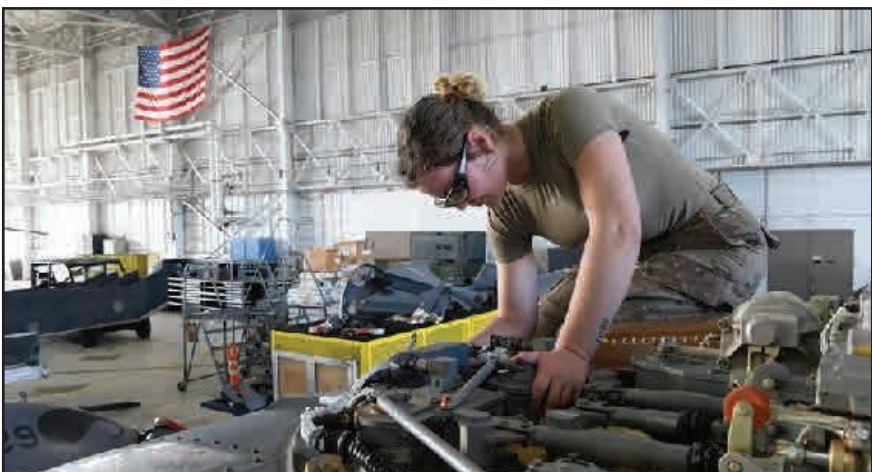
Master Sgt. Michael G. Heiser ... Staff Sgt. Kevin J. Johnson
A1C Justin R. Wood ... Capt. Christopher J. Adams
Capt. Leland T. Haun



Maintenance Airmen continue despite minimal manning, COVID-19



Top left: Tech. Sgt. Brandon and Staff Sgt. Michael, 943d Maintenance Crew Chiefs, install a Tail Rotor Drive Shaft during the assembly stage of the helicopter’s 600-hour phase inspection, March 19.



Top right: Staff Sgt. Madeline, 920th Maintenance Squadron, ensures the readiness of the HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters during the COVID-19 pandemic and with minimal manning in effect March 24.



Middle: 920th MXS Airmen perform an aircraft tow with tow team members wing walking alongside an HH-60G helicopter to ensure all sides are clear of obstructions as a tug driver pushes the helicopter into a hangar at a location outside of Hurricane Iaias’ projected pathway July 31.

Bottom: 720th Aircraft Maintenance Airmen push a power cart closer to an HC-130J aircraft to hook up external power.



Staff Sgt. Savannah, 943d Maintenance Electronic Warfare Craftsman, gets elbow deep in her work installing electrical connectors to the Flight Engineer’s console on aircraft 227 during its 600-hour phase inspection.



920th MXS Airmen load an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter into a C-17 July, 31. The C-17 transported a couple of the 920th’s helicopters to a location outside of Hurricane Iaias’ projected pathway.

Super Herculean milestone



Hercules history was made on April 2, when Airmen from the 920th Rescue Wing (RQW), Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, accepted delivery of the U.S. Air Force's Reserve first HC-130J Combat King II search-and-rescue aircraft. This HC-130J will be operated by the 920th RQW's 39th Rescue Squadron (RQS).

"This is an exciting time for the men and women of the 39th RQS, the 920th RQW and Air Force Reserve Command," said Lt. Col. Elis, 39th RQS commander. "The delivery of the first HC-130J represents a major milestone in our unit's transition. The new aircraft will enable enhanced mission capabilities and ensure the successful execution of future combat search and rescue operations."

The wing has long been operators of the legacy HC-130 P/N Combat King combat search-and-rescue aircraft, flying and maintaining HC-130s since the 1960s. The HC-130J is the sole dedicated fixed-wing personnel recovery platform operated by the Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard.

According to Lockheed Martin, the 920th RQW has the distinction of being the Air Force Reserve's only HC-130J operators and will eventually have several HC-130J in fleet to support mission requirements.

The 920th RQW is responsible for a demanding and compelling array of missions, and the men and women who serve here must maintain a high level of proficiency and be ready to deploy at a moment's notice. In addition, the unit supports the space program, and the unit's other peacetime missions include search-and-rescue support for civilians in distress at sea, in the desert or upon mountains. The wing also provides worldwide humanitarian relief, supporting rescue efforts in the aftermath of disasters such as hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. The HC-130J is essential in enabling this unique mission set.

Often tasked for airdrop, airland, helicopter air-to-air refueling and forward-area ground refueling missions, the HC-130's mission capabilities also include humanitarian aid operations, disaster response, security cooperation/aviation advisory, emergency aeromedical evacuation and noncombatant evacuation operations.

"As we salute one fleet for a lifetime's worth of work, we are also excited to commemorate a new era with the arrival of the 920th's first HC-130J Combat King II," said Rod McLean, vice president and general manager, Air Mobility & Maritime Missions at Lockheed Martin. "This HC-130J provides the 920th's Citizen Airmen with increased power, capability and performance to continue to support critical missions close to home and around the world."

Compared to legacy platforms, the HC-130J Combat King II offers significant performance and capabilities advancements, to include fuel efficiencies, improvement in payload/range capabilities, an integrated defensive suite, automated maintenance fault reporting, high-altitude ramp and door hydraulics, and improved situational awareness with its digital avionics and dual Head Up Displays.

Airmen limit COVID-19 Exposure during Historic Aircraft Delivery

By Master Sgt. Kelly Goonan, 920th RQW Public Affairs

The 39th Rescue Squadron took possession of their first, brand new HC-130J Combat King II aircraft April 2. 920th Rescue Wing maintenance and aircrew brought the aircraft home to Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, while making history in their efforts.

"This is an exciting time for the men and women of the 39th RQS, the 920th RQW, and the Air Force Reserve Command," said Lt. Col. Ellis, 39th RQS commander. "The delivery of the first HC-130J represents a major milestone in our unit's transition. The new aircraft will enable enhanced mission capabilities and ensure the successful execution of future combat search and rescue operations."

However, because of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Airmen, as well as Lockheed Martin personnel, took several precautionary measures to ensure their health and the health of those they may come in contact with.

"We eliminated the customary factory tour, team introductions as well as the 'Key Ceremony', in which Lockheed Martin gives the gaining unit a symbolic key to the aircraft," said Lt. Col. Rich, 920th Operations Group HC-130J Conversion Officer. "In fact, our 920th maintenance experts limited their interaction with Lockheed Martin personnel to an absolute minimum prior to releasing the aircraft to the aircrew."

The 920th maintenance personnel were able to expedite the acceptance and pre-flight checks of the first AFRC HC-130J, accomplishing all required tasks in nearly half the normally allotted time.

To stop the spread of COVID-19, health and government officials have recommended avoiding large gatherings and maintaining a distance of 6 feet from other people. This reduces the chance of contact with those knowingly or unknowingly carrying the infection.

"The aircrew avoided local contact entirely with assistance from the 71st Rescue Squadron out of Moody Air Force Base, Georgia," said Lt. Col. Rich. "The 71st provided a pilot and loadmaster to round out our aircrew from the 39th RQS in addition to flying us all from Patrick to the Lockheed factory."

One of the most unique situations that presented itself during this historical moment was another, never ever seen before, safety measure.

"We executed the first ever 'Engine Running Offload' on the Lockheed Martin ramp and proceeded directly to the aircraft," said Lt. Col. Rich. "This has never been done before and the aircrew was able to avoid the Lockheed facilities altogether. It was a truly unique and exceptionally well thought out plan to limit our exposure to the current threat."

Once the power-up and preflight checks were complete, the combined team from the 920th and 71st departed the airfield in Georgia, without incident.

"The day was complete when the 71st RQS crewmembers, who assisted us, were picked up from Patrick AFB and returned safely to Moody AFB," said Lt. Col. Rich. "Despite all that is going on in world today, I am proud to have been a small part of the great effort by the Total Force working together to overcome seemingly unlimited obstacles. It was inspiring to witness the priority placed on the protection of each Airman while still focusing on mission accomplishment."





The 301st Rescue Squadron, 920th Rescue Wing, partnered with the U.S. Coast Guard in October to conduct hoist training off of a Florida coast in October. The HH-60G Pavehawk helicopters hoisted pararescuemen from the mobile U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Kathleen Moore.

This training requires the entire crew to be in complete coordination; the pilots must hold a hover with minimal visual references of a moving vessel while the special mission aviators direct the pilots where the helicopter needs to be positioned over the ship so the PJ's below can hook up a patient all while the ship is moving through the ocean, pitching and rolling.

BOTTOM: 920th Communication Flight Airmen setup a High Frequency antenna during an exercise in early October. The HF Frequency antenna is used to transmit between 3 - 30 hertz and can transmit up to 6,000 miles line of sight.



RIGHT: 920th Communication Flight Airmen raise an antenna mast with two line of sight antennas which are used to pass voice and data information between aircraft and members on the ground during an exercise in early October.



Mount Rainier SAR training prior to start of hiking season

PORTLAND AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ore. -- On April 22, 2020, the 304th Rescue Squadron performed mission essential training with the Army Reserve in support of search and rescue training for the upcoming climbing season at Mount Rainer National Park.



In today's climate of the COVID-19 pandemic, special measures were implemented to mitigate risk during this life-saving training. The Air Force is committed to preserving the ability of our servicemen and women to provide for national defense and current worldwide military missions.

Pararescuemen (PJs) from the 304th Rescue Squadron joined forces with Fox Company, 2-135th General Support Aviation Battalion of the Army Reserve and Mount Rainier Park Rangers from the National Park Service.

Capt. Ben, Combat Rescue Officer, 304th Rescue Squadron said, "We have a memorandum of agreement between the 304 RQS, an Army Reserve CH-47 unit, and the National Park Service to support civil search and rescue operations at Mount Rainier, when requested."

The Army Reserve unit from Joint-Base Lewis McChord has CH-47 Chinooks with hoist capability. Together the Air Force Reserve and Army Reserve

were able to perform mission rehearsals and training and integration for the upcoming climbing season at Mt. Rainier. The training was successful while utilizing safety protocols in compliance with COIVD-19 risk mitigation.

The park's centerpiece is Mt. Rainier, 14,410 feet, which is considered an active volcano and covers 235,625 acres in the Cascade Range. In 2018 the NPS reported 1.5 million visitors to Mount Rainier park.

In 2019 the 304 RQS participated in three rescue missions at Mount Rainier.

These Civilian Search and Rescue, Civ-SAR, missions and associated training with the Army Reserve provides real-world experience that is applicable to Combat Search and Rescue, C-SAR, missions although there are differences.

"We have different equipment on us for Civ-SAR to include mission specific mountaineering and alpine equipment in the back of the helicopter to facilitate extracting an injured or stranded climber off the mountain at high elevations," said Capt. Ben. "Typically under hazardous mountain conditions, as we're able to mitigate some of the risk for the National Park Service."



First operational flight marks milestone

By 1st Lt. Amanda Ling , 920th RQW Public Affairs

June 2, 2020 was a historic day for the 39th Rescue Squadron as aircrew members flew the first fully operational HC-130J Combat King II training mission.

This first operational flight marks an important milestone for the 39th RQS because the HC-130J replaced the HC-130 P/N as the only Air Force dedicated fixed-wing personnel recovery platform. The new aircraft came directly off the production line from Lockheed Martin and went straight to the flight line earlier just two months ago.

“The Combat King II, flies faster, higher and further. It’s capabilities, far exceeds that of its predecessor,” the 920th Rescue Wing Vice Commander explained. “This is not your grandfathers C-130. This is the beginning of exciting new era for our wing.”

Despite the rain outside, the atmosphere inside the briefing room was that of excitement and anticipation. The discussion centered on a crawl, walk, run mentality for the introduction of the new aircraft. The first flight is the start of the crawl phase where pilots, combat systems officers (CSO) and loadmasters become comfortable in this new, state-of-the-art, aircraft.

“Since I began training a year ago, I have been waiting for this moment,” a loadmaster explained. “The HC-130J is amazing in every aspect. I can’t wait to see how it adds to our mission, given its capabilities.”

The HC-130J has improved technology, to include a full glass cockpit, with digital heads up displays, improved navigation, threat detection, and new capabilities, such as satellite and data-burst communications and the ability to receive inflight refueling to travel longer distances.

In order to become qualified to operate in the HC-130J, the aircrew members returned to training in Little Rock, Arkansas and Kirtland Air Force Base, Albuquerque New Mexico. Even though the majority of the aircrew were highly experienced and skilled in the HC-130 P/N platform, the formal school training took an average of seven months to complete; but that was just the beginning. Due to the unique mission of the 920th RQW, additional hours in the J model are required for full proficiency.

“These five rocked it and I was incredibly proud to have been in the seat for the 39th’s first sortie,” the 39th RQS Commander said.



Guardian Angels rescue lost father, daughter near Mt. Hood, Oregon

PORTLAND AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ore -- On September 3, a 34-year-old male, his seven-year-old daughter, and their dog were rescued after being reported missing for two days in the Mt. Hood wilderness area.

At the time of notification, the lost personnel were believed to be in a steep canyon. Clackamas County Sheriffs took the lead and requested assistance from the 304th Rescue Squadron, (RQS).

304th RQS personnel were notified at 9:30 pm on September 2, and quickly went into action. The team assembled at 10:00 p.m. for mission planning and gear preparation. 15-minutes after midnight, the 11 rescue personnel team left for Kinzel Lake Campground to link up with Clackamas County Search and Rescue.

The team consisted of one Combat Rescue Officer (CRO), seven Pararescue (PJ) Specialists, and three Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape specialists.

Maj. Ryan, Director of Operations 304th Rescue Squadron said, “We were contacted late last night about a mission to aid the Clackamas Sheriff department with technical rescue support for a search of two isolated personnel in the wilderness just south of Rhododendron, Oregon.”

At 1:30 a.m. the team arrived at Kinzel Lake Campground. By 1:50 a.m., two Search and Rescue (SAR) teams departed the campground to look for the missing man and daughter.

Each search team was outfitted with adverse terrain gear, fusion goggles (Thermal & Night Vision), technical rope rescue equipment, and medical gear.

By 5:40 a.m. the SAR teams located the lost hikers with non-life-threatening injuries. Both patients were unable to walk and required rope systems and litters to be safely extracted from the area.

At 7:00 a.m. SAR teams link up with members of the Oregon Air National Guard’s 125th Special Tactics Squadron who assisted with patient movement. The rescuers had to navigate, with the injured patients on litters, through roughly 1 kilometer of dense terrain in order to reach the nearest service road.

A 304th RQS CRO was the Liaison Officer working with the Clackamas Sheriffs department.

“It was a combined effort between the 304th RQS and 125th STS moving the two patients through very thick and steep terrain,” the CRO said. “Technical rope systems were used at a number of different locations in order to safely transport the two patients off the mountain to a place where they could be turned over to definitive care.”

By 12:30 p.m. the patients were extracted from the wilderness and turned over for medical care, mission complete.

“Our members responded in the middle of the night to assist the local authorities, located the isolated personnel, and evacuated them to safety,” said Ryan. “I am extremely proud of our team and how they performed to enable a positive outcome for the local authorities. A great reflection of the capabilities of the Air Force Reserve Command’s Guardian Angel Rescue Squadrons.”



920th Rescue Wing welcomed eight new commanders



308th Rescue Squadron



301st Rescue Squadron



920th Operations Group



943rd Rescue Group



920th Force Support Squadron



920th Logistics Readiness Squadron



39th Rescue Squadron



920th Maintenance Group

306th RQS donates 300 masks to base security

DAVIS-MONTHAN AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. -- The 306th Rescue Squadron donated 300 masks to support base security on March 27, 2020 for COVID-19 mitigation efforts. The 306th RQS is part of the 943rd Rescue Group located on Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. The 943rd RQG is a geographically separated unit within the 920th Rescue Wing located on Patrick AFB, Florida.



A call from the 355th Security Forces Squadron went out to Davis-Monthan AFB mission partners, asking if anyone had any masks they could donate to the defenders guarding the base. Citizen Airmen from the 306th RQS were ready to support.

The 306th RQS commander said, "As mission partners it's important to help out the total force initiatives."

The commander said the masks were new and unused ear-loop masks from a previous deployment. Pararescue Jumpers (PJ's) keep these disposable surgical masks in their medical pack, Med Rucks, to utilize in the field or in clinical situations.

"Everyone is doing what they can to fight this virus," said the commander. "This is one small thing we can do as mission partners to support our active duty family."



The 39th Rescue Squadron performed two flyover events for the Daytona 400 NASCAR races at Daytona International Speedway in August with their HC-130J Combat King II aircraft.

Flyovers are a way for the U.S. Air Force to showcase the capabilities of aircraft while at the same time inspiring a future generations to serve their country.



920th Rescue Wing Airmen temporarily relocated aircraft to locations outside of the projected pathway of Hurricane Isaias July 31, 2020.



The 920th Rescue Wing participated in the inaugural Lockheed Martin Space and Air Show Oct. 31 at the Orlando-Sanford International Airport by providing a helicopter air-to-air demonstration and other aerial demo's.



In November, the 39th Rescue Squadron provided tilt rotor air-to-air refueling to an Osprey.

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<<< In October, the 39th Rescue Squadron HC-130J Combat King II aircraft performed an Air-to-Air (AAR) refuel with a KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft assigned to the 101st Air Refueling Wing, Bangor, Maine Oct 26, 2020. The 39th RQS worked alongside the 101st ARW to accomplish the mission essential training for both aircraft aircrew.



Beret flown in space for retiring Pararescueman CMSgt



By Master Sgt. Kelly Goonan, 920th RQW Public Affairs

Air Force Colonel and NASA astronaut, Nick Hague had a unique retirement gift for retiring pararescueman, Chief Master Sgt. Michael Ziegler; a gift which orbited the earth 200 times to honor his service.

Some close family were on hand during Chief Ziegler's retirement ceremony but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing measures meant that many had to send video messages, including Hague who wanted to personally deliver his gratitude but resorted to a video to tell his story.

As the Chief and small audience watched the screen, Hague explained how an event on October 11, 2018, fundamentally changed the way he viewed what search-and-rescue forces do.

Hague was riding in a rocket, going 4,000 miles an hour, when it disintegrated underneath him and his team. Luckily, the escape system pulled them to safety.

"I can tell you there was no better feeling, no greater sense of safety and security then when we had touched down on the ground in steps of Kazakhstan and on the outside of the window, that's six-inches from my face, I get the knock and thumbs up from the PJ that had jumped in to extract us from the capsule," he said. "That's when I knew everything was alright."

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920th Security Forces conduct annual incident response training

The 920th Security Forces Squadron conducted incident response training inside an abandoned facility on Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., Aug. 20.

This is annual training requirement plays an integral role in preparing our highly trained Defenders to handle high stress and chaotic situations.



This year's training focused on active shooter response with a concentration on search patterns/techniques, team movement, communication, and weapons handling tactics. Additionally, the training stressed the importance of constant fluidity in an active shooter situation.

Each eight-hour training evolution included classroom instruction, practical application, battle drills/rehearsals, and performance evaluations utilizing simulated M-4 and M-9 weapons systems.

“Accelerate change or lose”

By Senior Airman Cali Elliott, 920th RQW Public Affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. --How would you conduct your mission if you were in an austere and possibly hostile environment? This is the question the 920th Force Support Squadron’s (FSS) Services Flight continuously strives to answer.

They’ve found that by conducting hands-on research testing potential equipment, they not only maximize their functionality but also their enduring capabilities and lethality.

On Sept. 12, a group of 12 Airmen field tested various commercial equipment by deploying cots, assembling/disassembling tents, and using sleeping bags. They were encouraged to work independently, simulating being in the field. This was the second iteration of training exercises they’ve recently conducted.

A previous field exercise conducted with the assistance of Mr. Ross of the emergency management flight was performed with all potential equipment stowed in deployable ruck sacks. Airmen from different units throughout the wing were then asked to take the equipment and run a lap around the track before breaking it out and setting it up at the center of the track field.



“Since we have gotten the mobility data we were looking for in the previous exercise, now we want to focus more on the equipment functionality itself.” Said Maj. Daniel, 920th Officer In Charge (OIC) of Services. “There’s a lot of products out there and we want the equipment to be lightweight and durable, that’s what this is testing.”

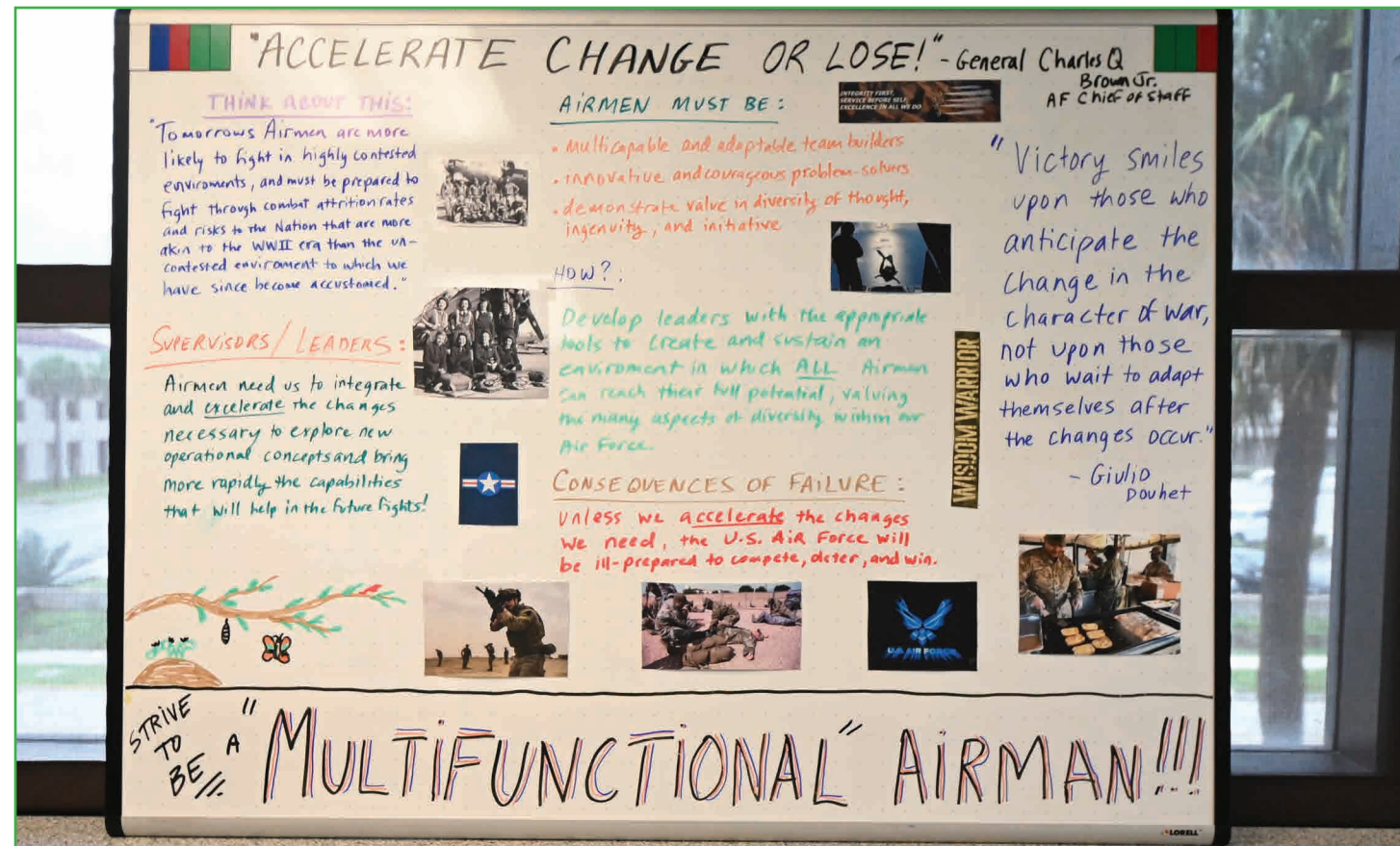
The Airmen conducting the research of the products were instructed to set up, test, and break down the equipment. Serving a test of durability, there were no repercussions if something broke. On the contrary, the data collected from failed equipment would ensure a better understanding of what products were not conducive in field environments.

“There are pros and cons to every piece equipment,” the OIC said. “So getting as many hands on as possible will give us the widest diversity of opinions.”

A spreadsheet was used to evaluate the equipment, a standard score sheet that allowed the Airmen testing the equipment to voice their opinion. The sheet had each item listed, a number from one to five, one being poor and five being excellent. Additionally, a comment section was provided for the user to give additional, detailed feedback. The spreadsheet was essentially a listing that captured all the data from overall weight to actual usability in the field.

“The intent isn’t to tell leadership what to buy, but give them feedback on what their Airmen think about the suitability of the equipment,” he said.

All of the data will be compiled and new equipment used for an extensive exercise in 2021 that will train MSG Airmen in wartime training scenarios. These products were hand-selected for the conditions the Airmen would be in if they were deployed to an austere location where they must be light and agile.



“We have a general idea of the environment we would be in and knew we needed something lightweight, and breathable,” he said. “Ideally, we want to get our Airmen off the ground and in a reliable type of cover.”

Also featured in the Services Flight within the FSS was a large, colorful, story board created by Staff Sgt. Karey and her troops, with pictures and quotes she had pulled directly out of the August 2020 “Accelerate Change or Lose” paper presented by General Charles Brown, Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

“After a squadron staff meeting where our FSS commander led a discussion about General Brown’s paper and what it means to be a Multifunctional Airman, I wanted to take that message back to my troops in a meaningful way,” the Staff Sgt. explained. “The story board grew organically out of that conversation with my Airmen and was a team effort over the course of a few days.”

The OIC Maj. expanded on the Staff Sgt’s comments by adding that sometimes, at the tactical level, Airmen are given direction by their leadership and can be left wondering why they’re moving in that direction.

“That couldn’t be further from the actuality within this wing,” he explained. “That message has always been to develop Multifunctional Airman for a high-end fight against a peer adversary from day one.”

The “Bed-down Expo” and the story board were just a few of the many highlights featured during a recent visit from the Tenth Air Force Commander, Major General Brian Borgen that directly reflects the new Chief of Staff of the Air Force’s Accelerate Change or Lose initiative.

“Although our group is preparing Agile Combat Employment for our Rear Command Post, our strategic wing focus has pinpointed our effort to maximizing multifunction Airmen capable of operating in a contested environment for a high-end fight,” Col. Matthew, Mission Support Group commander, said. “This is a huge shift in my mission support group training priorities as these capabilities require every one of my Citizen Airmen to become light, lean and lethal.”

Deployment during COVID-19 pandemic 943rd RQG deployers return home after safety delays

By Andre Trinidad, 943rd Rescue Group Public Affairs

DAVIS-MONTHAN, Ariz. -- It's 2 a.m. on a hot and muggy morning. In an empty parking lot, minivans and SUV's are gathering together. People of all ages are gathering around a sidewalk, holding signs with barely visible names. A 5-year-old girl sits on the curb, hands holding her face, waiting, waiting, waiting...

At the beginning of 2020, the 304th Rescue Squadron, 305th Rescue Squadron and 943rd Maintenance Squadron deployed to undisclosed locations. For the 943rd Rescue Group, whose primary mission is Combat Search and Rescue, CSAR, deploying is a regular part of their battle rhythm.

Lt. Col. Jesse, 943rd RQG Commander, said "I'm happy to have the 304th, 305th and 943rd MXS back safe and sound after successful deployments. I look forward to them getting their Rest & Relation time and then getting back to work to train for whatever is next."



The expected duration of the deployment was extended due to unforeseen circumstances, namely COVID-19.

Beginning on March 13th, and subsequent addendum' the Department of Defense directed a Stop Movement in order to slow down the spread of the virus. This affected leave requests, moving to a new base and deployments.

As Air Force Reservists, the majority of the 943rd RQG personnel maintain full-time employment in

the civilian sector and attend military training on a part-time status. When their return from deployment date is delayed this can bring about additional challenges for their friends and family back home.

During the deployment, the 305th RQS and 943rd MXS deployed together with their HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and associated maintenance equipment in order to fully operate in remote environments. The 304th RQS was assigned to a different location but the challenges were similar.

In order to comply with current safety standards, 943rd Aeromedical Squadron personnel were on hand to screen each team member before they were released.

"They also did COVID testing in theater before they returned," said Jesse. "Many of our team members will perform the 14-day Restriction of Movement, ROM, at their home but some have elected to do the ROM on base."

In order for the 100 plus personnel to arrive home safely, several aircraft were use and arrived at different times and locations.

By 3 a.m., all the Rescue professionals in this flight have been processed by medical professional and are released to their families and friends. The 5-year-old girl jumps up from the curb and runs to her father, waiting no longer for his embrace.

304th RQS supports SAR of downed civilian aircraft near Mt. Hood, Oregon

By Andre Trinidad, 943rd Rescue Group Public Affairs

PORTLAND AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ore. -- The 304th Rescue Squadron sent three Pararescue Specialists Nov. 18 to assist civilian agencies in locating a downed aircraft near Mt. Hood, Oregon.

Just after 6 a.m. on Nov. 16, the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office was made aware of a small plane may have crashed in a remote area of the Mt. Hood National Forest in Clackamas county.

The Cessna 150 left Salem, Oregon, that morning; the pilot planned to stop in Troutdale, Oregon before continuing on to Idaho and then Utah.

The pilot reported having trouble due to bad weather and reported that ice was beginning to form on the plane. The pilot expressed his intent to change destinations; aircraft controllers lost contact with the plane a few minutes later.



Clackamas County Sheriff's Office Search & Rescue (SAR) Coordinators launched a mission to locate and then respond to the presumed crash scene enlisting help from many local, state, and federal search agencies.

The downed aircraft is believed to have crashed in Fish Creek Basin, approximately seven miles from the closest access point.

This is considered one of the more difficult wilderness areas to reach and wildfire damage has left the area additionally hazardous and difficult to navigate; challenges include an approximate 7,000-foot elevation gain, land and rock slides, fallen trees, and a lack of a navigable trail system.

The search team was not able to reach the suspected site on Nov. 17 due to these adverse conditions.

On Wednesday morning search and rescue personnel tried to locate a better access point using 4x4 vehicles but were unsuccessful.

A request came to the 304th Rescue Squadron for their expertise in personnel recovery in difficult terrain.

Three Pararescue Specialists and two Navy Search and Rescue Med Techs left Portland on a U.S. Navy MH-60 helicopter to the search location.

920th wins AFRC Aviation Safety Award

The 920th Rescue Wing Aviation Safety Office brought home the 2020 fiscal year Air Force Reserve Command Outstanding Achievement Award for Flight Safety.

The five-man team earned the organizational award by being proactive in determining negative trends and hazards across the wing's aviation units.

"Flight safety officers, myself, and respective safety representatives within squadrons work to ensure that all of the programs are following the appropriate guidelines," said a 920th RQW Flight Safety Non-commissioned Officer. "If we have any discrepancies, we address them before something little turns into something big."

The safety office professionally assesses procedures, hazards and inefficiencies.

"We want people to do their jobs, using safe practices and mitigating risk, so they can do dangerous activities in the safest way possible," said the 920th RQW Chief of Safety. "Corrections result in higher sortie generation, enable aircrew to fly more, allows them to be more efficient and increases combat mission ready rates."

More successful flights bolster mission effectiveness and fighting power.

"Even with 50% increased discrepancy reporting, we reduced the number of damaging mishaps by 87% this fiscal year compared to last year," the Chief of Safety said. "That's the lowest it has been in the last five years."

In addition to the organizational award, 920th RQW Aviation Safety Officer Lt. Col. John M. Tatton won the AFRC Safety Officer of the Year.

"The nominations were impressive and the competition was intense," said AFRC safety director, Col. John A. Lesho, III, who announced the 2020 fiscal year's Safety Award Winners. "I congratulate all of the nominees and commend them for their dedication to duty and outstanding performance."

During a 50-hour inspection on an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter, corrosion was found on the main gear box (MGB). The MGB is the main transmission for the aircraft and has four additional gearboxes attached to it.

920th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Airmen removed all five transmissions at the same time to better inspect the corrosion on the transmission Nov 10, 2020. The removal and replacement of a MGB is a job that takes a two man team about 80-hours to complete.



Wing exercise bolsters readiness, highlights importance of partnership

By Master Sgt. Kelly Goonan, 920th RQW Public Affairs

CAPE CANAVERAL AIR FORCE STATION, Fla. -- The 920th's Operations Group, Maintenance Group and Aeromedical Staging Squadron Critical Care Air Transport team participated in a quarterly training exercise Oct. 29 that focused on the full combat capability the team brings to the fight by integrating world-class professionals to conduct rescue operations.



"Planning and executing exercises like this is no small task. It is incredibly complex and requires long hours of preparation before the relatively short event even starts," the Operations Group Commander explained. "The work of our highly skilled and dedicated planners allows our operators to focus on execution of the challenging and dynamic training scenarios where they receive irreplaceable, life-saving experience and strengthen bonds with our partners both inside and outside our Operations Group."

During the exercise the 920th Ops Group performed an aerial insertion, ground assault force movement, high altitude aerial refueling, transload operations and advanced medical care with the help of the 45th Space Wing, Detachment 1, and supporting agencies.

"This training simulation allowed all members participating the opportunity to test their capability before deployment," a 308th Rescue Squadron Combat Rescue Officer explained. "The lessons learned during this exercise will be reinvested into the 920th Rescue Wing to increase combat capability prior to deployment to guarantee that the 920th RQW will continue to provide the best America can ask for."



Airmen enhance SERE skills

By Senior Airman Kalloo Sanes, 920th RQW Public Affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – 920th Rescue Wing Aircrew participated in Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE) training near Patrick AFB on Nov. 7.

Life support technicians and SERE experts put the Airmen through a rigorous training scenario testing their survival skills late into the evening across several miles of thick Florida woodland.

Following classroom instruction, they were taken to a beach location to put their knowledge to the test. Instructors had the aircrew inflate life preservers in the Atlantic, ensuring each member was soaked just like they would be after a real emergency landing at sea.



Properly drenched, the group broke out into three teams with a different set of coordinates where 920th RQW HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter crews would extract them later that night. They didn't have long to plan their journey because instructors, playing the role of enemy combatants, would begin pursuing them at any moment.

“We try to make these training opportunities as realistic as possible,” said an Aircrew Flight Equipment Specialist with the 920th Operations Support Squadron. “Challenging our personnel helps ensure they are properly equipped and trained to overcome any obstacle that could come their way.”

Using concealment and land navigation techniques, the Airmen weaved their way through sharp brush and uneven terrain hoping to find their extraction points before midnight. They had to remain vigilant and quiet with coastal winds, wet gear and enemy actors in pursuit. Additionally, they had to be on the lookout for potentially dangerous wildlife such as alligators, snakes and wild boar.

In the end, all three teams successfully avoided detection and found their intended extraction points. The exercise doubled as training for the 301st Rescue Squadron who worked to locate the survivors with only a general idea of where the teams were expected to end up. Their helicopters could be heard probing for the survivors along the coastline under the cover of darkness.

Rescue teams hoisted each survivor to safety and returned to base marking the end of their training. According to the wing commander, the unit hopes to continue hands-on exercises like these to strengthen its warfighting capabilities.



Tenth Air Force commander visits 920th RQW, recognizes Airmen

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- Maj. Gen. Brian K. Borgen, Tenth Air Force Commander, Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base, Texas, visited 920th Rescue Wing Airmen at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., Sept. 12. Borgen spent the weekend visiting Airmen within nearly every single squadron attached to the 920th RQW.

“Our Reservists are in a unique position to combine their civilian expertise, knowledge, and experience with their military training,” the General said. “I’m always impressed with the talent we have in the Tenth and how well our Airmen are able to integrate both worlds, further empowering their individual squadrons and by effect, enhancing the lethality and readiness of their Wing.”

During the visit, the Tenth Air Force Commander sought to recognize several Airmen across the Rescue Wing who’ve gone above and beyond during the year who exemplify the Wing’s motto: “These Things We Do That Others May Live.”

For example, during the Mission Support Group facilities tour the General was introduced to Airman First Class Ryan, an Air Transportation Airman within the Logistics Readiness Squadron. While conducting final checks in preparation for Hurricane Isaias, a need was identified to transfer medical records to a secure location. The A1C quickly took action without leadership intervention. He contacted his LRS leadership team, informed them of the situation, rallied members and prepared vehicles/trailers to quickly resolve the issue which secured and safeguarded medical records for the Wing.

As the visit continued, General Borgen would meet two Aeromedical Staging Squadron (ASTS) Airmen who distinguished themselves for their outstanding performance when called upon for New York COVID-19 response earlier this year.

Staff Sgt. Jorge, Non-commissioned Officer in Charge of Physical Exams and Deployments overhauled the examination and medical deployment process when the request to deploy to New York came in. His implementation of new guidance ensured all deployers were medically qualified prior to heading to the North Eastern state. The NCOIC was instrumental in ensuring all 920 RQW Airmen heading for NYC COVID-19 Response were medically cleared and out the door in less than 24-hours.

920th ASTS Respiratory Therapist, Staff Sgt. Marja, was one of those members who deployed for that response. While she was deployed to NYC’s Lincoln Memorial Center, one of the hardest hit Coronavirus areas, she provided her respiratory therapist skills to ventilated patients in the fight against COVID-19. She had a remarkable patient save when responding to an alarm for a patient that was not assigned to her. Marja quickly recognized an emergent situation related to an endotracheal tube which had become dislodged in an unstable patient. She promptly provided lifesaving interventions then elicited additional assistance to provide more definitive care. Her attention to detail and quick thinking prevented almost certain and imminent death for the patient.

“The drive and initiative of the 920th Airmen, with their willingness to take on projects without being instructed to do so, is exactly what I’m looking for in our Airmen,” Borgen said. “We need to get away from the mother-may-I mentality our Air Force has fallen into and start to once again to empower our SSgt/TSgt and young officers to make decisions without them worrying about receiving negative repercussions if they fail.”

Additionally, he observed a training exercise first-hand conducted by the 301st Rescue Squadron by joining aircrew on a HH-60 Pave Hawk Helicopter. The capabilities and readiness of the 301st RQS allowed for a smooth flight, allowing him to see many sites including Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, SpaceX and NASA.

39th RQS makes history with first-ever heavy equipment airdrop

By 1st Lt Amanda Ling, 920 RQW Public Affairs

PATRICK AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. -- The 39th Rescue Squadron etched out a small but heavy piece of history on Sept. 17 with their first-ever heavy equipment airdrop.

“Thanks to improved HC-130J capabilities, the 39th has added a new mission set of heavy equipment airdrops to our list of proficiencies,” said Capt. Michael, 39th RQS pilot. “Going from the legacy to the J model is like going from a flip phone to an iPhone 11. The J-model’s effectiveness and technology is far more advanced, providing increased potential all around. There is just no comparison.”



The 920th Rescue Wing’s 39th RQS was home to the now fully retired HC-130P/N Combat King aircraft which was limited in airdrop capabilities.

According to Stephanie Stinn, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics communications, the new HC-130J outperforms all older C-130s in combat operations by at least a 2:1 margin and demonstrate reliability that far exceeds most other military aircraft with average mission capable rates routinely in the 80 to 90 percent range.

The HC-130J is equipped with rear access ramps that can be lowered inflight. This advantage allows large platforms to be rolled out the back of the aircraft. Parachutes were deployed behind the aircraft which pulled the load out and cargo para-

chutes then deployed to slow the load down to the ground.

“The maximum airdrop load weight hasn’t changed from the legacy model to the J,” Master Sgt. Dean, 39th RQS loadmaster, explained. “However, the J has a dual rail system that locks the pallets into place, allowing us the ability to airdrop extremely heavy loads should the need arise.”

Developed in World War II as a solution to resupply inaccessible troops, the airdrop is a type of airlift operation still in use to this day. Early airdrops were conducted by dropping or pushing padded bundles from the aircraft to their targets below. As these airlift operations evolved, these padded bundles were fitted with parachutes allowing for softer landings.

“The J model is a much, much more adequate platform,” said Maj. Patrick, 39th RQS pilot. “Its advanced avionics allows us to airdrop cargo, such as heavy equipment, without a need for a navigator making us more agile and lethal.”

Not only does the heavy equipment airdrop improve efficiency in combat situations, it allows the Rescue Wing to continue its mission in peacekeeping operations such as hurricane relief. More food and medical supplies can be airdropped from the aircraft.



9 2 0 T H R E S C U E W I N G

WHO WE ARE

Combined Arms team of special mission personnel and aviation

MISSION

Plan, lead, and conduct military rescue operations and missions to deny competitors and adversaries exploitation of isolated personnel

THESE THINGS WE DO, THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE