

Based at Fort Benning, Georgia, the 17th ASOS provides air liaison, operational planning and terminal attack control support to the 75th Ranger Regiment. The squadron controls the employment of combat air assets for its supported units, and coordinates joint operations with component forces of other services and nations, both at home station and deployed. In addition to its headquarters, the 17th ASOS maintains operating locations at Hunter Army Airfield GA and Ft. Lewis WA. All 17th ASOS TACP are jump qualified, are handpicked from their career field and must have at least three years of experience in a conventional unit.



The 17th ASOS has its roots in the 507th Tactical Air Control Wing (507 TAIRCW). It was known as Operating Location–Alpha Bravo (OL-AB), 507th TAIRCW from Dec 1985 – Jan 1990. Between Jan 1990 and Jul 1994, the unit designation was Det 7, 18th ASOG. The 17th ASOS was constituted on 24 Jun 1994 and assigned to Air Combat Command (ACC) (AUTH: DAF/PE 643r Ltr, 24 Jun 1994). The unit was activated and assigned to the 18th ASOG on 1 Jul 1994 (AUTH: HQ ACC SO GB-80, 30 Jun 1994). Squadron initially was tasked to support the 75th Ranger Regiment, 3rd Ranger Battalion, and 3BDE/3ID. In 1998, the squadron gained the TACP flight aligned with 1st Ranger Battalion at Hunter AAF GA.

In Apr 2005, an organizational change request (OCR) was approved by HQ ACC and all special operations TACP within the 18th ASOG were consolidated under the 17th ASOS flag. Thus, two new OL's (operating locations) were added to the squadron: OL-B at Fort Bragg, NC (supporting USASOC, USASFC, and 3d and 7th Special Forces Groups), and OL-C at Fort Campbell, KY (supporting 5th Special Forces Group). Additionally, when the OCR was approved, it also chopped the conventional TACP supporting 3 BDE, 3 ID from the 17th ASOS to the 15th ASOS at Fort Stewart, GA. The 15th ASOS supports the rest of 3rd ID at Fort Stewart, GA.

In May 2008, another OCR was approved by HQ ACC and all remaining SOF TACP from the 5th ASOS were consolidated under the 17th ASOS flag. This included elements supporting the 2nd Ranger Battalion and the 1st Special Forces Group located at Ft Lewis WA. In October 2008, the 17th ASOS transferred to Air Force Special Operations Command and was aligned under the 720th Special Tactics Group. On 1 March 2011, Lt Gen Wurster (COMAFSOC) directed that the squadron's Special Forces operating locations be dissolved and that the personnel and TACP authorization be realigned under the conventional Special Tactics Squadrons. In Nov 2011, the squadron closed its final Special Forces operating location at Fort Carson CO, and became solely aligned to support the 75th Ranger Regiment.

The 17th ASOS has participated in Operation URGENT FURY (Grenada), Operation JUST CAUSE (Panama), Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM (Kuwait), Operation RESTORE HOPE (Somalia), Operations VIGILANT WARRIOR and DESERT FOX (Kuwait), Operation JOINT GUARDIAN (Kosovo), Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (Afghanistan), and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM/NEW DAWN (Iraq).

Unauthorized Streamers (Due to Lineage and Honors rules)

ARMED FORCES EXPEDITIONARY - 2

Grenada 1983

Panama 1989-1990

SOUTHWEST ASIA SERVICE - 3

Defense of Saudi Arabia 1990-1991

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait 1991

Southwest Asia Cease-Fire 1991-1995

Authorized Streamers

GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM - 2

Service

Expeditionary

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM 2001-Present

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM 2003-Present

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

Order GA-309 (1995) from 6/1/1993 to 5/31/1995

Order GA-088 (2001) from 6/1/1999 to 5/31/2001

Order GA-089 (2002) from 6/1/2001 to 5/31/2002

17th ASOS Commanders

Lt Col John Bush	Jul 1994 – Jun 1995
Lt Col Gerald E. Valentini (acting)	Jun 1995 – Sep 1995
Lt Col John F. Owens	Sep 1995 – Apr 1997
Lt Col Gerald E. Valentini	Apr 1997 – Aug 1998
Lt Col Keith P. Maresca	Aug 1998 – Aug 2000
Lt Col Donald D. Tharp	Aug 2000 – Jun 2002
Lt Col David B. Hume	Jun 2002 – Jul 2004
Lt Col James E. Fairchild	Jul 2004 – Jun 2006
Lt Col Thomas A. Bell	Jun 2006 – Jul 2008
Lt Col Christopher S. Cronk	Jul 2008 – Jun 2010
Lt Col Werner W. Keidel	Jun 2010 - Present

17th ASOS Superintendents

MSgt Gregory Moseley	Jul 1994 – Apr 1996
MSgt Martin S. Klukas	Apr 1996 – Jun 1996
MSgt Bruce E. Voight	Jul 1997 – Feb 2003
MSgt Mark J. Ericson	Feb 2003 – May 2005
MSgt Jason U. Quesenberry	May 2005 – Jul 2006
MSgt Eric J. Brandenburg Jr.	Jul 2006 – Mar 2008
SMSgt Matthew Schleich	Mar 2008 – Nov 2011
MSgt Adam Benson (acting)	Nov 2011 – Mar 2012

Notable Events

1983

25 Oct

Grenada Operation URGENT FURY

- Static-line Combat Jump on Point Salines Airfield, Grenada
 - 1st Ranger Battalion: Maj Jim Roper, Maj Marshall Applegate, TSgt Lance Heaton and TSgt Robert Scott

1989

20 Dec

Panama Operation JUST CAUSE (received Outstanding Unit w/Valor)

- Static-line Combat Jump on Torrijos-Tocumen Intl Airport, Panama
 - 1st Ranger Battalion: Maj Luck, Klukas, Cross and McKay
 - C Company, 3rd Ranger Battalion: TSgt Villela, SSgt Hanneken
 - Regt HQ: Maj Kolessar, (Airland insertion: SSgt Hochgraber)
- Static-line Combat Jump on Rio Hato Airfield, Panama
 - 3rd Ranger Battalion: Maj Logan, Capt Brelsford, SSgt Ericson, SSgt Kibby, SSgt Avants and SSgt Stangel

1991

Feb-Apr

Saudi Arabia and Iraq Operation DESERT STORM

- B Company, 1st Ranger Battalion: TSgt Klukas deployed to Ar Ar Saudi Arabia and conducted raids into Iraq

1993

3 Oct

Somalia Operation RESTORE HOPE

- B Company, 3rd Ranger Battalion: Task Force Ranger: SSgt Huneke

1994

1 Jul

17th ASOS activated (Lt Col John Bush commanding) and assigned to the 18th ASOG

Oct

A Flight deployed to Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR with 3 BDE/24 ID (26 personnel)

1995

Jan

B Flight deployed 18 personnel to JRTC with 75th RGR, 1/75, and 3/75 – integration of CAS significantly hampered OPFOR

Jun

Squadron Change of Command (Lt Col John Bush – Lt Col Jerry Valentini [interim])

Sep

Squadron Change of Command (Lt Col Jerry Valentini – Lt Col John Owens)

Oct

24rd ID retired and 3rd ID transferred from Germany to Ft Stewart GA – 3rd BDE designated 3BDE/3ID

Oct

18th ASOG DRAGON CHALLENGE: 17th ASOS teams sweep and squadron wins unit award

1996

Jan 17th ASOS Ranger Weather Officer transferred to AFSOC
Apr B Flight deployed to JRTC – “Best ever CAS employment”
Aug A Flight to NTC – Most successful integration of CAS ever – won 5 force-on-force and 1 live-fire battle as a direct result of CAS employment – subsequent change to NTC ROE (no more than 25% CAS effects)
Sep 18th ASOG DRAGON CHALLENGE: 17th ASOS teams win 1st, 2nd, and 4th places and the squadron wins the best unit award
Oct LIGHTNING CHALLENGE: B Flight personnel won 1st (SSgt Ford & SSgt Arserio) and 3rd place team Trophies, 1st and 2nd place individual trophies, and numerous individual event trophies. All three 17th ASOS teams placed in the top 5.

1997

Feb B Flight deployed 4 personnel to Key West, FL in support of COMJIATF6
Apr Squadron Change of Command (Lt Col John Owens - Lt Col Jerry Valentini)
Apr B Flight deployed to JRTC
Aug A Flight deployed to NTC – Validated capability of SADL, SOFLAM, and PRC-117F radio
Oct 18th ASOG DRAGON CHALLENGE: 17th ASOS teams win 1st, 3rd, 6th place and the squadron wins the best unit award for the 3rd straight year

1998

May Capt Sully (B Flight CC) participates and leads the 75th RGR Monga Dai
Aug Squadron Change of Command (Lt Col Jerry Valentini - Lt Col Keith Maresca)
Oct LIGHTNING CHALLENGE: 17th ASOS teams win 1st (O’Neill and Quesenberry) and 3rd (Lindsey and Welsh) places

1999

1999 3d BDE/3ID deploy to Operation DESERT FOX (w/TACP)
1999 TSgt Chris Gendron: DG at NCOA
2000-2002 17th ASOS had personnel deployed continuously to Kuwait as part of the 332nd EASOS

2000

Aug Squadron Change of Command (Lt Col Keith Maresca - Lt Col Don Tharp)
2000 TSgt Kenny Lindsey won John L. Levitow Award at NCO Academy
2000 TSgt Troy Lundquist: DG at NCOA

2001

10 Oct New 17th ASOS building dedicated; named after Capt Hilliard A. Wilbanks, a FAC in Vietnam who earned the Medal of Honor

TSgt Sean O'Neill won John L. Levitow Award at NCO Academy

BEGIN CONTINUOUS GWOT DEPLOYMENTS

2001

Oct-Dec

Afghanistan Operation ENDURING FREEDOM

3rd Ranger Battalion: Ferguson, O'Neill, Lindsey, Welsh, Sharack, Del Pego

75th Ranger Regiment: Tharp, Voight, Brandenburg

- Static-line Combat Jump Objective Rhino, Afghanistan on 19 Oct 2001
 - 3/75 (RHQ, HHC, C CO, A Co-): Ferguson, O'Neill, Welsh, Sharack

- Static-line Combat Jump DLS Bastogne, Afghanistan on 13 Nov 2001
 - 3/75 (B Co-): Del Pego
 - Brandenburg/Sharack deployed to Pakistan for 45 days to run a forward DLS

2002

Jan-Apr

1st Ranger Battalion deployed to OEF (Piccin, Vance, Hurst)

- SSgt Kevin Vance wounded on Roberts' Ridge; awarded Purple Heart for his actions

Jun

Squadron Change of Command (Lt Col Don Tharp - Lt Col Dave Hume)

Jul

TSgt Kevin Vance selected as one of the USAF 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Yr

2003

Jan

SSgt Kevin Vance awarded Silver Star Medal for actions on Roberts' Ridge.

Medal presented to him by CSAF (Gen John Jumper) in a ceremony at Hunter AAF, GA

Mar-Apr

Squadron personnel deploy to support 75th Ranger Regiment during OIF invasion

- 75th Ranger Regiment: Lt Col Hume, Killian, Ericson, Gendron, Muller
- 3rd Ranger Battalion: Capt Thompson, Brandenburg, Hankhouse, Otter, Del Pego, Joy, Case, Brooks, Foster
- 1st Ranger Battalion: Piccin, Lunquist, Hurst, Vance, Nugent, Martens, Sharack, Bickel
- RRD: O'Neill and Quesenberry

- Mar '03: Static-line Combat Jump onto DLS Roadrunner, Iraq
 - 3/75 (HHC / C Co): TSgt Brandenburg, SSgt Hankhouse, SSgt Brooks

- Mar '03: Static-line Combat Jump onto H1 Airfield, Iraq
 - 3/75 (HHC / A Co): Capt Thompson, SSgt Otter and SSgt Joy
 - First ever C-17 combat jump

- Battle for Haditha Dam (TSgt Brandenburg, SSgt Case)

- Rescue of POW PVT Jessica Lynch
 - 1st Ranger Battalion: Hurst, Vance and Sharack
- TSgt Quesenberry awarded Purple Heart

Oct C Flight, Weather mission changed to civilian contract with 17th ASOS oversight
 Dec TSgt Mark Hurst won John L. Levitow Award at NCO Academy graduation

2004

Feb TSgt Eric Brandenburg won John L. Levitow Award at NCO Academy
 Feb Capt Germann named Distinguished Graduate at Squadron Officer's School
 May Work begun on OCR to incorporate Special Forces TACP (subordinate to 18th ASOG) at Ft Bragg NC and Ft Campbell KY into 17th ASOS as OL-B and OL-C.
 May TSgt Hurst wounded awarded Purple Heart

Jul-Oct RRD Team 3 (Quesenberry) deployed to OEF

- MFF Combat Jump onto OBJ Tillman in OEF (TSgt Quesenberry)

Jul Squadron Change of Command (Lt Col Dave Hume - Lt Col Jim Fairchild)
 Dec TSgt Eric Brandenburg, TSgt Jason Quesenberry, and SSgt Thomas Case were each presented with the Silver Star Medal by SECAF (Dr. James G. Roche) for their actions in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM

Dec TSgt Ed Shulman finished 2nd overall at 18th ASOG's DRAGON CHALLENGE

2005

Jan MSgt Knipe selected as one of the USAF 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year
 Apr 05: OCR approved and OL-B and OL-C formally established as part of 17 ASOS
 May-Aug RRD Team 2 (Brandenburg) deployed to OEF

- Team 2(Brandenburg) tasked to rescue/recover survivor of SEAL recon team and recover SEAL Team 10 personnel from helicopter crash site

Jun TSgt Schleich awarded Purple Heart/Levitow winner at NCOA
 Aug TSgt Astrauskas awarded Purple Heart

2006

Apr-Jun 3/75 OEF #6 (Cox, Foster, Gavulic) OIF #6 (Laliberte, Douglas, Ozbek, Muhly, Newman, Bocoock)

- Foster injured during Fast Rope infil (Broken Back)

Jun 06: Squadron Change of Command (Lt Col Fairchild - Lt Col Bell)

2007

Feb TSgt Hodges awarded Purple Heart
 Jun TSgt Valentine awarded Purple Heart

2008

Jan TSgt Covell selected as one of the USAF 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year and AFSA NCO of the Year
 Jun TSgt Woodring awarded Purple Heart

July Squadron change of command (Lt Col Bell – Lt Col Cronk)
Sep TSgt Woodring selected as the USAF Lance P. Sijan award winner
Oct 17th ASOS transitions to AFSOC as a squadron under the 720th STG

2009

Apr TSgt Bickel Awarded Purple Heart
May TSgt Benson recognized as DG and Academic Award winner @ NCOA
Jul TSgt Douglas (RRT 2) performs night combat HAHO jump in Afghanistan

2010

Jan SrA Cordero on raid that kills #1 and #2 AQI leaders in OIF
Jun Squadron Change of Command, (Lt Col Cronk – Lt Col Keidel)
Jul TSgt Hoover recognized as a DG @ NCOA
Sept SSgt Jakubowski wounded in OEF (16 Sept 2010)
Oct TSgt Hoover receives an Air Commando Association Leadership Award
Nov Capt George and SSgt Gunnell selected as 2010 AFSOC ALO /TACP of the Year

2011

Mar Capt George and SSgt Gunnell selected as 2010 USAF ALO/TACP of the Year
Jun Capt George selected for AFSOC ACA Leadership Award
Jun SSgt Jakubowski selected as 1 of 18 CSAF Portraits in Courage winners
Aug SSgt Truman Smith and TSgt Stewart Ferguson involved in the recovery of a
downed CH-47 and the loss of a SEAL assault force (38 FKIA)
Nov Sqdn's last Special Force OL (operating location) closes at Ft Carson CO. Sqdn
becomes solely aligned to support the 75th Ranger Regiment
Nov SMSgt Schleich (superintendent) retires, and MSgt Adam Benson becomes the
acting sqdn superintendent.
Dec Maj David Jones selected as the 2011 AFSOC ALO of the Year
Dec SSgt Matthew Davis presented with a BSM with Valor

2012

Jan SSgt Jordan Jakubowski presented with a BSM with Valor
Feb SSgt David Carden presented with a BSM with Valor

Silver Star Recipients

MSgt Stamey
SSgt Tomat
SSgt Vance
TSgt Brandenburg
TSgt Quesenberry
SSgt Case
SSgt Covell

Purple Heart Recipients

SSgt Vance
TSgt Quesenberry
TSgt Hurst
TSgt Schleich
TSgt Astrauskas
TSgt Hodges
TSgt Valentine
TSgt Woodring
TSgt Garrison
TSgt Bickel
TSgt Astrauskas

SSgt Jakubowski
TSgt Hoover

Major Awards Total

Silver Stars: 7

Purple Hearts: 13

Bronze Stars w/Valor: 75

12 OAY: 2

NCOA John L. Levitow Award Winners: 6