

Both have accompanied the cargo on several flights.

“The first flight was crucial to establishing our credibility,” said Jobe. “Within 24 hours of the cargo getting on the ground, a company of Apache helicopters was made combat-ready with the parts we brought.

“We also returned with battle-damaged aircraft and ten pallets of cargo. The retrograde helps us keep our lines operating so we can repair and refurbish material and provide it back to the field,” Jobe said.

Lovell accompanied the first flight last year. “We took a large load of blades,” he said. “When we were met in Balad by the Theater Aviation Single Manager, we were jokingly referred to as Santa Claus showing up with a sled load of spare parts.” Lovell said Corpus Christi employees have steadily increased the efficiency of the processes, and are continuing to fine-tune the operation.

When the material arrives in Balad, AMCOM’s Theater Aviation Single Manager oversees its distribution to the forward-based units by C-130, Chinook or ground convoys. The flights are scheduled in advance, so the TASM works with units to schedule quick pickup and delivery of the parts and upload of the retrograde items. The AMCOM Express plane sits on the ground in Balad only about four hours before it begins its return flight to Corpus Christi.

The engine, transmission and blade shops are working extended shifts, according to Army Col. Timothy Sassenrath, Corpus Christi Army Depot commander. “These are the high priority items that ground the helicopters,” he said. “I would like a more steady line of retrograde to repair and return. I need to have assets returned from theater to keep our lines working smoothly so we can continue to support our soldiers.”

When space on the plane allows, employees of Corpus Christi organizations provide unofficial “care” packages for units. “We control the contents and numbers of packages,” said Lovell. “We include toothpaste,

toothbrushes, sunscreen and other basic, simple items.”

“Our employees are very proud of America’s soldiers and by helping them get parts quickly we know we have a direct impact on their lives,” said Sassenrath. “It takes a team to make this program a success, and we have a great team.”

The AMCOM Express program is managed for the command by the Integrated Materiel Management Center.

Parachute Riggers Conduct Airborne Operation

By Sherre Mitten-Bell, DDSP Public Affairs

It’s believed we are born with the fear of falling, so it isn’t surprising that jumping out of airplanes doesn’t appeal to everyone. There are some who do it for the adrenaline rush, the thrill of living on the edge.

However, for the Defense Distribution Depot Susquehanna, PA (DDSP) Parachute Riggers, it’s a part of their job and necessary in order to maintain their proficiency status as parachute riggers. Jumping with the airdrop equipment systems they maintain facilitates an understanding that can’t be taught from a book.

On occasion, riggers are required to perform test jumps with parachutes that were recently repaired to determine the system’s “Air Worthiness.” These are just a few of the reasons why the Riggers conducted an Airborne Operation at Capitol City Airport in New Cumberland, PA, in June.

The DDSP Army “jumpers” were SSG Michael Morris, SGT Randolph Policar, SGT Eri Ramos, and SGT Anthony Penson, who were joined by SFC Mark Hearn, Integrated Logistics Support Center, Natick, MA, and SFC Chris Rafuse, 104th Infantry Detachment LRSD. CW3 Kevin Wood performed the final jumpmaster gear inspection before the group boarded the plane.

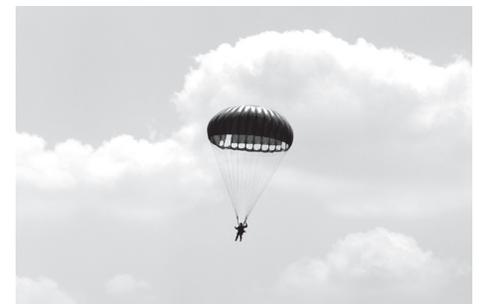
The C-130 made two passes so that

the five could perform routine static line proficiency jumps from 1,250 feet above ground. Weather conditions were ideal this day, assuring that they would avoid hazards such as trees, fences, and golfers from the adjacent Riverview Golf course, and successfully land on the DZ, or drop zone.

Airborne Riggers have to maintain jump status in order to stay current as a Rigger. The minimum requirement is one jump every three months after training as a Paratrooper.



Jumper's board a C-130 plane during the DDSP Airborne Operation.



Paratrooper descends to drop zone.

The Airborne Rigger is the only Military Occupation Specialty (MOS) 92R in the Army in which you have to stay current and on airborne status in order to keep your position. “A Paratrooper is so well trained that the fear of falling is replaced with sheer anticipation. You can’t wait to make your first jump,” said CW3 Wood.

“I will be sure always!” is their motto.” Airborne Riggers will go beyond the minimum standard of once a quarter to at least once a month or more to ensure they stay very fluent with not only the complexities of airborne operations but also with how personnel parachute systems react to a live deployment.

After all, jumping out of an airplane is a very unnatural act. The simple fact that riggers jump with their own parachutes instills confidence throughout the entire airborne community. “Lives depend on our expertise, so we make all attempts to stay at the top of our game,” said CW3 Wood.

The Riggers are assigned to DDSP’s Air Delivery and Textile section. The section’s workforce is comprised of 21 multi-functional civilians and eight military riggers.

The section’s mission is multi-purpose – the combined workforce inspects repairs, modifies, packs, stores, and issues Federal Stock Class (FSC) 1670 Aerial Delivery Equipment (ADE) and related items for the Department of Defense (DOD). They manage five separate operational sections that provide contingency cargo parachute re-pack, depot-level ADE repair, military free fall and static line airdrop, warehouse operations, and the manufacturing of aircraft acoustical blankets for the Air Mobility Command (AMCOM).

The Riggers also serve as advisors to other agencies on the status of depot aerial delivery assets reserved for war contingency and training.

The DDSP Parachute Riggers are an elite group of individuals who provide technical knowledge of all airborne units and their equipment. They are the only group of Parachute Riggers assigned to DLA.



Left to right, back row: Army Airborne Riggers CW3 Kevin Wood, SFC Mark Hearn (ILSC, Natick), SSG Michael Morris, SGT Randolph Policar, and SGT Anthony Penson. Front Row: SGT Eri Ramos and SFC Chris Rafuse (104th Infantry Detachment LRSD).

Contingency training great tool for supporting Warfighters

By Jose Abreu, DDC Reserve Affairs and Mobilization Office

Designed to provide designated personnel deployed with troops in an active theater of operations with the information necessary to represent DLA, the Materiel Management Contingency Training (MMCT) has proved once again to be a great training course.

“MMCT is the single best way to begin working in the world of DLA logistics. The curriculum, the degree of difficulty and the duration are perfect. The instructor’s knowledge and enthusiasm make the logistics learning experience fun and rewarding,” said LCDR “Rope” Burns, DLA Customer Support Representative in Iraq and Commanding Officer of Defense Distribution Center (DDC) Navy Reserve Unit DDYJ1 from Sioux Falls, SD.

The course includes an in-depth description of requisition processing at retail and wholesale levels of supply. MMCT focuses on sources of requisitioning and delivery of information available to DLA representatives, including how to interpret and apply the information to the solution of logistical problems that could inhibit combat operations.

“The students have been exposed to a myriad of systems that they would not normally encounter in their normal duty assignments and are now ‘Super Commodity Expeditors.’ All in a very short period of time,” said Pat Calhoun, instructor of the MMCT from the DLA Training Center.

Although the bulk of instruction deals with how DLA provides repair parts, the course covers all types of supply items managed and delivered by DLA to include clothing, medical supplies, subsistence, and fuels.

“This class compresses about a month of instruction into a week’s time frame.

It requires diligence, attention to detail and homework to prepare them for the ‘big test in the sky’ when they are actually down range shoulder to shoulder with the Warfighters,” said Calhoun.

“The MMCT class was extremely well prepared with hands-on sessions, allowing us to comprehend the lessons. Good use of repetition was used to ingrain the concepts. We enjoyed Pat Calhoun,” said SKC Ronald Scheaffer, Executive Officer, NR DDC Detachment A-106.

Attendance to MMCT is limited to those persons nominated for deployment with a DLA Contingency Support Team (DCST). To learn more about DCST, please contact the DDC Reserve Affairs & Mobilization Office at (717)770-6166 or DDC.Mobilization@dla.mil.



Students attend a week-long DLA Materiel Management Contingency Training (MMCT) course.

