



Ramstein bids farewell to the 38th EAS

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8/21/2010 - **RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany** – Airmen of the 38th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron reflect on a legacy of outstanding service as they prepare for the unit's inactivation Sept. 15.

More commonly known as "Delta Squadron," the unit began in Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England. In response to an increased demand for airlift missions to the Balkan region, the unit was moved to Rhein-Main, Germany, in 1990, and by 1994, had found its home here at Ramstein.

"We provide extra airlift capability to reduce the strain on the active-duty folks who support not only U.S. Air Forces in Europe, but Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom as well," said Tech. Sgt. Kevin Merritt, 38th EAS C-130 Hercules flight engineer. "I also really enjoyed the opportunity to support the U.S. Africa Command mission while I was at Ramstein. They gave me the chance to not only see parts of Africa I had not seen before, but challenged me as a flyer."

The 38th EAS is unique in the 86th Operations Group, as it is comprised of personnel from a variety of Guard and Reserve units. Currently, the squadron consists largely of personnel from the 910th Airlift Wing at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio. Their focus is to provide mission-ready forces, airlift operations and base support.

"As an expeditionary unit made of Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard personnel, we have done an exemplary job of practicing the concept of total force," said Maj. Joseph George, 38th EAS director of operations. "We are a small unit that supports a vast stretch of land with only three crews and two aircraft."

With short missions lasting anywhere from one to 16 days, members of the 38th EAS keep very busy, supporting Ramstein's commitments to U.S. European Command, AFRICOM and USAFE.

"In the past, this has been a 'win-win' situation for both Team Ramstein and the reservists," said Maj. Gary Dodge, 38th EAS commander. "Team Ramstein gets additional aircraft to relieve some of the flying strain on the active-duty squadron, while the rotational squadrons from the Guard and Reserve get valuable experience flying in Europe and Africa, something they cannot get stateside."

While at Ramstein, the squadron was instrumental to the success of Operations Joint Endeavor, Joint Force, Allied Force, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Since 2005, the unit has logged more than 14,000 flying hours, carrying nearly 13,500 tons of cargo to various locations.

Along with providing medical supplies and aid when needed, the 38th EAS has also supported several other major events, such as various NASA missions, and flight requests for the 65th anniversary of D-Day in Normandy, France.

"I am a traditional reservist and have been here for Operation Enterprise [formerly called Joint Forge] six times," Major Dodge said. "Each time I have been here, I've been surrounded by great men and women from my unit who are very good at what they do. This translates into mission success for Team Ramstein."

The success witnessed at Ramstein is not only thanks to active-duty members stationed here long term but also to the Guard and Reserve members who are stationed here temporarily.

"Since the 86th became an airlift wing, Guard and Reserve service, in Delta and later the 38th EAS, has been absolutely critical to accomplishing our mission," said Col. Tim Budd, 86th OG commander.



The 38th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron pose for a group photo on the flightline, Ramstein Air Base, Germany, Aug. 11, 2010. The squadron, which is made up of Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard personnel, will end their tour here on 15 Sept. after more than 20 years in Germany. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Tony R. Ritter)