

4-3rd ADA Air Load Training

Capt. Corey Robertson, 31st ADA PAO

FORT SILL, Okla.- 4th Battalion, 3rd Air Defense Artillery Regiment, 31st ADA Brigade, trained for their assumption of a Contingency Expeditionary Force mission later this year. Their latest training objective was to certify their air load teams. To accomplish this task they convoyed with over 30 pieces of equipment to Altus Air Force Base for some hands-on training.

Altus Air Force Base is home to the 97th Operational Support Squadron, which is part of the 97th Air Mobility Wing. One of their jobs is to instruct personnel on the proper loading, securing and un-loading of equipment on the C-17 aircraft. On occasion, the squadron facilitates joint training with the U.S. Army to teach Soldiers proper loading, tie-down and un-loading procedures.

Tech Sgt Donnie McCorkle, a loadmaster in the 97th Operational Support Squadron, was eager and very happy to assist in the training.

“This has been great, and this is awesome for us to do the real hands-on loading process. We are keeping our proficiency and the Soldiers are getting training which is a great way to enhance the relationship between the Army and Air Force,” McCorkle said.

For new Soldiers straight out of Advanced Individual Training, this was their first chance to get this sort of hands-on-training.

“This is giving me the basic knowledge I need of loading my equipment which I haven’t learned yet, this isn’t something you learn in AIT,” said Pfc. Nicholas Murray of D Battery.

“This partnership is great; they have resource we don’t, so being able to rely on one another helps both branches work together.”

Sgt. Kanon Bouldin of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 4-3rd ADA, said, “This training allows Soldiers straight out of AIT to see the whole process of deploying not only themselves, but their equipment as well.”

The commander of C Battery, Capt. Michael Savageau, stressed the importance of this training in regards to overall mission readiness. “This training is going very well so far, I feel it is

beneficial to the air load teams and the Soldiers. The convoy operations to Altus from Fort Sill were great as well.”

“This gives them the appreciation of maintaining their equipment and knowing the importance of keeping it mission ready.”

Overall the air load training was a beneficial event with both the Army and Air Force gaining the experience and training needed to maintain and increase their levels of proficiency.

“The Air Force and Army work well together because we both benefit from this type of event. They facilitate this training but they also get training of their own,” said Sgt. 1st Class Tony Coleman, A Battery.

As a part of the expeditionary force, the battalion could be ordered to rapidly deploy around the globe.

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0084: Tech Sgt. Nate Griesinger a Loadmaster with 97th OSS instructs Spc. Jonathan Rodriguez, D Battery 4-3rd ADA, on the proper tie-down procedures inside the C-17 aircraft (Photo by Staff Sgt. Nathan Akridge).

0105: A loadmaster ground-guides a Patriot Missile Launcher System into a C-17 aircraft at Altus Air Force Base (Photo by Staff Sgt. Nathan Akridge).

0158: The 4-3rd ADA conducts convoy operations from Fort Sill to Altus Air Force Base.