HUMANITARIAN AIRLIFT OPERATIONS IN WHICH USAF PARTICIPATED SINCE 1994
Preliminary list compiled by Dr. Daniel L. Haulman,
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Partially Updated November 2006

2 Jul 1992-9 Jan 1996, Europe, Operation Provide Promise to Bosnia/Herzegovina
longest sustained humanitarian airlift in history.
Short of War book
Air Force Times, 24 Apr 1995, p. 22
100 Years of Flight
Shaw and Warnock chronology

Continued since Humanitarian Airlift book.

10 Sep 1994-3 Mar 1995, Latin America, Panama, Operation Safe Haven
(Humanitarian Service Medal awards)

Humanitarian Service Medal awarded for service members providing humanitarian assistance during this operation.
(Humanitarian Service Medal awards)

1995, January 19, Pacific, Japan, earthquake at Kobe. 17 Jan earthquake hit. 374 AW C-130s delivered relief supplies.
Air Force Times, Jan 1995
Montgomery Advertiser, 26 Jan 1995, p. 13A
Shaw and Warnock chronology

1995, 1-20 Feb, Operation Safe Passage, after riots at Cuban refugee camps in Panama
7,300 Cubans to Guantanamo by air. “assisting Cuban refugees, Panama, Feb 1995.

1995, 16 March, Iceland blizzard 56 Rescue Squadron
AF Times, 3 Apr 1995, p. 2

1995, spring?, Latin America, relief supplies to Paraguay, C-5 of 433 AW
Air Force Magazine, Apr 1995

1995, spring?, Latin America, relief supplies to Haiti, C-130 of 911 AW
Air Force Magazine, Apr 1995
1995, 19 April-3 May, North America, Oklahoma City bombing on 19 Apr airlift of personnel, equipment, supplies, from all over USA to Oklahoma see list of Humanitarian Service Medal operations
Airman, June 1995, pp. 6-7
(Humanitarian Service Medal awards)
Shaw and Warnock chronology

1995, April. Aid for Ukraine. Part of Operation Provide Hope?
Air Force Times, 24 Apr 1995, p. 2

1995, April. Aid for Mongolia.

1995, 8-11 May, North America, Louisiana floods after 22+ inches of rain in 2 days. Air National Guard units rescued thousands of flood victims.
Air Force Times, 22 May 1995, p. 16.
Shaw and Warnock chronology, p. 156.

1995, 10-17 May, Africa, Ebola virus epidemic in Zaire, central Africa. 349 AMW C-141 and 60 AW C-5. C-141 delivered more than a ton of medical supplies, including 2,000 face masks, 300 body bags, 2,000 caps, 4,000 examination gloves, 2,100 disposable boots, 200 units of plasma, 2,000 disposable gowns.
Air Force Times, 29 May 1995, p. 18
Air Force Mag, Jul 1995, p. 30
Shaw and Warnock chronology.

(Humanitarian Service Medal awards)

1995, 13 Jun-17 Oct, East Asia, Vladivostok, Russia Russia Relief Operation


1995, 23 July. Relief supplies to Byelorussia (part of Provide Hope?) 433 AW C-5
Shaw and Warnock chronology

1995, 13, 20-21 Aug. Relief supplies to war victims in Croatia. 60 AMW. C-5s.
Shaw and Warnock chronology

1995, August, North America, Hurricane Erin, Pensacola, Florida


Air Force News Service, message 1043, 19 Sep 1995

100 Years of Flight chronology
Shaw and Warnock chronology

1995, 16 Sep-31 Oct, or 15 Sep-21 Sep, Latin America, Hurricane Marilyn, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico
or 15-21 Sep 1995. C-17s from Charleston, C-130s from 908 AW (Maxwell AFB) flew humanitarian missions to Caribbean Sea islands.

Air Force Times, 2 Oct 1995, pp. 16-18
Airman, Dec 1995, pp. 11-15


100 Years of Flight chronology
Shaw and Warnock chronology, The Cold War and Beyond, p. 156

1995, 4-13 October, Hurricane Opal relief, North America, Alabama, Florida

Airman, Dec 1995, p. 19


1995, October or November, Pacific, Typhoon Angela, Philippines


1996, February, Costa Rica Flood. 2 UH-60s, 2 CH-47s. (USAF?)


USAFE contributed three KC-135s, two C-130s, medical teams. Evacuation of 2000 noncombatants from Liberia. US citizens and third-country nationals. Civil war between followers of Roosevelt Johnson and Charles Taylor. 9 April, President Clinton ordered US forces to evacuate US citizens and third-country nationals. US security personnel deployed to Monrovia same day. *Soldiers*, Jul 1996, pp. 4-5

352 or 353 SOG, 100 ARW, 11 ARW, 86 AW, 60 AMW, 62 AW, 305 AMW, 436 AW, 437 AW, 7, 21, 67, Special Operations Squadrons, 321 Sp Tactics Sq. MH-53s, MC-130s, AC-130s, HC-130s, KC-135s, KC-10s, C-5s, C-141s, C-130s, C-17s. Other source says operation began 8 April. *AF Times*, 22 Apr 1996, p. 3; *Airman*, July 1996, p. 24. AFNS.

Shaw and Warnock chronology
List of “Recent USAFE Continencies,” from USAFE/HO


1996, late Aug. Western forest fires. AFR and ANG. C-130s. 302 AW, 146 AW dispensed 3,000 gallons of water and fire retardant at a time. “The Enemy is At Ground Zero” by William Matthews. 302 AW, 2 C-130s from Peterson AFB, CO; 146 AW, 2 C-130s from Channel Islands ANGB, CA). 6 fires in N. California. Missions from Redding, CA airport. Late Aug 1996. Aircraft dropped retardant while flying 150 knots at 150 feet. By Aug 29, over 5 million acres in West had burned. 2 C-130s from 302 AW, Peterson AFB, CO; 2 C-130s from 146 AW, Channel Islands ANGB, CA. *AF Times*, 16 Sep 1996, pp. 2, 18.

1996, 4 Sep. Burundi Evacuation. Civil war there. One USAF C-141 evacuated 30 people (from 9 nations, including USA) and their household goods from Burundi to Nairobi, Kenya; delivered equipment (generator, medical supplies, diplomatic papers) and 2 passengers to Bujumbura, Burundi. Plane from 305 AMW at McGuire AFB, NJ. Evacuees to Nairobi, Kenya. Crisis: Burundi civil war. *AF Times*, 16 Sep 1996, p. 2


1997, Jan. **humanitarian cargo to Cancun, Mexico** for Mayans of Yucatan. 40,000 pounds of cargo to construct clinic. Mission of Love non-profit group from
Youngstown, OH organized the donations. 911 AW C-130; 913 AW C-130. Denton Amendment airlift. AF News Agency e-mail, 3 Feb 1997.

1997, Jan 29. **Airlift to Warsaw, Poland.** Medical equipment and supplies, food, educational material. 911 AW. One C-130. Donations from sister city of Hazelton, PA. AFR. 13,000 pounds. AFNS e-mail, 3 Feb 1997.


1997, March 17-5 Jun. **Operation Guardian Retrieval.** Evacuation of non-combatants from Zaire, or at least deployment for that purpose.

1997, April 7-June 3. **Flood relief for victims of Red River of the North** flood, N and S Dakota, Minnesota. AMC airlift. 50 power generators, 900 sleeping bags, 4,000 blankets, 90 pallets of Red Cross supplies. FEMA satellite communications personnel, medical teams from WA, CA, to Grand Forks AFB, ND. AF News Service, 30 Apr 1997.


AFNS, 27 May 1998.


1997, 26 Sep. Italian earthquake. USAF engineers from Aviano AB and Camp Darby helped. 31 CES. 31 Red Horse Flight. Assisi area. Any airlift?


gusts. 236 mph wind gust reported (new record). Sea up to 35 feet above normal. President Clinton declared Guam a federal disaster area. Air Force airlifted 2.7 million pounds of relief supplies on 45 relief flights to Guam as of 4 Jan 1998. C-5s carried power crews and bucket trucks from California to Guam. C-5 carried FEMA team to Guam. Relief supplies to FEMA’s Emergency Reaction Team Alpha (50 members). 36 ABW affected. 236 mph wind gust new record. 150 mph sustained winds. 5 C-5s. C-130s, KC-135s, KC-10s, C-141s. one civilian-contracted Boeing 747. generators, transformers, utility trucks, telephone poles, medical supplies, chain saws, cots. Estimated 1,700 people homeless. Paka destroyed 3,000 homes. (contradiction?) sea up to 35 feet above normal. USAF C-5 transported FEMA team to Guam. 50 persons. President Clinton declared Guam a federal disaster area. As of 30 Dec 1997, USAF and Coast Guard aircraft flew 163,000 pounds of FEMA supplies to Andersen AFB, Guam.


PACAF News Service; AFNS, 8 Jan 1998.


1997, Dec 30-Jan 4, 1998. Operation Haydrop. Airlift of feet to stranded cattle snowbound after blizzard. New Mexico. More than 50,000 pounds of feed. 25,000 cattle had died because of winter storms. Request from New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson. 22 inches of snow had closed highways. Bales of hay dropped. 180,000 cattle stranded without food. Five ANG C-130s. New Mexico. ANG units from OK, TX, WY 137 Airlift Wing from OK, lead unit; 3 aircraft, over 50 people. 2 aircraft from 136 Airlift Wing from Dallas, TX. and 153 Airlift Wing, Cheyenne, WY.


1998, January. **Blizzard** relief, Maine, New York, and Canada. Ice storm. AMC. C-17s from 437 AW, Charleston AFB; C-5s from 436 AW, Dover AFB. 106 Rescue Wing (NY ANG) MH-60 used. AMC delivered supplies to Maine after ice storm there on 7 Jan. to Montreal (437 AW) C-17. Ice storm hit 7 Jan.


1998, May. **Floods and landslides** in Ecuador. 251 dead, 59 missing. 24 WG in Panama (Howard AFB) took supplies (wheelbarrows and plastic sheeting) from Quito to N. coast. Manabi region. Also from Guayaquil. Medicines, mattresses, bananas. 10 May, flew wheelbarrows and plastic sheeting from Quito to Menabi. 11 May flew medicines, mattresses, bananas, from Guayaquil to region. Some air-dropping of bananas. Floods and mudslides from 6 months of rain washed out roads. USAF used seven small C-27A cargo planes because of small airfields. El Nino weather. 24 Operations Group. Some air-dropping of bananas. SSgt John B. Dendy IV, 24 Wing Public Affairs.


AFNS, 27 May 1998.


AFNS, 6 Jul 1998.

1998, July 2-5. **Florida forest fires.** AMC airlift. C-5s. airlift of fire fighters and equipment. 13 missions from March AFB and Travis AFB, CA, and Klamath Falls, OR, and Ellsworth AFB, SD. To Patrick AFB, FL, and NAS Jacksonville. 65 fire trucks airlifted; 7 brush trucks. Two C-141s, South Dakota to Florida 4 Jul weekend. 68 Airlift Squadron. 1,900 fires. 450,000 acres burned. Since 2 Jul 1998, when FEMA asked AMC help. C-5 from Travis to Jacksonville 4 July. First of a series of C-5 and C-141 flights. Tanker Airlift Control Center. 12 missions. 300 passengers, 740 tons of firefighting equipment. Last aircraft landed 5 July. 721 TACE from McGuire AFB, NJ supervised movement of equipment at Jacksonville.


1998, mid-late July, **Tsunami, Papua New Guinea.** 8 Airlift Squadron. One C-141. 20,000 pounds. Medical supplies, water, tents, cots, plastic sheeting. Guam to New Guinea. Australian C-130s took supplies from airport to flooded area. Tsunami hit 17 July.


1998, Operation Keiko Lift. USAF C-17 of 15 Airlift Squadron (Charleston AFB, SC) airlifted killer whale Keiko from Newport, Oregon, to Vestmannaeyjar airport in Westman Islands, Iceland. 9-hour flight. 81,000 lbs. total cargo, including 9,050 pounds of whale. Return to his native waters. For Free Willy Keiko Foundation, which paid cost. Whale had been in Free Willy movie. Airman, Nov 1998, p. 11.


908 AW C-130 flying relief supplies from Gulfport, MS to Honduras for Hurricane Mitch victims. Weekend of 27-29 Nov, two C-130s from 357 Airlift Squadron flew supplies to Soto Cono AB and Goloson IAP at La Ceiba, Honduras. 25,000 lbs. of rice and flour. Second flight delivered 28,000 lbs. food, water, medical supplies, clothing, building supplies. AFR crews flew more than 100 trips to Central America between Nov 6 and 24, delivered more than 6 million pounds of cargo for Hurricane Mitch victims. Montgomery Advertiser, Dec 5, 1998.


1999, 3 or 4 April-June. **Operation Shining Hope (Sustain Hope).** Humanitarian counterpart of Operation Allied Force. Relief airlift for Kosovo refugees who had fled from Serbia to Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro. Joint Task Force SHINING HOPE was activated 3 April 1999. Lead elements deployed to Tirana, Albania. Maj Gen William Hinton, Third Air Force commander, provided humanitarian assistance to 750,000 Kosovar refugees in Albania and Macedonia, who fled ethnic cleansing. AF History and Museum Program aerospace heritage slide.


1999, May. Oklahoma tornado relief. (also Kansas and Texas?)


1999, 18 August-10 September. *Operation Avid Response*. After earthquake at Izmit, Turkey, East of Istanbul. Turkey asked UN for 45,000 body bags.


1999, December-January 2000. Relief for *flood* victims in *Venezuela*


2000, Oct. airlift of victims of terrorist attack on USS Cole.

2001, 31 Jan-1 February. Relief for earthquake victims in India. C-5s, C-17s, KC-135s. supplies from California to Guam to India. Earthquake hit 26 Jan. Two USAF C-5 aircraft missions 31 Jan and 1 Feb after six-person communications, logistics, and medical support team from US Pacific Command flew in to assess needs. Loads: a 2.2-ton truck, two forklifts, two 400-gallon water trailers, 10,000 blankets, 1,500 sleeping bags, 92 large tents. C-5s landed in Guam, transferred cargo to smaller transports that continued to Ahmadabad in heart of disaster zone. Source: Air Force Magazine, April 2001, p. 18.

2001, 12 Apr. Operation Valiant Return. Airlift of U.S. military personnel who had been held by China after airplane collision and forced landing. After having been moved from China to Guam, they were flown from Guam to Hawaii by US military aircraft.


C-17s airdropped 2.5 million daily rations, almost 21,000 55-pound sacks of wheat, over 41,000 blankets on 198 missions between 7 Oct and 21 Dec 2001.

7 Oct-21 Dec 2001, C-17 airdrops on missions over Afghanistan from Ramstein AB, Germany. 2.44 million daily rations, 42,000 blankets, 21,000 55-pound sacks of flour. 161 packages by tri-wall air delivery system (TRIADS) and 36 packages by container delivery system (CDS)


Lt Col John Zazworsky commanded 437 Expeditionary Airlift Squadron at Ramstein AB, Germany during Oct 7-Dec 21, 2001 C-17 airdrops over Afghanistan. To honor end of Ramadan on Dec 16, dates dropped in container delivery system (CDS), although most previous airdrops were by TRIADS. Total delivery more than 3,800 tons.


Problems with airdrops: packages landing on people, color of food packages like unexploded ordnance, food packages landing in mined areas where people going to get food endangered.

2002, 13 June. Colorado Fires. 90,000 acres had burned southwest of Denver. Reached within 10 miles of Denver metropolitan area, forcing evacuations. Four C-130s, two from 302 Air Wing of AFR, two from 145 Air Wing of NC ANG. Flew out of Peterson AFB, Colorado Springs, CO. National Forest Service’s National Interagency Fire Center requested the C-130s.


2002, December, relief for victims of Typhoon Pongsona in Guam 58 C-5 missions to Andersen AFB. From Travis AFB, CA. 1,200 tons of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) equipment and supplies after storm hit
8 December. C-5s also flew 45 people (family members) from Guam to California to stay temporarily while recovery efforts on Guam continued. “Air Force Supports Relief Mission in Guam,” 17 Dec 2002 news release from Air Force Print News Today.


2004, Summer, Relief for victims of Hurricane Charley, Florida


2004, early September. **Hurricane Frances.** Florida.


2004, October-. **Sudan Airlift.** 322 Air Expeditionary Group staged out of Rwanda for African Union. C-130 flew from Nigeria with 40 troops and 3,000 pounds of equipment for El-Fashir airstrip in Darfur region of Sudan. To help lessen severity of humanitarian crisis in Darfur, where nearly 50,000 people have been killed and more than 1.5 million have lost their homes in recent months. Source: Code One Magazine, vol. 20, no. 1, First Quarter, 2005.

2004, October. **Afghanistan Food Drops.** Since Oct 2004, USAF aircraft dropped more than 2.1 million pounds of aid throughout Afghanistan. Many of the missions were flown by C-130 aircraft. The cargo included not only food but also blankets. The supplies aided poor people who were often isolated because of snow-blocked roads in mountain areas.


2004, November-December **Philippines typhoons.** Flooding.

30-foot waves moved at speeds up to 500 miles per hour as far as 3,000 miles. More than 150,000 dead. Millions homeless. Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka. 105 Airlift Wing (NY ANG), C-5, carried HH-60 helicopter of 33 Rescue Squadron from Stewart airport. Dispatched 31 Dec 2004. C-5 airlifted supplies from Kadena AFB, Japan, to Sri Lanka and Thailand. C-5 commander Maj Patrick Lasella. Volunteer aircrews. CH-46s transported for search and rescue teams for finding survivors. C-5 also carried water purification equipment. Last Stewart C-5 returned 24 Jan 2005. 105 Airlift Wing members flew 35 sorties, transported 553 passengers. Airlifted more than 1.8 million pounds of cargo. 105 Airlift Wing news release
(http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/ang/105/news/tsunami.htm)
AF Association news, “Tsunami Relief Efforts,” from Air Force Association AFA update sent from service@afa.org on 9 Jan 2005.


THE US AIR FORCE RESPONSE TO HURRICANE KATRINA

Dr. Daniel L. Haulman
14 November 2006

Media images of destitute flood victims in New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina generated the impression of an unresponsive federal government. Many critics blamed local or state governments, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the Department of Homeland Security of which it had become a part. Some also criticized the Department of Defense as if it had failed to furnish the quick and massive humanitarian relief which the American people had come to expect after a natural disaster. After all, Pentagon resources were stretched thin because of ongoing combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan on the other side of the world. This paper will explore the validity of that impression by focusing on the response of the U.S. Air Force, as part of the larger Department of Defense, to the crisis posed by Hurricane Katrina.

The U.S. Air Force was involved even before the storm hit. During late August, 2005, the Hurricane Hunters of the 53d Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (403d Wing) in their WC-130 airplanes tracked and measured Katrina’s intensity and location as it crossed the tip of Florida and grew into a category 5 monster in the Gulf of Mexico. Between August 23 and 29, squadron aircrews flew more than 109 hours tracking the storm. As Katrina approached the central Gulf coast, the squadron dispersed its aircraft, which were based at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, to other bases beyond the projected storm path.

Hurricane Katrina hit southeast Louisiana early on the morning of Monday, August 29, with winds as high as 140 miles per hour. After making landfall near Buras, it followed a northward track to the Louisiana-Mississippi border. East of there, the counterclockwise winds pushed a 28-foot storm surge from the Gulf of Mexico northward into the towns of coastal Mississippi. A combination of wind, rain, and storm surge destroyed countless buildings, leaving a scoured landscape, but floodwaters did not remain. West of the storm center, the winds blew from north to south, pushing a swollen Lake Pontchartrain into the canals of New Orleans. Failures of floodwalls along those canals left 80% of the city flooded for weeks. Of some 485,000 residents, approximately 100,000 who had not evacuated awaited rescue as they struggled to survive without adequate food, water, shelter, plumbing, electricity, and communications. Besides southeastern Louisiana and southern Mississippi, the storm also inundated parts of southwestern Alabama, including downtown Mobile and Bayou La Batre. Hurricane Katrina eventually caused 1,304 deaths and some $50 billion in destruction and damage.

After the governors of the affected states requested federal assistance, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), tapped the Department of Defense for military assistance. On August 31, two days after impact, The U.S. Northern Command set up Joint Task Force Katrina under Lt. Gen. Russell L. Honore’, the commander of the First U.S. Army, at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. Maj. Gen. M. Scott Mayes, commander of the USAF First Air Force, served as the task force’s joint forces air component commander (JFACC). General Mayes established the 1st Aerospace Expeditionary Task
Force-Katrina at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida. The task force set up various air expeditionary groups for a massive disaster relief operation. For example, the 97th Air Expeditionary Group was activated at Keesler. By September 7, the Air Force, Air Force Reserve, and the Air National Guard had deployed some 8,000 personnel for the emergency. iv

USAF helicopters took part early in the disaster relief effort. Their role was most important in the New Orleans area, where only helicopters were allowed to fly below 20,000 feet. Late on August 30, the Air Force Reserve Command’s 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base (AFB), Florida flew large HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters to Jackson, Mississippi in order to fly FEMA damage assessment teams to the disaster zone. They and other HH-60s from wing’s 943d Rescue Group from Davis Monthan AFB, Arizona, soon began flying search and rescue missions over the disaster zone. Such missions commenced on August 31. HC-130 tankers staging at Patrick AFB refueled the helicopters. v

At the same time, other HH-60s and HC-130s from the Air Force Special Operations Command’s 347th Rescue Wing from Moody Air Force Base, Georgia and 563d Rescue Group from Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, performed similar search and rescue missions in the disaster area. The Pavehawk helicopters flew their missions from Jackson, Mississippi, refueled by HC-130s staging from elsewhere. MH-53 helicopters refueled by MC-130 tankers from the 16th Special Operations Wing, home based at Hurlburt Field in Florida, also took part in the search and rescue operations in the disaster zone. Like the Air Force Reserve helicopter assets, they served under the 347th Expeditionary Rescue Group under Task Force Katrina. The Air National Guard’s 106th Rescue Wing also took part in the helicopter search and rescue operations. vi

Air Force Space Command deployed eight UH-1 helicopters, two each from Minot AFB, North Dakota; F.E. Warren AFB, Wyoming; Malmstrom AFB, Montana; and Vandenberg AFB, California, for Hurricane Katrina search and rescue missions. Smaller than the MH-53s or the HH-60s, the UH-1s were in some ways more versatile. They came from the Air Force Space Command’s 37th, 40th, 54th, and 76th Helicopter Flights. From Columbus AFB, Mississippi, they carried food, water, medicine, and other supplies to hurricane victims along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The UH-1s served in the 620th Air Expeditionary Squadron of the 347th Expeditionary Rescue Group. Two other UH-1s took part in relief efforts, one from the Air Force Materiel Command and one from Air Force Special Operations Command. vii

Between August 31 and September 10, USAF helicopter crews rescued 4322 people, 2836 of them by HH-60s, 1461 by MH-53s, and 25 by UH-1s. On September 4, the 347th Expeditionary Rescue Group rescued a record 791 persons in one day. Some missions lasted up to 11 hours at a time. The helicopters at first concentrated on search and rescue missions, hoisting victims stranded on roofs in flooded areas of New Orleans to dry ground, but later they carried refugees from shelters within New Orleans, such as the Superdome and Convention Center, to the New Orleans (Louis Armstrong) International Airport, where there were medical treatment personnel, equipment and supplies, and where air and surface transportation resources were being concentrated for evacuation to designated shelter areas beyond the disaster region. viii

Besides helicopters, USAF fixed wing aircraft, including C-130s, C-17s, and C-5s, flew crucial airlift missions to transport both people and equipment and supplies. The
Eighteenth Air Force’s Tanker Airlift Control Center (Air Mobility Command) coordinated airlift flights. Col. Jeff Franklin served as lead controller for Katrina mission taskings. Many of the same aircraft that flew equipment, supplies, and emergency personnel into the disaster area also flew medical patients and displaced persons out. ix

The Air Force air-evacuated a total of 2,602 medical patients from the Hurricane Katrina disaster area to medical facilities across the United States between the end of August and mid-September. The biggest day was September 4, when Air Force transports evacuated some 1,500 patients from the New Orleans International Airport in 24 hours. Many of the medical evacuees flew to San Antonio or Houston, Texas. For example, a C-5 of the 433 Airlift wing shuttled more than 1,200 patients from New Orleans to San Antonio. Two C-130s of the 139th Airlift Wing flew 31 children and their families from the New Orleans Children’s Hospital to Mercy Children’s Hospital in Kansas City. As early as August 30, a C-17 and a C-130 landed at Keesler to evacuate hospital patients and pregnant women to Lackland Air Force Base’s Wilford Hall Medical Center in Texas. x

Not only patients, but those made homeless by Hurricane Katrina, needed airlift from the disaster area. The Air Force airlifted 26,943 displaced persons from New Orleans to temporary or new homes in more than 35 states across the country. In 55 hours, 89 aircraft moved almost 10,000 refugees from New Orleans to Kelly Field, San Antonio, Texas, where Lackland Air Force Base personnel had set up temporary shelters. C-17s that had delivered emergency personnel and equipment to New Orleans, instead of returning to their home bases empty, carried refugees from New Orleans to Dobbins Air Force Base, Georgia, as well as San Antonio, Texas. Other C-17s of the 97th Air Mobility Wing, after having delivered generators to Keesler, airlifted 437 USAF technical students from Biloxi, Mississippi, to Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. A total of 1,100 USAF technical students were moved from Keesler to other Air Education and Training Command facilities. xi

Besides airlifting displaced persons and patients from the disaster area to other parts of the country for housing and medical treatment, the Air Force also transported large numbers of emergency personnel to the New Orleans and surrounding areas, including medical and communications personnel, engineers, and armed troops. USAF aircraft moved 30,412 Air National Guard passengers and 5,414 Air Force Reservists, and a total of 43,713 Joint Task Force support personnel. xii

Many of the airlifted emergency personnel came to restore infrastructure. As early as August 30, two C-5s from the 60th Air Mobility Wing at Travis Air Force Base in California airlifted tanker airlift control elements and search and rescue teams to the disaster area. A C-17 from the 305 Air Mobility Wing from McGuire AFB, NJ airlifted contingency support groups to New Orleans International Airport. Between August 31 and September 3, 2005, other C-17s airlifted emergency response personnel and equipment from New Jersey and Michigan to New Orleans. C-5 transported 615 Contingency Response Wing from Travis AFB, CA, to Lafayette, LA as advance team to receive aircraft and cargo. On August 31, the 621 Contingency Response Wing’s 818 Contingency Response Group deployed from McGuire AFB, NJ to New Orleans International Airport with combat controllers and medical teams to establish bare base operations there. An AFSOC MC-130 took a team of combat controllers and a medical team to New Orleans International Airport on the same day. The 822d Contingency
Response Group also deployed there. Meanwhile, the 615 Contingency Response Wing’s 571st Contingency Response Group deployed from Travis AFB, CA, to Keesler for bare base operations in the Biloxi area of Mississippi. A C-5 moved equipment for fire and rescue personnel to New Orleans International Airport. xiii

The 49 Materiel Maintenance Group, the only USAF Base Expeditionary Airfield Resources (BEAR) group, deployed personnel and equipment to New Orleans and Biloxi. On 4 Sep, four C-5s each carried a BEAR Base set and more than 550 personnel from Holloman AFB, New Mexico to New Orleans International Airport. On 5 Sep, the 4th Air Expeditionary Group under Col Leonard Coleman, bedded down at a tent city there. xiv

On September 2, 2005, a 60-member contingency aeromedical staging facility team from Lackland AFB deployed to New Orleans, where it set up a 24-hour tent facility to care for patients. 25-bed facility ready next day, manned by 182 medical personnel. The 932d Airlift Wing moved medical teams by C-9 to the medical staging area in New Orleans, where 80 doctors, nurses, and medical technicians of the 375th Medical Group served admirably. A mobile aeromedical staging facility from Lackland Air Force Base in Texas operated in an airport concourse at New Orleans to treat patients awaiting evacuation. xv

Absence of adequate communications in the wake of Hurricane Katrina required the importation of equipment and expert personnel to operate it. The 139 Airlift Wing flew military communications personnel from Colorado to Gulfport, Mississippi, while the 5th Combat Communications Group deployed resources from Robins AFB, GA, to nearby Keesler AFB. At request of US Senator “Kit” Bond, 139 Airlift Wing (Missouri ANG) flew members of National Guard Communications Element from Buckley ANG Station in Colorado to Gulfport. xvi

The first week in September exposed a growing breakdown of law and order in New Orleans. Thousands of refugees, lacking adequate food, drink, plumbing, air conditioning, and space, crowded at the Superdome and the convention center, where violence threatened to erupt. Desperate people broke into grocery and drug stores in search of necessities, while others looted clothing and electronics stores for items to sell or barter. During the first nine days of September, hosts of USAF C-130s and Air National Guard KC-135s airlifted U.S. Army and Army National Guard troops from various parts of the country to New Orleans during the first nine days of September. Between Sep 3 and 8, thirty-three C-17 missions airlifted troops of the 82d Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, NC, to New Orleans. C-5s, the largest airplanes in the Air Force, also airlifted division troops to the city. xvii

Not to be overlooked was the airlift of the highest federal officials to the beleaguered disaster area. The 89th Airlift Wing (AMC) flew Air Force One, a VC-25 carrying President George W. Bush and his staff, from Andrews Air Force Base near Washington, D.C. to New Orleans, LA, and Keesler AFB, MS more than once. The President and his party met with state and local officials, storm and flood victims, and ruined areas. xviii

The Air Force airlifted not only emergency personnel into the disaster area, but also some 11,450 tons of equipment, supplies, and vehicles. For example, between September 8 and 11, four C-17s and two C-5s carried large water pumps from Ramstein Air Base in Germany to New Orleans to expel flood waters from the city. Other C-5s
imported vehicles and relief cargo from New York and New Jersey to New Orleans and Gulfport between September 5 and 8. On August 31, C-17s from the 97th Air Mobility Wing of Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma, transported 200-watt generators to Keesler. On September 7, one week later, a C-17 delivered more FEMA generators to New Orleans. C-17s delivered engineering equipment and supplies from other USAF bases to Keesler. Food was one of the most important of airlifted emergency supplies. Between 1 and 9 September, the 155th and 185th Air Refueling Wings of the Air National Guard delivered 66,000 Meals, Ready to Eat, or MREs, from Nebraska to New Orleans, using KC-135 tankers as transports. On September 4, C-5s transported huge quantities of MREs from Norfolk, Virginia, to Gulfport. To Keesler Air Force Base in coastal Mississippi went 182,640 meals ready-to-eat, 243,507 gallons of water, and 92 tons of supplies. On September 6, a C-5 airlifted 27,300 British MREs from RAF Mildenhall, UK, to Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, the base designated for delivery of foreign relief supplies. Insects, breeding profusely in the floodwaters, posed a disease threat to New Orleans and its vicinity. Between September 12 and 20, two C-130s of the 910 Airlift Wing from Ohio sprayed insecticide over disaster area, staging out of Duke Field, Florida. On 44 aerial spray sorties, they treated more than 2.8 million acres, using 13,775 gallons of insecticide. They served under the 153d Air Expeditionary Group.

Specialized Air Force aircraft performed other crucial missions. E-3 AWACS aircraft and crews from 552d Air Control Wing (960 Air Control Squadron) provided air traffic control for more than 1,000 helicopters between September 3 and 19, flying eleven sorties. The 99th Reconnaissance Squadron from Beale Air Force Base in California flew U-2s over the disaster area for aerial photography and imagery, while the 45th Reconnaissance Squadron from Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska flew OC-135s for the same purpose. The Air Force flew 361 intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance sorties during the Hurricane Katrina operation. Just in case they were needed to fight fires from the air, two 145th Airlift Wing C-130s equipped with the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System deployed from North Carolina to Pensacola for possible use against fires that had broken out in New Orleans.

Statistics prove the quantitative significance of the Air Force role in Hurricane Katrina relief operations. USAF helicopters flew 648 sorties, 599 of these on search and rescue missions that rescued 4322 people. Air Force fixed-wing aircraft flew 4,095 sorties, 3,398 of these on air mobility missions. USAF aircraft evacuated 26,943 displaced persons from New Orleans and surrounding areas to airports and bases outside of the disaster area. The Air Force air-evacuated more than 2,600 medical patients to medical facilities across the country. USAF medical teams at the New Orleans International Airport treated 16,714 patients, including more than 5,500 in two days. The Air Force airlifted 11,450 tons of relief cargo from various parts of the country to the disaster zone. Transports carried thousands of emergency personnel, including engineers, electricians, doctors, nurses, cooks, and troops from all over the country to New Orleans and southern Mississippi. Among the Air Force aircraft involved were 49 C-130s, 31 KC-135s, 25 HH-60s, 16 C-5s, 15 C-17s, 31 KC-135s, 9 UH-1s, and 5 MH-53s, as well as HC-130s, MC-130s, WC-130s, U-2s, and OC-135s.

The immense contribution of the Air Force in Hurricane Katrina disaster relief was only a fraction of the total Defense Department effort, which involved elements of the National Guard, the Army, Navy, and the Marine Corps. Although not technically
part of the Defense Department, the Coast Guard also played a major role. The Pentagon flew 12,786 helicopter sorties, rescued 15,000 citizens, and transported 80,000 people in one of the largest mass evacuations in history. From nine regional military bases, the Defense Department distributed huge quantities of equipment and supplies, including more than 30 million meals. The Pentagon’s response to Hurricane Katrina was the largest deployment of military forces for a civil-support mission in U.S. history.\textsuperscript{xxiii}

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14 November 2006 (see end of list for notes on Katrina)

\textbf{2005, September 4-, Idaho forest fires}  
two C-130s, 29 reservists. 302 Airlift Wing. Modular airborne fire fighting systems. In first 3 days, 14 sorties, and 36,500 gallons of fire retardant dropped

\textbf{2005, September. Relief for victims of Hurricane Rita, Louisiana and Texas}  
No details yet.

\textbf{2005, October. Hurricane Stan.} Central America  
No details yet.

\textbf{2005, October. Darfur Relief.} Sudan.  
No details yet.

On October 8, 2005, a 7.6-magnitude earthquake struck northern Pakistan near its disputed border with India, killing an estimated 73,000 people and leaving hundreds of thousands homeless. By December 2, USAF aircraft had delivered nearly 10 million pounds of relief supplies, including food, water, tents, sleeping bags, cots, blankets, heaters, clothing, medicine, and medical equipment. C-17, C-130, KC-10, and contract aircraft carried most of the cargo from Afghanistan, where USAF food airdrops had been ongoing as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, but C-5 and C-17 transports also carried some dozen U.S. Army CH-47 helicopters from the United States to facilitate search and rescue operations in the disaster area.


\textbf{2006, February. Leyte Mudslides.}  
On February 17, 2006, a rain-induced landslide buried the mountain town of Guinsaunon on Leyte Island in the Philippines under up to 30 feet of mud, leaving more than 1,000 people dead or missing. 36\textsuperscript{th} Expeditionary Airlift Squadron C-130s from Yokota Air Base in Japan carried emergency personnel and tons of relief equipment and supplies from Clark Air Base on Luzon to Tacloban Airfield on Leyte. A few days later, a C-17 from the 15\textsuperscript{th} Airlift Wing delivered heavy
equipment, meals, water, cots, tens, and personnel from Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii. 36 Contingency Response Group and its 736th Security Forces Squadron and 36th Mission Readiness Squadron from Andersen AFB, Guam, also took part.


2006, March. Pakistan Earthquake Relief.

2006, June. Indonesia Earthquake Relief.

2006, August. Lebanon Evacuation.

2006, November. Ethiopia Flood Relief.

Notes for Hurricane Katrina Relief:

3 Hurricane Katrina: The Storm That Changed America (New York: Time, Inc., 2005); CNN Reports: Katrina; State of Emergency (Kansas City: Andrews McMeel, 2005); Hurricane Katrina: The One We Feared (Harahan, LA: Express Publishing, 2005).
7 vi. Director of Mobility Forces After Action Report, Joint Task Forces Katrina and Rita, 18 Oct 2005, Appendix C.


