

RAF Force Protection leads on security on Exercise Mobility Guardian

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Royal Air Force personnel are playing a leading role in providing security on Mobility Guardian, a large air mobility exercise in the United States involving 3000 personnel from 24 countries.

At a remote austere airfield a Force Protection team led by the RAF are protecting the transport aircraft and personnel conducting humanitarian relief operations to ensure aid reaches those in need.

In the opening days of the exercise the US Army's 82nd Airborne Division conducted a mass parachute drop to seize the airfield. Once secured, responsibility for the establishment and operation of the airfield passed to the Contingency Response Group (CRG).



The force protection for the CRG is being provided by 4 Force Protection Wing Headquarters, No. 2 Squadron RAF Regiment, 1 Tactical Police Squadron and 2624 Squadron, RAuxAF Regiment together with personnel from the Royal Australian Air Force, Belgian Air Component and US Air Force.

As military vehicles of all shapes and sizes are loaded and offloaded in quick time from a row of huge transport aircraft, the Force Protection team kept a watchful eye on potential threats to the transporters and their crews in temperatures exceeding 40°C.

The Force Protection Component Commander is Squadron Leader Steve Turner, Officer Commanding No. 2 Squadron RAF Regiment. He said: "Our role is to provide force protection to the CRG operations. That forms two parts. First the security of the operating areas here at Moses Lake, the other is enabling certain air mobility operations that conduct land away tasks from here.



“It’s

a very valuable exercise, it’s been a real learning process for everyone involved. Since we got here the integration has been fantastic, the attitude towards interoperability and flexibility has helped resolve any sticking points which have arisen.”

One

training serial was observed by Group Captain Dave Tait, the Station Commander

of RAF Honington. He said: “You really can’t beat working alongside the aircraft, the aircrew, the technicians, the movers and our international partners with whom we’ll be operating alongside on the day in a real time live

flying environment. It’s absolutely fantastic training value.”



The

scenario observed by Gp Capt Tait saw an Air Mobility Protection Team comprising of RAF and Belgian personnel having to keep a crowd of civilians away from an RAF A400M Atlas. Tact and diplomacy was required to ensure the aircraft remained secure and could complete its mission unhindered.

Gp

Capt Tait: The variety of scenarios enable us to trial new tactics techniques

and procedures (TTP), and it’s quite interesting to work with the Belgians who

do things in a subtly different way. We’ve learnt a few things about them which

allowed us to refine our TTPs and they learn from us as well.”

Editor: Wg

Cdr Eklund

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