

# 818TH MOBILITY SUPPORT ADVISORY SQUADRON

## The Road Ahead



**ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

**Peace through Partnerships**



# FROM THE COMMANDER

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“Rain does not fall on one roof alone.”

This African proverb reminds us that tribulation is often an experience endured not just by one person, but instead, by many throughout a community. The COVID-19 global pandemic has reached every major population center of our world, and transformed our way of life. Though the road ahead is still uncertain, the horizon promises the dawn of new chances, and ultimately...new beginnings.

Despite these challenging times, the 818th MSAS has remained resilient and mission-ready. We have used our time social distancing and teleworking to prioritize innovation and new thinking. COVID-19 has allowed us to concentrate on inward improvement in order to refine our perspective outward. Persistent self-enhancement and a willingness to build new strengths throughout this year has allowed us the opportunity to become an even better force provider within the Security Cooperation Enterprise.

Our strength is in our relationships. Our pride is in our technical and tactical competencies. We undertook a massive effort this year to improve air advisor training and development. This endeavor underscored our intent to ensure we provide our African partners advisement, training, and mentorship of the highest quality. The culminating event was a squadron-level exercise that simulated real-world mission scenarios, and encouraged our advisors to hone their ability to rapidly adapt to changing requirements in the operational environment.

Additionally, we were able to forge a new relationship with the 81st Fighter Squadron in an effort to bring deeper air-to-ground integration expertise to the Nigerian Air Force and broaden our efforts in support of national security strategic objectives. This partnership has afforded increased operational effectiveness to these strategic partners and has enhanced regional security efforts.

While 2020 certainly has brought challenges that nobody expected, the global health crisis has presented the 818th MSAS with the opportunity to become more innovative, agile, and forward-thinking. I am proud to say that we have made the most of a difficult situation. As always, our priority remains to be the most professional and capable air advisors in the world!

Jonathan H. Magill  
Commander,  
818th Mobility Support Advisory Squadron (MSAS)



# FY20 RECAP

## BY THE NUMBERS

**12**

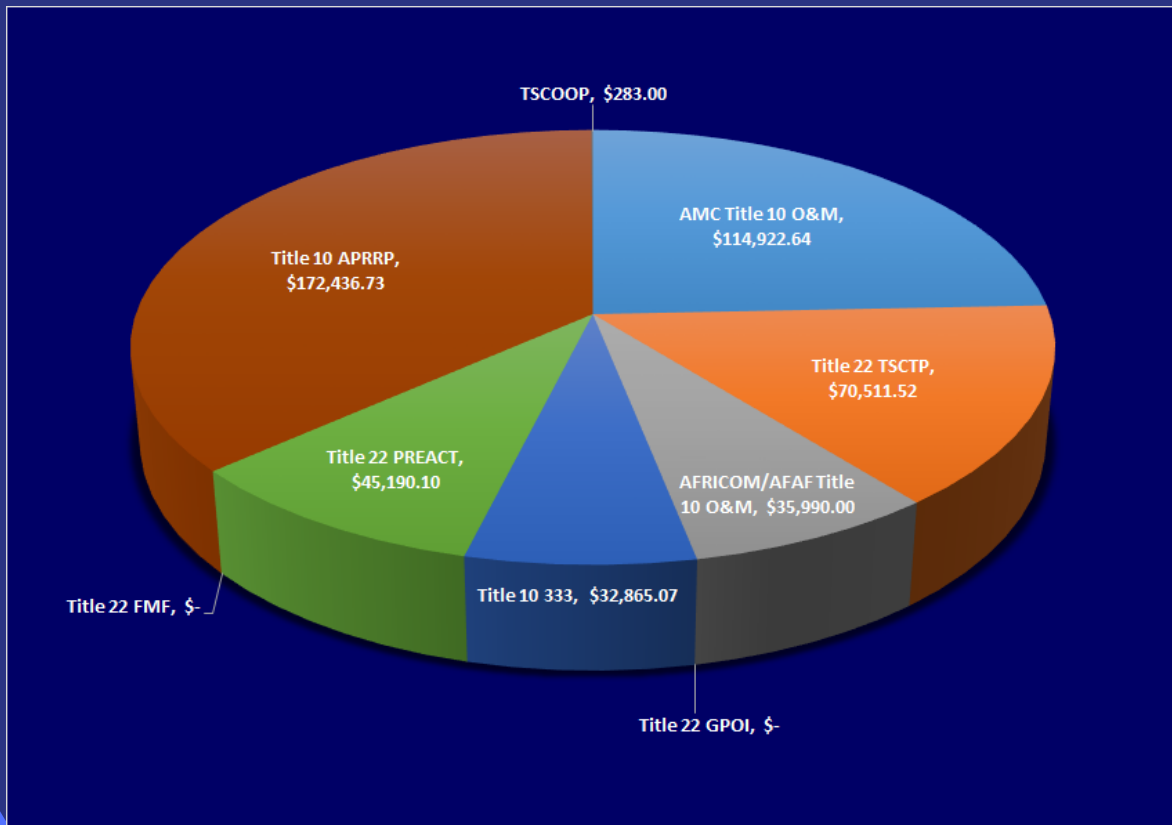
818th MSAS air advisors completed 12 missions. Partner nations included Tunisia, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Nigeria, Zambia, and Morocco.

**205**

The total of African partners engaged, trained, and advised by 818th MSAS air advisors.

**\$472,199**

Total funds executed.



**Executed Funds (by source)**

# WHAT IS THE 818TH MSAS?

## "THE SILVERBACKS"

### Our Mission:

**Build, sustain and expand** the relationships with, and the capabilities of, partner nation air forces in direct support of Combatant Commander requirements.

### Our Vision:

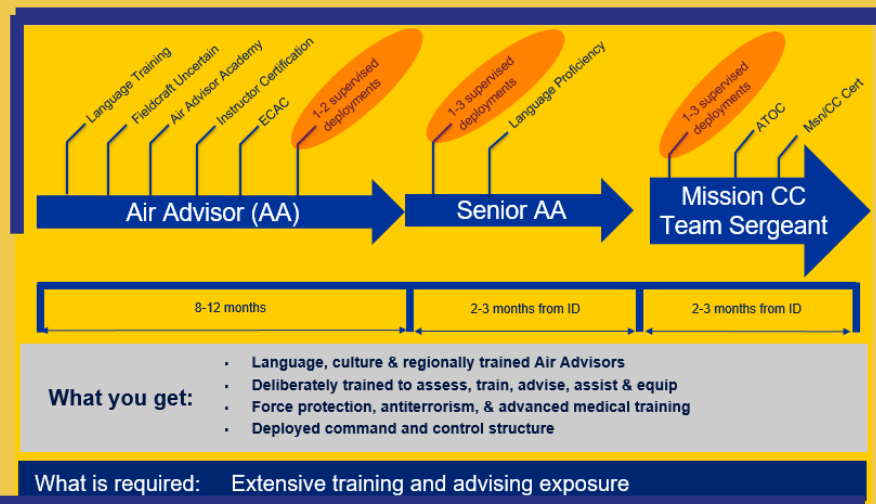
*Be the most professional and capable air advisors in the world.*



818th air advisors are language-enabled, technical specialists representing over 25 US Air Force specialties equipped to train, advise, and assist US military partners in sub-Saharan Africa, on behalf of Air Mobility Command (AMC). The 818th is the only standing USAF squadron regionally aligned to support US Africa Command's (USAFRICOM) area of responsibility.

## Making professional 818th MSAS air advisors

The 818th MSAS invests a significant amount of effort (upwards of 18-months) to produce fully operational mobility air advisors, Mission commanders (MS) and Team Sergeants (TS) capable of leading small teams that engage partner nation personnel at all levels. MSAS air advisors reduce force protection and program failure risks by being well-versed in security cooperation authorities, low-footprint operations, embassy coordination processes, operational capability assessments, and rapport building with international partners. The MSAS provides a professional unit to conduct air advising efforts, bringing continuity and collaboration to the table.



## 818th MSAS MISSION OVERVIEW

Fiscal Year 2020 remained another busy year for the 818th MSAS. 818th MSAS air advisors engaged, trained, and assessed several African air forces over the course of **12** total engagements. In doing so, the MSAS supported US national security strategic goals, geographical combatant command lines of effort (LOEs), intermediate objectives (IOs), and strategic end states for the Departments of State (DoS) and Defense (DoD), USAFRICOM, USTRANSCOM, US Air Forces Africa (USAFAFRICA), AMC, and US Embassy Country Teams across the African continent. 818th MSAS air advisors engaged with or trained **205** partner nation personnel, from young officers and enlisted members to air force chiefs of staff. The 818th MSAS continued to forge valuable partnerships and strengthen existing relationships.

Through the air advising mission, the United States...

- Promotes regional stability with partners in areas of strategic importance for the international community at large.
- Enables partner nation Air Force's to support United Nations and African Union Peace Keeping Operations.
- Gains access and builds strategic partnerships throughout the theater.
- Facilitates regional, military interoperability.

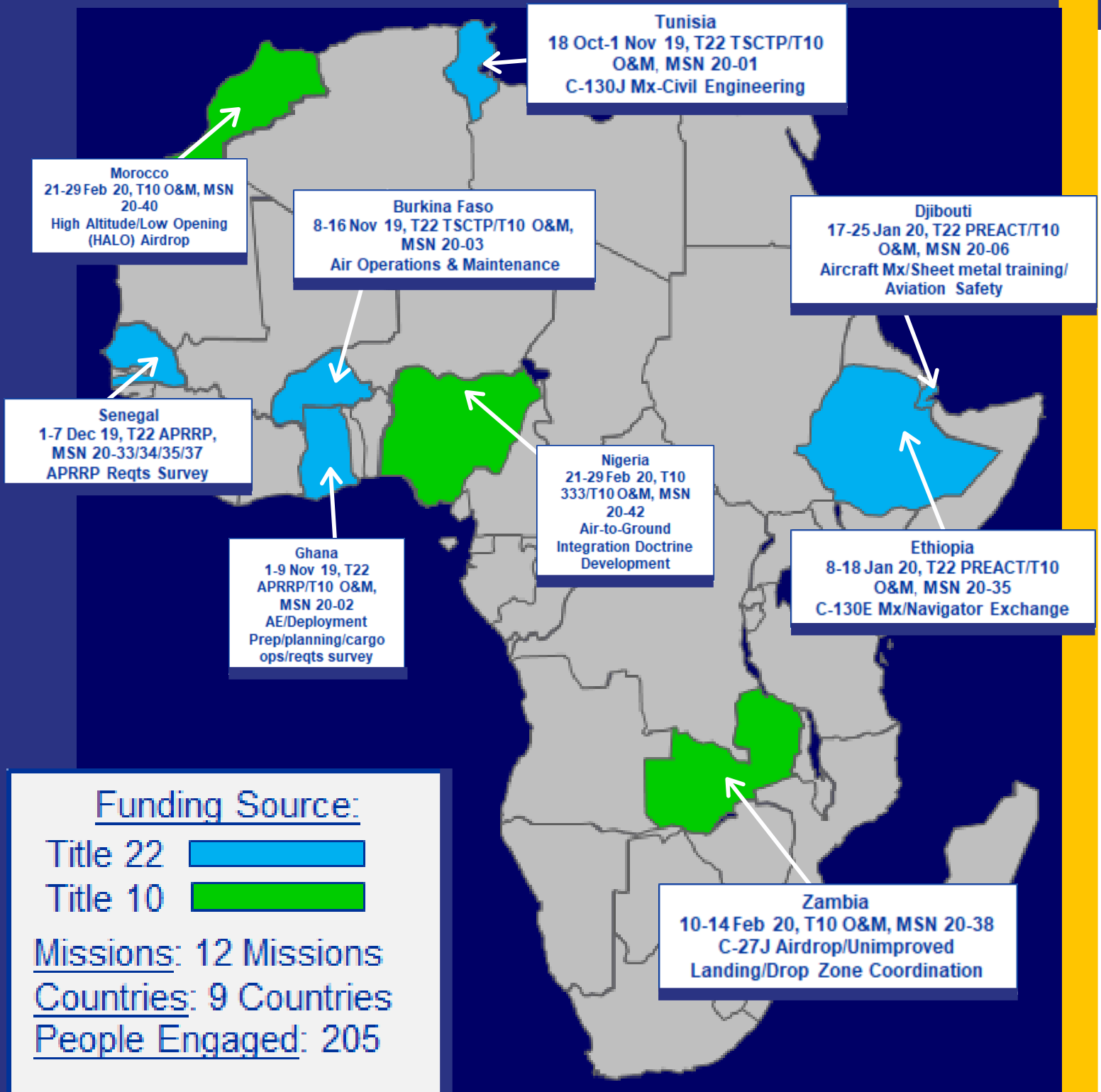


# Peace through Partnerships

AFSC	Assgn	Auth'd	AFSC	Assgn	Auth'd
•1A2 Aircraft Loadmaster	3	4	•3E7 Fire Protection	1	1
•1C1 Air Traffic Control	1	1	•3P0 Security Forces	6	6
•1C3 Command & Control Operations	2	2	•3F0 Personnel	1	1
•1C7 Airfield Management	2	2	•3F5 Administration	1	2
•1C8 Ground Radar Systems	0	3	•4N0 Aerospace Medical Service	2	2
•1N0 All Source Intelligence Analyst	3	3	•8F0 First Sergeant	1	1
•1P0 Aircrew Flight Equipment	1	1	•9L0 Interpreter/Translator	3	3
•1T0 SERE	2	2	•11M Mobility Pilot	3	4
•2A5 Airlift/Special Mission Aircraft Maintenance	5	5	•12M Mobility Combat Systems Officer	1	2
•2F0 Fuels	2	2	•13M Airfield Operations	1	1
•2S0 Materiel Management	3	4	•16F Foreign Area Officer	2	3
•2T2 Air Transportation	3	3	•17D Network Operations	0	2
•2T3 Mission Generation Vehicular Equipment Maintenance	2	3	•21A Aircraft Maintenance	1	0
•3D1 RF Transmissions	3	4	•21R Logistics Readiness	4	6
•3E0 Electric Power Pro	0	2	•32E Civil Engineering	0	3
•3E5 Engineering	2	2	•46F Flight Nurse	1	1
			Assigned	62	
			Authorized	81	

The 818th MSAS combines **32** unique specialties and skillsets to create functional teams to align with a partner nation's security requirements. The above table captures the various specialty codes utilized in the MSAS structure.

# FY20 COMPLETED MISSIONS





# THE MSAS APPROACH TO SECURITY FORCE ASSISTANCE

## MSAS Aviation Capabilities Enhancement (ACE) Program

The 818th MSAS can train partners in different skill areas to include: air operations, command and control, mission planning, disaster response, logistics, security forces, intelligence support, civil engineering, and medical support.

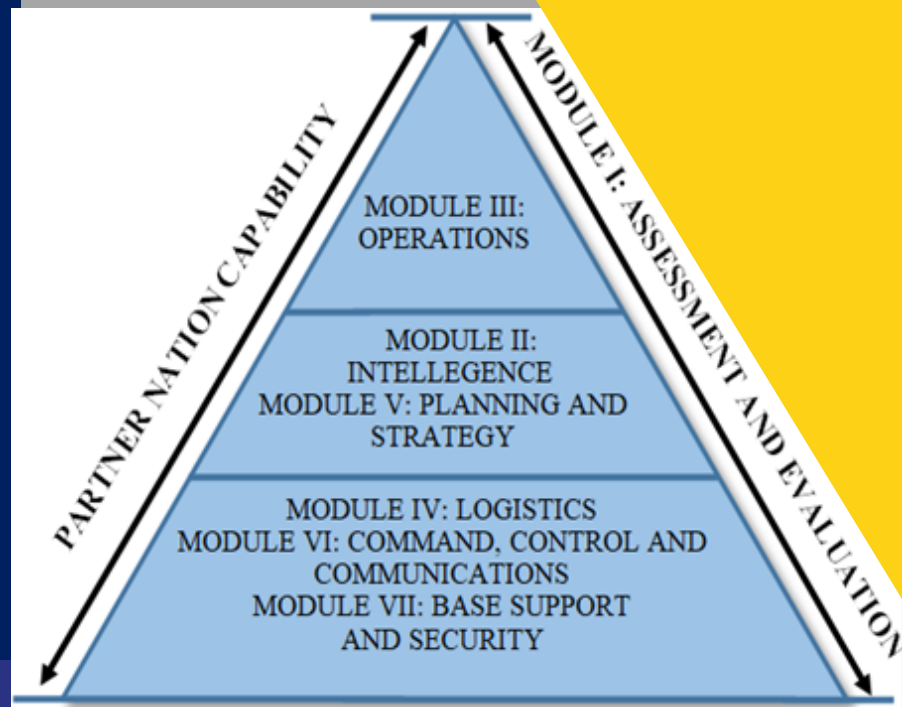
The ACE Program consists of various air advisor teams capable of providing complete support packages which can be tailored to fit the needs of a partner nation (PN). The program consists of a full range of specialized modules supporting a complete Air Mobility System, bridging the gap from outside assistance to self-sustained programs and operations. The program can also be used to enhance an existing capability or to prepare a PN for a proposed Foreign Military Sales (FMS) case.

ACE establishes the foundation for operational deployment, air base support and logistical enhancement of African PNs that will participate in counterterrorism, peacekeeping and humanitarian relief operations. This Title 22-funded program aims to develop:

- **PN Organic Capacities**
- **Regional Centers of Excellence**
- **Regional Participation in Joint and Multilateral Exercises**
- **Counterterrorism Capabilities**
- **Cooperative Arrangements for Regional Joint Ops**

### ACE Program Modules

- MOD 1 – Initial Assessment
- MOD 2 – Intelligence
- MOD 3 – Operations
- MOD 4 – Logistics
- MOD 5 – Organization & Strategy
- MOD 6 – Command, Control, and Communication
- MOD 7 – Installation Support





# Ethiopia

(MSN 20-35)



Ethiopia represents a persistent 818th MSAS engagement partner. In January, MSAS air advisors trained C-130E maintenance best practices as well as certified Ethiopian Air Force (ETAF) navigators on aircraft flight systems. Additionally, the MSAS enabled the ETAF to complete a successful high-speed taxi of the aircraft and subsequent test flight. Until FY20, Ethiopia's C-130E had been grounded as a result of delays in maintenance and repair parts acquisition, and air crew currency.



818th air advisors worked with ETAF subject matter experts (SME) to develop a comprehensive sustainment plan for their C-130 program. The long-term goal is to aid the ETAF in fostering a culture of mission preparedness centered around risk mitigation as it pertains to maintenance readiness.



Ethiopia is a critical US partner in the Horn of Africa. The nation's strategic location, bordering the only persistent US presence on the continent in Djibouti, makes Ethiopia a vital thoroughfare for overflights. A major stabilizing force in a challenging region, Ethiopia has consistently been the world's largest provider of peacekeeping forces to United Nations Operations. Moreover, Ethiopia boasts the fastest growing economy on the continent, averaging 10% economic growth annually over the last 15 years.

***"We instilled confidence in the ETAF, strengthened our relationship, and stressed the importance of safety."***

**MSgt Albert Kirkey, Team Sergeant; Aircraft Maintenance Specialist**

*The Year in Review....*

# Senegal

(MSN 20-34)



The 818th MSAS began efforts to support Senegal's ability to deploy personnel and equipment to support peacekeeping operations (PKO). Under the African Peacekeeping Rapid Response Partnership (APRRP) program, the 818th MSAS conducted two training events with the Senegalese Air Force (SAF). The first was a comprehensive assessment through which a nine-engagement campaign plan was built. The second engagement was the first in the multi-iteration training series, which consisted of personnel recovery, maintenance, security, and base planning. Despite training delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 818th MSAS continues to press forward with supporting Senegal Joint Staff and USAFRICOM Objectives. The 818th MSAS has tentatively scheduled the next iteration of training for 2QTR/FY21.



Senegal is also an important US partner in promoting peace and security in Africa. The country shares many fundamental values and international goals with the United States, and it has set an example of democratic rule as well as ethnic and religious tolerance. Senegal is also a major contributor to regional peacekeeping operations.



*"We provide the enterprise the ground-truth perspective from the tactical level."*

**Maj Johnny Harris, Mission Commander;  
Pilot, KC-10, C-208**

# Ghana

(MSN 20-02)



818th MSAS air advisors traveled to Africa's "Gold Coast" to partner with members of the Ghanaian Air Force (GAF). Similar to Senegal, the GAF is an APRRP partner that looks to bolster its airpower deployment capabilities in support of national peacekeeping efforts in West Africa. The 818th MSAS conducted a requirements survey of current GAF capabilities in aeromedical evacuation (AE), deployment preparation and planning, and cargo operations. The team determined APRRP end-state objectives and associated training program requirements necessary to inform the broader program for this key US ally. The 818th MSAS is projected to begin training with the GAF in 3d QTR/FY21.



*"The Ghanaian participants demonstrated trust in the advisors and openly discussed both positives and negatives of their respective areas."*

**Capt Melissa Magnusson, Team Lead;  
Logistics Readiness Officer**

*The Year in Review....*

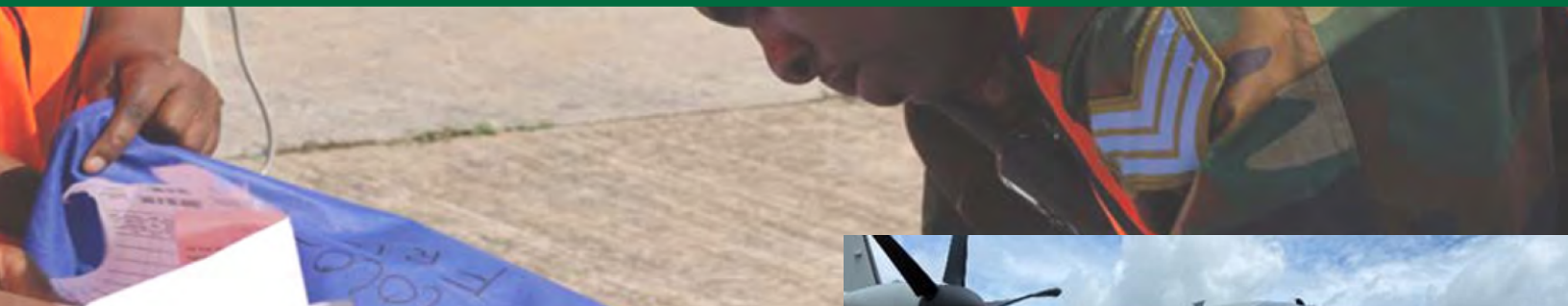
# Zambia

(MSN 20-38)



FY 20 also saw 818th MSAS engagement with US partners in southern Africa. This USAFRICOM-funded event brought our air advisors to Zambia where they met with members of the Zambia Air Force (ZAF). The objective of the mission was to conduct a knowledge exchange that focused on airdrop and unimproved landing procedures as well as landing and drop zone coordination for the ZAF's recently acquired C-27J aircraft.

During this event, the 818th MSAS identified focus areas for future training events and made several recommendations to improve the ZAF C-27J squadron. The ZAF Air Chief, Lt Gen David Muma, welcomed 818th MSAS team members and directly communicated the need for a tactical airdrop and unimproved short field landing capability so that ZAF C-27Js would be able to participate in United Nations (UN) or African Union (AU) deployment operations.



*"The ZAF is willing and eager to learn. It is a high priority of ZAF leadership to acquire these capabilities on their C-27J aircraft to support various deployment operations."*

*TSgt Ryan Murray, Team Lead;  
Aircrew Flight Equipment Specialist*





## Improving Operational Readiness in Djibouti



The Republic of Djibouti remains a key US partner in East Africa. The home of Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (HOA), and the only permanent military installation in Africa, Djibouti sought the expertise of the 818th MSAS to develop a comprehensive aviation safety program and improve Djibouti Air Force (DAF) aircraft maintenance practices. Advisors from the 818th conducted a one-week engagement with members of the DAF to survey and assess existing capabilities, determine future mission requirements, and offer recommendations for program developments that would enable the DAF to achieve institutional goals.

The high-priority interest for the DAF was structural maintenance and repair. Air advisors provided instruction that included routine maintenance and repair; metal and material familiarization; principles of corrosion avoidance; drilling and damage removal; and rivet installation. DAF maintainers were able to apply the newly learned principles during the repair of a non-operational L-410 aircraft. With the newly acquired training, the DAF will be able to reduce aircraft downtime and improve operational readiness.



*"Continued development and strengthening of the US-Djibouti partnership will be important as we pursue increased interoperability with this important regional partner."*

*MSgt Roi Yeandal, Team Sergeant;  
Aircrew Flight Equipment Specialist*

# The next level of air advising: *e-Advising*



The current global crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has made the 818th MSAS more innovative, agile, and forward-thinking. To remain connected with our African partner air forces, 818th MSAS air advisors are providing training for the first time using virtual mediums. The "e-Advising" concept was recently employed by the 818th MSAS' sister squadron - the 571st MSAS, who supports the US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) theater. This new format of instruction is vastly different from anything the MSAS has done before as its mission is typically conducted in a partner nation.

Air advisors established the new training and certification process with inputs from Headquarters Air Force, AMC, Inter-American Air Forces Academy and members of the State Partnership Program.

Prior to e-Advising, Air advisors receive virtual training certifications that include two weeks of significant practice, research and training to ensure they present a professional image and comply with industry standards.

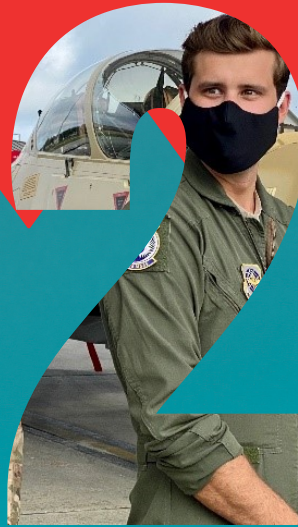
"Following an e-Advising engagement with the Panamanian Air Force, 571st MSAS mission commander, Capt Rueben Luoma-Overstreet, noted that his team had to overcome hurdles such as how to handle virtual interpretation, how to meet Congressional Leahy (law) vetting requirements virtually, and how to be engaging instructors while coping with the challenge of only having a camera, microphone and screen to engage the audience,"

While virtual engagements will not replace in-person advising, they will provide a complementary method of meeting mission requirements during challenging times.

**Source:** TSgt Luther Mitchell, Jr. "Air advisors host first virtual training with Panama partners amid COVID-19. 8 Sep 2020.

***"This new format of instruction is vastly different from anything the MSAS has done before as their mission is typically conducted in a partner nation."***

# ATTACK!



In August FY20, the 818th MSAS met with members of the 81st Fighter Squadron (81st FS) (Moody AFB, GA) in order to synchronize air advisory efforts, further develop relationships, and familiarize the MSAS with 81st FS Air to Ground Integration (AGI) mission sets and A-29 operational capabilities. This meeting facilitated further discussion and collaboration on e-Engagement initiatives, specifically courses of actions for upcoming e-Engagements with Tunisia and possibly Nigeria.

The MSAS provided 81 FS recommended resolutions to employ their new AGI role within Security Cooperation (SC), while developing their internal Advisor training requirements and processes. The two parties exchanged ideas, shared best practices, and developed a better understanding of each unit's unique capabilities. Through further collaboration and cooperation, 818th MSAS and 81 FS capabilities which will create synergistic effects when engaging African partners, while meeting multiple combatant command objectives.

"The 81 FS earned their place in the security cooperation enterprise by flying Super Tucanos in Afghanistan alongside the Afghan Air Force. They possess strike pilots and are exceptionally well trained and easy to operate alongside air advisors. The squadron is the only combat mission ready fighter squadron in AETC."

As the 81st FS expands its AGI program across all GCCs, the 818th MSAS will seek to further develop, and support them to get them operating IAW SC & their MAJCOM guidance. They have had several countries express interest in AGI instruction with A-29s and could quickly have a worldwide demand signal. Partnering with 81st FS will have fruitful impact on the MSAS as we continue to revamp and develop our own flying program.





# "The Silverbacks"

## Lineage

Constituted as 818th Mobility Support Advisory Squadron on 29 Mar 2011. Activated on 15 Apr 2011.

## Assignments

818th Contingency Response Group, 15 Apr 2011  
621 Air Mobility Advisory Group, 1 Jun 2015-present

## Stations

McGuire AFB, NJ, 15 Apr 2011-present

## Service Streamers

Global War on Terrorism (GWOT-S)

## Decorations

\*Meritorious Unit Award (May-Sep '12; Oct '16-Sep '17)

\*Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (Oct '10-Sep '11; Oct '12-Sep '14; Oct '14-Sep '15; Oct '15-Sep '16)



## CONTACT INFORMATION

818th Mobility Support Advisory Squadron

818msas@us.af.mil

DSN: 312-650-2844

Commercial: 001-609-754-2844