

RAF Aeromedical Evacuation team deploys with A400M Atlas on Ex Mobility Guardian

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A Royal Air Force Aeromedical Evacuation team has deployed on exercise with A400M Atlas for the first time.

The medics from Tactical Medical Wing (TMW) and three RAF Reserve squadrons are in the US to participate in Mobility Guardian, the largest exercise of its type involving over 50 transport and air-refuelling aircraft, paratroopers, Force Protection and Aeromed personnel.



Flight Lieutenant Scott Fitzgerald, a Flight Commander on TMW based at RAF Brize Norton, explained the aim of the exercise. He said: “The focus for the aeromedical part of this exercise is to simulate the evacuation of up to 300 hospital patients in a humanitarian effort from a displaced area in a war torn environment.

“We’re doing that by working closely with other aeromedical teams from other countries. We’re mixing those teams to understand what qualifications, capabilities and skill sets are required in order to function on various aircraft from other countries and that combination of doctor, nurse and medical teams.”



The scale of the exercise has enabled a medical evacuation process which replicates closely what the RAF personnel have experienced previously on coalition operations. Two separate patient preparation areas have been established over 350 miles apart. The RAF teams fly out to the humanitarian area to evacuate patients originating from a US Army Role 2 Hospital.

“We receive hand over of those casualties and evacuate them back” explained Flt Lt Fitzgerald. “We sometimes simulate an intra-theatre transfer which involves a 40 minute flight, or when we have a C-CAST on board,

which is the critical care aspect of our aeromedical team, we simulate the 3-4 hour evacuation as if we were for example returning patients to Birmingham.”



The UK Aeromedical Team on the exercise have brought Flight Nurses who are emergency qualified, including four Reservists from three different squadrons.

The A400M, which can carry up to 66 stretcher patients, was recently used for the first time on a real aeromed mission for operational reasons. Mobility Guardian is however the first time it has been used on exercise in the role.

Flt Lt Fitzgerald: “All the personnel we have brought with us have never flown A400 previously so this is new for us. It’s a new capability, we can carry up to 66 stretchers on board the A400 which is our aircraft for the future.”

Editor: Wg Cdr Dylan Eklund

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