

5th Transportation Battalion

On 17 June 1943, the US Army constituted the 5th Quartermaster Troop Transport Battalion and activated it at Camp Swift, Texas on 25 August 1943. On 23 November 1943, its lettered companies, A, B, C, and D, were reorganized and redesignated as numbered companies and the battalion headquarters was redesignated Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 5th Quartermaster Battalion, Mobile. From then on the companies followed separate lineages, although they remained with the headquarters throughout the war.

The 5th Quartermaster Transport Battalion participated in the Third Army Louisiana Maneuvers from 17 December 1943 to 16 February 1944. On 5 August 1944 it reported to the Boston Port of Embarkation and on 12 August boarded the *USAT George W. Goethals*. The battalion arrived in England on 22 August and then arrived in France on 10 September. It was assigned to the European Theater of Operation. On 30 January 1945, the battalion crossed into Luxembourg, and Germany on 26 March. The 5th Quartermaster Transport Battalion served in Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, and Central Europe Campaigns. It was inactivated in Germany on 30 September 1946. It earned the Meritorious Unit Commendations for the European Theater.

Effective 1 August 1946, the Quartermaster Corps transferred functions and responsibilities of truck and aviation units to the Transportation Corps in accordance with GO No 77, War Dept. 24 July 1946. While on inactive status, it was converted and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 5th Transportation Corps Truck Battalion on 1 October 1946. On 20 November 1950, it was redesignated as the 5th Transportation Truck Battalion and allotted to the Regular Army.

Amphibious Truck

On 22 December 1950, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 5th Transportation Truck Battalion was activated as the second amphibious truck battalion at Fort Story, Virginia. The Transportation Corps selected Fort Story as the training area for amphibious vehicles because of its sandy beaches and rough surf. The battalion initially fell under the control of the 54th Transportation Battalion and had control of the following companies:

- 169th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 206th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 458th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 460th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 461st Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 489th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company

These companies spent the year training on DUKW amphibious trucks. The 458th, 460th, and 461st Amphibious Truck Companies had been on active duty since WWII and moved to Fort Eustis when the Amphibious Training School moved to Fort Eustis from Fort Gordon Johnston, Florida as part of the move to consolidate the Transportation School into one location. It relocated to Norfolk and then Fort Story.

Operation Blue Jay

In 1951, the US Air Force began secretly building up the weather station on Thule, Greenland into an air base for staging B-52 bombers during the Cold War. The 5th Transportation Battalion sailed out of Norfolk on an armada of transports with the 169th, 206th, 460th, 489th Amphibious Truck Companies on 6 June. They were attached to the 373rd Transportation Major Port (TMP) to Thule, Greenland as part of Operation Blue Jay.

The 9224th TSU-TC Detachment III was activated at Fort Story on 31 October 1951 to provide administrative overhead personnel for the purpose of command all Transportation Corps and Second Army units stationed at Fort Story to include the 5th and 54th Transportation Amphibious Truck Battalions.

In April 1952, the 5th Transportation Battalion had the following companies attached:

- 169th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 206th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 458th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 461st Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 489th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 604th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company

On 1 May 1952, the 458th was transferred to the European Command. On 13 May 1952, the 206th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company was transferred to the 54th Transportation Battalion.

By December 1952, the 5th Transportation Battalion had the following companies attached:

- 169th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 285th Transportation Port Company
- 461st Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 489th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company
- 604th Transportation Amphibious Truck Company

Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line

There was a similar fear of attack by Soviet long-range bombers. The shortest distance for was across the Arctic Circle. The US Air Force established a line of Distant Early Warning (DEW) stations from Thule, Greenland, to the tip of Alaska in 1952. To man the DEW Line year round, required the Army transportation units out of Fort Eustis and Story, Virginia, to deliver cargo over the unimproved shores of Greenland and Canada every Spring and Summer from 1952 to 1965. These operations became known as Supply Unit Northeastern Command (SUNEC). On 27 May 1952, the 461st Amphibious Truck Company shipped out to participate in the SUNEC Operation at Goose Bay, Labrador.

On 1 September 1952, the headquarters was redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 5th Transportation Amphibious Truck Battalion and then on 5 December it was redesignated 5th Transportation Battalion (Amphibious Truck).

In June 1953, the 461st Transportation Company took over the RSI training at Fort Story. This allowed for stability. During this period the company performed outstandingly in all sports.

On 23 April 1953 due to extreme personnel shortages and impending operational commitments, the 169th, 461st, 489th and 604th TAT Companies were directly assigned to the 54th Truck Battalion. The 5th Transportation Battalion was reduced to one officer and one enlisted man and attached to the 54th Battalion.

On 21 May 1953, the 169th Transportation Company (Amphibious Truck) was attached to the 362nd Transportation Port Battalion for Operation SUNEK and returned 9 October.

The next year, the 5th Battalion with the 169th, 206th and 604th TAT Companies and 870th Port Company conducted US Army Reserve unit training from 18 July to 29 August 1954.

During the summer of 1954, the two battalions were attached to the 5th Transportation Port Command B, which was later redesignated 5th Transportation Terminal Command B on September 1954.

On 2 October 1954, the 5th Transportation Battalion was reorganized with the following companies:

- 169th Transportation Company (Amphibious Truck)
- 206th Transportation Company (Amphibious Truck)
- 489th Transportation Company (Amphibious Truck)
- 604th Transportation Company (Amphibious Truck)
- 607th Transportation Company (Amphibious Truck)
- 565th Transportation Company (Terminal Service)

The 5th and 54th Battalions conducted LOTS 4 at Fort Story in November.

The 5th Battalion with the 605th TAT and 565th Terminal Service Companies (approximately 276 men) conducted a LOTs exercise, 11-16 April 1955, for participation in SUNEK. Crews from the companies would link up with prepositioned equipment to conduct the LOTS operation.

Effective 2400 hours, 24 February 1955, the 169th, 206th, and 489th Transportation Companies (Amphibious Truck) were released from the 5th Transportation Battalion and returned to reserve status. The HHC, 5th Transportation Battalion, 605th Transportation Company (Amphibious Truck), and 565th Transportation Company (Terminal Service) was alerted for SUNEK during 11-16 April. Only the 605th Transportation Company provided support for the LOTS exercise conducted at Fort Story, 4-9 June. The HHC, 5th and 54th Transportation Battalion with four companies of the 54th conducted summer training for US Army Reserve units at Fort Story during 4-18 June. The 606th and 607th Transportation Companies (Amphibious Truck) went to Fort Eustis to conduct preparation for overseas movement (POM) for Project 572.

In 1954, Fort Story received the Barge Amphibious Resupply Cargo (BARC) LX. These amphibians with a 60-ton cargo capacity would replace the 2 ½-ton DUKWs. One BARC LX could haul the same cargo as 24 DUKWs. Consequently, HHC, 5th and 54th Transportation Battalions were inactivated on 27 June 1955, and HHD, 10th and 376th Transportation Battalions (Terminal Service) were activated and assigned to the 5th Terminal Command. The companies

formerly under the 5th Battalion were assigned to the 10th Battalion and the companies of the 54th were assigned to the 376th Battalion.

Okinawa

On 3 May 1960, it was redesignated as the 5th Transportation Battalion and activated on Okinawa on 10 May 1960. It was placed under the 9th Logistics Command, which was also activated on 10 May. Okinawa was a logistics base for the Pacific rim. The 9th Logistical Command deployed to Thailand in May 1962. The 5th Transportation Battalion was inactivated on Okinawa on 25 June 1963.

Vietnam

The 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division deployed to Vietnam in July 1965, and the rest of the division deployed in November 1967. In 1968, the division became the second airmobile division in Vietnam after the 1st Cavalry Division. On 1 July 1968, the 5th Transportation Battalion was activated as an aircraft maintenance battalion with four lettered companies, A, B, C, and D; and assigned as an organic unit of the 101st Airborne Division. The division headquarters was based at Phu Bai in I Corps Tactical Zone and operated in the central Thua Thien Province. The division participated in Operation Texas Star during 1970 and Jefferson Glenn from September 1970 to October 1971. Its aviation assets supported the ARVN incursion of Laos during Operation Lam Son 719 in February through March 1971.

As part of the drawdown and Vietnamization, the 5th Transportation Battalion departed Vietnam on 18 January 1972 and returned with the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The 5th Battalion earned the Meritorious Unit Commendation for 1968-1969 and 1969-1970, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm for 1968-1969, and the Vietnamese Civil Actions Medal, First Class for 1968-1970.

The battalion was inactivated at Fort Campbell on 18 September 1986. It was later redesignated as the 526th Support Battalion on 16 April 1994 and activated at Fort Campbell as an element of the 101st Airborne Division.