



159th Brigade History



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The 159th Aviation has a distinguished record in the annals of military history. The 159th Aviation Battalion was formed in Vietnam on 1 July 1968 from the dissolved 308th Combat Aviation Battalion. Organized as the medium and heavy lift Assault Support Helicopter Battalion (ASHB) of the [101st Airborne Division](#) the unit was comprised of three CH-47 companies and one CH-54 company.

During the Laotian incursion, the 159th ASHB was tasked to provide medium and heavy lift support for three divisions, elements of three additional divisions and a Ranger Group. This support was of a magnitude never before achieved and in the face of resistance never before encountered by a unit of this type. The heroic efforts

of the 159th ASHB, together with supporting units were, in a large part responsible for the success enjoyed by the ground forces engaged in ["LAM SON 719"](#). The 159th ASHB received the [Valorous Unit Award](#) for services in Vietnam.



In February 1972, the 159th ASHB returned to Ft. Campbell as the only CH-47 battalion in the Army, and in

September 1973, proved the feasibility of self-deployment of the CH-47. Four aircraft flew nonstop from Homestead Air Force Base, Florida to San Juan, Puerto Rico- a total of 907 nautical miles and 7 hours and 33 minutes. The battalion conducted further tests and in January 1974 flew 9 hours and 5 minutes, over 1090 nautical miles, nonstop.

A new era began in 1980 as the battalion field tested the CH-47D. Fielding of the aircraft began in 1983 and continued for three years. During this time the battalion set new lift records in the CH-47D with the innovative three hook system.

Throughout 1982 to 1986 the Battalion operated in over 21 states and six countries including Honduras, Germany, and Canada, conducting mission support for the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), disaster relief operations, emergency search and rescue operations, and Joint operations; all of this while also instructing the Royal Air Forces of Great Britain and Canada on CH-47 operations.



In November 1987, the 159th ASHB was inactivated at Ft. Campbell and the 159th Aviation Regiment was activated under the U. S. Army Regimental system at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. The 159th ASHB was redesignated as 4th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment and was activated in Kitzingen, Germany, and then relocated to Giebelstadt. The Battalion was again redesignated as the 4th Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division- "Rock of the Marne". In 1991 the Brigade deployed to Northern Iraq and Southwest Turkey in support of Operation Provide Comfort.

In October 1992 the unit returned to the U.S. and was again redesignated as the 159th Combat Aviation Group (Airborne), with Headquarters of the 159th Aviation Regiment, as part of the 18th Aviation Brigade, XVIII Airborne Corps, Ft. Bragg. The regiment upheld its history of excellence by participating in Hurricanes Andrew and Emily Relief Operations, St. Maarten Disaster Relief in direct support of the Dutch Government, and in



Operations Restore Hope, Uphold Democracy and most recently Joint Guard.

Again called upon to meet the challenge, the 159th Aviation Regiment (Airborne) has returned home to Ft. Campbell and is redesignated the 159th Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), where it will continue to ["PRESS ON"](#) for America's Army and the Untied States of America.

UNIT MISSION:

Deploy worldwide within 36 hours notification and conduct air assault and air movement operations in support of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and the XVIII Airborne Corps contingency missions.

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