

# U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

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## 21<sup>st</sup> Theater Sustainment Command parachute riggers join Sailors for joint airborne training in Sicily

By **Sgt. Frank Sanchez III**

21st Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs Office

**NAVAL AIR STATION SIGONELLA, SICILY** -- A group of paratroopers from the 21st Theater Sustainment Command's 5th Quartermaster Company traveled to this Italian island to conduct joint training and airborne operations with the U.S. Navy's Mobile Unit 8 explosive ordnance disposal team, June 22-26.



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Chief Petty Officer Nathaniel Spencer, air operations leader for the U.S. Navy's Mobile Unit 8 explosive ordnance disposal team, makes a high-altitude jump from the rear tailgate of a U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules cargo plane during joint training with Soldiers from the 21st Theater Sustainment Command's 5th Quartermaster Company at Naval Air Station Sigonella in Sicily, June 23.

The exercise, designed in part to help the units better understand each other's airborne operations and training procedures, took place at the naval air station where Mobile Unit 8 conducts airborne and high-altitude jump training.

Mobile Unit 8 is the Navy's European response force for explosive ordnance disposal, with teams deployed all over the world. The 5th is a parachute rigger company stationed in

Kaiserslautern, Germany, that supports airborne operations across Europe and Africa.

"I love the fact that we can get several branches working together to see how the Army does things and how the Navy does things, because we can always learn a lot from each

other, and it is always good to get that cross-service training,” said Petty Officer 1st Class John Delong, a special operations rigger for Mobile Unit 8.



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Soldiers from the 21st Theater Sustainment Command's 5th Quartermaster Company and members of the U.S. Navy's Mobile Unit 8 explosive ordnance disposal team line up to jump from a U.S. Air Force C-130 Hercules cargo plane during joint airborne operations at Naval Air Station Sigonella in Sicily, June 23.

The joint training also included U.S. Air Force units based at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, as the operation included several jumps from the rear tailgate of a C-130 Hercules cargo plane from the 37th Airlift Squadron with maintenance support from the 86th Maintenance Squadron.

“I think it is (an) integral part of our job to see how other branches of the military work. We see how they handle their

equipment, and they can see how we handle ours,” said Staff Sgt. Shanard Letang, the 5th's NCO-in-charge of the Sigonella mission.

Sicily was made famous during World War II thanks to the large-scale allied invasion that took place there in July 1943. Chief Warrant Officer 2 David Fabunan, the 5th's officer-in-charge during the mission there, said he was excited about jumping onto the same soil where allied Soldiers landed during that historic invasion.

“It was a good feeling. Historically, this was a good opportunity to come down here and jump on the same land that our troops did over 60 years ago,” Fabunan said.



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