

GENERAL ROBERT L. RUTHERFORD

18 OCTOBER 1994 TO 15 JULY 1996

As commander in chief of USTRANSCOM, Air Force General Robert L. Rutherford's focus was to increase the command's efficiency without decreasing its warfighting effectiveness. "The strategic plan had been laid out," he said. "The structure was in place, good people were in place. We needed to make sure we had it resourced properly."

Ensuring that USTRANSCOM better understood its customers' desires and expectations, and that customers understood USTRANSCOM's capabilities, was a priority for General Rutherford. He developed a good rapport with the regional combatant commands during the deliberate planning process and the execution of contingency and humanitarian operations around the world.

General Rutherford also forged greater teamwork with the component commands--Air Mobility Command, Military Traffic Management Command, and Military Sealift Command--and got them to focus more on the common-user transportation mission as opposed to their Service-unique responsibilities.

Readiness was another of his focus areas. The Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) program, established in 1951 as the mechanism for obtaining commercial airline industry augmentation during wartime, was expanded to include aeromedical airlift. General Rutherford championed the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement, a program similar to CRAF on the sealift side. He also helped develop the Maritime Security Program to provide financial assistance to offset the increased costs of operating a US-flagged vessel in return for commitment of vessel capacity and intermodal transportation resources for government use when needed.

To fill a shortfall in military sealift revealed by the Persian Gulf War, General Rutherford supported the acquisition of 19 Large Medium Speed Roll-On/Roll-Off (RO/RO) ships for the surge and prepositioning fleets and more RO/ROs for the Ready Reserve Force. Finally, the C-17 reached initial operating capability during General Rutherford's tenure.

The command also picked up a new mission: centralized scheduling of the Department of Defense's operational support airlift fleet in the continental United States. The Joint Operational Support Airlift Center was activated under USTRANSCOM to carry out this function.

USTRANSCOM remained heavily engaged operationally during General Rutherford's tenure. The command supported Joint Endeavor, the deployment of a NATO-led multinational peacekeeping force to implement a peace agreement in Bosnia. The command delivered 24,000 passengers and 64,000 short tons of cargo by air, along with 400,000 square feet of cargo via surface transportation.



Other operations of note included the evacuation of 2,444 American citizens and citizens of other countries from Liberia after an outbreak of civil war; and humanitarian operations in Angola, Rwanda, Albania, Germany, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Laos, Japan, Zambia, Mongolia, Ukraine, and Croatia.

"I think we have improved our efficiency *and* our effectiveness," General Rutherford observed at the end of his tenure at USTRANSCOM. "It is not perfect, and it has a long way to go. But given where we started, I think we've come a long way."

