



**ONLY THOSE WILLING TO DIE FOR A
NOBLE IDEAL DESERVE TO LIVE**





ESCUADRÓN DE ZAPADORES PARACAIDISTAS

"ONLY THOSE WILLING TO DIE FOR A
NOBLE IDEAL DESERVE TO LIVE"

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Chapter 1

Greetings from the Unit Commander

Dear friend:

Let me welcome you to the Spanish Air Force Unit: EZAPAC.

EZAPAC is the heir to the first parachutist unit of the Spanish Armed Forces: the First Parachutist Flag of the Air Force, founded in 1947. Furthermore, it is the Air Force Special Operations Unit and the surface element of the Special Air Operations, being a world-wide reference in Special Operations Air-Land Integration (SOALI).

The EZAPAC combines inherent values of the Spanish Air Force such as availability, commitment, loyalty, teamwork, professionalism and exemplary behavior with other intrinsic characteristics such as effort, sacrifice and discipline. These values form the real character of this Unit, together with state-of-the-art technical means that allow us to accomplish our main tasks.

Selection process in EZAPAC is one of the more demanding in our Armed Forces. All our staff are parachutists and, only the chosen ones deserve wearing the Green Beret after extensive training.

Our SOF operators are at the technological vanguard of communication & information systems, weapons and special equipment that allow them to operate in any type of environment and fulfill a wide spectrum of tasks.

Our operators are specialized in a full array of duties: Close Air support (JTAC), Combat Control (CCT), Personnel Recovery (PR), intelligence, weapons, vehicles, snipers, special equipment, tactical casualty care, remote piloted aerial systems, mountain, diving and parachuting.

Let me finish stating one of our axioms: "The parachutist requires a thorough training. Much more than any other soldier. Because, in the war, diverse material will have to be employed and you might be arisen to command your partners, or become isolated. In these situations you will have to perform, simultaneously, as soldier and commander."

*EZAPAC Commander
Lieutenant Colonel*

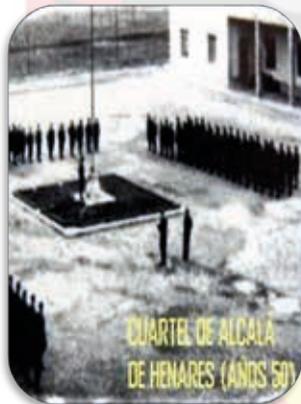
*Agustín Donato Lozano Gay
"Only those willing to die for a noble ideal deserve to live"*



Chapter 2 The Parachutist Sapper Squadron

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF THE EZAPAC

The Parachutist Sapper Squadron (EZAPAC) is heir to the first parachutist unit of the Spanish Armed Forces. Its origins are in the First Flag of the First Legion of Aviation Troops created in 1946, planned to be parachutist. This intention was met in January 1st, 1947, when it came to be named the First Parachutist Flag, breaking away as of that moment from the First Legion of Aviation Troops. It came to answer directly to Central Air Region Headquarters, and its service was reserved to the Air Force high command.



Already at that time it was assigned missions of strategic nature, since it was an air raid unit capable of conducting commando-type actions behind enemy lines, as far as its own aviation could operate.

When in 1953 it is renamed the First Parachutist Squadron, it is assigned the task of “executing insidious actions behind enemy lines” as well as “supporting aviation by capturing and activating airfields”. These tasks became the seed of the Special Operations Units subsequently created in Spain by the Army after the first experimental commando course in 1957.

The current name comes from 1965, when the former was renamed Parachutist Sapper Wing (*Escuadrilla de Zapadores Paracaidistas- EZAPAC*).

In 2002, it is given Squadron entity, increasing its workforce and means to fulfill its assigned Special Operations missions.



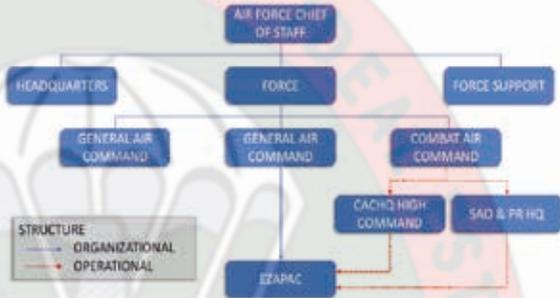


Organizational and Operational Structure of the EZAPAC

TASKS

Special Operations are defined as military operations carried out by specifically designed forces, organized, trained and equipped to achieve high value objectives, in sensitive or hostile areas, by using unconventional and often innovative tactics and equipment in whatever stage of the conflict.

The Parachutist Sapper Squadron (EZAPAC) is the Air Force Special Operations unit. An added value when compared to the Special Operations Command (MOE) or Naval Special Warfare (FGNE) units resides in its specific aerial nature and the unique ability to integrate air power with land forces, in the Special Operations Air-Land Integration (SOALI) concept.



The Squadron also constitutes the land element in SOF Air Operations (SAO) which the Air Force conforms around fixed-wing (35th) and rotary-wing (48th) assets.

Within these SAO, the EZAPAC organizes operational teams and contributes specialized personnel to the Command and Control structures, to optimize integration of air power in Special Operations. Its roles can be grouped up in three categories:

Joint Fire Support:, providing Close Air Support coordinated with the land element's scheme of maneuver, Ground Assisted Air Interdiction and Terminal Guidance Operations against high value targets primarily in benefit of the Air Power.



Combat Control Team, provide the ability to locate, identify and mark Drop, Extraction or Landing Zones for either fixed or rotary-winged assets, exercising tactical combat control and weather soundings in these areas.0

Personnel Recovery, locating, identifying and providing support (comms, protection, medical aid...) to isolated personnel and assisting in their recovery or extraction, as well as the recovery of material when needed.



All of this in addition to the tasks assigned to the other Special Operations units:

Direct Action, offensive actions carried out with precision and the element of surprise against targets where conventional methods or equipment are inconvenient. Within these types of operations are air raids, Terminal Guidance Operations, Personnel Recovery and targets of opportunity.



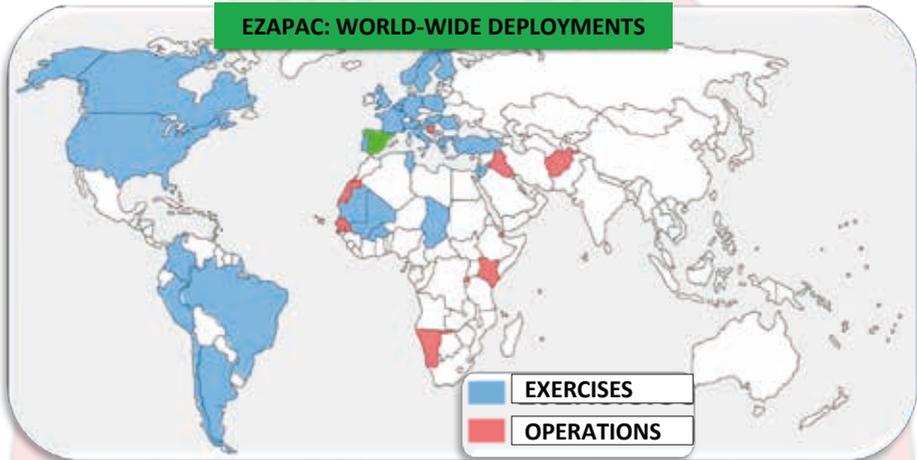
Special Reconnaissance, to supplement theater ISR assets. Includes area reconnaissance for specific areas of interest, threat and target analysis, post-mission and Battle Damage Assessments.

Military Assistance, encompasses a wide array of activities to support allied or friendly forces, from basic advice or training to enable and accompanying those forces as they progress in their mission.





EZAPAC Missions and Deployments



The EZAPAC, still as the Air Force First Parachutist Squadron, was deployed for the first time to the Ifni War (1957-1958), having its baptism of fire and conducting its first combat jump from French aircraft in the vicinity of Hagunia and Smara



Between November 7th and December 20th, they also participated in Operation Golondrina (evacuation of the former Spanish Sahara).

The EZAPAC has had an almost uninterrupted international presence in diverse missions since 1989 till this day almost continuously:

- Teams were deployed to Namibia between **1989-1990** as part of the United Nations mission **UNTAG** to verify and guarantee democratic elections and the consolidation of the newly formed government.



- **1993 – 2000**, Deployments were carried out in **Bosnia** between within **UNPROFOR** (subsequently **IFOR** and **SFOR**), shaping the core of the Tactical Air Control Parties. The callsign **BULLFIGHTER** was first assigned in this mission and used from then until nowadays and by which the Air Force JTACs are renowned.

- **1994**: Deployment to **Rwanda** within **UNAMIR** to re-establish the situation between Hutus and Tutsis.
- **2002 - 2004**, deployments in **Djibouti** within Operation **Enduring Freedom** in the Global War on Terror.





2004 - 2015, initial deployment to **Afghanistan** (Mazar-i-Sharif) was accomplished in August 2004. Three TACPs with their corresponding support.

From 2005, under Operation ISAF, EZAPAC deploys an Extraction Force / Pararescue Jumper team along with the 48th wing Superpuma helos and up to five TACPs in Herat and Qala-i-naw.

The last EZAPAC contingent returned to Spain from Afghanistan in October 2015, putting an end to an uninterrupted presence of the Squadron of 11 years.



Since February 2015 till the present day, the EZAPAC is deployed in **Iraq** within CJSOTF, focused on training and enabling Iraqi SWAT and Special Forces in their fight against DAESH with a SOALI embedded in a Spanish SOTG located in Baghdad.

In addition, a TACP was deployed in Besmayah from 2015 to 2020 in support of a Spanish Army Battalion.



From August 28th, 2016 until now the EZAPAC was deployed in **Senegal** within **Cooperative Security**, with a goal to strengthen military capabilities in the ambit of prevention and stabilization in the Sahel area. The Squadron was requested to lead the creation of a Special Forces unit in the Senegalese Air Force.

The Unit is expecting to maintain the current deployment in Iraq, with a elemental SOALI Team embedded in the Spanish SOTG and an intermittent Mobile Training Team (MTT) in Senegal.



The Parachutist Sapper

To speak of the valor of the people that comprise this Unit is to describe the characteristic of will; a trait which pushes you forward, resolutely endeavoring to succeed in any task assigned, whatever the danger.

As it is said in one of the mottos inherited from the First Flag: "A profound camaraderie and maximum esprit de corps must reign amongst paratroopers; the will and disposition to endure, cheerful and optimistic, the hardships of battle is born from this brotherhood".



Selection

To become a member of the Unit one needs to overcome a thorough and rigorous training of selective nature, that includes the parachuting course, and which qualifies the personnel to be able to integrate with the SOTU-ALI teams and deploy abroad on whatever mission ordered.

Not all that decide to access one of the few posts offered as Officer, NCO or enlisted are allowed to remain in the Unit.

EZAPAC selection consists of two phases, basic and advanced training, which provide the trainee the necessary character to surpass his limits and learn everything required to join one of the teams where he will continue specializing with further courses such as HALO/HAHO or Combat Control.

This selection together with the parachuting course is sine qua non for obtaining the prized green beret. Duration is approximately 10 months and has a 30-40% success rate, which clearly indicates the demanding and strenuous nature of selection.





Training

Maintaining proficiency is not an easy task. It requires extensive and continuous training with biannual evaluations. Firstly, through specialization courses such as the aforementioned HALO/HAHO MFF, combat diving, mountaineering, paramedic, CCT or Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC). Secondly, through team training both in the Unit or throughout the array of exercises in which EZAPAC participates annually worldwide.



Physical training plays a key role in the operator's life, having to pass annual PT tests to maintain an operational status. This is crucial as one can expect to be rapidly deployed at any given moment, anywhere in the world.

Certain personnel provide support in the Combat Support Unit while maintaining the Green beret or operational status. EZAPAC trains its support personnel in areas such as mechanics, weapons, parachute rigging or computers and communications systems.

Experience

The ultimate goal of selection and training is to piece together the operational teams, where experienced veterans are united with young blood.

Being the Spanish Armed Forces pioneer parachutist unit, EZAPAC has a long trajectory in this field, but it has also been working for many decades with air assets, making this unit a reference when regarding air-land integration, collecting ample experience in diverse theaters of operations.



As the operator becomes a veteran, his experience is used to generate new doctrine, update operating procedures or lend a hand in any of the other sections of the EZAPAC: Operations, Planning, Intelligence, Personnel or Financial Resources.

Motivation



Operators form a team which trains with tenacity, day by day, for complex situations that benefit air power; those in which they'll make use of the most sophisticated communications equipment, weapons or explosives. Those in which they'll insert by any means, be it on foot, by vehicles, water, parachute or other air assets.

A team trained to approach an objective, compromising their personal security, so that they can provide crucial information that will allow the command to take appropriate decisions.

A team that trains allied Special Forces, in whatever country needed, to strengthen security in our own homeland.

A team that participates in Close Air Support missions, in mutual confidence with the pilot, since one's security depends on the other.

A team that, in combat control missions, is willing to put their security at risk so an aircraft can land safely at its destination.

A team that trains to save the lives of those isolated in hostile territory or in the middle of the ocean, risking their own lives wherever deemed necessary.

A team that always supports the local population when danger strikes, whether in massive flash floods, earthquakes or virus outbreaks. Without ever looking away.

In a simple way, the motivation of an operator is always to be the best while being the most humble in service to the Nation.



Equipment

The Squadron has a wide array of equipment available to the teams to better tailor each mission. The following is an example of the material:



- **PARACHUTING:** Tactical, tandem and sporty parachutes. Able to drop cargo and insert from very high altitude with the employment of oxygen.
- **SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:** Laser designators, thermal cameras and night vision devices, IR pointers, Full Motion Video (ROVER) with video downlink and data uplink, weather sounding, visual and IR airfield markers.
- **RPAS:** micro and nano UAS.



- **COMMUNICATIONS:** multiband LOS and BLOS, cyphered Harris radio equipment.
- **ARMAMENT:** Assault and sniper rifles, handguns, shotguns, light, medium and heavy machine guns, mortars, Rocket Propelled Grenades.





• **EXPLOSIVES AND DIVERSE HAND GRENADES.**



• **VEHICLES:** More than 85 vehicles, standing out the RG-31 and the ST5 URO tactical vehicles, as well as different watercraft for amphibious insertions.



Records and Milestones

The Squadron is pioneer in high altitude parachuting with the use of oxygen, introducing this insertion method in Spain in the year 1978. The Spanish jump altitude record from an airplane was established the 26th of June, 1987, and still hasn't been broken. 35,500 feet, five men, in a High Altitude Low Opening (HALO) jump from a C-130 Hercules.

It is also in possession of the record 50-kilometer navigation distance in a High Altitude High Opening (HAHO) jump in 1988.

In the year 1997, the Spanish TV show "Al filo de lo imposible" and the EZAPAC broke the Spanish jump altitude record from a hot air balloon at 38,500 feet. These records show their professionalism and high operational capabilities.



The EZAPAC introduced tandem passenger jumps in Spain in the year 1989. In May, 2018, it became the first Spanish unit to perform a tandem night jump, in which an operator inserted a military working dog and its handler. In June 2020, a tandem into water was accomplished; and lately, in May 2022 a tandem with oxygen (HALO) was performed.





Supporting State Effort

Between January 8th, 1987 and July 22nd, 1991, the Unit participated in Search and Rescue operations in the Atlantic Ocean, assisting in the recovery of 250 shipwreck survivors.

In the years 1987, 1988 and 1989 the Wing (soon to be Squadron) assisted in various campaigns in the Region of Murcia during massive flash floods.

For its actions during this period of mayhem, the Civil Defense awarded the Unit the Silver Medal with blue ribbon. Under similar circumstances, the Unit was once again called upon to help the civilian population that was suffering the consequences of a localized, extreme downpour in September 2019. On this occasion, the work of the one hundred sappers participating was recognized by the Government of the Region of Murcia.



Both natural and environmental disasters have seen the Unit in action. Such is the case of the "Prestige" oil spill that affected the coast of Galicia back in 2002 or the earthquakes in Lorca in 2011 where the Unit helped the population in those critical initial moments.

Homeland security has also been a task in extraordinary circumstances like the aftermath of the terrorist attack on March 11th, 2004, or in the International Exposition celebrated in Zaragoza where snipers aboard helicopters were tasked with antiterrorism duties.



Recently, COVID-19 has had the members of the Unit participating in various points of the Region of Murcia (Lorca, Cieza and Murcia capital) in Operation Balmis, performing military presence and reconnaissance patrols supporting and cooperating with other law enforcement agencies.



EZAPAC, Beret and Motto

Upon return from the Sidi-Ifni campaign in 1958, the traditional aviation troops' cap was replaced by the mythical black beret, with the emblem of the First Squadron on it. They also created their own creed, in a form of parachutist mottos which still guide the conduct of Unit members today and established as tradition for all hard times the Unit's motto: "Only those willing to die for a noble cause deserve to live".



The black beret, characteristic of parachutist units in Spain, was replaced the 18th of May, 1997 by the green beret, distinctive service headgear for many countries' Special Operations Forces. In spite of this historical change, the black ribbon was maintained as a constant tribute to fallen comrades.

The Emblem

The Unit's emblem is composed of three fundamental elements: the **combat knife** (inherited from the First Parachutist Flag) unique due to its double-edged, inverted blade pointing downwards in sign of initiative and aggressiveness; the **parachute** as it represents a parachutist unit; and the **wings**, as an international emblem for aviation.

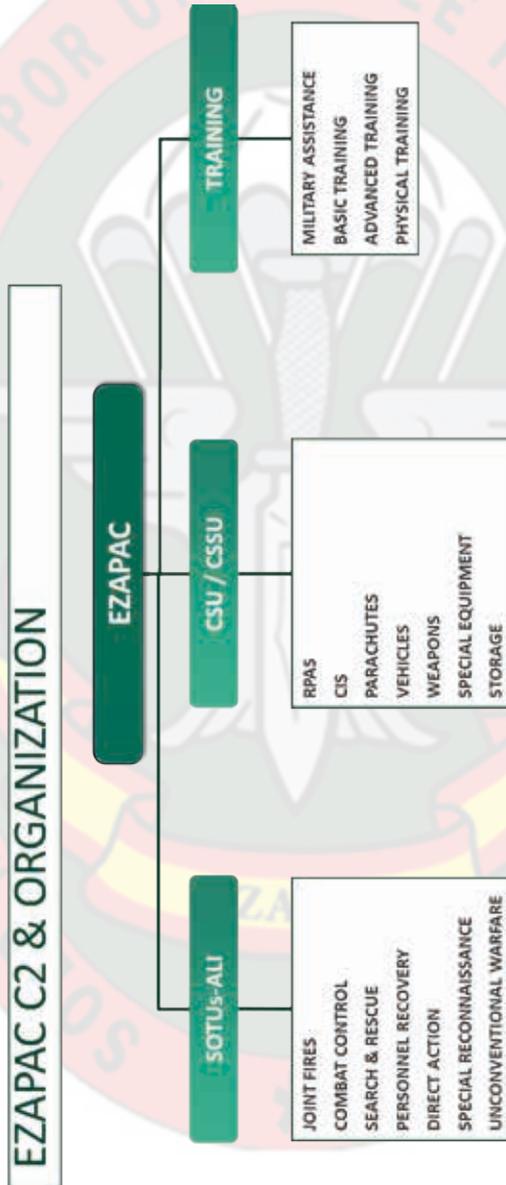


The Unit's name, in acronym, is placed on the bottom of the emblem, over a Spanish flag. Bordering the ensemble is the Unit's motto, inherited from the First Flag of Aviation Troops and from the First Parachutist Squadron.





Chapter 3 EZAPAC Structure





Chapter 4 Alcantarilla Air Base, location and facilities

LOCATION

EZAPAC is an independent unit located inside of Alcantarilla Air Base, which provides the necessary logistical and administrative support.

The base itself is located 8 kilometers southwest of Murcia capital in the municipality of Alcantarilla and covers approximately 10 square kilometers with an average elevation of 70 meters.

The EZAPAC has different departments distributed throughout the base. (See map).



ESCUADRÓN DE ZAPADORES PARACAIDISTAS

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Web: www.ejercitodelaire.mde.es (Oficial Page)



IF YOU YOU HAVE A QR CODE READER, SCAN TO START THE TRAVEL ROUTE.



There are two airports near the air base:

International Airport of the Region of Murcia.

25 km from Alcantarilla on the A-30 motorway - Exit 161.

Phone: 913.211.000

El Altet Airport (Alicante).

74 km from Murcia on the A-70 motorway - Exit 22.

Phone: 966.919.100



At the entrance of the base there is a bus stop:

Alcantarilla - Murcia (Line 44)

Alcantarilla - El Palmar - Beniaján (Line 27)

Alcantarilla - Molina de Segura (Line 41) LAT

Alcantarilla - University Campus (Line 38) LAT

Alcantarilla - Torrevieja (Line) LATLAT Tel.: 968.250.088 - www.latbus.com

San Andrés bus station (Murcia) Phone: 968.292.211

Radio-Taxis Alcantarilla

at C/ Mayor, next to Entrevías 968.800.042

Radio-Taxis Murcia

Phone: 968.297.700 / 968.248.800 (24H)



Base housing

There are housing areas available for enlisted, NCOs and officers on base where they can stay for short periods or use as a permanent residence.

Enlisted. This dorm-type of housing is standard for the Armed Forces. There are rooms that can house up to four individuals, each with a bed, closet, desk and 5.5m² per person. They all have WiFi and air conditioning system. Each hall has restrooms and showers on one end, a kitchen area to prepare coffee, sandwiches or similar with a microwave and a refrigerator. On the bottom floor there is a laundromat that works with coins.

NCOs and Officers. This type of housing is standard for the Armed Forces. There are rooms that can house up to two individuals, each with a bed, closet, refrigerator, desk and 5.5m² per person. They also have an air conditioning system, their own bathroom and access to WiFi. There is a shared laundromat that works with coins.

Base facilities

Morale, Welfare and Recreation.

- The base has a gym and other sport facilities year round, plus a swimming pool for summer months.
- There is a library, newspaper archive and computers with access to intranet and others for internet. The enlisted help desk is open from 0800 to 2000.

Base Access Point



Main gate entry / exit point 



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