

*U.S. Special Operations Command
Parachute Demonstration Team
“The Para-Commandos”*



2015 Support Manual



UNITED STATES SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND
7701 TAMPA POINT BLVD.
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA 33621-5323

Special Operations Command Parachute Team, “The Para-Commandos”

MEMORANDUM FOR: Para-Commando Show Sponsors

SUBJECT: Para-Commando Support Requirements

1. On behalf of the Special Operations Command’s (SOCOM) Parachute Team, “The Para-Commandos,” thank you for requesting the Para-Commandos to perform at your event. Our participation in your event has been approved and we will do everything we can to help make your event successful.
2. Our participation in your event comes with some requirements you must fulfill in order for us to provide the type of first-class demonstration that you expect. These requirements are detailed in this manual. Please read this manual thoroughly and get started on the described requirements as soon as possible in order to insure our mutual success. Also as a reminder, the members of the Para-Commandos are fully deployable, and our support may be cancelled on short notice based on military mission requirements.
3. While at your event, we welcome the opportunity to perform as often as twice a day. For air shows, we usually do a practice day/media event the day prior. At that media event /practice day, we MAY be able to do a single tandem skydive with a person nominated by you in conjunction with our practice. We cannot do tandems in conjunction with our regular show. Details on our tandem program are included in this manual.
4. Sergeant First Class Kyle Margelofsky, Lieutenant Colonel Bill Walsh & I are your points of contact. You can reach us all at Para-Commandos@socom.mil. We can be reached by phone at (813) 826-7714/7719 or (813) 507-4640.

Keith Walter

Keith Walter
Team Leader

SHOW FEES: The Para-Commandos do not have a show fee. All of our performances are free of charge. However, there are some support you must provide. These are detailed below.

LOCAL SHOWS: For shows in the local Tampa area, where we can reasonably arrive, perform, and return to MacDill Air Force Base in the same day, you must provide the team with all of the support listed in this manual, starting with the Paragraph marked "AIRCRAFT." You are also responsible for providing the team with unlimited water. As a general rule, we consider shows local if they are within a 100 mile radius of MacDill AFB, but other factors are also considered, such as the time of day of your event, route, traffic, and logistical issues associated with your event. The Team Leader makes the decision whether an overnight stay is required based on the safety of the Team.

SHOWS REQUIRING OVERNIGHT TRAVEL: For shows requiring overnight travel you are responsible for coordinating our logistical support. If we fly military air into your event, you must coordinate for 2 rental cars and two rental vans or SUVs at the government rate; we will pay for them. You must reserve 10 hotel rooms at the government rate under the name "SOCOM Para-Commandos." These rooms must be single occupancy, non-smoking rooms and must all be at the same hotel within 15 minutes driving time from your event. Hotels must be decent. Reserve the hotel with your credit card, get us the info and we will change it to our credit cards prior to the mandatory charge to your account occurring.

FOR GOVERNMENT SHOWS REQUIRING OVERNIGHT TRAVEL: You are responsible to provide all logistical support as detailed above. However, comparable GSA vehicles are suitable substitutes for rental vehicles.

ADVANCE REPRESENTATIVE: For shows requiring overnight travel, the team may send an advance representative to your location a day prior to the team's arrival. His role is to prepare for arrival of the team's main element and to assist you in any final coordination.

AIRCRAFT: Although we attempt to assist you, it is your responsibility to locate, provide and pay for a safe, suitable aircraft to be used as our jump aircraft. The Para-Commandos can jump from aircraft as small as a Cessna 182 and as large as a C-5, providing it is safe to jump and flown by a properly rated pilot. The aircraft may be military or civilian and either fixed or rotary wing. If you coordinate for a military aircraft, you may be responsible for providing logistical support for both the aircrew and the aircraft. These requirements are in addition to the SOCOM Para-Commandos support and must be coordinated with the unit providing the aircraft.

LIAISON: You must assign someone to be your liaison to us. This person must be empowered to make decisions and must be available and dedicated to the team throughout the event. If you are the event coordinator, we recommend you assign someone who works with you as our liaison, since you will be very busy during the show itself.

NARRATION: All of our demonstrations are narrated by a Para-Commando. You must provide an adequate public address system that is capable of broadcasting to the entire audience. The microphone must be in a location that provides an unobstructed view of the entire drop zone and the aircraft; and for sporting events cannot be in the press box but must be on the field. The system must support a compact disc/IPOD for our background music; a cordless microphone is preferred. **NOTE:** The narration is a key part of our performance and enables us to educate the U.S. public about who SOCOM is and what SOCOM does. Time on the microphone is one of our requirements, which we waive in only very limited instances.

GROUND SUPPORT: As a general rule, we require a minimum of a 50 yard by 50 yard landing area, but we can sometimes jump in smaller areas and sometimes will need larger areas. Differences are for safety and take into account obstacles, wind direction and speed, aircraft type, and etc. You must submit an aerial photo with requested landing area no later than 60 days prior to your event. The photo of the landing area must have either a physical address or a latitude/longitude coordinate on it so we can find it using an aerial photo program. During our show, you must insure the landing area is well marked, and secured by adequate crowd control measures to insure the safety of both the team and the spectators. You must also provide an individual with a dedicated vehicle to recover a jettisoned main parachute should one of the jumpers have a parachute malfunction during the show. We require a parking pass per vehicle and the parking area must be within 100 yards of the landing area, as we have heavy equipment that must be transported. For all events but sporting events, we require a dedicated autograph area. Generally speaking, two tables and ten chairs in the general vicinity of our landing area for the team to hand out brochures and sign autographs works perfectly.

MEDICAL SUPPORT: An emergency response vehicle with a paramedic or emergency medical technician must be on location or on alert nearby. If the medical technician is not on site, the sponsor must provide a direct phone number to the pre-alerted medical element.

WATER HAZARDS: If there is a significant body of water near the landing area, a rescue boat with crew must be available to recover any jumpers who land there, either accidentally or as a pre-planned alternate landing site. The Team Leader will inform you if you need to coordinate for this coverage based on his assessment of the landing area from your aerial photo. If water recovery is needed, you can usually coordinate with the local police to provide this coverage.

SOCIAL ENGAGEMENTS: The Para-Commandos will attempt to attend your social functions, if invited. If you would like the team to attend your gathering, please inform us of the date, time, location and appropriate attire, as well as any special requests associated with the engagement at least 10 days prior to the event. Attendance at the social must be at no charge to the Para-Commandos unless the cost of the event includes a meal which is within the per diem rate of the area.

WEATHER CONSIDERATIONS: Weather conditions must be within the limitations of the Federal Aviation Administration regulations and our standard operating procedures. Winds cannot be excessive and differ depending on hazards in the area, direction, size of the landing area, turbulence, and many other factors. The Team Leader is responsible for the safety of both the team and the crowd and he will make the final Jump/No Jump decision.

SMOKE: Except when traveling via commercial air, the team travels with military issued smoke canisters to enhance our visibility to the crowd. These smoke canisters require additional security and must be properly secured; usually on a military base or in a police facility. Coordinating for this security is the sponsor's responsibility.

Types of Demonstration Jumps

SOLO FLAG JUMPER: With the exception of sporting events, our shows generally start with a single demonstrator freefalling with attached smoke canisters to a designated opening altitude and deploying his parachute. After the main parachute opens, the jumper deploys a flag (usually the US Flag, the SOCOM Flag or the POW/MIA flag), and lands in the target area, often in conjunction with music such as the national anthem. The next pass of the team will be 1-3 minutes after he lands. Our show time starts with the narrator taking the microphone 3 minutes prior to the solo jumper exiting

the aircraft and ends 3 minutes after the team lands, waves to the crowd, and the Narrator passes the microphone back to the host. NOTE: Before every show, we require a streamer pass over the landing area. During the streamer pass, we fly over our landing area and throw colored paper streamers out of the aircraft from 2000-3000 feet. The purpose of the streamer pass is to determine wind direction / speed and is generally 10 minutes or so before the show begins.

MASS EXIT DEMONSTRATION: Approximately 1-3 minutes after the Solo Flag Jumper lands, the entire team simultaneously exits the aircraft from 8,500 to 13,500 feet and builds a free fall formation. At a pre-determined altitude, the team members separate, open their parachutes, and land in the target area. Jumpers will generally wear smoke canisters so that spectators can track their movements during the jump. The Mass Exit show normally takes 10-12 minutes to perform.

FULL SHOW: Our full show involves several different maneuvers and involves multiple jump passes during which we get out in smaller groups. Our full show typically lasts 18-21 minutes.

LOW SHOW: Our low show is done when weather, altitude restrictions, or sponsor needs require us to exit at or below 5,000 feet AGL. We have several different variants of our low shows and will tailor our performance for you. Our low shows take 10-15 minutes to complete.

SPECIAL DEMONSTRATIONS / STADIUM JUMPS: Are conducted for high visibility events such as professional or college sporting events where one of our other shows would not be suitable. The type of show we do depends on the event, time available, and the sponsor's needs.

NIGHT JUMPS: The Para-Commandos do have a night jump capability. Our night jumps include a short freefall followed by a canopy landing in the well-lit target area. All of our jumpers will be marked with high visibility strobe lights to help the crowd see the jumpers. We are working to develop a night pyro show. Ask about its availability.

TANDEMS: The SOCOM Para-Commandos have a Tandem Program and may be able to do a single tandem in conjunction with your Air Show on the media/practice day only. If you want to pursue a Tandem in conjunction with your Air Show, you must inquire with the Para-Commandos on availability NLT 60 days prior to your event. Our ability to do tandems in conjunction with your air show is limited by both availability of properly qualified personnel and the type of aircraft from which we are jumping. If we have the right combo of aircraft and personnel, you must provide us with your nominee's name NLT 30 days prior to your show. We recommend you nominate someone who will help increase the attendance at your event, such as the local mayor, news anchor, etc. The nominee must be in good health and weigh less than 215 lbs. If your event is not an air show or we do not have the right combination of personnel and aircraft at your event, you may nominate a qualified person to tandem with us at our training facility at Zephyrhills, FL, at another time.

ADVERTISING AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS: We require that you publicize the Para-Commandos participation in your event and include information about the team on your website, program information, and at your media center. We will assist in this endeavor by providing you with press releases, fact sheets, photos, and etc. We will also attempt to schedule multiple media engagements while supporting your event. At the end of each of our shows, if appropriate and time permits, team members will interface with the spectators, distribute information about SOCOM and the Para-Commandos, and will be available for pictures and to sign autographs. For air shows, if there are any school visits or civic groups you would like team members to address please let us know 30 days out so we can make proper arrangements.

SPONSOR CHECKLIST

NLT 60 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR EVENT Sooner is better. Submit properly filled out and SIGNED DD Form 2535 to para-commandos@socom.mil

- Submit aerial photo with Lat/Long or physical Address with DZ location marked
- Submit request for single VIP tandem (air show media days ONLY)

NLT 45 DAY S PRIOR TO YOUR EVENT (Sooner is better!)

- Contact para-commandos@socom.mil for approval/disapproval status
- Make hotel reservations at suitable hotel IAW PC TL guidance

NLT 30 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR EVENT

- insure hotel rooms and rental vehicles are reserved, if applicable
- Coordinate for suitable jump aircraft
- Designate a liaison to the PC's
- Coordinate for Medical Coverage
- Coordinate for Water Recovery
- Coordinate for Parachute Recovery (Can be Team Liaison)
- Coordinate for Sound System to include compact disc player
- Coordinate for Smoke Security
- Coordinate for school visits or civic group presentations
- Nominate Tandem Candidate, if applicable

NLT 7 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR EVENT

- Do telephonic walk thru / talk thru of your event with POC
- Provide a written detailed timeline of your event (Don't forget the Streamer Pass)
- Provide POC with list of Social Engagements, VIPS in attendance and special requests
- Insure adequate landing area marking / crowd control plan is in place
- Provide press release to local media

NLT 1 DAY PRIOR TO YOUR EVENT

- Meet Advance Man or do final telephonic walk thru / talk thru with POC
- Provide parking passes and credentials
- Provide second press release to local media

EVENT DAY: Meet entire team at landing area at pre-coordinated time. At that time -

- Provide any last minute time changes
- Water recovery must be in place with contact method
- Medic must be in place with contact method
- Parachute recovery liaison must be in place with contact method
- Landing Area must be marked with crowd control mechanisms in place
- Sound system must be in place
- Water must be available