



The 17th Stormo Incursori Makes History: First NATO Unit Accredited by AFSOC for Global Access Operations

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In an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape, Italian excellence in the field of **Special Operations** marks a historic turning point. The **17th Stormo Incursori** of the Italian Air Force has officially received accreditation from the U.S. **Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC)**.

This recognition is not just a technical certification: it attests to full interoperability with the United States Armed Forces in **Global Access Operations (GAO)**. With this achievement, Italy boasts an absolute first, becoming the **first NATO nation** to achieve such qualification.

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The Path to Accreditation

The process leading to this result was long and rigorous, starting in **July 2023**. The Incursori underwent a multi-level evaluation process:

- **Documentary and procedural checks:** Analysis of operational protocols in line with U.S. standards.
- **Technical-operational validation:** Field tests under the direct supervision of American instructors and evaluators.
- **CCSL-1 Course:** The cycle concluded with the validation of the *Combat Controller Skill Level 1* course, featuring students from the 9th BIAM Course (Brevetto Incursore dell’Aeronautica Militare).

The exercises took place in extreme conditions, including nighttime scenarios and semi-permissive environments, to test the resilience and precision of advanced projection.

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The Combat Control Capability: A Unique Italian Asset

The 17th Stormo Incursori confirms itself as the only unit of the Italian Defense to express the **Combat Control** capability. But what makes this setup so strategic?

Function	Operational Description
Runway Management	Security and control of takeoffs/landings on semi-prepared or improvised runways.
Area Assessment	Analysis of terrain and landing zones in remote or hostile contexts.
Traffic Control	Management of military and civilian air traffic in crisis zones.
Rapid Projection	Capability to insert into austere areas to ensure access for allied forces.

A Pillar for European Defense and NATO

The AFSOC accreditation officially projects Italy into the select group of elite units capable of operating jointly with the **United States Air Force Special Operations Command**

(USAFSOC) in multi-domain scenarios.

"This achievement represents a prestigious milestone not only for the 17th Stormo but for the entire Italian Defense, confirming the ability to field personnel with world-class technical-military skills."

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Conclusions

The recognition obtained consolidates Italy's role as a **key and interoperable player** in the framework of NATO Special Operations. In an era characterized by the need for rapid and integrated responses, the 17th Stormo Incursori ensures the nation an advanced aerospace posture, ready to operate wherever secure and precise global access is required.

News link: <https://www.aeronautica.difesa.it/news/forze-speciali-il-17-stormo-incursori-primo-reparto-nato-accreditato-afsoc-per-le-global-access-operations/>