The Acquisitors of the 185th RRAO Folgore in the Arizona Desert at EMERALD WARRIOR 2025

Published on 17/02/2025

On Friday, February 14, 2025, the exercise **Emerald Warrior 2025** concluded in Arizona, USA, featuring the participation of an Operational Detachment of the 185th Paratroopers Reconnaissance and Target Acquisition Regiment Folgore, along with personnel from the 17th Wing of the Italian Air Force.

The Air Force Special Operations Command Exercise

The event, organized by the AFSOC (Air Force Special Operations Command), aimed to integrate Special Forces with aerial assets. In particular, the operators of the **RRAO** conducted training on:

- **Free Fall Technique (TCL)** for parachuting;
- **Live-fire activities with A-10 aircraft** of the US Air Force;
- **Terminal Guidance Operations (TGO)** with the support of Italian **JTAC (Joint Terminal Attack Controller)**;
- **Treatment and evacuation of combat casualties**, thanks to the collaboration between **SOCM (Special Operations Combat Medic)** personnel and a US **SOST (Special Operations Surgical Team)**. The latter managed the evacuation of casualties aboard a **C-130J** of the **46th Air Brigade of Pisa**.

The training took place in the typical desert scenario of Arizona, an environment difficult to replicate in Europe, offering a high-level training opportunity. Shooting sessions with the portable weapons supplied to the 185th RAO were also conducted.

The exercise also included special units from the **United States, France, and Romania**, with the goal of strengthening cooperation among NATO Special Forces, making them more effective in facing future operational challenges in complex international contexts.

The 185th Paratroopers Reconnaissance Target Acquisition Regiment Folgore

The 185th Paratroopers Reconnaissance and Target Acquisition Regiment Folgore (abbreviated as 185th RRAO) is a unit of the Italian Army, since **2018** part of the special forces, composed of specifically selected and trained personnel, equipped to conduct the full spectrum of typical *Special Operations* tasks, and specialized in conducting *Special Reconnaissance* and *Terminal Guidance Operations*.

The 185th RRAO regiment has a distinctly intelligence-oriented vocation and specializes in direct actions involving the engagement of distant targets (i.e., in *stand-off* mode) using the available weaponry and all terrestrial, aerial, and naval fire platforms. The RRAO typically operates by infiltrating operational detachments equipped and trained to operate beyond enemy lines, at great distances from friendly forces, and in complete tactical isolation.

The operational component of the regiment consists of officers, non-commissioned officers, enlisted personnel, and volunteers in permanent or fixed-term service, trained and selected through a training process lasting about two years, culminating in the award of the *Target Acquisitor* brevet, with operational dependence on the Joint Special Operations Command, and is stationed in Livorno.

News link: https://www.difesa.it/smd/news-italia/esercitazione-emerald-warrior/65069.html