



## **U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND** *FACT SHEET*

U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE  
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# **THE BLACK DAGGERS**

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### **PARACHUTE DEMONSTRATION TEAM**

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command Parachute Demonstration Team — the Black Daggers — is comprised entirely of volunteers from throughout the Army special operations community. They have diverse backgrounds and various military specialties. The average age is 33 years and the average number of free fall jumps is 560. The team represents the professionalism and dedication of special operations forces.



The U.S. Army Special Operations Command, better known as USASOC, was activated Dec. 1, 1989 at Fort Bragg, N.C. USASOC is the Army component of U.S. Special Operations Command, headquartered at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

For almost three-quarters of a century, highly-trained groups of Soldiers have been inserted behind enemy lines to disrupt the movement of enemy troops and supplies to the front lines. These brave Soldiers have frequently used parachutes as a means to infiltrate without being detected. Although most of the airborne forces of the world still use round parachutes, some specialized units use the Ram Air Canopy as their primary means of infiltration.

The Black Daggers use the military variant of the Ram Air parachute, which allows a free fall parachutist the ability to jump with more than 100 lbs. of additional equipment attached to him. In addition to the extra weight, the jumper must also withstand high winds, frigid temperatures and low oxygen levels, all of which require the jumper to be highly skilled.

When exiting the aircraft, normally from an altitude of 12,500 feet, the jumpers free fall for about two miles at approximately 120 miles per hour. They fly their bodies to perform maneuvers using their hands, arms, legs and shoulders to control their flight. The parachutes used by the USASOC team are flexible wing gliders.

The Black Daggers' mission is to perform live aerial demonstrations in support of U.S. Army Special Operations Command community relations and recruiting.