



MEDIA ADVISORY

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SPECIAL TACTICS AIRMEN KILLED IN HOSTILE INCIDENT

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. – Two Special Tactics Airmen were killed at a vehicle checkpoint at a forwarding operating base when two individuals wearing Afghan National Defense and Security Forces uniforms opened fire on them, Helmand Province, Afghanistan, Aug. 25, 2015.

NATO service members returned fire and killed the shooters at Camp Antonik.

Capt. Matthew D. Roland, 27, and Staff Sgt. Forrest B. Sibley, 31, were deployed in support of OPERATION Freedom's Sentinel as ground special operations forces.

“The losses of Matt and Forrest are a terrible blow to everyone who knew them,” said Col. Wolfe Davidson, 24th Special Operations Wing commander. “These two combat controllers were incredible warriors who not only volunteered to join our nation's Special Operations Forces, but earned their way to the tip of the spear in defense of our nation.”

Roland was a Special Tactics Officer at the 23rd Special Tactics Squadron here. He graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 2010. Upon completing the rigorous STO training program in 2012, he was a team leader who supervised real-world combat preparedness training of a 35-member team. He deployed twice in his five years of service to multiple locations globally. He is survived by his parents.

Sibley was a combat controller at the 21st Special Tactics Squadron, Pope Army Airfield, N.C. He was a four-time Bronze Star medal recipient, once with the Valor device, and he had deployed four times to multiple sensitive locations around the world in his nearly seven years of service. He is survived by his parents.

Due to their extensive special operations training, both were military qualified static line jumpers, free fall jumpers, combat scuba divers, and qualified in joint terminal attack control.

Special Tactics Airmen integrate, synchronize, control air and space power to enable global access, precision strike and personnel recovery for special operations.

“The risks that these men and their teammates endured in combat and in training are all too well known to the Special Tactics community, but it does not make this great loss any easier to bear,” Davidson said. “We will honor Matt and Forrest for the legacy they left behind, embrace their families as our own and thank them eternally for their ultimate sacrifice for American freedom.”

Both the 21 STS and 23 STS fall under the 720th Special Tactics Group, 24th Special Operations Wing, the only wing solely dedicated to Special Tactics in the Air Force.

Please direct any media queries to the 24th Special Operations Wings Public Affairs at 850-884-3902, or at 24sow.PAO@us.af.mil.