

116th AIR CONTROL WING



LINEAGE

116th Fighter Bomber Wing
116th Fighter Interceptor Wing
116th Air Defense Wing
116th Air Transport Wing
116th Military Airlift Wing
116th Tactical Fighter Wing
116th Fighter Wing
116th Bomb Wing, 1 April 1996

STATIONS

Dobbins ARB, GA
Robins AFB, GA

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

F-15
B-1B
E-8C

Support Aircraft

C-26B

COMMANDERS

Col Charles M. Ford, Jr., Oct 50-1951
Col James Buck, Jul 51 - Jul 52
BG Bernard Davey, Jul 52 - Aug 56
Col Ralph G. Kuhn, Sep 56 - May 57
BG Bernard Davey, Jun 57 - Apr 63
Col Raph G. Kuhn, Apr 63 - May 65
BG Charles S. Thompson, Jr., May 65 - Apr 72
BG Billy M. Jones, Apr 72 - Jan 75
Col Ben L. Patterson, Jr., Jan 75 - May 75

BG William M. Berry, Jr., May 75 - May 77
BG Ben L. Patterson, Jr., May 77 - Nov 83
BG Charles W. Taylor, Jr., Nov 83 - Nov 88
BG Don V. Hubbard, Jan 89 - Dec 91
BG Stephen G. Kearney, Dec 91 - Dec 94
BG Bruce W. MacLane, Dec 94 - Jun 98
Col George T. Lynn, Jun 98
Col James Jones
Col Thomas Moore
Col. Jeffrey A. Herd, # 2010

Col. Henry Cyr, 461st ACW commander, during an Oct. 8 press conference at Robins. "Our hearts go out to the 116th and the 461st and their families during this time of loss," said Col. Kevin Clotfelter, 116th commander. "Please keep your thoughts and prayers of support directed toward all those affected."2014

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
Jul 1973-Nov 1974
Nov 1974-Jun 1976
Jun 1976-Jun 1977
Jun 1978-Jun 1979
Jun 1979-Apr 1983
May 1987-May 1989
Jun 1991-May 1993
Jul 1993-Jun 1995
May 1996-Apr 1998

EMBLEM

Azure, a base embattled Argent, overall three chevrons reversed of the like, the center merlon of the embattlement penetrated and fractured of the first, in chief four flight symbols descending in tactical formation Argent, all within a diminished border Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "116TH AIR CONTROL WING" in Blue letters.

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The chevrons reversed symbolize the three tactical squadrons of the group

whose primary mission forms a close support weapon rending the embattlement that symbolizes the enemy ground position, which is the target they seek and destroy. The darts represent a flight of fighter-bomber aircraft in tactical formation moving toward the enemy.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATION

The Joint STARS aircraft is an airborne battle management, command and control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft. Its primary mission is to provide ground and air commanders with ground surveillance to support attack operations and targeting that contributes to the delay, disruption and destruction of enemy forces. "While the production of the Joint STARS is coming to an end, its mission remains vital to the success of the warfighter, and we are committed to keeping the E-8C dominant for today and tomorrow's battlefield through 2025 and beyond," said David LaRochelle, director of the group. The E-8C is a modified Boeing 707-300 series commercial aircraft with the radar, communications, operations and control subsystems required to perform its operational mission. The most prominent external feature is the 40-foot long, canoe-shaped radome under the aircraft that houses a 24-foot long antenna.

In October of 1950, after the start of the Korean War, the Group activated and moved to George AFB, California where it reorganized under Tactical Air Command (TAC) as the 116th Fighter Bomber Wing flying the F-84. After several months of fighter/bomber tactical training the wing deployed to Misawa Air Base, Japan in July of 1951 to support the air defense of the northern portion of the island. Beginning in December of 1951 the wing flew attack missions against North Korean forces until July of 1952 when it returned to state control in Georgia at Dobbins AFB. There it continued to fly fighter type aircraft until 1961, including F-51s, F-84Fs, F-84Ds, and F-86Ls.

After flying fighters and bombers since its initial activation, the 116th became the Air Transport Wing on 1 June 1961 and converted to the C-97 marking a major change in wing history. Later, in December of 1966, it became the first ANG unit to receive the new C-124.

Numerous combat support missions to every corner of the globe, including Vietnam, kept the 116th busy until it again became a fighter unit in 1974, equipped with the F-100D. Designated as the 116th Tactical Fighter Wing, the 116th flew the F-100 for six accident-free years until May of 1979 when the last aircraft left Dobbins AFB for the Boneyard at Davis Monthan AFB in AZ. From then until 1996, the 116th flew F-105G, F-4D, and F-15A/B at Dobbins AFB, Georgia. During this period, the wing developed an impressive record of accomplishment and was awarded nine Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards.

As the U. S. Air Force embraced the 'Total Force' concept, Georgia Air National Guard units reacted with a professional attitude and new training. The 116th Tactical Fighter Wing completed a conversion program from the F-100 to the F-105G in September of 1979 when C-3 was declared. The F-105G 'Wild Weasel' required two crew members to serve in an electronic defense suppression role. The complexity of the new mission – in comparison to the single seat

F-100 iron bomb missions – presented a training challenge of great significance. When no higher headquarters exercises were available, the unit built its own strike exercise and arranged for U.S. Navy destroyers and fast frigates to provide the necessary electronic signals. The 116th Tactical Fighter Wing gained approval for much needed changes to the F-105 aircraft. The Wing did not deploy for annual field training as a unit but continued with ‘mini-deployments’. To create a realistic training deployment with the F-105G, the 9th Air Force IG conducted an Operational Readiness Inspection at Travis Field, Savannah, Georgia. Aircrew and maintenance crews from the 116th Tactical Fighter Wing took advantage of two deployments in 1979 to obtain realistic training with their F-105 RED FLAG exercise at Nellis AFB, Nevada in March and the CORSAIR ROUGE EXERCISE at England Air Force, Louisiana in April. During both exercises, the 116th performed ‘Wild Weasel’ tactical and hunter-killer missions required of the aircrews. At RED FLAG, crews of the 116th flew missions with F-4, A-7, F-15, and the Marine Corps ‘Harrier’. Throughout the CORSAIR ROUGE Exercise the 116 TFW flew missions with A-7 and F-4 aircraft and active duty Air Force units. Aircrews logged 124 flying hours by taking part in the two deployments. Four pilots and four electronic warfare officers achieved mission-ready status in the F-105. The Wing continued aggressive training in its electronics warfare role. It upgraded its aircrew’s capabilities through participation in higher headquarters and unit generated Composite Force Training exercises such as QUICK THRUST, SENTRY, VOLUNTEER, SENTRY DESERT FLAG, SENTRY BAMA, NAVEX, and RED FLAG. The unit developed a monthly overnight deployment of six aircraft to Eglin AFB, Florida.

After calling Dobbins AFB home for many years, the 116th was presented with a new challenge in 1996. The wing simultaneously converted from fighters to the B-1 and moved 110 miles south to Robins AFB in Warner Robins, Georgia. Having to make the most of the available facilities, including the former Strategic Air Command alert facility, the 116th Bomb Wing was quickly up and running and participated in a number of deployments and exercises around the world in the B-1B.

The 116th Bomb Wing of the Georgia Air National Guard opened new facilities on Friday, April 6, 2001 at Robins Air Force Base valued at over \$60 million. These improvements represent Phase I of a three-phase project valued at over \$100-million for the middle Georgia Air Force Base. It also represents the largest facilities improvement contract in the history of the Air National Guard. Phase One improvements at the 116th Bomb Wing include a \$5.8 million Aircraft Site beddown area, a \$9.4 million Consolidated Aircraft Support System and Fuel Complex, and \$8.8 million worth improvements to the aircraft parking apron and taxiway. A new double bay hangar, single-bay hangar and engine shop costing \$20.9 million are among the largest hangar and maintenance facilities on the base. Other improvements to be opened are an Aircraft Ground Equipment and Munitions Trailer Maintenance area (\$2.8 million), Operations Group and Security forces buildings (\$5.3 million), a Munitions Maintenance shop (\$0.5 million), and a T-9 Engine Noise Suppressor (\$1.0 million). Phase II valued at more than \$11.8 million will include a Weapons Release/Load Crew training facility and Munitions Maintenance and Training area. Completion is anticipated in 2002. Phase III, yet unfunded, includes a new Wing Headquarters, Communications Flight and Services flight, a Vehicle Maintenance and Avionics Test Station, and a Supply and Civil engineering complex.

2002 It may best be described as a bittersweet deployment for the 116th Bomb Wing as it

departed on Feb 4 to Gulfport, Miss. for its final deployment in the B-1B. More than 200 Guardsmen went along on this final mission where the necessary squares were checked for required individual and crew training. During off duty hours the Georgia Guardsmen took advantage of the abundant nightlife in nearby Gulfport and Biloxi. A single B-1 stayed in Gulfport throughout the deployment while other bombers routinely flew in on ERCC (Engine Run Crew Change) missions directly from Warner Robins. Crews flew more than fifteen individual sorties in as many as five different aircraft. This deployment was also used to conduct the many B-1 incentive flights owed 116th personnel that had lingered for several years. Many of the Guardsmen who took their first flights in the aircraft had worked on the bomber from the time it was first assigned to the Wing in 1995. The Wing also made overtures to the local community while deployed inviting local fire and police, FAA groups, school groups and local educators to visit. More than forty American veterans from WWI through Vietnam from Veterans Hospitals in Gulfport and Biloxi were invited out to view the bomber and visit the wing while deployed. The Wing begins its transition to the JSTARS mission in August and will begin losing its B-1s in July and August. The Wing officially converts to the 116th Air Control Wing in October.

The Georgia Air National Guard redesignated the 116th Bomb Wing here at Robins AFB as the 116th Air Control Wing (ACW) on 1 October 2002 after a historic ceremony which also served to inactivate the active-duty 93d ACW. On that day the mission of the 93d became that of the new 116th ACW. The ceremony officially marked the joining of personnel and resources from each wing and the creation of the first ever "blended wing," a mixture of both ANG and active-duty personnel under one commander. The mission of the new 116th ACW is to provide combat ready personnel, unit and equipment to deploy to support the governor of Georgia and the President of the United States. It is the first ever U.S. Air Force Wing to activate under the Air Force's Future Total Force (FTF) concept, which will eventually combine U.S. Air Force active-duty and reserve components worldwide. The 116th ACW is also the only Air Force unit operating the E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (Joint STARS), the most advanced ground surveillance and battle management system in the world. Joint STARS detects, locates, classifies, tracks and targets ground movements on the battlefield, communicating real-time information through secure data links with U.S. Forces command posts. The wing received its 17th and final production E-8C on 1 April 2005, reaching its full fleet strength.

2002 History was made in Georgia on Sept 30 that forever changes the way the Air Force is organized. In a ceremony lasting little more than one hour, members of the 116th Bomb Wing of the Georgia Air National Guard and the active Air Force 93rd Air Control Wing closed ranks to become the first combined unit in the history of the Air Force. "What we're doing has never been done before, putting active and National Guard members in one command structure," said Air Force Secretary James Roche on hand for the formal activation of the 116th Air Control Wing at Robins Air Force Base. "Today we take a significant leap forward in realigning the Air Force of the 21st Century", continued Roche. Air Force officials say the combined unit will be the template of other combined units in the future. With the combination, the new 116th Air Control Wing also becomes the largest wing in the Air Force with more than 2700 members. Col. Tom Lynn, the 116th Bomb Wing's former commander, will command the new wing. "Today we make history," said Lynn before a gathering of several thousand Guardsmen, public officials, guests and families. "Tomorrow, we put these concepts into reality. You are professionals,

patriots. You're Americans who put service before selves. You have an opportunity to create an unparalleled organization of excellence." The new wing will fly the sophisticated Joint STARS (Surveillance Target Attack Radar System) mission, considered by Air Force leaders as one of the highest priority missions for the future Air Force. Flying converted Boeing 707s, the J-STARS sophisticated airborne radar detects targets on the ground up to 155 miles away and provides updated information to battlefield commanders to engage and destroy the enemy. The J-STARS aircraft known as the E-8C carries a crew of three and another nineteen operators that operate the sophisticated systems and radar. The J-STARS has proven its value by flying more than 240 combat missions over Afghanistan, gathering intelligence and helping fighters, bombers and command on the ground to identify al-Qaida and Taliban targets. The 93rd Air Control Wing at Robins was the only J-STARS unit in the Air Force. By allowing the Guardsmen to fly the J-STARS, the Air Force can get more flights out of the aircraft without adding new equipment or having to bring crews from elsewhere to Robins. Although the ceremony marked the successful merger, the secretary said the success of the wing would be determined when the wing deploys for the first time. He added the merger brings together a stronger wing, but said it also brings challenges. "This is something not tried before," Roche said. "The biggest challenge will be merging active duty and Guard cultures." "It's going to be an adventure," said Msgt Walt Downing, one of the J-STARS crewmembers. "There's going to be problems we have to work out, but the Guard and active duty have been working together for years."

2002

The six-year era of the B-1 at the 116th Bomb Wing comes to a close at Robins AFB on Saturday, 22 June when the unit conducts its final flight in the supersonic jet. Following the landing of the B-1 and the ending of an era, the unit will prepare to convert to the E-8C Joint STARS aircraft and become the 116th Air Control Wing on October 1, 2002. The 116th converted to the B-1 in April 1996 after moving from Dobbins. It continued to fly the aircraft even after the June 2001 announcement that the unit's aircraft would return to active duty as part of a plan to reduce the overall size of the B-1 fleet from 93-to-60 aircraft. The 1,100-member unit will transition to the Joint STARS mission and become the first Air National Guard unit to "blend" with an active duty wing, the 93rd Air Control Wing at Robins. This concept has strong Air Force backing and is expected to be the template for a combined Active Duty and Reserve Component Air Force. Amidst the anticipation and excitement of the last flight of Georgia's B-1s at Robins' 116th Bomb Wing, a somber mood permeated more than 1,000 Guardsmen and families who viewed the final flight of the celebrated supersonic bomber. "This is a sad day for us," said Tech Sgt. Mark Shaw a maintenance supervisor with the 116th who has worked on the B-1s since the Air Force first introduced them nearly 15 years ago. "I've got so many years with the airplane, it's hard to see it go." Saturday, June 22 marked the last flight of two B-1s from Robins with crews including 116th Commander, Col. Tom Lynn. The Robins-based Air Guard Wing has flown the supersonic bomber for more than six years. Following the last formal training sortie, the two aircraft stirred the assembled crowd by making several low-level, high speed passes over the base. All eyes followed the majestic aircraft as it climbed into the gray skies above the assembled guests. Kids held their ears and a few Guardsmen rendered a salute as the B-1s passed overhead. For the 50-year-old Air Guard unit, this event marked the passing of yet another era of a long and illustrious heritage. As the B-1 passed into the 116th history books, the new Joint STARS mission started to take shape. Not only will the mission of the unit change,

but the unit will take on a new aircraft, the E-8C battlefield surveillance jet now flown by the 93rd Air Control Wing at Robins. The final two aircraft culminated their impromptu air show by taxied into position from opposite sides of the tarmac and stopping nose-to-nose in front of the crowd. Col. Tom Lynn receives the customary hosing down following the last B1 flight at Robins "We really didn't want to come down,' said Col Tom Lynn who was the weapons systems officer on the last B-1 flight. Col Lynn will command the new Joint STARS Wing that is expected to nearly double the Wing's current manning. The new Air National Guard Wing is part of what the service is calling "Total Force" said Major General William Searcy. Chief Master

2002 After flying the B-1B Lancer for over six years, the 116th Bomb Wing's last remaining B-1 departed from Robins at 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept 17. A crew from the 9th Bomb Wing at Dyess ARB, TX flew the last B-1 to Davis Monthan AFB, AZ where it will be one of the sixty B-1s left in service.

2005 The 116th Air Control Wing received its 17th and final E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (Joint STARS) aircraft during a ceremony April 1. The ceremony included remarks from: Brig. Gen. George 'Tom' Lynn, 116th Air Control Wing Commander, Maj. Gen. David Poythress, The Adjutant General for Georgia; The Honorable Jim Marshall, U.S. House of Representatives; Mr. Dave Nagy, VP and Program Manager for Joint Stars, Northrop Grumman and special guest speaker The Honorable Saxby Chambliss, U.S. Senate In a tribute to the events of Sept. 11, 2001, the final Joint STARS aircraft will wear the tail number 02-9111. The 116th ACW is the only home to the 17 Joint STARS aircraft and is the first wing to combine Air National Guard and active duty members into a single unit. The E-8C Joint STARS is the world's most advanced wide area airborne ground surveillance, targeting and battle management system. From a standoff position, it detects, locates, classifies, tracks and targets hostile ground movements, communicating real-time information through secure data links with Air Force and U.S. Army command posts. All Joint STARS aircraft are based on a Boeing 707 airframe. Each aircraft went through a \$40 million refurbishment program at the Northrop Grumman production before entering the AF inventory.

2005 1 Sep

Fourteen personnel assigned to the 165th Civil Engineer Squadron (CES) Georgia ANG, and thirty-five personnel assigned to the 116 CES, Georgia ANG, deployed to Gulfport CRTC to assist with base reconstitution. Seventy Texas ANG Security Forces personnel deployed to Louisiana and twentyfive Delaware ANG, Security Forces personnel deployed to Mississippi.

Through five years of war, inspections and varying opinions, the only Total Force blended wing in the Air Force, Robins' 116th Air Control Wing has made a name for itself -- not only because of its unique make-up, but because of the continuing success of it equally unique E-8C Joint STARS mission. In October of 2002, the 116th Bomb Wing and the 93rd Air Control Wing combined to form the 116th Air Control Wing. This unique merger brought together Active-Duty and Air National Guard Airmen, Army Soldiers and civilians. Almost immediately after the activation of the wing, its troops and aircraft went to war. "To instantly do what had never been done, and many said couldn't be done, was incredibly exciting to be a part of," said Brig. Gen. Tom Lynn, Headquarters Air Force Director of Aircraft and Weapons Maintenance and first commander of the 116th ACW. Lynn added that "To create a new family made up of Active

Duty, Guard, Army and civilians was truly a sight to behold and to go off to war with almost the entire wing and all of the aircraft showed me that this was an amazing organization. The 116th is an organization that could withstand any challenge -- one that would only get better with time.”

The Joint STARS aircraft has logged more than 30,000 flying hours in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom. With a low density, high demand mission platform, the 116th and its troops are in a constant state of deployment supporting Army, Marines and other military members. An instance in which JSTARS provided support for military on the ground came in March 2003. “On March 26, 2003, during Operation Iraqi Freedom, JSTARS detected a large convoy heading south out of Baghdad directly toward friendly forces during a severe sandstorm,” said Lt. Col. John Werner, 116th Standardization and Evaluation deputy chief. “Our crew was orbiting in Southeastern Iraq monitoring enemy movement in the vicinity of Baghdad. With our robust data links we were able to forward these tracks real time to the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) and to the 3rd IDs Common Ground Stations. We coordinated with AWACS and directed coalition fighters, F-16s and RAF GR-7s, onto the lead elements of the convoy. The fighters went low level to get a visual. They said the area was a snake pit and were unable to fly under the weather low enough to make a visual determination. We continued with other assets to get a positive I.D. but were unable throughout the mission. The data was also being sent to ground commanders through the common ground stations our jet was linked to. With this information, the ground commanders were able to determine location, size, and speed of the convoy and arranged with tactical air control parties to control B-52 strikes against them. The total time from initial detection to destruction of the convoy was less than 10 hours. Our contributions to this effort were appreciated by the ground forces who were threatened by the enemy and unable to effectively determine their movement throughout the sandstorm. Despite the weather, JSTARS provided the Combined Air Operations Center and the ground commanders the information they needed to get the job done.” The mission was called, “The turning point of the war,” by former Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. John Jumper. The unique wing has not only proved itself with real-world support of the Global War on Terrorism but has also brought home numerous awards including The Air Force outstanding unit award every year since the blending and four Air Force Association Battle Management Crew of the Year awards in the past five years. The unit has successfully completed an operational readiness inspection and a unit compliance inspection. In addition to all of the unit’s accomplishments, its individual members have won too many awards to mention. All of this has been done while logging more than 30,000 flying hours in support of the ongoing war. Looking toward the future, the next five years are uncertain with respect to the Global War on Terrorism and the U.S. involvement, but one thing remains clear -- JSTARS is the Air Force’s premier platform performing command and control and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance within a single aircraft. “The work you do in the FOL is meaningful and makes a difference,” said Brig. Gen. Tom Moore, 116th ACW commander. “It requires continued commitment from the great men and women of the JSTARS Family. Not a day goes by that we’re not flying in the air, helping protect the lives of our forces on the ground, while defeating insurgents. What you do matters – and don’t you ever forget it.”2007

Continuously deployed for over eight years, Georgia’s 116th Air Control Wing has logged more than 62,000 flying hours with the E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System command and control aircraft in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Georgia’s 116th ACW is the only Air Force unit flying the sophisticated J-STARS mission. Over the last

eight years, the 116th has worked as a blended organization to successfully accomplish the mission with unparalleled results. The “blending” of the active duty 93rd Air Control Wing with the Georgia Air National Guard 116th Bomb Wing created a one-of-a-kind organization with many organizational challenges. The professionalism of the men and women of the 116th Air Control Wing, along with their dedicated missions focus, resulted in outstanding mission effectiveness at every level, especially at its forward operating locations. Administrative, cultural and regulatory challenges were met and overcome to accomplish the unit’s mission. The 116th received an overall “excellent” rating from the Air Combat Command Inspector General team from Langley Air Force Base for a Phase I Operational Readiness Inspection in November 2010. The wing was evaluated on its ability to rapidly recall all personnel and to prepare personnel and equipment for a long-term deployment to a forward operating location. During the out brief to the wing the ACC IG Team Chief, Col. Leonard Moskal, stated that the 116th was “the best heavy wing he has ever evaluated.” As evidence of the 116th’s superb performance, it recently earned its 15th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. On November 24, 2010, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force designated the 116th Air Control Wing as an “Active Associate” wing and reorganized the “blended” wing concept. As a result of this reorganization, a new active duty Associate Wing called the 461st Air Control Wing was formed. The structure will be an Active Association, composed of the Georgia Air Guard’s 116th ACW and active duty’s 461st ACW. They will continue to operate together to accomplish the shared J-STARs mission by integrating Air Guard and active duty personnel to the maximum extent possible in groups, squadrons, flights and shops. The Active Association model is one in which a reserve component (the Air Guard) has principal responsibility for the weapon system that it shares with one or more Active Duty units. All personnel in the association will be trained, tasked, inspected and deployed as a unified team to accomplish the common mission. Air Guard and active duty supervisors will continue to coordinate with each other to provide a unified approach to direct the operations of the J-STARs association. The 116th continued its high profile J-STARs mission in 2010, assisting in the capture of several high level insurgents as well as uncovering approximately 1,000 IEDs, several IED factories and insurgent tunnel complexes. 116th aircraft and crews also surged to support Afghan national elections, assuring safe conditions for voting. Also in 2010, the 116th Security Forces Squadron deployed a 39-member team to Kirkuk Air Base for perimeter security missions for six months. The 116th Medical Group conducted two CERFP exercises in Atlanta and Jacksonville. The medical group is one of three in the nation that is fully mission capable and ready to respond to emergencies. The 116th was selected as the 2010 Air Force Association Air Battle Management Crew of the Year. While supporting Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, the Wing also participated in 75 local and developed exercises with a combined 2,200 flying hours and 375 missions supporting Air Combat Command and National Guard Bureau missions. The Wing also developed a Joint Task Force Logistic plan with the Georgia Army National Guard for local defense support of civil authorities operations. In response to a local community need, the Wing’s Explosive Ordnance Device team authored a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan for the City of Perry.

11/24/2010 - 11/23/2010 -- Over the last eight years the 116 ACW has effectively worked as a blended organization to successfully accomplish the mission with unparalleled results. The "Blending" of the Active Duty 93d Air Control Wing with the Georgia Air National Guard 116th Bomb Wing created a one-of-a-kind organization with many challenges. The professionalism of the men and women of the 116th Air Control Wing, along with their dedicated missions focus,

has resulted in outstanding mission effectiveness at every level but especially at its Forward Operating Locations. Administrative, cultural and regulatory challenges were met and overcome to accomplish our mission.

Our current "blended" organization that formed under a Total Force Initiative (TFI) in 2002 at the direction of the Secretary of Defense. In 2007, the USAF further defined how TFI wings will be organized with the release of AFI 90-1001. Our current "blended" construct was not one of the models approved by the AFI. Therefore, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force has designated the 116th Air Control Wing as an "Active Associate" wing to bring JSTARS operations into compliance with AFI 90-1001. Over the last year, the wing has moved forward with plans to align under the current AFI guidance by reorganizing the "blended" wing. Plans to create separate AD and ANG wings, organized under the Active Associate construct, were drafted. Wing leadership, both AD and ANG, briefed their chain of command and leaders at all levels (the GA Adjutant General, the 8 AF/CC and 9 AF/CC, the Director of the Air National Guard in DC, and the COMACC) regarding the reorganization initiative. Today, we received approval from the Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) and are moving the reorganization forward.

As a result of this reorganization, we will stand up a new AD Associate Wing called the 461st Air Control Wing. The structure will be an Active Association, composed of the ANG's 116 ACW and AD's 461 ACW and will continue to operate together to accomplish the shared JSTARS mission by integrating ANG and AD personnel to the maximum extent possible in groups, squadrons, flights and shops. Commanders and supervisors from both components will be jointly responsible to maintain unity of command and mission readiness of all personnel. The Active Association model is one in which a reserve component (the ANG) has principal responsibility for the weapon system that it shares with one or more AD units. All personnel in the association will be trained, tasked, inspected and deployed as a unified team to accomplish our common mission. Our Designated Operational Capability (DOC) statements and Unit Type Code (UTC) will be aligned in such a way that we will be tasked together.

So, what does all this mean? In a nutshell, it means that we will continue to operate as we do today to accomplish the mission. ANG and AD supervisors will continue to coordinate with each other, operating from the same offices they occupy today, to provide a unified approach to direct the operations of the JSTARS association. Differences between how we operate today and how the new association will operate will be minimal and will benefit the association by allowing all personnel, regardless of component, to have a commander from their respective component to handle their administrative actions as required by law. ANG leadership and supervisors will handle ANG administrative actions, and the association's AD element will handle its own administrative responsibilities.

Air Force officials activated the 461st Air Control Wing to operate E-8 JSTARS at Robins AFB, Ga., in an active association with the Georgia Air National Guard's 116th Air Control Wing. The 116th ACW originally formed in 2002 as the Air Force's first "blended wing," bringing together the active duty 93rd ACW and Air Guard's 116th Bomb Wing into a single unit to fly and maintain these high-in-demand ground-surveillance airplanes. "Nine years ago to the day, we went from two wings to one, and today we go from one wing to two," said Brig. Gen. William Welsh, who became 116th ACW commander on Sept 30, the same day that the 461st ACW

stood up. Welsh added, "We're still one team, Team JSTARS." The Air Force announced last November its plan create the active association in place of the blended wing construct. 2011

E-8C JSTARS, staging from Al Udeid AB, Qatar, recently surpassed 100,000 flying hours in direct support of US Central Command operations. "The tasking in the CENTCOM theater during the last 13 years is a clear indication of the value and capabilities that the E-8C brings to the manned command and control, battle management, intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance mission," said Col. Kevin Clotfelter, Georgia Air National Guard 116th Air Control Wing commander in a June 2 release. Members of the ANG's 116th ACW and the Active Duty 461st ACW from Robins AFB, Ga., as well as Army JSTARS 138th Military Intelligence Company amassed the flying hours over six CENTCOM operations, including Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, New Dawn, Inherent Resolve, and Freedom's Sentinel, according to the release. JSTARS clocked 100,000 post-9/11 combat flying hours in all theaters last May. 2015





Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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