

157th AIR OPERATIONS GROUP



LINEAGE

582nd Signal Air Warning Battalion activated, 15 Jan 1944

Inactivated, 30 Nov 1945

Redesignated 157th Aircraft Control and Warning Group and allotted to the National Guard and the State of Missouri, 24 May 1946

Extended federal recognition, 26 April 1948

Redesignated 157th Tactical Control Group, 20 November 1952

Redesignated 157th Air Control Group.

Redesignated 157th Air Operations Group, 18 April 2001

STATIONS

Frattamaggiore, Italy, 15 Jan 1944

France, 15 Aug 1944

Germany, 21 Feb 1945

Jefferson Barracks, MO, 24 May 1946

Alexandria Municipal Airport, LA, 10 Nov 1951

ASSIGNMENTS

Twelfth Air force, 17 Jun 1943

XII Air Support Command,

9th Air Force, 20 May 1945

Technical Air Command,

57th Wing, 24 May 1946

71st Fighter Wing, 24 May 1946

2nd Air Force, Jan 1947

10th Air Force-Continental Air Command, 24 Jun 1948

9th Air Force-Tactical Air Command, 10 Nov 1951

Air Combat Command. Pacific Air Forces, 1 Apr 2001

COMMANDERS

LTC Richard J. Ruick

Col William G. Work 1983,

LTC David L. Van Winkle

Col Frederick L. Bonney
Col David W. Baugher
Col David W. Newman

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

Blue and 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 black and white globe signifies the unit's readiness worldwide, day or night. The sword indicated the qualities of courage, patriotism and strength of the unit. The silver gauntlet represents the Air Operations Group as senior planners of the air campaign. Approved, 10 Jun 1999

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 157th Air Operations Group, of St. Louis, is headquartered at Lambert Airport with operations at historic Jefferson Barracks. The unit is comprised of nearly 150 Guardsmen in numerous Air Force specialties, including: Pilots, Navigators, Air Battle Managers, Aerospace Control and Warning, Communications, Space, Knowledge Operations, Intelligence, and more.

The 157th AOG maintains a high level of readiness in order to augment the active duty 613th Air and Space Operations Center, providing air component planning and execution throughout the Pacific Air Forces' theater of operations. We are also on call 24/7, ready to provide assistance to Missouri's civilian authorities during times of crisis.

Prepares and provides a trained cadre of Airmen skilled in operational level command and control as a PACAF-gained unit to augment the 613th AOC and other USAF active duty forces and support the State of Missouri, employing across the full spectrum of crisis and conflict. Provides continuous liaison with our supported/supporting Air Operations Center counterparts.

In April, 1948, the 157th Aircraft Control & Warning Group was formed under the command of Colonel Ben W. Lichty. This unit was the early beginning of what came to be the 157th Tactical Control Group. The headquarters for this organization became a portion of the newly organized Missouri Air National Guard structure.

The 157th Aircraft Control & Warning Group was activated at Jefferson Barracks, then the headquarters of the 71st Fighter Wing, becoming a sister unit to the 131st Aircraft control & Warning Squadron. Thus, the 157th Group and the 131st Group became inseparably joined. They formed the nucleus of a widespread network of semi-autonomous aircraft control and warning units located in several other states.

As a recognizable organization, the 157th AC&W Group became one of three Air National Guard Groups that had accepted the responsibility for providing the Defense Department with a nationwide radar back-up to active duty units.

In 1948, the first summer training exercise was held for the Hq 157th and 131st Squadron at Jefferson Barracks.

Both the 157th and 131st convoyed to Selfridge AFB, Mich. during the summer of 1950. At Selfridge, the men gained sound experience from working side by side with active duty personnel who were similarly undergoing extensive training in anticipation of a Korean combat situation.

On March 1, 1951, the 157th was notified that it would be federalized on November 1, 1951. Thus, the group had sixteen days of regular monthly drills plus two weeks of regular field training to prepare. Field training was held at Camp Williams, Wis. and all effort was devoted to preparation for active duty.

In November, the 157th was assembled at Alexandria AFB, Louisiana. There the unit took the responsibility for the Gulf Coastal Frontier. From the beginning, individuals were splintered off and transferred throughout the major air command structure.

On July 11, 1950, a fire in one of the oldest buildings at Jefferson Barracks at the time caused \$100,000 damage and injured four persons. The blaze broke out at 11 p.m., about half an hour after members of the 607th Signal (Light) Const, Co. had finished their meeting.

The Group Headquarters and the 131st Squadron returned to Jefferson Barracks in late 1953. The 107th had previously been reorganized and redesignated the 266th in July, 1952.

In January, 1954, Lt. Col. David W. Baugher assumed command of the Group.

The summer camp of 1954 was held at Shaw AFB, South Carolina, in close conjunction with the 507th Communications and Control Group, a unit of the regular Air Force. This was the first summer field training for the units since coming off active duty.

For all intents and purposes, the units were absorbed by the 507th during those two weeks. The Guardsmen were assigned shifts and performed just as though they were on active duty. In addition, since the unit was recruiting to rebuild its lost manpower, the new inductees were given two weeks of intensified basic training at Shaw.

The same type of summer camp was held in 1955 with the unit again working at Shaw with the 507th. Basic training was not a part of the exercise, since the unit had begun sending its new

enlistees on active duty for basic training by the Regular Air Force.

With two years of close association with the 507th under their belt, the 157th and 131st were next to perform on their own. Thus, in 1956, they did not return to Shaw. For the first time all units of the Group participated simultaneously in summer field training and worked under a common Group Operation's Order. Each unit remained at its home site and controlled aircraft based nearby.

Also, significant during 1956 was the acquisition of \$450,000 in new radar equipment by the 131st. This was the latest in equipment developed for military use and greatly increased the effectiveness of the unit.

The 1957 summer camp saw all units assembled in the field at the same time. Group headquarters was established at Camp Dodge, Iowa, and a radar net oriented on this point was established. All units worked under a common Operations Order initiated by the 157th.

Aircraft were obtained from units located in the training area and were under the operational control of Group headquarters.

The communications and control concept of the 157th was tried initially with the Air Guard units during the summer camp of 1958. The 521st Communications Group, Ohio Air National Guard, joined the 157th at Camp Atterbury, Indiana, and a complete radar and supporting communications net was established.

This training exercise, integrating units from both Groups, was considered successful and warranted further experimentation.

The training was centered on an important Air National Guard experiment. For the first time in the history of the Air National Guard program, a communications group had been integrated with a tactical control group to provide point-to-point radio contact between the units.

On December 7, 1958, celebrating the Continental Air Command's 10th Anniversary, the units at Jefferson Barracks held an open house.

Visitors had the opportunity of seeing some of the Air Force's latest electronic equipment. The equipment had just been acquired by the units a few years prior.

In the fall of 1958, the 112th Aircraft Control and Warning Flight of Pennsylvania and the 123rd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron of Ohio were reassigned from the 157th group to the 152nd Tactical Control Group. In exchange the 157th gained the 117th Tactical Control Squadron of Georgia and the 129th Tactical Control Flight of Georgia.

In 1959, the training concept of the previous year was tried on a full scale with all units of the 157th Tactical Control Group and 251st Communications Group.

The mission was to integrate the planning and execution of air strikes, to centralize control, and to integrate the total effort so that the three primary tactical air missions might be accomplished.

Deployed in a tactical situation, various units of the 157th and 251st were located at Red Hills State Park, Ill., Ft. Campbell, Ky., Camp Breckenridge, Ky., Kickapoo State Park, Ill., Kankakee River State Park, Ill., and Zion, Ill. The 157th and 131st were both located at the Red Hills site.

The operation, dubbed Primera, was under the command of Col. Baugher.

Major General Winston P. Wilson, Chief of the National Guard Bureau's Air Force Division, summed up the operation like this: The 157th Tactical Control Group and the 251st Communications Group have demonstrated their mobility, their flexibility and a high degree of combat readiness. But most important, these Air National Guardsmen have proved once again that cooperation between active and reserve forces is producing the kind of well trained, capable Air Reserve Force which is vital to the security of our nation."

August of 1960 found the 157th participating for the first time in a joint air/ground simulated war exercise with regular Army and Air Force units. The exercise was Bright Star/Pine Cone III. More than 25,000 Air Force Reservists and Air National Guardsmen participated.

In the exercise, a small friendly nation "Platka" was invaded by a belligerent neighbor "North Vada." Platka, unable to fight off the aggressor, calls on the U.S. for military help under the terms of its mutual assistance pact.

A further premise was that active U.S. air units were needed elsewhere and couldn't be spared. Thus, the President called on air reserve forces to handle the situation.

In this "war", centered on Ft. Bragg, N.C., the 157th and 131st provided a tactical air control system throughout the exercise area. The mission was to install, operate, and maintain a system capable of air surveillance, ground-controlled intercept, and close air support of combat troops.

"Operation Wolverine" was the title for the 1961 summer field training. The possibility of a call-up because of the Berlin crisis was in the air.

The objective of the operation was to provide intensive unit and individual training in the technique of a tactical air control system and to demonstrate the ability to operate self-sustained units under field conditions.

Though alerted and ready, the units were not chosen for Berlin.

1962 saw participation in another joint exercise, Swift Strike II.

The 115th Squadron, the 117th Flight, the 129th Squadron and 85 members of the 131st Tactical Control Squadron participated in this exercise.

As part of the Red aggressor forces, these members of the 157th Group gained useful experience under simulated combat conditions in the operation of an Air Operations Center (AOC), a Control and Reporting Center (CRC) and two Control and Reporting Posts (CRP).

At the same time, other personnel of the 131st, the 119th Aircraft Control and Warning Flight of Tennessee, the 128th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron of Wisconsin and the 113th Aircraft Control and Warning Flight of Iowa were deployed into three areas of responsibility in Wisconsin and Michigan.

Each unit established radar control of friendly aircraft assigned to their area of responsibility and directed interception all simulated enemy aircraft penetrating friendly territory.

Also, 1962 saw the beginning of a 10-year improvement plan for the property at Jefferson Barracks.

Little or no improvement had been made at the Barracks since it had been given up by the U.S. government in 1946. This was primarily due to lack of funds.

In 1949, President Harry Truman had asked that a U.S. shrine be made of the historic military reservation. But, neither he nor any of Missouri's Congressmen accomplished much in that direction.

Finally, St. Louis County set aside \$150,000 of its historical museums and park development fund to begin renovation of Jefferson Barracks.

In 1963, the units participated as a group for the Red (aggressor) forces in Swift Strike III. The maneuver was the largest U.S. Strike Command joint training exercise to date, and supporting ground and air movements took place at more than two dozen U.S. air bases.

The actual ground maneuver area (some 5, 800,000 acres of land) was located in North and South Carolina with support air bases in Georgia and Tennessee. Approximately 100,000 men of the U.S. Strike Command, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve participated.

The primary purpose of Swift Strike III was to completely test the joint air-ground task force concept represented by Strike Command.

It was significant for the 157th that one of the concepts being tested in the exercise involved the Air Force's, Direct Air Support Center (DASC) and the Tactical Air Control Center (TACC). Within a few years, the unit would be very much involved in this new concept.

Bush Field, Georgia was the center of the operations and the location of the 157th.

The scene of operations changed to that of the desert southwest for 1964's summer field training. Participation that year was in exercise Desert Strike, a war exercise between the Phoenix forces and the Mojave forces.

The group provided a Tactical Air Control Center at Luke AFB, Arizona, a Control and Reporting Center at Wintersburg, Arizona and a Control and Reporting Center at Bouse, Arizona.

The mission of the Tactical Air Control Center was to provide an Air Force Command Post where the combat situation and the status of weapons was displayed. The Air Force Commander used this facility to control the battle.

In addition, the unit obtained the Systems Training Program (STP) which had been developed nine years earlier for the Air Defense Command by the Systems Development Corporation. This new program gave the Group a realistic vehicle to train and exercise the entire tactical air control system, as a system.

The units of the 157th stayed at Jefferson Barracks for their 1965 summer camp.

In addition to the acquisition of the Systems Training Program, the units in 1965, were designated as BEEF-BROTH units and were given a 50% increase in drills. In addition, they were authorized to bring themselves to 100% of strength and they received many new items of equipment.

Exercise Fox Hole was the title of the 1966 summer field training conducted in the Midwest Illinois and Indiana area.

The 157th provided personnel to staff the Air Force Component Command Post at Red Hills State Park, Illinois. At the same time, the 131st operated a limited DASC at Camp Atterbury, Indiana.

The objective of this operation was to train the units in their new missions for the first time in the field, to achieve the necessary training for upgrading the skill level of the unit's personnel and to increase the operational readiness.

In 1967, the 157th participated in exercise Guard Strike I, the largest National Guard Field Exercise ever held in the United States. This exercise was under the command of Maj. Gen. Charles DuBois.

Headquarters of the operation was at Bakalar Air Force Base, Indiana and communications were the responsibility of the 157th. Live aircraft were provided by flying units to provide realistic training. Systems Training Programs were also used to get the maximum training out of the operation.

During the years after Guard Strike I (1967) and the final Guard Strike exercise (Guard Strike IV in 1972). Participating units worked in many ways to prepare themselves for their missions.

Redesignated 157th Tactical Control Group

Manning: 38 Officer; 97 Airmen

Mission: 1980, To maintain an operationally ready Tactical Air Control System for rapid deployment and employment for any contingency, to gain and maintain Air Superiority in Tactical

Redesignated: 157th Air Control Group 16 June, 1992

Mission: Provide operationally ready Air Control System for rapid deployment and employment for any contingency with objective of gaining and maintaining air superiority within combat zone.

Note: Ordered to active duty by Governor to provide support and relief to civilian authorities for flood victims along Mississippi and Missouri Rivers.

Hosted Virtual Flag 10-1 exercise. First air reserve component to lead the synchronization of multiple, geographically separate units into a virtual simulated theater environment to exercise the array of air operations command and control functions

The 157th provided skilled manpower to Pacific Air Forces, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, National Guard Bureau and civil agencies in support of current operations worldwide:

Deployed 22 Airmen to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii and Yokota Air Base, Japan in support of Operation Tomadachi, a joint/coalition response to a massive earthquake and tsunami affecting northern Japan in March 2011.

Deployed eight Airmen in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and two in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

Ten Airmen joined US allies and military planners from over 24 nations to participate in Exercise Cobra Gold 2011, in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Deployed 77 Airmen to 613th AOC at Hickam Air Force Base in support Terminal Fury, a U.S. Pacific Command-sponsored exercise.

Deployed five Airmen to Canberra, Australia in support of joint Australia-United States exercise Talisman Sabre.

Deployed six Airmen to the Republic of Korea as Air Component liaisons to the combined forces commander and subordinate components for exercise Ulchi Freedom Guardian.

The 157th also provided a ready force of Airmen at the tactical and operational levels of crisis response for emergency operations within Missouri: Bitter Rain, Easter Twister, Rising Tide, Southwest Twister, and Northern Tide; also contributed significantly to the 2011 National Level Exercise.



Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.