

## 390 ELECTRONIC COMBAT SQUADRON



### MISSION

The 390 ECS "Wild Boars" are tasked to man, train, and equip USAF aircrew to employ expeditionary U.S. Navy EA-18G Growlers in support of Unified Commanders' plans. This unique electronic attack capability is designed to degrade or destroy enemy air defense systems by suppression of enemy radars and communications with complex, directional jamming and High-Speed Anti-Radiation Missiles. The 390 ECS is assigned to the 366th Operations Group and is stationed at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington.

### LINEAGE

390 Fighter Squadron (Single-Engine) constituted, 24 May 1943  
Activated, 1 Jun 1943  
Redesignated 390 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine, 20 Aug 1943  
Inactivated, 20 Aug 1946  
Redesignated 390 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 15 Nov 1952  
Activated, 1 Jan 1953  
Redesignated 390 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 1 Jul 1958  
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1959  
Activated, 30 Apr 1962  
Organized, 8 May 1962  
Inactivated, 1 Oct 1982  
Redesignated 390 Electronic Combat Squadron, 10 Dec 1982  
Activated, 15 Dec 1982  
Redesignated 390 Fighter Squadron, 11 Sep 1992  
Redesignated 390 Electronic Combat Squadron, 27 Sep 2010

### STATIONS

Richmond AAB, VA, 1 Jun 1943  
Bluethenthal Field, NC, 9 Aug 1943  
Richmond AAB, VA 6 Nov–17 Dec 1943  
Membury, England, 10 Jan 1944  
Thruxton, England, 1 Mar 1944  
St Pierre du Mont, France, 20 Jun 1944  
Dreux, France, 25 Aug 1944  
Laon/Couvron, France, 8 Sep 1944  
Asch, Belgium, 26 Nov 1944  
Munster/Handorf, Germany, 14 Apr 1945  
Bayreuth/Bindlach, Germany, 28 Jun 1945  
Fritzlar, Germany, 14 Sep 1945–20 Aug 1946  
Alexandria (later, England) AFB, LA, 1 Jan 1953–1 Apr 1959  
Chambley AB, France, 8 May 1962–Jul 1963  
Holloman AFB, NM, 12 Jul 1963–29 Oct 1965  
Da Nang AB, South Vietnam, 29 Oct 1965–30 Jun 1972  
Mountain Home AFB, ID, 30 Jun 1972–1 Oct 1982  
Mountain Home AFB, ID, 15 Dec 1982  
Whidbey Island NAS, WA, 27 Sep 2010

#### **DEPLOYED STATIONS**

Aviano, AB, Italy, 25 Dec 1955–18 Jun 1956  
Clark AB, Philippines, 29 Oct–17 Nov 1965  
Taegu AB, South Korea, 19 Aug–16 Sep 1976

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

366 Fighter Group, 1 Jun 1943–20 Aug 1946  
366 Fighter-Bomber Group, 1 Jan 1953  
366 Fighter-Bomber (later, 366 Tactical Fighter) Wing, 25 Sep 1957–1 Apr 1959  
United States Air Forces in Europe, 30 Apr 1962  
366 Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 May 1962  
6252 Tactical Fighter Wing, 29 Oct 1965  
35 Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 Apr 1966  
366 Tactical Fighter Wing, 10 Oct 1966  
347 Tactical Fighter Wing, 30 Jun 1972  
366 Tactical Fighter Wing, 31 Oct 1972–1 Oct 1982  
366 Tactical Fighter Wing, 15 Dec 1982  
366 Operations Group, 1 Mar 1992

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

21<sup>st</sup> Fighter-Bomber Wing, 25 Dec 1955–c. 14 Jun 1956  
Det 1, HQ, 366<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, 19 Aug–16 Sep 1976

#### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

P-47, 1943-1946  
F-51, 1953  
F-86, 1953-1955  
F-84, 1954-1958  
F-100, 1957-1959  
F-84, 1962-1965  
F-4, 1965-1972  
F-111, 1972-1982  
EF-111, 1982-1992

### **COMMANDERS**

Capt Harold N. Holt, 1 Jun 1943  
Capt Clure E. Smith, 14 May 1944  
Capt Maurice L. Martin, 2 Oct 1944  
Capt Lowell B. Smith, 1 Feb-20 Apr 1945  
Unkn, 21 Apr 1945-20 Aug 1946  
Maj John W. Saxton, 1 Jan 1953-Unkn  
Lt Col Harold E. Comstock, Jun 1954-Unkn  
Maj Joseph S. Michalowski, Unkn-14 Aug 1957  
Maj Fred H. Henderson, 14 Aug 1957  
Lt Col Frank J. McGuinness, 9 Sep 1958-1 Apr 1959  
Unkn, 8 May-15 Jul 1962  
Lt Col Raymond L. Hurley, 16 Jul 1962  
Lt Col Jack Bellamy, 29 Jun 1964  
Lt Col Douglas H. Frost, Jul 1966  
Lt Col Hoyt S. Vandenberg Jr., 6 Jan 1967  
Lt Col Hervey S. Stockman, 19 May 1967  
Lt Col Clement D. Billingslea, 11 Jun 1967  
Lt Col Fred A. Haeffner, 20 Jun 1967  
Lt Col Wayne T. Elder, 23 Nov 1967  
Lt Col John S. Stoer, 19 May 1968  
Lt Col Cecil G. Foster, 29 Jul 1968  
Lt Col Robert S. McCormick, 7 Jun 1969  
Lt Col Garold R. Beck, 19 Jun 1969  
Lt Col John E. Cadou, 27 Mar 1970  
Lt Col Robert B. Watson, 8 Dec 1970  
Lt Col Delbert H. Jacobs, 22 Apr 1971  
Lt Col Walter E. Bjerneby, 18 Dec 1971  
Lt Col Gene E. Taft, 6 May-C. 14 Jun 1972  
None (Not Manned), 15-29 Jun 1972  
Lt Col Robert B. Coburn, 30 Jun 1972  
Lt Col Ronald G. Strack, 18 Jun 1973  
Lt Col David H. Reiner, 13 Dec 1974

Lt Col John A. Dramesi, 1 May 1975  
Lt Col James C. Sharp, 12 Apr 1976  
Lt Col Brian R. Williams, 16 May 1977  
Lt Col Joe G. Cabuk Jr., 10 May 1979  
Lt Col Samuel L. Harris, 9 Jan 1981-1 Oct 1982  
Lt Col Herbert T. Pickering Jr., 15 Dec 1982  
Lt Col Robert J. Osterloh, 24 Jun 1983  
Lt Col William R. Teske, 7 Jun 1985  
Lt Col Richard M. Meeboer, 22 Jun 1987  
Lt Col Dennis Hardziej, 1 Jun 1989  
Lt Col Kenneth J. Muldowney, 7 Jun 1991  
Lt Col Larry D. New, 17 Jun 1992  
Lt Col Peter J. Bunce, 24 Mar 1994  
Lt Col Frank Gorenc, 22 Jan 1996  
Lt Col Mitch R. Fryt, 25 Jul 1997  
Lt Col Eric M. O'connell, 16 Jul 1999  
Lt Col James P. Molloy, 9 Mar 2001  
Lt Col David A. Slade, 7 Mar 2003  
Lt Col Jeffrey W. Prichard, 25 Mar 2005  
Lt Col David L. Cool, 20 Nov 2006  
Lt Col James E. Stratton, 25 Oct 2008  
Lt Col Donald K. Mcfatridge, 27 Sep 2010  
Lt Col Karl Fischbach, May 2011  
Lt Col Don Keen, May 2013  
Lt Col Allen A. Geist, 20 May 2015

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

#### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy, Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Vietnam

Vietnam Defensive

Vietnam Air

Vietnam Air Offensive

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III

Vietnam Air/Ground  
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV  
TET 69/Counteroffensive  
Vietnam Summer-Fall, 1969  
Vietnam Winter-Spring, 1970  
Sanctuary Counteroffensive  
Southwest Monsoon  
Commando Hunt V  
Commando Hunt VI  
Commando Hunt VII  
Vietnam Ceasefire

Southwest Asia  
Defense of Saudi Arabia  
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

Panama, 1989–1990

### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citation  
Normandy, 11 Jul 1944

Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia):

23 Apr–1 Aug 1967

1 Apr–26 Jun 1972

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device

1 May 1966–31 Mar 1967

1 Apr 1967–31 Mar 1968

1 Apr 1968–31 Jul 1969

1 Aug 1969–1 Aug 1970

2 Aug 1970–31 Mar 1972

Meritorious Unit Award

1 Jan 2007- 31 May 2008

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 May 1964–30 Apr 1966

17 Apr 1974–15 Apr 1976

16 Apr 1976– 27 Mar 1978

18 Aug–16 Sep 1976

1 Apr 1983–31 Mar 1985

1 Mar 1989–28 Feb 1991  
1 Mar 1992–28 Feb 1994  
1 Jun 1996–31 May 1998  
1 Jun 1999–31 May 2001  
1 Jun 2001–31 May 2002  
1 Jun 2003–31 May 2005  
1 Jun 2005–31 May 2006  
1 Jun 2011–31 May 2012

Cited in the Orders of the Day, Belgian Army

6 Jun–30 Sep 1944

1 Oct–17 Dec 1944

18 Dec 1944–25 Jan 1945

Belgian Fourragere

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 May 1966–30 Jun 1972

#### **EMBLEM**



390 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine patch



390 Fighter-Bomber Squadron emblems





Celeste, a boar's head issuant from dexter Sable, armed and garnished Argent, snout, pupil and mouth Gules; all within a diminished bordure Or. (Approved, 6 Oct 1955 and modified, 18 Nov 1993; replaced emblems approved, 10 Nov 1954 and 19 Jun 1944. Approved, 18 Nov 1993)

#### **MOTTO**

WILD BOARS

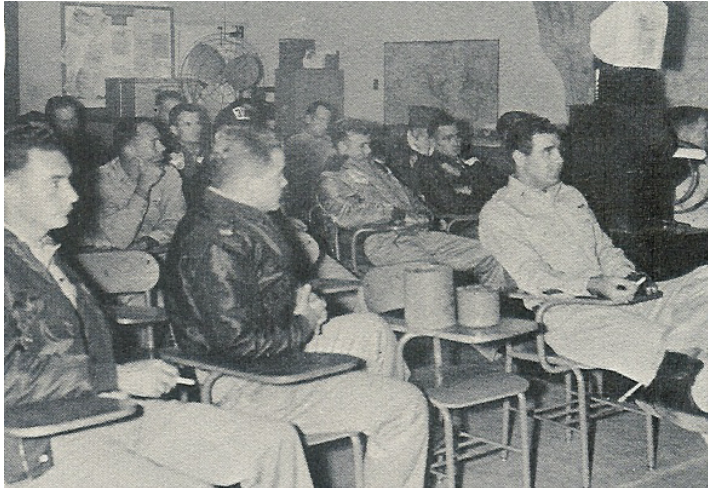
#### **OPERATIONS**

Combat in ETO, 14 Mar 1944–3 May 1945.





390 Fighter-Bomber Squadron F-84F



Pilot briefing before mission, 1955



Maj Joseph S. Michalowski

Combat in Southeast Asia, c. 18 Nov 1965–14 Jun 1972. Replacement training, 1 Jul 1974–c. 18 Aug 1976. Trained EF-111 aircrews in electronic countermeasures, 15 Dec 1982–4 Aug 1992. Jammed radar during the invasion of Panama, Dec 1989, and the war with Iraq, 17 Jan 1991–6 Mar 1991. Sent some aircraft and aircrews to Turkey and Saudi Arabia, 10 Jan–c. 11 Sep 1992.

During early December 1983, the 390 Electronic Combat Squadron (ECS) was involved in Exercise Run Fast 83-8, an operation designed to test the squadron's ability to respond quickly to orders for worldwide deployment.

During October 1983 the 390 ECS had experienced its first such exercise, Run Fast 83-7, but it was of lesser magnitude than Run Fast 83-8 since only six EF-111A Ravens were involved in the former, where 12 participated in the latter. However, both contained all the elements of a full scale exercise, and future Run Fasts will have increasing numbers of aircraft involved and sortie rates flown. Throughout the fall of 1983 and into the spring of 1984, the 366 Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) will conduct a graduated series of exercises designed to prepare the 390 Electronic Combat Squadron and its EF-111 aircraft for deployment, as well as the Tactical Air Command Operational Readiness Inspection that is expected following declaration of initial operational capability (IOC). The wing plan is to progress in a series of crawl-walk-jog-run situations. The 366 TFW Local Evaluation Team (LET) acts in the role of inspectors during each exercise. Problems are identified by the LET and published in an exercise report. Solutions to problems are developed and the next exercise, with increased tasking, validates the quality of solutions to past problems and pushes the system harder.

Run Fast exercises are composed of five readily identifiable stages, several which may be performed simultaneously. During the first stage, Aircraft Generation, maintenance personnel prepare aircraft for the long flight to a forward operating location. The Mobility phase of the exercise involves personnel processing, palletizing cargo, and preparing support equipment, for

loading on cargo aircraft. The Deployment phase involves the launch and flight of EF-111As to a forward deployed location. The Regeneration phase is the period in which the aircraft are serviced, repaired, and readied for combat after landing at the deployed location. The Employment phase is the final portion of the exercise in which the aircraft fly simulated combat sorties. These same phases are present in real world deployments supporting national objectives.

During Run Fast 83-7, for example, six EF-111As were deployed locally. Following the deployment flight, the aircraft returned to a "deployed" isolated area at Mt. Home AFB, Idaho. Only "mobilized" personnel had access to and worked in the isolated area and had available only the equipment and parts that were mobilized as part of the exercise. The employment phase of the exercise lasted two days, during which 20 sorties were scheduled and flown.

A highlight of Run Fast 83-7 was mobilization of the AN/ALM-204 test stations. One full and one partial set of stations were palletized, processed, and then returned to a room in one of the base nose docks, where they operated for the duration of the exercise, without the environmental conditions of the avionics shop. The stations were ready for shipment within seven hours after the exercise started. Once delivered, they were set up and operational within 24 hours, which was a notable accomplishment since this was the first time they had been palletized and moved.

The Run Fast exercise series represents a difficult and final step in the long process of bringing the EF-111 from the drawing board to operational readiness. The men and women of the 366 TFW are facing this challenge today.

An EF-111A from the 390 ECS (66-0016), flown by pilot Captain Jim Denton with EWO Captain Brent Brandon, scored an unofficial kill on the first night of the war when they maneuvered a pursuing Mirage F1 into the ground.

F-111 67-0093 390 TFS, was destroyed in ground fire November 9,1982, on the live ordnance ramp at Mountain Home AFB. The fire was fed by an oxygen leak in the cockpit. MK-82s on the aircraft exploded in a low order detonation and destroyed the aircraft.

F-111 67-0097 390 TFS crashed and was destroyed on March 26,1980, on Saylor Creek Range, south of Mountain Home AFB. The aircraft departed controlled flight during training. Captains Joseph G. Raker and Larry Honza, were killed after ejecting below the safe ejection envelope.

F-111 67-0098 390 TFS crashed and was destroyed on October 8,1982. It was on its second flight after having gone through depot maintenance. The AC electric power leads had not been tightened properly during the depot maintenance. They loosened causing flight control problems. The crew ejected successfully, but the impact attenuation bags failed, severely injuring the spinal cord of the pilot, Wing Commander Col. Ernest Coleman. The WSO was lucky and did not receive major injuries.

F-111 67-0105 crashed and was destroyed on July 5,1979, while assigned to the 390 TFS. The aircraft crashed when flying as lead of a formation during a daylight mission on the Nellis ranges. Major Gary Mekash and Lt Col Eugene Soeder were killed.

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USAF Unit Histories

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#### 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.

Unit yearbook, *Alexandria AFB, LA, 366 Fighter-Bomber Wing, 1954*, Army and Navy Publishing Co, Inc. Baton Rouge, LA, 1954.

Unit yearbook, *366 Fighter-Bomber Wing, England AFB, LA, 1955*. Army Navy Publishing Co. Baton Rouge, LA. 1955.