

439 SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

439 Air Police Squadron constituted, 8 Sep 1950
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1950
Ordered to Active Service, 1 Apr 1951
Inactivated, 3 Apr 1951
Activated in the Reserve, 15 Jun 1952
Inactivated, 16 Nov 1957
Activated, 4 Dec 1963
Organized, 8 Jan 1964
Redesignated 439 Security Police Squadron, 15 May 1967
Discontinued and inactivated, 15 Jan 1968
Redesignated 439 Weapons System Security Flight, 24 Aug 1984
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1984
Redesignated 439 Security Police Squadron, 1 Oct 1987
Redesignated 439 Security Forces Squadron, 1 Jul 1997

STATIONS

Selfridge AFB, MI, 1 Oct 1950-3 Apr 1951
Selfridge AFB, MI, 15 Jun 1952-16 Nov 1957
Misawa AB, Japan, 8 Jan 1964-15 Jan 1968
Westover AFB (later, Westover ARB), MA, 1 Oct 1984

ASSIGNMENTS

439 Air Base Group, 1 Oct 1950-3 Apr 1951
439 Air Base Group, 15 Jun 1952-16 Nov 1957

439 Combat Support Group, 8 Jan 1964-15 Jan 1968

439 Combat Support (later, 439 Air Base; 439 Combat Support; 439 Support; 439 Mission Support) Group, 1 Oct 1984

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Timothy S. Donnelly

Lt Col Wesley A. Thiel

Maj Bruce J. Lawler

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan-31 Dec 1984

15 Jun 1989-15 Jun 1991

1 Oct 1999-30 Sep 2001

1 Oct 2001-30 Sep 2003

1 Oct 2004-30 Sep 2006

[1 Oct 2006]-30 Jun 2007

1 Jul 2007-30 Jun 2009

EMBLEM



439 Security Police Squadron 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 eagle, on a field suggestive of the United States flag, reflects the willingness of the Squadron's personnel to defend freedom and indicates their military preparedness. The eagle rests on a globe and points out the unit's worldwide deployment capabilities. The tricorn hat and colonial musket recall the history of the American soldier. The stars denote the thirteen original colonies and the larger yellow star symbolizes the unit as the first of its kind in the Command and embodies the support provided by the Squadron to its parent organization. (Approved, 3 Jan 1991)

439 Security Forces Squadron emblem: Blue alludes to the primary theater of Air Force operations, yellow refers to the sun and excellence required of the U.S. Air Force personnel, green represents hope in the fulfilment of justice, white symbolizes mission clarity, brown stands for military austerity, and black signifies lethal strength. The globe indicates the vast regions in which the U.S. Air Force has made a positive impact. The eagle, in flight above the globe, embodies the willingness of the U.S. Armed Forces to respond anywhere and anytime with steadfast lethality. It also represents the ability to distinguish truth from falsehood. The musket characterizes the patriotism, selflessness, and courage required by all who have served in uniform while in defense of our nation; ascribing the parent organization our squadron serves under, The Patriot Wing. It also alludes to the nature of the craft of the U.S. Air Force Security Forces.

MOTTO

FACTIS AGNOSCIMUR (By our deeds we are known)

OPERATIONS

The 439th Weapons Systems Security Flight will be known as the 439th Security Police Squadron. The same set of orders issued on Mar. 12 created the 639th Weapons System Security Flight and assigned this new unit, with an activation date of Oct. 1, to the redesignated 439 SPS. Military Airlift Command will be the gaining unit of the new 639 WSSF, but the 439 SPS will be AFRES-gained.

Six members of the 439th Security Forces Squadron deployed to Iraq on Feb. 18. Capt. Shawn M. Swarz, Master Sgt. Paul E. Cyr, Tech. Sgt. Scott Taylor, Tech. Sgt. Ronnie Briere, Staff Sgt. Eric G. Marjault and Senior Airman Arjel R. Falcon, left as part of a 13-man squad of security forces Reservists tasked with the defense of Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq, said Chief Master Sgt. Michael P. Grady, Westover's security forces manager. The Patriot Wing cops are assigned to the 506th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, one of the Air Force's only security forces units with operational control of base security in Iraq. Although Kirkuk has maintained a degree of stability compared to other areas of Iraq, ethnic tensions and oil interests make it one of the country's most sensitive areas.

Kirkuk's oil fields are responsible for nearly 40 percent of Iraq's national oil production. The competing ethnic groups- Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen, have been vying for control of the area and its oil wealth since Saddam was overthrown by coalition forces in 2003.

Sporadic violence among Kirkuk's ethnic groups and attacks from groups instigating tensions such as Al Qaeda, make the nearby air base vital to the stability of northern Iraq and consequently a priority target for insurgent and terrorist groups. "You hear gunfire everyday- all

the time. We get occasional rocket attacks, although they've been basically ineffective," said Sergeant Cyr, a battle captain with the deployed cops. "It's such a big base and there's so much going on every day. I've been on six deployments to the Middle East and this is definitely the most eventful." Defending an air base in hostile territory is a big job. The cops work 12 to 13-hour days, doing everything from manning guard towers, operating sophisticated sensors that detect small arms fire and conducting surveillance – to skirmishing with enemy fighters outside the gate, Sergeant Cyr said. But despite the size of the task and the danger involved, the Westover cops persevere. "Everyone's morale is high and we all support this mission," Sergeant Cyr said.

"All of them have deployed before. They've proven themselves," Chief Grady said, "we expect great things we know they'll do a great job." Westover's cops received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award in January, owing some of that honor to their outstanding record while deployed. They were the first security forces squadron to go to Guantanamo Bay in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, where they managed more than 540 detainees. The squadron also had volunteers supporting military operations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Security forces Airmen from the 910th Airlift Wing at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, and the 917th Wing, Barksdale Air Force Base, La. rounded out the membership of the 13-man security team in Kirkuk. The deployed cops are expected to return home in July.

The 439th Security Forces Squadron received the Air Force's Outstanding Unit Award in January. Voluntary deployments and a slew of Air Force firsts over the course of the last two years helped propel the unit to the top of the Air Force. "To me this isn't a pat on the back," said Capt. Gary Byrd, an operations officer with the 439th SFS. "This was the Air Force acknowledging Westover's contribution." The unit was the only base in Air Force Reserve Command to implement a 100 percent background check on contractors through the National Crime Center. They were also the first and only security forces squadron to deploy to Guantanamo Bay in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, with 13 members serving as block NCOs overseeing more than 540 detainees. Another 18 members of the squadron volunteered to support military operations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

They provided security for 550 Air Force personnel and more than 450 members of the 82nd Airborne supporting humanitarian missions. "One thing we're particularly proud of was the development of a mobile command and control center for emergency response, the first in the Air Force," Captain Byrd said. The mobile command center helps security forces at Westover to coordinate with local authorities and respond to emergencies at any location more effectively. When the base received a bomb threat last summer, the mobile command center became a hub for security forces and local and state police responding to the threat, Captain Byrd said.

Other accomplishments include the installation of a flightline-security camera system and construction of a new ID gate with a new visitor control center and vehicle inspection area. The 439th SFS consists of 88 traditional reservists, 50 active reservists and 20 Department of Defense policemen. "We appreciate the wing's support and understanding that our guys are out there doing the best they can to make Westover a safe and secure environment," Captain Byrd said.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.