

## 564 MISSILE SQUADRON



### MISSION

### LINEAGE

564 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 19 Dec 1942

Activated, 24 Dec 1942

Redesignated 564 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 4 Jan 1944

Inactivated, 13 Sep 1945

Redesignated 564 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 28 Jan 1947

Activated in the Reserve, 27 Feb 1947

Inactivated, 27 Jun 1949

Redesignated 564 Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Atlas), 1 May 1958

Activated, 1 Jul 1958

Discontinued and inactivated, 1 Sep 1964

Redesignated 564 Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Minuteman), and activated, 14 Dec 1965

Organized, 1 Apr 1966

Redesignated 564 Missile Squadron, 1 Sep 1991

Inactivated 15 Aug 2008

### STATIONS

Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 24 Dec 1942

Biggs Field, TX, 1 Feb 1943

Lowry Field, CO, 19 Apr–2 Jun 1943

Hethel, England, 11 Jun 1943–c. 28 May 1945 (operated from Bengasi, Libya, 3 Jul–27 Aug 1943, and from Massicault, Tunisia, 19 Sep–3 Oct 1943)

Charleston AAFld, SC, 12 Jun–13 Sep 1945  
Fairfax Field, KS, 27 Feb 1947–27 Jun 1949  
Francis E. Warren AFB, WY, 1 Jul 1958–1 Sep 1964  
Malmstrom AFB, MT, 1 Apr 1966

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

389 Bombardment Group, 24 Dec 1942–13 Sep 1945  
Second Air Force, 27 Feb 1947  
Tenth Air Force, 1 Jul 1948–27 Jun 1949  
706 Strategic Missile Wing, 1 Jul 1958  
389 Strategic Missile Wing, 1 Jul 1961–1 Sep 1964  
Strategic Air Command, 14 Dec 1965  
341 Strategic Missile Wing, 1 Apr 1966  
341 Operations Group, 1 Sep 1991

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-24, 1943–1945  
Unkn, 1947–1949  
SM-65D Atlas, 1959-1964  
LGM-30F Minuteman II, 1967-1975  
LGM-30G Minuteman III, 1975-2008

### **COMMANDERS**

#### **HONORS**

##### **Service Streamers**

##### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II  
Air Offensive, Europe  
Sicily  
Naples-Foggia  
Normandy  
Northern France  
Rhineland  
Ardennes-Alsace  
Central Europe  
Air Combat, EAME Theater

##### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

##### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citation  
Ploesti, Rumania, 1 Aug 1943

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1975–30 Jun 1976

1 Jul 1976–30 Jun 1977

1 Jul 1978–30 Jun 1980

1 Jul 1980–30 Jun 1981

1 Jul 1989–30 Jun 1991

1 Sep 1991-31 Aug 1993

**EMBLEM**



564 Bombardment Squadron emblem



564 Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Atlas): On an AF blue isosceles triangle, one point up, edged AF golden yellow, eight diagonal stripes in base alternating red and white; over all issuing from base palewise a white missile pointing upward markings, shades of blue, its three exhaust trails to base, AF golden yellow and red; around the center of the missile a SAC ribbon (light blue, spattered with white stars); encircling the nose three white electrons in orbit; the lower edge of the AF blue field spattered with white stars; outlines and details AF blue throughout. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The emblem is symbolic of the squadron and its mission. The missile indicates

the deterrent force of the operational Atlas ICBM squadron, while the ribbon spattered with stars indicates our relationship to the Strategic Air Command, and the orbiting electrons symbolize the nuclear capability of the Atlas missile. The red, white, and blue background indicates unit pride in service to the United States of America. The dark blue field symbolizes the farthest reaches of outer space--beyond the stars. (Approved, 9 July 1959)

564 Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Minuteman) emblem: On a disc azure, two flanches or, the dexter bearing a fleur-de-lis and the sinister a fleur-de-lis florencee of the first overall a bendlet archy light blue spattered with mullets argent, in pale overall a skysword (stylized aircraft and contrail) blade to base of the second, the hilt garnished with a sprig of laurel of the first, all within a diminished bordure of the third. Below, a blank scroll edged light blue. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The emblem is symbolic of the squadron and its mission. 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 organization's honors awarded for service in the European Theater, World War II, are commemorated by the skysword and two fleurs-de-lis. The skysword with laurel leaves in the colors blue and gold denote the Distinguished Unit Citation. The fleurs-de-lis refer to the European campaigns; the fleur-de-lis florencee from the arms of the city of Florence signifies Italy. The light blue band with stars represents the squadron's organization in the Strategic Air Command and is global mission. The arched segments on the flanks connote to earth surfaces viewed from above and refer to the surface-to-surface strategic missile operation. The segments, together with the skysword additionally indicate the instantaneous response and effectiveness of the unit's performance. (Approved, 15 Sep 1967)

564 Missile Squadron emblem: Azure, between flaunches Or bearing fleures-de-lis of the first a "sky sword" Yellow charged on the grip with a spring of laurel Blue; all within a diminished bordure Celeste. (Approved, 28 Feb 1995)

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

Combat in ETO and MTO, 9 Jul 1943–25 Apr 1945, including pathfinder missions, 22 Mar–c. Oct 1944. Missile alert operations, 1959–1964 and 1967–1991. The 564 Missile Squadron began its proud heritage as a B-24 squadron operating in the European theater during World War II. In July 1943, the squadron flew its first combat mission in support of the Sicilian Campaign, operating from Bengazi, Libya. On Aug. 1, 1943, the 564 MS participated in infamous raids on the Ploesti oil field in Romania. The unit departed its final European base in England May 30, 1945 and disbanded at Charleston Army Airfield, S. C., Sept. 13, 1945.

On Jan. 28, 1947, the squadron was redesignated the 564 Bombardment Squadron (very heavy) and reactivated at Fairfax Field, Kansas City, Kan., as a reserve unit flying the B-36. When the B-36 was phased out of the active inventory, the 564 MS was again deactivated June 27, 1947. On July 1, 1958, the 564 Strategic Missile Squadron was activated at F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo. With its Atlas D intercontinental ballistic missile weapon system, the 564 Strategic Missile

Squadron became the first missile unit constructed solely for operational purposes. As the Atlas D missile became outmoded, however, the 564 Strategic Missile Squadron was inactivated for the final time Sept. 1, 1964.

On Dec. 14, 1965, the 564 Missile Squadron was reactivated in its current role as an ICBM squadron at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Mont. Equipped with the then-new Minuteman II missile, it earned its nickname as the "Deuce" squadron and was declared fully operational May 3, 1967. Today, the 564 Missile Squadron is a vital contributor to the 341st Space Wing's nuclear deterrent mission; operating, supporting, maintaining and securing five MAFs and 50 Minuteman III missiles.

The 564 was originally a B-24 squadron operating in the European theater, during World War II, as part of the 389th Bombardment group. In July 1943, the squadron was assigned to the Sicilian Campaign, operating from Bengazi, Libya. From there, the unit flew its first combat mission. On 1 August 1943, the 564 participated in the raids on the Ploesti oil field in Romania. By the end of August 1943, the squadron moved to Massicault, Tunisia to support the invasion of Italy. Early in 1944, the 564 was chosen for the Pathfinder duty against Germany's petroleum industry. Following very heavy duty both before and after D-Day, the squadron flew its last combat mission of the war in a raid on Salzburg, Austria on 25 April 1945. The unit departed its final European base in England on 30 May 1945 and disbanded at Charleston Army Airfield, South Carolina on 13 September 1945.

On 28 January 1947, the squadron was redesignated the 564 Bombardment Squadron (Very Heavy) and reactivated as a reserve unit flying the B-36 in the Air Defense Command and stationed at Fairfax Field in Kansas City, Kansas. Since the B-36 was being phased out of the active inventory, the 564 was again inactivated 27 June 1947. There was no 564 in the Air Force for more than a decade, but to fill the need for a unit designator with a rich, proud heritage, the unit was again reactivated as the 564 Strategic Missile Squadron on 1 July 1958. The squadron was assigned first to the 706th Strategic Missile Wing (SMW), then to the 389th SMW at F. E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming. With its Atlas C intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) weapon system, the 564 became the first missile unit constructed solely for operational purposes. As an operational squadron, the 564 had an important part to play in the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962. However, the Atlas D missiles at F. E. Warren were de-postured. The 564 was again inactivated on 1 September 1964.

On 14 December 1965, the 564 was reactivated for its fourth and current tour of duty and relocated to Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana. Equipped with the then-new Minutemen II missile, the unit was declared fully operational on 3 May 1967. In 1975, the squadron received the state-of-the-art Minuteman III missile and by late in the following year had added the capability for remote targeting with the Command Data Buffer system, or CDB. The 564 has gone through another change, the conversion of the CDB system to the modern Rapid Execution and Combat Targeting (REACT) system.

That's All for the 564, High-Level Visit: Past and present airmen gathered at Malmstrom AFB,

Mont., for the Aug. 16 inactivation ceremony marking the formal end to the 564 Missile Squadron. The unit had pulled its last Minuteman III ICBM from its silo last month, capping a year-long effort. The Great Falls Tribune reports that Col. Michael Fortney, commander of the 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom, called it "a great Air Force day, but also a bittersweet day," noting it was a day of farewells for many airmen and a "day to be proud and reflect on what they've accomplished." Officiating at the ceremony was Maj. Gen. Roger Burg, 20th Air Force commander, who presented the squadron an Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. The Tribune reports, too, that the last 564 MS commander, Lt. Col. Wayne Shaw, said of his airmen, "You weren't content to just fade away." Meanwhile, as a means to offset the loss of the 564, the Montana Congressional delegation earlier floated a proposal for the Air Force to form a new associate arrangement for the Montana Air National Guard that would bring in more active duty airmen to Malmstrom. At the request of Sen. Max Baucus (D) and Sen. Jon Tester (D), acting Air Force Secretary Michael Donley plans to visit Malmstrom later this week.

The Last 564 Missile Pull: 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., on July 28 pulled the last Minuteman III "owned" by the 564 Missile Squadron, according to a July 30 release. It was just a year since the Air Force directed the unit to remove the 50 ICBMs operated by the 564 MS. The wing already has placed nine of the 564's launch facilities and three missile alert facilities in caretaker status and is working to remove the equipment for the remaining 41 LFs and two MAFs before completing the deactivation process by emptying fuel tanks and disconnecting power and other caretaker actions. Under the last Quadrennial Defense Review, the Air Force had to downsize its ICBM force from 500 to 450 missiles. The service chose the 564 MS because it operated an odd-man-out missile configuration. Col. Michael Fortney, 341st MW commander, said, "The removal of the last booster in the 564 marks the closing of a significant period in our wing's history and, really, the history of our nation's strategic forces." He added, "The men and women of the 564 have a distinguished history serving our country and we are proud of the work they have done." According to an Aug. 1 report in the Great Falls Tribune, airmen of the 564 will transfer away from Malmstrom, which loses 492 out of its roughly 3,600 personnel. The Tribune also reported that Fortney said July 31 that the flag for the 564 would be furled "in the middle of August, and we're going to put it in a black sleeve," formally marking the unit deactivation.

The Air Force inactivated the 564 Missile Squadron at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., on Aug. 16, about three weeks after the unit's 50th and final Minuteman III ICBM was pulled from its silo.

These actions capped an effort begun in June 2007 to divest Malmstrom of 50 of its Minuteman IIIs under a policy established in the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review to reduce the Minuteman fleet from 500 to 450. The squadron's launch and missile alert facilities will be in caretaker status in case the US decides at some future point to increase the size of the ICBM fleet.

The reduction leaves Malmstrom's 341st Missile Wing with three ICBM operations squadrons and a total of 150 missiles, like the 90th MW at F. E. Warren AFB, Wyo., and the 91st MW at Minot AFB, N.D. 2008

Headquarters SAC inactivated the first Series D Atlas ICBM squadron, the 564 Strategic Missile Squadron at Francis E. Warren AFB, Wyoming. 1 Sep 1964

Completing Inactivation: After nearly two years and more than 29,000 man hours, members of the 341st Maintenance Group at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., on Aug. 23 completed the maintenance tasks associated with the inactivation of the 564 Missile Squadron. With the US decision, courtesy of the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, to reduce the nations' Minuteman III ICBM force by 50 missiles to 450, the unit was picked for inactivation. Although Malmstrom officials held the squadron's official inactivation ceremony in August 2008, these maintainers actually began the inactivation process in October 2007, which involved pulling the squadron's 50 missiles and all major equipment from its 50 launch facilities and five missile alert facilities. The remaining step is for inspectors to validate that all of the equipment has been removed from these sites so that they may enter caretaker status by the end of the month.

First the Bombers, Now the Missile Silos The Air Force has begun to eliminate 50 Minuteman III ICBM silos and five launch alert facilities associated with the now-inactive 564 Missile Squadron at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., according to a base release. The United States is getting rid of this infrastructure so that the silos no longer count as launchers for strategic nuclear warheads under the inventory limits imposed by the New START agreement with Russia. Bryan Construction of Colorado Springs, Colo., will eliminate the silos and alert facilities by filling them with earth and gravel, states Malmstrom's Jan. 24 release. Estimates call for completing this work by early 2015. To help meet New START's limits on warheads and launchers, the United States is eliminating a total of 103 silos and 10 missile alert facilities. In August, the Air Force began to demolish 50 inactivated Peacekeeper ICBM silos and five launch alert facilities at F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo. That demolition is scheduled for completion in December. The service is also eliminating three silos at Vandenberg AFB, Calif.

Turnover To SAC, 1 July 1959

Operational, 2 Sep 1960

First ICBM Off Alert, 15 May 1964

Last ICBM Shipped, 23 Jun 1964

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USAF Unit Histories

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