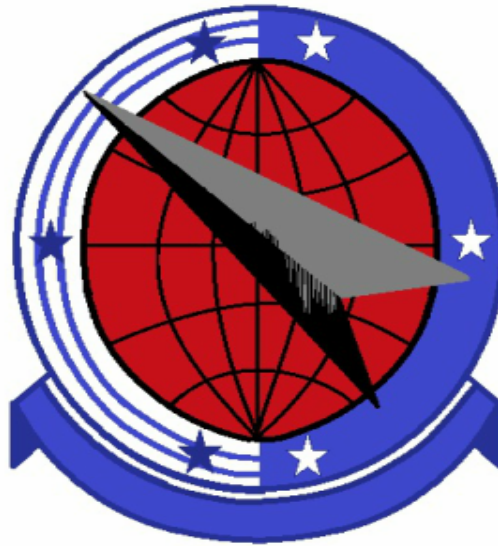


577th STRATEGIC MISSILE SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

577th Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 15 Jan 1943

Activated, 26 Jan 1943

Inactivated, 13 Sep 1945

Redesignated 577th Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, and activated in the reserve, 25 Aug 1947

Inactivated, 27 Jun 1949

Redesignated 577th Strategic Missile Squadron and activated, 12 Dec 1960

Organized, 1 Jun 1961

Inactivated, 25 Mar 1965

STATIONS

Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 26 Jan 1943

Biggs Field, TX, 1 Mar 1943

Alamogordo AAB, NM, 18 Apr-18 Jul 1943

Wendling, England, 1 Aug 1943-c. 9 Jun 1945

Charleston AAFld, SC, 25 Jun-13 Sep 1945

Adams Field, AR, 25 Aug 1947-27 Jun 1949

Altus AFB, OK, 1 Jun 1961

ASSIGNMENTS

392nd Bombardment Group, 26 Jan 1943-13 Sep 1945

392nd Bombardment Group, 25 Aug 1947-27 Jun 1949

Strategic Air Command, 12 Dec 1960

11th Bombardment (later Strategic Aerospace) Wing, 1 Jun 1961

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24, 1945

B-24E

B-24H

B-24J

B-29

SM-65F Atlas, 1961–1965

COMMANDERS



Col R. A. Syptak (USAF photo)

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation

Gotha, Germany, 24 Feb 1944

EMBLEM



On a disc per pale white and Air Force blue, the white area charged with concentric Air Force blue lines, an orange globe, grid lines black; all between six stars counterchanged, two in chief, two in base, one in dexter, and one in sinister; all surmounted by a gray dart-shaped projectile bendwise, shaded black. (Approved 1 Feb 1962)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 6 Sep 1943-25 Apr 1945.

SAC missile operations

Turnover to SAC, 9 Oct 1962

Operational, 9 Oct 1962

First ICBM off alert, 30 Dec 1964

Last ICBM off alert, 4 Feb 1965

Last ICBM shipped, 10 Feb 1965

Headquarters SAC inactivated the 577th Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Atlas F) at Altus AFB, Oklahoma, the 578th Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Atlas F) at Dyess AFB, Texas, the 579th Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Atlas F) at Walker AFB, New Mexico, the 568th Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Titan I) at Larson AFB, Washington, the 850th Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Titan I) at Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota, the 851st Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Titan I) at Beale AFB, California, the 566th Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Atlas E), and the 389th Strategic Missile Wing (ICBM-Atlas E) at Francis E. Warren AFB, Wyoming. 25 MAR 1965

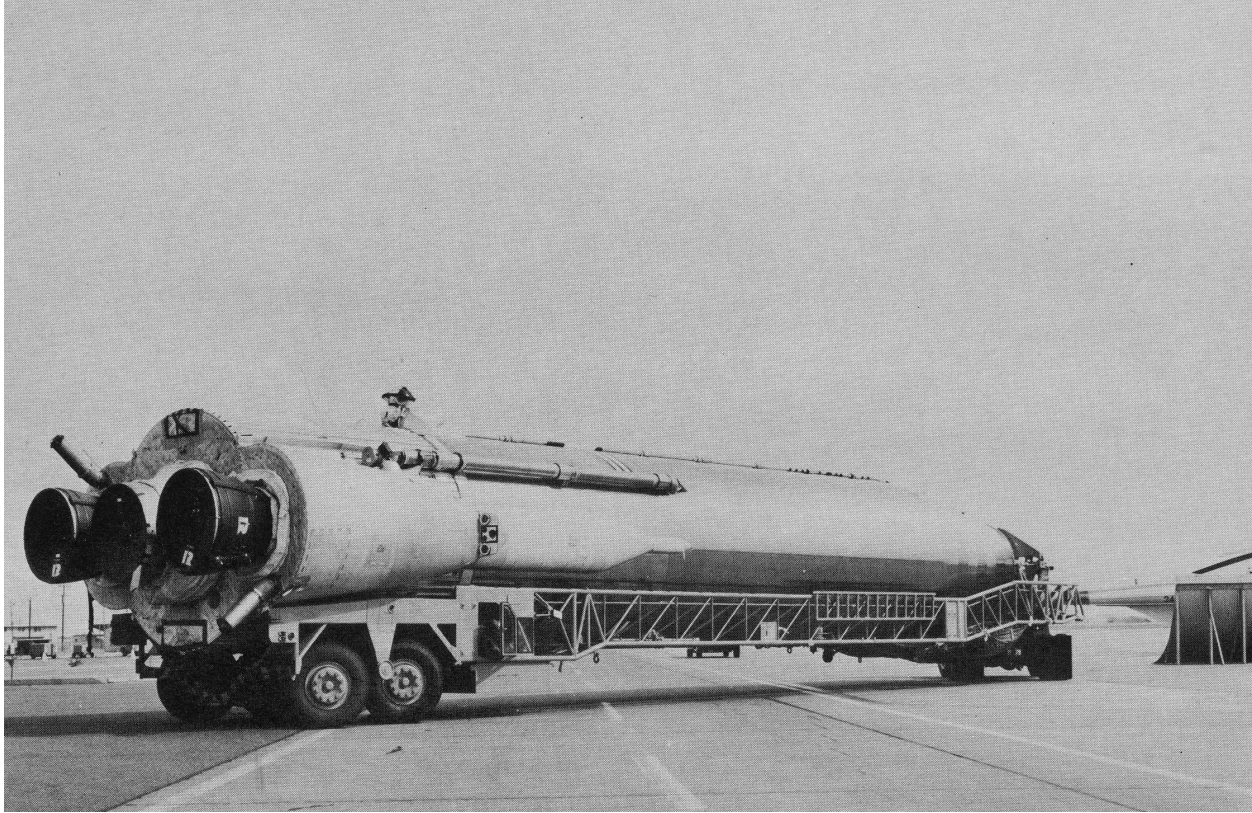
The first Series F Atlas ICBM was placed on alert at the 577th SMS, Altus AFB, Oklahoma, early in the month. 1 Aug 1962

Altus was destined to host the Atlas F ICBM. Near the end of January 1960, Senator Kerr, Senator Monroney, and Representative Toby Morris made the first public announcement regarding the installation of an Atlas F missile facility at Altus. In April, the Corps of Engineers, Tulsa District awarded the basic construction contract to Morrison-Knudsen and Hardeman and Associates. The two firms had submitted a combined bid of just over \$20.9 million. The 12 launcher locations were at or near Lonewolf; Hobart; Snyder; Cache; Mantiou; Frederick; Creta; Hollis; Russell; Willow; and Fargo, Texas. To acquire the needed 12,879 acres, in October, the Real Estate Division of the Tulsa District filed condemnation suits against 477 landowners in the 6 counties surrounding Altus.

As at other Atlas construction sites, Tulsa District Engineers were befuddled with the concurrency problem where improvements in the missile required constant modifications to the ongoing launcher construction. However, the Tulsa District managed to keep the project on schedule by using a "Red Ball" system that prioritized Atlas paperwork. Problems elsewhere forced the Army to centralize construction management. Therefore in November 1960, the responsibility of construction was transferred to the newly formed Corps of Engineers Ballistic Missile Construction Office (CEBMCO). Consequently, approximately 175 Tulsa District employees found themselves working for the Los Angeles-based organization.

There were several "growing pains" associated with this project. Coordination between the Corps of Engineers, contractor, Site Activation Task Force (SATAF), and integrating consultants from Convair Astronautics (later General Dynamics Astronautics) was difficult at times. The Corps blamed the integrating consultants for lacking experience in heavy construction. Natural difficulties were encountered as some sites had water tables that were higher than expected and at one site workers dug into underground cavities. Labor- management relations were harmonious.

Only eight short work stoppages occurred, causing minimal delays. There were three project-related fatalities. In addition, two major on-site fires set back construction. As with other first generation missile projects, the installation and testing of the propellant loading system proved difficult as contaminants hindered the system's operation. In August 1962, the first Atlas F was placed on alert status. In October, all 12 missiles were put on alert status as a result of the Cuban missile crisis. On May 14, 1964, during a propellant loading exercise, an explosion caused the destruction of launch complex 577-6. Two days later, Defense Secretary McNamara ordered the accelerated phaseout of Atlas and Titan I ICBMs. As a result, the 577th Strategic Missile Squadron was deactivated on March 25, 1965.



(USAF photo)

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 15 Mar 2011

Updated:

Sources

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit yearbook. *11th Strategic Aerospace Wing. Altus AFB, OK, 1964.* Army and Navy Publishing Co., Inc. Baton Rouge, LA. 1964.

Ballistic Missiles. Jacob Neufeld. Office of Air Force History. Washington D.C. 1990.