

626th TACTICAL CONTROL FLIGHT



MISSION

LINEAGE

STATIONS

Bremerhaven, Germany

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

15 March 1977 The 606th TCS, 626th TCF, and 636th TCF were activated at Carl Schurz Kaserne near Bremerhaven in 2 ATAF. This marked the completion of mobile radar expansion into Northern Germany. Control of these three units, like the other three in 2 ATAF, was charged to the 600th TCG,

14 November 1977 The 626th and 636th TCFs moved off Carl Schurz Kaserne to a land fill area at Muellplatz Grauer Wall, located just down the road from Carl Schurz.

22 March 1978 The 606th TCS, 626th TCF, and 636th TCF came on line as operational units and were declared fully operationally ready.

31 Mar 1978 By the close of March 1978, the remaining eight TPS-43ES at the 603rd TCS were released to their gaining units. Only two wing units still used the TPS-44 (the 626th and 636th TCFs),

8 May 1978 TPS-43E radar sets became operational at the 626th and 636th TCFs. This completed the wing's conversion to one type of radar set for the first time in the history of the 601st TCW. This swapout also brought the UPA-62 Planned Position Indicator into use at all 601st TCW mobile radar units.

21 February 1980 Higher headquarters chose Nordholz to become the temporary operating location for the 626th and 636th TCFs until their permanent site was readied at Wanna.

14 Aug 1980 The 626th and 636th TCFs completed their move to Nordholz from their previous site on the Bremerhaven city dump.

24 Jun 1981 The 606th TCS, 600th CSS, and 626th and 636th TCFs provided on-site assistance in support of recovery operations for an F-15 which crashed near Bremerhaven, Germany.

The 609th TCS and 619th TCF were activated at Bad Muender and Schwelentrup respectively on 1 April 1976. A month later, on 1 May 1976, the 629th TCF was also activated at Schwelentrup. Equipment for the 609th TCS came from Cannon AFB, New Mexico, and that for its two flights arrived from the 103rd TCF, Orange County, Connecticut, and the 101st TCF, Worcester, Massachusetts. Shortly after, on 21 May 1976, Hessian-Oldendorf Air Station was officially opened under project Creek Control and, on 20 September 1976, the 600th TCG and 600th Combat Support Squadron (CSS) were activated to provide control and support for 2 ATAF radar units. This left three new units yet to be activated. Almost a year later under project Creek Brahman, on 15 March 1977, the 606th TCS, 626th TCF, and 636th TCF were activated at Carl Schurz Kaserne near Bremerhaven. This marked the completion of mobile radar expansion into Northern Germany. But, unknown to wing officials at that time, the final bed-down of these latter two flights would become a monumental headache.

On 4 October 1977, the 603rd TCS started an extensive four week training program for the final 13 newly arrived TPS-43E radars. Each unit in the wing practiced setting up their own radar at the 603rd's technical site in Mehlingen. This period proved to be a busy time for the 603rd TCS which, along with the 615th and 616th AC&WS', participated in an E-3A AWACS demonstration in November and December 1977. The purpose of this demonstration, which proved to be very impressive to NATO officials who observed the activity, was to advertise the advanced capabilities of the E-3A to provide improved air surveillance for the European theater and its ability to down-link data through the ground environment system. The 603rd TCS deployed to Gruenstadt from 9 November through 15 December to support this demonstration. In several other TAGS related events during the year, on 14 November 1977, the 626th and 636th TCFs moved off Carl Schurz Kaserne to a location on top of the Bremerhaven City Dump at Muellplatz Grauer Wall, just down the road from their previous site. They would operate here, literally surrounded by garbage, for the next three years. Also, on 1 December 1977, the 636th TCF controlled its first mission, a sortie of two F-111s out of RAF Lakenheath, England. However, like the other two newly activated units, they would not be fully operational for several months.

Several other operational "firsts" also highlighted 1978. The 629th TCF assisted the 636th TCF in its first practice deployment from 4 through 7 January 1978 and the 606th TCS controlled its first practice intercept several weeks later on 2 February. The intercept involved F-15 aircraft from Bitburg AFB. On 22 March 1978, the 606th TCS, 626th TCF, and 636th TCF officially came on line as operational units and were declared fully operationally ready. Their sister radar units in 2 ATAF had previously achieved the same status on 1 February 1977. Also, in another key development, a change of command ceremony was held on 31 December 1978 which passed control and ownership of the Wasserkuppe 412L fixed radar site from the wing to the German Air Force. This concluded the transfer of various 4 ATAF 412L sites to the Germans that had been planned since 1959. On the next day, the 616th AC&WS was officially inactivated. Since the 606th AC&WS was previously inactivated and the Doebraberg site turned over to the GAF on 1 July 1974, only the

615th AC&WS fixed 412L radar site at Boerfink remained assigned to the wing. The remaining five fixed radar sites were now owned and operated by the German Air Force.

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Many major events occurred in 1980. The 601st TASG gained additional CH-53Cs and OV-10As, a major wing reorganization occurred, the 626th and 636th TCFs finally moved off their garbage dump near Bremerhaven to another temporary site in Nordholz, and the 412L site at Boerfink shut down to undergo the GEADGE modification. However, all this activity was overshadowed by the distant guns being sounded in the Persian Gulf area; called the Arabian Gulf after the fall of the Shah of Iran.

The year 1975 was a relatively quiet one for wing radar units. But, 1976 was, altogether, quite a different story. In an effort to provide mobile radar coverage services for Northern Germany, the 601st TCW planned on opening up several new units in 2 ATAF. Final planning stages for Creek North were completed by 31 March 1976, and, by year's end, the wing's mobile TAGS network grew by 40 percent. This expansion project involved the activation of eight units and first took in the development of three new sites in Northern Germany—Hessisch Oldendorf, Bad Muender, and Schwelentrup. Hessisch Oldendorf was the site of a former Royal Netherlands Air Force Hawk missile battery headquarters and the other two locations were its satellite missile launch sites. The 609th TCS and 619th TCF were activated at Bad Muender and Schwelentrup respectively on 1 April 1976. A month later, on 1 May 1976, the 629th TCF was also activated at Schwelentrup. Equipment for the 609th TCS came from Cannon AFB, New Mexico, and that for its two flights arrived from the 103rd TCF, Orange County, Connecticut, and the 101st TCF, Worcester, Massachusetts. Shortly after, on 21 May 1976, Hessisch-Oldendorf Air Station was officially opened under project Creek Control and, on 20 September 1976, the 600th TCG and 600th Combat Support Squadron (CSS) were activated to provide control and support for 2 ATAF radar units. This left three new units yet to be activated. Almost a year later under project Creek Brahman, on 15 March 1977, the 606th TCS, 626th TCF, and 636th TCF were activated at Carl Schurz Kaserne near Bremerhaven. This marked the completion of mobile radar expansion into Northern Germany. But, unknown to wing officials at that time, the final bed-down of these latter two flights would become a monumental headache.

Going into 1977, the 609th TCS and its two subordinate flights were declared operationally ready on 1 February. Also, yet another TACS milestone was reached on 22 March 1977, when the 603rd TCS received the first two "E" model TPS-43 radars. After initial checkout at the 603rd TCS, one of the TPS-43Es was sent to the 601st TCS on 22 April 1977. Four days later a TPS-43E radar was

used for the first time in an exercise as the 601st TCS participated in Certain Fighter. Eventually, all wing mobile radar units would receive the TPS-43E radar set. Indeed, on 4 October 1977, the 603rd TCS started an extensive four week training program for the final 13 newly arrived TPS-43E radars. Each unit in the wing practiced setting up their own radar at the 603rd's technical site in Mehlingen. This period proved to be a busy time for the 603rd TCS which, along with the 615th and 616th AC&WS, participated in an E-3A AWACS demonstration in November and December 1977. The purpose of this demonstration, which proved to be very impressive to NATO officials who observed the activity, was to advertise the advanced capabilities of the E-3A to provide improved air surveillance for the European theater and its ability to down-link data through the ground environment system. The 603rd TCS deployed to Gruenstadt from 9 November through 15 December to support this demonstration. In several other TAGS related events during the year, on 14 November 1977, the 626th and 636th TCFs moved off Carl Shurz Kaserne to a location on top of the Bremerhaven City Dump at Muellplatz Grauer Wall, just down the road from their previous site. They would operate here, literally surrounded by garbage, for the next three years. Also, on 1 December 1977, the 636th TCF controlled its first mission, a sortie of two F-111s out of RAF Lakenheath, England. Like the other two newly activated units, they would not be fully operational for several months.

TPS-43E activity dominated the early months of 1978. On 20 January, the 606th TCS became the last CRP to receive the new radar set and several months later, on 31 March 1978, the remaining eight TPS-43Es stored at the 603rd TCS were released to the gaining PACPs. At this time, only two wing units still operated the TPS-44—the 626th and 636th TCFs. On 8 May 1978, TPS-43E radar sets became operational at the last two FACPs. This activity, was to advertise the advanced capabilities of the E-3A to provide improved air surveillance for the European theater and its ability to down-link data through the ground environment system.

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TPS 43E

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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