

3rd COMBAT COMMUNICATIONS GROUP



LINEAGE

3rd Communications Group established, 16 May 1957

Activated, 8 Jul 1957

Discontinued and inactivated, 1 Jul 1962

Redesignated 3rd Mobile Communications Group and activated, 20 May 1964

Organized, 1 Jul 1964

Redesignated 3rd Combat Communications Group, 24 Mar 1976

Redesignated 3rd Combat Information Systems Group, 15 Aug 1984

Redesignated HQ 3rd Combat Communications Group, 1 Oct 1986

STATIONS

South Ruislip, England

Tinker AFB, OK, 1 Jul 1964

ASSIGNMENTS

Third Air Force, 8 Jul 1957-1 Jul 1962

Air Force Communications Service (later, Air Force Communications Command), 20 May 1964

Tactical Communications Area (later, Tactical Communications Division; Tactical Information Systems Division; Tactical Communications Division) 1 Apr 1980

602nd Tactical Air Control (later 602nd Air Control) Wing, 1 Oct 1990

552nd Air Control Wing, 28 May 1992

Twelfth Air Force, 1 Apr 1994

Twenty-Fourth Air Force (Twenty-Fourth Air Force [later Air Forces Strategic]), 18 Aug 2009

689th Combat Communications Wing, 5 Oct 2009

COMMANDERS

Maj James M. Dunn, May 1957-?

LTC Gilbert H. Bertie, Jun 1961

LTC Stanley J. Washuk, 14 Jun 1962

LTC John R. Coonan, 20 May 1964

Col William T. Judkins, 6 Jul 1964

Col John T. Ford, 22 Dec 1965
Col Ralph E. McDaniel, 5 Aug 1968
Col Francis W. Fender, 1 Sep 1969
Col Robert W. Pool, Mar 1971
Col John D. Nolan, 30 Apr 1973
Col Lowell F. Bohn, 15 Dec 1973
Col Paul W. Edwards, 17 Jun 1976
Col Ronald H. McKinney, 15 Jun 1976
Col James Selph, 15 Sep 1980
Col Gerald L. Boynton, 15 Dec 1982
Col Phillip J. Lurie, 1 May 1984
Col Buford R. Witt, 24 Jan 1986
Col Carl E. Stoops, 22 Jul 1988
Col Robert A. Allen, Jr., 19 Aug 1990
Col Carl Williamson
Col Tracy Amos, 21 Apr 2005
Col James H. Appleyard, Jr., 21 Apr 2006
Col Thomas Byrge, Jr., 21 Apr 2008
Col David Babyk

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Grenada 1983

Decorations

Meritorious Unit Award

1 Jun 2008-31 May 2009

1 Jul 1960-1 Feb 1962

1 Jan 1965-31 Dec 1966

1 May 1970-31 Dec 1971

1 Jan 1972-31 Dec 1972

1 Jan 1974-31 Dec 1974

1 Jan 1975-31 Dec 1975

1 Jan 1978-31 Dec 1978

12 Nov 1984-3 Jun 1985

1 Jan 1986-31 Dec 1987

1 May 1990-30 Apr 1992

1 Apr 1992-31 Mar 1994

1 Apr-31 Dec 1994

1 Jan 1995-31 May 1996

1 Jun 1996-31 May 1997

1 Jun 1997-31 May 1999

1 Jun 1999-31 May 2001

1 Jun 2001-31 May 2002

EMBLEM

Blue and yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The sword symbolizes the group's combat mission. The electronic flashes depict the telecommunications and data automation function. The use of navigational aids is indicated by Polaris, the North Star. The satellite communications function is denoted by the satellite. The space shuttle symbolizes the group's ongoing support of such interim mission requirements as the Space Transportation System.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 3rd Combat Communications Group, commonly referred to as the 3rd Herd, is a unit of the Air Combat Command's 12th Air Force. The group's subordinate squadrons are the 3rd Combat Communications Support Squadron, the 31st, 32nd, 33rd and 34th Combat Communications Squadrons. The 700 members of the 3rd Combat Communications Group provide deployable communications, computer systems, navigational aids and air traffic control services anywhere in the world in support of Air Force, DOD and other U.S. commitments. The unit's 700 personnel are trained to deploy more than 150 mission systems to provide initial service to Air Force wing customers and other units in locations where these capabilities don't exist, and are prepared to do so under hostile conditions. The 3rd Combat Communications Group's elements are self-sustaining during the initial phase of the expeditionary mission until relieved by follow-on forces and supplies.

From its earliest days in World War II, AACCS maintained combat or mobile communication units to support locations that lacked established communications and air traffic control facilities or to ensure continued operations in the event of a natural disaster or combat situation. Upon its activation in 1961, AFCS gained three mobile communication organizations which operated air transportable equipment to provide base communications, long-haul communications, and air traffic control in support of tactical environments and other situations where fixed facilities were not available. The 1st Mobile Communications Group, at Clark AFB, Philippines, supported the Pacific Area; the 2d Mobile Communications Squadron, at Toul-Rosieres AB, France, supported the Europe, Africa, Mid East Area; and the 3d Mobile Communications Squadron, at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma, supported the Western hemisphere. Throughout the sixties, these organizations remained in an alert status to meet needs resulting from the world political environment, to respond to emergencies caused by natural disaster, as well as to support exercises or projects that required temporary facilities. An increase in situations that required the use of AFCS's mobile units in the sixties prompted the command to expand its emergency mission support facilities. On

AFCS rapidly acquired a plethora of specialized equipment which increased the effectiveness and versatility of its mobile units. Command of all five mobile units was exercised by AFCS, yet each group was aligned to a specific "user" command to provide the responsiveness required in contingency operations. As a result, the command to which a group was aligned exercised operational control over the unit.

Members of the group have provided mobile and tactical communications services during virtually every major DOD and Air Force operation. Notable missions include: Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, U.S. involvement in the Dominican Republic, U.S. support to Israel during Yom Kippur War, Elf One in Saudi Arabia, Urgent Fury in Grenada, Eagle Look in the Middle East, Just Cause and Nimrod Dancer in Panama, Uphold Democracy in Haiti, Joint Endeavor in Bosnia, and Operations Desert Shield/Storm, Joint Forge in Kosovo and Operations Northern and Southern Watch in SWA.

Members of the 3d Herd deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Because of the need for communications and air traffic control services to enable the warfighter on little or no-notice, the 3d Herd's training for deploying to austere locations under bare-base conditions helped ensure mission success for U.S. operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Members of the 3d Herd are still deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and enduring Freedom in Southwest Asia. Other support includes DEA drug interdiction missions such as Operation Constant Vigil and Joint Task Force – 4.

The 3d Herd also supports humanitarian missions, such as Operation New Horizons in South America where U.S. military forces spend the summer months helping communities build or rebuild portions of their infrastructure to make it safer or better equipped.

Members of the 3d CCG provided emergency support to Guam, Florida and Hawaii following major hurricane disasters; to Washington State following the eruption of Mount St. Helens; and the Alfred P. Murrah federal building bombing rescue and recovery. Space Shuttle mission navigation support and national air traffic services during the controllers' strike in 1981 are also a part of the 3d CCG's proud history.

19 Dec 1995 The first of 33 members of Tinker AFB's 3rd Combat Communications Group departs for temporary duty in Operation Joint Endeavor, the United Nations' peacekeeping force in Bosnia. The group establishes air traffic control at the air base in Tuzla.

In 2003 stats, an average of 42 percent of the group's equipment and 70 percent of the personnel assigned were deployed at any given time. Approximately 120 group members, representing 30 career fields, were deployed for more than 110 days in 2003.

Air Force Space Command announced that it will inactivate the 3rd Combat Communications Group at Tinker AFB, Okla., as part of the Air Force's overall force structure changes to meet the Obama Administration's new strategic guidance. "The inactivation of the 3rd CCG is part of a larger Air Force effort to shape the force," said Col Joseph Scherrer, commander of the 689th Combat Communications Wing at Robins AFB, Ga., the group's parent organization. As part of the

new strategy, "the Air Force is reducing deployable communications capabilities to match the reduction in combat air forces, added Scherrer. The group's inactivation will affect 600 military billets at Tinker. Airmen from the group will transition to other units, said Scherrer. 2012

The 3rd Combat Communications Group's Combat Readiness School at Tinker AFB, Okla., last week graduated its final class of battlefield communications specialists before ceasing operations. "It's been a good feeling to teach airmen skills that could potentially save their lives," said school Commandant MSgt. Matt Smith. Air Force Space Command plans to inactivate the 3rd CCG to match reductions in the combat air forces. Under the plan, the 3rd CCG's activities would shift to the 5th CCG at Robins AFB, Ga., which has its own combat readiness school. Tinker's school began its two-week pre-deployment course in the early 1990s to teach airmen to establish and defend a communications emplacement in the field. The course, taught six times a year, culminated in a 36-hour field exercise. The final class graduated on July 27. 2012

Officials at Tinker AFB, Okla., inactivated the 3rd Combat Communications Group, one of the major moves the Air Force has been making to streamline the combat communications mission. The group's inactivation ceremony took place on Sept. 30. With the 3rd CCG ceasing operations, the 5th CCG at Robins AFB, Ga., is now the Air Force's sole active duty combat communications group. The 5th CCG will now report directly to 24th AF headquarters since the Air Force also inactivated Robins' 689th Combat Communications Wing, under which the 5th CCG formerly fell. The wing ceased operations in June. "The future of combat communications is to become a lighter, leaner, and more capable force," said Maj. Barry Roche, 5th Combat Communications Support Squadron commander. 2013



Air Force Order of Battle

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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.

Major Command history. A Salute to Air Force Communications Command Leaders and Lineage. Office of Air Force Communications Command History. Scott AFB, IL. 1 Oct 1990.