

15th OPERATIONAL WEATHER SQUADRON



MISSION

The 15th Operational Weather Squadron is responsible for producing and disseminating mission planning and execution weather analyses, forecasts, and briefings for Air Force, Army, Guard, Reserve, and combatant command forces operating at 138 installations/sites in a 24-state region of the northeastern United States. The 15th OWS also produces over 9,000 weather warning/advisories, 18,000 terminal aerodrome forecasts, 12,000 graphical aviation hazard products and 30,000 flight weather briefings per year. In addition to its operational mission, the 15th OWS serves as the training center for 20 percent of all new Air Force enlisted forecasters and weather officers. After completing an 8-month initial skills course, new weather apprentices report to the 15th OWS to complete a 15-month upgrade training process.

LINEAGE

15th Weather Squadron constituted, 10 Apr 1942
Activated, 22 Apr 1942
Inactivated, 8 Aug 1959
Activated, 28 Feb 1961
Organized, 8 Jul 1961
Inactivated, 30 Sep 1991
Activated, 1 Jun 1992
Inactivated, 1 Aug 1994
Redesignated 15th Operational Weather Squadron, 8 Jan 1999
Activated, 15 Feb 1999

STATIONS

McClellan Field, CA, 22 Apr 1942-16 Jun 1942
Melbourne, Australia, 16 Jul 1942

Townsville, Australia, 8 Nov 1942
Nichols Field, Philippines, 20 Oct 1945
Fort William McKinley, Philippines, 16 May 1946
Kadena Army Air Base (later Kadena AFB; Kadena AB), Okinawa, 1 Jul 1947- 8 Aug 1959
Charleston AFB, SC, 8 Jul 1961
McGuire AFB, NJ, 30 Aug 1963
Scott AFB, IL, 30 Jun 1972
Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, 1 Jan 1976
McGuire AFB, NJ, 1 Jun 1980-30 Sep 1991
Hickam AFB, HI, 1 Jun 1992-1 Aug 1994
Scott AFB, IL, 15 Feb 1999

ASSIGNMENTS

Sacramento Air Depot, 22 Apr 1942 - 16 Jun 1942
Allied Air Forces in Australia, 16 Jul 1942
Fifth Air Force, c. 2 Sep 1942
FEAF Regional Control and Weather Group (Provisional), 25 Oct 1944
1st Weather Group, 20 Sep 1945
1st Weather (later, 2100th Air Weather) Group,* 1 Jun 1948
2143rd Air Weather Wing, 23 Oct 1949
1st Weather Wing, 8 Feb 1954
10th Weather Group, 18 Feb 1957 - 8 Aug 1959
Military Air Transport Service, 28 Feb 1961
8th Weather Group, 8 Jul 1961
7th Weather Wing, 8 Oct 1965
5th Weather Wing, 30 Jun 1972 - 1 Jan 1972
7th Weather Wing, 1 Jan 1976 - 30 Sep 1991
15th Operations Group, 1 Jun 1992-1 Aug 1994
Air Mobility Command Tanker Airlift Control Center, 15 Feb 1999

*No relationship to previous 1st Weather Group

COMMANDERS

LTC R. Loyal Easton, 22 Apr 1942
Maj Whitford C. Mauldin, 10 May 1942
LTC James W. Twaddell, Jr., 1 Aug 1942
Maj John M. Tucker, Jan 1944
Maj Joseph W. Kelly, 12 Mar 1944
Maj Dorence C. Jameson, Jul 1944
Maj Joseph W. Kelly, 25 Oct 1944
Cpt Stephen J. Cope, Feb 1945
Maj James R. Reynolds, 1 Jul 1945
LTC Morrill E. Marston, 1 Jan 1946
Maj Wilbur B. Sherman, 25 Jan 1946

Cpt Edward O. Jess, 3 Apr 1946
Cpt Oscar H. True, 15 May 1946
Maj Leo A. Kiley, Jr., 10 Feb 1947
Cpt William J. Landsperger, 13 Nov 1947
Maj Thomas J. Arbogast, 12 Dec 1947
Maj DeWitt N. Morgan, 21 Feb 1949
LTC William J. Hall, 31 Dec 1949
Maj John S. Giegel, 20 Jun 1950
Maj Leonard H. Hutchinson, 9 Apr 1951
LTC John S. Giegel, 25 May 1951
LTC Jack H. Pelander, 26 Jul 1952
LTC Leland J. Rath, 28 Apr 1953
LTC Herschel H. Slater, 8 Apr 1955
LTC Lowell A. Schuknecht, 5 Jun 1955
LTC David C. Barrow, 6 Aug 1957
Unit not manned through 28 Feb 1961-7 Jul 61
Col Robert F. Neeley, 8 Jul 1961
LTC Frederick S. Tuttle, 8 Jul 1965
Col Andrew Paton, 16 Jul 1965
LTC Frederick S. Tuttle, 16 Jun 1967
Col W. B. Willis, 30 Jun 1967
Col Lloyd C. Hughes, 2 Jul 1970
Col Robert L. Kane, 30 Jun 1972
Col Joseph D. Saccone, 31 Jul 1973
Col Chester C. Lukas, 18 Jan 1974
Col Charles O. Jenista, Jr., 6 Jun 1974
LTC John E. Oliphant, 1 Jan 1976
LTC Dan K. Waylett, 30 Apr 1977
LTC William C. Culver, 20 Jun 1978
Col Donald E. Smith, 1 Aug 1978
LTC John J. Kelly, Jr., 1 Jun 1980
LTC Darrell L. Lucas, 13 Jul 1981
LTC James W. Overall, 21 Jun 1984
LTC Frank J. Carvell, 26 Jun 1986

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II

Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

Mar 1956-Oct 1956

1 Jul 1972 - 30 Jun 1973

1 Jul 1973 - 31 Dec 1974

1 Jul 1977 - 30 Jun 1979

1 Jun 1992 - 30 Jun 1993

1 Oct 1993 - 1 Aug 1994

1 Apr 2000 - 31 Mar 2001

1 Apr 2001 -31 Mar 2002

EMBLEM



15th Weather Squadron insignia portrays the 15th Weather Squadron behind the "8" ball of difficult weather reporting. Approved, 9 Oct 1943

15th Operational Weather 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 gauntlet gripping a lightning bolt from a thunderstorm cloud represents the unit's ability to maintain a firm forecasting grip on rapidly changing weather and assessment to the wing. The two background colors represent the day and night global capability and mobility of the unit. (Approved, 18 Apr 2000)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 15th Operational Weather Squadron was activated as the 15th Weather Squadron on April 22, 1942, at McClellan Field, California. The squadron shortly thereafter relocated to Australia, first at Melbourne and then to Townsville. In October 1945 the squadron moved to the Philippines, where it remained until 1947. On July 1, 1947, the 15th relocated to Kadena Army

Air Base. It was there inactivated in 1959. The 15th was again activated on February 28, 1961, at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina. It moved to McGuire AFB, New Jersey, in August 1963 and in June 1972, the 15th made its first sojourn to Scott AFB, Illinois. It remained there until 1976 when it transferred to Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. In 1980 the squadron returned to McGuire AFB until it was inactivated on September 30, 1991. It was again activated on June 1, 1992, at Hickam AFB, Hawaii, but was inactivated on August 1, 1994. The squadron was redesignated the 15th Operational Weather Squadron on January 8, 1999, and again activated on February 15, 1999, at its current location, Scott AFB, Illinois.

2/9/2009 The 15th Operational Weather Squadron here will assume short-term back-up responsibilities for the National Weather Service's Aviation Weather Center and Storm Prediction Center on April 1. AWC provides aviation warnings and forecasts of hazardous flight conditions at all levels within domestic and international air space while SPC provides tornado and severe weather watches along with a series of hazardous weather forecasts for the contiguous United States. In the event of an outage at either center, the 15th OWS will take over responsibility for portions of each of these missions until they are fully operational again. "We are looking forward to this new task," said Maj. Hugh Freestrom, 15th OWS flight commander, who is leading the effort for the squadron. The, the squadron should not see huge changes to procedures."

Come April the squadron must be able to produce weather advisories, forecasts and warnings for all air traffic within the continental United States in support of AWC. This includes hazardous weather due to thunderstorms, turbulence or icing, Instrument Flight Rule conditions, dust, sand or volcanic ash over a 3,000-square-mile area. The squadron must also be able to provide forecasts for SPC that identify the threat of severe storms for the next one-to-three days as well as issuing severe weather watch boxes, which are basically an early head's up that favorable conditions exist for the development of severe weather. "Although these new responsibilities will be a formidable challenge, our forecasters are well prepared to succeed," Maj. Hugh Freestrom said. "We currently forecast severe weather and produce aviation weather products for more than 40 percent of the total force units in the continental U.S."

To assist with these additional responsibilities the squadron will have access to the National Automated Weather Information Processing System, or N-AWIPS, from the National Centers for Environmental Protection. Information from this system will be used as a backup source for limited NCEP data during an outage. "The access to N-AWIPS is really the most important part of our new responsibilities; without it, we wouldn't be able to provide backup support," said Maj. Scott Lisko, 15th OWS systems and training flight commander, who is handling all communications and training for the new tasking. "The computer hardware and software used to perform the AWC and SPC missions is different from the hardware and software we use for our regular, day-to-day Air Force weather mission." Trainers and information technology representatives from AWC and SPC will visit the squadron during the next few months to help with the transition.

"The IT people will be working with 15th OWS communications personnel to configure the

routers and servers in our data center to ingest National Weather Service data and they will also be setting up and configuring the actual workstations our forecasters will be using to conduct the backup support," Major Lisko said. "The AWC and SPC training personnel will be working closely with our 15th OWS trainers to develop the courses and curriculum the 15th will be using to train the forecasters to provide the back-up support." After assuming the back-up duties on April 1, the squadron will continue to have ongoing training and hold quarterly exercises to ensure it is ready in the event of an outage. "We're planning two visits a year each way," Major Lisko said. "We'll have the AWC and SPC trainers visit us twice a year and we'll send 15th OWS trainers to AWC and SPC twice a year to stay abreast of any changes or updates to their forecast methods and procedures. "In addition, we will be exercising the back-up support quarterly to make sure our forecasters stay proficient on how to do the job," he said. "One facet of this agreement we're excited about is the sharing of forecasting concepts between Air Force weather and the National Weather Service. By working together on the AWC and SPC support, we'll start to cross-feed ideas and techniques with each other, helping both of us."

"Being tapped for these new responsibilities is good for (the squadron) and for our government as a whole," said Lt. Col. Gary Kubat, 15th OWS commander. "Our forecasters are quite capable of providing the types of backup products needed by the National Weather Service and it enables (them) to provide better service to America. "It's also good for our military weather forecasters because of the increased dialogue and knowledge sharing occurring to make this happen," he said. "Ultimately there may be some techniques and skills learned from this exchange that translate to better combat support for our military forces, so this is a great opportunity -- definitely a win-win situation." The backup responsibilities for AWC and SPC are currently handled by the Air Force Weather Agency at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

Det 1, Andrews AFB, MD
Det 3, Charleston AFB, SC
Det 5, Dover AFB, DE
Det 10, McGuire AFB, NJ
Det 12, Selfridge ANGB, MI
Det 13, Robins AFB, GA
Det 15, Wright Patterson AFB, OH
Det 19, Lajes Field, Azores
Det 21, Pope AFB, NC
Det 31, Dobbins AFB, GA

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.