

15th WING



MISSION

LINEAGE

15th Pursuit Group (Fighter) established, 22 Nov 1940

Activated, 1 Dec 1940

Redesignated 15th Pursuit Group (Interceptor), 12 Feb 1942

15th Fighter Group, 15 May 1942

Inactivated, 15 Oct 1946

Redesignated 15th Fighter Group (Air Defense), 20 Jun 1955

Activated, 18 Aug 1955

Discontinued, 1 Jul 1960

15th Tactical Fighter Wing established and activated, 17 Apr 1962

Organized, 1 Jul 1962

Inactivated, 1 Oct 1970

Redesignated 15th Air Base Wing, 20 Oct 1971

Activated, 1 Nov 1971

15th Fighter Group (Air Defense) and 15th Air Base Wing consolidated, 31 Jan 1984.

Consolidated unit retains 15th Air Base Wing designation.

Redesignated 15th Airlift Wing, 28 Apr 2003

Redesignated 15th Wing, 2010

STATIONS

Wheeler Field, Territory of Hawaii, 1 Dec 1940
Bellows Field, Territory of Hawaii, 3 Jun 1944-5 Feb 1945
South Field, Iwo Jima, 6 Mar 1945
Bellows Field, Territory of Hawaii, 25 Nov 1945
Wheeler Field, Territory of Hawaii, 9 Feb-15 Oct 1946
Niagara Falls Municipal Airport, NY, 18 Aug 1955-1 Jul 1960
MacDill AFB, FL, 1 Jul 1962-1 Oct 1970
Hickam AFB, HI, 1 Nov 1971

ASSIGNMENTS

14th Pursuit Wing, 1 Dec 1940
7th Interceptor (later, VII Fighter) Command, 23 Jan 1942
United States Army Strategic Air Forces, 16 Jul 1945
VII Fighter Command, 5 Aug 1945
Pacific Air Command, US Army, 25 Nov 1945
7th Fighter Wing, 1 Jan 1946
Seventh Air Force, 1 Mar-15 Oct 1946
4707th Air Defense Wing, 18 Aug 1955
4708th Air Defense Wing, 1 Mar 1956
30th Air Division, 8 Jul 1956
Syracuse Air Defense Sector, 1 Sep 1958-1 Jul 1960
Tactical Air Command, 17 Apr 1962
836th Air Division, 1 Jul 1962-1 Oct 1970
Pacific Air Forces, 1 Nov 1971
Thirteenth Air Force, 6 Oct 2006

ATTACHMENTS

7th Fighter Wing, 25 Nov-31 Dec 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

A-12, 1940-1942
OA-9, 1940-1942
P-26, 1940-1942
P-36, 1940-1942
B-12, 1941-1942
P-39, 1941-1944
P-40, 1941-1944
P-47, 1943-1945, 1945-1946, 1946
P-70, 1943-1944
A-24, 1944
P-51, 1944-1946
P-61, 1944

A-26, 1946
F-86, 1955-1958
F-102, 1958-1960
F-84, 1962-1964
T-33, 1962-1970
F-4, 1964-1970
B-57, 1968-1970
EC-135, 1971-1992
O-2, 1972-1980
T-33, 1972-1987
C-135, 1992-
C-37, 2002
C-40, 2003

COMMANDERS

Maj Clyde K. Rich, 1 Dec 1940
Maj Lorry N. Tindal, 6 Dec 1940
Maj Clarence F. Hegy, 17 Mar 1941
Maj Lorry N. Tindal, 25 Apr 1941
LTC Paul W. Blanchard, 20 Sep 1941
LTC William S. Steele, 12 Feb 1942
LTC Sherwood E. Buckland, 5 Mar 1943
LTC Kenneth R. Powell, 17 Jun 1943 (temporary)
LTC Sherwood E. Buckland, 7 Jul 1943
LTC William A. Bowen, 23 Aug 1943 (temporary)
LTC Sherwood E. Buckland, 15 Sep 1943
Col James O. Beckwith Jr., 27 Sep 1943
LTC Dewitt S. Spain, 16 Apr 1945
LTC Julian E. Thomas, 17 May 1945
LTC Elmer E. Booth, 19 Jul 1945 (temporary)
Col John W. Mitchell, 21 Jul 1945
Col William Eades, by Nov 1945
Col Oswald W. Lunde, 25 Nov 1945-15 Oct 1946
Col Stanley E. Matthews, 1955
Col Wayne B. Curren, c. 1956
Col Thomas L. Wiper, c. 1957
Col Vic L. Byers Jr., 23 Mar 1959-1 Jul 1960
None (not manned), 17 Apr-30 Jun 1962
Col George L. Jones, 1 Jul 1962
Col Francis J. Vetort, 8 Jun 1964
Col Levi R. Chase, 6 Jul 1964
Col Raymond A. Bradley, 4 Oct 1965
Col Woodrow W. Ramsey, 6 Oct 1965
Col Donald N. Stanfield, 12 Jun 1966

Col Charles J. Bowers, 29 Jul 1966
Col James D. Catington, 15 Aug 1966
Col Roy D. Carlson, 21 Jun 1967
Col Clifford H. Meier, 20 May 1968
Col Travis R. McNeil, 1 Feb-1 Oct 1970
Col Ernest W. Pate, 1 Nov 1971
Col Howard R. Inks, 3 Jun 1972
Col Wilmot E. Y. Paxton, 23 Aug 1972
Col Richard L. Thompson, 1 May 1976
Col Howard F. O'Neal, 17 May 1976
Col Sharman R. Stevenson, 7 Jul 1978
Col John A. Parrish Jr., 15 Aug 1980
Col Charles F. Luigs, 21 Jul 1983
Col Keith B. Connolly, 18 Apr 1984
Col Wayne E. Clark, 19 Apr 1985
Col Timothy D. Gill, 22 May 1987
Col William J. Kennedy, 9 Nov 1987
Col Don A. Lyon, 20 Sep 1988
Col William C. Van Meter, 23 Jul 1991
BG Dwight M. Kealoha, 25 Jun 1993
Col Bruce A. Brown, 26 Jan 1996
Col Ann M. Testa, 14 Aug 1997
BG Steven J Redmann, 8 Jul 1999
Col Albert F. Riggle, 14 Jun 2001
Col Raymond G. Torres, 28 Apr 2003
Col William J. Changose, 23 Mar 2005
Col John J. Torres, 2006
Col Giovanni K. Tuck, 2008
Col Sam C. Barrett

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Central Pacific

Air Offensive, Japan

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Japan, 7 Apr 1945

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1965-1 Jun 1966
1 Jan-31 Dec 1969
4 Apr-3 Sep 1975
25 Feb-25 Mar 1986
1 Jul 1989-30 Jun 1991
1 Jul 1991-30 Jun 1993
1 Oct 1993-30 Sep 1995
1 Oct 1995-1 Aug 1997
2 Aug 1997-1 Aug 1999
29 Nov 1999-30 Nov 2001
1 Nov 2002-31 Oct 2004
1 Nov 2004-31 Oct 2006
1 Nov 2006-31 Oct 2007

EMBLEM





Or, on a bend Azure, two terrestrial lightning flashes issuant from base of the first, overall a gun sight counterchanged, all within a diminished bordure of the first. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "15TH WING" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** 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 lightning flashes represent the speed of modern aviation. The gun sight represents the combat mission of the Wing's predecessors. (Approved, 5 Oct 1942)

MOTTO

PROSEQUOR ALIS--I pursue with wings

On 10 Dec 1992, the Air Force Historical Research Agency approved the 15 ABW Commanders request to delete this motto from the wing's heraldry record since it was no longer applicable to the 15th Air Base Wing's current mission.

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Served as part of the defense force for Hawaiian Islands. Suffered numerous casualties and lost aircraft during Japanese attack on Hawaii, 7 Dec 1941, but was remanned and reorganized, and remained part of the Hawaiian defense system until 1944. Sent squadrons to the Central and South Pacific at various times for operations against the Japanese. Reequipped with P-51 aircraft in 1944 and trained for very-long range escort missions. Moved to Iwo Jima in Feb 1945, and in Mar, supported the invasion force, and began bombing Bonin Islands. In Apr and May 1945, escorted B-29 raids into Japan and struck airfields to curtail enemy attacks on invasion force at Okinawa. Continued fighter sweeps and long-range escort missions to Japan until end of war. In Nov 1945, transferred back to Hawaii without personnel and equipment. Remanned and reequipped but inactivated less than a year later, on 15 Oct 1946.

Activated on 18 Aug 1955 at Niagara Falls Municipal Airport, NY, and equipped with F-86 and later, F-102. Performed air defense operations for the Syracuse Air Defense Sector until Jul 1960, when it was discontinued. The 15th Tactical Fighter Wing activated on 17 Apr 1962 at MacDill AFB, FL. Conducted tactical fighter combat crew training, 1962-1963. Reorganized as a mission-capable unit at the time of the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, returning afterwards to a training mission.

Deployed the 43d, 45th, 46th, and 47th Squadrons to Southeast Asia in 1965. Functioned as a replacement training unit for F-4 aircrews, 1965-1970. Also began B-57 light-bomber aircrew training in 1968. Deployed 16 F-4s at Seymour Johnson AFB, NC, during the Pueblo crisis in 1968. Inactivated in 1970.

Activated as an Air Base Wing on 1 Nov 1971 at Hickam AFB, HI, with control over Hickam, Wheeler, Dillingham, and Johnston Island AF Bases, Bellows AFS, and several smaller subsidiary bases. Commanded, maintained, operated, and provided security for all AF installations in the Hawaiian Islands, Wake Island, and other island groups in Central and South Pacific Ocean.

Wing's EC-135Es provided airborne command and control support for the Commander-in-Chief Pacific, Nov 1971-Mar 1992. Sheltered over 93,000 orphans, refugees, and evacuees from Southeast Asia during Operations Babylift and New Life, 6 Apr-30 Sep 1975.

From May 1977 to Apr 1980, participated in Project Lagoon, a joint service operation to remove radioactive waste from Enewetak Atoll.

From 1983, supported the space shuttle program by maintaining Hickam as a designated emergency landing site. Beginning in 1992, assigned C-135 executive aircraft, provided special air transport for Commander, US Pacific Command; Commander, Pacific Air Forces; Commander, US Army Pacific; and for the Commander, Hawaiian Air National Guard.

Deployed support personnel and equipment to Southwest Asia to assist in the liberation of Kuwait, Aug 1990-Mar 1991. Continued to deploy personnel worldwide in support of contingency and relief efforts, and supported deployments to the Pacific as it hosted deploying units in stopovers enroute to Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia locations.

Beginning in 1992, assigned C-135, provided special air transport for Commander, US Pacific Command; Commander, Pacific Air Forces; Commander, US Army Pacific; and for the Commander, Hawaiian Air National Guard. Deployed support personnel and equipment to Southwest Asia to assist in the liberation of Kuwait, Aug 1990-Mar 1991.

Continued to deploy personnel worldwide in support of contingency and relief efforts, and supported deployments to the Pacific as it hosted deploying units in stopovers enroute to Japan, Korea, and Southeast Asia locations.

Supported tanker task forces assigned to Operation Enduring Freedom in response to 11 Sep 2001 terrorist attack on the United States.

Det 1, Bellows AFS, HI

Det 2, Kilauea Military Camp, HI

Det 3, March AFB, CA

Det 4, Wake Island

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 25 Sep 2010

Updated: 28 Apr 2016

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.

Unit yearbook. *32nd Air Division*. 1955.