

17 STRATEGIC AEROSPACE DIVISION



MISSION

LINEAGE

17 Bombardment Wing established, 3 Oct 1940
Activated, 18 Dec 1940
Inactivated, 1 Sep 1941
Activated, 23 Jun 1942
Redesignated 17 Bombardment Training Wing, 5 Jan 1943
Redesignated 17 Bombardment Operational Training Wing, 15 Apr 1943
Inactivated, 15 Nov 1943
Redesignated 17 Bombardment Operational Training Wing, Very Heavy, 28 Feb 1944
Activated, 11 Mar 1944
Inactivated, 9 Apr 1946
Disbanded, 8 Oct 1948
Reconstituted and redesignated 17 Air Division, 1 Jul 1959
Activated, 15 Jul 1959
Redesignated 17 Strategic Aerospace Division, 15 Feb 1962
Redesignated 17 Strategic Missile Division, 1 Sep 1963
Redesignated 17 Strategic Aerospace Division, 1 Jul 1965
Inactivated, 30 Jun 1971
Redesignated 17 Air Division, 24 Jan 1975
Activated, 1 Jul 1975
Inactivated, 1 Jan 1976

STATIONS

Savannah Air Base (later, Army Air Base), GA, 18 Dec 1940-1 Sep 1941

Rapid City Army Air Base, SD, 23 Jun 1942
Walla Walla Army Airfield, WA, 24 June-15 Nov 1943
Smoky Hill Army Airfield, KS, 11 Mar 1944
Colorado Springs, CO, 15 Apr 1944
Grand Island Army Airfield, NE, 22 May 1944
Sioux City Army Air Base, IA, 9 Feb 1945
Tarrant Field, Fort Worth, TX, 24 Dec 1945-9 Apr 1946
Whiteman AFB, MO, 15 Jul 1959-30 Jun 1971
U-Tapao, Thailand, 1 Jul 1975-1 Jan 1976

ASSIGNMENTS

GHQ Air Force, 18 Dec 1940
Southeast Air District (later, Third Air Force), 16 Jan 1941-1 Sep 1941
Second Air Force, 23 Jun 1942
II Bomber Command, 15 May 1943
Second Air Force, 6 Oct-15 Nov 1943
Second Air Force, 11 Mar 1944
Fifteenth Air Force, 31 Mar-9 Apr 1946
Second Air Force, 15 Jul 1959
Eighth Air Force, 1 Jul 1963
Fifteenth Air Force, 31 Mar 1970-30 Jun 1971
Pacific Air Forces, 1 Jul 1975-1 Jan 1976

ATTACHMENTS

Bomber Command (of Third Air Force), 23 Apr-1 Sep 1941

COMMANDERS

Brig Gen Louis H. Brereton, 18 Dec 1940
Col Asa N. Duncan, 1 Aug 1941-1 Sep 1941
Brig Gen Walter R. Peck, 23 Jun 1942
Col Allen W. Reed, 14 Sep 1943
Maj Floyd S. Cofer Jr., 6-15 Nov 1943
None (not manned), 11 Mar-11 Apr 1944
Brig Gen Frank A. Armstrong Jr., 12 Apr 1944
Brig Gen Robert F. Travis, 7 Nov 1944
Col Kermit D. Stevens, by 28 Aug 1945
Brig Gen Robert F. Travis, c. 5 Sep 1945
Brig Gen Hugo P. Rush, 7 Sep 1945
Brig Gen Robert F. Travis, 5 Nov 1945-1946
None (not manned), 15 Jul-22 Jul 1959
Brig Gen Harold E. Humfeld, 23 Jul 1959
Brig Gen Robert H. Strauss, 1 Apr 1960
Maj Gen Joseph J. Preston, 1 Aug 1963
Brig Gen Richard N. Ellis, c. 8 Sep 1964

Maj Gen William E. Creer, 1 Jul 1966
Brig Gen James M. Keck, 7 Jul 1967
Col Robert J. Ray, 18 Aug 1968
Brig Gen Robert R. Scott, 20 Aug 1969
Col George R. Brendle, 14-30 Jun 1971 (acting)
Brig Gen Walter H. Baxter III, 1 Jul 1975-1 Jan 1976

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



Per fess arched light blue and checky argent and azure, in middle base a rook, in dexter flank a king and in sinister flank a queen all or, above the rook ascending in pale between in chief two mullets of the last a missile of the second emitting a flame to base gules, all within a diminished border of the fourth. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The chessboard refers to the world with the chess pieces reflecting the strategy for the maintenance of peace. The missile above the rook alludes to the ability of quick launching and the stars depict the multiple weapons systems within the unit. Chess pieces symbolize the strategic dispersal role that our missile weapons systems play in deterrence and the security of our country. The rook holds the most strategic position, protecting the king and queen from being attacked directly from the front and sides. Chess is not a game of chance, but a game of pure skill.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Beginning in Jan 1943, the wing supervised the training of heavy bombardment groups and crews. Initially, it controlled the third phase of training, in which each bombardment group split into tactical components and operated from squadron sized airfields under simulated combat conditions. Later, the 17th supervised the first and second phases of heavy bombardment group and crew training. It also exercised limited supervision over the training of the XXI and XXII Bomber Commands during 1944. Later as an Air Division, it gained control of the 340th and the 305th Bombardment Wings at Bunker Hill AFB, Indiana, and the 4040th Air Base Squadron at Richard I. Bong AFB, Wisconsin in 1959. The two bombardment wings flew normal SAC alert patrols and participated in special exercises as required. However, the division lost its bombardment wings and gained missile wings in 1963 and assumed responsibility for Titan and Minuteman missiles in Missouri, Kansas, and later Arkansas. When joined by the 70th Bombardment Wing, on 1 July 1965 with B 52 and KC 135 aircraft, the division reverted to an earlier designation - 17th Strategic Aerospace Division. From 1965-1971, the division's subordinate units frequently deployed bomber and tanker resources. Arc Light operations in Southeast Asia, consisting of military operations against enemy forces in Vietnam, drew most of the deployments. From 1 Jul 1975-1 Jan 1976, it maintained an effective training program for United States Air Force tactical units in Thailand.

USAF Unit Histories
Created: 25 Aug 2010
Updated:

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