

24th SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING



LINEAGE

24th Composite Wing (Special), established, 19 Nov 1942
Activated, 25 Dec 1942
Disestablished, 15 Jun 1944
Reestablished as 24th Composite Wing, 5 Aug 1946
Activated, 25 Aug 1946
Inactivated, 28 Jul 1948
Activated, 30 Oct 1967
Organized, 8 Nov 1967
Redesignated 24th Air Commando Wing, 15 Mar 1968
Redesignated 24th Special Operations Wing, 15 Jul 1968
Redesignated 24th Special Operations Group, 30 Jun 1972
Redesignated 24th Composite Group, 15 Nov 1973
Redesignated 24th Composite Wing, 1 Jan 1976
Inactivated, 31 Jan 1987
Activated, 1 Jan 1989
Inactivated, 15 Feb 1991
Redesignated 24th Wing, 1 Feb 1992
Activated, 11 Feb 1992
Inactivated, 1 Nov 1999
Redesignated 24th Special Operations Wing, Jun 2012

STATIONS

Camp Olympia, Reykjavik, Iceland, 25 Dec 1942
Camp Tripoli, Reykjavik, Iceland, 13 Mar–15 Jun 1944
Borinquen Field (later, Borinquen AAFld; Borinquen Field: Ramey AFB), Puerto Rico, 25 Aug 1946–28 Jul 1948
Albrook AFB, Canal Zone, 8 Nov 1967
Howard AFB, Canal Zone (later, Panama), 3 Jan 1968–31 Jan 1987
Howard AFB, Panama, 1 Jan 1989– 15 Feb 1991; 11 Feb 1992 – 1 Nov 1999
Hurlburt Field, Florida, 12 Jun 2012

ASSIGNMENTS

Iceland Base Command, US Army Forces, Iceland, 25 Dec 1942–15 Jun 1944

Caribbean Air Command, 25 Aug 1946–28 Jul 1948

United States Air Forces Southern Command, 30 Oct 1967

United States Air Force Southern Air Division, 1 Jan 1976–31 Jan 1987

830th Air Division, 1 Jan 1989–15 Feb 1991

Twelfth Air Force, 11 Feb 1992–1 Nov 1999

Air Force Special Operations Command, 12 Jun 2012

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-38, 1942–1944

P-39, 1942–1943

P-40, 1943–1944

P-47, 1944

B-17, 1946–1947

B-17/F-9, 1948

C-47, 1946–1948

C-54, 1947–1948

F-2, 1948

A-26, 1967–1968

C-46, 1967–1968

C-47, 1967–1970

VC-47, 1967–1970

C-54, 1967–1972

C-118, 1967–1971

VC-118, 1967

C-130, 1967–1984

C-131, 1967–1968

CH-3, 1967–1970

HH-19, 1967–1969

T-28, 1967–1970

VT-29, 1967–1970

U-10, 1967–1971

UH-1, 1967–1983

A-37, 1969–1972

HU-16, 1969

C-123, 1970–1973

UC-123, 1970–1975

VC-123, 1970–1973

C-119, 1971, 1973

O-2, 1971–1986

A-7, 1972–1985, 1985–1987

A-10, 1985

OA-37, 1985–1987

OA-37, 1989-1991
C-21, 1992
CT-43, 1992
C-27, 1992
C-130, 1992

COMMANDERS

BG George P. Tourtellot, 25 Dec 1942
BG Early E. W. Duncan, 5-15 Jun 1944
Col George H. Steel, 25 Aug 1946
BG John A. Samford, c. 6 Mar 1947-28 Jul 1948
None (not manned), 30 Oct-7 Nov 1967
Col Richard Jones, 8 Nov 1967
Col James G. Silliman, 13 Dec 1967
Col Joseph A. Stuart, Jr., 14 Jun 1968
Col Leslie E. Gaskins, 1 Jun 1971
Col Robert S. Beale, 30 Mar 1974
Col William E. Roth, 15 Aug 1975
Col Paul M. Davis, 1 Jan 1976
Col Alton J. Thogersen, 16 Jan 1976
Col Robert E. Patterson, 5 Jan 1979
Col Robert R. Reed, 10 Jun 1980
Col Wayne R. Topp, 5 Oct 1982
Col Loren E. Timm, 2 Jul 1984
Col Harold E. Watson, 3 Dec 1985-31 Jan 1987
Unkn, 1-16 Jan 1989
Col Lansford E. Trapp, Jr., 17 Jan 1989
Col David J. McCloud, 25 Jun 1990-15 Feb 1991
BG David Oakes, 11 Feb 1992
BG David A. Sawyer, 13 Jul 1992

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Combat, European-African-Middle-Eastern Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989-1990

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

2 Jun-3 Jul 1970

16 Mar 1971-15 Mar 1973

1 Jul 1976–30 Jun 1978
1 Apr 1982–31 Mar 1984
1 May 1984– 31 Mar 1986
20 Dec 1989–14 Feb 1991

EMBLEM

Azure, a stylized square-rigged ship of three mast sails set, flag and pennants floatant sailing to sinister above an arced olive branch to dexter and an arced lightning flash to sinister conjoined in base Or, all within a diminished bordure of the like. (Approved, 16 Aug 1994; replaced emblem approved, 1968)

MOTTO

LOS PROFESIONALES — The professionals

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Served in the defense of Iceland, Dec 1942–Jun 1944. From Aug 1946 until replaced by the Antilles Air Division in Jul 1948, supervised large numbers of major and minor bases and Air Force units in the Caribbean area from Puerto Rico to British Guiana.

Organized once more in Nov 1967 in the Canal Zone, replacing the 5700th Air Base Wing. The wing assumed operation and maintenance responsibilities for Howard and Albrook Air Force Bases and a special operations mission that included air transport, paramilitary operations, exercise participation, civic actions in Central and South America, search and rescue missions, humanitarian operations, mercy missions, aeromedical evacuation, and support of Army Special Forces, US military assistance units, and training of Latin American air forces.

From activation in 1967 until mid-1972, the 24th Wing operated the USAF Tropic Survival School at Albrook. It controlled various rotational detachments, 1967–1987. Lost UH-1s and control of search and rescue missions in the area after 1 Mar 1983.

Wing inactivated on 31 Jan 1987, its subordinate components reassigned directly to the USAF Southern Air Division.

Wing activated on 1 Jan 1989, again assuming responsibilities for Howard AFB and Albrook AFS.

The wing flew combat sorties in the invasion of Panama, Dec 1989–Jan 1990.

Trained foreign and domestic pilots in forward air control. Flew search and rescue, aeromedical airlift and disaster relief missions in the Latin American region, 1989–1990.

Members of the wing deployed to Southwest Asia to provide air liaison support between ground forces and air operations, 1 Oct 1990–Feb 1991.

When the 24th Composite Wing inactivated in 1991, its assets were placed under Air Forces in Panama.

On 11 Feb 1992 the wing activated, becoming the senior USAF organization in Panama, replacing the previous command and division-level Air Force host units. Mission of the 24th Wing was to provide, control, and employ air power as directed by Commander in Chief of USSOUTHCOM and USSOUTHAF to protect and defend interests of United States in Latin America.

In Jun 1992, it began operating the only C-21, CT-43, C-27 and special mission C-130s in ACC. Provided control and support to multi-service units directed by United States Southern Command and United States Southern Air Force, 1992.

Missions included counternarcotics operations, aerial command and control, intratheater airlift, security assistance and defense of the Panama Canal. The wing operates both Howard AFB and Albrook Air Force Station.

When the wing was activated in June 2012 it managed the 720th Special Tactics Group, Special Tactics Training Squadron and 724th Special Tactics Group.

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. (AFNS) -- U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command activated the 24th Special Operations Wing in a ceremony at Hurlburt Field, Fla., June 12 to meet the growing demand for the unique capabilities special tactics Air Commandos provide. AFSOC commander Lt. Gen. Eric Fiel said creation of this new brand of wing better prepares the special tactics community to meet the swiftly evolving requirements of a global special operations forces partnership. "While the pace of global special operations has been demanding throughout this past decade, we cannot expect to slow down over the next," he said. It is this pace that makes the activation of the 24 SOW so monumental. America has been at war running operations for more than a decade with a volunteer force, Fiel said. The special tactics Airmen who have been a constant presence in these operations comprise less than half of a single percent of the population. In assuming command of the 24 SOW, Col. Robert Armfield recognized the magnitude of what is being asked of his Airmen and what they are accomplishing under a highly demanding operational tempo. Our challenge now is to take this investment that you've made in resources and turn it into combat capability for the AFSOC portfolio, and we're going to do it," Armfield said. The mission of the 24 SOW is to provide special tactics forces for rapid global employment to enable airpower success. "Establishment of the 24th Special Operations Wing allows a single commander to lead the recruiting, training and development of our special tactics warriors and ultimately provide combatant commanders with world-class Airmen to accomplish their mission," Fiel said. By creating the 24 SOW, not only is a single special tactics commander enabled to lead, but pressure is alleviated by removing the responsibility of logistical planning from the groups so they can concentrate on the operational mission. Capabilities of the Wing include airfield reconnaissance, assessment and control. Special tactics Airmen also engage in joint terminal attack control, personnel recovery, weather and environmental reconnaissance. The 24 SOW will be the third wing under AFSOC alongside the 1st Special Operations Wing located here and the 27 Special Operations Wing at Cannon Air Force Base, N.M. With

Armfield's promotion to commander of the 24 SOW, Col. Kurt Buller assumed command of the 720 STG.



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.