

25th AIR DIVISION



LINEAGE

Established as 25th Air Defense Division, 27 Sep 1948
Activated, 25 Oct 1948
Redesignated 25th Air Division (Defense), 20 Jun 1949
Inactivated, 1 Feb 1952
Organized, 1 Feb 1952
Redesignated 25th Air Division (SAGE), 1 Mar 1959
Redesignated 25th Air Division, 1 Apr 1966
Inactivated, 30 Sep 1990

STATIONS

Silver Lake, WA, 25 Oct 1948
McChord AFB, WA, 14 Sep 1951-1 Feb 1952
McChord AFB, WA, 1 Feb 1952-30 Sep 1990

ASSIGNMENTS

Fourth Air Force, 25 Oct 1948
Air Defense Command, 1 Apr 1949
Fourth Air Force, 8 Jul 1949 (attached to Western Air Defense Force, 10 Nov 1949-1 Aug 1950)
Western Air Defense Force, 1 Aug 1950-1 Feb 1952
Western Air Defense Force, 1 Feb 1952
Air Defense Command, 1 Jul 1960
Fourth Air Force, 1 Apr 1966
Tenth Air Force, 15 Sep 1969
Aerospace Defense Command, 1 Dec 1969
Tactical Air Command, 1 Oct 1979
First Air Force, 6 Dec 1985-30 Sep 1990

COMMANDERS

BG Ned Schramm, 25 Oct 1948
Maj John C. Burnett, 6 Nov 1948
BG Clinton D. Vincent, 20 Apr 1949-1 Feb 1952
BG Clinton D. Vincent, 1 Feb 1952
BG T. Alan Bennett, 1 Apr 1952
BG Romulus W. Puryear, 15 Sep 1954
BG Charles R. Bond Jr., 1 Sep 1957

MG Von R. Shores, 15 Aug 1959
MG Henry R. Spicer, 13 Aug 1962
MG William E. Elder, 1 Jun 1964
BG John A. Rouse, 5 Mar 1966
Col Morris E. Petty, 1 May 1969
MG Archie M. Burke, 14 Nov 1969
MG Jack K. Gamble, 13 Mar 1972
MG James A. Young, by 31 Mar 1974
BG Elwood A. Kees Jr., 15 Jun 1976
Col Harold A. Homan, 22 Jan 1979
BG Alfred M. Miller, 1 Feb 1980
MG Harold W. Todd, 1 Sep 1980
BG Richard M. Pascoe, 1 Sep 1982
BG Alan P. Lurie, 4 Sep 1984
BG John M. Davey, 1 Jul 1987
Unkn, Aug 1989-30 Sep 1990

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan-31 Aug 1970

1 Sep 1970-30 Jun 1971

1 Jun 1985-31 May 1987

EMBLEM

Per pale azure and vert, issuant from sinister chief bend sinisterwise a lightning flash or surmounted by a telescope in pale proper (brown) and an aircraft volant affrontee bendwise argent, over all three radar rings of the last. (Approved, 7 Feb 1963)

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

The blue represents the Pacific Ocean, the 25th Air Division's primary area of responsibility. The green represents the land and home base. The yellow lightning flash depicts alertness, wisdom, speed and power. The brown of the telescope indicates the Ground Observer Corps, while the three white circles refer to the radar screen, which is in constant use.

MOTTO

ON EST PRET--Forever Ready

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 25th equipped, administered, trained and provided air defense combat ready forces within the northwestern United States, which at various times included the states of Washington, Oregon, and parts of Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, California and Nevada. It exercised command jurisdiction over assigned units, installations, and facilities and provided and maintained facilities for the Air Division control center. In addition, the division and its subordinate units also participated in numerous tactical air defense training exercises.

1958

Mission of 25 Air Division (Defense) included responsibility: to procure, organize, equip, administer, train, and prepare for combat such units and combat crews Of United States Air Force as directed; and to provide commander of continental air defense command with combat ready forces for air defense in assigned sector of responsibility.

Joint operations were conducted by 25 Air Division of USAF and 5 Air Division of Royal Canadian Air Force during period from jan through jun 58.

25th Air Division (Defense) was originally activated 25 October 1948, as the 25th Air Defense Division at Silver Lake (Everett), Washington, under the command of Brigadier General Ned Schramm, Vice Commander, 4th Air Force. It was assigned to 4th Air Force until 1 April 1949, when it was relieved of this assignment and assigned to Air Defense Command.

Approximately 20 April 1949, Brigadier General Clinton D. Vincent, then Colonel, assumed command of the division which had no units assigned or attached, and a meager total of nine personnel assigned, five officers and four airmen.

The divisions designation was changed to its present designation, 25th Air Division (Defense), 20 June 1949, and 8 July 1949, it reverted back to the control of 4th Air Force from Air Defense Command.

On 9 August 1949, the division was assigned the responsibility of the air defense of the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and that portion of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska west of the 103d meridian. To perform this mission, aircraft control and warning units within its geographical area of responsibility were placed under its operational control 21 July 1949, and were assigned 16 November 1949. Air Defense Command fighters within its geographical area were placed under its operational control 5 June 1950, but were not assigned until 10 December 1952.

Since Western Air Defense Force was charged with the air defense responsibility of the entire western part of the United States, the division was placed under its operational control 10 November 1949, and was assigned 1 August 1950, from 4th Air Force.

The divisions geographical area of air defense responsibility was enlarged 13 October 1950, to include that portion of Colorado and Utah north of 39 parallel and the northeast corner of Nevada. The geographical area remained status quo, until approximately 24 August 1951, when its area of air defense responsibility was reduced to the states of Washington and Oregon.

Division headquarters was moved from Silver Lake to its present station, McChord Air Force Base, Washington, on 14 September 1951, and the following 1 February, it was changed from a Table of Organization and Equipment unit, to a Table of Distribution unit, when it was inactivated, designated and organized anew.

Brigadier General T. ALAN BENNETT, then Colonel, assumed command of the division 1 April 1952, Brig. General VINCENT who had been reassigned to Headquarters, Air Defense command.

Again on 16 February 1953, the divisions geographical area of air defense responsibility was changed to include the state of Idaho and that portion of Montana west of 115th meridian as a result of the realignment of the 29th Air Division (Defense) and its areas of responsibility.

By 1 March 1953, all Air Defense Command units, radar, fighter, and support, within the division's area of responsibility was assigned to it with the exception of a small detachment of 4602d Air Intelligence Service Squadron.

The low geographic point when just western Washington and western Oregon were with 25th boundaries was reached in 1954 and continued until 1958.

From the period 25 October 1948, to 25 October 1953, five years, the division has grown in strength to number approximately ten thousand personnel in fifty-five units.

The Ground Observer Corps was organized in February 1950 as a means of supplementing the national air defense system with aircraft spotters, the GOC includes 49 filter centers and 11,984 observation posts.

Personnel of the Ground Observer Corps were incorporated into the 25th Divisions' air defense Network 16 April 1951 as a complement to the radar system and became a full-fledge member of the air defense team when "Operation Skywatch" was instigated, 14 July 1952.

The people who comprise the GOC are from all strata of life. They seek and expect little recognition for their service. The most distinctive award to members is the Silver Wings of the GOC.

The 25th Air Division - A Brief History - 1948-1990

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From the period 25 October 1948 to 25 October 1953, five years, the division had grown in strength to number approximately ten thousand personnel in 55 units.

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The Seattle Norad Sectors mission was to defend the air space over NW US and Western Canada an area of 600,000 square miles. To perform this Mission, the Sector exercised operational control over Radar Squadrons, ACW Squadrons, Naval Picket Vessels, Airborne Early Warning Aircraft, Army Air Defense Missile Units, all located within the Sector's boundaries. This large defense complex was tied together by thousands of miles of communications lines to the SAGE Direction Center.

The Seattle Air Defense Sector was one of the three SAGE sectors, comprising the 25th Air Division. Activated at McChord on 8 January 1958, the Sector Direction Center was turned over to the Air Force in 1959. The huge, IBM computers were installed in January 1959 and testing of the electronic computer and the air defense system was begun in August 1959. It was completed in early 1960.

When the Direction Center became operational on 1 March 1960, it was the first operational SAGE Center in the Pacific Northwest, and one of three Direction Centers co-located with its Division Combat Center. The Seattle NORAD Sector was established on 1 March 1960 and the operational capability for its area of responsibility was assumed on that date.

Before World War II, the North American continent was well isolated from potential enemies by thousands of miles of ocean and polar wasteland. The progress made in intercontinental bombing during world war II diminished the protection offered by those physical barrier, however, and brought the United States face-to-face with the necessity of a system of air defense for the continental United States.

The first step in this direction was the formation of the Air Defense Command on 27 March 1946 at Mitchell Air Force Base, New York, with Lieutenant General George B. Strateoeyer In command. The new unit was given the mission of organizing and administering the needed system.

At that time the national security of Canada and the United States was thought of as separate problems and each country was seeking its own solution. Today, both countries are as concerned about their national security as ever, but they have come to the natural conclusion that this is a common problem, shared by two sovereign nations, By treaty agreement in August 1957, they told the world they considered national security to be a common problem.

Under the agreement any air attack against the North American continent would be opposed by both countries contributing forces, real estate and equipment to a single operational agency. This agency was the North American Air Defense Command - NORAD, for short. Its commander was

directly responsible to the Joint Chief of Staff of the United States and the Chiefs of Staff Committee of Canada. Its forces were drawn from the United States Air Force, the United States Army, the United States Navy and the Royal Canadian Air Force. Its mission was the defense of the North American continent against air attack.

In carrying out this mission, the system had four basic functions: detection, identification, interception and destruction of enemy aircraft as far from their intended targets as possible. Tools for the accomplishment of this mission ranged from a network of radar stations beginning at the Arctic Circle and extending around the perimeters of the continent to electronically operated computers capable of storing thousands of bits of information for indefinite periods and playing them back at the touch of a finger on a button; from manned jet-powered fighter interceptors to unmanned missiles based at strategic locations across the continent. These tools of air defense, with their electronic systems for warning, communications and control were used effectively and efficiently by than 200,000 Americans and Canadians, often working side by side.

To manage this vast system of air defense, NORAD was divided into eight regions. One of these was the 25th NORAD region which encompassed an area made up of WA, and parts of Alberta and British Columbia. Its commander was Major General H. R. Spicer, who had his headquarters at McChord AFB, WA. The 25th NORAD Region was further divided into three NORAD Sectors: The Spokane NORAD sector which had its headquarters at Larson AFB, Moses Lake, WA; Seattle NORAD Sector with headquarters at McChord AFB, WA; Portland NORAD Air Defense Sector, with headquarter at Adair Air Force Station near Clovis and Albany, Oregon.

The Seattle and Spokane Sectors, both of which extended into Canada, were partly staffed by Canadian personnel. A Royal Canadian Air Force Officer, Air Commodore George Elms was assigned as Vice Commander of the 25th NORAD Region and shared operational responsibility in the region.

Under operational control of the 25th NORAD Region were fighter interceptor squadrons of the United States Air Force, United States Air National Guard, and the Royal Canadian Air Force and unmanned missiles of the United States Army Air Defense Command and the United States Army National Guard Artillery units. These were the Region's fighting weapons. But before these weapons could be brought to bear on an attacker the Region had to know where the attacker was, how fast he was moving, how he was flying, and his direction of travel.

This information came from long range radar stations located in British Columbia, Alberta, Washington, Oregon, Idaho and California, it could come from U. S. Navy Picket vessels or U. S. Air Force airborne early warning aircraft patrolling off the region's pacific coast area. These radars provided constant surveillance of air traffic in their assigned areas of responsibility.

Between these elements of the 25th NRAD Region air defense network were the middlemen, those who decided what action must be taken in any situation that arose; those who kept the aircraft flying and the weapons ready; those who kept the radar equipment working; and those who handled the administrative and support details.

To improve their capability to defend the North American continent, the United States and Canada built a radar detection system to warn of impending air Attack. At sea, U. S. Navy picket ships patrol specific areas of The North Atlantic and North Pacific oceans. In the air U. S. Air Force and U. S. Navy radar-equipped aircraft fly patrol of the off-shore areas of both coasts. Long range coastal radars, operated by USAF and RCAF airman, continually watch possible approach routes for unknown aircraft. 25th NORAD Region eyes at sea, in the air, and on the land and truly ALERT!

The heart of the three Sector headquarters in the 25th Defense Division (SAGE) is a digital computer system which accepts tracking information from ground and airborne radar stations, data on weapons status from missile and fighter-interceptor units, and pertinent information on weather, FAA flight plan, etc., stores this data until required or of immediate value, and releases it upon demand to a SAGE operator. Operating, in millionths of a second, SAGE makes available the current and reliable information which the men responsible for aerospace defense require to make quick but sound decisions.



Updated:

Sources
AFHRA