

## 26 OPERATIONAL WEATHER SQUADRON



### MISSION

The 26 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 133 installations/sites in a 13-state region of the southeastern United States. The 26 OWS also produces 11,000 weather warning/advisories, 32,000 terminal aerodrome forecasts, 31,000 graphical aviation hazard products and 30,000 flight weather briefings per year. In addition to its operational mission, the 26 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 26 OWS to complete a 15-month upgrade training process.

### LINEAGE

26 Weather Squadron constituted, 30 Sep 1943  
Activated, 10 Oct 1943  
Disbanded, 3 Jun 1944  
Reconstituted, 18 May 1948  
Activated, 1 Jun 1948  
Inactivated, 30 Jun 1972  
Activated, 1 Jan 1975  
Inactivated, 31 Jul 1991  
Redesignated 26 Operational Weather Squadron, 5 Feb 1999  
Activated, 1 Oct 1999

### STATIONS

Orlando Army Air Base, FL, 10 Oct 1943-3 Jun 1944  
Brookley AFB, AL, 1 Jun 1948

Barksdale AFB, LA, 10 Sep 1951-30 Jun 1972  
Barksdale AFB, LA, 1 Jan 1975-31 Jul 1991  
Barksdale AFB, LA, 1 Oct 1999

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

Army Air Forces School of Applied Tactics (later, Army Air Forces Tactical Air Center), 10 Oct  
1943-3 Jun 1944  
104 Weather (later, 2104th Air Weather) Group, 1 Jun 1948  
2059 Air Weather Wing, 24 Oct 1950  
2101 Air Weather Group, 16 Sep 1951  
1 Weather Group, 20 Apr 1952  
3 Weather Wing, 8 Oct 1956 - 30 Jun 1972  
3 Weather Wing, 1 Jan 1975-31 Jul 1991  
608 Air Operations Group, 1 Oct 1999

## **Commanders**

Col Chester W. Cecil, Jr., 10 Oct 1943  
Maj Eckwood H. Reagan, 1 Jun 1948  
Maj Joseph B. Smith, 24 Jan 1948  
Lt Col Norman E. King, Jan 1951  
Lt Col Stephen W. Pournaras, 10 Sep 1951  
Lt Col Jack H. Pelander, Mar 1954  
Lt Col Lawrence D. Connolly, 23 Mar 1957  
Lt Col Robert L. Sorey, 17 Aug 1957  
Col Paul E. Mcanally, 1 Aug 1962  
Col Lawrence D. Connolly, 26 Jun 1965  
Col Leonard E. Zapinski, 18 Jun 1968  
Lt Col Donald W. Moon, 5 Dec 1969  
Col John C. Ball, 6 Jan 1970  
Lt Col Kenneth F. Gordon, 1 Jun 1971  
Col Gordon W. Schmal, 20 Jul 1971  
Lt Col Frank D. Reader, 1 Jan 1975  
Lt Col Tommy D. Guest, 25 Jun 1975  
Lt Col David L. Donley, 19 Jul 1978  
Lt Col Ronald D. Haynes, 29 Mar 1982  
Lt Col Patrick J. Larkin, 17 Nov 1983  
Lt Col George E. Duffield, 1 Jul 1985

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

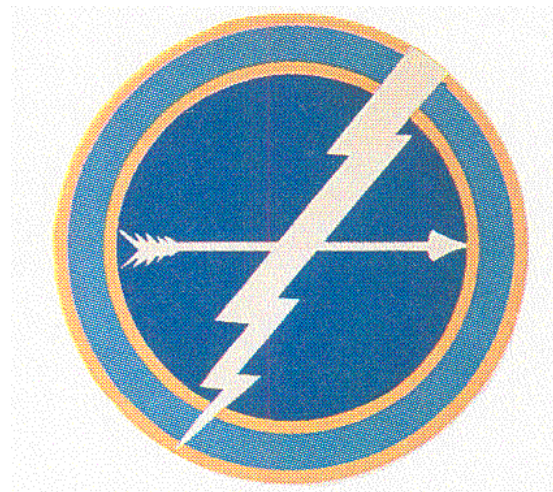
## Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Oct 1960 – 31 Jan 1963

1 Jul 1976 - 30 Jun 1978

## EMBLEM



First emblem approved, 20 Apr 1944



Second emblem: The emblem is symbolic of the squadron and its mission. Against the background of sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations, the blue saltire bearing the arrow crossed by the lightning bolt commemorates the squadron's history and organization in September 1943. The fleur-de-lis and anemometer, emblematic of weather service, with the star compass signifies the unit's participation in the weather service global mission. The star compass also denotes the squadron's Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. The placement of the stars two and six allude to the squadron's numerical designation. The emblem bears the Air

Force colors gold and ultramarine blue. (Approved, 3 Nov 1965)

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

In response to a request from the commanding general of the Army Air Forces School of Applied Tactics for an assigned weather squadron, the Army Air Forces headquarters constituted today's 26 Operational Weather Squadron on September 30, 1943, as the 26 Weather Squadron. The squadron activated on October 10, 1943, under the command of Lt Col Chester W. Cecil, Jr., at Orlando Army Air Base, Florida. In addition to his squadron duties, Colonel Cecil served as the 26 Weather Regional Control Officer and staff weather officer for the Army Air Forces School of Applied Tactics.

Later redesignated the Army Air Forces Tactical Air Center, the School of Applied Tactics was activated on October 16, 1942, to train selected officers under simulated combat conditions. More than 840 weather officers attended the Weather Staff Officer course conducted at the School of Applied Tactics during World War II.

The Army Air Forces disbanded the 26 Weather Squadron on June 3, 1944, and squadron personnel were transferred in-place to Squadron B, 902d Army Air Forces Base Unit.

The newly independent United States Air Force reconstituted the 26 Weather Squadron on May 18, 1948. On June 1, it activated the 26 at Brookley Air Force Base, near Mobile, Alabama. The Air Force assigned the 26 to the 104th Weather Group, which was later redesignated the 2104th Air Weather Group.

The 26 Weather Squadron was soon indirectly supporting Operation VITTLES as Brookley transports, including the limited- production C-74 Globemaster I, began participating in the Berlin Airlift.

The 26 Weather Squadron was reassigned to the 2059th Air Weather Wing on October 24, 1950, as part of Air Weather Service's restructuring to eliminate the Weather Groups.

The 26 Weather Squadron moved its headquarters to Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, on September 10, 1951, in order to align itself with the headquarters of Strategic Air Command's Second Air Force at Barksdale for which the 26 had been given functional responsibility under Air Weather Service's new organizational scheme.

In continuing Air Weather Service reorganizations, the 26 was reassigned to the 2101st Air Weather Group on September 16, 1951, and to the 1st Weather Group on April 20, 1952. The squadron began its long association with the 3d Weather Wing on October 8, 1956, to which it was assigned until it was inactivated on June 30, 1972.

The 26 was again activated and assigned to the 3d Weather Wing on January 1, 1975. The 26

continued at Barksdale until the divestiture of Air Weather Service. The squadron was inactivated on July 31, 1991.

As part of Air Force Weather's re-engineering, the squadron was redesignated the 26 Operational Weather Squadron on February 5, 1999, and again activated at Barksdale on October 1, 1999, where it was assigned to Eighth Air Force's 608th Air Operations Group.

Det 4, Loring AFB, ME

Det 6, Pease AFB, NH

Det 8, Griffiss AFB, NY

Det 12, Plattsburgh AFB, NY

Det 14, Eaker AFB, AR

Det 15, Grand Forks AFB, ND

Det 19, Whiteman AFB, MO

Det 20, Barksdale AFB, LA

Det 22, Carswell AFB, TX

Det 23, McConnell AFB, KS

Det 24, K. I. Sawyer AFB, MI

Det 26, Grissom AFB, IN

Det 28, Wurtsmith AFB, MI

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

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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.

Unit yearbook. *Barksdale AFB, LA, HQ 2 AF, 2 BW, 2 CSG, 1 CEG, 1964*. Army and Navy Publishing Co. Inc. Baton Rouge, LA. 1964.

*Lineage and Honors of the Operational Weather Squadrons*. Air Force Weather History Office. Offutt AFB, NE. Mar 2003.