

5 AIR TRANSPORT GROUP

MISSION

LINEAGE

5 Air Transport Group

STATIONS

Kelly Field, TX

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

On April 30, 1946, representatives of the San Antonio Air Technical Services Command and ATC signed an agreement, granting ATC use of Kelly Field. The facilities ATC gained at Kelly included use of a freight and passenger terminal (building 1614) and ramp space, but no hangars. Its personnel had to maintain its fleet outside under the blazing Texas sun. In just two short weeks, May 15, ATC's 5th Air Transport Group inaugurated "The Alamo," the all-military, scheduled passenger service between San Antonio and Washington, D.C.

Further budgetary and personnel reductions forced ATC to consolidate even more. In October 1946, ATC announced it was expanding the Military Air Transport division at Kelly, making San Antonio the hub of its operations within the continental United States. With ten C-54s flying into and out of

Kelly, the 5th Air Transport Group ferried almost 6,000 pounds of cargo and over 1,000 passengers a month. In January 1947, Kelly became a stop for C-54 on their run between Westover AFB, MA, and Travis AFB, CA.

Kelly's air transport group assumed operational control over all scheduled C-54 domestic cargo flights. During the first month of consolidated operations, the group moved 3.2 million pounds of cargo. That amount had increased to 4.4 million pounds by April.

The 5th Air Transport Group at Kelly Field is one of the largest Air Transport Command detachments in the Southwest and is the main terminus of -transport routes connecting the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. It also provides an intra-depot cargo service between Air Force installations in the south and an Air Evacuation pickup station. The detachment, was organized 10 May. 1946, as the Southern terminal of the "Alamo" flight with an original complement of 48 officers and enlisted men. As the post war mission of the ATC increased; the size of the 5th Group also increased until today it numbers 338 officers and men. Under the command of Lt. Colonel Frank Norwood, the group provides a minimum of IS departures a week on regularly scheduled trunk lines to both coasts., In addition the 5th maintains 10 to 12 daily feeder runs in which cargo and passengers are picked up and delivered to Air Material Depots in the Southwest. During the period the detachment has been in, operation the monthly totals of cargo moved has risen from 351,855 pounds in April 1947, to 3,367,569 pounds in August 1947. At no time have the total number of assigned aircraft exceeded 19 C-54's or C-47's. The C-54's are used on the main trunk lines and the C-47's are utilized on intra-depot feeder trips. The success or failure of any transport system falls on three departments; Operations, Traffic, and Maintenance. The Group's Operations Section is responsible for the efficient utilization of flight crews and scheduling them on trips. The 102 pilots assigned to the detachment fly an average of 60 hours per month on scheduled runs and crew training. Training is a continuous function in this department as the qualifications of a ' Military Air Transport pilot is one of highest in the Air Forces. Traffic is directly concerned with the handling and shipment of cargo and passengers. It is also responsible for the training of flight clerks and warehousemen. Further, this section prepares for shipment more than 3,000,000 pounds of cargo per month. Aircraft Maintenance performs all 25, 50 and 100 hour inspections on all assigned C-47's and C-54's; performs all Technical Order modifications and winterization, as all assigned aircraft fly into zones where winterization is required. Assigned C-54 aircraft average around 140 flying hours per month. In addition Aircraft Maintenance of this organization is required to perform first and second echelon maintenance on scheduled Air Evacuation C-54's and C-47's, passing through this operations.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

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Sources

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