

NORTHERN AIR MATERIEL AREA

MISSION

LINEAGE

STATIONS

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

September 1953, 59th Air Base Depot Group disbanded and was reformed as Northern Area Air Materiel Area on 1 September. The Air Base Group Depot was renumbered 7559th ABGD- together with The supporting Groups and squadrons, The role of The base remaining The same. Like most Depots in The US, Burtonwood planners were anticipating The use of civilians on a large scale. Labor was already scarce in industrial Lancashire. Industry was going flat out and labor had to be imported, but Air Force planners had decided to replace the American airmen with UK civilians and on a gigantic scale.

Labeled Operation Native Son, the new influx of UK civilians was supposed to eliminate The high cost of employing The military men, who so often had to bring their families with them. Burtonwood had earned a reputation of being The highest dollar earner in the North of England. Would This new influx of civilians, employed in all capacities, from a top executive

level all The way down to stockroom man in the stores, affect the dollar income of Lancashire? No, this was to be a new era for Burtonwood. Not only were the British employed for the first time in large numbers, but the US was going to spend more money through local purchases than in any other time in the history of this giant station.

On 1 September 1953 Burtonwood was retitled Northern Air Materiel Area (NAMA), replacing 59th Air Base Depot but essentially undertaking exactly the same duties. In 1954 a paper was issued by Brigadier General Troup Miller Jnr, Officer Commanding NAMA, giving a run down on the activities then current and stated that NAMA employed 2,500 people, spent \$1,540,000 a month on payroll and maintained 144,000 different types of items in stock. In addition, it provided food, clothing, shelter, medical care, transportation, schools and scores of other services for 75% of its personnel including Sealand, Brize Norton and Cranage which were also part of the NAMA umbrella. The statement continued:—"We have two major missions at Burtonwood and one supporting mission. The major mission is to procure, supply and distribute all supplies required by the USAF, US Army and US Navy units in the UK. As well as certain technical supplies for RCAF and Mutual Defense Assistance Programme Forces. Secondly, we are responsible for providing maintenance on aircraft, vehicles and other types of equipment for all USAF and Army organizations in the UK — and, in the case of specialized items, for all the Air Force Organizations on the Continent and to NATO forces as well".

"HQ at Burtonwood supplies planning, personnel, material and financial staff officers as well as an inspector and legal office. Seven operating Groups are contained within NAMA, with five of them — Supply, Maintenance, Transportation, Medical and Air Base Groups — at Burtonwood. Two smaller composites of these Groups — called Air Depot Groups — are located at Sealand and Brize Norton. These Air Depot Groups have about 1,500 men and operate depots specializing in the supply of certain technical items, medical supplies and subsistence materials".

"We also have smaller detachments at the Ports of Liverpool and Southampton at Renfrew Airport, Glasgow (where we process new fighter planes for delivery to NATO forces), and at several other stand by bases".

Although 1957 brought messages of impending closure 1958 opened with a very active Burtonwood housing NAMA still but with a shrinking commitment NAMA finally closed on 30 June 1958 and that date saw the end of Burtonwood's aircraft support role. A new unit entitled European Northern Disposition Task Force (ENDTF) formed on the same day having a basic mission of supplying material and giving logistic support to all USAF activities in the UK and certain Continental ports. With the arrival of a new Logistical Command Programme this changed and the resultant phase down meant that many of the supplies stored at Burtonwood became excess and available for marketing. Auctions were held on a regular basis selling lines of cars, lorries, petrol tankers, bulldozers etc stretching into the distance and an incredible pile of equipment ranging from machine tools, boxing gloves, buttons, nuts and bolts and scrap. Army supply dealers from Germany, Holland, and USA competed with scrap dealers from the

UK. Items sold even included supplies loaned to the RAF by the USAF and now taken back for disposal.

USAF Unit Histories

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Sources

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