

THIRD AIR FORCE



LINEAGE

Southeast Air District established, 19 Oct 1940
Activated, 18 Dec 1940
Redesignated 3rd Air Force, 9 Apr 1941
Redesignated Third Air Force, 18 Sep 1942
Inactivated, 1 Nov 1946
Organized, 1 May 1951
Inactivated, 1 Nov 2005
Redesignated Third Air Force (Air Forces Europe), 29 Nov 2006
Activated, 1 Dec 2006

STATIONS

MacDill Field, FL, 18 Dec 1940
Tampa, FL, Jan 1941
Greenville Army Air Base, SC, 21 Mar 1946
Victoria Park Estate (later, U.S. Air Base, South Ruislip; South Ruislip Air Station),
England, 1 May 1951
RAF Mildenhall, England, Apr 1972
RAF Mildenhall, England, 15 Apr 1972-1 Nov 2005
Ramstein AB, Germany, 1 Dec 2006

ASSIGNMENTS

Southern Defense Command, U.S. Army, 18 Dec 1940
Army Air Forces, Sep 1943
Continental Air Forces, 16 Apr 1945
Tactical Air Command, 21 Mar 1946
United States Air Forces in Europe, 1 May 1951-1 Nov 2005
United States Air Forces in Europe, 1 Dec 2006

COMMANDERS

MG Barton K. Yount, 18 Dec 1940
MG Lewis H. Brereton, 29 Jul 1941
MG Walter H. Frank, 6 Oct 1941
BG Carlyle H. Wash, 25 Jun-26 Nov 1942
MG St Clair Streett, 12 Dec 1942
MG Westside T. Larson, n Sep 1943
BG Edmund C. Lynch, 14 May 1945
BG Thomas W. Blackburn, 26 May 1945
LTG Lewis H. Brereton, 1 Jul 1945
MG Elwood R. Quesada, 1-21 Mar 1946
MG Paul L. Williams, 28 Mar-1 Nov 1946
MG Leon W. Johnson, 3 May 1951
MG Francis H. Griswold, 6 May 1952-20 Apr 1954
MG Roscoe C. Wilson, 30 Apr 1954
MG Ernest Moore, 16 Jul 1957
MG John H. Ives, 17 Mar 1961
MG R. W. Puryear, 15 Aug 1962
MG John S. Hardy, 23 Jun 1964
MG Clyde Box, 27 Oct 1966
MG Lawrence S. Lightner, 16 Jul 1968
MG John H. Bell, 30 Jul 1969
MG William F. Pitts, 14 Jul 1971
MG James E. Hill, 12 Jun 1972
MG Evan W. Rosencrans, 5 Nov 1973
MG William C. Norris, 1 Aug 1977
MG Robert W. Bazley, 25 Jun 1980
MG Walter H. Baxter, 13 Jul 1981
MG Carl H. Cathey, Jr., 30 Jul 1982
MG William P. Acker, 10 Jun 1983
MG Thomas G. McInerney, 23 Jul 1985
MG William K. James, 30 Sep 1986
MG Marcus A. Anderson, 27 Jun 1988
MG Charles D. Link, 15 Jul 1991
MG James G. Andrus, 28 Jul 1993
MG Tad J. Oelstrom, 25 Jul 1995
MG William S. Hinton Jr., 18 Jul 1997
MG Joseph H. Werhle Jr., 2 Jul 1999
MG Kenneth W. Hess, 2 Jun 2000
MG Michael W. Wooley, 7 Jun 2002
Col John E. Watkins, 28 Jun 2004
MG Michael C. Gould, 15 Jul 2004-1 Nov 2005
LTG Robert D. Bishop, Jr., 1 Dec 2006
LTG Philip M. Breedlove, #2008
LTG Frank Gorenc, #2010
LTC Darryl L. Roberson
MG Carlton Everhart II

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Antisubmarine, American

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

20 Aug 1990-8 Mar 1991

1 Jul 1995-30 Jun 1997

1 Apr 1998-31 Mar 2000

1 Apr 2000-31 Mar 2002

1 Jun 2002-31 May 2004

EMBLEM

On and over a blue disc within a yellow border an Arabic numeral "3" in white, in bend sinister, shaded in red perspective with a white star charged with a red disc in the lower loop. The winged star is symbolic of the Army Air Forces and the Arabic numeral "3" indicates the unit's numerical designation. (Approved, 1 Sep 1943; revised, 8 Dec 1953 and, 13 May 1996)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

One of the original four numbered air forces formed in the United States in 1940, primarily trained units, crews, and individuals for bombardment, fighter, and reconnaissance operations. Also had air defense responsibilities and some units engaged in antisubmarine efforts from Dec 1941-Oct 1942. Following WWII, assigned to Tactical Air Command to serve as a troop carrier organization until Nov 1946. Beginning in May 1951, responsible for U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) bases and units in the United Kingdom; conducted training and operations in support of NATO. From the early 1990s until 2005, Third Air Force served as USAFE's primary humanitarian command element and was involved in several operations in sub-Saharan Africa and the Balkans; also given responsibility in 1996 for all USAFE units north of the Alps and expanded duties in Eastern Europe and Africa. Beginning in Dec 2006, assumed role as warfighting headquarters component for air forces in Europe.

Franklin Reportedly Moved from Assault Case Third Air Force Commander Lt. Gen. Craig Franklin has come under fire once again for declining to pursue a court-martial in an alleged sexual assault case at Aviano AB, Italy. Earlier this year, Franklin dismissed a sexual assault conviction of the former inspector general of Aviano's 31st Fighter Wing, kick-starting a heated, and on-going, debate over potential changes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Air Force leaders now are second-guessing Franklin's decision and have turned the case over to another commander to reconsider, reported Stars and Stripes. The new case centers around a staff sergeant who reported a subordinate had raped her. Following the Article 32 hearing, the case's hearing officer recommended against court-martialing the suspected airman, and Franklin's legal

adviser reportedly agreed with the general's ultimate decision not to pursue the matter, according to the article. Since then, however, USAF leadership has decided the case should be reinvestigated. An unnamed JB Andrews, Md., commander has reviewed the new case and preferred charges against the airman, citing irregularities, such as Franklin not consulting with the accuser before deciding to drop charges despite a written request to do so, in the original case. The new Article 32 hearing is scheduled for Jan. 8, 2014

Third Air Force Commander Lt. Gen. Craig Franklin, whose controversial decision to overturn a military sexual assault conviction ignited a series of changes to the Uniform Code of Military Justice, will retire after more than three decades of service. "In the last 10 months as the commander of 3rd Air Force and 17th Expeditionary Air Force, my judgment has been questioned publicly regarding my decisions as a general court martial convening authority," said Franklin in a release. He added, "The last thing I want in this command is for the people to feel they cannot bring a sexual assault case forward or feel it won't be dealt with fairly." Franklin said he also feared that public scrutiny of his subsequent decisions would "jeopardize the privacy of both the victim and the accused." US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa Commander Gen. Frank Gorenc said in a separate statement that he "regrettably" supports Franklin's decision to retire, but he praised his many years of services. "Craig is an honorable man and I thank him for his selfless commitment to the country for over three decades, including nearly a decade focused on furthering US objectives and fulfilling national commitments in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East," said Gorenc. Franklin joined the Air Force in 1977 as a cadet at the Air Force Academy. His last day as 3rd AF commander will be Jan. 31, according to the release. 2014

Lt. Gen. Timothy Ray assumed command of 3rd Air Force, replacing Lt. Gen. Darryl Roberson, during a ceremony at Ramstein AB, Germany, according to a base release. Third Air Force, a component of US Air Forces in Europe, supports US European Command. In his new role, Ray also leads 17th Expeditionary Air Force, which supports US Africa Command. "We stand at the strategic crossroads of the world at an incredibly important time," said Ray to the assembled airmen during the July 2 change of command. "You will be the difference between peace and stability," he said. Ray received a third star for the new assignment. He comes to 3rd AF from the Pentagon where he was director of Global Power Programs in the Air Force's acquisition office. Gen. Frank Gorenc, commander of USAFE-Air Forces Africa, presided over the ceremony. Roberson is moving on to oversee Air Education and Training Command at JBSA-Randolph, Texas. The Senate confirmed him for the position on April 30, 2015

Lt. Gen. Darryl Roberson took command of 3rd Air Force and 17th Expeditionary Air Force, filling the leadership vacancy left by the retirement of Lt. Gen. Craig Franklin earlier this year. "Together with our allies and partners, our friends, there is no challenge that is going to be presented to 3rd AF that we won't overcome," said Roberson during the June 11 assumption-of-command ceremony at Ramstein AB, Germany. US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa Commander Gen. Frank Gorenc presided over the ceremony. Third Air Force is the numbered air force that supports US military operations in the European and African theaters. Roberson previously served as vice director of operations on the Joint Staff at the Pentagon. He is a 1983 graduate of the Air Force Academy and has logged more than 5,000 hours in several fighters, including the F-22. Franklin requested retirement in January; it took effect in April. 2014

Lt. Gen. Timothy Ray, commander of the Third Air Force-17th Expeditionary Air Force, and Col. Martin Rothrock, 65th Air Base Wing boss, furl and encase the wing flag during a redesignation ceremony on Lajes Field, Portugal, Aug. 14, 2015.



Air Force Order of Battle
Created: 23 Aug 2010
Updated:
Published:

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.
Air Force Magazine Almanacs. Air Force Association. Arlington, VA. Various years.