

39 AIR BASE WING



MISSION

The mission of the 39 Air Base Wing is to support and protect U.S. and NATO assets and people throughout Turkey while providing a full spectrum of capabilities to the warfighter. The 39 ABW also supports three geographically separated units. Incirlik Air Base is located seven miles from Adana, Turkey. About 1,500 military members are assigned. Although the wing has no permanently assigned aircraft, it provides excellent facilities and supports the following areas: Training deployments and regional exercises -- besides its real-world operational support, Incirlik offers many training facilities.

These facilities complement the area's cooperative weather, sparsely populated terrain and uncongested airspace. Pilots fly training sorties, including air-to-air, air-to-ground and low-altitude operations. Communications for National Command Authority taskings; Incirlik is a key communications link in the southern region. Hub support for various units; Incirlik provides vital support for numerous tenant and three geographically separated units located throughout Turkey. Key support includes medical services, supply, security and force protection, base infrastructure maintenance, communications support, transportation services, airlift, services and personnel support.

LINEAGE

39 Bombardment Group (Heavy) established, 20 Nov 1940

Activated, 15 Jan 1941

Redesignated 39 Bombardment Group, Very Heavy, 28 Mar 1944

Inactivated, 1 Apr 1944

Activated, 1 Apr 1944

Inactivated, 27 Dec 1945

Redesignated 39 Tactical Group and activated, 14 Mar 1966
Organized, 1 Apr 1966

39 Bombardment Wing, Heavy established and activated, 15 Nov 1962
Organized, 1 Feb 1963
Discontinued and inactivated 25 Jun 1965

39 Tactical Group and 39 Bombardment Wing, Heavy consolidated, 31 Jan 1984
Consolidated organization retained designation 39 Tactical Group

Redesignated 39 Wing, 1 Oct 1993
Redesignated 39 Air Base Group, 16 Jul 2003
Redesignated 39 Air Base Wing, 12 Mar 2004

STATIONS

Ft Douglas, UT, 15 Jan 1941
Geiger Field, WA, 2 Jul 1941
Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 5 Feb 1942-1 Apr 1944
Smoky Hill AAFld, KS, 1 Apr 1944-8 Jan 1945
North Field, Guam, 18 Feb-17 Nov 1945
Camp Anza, CA, 15-27 Dec 1945
Eglin AFB, FL, 1 Feb 1963-25 Jun 1965
Incirlik AB, 1 Apr 1966

ASSIGNMENTS

5 Bombardment Wing, 15 Jan 1941
II Bomber Command, 5 Sep 1941
16 Bombardment Operational Training Wing, 4 Sep 1943-1 Apr 1944
XXI Bomber Command, 1 Apr 1944
314 Bombardment Wing, Very Heavy, 18 Feb-27 Dec 1945
Strategic Air Command, 15 Nov 1962
822 Air Division, 1 Feb 1963-25 Jun 1965
United States Air Forces in Europe, 14 Mar 1966
7217 Air Division (Command), 1 Apr 1966
Sixteenth Air Force, 9 Sep 1970
TUSLOG, [The United States Logistics Group], 15 Oct 1971
Sixteenth Air Force, 17 Jul 1992

ATTACHMENTS

17 Bombardment Operational Training Wing, Very Heavy, 15 Apr 1944-8 Jan 1945
Composite Wing Provisional, 7440, 16 Jan 1991-30 Nov 1995

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1941-1942

B-25, 1941
B-24, 1942-1944
B-29, 1944-1945
B-52, 1963-1965

COMMANDERS

Maj Newton Longfellow, 15 Jan 1941
Cpt Maurice A. Preston, 1 Feb 1941
Lt Col Elmer E. Adler, 17 Mar 1941
Cpt George W. Hansen, 13 May 1941
Maj Charles B. Overacker Jr., 12 Nov 1941
Lt Col George W. Hansen, 25 Jan 1942
Col James H. Wallace, 16 Feb 1942
Col Fay R. Upthegrove, 12 Jul 1942
Lt Col Samuel C. Mitchell, 13 Sep 1942
Maj Marden M. Munn, 17 Dec 1942
Lt Col Horace D. Aynesworth, 1 Mar 1943
Lt Col Charles A. Watt, 1 Jul 1943
Lt Col Frank R. Pancake, 25 Nov 1943
Col Clyde K. Rich, 1 Dec 1943-1 Apr 1944
None (Not Manned), 1-27 Apr 1944
Cpt Claude J. Hilton, 28 Apr 1944
Maj Gordon R. Willis, 6 May 1944
Maj Campbell Weir, 11 May 1944
Lt Col Robert W. Strong Jr., 10 Jun 1944
Col Potter B. Paige, 15 Jun 1944
Col John G. Fowler, 22 Feb 1945
Col George W. Mundy, 16 Mar 1945
Col James E. Roberts, 16 Aug 1945
Lt Col James C. Thompson, 9 Oct 1945
Col Robert J. Mason, 13 Oct 1945-Unkn
None (Not Manned), 15 Nov 1962-31 Jan 1963
Col Earl L. Johnson, 1 Feb 1963
Col Fred W. Miller, 26 Jul 1963-25 Jun 1965
None (Not Manned), 14-31 Mar 1966
Col Leslie J. Westberg, 1 Apr 1966
Col Stephen P. Ham, 16 Jul 1966
Col Albert S. J. Tucker Jr., 9 Jun 1968
Col Robert J. Rudd, 1 Aug 1968
Col Robert H. Clark, 2 Aug 1968
Col Dwaine L. Weatherwax, 13 May 1970
Col Bobby J. Mead, 20 Jun 1971
Col James A. Minish, 8 Jul 1971
Col William W. Gray, 23 Jan 1973

Col Clyde H. Garner, 17 Jun 1974
Col Richard L. Meyer, 11 Mar 197
Col William L. Gibson, 9 Sep 1975
Col Elmer E. Nelson, 17 Sep 1975
Col Ellis C. Vander Pyl Jr., 10 Jun 1977
Col Wade L. Green, 23 Mar 1979
Col Paul N. Chase, 20 Aug 1980
Col Robert M. Thompson, 5 Feb 1981
Col William T. Williams IV, 4 Jun 1982
Col Gordon L. Clouser, 13 May 1983
Col William J. Hentges, 18 Jun 1984
Col Harold C. Byrd, 25 Mar 1985
Col William M. Douglass, 26 Jun 1986
Col Roger C. Taylor, 29 Jun 1987
Col Thomas J. Lennon, 29 Feb 1988
Col John L. Nystrom Jr., 3 May 1989
Col Gary R. Lorenz, 21 Dec 1990
Col John W. Rutledge, 20 Jun 1991
Col James D. Kula, 2 Sep 1992
Col Curtis H. Emery II, 7 Oct 1992
Col James D. Kula, 12 Apr 1994
Col John L. Barry, 2 Aug 1994
Col Jonathan S. Gration, 30 Jul 1996
Col Robertus C. N. Remkes, 5 Jun 1998
Col Thomas B. Wright, 16 Jun 2000
Col Marc D. Felman, 10 Dec 2001
Col William E. Maclure, 16 Jul 2003
Col Michael C. Gardiner, 12 Mar 2004
Col Murrell F. Stinnette, Jul 2005
Col Philip McDaniel, Jun 2007
Unkn, 2009–8 Jul 2013
Col Craig D. Wills, 9 Jul 2013
Col John C. Walker, 31 Jul 2015
Col David S. Eaglin, 1 Jun 2017

HONORS

Service Streamer

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Western Pacific

Air Offensive, Japan

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Japan, 10 May 1945

Japan, 23-29 May 1945

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1974-30 Jun 1975

1 Jul 1981- 30 Jun 1983

24 Jun-1 Jul 1985

1 Sep 1985-31 Aug 1987

1 Sep 1988-31 Jul 1990

1 Jul 1993-30 Jun 1995

1 Jan 1996-30 Aug 1997

27 Jun-29 Sep 1998

24 Mar-10 Jun 1999

15 Dec 1999-14 Dec 2001

15 Dec 2001-14 Jul 2003

15 Jul 2003-31 Oct 2004

1 Nov 2004-31 Oct 2005

1 Nov 2005-31 Dec 2006

1 Jan 2012-31 Dec 2013

EMBLEM



39 Bombardment Wing, Heavy



39 Air Base Wing emblem: Azure, a bend sinister double beveled parti per bend sinister Gules and Argent, surmounted by six flight symbols Or, ascending bendwise in triangular formation, three,

two, and one, all within a diminished bordure of the last. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "39 AIR BASE WING" in Blue letters. Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The group of flight symbols in formation suggests the precision with which the wing expounds six of the tenets of aerospace power: resistance, concentration, balance, synergy, priority, and centralized control, decentralized execution. The seventh tenet of aerospace power which the unit exemplifies is flexibility and versatility as reflected by the arched bend. (Approved, 39 Wing 21 Nov 1994)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The 39 Bombardment Group patrolled the northwest coast after the United States entered World War II. Served as an operational training and later as a replacement training unit, 1942-Apr 1944. Trained as a heavy bombardment unit in 1944. Moved to Guam early in 1945 as part of Twentieth Air Force. Conducted its first mission against the Japanese home islands in Apr 1945. Supported Allied invasion of Okinawa by attacking airfields that served as bases for kamikaze pilots. Bombed military and industrial targets in Japan and participated in incendiary raids on urban areas from mid-May until the end of the war. Received a Distinguished Unit Citation for an attack against the Otake oil refinery and storage area on Honshu on 10 May 1945. Received a second Distinguished Unit Citation for bombing industrial and dock areas in Yokohama and manufacturing districts in Tokyo, 23-29 May 1945.

Returned to the United States, Nov-Dec 1945 for inactivation.

The 39 Bombardment Wing trained, 1963-1965, to maintain combat readiness for strategic bombardment. Maintained airborne and ground alerts, and participated in numerous exercises until inactivation.

The 39 Tactical Group replaced the 7216th Combat Support Group on 1 Apr 1966 to control permanent support units and deployed weapons training detachments at Incirlik, Turkey.

Known as TUSLOG (The United States Logistics Group) Detachment 10 within Turkey until 1 Oct 1982, it supported the USAFE and NATO operational missions in the Middle East. Provided disaster relief and mercy missions as required during fires, floods, earthquakes, and other such disasters. Provided support for US and NATO forces during operations in Southwest Asia, Eastern Europe, and Iraq, Aug 1990.

From Oct 1993, provided operational and logistical support for all U.S. forces in Turkey and operated a Supreme Allied Command Europe Quick Reaction Alert Force.

From Sep 1997-May 2003, became major force provider for the 39 Air and Space Expeditionary Wing, which supported Operation Northern Watch, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation

Iraqi Freedom.

A deal with Turkey to stage Operation Inherent Resolve combat strikes from Turkish bases is still under negotiation , but the commander of the 39 Air Base Wing at Incirlik Air Base there said the base already is supporting OIR-related tasks and could be doing more soon. Col. Craig Wills, 39 ABW commander, said the wing is focused on "combat readiness" and preparing the base to accept forces for a wide range of missions. Wills noted the base, which will mark 60 years as a NATO asset next year, has performed numerous Cold War missions up to serving as headquarters for Operation Northern Watch, which ended in 2003, according to a Dec. 10 Pentagon release. Today, the civil war in Syria has affected the posture of the base, and airmen with the 39 ABW provide some support for the NATO air defense mission in southern Turkey, which features Patriot missile batteries manned by US, German, and Dutch personnel. A senior defense official noted Incirlik supports numerous "joint military requirements" already, in coordination with Turkey, to include intelligence support, and the base is preparing for any mission expansion. "That role could be military assistance, it could be building partnership capacity, it could be combat operations or it could be just support," said Wills. "We just have to be ready." 2014

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

Created: 1 Jan 2025

Updated:

Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.