

52 OPERATIONS GROUP



MISSION

LINEAGE

52 Pursuit Group (Interceptor) established, 20 Nov 1940
Activated, 16 Jan 1941
Redesignated 52 Fighter Group, 15 May 1942
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945
Redesignated 52 Fighter Group (All-Weather), 18 Oct 1946
Activated, 9 Nov 1946
Redesignated 52 Fighter Group, All-Weather, 10 May 1948
Redesignated 52 Fighter All Weather Group, 20 Jan 1950
Redesignated 52 Fighter Interceptor Group, 1 May 1951
Inactivated, 6 Feb 1952
Redesignated 52 Fighter Group (Air Defense), 20 Jun 1955
Activated, 18 Aug 1955
Discontinued and inactivated, 1 Jul 1963
Activated, 30 Sep 1968
Inactivated, 31 Dec 1969
Redesignated 52 Tactical Fighter Group, 17 Feb 1970
Activated, 1 Apr 1971
Inactivated, 31 Jul 1972
Redesignated 52 Operations Group, 1 Mar 1992
Activated, 31 Mar 1992

STATIONS

Field, MI, 16 Jan 1941

Norfolk, VA, 18 Dec 1941
Selfridge Field, MI, 16 Jan 1942
Florence, SC, 18 Feb 1942
Wilmington, NC, 27 Apr 1942
Grenier Field, NH, 14-24 Jun 1942
Eglinton, Ireland, 14 Jul 1942
Goxhill, England, 26 Aug-22 Oct 1942
Tafaraoui, Algeria, 9 Nov 1942
La Senia, Algeria, 14 Nov 1942
Orleansville, Algeria, 2 Jan 1943
Telergma, Algeria, 20 Jan 1943
Youks-les-Bains, Algeria, 9 Mar 1943
Le Sers, Tunisia, 14 Apr 1943
La Sebala, Tunisia, 21 May 1943
Boccadifalco, Sicily, 30 Jul 1943
Borgo, Corsica, 1 Dec 1943
Aghione, Corsica, 29 Apr 1944
Madna AFld, Italy, 14 May 1944
Piagiolino AFld, Italy, 21 Apr 1945
Lesina, Italy, 8 Jul-10 Aug 1945
Drew Field, FL, 25 Aug-7 Nov 1945
Schweinfurt, Germany, 9 Nov 1946
Bad Kissingen, Germany, 5 May-25 Jun 1947
Mitchel Field, NY, 25 Jun 1947
McGuire AFB, NJ, 4 Oct 1949-6 Feb 1952
Suffolk County AFB, NY, 18 Aug 1955-1 Jul 1963
Suffolk County AFB, NY, 30 Sep 1968-31 Dec 1969 (detachment operated at Atlantic City, NJ, 30 Sep 1968-31 Dec 1969)
Erding Air Station, Germany, 1 Apr 1971-31 Jul 1972
Spangdahlem AB, Germany, 31 Mar 1992

ASSIGNMENTS

6 Pursuit Wing, 16 Jan 1941
I Interceptor (later, I Fighter) Command, 1 Oct 1941
First Air Force, 15 Jun 1942
Eighth Air Force (attached to Royal Air Force), 13 Jul 1942
6 Fighter Wing, 18 Aug 1942
XII Fighter Command, 14 Sep 1942 (attached to Tunis Fighter Sector, 19 Jan 1943)
XII Air Support Command, 18 Feb 1943
North West Coastal Air Force, 23 May 1943
1 Air Defense Wing, 19 Aug 1943
62 Fighter Wing, 1943
63 Fighter Wing, 16 Nov 1943
Fifteenth Air Force, 1 May 1944

306 Bombardment (later, 306 Fighter) Wing, 3 May 1944
305 Bombardment Wing, 13 Jun-Aug 1945
Third Air Force, 22 Aug-7 Nov 1945
64 Fighter Wing, 9 Nov 1946
XII Tactical Air Command, 15 May 1947
Air Defense Command, 25 Jun 1947
First Air Force, 29 Oct 1947
104 Wing (Provisional), 26 Dec 1947
52 Fighter Wing, All Weather (later, 52 Fighter All Weather; 52 Fighter Interceptor Wing), 9 Jun 1948-6 Feb 1952
4709 Air Defense Wing, 18 Aug 1955
4707 Air Defense Wing, 1 Mar 1956
4709 Air Defense Wing, 8 Jul 1956
4621 Air Defense Wing (later, New York Air Defense Sector), 1 Oct 1956-1 Jul 1963
35 Air Division, 30 Sep 1968
21 Air Division, 19 Nov-31 Dec 1969
Seventeenth Air Force, 1 Apr 1971-31 Jul 1972
52 Fighter Wing, 31 Mar 1992

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-40, 1941-1942
P-39, 1942
Spitfire, 1942-1944
P-51, 1944-1945
P-61, 1947, 1947-1948
F-82, 1948-1951
F-94, 1950-1952
F-86, 1955-1957
F-102, 1957-1960
F-101, 1959-1963
F-101, 1968-1969
F-4, 1992-1994
F-16, 1992
OA/A-10, 1992
F-15, 1994-1999

COMMANDERS

Maj Earl W. Barnes, 16 Jan 1941
Lt Col Robert L. Schoenlein, 15 May 1941
Col Dixon M. Allison, 27 Feb 1942
Lt Col Graham W. West, 1 Mar 1943
Lt Col James S. Coward, 24 Jun 1943
Lt Col Richard A. Ames, 4 Sep 1943
Col Marvin L. McNickle, 8 Sep 1943

Lt Col Robert Levine, 25 Feb 1944
Col Marion Malcolm, 27 Aug 1944-Aug 1945
Unkn, Aug-7 Nov 1945
Col Sheldon B. Edwards, 9 Nov 1946
Col Carroll W. McColpin, 14 Dec 1946
None, Not Manned, Apr-13 Nov 1947
Lt Col Vincent W. Burnett, 14 Nov 1947
Col Oliver G. Cellini, 5 Dec 1947
Lt Col Leon G. Lewis, 3 Jul 1950
Col Benjamin S. Preston Jr., 6 Jul 1950
Col Royal N. Baker, 13 Jul 1951-6 Feb 1952
Col James H. Hancock, Aug 1955
Col Fred G. Hook Jr., Jul 1956
Col Frank A. Hill, 13 Jul 1959
Col Roy E. Ferguson, 3 Jul 1961
Lt Col Joseph T. Mckee, 19 Sep 1962
Col James H. Buckey, 22 Oct 1962-1 Jul 1963
Col Jack K. Gamble, 30 Sep 1968
Col Leon H. Larson Jr., 29 Apr 1969
Col Edward F. Smith, 14 May 1969
Col William E. Shelton, 31 May 1969-31 Dec 1969
Col Robert W. Kapfhamer, 1 Apr 1971-31 Jul 1972
Col William J. Dalecky, 31 Mar 1992
Col Thomas L. Baptiste, 20 Jul 1992
Col Edward H. Houle, 1 Jul 1994
Col John W. Eastman, 6 Jun 1996
Col Jan-Marc Louas, 4 Aug 1998
Col Michael N. Beard, 24 Mar 2000
Col H. D. Polumbo Jr., 29 Aug 2001
Col Chris R. Chambliss, 4 Aug 2003
Col Robert G. Wright Jr., 10 Jun 2005
Col Thomas J. Lawhead Jr., 18 Aug 2006
Col Patrick J. Mccrea, 25 Jun 2008
Col Jackson L. Fox, 26 Mar 2010

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Algeria-French Morocco

Tunisia; Sicily

Naples-Foggia

Rome-Arno
Normandy
Northern France
Southern France
North Apennines
Rhineland
Central Europe
Po Valley
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Kosovo
Air Campaign

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Munich, Germany, 9 Jun 1944
Rumania, 31 Aug 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device
19 Mar-16 Apr 2003

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

[31 Mar 1992]-30 Jun 1993

1 Jul 1993-30 Jun 1995

1 Aug 1995-31 Jul 1997

1 Jul 1997-30 Jun 1999

24 Mar-10 Jun 1999

1 Jul 1999-30 Jun 2001

1 Jul 2001-30 Jun 2003

1 Jul 2003-30 Jun 2005

1 Jul 2008-30 Jun 2010

EMBLEM



Group will use the wing emblem with group designation in the scroll. Approved, 30 May 2023

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The 52 trained and participated in maneuvers, 1941-1942, when it moved to the United Kingdom. It trained with the Royal Air Force as part of Eighth Air Force and flew missions from England to France during Aug and Sep. Group pilots flew Spitfires from Gibraltar to Algeria during the invasion of North Africa on 8 Nov 1942. The remainder of the group arrived by ship after the campaign had ended. The group then operated as part of Twelfth Air Force through Apr 1944, thereafter part of Fifteenth Air Force, serving in combat in the Mediterranean until the end of the war. It flew escort, patrol, strafing, and reconnaissance missions to help defeat Axis forces in Tunisia. In Sicily, it attacked railroads, highways, bridges, coastal shipping and other targets to support the Allied operations. Having converted to P-51s in Apr- May 1944, the group escorted bombers that attacked objectives in Italy, France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. It received a DUC for a mission on 9 Jun 1944 when the group protected bombers that struck aircraft factories, communications centers, and supply lines in Germany. The 52 flew one of the first shuttle missions to Russia, 4-6 Aug 1944, and received a second DUC for strafing attacks on a landing field in Rumania on 31 Aug 1944, destroying a large number of enemy fighter and transport planes. On 24 Mar 1945, the group's aircraft flew the longest escort mission ever flown in Europe - 1600 miles round-trip to Berlin.

From 1946-1947, it served as an all-weather fighter group in Germany and in Nov 1947 moved to the US and assumed an air defense role.

In the late 1950s and 1960s, the group had air defense and anti-submarine warfare missions.

The mission of the 52 Fighter Group is to provide aircraft and crews for interception in air defense. To participate in the United States Air Force collateral mission of anti-submarine warfare as directed by the New York Air Defense Sector or higher headquarters.

To support the operation of other commands in accordance with directives, policies, and schedules issued by the New York Air Defense Sector or higher headquarters. To operate and maintain Suffolk County Air Force Base, Westhampton Beach, L. I., NY, for the support of the armed forces personnel or units utilizing the Air Base.

From Apr 1971-Jul 1972, it provided logistical and administrative support to Seventeenth Air Force's deployed and attached elements but did not have any tactical elements of its own.

In Mar 1992 it activated under the objective wing structure and assumed responsibility of the 52 Fighter Wing's operational squadrons.

From Jan-Dec 1999, the group supported Operations Northern Watch, Allied Force, and Decisive Forge with numerous squadron deployments to Italy and Turkey.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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

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

Unit yearbook. *New York Air Defense Sector. 1960.*

Unit yearbook. *26th Air Division, Defense. 1956.*