

103rd AIR CONTROL SQUADRON



LINEAGE

103rd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron
103rd Tactical Control Squadron
103rd Air Control Squadron

STATIONS

Orange ANGB New Haven, CT

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Cpt Edward L. Osborne, 2 Apr 1947
Maj Louis C. Horvath, 13 Aug 1947
LTC Ruel M. Luckingham, Sr., 31 Jan 1951
LTC Stephen Loyzim, 1 Sep 1953
LTC William J. Pollitt, 16 Mar 1961
LTC Joseph B. Doolittle, 20 May 1963
LTC Herbert N. Bagshaw, 2 Mar 1964
LTC Arthur B. Haesche, 2 Oct 1971

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

On 2 Apr 1947, Col Richard W. Ballard went to Brainard Field to inspect the new 103rd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron CANG for Federal recognition. Present that day were 9 officers and 24 enlisted men. The mission of this unit, the idea for which had been developed by the British in WWII, was, as its name implies, control of airborne aircraft on defensive missions (directing the friendly fighter to the enemy intruder planes by the use of radar) and also, using radar, to spot intruders in time to give warning to defensive units and the civilian population. The 103rd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron was first organized in Hartford in September 1946. During the following eight months an interested group of Air Guardsmen, composed mainly of World War II veterans, attended regular training assemblies without pay. It was not until 2 Apr 1947 that the required 20 percent of authorized strength necessary for Federal Recognition was realized. From this point on, the Hartford Headquarters continued to expand under the leadership of its first Commander, then, Cpt Edward L. Osborn. In Sep 1947, a 46 airmen, and two officer detachment, organized in the Town of Groton, Connecticut. Shortly thereafter in Oct 1947 a similar detachment was activated at Milford. Then Cpt Richard L. Terry and 1LT Joseph B. Doolittle were appointed as the officers to man the Milford Detachment.

The building at Milford Point had previously been acquired from the State Fish and Game Commission, but necessary extensive rehabilitation had not been started. While awaiting these repairs, regular meetings were held in the homes of Lieutenant Doolittle and Captain Terry. Training at this time consisted, of necessity, of blackboard teaching of basic radar theory and the operation of control and warning systems. This pioneer group became known to its members as the "Kitchen Radar Unit." These original members of the detachment, augmented by a few other selected early squadron personnel, still conduct annual social reunions. By mid-June 1947 one of the buildings at Milford Point was ready for occupancy and all operations transferred to that point. Radar and communications equipment which had been stored at Hartford was moved into the new area and set up for operation.

The first major undertaking was the construction of an operational site. This was accomplished in October and was in operation within three days after order establishing the site was issued. The squadron at this time was part of the 151st Tactical Control Group which consisted of the Group Headquarters, a Radar Calibration Flight with two C-47's, and the 101st, 102nd, 103rd and 104th, Aircraft Control & Warning Squadrons, all New England units.

In Nov 1951 the squadron participated in the first maneuver "Operation Helping Hand" which was a combined operation with the Army, consisting of a mock invasion of Cape Cod and the ensuing tactical defense of the area. The mission of the 103rd was the close control of fighters and bombers in the "Front Lines". The existing operational site was used as a Tactical Air Direction Center (TADC) and Tactical Air Direction Parties (TADP), consisting of a radio operator and aircraft controller and a jeep with a radio were sent from the TADC to the front lines to take over the final visual control of the aircraft in the bombing and strafing of enemy positions. The operation was a success and the enemy repulsed.

In December the squadron dismantled the operational site and in early Jan 1952 the operational

teams and their supporting units were flown to Camp Drum, NY to take part in "Operation Snowfall," the largest maneuver conducted in the United States that year. This was a combined operation of Air Force and Army to test the efficiency of men and equipment under winter conditions. The 103rd established a radar site on a misnamed place called "Dry Hill", seven miles west of Watertown, New York. The installation consisted of two or three canvas "Quonset Hut" type operations shelters and approximately 15 squad tents for mess hall and living quarters, plus some radar and communications equipment on vehicle mounts. The weather was fine, for an Artie maneuver, with temperatures at 40 below zero but after six weeks the men got used to it.

The squadron participated in the control of parachute drops made by the 11th Airborne Division, and control of fighters and fighter-bombers in the same manner as "Operation Helping Hand." The high point of the maneuver was when the site was "Destroyed" by enemy aircraft and each man was given a tag to prove that he was "dead"! The personnel stayed "dead" for about three hours and then the unit was "reincarnated" and resumed operations. The squadron returned to Camp Edwards in Feb 1952 and the next month a new radar site was established at Sagamore on the north end of the Cape Cod Canal.

The first major change was to occur shortly after. Many of the personnel of the 103rd were transferred to a new squadron, the 932nd AC&W Sq, a unit being organized on 1 May 1952. This new unit was given intensive training and by the time summer reached Cape Cod the 932nd was fully manned with some transfers from the 101 AC&WSq. together with some regular Air Force personnel. The 932nd left Camp Edwards in the Fall of 1952 for Camp Kilmer NJ and then to Iceland where they established the first radar installation at Keflavik.

Meanwhile back at Camp Edwards the 103rd settled down to the routine of operating an Air Defense installation. ACPS-1 heavy duty search radar set was assigned to the squadron and was placed in operation and eventually became the show place of the 151st Tactical Control Group. In Nov 1952 the site at Sagamore was moved to the maneuver area of Camp Edwards.

During the first half of 1953 some of the squadron members were released from active duty and returned to the Connecticut Air National Guard. These men were placed in the 8240th Air Base Squadron, a temporary holding unit awaiting the return of the 103rd Aircraft Control Warning Squadron to State control. Much of the planning and ground work was completed during this period so as to enable the unit to accomplish the resumption of operations as a Guard unit with little delay. Great changes were accomplished. Milford was designated as the Squadron's Headquarters and the Groton station was a detachment.

On 1 September 1953 the 103rd Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron was officially returned to the State of Connecticut and started to get back into business. Equipment started to arrive, not the second-hand, out-dated material that was issued prior to 1951 but only the newest and most modern. Some of the equipment was so new that the regular Air Force had not been given the whole thing as yet. The Air National Guard was to train on the most modern equipment available. Search radar, height finders, Identification friend or foe interrogators, trucks, cargo vans, weapons carriers, communications vans, trailers, and much, much more. To maintain and operate this equipment a larger manning table was authorized totaling 281 officers and airmen.

By 26 Aug 1961 the 103rd Air Control and Warning Squadron was established at Milford Point and LTC William J. Pollitt, of Easton, was in command; an element of this unit was stationed at Trumbull Field, in Groton.

In Mar 1964 Maj Herbert Bagshaw was appointed commanding officer of the 103 AC&W Squadron, at Orange, CT.

The tactical control units from Orange, CT went with men of the 103rd Tactical Control Squadron, to Fort Devens, Massachusetts and to Montauk Point, New York in support of the Tactical Air Command's exercise, "Sentry Builder," which was designed to measure the effectiveness of mobilization, deployment, and operational capability of the entire Tactical Control System. This exercise was held in July, 1973.

"During this reporting period the 103rd Tactical Control Squadron and Flight completed the conversion program to 407L computerized e-equipment. Additional unit training assemblies were authorized which allowed for an intensified training program in order to upgrade and maintain proficiency of Weapons Controllers. The Flight became operational in February 1973 and deployed to North Smithfield and North Kingston, Rhode Island in February and March 1973 for a radar evaluation in preparation for Annual Training.

103 Aircraft Control & Warning Squadron

Milford & Trumbull Field, Groton, Connecticut ANG

Located: 1946 originally stationed at Brainard Field, Hartford, Connecticut.

Allotted: 24 May 1946 to ANG

Mobilized: 1 September, 1951 – 1 September, 1953

Mobilized: 1 Oct 61 - 31 Aug 62

Relocated: 1962 Orange, Connecticut

Deployment: Rothwestern, Germany

Equipment: TPS-1D, MPS-11(A)

Notes: Unit personnel converted an FPS-8 into an MPS-11 by trailer mounting the equipment.

103 Tactical Control Squadron

Located: 1962 Orange, Connecticut

Control & Reporting Post: 20 August, 1971

Manning: 27 Officer, 225 Airmen

103 Tactical Control Flight

Located: 1962, Orange, Connecticut

Forward Air Control Post: 20 August, 1971

Manning: 5 Officer, 43 Airmen

103 Air Control Squadron

Located: 1962 Orange, Connecticut

Redesignated: 16 June, 1992

Control & Reporting Center

Deployments: Allied Force; Noble Eagle; Operation Enduring Freedom, Kandahar, Afghanistan

Manning: 48 full-time and over 200 guardsmen and women.

Equipment: TPS-75

Commander: Maj. Joseph D. Hammer, September 2004

Awards: 1994, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

Deployments: Allied Force; Noble Eagle; Operation Enduring Freedom, Kandahar, Afghanistan

Notes: Command, Control, Communications, Computer, and Intelligence (C4I) element within a mobile Theater Air Control System.

The 103rd Tactical Control Squadron and its sister unit, the 103rd Tactical Control Flight, have received the Air Force's latest computerized tactical air control radar system and they call it the 407L.

The mission of tactical control units is to direct tactical air battles and strikes in the area of the action as their antennae reach out about 300 miles depending on elevation and ground obstacles. Computer-generated data displayed on the radar screens is passed onto fighter pilots as they fly to and from the targets.

The global war on terror sent the 103 ACS members to Afghanistan for Operation Noble Eagle in 2003 supporting a multinational force in daily combat operations, garnering another Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor for Bradley Airmen.





Air Force Order of Battle
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Sources

ANG Unit History: Connecticut. *Flying Yankees the First 50 Years, 1923-1973*. CT ANG, 1973