

1st SEARCH ATTACK GROUP

LINEAGE

1st Sea-Search Attack Group (Medium), constituted, 8 Jun 1942
Activated, 17 Jun 1942
Redesignated 1st Sea-Search Attack Group (Heavy), Jun 1943
Redesignated 1st Sea-Search Attack Unit, Sep 1943
Redesignated 1st Search Attack Group, Nov 1943
Disbanded, 10 Apr 1944

STATIONS

Langley Field, VA, 17 Jun 1942-10 Apr 1944

ASSIGNMENTS

AAF, Jun 1942
First AF, Nov 1943

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17
B-18
B-24

COMMANDERS

Col William C. Dolan, 17 Jun 1942-10 Apr 1944

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Antisubmarine, American Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

None

EMBLEM

None

MOTTO**NICKNAME****OPERATIONS**

The activation of the 1st Sea Search Attack Group at Langley Field on June 8, 1942 grew out of special testing of the magnetic anomaly detector system in hunting submarines. The group had a three-fold mission: to develop tactics and techniques for the employment of known destructive devices, to develop new experimental apparatus, and to train combat crews and technicians in the use of these instruments.

The 1st Sea Search Attack Group included the 2nd and 3rd Sea Search Attack Squadrons, which flew B-18s and B-24Ds and the 4th Sea Search Attack Squadron, which joined the group in November 1943 and flew B-17. The group played a vital role in the sinking of an enemy submarine off the Florida coast in August 1942, a probable sinking in September off the Virginia Capes, and in the possible confirmation of two sinking near Trinidad in October.

The group worked on more than sixty projects between Jun 1942 and Jul 1943. Among these were the sonobuoy and three improved versions of MAD, the Mark IV-B2 magnetic anomaly detector, the Mark VI, and the Mark X. After sighting the enemy submarine the crew dropped the sonobuoy into the sea to pick up underwater sounds and relay them to nearby aircraft. With the Mark IV-B2 MAD mounted in a tail "stinger," a B-18 could search a 16.6 square mile area in an hour. The Mark VI was mounted in a B-24 which had detectors on the tip of each wing. The Mark X MAD, a "bird" towed beneath a B-18B, was developed in early 1943.

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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