

ORIENTATION GROUP, USAF

LINEAGE

4140th Air Force Base Unit
3100th USAF Exhibit Unit
USAF Exhibit Group
USAF Orientation Group
Orientation Group, USAF

STATIONS

Wright Patterson AFB, OH, 13 Jan 1948-31 Aug 1971

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Creating and displaying exhibits that inform the American public about Air Force people, equipment, and contributions to the nation are the key objectives of the Orientation Group, United States Air

Force. These efforts play a major role in Air Force public affairs and recruiting efforts.

Orientation Group members travel worldwide. Their exhibits show advances in air power as well as the significance of the Air Force to the security of the United States. Millions of people view the displays every year.

The Orientation Group was established shortly after the 1945 Army Air Forces Fair held at Wright Field, which featured Allied and enemy' airplanes and equipment from World War II. Public response to the event was so favorable that Gen. Henry H. Arnold, Commanding General of the AAF, ordered a traveling show developed. What was ultimately called the 4140th Army Air Forces Base Unit was formed, and toured most of the northeastern United States during 1946. That year the unit also presented aerial demonstrations of the P-51 Mustang. In 1956, the traveling exhibit unit received its present name: Orientation Group, United States Air Force. (The Group is more commonly referred to as the Air Force Orientation Group—AFOG.)

April 1979, Hq US AF approved a plan to relocate all of the facilities of the Air Force Orientation Group (AFOG) from Area B, WPAFB to the Defense Electronics Supply Center (DESC) at Gentile Air Force Station, Dayton. The move was initiated in April 1981 and the Group was settled in its new quarters by August of that year. AFOG currently occupies Buildings 4 and 74 at DESC.

Orientation Group grew out of the hugely successful 1945 Army Air Forces (AAF) Fair held at Wright Field at the end of World War II. The fair displayed technological advances made in aviation during the war, showed off captured German and Japanese weapons, and presented the AAF story to the American people. More than a million visitors from across the United States and 26 foreign countries attended the event. Although originally intended as a local weekend show, public response was so overwhelming that Air Technical Service Command (ATSC) quickly decided to extend the fair for an additional week.

General Henry H. Arnold, commanding general of the AAF, recognized the public relations coup and ordered ATSC to develop a traveling version of the fair. ATSC assembled a selection of exhibits into a touring exhibition and formed the 4140th Army Air Forces Base Unit (Research and Development Exhibition) to organize and handle the road show. The new unit toured most of the northeastern United States during 1946 and also presented aerial demonstrations of the P-51.

In 1956, the traveling exhibit unit was renamed the Orientation Group, United States Air Force. The group was more commonly referred to as the Air Force Orientation Group (AFOG). Its mission was to create and display exhibits that informed the American public about Air Force people, equipment, and contributions to the nation. These efforts played a major role in Air Force public affairs and recruiting efforts.

The Orientation Group produced both outdoor and indoor exhibits. Its outdoor exhibits featured full-size aircraft and display vans showing audiovisual programs on aviation history and the Air Force's

technological contributions to the nation. Indoor exhibits depicted a variety of Air Force stories through large color transparencies, graphics, models, artwork, and multi-image productions. Displays also featured selections from the Air Force Art Collection. Besides traveling exhibitions, AFOG maintained permanent displays at the Pentagon and at the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry.

Originally headquartered in Wood City, AFOG experienced a devastating fire on November 25, 1961. The fire claimed three buildings and damaged four others. Most of the equipment in the destroyed buildings was also lost. AFOG then moved to Area B. The organization moved again in 1981, this time to the Defense Electronics Supply Center at Gentile Air Force Station in Dayton, Ohio. It remained there until its inactivation in 1992, a victim of the post-Cold War drawdown. Although the unit closed its doors, it left behind a rich heritage evidenced by its numerous Air Force Organizational Excellence Awards for "increasing public understanding and awareness concerning the Air Force."

Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources