

## 301 RESCUE SQUADRON



### MISSION

The 301 RQS trains personnel, with equipment, to achieve and maintain the capability to perform combat rescue missions; search for, locate and recover United States Air Force and other Department of Defense personnel involved with United States defense activities; provide rescue support for NASA manned Space Shuttle operations; support the space command by clearing of down range locations prior to missile launch activity; provide search and rescue support of civilians as directed by the Air Force Rescue Coordination Center; and provide humanitarian and disaster relief operations at the request of foreign governments and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Upon recall to active duty, the gaining command is through Air Combat Command (ACC), Langley Air Force Base, Va.

### LINEAGE

301 Air Rescue Squadron constituted, Mar 1956

Activated in the Reserve, 18 Aug 1956

Redesignated 301 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, 18 Jan 1966

Redesignated 301 Air Rescue Squadron, 1 Apr 1990

Redesignated 301 Rescue Squadron, 1 Feb 1992

### STATIONS

Miami Intl Aprt, FL, 18 Aug 1956

Homestead AFB, FL, 1 Aug 1960 (operated out of Tamiami Aprt and Patrick AFB, FL, Aug-Dec 1992)

Patrick AFB, FL, Jan 1993

### ASSIGNMENTS

2585 Air Reserve Flying Training Center, 18 Aug 1956

2586 Air Reserve Flying Training Center, 2 Jun 1958  
Fourteenth Air Force, 25 Jun 1960  
Third Air Force Reserve Region, 15 Jul 1960  
Eastern Air Force Reserve Region, 31 Dec 1969  
Western Air Force Reserve Region, 1 Jan 1972  
403 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery (later, 403 Rescue and Weather Reconnaissance) Wing,  
15 Mar 1976  
939 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group (later, 939 Air Rescue Wing; 939 Rescue  
Wing), 1 Oct 1987  
939 Operations Group, 1 Aug 1992  
920 Rescue Group, 15 Apr 1997  
920 Operations Group, 1 Apr 2003

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

SA(later, HU)-16, 1956-1973  
HH-34, 1971-1974, 1975  
HH-1, 1973-1979  
HH-3, 1974-1991  
HC-130, 1979-1997  
CH-3, 1987-1991  
HH-60, 1991

### **COMMANDERS**

Lt Col Joseph A. Ferrarese, 18 Aug 1956  
Maj Frank J. Englert, Jul 1958  
Lt Col Marcus C. West, 22 Jan 1960  
Lt Col Knox R. Hardy, 2 Jul 1967  
Lt Col Walter J. Soboslay, Aug 1969  
Lt Col Ernest Hack, by Sep 1973  
Lt Col Charles B. Coleman III, 29 Sep 1974  
Lt Col Robert F. Kujawa, 21 Jun 1976  
Lt Col Donald J. Colbert, 5 Aug 1976  
Lt Col Robert F. Kujawa, 9 Nov 1976  
Lt Col Donald J. Colbert, c. Feb 1977  
Lt Col Robert F. Kujawa, 22 Oct 1978  
Col Robert S. Martin, 17 Dec 1978  
Col Warren D. Snyder, 1 Aug 1980  
Lt Col Ernest R. Webster, 18 Jul 1982  
Lt Col Frank P. Fisher, 30 Jul 1984  
Lt Col John B. Goodwin, 25 Nov 1984  
Lt Col James P. Czekanski, 27 Apr 1986  
Lt Col William D. Peden, 12 Sep 1987  
Col Oral W. Carper, 24 Sep 1989  
Col William P. Kane, 24 Sep 1995

Col Richard R. Severson, 18 Aug 1996  
Unkn, 15 Apr-12 Jul 1997  
Lt Col Richard A. Kramer, 13 Jul 1997  
Lt Col Louis Villafane, 7 Jul 2001  
Lt Col Philip Manning, 7 Dec 2003  
Lt Col Christopher P. Hannon, 6 Mar 2005  
Lt Col Brent Baysinger, Aug 2008  
Lt Col Joseph Alcorn, 19 May 2011

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1977-31 Dec 1987

1 Oct 1981-1 Aug 1983

1 Jul 1984-30 Jun 1986

24 Aug-11 Sep 1992

1 Sep 1993-31 Aug 1995

1 Sep 1997-31 Aug 1999

1 Sep 2001-31 Aug 2002

1 Oct 2002-30 Sep 2004

1 Oct 2004-30 Sep 2005

1 Oct 2005-30 Sep 2006

## **EMBLEM**



The proposed insignia of the 301st Air Rescue Squadron is composed of a light blue circle (globe) tilted at approximately 15° to the left to symbolize the earth. This light blue globe is bordered by ultramarine blue and cross-hatched with white lines indicating longitude and latitude. The globe is, in turn, encircled with a broad band of golden yellow, bordered on both edges with black. Super-imposed on the upper right half of the globe, above the band, is an inflated parachute in white outlined in ultramarine blue and carrying a bundle marked with a red cross. In the lower right half of the globe, below the band, is a space capsule also white and outlined in ultramarine blue. On a golden yellow banner, on the top of the globe, are the words "301ST AIR RESCUE SQDN" in ultramarine blue. On a golden yellow scroll, at the base of the globe, is the Squadron motto "GUARDIAN WINGS" also in ultramarine blue. All lettering is on a white background. The basic globe signifies the world-wide mobility of the 301<sup>st</sup> Air Rescue Squadron. The golden yellow band with black borders is easily recognized as the symbol of the air rescue, which is used on all aircraft. The method of encircling the earth with this band not only further emphasizes the mobility of the Squadron, but also reflects the age of satellites and missiles in which we live. The parachute and red cross bundle are apparent in their indication of the medical supplies and survival equipment aerial delivery capabilities of our Squadron which also encompasses pararescue. The space capsule will be recognized by those familiar with space flight activities as a symbol of Air Rescue's participation in the "Mercury Program". It also symbolizes the ever-expanding capability of the Air Rescue Service in capsule recovery as well as pick-up and aid to the astronauts themselves when a manned flight is involved. The inscription on the top banner is the name "301ST AIR RESCUE SQDN." On the bottom banner is the newly selected Squadron motto "GUARDIAN WINGS" which combines the significance of a guardian angel with the mission of the Rescue Squadron. Other significant features of the overall patch are: The utilization of the basic colors of the Air Force—ultramarine blue and golden yellow—so as to insure recognition as a unit of the United States Air Force. The use of the globe which indicates our affiliation with Air Rescue Service and MATS when called to active duty.

An Air Force Blue globe with axis slanted from viewer's upper left to lower right, gridlined white, on the globe above an encircling yellow band with black upper and lower borders, a white parachute with black shroud lines attached to a white package in perspective bearing a red cross. Below the encircling band to the viewer's right a white space capsule detailed Air Force Blue. Above the globe a blank white scroll edged yellow. Below the globe a white scroll edged yellow and inscribed "Guardian Wings" in Air Force Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The globe signifies world-wide mobility. It also indicates affiliation with Air Rescue Service and MATS when called to active duty. The yellow band with black borders is the symbol of the air rescue, which is used on all aircraft. It also reflects the age of satellites and missiles. The parachute and bundle of medical supplies are indicative of aerial delivery of survival equipment. The space capsule symbolizes the Air Rescue's participation in the Mercury Program. It also represents the ever expanding capabilities of the Air Rescue Service in capsule recovery as well as pick-up and aid to the astronauts when a manned flight is involved.



301 Rescue Squadron emblem: On a disc as a globe Azure, axis bendwise gridlined Argent (Sliver Gray), an orbicular band arched reversed to sinister base Or, between in chief a White box arraswise charged with a cross coupé Gules, pendant from a White deployed parachute and in base a space capsule palewise, nose upward of the like, detailed of the field, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "301 RESCUE SQ" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "GUARDIAN WINGS" in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** 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 globe signifies the Squadron's worldwide mobility. The band encircling the globe denotes the air rescue based on all aircraft. The parachute and box of medical supplies are indicative of aerial delivery of survival equipment. The space capsule symbolizes the unit's air rescue services in capsule recovery as well as pick-up and aid to the astronauts. (Approved, 2 Dec 1963)

## MOTTO

## OPERATIONS

Trained for combat search and rescue capability. Performed search and rescue (SAR) and medical evacuation missions primarily over land areas of and water areas off Florida.

The peacetime mission of the 301st ARRS is to train personnel with equipment to: 1) achieve and sustain a combat rescue capability; 2) to maintain and provide a worldwide capability to search for, locate and recover aerospace personnel in response to USAF and DOD activities; 3) provide air support of manned space flight operations and aerospace hardware recovery as directed; 4) within capability and without interference with primary mission, support the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and foreign governments when directed; and 5) provide humanitarian and disaster relief operations in accordance with written agreements as directed. The unit is composed of 123 personnel, of whom 46 are fulltime Air Reserve Technicians (ARTs) and 13 of whom are fulltime civilian employees. The ART element provides the permanent party support essential to planning and directing the training, administration and mobilization of all resources into an operationally combat ready squadron capable of fulfilling its assigned mission. EQUIPMENT: The 301st ARRS employs three HH-3E Jolly Green Giant and six HH-1H Huey helicopters to accomplish its mission.

Between 1979 and 1997, had helicopter air refueling capability. Provided rescue coverage for space shuttle launches, 1981-, and launch support at the Eastern Test Range, 1993-. Deployed crews to provide SAR coverage worldwide, including to Keflavik, Iceland, during and after the Gulf War, and to the Gulf War area, 1993-.

Beginning in 1956 the Air Force Reserve flying unit program expanded to include air rescue squadrons equipped with the fixed-wing SA-16 aircraft. The Continental Air Command activated the first three squadrons in August and October 1956 at Miami, Long Beach, and Williams AFB, Arizona. The fourth squadron was organized at Portland IAP, Oregon, in November 1957 and the last, at Selfridge AFB, Michigan, in February 1958. The 301 Air Rescue Squadron at Miami conducted the first reserve rescue in January 1957, recovering three airmen from the sea when two B-47s collided off the coast of Cuba.

The 452d Air Refueling Wing assumed tanker alert duties, providing one alert crew and aircraft to the active force at March AFB on October 1, 1977, one year after its conversion. The wing's second unit, the 940th Air Refueling Second only to airlift, air rescue was the oldest of the Air Force Reserve's missions. In July 1972, the 303d and 305th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadrons converted from HC-97s to HC-130Hs at March AFB, California, and Selfridge Air National Guard Base (ANGB), Michigan. In June and July 1971, the 301 and 304th converted to the HH-34J helicopter, and in July 1974 the 301 added HH-SEs.

1 Aug 1956 Three Air Force Reserve (AFRES) squadrons (the 301, 302d, and 303d) were activated, ARS was designated the intermediate gaining command for the three squadrons.

20 Oct-21 Nov 1962 ARS participated in the Cuban Crisis by deploying HH-43, HC-54, and HU-16 aircraft to various bases in Florida. During the one month period ARS forces flew 935 hours in support of United States contingency operations in the Caribbean area. These resources were from the Eastern, Central, and Western ARCs and the 54th, 55th, 41st, and 48th AR Squadrons. Reserve forces from the 301 AR Squadron also participated.

In 1970 a HU-16B of the 301 ARRS, accompanied by another Albatross, crashed into the Atlantic Ocean and sank three miles west of Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico. The aircraft went prematurely airborne on a practice takeoff and settled back onto the water when a huge swell heaved the plane back into the air. That sheared off the right float and caused the left engine mounts to fail. The crippled Albatross rolled to the right and nosed into the water. Within 15 minutes the reigning sea claimed its quarry and all six crewmembers were rescued by the second Albatross.

Albatrosses served with five U.S. Air Force Reserve units which were dispersed throughout the country. Those Air Rescue Squadrons (redesignated Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadrons in the mid 1960s) operated SA-16As and HU-16Bs from their inception. They were the 301 at Homestead AFB Florida; 302nd at Long Beach Municipal Airport California (relocated to Luke AFB, Arizona); 303rd at March AFB, California; 304th at Portland International Airport Oregon; and the 305th at Selfridge ANG Base Michigan.

When the Dominican Republic crisis flared up in 1965, Albatrosses of the 301 ARRS flew nearly 130 hours evacuating Americans from the beleaguered island. The unit converted to a composite squadron in 1971 when it added HH-34 helicopters to its inventory. By 1973 all the 301 HU-16s had been replaced by the HH-34. In Fall 1966 the 302nd received the last three HU-16Bs to serve in the Pacific from the 33rd ARRS at Okinawa. The 302nd, 303rd, and 304th retired their Albatrosses in 1971. The 303rd and 305th replaced theirs with HC-97s in 1966 which, though incapable of water landings, were faster, able to carry more equipment, and stay on station longer. For its finale as an Air Force Reserve rescue aircraft, a HU-16B of the 304th ARRS was instrumental in saving the life of an injured seaman aboard a vessel 600 miles off the Oregon coast. Three PJs jumped from the Albatross into the ocean and were taken aboard the PECHENGA. This was the first paratroop ever made in Pacific Northwest waters. The last Air Force Albatross (S/N 51-5282), a Reserve aircraft, was retired to the Air Force Museum, but not before it completed a world record altitude flight on July 4, 1973, in the hands of a 301 ARRS crew.



**SIMULATED RESCUE** — An Air Force Reserve HU-16 Albatross aircraft of the 301 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Homestead AFB, Fla., prepares to pick up two "downed" airmen in a simulated rescue on Biscayne Bay near Miami. The last AFRES HU-16, assigned to the 301, set an international altitude record of 30,700 feet on July 4, 1973. The Albatross is now on display at the Air Force Museum, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

On July 4, 1973, the last Air Force Albatross, S/N 51-5282 of the 301 ARRS, rolled down the runway at Homestead AFB, Florida, with Lt. Col. Charles Manning at the controls. Nicknamed "Chuck's Challenge" after the Colonel, the HU-16B was on its final mission, that of surpassing the existing altitude record for amphibians, set by an Albatross eleven years earlier. It accomplished the mission when it climbed to 30,700 feet, a record, like the others, that stands today. The Albatross landed off Watson Island in Biscayne Bay where it was taxied ashore and greeted by Grumman officials, among them Graver Loening, the original builder. A few days later, Number 5282, a veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars, was flown to the Air Force Museum at Wright Patterson AFB, Ohio, where it rests in a place of honor.

The AFRES HH-34Js were transitional aircraft, filling the gap left by the retirement of the Grumman HU-16 Albatross amphibian and the needs of the Vietnam War. The squadrons assigned them never carried complements of more than nine. The 301 ARRS didn't fly their first mission with one until more than two months after its receipt. At times they were forced to place aircraft in storage because there were no trained air or ground crews available to use

them. By the time parts procurement problems, training and personnel requirements had been sorted out, the HH-34Js were scheduled for replacement by HH-1Hs and HH-3Es, to begin in January 1974.

LT. Col. Barnard AFRES (Retired) (former 304th ARRS Commander) stated AFRES originally had targeted four of the five HU-16 units for conversion to the HH-34J. The 301, 302nd, 304th and 305th ARRS were all to have 8 UE each, and the number 32 filled that requirement. It is believed that 26 of the aircraft were removed from storage and the remaining 6 came from the Navy straight to NARF Pensacola for modification.

The 305th ARRS was removed from that plan, going instead to HC-97's, but the timing of that change did not alter the H-34's from being transferred to AFRES. LT. Col. Barnard AFRES (Retired) confirmed that a pilot school program did not exist and that the crews got all of their HH-34J training at home station. The lesser known fact that the 305th ARRS dropped out of the picture so early on, never receiving any HH-34J's, helps to explain why looking back at only 3 units was creating so much difficulty in identifying what the fleet size was and how it came to be.

It is believed that all 32 helicopters were modified to the HH-34J configuration and were accepted by the three AFRES Rescue Squadrons. This may explain why some of the helicopters were placed in storage due to the lack of trained air and/or ground crews to adequately utilize the additional assigned aircraft. Due to various reasons aircraft were transferred between units, therefore making it difficult to ID a tail number to a specific unit.

The 304th ARRS Commander and other senior members of the unit realized the transition from the HU-16 to the HH-34J was going to be a monumental task requiring a maximum effort on the part of each and every member of the unit. All the hard work came to fruition four months after the receipt of the last aircraft when the unit attained a C-3 combat readiness status. The conversion from fixed to rotary wing resulted in many problems at all level of command. Of special interest is the fact that the 304th ARRS was the first Air Force unit, active or reserve, to have flown this ex Navy ASW aircraft as an Air Force Air Rescue aircraft. With considerable pride they came to realize that while they were the second unit to take delivery of its initial knocked down depot modified HH-34J's they were the first to reassemble, test fly, report all 10 aircraft as operational, and achieve mission ready status of its 12 assigned aircrews.

Probably the major problem was the lack of specific information on the reliability of the HH-34J and requirements for its logistic support. To clarify some of the problem areas and acquire first-hand information of the reliability and capability of the system an exercise plan was developed.

Commanded by Lt. Col. James H. Barnard, this was to be a real cross country deployment mission as opposed to the months of dogged transition training. It was selected to both reward the unit personnel for their high intensity transition efforts and to visually present to Western

Air Force Reserve Region Headquarters at Hamilton AFB the units return to full operational status.

Upon contacting Hamilton Approach Control Lt. Col. Barnard who was the flight commander reported in as a flight of 8. The HH-34J was new to the Air Force and eight HH-34J's in formation was an uncommon sight at Hamilton, which gave rise to the photograph in the MAC Flyer. Arriving in trail formation, demonstration team style, all aircraft landed at the same time, taxied in trail formation and completed a team type shutdown by stopping all of their rotors in unison using the rotor brake system.

The 301st has supported emergency rescue operations during NASA's manned space flights since the first Mercury capsule launches in 1961. On Aug. 24, 1992, Hurricane Andrew destroyed Homestead Air Force Base, Fla., and the 301st became an official tenant on Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. in November of 1993. Under the Base Realignment and Closure Commission guidelines, the unit will return to Homestead AFB when new facilities are completed. During the 18 days following Hurricane Andrew in 1992, the 301st launched a massive rescue and relief effort throughout the devastated area. With assistance of 939th Wing personnel and other Reserve and active duty units, the squadron was credited with 137 lives saved.

The 301st was credited with 93 lives saved during a one day rescue operation, March 1993 when floods devastated a retirement community on a Florida west coast island. June through September 1993 and 1994, members of the 301st deployed in increments to Southwest Asia to assist active-duty forces stationed there.

On April 1, 1994, a new dimension was added to the 301 RQS's peacetime mission. The unit was given primary responsibility for surveillance of the Air Force's Eastern Test Range during all space shuttle and unmanned missile launches.

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USAF Unit Histories  
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#### Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.  
The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.  
Unit yearbook. *Homestead AFB, FL. 1964.*