

962 AIRBORNE AIR CONTROL SQUADRON



MISSION

The 962 Airborne Air Control Squadron provides the commander, U.S. Pacific Command, with a long-range airborne surveillance, detection, identification, and command and control platform for both local and deployed composite wing operations. It supports the commander's, North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD), commitment to defense of the Alaskan Region. It responds to worldwide taskings as directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

LINEAGE

862 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 14 Sep 1943

Activated, 1 Nov 1943

Redesignated 862 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 21 Feb 1944

Inactivated, 28 Aug 1945

962 Airborne Early Warning and Control Squadron constituted, 30 Mar 1955

Activated, 8 Jul 1955

Inactivated, 31 Dec 1969

Redesignated 962 Airborne Warning and Control Support Squadron, 31 Jul 1979

862 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy and 962 Airborne Warning and Control Support Squadron consolidated, Consolidated squadron redesignated 962 Airborne Warning and Control Squadron, 19 Sep 1985

Activated, 1 Jul 1986

Redesignated 962 Airborne Air Control Squadron, 1 Aug 1994

STATIONS

McCook AAFld, NE, 1 Nov 1943–1 Jan 1944
Elveden Hall, England, 1 Jan 1944
Debach, England, 17 Apr 1944
Wormingford, England, 17 Feb 1945
Debach, England, 18 May–6 Aug 1945
Sioux Falls AAFld, SD, 13–28 Aug 1945
Otis AFB, MA, 8 Jul 1955–31 Dec 1969
Elmendorf AFB, AK, 1 Jul 1986

ASSIGNMENTS

493 Bombardment Group, 1 Nov 1943–28 Aug 1945
551 Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing, 8 Jul 1955–31 Dec 1969
28 Air Division, 1 Jul 1986
552 Operations Group, 29 May 1992
3 Operations Group, 1 May 1993

ATTACHMENTS

3 Air Division, 17 Feb–7 May 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24
B-17
P-51
RC-121
EC-121
C-121
E-3

COMMANDERS

Maj Pete C. Sianis, Nov 1943
LTC Vincent W. Masters, Mar 1945-unkn
Unkn, 8 Jul-31 Dec 1955
LTC Rollin R. Bullinger, by 1 Jan 1956
LTC James A. Harwell Jr., by 31 Dec 1957
LTC Timothy W. Donohue, by 30 Sep 1959
LTC Max Sansing, 12 Sep 1960
Maj Thomas L. Overton, by 30 Jun 1962
LTC James A. Geyer, 26 Feb 1963
Maj Paul S. Evans, by 30 Sep 1965
LTC Earl E. Putnam, by 31 Dec 1966
LTC Raymond H. Kehl, 9 Jun 1967 (temp), 7 Aug 1967 (permanent)-unkn
Unkn, 30 Sep 1967-31 Dec 1969
LTC Joseph C. Moynihan, 1 Jul 1986
LTC Thomas A. Toops, 13 Jul 1988

LTC Sammy S. Todd, 15 Aug 1990
LTC Richard C. Strom, 5 Aug 1992
LTC John C. Newsom, 15 Feb 1994
LTC William L. Carter, 8 Dec 1995
LTC William R. Macbeth, 5 Dec 1997
LTC James E. Eisenhart, 1 Jul 1999
LTC Christof P. Cordes, 15 Jun 2001
LTC Mark K. Nakanishi, 2 Jul 2002
LTC Roger A. Brown, 30 Jun 2004
LTC Russel K. Armstrong, 5 May 2006

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Jul 1957–31 Oct 1958
[1 Jul 1986]–31 Mar 1987
1 Apr 1987–31 Mar 1989
1 Dec 1989–1 Dec 1991
1 Apr–30 Sep 1992
1 Jan 1994–31 Dec 1995
1 Jan 1996–30 Sep 1998
1 Jan 2000–31 Dec 2001
1 Jan 2002–30 Sep 2003
1 Oct 2003–30 Sep 2005

EMBLEM



962nd Airborne Early Warning and Control Squadron approved, Feb 1957



962nd Airborne Warning and Control Squadron emblem approved, 6 Aug 1986



962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron emblem: Vert, an eagle volant and issuant from sinister chief Sable, tail and head Argent, feet and beak Or, and grasping in sinister talon a lightning flash bendwise sinister Yellow, all within a diminished border of the first. (Approved, 23 Oct 1995)

MOTTO

EYES OF THE EAGLE

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 6 Jun 1944–15 Feb 1945; weather reconnaissance in ETO, 17 Feb–7 May 1945. Airborne surveillance and combat control, 1955–1969 and 1986. Supported combat operations in Southwest Asia, Jan–Feb 1991.

The 962nd Airborne Early Warning and Control Squadron was first activated July 8, 1955, as a unit of the 551st Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing, with headquarters at Otis AFB, Mass. The squadron, equipped with various models of the propeller-driven C-121 Constellation aircraft, was a unit of the Air Defense Command.

The 962nd Airborne Early Warning and Control Squadron participated in numerous operations to test the capability and readiness of the early warning system in order to extend radar coverage seaward beyond that provided by land radars. The unit provided navigational and communications assistance to United States and allied aircraft crossing the Atlantic Ocean and to units operating near Cape Canaveral, Fla.

As an operational unit of the 551st Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing from 1955 to 1969, one of the 962's missions was to conduct search and rescue operations. One result of this role was the popularization of search operation patterns used while searching for a missing Navy aircraft in late February 1958.

The unit was inactivated Dec 31, 1969. Having been redesignated as the 962nd Airborne Warning and Control Squadron, the unit was reactivated July 8, 1986, at Elmendorf in support of the Alaskan NORAD Region. A tenant unit of the 21st Tactical Fighter Wing, the 962nd AWACS was assigned to the 552nd Air Control Wing, Tactical Air Command, with headquarters at Tinker AFB, Okla.

The mission of the 962nd AWACS was to provide the 11th Air Force/Alaskan NORAD Region commander with a survivable radar platform that can extend the surveillance coverage of the land-based radar system operated by the Regional Operational Control Center. This enables battle commanders to see a threat at previously undetectable ranges and to position fighters to intercept them before they approach U.S. airspace. Since 1986, the squadron assisted in the interception of 68 Soviet aircraft.

On Sept. 22, 1995, the squadron suffered the worst single accident in the Air Force's longest-serving wing. Yukla 27 rolled for takeoff at 0746 Alaska Standard Time (AST) remaining airborne only 42 seconds due to a massive birdstrike resulting in catastrophic damage.

Today, squadron aircrews take part in exercises such as Red Flag-Alaska, Northern Edge, Red Flag-Nellis, Sentry Aloha, Cope Thaw and Cope Tiger

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On 1 Jul 1986 the 962nd Airborne Warning and Control System Squadron (AWACS) activated at Elmendorf AFB to operate two E-3 Sentry aircraft on rotational duty to Alaska. The modern radar system, the F-T5s and the E-3 resulted in a greater capability to protect the air sovereignty of North America. The number of Soviet aircraft intercepts increased dramatically from an average of ten a year during the first half of the 1980s to a record of 31 in 1987. With the end of the Cold War, the trend reversed completely. By 1994, the 962d mission was mostly mobility and contingency oriented.

In October 1992, the squadron was redesignated to the 3rd Wing, Elmendorf AFB, under Pacific Air Forces, and acquired the additional mission of being ready to deploy in support of CINCPACOM. In August 1994, the 962 AWACS was redesignated the 962nd Airborne Air Control Squadron (962 AACCS).

On 22 September 1995, the squadron suffered the worst single accident in the Air force's longest-serving wing. Yukla 27 rolled for takeoff at 0746 Alaska Standard Time (AST) remaining airborne only 42 seconds due to a massive birdstrike which resulted in catastrophic damage.

Air Force 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.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit history. *A Brief History of the 3 Wing*. 673 Air Base Wing History Office. Elmendorf AFB, AK. 2012.