

12 AIRBORNE COMMAND AND CONTROL SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

523 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 13 Oct 1942
Activated, 18 Oct 1942
Redesignated 2 Antisubmarine Squadron (Heavy), 23 Nov 1942
Disbanded, 29 Jan 1944

327 Ferrying Squadron constituted, 12 May 1944
Activated, 31 May 1944
Inactivated, 5 Oct 1945
Disbanded, 8 Oct 1948

12 Air Commando Squadron (Defoliation) constituted and activated, 26 Aug 1966
Organized, 15 Oct 1966
Redesignated 12 Special Operations Squadron, 1 Aug 1968
Inactivated, 30 Sep 1970)

2 Antisubmarine Squadron (Heavy), 327 Ferrying Squadron, 12 Special Operations Squadron consolidated and redesignated 12 Airborne Command and Control Squadron, 19 Sep 1985

Activated, 29 Jan 1996
Allotted to the Air National Guard, 1 Oct 2002
Relieved from allotment to the Air National Guard and assigned to Air Combat Command, 1 Oct 2011

STATIONS

Langley Field, VA, 18 Oct-26 Dec 1942

St Eval, England, 2 Jan 1943

Craw Field, Port Lyautey, French Morocco, 11 Mar-25 Nov 1943 (air echelon operated from Agadir, French Morocco, Jul 1943)

Clovis AAFld, NM, 4-29 Jan 1944

Capodichino AB, Naples, Italy, 31 May 1944-5 Oct 1945

Tan Son Nhut AB, South Vietnam, 15 Oct 1966

Bien Hoa AB, South Vietnam, 1 Dec 1966

Phan Rang AB, South Vietnam, 10 Jul-30 Sep 1970

Robins AFB, GA, 29 Jan 1996-1 Oct 2002

Robins AFB, GA, 1 Oct 2011

ASSIGNMENTS

378 Bombardment Group, 18 Oct 1942

25 Antisubmarine Wing, 14 Dec 1942

480 Antisubmarine Group, 21 Jun 1943-29 Jan 1944

Mediterranean Air Transport Service, 31 May 1944

XII Air Force Service Command, 15 Sep-5 Oct 1945

Pacific Air Forces, 26 Aug 1966

315 Air Commando (later, 315 Special Operations; 315 Tactical Airlift) Wing, 15 Oct 1966-30 Sep 1970

93 Operations Group, 29 Jan 1996

93 Operations Group, 29 Jan 1996-1 Oct 2002

461 Operations Group, 1 Oct 2011

ATTACHMENTS

VIII Bomber Command, 2-15 Jan 1942

1 Antisubmarine Group [Provisional], 15 Jan-1 Mar 1943

2037 Antisubmarine Wing [Provisional], 1 Mar-21 Jun 1943

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1942

B-18, 1942

B-34, 1942

B-24, 1942-1944

P-40, 1944

C-47, 1944-1945

C-46, 1945

C-123, 1966-1970

E-8, 1996

COMMANDERS

None (unmanned), 18 Oct-14 Nov 1942
Maj Wilkie A. Rambo, 15 Nov 1942
Maj Isaac J. Haviland, 15 Jan 1943
Maj Lawrence E. Jarnagin, 1 Jun 1943
Maj Gerald L. Mosier, 26 Sep 1943-Nov 1943)
Maj James E. Scoggins Jr., 31 May 1944
Maj Rolland C. Swanson, 15 Jan 1945
Maj Willard E. Karschnick, 9 May 1945
Capt John E. Fernsler, 9 Sep-5 Oct 1945
Lt Col Robert Dennis, 15 Oct 1966
Lt Col Donald S. Stewart, 21 Jul 1967
Lt Col Arthur F. McConnell Jr., 8 Jun 1968
Lt Col Rex K. Stoner Jr., 20 Dec 1968
Lt Col Joseph M. Cesario, 8 Sep 1969 (temporary)
Lt Col Warner P. Fisher, 30 Sep 1969
Lt Col Keith W. West, 12 Jan 1970
Lt Col Ben V. Walker, 1 Apr-31 Jul 1970
None (unmanned), 1 Aug 30 Sep 1970
Maj Mark S. Giannini (acting), 29 Jan 1996
Lt Col Charles J. Freniere, 27 Jun 1996
Lt Col Gordon B. McKay, 8 Jan 1998
Lt Col Jeffrey M. Hall, 18 Oct 1999
Lt Col Thomas Wozniak, 20 Nov 2000
Unkn, Jan 2002
Maj James T. McElhone

HONORS

Service Streamers

Global War on Terrorism-Service (GWOT-S)

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Rome-Arno

Po Valley

Air Offensive, Europe

Rhineland

Antisubmarine, EAME Theater

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Vietnam

Vietnam Air Offensive

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II

Vietnam Air/Ground

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
Tet 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer-Fall, 1969
Vietnam Winter-Spring, 1969-1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon

Kosovo
Kosovo Air

Global War on Terrorism
GWOT-E

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
European Theater of Operations and North Africa, [16 Jan]-28 Oct 1943

Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia)
[15 Oct] 1966-30 Jun 1967
21 Jan-12 May 1968
15 May 1968-15 Apr 1969
1 Apr-30 Jun 1970

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device
15 Oct 1966-30 Apr 1967

Meritorious Unit Awards
1 Oct 2010-31 Mar 2012
1 Apr 2012-31 May 2013
1 Jun 2014-31 May 2015
1 Jun 2015-31 May 2016
1 Jun 2016-31 May 2017
1 Jun 2018-31 May 2019

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
31 Aug 2004-31 May 2006
1 Jun 2013- 31 May 2014

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
15 Oct 1966-31 Jul 1970

EMBLEM



2 Antisubmarine Squadron (Heavy)



327 Ferrying Squadron



12 Airborne Command and Control Squadron emblem approved, 12 Apr 2000

MOTTO

PRIMUS CUM MAXIMIS--First with the Most

OPERATIONS

Antisubmarine patrols around England (Jan to Mar 1943) and French Morocco (Mar-Nov 1943); flew cargo, passengers, and mail to destinations within Italy and to Sardinia, Corsica, north Africa, and southern France, Jun 1944-Sep 1945.

Sprayed defoliant herbicides and pesticides in Vietnam, 1966-1970, in addition to flying special missions, such as

Herbicide operations by the 12 SOS UC-123K aircraft at Bien Hoa ceased on 14 May 1970 by direction of the Secretary of Defense. Stocks of herbicide were exhausted, and restrictions on the use of herbicide Orange prevented further operations. Herbicide White operations were later resumed.

Activated in Jan 1996 to fly E-8 for air control and target attack radar system.

On 29 August 2000, at 11:33 a.m. Eastern Standard Time, an E-8C aircraft, S/N 96-0043, sustained \$3,788,079.59 worth of damage to its Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) some 42 nautical miles from Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina. The E-8C, assigned to the 93d Air Control Wing, Robins Air Force Base was flying a training mission in which students were being trained in how to operate JSTARS. The pilots were assigned to the 12th Air Command and Control Squadron (ACCS), and the remaining crew personnel were assigned to either the 12 ACCS or the 93d Training Squadron. Neither the pilots nor anyone else on board the aircraft was injured in the mishap. There were no civilian injuries or property damage. There is clear and convincing evidence that inadequate hydraulic servicing technical order guidance allowed an over-servicing (overfilling) condition to occur in the hydraulic system, which resulted in excess hydraulic fluid being forced into the radar wave-guide, causing damage to the radar system. During flight, excess hydraulic fluid in the hydraulic system went unnoticed, and that fluid was forced into the aircraft's bleed air system. This allowed hydraulic fluid to migrate into the radar's wave-guide and to heat up enough to melt the wave-guide. There is also substantial evidence that the hydraulic quantity gauge contributed to the mishap because it only indicates fluid levels up to 6.0 gallons. The maximum capacity of the utility hydraulic reservoir exceeds this level. Thus, the gauge does not inform ground or flight personnel of an over-serviced condition.

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. (AFNS) – 2023 After 27 years of decorated and dedicated service, the 12th Airborne Command and Control Squadron flew its last operational flight as KOMODO 1 at Robins Air Force Base, July 12. For nearly three decades, the 12th ACCS has been flying missions across the country and the world on the E-8C Joint Surveillance Targeting and Attack Radar System aircraft. The 12th ACCS is the last JSTARS squadron to take flight as part of the 461st Air Control Wing. With the Air Force decision to divest and retire the aircraft, this flight is another signal that the JSTARS is in its twilight months.

KOMODO 1, members of the 12th ACCS and total force maintainers from the 116th Air Control Wing and 461st Maintenance Group, take pride in carrying out and supporting each sortie. While there was an emphasis on treating this final mission as any other flight, the members also recognized they played a role in the final chapter of the decorated history of the

squadron and the greater JSTARS enterprise.

“In the midst of all the changes inside of the 461st Air Control Wing, our Airmen could have easily let that distract them and forget about addressing concerns or helping one another—that has not been the case,” he said. “Our Airmen have done a remarkable job taking care of each other and that’s what I’m most proud of.” In his 27-year career, Thompson has spent a significant amount of time as a member of the 12th ACCS. He was the chief of weapons and tactics from December 2011 to June 2013, and served as the commander since March 2022. While he is always quick to put his Airmen first, he took time to reflect on his role in the JSTARS community and 12th ACCS history.

“For my final stint in the 12th, to be serving as the commander is the absolute highlight of my 27-year Air Force career,” he said. “The men and women of this squadron have done some amazing things, and I’m just so happy to be a part of such an outstanding organization,” he said. Lt. Col. Nathan Anderson, 12th ACCS director of operations, agreed. “The jobs our Airmen do is nothing short of miraculous,” Anderson said. “It takes a special kind of team to keep these old airplanes not only flying, but relevant in an ever-changing battlespace. Even more surprising, however, is the demand for what we provide.”

Anderson added, “It will be a sad day to close the doors one final time, but seeing our Airmen off to their new assignments with a smile on their faces reminds me that the 12th ACCS legacy will live on with lessons learned spread to every corner of the Air Force. The command and control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance career field can be a thankless one at times. Success is often determined not by headlines that make the papers, but rather by the events that never come to fruition in the first place, thanks to the efforts which take place in the shadows. I’m proud to say the men and women of the 12th ACCS, and indeed the whole JSTARS enterprise, make a difference every day.”

Senior Master Sgt. Dustin Chapman, 461st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron senior enlisted leader, expressed his gratitude for JSTARS maintainers. “We’re continually impressed by the remarkable work our maintainers accomplish to uphold the strength and readiness of our JSTARS fleet,” Chapman said. “It is their tireless efforts behind the scenes that allow our aircrew to soar through the skies with confidence and protect our homeland. Their expertise, attention to detail and technical prowess contribute significantly to the safety and operational effectiveness of our wing.”

While the 12th ACCS has called Robins AFB home for the last 27 years, it traces its history to 1942 during World War II as the 2nd Antisubmarine Squadron and, later, during the Vietnam War as the 12th Special Operations Squadron. It would not be until January 29, 1996, that the 12th ACCS was reactivated. A few months after activation, the 12th ACCS supported the transition of forces from Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR to Operation JOINT GUARD (Bosnia) from October 1996 to January 1997. Then, the squadron was called to support Operation ALLIED FORCE (Kosovo) in 1999. After the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., on September 11, 2001, the 12th ACCS proceeded to have crews continuously deployed in support of the various operations within the Global War on Terror within the United States Central Command’s area of responsibility.

The squadron has also flown countless homeland defense missions in support of United States Southern Command and Northern Command, in addition to deploying in support of the Combatant Commanders’ objectives in United States European Command and United States

Indo-Pacific Command. In recognition of their service, the 12th ACCS has earned six Meritorious Unit Awards, six Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards and one Air and Space Outstanding Unit Award. Across the globe, the 12th ACCS flew 4,463 deployed sorties, totaling 44,517.9 hours, averaging nearly 10 hours per sortie.

Yet, for its final logged hours at home station, the flight was like any other 12th ACCS sortie: well-prepared, well-rehearsed and exceedingly well-performed, while ensuring safe and disciplined execution of the mission. When KOMODO 1 landed at Robins AFB for the last time, the sun officially set on 12th ACCS' mission operations. The legacy of the squadron and the JSTARS are cemented into historic lore but paved the way for the bright future of Robins AFB as the starting point of Battle Management transformation within the United States Air Force.



Airmen from the 12th Airborne Command and Control Squadron exit an E-8C Joint STARS after its last active-duty mission flight at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, July 12, 2023.



U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Omar DeHaza, crew chief with the 461st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, marshals an E-8C Joint STARS during its last active-duty mission flight at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, July 12, 2023.



U.S. Air Force Capt. John Lee, left, and Capt. Demetrios Kostakis, 12th Airborne Command and Control Squadron pilots, pause to have their photo taken in an E-8C Joint STARS during its last active-duty mission flight at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, July 12, 2023.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 5 Sep 2010

Updated: 19 Nov 2023

Sources

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