

154 TACTICAL CONTROL FLIGHT

MISSION

LINEAGE

154 Tactical Control Flight
Inactivated @1986/87

STATIONS

Peterson AFB, CO, 1 Apr 1976

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

1 Apr 1976 154th TACC deactivated, 154th Tactical Control Flight (TCP) activated at Peterson AFB in Colorado Springs.

Long anticipating a major reorganization, the 154th TCG began plans in the mid-1970s for the creation of a new radar unit. By the spring of 1976, plans were well under way to locate the new 154th TCF, a forward air control post (FACP), on Peterson Field in Colorado Springs and to draw personnel from the 154th Tactical Air Control Center (TACC), which was deactivated, and the 138th Tactical Control Flight (TCF). In April 1976 the organization completed its first unit training assembly and received a successful federal recognition inspection.

The early years were not without some measure of inconvenience and growing pains. Their first home, Building 1602 on Peterson Field, was quickly condemned as unfit after part of the roof caved in under heavy rain. In May 1976, the unit received the AN/TSQ 61 van, a mobile van used in conjunction with the radar van to increase the unit's number of control scopes by two. Other essential equipment trickled in one piece at a time for well over a year. The unit saw four commanding officers before a federal airspace letter of agreement was finalized in 1978.

Despite the limitations, the 154th TCF began mobile-radar control training with August 1976's "Stinger" exercise. Using mostly borrowed equipment and mission-qualified personnel from other units, the flight successfully completed its first deployment under field conditions. Only three months later, the flight deployed to Fort Carson for convoy training, life-support instruction and valuable lessons in winter-survival techniques. From January to February 1977, several individuals deployed to Holloman AFB, N.M.; the unit thus successfully completed three deployments in its first year in the tactical air control system (TACS). In December 1977, Maj. Roy C. Chase assumed command of the flight, shortly after the unit received a "satisfactory" management effectiveness inspection.

In July 1978, the unit deployed with a micro-mini package to Salina, Kan., in support of a "Hot Wheels" exercise. The flight's first major exercise JCS exercise "Brave Shield" occurred in August 1978 at a bare-base deployment location near Pueblo, Colo. A second JCS exercise, "Bold Eagle '80," took place in late 1979 at Eglin AFB, Fla. the flight's first deployment by air. The flight received an ORI "satisfactory" rating in December 1979.

The AN/TPS 43E, a lightweight, mobile radar and antenna system that can be moved by a crew of five in about two-and one-half hours, was received in January 1980. The system has two built-in, ultra-high frequency radios (ARC-164) for ground to-air communication and high-frequency radio (618T) for long- range ground-to-ground, or ground-to-air communication. Identification-friend-or-foe (IFF) and a selective-identification feature (SIF) is built into the system to help identify aircraft during war and peace time operations.

The mission of a TACS forward air control post is to provide a mobile-radar, manual-control

facility which could be deployed into forward areas in the initial move of an assault operation. At the same time, unit personnel were prepared to defend themselves and their equipment in order to sustain operations as directed.

Maj. Joseph N. Ortiz assumed command in April 1980, and led the flight on its first international JCS exercise, "Black Hawk IV," in February 1981. Approximately 60 members of the 154th TCF were mobilized for the two-week exercise in Panama. As a result of their excellent exercise record, the flight was selected to deploy to McConnell AFB, Kan., in January 1982 in support of the 84th TFW and the Nellis AFB "Aggressors" in a Red Flag exercise.

Marking a year of transition for the flight, Capt. Gary Fuller was sworn in as commander in April 1982 and the unit designator changed on July 1 to the 139th TCF. In December, the unit's call sign was changed to "Andromeda," symbolic of the 139th's "boundless quest for excellence." This degree of excellence was acknowledged in December 1982 during a HQ TAC management effectiveness inspection and again in March 1983 by the 154TCG standardization/evaluation team inspection.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.