

298th AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL FLIGHT

MISSION

The mission of the 298 ATCF was to provide terminal air traffic control services for tactical air forces and support U. S. Air Force wartime and emergency requirements and to provide these services to the state of Hawaii in support of civil authorities. To accomplish this mission, the flight was assigned 72 military members.

The 298 ATCF maintained throughout its operation a posture of readiness to provide timely support to any worldwide contingency. The unit constantly exercised its personnel and equipment to ensure that both had the ability to respond and perform. Training took place on Kauai as well as various deployment locations throughout the state and world, including Team Spirit exercises held in the Republic of South Korea, Cobra Gold in the Republic of Thailand and Sentry Vigilance in Alpena, Michigan and Volk, Wisconsin.

The 298 ATCF accomplished its mission utilizing several equipment packages. The major ones were the Ground Control Approach Radar (MPN-14), the Mobile Control Tower (TSW-7) and the Tactical Air Navigation System (TRN-26).

LINEAGE

298th Air Traffic Control Flight

STATIONS

Kekaha, HI

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

LTC Roy C. Smith, 22 Dec 1987-inactivation

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

298th Air Traffic Control Flight (298 ATCF) was located at Pacific Missile Range Facility Barking Sands, Kauai. In 1975, the unit relocated from Hickam AFB, Hawaii and initially garrisoned at the Kekaha National Guard Armory on the island of Kauai and moved to Barking Sands in 1979. Federally recognized unit in March 1, 1976 and deactivated April 1, 1996, the flight was a subordinate unit of the 201st Combat Communications Group headquartered at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

The unit admirably performed its state mission to protect life and property in the event of a natural or human disaster. In September 1992, Hurricane Iniki struck the island of Kauai, knocking out all electricity and leaving property damage exceeding millions in dollars. The 298 ATCF provided generators for electrical power to run pumps used to furnish essential water to the devastated island; one to and communication sites. In addition, the unit provided IFR approach control services 24 hours a day at Barking Sands airfield with its Tactical Air Navigation System and mobile radar. The 298 ATCF also staged its mobile tower (TSW-7) at Lihue as a backup to the damaged FAA tower. Unit members assisted in installing plastic on damaged roofs, distributed food and water, helped in the island clean up, and acted as a focal point for community leaders on the west side of the island. Due to the diligent effort of the air traffic control flight, initial relief support was able to get through to the citizens of Kauai. Numerous awards and citations were presented to the unit and its members for outstanding contributions during and after the hurricane. When Hurricane Andrew destroyed Homestead AFB, FL., the air defense alert mission shifted to NAS Key West. Since the US Navy operated their air traffic control facilities for only 16 hours a day, their manning did not support round the clock alert mission. The Air National Guard stepped in and provided air traffic controllers to augment the Navy's controller force. Two controllers who answered the call to duty came from the 298th ATCF. Following the heels of Team Spirit 93 in the Republic of Korea, this unit sent a member to Cobra Gold 93, a Joint Chiefs of Staff exercise in the Republic of Thailand. Upon request from HQ PACAF, four ATC radar technicians from the 297 and 298 ATCFs manned MPN-14K radar operations at Kunsan, AB, Korea in May 1994. March through September of 1994, Sentry Vigilance an exercise testing the operational readiness of flying units, was sustained by five personnel from the 298 ATCF at the Combat Readiness Training center at Volk Field, WI. and Philips-Colins MI. In October 1994, the 298 ATCF supported Operation Steady State (formerly known as Support Justice IV), a federal drug enforcement program. Men and women

of the 298 ATCF supported the 242 ATCF from Spokane, WA. during Falcon Ace 95, a 12 day mobility and ATC maintenance and operations training exercise.

The 298 ATCF provided valuable support and equipment loans allowing the 242 ATCF to practice its real world mission.

The flight received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the period January 1, 1993 to July 31, 1994.

The 298th Air Traffic Control Flight on Kauai was deactivated effective April 1996. Most members of the unit were provided full-time and traditional guard positions with the 154 ACS and 150 ACWS.

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.