

361 EXPEDITIONARY RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

361 Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron constituted and activated, 8 Apr 1966

Inactivated, 30 Jun 1974

Redesignated 361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron

Activated

Inactivated, 1 Sep 2014

STATIONS

Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam, 8 Apr 1966

Phu Cat AB, Vietnam, 31 Aug 1971

Nakhon Phanom RTAB, Thailand, 1 Sep 1972-30 Jun 1974

Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, 20 May 2010-1 Sep 2014

ASSIGNMENTS

460 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 8 Apr 1966-31 Aug 1971

6259 Air Base Squadron, 31 Aug 1971

56 Special Operations Wing, 1 Sep 1972-30 Jun 1974

407 Air Expeditionary Group,

451 Air Expeditionary Group, 20 May 2010-1 Sep 2014

WEAPON SYSTEMS

EC-47

MC-12

COMMANDERS

LTC Paul Davis, 12 May 1967

LTC Ralph L. Stapper, 24 Jul 1967

LTC Bruce E. Hunt, 12 Sep 1967
LTC Henry R. Briarton, 18 Jun 1968
LTC Kennedy, Jul 1969
LTC James R. Goad, Nov 1969-
LTC Oliver H. Tallman, Jul 1970-Jul 1971
LTC Perry E. Kemerer
LTC James White
LTC Harry Moore
LTC Charles E. Norby, Apr 1973
LTC Charles D. Gragg, Mar 1974-30 June 1974



LTC Ralph L. Stapper (USAF photo)



LTC Paul Davis (USAF photo)



LTC Bruce E. Hunt (USAF photo)

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Presidential Unit Citation

1 Sep 1967-10 Jul 1968

11 Jul 1968-31 Aug 1969
1 Feb 1971-31 Mar 1971

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor
15 April 1966-31 May 1967
1 Jul 1969-30 Jun 1970
1 Jul 1970-30 Jun 1971
1 Sep 1971-31 Dec 1971
23 Feb 1973-28 Feb 1974

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
15 Mar 1967-1 Sep 1972

EMBLEM



361 Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron emblem: according to Vietnamese legend, the first king of Viet Nam was protected from his enemies by a golden tortoise which gave him the power of invisibility. With the desire to acquire these powers for the mission and with the hope to be able to make the invisible more visible, the squadron has made the golden turtle the emblem of the 361 Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron.

361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron emblem: On a disc Argent (Silver Gray), a stylized raven Volant Sable, eyed and legged Or, talons of the second, highlighted and beaked Argent, grasping in both claws a snake bowed and encircled Vert, eyed and armed of the second, all within a narrow border Blue. Attached above the disc, a Gray scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "FIND FIX FINISH" in Blue letters. Attached below the disc, a Gray scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "361 EXP RECONNAISSANCE SQ" in Blue 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 conquering raven represents the vigilance of the Squadron as it provides over watch over the battlefield, poised to capture the adversary. The serpent

signifies the sinister nature of the Nation's adversaries.

MOTTO

FIND FIX FINISH

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 361 Reconnaissance Squadron was activated at Nha Trang Air Base on 8 Apr 1966. The first squadron commander, LTC Ralph L. Stapper, arrived from the United States to assume command on 24 Jul 1966. In August 1966, Detachment One of the 361 was activated at Pleiku Air Base in the Central Highlands with LTC Jack A. Crook as commander. The Detachment received their first airplane on 8 Sep 1966, almost a month before the arrival of the first airplanes at Nha Trang.

Once begun, the buildup at Nha Trang was more rapid with aerial operations reaching sixty percent of current capability by the end of 1966, while the Detachment's first mission was flown from Pleiku on 15 Dec 1966. Detachment One became our sister squadron, the 362, on 31 Jan 1967. In both cases, the rapid development of operational capability required herculean efforts and much self-help construction. Then, as now, hard-working, dedicated people made the difference in making the 361 an effective combat squadron.

The mission of the 361 has always been, to paraphrase the remark of a famous general, "to fly and help fight, and don't you ever forget it!" In spite of early problems such as pilots attempting to control the venerable "Gooneybird" while wearing survival "chaps" and a requirement to perform compass swings at Tan Son Nhut, the mission was performed superlatively—thanks to skill, cunning and dogged perseverance.

The Nha Trang environment contributed greatly to the ever-high morale of the squadron. For example, the official squadron history reports: "On 27 November a squadron party was held at a nearby beach. Steaks, liquid refreshment and involuntary swimming were featured." On the other hand, the shortage of billeting space for airmen was a continuing problem. The squadron has had three commanders during its history. LTC P. A. Davis relieved the original commander on 12 May 1967 and LTC Bruce E. Hunt assumed command on 12 September 1967. Each of these officers have since been promoted to the grade of colonel. Colonel Henry R. Briarton assumes command of the squadron in late June 1968.

Early in 1967 the squadron was redesignated the 361 Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron. Throughout its history it has been a component squadron of the 460 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing presently commanded by Brigadier General Robert J. Holbury.

In accomplishing its mission the 361 has continuously enjoyed outstanding support from the 14 Air Commando Wing, the 66th Tactical Wing, the 66 Tactical Wing (VNAF) and several other exceptionally fine organizations which will not be enumerated. The men of the 361 have played a major role in base life at Nha Trang, consistently fielding fine athletic

teams and placed first in the 14th ACW Commander's Trophy competition for February 1968.

The 361 Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron has played a highly significant role in the Southeast Asian conflict, achieving its mission with gallantry and high spirits. Its contribution to the defense of the Republic of Viet Nam and the region have been remarkable.

Flew EC-47 aircraft equipped with electronic countermeasures equipment over South Vietnam. Reassigned to Thailand in 1972 as part of USAF draw-down in South Vietnam. Continued missions over Indochina until 15 August 1973 when United States military flights over Indochina halted by congressional mandate. Trained in Thailand until inactivation in 30 June 1974.

Personnel of the 361 recognized that it might be called upon to ferry the EC-47's out of Thailand to Clark AB for temporary storage. Without previous guidance or instruction, the squadron initiated overwater briefings for aircrews on 8 April and 29 May 1974. The first series covered such things as clearances, flight plans, weather, fuel computations, and the extensive updating of overwater navigation procedures. The second series included briefings on aircraft transfer and emergency procedures, search and rescue capabilities and administrative requirements. All aircrew training was accomplished for remaining aircrews, and the squadron began phasing down its crew force from six crews to three crews.

During the current quarter, the squadron flew ARDF missions over Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where enemy pressure continued to be placed on supply routes north and south of that city. Other areas also were sampled for enemy targets. On 10 May, the TEWS daily sortie rate was increased from five to seven sorties to cover suspected Communist activity in northeastern Thailand.

361 TEWS operations were finished on 15 May, and squadron efforts were directed toward planning the ferrying operation. Two weeks prior to the last operational mission, it was learned that the squadron would deactivate on 4 June 1974.

Project officers were designated to assure closeout operations were completed. On 18 May 1974, the wings Operating Location (OL-1) at Ubon was closed, and the EC-47 aircraft were returned to NKP pending their disposition. The first EC-47A declared excess to NKP's needs was flown to Clark AB by Major Robin Purdie on 10 May. A "Sawadee" or going away party was held on 1 June in honor of personnel who supported the TEWS mission and for departing squadron personnel.

At the earliest stages of the U.S. buildup in Vietnam, a system was needed to locate Viet Cong and North Vietnamese radio transmitters. Conventional ground-based Radio Direction Finding (RDF) methods proved difficult in attempting to locate low-powered enemy transmitters. The solution was Airborne Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) by Army and Air Force aircraft. The aircraft selected by the Air Force for its ARDF effort was the venerable C-47. Prior to being sent to Southeast Asia, the planes had to be equipped with a multitude of electronic components so as to fulfill their mission. Thus was born the EC-47.

In 1966 squadrons were formed at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, Nha Trang Air Base, and Pleiku Air Base to conduct EC-47 ARDF operations. The flight crews consisting of the pilots, co-pilots, navigators and flight mechanics were assigned to the 360, 361, and 362 Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadrons, respectively. The mission specialists, consisting of Morse Radio Intercept Operators (Ditty-Bops), linguists, communications analysts, and equipment repairmen were assigned to the 6994 Security Squadron and its detachments.

The ARDF area of operation was South Vietnam, Laos (one six miles from the coast of North Vietnam), and later Cambodia. The Air Force ARDF program quickly demonstrated the capability to provide rapid determination of enemy locations and movements. Data was immediately transmitted to the ground where it was used to direct troop movements, artillery fire, tactical air strikes, and B-52 missions.

On 9 March 1967 RC-47P serial number 43-49201 was flying a radio direction finding mission when it was shot down about 10 miles south of Duc Pho, Vietnam. Seven men - four aircrew, and three equipment operators - were killed in the crash:

361 Squadron, 460th Tactical Recon Wing

Major Leroy P. Bohrer, Arlington, VA

Major Ivel D. Freeman, Englewood, CO

Capt Roger P. Richardson, Great Falls, MT

SSgt Prentice F. Brenton, Spokane, WA

6994 Security Squadron

TSgt Raymond F. Leftwich, Fort Scott, KS

A1C Charles D. Land, Denver, CO

A1C Daniel C. Reese, Bluefield, VA

On 8 October, 1969, an EC-47P (tail number 43-49100), call sign Prong 33, was on a radio direction finding mission out of Phu Cat Air Base. After returning to base to have an inoperable navigational instrument fixed, the aircraft launched into marginal weather. Upon arrival in its operating area, the pilot in command determined that the weather conditions were unsafe and turned back toward Phu Cat. Prong 33 was given a radar-controlled approach to Phu Cat, but as the aircraft approached the airfield the crew reported an inverter fire and loss of directional and attitude instruments. Shortly after that call radio and radar contact with Prong 33 was lost. Bad weather hampered search and rescue operations and the wreckage was not located until four days later, 12 Oct 1969. Six aircrew men died in the crash:

- 1st Lt Ronald H. Knight, Strawberry Plains, TN - Pilot

- 1st Lt Max E. Rosen, Philadelphia, PA - Co-Pilot

- Capt Bradley R. Ransom, Barlow, KY - Navigator

- TSgt Sylvester W. Redman, Petersburg, WV - Flight Engineer

- 6994 Security Squadron

- SSgt Elmore L. Hall, Savannah, GA - Radio Operator

- Sgt Michael L. Stiglich, Troutville, VA - Radio Operator

On 22 Apr 1970, EC-47 aircraft, tail number 43-48402, call sign CAP 53, out of Pleiku, with eight crewmembers on board, was hit by anti-aircraft fire (presumably 37MM) while flying a combat mission in eastern Laos. The Navigator was wounded by shrapnel from the explosion. The Pilot turned the aircraft on an easterly heading toward friendlier territory, but control problems prevented his success. The aircraft crashed near A Loui Airfield in South Vietnam. The Pilot (1st Lt. George M. Wall) and one Radio Operator (Michael R. Conner) were killed in the crash. The remaining crewmembers, although wounded, survived the crash and were rescued by helicopter. In order to assure destruction of the classified equipment on board, an EOD team policed the area and destroyed scattered components and the aircraft. Additionally, six Tactical Air sorties were flown on the crash site to destroy the aircraft and any sensitive equipment still aboard the aircraft.

- 1st Lt. George M. Wall - Houston, MS - Pilot - killed
- 1st Lt. "Nasty" Nasipak - Co-pilot
- Capt. Carl Lemon - Navigator
- SSgt Edward J. Mosely - Flight Engineer
- 6994 Security Squadron
- SSgt Michael R. Conner - Knoxville, TN, Radio Operator- killed
- Sgt Phil Ehrhorn - Radio Operator
- Sgt Danny E. Russell - Radio Operator
- Sgt Ron Lawlor - Radio Operator

On 21 Nov 1972, the EC-47 aircraft, serial number 43-49771, call sign Baron 56, took off from its base at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai AFB, Thailand, on an Airborne Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) mission. Upon the return from its mission, Baron 56 was cleared for landing. According to statements from crewmembers, the touchdown was normal with perhaps a slight bounce, but the aircraft then began a gradual movement to the left, nearly departing the runway; the aircraft commander applied high power to the left engine and the aircraft then swerved sharply to the right, departing the right hand side of the runway approximately 1800 feet from the approach end at a 45 degree angle. Power was applied to go-around; the path of the aircraft went just to the right (north) of the 6000 feet remaining runway marker, crossed a ditch, and became airborne after the right main landing gear struck the west (far) side of the ditch embankment. After becoming airborne the aircraft cut a wire to the base perimeter lights and also contacted a tree along the west base perimeter. Apparently some damage was done to the Number One (left) propeller or engine since the third pilot, sitting in the flight engineer's seat noticed that the propeller disc was erratic instead of flat as it is normally. Also, other crewmembers thought the Number Two propeller or engine was not functioning properly, causing vibration, and noticeable slowing down. All crewmembers recall vibrating or knocking throughout the airframe at approximately this time; the aircraft was momentarily in a shallow left bank attempting to clear the trees and parallel the runway. Approximately three fourths of the way down the runway a shallow right turn was begun and the aircraft commander, who had noted a power loss of failure of the Number Two engine ordered the Number Two engine feathered. The aircraft was just above the trees at this point still in a shallow right turn. The navigator thinks he heard the co-pilot acknowledge the order to feather the Number Two engine.

The aircraft commander then initiated the emergency procedure for engine failure by stating "throttle - closed" and at approximately this time the third pilot states he saw the Number one propeller slow down and a blade pitch change occur. Also crewmembers agree that at this point no sound of engine power was heard from either engine. Shortly after this, at 1740L, the aircraft impacted the trees and crashed. The pilot, Capt. Robert A. Kohn, and communications analyst, MSgt. John W. Ryon, perished in the crash.

- Capt. Robert A. Kohn - Pilot - Killed
- 2nd Lt. Edgar H. Hirshouer III - Co-Pilot
- 1st Lt. Michael G. Danielle - Third Pilot
- LTC Howe L. Vandegriff - Navigator
- 6994th Security Squadron
- MSgt John W. Ryon - Stonington, CT - Communications Analyst - Killed
- SSgt Paul W. Weyandt - Radio Operator
- Sgt Thomas E. Way - Radio Operator
- Sgt Charles F. Fidroeff - Radio Operator
- Sgt Laurent A. Morin - Radio Operator
- Sgt Claude W. Pennell Jr. - Radio Operator

On February 5, 1973, about a week after the signing of the Paris Peace Agreement, an EC-47Q electronic warfare collection aircraft (tail number 43-48636), call sign Baron 52, was shot down over Saravane Province, Laos, about 50 miles east of the city of Saravane. The aircraft was on a radio-direction-finding mission, attempting to locate North Vietnamese tanks moving south on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The last radio call from Baron 52 indicated that he was taking anti-aircraft fire. A search and rescue effort was launched immediately after the aircraft failed to make a scheduled radio check. Wreckage of the aircraft was spotted by an aerial reconnaissance aircraft on 7 February 1973 and on 9 February 1973, a Search and Rescue team inspected the crash site and observed at least 4 bodies in the wreckage, but were only able to recover the partial remains of one individual before they had to withdraw due to a heavy presence of hostile forces in the area. Over the next couple weeks, Air Force officials concluded that based on the evidence they were able to obtain, that the crew had perished in the crash and declared them killed in action. In November 1992, the Joint Task Force for Full Accounting was able to conduct an archeological excavation of the Baron 52 crash site and recovered partial remains of several individuals. However, none of the remains could be positively identified with particular individuals of the crew. The Baron 52 crew was finally laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, in December 1995 in a communal grave in section 34, site number 4402. Baron 52 was the last EC-47 lost to enemy fire during the conflict.

The aircraft belonged to and was crewed by the 361 Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron, but the collection crew "back-enders" were from the 6994 Security Squadron:

- 361 Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron
- Capt. George R. Spitz, Kahaluu, HI - Pilot
- 2nd Lt Severo J. Primm III, New Orleans, LA - Co-Pilot
- Capt. Arthur R. Bollinger, Greenville, IL - Navigator
- 1st Lt Robert E. Bernhardt, Richmond, VA - 3rd Pilot

- 6994th Security Squadron
- SSgt Todd M. Melton, Milwaukee, WI - Radio Operator
- Sgt Joseph A. Matejov, East Meadow, NY - Radio Operator
- Sgt Peter R. Cressman, Wayne, NJ - Radio Operator
- Sgt Dale Brandenburg, Capitol Heights, MD - Systems Repair Technician

The 361 TEWS officially was inactivated on 30 June, 1974 following several months of uncertainty regarding its termination date. It had been programmed for phaseout no later than 4-7 June, but its deactivation was moved to June 30th. Since 1974 began, the squadron had been gradually phasing back its operations and curtailing aircrews and support personnel. On 27 March 1974, the squadron was notified that 361 TEWS operations would terminate 15 May 1974 when it flew its last seven missions.

Before it was inactivated, the 361 TEWS was the last organization of its kind in SEA. Its primary mission had been to conduct day and night Airborne Radio Direction Finding (ARDF) collection operations against enemy forces in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and in Thailand. The intelligence data gathered by the 361 TEWS was provided to requesting agencies as directed by USSAG which was located at NKP.

During the current quarter, the squadron flew ARDF missions over Phnom Penh, Cambodia, where enemy pressure continued to be placed on supply routes north and south of that city.

The squadron re-activated as the 361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron as part of the Global War on Terrorism in 2003. Assigned to the first the 407th Air Expeditionary Group, then later the 451st Air Expeditionary Group, the squadron operated a variety of Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance aircraft before the United States pullout from Iraq in 2011 and Afghanistan in 2014.

On 9 April 2008, at 1606 zulu, an MQ-IB Predator crashed at a forward operating location. The MQ-IB Predator Remotely Piloted Aircraft, serial number 06-3158, assigned to the 361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron, 432d Wing, Creech Air Force Base, Nevada, was flying in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. There were no reported injuries, fatalities, damage to private property, or media interest. The Mishap Remotely Piloted Aircraft (MRPA) was damaged beyond economic repair and the loss is valued at approximately \$5,000,000. All maintenance and preflight activities were normal. Roughly 14.5 hours after becoming successfully airborne, the mishap crew (MC), consisting of the mishap pilot (MP) and the mishap sensor operator, was the sixth shift to assume control of the MRPA after an uneventful changeover briefing. The MC was current and qualified to conduct the mission. Approximately 15.9 hours into the mission and not having displayed any abnormal fluctuations in flight characteristics, the MRPA experienced a blockage in the intake air circuit (decreased airflow) and departed straight and level flight. Despite power inputs by the MP, the engine was unresponsive and ran at idle speed due to a decrease in manifold air pressure (MAP) and engine rotations per minute (RPM). The MRPA's ability to draw vacuum was reduced as the engine speed decreased which reduced engine power and the ability of the MRPA to remain airborne. Directed by supervisory channels, the MP nosed

the MRPA towards the ground until it crashed. Remains from the wreckage revealed no information useful to the investigation. The Accident Investigation Board President determined by clear and convincing evidence, the cause of the mishap was a failure of the MQ-1B's engine throttle body assembly. This failure resulted in a restriction of airflow through the throttle body and caused the engine to fail.

Air Force officials on May 1 activated the 361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron, the third unit of MC-12W intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance aircraft now operating in Southwest Asia. "The MC-12 is a critical capability, fielded at a critical time," said LTC Darren Halford, the squadron's commander. He added, "Your actions will drastically improve joint and combined counterinsurgency capabilities, assist Afghanistan with defeating the insurgency, and ultimately save American and coalition lives." The 80-member squadron is part of Kandahar's 451st Air Expeditionary Wing. Like the MC-12s flown by the 362nd ERS at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, and the 4th ERS at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan, its aircraft will provide ground troops with live streaming video and signals intelligence. The unit's first MC-12 actually flew its first combat sortie 2010

The first MC-12W intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance aircraft that will operate from Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, as part of the 361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron arrived there March 29 and flew its first combat sortie three days later. The squadron, part of Kandahar's 451st Air Expeditionary Wing, will be the second MC-12 expeditionary unit in Afghanistan, together with the 4th ERS at Bagram Airfield that began operations in December. "The MC-12 will protect US and coalition lives and will be a vital tool helping Afghanistan defeat the insurgency," said LTC Darren Halford, 361 ERS commander. MC-12s provides live streaming video imagery to ground troops as well as signals intelligence. Halford described this as "unparalleled capability" to give ground forces vital information on the enemy. The Air Force operates a third MC-12 expeditionary unit, the 362nd ERS, active since June 2009 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. 2010

MC-12 Unit Completes 5,000th Combat Sortie: The 362nd Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron at JB Balad, Iraq, has flown its 5,000th combat sortie over that nation. The MC-12W unit conducted its first mission in June 2009 and needed less than 18 months to reach the 5,000 mark last week on Dec. 30. Being on that sortie was "an awesome experience," said SrA. Nicholas Corbett, one of the squadron's airborne sensor operators. He added, "We've done a lot of good things out here." MC-12s carry a crew of four, along with imagery sensors and electronic eavesdropping equipment, to provide ground commanders at the tactical level with near real-time intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance information. The 362nd ERS was the first MC-12 operational unit, but today, there are two additional squadrons in the war theater, both in Afghanistan: the 4th ERS at Bagram Airfield and the 361 ERS at Kandahar Airfield.

Accident investigators determined that insufficient airspeed led to a stall that caused the crash of an MC-12 aircraft 110 miles northeast of Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, on April 27, announced Air Combat Command officials. The crash took the lives of the four aircrew members: Capt.

Brandon L. Cyr, 28, of Woodbridge, Va.; Capt. Reid K. Nishizuka, 30, of Kailua, Hawaii; SSgt. Richard A. Dickson, 24, of Rancho Cordova, Calif.; and SSgt. Daniel N. Fannin, 30, of Morehead, Ky. The stall occurred while the MC-12 was in a climbing left turn, according to ACC's Oct. 25 release, which cites the results of the accident investigation board report. The crew was unable to recover from the spiral that resulted from the stall and subsequent spin, states the release. The crew was attempting to climb to an altitude with better visibility after encountering exceedingly cloudy conditions. The MC-12 was assigned to Kandahar's 361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron. Valued at \$19.8 million, the airplane was destroyed in the mishap.

2013

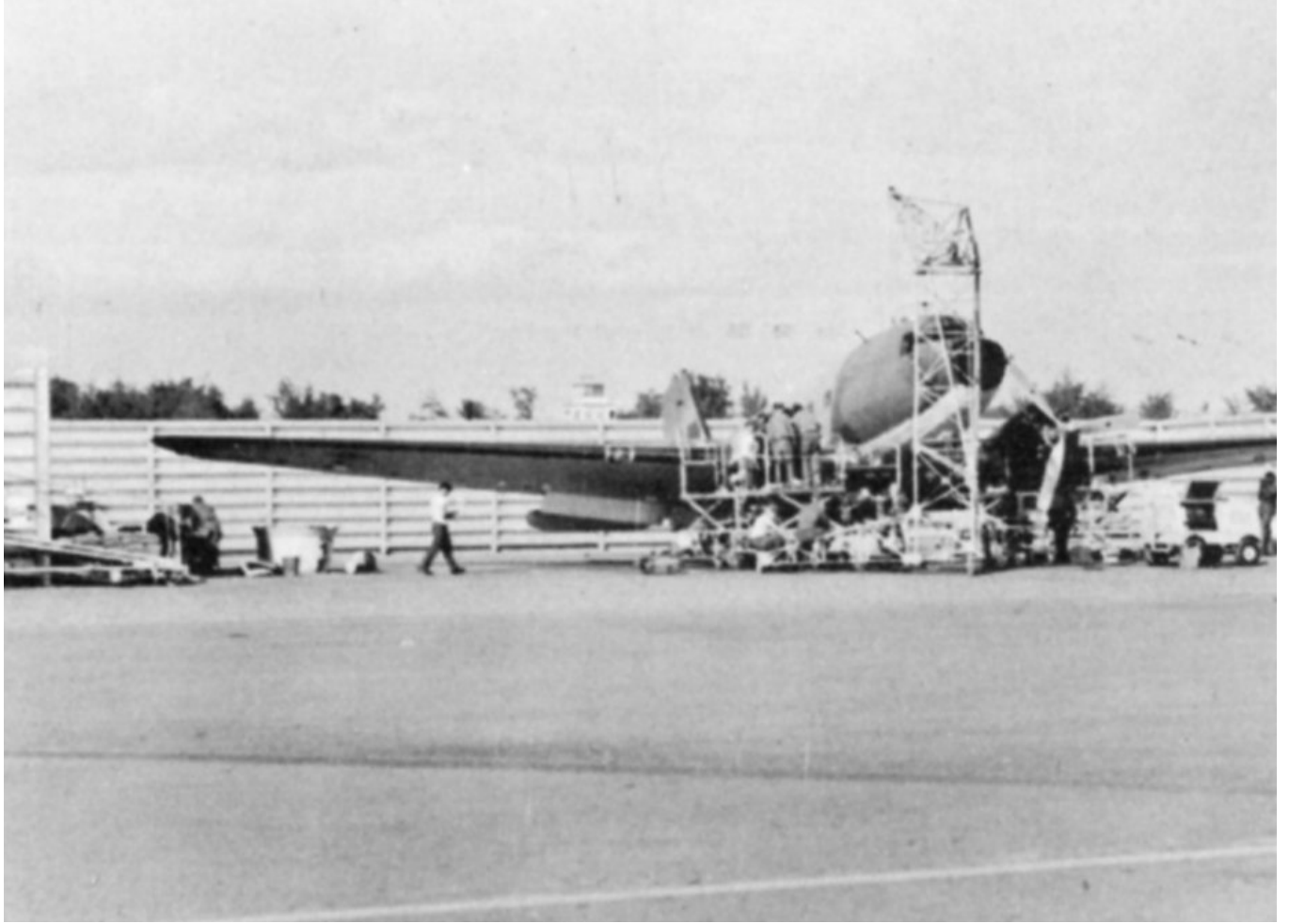
The last of the Air Force's MC-12W surveillance airplanes supporting combat operations in Afghanistan from Kandahar Airfield arrived back at Beale AFB, Calif., according to a release. The aircraft returned to Beale on Sept. 22, following the inactivation of the 361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron at Kandahar earlier this month. "Our accomplishments were tremendous," said LTC Thomas Yeager, former director of operations of the now-inactive 361 ERS. "My hat's off to the young men and women who support this program, working around the clock in rotations, some deploying four or five times with three thousand plus combat hours," he added. The Air Force began operating MC-12Ws from Kandahar in May 2010, some six months after it introduced them to Bagram Airfield with the 4th ERS. The MC-12s gathered intelligence and eavesdropped on enemy electronic signals in real time in support of ground troops.

MC-12W Liberty crews have ended operations at one airfield in Afghanistan, leaving one squadron of the specially made aircraft to cover the area. Earlier this month, the 361 Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron, based at Kandahar Airfield, deactivated. The last Liberty assigned to that squadron returned home to Beale Air Force Base, California, on Sept. 22. The squadron stood up in May 2010, and flew 115,000 combat flight hours, flew overwatch of more than 50,000 friendly forces and scanned about 13,000 kilometers, according to the 9th Reconnaissance Wing. "Our accomplishments were tremendous," said Lt. Thomas Yeager, the prior 361 ERS director of operations, in a release. "My hat's off to the young men and Women who support this program, working around the clock in rotations, some deploying four or five thousand plus combat hours." The unit deactivated during a ceremony Sept. 1 at Kandahar. "To see the success that these airmen have achieved in this battle space is nothing short of amazing. I know there is so much more we could do in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, so that's the bittersweet part," LTC James Mansard, prior commander of the 361 ERS, said at the ceremony. The unit was responsible for overwatch of 190 vehicle interdictions, 150 drug caches, 320 weapons caches Col. Rhude Cherry III, commander of the 451st Air Expeditionary Group, said at the ceremony. The inactivation of the 361 means that there's one last MC-12 squadron operating in Afghanistan the 4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron stationed at Bagram Airfield, according to the 9th Reconnaissance Wing. The 4th ERS has been operating at Bagram since 2009.

2014



361 TEWS aircraft (USAF photo)



361 TEWS maintenance crew working on their EC-47. (USAF photo)



361 TEWS EC-47 crew. (USAF photo)



Col Holbury congratulates LTC Bob "Crash" Dobyms, Lt Marks, Cpt Kasynski and SSgt Lott on completing the sortie that saw the squadron surpass 30,000 accident free hours. (USAF photo)



361 TEWS aircraft starting engines. (USAF photo)



Hear no evil, See no evil, say no evil and SMELL no evil? (USAF photo)



361 TEWS operations building. (USAF photo)



361 TEWS operations building (USAF photo)

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

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