

389 STRATEGIC MISSILE WING (ICBM-ATLAS)



MISSION

LINEAGE

389 Bombardment Group (Heavy) established, 19 Dec 1942
Activated, 24 Dec 1942
Redesignated 389 Bombardment Group, Heavy, 20 Aug 1943
Inactivated, 13 Sep 1945

389 Strategic Missile Wing (ICBM-Atlas), established, and activated, 26 Apr 1961
Organized, 1 Jul 1961
Discontinued and inactivated, 25 Mar 1965

389 Bombardment Group, Heavy and 389 Strategic Missile Wing (ICBM-Atlas) Consolidated,
31 Jan 1984. Consolidated organization remains inactive.

STATIONS

Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 24 Dec 1942
Biggs Field, TX, 3 Jan 1943
Lowry Field, CO, 19 Apr-Jun 1943
Hethel, England, 11 Jun 1943-May 1945 (air echelon), 8 Jul 1943-30 May 1945 (ground echelon)
Charleston AAFld, SC, 12 Jun-13 Sep 1945
Francis E. Warren AFB, WY, 1 Jul 1961-25 Mar 1965

ASSIGNMENTS

II Bomber Command, 24 Dec 1942-Jun 1943

Eighth Air Force, 11 Jun 1943
VIII Bomber Command, 29 Jun 1943
2 Bombardment Wing (later, 2 Combat Bombardment Wing [Heavy]), 29 Jun 1943-May 1945 (attached to 201st Provisional Combat Wing [HB], 29 Jun-14 Sep 1943)
Air Transport Command, 12 Jun-13 Sep 1945
Strategic Air Command, 26 Apr 1961
13 Air (later, 13 Strategic Missile) Division, 1 Jul 1961-25 Mar 1965

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24, 1943-1945
Atlas, 1961-1965

COMMANDERS

Col David B Lancaster, Jr., 24 Dec 1942
Col Jack w Wood, 16 May 1943
Col Milton W. Arnold, 30 Dec 1943
Col Robert B Miller, 29 Mar 1944
Col Ramsay D Potts, Jr., 17 Aug 1944
Col John B Herboth, Jr., 4 Dec 1944
Lt Col Chester Morneau, 7 Apr 1945 (temporary)
Lt Col Jack G Merrell, 14 Apr 1945-unkn
None (not manned), 26 Apr-30 Jun 1961
Col George T Chadwell, 1 Jul 1961
Col Julius B Summers, Jr., 12 Dec 1963-25 Mar 1965

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Air Combat, EAME Theater
Air Offensive, Europe
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace Central Europe

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Ploesti, Rumania, 1 Aug 1943

EMBLEM



389 Bombardment Group emblem

records of his office without further action.

2. The following is a complete description of the insignia:

SHIELD: Or, a demi-dragon couped azure, langued gules, holding in the dexter claw a drop bomb inflamed gules.

CREST: None.

MOTTO: Valiant and Ready.

DESCRIPTION: The ultramarine blue and golden orange are the colors of the Air Forces. The bombardment functions of the Group are allegorically symbolized by the mythological dragon adopted in medieval times in order to terrify the foe, and accepted as representative of cunning endurance and veracity against the enemy. The red color is added for design and participating of the color of fire, thus denoting martial prowess, boldness and hardness.

The motto is suggested as being appropriate and expressive of the characteristics of the personnel in the performance of duties.

For the Commanding Officer:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "William R. Smith".

389 Strategic Missile Wing

Azure, issuant from dexter base a demi-globe dark blue in front of a cloud in fess throughout dark gray and bendwise in pale overall a missile ascendant argent tipped gules and finned or emitting to base three flashes of the fifth; all within a diminished bordure dimidiated of the sixth and of the second. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Against a background of blue to represent the sky and a dark and threatening cloud to symbolize the enemy, a missile, white to reflect SACs mission of maintaining peace) faces north over the earth's horizon to act as a deterrent to the enemy. The tremendous destructive power of the wing and SAC is symbolized by the missile's red tip and by

the three red lightning bolts. The globe represents the free world. The Air Force colors, ultramarine blue and golden yellow and the national colors, red, white, and blue are all reflected in the emblem. The emblem is the winning design of 2Lt Herbert D. Gordon, 566 SMS, submitted in a base-wide contest. (Approved, 15 May 1962)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Activated 24 Dec. 42 at Davis-Monthan AAB, Ariz. Physical formation began at Biggs Fd, Tex. on 1 Feb. 43 under Lt Col David B. Lancaster. Between 17-20 Apr. 43 moved Lowry Fd, Col. for final training. Ground echelon to Camp Kilmer, NJ. arriving 11 Jun. 43 and embarking on Queen Elizabeth 30 Jun. 43, sailing next day and arriving Gourock 6 Jul. 43. Air echelon began overseas movement 13 Jun. 43 via Dow Fd, Me., Goose Bay, Gander, Meeks Fd, Iceland to Prestwick.

Almost immediately a detachment was sent to Libya, where it began operations on 9 Jul 1943. The detachment flew missions to Crete, Sicily, Italy, Austria, and Rumania. The group received a DUC for the detachment's participation in the famed low-level attack against oil refineries at Ploesti on 1 Aug 1943. For his action during the same operation, 2d Lt Lloyd H Hughes was awarded the Medal of Honor: refusing to turn back although gasoline was streaming from his flak-damaged plane, Lt Hughes flew at low altitude over the blazing target area and bombed the objective; the plane crashed before Hughes could make the forced landing that he attempted after the bomb run. The detachment returned to England in Aug and the group flew several missions against airfields in France and Holland. Operating temporarily from Tunisia, Sep-Oct 1943, the 389 supported Allied operations at Salerno and hit targets in Corsica, Italy, and Austria. Resumed operations from England in Oct 1943, and until Apr 1945 concentrated primarily on strategic objectives in France, the Low Countries, and Germany. Targets included shipbuilding yards at Vegesack, industrial areas of Berlin, oil facilities at Merseburg, factories at Munster, railroad yards at Sangerhausen, and V-weapon sites at Pas de Calais. Participated in the intensive air campaign against the German aircraft industry during Big Week, 20-25 Feb 1944- Also flew support and interdiction missions on several occasions, bombing gun batteries and airfields in support of the Normandy invasion in Jun 1944, striking enemy positions to aid the breakthrough at St Lo in Jul 1944, hitting storage depots and communications centers during the Battle of the Bulge (Dec 1944-Jan 1945), and dropping food, ammunition, gasoline, and other supplies to troops participating in the airborne assault across the Rhine in Mar 1945. Flew last combat mission late in Apr 1945.

Redeployed USA in May/Jun. 45. First aircraft left UK 20 May 45. Ground echelon sailed from Bristol on USS Cristobal 30 May 45 and arrived New York 8 Jun. 45. Personnel to Camp Kilmer and from there 30 days leave. Group established at Charleston AAF, SC. 12 Jun. 45 for transport duties but apparently not fully manned. Inactivated 13 Sep. 45 at that base.

First Mission: 9 Jul 1943

Last Mission: 25 Apr 1945

Total Missions: 321

Total Credit Sorties: 7,579
Total Bomb Tonnage: 17,548 tons
Aircraft missing in action: 116
Other Losses: 37
Enemy aircraft claims: 209-31-45

Organized as an Atlas missile wing and replaced the 706th SMW conducted strategic missile operations as directed by higher headquarters. Gradually phased out from early 1964, as a Minuteman missile wing phased in as a replacement organization. Inactivated on 25 Mar 1965.

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