

## 405<sup>th</sup> TACTICAL MISSILE SQUADRON



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE

15<sup>th</sup> Reconnaissance Squadron (Medium) constituted, 20 Nov 1940  
Activated, 15 Jan 1941  
Redesignated 405<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron (Medium), 22 Apr 1942  
Redesignated 405<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron, Light, 6 May 1946  
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1949  
Activated, 1 Jan 1953  
Redesignated 405<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadron (Tactical), 1 Oct 1955  
Redesignated 405<sup>th</sup> Tactical Missile Squadron, 18 Jun 1958

#### STATIONS

Langley Field, VA, 15 Jan 1941  
Jackson AAB, MS, 5 Jun 1941-19 Jan 1942  
Doomben Field, Australia, 25 Feb 1942  
Ballarat, Australia, 8 Mar 1942  
Breddan Field, Australia, 7 Aug 1942  
Townsville, Australia, 30 Sep 1942  
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 25 Oct 1942  
Nadzab, New Guinea, 6 Mar 1944  
Biak, 5 Sep 1944  
Morotai, 15 Oct 1944  
Lingayen, Luzon, 30 Jan 1945  
Okinawa, 21 Jul 1945  
Itazuke, Japan, c. 21 Nov 1945  
Itami, Japan, 26 Oct 1946

Itazuke, Japan, 14 Jan 1947  
Itami, Japan, 1 Sep 1947-1 Apr 1949  
Laon AB, France, 1 Jan 1953  
Hahn AB, Germany, 18 Jun 1958

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

38<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, attached on 15 Jan 1941, and assigned 25 Feb 1942-1 Apr 1949  
38<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 1 Jan 1953  
38<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing, 8 Dec 1957  
586<sup>th</sup> Tactical Missile Group, 18 Jun 1958  
38<sup>th</sup> Tactical Missile Wing, 25 Sep 1962

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-18, 1941  
PT-13, 1941  
B-26, 1941-1942  
B-26B  
B-26C  
B-25, 1942-1946, 1947-1948  
A-26 (later B-26), 1946, 1947-1949  
B-26, 1953-1955  
B-57, 1955-1958  
Matador, 1958-1962  
Mace, 1962

### **COMMANDERS**

#### **HONORS**

##### **Service Streamers**

None

##### **Campaign Streamers**

Air Offensive, Japan  
China Defensive  
Papua  
New Guinea  
Northern Solomons  
Bismarck Archipelago  
Western Pacific  
Leyte  
Luzon  
Southern Philippines

##### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

## **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citations

Papua, [17 Sep] 1942-23 Jan 1943

New Britain, 24-26 Dec 1943

New Guinea, 16-17 Jun 1943

Leyte, 10 Nov 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Apr 1956-1 Mar 1958

1 Apr 1959-30 Jan 1961

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

## **EMBLEM**



On a white disc with a dark red border, a head and neck of a mythical dragon, green with yellow highlights. Yellow and red flames issuing from his nostril, dark red mouth with white fangs and a medium red barbed tongue, dark red eye with black pupil and white highlight, spines on back yellow and dark red; the monster outlined in black. (Approved, 17 Jun 1954)

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

Combat in Southwest and Western Pacific, 17 Sep 1942-13 Aug 1945. Not operational, 1 Nov 1946-1 Dec 1947: basic military training unit, 14 Jan-May 1947; provided labor for various tasks, May-1 Sep 1947; not manned, 1 Nov 1946-14 Jan 1947, 1 Sep-10 Dec 1947.

B-26

43-22590 - Crashed, engine failure, 10nm SW of Mazagan, Fr. Morocco, 14 JAN 54, 2 fatalities.

44-34105 - Damaged, engine fire - explosion, on Wheelus AB, Libya, 23 OCT 54, no fatalities.

44-34745 - Crashed, low level, hit ground, 5nm NE of Sezanne, France, 10 JUL 54, no fatalities.

As part of the new realignment, the historical missile squadrons that had pioneered the Matadors vanished. USAFE issued General Order 75 which inactivated the 11th Tactical Missile Squadron at Sembach Air Base, and activated the 822nd Tactical Missile Squadron in its place. The new 822nd was assigned to the 587th Tactical Missile Group in place of the inactivated 11th TMS. At the same time, the 1st TMS at Bitburg Air Base was inactivated and replaced by the 71st TMS, assigned to the 585th TMG at Bitburg, and the 69th TMS at Hahn Air base was inactivated and replaced by the 405th TMS, assigned to the 586th TMG at Hahn.

The 405th TMS at Hahn AB, a fully operational TM-61C squadron in January, 1960, had completed the stand-down by March 23, 1960. The last duty days of the Matador were not easy for the 405th. The 405th documented the winter of early 1960 during January and February, when temperatures during the nights ranged from 5 degrees to 15 degrees Fahrenheit. The Matador J-33 engines in the missiles were difficult to start, much less the generators and support equipment in the vans or on the ground. Ice was forming in the generator fuel lines. "JP-4 jet fuel was mixed with the diesel fuel in a 10 to 1 ratio to successfully cut down the ice formation in the lines," according to the official 38th TMW history archives. All support engines were started every two hours and run for 30 minutes. The start fuel for the J-33 was upgraded from 90 octane to 100-130 octane AvGas to accomplish near normal engine starts. The hydraulic power units were kept connected to the missiles and continually under power to allow the warmed hydraulic fluid to be circulated through the missiles.

The new AMRO operation was different from past AMLOs in that only half of the active launch crews would participate. Selection of the launch elements was different from preceding years and began in July, picking the teams with the longest average retainability. Each crew had to be certified combat ready by the 38th TMW to be considered for the exercise. The 405th at Hahn sent its first task force on its inaugural trip to Orlando AFB, Florida, on August 11, 1959 and returned the element to duty on August 30, 1959, after successfully firing its Matadors at Cape Canaveral. The second element completed its live fire by September 27, 1959 and the third certification was complete by November 1, 1959.<sup>7</sup> The squadron launched six Matadors, one of which was a night launch, with an average impact distance, CEP8, for the six launches of 2,250 feet from the designated target. The 585th TMG from Bitburg soon followed the 586th from Hahn, with the Matador crews from Steinborn starting their 19 day temporary duty (TOY) at Orlando on November 19, 1959. The AMRO was conducted by the 38th TMW and the 4504th MTW until 1961. The final launch of a TM-61C Matador at the Cape took place on May 11, 1961.<sup>9</sup>

One unique result of the 405th TMS being short of crews was a technique that was developed to launch two missiles within two minutes by only one launch crew. The new procedure required one additional armament crew member, and one change that was approved by Headquarters, USAFE: a crew chief, a non-commissioned officer, acted as a launch officer. The new procedure was soon adapted and it laid the groundwork for another, later change in philosophy that would

not take effect until the TM-76A had been in place for more than a year, called Rapid Fire Multiple Launch, or RFML.

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Air Force Order of Battle

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Sources

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