

512th RESCUE SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

512th Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 19 Oct 1942
Activated, 31 Oct 1942
Redesignated 512th Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 3 May 1944
Redesignated 512th Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 23 May 1945
Inactivated, 26 Mar 1946
Redesignated 512th Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Weather, 6 May 1947
Activated, 23 May 1947
Inactivated, 20 Sep 1948
Activated, 13 Feb 1949
Inactivated, 20 Feb 1951
Redesignated 512th Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 25 May 1951
Activated, 1 Jun 1951
Discontinued and inactivated, 15 Mar 1965
Redesignated 512th Special Operations Squadron, 25 Mar 1994
Activated, 1 Apr 1994
Redesignated as 512 Rescue Squadron on 6 Oct 2000

STATIONS

Lydda, Palestine, 31 Oct 1942
Abu Sueir, Egypt, 9 Nov 1942
Gambut, Libya, 10 Feb 1943
Soluch, Libya, 25 Feb 1943
Bengasi, Libya, 16 Apr 1943

Enfidaville, Tunisia, 26 Sep 1943 (detachment operated from Bengasi, Libya, 3–11 Oct 1943)
San Pancrazio, Italy, 19 Nov 1943–19 Apr 1945
Harvard AAFld, NE, 8 May 1945
Grand Island AAFld, NE, 25 Jun 1945
Tarrant Field, TX, 10 Nov 1945
Roswell AAFld, NM, 9 Jan–26 Mar 1946
Gravelly Point, VA, 23 May 1947–20 Sep 1948
Fairfield-Suisun AFB, CA, 13 Feb 1949–9 Jan 1950
Yokota AB, Japan, 27 Jan 1950
Misawa AB, Japan, 11 Aug 1950–20 Feb 1951
Forbes AFB, KS, 1 Jun 1951
Barksdale AFB, LA, 10 Oct 1951
Lockbourne AFB, OH, 1 Dec 1957–15 Mar 1965
Kirtland AFB, NM, 1 Apr 1994

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Upper Heyford RAF, England, 8 Jul–16 Oct 1955

ASSIGNMENTS

376th Bombardment Group, 31 Oct 1942
468th Bombardment Group, 10 Nov 1945–26 Mar 1946
376th Reconnaissance Group, 23 May 1947
Air Weather Service, 16 Sep 1947
308th Reconnaissance Group, 14 Oct 1947–20 Sep 1948
308th Reconnaissance Group, 13 Feb 1949
2143rd Air Weather Wing, 14 Nov 1949–20 Feb 1951
376th Bombardment Group, 1 Jun 1951
376th Bombardment Wing, 16 Jun 1952–15 Mar 1965
58th Operations Group, 1 Apr 1994

ATTACHMENTS

376th Bombardment Wing, 1 Jun 1951–15 Jun 1952

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24G
B-24H
B-24J
RB-29A
WB-29A
UH-1N

COMMANDERS

Ukn, 31 Oct 1942-Feb 1943
Maj Reynold J. Soukup, Mar 1943

Maj Robert Hoover, Apr 1943-unkn
Cpt Gilmer E. Mayfield, unkn-Sep 1943
Cpt James Miller, Sep 1943
LTC Harry R. Gillett, Jan-26 Jul 1944
Unkn, 27 Jul 1944-26 Mar 1946
Not manned, 23 May 1947-20 Sep 1948
LTC Robert G. David, c. 1949-c. 1951
LTC Ralph T. Holland, 1 Jun 1951
LTC Clarence L. Lollar, Sep 1952
Maj John Lutz, 13 Dec 1954
Maj Dudley V. Brand, c. Jan 1956
LTC Cary L. Savage, 1 Dec 1957
Maj Raymond P. Lowman, c. Dec 1958
Maj Robert R. Agnew, 20 May 1959
Maj Jesse H. Beitman, 5 Jan 1961
LTC Joseph Fetsko, 18 Jul 1962
LTC Howard W. Moore, 19 Jun 1963-15 Mar 1965
LTC Jerald L. Folkerts, 1 Apr 1994
LTC Stephen P. Childers, 22 Jul 1994
LTC Howard C. Short, 21 Jun 1996
LTC Henry B. Gaither Jr., 26 Jan 1998
LTC Kenneth V. Volmert, 11 Jun 2000
LTC Gary A. Daigle, 9 Nov 2001
LTC Clair M. Gilk, 10 Jun 2003
LTC Timothy Calderwood, 3 Jun 2005
LTC Todd A. Worms, 29 Jun 2007
LTC Shelly G. Black, 26 Jun 2009

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Egypt-Libya

Air Offensive, Europe

Tunisia

Sicily

Naples-Foggia

Anzio

Rome-Arno

Normandy

Northern France

Southern France
North Apennines
Rhineland
Central Europe
Po Valley
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Korea
UN Defensive
UN Offensive
CCF Intervention
First UN Counteroffensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
North Africa and Sicily, [Nov] 1942–17 Aug 1943
Ploesti, Rumania, 1 Aug 1943
Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, 16 Jun 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

27 Jun–27 Dec 1950
1 Jul 1998-30 Jun 2000
1 Jul 2001-30 Jun 2002
1 Jul 2002-30 Jun 2003
1 Jul 2003-30 Jun 2004
1 Jul 2004-30 Jun 2005
1 Jul 2006-30 Jun 2007
1 Jul 2007-30 Jun 2008

EMBLEM



On a White disc, a Black skull and cross bones surmounting a Black three-bladed propeller, one blade to base, within border formed by Red counter-clockwise, stylized rotation lines from tips of propeller blades. (Approved, 6 Jan 1944)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Combat in MTO and ETO, 1 Nov 1942–15 Apr 1943; not fully manned or equipped, 10 Nov 1945–26 Mar 1946. Not manned, 23 May 1947–20 Sep 1948. Weather reconnaissance during the Korean War, c. 1 Jul 1950–Feb 1951. Primarily trained in electronic countermeasures, c. Nov 1952–Mar 1965.

The long-awaited activation of the 512th Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Weather, resulting from an expanded aerial weather reconnaissance program, became a fact effective 13 February 1949 when the unit was activated at Fairfield-Suisun AFB, California. The new squadron was assigned to the 308th Group for manning, equipping and training of personnel pending stabilization of the reconnaissance units already present and active at Fairfield-Suisun AFB.

Based in Japan at the beginning of the Korean conflict, the 512th RS, flying RB/WB-29s, performed daily strategic weather reconnaissance missions over the combat zone, conducted shipping surveillance and visual reconnaissance, and accomplished electronic countermeasures reconnaissance until February 20, 1951. In the early days of the conflict, the squadron also dropped leaflets. Initially unarmed, and later only lightly armed with two 50-caliber machine guns in the tail turret, the WB-29s flew daily missions over enemy-held territory. During the period June 27 through December 27, 1950, the squadron flew more than 200 combat missions, making over 5,000 vitally needed weather observations. These missions were exceptionally hazardous because of extremely varying weather conditions and exposure to attack over enemy territory. One of the squadron's WB-29s served as an aerial command post and weather station, giving on-the-spot weather data and directions to incoming bombers on the first B-29 strike (July 13, 1950) against North Korean installations. On this and several later such missions, the WB-29 carried Maj. Gen. Emmett O'Donnell, Jr., USAF, Commander, FEAF Bomber Command. The 512th RS was replaced by the 56th SRS in February 1951.

On 8 August 2002 at approximately 1610 (all times are local), the mishap aircraft (MA), a UH-1N, S/N 69-6612, crashed on Pad 8 of the auxiliary field (N34-57.16 W106-33.95), approximately 5 NM south of the Albuquerque International airport. The crew on the MA consisted of five people, the mission instructor pilot (MIP), two mission student pilots (MSP1, MSP2), mission flight engineer (MFE), and a student flight engineer (MSFE). The MA was on a scheduled contact checkride on the MSFE, a contact training flight on the MSP2, and an

ungraded remedial training flight on the MSP1. All three students were in UH-1N qualification training. The MSP1 had been graded “unsatisfactory” in manual fuel operations on the previous day’s recommendation flight for manual fuel operations due to an over speed on the manually controlled engine. The MA took-off seven minutes early at 1353 on a VFR flight plan to the auxiliary field. Two hours and 17 minutes after departure, the MA crashed on pad 8 of the auxiliary field. The aircraft was technically destroyed, but the crew was not injured. There was no damage to the landing site. The accident was the result of pilot error brought on by MSP1 applying too much throttle to engine number 1, causing its power to exceed that of the automatically controlled #2 engine. This input results in what is called a swap, a condition where the manually controlled engine provides more power than the automatically controlled engine, and if not properly controlled, can result in a loss of power in the automatically controlled engine, effectively creating a single engine situation, and loss of power to the rotor system degrading its ability to produce lift thus causing the helicopter to rapidly descend. The MSP1 ’s improper control of the MA #1 throttle (the manually controlled/ungoverned engine) placed the MA in a condition which resulted in a momentary loss of power to the automatically controlled engine, placing the MA in a single engine condition without the power to maintain either an in or out of ground effect hover, which resulted in the rapid loss of RPMs to the main rotor system and started an accelerating descent. Clear and convincing evidence indicates that once the MSP1 had made the throttle inputs it was impossible to arrest the descent of the helicopter due to the lack of time available to recover the #2 engine (governed engine) back to full operating power (2-5 seconds required) and the lack of altitude available to recover the rapidly decaying main rotor RPM (within the first second of the #2 engine reducing power, the main rotor had decayed to 92% or less). The aircraft was not recoverable at that point, the only question was at what rate of descent it would impact. The MEP’s inputs in the 2-3 seconds he had to react were focused on leveling the MA and controlling the yaw axis to prevent MA rollover and blade to fuselage contact. These actions ensured that no serious injuries were suffered by the MA crew.

On 11 May 2005, at approximately 1314 hours local time, an HH-60G aircraft, S/N 82-23728, crashed near Angel Fire, New Mexico during an instructor proficiency training sortie. The mishap aircraft was assigned to the 512th Rescue Squadron, 58th Special Operations Wing, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. The aircraft’s flight engineer, who was on his “fini” flight prior to retirement, was fatally injured. The mishap pilot and co-pilot were treated for minor injuries at a local hospital and released the same day. The aircraft was totally destroyed by the impact and subsequent fire. Shortly after taking off from the Angel Fire Airport for a return flight back to Kirtland AFB, the mishap pilot performed an over-flight of the Vietnam Veterans National Memorial in Angel Fire, New Mexico. The mishap pilot executed a 35-degree bank turn around the memorial allowing the flight engineer to view a helicopter displayed on top of a hill at the memorial. The mishap pilot was unable to roll out of the turn and the aircraft impacted the crest of a small knoll on the Vietnam Memorial property. The aircraft’s main rotor blades struck the ground near the crest of the knoll, followed by impact of the right main gear and right side of the belly of the aircraft. The aircraft then violently rolled left, ejecting the flight engineer from the main cabin, and came to rest on the upper left side of the fuselage. The aircraft caught fire shortly after impact. The Accident Investigation Board President determined, by clear and

convincing evidence, that the mishap was caused by pilot error coupled with challenging environmental conditions. Specifically, the mishap pilot failed to maintain sufficient altitude above terrain while entering the turn around the Vietnam Memorial. This error placed the helicopter lower than 300 feet above the terrain, initializing the mishap sequence. Additionally, the prevailing environmental conditions at the mishap site were not readily conducive to helicopter flight. The combination of high pressure and density altitude, and strong mountain winds resulted in degraded helicopter performance, responsiveness, and control. The mishap pilot's loss of control at low altitude completed the mishap sequence. Additionally, there were multiple contributing factors to this mishap, supported by substantial evidence. The general complacency of the flight crew in planning the mission, their inattention during flight, and their channelized attention on the Vietnam Memorial prior to the mishap adversely and directly impacted their situational awareness and resulted in poor crew communication immediately prior to the mishap.

On 27 April 2011, at approximately 1115 local time, a UH-1N, T/N 69-6603, crashed at a remote landing zone near Kirtland Air Force Base (AFB), New Mexico (NM). The mishap crew (MC) was performing hoist operations when the rescue device, in this case a forest penetrator, snagged on a stationary F-111 capsule. The mishap aircraft (MA) entered a descending right turn and impacted terrain. After the MA came to a rest, the MC egressed the MA unharmed. The MA is assigned to the 512th Rescue Squadron, 58th Special Operations Wing, Kirtland AFB, NM. The MC was conducting an initial instructor flight engineer checkride involving hoist operations. The MC consisted of two pilots (MP1 and MP2) and two flight engineers (MF1 and MF2). During one of the hoist operations, the hoist cable was lowered to the ground with the forest penetrator attached. MF1 initiated a hoist malfunction to test MF2's ability to troubleshoot. During the operation, the MA's hover drifted forward and left. When MF2 cleared the malfunction the hoist cable retracted unexpectedly. When the cable retracted, the forest penetrator raised off the ground and swung forward, snagging a stationary F-111 capsule's window. The MA banked right and MP2 instinctively applied maximum power in an attempt to recover the MA. The MA entered a sharp descending right turn while tethered to the F-111 capsule. When the forest penetrator ripped free, the MPs leveled out the MA before impacting terrain. The MA's main rotor struck the ground twice and the MA came to rest on its left side. The MC egressed with no major injuries. A fire ignited shortly after impact completely destroying the MA. The total cost of the mishap is \$4,811,580.00. The Accident Investigation Board (AIB) President found by clear and convincing evidence that the cause of the mishap was a combination of four actions by the mishap crew (MC), including three by the mishap flight engineers (MF1 and MF2) and one by the mishap pilot (MP2). These actions included (1) MF2's troubleshooting sequence, (2) MF1's checkride supervision, (3) MF2's channelized attention, and (4) MP2's control inputs. In addition, the AIB President found by a preponderance of the evidence that the use of an old F-111 capsule as a training target during hoist operations and miscommunication between the crew substantially contributed to the incident.

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Unit history. *376th Bombardment Wing (M)*. 1954.