

555th FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

555th Bombardment Squadron (Medium) constituted, 25 Nov 1942

Activated, 1 Dec 1942

Redesignated 555th Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 9 Oct 1944

Redesignated 555th Bombardment Squadron, Light, 23 Jun 1945

Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945

Redesignated 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron, activated and organized, 8 Jan 1964

Redesignated 555th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, 5 Jul 1974

Redesignated 555th Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991

Inactivated, 25 Mar 1994

Activated, 1 Apr 1994

STATIONS

MacDill Field, FL, 1 Dec 1942

Lake Charles AAB, LA, 9 Feb–8 May 1943

Snetterton Heath, England, 4 Jun 1943

Boxted, England, 10 Jun 1943

Great Dunmow, England, 24 Sep 1943

Beaumont-sur-Oise, France, 2 Oct 1944

St Trond, Belgium, 9 Apr–27 Jul 1945

Seymour Johnson Field, NC, 11 Aug 1945

Westover Field, MA, 29 Sep–7 Nov 1945

MacDill AFB, FL, 8 Jan 1964–8 Nov 1965

Udon RTAFB, Thailand, c. 25 Feb 1966

Ubon RTAFB, Thailand, 20 Jul 1966
Udorn RTAFB, Thailand, 28 May 1968–5 Jul 1974
Luke AFB, AZ, 5 Jul 1974–25 Mar 1994
Aviano AB, Italy, 1 Apr 1994

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Naha AB, Okinawa, 12 Dec 1964–9 Mar 1965 and 11 Dec 1965–c. 21 Feb 1966

ASSIGNMENTS

386th Bombardment Group, 1 Dec 1942–7 Nov 1945
12th Tactical Fighter Wing, 8 Jan 1964
Thirteenth Air Force, 4 Mar 1966
8th Tactical Fighter Wing, 25 Mar 1966
432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Jun 1968
58th Tactical Fighter (later, 58th Tactical) Training Wing, 5 Jul 1974
405th Tactical Training Wing, 29 Aug 1979
58th Operations Group, 1 Oct 1991–25 Mar 1994
31st Operations Group, 1 Apr 1994

ATTACHMENTS

51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, 12 Dec 1964–9 Mar 1965, 11 Dec 1965–21 Feb 1966
8th Tactical Fighter Wing, c. 22 Feb–4 Mar 1966
8th Tactical Fighter Wing, 4–24 Mar 1966.

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-26, 1943–1945
A-26, 1945
B-26B
B-26C
B-26B
B-26B
B-26B
B-26B
B-26B
Oxford II
B-26B
B-26G
B-26G
A-26B
A-26C
A-26B
A-26B
A-26B
A-26B
F-4, 1964–1974
F-4C

F-4D

F-15, 1974

F-16

COMMANDERS

Maj Sherman R. Beaty, 1 Dec 1942

Maj Charles V. Thornton, 13 Dec 1943

LTC Don L. Weiss, 21 Feb 1944

LTC James T. Wilson, 23 Jun 1944

LTC Boyd B. White, 22 Apr 1945

Cpt John H. Strand Jr., May 1945-1945

LTC Charles J. Bowers, 8 Jan 1964

Maj Robert F. Pugh, 16 Aug 1965

Maj Robert E. Grandon, 1966

LTC Jesse M. Allen, 1966

LTC Wesley D. Kimball, 1967

Col Charles R. Dougherty, 8 Apr 1968

LTC George G. Hupp, 30 Aug 1968

LTC Robert C. Taylor, 21 Dec 1968

LTC Norman R. Smedes, 20 May 1969

LTC David L. Brown, 1 Nov 1969

LTC Curtis C. Truver, 1 Apr 1970

LTC Earl W. Pitts, 10 Jul 1970

LTC William C. Gatschet, 19 May 1971

LTC Joseph W. Kittinger, 22 Jun 1971

LTC Wayne T. Frye, 1 Mar 1972

LTC James E. Brunson, 1 Aug 1972

LTC William R. Hemby Jr., 20 Jan 1973

LTC Edward R. Shields III, 1 Jun 1973

LTC Ernest T. Laudise, by Oct 1974

LTC Luther E. Thweatt, 5 Dec 1975

LTC Richard M. Suter, 25 Feb 1977

Maj Thomas C. Skanchy, 2 Jun 1978

LTC Ralph T. Browning, 20 Apr 1979

LTC Richard T. Giblin IV, 1 May 1981

LTC George H. Lippemeir, 6 Aug 1982

LTC Robert M. Juhns, 8 Nov 1983

LTC Donald J. Creighton, 8 Nov 1985

LTC Jerry J. Thorius, 14 Nov 1986

LTC Robert E. Nedergaard, 8 Nov 1988

LTC Daniel P. Leaf, 18 May 1990

LTC Dennis D. Granquist, 19 Sep 1991

LTC Terry W. Branson, 14 Nov 1991

LTC John W. Wyatt, 6 Apr 1992

LTC John H. Tweedy, 15 Oct 1993-unkn
LTC Stephen L. Hoog, 1 Apr 1994
LTC Guy Dahlbeck, 11 Jul 1996
LTC David L. Goldfein, 2 Jul 1998
LTC Robert E. Broderick, 5 May 2000
LTC Mark D. Moore, 17 May 2002
LTC Joseph T. Guastella, 24 Oct 2003
LTC Charles Moore, 8 Jul 2005
LTC Clay W. Hall, 7 Jul 2006

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Vietnam
Vietnam Air
Vietnam Air Offensive
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air/Ground
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
TET 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer-Fall 1969
Vietnam Winter-Spring 1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Southwest Monsoon
Commando Hunt V
Commando Hunt VI
Commando Hunt VII
Vietnam Ceasefire

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
ETO, 30 Jul 1943–30 Jul 1944

Presidential Unit Citations (Southeast Asia)

16 Dec 1966–2 Jan 1967
1 Mar 1967–31 Mar 1968
1 Nov 1968–31 Oct 1969

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device

25 Mar–31 May 1966
1 Apr–28 May 1968
21 Nov 1969–20 Nov 1970
21 Nov 1970–6 Apr 1971
18 Dec 1972–27 Jan 1973

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

15 Oct 1965–25 Mar 1966
22 Jun–31 Dec 1976
1 Jan 1978–31 Dec 1979
1 Aug 1982–31 May 1984
1 Oct 1989–30 Sep 1991
1 Apr 1992–24 Mar 1994
1 Apr 1994–1 Apr 1996
2 Apr 1996–1 Apr 1998
24 Mar–10 Jun 1999
1 Oct 2000–1 Oct 2002
2 Oct 2002–30 Sep 2004

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966–28 Jan 1973

EMBLEM



555th Bombardment Squadron emblem



555th Tactical Fighter Training Squadron emblem



555th Fighter Squadron emblems

On a Blue disc below a Yellow demi-sun in the top of the disc, issuing from sinister an eagle, upper body Brown, head and neck White, beak Yellow, details Black, the disc within a Black encircling band bearing 39 White five-pointed stars. (Approved, 13 Mar 1975; replaced emblem approved, 19 Apr 1943)

On a disc Vert, a falcon's head issuant from sinister Proper, eyed Azure below a demi-sphere issuant from chief Silver Gray, all within a border Sable charged with thirty-nine mullets Argent, all within a narrow border Black. Attached above the disc, a Green scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "TRIPLE NICKEL" in Black letters. Attached below the disk, a Green scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "555TH FIGHTER SQ" in Black letters. 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 green background represents integrity and honor and indicates the Squadron's preeminence in air-to-ground operations. The falcon depicts strength and prowess in the air. The demi-sphere represents the moon and symbolizes the unit's twenty-four hour readiness. The thirty-nine stars allude to the unit's combat heritage in battleground engagements.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

TRIPLE NICKEL

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 30 Jul 1943–3 May 1945. Combat in Southeast Asia, Feb 1966 until close of hostilities. Fighter training, Jul 1974.

The Triple Nickel heritage began 58 years ago on November 25, 1942 when the 555th Bombardment Squadron, Medium, was constituted flying the B-26 Marauder. During World War II, the Nickel led offensive actions against Axis forces from bases in England, France, and Belgium. For gallantry in action, the Nickel was awarded the first of its four Presidential Unit Citations.

Shortly after WWII ended, Nickel colors were retired as U.S. forces were drawn down. On 8 January 1964, the Nickel re-emerged at MacDill AFB, Fla., with the F-4C Phantom II as its steed. Being the first operational unit in the Air Force to receive the Phantom II, the Nickel was deployed and then permanently assigned to the Pacific Rim in support of hostilities in Southeast Asia.

In February 1966, the Nickel returned to combat. Flying out of Udorn Royal Thai Air Base, they scored their first two victories April 23, 1966, and became the first "Ace" Squadron in Southeast Asia with six kills one week later.

In June 1966, the 555th TFS moved to Ubon KTAB and joined the 8th TFW "Wolfpack." There, the squadron led the first strike against MiG airfields in North Vietnam. The Nickel launched the first night bombing attacks against North Vietnam September 29, 1967. While at Ubon, the Nickel downed an additional 14 aircraft, including four MiG-21s January 2, 1967. The Nickel was

now the only "Quad Ace" Fighter Squadron, with 20 MiGs to its credit.

In 1968, the Nickel participated in the campaign against the Ho Chi Minh Trail and the Linebacker campaigns against the NVN heartland in 1972. During Linebacker I and II, the Nickel returned to its air superiority role and brought its MiG tally to 39 confirmed victories--10 MiG-17s, 3 MiG-19s, and 26 MiG-21s, producing the first and second USAF aces, and earning the motto, "World's Largest Distributor of MiG Parts." From 1966 to 1973, the 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron earned three more Presidential Unit Citations, five Air Force Outstanding Unit awards with combat "V" device, the Republic of Vietnam gallantry cross with palm, and the 1973 Hughes achievement award.

The list of the unit's achievements shows a relentless drive to engage the enemy at his great misfortune. After nine years of distinguished combat operations, the Nickel returned to the United States. In 1974, the squadron moved to Luke AFB, Ariz., where it was again chosen to receive the Air Force's newest fighter, the F-15.

The Nickel, exactly 17 years to the day, April 1, 1994 transferred to Aviano AB, Italy, given the distinction of flying the F-16C.

555 Fighter Squadron Participated In North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Nato) Mass Raid, A 21 Nov Airstrike Against Udbina Airfield, Croatia.

Maiden Flight For 555 Fighter Squadron Began When Two F-16 Aircraft, Flown By 31 Wing Commander, Col John H. Campbell And Squadron Commander, LtC Stephen L. Hoog, Took To The Air To Perform A Variety Of Basic Flight Maneuvers Over The Adriatic. 1994

Five 555 Fighter Squadron F-16 Aircraft Participated In A Southern Presence Deployment To Sigonella.

In February 1966, the 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron, also equipped with F-4Cs, became part of the wing and in July 1966, the 435th TFS, equipped with F-104s, was added to the wing structure, although still operating from Udorn RTAFB. By the end of June 1966, after only six months in the theater, the wing had flown more than 10,000 combat sorties, achieving a 99 per cent sortie rate for which they received many commendations. More than 13,809 aircraft sorties were recorded by December 1966, and the 555th "triple nickel" squadron became the first squadron with five MIGs kills- to its credit, to achieve ace" status since the Korean War. At the end of December 1967, the 555th TFS had 18 MIGs kills while its sister squadron, the 433rd TFS, had 12 MIG's on its records, The wing, chalking up a total of 30 MIG's, emerged as the top Killing-killing unit as 1967 ended. Significant events occurred in 1967, which resulted In the 8th TFW becoming the first Air Force fighter unit to bomb an enemy airfield Major Thomas D. Hirsch, 555th TFS, was credited with destroying five enemy MIG's on the ground during the attack. Colonel Robin Olds, who joined the wing as its commander earlier in 1966, became the leading MIGs killer of the Vietnam war with four MIGs kills to his credit. Twenty new F-4D aircraft arrived at Ubon in May 1967. This gave the wing the distinction of being the first in

Southeast Asia to be operationally equipped with F-4Ds. Using these aircraft, Wolfpack pilots struck the previously untouched Canal des Rapides Bridge and the Paul Doumer bridge, near Hanoi plus many other strategic military and industrial targets. The final phase out of the F-4C was completed by the end of 1967 and the wing became fully equipped with the F-4D. By the end of August the wing logged more than 50,000 combat sorties since its arrival in Southeast Asia. These sorties ran the gamut from MIGs combat air patrol to interdiction missions. The wing's flexibility in response to mission changes also added immeasurably to its effectiveness in interdicting movement of enemy supplies, manpower and equipment into South Vietnam.

On 28 May 1968, the 555th TFS deployed to Udorn RTAFB. The 25th TFS, formerly with the 33rd TFW, Eglin AFB, Fla., replaced the "triple nickel" as the fourth F-4D fighter-bomber squadron at Ubon. By the end of May, eight, and a half MIG's added to the wing's roll of kills. The total of 38 1/2 insured retention of its title of top MIG-killer of the Vietnam War.

Aviano F-16s Return from Training in Sweden: More than 250 airmen and a contingent of F-16s from Aviano AB, Italy, have just completed a two-week stint at Kallax AB, Sweden, where they trained with Swedish airmen and Gripen fighters. During the deployment, members of Aviano's 555th Fighter Squadron and 31st Aircraft Maintenance Squadron worked side-by-side with their Swedish counterparts of the Norrbotten Wing in conducting more than 180 air-to-air and air-to-ground flying missions at the Vidsel Test Range, located about 50 miles from Kallax. In addition to the opportunity to train with friends, the exercise was important because it gave the USAF airmen "the opportunity to use a scored range, one of the best training areas I've ever seen, to conduct practice munitions drops and low-level flying," said Maj. Travis Swan, 555th FS assistant director of operations. Tuesday August 17, 2010

During the spring of 1995 the 303rd Fighter Squadron, 442nd Fighter Wing from Whiteman AFB, Missouri, and the 46th Fighter Squadron, 917th Wing, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, were operating from Aviano AB during one of their scheduled Operation Deny Flight deployments. On June 2, three weeks into the 917th's deployment, A USAF F-16C from the "Triple Nickel" (555th Fighter Squadron, 31st Fighter Wing) at Aviano AB was shot down by a Serb SAM while on a mission over Bosnia-Herzegovina. The A-10s flew search missions searching for the downed pilot, Captain Scott O'Grady. They also were put on short-notice alert to assist in rescue efforts, should it become necessary. On June 8, two 917th A-10s escorted the Marine Corps CH-53 helicopters which had rescued Capt. O'Grady. The two A-10 covered the last portion of the egress out of Bosnia, through Croatia to the Adriatic Sea. On June 13th, the aircraft of the 442nd and 917th left Aviano AB for home.

For the Pacific Air Forces, the Phantom era began in December 1964 when a TAC rotational F-4C squadron, the 555th TFS, arrived at Naha AB, Okinawa. Four months later, F-4C's of the 45th TFS deployed to Ubon RTAFB, Thailand, to commence the Phantom II's combat career.

The F-4D finally arrived in Southeast Asia in May 1967 when the 40th TFS ferried 22 aircraft to re-equip the hard-fighting 555th TFS which by then had already claimed 13 victories over North Vietnamese MiGs. Its new aircraft were not only expected to obtain better success in air

combat but were considered more capable in the strike role as they were fitted to launch AGM-62A TV-guided Walleye missiles. The next unit converting to F-4D's was the 435th TFS which, also flying from Ubon, exchanged Lockheed F-104C's for Phantom II's in July 1967.

In air combat, the F-4D first proved its worth on 5 June 1967 when a crew of the 555th TFS—Maj. E. T. Raspberry Jr. and Capt. F. M. Gullick—downed a MiG-17 with an AIM-7. Before the end of that year, F-4D's claimed seven and one-half other MiGs (three by crews from the 555th TFS, two and one-half by crews of the 435th TFS—including a victory shared with an F-105F crew from the 333rd TFS, and one each by crews of the 13th and 333rd TFS) for the loss of six F-4's to MiGs. The first of these losses occurred on 23 August when, during a strike against the Yen Vien Railroad Yard, 66-238 was hit by an infrared-homing missile launched by a MiG-21. The 555th TFS crew ejected over North Vietnam but Maj. C. R. Tyler, the aircraft commander, was taken POW while his backseater, Captain R.N. Sittner, was killed.

The North Vietnamese Spring Offensive in 1972 forced a resumption of U.S. air operations over the North and the massive reinforcement of PACAF strength in the theater. Among the aircraft then sent to Southeast Asia as part of Constant Guard were the F-4D's of the 523rd TFS (which went to Udorn), the 35th TFS (to Da Nang and Ubon), and the 49th TFW (to Takhli). Limited Freedom Train operations against the North commenced on 6 April and were extended into Linebacker I on 8 May. Victories and losses soon mounted while heavy damages were inflicted to the North Vietnamese through increased use of EOGB's (Electro-Optical Guided Bombs) and LGB's (Laser Guided Bombs). It was during this period that the USAF gained its top scorer of the war— Capt. Charles B. DeBellevue, a backseater of the 555th TFS—who was credited with four kills while flying F-4D's and two while flying F-4E's.

The 'LA' and 'LC' tailcoded F-4Es of the 4th TFS and 421st TFS were assigned in May 1972, even though they were based at Takhli RTAFB, before joining the wing on 1 October 1972. The 4th TFS, 13th TFS, 421st TFS, 555th TFS and 14th TRS all received the 'UD' tailcode starting in August 1973, although many aircraft were not recoded before unit inactivations and transfers. As with many Southeast Asian wings, the application of a common wing tailcode was not accorded a high priority. The 25th TFS replaced the 555th TFS on 14 November 1974, the latter being reassigned to the 405th TFW at Luke AFB, Arizona, to fly the first F-15 Eagles.

The 432nd Tactical Reconnaissance Wing activated at Udorn RTAFB on 18 September 1966 to control F-4 operations, primarily against North Vietnam and Laos. The 11th TRS (black), flying the RF-4C, arrived from Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, on 25 October 1966, while the 14th TRS (red) arrived on 28 October 1967. The fighter-bomber role was added to the wing's tasks with the arrival of the 13th TFS (blue), flying F-4Ds, in October 1967. In May 1968, the 13th TFS, 11th TRS and 14th TRS, respectively, tailcoded their F-4s 'OC', 'OO' and 'OZ.'. The 555th TFS 'Triple Nickel', was reassigned from the 8th TFW, adopting the 'OY' tailcode on its arrival in May 1968. The 11th TRS inactivated in November 1970. The 432nd TRW hosted numerous deployments to boost USAF airpower during peak periods of need during 1972.

14 October 1975 A USAF F-15A, 73-0088, of the 555th TFTS, 58th TFTW, crashes W of Minersville, Utah, due to electrical smoke/fire from generator failure; pilot ejects safely. This was the first F-15 crash.

Aviano's Triple Nickel Shaking off the Dust, Slowly Even after the Air Force last month lifted the grounding of nearly a third of its combat fleet, squadrons across the service are having a range of challenges getting aircrews back up to combat-mission-ready status. For the "Triple Nickel," the 555th Fighter Squadron at Aviano AB, Italy, this involves several months of retraining in F-16 operations, according to a July 31 base release. After the standdown began in April, the squadron relied on ground training, flight simulation time, and study in basic skills for its pilots. However the pilots said the downtime has eroded some of their edge, states the release. "I am nowhere near the level of proficiency I should be at, and I feel like I'm restarting the process in some areas," said Capt. Rob Glenn, a unit pilot. Squadron Commander Lt. Col. John Peterson wants his crews to spool up gradually, "so that we don't end up falling forward and hurting somebody or breaking our assets and resources." 2013

Spatial Disorientation Caused Fatal F-16 Crash Accident investigators determined that the pilot's spatial disorientation caused an F-16 from Aviano AB, Italy, to crash in the Adriatic Sea on Jan. 28, claiming the pilot's life, announced US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa officials. A combination of factors-including weather conditions, the pilot's use of night vision goggles, the aircraft's attitude and high rate of speed, and the pilot's breakdown in visual scan-caused the disorientation, states the command's Oct. 30 release, which summarizes the findings of the command's newly issued accident investigation report. The pilot, Maj. Lucas Gruenther, ejected, but did not survive the crash. He was a member of Aviano's 555th Fighter Squadron. At the time of the crash, Gruenther was a captain; the Air Force posthumously promoted him to the rank of major. USAFE-AFAFRICA Vice Commander Lt. Gen. Tom Jones approved the AIB report without comments, according to the release. 2013

The 555th then moved to Luke AFB, Arizona in 1974 after 9 years of combat operations in Southeast Asia and transitioned to the F-15 Eagle. Eventually in April of 1994, the 555th FS joined the 31st FW in Italy transitioning into the F-16C/D.

1945-operations. Combat in ETO, 30 Jul 1943-3 May 1945.

One of the more colorful and best known members of the 386th Bomb Group right from the start was Sherman Beaty, the first Commanding Officer of the 555th Bomb Squadron. Beaty had been an instructor in flying school when Tad Hankey was a cadet. Credited with selecting the name "Red Devils" for the squadron, he named his airplane Son of Satan and decorated the nose with a painting of a diaper-clad, top-hatted devil holding a bomb. This airplane and its pilot were featured in a number of articles in national magazines and newspapers.

Returning to England in August 1944 after a 30 day R&R in the United States I found the 555th drastically changed, recalls Ed Laube. There was a new 386th Group Commander, Colonel Tom

Corbin and a new 555th Squadron Commander, B.B. White. Many of the old squadron mates had finished their tours and returned to the states and a few had been lost in combat. My old Nissen hut, the Flak Shack II was now occupied by strangers. I had heard the old saw about never going back, but somehow I didn't expect it to be like it was.

The 555th saw the largest number of COs and was the only squadron to lose a Commanding Officer in action. When Lt. Colonel Beaty went to Group as the Air Executive, Major C.V. Thornton was placed in command. When Thornton was shot down over Holland, Major Don Weiss assumed command. Promoted to Lt. Colonel, Weiss was shot down over Caen and Major J.T. Wilson then took over. When he left for the States, he turned it over to Major B.B. White. When later as a Lt. Colonel, White injured his knee and went home, he was replaced by Captain John Strand who was the Commander until V-E Day.

In late November 2002, the 555 FS deployed to Caslav AB, Czech Republic, to provide combat air patrols over the site of the NATO Summit. The deployment included the real world diversion of an unidentified airliner.

From December 2003 to early March 2004, the 510 FS deployed to the region in support of OEF and OIF. Flying almost 900 sorties, including 750 combat sorties, the squadron flew close air support (CAS) and airborne forward air control (FAC-A) missions. Of note, squadron pilots were overhead during and participated in the capture of Saddam Hussein on 13 December 2003. Further, the 510th's overhead presence contributed to a 50% reduction in improvised explosive device and infrastructure attacks against Coalition forces. The 555 FS replaced the 510th and, like the Buzzards, the Nickel supported OEF and OIF where they were active in OEF's "MOUNTAIN STORM" in Afghanistan. In Iraq, the squadron performed the first true urban close air support (CAS) missions in recent history, a first in the F-16. Additionally, the 555th spearheaded development of CENTAF's tactics, techniques, and procedures to support and defend convoys. Finally, the squadron pioneered the Air Force's first operational F-16 employment of Advance Targeting Pods.

In 2000, the wing began its full-fledged participation in the Expeditionary Air Force. From March to September 2000, the 510th and 555th Fighter Squadrons conducted back-to-back deployments to Ahmed Al Jaber AB, Kuwait, in support of Operation Southern WATCH (OSW). While at Al Jaber, the squadrons flew over 400 combat sorties providing precision-guided munitions (PGM) delivery while patrolling the southern NFZ. Then, the "Scorpions" of the 603rd Air Control Squadron (603 ACS) deployed to Ali Al Salem AB, Kuwait from February to June 2001. As the core of the 386th Expeditionary Air Control Squadron, the 121 personnel of the 603rd served as the primary air control squadron for OSW. Significantly, the deployment marked the first-ever deployment of the 603rd outside of Europe.

The 31 FW received two new squadrons at that time, the 510th and 555th Fighter Squadrons, along with their Block-40 F-16s. The wing immediately became involved with events in Bosnia, part of the former communist country of Yugoslavia, in May 1994, as part of Operation DENY FLIGHT. A year later, the country held its breath as a massive rescue operation took place to

extract Captain Scott O'Grady of the 555 FS from behind enemy lines. A US Marine Corps HH-53 picked him up after he evaded capture for six days. In August and September, Operation DELIBERATE FORCE began and the 31 FW conducted air strikes against Bosnian Serbs conducting ethnic purges among the Muslim population of the country. Peacekeeping operations continued in the Balkans through the end of 2004, when the European Union assumed responsibility for the region.

A US F-16 on Oct. 13 was hit by small arms fire during a mission in Afghanistan, forcing the pilot to jettison two fuel tanks and three weapons before returning to base, Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. Jeff Davis told reporters on Monday. The jet was hit in a stabilizer of one of its munitions during a low-level flight, he added. It was flying in the Sayid Karam district of eastern Paktia province, an area largely under Taliban control, reported Agence France-Presse. Militants posted pictures online posing with the discarded fuel tanks and weapons. Initial reports have ruled out any larger weaponry, such as surface-to-air missiles, involved in the incident, Davis said. Officials have confirmed where the jet was assigned, but a contingent of F-16s from Aviano AB, Italy, are assigned to the 555th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. 2015

F-16Cs on Monday deployed from Aviano AB, Italy, to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Freedom's Sentinel and ongoing coalition capacity building operations there, officials announced. "First and foremost, we're here to protect the guys on the ground," 555th Fighter Squadron Commander Lt. Col. Byron Pompa said in a release. "We've prepared for the last six months to a year for this moment and our young guys are chomping at the bit to get in there and see some action," he added. Airmen and jets from Aviano's 31st Fighter Wing are relieving F-16s from the 388th FW from Hill AFB, Utah. The Aviano unit will assume regional over watch and close air support responsibility for the next six months, according to officials. The jets touched down at Bagram April 27, according to the release. 2015

SOUDA BAY, Greece (AFNS) -- From Jan. 20-Feb. 3, the 31st Fighter Wing's 555th Fighter Squadron and Arizona Air National Guard's 161st Air Refueling Wing are participating in a flying training deployment to Souda Bay, Greece.

Fourteen F-16 Fighting Falcons, one KC-135 Stratotanker and 280 Airmen are partnering with their NATO ally, Greece, to evaluate aircraft and personnel capabilities, and to train with Greece's Hellenic Air Force.

These training engagements are planned in advance to strengthen military-to-military relationships and increase NATO ally interoperability. The scenarios involve combined flying operations between countries to identify and work through coordination concerns that may arise during real-world events.

"Training here at Souda Bay prepares us for any upcoming deployments," said Lt. Col. Rob

Faustman, the 555th FS director of operations. "Access to their ranges allows us to drop live ordnance ... and utilize other combative tools on our jets."

Engagements such as these strengthen relationships between the US, allies and partners, and demonstrate the United States' shared commitment to a safe and secure Europe.

"Our Greek counterparts have been extremely accommodating—we wouldn't be able to do any of this without them," Faustman said. "We look forward to continuing to work with them during an already-stellar FTD."2017

Howerton, Rex D. (AC)	Maj	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	14 Feb 68
Voigt, Ted L. II (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	14 Feb 68
Cobb, Larry D. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	26 Oct 67
Lavoy, Alan A. (pilot)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	26 Oct 67
Gordon, William S. III (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	26 Oct 67
Monsees, James H. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	26 Oct 67
Logeman, John D. Jr. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	26 Oct 67
McCoy, Fred E. II (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	26 Oct 67
Pascoe, Richard M. (AC)	Maj	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	5 Jun 67
Wells, Norman E. (pilot)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	5 Jun 67
Raspberry, Everett T. Jr. (AC)	Maj	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	5 Jun 67
Gullick, Francis M. (pilot)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4D	5 Jun 67
Hirsch, Thomas M. (AC)	Maj	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	6 Jan 67
Strasswimmer, Roger J. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	6 Jan 67
Pascoe, Richard M. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	6 Jan 67
Wells, Norman E. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	6 Jan 67
Olds, Robin (AC)	Col	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	4 May 67
Lafever, William D. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	4 May 67
Blake, Robert E. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	23 Apr 66
George, S. W. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	23 Apr 66
Cameron, Max F. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	23 Apr 66
Evans, Robert E. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	23 Apr 66

Dowell, William B. D. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	29 Apr 66
Gossard, Halbert E. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	29 Apr 66
Keith, Larry R. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	29 Apr 66
Bleakley, Robert A. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	29 Apr 66
Golberg, Lawrence H. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	30 Apr 66
Hardgrave, Gerald D. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	30 Apr 66
Jameson, Jerry W. (AC)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	16 Sep 66
Rose, Douglas B. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-17	F-4C	16 Sep 66
Olds, Robin (AC)	Col	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	2 Jan 67
Clifton, Charles C. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	2 Jan 67
Radeker, Walter S. III (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	2 Jan 67
Murray, James E. III (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	2 Jan 67
Raspberry, Everett T. Jr. (AC)	Capt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	2 Jan 67
Western, Robert W. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	2 Jan 67
Wetterhahn, Ralph F. (AC)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	2 Jan 67
Sharp, Jerry K. (pilot)	1Lt	555 TFS	1.0	MiG-21	F-4C	2 Jan 67

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