

1 SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING



MISSION

The 1 Special Operations Wing (1 SOW) at Hurlburt Field, Fla., is one of two Air Force active duty Special Operations wings and falls under the Air Force Special Operations Command. The 1 SOW mission focus is unconventional warfare: counter-terrorism, combat search and rescue, personnel recovery, psychological operations, aviation assistance to developing nations, "deep battlefield" resupply, interdiction and close air support. The wing has units located at Hurlburt Field, Fla., Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., and Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. The wing's core missions include aerospace surface interface, agile combat support, combat aviation advisory operations, information operations, personnel recovery/recovery operations, precision aerospace fires, psychological operations dissemination, specialized aerospace mobility and specialized aerial refueling. The 1 SOW also serves as a pivotal component of AFSOC's ability to provide and conduct special operations missions ranging from precision application of firepower to infiltration, exfiltration, resupply and refueling of special operations force operational elements. In addition, the 1 SOW brings distinctive intelligence capabilities to the fight, including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance contributions, predictive analysis, and targeting expertise to joint special operations forces and combat search and rescue operations. The wing flies AC-130H/Us, MC-130E/Hs, MC-130Ps, MH-53J/Ms, and UH-1Ns.

Hurlburt Field employs more than 8,000 military and 700 civilian personnel. The wing is divided into four groups.

1st Special Operations Group:

- 1st Special Operations Support Squadron
- 4th Special Operations Squadron, AC-130U Spooky Gunship

- 6th Special Operations Squadron, UH-1N Huey, MI-8, C130-E, AN-26, C-47
- 8th Special Operations Squadron, CV-22 Osprey
- 9th Special Operations Squadron, Eglin AFB, MC-130P Combat Shadow
- 15th Special Operations Squadron, MC-130H Combat Talon II
- 16th Special Operations Squadron, AC-130H Spectre Gunship
- 19th Special Operations Squadron, Formal Training
- 20th Special Operations Squadron, MH-53J/M Pave Low III/IV
- 319th Special Operations Squadron, U-28A

1st Special Operations Maintenance Group:

- 1st Special Operations Maintenance Operations Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Component Maintenance Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Equipment Maintenance Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Helicopter Maintenance Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Maintenance Squadron

1st Special Operations Mission Support Group:

- 1st Special Operations Civil Engineer Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Communications Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Comptroller Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Contracting Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Logistics Readiness Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Mission Support Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Security Forces Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Services Squadron

1st Special Operations Medical Group:

- 1st Special Operations Aerospace Medicine Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Dental Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Medical Operations Squadron
- 1st Special Operations Medical Support Squadron

The 1st SOW and Hurlburt Field also play host to several major partner units including Air Force Special Operations Command, 505th Command and Control Wing, Joint Special Operations University, 823rd RED HORSE Squadron and the 720th Special Tactics Group.

LINEAGE

16 Pursuit Group authorized on the inactive list, 24 Mar 1923

Activated, 1 Dec 1932

Redesignated 16 Pursuit Group (Interceptor), 6 Dec 1939

Redesignated 16 Fighter Group, 15 May 1942
Disestablished, 1 Nov 1943
Inactivated, 3 Nov 1945

1 Air Commando Group constituted, 25 Mar 1944
Activated, 29 Mar 1944

1 Air Commando Group established, 9 Aug 1944

1 Air Commando Group and 1 Air Commando Group headquarters unit of the new
establishment consolidated, 9 Aug 1944

Disestablished, 8 Oct 1948
Reestablished, 18 Apr 1962
Activated and organized, 27 Apr 1962
Redesignated 1 Air Commando Wing, 1 Jun 1963
Redesignated 1 Special Operations Wing, 8 Jul 1968
Redesignated 834 Tactical Composite Wing, 1 Jul 1974
Redesignated 1 Special Operations Wing, 1 Jul 1975

1 Air Commando Group and 1 Special Operations Wing, consolidated and redesignated 16
Special Operations Wing, 1 Oct 1993

Redesignated 1 Special Operations Wing, 16 Nov 2006

STATIONS

Albrook Field, CZ, 1 Dec 1932-1 Nov 1943
Hailakandi, India, 29 Mar 1944 (original unit)
Asansol, India, 20 May 1944-6 Oct 1945 (original unit to 9 Aug 1944, establishment thereafter)
Camp Kilmer, NJ, 1-3 Nov 1945
Eglin Air Force Auxiliary Field No. 9 (Hurlburt Field), FL, 27 Apr 1962
England AFB, LA, 15 Jan 1966
Eglin Air Force Auxiliary Field No. 9 (Hurlburt Field), FL, 15 Jul 1969

ASSIGNMENTS

3 Attack Wing, 1 Dec 1932
19 Composite (later, 19) Wing, 15 Jun 1933
12 Pursuit Wing, 20 Nov 1940
XXVI Interceptor (later, XXVI Fighter) Command, 6 Mar 1942-1 Nov 1943
Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector, 29 Mar 1944 (original unit assigned to 9 Aug 1944,
establishment assigned thereafter)
Tenth Air Force, 10 Jul 1945
Army Service Forces, 6 Oct-3 Nov 1945
USAF Special Air Warfare Center (later, USAF Special Operations Force), 27 Apr 1962

Tactical Air Command, 1 Jul 1974
Ninth Air Force, 1 Jul 1976
Tactical Air Command, 26 Sep 1980
Ninth Air Force, 1 Aug 1981
2 Air Division, 1 Mar 1983
Twenty Third Air Force (later, Air Force Special Operations Command), 1 Feb 1987

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-12, 1932-1943
OA-3 1933-1937
B-6, 1933-1937
OA-9, 1937-1940
Y-10, 1937-1940
A-17, 1937-1940
P-26, 1938-1941
P-36, 1939-1942
P-39, 1941-1943
P-40, 1941-1943
B-25, 1944
P-47, 1944-1945
P-51, 1944, 1945
UC-64, 1944-1945
L-1, 1944
L-5, 1944-1945
C-47, 1944-1945
YR-4, 1944-1945
CG-4, 1944-1945
TG-5, 1944-1945
C-46, 1962-1964
C/TC/VC-47, 1962-1970, 1973-1975
B/RB-26, 1962-1966
T/AT-28, 1962-1973
L-28 (later, U-10), 1962-1973
C/UC-123, 1963-1973
A-1, 1963-1966, 1969-1972
YAT-28, 1964-1965
YAT-37, 1964
O-1, 1964-1967, 1969-1971
AC-47, 1965, 1967-1969
U-3, 1966-1967
U-6, 1966-1967
UH-1, 1966, 1969-1974, 1976-1985
A/RA-26, 1966-1969
A-37, 1967-1969, 1969-1971, 1973-1974

EC/HC-47, 1967-1969, 1973
AC-123, 1967
C/MC-130, 1968
AC-130, 1968, 1971
EC-130, 1969
C/AC-119, 1968-1969, 1971-1972
O-2, 1969-1976
OV-10, 1969-1976
YQU-22, 1969-1970
QU-22, 1970-1971
CH-3, 1973-1974, 1976-1980
MH-53, 1980
MH-60, 1989
HC-130, 1989
T-29, 1969-1973
VT-29, 1969-1975
T-33, 1969-1975
T-39, 1969-1975
C-131, 1970-1973
VC-131, 1973-1975

COMMANDERS

Capt Rex F. Gilmartin, 7 Sep 1927
Inactive, 14 Jan 1929
Unknown, 2 Dec 1929
Maj Eugene A. Lohman, 1 Dec 1932
Maj Robert A. Candee, 16 May 1933
Lt Col Robert L. Walsh, 24 Jun 1933
Maj Robert L. Walsh, 2 Sep 1933
Lt Col Charles T. Phillips, 14 Aug 1935
Maj Gilbert T. Collar, 15 Sep 1936
Lt Col Benjamin G. Weir, 23 Sep 1936
Lt Col Willis H. Hale, 11 Jul 1938
Col Adlai H. Gilkeson, 14 Aug 1939
Maj Arthur L. Bump, 1939
Cpt Roger J. Browne, 24 Feb 1941
Lt Col Otto P. Weyland, 20 May 1941
Maj John A. H. Miller, 1 Mar 1942
Lt Col Philip B. Klein, 10 Apr 1942
Lt Col Hiette S. William, Jr., Sep 1942
Maj James K. Johnson, 1943
Maj Edwin Bishop, Jr., 25 Sep 1943
Col Philip G. Cochran, 29 Mar 1944
Col Clinton B. Gaty, 20 May 1944

Col Robert W. Hall, 7 Apr 1945-Unkn
Lt Col Miles M. Doyle, 27 Apr 1962
Col Chester A. Jack, 29 Apr 1962
Col Gerald R. Dix, 19 Mar 1963
Col Harry C. Aderholt, 28 Mar 1964
Col Gordon F. Bradburn, 10 Jul 1964
Col Hugh G. Fly, Jr., 1 Dec 1965
Col Alpheus W. Blizzard Jr., 3 Apr 1967
Col Albert S. Pouloit, 9 Sep 1967
Col Leonard Volet, 14 Feb 1969
Col Robert W. Gates, 15 Jul 1969
Col Michael C. Horgan, 31 Oct 1970
Col James H. Montrose, 1 Apr 1973
Brig Gen William J. Holton, 11 Jan 1974
Col Edward Levell, Jr., 1 Jul 1976
Col Richard H. Dunwoody, 29 Jul 1977
Col Theodore W. Stuart, 13 Mar 1980
Col Hugh L. Cox III, 26 Feb 1982
Col Hugh L. Hunter, 1 Mar 1983
Col Leonard A. Butler, 12 Jul 1985
Col Hanson L. Scott, 28 Aug 1986
Col Dale E. Stovall, 13 Jul 1987
Col George A. Gray III, 21 Jun 1989
Col Gary C. Vycital, 29 Aug 1990 (Temporary)
Col George A. Gray III, 24 Nov 1990
Col Gary C. Vycital, 24 Dec 1990 (Temporary)
Col George A. Gray III, 13 Mar 1991
Col Charles R. Holland, 20 Jun 1991
Brig Gen Maxwell C. Bailey, 7 Jun 1993
Brig Gen Norton A. Schwartz, 2 Jun 1995
Col Richard L. Comer, 16 May 1997
Col Donald C. Wurster; 12 Jun 1998
Col David J. Scott, 29 Jul 1999
Col Lyle M. Koenig, 29 Jun 2001
Col Frank J. Kisner, 28 Jun 2002
Col Otis G. Mannon, 24 Oct 2003
Col Norman J. Brozenick, Jr., 7 Jul 2005
Col Marshall B. Webb, 3 Jul 2007
Col Gregory J. Lengyel, 20 Nov 2008
Col Michael T. Plehn, 7 Jun 2010
Col James C. Slife, 29 Jun 2011
Col William P. West, 3 Jul 2013
Col Sean Farrell

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers

World War II

India-Burma

Central Burma

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Grenada, 1983

Panama, 1989-1990

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation

Burma and India, [Mar]-20 May 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device

1 May 1982-30 Apr 1984

1 Jun 1997-31 May 1999

1 Jul 2003-30 Jun 2005

1 Jul 2005-30 Jun 2007

Meritorious Unit Awards

1 Jul 2007-30 Jun 2009

1 Oct 2009-30 Sep 2011

1 Oct 2011-30 Sep 2013

1 Oct 2013-30 Sep 2015

1 Oct 2015-30 Sep 2017

1 Oct 2017-30 Sep 2019

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

Jul 1963-Jun 1965

1 Jul 1969-15 Apr 1971

1 Jan 1976-31 Mar 1977

15 Jul 1979-15 May 1980

16 May 1980-30 Apr 1982

1 May 1985-30 Apr 1987

1 May 1988-30 Apr 1990

16 Apr 1992-15 Apr 1994

1 Jun 1995-31 May 1997
 1 Jun 1997-31 May 1999
 1 Jul 1999-30 Jun 2001
 1 Jul 2001-30 Jun 2003
 1 Jul 2003-30 Jun 2005

EMBLEM



16 Pursuit Group emblem was four lightning bolts, representing the four assigned squadrons, depict destruction from the sky. (Approved, 1934)

World War II emblem was taken from the National Standard of the Chindits Old Comrades Association. On a blue field a Burmese Temple Lion and Pagoda, all gold resting on the Morse Code dot, dot, dot, dash. overall a label: NO. 1 AIR COMMANDOS.



Per fess Azure and paly of 13 Gules and Argent, in pale a sword point to base light blue, winged

fesswise in chief of the like, the blade surmounted in base by a lamp or enflamed of the third and fourth, all within a diminished bordure of the fifth. (Approved, 6 Jun 1963; replaced emblem approved, 4 Dec 1934.



The emblem of the 1 Special Operations Wing symbolizes its 63-year mission and emphasizes that the wing is the single focal point for all Air Force special operations matters. The shield reflects its historic past as the first organization to field limited and unconventional warfare. It was approved for the reconstituted 1 Air Commando Group on June 6, 1943. The background is national colors with the blue representing the sky and the Air Force. The 13 red and white stripes represent the 13 original colonies, the first American force to engage in limited war. The stripes also are reminiscent of the red and white diagonal markings on some 1 Air Commando Group aircraft, an ancestor of the 1 SOW. The silver dagger represents the air commando, and the dagger is winged to indicate that commandos come from the air. A golden lamp of knowledge reflects the wing's civic action role and indicates that wing members serve as teachers, as well as warriors, in assisting U.S. allies determine their own way of life and form of government.

MOTTO

ANY TIME, ANY PLACE

OPERATIONS

Constituted in the Regular Army on 24 March 1923 as Headquarters, 16 Pursuit Group and assigned to the General Headquarters Reserve. Designated Active Associate was the 9th Observation Group on 1923-27. Designated mobilization station was Mitchel Field, NY, 1923-30. Allotted to the Second Corps Area 28 February 1927. Organized on 7 September 1927 with Organized Reserve personnel as a RAI unit at New York City, NY. Withdrawn from the Second Corps Area 14 January 1929 and allotted to the Eighth Corps Area. Organized on 2 December 1929 with Organized Reserve personnel as a RAI unit at San Antonio, TX.

Activated on 1 December 1932, less Reserve personnel, at Albrook Field, CZ.

Provided fighter defense of Panama Canal operations, Dec 1932-Oct 1943.

Replaced the 5318th Provisional Air Unit in India in Mar 1944. As a miscellaneous unit, the group was comprised until Sep 1944 of operational sections (rather than units): bomber; fighter; light-plane (and helicopter); transport; glider; and light-cargo. The group provided fighter cover, bomb striking power, and air transport services for Wingate's Raiders, fighting behind enemy lines in Burma. Operations included airdrop and landing of troops, food, and equipment; evacuation of casualties; and attacks against enemy airfields and lines of communication. Converted from P-51 to P-47 fighters and eliminated its B-25 bomber section in May 1944. In Sep 1944, after the original unit was consolidated with the headquarters component of the new establishment (also called 1 Air Commando Group); the sections were replaced by a troop carrier, two fighter, and three liaison squadrons. The group continued performing supply, evacuation, and liaison services for allied forces in Burma until the end of the war, including the movement of Chinese troops from Burma to China in Dec 1944. It also attacked bridges, railroads, airfields, barges, oil wells, and troop positions in Burma and escorted bombers to Burmese targets, including Rangoon. Switched back to P-51s in May 1945. Left Burma in Oct and inactivated in NJ in Nov 1945.

Replaced the 4400th Combat Crew Training Group in Apr 1962 and assumed air commando operations and training responsibility. Trained USAF and South Vietnamese Air Force aircrews in the United States and South Vietnam in unconventional warfare, counterinsurgency, psychological warfare, and civic actions throughout the Southeast Asian conflict.

Between 11 Jan and 30 Jun 1974, the USAF Special Operations Force and 1 Special Operations Wing merged their operations, and on 1 Jul 1974, the wing assumed responsibility for operating the USAF Air Ground Operations School, which trained personnel in concepts, doctrine, tactics, and procedures of joint and combined operations until 1 Feb 1978, and the USAF Special Operations School, which trained selected American and allied personnel in special operations, until Mar 1983.

As the Nixon Doctrine became reality and the Vietnam War began winding down, SOF was gradually squeezed by budget and manpower cuts. By the early 1970s, SOF unit manning had declined by 70% and continued to decline throughout the decade. On 30 June 1974, the USAFSOF was redesignated the 834th Tactical Composite Wing (TCW), effectively bringing to a close the most aggressive, far reaching effort by USAF to support unconventional warfare operations. On 1 July 1975, the 834th TCW was renamed the 1 Special Operations Wing (1 SOW), the designation which it had carried from 8 July 1968 to 30 June 1974.

Elements of the wing participated in the attempt in Apr 1980 to rescue US hostages held in Tehran, Iran. Thereafter, continued to work closely with multi-service special operations forces to develop combat tactics for numerous types of aircraft and conduct combat crew training for USAF and foreign aircrews.

Conducted numerous disaster relief; search and rescue; medical evacuation; and humanitarian support missions. Supported drug interdiction efforts in a coordinated program involving multiple US and foreign agencies, 1983-1985.

Conducted airdrop and airlift of troops and equipment; psychological operations, close air support, reconnaissance, search and rescue, and attacks against enemy airfields and lines of communications in support of the rescue of US nationals in Grenada, Oct-Nov 1983, and the restoration of democracy in Panama, Dec 1989-Jan 1990.

Beginning Aug 1990, deployed personnel and equipment to Saudi Arabia. These forces carried out combat search and rescue, unconventional warfare, and direct strike missions during the conflict, including suppression of Iraqi forces during the Battle of Khafji, Jan 1991.

When President George Bush ordered the execution of Operation Desert Storm in January 1991, MH-53J Pave Lows from the 20th SOS teamed with Army helicopters and led the first wave assault against Iraqi air defense systems. During the war, MC-130E Combat Talons dropped leaflets on Iraqi forces, MH-53Js provided combat search and rescue, and AC-130H gunships flew armed reconnaissance and destroyed ground targets. MH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters performed combat search and rescue and inserted Special Forces behind enemy lines. HC-130 Combat Shadows flew deep aerial refueling for wing helicopters in a high-threat environment. A heavy price was paid when the wing lost AC-130H gunship "Spirit 03" and her aircrew to Iraqi ground fire. In the 1990's, the Air Commando Spirit lives on. MH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and Combat Shadow tankers flew missions in support of Operation Provide Comfort, aiding the Kurdish refugees in Turkey and Northern Iraq. In 1992's Operation Restore and 1993's Operation Continue Hope, Pave Hawks flew hazardous search-and-rescue missions to assist starving citizens enduring a bloody civil war. Again, air commandos went in harm's way and paid a price, losing gunship "Jockey 14."

Deployed personnel and equipment worldwide, performing combat search and rescue, and supporting contingencies, humanitarian relief, and exercises that included Bosnia-Herzegovina, Iraq, Kuwait, and Central America.

Elements of the wing deployed to participate in operations Provide Comfort in Iraq, 1991-1996 and Deny Flight, Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1993-1995.

On Oct. 1, 1993 the United States Air Force redesignated the 1 SOW as the 16 SOW. The redesignation occurred as part of then Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Merrill A. McPeak's effort to protect Air Force heritage. Upon becoming Chief of Staff, General McPeak tasked the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. to develop a historical scoring system for wings and squadrons that would permit the Air Force leadership to keep those unit designations with the most history points during down-sizing actions. The historical agency personnel developed a scoring system based upon a unit's total years of service, service streamers, campaign or expeditionary credits, combat decorations, foreign decorations, non-combat decorations and aerial victory credits. General McPeak directed that no active duty units would have the same designation. At the time, the 1 SOW shared its numerical designation with the 1 Fighter Wing, Langley AFB, VA, and the recently inactivated 1 Space Wing, Peterson AFB, Colo. Under the AFHRA scoring system, the 1 FW accumulated the most points, thus the 1 SOW had to be renamed. To comply with General McPeak's requirement, the AFHRA personnel reconstituted the 16 Fighter Group and consolidated it with the 1 SOW. The 16 FG had a unique but short history in that it was activated in the Panama Canal Zone on Dec. 1, 1932 and served as part of the then very crucial defense of the Panama Canal. In 1939, the unit was redesignated the 16 Pursuit Group (Interceptor), and in 1941, the 16 Fighter Group. The unit was disbanded on Nov. 1, 1943. The 16 was of historical importance in that it was one of the original 13 Air Force units created between 1918 and 1932.

It supported operation Deliberate Force/Joint Endeavor, Aug-Sep 1995 and 14-20 Dec 1996, flying combat missions and attacking targets critical to Bosnian-Serb Army operations. Wing elements participated in operations Northern and Southern Watch in 1997 and again participated in combat operations in Desert Thunder, Feb-Jun 1998 and Desert Fox, 17-21 Dec 1998. It assumed an additional mission, supporting the Aerospace Expeditionary Forces in Feb 2000. In 2001 and 2003 deployed elements to Afghanistan and Iraq and performed combat operations in the global war on terror.

The 16 Special Operations Wing distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious service from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2001. During this period, the 16 Special Operations Wing deployed 15,747 troops, 818 aircraft comprised of 9 distinctly different operational flying squadrons, and 8,674 tons of cargo across 4 theaters and a total of 50,932 accident-free hours in support of National Command Authorities missions worldwide. The men and women performed spectacularly in a variety of missions overseas during Operations GOALKEEPER II, EASTERN VIPER, BLUE LIGHTNING, DESERT SPRING, EASTERN VALOR, and SOUTHERN WATCH as well as at home during four real-world hurricane evacuations.

The 16 Special Operations Wing distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious service from 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2003. Despite being fully engaged in combat operations supporting the global war on terrorism during Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM, wing

personnel repeatedly excelled at home station. During this period, the wing supported recovery operations at the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001. With nearly two-thirds of its aircraft and 30 percent of its airmen deployed to two simultaneous combat theaters in support of combat operations, the wing continued to hone its dagger, accumulating 24,307 flying hours during 6,213 sorties. Support for the war-fighters families and the community never faltered.

The 16 Special Operations Wing, Air Force Special Operations Command, distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious service from 1 July 2003 to 30 June 2005. During this period, the 16 Special Operations Wing continued to serve on the forefront executing the nation's objectives for the Global War on Terrorism. The rag successfully executed over 3,000 combat sorties totaling over 17,000 combat hours in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. They also responded within 48 hours to support Operation SECURE TOMORROW, the rapid stabilization response to the upheaval in Haiti. The men and women of the 16 Special Operations Wing repeatedly rose to the challenge, responding to three hurricane events including the Category IV Hurricane Ivan, the strongest storm to strike the Gulf Coast in over 30 years. Despite the forced evacuation of over 20,000 Hurlburt Field personnel and 34 aircraft, the wing maintained the highest level of readiness and reestablished operations within 24 hours of the storm passing overcoming over \$80 million in damages.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

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Sources

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.