

## 15 EXPEDITIONARY MOBILITY TASK FORCE



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE<sup>1</sup>

Fifteenth Air Force established, 30 Oct 1943

Activated, 1 Nov 1943

Inactivated, 15 Sep 1945

Activated, 31 Mar 1946

Redesignated 15 Expeditionary Mobility Task Force, 1 Oct 2003

Inactivated, 2012

#### STATIONS

Tunis, Tunisia, 1 Nov 1943

Bari, Italy, 1 Dec 1943

Ent AFB, Colorado Springs, CO, 31 Mar 1946

March AFB, CA, 7 Nov 1949

Travis AFB, CA, 1 Jul 1993

#### ASSIGNMENTS

North African Theater of Operations, 1 Nov 1943

Army Air Forces, Mediterranean Theater of Operations, 26 Apr 1944-15 Sep 1945

Strategic Air Command, 31 Mar 1946

Air Mobility Command, 1 Jun 1992

Eighteenth Air Force, 1 Oct 2003

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<sup>1</sup> Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

## **COMMANDERS**

Maj Gen James H. Doolittle, 1 Nov 1943  
Maj Gen Nathan F. Twining, 3 Jan 1944  
Brig Gen James A. Mollison, 26 May 1945  
Brig Gen William L. Lee, 3 Aug 1945  
Col Elmer J. Rogers, Jr., 31 Aug-15 Sep 1945  
Maj Gen Charles F. Born, 31 Mar 1946  
Brig Gen Leon W. Johnson, 24 Apr 1947  
Maj Gen Emmett O'Donnell, Jr., 6 Oct 1948  
Maj Gen Walter C. Sweeney, Jr., 20 Apr 1953  
Maj Gen Archie J. Old, Jr., C. 20 Aug 1955  
Lt Gen William K. Martin, 1 Sep 1966  
Lt Gen Jack J. Catton, 1 Aug 1968  
Lt Gen Paul K. Carlton, 1 Aug 1969  
Lt Gen William F. Pitts, 27 Nov 1972  
Lt Gen Bryan M. Shotts, 1 Aug 1975  
Lt Gen James P. Mullins, 1 Nov 1978  
Lt Gen John J. Murphy, 14 Jul 1981  
Lt Gen James E. Light, Jr., 1 Sep 1983  
Lt Gen Richard A. Burpee, 26 Jan 1988  
Lt Gen Robert D. Beckel, 5 Feb 1990  
Lt Gen John E. Jackson, Jr., 1 Jul 1992  
Lt Gen Walter Kross, 7 Aug 1993  
Maj Gen Marvin S. Ervin (Temporary), 18 Jul 1994  
Lt Gen Bruce L. Fister, 3 Aug 1994  
Lt Gen Charles T. Robertson, Jr., 9 Sep 1996  
Lt Gen John B. Sams, Jr, 24 Jul 1998  
Lt Gen Walter S. Hogle, Jr., 1 Nov 1999  
Maj Gen John D. Becker, 3 Jul 2001  
Brig Gen Richard E. Perraut, Jr., 1 Oct 2003  
Brig Gen Brooks L. Bash, 27 Oct 2004  
Brig Gen Mark E. Stearns, 15 Sep 2006

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

Air Combat, EAME Theater  
Air Offensive, Europe  
Naples-Foggia  
Anzio  
Rome-Arno  
Normandy

Northern France  
Southern France  
North Apennines  
Rhineland  
Central Europe  
Po Valley

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1984-30 Jun 1986

1 Jul 1989-30 Jun 1991

1 Jul 1993-30 Jun 1995

1 Jul 1995-30 Jun 1997

1 Jul 1997-30 Jun 1999

1 Jul 1999-30 Jun 2000

1 Jul 2000-30 Jun 2001

1 Jul 2001- 30 Jun 2003

1 Oct 2004-30 Sep 2005

1 Oct 2005-30 Sep 2006

### **EMBLEM**





On a blue disc a white star charged with a red disc in the center and with golden orange stylized wings below a golden orange Arabic numeral "15", all within a golden orange annulet. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The insignia is in the colors of the Air Forces. The white star with the red center together with the wings indicates that it is an organization of the Army Air Forces, while the number "15" is the numerical designation of the organization. (Approved, 19 Feb 1944; revised, 7 Jul 1994)

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

In late 1943, Fifteenth Air Force was newly established in the Mediterranean theater as a strategic air force. The new air force drew its operational units from existing air forces in the European and Mediterranean theaters and commenced combat operations the day after it was formed.

In early 1950, SAC's three numbered air forces were somewhat distinct. The Eighth was concerned primarily with medium and heavy bombers, the Fifteenth concentrated on medium bombers, and the Second devoted its attentions almost exclusively to reconnaissance activities. Expansion and the integration of B-36s and B-50s into the command created the need for a more balanced organization. Geographic factors also prompted the need for reorganization. Headquarters Second Air Force, located in Louisiana, controlled units at Fairfield-Suisun Air Force Base, California, while Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, located in California, controlled units at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. On 1 April, the SAC forces were realigned. Each numbered air force was assigned both bomber and reconnaissance aircraft and was assigned units and bases in rather specific geographical regions of the United States—the Second in the eastern part, the Eighth in the central region, and the Fifteenth in the western area.

By 1955, the New York-New England area was becoming increasingly important to SAC operations. Dow and Loring Air Force Bases, Maine, had been supporting F-84 and B-36 wings, respectively, for some time; Westover Air Force Base, Massachusetts, which became a SAC installation on 1 April, was being groomed to support tankers and bombers; and new B-47/KC-

97 bases were being built at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Plattsburgh, New York. In line with this expansion, SAC realigned its three numbered air forces and, effective 13 June, moved Headquarters Eighth Air Force from Carswell Air Force Base, Texas, to Westover. Following this realignment, SAC's numbered air forces were generally responsible for units and bases in the following geographical sections of the country: Second—southeast (including Texas); Eighth—northeast and central; Fifteenth—southwest and west.

Effective 1 January 1959, SAC realigned several bases and units between the Second and Eighth Air Forces. One base and its assigned units were transferred from the Eighth to the Fifteenth Air Force. Basically, this realignment placed the Eighth Air Force in control of forces in the eastern section of the United States and Second Air Force in command of forces in the central section. The Fifteenth's area of responsibility remained in the western section of the country.

On 1 July 1963, SAC reorganized its three numbered air forces in the United States. This realignment was effected primarily to correct an imbalance in the assignment of missiles. Due to restrictive geological factors in the eastern part of the United States, the Eighth Air Force's role in the SAC ICBM program had been limited to one squadron of Atlas F missiles at Plattsburgh Air Force Base, New York. With additional B-47 and KC-97 units of the Eighth Air Force scheduled to be inactivated in the following years, the imbalance of forces among the three numbered air forces would be accentuated. Completely disregarding whatever influence geographical factors may have had upon a numbered air force's area of responsibility, SAC directed that its three numbered air forces be realigned on 1 July, an action which overnight plunged the Eighth Air Force into an operational ICBM environment in the Midwestern and Rocky Mountain regions of the United States. From the Fifteenth, the Eighth acquired a tenant Titan I wing at Lowry Air Force Base, Colorado, and Francis E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming, with an operational Atlas wing. With the acquisition of F. E. Warren, a Minuteman wing was activated there. From the Second Air Force, the Eighth acquired a Titan II wing, which would begin receiving missiles shortly thereafter at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, and Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri, together with its embryonic Minuteman wing.

By 1 July 1973, the Second and Fifteenth Air Forces had completed a major unit realignment program. This program entailed giving the air division diversified missions with a variety of weapon systems rather than allowing them to specialize in one weapon system. It also included placing some ICBM units - one Minuteman and two Titan wings -under the Second Air Force rather than having all missile units concentrated in the Fifteenth Air Force as had been the case since the numbered air force realignment of early 1970. The numbered air force realignment was effected in a series of reassignment actions extending from 15 February through 1 July.

In the postwar years it became one of Strategic Air Command's primary numbered air forces. Upon its transfer to Air Mobility Command in 1992, Fifteenth Air Force assumed responsibility for airlift and air refueling missions. Beginning in 2003, served as an expeditionary task force conducting air mobility operations in support of worldwide contingencies, humanitarian operations, exercises and other missions.

The 18 AF commands two EMTFs, the 15 EMTF at Travis AFB, and the 21 EMTF at McGuire AFB. The EMTF's mission is to provide rapid, tailored, world-wide, air mobility responses to support the combatant commanders' requirements. The EMTF's are the source for a variety of deployable Global Air Mobility Support System GAMSS units. The EMTFs support Rapid Global Mobility operations via AMC infrastructure, through both enroute employment and rapid forward deployment capabilities. In order to project and sustain combat forces worldwide, the EMTFs provide mission-ready Command and Control (C2) elements, Aerial Port operations, Aircraft Maintenance, Air Traffic Control, Security Forces, Civil Engineering, Weather, Finance, Supply, and Intelligence Personnel, as well as, Airlift, Air-refueling, and Aeromedical Evacuation expertise. An important function of the EMTF is the establishment of airlift operations in the planning, opening and execution of initial airfield operations.

Air Mobility Command inactivated the 15th Expeditionary Mobility Task Force at Travis AFB, Calif., one day after standing down the 21st EMTF-a parallel organization at JB McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. Part of AMC's streamlining of mobility forces, 18th Air Force is relinquishing the roles and units formerly assigned to the task forces to the Air Force Expeditionary Center at McGuire. Along with the 515th Air Mobility Operations Wing at JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, the 615th Contingency Response Wing at Travis formally transferred to AFEC control in a ceremony Tuesday at Travis. "The mission will continue no matter what we do to the wing," said Lt. Gen. Mark Ramsay, 18th AF commander, addressing 615th CRW airmen at the ceremony. "When other nations have called on America in a time of need, we have always responded. . . . That will continue," he added, noting that former 15th EMTF constituent units at Travis and Hickam will remain in place. 2012<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

