

24 SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING



MISSION

The mission of the 24 SOW is to provide special tactics forces for rapid global employment to enable airpower success. The 24 Special Operations Wing allows a single commander to lead the recruiting, training and development of our special tactics warriors and ultimately provide combatant commanders with world-class Airmen to accomplish their mission. Capabilities of the Wing include airfield reconnaissance, assessment and control. Special tactics Airmen also engage in joint terminal attack control, personnel recovery, weather and environmental reconnaissance.

LINEAGE¹

24 Composite Wing (Special), established, 19 Nov 1942

Activated, 25 Dec 1942

Disestablished, 15 Jun 1944

Reestablished as 24 Composite Wing, 5 Aug 1946

Activated, 25 Aug 1946

Inactivated, 28 Jul 1948

Activated, 30 Oct 1967

Organized, 8 Nov 1967

Redesignated 24 Air Commando Wing, 15 Mar 1968

Redesignated 24 Special Operations Wing, 15 Jul 1968

Redesignated 24 Special Operations Group, 30 Jun 1972

Redesignated 24 Composite Group, 15 Nov 1973

Redesignated 24 Composite Wing, 1 Jan 1976

¹ Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, Alabama.

Inactivated, 31 Jan 1987
Activated, 1 Jan 1989
Inactivated, 15 Feb 1991
Redesignated 24 Wing, 1 Feb 1992
Activated, 11 Feb 1992
Inactivated, 1 Nov 1999
Redesignated 24 Special Operations Wing, 12 Jun 2012

STATIONS

Camp Olympia, Reykjavik, Iceland, 25 Dec 1942
Camp Tripoli, Reykjavik, Iceland, 13 Mar–15 Jun 1944
Borinquen Field (later, Borinquen AAFld; Borinquen Field: Ramey AFB), Puerto Rico, 25 Aug
1946–28 Jul 1948
Albrook AFB, Canal Zone, 8 Nov 1967
Howard AFB, Canal Zone (later, Panama), 3 Jan 1968–31 Jan 1987
Howard AFB, Panama, 1 Jan 1989–15 Feb 1991; 11 Feb 1992 – 1 Nov 1999
Hurlburt Field, Florida, 12 Jun 2012

ASSIGNMENTS

Iceland Base Command, US Army Forces, Iceland, 25 Dec 1942–15 Jun 1944
Caribbean Air Command, 25 Aug 1946–28 Jul 1948
United States Air Forces Southern Command, 30 Oct 1967
United States Air Force Southern Air Division, 1 Jan 1976–31 Jan 1987
830 Air Division, 1 Jan 1989–15 Feb 1991
Twelfth Air Force, 11 Feb 1992–1 Nov 1999
Air Force Special Operations Command, 12 Jun 2012

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-38, 1942–1944
P-39, 1942–1943
P-40, 1943–1944
P-47, 1944
B-17, 1946–1947
B-17/F-9, 1948
C-47, 1946–1948
C-54, 1947–1948
F-2, 1948
A-26, 1967–1968
C-46, 1967–1968
C-47, 1967–1970
VC-47, 1967–1970
C-54, 1967–1972
C-118, 1967–1971
VC-118, 1967

C-130, 1967-1984
C-131, 1967-1968
CH-3, 1967-1970
HH-19, 1967-1969
T-28, 1967-1970
VT-29, 1967-1970
U-10, 1967-1971
UH-1, 1967-1983
A-37, 1969-1972
HU-16, 1969
C-123, 1970-1973
UC-123, 1970-1975
VC-123, 1970-1973
C-119, 1971, 1973
O-2, 1971- 1986
A-7, 1972-1985, 1985-1987
A-10, 1985
OA-37, 1985-1987
OA-37, 1989-1991
C-21, 1992
CT-43, 1992
C-27, 1992
C-130, 1992

COMMANDERS

Brig Gen George P. Tourtellot, 25 Dec 1942
Brig Gen Early E. W. Duncan, 5-15 Jun 1944
Col George H. Steel, 25 Aug 1946
Brig Gen John A. Samford, 6 Mar 1947-28 Jul 1948
None (not manned), 30 Oct-7 Nov 1967
Col Richard Jones, 8 Nov 1967
Col James G. Silliman, 13 Dec 1967
Col Joseph A. Stuart, Jr., 14 Jun 1968
Col Leslie E. Gaskins, 1 Jun 1971
Col Robert S. Beale, 30 Mar 1974
Col William E. Roth, 15 Aug 1975
Col Paul M. Davis, 1 Jan 1976
Col Alton J. Thogersen, 16 Jan 1976
Col Robert E. Patterson, 5 Jan 1979
Col Robert R. Reed, 10 Jun 1980
Col Wayne R. Topp, 5 Oct 1982
Col Loren E. Timm, 2 Jul 1984
Col Harold E. Watson, 3 Dec 1985-31 Jan 1987
Unkn, 1-16 Jan 1989

Col Lansford E. Trapp, Jr., 17 Jan 1989
Col David J. McCloud, 25 Jun 1990–15 Feb 1991
Brig Gen David Oakes, 11 Feb 1992
Brig Gen David A. Sawyer, 13 Jul 1992

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Combat, European-African-Middle-Eastern Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989–1990

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

2 Jun–3 Jul 1970

16 Mar 1971–15 Mar 1973

1 Jul 1976–30 Jun 1978

1 Apr 1982–31 Mar 1984

1 May 1984– 31 Mar 1986

20 Dec 1989–14 Feb 1991

EMBLEM





Azure, a stylized square-rigged ship of three mast sails set, flag and pennants flotant sailing to sinister above an arced olive branch to dexter and an arced lightning flash to sinister conjoined in base Or, all within a diminished bordure of the like. (Approved, 16 Aug 1994; replaced emblem approved, 1968)

MOTTO

LOS PROFESIONALES — The professionals

OPERATIONS

Served in the defense of Iceland, Dec 1942–Jun 1944. From Aug 1946 until replaced by the Antilles Air Division in Jul 1948, supervised large numbers of major and minor bases and Air Force units in the Caribbean area from Puerto Rico to British Guiana.

Organized once more in Nov 1967 in the Canal Zone, replacing the 5700th Air Base Wing. The wing assumed operation and maintenance responsibilities for Howard and Albrook Air Force Bases and a special operations mission that included air transport, paramilitary operations, exercise participation, civic actions in Central and South America, search and rescue missions, humanitarian operations, mercy missions, aeromedical evacuation, and support of Army Special

Forces, US military assistance units, and training of Latin American air forces.

From activation in 1967 until mid-1972, the 24 Wing operated the USAF Tropic Survival School at Albrook. It controlled various rotational detachments, 1967–1987. Lost UH–1s and control of search and rescue missions in the area after 1 Mar 1983.

Wing inactivated on 31 Jan 1987, its subordinate components reassigned directly to the USAF Southern Air Division.

Wing activated on 1 Jan 1989, again assuming responsibilities for Howard AFB and Albrook AFS.

The wing flew combat sorties in the invasion of Panama, Dec 1989–Jan 1990.

Trained foreign and domestic pilots in forward air control. Flew search and rescue, aeromedical airlift and disaster relief missions in the Latin American region, 1989–1990.

Members of the wing deployed to Southwest Asia to provide air liaison support between ground forces and air operations, 1 Oct 1990–Feb 1991.

When the 24 Composite Wing inactivated in 1991, its assets were placed under Air Forces in Panama.

On 11 Feb 1992 the wing activated, becoming the senior USAF organization in Panama, replacing the previous command and division-level Air Force host units. Primary mission of the 24 Wing was to provide, control, and employ air power as directed by Commander in Chief of USSOUTHCOM and USSOUTHAF to protect and defend interests of United States in Latin America. Missions included counternarcotics operations, aerial command and control, intratheater airlift, security assistance and defense of the Panama Canal. The wing operates both Howard AFB and Albrook Air Force Station. In Jun 1992, it began operating the only C–21, CT–43, C–27 and special mission C–130s in ACC.

U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command activated the 24 Special Operations Wing in a ceremony at Hurlburt Field, Fla., 12 June 2012 to meet the growing demand for the unique capabilities special tactics Air Commandos provide. AFSOC commander Lt. Gen. Eric Fiel said creation of this new brand of wing better prepares the special tactics community to meet the swiftly evolving requirements of a global special operations forces partnership. "While the pace of global special operations has been demanding throughout this past decade, we cannot expect to slow down over the next," he said. It is this pace that makes the activation of the 24 SOW so monumental. America has been at war running operations for more than a decade with a volunteer force, Fiel said. The special tactics Airmen who have been a constant presence in these operations comprise less than half of a single percent of the population. In assuming command of the 24 SOW, Col. Robert Armfield recognized the magnitude of what is being asked of his Airmen and what they are accomplishing under a highly demanding operational

tempo. Our challenge now is to take this investment that you've made in resources and turn it into combat capability for the AFSOC portfolio, and we're going to do it," Armfield said.