

31st RESCUE SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

31st Air Rescue Squadron constituted, 17 Oct 1952
Activated, 14 Nov 1952
Discontinued, 18 Sep 1960
Organized, 8 Jul 1963
Redesignated 31st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, 8 Jan 1966
Inactivated, 1 Jul 1975
Activated, 8 Jan 1981
Redesignated 31st Special Operations Squadron, 6 Apr 1989
Inactivated, 31 Aug 2001
Redesignated 31st Rescue Squadron, 16 May 2003
Activated, 31 Jul 2003

STATIONS

Clark AB, Philippines, 14 Nov 1952
Naha AB, Okinawa, 12-18 Sep 1960
Clark AB, Philippines, 8 Jul 1963-1 Jul 1975
Clark AB, Philippines, 8 Jan 1981
Marine Corps Air Station, Futenma, Okinawa, Japan, 29 Jun 1991
Osan AB, South Korea, Jul 1992-31 Aug 2001
Kadena AB, Japan, 31 Jul 2003

ASSIGNMENTS

2nd Air Rescue Group, 14 Nov 1952

Air Rescue Service, 24 Jun 1958-18 Sep 1960

Air Rescue (later, Aerospace Rescue and Recovery) Service, 8 Jul 1963

Pacific Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Center (later, 41st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Wing), 1

Apr 1967-1 Jul 1975

41st Rescue and Weather Reconnaissance Wing, 8 Jan 1981

353rd Special Operations Wing (later, 353rd Special Operations Group) 6 Apr 1989-31 Aug 2001

18th Operations Group, 31 Jul 2003

ATTACHMENTS

Pacific Air Rescue [later, Pacific Aerospace Rescue and Recovery] Center, 8 Jul 1963-31 Mar 1967

WEAPON SYSTEMS

SA-16, 1952-1960

H-19, 1952-1955

SH-19, 1955-1960

HH-19, 1963-1964

HC-54, 1964-1965

HH-43, 1964-1970, 1971-1972

HC-97, 1965-1966

HC-130, 1966-1975

HH-3, 1968-1975

HH-3, 1981-1990

CH-3, 1981-1990

MH-53, 1990-2001

CH-53C

HH-53C

MH-47, 2001

COMMANDERS

Maj Sherwin G. Desens, 14 Nov 1952

LTC Edward P. Langebartel, Jun 1955

LTC Frank M. Allen, 21 Jun 1955

Maj Reuben J. Brown Jr., 1 Jul 1956

Maj Frederick E. Weigand, 26 Jul 1956

LTC George P. Bahler, 6 Sep 1956

LTC Felix G. Brenner, 1 Apr 1958

Maj Alexander S. Sherry, c. Jun 1960

Maj Willard D. Welch, by Jul 1960

LTC Ernest M. Magee, 27 Jul-18 Sep 1960

None (not manned) 18 Sep 1960-7 Jul 1963
Maj Cortez C. Brown, 8 Jul 1963
LTC Gardner W. Kendall, 25 Aug 1963
LTC Karol F. Rybos, 29 May 1965
LTC Melbourne J. Nibe, 2 Aug 1966
LTC George C. Pinyerd, 2 Jun 1968
LTC Robert Galt Jr., 6 Jun 1970
LTC James J. Krajicek Jr., 30 Jun 1970
LTC Carl W. Olsson, c. Jul 1972
LTC Herbert D. Kalen, 1 Jan 1975
LTC Richard H. Smith, 24 Jan-1 Jul 1975
LTC Doyle W. Krauss, 8 Jan 1981
LTC Robert P. Starnes, 19 Jun 1981
LTC Robert M. Stankovich, 12 Jun 1984
LTC Thomas C. Marsh, 12 May 1986
LTC Dale J. Cook, 18 May 1988
LTC Lee T. Massey, 14 Aug 1990
LTC Eugene A. Correll, 18 Dec 1991
LTC Craig R. Jensen, 20 Dec 1993
LTC Bob L. Hunt, 13 Dec 1994
LTC Lyle M. Koenig Jr., 7 Jul 1995
LTC Clayton P. Spriet, 26 Jul 1996
LTC Steven F. Dreyer, 4 Aug 1997
LTC T. Tracey Goetz, 3 Aug 1998
LTC Steven R. Otto, 16 Jul 1999
LTC Brendan G. Clare, 30 Jun 2000-30 Jun 2001
Unkn, Jul-31 Aug 2001
Maj Coy Speer, 31 Jul 2003
Maj Charles E. Metrolis Jr., 24 Jun 2005

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device
12 Feb-17 May 1975

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1964-30 Jun 1966
1 Jul 1966-31 May 1968
1 Jun 1969-31 May 1971
1 Jun 1971-31 May 1973
1 Jun 1973-31 May 1975
[8 Jan]-15 Jun 1981
1 Apr 1984-31 Mar 1986
1 Apr 1986-31 Mar 1988
6 Apr 1989-5 Apr 1991
1 Jun 1993-31 May 1995
1 Sep 1995-31 Aug 1997
16 Oct 1998-31 May 2000
13 Oct 2000-[31 Aug 2001]
31 Jul 2003-30 Sep 2004

Meritorious Unit Citation (Navy)

1 Jul 1967-26 Jul 1969

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966-17 Jan 1967

Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation

21 Jul-15 Aug 1972

EMBLEM



31st Air Rescue Squadron emblem



31st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron



31st Special Operations Squadron emblem



31st Special Operations Squadron approved, 15 Sep 1993



31st Rescue Squadron emblem

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

23 Jul 54 A British Cathay-Pacific DC-4 airliner was shot down by Chinese Communist aircraft near Hainan Island. An SA-16 crew of the 31st AR Squadron picked up nine of the survivors, one of whom died on the flight to Hong Kong.

17 Mar 57 In the Philippines a plane carrying President Ramon Magsaysay and a party of 26

persons crashed near Cebu City. The 31st AR Squadron participated in the ensuing SAR mission. Only one person survived.

14 Jul 60 A civilian DC-7 with 58 aboard ditched off the coast of Island, Republic of the Philippines. Three SA-16s from the 31st AR Squadron rescued 27 survivors.

10 Apr 1968 Two Philippine fishing boats capsized in rough seas about 400 miles north of Clark AB, dumping 31 fishermen overboard five miles from shore. The 31st ARR Squadron sent an HC-130 to the scene, and two pararescuemen parachuted into the ocean to aid the victims. The pararescuemen rescued about 17 fishermen and put them in life rafts dropped from the HC-130.

28 Oct 70 HH-3 aircrew from the 31st ARR Squadron saved 39 persons from the disabled Chinese tanker Tong Lam, aground on the Scarborough Reef, 150 miles west of Clark AB, Republic of the Philippines.

7 Oct 1971 Responding to an SOS during Typhoon Elaine, two helicopters from the 31st ARR Squadron at Clark AB, Republic of the Philippines, rescued 25 Hong Kong Chinese from their sinking ship, the Kee Lang.

Three HC-130s and two HH-3s from the 31st APR Squadron hoisted 29 Philippine sailors and one pet orangutan from lifeboats after their logging ship, the San Mort-in, sank about 500 miles east northeast from the Island of Luzon. Twenty-nine plus saves. 2-3 Dec 1972

In June 1965, an HU-16 from the 31st APRS landed in 14 foot swells to pull four survivors from the Pacific Ocean after two B-52s collided and crashed enroute to Southeast Asia. The survivors and two PJs were transferred to a passing Norwegian freighter, while the HU-16 crew stayed with their aircraft, which had been damaged during the rescue. Immediately after the crew was taken aboard a Navy ship, the Albafross sank.

Combat rescue in Southeast Asia, 1965-1966. Operated Joint Rescue Coordination Center for Thirteenth Air Force, Apr 1967-Jul 1975.

Supported evacuation of Saigon, South Vietnam, flying 108 hours in combat search and rescue, Feb-May 1975.

Provided rotary wing search and rescue capabilities in Southwest Pacific area, 1981-1989, and rotary wing unconventional warfare and special operations resources in the Far East, 1990-2001.

25 Feb 86 Following a disputed election in the Republic of the Philippines, the 31st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron flew five H-3s to the presidential palace in Manila and evacuated President Ferdinand Marcos and 51 other persons from the palace to Clark Air Base

(AB). In addition, 15 other persons were evacuated from the US Embassy in Manila to Clark AB. Subsequently, President Marcos and his family were flown to Guam in a C-9, then to Hickam AFB, Hawaii, in a C-141.

The 31st Special Operations Squadron Black Knights are no more — almost. The 50-year-old unit held an inactivation ceremony last week, but Lt. Col. Brendan G. Clare, squadron commander since last June, said the Black Knights will still fly their MH-53 Pave Low helicopters from Osan through June. Squadron members will gradually rotate to units outside Korea. As they do, the unit will be augmented by airmen from helicopter units at Hurlburt Field, Fla., he said. "We wanted to hold the inactivation ceremony while most of the unit members are still here," Clare said. "This is the first step in preparation for the arrival of the CV-22 tilt-rotor aircraft," said Master Sgt. Michael Farris, spokesman for the 353rd Special Operations Group, the squadron's parent unit at Kadena Air Base, Japan. "The new aircraft will increase the command's long-range mission, (even) sending teams into politically denied or hostile territory." But last week's ceremony doesn't mean the Black Knights will fade into Air Force history. When a squadron of the CV-22s joins the Air Force inventory in the Pacific, it will carry the 31st's banner, Farris said. During its nine years at Osan, the squadron has used its MH-53J Pave Low III helicopters for humanitarian flights and classified night missions. When the squadron leaves Korea in June, its helicopters will be reassigned to Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., Farris said.

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 16 Nov 2010

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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.