

43rd AIR REFUELING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

43rd Ferrying Squadron constituted, 9 Jul 1942

Activated, 17 Aug 1942

Redesignated 43rd Transport Squadron, 24 Mar 1943

Disbanded, 30 Sep 1943

43rd Air Refueling Squadron, Medium, 30 Jun 1948

Activated, 19 Jul 1948

Redesignated 43rd Air Refueling Squadron, Heavy, 15 Nov 1960

43rd Transport Squadron reconstituted, and consolidated with 43rd Air Refueling Squadron,
Heavy, 19 Sep 1985

Redesignated 43rd Air Refueling Squadron, 1 Sep 1991

Inactivated, 31 Mar 1995

Redesignated 43rd Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, and converted to provisional status, 12
Jun 2002

STATIONS

Accra, British Gold Coast, 17 Aug 1942-30 Sep 1943

Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 19 Jul 1948-14 Nov 1960

Larson AFB, WA, 15 Nov 1960

Fairchild AFB, WA, 2 Apr 1966

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Lakenheath RAF Station, England, 21 Mar-5 Jun 1953

Fairford RAF Station, England, 18 Sep-9 Dec 1954

Ernest Harmon AFB, Newfoundland, 28 Oct-28 Dec 1955

ASSIGNMENTS

12th Ferrying (later, 12th Transport) Group, 17 Aug 1942-30 Sep 1943

43rd Bombardment Group, Medium, 19 Jul 1948

43rd Bombardment Wing, Medium, 16 Jun 1952

303rd Bombardment Wing, Medium, 1960

4170th Strategic Wing, 15 Nov 1960

462nd Strategic Aerospace Wing, 1 Feb 1963

92nd Strategic Aerospace Wing (later, 92nd Bombardment Wing, Heavy), 2 Apr 1966

92 Operations Group, 1 Sep 1991

453 Operations Group, 1 Jun 1992

92 Operations Group, 1 Jul 1994-31 Mar 1995

Air Mobility Command to activate or inactivate at any time after 12 Jun 2002

ATTACHMENTS

43rd Bombardment Wing, Medium, 10 Feb 1951-15 Jun 1952

Eighth Air Force, 28 Oct-28 Dec 1955

WEAPON SYSTEMS

C-47

C-53

C-87

B-29, 1948-1949

KB-29M, 1949-1953

KC-97G, 1953-1960

KC-135A, 1961

KC-135R

COMMANDERS

Maj Richard E. Fell, 4 Dec 1942

Cpt Winston M. Asquith, 15 Jan 1943

Cpt Richard Dixon, 12 Feb 1943

Cpt Frank B. Scott, 23 Apr-20 Sep 1943

Cpt George M. Lockhart, 19 Jul 1948

Unkn, Nov 1948-2 Jan 1949

LTC William C. Sipes Jr., 3 Jan 1949

LTC Leo W. Cook, 15 May 1951

Unkn, 30 Jun 1952-Jan 1953

LTC Ralph D. Sensenbrenner, Feb 1953
LTC Jerry O. Spray, 2 Jul 1954
LTC Frank G. Latawiec, 1 May 1957
Unkn, 2 Jan 1962-1966
LTC Robert L. Litchfield, Jun 1966
LTC William E. Kevan, Sep 1966
LTC Ralph W. Trousdale, Sep 1967
LTC Floyd J. Geiger, Sep 1968
LTC John C. Crocker, Dec 1970
LTC Arthur J. Halverson, 15 Dec 1971
LTC Eugene Bal Jr., 1 Mar 1973
LTC William R. Desmond, 18 Jun 1973
LTC Eugene Bal Jr., 1 Nov 1973
LTC Bobby S. Poteet, 14 Apr 1974
LTC Ronald J. Langlois, 1 Mar 1976
LTC Thomas W. Scott, 2 Jun 1978
LTC Jeremy F. Smith, 21 Jul 1980
LTC Lawrence L. White, 15 Jan 1982
Maj Noel N. Mears Jr., 30 Nov 1982
LTC John Szczypien Jr., 17 Jan 1983
LTC Gerald M. Beverly, 30 May 1984
LTC David E. Pine, 1 Jun 1984
LTC Gerald M. Beverly, 30 Jul 1984
LTC John Ekwall, 15 Oct 1985
LTC Robert E. Dawson, 4 Feb 1987
LTC John H. Gurtcheff, 24 Jun 1988
LTC James O. Kallstrom, 8 Jun 1990
LTC James W. Pzinski, 14 Feb 1992
LTC Bernard V. Traynor III, 4 Jun 1993-31 Mar 1995
LTC Richard L. Rohrer

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II

European-African-Middle Eastern Theater

Campaign Streamers

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device
2 Mar-30 Sep 1969

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jan 1959-31 Aug 1960

1 Jul 1967-30 Jun 1968

1 Jul-1 Oct 1968

1 Jul 1969-30 Jun 1970

1 Jul 1976-30 Jun 1977

1 Jul 1989-30 Jun 1990

1 Jul 1990-29 May 1992

1 Jun 1992-30 Jun 1993

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross, with Palm

2 Mar 1969-30 Jun 1970

EMBLEM

On a disc per bend white and Air Force blue, edged black, the face of a Saint Bernard dog shades of tan and white, eyeballs white, iris blue, pupil black highlighted white and light blue, with a cask under his chin, shades of brown, all outlines and detail black. The Saint Bernard dog, with a cask under his chin, symbolically represented in fact and fiction as carrying needed supplies to adventuresome travelers, is particularly appropriate to the mission of an air refueling squadron. The background colors, blue and white, are the traditional colors of the squadron, having been used since 1948 when the squadron was first activated, and signifying that the unit's aircraft are prepared to do their job anywhere on the globe-over land or water, in the arctic or tropics, summer or winter, and day or night. (Approved, 7 Jun 1955)

MOTTO

The squadron motto, FIRST GLOBAL REFUELERS, is in recognition that this unit carried out the air refueling for the first non-stop flight around the world, completed by B-50 "Lucky Lady II" in 1949.

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Transport in the theater and as far east as India, Dec 1942-Sep 1943; in addition, delivered combat and transport aircraft to British forces in the Middle East and later to US forces in North Africa.

Activated on 17 Aug 1942, the 43rd Ferrying Squadron did not become operational at Accra, British Gold Coast (now Ghana), Africa, until 4 December. As a unit of the 12th Ferrying Group, the 43d delivered combat and transport aircraft to British forces in the Middle East and later to U.S. forces in North Africa, but its major task was the transport of high priority cargo and

personnel within the theater and as far east as Karachi, India. Redesignated the 43d Transport Squadron in March 1943, it disbanded on 30 Sep 1943 during a reorganization of Air Transport Command units in North Africa.

One of two refueling squadrons that the Strategic Air Command activated on 12 Jul 1948, the 43d Air Refueling Squadron, Medium, was the USAF's first air refueling unit. The 43d AREFS began operations in January 1949, flying KB-29Ms from Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. These first tankers were B-29s modified to carry and dispense fuel in the air. Employing trailing hoses and grapnel hooks. 1948

In February 1949 supported the circumnavigation flight of the "Lucky Lady II", the first aircraft to fly non-stop around the world.

On 6 July, a KB-29M of the Air Materiel Command operated by a crew of SAC's 43d Air Refueling Squadron conducted the first air refueling operation over enemy territory under combat conditions. Operating out of Yokota Air Base, Japan, and temporarily assigned to the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, the KB-29M refueled four RF-80s flying a reconnaissance mission over North Korea. In the meantime, one 91st Air Refueling Squadron KB-29P, outfitted with the boom type system, had deployed from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, to Yokota where it was assigned to Detachment 2 of the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, which was operating RB-45Cs. On 14 July, the KB-29P successfully refueled one of the RB-45Cs on a combat mission over North Korea. 1951

During the Korean War, the 43d sent aircrews to the Far East to refuel fighter aircraft, at that time an experimental procedure. Deployed 21 Mar-5 Jun 1953 to Lakenheath RAF Station, England. In 1953, the 43d AREFS completed transition to new aircraft, the KC-97, equipped with the recently developed flying boom.

Upon notice of the transition to KC-97s, the 43rd transferred fourteen of their assigned 25 KB-29M aircraft. Nine went to the 55th Recon Wing and 90th Bomb Wing at Forbes AFB, Kansas. The remaining five were sent to OCAMA storage. The other eleven were also transferred to Forbes before the end of 1953. In the same months, twenty of the newer KC-97G aircraft were received, the final being set for Jan 1954.

Deployed 18 Sep-9 Dec 1954 to Fairford RAF Station, England.

The 43rd Air Refueling Squadron was assigned to the 4170th on 15 November 1960 and changed its suffix from "Medium" to "Heavy" in preparation for transition to the KC-135A. The 43rd AREFS flew its last KC-97 mission in October 1960. The first crews of the 43rd arrived on 19 March 1961 from Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, and the first of the KC-135's arrived on 24 March 1961. With this new aircraft, 43d aircrews over the next few years refueled aircraft virtually everywhere in the world. Aircraft and crews deployed temporarily to Guam, Alaska, Greenland, Spain, England, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq. In Aug 1964, 43rd aircrews deployed to Clark AB, Philippines, to begin

supporting combat in Southeast Asia. Before terminating this refueling support in December 1975, the 43rd AREFS dedicated substantial resources to the Vietnam War.

On 2 Apr 1966, the 43d moved from Larson to Fairchild AFB, Wash. In May-June 1980, the eruption of Mt. Saint Helens forced the suspension of operations from Fairchild for a month, but the 43d operated four tankers each from Beale AFB and Travis AFB, Calif. Once again, from 7 May to 8 Aug 1983, the squadron left Fairchild, deploying to Grant County Airport (formerly Larson AFB), Wash, while the Fairchild runway was repaired.

Worldwide air refueling until 1995, including supporting combat operations in Southeast Asia, 1967-1975 and in Southwest Asia, Jan-Feb 1991.

Air Force Order of Battle

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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.

Unit yearbook. *Larson AFB, WA, 462nd Strategic Aerospace Wing. @1964.*