

## 55 AIR REFUELING SQUADRON



### MISSION

The squadron's mission is training of active duty, guard, reserve and international KC-135 crewmembers. Sixty aircrew instructors and support staff manage a \$28 million, 6,713 hour flying program, annually training 450 pilot and boom operator students for Department of Defense and international customers.

One of two Air Force formal Combat Crew Training School and Central Flight Instructor Course for KC-135 aircrew qualification training. Select aircrew instructors and support personnel train pilot, navigator, and boom operator students in 16 different courses for AF, ANG, AFRC, DoD, and international customers. Instructors maintain mission-ready status to deploy worldwide for any short-notice contingency.

### LINEAGE

755 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy), 19 May 1943

Activated, 1 Jul 1943

Redesignated 755 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 20 Aug 1943

Redesignated 755 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 5 Aug 1945

Inactivated, 17 Oct 1945

55 Air Refueling Squadron, Medium constituted, 22 Nov 1950

Activated, 1 Nov 1950

Inactivated, 18 Feb 1954

Activated, 1 Oct 1955

Discontinued and inactivated, 15 Mar 1963

755 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy and 55 Air Refueling Squadron, Medium consolidated, and designated 55 Air Refueling Squadron, Heavy, 19 Sep 1985

Redesignated 55 Air Refueling Squadron, 31 May 1994  
Activated, 28 Oct 1994  
Inactivated, 1 Apr 2009

#### **STATIONS**

Wendover Field, UT, 1 Jul 1943  
Gowen Field, ID, 28 Jul 1943  
Kearns, UT, 10 Sep 1943  
Wendover Field, UT, 15 Sep 1943  
Tonopah AAFld, NV, 4 Nov 1943–1 Jan 1944  
Horsham St Faith, England, 1 Feb 1944–3 Jul 1945  
Sioux Falls AAFld, SD, 15 Jul 1945  
Walker AAFld, KS, 25 Jul 1945  
March Field, CA, 22 Aug–17 Oct 1945  
Ramey AFB, Puerto Rico, 1 Nov 1950–9 Oct 1952  
Forbes AFB, KS, 10 Oct 1952  
Lincoln AFB, NE, 16–18 Feb 1954  
Forbes AFB, KS, 1 Oct 1955–15 Mar 1963  
Altus AFB, OK, 28 Oct 1994–1 Apr 2009

#### **DEPLOYED STATIONS**

Ernest Harmon AB, Newfoundland, 31 Oct–27 Dec 1956

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

458 Bombardment Group, 1 Jul 1943–17 Oct 1945  
55 Strategic Reconnaissance Group, 1 Nov 1950  
55 Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 16 Jun 1952–18 Feb 1954  
55 Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Oct 1955–15 Mar 1963  
97 Operations Group, 28 Oct 1994–1 Apr 2009

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

55 Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 8 Jan 1951–15 Jun 1952  
Eighth Air Force, 31 Oct–27 Dec 1956

#### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-24, 1943–1945  
B-29, 1945  
KB-29, 1950–1954  
KC-97, 1955–1963  
KC-135

#### **COMMANDERS**

## HONORS

### Service Streamers

#### Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

#### Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

#### Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

Jul 1956–Nov 1957

## EMBLEM



755 Bombardment Squadron emblem: On a light turquoise blue disc, within a border of six segments, alternate red and white, a caricatured, nonchalant, camouflaged, B-24, standing, affronte, on a white cloud formation in base, and resting right wing tip on nose of upturned, red aerial bomb. (Approved, 20 Mar 1945)

Azure two swords saltirewise Argent gripped Gold Brown below in chief a mullet of four saltirewise White superimposed by a mullet Or voided at the shading of the field; all within a diminished bordure Yellow. (Approved, 13 Apr 1995)

## MOTTO

MASTERS OF THE ART

## **OPERATIONS**

Combat in ETO, 24 Feb 1944–25 Apr 1945. Air refueling operations, 1950–1954 and 1955–1963.

Deployed To Harmon AFB Newfoundland, for Operation Sand Box 1956

Redeployed from Harmon AFB to Forbes AFB KS under Operation Sandpaper. 1958

Search was conducted for 200 foot air refueling hose and nozzle lost from KB-29 of 55 AREFS at Ramey AFB while flying at altitude of 10,000 feet near Salinas, Puerto Rico. This mission provided valuable training in refueling helicopters directly from tanks of SA-10 while operating out of advanced airdrome where fuel was not available. Successful recovery of nozzle and diversified training received were considered sufficient to fully justify this mission.

The squadron deployed to Ernest Harmon Air Base, Newfoundland, from Oct. 31 through Dec. 27, 1966 in response to the Suez Canal crisis. During this period, the squadron participated in giant simulated combat missions involving 1,000 B-47s and KC-97s, demonstrating the United States' resolve and intercontinental war fighting capability.

Pilots, Capts Christopher Bence, Brian Hansen and Howard Williams participated in their first Commando Sling 95-1 mission. They accomplished dry contacts with Republic of Singapore AF F-16s, first air refueling for the RSAF.

Capt Bart Klien won the Kolligian Trophy after his crew from the 55 AREFS safely landed a KC-135 at White Sands, NM, after losing left main landing gear on a landing attempt at Altus AFB.

The 97th Air Mobility Wing at Altus AFB, OK, inactivated its 55 Air Refueling Squadron after 14 years of service on April 1 2009 and merged it with its 54th ARS. The 55 ARS, like the 54th ARS, was an Air Education and Training Command KC-135R flying training squadron. Now the 54th ARS will carry that load. But some help will come from the newly announced classic associate Reserve squadron that the Air Force intends to stand up at Altus to work with the 97th AMW in its KC-135 and C-17 training mission.

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USAF UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 19 Jan 2012

Updated: 17 Sep 2023

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.