

## 64 AIR EXPEDITIONARY GROUP



### MISSION

The 64 Air Expeditionary Group is a United States Air Force unit subordinate to the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, and located at Eskan Village in Saudi Arabia, a compound about 20 km southeast of Riyadh. The group is made up of about 300 security forces, support Airmen, and civilians. Their mission is to stand guard all day, every day, providing integrated defense, emergency response, and combat support for the base, which houses military and host-nation tenant agencies.

### LINEAGE

64 Transport Group established, 20 Nov 1940  
Activated, 4 Dec 1940  
Redesignated 64 Troop Carrier Group, 1 Jul 1942  
Inactivated, 31 Jul 1945  
Activated, 19 May 1947  
Inactivated, 10 Sep 1948  
Redesignated 64 Troop Carrier Group, Medium, 3 Jul 1952  
Activated, 14 Jul 1952  
Inactivated, 21 Jul 1954  
Redesignated 64 Military Airlift Group, 31 Jul 1985  
Redesignated 64 Operations Group, 1 May 1991  
Activated, 15 May 1991  
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1997

Redesignated 64 Air Expeditionary Group and converted to provisional status, 4 Dec 2001

### **STATIONS**

Duncan Field, TX, 4 Dec 1940  
March Field, CA, 13 Jul 1941  
Hamilton Field, CA, 1 Feb 1942  
Westover Field, MA, 8 Jun-31 Jul 1942  
Ramsbury, England, Aug-Nov 1942  
Maison Blanche, Algeria, 11 Nov 1942 (air echelon)  
Blida, Algeria, 17 Nov 1942 (air echelon), 30 Nov 1942 (ground echelon)  
Kairouan, Tunisia, 28 Jun 1943  
El Djem, Tunisia, 26 Jul 1943  
Comiso, Sicily, 29 Aug 1943; (air echelon on detached service to Lalmai, India, 10 Apr-15 Jun 1944)  
Ciampino, Italy, 10 Jul 1944  
Rosignano Airfield, Italy, 10 Jan-23 May 1945  
Waller Field, Trinidad, 4 Jun-31 Jul 1945  
Langley Field, VA, 19 May 1947-10 Sep 1948  
Donaldson AFB, SC, 14 Jul 1952-21 Jul 1954  
Reese AFB, TX, 15 May 1991-1 Apr 1997  
Eskan Village, Saudi Arabia

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Fourth Air Force, 4 Dec 1940  
50 Transport Wing, 31 Mar 1942  
51 Transport (later, 51<sup>st</sup> Troop Carrier) Wing, 1 Jun 1942  
Eighth Air Force, 18 Aug 1942  
51 Troop Carrier Wing, 1 Sep 1942  
Twelfth Air Force, 4 Sep 1942  
51 Troop Carrier Wing, 25 Oct 1942  
52 Troop Carrier Wing, 15 Jun 1943  
51 Troop Carrier Wing, 11 Jul 1943 (air echelon attached to Tenth Air Force, 7 Apr-15 Jun 1944)  
Air Transport Command, 25 May-31 Jul 1945  
Tactical Air Command, 19 May 1947-10 Sep 1948  
64 Troop Carrier Wing, 14 Jul 1952-21 Jul 1954  
64 Flying Training Wing, 15 May 1991-1 Apr 1997  
Air Combat Command to activate or inactivate at any time after 4 Dec 2001

### **ATTACHMENTS**

443 Troop Carrier Wing, 19 Jul-16 Oct 1952  
63 Troop Carrier Wing, 15 Oct 1953-15 Feb 1954

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

C-47, 1940-1945  
C-82, 1952-1953  
L-20, 1952-1953  
C-119, 1953-1954  
T-37, 1991-1996  
T-38, 1991-1997  
T-1, 1992-1997

## **COMMANDERS**

Lt Col Malcolm S. Lawton, Dec 1940



Col Tracey K. Dorsett (USAAC photo)

Col Tracey K. Dorsett, by Jul 1942  
Lt Col Claire B. Collier, 1 Mar 1943  
Col John Cerny, 16 May 1943-1945  
Unkn (probably unmanned), 19 May 1947-10 Sep 1948  
Col Steward H. Nichols, 14 Jul 1952  
Col David E. Kunkel Jr., c. Nov 1953  
Lt Col William G. Forwood, unkn-1954  
Col Robert M. Negley Jr., 15 May 1991  
Col Larry W. Driskill, 1 Jan 1992  
Col F. Randall Starbuck, 21 Sep 1992  
Lt Col Julius R. McRee, 28 Jun 1993  
Col Frank K. Geisler Jr., 24 Sep 1993  
Col Randall C. Gelwix, 15 Jul 1994  
Col Bruce E. Burda, 28 Jul 1995  
Lt Col Kenneth A. Montague, 16 Jan-1 Apr 1997  
Col Willie Braggs III, #2008  
Col Arthur G. Hatcher, Jr.

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

World War II American Theater

### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

Algeria-French Morocco

Tunisia; Sicily

Naples-Foggia

Rome-Arno

India-Burma

Southern France

North Apennines

Po Valley

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

#### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citation

CBI Theater, 7 Apr-15 Jun 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1 Oct 1995-[1 Apr] 1997

### **EMBLEM**



64 Troop Carrier Group emblem



Azure, a stylized eagle ascending bendwise with wings elevated, head, neck, wing tips, and tail feathers Argent, body, beak, wings, legs, claws, and talons Or garnished Brown and Sable, grasping a lightning flash of the second, in dexter chief over a mullet of five points of the like, all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "64 AIR EXPEDITIONARY GROUP" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The American eagle in flight symbolizes an indomitable spirit of freedom, strength, fierceness and tenacity when challenged grasps in his talons a bolt of lightning, representing speed and power. The eagle is flying toward a single star symbolizing the unity of the Wing's mission to train the most capable pilots in the world. (Approved, 16 Jun 1942)

#### **MOTTO**

#### **NICKNAME**

#### **OPERATIONS**

Activated on 4 Dec 1940. Used C-47s for training and flying transport missions in the US.

The 64 Transport Group, under the command of Captain Tracy K. Dorsett, was activated at Duncan Field, San Antonio, Texas, as a Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron on December 18, 1940, from a cadre of the Third Transport Squadron.

This squadron was transferred to March Field in July, 1941, the 16, 17 and 18 Transport Squadrons being added then to form the 64th Transport Group.

The 16 Transport Squadron is now stationed at Portland (Oregon) Field.

The 17 Transport Squadron is now stationed at Hamilton Field.

The 18 Transport Squadron is the only member of the group now at March Field.

The function of the 64th Transport Group is to transport by air, with airplanes, and not by road with trucks as some often err in thinking. The main duties of the Group is the transportation of airplane parts and supplies but they are often called upon to deliver many other commodities from food to plumbing fixtures. Regardless of the assignment, the Group personnel manages to load whatever is required into an airplane and fly it to its destination.

Although young in age, the 64 Transport Group expects to carve a niche in the pages of history that are now in the making.

After Jul 1942, trained with paratroop and glider units in airborne operations.

The Group was soon redesignated as the 64 Troop Carrier Group, which meant that its primary function would be to transport paratroopers and tow gliders in airborne operations. The primary airplane assigned to the Group was the C-47, which was the military version of the DC-3 used in commercial aviation. Extensive training was conducted in the next several weeks at Westover Field (Chicopee, MA) and nearby Westfield (Barnes Municipal Airport). The first paratrooper drop, for some airplanes in the Group, was conducted later in June staging out of Pope Field, North Carolina, and dropping at Fort Jackson, North Carolina. We believe that officials which observed this paratrooper drop included President Roosevelt, General Arnold and Winston Churchill. By the end of July 1942, the Group and all squadrons were considered ready for duty. The ground echelon left Fort Dix by ship during the first part of August and the air echelon, with an estimated 49 planes, departed about the same time for England by way of Presque Isle, Maine; Goose Bay, Labrador; Greenland; Iceland, and Scotland.

Moved to England Jul-Aug 1942 and trained for Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa. On 10 Nov the air echelon flew from England via Gibraltar and on 11 Nov landed personnel of the British 3 Parachute Battalion at Maison Blanche, near Algiers. By mid-Dec, the ground echelon joined the air echelon at Blida, Algeria. The group dropped paratroops to capture airfields and destroy bridges, during the battle for Tunisia, the invasion of Sicily in Jul 1943, and Italy in Sep 1943.

By Apr 1944, most of the group was detached to India where it aided in the Allied offensive in Burma. With the Japanese assault on the Indian City of Imphal in full swing and not enough transport aircraft to aid in the supplying and relieving the beleaguered British Garrison, it became very evident that another Transport Group would be required immediately in the Theater. On 1 April 1944 the 16th, 17th, 18th and 35th Troop Carrier Squadrons of the 64 Troop Carrier Group were notified that they, along with the 4th TCS of the 62nd TCG, were to leave forthwith for detached service in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations. The 35th Squadron, first to take off, left the airdrome at 0600 on 2 April 1944. The other squadrons followed, and the last plane got away on 5 April. The trip was made via Bengasi, Cairo, Abadan, Karachi, and Geya. After reaching their destination, the 16th and 17th Squadrons began operations from Lalmai, Lower Bengal, and then from Dinjan, Upper Assam - and RAF 216

Squadron working out of Chandina, the Group through April, May, and the first half of June was instrumental in supplying Merrill's Marauders in the Ft. Hetz Valley and 170,000 troops besieged at Imphal. According to one authority, the war in Burma was shortened two years by reason of the troop carrier units' heroic contribution. And a truly heroic contribution it was. The 64's C-47s frequently flew as many as three round trips a day into the Imphal Valley. Every sortie meant two pay loads. Replacements, food, ammunition, and other supplies were flown in; casualties and "useless mouths" were flown out. "During April only 744 sick and wounded men were evacuated but in May the fighting was much heavier, and the number flown out rose to 4,400. The Group lost a total of seven planes during its stay in Burma.

Returning to Sicily in mid-Jun 1944, it moved to Italy the following month and participated in the assault on southern France in Aug 1944, releasing gliders and paratroops. It moved to Trinidad, without aircraft, in May-Jun 1945 and inactivated in July 1945.

Assigned to Tactical Air Command and activated in May 1947, the group remained a paper organization, unmanned, until its inactivation on 10 Sep 1948.

Activated at Donaldson AFB, SC on 14 Jul 1952, the 64 Troop Carrier Group transported personnel and equipment worldwide and participated in joint training operations with the 82 Airborne Division until inactivation on 21 Jul 1954.

Activated in May 1991, and conducted undergraduate pilot training 1991-1997. In 1996, began preparing Reese AFB, TX for closure. Graduated last pilot training class in Jan 1997 and inactivated on 1 Apr 1997.

On Sept. 5, 2005, the Air Force activated the 64 Air Expeditionary Group and accepted responsibility of providing force protection and operational support from the Army at an undisclosed location. For nearly eight years, the 64 AEG continued the force protection and operations support mission. In 2014, the 64 AEG was inactivated and replaced by the 879th ESFS.

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USAF Unit Histories  
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#### Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.  
Unit yearbook. *March Field Air Base, CA, 1941*. Army and Navy Publishing Co. Inc. Baton Rouge, LA. 1941.