79 AIR REFUELING SQUADRON

MISSION

LINEAGE
79 Troop Carrier Squadron constituted, 23 Mar 1943
Activated, 1 Apr 1943
Inactivated, 15 Nov 1945
Activated in the Reserve, 11 Apr 1948
Redesignated 79 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 27 Jun 1949
Ordered to active service, 1 Apr 1951
Inactivated, 16 Apr 1951
Activated in the Reserve, 18 May 1955
Inactivated, 15 May 1958
Redesignated 79 Military Airlift Squadron, and activated in the Reserve, 14 Mar 1966
Organized, 1 Apr 1966
Redesignated 79 Airborne Early Warning and Control Squadron, 30 Jun 1971
Inactivated, 1 Oct 1978
Redesignated 79 Air Refueling Squadron, Heavy (Associate), 21 Jun 1982
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Sep 1982
Redesignated 79 Air Refueling Squadron (Associate), 1 Feb 1992
Redesignated 79 Air Refueling Squadron, 1 Oct 1994

STATIONS
Baer Field, IN, 1 Apr 1943
Alliance AAFld, NE, 2 May 1943

Laurinburg-Maxton AAB, NC, 4 Aug 1943
Baer Field, IN, 16-28 Dec 1943
Bottesford, England, 6 Jan 1944
Membury, England, 2 Mar 1944-Feb 1945 (operated from Voltone Airfield, Italy, 20 Jul-23 Aug 1944)
Melun, France, 21 Feb-15 Jul 1945
Baer Field, IN, 7 Aug 1945
Malden AAFld, MO, 8 Sep-15 Nov 1945
Norfolk Muni Aprt, VA, 11 Apr 1948
Godman AFB, KY, 27 Jun 1949
Standiford Field, KY, 20 Oct 1950-16 Apr 1951
New York Naval Air Station (later, U.S. Naval Air Station, New York), NY, 18 May 1955-15 May 1958
Homestead AFB, FL, 1 Apr 1966-1 Oct 1978
March AFB, CA, 1 Sep 1982
Travis AFB, CA, 1 Apr 1995

ASSIGNMENTS
436 Troop Carrier Group, 1 Apr 1943-15 Nov 1945
419 Troop Carrier Group, 11 Apr 1948
436 Troop Carrier Group, 27 Jun 1949-16 Apr 1951
436 Troop Carrier Group, 18 May 1955-15 May 1958
Continental Air Command, 14 Mar 1966
915 Military Airlift Group, 1 Apr 1966
Eastern Air Force Reserve Region, 30 Jul 1971
Tenth Air Force, 8 Oct 1976
915 Airborne Early Warning and Control Group, 1 Dec 1976-1 Oct 1978
452 Air Refueling Wing, 1 Sep 1982
452 Operations Group, 1 Aug 1992
349 Operations Group, 1 Apr 1995

WEAPON SYSTEMS
C-47, 1943-1945
C-47, 1948-1951
T-7, 1948-1951
T-11, 1948-1951
C-46, 1955-1958
C-119, 1957-1958
C-124, 1966-1971
C-121, 1971-1973, 1976-1978
EC-121, 1971-1978
KC-10, 1982

COMMANDERS

None (not manned), 1-3 Apr 1943
Lt Col John D. Kreyssler, 4 Apr 1943
Capt Silas P. Lee, 18 Jul 1944
2nd Lt Nellis E. Hill, 2 Aug 1944
2nd Lt John O. Dorr, 6 Aug 1944
2nd Lt William R. Bryant, 9 Aug 1944
Capt Silas P. Lee, 19 Aug 1944
Lt Col John D. Kreyssler, 24 Aug 1944
Lt Col Hollis B. Tara, 8 Mar 1945-unkn
Unkn, 11 Apr 1948-1949
Lt Col Alvin H. Nurre, 1 Jul 1949
Maj Garland Hardin, 19 Oct 1949-1950
Unkn, 1950-16 Apr 1951
Unkn, 18 May 1955-15 May 1958
Lt Col James P. Friel, 1 Apr 1966
Lt Col Lawrence F. Liberty, 1 Jul 1968
Col David L. Stanford, Mar 1971
Col William R. Stack, Jr., Aug 1971
Col David L. Stanford, 6 Jan 1974
Col Leonard P. Voight, 3 Mar 1975
Col Evan E. Clements, by Sep 1976
Lt Col William J. Campbell, Jr., Mar 1977-1 Oct 1978
Maj Russell T. Olson, 1 Sep 1982
Maj Johnny L. Corbin, by 7 Sep 1984
Lt Col James P. Bronowski, by 4 Feb 1985
Lt Col John J. Batbie, Jr., 13 Aug 1987
Col Kenneth L. McKibban, 10 Apr 1988
Lt Col Robert E. Fields, 15 Jul 1990
Unkn, Apr 1994-5 Aug 1995
Maj Louis J. Leli, 6 Aug 1995
Lt Col Eric Jenkins, 26 Jun 2011

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War II
American Theater

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Rome-Arno
Normandy
Northern France
Southern France

Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations
Distinguished Unit Citation
France, [6-7] Jun 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Dec 1976-15 Mar 1978
1 Apr 1984-31 Mar 1985
1 Jul 1991-30 Jun 1993
1 Apr-15 Aug 1995
1 Jul 1996-30 Jun 1998
1 Aug 2000-31 Jul 2002
16 Aug 2003-17 Aug 2004
18 Aug 2004-17 Aug 2005
18 Aug 2005-17 Aug 2006
18 Aug 2006-17 Aug 2007
18 Aug 2007-17 Aug 2008
18 Aug 2008-17 Aug 2009
30 Sep 2009-30 Sep 2011
1 Oct 2011-30 Sep 2013
1 Oct 2013-31 Dec 2014

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
1 Jul 1966-29 Jul 1971

EMBLEM

79 Troop Carrier Squadron patch

On a silver gray disc edged in ultramarine blue facing dexter base an ultramarine blue stylized American bald eagle, the national symbol. The eagle, with raised wings, is poised for action and ready for combat, sweeping toward new horizons in pursuit of excellence and expressing patriotism. A star at middle chief represents Polaris, the north star, the beacon to guide aircrews. Two stars, at dexter and sinister, represent the eastern and western hemispheres, symbolizing the unit's worldwide mission. Three stars of Air Force yellow also allude to the renowned past, dynamic present and challenging future as well as the teamwork of the three crew positions. A scroll at top and bottom proudly proclaim the numerical designation of the unit and the unit's motto: EXCELLENCE IN RESERVE.

Silver Gray, a stylized bald eagle volant Azure fimbriated Or between three polestars Yellow

fimbriated Blue; all within a diminished bordure of the second. Attached above the disc a Gray scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed " 79 AIR REFUELING SQ " in Blue letters. Attached below the disc a Gray scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "EXCELLENCE IN RESERVE" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Blue and 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 bald eagle in flight suggests the unit's support to the Air Force mission. The uppermost polestar represents Polaris, the aviator's beacon, and reflects the navigational capabilities of the aircrews which are an important part of the refueling function. The dexter and sinister polestars symbolize the eastern and western hemispheres of the earth and denote the unit's worldwide mission. The stars also signify the three crew positions and the teamwork involved in completing assigned duties.

Since the first military aviators organized themselves into flying squadrons, the unit emblem has come to assume great significance. Notable examples, such as the eagle of the Lafyette Escadrille, Eddie Rickenbacker's "Hat in the Ring" squadron, or the shark teeth of the "Flying Tigers," have all come to represent the aviators associated with their emblems. In this same tradition, the emblem of the 79 Air Refueling Squadron has come to represent the crewmembers who wear the 79 symbol of excellence: Excellence In Reserve. The emblem of the 79 AREFS is dominated by the American bald eagle, the national symbol of the United States of America. This focal point connotes not only powerful flight, but patriotism, a natural link between the squadron and the nation it serves. The qualities of the eagle are those with which the 79 has come to be known: strength, power, courage, and determination.

In addition to its fierce fighting spirit, the eagle is respected for its superior intelligence and keen vision. An ideal symbol, the eagle responds immediately when challenged, and strikes with speed and power when threatened. Bridging the past and the future, the 79's eagle incorporates America's traditional national symbol with a stylized, modern design, symbolizing the bridge between the military tradition and heritage of the minuteman and the challenges of the future, technical, modern Air Force. The eagle is blue, the color worn by those airmen who have preceded us, those who have joined our ranks, and those who will surely follow. Finally, the eagle's wings are raised high into the air, poised for action and ready for combat; sweeping out towards new horizons in the pursuit of excellence: Excellence In Reserve.

The eagle is set against a background of a circle, or globe, representing the 79's worldwide mission. The star at the top of the case represents Polaris, the north star, the beacon that guides the crews of the 79. The two remaining lower stars represent the east and west hemispheres, symbolic of the 79's worldwide mission. Each star is comprised of four major points, indicative of the four corners of the world through which 79 crewmembers serve. The three stars represent the squadron's renowned past, dynamic present, and challenging future. The stars are also symbolic of the squadron's comradery. Each star represents the three KC-10 crew positions: pilot, flight engineer, and boom operator.

Each crew position is a separate entity, yet together are unified in effort, just as the stars are separate, yet interwoven within the emblem to produce a strong, coherent design, corresponding to the solidarity, teamwork, and unity found in the 79. The stars are arranged in the same triangular pattern as the three engines of the McDonnel Douglas KC-10 Extender, the Air Force's only three engine aircraft, the aircraft flown by the members of the 79. Finally, the

stars are gold, the traditional symbol for the achievement of excellence: Excellence In Reserve. Finally, the 79 emblem is bordered with two arcs. The upper arc boldly identifies the wearer of the patch as a proud member of the 79 Air Refueling Squadron. The lower arc proclaims the motto of the 79, a squadron that has become synonymous with excellence: Excellence In Reserve.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Transported cargo and troops in the ETO and MTO during World War II; dropped relief supplies to Bastogne and took part in airborne assaults on Normandy, southern France, the Netherlands, and Germany in 1944 and 1945.

Performed worldwide airlift operations, 1966-1971, including missions to southeast Asia.

The squadron is commanded by Lt. Col. James Friel. During the reporting period the units personnel trained to complete qualification in the C-124 aircraft.
During this period the 9l5th was visited by 3rdAFRR, the 445thMAW, 21AF MAC and received a C-l status rating.
During summer camp overall active duty training for the group was excellent due mostly to the preparation and execution of a detailed training schedule. A Group Command Post was established operating around the clock. The 9l5th OJT and GMT training program was of paramount importance .

Flying and ground training played a very important role during the 15 day active duty tour and though the 79th did not participate in force (due to Texas Tour.) the Group did accomplish the following; flew overwater flights to Tachikawa AB, Japan; Roosevelt Rds., Puerto Rico; Rhein Main, Germany; Kindley AB, Bermuda and two flights to Torrejon AB, Spain. These flights aided in the upgrading of two navigators in instructor navigators, a line check for a navigator and one requalification check for a navigator. The Squadron qualified a pilot to co-pilot status during this period and also had ground school for both pilots and navigators. Detrimental to the tour was the fact that most of the unqualified pilots from the 79th were permitted to utilize Texas tours. This resulted in a severe scarcity of pilots to train during the tour. In the future, we intend to ensure that maximum results can be obtained on the scheduled flights by using only unqualified pilots as students during the summer During this period the 79th flew 29 local training flights at Homestead AFB and had training flights for the 37th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron.

Flew airborne early warning and control missions in the air defense of the United States, 1971-1978.

When the Air Force's force of EC-121s for airborne early warning and control was programmed to be reduced from 46 to 18 at the end of fiscal 1972, Air Staff officials feared the United States would be left with only minimum surveillance capability in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico regions. A potential solution appeared when Representative Bob F. Sikes asked Air Force Reserve officials to investigate the possibility of stationing a reserve unit at Eglin AFB in his Florida panhandle district. On March 10, 1971, Deputy Secretary of Defense David Packard approved an Air Staff proposal to convert an Air Force Reserve airlift unit at Homestead AFB, Florida, to EC-121s instead of to its programmed C-130s, and to assign those C-130s to a new tactical airlift unit at Eglin. These actions enabled the Air Force to solve the surveillance problem and honor Congressman Sikes' request.

Headquarters AFRES activated the 79 Airborne Early Warning and Control Squadron at Homestead and assigned it to the redesignated 915th Airborne Early Warning and Control Group on July 30, 1971. The unit was equipped with six EC-121D and two transport-configured C-121s for transition and support. Soon after its conversion, the 79 began flying active surveillance missions in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, and its declared C-3 readiness as programmed in March 1973. From there, the 79 rotated crews and support personnel to Iceland to conduct the mission. Although occasionally stumbling over its organizational peculiarity, the integrated organization accomplished its mission. The A-3E was to assume the North Atlantic airborne early warning and control mission from the EC-121 on October 1,1978. When acquisition of the A-3E was delayed, the Air Staff directed the reserves to retain one EC-121 on station for another six weeks. Except for the responsibility of maintaining that single aircraft in Iceland, the Homestead AFB EC-121 mission, in Florida and in Iceland, ended on September 30, 1978.

One airplane 55-0121 burned up after its left gear collapsed.

The combined force will be used for Southeast U. S. radar mission, maintaining a TDY force of EC-121 aircraft in Iceland for support of NATO and other special missions as specified by the Department of Defense.

Initially, squadron aircrews flew missions in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. In 1974, the 79 AEW&CS converted to EC-121T's and sent its "D" models off to the Military Aircraft Storage and Disposition Center at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

In 1976, the Reserve early warning program underwent significant changes. At the time, the Air Force wished to terminate for economy purposes its EC-121 Iceland mission. The Office of the Secretary of Defense requested that the Air Force continue the mission pending other arrangements due to State Department concerns that without the EC-121 presence, Iceland would not have any warning of airspace intrusions. Accordingly, the Air Force assigned the 79 AEW&CS responsibility for flying missions out of Keflavik, Iceland, on a rotational basis.

On Dec. 1, 1976, the Reserve activated the 915th Airborne Early Warning and Control Group at Homestead to provide control and command supervision over the 79 AEW&CS.

In 1978, the Air Force ended the EC-121 Iceland and Florida missions once E-3A AWACS aircraft entered the aircraft inventory. On Oct. 1, 1978, except for maintaining one EC-121 on station in Iceland for another six weeks to accommodate E-3A delivery delays, the Air Force Reserve began converting its EC-121 units to fighter operations. Effective that date, Air Force Reserve redesignated the 915th AEW&CG as a tactical fighter group and inactivated the 79 AEW&CS, replacing it at Homestead with the 93rd Tactical Fighter Squadron.

Since 1982, trained for and flew worldwide air refueling and strategic airlift missions, including contingency and humanitarian relief operations.

On 17 November 2003, at 2135 PST (18/0535Z), a KC-10A, S/N 82-0192, experienced a catastrophic failure of number 2 engine at a point 80 nautical miles west of Mendocino (Sonoma County), CA (coordinates: N39°21' W124°56'). The KC-10, assigned to 60th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base (AFB), CA, was flown by members of 79 Air Refueling Squadron, 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis AFB. The damage was extensive enough to cause an estimated $4.7 million in repair costs. There were no injuries to military or civilian personnel and no private property damage. The KC-10 was on a night air refueling training mission at the time of the mishap. Approximately 3 hours and 40 minutes into the mission, during a practice emergency separation maneuver and after advancing the throttles toward maximum continuous thrust, the flight crew reported hearing a loud noise and feeling significant vibration throughout the aircraft. All engine instruments were indicating normal. Upon reduction of power, the flight crew observed that the thrust reverser unlock and pressure caution indicator lights for the number 2 engine were illuminated. At the same time the flight crew received reports from the receiver aircraft (C-5) and the refueling boom operator that they had seen a flash toward the tail of the aircraft. The flight crew then shut down number 2 engine. After shut down, they declared an in-flight emergency and the aircraft was returned to Travis AFB and landed uneventfully. After landing, inspection revealed that a portion of the number 2 engine first stage fan blade had liberated and been ingested into the engine causing significant damage. The catastrophic failure of the number 2 engine was caused by failure of the number 6 blade. The blade failed as a result of an anomaly whose nature or origin could not be determined. However, based on substantial scientific evidence, the anomaly occurred some time after its last landing prior to its last overhaul but before or simultaneously with the last straightening procedure at the last overall. During this time the following agencies had responsibility for the blade; the Air Force, GEWO, Airfoil Technologies International/Aviation Product Support-Ohio (ATI), and the shipping firm. A review of procedures employed revealed that each agency followed them properly with no deviations annotated. However, ATI employed certain procedures in an improper repair sequence. This improper sequencing substantially contributed to the accident in that it resulted in masking of the anomaly and the subsequent failure to detect the anomaly.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES
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Sources
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