

85th AIR DIVISION (DEFENSE)



MISSION

85th Air Division is an Air Defense Organization under the jurisdiction of the Air Defense Command. It is one of the divisions of the ADC and one of seven Air Divisions assigned to the Eastern Air Defense Force.

The mission of the 85th Air Defense is to provide air defense for the middle Atlantic states of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina and parts of Pennsylvania, West Virginia and South Carolina.

The division is responsible for more than 110,000 square miles of modern industrial area as well as the heart of the nation, the National Capitol — Washington, D. C.

The air defense mission of the 85th AD is to detect, identify, intercept and destroy hostile airborne forces. To do this the 85th has a vast complex of human and material resources radar and communications facilities all weather fighter interceptor aircraft nuke and anti-aircraft artillery and the supporting forces necessary to keep these primary elements of the air defense system operational.

The 85th Air Division has three all-weather fighter interceptor squadrons, seven Aircraft Control and Warning Squadrons and four air defense filter centers and more than 800 observation posts. The latter two organizations are manned by civilian Ground Observer Corps volunteers.

LINEAGE

85th Fighter Wing established, 4 Nov 1943

Activated, 10 Nov 1943

Inactivated, 30 Jun 1948
Redesignated, 85th Air Division (Defense), 3 May 1955
Activated, 8 Sep 1955
Inactivated, 1 Sep 1958

STATIONS

Hamilton Field, CA, 10 Nov 1943
San Francisco Municipal Airport, CA, 10 Nov 1943-10 Jan 1944
Gusap, New Guinea, 25 Feb 1944
Hollandia, New Guinea, 24 Jul 1944
Leyte, Philippine Islands, 24 Oct 1944
Fort William McKinley, Luzon, Philippine Islands, 15 Jun 1945
Floridablanca, Luzon, Philippine Islands, 15 Jul 1946
Nagoya, Japan, 1 Jun 1947-30 Jun 1948
Andrews AFB, MD, 8 Sep 1955-1 Sep 1958

ASSIGNMENTS

Fourth Air Force, 10 Nov 1943
IV Fighter Command, 28 Nov 1943-10 Jan 1944
Army Service Forces, 10 Jan-17 Feb 1944
Fifth Air Force, 18 Feb 1944
Far East Air Forces, 11 May 1945
Thirteenth Air Force, 1 Sep 1945
Fifth Air Force, 1 Jun 1947-30 Jun 1948
Eastern Air Defense Force, 8 Sep 1955-1 Sep 1958

COMMANDERS

Col John M. Bartella, 10 Nov 1943
Col Harlan T. McCormick, 6 Dec 1943
Col Philip H. Greasley, 11 Nov 1944
Col George A. Walker, 23 Apr 1945
BG George P. Tourtellot, 20 May 1945
LTC Vernon L. Head, 2 Oct 1945
Col Raymond J. Reeves, 1 Feb 1946
BG William M. Morgan, 26 Feb 1946
unkn, 2 May 1947-30 Jun 1948
BG Emmett F. Yost, 8 Sep 1955
BG Ernest H. Beverly, 1 Aug-1 Sep 1958

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II: Leyte; Luzon; New Guinea

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

EMBLEM

A shield, per bend azure and of the sky proper, a sinister quarter pointed or; overall in chief, a silhouetted futuramic jet aircraft bendwise, volant, sable, with speed lines gules; in base a lightning bolt, bendwise of the third, over a checky grid throughout proper. (Approved, 26 Dec 1956)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

During World War II, the 85th, participated in aerial combat in New Guinea and the Philippine Islands (Feb 1944-Aug 1945). Subordinate units flew cover missions for convoys, patrols, escorted bombers, attacked enemy airfields, and supported ground forces. After the war's end, the organization provided fighter protection for the Philippine Islands and conducted an intensive training program in aerial combat, gunnery, and instrument flying, until Jun 1948. It was assigned to the Eastern Air Defense Force in Sep 1955. Until Sep 1958, the division intercepted unidentified aircraft and participated in numerous training exercises. It also took part in gunnery and air launched training and readiness tests.

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 25 Aug 2010

Updated:

Sources

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