

AIR COMBAT COMMAND



MISSION

Air Combat Command (ACC) serves as the Air Force component of the United States Atlantic Command. Air Combat Command is the primary provider of combat airpower to America's war fighting commands. To support global implantation of national security strategy, ACC operates fighter, reconnaissance, battle-management, and electronic-combat aircraft. It also provides command, control, communications and intelligence systems, and conducts global information operations.

ACC organizes, trains, equips and maintains combat-ready forces for rapid deployment and employment while ensuring strategic air defense forces are ready to meet the challenges of peacetime air sovereignty and wartime air defense.

ACC numbered air forces provide air componency to U.S. Central and Southern Commands with Headquarters ACC serving as the air component to U.S. Northern and Joint Forces Commands. ACC also augments forces to U.S. European, Pacific and Strategic Commands.

LINEAGE

Tactical Air Command established and activated as a major command, 21 Mar 1946

Reduced from major command status, and assigned to Continental Air Command as a subordinate operational command, 1 Dec 1948

Returned to major command status, 1 Dec 1950

Inactivated, 1 Jun 1992

Air Combat Command established and activated, 1 Jun 1992

Tactical Air Command and Air Combat Command consolidated, 26 Sep 2016. Consolidated unit Designated Air Combat Command.

STATIONS

Drew Field, Tampa, FL, 21 Mar 1946

Langley Field (later, Langley AFB, Joint Base Langley-Eustis), VA, 26 May 1946

ASSIGNMENTS

Army Air Forces, 21 Mar 1946

Headquarters, United States Air Force, 26 Sep 1947

Continental Air Command, 1 Dec 1948

Headquarters, United States Air Force, 1 Dec 1950

COMMANDERS

Lt Gen Elwood R. Quesada, 21 Mar 1946

Maj Gen Robert M. Lee, 24 Dec 1948

Maj Gen O. P. Weyland, 7 Jul 1950

Maj Gen Glenn O. Barcus, 17 Jul 1950

Gen John K. Cannon, 25 Jan 1951

Gen Otto P. Weyland, 1 Apr 1954

Gen Frank F. Everest, 1 Aug 1959

Gen Walter C. Sweeney Jr., 1 Oct 1961

Gen Gabriel P. Disosway, 1 Aug 1965

Gen William W. Mommyer, 1 Aug 1968

Gen Robert J. Dixon, 1 Oct 1973

Gen W.L. Creech, 1 May 1978

Gen Jerome F. O'Malley, 1 Nov 1984

Gen Robert D. Russ, 22 May 1985

Gen John Michael Loh, 27 Mar 1991

Gen Joseph W. Ralston, 23 Jun 1995

Lt Gen Brett M. Dula (acting), 28 Feb 1996

Gen Richard E. Hawley, 5 Apr 1996

Gen Ralph E. Eberhart, 11 Jun 1999

Gen John P. Jumper, 8 Feb 2000

Lt Gen Donald G. Cook (acting), 6 Sep 2001

Gen Hal M. Hornburg, 14 Nov 2001

Lt Gen Bruce A. Wright (acting), 17 Nov 2004

Lt Gen William M. Fraser III (acting), 6 Feb 2005

Gen Ronald E. Keys, 26 May 2005

Gen John D. W. Corley, 2 Oct 2007

Gen William M. Fraser, III, 10 Sep 2009

Gen Gilmary M. Hostage III, 13 Sep 2011

Gen Herbert J. Carlisle, 4 Nov 2014

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Grenada

Decorations

Air Force Organizational Excellence Awards:

1 Jun 1984-31 May 1986

1 Jun 1986-31 May 1988

1 Jun 1988-1 May 1990

1 Jun 1990-31 May 1992

1 Sep 1992-31 Aug 1994

1 Jun 1994-31 May 1996

1 Jun 1996-31 May 1998

1 Jun 1998-31 May 2000

1 Jun 2000-31 May 2002

1 Jun 2002-31 May 2004

1 Jun 2004-31 May 2006

1 Jan 2009-31 Dec 2010

EMBLEM

On a shield divided by a nebuly line; the upper part blue, the lower part red; the nebuly line and narrow edge white around outer edge of blue section of shield; over all a sword in a vertical position, the grip red, with black markings, the sword between a pair of wings golden yellow. The upper field of azure symbolizes the sky; the lower field of red, the embattled ground forces. Both are protected by golden wings symbolic of aerial supremacy gained through unblemished personal combat, depicted by a silver sword. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The upper field of azure symbolizes the sky; the lower field of red the embattled ground forces. Both are protected by golden wings which are symbolic of aerial supremacy gained through unblemished personal combat, depicted by a silver sword. (Approved, 6 Nov 1952. Newest rendition prepared, 16 Sep 2011)

MOTTO

GLOBAL POWER FOR AMERICA

OPERATIONS

HQ USAF established this command to integrate the bomber and intercontinental ballistic missile resources of Strategic Air Command and the fighter resources of Tactical Air Command into a single command, able to support and implement joint missions.

During its first five years, the command's missions included interdiction, close air support, tactical reconnaissance, and troop carrier support for Army airborne forces. On 1 Dec 1948, Tactical Air Command (TAC) became a subordinate command of Continental Air Command, but returned to major command status two years later, on 1 Dec 1950. After 1 Dec 1950, TAC

organized, trained, and equipped forces to perform tactical air operations including counter-air, air interdiction, close air support, tactical air control, electronic warfare, and special operations. Troop carrier operations remained a TAC mission until Dec 1974, when tactical airlift was transferred to Military Airlift Command. In Oct 1979, when Aerospace Defense Command was inactivated, TAC assumed the national air defense mission, in addition to its other missions. In 1983, TAC's special operations mission was transferred to Military Airlift Command's Twenty-Third Air Force, which later became Air Force Special Operations Command. In carrying out its mission, TAC participated with the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Marine Corps in developing doctrine, procedures, tactics, techniques, training and equipment for joint operations. TAC prepared combat-ready USAF units for joint commands of the Department of Defense. Consolidated in 2016 with Air Combat Command (ACC), which HQ USAF established to integrate most of the combat resources of Strategic Air Command with Tactical Air Command units into a single command, able to support and implement joint missions. ACC assumed control of all USAF fighter resources based in the continental United States (CONUS), as well as all USAF bombers, reconnaissance aircraft, battle management resources, and intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Additionally, some tankers and C-130s were assigned to ACC, primarily to its composite and strategic wings. The Air Force transferred the Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) mission from Air Mobility Command (AMC) to ACC in Feb 1993. In another mission change, the Air Force transferred operational control of the ICBMs to Air Force Space Command and F-15 and F-16 flying training resources to Air Education and Training Command in Jul 1993. Later, in Oct 1993, CONUS C-130 airlift forces transferred to ACC while the command's tanker resources transferred to AMC. The C-130 forces returned to AMC in Apr 1997. The CSAR mission transferred to Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) in Oct 2003, only to return to ACC in Apr 2006. Air Combat Command also served as the Air Force component of the United States Atlantic Command (later, United States Joint Forces Command).

The Tactical Air Command will provide and operate that portion of the AAF which is maintained in the United States, and in such other areas as may be designated from time to time, for cooperating with land and sea forces in the conduct of land and amphibious operations.

HQ USAF established this command to provide a balance between strategic, air defense, and tactical forces of the post-World War II Air Force. In 1948 the Continental Air Command assumed control over air defense, tactical air, and air reserve forces. After two years in a subordinate role, Tactical Air Command (TAC) was reestablished as a major command. In 1992, after assessing the mission of TAC and to accommodate the decision made regarding Strategic Air Command, HQ United States Air Force inactivated TAC and incorporated its resources into the newly created Air Combat Command.

TAC's organization has varied greatly over this ten year period. TAC's formation, on 21 Mar 1946, brought it five numbered air forces. TAC sought a three numbered air force structure, with the intent of East and West Coast tactical forces, plus the third force of troop carriers for support. The subsequent reductions to two numbered air forces—Ninth and Twelfth—allowed TAG to still have tightly controlled East and West Coast tactical forces, but troop carrier assets were assigned to the Ninth. This diversity of missions, within the numbered air forces, was not

ideal. TAC's major setback—its subordination to CONAC—came in 1949, and wasn't resolved until Dec 1950. While TAC's growth and advancement suffered greatly, during this two year stagnation, the tactical experience and knowledge of its personnel allowed rapid recovery. TAC was restored, as a major command, in Dec 1950, with only the Ninth Air Force assigned. When the Eighteenth Air Force was assigned, in Mar 1951, TAC remembered its previous problems with diversification of missions. Thus, the Ninth possessed the fighters/bombers; the Eighteenth, troop carriers. The addition of the Nineteenth Air Force, in 1955, was TAC's early version of the "Rapid Deployment Force." At the time, it was called the "Composite Air Strike Force" and provided a highly mobile, responsive, operational force to TAC.

Tactical Air Command exercises command and control over tactical forces; maintains tactical communications; and carries out other assigned missions and tasks. Tactical forces may be supplemented in the tactical role by strategic or space systems. Strategic bombers can deliver ordnance in support of the land battle, and strategic reconnaissance systems can provide information of immediate interest to tactical commanders. Satellite systems provide support in communications, surveillance, and weather monitoring. Other support activities include a global navigational and positioning system and a satellite negation capability.

MISSION

The three major missions of the commander of Tactical Air Command (COMT AC) include: air component commander (ACC) of United States Readiness Command (USREDCOM); air component

1. Develops Air Force policies and operational doctrines for tactical air operations; employment, organizational, and operational concepts for weapon systems; and concepts, tactics, techniques, procedures, and appropriate manuals applicable to tactical air operations worldwide.
2. Develops operational doctrines, concepts, and procedures pertaining to tactical air operations in support of air, land, and naval forces; tactical air control systems; air defense from overseas land areas; airspace control systems; amphibious operations; and joint operations and exercises.
3. Develops operational doctrine, tactics, and procedures for air defense of North America and other places; conducts long-range planning; and makes recommendations to the chief of staff for doctrine, concepts, procedures, organizations, training, and facilities for air defense operations, tactics, techniques, force structure, and deployment of air defense systems.
4. Participates with the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps in developing doctrines, procedures, tactics, techniques, training, publications, and equipment for joint operations and serves as the primary coordinating interface for Army and Air Force matters pertaining to tactical air doctrine and airland operations.
5. Collaborates and participates with the Air Force Systems Command, Air Training Command, Military Airlift Command, Air Force Logistics Command, Air Force Communications Command, Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center, and other commands, as appropriate, in planning, developing, acquiring, testing, and evaluating new or improved tactical aerospace systems and equipment. Tactical Air Command serves as lead command for tactical air forces.

6. Assesses operational requirements on a continuous basis to identify deficiencies of the tactical air forces to perform assigned missions.

The Tactical Air Command organizes, trains, and equips combat-ready tactical air forces for employment in air operations in any area of the world. Combat-ready TAC forces are provided to the commander in chief, NORAD, for strategic air defense of North America. When directed by higher authority, operational command of air defense in the continental United States is transferred to the NORAD commander in chief. In the event of general war, TAC deploys tactical units overseas to augment theater tactical forces.

USAF Unit Histories
Created: 22 Aug 2010
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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.