

USAF COMBAT WINGS AND SUPPORT UNITS IN KOREA 1950-54

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Because of the need to transcribe a large number of units with which he is not familiar [the author's knowledge of the USAF starts in 1960] there are likely to be mistakes. Kindly email to correct the author]

In several cases, units were attached or detached to wings. For brevity, we exclude this information, which may be accessed at the link above.

Note on Far East Air Force

FEAF was the controlling air HQ for the Korean War. Its background is given by Monty Moore,¹ in his history of US military dogs in the Pacific Theatre:

PACAF traces its roots to the World War II activation of the Far East Air Force (FEAF) on 03 August 1944, at Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. FEAF, subordinate to the U.S. Army Forces Far East, served as the headquarters of Allied Air Forces Southwest Pacific Area - By 1945, three numbered air forces - 5th, 7th and 13th - supported operations in the Pacific Theater. At that time, the Army Air Forces in the Pacific was part of the largest and most powerful military organization ever fielded by any nation.

After World II, FEAF and 5th AF remained in Japan - 7th AF operated from Hawaii, and 13th AF was located in the Philippines. In the post-war years, FEAF was designated the theater air force for the Far East Command. Thus, all air force units in the Far East and Southwest Pacific were placed under one Air Force commander for the first time.

When the North Koreans crossed the 38th parallel June 25, 1950, FEAF consisted of 5th, 13th and 20th AF and the Far East Materiel Command. Four years after the Korean War armistice, FEAF was re-designated Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) and transferred its headquarters to Hickam AFB, Hawaii.

Note on Organization of Wings²

During World War II, the group, each with three or four flying squadrons, was the basic combat element of the Army Air Forces. This organization changed in 1947 when the new United States Air Force adopted the wing-base plan. Each combat group then active received a controlling parent wing of the same number and nomenclature. The new wing also controlled three additional groups (with the same number) to operate the air base, maintain the aircraft, and provide medical care at the base.

When combat forces began to fight the war in Korea, the USAF units did so in various organizational forms. In some cases, the combat arm of the wing, plus a portion of the wing's supporting personnel, deployed to the Korean theater, leaving the rest of the wing to operate the home base, to which the group returned after its tour of combat ended. Early in the war, some combat groups deployed and operated under other wings, including temporary four-digit wings.

In December 1950, those groups' aligned (same number) parent wings moved on paper from their previous bases and replaced the temporary wings in combat. The personnel of the temporary wing's headquarters were reassigned to the headquarters of its replacement. In 1951, wings replaced the medium bombardment groups attached to FEAF Bomber Command for combat. In

¹ "Military Dogs in the Pacific", at <http://www.dposs.com/k9/pacafhistory.htm>. [The reference is to sentry dogs.]

² From Judy G.Endicott, at http://www.maxwell.af.mil/usaf_organizations_korea_introduction.html/.

most cases, the personnel assigned to the group headquarters were simply reassigned to the wing headquarters, which had moved on paper to the location of the group headquarters.

Most other combat organizations in-theater continued to operate with both wing and group headquarters or with group headquarters only. In a few cases, individual squadrons, such as the 319th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, were directly controlled by an organization higher than either wing or group level.

Fighter-Bomber Wings

8th Fighter-Bomber Wing/8th Fighter-Bomber Group

35th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration.

36th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration.

80th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration. [1 Medal of Honor]

18th Fighter-Bomber Group/18th Fighter-Bomber Wing

12th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration.

67th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration.

49th Fighter-Bomber Group/49th Fighter-Bomber Wing

7th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

8th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

9th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

58th Fighter-Bomber Wing/58th Fighter-Bomber Group

69th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952-

310th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952-

311th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952-

116th Fighter-Bomber Group³

158th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

159th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

196th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

136th Fighter-Bomber Wing/136th Fighter-Bomber Group

111th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

154th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

182nd Fighter-Bomber Squadron: duration

474th Fighter-Bomber Wing/474th Fighter-Bomber Group [replaced 116th Fighter-Bomber Group]

428th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952-

429th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952-

430th Fighter-Bomber Squadron: July 10, 1952-

Fighter Escort Wing

27th Fighter-Escort Wing/27th Fighter-Escort Group [F-84s for long-range bomber escort]

522nd Fighter-Escort Squadron: duration

523rd Fighter-Escort Squadron: duration

524th Fighter-Escort Squadron: duration

³ The 116th was Air National Guard (ANG); in July 1952 474 FBW took over.

Fighter-Interceptor Wings

4th Fighter-Interceptor Wing/4th Fighter-Interceptor Group⁴

334th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron: duration [1 Medal of Honor]

335th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron: duration

336th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron: duration

35th Fighter-Interceptor Wing/35th Fighter-Interceptor Group⁵

39th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron: to May 1951

40th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron: duration

51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing/51st Fighter-Interceptor Group [Other squadrons attached from time to time]

16th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron: duration

25th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron: duration

319th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron⁶

Light Bombardment Wings

3rd Bombardment Wing, Light/3rd Bombardment Group, Light

8th Bombardment Squadron: duration [1 Medal of Honor]

13th Bombardment Squadron: duration

90th Bombardment Squadron: June 1951 to end

17th Bombardment Wing, Light/17th Bombardment Group, Light

34th Bombardment Squadron: May 1952-

37th Bombardment Squadron: May 1952-

95th Bombardment Squadron: May 1952-

452nd Bombardment Wing, Light/452nd Bombardment Group, Light⁷

728th Bombardment Squadron: -May 1952

729th Bombardment Squadron: -May 1952

730th Bombardment Squadron: -May 1952

731st Bombardment Squadron: -November 1950

Medium Bombardment Wings

19th Bombardment Group, Medium/19th Bombardment Wing, Medium⁸

28th Bombardment Squadron

30th Bombardment Squadron

93rd Bombardment Squadron

22nd Bombardment Group, Medium⁹

2nd Bombardment Squadron: duration

19th Bombardment Squadron: duration

33rd Bombardment Squadron: duration

⁴ Credited with 516 air combat victories, more than half the total credited for Korean War. Flew F-86 and had 25 aces by war's end.

⁵ Other squadrons were attached from time to time.

⁶ F-94 Starfire Night AW [All Weather] fighter, sent from US to provide additional night interception/escort capability from March 1952 to war's end.

⁷ Reserve wing, on active duty until May 1952.

⁸ 19th Bomb Group inactivated June 1953; its B-29 squadrons went under direct command of 19th Bomb Wing. Flew from Anderson AFB, then Kadena AFB.

⁹ Redeployed to US November 1950.

92nd Bombardment Group, Medium¹⁰
325th Bombardment Squadron: duration
326th Bombardment Squadron: duration
327th Bombardment Squadron: duration

98th Bombardment Group, Medium/98th Bombardment Wing, Medium¹¹
343rd Bombardment Squadron: duration
344th Bombardment Squadron: duration
345th Bombardment Squadron: duration

307th Bombardment Group, Medium/307th Bombardment Wing, Medium¹²
370th Bombardment Squadron:
371st Bombardment Squadron:
372nd Bombardment Squadron:

Reconnaissance Units

543rd Tactical Support Group¹³
8th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron [RF-80 PR]
45th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron [T-6, F-51]
162nd Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron [RB-26, Night PR]
6166th Air Weather Reconnaissance Flight [WB-26]

67th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing/67th Tactical Reconnaissance Group
12th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron: February 1951-
15th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron: February 1951-
45th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron: February 1951-

Separate Squadrons

31st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Photographic [Directly under Far East Air Forces] 31st SRS moved back to US and was replaced by 91st SRS
91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Medium, Photographic Flew RB-26, RB-45, RB-50 for reconnaissance, surveillance, and ferret missions
512th Reconnaissance Squadron, Very Long Range, Weather. Flew RB-29/WB-29, replaced by 56th SRS
56th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Medium, Weather. Took over personnel and aircraft of 512th SRS in mid-1951

Air Rescue

3rd Air Rescue Group
Flight A (Johnson AB, Japan)
Flight B (Yokota/Misawa/Yokota/Komaki, Japan)
Flight C (Misawa AB, Japan)
Flight D (Ashiya AB, Japan)
Det F/Det 1 (Seoul/Taegu/Yongdong-po/Seoul, South Korea)
36th Air Rescue Squadron
37th Air Rescue Squadron
38th Air Rescue Squadron
39th Air Rescue Squadron
2157th Air Rescue Squadron

¹⁰ Redeployed to US November 1950, flew B-29 from Yokota AFB.

¹¹ Squadrons of the group shifted at least once to control of 98th Wing and then back to 98th Group.

¹² Squadrons shifted at least once to control of 307th Wing; by war's end flew 5800 missions].

¹³ Stood down when 67 TRW activated January-February 1951.

Tactical Control Groups

502nd Tactical Control Group¹⁴

- 605th Tactical Control Squadron
- 606th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron
- 607th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron
- 608th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron
- 6132d Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron

6147th Tactical Control Group

- 942nd Forward Air Control Squadron [attached for some time]
- 6148th Tactical Control Squadron
- 6149th Tactical Control Squadron
- 6150th Tactical Control Squadron

Tactical Support Wings

[These were temporary wings, each for support of a combat group. The USAF did not realize the war would be a long one and the TSWs were reorganized to permanent wings in December 1950.]

- 6002nd Tactical Support Wing
- 6131st Tactical Support Wing
- 6133rd Tactical Support Wing
- 6149th Tactical Support Wing
- 6150th Tactical Support Wing

Troop Carrier Wings and Groups

1st Troop Carrier Group (Provisional) [Operated for 5 months]

- 46th Troop Carrier Squadron (P)
- 47th Troop Carrier Squadron (P)
- 48th Troop Carrier Squadron (P)

61st Troop Carrier Group, Heavy

- 4th Troop Carrier Squadron: attached for some months
- 14th Troop Carrier Squadron: attached 11 months in 2 tours
- 15th Troop Carrier Squadron: duration
- 53rd Troop Carrier Squadron: duration

314th Troop Carrier Group, Medium [C-119]

- 7th Troop Carrier Squadron: attached 9 months
- 50th Troop Carrier Squadron: duration
- 53rd Troop Carrier Squadron: attached 2 months
- 61st Troop Carrier Squadron: duration
- 62nd Troop Carrier Squadron: duration

315th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium/315th Troop Carrier Group, Medium [Replaced 437th TCG]

- 19th Troop Carrier Squadron: June 1952-
- 34th Troop Carrier Squadron: June 1952-
- 43rd Troop Carrier Squadron: June 1952-
- 344th Troop Carrier Squadron: June - December

¹⁴ Guided tactical aircraft to targets and controlled flight corridors.

374th Troop Carrier Wing, Heavy/374th Troop Carrier Group, Heavy
[Other squadrons were attached from time to time]

4th Troop Carrier Squadron: attached 5 months 1951

6th Troop Carrier Squadron: duration

14th Troop Carrier Squadron: attached twice

21st Troop Carrier Squadron: duration

22nd Troop Carrier Squadron: duration

344th Troop Carrier Squadron: attached December, 1952-

403rd Troop Carrier Wing, Medium/403rd Troop Carrier Group, Medium

437th Troop Carrier Wing, Medium/437th Troop Carrier Group, Medium¹⁵

63rd Troop Carrier Squadron: -January, 1953

64th Troop Carrier Squadron: -January, 1953

65th Troop Carrier Squadron: -January, 1953

483rd Troop Carrier Wing, Medium/483rd Troop Carrier Group, Medium¹⁶

815th Troop Carrier Squadron: January 1953-

816th Troop Carrier Squadron: January 1953-

817th Troop Carrier Squadron: January 1953-

Other Units

1st Shoran Beacon Squadron¹⁷

5th Communications Group

1st Radio Squadron

1st Telephone and Carrier Squadron

2nd Communications Squadrons (Operations)

7th Communications Squadrons (Operations)

2d Radio Relay Squadron

20th Weather Squadron Detachments

30th Weather Squadron

75th Air Depot Wing

417th Engineer Aviation Brigade [As of May 1953]

Direct Command

420th Engineer Aviation Topographic Detachment

366th Engineer Aviation Battalion

733rd Engineer Aviation Supply Point Company

840th Engineer Aviation Battalion

841st Engineer Aviation Battalion

1903rd Engineer Aviation Battalion

930th Engineer Aviation Group

622nd Engineer Aviation Maintenance Company

808th Engineer Aviation Battalion

822nd Engineer Aviation Battalion

931st Engineer Aviation Group

809th Engineer Aviation Battalion

811th Engineer Aviation Battalion

¹⁵ Reserve unit, returned to inactive service January 1953.

¹⁶ Also served as HQ unit for another group and a provisional squadron, replaced 437th TCG.

¹⁷ Used land-based short-range beacons to guide B-29 bombers and long-range reconnaissance aircraft to targets.

919th Engineer Aviation Maintenance Company
934th Engineer Aviation Group
802nd Engineer Aviation Battalion
839th Engineer Aviation Battalion

801st Medical Air Evacuation Squadron

3903rd Radar Bomb Scoring Group Dets C (11), K (5), and N (22)

6004th Air Intelligence Service Squadron Dets 1, 2, 3, and 5

6146th Air Force Advisory Group

6167th Air Base Group

6204th Photo Mapping Flight Detachment 1

6405th Korea Air Material Unit

SOURCE: Air University, Maxwell AFB: USAF Organizations Korea, at
http://www.maxwell.af.mil/usaf_organizations_korea.html/