

191 AIR REFUELING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

407 Fighter Squadron constituted, 12 Oct 1943
Activated, 15 Oct 1943
Redesignated 407 Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 5 Apr 1944
Redesignated 407 Fighter Squadron, 5 Jun 1944
Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945
Redesignated 191 Fighter Squadron, and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946
191 Fighter Squadron (SE) extended federal recognition, 18 Nov 1946
Redesignated 191 Fighter Squadron (Single-Engine),
Redesignated 191 Fighter-Bomber Squadron,
Redesignated 191 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Jul 1955
Redesignated 191 Air Transport Squadron (Heavy), 1 Apr 1961
Redesignated 191 Military Airlift Squadron, 1 Jan 1966
Redesignated 191 Air Refueling Squadron (Heavy), 20 Oct 1972
Redesignated 191 Air Refueling Squadron

STATIONS

Hamilton Field, CA, 15 Oct 1943
Portland AAB, OR, 7 Dec 1943
Esler Field, LA, 25 Mar 1944
Pollock AAFld, LA, 15 Apr 1944
Esler Field, LA, 9 Feb 1945
Alexandria AAFld, LA, 12 Sep 7 Nov 1945
Salt Lake City, UT

ASSIGNMENTS

372nd Fighter Bomber; Fighter Group, 15 Oct 1943-7 Nov 1945

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

P-39, 1943

P-40, 1944

P-51, 1945

F-51

F-86

C-97, 1961

F-104

C-124, 1969

KC-97, 1972

KC-135

Support Aircraft

C-47

T-6

B-26

COMMANDERS

LTC Jack F. Oberhansly

LTC Alma G. Winn, #1949

LTC Steve Busath 2004

HONORS

Service Streamers

American Theater

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

During World War II, the squadron was an Operational Training Unit (OTU), equipped with second-line P-39s and P-40s. Its mission was to train newly graduated pilots from Training Command in combat tactics and maneuvers before being assigned to their permanent combat unit. Initially assigned to IV Fighter Command, then transferred to III Fighter Command in 1944, being re-equipped with P-51D. It took part in air-ground maneuvers and demonstrations, participating in the Louisiana Maneuvers in the summer of 1944 and in similar activities in the US until after V-J Day.

Organized as a tactical unit prepared to implement the regular Air Force in time of emergency, the 191 Fighter Squadron, after several months of extensive planning and preparation, was federally recognized November 18th, 1946. In its infancy, the squadron was commanded by Lt. Col. Jack J. Oberhansly who was later succeeded by the unit's present commander, Lt. Col. Alma G. Winn. In its brief but colorful history, the squadron has grown from a complement of fifty-six officers and enlisted men to its present strength of three hundred and fifty over ninety-seven percent of its authorized personnel. Based at Salt Lake's Municipal Airport, the squadron began recruiting men from all communities in a widespread vicinity.

The first aircraft arrived on the base the 23rd of December, 1946. In the ensuing five months additional aircraft were received and by the 4th of June, 1947 the unit had all its planes and both Utility Flight and the Fighter Squadron were in full operation. The squadron now had twenty-six F-51s, two C-47s, four B-26s, and four T-6s. With the advent of the aircraft, recognition of the Air Guard by the public became evident and a marked increase in morale and interest was indicated by all members of the organization. The roar of planes overhead became commonplace to the citizenry of surrounding towns and cities as the squadron's fighters streaked across the sky in successive flights. Pilots, crew chiefs, armorers, radio men—needed technicians and rated airmen were attracted from the ranks of the ex-servicemen. Untrained recruits were enlisted and classified in "on-the-job-training" status, practical and classroom

instruction was initiated and the training program gathered momentum.

Publicity was received by the organization in its beginning. "Utah Air National Guard Unit to Hold Exhibit," "Air Guard Group to Conduct Enlistment Drive," "Guard Squadron Aids in Feeding and Rescue of Livestock," and numerous other articles began to appear in local and national publications. Such activities and accomplishments soon established the 191 Fighter Squadron as one of the outstanding units of the Air National Guard.

The first building used by the Air Guard was the old Army hangar at the Salt Lake Municipal Airport. This structure was shared with an Airline and the arrangement proved very unsatisfactory due to the influx of men and equipment which could not be properly housed. Although this condition appeared to reduce efficient training and operations, the organization continued to progress. A new area, formerly a part of the Salt Lake Army Air Base and located at the northern end of the airport, was allotted to the unit. A modern hangar and adjoining shop and supply buildings were constructed. Barracks, classrooms, mess hall and supply warehouses, long vacated, were renovated and prepared for use. The new area flourished and prospered until all needed facilities were available for squadron use.

The squadron has participated in three summer encampments since its activation. In 1947 the units were ordered to their first fifteen day tour of duty at their home station. Summer Camp in 1948 again found the squadron operating from their home base for a fifteen day period. During the summer of 1949, all units were flown to Victorville Air Force Base, California, for joint operations with units from California and Nevada under command of the 61st Fighter Wing. These summer camps were the "proving grounds" of the training and experience received during months of Monday night drill periods.

The parent unit, the 191 Fighter Squadron, exercises command function over Utility Flight, the Weather Station and Detachment "C", 244th Air Service Group. All planning, maintenance and administration necessary for the operation of the squadron is performed by forty-four officers and one hundred and one airmen. To destroy enemy air and surface targets and provide protective cover for strategic air operations are two of the many important missions required of this unit; and to achieve and maintain this level of operational effectiveness are pilots, administrative personnel, specialists and mechanics; all combining their efforts to provide the striking power necessary to fulfill the "M" Day mission of the 191 Fighter Squadron.

Contributing to the success of the Fighter Squadron and Utility Flight is the 191 Weather Station (Type "A"), commanded by Captain Victor D. Allred. This unit installs, maintains and operates its equipment, either mobile or fixed, to provide weather information and forecasts for all flights. Because of uncertain and many times hazardous weather conditions, the pilots of the organization would fail to successfully complete their required missions were it not for the services of the three officers and five airmen of the weather station.

Detachment "C", 244th Air Service Group, commanded by Major Loyal W. Fry, provides base services, third echelon maintenance and supply and performs the numerous sundry duties

necessary to maintain an operating base. Its eight officers, warrant officer and one hundred and sixty-eight airmen are of varied occupations and skills and comprise the working backbone of the organization. Motor transportation, utilities, mess, supply, aircraft maintenance and shops; all requisites for a complete and efficient organization.

These four units, 191 Fighter Squadron, 191 Utility Flight, 191 Weather Station and Detachment "C" 244th Air Service Group, comprise an indomitable tactical force which has, since its beginning three years ago, proven its preparedness and demonstrated its willingness to take its place in the nation's military plan.

Our first summer camp—testing ground for our initial training as a fighter squadron. Operating from the old hanger, inconveniences and shortages were aplenty. Watching the first gunnery mission takeoff made old G.I.'s choke up and get that "remember when" look in their eyes. Buddy, we were proud!

Crew chiefs, armorers, and specialists, many wearing the same faded coveralls and khakis they wore with their old Air Force outfits; 9th, 8th, 14th, 5th and other Air Force patches were worn by all the ex-G.I.'s—sentimentalists all. It was good to smell those gas and oil fumes again and feel the hot cowling of a warmed-up engine.

Shortcuts and ideas to expedite squadron operations; American ingenuity worked twenty-four hours a day. Pilots and ground crew worked together and lasting friendships were formed. Experienced men taught raw recruits the fundamentals and merged them with know-how.

Talking over the day's work in the barracks; drinking beer, and shooting pool in the Enlisted Men's Club—good times long remembered. Basketball in the old gym, Softball games where rank was forgotten. Passes for the homesick and nightlife for the "Casano-vas." Days passed with a rush and soon it was over. Our first camp proved to be "Operation Success" and pleasant memories were a dime a dozen.

Our second fifteen day field training operation. More men and equipment than last year. Overnight, new faces became familiar ones. Operating from a new area, we had it made. Plenty of chow, good housing and tools to work with, a damn good base.

Four gunnery, bomb and rocket missions a day. Not counting formation, transition and navigation. Engines roared before dawn and after dusk. Records were made. The pressure was on and men and machines strained day and night to meet the demand.

Policing up, cutting weeds and trash runs the base looked good. Governor's Day, Air show and review. The public came and applauded. Our chests increased by inches as we watched our pilots and planes prove we were ready.

Last night of camp the big dance and tasty chow in the new hangar. Morale was tops. A good job well done and everyone, from private to Commanding Officer, had a part in it.

Out of state maneuvers at Victorville, California hot and dusty. C-47s and '46s loaded with personnel and supplies crowded the ramp. Joint operations with California and Nevada. Nineteen F-51s and all in the air for the night navigation mission and the formation on Governor's Day. A maximum effort every day and the ships were ready. Operations, Engineering and Supply worked together like a well-oiled machine. Administration kept the squadron personnel on their toes and set an example in "good housekeeping." We operated on a shoestring; all supplies and equipment were a necessity. No dead-weight luxuries on this tour.

"Operational Readiness Test" for four days and the squadron came through with flying colors. Scrambles, alerts and secret briefings; not unlike our hitches during the war years. 'VIPs' in numbers gave the outfit a going over with a fine tooth comb. Corrections and compliments we took 'em both and worked for perfection.

Utility Flight had the bad breaks, but made the most of them and came out ahead. Two engine changes. The crews worked into the night and had the ships in the air in record time. Supply and Transportation were in there pitching. No losses and no accidents it was a good feeling.

Governor's Day, and the Governors and Adjutant Generals from three states came to watch the 61st Fighter Wing perform. The squadron did itself proud. Reviews and aerial formations made an impressive display.

Sack time and beer offset the sweating hours and red tape. Officer's and Enlisted Men's Clubs, PX, and the swimming pool were filled to capacity after the day's operations. Week-end passes to the coast cities provided "bull sessions" for a lifetime. Homesick recruits wrote every night and got all the mail. Sunday pay call and the squadron headed for Salt Lake and home. Another memorable summer camp was over.

As a result of the Korean War, the 191 Fighter Squadron was federalized and brought to active duty on 1 April 1951 and assigned to the 140th Fighter Wing. The unit was ordered to the new Clovis Air Force Base, New Mexico, which arrived in October 1951. The federalized 140th was a composite organization of activated Air National Guard units, composed of the 191, the 187th Fighter Squadron (Wyoming ANG) and the 120th Fighter Squadron (Colorado ANG). The 140th and its components were equipped with F-51D Mustangs, and were re-designated as Fighter-Bomber squadrons on 12 April 1951.

During their period of federal service, many pilots were sent to Japan and South Korea to reinforce active-duty units, 10 pilots flew over 100 missions, and two Utah pilots were killed in this conflict. One Utah ANG pilot, Capt. Clifford Jolley, flying an F-86 Sabrejet, shot down seven soviet made MIG-15 aircraft and became the first Air Guard "Ace" of the Korean Conflict.

At Clovis, elements of the 140th FBW took part in Operation Tumbler-Snapper - 1952, a nuclear bomb test in Nevada. On 15 November 1952, the elements of the 140th returned to Air National Guard control in their respective states.

Upon return to Utah state control, the 191 was re-equipped by Tactical Air Command (TAC) with F-51D Mustangs. On 1 June 1955 it was transferred to Air Defense Command (ADC) and re-designated as the 191 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, and received its first jet aircraft, the F-86A Sabre which it used as a day-only interceptor for the air defense of Utah.

On 1 July 1958, the 191 was authorized to expand to a group level, and the 151st Fighter-Interceptor Group was established by the National Guard Bureau. The 191 FIS becoming the group's flying squadron. Other squadrons assigned into the group were the 151st Headquarters, 151st Material Squadron (Maintenance), 151st Combat Support Squadron, and the 1151st USAF Dispensary.

Also, in 1958, the 151st FIW implemented the ADC Runway Alert Program, in which interceptors of the 191 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron were committed to a five-minute runway alert. The F-86s were replaced by the F-86L Sabre Interceptor, a day/night/all-weather aircraft designed to be integrated into the ADC SAGE interceptor direction and control system.

On 1 April 1961, the 151st was transferred from Air Defense Command to the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), and re-equipped with C-97 Stratofreighter. The 151st Air Transport Group expanded its military airlift role to worldwide mission capabilities. Entering the realm of Southeast Asia and the Vietnam War, the Utah Air National Guard flew its first mission into the Southeast Asia theater combat zone in late 1964, and continued to do so throughout the Vietnam War years. In January 1966, the unit became the 151st Military Airlift Group (151 MAG), under the Military Airlift Command [MAC]. In 1969, the C-97s were retired and replaced by the C-124C Globemaster II. During the Vietnam War, Utah Air Guard crews flew 6,600 hours of support missions for American forces.

The 151st Military Airlift Group was transferred to Strategic Air Command (SAC) on 1 July 1972 and was equipped with second-line KC-97L Stratotankers. In 1978, the squadron received KC-135A Stratotankers; a newer and faster jet tanker. In January 1979 the unit began the 24-hour-per-day Strategic Air Command (SAC) alert commitment. This commitment would be maintained for the next 12 years until President George Bush ended the SAC Alert Force in 1991.

The 1980s found the squadron involved in many training exercises as well as "real World" flying missions. In 1982 the unit converted to a newer version model aircraft—the KC-135E. In April 1983 the 191 Air Refueling Squadron was involved in the first Pacific Tanker Task Force, with flights to Guam, South Korea and Australia. Spring of 1984 brought a very large "first" for the 1191 Air Refueling Squadron. The unit participated in Coronet Giant, an exercise which entailed a direct flight from the United States to West Germany by 12, A-10 Thunderbolt II attack fighters, refueled along the way by three KC-135's from the 191 The route spanned 3600 miles, and was the largest mission of this type ever undertaken by a guard force.

During Operation Desert Shield, the squadron received orders for a partial activation on 20

December 1990. All aircraft, aircrews and a number of support personnel were dispatched to the newest forward operating base at Cairo West Airport, Egypt on 27–29 December 1990. They became the basis for the 1706th Air Refueling Wing (Provisional). Other unit personnel were mobilized for use as stateside "backfill" (replacing troops sent forward) or sent to overseas destinations.

On 30 April 1999, the 151st ARG was tasked for a Presidential Reserve Call Up due to the crisis in Kosovo. President William Clinton authorized the call up of 33,000 reserve personnel for up to 270 days. The 191 deployed to Europe to support Operation Allied Force.

Following the terrorist's attacks on the United States the squadron was tasked to provide aerial refueling support for the countless fighter combat air patrols performed over major U.S. cities. Dubbed Operation Noble Eagle (ONE), the 191 ARS flew their first ONE mission on 12 September 2001. The highest sortie production occurred in November when fighter combat air patrols occurred every four hours over most of the major U.S. cities.

In addition to supporting ONE, the 191 ARS also provided support for Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), deploying aircraft and personnel to Spain to support combat air operations from late Sep 2001 until the spring of 2002.

At home, local communities see many benefits from the Utah ANG. Many opportunities exist to meet legitimate military training needs while serving the community. Activities include Sub-for-Santa, Blood Drives, highway cleanup, and the 2002 Winter Olympics. The Utah ANG also maintains a state of readiness should Utah need support during an earthquake, flood, civil disturbance, or major disaster, and was involved in assisting evacuees in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

USAF Unit Histories

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Sources

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