

358 FIGHTER SQUADRON



MISSION

The 358 Fighter Squadron trains pilots in the A-10 and OA-10 Thunderbolt II. The 358 'Lobos' conducts all formal course directed aircraft transition, day and night weapons and tactics employment, day and night air refueling and dissimilar air combat maneuvers. The squadron trains pilots to plan, coordinate, execute, and control day and night close air support, air interdiction and battlefield surveillance and reconnaissance. The squadron prepares pilots for combat mission ready upgrade.

LINEAGE

358 Fighter Squadron constituted and activated, 12 Nov 1942
Redesignated 358 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine, 20 Aug 1943
Redesignated 56th Reconnaissance Squadron, Weather Scouting, 3 Dec 1945
Inactivated, 20 Nov 1946
Redesignated 56th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Medium, Weather, 22 Jan 1951
Activated, 21 Feb 1951
Redesignated 56th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, 15 Feb 1954
Inactivated, 15 Jan 1972
Redesignated 358 Tactical Fighter Squadron, 18 May 1972
Activated, 1 Jun 1972
Redesignated 358 Tactical Fighter Training Squadron, 1 Jan 1976
Redesignated 358 Fighter Squadron, 1 Nov 1991
Inactivated, 21 Feb 2014

STATIONS

Orlando AB, FL, 12 Nov 1942
Norfolk Muni Aprt, VA, 17 Feb 1943
Philadelphia Muni Aprt, PA, 4 Mar–16 Jun 1943
Steeple Morden, England, 8 Jul 1943

Gablingen, Germany, 16 Jul 1945
Schweinfurt, Germany, Apr 1946
Mitchel Field, NY, 1 Aug–20 Nov 1946
Misawa AB, Japan, 21 Feb 1951
Yokota AB, Japan, 14 Sep 1951–15 Jan 1972 (detachment operated from Andersen AFB, Guam,
11 Mar 1960–18 Apr 1962)
Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 1 Jun 1972

DEPLOYED STATIONS

Korat RTAFB, Thailand, 29 Dec 1973–14 May 1974

ASSIGNMENTS

355 Fighter Group, 12 Nov 1942–20 Nov 1946
2143 Air Weather Wing, 21 Feb 1951
1 Weather Wing, 8 Feb 1954
9 Weather (later, 9 Weather Reconnaissance) Group, 1 Feb 1960
9 Weather Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Jul 1965–15 Jan 1972
355 Tactical Fighter (later, 355 Tactical Training; 355th Fighter) Wing, 1 Jun 1972
355 Operations Group, 1 May 1992

ATTACHMENTS

354 Tactical Fighter Wing, 29 Dec 1973–14 May 1974

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-47, 1943–1944
P-51, 1944–1945
WB-29, 1951–1957
WB-50, 1956–1965
RB-57, 1962–1964, 1966–1972
C-130, 1962–1964
WB-47, 1963–1966
WC-135, 1964–1972
A-7, 1972–1979
A-10, 1979

COMMANDERS

1st Lt Theodore B. Marxson, 2 Feb 1943
Lt Col Raymond B. Myers, 8 Feb 1943
Maj Charles J. Rosenblatt, 29 Jun 1944
Capt William J. Hovde, 10 Jul 1944
Lt Col Emil L. Sluga, 2 Aug 1944
Maj Walter V. Gresham, Jr., 21 Mar 1945
Maj William J. Hovde, 7 May 1945
Capt Kenneth E. Mikalauskas, 8 Oct 1945

Unknown, Dec 1945-20 Nov 1946
Col Robert G. David, 21 Feb 1951
Lt Col Lester E. Ferriss, Jr., 28 May 1952
Lt Col Russell W. Neely, 25 Apr 1955
Lt Col Lawrence Cometh, 27 Feb 1958
Lt Col Eugene D. Wallace, 8 Jul 1960
Lt Col Robert V. McKibban, 20 Jul 1963
Col Arthur L. Moreland, 17 Oct 1965
Lt Col James O. Lykins, 10 Apr 1966
Lt Col Whitney L. Morgan, 20 Jul 1966
Lt Col Tedd L. Bishop, 6 Jun 1969
Col Glenn A. Patterson, Jr., 8 Aug 1970

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II

Air Offensive, Europe

Normandy

Northern France

Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace

Central Europe

Air Combat, EAME Theater

Korea

First UN Counter-offensive

CCF Spring Offensive

UN Summer-Fall Offensive

Second Korean Winter

Korea Summer-Fall, 1952

Third Korean Winter

Korea, Summer 1953

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation

Germany, 5 Apr 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

Mar–Oct 1956

1 Mar 1960–28 Feb 1961
1 Jul 1967–30 Jun 1968
1 Jan–31 Dec 1971
[1 Jun 1972]–1 Jun 1973
1 Oct 1976–31 May 1978
1 Jan 1990–31 Dec 1991

EMBLEM



358 Fighter Squadron emblem: Over and through a dark red disc, a cherub proper, wearing white aviator's helmet and leaning on and peering over edge of large white cloud information, outlined brown, in base, holding in left arm a "Tommy Gun," outlined brown also at rest on cloud formation. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The crouching cherub represents the pilots of the Army Air Forces riding high above the clouds, which also portray the high altitude performance of fighter type aircraft. The dark red disc is symbolic of the fiery sun into whose rays the pilots climb and from which vantage point they can effectively attack the foe. Approved on 7 July 1943. This emblem is not weather oriented but was used by the 56th Reconnaissance Weather Scouting, and its successors from 3 December 1945 until a new emblem was approved in 1952.



56th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron (Medium) Weather emblem: On a disc black, edged red, three concentric circular lines, bisected by one vertical and one horizontal cross hair, representative of the face of a radar scope yellow; superimposed over-all a caricatured buzzard gray, "with a Sherlock Holmes manner," face and vest front white, beak and feet yellow, outline and details black, wearing an aviator's helmet brown; the buzzard, smoking a Calabash pipe brown, from which two puffs of smoke white are emitting, and holding in his right hand a dropsonde instrument; in his left hand a magnifying glass white, through which he examines a caricatured representation of a squall-line yellow, in the lower right [dexter] of the disc. (Approved 26 Sep 1952)

The Buzzard, the symbol of the code name for this squadron's weather tracks is preparing to release a dropsonde instrument in order to gather weather data from the squall-line. The dropsonde instrument, a miniature weather station, transmits in Morse code to the dropsonde analyst in the aircraft the temperature, pressure, and humidity of the vertical column of air through which it descends. The Calabash pipe with the two puffs of smoke expressed the forcefulness, drive, and determination displayed by the Buzzard, a caricature of Sherlock Holmes, while he searches with his magnifying glass for important meteorological data contained within the squall line. The aviator's helmet symbolizes flying mission of the squadron. All of the above superimposed on the face of the radar scope indicates that radar is one of the most important navigational and weather detecting aids used in aerial weather reconnaissance.



358 Tactical Fighter Squadron emblem: On a Red disc fimbriated White and bordered Blue issuing from sinister a wolf's head, Brown, garnished White and Red and detailed Black, surmounting a Yellow lightning bolt extending from upper left to lower right. (Approved, 14 Nov 1972)



358 Fighter Squadron emblem: On a disc Gules, fimbriated with an inner border Argent, a wolf's head issuing from sinister Gold Brown, eyed of the first, garnished of the second, detailed Sable, surmounting a lightning bolt Or bendwise its tips penetrating the inner border, all within a narrow border Azure. Attached below the disk, a White scroll edged with a narrow Blue border and inscribed "358 FIGHTER SQ" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Ultramarine blue and Air Force 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 snarling wolf's head depicts the aggressiveness and fierceness of the fighter squadron. The lightning bolt indicates the quickness and striking ability of the fighter aircraft.

MOTTO

LOBOS

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 14 Sep 1943–25 Apr 1945. Supported combat operations in Korea, 21 Feb 1951–27 Jul 1953. Weather reconnaissance in the Far East, 1951–1972. Trained A–7 aircrews, Jul 1976–Oct 1979 and A–10 aircrews, c. Oct 1979–c. Oct 1991.

Officials at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., inactivated Air Force Reserve Command's 45th Fighter Squadron, passing its A-10 pilot training duties to AFRC's 47th Fighter Squadron, which was transplanted from Barksdale AFB, La. "During the last five-plus years, members of the 45th FS have trained A-10 mission-ready pilots alongside our regular Air Force team," said Col. John Russell, 924th Fighter Group commander, at the March 8 ceremony. Davis-Monthan inactivated the Active Duty 358 Fighter Squadron last month and rolled it together with the Reserve 45th FS as the 47th FS, according to a release. The reformed 47th FS is now the Air Force's only "combined classic and Active association," according to a separate March 20 release. Under the arrangement, AFRC pilots will fly with the 347th FS—one of D-M's two remaining Active Duty A-10 training squadrons, while Active Duty pilots will in return fly with the Reserve unit. 2014

Combat in ETO, 14 Sep 1943-25 Apr 1945. Not fully manned or equipped, Jan-20 Nov 1946. Supported combat operations in Korea, 21 Feb 1951-27 Jul 1953.

1957 56 WRS Tracked Typhoons Agnes, Bess, Carmen, Della, Elaine, Faye, Hester, Kit, Mamie And Judy. Mission commitment increased to two fixed tracks per day. Navy reconnaissance

aircraft entered Typhoon Bess at same time and altitude as buzzard flight.

The 56th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron (56WRS) was a relatively small tenant organization stationed at Yokota Air Base about an hours drive west of Tokyo Japan. Formally deactivated in May 1972, many assigned members transferred across base to 610MASS (Military Airlift Support Squadron) while others rotated to new assignments. The 55th WRS at McClellan AFB CA picked up the aircraft and missions that were occasionally required. 56WRS was on the opposite side of the flight line from main base where most all activities resided.

One of the highlights of the small squadron was the camaraderie between members attached to the unit. The Vietnam war was in full swing around us, and when the tree chopping incident in the DMZ caused the US to rattle sabers by filling the Yokota runway with KC-135 tankers and other various aircraft, we knew that we lived in a time of turmoil. Most of the younger troops were housed in barracks 333, a two story barracks directly next to the Airmans club where slots and the monthly membership stag nights were held. Higher ranking members could live in barracks 212(?) where some realm of privacy and sanity existed.

The 56th WRS maintenance crew replaced the elevator on the left side due to damage the week before the flight. The elevator control rods ran along up tight close to the fuselage. To hook them up properly, according to the Air Force Maintenance book, the AFM called for the removal of the huge tail cowling, which meant a bunch more down time. As a result, the flightline maintenance guys took a shortcut, left the tail cone in place, and put the control rod bolt in from the wrong side. They didn't get it correctly safety wired because it was squeezed up tight against a spar, and they thought it would be OK. It did work fine on preflight and power-on operational check before taxiing, but, as -671 took off down the runway, the pilots pulled back on the yoke, and even with their feet on the instrument panel pulling on the control columns together, they could not get the nose up or the nose-wheels off the centerline as they rolled down the runway at take-off power.

The aircraft commander used stabilizer trim at full nose-up setting to lift off the runway just barely missing the commuter train outside Fussa. The aircrew went out and dumped fuel over Tokyo Bay, came back, attempted to land, but they couldn't trim the nose without full elevator authority. The aircraft commander made several attempts or passes over the runway and finally had to come in hot at over 180 knots since the WC-135 was too heavy to glide in underpowered without uncontrollably stalling wingover.

After touching down on the last attempt, 61-2671 bounced three times. On the third runway contact, the front gear folded back into the forward fuel tank, and the aircraft skidded off the runway twisting the shit out of the fuselage. Everyone bailed out over the wing. According to Steve Wing who was on -669, I watched the whole thing go down. I was glad it wasn't my bird 669.

The Squadron and Wing Commander awarded the Aircraft Commander an Air Force Cross for bringing -671 in without destroying it. He managed to get it down to the Higashi-Fussa end of

the runway, but he almost did not have the throttle power to get over the railroad tunnel off the end of the runway. In order to get over the tunnel, he built up enough airspeed at 110% power to lift the nose up and get it all over the tunnel, but he then had no way to bleed that airspeed off and set -671 down in the foam.

Apparently, the elevator control rod bolt came loose, backed-out, and jammed against a spar, which would not let the elevator go up or down. The fastener had to go inside from the fuselage pointing out. This was the only way it would fit properly, according to the maintenance manual. The maintenance guys reversed the bolt in-from-out to out-pushed-in so they wouldn't have to take the tail cone off to make room to install the bolt. They experimented with it up to some degree because Steve Wing had to gut -669 and fly to Boeing to pick up a RAM Team and then go back and pick up parts and tools to fix -671.

Rather than scrap the airframe there at Yokota AB, it cost about 2 million dollars to fix. For a maintenance screwup that caused the landing accident---not anything to do with the stabilizer trim screw that saved the aircrew and plane on takeoff---two million dollars from budgeted maintenance funds may have been a bargain for a WC-135B that otherwise would have crashed at the end of the runway into a passing train.

The Air Force released -671 from Air Weather Service in 1972, converted it to a C-135C executive transport aircraft, and it sat on the ramp at Hickam AFB with Detachment 1 of the 89th Military Airlift Wing. It carried the combined command staffs of the Pacific forces until 1990. The Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center later converted 61-2671 to its present static display outside Tinker AFB, OK.

The Chernobyl reactor accident was a grotesque disaster, and it bankrupted the Soviet Union not only financially but humanly, morally, philosophically, and scientifically. The Ukraine and the interior of Russia will be a financial, human, moral, philosophical, and scientific wasteland for hundreds if not thousands or tens of thousands of years. The final outcome will be vastly more catastrophic and costly than Hollywood could represent in one-hundred post-Apocalyptic science-fiction movies.

Because the Soviets misunderstood or tried to downplay the initial explosion and meltdown, the exact nature of the reactor accident could only be known by measuring it. That Soviet reactor debris emitted high-energy radioactivity characteristic of a critical or ongoing nuclear reaction. The reactor plume blew downwind into Scandinavia, and the initial readings must have been very frightening to the Norwegians and Swedish considering that the #1 Chernobyl reactors was still runaway and visibly on fire. So, the Swedish nuclear authority broadcast an all-points bulletin, and the United Nations probably invoked its highest authority and implored the United States of America to assess the Ukraine situation. Certainly 61-2674 deployed from 55th WRS with two alert crews and KC-135 tanker support. They never looked back. As each WC-135B crew accumulated a medically-indicated dose of ionizing radiation, a new crew came on board until they too were exposed. This is exactly what the WC-135B was built to do, and, fortunately, one excellent aircraft was on alert on April 25-26, 1986.

Our nuclear-bomb fallout was contaminated with alpha and beta decay products, which were nearly harmless to us at 56th WRS provided we took preventative measures for radiological contamination. On the other hand, the Chernobyl nuclear reaction released very few alpha and beta decay particles but released many fast neutrons and huge quantities of gamma wavelength radiation in the rising smoke plume. These two latter, high-energy particle-waves changed normal aluminum, copper, silicon glass, and steel into radioactive isotopes. The point is that WC-135B /61-2674/ is now tangibly made of radioactive isotopes, and that's how it got "hot." For the time being, the Air Force Air Combat Command stored 61-2674 at Davis-Monthan AFB in August 1997 as an OC-135B Open Skies Treaty reconnaissance aircraft until all the signatories to the Open Skies Treaty ratify the over flight reconnaissance provisions. Offutt AFB, NE has two remaining WC-135Bs modified to WC-135Ws by the addition of a UHF data link console assigned to the 45th Reconnaissance Squadron of the former 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing and a third EC-135C as a weather reconnaissance mission-ready training aircraft.

Activated on February 21, 1951, the 56th SRS absorbed the personnel and resources of the 512th RS. Until early June 1952, the squadron flew almost daily strategic weather reconnaissance missions over the combat zone. Through the end of the conflict, the squadron conducted shipping surveillance and flew two reconnaissance tracks to observe and report weather conditions in the area east of the Asian landmass, between Formosa and USSR's Kamchatka Peninsula.

Ten C-135B (s/n 61-2665), delivered to the MATS in 1962 were, therefore, transformed three years later into the WC-135B; the W prefix was for weather and clearly identified its new role. From the outside it was close to the traditional cargo aircraft and could be refueled in flight it did not have an in-flight refueling boom, but had a drain hose like on most of the RC-135, whilst the boomer's compartment was faired and equipped with various special equipment. They were veritable weather stations and generally carried a minimum crew of seven men (pilot, co-pilot, navigator, weather officer, mechanic and two weather technicians whose role, amongst others, was to release the on board probes), a number that could be increased to more than thirty. The WC-135B was equipped with the AN/AMQ-25, an on board weather and geophysical laboratory that called upon a computer that compared and analyzed the data. It also had high performance research systems (such as the ARE, Atmospheric Research Equipment) that comprised of detectors and different types of probes, fixed and releasable, or even propelled by rockets. Faired scoops (U-1) were installed for collecting air samples when the plane was in flight; these were placed on each side of the fuselage, where it was strengthened, behind the emergency exits above the wings. These had filters and were analyzed and imprisoned in high-pressure spheres thanks to a special on board compressor. During their career, some of these aircraft received a special layout; one of them, for example, had its old boomers compartment equipped with tubes for the pneumatic release of probes whilst the WC-135B fleet was modified beginning in 1988 in order to carry the 'Star Cast' electro-optical system for taking photographs of fast moving objects, notably space shuttles. The presence of this equipment led

to the removal of one of the two air sample scoops and the installation of two windows, one of which was on the cargo door, protecting the position-calculating optical system.

From 1965 onwards, the WC-135B based at McClellan and Yokota (Japan) with the 55th and 56th Weather Reconnaissance Squadrons carried out missions throughout the world, including polar regions or off the African and South American coasts. As well as the surveillance of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, their role also included establishing very precise databases that could be used to improve the use of any type of flying object. In the event of a nuclear conflict, the influence of the weather on a missile, a B-52 type jet bomber, or even a flying tanker could be determining, notably on the amount of fuel used and, therefore, the range and efficiency in general. Indeed, it should be known that a ballistic missile, despite its constantly improving precision due to technical progress, was extremely sensitive to strong winds at high altitude which could put it off its course and miss its target, or even lead to its destruction when it re-entered the atmosphere.

The WC-135B were, therefore, much used to define and trace the routes going via the North Pole that strategic bombers would have to take if launching a strike against the Soviet Union. On a regular basis, they collected (at least once a week) the different parameters (temperature, wind speed, hygrometric degrees, atmospheric pressure) in order to make databases and carry out simulations to define the ideal route and the weather conditions on them. These weather reconnaissance planes were also used in much more peaceful circumstances, taking part, for example, in international weather research, using their detectors to make sure that treaties banning open air nuclear testing were respected. Two WC-135B were even used in May 1986 after the nuclear power station explosion at Chernobyl, collecting the debris that allowed not only for the evaluation of the incident, but also its consequences. These planes were also used in operation 'Desert Shield' in order to draw up a precise weather map of Kuwait and Iraq (wind direction etc.), notably for use in the possible use of bacteriological or chemical weapons.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.