

449th AIR EXPEDITIONARY GROUP



MISSION

From 2008, the 449th Air Expeditionary Group has been assigned to United States Air Forces Europe to activate or inactivate as needed for operations. The group is currently located at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti. The 449th provides combat search and rescue for the Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa. The group has been assigned various expeditionary rescue squadrons while located in Djibouti. It is currently composed of HC-130P Hercules aircraft assigned to the 81st Expeditionary Rescue Squadron and pararescuemen from the 82nd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron. While deployed the group performed both combat and civil search and rescue missions.

LINEAGE

449th Bombardment Group (Heavy) constituted, 6 Apr 1943

Activated, 1 May 1943

Redesignated 449th Bombardment Group, Heavy, Aug 1943

Redesignated 449th Bombardment Group, Very Heavy, 29 May 1945

Inactivated, 4 Aug 1946

449th Fighter-Bomber Wing established, 23 Mar 1953

Redesignated 449th Bombardment Wing, Heavy and activated, 15 Nov 1962

Organized, 1 Feb 1963

Inactivated, 30 Sep 1977

449th Bombardment Group, Very Heavy and 449th Bombardment Wing, Heavy consolidated, 31 Jan 1984. Consolidated organization designated 449th Bombardment Wing, Heavy

Redesignated 449th Air Expeditionary Group and converted to provisional status, 2003

STATIONS

Davis-Monthan Field, AZ, 1 May 1943
Alamogordo AAFld, NM, 5 Jul 1943
Bruning AAFld, NE, 12 Sep-3 Dec 1943
Grottaglie, Italy, 4 Jan 1944-16 May 1945
Sioux Falls AAFld, SD, 29 May 1945
Dalhart AAFld, TX, 24 Jul 1945
Grand Island AAFld, NE, 8 Sep 1945-4 Aug 1946
Kincheloe AFB, MI, 1 Feb 1963-30 Sep 1977
Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, 2003

ASSIGNMENTS

Fifteenth AF
Strategic Air Command, 21 Mar 1946
Strategic Air Command, 15 Nov 1962
40th Air Division, 1 Feb 1963-30 Sep 1977
Air Combat Command to activate or inactivate any time after 2003
United States Air Forces in Europe to activate or inactivate any time after 1 Oct 2008
Seventeenth Air Expeditionary Force, 20 Apr 2012

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24
B-17
B-25
B-29
B-52, 1963-1977
KC-135, 1963-1977
B-52H, 1963-1977
C-130

COMMANDERS

Col A. J. Kerwin Malone, 1 May 1943
Col Darr H. Alkire, 30 Jul 1943
Col Thomas J. Gent, Jr., 3 Feb 1944
Col Jack L. Randolph, Oct 1944-Jun 1945
Cpt Charles K. Howell, Jul 1945
Maj Walter W. Cross, 31 Jul 1945
LTC Leon Stann, 6 Aug 1945
Col William H. Hanson, 15 Aug 1945
Col Richard M. Montgomery, 16 Sep 1945-4 Aug 1946
None (not manned), 15 Nov 1962-31 Jan 1963
Col Louis M. Sowers, 1 Feb 1963
Col Charles W. Johnson, Jr., 9 May 1964
Col Joseph D. White, 16 May 1964

Col Arthur W. Holderness, Jr., 8 Jul 1965
Col Robert E. Huyser, 29 Dec 1966
Col George N. Payne, 9 Apr 1968
Col Ernest L. Benton, 1 May 1970
Col Kenneth M. Holloway, 1 Jun 1971
Col Robert T. Herres, 12 Apr 1972
Col Kenneth M. Holloway, c. 10 Oct 1972
Col Robert T. Herres, 27 Nov 1972
Col John E. Wolter, 16 Mar 1973
Col Otto L. Kovar, Jr., 3 Aug 1973
Col Robert T. Herres, 14 Sep 1973
Col Otto L. Kovar, Jr., 8 Feb 1974
Col Donald L. Jolly, 7-30 Sep 1977

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
1 Jul 1974-30 Jun 1976

EMBLEM

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

American Theater
Air Combat, EAME Theater
Air Offensive, Europe
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
Normandy
Northern France
Southern France
North Apennines
Rhineland

Central Europe
Po Valley

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Bucharest, Rumania, 4 Apr 1944
Ploesti, Rumania, 9 Jul 1944

EMBLEM



449th Bombardment Wing, Heavy emblem: A shield divided into a horizontal gray embattlement in base just below the horizontal center and diagonally from the viewer's upper right to lower left above the embattlement, the top portion medium blue and the bottom portion black, the upper portion bearing a yellow lightning bolt originating along top of the shield to the viewer's right and extending along the division line between the blue and black areas. Around the shield a narrow white border. (Approved, 7 Feb 1964)

449th Air Expeditionary Group emblem: Azure, a stylized Pegasus Or; all within a diminished bordure of the second. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "449TH AIR EXPEDITIONARY GROUP" 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 flying Pegasus links the unit to its emblem of World War II, where the unit became known as "The Flying Horseman."

MOTTO

NUMQUAM NON PARATUS—Never unprepared.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Operated primarily as a strategic bombardment organization, attacking such targets as oil refineries, communications centers, aircraft factories, and industrial areas in Italy, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, and Greece. Received a DUG for a mission on 4 Apr 1944 when the group, flying without escort, raided marshalling yards in Bucharest; although heavily outnumbered by German fighters, the group succeeded not only in bombing the target but also in destroying many of the enemy interceptors. Received another DUG for action on 9 Jul 1944 when the group flew through heavy smoke and intense enemy fire to attack an oil refinery at Ploesti. Other operations of the group included bombing gun emplacements in southern France in preparation for the invasion in Aug 1944, and attacking troop concentrations, bridges, and viaducts in Apr 1945 to assist Allied forces in northern Italy.

Replaced the 4239th Strategic Wing and assumed a mission of training for strategic bombardment on 1 Feb 1963. Added air refueling to the mission in Jul 1963. Supported SAC combat operations in Southeast Asia by furnishing KC-135 aircraft and crews, Nov 1965-Dec 1975, and B-52 crews, May 1968-Jun 1975. Responsible for phasing down Kincheloe AFB, Mich, for closure, Jul-Sep 1977.

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 10 Feb 2012

Updated: 28 Mar 2020

Sources

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

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.