

487 AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING



MISSION

LINEAGE

487 Bombardment Group (Heavy) constituted, 14 Sep 1943

Activated on 20 Sep 1943

Redesignated 487 Bombardment Group, Heavy 5 Apr 1944

Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945

587 Tactical Missile Group established, 3 Aug 1956

Activated, 15 Sep 1956

Inactivated, 25 Sep 1962

487 Bombardment Group, Heavy and 587 Tactical Missile Group consolidated and redesignated 487 Tactical Missile Wing, 11 Jan 1982

Activated, 30 Jun 1983

Inactivated, 27 May 1991

Redesignated 487 Air Expeditionary Wing and converted to provisional status, 1 Mar 2003

STATIONS

Bruning AAF, NE, 20 Sep 1943

Alamogordo AAF, NM, 15 Dec 1943 – 13 Mar 1944

Lavenham England, 5 Apr 1944 – 26 Aug 1945

Drew Field, FL, 3 Sep–7 Nov 1945

Sembach AB, West Germany, 15 Sep 1956 – 25 Sep 1962
Comiso Air Station, Italy, Jun 1983 – May 1991
Cairo West Airport, Egypt, March–May 2003

ASSIGNMENTS

II Bomber Command, 20 Sep 1943
Second Air Force, 6 Oct 1943 – 13 Mar 1944
92 Combat Bombardment Wing, 5 Apr 1944
4 Bombardment Wing (Provisional), 22 Nov 1944
4 Combat Bombardment Wing, 16 Feb–24 Aug 1945
Third Air Force, 3 Sep –7 Nov 1945
701 Tactical Missile Wing, 15 Sep 1956
38 Tactical Missile Wing, 18 Jun 1958 – 25 Sep 1962
Sixteenth Air Force, 30 Jun 1983 – 27 May 1991
United States Air Forces in Europe to activate or inactivate any time after 1 Mar 2003

WEAPONS SYSTEMS

B-24, 1943
B-17, 1944
BGM-109G, 1983–1991

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Charles E. Lancaster, 4 Oct 1944
Lt Col Beirne Lay, Jr., 28 Feb 1944
Col Robert Taylor III, 12 May 1944
Col William K. Martin, 28 Dec 1944
Lt Col Howard C. Todt, May 1945
Col Nicholas T. Perkins, 3 Jun 1945

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



487 Bombardment Group



587 Tactical Missile Group

487 Tactical Missile Wing emblem: Quarterly azure and or, a saltire diminished couped and barbed argent; overall a griffin segreant of the second, armed and langued gules and in chief an astral crown of the like, all within a diminished bordure of the second. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The blue and yellow colors represent the Air Force and red is for courage and strength. The arrows signify flight. The griffin is symbolically a warlike character. It is half-eagle and half-lion, with the cunning and intelligence of the eagle in flight and possessing the courage and valor of the lion in battle. The astral crown denotes command in the air and obedience to guidance. Approved: 19 May 1983.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Activated 20 Sep 1943 at Bruning AAFd, Neb. Moved Alamogordo AAFd, NM. 15 Dec 1944 to complete training. Ground echelon left Alamogordo 10 Mar 1944 for Camp Kilmer, NJ. and sailed on Duchess of Medford 23 Mar 1944, arriving Gourock 3 April 1944. Air echelon started overseas movement 23 Mar 1944, taking southern ferry route to UK arriving Nuts Corner, Valley and Prestwick early April 1945

German industries, refineries, and communications during the period May-Aug 1944, but operated almost solely against strategic targets from Aug 1944, when conversion to B-17s was completed, until Mar 1945. Attacked oil refineries in Merseburg, Mannheim, and Dulmen; factories in Nurnberg, Hannover, and Berlin; and marshalling yards in Cologne, Munster, Hamm, and Neumunster. Aided ground forces during the Battle of the Bulge, Dec 1944-Jan 1945, and turned again to support and interdiction operations in Mar 1945 as The Allies crossed the Rhine and made the final thrust into Germany.

Redeployed USA Jul/Aug 1945. Aircraft left Lavenham first week Jul 1945. Ground echelon sailed Queen Elizabeth 25 Aug 1945 arriving New York 1 Sep 1945. Personnel 30 days R & R. Group established Drew Fd, Fla. 3 Sep 1945, and inactivated there 7 Nov 1945.

First Mission: 7 May 1944
Last Mission: 21 Apr 1945
Total Missions: 185
Total Credit Sorties: 6,021
Total Bomb Tonnage: 14,0414 tons (158.1 tons supplies, etc.)
Aircraft missing in action: 48
Other Operational losses: 37
Enemy aircraft claims: 22-6-18.

The 487 Tactical Missile Wing (TMW) was part of the NATO Theater Nuclear Force. Stationed in Sicily, at Comiso Air Station, the 487 TMW deployed 108 BGM-109G Ground Launched Cruise Missiles, each with a nuclear warhead with a selectable yield from 0.2kt to 150kt. During a war with the USSR, the 487 was tasked to conduct nuclear strikes against fixed targets supporting the Soviet Southwestern TVD, such as airfields, transportation hubs, munitions and supply dumps and command and control facilities. The seven flights of the 487's 302nd Missile Squadron, each composed of four 4-missile TELs (Transport-Erector-Launcher vehicles), 18 other vehicles and over 70 personnel (including 44 assigned to security duties) deployed to remote sites around Sicily during times of tension. While in garrison at Comiso, the TELs were kept in large bunkers strengthened against conventional and nuclear attack.

OL-A designated and activated, 1 Jan 1984 at NAS Sigonella, Italy
Det 1 inactivated, 15 Feb 1984, Davis Monthan AFB, AZ

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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