

13 RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON



MISSION

The 13 Reconnaissance Squadron is an associate unit that provides theater commanders with near-real-time intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and target acquisition data. The squadron operates and maintains deployable, long-endurance RQ-4 Global Hawk aircraft and ground control elements to fulfill training and operational requirements generated by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in support of unified commanders and the Secretary of Defense. Personnel consisted of 135 traditional reservists; 60 full-time reservists.

LINEAGE

13 Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron constituted, 9 Jun 1942
Activated, 20 Jun 1942
Redesignated 13 Photographic Squadron (Light), 6 Feb 1943
Redesignated 13 Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron, 13 Nov 1943
Inactivated, 1 Dec 1945
Redesignated 13 Reconnaissance Squadron, Photographic, 11 Mar 1947
Activated in the Reserve, 6 Jul 1947
Inactivated, 27 Jun 1949
Redesignated 13 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 26 May 1952
Activated in the Reserve, 14 Jun 1952
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1953
Redesignated 13 Military Airlift Squadron, 14 Jul 1987
Activated, 1 Oct 1987
Redesignated 13 Airlift Squadron, 1 Apr 1992
Inactivated, 31 Mar 2000
Redesignated 13 Reconnaissance Squadron, 10 Feb 2005
Activated, 12 Mar 2005
Inactivated, 30 Sep 2022

STATIONS

Colorado Springs, CO, 20 Jun-17 Oct 1942
Podington, England, 2 Dec 1942
Mount Farm, England, 16 Feb 1943
Chalgrove, England, 8 Apr 1945
Grove, England, 13 Oct-23 Nov 1945
Camp Kilmer, NJ, 30 Nov-1 Dec 1945
Rome AAFld, NY, 6 Jul 1947
Chemung County Aprt, NY, 26 Jan 1948-27 Jun 1949
Mitchel AFB, NY, 14 Jun 1952-1 Apr 1953
Kadena AB, Japan, 1 Oct 1987-1 Oct 1993
McGuire AFB, NJ, 1 Oct 1993-31 Mar 2000
Beale AFB, CA, 12 Mar 2005

ASSIGNMENTS

3 Photographic (later, 3 Photographic Reconnaissance and Mapping) Group, 20 Jun 1942
(attached to 1 Bombardment Wing, 2 Dec 1942-16 Feb 1943, and to Eighth Air Force, 16
Feb-7 Jul 1942)
7 Photographic Reconnaissance and Mapping Group, 7 Jul 1943-21 Nov 1945
Unkn, 22 Nov-1 Dec 1945
65 Reconnaissance Group, 6 Jul 1947-27 Jun 1949
65 Troop Carrier Group, 14 Jun 1952-1 Apr 1953
374 Tactical Airlift Wing, 1 Oct 1987
316 Airlift Support Group, 1 Apr 1992
18 Operations Group, 1 Jun 1992
438 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1993
305 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1994-31 Mar 2000
610 Regional Support Group, 12 Mar 2005

WEAPON SYSTEMS

P-38/F-5, 1942-1945
L-4, 1942-1943
Spitfire, 1943
P-51, 1945
C-46, 1952-1953
C-12, 1987-1993
C-141, 1993-2000
RQ-4

COMMANDERS

Col James G. Hall, 10 Sep 1942
Maj Hershell E. Parsons, 8 Jul 1943
Maj Ray C. Mitchell, 15 Nov 1943

Maj Robert R. Smith, 19 May 1944
Cpt George H. Nesselrode, 17 Aug 1944
Maj Walter D. Shade, 20 Mar 1945
Lt Col Benjamin F. Kendig, 18 May 1945
Maj Walter D. Shade, 21 Jul 1945
1Lt John G. Weeks, 11 Sep 1945
Lt Col Fred Henry, 1 Oct-1 Dec 1945
Unkn, 6 Jul 1947-27 Jun 1949
Unkn, 14 Jun 1952-1 Apr 1953
Lt Col David C. McClure, 1 Oct 1987
Lt Col William B. Carroll, 28 Nov 1989
Lt Col Daniel F. Fraley, 4 Apr 1991
Lt Col Gary L. Albaugh, 2 Jul 1991
Lt Col James D. Rummer, 1 Oct 1993
Lt Col Matthew F. Martorano, 1 Dec 1994
Lt Col Lee W. Sheedy, 21 Jun 1996
Lt Col Robert J. Hinger, 5 Aug 1996
Lt Col Lyn D. Sherlock, 31 Mar 1998
Lt Col Alan Hunt Jr., 27 Jul 1999-31 Mar 2000
Lt Col Jonathan M. Ellis, Feb 2005-Sep 2008
Lt Col Scott R. Hinkle
Lt Col Karyn L. Christen, 2016
Lt Col Summer Fields, 2018
Lt Col Christopher D. Hetrick, 14 Aug 2020

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Air Offensive, Europe
Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland
Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
France, 31 May-30 Jun 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jun 1991-31 May 1993

1 Oct 1994-30 Jun 1996

1 Jul 1996-30 Jun 1998

1 Jun 1998-30 Jun 1999

1 Jun 1998-30 Jun 1999

1 Jul 1999-31 Mar 2000

1 Oct 2011-31 Sep 2013.

French Croix de Guerre with Palm: 1944

EMBLEM



Approved, 6 Mar 1944





13 Airlift Squadron emblem: Azure, a cat caricature descending bendwise Sable and Argent langued Gules grasping in its forepaws a winged globe Azure land masses Vert winged White all below three lightning flashes issuant from chief bendwise of the fourth in dexter a lightning flash issuant from chief palewise of the like; all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached below the disc a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "13 AIRLIFT SQUADRON" in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** Blue and 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 cat grasping the globe suggests the unit's worldwide airlift capabilities. The lightning flashes denote the cat's speed, agility and quick reflexes, qualities that are employed by squadron members in the performance of their duties in the global arena.





13 Reconnaissance Squadron emblem: On a disc Azure, over and through an irregular outline figure Celeste, charged with four lightning bolts Or arranged three and one, a caricature cat Sable, detailed Argent, eyes Or, tongue Gules, diving toward sinister base and holding a camera Sable trimmed Azure and Argent, winged Celeste as per record drawing, all within a narrow border Yellow. Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "LUCKY THIRTEEN" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "13 RECONNAISSANCE SQ" in Yellow letters. 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 cat grasping the aerial camera represents the unit's role in performing worldwide high altitude intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance imagery. The four lightning bolts represent the type of aircraft used by the Squadron, while their arrangement indicates the Squadron's numerical designation, "13." (Approved, 5 Jun 1995)

13 Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale Air Force Base, Calif., is re-implementing its original patch created by Walt Disney Studios in 1944. "The uniqueness of the patch is fitting for a squadron that's also unique as the Air Force Reserve Command's only Global Hawk unit," said Master Sgt. Christopher Van Slyk, unit historian. In 1942, the 13 RS was activated as a photographic reconnaissance squadron. The unit saw combat in Europe during World War II, flying P-38 and P-51. It was during this time that the first squadron patch was designed and approved. Walt Disney Productions created approximately 1,200 designs during the war for both American and Allied military units. A special six-person team of animators was named to work on the insignia requests. Disney's work was done for free as a donation to the war effort. After the war, the 13 RS returned to the United States where the unit was inactivated in 1949. For a brief period, from 1952 to 1953, the unit was reactivated as the 13 Troop Carrier Squadron flying the C-46 Commando. The unit was reactivated again in 1987 as the 13 Military Airlift Squadron and was redesignated the 13 Airlift Squadron in 1992. During this period, the squadron flew C-12 and C-141. After 23 years in the airlift business, the 13 was deactivated once again in 2000. In 2005, the 13 RS was reactivated to fly the RQ-4. Having returned to its original intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance mission, the squadron decided to pay homage to its roots by

reverting to the original squadron patch. Air Force Instruction 84-105, Organizational Lineage, Honors and History, allows an organization to return to its historical unit emblem, generally the oldest registered emblem of the unit. The historical unit patch of the 13 RS required special permission to exceed the maximum six colors allowed by current Air Force policy. Since the 1944 emblem is a copyrighted Disney design, no design changes could be made, including color. "Squadron members are excited about going back to the heritage patch," Van Slyk said. "They think the one-of-a-kind Walt Disney production aspect is cool. The style of the cat on the original emblem is really feisty, and they like that, too." According to Van Slyk, Air Force Reserve Command has approved the request to return to the original design, including the proposed motto, "Lucky Thirteen." The final step is to submit the package to the Army Institute of Heraldry for a formal rendering. Once that final hurdle is cleared, squadron members will be able to sport the emblem on their uniforms. "History and traditions are important aspects of the military," said Lt. Col. David Lineback, 13 RS commander. "The patches we all wear on our uniforms are significant reminders of our heritage. The 13 RS will wear this patch with pride."

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Combat in ETO, 28 Mar 1943-26 Apr 1945. Intra-theater airlift for high-ranking PACAF and civilian officials and small mission-essential equipment, 1987-1993. Moved without personnel and equipment to McGuire AFB, NJ, on 1 Oct 1993 and absorbed personnel and equipment of the 30th Airlift Squadron. Equipped with C-141B, squadron took on a new world-wide airlift mission.

13 Military Airlift Squadron activated on 1 October and received its first two C-12 from the 1403d Military Airlift Squadron. The remaining four C-12 arrived in December. 1987

Aircraft maintainers with Air Force Reserve Command's 13 Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale AFB, Calif., earlier this month got the chance, for the first time, to train on an RQ-4 during a unit training assembly weekend. The squadron is part of the 940th Air Refueling Wing that is transitioning under BRAC 2005 from operating KC-135 tankers to an associate unit that cooperates with Beale's active duty 9th Reconnaissance Wing to operate and maintain Global Hawk aircraft. "Having access to the aircraft during UTAs will allow us to get our troops qualified and trained," said Lt. Col. John Welch, 13 RS commander. He continued, "This is a significant step forward for us." Welch said eventually he would like to see the squadron have access to two Global Hawks on training weekends.

Air Force Reserve Command has realigned three units within its numbered air forces, according to a release. The 932nd Airlift Wing at Scott AFB, Ill., was reassigned from 4th Air Force to 22nd AF. The 1st Aviation Standards Flight in Oklahoma City, Okla., was reassigned from the 507th Air Refueling Wing under the 4th AF to the 413 Flight Test Group, which is part of 22nd Air Force. Both those reassignments became effective Dec. 10. Additionally, the 13 Reconnaissance Squadron at Beale AFB, Calif., will be reassigned from the 940th Operations Group in 4th AF to

the 726th Operations Group under 10th Air Force in February. The realignments, which are based on mission areas, are organizational and do not affect the basing of the units, according to officials.2015

USAF Unit Histories

Created: 13 Nov 2010

Updated: 5 Feb 2023

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.