

16 ELECTRONIC WARFARE SQUADRON



MISSION

The 16 Electronic Warfare Squadron provides EW expertise and test facilities for mission data and EW system test and evaluation. Squadron personnel assess the maintainability, reliability, suitability, and readiness of EW systems and support equipment, and perform test and evaluation of new EW concepts for fighter, bomber, reconnaissance, and specialized EW systems. They monitor developmental testing conducted by acquisition agencies and assess the impact of these tests, providing critical expertise for EW avionics acquisition and modifications.

The 16 EWS has more than \$450 million in assets, including eight system integration laboratories and five mobile test facilities. These facilities are used to validate and verify mission data software, support foreign materiel exploitations, and verify operational technical order updates prior to fielding. Squadron personnel develop, fabricate and maintain aircraft and lab test instrumentation and perform acceptance tests of all new EW-related hardware and software, as well as provide expertise to support EW system testing and training to maintenance and operational units worldwide. The squadron also provides technicians and equipment to execute the COMBAT SHIELD Electronic Warfare Assessment Program.

Detachment 1, 16 EWS at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla., provides maintenance support and EW expertise for adversary electronic attack training pods. Used for air-to-air EW training, the pods are repaired and modified at Tyndall and shipped worldwide to fighter units. Det 1, 16 EWS also maintains electronic attack payloads for full-scale and subscale drones in support of live-fire missile testing under the Weapon System Evaluation Program.

LINEAGE

3 Aviation School Squadron organized, 9 May 1917

Redesignated 16 Aero Squadron, 31 Aug 1917

Demobilized, 22 May 1919

16 Squadron authorized, 30 Aug 1921
Organized, 7 Dec 1921

16 Aero Squadron Reconstituted and consolidated with 16 Squadron, 1924

Redesignated 16 Observation Squadron, 25 Jan 1923
Inactivated, 15 Mar 1931
Activated, 1 Jun 1937
Redesignated 16 Observation Squadron (Medium), 13 Jan 1942
Redesignated 16 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942
Redesignated 16 Reconnaissance Squadron (Bomber), 31 May 1943
Redesignated 16 Reconnaissance Squadron, Heavy, Special, 12 May 1944
Disbanded, 12 Apr 1945

16 Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron (Special), designated, 24 Nov 1947
Organized, 16 Dec 1947
Discontinued, 1 Jul 1949

16 Reconnaissance Squadron, Heavy, Special reconstituted and consolidated with the 16
Photographic Reconnaissance Squadron (Special), and redesignated 16 Tactical Electronic
Warfare Squadron, 19 Sep 1985

Redesignated 16 Test Squadron, 9 Apr 1993
Activated, 15 Apr 1993
Redesignated 16 Electronic Warfare Squadron, 13 Sep 1999

STATIONS

Memphis, TN, 9 May 1917
Chicago, IL, 20 May 1917 (Ashburn)
Chanute Field, IL, 12 Jul 1917
Garden City, NY, 4 Nov-4 Dec 1917
St Maixent, France, 1 Jan 1918
Tours, France, 24 Jan 1918
St Gervais, Gironde, France, 12 Feb 1919
Bordeaux, France, 17-23 Apr 1919
Mitchel Field, NY, 7-22 May 1919
Ft Riley, Kan, 7 Dec 1921-15 Mar 1931 (detachment operated between North Platte, Neb, and
Rapid City, SD, 1 Aug-Sep 1927, and between Chicago, Ill, and Superior, WI, 11 Jun-14 Sep
1928)
Pope Field, NC (flight at Lawson Field, GA), 1 Jun 1937
Lawson Field, GA, 24 Oct 1940
Daniel Field, GA, 9 Feb 1942
Greensboro, NC, 7 Jul 1942

Morris Field, NC, 15 Aug 1942
Langley Field, VA, 3-23 Oct 1942 (detachment at Wattisham, England, 5-21 Oct 1942)
Fedala, French Morocco, 9 Nov 1942
Casablanca, French Morocco, 12 Nov 1942
Oujda, French Morocco, 10 Dec 1942
Berrechid, French Morocco, 24 Mar 1943
Berteaux, Algeria, 6 Sep 1943
Foch Field, Tunisia, 26 Sep 1943 (detachments operated intermittently from several points in Italy and adjacent islands during period Oct 1943-Mar 1944 operated primarily from Foggia, Italy, after 28 Mar 1944)
Foggia, Italy, 3 May-30 Oct 1944 (detachment operated from Borgo, Corsica, until Sep 1944)
Bradley Field, CT, 20 Nov 1944
Buckley Field, CO, 1 Dec 1944-12 Apr 1945
McGuire AFB, NJ, 17 Aug 1948-1 Jun 1949
Eglin AFB, FL, 15 Apr 1993

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, 9 May 1917-Jan 1918
Second Aviation Instruction Center, Jan 1918-Feb 1919; Feb-22 May 1919
Seventh Corps Area (attached to Cavalry School), 7 Dec 1921
12 Observation Group (attached to Cavalry School), 1 Oct 1930-15 Mar 1931
Fourth Corps Area, 1 Jun 1937 (flight attached, later assigned, to Infantry School until 20 Nov 1940)
Armored Force, 3 Oct 1940
73 Observation Group, 1 Sep 1941 (attached to 68 Observation Group from Feb 1942)
Army Air Forces, 12 Mar 1942
68 Observation (later Reconnaissance; Tactical Reconnaissance) Group, 29 Mar 1942
Mediterranean Allied Air Forces, 10 Dec 1943
AAF, MTO, 1 Jan-26 May 1944
AAF, MTO, 26 May 1944
Army Air Forces, 3 Nov 1944-12 Apr 1945
311 Reconnaissance Wing (later, 311 Air Division), 16 Dec 1947-1 Jun 1949
68 (later, 53 Electronic Combat Group, 15 Apr 1993)

ATTACHMENTS

XII Air Force Service Command, 25 Sep 1943
Twelfth Air Force, 1 Jan 1944
Fifteenth Air Force, 18 Feb 1944
AAF, MTO, 27 Mar 1944
Northwest African Air Forces, 20 Sep 1943
311 Photographic Wing, 21 Nov 1944-12 Apr 1945
55 Reconnaissance Group, 16 Dec 1947-18 Jun 1948
307 Bombardment Wing, 12 Jul-17 Aug 1948
91 Reconnaissance Group, 20 Aug-9 Nov 1948

91 Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, 10 Nov-1948-1 Jun 1949

WEAPON SYSTEMS

JN-4, 1917
DH-4, 1922-1926
O-2H, 1926-1930
O-M
JNS-1
O-1C
O-1G
JN-4
JN-6
O-25, 1930-1931
O-46, 1937-1939
O-47, 1938-1942
O-49, 1941-1942
C-8
YG-1
O-43
O-51
O-54
DB-7B
L-4
P-43
A-20
P-39, 1942-1943
P-38
P-40
Spitfire, 1943
B-17, 1943-1944
B-25, 1945

COMMANDERS

Capt Thomas Bolend, 7 Dec 1921
Maj Clarence L. Tinker, 9 Feb 1922
Maj Benjamin G. Weir, 5 Oct 1924
Capt Thomas Bolend, 1 Nov 1925
Maj Henry H. Arnold, 22 Mar 1926
Maj Robert E. M. Goolrick, 1 Aug 1929
Inactive, 15 Mar 1931-16 Jul 1937
Unknown, 17 Jul 1937-Jan 1939
Lt Col Vincent B. Dixon, Jan 1939
Capt Fred S. Stocks, 12 Jul 1940-Sep 1941

HONORS

Service Streamers

World War I
Theater of Operations

World War II
American Theater

Campaign Streamers

Algeria-French Morocco 1942, with arrowhead
Air Offensive, Europe 1942-1944
Naples-Foggia 1943-1944
Anzio 1944
Rome-Arno 1944
Normandy 1944
Southern France 1944
North Apennines 1944-1945
Rhineland 1944-1945
Air Combat, EAME Theater 1941-1945
Antisubmarine, EAME Theater 1941-1945

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

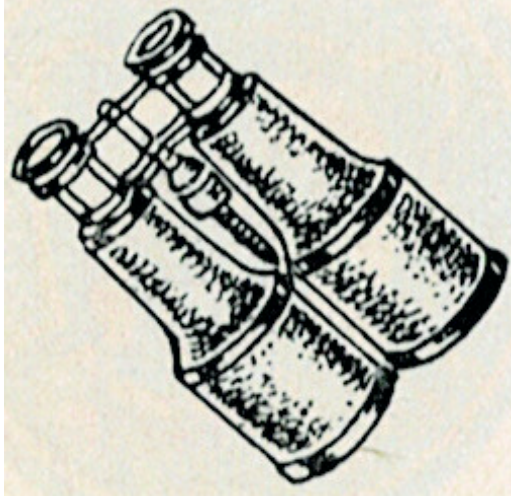
Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Mediterranean Area, 1 Oct 1943-31 Jan 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
1 Jun 1998-31 May 2000

Air Force Organizational Excellence Award
[15 Apr 1993]-31 Dec 1993

EMBLEM



16 Observation Squadron emblem



16 Test Squadron emblem approved, 4 Aug 1995

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

The 16 Observation Sq. was organized in Chicago in 1916. After several shifts about the country it finally went overseas in December, 1917. It was attached to the 2nd Aviation Instruction Center for the duration of the war and returned to this country in May, 1919 when it was demobilized.

In 1917, Twenty-three planes of the 16 Aero Squadron left Ashburn Field near Chicago, where they had been uncrated and assembled and flew the approximately 125 miles to Rantoul. This was the "largest squadron of flying machines that ever made a successful trip in the United States" according to the local press, and "like huge birds and machines descended gradually to the ground." The flight was a success, but not without incident. One aviator landed for gas at Paxton, a village ten miles north of Rantoul. As he was cranking the propeller, "he stubbed his toe

and pitched head first" into the blade. Fortunately, he was not seriously hurt. The other incident involved the 23rd airplane. It did not arrive. The pilot had become lost in the altitude (3,500 feet) after leaving Ashburn Field, and had landed in St Joseph, Michigan. After taking off from there, the pilot again lost his way and landed in Logansport, Indiana, wrecking his plane in the process. He finally arrived at Chanute on 15 July. Captain Roy S. Brown, in charge of the newly arrived squadron, was, like Captain McDonnell, a veteran of the Mexican border expedition. Once at Chanute, Captain Brown was in charge of flying. On the evening of the 9th, a 25-car special train arrived from Ashburn Field carrying 150 men, equipment, four large trucks, four official autos, and several private autos. Henceforth, the field was closed to all who did not have special passes.

On 7 October 1917, Chanute received orders from the War Department ordering the 10th and the 16 Aero Squadrons to be ready to leave within 48 hours for Ft. Wood at Mineola, New York. The men, anxious to be off to fight the Hun, cheered the news. Chanute had expected to retain the squadrons through the winter, and had given them permanent assignments in camp. The news of a student departure required a certain amount of shuffling of personnel. All the field's best truck drivers and motorcycle riders were included in the order and several such men from the 38th and 39th squadrons were transferred to the 10th and 16. These two squadrons were to become part of the 3rd Provisional Aero Squadron once they arrived in France.

Conducted bombing of ice floes on the Platte River to prevent the collapse of a Union Pacific Railroad bridge in March 1924.

Flew mail from Platte City, NE, to Rapid City, SD, for President Calvin Coolidge during his stay in the Black Hills August-September 1927.

Squadron inactivated on 13 March 1931, less Flights A, B, C, and D at Marshall Field, KS. Concurrently flights posted as follows: A at Langley Field, VA, to support the Coast Artillery School; B at Fort Benning, GA, to support the Infantry School; C at Fort Bragg, NC, to support the 13th Field Artillery Brigade; D at Fort Riley, KS, to support the Cavalry School. Flight E constituted 1 October 1931 and activated on 1 November 1931 at Fort Sill, OK, to support the Field Artillery School.

11 September 1936 Sole Kellett YG-1 gyrocopter, 35-278, now assigned to the 16 Observation Squadron, is moderately damaged in a takeoff accident at Pope Army Airfield, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, its second at this field this year. Pilot was Hollingsworth F. Gregory.

3 November 1948 RB-29A 44-61999 crashes on Shelf Moor, Bleaklow, in between Manchester and Sheffield, Derbyshire, while descending through cloud. All 13 crew killed. It is doubtful they ever saw the ground. The time was estimated from one of the crew member's wrist watch. The plane, piloted by Captain L. P. Tanner, was on a short flight, carrying mail and the payroll for American service personnel based at USAF Burtonwood. The flight was from Scampton near Lincoln to Burtonwood near Warrington, a flight of less than an hour. Low cloud hung over much of England, which meant the flight had to be flown on instruments. The crew descended after having flown for the time the crew believed it should have taken them to cross the hill.

Unfortunately, the aircraft had not quite passed the hills and struck the ground near Higher Shelf Stones, being destroyed by fire.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 13 Nov 2010

Updated: 26 Apr 2021

Sources

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.