

43 ELECTRONIC COMBAT SQUADRON



MISSION

The unit's combat mission is to support tactical air, ground and naval operations by confusing the enemy's defenses and disrupting its command and control capabilities. Squadron operate the EC-130H, a specially configured version of the Air Force's proven C-130 transport. To execute its unique missions, the aircraft were modified with electronic countermeasures systems, specialized jamming equipment, the capability to aerial refuel, as well as upgraded engines and avionics. Modifications made to the aircraft vary between the two squadrons, to help each squadron meet its specific mission-oriented needs.

LINEAGE

86 Aero Squadron organized, 17 Aug 1917

Demobilized, 26 May 1919

86 Observation Squadron constituted and activated, 1 Mar 1935

86 Aero Squadron reconstituted and consolidated with 86 Observation Squadron, 1 Dec 1936. Consolidated organization designated 86 Observation Squadron.

Inactivated, 1 Sep 1936

Activated, 1 Feb 1940

Redesignated 86 Observation Squadron (Medium), 26 Feb 1942

Redesignated 86 Observation Squadron, 4 Jul 1942

Redesignated 86 Reconnaissance Squadron (Bomber), 31 May 1943

Redesignated 86 Combat Mapping Squadron, 13 Nov 1943

Redesignated 43 Reconnaissance Squadron, Long Range, Photographic, 16 Jun 1945
Inactivated, 22 Feb 1946
Redesignated 43 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, Night-Photographic, 14 Jan 1954
Activated, 18 Mar 1954
Redesignated 43 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, Night Photo-Jet, on 8 Apr 1956
Inactivated, 18 May 1959
Redesignated 43 Electronic Combat Squadron, 6 Jun 1986
Activated, 1 Oct 1986
Inactivated, 31 Jul 1991
Activated, 1 May 1992

STATIONS

Kelly Field, TX, 17 Aug 1917
Scott Field, IL, 24 Sep 1917
Garden City, NY, 26 Feb–5 Mar 1918
Shoreham by Sea, England, 25 Mar–11 Aug 1918
St Maixent, France, 15 Aug 1918
Romorantin, France, 25 Aug 1918
Vavincourt, France, 4 Sep 1918
Behonne, France, 18 Sep 1918
Bordeaux, France, c. 9 Mar 1919–unkn
Camp Lee, VA, c. 23–26 May 1919
Maxwell Field, AL, 1 Mar 1935–1 Sep 1936
Wheeler Field, TH, 1 Feb 1940
Bellows Field, TH, 15 Mar 1941
Hilo Apt, TH, Jun 1942
Wheeler Field, TH, 17 Aug 1942–c. 28 Jun 1944 (detachment operated from Kwajalein, May–Jun 1944, and from Eniwetok, Jun–Aug 1944)
Saipan, 8 Jul–6 Nov 1944 (air echelon, less Eniwetok detachment, at Wheeler Field, TH, to Oct 1944, and at Kahuka AAB, TH, from Oct 1944)
Kahuka AAB, TH, 24 Nov 1944 (detachment operated from Puerta Princesa, Palawan, Jun–Aug 1945)
Wheeler Field, TH, Feb–22 Feb 1946
Shaw AFB, SC, 18 Mar 1954–18 May 1959
Sembach AB, Germany, 1 Oct 1986–31 Jul 1991
Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 1 May 1992

ASSIGNMENTS

Unkn, 17 Aug 1917–Sep 1918
Advanced Air Service Depot, Sep 1918–Mar 1919
Unkn, Mar–26 May 1919
Air Corps Tactical School, 1 Mar 1935–1 Sep 1936
Hawaiian Department, 1 Feb 1940
Hawaiian (later, Seventh) Air Force, Nov 1940

AAF, Pacific Ocean Areas (later, US Army Strategic Air Forces), 24 Oct 1944
US Army Forces, Middle Pacific, 14 Sep 1945
Twentieth Air Force, 18 Sep 1945
Seventh Air Force, 1 Jan–22 Feb 1946
432 Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 18 Mar 1954
363 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 8 Feb 1958–18 May 1959
66 Electronic Combat Wing, 1 Oct 1986–31 Jul 1991
355 Operations Group, 1 May 1992

ATTACHMENTS

VI Air Service Area Command, 24 Oct 1944–14 Sep 1945 detachment attached to 4
Reconnaissance Group, Jun–Aug 1945)
7 Fighter Wing to 22 Feb 1946
432 Tactical Reconnaissance Wing, 1 Feb–7 Apr 1959

WEAPON SYSTEMS

O–19, 1935–1936
O–47, 1940–1943
B–18, 1942–1943
B–12, 1940–1942
O–49, 1941–1942
A–20
A–24
L–2
L–3
PQ–8
AT–23, 1943
F–7, 1944–1945
RB–57, 1954–1956
RB–66B, 1956–1959
EC–130, 1987–1991
EC–130, 1992

COMMANDERS

Lt C. B. Ammon
Maj Kenneth C. McGregor, 1 Mar 1935
Maj George R. Acheson, 1 Feb 1940
Inactive, 1 Sep 1936–31 Jan 1940
Maj Charles Stewart, Aug 1940–Dec 1941
Maj Paul C. Vanderhoek
Lt Col Kevin Simmons, 2006

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War I
Meuse-Argonne

World War II
Central Pacific
Eastern Mandates
Western Pacific
Southern Philippines
China Offensive
Air Combat, Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Southwest Asia
Defense of Saudi Arabia
Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Kosovo
Air Campaign

Global War on Terrorism
GWOT-E

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Meritorious Unit Awards
1 Oct 2002-31 May 2004
1 Jun 2004-31 May 2006
1 Jun 2006-31 May 2007
1 Jun 2007-31 May 2008
1 Jun 2008-31 May 2009
1 Jun 2009-31 May 2010
18 Nov 2012-31 May 2014
1 Jun 2014-31 May 2015

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards
1 Jun 1989-31 May 1991
1 Jun 2011-31 May 2012

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
1 Jun 1989-31 May 1991

EMBLEM



43 Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron



On a disc divided horizontally Red above White, a Black bat displayed throughout detailed White with Red eyes and mouth wearing a Silver Gray helmet and a Blue scarf detailed Black; all within a narrow Black border. (Approved, 5 Nov 1987. replaced emblem approved, 29 Apr 1955)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Air Park in Zone of Advance, Sep 1918–Mar 1919.

86 AERO SQUADRON— Commanded by Lieut. C. B. Ammon. The personnel of this organization was also entirely of men from the Pacific Coast. Following closely upon the heels of the 85th Aero Squadron they were soon taking an active part in aviation activities "over there."

Constituted in the Regular Army on 1 March 1935, attached to the Air Corps Tactical School, and organized at Maxwell Field, AL. Inactivated on 1 September 1936 at Maxwell Field, AL.

Consolidated on 1 December 1936 with the 86 Aero Squadron (a WWI unit organized on 17 August 1917 at Scott Field, IL; demobilized on 26 May 1919 at Camp Lee, VA; reconstituted on 1 December 1936). Activated on 1 February 1940 at Wheeler Field, TH, and assigned to the Hawaiian Department. Further assigned in November 1940 to the Hawaiian Air Force.

Patrols over Hawaiian waters, 7 Dec 1941–May 1942; combat in Central Pacific and Western Pacific, 14 Apr–8 Aug 1944; primarily aerial transportation, Feb–Jul 1945; reconnaissance in Southwest Pacific, 6 Jul–5 Aug 1945.

Photographic reconnaissance over the southwestern US, Mar 1954–May 1959. Electronic countermeasures, 1987–1991 and 1992.

Provided crewmen and equipment for electronic combat operations during the Gulf War, 17 Jan–10 Mar 1991.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

Created: 25 Jan 2025

Updated:

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.

Steven E. Clay. *US Army Order of Battle 1919-1941*. Combat Studies Institute Press. US Army Combined Arms Center. Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Nd.

Unit yearbook. *Shaw AFB, SC, 1956*. Army and Navy Publishing Company of Louisiana. Baton Rouge, LA. 1956.