

3588 FLYING TRAINING SQUADRON (HELICOPTER)



MISSION

LINEAGE

3588 Flying Training Squadron (Helicopter)

STATIONS

Gary AFB, TX
Fort Rucker, AL

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

H-13
UH-1

COMMANDERS

Maj William Hughes

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

OPERATIONS

In 1971, when the Army began training Air Force undergraduate helicopter pilots, Air Training Command established small detachments of Air Force personnel at Army training sites to monitor training, provide interservice liaison, and give administrative support to Air Force students. When this training went to a single location-Fort Rucker, Alabama-ATC transferred student accountability and processing from Randolph to Craig AFB in Alabama. Craig closed in 1977, and the responsibility went to a detachment of the 14th Flying Training Wing at Columbus. Since that time, the detachment's mission had expanded to include more than 350 hours per month for flying and academic training with 17 permanent party personnel assigned. Then on 31 January 1980, Air Training Command replaced the detachment with the activation of the 3588th Flying Training Squadron (Helicopter). The squadron reported directly to the HQ ATC Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations.1980

Since January 1980, the 3588th Flying Training Squadron (Helicopter) had conducted helicopter pilot training for the Air Force at Fort Rucker, Alabama. The squadron reported directly to ATC's Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations and Readiness. However, General Ashy decided to reassign the 3588th.

ATC conducted undergraduate helicopter training at the U.S. Army Aviation Center, Fort Rucker, Alabama. The 3588th Flying Training Squadron provided administrative support for the Air Force students in the program (82 Air Force students completed the course in 1983) and carried

out specialized instruction applicable to Air Force students. In 1983, the Army added two weeks to their syllabus to prepare their students to manage Aviation Branch activities. The commander of the 3588th proposed adding two weeks to the Air Force portion of the course, to provide additional instruction and to keep its students on the same schedule as their Army partners. ATC and the Air Force approved the request in November.

Effective 1 October 1990, to the 14th Flying Training Wing at Columbus AFB, Mississippi.

In 1991 the Air Force had a surplus of helicopter pilots, so HQ USAF decided to reduce production from the 41 graduated in FY 91 to only 10 per year in FY 92-94. Under this program, the helicopter pilot trainees would be first assignment instructor pilots, who the Army would train in its rotary wing qualification course at Fort Rucker, Alabama, without any Air Force top-off training. Consequently, Air Training Command inactivated the 3588th Flying Training Squadron at Fort Rucker on 18 October. Also on the same date, ATC established Detachment 1, 14th Flying Training Wing at Fort Rucker to provide administrative support and supervision. 1991

On 18 October 1991, the last UPT-H class graduated, and since ATC no longer conducted an Air Force-unique program at Fort Rucker, it inactivated the 3588th Flying Training Squadron. To leave the door open for the possibility of resuming some Air Force-conducted training, ATC didn't completely disband its helicopter training presence at Fort Rucker. When ATC inactivated the 3588th, it activated a detachment at Fort Rucker to take care of such things as administrative support and supervision for the 10 students slated to go through the RWQ course each of the next few years. In approving two manpower authorizations (one officer and one enlisted), the Air Staff suggested that the officer remain qualified as a UH-1N instructor pilot in order to maintain Air Force presence and continuity with the Army's Fort Rucker cadre. When the Air Force began the SUPT helicopter track in 1994, that officer could help qualify the new squadron cadre and the additional IPs. In the interim, ATC assigned Detachment 1 to the nearest flying training wing--the 14th Flying Training Wing, Columbus AFB, Mississippi.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
Unit yearbook. *Gary AFB, TX, 1955*. Army and Navy Publishing Co Inc. Baton Rouge, LA. 1955