

55th MOBILE COMMAND AND CONTROL SQUADRON



MISSION

Mission was a ground mobile command and control systems, which provided the primary C3I capability for the US Strategic Command during periods of national crisis. The platform interfaced with various command centers and the intelligence community for information needed to operate in the pre attack, trans-attack and post attack environments.

Squadron operated the Mobile Consolidated Command Center. Squadron was augmented by personnel of the 55 Communications Group and medical, transportation, civil engineering, and security forces personnel. The MCCC was developed and procured under a rapid prototype, incremental development strategy to provide an austere, enduring C3I warfighting capability.

LINEAGE

55 Mobile Command and Control Squadron

Activated

Inactivated, 27 Sep 2006

STATIONS

Offutt AFB, Nebraska

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

On a disc Azure, in dexter chief an Orange overall a hooded spectre issuant from sinister base Sable garnished Gray and clinching in its sinister hand two lightning bolts saltirewise Gray, all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "55 MCCA" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "IMPERIUM REGIMEN COMPITI" in Yellow letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** 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 orange disc suggests the moon and alludes to the clandestine and covert nature of the Squadron's command and control mission. The ghost represents the elusive and mobile nature of the Squadron's platform and equipment. The lightning bolts signify the speed and power of strategic forces controlled by the USSTRATCOM Mobile Consolidated Command Center.

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

In the mid-1980s, the Defense Communications Agency now the Defense Information System Agency, developed requirements for an economical architecture to interconnect and deploy C3I systems to support unified and specified commands. Sandia National Laboratories was chosen to demonstrate the feasibility of integrating off the shelf components into a mobile platform which evolved as the Proof of Concept/Experimental Test Bed. Successful development of the program led to the fielding of the Survivable and Endurable Command Center. As SAC transition to USSTRATCOM in 1992, the platform was renamed the CINC's Mobile Alternate Headquarters.

The unit was placed under ACC in 1992 becoming Det 1, 55th Wing. In 1994 the unit was renamed the 55th Operations Squadron and again in 1995 to the 55th MCCA and transferred from the 55th Operations Group to the 55th Communications Group in 1998.

9/29/2006 The 55th Mobile Command and Control Squadron here was officially inactivated Sept. 27 after 28 years of service. For nearly three decades the men and women of the 55th MCCA have kept a quiet vigil, preparing for the day when the fate of the nation might depend on their ability to provide a survivable command and control platform after an attack during the Cold War. That day never came according to Lt. Gen. C. Robert Kehler, deputy commander of U.S. Strategic Command, it turns out the people of the United States were depending on

the 55th MCCA all along.

"When you started, it was with some vans with some radio gear and your job was to help the command survive and conduct its mission through what we all know would have been the most horrific set of circumstances we ever could have faced," General Kehler said. "The real objective was to never get to that point, to have a strong enough deterrent to ensure that we didn't, and ... it worked," he said. For the years it was in service, 55th MCCA members and the mission they supported, U.S. Strategic Command's Mobile Consolidated Command Center, were ready to roll out of Offutt AFB at a moment's notice. With their communications gear, they could set up an independent, survivable command center far away from likely nuclear attacks.

The MCCA was part of a strategic deterrent the United States maintained throughout the Cold War and, according to the general, succeeded because people in units like the 55th MCCA were "manning the walls." Secrecy was at the heart of the 55th MCCA, according to Col. Curtiss Petrek, 55th Wing vice commander. Even the squadron's crest, which shows the grim reaper silhouetted against a night sky, communicates the need for covertness. "The crest," he said, "signifies the fact that when this squadron left town and moved to a new location, they often did it under the cover of darkness, and the thousands of people stationed here would not even know that they had left town."

Col. Sheron Bellizan, commander of the 55th Communications Group, noted that while the squadron might be gone, its legacy would endure. "We are indeed inspired by the outstanding legacy of excellence that the MCCA leaves to our wing, U.S. Strategic Command and our nation," she said. The final words about the 55th MCCA were spoken by its final commander, Maj. Karen Hibbard, who took the stage after Colonel Petrek. "I'd like to leave you with the words of the last transmission from the command center status report," she said. "It simply says, To all the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen who have ever had the opportunity to work aboard one of the finest and most unique platforms ever created, the time has come. The technologies and advancements being made by this great nation, along with continually changing world conditions, have once again preceded everything of yesteryear, and have changed the future of tomorrow. "As a result, the U.S. Strategic Command Mobile Consolidated Command Center is rolling into the history books. The memories and accomplishments that have been created, however, will always remain alive in the hearts of those who have been here, and who have participated in the mission to protect, respond and recreate.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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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.