

## 57 WEAPONS SQUADRON



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE

57 Troop Carrier Squadron constituted, 12 Nov 1942  
Activated, 18 Nov 1942  
Inactivated, 25 Mar 1946  
Activated in the Reserve, 3 Aug 1947  
Redesignated 57 Troop Carrier Squadron, Medium, 27 Jun 1949  
Ordered to active service, 15 Oct 1950  
Inactivated, 14 Jul 1952  
Activated in the Reserve, 14 Jul 1952  
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1954  
Redesignated 57 Military Airlift Squadron, Training and activated, 27 Dec 1965  
Organized, 8 Jan 1966  
Redesignated 57 Airlift Squadron, 27 Aug 1991  
Inactivated, 30 Sep 2001  
Redesignated 57 Weapons Squadron, 30 May 2003  
Activated, 1 Jun 2003

#### STATIONS

Bowman Field, KY, 18 Nov 1942  
Sedalia AAFld, MO, 23 Jan 1943  
Laurinburg-Maxton AAB, NC, 5 May 1943  
Baer Field, IN, 3-17 Jun 1943  
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 29 Jun 1943  
Dobodura, New Guinea, 2 Aug 1943  
Port Moresby, New Guinea, 20 Dec 1943

Nadzab, New Guinea, 22 Apr 1944  
Biak, 23 Sep 1944 (operated from Peleliu, 9-26 Jan 1945)  
San Jose, Mindoro, 18 Feb 1945  
Porac, Luzon, 20 May 1945  
Okinawa, 20 Aug 1945  
Tachikawa, Japan, 20 Sep 1945-25 Mar 1946  
Greater Pittsburgh Aprt, PA, 3 Aug 1947  
Greenville (later, Donaldson) AFB, SC, 16 Oct 1950-14 Jul 1952  
Pittsburgh, PA, 14 Jul 1952-1 Apr 1954  
Tinker AFB, OK, 8 Jan 1966  
Altus AFB, OK, 21 Apr 1969-30 Sep 2001  
McGuire AFB, NJ, 1 Jun 2003

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

375 Troop Carrier Group, 18 Nov 1942-25 Mar 1946  
375 Troop Carrier Group, 3 Aug 1947-14 Jul 1952  
375 Troop Carrier Group, 14 Jul 1952-1 Apr 1954  
443 Military Airlift (later, 443 Airlift) Wing, 8 Jan 1966  
443 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1991  
97 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1992-30 Sep 2001  
USAF Mobility Weapons School, 1 Jun 2003  
USAF Weapons School, 5 Jul 2006

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

C-47, 1942-1945  
B-17, 1944  
C-46, 1944-1946  
C-46, 1947-1950  
C-82, 1950-1952  
C-46, 1953-1954  
C-141, 1966-2001

### **COMMANDERS**

Unkn, 18-19 Nov 1942  
Capt Lucian N. Powell, 20 Nov 1942  
1<sup>st</sup> Lt Benjamin C. King, 22 Mar 1943  
Capt James C. Smith, 27 Nov 1944  
Capt Fred M. Starr, 24 Jun 1945  
Unkn Maj George F. Swearingen, 3 Aug 1947  
Maj James M. Thomas, 20 May 1949  
Capt George Kacsuta, 15 Oct 1950  
Maj Earl J. Smith, 7 Nov 1950  
Capt Robert W. Smith, Dec 1951-Unkn  
Unkn, 14 Jul 1952-1 Apr 1954

Lt Col Therman C. Weir, 8 Jan 1966  
Col Roger P. Larivee, 11 Oct 1966  
Lt Col Ralph D. Haaf, 1 Aug 1968  
Lt Col Thomas J. Overton, 28 Nov 1969  
Lt Col Barney J. Milner, 31 Dec 1970  
Lt Col Kenneth E. Klein, 1 Dec 1971  
Lt Col Leonard W. Dasbach, 23 Nov 1972  
Lt Col Richard L. Davis, 24 May 1973  
Lt Col Roy B. Dille Jr., 20 May 1974  
Lt Col Gary S. Baker, 2 Feb 1976  
Lt Col Francis J. Almeter, 2 Jul 1976  
Lt Col Joseph L. Bergeron, 13 Feb 1978  
Lt Col Carleton R. Philbrick, 9 Apr 1979  
Lt Col Larry R. Winchell, 25 Aug 1980  
Lt Col John C. Tait, 26 May 1981  
Lt Col Bobby O. Floyd, 14 Jul 1982  
Lt Col James C. Schaffer, 1 Jun 1984  
Lt Col Richard B. Bundy, 27 Jun 1986  
Lt Col Martin D. Amelung, 4 Apr 1988  
Lt Col Robert A. Saunders, 27 Mar 1990  
Lt Col Stephen B. Frye, 15 Jun 1992  
Lt Col Mark C. Wido, 18 Jun 1993  
Lt Col John H. Christ, 23 Jun 1994  
Lt Col Russell J. Deluca, 13 Jun 1995  
Lt Col Frederick H. Martin, 31 Mar 1997  
Lt Col Bruce E. Card, 30 Jun 1998  
Lt Col Richard J. Walberg, 3 Apr 2000-30 Sep 2001  
Lt Col Richard J. Walberg, 3 Apr 2000-30 Sep 2001  
Lt Col John J. Sullivan, 1 Jun 2003  
Lt Col John J. Roscoe, 27 Jun 2005  
Lt Col Walter C. Daniels, li, 2 Jul 2007  
Lt Col Christopher B. Collett,  
Lt Col Brian J. Wald

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

Air Offensive, Japan

New Guinea

Northern Solomons

Bismarck Archipelago

Western Pacific  
Leyte  
Luzon  
Southern Philippines  
Ryukyus

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

None

**Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Apr 1967-31 Mar 1969

1 Apr 1970-31 Mar 1972

1 Jul 1979-30 Jun 1981

1 Jul 1985-30 Jun 1987

1 Jul 1991-30 Jun 1993

1 Jul 1993-30 Jun 1994

1 Jul 1994-30 Jun 1995

1 Jul 1995-30 Jun 1996

1 Jul 1996-30 Jun 1998

1 Jul 1998-30 Jun 1999

1 Jul 1999-30 Jun 2000

1 Jul 2000-[30 Sep 2001]

1 Jun 2004-31 May 2006

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm

1 Apr 1966-28 Jan 1973

**EMBLEM**





Azure, a pair of wings Or, garnished Gold Brown surmounted by two arrows saltwise of the like, overall a torch of the third flamant Proper fimbriated Argent, all between in base three double mullets, Yellow offset on White, each issuing a four lined contrail arcing to the flame of the torch of the last; all within an inner bordure Or and an outer diminished bordure of the first. (Approved, May 1966)

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

Aerial transportation in Southwest and Western Pacific during World War II; airborne assault on Nadzab, New Guinea, 5 Sep 1945.

Our squadron was activated on November 18, 1942 at Bowman Field, KY as the 57 Troop Carrier Squadron (TCS)(In New Guinea the squadron was named "Biscuit Bomber). It was originally equipped with C-47 aircraft. Additional training followed in 1943 at Sedalia Army Air Field, MO, and Laurinburg-Maxton Army Air Base, NC.

The squadron experienced its first accident on March 10 when a glider, practicing night landings, cut loose too soon, hit a tree and crashed. The pilot and co-pilot were seriously injured and the mechanic was killed. The squadron received its final training at Baer Field, IN.

On June 14, the air echelon (part of 375th Troop Carrier Group - Tokyo Trolley) flew to Port

Moresby, New Guinea, (5th AF and 54th Troop Carrier WG) arriving there June 29, 1943. The ground echelon left Baer Field on June 17 and arrived at Port Moresby on July 31. After arriving in New Guinea the squadron received the name "Biscuit Bomber. The 57 TCS moved on Aug. 2 to Dobodura, New Guinea and two days later flew the first mission to Salamaua. On September 2, nine of the 57's planes dropped 90,000 pounds of ammunition, food and equipment to allied troops in the area. Until December 23, 1943, the unit made flights to several locations in New Guinea, as well as Port Moresby and Australia. After October 16, the air echelon operated from Port Moresby, with the rest of the squadron moving there on December 20, 1943.

In addition to C-47s, the squadron flew a B-17F from February to May 1944 on long-range missions. On April 8, 1944, the 57 flew personnel and equipment from Guadalcanal to forward bases at Munda and Dobodura. The unit supported the invasion of Noemfoor Island on July 2 and on September 23, moved to Biak Island. They made the first trip to Morotai Island on October 5, carrying supplies forward and returning with litter patients.

An additional mission took them to Leyte, Philippine Islands on October 31 to haul supplies to the beachhead and return wounded to hospitals. In January 1945 the unit began the transition to C-46 aircraft. It also moved to San Jose, Mindoro, Philippine Islands, on Feb. 18; then to Porac, Luzon on May 19. C-46s flew from Clark Field, 15 miles from the squadron's camp. On June 16, 1945, the 57 TCS made its first flight to Okinawa, the destination of most missions for the next two months.

The war ended shortly after the move to Clark Field in August and the 57 was used to help transport the 11th Airborne Division to Okinawa. September 20 brought another move, this time to Tachikawa AB near Tokyo. Operations continued in Japan until January 21, 1946 when the last of the personnel and equipment transferred to other organizations. The 57 Troop Carrier Squadron inactivated on March 25, 1946.

The 57 activated in the Reserve at Greater Pittsburgh Airport, PA, as part of the 375th Carrier Group. The Reservists trained in the C-46 operations until the unit was reactivated on October 15, 1950. Immediately, the unit moved to Greenville (later, Donaldson) AFB, SC, and began flying C-82 aircraft on operational troop carrier missions in November 1950.

Between February 20 and April 11, 1952, the unit operated on temporary duty from Brownwood Municipal Airport, TX, in support of Army maneuvers. On July 14, 1952, the 57 TCS inactivated at Donaldson AFB and activated in the Reserve at Pittsburgh, PA, with new personnel and equipment. The squadron did little training and inactivated on April 1, 1954.

Redesignated 57 Military Airlift Squadron (MAS), Training, the squadron was activated at Tinker AFB OK, on 8 January 1966 while also absorbing the men and equipment of the 1741st Air Transport Squadron.

The 57 MAS trained aircrew members (Pilots, Navigators, Flight Engineers and Loadmasters) to fly the new C-141 turbo-jet transport. They frequently carried cargo and passengers to

destinations within the United States on the training flights. The unit also transported cargo and passengers overseas to Japan, Germany, Guam, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, and Alaska, usually on weekend missions. In later years, additional destinations included Egypt, Korea, Italy, the Philippines, Spain and Africa.

On April 21, 1969, the squadron relocated to Altus AFB OK. From there, the squadron took part in numerous humanitarian and operational missions. The squadron regularly flew to Southwest Asia in support of U.S. forces there. Crews and aircraft flew in the Israeli airlift, October-November 1973. In 1975, the 57 flew its first mission to South America. Occasionally the 57 supported the U.S. Army with airdrop missions of paratroopers and supplies.

In December 1979, the unit received the Air Force's first C-141B, and it was given the name "the City of Altus." In addition to the stretched fuselage, the aircraft was modified for air refueling capabilities. The squadron also supported the Commander in Chief, Military Airlift Command and his staff in the late 1970s and early 80s.

Airlift missions to Beirut, Lebanon began in August 1983, in support of peacekeeping forces there. During Desert Shield, Desert Storm, 32 aircrews from the squadron flew more than 4,300 hours on 640 sorties. Additionally, the squadron flew more than 200 sorties and transported more than 3,100 tons of food and supplies in support of the Somalia relief efforts during Operation Restore Hope.

In April 1993, with the transfer of 285 flightline maintenance personnel to the 57 AS, the squadron combined aircrew operations with maintenance operations to form the largest combined maintenance and aircrew operational C-141B squadron in the Air Force.

On 28 July 2001 AETC inactivated the 57 Airlift Squadron at Altus AFB, Oklahoma, which at that time was the Air Force's sole source for initial qualification and upgrade training for the C-141. An Air Force Reserve Command unit would assume responsibility for this mission in the future.

Redesignated 57 Weapons Squadron (WPS) on 30 May 2003 and activated on 1 June 2003 at McGuire AFB, NJ. The 57 WPS would provide graduate-level instructor academic and flying courses to C-17 crew members.

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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.