

68 AIR REFUELING SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

468 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 9 Jul 1942

Activated, 15 Jul 1942

Inactivated, 1 Apr 1944

68 Air Refueling Squadron, Heavy constituted, 7 Apr 1952

Activated, 8 Apr 1952

Inactivated, 28 May 1952

Activated, 25 Nov 1953

Discontinued, 25 Mar 1965

468 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) and 68 Air Refueling Squadron, Heavy consolidated, 19 Sep 1985. Retained designation as 68 Air Refueling Squadron (Heavy). Squadron remains inactive.

STATIONS

Salt Lake City AAB, UT, 15 Jul 1942

Topeka, KS, 21 Aug 1942

Dalhart AAFld, TX, 22 Feb 1943-1 Apr 1944

Lockbourne AFB, OH, 8 Apr-28 May 1952

Lake Charles AFB, LA, 25 Nov 1953

Bunker Hill AFB, IN, 4 Sep 1957-25 Mar 1965

ASSIGNMENTS

333 Bombardment Group, 15 Jul 1942-1 Apr 1944

68 Strategic Reconnaissance Group, 8 Apr-28 May 1952

68 Bomb Wing, 25 Nov 1953

4041 Air Base Group, 3 Sep 1957

305 Bombardment Wing, 1 Jun 1959-25 Mar 1965

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-24, 1942-1943

KC-97

COMMANDERS

Maj Maddison M. McBrayer

Maj Robert L. Hundley

Lt Col Ernest Turner, Oct 1954

Lt Col James H. Coats, 16 Jan 1956

HONORS

Service Streamers

WWII American Theater

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Served as a replacement training unit, Aug 1942-Nov 1943.

The 68th Air Refueling Squadron, Medium was constituted and assigned to the Strategic Air Command on 7 April 1952. Effective the following day, it was activated at Lockbourn AFB, OH, with further assignment to the 68th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Medium. The authorized personnel strength consisted of 72 officers and 347 airmen. Without having been adequately manned or effectively organized, the squadron was inactivated at Lockbourne AFB on 28 May 1952.

After having remained in an inactive status for approximately 18 months, and without any change in designation, the 68th AREFS was activated at Lake Charles AFB, LA, on 25 November 1953. At that time it was assigned to the 68th Bombardment Wing, Medium. Personnel was provided by the inactivation of the 98th Air Refueling Squadron, Medium at Lake Charles AFB on the same day.

It was not until 1 April 1954 that the 68th Air Refueling Squadron achieved a combat ready status. Operating meanwhile with shortages both in combat crews and in tanker aircraft, the KC-97, the squadron was unable to complete a full-fledged flying program. During that month, with 11 aircraft and 9 combat ready crews, the squadron flew 79 sorties for a total of 341 flying hours. There were 10 short ferrying trips and a comparable number of test hops. Most of the time in the air involved routine training and in-flight refueling missions. Yet only 9 of a scheduled 27 refueling missions actually were accomplished. Fuel in the amount of 225,220 pounds was transferred in 38 "wet" hook-ups, with the 68th Bombardment Wing's B-47 as the receivers. On these same missions, the crews effected 369 "dry" hook-ups.

In the month of April 1954, with 16 combat ready crews and 16 KC-97 on hand, the squadron flew 106 missions for a total of 411 hours of flying time. They included 10 ferrying hops to the Oklahoma City Air Materiel Area; and 45 in-flight refueling missions, during which 722,400 pounds of fuel were transferred from tanker aircraft to B-47's. Squadron made 3 round-trips to Sidi Slimane AB, French Morocco.

In January 1955 the 68th Squadron deployed 373 men and 23 aircraft to Kindley AFB, Bermuda, to provide turn-around refueling support for bombers of the 68th Bombardment Wing which participated in operations against simulated European targets. On that mission the squadron's tankers transferred over 1,500,000 pounds of fuel to 34 bombers. In November following the squadron sent 16 KC-97 to Lajes Field, Terceira Island, Azores, for the purpose of providing refueling support to B-47 of the 44th and 68th Bombardment Wings then engaged in a simulated combat mission. Redeployment for the 68th Refueling Squadron was through Kindley AFB as a staging area. An important feature of this mission was the opportunity it afforded newly qualified navigators to gain experience in long over-water flights. Finally, in the category of missions that were performed, the squadron's crews in July 1956 devoted 47 hours flying time in ferrying

aircraft and airlifting personnel and equipment to Goose AB, Labrador.

On 15 June 1954 the 68th Air Refueling Squadron departed Lake Charles for a 45-day temporary duty mission at Nouasseur Air Depot, French Morocco. The principal purpose of this deployment was to utilize the facilities of the 5th Air Division and the 7th Air Division in refueling support of the aircraft of the three bombardment squadrons (51st, 52nd, and 656th) of the 68th Bombardment Wing which were deployed simultaneously at Fairford RAF Station, England. For one week during the month of July, the refueling squadron was engaged exclusively in providing tanker support for the 320th Bombardment Wing then engaged in that area on a unit simulated combat mission. Redeployment began on 28 July and was completed by 14 August. Over-all flying for deployment, temporary duty at Nouasseur Air Depot, and redeployment amounted to 2,255 hours. Before the end of August the squadron had resumed normal operations in full at its home base.

Beginning on 20 May 1955 the 68th Refueling Squadron deployed to Goose Air Base for a 50-day temporary duty period in support of Strategic Air Command air operations in that forward area. This move involved 20 aircraft; and, counting administrative, maintenance, and medical units, a total of 100 officers and 401 airmen. While stationed at Goose Bay the squadron performed in-flight refueling services for four separate maneuver missions. All told, 4,300,000 pounds of fuel were transferred from the squadron's tankers to receiver aircraft. In addition, the squadron airlifted 121,000 gallons of fuel from Goose AB to an airfield at the head of Frobisher Bay, Canada. The hours flown on deployment, temporary duty at Goose Bay, and redeployment amounted to 1,480.

Participating in an air refueling support mission in the Northeast Command area, the 68th Air Refueling Squadron was stationed at Goose Air Base again the following year from 27 February to 28 April 1956. This mission involved the deployment of 17 aircrews, together with supporting administrative, maintenance, and medical units, a total of 490 personnel. During one week its crews participated also in the simulated War Plans Refueling Mission. Counting deployment, air refueling missions, ferrying operations, and redeployment the squadron flew approximately 2,100 hours in connection with this temporary duty mission.

On 24 Mar 58, the 68 AREFS and support personnel departed from Bunker Hill AFB in for deployment to Harmon AFB, Newfoundland, under operation Head Start.

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.