

ALASKA AIR DEPOT

MISSION

LINEAGE

Alaska Air Depot

STATIONS

Elmendorf AFB, AK, 13 Apr 1953-1 Mar 1954

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Military aircraft could not keep flying without the assistance of air depots and maintenance crews. When Alaska's first Air Corps units began to operate at Ladd and Elmendorf Fields, repair and maintenance organizations had to follow them in and set up shop. Before the war, when the operations at both airfields were still quite limited, aircraft and supplies were provided by the Sacramento Air Depot in California. Beginning in February 1941, units of the 23rd Air Base Group, headquartered at Elmendorf, arrived to take care of on-site maintenance and repair. Detachments from this group were also present at Ladd Field.

After the United States entered the war, depot functions in Alaska were reorganized. In February 1942, the Sacramento Air Depot activated two sub-depots to take over Air Corps supply activities, one at Ladd and one at Elmendorf. The sub-depots' primary concern was to service tactical aircraft for what became the Eleventh Air Force, headquartered at Elmendorf Field. A few months later, in the summer of 1942, the 11th Air Force Service Command was activated and took command of these sub-depots. In August, the Ladd sub-depot was redesignated as the Alaska Air Depot (AAD), while the Elmendorf unit remained a sub-depot, the 342nd. The Alaska Air Depot's mission was to support the Eleventh Air Force by maintaining and improving aircraft and equipment for use in the Alaska Theater. Its responsibilities also included distributing parts and supplies to Elmendorf.

At the same time, Lend-Lease operations were beginning at Ladd, and the Cold Weather Test Detachment had just been re-established at the field. The new 6th Air Depot Group had arrived in July to support Lend-Lease activities and was soon attached to the Alaska Air Depot.

Because of the demands of the Lend-Lease program, Ladd Field personnel could not meet the needs of the tactical units in the Eleventh Air Force. The Alaska Air Depot had a short tenure at Ladd Field. Beginning in November 1942, personnel from the AAD began transferring to an expanded operation at Elmendorf. By March 1943, the Alaska Air Depot was formally moved to Elmendorf, taking over the sub-depot there. The 6th Air Depot Group, minus a few units which were sent to Elmendorf, was separated from the AAD and placed under the direct control of the Ladd Field commander.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.