

# NORTHEAST AIR COMMAND



## LINEAGE

Newfoundland Base Command established, 15 Jan 1941

Redesignated Northeast Air Command, 1 Oct 1950, Elevated to major command status

Discontinued, 1 Apr 1957

## STATIONS

Pepperell AFB, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada

## COMMANDERS

Col Maurice D. Welty, 15 Jan 1941

BG H.W. Harms 16 Jul 1941

Col Maurice D. Welty, 22 Sep 1941

MG Gerald C. Brant, 18 Oct 1941

BG John B. Brooks, 7 Jan 1943

BG Samuel Connell, Oct 1944

Col Albert L. Edson, 1 Jan 1946

BG Caleb V. Haynes, 20 Jan 1946

MG Lyman P. Whitten, 1 Jul 1949

MG Charles T. Myers, 20 Mar 1952

LTG Glenn O. Barcus 31 Jul 1954

## EMBLEM

Azure within a diminutive of the border or, a demi-representation of the Northern hemisphere issuing from base argent, land outlined, longitudinal and latitudinal lines of the first, a futuramic aircraft with a jet stream all proper, circumventing the Northeast Air Command area, the aircraft nosed toward the dexter chief, an arc four stars of the third in chief sinisterwise. (Approved, 1 Sep 1954)

## EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

The Northeast Air Command emblem shows the aircraft emblematic of the Air Force of today and tomorrow, circumventing the command's area of defense. The aircraft jet stream is symbolically laying a wall of Air Power ready to give and take.

The colors are traditional with Air Force emblems yet have their individual significations. They are red, yellow and blue, the primary colors, and silver (the light blue gray denotes the silver), red and yellow signify power and might, blue signifies the long arctic night, white signifies the arctic ice and snow and silver signifies the material shown in the aircraft.

## **OPERATIONS**

To take charge of U.S. forces and facilities in northeast Canada and Greenland, the Newfoundland Base Command was activated under the command of Colonel Maurice D. Welty. The Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment of the Newfoundland Base Command was activated on 15 January 1941 on board the ship that brought the first troops.

The Newfoundland Base Command was assigned to the Northeastern (later Eastern) Defense Command whose area included the east coast of the United States. This was one of four regional commands responsible for air-ground defense. NBC's mission was to provide ground, antiaircraft, and harbor defense of U.S. bases in Newfoundland, to work with Canada in defending Newfoundland, and to cooperate with the Navy in Newfoundland defense.

Newfoundland Base Command, a World War II organization that supported the North Atlantic route to Europe, was a part of the Eastern Defense Command (U.S. Army) until January 1, 1946, when it became a component of Atlantic Division, Air Transport Command. On April 1, 1948, Newfoundland Base Command became a directly assigned component of Air Transport Command. On June 1, 1948, when Air Transport Command inactivated, it became a directly assigned component of Military Air Transport Service.

The threat of a Russian air attack had created a new need for air defense and caused a new build-up to be started. The next ten years would see a much greater American force in the Northeast area than had been there in the preceding ten years.

On 1 October 1950, the Joint Chiefs of Staff established the U.S. Northeast Command as a unified command. The purpose was "to provide a more direct operational control by the Joint Chiefs of Staff over U.S. forces on bases in Canada and Greenland". USNEC's mission was to defend the U.S. from attack through the arctic regions in the northeast area, defend the USNEC area, and support SAC, MATS, and other military and governmental agencies using Northeast bases. The headquarters was placed at Pepperrell AFB. Also on 1 October, USAF relieved the Newfoundland Base Command from assignment to MATS and re-designated it to the Northeast Air Command as a major command of the Air Force and as the Air Force component of USNEC. All units of the NBC and the Greenland Base Command were assigned to NEAC. And NEAC became responsible for all forces in Newfoundland, Labrador, eastern Canada, and Greenland. Major General Lyman P. Whitten who had commanded the NBC was named commander of both USNEC and NEAC. NEAC was the only component of USNEC. Neither the Army nor the Navy ever established component commands. But Army and Navy officers served on the staff of USNEC.

NEAC also had responsibility for the Greenland part of the DEW Line extension beyond Cape Dyer. In February 1956, the Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the line from Cape Dyer across

Greenland to Iceland, and to the Faeroes, and to a termination point in Scotland. They also approved a southern line to Cape Farewell, Greenland, and on to the Azores.

At mid-1956, the Joint Chiefs of Staff completed a world-wide reorganization plan which they called the Unified Command Plan. Its aim was a more efficient structure and reduced cost. It achieved this by consolidating organizations and eliminating the excess superstructures. Under the Unified Command Plan, the U.S. Northeast Command was disestablished on 1 September 1956. Responsibility for air defense of the Northeast was given to CONAD. The latter designated NEAC as a subordinate joint command responsible for U.S. air defense activities in the Northeast. This was an interim arrangement only, however, for it was planned that NEAC would follow USNEC as soon as possible. This date was eventually set as 1 April 1957.

When the Northeast Air Command discontinued in 1957, its subordinate components were reassigned, most going to Air Defense Command and Strategic Air Command.

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Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 22 Aug 2010

Updated:

Sources

AFHRA

Air Force Magazine Almanacs. Air Force Association. Arlington, VA. Various years.

Command History. *US Air Defense in the Northeast, 1940-1957*. Office of Information Services, HQ Continental Air Defense Command. Ent AFB, CO. 1 Apr 1957.