

461st AIR CONTROL WING



MISSION

The 461st Air Control Wing mission is operating the E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (Joint STARS), an advanced ground surveillance and battle management system. Joint STARS detects, locates, classifies, tracks and targets ground movements on the battlefield, communicating real-time information through secure data links with U.S. Forces command posts.

LINEAGE

461st Bombardment Wing, Light, established, 11 Dec 1953
Activated, 23 Dec 1953
Redesignated 461st Bombardment Wing, Tactical, 1 Oct 1955
Inactivated, 1 Apr 1958
Redesignated 461st Bombardment Wing, Heavy and activated, 15 Nov 1962
Organized, 1 Feb 1963
Discontinued and inactivated, 25 Mar 1968
Redesignated 461st Air Control Wing, 1 Sep 2011
Activated, 1 Oct 2011

STATIONS

Hill AFB, UT, 23 Dec 1953
Blytheville AFB, AR, 8 Apr 1956-1 Apr 1958
Amarillo AFB, TX, 1 Feb 1963-25 Mar 1968
Robins AFB, GA, 1 Oct 2011

ASSIGNMENTS

Ninth Air Force, 23 Dec 1953-1 Apr 1958
Strategic Air Command, 15 Nov 1962
22nd Strategic Aerospace Division, 1 Feb 1963

819th Strategic Aerospace Division, 1 Jul 1964
Second Air Force, 1 Jul 1965
19th Air Division, 2 Jul 1966-25 Mar 1968
Ninth Air Force, 1 Oct 2011

ATTACHMENTS

Nineteenth Air Force, 15 Apr 1956-1 Apr 1958

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-26, 1953
C-47, 1954
B-57, 1955
B-52D, 1963
B-52C, 1967-1968
KC-135

COMMANDERS

LTC Gus Weiser, 23 Dec 1953
LTC Thomas R. Ford, 29 Jan 1954-1 Apr 1958
None (not manned), 15 Nov 1962-31 Jan 1963
Col William R. Calhoun, Jr., 1 Feb 1963
Col John B. Paine, 11 Jun 1965
Col Charles D. Lewis, 2 Jul 1965
Col John B. Paine, 21 Jul 1967
Col William H. Hill, 19 Jan-25 Mar 1968
Col Henry Cyr

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

None

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
1 Jul 1966-30 Jun 1967

EMBLEM



461st Bombardment Wing emblem: A shield per bend azure and light blue, superimposed over the bend a thunderbolt, bendwise, or, piercing through a cloud formation proper, over an increscent moon to the sinister chief, and a sun to the dexter base of the third; on a chief argent, over a bar to base of chief, embattled gules, an olive branch and seven arrows in saltire, between two spheres all proper. (Approved, 4 Aug 1955)

461st Air Control Wing emblem: Per bend Azure and Celeste, a lightning bolt as a bend point to sinister base Or, in sinister chief a decrescent Argent, in dexter base a sun in splendor of the third, detailed Old Gold, all within a diminished bordure of the third. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "461ST AIR CONTROL WING" in Blue letters. 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 lightning bolt is symbolic of power from the sky, able to destroy any aggressor. It also represents command of the electromagnetic spectrum. The moon and sun indicate the capability to carry out the Wing's mission in any weather, day or night.

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Organized to increase air support of ground forces and air interdiction during the Korean war. Although the Air Force envisioned equipping the 461st with B-57s, these were unavailable at the time of activation. The 461st therefore received the B-26.

The wing trained assigned units and personnel for light bombardment and tactical bombardment proficiency.

Officer cadre was drawn from the 4th Tow Target Squadron, George AFB, CA, 1953/1954

As a part of the Ninth Air Force, the wing's strength on arrival was only 24 officers and 20 airmen. By 30 June 1955 its assigned strength was 237 officers and 1,593 airmen.

In the course of its practices the 461st used the B-26, later replaced by the B-57. Aircraft assigned to the wing for all its many purposes of training, transport, liaison, etc., were T-33As, C-47s, B-26s, B-57s, L-20s and H-19s.

In mid-1954 the wing moved to Wendover for 43 days to let the combat units put into practice techniques in rocketry, bombing, gunnery and armed reconnaissance.

The Utah and California Air National Guards cooperated with the 461st Bombardment Wing (Light) in completion of an originally designed bombing and gunnery range on the eastern edge of the northeastern Wendover Bombing and Gunnery Range. Between 2 May and 2 June 1954 the Utah and California Air National Guards conducted fighter-gunnery operations there. In April 1954 the 461st Bombardment Group of the Wing launched its first live practice bombing training at Wendover. 3 May 1954

Participated in actual and simulated exercises involving the deployment of aircraft and crews. Wing also operated Blytheville AFB, Ark, from 8 Apr 1956 to inactivation in 1958.

Activated at Amarillo AFB, Texas, in 1963, the 461st absorbed the personnel and equipment of the inactivating 4128th Strategic Wing. Trained with B-52s to maintain heavy bombardment proficiency, and participated in numerous operational readiness inspections and actual and simulated exercises as directed by the Strategic Air Command.

Malfunction and breakdown of training devices; fire control system testing device; T-2A Navigation training and AN/ALQ-T-4 ECM trainer effected wing training. In addition, problems with calibration of terrain avoidance modified radar for B-52 adversely effected training. 1963

After years as part of Strategic Air Command Nuclear deterrent force, 461 BW started training for conventional weapons delivery. 1965.

Deployed B-52 and crews to Anderson AFB, Guam, 18 Jan-4 Jul 1967, for combat operations in Southeast Asia.

Maintained combat proficiency until 21 Jan 1968 when last B-52 transferred.

The Air Force leadership has changed the organization that operates the service's fleet of E-8C JSTARS at Robins AFB, Ga. Gone is the blended 116th Air Control Wing that saw active duty and Air National Guard airmen run the JSTARS mission under a single, unified command chain. In its place is a new active association under which the 116th ACW becomes the ANG host unit and the newly established active duty 461st ACW works side-by-side with it to operate these aircraft. There will be no change to manning due to these administrative moves, said USAF officials. Back

in 2002, the Air Force designated the 116th ACW as a blended unit, the first of its type. Since then, USAF has standardized the integration of active duty and reserve component units under the association construct. The desire to fit JSTAR operations into an association drove this change 2010

11/24/2010 - 11/23/2010 -- Over the last eight years the 116 ACW has effectively worked as a blended organization to successfully accomplish the mission with unparalleled results. The "Blending" of the Active Duty 93d Air Control Wing with the Georgia Air National Guard 116th Bomb Wing created a one-of-a-kind organization with many challenges. The professionalism of the men and women of the 116th Air Control Wing, along with their dedicated missions focus, has resulted in outstanding mission effectiveness at every level but especially at its Forward Operating Locations. Administrative, cultural and regulatory challenges were met and overcome to accomplish our mission. Our current "blended" organization that formed under a Total Force Initiative (TFI) in 2002 at the direction of the Secretary of Defense. In 2007, the USAF further defined how TFI wings will be organized with the release of AFI 90-1001. Our current "blended" construct was not one of the models approved by the AFI. Therefore, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force has designated the 116th Air Control Wing as an "Active Associate" wing to bring JSTARS operations into compliance with AFI 90-1001. Over the last year, the wing has moved forward with plans to align under the current AFI guidance by reorganizing the "blended" wing. Plans to create separate AD and ANG wings, organized under the Active Associate construct, were drafted.

As a result of this reorganization, we will stand up a new AD Associate Wing called the 461st Air Control Wing. The structure will be an Active Association, composed of the ANG's 116 ACW and AD's 461 ACW and will continue to operate together to accomplish the shared JSTARS mission by integrating ANG and AD personnel to the maximum extent possible in groups, squadrons, flights and shops. Commanders and supervisors from both components will be jointly responsible to maintain unity of command and mission readiness of all personnel. The Active Association model is one in which a reserve component (the ANG) has principal responsibility for the weapon system that it shares with one or more AD units. All personnel in the association will be trained, tasked, inspected and deployed as a unified team to accomplish our common mission. Our Designated Operational Capability (DOC) statements and Unit Type Code (UTC) will be aligned in such a way that we will be tasked together. In a nutshell, it means that we will continue to operate as we do today to accomplish the mission. ANG and AD supervisors will continue to coordinate with each other, operating from the same offices they occupy today, to provide a unified approach to direct the operations of the JSTARS association. Differences between how we operate today and how the new association will operate will be minimal and will benefit the association by allowing all personnel, regardless of component, to have a commander from their respective component to handle their administrative actions as required by law. ANG leadership and supervisors will handle ANG administrative actions, and the association's AD element will handle its own administrative responsibilities.

Air Force officials activated the 461st Air Control Wing to operate E-8 JSTARS at Robins AFB, Ga., in an active association with the Georgia Air National Guard's 116th Air Control Wing. The 116th

ACW originally formed in 2002 as the Air Force's first "blended wing," bringing together the active duty 93rd ACW and Air Guard's 116th Bomb Wing into a single unit to fly and maintain these high-in-demand ground-surveillance airplanes. "Nine years ago to the day, we went from two wings to one, and today we go from one wing to two," said Brig. Gen. William Welsh , who became 116th ACW commander on Sept 30, the same day that the 461st ACW stood up. Welsh added, "We're still one team, Team JSTARS." The Air Force announced last November its plan create the active association in place of the blended wing construct. 2011

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 30 Dec 2010

Updated: 18 May 2017

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.