

1 EXPEDITIONARY RESCUE GROUP



MISSION

LINEAGE

1 Emergency Rescue Squadron constituted, 25 Nov 1943

Activated, 1 Dec 1943

Inactivated, 4 Jun 1946

Redesignated 1 Rescue Squadron, 26 Sep 1946

Activated, 1 Nov 1946

Redesignated 1 Air Rescue Squadron, 20 Aug 1950

Redesignated 1 Air Rescue Group, 14 Nov 1952

Inactivated, 8 Dec 1956

Redesignated 1 Rescue Group, 31 Mar 1995

Activated, 14 Jun 1995

Inactivated, 30 Sep 1997

Redesignated 1 Expeditionary Rescue Group, converted to provisional status, and assigned to Air Combat Command to activate or inactivate at any time on or after 9 Jun 2015.

STATIONS

Boca Raton, FL, 1 Dec 1943-18 Feb 1944

Casablanca, Morocco, 12 Mar 1944

Sidi Ahmid, Tunisia, 29 Mar 1944

Ajaccio, Corsica, 8 Apr 1944

Foggia, Italy, 19 Dec 1944-25 May 1945

Keesler Field, MS, 18 Jun 1945-4 Jun 1946

Howard Field (later, AFB), Canal Zone, 1 Nov 1946-1 Sep 1949
MacDill AFB, FL, 1 Sep 1949-15 Jun 1951
Albrook AFB, Canal Zone, 15 Jun 1951-8 Dec 1956
Patrick AFB, FL, 14 Jun 1995-30 Sep 1997

ASSIGNMENTS

Army Air Forces Eastern Technical Training Command, 1 Dec 1943
XII Fighter Command, 12 Mar 1944
Twelfth Air Force, 1 Oct 1944
Army Air Forces Western Technical Training Command, 18 Jun 1945
Army Air Forces Eastern Technical Training Command, 15 Oct 1945-4 Jun 1946
Caribbean Defense Command, 1 Nov 1946
5600 Wing (later, Composite Wing), 26 Jul 1948
Caribbean Air Command, 25 Apr 1949
Air Rescue Service, 1 Sep 1949-8 Dec 1956
1 Fighter Wing, 14 Jun 1995
347 Wing, 1 Apr-30 Sep 1997

ATTACHMENTS

Mediterranean Allied Coastal Air Force, 14 Sep 1944-12 May 1945
Caribbean Air Command, 14 Nov 1952-8 Dec 1956

WEAPON SYSTEMS

OA-10 L-5
B-25 B-17 L-17B
SA-10B
OA-10, 1944-1945
L-5, 1944-1945
B-25, 1944-1945
B-17, 1944-1945
B (later TB; SB)-17, 1946-1952
C-47, 1946-1950
L-1, 1946-1948
L-13, 1946-1949
OA (later, SA)-10, 1946-1953
L-5, 1947-1949
R (later, H)-5, 1947-1953
C-82, 1949-1952
SB-29, 1952-1956
SA-16, 1952-1956
SH-19, 1954-1956
SC-54, 1956
HH-60, 1995-1997
C-130, 1995-1997

HC-130, 1995-1997

COMMANDERS

Capt Merrick A. Gray, 2 Dec 1943
Lt Col Zoller, 15 Dec 1943
Lt Col Littleton J. Pardue, 4 Jan 1944
Unkn, Jul-Dec 1945
Maj Thomas M. Ruckman, 1 Jan 1946
Capt P.H. Dwyer, 28 Mar-4 Jun 1946
Lt Col Robert L. Rizon, 1 Nov 1946
Lt Col Theo R. Diltz, May 1948
Lt Col J.C. Bailey, 1 Sep 1949
Lt Col George T. Prior, 14 Nov 1950
Lt Col James T. Cousin, 31 Jan 1952
Lt Col Joseph C. Ware Jr., 14 Jun 1952
Col Edwin M. Ramage, 10 Aug 1954-8 Dec 1956
None (not manned), 14 Jun-13 Jul 1995
Col Thomas R. Friers, 14 Jun 1995-30 Sep 1997

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Rome-Arno
North Apennines
Po Valley
Southern France
Rhineland
Air Combat, EAME

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation
Mediterranean Theater of Operations, 17-21 Aug 1944

EMBLEM



1 Emergency Rescue Squadron emblem



1 Air Rescue Squadron emblem approved, 23 Jan 1951



MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Conducted long-range air-sea rescue operations from North Africa, Italy, Corsica and Southern France, 1944-1945. Conducted long-range air-sea rescue operations in Central America and Caribbean region, 1946-1956. Provided personnel and aircraft conducting combat search and rescue operations in Southwest Asia, 1995-1997.

Two realignments ordered by Air Combat Command took effect on the same day, 1 April 1997. The most substantial one had been the 1st Rescue Group's reassignment to the 347th Wing at Moody Air Force Base. This move meant the loss of two types of aircraft, the HC-130P, and the HH-60G.

1st Expeditionary Rescue Group activated at an undisclosed location to support the efforts of Operation Inherent Resolve and continue the legacy of those early rescue Airmen. Col. Michael Koscheski, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing commander, presided over the ceremony and is simply referred to as "Col. K" by his 1,100 Airmen who serve with him. "The idea of the 1st Rescue Group started out about a year ago when Operation Inherent Resolve kicked off," said Col. K. "We were looking at different options and at the time the staff was working a lot of the buildup and the planning. It became readily apparent that we needed a rescue group to harmonize rescue initiatives across the Levant Area of Operations." Earlier this year, two deliberately planned hostage rescue personnel recovery missions were carried out by U.S. Special Forces to save hostages held by the Islamic State, also known as ISIL or Daesh. Among the captives was Muath al-Kasasbeh, a Royal Jordanian air force pilot, who was captured by Daesh after his fighter jet crashed in Syria. The pilot was infamously burned to death in a cage. This event highlighted the need for ready, immediate-recovery combat search and rescue personnel recovery forces. U.S. and coalition forces rely on each other during tragic events such as this to further the mission protecting the men and women fighting to degrade ISIL. Following Col. K's speech, the 1st ERQG guidon was uncased, unfurled and passed to Col. Gregory Roberts, signifying the reactivation and his assumption of command in Southwest Asia, Sept. 1, 2015. "The men and women of the new 1st Expeditionary Rescue Group, the 26th, the 52nd and 64th Expeditionary Rescue Squadrons, will continue the Air Force combat search and rescue legacy of vigilance, valor, altruism and excellence," said Roberts.

The USAF air rescue mission comes under the cognizance of the Air Combat Command. Guardian Angel squadrons are the Air Force's human and equipment-based weapon system consisting of pararescuemen, survival specialists and Combat Rescue Officers. The HH-60 and HC-130 rescue squadrons cooperate to quickly infiltrate into denied territory with pararescuemen and recover survivors or other isolated personnel. As of Aug. 25, 2015, the U.S. and its coalition forces have conducted a total of 6,419 airstrikes in Iraq and Syria. Every component, no matter the size, is an integral piece to complete the mission of degrading and defeating ISIL. "This event, this assumption of command, is just a small testament to that," said Roberts. "Much bigger evidence is the thousands of protected air crew, conducting thousands of high-risk missions over the vast swathes of Iraq and Syria in Operation Inherent Resolve in defense of our alliance as well as our nations' coalition's wills every day."

A B-29 ditched in the vicinity of Bermuda, and approximately 150 aircraft, including forces of the 1st, 5th, and 6th Rescue Squadrons, participated in the search. After four days, an SB-17

located survivors in two life rafts. An A-1 lifeboat was dropped, and a Canadian cutter was directed to the scene for the pickup. Eighteen lives were saved. 16 Nov 1949.

11 Apr 1952 Personnel from Flight C, 1st Air Rescue Squadron, rescued six persons from the crash of a Pan American airliner at sea near Puerto Rico. The six personnel and a number of bodies were evacuated in an SA-16.

The 1st Emergency Rescue Squadron was a composite unit with nine OA-10, three L-5, and three B-25 and it was transferred to Casablanca in the middle of March 1944. Later it gained four B-17s. It was active throughout the Mediterranean until the surrender of the Germans in April 1945 and racked up 244 saves.

USAF UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 8 Dec 2014

Updated: 19 Feb 2023

Sources

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