

## 194th FIGHTER SQUADRON



### MISSION

#### LINEAGE<sup>1</sup>

409th Fighter Squadron constituted, 12 Oct 1943

Activated, 15 Oct 1943

Redesignated 409th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 5 Apr 1944

Redesignated 409th Fighter Squadron, 5 Jun 1944

Inactivated, 7 Nov 1945

Redesignated 194th Fighter Squadron and allotted to ANG, 24 May 1946

194th Fighter Squadron (Single Engine) extended federal recognition 2 Mar 1949

Redesignated 194th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Oct 1952

Redesignated 194th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 15 Dec 1952

Redesignated 194th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 1 Jul 1955

Redesignated 194th Fighter Squadron, 15 Mar 1992

#### STATIONS

Hamilton Field, California, 15 Oct 1943

Portland AAB, Oregon, 7 Dec 1943

Esler Field, Louisiana, 25 Mar 1944

Pollock AAFld, Louisiana, 15 Apr 1944

Esler Field, Louisiana, 9 Feb 1945

Alexandria AAFld, Louisiana, 14 Sep 7 Nov 1945

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<sup>1</sup> Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

Hayward, California  
Fresno, California, 1954

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

372d Fighter (later Fighter-Bomber; Fighter) Group, 15 Oct 1943-7 Nov 1945  
144th Fighter Interceptor Group  
144th Fighter Interceptor Wing, 9 Jul 1976

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

#### **Mission Aircraft**

P-39, 1943  
P-40, 1944  
P-51, 1945  
F-51, 1952  
T-33, Sep 1954  
F-86, **1954**  
F-102, Jul **1964**  
TF-102  
F-106, 1974  
F-4, **1984**  
F-16, 1989

#### **Support Aircraft**

### **COMMANDERS**

Lt Col Edward R. Aguiar  
Lt Col Robert Boehringer, #1982

### **HONORS**

#### **Service Streamers**

American Theater

#### **Campaign Streamers**

#### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

#### **Decorations**

### **EMBLEM**



### **MOTTO**

Griffins

### **OPERATIONS<sup>2</sup>**

Replacement training and air support for maneuvers, 1944-1945.

The 194 Fighter Squadron was activated 25 Jun 1948. The order called for only eight officers and eleven enlisted men. General Ames and four other former Wing Commanders: BG Leslie B. Smith, George W. Edmunds, Marvel M. Taylor and Milton R. Graham gathered in Fresno for the USAF Outstanding Unit presentation in 1967.

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<sup>2</sup> Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency; Unit yearbook. *144 Air Defense Wing, 1943-1969*; Unit yearbook. *144 Fighter Interceptor Wing 1948-1983*.



In 1953 when it was announced that the 194 Fighter Bomber Squadron would be trading P-51s for noisier jets, the quest for a more rural based location began and so did the cordial relationship between the city of Fresno and the 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Wing.

1 Mar 1953-30 Jun 1953: Maintained two F-51Ds on alert from sunrise to The 144 FIW has traditionally been tasked with maintaining and flying California's support aircraft.

LTC George W Edmunds led 194 Fighter Bomber Squadron to Fresno on 1 Nov 1954. The newly formed 144<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Squadron of Maj Philip Gangemi, Jr. on 16 Apr 1955. The new base was dedicated on 13 Nov 1955. The 4000 people in attendance was undaunted by the rain and the toured the new hangar and the various aircraft on display the base had a compliment of 300 persons including only 90 full-time air technicians. The 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Bomber Group and wing remained headquartered in Hayward until 7 Apr 1956 and 23 Feb 1957 respectively.

The Fresno air National Guard base location was well to the east of the city in 1954. The rural setting adjacent to the Fresno air terminal runway shared by the North American aircraft Fresno plant gave rise to hopes that the 144<sup>th</sup> when not have to worry about generating too much noise. Unfortunately over the years developers were allowed to build ever closer to the base. Eventually Guard and City officials had to formulate plans to more effectively control development in the area and to further efforts to minimize excessive noise. The 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Wing limited Sunday morning and most late-night training flights. Pilots made efforts to attain higher elevations earlier after takeoff. The engine test cell was replaced by the prototype of what promised to be the most effective and efficient sound pressure suppressor yet built. The city began the development of Leaky Acres. The project called for the removal of many of the homes which were in the flight pattern at the end of the runway and the construction of water table recharge basins in their place.





Once again in Oct 1962 the base went on special 24-hour alert status. This time it was in response to the Cuban missile crisis. This alert was more obvious to local residents as they could see the sandbags tragically placed on top of some of the buildings as they passed by on McKinley Avenue. The major effect of the crisis had on the 144<sup>th</sup> was a postponement of the transition to the F-102. The word was official on 1 Jul 1964 and by the sixth the first of 25 F-102s arrived. Home-base AFT helped the unit make an especially fast transition and the base totally deployed for summer camp only once again and that wasn't until 1969

In the late 1960s the 144<sup>th</sup> collected safety award for continuing to fly the original at F-102s. In 1967 the 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group (AD) commanded by Col Milton R Graham was awarded the ADC AN award and the US Air Force outstanding unit awards for the first time.

Toward the end of 1964, remaining F-86Ls were ferried in groups of four out to Davis-Monthan for storage; they were replaced by F-102A. When the last four air-craft came to be flown out of Fresno in December 1964, aircraft 53-642 lost oil pressure on its number 1 engine bearing and never made it. One week later 53-642 was placed on display at Fresno, where it remains to this day.

The 194 Fighter Interceptor Squadron carries out the mission of Air Defense of the Continental United States with the F-102, missile armed, jet interceptor. Under a 24 hour alert commitment to NORAD, the North American Aerospace Defense Command, pilots of the 194th FIS execute fighter interceptor missions far out off the coast of California in order to identify friendly aircraft and destroy enemy forces should the situation arise.

The transition from air defense command was projected to be accomplished in eight months. The tactical air command assignment introduced new training to make the 144<sup>th</sup> sector was capable of deployment anywhere in the world. For pilots this meant air to air refueling, basic fighter maneuvers and aerial combat tactics. The pilots of the 194 Fighter Interceptor Squadron were proud to be first air National Guard F-106 unit to go through the training. The other 144<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Wing personnel tactical air command transition meant repeated UTA mobility exercises.







The 194 FIS was re-equipped with F-4Ds in winter 1983. The unit also maintained an alert detachment at George AFB, California. Between April 1986 and April 1987, the 194 FIS and its parent, 144 FIW, provided F-4Ds and personnel to Operation "Creek Klaxon", the ANG's assumption of air defense commitment at Ramstein AB, Germany, while the 86 TFW, USAFE, was converting from F-4Es to F-16. Conversion from F-4s Phantoms to F-16A/B was officially completed in summer 1989.

Det 1 alert relocated from George AFB, CA, to March AFB, CA, 15 Jun 1992.

An ACC investigation board attributed the January 2007 crash of an Air National Guard F-16C to fuel starvation caused by a loose fuel line. The F-16C belonged to the 144 FW of the California Air National Guard, Fresno-Yosemite Arpt., and Calif. According to the report, the pilot experienced a loss of engine power shortly after takeoff on a training mission. After several unsuccessful attempts to restart the engine, the pilot ejected over a dry lake bed about 85 miles east of Fresno. Investigators determined that bolts connecting the fuel line to the main

fuel control unit were not properly torqued during routine maintenance.

Officials are investigating the cause of last week's crash of an F-16C from the California Air National Guard's 144th Fighter Wing in Fresno. The F-16 went down in the California desert on Dec. 27 during a routine mission. The pilot safely ejected, was taken to a local medical facility, but then released on that same day, wing spokesman SMSgt. Chris Drudge told the Daily Report on Jan. 3. Fresno's KMPH TV New Station 26 reported that the pilot encountered trouble with the fighter while flying at 12,000 feet in altitude. Drudge said the wing held an internal safety standdown on the day after the mishap, except for the unit's F-16s on alert to protect US skies from unauthorized intrusion. 2013

An F-16 pilot's failure to recover his aircraft from an inverted stall, along with the pilot's complacency and errors in applying recovery procedures, led to the fighter's crash in late December east of Fresno, Calif., announced Air Combat Command officials. The pilot, assigned to the California Air National Guard's 194 Fighter Squadron in Fresno, was on an air-to-air training mission when his aircraft departed controlled flight and crashed on government land, according to ACC's April 9 release, which discusses the findings of the command's newly issued accident investigation board report. The pilot ejected; the F-16 was destroyed upon ground impact, a loss of approximately \$21.4 million, states the release. The AIB found that the pilot "failed to properly apply out-of-control recovery procedures" after the stall. The board president noted that three human factors were primarily responsible for the mishap: "complacency evident throughout the entire flight, pressing the equipment beyond reasonable limits, and procedural error in the last few minutes of flight," according to the release. 2013

The first of 21 F-15s slated to replace the 144th Fighter Wing's F-16s touched down at the Fresno Yosemite Airport in California on June 18, states a base release. The 144th Fighter Wing has been flying F-16s out of Fresno as part of a homeland defense mission since 1989. The wing will transition from F-16s to F-15s as part of the Air Force's Fiscal 2013 force structure changes. As more F-15s continue to arrive from Montana, the F-16s will leave for Arizona to be used in training operations. "We're going to miss the F-16. There's not a fighter that we've had nearly as long," said Lt. Col. Dave Johnston, 144th FW antiterrorism officer. "But the arrival of the F-15 means we have the right aircraft for the mission. From a capabilities standpoint, it's much better suited for the role. It's big. It's got a lot of power. Its radar is exponentially better. It can do things the F-16 can't." When the F-15 arrived at Fresno ANGB on June 18, it was greeted by a cheering crowd. "It's a beautiful day," said Maj. Jon Burd, the pilot who flew the F-15. "It couldn't have been more perfect," he added. 2013

Col. John York, 144th Operations Group commander, flies an F-15 Eagle ahead of Lt. Col. Sean Navin, 194 Fighter Squadron Commander, who's flying an F-16 Falcon on its final mission for the California Air National Guard's 144th Fighter Wing. The F-16s have been transferred to the 162nd Fighter Wing in Tucson, Ariz. The 144th FW now flies F-15s, according to a Nov. 15, 2013, Air Force release. 2013