

509 STRATEGIC MISSILE SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

509 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 25 Sep 1942

Activated, 1 Oct 1942

Inactivated, 28 Aug 1945

Redesignated 509 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 11 Mar 1947

Activated in the reserve, 9 Apr 1947

Inactivated, 27 Jun 1949

Redesignated 509 Strategic Missile Squadron, and activated, 11 Oct 1962

Redesignated 509 Missile Squadron on 1 Sep 1991

Inactivated on 1 Oct 1994

STATIONS

Salt Lake City AAB, UT, 1 Oct 1942

Gowen Field, ID, 1 Oct 1942

Geiger Field, WA, Nov 1942

Biggs Field, TX, 2 Jan 1943

Pueblo AAB, CO, 28 Feb-13 Apr 1943

Polebrook, England, 12 May 1943-9 Jun 1945

Sioux Falls AAFld, SD, Ju1-28 Aug 1945

Wold-Chamberlain Field, MN, 9 Apr 1947-27 Jun 1949

Whiteman AFB, MO, 1 Jun 1963

ASSIGNMENTS

351 Bombardment Group, 1 Oct 1942-28 Aug 1945
351 Bombardment Group, 9 Apr 1947
381 Bombardment Group, 3 May 1948-27 Jun 1949
Strategic Air Command, 11 Oct 1962
351 Strategic Missile Wing, 1 Jun 1963
351 Operations Group, 1 Sep 1991-1 Oct 1994

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1942-1945
LGM-30B Minuteman I, 1963-1967
LGM-30F Minuteman II, 1966-1994

COMMANDERS

Lt Col Jasper L. Godwin, Jr., 1 Jun 1963
Col Howard M. Levine, 1 Feb 1964
Lt Col Valley J. Voyles, 1 Oct 1966
Lt Col Paul T. Doelker, 6 Feb 1968
Lt Col Paul A. Holland, 24 Apr 1971
Lt Col Clyde Snodgrass, Sep 1971
Lt Col James E. Whittenberg, Mar 1972
Lt Col James D. Altus, 7 Aug 1972
Lt Col John T. Moser, 1 Jun 1973
Lt Col David W. Thompson, 1 Oct 1974
Col Edward Osborne, 26 Sep 1975
Lt Col Mahrlon R. Bright, 15 Feb 1976
Lt Col John K. Arnold, III, 1 Jul 1977
Lt Col Jack D. Chandler, Jr., 10 Jul 1978
Lt Col Jerry E. Brown, 29 Jan 1980
Lt Col Lester R. Willey, 15 May 1981
Lt Col James N. Posey, Aug 1982
Lt Col David E. Mitchell, 7 Oct 1983
Lt Col Benjamin F. Weeks, III, Mar 1985
Lt Col John E. Kneece, 12 Aug 1986
Lt Col Gay D. Blackmore, 15 Apr 1988
Lt Col Harold J. Camacho, Jr., 23 Jun 1989

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Offensive, Europe
Air Normandy
Northern France
Rhineland

Ardennes-Alsace
Central Europe
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations
Germany, 9 Oct 1943
Germany, 11 Jan 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Jul 1965-30 Jun 1966
1 Jul 1967-30 Jun 1968
1 Jul 1969-30 Jun 1971
1 Jul 1980-30 Jun 1982
1 Jul 1991-30 Jun 1993

EMBLEM



509 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy emblem Over and through an ultramarine blue disc, an annulet white surmounted by a light red aerial bomb, winged gold, falling toward dexter base. Significance: The background color represents the sky. The flying bomb is emblematic of the squadron's desire to bring swift destruction to the enemy. (Approved, 9 Dec 1943)

509 Strategic Missile Squadron (ICBM-Minuteman) emblem: On a medium blue disc edged with a narrow blue border, a blue triangular wedge issuing from the base of the disc below a red delta wing, all surmounted by a white missile in vertical ascent, detailed blue, its nose between the center of an arc of five white five-pointed stars, above the delta wing on each side of the missile a

yellow lightning bolt all between two arced green olive branches, one in dexter flank and one in sinister flank. Attached below the disc, coinciding with the angles of the blue triangular wedge, a blank blue scroll. Significance: The missile depicts the primary mission of the squadron. The lightning bolt depicts the power, swift response, and strike capability of the squadron. Olive branches symbolize the unit's goal of peace, and the five stars depict the five campaigns in World War II fought by the original 509 Bombardment Squadron. The two upper sides of the triangle depict the joining of the past and present missions of the 509 squadron. (Approved, 28 Oct 1981)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Initially activated as the 509 Bombardment Squadron on 1 October 1942, the 509 began its operational history at Salt Lake City Army Air Base, Utah, as part of the 351 Bombardment Group. It was transferred to Biggs Field, Texas, in January 1943, and received B-17 training in flying, bombing, gunnery, and navigation. On May 11, 1943, the 509 proceeded to Polebrook, England, where the 351 Bombardment Group was based for the next two years. During this period, the 509 was engaged in the bombing campaign conducted by the Eighth Air Force against strategic objectives in Germany and German-occupied territory in Europe. On 17 August 1943, the 509 participated in a major attack on German aircraft and ball bearing factories conducted by 376 Eighth Air Force bombers. A similar raid on 14 October resulted in the relocation and dispersal of German industries. Five days earlier, on the 9th, the 509 had engaged in another great air battle—an attack on an aircraft factory at Anklam. The formation dispatched was successful in its mission, but 18 of the 106 bombers were lost. For its part in the mission, the 509 received its first Distinguished Unit Citation.

A second Distinguished Unit Citation was awarded to the 509 as a result of a mission flown by the 1st Bombardment Division against an aircraft plant at Oschersie-ben on 11 January 1944. As a result of bad weather, fighters were unable to escort the bombers that day and an intensive air battle ensued with approximately 150 enemy aircraft attacking the 663 B-17s and B-24s on the mission. In February 1944, the 509 participated in the air ground campaign labeled the "Big Week," a campaign which paved the way for the invasion of Northern France.

At the conclusion of World War II, the 509 moved to South Dakota and was deactivated for two years. In March 1974, it was redesignated the 509 Bombardment Squadron and served as the Air Force Reserve unit in Minnesota. On 15 October 1962, the unit was redesignated the 509 Strategic Missile Squadron and, in June 1963, was assigned to the 351 Strategic Missile Wing. After construction was completed on the Minuteman launch complexes, the 509 became fully operational in early 1964. During 1966 and 1967, the 509 underwent force modernization, transitioning to the second generation Minuteman II missile. This made the 509 the first squadron to be fully outfitted with the new missile. In 1980, the 509 received the Improved Launch Control System (ILCS) weapon system modification. In July 1986, the unit transitioned from ILCS to ARSIP (Accuracy, Reliability, Supportability Improvement Program) which allowed the missile crews for the first time to remotely retarget their missiles directly and rapidly from the launch control center.

USAF Unit Histories

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Sources

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

Unit History. *351 Strategic Missile Wing, Whiteman AFB, MO. 1964-1989, 25 Years of Deterrence.*