

543 INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE, AND RECONNAISSANCE GROUP



MISSION

Provides timely and accurate multi-regional SIGINT to warfighters and other intelligence users.

Provides command and control, personnel, communications, computer and logistics support for all CONUS-based RSOC's conducting information operations543 Intelligence Group (ACC)

LINEAGE

3 Photographic Group established, 9 Jun 1942

Activated, 20 Jun 1942

Redesignated 3 Photographic Reconnaissance and Mapping Group, 19 May 1943

Redesignated 3 Photographic Group, Reconnaissance, 13 Nov 1943

Redesignated 3 Reconnaissance Group, 13 May 19

Inactivated, 12 Sep 1945

Disestablished, 6 Mar 1947

543 Tactical Support Group constituted, 19 Sep 1950

Activated, on 26 Sep 1950

Inactivated, 25 Feb 1951

3 Reconnaissance Group reestablished and redesignated 543 Tactical Intelligence Group, 31 Jul 1985

Redesignated 543 Intelligence Group, 22 Jan 1997

Activated, 1 Mar 1997

543 Tactical Support Group and 543rd Intelligence Group consolidated, 10 Feb 2005.
Consolidated organization retained designation, 543 Intelligence Group

Redesignated 543 Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group, 1 Jan 2009

STATIONS

Colorado Springs, CO, 20 Jun-12 Aug 1942
Membury, England, 8 Sep 1942
Steeple Morden, England, 26 Oct-22 Nov 1942
La Senia, Algeria, 10 Dec 1942
Algiers, Algeria, 25 Dec 1942
La Marsa, Tunisia, 13 Jun 1943
San Severo, Italy, 8 Dec 1943
Pomigliano, Italy, 4 Jan 1944
Nettuno, Italy, 16 Jun 1944
Viterbo, Italy, 26 Jun 1944
Corsica, c. 14 Jul 1944
Rosia, Italy, Sep 1944
Florence, Italy, 17 Jan 1945
Pomigliano, Italy, 26 Aug-12 Sep 1945
Itazuke AB, Japan, 26 Sep 1950
Taegu AB, South Korea, 29 Sep 1950
Komaki AB, Japan, 26 Jan-25 Feb 1951
Kelly AFB (later, Kelly Field Annex, Lackland AFB), TX, 1 Mar 1997

ASSIGNMENTS

Headquarters, Army Air Forces, 20 Jun 1942
Eighth Air Force, c. 8 Sep 1942
Twelfth Air Force, 16 Oct 1942
90 Photographic Wing, Reconnaissance, c. 15 Aug 1943
Twelfth Air Force, 1 Oct 1944-12 Sep 1945
Fifth Air Force, 26 Sep 1950 (attached to 6149 Tactical Support Wing, 14 Oct 1950; 49 Fighter-Bomber Wing, 1 Dec 1950-26 Jan 1951)-25 Feb 1951
67 Intelligence Wing, 1 Mar 1997
70 Intelligence Wing, 16 Aug 2000

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1942-1943
F-4, 1942-1944
F-5, 1943-1945
Potez 540, 1943
Spitfire, 1943-1945

A-20, 1944-194
B-25, 1944-1945

COMMANDERS

Capt George H McBride, 20 Jun 1942
Maj Harry T Eidson, 25 Jun 1942
Maj Elliott Roosevelt, 11 Jul 1942
Lt Col Furman H Limeburner, 13 Aug 1942
Col Elliott Roosevelt, 30 Sep 1942
Lt Col Frank L Dunn, Mar 1943
Lt Col James F Setchell, 4 Nov 1943
Maj Hal C Tunnell, 19 Jan 1944
Maj Thomas W Barfoot Jr, 29 May 1944
Col Duane L Kime, 17 Sep 1944
Lt Col Oscar M Blomquist, 29 May 1945
Lt Col James E Hill, 2 Aug-Sep 1945
Lt Col Bert M. Smiley, 26 Sep 1950
Lt Col Jacob W. Dixon (temporary), 4 Oct 1950
Col Bert M. Smiley, 20 Oct 1950-25 Feb 1951

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Anzio
Rome-Arno
Southern France
North Apennines
Po Valley
Rhineland
Central Europe
Air Combat, EAME. Korea
UN Offensive
CCF Intervention
First UN Counteroffensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citation

Mediterranean Theater of Operations, 28 Aug 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device

1 Jun 2001-31 May 2003

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Oct 1997-30 Sep 1998

1 Oct 1999-30 Sep 2000

1 Jun 2004-31 May 2005

1 Jun 2006-31 Dec 2007

1 Jun 2008-31 May 2009

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation

10-25 Feb 1951

EMBLEM

3 Photographic Group emblem: Per chevron or and azure, in center chief point a stylized camera, lens to base sable. (Approved, 29 Oct 1942)



543 Intelligence Group emblem

543 Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group emblem: Per chevron enhanced Or and Azure, in front of a counterchanged globe Celeste and of the second, gridlined Argent (Silver Gray), two swords in saltire with blades as lightning flashes of the first, hilts Proper, surmounted by a knight piece Sable, detailed Argent (White), all within a diminished bordure Or. Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "543D ISR GROUP" in Blue letters. **SIGNIFICANCE:** 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 divided background represents night and day, signifying around the clock vigilance of the unit. The world represents the global scope of the Group's mission and its counterchange alludes to counterintelligence. The black knight representing air intelligence, stands ready, with no visible opponent, ever vigilant and prepared to strike at adversaries whenever and wherever they appear. The crossed swords of lightning represent communications and the support of the ideals of freedom and security in modern warfare.

MOTTO

ARCHEZ BIEN—Shoot Well

OPERATIONS

Moved, via England, to the Mediterranean theater, Nov-Dec 1942. Provided photographic intelligence that assisted the campaigns for Tunisia, Pantelleria, Sardinia, and Sicily. Reconnoitered airdromes, roads, marshalling yards, and harbors both before and after the Allied landings at Salerno. Covered the Anzio area early in 1944 and continued to support Fifth Army in its drive through Italy by determining troop movements, gun positions, and terrain. Flew reconnaissance missions in connection with the invasion of Southern France in Aug 1944. Received a DUC for a mission on 28 Aug 1944 when the group provided photographic intelligence that assisted the rapid advance of Allied ground forces. Also mapped areas in France and the Balkans.

The 543 group provided photographic intelligence that assisted the campaigns for Tunisia, Pantelleria, Sardinia, and Sicily. It reconnoitered airdromes, roads, marshalling yards, and harbors both before and after the Allied landings at Salerno. Early in 1944, the group provided coverage of the Anzio area and helped support Fifth Army in its drive through Italy by determining troop movements, gun positions, and terrain. The group flew reconnaissance missions in connection with the invasion of Southern France in Aug 1944 and received a DUC for a mission on 28 Aug 1944, when it provided photographic intelligence that assisted the rapid advance of Allied ground forces.

At the outset of the Korean War, the only tactical reconnaissance squadron (TRS) available in the Far East, the 8th TRS began flying RF-80 daylight reconnaissance missions over Korea. A few days before the Inchon landings in September 1950, it provided photography for the U.S. Navy to show high and low-tide heights of the seawalls and to orient landing crews. Meanwhile, the 162d TRS, flying R.B-26s, and the photo-processing 363d Reconnaissance Technical Squadron (RTS) moved from the United States to Japan and began operations in August. Requests for photoreconnaissance were so extensive that in September FEAF activated the 543d Tactical Support Group (TSG) to control the reconnaissance squadrons already engaged and to form a visual reconnaissance squadron. Except for the 45th TRS, the group's headquarters and tactical squadrons moved to Korea in early October. It encountered difficulties in command arrangements, physical separation from the supporting 363d RTS, and other problems. Then, the Chinese intervention required temporary withdrawal to Japan in December of all but advanced echelons. In late December the 45th TRS began operations with T 6s and F 51s. Col. Karl "Pop" Polifka, one of the USAF pioneers in the field of aerial reconnaissance, worked for a wing-level

organization to replace the 543d TSG.

At the outset of the Korean War, the only tactical reconnaissance squadron (TRS) available in the Far East, the 8th TRS began flying RF-80 daylight reconnaissance missions over Korea. A few days before the Inchon landings in September 1950, it provided photography for the U.S. Navy to show high- and low-tide heights of the seawalls and to orient landing crews. Meanwhile, the 162d TRS, flying R.B-26s, and the photo-processing 363d Reconnaissance Technical Squadron (RTS) moved from the United States to Japan and began operations in August. Requests for photoreconnaissance were so extensive that in September FEAF activated the 543d Tactical Support Group (TSG) to control the reconnaissance squadrons already engaged and to form a visual reconnaissance squadron. Except for the 45th TRS, the group's headquarters and tactical squadrons moved to Korea in early October. It encountered difficulties in command arrangements, physical separation from the supporting 363d RTS, and other problems. Then, the Chinese intervention required temporary withdrawal to Japan in December of all but advanced echelons. In late December the 45th TRS began operations with T 6s and F 51s. Col. Karl "Pop" Polifka, one of the USAF pioneers in the field of aerial reconnaissance, worked for a wing-level organization to replace the 543d TSG.

On 14 March, the 543 IG activated during ceremonies at the Lackland AFB Medina Annex. The new group provided command and control as well as computer and logistics support for the Medina Regional Signals Intelligence Operations Center (MRSOC). 199

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

Created: 28 Apr 2018

Updated: 18 Feb 2019

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.