

588th TACTICAL MISSILE GROUP

MISSION

LINEAGE

588th Tactical Missile Group

STATIONS

Orlando AFB, FL, 8 Jan 1957-15 Jul 1958

ASSIGNMENTS

WEAPON SYSTEMS

COMMANDERS

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The 588th Tactical Missile Group, formed at Orlando AFB, FL, on Jan 8, 1957, encompassing separate launch and maintenance squadrons to be deployed together rather than as a single squadron as had been done previously. The group was comprised of the existing 17th Tactical Missile Squadron, which was later to be the first Matador unit deployed to the Far East in

November of 1957, and the 588th Support Squadron. The 588th Tactical Missile Group remained assigned to Ninth AF, TAC, and never became part of the 4504th Training Wing. Training continued with Matador launches at the Cape by the 588th TMG, with the 6555th Guided Missiles Squadron assisting with the launches.

The 588th TMG was intended to deploy its lead elements to Korea during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 1958, with full deployment within 18 months, but in another change of plans, the unit was inactivated at Orlando AFB in 1958. The personnel and equipment all deployed to Korea, but not as the 24th Tactical Missile Squadron or the 588th Tactical Missile Group.

The concept of creating, training, and equipping deployable combat missile units at Patrick, first by a research and development organization, and later by a training detachment from TAC, soon proved to be uneconomical as units in the field became stable, needing replenishment and replacement crews instead of complete startup organizations. TAC began teaching crews, rather than full missile squadrons, and again, the training organization changed to meet the new requirements. Once the original missile squadrons were in place for their long-term planned deployment, which far exceeded the overseas assignment obligations of any single member of the organization, training no longer applied to entire units, rather to maintaining the operational readiness of any unit. In preparation for a new, more streamlined pipeline-type operation, both tactical missile groups at Orlando were inactivated within six weeks of each other, the 589th on June 8, 1958 and the 588th on July 15, 1958.

On July 15, 1958, the U.S. Air Force inactivated the 58th Fighter-Bomber Wing, under the command of the 314th Air Division, at Osan Air base, Korea, and reduced its status to group level. Concurrently, HQ USAF activated the 58th Tactical Missile Group in its place at Osan, while at the same time inactivating both the 588th Tactical Missile Group at Orlando and its 24th Tactical Missile Squadron, which had finished its training in preparation for its deployment to Korea. All members and equipment were transferred to Korea and assigned to the newly formed 310th Tactical Missile Squadron and the 58th Support Squadron to man the TM-61C Matador at Osan, some twenty miles south of Seoul. The Matadors, replacing the F-86 of the former fighter squadron, were armed with W-5 nuclear warheads and declared in service on December 16, 1958.

Air Force Order of Battle
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.