

37 SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON



MISSION

The 37 SFS is charged with providing security for a wide-range of Air Force priority resources and assets. In addition to base security operations, the squadron provides police services to five wings, Wilford Hall Medical Center, a flight line, several family housing areas, and a customer base of more than 45,000 daily. They also manage one of three Air Force Regional Confinement Facilities and one of the busiest military working dog sections.

LINEAGE

37 Air Police Squadron constituted, 3 Mar 1953
Activated, 8 Apr 1953
Inactivated, 25 Jun 1953
Activated, 21 Feb 1966
Organized, 8 Mar 1966
Redesignated 37 Security Police Squadron, 15 May 1967
Inactivated, 31 Mar 1970
Activated, 5 Oct 1989
Inactivated, 8 Jul 1992
Activated, 1 Jul 1993
Redesignated 37 Security Forces Squadron, 1 Jul 1997

STATIONS

Clovis AFB, NM, 8 Apr-25 Jun 1953
Qui Nhon Afd, South Vietnam, 8 Mar 1966
Phu Cat AB, South Vietnam, c. 1 Aug 1966-31 Mar 1970
Tonopah Test Range, NV, 5 Oct 1989-8 Jul 1992

Lackland AFB, TX, 1 Jul 1993

ASSIGNMENTS

37 Air Base Group, 8 Apr-25 Jun 1953
Pacific Air Forces, 21 Feb 1966
37 Combat Support Group, 8 Mar 1966-31 Mar 1970
37 Combat Support Group, 5 Oct 1989-8 Jul 1992
37 Support Group, 1 Jul 1993

COMMANDERS

Maj Jerry M. Kerby, #1991

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Vietnam Air,
Vietnam Air Offensive
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II
Vietnam Air/Ground
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV
TET 69/Counteroffensive
Vietnam Summer-Fall
Vietnam Winter-Spring

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Presidential Unit Citation
Southeast Asia, 1 Jul-31 Dec 1968

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device

1 Jul 1966-30 Jun 1967
1 Jul 1967-30 Jun 1968
1 Apr 1969-31 Mar 1970

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

16 Mar 1990-15 Mar 1992
1 Jul 1993-30 Jun 1994
1 Jul 1994-30 Jun 1996
1 Jul 1996-30 Jun 1998
1 Jul 2000-30 Jun 2002
1 Jul 2002-30 Jun 2003

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm
1 Apr 1966-31 Mar 1970

EMBLEM



37 Security Police Squadron emblem: on a yellow disc edged red, three red bars throughout in fess surmounted by a blue chess knight. Attached below the disc a blank white scroll edged red. The emblem is symbolic of the squadron, and the Air Force colors, ultramarine blue and golden yellow, are used in the design. The color blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations, and yellow to the sun and excellence of personnel in assigned duties. The background of the disc and horizontal bars are symbolic of the unit's service in Southeast Asia. The chess knight, the most maneuverable of pieces in the historic game, suggests the maneuverability and quick response of security forces to threats against the resources of the installation.



37 Security Forces Squadron: on a blue disc edged in gold, three red bars throughout surmounted by a black chess knight and three black darts. Attached below the disc is a white scroll edged in gold

with gold lettering. The emblem is symbolic of the squadron's, mission and history. The ultramarine blue background alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. The three red bars are symbolic of the unit's service in South Vietnam. The three black darts represent the Stealth Fighters of the three tactical fighter squadrons of the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing the squadron is tasked to defend. The black chess knight, the most maneuverable of pieces in the historic game, suggests the maneuverability of the unit to deploy anywhere with the aircraft and the quick response of security forces to any threat against wing resources during daylight or darkness.

MOTTO

WE DEFEND THE DEFENDERS

NIGHTHAWK DEFENDERS

OPERATIONS

The 37th Security Police Squadron mortarmen developed and implemented a new technique in mortar gunnery--the use of "delayed illumination" mortar rounds as target markers for Air Force gunships. In addition, 37th Security Police Squadron personnel, trained as Forward Observers, controlled and exercised AC-47 Gunships of the 4th Special Operations Squadron using this technique during a local area harassment and interdiction program. On 5 May 1969, the 37th Security Police Squadron convened the first class of the 7th Air Force Mortar School which was developed and centralized at Phu Cat Air Base. Since the Air Force experience with the 81mm mortar was substantially different from that of the U.S. Army, the 37th Security Police Squadron mortar cadre was required to prepare a curriculum for this school virtually from scratch. The development of the school, and preparations for its implementation, were conducted expeditiously and thoroughly. The majority of the actual mortar firing was accomplished at night as an integral phase of the harassment and interdiction program, thus reducing ammunition costs. The overall excellence of the training provided by the school was recognized by the U.S. Army, Commanders of the 41st Artillery Group, 7/15 Artillery Battalion, and the Qui Nhon Support Command requested school quotas for members of their commands. When the 52nd Artillery Group at Pleiku Air Base was forming its own weapons school, the Commandant-Designate attended the 7th Air Force Mortar School for familiarization.

The Law Enforcement Section of the 37th Security Police Squadron assumed a sizeable task when the Qui Nhon Army Airfield was closed for repairs on 15 June. Flying operations were transferred to Phu Cat Air Base, thereby vastly increasing the personnel and vehicular traffic on base. Extra posts were established at the main gate, passenger terminal, and a separate operating area established for Air Vietnam. Motorized security patrols were extensively utilized to provide continuous escort for Vietnamese personnel and vehicles traveling between the main gate and the flight line. The extent of this operation is evidenced by the fact that this traffic often exceeded 100 vehicles per hour. Effective coordination with Base Operations permitted the escort of Air Vietnam passengers from the main gate to the flight line between the time their aircraft came into the landing pattern and the time it shut down its engines. When Qui Nhon Army Airfield resumed operations on 31 August, traffic returned to normal.

From April through 31 December 1969, a comprehensive integration of new weapons and tactics

was established which included the introduction of six new armored personnel carriers equipped with .50 caliber machine guns. The M-174 Automatic Grenade Launcher was introduced into the base defense inventory, and within three weeks of the arrival of the weapon, every member of the 37th Security Police Squadron was qualified in its use. From April through August 1969, members of the 37th Security Police Squadron Intelligence Branch flew twice-daily reconnaissance missions, covering the local Phu Cat area, on board HH-43 helicopters of the 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron. These flights, curtailed in August 1969, were resumed in December, utilizing O-1 aircraft of the 21st Tactical Air Support Squadron.

On 17 November 1969, a 37th Security Police Squadron security force team sighted four intruders who had penetrated the air base perimeter. During the encounter, three of the intruders were killed, while the fourth was wounded and later apprehended. Once again, the air base sustained no damage.

Throughout the spring and summer of 1969, the 37th Security Police Squadron team prepared for the field testing of a prototype electronic detection and surveillance system in conjunction with the 485th Ground Electronics Engineering Installation Agency (GEEIA), Air Force Logistics Command, and the Aerospace Systems Division of the Air Force Systems Command. This project which bore the code name Safe Look, consisted of field testing the Westinghouse Balance Pressure System and the Honeywell Multi-Concealed Instrumentation Detection System. In addition, two other systems were tested by the Safe Look Force: the million-candlepower "Big Light" developed by the Advanced Research Projects Agency, Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the SADS 1.5 point-detection system. Data resulting from these initial field tests will inform Air Force Systems Command of future revisions required for these systems. For its major part in these important tests, the 37th Security Police Squadron received commendation from the Safe Look Project Officer.

On 17 November 1969, the first Correctional Custody Facility in 7th Air Force was opened under the supervision of the 37th Security Police Squadron. Utilizing a living area vacated by a small U.S. Army unit, the Law Enforcement Section exercised control over the facility and a program designed to enhance discipline and effect proper military attitude. The 7th Air Force Inspector General Report highlighted this commendable program, and stated, "Though recently implemented, beneficial results had already been achieved as reflected by a lowering of incident rate."

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

Created: 1 Jan 2025

Updated:

Sources

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

Unit History. *History and Lineage of the F-117A Stealth Fighter; Organizations*. Office of History HQ 37 TFW. Special Study HO-91-2. Dec 1991.