

55 RESCUE SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

55 Air Rescue Squadron constituted, 17 Oct 1952
Activated, 14 Nov 1952
Discontinued and inactivated, 18 Jun 1960
Activated, 10 May 1961
Organized, 18 Jun 1961
Redesignated 55 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, 8 Jan 1966
Redesignated 55 Special Operations Squadron, 1 Mar 1988
Inactivated, 11 Nov 1999
Redesignated 55 Rescue Squadron, 23 Jan 2003
Activated, 14 Mar 2003

STATIONS

Thule AB, Greenland, 14 Nov 1952
Kindley AFB, Bermuda, 17 Mar-18 Jun 1960
Kindley AFB, Bermuda, 18 Jun 1961
McCoy AFB, FL, 27 Feb 1970
Eglin AFB, FL, 25 Jun 1971
Hurlburt Field, FL, 25 Feb 1993-11 Nov 1999
Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, 14 Mar 2003

ASSIGNMENTS

6 Air Rescue Group, 14 Nov 1952
Air Rescue Service, 18 Feb 1958-18 Jun 1960
Military Air Transport Service, 10 May 1961

Air Rescue (later, Aerospace Rescue and Recovery) Service, 18 Jun 1961
39 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery (later, 39 Special Operations) Wing, 1 Jan 1970
1 Special Operations Wing, 18 Apr 1989
1 Special Operations (later, 16 Operations) Group, 22 Sep 1992-11 Nov 1999
355 Operations Group, 14 Mar 2003
563 Rescue Group, 1 Oct 2003

WEAPON SYSTEMS

SB-17, 1952-1955
SC-47, 1952-1954
H-19, 1953-1957
SA-16, 1953-1959
YH-21, 1953-1955
SC-54, 1956-1957, 1959-1960
SH-21, 1956-1960
HC-54, 1961-1964
SH-19 (later, HH-19), 1961-1963
HH-43, 1963-1964
HC-97, 1964-1966
HC-130, 1966-1988
HH-53, 1973-1980
H-3, 1980-1982
UH/MH-60, 1982-1999
HH-60, 2003

COMMANDERS

Maj Melvin E. Bunch, 14 Nov 1952
Maj Bernard L. Bailey, 5 Oct 1953
Maj Michael V. Pedulla, 19 Feb 1954
Maj Henry M. O'conner, 31 Aug 1954
Lt Col Robert H. Johnson, 26 Sep 1954
Lt Col Eugene Ecklund, 24 Sep 1955
Maj William W. Poteet, 8 Jun 1956
Lt Col Webster W. Plourd, 23 Jul 1956
Maj Kenneth J. Mask, 10 Jul 1957
Lt Col Leon H. Golinsky, 8 Jun 1958
Lt Col F. V. Sohle Jr., 1959
Maj Burkhead M. Herndon, 28 Jul 1959
Lt Col Alden G. Glauch, 6 Aug 1959
Lt Col Joe Walker, 18 Mar-18 Jun 1960
Lt Col Norman V. Rudrud, 18 Jun 1961
Lt Col Edgar H. Albers Jr., 28 Jul 1963
Lt Col Marion L. Costello, 1966
Lt Col Reed C. Mulkey, 9 Mar 1967

Lt Col Paul W. Rudloff, 1968
Lt Col Coy W. Farrar Jr., 11 Feb 1971
Lt Col James F. Harmon, 28 Apr 1973
Lt Col John R. Moulton, By 31 Dec 1973
Lt Col Jerry A. Crupper, C. Jul 1974
Col Lewis E. James, 18 Jan 1976
Lt Col Richard E. Porter, 2 Jul 1976
Lt Col John H. Denham, By 30 Jun 1977
Lt Col John C. Flournoy, Jan 1979
Lt Col Franklin W. Watkins, 3 Nov 1980
Lt Col Benjamin J. Pearson II, 30 Oct 1981
Lt Col Paul B. Bowen, 23 Jul 1982
Lt Col Bennie D. Orrell, 2 Jul 1984
Lt Col Kenneth R. Pribyla, 14 Nov 1986
Lt Col John G. Taylor III, 1 Mar 1988
Lt Col Jerry L. Garlington, 18 May 1990
Lt Col Roderick D. Reay, 30 Oct 1992
Lt Col John W. Zahrt, 2 Jun 1994
Lt Col Charles S. Shaw, 9 Jun 1995
Lt Col Richard B. McNabb, 25 Apr 1997
Lt Col Stephan J. Laushine, 9 Jul 1998-16 Sep 1999
Unkn, 17 Sep-11 Nov 1999
Lt Col Michael T. Healy, 14 Mar 2003
Lt Col Bradley K. Grambo, 9 Jul 2004
Lt Col Griffith S. Massey, 16 Jun 2006
Lt Col James J. Mcelhenney, 27 Sep 2007
Lt Col James D. Kuehn, Jun 2009
Lt Col Robert A. Remey, Jun 2011
Lt Col Andrew Smith, Jun 2013
Lt Col Paul Sheets, Jun 2015

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Southwest Asia

Defense of Saudi Arabia

Liberation and Defense of Kuwait

Kosovo

Air Campaign

Afghanistan

Consolidation I

Consolidation II
Consolidation III

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Panama, 1989-1990

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device
1 Jun 1997-31 May 1999

Meritorious Unit Awards

1 Jun 2008-31 May 2010

1 Jun 2010-31 May 2012

1 Jun 2014-31 May 2016

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1 Jul 1972-30 Jun 1974

1 Jul 1976- 30 Jun 1978

20-29 Nov 1978

1 May 1988-30 Apr 1990

16 Apr 1992-15 Apr 1994

1 Jun 1995-31 May 1997

1 Oct 2003-31 Oct 2004

1 Nov 2004-31 Jul 2006

[1 Aug] 2006-31 May 2008

Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation

1 Jul 1967-26 Jul 1969

Coast Guard Meritorious Unit Commendation

5-6 Feb 1986

EMBLEM



55th Air Rescue Squadron emblem



55th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron



Approved, 12 Dec 1988



MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Trained and performed rescue and recovery missions, 1952-1960.

The Norwegian vessel Jopeter was caught in a North Atlantic ice pack. A large-scale rescue effort was directed by the 55th AR Squadron, and 26 passengers and crewmen were evacuated to the safety of another ship. Sep 1955

Supported manned spacecraft recovery operations, Jun 1961-Jan 1966.

The Lebanese cargo ship Alheli, with 26 crewmen aboard, radioed that they were sinking in rough seas about 900 miles east of Bermuda. An HC-130 from the 55th ARR Squadron, Kindley AFB,

Bermuda, orbited the sinking ship, vectored a British ship, the Megantic to the scene then dropped flares to aid the loading of the survivors aboard Megantic. 22 Apr 1968

HH-53C 67-14996 Oct 1969, 55 ARRS, Eglin AFB, FL, all killed; Aircraft went out of control during aerial refueling over the Gulf of Mexico and crashed into water.

An HH-53 aircrew from the 55th ARRS and an H-3 aircrew from Detachment 5, 39th ARR Wing, saved 32 United States Army Rangers who were unexpectedly caught in cold rainy swamps during an exercise near Eglin AFB, Florida. 14 Jun 77

Special operations missions, Mar 1988-Sep 1999.

Record flight of two MH-60G aircraft, 55th Special Operations Squadron, from Antigua to Eglin AFB, FL, a distance of 1,640 nautical miles, in 11.1 hours with six aerial refuelings in transit. 20 Aug 1988

Combat search and rescue in Panama, 20 Dec 1989-14 Jan 1990, Southwest Asia, Jan-Mar 1991, and again in Southwest Asia and Kosovo, 1998-1999.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, Virginia.