

# **SMOKEY HILL WEAPONS RANGE**

## **MISSION**

The Smoky Hill Weapons Range is a 50 square-mile facility located 11 miles southwest of Salina, Kansas. It is the largest ANG air-to-ground bombing and gunnery range, providing a target impact area for tactical fighter aircrews of the Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, and Air Force.

The purpose of this facility is to train aircrews for conventional, nuclear and tactical air-to-ground combat missions and to develop the weapons skills of these aircrews to assure proficiency and combat readiness. To obtain the desired levels of expertise requires a realistic and flexible training environment. At Smoky Hill, this equates to a variety of ranges and targets which tests skills on a variety of operational offensive weapons, as well as training in countermeasures and evasion. In the Midwest, tactical weapons ranges are scarce. T

he importance of the Smoky Hill facility is evidenced by the fact that it serves as the primary range facility for six units in five surrounding states, and also serves as the secondary target range for another six units, with approximately 5,500 sorties flown on the range annually. Within this 50 square mile facility are 33,877 acres of range land. Of this acreage 26,696 acres are made available to the public for agriculture, hay production and grazing on a competitive bid basis by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The remaining area is utilized for the target complex, which includes two conventional ranges, one nuclear range, two non-scorable tactical ranges, and two scorable tactical ranges. The Range also includes 70 miles of roads and firebreaks.

## **LINEAGE**

Smoky Hill Weapons Range

## **STATIONS**

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

### **COMMANDERS**

Major Richard V Gorman, 15 Oct 1973

Lt Col Robert E Eveleigh, 5 Oct 1975

Lt Col Jerry W Nelson, 9 Aug 1981

Lt Col Joe T Short, 22 Aug 1984

Maj Lyle E Allen, 1 Aug 1986

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

## **EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **OPERATIONS**

Smoky Hill Range was originally acquired in 1942 by the United States Army and reassigned on 12 January 1945 as Camp Phillips Air-to ground Gunnery Range. The land was later transferred from the Army to the Air Force Strategic Air Command.

This command changed the name from Camp Phillips to Smoky Hill Air Force Range. In July 1964, Smoky Hill Air Force Range was transferred from SAC to the Tactical Air Command (TAC). In July 1972 the 184th Tactical Fighter Training Group, Kansas Air National Guard, McConnell AFB, Kansas, assumed range scheduling functions, and in October 1973, the Kansas Air National Guard assumed all operating and maintenance functions for the range under a license agreement with the Air Force.

Personnel assigned to the range were Title 5 Civil Service personnel until being replaced by Title 32, active duty Guardsmen in 1979. In addition to the personnel changes, Smoky Hill was also redesignated as Smoky Hill Weapons Range. In 1980 the Civil Engineer Flight (part-time) was assigned to Smoky Hill. Currently, 25 full time Air Guard active duty personnel, two Civil Service janitors, and 21 weekend Air Guardsmen make up the team that operate and maintain the range.

The year 1991 started off with the Smoky Hill Air National Guard Range receiving the first Air Force Outstanding Unit Award ever given to an ANG range. In February the air war in Iraq began and continued through the month.

Lt Col Chuck Youngquist assumed command of the Smoky Hill Gunnery Range from Lt Col Russ Axtell, who then assumed command of the 184 TFG from Col Frank Scoggins.

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USAF Unit Histories  
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Sources  
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.