

TWENTIETH AIR FORCE (AIR FORCES STRATEGIC)



MISSION

Twentieth Air Force (Air Forces Strategic) has dual responsibilities to Air Force Space Command and United States Strategic Command. As the missile numbered air force for AFSPC, the Twentieth Air Force (Air Forces Strategic) is responsible for maintaining and operating the Air Force's ICBM force. Designated as USSTRATCOM's Task Force 214, the Twentieth Air Force (Air Forces Strategic) provides on-alert, combat-ready ICBMs to the President of the United States.

LINEAGE

Twentieth Air Force activated and established, 4 Apr 1944
Inactivated, 1 Mar 1955
Activated, 1 Sep 1991
Redesignated as Twentieth Air Force (Air Forces Strategic), 1 Dec 2009

STATIONS

Washington, DC, 4 Apr 1944
Harmon Field, Guam, 16 Jul 1945
Kadena, Okinawa, 16 May 1949-1 Mar 1955
Vandenberg AFB, CA, 1 Sep 1991
F. E. Warren AFB, WY, 1 Oct 1993

ASSIGNMENTS

Army Air Forces
U.S. Army Strategic Air Forces, Jul 1945
Pacific Air Command, U.S. Army, (later Far East Air Forces), 6 Dec 1945
Strategic Air Command, 29 Mar 1991
Air Combat Command, 1 Jun 1992
Air Force Space Command, 1 Jul 1993
Air Force Global Strike Command, 1 Dec 2009

COMMANDERS

General of the Army Henry H. Arnold, 6 Apr 1944
Maj Gen Curtis E. LeMay, 16 Jul 1945
Lt Gen Nathan F. Twining, 2 Aug 1945
Maj Gen James E. Parker, 15 Oct 1945
Brig Gen Frederick M. Hopkins, Jr., 19 Mar 1946
Maj Gen Francis H. Griswold, 10 Sep 1946
Maj Gen Alvan C. Kincaid, 8 Sep 1948
Maj Gen Ralph F. Stearley, 31 Jul 1950
Maj Gen Fay R. Upthegrove, 8 Feb 1953-1 Mar 1955
Brig Gen Thomas E. Kuenning, Jr., 1 Sep 1991
Lt Gen Arlen D. Jameson, 1 Jul 1992
Maj Gen Robert W. Parker, 22 Jun 1994
Maj Gen Donald G. Cook, 17 Jun 1996
Maj Gen Thomas H. Neary, 4 Sep 1998
Maj Gen Timothy J. McMahon, 19 Jul 2000
Lt Gen Frank G. Klotz, 30 May 2003
Lt Gen Thomas F. Deppe, 14 Oct 2005
Maj Gen Roger W. Burg, 10 Aug 2007
Maj Gen Donald Alston, 2010
Maj Gen Jack Weinstein
Maj Gen Anthony Cotton
Maj Gen Michael Carey

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

World War II
American Theater
India-Burma
Air Offensive, Japan
China Defensive
Eastern Mandates
Western Pacific
Central Burma

Korean War
UN Defensive

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Sep 1991-31 Aug 1993

1 Sep 1993-14 Oct 1994

1 Oct 1995-30 Sep 1997

1 Oct 1997-30 Sep 1999

1 Oct 2000-1 Oct 2001

1 Oct 2001-30 Sep 2003

EMBLEM



A disc of ultramarine blue marked with white parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude surmounted in base by a white star charged at center with a red disc and circumscribed by an annulet golden orange lined blue, tips enclosing the Arabic numeral "20". **SIGNIFICANCE:** The insignia is in the colors of the Air Forces. The white star with the red center together with the wings indicates that it is an organization of the Army Air Forces, while the number "20" is the numerical designation of the organization. (Approved, 26 May 1944)

Celeste, a globe azure grid lines argent surmounted by a winged annulet or garnished of the second enclosing a hurt bearing a mullet of the third charged with a torteau, the wings elevated and enclosing the Arabic numerals "20" argent, all within a diminished bordure yellow. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The light blue shield refers to the Pacific Ocean where the unit activated its headquarters and conducted missions during World War II. The globe denotes worldwide defense capabilities. The winged aircraft marking symbolizes the latest aircraft technology and dedicated support of personnel in maintaining a ready defense force. The numeral 20 designates the unit. (Approved, 15 Oct 1991; modified, 18 May 1994)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Twentieth Air Force was formed during World War II, exclusively as a heavy strategic bombardment organization. Headquartered in the United States, under command of General Henry H. Arnold, with direction from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, its B-29 components operated in the China-Burma-India and Pacific theaters, carrying the air war to the Japanese. Operations

climaxed with atomic attacks on Japan in August 1945. Twentieth AF units also supported United Nations' forces during the Korean War.

Inactivated on March 1, 1951, the unit was reactivated Sept. 1, 1991 as a component of the Strategic Air Command and was located at Vandenberg AFB, Calif. Operationally responsible for all land-based ICBMs, 20th AF's rebirth came at a time when America's nuclear forces were entering a decade of unprecedented force reductions and changes. Spawned by the Cold War's end and the breakup of the Soviet Union, these changes reshaped the basic fabric of the nation's nuclear deterrent forces. For the men and women of America's ICBM team, it proved to be a period of sustained, dramatic change. In nine short years following its rebirth, the 20th AF experienced three major command identities. After one year in SAC and another year in Air Combat Command, the 20th AF found a permanent home in Air Force Space Command in 1993. Twentieth Air Force's location also changed in 1993, moving from Vandenberg AFB, Calif., to its current home at F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.

The ICBM force structure was reduced radically during the 1990s, going from six wings to three, and from 1,000 alert ICBMs to 550. Currently, there are more than 11,000 personnel operating, maintaining, protecting and supporting 500 Minuteman III ICBMs at three bases: F.E. Warren AFB, Wyo.; Minot AFB, N.D. and Malmstrom AFB, Mont.

USAF Unit Histories
Created: 23 Aug 2010
Updated: 5 Jan 2022

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.