Vision

The cornerstone of our success is our Airmen. We are expeditionary Airmen who generate the sorties, connect the airwaves, and command and control the airpower that is crucial to mission success along the spectrum of conflict.

Mission

Organize, train, equip, and maintain combat ready forces, aircraft, and communications equipment for rapid deployment and employment across the globe, bringing sustainable and responsive battle management capability to combatant commanders.

Wing Commander
Col John T. Rauch Jr.

Vice Commander
Col Scott A. Forest

Command Chief
CMSgt Scott A. Magoon
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By the 552d Air Control Wing History Office

Bldg 280, Suite 118

739-2741

Email comments, corrections or suggestions to Curtis.swift@tinker.af.mil
## 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing Commanders

### Connie Commanders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Leeman J. Hipson</td>
<td>8 Jul 1955 - Dec 1955</td>
</tr>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>Richard W. DaVania</td>
<td>Dec 1955 - Dec 1956</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>Septime S. Richard, Jr.</td>
<td>Dec 1956 - 18 Oct 1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Charles R. Heffner</td>
<td>18 Oct 1957 - 28 May 1959</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>Charles F. Kneirim</td>
<td>28 May 1959 - 17 Oct 1960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>James P. Lyle</td>
<td>18 Oct 1963 - 28 Aug 1964</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>Wright J. Sheppard</td>
<td>28 Aug 1964 - 2 Feb 1966</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>William R. Nevitt</td>
<td>2 Feb 1966 - 31 May 1968</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>Olin E. Gilbert</td>
<td>31 May 1968 - 1 Nov 1969</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>Henry L. Timmermans</td>
<td>1 Nov 1969 - 28 Apr 1972</td>
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<td>Robery P. Halpen</td>
<td>28 Apr 1972 - 26 Jul 1974</td>
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<td>Harold P. Knutty</td>
<td>26 Jul 1974 - 27 Jun 1975</td>
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<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Frances B. Henkel</td>
<td>27 Jun 1975 - 1 Jul 1976*</td>
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### E-3 Commanders

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<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maj Gen</td>
<td>John L. Piotrowski</td>
<td>1 Jul 1976 - 29 Aug 1979</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>Jerry D. Holmes</td>
<td>20 Jul 1981 - 16 Sep 1982</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brig Gen</td>
<td>William K. James</td>
<td>16 Sep 1982 - 1 Mar 1985</td>
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<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Wylie J. Koiner</td>
<td>16 Jun 1988 - 17 May 1990</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>Gary A. Voellger</td>
<td>17 May 1990 - 29 May 1992</td>
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<td>Brig Gen</td>
<td>William J. Ball</td>
<td>29 May 1992 - 10 Aug 1992</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Silas R. Johnson, Jr.</td>
<td>27 Jun 1994 - 6 Sep 1996</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brig Gen</td>
<td>Ben T. Robinson</td>
<td>15 Mar 2000 - 29 Aug 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brig Gen</td>
<td>Gilmary M. Hostage</td>
<td>29 Aug 2002 - 2 Mar 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brig Gen</td>
<td>Joseph F. Mudd</td>
<td>2 Mar 2004 - 9 Nov 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>Col</td>
<td>Patricia D. Hoffman</td>
<td>27 Aug 2008 - 15 July 2010</td>
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<td>Col</td>
<td>John T. Rauch Jr.</td>
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552d Air Control Wing Commander

Colonel John T. Rauch Jr.
## Command Chiefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Clarence Wilson</td>
<td>1976 - 1977</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMSgt Fred Lower</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSgt Terrence Arrowwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMSgt Donald McGlory</td>
<td>1979 - 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt William Southwell</td>
<td>1980 - 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Walter Lubecki</td>
<td>1985 - 1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Ronald Wheelis</td>
<td>1987 - 1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Dean Widhalm</td>
<td>1989 - 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Ronald Wheelis</td>
<td>1993 - 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt John Shipman</td>
<td>1994 - 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt William Hensley</td>
<td>1996 - 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Charles McKeever</td>
<td>1982 - 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Victor Smith</td>
<td>2001 - 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Rick Bailey</td>
<td>2004 - 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt John Harris</td>
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</tr>
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<td>CMSgt James Foltz, Jr.</td>
<td>2006 - 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMSgt Scott A. Magoon</td>
<td>7 Aug 2009 -</td>
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552d Air Control Wing
Command Chief

CMSgt Scott A. Magoon
552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing

Airborne early warning and control operations commenced with the establishment of Air Defense Command (ADC) in early 1950. Airborne systems provided seaward extensions to land based early warning radar and assisted in controlling friendly interceptor aircraft. The 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing (AEW&CW) adopted these roles when it activated as a provisional wing on 8 July 1955 at McClellan AFB, California. Initially, ADC assigned the 552 AEW&CW to the 8th Air Division (AD). At that time, 552 AEW&CW flying squadrons included the 963d and 964th Airborne Early Warning and Control Squadrons (AEW&CS). Exactly one month later on 8 August 1955, the 965 AEW&CS joined the wing. Training occupied the 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing’s early months of activity until mid-March 1956 when the 552 AEW&CW became an operational part of the ADC’s radar network.

Operational command and control over the 552 AEW&CW transferred to the Western Air Defense Force in July 1957 and changed again in July 1960 to the 28th Air Division. In the interim (late 1958), the mission had expanded to include “gap-filler” duty when ground based radar stations became temporarily inoperative. By then, the 552 AEW&CW also supported US space activities. The 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing aircraft, aircrews, and support personnel regularly deployed to remote areas of the Pacific region to track ballistic missiles and aid recovery aircraft by pinpointing missile impacts. Later, the 552 AEW&CW provided similar support for the Discovery and Mercury series space missions. In addition, the 552 AEW&CW aircraft vectored US Navy units to the first recovery of an orbiting earth satellite.
(Discoverer XIII) on 11 August 1960. 552 AEW&CW TC-121D aircraft also vectored and controlled Air Force C-119s which recovered Discoverer XIV’s capsule in the air.

The 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing soon grew to four flying squadrons with the 1 May 1963 assignment of the 966 AEW&CS. Beginning in April 1965, the 552 AEW&CW kept part of its resources deployed in Southeast Asia as part of the “Big Eye Task Force” (later dubbed “College Eye Task Force”). Nearly every member of the 552 AEW&CW served one or more tours of duty, on a rotational basis, with that force. The task force vectored and controlled friendly aircraft and provided airborne early warning services to allied aircraft throughout the war. By late 1968, the task force had become a 552 AEW&CW formal detachment.

The College Eye Task Force continued operations and flew missions from at least eight different locations during the war. Flying EC-121Ds and EC-121Ts (the Ds were manually controlled and the T-models partly “computerized,” a transition step between the 121 and the E-3), the task force flew combat operations until August of 1973 when it flew its last active combat mission. It stayed in Southeast Asia 10 more months before inactivating on 30 June 1974.

It took nearly 300 temporary duty (TDY) aircrew and maintenance personnel to keep College Eye going. All 552 AEW&CW personnel performed 60-90 day TDYs from their home station of McClellan AFB, California, with each member averaging one TDY per year. Only three staff positions (two at Tainan AB, Taiwan and one at Kwang Ju AB, Republic of Korea) were not supported by TDYs. The 552 AEW&CW personnel on TDY rotations performed all other operational, maintenance and staff positions for College Eye.
By the end of American involvement in Vietnam, College Eye had produced a proud record of accomplishments. College Eye had controlled over 210,000 aircraft; issued 700 MIG warnings; flown 4,713 combat missions for 48,954.3 combat hours; and, perhaps most importantly, assisted in the recovery of 80 downed US aircrew members.

In April 1967, Fourth Air Force assumed command and control over the 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing. In November of 1969, the 552 AEW&CW again realigned, this time under Aerospace Defense Command. On New Year’s Eve 1969, the Air Force inactivated the 551 AEW&CW, the 552 AEW&CW’s sister wing. The 552 AEW&CW transitioned to flying warning and control routes along the eastern seaboard of the United States and Iceland.

552d Airborne Warning and Control Group

On 1 July 1974, the Air Force redesignated the 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing as the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Group. Then, in line with the Air Force’s plan to relocate the airborne warning and control mission to a more centrally located base, reductions soon hit the unit. By mid-1975, these cutbacks had limited the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Group to one flying squadron, a training squadron, a maintenance squadron, and a single detachment. From then until 30 April 1976, the unit operated on a vastly reduced scale. The transformation of the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Group ended in its inactivation on 30 April 1976, along with the 963 AEW&CS.
552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing

This inactivation lasted less than a week, however, as the Air Force again activated the unit and redesignated it as the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing (AWACW) on 5 May 1976 and relocated the wing to Tinker AFB, Oklahoma on 1 July 1976. At that time, the 552 AWACW reported directly to Headquarters, Tactical Air Command (TAC). In addition, on 1 July 1976, TAC activated three squadrons (the 963d Airborne Warning and Control Squadron [AWACS], 966th Airborne Warning and Control Training Squadron, and the 552d Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron) and assigned them to the 552 AWACW. On 1 October 1976, the 7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron (7 ACCS), stationed at Keesler AFB, Mississippi, began reporting to the 552 AWACW.

Taking on a worldwide commitment, the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing initiated E-3 Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) operations in early 1977. The 552 AWACW expanded again on 1 July 1977 when TAC redesignated and activated the 964 AWACS. Six months later on 1 January 1978, the 8th Tactical Deployment Control Squadron (TDCS) joined the 552 AWACW and, on 1 July 1978, the 965 AWACS reappeared as part of the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing. Internal organizational recomposition highlighted the fall of 1978 as the inactivation of the 552 CAMS gave way to the activation of the 552d Component Repair Squadron (CRS) and the 552d Aircraft Generation Squadron (AGS).

In early 1979, the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing assumed a readiness role in support of North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD). The 552 AWACW aircraft and aircrews stood on alert, ready to fly short notice missions to sectors along the US-Canadian border for airborne radar coverage in defense of the North American continent. Organizationally, the 552 AWACW expanded to incorporate the 960th Airborne Warning and Control Support Squadron on 1 September 1979 and the 961st Airborne Warning and Control Support Squadron on 1 October 1979. Later in 1982, the USAF redesignated both squadrons to drop “Support” from their designations.

In October 1979, two E-3 aircraft and 240 aircrew and E-3 support personnel took part in a short-notice deployment to South Korea following the assassination of President Park Chung Hee. The entire deployment package was airborne in less than six hours. Over the course of the next two months, E-3 aircraft and aircrews flew 54 missions totaling 370 flying hours and

Figure 14 - A rare photo of the EC-121 and E-3 sharing ramp space at Tinker AFB.
provided “deep look” surveillance of the Korean peninsula. In addition, the E-3 detachment provided extensive joint training for the US and Republic of Korea air defense forces during the deployment.

From December 1979 through May 1980, another deployment package of two E-3 aircraft, two aircrews, and adjacent support personnel conducted joint training operations in Central Europe and the Mediterranean region in support of US Navy Sixth Fleet and other Allied forces. This deployment also featured the first E-3 visit to Egypt.

Further 552 AWACW expansion continued with the assignment of the 41st Electronic Control Squadron (ECS) on 1 July 1980. Three months later on October 1, 1980, four E-3s and approximately 200 personnel deployed to Saudi Arabia in support of European Liaison Force (ELF)-One operations. With the Iran-Iraq war in full swing, both the United States and Saudi Arabia felt concern that the conflict could “spill-over” into the adjacent Gulf region. To counter this threat, and demonstrate American resolve, the United States sent a symbol of commitment, the E-3A. The 552 AWACW supported ELF-One and continued to provide “around-the-clock” airborne radar coverage during the entire course of the eight-year war. In fact, the E-3’s ELF-One obligation did not officially end until 16 April 1989.

In December 1980, four E-3 aircraft, aircrews, and support personnel deployed to Ramstein Air Base (AB), West Germany to conduct joint training with elements of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s (NATO) air defense network. This deployment coincided with increased international tension over a possible Warsaw Pact invasion of Poland. Two 552 AWACW E-3 aircraft, aircrews, and support personnel already on temporary assignment with Air Forces Iceland flew in from Keflavik Naval Air Station (NAS), Iceland, while two other E-3 packages traveled from Tinker AFB. By mid-January 1981, the crisis in Poland subsided enough to allow the E-3 aircraft and aircrews to redeploy back to Iceland and Tinker. However, short duration E-3 training flights to the European continent continued thereafter. Later, in October 1981, two 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing E-3 aircraft revisited Egypt following the assassination of President Anwar el-Sadat.

In August 1983, the 552 AWACW sent a single support package to Sudan to provide airborne radar coverage as that nation repelled rebel forces near Khartoum. That same year, 552 AWACW activities in the Pacific theater also increased following the downing of Korean
Airlines Flight 007 by Soviet military forces. From 1 to 15 September 1983, the 552d supported the salvage operation and earned an Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA) in the process.

552d Airborne Warning and Control Division

On 1 October 1983, the 552 AWACW’s missions and composition expanded so dramatically the Air Force decided to elevate the unit to division status by redesignating it as the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Division. The 552d Airborne Warning and Control Division continued to grow as it took on the 4552d Tactical Training Squadron (TTS) on 1 November 1983 (inactivated two months later and redesignated as the 552 TTS on 1 January 1984).

552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing (Encore)

On 1 April 1985, TAC again redesignated the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Division and returned it to Wing status. At the same time, TAC activated the 28th Air Division at Tinker AFB to assume intermediate administrative and command and control functions over the 552 AWACW. In conjunction, Headquarters TAC immediately transferred the 7 ACCS, 41 ECS, 960, and 961 AWACS to the 28 AD. The next year, the 8 TDCS followed suit and transferred to the 28th on 1 March 1986. From August through November 1986, the 3d Airborne Command and Control Squadron also provided short-lived growth to the 552 AWAC Wing’s unit strength.

The End of ELF-One/JUST CAUSE

On 16 April 1989, the 552 AWACW ended its eight-year deployment to Saudi Arabia, having flown more than 6,000 sorties and 87,000 hours in support of ELF-One. In August 1989, the 552 AWACW again expanded its mission by becoming involved in the war against drugs. Under higher headquarters’ direction, the wing began patrolling the southern border of the United States and beyond. On December 20 1989, Operation JUST CAUSE highlighted the early anti-drug campaign and featured 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing participation in the invasion of Panama and the capture of Manuel Antonio Noriega. Following JUST CAUSE in February 1990, the 552 AWACW E-3s began flying routine counter narcotics operations out of Roosevelt Roads NAS, Puerto Rico.
DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM

On 10 August 1990, the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing began its deployment to the Persian Gulf in support of Operation DESERT SHIELD. On 16 January 1991, E-3 support packages of the 552 AWACW executed airborne control over several of the initial strikes on Iraq in Operation DESERT STORM. Beginning on 17 January 1991, aircrews of the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing flew as part of operation PROVEN FORCE in the Persian Gulf War. The E-3 aircraft and aircrews flew a total of 7,314.7 combat hours during DESERT STORM, sustaining a 91.36 percent mission capable rate. They controlled 31,924 strike sorties and losing a single Allied aircraft in air-to-air action. In addition, E-3s controlled 20,401 air refueling sorties with tankers off-loading more than 178 million gallons of gas to 60,543 receivers.

552d Air Control Wing

In October 1991, Tactical Air Command again redesignated the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing, this time naming it the 552d Air Control Wing (ACW). A month later, on 1 November 1991, TAC redesignated the 552 TTS as the 552d Training Squadron. Then, on 28 May 1992, TAC assigned the 3d Combat Communications Group (CCG) to the 552 ACW. On the following day, 29 May 1992, TAC inactivated the 28 AD and the 552 ACW realigned directly under TAC. Also on 29 May 1992, the internal composition of the 552d Air Control Wing changed with the inactivation of the 552d Equipment Maintenance Squadron (EMS) and 552d Component Repair Squadron (CRS). In turn, TAC activated the 552d Operations Group (OG), 552d Logistics Group (LG), and 552d Computer Systems Group (CSG). The 552d Aircraft Generation Squadron (later redesignated 552d Maintenance Squadron) remained intact under the 552 LG. (The 552 MS did absorb the remnants of the EMS and CRS.) The 963d, 964th, 965th, Airborne Warning and Control Squadrons and 966th Airborne Warning and Control Training Squadron remained active under the 552 OG. On 1 June 1992, the 552d Air Control Wing migrated from assignment to TAC to the newly activated Air Combat Command (ACC). As a final act of reorganization, HQ ACC placed the 552 ACW under the intermediate command of Second Air Force on 1 October 1992.
In 1993, the 552 ACW continued its worldwide force projection mission. It maintained E-3 support packages in Southwest Asia in support of Provide Comfort and Southern Watch, and deployed E-3s for the air-interdiction war on drugs coming out of South America. On 1 July 1993, the 552 ACW ended its short tenure with Second Air Force and came under the auspices of Twelfth Air Force. In addition, beginning 17 July 1993, 7 ACCS EC-130E Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Center (ABCCC) aircraft and aircrews served in Operation Deny Flight at Aviano AB, Italy. United Nations Operation DENY FLIGHT sought to facilitate the end of the civil war between the Croatians and the Serbians in the former Yugoslavia. A final wing reorganization move occurred on 8 October 1993 when ACC activated the 34th Combat Communications Squadron.

With the fall of the Soviet empire, relations between Eastern Europe and the United States warmed considerably. In light of the advances in this area, on 15 March 1994, the 552d Air Control Wing hosted two key members of the Polish military establishment. The 552 ACW provided the Polish visitors a tour of the E-3 aircraft and detailed briefings on the E-3 aircraft’s capabilities.

In March 1994, another history-making event occurred in the 552 ACW when the 175th Fighter Wing, Maryland Air National Guard chose First Lieutenant Julie E. Petrina as the first female A-10 pilot. She had been the 552d Computer Systems Group’s executive officer.

In April of 1994, many events occurred that would impact the organization of the 552d Air Control Wing and the business of airborne command and control. On 1 April 1994, in accordance with the USAF’s reorganization and restructuring system, the 3 CCG became a direct reporting unit under Twelfth Air Force. Their short tenure with the 552d Wing lasted barely 23 months.

Blackhawk Helicopter Shoot-down

Then on 14 April 1994, two USAF F-15s, controlled by a 552 ACW E-3 aircraft and aircrew, accidentally shot down two US Army “Blackhawk” helicopters while they transited through the northern Iraq “no-fly zone.” The F-15s had mistaken the two aircraft for Soviet built MI-24 “HIND” helicopters. This “friendly fire” incident killed 26 people and galvanized national interest on E-3 activities. This unfortunate accident also provided the genesis for a massive re-certification process for all 1,300 airborne warning and control aircrew members.
On 1 July 1994, Headquarters ACC directed the 963d, 964th, 965th Airborne Warning and Control Squadrons and 966th Airborne Warning and Control Training Squadron to be redesignated as Airborne Air Control Squadrons (AACS). On the same day, ACC also redesignated the 8 ADCS as the 8th Airborne Command and Control Squadron (ACCS).

**UPHOLD/MAINTAIN DEMOCRACY - VIGILANT WARRIOR**

Autumn of 1994 proved a turbulent time for the 552d Air Control Wing. During September and October, the 552 ACW found itself involved in two real world contingencies, Operations UPHOLD/MAINTAIN DEMOCRACY and VIGILANT WARRIOR. The United States, along with several Caribbean basin nations, banded together to conduct UPHOLD DEMOCRACY. UPHOLD DEMOCRACY was planned as the invasion of the island nation of Haiti to restore its duly-elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide into power. VIGILANT WARRIOR occurred when Iraq once again tried to flex its military muscles by again threatening Kuwait. Luckily, both events ended quickly and quietly. Before UPHOLD DEMOCRACY kicked off, former President Jimmy Carter led a delegation to peacefully defuse the Haitian situation and broker a peaceful US military landing. VIGILANT WARRIOR displayed to the Iraqi leaders that the US and the coalition still planned to defend their interests in Southwest Asia. After this delay, Iraq thought better of their military provocation and pulled its troops back from the Emirate. Thus, Iraq avoided another armed conflict with the US and its Gulf State and coalition allies.

The 552d provided missions for SOUTHERN WATCH by flying out of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and patrolling the skies over southern Iraq, keeping a scrupulous eye on aircraft movements within that country. On 18 September 1994, 552 ACW members flew their 2,000th sortie in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH in tail number 79-0001.

**Aircrew Recertification**

An emphasis on training carried over from the 1994 Aircrew Recertification directly related to the “Blackhawk” shoot down; and reorganization and expansion again affected the 552d. Headquarters ACC decided to activate the 952d Aircraft Generation Squadron (Test) and inactivate the 552d Maintenance Squadron. This ended a four year experiment on the effectiveness of a combined maintenance organization. Headquarters Air Force approved the creation of an Air Force Reserve AWACS unit and, at the same time, authorized an increase from 28 to 40 AWACS aircrews. Both of the aforementioned actions sought to decrease the amount of time each crewmember spent on temporary duty each year and increase their overall quality of life. In addition, the 552 ACW also continued support of Operations PROVIDE COMFORT, SOUTHERN WATCH, and DENY FLIGHT.

**The Yukla 27 Tragedy**

Tragedy struck the AWACS community on 22 September 1995. On that date, an E-3 AWACS aircraft, tail number 77-0354, call sign Yukla 27, crashed at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska minutes after takeoff. Twenty-two U.S. Air Force and two Canadian Air Force aircrew members
died in the mishap stunning the members of the 552d wing. This crash, caused by ingesting Canadian geese into two of the E-3’s engines, marked the first loss of an US Air Force AWACS aircraft to accident or enemy action. The term “Yukla” has its origins in Alaskan dialect meaning “Eagle.” All 962d Airborne Air Control Squadron flights carry this call sign.

**Block 30-35 Upgrade**

On 4 October 1995, the first E-3 AWACS aircraft (tail-number 80-0137) equipped with the Block 30/35 upgrades arrived at the 552d Air Control Wing. At a cost of approximately $984 million for the entire E-3 fleet, the upgrades represented the single largest modification ever made to the E-3 AWACS aircraft. Block 30/35 affected four major subsystems aboard the E-3 aircraft including integration of Joint Tactical Information Distribution Systems, Global Position System, Electronic Support Measures System, and Data Analysis Programming Group. All E-3 AWACS aircraft would be equipped with these improvements by 2001.

At the end of 1995, the wing discovered that HQ ACC had awarded Brigadier General Silas R. Johnson, Jr. the annual Moller Trophy which recognized the best wing commander in the command. The award represented the best qualities of command, “... most effective personal leadership to achieve and maintain a wing’s combat effectiveness.” General Johnson stated that “A piece of this trophy belongs to each and every member of the 552 ACW---every officer, airman and civilian who performed our mission has earned this.” In conjunction with the Moller Trophy, the wing also earned its fifteenth consecutive Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, one of only six units in the command to earn the honor.

**The Brothers to the Rescue**

In the operational vein, the 552d again flew in support of national interests when it flew watch over a group of US citizens staging a protest against the government of Cuba. Earlier in the year, the Cuban Air Force had shot down two civilian planes belonging to the organization known as “Brothers to the Rescue,” when they allegedly trespassed upon Cuban airspace. To protest the shoot-down, the Brothers to the Rescue organized a flotilla of small boats to drift outside the international limits of Cuba and perform a memorial service, bringing attention to the tragedy. The US Atlantic Command, seeking to prevent further bloodshed, monitored the flotilla to ensure that the protest would be peaceful and safe. Atlantic Command concluded that the best resource for this purpose would be
the E-3. Well-publicized in advance, the protest occurred without incident on 24 February 1996 under the watchful eye of the 552.

The remainder of 1996 proved to be challenging, rewarding and tumultuous for the 552d. Early in the year, Headquarters Air Combat Command selected the 552d as the recipient of the command’s Annual Ground Safety Award for 1995. Following closely on the heels of this prestigious award, the wing faced a HQ ACC sponsored evaluation of the wing’s Standardization and Evaluation Division from 15-20 April 1996. This center piece of the 552d’s training effort proved well up to the task and gained a rating of Excellent from the evaluation team. Shortly thereafter, HQ ACC followed up the Stan-Eval Inspection with a much broader scope Quality Air Force Assessment (QAFA). From 22-26 April, the wing played host to a multitude of evaluators that descended upon Tinker AFB to analyze how the wing performed its everyday mission and duties. As in past inspections, the wing proved more than merely adequate to the task earning an overall rating of EXCELLENT from the team.

Inactivation of the 552d Maintenance Squadron

Later in 1996, more reorganizations and inactivation’s affected the wing structure. Finding the size of the combined maintenance structure unwieldy and cumbersome, the 552 MXS split its personnel and resources into two squadrons that had inactivated a mere four years before. On 1 May 1996, HQ ACC activated the 552d Component Repair Squadron and the 552d Equipment Maintenance Squadron and inactivated the 552d Maintenance Squadron (MXS). Major Merkel C. Joseph and Major James R. Watts took command of each squadron, respectively. Then 14 days later, on 15 May 1996, the Wing bid farewell to the unique 8th Airborne Air Control Squadron. The squadron’s personnel were absorbed by the wing or transferred to other bases, the aircraft found homes with other units.

Activation of the 513th Air Control Group

Another activation also took place during the summer of 1996 that would have a significant impact on the wing’s ability to support its mission and improve the quality of life for the members of the wing. On 13 July 1996, the Air Force Reserve activated the 513th Air Control Group at Tinker AFB under the 507th Air Refueling Wing. The 552d looked at the 513th to eventually help reduce the number of temporary duty days that 552d members endured each year. The 513th’s mission would parallel that of the 552 ACW, “providing airborne warning and control system support of combat as well as contingency and special missions worldwide. In this symbiotic relationship, the 552d would maintain actual “ownership” of the E-3 aircraft but would benefit from the reservists assisting in the maintenance of the aircraft and flying actual missions with the E-3s.
Isochronal Conversion

In August 1996, the 552 ACW streamlined its aircraft inspection process. This new concept named Isochronal Conversion eliminated the 230 hour interval phase inspections and implemented a 6 month or 460 flying hour aircraft inspection schedule.

GENERATIONS

Figure 19 - There I was……..trying to land at Da Nang on one engine, low on fuel, one wing on fire…..THEN the mortar attack began!!!!!
Mission Simulator Live Intercept Training Environment

On 27 September 1996, the Air Combat Command Commander, General Richard E. Hawley, requested an outline for “…operational requirements to enhance E-3 mission simulators.” ACC assisted the 552d Air Control Wing in upgrading the simulators, eventually evolving into the Mission Simulator Live Intercept Training Environment (MSLITE). The updated simulators provided additional training opportunities for weapon directors, increased continuation training opportunities, and decreased weapons directors’ “time to experience.”

The MSLITE design permitted remote live radar pictures from the Southeast Air Defense Sector to be fed into the AWACS mission simulators, allowing crew members the ability to control airborne aircraft while working in a ground environment. An additional Advanced Distributed Simulation (ADS) upgrade allowed AWACS personnel to closely emulate an integrated theater air control battle environment. These enhancements provided aircrews real world training and interaction with actual fighters units. MSLITE’s state of the art design reduced operating costs and additional wear on E-3 aircraft. MSLITE achieved Initial Operational Capability on 17 December 1997.

Lieutenant Colonel John J. Kennedy, Jr., makes Air Force History

On 15 January 1997, Lieutenant Colonel John J. Kennedy, Jr., became the first non-rated officer to take command of an Air Force operational flying squadron, the 963d AACS.

Aircrew Career Field Changes

On 28 February 1997, AWACS technicians received two newly developed Career Field Education and Training Plans (CFEPT). The CFEPTs were related to the realignment of four Air Force Specialties (AFS) directed in 1993 by then Air Force Chief of Staff, General Merrill McPeak. Airborne Radar Technicians, formerly AFSC 118X0, and Computer Display Maintenance Technicians, formerly AFSC 118X2 combined to become, Airborne Mission Systems Specialist, 1A5X1. The Communications Systems Officer, formerly AFSC 116X0, and Communications Technician, formerly AFSC 118X1, combined to become Airborne Communications Specialist, 1A3X1.

552d Air Control Wing 1997 Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI)

On 28 April 1997, the 552d ACW achieved an “Outstanding” rating during ACCs Phase I ORI. This landmark result was the highest rating for a wing in ACC History. Even more spectacular were the “outstanding” ratings awarded in eleven separate categories.

The 552d Aircraft Generation Squadron comes back to Life

After a sixteen month hiatus and awaiting the results of the 952d AGS test, the 552d AGS was again activated. The 952 AGS test was activated on 1 December 1995 and inactivated on 16 September 1997. On 29 May 1992, the 552 AGS was redesignated as the 552d Maintenance Squadron and was officially inactivated on 1 May 1996. At a ceremony on 16 September 1997,
the 552d MXS was again activated and redesignated as the 552d AGS. Major Richard A. Lane was the acting commander until 26 November 1997, when Lieutenant Colonel Barbara F. Reynolds took command.

552d Air Control Wing 20th Anniversary

The 552d Air Control Wing observed their 20th Anniversary during three days of events on 27-29 June 1997. Former commanders and other senior leadership returned to commemorate the special reunion. Led by the wing’s first commander, General John L. Piotrowski, other dignitaries included Major Generals Neil L. Eddins, Jerry D. Holmes, William K. James, Gary A. Voellger, Silas R. Johnson, Jr., John D. Logeman, Jr., John R. Farrington; Brigadier Generals William J. Ball and David Oakes; and Colonels James R. Sterk, Wylie J. Koiner and John M. Howell.

The festivities began with a Welcome Brunch at the Tinker Air Force Base Enlisted Club. Hosted by the 552 ACW Commander, Brigadier General (S) James W. Morehouse, more than 200 guests were present. Other events that took place were a full day of water-sport activities at Lake Stanley Draper, just south of Tinker AFB. A golf tournament, attended by more than 130 participants, also took place at the base golf course. Tour buses were set up for those members who wanted to see places outside of the base that they had not seen for some time.

A special mini-open house was set up for attendees to visit wing facilities such as a static display aircraft, mission and flight simulators, maintenance facilities and more. Over 1,000 people attended this event. One of the highlights was the official unveiling of special 20th Anniversary nose art created by Senior Airman Donald A. Stanton, Jr. of the 552d Equipment Maintenance Squadron. Later that evening, a 20th Anniversary E-3 AWACS Banquet attended by more than 700 people was held in the Medallion Hotel in downtown Oklahoma City.

On 4 June 1998, the two deployed aircraft returned along with more than 120 people assigned to the 552 ACW. This was a result of the reduction in forces directed by President Bill Clinton. The February – June 1998 deployment of the additional E-3s enhanced the capabilities of the forces already in place while substantiating the resolve of the United States and
international community to ensure Iraq complied with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions.

**Block 30/35 Initial Operational Capability**

On 31 March 1998, the 552 ACW declared initial operational capability for the E-3 Sentry block 30/35 upgrade. This was the largest upgrade performed on the E-3 since its production. The enhancements integrate operators and systems, improving the E-3’s ability to perform its air battle management mission worldwide.

The GPS modification incorporated the positioning system into the navigation and mission crew computers which improved navigational accuracy and gave the flight crew excellent flight planning capabilities. An upgraded computer system was required to support the Block 30/35 modifications on the E-3, providing more processing power and additional memory. The modification also made future system expansion available. The ESM system augmented present on-board sensors by detecting signals from hostile, neutral, friendly and unknown emitters while improving the E-3’s combat identification, surveillance and weapons control capability.

Another part of the upgrade was the class 2H Joint Tactical Information Distribution System (JTIDS). JTIDS is a secure digital communications system and allowed E-3 crewmembers to communicate with other participants such as fighter aircraft, Navy units, and ground-based units. The Class 2H JTIDS terminal uses the TADIL-J/Link 16 message and provides increased secure voice and data capability for the E-3. Currently the wing has 28 aircraft equipped with the Block 30/35 upgrade. These modifications not only enhance the aircrews’ ability to do their mission but will keep the E-3 viable through the year 2025.

![Figure 14 – The new look of the Block 30/35 equipped E-3 AWACS aircraft](image)
552 ACW supports Allied Force

Our nation’s leaders once again called upon the 552 ACW to help support our worldwide community by providing assistance to our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies in the European theater. NATO E-3s stationed at Geilenkirchen AB routinely patrol the skies of Europe. However, the escalating conflict in the Balkans required more E-3 airborne battle management platforms. On 29 April 1999, 200 Airmen and three E-3s deployed to Geilenkirchen AB, Germany, in support of Operation ALLIED FORCE. The E-3s from the 552 ACW flew 47 sorties supporting over 300 aircraft during the 60-day deployment.

On 24 June 1999, approximately 200 military personnel and aircraft returned to Tinker by order of Secretary of Defense, William J. Cohen. This important deployment demonstrated the U.S. commitment in supporting NATO and the NATO led peace policies worldwide.

May 3rd Tornado

On 3 May 1999, Oklahoma residents including Tinker AFB and 552 ACW personnel experienced their worst storm in half a century. An initial tornado developed miles west of Chickasha and continued to get organized and grow as it traveled East-Northeast. The tornado paralleled Hwy 44/ (Bailey Spur) until reaching the small town of Bridge Creek approximately 20 miles Southwest of Oklahoma City. Over Bridge Creek, the tornado continued to grow spawning winds of 301 MPH – the highest winds ever recorded in a tornado. The vulnerable town of Bridge Creek was completely destroyed by the mile wide tornado, killing 12 people and injuring dozens before moving to the northeast toward the city of Moore leaving a wide path of destruction before turning its wrath toward Oklahoma City. The tornado showed no signs of slowing as it crossed Hwy 35 and followed Hwy 240 East until it crashed into Del City. After severely damaging Del City, the tornado continued towards Tinker AFB and Midwest City.

The tornado came within one quarter mile of Tinker AFB’s west gates, causing major damage to dormitories, softball fields, and horse stables. The base also sustained moderate damage to its far northwest corner while enduring large hail and 300+ miles per hour winds. The neighboring communities of Del City and Midwest City saw huge portions of their cities demolished. The tornado would be later classified as a rare F-5 on the Fujita scale – the highest such ranking for a tornado (by contrast, of 1,255 tornadoes in 1998, only five even reached an F-4 classification). Overall damage to the base included the total destruction of eight buildings. Other buildings received some type of damage from flying debris including nine dormitories. One mile of the base’s northwest fence line was also destroyed.

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1 The winds were originally reported as 318 MPH; however, researchers later downgraded the max wind-speed to 301 MPH after discovering a miscomputation by the Doppler supporting computer yet, this remains the strongest winds ever recorded in a tornado.
The 552 ACW responded to the call for assistance by setting up a mobile command post and sending more than 1,000 members out to the base and local communities to help with the recovery and clean-up efforts. A total of 1,389 wing personnel were submitted for the humanitarian award for their volunteer efforts in the May 3rd Tornado. The commander gave thanks to all the members of the 552 ACW for the rapid response and aid given to the local communities affected by the storm.

Even though local television and radio stations provided ample warning and notification to prepare the community for the oncoming storm, complete preparation for disasters of this magnitude are impossible. Preliminary damage estimates indicate more than 9,000 homes were damaged or destroyed in the greater Oklahoma City metropolitan area including Del City, Midwest City, Moore and Choctaw.

513th Air Control Group members deploy

Roughly a dozen maintenance members from the 513th Air Control Group (ACG), Air Force Reserve, and an advance team of six more aircrew members departed to backfill active duty counterparts at overseas locations at Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia and Incirlick AB, Turkey. The team made preparations for the subsequent arrival of the remainder of 513th contingent. 8 May 1999, witnessed the activation of more than 200 members from the 513th Air Control Group under the Presidential selected reserve call in support of Joint Chief of Staff Taskings outside of the continental U.S. On 10 May 1999, the activated reservists received the call to report to their units for departure.
On the morning of 11 September 2001, Al Qaeda terrorists struck several key targets on American soil. First, a hijacked airliner was flown into the World Trade Center’s north tower in New York City causing a huge explosion and fire and a while later, complete catastrophic collapse of the tower. Minutes after the first aircraft hit the north tower; a second jetliner flew into the south tower also causing a catastrophic damage and later collapse of the tower. A third commercial jetliners crashed into the Pentagon in Washington DC while a fourth was also hijacked with the intention of crashing into the White House. Fortunately, passengers on the fourth aircraft got word of the previous hijackings from family members via cell phones and attempted to retake the aircraft from the hijackers. Although the heroic passengers failed to regain control of the aircraft, they did prevent the jetliner from being used to crash into the White House and instead the aircraft crashed into a Pennsylvania field killing all onboard.

Moments after the attacks began, Air Force aircraft were put on alert and began patrolling the skies over major cities across the United States. All airborne commercial aircraft over the US were instructed to land immediately to prevent any further their potential use as terrorist’s weapons. Passenger aircraft en route to the US from abroad were instructed to divert or return to their originating point, if possible. Crews from the 552 ACW began patrolling the skies over the Eastern Quadrant of the US within hours of the initial attack. These patrols protecting the US would later expand to cover the entire US and would fall under the umbrella of Operation NOBLE EAGLE.

Operations ENDURING FREEDOM

In response to the Al Qaeda attacks against, President George Bush announced the beginning of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) as part of the Government War on Terrorism (GWOT). Operation ENDURING FREEDOM focused on routing out AL Qaida terrorists anywhere they were training or hiding in the world although the primary focal point was in Afghanistan, a mountainous region of the world where members of the Muslim extremist group known as the Taliban ruled. Most of the mountainous regions of Afghanistan were either under Taliban control or were so destabilized that Taliban and Al Qaeda members could operate freely without concern for reprisal or capture. The Leader of the Al Qaeda terrorist organization was Osama Bin Laden, the son of a rich family from Saudi Arabia. US forces sought to hunt down and either capture or kill Bin Laden and the Al Qaeda members responsible for the worst terror attack on US Soil in history.

Build-up for Operations ENDURING FREEDOM began immediately. Crews from the 552 ACW deployed to Thumrait, Oman on 27 September 2001 and began flying sorties in-country on 29 September.

Operations IRAQI FREEDOM

On 16 March 2003, US forces attacked Iraqi military targets in Iraq beginning Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Crews flying E-3 aircraft worked diligently around the clock to ensure US and Allied aircraft flying in the congested skies over and around Iraq were able to operate as effectively and safely as possible.
The 30th Anniversary of the E-3

In July 2007, the men and women of the 552 ACW celebrated the 30th anniversary of the E-3 AWACS aircraft service to the United States and the United States Air Force. Originally conceived to overcome the line-of-sight limitations of ground based radar systems, the E-3 development program produced the preeminent airborne warning and control system in the world.

The CAN-AM 30th Anniversary

In September 2009, the 552 ACW celebrated 30 years of Partnership with the Canadian E-3 Component at Tinker AFB. The celebration included a Canadian versus American Hockey game, a Can-Am Softball game, Dinner, and Proclamation from the Oklahoma Governor.

Mishap at Nellis AFB

On 29 August 2009, while participating in a RED FLAG exercise at Nellis AFB, NV, an E-3, tail number 83-0008 was involved in a Class A mishap. The mishap, a hard landing, resulted in nose gear failure and a fire. All on-board personnel evacuated the aircraft safely however the aircraft sustained heavy damage rendering it unusable.
Chronology of the 552d Air Control Wing

8 Mar 55 -- The 963d and 964th Airborne Early Warning and Control Squadrons were activated at McClellan AFB, California, and equipped with the new EC-121 Constellation.

8 Jul 55 -- The 552d Airborne Early Warning & Control Wing gained permanent status at McClellan AFB and its assigned squadrons received the RC-121 aircraft to carry out its mission of detecting aircraft and controlling defensive interceptors beyond the range of ground-based radar.

8 Aug 55 -- The Air Force activated the 965 AEW&CS as part of the 552 AEW&CW.

1 Jul 57 -- The USAF inactivated the 8th Air Division making the 552 AEW&CW a part of the Western Defense Force.

1 Jul 60 -- The USAF inactivated the Western Defense Force and the 552 AEW&CW shifted under the 28 AD and became a part of Air Defense Command.

Oct 62 -- The 552 AEW&CW participated in the NASA’s Project Mercury and assisted in the recovery of the Mercury space capsules.

1 May 63 -- The 966 AEW&CS was reassigned from the 551 AEW&CW to the 552 AEW&CW.

May 63 -- The 964 AEW&CS participated in the recovery of Faith 7 the space capsule piloted by astronaut Gordon Cooper.

10 Jul 65 -- An EC-121 aircraft from the 552 AEW&CW teamed up with an F-4 Phantom II from the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) for the 8 TFW’s first confirmed air-to-air MIG kill in Southeast Asia.
Mar 68 -- 552 AEW&CW aircraft number 554 became the first EC-121 to log more than 20,000 flying hours.

Nov 69 -- The 551 AEW&CW Icelandic Deployment Forces transferred to the 552 AEW&CW.

Dec 69 -- The 552 AEW&CW added the RC-121 aircraft to its inventory.

Jul 70 -- Boeing Aerospace Company received a contract to develop and flight test two E-3 aircraft radar systems. The Westinghouse Electric Company’s radar eventually became the choice for the E-3.

1 Aug 72 -- “Triple Nickel” EC-121 aircraft #555 retired and went on display at the Air Force Aircraft Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. “Triple Nickel” logged over 22,000 flying hours and 4.8 million air miles.

9 Feb 73 -- The first E-3 airframe accomplished its initial flight test.

30 Jun 74 -- College Eye inactivated. During the course of the Vietnam conflict, the members of the 552d AEW&CW controlled over 210,000 aircraft; issued 700 MIG warnings; flew 4,713 combat missions for 48,954.3 combat hours; and, perhaps most importantly, assisted in the recovery of 80 downed US aircrew members.

30 Jun 74 -- The 964 AEW&CS received inactivation orders.

1 Jul 74 -- The 552 AEW&CW became the 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Group.

22 Nov 74 -- The Department of Defense announced that the 552 AEW&CG would inactivate in the summer of 1976.

Apr 75 -- The Systems Integration Demonstration of the E-3 aircraft prototypes resulted in the decision to produce the aircraft and its assorted components.

Aug 75 -- Four E-3 aircraft completed a 16-month test period at the Air Force Test and Evaluation Center, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico.

Oct 75 -- Engineering and test evaluations began on the E-3 aircraft at Tinker AFB, OK.
1 Jul 76 -- The Air Force activated the 552 AEW&CG and redesignated it as the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing (AWACW) at Tinker AFB, OK.

11 Sep 76 -- Headquarters TAC informed the 552 AWACW that the Air Force Chief of Staff approved the realignment of the 7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron under the 552 AWACW.

20 Jan 77 -- The 552 AWACW’s new command post facility became operational.

5 Feb 77 -- The USAF redesignated the 964 AEW&CS as the 964th Airborne Warning and Control Squadron (AWACS).

23 Mar 77 -- The first E-3A Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft, tail number 75-0557, arrived at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma.

24 Mar 77 – The wing conducted the arrival ceremony for the first E-3A.

31 Mar 77 -- The first operational flight of the E-3A AWACS “Sentry” 75-0557 took place.

7 Jul 77 -- The 964 AWACS activated at Tinker AFB, OK under the 552 AWACW.

11 Dec 77 -- Imperial Iranian Air Force representatives visited the 552 AWACW to negotiate the purchase of E-3 aircraft for Iran. This initiative, called “Peace Sky”, never materialized.

26 Jun 78 -- The 8th Tactical Deployment Control Squadron and the oldest C-135 airframe in the Air Force inventory was transferred to Tinker AFB under the 552 AWACW.

1 Jul 78 -- The 965 AWACS activated at Tinker AFB.
Sep 78 -- The 963 AWACS made its first operational E-3 deployment to Kadena AB, Japan. The 963 AWACS exercised over the Republic of Korea in a multinational operation called COPE JADE CHARLIE.

Sep 78 -- The 964 AWACS deployed personnel and equipment to Keflavik NAS, Iceland.

Dec 78 -- North Atlantic Treaty Organization decided to purchase 18 E-3 aircraft for its airborne early warning role.

Jan 79 -- The 552 ACW and its E-3s began service with NORAD.

15 Jan 79 -- An E-3 mission assisted in the apprehension of an aircraft smuggling marijuana into Florida.

Mar-Apr 79 -- The first ever E-3 “around the world” mission was accomplished. The lead squadron for the mission was the 964 AWACS. During the flight, the E-3 touched down in Alaska, Hawaii, Japan, Korea, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, and the Azores.

Oct 79 -- Two E-3s flew to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in response to the rising tensions caused by the North Yemen - South Yemen civil war.

Oct 79 -- South Korean President, Park Chung Hee, was assassinated. In less than six hours, the 963 AWACS mobilized making its way to South Korea. The aircraft and aircrews remained in South Korea for 60 days and flew 54 missions for a total of 374 flying hours.

Nov 79 – The 8th Airborne Deployment and Control Squadron refurbished a C-135 aircraft, tail number 59-1518. The 8th transformed it into an EC-135, adapting it to perform a specialized mission of transporting distinguished visitors and airborne deployment control missions.

14-24 Jan 80 -- The 7 ACCS participated in EMPIRE GLACIER, a cold-weather exercise involving Air Force, Army, and Navy elements at Fort Drum, New York.

14 Mar 80 -- A crew from the 963 AWACS, while on scramble over Iceland, located and saved a lost civilian aircraft.

23 May 80 -- The USAF activated the 961 AWACS at Kadena AB, Japan.
17 Jun 80 -- The Air Force announced the activation of the 552 AWACW’s geographically separated unit the 41st Electronic Combat Squadron (ECS) at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona.

26 Jun 80 -- North Atlantic Treaty Organization aircrews began arriving at Tinker AFB to begin training on the E-3A.

1 Jul 80 – Headquarters TAC assigned the 41 ECS to the 552 AWACW.

8 Jul 80 -- The 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing celebrated its 25th Anniversary.

1 Oct 80 -- Four E-3As and over 200 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing personnel deployed to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in support of Operation EUROPEAN LIAISON FORCE-ONE (ELF-ONE).

9 Dec 80 -- Four E-3As and over 200 552 AWACW personnel deployed to Ramstein AB, West Germany, in support of exercise GREEK SENTRY.

11 Aug 81 -- The first flight of the NATO standard E-3As took place.

14 Aug 81 -- Two E-3As deployed to Egypt following the assassination of that country’s president, Anwar el-Sadat.

10 Dec 81 -- The first NATO standard E-3A, tail number 80-0137, was delivered to Tinker AFB. However, aircraft 80-0137 was the 25th E-3 delivered to the 552 ACW.

1 Jan 82 -- North Atlantic Treaty Organization accepted delivery on the first of 18 E-3 aircraft.

9 Mar 82 -- The 41 ECS received its first EC-130H, Compass Call, aircraft.

18 May 82 -- For the first time, an E-3 controlled the intercept of a Soviet “Bison” aircraft near Iceland.

19 Mar 82 -- Exercise ELF-ONE SENTRY initiated the deployment of one E-3A from Tinker AFB to Cairo, Egypt.

31 Sep 82 -- The 552 AWACW set a fiscal year flying record of 26,365 hours with 24 aircraft. This amounted to approximately 1,099 flying hours per aircraft.

15 Feb 83 -- The 552d Equipment Maintenance Squadron activated under the 552 AWACW.

Aug 83 -- Two E-3 aircraft, aircrews, and support personnel deployed to Khartoum, Sudan, to assist the Sudanese in repelling rebel forces.
1-15 Sep 83 -- The Korean Airlines flight 007 salvage operations received the support of the 552 AWACW.

1 Oct 83 -- The 552 AWACW was redesignated as the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Division.

1 Nov 83 -- The 552d Tactical Training Squadron activated under the 552 AWACD.

9 Nov 83 -- The 961 AWACS escorted President Ronald Reagan’s aircraft to Tokyo, Japan. The trip was a State visit with Emperor Hirhito and Prime Minister Nakasone; the President also addressed the Diet.

20 Jul 84 -- First operational E-3B became part of the Air Force and 552 AWACD inventory.

1 Oct 84 -- Boeing assumed responsibility for all E-3 pilot training.

1 Apr 85 -- The 28th Air Division activated in turn, the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Division returned to the designation as the 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing under the 28 AD.

1 Apr 85 -- Saudi Arabian aircrew students arrived at Tinker for E-3 training.

1 Oct 85 -- An EC-121 Connie arrived at Tinker to become a static display aircraft at a new air park just west of building 280. The Connie flew in from Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona. Volunteers from the 41 ECS donated their time to prepare the old veteran for its final flight.

1 Jul 86 -- The United States Air Force activated the 962 AWACS at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska.

2 Aug 87 -- Deployed E-3 AWACS flew their 5,000th ELF-One sortie.

Mar 88 – The Air Force recognized the 552 AWACW’s efforts during ELF-One with the award of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.
28 Mar 88 -- Tinker AFB experienced a severe hail storm that causing substantial damage to aircraft and facilities.

Oct 88 -- The 961 AWACS flew in support of the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

31 Oct 88 -- A letter of agreement between the Air Force and the US Customs office established a Customs National Aviation Center at Tinker AFB.

16 Apr 89 -- The final two 552 AWACW E-3s returned from Saudi Arabia marking the end of the ELF-One commitment. The 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing logged more than 6,000 sorties and 87,000 flying hours in 8.5 years during ELF-One.

Feb 90 -- The 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing deployed E-3 aircraft to Roosevelt Roads NAS, Puerto Rico in response to the expanded drug interdiction missions assigned to the 552 AWACW.

7 Aug 90 -- The 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing E-3 aircraft, aircrews and personnel deployed in support of Operation DESERT SHIELD.

Oct 90 – Tactical Air Command recognized the 552d Component Repair Squadron as the “Best in TAC.”

Oct 90 -- Tactical Air Command named the 552 AWACW as the “Best Tenant Facility in TAC.”

Oct 90 -- The 552 AWACW completed training the French E-3 aircrew members for the French Air Force E-3 fleet.

Oct 90 -- Headquarters USAF reassigned the 961 AWACS to Pacific Air Forces.

17 Jan 91 -- The 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing E-3s began flying in support of Operation DESERT STORM. The 552 AWACW flew a total of 7,314.7 combat hours during DESERT STORM with a combined 91.36 percent mission capable rate. They controlled a total of 31,924 strike sorties which dropped a total of 88,500 tons of munitions without losing a single Allied aircraft in air-to-air action. In addition, E-3s controlled 20,401 aerial refueling sorties that off loaded a total of 178.4 million gallons of fuel to 60,543 receivers. The 552 AWACW also assisted in 39 of 41 Allied air-to-air shoot downs during DESERT STORM.
17 Jan 91 -- The E-3s began flying in Operation PROVEN FORCE and continued throughout the war. They controlled 4,401 sorties equating to 14,117.8 flying hours. While flying 490.4 hours, the E-3s assisted in five air-to-air kills and the delivery of 6.6 million pounds of ordnance.

28 Feb 91 -- Operation DESERT STORM ended. After the war, E-3s remained in the region in support of NATO Operations PROVIDE COMFORT and SOUTHERN WATCH.

Oct 91 -- Headquarters Air Force redesignated the 552 AWACW as the 552d Air Control Wing.

Nov 91 -- Headquarters Air Force redesignated the 8th Tactical Deployment and Control Squadron as the 8th Airborne Deployment and Control Squadron (ADCS).

27 May 92 -- The 28 AD received its third Air Force Outstanding Unit Award since April 1985.

28 May 92 -- Headquarters TAC assigned the 3rd Combat Communications Group under the 552 ACW.

29 May 92 -- The USAF inactivated the 28th Air Division and aligned the 552 ACW directly under TAC.

1 Jun 92 -- The 552 ACW was relieved from Tactical Air Command control and reassigned to Air Combat Command.
**Dec 92** -- The 552 ACW underwent a Quality Air Force Assessment and achieved an overall Excellent from the Air Combat Command Inspector General.

**13 Jan 93** -- A 552 ACW E-3, flying an Operation SOUTHERN WATCH mission over the Persian Gulf, guided an Allied air strike against Iraqi ground targets in response to Iraq’s violations of the United Nations resolutions.

**17 Jan 93** -- A 552d ACW E-3, flying an Operation PROVIDE COMFORT mission over the Persian Gulf region, guided an USAF F-16 in the interception and destruction of one Iraqi MIG-29. This attack sequence followed a violation of the United Nations’ imposed no-fly zone over Northern Iraq by the Iraqi pilot.

**18 Jan 93** -- The 552d Ground Computer Squadron’s small computer flight completed testing of a computer software program called Battlefield Mapping Station (BMS) and released it for immediate operational use. The 7 ACCS used BMS to produce navigation maps during Airborne Battlefield Command and Control Center III missions.

**1 Jul 93** -- The 552 ACW became an operational unit of Twelfth Air Force.

**17 Jul 93** -- The 7 ACCS deployed to Aviano AB, Italy to operations in the former Yugoslavia as part of United Nations Operation DENY FLIGHT.

**1-19 Jan 94** -- The 8 ADCS performed mission CODEL JOHNSTON by flying the US Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to Southeast Asia for trade meetings. The mission originated at Andrews AFB, District of Columbia and proceeded to Elmendorf AFB, Alaska; Yokota AB, Japan; Beijing, China; Guangzhou, China; Hanoi, Vietnam; Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; Bangkok, Thailand; Jakarta, Indonesia; Timika, New Guinea; Saipan, the Marianas Islands; Hickam AFB, Hawaii and terminated at Langley AFB, Virginia.

**15 Mar 94** -- The 552 ACW hosted two key members of the Polish military establishment and provided the dignitaries with a tour of the E-3 aircraft and a briefing on the aircraft’s capabilities.

**1 Apr 94** -- The 3 CCG realigned and began reporting directly to Twelfth Air Force.

**14 Apr 94** -- Two USAF F-15s shot down a pair of US Army “Blackhawk” helicopters over the northern no-fly zone in Iraq, mistaking them for Soviet built “HIND” helicopters. The fighters were controlled by 552 ACW E-3s during the mission. The “friendly fire” incident caused the deaths of 26 people aboard the two helicopters.

**21 Apr 94** -- Crew Chief Technical Sergeant Robert L. Stanley and his crew launched a “black letter” (no maintenance discrepancies on the E-3 aircraft) E-3 sortie, tail number 78-0578. This was the first time a “black letter” E-3 aircraft launched in five years.

**15-27 May 94** -- The Commander of Space Command, General Charles A. Horner, received support from the 8 ADCS on a Distinguished Visitor (DV) mission. The DV mission began at Peterson AFB, Colorado, and proceeded to Travis AFB, California; Hickam AFB, Hawaii; Kwajalein (an island in the Pacific Ocean); Guam; Hong Kong; Kadena AB, Japan; Anchorage, Alaska; and terminated back at Peterson AFB, Colorado.
27 Jun 94 -- Special Order GA-325 awarded the 552 ACW (subordinate groups and squadrons included) the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. The AFOUA effective dates were 1 Apr 92-31 May 94.

1 Jul 94 -- Headquarters ACC directed the renaming of the Airborne Warning and Control Squadrons as Airborne Air Control Squadrons (AACS) and the 8 ADCS became the 8th Airborne Command and Control Squadron (ACCS).

15 Jul 94 -- Captain Robert T. Aman of the Royal Canadian Air Force became the first Canadian aircraft commander of a USAF E-3.

19 Jul 94 -- The 7 ACCS left the 552 ACW and relocated under the control of the 55th Wing, Offutt AFB, Nebraska. The 7 ACCS personnel and aircraft transferred to the 42d Airborne Command and Control Squadron stationed at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona.

Sep 94 -- The 552 ACW members flew the 2,000th sortie in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH in tail number 79-0001.

Oct 94 -- When Iraq forces began assembling near the Kuwaiti border region, the 552 ACW began to build up aircraft in support of Operation VIGILANT WARRIOR. The 552d Air Control Wing began mobility processing procedures and scheduled four E-3s for deployment. Deployment orders were canceled when Iraq pulled its troops to a safe distance from Kuwait.

Oct 94 -- The 552d Air Control Wing supported Operation UPHOLD/MAINTAIN DEMOCRACY, the planned invasion of Haiti. Operations ended when a US delegation, led by former President Jimmy Carter, peacefully resolved the situation before US Forces arrived in Haiti.

3 Oct 94 -- Field Training Detachment 413 (413 FTD) conducted its last class under Air Education and Training Command. The 413 FTD became the 552d Logistics Group Deployment and Application Training Section as part of USAF Chief of Staff General Merrill McPeak’s “one base-one boss” concept.

23 Oct 94 -- In a move to improve real-time battle management capabilities, representatives from the 55th Wing (Offutt AFB, Nebraska) and 552 ACW began discussions to increase interoperability. The two units eventually agreed to a personnel exchange program and created a RIVET JOINT/AWACS Battlefield Management Quality Improvement Team. They also discussed joint exercise participation and combined operations at deployed locations such as Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

26 Oct 94 -- The Article 32 hearings for the five 552 ACW officers charged with dereliction of duty ended at Tinker AFB. After weeks of testimony, Lt. General Stephen Croker, Eighth Air Force Commander, dismissed charges against all but one officer. General Croker charged Captain James Wang, the mission crew senior director, with dereliction of duty. Captain Wang’s court-martial was scheduled for early 1995.
9 Dec 94 -- The 552 ACW honored a pioneer of E-3 operations when it named its flight simulator facility as “The Jerry Auth Flight Training Center” in honor of the late Lt. Col Edward G. (Jerry) Auth (retired).

23-25 Jan 95 -- The 552d Air Control Wing conducted exercise SENTRY LEAP 95-2 at Tinker AFB, OK. All 552 ACW operational squadrons participated in the ORI preparation, using six E-3 aircraft and six aircrews during the exercise.

8 Feb 95 -- First Lieutenant Treisa D. Schumacher, assigned to the 552d Computer Systems Group, was named the Air Force’s nominee for two operations security based awards including the 1995 National Operations Security Organizational Achievement Award.

5-10 Mar 95 -- The 552d Air Control Wing began an ACC sponsored Operational Readiness Inspection - Phase I at Tinker AFB. The 552 ACW achieved an overall rating of Excellent. Six E-3 AWACS aircraft and six aircrews flew during the ORI.

30 Apr-6 May 95 -- The 552d supplied one E-3 AWACS aircraft and one aircrew in support of Exercise Woodland Cougar 95 (WC 95), the Air Force’s largest combat search and rescue exercise to date. The Twelfth Air Force hosted WC 95 which included units from the Air Force, Marine Corps and Navy.

19 April 95 -- Members of the 552d Air Control Wing responded within two hours of the bomb blast at the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in downtown Oklahoma City. Within the first five hours the wing had over 850 volunteers; by the following Sunday, the wing had its highest count, 1,060 volunteers. The volunteers were divided into three groups; those with medical experience, those with rescue experience and those that could provide physical labor to remove rubble. From those that volunteered, 75-80 had medical experience, 50 had search and rescue experience and many others helped remove rubble. Wing volunteers also washed dishes; handed out food and water; and delivered flashlights, clothing and ponchos. There were no shortage of tasks or volunteers to meet those needs. According to Major General Kenneth Eichmann, Commander, Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center, “Many people have described the response as the best coordinated they have ever seen.” MG Eichmann also stated, “I am pleased that it worked so well but not surprised. The important thing is that we were part of the team. No request was too big or too small.”

19 May 95 -- Air Combat Command named the 552d Logistics Squadron and the 966th Airborne Air Control Squadron as “Air Combat Command’s Best” for 1994.

20 Jun 95 -- The Air Force announced the Court Martial decision of Captain James Wang. The Court acquitted Captain Wang of all charges in conjunction with the 14 April 1994 downing of a US Army Blackhawk helicopter over Northern Iraq.

21-27 Jul 95 -- The 552d Air Control Wing participated in a Phase II inspection at Mountain Home AFB, ID, earning an overall grade of Excellent.
**Aug 95** – Senior Master Sergeant Frank Grant, the 966 AACS Maintenance Superintendent, was selected to receive the General Lew Allen, Jr., Trophy. Senior Master Sergeant Grant received the award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to sortie generations at Tinker in the form of 440 sorties garnering 3,400 flying hours, and producing 700 qualified crewmembers.

**22 Sep 95** – The first crash of a United States Air Force E-3 (call sign Yukla-27, tail number 77-0354) occurred at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. Twenty-two USAF aircrew and two Royal Canadian Air Force crew members lost their lives in the crash. The Air Force later determined that Yukla-27 ingested geese into the engines during take-off, which caused the AWACS to crash.

![Figure 29 - The members of Yukla 27 are remembered at a memorial ceremony held at Tinker AFB. Pictured is Casie DeFrancesco and her daughter Brittany, family of SrA Lawrence DeFrancesco, killed in the crash.](image)

**4 Oct 95** – The first E-3 AWACS aircraft, tail number 80-0137, to receive the Block 30/35 upgrade rolled out at Tinker AFB. Block 30/35 comprised the single largest upgrade to the E-3 aircraft ever accomplished.

![Figure 30 - The Yukla 27 memorial at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska.](image)

**5-9 Nov 95** – Tinker AFB and the 552d Air Control Wing sponsored and hosted the third Multi-national Airborne Early Warning Commander’s Conference (MACC). The MACC participants came to Tinker from Britain (55 participants), France (30), NATO (55), and the US Navy (7).

**1 Dec 95** – The 952d Aircraft Generation Squadron (Test) stood up on 1 December 1995 with Major Richard A. Lane assuming command.

**Dec 95** – The 552 ACW accomplished the goal of increasing aircrews from 28 (in April 1994) to 40 in December 1995. The increase in aircrews succeeded in reducing the average TDY rate for 552 ACW personnel from 160 days per year to fewer than 120 days per year.
Jan 96 – Air Combat Command named the 552d Air Control Wing commander, Brigadier General Silas R. Johnson, Jr. as the winner of the 1995 Moller Trophy as ACC’s best wing commander.

3 Jan 96 -- Air Combat Command named the 552d Air Control Wing as the command’s Annual Ground Safety Award winner for 1995:

24 Feb 96 -- The 964 AACS supported Atlantic Command in conjunction with the shoot down of two civilian Cessna aircraft by the Cuban Air Force over international waters. The “Brothers to the Rescue” (a Cuban protest organization) planned to protest Cuban policies and organized a peaceful flotilla against Cuba in the Florida Straits.

5 Apr 96 – United States President William J. Clinton came to Oklahoma City to meet with victims of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing.

Apr 96 -- Twelfth Air Force Standards and Evaluations appraised the 552d Air Control Wing Standardization-Evaluation Team. The 552d merited a grade of “Excellent.”

22-26 Apr 96 -- The 552 ACW received an overall grade of “Excellent” as part of an Air Combat Command Quality Air Force Assessment

1 May 96 – Air Combat Command Special Order GB-75 directed a major reorganization of the 552d Logistics Group subordinate units. The 552d Maintenance Squadron inactivated. In conjunction, the 552d Component Repair Squadron and 552d Equipment Maintenance Squadron activated after being previously inactivated on 29 May 1992. Major Merkel C. Joseph assumed command of the 552 CRS and Major James R. Watts assumed command of the 552 EMS.

15 May 96 – The 8th Airborne Air Control Squadron inactivated via G-Series Order GB-80. The aircraft were reassigned to the 89th Airborne Command and Control Squadron at Andrews AFB, Maryland.

Jul 96 – The Air Force named 963d Airborne Air Control Squadron Senior Airman Gregory White as the “Air Force Outstanding Aircrew Member of the Year.”

13 Jul 96 – The Air Force Reserve activated the 513th Air Control Group (ACG) naming Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Suggs as commander.
16 Jul 96 -- Air Combat Command Special Order GA-077 awarded the 552d Air Control Wing and its subordinate units the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with effective dates of 1 Jun 94-31 May 96.

6 Sep 96 – The Air Force reassigned Brigadier General Silas R. Johnson, Jr. to the Pentagon in Washington DC and selected Brigadier General Robert T Newell, III as the new 552d Air Control Wing commander.

8 Oct 96 – The 552d Air Control Wing flew a mission in support of United States Counterdrug Operations. During the mission, the AWACS located a suspicious boat that was later boarded and 6,800 kilograms of cocaine were confiscated.

24 Oct 96 – Colonel John M. Howell assumed command of the 552 ACW from Brigadier General Robert T. Newell, III.


26 Nov 96 -- Brigadier General (select) James W. Morehouse assumed command of the 552d Air Control Wing.

15 Jan 97 -- Lieutenant Colonel John J Kennedy, Jr. assumed command of the 963d Airborne Air Control Squadron replacing Lieutenant Colonel Alan L. Vogel. Lieutenant Colonel John J Kennedy, Jr. became the first non-rated officer in Air Force history to command an operational flying squadron.

Feb 97 -- The 552d Air Control Wing Public Affairs Office received Air Combat Command’s award for “Best Magazine for 1996.”

22 Apr 97-- The 552d Air Control Wing flew a mission in support of United States Counterdrug Operations and located a suspicious boat that was later boarded resulting in confiscation of 1,780 kilograms of cocaine.

23-28 Apr 97 -- Air Combat Command conducted an Operational Readiness Inspection of the 552d Air Control Wing. The 552 ACW recorded the highest scores ever achieved in ACC history with an across-the-board rating of OUTSTANDING.

27-29 Jun 97 -- The 552d Air Control Wing hosted the 20th Anniversary celebration, commemorating 20 years of AWACS operations.

15 Sep 97 – The 952d Aircraft Generation Squadron provisional was inactivated. During the same ceremony, HQ ACC activated the 552d Maintenance Squadron and redesignated it as the 552d Aircraft Generation Squadron.
16 Feb 98 – The 552d Air Control Wing joins in Gulf Build-up deploying two additional E-3s to Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia bringing the total number of E-3s on station to five. The 552 ACW flew five additional sorties per month as a result of the deployment.

31 Mar 98 -- The 552 ACW declared initial operational capability for the E-3 Sentry block 30/35 upgrade, the largest upgrade performed on the E-3 since its production. 30/35 enhancements integrated operators and systems and improved the E-3’s ability to perform its air battle management mission worldwide.

4 Jun 98 – The two aircraft deployed during the Gulf Build-up returned along with more than 120 people assigned to the 552 ACW as part of a reduction in forces directed by President Clinton.

29 Apr 99 – Three E-3s along with 125 members of the 552 ACW deployed to Geilenkirchen AB, Germany in support of Operation ALLIED FORCE. The crews flew 47 sorties supporting NATO and NATO led policies in the Balkans.

8 May 99 – Members of the 513th Air Control Group departed Tinker to backfill active duty counterparts at Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia and Incirlik AB, Turkey. More than 200 members from the 513th ACG were activated under the Presidential selected reserve call in support of Joint Chief of Staff Taskings.

3 May 99 – Oklahoma and Tinker AFB residents witnessed one of its worst storms in a half of a century. The tornado passed within one-quarter mile of Tinkers AFB’s west gate, causing major damage to dormitories, softball fields, and horse stables.

15 Mar 00 – The 552d Air Control Wing welcomed Brigadier General Ben T. Robinson as new wing commander.

28 Apr 00 – The 552 ACW achieved an “Outstanding” rating during an ACC Initial Response Operational Readiness Inspection.

27 Sept 2000 – Members of the 552 ACW celebrated the landing of the final flight for fiscal year 2000. This year AWACS eclipsed its original flying hour goal by 1,729 hours with a record breaking 10,377 hours.


15 Nov 00 – The 552d conducted a ground-breaking ceremony for its new 60-million dollar facility housing the E-3 simulator.

Nov 2000 – Major General Johann G. Dora, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Airborne Early Warning and Control Force Command commander, presented the 552 ACW with the Allied Command Europe Campaign Pennant for its contributions during Operation Allied Force, the air campaign over Kosovo. This was the first battle streamer earned by the 552 ACW.
5 Feb 2001 – The last block 20/25 E-3 took off from Tinker AFB destined for Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts to undergo a Block 30/35 avionics package upgrade.

19 Feb 2001 – President Bush visited Tinker AFB en-route to a speaking engagement at the Oklahoma City National Memorial.

1 Mar 2001 – Headquarters Air Combat Command reactivated the 960th Airborne Air Control Squadron after nine years of dormancy.

6 Apr 2001 – The 552d Air Control Wing marked its tenth year of patrolling the no-fly zone over the skies of Iraq. During Operations NORTHERN and SOUTHERN WATCH, the 552 ACW had more than 250 support personnel deployed to locations in Saudi Arabia and Turkey. The E-3 had a 21-year presence in the region. Iraqi forces continued to threaten U.S. aircraft committing over 370 Iraqi provocations including shooting at U-2 and Navy E-2 reconnaissance planes.

16-21 Apr 2001 – The 552 ACW achieved an overall rating of Outstanding during the ACC Unit Compliance Inspection (UCI).

7-11 May 2001 – The wing participated in SENTRY SHIELD 01-04, a Phase Two, Operational Readiness Exercise (ORE), the largest single build-up of AWACS flying operations since DESERT STORM. For the first time in AWACS history, the wing deployed the AWACS Deployable Mission Support System (ADMSS), a deployable mainframe used to update, store, and replay AWACS missions in a deployed environment.

11 Sep 2001 – The 552 ACW patrolled the skies over the Eastern portion of the U.S. following the terrorist attacks of the World Trade Center. The Joint Chief of Staff tasked the 552 ACW to protect the airspace over North America. This mission would later become Operation NOBLE EAGLE.

24 Sep 2001 – The 552 ACW received deployment orders to support Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF), “the war against terrorism.” Three days later, the wing launched its first aircraft designated for OEF.

9 Oct 2001 – Five aircraft and 180 NATO personnel deployed from Geilenkirchen, Germany to Tinker Air Force Base (AFB) Oklahoma to support Operation EAGLE ASSIST. For the first time in the 52-year history of NATO, NATO forces helped defend North American borders by invoking Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. On 18 January 2002, two more NATO aircraft deployed to Tinker.

22 Feb 2002 – Air Force Secretary Dr. James G. Roche visited the 552 ACW to thank Airmen for their contribution to secure the United States borders following the events of 11 September 2001. At that time, USAF crews had flown 14,000 operation NOBLE EAGLE sorties, flying continuously during a five month span and logging over 700 sorties.

16 May 2002 – NATO E-3s left Tinker AFB and the 552 ACW after more than seven months of support.
27-29 May 2002 – The 552 AEW hosted the Executive Multi-National AEW Commanders Conference (EMACC) 9 at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. The conference was a multi-national forum organized for commanders of AWACS and AEWOC operational units to speak to, verify and prioritize areas of mutual interest which may merit coordinated multi-national staff action and acquisition plans.

19 Jun 2002 – The 552d Operations Group welcomed Colonel Lori J. Robinson as their new commander. Colonel Robinson assumed the command from Colonel Patrick J. Sheets and became the first female to command the 552 OG.

27 Jun 2002 – The wing unveiled its newest facility with a ribbon cutting ceremony. Building 255, a 69,438 square foot building, was built to house the 960 AACS, 965 AACS and the 72d Air Base Wing’s (ABW) mobility processing function. Planning for the 9.6 million dollar facility had been in the works for 25 years before construction began.

29 Jun 2002 – The 552 ACW celebrated its 25th Anniversary. More than 1,000 current and former members of the 552d ACW made the pilgrimage to Oklahoma City to take part in the four-day celebration.

15 Jul 2002 – The 552 ACW reorganized to comply with the Air Force Chief-of-Staff General John P. Jumper’s vision to transform Air Force organization. The 552d Logistics Group was redesignated 552d Maintenance Group (MXG) with Colonel Leonard Benson as the first MXG commander. The 552d AGS was re-named the 552d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (AMXS). In addition, the 552d CRS was redesignated 552d Component Maintenance Squadron (CMS) and the 552d LSS was redesignated as the 552 Maintenance Operations Squadron (MOS). The realignment was implemented three months ahead of schedule.


1 Oct 2002 – The 552 ACW realigned under Eighth Air Force (8 AF). With the realignment, 8 AF became the first Numbered Air Force (NAF) to integrate information operations into a war-fighting headquarters operating a variety of aircraft including the E-8C Joint Stars, EC-130H Compass Call, RC-135 Rivet Joint, the U-2S Dragon Lady, B-52 Stratofortress and B-2 Spirit. This collection of C2 resources gave 8 AF the capability to collect, process, and analyze friendly and enemy force disposition and provide real-time information to war fighters and national decision makers.

Oct 2002 – E-3 crews deployed as part of the 968th Expeditionary Airborne Air Control Squadron logged the 10,000th flying hour in support of OEF. The unit had supported OEF since September 2001.
28 Jan 2003 – The 552 ACW was awarded the Deputy Commander in Chief of the North American Aerospace Defense Command’s commendation for their contribution and performance during Operation GRIZZLY. E-3 crews provided continuous airspace coverage for the G8 summit held in Alberta Canada. During the summit, the wing flew 12 sorties providing more than 139 hours of continuous surveillance.


22 Feb 2003 – The 552d Air Control Wing received deployment orders to support Operation IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF). The order’s primary intention was to strengthen military forces already in the Area of Responsibility. Detachment Commander Lieutenant Colonel Joseph J. Rossacci along with five E-3s from Tinker AFB, aircrew, and associated support personnel and equipment redeployed from Thumrait, Oman to Prince Sultan Air Base (PSAB), Saudi Arabia in preparation for OIF. Additionally, five E-3s deployed from Tinker AFB to PSAB as well, bringing the E-3 force to 10 aircraft.

28 May 2003 – 8 Jun 2003 – The first group of 552 ACW personnel deployed in support of OEF and OIF returned to Tinker AFB. Crews flew more than 325 sorties and 3,275.3 flying hours in support of both operations. On 8 June, the remaining personnel and aircraft returned to Tinker AFB ending a 13-year continuous presence in the region. For the first time in 26 years, all 28 E-3s were at home station.

July 2003 – The 552d Air Control Wing entered reconstitution to address the training backlog caused by high operations tempo of OEF and OIF.

8 Aug 2003 – The 552d Computer Systems Group was redesignated as the 552d Communications Group and the 752d Computer Systems Squadron was redesignated as the 752d Communications Squadron.

20 Sep 2003 – The Oklahoma Aviation and Space Hall of Fame at the Omniplex museum in Oklahoma City inducted the 552d Air Control Wing into the Aviation and Space Hall of Fame. The 552 ACW was honored for its contributions to national security and advances in aviation.

December 2003 – Crewmembers from the 963 AACS received the Air Force Air Battle Manager of the Year Award. The crew was recognized for demonstrating the E-3’s ability to locate, process and prosecute mobile ground targets within 10 minutes. The refined process paved the way for single-digit time critical target prosecution.

January 2004 – The 552d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron received Air Combat Command’s Maintenance Effectiveness Award for the fourth consecutive year. The wing flew 23,400 flying hours without a mishap over the course of 2,600 sorties. Seventeen aircraft were deployed at any given time during the height of OIF and OEF. The increased tempo required a large contingent of deployed maintainers to keep them flying. Meanwhile, maintainers at home station labored long hours in support of the E-3s tasked for the ongoing ONE mission. Other accomplishments setting the squadron apart from similar units included achieving a mission capability rate 10 percent above the ACC standard. The squadron also supported five contingencies and 14 combat exercises, achieved a 100 percent on-time takeoff rate, managed a 200 percent increase in home
station aircraft, and tripled CONUS sorties while supporting aircraft in three areas of responsibility.

March 2004 – The 552d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron converted its flights to Aircraft Maintenance Units (AMU). An AMU is an organization with an established number of aircraft and maintenance and support personnel assigned to it. According to Air Force Instruction 21-101, there was normally one AMU for each assigned operations squadron. The wing had four operational flying squadrons, but due to the E-3 Sentry being a low density, high demand platform, the wing only had the resources to support three AMUs. The AMUs were named, “Red,” “White,” and “Blue.”

2 March 2004 – Brigadier General Gilmary M. Hostage relinquished command of the 552d Air Control Wing to Colonel Joseph F. Mudd, Jr.

24 November 2004 – Members of the 552 ACW deployed to Manta, Ecuador in South America. The 965 AACS flew the first missions in this war against drugs. The initial plan was to rotate one or more E-3s and support personnel in and out of Ecuador every 60 days in support of civil law enforcement’s effort of stopping the flow of illegal drugs from Latin America into the United States and Canada.

12-22 November 2004 – The ACC Office of the Inspector General (IG) conducted an integrated Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI). The ACC IG team evaluated the 552d Air Control Wing and the 513th Air Control Group (ACG) simultaneously. The integrated ORI participants achieved an overall “EXCELLENT” rating.

15 November 2004 – 12th Air Force (12 AF) activated the 965th Expeditionary Airborne Air Control Squadron (EAACS) in support of the President of the United States’ (POTUS) attendance at the Asian-Pacific Economic Coordination Conference in Santiago, Chile. Lieutenant Colonel Gregory M. Guillot served as Detachment Commander for the deployment. Three aircraft and 159 personnel deployed from the 965th, 960th and the wing’s reserve component, the 970 AACS. The 965th EAACS met all military objectives during the first E-3 deployment to Santiago, Chile. On 23 November 2004, the squadron redeployed to home station.

11 January 2005 – The 552 ACW launched the last E-3 receiving the Radar Systems Improvement Program (RSIP) upgrade. The 552 ACW, OC-ALC, Boeing, and the Electronics Systems Center at Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts coordinated the RSIP modification that increased the aircraft’s ability to detect cruise missiles and provide 200 percent greater fighter coverage volume. The bulk of the modification involved changing the on-board computer and installing a new console.

15 February 2005 – The 552 ACW officially ended its reconstitution period that allowed the wing to recover from the ramifications of the shortened Ready Aircrew Program year.

6 May 2005 – Three aircraft from the 964 EAACS along with 122 support personnel deployed to Bourges, Bulgaria in support of the POTUS visit to Tbilisi, Georgia. The squadron began flying operational sorties over the region the same day. On 11 May, all 552 ACW personnel redeployed back to Tinker.
8 July 2005 – The 552 ACW celebrated its 50th Anniversary. Oklahoma Governor, Brad Henry, signed a letter into law proclaiming 8 July as “AWACS Day” in the state to honor the men and women of the AWACS community.

19-21 July 2005 – The 552 ACW once again hosted the Executive Multi-National AEW Commanders Conference (EMACC) at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma.

1 September – 31 December 2005 – The 960 AACS received a tasking to support AEF cycle 7/8. The 120-day deployment was the first of its kind since OIF. Preparation for the deployment began in July and consisted of briefings in the areas of Southwest Asia, Counter-Narcotics, NOBLE EAGLE and the Pacific Theater OPLANS. In the end, four crews were certified. During the cycle, the squadron supported five higher-headquarter directed deployments, 26 Operation NOBLE EAGLE Presidential and Vice-Presidential support missions. The squadron also assisted in humanitarian relief operations following the devastation caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. This was the first time an E-3 assisted federal agencies in its hurricane relief efforts.

7 September 2005 – The 552 ACW assisted federal agencies in Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. The Category-5 hurricane devastated areas in Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana. The wing flew 16 sorties amassing 158 flying hours to coordinate relief efforts of both civilian and military aircraft. A few days later Hurricane, Rita (Category 5) ravaged Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana. The wing flew support missions again, flying 14 sorties and 118 hours.

30 October 2005 – The 552 ACW deployed to Mar del Plata, Argentina for POTUS support during the Summit of the Americas. The higher headquarter tasking directed the deployment of four E-3 aircraft and associated personnel be in place 1 November 2005 to begin three days of operations covering the arrival and the departure of the POTUS and 34 other world leaders. The United States Southern Command activated the 960 EAACS for the duration of the deployment. This was the wing’s first deployment to Argentina. Lt Col Gregory Roberts commanded the squadron of 189 personnel from the 552 ACW and 12 security forces from the 72d Air Base Wing. Aircrews operated out of Comandante Espora Naval Air Base in Bahia Blanca, Argentina. The 960 EAACS provided 99.3 percent of the tasked on-station time.

9 November 2005 – Brigadier General James M. Kowalski assumed command of the 552d Air Control Wing from Brigadier General Joseph F. Mudd Jr. during a ceremony at Tinker AFB.

10-22 November 2005 – The 960 AACS deployed to Yokota Air Base, Japan in support of the Asia-Pacific Economic Committee Meeting. Detachment Commander Lt Col Carson Elmore led one crew of 37 personnel that flew four sorties amassing 38.7 flying hours.

25-27 Apr 2006 – (U) The 552 ACW hosted the MACC-14 at Tinker AFB

10-15 Jul 2006 – HQ ACC conducted a Unit Compliance Inspection (UCI) of the 552 ACW at Tinker AFB, OK. The 552 ACW earned a rating of “Complies with no Comments.”
28 Mar 2007 – Crews from the 960 AACS, commanded by Lt Col Lou Brundidge, deployed to Al Dahfara Air Base (ADAB), UAE, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. This marked the return of the 552 ACW to the Middle East and the first deployment of the E-3 to the region since June 2003.

4 May 2007 – HQ ACC inactivated the 552d Component Repair Squadron and transferred all personnel and equipment to the 552 MXS. (GB-107, 3 May 07)

18 May 2007 – Brig Gen Lori J. Robinson assumed command of the 552d Air Control Wing from Brig Gen James D. Kowalski.

6-12 Jun 2007 – Members of the 963 AACS and 964 AACS supported the President of the United States during his trip to Albania.

18-21 Jul 2007 – Members of the 964 AACS flew to Elmendorf AFB, AK and stood alert (real world) flying 3 sorties and logging over 23 hours. (Appendix L)

26 Aug 2007 – 7 Jan 2008 – The 963 AACS deployed to ADAB in support of CENTCOM OEF & OIF taskings. The 963 AACS flew 179 sorties for a total of 1,919.2 flying hours.

8 Nov 2007 – HQ ACC awarded the 552 ACW an AF Meritorious Unit Award (AFMUA) for the period of 1 Jun 06-31 May 07. This was the first AFMUA for the 552 ACW. (SO GA-017).

4 Jan - 21 Apr 2008 – The 964 AACS deployed two E-3s to Curacao, NetherAntilis, to fly supporting drug interdiction sorties in support of AFSOUTH taskings. The 964 AACS flew 102 sorties for a total of 935.1 hours.

6 Jan - 7 May 2008 – The 964 AACS deployed to ADAB in support of OEF & OIF. The 964 AACS flew a total of 169 sorties for a total of 1,784.8 flying hours.

24 Apr - 7 Sep 2008 – The 960 AACS deployed to Curacao in support of AFSOUTH taskings. The 960 AACS flew a total of 95 sorties for a total of 944.3 hours.

1 May 2008 – HQ ACC redesignated the 552 Communications Group as the 552d Air Control Group. Following this redesignation, HQ ACC transferred the 607th Air Control Squadron (ACS) at Davis Monthan AFB, AZ from the 355th Operations Group to the 552 Air Control Group. Also transferred to the 552 ACG were the 729 ACS located at Hill AFB, UT previously under the 388 FW; the 728 ACS at Eglin AFB, FL, previously under the 33 OG; and the 728 ACS at Mountain Home AFB, ID, previously under the 366th Operations Group. Additional changes in the 552 ACG included: the 552d Computer Support Squadron redesignated as the 552d Air Control Network Squadron (ACNS); HQ ACC also activated a new squadron, the 752d Operations Support Squadron. The personnel and equipment of the 752 CSS were transferred into the 752 OSS. Finally, the 752d Computer Support Squadron was inactivated. With the addition of the four geographically separated Air Control Squadrons, the total number of personnel in the wing rose from 3,475 to 4,745 personnel.

1-2 May 2008 – During the late evening of 1 May and into the early morning of 2 May, Severe weather hit Tinker AFB. A fast-moving wall cloud extending from the north border of
Oklahoma down past the south border into Texas traveled across the state from West to East creating violent straight-line winds between 60-75 MPH, large amounts of deadly lightning, and large violent hail. The hail storm which hit Tinker AFB pounded the base with baseball-sized hail and damaged 11 E-3 Aircraft. The 552 ACW Commander immediately called an emergency Battle Staff Meeting and requested assistance from the Tinker AFB OO-ALC. Maintenance teams worked non-stop to repair the battered fleet to ensure that the 552 ACW could support Higher Headquarter taskings. The support from the ALC, NDI, and 76 MXG was overwhelming. The E-3 fleet was back to full strength and ready for normal operations in under 48 hours.

8 May - 5 Sep 2008 – The 960 AACS deployed to ADAB in support of OEF and OIF CENTCOM taskings. During this deployment, the 960 AACS flew 159 sorties for a total of 1773.0 hours.

27 Aug 2008 – Colonel Patricia D. Hoffman assumed command of the 552d Air Control Wing from Brig Gen Lori Robinson.

7 Aug - 2 Nov 2008 – The 552d Air Control Wing deployed two E-3 aircraft to operate from Oneida County Airport (previously Griffiss AFB) to test the viability of long-term Forward Operating Location (FOL) operations in an effort to increase crew training opportunities and reduce fuel and maintenance costs. The 552 OG deployed two aircraft with crews while the 552 MXG deployed 30 personnel to perform the required aircraft maintenance and prep and recover the aircraft after each mission.

28 Aug 2008 - 9 Jan 2009 – The 965 AACs deployed to ADAB in support of OIF taskings. The 965 AACS flew 178 Sorties for a total of 1903.7 hours during this deployment.

6 Sep 2008 - 8 Jan 2009 – The 970 AACS deployed to Curacao in support of AFSOUTH AEF taskings. The 970 AACS filled this tasking for the 965 AACS. The 970 AACS flew 92 sorties for a total of 912.1 hours during this deployment.

15 Sep 2008 - HQ ACC awarded the 552 ACW with an Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA) for the period of 1 Jun 2007 - 31 May 2008. (SO GA-224)

2 Jan – 7 May 2009 – The 963 AACS and members of the 552 MXG deployed to ADAB in support of CENTCOM AEF taskings supporting OIF and OEF. The 963 AACS flew a total of 158 sorties for 1781.7 hours during this deployment.

8 May— 8 Sep 2009 – The 964 AACS and members of the 552 MXG deployed to the Al Dhafra AB, UAE, and Curacao in support of AEF taskings.

29 Aug 2009 – Following a RED FLAG exercise at Nellis AFB, NV, an E-3, aircraft 83-0003, was involved in a Class-A mishap. The mishap, a hard landing, resulted in nose landing gear failure while landing and an eventual fire. All crewmembers evacuated the aircraft safely however, the aircraft sustained damage too severe to repair.

23 Sep 2009 - Members of the 552 ACW celebrated 30 years of Canadian/American partnership at Tinker AFB.
2 Sep 2009 - Members of the 960 AACS and 552 MXG deployed to ADAB in support of AFCENT taskings.

1-9 Nov 2009 - HQ ACC conducted an Operational Readiness Inspection (Phase I and Phase II) on the 552 ACW resulting in an UNSATISFACTORY rating.

3 Jan 2010 - Members of the 965 AACS and 552 MXG deployed to ADAB in support of AFCENT taskings.

12-17 Mar 2010 - HQ ACC/IG conducted an Operational Readiness Re-Inspection (Phase II) on the 552 ACW resulting in a SATISFACTORY rating.

15-20 May 2010 - HQ ACC/IG conducted an Operational Readiness Re-Inspection (Phase I) on the 552 ACW resulting in a SATISFACTORY rating.

15 July 2010 - Colonel John T. Rauch Jr. assumed command of the 552d Air Control Wing from Colonel Patricia D. Hoffman.
552d Air Control Wing
Lineage and Honors

Updated: 30 July 2010

**Lineage:**
Established as 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing on 30 Mar 1955.
Activated on 8 Jul 1955.
Redesignated 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Group on 1 Jul 1974.
Inactivated on 30 Apr 1976.
Redesignated 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing on 5 May 1976.
Activated on 1 Jul 1976.
Redesignated 552d Airborne Warning and Control Division on 1 Oct 1983.
Redesignated 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing on 1 Apr 1985.
Redesignated 552d Air Control Wing on 1 Oct 1991.

**Assignments:**

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th Air Division (Airborne Early Warning and Control)</td>
<td>8 Jul 1955 - 1 Jul 1957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Air Defense Force</td>
<td>1 Jul 1957 - 1 Jul 1960</td>
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<tr>
<td>28th Air Division (SAGE)</td>
<td>1 Jul 1960 - 1 Apr 1966</td>
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<td>Fourth Air Force</td>
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<td>Tenth Air Force</td>
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<td>Tactical Air Command</td>
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<tr>
<td>28th Air Division</td>
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<td>Air Combat Command</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth Air Force</td>
<td>1 Jul 1993 - 30 Sep 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eighth Air Force</td>
<td>1 Oct 2002 - 30 Sep 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twelfth Air Force</td>
<td>1 Oct 2009 - Present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Stations:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>McClellan Air Force Base, California</td>
<td>8 Jul 1955 - 30 Apr 1976</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aircraft:
EC–121, 1963–1976
C–121, 1967–1976
E–3, 1977–Present

Assigned Units:

552d Operations Group
552d Operations Support Squadron
552d Training Squadron
960th Airborne Air Control Squadron
963d Airborne Air Control Squadron
964th Airborne Air Control Squadron
965th Airborne Air Control Squadron
966th Airborne Air Control Squadron

552d Maintenance Group
552d Aircraft Maintenance Squadron
552d Maintenance Squadron
552d Logistics Support Squadron

552d Air Control Group
552d Air Control Network Squadron
752d Operations Support Squadron
607th Air Control Squadron
726th Air Control Squadron
728th Air Control Squadron
729th Air Control Squadron
**Flying Components:**

*Group. 552d Operations: 29 May 1992–.*


**Operations:**

The 552d Airborne Early Warning and Control Wing (AEW&CS) operated from McClellan AFB, CA, 1955 until inactivated in 1976. Through its squadrons, detachments, and operating locations, it extended air defense radar coverage and fighter control seaward beyond the range of shore-based stations. Late in 1958, the 552d assumed the additional mission of performing gap-filler duty for temporarily inoperative ground radar stations. The wing tracked ballistic missiles in the Pacific after 1957 and provided support for Discoverer and Mercury space flight projects. On 11 Aug 1960, wing aircraft vectored and controlled the aircraft that recovered the Discoverer XIII capsule. The 552d AEW&CS deployed aircraft and crews to McCoy AFB, FL, (19 Oct–5 Dec 1962) during the Cuban missile crisis. The wing operated extensively in Southeast Asia, 1965–1974, as part of the Big (later, College) Eye Task Force. During this time, the 552d expanded operations to the eastern coast of the United States and to Iceland. Redesignated as a group on 1 Jul 1974 because of a reduction in components and a reduced mission; remained in this status until inactivation on 30 Apr 1976. Redesignated 552d Airborne Warning and Control Wing and activated on 1 Jul 1976 at Tinker AFB, OK. The wing provided airborne early warning; surveillance; command, control and communications; and battlefield services for US Armed Forces and its allies. Besides functions at its primary station, the wing fulfilled its mission from other geographical locations worldwide, participating in numerous tactical exercises such as joint training in electronic warfare environments, airborne battlefield command and control for Tactical Control Centers, search and rescue, and maritime operations, Oct 1977–. The wing assisted US Customs in drug interdiction, Jan 1979–. Advised NATO on activation of its AEW (Airborne Early Warning) Force Command and trained NATO crews in E–3 Sentry aircraft to improve the Allied air defense system in Europe, c. Jan 1980–Dec 1982. Aided in the search and salvage operations 1 Sep–9 Oct 1983, of the Korean Airlines flight 007 (KAL 007) that was shot down by a Soviet fighter over the Sea of Japan on 1 Sep 1983. Flew intelligence missions with E–3s in Saudi Arabia during the Iran-Iraq War, 13 Oct 1980–17 Apr 1989. Elevated to division level in Oct 1983. With the activation of the 41st Electronic Combat Squadron at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ, the division was tasked with the Command, Control and Communications Countermeasures mission, 1 Jul 1980–1 Apr 1985. Relieved of the countermeasures duty when the division was redesignated to a wing. Flew Airborne Battlefield Command, Control and Communications (ABCCC) missions on airborne alert during the invasions of Grenada, Nov 1983, and Panama, Dec 1989. Trained Royal Saudi Air Force

Honors

Service Streamers: None
Campaign Streamers:
Southwest Asia: Defense of Saudi Arabia; Liberation and Defense of Kuwait.

Decorations:

Meritorious Unit Award:
1 Jun 2006 – 31 May 2007
1 Jun 2008 – 31 May 2009

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device:

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards:
1 Jun 2007 – 31 May 2008

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm:
1 Apr 1966 – 28 Jan 1973

Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
Oct-Nov 83 (Grenada); Jul 87-Apr 89 (Persian Gulf); Dec 89-Jan 90 (Panama); Aug 90-Present (Persian Gulf).
Official Emblems

552d Maintenance Group
552d Operations Group
552d Air Control Wing
E-3 Desert Sortie & Flying Hour Totals

ELF-1
- October 1980 - April 1989 - 6,231 Sorties and 77,211.7 Flying Hours.

Operations DESERT SHIELD & DESERT STORM
- 17 January - 28 February 1991 - flew 1,498 Sorties & 16,874.6 Combat Hours (91.36 Mission Capable Rate).
- Controlled 31,924 Strike Sorties which dropped 88,500 tons of munitions.
- Controlled 20,401 Refueling Sorties which off-loaded 178.4 million gallons of fuel to 60,543 receivers.

Operation PROVIDE COMFORT
Fiscal Year 1992 - December 1999: 3,178 sorties / 24,798.7 hours.

Operation NORTHERN WATCH

Operation SOUTHERN WATCH
- February 1991 - March 2003 - Flew 5,957 Sorties & 53,855.2 Flying Hours in support of OSW

Operation ENDURING FREEDOM
- 27 September 2001 - 27 May 2003 - 1,253 Sorties & 15,623.7 Flying Hours
- July 2003 - 15 February 2005 - RECONSTITUTION (No deployments to CENTCOM)
- 28 March 2007 - 13 November 2009 - 1,480 Sorties & 16,523.2 Flying Hours

Operation IRAQI FREEDOM
- 28 May - 8 June 2003 - 313 Sorties & 3,115.5 Flying Hours
- 8 June 2003 - the 13-year continuous presence of the 552 ACW in the region ended.
- July 2003 - 15 February 2005 - RECONSTITUTION (No deployments to CENTCOM)

Totals: Sorties: 20,543  Flying Hours: 211,958.2

*Current through 1 July 2010.
Airborne Warning & Control System E-3 “Sentry”

Fact Sheet

- **Prime Contractors** -- Boeing Aerospace Company & Westinghouse

- **Airframe** -- Modified Boeing 707-320B approximately $270.0 million for each aircraft

- **Power Plant** -- Four Pratt & Whitney TF-33-PW-100A turbofan engines

- **Speed** -- In excess of 500 MPH (Mach .78)

- **Normal Operating Altitude** -- 29,000 to 31,000 feet

- **Endurance** -- 11 hours unfueled, 24 hours refueled

- **Crew size** -- 4 flight crew; 13-21 mission crew

- **Primary Missions** -- Provide surveillance, command, and control and communications capability. Detects and tracks fixed wing aircraft at all altitudes against both land and sea backgrounds. Detects and tracks maritime surface vessels. Directs friendly aircraft against enemy aircraft before they reach ordnance delivery points.

- **Delivery** -- First aircraft delivered March 1977 Last aircraft delivered July 1984
Colonel John T. Rauch Jr. is the Commander of the 552nd Air Control Wing, Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. He is responsible for Air Combat Command's fleet of E-3 Airborne Warning & Control System (AWACS) aircraft and ground-based Control and Reporting Centers (CRC) supporting combatant commanders worldwide. He leads 5,500 men and women at five Air Force bases and manages resources that include 32 E-3 AWACS aircraft and 4 CRCs valued at $11.8 billion.

Colonel Rauch received his commission in 1989 through the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps program at the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo. Colonel Rauch flew operational reconnaissance missions in the RC-135 supporting Operations SOUTHERN WATCH, PROVIDE PROMISE, DENY FLIGHT, SUPPORT DEMOCRACY, ENDURING FREEDOM, and IRAQI FREEDOM. His staff assignments include serving in the Air Force Intelligence and Legislative Liaison Directorates, AETC and U.S. Special Operations Command. He commanded the 763d Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron and 338th Combat Training Squadron.

EDUCATION
1989 Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering, University of Colorado at Boulder, Colo.
1995 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
1997 Master of Arts in Organizational Management, George Washington University, Washington D.C.
2001 Master of Military Operational Art and Science, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2002 Master of Airpower Art and Science, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2007 NATO Defense College, Rome, Italy.

ASSIGNMENTS
September 1989 - June 1990, student, Specialized Undergraduate Navigator Training, Mather AFB, Calif.
August 1995 - June 1997, Air Force Intern Program, Intelligence and Legislative Liaison Directorates, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
June 1997 - July 2000, instructor navigator, flight commander and assistant operations officer, Joint Specialized Undergraduate Navigator Training, Randolph AFB, Texas.
July 2000 - July 2001, student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
July 2002 - July 2003, Deputy and Director Air Education and Training Command Commander's Action Group, Randolph AFB, Texas.
October 2006 - February 2007, Deputy Commander, 55th Operations Group, Offutt AFB, Neb.
February 2007 - August 2007, Course Member, NATO Defense College, Rome, Italy.
August 2007 - June 2009, Special Operations Support Team Chief, USSTRATCOM, Offutt AFB, Neb.
June 2009 - July 2010, Vice Commander, 55th Wing, Offutt AFB, Neb.
July 2010 - Present, Commander, 552d Air Control Wing, Tinker AFB, Okla.

FLIGHT INFORMATION
Rating: Master Navigator
Flight Hours: More than 3,000
Aircraft flown: RC-135U/V/W, T-43 and E-3B/C

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS
Defense Meritorious Service Medal
Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters
Air Medal
Aerial Achievement Medal with five oak leaf clusters
Air Force Commendation Medal
Air Force Achievement Medal with one oak leaf cluster

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION
Second Lieutenant July 11, 1989
First Lieutenant July 11, 1991
Captain July 11, 1993
Major July 1, 1999
Lieutenant Colonel March 1, 2002
Colonel August 1, 2007

(Current as of July 2010)