



FACT SHEET

U.S. Air Force Fact Sheet 13TH AIR FORCE

The mission of 13th Air Force is to plan, execute and control aerospace operations throughout the Southwest Pacific and Indian Ocean areas. Nicknamed "The Jungle Air Force," 13th Air Force provides the commander-in-chief, Pacific Command, with a combat-ready, deployable staff to direct joint coalition contingency operations; ensures assigned combat forces are effectively employed and logistically supported; and supports U.S. policies and interests by maintaining military-to-military relationships with regional partners.

Thirteenth Air Force headquarters is at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. Organizations assigned to 13th Air Force include the 36th Wing, 613th Air Operations Squadron, 613th Air Support Squadron, 613th Air Communications Squadron and the 613th Air Intelligence Flight, all at Andersen. The 13th is also responsible for the 497th Combat Training Squadron, Singapore, and Det. 1 of the 613th Air Support Squadron at Diego Garcia.

Activated at New Caledonia in the Coral Sea on Jan. 13, 1943, 13th Air Force began operations as an organization composed of many widely separated and independent units scattered throughout the Pacific. From 1943-1945, 13th Air Force staged out of tropical jungles on more than 40 remote islands, thus earning the nickname, "The Jungle Air Force."

Initially charged with taking a defensive stand against advancing enemy forces, 13th Air Force later took the offensive and traveled northeast from the Solomons to the Admiralty Islands, New Guinea, Morotai and the Philippines. Jungle Air Force units have participated in five different operation areas and 13 campaigns, flying a variety of aircraft, including the B-17 "Flying Fortress," B-24 "Liberator," B-25 "Mitchell," B-26 "Marauder," P-38 "Lightning," P-39 "Aircobra," P-40 "Warhawk," P-61 "Black Widow," C-46 "Commando," C-46 "Skytrain" and L-5 "Sentinel."

Thirteenth Air Force established its headquarters at Clark Field, Philippines, in January 1946. In May of that year, it moved to Fort William McKinley, Luzon. By August 1947, 13th returned to Clark Field. In December 1948, the unit moved to Kadena, Okinawa, where it remained for only a few months before returning to Clark in May 1949.

During the Korean War, 13th Air Force units provided staging areas for people and equipment destined for the war zone. During the decade of peace that followed the war, the command concentrated on training and surveillance activities to maintain a high state of readiness for contingencies.

As the Vietnam War escalated during the late 1960s and early 1970s, 13th Air Force again served as a staging base and logistics manager for units fighting in Southeast Asia. As more American aircraft and people were poured into the war effort, combat units and facilities under 13th Air Force in Thailand increased. At its peak, 13th Air Force was composed of seven combat wings, nine major bases, 11 smaller installations and more than 31,000 military members.

With the buildup and execution of Operations Desert Shield and Storm, 13th Air Force provided aircraft and support staff vital to the United Nations victory in Southwest Asia.

In June 1991, Mount Pinatubo buried Clark in volcanic ash, forcing the base to close Nov. 26 and leading to the evacuation of assigned military members and their families in Operation Fiery Vigil. Thirteenth Air Force relocated and officially established its headquarters at Andersen on Dec. 2, 1991.

Today, the Jungle Air Force stands "poised and ready" to help maintain peace and promote prosperity through cooperation with regional partners.

Point of Contact

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