

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet



HISTORY OF HQ TWENTY-FOURTH AIR FORCE AND 624TH OPERATIONS CENTER

By

24 AF Office of History
Current as of: 17 January 2014

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

On 7 December 2005, Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne and Chief of Staff General T. Michael Moseley unveiled a new mission statement for the United States Air Force:

“The mission of the United States Air Force is to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests—to fly and fight in air, space, and cyberspace.”

That new mission statement highlighted the increasing importance of cyber operations in the U.S. Air Force and served as the Air Force’s acknowledgment of that domain. The new mission statement also marked the beginning of a process that would lead to the establishment of Twenty-Fourth Air Force (24 AF) as the operational level organization responsible for conducting the full range of cyber missions for the U.S. Air Force and for providing forces to combatant commanders in support of military operations.



Secretary of the Air Force Michael W. Wynne and Chief of Staff Gen T. Michael Moseley paved the way for organizing the USAF for cyberspace operations.

Cyber operations have a long history in the Air Force, from the earliest day of Observation balloons and tactical photo reconnaissance to the Army Airways Communications Service in World War II and the Air Force Communications Command. Cyber operations as we understand them today in the Air Force, however, can be traced back to the late 1980s and early 1990s with the establishment of the Air Force Computer Emergency Response Team (AFCERT), the Air Force Information Warfare Center (AFIWC), and the Air Force Network Operations Center (AFNOC). Still, the establishment of Twenty-Fourth Air Force was the culmination of an effort to pull disparate units and capabilities together under a single command structure. That effort began in September 2006, when Secretary Wynne and General Moseley expressed their intent to establish an operational cyberspace command in the U.S. Air Force. The two leaders gave Air Education and Training Command (AETC), Air Combat Command (ACC), Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC), and Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) 30 days to develop plans for this new cyber command. Two months later, on 1 November 2006, General Moseley selected Lt. Gen. Robert Elder and Eighth Air Force (8 AF) as the lead organization to develop cyber command. On 18 September 2007, after months of planning, Secretary Wynne ordered the activation of the Air Force Cyber Command (Provisional), with the expectation that a permanent command would be activated by 1 October 2008. The Air Force selected Major General William T. Lord to command the new provisional organization.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

Unfortunately, the establishment of a major command to direct cyber operations did not proceed as planned. Because of problems stemming from management of the USAF's nuclear enterprise, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates accepted the resignations of both Secretary Wynne and General Moseley in June 2008. The new Air Force senior leadership, Secretary Michael B. Donley and Chief of Staff General Norton A. Schwartz, called for a "pause" in the establishment of Air Force Cyber Command (P) until they could determine the best "form" for the new cyber organization. During this pause, two other events occurred which had a direct impact on the establishment of 24th Air Force. First, the *Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on Department of Defense Nuclear Weapons Management* (also known as the Schlesinger Report), released in September 2008, recommended that all non-bomber related missions, including the cyber mission, should be transferred from 8 AF to other Air Force commands. Second, the Department of Defense suffered a major computer attack that drove home the importance of network security to all the services.

In early October, USAF senior leaders met at the annual Corona conference to discuss a range of issues, including the best way to organize USAF cyber forces. Secretary Donley noted that "The conduct of cyber operations is a complex issue, as DoD and other interagency partners have substantial equity in the cyber arena," and again hinted that an Air Force major command might not be the best way to proceed. Shortly after the conference's conclusion, Secretary Donley and General Schwartz announced that instead of major command, the USAF would establish a component numbered air force (C-NAF) and assign it to Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) to "plan and conduct cyberspace operations in support of combatant command(s) and maintain and defend the Air Force Enterprise Network." This decision led to the establishment of Twenty-Fourth Air Force.



Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Chief of Staff General Norton Schwartz called for a pause in the establishment of the Air Force Cyber Command (P) in order to determine the best way forward. Their decision ultimately led to the establishment of Twenty-Fourth Air Force as the major Air Force cyber organization.

The Twenty-Fourth Air Force

By early 2009, planning for the new numbered air force was well under way, including the selection of the organization's new home. Six locations made the final list, and on 15 May 2009 Secretary Donley and General Schwartz announced Lackland AFB as the preferred location for 24 AF. At the same time, Air Force leaders announced that all network related tasking orders had the same binding force as lawful general orders. This was part of an initiative by General Schwartz to foster a cultural change in the Air Force regarding cyber operations. As the Chief of

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

Staff noted, Airmen “must treat our computers and networks similarly to our aircraft, satellites, and missiles.”

On 4 June 2009, USAF leaders selected Maj. Gen. Richard E. Webber as the first 24 AF commander. Prior to his selection, General Webber served as the Assistant Deputy Chief for Air, Space, and Information Operations, Plans and Requirements for Headquarters, U.S. Air Force. Less than a month after his selection, the initial cadre of the 24 AF headquarters staff arrived at Lackland AFB although a final basing decision had not yet been announced. Finally, in the first week of August 2009, Secretary Donley announced that an environmental assessment had shown there would be no “significant impact” to basing 24 AF at Lackland and officially named “The Gateway to the Air Force” as 24 AF’s new home.

18 August 2009 was an important day Air Force cyber forces. On that day, the commander of Air Force Space Command (AFSPC), Gen. C. Robert Kehler, presided over the 24 AF activation ceremony at Lackland AFB. General Kehler observed, “We will look back at some point and we will all point to this day as the beginning of something focused in our Air Force.” General Webber assumed command of the new organization, which included the headquarters staff, the 624th Operations Center (OC), the 67th Network Warfare Wing (NWW), and the newly re-designated 688th Information Operations Wing (IOW). The 689th Combat Communications Wing (CCW) would join the 24 AF after its activation on 5 October 2009 at Robins AFB, Georgia. In his remarks during the activation ceremony, General Webber noted:

Today is truly an historic day for our Air Force. The activation of 24 AF continues the evolution of the Air Force’s commitment to “Fly, Fight, and Win in Air, Space, and Cyberspace.” We moved our cyber capabilities under Air Force Space Command as our lead command, continuing the evolution of cyber as a potent war fighting capability. 24 AF further demonstrates the Air Force’s commitment to supporting DoD objectives in cyberspace. For the first time in the history of the Air Force, we have consolidated cyber capabilities under an operational war fighter solely devoted to cyber operations.

Although an important day, 24 AF vice commander General Charles K. Shugg put it in perspective: “It was just another day in the progression forward. It was a day that was marked, but we were working just as hard the day before as the day after. We still had a long way to go in the marathon.” To underscore the importance of the new numbered air force, Secretary Donley and Gen. Schwartz published a “Memorandum to all Airmen” in which they outlined the steps taken by the Air Force to organize its cyber forces to that point. The two leaders noted that Airmen “must think of cyberspace as a mission-critical domain where operations are characterized by rigor and discipline, and are executed with precision and reliability.”

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet



General C. Robert Kehler, AFSPC/CC, CMSgt Todd Small, AFSPC Command Chief, and Maj. Gen. Richard E. Webber, 24th AF/CC, during the 24th Air Force activation ceremony (courtesy photo).

24 AF Mission:

Operate, Extend and Defend the Air Force Information Network, defend key mission systems, and provide full spectrum capabilities for the Joint warfighter in, through, and from cyberspace.

After the activation, the 24 AF staff worked toward initial and full operational capability certification (known as IOC and FOC respectively). Initial Operational Capability was declared on 22 January 2010 and FOC was declared later that year, on 1 October 2010. On that day, Gen. Kehler noted the "declaration of FOC means 24th Air Force is now a full operational partner on the joint cyber team." In addition to IOC and FOC, 24 AF also participated in its first exercises, began to employ limited command and control of cyber forces, presented cyber forces to United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) for the first time, and the 624 OC transferred its operations from Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, to Texas. In recognition of the efforts of the men and women of 24 AF during this period, the Air Force awarded the Outstanding Unit Award to the organization for meritorious service from 18 August 2009, to 1 October 2010.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet



General C. Robert Kehler, Commander of Air Force Space Command, was responsible for the activation of 24th Air Force and certified the new numbered air force as Fully Operational Capable (FOC) on 1 October 2010.

Air Forces Cyber

United States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) was established on 1 May 2010 as a sub-unified command under United States Strategic Command. Because USCYBERCOM was headquartered at Fort Meade, Maryland, AFSPC and 24 AF established an Air Component Coordination Element (ACCE) at that location to serve as the 24 AF commander's personal representative to USCYBERCOM. On 7 December 2010, the USAF re-designated 24 AF from Air Forces Strategic (AFSTRAT) to Air Forces Cyber (AFCYBER) in recognition of the Component Numbered Air Force's role as the service component to USCYBERCOM. On 1 September 2011, Brigadier General Burke E. Wilson became the first general officer to serve as the ACCE Director, and in July of 2012 he was appointed the AFCYBER Deputy Commander. In that role, General Wilson represented "Air Force equities regarding assignment and allocation of forces, exercise participation, and all other operational matters for which the Air Force component is responsible." Likewise, the ACCE became AFCYBER Forward in an effort to strengthen that relationship.



As 2011 began, 24 AF continued to fine tune its organizational structure and fully assumed its role as operational level command and control authority for Air Force cyber forces. As of 1 January 2011, the headquarters staff numbered 206 officers, enlisted members, and

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

civilians, while the entire 24 AF, its Operations Center and three wings consisted of 4,388 personnel. In addition, the 24 AF could count on thousands of Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard personnel assigned to cyber and combat communications units. Twenty-Fourth Air Force units and personnel participated in numerous exercises, including Red Flag and the inaugural Cyber Flag, and conducted real world operations supporting USAF and Combatant Command requirements under Operation GLADIATOR SHIELD.

In April 2011, General Webber retired and Major General Suzanne M. Vautrinot assumed command of 24 AF. General Vautrinot arrived with extensive experience in space and cyber operations, including a tour as Director of Plans and Policy of U.S. Cyber Command. The change of command marked the beginning of a new chapter in 24 AF's short existence. While General Webber had faced the challenge of getting 24 AF up and running and building the organization, General Vautrinot continued to develop the organization and worked toward operationalizing and normalizing Air Force cyber operations. To do that, General Vautrinot focused on new strategies and priorities. The integrated strategies included delivering a "robust, defensible, trusted network," operationally leveraging the cyberspace domain, and building and delivering "combat power." Those strategies dovetailed with her priorities to "balance mission operations and staff responsibilities, stabilize and baseline the 24 AF and cyber units," and improve "capacity, capability, and collaboration." With those strategies and priorities as a guide, General Vautrinot set the tone for her command and outlined a path to further develop USAF cyber forces into an operational command to support the U.S. Air Force, United States Cyber Command, and joint force commanders around the world.



Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) Commander Gen. William Shelton hands the organizational flag to 24th Air Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Suzanne Vautrinot, 29 April 2011 (U.S. Air Force Photo by William Belcher).

Through 2012 and 2013, the 24 AF continued to fine tune its processes and develop capability and capacity. The organization successfully completed its re-certification as the USAF's sole Computer Network Defense Service Provider (CNDSP) in August of 2012 and

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

received an Excellent rating on an AFSPC Limited Compliance Inspection in April 2013. Additionally, the headquarters staff moved into newly renovated facilities on the former Kelly AFB in January of that year. However, the 24 AF also underwent several organization changes during this period, with the most important being the announcement that the 689 CCW and the 3d Combat Communications Group would inactivate by 1 October 2013.

General Vautrinot retired from the Air Force on 25 June 2013 and was succeeded by Major General James K. McLaughlin. General McLaughlin, a 1983 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, had extensive experience in space operations and had spent the majority of his career serving in Air Force Space Command, where he had commanded two wings and a group. Prior to taking command of 24 AF, General McLaughlin served as Director of Space Operations on the Air Staff.

General McLaughlin brought a fresh perspective to cyber operations and began his tenure in command facing several challenges in how the USAF planned to organize and present its cyber forces in the future. Still, with General McLaughlin at the helm, the men and women of 24 AF (AFCYBER) continued to carry out their mission with professionalism and skill unrivaled in the Department of Defense.



AFSPC Commander, Gen William L. Shelton, presides over the 24th Air Force change of command ceremony in which Maj Gen James K. McLaughlin assumed command in place of Maj Gen Suzanne M. Vautrinot, 25 June 2013.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

24th Air Force (AFCYBER) Commanders



Major General James K. McLaughlin
25 June 13-Present



Major General Suzanne M. Vautrinot
29 April 11-25 June 2013



Major General Richard E. Webber
18 Aug 09-29 Apr 11

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

24th Air Force Vice Commanders



Colonel Paul A. Welch
23 Jul 13-Present



Colonel Richard A. Lipsey
30 Jul 11-19 Jul 2013



Brig Gen Charles K. Shugg
18 Aug 09-30 Jul 11

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

AFCYBER Deputy Commanders



Brig Gen Robert J. Skinner
18 July 2013-Present



Brig Gen Burke E. Wilson
1 September 2011-7 June 2013

Col Robert A. Morris
12 Jul 10-1 Sep 11

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

24th Air Force Command Chief Master Sergeants



CMSgt Brendan I. Criswell
13 Jan 2014-Present



CMSgt Alfred A. Herring
10 May 2012-12 Jan 2014



CMSgt Kevin G. Slater
18 August 2009-30 March 2012

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

HQ 24 AF Emblem



SIGNIFICANCE

Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue represents the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The globe describes the reach of the cyberspace domain. The combination of the star and lightning bolts represents yesterday's history with today's innovation.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

Air Forces Cyber (AFCYBER) Emblem



SIGNIFICANCE

Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The globe represents the worldwide theater of cyber operations. The combination of the star and lightning flashes represents yesterday's history with today's innovation and connects AFCYBER to Twenty-Fourth Air Force. The three wavy threads connect AFCYBER to United States Cyber Command and represent the three missions of the United States Air Force--air, space and cyberspace.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

624th Operations Center

The 624th Operations Center (624 OC) serves as the command and control element of Twenty-Fourth Air Force. Its mission is to “Establish, plan, direct, coordinate, assess, command and control full spectrum cyber operations and capabilities in support of Air Force and Joint requirements.” Like other 24 AF units, the 624 OC has a long lineage, starting with the 1957th Airways and Air Communications Squadron in 1948. The squadron became the 1957th Airways and Air Communications Service Group on 8 Oct 1959 and then Headquarters, 1957th Communications Group on 1 July 1961. The Air Force inactivated the group on 13 April 1992. However, with the pending activation of a Component Numbered Air Force dedicated to cyber operations in August of 2009, the Air Force re-designated the inactive 1957th Communications Group as the 624th Operations Center on 11 August 2009 and activated the organization on 18 August 2009. Thus, the 624 OC traces its lineage back to Hickam AFB, Hawaii, where the 1957th Communications Group served as part of the Pacific Communications Division of Air Force Communications Command. While the unit’s lineage is traced to that organization, the initial cadre of personnel who established the 624 OC transferred from Eighth Air Force, Detachment 1, known as the Air Force Network Operations Center (AFNOC), at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. The 624 OC consists of four divisions: Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance, Combat Plans, Combat Operations, and Strategy and reports directly to the Twenty-Fourth Air Force Commander. The 624 OC receives orders and tasks from United States Cyber Command and in turn tasks 24 AF subordinate units to perform a wide range of cyber missions in support of Air Force and Joint Force Commanders.

Decorations:

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award: 1962, 1966-1967, 1989-1991, 2009-2010.

Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation: 1 Jan 68-26 Jul 69.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

HQ 624th Operations Center Emblem



Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The background is divided light over dark, symbolizing the sky, space and the cyber domain as well as the around-the-clock mission of the Center. The four stars allude to the cyber command and control function. The largest star represents the Center while the three smaller stars symbolize the three wings within the numbered Air Force. Together, all four stars form a diamond formation representing strength and solidarity to execute the Air Force cyber mission. The lightning bolts emanating from the large star depict the Center's ability to control the three Air Force cyber functional areas: network defense, network operations and network attack.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

624th Operations Center Commanders



Lt Col Bradley L. Pyburn
11 July 2013-Present



Col Alan R. Berry
28 July 2011-11 July 2013



Colonel Victor J. Diaz, Jr.
4 October 2009- 28 July 2011

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

67th Cyberspace Wing



The 67th Cyberspace Wing (67 CW) is the oldest of the Twenty-Fourth Air Force's wings, having been established as the 67 Reconnaissance Wing on 6 November 1947 with the mission of aerial reconnaissance training. After being re-designated as the 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing in 1948, the unit served in the Korean War, conducting photographic reconnaissance of enemy positions, airfields and rail lines. By 1957, the 67 TRW was the only reconnaissance wing in the Far East. However, the USAF inactivated the wing from 1960-1966. After being activated again in 1966, the wing's mission revolved around worldwide aerial, visual, optical, thermal, and radar reconnaissance. While maintaining tactical reconnaissance capabilities, the wing's training mission expanded and continued through 1989. In 1990-1991, members of the wing supported operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm by providing reconnaissance of Iraqi Republican Guard movements and providing information for battle damage assessments among other things. Still, the 67th Reconnaissance Wing ended its flying operations in August of 1992 and in 1993 became the 67th Intelligence Wing and was charged with the planning of all-source intelligence, electronic combat, and security support for the Air Intelligence Agency. In 2000, the wing became the 67 Information Operations Wing and on 5 July 2006 was re-designated as the 67th Network Warfare Wing. In August of 2009, the 67th Network Warfare Wing was transferred from Air Combat Command to Air Force Space Command and assigned to Twenty-Fourth Air Force, where it continues to serve as the premier operational wing of Air Forces Cyber (AFCYBER), conducting offensive, defensive, and exploitation missions in support of Combatant Commanders around the world. The wing is authorized to display the honors earned by the World War II-era 67th Reconnaissance Group. During its service as a flying unit, the wing flew a wide range of aircraft, including the RF-80, C-47, RF-51, RF-86, F-84, C-54, B-57, RF-

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

101, and the F-4 among others. Finally, on 15 August 2013, HQ USAF approved the re-designation of the wing to the 67th Cyberspace Wing.

Streamers:

Korea: First UN Counteroffensive; CCF Spring Offensive; UN Summer-Fall Offensive; Second Korean Winter; Korea Summer-Fall, 1952; Third Korean Winter; Korea Summer, 1953

Southwest Asia: Defense of Saudi Arabia; Liberation and Defense of Kuwait
Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamer: Grenada, 1983

Decorations:

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (multiple awards)

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Combat "V" Device (multiple awards)

Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation (1951-1953)

Bestowed Honors of 67 Reconnaissance Group

Campaign Streamers:

World War II: Antisubmarine, American Theater; Air Offensive, Europe; Normandy; Northern France; Rhineland; Ardennes-Alsace; Central Europe; Air Combat, EAME Theater.

Decorations:

Distinguished Unit Citation: Le Havre and Straits of Dover, 15 Feb-20 Mar 1944

Citations in the Order of the Day, Belgian Army: 6 Jun-30 Sep 1944 and 16 Dec 1944-25 Jan 1945, and Belgian Fourragere.

Lux Ex Tenebris (Light From Darkness)

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

688th Cyberspace Wing



The 688th Cyberspace Wing (688 CW) also has a long history and has called San Antonio home since its establishment. The wing's lineage can be traced to the activation of the 6901st Special Communications Center in 1953. However, just one month later, the unit was re-designated as the Air Force Special Communications Center (AFSCC) on 24 July 1953. From 1953 to 1975, AFSCC produced and disseminated intelligence data for the Air Force Security Service Agency (the predecessor to today's AF ISR Agency), oversaw its school for intelligence specialists, advised field units, and became involved in Electronic Warfare in the 1960s. By 1975, the center's role in Electronic Warfare led to its re-designation as the Air Force Electronic Warfare Center (AFEWC). Still aligned under the Electronic Security Command and later the Air Intelligence Agency, the center focused on exploring new and state of the art Electronic Warfare technologies. By the mid-1980s, AFEWC emerged as the primary source of EW and command, control, and communications countermeasures (C3CM) analysis and advice for the Air Force and the center's EW advances were successfully tested during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM in 1990-1991. However, the early 1990s witnessed the rise of the concept of Information Warfare and the mission of the AFEWC changed once again. Re-designated as the Air Force Information Warfare Center (AFIWC) in 1993, the Center's new mission revolved around information superiority. The organization explored, applied, and migrated offensive and defensive IW capabilities for operations, acquisition, and testing. In addition, AFIWC provided advanced Information Warfare training and technical expertise in communication and computer security. In 2006, as the emphasis shifted from Information Warfare to Information Operations, AFIWC shifted its focus once again, this time becoming the Air Force Information Operation Center (AFIOC). In that role, AFIOC focused on innovation and integration of Information

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

Operations into air, space, and the new realm of cyberspace. Finally, on 18 August 09, AFIOC transitioned to a wing structure and became the 688th Information Operations Wing, assigned to the newly established Twenty-Fourth Air Force. As a part of the cyber Numbered Air force, the wing's groups provided world class Information Operations and Engineering Implementation capabilities integrated across air, space and cyberspace. In addition, the wing assumed the lead in developing a range of new cyber capabilities to support the joint warfighter. On 15 August, HQ USAF approved the re-designation of the 688 IOW to the 688th Cyberspace Wing, effective 13 September 2013.

Decorations:

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award: 1965-1967, 2009-2010
Air Force Organizational Excellence Award: Multiple awards.



24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

5th Combat Communications Group



The Fifth Combat Communications Group (5 CCG) was established as the 5th Mobile Communications Group on 20 May 1964. The Air Force re-designated the unit as the 5th Combat Communications Group on 31 March 1976. After a short, two year period when it was known as the 5th Combat Information Systems Group, it reverted back to the 5th Combat Communications Group on 1 October 1986. The group has been assigned to the Air Force Communications Service, the 507th Tactical Air Control Wing, the 347th Fighter Wing, and Air Combat Command. On 18 August 2009, the group was assigned to 24th Air Force and then was placed under the 689th Combat Communications Wing when that organization was activated on 5 October 2009. Since its establishment in 1964, the group has called Robins AFB, Georgia, home. The 5th MOB, as it is affectionately known, groups provide deployable communications, computer systems, and HAMMER ACE capabilities anywhere in the world for USAF and Joint Force Commanders. The 5 CCG continues its long heritage and stands ready to lead expeditionary cyber operations into the future.

Streamers

Southwest Asia: Defense of Saudi Arabia, Liberation and Defense of Kuwait, 1991.

Decorations

Meritorious Unit Award 2007-2009

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with V device 1972-1973

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award: Multiple Awards

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

Inactivated 1 October 2013

689th Combat Communications Wing and 3d Combat Communications Group



The 689th Combat Communications Wing (689 CCW) traces its history back to 1948 and the creation of the 1931st Airways and Air Communications Squadron. On 1 March 1969, the Air Force elevated the unit to group status and designated it as the 1931st Communications Group. On 1 July 1984, the Air Force re-designated the group as the 1931st Information Systems Wing. After a further name change to the 1931st Communications Wing in 1986, the wing reverted to group status on 1 October 1990 and was inactivated on 26 September 1991. With the activation of 24 AF in August 2009 and the inclusion of Combat Communications under the Numbered Air Force, the Air Force re-designated the inactive 1931st Communications Group on 22 Sep 2009 and activated it on 5 October of that year as the third wing under the auspices of 24 AF. The 689 CCW consisted of two combat communications groups, the 3d and 5th, both of which have their own distinguished histories, with the “Third Herd” tracing its lineage to 1957 and the “Fifth Mob” to 1964. The heritage of the wing includes time stationed at Elmendorf AFB, Anchorage, Alaska from 1948 until 1991 as part of the Alaskan Communications Region. During this period, the group’s personnel supported relief efforts after the devastating Alaska Earthquake of 27 March 1964 for which the group received the Air force Outstanding Unit Award. Over time, the 1931st assumed greater responsibility for the entire Alaska region, and by 1972, the group included three squadrons and 13 detachments scattered across the state. Since its activation and assignment to 24 AF, the wing has called Robins AFB, Georgia home. Under the 24 AF, the wing’s two Combat Communications groups provide deployable communications, computer systems, navigational aids and air traffic control services anywhere in the world for USAF and Joint Force Commanders, and used the motto “Fear the BEAST.” Because of a congressionally mandated reduction in the number of combat communications groups in the United States Air Force, the HQ 689 CCW and the 3 CCG were inactivated on 1 October 2013.

Decorations:

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award: Multiple awards dating to 1959.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

Selected Chronology of Air Force Cyber Heritage

(U) 7 December 2005—Secretary of the Air Force Michael Wynne and Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley unveiled the new Air Force mission statement: “The mission of the United States Air Force is to deliver sovereign options for the defense of the United States of America and its global interests—to fly and fight in air, space, and cyberspace.” This marked the first time that cyberspace was included in the Air Force’s fundamental mission statement.

(U) 6 September 2006—Secretary of the Air Force Michael Wynne and Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley charged Air Education and Training Command, Air Combat Command, and Air Force Space Command to present “options for the Operational Command for Cyberspace.” According to the memorandum, the three MAJCOMS were required to “construct a plan to organize and to train in preparation for presentation to support Combat Commanders, and the specified supported agencies in Cyberspace.” Additionally, Air Force Material Command was charged with developing a research, development, and acquisition Strategy.

(U) 1 November 2006—Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley charged 8 AF/CC Lt. Gen. Robert J. Elder with integrating “the Air Force’s global kinetic and non-kinetic strike capability in support of the combatant commander through the full range of military operations with authority to become COMAFFOR for all USAF cyberspace elements.” In addition, he was to provide trained and equipped forces “to conduct sustained offensive and defensive operations through the electromagnetic spectrum and fully integrate these with air and space operations.” This “Go Do” letter was part of the Air Force’s initial attempt at establishing an operational cyberspace command and control organization.

(U) 18 September 2007—The Air Force activated Air Force Cyberspace Command (Provisional) (AFCYBER (P)) at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. The new organization was charged with developing an implementation plan for a permanent MAJCOM to be established on 1 October 2008.

(U) 12 August 2008—The new Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz implemented a “delay” in establishing Air Force Cyber Command in order to decide the best “form” for the new organization. In an interview, Secretary Donley noted the new cyber command “has to fit with Strategic Command; has to fit with the broader national security community. And we’re going to look at making sure that all those pieces fit together as we proceed.”

(U) 12 September 2008—The Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DoD Nuclear Weapons Management recommended that all non-bomber related missions, including the cyber mission, be removed from 8th Air Force and assigned to other Air Force Major Commands.

(U) 1-3 October 2008—Air Force leaders meet at the Corona Conference. One of the major topics of discussion was the organization of Air Force cyber forces. The deliberations in that meeting led to the establishment of 24th Air Force as the Air Force’s major cyber organization.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

(U) February 2009—The 24th Air Force Commander was “dual-hatted” as Air Force Network Operations Commander (AFNETOPS) with command authority for the Air Force Network (AFNET).

(U) 15 May 2009—Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz publicly announced the selection of Lackland AFB, Texas, as the Preferred Alternative for the 24th Air Force Headquarters pending the completion of a successful environmental assessment.

(U) 15 May 2009—Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz signed a directive memorandum stipulating that maintenance tasking orders (MTO), network tasking orders (NTO), and cyber control orders (CCO) issued by the AFNETOPS/CC now had the same authority as aircraft maintenance orders and lawful general orders.

(U) 27 May 2009—Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz wrote a Letter to Airmen in which he stressed that the Air Force had to undergo a cultural change regarding cyberspace operations. In essence, he stressed that Airmen “must treat our computers and networks similarly to our aircraft, satellites, and missiles.”

(U) 23 June 2009—Secretary of Defense Robert Gates ordered the establishment of United States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) as a sub-unified command of United States Strategic Command. Gates noted that the development of cyberspace posed an added risk to National Security. In establishing USCYBERCOM, Secretary Gates wrote that the “Department of Defense requires a command that possesses the required technical capability and remains focused on the integration of cyberspace operations.”

(U) 6 July 2009—Initial cadre of the 24th AF arrived at Lackland AFB, Texas. The group consisted of seven individuals and was known as the “Cyber 7.” The group included Brig. Gen. Charles K. Shugg, 24th Air Force Vice Commander, Col. John Clarke, Director of Staff, and the following members of the operations directorate: CMSgt Bruce C Collet, Col. Mark E. Ware, Lt. Col. Steven A. Renalli, Lt. Col. Michael P. O’Toole, and Mr. Arthur Wachdorf.

(U) 7 August 2009—Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley announced the final selection of Lackland AFB, Texas, as the home of Headquarters 24th Air Force.

(U) 11 August 2009—HQ USAF issued orders constituting the following units: HQ 24th Air Force (Air Forces Strategic), HQ 624th Operations Center, 90th Information Operations Squadron, and 26th Network Operations Squadron. The HQ 1957th Communications Group, inactivated 13 April 1992, was redesignated HQ 624th Operations Center, and the 38th Engineering and Installation Group was redesignated as HQ 38th Cyberspace Engineering Group.

(U) 11 August 2009—The Department of the Air Force issued Special Order GD-017, ordering the activation of the HQ 24th Air Force, HQ 624th Operations Center, and Det. 1, 624th Operations Center, effective 18 August 2009.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

(U) 11 August 2009—Headquarters USAF relieved the HQ 67th Network Warfare Wing and its subordinate units from Air Combat Command (ACC) and assigned the wing to Air Force Space Command and 24th Air Force, effective 18 August 2009.

(U) 11 August 2009—Headquarters USAF relieved the HQ Air Force Information Operations Center from Air Combat Command (ACC), redesignated it as the 688th Information Operations Wing, and assigned the wing and its subordinate units to Air Force Space Command and the 24th Air Force, effective 18 August 2009.

(U) 18 August 2009—Headquarters, 24th Air Force was activated at Lackland AFB, Texas on this date. Air Force Space Command Commander Gen. C. Robert Kehler presided over the ceremony in which Maj. Gen. Richard E. Webber assumed command of the new organization.

(U) 20 August 2009—Following the Secretary of Defense's approval for the establishment of U.S. Cyber Command and after the activation of 24th Air Force, Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz issued a memorandum for all Airmen that summarized the actions taken to date by the Air Force regarding support for the cyber mission. As the memo noted, "Your Air Force is taking critical steps to support the DoD cyberspace effort and to define the key role you will play in these developments." Furthermore, the memo again emphasized that "we must think of cyberspace as a mission-critical domain where operations are characterized by rigor and discipline, and are executed with precision and reliability."

(U) 5 October 2009—the 689th Combat Communications Wing was activated at Robins AFB, Georgia with the mission to "train, deploy, and deliver expeditionary and specialized communications, air traffic control and landing systems for Humanitarian Relief Operations and dominant combat operations, anytime, anywhere." Maj. Gen. Richard E. Webber, 24th Air Force commander, appointed Col. Theresa Giorlando as the first commander of the 689th CCW. This was the third wing to be placed under the 24th Air Force.

(U) November 2009—Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz unveiled the "Rise of the Cyber Wingman" philosophy. The Rise of the Cyber Wingman incorporated ten cyber principles that Airmen needed to know.

(U) 25 November 2009—The Air Force Historical Research Agency approved the 24th Air Force emblem.

(U) 22 January 2010—Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) commander Gen. C. Robert Kehler announced that 24th Air Force and the 624th Operations Center were at Initial Operational Capability.

(U) 21 April 2010—Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz approved the new Cyberspace badge and the guidelines for wearing the new device.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

(U) 21 May 2010—Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates announced the appointment of Army Gen. Keith B. Alexander as the first commander of the United States Cyber Command at Fort Meade, Maryland. USCYBERCOM was a sub-unified command of U.S. Strategic Command.

(U) 8 September 2010—The 659th ISR Group was activated at Fort Meade, Maryland. The 659th ISR Group, commanded by Col. Peter Lambert, was to provide direct ISR support to the 24th Air Force. The group was assigned to the 70th Intelligence Wing.

(U) 1 October 2010—AFSPC Commander Gen. C. Robert Kehler declared Full Operational Capability (FOC) for the 24th Air Force. To achieve this milestone, the 24th Air Force was required to perform all component Numbered Air Force responsibilities in support of combatant commanders for the Air Force's cyberspace mission. It was also required to "execute full organizational structure (24th AF HQ with three wings) of assigned forces." Finally, the 24th Air Force had to pass a MAJCOM directed readiness inspection, which was completed on 11 September.

(U) 14 October 2010—The Air Force's LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education approved and published Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 3-12, *Cyberspace Operations*.

(U) 7 December 2010—The USAF re-designated 24 AF from Air Forces Strategic (AFSTRAT) to Air Forces Cyber (AFCYBER) to reflect its mission more appropriately as the service component to U.S. Cyber Command, a sub-unified command of U.S. Strategic Command.

(U) 7 January 2011—HQ 24 AF and the 624 OC received the Outstanding Unit Award for meritorious service from 18 August 2009 to 1 October 2010.

(U) 1 February 2011—24th Air Force Command CMSgt Kevin G. Slater hosted the first ever Cyber Senior Enlisted Summit at Lackland AFB, Texas. Eighteen senior enlisted leaders from all branches of the military attended the summit to "pass on best practices and learn from each other."

(U) 21 February-11 March 2011—Red Flag 11-3 became the first Red Flag exercise to fully integrate space and cyber elements. Space and cyber were "fully integrated at the tactical level from planning through execution and debrief." The 57th Information Aggressor Squadron served as the cyber "red team."

(U) 29 April 2011—HQ 24 AF held its first change of command ceremony. Major General Richard E. Webber relinquished command to Major General Suzanne M. Vautrinot. Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) commander Gen. William L. Shelton presided over the ceremony.

(U) 21 June 2011—24 AF Commander Maj. Gen. Suzanne M. Vautrinot presided over the first 689th Combat Communications Wing change of command ceremony in which the wing's first commander, Col. Theresa Giorlando, relinquished command to Col. Joseph H. Scherrer.

(U) 22 July 2011—24 AF Commander Maj Gen Suzanne M. Vautrinot presided over the 688th Information Operations Wing (688 IOW) change of command ceremony as Colonel Paul A.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

Welch assumed command in place of Col Robert J. Skinner. Prior to assuming command of the 688 IOW, Col Welch served as the vice commander of the 67th Network Warfare Wing.

(U) 31 Oct 2011—SSgt Stephen J. Herron received the Bronze Star medal for his deployment to Afghanistan. SSgt Herron served seven months as the communications non-commissioned officer to the 466A Explosive Ordnance Disposal Flight. SSgt Heron was a member of the 689 CCW.

(U) 9 November 2011—Congressman Jim Langevin, representing Rhode Island, visited 24 AF. Congressman Langevin served on the House Armed Services Committee’s Emerging Threats and Capabilities sub-committee. During his visit, Langevin stated that securing the nation’s infrastructure against cyber attacks was a top priority.

(U) 6 January 2012—The 38th Cyberspace Engineering Installation Group (38 CEIG) of the 688 IOW activated three new squadrons. The three squadrons included the 38th Contracting Squadron, the 38th Engineering Squadron and the 38th Operations Support Squadron.

(U) 12 January 2012—24 AF Command Chief Master Sergeant Kevin Slater hosted a Chief’s Call with USCYBERCOM senior enlisted leader Command Master Chief Daniel Miller.

(U) 13 January 2012—Lt General William T. Lord, the USAF’s chief information officer and chief of warfighting integration, visited Lackland AFB and spoke to members of 24 AF. During his talk, General Lord compared “current cyber operations to flight operations between World War I and World War II.”

(U) 27 Feb-16 March 2012—24 AF personnel participated in the annual Red Flag Exercise 12-3, held at Nellis AFB, Nevada. The Red Flag exercises increasingly included cyber operations in larger roles, including the use of Blue Teams to defend exercise networks, while Red Teams functioned as aggressors during the exercise.

(U) 6-7 March 2012—Major General Vautrinot hosted the 24 AF Strategic Leadership Meeting at Lackland AFB, Texas.

(U) 7 March 2012—The USAF announced that the 3d Combat Communications Group (3 CCG) would be inactivated as part of overall “Force Structure” changes. This was done to reduce deployable communications capability to match a reduction in the Combat Air Forces (CAF).

(U) 10 July 2012—Maj Gen Suzanne Vautrinot, 24 AF/CC, presided over the 67th Network Warfare Change of command ceremony in which Colonel Kevin B. Wooton relinquished command to Colonel William J. Poirier.

(U) 16 July 2012—AFSPC commander Gen. William Shelton issued his command’s space and cyberspace priorities. Nine prioritized cyber capabilities were identified: Proactive defense; Defensive Counter Cyber; Cyberspace ISR and Situational Awareness; Persistent Network Operations; Data Confidentiality and Integrity Systems; Cyberspace operations center; Offensive Counter-cyberspace; Network extension and resiliency; and Influence operations.

24th Air Force Heritage Pamphlet

(U) 30 Jul-3 August 2012—24 AF underwent a week long Computer Network Defense Service Provider (CNDSP) re-certification inspection.

(U) 7-8 August 2012—24 AF and the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency (AFISRA) hosted an Industry Day for companies from the civilian sector who wished to develop business ties with both agencies.

(U) 17 September 2012—The Air Force Association presented the 24 AF with the 2012 Theodore Von Karman award for “Outstanding Contribution to National Defense in the field of aerospace science and engineering.” The 24 AF shared the award with the USAF’s Space and Missile Center’s Engineering and integration Team.

(U) 24 September 2012—Lt Col James Burleigh of the 24 AF Operations Directorate received the Bronze Star for his deployment to Afghanistan from March to September. During his deployment, Lt Col Burleigh served as the Expeditionary cyber Support element-Afghanistan deputy officer in charge and computer network operations planner.

(U) 29 Oct-9 November 2012—24 AF personnel participated in the second annual Cyber Flag exercise at Nellis AFB, Nevada. The USCYBERCOM designed exercise allowed DOD professionals to test their cyber skills “against a realistic adversary in a tactical virtual environment.” All told, the USAF deployed 70 people to participate in the exercise.

(U) 7 November 2012—Maj Gen Suzanne Vautrinot, 24 AF/CC, received the Symantec Corporation 2012 Cyber award in the National/Federal Defense Category.

(U) 25 June 2013—Maj Gen James “Kevin” McLaughlin assumed command from Maj Gen Suzanne M. Vautrinot. After the Change of Command ceremony, a retirement ceremony was held for General Vautrinot.

(U) 11 July 2013—Lt Col Bradley Pyburn assumed command of the 624th Operations Center from Col Alan R. Berry, who transferred to AFCYBER Forward at Fort Meade, Maryland.

(U) 19 July 2013—24 AF Vice Commander Colonel Richard A. Lipsey retired from active duty after 28 years of service.

(U) 24 July 2013—Headquarters USAF approved the re-designation of six 24 AF units.

(U) 13 Sep 2013—HQ AFSPC re-designated the 688th Information Operations Wing as the 688th Cyberspace Wing, and the 318th Information Operations Wing as the 318th Cyberspace Operations Group.

(U) 1 Oct 2013—HQ AFSPC re-designated the 67th Network Warfare Wing as the 67th Cyberspace Wing, the 67th Network Warfare Group as the 67th Cyberspace Operations Group, the 26th Network Operations Group as the 26th Cyberspace Operations Group, and the 690th Network Support Group as the 690th Cyberspace Operations Group.