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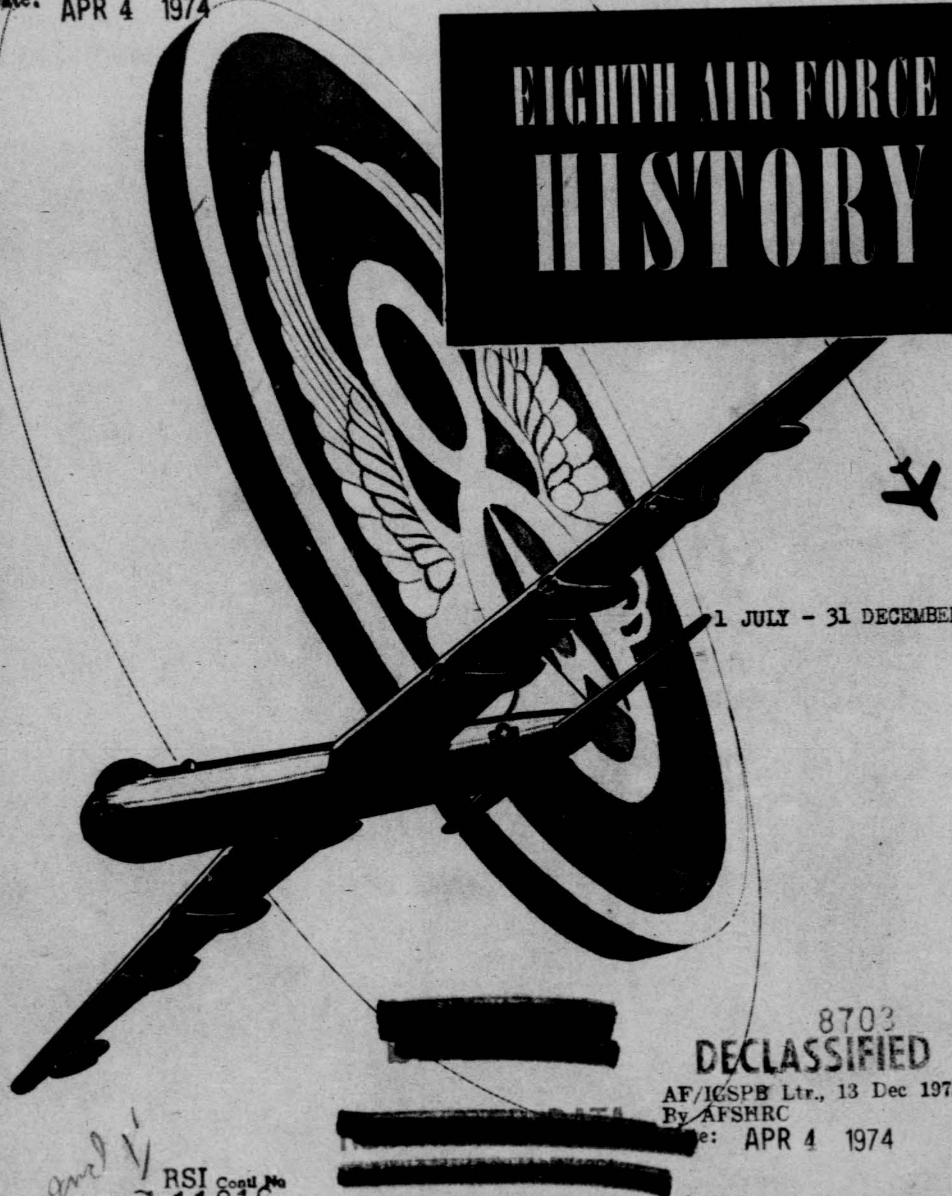
EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORY



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EIGHTH AIR FORCE

HISTORY

1 JULY - 31 DECEMBER 1954

Historical Division
Office of Information
Headquarters Eighth Air Force
Fort Worth, Texas

SECRET

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ATOMIC ENERGY ACT 1954

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ORGANIZATION & ADMINISTRATION

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Chapter I

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Commanded by Major General John B. Montgomery, the Eighth Air Force is one of the three numbered air forces comprising the Strategic Air Command (SAC). A global striking force, unrestricted geographically, the Eighth Air Force is charged with maintaining capability to operate anywhere in the world on short notice. Headquarters for the Eighth is located at Carswell Air Force Base, Fort Worth, Texas, and from this headquarters General Montgomery exercises command jurisdiction over the combat and support elements assigned to this air force. The size and complexity of the command can be demonstrated by noting that as of the end of December 1954, this air force numbered among its major organizations, five heavy bombardment wings, three medium bombardment wings, three strategic fighter wings, one heavy reconnaissance wing, two strategic support squadrons, five base air divisions, eight air base groups, two air base squadrons, one communications squadron, one reconnaissance technical squadron, one independent air refueling squadron, and one aviation depot squadron.

At the end of the year this air force was operating a total of ten active stations, two inactive bases, and two other stations were utilized in a tenant status. In addition, this air force has development responsibility for two other stations which ultimately will be assigned to this command. Location of the Eighth Air Force bases, as

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well as other SAC installations, is shown on the appended map.[1/]

The following represents a list of stations and major organizations assigned the Eighth Air Force as of 31 December 1954: ABILENE AIR FORCE BASE, Abilene, Texas - No units assigned. ALTUS AIR FORCE BASE, Altus, Oklahoma - 96th Bombardment Wing, Medium, and 96th Air Base Group. BERGSTROM AIR FORCE BASE, Austin, Texas - 42d Air Division, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, and 808th Air Base Group. BIGGS AIR FORCE BASE, El Paso, Texas - 810th Air Division, 95th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, 97th Bombardment Wing, Medium, 810th Air Base Group, and 1st Strategic Support Squadron. CARSWELL Air Force Base, Fort Worth, Texas - Headquarters Eighth Air Force, 19th Air Division, 7th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, 11th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, 824th Air Base Group, 18th Communications Squadron (Air Force), and 8th Reconnaissance Technical Squadron. CLINTON-SHERMAN AIR FORCE BASE, Clinton, Oklahoma - No units assigned. DOW AIR FORCE BASE, Bangor, Maine - 506th Strategic Fighter Wing and 506th Air Base Group. ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, Rapid City, South Dakota - 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Heavy, 28th Air Base Group, 4th Strategic Support Squadron, and Detachment 1, 8th Reconnaissance Technical Squadron. GRAY AIR FORCE BASE, Killeen, Texas - 4001st Air Base Squadron. LORING AIR FORCE BASE, Limestone, Maine - 45th Air Division, 42d Bombardment Wing, Heavy,

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1/ Map, Eighth Air Force and Other SAC Stations. See Exhibit #1.

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and 42d Air Base Group. MATAGORDA ISLAND BOMBING AND GUNNERY RANGE, Victoria, Texas - 4004th Air Base Squadron. WALKER AIR FORCE BASE, Roswell, New Mexico - 47th Air Division, 6th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, 509th Bombardment Wing, Medium, and 812th Air Base Group. The 380th Air Refueling Squadron is located at SHEPPARD AIR FORCE BASE, Wichita Falls, Texas (tenant status) and the 7th Aviation Depot Squadron is stationed at Goose Bay, Labrador (tenant status). 2/

This air force has had development responsibility for the currently inactive bases at Abilene, Texas and Clinton, Oklahoma. These two bases have been officially assigned to the Eighth Air Force and will assume operational status in the near future. The two other stations over which this command holds development responsibility are Plattsburgh Air Force Base, New York and Portsmouth Air Force Base, New Hampshire.

The organization of Headquarters Eighth Air Force is similar to that of Headquarters SAC and is identical with the headquarters of the other numbered air forces of this command. Mobility planning of SAC requires the integration of parts of two or more subordinate headquarters into an operating task force capable of immediate command effectiveness in a forward area. To be able to accomplish the integration with speed and effectiveness it is essential that the normal routines

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2/ Directory, Eighth Air Force Organizations, 31 Dec 54. See Exhibit #2.

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of the headquarters of the numbered air forces be established on a common basis in order to permit meshing of the various components into a structure capable of effecting the basic purpose of the command. Obviously, the integration should not be delayed by the necessity of fitting individuals into unfamiliar organizational structures. This requires the pre-arrangement and standardization of organizational patterns for the various units concerned, and the continued adherence to these patterns.[3/] Not only does this standardization of organization apply to the headquarters of the numbered air forces of SAC, but it also applies to the structure or organizational pattern of comparable SAC air divisions, combat wings, air base groups, squadrons, and the different types of separate organizations assigned within the command.

This standardization of organizations within SAC allows for the interchange of individuals as well as complete units. For example, a key staff member in one numbered air force can assume an identical function in another numbered air force with a minimum of indoctrination or breaking in. Similarly, a complete wing can transfer from one SAC air force to another, or a combat squadron can transfer from one wing to another without encountering any strange organizational patterns. Thus, the utility of standardized organizations accrues benefits not only in regard to mobility planning, but in everyday SAC usage.

3/SAC Regulation 20-1, dtd 28 July 54. See Exhibit #3.

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The headquarters of this air force is responsible for the direction and supervision of the activities of all assigned and attached units, installations, and personnel, maintaining them in a state of readiness commensurate with the requirements of the command mission. Thus, the headquarters must provide command and staff supervision over the air divisions, combat wings, air base groups, and other units comprising this command. The organizational structure of the Eighth Air Force Headquarters consists of the Command Section which includes the Commander, deputy Commander, and Chief of Staff; six Directorates which include Personnel, Intelligence, Operations, Materiel, Plans, and Comptroller; five Staff Offices which include Inspector General, Surgeon, Judge Advocate, Special Assistant (Information Office), and Chaplain; the Adjutant; and the Headquarters Squadron Section. Provision for the headquarters organization, as well as the major functions and responsibilities of the various Directorates and Staff Agencies, are outlined in the appended regulation and inclosed chart. 4/

Organization of the SAC Combat Wing

The combat element of this air force consists of the 12 combat wings enumerated earlier in the chapter. Eleven of those wings are fully operational, while the 96th Bombardment Wing, M, is still in the process of manning and equipping. The combat wing is an organization

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4/Ibid.

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designed for immediate deployment for sustained operations, combining into a single unit the combat and supporting elements necessary to carry out this mission. It provides for clean-cut command channels and assignment of personnel to the unit charged with their utilization and welfare. An individual is clothed, housed, paid, promoted, and administered by the commander who is charged with working that individual. The wing is the basic operational unit. The groups and squadrons are mutually dependent upon and operate under the direction of a single commander, the wing commander. By molding all interdependent elements into a whole, a self-sufficient organization, capable of sustained effective action, is formed. The operation of the wing involves two separate workloads. The first is that incident to the readiness mission of the wing, while the second is that incident to the operation of the station under peacetime conditions. 5/

The combat wing organization consists of the wing headquarters, three or more combat squadrons, three maintenance squadrons, a tactical hospital, and air base group with support squadrons, and a fixed medical facility (USAF Hospital). The wing headquarters is the directing head for assigned units and functions as both a planning and operating agency. The wing commander is the combat commander. The air base group is responsible for those functions generally associated with operation of

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5/ SAC Regulation 20-15, dtd 4 Aug 54. See Exhibit #4.

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the base. The group includes a headquarters and six squadrons, ie, air police, food service, motor vehicle, operations, installations, and supply. The commander of the air base group is designated as the base commander.[6]

The function of the wing headquarters is to provide command and staff supervision over assigned units and to exercise such control over attached organizations as may be prescribed. The headquarters is organically capable of performing this function and directing the operation of the base occupied in such a manner as to insure adequate training essential in the accomplishment of the assigned mission. The wing headqueaters is the single addressee on a one-wing station. The wing headquarters organization consists of a Command Section, plus the following staff agencies: Inspection, Adjutant, Squadron headquarters, Comptroller, Personnel, Operations, Materiel. The squadrons assigned directly to the wing headquarters include three combat squadrons, a field maintenance squadron, a periodic maintenance squadron, and an armament-electronics maintenance squadron. In some instances the wing may also include an air refueling squadron and/or a reconnaissance technical squadron.[7]

The Base Air Division

The connecting link between the combat wings and the numbered air force headquarters is the base air division. The base air division

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6/ Ibid.
7/ Ibid.

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is not to be confused with such SAC organizations as the 3d, 5th, and 7th Air Divisions which have approximately the same status in SAC as the numbered air force. The base air division is a small Table of Organization headquarters utilized on SAC stations where two or more combat wings are assigned. There are five such base air divisions currently operating in this air force. These air divisions are provided to supervise, direct, and coordinate operations of the assigned wings on multiple wing stations. The primary mission of an air division is combat training of the assigned wings. The combat capabilities of the assigned wings are the basic factors in the performance of this primary mission, therefore, the air division concentrates more on operations, flying training, and aircraft maintenance in the subordinate units than administrative and other support activities. The primary responsibility of the air division is the formulation of policies. In order to avoid the necessity for direct participation in routine matters, the air division commander utilizes the command and staff elements of the subordinate units to the maximum extent possible consistent with the assigned functions. The air division headquarters acts as arbitrator to resolve controversial issues between the assigned units. The authorized strength of the base air division headquarters is 10 officers and seven airmen. The commander of the air division is the senior officer assigned to the base. The air division headquarters is the addressee on a division station. Units assigned to the air division are the

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combat wings, the air base group, and the USAF Hospital. The air division headquarters organization consists of the Command Section, Personnel, Operations, and Materiel.[8]

The major responsibilities of the air division headquarters are enumerated as follows: 1. Provide command supervision and direction of the combat operations of assigned wings. 2. Provide command supervision and direction of the combat training of assigned wings, insuring that the highest standards of quality are attained. 3. Promote standardization of operating techniques of assigned combat wings. 4. Insure that proper emphasis within combat wings is being placed upon the essential preparations for execution of assigned combat missions. 5. Monitor closely and participate in, by means of observer personnel, the execution of all simulated combat missions conducted by the assigned combat wings. 6. Provide command supervision, direction, and correlation of the functions of the air base group. 7. Correlate the activities of all assigned units. 8. Advise the numbered air force headquarters concerned as to any action required to improve operational capability of assigned units. Organizational charts for single and multiple wing stations are shown in the appended document.[9]

Changes in Eighth Air Force Units

As was true during the first half of 1954, no new tactical

8/ Ibid.
9/ Ibid.

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organizations were added to this air force during the period covered by this history. Otherwise, changes in the units and stations of this command followed the normal pattern which included reorganization of units, inactivation of units, activation of certain organizations, redesignation of one station, assignment of one new station, and continued developmental responsibility for several new stations. The one surprising development during the last half of 1954, was the announcement in October of the planned movement of the Eighth Air Force Headquarters from Carswell Air Force Base to Westover Air Force Base in the spring of 1955. The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to a discussion of organizational and station changes which occurred during the period 1 July through 31 December 1954, and to the initial plans for movement of the command headquarters.

Inactivation of Certain Units

Inactivation of units during the current reporting period was confined to the 24th WAF Squadron, Carswell Air Force Base, and the aviation squadrons located at several stations of this air force. The 24th WAF Squadron was inactivated at Carswell on 1 July 1954.[10/] Personnel assigned and attached to the squadron were absorbed in other units at Carswell. This action marked the inactivation of the last WAF squadron assigned in this air force. Two other WAF squadrons formerly assigned

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10/SAC Gen Ord No. 47, dtd 7 Jun 54. See Exhibit #5.

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in the Eighth Air Force, the 23d WAF Squadron at Ellsworth Air Force Base and the 25th WAF Squadron at Walker Air Force Base, were inactivated effective 18 January 1954.[11]

The most significant inactivation during the current period concerned the discontinuance of four aviation squadrons assigned in this command. Effective on 1 July 1954, the following units were inactivated: 7th Aviation Squadron, Bombardment, Heavy, Carswell Air Force Base; 27th Aviation Squadron, Strategic Fighter, Bergstrom Air Force Base; 509th Aviation Squadron, Bombardment, Medium, Walker Air Force Base; and 580th Aviation Squadron, Biggs Air Force Base.[12] Each of these aviation squadrons was formerly assigned to the similarly numbered wing at the stations indicated, except for the 580th Squadron which was assigned to the 810th Air Division at Biggs. Personnel and equipment formerly assigned to the aviation squadrons were reassigned to the Armament-Electronics Maintenance Squadrons on the stations concerned.

Special Weapons Teams for A&E Squadrons

As noted above the Aviation Squadrons located on several bases of this command were inactivated effective on 1 July 1954. Effective on the same date that these squadrons were inactivated Special Weapons support became the responsibility of the Armament-Electronics Maintenance Squadron in the various Bombardment and Strategic Fighter Wings of this

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11/SAC Gen Ord No. 85, dtd 4 dec 53.
12/SAC Gen Ord No. 48, dtd 10 Jun 54. See Exhibit #6.

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command. The Special Weapons function of the Armament-Electronics Maintenance Squadron was to be performed by a Special Weapons Team assigned to the squadron. Each of the squadrons was augmented by an increase in strength of one officer and 11 airmen. The personnel to man these 12 man teams were drawn from personnel formerly assigned to the inactivated Aviation Squadrons. Manning and organization of these Special Weapons Teams is covered in some detail in the Progress Reports pertaining to the activity. 13/

Reorganization of Units

A number of organizations assigned this air force were reorganized during the last six months of 1954. In most instances the reorganizations consisted of nothing more than slight increases or decreases in the authorized strength of the unit or units affected. Changes of this nature occurred at intervals throughout the reporting period and are described briefly as follows:

97th Wing and 810th Air Base Group

As was noted in the proceding history of this command, most of the organizations assigned in the Eighth Air Force were reorganized

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13/a. Secret, Report, Hq 8AF, Subj "Progress Report #1, Atomic Weapons Support Augmentation for A&E Maintenance Squadrons (8AF Programming Plan 19-54) Status as of 25 June 1954," dtd 28 Jun 54. Control #13839C. See Exhibit #7.

b. Secret, Report, Hq 8AF, Subj "Progress Report #2, Atomic Weapons Support Augmentation for A&E Maint Sqdns (8AF Programming Plan 19-54) Status as of 25 Jul 54," dtd 28 Jul 54. Control #16206C. See Exhibit #8.

c. Secret, Report, Hq 8AF, Subj "Atomic Weapons Support Augmentation for A&E Maint Sqdns (8AF Programming Plan 19-54) Status as of 1 Oct 54", dtd 4 Oct 54. Control #21436C. See Exhibit #9.

d. Secret, Report, Hq 8AF, Subj "Progress Report #4 (Final), Atomic Weapons Support Augmentation for A&E Maint Sqdns (8AF Programming Plan 19-54) Status as of 1 Nov 54," dtd 9 Nov 54. Control #24526C. See Exhibit #10.

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under new manning documents during the period May-June 1954, however, certain units at Biggs Air Force Base were not reorganized until 8 July 1954. Effective on that date the units were reorganized to conform to authorizations provided in Tables of Organization dated 1 January 1954. No significant change in overall personnel strength resulted from the reorganization. Biggs units concerned in the reorganization are listed as follows: Headquarters 97th Bombardment Wing, Medium; 340th, 341st, and 342d Bombardment Squadrons, Medium; 97th Air Refueling Squadron, Medium; 97th Armament and Electronics Maintenance Squadron; 97th Field Maintenance Squadron, 97th Periodic Maintenance Squadron; Headquarters 810th Air Base Group; 810th Operations Squadron; 810th Supply Squadron; 810th Motor Vehicle Squadron; and 810th Installations Squadron. Authorized strengths of each of these organizations is reflected in the appended order. 14/

Tactical Hospitals

Effective on 10 August 1954, the Tactical Hospitals assigned to combat wings of this air force were reorganized. The only result of the reorganization was a slight change in authorized strength of these hospitals. Units concerned in the reorganization were the 6th, 7th, 11th, 12th, 27th, 28th, 42d, 96th, 95th, 97th, 506th, and 509th Tactical Hospitals. Under the reorganization the Tactical Hospitals of Medium Bombardment Wings were authorized 27 officers and 95 airmen, Tactical

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14/SAC Gen Ord No. 50, dtd 18 Jun 54. See Exhibit #11.

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Hospitals of the Heavy Wings were authorized 35 officers and 134 airmen, the 27th and 506th Tactical Hospitals were each authorized 18 officers and 76 airmen, and the 12th Tactical Hospital was authorized 17 officers and 73 airmen.[15] It should be noted that the last three hospitals mentioned above are assigned to Strategic Fighter Wings of this command.

7th Aviation Field Depot Squadron

The 7th Aviation Field Depot Squadron, assigned to this air force, but located in a tenant status at Goose Bay, Labrador, was reorganized effective on 18 August 1954.[16] Prior to that date the squadron had operated under Table of Organization 1-1935 dated 1 October 1952. The squadron was authorized a total of 24 officers and 212 airmen. Under the reorganization effected on 18 August 1954, the squadron was manned under T/O 1-1935, dated 1 January 1954. Authorized strength was 15 officers and 90 airmen. By comparison it would appear that this reorganization resulted in a more than 50% decrease in authorized squadron strength. Actually, the reorganization resulted in the deletion of the Security Division from the squadron T/O and the continuation of that function by personnel authorized on a squadron T/DA. This supplemental manning document authorized two officers and 91 airmen. Thus under the new T/O and the T/DA the squadron was authorized a total of 17 officers and 181 airmen.[17]

15/Ibid.
16/Confidential, SAC Gen Ord No. 52, dtd 12 Jul 54. See Exhibit #12.
17/T/O 1-1935, dtd 1 Jan 54 and PAV SAO 008, dtd Sep 54.

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10th and 33d Crash-Rescue Boat Flights

Effective on 1 October 1954, the 10th and 33d Crash-Rescue Boat Flights of this air force were reorganized. The 10th Boat Flight located at Matagorda Island Bombing and Gunnery Range (Texas) is authorized five warrant officers and 51 airmen, while the 33d Boat Flight located at Southwest Harbor (Maine) is authorized five warrant officers and 31 airmen.[18] The 33d Flight was reorganized again on 18 November with a strength of seven warrant officers and 43 airmen.[19]

28th Supply Squadron

The 28th Supply Squadron, 28th Air Base Group, Ellsworth Air Force Base, was reorganized effective on 1 July 1954. The squadron was reorganized under T/O 1-8164P, dated 1 January 1954, with an authorized strength of 13 officers and 227 airmen.[20] This represented an increase of one officer and two airmen positions over the previous authorization.

Activation of Clinton-Sherman Air Force Base

Clinton-Sherman Air Force Base, Clinton, Oklahoma was activated on an inactive status on 15 September 1954. Effective with activation the new station was assigned to the command jurisdiction of Strategic Air Command and further assigned to jurisdiction of the Eighth Air Force.[21]

18/ SAC Gen Ord No. 63, dtd 8 Sep 54. See Exhibit #13.
19/ SAC Gen Ord No. 72, dtd 25 Oct 54. See Exhibit #14.
20/ SAC Gen Ord No. 45, dtd 28 May 54. See Exhibit #15.
21/ SAC Gen Ord No. 73, dtd 29 Oct 54. See Exhibit #16.

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Developmental responsibility for the former World War II Naval station will be the responsibility of this air force. Specific information relating to the new station will be presented in future histories of this command.

Activation of the 45th Air Division

The Headquarters 45th Air Division having been assigned to the Strategic Air Command was activated at Loring Air Force Base, Limestone, Maine, effective 8 October 1954. Concurrent with activation, the new air division was assigned to the Eighth Air Force. On the same date the 42d Bombardment Wing, Heavy, located at Loring Air Force Base, was assigned to the new air division. Other units assigned to the division included the 42d Air Base Group and the 4034th USAF Hospital.[22]

On 8 October 1954, Brigadier General Bertram C. Harrison, former commander of the 42d Bombardment Wing, H, assumed command of the 45th Air Division. On the same date Colonel Jerome Tarter, former commander of the 42d Air Base Group, moved up to command the 42d Bombardment Wing, and Colonel Jackson W. Lewis became commander of the 42d Air Base Group.[23]

Redesignation of Limestone Air Force Base

Effective on 1 October 1954, Limestone Air Force Base, Limestone, Maine, was officially redesignated as Loring Air Force Base.[24] The base

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22/ SAC Gen Ord No. 69, dtd 6 Oct 54. See Exhibit #17.
23/ Secret, 42d Bomb Wing, H, History, Oct 54.
24/ DAF, Gen Ord No. 34, dtd 16 Sep 54. See Exhibit #18.
Special Bulletin No. 13, Hq 42d AB Gp, dtd 1 Oct 54.

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was named in honor of Major Charles J. Loring Jr., a native of Portlabd, Maine, who died while leading a jet dive-bombing mission in North Korea on 22 November 1952. Major Loring was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously on 5 May 1953. At the time of his death Major Loring was leading a flight of F-80's in a close support mission against enemy gun positions near Sniper Ridge, North Korea. As the leader of the flight Major Loring became the target of heavy and accurate ground fire during his dive. He continued the attack until his plane was hit, then he deliberately made a 45 degree turn toward enemy artillery pieces to his left and aimed his plane at those guns. His aircraft crashed into the midst of the emplacements, destroying them. It was his 51st combat mission of the Korean War.25/

Born on 2 October 1918, Major Loring was graduated from Cheverus High School, Portland, and the Maine School of Commerce. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1942 and was sent to the European Theater as a fighter pilot. Shot down over Belgium he was in a German prisoner of war camp for approximately five months. During the ETO service he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal. Between World War II and the outbreak of the Korean War he served as a recruiting officer and as an instructor at different positions in the United States. Major Loring is survived by his widow, Mrs. Elsie C. Loring, and their two daughters, Aldor, 5, and Charlene, 3. They reside at 1819D Patton Drive, Meade Heights, Fort Meade, Maryland.26/

25/42d Bomb Wing, History, Oct 54.
26/Ibid.

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Reassignment of the 321st Air Refueling Squadron

Effective on 8 November 1954, the 321st Air Refueling Squadron located at Sheppard Air Force Base, Wichita Falls, Texas was relieved from assignment to this air force and reassigned to the 321st Bombardment wing, Medium, Second Air Force. The unusual thing about the above action was that the reassignment of the squadron was strictly a paper move. Equipment and personnel formerly assigned to the 321st Squadron remained in place at Sheppard Air Force Base. On the same date that the 321st Squadron was reassigned and moved to Maxwell Air Force Base, the 380th Air Refueling Squadron, formerly located at Lincoln Air Force Base (Fifteenth Air Force) was reassigned to this air force with duty station at Sheppard.[27/] This was also a paper move with only the squadron designation (380th) actually moving to Sheppard. Thus, the new 380th Air Refueling Squadron assigned at Sheppard Air Force Base was manned and equipped with the personnel and equipment formerly belonging to the 321st Squadron.

Redesignation of Units

Another action which occurred in this command on 8 November 1954, was the redesignation of two organizations assigned to the Eighth Air Force. Effective on that date the 7th Aviation Field Depot Squadron, assigned to this air force and located at Goose Bay, Labrador was redesignated as the 7th Aviation Depot Squadron.[28/] On the same day

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27/SAC Gen Ord No. 71, dtd 18 Oct 54. See Exhibit #19.
28/SAC Gen Ord No. 69, dtd 6 Oct 54. See Exhibit #17.

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the 18th Communications Squadron, Command, located at Carswell Air Force Base was redesignated as the 18th Communications Squadron, Air Force.[29] In the case of both organizations the action consisted of a change in name only and had no effect on personnel, equipment, and or mission of the unit.

Dow AFB Designated as Permanent Station

Effective on 26 November 1954, Dow Air Force Base was designated by the Department of the Air Force as a permanent Air Force installation.[30] Dow is the Eighth Air Force station at Bangor, Maine. During the current reporting period Dow was the home of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing and the 506th Air Base Group.

Designation and Organization of Provisional Forces

Effective on 1 September 1954, the Strategic Air Command OBOE Provisional force was designated and organized at Limestone Air Force Base, Maine. Major General John B. Montgomery was designated as commander.[31] Effective on the same date the following provisional units were assigned to SAC OBOE: Tule Task Force Provisional, Goose Bay Task Force Provisional, Ernest Harmon Task Force Provisional, and Limestone Task Force Provisional.[32] Goose Bay Task Force Provisional was designated and organized at Goose Bay on 1 September 1954, with Brigadier General Charles B. Westover as commander.[33] Tule Task Force Provisional was

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29/Ibid.
30/DAF Gen Ord No. 40, dtd 26 Nov 54. See Exhibit #20.
31/Secret, SAC Gen Ord No. 57, dtd 26 Aug 54, Control No. 19275C.
32/Ibid.
33/Secret, SAC Gen Ord No. 58, dtd 26 Aug 54, Control No. 19276C.

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designated and organized at Tule on 1 September 1954, with Brigadier General Charles W. Schott as commander.[34] Ernest Harmon Task Force Provisional was designated and organized at Ernest Harmon on 1 September 1954, with Brigadier General Nils O. Ohman as commander.[35] Limestone Task Force Provisional was designated and organized at Limestone on 1 September 1954, with Brigadier General Bertram C. Harrison as commander.[36]

Reorganization of Tactical Squadrons

Effective on 18 November 1954, all tactical or combat squadrons of the Eighth Air Force were reorganized under Tables of Organization dated 1 July 1954. Units affected by this action included medium and heavy bombardment squadrons, heavy reconnaissance squadrons, strategic fighter squadrons, air refueling squadrons, and strategic support squadrons. Reorganization under the new T/O's resulted in only slight changes in the authorized strength of the squadrons. Squadrons reorganized and strength changes resulting from the action were as follows:

The 341st and 342d Bombardment Squadrons of the 97th Wing and the 393d, 715th, and 830th Bombardment Squadrons of the 509th Wing were reorganized under T/O 1-1173P, dated 1 July 1954.[37] Each of the squadrons was authorized 101 officers and 233 airmen as opposed to 85 officers and 209 airmen under the previous T/O's. Each of these medium bombardment

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34/Secret, SAC Gen Ord No. 59, dtd 26 Aug 54, Control No. 19277C.
35/Secret, SAC Gen Ord No. 60, dtd 26 Aug 54, Control No. 19278C.
36/Secret, SAC Gen Ord No. 61, dtd 26 Aug 54, Control No. 19279C.
37/SAC Gen Ord No. 76, dtd 8 Nov 54. See Exhibit #21.

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squadrons utilized B-50 type aircraft. The 337th, 338th, and 339th Bombardment Squadrons of the 96th Wing (B-47's) were reorganized under T/O 1-1178P, dated 1 July 1954. Each of these squadrons was authorized 77 officers and 100 airmen.[38] Previous authorized strength of these squadrons had been 65 officers and 105 airmen each.

The bombardment squadrons of the 7th, 11th, and 95th Bombardment Wings, Heavy, were reorganized under T/O 1-1176P, dated 1 July 1954. Each of the squadrons was authorized 109 officers and 213 airmen as compared to 109 officers and 240 airmen per squadron under the former T/O.[39] The bombardment squadrons of the 6th and 42d bombardment Wings, Heavy, were reorganized under T/O 1-1176P, dated 1 July 1954. Each of these squadrons was authorized 109 officers and 229 airmen as compared to 109 officers and 240 airmen under the previous T/O.[40] The 77th, 717th, and 718th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadrons of the 28th Wing (RB-36) were reorganized under T/O 1-1473P, dated 1 July 1954. Authorized strength of each of these squadrons was 129 officers and 285 airmen as opposed to 132 officers and 300 airmen under the earlier T/O.[41]

There are three strategic fighter wings assigned in this air force, each of which has three strategic fighter squadrons. Each of the squadrons was reorganized under T/O 1-1259P, dated 1 July 1954, with an authorized strength of 35 officers and 55 airmen.[42] Under the earlier

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38/Ibid.
39/SAC Gen Ord No. 75, dtd 8 Nov 54. See Exhibit #22.
40/Ibid.
41/Ibid.
42/SAC Gen Ord No. 74, dtd 8 Nov 54. See Exhibit #23.

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T/O the fighter squadron strength had been 36 officers and 56 airmen.

The 96th, 97th, 380th, and 509th Air Refueling Squadrons, Medium, were reorganized under T/O 1-1179P, dated 1 July 1954, with a strength of 100 officers and 250 airmen each.[43] Under earlier T/O's these squadrons were authorized 85 officers and 228 airmen. The 27th and 506th Air Refueling Squadrons, Strategic Fighter, were reorganized under T/O 1-1174P, dated 1 July 1954, with an authorized strength of 130 officers and 248 airmen.[44] Under former T/O's these squadrons were each authorized 110 officers and 228 airmen.

The 1st and 4th Strategic Support Squadrons located at Biggs and Ellsworth Air Force Bases, respectively, were reorganized under T/O 1-1534P, dated 1 July 1954. Each squadron was authorized 64 officers and 260 airmen.[45] Previous authorized strength of these units was 64 officers and 259 airmen.

Discontinuance of SAC Test Detachment, Provisional

It will be recalled from an earlier history of this command that the Strategic Air Command Test Detachment, Provisional was designated and organized at Carswell Air Force Base on 25 August 1953.[46] The SAC Test Detachment was organized in support of Task Group 7.4 which was the Air Force element of Joint Task Force 7. Joint Task Force 7 was

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43/Ibid.
44/Ibid.
45/Ibid.
46/8AF, Gen Ord No. 36, dtd 4 Sep 53.

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organized to conduct scientific tests in the Bikini area of the Eniwetok atolls during the spring of 1954. The code name for this operation was CASTLE.[47] The SAC Test Detachment, Provisional was discontinued on 23 July 1954. Personnel and equipment furnished from resources under control of the Commander, Eighth Air Force, were returned to original units.[48]

Assumption of General Court-Martial Jurisdiction

Pursuant to the request of the Commander, Fourteenth Air Force, Continental Air Command, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, the Commander, Eighth Air Force, assumed general court-martial jurisdiction over airmen personnel of the 2693d Air Reserve Center, Fort Worth, Texas, effective on 25 October 1954.[49]

On 3 December 1954, the Commander, Eighth Air Force, assumed general court-martial jurisdiction over Air Force personnel of the 2013th Airways and Air Communications Service Squadron located at Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas.[50]

Effective on 13 December the Commander, Eighth Air Force, assumed general court-martial jurisdiction over Air Force personnel of the 2012th Airways and Air Communications Service Squadron at Gray Air Force Base, Texas.[51] Also, on the same date, the Commander, Eighth Air Force, assumed general court-martial jurisdiction over Air Force personnel of

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47/Secret, 8AF, History, Jul-Dec 1953.
48/8AF, Gen Ord No. 28, dtd 23 Jul 54. See Exhibit #24.
49/8AF, Gen Ord No. 38, dtd 25 Oct 54. See Exhibit #25.
8AF, Gen Ord No. 39, dtd 29 Oct 54. See Exhibit #26.
50/8AF, Gen Ord No. 42, dtd 3 Dec 54. See Exhibit #27.
51/8AF, Gen Ord No. 43, dtd 13 Dec 54. See Exhibit #28.

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the 3941st Strategic Evaluation Squadron, Carswell Air Force Base, Texas.[52]

New Base Development

As has been noted earlier in this chapter, several new bases were under development as future Eighth Air Force stations during the six months covered by this narrative. Included in this group were Abilene, Portsmouth, Plattsburgh, and Clinton-Sherman Air Force Bases. Initial information relating to these stations was presented in the foregoing history of this command and while none of the stations achieved operational status during the current six months, development of the bases continued throughout the period. Continued progress in the development of the new stations is outlined briefly below.

Abilene Air Force Base

Abilene Air Force Base was assigned to this air force in an inactive status on 1 October 1953.[53] Lieutenant Colonel Jack O. Brown was designated as project officer for the new station and was assigned with duty station at Abilene on 15 October 1953.[54] The liaison office was officially opened at Abilene Air Force Base on 17 October 1953. On the 21st of that month Master Sergeant Ira J. Burrows reported for duty as clerical assistant to the project officer.[55] The official ground breaking ceremony for the new base took place on 25 September 1953, with

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52/Ibid.
53/SAC Gen Ord No. 67, dtd 25 Sep 1953.
54/DF, PL to CO, Hq 8AF, subj "Abilene Project Officer," dtd 30 Sep 53.
55/Ltr, AAFBl, Lt Col Brown to Comdr, 8AF, subj "Report on Abilene AFB," dtd 21 Oct 53.

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Major General John B. Montgomery representing the Eighth Air Force.[56] Available information indicates the base is programmed for utilization by two medium bombardment wings each equipped with B-47 type aircraft. Equipping date for the initial wing is April 1955, while the scheduled equipping date for the second wing is February 1956.[57]

Colonel Brown continued as the Abilene project officer throughout calendar year 1954. During that period his office submitted semi-monthly progress reports to the Directorate of Plans, Eighth Air Force, The reports were concerned primarily with the status of base development which consisted mainly of new construction. The status of construction projects as reflected by the final progress report for 1954, showed the following: The project covering the construction of runway, taxi-ways, and apron was completed and accepted by the Area Engineer on 22 December 1954. The work was done by the Texas Bitulithic Company. A general purpose warehouse was approximately 70% complete. One group of airmen's dormitories and mess and administration buildings was 78% complete. The hi-intensity runway lighting system was 82% complete and the remote radio transmitter and receiver buildings were 90% complete. The double cantilever maintenance hangar was 52% complete. Other projects in various stages of construction included: additional airmen's dormitories and messes, hospital, maintenance hangar and apron, parking

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56/ 8AF, History, Jan-Jun 54, pp 20.
57/ Secret, Ltr, Brig Gen C. J. Bondley, Jr, MD, Hq SAC to USAF Installations Rep Office, Southwestern Division, CE, Dallas, Texas, Subj "Programmed Utilization for Abilene Air Force Base," dtd 28 Apr 54, File SAC DM7D.

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and access apron, motor pool facilities, communications building, hydrant refueling system, water distribution system, grading and drainage and roads, chapel, BOQ's, warehouse, ordnance storage igloos, railroad spur, crash and structural fire station, wing headquarters building, base operations and control tower, pump station and storage reservoir, and water and gas distribution systems.[58]

Plattsburgh Air Force Base

As was reported in the preceding history of this command, Plattsburgh Barracks was assigned to SAC in an inactive status on 5 September 1953. Effective on the same date the installation was redesignated as Plattsburgh Air Force Base.[59] The official ground breaking at the New York installation was held on 29 January 1954. General Montgomery represented this air force at the ceremony.[60] Lieutenant Colonel Richard H. Hackford was named as project officer at Plattsburgh on approximately 1 July 1953, and assumed his duties immediately. Master Sergeant R. W. Roe reported as clerical assistant to Colonel Hackford on 15 August 1953. These personnel continued to man the project office at Plattsburgh throughout calendar year 1954. Effective 15 September 1954, Captain Boren L. Green joined the office as Air Installations Officer for the base.[61] Major activities at Plattsburgh Air Force Base during the year 1954 consisted of construction and rehabilitation projects designed to prepare the

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58/Ltr, Lt Col Brown, Abilene AFB, to Comdr, 8AF, subj "Progress Report for Period 11 Dec - 25 Dec 1954," dtd 31 Dec 54.
59/Msg, DM7C, Comdr SAC to Comdr 8AF, dtd 3 Sep 53, File PLP 8AF.
60/Ltr, Lt Col Hackford, PAFB to Comdr 8AF, subj "Activity Report Plattsburgh Project Officer," dtd 4 Feb 54, File PLP 8AF.
61/Rpt, Dir of Plans, Hq 8AF, subj "Plattsburgh AFB," dtd 1 Oct 54.

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installation for active operation as a SAC station. Development of the base progressed pretty well on schedule and it was expected that an air base squadron would be activated soon after the beginning of the new year.

Portsmouth Air Force Base

Monitoring of the development of Portsmouth Air Force Base, New Hampshire as a SAC station was assigned as a project of the Plans Division, Directorate of Plans, this headquarters, effective on 15 June 1953. Subsequent to that date Lieutenant Colonel William R. Berkeley was assigned as Eighth Air Force project officer at Portsmouth and occupied that position until 15 February 1954, at which time he was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel Andreas A. Andreae. During the early weeks of 1954, Technical Sergeant John W. Smith was assigned as clerical assistant to Colonel Andreae.[62/] These two personnel manned the project office at Portsmouth during the remainder of the year.

An official ground breaking ceremony was held at Portsmouth Air Force Base on 3 July 1954. Among those taking part in the ceremony were James H. Douglas Jr, Under Secretary of the Air Force; Senators Styles Bridges and Robert W. Upton of New Hampshire; Senator George Malone of Nebraska; Congressmen Norris Cotton and Chester E. Morrow of New Hampshire; General Thomas D. White, Vice Chief of Staff, USAF; Major General John B. Montgomery, Commander, Eighth Air Force; Major General Lee B. Washborne,

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62/8AF, History, Jan-Jun 1954.

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USAF; and Governor Hugh Gregg of New Hampshire.[63]

As was indicated in the preceding history of this air force, major construction and improvement projects were begun at Portsmouth Air Force Base during the first half of 1954, and these projects, as well as others, were continued during the last six months of the year. A third person was added to the project office on 13 September 1954, when First Lieutenant Delmont Groth reported for duty. Reports show that on 15 September 1954, personnel working at Portsmouth Air Force Base consisted of three Air Force personnel, 75 Corps of Engineer personnel, and approximately 750 personnel employed by contractors engaged in base construction projects.[64] Announcement was made late in 1954, that an air base squadron would be activated at Portsmouth Air Force Base early in 1955.[65] Information pertaining to the activation and organization of that unit will be presented in the next history of this command.

Scheduled Movement of Headquarters Eighth Air Force

On 6 October 1954, announcement was made of the scheduled movement of the Headquarters Eighth Air Force from Carswell Air Force Base, Fort Worth, Texas to Westover Air Force Base, Massachusetts. The announcement was released simultaneously by Headquarters USAF and the other interested headquarters, including Headquarters SAC and Headquarters Eighth Air Force and the Atlantic Division of Military Air Transport Service (MATS).

63/Newspaper, "The Portsmouth Herald," Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 2 Jul 54.
64/Ltr, Lt Col A. A. Andreae, 8AF Proj Off, Portsmouth AFB, to Comdr, 8AF, subj "Semi-Monthly Activity Report," dtd 16 Sep 54, File PLP 8AF.
65/Newspaper, Daily Democrat, Dover, New Hampshire, 12 Nov 54.

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The official announcement stated that in view of the fact that the United States Air Force has established new bases in the Northeast portions of the United States which will be under command of SAC, it is desireable to place the headquarters which will have jurisdiction over the new installations in near proximity to the facility. Accordingly, Headquarters Eighth Air Force was to be moved from Carswell to Westover. The original indicated that the Atlantic Division of MATS was to be moved from Westover to McGuire Air Force Base on 1 February 1955, and at that time Headquarters Eighth Air Force was to move to Westover.[66] The ZI bases of the Northeast area which were to be under jurisdiction of Eighth Air Force included: Loring Air Force Base, Maine; Dow Air Force Base, Maine; Portsmouth Air Force Base, New Hampshire; Plattsburgh Air Force Base, New York; and Westover Air Force Base, Massachusetts. The announcement also indicated that the movement of the headquarters from Carswell to Westover would involve approximately 200 officers, 475 airmen, and 125 civilian personnel.[67]

It will be recalled from the previous command history that plans were already under way for effecting the transfer of Westover Air Force Base from MATS to SAC and Eighth Air Force, however this was the first public announcement that the headquarters was to be moved to the Massachusetts station. Consequently, at the time the announcement of the scheduled movement was made, this headquarters already had two

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66/Telephone Conversation, Brig Gen Jack Roberts, CS, 8AF, with Lt Col Reade Tilley, SA, Hq SAC, dtd 6 Oct 54.
67/Ibid.

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officers on TDY at Westover. These officers were Lieutenant Colonel Robert G. Bradley, SAC Liaison Officer at Westover, and Captain Norris H. Goodwin, Eighth Air Force Project Officer at Westover.[68] Colonel Bradley's duties at Westover were outlined in a letter from this headquarters dated 6 October 1954.[69]

One of the first actions taken by this headquarters toward preparing for the movement was the publication of a Programming Plan pertaining to the move. This plan, published on 20 October 1954, noted that the transfer of command jurisdiction of Westover Air Force Base from MATS to SAC was to take place on 1 February 1955. This action would result in a need for an Air Base Group to support an Eighth Air Force ADVON which would be moved into place as soon as facilities were available. To insure that capability it was planned that the Air Base Group would be activated on or about 8 January 1955. This would permit sufficient time for planning, programming input, manning, and integration of personnel then assigned to MATS who were to be transferred to Eighth Air Force. The move was to be phased with the availability of facilities but planned so that the headquarters would be operational at Westover no later than 1 April 1955. Accordingly, it was planned to form an ADVON which would be in place at Westover on or about 1 February 1955. It was further contemplated that the main body of Eighth Air Force personnel would make the move in June 1955, in two phases. The second phase to complete the

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68/Ltr Ord No. 600, Hq 8AF, subj "Temporary Duty Travel," dtd 7 Sep 54.
69/Ltr, Hq 8AF to Lt Col Bradley, WAFB, subj "Letter of Instructions," dtd 6 Oct 54, File PLP 8AF.

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move no later than 25 June 1955. The 65th Air Base Group (and 65th Strategic Fighter Wing) was scheduled to be activated at Westover on or about 8 January 1955. This was the unit which was to support the headquarters when it started moving into Westover. Other units which were to move to Westover with the Eighth Air Force Headquarters included the Detachment of the 8th Reconnaissance Technical Squadron located at Ellsworth Air Force Base, the 2d Weather Squadron Headquarters, and the 18th Communications Squadron.[70]

During the period from October through December 1954, most of the action taken toward the movement of the headquarters from Carswell to Westover was of a planning nature. Progress recorded in preparing for the actual move is reflected in monthly reports prepared by the Directorate of Comptroller, Headquarters Eighth Air Force. The initial report indicated that construction delays at McGuire Air Force Base might result in MATS units not being able to phase out of Westover as previously scheduled. Such delay in movement of MATS units out of Westover would probably delay the movement of SAC units into Westover. This same report also indicated that a Strategic Fighter Wing might not be activated at Westover as previously scheduled. The possibility existed that the fighter wing might be activated elsewhere and Air Refueling Units activated at Westover.[71] One of the matters which has drawn attention

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70/Programming Plan 102-54, Hq 8AF, dtd 20 Oct 1954. See Exhibit #29.
71/Conf, Report, CD, Hq 8AF, subj "Progress Report #1, Movement of 8th AF to Westover AFB (8AF Prog Plan 102-54) Status as of 15 Nov 54," dtd 30 Nov 54. Control No. 25930C. See Exhibit #30.

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in connection with the movement of the headquarters is that of civilian employees. As of the end of the year there was no definite information as to how many civilian employees would accompany the move to Westover, however, a report dated early in December indicated that approximately 44 of the 117 employees had expressed a desire to make the move.[72] A later survey indicated that of the 107 civilian employees on the rolls of the headquarters, 82 indicated that they would not move to Westover, 14 were undecided, and 11 planned to accompany the move.[73]

The third progress report indicated that the Space Allocations Committee had met and assigned Westover Air Force Base buildings to the various directorates and offices of this headquarters. This action allowed the various agencies to start planning the physical layouts of their offices prior to the actual movement of the headquarters. The report also noted that this headquarters would probably assume command of Westover on or about 1 April 1954, some two months later than had been planned originally,[74] In the report covering the last two weeks of the year, the housing policy for headquarters personnel was published, as well as other information pertaining to the phasing of MATS and Eighth Air Force personnel and equipment. This report also noted that effective

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72/ Rpt, CD, Hq 8AF, subj "Progress Report #2, Movement of 8th AF to Westover AFB (8AF Programming Plan 102-54) Status as of 1 Dec 54. See Exhibit #31.

73/ Memo for the Record, PD, Hq 8AF, subj "Civilian Personnel Problems Concerning Movement of this Headquarters to Westover," undated. See Exhibit #32.

74/ Secret, Report, CD, Hq 8AF, subj "Progress Report #3, Movement of 8th AF to Westover AFB (8AF Programming Plan 102-54) Status as of 15 Dec 54," dtd 21 Dec 1954. Control No. 27618C. See Exhibit #33.

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on 3 January 1955, Lieutenant Colonel Robert G. Bradley assumed command of the 1st Air Division (SAC) at Westover Air Force Base.[75]

At this point it should be noted that the Headquarters 1st Air Division (SAC) was assigned to SAC, further assigned to Eighth Air Force, and organized at Westover Air Force Base, effective 1 July 1954. Authorized strength of the headquarters was one officer and one airman.[76] This air division was to be the holding unit for Eighth Air Force personnel sent to Westover on a PCS basis prior to the movement of the headquarters squadron. The 1st Air Division was strictly a paper organization until Colonel Bradley's assignment as commander on 3 January 1955.

Additional information concerning the plans for movement, and actual movement of the Eighth Air Force Headquarters, will be described in subsequent histories of this command.

75/ Secret, Report, CD, Hq 8AF, subj "Progress Report #4, Movement of 8th AF to Westover AFB (8AF Programming Plan 102-54) Status as of 1 January 1955," dtd 7 Jan 55. Control No. C738. See Exhibit #34.

76/ SAC Gen Ord No. 54, dtd 22 Jul 54. See Exhibit #35.

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Chapter II

MISSION

Strategic Air Command

The mission of Strategic Air Command requires that the commander will organize, train, equip, administer, and prepare strategic air forces for combat, including strategic bombardment, strategic reconnaissance, strategic fighter units, and strategic support units in accordance with directives and policies issued by Headquarters USAF. He exercises command over all forces allocated to him by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, (JCS), and with those forces will conduct strategic air operations as defined in the functions of the Armed Forces. He will conduct such other air operations as the JCS direct, and will support other commanders under the JCS in their missions. 1/

The function of strategic air warfare in global strategy is summed up in the following quotation: 2/

> Strategic air warfare is the primary offensive manifestation of national power in war because of its direct destructive influence upon the social structure and warmaking potential of an enemy nation. The primary function of forces engaged in strategic air warfare is to defeat the enemy nation. Strategic air operations, therefore, basically are designed to destroy or render ineffective the crucial portions of the enemy nations's structure - those elements within the enemy's homeland vital to its continued prosecution of the war. They also contribute directly and indirectly to gaining and maintaining control of the air.

1/ AFR 23-12, dtd 25 Mar 54. See Exhibit #36.
2/ AFM 1-8, Air Doctrine - Strategic Air Operations, dtd 1 May 54.

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By nature of their overall influence upon the entire enemy war effort, strategic air operations directly contribute to effective actions of other air forces as well as surface forces. In conjunction with theater air forces, they help to achieve and maintain control of the air, but contribute primarily by means of direct attacks against vital enemy installations or against crucial supporting systems, such as oil. They may participate in homeland air defense by means of directly attacking the enemy's strategic air forces. Strategic air operations can directly support the actions of surface forces. In turn, strategic air forces can be supplemented in their mission by the destructive capability of other air forces.

The Eighth Air Force

As one of the numbered air forces of Strategic Air Command, the Eighth Air Force is required to man, train, and equip assigned units for the primary purpose of conducting strategic air warfare on a global scale utilizing either atomic or conventional weapons. Command units must be prepared to perform those tasks assigned in the current emergency plan and related operations orders. In addition to it's primary mission, this air force is required to train and administer assigned reserve personnel and units, be prepared to participate in disaster relief and other domestic emergencies, and to perform such special missions as higher headquarters may direct.[3/] While the present mission has been in effect since May 1950, and it might be expected that the mission could have changed since that time, it should be noted that the wording of the mission is sufficiently elastic to cover practically any development.

3/ SAC Reg 23-1, "Mission - Eighth Air Force," dtd 3 May 50. See Exhibit #37.

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Reference here is to that part of the mission which states: "Be prepared to perform those tasks assigned in the current emergency plan and related operations order." The emergency plan as it applies to the tactical units of this air force is subject to continuous revision, however, keeping the plan up-to-date requires no change in the actual phraseology of the command mission as currently stated.

Individual Organizations

As noted in the preceding chapter, this air force is composed of a large number of organizations. Included in this group are bombardment, reconnaissance, fighter, air refueling, and airlift support units; base air division; air base groups and squadrons, and several miscellaneous units. Obviously, the missions of the individual organizations are determined by the primary functions of the units themselves. For example, the mission of a bombardment wing differs from that of a fighter wing, just as the mission of a reconnaissance wing differs from that of an air refueling squadron or an air base group. Primary missions of the different types of units assigned in this command are outlined briefly as follows:

Heavy Bombardment

During the period covered by this narrative the heavy bombardment arm of this air force consisted of five combat units - the 6th, 7th, 11th, 42d, and 95th Bombardment Wings. The combat elements of each of these wings consisted of three bombardment squadrons. The missions of these five wings are identical, requiring that they organize and train

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forces capable of immediate and sustained long range offensive bombardment operations in any part of the world, utilizing the latest technical knowledge and advanced weapons. 4/ All of the combat units assigned this air force, regardless of the type of aircraft utilized, have in common in their missions the requirements to perform those tasks assigned in the current emergency plans and related operations order, to participate in the reserve training program, to take part in disaster relief and other domestic emergencies, and to perform special missions as directed by higher headquarters.

Medium Bombardment

The medium bombardment force of this command is composed of the 96th, 97th, and 509th Bombardment Wings. Aside from the maintenance elements assigned to these wings, each of the organizations is composed of three medium bombardment squadrons and an air refueling squadron. The mission of these wings is similar to that of the heavy units, except for the added requirement of conducting air-to-air refueling operations. 5/ The air refueling squadron assigned each medium wing provides the in-flight refueling (IFR) necessary to increase the range of medium bombers, either jet or conventional.

4/ 8AF Reg 24-11, "Mission - 6th Bomb Wing, H," dtd 9 Dec 52. See Exhibit #38.
8AF Reg 24-1, "Mission - 7th Bomb Wing, H," dtd 13 Oct 49. See Exhibit #39.
8AF Reg 24-10, "Mission - 11th Bomb Wing, H," dtd 12 Mar 51. See Exh #40.
8AF Reg 23-9, "Mission - 42d Bombardment Wg, H," dtd 1 Apr 54. See Exh #41.
8AF Reg 24-22, "Mission - 95th Bomb Wg, H," dtd 9 Jun 53. See Exhibit #42.
5/ 8AF Reg 23-7, "Mission - 96th Bomb Wg, M," dtd 12 Feb 54. See Exhibit #43.
8AF Reg 23-12, "Mission - 97th Bomb Wing, M," dtd 3 May 54. See Exh #44.
8AF Reg 24-3, "Mission - 509th Bomb Wg, M, dtd 9 Jul 51. See Exhibit #45.

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forces capable of immediate and sustained long range offensive bombardment operations in any part of the world, utilizing the latest technical knowledge and advanced weapons.[4] All of the combat units assigned this air force, regardless of the type of aircraft utilized, have in common in their missions the requirements to perform those tasks assigned in the current emergency plans and related operations order, to participate in the reserve training program, to take part in disaster relief and other domestic emergencies, and to perform special missions as directed by higher headquarters.

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4/ 8AF Reg 24-11, "Mission - 6th Bomb Wing, H," dtd 9 Dec 52. See Exhibit #38.
8AF Reg 24-1, "Mission - 7th Bomb Wing, H," dtd 13 Oct 49. See Exhibit #39.
8AF Reg 24-10, "Mission - 11th Bomb Wing,H," dtd 12 Mar 51. See Exh #40.
8AF Reg 23-9, "Mission - 42d Bombardment Wg, H," dtd 1 Apr 54. See Exh #41.
8AF Reg 24-22, "Mission - 95th Bomb Wg, H," dtd 9 Jun 53. See Exhibit #42.
5/ 8AF Reg 23-7, "Mission - 96th Bomb Wg, M," dtd 12 Feb 54. See Exhibit #43.
8AF Reg 23-12, "Mission - 97th Bomb Wing, M," dtd 3 May 54. See Exh #44.
8AF Reg 24-3, "Mission - 509th Bomb Wg, M, dtd 9 Jul 51. See Exhibit #45.

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Of the three medium units assigned, two wings are fully operational. These two, the 97th and 509th Wings, are among the oldest outfits in the command. The 96th Wing, located at Altus Air Force Base, is the newest combat wing in the Eighth Air Force, having been activated at the Oklahoma installation on 18 November 1953.[6] The three bombardment squadrons of the 96th Wing are programmed to be equipped with B-47 type aircraft, however, as of the end of the present reporting period neither of the bomb squadrons had been manned or equipped. Examination of the individual missions of the three medium bombardment wings discloses a significant addition in the overall mission of the 97th Bombardment Wing and one which does not apply to the other medium wings. Reference is made to that part of the published mission which states: "Organize and train a force capable of providing intelligence of enemy electronics emissions throughout the full range of the usable spectrum."[7] Although the enlarged mission of the wing was not published until 3 May 1954, the electronics reconnaissance mission of the wing was assigned on 15 April 1954.

Strategic Reconnaissance

As noted earlier in this narrative, the one strategic reconnaissance organization assigned in the Eighth Air Force is the 28th Strategic

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6/ SAC Gen Ord No. 80, dtd 16 Nov 53.
7/ 8AF Reg 23-12, "Mission - 97th Bombardment Wing, M," dtd 3 May 54. See Exhibit #44.

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Reconnaissance Wing, Heavy, located at Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota. A significant change occurred in the mission of this wing during the year just completed. Prior to 10 May 1954, the 28th Wing operated under a mission which required that the wing organize and train a force capable of immediate and sustained long range aerial reconnaissance in any part of the world, utilizing the latest technical knowledge and equipment.[8] During the first six months of 1954, a bombing capability was integrated into the tactical units of the 28th Wing and was included in the mission of the unit effective of 10 May 1954. This change imposed on the wing the secondary mission of organizing and training a force capable of immediate and sustained long range offensive bombardment operations in any part of the world, utilizing the latest technical knowledge and advanced weapons.[9] The wing mission was republished on 3 September 1954. Under the current mission the wing is required to maintain a cppability for long range bombardment wnd long range aerial reconnaissance operations in any part of the world utilizing the latest technical knowledge and advanced weapons and equipment.[10]

Strategic Fighter

Eighth Air Force units in the strategic fighter category include the 12th, 27th, and 506th Strategic Fighter Wings. Assigned identical

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8/ 8AF Reg 24-8, "Mission - 28th Strat Recon Wg," dtd 21 Apr 50.
9/ 8AF Reg 23-11, "Mission - 28th Strat Recon Wg, H," dtd 10 May 1954.
10/ 8AF Reg 23-11, "Mission - 28th Strat Recon Wg, H," dtd 3 Sep 54. See Exhibit #46.

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missions, these wings are required to: 1. Organize and train a force capable of providing adequate protection for SAC bombardment and reconnaissance combat elements through escort and air defense, utilizing the latest available technical knowledge and advanced weapons. 2. Organize and train a force capable of the destruction of the forces, resources, and installations of an enemy, utilizing the latest technical knowledge and advanced weapons. 3. Organize and train a force capable of conducting air-to-air refueling operations in any part of the world. 4. Organize and train a force capable of performing low level photographic reconnaissance. 11/

Strategic Support Squadrons

Airlift support for tactical units of this air force, as well as other SAC organizations, is provided by the C-124 aircraft of the 1st and 4th Strategic Support Squadrons located at Biggs and Ellsworth Air Force Bases, respectively. These two units are required to organize and train forces capable of immediate and sustained long range air support for SAC units in any part of the world. Both organizations are under operational control of the Commander, Eighth Air Force. The 810th Air Division provides supervision of administrative, personnel, intelligence, maintenance, and supply functions, and provision of logistical support

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11/ 8AF Reg 24-5, "Mission - 12th Strategic Fighter Wing," dtd 26 Mar 53. See Exhibit #47.
8AF Reg 24-6, "Mission - 27th Strategic Fighter Wing," dtd 26 Mar 53. See Exhibit #48.
8AF Reg 24-17, "Mission - 506th Strategic Fighter Wing," dtd 26 Mar 53. See Exhibit #49.

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of the 1st Strategic Support Squadron. The 28th Wing provides the same support for the 4th Strategic Support Squadron.[12/]

Base Air Divisions

As noted earlier in this narrative, base air divisions are provided on SAC stations accommodating two or more combat wings. There are five such stations in this air force. The 19th Air Division at Carswell oversees the activities of the 7th and 11th Bombardment Wings and the 824th Air Base Group. The 42d Air Division at Bergstrom guides the activities of the 12th and 27th Strategic Fighter Wings and the 808th Air Base Group. At Walker the 47th Air Division supervises the 6th and 509th Bombardment Wings and the 812th Air Base Group. The 810th Air Division at Biggs directs the activities of the 95th and 97th Bombardment Wings, 810th Air Base Group, and 1st Strategic Support Squadron. The 45th Air Division was organized at Loring Air Force Base on 8 October 1954. As a small T/O headquarters the base air division is provided to supervise, direct, and coordinate operations of the assigned combat and service organizations.[13/]

Air Base Groups

Units of this type include the 28th, 42d, 96th, 506th, 808th, 810th,

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12/ 8AF Reg 23-4, "Mission - 1st Strat Spt Sq," dtd 23 Dec 53. See Exh #50.
8AF Reg 23-5, "Mission - 4th Strat Spt Sq," dtd 23 Dec 53. See Exh #51.
13/ 8AF Reg 24-7, "Mission - 19th Air Div," dtd 12 Mar 51. See Exh #52.
8AF Reg 24-12, "Mission - 42d Air Div," dtd 26 Mar 53. See Exh #53.
8AF Reg 24-9, "Mission - 47th Air Div," dtd 9 Jul 51. See Exh #54.
8AF Reg 23-10, "Mission - 810th Air Div," dtd 11 May 54. See Exh #55.
8AF Reg 23-13, "Mission - 45th Air Div," dtd 15 Nov 54. See Exh #56.

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812th, and 824th Air Base Groups. As pointed out earlier in this narrative, the air base group organization consists of the headquarters, air police, food service, operations, installations, supply, and motor vehicle squadrons. While the missions of the air base groups are not spelled out in the "23" and "24" series of Eighth Air Force regulations, this particular type unit performs a vital function in the command operation. In general, the air base group is responsible for providing the housekeeping services required on a station and for furnishing support to the tactical units operating on the station.

Air Base Squadrons

As noted above, command stations occupied by tactical units receive housekeeping support through assigned air base groups. In the case of two installations assigned this air force, base functions are performed by air base squadrons. Although no tactical units are permanently assigned at these two stations, each of the installations provide training facilities for utilization by Eighth Air Force and other SAC tactical units. The bases referred to are Gray Air Force Base, Killeen, Texas, and Matagorda Island Bombing and Gunnery Range, Victoria, Texas. Located at Gray Air Force Base is the 4001st Air Base Squadron. The squadron is responsible for training a force capable of performing those installation functions and services which are required to successfully support SAC emergency plans and tactical training operations. Functions and services required of the squadron are itemized in the published mission.[14/]

14/ 8AF Reg 23-2, "Mission - 4001st Air Base Squadron," dtd 20 Aug 53. See Exhibit #57.

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The second of the air base squadrons, the 4004th, is located at Matagorda Island Bombing and Gunnery Range. That squadron is required to operate facilities and services provided for bombing and gunnery training of reconnaissance, bombardment, and fighter crew personnel assigned to this command and to Air National Guard and Reserve components, and, by joint-use agreement, of personnel of other commands. Facilities operated include precision bombing complex, fighter ground range targets, VAR range, OQ gunnery range, air-to-air gunnery range, and landing strip. Services provided include aircraft clearance and dispatch, field lighting firefighting, fuel servicing, transportation, housing and messing, SAC communications network, installation security, communications facilities, and crash boat air-sea rescue facilities. The squadron is required to furnish support for AACS facilities, services, and security for the operation of control tower at the landing strip, GCA, and radio homing. 15/

321st Air Refueling Squadron

Of the half dozen air refueling squadrons assigned in this air force, only the 380th is not assigned to a tactical wing. That squadron, located at Sheppard Air Force Base, is under the administrative and operational control of the Commander, Eighth Air Force. The squadron is required to organize and train a force capable of air-to-air refueling operations in any part of the world, utilizing the latest technical knowledge and

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15/ 8AF Reg 23-3, "Mission - 4004th Air Base Squadron," dtd 7 Oct 54. See Exhibit #58.

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advanced procedures. Installation support for the 380th Air Refueling Squadron is provided by the Air Training Command in accordance with Air Force Regulation 11-4 and an approved joint-use agreement between TAC and SAC. The 380th Squadron has the same mission as its forerunner the 321st Air Refueling Squadron.[16]

Miscellaneous Units

Two of the miscellaneous units assigned this air force are the 10th and 33d Crash-Rescue Boat Flights at Matagorda Island Bombing, and Gunnery Range, Texas, and Southwest Harbor, Maine, respectively. The 10th is required to organize and train a force capable of providing adequate facilities to rescue personnel involved in aircraft accidents, including crash landings, ditching, abandonment, and similar occurances in water or swamplands adjacent to Matagorda Island Bombing and Gunnery Range, including the danger areas as published in current notifications.[17] The 33d Boat Flight is required to perform similar operations in water adjacent to the Criehaven-Machias-Seal Island Bombing and Gunnery Range.[18]

Other miscellaneous units include the 18th Communications Squadron, which performs the communications services for the headquarters;[19] the 7th Aviation Field Depot Squadron, Goose Bay;[20] and the 8th Reconnaissance Technical Squadron whose major activities are performed by Detachment1, Ellsworth Air Force Base.[21]

16/8AF Reg 23-8, "Mission - 321st Air Ref Sq," dtd 19 Feb 54. See Exh #59.
17/8AF Reg 24-20, "Mission - 10th Crash-Rescue Boat Flight," dtd 22 Oct 52. See Exhibit #60.
18/8AF Reg 24-14, "Mission - 33d Crash-Rescue Boat Flight," dtd 31 Mar 53. See Exhibit #61.
19/8AF Reg 23-6, "Mission - 18th Comm Sq (Comm),dtd 5 Jan 54. See Exh #62.
20/8AF Reg 23-1, "Mission - 7th Avia Fld Dep Sq, dtd 18 Sep 53. See Exh #63.
21/8AF Reg 24-16, "Mission - 8th Recon Tech Sq," dtd 10 Jun 52. See Exh #64.

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Chapter III

PERSONNEL

"Man, train, and equip assigned units for the primary purpose of conducting strategic air warfare on a global scale utilizing either atomic or conventional weapons." The foregoing quotation from the assigned mission of the Eighth Air Force indicates the three major factors involved in preparing this command to meet its readiness obligation. In other words, manpower, training, and equipment comprise the basic ingredients essential to the successful operation of this air force. Although from a historical standpoint more attention may be given to a discussion of operations and training than is accorded either personnel or materiel, this focusing of attention on operational activities in no way detracts from the basic importance of the personnel or equipment factors. Obviously, each of the three activities is vital to the accomplishment of the command mission.

The remainder of this history will be devoted to a discussion of Personnel, Operations, and Materiel, and this particular chapter will cover the overall subject of Personnel or Manning. Items to be covered include: authorized and assigned strength of the command, strength of individual organizations or units, gains and losses of personnel, reasons for losses, reenlistment rates, manning effectiveness, methods of overcoming non-effectiveness, promotions of personnel, changes in key personnel, utilization of civilian employees, operation of the NCO Academy, and

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other items bearing on the overall manning picture in the Eighth Air Force.

Command Strength - Authorized and Assigned

On 31 December 1954, there were a total of 44,714 military personnel authorized in the Eighth Air Force as compared to 43,375 authorized in the command on 30 June 1954. This represents a net gain in authorized strength during the six month period of 1,339 positions.[1] This increase was in line with a similar increase of some 1,114 spaces during the first six months of 1954. These nominal increases in authorized strength during calendar year 1954, came about through no major changes in command components such as activation of new units, but rather through the gradual lifting of manning restrictions which had been imposed on the 96th Bombardment Wing, Medium and other units assigned at Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma. As was noted in earlier histories of this command, the 96th Bombardment Wing, Medium, was initially activated at Altus Air Force Base on 18 November 1953.[2] Although officially activated on that date only certain units of the wing were to be manned and equipped during the early period of activation. Units to be manned included the air base group and its squadrons, the 96th Air Refueling Squadron, and certain of the wing maintenance functions. The bombardment squadrons of the wing were to be manned at such time as the delivery of tactical aircraft was firmly

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1/ Chart, Total Personnel Strength - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #65.
2/ SAC Gen Ord No. 80, dtd 16 Nov 53.

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scheduled. It was originally planned that B-47 aircraft would be delivered to the 96th Wing squadrons during the summer of 1954, however, subsequent slippage in the delivery schedule indicated that the aircraft would not become available to the wing until the early spring of 1955. Aside from the delivery of aircraft to the tactical squadrons, another factor which adversely affected manning of units at Altus was the shortage of housing and other base facilities which were being constructed at the station. Thus, although a complete medium bombardment wing and associated units were activated at Altus late in 1953, only certain units were to be manned immediately, while certain other units, namely the bombardment squadrons, were to remain on a one and one basis. Therefore, instead of the Altus personnel authorization being carried at full wing strength from the activation of the wing, authorization figures have reflected a restricted manning situation in effect at that station and have increased gradually during the past year. The most significant increase in personnel authorization for that station occurred during the month of December 1954, when authorized airmen strength increased from 1,923 to 2,866. This increase signified the beginning of the build-up of the bombardment squadrons of the 96th Wing. Additional information on the manning of Altus units will be covered later in this chapter.

During the last half of 1954, the assigned military strength of the Eighth Air Force increased from 43,644 personnel on 30 June 1954, to a total of 44,356 assigned as of 31 December 1954. This represented a

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net gain in assigned strength of some 712 personnel.[3] In considering the relationship between authorized and assigned strength in the Eighth Air Force it can be seen that during most of the current period the command was slightly more than 100% bodily manned. The highest point reached during the period was 31 July when the command was 103.2% manned. It was only in the month of December that the bodily manning figure dropped to a low of 99.1%. The bodily manned strength of the command was 100.6% on 30 June 1954, hence during the last half of the year there was a slight drop in the command manning percentage.[4]

Since the above figures represent total military strength, it might be well to show the relative strength of officers and airmen in this command during the six months covered by this narrative. On 30 June the Eighth Air Force was authorized 6,213 officers and officer assignments amounted to 5,716. That was a manned percentage of 92%. By 31 December 1954, officer authorizations had increased to 6,415 as compared to 5,839 assigned, for a manned figure of 91%. Thus, officer manning dropped one per cent during the six month period.[5] On 30 June 1954 this air force had airmen authorizations amounting to 37,162 as compared to 37,928 personnel assigned. On 31 December 1954, airmen authorized strength was 38,299 as compared to assigned airmen strength of 38,517. Thus, during

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3/ Chart, Total Personnel Strength - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #65.
4/ Ibid.
5/ Chart, Officer Manning Status - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #66.

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that six month period the command-wide airmen manned percentage decreased slightly from 102% to 100.5%.[6]

Strength of Stations and Units

In view of the fact that the above statistics reveal only the command-wide manning situation, it is deemed advisable to present very briefly the personnel strengths of the various command stations and individual organizations. A check of the different stations shows that on 31 December 1954, there were a total of 7,005 airmen and 910 officers assigned at Carswell Air Force Base. These figures included only those personnel assigned to 19th Air Division units, and did not reflect the personnel of Headquarters Eighth Air Force and other tenant units at the Fort Worth station. Records show that as of 31 July 1954, 19th Air Division units had a total of 7,063 airmen and 947 officers assigned. On 31 December, the assigned strength of Bergstrom Air Force Base was 628 officers and 3,962 airmen. Biggs Air Force Base had an assigned strength of 1,117 officers and 6,793 airmen, which included personnel of all units of the 810th Air division as well as the 1st Strategic Support Squadron. Dow Air Force Base reported an assigned strength of 388 officers and 2,680 airmen, Ellsworth Air Force Base had 647 officers and 4,722 airmen, Loring Air Force Base had 526 officers and 3,827 airmen, and Walker Air Force Base listed an assigned strength of 936 officers and 6,115 airmen. All

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6/ Chart, Airmen Manning Status - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #67.

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of these figures reflect the strength as of 31 December 1954. A monthly breakdown of personnel statistics reflecting officer and airmen authorizations, assignments, and effectiveness for the different stations of this command for the period of July through December 1954 is shown in the Personnel Section (Section II) of the appended exhibits.7/

Information relating to the manning status of individual wings, air base groups, and separate organizations comprising the Eighth Air Force is also appended.8/ Charts utilized reflect both officer and airmen manning figures for the complete period covered by this history.

Headquarters Strength

There was little change in the authorized and assigned strength of Headquarters Eighth Air Force during the last half of 1954. Strength charts show that on 31 July the Headquarters Squadron was authorized 224 officers and 363 airmen. Assigned strength on that date was 222 officers and 372 airmen. On 31 December 1954, the squadron was authorized 229 officers and 364 airmen. Assigned strength on that date was 219 officers and 379 airmen.9/

Officer Strength by Grades

Earlier in this chapter reference was made to the fact that as of 31 December there were a total of 6,415 Officers authorized in this air force. On the same date officer assignments totaled some 5,839. A

7/ Secret, Booklet, Hq 8AF, "Command Statistics -8AF," for Months of Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, and Dec 54. See Exhibits #'s 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, and 73.
8/ Chart, Officer Manning Status (By Units), Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #74. Chart, Airmen Manning Status (By Units), Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #75.
9/ Ibid.

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breakdown of the officer strength figures by grades is shown in the appended chart.[10]

Gains and Losses

During the last six months of 1954 there was a net gain in assigned military strength in this air force of 712 personnel.[11] On a comparative basis the gain in assigned strength for the current period was much smaller than the net gain of 2,100 people registered during the first half of the year. The gain of 712 personnel represented an increase in officer strength of 123 and in airmen strength of 589, While the gain of 712 people during a six month period may not seem to be a particularly large increase in command strength, it must be remembered that this was a net gain. In achieving that gain there was actually a turnover of several thousand military personnel involving both inputs and losses. In fact, gain and loss statistics show that from 1 July through 31 December 1954, a total of 12,288 inputs were received in this air force. Of that number 1,082 were officers and 11,206 were airmen. Total losses for the same period amounted to 11,560 of which 940 were officers and 10,620 were airmen. On the basis of the above figures it is evident that inputs exceeded losses by 728 personnel.[12] While that figure is slightly in excess of the net gain of 712 personnel referred to above, it should be noted that the dates used in determining the two

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10/Chart, Officer Strength by Grade - 8AF, 31 Dec 54. See Exhibit #76.
11/Chart, Total Personnel Strength - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #65.
12/Chart, Personnel Gains and Losses - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #77.

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sets of statistics are different. The increase in command assigned strength for the current six month period (Exhibit #65) was arrived at by comparing assignments as of 30 June and 31 December 1954, whereas the gain and loss figures used in Exhibit #77 were extracted from IBM runs for the period 1 July through 31 December 1954. At any rate, it is evident that in recording a net gain of some 712 personnel assigned in the Eighth Air Force, the total turnover of personnel amounted to some 23,848.

Although an exact listing of sources of incoming personnel is not available, it is known that inputs include basic airmen just coming in to the service, graduates of technical schools, transfers from other SAC commands, transfers from other ZI commands, and overseas returnees. On the other hand losses were attributed to such reasons as discharge and failure to reenlist, overseas assignments, transfers within the ZI, permanent change of station school quotas, administrative discharges, and other reasons. The most common reasons for loss of personnel were overseas assignments and discharges. These two factors are discussed below.

Overseas Assignments

A major factor responsible for losses of airmen personnel was the problem of filling overseas assignment quotas. Of the total of 10,620 airmen losses experienced by this air force during the last half of 1954, some 5,930 were due to overseas assignments. Losses by months as reported by the Directorate of Personnel, this headquarters, were as follows:

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Overseas Assignments

A major factor responsible for losses of airmen personnel was the problem of filling overseas assignment quotas. Of the total of 10,620 airmen losses experienced by this air force during the last half of 1954, some 3,930 were due to overseas assignments. Losses by months as reported by the Directorate of Personnel, this headquarters, were as follows:

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July - 673, August - 646, September - 498, October - 1142, November - 303, and December - 668.[13] By way of comparison it is noted that during the first half of the year airmen losses to overseas quotas numbered 3,847.[14]

Failure to Reenlist

The most important factor contributing to the loss of airmen personnel during the past six months was the low reenlistment rate. Reenlistment statistics compiled during the period from 1 July through 31 December 1954, show that a total of 5,508 airmen in this command completed their terms of enlistment and were discharged. Also included in this total were early release personnel. The figure does not include personnel lost through such reasons as retirement, resignation, hardship cases, release to enter the ministry, involuntary separations, disciplinary actions, etc. The records further show that of the 5,508 personnel discharged and eligible for reenlistment, only 1,211 reenlisted within 90 days of separation. Thus, the reenlistment rate for this command for the last six months of the year was 21,9%. By simple subtraction it is evident that the command lost a total of 4,297 airmen through failure to reenlist.[15] The command-wide reenlistment rate by months shows the following: July - 19.5%, August - 20.9%, September - 24.9%, October - 29.5%, November - 30.8%, and December - 15.5%. From these percentages it can be seen that the lowest reenlistment rate occurred in December. Attention is also

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13/ Chart, Airmen Losses to Overseas Assignments, Jul-Dec 54, Directorate of Personnel, Hq 8AF.
14/ Secret, 8AF, History, Jan-Jun 54, p 62.
15/ Secret, Booklet, Hq 8AF, "Command Statistics - 8AF," Dec 54, p 12. See Exhibit #73.

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called to the fact that the greatest number of discharges occurred during December. The explanation for the unusually large number of discharges in December and the low reenlistment rate for that month was the fact that during that month a total of 1,339 airmen in this command were granted early releases on their enlistments.[16]

To go back for a full year prior to the period covered by this history, records show that during the 12 months from 1 July 1953 through 30 June 1954, discharges upon completion of contracted terms of enlistment totaled 3,007. Of that number a total of 869 reenlisted within 90 days, which gave a reenlistment rate of 29%.[17] Thus, the reenlistment rate for the six-month period just completed represents a definite decrease from the rate of the preceding year.

Officer Gains and Losses

While information relating to the numbers of officer personnel gained and lost by months during the last half of the year has already been presented in this chapter, a breakdown of those personnel by type (crew or support) is reflected in the appended chart.[18] Differences between monthly totals shown on this chart and those shown in Exhibit #77, are due to different personnel accounting dates. It will be noted that Exhibit #79 shows officer gains and losses for the entire year.

16/Ibid.
17/Confidential, Hq 8AF, Command Summary, No. 6, Vol I, dtd 20 Jul 54. See Exhibit #78.
18/Chart, Officer, Gains and Losses - 8AF, Jan-Dec 54. See Exhibit #79.

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Manning Effectiveness

So far in this chapter attention has been given the overall strength picture for this air force, the turnover of personnel, and one or two of the factors contributing to the loss of personnel. The next matter to come under discussion is that of manning effectiveness. As noted earlier, the authorized strength of the command on 31 December 1954, was 44,714. That number was 1,339 positions in excess of the authorized strength on 30 June 1954. The command assigned strength on 31 December was 44,356 as compared to an assigned strength of 43,644 on 30 June 1954. This represented an increase in assigned strength of 712 personnel during the six month period. On the basis of the figures shown above, as well as more detailed statistics presented in Exhibits 65, 66, and 67, it is evident that insofar as numbers of people were concerned, this air force dropped slightly below 100% manned at the end of the year. In other words, while we actually had an increase in assigned personnel during the past six months, we had a greater increase in authorized strength, with the result that the command bodily maned percentage dropped 1.5%.19/

Examination of the bodily manned statistics for this air force reveals that as of the end of the calendar year most of the stations were more than 100% manned in the airmen category. In fact, the only Eighth Air Force station with less than 100% airmen manning was Altus Air Force Base where the airman manned percentage was 56.3. Reports

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19/Chart, Total Personnel Strength - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #65.

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from that station show that as of the end of November 1954, the bodily manned percentage for airmen was 78.6, however, the airmen authorization for Altus was increased by approximately 900 during December and that action resulted in the low bodily manned percentage existing on 31 December 1954.[20] The majority of the major organizations assigned this air force at the end of December 1954, had 100% or higher bodily manning. Units with less than 100% bodily manning in the airmen category included the following: 509th Bombardment Wing (94.2%), 509th Air Refueling Squadron (88.8%), 97th Bombardment Wing (95.6%), 97th Air Refueling Squadron (96.8%), 4th Strategic Support Squadron (98.4%), 96th Bombardment Wing (30.3%), and 96th Air Base Group(73.6%).[21] On a command-wide basis the airmen bodily manned percentage on 31 December 1954 was 100.5.[22]

In the officer category the command bodily manned strength on 31 December 1954, was 91%. That represents a one per cent drop from the 92% manned strength reported on 30 June 1954. Units reporting 100% or better in manned strength on 31 December 1954, included the following: 509th Air Refueling Squadron, 340th Bombardment Squadron, 1st Strategic Support Squadron, 4th Strategic Support Squadron, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, 506th Strategic Fighter Wing, 96th Wing (Restricted Manning Ceiling), 96th Air Refueling Squadron, 380th

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20/ Chart, Airmen Manning Status (By Units), Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #75.
21/ Ibid.
22/ Chart, Airmen Manning Status - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #67.

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Air Refueling Squadron, 18th Communications Squadron, and 4001st Air Base Squadron.[23]

In view of the command-wide manned strength of 99.1% on 31 December 1954, it would appear that the Eighth Air Force was at just about full authorized strength. It must be recalled however, that the 99.1% represents bodily manned strength and that there is considerable difference between the terms "bodily" manned and "effectively" manned. "Bodily" manning statistics take into consideration only the fact that a given unit or command is authorized so many personnel and that a certain number of personnel are assigned. "Effective" manning statistics reflect the extent to which authorized positions are manned by properly qualified assigned personnel. In military units authorizations are provided by Tables of Organization and other manning documents, and these documents establish positions by specific Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC's). Therefore, instead of a unit simply being authorized a certain number of people, the manning devices also specify the exact positions by AFSC's. Hence, a relatively high percentage of bodily assignments does not necessarily mean an equally high percentage of effective assignments. With this in mind it is necessary to take another look at the manning situation in this air force during the period from 1 July through 31 December 1954.

A review of the manning statistics for the past six months shows

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23/Chart, Officer Manning Status (By Units), Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #74.

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that on 30 June 1954, the Eighth Air Force had a bodily manned percentage of 100.6 and an effective manned percentage of 87.1. On 31 December the bodily manned strength was 99.1% as compared to an effective manned strength of 79.3%. Thus, during the six month period there was a drop of 1.5% in the bodily manned percentage and 2.4% in the effective manned percentage.[24/] The referenced chart reflects the manning percentages of the intermediate months of the current period.

As noted earlier, effective personnel means those people who are working in their primary AFSC's. With respect to enlisted personnel the effectiveness criteria has been broadened somewhat to include not only personnel working in their primary, but also those considered as "adjusted" effectives. The latter group includes airmen overages who are being utilized in a lower skill level in their own AFSC to fill authorized positions. For example, a 70270 overage can be counted as effective if utilized in a 70250 position, or a 70250 is counted as effective if filling a 70230 slot. Obviously, inclusion of these "adjusted" effectives results in a higher effective manning percentage. Just how much effect the inclusion of "adjusted" effectives had on the command manning effectiveness percentages for the current six months could not be determined, however, earlier records reveal a difference of as much as 10%. This method of computing effectiveness percentages is permitted under the SAC rating system.

24/Chart, Total Personnel Strength - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #65.

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Statistics relating to effective manning of individual units of this air force are listed in Exhibits 74 (officers) and 75 (airmen). It will be noted that on 30 June 1954, the effective manned strength of this air force was 84% for officers and 81.3% for airmen. By the end of December the effective manned strength was 83.1% for officers and 78.7% for airmen. A survey of the charts included in Exhibit #74 shows that on 31 December 1954, the only unit reporting 100% effective officer manning was the 4001st Air Base Squadron at Gray Air Force Base. Most of the command units had an effective manned percentage of more than 80% for officer personnel. Units with the highest officer manning effectiveness included: 509th Air Refueling Squadron, 340th Bomb Squadron, 1st Strategic Support Squadron, 96th Air Refueling Squadron, 4th Strategic Support Squadron, 12th Wing, and 27th Wing. The unit with the lowest effectively manned percentage was the 96th Wing.[25/]

In the airmen category units with the highest effective manned percentages on 31 December were as follows: 18th Communications Squadron (90.9%), 4001st Air Base Squadron (90.9%), 28th Air Base Group (89%), 7th Wing (88.3%), 824th Air Base Group (88%), 11th Wing (85.1%), Headquarters Eighth Air Force (87.3%), and 808th Air Base Group (87.8%). The unit with the lowest airmen manning effectiveness percentage was the 96th Wing with 26%.[26/]

26/Chart, Officer Manning Status (By Units), Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #74.
26/Chart, Airmen Manning Status (By Units), Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #75.

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As pointed out in previous histories of this command, one of the major concerns of personnel officials is whether or not the available assigned personnel fit the positions authorized. While the ultimate goal is a qualified individual in each authorized position, or 100% effective manning, a realistic approach to the problem indicates that such a goal is not likely to be attained. Some of the factors which work against 100% effective manning are: 1. The constant turnover of personnel. 2, The manning of new units. 3. Strength limitations. Experience shows that the chief obstacle to attaining a higher level of effective manning is the matter of personnel turnover. Gain and loss statistics cited earlier in this chapter attest to that fact. While no major units were activated in this command during the past six months, build-up of the 96th Wing and other units activated earlier continued to affect manning effectiveness. The third factor mentioned above has to do with manpower limitations resulting from budgetary restrictions.

Concerning the matter of personnel turnover, it is recognized that this problem would not be so serious if all incoming personnel were immediately qualified to fill positions vacated through discharge, reassignment, and other losses. This, of course, is not the case. While large numbers of inputs are skilled personnel, others are not. For example, hundreds of basic airmen are assigned to the command during a six month period. Obviously, these personnel cannot be utilized immediately to offset the loss of an equal number of experienced personnel. Insofar as overseas returnees and technical school graduates are concerned, effective

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utilization is more readily attained. However, even in this group of skilled personnel, their particular skills or AFSC's may not necessarily coincide with existing command vacancies. Thus, some of these skilled personnel may actually become overages in the units to which assigned. Effective utilization of all assigned personnel, particularly basics and overages, is a major problem in command manning. Some of the methods employed to decrease the command's non-effectiveness rate are discussed below.

Utilization of Non-Effectives

The seriousness of the non-effective problem can be gathered from the fact that as of the end of December 1954, approximately 21% of the total military personnel assigned in this air force were technically in the non-effective category. On that date total assignments amounted to 44,356 whereas effective assigned strength was 35,496. This meant that 8,860 of the military personnel assigned in this air force on 31 December were actually carried in the non-effective group. This is not to say that the services of that part of the command strength were of no value to the command. Although not effectively assigned in their primary AFSC's, or by "adjusted" effectiveness as allowed under the SAC rating system, these personnel were utilized in secondary AFSC's, on-the-job training, etc, to fill vacancies for which personnel with applicable primary skills were not available. The situation does point up however, the large percentage of assigned personnel who did not automatically fit into the positions

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authorized through current manning tables. Also, it should be kept in mind that these so-called non-effectives were by no means untrained personnel. Although in the airman category relatively large numbers of basics were assigned each month, the large majority of the non-effectives were skilled personnel, Some were overages in authorized AFSC's, while others had skills which were not required by existing manning documents of the units of assignment.

There are a number of ways of attacking the non-effective problem, all of which are employed in this command. One of the most common courses of action is the transfer of personnel between units or commands. Continuing efforts are made to effect administrative adjustments which will result in better utilization of available manpower. This type action can be illustrated by assmming that one squadron of a tactical wing or air base group is short of personnel in a particular AFSC, whereas another squadron in the same organization has an overage of personnel in that particular specialty. Obviously, a transfer of personnel between the two units is in order. The same procedure is employed in the shifting of overages between stations of the same command, or between different commands. In many instances overages in existing organizations can be immediately and effectively utilized through transfers to a new unit or units being activated and manned.

Perhaps the most effective method of qualifying non-effective personnel for authorized positions and thereby improving the command manning effective-

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ness percentages, is base level on-the-job training (OJT). Such training is permitted where formal technical school training courses are not available and in some instances Headquarters SAC grants waivers and allows OJT even where courses do exist. Upon successful completion of the prescribed period of OJT, and by passing necessary examinations, applicable AFSC's may be awarded to the trainees. Just how extensively OJT is carried on in this air force is shown by the training statistics compiled during the last half of 1954. From July through December there was an average of 5,976 airmen personnel undergoing OJT during each month. Records show that during July there were 5,000 personnel under instruction in the OJT program of the command and by December the number had increased to 7,951 under instruction. The OJT records also show that during the six month period a total of 4,971 personnel completed OJT. July was the low month with 574 completing OJT, whereas December was the high month of the period with a total of 1,182 completing OJT.[27] The total of 4,971 personnel completing OJT during the last half of 1954, compares favorable with the first six months of the year when a total of 5,429 completed OJT. During the last half of 1953, a total of 4,273 completed the training.[28]

Another method of attacking the non-effective manning problem is through the use of existing technical training school facilities provided

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27/ Chart, OJT - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #80.
28/ History, 8AF, Jan-Jun 54 (Exhibit #85).

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by Air Training Command. This procedure is followed extensively in this air force. Training information shows that during the last half of 1954, a total of 2,883 officers and airmen of this command entered technical training courses and a total of 1,466 graduated from those courses. The average number of personnel under instruction throughout the six month period amounted to 648. A breakdown of that figure into the officer and airmen category shows that a total of 1,461 airmen entered technical school training and 754 graduated during the period. During the same period a total of 1,422 officers entered school and 712 were graduated.[29/] All of the above numbered personnel attended the training courses on a TDY basis and hence were returned to this command upon completion of their instruction. By way of comparison, earlier records show that during the first half of the year a total of 2,536 personnel of this command entered technical schools on a TDY basis, and graduates for the same period amounted to 1,554.

From the foregoing it is evident that a continuous training program, technical school quotas and OJT, goes on in this air force. Except for the turnover in personnel, utilization of these training programs would result in a steady improvement in the manning effectiveness percentages of the command.

Combat Crew Availability

Among the more important aspects of the overall command personnel

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29/Chart, Technical School Training, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #81.

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picture is the availability of combat ready crews for the tactical units of this air force. Before summarizing the status of this manning requirement, it is necessary to call attention to the aircraft and combat crew ratio provided under current authorizations. In bombardment wings, strategic reconnaissance wings, and fighter wings there is an authorization for 1.2 crews per authorized primary mission aircraft. Thus, a heavy bombardment wing with 30 B-36 type aircraft is authorized a total of 36 combat crews. A medium bombardment wing with 45 B-50 type aircraft is authorized a total of 54 combat crews, and a fighter wing with 75 aircraft is authorized a total of 90 combat crews. Air refueling squadrons are authorized 1.25 crews per aircraft, which means 25 crews for the 20 aircraft authorized. The strategic support squadrons get 1.5 crews per aircraft, or 18 crews for each squadron of 12 aircraft.

A check of the availability of combat ready crews in this air force shows that during the month of July 1954, there was an average of 114 combat ready crews in the heavy bomb wings. Of the five heavy wings the 7th Wing had an average of 28 combat ready crews, the 11th Wing had an average of 27, the 6th Wing had an average of 26, the 42d Wing had an average of 17.3, and the 95th Wing had an average of 16 combat ready crews. The average number of combat ready crews assigned in the air refueling squadrons during July was 67.1. These combat ready crews were divided among five squadrons. The two medium wings had a daily average of 72.2 combat ready crews during the month. The 97th Wing had an

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average of 30 crews, while the 509th Wing had an average of 42.2 crews. Due to a change in type of aircraft in the three strategic fighter wings, those units were reporting no combat ready crews during the month of July 1954.[30]

During the month of December the average number of combat ready crews assigned to the heavy bomb units of the command totaled 123.1. The 7th Wing had an average of 29 combat ready crews, the 11th Wing had an average of 28, the 6th Wing had an average of 27, the 42d Wing had an average of 23, while the 95th Wing had an average of 16.1 combat ready crews. The two medium bomber wings had an average of 69 combat ready crews assigned. The average number assigned in the 97th Wing was 30, while the average number assigned in the 509th Wing was 39. During December there were a total of 123.1 combat ready crews assigned in the air refueling units of the command. Of the five squadrons the 27th Air Refueling Squadron was the only unit with a full compliment of 25 combat ready crews assigned. The fighter wings continued to report no combat ready crews as of the final month of the year.[31]

With respect to the amount of flying time accomplished by combat ready and non-combat ready crews, reports show that during the nine months from 1 January through 30 September 1954, the available combat ready crews of this air force flew an average of 40 hours per crew per month. During

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30/Secret, Booklet, Command Statistics - 8AF, July 54, p 25. See Exhibit #68.
31/Secret, Booklet, Command Statistics - 8AF, Dec 54, p 24. See Exhibit #73.

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the same period the non-combat ready crews flew an average of 32 hours per crew per month.[32]

Manning of Altus Air Force Base

As was noted earlier in this history, the major organizations at Altus Air Force Base are the 96th Bombardment Wing, the 96th Air Base Group, and the 96th Air Refueling Squadron. Subordinate units of the wing and air base group are active with the exception of the three bombardment squadrons. These squadrons are carried on a one and one basis and active manning will not be pursued until such time as actual equipping of the units is firmly scheduled. As of the end of December 1954, it was expected that the first tactical aircraft (B-47) would be delivered to the squadrons in April or May 1955. As has been noted earlier in this history, and as was pointed out in the preceding command history, manning of Altus has been curtailed because of the status of the bombardment squadrons and because of shortage of housing and other facilities. Manning of Altus units is expected to proceed on a full scale basis shortly after the first of the new year (1955). On 30 June 1954, the authorized strength of the station was 168 officers and 1490 airmen.[33] By 31 December 1954, authorized strength at that station had increased to 270 officers and 2,866 airmen. On the last day of the year the assigned strength of the base was 276 officers and 1,614 airmen. A breakdown of assigned strength

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32/Secret, Command Summary - 8AF, No. 13, Vol 1, dtd 5 Nov 54, p 6. See Exhibit #82.
33/Secret, 8AF, History, Jan-Jun 54, p 91.

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by major units was as follows: 96th Wing - 83 officers and 411 airmen, 96th Air Base Group - 79 officers and 929 airmen, and the 96th Air Refueling Squadron - 114 officers and 274 airmen.[34/]

Command-Wide Promotions

Three promotion quotas for airmen were received by this air force during the last half of calendar year 1954. Promotion quotas were received for the months of August, October, and December, continuing the bi-monthly promotion policy of SAC which has been in effect for the past couple of years. The three quotas amounted to a total of 9,099 promotions with a breakdown by grades as follows: Master Sergeant - 218, Technical Sergeant - 395, Staff Sergeant - 1,890, Airman First Class - 3,259, and Airman Second Class - 3,337. The bi-monthly quotas for the command were as follows: August - 3,039, October - 2,984, and December - 3,076.[35/] During the first half of 1954, command wide airmen promotion quotas amounted to 7,491, hence the total number of promotions for the entire year was 16,590.

During the last six months of 1954, machinery was set in motion to effect officer promotions for the Fiscal Year 1955. The criteria was announced by SAC in July and the job of furnishing the lists of eligible personnel to SAC was completed by 20 December 1954. Promotion lists were prepared by unit commanders and submitted to Headquarters Eighth Air Force where they were screened by the Review Panel. Command-

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34/Chart, Officer Manning Status (By Units), Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #74.
Chart, Airman Manning Status (By Units), Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #75.
35/Chart, Airmen Promotion Quotas - 8AF, Jul-Dec 54. See Exhibit #83.

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wide totals of eligibles forwarded to Headquarters SAC were as follows: First Lieutenant to Captain - 745, Captain to Major - 1,080, Major to Lieutenant Colonel - 523, and Lieutenant Colonel to Colonel - 91.[36] The announcement of actual promotions did not occur during the period covered by this report.

Civilian Employees

As pointed out in the early part of this chapter the authorized military strength of this air force amounted to 44,714 on 31 December 1954. On the same date the assigned military strength amounted to 44,356. Along with the discussion of the military personnel picture in this air force attention should also be directed to the civilian personnel force utilized at the several stations of this command.

Civilian personnel statistics show that on 30 June 1954, the civilian personnel component of this command numbered 3,149 people as compared to a total of 3,137 positions authorized. Six months later on 31 December 1954, the civilian force stood at 3,335 authorized on a total of 3,347 personnel assigned. Thus, there was an increase of 198 in the total civilian personnel assigned this air force from 30 June to 31 December 1954. A large increase in assigned civilian strength occurred at Altus Air Force Base where the civilian figure jumped from 216 on 30 June to 287 on 31 December. Biggs Air Force Base increased its civilian force

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36/ Interview, Historian Taylor with 1st Lt Vernon O. Mills, PD, 8AF, 11 Mar 55.

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from 379 to 410 during the six month period. The assigned civilian personnel strength at Loring Air Force Base increased from 424 to 30 June to 513 on 31 December for the largest increase at a single command station. Only small changes were experienced at other command stations.[37] Combination of the military and civilian personnel gave this air force an overall assigned strength of 47,703 people on 31 December 1954.

As noted in earlier histories of this command, the civilian work force is divided into two major categories - graded and ungraded. Graded employees are those whose positions are covered by the Classification Act and who are paid on an annual salary basis. These positions include clerical, administrative, technical, and professional duties. Ungraded positions are those in which the pay is based on an hourly wage rate. These positions are usually referred to as Wage Board jobs. Hourly rates for those positions are set by joint Army and Air Force Wage Boards established in different geographical areas. These positions include recognized trades and crafts, or skilled manual labor occupations. The individual wage rate is determined by the trade or craft and the degree of skill of the employee. During the six months covered by this particular history the ratio of graded to ungraded civilian employees in this air force was approximately 40% - 60%.

Although it would be difficult to describe in detail the total contribution of the command civilian personnel working force, some

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37/Secret, Booklet, Command Statistics - 8AF, Dec 54, p 9. See Exhibit #73.

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indication as to the nature and types of jobs performed by civilians may be gained from the following. While the majority of the civilian positions authorized in the command headquarters are in the overall clerical field, a considerable number of the jobs are considered key positions requiring administrative, technical, or professional skills. Examples of these positions include the following: Aviation Psychologist, Historian, Records Analyst, Budget Officer, Budget and Cost Analyst, Management Analyst, Librarian, Procurement Supervisor, Traffic Manager, Automotive Adviser, Electronics Engineer, Mechanical Engineer, Civil Engineer, Ammunition Inspector, Construction Engineer, Ground Safety Officer, Management Training Officer, and Structural Engineer.

Except for the command headquarters where most of the civilian jobs were graded positions, civilian jobs at the different bases were divided pretty well along the 40-60 ratio referred to earlier. Graded positions at base level were pretty well along the same lines as those at the numbered air force headquarters. Among the types of jobs found at base level in the ungraded category were the following: automovive mechanics, sheet metal workers, upholsterers, construction equipment mechanics, vehicle maintenance supervisors, laborers, carpenters, plumbers, fuel system mechanics, packers and craters, fork lift operators, warehouse specialists, cablemen, construction helpers, and warehousemen.

NCO Academy

One of the most important developments in the Eighth Air Force

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during the past calendar year was the establishment of the Eighth Air Force Non-Commissioned Officers Academy at Bergstrom Air Force Base. The objectives of this academy, as well as a brief summary of the course of instruction, identity of key personnel, and activities of the first three classes were covered in the preceding command history. It will be recalled from that history that the third academy class was graduated on 2 July 1954, after which the academy recessed for approximately six weeks. During the early part of the recess a SAC wide NCO Academy conference was held at March Air Force Base, California. The conference was attended by academy faculty members and command staff officers of the 7th Air Division, Second Air Force, Eighth Air Force, and Fifteenth Air Force, as well as advisers from Headquarters SAC, the Air University, and Air Training Command. Attending the conference from this air force were Major Karl Pearson, command staff representative, and from the academy itself Major Richard S. Wilson, commandant; Captain George W. Long, director of training; and Master Sergeant Charles S. McCalment, instructor. One of the major changes adopted for the SAC NCO Academies was lengthening of the academy course from 30 to 40 days. Under the new system a class was to begin every sixth Thursday. Graduations were to be scheduled on Saturdays. The additional time in the course resulted in streamlining and expansion of the curriculum. Certain subjects were given more hours, and one new subject was added covering the world situation

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and SAC's place in the world picture. The number of students for each class (60) remained unchanged, however, the number of instructors was increased from seven to ten.[38]

The NCO Academy reopened the first week in August and Class 54-G (fourth Academy class) graduated on 18 September 1954. The speaker for the graduation was Major General John H. McCormick, Commander, 3700th Military Training Wing, Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. The outstanding graduate of the class was Master Sergeant Donald B. Bray of the 4004th Air Base Squadron, Matagorda Island. Master Sergeant Arthur W. Tuskey, Walker Air Force Base, was the recipient of the Commandant's Award for the student showing the most progress during the 265 hours of leadership training.[39] The fifth class of the NCO Academy graduated on 30 October 1954, with Brigadier General Jack Roberts, Chief of Staff, Eighth Air Force, as the featured speaker. The honor graduate of this class was Master Sergeant Alvin G. Iverson, Headquarters Eighth Air Force. The Commandant's Award went to Master Gergeant James R. McAfee of the 524th Strategic Fighter Squadron, Bergstrom Air Force Base.[40]

The sixth class (Class 54-I) of the NCO Academy graduated on 11 December 1954. The featured speaker for the class was Brigadier General John M. Reynolds, Commander, 810th Air Division, Biggs Air Force Base. Master Sergeant Harold C. Waite, Walker Air Force Base, was selected

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38/Press Release, Sp Asst Off, Hq 8AF, Issues of 30 Jul, dtd 23 Jul 54.
39/News Story, Jet Gazette, Bergstrom AFB, 24 Sep 54.
40/News Story, Jet Gazette, Bergstrom AFB, 5 Nov 54.

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as the honor student of the class, while the Commandant's Award went to Master Sergeant William A. Grant of Gray Air Force Base. The academic Achievement Award went to Master Sergeant James H. Jenkins, Walker Air Force Base.[41]

Following the graduation of the sixth class, the school recessed for the Christmas holidays. The first 1955 session of the Eighth Air Force NCO Academy, as well as other SAC Academies, was scheduled to open on 15 January 1955.

Changes in Key Personnel

During the period covered by this history there were few changes in the key personnel of Headquarters Eighth Air Force. Directing the activities of the command were Major General John B. Montgomery,[42] Commander; Major General James C. Selser, Jr,[43] Deputy Commander; and Brigadier General Jack Roberts,[44] Chief of Staff. General Selser assumed the position of Deputy Commander on 1 September 1954.[45] Prior to this assignment General Selser was Commander of the 7th Air Division in England. He was promoted from Brigadier General to Major General on 27 October 1954, with date of rank as Major General being 1 January 1951.

41/News Story, Jet Gazette, Bergstrom AFB, 17 Dec 54.
42/Biography, Maj Gen J. B. Montgomery, See Exhibit #84.
43/Biography, Maj Gen J. C. Selser, Jr. See Exhibit #85.
44/Biography, Brig Gen Jack Roberts. See Exhibit #86.
45/DAF Sp Ord No. 85, Par No. 2, dtd 3 May 54.
8AF, Gen Ord No. 34, dtd 1 Sep 54. See Exhibit #87.

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General Roberts was promoted from Colonel to Brigadier General on 30 July 1954, with date of rank from 23 July 1954.

Effective on 6 July 1954, Colonel Harold E. Humfeld was assigned as Director of Operations. He succeeded Colonel Richard Taylor who had been acting as Director of Operations.[46] Prior to this assignment Colonel Humfeld was Deputy Commander, 6th Bombardment Wing.[47] The only other Staff Office change within the headquarters took place on 27 December 1954, when Major Loren B. Laridon was assigned as Special Assistant to the Commander, succeeding Lieutenant Colonel William R. Berkeley, reassigned.[48] Prior to his assignment as Special Assistant, Major Laridon was Chief, Internal Information Division, of the Office of Special Assistant, this headquarters.[49]

For a list of personnel occupying key positions in this headquarters during the period 1 July through 31 December 1954, see the Roster of Key Personnel located at the end of the narrative portion of this history.

As was true in the headquarters staff positions, only a few changes occurred among the commanders of Eighth Air Force units during the period covered by this report. Changes in unit commanders are listed briefly as

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46/ 8AF, Gen Ord No. 24, dtd 12 Jul 54. See Exhibit #88.
47/ Biography, Colonel Harold E. Humfeld. See Exhibit #89.
48/ 8AF, Gen Ord No. 45, dtd 22 Dec 54. See Exhibit #90.
49/ Biography, Major Loren B. Laridon. See Exhibit #91.

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follows:

Effective on 2 July 1954, Colonel W. W. Smith was named commander of the 97th Bombardment Wing, Medium, succeeding Colonel K. K. Compton.[50] On 7 August 1954, Colonel Howard W. Moore, formerly Deputy Commander of the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, was appointed commander of the 11th Bombardment Wing, Heavy. Colonel Moore succeeded Colonel William t. Seawell as commander of the 11th Wing.[51]

On 25 July 1954, Colonel Richard N. Ellis assummed command of the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing succeeding Colonel Donald J. M. Blakeslee.[52] Effective on 4 October 1954, Colonel R. B. Templeman was named commander of the 96th Air Base Group, succeeding Colonel D. L. Beard.[53] On the 18th of October 1954, Lieutenant Colonel Carl H. Ullstrom was named commander of the 7th Aviation Depot Squadron.[54] He succeeded Major Malcom C. Hamby.

A complete list of commanders of major subordinate units of this command for the July-December period is carried at the end of the narrative portion of this history.

The identity of all officer personnel assigned in Headquarters Eighth Air Force as of 31 July and 31 December 1954, is reflected in the appended exhibits.[55]

50/Gen Ord No. 11, Hq 97th Bomb Wing, dtd 2 July 54.
51/Biography, Colonel H. W. Moore. See Exhibit #92.
52/8AF, Gen Ord No. 27, dtd 23 Jul 54. See Exhibit #93.
Biography, Colonel R. N. Ellis. See Exhibit #94.
53/Gen Ord No. 28, Hq 96th ABGp, dtd 4 Oct 54.
54/Biography, Lt Col C. H. Ullstrom. See Exhibit #95.
55/Officers Roster, Hq 8AF, 31 Jul 54. See Exhibit #96.
Officers Roster, Hq 8AF, 31 Dec 54. See Exhibit #97.

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Hascall Retires

Colonel Alva S. Hascall, chief of the Eighth Air Force armament-electronics division retired on Saturday, 6 November 1954, following 30 years of active military service. His service with the Air Force came to a formal end during a ceremony in which some 4,000 airmen and officers of Carswell Air Force Base passed in review. 56/

56/Photographs, Formal Review Ceremony for Col A. S. Hascall. See Exhibit #98.

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Chapter IV

MATERIEL

The following pages covering logistics, flying statistics, supply, maintenance, and other miscellaneous matters pertaining to the subject of materiel, have been written in an effort to present an overall picture of that subject and its related problems as they occurred at the numbered air force level and at bases under the control of the Eighth Air Force. The chapter has been sub-divided into sections concerned with heavy and medium bombardment type units, fighter units, and supporting organizations. It was felt in this way the reader would gain a greater understanding of materiel problems in this air force. At the same time, the reader would come to know the inter-relationship of materiel to the accomplishment of the mission of the Eighth Air Force. As in the past, some problems have been discussed which had no immediate solution, but which would be solved later in the light of improved supply and flow of parts for aircraft assigned.

The first sub-section covers general activities of the Materiel Staff Directorate in relation to organizations at bases assigned to the Eighth Air Force.

General

Transfer of 15 T-33's

Project 54-T33-57 which directed the transfer of 15 T-33 aircraft from the 2d to 8th Air Force was completed during the period covered by the

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July-August report of the Directorate of Materiel, this headquarters. Fourteen of the 15 aircraft scheduled for transfer were delivered to bases of this command. One was lost in a crash prior to the transfer.[1]

Transfer of KC-97's.

An open project (designation 54-KC97-8) was set up by Headquarters Strategic Air Command for transfer of KC-97 aircraft within units of SAC. One will be moved from the 98th to the 509th Air Refueling Squadron, and the 509th will transfer one KC-97 to the 98th Air Refueling Squadron. The reason for this move was that certain "G" models of the KC-97 are equipped with "F" packs. It was planned by SAC that all "F" packs would be removed and replaced through the IRAN project or a special modification program. On receipt of the new KC-97 by the 98th Air Refueling Squadron, one of their older models will be transferred to the 96th Air Refueling Squadron. During September 1954, another KC-97 will be moved to the 96th Air Refueling Squadron.[2]

B-36 Corrosion Problems

Three B-36 aircraft returned from a special mission with Task Force 7.4 during the months of July and August, and it was found that corrosion and contamination was at an advanced stage throughout all three aircraft. This was the result of atomic explosions and tests in which the aircraft had taken part. After inspection, it was found that landing gear, door

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1/ Monthly Historical Report, Dir of Materiel, Hq 8AF for Jul-Aug 54, dtd 8 Sep 54.
2/ Ibid.

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tie braces, hydraulic, fuel, oil, and fire extinguisher lines were badly contaminated by radio-active roentgen rays. Eighth Air Force Headquarters contacted Strategic Air Command and the San Antonio Air Materiel Depot to have the three aircraft repaired and to remove all effects of contamination either in SAM-SAC or B-36 IRAN at the Convair plant at Ft. Worth, Texas. Due to the atomic bomb contamination, Convair refused to accept the B-36's without a contract authorizing special handling. The project, estimated at over a million dollars, included repair of aircraft and writing a book on special handling procedures for working on radio-active aircraft. As a result, due to the high cost, the contract had to be approved by the Secretary of the Air Force. With the three B-36's, a new era on Air Force and civilian maintenance and operations had been opened up in which special precautions had to be taken on any aircraft contaminated by radio-active rays.3/

B-36 Exhaust System Failures

During the period between 10 June and 20 August 1954, the 95th Bombardment Wing had 24 serious exhaust system failures all due to mechanical and not maintenance failures. Any of these could have been the cause of a nacelle fire. As a result of this condition and following investigation by San Antonio Air Materiel Command representatives, 10 new exhaust assemblies were airlifted from SAAMA as replacements. A magne-probe check of all assigned aircraft of the 95th Bombardment Wing

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3/Ibid.

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was completed on any aircraft not having new exhaust systems. This was done for detection of any flaws in the metal parts. Representatives of SAAMA used an annealing and passivating procedure in their overhauling process in order to eliminate areas of thermal strain. As a result, the American Instrument Company developed a new instrument to measure exhaust component wall thickness in order that the trouble covered above would not reoccur.[4]

Technical Order Compliance on Medium Bombardment Aircraft

Technical Order compliance on all Medium Bombardment aircraft assigned to the 97th Bombardment Wing continued to receive the close attention of headquarters Eighth Air Force during the period of July and August 1954. The importance of reducing all outstanding Technical Order compliances on all assigned aircraft was emphasized by the use of reports, messages, and staff visits to the wing in question. A staff visit was made by the Directorate of Materiel, this headquarters, to the 97th Bombardment Wing during the 15th and 16th of July 1954 and a comprehensive program was worked out with wing personnel on the scheduling of Technical Order Compliances. Improvement was expected in this matter during the months following the visit particularly on such aircraft as the B-50 and C-124.[5]

In August, it was found that technical order compliance status of units had improved. This was due partly to new reporting methods which

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4/ Ibid.
5/ Ibid.

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had been set up and required by Strategic Air Command. During August, more than 4000 man-hours were used in technical order compliance by personnel assigned to the 97th Bombardment Wing. With all the work going into changes required by the technical orders the compliance status of the wing has improved.6/

Fighter Aircraft

All fighter aircraft (F-84's) assigned to units of Eighth Air Force were grounded during the August 1954 reporting period as the result of technical orders which had been received requiring changes and alterations to the oxygen, hydraulic, engine fuel, and stabilator control system. Most of these were required on the hydraulic systems of the F-84 and would be completed by contractor personnel. Along with this, units of the Eighth Air Force where the F-84 was assigned were required to use many man-hours over and above the normal amount required for regular maintenance in order that all aircraft would be in flying condition.

At Bergstrom, an extensive training program was set up in order that maintenance personnel could be trained in maintenance procedures for the latest types of F-84 jet aircraft being delivered to the base during the last half of 1954. In order to complete the training, technical orders and a Mobile Training Detachment School from the training command were both used.7/

All F-84F type aircraft which were equipped with the J-65 engine needed

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6/ Ibid.
7/ Ibid.

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modifications in order that their operation could be improved. Those units assigned this type aircraft had the larger tail pipe installed plus a pylon tank. The pylon tank provided for an in-flight refueling of each aircraft. 8/

Special Weapons Program

A Special Weapons program was in progress in all Armament Electronic Squadrons during November 1954. Eighth Air Force Programming Plan 19-54 was carried out in reference to Atomic Weapons Support for Armament Electronics Maintenance Squadrons. All Special Weapons teams are not 100% manned to date, but it was expected that all Bases would reach that figure in the immediate future.

Two problems remain to be solved in this program. The first is the fact that all "priority 1" personnel had not been trained in the primary weapon assigned to their station, although they were filling the required vacancy on the table of organization. In addition, a shortage of 461X0 (JRN 9) career field personnel exists and this factor is slowing down the training of "priority 2" teams. In order to correct this condition an energetic on-the-job training program will be necessary to train personnel required to fill vacancies which exist. The second problem has to do with a shortage of 39D equipment which has been requisitioned from the San Antonio Air Materiel Depot. Delivery date of the equipment was not known as of November 1954. 9/

8/ Ibid.
9/ Historical Report, Directorate of Material, 8th AF, November 1954.

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Maintenance Problems at Eighth Air Force Units.

By November 1954, the overall picture of maintenance performed throughout units of the Eighth Air Force was on the downgrade. This was caused by several factors. The first cause was due to the fact that a higher percentage of aircraft were under modification programs. Secondly, there was a large loss of personnel to B-47 and J-47 training in anticipation of the organization's shift to that type of aircraft in the near future. A greater emphasis had been put on on-the-job training of new airmen in the organizations and this adversely affected the maintenance performed. Finally, the coming of cold weather flying conditions in many of the bases throughout the Eighth Air Force has contributed to the lowering of maintenance work completed.

In Fighter units, the transfer of F-84F split tail aircraft and the receipt of F-84F slab-tail aircraft has contributed to the lowered level of maintenance completed. In months following November 1954, it was expected that maintenance capability would increase which would result in increased flying hours flown in all organizations of this command. 10/

Fuel Cell Problems in B-36 and B-50 Aircraft

During November 1954, a gasoline leakage problem was reported as occurring in B-36 aircraft assigned at Biggs Air Force Base, Texas. It was found that gasoline was leaking from all aircraft around the pivot shaft boxes. The Convair aircraft plant in Fort Worth and the San Antonio

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10/Ibid.

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Air Materiel Depot were asked to help in correcting this condition, since it was believed most fuel leaks were caused by poor quality workmanship during aircraft overhaul projects at the Convair plant.

In the 97th Bombardment Wing, where B-50's were assigned, fuel cell leaks were reported during November 1954. After some trouble in getting repair work accomplished by either the San Antonio or the Oklahoma City Air Materiel Depots, 12 technicians were placed on temporary duty from the latter Depot to repair the leaks and perform fuel cell inspections on all B-50 aircraft assigned.

The same problem existed on aircraft assigned to the 509th Bombardment Wing. As a result, in a meeting held at the Oklahoma Air Materiel Command Depot, it was decided that 12 maintenance personnel would be sent to both Biggs and Walker Air Force Bases to inspect all B-50 fuel cells. The project should have been completed by January 1955. 11/

Performance Test on the R4360-41 Engine

During November 1954, preparation and completion of a test (Project 44D) on the B-36 engine, the R4360-41, occurred. The test was set up to record performance characteristics of B-36D engines assigned to the 95th Bombardment Wing. All engines on four individual B-36's were completely prepared for the test. Two profile missions were scheduled and carried out; the first on 22 November and the final one on 3 December 1954. As a result of these tests, it was found that the R4360-41 engine

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11/Ibid.

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was not capable of supporting the Emergency War Plan requirements for the 95th Bombardment Wing. No action was taken to change the Emergency War Plan until the final test report was studied and conclusions had been reached.[12]

Transfer of T-33's to Bergstrom Air Force Base

It was decided during November 1954 that additional T-33 type jet aircraft would be transferred to Bergstrom Air Force Base so that aircrew personnel of the 42nd Air Division could complete their required flying hours during the month. Representatives of the Materiel Directorate, Eighth Air Force, were placed on temporary duty at Bergstrom to help the 42d Air Division set up a program for the best use of the newly-assigned aircraft. As a result, the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing was assigned responsibility for maintenance of all T-33 aircraft. In addition, four flights were set up to schedule flying time and assignment of flying personnel to each aircraft. Four periodic inspection docks were set up for maintenance of aircraft assigned to the above flights.[13]

Heavy Organizations

6th Bombardment Wing

The 6th Bombardment Wing at Roswell, New Mexico was scheduled to complete 1200 flying hours in July and ended the month with 1294:35 hours completed. During the same period, aircraft assigned to the Wing took

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12/Ibid.
13/Ibid.

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part in an Air Defense Command exercise in which they took thepart of the enemy aggressors and logged a total of 208:55 hours in the exercise.[14]

During August, the 6th Bomb Wing had 38 B-36 aircraft assigned, 33.5 of this number were on hand, and 23.3 were in-commission. The in-commission rate had dropped 1% over the previous month and the AOCP rate had increased more than 2%. Total hours flown by all three squadrons of the Wing amounted to 1166:15 which was 113.2% of the assigned number of hours scheduled for the month. A total of 13 engine changes were made with an average of 276 hours of running time on each engine removed. The number of R-4360-53 engines changed was considerable less than previous months.[15]

Total flying time accomplished during September by the Wing amounted to 1268:05 hours and was broken down to 423:15 hours for the 24th Bomb Squadron, 422:35 hours for the 39th Bomb Squadron, and 422:15 hours for the 40th Bomb Squadron. No large maintenance problems bothered the Wing during September and there were no changes in aircraft inventory reported. A total of 16 reciprocating engines and three jet engines were changed in the period.

In September, an overall decrease was recorded in the 6th Bomb Wing's total average maintenance discrepancies in comparison to previous months. The quality control section of the Wing's Materiel Directorate figured

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14/Flying hours since September 1954, 6th Bombardment Wing, Roswell AFB, New Mexico.
15/6th Bomb Wing Maintenance Review for August 1954.

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that the decline in maintenance discrepancies during September was a result of improved maintenance quality, throughout the Wing.[16]

Monthly flying training accomplished, plus a Unit Simulated Combat mission, in October, resulted in 1317:15 hours being logged. This figure was more than the time allocated for the month and was the second highest for flying time accomplished during the year. During October, the Wing had the lowest AOCP rate, 0.2 percent, in the four year history of the organization. Maintenance performance continued at a high quality level during the same period. Numerous analyses of the maintenance situation were written by the Wing's Materiel Directorate and resulted in many explanations for the high grade of maintenance.[17] Three factors leading to this were, the use of a maintenance wagon, which delivered parts directly to aircraft while work was being performed, a comprehensive monitoring of the program from staff level, and cooperation between Base Supply agencies and the Wing Maintenance Section.

7th Bombardment Wing

The 7th Bombardment Wing, stationed at Carswell Air Force Base, averaged, during July 1954, 29.78 aircraft on hand, while 23.95 of this number were in-commission, and the balance of 5.93 were grounded because of maintenance and parts shortages. During the month, the in-commission rate for assigned B-36 aircraft was 80.41% which was an increase of 5% over the previous month.[18]

16/6th Bomb Wing History for September 1954.
17/Factors contributing to the 6th Bomb Wing low AOCP rate, October 1954. Exhibit #99.
18/7th Bomb Wing History for July 1954.

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During July, the Wing dispatched 10 B-36 aircraft on an overseas simulated combat mission where the city of Marrakech, North Africa was the bomb target. The purpose of the mission was to test the ability of the Air Base at Nouasseur of supporting the 7th Bomb Wing. After the completion of a simulated attack, aircraft left North Africa in 48 hours for return to Carswell, making a practice bomb run over the city of Jackson, Mississippi on the return course. Due to the explosive situation existing between the French Government forces and national troops, it was advised that all personnel accompanying the Wing be cautioned of revolutionary conditions in North Africa and be warned against making trips around the country.19/

In September, the 7th Bombardment Wing had an average of 28.6 B-36 aircraft on hand, 20.9 aircraft were in commission, and 7.7 were grounded due to lack of parts and for maintenance. The in-commission rate for the month amounted to 73.2% on comparison with the August figure of 76.36%. Total flying time accrued, during September, amounted to 1204 hours. In the same period, 18 engines were changed and of this number ten were reciprocating engines while eight were jet engines.20/

During October, an average of 25.1 aircraft were on hand in possession of the Wing, 19.2 were in commission, and 5.9 were grounded due to maintenance and parts shortages. The in-commission rate, expressed in percentages,

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19/Operations Order #129-54, 7th Bomb Wing, Carswell AFB, dtd 4 Aug 54.
20/7th Bomb Wing History for September 1954.

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was 76.5% in comparison to 73.2% which was reported during the previous month.[21] Several new changes were incorporated in the supply system on the line. A control center was set up for all field maintenance shops, which eliminated separate orders sent to Base Supply from each maintenance shop. The service unit set up a system whereby all items of supply would be issued directly to the shops and not to aircraft as was done formerly. A problem arose, in October, concerning fogging of aft sighting blisters in B-36 aircraft. On further investigation, it was found that the sighting blisters frosted at high altitude so much that scanners were unable to observe engine operation while the aircraft was inflight. The installed defrosting systems were modified by one short metal duct and two flexible ones. In the future, it was recommended that the defrosting systems be kept running at all times in order that vision would not be cut off due to frost.[22]

The wing had an average of 24.2 aircraft in their possession during November 1954, and the in-commission rate was 78.6% in comparison with a figure of 76.5% for October. A lack of skilled five and seven level maintenance personnel in the 43-thousand career field was felt throughout the Wing. One approach for correction of this problem was upgrading, in skill level, of several airmen to the five level. In order to overcome this problem, which existed at all levels, more on-the-job training, and

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21/7th Bomb Wing History for October 1954.
22/Eighth Air Force Message MDMP1 47792, 23 Oct 54.

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more graduates of technical schools would have to be brought into units of the wing.[23]

11th Bombardment Wing

The 11th Bombardment Wing, assigned to Carswell Air Force Base during the six month period of this history, flew a total of 1576 hours during July 1954. This figure was divided between the three squadrons of the Wing as follows: 26th Bombardment Squadron - 626:50 hours, 42nd Bomb Squadron - 523:05 hours, and the 98th Bomb Squadron with 426:05 hours. A total of 514:40 hours were flown in performance of missions which had been directed by higher headquarters. This figure was the result of two Unit Simulated Combat Missions flown during July, and for other missions which included Photo Reconnaissance, Tow Target, and Strategic Evaluation Missions. The USCM flown during July, was directed by an Eighth Air Force Operations Order,[24] and was to check and test the potential strength and readiness of the Air Defense Command.

Aircraft assigned to the 11th Bomb Wing took part in a mission to North Africa, during July, in compliance with an Operations Order issued by Headquarters Eighth Air Force.[25] The ADVON left Carswell on the 25th and 26th of June 54 in eight C-124's, followed by four personnel carriers on the 25th and four cargo carriers (C-124's) on the 26th of June 1954.

23/7th Bomb Wing History for November 1954.
24/Eighth Air Force Operations Order 25-54, dtd July 54, Title: "Operation Checkpoint."
25/Operations Order 28-54, Hq 8th Air Force, dtd July 1954.

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On the return trip all B-36 aircraft took off as scheduled, with one exception, on 29 July 54. All bomber type aircraft, with two exceptions, landed at Carswell on 30 July 1954.

Of the 1103:25 hours flown during August by crews of the 11th Bomb Wing, the 26th Bomb Squadron flew a total of 353:05 hours, the 42nd Bomb Squadron accumulated 377:50 hours, and the 98th Bomb Squadron recorded 372:30 hours.[26] A total of 269:40 hours were flown in the performance of missions which had been ordered from higher headquarters. This figure represented a compilation of hours flown for such purposes as: Strategic Evaluation missions, SAC Bombing Competition, Convair flyover, support of Eighth Air Force standboard, and static display at McDill Air Force Base.[27] During the same period, seven major maintenance inspections were completed by members of the 11th Periodic Maintenance Squadron. As a result of these inspections, 90 cylinders were changed in reciprocating engines of B-36 aircraft. A total of 6 jet and 12 reciprocating engines were changed at the time.[28]

In September, aircraft of the Wing built up a total of 1196:40 flying hours in assigned aircraft. The total figure was compiled by three squadrons in which the 26th Bomb Squadron accumulated 387:55 hours, the 42nd Bomb Squadron recorded 429:35 hours and the 98th Bomb Squadron flew a total of 379:10 hours.[29]

26/ History, 11th Bomb Wing for August 1954.
27/ Part IV, Wing Commander's Remarks, dtd August 1954.
28/ History, 11th Bomb Wing for August 1954.
29/ History, 11th Bomb Wing for September 1954.
Part IV, Wing Commander's Remarks, 11th Bomb Wing, September 1954.

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One unit simulated combat mission was completed during September in accordance with orders issued by Headquarters Eighth Air Force. 30/ The purpose of the mission was to bomb at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, in which M107 bombs were used by aircraft assigned to the mission. During the same period, the wing completed six major maintenance inspections. Two of them were carry-overs from the previous month, and one was scheduled for carry-over to October since the inspection was only 50% completed by the end of September. A total of three jet engines were changed, with an average operational time of 91 hours. In addition, nine reciprocating engines three turbos, and 46 cylinders were changed during the month by maintenance men assigned to the wing.

In September, power plants of assigned B-36 aircraft accounted for 18 engine malfunctions. On investigation, it was found that ten of them were due to poor maintenance and eight could be blamed on materiel failure. 31/ In order to partially correct the power plant malfunctions due to errors on the part of maintenance personnel, a school was started in the Wing to teach, by demonstration, the proper way to perform engine repair work.

Total flying hours completed by pilots and crews of 11th Bombardment Wing aircraft amounted to 1231:10 hours during October. The breakdown amounted to 383:50 hours in the 26th Bomb Squadron, 330:35 hours for the 42nd Bomb Squadron, and 516:45 hours for the 98th Bombardment Squadron. In flying missions 335:15 hours was completed as ordered by higher head-

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30/ Eighth Air Force Operations Order 134-58, September 1954.
31/ Monthly aircraft malfunction summary, 11th Bomb Wing, September 1954.

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30/Eighth Air Force Operations Order 134-58, September 1954.
31/Monthly aircraft malfunction summary, 11th Bomb Wing, September 1954.

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quarters.[32]

In October, personnel of the 11th Bomb Wing conducted six major inspections, resulting in changing three jet, 17 reciprocating, three turbos, and 21 cylinders.[33]

Crew members of the 11th Wing flew a total of 1200:55 hours during November 1954, in which the 26th Bomb Squadron recorded 379:40 hours, the 42nd Bomb Squadron logged 440:10 hours, and the 98th Bomb Squadron completed 363:05 hours. In total hours flown, 150:35 were accounted for in performance of missions ordered from higher headquarters. These included such missions as support for a Strategic Evaluation Squadron, support of a loading course at Lowry Air Force Base, and two ferry flights. One of the ferry flights was to Ellsworth Air Force Base and the other was from Fort Worth to Roswell Air Force Base, New Mexico.[34] During the same month, seven periodic inspections were performed and completed in the Wing. In these, two jet engines were changed where each engine had averaged 46 hours of operation. The balance of engines and parts changed numbered 20 reciprocating type, six turbos, and 41 cylinders.[35]

The 19th Air Division, at Carswell Air Force Base, provided maintenance support for the two bombardment wings under its control. During July, nine major inspections, 27 reciprocal and two jet engines changes were completed. In addition, 92 cylinders and 11 power packages were assembled.

32/Part Iv, Wing Commander's Remarks, 11th Bomb Wing, October 1954.
33/11th Bomb Wing History, October 1954.
34/Part IV-Wing Commander's Remarks for November 1954.
35/11th Bombardment Wing History for November 1954.

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The B-36 aircraft assigned to tactical units, the 7th and 11th Bomb Wings, of the 19th Air Division on 31 July 1954, included 10 B-36J's assigned and on hand, 25 B-36H's assigned, of which 22 were on hand in the 7th Bomb Wing. In the 11th Bomb Wing, 10 B-36J's were assigned and all of them were available to the Wing. A total of 25 B-36H aircraft were assigned to the 11th Wing, and 23 of this number were on hand. 36/

The tactical wings assigned to the 19th Air Division completed 2251 hours flying time during August. In order to accomplish this, 16 major inspections were completed, 27 engine changes were made, 158 cylinders were replaced in B-36 engines, and 20 power packs were received from the Materiel Depot at San Antonio, Texas. At the same time, 11 power packs (R-4360-53 B-36 engines) were assembled in both Wings at Carswell.

The 7th Bomb Wing had 35 B-36's, both "J" and "H" models, assigned to the organization, while 30 were on hand during August. In the 11th Bomb Wing, 35 B-36J's and "H's" were assigned and all were present and available. 37/

Both Wings assigned to the 19th Air Division completed 2318 flying hours in September 1954. To keep both Wings operational, 17 major inspections were performed, 19 engine changes were required, 105 cylinders were replaced, 20 power packs were received from the Materiel Depot at San Antonio in addition to seven power packs being assembled. 38/

36/Daily Effectiveness Reports, 7th and 11th Bombardment Wings, Carswell Air Force Base, for July 1954.
37/Historical Report, 19th Air Division for August 1954.
38/Historical Report, 19th Air Division for September 1954.

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As of 30 September 1954, 35 B-36 aircraft were assigned to the 7th Bomb Wing, of which 27 were on hand and possessed by the Wing. In the 11th Bomb Wing, 35 B-36 aircraft were assigned and 30 were on hand.[39]

The two Wings accumulated 2450:30 hours flying time during November in performance of missions and local test hops. Of the 35 aircraft assigned to the 7th Bombardment Wing, 22 were on hand during the month. The 11th Bomb Wing was equipped with "J" and "H" models of the B-36; a total of 35 B-36's were assigned. This figure breaks down to 10 B-36J's and 25 B-36H's. Of this number, 10 "J's" and 18 "H's" were on hand at Carswell.[40]

The Strategic Air Command Flying Safety trophy was awarded to Carswell Air Force Base during December for completing 50,000 flying hours without an accident. Due to an extensive program of construction at Carswell during 1954 caution had to be observed by all personnel connected with aircraft operation. During December, 3151 take-offs and landings were recorded at the base for all types of aircraft, and a total of 174 flights completed freight hauling and passenger missions during the month.[41]

28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing

Pilots and aircraft assigned to the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, increased the amount of flying time performed in July over the figures recorded for the previous month. A total of 1181 hours and 79 sorties were

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39/Ibid.
40/Historical Report, 19th Air Division for November 1954.
41/Historical Report, 19th Air Division for December 1954.

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scheduled by higher headquarters for July and the wing completed 81 sorties flying 1072 hours in their accomplishment.[42]

Training commitments gradually changed during July to include those necessary for conversion of the primary mission to a combat ready bombardment wing by 1 October 1954. By 22 July 1954, the Wing had completed a programming plan which included bombardment training requirements necessary before conversion could be completed. During the intervening period between July and October, the reconnaissance mission of the wing was maintained but received a lower priority than the bombardment mission. In order to get on with the new mission, the wing was relieved of requirements of SAC Regulation 50-8, by a message received from SAC dated 18 June 1954. Bombing requirements were set up for each crew category.[43]

The wing had 35 RB-36 aircraft assigned as of the end of July, and of this number the in-commission rate was 67 percent. Aircraft out-of-commission for parts amounted to 17 percent and all other aircraft which were grounded, temporarily, included 16 percent of the number assigned.[44]

A decrease in the rate of aircraft out-of-commission for parts was reported during July, but a shortage of aircraft spare parts still existed. In several cases, substitution of aircraft to carry out an assigned mission was necessary due to the above problem. In a survey which was carried

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42/Historical Report, 28th Strat Recon Wg, for July 1954.
43/28th Strat Recon Wg Programming Plan 8-54. TWX DOTRFC 6206, 18 Jun 54.
44/Historical Report, 28th Strat Recon Wg, for July 1954.

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out during the month to find out pipeline time required for 31 AOCP line items, it was learned that an average of 10.3 days were required from the time the part was ordered until its delivery to the Wing maintenance shops. This time problem had been referred to Eighth Air Force for solution.[45]

The 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing completed 1218 hours of flying plus 66 hours recorded as ferry flights in August. Of the 1200 hours scheduled by higher headquarters for mission flying, 1152 hours were actually flown during the month. Additional hours were built up on wing missions in which 63 hours were in performance of 3908th Strategic Evaluation Squadron commitments, 238 hours were flown to fulfill Eighth Air Force Operations Order 133-54, and 576 hours for combat crew training. Flying time logged in the SAC Navigation competition was 88 hours; 181 hours were recorded in non-combat ready crew training, and six hours were flown by combat ready crews during August.[46]

Of the 35 RB-36 aircraft assigned in August, a total of 27.22 were on hand, 18.91 were in commission and the balance of 4.71 were grounded due to lack of parts and for maintenance.[47]

During September considerable improvement was noted in the maintenance and supply program of the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing. Reduction was most noticeable in the daily AOCP rate for assigned aircraft. This fact was due to command support by Eighth Air Force supply agencies, such

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45/28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing Commander's Remarks, July 1954.
46/Historical Report, 28th Strat Recon Wg, for August 1954.
47/Monthly Analysis, 28th Strat Recon Wg, for August 1954.

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as the San Antonio Air Materiel area coordination visits, a good supply management control procedure at Base level, and a local project to speed up delivery of parts where needed. As proof of the low AOCP rate for the month, an average of 0.5 aircraft were out of commission for parts during September, while for the previous month, the figure was 3.6 aircraft out-of-commission due to parts shortages.[48]

Total flying time completed during September amounted to 908 hours, which was nine hours short of scheduled hours of flying for the month. Flying training in crew proficiency amounted to 15 hours during the month, 202 hours were logged in non-combat ready crew training, 542 hours were for combat ready crew training, and 82 hours for the 3908th SES commitments. An additional 65 hours was recorded in test and ferry flying, plus two hours which were directed by higher headquarters.[49]

Operations carried out during October by the Wing were 90 sorties of 929 hours which were logged for training purposes. Eight sorties were made in training select and lead crews and 47 hours flying time was recorded. Eight sorties totalling 79 hours for non-combat ready crew training, and 14 sorties completed 110 hours of flying for the 394lst Strategic Evaluation Squadron. Bombing capability training consisted of 21 sorties of 299 hours flying. An additional 21 sorties were flown of 331 hours which were recorded as 51-26 probation commitments, and a final

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48/28th Strat Recon Wg Commander's Remarks for September 1954.
49/Historical Report, 28th Strat Recon Wg dated September 1954.

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18 sorties of 63 hours were flown for testing and ferrying of assigned aircraft.[50]

A total of 34 RB-36 aircraft were assigned to the Wing in October, and 26 were on hand, of which 17.5 were in-commission during the month. Aircraft out-of-commission for maintenance and other reasons amounted to six. Aircraft out-of-commission for parts was 1.5 which was still as low as the previous month. Aircraft in-commission during the month amounted to 68 percent, while six major and 45 post flight inspections were completed by wing maintenance crews. Eighteen reciprocal and three jet engines were changed by crews during the course of the month.[51]

During November 1066 flying hours were completed by crews and assigned RB-36 aircraft of the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing. Of this total, 296 hours were recorded on 51-26 probation flying, and an additional 74 hours were flown in 3941st SES evaluations. Another 127 hours flying was logged on a trip to and from Thule, Greenland during the month. Two radar project sorties were flown, in which 35 hours were added to the total flown by assigned aircraft. Additional flying training was conducted for non-combat ready, combat ready, select and lead crew members in which 436 hours flying were recorded for the wing total.[52]

Again in November, the assigned figure was 34 RB-36 aircraft. A total of 65.6 percent were in commission, while 15 percent were out-of-commission for parts, and 3.9 percent were grounded for miscellaneous

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50/28th Strat Recon Wg Commander's Remarks for October 1954.
51/Ibid.
52/28th Strat Recon Wg Commander's Remarks dtd 13 Dec 1954.

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reasons. Five sorties were cancelled, during the month, due to fuel tank leaks, engine changes, rigging difficulties, and shortage of parts. Four sorties were not flown due to maintenance and materiel reasons.[53] A total of six periodic, three in-commission inspections, eight jet engine changes, 23 final build-up engine inspections were performed during November 1954.[54]

Total flying time accrued by RB-36 aircraft during December amounted to 962:05 hours. Of this amount, 146 hours was logged in completion of missions ordered by higher headquarters, 36 hours were recorded in ferrying aircraft, 60 hours for Strategic Evaluation Squadron flights, and 50 hours for an evaluation mission directed by a Wing Operations Order (28th Wing Operations Order 72-54, 19 Nov 54).[55]

Of the 34 RB-36H aircraft assigned to the Wing, 24 were possessed during December. Of this number, 65.9 percent were in commission for flying, 14.7 of aircraft assigned were out-of-commission for maintenance, 16.5 percent were grounded for parts shortages, and 2.9 percent were not flying for other reasons. Five RB-36 aircraft were sent to the Depot for inspection and overhaul in project SAM-SAC, and one was returned.[56]

42d Bombardment Wing

Three Bombardment Squadrons, 69th, 70th, and 75th, accumulated 1033:35 flying hours during July as compared to the scheduled time of 1000 hours.

53/Reconnaissance Air Training Report, Wing Commander's Remarks, 28th Strat Recon Wg, dated 13 Dec 54.
54/28th Strat Recon Wg History for Nov 1954.
55/28th Strat Recon Wg History for Dec 1954.
56/Ibid.

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In the 75th Bomb Squadron, four crews and their aircraft took part in a combined exercise with Air Defense Radar Installations to test counter-measure procedures against bombardment aircraft during July 1954. The exercise gave aircraft gunners of B-36 aircraft experience in actual fighter aircraft attacks against a theoretical enemy bomber.[57]

A low aircraft in-commission rate, during July, could be blamed largely on the number of aircraft out-of-commission for parts. The reason for the high AOCP rate was due to a shortage of fire extinguishers which were mounted on each B-36 engine and were capable of putting out any engine fire which might break out. As a result, a total of 46 aircraft flying days were lost by the organization due to the cylinder shortage.[58]

Total flying time recorded in July amounted to 1022 hours and was reached with 28.2 percent of assigned aircraft.[59]

The in-commission rate of assigned aircraft amounted to 62.6 percent for August. The AOCP rate of 25.2 percent was attributable to a flap modification program in progress during the month.[60] Total flying time in the Wing amounted to 1,111 hours which was reached with 26.4 percent of all B-36 aircraft assigned to the wing.[61]

Aircraft out-of-commission due to parts shortages decreased to the point that no assigned aircraft were in this category for 17 days during

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57/Historical Report, 42nd Bombardment Wing, July 1954.
58/Daily Rpt of Acft Status & Selected Flight Operations, 42d Bomb Wg, Loring AFB, Maine, dtd 31 Jul 54.
59/B-36 Flying Time Chart, 42d Bomb Wg, Jul 54.
60/B-36 In-Commission Status, 42nd Bomb Wing for July 1954.
61/Chart, Average hours flown by the 42d Bomb Wing, August 1954.

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September. This resulted in a drop in the number of hours lost due to lack of parts and cannibalization. As a result, the in-commission rate for assigned B-36's reached 74 percent, and this could be credited to improved maintenance plus a low AOCP rate previously mentioned. Due to the high in-commission rate reported, a total of 1350 flying hours were logged by pilots and aircraft of the Wing during September.[62] The flap modification program, started in August, was 80 percent completed by the end of September. During that time, a total of 210 aircraft flaps had been modified on B-36 aircraft.

On 15 September, 17 aircraft assigned to the 42nd Bombardment Wing took part in an overseas mission to the United Kingdom in compliance with an Eighth Air Force Operations Order.[63] Fourteen aircraft departed from Loring Air Force Base on schedule and three were as much as two hours late in their scheduled take-off. A total of 13 aircraft were effective over the target, and three aborted due to inoperative radar equipment. The aircraft assigned to the mission flew a total of 1350 hours, with B-36 aircraft logging 250 hours and B-36H's flying the balance of 1,100 hours.[64]

In October, a shortage of qualified aircraft maintenance officers had reached a point in the 42nd Bombardment Wing where it slowed down the wing's maintenance program. In the past nine months, a total of seven

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62/B-36 Flying Time Chart, 42d Bomb Wing, Sep 1954.
63/Eighth Air Force Operations Order 135-54, Sep 1954.
64/B-36 Flying Time Chart, 42d Bomb Wing, Sep 1954.

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maintenance officers were lost to the wing and four replacements reported to fill existing vacancies. The wing was authorized 19 officers, having maintenance backgrounds, but only 10 officers were found to fill those slots. It was recommended to higher headquarters that action be taken to procure officers with a maintenance specialty to fill the vacant slots in the wing's table of allowances.[65/]

The in-commission rate for aircraft assigned to the wing during October 1954, amounted to 74.5 percent, which was an increase over September by .6 percent. Flying time logged, during the month, amounted to 967:15 hours.[66/]

A problem of water in aircraft fuel arose, during September and October in the wing maintenance section. This resulted in five major malfunctions occurring in assigned aircraft during the two month period, and as a result, a continuous check of all refueling equipment was made to eliminate the cause of the problem. Aircraft fuel tanks, pumps, strainers, and booster pumps were drained twice after each refueling, in order to remove all traces of water in the fuel. It was found that water in solution with gasoline, had condensed in fuel tanks due to lowering of fuel temperatures. The water froze in strainers and finger screens of affected B-36 aircraft and cut off the flow of gasoline, thereby causing a complete loss of power in all engines. It was recommended that research be carried out

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65/Historical Report, 42d Bomb Wing, October 1954.
66/Ibid.

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to correct the condition and to prevent future loss of combat potential or a major aircraft accident.[67]

In November, 10 B-36D's, 13 B-36H's and 5 B-36J's were on hand for a total of 28 aircraft. Flying time recorded during the month amounted to 1160 hours, of which 873 hours were flown during daylight hours and the balance of 287 was logged at night.[68] The percentage of aircraft out-of-commission for parts increased during November, and was due to a shortage of instruments. As a result of that, cannibalization was carried out in order that aircraft be always available for any mission.[69]

95th Bombardment Wing

During July, the 95th Bombardment Wing at Biggs Air Force Base, Texas forwarded priority requisitions to higher headquarters for equipment shortages under the code name "Long Run." The name was authorized as an aid to Strategic Air Command Bomb Wings in procurement of mobility equipment. Most of the equipment was requisitioned through Eighth Air Force by the wing.[70]

July was the third month in a row during which the 95th Bomb Wing flew in excess of its planned flying requirments. The goal of 938 flying hours was passed with 947:35 hours logged in 79 sorties.[71]

67/Ibid.
68/Daily Report of Aircraft Status and Selected Flight Operations, 42nd Bomb Wing, 30 November 1954.
69/Historical Report, 42d Bomb Wing, November 1954.
70/Historical Report, 95th Bomb Wing, July 1954.
71/Ibid.

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In a message received from Eighth Air Force in June 1954, requiring that all B-36 flaps be inspected and repaired, if required, a total of 19 from assigned aircraft required removal and repair. The San Antonio Air Materiel Depot was asked to repair five flaps; the other 14 were issued directly from the Depot to the Wing. As a result of the request, eight sheet metal repairmen were sent to the 95th Bomb Wing to do the repairs.[72]

No additional B-36D aircraft were assigned to the wing in August, but one crashed and was destroyed leaving 29 as the total number assigned. Due to ferrying aircraft to and from SAM-SAC for configuration, feather-weighting, and other modifications, in August, a total of eight aircraft were TDY and 21 were present and available for flying.[73]

Total flying time accrued during August by pilots and aircraft of the 95th Bomb Wing was 1027:30 hours, of which select crews flew 62:45 hours, lead crews 280:40 hours, ready crews 377:30 hours, non-ready crews 259:05 hours and 47:30 hours were logged in test flights. Time recorded in missions ordered by higher headquarters was 390:50 hours. Of the total 69:00 hours were flown during the SAC Navigation Bombing Competition, 97:20 hours were accumulated for ferrying aircraft and the balance of 225:30 hours were logged in the mission to and from Lajes, Azores.[74]

On 15 September 1954, personnel arrived at Biggs from Eighth Air Force on a project called SAC-SIP (SAC Supply Improvement Program) which

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72/TWX from Comdr 8th AF to Comdr 810th ADiv, MDMPl 41874, dtd 15 Jun 54.
73/Strategic Air Command V-1 Report, 95th Bomb Wing, dtd August 1954.
74/Historical Report, 95th Bomb Wing for August 1954.

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required that all items of equipment in excess of allowances be checked and turned in to supply sources. Many overages had developed due to several factors: first, automatic shipment of equipment from Air Force Supply Depots to the organization. This resulted in overstocking the unit with some items. Secondly, UPREAL's, TA's, and ECL's aided in stock-piling equipment; and, finally, unauthorized equipment had been obtained through normal supply channels. The 95th Bomb Wing had been formed on a Base where B-36 aircraft had never been stationed before, and all types of equipment had to be ordered for successful completion of the mission. Letters were sent to higher headquarters requesting certain overages of equipment be retained by the organization, and authorization was received to keep some excess items so that the wing mission could be carried out. 75/

The first Unit Simulated Combat Mission held since the reactivation of the 95th Bombardment Wing, was conducted in October 1954. Six weeks before "X" day, information was received from Eighth Air Force concerning the USCM scheduled to be flown in October. The Wing Staff began planning the mission and for supplies required in carrying it out. When the mission started, 15 out of 16 aircraft available for flying, took-off and flew for 275:30 hours. A total of 177:55 hours of combat ready crew training was flown out of 206 hours scheduled. If maintenance work had been completed on assigned aircraft the scheduled time would have been completed. 76/

75/Recapitulation of Supply Activities of the 95th Bomb Wing, Project SAC-SIP, Eighth Air Force Inspection Team, September 1954.
76/Operations Order 142-54, 95th Bomb Wing, dated 27 Sep 54.

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An additional B-36 aircraft was assigned to the Wing during October bringing the total to 31 B-36's. By the end of the month, 25 of that number had been through the featherweighting program, while six were ferried to San Antonio to go through the featherweight process. 77/

Total flying time completed by crews of the 95th Bombardment Wing during October, amounted to 921:20 hours. Select crews flew seven sorties amounting to 85 hours, lead crews flew 34 sorties for 333:45 hours, ready crews recorded 24 sorties for 279:10 hours, and non-ready crews logged 190:45 hours for 22 sorties. Total hours recorded in performance of missions ordered by Eighth Air Force amounted to 389:10 hours. Of this total, 275:20 hours were flown to support the Unit Simulated Combat Mission, 69:50 hours were accounted for by ferrying aircraft, and the balance of the time flown (44 hours) was for miscellaneous projects. 78/

The 95th Bombardment Wing flew 758:15 hours during November 1954. Select crews completed 11 sorties flying 80:25 hours, lead crews flew 34 sorties for a total of 292:05 hours, ready crews flew 17 sorties for 179:05 recorded hours, and non-ready crews completed 19 sorties of 175:45 hours during November. The total number of hours flown to comply with orders from higher headquarters amounted to 110:35, of which 49:25 hours were logged on project "A40", a special engine conditioning project, 57:10 hours were accounted for ferrying aircraft, and four hours were flown on a top secret project named "Project Shotgun." 79/

77/SAC V1 Report, 95th Bomb Wing for October 1954.
78/SAC T-12 Report, 95th Bomb Wing, October 1954.
79/95th Bombardment Wing Commander's Remarks for November 1954.

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An additional B-36 aircraft was assigned to the Wing during October, bringing the total to 31 B-36D's. By the end of the month, 25 of that number had been through the featherweighting program, while six were ferried to San Antonio to go through the featherweight process.[77]

Total flying time completed by crews of the 95th Bombardment Wing, during October, amounted to 921:20 hours. Select crews flew seven sorties amounting to 83 hours, lead crews flew 34 sorties for 333:45 hours, ready crews recorded 24 sorties for 279:10 hours, and non-ready crews logged 198:15 hours for 22 sorties. Total hours recorded in performance of missions ordered by Eighth Air Force amounted to 389:10 hours. Of this total, 275:20 hours were flown to support the Unit Simulated Combat Mission, 69:50 hours were accounted for by ferrying aircraft, and the balance of the time flown (44 hours) was for miscellaneous projects.[78]

The 95th Bombardment Wing flew 758:15 hours during November 1954. Select crews completed 11 sorties flying 80:25 hours, lead crews flew 31 sorties for a total of 292:05 hours, ready crews flew 17 sorties for 179:05 recorded hours, and non-ready crews completed 15 sorties of 175:45 hours during November. The total number of hours flown to comply with orders from higher headquarters amounted to 110:35, of which 49:25 hours were logged on project "440", a special engine conditioning project, 57:10 hours were accounted for ferrying aircraft, and four hours were flown on a top secret project named "Project Shotgun."[79]

77/SAC VI Report, 95th Bomb Wing for October 1954.
78/SAC T-12 Report, 95th Bomb Wing, October 1954.
79/95th Bombardment Wing Commander's Remarks for November 1954.

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An Operations Order was written and published by the 95th Bombardment wing during November, which covered a period from 19 November 1954 through 10 February 1955. The exercise was given the code name of "Fancy II" and was similar in scope to the first one held in November 1953. The Strategic Air Command was desirous of finding out whether bombing methods had improved since the first exercise and requested the second mission a year later to prove their point.[80] During the mission, radar bombing techniques and accuracy of hits were measured while working against simulated enemy radar jamming procedures. Another purpose for the operation was to find out if SAC Bombardment units were capable of delivering bombs on the target, and if the method had changed appreciably over the first exercise.[81]

No additional B-36D aircraft were assigned to the Wing in November, so last month's total of 31 aircraft assigned remained the same. Five B-36D's were on temporary duty undergoing a featherweighting process at the Air Materiel Depot in San Antonio, leaving 26 B-36D's present in the wing by the end of the month. Since the last one was sent to SAAMA during the month for featherweighting, the Wing Commander, on 19 November 1954, ordered that all crews came under this classification and crew changes were made in accordance with his order.[82]

80/95th Bomb Wing Operations Order 72-54, dated 19 November 1954.
81/Ibid.
82/Wing Commander's Remarks, 95th Bomb Wing, November 1954.

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Total flying time completed by the 95th Bomb Wing during December was 758:10 hours, of which select crews flew nine sorties of 131:50 hours, lead crews flew 12 sorties of 165:15 hours, combat ready crews completed 15 sorties of 174 hours and non-ready crews logged 243:50 hours in 19 sorties.[83]

By the end of December, five B-36D aircraft of the 31 assigned to the Wing had departed on TDY to undergo phase two of the electronics countermeasure modification. As a result, 26 B-36D's were on the station and available for completion of assigned missions.[84]

Medium Organizations

97th Bombardment Wing

The 97th Bombardment Wing, located at Biggs Air Force Base, Texas had 78 aircraft assigned as of 31 July 1955. Of this number, 33 were B-50's, 13 were RB-50G's, five B-50E's, six KB-29M's, and the final 21 were KC-97G's. Two B-29's and three KB-50G's were on location outside the continental limits of the United States. Specifically these three aircraft were located at Lakenheath, England. In addition to these, three RB-50G's were overseas at Yokota, Japan.[85]

Of the total 78 aircraft assigned to the 97th Bombardment Wing, 66 were available and combat equipped at the end of July 1954. Total flying time logged in the wing during the month amounted to 2,484:05 hours which

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83/95th Bomb Wing Commander's Remarks, part VII, December 1954.
84/Historical Report, 95th Bomb Wing for December 1954.
85/Aircraft Availability Report, Part IV, July 1954.

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was an increase over the previous month of 560:20 hours.[86]

A total of 21 major aircraft malfunctions occurred during July, of which 14 were due to power plant failure, two were chargeable to maintenance personnel error, and 12 were attributed to materiel failure or mechanical malfunctions.[87]

By 31 August 1955, 77 aircraft were assigned to the 97th Bombardment Wing at Biggs. The breakdown of types and numbers assigned was approximately the same as for July, and assignment of aircraft outside the continental limits of the United States remained the same as for the previous month.[88] A total of 228,788 manhours were allocated for the maintenance of all aircraft during August. Of this amount, 178,405 manhours were available, 122,651 were used directly, and the balance of 55,552 were used indirectly.[89]

During August, 2,523:50 hours were flown in assigned aircraft by pilots and crews of the Wing at an average of 34.1 hours per aircraft possessed. Also, during the month, 26 major malfunctions were recorded for all B-50's available to fly. Of the 26 malfunctions reported, three were chargeable to maintenance failure, 20 were due to materiel failure, and three were charged to miscellaneous reasons.[90]

86/97th Bomb Wing Maintenance Data and Comparison Report, July 1954.
87/97th Bomb Wing U-15 Report for July 1954.
88/97th Bomb Wing SAC V-1 Report for August 1954.
89/Maintenance Manhour Information Booklet, 97th Bomb Wing, Aug 1954.
90/SAC U-15 Report, 97th Bomb Wing, Aug 1954.

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The personnel availability picture, during September, was the same as for August. There was a large overage of three level personnel, with five and seven level personnel being critically short. The low skill level of assigned maintenance personnel tended to lower standards of maintenance within the wing and continued to do so until corrective action could be taken. At the same time, strength figures taken from the SAC U-22 report indicated that 24 officers, 1338 airmen and 49 civilians were authorized for the three tactical squadrons assigned to the wing, plus other support units. Although the above figures were those authorized, the actual picture of personnel assigned was quite different. A total of 22 officers, 1235 airmen, and 47 civilians were actually assigned, which indicated that although the officer strength is practically filled, the airmen strength was short of the desired goal. 91/ Of the assigned personnel figures, 27 officers, 927 airmen and 44 civilians were available for duty during September. A shortage of personnel existed in the 32 career field (Armament Systems Maintenance) at all skill levels from the 30 through the 70 level in the Armament and Electronics Section of the wing. This resulted in an investigation of the problem by the wing maintenance Standardization Board Team and the Reports and Analysis Section, both sections being a part of the 97th Bombardment Wing. As a result of the investigation, it was found that 13 of the 3, 5, and 7 level personnel assigned were working as clerks, supply personnel, truck drivers, and

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91/ Maintenance Data and Comparison Rept. 97th Bomb Wing, September 1954.

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coordinators. The reporting section kept and continued to keep facts and figures on this situation on file for future reference.92/

A total of 50 major malfunctions occurred during September on all assigned B-50 aircraft. There were 26 major malfunctions in the power plant systems of aircraft belonging to the wing, one aircraft was grounded due to maintenance error, and the balance were blamed on internal malfunctions of the engines or to materiel failure. One such materiel failure was due to a broken oil line in one of the B-50 aircraft. This discrepancy was a common occurrence and corrective action such as strengthening of the oil line assembly had proven ineffective. It was recommended that the complete oil line be redesigned and be made of heat-resistant, flexible tubing. In order to cope with normal engine vibration, flexible tubing would be an essential factor in correction of this condition. This problem is not a new one, since it dates back as far as 1951.93/

A problem of excessive fuel tank leaks developed in B-50 aircraft in October 1954. In order to correct this condition, assistance was asked of the nearest Air Materiel Depot, located at San Antonio, Texas. The Depot informed the base that fuel cell inspection and repair was under study and that the base would be informed of their findings. By 5 October, a representative of the Depot arrived at the base in order to study the fuel leaks occurring in assigned aircraft. Information was furnished to the man from San Antonio, and he returned to his home office

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92/Ibid.
93/SAC U-15 Report, 97th Bombardment Wing, September 1954.

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presumably to solve the problem. With no action from the Depot, the problem continued to exist. In fact, 10 out of 21 aircraft taking a part in a mission to Fairchild AF Base and return, were grounded due to serious fuel leaks. After a second request to the depot at San Antonio and their requesting the Oklahoma depot to take action, it was determined that San Antonio would have to send a fuel cell repair team to the 97th Bombardment Wing, at Biggs, to carry out the required repairs.[94/] By the time the problem had reached that stage, six wing aircraft had bad gas tank leaks and the Wing Commander decided that the field maintenance section would inspect, repair, and replace the affected fuel cells on aircraft requiring new ones. Work on this project started on 28 October 1954, with just one hangar available to maintenance personnel. Eighth Air Force Headquarters had been trying to get depot assistance for the wing in this matter, and that resulted in the arrival of six technicians from San Antonio to help in the work. As of the end of October, work was being done by personnel from the wing Aero Repair Section with the aid of maintenance personnel, on loan from all organizations in the 97th Bombardment Wing.

Personnel from San Antonio who had worked and completed fuel cell changes and alterations finished their work and returned to San Antonio on 21 December 1954. A total of 19 aircraft had been worked on by all personnel concerned. Depot personnel will return to the 97th Bomb Wing early in January 1955 to complete the rest of the B-50 fleet of aircraft

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94/SAC T-12 Report and Wing Commander's Remarks, 97th Bomb Wing for October 1954.

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assigned to the Wing.[95]

96th Bombardment Wing

On 1 July 1954, 25 aircraft were assigned to the 96th Bombardment Wing at Altus, Oklahoma. Of this number, 19 were KC-97G aircraft and assigned to the Air Refueling Squadron of the Wing. Three aircraft were C-45G's and one was a C-45H. One TB-25J and one C-47D was assigned, on loan from Bergstrom Air Force Base.[96]

A shortage of parts available to the 96th Wing held up maintenance organizations in keeping assigned aircraft in commission. During July 1923 hours were charged to out-of-commission time due to parts shortages, and additional 1389 hours were due to periodic maintenance and inspections, and 1367 hours were for malfunctions and mechanical defects.[97]

A low priority assigned to Altus for maintenance supplies and equipment continued to hold back the maintenance program of the 96th Bomb Wing. This fact had been reported to Eighth Air Force by the Wing Commander, who believed that supply support was necessary to support the new committments of the 96th Air Refueling Squadron, which was trying to become combat ready by 1 August 1954.[98]

By 1 August 1954 the 96th Bombardment Wing had 24 aircraft assigned, and by 5 August, with the arrival of additional KC-97G, aircraft assigned strength reached 25, which was the same as for the preceding month.[99]

95/Historical Report, 97th Bombardment Wing for December 1954.
96/96th Bomb Wing aircraft statistics, July 1954.
97/Aircraft Statistics, 96th Bomb Wing, July 1954.
98/Ltr, 96th Bomb Wing to Comdr 8AF, "Request for higher precedence rating." dtd 17 June 1954.
99/Aircraft Status Chart, 96th Bomb Wing, August 1954.

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During the month, the greatest cause for aircraft out-of-commission, was periodic maintenance and inspections. This resulted in 2,066 manhours being spent in performance of required inspections and work resulting from them. Parts shortages caused 1,673 out-of-commission hours, malfunctions and mechanical defects added another 1,118 hours.[100]

About 61 percent of the AOCP rate, during August, could be blamed on a shortage of conduits and indicators for KC-97G aircraft. After requisitions were submitted and forwarded to the depot, a stock level for indicators was started and it did not reach a useful level until September. One trouble in getting KC-97G parts was due to a lack of knowledge, on the part of base supply activities, on how many parts were necessary to support a KC-97G wing. Until such time as enough parts could be stocked to take care of replacements, this condition would not be corrected.[101]

In September, the aircraft assigned strength remained at 25, the same as for the previous two months; but on 17 September, with the assignment of an additional KC-97G the strength increased to 26.[102]

The aircraft out-of-commission for parts problem remained unsolved in September, as it had been during previous months. Base aircraft were out of commission for 4,324 hours and in-commission for 13,982 hours over the thirty-day period in September. As in prior months, the greatest cause for grounded aircraft was due to periodic maintenance and inspections.

100/ Historical Report, 96th Bomb Wing, August 1954.
101/ Ibid.
102/ Aircraft Status Chart, 96th Bomb Wing, September 1954, and TWX 96th Bomb Wing to Comdr 8th AF, MDA 3 9-007, 17 Sep 54.

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Both causes were responsible for 1503 out-of-commission hours, 1413 hours were chargeable to parts shortages, and 1384 hours were the result of malfunctions and mechanical defects.[103]

The maintenance workload increased, to some extent, during September due to a planned rotation of the 96th Air Refueling Squadron, which would be moving with its 20 KC-97G aircraft. Maintenance of aircraft, taking part in the maneuver, required extra manhours in addition to the fact that personnel going on the move had to prepare themselves and personal equipment to be ready when orders came for moving.[104]

Of the 25 aircraft assigned to the base, 20 of them were KC-97G's, and the balance were operational types and were two C-45's and one C-47. On 5 October 1954, 10 refueling aircraft departed on a 45-day stay in Harmon Air Force Base, Newfoundland in support of a maneuver in the arctic. Another 10 aircraft (KC-97G's) left for the north on 7 October 1954 leaving the base with only administrative aircraft assigned.[105]

The out-of-commission time for assigned aircraft, during October, reached the lowest point since February 1954. The reason was that periodic maintenance and inspections were lower than for previous months and had dropped to 439 hours during October. Another decrease was for aircraft grounded due to a shortage of parts. In this case, 455 hours were charged to aircraft grounded for this reason.[106] Hours chargeable to malfunctions

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103/Aircraft Status Chart, 96th Bomb Wing for September 1954.
104/Historical Report, 96th Bomb Wing for September 1954.
105/TWX From: Comdr 8AF to Comdr 96th Bomb Wing, MDA3-10-100-2, 8 Oct 54, and TWX from Comdr 8AF to Comdr 96th Bomb Wing, MDA 3-10-1003, 12 Oct 54.
106/Aircraft Status Chart, 96th Bomb Wing for October 1954.

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and mechanical defects did not drop appreciably during the 30-day period, but the figure for October was considerably lower than in prior months, being 747 hours. An additional 24 hours were lost due to required compliance with technical orders.[107]

For the aircraft remaining at Altus Air Force Base during November, while all the 21 KC-97G's were on TDY at Harmon Air Force Base, Newfoundland, flying hours completed by C-45's and C-47's was practically nil in comparison with that usually accumulated by pilots and crews of the KC-97G's. A total of 129 hours were flown, during November, in the C-47 141 hours were flown in assigned C-45's, and the single B-25 logged 51 hours in both day and night flying.[108]

Maintenance personnel who went along with the 21 KC-97G's to Newfoundland during the 48 day period of temporary duty, did an outstanding job of maintenance on their aircraft. Drawbacks to the successful completion of their work included limited shop and hangar space, unsatisfactory communications net, nose docks not available, and a shortage of water for washing aircraft.[109] Due to the excellent maintenance picture at Harmon Air Force Base, the Squadron was able to complete training required by SAC Regulation 50-8. The aircraft out-of-commission for parts rate, during the period of the maneuver, was at zero and the aircraft in-commission was high. Both of these facts added up to a highly successful

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107/Ibid.
108/Ibid.
109/Aircraft Status Chart, 96th Bombardment Wing for December 1954.

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operation as far as maintenance personnel were concerned.[110] A total out-of-commission time, during November 1954, amounted to 923 hours in comparison to the aircraft left at Altus when the organization departed on the temporary duty move. Causes for aircraft being grounded were the same as usual, mainly maintenance and mechanical defects and malfunctions.[111]

Aircraft assigned to the 96th Bomb Wing during December 1954, numbered 27 of which 21 were KC-97G aircraft, and the balance were base administrative aircraft. During the month, one C-47 was transferred to undergo IRAN and replaced by another of the same type from Bergstrom Air Force Base. In addition to this loss, a C-45G was transferred to the Grand Central Aircraft Company at Glendale, California on 15 December 1954 for inspection and repair as necessary. At the close of the month total assigned aircraft had dropped to 26.[112]

There was an overall increase in the aircraft out-of-commission time due to mechanical defects and maintenance, during December 1954. A total of 612 more hours were chargeable to the wing during December than for the previous month, in that category. Out-of-commission time for parts increased, during the same period, by 463 hours, while the time aircraft were grounded for maintenance and periodic inspections increased 378 hours.[113]

110/ Ibid.
111/ Ibid.
112/ Aircraft Status Chart, 96th Bombardment Wing for December 1954.
113/ Review of aircraft maintenance activities for month of December 1954, dated 6 January 1955.

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Support Squadrons

1st Strategic Support Squadron

All C-124 aircraft assigned to the 1st Strategic Support Squadron, at Biggs Air Force Base, Texas, completed 15 different airlift missions during July 1954. Of this number, three completed double purpose missions, three more were dispatched on a single mission and two were on a single mission while performing a secondary one. Three aircraft flew overseas, during July, in support of overseas movements by other organizations.

Assigned aircraft flew 47,009 statute miles, while carrying cargo amounting to 454,000 pounds. A total of 428 passengers were flown to destinations, in July, along with personel baggage weighing 38,350 pounds.[114]

A total of 36 missions were flown in the local flying area at Biggs Air Force Base. Of this number, 32 were for flight proficiency and the balance of four, were test flights.

In July, 498:15 hours were flown by assigned C-124's. Of the total time logged, 174:35 hours were flown by C-124's and 323:40 hours were completed by the "A" models.[115]

During August, two aircraft assigned to the squadron, were sent on missions overseas, while nine more took part in flights scheduled throughout the United States. The overseas flights logged a total of 178:15 hours of flying time, while carrying 459,381 pounds of cargo. In addition, 325

114/Rpt, 1st Strat, Spt Sq Freight Terminal, Subj: Total Statistics for July 1954.
115/Historical Report, 1st SSS for July 1954.

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passengers and 30,100 pounds of baggage was carried on all flights. The average distance each passenger was carried was 1,068 statute miles and each ton of freight was flown an average of 1,237 miles.[116]

During September, the squadron sent nine aircraft on overseas flights and three more on missions throughout the zone of the interior. Twelve aircraft flew 460:15 hours during the 30-day period, and at the same time, carried 1,079,544 pounds of cargo, 89,702 pounds of baggage, plus 1,276 passengers.[117]

In October, Strategic Air Command units of the 1st Strategic Support Squadron sent seven aircraft overseas and eight more on flights throughout the United States. All 15 aircraft moved 518,566 pounds of cargo, 85,910 pounds of baggage and 1,102 passengers. In addition to the above flights, 45 aircraft were dispatched for local flights, five of these being test flights, and 40 were crew proficiency training flights.[118]

The 1st Strategic Support Squadron sent eight C-124 aircraft on overseas flights and 18 on flights in the United States during November. This was 44 percent in excess of any number dispatched during the first ten months of 1954. A total of 1,458,336 pounds of cargo, 158,301 pounds of baggage, and 2094 passengers were airlifted during the period.[119]

Squadron aircraft were sent on four overseas missions and 27 flights in the United States during December 1954. A total of 2,017,778 pounds

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116/Report, 1st Strategic Support Sqdn Freight Terminal for August 1954.
117/Freight Terminal Summary, 1st SSS, September 1954.
118/Freight Terminal Summary, 1st SSS, October 1954.
119/Freight Terminal Summary, 1st SSS, November 1954.

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of cargo, 105,576 pounds of baggage and 1,228 passengers were transported to many locations during the month.[120]

C-124 Aircraft Maintenance Problems

Of the eight C-124A aircraft assigned to the 1st Strategic Support Squadron, at Biggs Air Force Base, Texas, in July, an average of 7.177 were present and ready for use. The one "A" model absent was at San Bernardino Air Materiel Depot on an IRAN (Inspection and Repair as necessary) project and would not be returned to the squadron before September 1954.

Total flying time accumulated by C-124A's assigned amounted to 323:40 hours during July 1954. In the same period, three engine changes were completed, on which each engine replaced averaged 412 hours of operation prior to its removal. Aircraft of this category (C-124A) were 81.33 percent in-commission and 18.67 percent out-of-commission during the month. The out-of-commission figure, was broken down to 7.87 percent for routine maintenance and 10.8 percent for periodic inspections.[121]

Five C-124C aircraft were assigned to the squadron in July, and of this number, all were on hand. The in-commission status of the five amounted to 53.44 percent, while the same figures for those out-of-commission during the 30-day period was 46.56 percent. Of those grounded, 7.10 percent did not fly because of routine maintenance, 10.16 percent

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120/Freight Terminal Summary, 1st SSS, December 1954.
121/Historical Report, 1st SSS, July 1954.

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were out-of-commission for periodic inspections, and 29.30 percent were grounded due to a lack of spare parts. The C-124C's flew 174:35 hours during July 1954 in order to complete flight missions, proficiency training requirements, and test hops.[122]

The number three engine on a C-124 assigned to the 1st Strategic Support Squadron, had six cylinders which, on being checked, had low compression readings. By complying with technical order 2R-1-15, all affected cylinders could not be brought up to an acceptable compression standard, so the cylinders were removed and it was found that exhaust valves were cracked around the outer edges. New valves were installed to replace the broken parts.

Similar difficulties were found on another C-124. In this case, two cylinders indicated only 10 pounds compression per square inch of pressure. In order to correct this condition, the cylinders were replaced and it was later found that the exhaust valves were warped and burned.

Generator Problems

Generator malfunctions increased a great deal during July, over those reported in previous months. Due to the fact that all generators, being installed, could not be tested until they were in place on the aircraft, a new procedure of bench checking each generator during a periodic inspection was started. As a result of this two generators, which appeared to

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122/Ibid.

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be in serviceable condition, were found to be defective and had to be replaced.[123]

In August 1954, six out of eight C-124A's were assigned to the 1st Strategic Support Squadron. One was at San Bernardino undergoing an IRAN project and the other was grounded due to required sheet metal work, which was being accomplished locally by a team of specialists from the Air Materiel Depot at San Antonio. The team was on temporary duty at Biggs Air Force Base and was due to return to their home depot in 70 days, on completion of the required work.

During August, the C-124A's flew 169:25 hours. Of the 6.05 aircraft on hand, which represented 73.5 percent of all aircraft assigned and available for flying, 26.5 percent were out-of-commission for parts, maintenance, and absent from the station for inspection and repairs. No engine changes were undertaken during August 1954.

Five C-124C's were assigned and present during August at the 1st Strategic Support Squadron of Biggs AF Base. The in-commission status, percentage wise, was 75.1 percent. Of the 24.9 percent out-of-commission 4.1 percent of assigned aircraft were out for maintenance, 9.1 for parts, and 11.7 for periodic inspections. One engine change was completed in August on a C-124C assigned to the organization and which was required due to internal failures. The engine had completed 334:50 hours of

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123/Ibid.

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operation before overhaul. A total of 186:50 hours flying was logged during August on all C-124C aircraft.[124]

Six C-124A aircraft, of the eight assigned to the squadron, were on-hand during September 1954. Of the six on-hand, 75.1 percent were in-commission during the month. Of the balance 24.9 percent were out-of-commission, 2.96 percent were grounded for maintenance, 7.31 percent for shortages of parts, 10.56 percent for periodic inspections, and 4.07 percent for compliance with existing Technical Orders. Of the figure representing maintenance (2.96%), three aircraft had been grounded for engine changes; all three engines had averaged 530 operational hours before requiring changing and overhaul. The AOCP rate, during September, was higher than for previous months due to the fact that extensive delays were experienced in receipt of parts like landing gear struts and booster pump sumps. The six C-124A aircraft, used during September, completed 280:30 hours of flying in performing flight missions, proficiency training flights and test hops.[125]

Of the five C-124C's assigned, all were present in September. An average of 79.3 percent were in-commission and the balance of 20.7 percent were grounded for such reasons as maintenance, lack of parts, and periodic inspections. During the same period, two periodic inspections were performed and one engine change took place.

124/ Historical Report, 1st Strategic Support Sq, Biggs AFB, Texas, for August 1954.

125/ Ltr, 1st SSS Mnt Off to Comdr 1st SSS. Subj: Historical Report for the month of September, 13 Oct 54.

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The Aircraft out-of-commission for parts rate was high during September as was true during the prior month. Two C-124C aircraft were grounded, due to this condition, for a period of 14 days in September. This was due to the fact that propeller cuffs, which were being replaced on affected aircraft, had not arrived at the base to be installed. A total of 283:55 hours flying was completed by "C" models during September on missions covering training, local area flights, and test hops.[126]

A total of 7.06 C-124A aircraft were on hand, of eight assigned, during October 1954. There were 78.3 percent in commission and 21.7 percent grounded for various reasons including maintenance, parts shortages, periodic inspections and technical order compliances. Due to the fact that no engine changes were required on C-124A's, an increase of the in-commission rate by 3.2 percent, during October, was recorded, and was greater than the same figure for the preceding month. Total time flown by assigned "A" type aircraft amounted to 267:15 hours, during October on flight missions, proficiency training flights, and test hops.[127]

The entire group of C-124C aircraft, which was five, were present during October 1954. Of this number, 89.8 percent were in commission during the period, which was an increase of 10.5 percent over the figure for September. A total of 10.2 percent of all "C" models were out-of-commission due to routine maintenance and periodic inspections. Two

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126/Ibid.
127/Ltr, 1st Strat Spt Sq Maint Off to Comdr, 1st SSS, Subj: Historical Rpt for Oct 54, dtd 16 Nov 54. Exhibit #100.

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periodic inspections were completed, in October, and one engine was changed after running 429 hours. A total of 177:45 hours flying time was recorded for all "C" models assigned to the squadron.[128]

Of the eight C-124A aircraft assigned, a total of 7.15 percent were on hand in November. This amounted to 89.8 percent in commission during that time, and 10.2 being in an out-of-commission status. Also, in the out-of-commission figure is represented aircraft out due to maintenance, lack of parts, and periodic inspections. One engine change was completed during November, at which time 510 hours had been recorded on its operational life. The seven remaining aircraft accumulated 465:55 hours flying time during the month, in order to complete assigned flight missions, proficiency training flights and test hops.

Again, all five C-124C aircraft were present during November. Of this number, 69.1 percent were in commission and 30.9 were grounded for maintenance, lack of parts, and periodic inspections. The high AOCP rate during November was attributable to troubles in getting propeller cuffs for the C-124C's. A total of 223:20 hours flying was recorded for assigned "C" aircraft which was broken down to flight missions, training flights and local test hops.[129]

A slight drop in the number of C-124A type aircraft on-hand was recorded during December, with 6.77 percent of the eight assigned being

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128/ Ibid.
129/ Ltr, 1st Strat Spt Sq Maint Off to Comdr 1st SSS, Subj: Historical Rpt for month of November 54, dtd 28 Dec 54. Exhibit #101.

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present. Of the available aircraft, 77.37 percent were in-commission during the month; while the 22.63 percent out-of-commission were carried in that status because of lack of parts, and periodic inspections. Two engine changes were completed in December 1954, and the time registered for each was 715 hours. Total flying time completed amounted to 319:50 hours, and was flown by the six "A" type aircraft on-hand.[130]

In December 1954, again all five C-124C aircraft were on-hand. Of this figure, 85 percent were in-commission, while 15 percent were out-of-commission. The aircraft out-of-commission were accounted for by required maintenance and lack of parts. The aircraft out-of-commission for parts rate was high during December due to a shortage of replacement propeller cuffs and propeller elements. Other parts shortages were in Nose Steering bellcranks and flap cables. Total flying time for C-124C aircraft amounted to 349:30 hours and was completed in flight missions, proficiency training flights and test hops.[131]

4th Strategic Support Squadron

The 4th Strategic Support Squadron, assigned to Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota, had 12 C-124C aircraft assigned during July 1954. These aircraft flew a total of 342 hours during the month for an overall average per aircraft of 28 hours and 40 minutes. No engine changes were made during the month, but one cylinder change was required.[132]

130/Ltr, 1st Strat Spt Sq Maint Off to Comdr 1st SSS, Subj: Historical Rpt for month of December 1954, dtd 11 Jan 55. Exhibit #102.
131/Ibid.
132/Engineering Office Historical Report for July, dtd 7 Aug 54.

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The following month, August, the number of aircraft assigned to the Squadron remained the same as the previous month. The average number of C-124's in commission was 10.8 percent, which represented 90 percent of the number assigned. Total flying time in the Squadron was 559:35 hours, which averaged 46 hours and 38 minutes per aircraft.[133]

Due to increased flying by assigned aircraft in August, the number of engine changes increased by two. The changes were required due to an excessive amount of oil draining from the breather tubes, which, in turn, was blamed on defective valves.[134]

Of the 12 aircraft assigned during September, an average of 10.4 were in-commission and available for flying. Squadron aircraft set a new monthly flying record during the month by completing 747 hours and 15 minutes flight time.

A maintenance problem causing some concern in September was defective propeller cuffs. On receipt of a message from Warner Robbins Air Materiel Area, all propeller cuffs were inspected, and 72 were found defective and required changing. A total of 62 had cracked pads, eight had cracked sheets, and two had cracked doubler assemblies. An emergency unsatisfactory report, listing all deficiencies and recommendations requiring correction, was forwarded to all personnel concerned.

Another maintenance problem confronting the 4th SSS during September

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133/Maintenance Historical Report, 4th SSS, Aug 54.
134/Ibid.

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was that of leaking nose wheel struts on all assigned C-124 aircraft. The problem resulted from cold weather at Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota. Due to high winds in the fall of the year, all five affected aircraft had to be worked on in a hangar designed for B-36's. Getting an area reserved in the hangar was difficult due to the fact that it was in continual use for washing and pre-dock inspections of assigned B-36's.[135]

During October, the average number of C-124 aircraft in commission amounted to 8.8. One engine change and four cylinder changes were completed during the month.

In the same month, a base-wide shortage of gunk, which is used in washing aircraft, was not available through normal supply channels. Since all aircraft going through periodic inspections were required to be clean, it was impossible to complete quantity and quality maintenance due to dirty aircraft. A new supply of gunk would be available for issue about 1 January 1955, and in the meantime, aircraft would have to go through inspections without washing.

A permanent floor space allocation was made on 20 October 1954 for aircraft of the 4th Strategic Support Squadron in the large Base hangar. This move will result in improved winter maintenance capability for all assigned aircraft mechanics. During the winter of 1954, weeks were lost due to blizzards when outdoor maintenance was impossible. Another saving resulted from the move. It was in the towing of ground power equipment,

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135/Maintenance Historical Report, 4th SSS, For September 1954.

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which formerly had to be towed to the 4th Strategic Support Squadron maintenance hangar for overnight protection. With the move to the large hangar, all this equipment could be stored right with the aircraft undergoing repair, which saved approximately two miles of towing each day.[136]

A problem facing the maintenance section of the 4th Strategic Support Squadron, in November, was that of propeller cuffs on assigned aircraft. As required by a technical order, a total of 70 propeller cuffs were sent to the Air Materiel Command depot at Hill Air Force Base, Utah for a complete modification. On being returned a week later, it was found that they had only been partially modified. Later on in the month, one of the C-124's which landed at Offutt Air Force Base was grounded due to defective cuffs. A staff officer of the SAC maintenance division was notified of this situation, and he contacted the Warner Robbins Air Materiel Depot requesting that a team be sent to Ellsworth to help solve the problem. The team arrived and all assigned C-124's were grounded while the problem was solved. The modification of all cuffs was completed by working 12 hours a day. On an inspection following 30 hours of flying, five of the modified cuffs were still found to be defective. As a result of the work and inspections, it was believed that the trouble was caused by low RPM settings during flight. In order to test this theory, three aircraft underwent a five hour service test with RPM settings of 1700 RPM, 1800 RPM, and a third setting in excess of 1800 RPM. As a result of the test, it

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136/Maintenance Historical Report, 4th SSS, for October 1954.

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was recommended that all C-124 aircraft be flown at an excess of 1800 RPM. Air Materiel Depots at Warner Robbins, Georgia and San Bernardino, California were notified of this finding and approved the recommendation. A complete solution to the problem of defective propeller cuffs has not been found.[137]

An additional problem facing the Squadron Maintenance Section was a shortage of experienced maintenance personnel. This had arisen because of the high discharge rate and the low number of re-enlistments. In order to partially overcome this situation, emphasis was placed on proper training and better use of assigned personnel. Proper utilization of personnel could be improved by additional personnel being assigned especially for aircraft guard duty. This duty was being done by aircraft mechanics who were needed for maintenance work during the day, but were not available to the Squadron due to guard assignments. The Maintenance Officer planned to submit a Table of Organization change request in which an additional five personnel would be authorized for those duties.[138]

Fighter Units

12th Strategic Fighter Wing

The 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, with permanent duty station at Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas, was on a tour of temporary duty in Japan during July 1954. From May through August, it was preparing for its return to the United States. As in the past, the 407th Strategic Fighter Wing

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137/Unsatisfactory Report, 4th Strategic Support Squadron Maintenance Section, dated November 1954.
138/Historical Report, 4th SSS, for November 1954.

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replaced the 12th Wing at Misawa, Japan, on the latter's rotation from that country to the United States. The process of moving an organization the size of a wing, took much planning, in order that the program would proceed without incident. So that the task could be completed without a great amount of friction and delays, planning had to be thorough and cover details not usually associated with an organizational move. By the end of July, advance party personnel from the 407th Wing were on hand to sign for all 12th Wing property. Inventories were completed and one change was instituted at that time, in which the 12th Wing signed all UPREAL and base support property over to the 407th Wing.[139]

During July, the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing completed 1796:15 hours flying in F-84G and 167:45 hours in T-33 aircraft, which is a jet type trainer. Both figures added together gave the wing a total of 1964 hours flying by the end of July. For July, an average of 64.6 aircraft were possessed, with a utilization rate for each aircraft of 27:50 hours. In the case of T-33 aircraft, numbering six, the average utilization rate was 28 hours per aircraft available.[140]

By the beginning of August, the 12th Wing was in the process of winding up its temporary duty tour at Chitose and Misawa, Japan. While at these two locations overseas, the mission of the wing was to maintain a continuous five minute alert in which a given number of aircraft would be available for immediate take-off for a period of 30 minutes before

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139/Historical Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, July 1954.
140/Historical Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, July 1954.

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[illegible] to 30 minutes following sunset. In addition, all crews and aircraft were on a [illegible]-hour readiness alert at all times, while stationed at Misawa, Japan.141

The 12th Wing completed [illegible] hours flying in F-84G aircraft during August 1952. Jet trainers (T-33's), flew [illegible] hours for eight days in August, as was true in the case of the F-84G's. Missions ordered by higher headquarters, included: Radar Tracking, anti-aircraft artillery tracking, and close support missions.142

Eleven F-84G aircraft assigned to the 12th Fighter Wing, while it was in Japan were signed over to the incoming organization during August 1952. Each of the 11 were processed through periodic maintenance docks while the organization was still in Japan to correct any mechanical defects which might have been present. On the organization's return to Bergstrom during August, half of the men were granted leaves of absence, and the other half worked with the 27th Fighter Wing, at Bergstrom, to comply with the backlog of Technical Orders, which had piled up. Technical order changes and modifications were completed on nine jet aircraft, of the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, during the remainder of the month. Airmen of the 12th continued to work with personnel of the 27th until such time as the 12th Wing received their aircraft.143

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141/ Historical Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, August 1952.
142/ Final Mission Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, 26 August 1952.
143/ Historical Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, August 1952.

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Operational control at Misawa and Chitose Air Force Bases in Japan was turned over to the 407th Strategic Fighter Wing on 7 August 1954, with a minimum amount of difficulty for all concerned. During the first week of August, 378:15 hours of flying were completed by pilots of the 12th Wing, while that organization was still overseas.[144]

On the organization's move from Japan to the United States, all plans went forward without incident. The Military Air Transport Control Team, assigned on temporary duty at Misawa to see that the move was accomplished as planned, did not know when transport aircraft would arrive at Chitose and Misawa, and, on arrival, they did not know the passenger and baggage capacity of all aircraft which would complete the move.[145]

Flying, during September, was limited because of the transition to F-84F aircraft. All time credited to pilots of the wing was built up in checking out of instructor pilots and in qualifying them to ferry aircraft. One T-33 was temporarily assigned to the wing on a 45-day basis to complete pilot transition training. During the month, all F-84F aircraft were grounded for a seven day period, from 23 to 30 September, and this resulted in the loss of 150 flying hours in September. All aircraft were grounded on the verbal orders of the Commanding General of the 42nd Air Division until such time as a board of inquiry, investigating two serious aircraft accidents, could reach a decision as to the cause of them.

144/Ibid.
145/Article from "The Jet Gazette" - Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas, 27 August 1954. Exhibit #103.

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Both accidents took place on the 22nd and 23rd of September. Even with the loss of seven days flying, the 12th wing flew 237:10 hours during the month in their F-84F's. Seventeen hours were used in testing aircraft and 39 hours were recorded in delivering new aircraft to Bergstrom.[146] Time logged in T-33's amounted to 131:45 hours, in which the requirements of SAC Regulation 60-2 were fulfilled.

During September, the wing received 33 F-84F jet aircraft. Of this number, one was lost in a crash, leaving a total of 32 on hand at the end of the month. Five T-33's were on loan to the wing for a 45-day period, and were used, as stated above, for training pilots and in ferrying new aircraft from the factory to Bergstrom Air Force Base.

The 12th Wing's maintenance capability was far below flying hour sortie requirements during September. This was due to several conditions, namely: the normal maintenance capacity with a full complement of aircraft would come to 1800 to 1900 hours per month. This was still 1000 hours short of the requirement, since 133 pilots were assigned to the wing and enough aircraft were not available for the assigned pilots.

Aircraft out-of-commission for parts rate, during September, was extremely high (23.3%) and apparently would not improve. This condition resulted from the large number of parts required and requisitions which followed. Even aircraft arriving directly from the factory had an average of 15 discrepancies. In order to correct these conditions, many manhours

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146/Commander's Remarks, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, September 1954.

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of maintenance was spent by maintenance men of the wing. Since the organization was unable to get quick engine change kits, each engine change required transfer of all accessories from the old to the new engine. This created more work and delay than necessary, and was charged to the wing's maintenance records, whereas it should have been charged to Base Supply non-support. In order to partly overcome this condition, much overtime work was recorded during the month, particularly in the engine build-up shop. Overtime in that shop was 207 hours in September.[147]

Flying time, during October, was logged by transition flying and combat crew training. A total of 798:35 hours was recorded in F-84F's, of which 76:15 hours were used in testing, and 80 hours were flown ferrying aircraft from Kansas City, Luke, and Edwards Air Force Bases. Time completed in T-33's assigned to the wing on a temporary basis, was 257:35 hours. All of the time was spent in fulfilling the provisions of SAC Regulation 60-2.[148]

Two major aircraft accidents, involving F-84F aircraft, occurred during October. The first took place on 18 October 1954, in which the pilot was unable to extend the main landing gear of his aircraft. On several attempts to extend the gear, while still flying, it was decided that a wheels-up landing would be attempted, and this proved to be successful. The aircraft accident investigation board concluded that the

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147/Historical Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, September 1954.
148/Historical Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, October 1954.

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cause of the accident could be laid to failure of landing gear to unlock and extend due to a low hydraulic pressure in the landing gear system. A minimum of 300 pounds per square inch of pressure was required to lower the gear of the F-84F, and the amount in the hydraulic system of the aircraft was not enough to actuate the gear.[149]

The second aircraft accident took place on 29 October. A pilot of the 12th Fighter Wing reported erratic instrument readings, followed shortly by a "flameout." At the time, he was directly over the landing strip at Bergstrom flying at an altitude of 7000 feet. In landing, the pilot executed the established procedure for "flameout" conditions. This included extending landing gear, flaps, and speed brakes. The pilot misjudged the wind velocity, position of the runway, and the glide pattern for his aircraft. In so doing, his aircraft stalled and he crashed 5000 feet short of the runway. At the moment of impact, the pilot ejected himself and was alive when found by the rescue crew from Bergstrom, but died 12 hours later at the base hospital because of internal injuries. The accident investigation board found that the cause of the accident was fuel contamination, resulting in a "flamecut" and fatal crash.[150]

Other matters affecting the maintenance program in the wing were a shortage of high pressure air compressors, tugs, hand tools and engine dollies. Sixteen high pressure air compressors were authorized the wing

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149/Ibid.
150/Ibid.

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but none were assigned. Only four were available on loan. Due to a lack of compressed air for the starter systems, many aircraft were delayed on turn-around flights. No relief could be promised by the base supply officer in less than 120 days. The base accountable supply officer submitted emergency follow-up messages and supply difficulty letters to Eighth Air Force in order to get some relief for the 12th Fighter Wing on their shortages of equipment. The wing had been authorized 23 aircraft tugs and seven were available and being used constantly. Hand tools, which had been transferred to the 407th Strategic Fighter Wing while both organizations were on TDY in Japan, had not been replaced through local purchase channels. In addition, the cost of replacing all tools signed over to the 407th wing would amount to $3,000.00. By the end of October, the commander of the 12th wing had not received that amount for purchasing new hand tools.[151]

Poor supply support of F-84F aircraft stationed at Bergstrom Air Force Base resulted in an aircraft out-of-commission for parts rate of 29.4% during October 1954. This was not a true picture of the entire problem since 75 cannibalizations and 122 individual aircraft parts were needed in order to complete the story. In a message sent to higher headquarters during October, 27 line items were listed on aircraft which had been grounded for 10 days or more due to parts shortages. To prevent a complete breakdown of the maintenance program of the 12th Wing, cannibalization

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151/Commander's Remarks, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, Monthly Training Report, (Fighter), October 1954.

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152/ Extract of Wing Commander's [illegible], dated October 1956. Exhibit [illegible]
153/ Historical Report, [illegible] Strategic Fighter Wing [illegible]
154/ Part III, Commander's Remarks, [illegible] Strategic Fighter Wing [illegible]
155/ Technical Order 1F-84-[illegible]

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was necessary. In periodic inspections, 50% of all spare parts used were required at the time of the inspection. Even on new aircraft received direct from the factory, maintenance was necessary to bring them up to desired standards. In the case of new aircraft received during October, only two were going through the periodic inspection docks and both were delayed due to parts shortages.[152]

The in-commission rate for aircraft assigned to the 12th Wing during October was 34.6%, while the AOCP rate was 29.5%. The out-of-commission rate due to maintenance amounted to 24.7%. A total of 25 acceptance inspections were completed on newly assigned aircraft. During the month, 35 new F-84F's were assigned to the wing, bringing the total number assigned to 67.[153]

From 4 to 13 November, 100 hours of flying time was lost by the wing because all "split tail" aircraft of the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing were being prepared for transfer. During this period, maintenance support was given by the 12th Wing to prepare the "split tail" aircraft for transfer to Kelly Air Force Base by 15 November 1954.[154] Later on in the month, from the 16th through the 20th, all F-84F aircraft were grounded in order to comply with technical orders.[155] In spite of the time lost by both periods of no flying, wing pilots flew their aircraft 687 hours. Of this figure, 79 hours were logged testing new F-84F's and 18 hours were recorded

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152/Extract of Wing Commander's Remarks, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, dated October 1954. Exhibit #104.
153/Historical Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing for October 1954.
154/Part III, Commander's Remarks, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, Nov 54.
155/Technical Order 1F-84-501.

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ferrying new aircraft from Kansas City to Bergstrom Air Force Base.[156]

The problem of supply shortages, in aircraft spare parts, existed in November as in the previous month. An AOCP rate of 20.6% for all grounded F-84F's was still too high for the organization. That figure included a general shortage of parts plus 39 cannibalizations which were required to get parts to keep available aircraft flying. Controlled consolidation of shortages was necessary so that the wing would have some idea of the overall parts shortages.[157]

27th Strategic Fighter Wing

From the sixth through the 27th of July, aircraft assigned to the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing were grounded for technical order compliance requirements and to complete flight safety directives. Due to the grounding of all F-84F's, the scheduled 1200 hours could not be flown during the month. Of the nine days available, 166:10 hours flying was completed by assigned wing pilots. In addition, 138:30 hours were recorded by non-combat ready crews.[158] Time for flying was so limited, during July, that requirements of chapter 2, Air Force Manual 173-20 could not be complied with. Nine fighter-bomber intercept missions were cancelled due to grounding of all assigned aircraft during most of the month.[159]

156/Historical Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, November 1954.
157/Commander's Remarks, 12th Strat Ftr Wg, November 1954.
158/Historical Report, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing for July 1954.
159/TWX from Commander, 8th AF, to Commander, 42nd ADiv, ODTIC #52011.

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Newly assigned and attached pilots, totaling 76, completed transitional training for F-84F's by the end of July. Lack of flying, plus maintenance difficulties in the wing, were serious factors limiting completion of monthly flying requirements. Wing combat readiness would take longer to achieve than could be expected normally due to parts shortages and maintenance problems.

Training priorities set up by Eighth Air Force, in August, for wing aircraft were 516:30 hours for completion of AF Regulation 60-2 requirements, 10:30 hours for the Air Force ROTC program, crew training 373:50 hours, and ferry flights and test flying - 78:10 hours.[160]

A total of 30 F-84F aircraft were assigned to the wing in August. Five were received from regular production sources, three came from the Republic factory, and two more were delivered from the assembly plant at Kansas City.[161]

In August, 850 hours maintenance work was completed by assigned personnel. A total of 438 hours training was recorded, which was 52% of the amount scheduled by the wing. The reason for incomplete training records was due to grounding of aircraft. Maintenance crews were unable to keep a sufficient number of aircraft in flyable condition so that scheduled flying could be completed. A great deal of work was finished by crews on new aircraft acceptance inspections and in complying with current technical orders. A total of 29 "slab tail" F-84F's were grounded,

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160/Historical Report, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing for August 1954.
161/Ibid.

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during August, so that work required by technical orders could be completed. A team of maintenance men arrived on 18 August 1954 from the Republic factory to complete work required by a technical order, but left Bergstrom as soon as three aircraft were modified for the Bendix Trophy race. They did not return to complete their work until 29 August.[162]

Of the 84 "split tail" F-84F aircraft in possession of the wing, 53 were in temporary storage awaiting fuel controls. Another five were grounded due to an Eighth Air Force wire message,[163] and the 26 left were flown during August. Hydraulic failures, mechanical problems, and technical order compliances were responsible for the low number of flying hours flown during the month.[164]

Wing maintenance men attended mobile training school, during August, in order to learn the latest information available on F-84F maintenance. The training required 3600 hours and resulted in bridging the gap between the new and older series of jet aircraft currently assigned. A new course, of 20 hours, which covered familiarization and characteristics of SAC Manual 66-12, was started in August. In addition, technical representatives gave lectures to maintenance personnel on the pneumatic, fuel, and hydraulic systems installed on the F-84F.[165]

Flying accomplished, during October, was far short of the 1586 hours scheduled, of which 954:30 hours were flown and recorded by wing pilots.

162/Monthly Analysis, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, dtd 13 Sep 54.
163/Message Eighth Air Force, MIMP4 44152.
164/Monthly Analysis, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, 13 Sep 1954.
165/Ibid.

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Since the wing had been relieved of minimum training requirements found in SAC Regulation 50-8, a training program was substituted in order to comply with Air Force Regulation 60-2. Since training took first priority during the month, ferrying new aircraft to Bergstrom from the factory was a second priority item. A third objective, was completion of flying training for non-combat ready crews. In completing these objectives, 103:10 hours flying was recorded on project "Run In," 14:55 hours were logged in ferrying 12 aircraft from factories producing F-84F's, and 776 hours were flown in combat crew training.[166]

During October, the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing had 106.2 aircraft on hand. For the number possessed, the average number of aircraft in-commission was 28.4%, while aircraft out-of-commission for parts amounted to 43.5%. Aircraft grounded for periodic inspections were 2.5% of the number on hand, and the balance were out-of-commission for technical order compliance and maintenance.[167]

Flying time completed by wing pilots amounted to 884:55 hours in November, which was a considerable increase over that recorded in previous months. In order to maintain the increased amount of flying time, a heavy strain was placed on wing maintenance sections. Increased engine inspections and work resulting from them piled up due to a shortage of trained jet engine specialists.[168]

166/ Historical Report, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing for October 1954.
167/ Ibid.
168/ Monthly Analysis, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, 13 December 1954.

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As in October, the wing was again relieved from completing training requirements of SAC Regulation 50-8, during November. Ferrying of "split tail" F-84F's to Kelly Air Force Base accounted for 33:30 hours flying time. On receipt of four "slab tail" aircraft from the factory, a total of 66.2 of those aircraft were possessed by the wing by 30 November. First priority in meeting training requirements was completion of AF Regulation 60-2 training minimums. A total of 700 hours were allotted to this phase, but 570:45 hours were completed by the end of the month. Training of non-combat ready pilots took second priority, with a total of 1080 flying hours allocated for this purpose. Transfer of 54 split tail F-84F's to Kelly Air Force Base, in which 793:55 hours flying was recorded, helped in lightening maintenance work on aircraft possessed by the wing.[169]

The 27th Strategic Fighter Wing accumulated 1645:30 hours flying in December. Of this, 1299:30 hours were flown by F-84F aircraft, 268:40 hours were logged by T-33 aircraft and the balance of 357:50 hours by KB-29's. Flying time accredited to the 27th Wing was a third higher in December than for November and was the result of a decrease in F-84F's possessed by the wing. A further reason for the increased flying time completed was a drop in the number of aircraft out-of-commission for parts and maintenance.[170]

Two problems occurred in December which slowed down maintenance. One

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169/Historical Report, 27th Strat Ftr Wing for Nov 54.
170/Monthly Analysis, 27th Strat Ftr Wing Comptroller, Dec 54.

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was an unexpected loss of aircraft, with no advance notice, to the retrofit program. Another was an excessive number of technical orders requiring many extra hours of work for compliance. Another regular problem was that higher headquarters placed too heavy a workload on the wing without advance notice. In order to complete resulting work, scheduled maintenance had to be pushed aside, resulting in an efficiency drop in the wing operation. Personnel required for routine maintenance activities had to be shifted to the new project in order to complete it within the time limit directed by higher headquarters.

During December, 600 hours were flown by wing pilots to comply with Air Force Regulation 60-2 and an additional 672 hours were recorded training of non-combat ready crews and staff pilots. In addition, 22:45 hours were logged in ferrying aircraft from the factory to Bergstrom Air Force Base.[171]

171/Historical Report, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, December 1954.

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Chapter V

FACILITIES

During the six months covered in this chapter, from July to December 1954, a considerable amount of construction has been noted on the newer bases of the Eighth Air Force. Such basic equipment as new hangars, runways and taxiways, barracks and mess halls have been erected at all the new bases, while at the older installations, much less construction activity occurred.

Abilene Air Force Base

At Abilene Air Force Base, Texas, new north-south runways and two warm-up aprons of 265,000 square yards had been under construction for the six month period of this history. The original contract had been awarded during August 1953 and the final one was accepted early in February 1955. Total funds authorized for its completion amounted to $2,045,000 and by December 1954, $2,050,000 had been spent with work having progressed to 91 percent of completion.[1] In addition, an apron of 343,100 square yards had been in the building stage since the first contract was awarded in August 1953. The total amount authorized for its completion was $2,379,000. By December 1954, with $2,746,000 having been spent, work was 90 percent completed.

Three 20,000 barrel jet fuel storage tanks were being built during

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1/ Unless otherwise indicated, to avoid repetition, since most information in the chapter has been taken from Military Construction Progress Reports on file at the 8th Air Force Installations Office, further footnotes indicating this fact have been omitted.

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the period, on which a contract had been authorized and accepted during January 1954 and on which work began in February 1954. It was estimated that work would be completed by October 1955, at which time a total of $172,000 would have been spent. By December 1954, $214,000 had been spent and the tanks were 99 percent finished. One 20,000 barrel aviation fuel storage tank was under construction during the same period, on which the contract had been awarded during January 1954, with work to start the following month. By December 1954, construction was 99 percent complete.

A hydrant refueling system, was being built at Abilene during the latter half of 1954. The contract was awarded during May 1954, and work started in August. A total of $755,000 was authorized for its completion, and by December 1954, $730,000 had been spent and 4 percent of the contract remained.

Contracts were in various stages of completion on a base communications building, a transmitter and receiver building, and on a runway lighting program during the last six months of 1954. A crash fire station was being build at Abilene, on which work had started during April 1953 and by December 1954, the building was 14 percent finished. Of the $111,000 authorized for its construction, $16,000 had been spent. It was expected that the building would be finished by May 1955. An aircraft maintenance hangar, on which work began in May 1954 and which should be finished by August 1955, was being built during the last six months of the year. Of an authorized $1,291,000, a total of $703,000 had been spent and work

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was 49 percent accomplished by the end of December 1954. Seven 200-man barracks with two accompanying mess halls, capable of feeding 500 men, were more than half completed by the end of the period and would be ready for use by March 1955. Of the $2,006,000 authorized for the building, $1,736,000 had been spent and all buildings in the program were 79 percent completed. Work went on with eight separate utilities contracts, in which some were finished and others were in the process of completion during 1954. A total of $1,373,000 had been authorized for them, and by December, 34 percent of the work was finished. One 150-300 bed hospital was being built during the latter half of the year, on which work had begun in July 1954 and would not be finished until March 1956. A total of $2,408,000 had been set aside for its building, and by December, when it was 11 percent completed, $323,000 had been spent.

Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma

A small arms range had just been started at Altus during the last six months of the year. The contract was given to a construction concern and work was scheduled to start during February 1955. By the time the work was completed, $19,000 would have been spent for the range.

Several utilities contracts were let to contractors at Altus and completion was expected in June 1956. A total of $388,000 was authorized for finishing them, and by December 1954, 66 percent of the contracts were completed after spending $444,000.

A 50-bed hospital, on which a contract was awarded during May 1954

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and for which $924,000 was allocated was 46 percent completed by the end of December 1954. The scheduled completion date was set at September 1955, but personnel assigned would not be able to move into the new hospital until October of the same year.

A chapel, on which contracts had been awarded between March 1953 and August 1954 and for which $115,000 had been allowed for building it, had reached the point where it was 88 percent complete by 31 December 1954. By that time, the working estimate had been raised to $149,000 and of this amount, $131,000 had been spent.

Additional construction still in the planning stage, included an aircraft maintenance hangar and an airfield lighting contract.

Bergstrom Air Force Base

A north to south runway extension project was being worked on at Bergstrom during the last six months of 1954, and by the end of December, it was 98 percent complete. The original contract had been let during June 1952, on which work began the following month. An allowance of $113,000 was made for its completion, and by December, the working estimate had been increased to $140,000 with $130,000 of that amount already spent. An additional major runway extension was underway at the same time. Contracts were awarded in June 1952 and August 1953, and $469,000 had been allocated for its completion. The project was 99 percent completed by the end of the year, by which time the construction cost had been increased to $578,000 of which $523,000 had been spent.

A maintenance hangar for fighter-type aircraft was being built during

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the last half of 1954, on which contracts had been awarded between February 1953 and June 1954. The original cost estimate had been set at $1,686,000 but later was increased to $1,990,000. By the end of the year, the hangar was 98 percent complete.

An aircraft maintenance shop had been under construction since August 1952 and was 99 percent completed by the end of December 1954. A total of $188,000 had been allocated for its completion, but this amount was increased by December, to $217,000 of which $215,000 had been spent in construction work.

A total of 12 contracts were awarded for utilities going with new construction. The last contract was to be completed by May 1956, at which time, it was estimated that $314,000 would have been spent on the contracts. By December, the working estimate had been increased to $506,000 and $376,000 had been spent with 75 percent of the work completed.

Biggs Air Force Base

A complete runway construction job was underway during the last six months of 1954 at Biggs Air Force Base. Original contracts had been let during 1953 and 1954 with expected completion dates during December 1954. The completion date had been advanced to March 1955, at which time the original $2,256,000 estimated construction cost had been increased to $2,750,000. By December 1954, 95 percent of the work was completed and $2,605,000 had been spent.

An administrative telephone system, on which the contract had been

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awarded during January 1954, and on which completion was expected during March 1955, was 84 percent complete by the end of December 1954. A total of $63,000 had been allowed for its construction, and $23,000 had been spent by the end of the year.

A heavy bomber hangar plus a moveable crane within the building had been in the process of completion since 17 February 1953. The estimated cost of the building had risen from $3,614,000 to $3,862,000 by the end of the year. Of this figure $3,305,000 had been spent and the hangar was 87 percent completed.

Utilities contracts were 21 percent completed by December 1954, and $63,000 of an allowed $473,000 had been spent. Original contracts had been awarded during February and August 1952 and again in June 1954. All work was to be completed by 11 April 1955, at which time $473,000 would have been spent in construction work.

Other work, still in the planning stage, included a base operations control tower, a crash and fire station, a technical training building, and a runway widening contract.

Carswell Air Force Base

By 8 January 1954, Carswell had $10,000,000 in contracts going on at the same time. One of the largest, was a three story hangar covering 152,000 square feet and capable of accomodating four B-36 aircraft at a time. The contract was for $3,409,000 and was being handled by a construction company from Dallas, Texas. The building occupied over four acres of floor space and was covered with corrugated steel siding material. The

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main floor of the hangar was 14 inches thick and when completed, the structure will be 250 feet wide by 540 feet in length and will rise to a height of 66 feet.[2] Other contracts, in progress, included a north-south runway extension of 110,000 square yards which was in the planning stage during November 1952 and which was 97 percent complete by December 1954. By the end of the year, $1,806,000 had been spent on the runway extension. A new taxiway of 77,100 square yards, in which contracts had been awarded during the latter part of 1952 and 1953, was 97 percent complete by December 1954 after $1,617,000 had been spent on work and materials going into it. The estimated completion date was to be in February 1955. A new taxiway of 77,100 square yards on which work had started in April 1953 and which was estimated to cost $1,475,000 was 97 percent complete by December 1954. By that time, $1,617,000 had been spent in construction and materials going into the taxiway. It was estimated that the contract would be completed by February 1955 and ready for use by aircraft assigned to the base.

An aircraft washrack, 80 percent completed by December 1954, was estimated to cost $125,000 by the time it was finished. The original contract was awarded during January 1953 and the final one was placed in December 1954. By December, a total of $118,000 had been spent with five months left on the contract.

2/ Article from the "Lone Star Scanner", Carswell AFB newspaper for 8 Jan 54, subj: "Corps of Engineers find plenty of Work at CAFB." Exhibit #105.

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Ten utilities contracts to support the new construction on the base were 59 percent complete by the end of the year. A total of $700,000 had been allocated for finishing the work and by December 1954, $1,184,000 was spent in materials and labor costs.

A hydrant refueling system was completed and placed in operation at Carswell during October 1954. The new system had many advantages over the older methods of refueling, mainly in speed of delivery to aircraft. The system installed at Carswell was capable of pumping 600 gallons per minute. An aircraft requiring 24,000 gallons of gasoline can be refueled in 40 minutes under the new method in comparison to an hour and a quarter by the older refueling truck delivery. 3/

Clinton Air Force Base, Oklahoma

Because Clinton Air Force Base was new to the Eighth Air Force, construction had not progressed beyond planning and design stages during the last half of 1954. Buildings and construction planned for the base included navigational aids, access and parking aprons, primary and taxi runways, fuel storage and a hydrant refueling system, communications buildings, and others for housing and feeding of airmen and officers assigned to duty at the base.

Dow Air Force Base, Bangor, Maine

A taxi apron for which contracts had been awarded from April 1953 to January 1954, was undergoing construction at Dow all during 1954. By

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3/ Article from the "Lone Star Scanner", Carswell AFB newspaper for 22 October 1954. Subj: "Installation complete on hydrant refueling system." Exhibit #106.

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December, with work 86 percent completed, $1,130,000 had been spent of an estimated $1,314,000. The estimated completion date for the project was set at June 1955.

Contracts for jet fuel storage had been awarded to local contractors between May and December of 1953 with work commencing in July of the same year. It was expected that the contracts would be completed by March 1955, at which time $93,000 would have been spent. By December 1954, with work 92 percent completed, $86,000 had been spent.

Hydrant refueling contracts, on which work began during March 1953, had progressed to 92 percent of completion by December 1954. At that time, $346,000 of an estimated $376,000 had been spent for work and materials. The estimated date for finishing work on the contracts was March 1955.

Six separate utilities contracts were awarded during 1953 and 1954 to construction companies at Dow Air Force Base. Work had started in the latter part of 1953 and on the last contract during April 1954. An estimated construction cost of $131,000 would have been exceeded by $58,000 by the time work was completed in June 1955. By December 1954, with work 74 percent completed, a total of $140,000 had been spent.

Two land purchasing contracts were carried out during the year for expansion of Dow Air Force Base. By December 1954, $15,000 had been spent under the first contract in purchasing real estate, while the second contract was still in the planning stage, having been opened on 15 December

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1954.

A warehouse, under construction since October 1953 and for which the cost had been estimated at $326,000 was 54 percent completed in December 1954. A total of $206,000 had been spent on the building by the end of the year.

Ellsworth Air Force Base

A bulk fuel storage facility, on which the contract had been awarded during October 1952, with work starting during the following month, was nearing completion by the end of 1954. A total of $113,000 had been set aside for its construction, but this had been increased to $130,000 by December 1954. At that time, $125,000 had been spent and the project was 97 percent completed.

Utilities contracts, awarded from September 1951 to February 1954, on which work would be finished by July 1955, had reached 99 percent completion by the end of the year. A total of $672,000 was originally authorized, but this amount had to be increased to $811,000 by the end of the year, in order to complete all contracts.

A base hospital, on which the contract was awarded in February 1954, with work starting in March, was 47 percent complete by the end of December 1954. A total of $1,914,000 had been authorized but this amount was increased to $2,141,000 in order to complete construction authorized.

Two barracks and one mess hall were built for Army support units assigned to Ellsworth Air Force Base during the time between September 1952

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and the completion date of February 1955. The original contract was awarded in September 1952 with construction beginning the next month. The buildings were scheduled for completion by February 1955 and the cost had been set for $768,000. By December 1954, with work 99 percent complete the estimated cost had been increased to $839,000. Additional quarters, for single officers, on which construction had started during October 1952, were 95 percent complete by the end of the year. The amount planned for their construction was $112,000, but had been raised to $127,000 by December 1954.

A motor repair shop, on which the original contract had been awarded in September 1952, with construction starting the following month, was 99 percent completed by December 1954. The original $53,000 allocated for construction of the building had been increased to $61,000 by the end of 1954.

A cold climate type automotive shop, on which the contract had been awarded in June 1954, with work commencing the next month, was scheduled for completion during March 1955. By December 1954, with the building 76 percent complete, the original cost of $122,000 had been increased to $145,000.

Loring Air Force Base, Maine

A communications and electronics building, on which a contract was awarded in July 1954 with construction beginning the same month, was 25 percent complete by December 1954. To complete the building, $316,000 had been allocated, but by the end of the year, the amount was increased to

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$373,000. It was expected that it would be finished and ready for occupancy by November 1955.

A hardstand and connecting taxiway were built at Loring during 1954. The original contract had been authorized in February 1952 with work commencing the following month. The estimated cost of labor and materials was $4,217,000, but by December 1954, with construction 32 percent complete, the estimate had been increased to $5,719,000. The hardstand and taxiways were to be finished and ready for use by September 1956.

Three contracts were awarded for building a cantilever type aircraft hangar at Loring, on which work began during August 1953. A total of $2,278,000 had been authorized for its erection, and by December 1954, with the hangar 80 percent complete, a total of $2,062,000 had been spent. The completion date was for August 1955, when the increased cost of construction amounting to $2,577,000 would have been spent. Another hangar of the same type, had been under construction since March 1952 and would not be finished until August 1955. Original cost estimates had been $1,698,000 and by December 1954, when the hangar was 79 percent finished, this amount had been increased to $1,954,000.

Roads and parkways, which had been started in August 1952 would be finished during July 1955 at a cost of $861,000. Eight contracts had been awarded for the work, and by December 1954, with construction 69 percent completed, $594,000 had been spent.

Utilities contracts were awarded from May 1952 to September 1953 at

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Loring Air Force Base. It was expected that work would be completed on the final contract by June 1955, by which time the $1,433,000 authorized would have been spent on supplies and labor costs. The project was 92 percent finished by December 1954, and a total of $1,370,000 had been spent.

A contract for building an auditorium type theater, with a seating capacity of 1000 persons, was awarded during August 1954 and was 36 percent completed by December 1954. Originally, $291,000 had been authorized for its construction, but had been increased to $331,000 by the end of the year.

A parking apron, on which work began in April 1954, was 85 percent completed by the end of the year. A total of $929,000 was authorized for its completion and by December, $790,000 had been spent.

A multi-purpose maintenance dock was in the process of completion, since work had started in July 1953 and the dock wouldn't be ready for use until August 1955. Originally, a total of $2,898,000 had been authorized for building it, but by December 1954, with the dock 99 percent completed, the authorization had been increased to $3,790,000.

A 2500 kilowatt electric power system was installed at the base during the year. Original contracts had been authorized, during the early portion of 1953, and work had started in March of the same year. By December 1954, 78 percent of the work had been completed and $874,000 of the authorized $1,159,000 had been spent on construction.

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Plattsburg Air Force Base

A new runway, on which work had started in February 1954 and which was scheduled for completion in August 1955, was 62 percent complete by the end of December 1954. At that time, $2,323,000 had been spent of an authorized $3,797,000. A taxiway, on which $1,713,000 was authorized, was 23 percent completed by December 1954 and $260,000 had been spent in its construction. A parking apron on which work started during April 1954, was 13 percent completed by the end of the year and $668,000 of an authorized $5,489,000 authorized had been spent.

Aviation gas and jet fuel storage contracts were being completed at Plattsburg during the latter half of the year. For aviation gas storage, a contract had been awarded in January 1954, with work starting the following May. The completion date was set for September 1955, at which time, a total of $66,000 would have been spent. By December 1954, with the project 89 percent complete, $60,000 had been spent for materials and labor costs. The jet fuel storage contract, awarded in January 1954, on which work had begun in May 1954, was 94 percent complete by the end of the year. A total of $126,000 had been allocated for the project completion and by the end of December, $114,000 had been spent.

Two hydrant refueling contracts were completed at Plattsburg during 1954. The first one for which the contract had been authorized during January 1954 and on which work started the same month, would be completed by September 1955. By December 1954, with the contract 65 percent finished, $349,000 of an authorized $443,000 had been spent. The second contract,

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awarded during the same month as the first, would be completed in September 1955 at a cost of $1,393,000. By December 1954, with work 45 percent finished, a total of $639,000 had been spent for labor and materials.

Other contracts in the early stages of completion included aviation fuel and oil storage, fuel oil and bulk fuel storage, automotive gasoline and oil tanks.

A communications building, for which three contracts had been awarded was 25 percent completed by the end of December. A total of $130,000 had been authorized for its construction and by the end of the year, $38,000 had been spent.

Buildings and equipment in the early stages of construction included transmitter and receiver buildings, a communications facility, runway and taxiway lighting installations, a base operations building and control tower, a crash and fire station, and airmen barracks.

Portsmouth Air Force Base

A runway and taxiway was being built at Portsmouth during the last half of the year. A total of four contracts had been awarded, with work scheduled for completion by June 1956. By December 1954, with construction 42 percent finished, $1,320,000 of an authorized $3,144,000 had been spent on labor and materials. A parking apron, for which contracts had been awarded during 1953 and early in 1954, was 36 percent completed by the end of the year. By December 1954, $3,262,000 had been spent of an authorized $9,061,000.

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A hydrant refueling project of 50,000 and 100,000 gallon capacity was being completed during 1953 and 1954. It would be finished by December 1955 at which time, $1,081,000 would have been spent. By December 1954, with construction 51 percent finished a total of $551,000 had been spent.

Projects in the early stages of construction included, communications facilities and telephone exchange, an airfield lighting project, navigational aids, and a base operations and control tower. Additional construction in the earlier stages of development were an aircraft maintenance shop, training building, barracks with mess hall, and an officers BOQ and mess hall.

A crash and fire station for which contracts had been awarded from March to December 1953 and again in March 1954, on which work had started during the same months, would not be finished until June 1955. By December 1954, with construction 50 percent completed, $94,000 had been spent of an authorized $188,000.

A cantilever type hangar, on which contracts had been let in March and December 1953 and during April 1954, would not be completed until June 1956. By December 1954, with 32 percent of the work completed, a total of $1,181,000 had been spent of an authorized $3,691,000.

A land purchasing contract which had started in February 1952, would be completed during June 1956 at a total cost of $2,300,000. By December, with the contract 98 percent fulfilled, a total of $2,045,000 had been spent.

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Air Installations buildings and shops, for which contracts had been authorized throughout 1953 and early in 1954, were 74 percent completed by December 1954. A total of $383,000 had been authorized for their construction, of which $283,000 had been spent by the end of the year.

An air base group headquarters building, 42 percent finished by the end of 1954, had been started in April 1953 with and expected completion date of June 1955. A total of $261,000 had been authorized for its construction and $110,000 had been spent on it by December 1954.

Walker Air Force Base, New Mexico

Contracts for apron parking areas were awarded from January 1953 to April 1954, with work starting on the first one during February 1953. An authorization of $491,000 was set aside to pay for the work and materials used, but by December 1954, with 88 percent of the work completed, the overall cost estimate had been raised to $614,000. Completion date was expected to be in September 1955.

A telephone building and communications center were under construction during the latter half of the year at Walker. The original construction cost was set at a cost of $73,000, but by December 1954, when it was finished, the cost had been raised to $99,000.

A ground controlled approach building was under construction during the last half of the year. Original contracts had been awarded on 21 July 1953, with work starting on 6 August 1953. The original contract cost was set at $57,000, but by December 1954, when the building was completed,

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the cost had been increased to $65,000. Along the same line, an airport surveillance radar facility was being built during the year. The original contract was awarded on 21 July 1953 with work starting the following month. The construction cost had been set for $65,000 but had to be raised to $73,000 before the building was completed on 31 December 1954.

A new cantilever type hangar, equipped with a moveable crane was started during June 1953 and would not be completed until November 1955. By December 1954 after having spent $3,884,000, the hangar was 99 percent completed.

An airmen's barracks, capable of housing 396 men, was started in March 1952 and was to be completed by August 1955. Original construction costs were estimated at $554,000 and by December 1954, with the building 99 percent completed, $612,000 had been spent in its erection.

A contract for road construction at Walker Air Force Base, had been let at the end of June 1953, with work starting the following month. The scheduled completion date of June 1954 had been set and a total of $154,000 was allocated to pay for construction and materials used, but by the end of June, when the job was completed, $192,000 had been spent.

Utilities contracts which had been awarded from February 1952 to November 1954 and on which work had started during March 1952 were 53 percent completed by December 1954. The original construction cost had been $120,000 but was increased to $435,000 by the end of the year.

An electric power system was built at Walker during 1954, and by

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December was 34 percent completed. By that time, $86,000 had been spent of an estimated $399,000.

A base headquarters building was under construction during the last half of 1954. The original contract had been awarded during August 1954, with work commencing the same month. It was estimated that the building would be completed by March 1955, after an expenditure of $196,000. By December, $76,000 had been spent and the building was 61 percent completed.

A runway and taxiway extension project was going on during the entire year. Original contracts had been awarded during April 1954, with work starting in June 1954. The expected completion date was October 1955, and by December 1954, with the project 55 percent completed, $1,132,000 had been spent.

Two underground jet fuel storage tanks were installed at Walker during 1954. The contract for them was awarded in April 1954, with work starting the following month. By December 1954, when 85 percent complete, a total of $30,000 had been spent on tank installations.

An alert hangar, for which the contract was awarded during June 1954, with work starting in July had reached 64 percent of completion by the end of the year. A total of $342,000 had been allocated for the completion of the job, and by December, $395,000 had been spent.

The original contract for an armament electronics shop was let in April 1953 with work beginning the same month and ending in May 1954. Then the original cost estimate of $353,000 had been exceeded by an expenditure

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of $387,000 on construction work and materials.

Westover Air Force Base

New runways and taxiways were built at Westover during 1953 and were to be finished by November 1955. On the current estimated cost of $3,340,000 a total of $2,259,000 had been spent and construction was 67 percent completed.

A hydrant refueling system was being installed during part of 1953 and all during 1954. Of the $978,000 allocated for completion of the contract, $274,000 had been spent by the end of the year and work was 28 percent completed.

One 100 to 200 bed hospital was in the early stages of construction by the end of the year. Original contracts had been awarded during November and December 1953 and in the early months of the following year. Work began in November and the building would not be completed until January 1956. By December, of the $2,424,000 authorized, $461,000 had been spent and the structure was 19 percent finished. Along with the hospital, a dental clinic was being erected. Contracts had been awarded late in 1953 and during the first three months of 1954. This facility would not be finished until January 1956. Of the $148,000 authorized for its construction, $28,000 had been spent by the end of December 1954 and the building was 19 percent completed.

An aircraft maintenance hangar, for which contracts had been authorized during December 1953 and November 1954 was being built and would not be

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finished until April 1956. By December 1954, with the hangar 55 percent completed, $1,576,000 of an authorized $2,866,000 had been spent.

Utilities contracts, which had been authorized in October 1953 and in June 1954, with work commencing in November 1953 were 37 percent completed by the end of December 1954. It was expected that they would be finished by November 1956. By December 1954, $280,000 of an authorized $756,000 had been spent in construction and for materials.

New runways, which had been started in March 1953 and which would not be completed until November 1955 were 37 percent finished by December 1954. Of the $2,487,000 authorized for their completion, $965,000 had been spent by the end of the year. New taxiways were being built at the same time on which three separate contracts had been awarded from March to October 1953 and on which work had commenced during the same period. By December 1954, $264,000 had been spent of an authorized $801,000 and work was 33 percent completed. Work would be completed on all contracts in October 1955 and November 1956.

Contracts had been awarded for various airfield improvements, such as strengthening the apron parking area, a new hardstand, warm up pads, and an alert hangar and had not proceeded far enough for reporting.

Five and seven-tenths miles of roads were being built during 1953 and would not be finished until November 1956. By December 1954, with the contract 30 percent completed, a total of $92,000 had been spent of an authorized $305,000.

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Water distribution mains were being installed at Westover during the latter half of 1953. By December 1954, with work 63 percent completed, $29,000 of an authorized $46,000 had been spent. At the same time, sewage lines were being installed on the base at a cost of $88,000. By December, this contract was 63 percent complete and $55,000 had been spent.

Above and under ground electrical distribution systems were being installed from April to October 1953 and would be completed by September 1956. By December 1954, the above ground system was 28 percent complete and a total of $23,000 of an authorized $80,000 had been spent on installation. The under ground system had progressed to 39 percent of completion and $125,000 of the authorized $320,000 installation cost had been spent.

Family Housing at Eighth Air Force Bases

As a result of reports received from commanders of major air force installations throughout the country, the general status of family housing conditions is known each quarter. The only two bases in Eighth Air Force reporting adequate family housing which was available at reasonable rental rates were Bergstrom and Carswell. All other bases ranged from housing in limited supply to a condition where houses for rent were practically non-existant. The report covered the period from July to October 1954. 4/

4/ Report of prevailing family housing conditions at USAF major installations, Department of the Air Force, dtd 1 November 1954.

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OPERATIONS & TRAINING

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Chapter VI

OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

The combat elements of the United States Air Force are grouped into three major air commands. These include the Air Defense Command (ADC), the Tactical Air Command (TAC), and the Strategic Air Command (SAC). Each command has a different responsibility. Briefly, the Air Defense Command is responsible for defending the continental United States against air attack, the Tactical Air Command has the job of supporting ground elements in the field, and the Strategic Air Command has the primary task of attacking and destroying the enemy's capability to wage war. During peacetime, these commands have the responsibility of developing and maintaining the highest degree of combat readiness in order that they might execute their assigned duties in the event of hostilities.

As one of the three numbered air forces assigned to the Strategic Air Command, the Eighth Air Force must man, train and equip assigned units for the primary purpose of conducting strategic air operations on a global scale utilizing either atomic or conventional weapons. On 1 July 1954, the striking force of this command consisted of five heavy bombardment wings, three medium bombardment wings, three strategic fighter wings and one heavy reconnaissance wing. With the exception of the 96th Medium Bombardment Wing, which was neither manned nor equipped, each wing had three combat squadrons. The three medium

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bombardment wings were also equipped with air refueling squadrons as were two of the three strategic fighter wings. Each wing also had three maintenance squadrons assigned. Lending support to the combat wings at their stations were the support units of the air base groups. Logistical support was provided by two strategic support squadrons. Each tactical unit was required to be prepared to strike swiftly and effectively should the necessity arise either independently or in conjunction with other units of this command or those of the Second and Fifteenth Air Forces.

Such terms as "mobility" and "combat readiness" were familiar throughout the command. Global training operations were carried out as part of the day to day routine. While combat units of this command were stationed at ZI bases, they frequently rotated to overseas operating bases. It was not uncommon to find on a single day individual aircraft or complete units operating in such widely separated areas as Japan, Guam and North Africa.

Since the Eighth Air Force is a combat air force and since its activities are geared toward preparation of its units to meet situations which could arise, some of the major operations performed during the period 1 July through 31 December 1954 will be discussed. The

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discussion will not include all activities, but namely those which best show the combat capability of the Eighth Air Force. Information relative to the more routine activities of individual tactical units can be found in the monthly histories of those organizations.*

Strategic Fighter Wings

Temporary duty tour of the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing

The 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, from Bergstrom Air Force Base, had been on tour of temporary duty in the far east since May 1954. By September of the same year, the wing was winding up loose ends at their two bases in Japan, preparatory to returning to the United States. Airdrome operational control at Chitose and Misawa was not given to the 407th Strategic Fighter Wing, the replacing organization, until August, at which time the 12th Wing was scheduled to depart for their home base in the United States. The mission of all organizations assigned to the northern airbase of Chitose and Misawa, was the maintenance of five minute readiness alert with a given number of aircraft. The alert period extended from 30 minutes before sunrise to one half hour after sunset each day. Other missions, in addition to the primary one, were ordered by headquarters Far East Air Forces,

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* Subject histories are on file in the Hist Div, OI, Hq 8th AF.

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and, as a result, 15 additional missions were flown, during July, by the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing. 1/

Under the provisions of the July Operations Order, the wing provided a given number of jet aircraft for missions over Japan in order that GCI, Early Warning and Anti-Aircraft Artillery units would get necessary training in tracking aircraft through their zones of protection. 2/

Since eight days remained to the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing for flying and operations in Japan, during August, only two Operations Orders were published by that organization. Generally, the content of the orders was the same as those published in previous months. The pilots assigned to flying jet aircraft, flew so that AAA, GCA, and Early Warning Radar units could get training. Due to the few days left to the wing, only 368:40 hours flying were completed by wing pilots. Of that figure, 56:15 hours were flown in T-33 aircraft. Additional pilot training was completed, during a short period in August, by night and instrument flying which was authorized by Air Force Regulation 60-2. At the same time, 76 ground controlled approaches were made, plus non-combat ready crew training, as directed in SAC Regulation 50-50 and 51-19. All combat crew training was completed by authority and the provisions of SAC Regulation 50-8. 3/

Delivery of new F-84F aircraft

The 12th Strategic Fighter Wing returned, during August, from

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1/ Operations Order 232-54, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, dtd 3 July 54.
2/ Ibid.
3/ Final Mission Report, 12th Strategic Fighter Wing to Operations Order 14-54. Exhibit #107.

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90 days temporary duty in the Far East and no tactical aircraft were assigned to them on their reporting to Bergstrom. According to plan, the organization was to be re-equipped in September with F-84F-25's having a slab-tail design. Both the 27th and 506th Fighter Wings, the first located at Bergstrom and the latter at Dow Air Force Base, Maine, were to be supplied with the same type aircraft. That would result in the total conversion of Eighth Air Force fighter units to the most modern of jet aircraft. During the same month, 219 F-84F's were ready for delivery to units of the command and this posed a problem in the matter of delivery of aircraft from the factory to organizations of the command. Since very few pilots in the command were qualified to fly the new jets, a total of 10 highly skilled pilots of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing were placed on temporary duty with the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing and checked out on flying new slab-tail aircraft. This was done so that delivery of new F-84F's could be completed. 4/

The disposition of F-84F split-tail aircraft, during September 1954, was handled at Dow Air Force Base in which 26 transfer inspections were carried out on the base. The 38 aircraft remaining were prepared

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4/History, Dir of Opns, 8th AF, Aug 54.

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for a one-time flight and then flown to the Air Materiel Command depots at Rome, New York and San Antonio, Texas where final inspections and repairs were made. The 11 split-tail aircraft left at Dow were transferred to the Training Command.

In the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, 13 transfer inspections were completed by that organization and the remaining aircraft were prepared for a one time flight to the Air Materiel Command depot at San Antonio for inspections and repairs prior to transfer to the National Guard. A total of 30 aircraft were scheduled for assignment to Training Command units during September, and the 54 remaining were to be sent to National Guard units. 5/

A message to the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing from Strategic Air Command Headquarters, directed Eighth Air Force to furnish six aircraft, with crews and support personnel, for phases I and II of Operations "Run-In". Aircraft required were flown to Eglin Air Force Base on 18 October 1954, for a TDY of 30 days. During that time 120 to 130 hours flying was recorded by pilots from Eighth Air Force organizations. This was a joint maneuver, in which units of the Air Proving Ground Command, Tactical Air Command, and Strategic Air Command took part. Phases II and III of the exercise covered special weapons, their firing and mission profiles. 6/

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5/ History, Dir of Opns, 8th AF, Sept 54.
6/ History, Dir of Opns, 8th AF, Oct 54.

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12th Strategic Fighter Wing Operations

When the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing had returned and become operational in September, flying was limited because all older aircraft had been returned to materiel depots for further assignment to other organizations. At the same time, the newest model of the F-84F had not been received from the factory. Consequently, all flying was logged in checking out instructor pilot personnel so that they would be qualified to ferry new aircraft from the factory to Bergstrom. Several T-33's has been assigned to the base on a 45-day loan to train pilots for ferrying missions. 7/

A further loss in flying time was reported in September and was the result of two major aircraft accidents and following verbal orders of the 42nd Air Division Commander, who grounded all aircraft until the accident's cause could be determined. The order grounding aircraft extended from the 23rd to the 30th of September, and this time represented a loss, to the wing, of approximately 150 flying hours for the month. 8/

Wing pilots built up flying time, during October, by transition and combat crew training in order to comply with the requirements of SAC Regulation 60-2. Flying hours completed had increased over the figure reported for September, being 798:35 hours for all F-84 pilots assigned, with additional time recorded in testing and ferrying aircraft to Bergstrom from the factory. Additional time was logged flying T-33 aircraft by checking out pilots not familiar with flight characteristics

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7/ History, 12th Strat Fighter Wg, Sept 54.
8/ Ibid.

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of the new F-84F. The flying completed in T-33 Aircraft, during October, amounted to 257:35 hours.[9]

Two major aircraft accidents took place at Bergstrom, during October, in which F-84F's were involved. The first one happened on 18 October, when the pilot was unable to extend the landing gear. After several attempts to lower it without success, a landing was made with the gear up. Following the accident, which was not fatal to the pilot, an aircraft accident investigation board decided that the landing gear would not extend and lock in position because the hydraulic system which lowered the gear did not have a minimum of 300 pounds pressure per square inch. This was found to be the cause of the accident. A second major accident occurred on 29 October 1954 in which the pilot reported erratic instrument readings, followed by a flameout. The pilot's position was directly over Bergstrom when the trouble developed and he was flying at an altitude of 7,000 feet. So, he began going through standard landing procedures, which were to be followed in an emergency of that kind. Because he misjudged the wind speed and its direction, plus the glide angle, his F-84F crashed about 5,000 feet short of the main runway. The pilot was successful in ejecting himself at the moment of impact, and was alive when the rescue crew arrived at the scene from Bergstorm. He died some 12 hours later of internal injuries, at the base hospital. The accident was

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9/History, 12th Strat Fighter Wg, Oct 54.

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the result of fuel contamination in which alcohol from the de-icing tank mixed with aircraft jet fuel, resulting in a flameout and crash landing. The fuel filter, of faulty manufacture, was primarily to blame for the accident. Additional causes were the pilot's misjudgement of runway location, glide angle, and wind velocity.[10]

All assigned aircraft were grounded over a five-day period, from the 16th to the 20th of November, so that the maintenance section of the wing could get the older F-84's ready for shipment to the Air Materiel Depot at San Antonio. The depot was to complete transfer inspections and then would reassign all incoming aircraft either to the Training Command or to units of the National Guard. Due to the order grounding all aircraft, a total of 150 hours flying time was lost to the 12th Wing. An additional 100 hours were lost earlier in the month from the 4th to the 13th due to required maintenance prior to transfer of aircraft to the depot.[11]

The possibility of an ordered alert, from Eighth Air Force, was discussed and planned by the 12th Fighter Wing in December. Instructions for improving the operation of the alert were given verbally to each squadron at the wing commander's staff meeting on the 9th and 13th of December. Such things as assigning four tug trains to each tactical squadron, would result in improved efficiency of the organization and would serve to move supplies and equipment much faster.[12]

10/Ibid.
11/History, 12th SFW, Nov 54.
12/Staff Meeting Notes, 12th SFW, 9 Dec 54.

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At a later staff meeting held by the deputy wing commander of the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, further planning in reference to a possible alert was discussed. It was decided that when condition "Bravo" was reached, two tip tanks per flyable aircraft would be marked as full of fuel to indicate that the aircraft was ready for combat flying. When pylon tanks were used, they would be marked in the same way, simulating that they had been filled with jet fuel and that the aircraft was ready to take off. One and one-half hours following "H" hour, maintenance work would cease on all aircraft requiring it. It was decided that if aircraft could not be repaired and ready for flight in that time, in a real alert it would be too late, and those aircraft would have to be abandoned. Additional information was presented at the 13 December 1954 staff meeting. At that time, it was decided that only equipment, the absence of which would not hinder the maintenance effort of the wing, would be moved out of the area in the first hour and a half. 13/

The flying time completed by pilots of the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing was accomplished in transition flying and in combat crew training, during December. The T-33 aircraft, which were on loan from other bases throughout Eighth Air Force were in continuous use by wing pilots to complete flying requirements for the first half of the fiscal year of 1955. As a result, all assigned and attached pilots of the wing

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13/ Staff Meeting Notes, 12th SFW, 13 Dec 54.

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completed their flying requirements as directed by Air Force Regulation 60-2. Due to an increased amount of maintenance required on newly arrived F-84F aircraft, the combat crew training program had to be reduced. This resulted in an increased demand for additional aircraft so that wing pilots could complete their flying requirements during December. To try and overcome the difficulty, a shortage of available aircraft, the commander of the 42nd Air Division, at Bergstrom, published a letter in which he directed that T-33 aircraft on TDY with the wing, be used to the fullest extent.[14]

A provisional squadron was organized by the Commander of the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing, so that the wing would have operational control of all T-33 aircraft on loan to the Air Division. On organization, the squadron consisted of one flight from each fighter wing on duty at Bergstrom, plus a third flight from the 808th Air Base Group Instrument school. All T-33 aircraft in commission and available for flying were scheduled for flights by the provisional squadron commander who followed the orders and directives of the Director of Operations, 42nd Air Division.[15] As of the end of the year, 31 December 1954, a total of 35 T-33 aircraft were assigned to the training squadron. Of the number assigned, 29 were provided through the channels of SAC Project 57-217. There were 31 T-33's present at Bergstrom and four were absent undergoing inspection and repair at the depot.[16]

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14/Ltr, Hq 42nd ADiv, Subj: Maintenance and Utilization of T-33 Aircraft, dtd 3 December 1954.
15/History, 12th SFW, Dec 54.
16/Ibid.

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Flying completed in December increased over the previous two months. Time logged by assigned pilots amounted to 961:10 hours in F-84F's, of which 74:50 hours were used for testing, and 22:15 hours were recorded in ferrying aircraft from Bergstrom to Air Materiel Depots at Ogden, Utah and Mobile, Alabama.[17] A total of 866:10 hours flying was logged in T-33 aircraft by 12th wing pilots during December. That time was recorded in instrument flying and meeting standards of proficiency for jet aircraft. The T-33 program was held back due to several causes as pointed out by the following quotation:[18]

> "The requirements to obtain approximately 850:00 hours of T-33 time without the necessary tools and personnel reduced the maintenance capability on the F-84F program, as only approximately 50% of the personnel had reported for duty as of 15 December 1954 and approximately 25% of the personnel will not be available until some time during the next reporting period. The Power Plant Branch, a section that has been agreed upon by personnel from higher headquarters to be undermanned and a weak spot, had to perform all T-33 engine maintenance to support the T-33 program during this period without the assistance of any of the six (6) jet engine repairmen authorized for the T-33 program. These specialists are due in next month. PCS personnel transferring in for the T-33 program did not have tool kits. This fact coupled with the class 17B tool shortage that has existed since this unit's return from the Far East Air Force makes this known problem a more serious one. No assistance from your headquarters is requested at this time, as tools are coded local purchase; funds are available and purchase requests have been submitted."

27th Strategic Fighter Wing Operations

During July, the wing received 16 new F-84F's from the Republic Aviation Company of New York and from assembly plants in Kansas City.

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17/12th SFW, Monthly Training Report, Dec 54.
18/12th SFW, Commander's Remarks to Monthly Air Training Report (Fighter), Dec 54.

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Because the wing had been relieved of the requirements of SAC Regulation 50-8, all flying alloted was used in training missions and in familiarization with the newly received aircraft. Training was completed in five phases, of which the completion of SAC Regulation 60-2 requirements was the number one priority. Other priorities, in order of their importance, included performance of drone target tests, completion of non-combat ready crew and instrument training, air refueling, and fighter-bomber intercept requirements. A total of 1132 hours had been set up for training crews, but due to the grounding of all 27th Wing aircraft from the 6th through the 27th of July, because of technical orders requiring compliance, only 166:10 hours were flown during the month.[19] Additional flying time was logged in non-combat ready crew and instrument training, which amounted to 138:30 hours all month.

The limited amount of flying completed during July was not enough to meet the provisions of Air Force Manual 173-20. In order that the requirement of that manual could be met, additional time was received by wing pilots in flying aircraft (T-33's) assigned to the base operations section.

By the end of the month, 76 pilots assigned to the wing had completed their transition training and were capable of flying the new F-84F's which were being flown to the wing direct from the factory.[20]

19/History, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, July 1954.
20/Ibid.

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On 20 July 1954 the 27th Wing lost another F-84F due to a fatal crash landing at Fairfax Field in Kansas City, Kansas. Shortly after take-off at 1025 hours, the pilot had trouble controlling the flight of his aircraft. He reported that the trouble was an electrical malfunction in the pitch trim feel actuator. This resulted in a full nose up position of the aircraft while flying. In order to correct the condition, the pilot decided to return to Fairfax Field, land, and have the difficulty corrected. In approaching the downwind leg of the landing pattern, his aircraft stalled, and crashed into the residential area surrounding the field, killing the pilot and three civilians. The primary cause of the accident was that the aircraft had stalled in mid-air and a contributing cause was the faulty flight control system. 21/

As a result of the continued grounding of aircraft assigned to the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, during August, a much needed amount of flying hours were lost. For the month, a total of 516:35 hours were flown by aircraft possessed. The total of non-combat ready crews, who were capable of deploying aircraft to other bases in the event of an emergency, dropped from 73 to 70 during August. The lack of flying time completed was the result of grounding aircraft for technical order compliances and the overload of maintenance work required, but not completed, on aircraft out of commission either for parts or maintenance.

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21/Ibid.

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A total of 29 "slab-tail" aircraft were grounded for compliance with existing technical orders. To comply with one technical order, a maintenance team from Republic Aviation Company arrived on 18 August 1954, but left Bergstrom after three aircraft had been modified for the Bendix Trophy Race. They did not return to finish their work until the end of the month, meanwhile all aircraft they were to work on had been grounded pending their return. Another team, of two men, conducted a research project to find out the condition of aircraft on arrival from the factory. They also checked into the reason for the extensive acceptance inspections required on new aircraft. Of the five inspected, only three passed acceptance inspections. The other two were sent to the materiel depot at Mobile, Alabama for correction of hydraulic and brake trouble. In addition to the above problems, 53 "split-tail" aircraft were in temporary storage awaiting fuel controls. An additional 31 aircraft of that type were available to the organization, five of which were grounded in compliance with an Eighth Air message.[22] A continuous problem with all assigned aircraft was hydraulic and mechanical difficulties and technical order compliances.[23]

A mobile training detachment school at the base used 3600 maintenance man-hours during their instruction periods, which detracted from the maintenance completed by wing mechanics during August. The course covered maintenance problems which could be expected on all F-84F aircraft. The course was a necessary requirement from a long range maintenance standpoint.

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22/Eighth Air Force Message MDMP4 44152, August 1954.
23/Monthly Analysis, 27th SFW, Aug 54.

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Flying time completed in September was almost one hundred hours less than that for the previous month. In September, 418:30 hours were completed in F-84F aircraft, while 2403 hours were scheduled. Maintenance work was split between preparing split-tail F-84F's for transfer and daily maintenance work on the slab-tails. All wing flying training was logged in slab-tain F-84F's with an average of 9.1 hours per aircraft. The average number of aircraft possessed by the wing had risen from 113 in July to 121 by September and flying time completed had increased from 220:10 hours in July to 418:30 in September. In July, as in September, a total of 93 aircraft were authorized the organization, while the number assigned had risen from 89 in July to 98 in September. Approximately half the maintenance work scheduled was completed during the month, with 418:30 hours spent on it. This was due to grounding of all aircraft for one week, plus required technical order compliances and a high aircraft out-of-commission-for-parts rate. A further cause of the low level of maintenance completed was due to the division of maintenance effort between split-tail and slab-tail aircraft. The former type were being prepared for shipment to depots for modification and further shipment to other organizations. Orders had been received for transferring 30 YJ F-84F aircraft to the Air National Guard, and of this number, 17 would be shipped to the depot for transfer inspections and re uired maintenance

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work, while 13 which was the balance were prepared for transfer to squadrons in the wing. The remaining 54 aircraft were prepared for a one-way flight to the depot for maintenance, modifications, and further assignment to other organizations. 24/

Recorded flying time during October, amounted to 954:30 hours and was far below that scheduled. This was due to the same factors which had existed for the past two months, namely, maintenance work which had been split between the split-tail and slab-tail models. The former were undergoing preparations for transfer and shipment to depots, and the latter were assigned to the wing. Because assigned aircraft were so new, there were many mechanical faults, common to all aircraft, and these resulted in very few aircraft being available for flying. An additional reason for the shortage of recorded flying time was due to maintenance work required on T-33 aircraft, which used to supplement flying in assigned F-84F's. Other problems, which had not been solved, were parts shortages and a lack of trained mechanic personnel. All these conditions and problems when added together resulted in very few flying hours being completed during the past three months. All maintenance during October was directed toward preparation of aircraft for operation "Run-In" and the gunnery training program at Foster Air Force Base. The average number of aircraft possessed by the wing

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24/Monthly Analysis, 27th SFW for Sept 54, dated 14 Oct 54.

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had dropped to 106 in October, while, at the same time, flying logged by wing pilots had more than doubled. Shortages of equipment were contributing factors in the poor maintenance picture. For example, the Shaw-Estes test stand was incomplete and due to this fact, wing maintenance capability was seriously affected. Adequate engine run-up, to check for oil leaks and engine roughness, could not be made following completed repair work. A shortage of portable air compressors continued to limit the maintenance picture. The requirement for compressors became more acute with the beginning of short sorties during gunnery training.25/

In addition to eight F-84F aircraft which were on temporary duty at Eglin Air Force Base for operation "Run-In", 15 more were on temporary duty at Foster Air Force Base taking part in a gunnery program. In order to prepare the 23 aircraft for these missions, they were lost to the organization for flying during an entire week before leaving Bergstrom. Even though the training was necessary and valuable to the organization, it placed such a heavy load on maintenance crews that it lowered the number of flying hours which could have been completed by wing pilots. To keep the eight aircraft at Eglin in commission, 30 experienced maintenance personnel and ten pilots were placed on TDY at that base. It was reported that experience gained on the project

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25/Monthly Analysis, 27th SFW for Oct 54, dated 15 Nov 54.

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at Eglin was well worth the effort put forth, even though it did not show up in the training hours completed by the wing. Since sorties flown were from 40 minutes to one hours' duration, in both gunnery and project "Run-In", flying time logged was low due to the amount of time all F-84F's were on the ground being serviced for the next mission.[26]

Because no increase in flying time was anticipated in the next few months, a policy was established limiting the number of pilots who flew assigned F-84F aircraft. Combat crew pilots would receive a minimum of 15 hours flying during any one month, and in, addition, each pilot would fly T-33 aircraft a total of five hours. During October, the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing had an average of 49.4 slab-tail aircraft available for flying, which resulted in an average of 19.3 flying hours per aircraft possessed. In addition to F-84F flying time, a total of 143:05 hours were flown in T-33 aircraft assigned to the base.[27]

A total of 884:55 hours were flown in F-84F aircraft assigned and available for flying during November. This figure indicated a favorable upward trend in flying hours completed, but while this trend indicated the wing was in better condition operationally, it also resulted in an exceptionally heavy workload on wing maintenance personnel. Increased flying resulted in more engine inspections and mechanical work required. All mechanical work had to be done by fewer mechanics than in the past due to a high rate of personnel turnover in that specialty field.[28]

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26/Ibid.
27/History, 27th SFW, Oct 54.
28/Monthly Analysis, 27th SFW for Nov, dated 13 Dec 54.

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Project "Run-In" was still in progress at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, with nine aircraft from the 27th Wing taking part in Phase II of the maneuver. The aircraft returned to Bergstrom on 5 November 1954 for inspections and required maintenance and further, to prepare for PhaseIII of the same project. By 15 November 1954, with the opening of Phase III, 15 additional aircraft were placed on temporary duty at Eglin to take part in the maneuver. This increased the number of aircraft from Bergstrom to a total of 24. The third phase consisted of dropping nine practice (T-63) bombs and MK-3 bombs. A practice mission was flown and conducted prior to the final one and in the same way as the actual mission. Missions were divided into three types: The first, at maximum radius of the aircraft assisted by air refueling, the second, at maximum radius of the aircraft from the staging base, and the third a low level penetration with the aid of air refueling. All aircraft were flown in elements of two with the lead aircraft carrying the bomb and the accompanying one acting as a chase aircraft. Two practice missions were flown from Bergstrom on 11 November 1954, and three more from Lake Charles Air Force Base, Louisiana, the staging base. One mission from Bergstrom was cancelled due to a landing gear malfunction but was re-scheduled for later participation in the exercise.

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Altogether, 58 sorties were scheduled and completed during the course of the exercise, which lasted from the 10th to the 13th of November. The entire program provided valuable data on weapons and, at the same time, gave pilots experience in a maneuver of that type.[29]

November saw the last of the "split-tail" aircraft being flown from Bergstrom to the depot at San Antonio. A total of 54 F-84F's were delivered to the depot during the month, and by the 16th of November, the last one took off from Bergstrom. The transfer of these aircraft, plus the additional workload imposed by project "Run-In" placed a heavy workload on wing maintenance personnel in November, but in future months, it was expected that the entire maintenance program could be concentrated on the production of flying time with remaining slab-tail aircraft.[30]

During December, the wing completed 1645 hours flying, of which 1299:30 hours were flown in F-84F's, 268:40 hours in T-33's and the balance of 357:50 hours in KB-29's. The flying figures for December were a third again as much as those reported for the previous month. The increase over the last month's total was the result of a great reduction in required maintenance on assigned aircraft. Commitments and requirements levied on the wing by higher headquarters had their effect, in the past, on maintenance output and in resultant flying figures. A further breakdown in flying figures indicated that 600 hours

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29/History, 27th SFW, Nov 54.
30/Ibid.

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were flown in meeting requirements of Air Force Regulation 60-2, and 672 hours were completed in training non-combat ready crews and staff pilots. An additional 22:45 hours were logged in ferrying aircraft to the depot and four and a quarter hours were recorded while flying new aircraft from the factory to Bergstrom.[31/]

506th Strategic Fighter Wing

The 506th Strategic Fighter Wing, located at Dow Air Force Base, Maine, reported that flying time completed in July was at a low level due to the fact that all assigned aircraft were grounded for a 25-day period during the month. All fighter aircraft were grounded from the 2nd through the 16th and again from the 17th through the 25th of July. During the 31-day period, none of the assigned 27 F-84F crews reached a combat ready status due to the long period of no flying in July. It was anticipated that the problem would be corrected by the following month. One reason for grounding all jet aircraft was the heavy rainfall which fell practically all month, in addition to 14 days of fog.[32/]

Unusual weather, during August, resulted in the loss of six days flying. A hurricane ran north along the coast causing high winds, rain, and much property damage.

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31/Monthly Analysis, 27th Strategic Fighter Wing, Comptroller, Dec 54.
32/History, 506th Strategic Fighter Wing, July 1954.

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A total of 79 F-84F aircraft were assigned to the wing in August. This was one more than for the previous month, when very little flying had been recorded. A total of 815:50 hours were flown by assigned crews, in F-84F's, during August. Of this figure, 168:30 hours were logged as instrument flying, and 51:15 hours were flown at night.[33/]

September weather showed no improvement over the previous two months. In fact, it was worse, since the second hurricane, named "Edna", hit the area and dropped almost six inches of rain. As an overall figure, 9.03 inches of rain fell during the month resulting in lower than average temperatures and greatly reduced visibility. Ceilings of less than 1500 feet were recorded by the weather station at Dow on 16 days, while visibility, during the days, was less than three miles.[34/] The primary goal of the wing, in the matter of maintenance, during September was preparation of all split-tail F-84F's for transfer to the depot for overhaul and eventual reassignment to other organizations. Since the wing had 49 split-tails and 13 slab-tails, much work was expended in preparation of all split-tails for the depot.[35/] The wing's main commitment, during September, was support of the National Aircraft Show, which took place between the 4th and 6th of the month.

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33/Breakdown of flying time for August, 506th SFW.
34/Weather Report for Sept, 506th SFW.
35/History, 506th SFW, Sept 54.

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The wing mission, as carried out in October, resulted in a very low figure for flying time. This was due to the wing's ferrying aircraft from the base to the depot. Until the last day of the month, many pilots had not completed their minimum flying hours. By the end of the month, all F-84F split-tails, with the exception of nine, had been flown from the base to the depot. By that time, 71 of the new slab-tails were assigned to the wing. As with other fighter wings in the command, the 506th had much trouble in getting their new aircraft through acceptance checks and into a ready-for-flying condition. The few aircraft in that category gave a good account of themselves since there were fewer mechanical difficulties reported and all available aircraft were flown to the maximum.[36/]

Of the 26 flying days scheduled in November, only eight and a quarter days flying were lost due to poor weather. The month was considered the best for flying completed in comparison with any month during the past half year. The wing completed all scheduled flying during the thirty-day period. In the past, a hinderance to completion of flight plans had been weather, either too much rain and fog or severe snow storms and attendant icy conditions. Transition training to the slab-tail model of the F-84F for all pilots, resulted in many restrictions on scheduled flying. The restrictions were not only from the local headquarters, but came from higher head uarters. These included a limit on the number of take-offs and landings. They were

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36/History, 506th SFW, Oct 54.

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imposed because of poor runways at Dow. Due to this fact, where take-offs and landings were controlled, completion of monthly flight schedules was impossible. During November, of the 1200 hours flying scheduled, 1109 were flown. By the end of the month, approximately 80 percent of assigned pilots had completed training requirements of Air Force Regulation 60-2, and by the end of the next month, it was expected that all pilots would have finished those requirements. In order to accomplish other training, Strategic Air Command headquarters issued a plan for the deployment of all fighter squadrons to southern bases during the winter months. In that way, the requirements of SAC Regulation 50-5 could be fulfilled and more training could be completed under favorable weather conditions. As a result of a visit between the fighter wing commander and the commander at Eighth Air Force, it was decided to deploy fighter crew elements, in groups, for a 75-day training period to Pinecastle Air Force Base, Florida. In November, preparations were started to send fighter aircraft from Dow to Pinecastle, in three groups. As one group completed its training, another would take its place and the original group would be rotated to the home base at Dow. In that way, more training could be completed by all elements of the wing, and the primary mission of the wing, at Dow, would still be carried out.[37]

37/History, 506th SFW, Nov 54.

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Due to long periods of poor weather at Dow, during December, very little flying was completed by wing pilots. A total of 19 days instrument flying weather prevailed, during which time snow fell for 18 days. Because of this so much snow was on the runways that only 762:05 hours of a programmed 900 hours of flying was completed. Most of the flying, during the month was logged at Pinecastle Air Force Base, rather than at Dow.[38]

Strategic Reconnaissance Activities

During the first half of 1954, a significant change occurred in this command's only strategic reconnaissance unit, the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance wing, Heavy. On 18 June 1954, the primary mission of that Wing became the attainment of a bombardment capability by 1 October 1954 which would justify the assignment of a primary bombardment mission in the Wing's current Emergency War Plan.[39] The secondary mission of reconnaissance was retained during the period but received a low priority with the various types of reconnaissance being maintained in a dormant status.[40]

The priorities for crew training were select, lead, combat ready and non-combat ready crews. Each crew was required to complete a total of 13 RBS (Radar Bomb Scoring) Radar Runs. Ten of the 13 runs were to be Radar Record Runs, five of which were to be flown at 35,000

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38/History, 506th SFW, Dec 54.
39/Msg, Comdr SAC to Comdr 8AF, DOTRFC 6206, 18 Jun 1954.
40/Ibid.

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feet or above. Six of the radar record runs were to be conducted utilizing direct methods of bombing and the remaining three RBS radar runs were to be accomplished using GPI (Ground Position Indicator) reference point techniques without the use of cross hair refinement on the target. Ten RBS visual record runs were to be accomplished at 25,000 feet or above. Each crew was also required to complete four practice bomb loadings. All aircraft commanders were required to complete bomb commanders school, and the radar operator and photo navigator were required to complete IFI-IFE school.[41]

During July, August and September, the Wing concentrated on bombardment training with very few strategic reconnaissance missions being flown. Commitments from higher headquarters were at a minimum, and no requirements were levied for USCM's.[42]

By the 10th of October, the Wing had 21 crews classified as combat ready in both reconnaissance and bombardment with an additional eight crews still in training. Effective 1 October 1954, the Wing was placed under Supplement IV, SAC Regulation 50-8, dated 23 September 1954, which outlined the proficiency requirements to support the reconnaissance and bombardment capability which the Wing had attained.

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41/ Ibid; Secret, "Progress Report #6, Integration of an Atomic Weapons capability into the RB-36 Units of Eighth Air Force (8AF Programming Plan 8-54), Hq 8AF, 14 Sep 1954. Exhibit #108.

42/ Ibid; Secret, "Progress Report #4, Integration of an Atomic Weapons Capability into the RB-36 Units of the Eighth Air Force (8AF Programming Plan 8-54)", Hq 8AF, 14 Jul 54. Exhibit #109. Secret, "Progress Report #5, Integration of an Atomic Weapons Capability into the RB-36 Units of the Eighth Air Force (8AF Programming Plan 8-54)", Hq 8AF, 13 Aug 54. Exhibit #110.

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Eleven EWP bombardment targets were assigned to the Wing for study. Five of these were actively assigned for strike. As the capability of the Wing increased the remainder were to be assumed.[43]

Having attained its bombardment capability, the Wing turned to more advanced types of training as exemplified by the following missions.

Operations Order 201-54

Operations Order 201-54 was published on 12 October 1954 directing a daylight radar bomber stream mission on 20 October 1954 against Little Rock, Arkansas; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Dallas, Texas to be scored by Radar Bomb Scoring procedures. The purpose of the mission was to give combat crews indoctrination and practice in bomber stream activity through a series of target complexes, indoctrinate aircraft commanders and pertinent crew members in mass take-off tactics and cell type flying tactics. The mission was deemed a success in all phases. Take-off was excellent with six aircraft, two RB-36 aircraft from each of the three tactical squadrons, taking off at the prescribed three minute intervals. The cell tactics were proven under Instrument Flight Rule conditions during the climb from 15,000 to 26,000 feet. The unconfirmed radar circular error average for all three targets was

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43/Secret, "Progress Report #7, Final Integration of an Atomic Weapons Capability into the RB-36 Units of Eighth Air Force (8AF Programming Plan 8-54)", Hq 8AF, 28 Oct 1954. Exhibit #111.

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1565 feet. The circular error average by site consisted of 1,660 feet for four runs on Little Rock; 842 feet for five runs on Oklahoma City; 2,630 feet for three runs on Dallas and 350 feet for one visual run on Dallas. Dissatisfaction with the scores received at Dallas was expressed by all three crews. Staff personnel had observed the runs and stated that the scores did not indicate the accuracy obtained. It was believed that Dallas being out for maintenance at take-off time could be the explanation for poor scoring. It was the unanimous opinion of the radar observers that the bomber stream type mission gave a more realistic bombardment training. 44/

The target studies and briefings presented by the radar prediction team were excellent and considered the most important type of target study. The supervised target study combined with adequate individual target study was a factor which improved the bombing results on this mission.

The following comments were made during a critique of the mission to enable crews to improve their next mission. It was pointed out that the lead aircraft of the formation should be very careful on all the turns, do not roll from one turn into another and use as shallow a bank as possible. The joining orbit should be flown in a racetrack

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44/Operations Order 201-54, 28th SRW, 12 Oct 54.

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pattern with two minute legs rather than in a circle. The lead aircraft should give the amount of any correction in degrees and the time that the correction will be made, such as: "25 degrees right in two minutes". Element leaders must remember to trail the lead element in turns.

Cell Tactics and Formation Flying Training

The first mission in cell tactics and formation flying training took place during the month of October 1954. The month of November experienced a series of missions for the purpose of indoctrinating aircraft commanders and pertinent crew members in mass take-off tactics, formation and cell type flying and afforded practice in bomber stream activities. A total of 15 crews particiapted in the missions and three crews out of the 15 had participated in two missions each. Each crew utilized a total of two flying hours per mission with the exception of Crews L-25, L-37 and N-36 which had completed four hours flying. The other crews which participated in cell tactics and formation flying during the month were crews S-02, S-08F, S-16F, S-19, S-23, L-12, L-50, R-41, R-55, N-42, N-44, and N-47. A total of 19 crews had received this indoctrination training by 30 November and seven lead and select crews were in need of this orientation.

With three directed missions being flown during the month, the

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first two efforts were considered highly satisfactory, and the third was marred by three aborts. Improved radar and visual bombing circular errors were attributed to the directed supervised target studies that were conducted inconjunction with these operations orders: The 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing's Operations Order 202-54, dated 2 November 1954; the 717th FRAG Order 1-54, dated 16 November 1954; and the 77th FRAG Order 1-54, dated 11 November 1954. Each of these three missions involved six aircraft each.

The mission as directed by the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing's Operations Order 202-54 was conducted on 10 November and employed mass takeoff, formation, cell type tactics and a target complex planning maneuver to form a bomber stream. Ten minute spacing was required and Radar Bomb Scoring attacks were conducted on targets of Kansas City, Omaha, and Denver. This was the second attempt at a bomb stream type mission to induce a variety of cell training. This mission varied from the first mission conducted in October in that several changes or headings were incorperated during the cell maneuvers. An attempt to climb to the required altitude while the cell was in "Indian File" formation was accomplished and this type of maneuver proved to be unsuccessful. This mission did prove that all climbs should be made in a broad flank or a semi-broad flank maneuver. The modified cell attack on six separate aim points within the Tulsa

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target complex proved highly successful, as did the bomber stream portion of the mission. Again the mass take-off was accomplished at three minute intervals without incident. For the second time it was proved that by proper pre-position of aircraft for run-up, taxi, and take-off procedures, that a mass take-off with the extreme minimum interval of three minutes could be accomplished successfully.45/

On 11 November the 77th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron published a FRAG order which set forth procedures for a mission conducted on 18 November. This mission varied from the two previous missions due to a radar project being incorporated and flown in a pattern of six aircraft. The mission employed mass take-off and cell procedures which were considered successful. The mission was similar to a standard bomber stream mission but after the bomber stream portion the crews resorted to Plan B or Bravo which did not include formation flying. This change was due to aborts and maintenance difficulties encountered and was considered unsuccessful. Target strikes were attempted against Okomogi Air Port and were scored by visual camera means. Ground Position Indicator (GPI) was used on this target.

On 24 November 1954, the 717th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron directed a mission which involved bomber stream and cell tactics and formation flying. Reversed procedures were utilized during the mission and aircraft took off at ten minute intervals. This mission was considered

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45/Operations Order 292-54, dtd 2 Nov 54, Hq 28th SRW.

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a success in as much as it proved two points. There had been some controversy as to whether or not the Wing was able to fly cell tactics above 30,000 feet and this mission proved that the Wing was capable of doing so. Another question which was answered was if the Wing was ready to accomplish cell tactics under the cover of darkness. This was the first mission that cell tactics were conducted during the night and it was considered a success.

BOMBARDMENT ACTIVITIES

11th Bombardment Wing, Heavy

The Strategic Air Command's bombardment units frequently deployed to overseas bases for short TDY's. Simulating as closely as possible actual war time conditions, these missions offered valuable training for both units and overseas bases. During this period, the 11th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, executed a mission to Nouasseur Air Base, French Morocco.

The Wing's ADVON departed Carswell on 25 and 26 June in eight C-124's, four personnel carriers departing on the 25th and four cargo carriers on the 26th. The four personnel carriers arrived at Nouasseur on the 28th, and three of the cargo aircraft arrived on the 29th. The other C-124 was delayed one day at Lajes for maintenance and arrived at Nouasseur on the 30th.[46/]

The tactical aircraft departed Carswell on 30 June and arrived

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46/Secret, "Final Mission Report of the 11th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, Hq 11th Bomb Wg, H, 6 Aug 1954, Sec I, in files Collection Branch, ID, Hq 8AF.

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at Nouasseur on 1 July, executing a USCM enroute. The USCM bombing target for 15 of the scheduled aircraft was Flores Island in the Azores, and for five aircraft was the Marrakech RBS site. In addition, all aircraft bombing Flores Island were scheduled for a radar run at Marrakech. The results of the mission were as follows: 20 aircraft airborne, 12 effective over the target and 11 completed the mission in accordance with the rules for a USCM. Fourteen of the twenty aircraft which were airborne landed at Nouasseur. One landed at Lajes, refueled and flew to Nouasseur. One of the crews which aborted the mission at Carswell took a ground spare to North Africa to complete the 10 aircraft and crews which were scheduled for 30 days TDY. Eleven of the 13 RBS runs were record. For all runs, the CEA was 1,409 feet and the CEP was 1,150 feet. For record runs only, the CEA was 1,261 feet and the CEP was 1,150 feet. The largest RBS bombing error was a record run for 2,325 feet.[47/]

The only major mission accomplished during the TDY period was a turn around mission flown during the early part of July. The mission was divided into two phases. Ten of the aircraft flew a training mission out of Nouasseur and returned to that base. This mission included formation flying, RBS and ECM work. The other six

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47/Ibid, Secs I and III.

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aircraft flew from Nouasseur to Carswell. Four of these aircraft completed the mission as planned, bombing Shreveport, Louisiana, before returning to Carswell. The ten aircraft and crews which remained at Nouasseur spent the remainder of the TDY on SAC Regulation 50-8 training. In addition to its normal training, the 11th Wing provided aircraft and instructor personnel to the 5th, 6th and 10th Aviation Field Depot Squadrons for special weapons training.[48]

The Wing reported that Nouasseur was capable of supporting its EWP requirements provided the TDY units bring the heavy augmentation listed in the current operations plans. The Wing further stated: "With the base support rendered and facilities available, operational accomplishments were higher per man hour of work expended than at Carswell".[49]

On 19 July, the first of the Wing's B-36's returned to Carswell carrying the Wing Commander. The remainder of the aircraft took off as scheduled on 29 July. One aircraft landed at Lajes with a feathered engine. All aircraft had landed at Carswell by 31 July. The support personnel and equipment had returned by 3 August 1954.[50]

7th Bomb Wing - TDY North Africa

The 7th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, was directed to send 10 B-36

48/Ibid, Secs I and III.
49/Ibid, Sec I.
50/Ibid, Sec I.

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aircraft on a strike mission to North Africa, utilizing tactics employed in the current Emergency War Plan. After striking the target - Marrakech RBS site, the aircraft were to land at Nouasseur Air Base, French Morocco for approximatley 48 hours where the necessary maintenance was to be performed preparatory to the return flight to Carswell. A second strike assignment was scheduled on the return trip against Jackson, Mississippi. Actually only nine of the B-36's were scheduled to execute the strike missions. The tenth bomber was charged with the responsibility of airlifting the control team. The operational requirements were routine in as much as the mission was designed to test the capability of Nouasseur Air Base to support the 7th Wing and to provide realistic training for the combat crews.[51]

The deployment began as scheduled at 1500Z, 5 August with the ADVON aircraft departing Carswell for Nouasseur. The plane flew the same route as that designated for the strike aircraft and arrived at Nouasseur at 1128Z, 6 August.[52] The second phase of the deployment began at 1052Z, 7 August when four C-124's of the 4th Strategic Support Squadron departed Carswell. These aircraft airlifted 172 support personnel in addition to flyaway kits and spare engines. They were in place at Nouasseur by 1200Z, 10 August.[53]

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51/Secret, Operations Order 129-54, Hq 7th Bomb Wg, H, 4 Aug 54, in History, 7th Bomb Wg, H, Aug 54, Ex. 2.
52/Secret, "Final Mission Report", 8AF Operations Order 129-54, Hq 7th Bomb Wg, H, n. d., SEC III. Exhibit #112.
53/Ibid, Secs I and III: "Final Mission Report on 8th Air Force Operations Order 129-54," Hq 4th SSS, 27 Aug 1954. Exhibit #113.

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The nine aircraft left Carswell in cells of five and four respectively at 1150Z and 1335Z on 10 August. The strike itself was a bomber stream formation with each aircraft making a Simulated Radar Bombing Attack on target "Alpha" at Marrakech. An "H" hour control time of 0400Z, 11 August for the first cell and 0630Z for the second cell was designated at Lajes, Azores. Each cell was formed as briefed and flew station keeping tactics to Casablanca Radio, where the aircraft broke into bombing stream formation, proceeded over the briefed route, bombed the designated DGZ's at Marrakech and landed at Nouasseur. All aircraft completed this portion of the mission as planned. Bombing results varied from poor to excellent.[54/]

The condition of the Seaweed maintenance equipment at Nouasseur was marginal. Only seven of the fifteen B-10 units located there were operational. Only one man was assigned to the maintenance of this equipment and the 7th Wing was compelled to accomplish the necessary maintenance to place these units in operation. The Seaweed maintenance stands were also below standard. The Wing believed that this condition was due to negligence on the part of previous TDY units at Nouasseur.[55/]

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54/Secret, "Final Mission Report", 8AF Operations Order 129-54, Hq 7th Bomb Wg, H, n. d., Secs I and III. Exhibit #112.
55/Ibid.,Sec IV, in History, 7th Bomb Wing, H, Aug 54, Ex. 25.

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Prior to the mission, personnel of the 7th Wing were informed of the political situation in French Morocco.[56] Due in part to the French defeat in Indo-China, the nationalistic forces in French Morocco had become extremely hostile toward the governing French. Violence between the two forces was prevalent throughout French Morocco, particularly Casablanca, a tourist attaction about 20 miles from Nouasseur. Much to the disappointment of the men from the 7th Wing, many of whom were making their first trip to that country, sightseeing and souvenir-buying tours to this city were extremely limited.[57]

By the end of the 13th of August, maintenance had been completed, pre-flights performed, discrepancies corrected, and the aircraft refueled preparatory to their return trip. The tactical aircraft left Nouasseur on 14 August. The first cell of five departed at 0935Z and the second cell of four left at 1352Z. Their mission was to make radar camera attacks against the Jackson, Mississippi, complex and return to Carswell. Eight aircraft flew the mission as briefed, with the first cell landing at Carswell commencing at 0918Z, 15 August, and the second cell commencing at 1241Z. Alternator difficulties and major oil leaks prompted the ninth aircraft to abort the mission before reaching the target and land at Hunter Air Force Base, Georgia. Within five hours, the trouble was corrected and the aircraft took off

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56/ Secret, Operations Order 129-54, Hq 7th Bomb Wg, H, 4 Aug 1954, in History, 7th Bomb Wing, H, Aug 54, Ex. 2.

57/ Air Force Times, 28 Aug 1954, Exhibit No. 114. As far as possible, combat crews and support personnel who had never been to French Morocco on a mission of this type were selected for participation in the maneuver. (Secret, "Final Mission Report", 8AF Operations Order 129-54, Hq 7th Bomb Wg, H, n. d., SEC I. Exhibit No. 112.) Certainly training purposes and not sightseeing reasons were responsible forthis policy.

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for Carswell. Bombing results for this portion of the mission were fair to excellent.[58]

The tenth B-36, carrying ADVON personnel, departed Nouasseur on 15 August, flying the same route as the strike aircraft, and arrived at Carswell on the 16th.[59] Three C-124 support aircraft also left Nouasseur on the 15th and had landed at Carswell by the 19th. One C-124 remained at Nouasseur because of mechanical difficulties until 19 August and arrived at Carswell on the 21st.[60]

95th Bombardment Wing's TDY to Lajes, Azores

The 95th Bombardment Wing, with their home station at Biggs Air Force Base, Texas, was ordered to send 10 B-36 aircraft on an overseas maneuver to Lajes in the Azores Islands and to return to their home station on completion of the mission.[61] Take-off was originally scheduled for 19 August 1954, but was postponed to the end of the month for reasons of flying safety. The overseas operation, as pointed out in the Operations Order, which outlined the plan for the trip, was to provide part of the striking force in the 95th Bombardment Wing with a realistic training mission and to familiarize personnel with operating conditions at Lajes Air Base.[62] In addition to the B-36's taking part in the operation, many services supported the bombers along the route and at their destination. The Military Air Transport

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58/Secret, "Final Mission Report", 8AF Ops Ord 129-54, Hq 7th BW, H, n. d., Sec IV, in Hist, 7th BW, H, Aug 54, Ex. 25; Ibid., SecIII. Exhibit # 112.
59/Ibid., Sec I.
60/Ibid., Sec III: "Statistical Report of Operational Missions, Aug 54," Hq 4th SSS, n. d., in Hist 4th SSS, Aug 54, Ex. 3.
61/Operations Order 141-54, Hq 95th Bomb Wg, H, 9 Aug 54.
62/Ibid.

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Service provided services and shop facilities at Lajes, Air Rescue Service (ARS) made rescue aircraft available along the route overseas, Second Air Force provided refueling services and facilities at Hunter Air Force Base, Georgia, and the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing provided one RB-36 to accompany the other B-36 aircraft. Finally, the 1st Strategic Support Squadron ordered five C-124's to support the operation by providing transportation for supplies and maintenance personnel.

On 27 August 1954, one C-124 left Biggs for Lajes with cargo and crew personnel, and was followed the next day by one B-36 and one more C-124. Cargo, crew members and passengers were included on both the B-36 and C-124 when they left Biggs on 28 August 1954. By 30 August, the main group of B-36 aircraft, nine in all, departed from Biggs Air Force Base on the way to Lajes, with cargo, crews, and 63 maintenance and other specialist personnel. By the time the operation had gotten underway, a total of 347 personnel, 10 B-36 aircraft, and five C-124's were enroute to the Azores. Of the 10 B-36D aircraft which left Biggs Air Force Base, six landed at Lajes and four were directed to an alternate field at Santa Maria Island in the Azores. This move was necessary due to the heavy cross-wind blowing at Lajes during the time for landing. All four re-directed aircraft, on landing, required extensive repairs and were taken care of by a crew of mechanics which had been flown in the C-124's especially for that purpose. 63/

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63/History, 95th BW, H, Sept 54.

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The assigned B-36 aircraft left Lajes, Azores, for the return to Biggs Air Force Base. On the way, they were instructed to carry out a simulated radar bombing at Eglin Air Force Base and again over the city of Jackson, Mississippi. The return route was from the Azores Islands, over Bermuda, around the souther tip of Florida and north to a theoretical bomb release point over Eglin, thence west to Jackson, Mississippi. The aircraft continued their flight from that point to their destination at Biggs Air Force Base.64/

The five C-124 aircraft that accompanied the B-36's on the Azores mission, began the return trip to the United States on 8 September 1954. Two additional C-124's had been sent to the Azores to help in bringing supplies and crews back and with the two additional C-124's, the total number taking part in the operation was increased to seven. On the return route, it was planned to leave Lajes and fly to Harmon Air Force Base, Newfoundland, from there to Lockbourne Air Force Base and finally to arrive at their home base, Biggs Air Force Base. Due to heavy winds at Harmon Air Force Base, five of the seven C-124's were delayed 24 hours in completing their mission and turned back to Lajes. They took off the following day, 9 September 1954, and arrived at Biggs on the 10th of September. The total weight of cargo and

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64/Ibid.

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passengers airlifted to Lajes amounted to 143,000 pounds, while on the return trip, that figure had increased 40,000 pounds to a total of 183,000 pounds.[65]

42nd Bombardment Wing's TDY to England

The 42nd Bombardment Wing, stationed at Limestone Air Force Base, Maine, scheduled 17 B-36 aircraft on a temporary duty mission to two Air Bases, Upper Heyford and Burtonwood, in England during September 1954.[66] The B-36 aircraft taking part in the exercise were scheduled to leave Limestone on 15 September 1954, but only 14 of the original 17 scheduled to leave, too off on time. Two of the remaining aircraft left the United States on the overseas flight less than an hour behind schedule and the last B-36 took off two hours and two minutes late. Over the simulated bombing target, thirteen aircraft were effective, while three aborted due to radar malfunctions and the final one had a pre-target abort. On the return trip to the United States, 15 of the 17 aircraft, flew a training mission as directed in the Operations Order. The two B-36's not taking part in the training mission, flew directly to Limestone because of minor malfunctions.[67]

On the TDY mission, the purpose of which was to simulate a combat mission, provide mobility training, and familiarize crews of the 42nd

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65/Final Mission Report for 8th Air Force Operations Order 141-54, 1st Strategic Support Squadron, 23 Sept 54. Exhibit #115.
66/Eighth Air Force Operations Order 135-54, Sept 54.
67/History, 42nd Bomb Wing, Sept 54.

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Bombardment Wing with operating conditions in the United Kingdom a total of eight C-124 aircraft were provided by the 1st Strategic Support Squadron. These aircraft were attached to the 42nd Bomb Wing to airlift 350 personnel and to move 143,034 pounds of cargo from Limestone to Burtonwood and Upper Heyford Air Bases in England.[68] The eight C-124 aircraft supplied from Biggs Air Force Base were ready for loading on 12 September 1954. Loading was delayed due to the fact that aircraft engines which were being taken on the move had been mounted on skids instead of dollies as was directed. Another factor delaying loading was an additional 6,000 pounds of cargo, which, at the last minute the commander of the movement decided should be taken to England. The mission, from the standpoint of the C-124 aircraft commanders was plagued by delay due to engine troubles and to unloading problems once the aircraft landed in England. It was recommended that future load planning be initiated prior to a move of this kind. There should have been a centralized control for loading and off-loading of the C-124's, and since the necessary equipment for loading and unloading aircraft was not available, it should be provided. As a final recommendation, the commander of the 1st Strategic Support Squadron advised that a loading officer, having a knowledge of C-124 capabilities, be appointed for a move of that size.[69]

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68/Final Mission Report, 1st Strategic Support Squadron, 29 Sept 54. Exhibit # 116.
69/Ibid.

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509th Bombardment Wing TDY - Guam

The 509th Wing was directed to deploy 45 B-50 bombers to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, for 90 days temporary duty as a replacement for the 97th Wing. The bombers were scheduled to leave Walker Air Force Base on 7, 8 and 9 July in equal increments of 15. They were to remain overnight at Hickam Air Force Base, refuel in the vicinity of Kwajalien and arrive at Andersen on 10, 11 and 12 July, local time. The Military Air Transport Service (MATS) was scheduled to carry the greater part of support personnel and equipment.[70]

The 508th Air Refueling Squadron, a Second Air Force unit located at Turner Air Force Base, Georgia, was directed to support the 509th Wing during the TDY. The 508th was scheduled to deploy 18 KB-29's to Kwajalien in order to refuel the B-50's on their final leg of deployment. As soon as, the main body of bombers had been refueled, the tankers were to proceed to Andersen for the remainder of the TDY.[71]

Prior to the main deployment, an advance part left Walker for Andersen on 14 June. The deployment of the bombers began as scheduled;

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70/Operations Order 27-54, Hq 509th Bomb Wg, M, 12 Jun 1954, in History, 509th Bomb Wing, M, June 1954, Ex. 13.

71/Ibid. While the 509th Wing was in Guam, the 509th Air Regueling Squadron was on the opposite side of the globe at Harmon Air Force Base, Newfoundland, supporting SAC units operating in or or through the NEAC area. (Confidential, Operations Order 132-54, Hq 509th Bomb Wg, M, 31 Jul 1954, in History, 509th BW, M, July 54, Ex. 13.)

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the aircraft began arriving at Andersen on 10 July and the bulk were in place by the 13th.[72]

Upon becoming operational, the first major project for the Wing was a Unit Simulated Combat Mission on 28 July.[73] The month of August was the first full month of operations during the TDY. Projected flying time for the month was 1,300 hours for B-50's and 500 hours for the tankers. Total flying time for the month was 1,323 hours for B-50's and 532 hours for the KB-29's.[74] It was during August that the Wing executed a simulated attack on air bases and docks in Japan. These missions were designed to saturate the target defenses and simulate a possible plan of attack of an aggressor force.[75]

During September, the second and last full month of operations during the TDY, a total of 1,500 flying hours for B-50's and 600 flying hours for KB-29's were planned. The flying accomplished was 1,476 hours for B-50's and 610 for tankers.[76] The operational highlight of the month was an ECM jamming attack mission flown against all radars on the west coast of Honshu and Kyushu, Japan. This mission was designed to cover high altitude intruder aircraft and to simulate a plan of attack by an enemy force operating from China or Siberia.[77]

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72/Secret, History, 509th BW, M, July 54, p. 15.
73/Secret, Ops Ord 102-54, Hq 509th BW, M, 21 Jul 54, in Hist, 509th BW, M, July 54, Ex. 11.
74/Secret, Hist, 509th BW, M, Aug 54, p. 13.
75/Secret, Ops Ord 104-54, Hq 509th BW, M, 5 Aug 54, in Hist, 509th BW, M, Aug 54, Ex. 13.
76/Secret, Hist, 509th BW, M, Sept 54, p. 19.
77/Secret, Ops Ord 105-54, Hq 509th BW, M, 1 Sept 54, in Hist, 509th BW, M, Sept 54, Ex. 6.

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The 509th Wing and the 508th Air Refueling Squadron completed their TDY assignment in the early part of October. The redeployment was scheduled in much the same manner as the deployment. The bombers were scheduled for two overnight stops, one at Kwajalien and one at Hickam and one at March.[78] The bombers departed Guam on 12, 13 and 14 October. They began to arrive at Walker on the 13th; the last had returned by the 22nd.[79]

STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND ANNUAL RECONNAISSANCE AND NAVIGATION COMPETITION

Two 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Heavy, crews made a clean sweep of top awards in the Third Annual Strategic Air Command Reconnaissance and Navigation Competition held at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington, 8-14 August 1954.

The 28th regained possession of the P. T. Cullen Award, top prize of the entire competition and retained possession of the Richard E. Ellsworth Award for the second straight year. The Cullen Award is for the highest photo-navigation phase score. The 28th won it at the first annual competition but lost it in 1953 to the Fifth Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Heavy, a Fifteenth Air Force unit. The Ellsworth Award went to the wing with the highest score index in aerial and radar photography and did not include navigation. The trophy, honoring the late Brigadier General Richard E. Ellsworth, former 28th Wing Commander, was won by the 28th Wing in 1953, the first year it was awarded.[80]

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78/ Secret, Ops Ord 33-54, Hq 509th BW, M, 23 Sept 54, in Hist, 509th BW, M, Sept 54, Ex. 7.
79/ History, 509th BW, M, Oct 54, p. 12
80/ Secret, History, 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, Heavy, Aug 54, Chap IV; Rapid City Journal, 15 Aug 54.

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STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND ANNUAL BOMBING AND NAVIGATION COMPETITION

The Strategic Air Command's Sixth Annual Bombing and Navigation Competition, which was designed to determine the relative capabilities of bombardment wings and crews and to promote competitive spirit within the entire command, was held during the period 23-29 August 1954. The Second Air Force was host for the competition and was responsible for its conduct except that: responsibility for operation aspects was vested in the 3908th Strategic Evaluation Group; responsibility for scoring the mission results was vested in the Competitive Scoring Committee; and responsibility for arbitration of controversial points and the determination of winners was vested in the Judging and Arbitration Committee.[81/]

Each of SAC's 23 operational bombardment wings selected two crews and aircraft for participation in the event.[82/] The B-47's staged from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, a Second Air Force installation; while the B-36 and B-50 aircraft staged from Walker Air Force Base, New Mexico, an Eighth Air Force base. Each crew was scheduled for three mission, each consisting of a night celestial

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81/Secret, "Report of Sixth Annual Bombing and Navigation Competition," Hq SAC, 22 Oct 54, p. 1, in files Hist Div, OI, Hq 8th AF.

82/One crew from the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing was entered as a result of its outstanding demonstration of bombing and navigation capability during SAC's Reconnaissance and Navigation Competition at Fairchild Air Force Base 8-14 August 1954. (Ibid, ppl-2.)

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navigation leg, two radar RBS runs against Omaha and Denver, one "free style" RBS run against Oklahoma City, and one visual bomb release on Camp Phillips Bombing Range.[83]

The mission was approximately 2,800 nautical miles (6 hours and 45 minutes) for the B-47's and 2,350 nautical miles (10 hours) for conventional aircraft. The two competing crews had one mission each in the first, middle and last protions of the bombing stream. Thus a crew from each wing flew every night, equalizing the effect of weather and light conditions.[84]

In the main areas of competition, no distinction was made between the three different types of aircraft. Each crew competed for individual honors in navigation, bombing and a combination of the two; each wing competed for honors in similar phases. The best overall wing in both navigation and bombing was to receive the coveted Fairchild Trophy.[85]

Provisions were also included for wing and crew competition within the three different calsses for participating aircraft. For example, i n the B-36 competition, two awards were to be made: one to the winning wing in bombing and navigation and one to the winning crew in bombing and navigation. Similar awards were reserved for B-47 and B-50 competition.[86]

The results of the competition showed that the overall proficiency

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83/Ibid., p. 2.
84/Ibid., pp. 2-3.
85/Official Rules, SAC Annual Bombing and Navigation Competition, Hq SAC, Jun 1954, in files Hist Div, OI, Hq 8th AF.
86/Ibid.

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of Strategic Air Command crews had improved substantially in some areas since the 1953 meet. The celestial navigation performed was the best that had ever been accomplished in a SAC meet. Superior results were obtained by all crews; however, the most noticeable improvement was made by B-47 crews.[87]

Radar bombing scores were considered excellent; however, with the exception of B-36 crews, the circular errors were slightly higher than in 1953. The B-47 scores were influenced considerably by 30 runs accomplished by six non-combat ready crews with a CEA of 2,747 feet and CEP of 2,550 feet.[88]

There was great improvement in "free style" bombing where circular errors were reduced by approximately one-half over those of 1953. It should be noted that inclement weather was an important factor in the 1953 meet whereas in the 1954 meet the weather was clear. There was a slight decrease in CEA and CEP for all types of equipment over the 1953 meet.[89]

Eighth Air Force units won or shared every trophy for which they were eligible. The most coveted prize, the Fairchild Trophy, was won by the 11th Bombardment Wing, Heavy. Second and third places in

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87/Secret, "Report of Sixth Annual Bombing and Navigation Competition", Hq SAC, 22 Oct 1954, pp. 5-8, in files Hist Div, OI, Hq 8th AF.
88/Ibid., pp. 9-10. All of the competing crews of the conventional wings were lead or select, while only 16 of the 30 participating B-47 crews were in those categories. Eight of the B-47 crews were combat ready and six were non-combat ready. (Ibid., p. 2.)
89/Ibid., pp. 11-12.

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this competition also went to Eighth Air Force Wings. Eighth Air Force Wings took the top five bombing spots with the winner being the 7th Bombardment Wing, Heavy. The Wing Navigation Trophy was won by the 11th Wing. The 11th Wing also won the Combined Navigation and Bombing Trophy. The Crew Bombing Trophy went to the 95th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, also an Eighth Air Force unit. It was only in the competition for the Crew Navigation Trophy that the Eighth Air Force failed to win undisputed first place. In this category, there was a two way tie between crews from the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, an Eighth Air Force unit, and the 92nd Bombardment Wing, Heavy, assigned to the Fifteenth Air Force.[90]

In the individaul class competition, based upon the type of aircraft, wings and crews from the Eighth Air Force won every event except in the B-47 calss for which they were ineligible.[91]

In no way detracting from the proficiency of the Eighth Air Force, certain factors which existed during the competition should be pointed out. The Fifteenth Air Force entered only one B-36 Wing; the Second Air Force none. The only B-50's competing were from the Eighth Air Force. The majority of the participants, 15, were B-47 units, relatively

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90/Ibid., pp. 13-15.

91/Ibid., pp. 13-15. Winners in the class competition were as follows: B-36 Class Wing Trophy - 11th Wing; B-36 Class Crew Trophy - Crew S-31, 11th Bomb Wing; B-47 Class Wing Trophy - 305th Medium Bombardment Wing; 97th Bombardment Wing, Medium - B-50 Class Wing Trophy; B-50 Class Crew Trophy - Crew S-62, 97th Wing. (Ibid., pp. 14-15.)

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new outfits belonging to the Second and Fifteenth Air Forces, whose aircraft still had some mechanical "bugs." The Eighth Air Force had no B-47 Wing in operation at this time.[92]

MAJOR AIRCRAFT ACCIDENTS

During the period 1 July through 31 December 1954, there were 22 major aircraft accidents recorded in the Eighth Air Force, six more than the previous six month period.[93] As a result of these accidents, 46 persons lost their lives, 29 more than during the first half of 1954.[94] The major accidents are described briefly below.

On 2 July 1954, 1st Lieutenant Dennis L. Drews of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing was fatally injured when his F-84F aircraft crashed two miles south of Dow Air Force Base one minute after take-off. The accident was attributed to failure of the fuel pump drive shaft.[95]

On 7 July 1954, a four ship flight of fighters departed Fairfax Field, Kansas City, Kansas, for Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma City, with 2nd Lieutenant John H. Kapeles in an F-84F belonging to the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing. Shortly after take-off, Lieutenant Kapeles experienced a flight control difficulty and decided to return to Fairfax. During the precautionary landing pattern, with a downwind leg requiring a steep turn to line up with the runway, the aircraft

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92/Ibid., pp. 1-20.
93/Secret, 8AF, History, Jan-Jun 1954, p. 205.
94/Ibid., p. 205.
95/Ltr, Hq 8AF Comdr to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1AF-F3 (SAC-1)," 6 Aug 1954, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

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stalled and crashed at an approximated 20 degree dive angle, fatally injuring the pilot. The accident was attributed to pilot failure.[96]

On 7 August 1954, nineteen miles southeast of Dow Air Force Base, 1st Lieutenant Richard C. Hafenrichter of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing experienced engine failure and stiffening of controls due to the loss of hydraulic pressure. He levelled the aircraft toward an uninhabited area and ejected safely. The pilot received no injuries but the aircraft was destroyed. Materiel failure was responsible for this accident.[97]

On 13 August 1954, Captain George D. French of the 506th Air Refueling Squadron and his crew departed Dow Air Force Base in a KB-29P on a long range navigational training mission and climbed to the cruising altitude of 16,000 feet. Approximately three and one-half hours later, the number two and three engines were feathered due to backfiring and high cylinder head temperatures. As the power to number one and four engines was increased smoke and flames were reported from both and the fire warning light came on for number four. Captain French gave the order to jump and all 16 crew members made an orderly bail out. The aircraft was destroyed upon impact with the ground. The cause of the accident was determined to be contaminated fuel, a materiel failure.[98]

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96/Ibid., Confidential, History, 27th SFW, July 1954, p. 7.
97/Secret, Hist, 506th SFW, Aug 54, p. 20; Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1)", 10 Sep 54, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.
98/Ibid., Secret, Hist, 506th SFW, Aug 54, p. 20.

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On 18 August 1954, the enine on an F-84F of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing exploded just as the pilot was receiving take-off clearance from the tower. The explosion punctured the main fuel line and fuel cell, allowing fuel to pour into the engine case. A fire developed which was controlled by the crash crew. The aircraft sustained severe fire and heat damage and was recommended for salvage. The pilot, Captain Robert H. Anderson, was not injured. Materiel failure caused this accident.[99/]

On 18 August 1954, 2nd Lieutenant Rober B. Conover of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing, made a "hot" landing in his F-84F, blew a tire, and skidded off the left side of the runway. Both main gears collapsed resulting in severe structural damage to the wings. The pilot was not injured and the aircraft was repairable. The accident was attributed to pilot error.[100/]

The worst B-36 crash in the history of that aircraft occurred on 27 August 1954 near Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota. The aircraft, an RB-36H of the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, was commanded by Lieutenant Wray P. Cotterill and carried in addition to the commander, 26 men. Colonel Wray and his crew left Ellsworth early

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99/Ibid., p. 21; Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1), 10 Sep 1954, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

100/Ibid; Chart, "Eighth Air Force Aircraft Accidents, August 1954," n. d., prep by and in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

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on the morning of 27 August 1954 for a 20 hour training mission. They returned to the vicinity of Ellsworth on the night of the 27th with about four hours of training time left on the mission. They planned to conduct ECM and pilot proficiency training over Ellsworth. Upon arrival over the station, the aircraft descended to 5,500 feet until the first of a series of GCA contacts was received. All indications proved that the co-pilot's directional gyro was inoperative during the series of GCA-PPI approaches conducted. There was no indication when the gyro became inoperative. First Lieutenant Roger Bumps made the first four approaches from the right seat. On the fourth appraoch, Lieutenant Bumps, first pilot, was advised by the GCA unit that the obstruction lights on the low range of hills, one and three-quarter miles northwest of runway 12 were out. Between the fourth and fifth approaches, GCA was notified that the aircraft was changing pilots. Colonel Cotterill took over the left seat and Lieutenant Bumps remained in the right seat and the fifth approach was completed. Lieutenant Bumps later reported that Colonel Cotterill had difficulty getting down to the altitude specified by GCA and was high at all call off points. On all approaches the gear was retracted, flaps set at 20 degrees, and the landing lights were extended.

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The pilot reported 145 miles per hour would be the speed of the final approaches. At this time, Captain Williams took over the right seat and Colonel Cotterill remained in the left seat. On the sixth approach to runway 12, the aircraft struck the ground 8,777 feet from the end of the runway and 224.8 feet right of the center line extended at the top of a bluff, 148 feet higher than the runway. Twenty-four of the crew members were killed instantly and the remaining three were rescued within minutes after the crash. Within five days, two of the crewmen died, increasing the death toll to 26 with 1st Lieutenant Roger W. Bumps as the sole survivor.[101]

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Board reported the following were probable causes of the accident: For some unknown reason, the pilot allowed the aircraft to fly into the ground; fatigue of the commander and co-pilot; allowable error in altimeter reading at the elevation of Ellsworth Air Force Base; pressure differential error measure on the north slope of the ridge northwest of the field, ranging from minus 70 to plus 70 feet; one-half mile linear error in the GCA range calibration of the Area Search Radar, equivalent to an altitude error of 150 feet low and that the radar set was not being used (due to malfunction) to monitor these low GCA-PPI approaches.[102]

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101/Ibid, Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1), 8 Oct 1954", in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF; Secret, History, 28th SRW, H, Sep 54, pp. 14-15.

102/Ibid., pp. 16-17.

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On the day following the crash at Ellsworth, a B-36 assigned to the 95th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, crashed about two miles south of Biggs Air Force Base. The pilot, Major L. D. Lanier was practicing GCA runs when on the last pull up he experienced a loss of power and declared an emergency. He requested permission to make an emergency landing at the ElPaso International Airport. Permission was granted but the men were unable to keep the plane in the air. It fell in an unpopulated area. One man was killed and 15 were injured. The cause factor was pilot error.[103]

On 22 September 1954, Captain John R. Kummer of the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing abandoned his F-84F after the engine failed and caught fire. He escaped without injury; however, his aircraft was completely destroyed.[104] Materiel failure accounted for the accident.

Another major accident occurred on 23 September 1954 when an F-84F piloted by Captain Donald D. Watt of the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing caught fire forcing the pilot to bail out. Captain Watt escaped without injury; however, the aircraft was completely destroyed.[105] This accident was caused by materiel failure.

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103/Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1)," 10 Sep 1954, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

104/Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1)," 8 Oct 1954, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

105/Ibid., Secret, History, 27th SFW, Sep 54, p. 6.

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On 6 October 1954, an RB-50G aircraft of the 97th Bombardment Wing, Medium, commanded by Major Paul E. Herrick, crashed four miles northeast of Willows, California, when the auto-pilot malfunctioned and threw the aircraft into a 90 degree bank and then into a spin from 15,000 feet altitude. A total of 17 men were aboard, including a student flight engineer, a radar technician and a normal crew of 15. Thirteen of the occupants were killed; the remaining four survived. Materiel failure accounted for this accident.[106]

The command's second accident of the month occurred on the 7th when 1st Lieutenant Richard C. Hafenrichter of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing attempted to land his F-84F at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas; due to excessive warpage of the brake discs, the left wheel locked upon landing. The pilot was unable to maintain directional control and the aircraft veered off the runway. There was no injury to the pilot.[107]

On 12 October 1954, a major accident occurred when an F-84F of the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing made a hard landing at Foster Air Force Base, Texas. Immediately upon touchdown the left landing gear sheared at the forward trunnion mount. The left wing dropped and the pilot attempted to keep the aircraft on the runway but it went out of control and ran off the left side. Investigation revealed

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106/Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1), 13 Nov 1954, in files Flying Safety Division OS, Hq 8AF.

107/Ibid., Secret, History, 506th SFW, Oct 54, p. 18.

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that the pivot point in the main spar had broken allowing the gear to fall free of the aircraft. The pilot, 1st Lieutenant John J. Tallitsch was not injured. The accident was attributed to pilot error. The Eighth Air Force reported: "In view of the many groundings of this aircraft due to materiel problems encountered, it has made it impossible for the units to produce sufficient flying time for their pilots to maintain desirable minimum individual proficiency."[108]

Another F-84F aircraft was involved in a major accident on 18 October when 1st Lieutenant Knox C. Lake of the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing was unable to lower his left gear while attempting to land at Bergstrom Air Force Base. The accident was caused when an "O" ring seal ruptured in the 300 pound balanced relief valve preventing the normal operation of the valve. The pilot chose to land on his belly rather than face the probability of landing with one gear in the up position. No injuries were suffered in the landing. Materiel failure was responsible.[109]

On 29 October 1954, 1st Lieutenant William C. Smith lost his life while attempting to land an F-84F of the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing at Bergstrom Air Force Base. The aircraft falmed out two miles south of the base and crash landed short of the runway. The pilot

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108/Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1), 13 Nov 1954, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

109/Ibid.

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ejected on impact and died 12 hours later. Materiel failure was responsible for this accident.[110]

A major accident involving two B-36's of the 6th Bombardment Wing, Heavy, occurred on 17 November at Walker Air Force Base. The wing tip of a taxiing B-36 struck the canopy of another B-36 which was parked in a designated taxi lane. The parked aircraft had been moved 26 feet forward of its prescribed parking position in order to permit maintenance personnel to work. It was not returned to its designated space when the work was completed. Negligence on the part of maintenance personnel was the primary reason for the accident; however, alertness on the part of the commander of the taxiing aircraft might have prevented the accident.[111] No fatalities resulted. In order to prevent a recurrence of such accidents, Headquarters Eighth Air Force informed all commanders that:[112]

(a) Adequate measures would be taken to insure that no aircraft is left out of the normal parking position and that no other equipment is left outside of its designated area after completion of required work.

(b) Instructions to the Airdrome Officer will include periodic checks of aircraft for proper parking.

Another major accident occurred on 26 November at Dow Air Force

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110/Chart, "Eighth Air Force Aircraft Accidents, October 1954," n. d., prep by and in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF; Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, ODS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1), 13 Nov 1954, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

111/Ibid., 13 Dec 1954; Secret, History, 6th Bomb Wg, H, Nov 1954, p. 11.

112/Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, FS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report", RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1), 11 Jan 1955, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

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Base when 1st Lieutenant Paul G. Stockman, assigned to the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing, experienced a complete loss of hydraulic pressure in his F-84F aircraft while airborne and was forced to return to his home base. After touchdown and on second application of brakes, the brake pedals deflected to maximum travel with no apparent braking action. The pilot made a go-around and called for the crash barrier to be erected. He touched down at approximately 170 knots, striking the barrier at 148 knots but the aircraft overrode the barrier and went off the end of the runway where it was destroyed. The pilot was not injured. Materiel failure was responsible.[113]

On 29 November 1954, a T-33 piloted by 1st Lieutenant John J. Gaudion of the 27th Strategic Fighter Wing was damaged when the left main gear failed to lower upon landing. The emergency system was utilized but to no avail. The landing was made with the right gear and nose down and was held under control until the left tip tank settled to the runway. The right gear was sheared and major damage resulted. The pilot was not injured. Materiel failure was responsible.[114]

A major F-84F accident occurred on 16 December. The aircraft was piloted by 1st Lieutenant Robert H. Rieck, who was assigned to

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113/Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, FS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1)", 13 Dec 1954, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

114/Ibid.

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the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing. The accident occurred near Melbourne Beach, Flowida, when the aircraft experienced complete hydraylic failure and became uncontrollable. It was suspected that simultaneous failure of the electric stabilator emergency occurred. The aircraft crashed six miles off shore. The pilot made a successful jump and was picked up within a few minutes by a helicopter.115/

On 19 December, an F-84F of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing suffered an explosion of the mechanical moisture separator located just inside the leading edge of the nose island air intake ducting. The explosion occurred without warning at 31,000 feet over Boston, Massachusetts. Captain Doyle W. Flowers, the pilot, aborted the mission and returned safely to Dow Air Force Base. The aircraft sustained extensive damage in the nose section.116/

The month's only fatalities occurred on the 20th when a B-25 of the 28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing crashed three miles south of Ellsworth Air Force Base. The aircraft was on a test flight and only three men were aboard. Thirteen minutes after take-off, Major Herbert Trost, the pilot, reported a runaway engine, declared an emergency, returned to the edge of the air base, and made a left turn into base leg for a landing. Suddenly, the aircraft went into

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115/Ltr, Hq 8AF to Comdr SAC, FS, "Aircraft Accident Follow-Up Report, RCS 1-AF-F3 (SAC-1), 11 Jan 1955, in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.

116/Ibid.

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a spin and crashed. All three crew members were killed.[117]

This command's last major accident occurred on 30 December. While participating in "Operations Sun Tan" at Pinecastle Air Force Base, Florida, an F-84F of the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing experienced generator failure. The pilot, Lieutenant Colonel Monroe S. Sams, aborted his mission with the intention of landing at Pinecastle. The aircraft crashed on the base while attempting an emergency landing after the engine flamed out. The pilot received major injuries.[118]

A summary of the aircraft accidents shows that of the 22 registered, 15 were jet fighters of the F-84F type, three were B-36's, one was a T-33, one was a B-25, one was a B-50 and one a B-29. Of the 46 fatalities recorded, 27 were killed in B-36's, 13 in a B-50, three in a B-25 and three in F-84F's. The accidents were due to materiel failure, pilot error or unknown causes. Materiel failure accounted for 64% of the accidents, pilot error was responsible for 32%, and unknown causes 4%. During the first six month of 1954, there was a total of 16 major accidents and 17 fatalities. Thus, during the last half of 1954, there was a 72% increase in major accidents and an increase of 171% in fatalities.

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117/Ibid; Chart, "Eighth Air Force Aircraft Accident, December 1954", n.d., prep by and in files Flying Safety Division, OS, Hq 8AF.
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Flying Time Logged in Primary Mission Aircraft

During the period covered between July and December 1954, primary mission aircraft of the Eighth Air Force flew a total of 100,602 hours in completion of missions ordered by this and higher headquarters. This figure was an increase of 3,779 hours over the total reported for the first six months of the year. Increases were noted mainly with Air Refueling Squadrons, which had been activated only a short time prior to the first of the year and had not received their total aircraft allotment. A decrease in the amount of flying time recorded in the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing during the last half of 1954 was accounted for because of a changeover in models of aircraft. Between getting the older model of jet aircraft ready for transfer to the depot and correcting mechanical difficulties found in newly manufactured aircraft, the amount of flying time completed dropped considerably. The same situation took place in the 506th Strategic Fighter Wing, based at Dow Air Force Base. Theri problems of maintenance and transfer of older aircraft to the depots were practically identical as those found in the 12th Strategic Fighter Wing. As a result, both wings reported low figures of completed flying from July to October. By October, the changeover had been completed an pilots again were logging normal amounts of flying completed in any one month. Flying

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recorded by all bombardment wings of the Eighth Air Force during the latter half of the year, varied only slightly with figures recorded during the latter half of the year. In some cases, a wing would have reported slightly more or less than in the first six months. In the case of the heavy bombardment wings, no model changeover had taken place to slow down flying accomplishments, consequently, the problems of heavy wings centered around maintenance and crew proficiency. The Air Refueling Squadrons, as mentioned previously, showed the greatest increases in flying completed during the six month period. In some cases, the improvement in flying reported was almost 200 percent greater than for the first half of the year, but this fact was understandable since some of the wings had just received or were about to receive their aircraft. Generally, total hours flown in primary mission aircraft throughout the Eighth Air Force, had increased since first reported in July 1951 to the ending date of this history from 71,046 hours to 100,602 hours by the end of 1954. The increase of time reported over the first half of the year was approximately four thousand hours, which was practically the time one heavy bombardment wing would have flown during this period. 119/

119/ Chart, "Total Flying Time (Primary Mission Aircraft) 8AF, Jul-Dec 54," prep by Hist Div, OI, Hq 8AF. Exhibit # 117.

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KEY PERSONNEL

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KEY PERSONNEL
HEADQUARTERS EIGHTH AIR FORCE
1 JULY - 31 DECEMBER 1954

COMMANDER	Major General J. B. Montgomery	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
DEPUTY COMMANDER	Vacant Major General J. C. Selser Jr.	1 Jul - 31 Aug 54 1 Sep - 31 Dec 54
CHIEF OF STAFF	Brigadier General Jack Roberts	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL	Colonel C. A. Dunn	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
DIRECTOR OF INTELLIGENCE	Colonel Rockly Triantafellu	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS	Colonel Richard Taylor (Actg) Colonel Harold E. Humfeld	1 Jul - 6 Jul 54 7 Jul - 31 Dec 54
DIRECTOR OF MATERIEL	Colonel W. E. Reddell	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
DIRECTOR OF PLANS	Colonel Jay P. Thomas	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
COMPTROLLER	Colonel Elkins Read Jr.	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
INSPECTOR GENERAL	Colonel L. W. Rohr	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
AIR SURGEON	Colonel A. A. Towner	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
SP ASST (PIO)	Lt Colonel W. R. Berkeley Major L. B. Laridon	1 Jul - 26 Dec 54 27 Dec - 31 Dec 54
JUDGE ADVOCATE	Lt Colonel H. W. Ford	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
AIR CHAPLIN	Lt Colonel F. S. Smith	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
ADJUTANT	Major Leo E. Goodman	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
HQ COMMANDANT	Major G. L. Hambleton	1 Jul - 31 Dec 54

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COMMANDERS - FIELD UNITS
1 JULY - 31 DECEMBER 1954

ALTUS

96th Air Base Group - Colonel D. L. Beard - 1 Jul - 3 October 1954
Colonel R. B. Templeman - 4 Oct - 31 Dec 1954
96th Bombardment Wing, M - Colonel Audrin R. Walker - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954

BERGSTROM

42d Air Division - Brigadier General C. T. Edwinson - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
808th Air Base Group - Colonel Vance E. Murphy - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
12th Strategic Fighter Wing - Colonel Howard G. Cook - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
27th Strategic Fighter Wing - Colonel D. J. M. Blakeslee - 1 Jul - 24 Jul 54
Colonel Richard N. Ellis - 25 Jul - 31 Dec 54

BIGGS

810th Air Division - Brigadier General J. M. Reynolds - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
810th Air Base Group - Colonel L. M. Thomas - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
95th Bombardment Wing, H - Colonel E. W. Scott - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
97th Bombardment Wing, M - Colonel K. K. Compton - 1 July 1954
Colonel W. W. Smith - 2 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
1st Strategic Support Squadron - Lt Colonel J. B. Howard - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 54

CARSWELL

19th Air Division - Brigadier General J. D. Ryan - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
824th Air Base Group - Colonel W. G. Booth - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
7th Bombardment Wing, H - Colonel C. A. Neely - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
11th Bombardment Wing, H - Colonel W. T. Seawell - 1 Jul - 6 Aug 1954
Colonel H. W. Moore - 7 Aug - 31 Dec 1954

DOW

506th Air Base Group - Colonel R. F. Layton - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
506th Bombardment Wing - Colonel R. O. Hunziker - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954

ELLSWORTH

28th Air Base Group - Colonel W. W. Herblin - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
28th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, H - Colonel Ariel W. Nielsen -
1 Jul - 31 December 1954
4th Strategic Support Squadron - Major W. F. Frazier - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 54
8th Reconnaissance Technical Squadron - Major G. E. Niedenfuehr -
1 Jul - 31 December 1954

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WALKER

47th Air Division - Brigadier General C. W. Schott - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
812th Air Base Group - Colonel Mason H. Grower Jr. - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
6th Bombardment Wing, H - Colonel W. K. Martin - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954
509th Bombardment Wing, M - Colonel W. R. Wood - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954

OTHER UNITS ASSIGNED 8 AF

GOOSE BAY

7th Aviation Depot Squadron - Major Malcolm C. Hamby - 1 Jul - 17 Oct 54
Lt Colonel Carl H. Ullstrom - 18 Oct - 31 Dec 1954

GRAY

4001st Air Base Squadron - Colonel W. F. Crowley - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954

MATAGORDA ISLAND

4004th Air Base Squadron - Lt Colonel W. F. Gardner - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954

SHEPPARD AIR FORCE BASE

321st Air Refueling Squadron - Lt Colonel Elwyn S. Baldwin - 1 Jul - 7 Nov 54
380th Air Refueling Squadron - Lt Colonel Elwyn S. Baldwin - 8 Nov - 31 Dec 1954

NEW BASE DEVELOPMENT

ABILENE - Lt Colonel Jack O. Brown - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954

PLATTSBURGH - Lt Colonel R. H. Hackford - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954

PORTSMOUTH - Lt Colonel A. A. Andreae - 1 Jul - 31 Dec 1954

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