

## 602<sup>nd</sup> TACTICAL AIR CONTROL WING



### MISSION

### LINEAGE

602<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Control Group constituted and activated, 11 Feb 1966  
Organized, 1 Mar 1966  
Redesignated 602<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Air Control Group, 15 Jun 1974  
Redesignated 602<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Air Control Wing, 1 Oct 1976  
Redesignated 602<sup>nd</sup> Air Control Wing, 1 Oct 1991  
Inactivated, 15 Jun 1992

### STATIONS

James Connelly AFB, Waco, TX, 1 Mar 1966  
Bergstrom AFB, TX, 18 Apr 1966-1 Sep 1982  
Davis Monthan AFB, AZ, 1 Sep 1982

### ASSIGNMENTS

Twelfth Air Force, 1 Mar 1966

### WEAPON SYSTEMS

O-1, 1967-1968  
CH-53, 1974  
O-2, 1974  
OV-10, 1974

### COMMANDERS

Col Amos Riha, 1 Mar 1966

Col Francis E. Binnell, 30 Aug 1968  
Col Harold H. Comstock, 1 Jun 1971  
Col Rufus Woody, 10 Aug 1971  
Col William M Shadel, 27 Jun 1973  
Col James Landers, 31 Mar 1975  
Col David H. Reiner  
Col Jerry W. Richards, 1980  
Col William E. Ardern  
Col Ronald M. Miller  
Col Calvin C. Anderson, 1 Aug 1983  
Col Robert H. Boles  
Col William Ardern, 5 Jun 1986  
Col David A. Sawyer, 1988

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

Grenada  
Panama  
Defense of Saudi Arabia  
Liberation of Kuwait

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award  
1 Jan 72-31 Dec 73  
18 May 1980-1 Jun 1980  
1 May 1984-30 Apr 1986  
1 May 1988-30 Apr 1990  
1 May 1990-30 Apr 1992

## **EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

Upon activation at Waco, Tex, on 1 Mar 1966, absorbed resources of the 4460th Tactical Control Group, discontinued the Same day. One squadron, the 602d Direct Air Support Squadron, was assigned at this time; it absorbed resources of the discontinued 4461st Direct Air Support Squadron. Between 15 Mar and 30 Apr 1966 the group and its squadron moved from

Waco to Bergstrom AFB, Tex.

Effective 1 Jul 1966 the group gained the 727th Tactical Control Squadron, then located at Myrtle Beach AFB, SC. This squadron moved to Bergstrom in Nov 1966

The mission of the group was to command, organize, equip, train, operate and administer its assigned and attached forces to provide control activities and associated communications elements in support of tactical air operations. The 602<sup>nd</sup> DASS provided a Direct Air Support Center (DASC) and Tactical Air Control Parties (TACPs). The 727th TCS provided a Tactical Air Control Center (TACC), a Control and Reporting Center (CRC), a Control and Reporting Post (CRT), and a Forward Air Control Post (FACP). The TACC was the top operational element in the tactical air control system. Under it came the CRC, and under the CRC was the CRP (capable of being a CRC in an emergency). The FACP was also directed by the CRC. The PASC was a mobile facility which worked directly with Army tactical operations centers to provide on-the-spot coordination between ground forces and tactical air elements, as well as immediate response to Ann-requests for tactical air support. The TACPs provided Forward Air Controllers FAC to Army combat elements and relayed requests for tactical air support from Army field units to the DASC.

On 1 Jul 1966 the group assumed advisory responsibility for a number of Air National Guard tactical control groups, squadrons and flights located over much of the US. By the close of 1966 the group's ANC advisory office was in full operation. Advisory support to ANG units was a continuing responsibility of the group over the years, and continuously increased in scope. By mid-1974 the 602d Group had advisory responsibility for five ANG tactical control and/or tactical air support groups and their numerous subordinate units scattered throughout the nation.

Participation in tactical exercises was another of the group's continuing responsibilities. The first exercise in which the group took part was Exercise Clover Leaf X, conducted at Ellington AFB, Tex, in Apr and May 1966. From then on, the 602d Group participated in a constant stream of tactical exercises throughout the nation, including Alaska, with all or a portion of its assigned resources. Between exercises the group conducted extensive training to maintain its proficiency to perform its mission.

The first Tactical Air Support Squadron to join the group was the 701st, on 5 Apr 1967. This squadron remained a part of the group until 25 Jul 1969 but was never manned, although it apparently had a commander for record purposes. Three O-1E, aircraft loaned to this squadron in Oct 1957 were flown by other group personnel until 11 Jul 1968, when they were returned to Eglin AFB, Fla.

Detachment 1 of the group was organised at Bergstrom AFB on 1 Jun 1968, earmarked to operate a DASC, but its manning became a problem. It was discontinued in Jul 1969.

Three units, the 4466th Tactical Air Control Support Squadron (which took over operation of the TACC), the 4468th Tactical Control Squadron, and the 4469th Tactical Control Squadron, joined the group on 25 Jun 1969. They were replaced on 15 Oct of that year by the 602d Tactical Air Control Support Squadron and the 607th and 609th Tactical Control Squadrons. The 602d TACS Squadron (which on 1 Jan 1971 was redesignated 602d Tactical Air Control Center Squadron) took over operation of the TACC, and on 24 Oct 1969 went under direct operational control of Twelfth Air Force. On 25 Jul 1969 the group lost the 602d Direct Air Support Squadron and the inoperational 701st Tactical Air Support Squadron. From then until Jun 1974 the group was not responsible for direct air support to Army units, but concentrated instead on tactical air control operations.

The 602d TACS (later, TACC) Squadron operated the Tactical Air Control Center, and was directly controlled by Twelfth Air Force for operational matters. The 727th Tactical Control Squadron operated a CRC, which could serve when necessary as a TACC. The 607th and 609th Tactical Control Squadrons operated CRTs, either of which had the capability of serving as a CRC. The 609th and 727th Squadrons each had one Tactical Control Flight assigned to them, while the 607th had two such flights.

A new Detachment 1, 602d TCG, was organized in California on 1 Oct 1972 to provide coordination for tactical air control system research and development.

In 1974 Twelfth Air Force acted to consolidate all of its tactical air control system capabilities within a single group. The 602d Group was redesignated 602d Tactical Air Control Group on 15 Jun 1974 and gained four squadrons from an inactivated group:

- 701st Tactical Air Support Squadron, Helicopter
- 702d Tactical Air Support Squadron
- 705th Tactical Air Support Squadron
- 712th Direct Air Support Squadron.

The 701st TASS, Helicopter, was equipped with CH-53 helicopters. The 702d TASS possessed O-2 aircraft when it joined the group, and gained OV-10s from the 705th TASS, which became inoperational on 21 Jun and was inactivated on 1 Jul 1974. With these additional units under its control, the 602d Group's mission of supporting tactical air operations was enlarged to a fully developed tactical air control system.

The 602nd formed as a Tactical Air Control Group in March, 1966. The Group was redesignated the 602nd Tactical Air Control Wing (TAIRCW) in October, 1976, flying OV-10s and moved to DM in September, 1982. The 23rd Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS) began receiving its OA-10s on October 1, 1987, followed by the 22nd Tactical Air Support Training Squadron (TASTS) who started receiving their OA-10s on June 15, 1988. The 602nd TAIRCW became the 602nd Air Control Wing on October 1, 1991. The 602nd's originally assigned squadrons (the 22 TASTS and the 23rd TASS) were inactivated and on November 1, 1991, replaced with the 333rd TFS and the 354th TFS from the 355th TFW. The 333rd and the 354th new squadrons moved back to the 355th Wing on May 1, 1992, and the 602nd ACW inactivated the next month. All of the 602nd

OA-10s were painted in European I camouflage. They carried NF tail codes (for Nail FAC the Vietnam War call sign of the 23rd TASS was NAIL).

The unit was created as the 602nd Tac Control Group at Bergstrom AFB in 1966, but with no aircraft assigned. The 602nd was redesignated a Tactical Air Control Group in June 1974, replacing the 71st Tactical Air Support Group. CH-53Cs and O-2As were operated. Designation changed to 602nd Tactical Air Control Wing in October 1976. The wing relocated to Davis-Monthan AFB in September 1982. The O-2As were retired in July 1980. One squadron of OV-10As was located at George AFB from May 1984 until June 1990, while a second squadron operated the Bronco from October 1988 until December 1990. OA-37Bs were assigned from May 1981 until March 1988, when the wing re-equipped with the OA-10A. The unit changed to 602nd Air Control Wing in September 1991. The 602nd was inactivated in April 1992, when the 355th FW assumed control of the frontline flying operations at Davis-Monthan AFB.

Det 1, Fort Hood, TX

Det 3, Fort Carson, CO

Det 5, Fort Ord, CA

Det 6, Fort Lewis, WA

Det 7, Fort Bliss, TX

Subordinate Units as of 1970:

602nd Tactical Air Control Support Squadron

607th Tactical Control Squadron

609th Tactical Control Squadron

727th Tactical Control Squadron

81st Tactical Control Flight

82nd Tactical Control Flight

83rd Tactical Control Flight

84th Tactical Control Flight

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Air Force Lineage and Honors

Created: 26 Aug 2011

Updated: 3 May 2020

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.