

56th Mission Support Group



Col Robert A. Sylvester

Lineage.

Established as 56th Airdrome Group on 28 July 1947.
Organized on 15 August 1947.¹
Discontinued on 1 August 1948.

Consolidated (1 October 1984) with the 56th Air Base Group, which was established on 14 June 1948.
Activated on 1 August 1948.
Inactivated on 6 February 1952.

Activated on 28 December 1960.²
Organized on 1 February 1961.³
Redesignated 56th Combat Support Group on 1 April 1963.
Discontinued, and inactivated, on 1 January 1964.⁴

Activated on 16 March 1967.
Organized on 8 April 1967.⁵

¹ GO-77, 20 August 1947

² AFOMO 536m, 28 December 1960

³ AFOMO 536m, 28 December 1960

⁴ AFOMO 90n, 16 September 1963 and SAC SO G-82, 25 September 1963

⁵ PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967

Redesignated 56th Support Group on 1 November 1991.⁶
Inactivated on 4 January 1994.⁷

Activated on 1 April 1994.⁸
Redesignated 56th Mission Support Group on 27 September 2002.⁹

Honors.

Campaign Streamers.

Vietnam

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II [1967-1968]
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III [1968]¹⁰
Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV [1968-1969]
Tet 1969 Counteroffensive [1969]
Vietnam Summer/Fall 1969 [1969]
Vietnam Winter/Spring 1970 [1969-1970]¹¹
Sanctuary Counteroffensive [1970]
Southwest Monsoon [1970]¹²
Commando Hunt V [1970-1971]¹³
Commando Hunt VI [1971]¹⁴
Commando Hunt VII [1971-1972]¹⁵
Vietnam Cease Fire [1972-1973]¹⁶

Decorations.

Presidential Unit Citations

Southeast Asia 1 November 1968-1 May 1969¹⁷
Southeast Asia 1 October 1969-30 April 1970¹⁸
Southeast Asia 1 April 1972-22 February 1973

⁶ TAC SO GB-16, 1 November 1991

⁷ ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

⁸ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

⁹ AETC SO G-02-20, 23 June 2002

¹⁰ PACAF SO G-184, 30 July 1969

¹¹ PACAF SO G-352, 14 June 1971

¹² PACAF SO GB-0019, 31 January 1974

¹³ PACAF SO GB-0022, 31 January 1974

¹⁴ PACAF SO GB-0025, 31 January 1974

¹⁵ PACAF SO GB-0027, 31 January 1974

¹⁶ PACAF SO GB-0187, 15 July 1974

¹⁷ DAF SO GB-552/1970

¹⁸ DAF SO GB-352, 14 June 1971

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

- 1 June 1970-31 May 1971 with Combat "V" Device¹⁹
- 1 December 1971-29 February 1972 with Combat "V" Device²⁰
- 23 February 1973-28 February 1974 with Combat "V" Device²¹
- 24 January 1975-2 May 1975 with Combat "V" Device²²
- 1 January 1977-1 January 1979²³
- 1 July 1980-31 May 1982²⁴
- 1 June 1984-31 May 1986²⁵
- 1 May 1987-30 April 1989²⁶
- 1 May 1989-30 April 1990²⁷
- 1 May 1990-30 April 1991²⁸
- 1 July 1994-30 June 1996²⁹
- 1 July 1996-30 June 1998³⁰
- 1 July 1998-30 June 2000³¹
- 1 July 2001-30 June 2003³²
- [1 July] 2003-30 June 2005³³
- 1 July 2005-30 June 2006³⁴
- 1 July 2006-30 June 2007³⁵
- 1 July 2007-30 June 2008³⁶
- 1 July 2008-30 June 2009³⁷

¹⁹ DAF SO GB-703, 9 November 1971

²⁰ DAF SO GB-553, 31 July 1973

²¹ DAF SO GB-600, 17 July 1975

²² USAF SO GB-623, 10 August 1976

²³ DAF SO GB-719, 30 November 1979

²⁴ DAF SO GB-117, 22 February 1983

²⁵ DAF SO GB-275/1987

²⁶ TAC SO GA-053, 29 August 1989

²⁷ TAC SO GA-048, 16 August 1990

²⁸ TAC SO GA-069, 26 September 1991

²⁹ AETC SO GA-18, 15 November 1996

³⁰ AETC SO GA-12, 9 November 1998

³¹ AETC SO GA-9, 8 December 2000

³² AETC SO GA-55, 29 April 2004

³³ AETC SO GA-0052, 22 June 2006

³⁴ AETC SO GA-045, 8 May 2007

³⁵ AETC SO G-054, 28 February 2008

³⁶ AETC SO G-071, 3 April 2009

³⁷ AETC SO G-025, 11 March 2010

Decorations. (Continued)

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (Continued)

1 July 2009-30 June 2010³⁸
1 July 2010-30 June 2011³⁹
1 July 2011-30 June 2012⁴⁰
1 July 2012-30 June 2013⁴¹
1 July 2013-30 June 2014⁴²
1 July 2014-30 June 2015⁴³
1 July 2015-30 June 2016⁴⁴

Special Honors.

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm, 8 April 1967-28 January 1973

PAST AND PRESENT UNITS ASSIGNED

Currently Assigned Units	Time Frame Assigned
<i>Squadrons</i>	
56th Civil Engineer Squadron	1 April 1994. ⁴⁵
56th Communications Squadron	1 April 1994 ⁴⁶
56th Contracting Squadron	1 April 1994 ⁴⁷
56th Logistics Readiness Squadron	1 August 2002 ⁴⁸
56th Services Squadron	
later, Force Support Squadron	1 April 1994 ⁴⁹
56th Security Police Squadron	
later, 56th Security Forces Squadron	1 April 1994. ⁵⁰

³⁸ AETC SO G-086, 9 May 2011

³⁹ AETC SO G-171, 17 April 2012

⁴⁰ AETC SO G-036, 1 March 2013

⁴¹ AETC SO G-017, 1 February 2014

⁴² AETC SO G-029, 8 January 2015

⁴³ AETC SO G-006, 14 October 2016

⁴⁴ AETC SO G-022, 22 March 2017

⁴⁵ USAF/CE MSG 041900Z February 1994 and AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

⁴⁶ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

⁴⁷ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

⁴⁸ AETC SO G-02-20, 23 June 2002

⁴⁹ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994; AETC SO G-09-9, 26 February 2009

⁵⁰ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

Previously Assigned Units	Time Frame Assigned
<i>Squadrons</i> Squadron "A," 56th Airdrome Group 56th Communications Squadron	15 August 1947-1 August 1948 1 August 1948-6 February 1952; 1 October 1991 ⁵¹ -4 January 1994. ⁵²
Squadron "B," 56th Airdrome Group 56th Air Police Squadron, Fighter, Jet later, 56th Air Police Squadron later, 56th Security Police Squadron	15 August 1947-1 August 1948 1 August 1948-6 February 1952; 15 February 1963-1 January 1964 ⁵³ 8 April 1967-4 January 1994 ⁵⁴
Squadron "C," 56th Airdrome Group 56th Installations Squadron, Fighter, Jet later, 56th Installations Squadron, later, 56th Civil Engineering Squadron	15 August 1947-1 August 1948 1 August 1948-6 February 1952; 1 February 1961 ⁵⁵ -1 January 1964 ⁵⁶ ; 8 April 1967 ⁵⁷ -4 January 1994. ⁵⁸
Squadron "D," 56th Airdrome Group 56th Food Service Squadron, Fighter, Jet later 56th Food Service Squadron 56th Services Squadron later, 56th Morale, Welfare, Recreation and Services Squadron	15 August 1947-1 August 1948 1 August 1948-6 February 1952 8 April 1967 ⁵⁹ -28 February 1975; 30 June 1975 ⁶⁰ -4 January 1994 ⁶¹

⁵¹ TAC SO GB-16, 1 November 1991

⁵² ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

⁵³ AFOMO 90n, 16 September 1963 and SAC SO G-82, 25 September 1963

⁵⁴ PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967; ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

⁵⁵ ADC GO #192, 28 December 1960

⁵⁶ AFOMO 90n, 16 September 1963 and SAC SO G-82, 25 September 1963

⁵⁷ PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967

⁵⁸ ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

⁵⁹ PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967

⁶⁰ TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975

⁶¹ ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

Previously Assigned Units	Time Frame Assigned
<i>Squadrons (Continued)</i>	
Squadron "E," 56th Airdrome Group 56th Motor Vehicle Squadron, Fighter, Jet later, 56th Motor Vehicle Squadron later, 56th Transportation Squadron	15 August 1947-1 August 1948 1 August 1948-6 February 1952 1 February 1961 ⁶² -1 April 1963 8 April 1967 ⁶³ -30 June 1975 ⁶⁴
Squadron "F," 56th Airdrome Group	March 1948-Unknown
4th Finance Disbursing Unit, Fighter, Jet 56th Air Base Squadron 56th Base Service Squadron, Fighter, Jet, later, 56th Mission Support Squadron	1 August 1948-1 November 1949 1 February 1961 ⁶⁵ -1 January 1964. ⁶⁶ 1 August 1948-13 March 1950; 15 August 1988-4 January 1994 ⁶⁷ ; 1 April 1994 ⁶⁸ -26 February 2009.
56th Combat Support Squadron (Avon Park, Florida) later, 56th Support Squadron (Avon Park, Florida)	30 June 1975-4 January 1994. ⁶⁹
56th Comptroller Squadron 56th Headquarters Squadron 56th Morale, Welfare and Recreation Squadron	[15 August 1988]-1 November 1991. 1 February 1961 ⁷⁰ -Unknown 1 October 1991 ⁷¹ -4 September 1992 ⁷²
56th Supply Squadron	1 February 1961 ⁷³ -1 April 1963 ⁷⁴ ;

⁶² AFOMO 536m, 28 December 1960

⁶³ PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967

⁶⁴ TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975

⁶⁵ ADC GO #192, 28 December 1960

⁶⁶ AFOMO 90n, 16 September 1963 and SAC SO G-82, 25 September 1963

⁶⁷ ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

⁶⁸ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994; AETC SO G-09-9, 26 February 2009

⁶⁹ TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975; ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

⁷⁰ AFOMO 536m, 28 December 1960

⁷¹ TAC SO GB-001, 1 October 1991

⁷² ACC SO GB-124, 21 August 1992

⁷³ AFOMO 536m, 28 December 1960

⁷⁴ SAC SO G-82, 25 September 1963

Previously Assigned Units
Squadrons (Continued)

56th Support Squadron
32d Crash-Rescue Boat Flight

Time Frame Assigned

1 April 1994-1 October 1994⁷⁵
attached 14 July 1951-Unknown⁷⁶

Assignments. 56th Fighter Wing on 15 August 1947-1 August 1948. 56th Fighter (later, 56th Fighter-Interceptor) Wing on 1 August 1948-6 February 1952. 56th Fighter Wing (Air Defense), 1 February 1961⁷⁷-1 January 1964.⁷⁸ 56th Air Commando (later, 56th Special Operations, 56th Tactical Fighter, 56th Tactical Training, 56th Fighter) Wing, 8 April 1967⁷⁹ - 4 January 1994.⁸⁰ 56th Fighter Wing 1 April 1994-.⁸¹

Stations. Selfridge Field (later, Air Force Base), Michigan, 15 August 1947-1 August 1948; 1 August 1948-6 February 1952. K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base, Michigan, 1 February 1961⁸²-1 January 1964.⁸³ Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, 8 April 1967-30 June 1975⁸⁴; MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, 30 June 1975⁸⁵-4 January 1994.⁸⁶ Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, 1 April 1994-.⁸⁷

Aircraft. None.

⁷⁵ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994; AETC SO G-49, 30 June 1994

⁷⁶ 56 FIW GO 22, 14 July 1951

⁷⁷ AFOMO 536m, 28 December 1960

⁷⁸ AFOMO 90n, 16 September 1963 and SAC SO G-82, 25 September 1963

⁷⁹ TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975

⁸⁰ ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

⁸¹ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

⁸² AFOMO 536m, 28 December 1960

⁸³ AFOMO 90n, 16 September 1963 and SAC SO G-82, 25 September 1963

⁸⁴ TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975

⁸⁵ TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975

⁸⁶ ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

⁸⁷ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

Emblem. [Group uses wing emblem with group designation in the scroll.] Emblem approved 16 May 2013.

Blazon. Tenné, a chevron Azure fimbriated Or, charged with two lightning bolts conjoined chevronwise of the third, all within a diminished bordure of the like.

Attached below the shield, a White scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed “56TH MISSION SUPPORT GROUP” in Blue letters.

Motto. None.

Significance. Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The emblem is symbolic of the Wing. The heraldic chevron represents support and signifies the Wing’s support of the Nation’s quest for peace. The lightning bolt represents the speed and aggressiveness with which the unit performs. The colors represent the Air Corps and commemorate the service of the 56th Fighter Group, whose honors and history the Wing inherits.

Commanders.

56th Airdrome Group [15 August 1947-1 August 1948]

Maj James R. Woods	c. 15 August 1947	
Lt Col Irwin H. Dregne	bef 30 September 1947	[Ace]
Lt Col David T. McKnight	bef 30 June 1948-1 August 1948	

**56th Air Base Group [1 August 1948-6 February 1952;
1 February 1961-1 April 1963]**

Lt Col David T. McKnight	1 August 1948
Lt Col Burton E. McKenzie	bef 30 June 1949
Lt Col Robert N. Lacy	bef 31 December 1949
Maj Roy L. Bowlin	bef 1 January 1950
Lt Col William W. Ingehut	bef 1 September 1950
Lt Col George J. Ola	21 December 1950
Col Graeme S. Bond	bef 31 March 1951
Col Blake C. Miller	27 August 1951-Unknown
Unknown	1 February 1961
Col Daniel P. McLean	bef 28 March 1963

Commanders. (Continued)

**56th Combat Support Group [1 April 1963-1 January 1964;
8 April 1967-1 November 1991**

Col Daniel P. McLean	1 April 1963 - Unknown
Col Frank A. Sheehan	8 April 1967 ⁸⁸
Lt Col Lewis C. Hughes	20 May 1967 ⁸⁹
Col Benjamin F. De Haan	2 July 1967 ⁹⁰
Col Thomas R. Owens	bef 18 December 1968
Col Thomas B. Carter	13 June 1969
Col Thomas L Carroll	1 June 1970
Col James D. Pearson	bef 30 September 1971
Lt Col William E. Flanigin	bef 18 July 1972
Col Edward H. Aune	18 July 1972
Col John R. Boyd	bef 31 December 1972
Col John.L. Webb	1 April 1973
Col Robert G. Rogers	1 April 1974
Col Howard T. Nuckels	15 March 1975
Col David G. Harston	bef 25 August 1975
Col William E. Adams	25 August 1975
Unknown	Unknown
Col George E. Wehling	1 March 1979
Col Milton A. Steadman	27 February 1981
Col Edward A. Zompa	11 May 1984 ⁹¹
Col David L. Wagner	14 Nov 1984
Col Jack P. Cross	17 June 1987
Col Robert J. Smith	18 April 1988 ⁹²
Col Jack P. Cross	bef 7 July 1988
Col Robert J. Smith	7 July 1988 ⁹³
Col George G. Giddens	25 July 1989 ⁹⁴
Col Stig Egede Nissen	August 1991-1 November 1991.

⁸⁸ 56 CSG SO G-05, 8 April 1967

⁸⁹ 56 CSG SO G-07, 20 May 1967

⁹⁰ 56 CSG SO G-10, 2 July 1967

⁹¹ 9 AF SO G-13, 9 May 1984

⁹² 56 CSG SO G-48, 19 April 1988

⁹³ 56 CSG SO G-63, 8 July 1988

⁹⁴ 56 MSS SO G-034, 24 July 1989

Commanders. (Continued)

**56th Support Group [1 November 1991-4 January 1994;
1 April 1994-27 September 2002]**

Col Stig Egede Nissen	1 November 1991	
Col Charles T. Ohlinger, III	August 1992	
Col Larry A. Timmerman	18 August 1993-4 January 1994	
Col Samuel E Young, Jr.	1 April 1994 ⁹⁵	
Col Elizabeth A. Harrell	17 October 1994 ⁹⁶	[Major General]
Vacant	13 June 1995	
Col Rodney E. Gibson	9 August 1995 ⁹⁷	
Lt Col (later, Col) Norman L. Watson	7 August 1996 ⁹⁸	
Lt Col (later, Col) Michael Hazen	15 June 1998 ⁹⁹	
Col Robert L. Worley, Jr.	18 May 2000 ¹⁰⁰ -27 September 2002.	

56th Mission Support Group [27 September 2002-.]

Col Michael J. Maloney	27 September 2002 ¹⁰¹	
Col Keith E. Smith	7 June 2004 ¹⁰²	
Col Ronald J. Mozzillo	10 July 2006 ¹⁰³	
Col Andre K. Curry	2 May 2008 ¹⁰⁴	
Col Philippe R. Darcy	18 June 2010 ¹⁰⁵	
Col Nathan C. Mooney	9 July 2012 ¹⁰⁶	
Col James K. Kossler	24 July 2014 ¹⁰⁷	
Col Robert A. Sylvester	24 July 2014-Present ¹⁰⁸	

⁹⁵ [832 MSS SO SO-G-8, 27 December 1990 and 58 MSS SO SO-G-1, 1 October 1991]

⁹⁶ 56 FW SO SO-GR-001, 21 October 1994

⁹⁷ 56 FW SO SO-GR-004, 24 July 1995

⁹⁸ 56 FW SO SO-GR-001, 31 July 1996

⁹⁹ 56 FS SO SO-GR-001, 28 May 1998

¹⁰⁰ 56 FW SO SO-GR-003, 17 May 2000

¹⁰¹ 56 MSG SO MSG G-2, 24 September 2002

¹⁰² 56 MSS SO 56 MSS G-2 2004, 3 June 2004

¹⁰³ 56 MSG SO MSG-06-05, 30 June 2006

¹⁰⁴ 56 MSS SO G-015, 2 May 2008

¹⁰⁵ 56 MSG SO G-011, 9 June 2010

¹⁰⁶ 56 FW SO G-021, 9 July 2012

¹⁰⁷ 56 MSG GS-29-14, 28 July 2014

¹⁰⁸ 56 MSG G-20-16, 6 July 2016

Narrative.

Organized as the 56th Airdrome Group at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan, on 15 August 1947, the same day as the 56th Fighter Wing. The 56th Mission Support Group is one of the oldest organizations in the wing. The group supported the wing mission in Strategic Air Command's exercises, operations, and training programs. In July 1948, the group provided support to the first west-to-east jet fighter transatlantic crossing along the northern air in reaction to the Soviet Blockade of Berlin, Germany. On 1 August 1948, the group was discontinued and replaced by the 56th Air Base Group. The two groups were later consolidated. Starting in December 1948, the group supported the wing's mission of air defense for a large portion of the northeastern United States. On 6 February 1952, the 56th Air Base Group inactivated, along with the 56th Fighter Wing.

Reactivated with the wing at K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base, Michigan, on 1 February 1961, the group again supported the air defense mission in the Michigan area, and the dispersal of the 62d Fighter Squadron during the Cuban Missile Crisis. On 1 April 1963, the group was redesignated as the 56th Combat Support Group. On 1 January 1964, the group was discontinued and inactivated.

On 8 April 1967, the group reactivated with the wing at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand. In the first year, the wing/base doubled in size. The group supported the wing's mission of employing a wide variety of aircraft to meet specialized missions. Those missions included interdiction, psychological warfare, close air support, search and rescue, forward air control, training Thai and Laotian air forces, and helicopter escort for clandestine insertion and extraction of personnel in Laos and North Vietnam. The group supported the wing's close air support missions during the sieges of Khe Sanh, February-April 1968, and Lima Site 85, January-March 1968. The group support wing elements that participated in the Son Tay Prison raid on 21 November 1970 and continued combat in Vietnam until mid-January 1973, in Laos until 22 February 1973, and in Cambodia until 15 August 1973. The group assisted in the evacuations of Phnom Penh on 11 April 1975 and Saigon, 29-30 April 1975. The group supported forward air control and helicopter insertion/extraction mission during the SS Mayaguez rescue operation on 15 May 1975. Due to its efforts in Thailand, the group was awarded three Presidential Unit Citations, 12 campaign streamers, 4 Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V" Device, and a Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm.

On 30 June 1975, the group moved with the wing to MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. There the group operated the base and the nearby Avon Park Range. It supported the wing's mission to train pilots and weapon system officers learn to fly the F-4D/E and later pilots to fly F-16s. The group provided logistic support to US Central Command beginning in 1983 and to US Special Operations Command after 1986. Between August 1990 and March 1991, the group provided support personnel and equipment to units in Southwest Asia. On 1 November 1991, the group was redesignated as the 56th Support Group. On 4 January 1994, along with all of the other groups in the wing, the 56th Support Group inactivated.

On 1 April 1994, the group reactivated at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. On 27 September 2002, the group was redesignated as the 56th Mission Support Group. While at Luke Air Force Base, the group continued to support the wing's mission to train F-16 pilots and deploy mission ready

Airmen. Most recently the group supported the activation of the 56th Fighter Wing's 54th Fighter Group at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, on 1 March 2014, and the start of training F-35 pilots. Since 1970, the group earned 26 Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, four of which were with Combat "V" Device.

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Updated by Rick Griset