

## 56th Mission Support Group



Col James K. Kossler

### **Lineage.**

Established as 56th Airdrome Group on 28 July 1947.

Organized on 15 August 1947.

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.<sup>1</sup>

Organized on 1 February 1961.

Redesignated 56th Combat Support Group on 1 April 1963.

Discontinued, and inactivated, on 1 January 1964.<sup>2</sup>

Activated on 16 March 1967.

Organized on 8 April 1967.<sup>3</sup>

Redesignated 56th Support Group on 1 November 1991.

Inactivated on 4 January 1994.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> AFOMO 536m, 28 December 1960

<sup>2</sup> AFOMO 90n, 16 September 1963

<sup>3</sup> PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967

<sup>4</sup> ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

**Lineage. (Continued)**

Activated on 1 April 1994.<sup>5</sup>

Redesignated 56th Mission Support Group on 27 September 2002.<sup>6</sup>

**Honors.*****Campaign Streamers.*****Vietnam**

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase II [1967-1968]

Vietnam Air/Ground [1968]

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase III [1968]<sup>7</sup>

Vietnam Air Offensive, Phase IV [1968-1969]

Tet 1969 Counteroffensive [1969]

Vietnam Summer/Fall 1969 [1969]

Vietnam Winter/Spring 1970 [1969-1970]<sup>8</sup>

Sanctuary Counteroffensive [1970]

Southwest Monsoon [1970]<sup>9</sup>

Commando Hunt V [1970-1971]<sup>10</sup>

Commando Hunt VI [1971]<sup>11</sup>

Commando Hunt VII [1971-1972]<sup>12</sup>

Vietnam Cease Fire [1972-1973]<sup>13</sup>

**Decorations.****Presidential Unit Citations**

Southeast Asia 1 November 1968-1 May 1969<sup>14</sup>

Southeast Asia 1 October 1969-30 April 1970<sup>15</sup>

Southeast Asia 1 April 1972-22 February 1973

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<sup>5</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

<sup>6</sup> AETC SO G-02-20, 23 June 2002

<sup>7</sup> PACAF SO G-184, 30 July 1969

<sup>8</sup> PACAF SO G-352, 14 June 1971

<sup>9</sup> PACAF SO GB-0019, 31 January 1974

<sup>10</sup> PACAF SO GB-0022, 31 January 1974

<sup>11</sup> PACAF SO GB-0025, 31 January 1974

<sup>12</sup> PACAF SO GB-0027, 31 January 1974

<sup>13</sup> PACAF SO GB-0187, 15 July 1974

<sup>14</sup> DAF SO GB-552/1970

<sup>15</sup> DAF SO GB-352/1971

### **Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards**

- 1 June 1970-31 May 1971 with Combat "V" Device<sup>16</sup>
- 1 December 1971-29 February 1972 with Combat "V" Device<sup>17</sup>
- 23 February 1973-28 February 1974 with Combat "V" Device<sup>18</sup>
- 24 January 1975-2 May 1975 with Combat "V" Device<sup>19</sup>
- 1 January 1977-1 January 1979<sup>20</sup>
- 1 July 1980-31 May 1982<sup>21</sup>
- 1 June 1984-31 May 1986<sup>22</sup>
- 1 May 1987-30 April 1989<sup>23</sup>
- 1 May 1989-30 April 1990<sup>24</sup>
- 1 May 1990-30 April 1991<sup>25</sup>
- 1 July 1994-30 June 1996<sup>26</sup>
- 1 July 1996-30 June 1998<sup>27</sup>
- 1 July 1998-30 June 2000<sup>28</sup>
- 1 July 2001-30 June 2003<sup>29</sup>
- 1 June [July] 2003-30 June 2005<sup>30</sup>
- 1 July 2005-30 June 2006<sup>31</sup>
- 1 July 2006-30 June 2007<sup>32</sup>
- 1 July 2007-30 June 2008<sup>33</sup>
- 1 July 2008-30 June 2009<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> DAF SO GB-703, 9 November 1971

<sup>17</sup> DAF SO GB-553/1973

<sup>18</sup> DAF SO GB-600/1975

<sup>19</sup> USAF SO GB-623, 10 August 1976

<sup>20</sup> DAF SO GB-719, 30 November 1979

<sup>21</sup> DAF SO GB-117, 22 February 1983

<sup>22</sup> DAF SO GB-275/1987

<sup>23</sup> TAC SO GA-053, 29 August 1989

<sup>24</sup> TAC SO GA-048, 16 August 1990

<sup>25</sup> TAC SO GA-069/1991

<sup>26</sup> AETC SO GA-18/1996

<sup>27</sup> AETC SO GA-12/1998

<sup>28</sup> AETC SO GA-9/2000

<sup>29</sup> AETC SO GA-55/2004

<sup>30</sup> AETC SO GA-0052/2006

<sup>31</sup> AETC SO GA-045/2007

<sup>32</sup> AETC SO G-054/2008

<sup>33</sup> AETC SO G-071/2009

**Decorations. (Continued)**

**Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (Continued)**

1 July 2009-30 June 2010<sup>35</sup>

1 July 2010-30 June 2011<sup>36</sup>

1 July 2011-30 June 2012<sup>37</sup>

1 July 2012-30 June 2013<sup>38</sup>

1 July 2013-30 June 2014<sup>39</sup>

***Special Honors.***

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

**PAST AND PRESENT UNITS ASSIGNED**

<b>Currently Assigned Units</b>	<b>Time Frame Assigned</b>
<b><i>Squadrons</i></b>	
56th Civil Engineer Squadron	1 April 1994. <sup>40</sup>
56th Communications Squadron	1 April 1994 <sup>41</sup>
56th Contracting Squadron	1 April 1994 <sup>42</sup>
56th Logistics Readiness Squadron	1 August 2002 <sup>43</sup>
56th Services Squadron	
later, Force Support Squadron	1 April 1994 <sup>44</sup>
56th Security Police Squadron	
later, 56th Security Forces Squadron	1 April 1994. <sup>45</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> AETC SO G-025/2010

<sup>35</sup> AETC SO G-086/2011

<sup>36</sup> AETC SO G-171/17 April 2012

<sup>37</sup> AETC SO G-036, 1 March 2013

<sup>38</sup> AETC SO G-017, 1 February 2014

<sup>39</sup> AETC SO G-029, 8 January 2015

<sup>40</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

<sup>41</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

<sup>42</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

<sup>43</sup> AETC SO G-02-20, 23 June 2002

<sup>44</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994; AETC SO G-09-9, 26 February 2009

<sup>45</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

<b>Previously Assigned Units</b>	<b>Time Frame Assigned</b>
<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 1991-4 January 1994. <sup>46</sup>
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 8 April 1967-4 January 1994 <sup>47</sup>
Squadron "C," 56th Airdrome Group 56th Installations Squadron, Fighter, Jet later, 56th Installations Squadron, later, 56th Civil Engineering Squadron, later, 56th Civil Engineer Squadron	15 August 1947-1 August 1948 1 August 1948-6 February 1952; 1 February 1961 <sup>48</sup> -1 January 1964; 8 April 1967-4 January 1994. <sup>49</sup>
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 <sup>50</sup> -28 February 1975; 30 June 1975-4 January 1994 <sup>51</sup>
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 1961-1 April 1963 8 April 1967 <sup>52</sup> -30 June 1975
Squadron "F," 56th Airdrome Group	March 1948-Unknown

<sup>46</sup> ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

<sup>47</sup> PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967; ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

<sup>48</sup> ADC GO #192, 28 December 1960

<sup>49</sup> PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967; ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

<sup>50</sup> PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967

<sup>51</sup> TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975; ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

<sup>52</sup> PACAF SO G-41, 8 March 1967

<b>Previously Assigned Units (Continued)</b>	<b>Time Frame Assigned</b>
4th Finance Disbursing Unit, Fighter, Jet	1 August 1948-1 November 1949
56th Air Base Squadron	1 February 1961 <sup>53</sup> -1 January 1964.
56th Base Service Squadron, Fighter, Jet, later, 56th Mission Support Squadron	1 August 1948-13 March 1950; 15 August 1988-4 January 1994 <sup>54</sup> ; 1 April 1994 <sup>55</sup> -26 February 2009.
56th Combat Support Squadron (Avon Park, Florida) later, 56th Support Squadron (Avon Park, Florida)	
	30 June 1975-4 January 1994. <sup>56</sup>
56th Comptroller Squadron	[15 August 1988]-1 November 1991
56th Headquarters Squadron	1 February 1961-Unknown
56th Morale, Welfare and Recreation Squadron	1 October 1991 <sup>57</sup> -4 September 1992 <sup>58</sup>
56th Supply Squadron	1 February 1961-1 April 1963;
56th Support Squadron	1 April 1994-1 October 1994 <sup>59</sup>
56th Transportation Squadron	1 February 1961-
32d Crash-Rescue Boat Flight	attached 14 July 1951-Unknown <sup>60</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> ADC GO #192, 28 December 1960

<sup>54</sup> ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

<sup>55</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994; AETC SO G-09-9, 26 February 2009

<sup>56</sup> TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975; ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

<sup>57</sup> TAC SO GB-001, 1 October 1991

<sup>58</sup> ACC SO GB-124, 21 August 1992

<sup>59</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994; AETC SO G-49, 30 June 1994

<sup>60</sup> 56 FIW GO 22, 14 July 1951

**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 1961-1 January 1964. 56th Air Commando (later, 56th Special Operations,) Wing, 8 April 1967-Unknown. Tactical Air Command, Unknown-30 June 1975. 56th Tactical Fighter (later, 56th Tactical Training, 56th Fighter) Wing 30 June 1975<sup>61</sup>-4 January 1994.<sup>62</sup> 56th Fighter Wing 1 April 1994-.<sup>63</sup>

**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 1961-1 January 1964. Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, 8 April 1967-30 June 1975; MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, 30 June 1975<sup>64</sup>-4 January 1994.<sup>65</sup> Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, 1 April 1994-.<sup>66</sup>

**Aircraft.** None.

**Emblem.** [Group will use the wing emblem with group designation in the scroll.] Emblem approved 19 April 1967. [Source: 1967 Emblem Approval Letter.]

**Blazon.** [Group will use the wing emblem with group designation in the scroll.] Tenne on a chevron azure fimbriated or two lightning flashes chevronwise of the last. [Source: 1967 Emblem Approval Letter.].

**Motto.** [Group will use the wing emblem with group designation in the scroll.] Cave Tonitrum (Beware of the Thunderbolt) . [Source: 1967 Emblem Approval Letter.]

**Significance.** [Group will use the wing emblem with group designation in the scroll.] The emblem is symbolic of the Wing. The heraldic chevron, represents support and signifies the Wing's support of our nation's quest for peace. The blue of the chevron represents the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. The lightning bolt symbolizes speed and aggressiveness with which the unit performs. The color of the shield represents the Air Corps and commemorates the service of the 56th Fighter Group, whose honors and history the Wing inherits. The emblem bears the Air Force colors of golden yellow and ultramarine blue. [Source: 1967 Emblem Approval Letter.]

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<sup>61</sup> TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975

<sup>62</sup> ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

<sup>63</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

<sup>64</sup> TAC SO GA-12, 10 June 1975

<sup>65</sup> ACC SO GB-18, 30 December 1993

<sup>66</sup> AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

**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	

**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 <sup>67</sup>	
Lt Col Lewis C. Hughes	20 May 1967 <sup>68</sup>	
Col Benjamin F. De Haan	2 July 1967 <sup>69</sup>	
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	

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<sup>67</sup> 56 CSG SO G-05, 8 April 1967

<sup>68</sup> 56 CSG SO G-07, 20 May 1967

<sup>69</sup> 56 CSG SO G-10, 2 July 1967

**Commanders. (Continued)**

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 <sup>70</sup>
Col David L. Wagner	14 Nov 1984
Col Jack P. Cross	17 June 1987
Col Robert J. Smith	18 April 1988 <sup>71</sup>
Col Jack P. Cross	bef 7 July 1988
Col Robert J. Smith	7 July 1988 <sup>72</sup>
Col George G. Giddens	25 July 1989 <sup>73</sup>
Col Stig Egede Nissen	August 1991-1 November 1991.

**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 <sup>74</sup>
Col Elizabeth A. Harrell	17 October 1994 <sup>75</sup> (Major General)
Vacant	13 June 1995
Col Rodney E. Gibson	9 August 1995 <sup>76</sup>
Lt Col (later, Col) Norman L. Watson	7 August 1996 <sup>77</sup>
Lt Col (later, Col) Michael Hazen	15 June 1998 <sup>78</sup>
Col Robert L. Worley, Jr.	18 May 2000 <sup>79</sup> -27 September 2002.

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<sup>70</sup> 9 AF SO G-13, 9 May 1984

<sup>71</sup> 56 CSG SO G-48, 19 April 1988

<sup>72</sup> 56 CSG SO G-63, 8 July 1988

<sup>73</sup> 56 MSS SO G-034, 24 July 1989

<sup>74</sup> [832 MSS SO SO-G-8, 27 December 1990 and 58 MSS SO SO-G-1, 1 October 1991]

<sup>75</sup> 56 FW SO SO-GR-001, 21 October 1994

<sup>76</sup> 56 FW SO SO-GR-004, 24 July 1995

<sup>77</sup> 56 FW SO SO-GR-001, 31 July 1996

<sup>78</sup> 56 FS SO SO-GR-001, 28 May 1998

<sup>79</sup> 56 FW SO SO-GR-003, 17 May 2000

**Commanders. (Continued)**

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

Col Michael J. Maloney	27 September 2002 <sup>80</sup>
Col Keith E. Smith	7 June 2004 <sup>81</sup>
Col Ronald J. Mozzillo	10 July 2006 <sup>82</sup>
Col Andre K. Curry	2 May 2008 <sup>83</sup>
Col Philippe R. Darcy	18 June 2010 <sup>84</sup>
Col Nathan C. Mooney	9 July 2012 <sup>85</sup>
Col James K. Kossler	24 July 2014-Present <sup>86</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> 56 MSG SO MSG G-2, 24 September 2002

<sup>81</sup> 56 MSS SO 56 MSS G-2 2004, 3 June 2004

<sup>82</sup> 56 MSG SO MSG-06-05, 30 June 2006

<sup>83</sup> 56 MSS SO G-015, 2 May 2008

<sup>84</sup> 56 MSG SO G-011, 9 June 2010

<sup>85</sup> 56 FW SO G-021, 9 July 2012

<sup>86</sup> 56 MSG GS-29-14, 28 July 2014

### **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 56th Air Base 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, it 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 supported 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 to learn to fly the F-4D/E and later to fly the F-16. 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.

**DATE PREPARED.** 10 December 1996

**SUPERSEDES** statement prepared 3 April 1967.

**PREPARED BY** William J. Allen

**Updated** 6 July 2015

**Updated by** Rick Griset