

56th Training Squadron

Lineage.

Constituted 56th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor)
on 20 November 1940.

Activated on 15 January 1941.

Redesignated 56th Fighter Squadron on 15 May
1942.

Disbanded on 1 May 1944.

Reconstituted, and redesignated 56th Fighter-
Interceptor Squadron, on 14 November
1952.

Activated on 27 November 1952.

Discontinued on 1 March 1960.

Redesignated 56th Tactical Training Squadron on
25 September 1979.¹

Activated on 1 October 1979.²

Redesignated 56th Training Squadron on 1 November 1991.³

Inactivated on 20 July 1993.⁴

Activated on 1 April 1994.⁵



Honors.

Service Streamers.

World War II American Theater

Campaign Streamers.

World War II Asiatic-Pacific Theater

Air Combat 7 December 1941 - 2 September 1945

Decorations.

Distinguished Unit Citations

Alaska, [June]-4 November 1942

¹ TAC SO GA-105, 26 September 1979

² TAC SO GA-105, 26 September 1979

³ TAC SO G-12, 1 November 1991

⁴ ACC SO GB-93, 29 June 1993

⁵ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 July 1980-31 May 1982⁶
1 June 1984-31 May 1986⁷
1 May 1987-30 April 1989⁸
1 May 1989-30 April 1990⁹
1 May 1990-30 April 1991¹⁰
1 July 1994-30 June 1996¹¹
1 July 1996-30 June 1998¹²
1 July 1998-30 June 2000¹³
1 July 2001-30 June 2003¹⁴
[1 July] 2003-30 June 2005¹⁵
1 July 2005-30 June 2006¹⁶
1 July 2006-30 June 2007¹⁷
1 July 2007-30 June 2008¹⁸
1 July 2008-30 June 2009¹⁹
1 July 2009-30 June 2010²⁰
1 July 2010-30 June 2011²¹
1 July 2011-30 June 2012²²
1 July 2012-30 June 2013²³
1 July 2013-30 June 2014²⁴
1 July 2014-30 June 2015²⁵
1 July 2015-30 June 2016²⁶

⁶ DAF SO GB-117, 22 February 1983

⁷ DAF SO GB-275/1987

⁸ TAC SO GA-053, 29 August 1989

⁹ TAC SO GA-048, 16 August 1990

¹⁰ TAC SO GA-069, 26 September 1991

¹¹ AETC SO GA-18, 15 November 1996

¹² AETC SO GA-12, 9 November 1998

¹³ AETC SO GA-9, 8 December 2000

¹⁴ AETC SO GA-55, 29 April 2004

¹⁵ AETC SO GA-0052, 22 June 2006

¹⁶ AETC SO GA-045, 8 May 2007

¹⁷ AETC SO G-054, 28 February 2008

¹⁸ AETC SO G-071, 3 April 2009

¹⁹ AETC SO G-025, 11 March 2010

²⁰ AETC SO G-086, 9 May 2011

²¹ AETC SO G-171, 17 April 2012

²² AETC SO G-036, 1 March 2013

²³ AETC SO G-017, 1 February 2014

²⁴ AETC SO G-029, 8 January 2015

²⁵ AETC SO G-006, 14 October 2016

²⁶ AETC SO G-022, 22 March 2017

Decorations. (Continued)

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (Continued)

1 July 2016-30 June 2017²⁷

1 July 2017-30 June 2018²⁸

1 July 2018-30 June 2019²⁹

Squadron – 1 Total Aerial Victory Credits. **Squadron Aces:** None.

Assignments. 54th Pursuit (later, Fighter) Group, 15 January 1941-1 May 1944. 4708th Defense Wing, 27 November 1952; 575th Air Defense Group, 16 February 1953; 4706th Air Defense Wing, 18 August 1955; 58th Air Division, 1 March 1956; 30th Air Division, 1 September 1958; Detroit Air Defense Sector, 1 April 1959-1 March 1960. 56th Tactical Fighter (later, Tactical Training; Fighter) Wing, 1 October 1979; 56th Operations Group, 1 November 1991-20 July 1993. 56th Operations Group, 1 April 1994-.³⁰

Stations. Hamilton Field, California, 15 January 1941; Snohomish County Airport (later, Paine Field), Washington, 22 June 1941; Harding Field, Louisiana, 31 January 1942 (detachment operated from Santa Ana, California, 28 May-12 June 1942; Nome, Alaska, 20 June-20 October 1942; Anchorage, Alaska, 23 October-21 December 1942); Bartow Army Air Field, Florida, 11 May 1943-1 May 1944. Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan, 27 November 1952; Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, 18 August 1955-1 March 1960. MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, 1 October 1979-20 July 1993. Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, 1 April 1994-.³¹

Aircraft.

Curtis P-40 Warhawk	1941
Bell P-39 Airacobra	1941-1943
North American P (later, F)-51 Lightning	1943-1944 and 1952-1953
North American F-86 Sabre	1953-1958
Lockheed F-104 Starfighter	1958-1960

²⁷ AETC SO G-015, 19 Dec 2017

²⁸ AETC SO G-057, 20 May 2019

²⁹ AETC SO G-013, 18 Dec 2019

³⁰ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

³¹ AETC SO G-34, 25 March 1994

Emblem. Approved on 9 March 2001. Awaiting redraw by TIOH.

Blazon. On a disc Gules, in horizontal flight two flight symbols fesswise in bend Sable, each emitting a contrail to sinister chief Or, issuant from base a mountainous terrain earth colored Proper surmounting a bezant, all within a diminished bordure Yellow.

Attached above the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "56TH TRAINING SQ" in Yellow letters.

Attached below the disc, a Blue scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "FIGHTER ACADEMICS" in Yellow letters.

Motto. Fighter Academics.

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 escarpment refers to the location of the unit. The rising sun signifies the unit's role in training student pilots to qualified status in major weapons systems. The deltas show the high level of training provided by the unit.

Commanders.

56th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) 15 January 1941-15 May 1942]

2d Lt Patrick R. Arnold	15 January 1941
2d Lt Samuel H. Marret	24 January 1941
1st Lt (later, Capt) Robert B. Richard	30 April 1941
Maj Charles M. McCorkle	24 March 1942-15 May 1942

56th Fighter Squadron [15 May 1942-1 May 1944]

Maj Charles M. McCorkle	15 May 1942	[Ace][Major General]
1st Lt James K. Dowling	12 June 1942	
Capt William P. Litton	1 February 1943	
Capt (later, Maj) William H. Merriam	16 February 1943	
Maj James G. Curl	4 October 1943-Unknown	
Unknown	26 January 1944-1 May 1944	

56th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron [27 November 1952-1 March 1960]

Maj Frank O. Lux (acting)	27 November 1952	
Lt Col Richard D. Creighton	by 1 January 1953	[Ace]
Maj Frank O. Lux	by 30 June 1954-Unknown	
Unknown	1 July 1954-30 March 1958	
Lt Col Alston L. Brown	by 31 March 1958	
Maj Sylvester H. Hendricks (acting)	11 December 1958	
Lt Col Charles E. Rigney	by 30 June 1959-Unknown	
Unknown	1 July 1959-1 May 1960	

Commanders. (Continued)

56th Tactical Training Squadron [1 October 1979-1 November 1991]

Lt Col David W. Spring	1 October 1979 ³²
Lt Col Paul H. Burbage, III	15 March 1980
Maj John D. Holmquist	19 May 1980
Lt Col Charles E. Cotton	30 June 1980
Lt Col Bruce V. Huneke	2 August 1982
Lt Col James C. Kobriger	24 January 1983 ³³
Lt Col David H. Brooks	1 April 1983 ³⁴
Lt Col Ralph T. Hood	4 October 1984 ³⁵
Lt Col Randall H. Wiseman	19 December 1986 ³⁶
Lt Col Jon E. Wilson	20 December 1988
Lt Col Rodney L. Bates	7 September 1990-1 November 1991

56th Training Squadron [1 November 1991-20 July 1993; 1 April 1994-]

Lt Col Rodney L. Bates	1 November 1991
Lt Col William Stringer	17 January 1992
Lt Col Stanley Sutterfield	August 1992-Unknown]
Lt Col Ronald H. Heyden	1 April 1994 ³⁷
Lt Col David M. Burnett	6 May 1994 ³⁸
Lt Col John C. Vignetti	19 June 1995
Lt Col John R. Swarsbrook	15 July 1997 ³⁹
Lt Col William Gonzalez, Jr.	9 July 1999 ⁴⁰
Lt Col Randy A. O'Connor	19 December 2000 ⁴¹
Lt Col Jack D. Patterson, Jr.	18 January 2002 ⁴²
Lt Col Robert P. Egan	28 March 2003 ⁴³
Lt Col Richard A. Forster	7 January 2005 ⁴⁴
Lt Col Brian D. Neumann	16 June 2006 ⁴⁵
Lt Col Doyle C. Turner	16 May 2008 ⁴⁶

³² 56 CSG SO G-49, 1 October 1979

³³ 56 CSG SO G-2, 24 January 1983

³⁴ 56 CSG SO G-10, 1 April 1983

³⁵ 56 CSG SO G-30, 4 October 1984

³⁶ 56 CSG SO G-10, 18 December 1986

³⁷ [58 MSS SO SO-G-60, 7 May 1992]

³⁸ 56 TRS SO SO-GF-001, 18 April 1994

³⁹ 56 TRS SO SO-TS-001, c. 12 Jul 1997, and 56 TRS SO SO-GF-001, c. 18 November 1997

⁴⁰ 56 TRS SO SO-GF-005, 30 June 1999

⁴¹ 56 TRS SO SO-GF-001, 19 December 2000

⁴² 56 TRS SO SO-GF-005, 16 January 2002

⁴³ 56 TRS SO 56 TRS G-1, 11 March 2003

⁴⁴ 56 TRS SO 56 OG-G-2005-03, 6 January 2005

⁴⁵ 56 TRS SO 56OG-G2006-11, 9 June 1006

⁴⁶ 56 TRS SO G-020, 15 May 2008

Commanders. (Continued)

Lt Col Brian I. Elliot (temp)	18 Dec 2008 ⁴⁷
Lt Col Charles J. DeLapp	14 May 2010 ⁴⁸
Lt Col Matthew Liljenstolpe	13 July 2012 ⁴⁹ Ret
Lt Col Michael W. Dunn	3 July 2014 ⁵⁰
Lt Col Matthew A. Hayden	1 July 2016 ⁵¹
Lt Col Jon A. Pitts	30 October 2017. ⁵²
Lt Col Christopher R. Marslender	28 June 2019-Present. ⁵³

Narrative.

The 56th Training Squadron was constituted as the 56th Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) on 20 November 1940. Activated on 15 January 1941, it was assigned to the 54th Pursuit (later, Fighter) Group. The group is currently stationed at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico, and assigned to the 56th Fighter Wing. When stationed at Hamilton Field, California, the squadron began flying the Curtis P-40 Warhawk. During the year, the squadron converted to the Bell P-39 Airacobra. On 22 June 1941, the unit moved to Snohomish County Airport (later, Paine Field), Everett, Washington. On 31 January 1942, the squadron moved to Harding Field, Louisiana. On 15 May 1942, the squadron was redesignated as the 56th Fighter Squadron. Starting on 28 May 1942, the squadron operated a detachment at Santa Ana, California. While there, it served as part of the Air Defense force for the West Coast. The detachment departed on 12 June and arrived in Nome, Alaska, on 20 June 1942. While there the detachment flew patrols until 20 October, when it moved to Anchorage, Alaska, arriving on 23 October 1942. At Anchorage, the detachment flew patrols until 21 December 1942. Pilots from the detachment were credited with one aerial victory during the defeat of the Japanese invasion of the Aleutian Islands. The detachment then returned to Harding Field until 11 May 1943, when the entire squadron removed to Bartow Army Air Field, Florida. At Bartow, the unit conducted replacement training for North American P-51 Lightning pilots. On 1 May 1944, the squadron was disbanded.

On 14 November 1952, the unit was reconstituted and redesignated as the 56th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron. It activated on 27 November 1952, at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan, assigned to the 4708th Defense Wing. Earlier in the year, the 56th Fighter Wing had inactivated there. Initially flying the renamed F-51, it converted to the North American F-86 Sabre during 1953. On 16 February 1953, the squadron was reassigned to the 575th Air Defense Group. On 18 August 1955, the squadron was moved to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio and reassigned to the 4706th Air Defense Wing. The following first of March, it was reassigned to the 58th Air Division. On 1 September 1958, the squadron was assigned to the 30th Air Division. During 1958, the squadron converted to the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter. On 1 April 1959, it was

⁴⁷ 56 MSG SO G-015, 16 Dec 2008

⁴⁸ 56 MSG SO G-005, 14 May 2010

⁴⁹ 56 FW SO G-026, 3 July 2012

⁵⁰ 56 MSG SO GS-24-14, 3 July 2014

⁵¹ 56 MSG SO G-18-16, 21 June 2016

⁵² 56 MSG SO G-02-18, 30 October 2017

⁵³ 56 MSG SO G-19-036, 27 June 2019

assigned to the Detroit Air Defense Sector. On 1 March 1960, the squadron was discontinued. Throughout that eight year period, the squadron's main mission was Air Defense of the homeland.

On 25 September 1979, the squadron was redesignated as the 56th Tactical Training Squadron. It activated on 1 October 1979 at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, assigned to the 56th Tactical Fighter (later, Tactical Training; Fighter) Wing. On 1 November 1991, the unit was redesignated the 56th Training Squadron and reassigned to the 56th Operations Group. On 20 July 1993, the squadron was inactivated. While at MacDill AFB, the squadron conducted F-16 academic training.

When the wing moved to Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, on 1 April 1994, the group and squadron reactivated. The squadron continued the same mission after the move. During 1994 and 1995, it also provided academic training to F-15E aircrews. Today, the squadron provides academic and ground-based instruction to support training of the world's finest F-16 and F-35A pilots.

Locally Updated on 20 February 2020

Locally Updated by Rick Griset