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**(U) The History and Heritage of the 341st Missile Wing**



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## The History of the 341st Missile Wing

The 341st Missile Wing (341 MW) began as the 341st Bombardment Group, Medium (341 BG) in the China-Burma-India theater during World War II (WWII). The Army Air Forces (AAF) activated the 341 BG at Camp Malir in Karachi, India on 15 September 1942. It consisted of the 11th Bombardier Squadron (11 BS) and the 22d Bombardier Squadron (22 BS), which were attached to the 7th Bombardment Group since May 1942, and two new squadrons, the 490th Bombardier Squadron (490 BS), and the 491st Bombardier Squadron (491 BS). Headquarters, 341 BG, along with 22 BS, 490 BS, and 491 BS operated in India under the Tenth Air Force (10 AF) from October 1942 until 1944. Using B-25 Bombers, it targeted enemy bridges, locomotives, and railroad yards to delay the movement of supplies to Japanese troops fighting in northern Burma (now Myanmar).

Fourteen months later the group headquarters, 22 BS, and 491 BS squadrons joined the 11 BS in China under the 69th Composite Wing, Fourteenth Air Force—the 490 BS remained in India under 10 AF. Headquarters, 341 BG made Kunming its home while the AAF stationed 22 BS and 491 BS at Yangkai; the 11 BS operated out of Kweilin attached to the 68th Composite Wing. While in China, the 341 BG attacked enemy storage areas and conducted sea sweeps against island shipping. It also bombed and strafed enemy infrastructure such as trains, harbors, and railroads in French Indochina and the Canton-Hong Kong area of China. The Group received a Distinguished Unit Citation for developing and using a special glide-skip, or “GLIP,” bombing technique against enemy bridges. The 341 BG also earned three WWII Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers: India-Burma, China Defensive, and China Offensive. The AAF inactivated the group on 2 November 1945.

Following WWII, the 341 BG saw action as a training unit and later as a wing in Strategic Air Command (SAC). On 27 December 1946, AAF re-designated the group as the 341 BG, Light in the United States Air Force Reserve at Westover Field, Massachusetts. The group trained with the AT-6 (Fighter) and AT-11 (Bomber) until inactivated on 27 June 1949. In September 1955, the United States Air Force (USAF) re-activated 341 BG as the 341st Bombardment Wing, Medium (341 BW) at Abilene AFB, Texas under SAC. As a B-47E Stratojet unit, it could penetrate the Soviet Union’s air defenses with its high operational ceiling and near-supersonic speed while carrying nuclear weapons. The 341 BW flew B-47s on alert missions and participated in SAC exercises and deployments to Guam, Morocco, and England. During this time, the wing also controlled a KC-97 Stratotanker squadron to provide air refueling for B-47 operations. In 1958, USAF phased out the Stratojet and the 341 BW sent its aircraft to storage at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona in 1961. The Air Force inactivated the wing on 25 June that same year.

The USAF reactivated the 341 BW on 1 July 1961 as the 341st Strategic Missile Wing (341 SMW) at Malmstrom AFB, Montana in support of the new Minuteman intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) mission. The Air Force selected Malmstrom AFB (MAFB) as home of the first Minuteman ICBM missile wing for two interconnected reasons. First, the Minuteman IA’s technical limitations forced it to move the first Minuteman squadron from Vandenberg AFB, California to Malmstrom AFB. The Minuteman’s engineers discovered a flaw in its first stage booster that reduced its range from 6,300 to 4,300 miles. This proved a major setback for any

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Minutemen stationed at Vandenberg—4,300 miles were simply insufficient to carry them over the North Pole to their targets in the Soviet Union. Since MAFB was 600 miles north of Vandenberg, this move placed the missiles that much closer to their targets. Also, Great Falls' 3,500-foot elevation made it that much easier to launch the Minuteman into space. Instead of delaying deployment for six months to a year while the engineering team redesigned the missiles, the Air Force moved the first wing to Malmstrom.

The USAF also selected Montana because the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) needed wide swaths of sparsely populated land to build 341 SMW's launch control centers (LCC) and launch facilities (LF). The 341 SMW consisted of three 50-missile squadrons—the 10th Strategic Missile Squadron (10 SMS), 12th Strategic Missile Squadron (12 SMS), and the 490th Strategic Missile Squadron (490 SMS)—divided into five flights of 10 missiles each. Each flight consisted of one underground LCC, a 59 foot long by 29 foot in diameter command center staffed by a two-person missile crew that monitored 10 LFs. LFs were hardened launch tubes that were 12 feet in diameter and 62 feet deep. The Minuteman ICBMs stood ready in these facilities until missileers in the LCCs received orders to launch them towards their targets somewhere in the Soviet Union. To ensure the Minuteman weapon system survived a nuclear attack, the USACE spaced each LF 3.5 to 17.5 miles away from its LCC and each LF 3.5 to 8.5 miles apart from one another. This footprint ensured a 10-megaton blast from a Soviet warhead would not destroy the neighboring facilities thus negating the United States' retaliatory response.

The 341 SMW tested its operational capabilities during the Cuban Missile Crisis in the fall of 1962. After an American U2 surveillance plane photographed Soviet military personnel emplacing medium and intermediate range ballistic missiles throughout Cuba, President John F. Kennedy stated, "It shall be the policy of this Nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union." As a result, the 341 SMW brought its first flight of Minutemen missiles to alert while construction was still underway. It placed LF A-06 on strategic alert on 27 October 1962 and over the next four days the wing placed eight additional ICBMs on alert. On 11 December, the wing placed its second flight on alert and by July 1963 all 150 Minutemen IA ICBMs were ready to receive their emergency war orders. The 341 SMW's successful effort to bring a brand-new ICBM weapon system to alert status was unprecedented and prompted Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to authorize a 1,000 Minuteman ICBM force.

In August 1964, the USAF announced plans to build additional LFs at Malmstrom AFB to house the LGM-30F Minuteman II ICBM. It activated the 564th Strategic Missile Squadron (564 SMS) on 14 December 1965 and constructed 5 additional LCCs and 50 LFs throughout 1966. Just over a year later in April 1967, the 341 SMW placed America's 1,000th Minuteman missile on alert at Malmstrom AFB. Malmstrom's missile field was now the largest in the United States, covering 23,500 square miles. By 1969 the USAF replaced all Minuteman Is in the 10 SMS, 12 SMS, and 490 SMS with Minuteman IIs. On 20 January 1975 Airmen from Ogden Air Logistics Center began replacing the 564 SMS's Minuteman II ICBMs with Minuteman IIIs and completed this changeover by 11 July 1975.

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The Minuteman weapon system underwent numerous upgrades and life extension programs during its lifespan. In November 1975, the wing began an integrated improvement program that included a command data buffer and an improved launch control system. In 1985, the 341 SMW became the lead unit in the Minuteman Integrated Life Extension program (Rivet MILE) that extended the Minuteman's operational capability long into the future. Additionally, in March 1994 the wing upgraded the Rapid Execution and Combat Targeting (REACT) software and replaced the consoles in its LCCs. This upgrade reduced a missile crew's reaction time, automated many command and monitoring tasks, and increased the weapon's survivability. The Minuteman's most recent life extension program was programmed depot maintenance (PDM) on LCCs and LFs throughout Twentieth Air Force (20 AF). PDM was an eight-year planned maintenance cycle that sought to bring Air Force Global Strike Command's (AFGSC) ICBM force to full operational capability by 2019. It selected Malmstrom as a test site and used LF C-03 as a prototype. This endeavor should ensure the Minuteman III's operability until the Sentinel ICBM comes online sometime in the next decade.

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 marked a moment of transition for the Minuteman force. First, President George H. W. Bush, believing "The prospect of a Soviet invasion into Western Europe, launched with little or no warning, is no longer a realistic threat," ordered all Minuteman IIs off alert status across the USAF's missile wings and their deactivation in accordance with the US-Russian Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I). This order affected three-quarters of the ICBMs assigned to the 341st Missile Wing (341 MW). In November 1991, personnel removed the first MM II ICBM at LF J-03 in compliance with the order. It would be over three years until the last Minuteman II in the Air Force inventory was removed from LF K-11 on 10 August 1995. Also, following the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's recommendation to inactivate the 321st Strategic Missile Wing at Grand Forks AFB, North Dakota in March 1995, the 321st Missile Group transferred 120 Minuteman III missiles to the 341 MW. This effort brought the wing to 200 Minuteman IIIs on alert status. The wing completed the conversion in 1998.

With the Cold War over, on 1 June 1992 the Air Force restructured its major commands, inactivating SAC and reassigning the 341 MW to the Air Combat Command. After a short and rocky tenure, Gen Merrill A. McPeak, Air Force Chief of Staff announced Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) would assume responsibility for the ICBM mission to "more closely align the organization, training, and equipping of Twentieth Air Force and its ICBM mission with the major command whose core business is space launch and control." The USAF transferred the nation's ICBM force to AFSPC in July of 1993 and the command managed the reduction of ICBM mission within the USAF. For example, between 1992 and 2008 the Minuteman force declined from 19 to nine squadrons and 925 Minuteman missiles to 450. Airmen from the 341st Missile Maintenance Squadron (341 MMXS) extracted the final weapon system component from LF T-41 on 28 July 2008 and inactivated the 564 MS on 15 August 2008. On 5 August 2014, the 341 MW completed Phase I of the elimination program of the 50 LFs and five missile alert facilities formerly assigned to the inactivated 564 MS when it demolished LF T-49 near Conrad, Montana.

On 1 December 2009 the USAF reassigned the 341 MW to the newly established AFGSC, a new major command responsible for the United States' nuclear arsenal. This reorganization placed the Air Force's nuclear weapons under a dedicated command that focused both on weapons

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infrastructure and troops' morale. While the new command made steady improvements, in 2013 the Air Force Office of Special Investigations investigated alleged drug use among officers on Malmstrom AFB that revealed widespread cheating among missile crews on their proficiency exams. In response, AFGSC implemented the Force Improvement Program (FIP) that sought to guide the ICBM mission culture forward. For example, the FIP brought numerous changes to the wing: it implemented incentive pay for missileers, issued new OCP uniforms as part of the Model Defender Program in 2015, and reorganized 341 SFG as part of the Missile Security Operating Concept two years later. Finally, in response to the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the 341st Operations Group (341 OG) changed the missileer deployment schedule from the long-standing alert-travel-off duty schedule to squadron deployments. For example, on 5 August 2020, the entire 490 MS posted to the missile fields as the 20 AF's first ever squadron deployment. As the past clearly dictates, the 341 MW is ready to address changes head-on and will continue to defend America with combat-ready Airmen and ICBM forces.

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## APPENDIX A

### 341st Missile Wing Lineage

<b>1 Feb 40</b>	The United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) activated the 10th Bombardment (10 BS) and the 12 <sup>th</sup> Bombardment Squadrons (12 BS).
<b>15 Sep 42</b>	The USAAF activated the 341st Bombardment Group (341 BG), Medium at Camp Malir, Karachi, India.
<b>17 Jun 44</b>	The USAAF inactivated the 10 BS.
<b>20 Jun 44</b>	The USAAF disbanded the 12 BS.
<b>2 Nov 45</b>	The USAAF inactivated the 341 BG.
<b>27 Dec 46</b>	The USAAF re-designated 341 BG as 341 BG, Light, First Air Force and activated it at Westover Field, Massachusetts.
<b>10 Mar 47</b>	The USAAF activated the 12 BS at Westover Field, Massachusetts.
<b>18 Jun 47</b>	The USAAF activated the 10 BS at Westover Field, Massachusetts.
<b>27 Jun 49</b>	The United States Air Force (USAF) inactivated the 341 BG, Light, 10 BS, 12 BS, and 490 BS.
<b>1 Sep 55</b>	The USAF consolidated the 341 BG with the 341st Bombardment Wing (341 BW), Medium and activated it, along with the 10 BS, 12 BS, and 490 BS, at Abilene AFB, Texas.
<b>25 Jun 61</b>	The USAF inactivated the 341 BW, 10 BS, 12 BS, and 490 BS.
<b>1 Jul 61</b>	The USAF activated the 341st Strategic Missile Wing (341 SMW) at Malmstrom AFB (MAFB).
<b>2 Aug 61</b>	The USAF re-designated the 10th Bombardment Squadron the 10th Strategic Missile Squadron (10 SMS) and activated it at MAFB.
<b>22 Sep 61</b>	The USAF re-designated the 12th Bombardment Squadron the 12th Strategic Missile Squadron (12 SMS) and activated it at MAFB.
<b>18 Dec 61</b>	The USAF re-designated the 490th Bombardment Squadron (Medium) the 490th Strategic Missile Squadron (490 SMS) and activated it at MAFB.
<b>14 Dec 65</b>	The USAF activated the 564th Strategic Missile Squadron (564 SMS) at MAFB.

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- 1 Sep 91**      The USAF re-designated the 341 SMW the 341st Missile Wing (341 MW). It also redesignated the 10 SMS, 12 SMS, 490 SMS, 564 SMS the 10th Missile Squadron, 12th Missile Squadron, 490th Missile Squadron, and 564th Missile Squadron (564 MS) respectively.
- 1 Oct 97**      The USAF re-designated the 341 MW as the 341st Space Wing (341 SW).
- 1 Jul 08**      The USAF re-designated the 341 SW as the 341 MW.
- 15 Aug 08**      The USAF inactivated the 564 MS.

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## APPENDIX B

### 341st Missile Wing Emblem



**Motto:** English Translation – “World Peace Through Air Strength”

**Emblem Description:** Per fess nebuly Azure, semi of mullets Argent, and White a sheath palewise point to base of the second and rising therefrom a sword of the like its hilt a winged escutcheon Or, between in base two lightning flashes pilewise Gules surmounted by an olive branch Vert veined Yellow; all within a diminished bordure of the last. Motto: PAX ORBIS PER ARMA AERIA - World peace through air strength.

**Significance:** Blue and 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 nebuly fess below a field scattered of stars reflects the emblem of the unit's predecessor and also the wing's support to the Air Force mission of air defense. The half-sheathed sword represents preparedness and strength of force. The winged hilt symbolizes the unit as an air arm in the total national defense. The lightning bolts indicate the speed and striking power of the wing in defense of peace.

Approved on 5 Jun 1957, modified on 22 Mar 1995.

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## APPENDIX C

### Wing Commanders

<b>Name</b>	<b>Assumed Command</b>
Col Torgils G. Wold	15 Sep 1942
Lt Col James A. Philpott	21 Sep 1943
Col Torgils G. Wold	2 Nov 1943
Col Morris F. Taber	23 Nov 1943
Maj Loren S. Nickels	2 Feb 1944
Col Morris F. Taber	17 Mar 1944
Col Joseph B. Wells	11 Apr 1944
Col Donald L. Clark	1 Dec 1944
Col James W. Newsome	16 Apr 1945
Unknown	Sep 1945
Unknown	27 Dec 1946
Lt Col Ralph P. Warriner	Mar 1947
Unknown	Jan 1949
Col Anthony J. Perna	1 Sep 1955
Col Frank P. Sturdivant	3 Dec 1955
Col Calvin E. Peeler	31 Oct 1957
Col Anthony J. Perna	1 Nov 1957
Col Jack W. Hayes, Jr.	9 Jun 1959
Col Ralph T. Holland	3 Feb 1961
Unknown	1 Jul 1961
Col Burton C. Andrus, Jr.	15 Jul 1961
Brig Gen Lawrence S. Lightner	20 Feb 1963
Col Rex Downtin	1 Jul 1964
Col Thomas F. Doyle	3 Jun 1966
Col John W. Carroll	5 Jul 1966
Col Eugene J. Crahen	13 Mar 1968
Brig Gen Gerald G. Fall, Jr.	27 May 1970
Brig Gen Kermit C. Kaericher	7 Jun 1972
Col Ralph D. Scott	7 Jun 1973
Col William R. Brooksher	18 Jun 1975
Col Gerald E. McIlmoyle	23 Jul 1976
Col Allen K. Rachel	23 Mar 1978
Col James L. Crouch	25 May 1979
Col Dennis M. Heitkamp	5 Jun 1981
Col James B. Knight	20 Jun 1983
Col Robert W. Parker	3 Aug 1984
Col Teddy E. Rinebarger	13 Dec 1985
Col Richard O. Keen	10 Jul 1987
Col Edward L. Burchfield	20 Sep 1988
Col William R. Smith	27 Aug 1990

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Brig Gen Thomas H. Neary	15 Jan 1992
Col Donald P. Pettit	29 Jul 1993
Brig Gen Robert E. Larned	14 Jul 1994
Brig Gen Timothy J. McMahon	19 Jul 1995
Brig Gen Glenn C. Waltman	20 Feb 1997
Col J. Gregory Pavlovich	18 Nov 1998
Col Thomas F. Deppe	9 Jun 2000
Col C. Donald Alston	11 Jul 2002
Col Everett H. Thomas	7 Jul 2004
Col Geoffrey A. Frazier (interim)	5 Apr 2006
Col Sandra E. Finan	7 Jul 2006
Col Michael E. Fortney	21 May 2008
Col Anthony J. Cotton	26 May 2010
Col Heraldo B. Brual	22 Aug 2011
Col Robert W. Stanley II	8 Feb 2013
Col John T. Wilcox II	27 Mar 2014
Col Ronald G. Allen, Jr.	18 Apr 2016
Col Jennifer K. Reeves	19 Jun 2018
Col Anita A. Feugate Opperman	5 Aug 2020
Col Barry E. Little	18 Jul 2022

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## APPENDIX D

### Unit Decorations and Awards

#### Streamers

World War II: India-Burma; China Defensive; China Offensive  
Global War on Terror (GWOT-S)

Decoration	Date of Award
Distinguished Unit Citation, French Indochina	11 Dec 1944 - 12 Mar 1945 22 Oct 1962 - 31 Dec 1963 1 Jul 1975 - 30 Jun 1976 1 Jul 1976 - 30 Jun 1977 1 Jul 1979 - 30 Jun 1981 1 Jul 1988 - 30 Jun 1990 1 Jul 1990 - 30 Jun 1991 1 Sep 1991 - 31 Aug 1993 1 Sep 1993 - 31 Aug 1994 1 Sep 1994 - 31 Aug 1995 1 Oct 1995 - 30 Sep 1996
Air Force Outstanding Unit Award	1 Oct 1997 - 30 Sep 1999 1 Oct 1998 - 30 Sep 1999 1 Oct 2000 - 30 Sep 2002 1 Oct 2002 - 1 Oct 2003 1 Jan 2003 - 31 Dec 2003 1 Oct 2004 - 30 Sep 2006 1 Oct 2006 - 30 Sep 2008 1 Oct 2008 - 30 Sep 2009 1 Jan 2010 - 31 Dec 2011 1 Jan 2015 - 31 Dec 2015 1 Jan 2017 - 31 Dec 2017

Trophy	Date of Award
Blanchard Trophy	1976, 1986, 1990, 1991, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021
Omaha Trophy	1993, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2021 (12 MS)

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