

Elmendorf Air Force Base

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Elmendorf Air Force Base (IATA: **EDF**, ICAO: **PAED**, FAA LID: **EDF**) is a United States military facility in Anchorage, the largest city in Alaska. Formerly known as Elmendorf Field, in 2010 it merged with nearby Fort Richardson to form Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

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Overview

The adjacent facilities were officially combined by the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission. Its mission is to support and defend U.S. interests in the Asia Pacific region and around the world by providing units who are ready for worldwide air power projection and a base that is capable of meeting PACOM's theater staging and throughput requirements.

It is the home of the Headquarters, Alaskan Command (ALCOM), Alaskan NORAD Region (ANR), Joint Task Force-Alaska (JTF-AK), Eleventh Air Force (11 AF), the 673d Air Base Wing, the 3rd Wing, the 176th Wing and other Tenant Units.

Units

Elmendorf Air Force Base



Part of Pacific Air Forces (PACAF)

Located in: Anchorage, Alaska



F-22 Raptors of the 3rd Wing at Elmendorf-Richardson



Coordinates 61°15′05″N 149°48′23″W

Site information

Controlled by  United States Air Force

Site history

Built 1940

In use 1940-Present

Garrison information

Garrison  673d Air Base Wing

The installation hosts the headquarters for the United States Alaskan Command, 11th Air Force, U.S. Army Alaska, and the Alaskan North American Aerospace Defense Command Region.

Major units assigned are:

- 673d Air Base Wing

Activated on 30 July 2010 as the host wing combining installation management functions of Elmendorf AFB's 3rd Wing and U.S. Army Garrison Fort Richardson. The 673d ABW comprises over 5,500 joint military and civilian personnel, supporting America's Arctic Warriors and their families. The wing supports and enables three AF total-force wings, two Army Brigades and 55 other tenant units. In addition, the wing provides medical care to over 35,000 joint service members, dependents, VA patients and retirees throughout Alaska. The 673d ABW maintains an \$11.4B infrastructure encompassing 84,000 acres, ensuring Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson remains America's premier strategic power projection platform.

- Alaskan Command

Responsible for maximizing theater force readiness for 21,000 Alaskan servicemembers and expediting worldwide contingency force deployments from and through Alaska as directed by the Commander, USPACOM

- United States Army Alaska (US)

U.S. Army Alaska executes continuous training and readiness oversight responsibilities for Army Force Generation in Alaska. Supports U.S. Pacific Command Theater Security Cooperation Program. On order, executes Joint Force Land Component Command functions in support of Homeland Defense and Security in Alaska.

- 3d Wing (USAF)

To support and defend US interests in the Asia-Pacific region and around the world by providing units who are ready for worldwide air power projection and a base that is capable of meeting PACOM's theater staging and throughput requirements.

- 176th Wing (ANG)

Composite wing of the Alaska Air National Guard flying the C-17 Globemaster, C-130 Hercules, HC-130 Hercules and HH-60 Pavehawk. Previously located at the former Kulis Air National Guard Base until relocated to Elmendorf per BRAC action.

- 477th Fighter Group (AFRC)

Air Force Reserve Command "Associate" unit to the active duty 3d Wing; operates and maintains the

Airfield information

IATA: EDF – ICAO: PAED – FAA LID: EDF
– WMO: 70272

Summary

Elevation AMSL 212 ft / 65 m

Website www.jber.af.mil
(<http://www.jber.af.mil>)

Runways

Direction	Length		Surface
	ft	m	
6/24	10,000	3,048	Asphalt
16/34	7,505	2,288	Asphalt

Sources: FAA,^[1] official site^[2]

F-22 Raptor.

- Alaskan Norad Region

The Alaskan NORAD Region (ANR) conducts aerospace control within its area of operations and contributes to NORAD's aerospace warning mission.

- Eleventh Air Force

Provide ready warriors and infrastructure for homeland defense, decisive force projection, and aerospace command and control

History

World War II

Construction on Elmendorf Field began on 8 June 1940, as a major and permanent military airfield near Anchorage. The first Air Corps personnel arrived on 12 August 1940.

On 12 November 1940, the War Department formally designated what had been popularly referred to as Elmendorf Field as Fort Richardson. The air facilities on the post were named Elmendorf Field in honor of Captain Hugh M. Elmendorf, killed on 13 January 1933, while flight testing the experimental Consolidated Y1P-25, fighter, 32-321, near Wright Field, Ohio.^{[3][4]} After World War II, the Army moved its operations to the new Fort Richardson and the Air Force assumed control of the original Fort Richardson and renamed it Elmendorf Air Force Base.

The first Air Force unit to be assigned to Alaska, the 18th Pursuit Squadron, arrived in February 1941. The 23d Air Base Group was assigned shortly afterward to provide base support. Other Air Force units poured into Alaska as the Japanese threat developed into World War II. The Eleventh Air Force was formed at Elmendorf AFB in early 1942. The field played a vital role as the main air logistics center and staging area during the Aleutian Campaign and later air operations against the Kurile Islands.

Cold War

Following World War II, Elmendorf assumed an increasing role in the defense of North America as the uncertain wartime relations between the United States and the Soviet Union deteriorated into the Cold War. The Eleventh Air Force was redesignated as the Alaskan Air Command (AAC) on 18 December 1945. The Alaskan Command, established 1 January 1947, also headquartered at Elmendorf, was a unified command under the Joint Chiefs of Staff based on lessons learned during World War II when a lack of unity of command hampered operations to drive the Japanese from the western Aleutian Islands of Attu and Kiska.



Elmendorf Air Force Base sign outside of Government Hill Gate



A C-17 Globemaster III takes off from Elmendorf Air Force Base on 26 March 2010

The uncertain world situation in late 1940s and early 1950s caused a major buildup of air defense forces in Alaska. The propeller-driven F-51s were replaced with F-80 jets, which in turn were replaced in succession by F-94s, F-89s, and F-102s interceptor aircraft for defense of North America. The Air Force built an extensive aircraft control and warning radar system with sites located throughout Alaska's interior and coastal regions. Additionally, the Air Force of necessity built the White Alice Communications System (with numerous support facilities around the state) to provide reliable communications to these far-flung, isolated, and often rugged locales. The Alaskan NORAD Regional Operations Control Center (ROCC) at Elmendorf served as the nerve center for all air defense operations in Alaska.



The 19th Fighter Squadron's F-15 Eagle flagship takes off for the final time at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, 13 May 2010

The U.S. Air Force Security Service (USAFSS) activated the 6981st Security Group tasked with monitoring, collecting and interpreting signals intelligence of concern to the region, including installation of an AN/FLR-9 antenna array as part of a worldwide network known collectively as "Iron Horse."

Air defense forces reached their zenith in 1957 with almost 200 fighter aircraft assigned to six fighter interceptor squadrons located at Elmendorf AFB and Ladd AFB. Eighteen aircraft control and warning radar sites controlled their operations. Elmendorf earned the motto "Top Cover for North America." AAC adopted the motto as its own in 1969.



31st Fighter Interceptor Squadron Convair F-102A-75-CO Delta Dagger 56-1281, 1965. Aircraft crashed 12/27/67.

The late 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s brought about a gradual, but significant decline in air defense forces in Alaska due to mission changes and the demands of the Vietnam War. The Air Force inactivated five fighter squadrons and closed five radar sites. In 1961, the Department of Defense consigned Ladd AFB to the Army which renamed it Fort Wainwright. The Alaskan Command was disestablished in 1975. Elmendorf began providing more support to other Air Force commands, particularly Military Airlift Command C-5 and C-141 flights to and from the Far East.

Despite a diminished number of personnel and aircraft, a turning point in Elmendorf's history occurred in 1970 with the arrival of the 43d Tactical Fighter Squadron in June 1970 from MacDill AFB, Florida. The squadron gave AAC an air-to-ground capability which was further enhanced with the activation of the 18th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Elmendorf (also with F-4Es) on 1 October 1977.

The strategic importance of Elmendorf AFB was graphically realized during the spring of 1980 when the 18th Tactical Fighter Squadron deployed eight of its F-4Es to Korea to participate in exercise Team Spirit. It was a historical first and underlined an increasing emphasis AAC placed on its tactical role. The strategic location of Elmendorf AFB and Alaska made it an excellent deployment center, a fact that validated the contention of Billy Mitchell who, in 1935, stated that "Alaska is the most strategic place in the world." Deployments from Elmendorf AFB and Eielson AFB to the Far East are now conducted on a routine basis.

The 1980s witnessed a period of growth and modernization of Elmendorf AFB. During 1982, the 21st Tactical Fighter Wing converted from F-4Es to F-15A/Bs. The 18th Tactical Fighter Squadron was assigned to Eielson AFB where it was equipped with A-10s. The 54th Tactical Fighter Squadron, of

Aleutian Campaign fame, activated once again in 1987. Operating two F-15 Squadrons (43rd and 54th TFS), the F-15s were housed next to the 5021st Tactical Operations Squadron's T-33 Shooting Stars. Rounding out the modernization program was the construction of an enhanced Regional Operations Control Center (completed in 1983), and the replacement of the 1950s generation aircraft control and warning radars with the state of the art AN/FPS-117 Minimally Attended Radars. The integrated air warning and defense system became fully operational in mid 1985. Alaska's air defense force was further enhanced with the assignment of two E-3As to Elmendorf AFB in 1986. The Alaskan Command was reestablished at Elmendorf in 1989 as subunified joint service command under the Pacific Command in recognition of Alaska's military importance in the Pacific region.

The Elmendorf AFB is a site of one of the now decommissioned FLR-9 Wullenweber-class antennas, a node of the now obsolete High Frequency SIGINT direction finding system.

Modern era

That importance was further recognized when the F-15E Strike Eagle equipped 90th Tactical Fighter Squadron was reassigned to Elmendorf Air Force Base from Clark Air Base in the Philippines in May 1991. The Pacific Regional Medical Center moved from Clark to Elmendorf and construction of a new, greatly expanded hospital began in 1993. The early 1990s also saw major organizational changes and an expansion of Elmendorf's importance. In 1991, the 21st Tactical Fighter Wing was reorganized as an objective wing and all the major tenant units on Elmendorf were placed under it. The 21st Wing was inactivated and the 3d Wing was reassigned from Clark Air Base to Elmendorf Air Force Base on 19 December 1991. This was in keeping with the Air Force's policies of retaining the oldest and most illustrious units during a period of major force reductions. It was also an alternative landing site for the Space Shuttle.



Six Blue Angels F/A-18 Hornets, fly in delta formation into the rainy mists surrounding Elmendorf AFB during Arctic Thunder, August 2006

Major Commands to which assigned

- **Alaskan Defense Force**, (June 1940 – February 1941)
- **Alaskan Defense Command**, (February – May 1941)
- **Air Field Forces, Alaskan Defense Command**, (May – December 1941)
- **Alaskan Air Force**, (December 1941 – February 1942)
- **Eleventh Air Force**, (February – September 1942)
- **Alaskan Air Command**, (December 1945 – August 1990)
- **Pacific Air Forces**, (August 1990 – present)

Base operating units

- **1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, US** (June 1940 – February 1941) (initial base complement)
- **23d Air Base Group**, (February 1941 – July 1953)
- **5039th Air Base Wing**, (April 1953 – October 1957)
- **5040th Air Base Wing**, (October 1957 – February 1959)

- 1942)
- **23d Service Group**, (July 1942 – January 1948)
- **23d Air Service Group**, (January – April 1948)
- **57th Airdrome Group**, (April - September 1948)
- **57th Air Base Group**, (September 1948 – January 1951)
- **39th Air Depot Wing**, (January 1951 – April 1953)
- **5040th Air Base Wing**, (August 1960 – July 1966)
- **21st Air Base Group**, (July 1966 – January 1980)
- **21st Combat Support Group**, (January 1980 – December 1991)
- **3d Wing**, (December 1991 – July 2010)
- **673d Air Base Wing (July 2010 – present)**

Major units assigned

- 28th Bombardment Group (Composite) (February 1941 – March 1943)
- 343d Fighter Group (September 1942 – March 1943)
- 93d Air Depot Group (May 1944 – September 1946)
- 28th Bombardment Group (June 1946 – June 1948)
- 57th Fighter Group (March 1947 – April 1953)
- 64th, 65th, 66th Fighter-Interceptor Squadrons (June 1947 – November 1957)
- 5039th Air Depot Wing (September 1948 – January 1951)
- 39th Air Depot Wing (January 1951 – April 1953)
- 5039th Air Base Wing (April 1953 – June 1957)
- 5040th Air Base Wing (June 1957 – July 1966) (Under 10th Air Division until August 1960)
- 5070th Air Defense Wing AAC (1 August 1960 – 1 October 1961) with 317th Fighter Interceptor Squadron 25 August 1960 – 1 October 1961)
- **602 Military Airlift Support Squadron (62MAW, McCord AFB, WA) (about 1966-1970 - exact dates unknown at this time)**
- 21st Tactical Fighter Wing (May 1966 – December 1991)
- 343d Tactical Fighter Wing (November 1977 – January 1980)
- 381st Intelligence Squadron (1955–present) (6981st with various unit designations under USAFSS)
- 3d Wing (December 1991 – present)

Base Realignment and Closure, 2005

The Department of Defense proposed a major realignment of the base as part of the Base Realignment and Closure program announced on 13 May 2005. Currently, under the plan, one F-15E and one F-15C squadron have been replaced with the F-22, and the C-130 fleet has been replaced with the C-17 Globemaster III.

Aviation accidents

On 22 September 1995, a Boeing E-3 Sentry Airborne early warning and control aircraft with 22 USAF personnel and two Canadian air crew members crashed after ingesting a flock of Canada Geese, killing all on board.^{[5][6]}

On 28 July 2010, a Boeing C-17 Globemaster III cargo aircraft practicing for an upcoming airshow crashed into a wooded area within the base, killing all four air crew members; three from the Alaska Air National Guard and one from the USAF.^{[7][8]} The cause of the accident has been reported to be pilot error. The pilot performed an aggressive righthand turn and ignored the aircraft's stall warning, continuing the turn until the aircraft stalled due to lack of airspeed. The low altitude of the turn made it impossible for the crew to recover from the stall in time to avoid impacting the ground.^[9]

On 16 November 2010, a Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor took off for a training mission. At approximately 1900 hrs., the base reported that the aircraft was overdue and missing. Air Force rescue teams were reported to be concentrating their search for the missing plane and pilot in Denali National Park. The F-22's crash site was found about 100 miles north of Anchorage near the town of Cantwell, Alaska. The pilot, of the US Air Force's 525th Fighter Squadron, was killed in the crash.^[10]

See also

- Alaska World War II Army Airfields
- Arctic Thunder Air Show
- United States Pacific Air Forces

References

This article incorporates public domain material from websites or documents of the Air Force Historical Research Agency.

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External links

- Elmendorf Air Force Base (<http://www.elmendorf.af.mil/>) official site
- Fort Richardson official website (<http://www.usarak.army.mil/garrison/sites/local/>)
- Elmendorf AFB Installation Overview (<http://elmendorf.ak.airforceusa.org/>) from AirForceUSA.org (<http://AirForceUSA.org/>).
- Elmendorf Air Force Base (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/elmendorf.htm>) at GlobalSecurity.org
- BRAC 2005: Closings, Realignments to Reshape Infrastructure (http://www.defenselink.mil/news/May2005/20050513_1081.html)
- Elmendorf AFB FamCamp Information (http://www.militarycampgrounds.us/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=28&Itemid=38)
- FAA Airport Diagram (<http://aeronav.faa.gov/d-tpp/1506/01196AD.PDF>) (PDF), effective May 28, 2015
- FAA Terminal Procedures for EDF (https://www.faa.gov/air_traffic/flight_info/aeronav/digital_products/dtpp/search/results/?cycle=1506&ident=EDF), effective May 28, 2015
- Resources for this airport:
 - FAA airport information for EDF (<https://nfdc.faa.gov/nfdcApps/airportLookup/airportDisplay.jsp?airportId=EDF>)
 - AirNav airport information for PAED (<http://www.airnav.com/airport/PAED>)
 - ASN accident history for EDF (<http://aviation-safety.net/database/airport/airport.php?id=EDF>)
 - FlightAware airport information (<http://flightaware.com/resources/airport/PAED>) and live flight tracker (<http://flightaware.com/live/airport/PAED>)
 - NOAA/NWS latest weather observations for PAED (<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/data/obhistory/PAED.html>)
 - SkyVector aeronautical chart for EDF (<http://skyvector.com/perl/code?id=EDF&scale=2>)



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