**PACAF Pacific Air Forces**

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| --- |
| **Pacific Air Forces** |
| Pacific Air Forces emblem |
| **Active** | August 3, 1944 – Current |
| **Country** | [United States of America](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_of_America) |
| **Branch** | [United States Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force) |
| **Type** | Major Command |
| **Part of** | [U.S. Pacific Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Pacific_Command) |
| **Garrison/HQ** | [Hickam Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_Air_Force_Base), [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii) |
| **Nickname** | PACAF |
| **Engagements** |     * World War II

Asiatic-Pacific Campaign (1944–1945)* Army of Occupation

Japan (1945–1952)* Korean Service (1950–1953)
* Vietnam Service (1961–1973)
* Expeditionary Service

Cambodia (1973) |
| **Commanders** |
| **Currentcommander** | General [Gary L. North](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gary_L._North) |

**Pacific Air Forces (PACAF)** is a [Major Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Major_Commands_of_the_United_States_Air_Force) of the [United States Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force). It is one of two USAF Major Commands assigned outside of the Continental United States, the other being the [United States Air Forces in Europe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Forces_in_Europe) (USAFE).

PACAF is also the air component of the [United States Pacific Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Pacific_Command) (USPACOM) [Unified Combatant Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unified_Combatant_Command). PACAF is headquartered at [Hickam Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_Air_Force_Base) [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii).

**Leadership**

The [commander](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commander) of Pacific Air Forces is General Gary North; its Vice-Commander is Major General Douglas H. Owens The Command Chief Master Sergeant is Chief Master Sergeant Anthony L. Bishop. Chief Bishop represents the 40,000 Airmen of Pacific Air Forces.

**Mission**

The mission of Pacific Air Forces is to provide ready air and space power to promote U.S. interests in the Asia-Pacific region during peacetime, through crisis, and in war.

PACAF is one of nine US Air Force major commands throughout the world, PACAF is positioned in the Pacific to organize, train, and equip the 45,000 Total Force personnel with the tools necessary to support the Commander of [United States Pacific Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Pacific_Command).

The command's area of responsibility extends from the west coast of the [United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) to the east coast of [Africa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa) and from the [Arctic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arctic) to the [Antarctic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antarctic), more than 100 million square miles. The area is home to nearly two billion people who live in 44 countries.

PACAF comprises four numbered Air Forces, nine main bases and nearly 375 aircraft, It supports both US Pacific Command and the US Air Force with integrated expeditionary Air Force capabilities to defend the Homeland, promote stability, deter aggression and swiftly defeat enemies.

**Current Operating Units**

The command controls four [Numbered Air Forces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Numbered_Air_Force), which function as the senior war-fighting components of PACAF. These are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * [**Fifth Air Force**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth_Air_Force) - [Yokota Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yokota_Air_Base), [Tokyo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokyo), [Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan)

[18th Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/18th_Wing) - [Kadena Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kadena_Air_Base), [Okinawa Prefecture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okinawa_Prefecture), Japan ([HH-60G](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HH-60_Pave_Hawk), [F-15C/D](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-15_Eagle), [KC-135R](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/KC-135_Stratotanker), [E-3 Sentry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-3_Sentry))[35th Fighter Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/35th_Fighter_Wing) - [Misawa Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Misawa_Air_Base), [Aomori Prefecture](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aomori_Prefecture), Japan ([F-16CJ/DJ](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-16_Fighting_Falcon#F-16_C.2FD))[374th Airlift Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/374th_Airlift_Wing) - [Yokota Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yokota_Air_Base) ([C-130E](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-130_Hercules), [C-21A](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-21_Learjet), [UH-1N](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UH-1_Iroquois))[605th Air and Space Operations Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=605th_Air_and_Space_Operations_Center&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Yokota Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yokota_Air_Base)* [**Seventh Air Force (AFKOR)**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh_Air_Force) - [Osan Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osan_Air_Base), [Gyeonggi-do](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gyeonggi-do), [South Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Korea)

[8th Fighter Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8th_Fighter_Wing) - [Kunsan Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kunsan_Air_Base), [Jeollabuk-do](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeollabuk-do), South Korea ([F-16CG/DG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-16_Fighting_Falcon#F-16_C.2FD), [F-16C/D](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-16_Fighting_Falcon#F-16_C.2FD))[51st Fighter Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/51st_Fighter_Wing) - [Osan Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osan_Air_Base) ([A-10/OA-10](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A-10_Thunderbolt), [F-16CG/DG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-16_Fighting_Falcon#F-16_C.2FD), [C-12](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-12_Huron))[607th Air and Space Operations Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=607th_Air_and_Space_Operations_Center&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Osan Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osan_Air_Base)[607th Air Support Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=607th_Air_Support_Group&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Osan Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osan_Air_Base)[607th Air Support Operations Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=607th_Air_Support_Operations_Group&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Osan Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osan_Air_Base)[607th Support Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=607th_Support_Group&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Osan Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osan_Air_Base) | * [**Eleventh Air Force**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleventh_Air_Force) - [Elmendorf Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elmendorf_Air_Force_Base), [Alaska](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska)

[3d Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3d_Wing) - [Elmendorf Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elmendorf_Air_Force_Base) ([F-22 Raptor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-22_Raptor), [F-15C/D](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-15_Eagle), [C-130H](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-130_Hercules), [C-12](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-12_Huron), [E-3B](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-3_Sentry), [C-17 Globemaster III](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-17_Globemaster_III))[354th Fighter Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/354th_Fighter_Wing) - [Eielson AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eielson_AFB), [Alaska](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska) ([F-16CG/DG](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/F-16_Fighting_Falcon#F-16_C.2FD))[611th Air and Space Operations Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=611th_Air_and_Space_Operations_Center&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Elmendorf Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elmendorf_Air_Force_Base)[611th Air Support Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/611th_Air_Support_Group) - [Elmendorf Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elmendorf_Air_Force_Base)* [**Thirteenth Air Force (AFPAC)**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Air_Force) - [Hickam AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_Air_Force_Base), [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii)

[15th Airlift Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/15th_Airlift_Wing) - [Hickam AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_AFB) ([C-17](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-17_Globemaster_III), [C-37](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-37), [C-40](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C-40_Clipper))[13th Air Expeditionary Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=13th_Air_Expeditionary_Group&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Hickam AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_Air_Force_Base), [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii) (Seasonal)[36th Wing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/36th_Wing) - [Andersen AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andersen_Air_Force_Base), [Guam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guam) (No aircraft assigned)[613th Air and Space Operations Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=613th_Air_and_Space_Operations_Center&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Hickam AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_AFB)[613th Support Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=613th_Support_Group&action=edit&redlink=1) - [Hickam AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_AFB) |

**History**

Pacific Air Forces was established in 1944 to consolidate and streamline the command and control authority over United States Army Air Force units widely deployed throughout the southwest Pacific in World War II. Over the past 60+ years, PACAF has been the symbol of United States air and space power over a third of the world; being engaged in combat twice during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and today is the United States Air Force component of the Unified United States Pacific Command

**Lineage**

* Established as **Far East Air Forces** on July 31, 1944

Activated on August 3, 1944

Redesignated: **Pacific Air Command, United States Army**, on December 6, 1945

Redesignated: **Far East Air Forces** on January 1, 1947

Redesignated **Pacific Air Forces** on July 1, 1957

**Assignments**

* Southwest Pacific Area, August 3, 1944
* US Army Forces, Pacific, December 6, 1945
* [United States Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force), September 26, 1947 – Present

**Operational Components**

**Commands**

* Far East Air Forces Bomber Command, Provisional: July 8, 1950 – June 18, 1954
* Far East Air Forces Combat Cargo Command, Provisional: August 20, 1950 – January 25, 1951
* Far East Air Forces Materiel Command (later, Far East Air Logistics Force): August 18, 1944 – October 1, 1955

**Force**

* Japan Air Defense: March 1, 1952 – September 1, 1954

**Air Forces**

* [Fifth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth_Air_Force): August 3, 1944 – Present
* [Seventh Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh_Air_Force)

July 14, 1945 – January 1, 1947; January 5, 1955 – July 1, 1957; April 1, 1966 – June 30, 1975; September 8, 1986 – Present

* [Eighth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eighth_Air_Force): December 6, 1945 – June 7, 1946
* [Eleventh Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleventh_Air_Force): August 9, 1990 – Present
* [Thirteenth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Air_Force): August 3, 1944 – June 1, 1955; July 1, 1957 – Present
* [Twentieth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twentieth_Air_Force): December 6, 1945 – March 1, 1955

**Air Divisions**

* [1st Bombardment Division (later: 1st Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1st_Strategic_Aerospace_Division): June 7, 1946 – December 1, 1948
* [2d Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2d_Air_Division_%28United_States%29): September 10 – October 10, 1962; July 8, 1965 – April 1, 1966
* [17th Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/17th_Air_Division_%28United_States%29). July 17 1, 1975 – January 1, 1976
* [85th Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/85th_Air_Division_%28United_States%29): May 11, 1945 – September 1, 1945
* [91st Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/91st_Air_Division_%28United_States%29): August 8, 1944 – January 27, 1946
* [314th Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/314th_Air_Division): May 18, 1951 – March 1, 1952
* [315th Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/315th_Air_Division): January 25, 1951 – April 15, 1969
* [326th Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/326th_Air_Division): July 1, 1957 – February 15, 1989
* [327th Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/327th_Air_Division): January 26 – February 8, 1966

**Wings**

* [8 Tactical Fighter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8th_Fighter_Wing): June 18 – July 8, 1964
* [18 Fighter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/18th_Wing): December 1, 1948 – May 16, 1949
* [19 Bombardment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/19th_Airlift_Wing): May 16 – October 17, 1949
* [27 Fighter-Escort](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/27th_Special_Operations_Wing): attached, November 19–29, 1950 and October 6–13, 1952
* [35 Tactical Fighter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/35th_Fighter_Wing): March 14 – April 8, 1966.

**Stations**

* [Brisbane](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brisbane), [Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia), August 3, 1944
* [Hollandia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hollandia), [New Guinea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Guinea), September 16, 1944
* [Leyte](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leyte), [Philippines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines), February 7, 1945
* [Tolosa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tolosa), [Leyte](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leyte), [Philippines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines), February 17, 1945
* [Fort McKinley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_McKinley), [Leyte](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leyte), [Philippines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines), March 20, 1945
* [Tokyo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokyo), [Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan), May 17, 1946
* Fuchu AS, [Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan), May 13, 1956
* [Hickam AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_AFB), [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii), June 30, 1957 – Present

**Operational History**

**Far East Air Forces**

Main article: [Far East Air Force (United States)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Far_East_Air_Force_%28United_States%29)

See also: [United States Strategic Air Forces in the Pacific](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Strategic_Air_Forces_in_the_Pacific)

PACAF traces its roots to the activation of the [World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II) **Far East Air Forces\*** (FEAF) on August 3, 1944, at [Brisbane](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brisbane), [Queensland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queensland), [Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia). FEAF was subordinate to the U.S. Army Forces Far East and served as the headquarters of Allied Air Forces Southwest Pacific Area.

On June 15, 1945, all [United States Army Air Forces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army_Air_Forces) numbered air forces in the [Pacific theater](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_theater) were assigned to FEAF to support combat operations in the Pacific, these being:

* [Fifth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth_Air_Force), [New Guinea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Guinea)
* [Seventh Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh_Air_Force), [Okinawa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okinawa)
* [Thirteenth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Air_Force), [Solomon Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon_Islands)

Although engaged in combat operations against Japan, [Tenth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tenth_Air_Force) stationed in [India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India) and [Fourteenth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourteenth_Air_Force) stationed in [China](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China) were not part of Far East Air Forces. [Twentieth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twentieth_Air_Force) was assigned directly to Headquarters USAAF at [The Pentagon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Pentagon) and also was not part of Far East Air Forces. However, the combined Army Air Forces in both the [China Burma India Theater](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China_Burma_India_Theater_of_World_War_II) and the [Pacific theater](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Ocean_theater_of_World_War_II) were the largest and most powerful military organization ever fielded by any country in the world.

With the end of [World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II) in September 1945, the USAAF found its units deployed throughout the Pacific, from [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii) to [India](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India); from [Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan) to [Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia); based on a hundred island airstrips along with bases in [China](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China) and [Burma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burma). A realignment of these forces was needed by the USAAF to better organize its forces in the Pacific for peacetime. On December 6, 1945, Far East Air Forces was redesignated **Pacific Air Command, United States Army** (PACUSA), and its Air Forces were redeployed as follows:

* Fifth Air Force: Assigned to [Tokyo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokyo), [Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan).

Its primary mission performing occupation duty on the [Japanese Home Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan) and the [Korean peninsula](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korea).

* Seventh Air Force: Assigned to [Hickam Field](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_AFB), [Territory of Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii)

Returning to its prewar mission for the defense of the [Hawaiian Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaiian_Islands), including [Midway Island](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Midway_Atoll); the [Marshall Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Islands) and other Central Pacific islands

* Eighth Air Force: Assigned to [Kadena Army Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kadena_Air_Base), [Okinawa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okinawa)

Defense of the [Ryukyu Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ryukyu_Islands), including [Iwo Jima](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iwo_Jima)

* Thirteenth Air Force: Assigned to [Clark Field](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clark_Air_Base), [Philippines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines)

Defense of the Philippines, [New Guinea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Guinea) and the [Solomon Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solomon_Islands).

* Twentieth Air Force:\*\* Assigned to Harmon Field, [Guam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guam), [Mariana Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mariana_Islands)

Providing a strategic deterrent for the entire [Western Pacific](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Pacific_Ocean) region.

With this realignment and reassignment of forces, PACUSA controlled and commanded all United States Army Air Forces in the Far East and Southwest Pacific, and all air forces were placed under one Air Force commander for the first time.

In November 1945 the [509th Composite Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/509th_Composite_Group) left [Tinian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tinian) and was reassigned to [Roswell Army Air Field](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walker_AFB), [New Mexico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Mexico), taking the [Atomic Bomb](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atomic_Bomb) delivery capability of PACUSA to the United States. Shortly afterwards, Eighth Air Force was reassigned to the new [Strategic Air Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_Air_Command) (SAC) on June 7, 1946 and its strategic units reassigned to the 1st Bombardment Division.

The major mission of PACUSA in the postwar years (1946–1950) was occupation duty in Japan and the demilitarization of the Japanese society in conjunction with the United States Army. In addition, PACUSA helped to support Atomic Bomb testing in the [Pacific Proving Grounds](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Proving_Grounds) beginning with the [Operation Crossroads](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Crossroads) test on [Bikini Atoll](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bikini_Atoll) in the [Marshall Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Islands) in 1946

With the establishment of the [United States Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force), PACUSA was redesignated **Far East Air Forces** (FEAF) on January 1, 1947. On that same date, Seventh Air Force in [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii) was inactivated with its organization absorbed by HQ, FEAF.

PACUSA/FEAF deployments to [Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korea) prior to the 1948 partition of the country helped in the establishment of the [Republic of Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_Korea) (South Korea), along with the transfer of surplus military equipment and other aid to [French Indochina](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Indochina) as well as aid to the [Nationalist Chinese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalist_China) during the [Chinese Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_Civil_War) which resumed after the end of World War II (1945–1949).

\* The United States Far East Air Forces was a separate command from the World War II **Far East Air Force** (October 28, 1941 – February 5, 1942) which fought in the Philippine and Dutch East India campaigns. Initially it was comprised mostly of aircraft and personnel from the [Philippine Army Air Corps](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippine_Army_Air_Corps). It was largely destroyed during the [Battle of the Philippines (1941–42)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Philippines_%281941%E2%80%9342%29). The surviving personnel and aircraft were later re-organized in [Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australia), as the U.S. [Fifth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fifth_Air_Force).
\*\* Reassigned to PACUSA December 6, 1945

**Korean War**

*Further information:* [*United States Air Force In South Korea*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force_In_South_Korea)

  for information concerning the USAF's role in the Korean War and subsequent activities in South Korea since 1953.

*Further information:* [*USAF Units and Aircraft of the Korean War*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USAF_Units_and_Aircraft_of_the_Korean_War)

  for information concerning aircraft flown by FEAF in the Korean War; bases, and units engaged in combat operations.

On June 25, 1950, the armed forces of the [Democratic People's Republic of Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_People%27s_Republic_of_Korea) (North Korea) invaded South Korea. On June 27 the [United Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) [Security Council](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Security_Council) voted to assist the South Koreans in resisting the invasion. [President Harry Truman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Truman) authorized [General Douglas MacArthur](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Douglas_MacArthur) (commander of the US occupying forces in Japan) to commit units to the battle. MacArthur ordered [General George E. Stratemeyer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_E._Stratemeyer), CIC of FEAF to attack attacking North Korean forces between the front lines and the [38th parallel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/38th_parallel_north).

**Order of Battle, June 1950**

Despite the post-World War II demobilization of United States forces the United States Air Force still had substantial forces in the Pacific to oppose the North Korean military. When the North Koreans crossed the 38th parallel June 25, 1950, FEAF consisted of the following primary units\*:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * **Fifth Air Force** (Japan)

Itazuke Air Base, Kyushu [8th Fighter-Bomber Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/8th_Fighter_Wing) (F-80, F-82)[Johnson Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johnson_Air_Base), Honshu [3d Bombardment Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3rd_Wing) (B-26)Nagoya Air Base, Honshu [347th Fighter AW Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/347th_Rescue_Wing) (inactivated June 24, 1950)[Tachikawa Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tachikawa_Airfield), Honshu [374th Troop Carrier Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/374th_Airlift_Wing) (C-54)[Yokota Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yokota_Air_Base), [Honshu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honshu) [35th Fighter-Interceptor Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/35th_Fighter_Wing) (F-80, RF-80, F-82)Misawa Air Base, Honshu [49th Fighter-Bomber Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/49th_Fighter_Wing) (F-80) | * **Twentieth Air Force** (Okinawa and the Marianas)

Naha Air Base, Okinawa [51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/51st_Fighter_Wing) (F-80, F-82)[Kadena Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kadena_Air_Base), Okinawa 31st Photo Reconnaissance Squadron, VLR\*\* (RB-29)[Andersen Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andersen_Air_Force_Base), [Guam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guam) [19th Bombardment Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/19th_Air_Refueling_Wing) (B-29)* **Thirteenth Air Force** (Philippines)

[Clark Air Force Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clark_Air_Base), [Luzon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luzon) [18th Fighter-Bomber Wing/Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/18th_Wing) (F-80)21st Troop Carrier Squadron (C-54)6204th Photo Mapping Flight\*\*\* (RB-17)) |

At that time, the combat units of the FEAF were equipped with the Lockheed F-80 Shooting Star fighter, the North American F-82 Twin Mustang all weather escort fighter, the Douglas B-26 Invader light attack bomber, the Lockheed RF-80A tactical reconnaissance aircraft, and the Boeing B-29 Superfortress heavy bomber.

During the Korean War (1950–1953) FEAF's Fifth Air Force was the main United Nations combat air command during the Korean War, and was instrumental in bringing about the cease-fire that formally ended that conflict in 1953.

\* Elements of the 2d and 3d Air Rescue squadrons, attached to FEAF by the [Military Air Transport Service](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_Air_Transport_Service) (MATS), were located at various bases where they could best perform emergency rescue services with their SB-17's. The 512th and 514th Weather Reconnaissance Squadrons (2143d Air Weather Wing) were located at Yokota and Anderson. All USAF units engaged in combat during the [Korean War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_War) were under the overall command of Far East Air Forces.
\*\* The 31st Photo Reconnaissance squadron was a [Strategic Air Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_Air_Command) (SAC) organization, attached to FEAF for operations. On June 29, 1950 the unit began flying combat missions over the Korean Peninsula to provide FEAF Bomber Command with target and bomb-damage assessment photography.
\*\*\* The 6204th Photo Mapping Flight, located at Clark AB, Philippines, deployed the Flight's two RB-17 aircraft complete with combat crews and maintenance personnel to Johnson AB, Japan in mid-June 1950. The FEAF deployment order specified that the two RB-17 aircraft be equipped with normal armament insofar as practicable, not to interfere with the photographic capability of the aircraft. This posed a problem for the Flight, since the RB-17s had been flying peacetime missions and were not equipped for combat. However, the 6204th found the necessary gunners and equipment, made the modifications to the aircraft, and by late August 1950 the detachment began flying photo-mapping missions over Korea. By the end of November 1950, it had photographed the entire North Korean area at least once and re-photographed some areas as far north as weather conditions permitted. By early December the detachment returned to Clark AB and resumed the flight's mapping program in the Philippine area.

**Cold War**

C-124 at Hamilton AFB, California being prepared to load a Lockheed F-104 Starfigther being transported to Formosa, 1958

With the 1953 Korean Armistice, the deployed SAC and TAC units to Japan and Korea were gradually withdrawn, and returned to the United States. [Twentieth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twentieth_Air_Force) was inactivated on March 1, 1955, leaving FEAF with two Air Forces, the Fifth in Japan and the Thirteenth in the Philippines, although units were maintained on Guam and Okinawa.

Tensions between the [Communist Chinese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_Chinese) on the mainland and the [Nationalist Chinese](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nationalist_Chinese) on [Taiwan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan) dominated FEAF during the mid to late 1950s. The [1954](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Taiwan_Strait_Crisis) and [1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Taiwan_Strait_Crisis) both threatened to break out into a war, and USAF F-104C units were deployed to [Kung Kuan Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ching_Chuan_Kang_Air_Base) on [Taiwan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan) in 1958. The question of "[Matsu](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matsu) and [Quemoy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quemoy)" became an issue in the [1960 American Presidential election](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1960_American_Presidential_election) when [Richard Nixon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nixon) accused [John F. Kennedy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_F._Kennedy) of being unwilling to commit to using nuclear weapons if the People's Republic of China invaded the Nationalist outposts.

On July 1, 1957 United States Far East Air Forces was redesignated **Pacific Air Forces** and transferred its headquarters to [Hickam AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hickam_AFB), [Territory of Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii). By 1960, PACAF maintained a combat-ready deterrent force of some 35 squadrons, operating from 10 major bases in a half-dozen countries.

**Vietnam War**

See also: [United States Air Force In South Vietnam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force_In_South_Vietnam)

See also: [United States Air Force In Thailand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force_In_Thailand)

F-4 of the 421st Tactical Fighter Squadron, Da Nang Air Base

Republic F-105F/G-1-RE Thunderchief Serial 63-8319 of Det 1, 561st Tactical Fighter (Wild Weasel) Squadron, Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base

North American F-100F-20-NA Super Sabre Serial 58-1213 of the 352d Fighter Squadron at Phan Rang Air Base, South Vietnam, 1971

In the early 1960s communist military strength and firepower in [Vietnam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam) increased. As a result, PACAF began a buildup in the area with the addition of troops and better arms and equipment.

In response to what has become known as the [Gulf of Tonkin incident](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_of_Tonkin_incident) in 1964, [Tactical Air Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tactical_Air_Command) pilots and support personnel found themselves deployed from the CONUS to PACAF bases such as [Da Nang Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Da_Nang_International_Airport) and [Phan Rang AB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phan_Rang_Air_Base) in South Vietnam. Bases in Thailand ([Takhli RTAFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Takhli_Royal_Thai_Air_Force_Base), [Korat RTAFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korat_Royal_Thai_Air_Force_Base)) were also used by deployed TAC fighter squadrons.

As the American effort in Southeast Asia increased, TAC permanently reassigned entire wings of aircraft from CONUS bases to PACAF and increased the number of rotated tactical fighter and recon squadrons on rotating Temporary Duty commitments to PACAF bases in Vietnam and Thailand, along with units to [South Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Korea), [Japan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan) and the [Philippines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines). On a daily basis, flight crews would hurl themselves and their planes at targets across the area of operations over the skies of [North](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Vietnam) and [South Vietnam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Vietnam).

At the height of the [Vietnam War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnam_War) (1968), PACAF commanded forces at major air bases in the following countries:

* Japan (Fifth Air Force)
* South Korea (Fifth Air Force)
* Philippines (Thirteenth Air Force)
* Taiwan (Thirteenth Air Force)
* South Vietnam (Seventh Air Force)
* Thailand (Seventh/Thirteenth Air Force)

In 1962, PACAF activated the [2d Air Division](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2d_Air_Division) to be the main warfighting organization in South Vietnam. As the conflict escalated, [Seventh Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh_Air_Force) was activated on April 1, 1966, replacing 2d Air Force. PACAF units in [Thailand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thailand) were under the command of [Thirteenth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Air_Force) beginning in 1964, then in 1973 a joint Seventh/Thirteenth Air Force headquarters was established in Bangkok to direct PACAF forces in Thailand operating in Indochina (Until August 15, 1973), and Thailand until the final USAF withdrawal from Southeast Asia in the beginning of 1976.

Further information: [Seventh Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seventh_Air_Force)

*for the PACAF order of battle in South Vietnam*

Further information: [Thirteenth Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thirteenth_Air_Force)

*for the PACAF order of battle in Thailand*

By 1970 the war was winding down as the conflict was being Vietnamized. Units from the South Vietnamese Air Force (SVNAF) took on more and more combat to defend their nation. PACAF tactical air strength was being reduced as several air bases were turned over to the SVNAF. Combat aircraft of PACAF flew their last strikes in [Cambodia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambodia) August 15, 1973, writing the final chapter to the long and costly history of active American participation in the [Indochina War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indochina_War). The [Paris Peace Accords](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris_Peace_Accords) of 1973 ended PACAF's use of South Vietnamese bases, and by 1976 bases in Thailand were turned over to the Thai government. In 1979, normalization of relations with the [People's Republic of China](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/People%27s_Republic_of_China) led to the withdrawal of PACAF personnel from [Ching Chuan Kang Air Base](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ching_Chuan_Kang_Air_Base), [Republic of China (Taiwan)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_China_%28Taiwan%29).

**Post-Cold War**

South Korea based 51st Fighter Wing F-16Cs in flight.

The post-Vietnam era found the command focusing on improving its readiness, and PACAF's organizational structure saw a marked period of rapid and extensive changes. Deactivated at the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, Seventh Air Force was reactivated at Osan Air Base, South Korea in 1986 to take over Fifth Air Force activities in South Korea. [Andersen AFB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andersen_AFB) was reassigned from [Strategic Air Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategic_Air_Command) in 1989, and [Eleventh Air Force](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleventh_Air_Force) became a part of the command in late 1990. Following the volcanic eruption of [Mount Pinatubo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Pinatubo), [Clark AB](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clark_AB), the [Philippines](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines), was closed and Thirteenth Air Force relocated in 1991.

In 1992, changes took place in force structure within PACAF as the command assumed control of theater-based tactical airlift wings, theater C-130 aircraft and crews, and associated theater C-130 support. PACAF also gained control of all operational support aircraft and all aeromedical airlift assets in the Pacific.

In 1986, the [Goldwater-Nichols Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goldwater-Nichols_Act) reworked the command structure of the United States military. With the creation of [Unified Combatant Commands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unified_Combatant_Command) (UCC) organized either on a geographical basis (known as "Area Of Responsibility", AOR) or on a functional basis, Pacific Air Forces became a part of the [United States Pacific Command](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Pacific_Command) (USPACOM)

Throughout its history PACAF has played a vital role in world events. In addition to its key combat role in World War II, Korea and Vietnam, PACAF units fought in [Desert Storm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desert_Storm) in 1991, and they continue to deploy to [Saudi Arabia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saudi_Arabia), [Turkey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkey) and [Italy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italy) for peacekeeping operations. PACAF provided its expertise, aircraft, personnel and equipment to facilitate the new Expeditionary Air Force, especially as it applied to successful airbridge operations spanning the vast [Pacific Ocean](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Ocean). Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the United States, PACAF again demonstrated its intrepid spirit through its units deployed in support of [Operation Noble Eagle](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Noble_Eagle) and [Operation Enduring Freedom](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Enduring_Freedom).

Since 1944, the command has participated in more than 140 humanitarian operations within its area of responsibility and beyond. In these operations PACAF people quickly and efficiently airlifted food, medicine and other supplies to areas devastated by storms, floods, earthquakes, volcanoes and other natural disasters.

It is a certainty that PACAF personnel and aircraft not assigned to [South Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Korea) are deployed to combat areas in the [Middle East](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Middle_East), [South Asia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Asia) or elsewhere as part of the [Global War on Terrorism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_War_on_Terrorism).

**See also**

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|  | [***United States Air Force portal***](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3AUnited_States_Air_Force) |

* [Military of South Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_of_South_Korea) (ROK Armed Forces)
* [United States Air Force In South Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force_In_South_Korea)
* [United States Air Force In South Vietnam](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force_In_South_Vietnam)
* [United States Air Force in Thailand](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Air_Force_in_Thailand)
* [United States Army Air Forces in Australia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Army_Air_Forces_in_Australia)
* [United States Forces Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Forces_Korea) (USFK)

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