WORLD'S AIR FORCES

West coast-based E-2C Hawkeyes parade in force

first of 25 Lockheed TR-1 battlefield
surveillance aircraft is in service, and
18 Precision Locator Strike System-
equipped TR-ls will be based in
England from next year to provide
coverage over the European central front.
Selection of a New Generation Trainer is complete, with Fairchild to build 650 T-46s under a $104 million fixed-price incentive contract. The T46 is scheduled to fly in April 1985, and be in Air Training Command service by 1987. Other contenders for the T-46 contract included Rockwell, Grumman, and Cessna.
Strategic Air Command maintains the USAF deterrent and all nine ICBM wings, and the manned bomber force conies under its control within the 8th Air Force with headquarters at Barksdale AFB, La, and 15th AF with headquarters at March AFB, Calif. The bomber element has 18 wings of B-52s, comprising 269 B-52G/ Hs (170 Gs equipped with Srams and fitted with an electro-optical viewing system) and 80 B-52Ds which have been structurally modified and are being equipped with digital bomb navi-gation systems. Each of the bomber wings has attached to it an associated KC-135 Stratotanker element drawn from 35 squadrons with 615 aircraft. These also support other commands on air-refuelling duties and include KC-135s assigned to Air Force Re-serve and Air National Guard units. Four squadrons in two wings, the 380th and 509th, operate 66 Sram-equipped FB-lllAs, while SAC's reconniassance force comprises the 9th SRW with U-2s, SR-71s, and supporting KC-135Q tankers at Beale AFB. Two further wings with about 65 RC-135s fly a variety of tasks including electronic reconniassance.

Responsibility for the operation of the air defence radars, control centres, and interceptors rests with Tactical Air Command, while SAC now oper-ates the Air Force's missile warning

and space surveillance sensors. TAG aircraft maintain the important air defence commitment over the conti-nental USA, with the north covered by the Canadians. The interceptor force comprises one F-15 Eagle squa-dron, five active and five Air National Guard F-106 squadrons totalling some 215 aircraft, one F-101B Voodoo ANG unit with 40 aircraft, and four F-4 Phantom ANG units, with one active F-4 squadron based in Iceland (57th FIS). There is one group of EB-57s with the ANG, and plans call for the replacement of the F-106s by F-15 Eagles and the replacement of the Voodoo force with F-4s. TAC itself is the USAF's quick-reaction force incor-porating fighter, reconnaissance, trans-port, and special operations units. There are two Air Forces, the 9th with headquarters at Shaw AFB, SC, and the 12th, headquartered at Berg-strom AFB, Texas.

TAC is currently receiving three new combat aircraft in quantity, F-16 Fighting Falcons, F-15 Eagles, and A-10 Thunderbolt lis. More than 300 F-16s have been delivered of 1,388 planned (including 206 two-seat F-16Bs) and these are flying with the 56th TFW at MacDill AFB, Ga, the 474th TFW at Nellis AFB, Nevada, the 363rd TFW at Shaw AFB, South Carolina, and the 388th TFW at Hill AFB, Utah. F-15C/D Eagle deliveries con-tinue at the 48th FIS, Langley AFB, the 21st TFW, Elemdorf AFB, and the 25th Norad AD Region, McChord AFB. Anti-armour units with A-lOs are the 354th TFW at Myrtle Beach, SC, as well as the 355th Training Wing at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz, and the 23rd TFW at England AFB, La, while Air National Guard units attached to TAC flying the type include the 174th TFW and three groups, the 103rd, 104th, and 175th. A-10 procurement stands at more than 700 production aircraft of a planned total of 727 machines.

The 552nd Airborne Warning and Control Wing at Tinker AFB operates the 26 E-3A (Awacs) aircraft currently in the Air Force inventory. A total of 34 E-3As are required. Other types in use include two active AF squa-drons with F-4Gs, four wings and 11 groups with more than 350 A-7Ds (ANG-operated), six squadrons with F-lllA/Ds, six RF-4C squadrons with 100 aircraft, and 12 squadrons with F-4D/E Phantoms. TAC now has EF-111A Electric Fox defence suppres-sion aircraft of a total of 42 F-111A conversions for two squadrons for bas-ing in England from 1984. Delivery is also continuing of 25 two-seat A-7Ks for the ANG A-7 units, with planned procurement reaching 42 aircraft. Seven special-operations squadrons fly 42 OV-lOAs, 68 0-2A/BS, 27 C/AC-130s, and five EC-135s. Most of TAC's 82 T-38s and 66 F-5Es are used for "Red Flag" combat training at Nellis AFB, Nev. Total TAC helicopter inventory is: 19 UH-ls, 15 CH-3s, and three CH-53s. Air National Guard units have been receiving F-4s and A-7s from the active TAC inventory and there are now four wings and seven groups of F-4C/ Ds as well as two wings and six groups of RF-4Cs. There are also three groups with 140 0-2As and three groups with OA-37s. A single Tactical Electronic Warfare Group operates EC-130Es. TAC units involved in the establishment of the Rapid Deploy-ment Joint Task Force include the 27th TFW at Cannon AFB, with F-lllDs, the 49th TFW at Holloman AFB with F-15s, the 347th TFW at Moody AFB with F-4Es, the 354th TFW at Myrtle Beach AFB with A-lOAs, and the 552nd AW&CW at Tinker AFB with Boeing E-3As.

US Air Forces Europe is an integral part of Nato with more than 30 squadrons based with the 3rd AF in the UK, 16th in Spain, and 17th in Germany. Modernisation of aircraft continued during the year, with the conversion of F-15A/Bs to F-15C/Ds, and the planned addition of EF-111 aircraft in 1984 will increase USAFE's electronic warfare capability. For com-bat training, the 527th TFT Aggressor Sqn at RAF Alconbury operates 20 F-5Es. At RAF Lakenheath, the 48th TFW has four squadrons of F-lllFs and at Upper Heyford the 20th TFW continues to operate three squadrons with about 80 F-lllEs. Ten squadrons continue to fly F-4D/E Phantoms, two with the 86th at Ramstein, and three with the 401st at Torrejon. A third squadron with the 52nd TFW has two F-4G Wild Weasel anti-radar Phan-toms, received in 1979, while two re-connaissance squadrons are equipped with 40 RF-4Cs (one each with the 10th TRW at Alconbury and 26th TRW at Zweibrucken). From January 1982, F-16s replaced F-4s in the 50th TFW at Hahn, with 24 of their F-4s alloca-ted to other European-based units with the other 48 being returned to the USA. There are SAC rotational squadrons of KC-135s at Zaragoza in
Spain as well as RAF Mildenhall and
RAF Fairford in the UK, while a
C-130E/H unit is deployed from the
States to Mildenhall and Rhein-Main,
Germany. At the same base are four

1 344 FLIGHT International, 6 November 1982