



History of Eglin Air Force Base





15 Oct 1934

James Plew, a local businessman, donated 1,460 acres of land to the US Government for a military airport near Valparaiso, FL.



22 May 1935

The Army Air Corps activated the Valparaiso Bombing and Gunnery Range with one officer and 15 enlisted men assigned.



27 Mar 1936

The Air Corps Tactical School conducted the first gunnery training at the Valparaiso Bombing and Gunnery Range.



4 Aug 1937

Valparaiso Bombing and Gunnery Range was renamed Eglin Field in honor of Lt Col Frederick I. Eglin, killed 1 Jan 1937 near Anniston, AL.



26 Apr 1939

Maj Gen Henry "Hap" Arnold, Chief of the Air Corps, approved the findings of the Air Corps Board to locate a proving ground at Eglin Field.



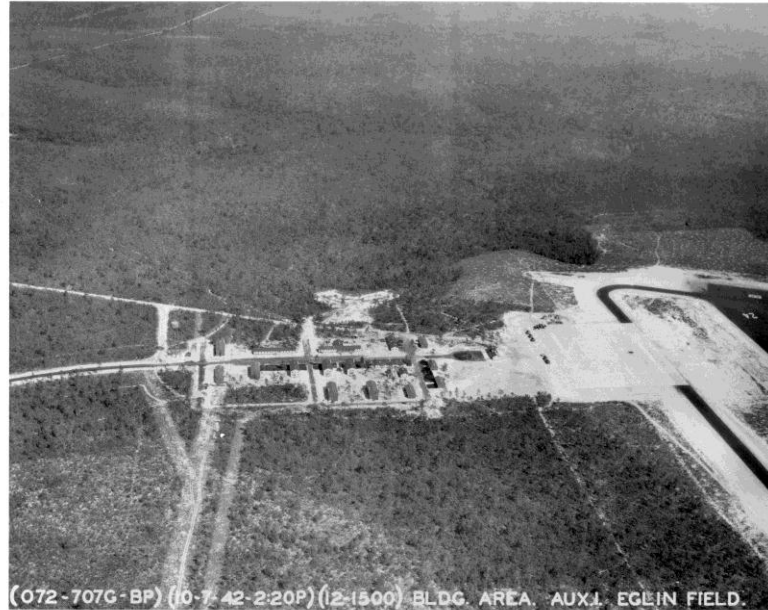
Dec 1939

Cpts Delmar T. Spivey and George W. Mundy, 23rd Composite Group, Maxwell Field, flew two P-37s to Eglin Field for engine testing, the first of 1000s of service tests.



27 Jun 1940

The Department of Agriculture transferred over 340,000 acres of the Choctawhatchee National Forest to the War Department for ranges to be used for gunnery and bombing training.



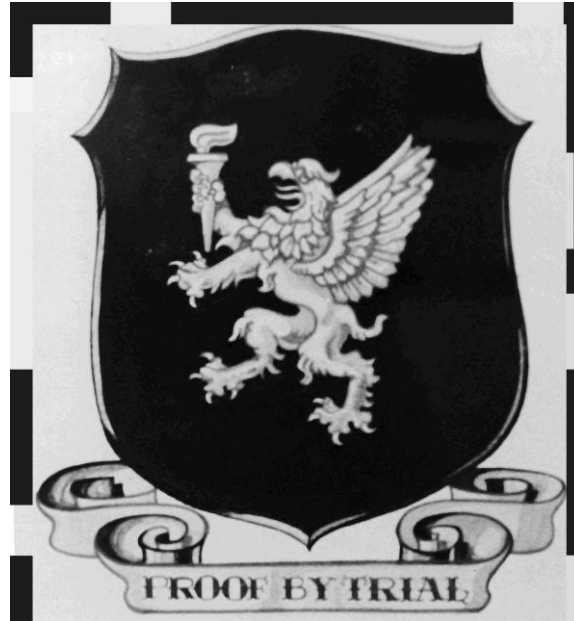
27 Nov 1940

Egin Field began construction of the first of nine auxiliary fields for gunnery and bombing training and service testing of aircraft and armament.



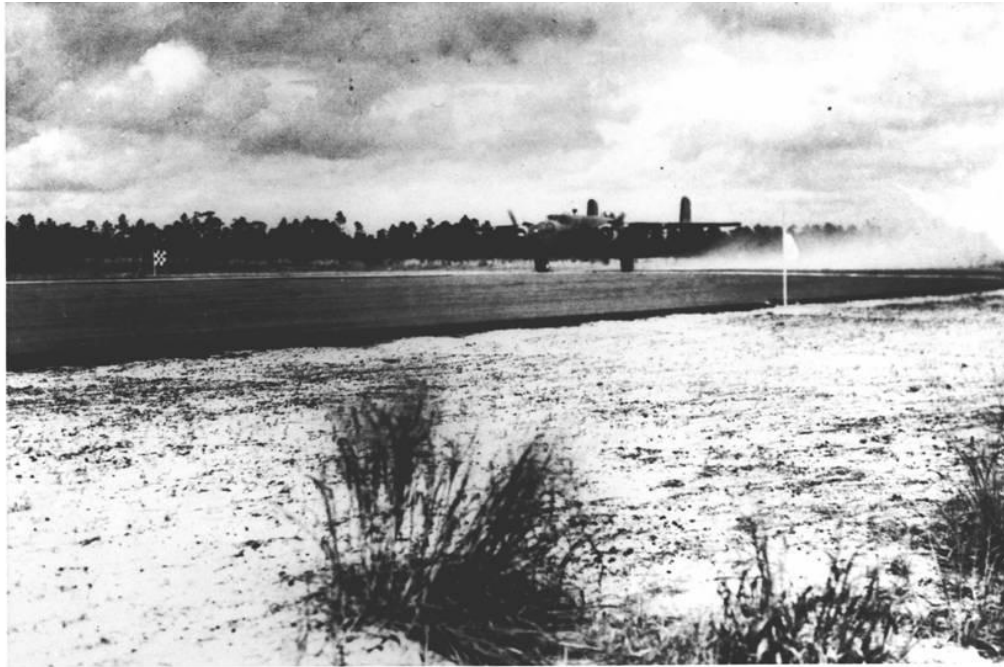
30 Jun 1940

The 23rd Composite Group transferred from Orlando AAF for permanent assignment to Eglin Field to conduct flight testing activities.



19 May 1941

Eglin Field was redesignated as the Air Corps Proving Ground under the direct control of the Chief of the Air Corps with Col Donald P. Muse as its first commander.



9-25 Mar 1942

Doolittle Raiders learned to conduct carrier-style short takeoffs at Wagner Field, Auxiliary Field #1, in preparation for their 18 Apr raid on Japan.



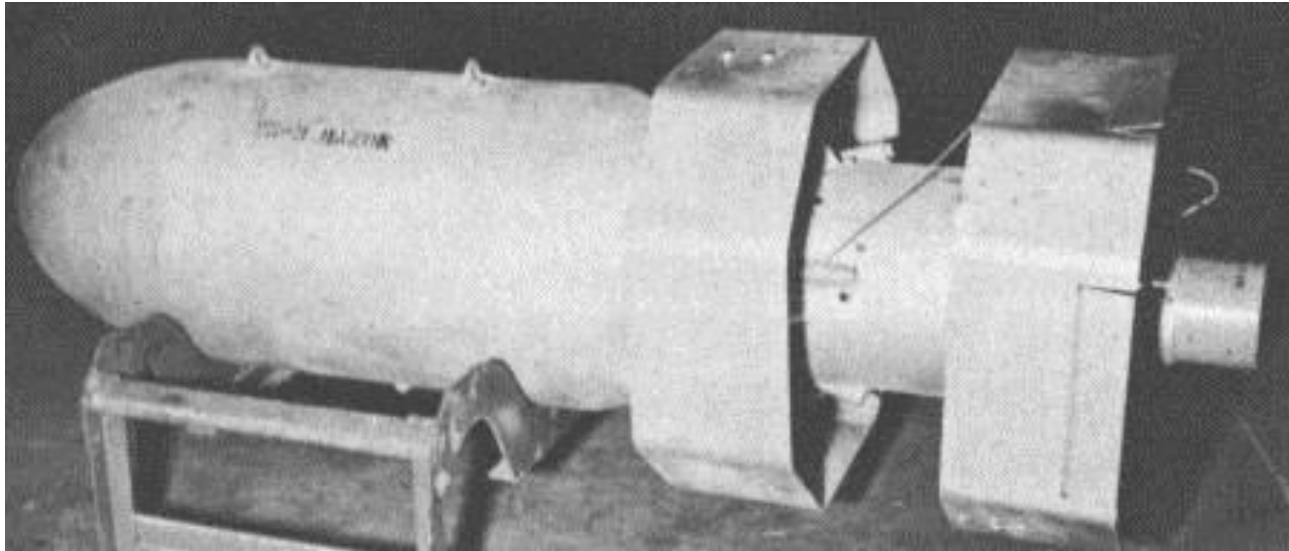
15 Feb 1944

Gen “Hap” Arnold, Chief of the Army Air Force, observed an Operation CROSSBOW test, the program to determine the best method of attacking German V-1 “buzz bomb” sites along the French and Dutch coast, at Eglin Field.



12 Oct 1944

The Air Proving Ground Command began testing the JB-2 Loon, an American version of the German V-1, which became the foundation of the Air Force guided missile program.



31 Mar 1946

The Air Proving Ground Command completed the tactical suitability test of the JB-3, which destroyed 15 bridges during the Korean War.



13 Jan 1947

The First Experimental Guided Missile Group conducted a simulated “bombing” mission of Washington, DC, with a B-17 drone.



24 May 1947

Eglin AFB completed construction of the McKinley Climatic Laboratory that allowed the Air Proving Ground Command to simulate virtually all climatic conditions “indoors.”



20 Nov 1951

The US Army located its Ranger training camp at Eglin Auxiliary Field #7 to provide realistic jungle/swamp training. In Jan 70, the camp moved to its present location at Field #6.



26 Dec 1951

The Air Force established the Air Force Armament Center (AFAC), commanded by Maj Gen Edward P. Mechling, as a tenant unit on Eglin AFB, to develop air-delivered weapons for the Air Force.



9 Feb 1956

The first production model of the Lockheed C-130 Hercules arrived for cold weather testing in the McKinley Climatic Laboratory. C-130 has served in over 15 roles and has been produced in 10 major variants.



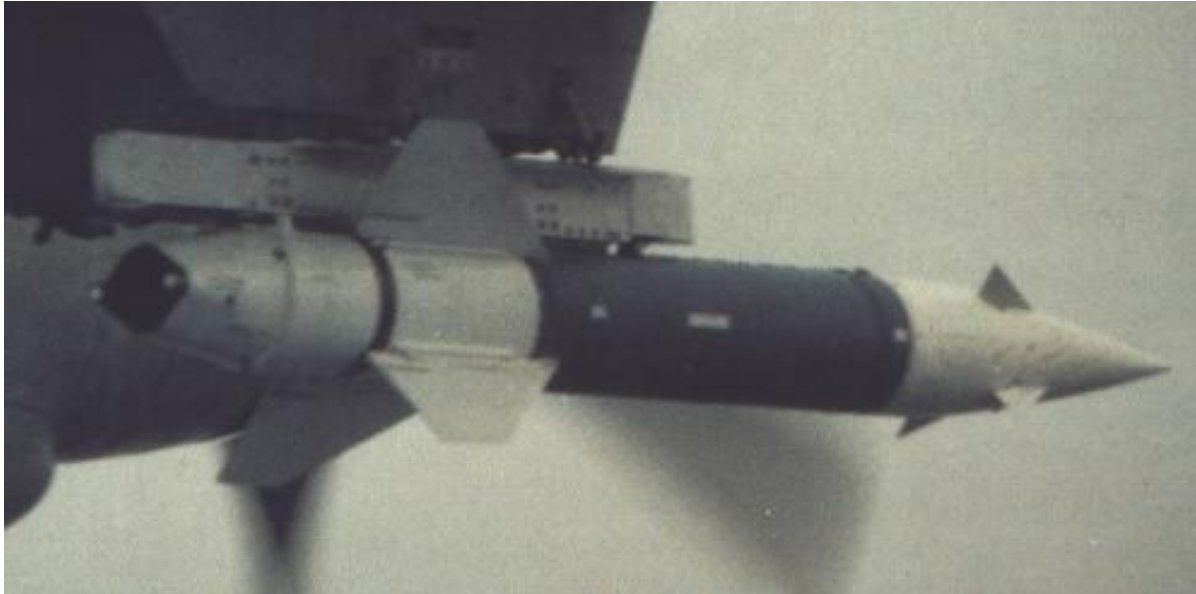
1 Dec 1958

The Strategic Air Command activated the 4135th Strategic Wing, equipped with B-52s, at Eglin AFB to disperse the manned bomber force and conduct final testing of the GAM-77 Hound Dog and the GAM-72 Quail.



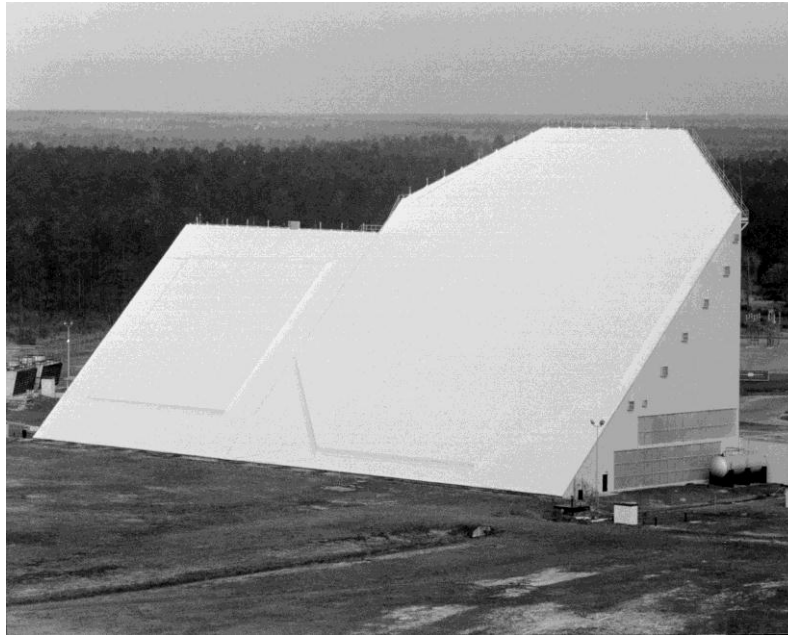
15 Jan 1959

The 4751st Air Defense Missile Wing, Hurlburt Field, activated on 27 Feb 1958, launched the first BOMARC surface-to-air interceptor from the Santa Rosa Island launch site.



13 Feb 1961

An AGPC F-100 Super Sabre successfully launched the nuclear capable air-to-surface GAM-83B Bullpup missile over the Eglin Gulf Test Range.



2 Apr 1962

The Air Force announced Eglin AFB as the site (C-6, 35 miles east of Eglin main) for the development and test of a phased array radar to detect and track satellites.



1967

The Air Force began development of the BOLT-117 (BOmb, Laser Terminal), the world's first laser guided bomb, and completed combat evaluation in 1968.



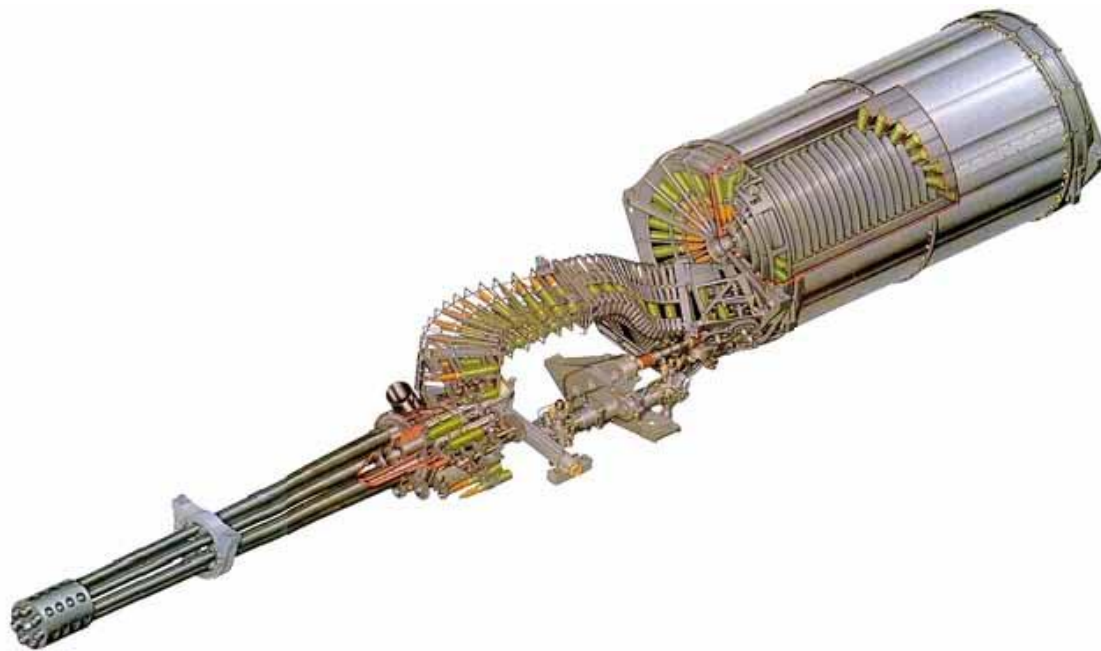
Aug-Sep 1970

An Army Special Forces group, led by Col Arthur “Bull” Simons, trained on Eglin AFB before deploying to Thailand for the attempted rescue on 20-21 Nov 1970 of US POWS at the Son Tay prison camp in North Vietnam.



Sep 1972

The 3246th Test Wing completed testing of the first production television-guided AGM-65 Maverick air-to-ground missile.



2 Apr 1973

The Air Development and Test Center chose the GE version of the GAU 8/A gun system over the Philco-Ford competitor for exclusive use in the A-10 Thunderbolt II.



27 Apr 1975

The Department of Defense chose Eglin AFB as one of three processing centers in the US for Vietnamese refugees.



14 Oct 1976

The Armament Development and Test Center formed the Advanced Medium Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM) Joint System Program Office to develop the follow-on missile to the AIM-7 Sparrow missile.



24 Jun 1977

The Air Force announced that the 33rd Tactical Fighter Wing, located on the west side of Eglin AFB, would convert from the F-4E to the F-15. During DESERT STORM the 33rd shot down more Iraqi MiGs than any other unit, earning it the nickname of “MiG-killer.”



25 Apr 1980

The Department of Defense chose Eglin AFB as a resettlement camp for over 9,200 Cuban refugees between 2 May and 15 Sep.



16 Jan 1981

The Armament Division awarded the first production contract to Rockwell International for the 2,000-pound GBU-15 cruciform-wing guided bomb that could be launched outside the range of most enemy defenses.



26 Jul 1983

The Armament Division awarded Texas Instruments a contract to produce the GBU-24 PAVEWAY III Low Level Laser Guided Bomb for use against bridges, military headquarters, and POL facilities.



9 Jul 1984

The Armament Division awarded AVCO Systems Division a contract for the development of the Sensor Fuzed Weapon, the first wide-area cluster munition with “smart” warheads capable of multiple kills per pass against armored targets.



24 Jun 1988

The US Navy opened its new facility for the Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal School at Eglin AFB, relocated from Indian Head, MD.



1 Aug 1988

The Air Force established the SEEK EAGLE Office at Eglin AFB to manage and direct the certification of weapons and stores for all Air Force aircraft.



19 Feb 1991

The 3246th Test Wing conducted a short notice test to certify the GBU-28/B “Bunker Buster,” developed in only eight weeks, on the F-111 for immediate deployment for DESERT STORM.



3 Feb 1992

The V-22 Osprey made its first vertical landing at Eglin AFB as it arrived for tests in the Climatic Laboratory.



Jul 1994

**The 46th Test Group, Holloman AFB, NM,
began construction of a magnetic levitation
sled track to meet future sled track needs.**



26 Jun 1996

A 5,000-pound terrorist bomb destroyed the Khobar Towers apartment building near Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, killing 19 US service members, including 12 assigned to the 33rd Fighter Wing.



30 Apr 1997

The Air Force announced the decision to begin low-rate initial production of Joint Direct Attack Munition with the first production lot of 937 JDAM kits. Using the NAVSTAR GPS signal the JDAM has a CEP of about ten feet.



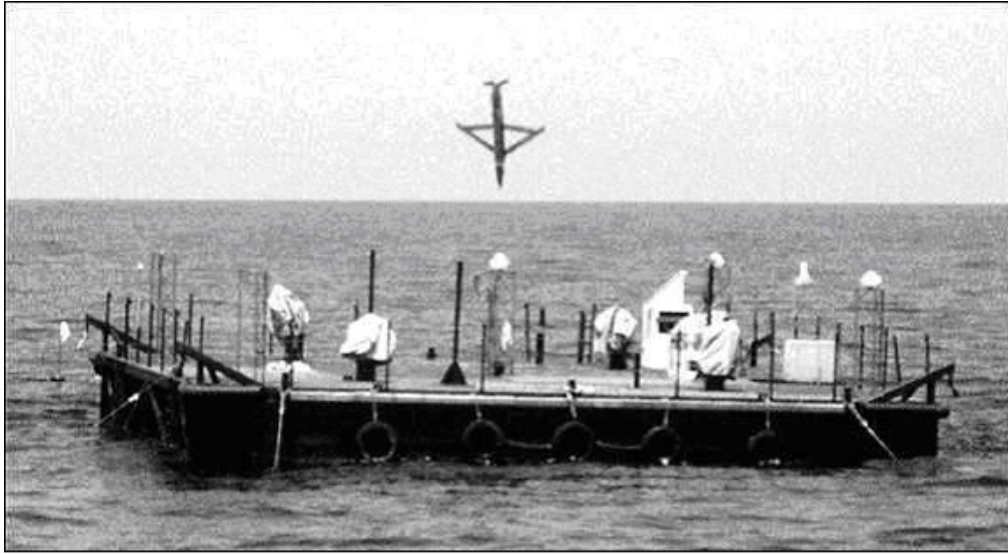
3 May 2001

Eglin AFB launched its first Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) from a B-52 over the White Sands Missile Range. The JASSM maneuvered across 195 miles and hit its intended target.



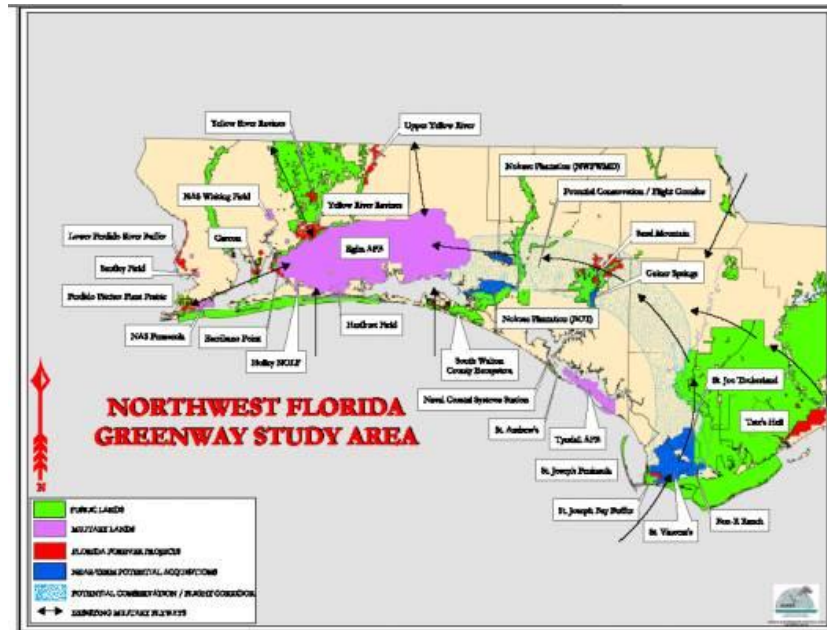
11 Mar 2004

Eglin AFB first exploded the Massive Ordnance Air Blast (MOAB) bomb, the world's largest conventional bomb, on Eglin's western range.



2 Jun 2004

A Small Diameter Bomb, developed by the Direct Attack Joint Systems Program Office, struck an offshore floating target, developed by the 46th Test Wing, 21 miles off the Florida Gulf coast.



1 Jul 2004

The AAC Commander signed an agreement with national and Florida agencies to support the NW Florida Greenway Initiative that will preserve land and airspace in NW Florida for conservation and military training needs.



7 Dec 2004

The Miniature Air Launched Decoy (MALD) team successfully executed the program's first captive flight test mission over the Eglin Test Range.



20 May 2005

The DoD released the results of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Committee which recommended the placement of the Joint Strike Fighter training wing and the Army's 7th Special Forces Group at Eglin AFB.



Sep 2005

The UH-1 “Huey” helicopter of the 46th Test Wing rescued 23 people as part of the Eglin AFB response to flood-stricken New Orleans after the passage of Hurricane Katrina.



20 Sep 2005

The AAC Commander certified the GBU-39/B Small Diameter Bomb to enter operational test and evaluation a month ahead of schedule and under cost.