



1950

Almost two years after the aborted idea to move the No. 230 OCU to RAF Station Mildenhall, the RAF changed the station's status from active to "Care and Maintenance" on April 1, 1950. It remained in the status while the RAF awaited an answer from the USAF, who expressed an interest in moving units to the station. An RAF Regiment and a RAF Police Security Flight remained on the station.

On July 12, 1950, after improving facilities and spending £1,000,000 to lengthen the runway to 9,000 feet, elements of the 93rd Bomb Group (BG), 329th Bombardment Squadron (BS), 330th Bombardment Squadron, and 4115th Organizational Squadron arrived to operate on a rotational duty with 45 WB-50 Superfortresses.



From left to right: 93rd Bomb Group (BG), 329th Bombardment Squadron (BS), and the 330th Bombardment Squadron

The U.S. worried that the Soviets might think the U.S. too occupied with the Korean conflict to adequately protect Europe. To counter this Cold War threat, RAF Mildenhall, as it was now known, became one of the initial bases identified to host the B-29, B-47, and B-52 bombers, as well as the KC-97 and KC-135 tankers. The B-50 was first designated as the B-29D, but modifications to the original B-29 structure were considerable so it was redesignated as the B-50. The WB-50 stood for weather-reconnaissance.



This RB-29 gives a good idea of what the B-29 and B-50 Superfortresses variants looked like.

On July 12, 1950, USAFE established the 7511th Air Base Squadron (ABS) to provide support to the temporary duty Strategic Air Command (SAC) units that rotated in and out of RAF Mildenhall. This unit changed to the 7511th Air Support Wing on September 26, 1950, and then to the 7511th Air Base Group (ABG) on May 16, 1951. February 1951 saw the first B-29s stationed at RAF Mildenhall, when the 93 BG rotated out and the 830th Bombardment Squadron, from the 509th Bombardment Wing took its place. This was followed in May 1951 by the first B-50s to operate out of RAF Mildenhall from the 49th Bombardment Squadron. They replaced the 830 BS.