

Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal Criteria in the Army Air Forces in World War II

Arranged by Theater and Command

by

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Distinguished Flying Cross



Air Medal

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Introduction

The criteria for both the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and the Air Medal at the start of World War II seemed straight forward on paper, but exposed to such variance of interpretation that many veterans of the Army Air Forces view the whole medal process as inadequate, inappropriate, and indefensible. As the war progressed, it became more and more apparent that the solution to the efficient function of the awards procedure, both within the United States and on a world-wide basis, was coordination. The biggest problem was not whether awards were given out too freely or whether too few were made. It was the consistency on an over-all basis with which they were awarded to Air Forces personnel that has caused misunderstandings and frustration with veterans and their families. For instance, the men in the Fifteenth Air Force thought that the policy in the Eighth Air Force was more liberal than their own. The men in the Southwest Pacific could fly 25 missions and not receive an Air Medal while a combat veteran of the United Kingdom could come home with an Air Medal with three clusters plus a Distinguished Flying Cross after 25 missions. No rules for the award of these medals could be made at Headquarters Army Air Forces, as it was too far from the field of combat to know the intimate problems of the separate Air Forces. The policy was completely left to the discretion of the Commanding Generals of those Air Forces. There seemed to be no possibility of coordinating awards policies throughout the world except in a very general way as seen in the Adjutant General's letter of 14 August 1943 (prompted by General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces; see below, page 8). Therefore, even into the 21st Century, negative comments abound from the men who saw combat in that era adding to the view of that the system was unfair, unequal, and undemocratic. Therefore, before explaining what the criteria was for any particular theater of war, it is worthwhile to explain what the highest authority directed, and it started in 1926.

Background to the DFC¹

The Distinguished Flying Cross was established in the Air Corps Act (Act of Congress, 2 July 1926, Public Law No. 446, 69th Congress). This act provided for award "to any person, while serving in any capacity with the Air Corps of the Army of the United States, including the National Guard and the Organized Reserves, or with the United States Navy, since the 6th day of April 1917, has distinguished, or who, after the approval of this Act, distinguishes himself by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight." Various designs from the U.S. Mint, commercial artists, and the Office of the Quartermaster General, were submitted to the Commission of Fine Arts and on 31 May 1927 the Commission approved a design submitted by Mr. Arthur E. Dubois and Miss Elizabeth Will. It is a bronze cross pattee, with rays between the arms of the cross. On the obverse is a propeller of four blades, with one blade in each arm of the cross and in the re-entrant angles of the cross are rays which form a square. The cross is suspended by a rectangular-shaped bar and centered on this is a plain shield. The reverse is blank and suitable for engraving the recipient's name and rank. The ribbon has a narrow red center stripe, flanked on either side by a thin white stripe, a wide stripe of dark blue, a narrow white stripe and narrow dark blue at the edge of the ribbon. Subsequent awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross are indicated by oak leaf clusters for Army and Air Force personnel and by additional award stars for members of the Naval services.

This medal is awarded to any officer or enlisted person of the Armed Forces of the United States who shall have distinguished themselves in actual combat in support of operations by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight, subsequent to November 11, 1918. The decoration may also be given for an act performed prior to November 11, 1918, when the individual has been recommended for, but has not received the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or Distinguished Service Medal.

The DFC was awarded first to Captain Charles A. Lindbergh, of the U.S. Army Corps Reserve, for his solo flight across the Atlantic in 1927. The first DFC to be awarded to a Navy man was to Commander Richard E. Byrd, of the U.S. Navy Air Corps, on May 9, 1926, for his flight to and from the North Pole. Amelia Earhart also received the Distinguished Flying Cross, and hers is the only such award since an executive order on March 1, 1927, ruled that the DFC should not be conferred on civilians.

During wartime, members of the armed forces of friendly foreign nations serving with the United States are eligible for the DFC. It is also given to those who display heroism while working as instructors or students at flying schools.

Background to the Air Medal

In a letter from the Secretary of War to the Director, Bureau of Budget, dated 9 March 1942, the Secretary submitted a proposed executive order establishing the Air Medal for award to any person who, while serving in any capacity of the Army of the United States, distinguishes himself by meritorious achievement while participating in an aerial flight. The Secretary of War, in his request, stated "The Distinguished Flying Cross is available only for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight...It is desired not to cheapen the Distinguished Flying Cross by awarding it for achievement not bordering on the heroic. It is, however, important to reward personnel for meritorious service."

The Air Medal was authorized by President Roosevelt by Executive Order 9158, on 11 May 1942, and established the award for "any person who, while serving in any capacity in the Army, Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard of the United States subsequent to September 8, 1939, distinguishes, or has distinguished, himself by meritorious achievement while participating in an aerial flight." Authorization was announced in War Department Bulletin No. 25, on 25 May 1942.

Executive Order 9242-A, dated 11 September 1942 amended the previous Executive Order to read "in any capacity in or with the Army". In July 1942, the Office of The Quartermaster General (OQMG), forwarded a letter to twenty-two artists offering an opportunity to submit designs for consideration. The design selected was submitted by Walker Hancock and approved by the Secretary of War on 31 December 1942 (Hancock also received a cash award of \$1,500 for the winning design). Walker Hancock had been inducted into the Army and assigned to Camp Livingston, Louisiana, where he was ordered on temporary duty, effective 16 November 1942, to the G-1 Section of the War Department to work on the medal. The medal is a bronze compass rose of sixteen points with a fleur-de-lis design on the top point. On the obverse, in the center, is an American eagle, swooping downward (attacking) and clutching a lightning bolt in

each talon. The reverse has a raised disk on the compass rose, left blank for the recipient's name and rank.

The ribbon has a broad stripe of ultramarine blue in the center flanked on either side by a wide stripe of golden orange, and with a narrow stripe of ultramarine blue at the edge, the original colors of the Army Air Corps. The Chief of Staff approved the ribbon design prepared by OQMG on 26 August 1942.

The Original Regulatory Authority to be Applied World-Wide

According to Army Regulation 600-45, published 8 August 1932, the Distinguished Flying Cross had the following criteria (paragraph 13):

Awarded to any person while serving in any capacity with the Air Corps of the Army of the United States who has distinguished himself by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight.²

The Air Medal did not exist at the time of the regulations writing in 1932, as it was established on 11 May 1942, and its purpose was described by Headquarters Army Air Forces (AAF) as it being "...similar to [the] DFC but [as a] lesser award."³ Further clarification was obviously needed.

On 25 September 1942 the first Policy Letter, published by the Adjutant General's Office in Washington, D.C., tried to create a standard for the entire Army Air Force. It states:

1. The Air Medal is an award provided to recognize meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight. The Distinguished Flying Cross is a higher decoration for the recognition of heroism or extraordinary achievement while participant in aerial flight. While it is recognized that no fixed standards or rules can be prescribed to determine the cases in which these awards may or may not be made, some degree of uniformity throughout the Army Air Forces is desirable.

2. It is requested that you consider the following suggested requirements as a guide in awarding the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross:

a Air Medal

1 Destruction of one (1) combat naval vessel, or three (3) combat aircraft in flight, or:

2 Participation in twenty-five (25) operational flight missions during which exposure to enemy fire is probable and expected, or:

3 Participation in one hundred (100) hours of operational flight under conditions specified in 2 above.

b Distinguished Flying Cross

1 Destruction of five (5) combat aircraft in flight, or:

2 Participation in fifty (5) [sic—should be 50] operational flight missions under conditions specified in a-2 above, or:

3 Participation in two hundred (200) hours of operational flight under conditions specified in a-2 above.

c Reference a-1, and b-1, above, all members of the crew of an aircraft responsible for destroying a combat naval vessel should receive an award, but only the person operating the gun responsible for destroying a combat airplane should receive credit therefore toward an award.

3. The prompt recognition of heroism or extraordinary or meritorious achievement in time of war is a most important factor toward building and maintaining the morale of troops. Such recognition is the responsibility of the theater commander and no attempt is being made herein to interfere with the prerogatives of such commander incident to the award of decorations. The suggestions contained in paragraph 2 above, are proposed as a guide only and are not intended to restrict the award of the Air Medal or the Distinguished Flying Cross for acts of heroism or other meritorious or extraordinary achievements while participating in aerial flight; nor are they intended to affect, in any way, the award of decorations other than the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross.⁴

The updated version of Army Regulation 600-45 was released on 22 September 1943 and stated that the DFC and Air Medal criteria:

[paragraph 14] Distinguished-Flying Cross.—*a.* The Distinguished-Flying Cross is awarded to *members of military, naval, and air forces* who, while serving in any capacity with the Army Air Forces, distinguish themselves by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. *See act 2 July 1926 (44 Stat. 789, 10 U.S.C. 1429; M.L. 1939, sec. 914), and E. O. 4601, 1 March 1927.*

b. In order to justify an award of the Distinguished-Flying Cross for heroism, the heroism must be evidenced by voluntary action in the face of great danger above and beyond the line of duty while participating in aerial flight.

c. To warrant an award of the Distinguished-Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight, the results accomplished must be so exceptional and outstanding as clearly to set him apart from his comrades who have not been so recognized.

[paragraph 17] Air Medal.—*a.* The Air Medal is awarded to persons who, while serving in any capacity in or with the Army, distinguish themselves by meritorious achievement while participating in an aerial flight. *See E.O. 9158, 11 May 1942 (sec. III, Bull. 25, WD, 1942), and E.E. 9242-A, 11 September 1942 (sec. III, Bull. 49, WD, 1942).*

b. The required achievement to warrant award of the Air Medal is less than that for the Distinguished-Flying Cross, but must nevertheless be accomplished with distinction above and beyond that normally expected. The Air Medal may be awarded to recognize single actions of merit or sustained operational activities against the enemy.⁵

It was the last sentence of paragraph 17 b concerning the Air Medal that failed to close the flood gates for giving awards. The “sustained operational activities against the enemy” was most easily recognized by how many combat missions or combat hours (depending upon where in the world the aircrew were stationed at the time) the person had flown. Despite very clear signals that hours and missions were not to be the sole basis for the awards, the practice had not been outlawed in the new regulation.

There would be one more update to the Army Regulation concerning the DFC or the Air Medal. On 2 May 1945 a change was made that allowed commanding generals of any separate force operating outside the continental United States when commanded by a major general or officer of higher grade, to be able to award the Distinguished-Flying Cross and the Air Medal (among others) to individuals physically present within his command under competent orders even though not assigned to the command.⁶ No other changes in this regulation occurred concerning the DFC or Air Medal until 1947 (and therefore outside the scope of this paper).

In a related issue, the Government Printing Office printed Air Medal Certificates that were to be presented with the actual medal. However, it was the policy of the War Department to mail the certificates to the next of kin for safe-keeping so that distribution would not be made in overseas theaters. Presentation of the certificates was to be made with the medal in posthumous presentations. By 17 August 1943 there was a backlog of over 26,000 certificates to be mailed and the Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section anticipated over 1,000 Air Medals a week be added to that backlog.⁷ By 27 December 1943 the decision was to discontinue all certificates for the duration of the war for all decorations except the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Medal, posthumous award of the Purple Heart, and for awards of Legion of Merit and other decorations to foreigners. Issuance of certificates covering the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal ceased at that point.⁸

Headquarters, Army Air Forces

General Arnold made what seemed like a unique circumstance for the award of the Air Medal when on 19 June 1943 he sent a message to his commanding generals in the field in regards to civilians:

“Certain cases combat correspondents have made outstanding contributions to this war but their services have not, repeat not, been adequately recognized. Correspondents serving with Army Air Forces are eligible for certain awards subject to approval in each case by the President. Recommendations for award of Air Medal is appropriate where meritorious achievement performed while participating in aerial flight. Forward recommendations correspondents serving your theater deserve consideration if in your judgment.”⁹

General Arnold’s directive was not without precedent. General Douglas MacArthur had been decorating members of the press corps in the Pacific as far back as October 1942. The Ninth Air Force had also awarded the Air Medal to United Press reporter, Mr. Henry T. Gorrell, for his administering first aid and possibly saving the life of a B-24 aerial gunner while flying on a bombing mission to Navarino (Pylos) Bay, Greece, on 3 October 1942 with the 98th Bombardment Group.¹⁰ As late as August 1945 War Correspondents were being awarded the

Air Medal. The Twentieth Air Force bestowed an Air Medal on Mr. Richard Tregaskis for his 5 June through 14 July 1945 flights aboard B-29s bombing the Japanese Empire.¹¹

On 13 August 1943, a question came up to Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section concerning the awarding of the Air Medal to Military Attaché's (Air). The procedure for such instances was that a recommendation would have to be submitted to the Commanding General, Army Air Forces, for evaluation and action. Unfortunately, the outcome is unknown.¹²

The next day, 14 August 1943, the Adjutant General published a letter entitled "Suggested Guide for Uniform Award of Decorations to Personnel of the Army Air Forces." All commanding generals of numbered air forces were notified by telegram that:

"Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism in flight evidencing voluntary action in face of great danger above and beyond line of duty. Achievement in flight must evidence exceptional and outstanding accomplishment. Air Medal for achievement in flight accomplished with distinction above and beyond that normally expected. May recognize single action or sustained operational activities against the enemy. Hours and sorties not constitute sole basis for awards, but may be used to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight which would include sustained operational activities."¹³

This letter was the direct result of the actions by the Eighth and Twelfth Air Forces where the Air Medal was awarded to all men in a crew after that crew had made five missions over enemy territory. The Distinguished Flying Cross was automatically awarded after 25 missions. The letter, however, did not change the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross or the Air Medal to men who had, before the 14 August 1943 date, participated in actions which would, under the older policy, be sufficient basis for their awards. The Adjutant General's letter stated that War Department policy governing these awards were being revised and prepared for publication but that decoration for combat time could be awarded under the old policy for actions prior to 14 August 1943.¹⁴ However, the hand-writing was on the wall—automatic bestowal due to the hours or missions was no longer tolerated.

Despite Headquarters Army Air Forces' attempts to disseminate the Adjutant General's new policy of 14 August 1943 on the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal award recommendations to the combat theater commanders, by 28 September 1943 there was an ominous silence from the majority of the commanders indicating that the message had not reached them. Colonel Guenther, of the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, advised the Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section to resend the new policy by radio, thereby creating a documented record that the new policy had been sent. He emphasized that the new policy included the provision that hours and sorties were not to constitute sole basis for awards but they may be used to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight that would include sustained operational activities (the message was re-sent under General Henry H. "Hap" Arnold's signature on 1 October 1943).¹⁵ That same day, the Commanding General of the Tenth Air Force had to be reminded of the new policy and that awards recommended after 14 August 1943 were to adhere to the new policy.¹⁶

In another effort to “get the word out,” Headquarters Army Air Forces, Awards Section, sent a message on 4 October 1943 to all Commanding Generals of overseas Air Forces that the following rules would govern the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal until the publication of the Army Regulation revising the War Department policy:¹⁷

- a. Distinguished Flying Cross awarded for heroism in flight evidencing voluntary action in face of great danger above and beyond line of duty. Achievement must evidence exceptional and outstanding accomplishment.
- b. Air Medal awarded for achievement in flight accomplished with distinction above and beyond that normally expected. Award may recognize single action or sustained operational activities against the enemy.
- c. Hours and sorties shall not constitute sole basis for awards, but may be used to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight which would include sustained operational activities.

While the implementation of the new policy concerning the deemphasizing of hours and missions was waged, Air Medals for Norman Forrester, Norman Crewe, Peter Midlige and Carl W. Rach, all civilian pilots for the Canadian Pacific and Colonial Airlines, were delivered to Lieutenant Colonel H.A. Kenyon, Chief of the Air Section, Foreign Liaison Branch, G-2, for clearance and transmission through diplomatic channels to be awarded to them. This event illustrates that the Air Medal was not only bestowed upon foreign military personnel, but also on foreign civilians as well.¹⁸

The “sustained operational activities” way of determining if an individual should receive a DFC or an Air Medal was not adopted world-wide, and very soon friction arose between numbered air forces for the higher or lower standards (depending upon one’s viewpoint) used to achieve the same award. This was especially true where numbered air forces worked closely together, as in Europe with the Eighth, Ninth, Twelfth, and Fifteenth Air Forces frequently rubbing shoulders.

These complaints about inequitable standards between the various Numbered Air Forces were voiced all the way up to Headquarters, Army Air Forces. For instance, on 23 December 1943, the Chief of Decorations and Awards Branch of Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section was confronted by a very concerned Brigadier General Earle E. Partridge, the Chief of Staff of the Fifteenth Air Force, in regards of the new policy. Undoubtedly casting his eye towards the Eighth Air Force award policy, he insisted that a uniform set of regulations for the award of decorations to Air Forces personnel should be established by General Arnold after consulting with the several Air Force commanders.¹⁹ Arnold, however, resisted such requests, due to the varied nature of air warfare around the world.

While the criteria for the Air Medal and the wording of the award citation policy went back and forth in and among the different air forces in the European Theater, one practical problem had, in the meantime, arisen. The men were not getting the actual Air Medals they were authorized. There simply just not enough to be awarded to all who qualified no matter what standard was used by what air force. By late 1943 and early 1944, unit adjutants were reduced to giving the men a note stating that they were entitled to an Air Medal and told to present the note to any post, camp or station Quartermaster when they returned to the United States to receive the actual

medal. Headquarters Army Air Forces reacted to this problem by centralizing the process of awarding the returning airman their authorized awards at the Redistribution Stations. Trying to make sure that every post, camp or station in the United States had enough Air Medals on hand, as well as trying to get Air Medals over to the combat theaters to begin with, would have caused even more frustration to the combat veterans in trying to obtain their decorations. Headquarters Army Air Forces directed that each combat returnee answer a questionnaire at the port of debarkation, substantiated by theater orders or other certification for the award, so that the Adjutant General could forward the appropriate number and type of medals directly from the Philadelphia Quartermaster to the Army Air Forces Redistribution Stations for presentation to the combat veteran.²⁰

At the War Department, questions about the Air Medal surfaced concerning non-combat aircrews. In an informal conference between Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section and the War Department's G-1 on 28 January 1944, the Army Air Forces noted that they believed that the Air Medal could appropriately be awarded to Air Liaison Officers serving with Field Artillery Divisions, since the Executive Order authorizing the award of the Air Medal to persons while serving in any capacity in or with the Army.²¹

It was at this point, 8 April 1944, that the complaints of inequitable standards for the DFC and the Air Medal caught the attention of the United States Congress. Comments were voiced in regard to the number of decorations awarded to personnel of the Army Air Forces in Congress, over the radio and in print, by those who failed to recognize certain air warfare fundamentals which did not exist prior to World War II. For example, in one comparison of the number of awards made by the Army and the Navy, observers overlooked the relative size and activities of the respective air components of these two forces. In operations from Pearl Harbor to the spring of 1944, the ratio of planes in combat had been approximately three to one; personnel assigned per plane for each combat mission five to one; and frequency of participation of planes in combat eight to one (exclusive of fighter type in which the Navy had released no comparable figures at this time). These ratios indicated an overall combat activity ratio of 120 to one. In other words, the Army Air Forces would be justified in increasing recognition of its combat personnel nearly five-fold to reach a rate of award commensurate with that being used in the Navy for its combat personnel. The Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section suggested that the Army Air Forces should take a positive stand in regard to decorations and awards matters. They believed that the policy should indicate willingness and a desire to recognize heroism and meritorious achievement, for the purpose of securing maximum morale benefits for Army Air Forces personnel who since December 1941 carried the fight to the country's enemies.²²

The key to the above argument, of course, was that the awards be perceived to be bestowed for meritorious achievement, and the "score-card" perception by the public made this difficult to overcome. In fact, the Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section had to respond to inquiries from the Congress on not only how many Air Medals had been awarded in overseas theaters, but how many had been awarded within the Continental United States as well (it was believed to be not over five awards by April 1944).²³

With Congressional and public scrutiny, it is well understood why General Arnold was very sensitive of this issue, and in June 1944 while General Arnold visited the combat theaters, where

he made his views known. Having General Arnold visit commanding generals and relaying his concerns personally would normally have been enough to make sure the DFC and the Air Medal were not perceived as being given out willy-nilly, based solely upon hours or sorties. However, as the old saying goes, timing is everything.

Having just returned from his tour of the combat theaters and getting an ear-full of complaints about the awarding of the DFC and the Air Medal using the score-card method, and strongly insisting to his commanders to take corrective action, General Arnold's heart problem was not helped when he got back to the United States and saw a newspaper article about a returning airman from the combat area wearing "...the Air Medal and six Oak Leaf Clusters because [he] had thirty-five combat missions." On 24 June 1944 General Arnold had a letter fired off to his Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, and he was very angry. Arnold wanted the process of awarding the DFC and Air Medal on a mechanical basis to be stopped immediately. Although he didn't want to instruct his numbered air force commanders to reduce the quantity of awards being processed, he insisted that each award be made for a worthy act.²⁴

With the end of the European war in sight, the Army Air Forces Awards Board met on 19 March 1945 and discussed the important task of determining the discharge eligibility of returning veterans. A system of points had been created (the higher number of points an individual had, the more likely he would be allowed to leave the service first), and one of the determining factors was the number and type of decorations each airman had. Each award had a point value and the correctness of the airman's record to reflect his awards was paramount. Unfortunately, servicemen were returning home with unauthorized wearing of decorations, usually through the misunderstanding of the wearer as to what he was entitled to wear. One of the problem decorations was the Air Medal. The confusing "score-card" method had led some to believe they should be wearing more Air Medals than they should.²⁵

A few weeks later, on 21 May 1945, the Army Air Forces Awards Division received word from the War Department General Staff that the War Department now had authority to take final action on all awards to civilians and that these awards no longer needed to be referred to the White House for final approval. Under this ruling, the final action for the award of the Air Medal would be vested in the Commanding General, Army Air Forces. There was no change in policy in regard to award of the Distinguished Flying Cross since that award was not authorized for civilians.²⁶

In 1945, General Arnold established a policy to award the Air Medal to senior rated officers, who were facing retirement without having received a flying award. This policy was discontinued in June 1950.²⁷

Air Transport Command

For the most part, Air Transport Command personnel operating in overseas theaters qualified for the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal under the standards in place for personnel permanently assigned in those theaters (see the CBI Theater, Air Transport Command, for more examples). By early 1945, the authority to award all War Department decoration with the exception of the Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Medal had been delegated to the

various theater commanders. These theater commanders in turn had re-delegated this authority to award decorations (other than the Legion of Merit, in most cases) to the Commanding General of the Air Forces under their jurisdiction. The Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross had also been delegated to the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces (Arnold). Arnold, in turn, had delegated the authority to his Air Force commanders to award Distinguished Flying Crosses and Air Medals. This meant, in effect, that all classifications of personnel but one was eligible for service awards by the commander of the zone in which the personnel were assigned. This is how members of the Air Transport Command, although assigned to a unit in the United States, could be eligible for a Distinguished Flying Cross or an Air Medal for flying in a combat zone overseas, as long as they met the criteria for that war theater. One classification, however, was excluded from any but combat decorations. These people were those assigned to a headquarters located within the continental United States, although they themselves served within the war theaters. This affected personnel in the Air Transport Command, Army Airways Communications System, and the Air Weather Service.²⁸

In late January 1945, the Commanding General of the Air Transport Command requested that the Office of the Recorder, Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Board, to start action to change regulations in order that non-combat service awards might be made within the theater by the theater commander in order to equalize the award policies in the theater. For example, a man serving in the China-Burma-India Wing of the Air Transport Command might qualify for a Soldier's Medal. Recommendation for the award had to be forwarded to the China-Burma-India Air Transport Command headquarters and from there, through channels, to the headquarters of the Air Transport Command in Washington, to the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces and finally to The Adjutant General for final decision. A man on the same base assigned to an Air Force in the China-Burma-India Theater might be recommended for the same act. His recommendation would go through channels to the Air Force Group or Command headquarters and the award could be made. It was reasonable to believe that the elimination of three or four assessment agencies would prove a considerable advantage in the case of the second soldier.²⁹ Non-Combat awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal and Air Medal fell into this latter category. While heroic actions of Air Transport Command (and other personnel whose unit headquarters were in the United States) could be recognized by combat theater commanders with the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal and Bronze Star Medal, however, meritorious sustained operations could not be recognized by combat theater commanders without going through the bureaucracy noted above.

This situation was resolved on 25 April 1945 when the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, directed that a change to Army Regulation 600-45 be made to allow Major Generals at the numbered air force level to authorize the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal to Air Transport Command, Army Airways Communications System personnel and to personnel of other organizations physically present within the command under competent orders but not assigned thereto. This streamlined the Air Transport Command's concerns for processing Air Medals and DFC's for its personnel in the China-Burma-India Theater.³⁰

The American Theater

First, Second, Third, Fourth and Sixth Air Forces, and Civil Air Patrol

In the Continental United States, aircrews of the First and Third Air Forces were qualifying for Air Medals for their Anti-Submarine patrols off the East Coast and the Gulf Coast of the country. Policy documents for award criteria are non-existent in the Air Force Historical Research Agency holdings for the First through Fourth Air Forces (the First Air Force operated out of the northeast section of the United States, while the Second Air Force operated out of the northwest area, the Third Air Force in the southeast portion, and the Fourth Air Force in the southwest area of the country). However, newspaper accounts do note that members of the First Air Force qualified for the Air Medal after flying 200 hours of coastal patrol operations.³¹

Others were asking for authority to issue the two awards. Colonel A.D. Smith, Commanding Officer of the Greenland Base Command in September 1943 who wanted the authority to award the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal in his command. Since the Greenland Base Command operated directly under the War Department, it was understood that Colonel Smith would have to obtain authority from the Chief of Staff through the War Department's General Staff, Operations Division.³² In the same manner, the Commanding General of the Fourth Air Force, based in the United States, also requested authority from the Chief of the Air Staff to be allowed to award the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal on 15 October 1943.³³

On another issue, pilots of the Civil Air Patrol had been flying anti-submarine coastal patrols, racking up a tremendous amount of flying hours. Although not officially combatants, they eventually were provided with bombs to drop if they spotted German submarines while on patrol (on 15 July 1942 the Civil Air Patrol was credited with sinking or damaging two submarines). By the end of the summer of 1943, the U.S. Navy and Army Air Forces had built their own forces up to the point that Civil Air Patrol was no longer needed to conduct anti-submarine patrols, and therefore relieved of those duties. Word had spread about the flying duties of the Civil Air Patrol, and the fact that none of the pilots were achieving any recognition by the Army Air Forces was commented on by the American press. The Herald Tribune noted in May 1943, "Several Army pilots in the Gulf area drew...Medals for flying 200 hours over the ocean on anti-sub patrol. They have the best equipment. Civil Air Patrol pilots doing the same work fly old one-engine planes. There are 15 men who have done 300 hours, several logged 600! But no medals."³⁴ The fact that civilian pilots had been armed was a closely guarded secret at the time. Shortly after the sinking or damaging two German submarines in July 1942, Air Medals were considered for the two pilots flying out of Atlantic City, New Jersey, Wynant C. Farr and John Haggins. However, the awards would have to be kept secret. As Earl L. Johnson, the Civil Air Patrol National Commander said at the time, "From the standpoint of moral of this whole organization, it is too bad that an incident of this kind can not be publicized but some day the story will be told..."³⁵ After a dramatic air-sea rescue on 29 May 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt personally awarded two Civil Air Patrol pilots (Hugh R. Sharp and Edmond Edwards) an Air Medal in the Oval Office at the White House.³⁶ In early September 1943, at the end of the Civil Air Patrol's participation in the anti-submarine coastal patrol duty, the idea of Air Medals to be bestowed upon the participating pilots was once again taken up at Headquarters Army Air Forces.³⁷ Unfortunately, the Air Force Historical Research Agency's holdings do not hint at the outcome.

The European African Middle Eastern Theater

United States Strategic Air Forces In Europe

A month and a half after the invasion of Europe, the predicament of Army pilots flying Liaison missions for army ground commanders came to light. On 19 August 1944 United States Strategic Air Forces notified Army Ground commanders in the European Theater that the Air Medal was now an authorized award to pilots of Army Air Forces Liaison Squadrons. The qualifications for the Air Medal were the same as established for the Field Artillery Liaison pilots and observers back in January and March 1944. Credit for a sortie would be given for any flight in which the airplane was attacked by enemy aircraft or if ordered to fly at least one hour of air travel involving European Continental Operations. However, the credit was to be limited to one sortie per flight, and then only when every effort for the success of the mission had been made. In addition, these credits had to be specified and approved by the Division, Corps, or Army Commander for which the Liaison Pilot had flown the mission on their behalf.³⁸

On 31 October 1944, the Commanding General, European Theater of Operations, established a quota system for awards, and provided some examples as “guides.” For instance, the 12th Army Group, based upon the strength of an infantry division, for each week of offensive combat the following figures for gallantry awards would be used “as a guide”:

Distinguished-Service Cross	.025 of 1% = 3 awards
Silver Star	.25 of 1% = 35 awards
Bronze Star Medal	.55 of 1% = 79 awards

Some units were directed not to exceed these quotas, and thereby lost the concept of using the quotas as a guide. The Air Force commands in the European Theater, although they followed the quota system on several occasions, protested its injustice. They maintain that such a system defeated the very spirit of basic War Department directives, wherein awards were specifically authorized for outstanding heroism or service. In their opinion, simultaneous awards of a large number of medals not only cheapens the award for the individual, but did nothing to improve troop morale.³⁹

Eighth Air Force

With a war in progress, the 600-45 regulation needed to be updated, but that would take time. On 24 September, 1942, the Headquarters of the VIII Air Force Service Command, European Theater of Operations, United States Army, issued a policy memorandum outlining the requirements for bestowing the Distinguished Flying Cross. The policy explicitly states that “The D.F.C. will be awarded to any Pilot or Gunner upon shooting down his first enemy airplane in combat, confirmed as destroyed.”⁴⁰ The Air Medal is not mentioned, and this policy lasted exactly one day when the War Department issued its own policy.

As soon as the AAF’s Adjutant General’s 25 September 1942 Policy Letter was released, theater commanders took the guidelines and made it the standard. On 6 November 1942, the Eighth Air Force notified Headquarters AAF that it was the policy of the Eighth to use the Air medal as an

aerial victory credit medal, and the Air Medal ribbon as a scoreboard to indicate enemy aircraft destroyed and extent of combat operational missions. While the Eighth Air Force’s headquarters staff may have believed this route to be a “...excellent morale builder,” the concept of “score carding” would come back to haunt them.⁴¹

It did not take long before the unique circumstances faced by numbered air force commanders in various areas of the world forced adaptations to the new regulation. In the Eighth and Twelfth Air Forces, for example, identical policy letters were published on 29 November 1942 stating that an airman could be recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross for flying 25 bomber, photographic, air transport, or observation sorties, or 50 fighter sorties. These policy letters directed that the DFC and the Air Medal would be awarded to their personnel for participation in aerial combat operations against the enemy as follows:⁴²

For:	Award:
First enemy airplane destroyed	Air medal
Second enemy airplane destroyed	Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on Air Medal Ribbon)
Third enemy airplane destroyed	Second Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on the Air Medal Ribbon)
Fourth enemy airplane destroyed	Third Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on Air Medal Ribbon)
Fifth enemy airplane destroyed	Distinguished Flying Cross
Tenth enemy airplane destroyed	Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on DFC Ribbon)
Fifteenth enemy airplane destroyed	Second Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on DFC Ribbon)

For example:

Air Medal	1 Oak Leaf Cluster – 2 enemy airplanes
Air Medal	3 Oak Leaf Clusters – 4 enemy airplanes
Air Medal and DFC	3 Oak Leaf Clusters – 5 enemy airplanes
Air Medal and DFC	3 Oak Leaf Clusters – 10 enemy airplanes 1 Oak Leaf Cluster

Air Medal For 5 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation sorties or 10 Fighter sorties.

Oak Leaf Cluster to be worn on Air Medal Ribbon:

For each succeeding qualification warranting an Air Medal credit such as 10 Fighter sorties or 5 other type sorties as outlined above or the destruction of one enemy airplane.

DFC To be awarded in lieu of 4th Oak Leaf Cluster for wear on Air Medal.

Sorties: (a) 5 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or	Award:
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Observation sorties:	Air Medal
(b) 10 Fighter Sorties:	Air Medal
(c) 10 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on AM Ribbon)
(d) 20 Fighter Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on AM Ribbon)
(e) 25 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation Sorties:	DFC
(f) 50 Fighter Sorties:	DFC
(g) 30 bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on DFC Ribbon)
(h) 60 Fighter Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on DFC Ribbon)

On 2 December 1942, the Eighth Air Force reinforced the policy that the Air Medal would be awarded to any "...Pilot or Gunner upon shooting down his first enemy airplane in combat, confirmed as destroyed."⁴³ This began the inequality of the criteria for awarding the DFC and the Air Medal, as other theater commanders adhered strictly to the 25 September 1942 Policy Letter.

On 8 February 1943, Headquarters 2nd Bombardment Wing of the Eighth Air Force notified all of its units of the requirements it expected the subordinate organizations to adhere to when awarding the Air Medal for participation in combat sorties:

The award of the Air Medal is authorized to military personnel who have participated in five (5) bombardment sorties, and the Oak Leaf Cluster to those who have participated in ten (10) sorties. An airplane sortie is deemed to have taken place when an aircraft, having been ordered to a combat mission, has entered an area where enemy anti-aircraft fire may be effective, or where usual enemy fighter patrols occur, or is in any way subject to enemy attack while in the performance of that mission.⁴⁴

A couple of weeks later, on 20 February 1943, the 2nd Bombardment Wing staff further clarified the sortie count when they released a short instruction stating that sortie credit would not be given to a member of a combat crew that turned back from a mission, unless, in the opinion of the Group Commander, exceptional circumstances warranted such credit.⁴⁵

By 31 March 1943, the Eighth Air Force changed the criteria for the first oak leaf cluster to the DFC as mandated in the 29 November 1942 policy letter. The number of sorties was increased from 30 to 50 bomber, photographic, air transport or observation sorties, and the fighter sorties were increased from 60 to 100, to qualify for the oak leaf cluster.⁴⁶ Presumably these changes were made to reflect that surviving aerial combat in "the Big Leagues" had improved. However, the official policy letter reflecting this updated mission requirement did not get published until 17 August 1943.⁴⁷

On 6 June 1943, the Eighth Air Force's 4th Bombardment Wing issued its instructions to subordinate units concerning the Air Medal and DFC. One interesting fact noted in this publication is the matter of a pay raise of \$2.00 for an awardee of the Distinguished Flying Cross

from the date of the act for which the award was made.⁴⁸ The same 4th Bombardment Wing Instruction provided the following criteria for the Air Medal:

This decoration is now awarded to members of this command by the Commanding General VIII Bomber Command. It is awarded for exceptional meritorious action or service, such as bringing in a badly damaged aircraft under difficult circumstances; for a single act of heroism while participating in aerial flight; for five bombardment sorties, or for one air victory. The Air Medal may be awarded posthumously.⁴⁹

The DFC's criterion was also detailed by the 4th Bombardment Wing's 6 June 1943 Instruction:

This award is made by Commanding General, Eighth Air Force, and citations are published in General Orders of that Headquarters, Supply of medals and/or ribbons pertaining thereto, will be made by this Headquarters. This award is made for extraordinary achievement or heroism while participating in aerial flight: for five air victories, or for twenty-five sorties. If a Squadron Commander is being recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross for twenty-five sorties or five air victories, the Group Commander should initiate and sign the recommendation.⁵⁰

Headquarters VIII Air Support Command issued a policy memorandum on 20 July 1943 that closely reflected the Eighth Air Force policy letter of 29 November 1942 for the criteria for the Air Medal and the DFC:⁵¹

For:	Award:
First enemy airplane destroyed	Air medal
Second enemy airplane destroyed	Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on Air Medal Ribbon)
Third enemy airplane destroyed	Second Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on the Air Medal Ribbon)
Fourth enemy airplane destroyed	Third Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on Air Medal Ribbon)
Fifth enemy airplane destroyed	Distinguished Flying Cross
Tenth enemy airplane destroyed	Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on DFC Ribbon)
Fifteenth enemy airplane destroyed	Second Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on DFC Ribbon)
Sorties:	Award:
5 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation sorties:	Air Medal
10 Fighter Sorties:	Air Medal
10 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on AM Ribbon)
20 Fighter Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on AM Ribbon)
25 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation Sorties:	DFC
50 Fighter Sorties:	DFC

On 5 August 1943, the Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Board held a meeting in which the Chief of Staff recommended a reevaluation of the criteria for the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal. This reevaluation decision was transmitted to all combat theater commanders through The Adjutant General that these two medals were removed from the “score card” basis but not prohibit commanders to recommend these awards based on sustained operational activities against the enemy. The primary purpose was to cease the awarding of these medals based solely on operational hours flown.⁵²

By 23 September 1943 the decision to allow Air Divisions in the Eighth Air Force to take over the awarding of Air Medals had been made. By allowing each Air Division to take responsibility for coordinating the paperwork to process Air Medals, instead of VIII Bomber Command, the time it took from being recommended for an Air Medal to actually receiving the award was anticipated to be only five or six days. In addition, the possibility of the air divisions also taking on the responsibility of awarding the Distinguished Flying Cross for sustained operational performance was raised. First Lieutenant E. M. Dahill, Junior, a member of the Awards Section of the 3rd Bombardment Division, reported this latest recommendation to his superior, stating that if the automatic DFC were to be handled by the air divisions, instead of VIII Bomber Command, he then anticipated a reduction in processing time from the initial recommendation to award presentation.⁵³

The Eighth Air Force commander forwarded General Arnold’s 1 October 1943 message to his air division commanders on 15 October. Major General Curtis E. LeMay, commander of the 3rd Air Division, requested from Colonel A.W. Kissner, his chief of staff, his thoughts on what impact the new criteria would have on the awarding of Air Medals and DFC’s to the combat crews. Colonel Kissner did not see any change necessary. “I recommend we make no change in present policy for initiating awards of DFC and Air Medal especially in view of the high losses of the VIII Bomber Command over the past ten operations.”⁵⁴ Quoting from the Arnold message, Colonel Kissner stated that the wording of “Achievement in flight must evidence exceptional and outstanding accomplishment” authenticated the 3rd Air Division’s practices of awarding the DFC for lead bombardiers, lead pilots, lead navigators, and commanders of groups in the air. He noted that the requirement of the “Air Medal for achievement in flight accomplished with distinction above and beyond that normally expected” covered the score-card approach for bestowing an Air Medal upon those who shot down an enemy aircraft. Colonel Kissner also quickly agreed that while hours and sorties alone should not be the sole basis for the award of the Air Medal, the fact that these criteria could be used to support and substantiate meritorious achievement in flight in sustained operational activities was undeniable. He believed that the continuance of the policy of awarding an Air Medal for each five sorties could be justified, if it was plainly stated that the five sorties were accomplished during a period of sustained strategic operations against the German Air Force.⁵⁵ Colonel Kissner believed that any variance from the award policy would have an adverse effect upon moral, especially when the operations undertaken by the Eighth Air Force at this particular time were so costly in casualties.⁵⁶ General LeMay agreed and the policy remained intact; however, in recommending personnel for the Air Medal, substantiation of meritorious achievement in flight while on sustained operational missions (or combat missions) were to be stressed in the recommendations.⁵⁷

By 22 October 1943, the VIII Bomber Command of the Eighth Air Force tried its hand at explaining to its commanders the distinctive criteria between the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross. In his instructions, Colonel John A. Samford, the bomber command's chief of staff, emphasized that the awards needed to focus on one, or a series of individual acts of "meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight" for the Air Medal that while may have been undertaken as duty by the individual, but which represent, upon completion, a significant and highly commendable aerial accomplishment under conditions of danger or uncertainty peculiar to the flight or flights in which the individual participated. He cautioned that meritorious achievement should not be claimed for an act which was not completed (or not completed, due to circumstances outside of the individual's control) in a more than satisfactory manner. However, for the Distinguished Flying Cross, Colonel Samford emphasized the need for the presences of great hazard or uncertainty while assuming distinguished responsibility or performance of an unprecedented flight mission. To be considered for the DFC, the individual had to be primarily responsible for the mission (such as a pilot or navigator) or display technique, skill or judgment quite beyond the adequate or expected. In addition, extraordinary achievement could not be claimed for an act that was not completed (or not completed, due to circumstances outside of the individual's control) in a superior manner. Sorties and hours were not mentioned at all in this directive.⁵⁸

In the 1st Bombardment Division of the Eighth Air Force, another wrinkle soon arose concerning the hazards of awarding an Air Medal on the basis of missions completed. In some instances the Air Medal had been awarded to individuals who, after completing five missions, subsequently had to be removed from further flying duties for "lack of moral fibre." Colonel Bartlett Beaman, the Executive Officer of the 1st Division, published a policy letter on 3 November 1943 and sent it to all Combat Bombardment Wings and Bombardment Groups in the Division. In it, he acknowledged that although the completion of five successful sorties was normally considered a prerequisite for the Air Medal, he wanted to emphasize that the Air Medal was not a wholly automatic award and that meritorious service must have been performed in connection with each sortie in question. Beaman wanted his commanders to subject their award nominees with closer scrutiny to their actual performance to warrant the Air Medal. He wrote: "Simply completing five successful sorties does not necessarily indicate meritorious achievement and certainly should not be made the basis of an award to an individual who has exhibited characteristics which indicate that he might lack moral fibre."⁵⁹

Although the September 1943 regulation addressed the issue of number of sorties or hours, the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, General Arnold, still tried to eliminate the exclusive use of the "score-card" basis for the Air Medal (and consequently for the DFC). But he did not want to remove from a commander's consideration the number of missions flown in considering someone for the award. However, human nature being what it is, the follow-up message from Arnold noted previously only supported the idea of using the number of missions as the sole basis for awarding the decorations that were not for a single heroic act, usually citing "sustained operational performance against the enemy" as the justification, especially in the Eighth Air Force. By 7 December 1943, Eighth Air Force again codified the basis of awarding the DFC to "For 25 Bomber, Bomber-Fighter, Photographic, Air Transport, or Observation sorties with distinction, or, for 50 Fighter sorties with distinction." In the same way, the Air Medal's criteria were for: "For 5 Bomber, Bomber-Fighter, Photographic, Air Transport, or

Observation sorties with distinction.” An oak leaf cluster would be awarded for: “For each additional 5 Bomber, Bomber-Fighter, Photographic, Air Transport, or Observation sorties with Distinction.” The Air Medal could also be awarded for 10 Fighter sorties with distinction,” and an oak leaf cluster would be bestowed “For each additional 10 Fighter sorties with distinction.”⁶⁰

The Eighth Air Force awards personnel felt that by adding the words “with distinction” to their sustained operational activities medal recommendations, that they had removed the score-card approach. However, members of the Eighth Air Force staff believed that the ‘cookie cutter’ award citation, in use by their headquarters for the Distinguished Flying Cross awarded to their crewmembers, needed to be strengthened. They realized that even though the DFC award for a crew’s last five missions was pretty much automatic, it still should have more specifics noted in the citation. Major Maas of the 3rd Bombardment Division suggested that the Division’s awards staff adopt a policy of writing the citation for navigators by mentioning the principal missions in which the particular navigator led, participated, or did outstanding work. He believed that citations read in this manner would be more appreciated and help build moral, rather than the stereotype form then in use. Colonel Thomas B. Scott, Junior, the Division’s Chief of Personnel, agreed and pointed out that the ‘one form fits all’ citation then in use should be done away, not only for navigators, but also more individualistic DFC citations for bombardiers, co-pilots, and pilots be created. He also noted that gunners should also have their personal exploits explained in the citation if, in the course of their missions, they had shot down any enemy aircraft.⁶¹

The Ninth Air Force, however, did not see any practical modifications to the Eighth Air Force’s DFC criteria of 7 December 1943 by such subtleties, and complained on 27 January 1944 up the chain of command of the Eighth’s ‘score-card with distinction’ approach. In response, Eighth Air Force rescinded the DFC criteria on 12 February 1944 that mentioned the number of missions (for a while) and issued new instructions to their units that the DFC should be based upon leadership, hours flown, or sorties performed as being extraordinary.⁶²

In addition, there was an Eighth Air Force policy (up until 1 January 1944) to award the Air Medal to all Escapees or Evaders, although there was never anything in writing covering such a policy. An investigation to this practice was initiated at Headquarters Army Air Forces, who viewed this as an abuse of the Air Medal’s purpose, after complaints arose from the Ninth Air Force.⁶³ Lieutenant General Spaatz (the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe commander), on 25 March 1944, implemented the official policy after 1 January 1944, directing that the award of the Air Medal to Escapees and Evaders were no longer automatic, but it could be awarded on individual recommendations of Commanding Officers.⁶⁴

An odd situation arose concerning the Distinguished Flying Cross medal came about, due to the inability of the overseas bureaucracy to move fast enough to award those crewmembers who had completed their combat missions (known as “operational graduates”) and were awarded the DFC before they left for their new assignments back in the United States. The Eighth Air Force awards staff would normally wait until all 25 combat missions were completed before submitting DFC requests for deserving aircrew members. Colonel Thomas B. Scott, the Chief of Personnel of the 3rd Bombardment Division, directed that since extremely few losses were incurred between the 20th and 25th combat mission, preparation for a DFC award were to be started by an

individual's 22nd mission, so that the award could be made by the end of a man's 25th combat mission.⁶⁵

At this point an explanation of how the Eighth Air Force Awards Board went about its business is in order. Fortunately, Colonel Irvine A. Rendle, the Commander of the 392nd Bombardment Group, 2nd Bombardment Division, sent a report to the 2nd Division's commander, Brigadier General James P. Hodges, on how the Board ascertained the validity of an award recommendation. Colonel Rendle sat as a member of the Eighth Air Force Awards Board on 15 March 1944 and found to his initial surprise that the 3rd Bombardment Division's board representative was a Wing Commander (the 3rd Division had the 4th, 13th, and 45th Bombardment Wings under its command at this time). The 3rd Division had decided to have each of their Wing Commanders serve a time on the Awards Board, not to give added weight for their own personnel, but rather to acquaint all Wing Commanders with the Board's workings. Colonel Rendle reported that all recommendations for leadership within the 3rd Bombardment Division originated with these Wing Commanders and passed on to the Division Commanders at the time of the Division Critiques at Headquarters Eighth Air Force. The Division Commander then weighed the relative merits of leadership award recommendations from each Wing Commander and immediately determined which recommendation would be submitted to the Eighth Air Force Awards Board. This helped to assure justice and consistency. Personnel included were Command leaders and all officer members of lead crews. Individual acts of heroism, gallantry, or achievement originated from within the Bombardment or Fighter Groups. Colonel Rendle reported that many recommendations were "flowered" by personnel preparing them with claims that frequently were technically incorrect or not proven factually. He cautioned that "It must be remembered that at least one member of the board is possibly very familiar with the details and results of each and every mission. Bombing records are invariably consulted and unfounded claims are usually detected. An adverse attitude results."⁶⁶

Colonel Rendle explained that if squadron commanding officers, operations officers, and command pilots who had done a series of missions, approximately ten or more, without getting into trouble to the extent of being conspicuous and subsequently decorated, had a good chance of being recommended for a Distinguished Flying Cross on the basis of over-all achievement. However, he stressed that the Awards Board had taken General Arnold's directives to heart and that the automatic DFC for the completion of 25 missions was "out." If the individual's record had not been blemished in any way, then he would be recommended for a DFC on the basis of over-all achievement.⁶⁷

Just two weeks after Colonel Rendle's visit to the Eighth Air Force Awards Board, General Hodges (following the lead of the 3rd Bombardment Division's practice to send a Wing Commander to Award Board meetings), sent his 2nd Combat Bombardment Wing Commander, Brigadier General Edward J. Timberlake, Junior, to the meeting on 29 March 1944. General Timberlake reinforced the remarks of Colonel Rendle concerning the need to submit accurate and honest award submissions, not colored by fanciful material. As an example, he related how one 2nd Bombardment Division award recommendation stated the lead combat wing had veered off course from the Impact Point to the target and that the subject combat wing was the first over the target. However, upon review of the actual records of the bombing mission, it was realized that this was not the case. The board members looked upon the entire recommendation with ill

favor, especially as subsequent recommendations stated that the lead combat wing had gone over the target as scheduled. That particular recommendation was returned for resubmission. As did Colonel Rendle noted in his report, General Timberlake emphatically stated that "...the board has at its disposal sufficient records to check as to the order over the target and the bombing results."⁶⁸ General Timberlake suggested that each Division decorations board screen out such recommendations that were not factual and those that were poorly written. He also noted that the Distinguished Flying Cross should be regarded as a high award and that all attempts to boost an individual's achievement up to a Silver Star status be discouraged. He found that many Silver Star recommendations had to be reduced to the DFC level when it became obvious to the Board that the accomplishments being recognized were due to sustained outstanding achievements and not gallantry. General Timberlake noted that there was a tendency of the Board members to bestow the Silver Star when a crew member who was wounded, returned to his post of duty, and continued his assignment. However, if the crew member was wounded and could not return to his post, the award recommendation for the Silver Star was not approved. The General also noted that any awards for personnel missing in action (MIA) had to include evidence of accomplishment. The fact that an individual was MIA was not sufficient grounds for an award.⁶⁹

There were some policy decisions made at the 29 March 1944 Board meeting. General Timberlake reported that all Division representatives were unanimous in expressing a desire that lead crews (pilots, navigators and bombardiers) should receive decorations commensurate with their ability. Of the 120 decorations passed on that day, only 30 were for leaders and only a few of those for the assigned lead pilot, navigator and bombardier. The board reaffirmed the practice of bomber groups recommending lead crew teams after these crews led a series of successful missions. These recommendations may:

1. be retroactive;
2. consist of from five to ten, or more, missions;
3. not include a mission for which an award has been already made.

The series of missions that lead crews should be recommended for an award should have entailed enemy opposition coupled with good results. Attacks on V-1 rocket launching sites (known as "Noball" missions) and missions to the occupied countries were not considered worthy enough to be listed.⁷⁰

General Timberlake also noted that awards for leadership for a particular hazardous and outstanding successful mission had the following in common:

1. Leading a Wing, the pilot, navigator and bombardier plus the Wing Commander may all be recommended; however, recommendations for the Silver Star would normally be reduced to the DFC level if outstanding ability was the only reason for the recommendation;
2. Group Leaders following behind the Wing Leaders, such as the Group Lead Bombardier, Commander and Pilot, in that order, would normally be acceptable to the Board. However, it was to be kept in mind by the Group Commanders that these were only recommendations and they were not to become the accepted practice for awarding every lead crew member after every mission. The policy of recognizing with an award lead crew members who had completed five to ten or more missions was an effort to recognize those Group Lead Crews that occupied the second or third position in a Wing formation on a mission.⁷¹

The apparent firm procedures employed by the bombardment divisions concerning their award programs fostered enough confidence by the European Theater of Operations, United States Army, that on 2 April 1944 the Eighth Air Force bombardment divisions were allowed to award the DFC, Soldier's Medal, Purple Heart and the Air Medal to their own personnel without going through Headquarters Eighth Air Force.⁷² However, in order to clear up the awards still awaiting a decision at Headquarters Eighth Air Force, another meeting of the Awards and Decorations Board was held on 5 April 1944. Representing the 2nd Bombardment Division at this meeting was Colonel Leland G. Fiegel, the 93rd Bombardment Group's commanding officer. Reviewing 110 award submissions, Colonel Fiegel noted that the Board members were very stingy on authorizing a leadership DFC award for a crew member whose award submission was based on a mission to France than on missions to Germany. He noted that the 1st and 3rd Bombardment Divisions recommended awards for their entire lead crew (Air Commander, Pilot, Navigator and Bombardier) for a specific mission. Practically all were approved in each case with the exception of the pilot. It was not felt that a pilot should be recommended if the Air Commander (who is on the same crew in that situation) was also recommended for an award. In addition, the navigator should not be recommended unless he was leading at least a Combat Wing. Colonel Fiegel also reported that the board took a very lenient view on awarding the DFC and Silver Star to Air Commanders and lead crew members based on an accumulation of successful missions, as these would appear to be approved with much less argument than a leadership DFC based on a single mission.⁷³

With the new authority to award the DFC and Air Medal directly to their aircrew members, the Eighth Air Force Divisions were trying to organize their procedures and policies. The 2nd Bombardment Division issued a directive on 9 April 1944 to its subordinate Groups to use a prepared form to accelerate the presentation of awards. The policy letter provided a sample of the form to use when preparing an award order for an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for an individual completing five missions.⁷⁴ The next day, 10 April 1944, a meeting was called at the Fighter Command headquarters by Major General William E. Kepner for the purpose of discussing coordination of Awards policy as between Fighter Command and the three Bombardment Divisions of the Eighth Air Force. Generals Williams, Hodges, and LeMay represented the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Bombardment Divisions, respectively. The following policies were agreed to:⁷⁵

1. Air crews would be considered for an Air Medal after completing six sorties with a record of creditable performance. While the completion of six sorties would not be a basis of an award, it would be the basis for being considered for an award of the Air Medal. Fighter pilots, on the other hand, would be considered eligible for the Air Medal after completing 400 hours of operational flying.
2. The DFC would be awarded in lieu of the 4th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal from this point on. However, any member of an air crew who had completed 25 missions would be considered eligible for consideration for the DFC prior to completing their 25 mission tour (on the basis of his record of performance throughout his tour of duty up to that time).
3. An Air Commander of a successful mission involving a deep penetration was considered deserving the DFC. Should the success of the mission be due to the

- individual gallantry of the Air Commander in overcoming unusually severe obstacles, or in spite of personal wounds, he would be considered for the Silver Star.
4. The pilot of the lead aircraft would be ordinarily considered for an award of the DFC for his skill in handling the aircraft.
 5. The bombardier of the lead aircraft would ordinarily be considered for the DFC whenever a mission involved particularly successful bombing. However, such recommendations would have to be substantiated by strike photos, if bombing was done visually, or the award would be withheld until such time as photo reconnaissance unit aerial photographs were available when the mission was conducted under radar bombing conditions (where the Pathfinder Force, or PFF, bombed through overcast conditions and never saw the ground). All recommendations for awards to bombardiers would be checked with and approved by the Division Bombardier.

The criteria for awarding a DFC to a navigator took up the most time at the meeting, resulting with the following:

6. Careful consideration of the individual facts would have to be given in connection with recommendations for navigators. The lead navigator would be considered for a DFC on the basis that the formation was brought successfully to the target and back to base as a result of his navigation. Under conditions of good visibility, where the pilotage navigator is able to contribute by his familiarity and intimate knowledge of the terrain throughout the entire route, he would be also considered as eligible for the DFC. Where the pilotage navigator's contribution is based on his knowledge of the target area, the lesser award of the Air Medal will be considered. Under conditions of flying over an overcast the Pathfinder Force (PFF) navigator would be considered for the DFC, or the Air Medal (the same for a pilotage navigator), depending upon his contribution to the success of the mission.⁷⁶

In cases where the leadership is assumed by a succeeding flying element prior to attack on the assigned target, a lesser award will ordinarily be considered on the basis that it was not a contribution to the success of the entire mission but only to a portion of the mission. The Division commanders at this meeting wanted to set policy rewarding leader crews for their contribution to a successful mission; however, they realized that each award was an award to an individual and therefore, must be specifically describe the individual's contribution to the success of the mission.⁷⁷

Generals Williams, Hodges, LeMay and Kempner wanted to emphasis that speed of processing the leadership type of awards was essential. The recommendation for the Air Commander would be made by Combat Wings, whereas the recommendations of the other members of the lead ship could be made by the local Group Commanders. Group and Combat Wing leaders would be considered for the DFC for an accumulation of successful missions, even though there was no particularly outstanding achievement in any one mission. Such recommendations would have to fully describe the part played by the leader in missions under consideration, which ordinarily should total 10 to 15 missions involving leadership of a unit. These DFC awards would be based on a consistent record of sound leadership.⁷⁸

The 3rd Bombardment Division outlined its own standards for its Awards Board to consider DFC and Air Medal recommendations. For individual achievement as a result of command of successful combat operations (for both the DFC and Air Medal), the awards would have to be initiated by the local Group commander after conferring with the Combat Wing commander, except in the case where a Combat Wing commander on the ground commands the Division or Wing in the air, in which event the recommendation for an award would be made by the Commanding General, 3rd Bombardment Division. In addition to the strictest interpretation of “extraordinary or meritorious achievement” for the DFC and Air Medal, respectively, the 3rd Division’s Board would also assure itself that the achievement being recognized had the outcome of a highly successful bombing on outstanding missions. Individual achievement as a result of professional skill (shooting down an enemy aircraft, for instance) or individual achievement as a result of a combination of professional skill on a number of consecutive combat operations (sustained operational duty in combat over a period of time must be shown). This policy dictated that the DFC would not be awarded for such achievement on a lesser number of missions than for a combat tour of duty unless outstanding performance due to individual acts or excessive hardship on sustained operations was clearly demonstrated. However, the ‘five missions and an Air Medal’ standard for the Eighth Air Force was changed from having to complete five missions to six missions.⁷⁹

At another meeting also held on 10 April 1944 between the fighter command commander and the bombardment division commanders of the Eighth Air Force, a change in the combat tour from 25 to 30 missions was decided upon. With this change, the criteria for the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross also changed for the Eighth Air Force. Now an air crew had to complete six sorties with a record of creditable performance before being eligible for the Air Medal. It was further agreed that the DFC would be awarded in lieu of the 4th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal from this point on. However, any member of an air crew who had completed 25 missions would still be considered eligible for the DFC prior to the completion of his tour, on the basis of his record of performance throughout his tour of duty up to that time.⁸⁰

Major General LeMay, upon his return from the meetings held with other Division Commanders on 10 April 1944, directed some policy changes for awards and decorations for his 3rd Bombardment Division. In submitting recommendations for awards for sustained operational activities against the enemy or for destruction of enemy aircraft, General LeMay ordered that the DFC would not be recommended for such extraordinary achievement on a lesser number of missions than for a combat tour of duty unless outstanding performance of duty due to individual acts or excessive hardship on sustained operations was clearly demonstrated. In regards to the Air Medal, it could not be recommended unless six missions had been completed by the individual; although the Air Medal would be recommended for meritorious achievement in the destruction of an enemy aircraft, when officially credited. The new policy included pre-printed forms for submitting an award of the DFC and Air Medal. The 3rd Division policy also emphasized that those crews that were completing their combat tour (operational graduates) should have their DFC recommendations completed and forwarded to the Division headquarters within 24-hours of those individuals completing their last mission (as opposed to lead crews whose DFC recommendations were started at the end of their 22nd mission, so that they could be presented their medals upon landing after completing their last mission).⁸¹

Because of pressures from Headquarters Army Air Forces, Eighth Air Force leadership decided to try to spell out for their group commanders exactly what it took for a successful award nomination for the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal in an effort to reign in the number of awards based on sorties (although the “sustained operational activities” of the regulation was still a viable standard for an award to be justified). The Eighth Air Force published a Memorandum (35-9, Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations) on 18 April 1944 stating:⁸²

Distinguished Flying Cross – An act constitutes “extraordinary achievement or heroism while participating in aerial flight” when it is one act or a series of acts while participating in aerial flight which involves in the presence of great hazard or uncertainty, a distinguished assumption of responsibility other than that required by orders, distinguished performance of an unprecedented flight mission by an individual primarily responsible, such as a pilot or navigator, or a display of technique, skill or judgment quite beyond the adequate or expected, and which is considered so exceptional and outstanding as to clearly set him apart from his comrades who have not been so recognized. Upon completion of, or at any time during, an operational tour of duty, personnel whose record of accomplishment during the tour of duty has been of such an exceptional and outstanding character as to be termed an extraordinary achievement, may be recommended for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Air Medal – An act constitutes “meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight” when it is one act or a series of acts while participating in aerial flight, which is undertaken as duty by the individual but which represent, upon completion, a significant, highly commendable aerial accomplishment under conditions of danger or uncertainty peculiar to the flight or flight in which the individual participated. Meritorious achievement should not be claimed for an act which is not completed with distinction above and beyond that normally expected.

However, the 3rd Bombardment Division of the Eighth Air Force, while putting into practice the new criteria for the Air Medal (an Air Medal for every 6 combat sorties), did not put into effect the new policy of awarding a DFC in lieu of the 4th Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal as agreed upon at the 10 April 1944 meeting. Instead, 3rd Bombardment Division awarded the DFC to its members of air crews with 25 to 30 missions who were returned to the zone of interior (continental United States) on rest and recuperation. This was in accordance with a 3 May 1944 policy by the 3rd Bombardment Division concerning the award of the DFC for completing a tour of duty. This, of course, only muddied the waters for those outside of the 3rd Bombardment Division of the Eighth Air Force, not to mention those in other air forces operating nearby the Eighth.⁸³

A few days after the 18 April 1944 memorandum, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division’s Awards Board met, with the 4th Combat Bombardment Wing (and later Medal of Honor recipient), Colonel Frederick W. Castle and a Colonel Steel sitting in on the proceedings. The question of awarding a DFC or an Air Medal came up regarding a commander’s actions for one mission. After the meeting, the following policy was published for the 3rd Bombardment Division for awarding the DFC or Air Medal to commanders for their actions during one combat mission:⁸⁴

Basis of approval. Extraordinary or meritorious achievement must be shown within the meaning of existing regulations, through the carrying out of a successful bombing mission of substantial penetration within enemy territory, wherein the enemy opposed such penetration both by intense anti-aircraft fire and severe fighter attacks, and/or the weather and other physical difficulties of the mission presented great obstacles in the way of its accomplishment. With these conditions, bombing results must be proven by photographs showing a minimum of 40% [of the bombs impacting] within 1,000 feet and 80% [of the bombs impacting] within 2,000 feet. The tactical handling of the formation, and the performance of units themselves, must be in accordance with standing operating procedures and instructions of the Commanding General. Combat emergencies must be met with skill.

Personnel to be awarded.

- (1) Command Pilot – leader of division or combat wing. Each wing will be considered as a tactical force, under its own leader.
- (2) Pilot – pilot of lead aircraft of division or combat wing. Each wing will be considered as a tactical force.
- (3) Navigators (Dead Reckoning and/or Radar) – navigators responsible for the navigation of their wing or group will be considered for awards. Navigators of wing formations responsible neither for the direction of flight nor for the success of the bombing will not be awarded.
- (4) Bombardiers (visual) – bombardiers responsible for the bombing of their wing or group will be considered for awards. In most cases this will be the group bombardier.
- (5) Recommendations for individual gallantry, heroism or achievement other than that emanating from the command function, even though the individual might be the commander, will be made and awarded in the same manner as before.
- (6) When it is found that personnel of lead crews cannot be recommended for outstanding command or leadership performance on a single mission because of the operational restrictions noted above, under the heading of Basis of Approval, these personnel should be recommended for accumulated achievement on a number of missions. Wing and group commanders should refrain from recommending such awards based on achievement performed previous to **1 March 1944**. These recommendations covering accumulated achievement will fall into two general classes:
 - (a) Personnel of lead crews of units in the formation (other than the leading element) while participating on successful missions as described above, under the heading of Basis of Approval.
 - (b) Personnel of lead crews of lead elements on successful bombing missions which do not have the enemy opposition or weather difficulties mentioned above.

Perhaps the most significant result of the 21 April 1944 meeting at 3rd Division's headquarters came in the actual procedures of awarding the DFC and Air Medal (as well as other awards). A new handbook on awards and decorations publication broke out the step-by-step wording for the citation, from the type of award (Meritorious Achievement [Air Medal], Extraordinary Achievement [DFC], Heroism [DFC]), to the citation's required facts. The Air Medal citation for Meritorious Achievement had to have the individual's name, unit, date of the action, description of the mission (importance of target, distance, duration and altitude), weather (clear, cloudy, snow, ice, rain, wind, fog, visibility), position in the formation (combat wing, group or squadron), if friendly fighter support was present, type of bombing attempted (visual or radar, number of bombs dropped, number of pounds of bombs dropped within 1,000 feet of the aiming point, as well as the number of bombs dropped within 2,000 feet of the aiming point), the difficulties encountered (enemy aircraft encountered by formation, by plane number, type, tactics, armament and projectiles), the results of these encounters (enemy aircraft destroyed, probably destroyed, and damaged), anti-aircraft encountered (degree of resistance, accuracy, and type), if smoke screens used by the enemy to obscure the target, loss or damage to the formation and to the individual's own aircraft (from either anti-aircraft fire or enemy aircraft), casualties in the individual's own aircraft, in the formation (missing in action, killed in action, slightly wounded in action and wounded in action), any mechanical difficulties or malfunctions encountered, as well as any personal handicaps overcome (wounds, oxygen failure, etc.). The citation also required a brief description of the individual's accomplishment, achievement or action as a preface to one of six different sub-paragraphs the handbook offered as choices (such as performance of action in aerial flight; successful correction of mechanical difficulties; successfully aiding fellow crew members; action in aerial flight distinctive for the speedy, practical, and successful manner; courage and coolness under fire; exceptional foresight, keenness, ingenuity, and perfection). The final paragraph summarized the achievements described in the previous paragraph, and the handbook provided five sample paragraphs to choose from (The courage, skill, and tenacity; materially aided in the completion; meritorious serial accomplishments under conditions of danger; actions of [name] under these trying circumstances; knowledge, foresight and speedy actions...).⁸⁵

The handbook had similar instructions for the Extraordinary Achievement DFC for the individual accomplishment paragraph (efficient command, courage and skill in battle resulting in excellent bombing [Division Commander, Combat Wing Command, Group Leader]; outstanding flying technique and example of courage and ability inspiring to others [Pilot or Co-pilot]; outstanding bombing accomplishment, particularly successful despite difficulties..[Bombardier]; Exceptional navigation resulting in arrival at an assigned objective and demonstrating superior technique and skill...[Navigator]; outstanding skill and perfection in the handling of guns, demonstrating courage and resulting in exceptional aerial accomplishment [Gunners]; efficient and successful radio operation under duress of battle, resulting in material gain to ship and crew [Radio Operator/Gunner]; outstanding technique, skill and performance of duty on the part of any crew member which resulted in material benefit to the military operation). This type of DFC also had suggested final paragraphs for submitters to choose from (the courage and skillful airmanship displayed by [name] when confronted by an overwhelming enemy forces; a constant inspiration to all members of his crew; materially aided in the successful completion of a highly important mission; excellent results obtained by his Group (or Squadron or Wing) can be attributed to the courage, skill and tenacity of purpose displayed; exhibited strength of purpose

on this occasion and through his high degree of training and application of self to duty measurable contributed to the operation's success). These paragraphs usually ended with "...reflect highest (or great) credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States."⁸⁶

The DFC awarded for heroism also had sample paragraphs available to the submitter to choose from (distinguished assumption of responsibility...involving great hazard or uncertainty [daring, vigorous boldness]; demonstration of bravery by action beneficial to others and involving danger to oneself; determined application to completion of assignment under conditions of battle which demand high qualities of courage and complete devotion to duty; fulfilling of one's duty under perilous conditions and regardless of one's own welfare; wholehearted devotion to duty during battle conditions requiring exceptional display of courage, coolness, and a complete understanding of assigned job). As with the Air Medal and the Extraordinary Achievement DFC, the DFC for heroism, the handbook offered five different final paragraphs to be used for a summary of the individual's achievements (courage and determination displayed by [name] materially aided in the destruction of important enemy installations; courage, skill, and devotion to duty displayed by [name] on this occasion; the coolness by which [name] skillfully accomplished his assignment saved his aircraft and crew from probable destruction; the heroism displayed by [name] directly aided in the safe return of his aircraft and is highly indicative of his ability; acting with a single-minded devotion to duty, and without thought for his own welfare, [name] demonstrated heroism in aerial combat). This paragraph usually ended with either "...reflect highest credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States," or "...in keeping with the highest traditions of the Armed Forces of the United States."⁸⁷

The handbook also provided a chart with all the categories broken out to assist the award submitters to determine if the award should be forwarded to headquarters as a Meritorious Act, Meritorious Achievement, Heroism, Extraordinary Achievement, or Extraordinary Achievement in sustained flight. For the sustained operational flight Air Medals (and their Oak Leaf Clusters), the handbook provided ten different citations. These ten citations were synchronized to the day of the month. The award submitter would use citation number one if the award was submitted on the first day of the month. Citation number two would be used for awards submitted on the second day of the month, and so on until all ten citations were used by the tenth day of the month. The process was started over again on the eleventh day of the month, when citation number one was used again, and citation number two would be used again on the twelfth of the month, and so on. Months with 30 days would use the same citation only three times during the month (months with 31 days would use citation number one, thus utilizing that citation up to a possible four times). However, it must be remembered that there might be some days in which no award would be submitted, thus that day's 'reserved' citation may not be used as frequently as another day's scheduled citation.⁸⁸

The sustained operational mission DFCs that were awarded at the end of a combat tour (to 'operational graduates') had a section of the handbook also. Much like the sustained operational flight Air Medal citations, each date in the month had a corresponding 'qualification' and 'final' sentence phrase (ten of each), but they were further broken out for crew position (pilot, co-pilot, navigator, etc.). For instance, a pilot's DFC recommendation on the 5th of the month would use qualification phrase and final sentence number five. However, if the unit submitted more than one crewmember on that day for the DFC for sustained operations, the citation phrases and final

sentence would be displaced by one (i.e., the second pilot would have phrase three and final sentence 10, while the third pilot would have phrase four and final sentence nine. The fourth pilot would have phrase number five and final sentence eight, and so on). This complicated matrix prevented all the citations of that day from being the same.⁸⁹ The 2nd Bombardment Division issued their version of a handbook in the form of a letter's attachment on 3 August 1944. Although not as complicated as the 3rd Bombardment Division's handbook, the 2nd Division offered 13 different style DFC citations for a submitter's use to fit the particular circumstances.⁹⁰

A couple of weeks later, 29 May 1944, the General LeMay of the 3rd Bombardment Division added another requirement to substantiate recommendations for the sustained operations DFC. He wanted submitters to list three important missions flown by the individual by name and date.⁹¹ Headquarters 2nd Bombardment Division followed suite on 1 July 1944 by requesting their submitters to include a chronological list of the missions, dates, and capacity in which the duties were performed with all of their sustained operations DFC recommendations.⁹² With such firm guidance, it was hoped that now that the three Eighth Air Force bombardment divisions, now responsible for awarding the DFC and Air Medal, would speed the process so its personnel received their recognitions at a faster rate. This appeared to be a concept more readily accepted by U.S. forces across Europe. Headquarters European Theater of Operations issued a policy memorandum on 12 June 1944 with specific wording for the DFC and Air Medal's opening citation sentences.⁹³ The very next day, the same headquarters issued another policy letter; this time directing that for publicity reasons, extracts for medal citations should be unclassified and outlined what could and could not appear in these extracts.⁹⁴

A few days after D-Day, 8 June 1944, the 3rd Bombardment Division of the Eighth Air Force announced a new policy concerning the Distinguished Flying Cross. Due to the invasion of Europe, combat tours were extended for the bombardment aircrews from 30 missions to when they were no longer needed and could be released to return home. With this new situation, it was ordered to cease submitting DFC recommendations for sustained operations until the individual combat crew member completed his combat tour of duty. The exceptions, of course, was that any recommendation for the DFC based on extraordinary achievement could still be submitted, or, if a crewmember who would have been normally been recommended for the DFC for sustained operations after 30 missions, was killed or became missing in action during this temporary extension of their combat tour.⁹⁵

To confuse matters further, the day after General Arnold's edict of ending all "score-card" based awards, 25 June 1944, the 3rd Bombardment Division of the Eighth Air Force once again re-evaluated the award criteria while revealing another policy that was unique to the Eighth Air Force. Once again the number of missions bombardment crewmen flew before being eligible to be returned to the United States had been changed. Now, instead of 30 missions, by June 1944 the number had grown to 35 missions for a normal combat tour of duty. With this additional five missions added, the criteria for the Air Medal also was suggested to be changed. The 3rd Bombardment Division suggested that the Air Medal be considered to be awarded after completing seven combat sorties. This would give an individual an Air Medal and three Oak Leaf Clusters for sorties accomplished during a normal tour of 35 missions. This would also be in accord with an Eighth Air Force policy that no man would be given more than three Oak Leaf

Clusters to the Air Medal for sorties accomplished during one tour of combat duty. As far as the DFC was concerned, the 3rd Bombardment Division recommended that the present policy of awarding DFC's for sorties accomplished for the completion of a combat tour of duty, except in the cases of men who are returned to the zone of interior for rest and recuperation, or individuals who become missing in action, killed in action, or wounded in action before completion of their tour. In these cases it was recommend that the DFC be awarded to those individuals who completed between 29 and 35 missions.⁹⁶

By 28 June 1944 the 3rd Bombardment Division's suggestions were rejected. The Air Medal would still be based upon the six mission criteria agreed upon back in April 1944. For instance, if an individual completes 30 missions and is sent home for rest and recuperation (and does not complete the usual tour of 35 combat missions) and if recommended, he may receive one Air Medal plus three Oak Leaf Clusters plus the Distinguished Flying Cross. If he has completed 27 missions he may receive the Air Medal, three Oak Leaf Clusters and the DFC. If he has completed 32 missions he may receive the Air Medal, four Oak Leaf Clusters and the DFC.⁹⁷

Within a few weeks of becoming the 3rd Bombardment Division's commander, Brigadier General Earle E. Partridge suggested in a message of 8 July 1944 that the DFC for sustained operations criteria be brought back to 30 missions, instead of 35, and that any completion of five or more missions after accomplishing the initial 30 missions, be recognized with an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal. It appears that this became policy in the 3rd Division until 22 September 1944.⁹⁸ A few days later, 10 July 1944, General Partridge notified his command that 3rd Bombardment Division lead aircrew personnel of Group and larger formations (whose service had been honorable) may be recommended for the DFC upon the completion of 28 missions, whether they were returning to the Zone of Interior (the United States) for rest and recuperation or not.⁹⁹

As can be seen, the complications arising from such a system from just one Division of the Eighth Air Force caused many an airman to question the fairness of the award program. And, as noted before, when airman of the Eighth mingled with fellow airmen of the Ninth Air Force, there was even more perceived disparity in the Air Medal criteria. On 4 July 1944 the commander of the 4th Combat Wing, Colonel Frederick W. Castle, called 3rd Bombardment Division's awards section and complained about the differences in policy existing between the Eighth and Ninth Air Forces in issuing the Air Medal for sorties flown. Colonel Castle reported that his men were "...continually grumbling over the fact that the Ninth Air Force gets an Air Medal or cluster for every five sorties flown, claiming that their missions are not so difficult as those flown by our division."¹⁰⁰

Other claims of disparity bubbled up to the 3rd Bombardment Division headquarters concerning the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross in the summer of 1944. Back on 25 September 1942, the first War Department Policy Letter on the Air Medal suggested that an award should be bestowed on those individuals who destroyed three combat aircraft in flight. The Eighth Air Force modified the policy on 2 December 1942, stating that the Air Medal would be awarded to any "...Pilot or Gunner upon shooting down his first enemy airplane in combat, confirmed as destroyed." As the policy for the DFC and the Air Medal evolved in the ensuing months, the award of the Air Medal for gunners destroying enemy aircraft seemed to have been

forgotten until questions arose from combat crews in July 1944. It was pointed out that there were possibly two to three hundred men in the 3rd Bombardment Division alone who had destroyed one, two and even three enemy aircraft and had not received any recognition for their act. Colonel Scott of the 3rd Bombardment Division headquarters staff, when informed of the situation, replied:

I believe that only the outstanding cases should be recognized, that is those individuals who have destroyed 2, 3 and 4 enemy aircraft. The awarding of an air medal for 1 enemy aircraft destroyed will run into the hundreds. Higher headquarters might well question what we were doing when flooded with new presentation forms for these awards, because many of the individuals have returned home. It is also believed that some sort of equity should be established in awarding the individuals who are credited with 2, 3 and 4 enemy aircraft [destroyed]. Possibly a DFC should be given for 2 enemy aircraft [destroyed], a silver star for 3 [enemy aircraft destroyed], and a DSC [Distinguished Service Cross] for 4 [enemy aircraft destroyed]. This is in line with Colonel Truesdell's and Colonel Gerhaert's thinking at the last awards meeting.

The very next day, 16 July 1944, 3rd Bombardment Division A-1 Section conveyed the following policy to its bombardment groups: "Combat crew personnel who have not been recognized for destroying two or more enemy aircraft on one combat operation should be recommended for the DFC or Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC whichever is appropriate."¹⁰¹

Another issue that vexed the awards board at 3rd Bombardment Division concerned the awarding of the DFC or Air Medal to those who were missing or killed in action for the missions they completed prior to their last mission. The Eighth Air Force's 1st and 2nd Air Divisions did not hold up the publishing of an award due to a man becoming missing in action, a prisoner of war, or interned in a neutral country. It was their general contention that if a man had committed a breach of conduct that would negate the award, the actual presentation of the medal could be withheld and the general order authorizing the award be revoked. On the other hand, the 1st and 2nd Division awards boards felt that the nearest of kin of missing in action personnel, who were later to be proven to be killed in action, benefited in having their loved one's medal in their possession before receiving the bad news. 3rd Division took the cue of the other two Eighth Air Force bombardment divisions and adopted the same policy on 25 July 1944.¹⁰² Two days later, 27 July 1944, 3rd Bombardment Division announced a policy to disapprove any DFC or Air Medal recommendation for individuals who were found to have been subject to disciplinary action under the Articles of War or through reprimand as a result of breach of discipline or inefficiency.¹⁰³

A few weeks later, on 7 August 1944, the 3rd Bombardment Division attempted to correct another oversight with their aerial gunners and the Distinguished Flying Cross. At this time the normal combat tour for bombardment crews was 30 missions, and it was the policy of the 3rd Bombardment Division at that time to award the DFC for sustained operations upon completion of these 30 missions. However, the normal combat tour for "lead crews" (pilots, navigators, and bombardiers who had specialized training and usually led the vast bombing formations to improve the accuracy of the bombing missions) were 33 missions. The lead crew personnel [all

officers], however, who had completed 28 missions and who were returned to the zone of the interior (the United States) on rest and recuperation, were also awarded the DFC for sustained operations as they were expected to return to combat. Lead crew personnel who did not return to the zone of interior before completing 30 missions were not given a sustained operations DFC until they completed the required 33 missions. But here was the rub: due to the lead crew officers being absent on leave back to the United States, the crew's aerial gunners became surplus to the bomb group's pool of operational gunners. These gunners had completed in many instances 28 or 29 missions, but, because they were surplus and had over 25 missions, the bomb groups were releasing them from further combat duty. The outcome of this was that the officers of these crews got the DFC, but the enlisted men did not. To rectify the situation, the 3rd Bombardment Division adopted the policy to award a sustained operations DFC to all individuals whose service had been honorable upon completion of 30 missions, except for lead crew personnel, who, if their service had been honorable, would be awarded the DFC upon completion of 28 missions.¹⁰⁴

The lead crew issue also brought up another similar topic, DFC awards known as "Leadership Awards" to those individuals who led a Wing formation of bombers that resulted in excellent results. While this type of DFC had been policy since 21 April 1944, the awards board still struggled with the question as to when the award was appropriate. Some noted that in one situation, the 2nd Division was at a disadvantage since it flew B-24 aircraft, unlike its two sister bombardment divisions in the Eighth Air Force that flew B-17s. Aircraft that were equipped with radar had specially trained aircrews that led the formations to their targets in inclement weather when the targets were not visible from the air. These "Pathfinder" aircraft had different equipment for the B-17 and the B-24. The type used by B-24s limited their use to only shallow penetrations, while the B-17 radar equipment allowed deep penetration raids into Germany. While bombing results remained the primary consideration, DFC leadership award recommendations for B-17 Pathfinder crews stood a greater chance of being approved.¹⁰⁵

A consistent policy was needed for leadership awards and by 14 August 1944 it was decided by the 3rd Bombardment Division awards board that individuals, Group Commanding Officers, Squadron Commanding Officers, and Operations Officers (including staff navigators and bombardiers), who from the start were in higher rank and position and flew only as group leaders or as leaders of bigger formations would be considered for a DFC based upon outstanding leadership. However, they must have led a group or higher formation on at least 15 missions. Crews that were groomed by the local bomb group to be lead crews (pilots, navigators and bombardiers) should have completed at least 20 missions before consideration for the DFC.¹⁰⁶

On 25 and 31 August 1944, the Eighth Air Forces' 3rd Bombardment Division announced that sustained leadership DFC recommendations should contain more details, such as each time an individual led a Group, Wing, and Division, along with the dates and names of each mission. These factual items were required to assure that strong recommendations would be submitted to the Awards Board, and to assure that deserving individuals were not recommended for their sustained leadership on missions that were neither the achievement nor mission were particularly outstanding. In addition, a notation as to whether an officer had served as a commander of Group or larger formations on a number of missions during his tour of duty, or whether the entire

tour was completed in a command position (or whether some missions were flown as an aircraft pilot and the remainder as combat formation commander).¹⁰⁷

In September 1944, the headquarters administrative duties of the 66th Fighter Wing (which oversaw the 55th, 78th, 339th, 353rd, 357th, 358th, and the 361st Fighter Groups) were assumed by the headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division of the Eighth Air Force. In preparing to administer the awards and decorations portion of their new duties, the 3rd Bombardment Division's awards board reviewed the criteria for the Air Medal and DFC for the fighter pilots' of Eighth Air Force Fighter Command and the 66th Fighter Wing in particular. Irrespective of the type of aircraft flown, the typical operational tour for all fighter pilots was 270 hours. In the awarding of automatic awards, Eighth Air Force Fighter Command had been using a sortie credit system. Four hours of combat flying equaled one sortie credit and one enemy aircraft destroyed and confirmed by the Eighth Air Force Fighter Command confirmation board equaled 10 sortie credits. An Air Medal (or cluster) was awarded for each 10 sortie credits (40 hours of combat flying or one enemy aircraft destroyed) and a DFC was awarded for 50 sortie credits (200 combat flying hours or five enemy aircraft destroyed, or any combination of hours flown and enemy aircraft destroyed totaling 50 sortie credits). It had been a policy to award no more than three Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal for hours flown. This system resulted in pilots completing their tour with one or more clusters to the DFC in many cases. In one interesting sidelight, it was revealed that there was no leadership award DFC's for fighter pilots.¹⁰⁸

The 3rd Bombardment Division awards board abolished the sortie credit system on 16 September 1944 and the new policy set in place requiring the criteria of an Air Medal for fighter pilots was now for each 40 hours of combat flying and on enemy aircraft destroyed (which was approximately the same criterion for the bomber personnel). Coincidentally enough, Captain Johnson of the 1st Bombardment Division awards board called and said that they had also just abolished the credit system for their fighter pilots also, and that they would not be awarding the DFC for five enemy aircraft destroyed or any combination of hours flown and enemy aircraft destroyed. Their new criteria for the DFC would be flying 200 combat hours. Since the equivalent of 20 combat missions was around 154 hours of combat flying time, fighter pilots in the 1st Bombardment Division could expect a DFC after 25 or 26 missions. The 2nd Bombardment Division awards board followed suite, and by mid-September 1944 all three division commanders agreed upon the new unified Air Medal and DFC policy for their fighter pilots. However, for weeks afterwards, Air Medal and DFC recommendations under the old system for accomplishments prior to 16 September 1944 were approved, and as late as December 1944 questions would arise about the propriety of issuing these "automatic" DFC's and Air Medals.¹⁰⁹

On 7 October 1944 the 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, announced their policy for the DFC leadership award category. In this instance, the DFC would be awarded to leaders (command pilots, pilots, navigators, bombardiers and radar navigators [often referred to as "Mickey" operators]) for extraordinary achievement on one mission when photographs showed a minimum of 40% of the bombs falling within 1,000 feet and 80% within 2,000 feet of the mean point of impact and when, on the same mission, unusual difficulties were overcome, such as flak, fighters, weather, etc. The awards board held a very high standard in awarding the DFC under these conditions.¹¹⁰

A DFC could also be awarded to those same leaders mentioned above who had not distinguished themselves on a single sortie, but who had consistently done a good job in leading formations over a period of time. These leaders had not the misfortune (or good fortune) to have led a mission who had the necessary difficulties and dangers to justify the award of a DFC for a single mission. Command and staff personnel (non-crew members) became eligible for the award upon completing a total of 15 sorties. Crew members (pilots, navigators, bombardiers and Mickey operators) became eligible upon the completion of 20 sorties. In addition to these requirements, the 3rd Bombardment Division's awards board had a rule-of-thumb that individuals in both categories (leaders and crew members) should have a minimum of 10 missions in which they were in the lead crew.¹¹¹

Meanwhile, another question came up at the Eighth Air Force's 3rd Bombardment Division, exactly what type of "heroism by voluntary action or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight" would qualify for the DFC? On 18 October 1944 the awards board issued guidelines for both the DFC and the Air Medal. For the DFC, possible scenarios that would meet the board's approval were: a bomber pilot, or co-pilot acting as the pilot, successfully ditches the aircraft which resulted in the crew escaping; or, a bomber pilot, or co-pilot acting as the pilot, successfully returns a badly damaged aircraft with two inoperative engines, over a considerable distance; an individual on a bomber aircraft that operated a gun and was seriously wounded stayed at his position to defend against a threaten attack, or was slightly wounded and repelled an enemy attack; or the destruction of two enemy aircraft on one mission by a member of a bomber crew. For the Air Medal, the awards board provided examples of men administering first aid while wounded themselves, or saving the life of a fellow crewman because they administered first aid; or manning their guns though slightly wounded or frostbitten through no fault of the individual concerned.¹¹²

On 29 October 1944, the Eighth Air Force's 2nd Bombardment Division issued instructions on how to submit award recommendations. Credit for destroying enemy aircraft evidently had caused some consternation, as the instructions noted that in the case of bombardment personnel, credit would be given to only one person. The Group commander would make the final determination as to which man would receive the award when there was more than one claimant. Credits for destruction of an enemy aircraft for fighter pilots were confirmed by a screening board of officers at the Fighter Wing Headquarters. The award results for shooting down a German aircraft? An Air Medal and Oak Leaf Clusters would be awarded for the destruction of each enemy aircraft, which was a standard policy from the earliest days of the war.¹¹³

As such policy statements had done in the past, the 2nd Air Division's instructions noted the specific criteria for the Air Medal for their personnel at this point in the war. It would be awarded for meritorious achievement on an aerial flight for a specific meritorious act, while in flight, or for the destruction of each enemy aircraft. It goes on to say:

Heavy bombardment air crew personnel may be considered eligible for the award of the Air Medal or Oak Leaf Cluster thereto after completion of six (6) sorties. A sustained record of meritorious achievement will be the basis of an award, not merely an accumulation of sorties. Fighter air crew personnel may be considered eligible for the award of an Air Medal at the

completion of forty (40) operational hours and/or meritorious service or achievement, or the destruction of one enemy aircraft. Heavy bombardment and Fighter personnel may qualify for an unlimited number of Oak Leaf Clusters.¹¹⁴

As before, the Distinguished Flying Cross was to be awarded for extraordinary achievement or heroism in aerial flight for a specific accomplishment, or, for a sustained record of exceptionally outstanding performances of duty as clearly to set him apart from his comrades who have not been so recognized. The 2nd Bombardment Division's instructions go on to say that a DFC should be considered "For a consistent record of leadership or command involving successful completion of a series of missions with deep penetration of enemy territory against heavily defended targets, although the action on the individual missions may not in themselves qualify for the subject award."¹¹⁵

A whole section of the 2nd Bombardment Division's Instruction was devoted to the "Leadership and Command" recommendation principles for the DFC. The whole section is quoted below:¹¹⁶

1. Recommendations for leadership awards will be guided by the following general principles:

a. Accumulative leadership awards are for the purpose of recognizing leaders and lead crews who have led a considerable number of Division, Wing, Group, and in specific instances, Squadrons on missions which have on many occasions require deep penetrations to heavily defended targets.

b. Individual members of lead crews, or of crews which have been forced through unforeseen circumstances to assume the lead, may be recommended as having displayed outstanding skill, courage, and initiative in leading their forces throughout a successful mission involving deep penetration of enemy territory against a heavily defended target.

c. Leadership awards for any single mission will normally be limited to members of that lead force which achieved initial success against their target. However, leaders of successful following forces may be considered if particularly adverse weather, intense enemy opposition, or other obstacles were overcome on route.

d. Leadership awards to crew members will only be approved where in specific instances of extraordinary or meritorious achievement on the part of the individual concerned was singularly responsible for the success of the mission. The distinction between the relative contributions of individual crew members will be carefully considered in determining the degree of award to more than one member of a crew.

(1) Air Commander: An Air Commander of a successful mission involving a deep penetration is eligible for consideration for an award of the Distinguished Flying Cross. Should the success of the mission be due to the individual gallantry of the Air Commander in overcoming unusually severe obstacles, or in spite of personal wounds, consideration may be given to a Silver Star recommendation.

(2) Pilot: The pilot may be recommended for award based on skill displayed in flying the lead aircraft.

(3) Bombardier: The Bombardier of the lead aircraft may be considered for award whenever a mission involves particularly successful bombing. Such recommendation will be substantiated by strike photos, when bombing is visual, or PRU [photo reconnaissance unit] photos when the mission is PFF [pathfinder force]. Photos will show MPI [mean point of impact] and 1,000 feet circle.

(4) Navigator: Careful consideration of the individual facts will be given in connection with recommendation for Navigators.

(a) The accuracy of navigation, the difficulties encountered, and the contribution to the successful conclusion of the mission will be the basis for recommendation of the Lead Navigator.

(b) Under conditions of good visibility, where the pilotage navigator contributes by his familiarity and intimate knowledge of the terrain throughout the entire route, he may also be considered for award. Where the pilotage navigator's contribution is based on his knowledge of the target area, a lesser award should be recommended.

(c) Under conditions of flying over an overcast, the PFF Navigator may be considered for award depending on his contribution to the success of the mission as substantiated by PRU photos.

e. All recommendations for leadership or command awards will be subject to approval of respective Combat Wing Commanding Officer.

(1) Recommendations within a Group will be initiated by Group Commanding Officers and forwarded through Combat Wing Headquarters.

(2) Recommendations for Group Commanding Officers will be initiated by Combat Wing Commanding Officers and forwarded direct to this Headquarters.

On 1 November 1944 a question arose in the 3rd Bombardment Division's awards section concerning the Air Medal award qualification for the pilots of the Division's Scouter Force, attached to the 55th Fighter Group. They were not 'fighter pilots' per say, and they were not part of the bombardment crews, so how did these pilots flying fighter type aircraft qualify for the Air Medal? The answer was that they would be treated the same as the fighter pilots: upon completing 40 hours of combat flying they could be recommended for an Air Medal or an Oak Leave Cluster to the Air Medal, as appropriate.¹¹⁷

Starting on 12 November 1944, discussion for another DFC policy shift took place concerning the leadership DFC criteria and the minimum requirements for Mickey Operators in the Eighth Air Force's 3rd Bombardment Division. It was their policy to not award a sustained leadership DFC to individuals who already had a DFC for leadership. However, for a very few outstanding leaders in each subordinate group, it appeared to be creating a hardship in recognizing these exceptional individuals. While the emphasis of the leadership DFC justification had changed

from sustained operations (completing anywhere from 28 to 35 combat missions) to awarding DFC for individual achievement (in which the 3rd Bombardment Division's awards board tended to be more lenient in awarding a DFC), it was still felt by the Division's awards board that the sustained leadership award should be granted to outstanding leaders even though they had previously been awarded a leadership DFC either for a single mission or for sustained leadership.¹¹⁸

The 3rd Bombardment Division's awards board also strongly recommended that an injustice to the Mickey Operators be corrected. It was almost impossible, argued the members of the awards board, to substantiate a leadership DFC on a single mission for Mickey Operators, because of the requirement that bombing results had to be proven by photographs. Instead of the present 20 mission minimum for consideration for the sustained leadership DFC for Mickey Operators, the awards board requested that the minimum be reduced to 15 sorties. Both requests were approved on 23 November 1944.¹¹⁹

The Eighth Air Force's 3rd Bombardment Division rescinded all earlier Distinguished Flying Cross policy and issued a new set of instructions on 28 November 1944. While once again affirming that the DFC would be awarded to members of the Military, Naval, and Air Forces, who, while serving in any capacity with the Army Air Forces, distinguished themselves by heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight, the Division outlined what would constitute meeting those criteria. As with previous policy, the fundamentals of the DFC were reiterated. First, heroism must be evidenced by voluntary action in the face of great danger above and beyond the line of duty while participating in aerial flight. Second, extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight must be evidenced by accomplishment so exceptional and outstanding as to clearly set the individual apart from his comrades who have not been so recognized. An act constitutes heroism or extraordinary achievement when it is an act or a series of acts while participating in aerial flight which involves, in the presence of great hazard or uncertainty, a distinguished assumption of responsibility other than that required by orders; distinguished performance of an unprecedented flight mission by an individual primarily responsible, which as a pilot or navigator; or a display of technique, skill or judgment quite beyond the adequate or expected, and which is considered so exceptional and outstanding as to clearly set him apart from his comrades who have not been so recognized. Recommendations for the Distinguished Flying Cross must be supported by the most cogent of reasons and a superior performance of duty will not alone justify the award.¹²⁰

The new Instruction divided out the criteria into two broad categories, "Heroism or Extraordinary Achievement in a Command or Leadership Function" and "Extraordinary Achievement on Sustained Operations." Under the heroism or extraordinary achievement in a command or leadership function, there were further categories, on the basis of one mission only, and on the basis of more than one mission. On the basis of one mission only, extraordinary or meritorious achievement must be shown within the meaning of existing regulations, through the carrying out of a successful fighter or bombing mission of substantial penetration within enemy territory, wherein the enemy opposed such penetration both by intense anti-aircraft fire and severe fighter attacks, or the weather and other physical difficulties of the mission presented great obstacles in the way of its accomplishment. With these conditions, bombing results must be proven by photographs showing a minimum of 40% of the bombs falling within 1,000 feet

and 80% within 2,000 feet of the target. The tactical handling of the formation and the performance of units themselves must be in accordance with standing operating procedures and instructions of the Commanding General. Combat emergencies must be met with skill.¹²¹

In the case of command pilots, the Instructions noted that the DFC could be recommended for one mission only to the command pilot of the force, division, wing, or group, each element being considered as a tactical force under its own leader. In the case of the aircraft pilot, the award may be recommended to the pilot of the lead aircraft of the force, division, wing, group or squadron. The same is the case of a dead reckoning (DR) or radar navigator and bombardier. In the case of the bombardier, the bombing had to be visual. In all cases, definite action must be shown on the part of the individual contributing to the particular success of the mission in the position of duty to which assigned.¹²²

On the basis of more than one mission, leaders or members of lead crews of forces, division, wings, groups, and squadrons could be recommended for accumulated or sustained heroism or extraordinary achievement as a result of a number of combat hours or sorties flown. The Instruction noted that there may be instances of outstanding and superior leadership by leaders of forces, divisions, wings and group formations who, although such leaders may have already received a DFC for leadership achievement, were deserving of further recognition. However, the Instructions warned that recommendations for sustained heroism and extraordinary achievement were not normally approved when the individual concerned had already been recognized for leadership achievement. Recommendations were to be substantiated by the most cogent of reasons and were closely scrutinized by the Awards Board at 3rd Bombardment Division.¹²³

On the basis of more than one mission, the following personnel were cited by the new 3rd Bombardment Division Instructions as eligible for the DFC based on sustained leadership achievement: Fighter commanders (section leaders, squadron leaders, and group leaders) who have completed a minimum of 180 combat flying hours, for command leadership of section, squadron and group formations in the air. Capabilities were primarily shown by the command (leadership) of the squadron and group formations; therefore, command or leadership of section formations had to be greater in number than for squadron or group in order to merit the DFC.¹²⁴

Command and staff personnel (command pilots, group navigators, group bombardiers and mickey operators in lead aircraft) who completed a minimum of 15 sorties could be recommended for the DFC for command leadership of force, division, wing, group and squadron formations in the air. Capabilities were primarily shown by the command (leadership) of the division, wing and group formations; therefore, command or leadership of squadron formations had to be greater in number than for force, division, wing or group, in order to merit the DFC.¹²⁵

Crew members (pilots, navigators, and bombardiers in lead aircraft) who have completed a minimum of 20 sorties may be recommended for the DFC for command leadership of division, wing, group and squadron formations in the air. Capabilities were primarily shown by the command (leadership) of the division, wing and group formations; therefore, command or leadership of squadron formations had to be greater in number than for force, division, wing or group, in order to merit the award.¹²⁶

Regardless of whether the award was based on one or more missions, under the “Heroism or Extraordinary Achievement in a Command or Leadership Function,” or if it was for fighter commanders, command and staff personnel, or crew members, at least ten of the minimum number of sorties were expected to be flown in the lead aircraft.¹²⁷

Under the “Extraordinary Achievement on Sustained Operations” category, the 28 November 1944 3rd Bombardment Division Instruction made one criteria very clear. Except for combat crew personnel in heavy bombers who completed 20 or more combat sorties, and fighter pilots who had completed 154 hours or more of combat flying as of midnight, 16 September 1944, the mere participation in sustained operational missions was considered insufficient basis to approve the award of the DFC. In addition, the commission of any crime, offense or act constituting a felony or involving moral turpitude (cowardice) would preclude the presentation or citation.¹²⁸

So complicated had the air war become, that different situations constantly arose in which group commanders believed warranted recognition of the Distinguished Flying Cross. For instance, in the first week of December 1944, in a group commander’s meeting, it was announced that the co-pilots on lead ships, who acted as formation controllers from the tail gunner’s position, would be considered for a DFC. The 3rd Bombardment Division awards board on 13 December 1944 agreed that definite achievement was shown by lead crew co-pilots in this capacity and that they would be eligible for the DFC on the basis of sustained leadership upon the completion of their tours.¹²⁹

Less than a week later, on 18 December 1944, the 3rd Bombardment Division amended its 28 November 1944 Instructions and added Co-pilots to the list of eligible DFC recipients on the basis of more than one mission category. Co-pilots who served as formation controllers in lead aircraft and who had completed a normal tour of combat duty could be recommended for the DFC for leadership of division, wing, group and squadron formations in the air. However, this revision was not retroactive prior to the 18 December 1944 date. The revision also noted that normally at least ten of the minimum number of sorties for the command and staff personnel, and crew members (pilots, navigators, bombardiers, and now co-pilots), should be flown in lead aircraft, and at least ten of the sorties for the copilots should be flown by the co-pilot in lead aircraft as a formation controller. No such restrictions were placed upon the fighter commanders, since they already had the requirement to complete 180 combat flying hours.¹³⁰

Other questions arose, such as what organizational level should a leader is recognized with the leadership DFC? Should sustained leadership awards only be made to leaders who often led group formations, or wing formations, or division formations; or, should the recognition be given to those who led even small squadron formations? The decision was to award a leadership DFC to leaders of squadrons, groups, wings, divisions, and forces.¹³¹ Another issue vexed the 3rd Bombardment Division’s awards board. Since the sustained operational performance DFC was usually awarded at the end of a combat tour, what should be done for group and wing commanders who had no definite end of tour requirements yet had flown more than twenty missions as formation leaders? For instance, Colonel Frederick W. Castle had flown 31 missions; Colonel Archie J. Old had flown 25 missions; and Colonel Thomas S. Jeffrey, Junior, had flown 27 missions, all by 15 November 1944. The decision was to bestow the sustained operations or leadership DFC to group and wing commanders.¹³²

At the same time, Major General Earl E. Partridge, the Commanding General of the 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, challenged his Director of Personnel, Colonel Donald G. Graham, about bestowing “automatic” DFC to his bomber crews. It was now mid-December 1944, and he was very aware of the negative feedback he would receive from his superiors concerning this issue. Colonel Graham explained that at the time the “automatic” DFCs were discontinued, there was a clause permitting such automatic DFCs to be awarded to combat crew members at the completion of their tours who had completed 20 missions prior to 16 September 1944. Each month since then a few of these holdovers had been issued DFCs, and he intended to continue the practice until all such crew members had received the DFC award.¹³³

Colonel Graham took the opportunity to bring up another sore point concerning the DFC and the Air Medal. He commissioned a study examining non-automatic DFC’s and Air Medals awarded since the beginning of operations of bombardment personnel in the 3rd Bombardment Division. He found that the extremely low number of non-automatic Air Medals awarded (in other words, he excluded the sustained operations awards) in comparison with the non-automatic DFC’s indicated that the Air Medal had “...next to no prestige left.” He fervently believed that there had been literally “...hundreds of minor acts of achievement since the beginning of operations that could have been recognized by the award of an Air Medal but, the groups just didn’t think it worth the trouble to recommend someone for them.” Colonel Graham also compared one group’s submission rate to another group. In the extremes, he found that “The large number of DFC’s awarded to the 385th [Bombardment] Group indicates that group has been ‘on the ball’ as far as awards are concerned.” On the other hand, “The unusually small number of DFC’s awarded to the 96th [Bombardment] Group indicates that group has been very poor in their administration of awards.” In fact, “...six groups that became operational after the 96th, one as late as 9 months after, all have been awarded more non-automatic DFC’s than the 96th.” Consequently, the 96th Bomb Group received a new Awards Officer who appeared to take a greater interest in the personal awards function than his predecessors did.¹³⁴

As 1944 came to a close, the Eighth Air Force’s 2nd Bombardment Division issued Instructions on 24 December reminding commanders that recipients of the Air Medal and any Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal would be presented by the Group or Squadron commanders of the units to which the aircrew belonged, and that the presentation be made prior to these personnel being sent home after completing their combat tours.¹³⁵

The 406th Bombardment Squadron, a special operations unit that flew at night dropping leaflets over enemy occupied territory, published in December 1944 an aircrew orientation pamphlet aimed at new personnel who had been recently assigned to the organization. In one paragraph the following, under the heading of “Tour and Awards,” was included:¹³⁶

In accordance with the policy set forth by Headquarters, Eighth Air Force, the tour of combat for heavy bombardment crews has been placed on an unlimited status.

The tour of combat for the Squadron will consist of two hundred and fifty (250) hours of combat time, however individuals may be relieved from combat duties before that time if the Flight Surgeon deems it necessary.

Awards are made as follows:

	At the completion of
Air Medal	40 hours
1 st Oak Leaf Cluster	80 hours
2 nd Oak Leaf Cluster	120 hours
3 rd Oak Leaf Cluster	160 hours
4 th Oak Leaf Cluster	200 hours
5 th Oak Leaf Cluster	240 hours

The Distinguished Flying Cross is not in any sense an automatic award. It is given only for acts of extraordinary achievement while on an operational mission.

A glimpse of how local 2nd Air Division units handled award submissions is provided by the historian of the 466th Bombardment Group covering the last of 1944 and early 1945. He noted that the group had revised its method of handling awards and decorations which previously had been somewhat haphazard except in the case of “automatic” awards of the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross. Non-automatic awards and decorations had been made if it had seemed a good idea to the proper authorities, who would then get in touch with the Awards and Decorations Officer. Regularization of this procedure became demonstrably imperative once “automatic” Distinguished Flying Crosses for thirty combat missions had been discontinued. Therefore an Awards and Decorations Board was set up and a regular procedure for handling decorations adopted. Members of the board were the four squadron commanders, an S-2 (Intelligence) officer, and the Awards and Decorations Officer (non-voting). On the unanimous approval of the board proposed decorations and citations were forwarded to the commanding officer for approval prior to being submitted to 96th Combat Wing and Second Air Division. Acts which might call for awards or decorations were recorded on standard forms at interrogation by S-2 officers. These forms were then sent to the squadron adjutant of the man proposed for decoration. He in turn wrote a letter recommending the officer or enlisted man and giving reason for so doing. If approved this letter was signed by the Officers’ or enlisted mans’ squadron commander who forwarded it to the Awards and Decorations board for consideration. If approved by the Board it continued upward for the approval of the Group commanding officer, 96th Combat Wing, Second Air Division; and, in the case of medals superior to the Distinguished Flying Cross, to Eighth Air Force.¹³⁷

The latter half of February 1945 saw the final revision for the Eighth Air Forces 2nd Air Division’s policy for Air Medals, when Emergency Rescue Squadron aircrews were now included. The 18 February 1945 2nd Air Division Instructions again reiterated that bombardment crew members needed to complete six combat sorties before being considered for an Air Medal and that fighter pilots were required to fly 40 combat hours for each award of the Air Medal. Emergency Rescue Squadron personnel, however, were required to fly 100 actual operational hours in any type of aircraft prior to being considered for the Air Medal.¹³⁸

A few days later, 26 February 1945, the 2nd Air Division's Awards and Decorations Board held a meeting which the topic of exactly when to recommend and present a DFC arose. Evidently, some units who had recommended an individual for the DFC based on performance of duty throughout a tour actually stopped the man from going home until the award was actually presented. The Board viewed this as an unnecessary delay in departure for the awardee from the station and pointed out that recommendations for an award could be made at any time and that there was no requirement that such recommendation should be based on an individual's entire performance of his tour. The Board believed that recommendations based on performance throughout a tour could be appropriately presented shortly prior to the actual completion of a tour; that, for example, recommendations for lead crew personnel might be submitted on the completion of 27 missions and other crews on completion of 30 missions, so that when the tour was actually over, the DFC would be waiting for presentation and not slow down a combat veteran's return to the United States.¹³⁹

Ninth Air Force

The Ninth Air Force, having just arrived to the United Kingdom from the Mediterranean area of operations in October 1943, and no longer under the policies of the Northwest African Air Forces, now issued their own policy on 20 December 1943 (see Northwest African Air Forces, for Ninth Air Force award policy prior to coming to England). This policy declared that all recommendations for the DFC that were not based upon meritorious achievement or distinction (in other words, only those awards based upon sustained operations or score-card basis) would have to be approved by Headquarters Ninth Air Force. This mandate was intended to limit the number of such awards to only those who truly deserved them. However, the Air Medal criteria of an individual destroying his first enemy aircraft, completing five bomber, bomber-fighter, photographic, troop carrier, or observation sorties, or 10 fighter sorties, remained unchanged. An oak leaf cluster was still authorized for each additional enemy aircraft destroyed, for each group of five additional combat missions for the bomber, bomber-fighter, photographic, troop carrier, or observation crews, or for each group of 10 additional fighter combat sorties.¹⁴⁰

An explanation of a fighter sortie by the Ninth Air Force became very involved, as described in their 20 December 1943 policy:

A sortie is deemed to have taken place when an airplane, ordered on a combat operational mission, and in the performance of that mission, enters an area where enemy anti-aircraft fire may be effective or where enemy fighter patrols occur; or in any way is subjected to enemy attack. Fighter crews who participate in bomber-fighter missions are hereby authorized to receive the same sortie credit toward the award of decoration as occurred to Bomber crews. A Bomber-Fighter mission is to be defined as any mission in which Fighter crews accompany Bombers all the way to the target, or under unusual conditions to the proximity of the target, or to the limit of their range when equipped with extra gas tanks. On missions that Fighter crews do not accompany Bombers as described, they will receive credit for a Fighter sortie. Fighter crews who attack a target by strafing or bombing it will receive credit for a Fighter-Bomber mission. The award of these decorations will be made upon this basis only to combat crews and other personnel specifically directed by Command or higher headquarters to participate in combat operations. Credits for sorties will be given only when every effort of the success of the

mission has been made by the crew. Sorties will not be deemed the sole basis for the award of the Air Medal or Distinguished Flying Cross, but may be used, however, to substantiate recommendations therefore to this headquarters upon the basis of meritorious achievement in flight, which would include sustained operational activities.¹⁴¹

The Ninth Air Force tried to make the submission process for the DFC and the Air Medal more universal within their command. On 8 April 1944 the Ninth issued forms to be filled out when submitting a crew member for the DFC and Air Medal for achievements (single acts of gallantry), and another form for the 'automatic' (sustained operations) recommendation for the Air Medal.¹⁴²

Aircrews of a medium bomber unit, the 386th Bombardment Group, had their own suggestions. After a low level raid on Fort de Perseigne, France, on 6 August 1944, the debriefing intelligence officers were asked to record any suggestions the aircrews may have to improve their effectiveness. As expected, issues concerning the food, cleanliness of the facilities, and the maintenance of the aircraft armament were noted. However, out of the 18 suggestions, seven of them concerned the Distinguished Flying Cross. Each time the DFC came up, the crew emphatically declared that the award should be bestowed on them after completing 50 missions. Evidently, the policy against score-carding did not carry much weight with the aircrews.¹⁴³

On 24 November 1944, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, a force composed mostly of fighters, medium, and light bombers by this time, and operating out of temporary airfields across liberated Europe, issued its policy concerning the criteria for awarding Air Medals. The Ninth also bestowed an Air Medal in recognition of a confirmed destruction of one airborne enemy aircraft (as opposed to enemy aircraft sitting on the ground and destroyed by marauding Ninth Air Force fighter pilots). In the case of night fighters, crew members were eligible to receive equal credit for the destruction of an aircraft. As opposed to the Eighth Air Force's policy of awarding an Air Medal for every six sorties, the Ninth Air Force gave "favorable consideration" for awarding an Air Medal to combat crew members of medium and light bombers upon the completion of five sorties.¹⁴⁴

In addition, the Ninth Air Force's policy for fighter pilots, as opposed to the 40 hours of combat hours that the Eighth Air Force required, still rested on the number of sortie, in this case, ten. However, these ten sorties had to consist of all or a combination of fighter sweeps without external fuel tanks; bombers escort missions without external tanks; tactical reconnaissance for photographic reconnaissance missions of less than two hours duration; artillery adjustment missions; fighter intercept missions when enemy aircraft are engaged or when flight is over enemy territory; or night patrol missions where enemy fire from aircraft or ground installations is probable or to be expected.¹⁴⁵

Also, the Ninth Air Force would favor an award of an Air Medal for fighter pilots if they completed five sorties that consisted of, or were a combination of, fighter-bomber missions, either bombing or strafing; escort missions using external fuel tanks; tactical reconnaissance or photographic reconnaissance missions over two hours in duration; or night intruder sorties.¹⁴⁶

Because of the five mission or ten mission criteria for the Ninth Air Force, the tactical air force made clear what constituted a sortie: "A sortie is deemed to have taken place when an aircraft, ordered on a combat operational mission, and in the performance of that mission, enters an area where enemy anti-aircraft or ground fire may be effective, or where enemy fighter patrols occur, or is in any way subject to attack. Credit for a sortie will be given only when in the opinion of the group commander every effort for the success of the mission has been made."¹⁴⁷

North African Theater of Operations and Mediterranean Theater of Operations

Northwest African Air Forces

The Northwest African Air Forces (NAAF) oversaw the activities of the Ninth Air Force up to October 1943 (when that air force moved to England), the Twelfth Air Force, and the Fifteenth Air Force (after its activation on 1 November 1943). These air forces operated under the NAAF's rules and policies for the DFC and the Air Medal.

From available sources, it appears that up until 1 March 1943, the criteria for the Air Medal was based upon 100 hours of operational flight against the enemy in the Middle East Theater. The Distinguished Flying Cross was bestowed after flying 200 hours of operational flights against the enemy in the Middle East Theater (see Twelfth Air Force for the criteria after 1 March 1943).¹⁴⁸

On 19 April 1943, Headquarters Northwest African Air Forces provided to their units sample award citations for Group and Squadron commanders to use and adapt in recommending their men for the Distinguished Flying Cross. The two examples below are for sustained operational performance:¹⁴⁹

For extraordinary achievement while participating in _____ aerial flights. Expert professional knowledge and sound judgment has been displayed by Major _____ in leading and directing aerial operations against the enemy in Europe and North Africa. His outstanding qualities of leadership has been an inspiration to all persons under his command. He has carried out his duties with foresight, energy and exceptional success; the results of which have been of inestimable value. The reputation of success gained by his command has been largely due to the ability, leadership and inspiration of Major _____. Such ability and continued success reflect great credit upon himself and the military service of the United States. (NOTE: ____ has engaged in ____ successful combat sorties and has to his credit _____ operational combat hours.)

For extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flights in North Africa. During all of his flights, Lt. ____ has displayed a high degree of professional skill in the performance of his duties as a fighter pilot. His unceasing devotion to duty and eagerness to participate in all missions have contributed greatly to the success of the African Campaign. His courage and ability to properly carry out his assignment in the ace of grave danger from enemy action reflect great credit upon himself and the Military Service of the United States. (NOTE: _____ has engaged in ____ successful combat sorties and has to his credit _____ operational combat hours.)

The next three examples are for a one-time events:

For extraordinary achievement while participating in a bombing mission on 1 February 1943. Lt. _____ plane was attacked by an enemy fighter. The enemy plane, apparently damaged, did not break off the attack, but collided with Lt. _____ plane. With the left horizontal stabilizer and left elevator completely torn away and the fuselage cut approximately through 2/3 of its thickness, Lt. _____ with the assistance of the co-pilot, held the plane in formation and successfully landed it without further damage to the crew or plane. The courage and professional skill showed by Lt. _____ in performing a seemingly impossible feat reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Services of the United States. (NOTE: _____ has engaged in _____ successful combat sorties and has to his credit _____ operational combat hours.)

_____ First Lieutenant, Air Corps, For extraordinary achievement while participating in a highly destructive raid on the _____ road, March _____ 1943. Lt. _____ volunteered for the mission knowing full well that the chances of survival were extremely remote, and executed his part in it with great skill and daring. This achievement reflects high credit on Lieutenant _____ and the Military Service.

For extraordinary achievement while participating in a bombing mission in North Africa, 12 January 1943. As First Pilot on a B-17, Lt. _____ displayed great courage and skill in returning a very badly damaged airplane to his home base. During the course of action, the aircraft and two (2) of the engines received numerous direct hits, forcing it to lose altitude and fall out of the formation. After losing altitude from 10,000 feet to 900 feet, Lt. _____ with extraordinary courage and coolness, regained control of his airplane and reached an altitude of 1,500 feet. He then returned to this home base, flying over 450 miles, 250 of which were over mountains, enemy-held territory. By his resourcefulness and flying skill in the face of great danger and overwhelming odds, he upheld the highest traditions of the Military Forces of the United States. (NOTE: _____ has engaged in _____ successful combat sorties and has to his credit _____ operational combat hours.)

Back in Washington, District of Columbia, questions about the Air Medal surfaced concerning non-combat aircrews. In an informal conference between Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section and the War Department's G-1 on 28 January 1944, the Army Air Forces noted that they believed that the Air Medal could appropriately be awarded to Air Liaison Officers serving with Field Artillery Divisions, since the Executive Order authorizing the award of the Air Medal to persons while serving in any capacity in or with the Army.¹⁵⁰

Word quickly spread and by 6 March 1944, a policy circular by Headquarters, North African Theater of Operations, published the criteria. Field Artillery Liaison Pilots and Observers could qualify for the Air Medal after they had completed 35 sorties and was recognized for any single meritorious act while participating in aerial flight. To avoid any misunderstanding of exactly what a sortie consisted of, the circular defined it as a flight that had been ordered which involved: 1) adjustment of artillery fire on any enemy installation; 2) surveillance of artillery fire on any enemy installation; 3) registration of artillery fire in enemy territory; 4) front line reconnaissance of at least one hour duration; 5) any flight in which the airplane was attacked by enemy aircraft; 6) credit for only one sortie would be given regardless of any combination of the foregoing accomplished on any one flight; and 7) credit for sorties would only be given when

every effort for the success of the mission had been made. Such credits would be specified and approved by the battalion, group, brigade, division, corps or army artillery commanders.¹⁵¹

The Distinguished Flying Cross, on the other hand, should not be used for Air Liaison Officers assigned to or on duty with Field Artillery Units. The Executive Order establishing the Distinguished Flying Cross restricted the award to members of military naval or air forces who, while serving in any capacity with the Army Air Forces distinguished themselves while participating in aerial flight. Headquarters Army Air Forces recommended that the Silver Star be used in those cases in which the Distinguished Flying Cross might be appropriate for Air Liaison Officers serving with Field Artillery Units.¹⁵² The War Department disagreed, and on 25 March 1944 a cable to the theatre commanders authorized them to award the Distinguished Flying Cross to army liaison pilots assigned to and on duty with Field Artillery Units provided they were eligible under paragraph 14, Army Regulation 600-45. This authority, however, could not be delegated to subordinate commanders.¹⁵³ This policy was adopted by the Commanding General, European Theater of Operations, on 27 May 1944.¹⁵⁴

With the end of the war in Europe on 8 & 9 May 1945, General Joseph T. McNarney, Deputy Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean Theater and commanding general of the U.S. Army Forces, Mediterranean Theater, authorized the Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Mediterranean Theater of Operations, to delegate the award the DFC and the Air Medal to any Major General in the Army Air Forces under his command. In addition, the DFC and Air Medal could be bestowed upon members of the French, Brazilian, Polish, Yugoslav and Italian Armed Forces. He also re-authorized the Commanding Generals of the 15th Army Group and Fifth Army to award the Air Medal to United States Field Artillery Liaison Pilots and regularly assigned observers.¹⁵⁵

Twelfth Air Force

It did not take long before the unique circumstances faced by numbered air force commanders in various areas of the world forced adaptations to the new regulation. In the Eighth and Twelfth Air Forces, for example, identical policy letters were published on 29 November 1942 stating that an airman could be recommended for the Distinguished Flying Cross for flying 25 bomber, photographic, air transport, or observation sorties, or 50 fighter sorties. These policy letters directed that the DFC and the Air Medal would be awarded to their personnel for participation in aerial combat operations against the enemy as follows:¹⁵⁶

For:	Award:
First enemy airplane destroyed	Air medal
Second enemy airplane destroyed	Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on Air Medal Ribbon)
Third enemy airplane destroyed	Second Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on the Air Medal Ribbon)
Fourth enemy airplane destroyed	Third Oak Leaf Cluster (To be worn on Air Medal Ribbon)
Fifth enemy airplane destroyed	Distinguished Flying Cross
Tenth enemy airplane destroyed	Oak Leaf Cluster

Fifteenth enemy airplane destroyed (To be worn on DFC Ribbon)
 Second Oak Leaf Cluster
 (To be worn on DFC Ribbon)

For example:

Air Medal 1 Oak Leaf Cluster – 2 enemy airplanes
 Air Medal 3 Oak Leaf Clusters – 4 enemy airplanes
 Air Medal 3 Oak Leaf Clusters – 5 enemy airplanes
 and DFC
 Air Medal 3 Oak Leaf Clusters – 10 enemy airplanes
 and DFC 1 Oak Leaf Cluster

Air Medal For 5 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation sorties
 or 10 Fighter sorties.

Oak Leaf Cluster to be worn on Air Medal Ribbon:

For each succeeding qualification warranting an Air Medal credit
 such as 10 Fighter sorties or 5 other type sorties as outlined above
 or the destruction of one enemy airplane.

DFC To be awarded in lieu of 4th Oak Leaf Cluster for wear on Air
 Medal.

Sorties:	Award:
(b) 5 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation sorties:	Air Medal
(b) 10 Fighter Sorties:	Air Medal
(c) 10 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on AM Ribbon)
(d) 20 Fighter Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on AM Ribbon)
(e) 25 Bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation Sorties:	DFC
(f) 50 Fighter Sorties:	DFC
(g) 30 bomber, Photographic, Air Transport or Observation Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on DFC Ribbon)
(h) 60 Fighter Sorties:	Oak Leaf Cluster (to be worn on DFC Ribbon)

On 1 March 1943, Twelfth Air Force modified and added to the criteria of the Air Medal and DFC. For the Air Medal:¹⁵⁷

- a. One enemy aircraft destroyed in flight.
- b. Five sorties, each of which is of at least 2 ½ hours duration.
- c. Ten sorties, each of which is of less than 2 ½ hours duration.
- d. Destruction of one enemy combat naval vessel, or other enemy vessel of at least 500 tons.
- e. A combination of b and c above.

It was made clear in this new policy that the DFC would not be awarded in lieu of other awards, and that recommendations for the DFC would not be made on an automatic basis. Therefore, there may be awarded an unlimited number of Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal, as opposed to the Eighth and Twelfth Air Forces 29 November 1942 policy of awarding the DFC in lieu of the Air Medal. The policy reinforced the concept that the DFC may be awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. Recommendation for this award may be based on a single act or an extraordinary achievement over a period of time.

The same Twelfth Air Force 1 March 1943 policy letter also provided details of an agreement between the U.S. Navy and Army in circumstances when enemy submarines were “known sunk” (known as a Class A result) or “probably sunk” (known as a Class B result) by Army Air Force aircraft. The DFC would be awarded for an attack assessed or reassessed as Class A or B resulting in the capture of members of the submarine crew (alive or dead); or awarded or an attack assessed or reassessed as Class A or B during or incident to which enemy fire was encountered either from a submarine or other surface craft or from aircraft. If no enemy submarine crewmen were capture (alive or dead), and if enemy fire was not encountered from any source, then the award would be the Air Medal. The policy letter also made it clear that all members of the aircrew who had sunk or given credit for a probably sunk enemy submarine would all receive the identical decoration except where an individual member performed his duties in an outstanding manner as compared to the manner in which other members performed their duties. Later, in a review of awards and decorations prepared by the General Board, Headquarters European Theater of Operations, in 1946, it noted that pilots flying anti-submarine patrols were required to have completed 200 hours to receive the Air Medal. However, no further award would be made, regardless of the hours flown in excess of 200, for that type of patrol.¹⁵⁸

By late August 1943 the new policy of no “score-carding” operational hours or mission amounts as the primary basis for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal still had combat theater commanders scratching their heads in confusion. The Commanding General of the Twelfth Air Force asked questions as to the policy (as he would continue to do so throughout the war).¹⁵⁹

After a visit by General Arnold, and hearing his views about the criteria for the DFC and Air Medal, the 42nd Bombardment Wing (Twelfth Air Force) issued a Circular on 2 June 1944 that flatly states “Higher authority has announced that the Air Medal will not be awarded on an automatic basis which has been the practice heretofore in this organization. In the absence of any policy prescribed by the Twelfth Air Force the instructions contained herein will govern the submission of recommendations for the award of the Air Medal and Clusters.”¹⁶⁰ The circular continues on with the process of submitting an award package and numerous examples of what circumstances would find favorable decisions by the Wing staff to approve the award nomination, such as bombing accuracy, amount of enemy induced damage to aircraft, casualties and losses, and enemy aircraft destroyed. Sorties and combat hours were intentionally excluded from the circular.¹⁶¹

In Italy, in response to a question from the 42nd Bombardment Wing, Headquarters Twelfth Air Force established a policy in keeping with the June 1944 Arnold directive on 6 November 1944:

1. This policy is established to insure that the number of awards recommended by immediate subordinate commanders will not be disproportionate to the tasks being performed by their commands, and that the use of the decoration is consistent with the requirements of this Air Force as a whole, after consideration of practice in this and other theaters. It has long been a policy of this headquarters that this award, or any other award, not be made on the basis that uses as a criterion the completion of a fixed number of operational sorties or flying hours. Under any system where no restrictions exist as to the total number of Distinguished Flying Crosses, a gradual approach to the wholesale decoration of certain categories of personnel will obviously result in recognition of the ordinary, rather than the extraordinary achievement that is contemplated in current regulations.
2. The desirable level for Distinguished Flying Crosses in your command will be established on the basis of one such award for each two pilots completing sixty (60) tactical missions.
3. This policy will be effective on 1 November 1944 and all recommendations initiated after 31 October 1944 will be governed so that the number of awards recommended over any sixty (60) day period does not exceed the limiting total automatically accrued during that period, as provided for herein.
4. The total number of awards available to personnel of your command over any period, as computed under the method prescribed, has no relationship to the awards actually recommended for particular units of your command or for special categories of personnel. The credit is established for your command as a whole, and control within your command will be exercised by you.
5. Recommendations for the award of the cluster to the Distinguished Flying Cross are not chargeable against your credits.
6. This headquarters will maintain a record of the number of awards recommended and will check same against credits earned, as revealed by the monthly roster of flying personnel submitted with the Care of Flyer Report. This roster will be submitted in duplicate hereafter. It is desired that you take such action as may be necessary to insure the accuracy of data included in the roster referred to.

The ramification of this policy is dramatic. In essence, only half of the medium bombardment pilots who had completed 60 combat missions in the Twelfth Air Force were going to receive the DFC. The inequality of such a program, created to reduce the number of DFC's being awarded (probably in response to the pressures of the quota system imposed by the European Theater of Operations command staff, noted on page 14), and the uproar it would cause if the policy became well known, was apparent to Brigadier General Robert M. Webster, the Twelfth Air Force Deputy Commander, and the man who ordered the new program. The last paragraph of the policy letter signed by General Webster states:

7. This letter will not be reproduced and its contents will not be revealed to individuals other than members of your staff who require such information for the execution of their official duties.¹⁶²

In Italy, the Twelfth Air Force's XII Tactical Air Command commander, Brigadier General Gordon P. Saville, reacted to General Webster's 6 November 1944 letter of limiting the number of medium bomber pilots who would qualify for the DFC in the Twelfth Air Force. In a 19 December 1944 letter to the Twelfth Air Force Chief of Staff, General Saville suggested that instead of basically awarding the DFC to only half the pilots who completed the required 60 combat missions, perhaps a quota for a group for one month (which represented a general standard for average conditions and performance) should be set up. This quota would then be varied to take into account the differences in performance of a group for a particular month as compared to the overall average. In other words, the better the performance of a particular group, the more DFC's would be authorized for pilots coming from that organization. In arriving at a basis for determining a group's quota, General Saville believed that the fundamental basis would have to be sorties flown. A premium would have to be paid for the number of sorties flown over and above some average number flown by the average pilot within the group. For example, for every pilot in the group who flew over one hundred sorties, a greater credit toward a DFC would be allowed than was allowed for pilots who complete the standard 60 sorties. It is unknown if this approach was approved.¹⁶³

In mid-January 1945, Brigadier General Gordon P. Saville, Commanding the XII Tactical Air Command in Italy, realized that the pilots in the Eighth and Ninth Air Forces were getting multiple sortie credits for one flight, which equated into their receiving Air Medals at a faster rate than his pilots (see 20 December 1943 explanation of fighter sorties on page 43). He wrote about this situation to the Commanding General of the First Tactical Air Force (Provisional) and recommended that this practice of the Eighth and Ninth Air Forces be stopped. However, failing this "...it may be necessary or advisable that we conform to this practice in justice to our own crews....it is recommended that policy and definition governing multiple sortie credits be established, maintained and promulgated by United States Strategic Air Forces in order to ensure uniformity among all American crews in this Theater."¹⁶⁴

In response to General Saville's observations, on 15 February 1945, the First Tactical Air Force (Provisional), of the Twelfth Air Force, outlined their policy on the awarding of Air Medals and DFC's, and was based on the old concept of sustained operations (easily misunderstood as the mission count system that was so frowned upon by higher headquarters). In computing the average number of months per tour for fighter pilots, 100 sorties were estimated as the average combat tour. This figure was multiplied times the average number of personnel and divided by the average number of monthly sorties. This equated to the fighter pilots of the First Tactical Air Force (Provisional) receiving one Air Medal for every 10 sorties. For the medium bomber crews, 65 sorties were taken as the average combat tour and the same process followed in obtaining the average months as for the fighter pilots. This equated the medium bomber crews receiving one Air Medal for every seven sorties flown. The Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded to fighter pilots for every 150 sorties, and medium bomber crews received one DFC for every 100 sorties.¹⁶⁵

Fifteenth Air Force

The “sustained operational activities” way of determining if an individual should receive a DFC or an Air Medal was not adopted world-wide, and very soon friction arose between numbered air forces for the higher or lower standards (depending upon one’s viewpoint) used to achieve the same award. This was especially true where numbered air forces worked closely together, as in Europe with the Eighth, Ninth, Twelfth, and Fifteenth Air Forces frequently rubbing shoulders.

These complaints about inequitable standards between the various Numbered Air Forces were voiced all the way up to Headquarters, Army Air Forces. For instance, on 23 December 1943, the Chief of Decorations and Awards Branch of Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Section was confronted by a very concerned Brigadier General Earle E. Partridge, the Chief of Staff of the Fifteenth Air Force, in regards of the new policy. Undoubtedly casting his eye towards the Eighth Air Force award policy, he insisted that a uniform set of regulations for the award of decorations to Air Forces personnel should be established by General Arnold after consulting with the several Air Force commanders.¹⁶⁶ Arnold, however, resisted such requests, due to the varied nature of air warfare around the world.

The 463rd Bombardment Group noted in its May 1944 history that as of 24 May 1944, requirements for oak leaf clusters to the Air Medal were raised from five to ten missions. The basic Air Medal would be awarded to an aircrew member for flying the first five missions, but each oak leaf cluster to that Air Medal would require ten missions to be flown. For example, under the new rules of 24 May 1944, if a Fifteenth Air Force aircrew member flew 25 missions, he would have been awarded one Air Medal with two oak leaf clusters.¹⁶⁷

The Fifteenth Air Force’s XV Fighter Command issued detailed procedures on how to submit award recommendations on 26 September 1944. Four copies of the recommendation were required to be sent to the XV Fighter Command headquarters, along with a letter of transmittal stating briefly the authority for the award, the name, rank and serial number of the individual and the award proposed, which had to be signed by the Group Commander. All recommendations had to be numbered in pencil in the lower left corner, and the narrative labeled in capital letters “NARRATIVE” and the citation “PROPOSED CITATION.” Witnessing officers had to sign all copies of the recommendations, but the proposed citation and narrative were not to be signed. The administrative procedures also provided certain phrases and were to be followed “...exactly and without variation.”¹⁶⁸ For the DFC, the opening phrase of the “proposed citation” would read: “For extraordinary achievement in aerial flight as a pilot of a P- type aircraft in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations.”¹⁶⁹ The citation, about 175 words long, had to bring out the “extraordinary achievement” performed and not relate incidents common to all missions. The Air Medal only required that all of the names of individuals recommended either for the basic medal or for an Oak Leave Cluster, had to be arranged by rank alphabetically. The Fighter Command memorandum cautioned its personnel that actions worthy of a decoration should have a recommendation that did the individual credit, and should not ‘dressed up’ routine actions so that it would read as deserving the DFC. Recommendations had to distinguish between actions of ‘extraordinary achievement’ that deserved the DFC and actions of ‘gallantry’ that deserved the Silver Star. “Care must be exercised,” the memorandum read, “that narratives and citations are not written in either such lifeless or flamboyant phrases or contain so much extraneous matter

that they subtract from the worth of the action. Citations and narratives should be written directly and simply, letting the facts themselves recommend the award.”¹⁷⁰

The Asiatic Pacific Theater

Background to the South Pacific Area¹⁷¹

The South Pacific Area had been organized in April 1942 with the mission of protecting lines of communications to New Zealand and Australia and preparing a counter offensive against the Japanese positions. The South Pacific was, in turn, a part of the Pacific Ocean Areas which had been established by a Joint Chiefs of Staff directive, approved by the President on 30 March 1942. This directive and an earlier Combined Chiefs of Staff directive had divided the Pacific Theater, an area of United States responsibility, into three parts: The Pacific Ocean Areas, the Southwest Pacific Area and the Southeast Pacific Area (The Southeast Pacific Area never became an active theater of operations). Admiral Chester W. Nimitz was designated Commander in Chief of the first with the short title CINCPAC. General Douglas MacArthur was named Commander in Chief of Allied Forces in the Southwest Pacific, with the short title CINCSOPAC. The boundary between these two areas left the Philippines, the East Indies, Australia, New Guinea, and the Northern Solomon Islands under General MacArthur; the rest of the Pacific, including the home islands of Japan, were within Admiral Nimitz's area.

General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz had under their command the ground, air and naval forces of the United States and the Allied governments. For control of grand strategy and the overall allocation of forces and materials of war, both commanders were under the Combined Chiefs of Staff. In matters of Operational strategy, they were responsible to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Admiral Nimitz's command covered so large an area that it was subdivided into three parts. The region south of the equator, between the lines 160 degrees East Longitude, except for Phoenix Islands, was designated as the South Pacific Area. The other two areas to the north were designated as the Central and the North Pacific. Admiral Nimitz was instructed to retain direct command over the last two and to appoint a commander for the South Pacific. On 19 June 1942, Vice Admiral Robert L. Ghormley assumed command of this area, with the short title COMSOPAC, responsible directly to Admiral Nimitz. In command of all Army Forces in the South Pacific Area, under the direction of COMSOPAC, was Major General (later Lieutenant General) Millard F. Harmon (COMGENSOPAC) appointed by direction of the President on 7 July 1942. Admiral Ghormley was replaced on 18 October 1942, by Admiral William F. Halsey, who for the next two years, together with General Harmon, directed the South Pacific Force and conducted a vigorous and highly successful campaign against the Japanese in the Solomons.

In connection with General Harmon's administration, the logistics task was so important as to lead him to set up a special and separate organization: Services of Supply, South Pacific Area (SOS SPA) headed by Major General R.G. Breene. SOS SPA was formally established 10 November 1942 under direct command of General Harmon and was responsible for general theater and base supply.

The South Pacific Area never had the full status of a theater of operations. With some reservations it was a subordinate command of Admiral Nimitz's Pacific Ocean Areas Headquarters at Pearl Harbor, while at the same time subject to certain strategic control from the Southwest Pacific. Command relationships were extremely involved. General Harmon, in matters of Army administration, discipline and training, reported directly to the War Department, but was subordinate commander under Admiral Halsey. He had no operational control except when it was specifically delegated to him by COMSOPAC, who, in turn, was under Admiral Nimitz. Complicating the situation further was the fact that the South Pacific Force, ever since the Guadalcanal Campaign (7 August 1942 through 9 February 1943), had been operating west of the line 159 degrees East Longitude, in General MacArthur's area and under his strategic direction. It was not surprising, therefore, that General Harmon in writing about the future of the South Pacific Area to Major General Thomas T. Hand of the Operations Division stated, "In view of its special and admittedly transitory status as a 'theater of action,' it calls for special treatment of a nature to facilitate future reorganization and distribution of forces."

As early as October 1943, COMGENSOPAC directed the attention of the Operations Division, War Department General Staff, to the problem of the disposition of forces then under his command, and asked that the Joint Chiefs of Staff consider this matter and issue pertinent directives in time to permit detailed planning and orderly execution of such plans by the theater commanders. On the assumption that sometime in March or April 1944, the contemplated occupation of Kavieng and Manus would be complete, and General Harmon recommended that "full command control" of such Army forces that were not required to garrison islands in the South Pacific should pass to the Southwest Pacific at that time. This would include the Thirteenth Air Force, a strong, well-knit, offensive organization; and a very large number of ground combat and service troops. Such disposition would automatically solve many of the problems created by having Army forces under the operational control of the Navy, but would raise the further problem of logistic support for such forces as were transferred. General MacArthur would have to integrate, expand, and develop logistic bases in the Upper Solomons and New Guinea in order to take care of the increased number of troops coming under his jurisdiction.

On 17 March 1944 the Joint Chiefs of Staff issued JCS 713/5, "Redeployment of Forces in the Pacific Following Operation Hollandia," to take effect after the isolation of the Bismarck Archipelago. In writing their report, the Joint Staff Planners considered as assigned to the South Pacific those units in the area or scheduled to arrive by 5 May 1944. Command responsibilities of the forces deployed rather than the command of a geographical area was to be the basis of redeployment. Many of the units under the command of the South Pacific were already deployed in the Southwest Pacific, west of the line 159 degrees East Longitude and redeployment would involve no actual movement but only the transfer of command.

Air requirements for the South Pacific, the Joint Staff Planners estimated, would be limited to local defense and routine searches after the Hollandia operation. Air units of the south Pacific, however, would be required to engage in operations in and from the Southwest Pacific after this time. CINCPAC would need heavy bomber support from units in the Bismarck Archipelago for the neutralization of Truk and other islands in the Carolines. With these facts in mind, and

recognizing that the Thirteenth Air Force was a fully balanced and integrated command which should remain intact, the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed that air units be redeployed as follows:

1. The Thirteenth Air Force was to be transferred to the Southwest Pacific as soon as practicable consistent with COMSOPAC's responsibility of the neutralization of the Kavieng-Rabaul area and combat operations in the Solomons.
2. The New Zealand air units in excess of the minimum required for garrison and defense purposes in the South Pacific were to be transferred to the Southwest Pacific.
3. Three medium and four light Navy squadrons were to be retained in the South Pacific for patrol and anti-submarine searches, subject to withdrawal for use in the Central Pacific.
4. Air forces from the Southwest Pacific were to be employed for Central Pacific operations in the neutralization of Truk and Palau, either by support from Southwest Pacific bases, or by temporary transfer to CINCPAC of one or more air echelons for a limited period. Later operations might require further adjustment of air forces between the Pacific Ocean Area and the Southwest Pacific.

For the redeployment of air forces, the Thirteenth Air Force moved to Manus Island in the Admiralties at the earliest date COMSOPAC could be relieved of operational and administrative control. It was then to function as a component of the Allied Air Forces of the Southwest Pacific Area, reporting directly to the Commander of the Allied Air Forces in operational matters and to a higher United States air headquarters—United States Army Air Forces in the Far East (USAAFFE), commanded by Lieutenant General George C. Kenney—for administrative control.

On 13 June, Headquarters USAFISPA assigned all units west of 159 degrees and those east of the line under order to move or in movement, to USAAFFE, effective 0001 local hours, 15 June 1944.

All of the above is related so that the reader can understand why the criteria for the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal for this area of the world changed over time, according to which organization their unit operated under, and thereby to which decoration standards were in effect at that particular time.

US Army Forces In South Pacific Area (USAFISPA; covering the 13th Air Force up to 21 October 1944)

The Thirteenth Air Force is activated on 13 January 1943 and took command of the many air units in the South Pacific. The Thirteenth Air Force reported directly to the United States Army Forces in South Pacific Area (USAFISPA), who had the final say over personnel issues in the Thirteenth until its official transfer to the United States Army Air Forces in the Far East (USAAFFE) on 15 June 1944. And, unlike other numbered air forces, USAFISPA was the one who issued awards orders and the Thirteenth relied on USAFISPA awards policy.

For instance, up until October 1944 Air Medal award orders for the Thirteenth Air Force personnel routinely read: “Air Medal: For ten fighter sorties during the period.”¹⁷² The subsequent oak leaf clusters for the Air Medal had the same justification—10 fighter sorties, an additional Oak Leaf Cluster.¹⁷³ The citations read along these lines:

For meritorious achievement while participating, during the period of ___ to ___ in ten fighter sorties. All of these flights were of a hazardous nature during which there was traversed an area where enemy antiaircraft fire was effective, or where enemy airplanes or exposure to enemy fire were habitually expected and in numerous instances encountered.¹⁷⁴

Distinguished Flying Crosses, on the other hand, still required some specific exploit such as:

Distinguished Flying Cross – For extraordinary achievement while participating in an aerial flight on January 15, 1943, over the Solomon Islands. Lt Cosart was the pilot of one of fourteen fighter airplanes accompanying a flight of bombers on a mission to strike against enemy shipping. When the objective was located, the fighters furiously attacked the twelve Zero float bi-planes which were covering the Japanese task force, thus enabling the bombers to make their run unhampered. In the spectacular battle that followed, all twelve enemy airplanes were destroyed; Lt Cosart accounting for one himself. All friendly airplanes returned to their base with only one slight damaged by enemy fire.¹⁷⁵

Of course, there still came about the occasional Distinguished Flying Cross for sustained operational performance:

Distinguished Flying Cross – For extraordinary achievement while participating, during the period December 21, 1942 to January 24, 1942, and from February 15, 1943 to April 7, 1943 in over 70 operational air flights totaling over 170 hours, during which exposure to enemy fire was probable and expected.¹⁷⁶

On 25 June 1943, USAFISPA issued a new awards policy letter “Award of Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal,” which basically restated the above criteria. However, on 24 September 1943, USAFISPA issued a drastically revised policy letter, again entitled, “Award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal,” which reflected a less restrictive criteria and allowed the use of number of combat hours flown or combat missions completed for the basis of any award (the score card approach), as of 25 June 1943. Major General Nathan F. Twining, commander of the Thirteenth Air Force, conferred with Lieutenant General Millard F. Harman, commander of the United States Army Forces In the South Pacific Area (USAFISPA) concerning the effect on moral the new policy would have on his airman. Twining noted that a number of his pilots and combat crew members who had served a long period of time in the Thirteenth’s combat area would now be entitled to fewer awards than those who had more recently arrived and were now under the new award criteria. Twining pointed out that combat flying performed prior to 25 June 1943 were under more adverse conditions than after that date and that not allowing the new policy to be retroactive would cause an unreasonable administrative delay resulting in failure to decorate officers and enlisted men before their return

to the United States. To avoid moral problems, Twining insisted that the only answer would be to make the newer policy retroactive.¹⁷⁷ It appears that this was agreed to and the score card approach was allowed, but it became a moot point upon the Thirteenth Air Force's transfer to the United States Army Air Forces in the Far East (USAAFFE) on 15 June 1944, and consequently fell under USAAFFE's award policies starting on 21 October 1944.

US Air Forces in the Far East (USAFFE; covering the 5th and 13th Air Forces)

Lieutenant General Richard K. Sutherland, General MacArthur's Chief of Staff, on 27 May 1944, issued US Air Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) Regulation 10-50, addressing DFC and Air Medal criteria. Closely following the War Department's policy, the regulation noted that the "justification for the DFC for heroism must be evidenced by voluntary action in the face of great danger above and beyond the line of duty while participating in aerial flight. To warrant an award of the DFC for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight, the results accomplishments must be so exceptional and outstanding as clearly to set him apart from his comrades who had not been so recognized."¹⁷⁸

The Air Medal's criteria were also set out in this regulation. While recognizing that the achievement required for an award of the Air Medal was less than that of the DFC, it "...nevertheless be accomplished with distinction above and beyond that normally expected. The Air Medal may be awarded to recognize single actions of merit or sustained operational activities against the enemy. Completion of any number of hours or sorties does not in itself entitle an individual to an award of the Air Medal, but may be used to substantiate operational activity."¹⁷⁹

Much like the Eighth Air Force's 3rd Bombardment Division's awards and decorations handbook, the USAFFE regulation also tried to assist decoration submitters with form and content of the citations. The publication noted that the DFC and Air Medal could be recommended by any officer having information of the facts. The regulation accepted recommendations based upon the statements of an eye-witness or someone who had personal knowledge of the act. Written testimonies in the form of certificates or affidavits were accepted by the awards board. In addition, the USAFFE regulation noted that enlisted men awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross were entitled to additional pay at the rate of \$2.00 per month from the date of the act of heroism or extraordinary achievement (not sustained operations) on which the award was based.¹⁸⁰

On 14 November 1944, the Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Theater issued a Memorandum expanding the DFC type flight criteria to include supply, reconnaissance, search, rescue, and all other authorized missions involving flight over territory where "exposure to enemy fire is probable and expected."¹⁸¹

Fifth Air Force

The Fifth Air Force in the southwest Pacific had a policy to approve the award of the Air Medal for "...the completion of one hundred hours of combat flying." The DFC was awarded for "...the completion of two hundred hours of combat flying."¹⁸² In the Pacific Theater, it only made sense to airmen that hours of flight were a better standard to be measured than number of

combat missions. Aircrews in this area had hours of impending doom, when flying over the Pacific Ocean, with no hope of rescue if a mechanical failure brought the aircraft down. It seemed to them that just flying was risky enough and should be counted as a combat mission. However, Lieutenant General Richard K. Sutherland, General MacArthur's Chief of Staff, on 27 May 1944, issued US Air Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) Regulation 10-50, addressing DFC and Air Medal criteria that superseded Fifth Air Force's earlier criteria (see above, under US Air Forces in the Far East). However, Air Medals were still being awarded to Fifth Air Force aircrews for "100 hours of sustained operational flight over enemy territory" throughout the rest of 1944 and into early 1945.¹⁸³ One reconnaissance pilot of the 26th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron was sent home with 300 combat hours, and had received the DFC and two Air Medals for his efforts. The first two Air Medals were for the first 200 hours of sustained operational flights, the DFC for achieving 300 combat hours.¹⁸⁴

In March 1945, the 321st Bombardment Squadron's local historian noted in his monthly history that: "A new development in awards was the authorization of the Distinguished Flying Cross to pilots for 400 combat hours for participation in a particularly outstanding mission. Only pilots were named in the authorization."¹⁸⁵ By June 1945 the backlog of Air Medals had created a situation where the Intelligence Section had to take over the writing of recommendations for combat decorations. There was a considerable backlog of recommendations for Air Medals and many flying men were nearing the finish of their tours without a single award. One intelligence clerk was put exclusively to typing the recommendations. By month's end the Section had submitted 445 for Air Medals.¹⁸⁶

On 8 October 1945, Headquarters Fifth Air Force announced that the Far Eastern Air Forces had decided to award the Air Medal to personnel who had completed 90 or more combat hours but were unable to complete 100 hours prior to the cessation of hostilities. It appears that this policy was rescinded very quickly.¹⁸⁷

Thirteenth Air Force (after 21 October 1944)

Having been transferred from USAFIPOA's administrative control to FEAF's administrative control by 21 October 1944, there was no doubt that score-card and sorties alone would not be the sole justification for the DFC and Air Medal. Thus, the standardization of these two awards around the world was not based on what qualified, but what did not qualify an individual for these recognitions. The "sustained operations" basis for justification of the Air Medal and DFC, however, was the most common form of the two awards. The Thirteenth Air Force, operating under the Far East Air Forces' criteria, required the completion of 100 or more hours of operational combat mission time for their aircrews to qualify for the Air Medal (and subsequent oak leaf clusters). The wrinkle for the Thirteenth Air Force was that the hours flown in the combat zone did not qualify airmen for the Air Medal, but only those hours flown that fell into the definition of "combat mission time." The area where such combat mission time counted towards the award of the Air Medal, as of 7 October 1944, was an imaginary line commencing at Emirau Island, proceeding to Manus Island, Morotai Island, Cape Sansapor Area, Nabire, Cape Valsch and Darwin. All flying north and west of this boundary was considered as combat mission time. Flying south and east of this boundary, although classed as flying in a combat zone, would not be considered when compiling combat mission time hours for an Air Medal.¹⁸⁸

Pacific Ocean Areas and Army Air Forces, Pacific Area (later the United States Army Strategic Air Forces)

The earliest record available that outlines the award policies of the Army Air Forces, Pacific Ocean Areas is a table of War Department Decorations chart that was designed to assist in readily determining the major details and requirements of the award and presentation of then current Army decorations. For the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal, the chart provides the following details:¹⁸⁹

Distinguished Flying Cross, In Accordance With Army Regulation 600-45, Army Regulation 600-48 and War Department Circular 333 22 December 1943, as noted in Army Air Force Pacific Ocean Areas:

- Eligible Persons: Members of Military, naval and air forces serving in any capacity with the Army.
- Requirements: Heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.
- By Whom Awarded: A. Commanding General, United States Armed Forces in a theater of operations.
B. Commanding General (under WD) of:
1. An army or air force
2. A group of armies
3. A defense command in Alaska or outside continental U.S.
4. Any separate force commanded by a major general or officer of higher grade.
C. Unless specifically prohibited may be delegated to subordinate commanders of any force or command which is commanded by, or the appropriate command of a major general or higher.

Awards of decoration are made by the War Department and designated commanders acting for the President. Authority granted to any commander (other than Purple Heart) authorizes him to make awards only to individuals permanently assigned to that command except immediate combat awards can be made for acts personally witnessed by individuals physically present within that command under competent orders. Such commanders are also authorized to take final action on recommendations for acts or services performed while individuals or units were permanently assigned to that command but subsequently transferred or separated from. In any case however the commander is not authorized to bestow an award, recommendations will be forwarded to the War Department.

How Presented: With ceremony with troops if practicable.

Posthumously to
Next of Kin?: Yes with ceremony and troops if next of kin desires.

Additional Pay: \$2.00 per month (Enlisted Men only).

Personnel

Restrictions: Awards to foreigners permitted IF:

1. If recipient is below grade of colonel or its equivalent.
2. If prior approval of recipients senior field commander present is obtained.
3. Provided such field commander is of grade equal to or higher than a brigadier general.

Other recommendations will be forwarded to War Department for final action. Awards to personnel of grade of colonel or higher require Presidential approval.

Will not be awarded to civilians.

Service subsequent to time of distinction must be honorable.

Air Medal, In Accordance With Army Regulation 600-45, Army Regulation 600-48 and War Department Circular 333 22 December 1943, as noted in Army Air Force Pacific Ocean Areas:

Eligible Persons: Persons serving in any capacity with the Army.

Requirements: Meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight.

By Whom Awarded: A. Commanding General, United States Armed Forces in a theater of operations.
B. Commanding General (under WD) of:

1. An army or air force
2. A group of armies
3. A defense command in Alaska or outside continental U.S.
4. Any separate force commanded by a major general or officer of higher grade.

C. Unless specifically prohibited may be delegated to subordinate commanders of any force or command which is commanded by, or the appropriate command of a major general or higher.

Awards of decoration are made by the War Department and designated commanders acting for the President. Authority granted to any commander (other than Purple Heart) authorizes him to make awards only to individuals permanently assigned to that command except immediate combat awards can be made for acts personally witnessed by individuals physically present within that command under competent orders. Such commanders are also authorized to take final action on recommendations for acts or services performed while individuals or units were permanently assigned to that command but subsequently transferred or separated from. In any case however the commander is not authorized to bestow an award, recommendations will be forwarded to the War Department.

How Presented: With ceremony with troops if practicable.

Posthumously to
Next of Kin?: Yes with ceremony and troops if next of kin desires.

Additional Pay: None.

Personnel

Restrictions: Awards to foreigners permitted IF:

1. If recipient is below grade of colonel or its equivalent.
2. If prior approval of recipients senior field commander present is obtained.
3. Provided such field commander is of grade equal to or higher than a brigadier general.

Other recommendations will be forwarded to War Department for final action. Awards to personnel of grade of colonel or higher require Presidential approval.

Awards to civilians:

Commanding Generals U.S. Army Forces in theaters of operations may award to Merchant Marine men under their jurisdiction, otherwise civilian awards must have prior Presidential approval.

Service subsequent to time of distinction must be honorable.

The Arnold directive of June 1944 is found in Army Air Forces Pacific Ocean Areas Regulation 35-5, issued on 1 November 1944 (paragraph 7):¹⁹⁰

Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal. The following policy is established relative to the awarding of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal:

- a. Distinguished Flying Cross may be awarded to members of the Military, Naval, and Air Forces, serving in any capacity with the Army Air Forces for Heroism by voluntary action or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.
 - (1) The heroism required must evidence voluntary action in the face of great danger above and beyond the line of duty. The achievement required must be evidenced by exceptional and outstanding accomplishment so as to set the individual apart from his comrades who have not been so recognized.
 - (2) No award of the Distinguished Flying Cross will be made solely on the basis of hours or missions.
- b. Air Medal, awarded to persons serving in any capacity in or with the Army for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight.
 - (1) The required achievement is less than that for the Distinguished Flying Cross, but must nevertheless be accomplished with distinction above and beyond that normally expected. The Air Medal may be awarded to recognize single actions of merit or sustained operational activities against the enemy. The element of sustained effort over a period of time rather than an arbitrary enumeration of flight data shall be the guiding factor.

- (2) The Air Medal will not be awarded solely and automatically on the so-called “Score-card basis” of hours or missions.

On 11 August 1945, at the Headquarters of the new United States Army Strategic Air Forces (formally known as the Army Air Forces, Pacific Area) located at Guam, a meeting between Major General Curtis LeMay and Lieutenant General James Doolittle took place to determine how best to integrate the Eighth Air Force (transferring from Europe) into the aerial operations in the Pacific Theater. One of the topics that came up was the awarding of Air Medals and DFC’s to crews. General LeMay advised General Doolittle that the Twentieth Air Force policy required a crew to complete 35 missions during their combat tour. This would normally yield an Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters. The procedure was to normally award the Air Medal after a crew had flown a minimum of five missions, and make a survey every eight missions thereafter to determine eligibility for the Oak Leaf Cluster. General Doolittle agreed to this system, and it would be the criteria for both Twentieth and Eighth Air Forces. General LeMay also outlined that the Twentieth Air Force practice was to award the Distinguished Flying Cross when a crew had successfully completed his combat tour, based on the fact that such a crew had, undoubtedly, distinguished themselves in the course of the tour. General Doolittle did not believe that the DFC should be awarded automatically. The two men decided that the present system used by the Twentieth Air Force would be continued, however, the recipient must have accomplished extraordinary achievement in the air, and that achievement would have to be stressed in the nominee’s award submission package.¹⁹¹

Four days later all offensive action against Japan ended, and on 2 September 1945 Japan officially surrendered.

Seventh Air Force

On 21 March 1943, the Seventh Air Force’s VII Bomber Command published their criteria for the Air Medal and DFC. To receive the Air Medal, Seventh Air Force aircrews had to meet one of three qualifiers: destroy an enemy aircraft; fly 200 operational hours where enemy interception may be expected; or fly two combat missions over enemy territory. Subsequent awards of the Air Medal were:¹⁹²

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1 st Oak Leaf Cluster | Destroy a second enemy aircraft;
Fly 300 operational hours where enemy interceptions are expected;
Fly four combat missions over enemy territory. |
| 2 nd OLC | Destroy a third enemy aircraft;
Fly 400 operational hours where enemy interceptions are expected;
Fly six combat missions over enemy territory. |
| 3 rd OLC | Destroy a fourth enemy aircraft;
Fly 500 operational hours where enemy interceptions are expected;
Fly eight combat missions over enemy territory. |

The Distinguished Flying Cross criterion for the Seventh Air Force was also spelled out in the same Circular. An air crewman would be awarded the DFC for destroying their fifth enemy aircraft; or destroying one enemy naval vessel; or flying 600 operational hours where enemy interceptions are expected; or flying 10 combat missions over enemy territory; or flying one operational mission by a single aircraft over enemy territory. The last criterion was considered so dangerous that completing just one reconnaissance mission in a lone bomber was considered a tremendous feat. The DFC Oak Leaf Cluster criteria were further outlined for completing one of the following:¹⁹³

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| 1 st OLC | Destroy 10 enemy aircraft;
Destroy a second enemy naval vessel;
Fly 700 operational hours where enemy interceptions are expected;
Fly 15 combat missions over enemy territory;
Fly three operational missions over enemy territory in a single aircraft. |
| 2 nd OLC | Destroy 15 enemy aircraft;
Destroy a third enemy naval vessel;
Fly 800 operational hours where enemy interceptions are expected;
Fly 20 combat missions over enemy territory;
Fly five operational missions over enemy territory in a single aircraft. |

The Seventh Air Force, in the Central Pacific Theater, instituted a revised version of their medal criteria in a very complicated award system on 30 November 1943 for sustained operations. Much like other air forces, the Seventh provided an Air Medal for the first enemy aircraft destroyed, and an oak leaf cluster for the second, third and fourth aircraft destroyed. If an individual shot down a fifth enemy aircraft, he was to be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. If he shot down ten enemy aircraft, he would be awarded an oak leaf cluster to his DFC. An additional oak leaf cluster would be awarded to the DFC if he shot down 15 enemy aircraft. However, if at any time a pilot or gunner shot down two enemy aircraft during one sortie, then a DFC would be automatically awarded. With the vast Pacific Ocean to fly over and the number of flying hours it took to get to a target, the Seventh instituted a combination of sorties and hours to attain “sustained operational performance against the enemy” to justify the awards of the Air Medal and the DFC.¹⁹⁴

Seventh Air Force Heavy Bomber aircrews had the following criteria for their Air Medals and DFC’s that was based upon 100 hour increments:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 5 combat sorties or 100 combat flying hours | Air Medal |
| 10 combat sorties or 200 combat flying hours | Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal |
| 15 combat sorties | DFC |

The Medium Bomber aircrews had a slightly different hourly criteria, as their combat flying hours were based on 75 hour increments:

5 combat sorties or 75 combat flying hours	Air Medal
10 combat sorties or 150 combat flying hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
15 combat sorties	DFC

In addition to the combat missions, the fact that many aircraft failed to return to base necessitated the conduct of search missions. These were viewed as being just as hazardous, and they were also broken down into heavy and medium bomber hours flown criteria. The heavy bomber aircrews flying time was based on 150 hour increments and the medium bomber aircrews flying time for search missions were based on 110 hour increments:

Heavy Bomber Search Missions

150 hours	Air Medal
300 hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
350 hours	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
600 hours	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
750 hours	DFC

Medium Bomber Search Missions

110 hours	Air Medal
220 hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
330 hours	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
440 hours	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
550 hours	DFC

Another category, the Fighter-Bombers, had their own medal criteria for combat sorties and hours, based on 50 hour increments:

10 combat sorties or 50 combat flying hours	Air Medal
20 combat sorties or 100 combat flying hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 combat sorties	DFC

The Fighter pilots of the Seventh Air Force had combat sorties and combat flying hours (based upon a 50 hour increment), but also had a slight twist. Combat sorties that lasted for more than 3 ½ hours could be counted as two sorties:

10 combat sorties or 50 combat flying hours	Air Medal
20 combat sorties or 100 combat flying hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 combat sorties	DFC

Finally, the Seventh Air Force Transport aircrews had their own criteria, based upon a 200 hour increment in flying in a combat zone where, unarmed and without fighter escort, they could be exposed to enemy aggression. In fact, Seventh Air Force went so far as to define the zone of perceived danger to their cargo carriers who, if flying in this designated area, would qualify for the Air Medal and DFC. This area was a line lying west and north of Midway, Johnston, Baker, Funafuti, and Guadalcanal Islands, as well as Port Moresby, New Guinea. The Transport aircrew criteria were:

200 hours in the designated combat zone	Air Medal
400 hours in the designated combat zone	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
600 hours in the designated combat zone	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
800 hours in the designated combat zone	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
1,000 hours in the designated combat zone	DFC
1,400 hours in the designated combat zone	Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC
1,800 hours in the designated combat zone	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

In addition, the Seventh Air Force noted that if any of their aircrew sank an enemy vessel, they may award an Air Medal to the individual, depending upon the size and significance of the vessel.¹⁹⁵

By early 1944 combat in the Central Pacific moved forward in the island hopping campaign and Seventh Air Force headquarters soon realized that their 30 November 1943 regulation concerning the award criteria for the Air Medal and DFC was quickly going out of date. Heavy Bombardment aircrews were flying more than anticipated, rolling up more combat sorties and hours, and the Pacific offensive had changed the combat zone area. Therefore, on 1 February 1944, Seventh Air Force added the following criteria for their Heavy Bombardment aircrews and at the same time dropped any mention of combat flying hours in the new criteria:¹⁹⁶

20 combat sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
25 combat sorties	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 combat sorties	First Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

The changing combat zone affected the medal criteria for the Transport aircrews of the Seventh Air Force. Baker Island was dropped from the 30 November 1943 combat zone designation and Tarawa was added. The 200 increment flying hours in a combat zone remained the same. The new combat zone designation was a line lying west and north of: Midway, Johnston, Tarawa, and Guadalcanal Islands, and Port Moresby, New Guinea.¹⁹⁷ However, just a few weeks later, on 28 March 1944, the designated combat zone for Transport missions was revoked. For the next four days Transport aircrews simply did not qualify for any Air Medals or DFCs, since there was no designated combat zone for them to fly through to accumulate combat zone flying hours.¹⁹⁸

This would be corrected on 1 April 1944, but prior to that, Seventh Air Force issued on 31 March 1944 the criteria for the Air Medal and the DFC for their Fighter pilots, who, like their bombardment aircrew brethren, were rolling up more and more missions. The hourly criteria for Fighter pilots were also dropped in favor of just combat sorties, and the added to the original criteria of 30 November 1943:¹⁹⁹

40 combat sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
50 combat sorties	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
60 combat sorties	First Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

Seventh Air Force quickly issued a new regulation for the Air Medal and DFC award criteria for sustained operational performance on 1 April 1944. Essentially it was the same as its 30

November 1943 edition, with the exception of adjusting to the fact that their aircrews were flying more combat and search missions than previously planned and that the medal criteria had to keep up. In addition, the Transport aircrews had their combat zone re-established, so they could once again qualify for the Air Medal and the DFC.²⁰⁰

Exactly as it was codified in the 30 November 1943 regulation, the 1 April 1944 policy bestowed an Air Medal upon individuals for the first enemy aircraft destroyed, and an oak leaf cluster for the second, third and fourth aircraft destroyed. If an individual shot down a fifth enemy aircraft, he was to be awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. If he shot down ten enemy aircraft, he would be awarded an oak leaf cluster to his DFC. An additional oak leaf cluster would be awarded to the DFC if he shot down 15 enemy aircraft. However, if at any time a pilot or gunner shot down two enemy aircraft during one sortie, then a DFC would be automatically awarded.²⁰¹

Seventh Air Force Heavy Bomber aircrews had the following criteria for their Air Medals and DFC's that was based upon 100 hour increments for the first 200 hours:

5 combat sorties or 100 combat flying hours	Air Medal
10 combat sorties or 200 combat flying hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
15 combat sorties	DFC
20 combat sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
25 combat sorties	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 combat sorties	First Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

The Medium Bomber aircrews had slightly different hourly criteria, as their combat flying hours were based on 75 hour increments for their first 150 hours (although there would be a modification three weeks later, on 27 April 1944):

5 combat sorties or 75 combat flying hours	Air Medal
10 combat sorties or 150 combat flying hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
15 combat sorties	DFC
20 combat sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
25 combat sorties	Third Oak Leaf to the Air Medal
30 combat sorties	First Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC
35 combat sorties	Fourth Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
40 combat sorties	Fifth Oak Leaf Cluster (Silver) to the Air Medal

Heavy Bomber and Medium Bomber Search Mission hours criteria remained the same:

Heavy Bomber Search Missions

150 hours	Air Medal
300 hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
350 hours	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
600 hours	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
750 hours	DFC

Medium Bomber Search Missions

110 hours	Air Medal
220 hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
330 hours	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal

440 hours	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
550 hours	DFC

The Air Medal and DFC for the Seventh's Fighter-Bomber crews also remained the same, based upon 50 combat flying hour increments for the first 100 combat flying hours:

10 combat sorties or 50 combat flying hours	Air Medal
20 combat sorties or 100 combat flying hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 combat sorties	DFC

The criteria for the Seventh's Fighter pilots had changed, again reflecting the increased number of missions they were flying (combat sorties that lasted for more than 3 ½ hours could be counted as two sorties; however, flying hours only counted for the first 100 combat flying hours):

10 combat sorties or 50 combat flying hours	Air Medal
20 combat sorties or 100 combat flying hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 combat sorties	DFC
40 combat sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
50 combat sorties	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
60 combat sorties	First Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

Once again the Seventh Air Force Transport aircrews had a definitive combat zone area to fly into to accumulate flying hours towards the Air medal and DFC. This area, as of 1 April 1944, lay west and north of a line that ran from Midway, Kwajalein, Bougainville and Port Moresby.²⁰² Their hours flown for recognition remained unchanged from the 30 November 1943 policy:

200 hours in the designated combat zone	Air Medal
400 hours in the designated combat zone	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
600 hours in the designated combat zone	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
800 hours in the designated combat zone	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
1,000 hours in the designated combat zone	DFC
1,400 hours in the designated combat zone	Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC
1,800 hours in the designated combat zone	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

Again, Seventh Air Force noted that if any of their aircrew sank an enemy vessel, they may award an Air Medal to the individual, depending upon the size and significance of the vessel.²⁰³

Combat experience in the Seventh Air Force modified that organization's view of sortie counts for both Medium and Heavy Bombardment crews. On 27 April 1944 Seventh Air Force determined that those individuals flying medium bombardment aircraft that flew one low-level sortie would be credited for two sorties. This recognized the inherent danger of flying at low levels and the increased chances of being shot down by the enemy. If an individual flew two low-level combat sorties, and one medium altitude combat sortie, he would then be eligible for his first Air Medal.²⁰⁴

A few weeks later, on 16 May 1944, Seventh Air Force once again modified its 1 April 1944 policy for the sortie count, but this time it concerned the Heavy Bombardment crews. Combat

missions over the Marshall Islands were now counted only as one-half of one mission, reflecting the lessening danger of that area.²⁰⁵

Seventh Air Force revised its policy on the Air Medal and DFC once again on 2 October 1944 for sustained operations. A number of changes are reflected in this policy. First, only fighter pilots were rewarded for shooting down enemy aircraft, whereas aerial gunners were included before. Second, Heavy and Medium Bombardment aircrews and Fighter pilots no longer had combat flying hours assessed for their awards; they only dealt with number of combat sorties flown. Third, search missions were no longer counted for the Heavy and Medium Bombardment crews; although Fighter pilots were now included in search missions and consequently, those hours equated to awards of the Air Medal. Fourth, low-level missions over the Marshall Islands took on such importance that the sortie credit was expanded upon from the 16 May 1944 policy, but the sortie criteria for the Heavy Bombers over the Marshall Islands was rescinded. Fifth, for the first time Photo Reconnaissance and Combat Mapping missions were counted, as was Radar Calibration flights. Also the combat zone for the Transport crews was not defined except as the area lying west of 150 degrees east longitude. The particulars for each of these changes are below:²⁰⁶

Fighter Pilot Aerial Victories:

First enemy airplane destroyed	Air Medal
Second enemy airplane destroyed	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
Third enemy airplane destroyed	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
Fourth enemy airplane destroyed	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
Fifth enemy airplane destroyed	DFC
Tenth enemy airplane destroyed	Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC
Fifteenth enemy airplane destroyed	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC
Destruction of two or more enemy aircraft in a single aerial combat:	DFC

Heavy Bombardment:

5 combat sorties	Air Medal
10 combat sorties	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
15 combat sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
20 combat sorties	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
25 combat sorties	DFC
50 combat sorties	Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

Medium Bombardment:

<u>Marshall Island Missions</u>	<u>Other Missions</u>	<u>Award</u>
10 medium or 5 low level	5 combat sorties	Air Medal
20 medium or 10 low level	10 combat sorties	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 medium or 15 low level	15 combat sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
40 medium or 20 low level	20 combat sorties	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
50 medium or 25 low level	25 combat sorties	DFC
100 medium or 50 low level	50 combat sorties	Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

Fighter:

10 combat sorties	Air Medal
20 combat sorties	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 combat sorties	DFC
40 combat sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
60 combat sorties	Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC

Fighter Search Missions (in 100 hour increments):

100 hours	Air Medal
200 hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
300 hours	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
400 hours	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal

Photo Reconnaissance (a mission carried over enemy territory in conjunction with bomber or fighter sorties) and Combat Mapping:

<u>Less than 3 ½ Hours</u>	<u>More than 3 ½ Hours</u>	<u>Award</u>
10 sorties	5 sorties	Air Medal
20 sorties	10 sorties	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
30 sorties	15 sorties	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
40 sorties	20 sorties	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
50 sorties	25 sorties	DFC

Transport and Radar Calibration in combat areas (the area lying west of 150 degrees east longitude, in 200 flying hour increments):

200 hours	Air Medal
400 hours	Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
600 hours	Second Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
800 hours	Third Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal
1,000 hours	DFC

As before, Seventh Air Force noted that if any of their aircrew sank an enemy vessel, they may award an Air Medal to the individual, depending upon the size and significance of the vessel.²⁰⁷

However, as a subordinate unit of the Army Air Forces Pacific Ocean Areas, the Seventh Air Force's DFC and Air Medal policy was swept away on 1 November 1944 with the publication of Army Air Forces Pacific Ocean Areas Regulation 35-5, paragraph 7:²⁰⁸

Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal. The following policy is established relative to the awarding of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal:

- a. Distinguished Flying Cross may be awarded to members of the Military, Naval, and Air Forces, serving in any capacity with the Army Air Forces for Heroism by voluntary action or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.

- (1) The heroism required must evidence voluntary action in the face of great danger above and beyond the line of duty. The achievement required must be evidenced by exceptional and outstanding accomplishment so as to set the individual apart from his comrades who have not been so recognized.
 - (2) No award of the Distinguished Flying Cross will be made solely on the basis of hours or missions.
- b. Air Medal, awarded to persons serving in any capacity in or with the Army for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight.
- (1) The required achievement is less than that for the Distinguished Flying Cross, but must nevertheless be accomplished with distinction above and beyond that normally expected. The Air Medal may be awarded to recognize single actions of merit or sustained operational activities against the enemy. The element of sustained effort over a period of time rather than an arbitrary enumeration of flight data shall be the guiding factor.
 - (2) The Air Medal will not be awarded solely and automatically on the so-called "Score-card basis" of hours or missions.

Eleventh Air Force

For the Alaskan aircrews of the Eleventh Air Force, a policy memorandum was released on 6 February 1945. The Air Medal would be awarded for destroying an enemy aircraft, and an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal for each succeeding enemy aircraft destroyed, until four enemy aircraft were destroyed. If an individual destroyed a fifth enemy aircraft, then the Distinguished Flying Cross would be awarded. Destroy ten enemy aircraft, and an Oak Leaf Cluster would be awarded to the DFC. If an individual pilot or gunner destroyed two or three enemy aircraft in a single combat, then they would be awarded the DFC. If an enemy surface vessel is attacked and confirmed sunk or vitally damaged, an Air Medal or a DFC would be awarded (based on the importance of the shipping, the significance of the action, and enemy opposition or special circumstances).²⁰⁹

The Eleventh Air Force used slightly different terminology for their missions. Instead of using missions and hours, they used strikes and flights. A strike was deemed to have taken place when an aircraft ordered on an offensive mission in a combat area attacked the enemy or met enemy opposition; or, in any way, was actually subjected to enemy attack. A flight was deemed to have taken place when the mission was primarily non-offensive and when the aircraft operated in an active combat area where enemy anti-aircraft fire was expected or where enemy aircraft patrols usually occurred.²¹⁰

To all Eleventh Air Force flight crews of an aircraft participating in strikes or flights, but not warranted a specific individual award, would qualify for an Air Medal after completing five strikes and/or flights. Upon completing 10 strikes and/or flights, an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal would be considered. After completing 15 strikes and/or flights, an individual would qualify for the DFC. An Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC would be considered after completing 30 strikes and/or flights.²¹¹

Eleventh Air Force crews participating in non-combat operational flying within the Pacific Theater would be considered for bestowing an Air Medal if they completed 750 flying hours. After flying 1,500 hours, an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal would be considered. If 2,250 hours were flown, a DFC would be favorably recommended. However, this criterion was not to negate any recommendation for an award recognizing any meritorious achievement in flight for flight crews who engaged in unusually extended and extra hazardous flight in area other than active combat area for the purpose of transporting personnel or supplies, anti-submarine patrols and similar essential wartime operations.²¹²

Twentieth Air Force

In the early days of the Twentieth Air Force, specifically the XX Bomber Command (which was located at Kharagpur, India, from 28 March 1944 through 17 June 1945, before moving to Sakugawa, Okinawa for 7-16 July 1945) its B-29 aircraft were stationed in India and had to fly to forward operating bases in China to conduct its raids on Japanese installations and on the home islands themselves. This required some B-29s to be converted into ‘tankers’ that flew aviation fuel from India, over the Himalayas Mountains (known as the ‘Hump’) to these forward bases, offload the fuel, and return to India and repeat the procedure as many times as possible so the B-29s involved in the upcoming raid would have the fuel to conduct the mission. Almost all the B-29 combat crews pulled this duty. As noted in the below sections concerning the China-Burma-India Theater, the India Burma Air Service Command and the Air Transport Command, CBI, the dangers of flying over the Hump constituted recognition. The XX Bomber Command did the same, as noted by the November 1944 history of the 769th Bombardment Squadron, 462nd Bombardment Group, which flew more ‘tanker’ missions than combat missions. “During November the first citations for bravery and devotion to duty were awarded to combat crews. Many who had participated in 100 hours of combat operation and ‘Hump’ flying were awarded the Air Medal.”²¹³ The 768th Bombardment Squadron, also assigned to the 462nd Bombardment Group, noted in its December 1944 unit history that “On 6 and 8 December orders were published awarding the Air Medal to 28 Officers and 25 Enlisted men of the Squadron and Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal to 22 Officers and 21 Enlisted Men for completing 100 and 200 hours of “Hump” and combat flying.”²¹⁴

Since the XXI Bomber Command, also assigned to the Twentieth Air Force, did not arrive in the Pacific Theater until 4 December 1944, and when it did, it was stationed at Harmon Field, Guam, it did not have to conduct any ‘tanker’ missions. Therefore, the XXI Bomber Command award criteria only dealt with combat missions.

On 1 December 1944, the XX Bomber Command (a subordinate unit to the Twentieth Air Force, which reported directly to Headquarters Army Air Forces in Washington D.C.), issued a Standard Operating Procedure for its awards and decorations:²¹⁵

Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross

4. Recommendations for the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal and Oak Leaf Clusters thereto will be prepared as follows:

a. Recommendations, based on single heroic and outstanding acts, will be submitted in letter form.

b. Recommendations based on sustained flying activities only, for regularly assigned members of combat crews, will be submitted on the form shown as Attachment “B.”

[Attachment B of this handbook reproduced a form that required the submitter to fill in various blanks, such as the unit, date, what award was being recommended, name, rank, service number, branch, duty, specific or inclusive dates covering the action involved, number of flights, number of flying hours, territory flown over, flown from which bases, and the certification that the missions used as a basis for the recommendation had been logged as combat and/or operational time and that enemy fire was probable and expected, that the service of the individual had been honorable since the act being recognized, statements substantiating the award were taken from what official sources, home address, date of birth, next of kin and their address and relationship to the awardee and the state from which appointed and/or residence at time of enlistment]

(1) In those cases when an individual who is not a regularly assigned member of a combat crew (such as Intelligence Observers, Group Gunnery Officers, etc.) is recommended on the basis of having completed the required number of hours, the recommendation will be in letter form, and will give in detail, the number of combat flights participated in, total combat hours and the exact duties performed, as well as the number of operational flights and the specific duties performed during such flights.

(2) Recommendations will not be submitted on the basis of “over the Hump” time flown in a passenger status.

c. Army Regulations provide that not more than one decoration will be awarded for the same act of heroism or extraordinary achievement, and further specify that in recommendations based on service, which cover an appreciable period of time, information as to the exact dates covered will be included.

(1) To prevent any question as to the legality of awards of Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal or Distinguished Flying Cross, there will be no overlapping of calendar dates or flying time upon which such awards are based. For example, if an Air Medal is recommended on the basis of 110 combat and/or operational hours flown from 1 June through 30 September, the individual would have to fly an additional 100 such hours after 30 September to become eligible for consideration for the Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal.

(2) Upon completion of 300 operational and/or combat hours, however, the individual may be eligible for consideration for the Distinguished Flying Cross, regardless of the fact that the first 100 hours were the basis for the award of the Air Medal and the second hundred hours were the basis for the award of an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal.

On 2 April 1945, the XX Bomber Command modified their 1 December 1944 awards and decorations handbook slightly to have the certifying official swear that the individual recommended for an award was an actual participant in aerial flight.²¹⁶

In a meeting between General Curtis E. LeMay (Twentieth Air Force, XXI Bomber Command) and General James Doolittle (Eighth Air Force), LeMay explained that the Twentieth Air Force policy required a crew to complete 35 missions during their combat tour. This would normally yield an Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters. The procedure was to normally award the Air Medal after a crew had flown a minimum of five missions, and make a survey every eight missions thereafter to determine eligibility for the Oak Leaf Cluster. General LeMay also outlined that the Twentieth Air Force practice was to award the Distinguished Flying Cross when a crew had successfully completed their combat tour, based on the fact that such a crew had, undoubtedly, distinguished themselves in the course of the tour.²¹⁷

General Twining, the new Commander of the Twentieth Air Force, changed the rules for the Air Medal once again on 17 August 1945. He sent a message to the 313th Bombardment Wing and notified them that as of that date, air medals for sustained operational activity may be awarded after the first five crew credit sorties flown in the Pacific Theater, and an Air Medal Oak Leaf Cluster may be awarded for each five sorties thereafter. This changed the previous policy of having to fly eight more combat missions to obtain an oak leaf cluster to the basic Air Medal.²¹⁸

The China-Burma-India Theater

It must be remembered that in the China-India-Burma (CBI) Theater of war, headed up by the United States Army Forces, China-Burma-India, had numerous flying organizations under it. Assigned to the CBI Theater were: Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector (later HQ AAF, India Burma Theater); China-India-Burma Air Service Command; Tenth Air Force; Fourteenth Air Force; Tactical Air Command-Fourteenth Air Force; XIV Engineer Command; XIV Service Command; China Air Task Force; Chinese American Composite Wing; and the Air Transport Command's India-China Wing (later Division), Assam Wing, China Wing, India Wing, and Bengal Wing. Thrown into this mix were AAF personnel of the Air Weather Service and Army Airways Communications System. For the most part, all of these units followed the award policy of the United States Army Forces, China-Burma-India headquarters.

Before addressing the awards policy of this specific theater of war, the 14 August 1943 memorandum from General H.H. Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces must first be reviewed. This memorandum is cited by other USAF agencies as to why a World War II veteran should not be considered for an award of the Distinguished Flying Cross 'based solely on sustained operational missions, or score-card awards based on the number of missions or combat hours.'²¹⁹ Generally, this is a true statement for the European and Pacific Theaters of war; however, nothing could be further from the truth for the China-Burma-India Theater of war.

The 14 August 1943 message from General Arnold made it clear that awards based on missions alone was not permissible. However, "It is understood the new policy will include provision that hours and sorties are not to constitute sole basis for awards but they may be used to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight which would include sustained operational activities."²²⁰ Just a month later the new awards regulation was published. When the 22 September 1943 Army Regulation 600-45 was released, it appears from the awards orders published throughout the rest of 1943 that it was simply ignored in the CBI Theater (see below for Brigadier General Charles B. Stone's rationale). More messages from Headquarters Army Air Forces were distributed

among the field commands and were issued in an effort to ‘get the word out.’ A follow-up classified War Department radio message of 29 September 1943, which reinforced the 14 August 1943 memorandum, stated that the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1, had explained that DFCs and Air Medal decorations for combat time may be awarded under the old policy for actions prior to 14 August when old policy was rescinded by the War Department.²²¹

A further clarification came out of Headquarters Army Air Forces on 4 October 1943 concerning the DFC and Air Medal awards: “Hours and sorties shall not constitute sole basis for awards, but may be used to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight which would include sustained operational activities.”²²² One would think that would be the end of sustained operational awards based solely on combat hours or flights, but that simply was not true of the CBI Theater. As the Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Board history of this period explains:

No rules for the award of these medals [DFC and Air Medal] could be made at this headquarters as it was too far from the field of combat to know the intimate problems of the separate Air Forces. The policy was completely left to the discretion of the Commanding Generals of these Air Forces. There was no possibility of coordinating awards policies throughout the world except in a very general way as seen in General Arnold’s action of 14 August 1943.²²³

The China-Burma-India Theater, where all air force personnel were under the same award policy of Headquarters, Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector, the complaints of unfair award policy were fewer. Aircrew members of the different numbered air forces (Tenth and Fourteenth and the Air Transport Command personnel that operated within the CBI) had very little contact with each other. That does not mean that there was no consternation concerning what would be an appropriate measure for the DFC and the Air Medal. The 14 August 1943 memorandum from General Arnold, and the 22 September 1943 Army Regulation 600-45 was not acted upon by Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector until late January 1944.

Brigadier General Charles B. Stone, III, the Chief of Air Staff of the Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector of the China-Burma-India Theater, took great pains in a memorandum dated 31 January 1944 to explain the new standards as they applied to his aircrews. “There cannot be any hard and fast rule as to what constitutes “meritorious achievement” while participating in aerial flight, in connection with award of the Air Medal nor any categorical definitions established as to what represents “heroism” or “extraordinary achievement” in connection with the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross. *However, it is the policy of this Headquarters to recognize sustained operational activity on as nearly a uniform basis as possible.*” [Emphasis mine—editor.] General Stone then laid out the criteria for consideration for the Air Medal and the DFC, which raised the standard from the 15 December 1942 policy.²²⁴

For the Air Medal, 100 flying hours and/or 25 combat missions.

For the Distinguished Flying Cross, 200 flying hours and/or 50 combat missions.

General Stone warned that “The mere completion of a given number of operational flights does not, of itself, entitle an individual to an award. All of the elements which contribute to “meritorious achievement” or “extraordinary achievement” must be taken into account including

such factors as the degree of efficiency with which the duties are performed and an individual's conduct in general." The General also cautioned commanders to not refrain from awarding the DFC or Air Medal for truly heroic one time acts, despite the fact that these awards was normally based on sustained operational activities.²²⁵

The CBI was going to go use the 4 October 1943 policy clarification of "Hours and sorties shall not constitute sole basis for awards, but may be used to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight which would include sustained operational activities."²²⁶ In other words, meritorious achievement was measured by hours and sorties and that became the standard for DFC and Air Medal criteria in the CBI Theater, going in just the opposite direction of the award policies of the European and Pacific Theater commands.

Since all AAF forces operating in the CBI Theater fell under the award criteria of the Headquarters, Army Air Forces, China-Burma-India Theater, it is worth looking at some of the award orders published after General Stone's 31 January 1944 Awards and Decorations Memorandum. Up until April 1944 the award citations for both the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal mirror the criteria of General Stone's policy. However, his policy did not state exactly what criterion was to be used for an oak leaf cluster to either award. The policy letter only states "Participation in operational flights to the extent of a proportionately higher number of flying hours and/or combat missions will entitle an individual to consideration for award of Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross."²²⁷

Therefore, a review of award orders from April and May 1944 are in order to see how the new policy was applied, and it shows a disparity of the criteria for the awards, despite General Stone's intention. The DFC was awarded for flying 300 combat hours in some orders, or for flying 50 operational missions in another. Yet, an Oak Leaf Cluster for a DFC was awarded to an individual for flying 300 combat hours, the same as for some who flew the same amount and only received a basic DFC award.²²⁸

The Air Medal fared no better. During the same period of April through May 1944, award orders show the Air Medal bestowed on individuals for participating in more than 150 combat hours, or more than 25 operational flights, but during the same time individuals are receiving an Oak Leaf Cluster to their Air Medal for flying 150 hours in combat, or more than 75 combat missions.²²⁹

These orders from March through May 1944 state quite openly, "...the Air Medal is hereby awarded to the following ...for meritorious achievement in sustained operational activities..."; "...the Distinguished Flying Cross is hereby awarded...for extraordinary achievement by participating in more than fifty operational flights..."; "...the Distinguished Flying Cross (Oak Leaf Cluster) is awarded...for extraordinary achievement by participating in more than three hundred (300) hours of operational flight in transport aircraft..."; "...the Air Medal (Oak Leaf Cluster) is hereby awarded to...for meritorious achievement by participating in more than one hundred fifty (150) hours of operational flights in transport aircraft..."²³⁰

This pattern reveals the following criteria for the DFC and Air Medal for early 1944 as follows:

Medal	Hours	or	Flights
Air Medal	100		25
DFC	200		50
AM 1 OLC	150		75
DFC 1 OLC	300		100
AM 2 OLC	200		125
DFC 2 OLC	400		150
AM 3 OLC	250		175
DFC 3 OLC	500		200

This pattern is supported not only by the award orders published at the time, but is reinforced by a local transport unit of the India China Wing, in a May 1944 report, which outlined the criteria that was used successfully to award the DFC and Air Medal to their aircrews, which echoed the 31 January 1944 policy memorandum of HQ AAF India-Burma Sector:²³¹

25 Operational Flights by Crews	Air Medal
50 Operational Flights by Crews	D.F.C.
75 Operational Flights by Crews	Oak Leaf Cluster for Air Medal
100 Operational Flights by Crews	Oak Leaf Cluster for D.F.C.
125 Operational Flights by Crews	2 nd Oak Leaf Cluster for Air Medal
150 Operational Flights by Crews	2 nd Oak Leaf Cluster for D.F.C.

The award policy independence of the AAF in the CBI was quickly asserted again in a 1 September 1944, when Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector published a Memorandum on Awards and Decorations. While repeating the recognized criteria of the DFC (the same wording was used around the world in all combat theaters by this time), the CBI added the following, which was a repeat of Brigadier General Charles B. Stone III's policy letter on awards from the previous January:

Hard and fast rules cannot be made as to what constitutes "heroism," "extraordinary achievement" or "meritorious achievement." However, it is the policy of this Headquarters to recognize sustained operational activity on as uniform a basis as possible.²³²

Despite Arnold's 14 August 1943 directive, Headquarters, Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector, China-Burma-India Theater, issued their Memorandum of 1 September 1944 which revised its previous criteria of 31 January 1944 (Air Medal, 100 flying hours and/or 25 combat missions; Distinguished Flying Cross, 200 flying hours and/or 50 combat missions), but left the Air Medal criteria intact (100 flying hours and/or 25 combat missions). However, it did increase the criteria for the DFC to 300 flying hours and/or 75 combat missions. In fact, the China-Burma-India Theater instituted with this memorandum a very complicated set of rules for the Air Medal and DFC in regards to awarding Oak Leaf Clusters to the basic awards, as illustrated by the table below.²³³

Medal	Hours	or	Flights
Air Medal	100		25

1 st OLC to AM	200	50
DFC	300	75
2 nd OLC to AM	400	100
1 st OLC to DFC	500	125
3 rd OLC to AM	600	150
2 nd OLC to DFC	700	175
4 th OLC to AM	800	200
3 rd OLC to DFC	900	225
5 th OLC to AM	1,000	250

On 14 November 1944 Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Theater issued a policy change to their Awards and Decorations Memorandum AAF 75-2 of 1 September 1944, to add under the Distinguished Flying Cross criteria requirements: Supply, reconnaissance, search, rescue, and all other authorized missions involving flight over territory where “exposure to enemy fire is probable and expected.” In addition, the certification for DFC award submissions was changed to read “I certify that each mission used as a basis for this recommendation was logged as combat and/or operational time in accordance with Memorandum AAF 75-2, Hq, AAF, IBS, CBI, 1 September 1944.”²³⁴

As of 1 July 1945, Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Theater issued its final awards policy concerning the DFC and Air Medal by declaring that any flying time occurring outside the territorial boundaries of the active combat zones would not be counted for the Air Medal or DFC (or their oak leaf clusters). The combat zone for China was “enemy-held portions of China and contiguous countries, plus a zone 50 miles in width extending into territory held by Allied forces.” The combat zone for Central Burma was “That portion of the India-Burma Theater and enemy-held territory lying south and east of the following line: Latitude 25 24’ from east bank of Chindwin River to Kalewa (exclusive), thence straight to Chittagong (exclusive), thence southward along the coast to the 92d meridian, thence due south.” In the case of personnel flying liaison type missions the addition restrictions, requiring each flight to approach within 15 miles of enemy lines, remained in force.²³⁵

India Burma Air Service Command

The India Burma Air Service Command followed the award policy of the Headquarters, Army Air Forces, India-Burma Theater. On 13 July 1945, Headquarters India Burma Air Service Command announced a reduction of the number of hours required for the Air Medal and the DFC for aircrews under their command. The new criteria were now:²³⁶

Medal	Hours or	Flights
Air Medal	50	25
1 st OLC to AM	100	50
DFC	200	75
2 nd OLC to AM	250	100
1 st OLC to DFC	300	125
3 rd OLC to AM	350	150
2 nd OLC to DFC	400	175

4 th OLC to AM	450	200
3 rd OLC to DFC	500	225
5 th OLC to AM	550	250

Air Transport Command, CBI—the India-China Wing (later Division), Assam, China, India, and Bengal Wings

The award policy for the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal for Air Transport Command personnel, as noted before, reflected the medal criteria for those permanently stationed in the various combat zones. The China-Burma-India Theater was no different. Whether Air Transport Command personnel were assigned permanently or only on temporary duty in the India-China Wing (later India-China Division), the Assam Wing, the China Wing, the India Wing, or the Bengal Wing, the overall award policies of the Headquarters, Army Air Forces China-Burma-India Theater applied to them as well. What was different, as noted previously, was that approval for some non-combat awards took longer for Air Transport Command personnel since the local combat theater commander (Major General and below) could not, until 1945, authorize the awards on his own. Instead, the approval had to be obtained from Air Transport Command leadership in the United States, causing excessive delays.

The new 14 August 1943 policy was reflected in the wording of the award orders published by Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector for those awards earned prior to the 14 August 1943 policy memorandum. These citations, citing Air Transport Command personnel in the CBI in late January 1944 for the Distinguished Flying Cross start out with the following sentence:

“Pursuant to the authority contained in Army Regulations 600-45, War Department, Washington, D.C., 8 August 1932, and in accordance with policies of the War Department and the Theater Commander regarding awards for such action performed prior to 14 August 1943, the Distinguished Flying Cross is hereby awarded to the following named officers and enlisted men of the India China Wing, Air Transport Command, for extraordinary achievement by participating in more than fifty operational flights in heavily loaded transport airplanes through the combat zones of Upper Assam, Burma and Southwest China where enemy interception and attack was probable and expected.”²³⁷

The official history of the India-China Division (Air Transport Command) for 1944 reinforces that unit’s official policy for Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross awards based on flying hours (although the topic was slow promotion):

“...radio operators, many with more than 650 air hours, 450 of which were acquired in over-the-Hump operations, although receiving the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross, remained in the grade of Pfc. [Private First Class].”²³⁸

Headquarters AAF India-Burma Sector award orders also make it clear that the first Oak Leaf Cluster to the Distinguished Flying Cross would be awarded to those who participated in 300 hours of operational flying (it took 200 flying hours to get the basic DFC), and the first Oak Leaf

Cluster to the Air Medal was awarded to those who flew 150 hours of operational flights (it took 100 flying hours to get the basic Air Medal).

Reviewing award orders published by Headquarters Army Air Forces, India Burma Sector starting in March 1944 show that the phrase "...in accordance with polices of the War Department and the Theater Commander regarding awards for such action performed prior to 14 August 1943," is no longer used. One must assume that all awards for actions performed prior to 14 August 1943 had been bestowed, and from this point on all the DFC and Air Medal awards were under the new criteria of Headquarters Army Air Forces, India Burma Sector, as of 31 January 1944.

The official history of the India-China Division (Air Transport Command) for 1944 reinforces that unit's official policy for Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross awards based on flying hours (although the topic was slow promotion): "...radio operators, many with more than 650 air hours, 450 of which were acquired in over-the-Hump operations, although receiving the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross, remained in the grade of Pfc. [Private First Class]."²³⁹

In June 1944 General Arnold returned to Headquarters AAF from a world-wide visit to the combat theaters and again emphasized that DFC and Air Medals were not to be awarded on a mechanical basis. While he definitely did not wish to instruct Air Force Commanders to reduce the quantity of awards being made, he still insisted that each award be made for a worthy act.²⁴⁰

So why did the CBI's view of the DFC and Air Medal criteria fly in the face of the rest of the AAF and, at first glance, directly run counter to General "Hap" Arnold's directive? Despite the 13 August 1943 HQ AAF directive that is often cited in these situations, it was still the choice of the Combat Zone commander to determine who and under what circumstances a Distinguished Flying Cross would be awarded.

In addition, it is amply apparent that even Air Transport Command pilots who flew in the CBI Theater, but were assigned to units in the United States, had to meet the same criteria of the CBI Theatre commanders for consideration of the award of the DFC, which were based on sustained operational flights or hours. The conditions under which CBI aircrews operated under were the primary reason why the CBI viewed its DFC and Air Medal criteria very differently than the rest of the AAF. General Cyrus R. Smith, the Deputy Commander of Air Transport Command back in Washington D.C., sketched out the general problems to General Henry H. Arnold confronting operations after visiting the India-Burma Sector, emphasizing that these flights were combat flights:

"The air crews on the Hump are substituting spirit and 'guts' for experience...in nearly all respects, except to shoot back at the enemy, the operation over the Hump is a combat operation...The terrain is difficult, the weather conditions are bad, radio navigational aids are marginal, the airplanes are nearly always loaded to capacity and the enemy is constantly shooting at you."²⁴¹

Air Transportation Command crews assigned within the CBI Theater, as well as those who constantly flew in and out of the CBI area, were often slighted, since these transportation flights

were not considered to be ‘combat’ missions by those at Headquarters Army Air Forces. This made awards of DFCs and Air Medals problematic in trying to recognize these aircrews. However, with support from the Air Transport Command headquarters staff, as well as Major General George E. Stratemeyer, the commander of Army Air Forces, India-Burma Theater, changes were afoot. In December 1944, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Army Air Forces Awards Board, sent a cable to General Stratemeyer informing him that they were working on an authorization to allow him to recognize personnel of India-China Division, Air Transport Command, with combat awards while operating in his combat area. At the moment, the policy was making its rounds in the Pentagon, but the Awards Board was hopeful that it would be approved shortly.²⁴²

In late January 1945 the Office of the Recorder, Army Air Forces Awards Board, located at Headquarters, Army Air Forces in Washington, D.C., bemoaned the fact that while commanding generals of the numbered Air Forces in the combat theaters could bestow the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal to their men, they could not do the same for those aircrews that were assigned to a headquarters located within the continental United States, although they themselves served within the combat theater. The inequity of this situation was raised by the commanding general of the Air Transport Command when he requested that the Office of the Recorder start action to change regulations in order that non-combat service awards might be made within the theater by the theater commander in order to equalize the award policies in the theater. For example, a man serving in the China-Burma-India Wing of the Air Transport Command might qualify for a Soldier’s Medal. Recommendation for the award had to be forwarded to the China-Burma-India Air Transport Command headquarters and from there, through channels, to the headquarters of the Air Transport Command in Washington, to the Commanding General of the Army Air Forces and finally to The Adjutant General for final decision. A man on the same base assigned to an Air Force in the China-Burma-India Theater might be recommended for the same act. His recommendation would go through channels to the Air Force Group or Command headquarters and the award could be made. It was reasonable to believe that the elimination of three or four assessment agencies would prove a considerable advantage in the case of the second soldier.²⁴³

This situation was resolved on 25 April 1945 when the Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson, directed that a change to Army Regulation 600-45 be made to allow Major Generals at the numbered air force level to authorize the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal to Air Transport Command, Army Airways Communications System personnel and to personnel of other organizations physically present within the command under competent orders but not assigned thereto. This streamlined the Air Transport Command’s concerns for processing Air Medals and DFC’s for its personnel in the China-Burma-India Theater.²⁴⁴

On 26 March 1945, Brigadier General William H. Tunner, Commander of the India China Division (a subordinate unit to Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector), notified Lieutenant General Harold L. George, the commander of Air Transport Command, that “On 1 April [1945], a new policy on Air Medals and DFCs will go into effect, requiring 250 operational hours for the Air Medal and 500 for the DFC. Present policy requires 150 and 300 hours, respectively. A proportionately higher number of flying hours will entitle an individual to consideration for oak leaf cluster to the AM and DFC”²⁴⁵

On 1 April 1945 the India China Division of Air Transport Command announced to their aircrews through the Division’s newspaper, “Hump Express,” that a new policy on Air Medals and Distinguished Flying Crosses were then in effect. The new policy required 250 operational hours to be flown by their aircrews to qualify for the basic Air Medal award, and 500 operational hours for the Distinguished Flying Cross. Prior to 1 April 1945 the policy required 150 and 300 operational hours to be flown, respectively, for these awards.²⁴⁶ The article read thusly:

DFC, Air Medals Will Require More Flying After Apr. 1

Hq, Calcutta—Requirements for the Air medal and Distinguished Flying Cross have been revised in a new ICD regulation, effective Apr. 1.

Under the new policy an individual will be considered for award of the AM after completing 250 operational hours and for the DFC after 500 hours. A proportionately higher number of flying hours will entitle an individual to consideration for oak leaf cluster to the AM and DFC.

Formerly airmen could be recommended for the AM after 150 operational hours and for the DFC after 300.

If an individual has not completed the required number of hours under the old policy by Mar. 31, he must meet the new requirements to be considered for the awards. Time flown both prior and subsequent to Apr. 1 may be counted, however, in determining eligibility under the new policy.

In table format, the new 1 April 1945 policy would be:

Medal	Hours
Air Medal	250
DFC	500

Notice that there is no mention of the number of flights—all criteria was now based upon the number of operational flying hours. Also notice that the new criteria was based upon 250 operational flight hour increments. The phrase in General Tunner’s letter, “A proportionately higher number of flying hours will entitle an individual to consideration for oak leaf cluster to the AM and DFC,” would indicate that to get an oak leaf cluster to the Air Medal, personnel would have to fly 750 hours, and to get an oak leaf cluster to the DFC you would have to fly 1,000 operational flying hours. In table format, it would be thusly:

Medal	Hours
Air Medal	250
DFC	500
Air Medal 1 st OLC	750
DFC 1 st OLC	1,000

As with the revised policy before, those who completed the required hours for either the Air Medal or DFC before the 1 April deadline were bestowed their awards; therefore one finds

award orders up through May 1945 that provided individuals with awards under the older criteria.²⁴⁷

On 13 August 1945, Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton Heard, the Chief of Staff for the India China Division of Air Transport Command, notified General George (ATC Commander) that the India China Division had finally been delegated the authority by the Commanding General, United States Forces, China Theater, and the Commanding General, Army Air Forces, China Theater, to expand on the type of awards the commander of the India China Division could bestow upon its personnel. Although some award delegation had previously been received by the India China Division from the Commanding General, United States Forces, India-Burma Theater, for India-Burma based personnel of the Division, this new additional delegation finally gave the Commanding General of the India China Division the authority to grant the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Soldier's Medal and the Purple Heart to all India-China Division personnel.²⁴⁸

Just a few weeks later, the India Chain Division newspaper, "Hump Express," noted that approximately 1,000 Distinguished Flying crosses were being sent to bases throughout the Division, to men who previously had received orders and ribbons, but not the actual medals.²⁴⁹

By the end of September 1945, the war is over and the award orders of the India China Division no longer mention the number of operational hours or flights in the DFC and Air Medal citations. For the DFC, the citation simply states: "...the Distinguished Flying Cross is hereby awarded to...for distinguishing himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as ... from [date] to [date]." The Air Medal citation is also simply worded: "...the Air Medal is hereby awarded to the following named ...men for distinguishing themselves by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight during the periods indicated:..."²⁵⁰

Tenth Air Force

As a subordinate unit of the United States Army Forces, China-Burma-India, Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector (later HQ AAF, India Burma Theater), Tenth Air Force fell under the same awards policy as other Army Air Force units in the CBI.

The Tenth Air Force, following the theater command's lead, awarded Air Medals as early as 1942 for completing 25 operational flights over enemy-held territory where "air interception and attack was probable."²⁵¹ Other orders follow the same pattern: 25 missions for an Air Medal, 50 missions for a DFC. This followed War Department guidelines and the Tenth Air Force printed the Adjutant General's 25 September 1942 policy letter verbatim as their Memorandum 75-45, dated 15 December 1942, reprinted, below:²⁵²

1. In order to establish some degree of uniformity throughout the Army Air Forces for the award of the Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross, the War Department has suggested that the following be used as a guide in making these awards:

a. Air Medal.

- (1). Destruction of 1 combat naval vessel, or 3 combat aircraft in flight, or
- (2). Participation in 25 operational flight missions during which exposure to enemy fire is probable and expected, or
- (3). Participation in 100 hours of operational flight under conditions specified in (2) above.

b. Distinguished Flying Cross.

- (1). Destruction of 5 combat aircraft in flight, or
- (2). Participation in 50 operational flight missions under conditions specified in a, (2), above, or
- (3). Participation in 200 hours or operational flight under conditions specified in a, (2), above.

c. Reference a, (1), and b above, all members of the crew of an aircraft responsible for destroying a combat naval vessel should receive an award, but only the person operating the gun responsible for destroying a combat airplane should receive credit therefore toward an award.

2. The Air Medal is an award provided to recognize meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight, and is of a lower order than the Distinguished Flying Cross which recognizes heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.

3. The award of either of these medals for continuity of combat action does not in any way preclude their award for individual acts, nor do they affect in any way the award of other decorations. However, in their award, in accordance with Paragraph 1 above, the destruction of enemy aircraft in flight or of combat vessels is not cumulative if an individual award has been made covering the mission in question. For example, if a pilot is awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for an exploit which involved destruction of two enemy aircraft in flight, the two aircraft destroyed are not to be considered subsequently in determining eligibility for the award of either the Air Medal or the Distinguished Flying Cross under Paragraph 1, a, (2), above. The individual award, however, does not preclude consideration of the flight as a mission, or consideration of the hours of operational flight involved during the mission, as indicated in Paragraphs 1, a, (2) and (3), above.

4. Recommendations for the subsequent award of the Distinguished Flying Cross may include all action contributing to the award of the Air Medal. However, eligibility for the award of an Oak Leaf Cluster to an Air Medal does not begin until requirements for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross have been met. Specifically, the destruction of three enemy aircraft may establish eligibility for the Air Medal. Two additional aircraft destroyed may constitute eligibility for the Distinguished Flying Cross, and an additional three or a total of eight aircraft destroyed may constitute eligibility for an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Air Medal. Likewise, a total

of ten may be recognized by an Oak Leaf Cluster to the Distinguished Flying Cross. No fixed policy will be established in respect to other than the initial award of these medals for continuity of action. Each award of an Oak Leaf Cluster will be judged on its individual merits with due consideration to the conditions under which the action occurred. Awards will not be made in such numbers as will result in cheapening decorations and thus defeating their purpose.

5.
 - a. Recommendations for these awards will be initiated by the squadron commanders concerned and passed through normal command channels to this Headquarters. Awards for the Air Medal will be approved and issued by this Headquarters. Awards for the Distinguished Flying Cross will be forwarded to this Headquarters which will make appropriate recommendations to the Theater Commander.
 - b. Each recommendation will clearly set forth the conditions under which the awards are recommended. Inclusive or specific dates covering the action involved will be reported; for example, the dates aircraft were destroyed and confirmed, or the period within which the stated number of operational missions and/or the stated number of hours were accomplished. Where individuals meet more than one requirement for eligibility, it will be so stated.
 - c. Only confirmed destruction of aircraft will be considered.
 - d. Extreme care will be exercised to insure that the number of missions or the hours reported are from official organization records, and that the exposure to enemy fire was probable and expected.

By Command of Brigadier General Bissell:

WILLIAM D. OLD,
Colonel, Air Corps,
Chief of Staff.

Therefore, according to the above:²⁵³

Medal	Hours or	Flights	Other
Air Medal	100	25	shoot down three airplanes; sink one ship.
DFC	200	50	shoot down five airplanes.

A review of Tenth Air Force General Orders awarding the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross to its personnel from April through December 1943, show the following pattern:²⁵⁴

Medal	Operational Flights
Air Medal	25

DFC	50
Air Medal 1 st OLC	75
DFC 1 st OLC	100
Air Medal 2 nd OLC	125

When the new policy of 14 August 1943 was published, and reiterated in the War Department radio message of 29 September 1943, the Commanding General, Tenth Air Force (Major General Howard C. Davidson, who had taken command of the Tenth on 19 August 1943) was specifically advised of this action on 28 September 1943. In addition, he was notified that actions that had taken place prior to 14 August 1943 were unaffected by this new policy and that awards could still be bestowed under the old policy.²⁵⁵ Evidently Tenth Air Force started to question Headquarters AAF India-Burma Sector's award policy, which apparently seem to pointedly ignore the AAF directive, and had gone directly to Headquarters Army Air Forces with the question. This would not be the last time Tenth Air Force went over the head of their headquarters and go directly to Headquarters Army Air Forces on this issue. Despite the prohibition of using hours and sorties as the sole basis for awards, the caveat of using hours and sorties as a way to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight which would include sustained operational activities was included in the response back to General Davidson.²⁵⁶ It was this condition, along with the knowledge that Headquarters Army Air Forces was not going to second guess their combat commanders on what constituted "extraordinary" or "meritorious" achievement upon which Distinguished Flying Crosses and Air Medals were based, that Tenth Air Force therefore continued to comply with their higher headquarters (United States Army Forces China-Burma-India Theater) awards policy.

The status quo lasted in the Tenth Air Force for until early January 1945 when Major General Howard C. Davidson, contacted the Office of the Assistant Chief, Air Staff, Personnel, requesting a clarification on the DFC criteria, and he wished to know if there was any measurements established by the other theaters of war determining exactly what was "heroism" or "meritorious" achievement. Lieutenant Colonel Harold D. Krafft of the AAF Awards Board provided a quick canned response:²⁵⁷

Under the revised policy for award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal (14 August 1943), Memorandum to all Theater Commanders) the so-called "routine or score card" basis of award of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal was officially prohibited as of that date.

It is the desire of the Commanding General of the Army Air Force that the Distinguished Flying Cross shall be awarded only for acts of heroism in combat flight or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight. Under no circumstances is it to be made on an automatic or routine basis after a specified number of operations.

Operational missions may be used to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight as a basis for the award of the Air Medal but may not constituted the sole basis for automatic award of this medal.

This headquarters has no record of measurements established and used by various theaters and Air Forces for the determination of heroism or meritorious achievement in flight. It is felt that circumstances that enter into the evaluation of various types of acts and services depends entirely upon local conditions which are subject to continual change.

It was this last paragraph that provided the justification of the way DFC and Air Medal awards were bestowed by the Tenth Air Force. General Davidson moved quickly to establish an official policy that he thought would comply with both the spirit of Headquarters Army Air Forces and the wishes of Air Force personnel in the China-Burma-India Theater of war. On 23 January 1945, Headquarters Tenth Air Force published a policy letter to address their unique circumstances. Major George A. Labrecque, the Adjutant General, on behalf of Major General Howard C. Davidson, Tenth Air Force commander, wrote: "While one commander may consider that because of the relatively great distances between our forces and the enemy in air combat, opportunities for heroism and gallantry in the air rarely occur, another may consider that any individual who enters an airplane and who performs a combat mission therein has performed per se a valorous action." However, continued Labrecque, "The existence of a situation in which the greater number of awards are for routine participation in a given number of missions or combat hours is undesirable, and it does not represent a true picture of conditions." In other words, although the practice of using missions and flying hours had been used in the Tenth Air Force, the headquarters now rejected both missions and hours as a means to bestow the DFC and the Air Medal. Davidson, through Labrecque, believed that, "Individual acts of heroism, gallantry, meritorious and outstanding achievement are regularly and frequently performed. It is the responsibility of every individual, and particularly of a commanding officer, to be on the alert to recognize such acts and to submit promptly recommendations for the award." The letter then goes on to list out the different type of awards and sample citations as a guide as to the type of information required in any award package submission. Section VII, for the Distinguished Flying Cross is thusly cited.²⁵⁸

1. The Distinguished Flying Cross is awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.
 - a. To warrant the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism, such must be evidenced by voluntary action in the face of great danger above and beyond the line of duty while participating in aerial flight.
 - b. To warrant the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight, the results accomplished must be so exceptional and outstanding as to clearly set the individual recommended apart from his comrades.

2. Examples:
 - a. "For heroism while participating in aerial flight. On *** 1944, 2nd Lt. **** in a flight of four P-40's on a close ground support mission had just taken off from an allied airfield immediately behind our front lines and had gained an altitude of only 2500 feet when he sighted

a formation of 25 or more enemy fighters and fighter-bombers. The enemy planes, echeloned upward from 2,000 to 10,000 feet between cloud layers, were headed directly for the allied field with the obvious intention of bombing and strafing. The field, at the time, was loaded to capacity with personnel, transports, and supplies. Cognizant of the extremely vulnerable position in which he was placing himself, with respect to the enemy 15-plane top cover, 2nd Lt. **** without hesitation immediately attacked the fighter-bombers, disrupted their bomb-run and forced them to jettison their bombs short of the field. The attack was pressed until the entire enemy force was driven from the area. During this encounter with the enemy 2nd Lt. *** was credited with one aircraft destroyed. The daring skill with which this mission was performed reflects great credit on 2nd Lt. *** and the Army Air Forces of the United States.”

b. “For heroism while participating in aerial flight on **** 1944, 1st Lt. ***, as wing-man, took part in a strafing raid on an enemy airfield in Burma. As the flight of which he was a part approached their target, twelve-plus enemy fighter aircraft were airborne and awaiting their arrival. When orders to drop belly tanks were given, he dropped one as directed, but a defect in the release mechanism made it impossible for him to drop the other, which greatly reduced the speed of his plane. Though handicapped by the hanging tank, 1st Lt. *** made a strafing pass across the field through intense and accurate antiaircraft fire; strafing hangarettes. In addition, when an enemy fighter plane swept down on his flight leader, he attacked it forthwith, causing it to break away. The exceptional and piloting skill and daring displayed by 1st Lt. *** on this occasion reflects great credit on the Army Air Forces of the United States.”

Section X concerned itself with the Air Medal:

1. The Air Medal is awarded for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight. It will be awarded for achievement not deemed sufficiently extraordinary to warrant an award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.

2. Examples:

a. “For meritorious achievement in aerial flight by destroying three (3) enemy aircraft in aerial combat over the combat areas of **** and **** where enemy fire was probable and expected. Flying over rugged terrain through areas characterized by treacherous weather conditions, against superior enemy air opposition, where forced landing meant probable capture, this officer has exhibited superior flying skill and has accomplished more than his assigned tasks with distinction. Flights in which enemy aircraft were destroyed were frequently made on successive days, rendering this officer liable to cumulative flying fatigue. His achievements in the face of the hazards and difficulties faced regularly and continuously, with steadfast devotion to duty, reflect much credit on himself and the Army Air Forces of the United States.”

b. “For meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight. On the night of ***** 1944, 1st Lt. *** undertook an emergency flight over jungle terrain in Burma carried out in complete darkness in an unarmed liaison-type aircraft for the purpose of evacuating a seriously injured soldier for medical treatment. He effected a landing on a rice paddy airstrip where the only illumination was provided by the headlights of motor vehicles. His display of

exceptional flying skill and devotion to duty on this mission of mercy reflect credit on the Army Air Forces of the United States.”

It should be pointed out at this time that the above policy only applied to Tenth Air Force personnel, and not those in the in the Fourteenth Air Force, China-India-Burma Air Service Command, or Headquarters Army Air Forces India-Burma Sector. This brings an interesting irony; the Tenth Air Force was the exception, from 23 January 1945 onwards, in the CBI Theater for DFC and Air Medal award criteria, but it did aligned them with the rest of the AAF.

Fourteenth Air Force

The Fourteenth Air Force was activated on 10 March 1943 and its award policy reflected the award criteria of its higher headquarters, United States Army Forces, China-Burma-India. While the Air Force Historical Research Agency does not appear to have any awards policy directives or memorandums from the Fourteenth Air Force, this repository does have a number of that air force’s general orders which reveal in the citations what was required to meet the standards for both the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and the Air Medal.

From its inception through the end of May 1943, the requirements of the DFC and the Air Medal break out in the following pattern:²⁵⁹

	Minimum	
Medal	Hours	or Flights
Air Medal	50	25
1 st OLC AM	75	50
DFC	100	50
1 st OLC DFC	200	100

A review of these orders also makes clear that the destruction of five enemy aircraft also warranted a DFC, and many (but not all) of the DFC citations note the destruction of any enemy aircraft as part of substantiating the award, as well as those that only note the number of missions and hours (50 missions, 100 or more hours). The Air Medal citations sometimes also note the destruction of an enemy aircraft, along with flying the prerequisite 25 (basic award) or 75 (oak leaf cluster) combat missions.

Starting with the 12 June 1943 general order, the Fourteenth Air Force ceased providing individual citations for sustained operational activities (the individual citation was retained for heroic acts) and sometimes only noted the number of combat hours the recipients had flown in substantiating their award. An example, below for the Air Medal:²⁶⁰

These officers have flown one hundred hours in operational flights between March 23, 1943 and June 1, 1943, as members of combat crews in heavy bombardment planes. These operational hours were accomplished in the China, Burma and India theater where exposure to enemy fire was probable and expected. Rugged terrain and hazardous weather conditions added greatly to the dangers of these operational flights, the accomplishment of which is deemed a

meritorious achievement. Each has exhibited a keen perception of his duties and assignments as a member of the crew and the successful completion of these flights reflects credit on their personal records as well as that of the Army Air Forces.

Other citations only noted the number of combat flights and do not mention the number of combat hours flown.²⁶¹

These officers and enlisted men have flown in twenty five missions between March 23, 1943 and June 9, 1943, as members of combat crews in heavy bombardment planes. These operational flights were accomplished in the China, Burma and India Theater where exposure to enemy fire was probable and expected. Rugged terrain and hazardous weather conditions added greatly to the dangers of these flights, the accomplishment of which is deemed a meritorious achievement. Each has exhibited a keen perception of his duties and assignments as a member of the crew and the successful completion of the flights reflects credit on their personal records as well as that of the Army Air Forces.

This pattern continues, even after the 14 August 1943 awards policy of General Henry "Hap" Arnold, who tried to curb the "score-card" approach to awards. The orders in September 1943 echo earlier ones and were allowed to stand as the exploits of the Fourteenth Air Force personnel all took place prior to the new awards policy (as noted earlier in this paper). However, even though the 22 September 1943 Army Regulation 600-45 publication is cited in the awards justifications, Fourteenth Air Force General Orders still cited the number of missions or the number of combat hours to justify the awards of the DFC or Air Medal; however, more personal achievements are also included. For example, this DFC citation has both the number of combat missions and personal exploits:²⁶²

William R. Crooks, O404011, Captain, Air Corps, United States Army. Captain Crooks by participating in fifty combat missions as a pilot of fighter aircraft between July 8 1942 , and September 4, 1943, has evidenced outstanding and exceptional achievement in aerial flight. During his service in the China, Burma and India Theater, he has shot down two Japanese fighter planes in aerial combat and probably destroyed another. During a coordinated drive by American air units and Chinese ground troops in the Tungting Lake and Ichang area, Captain Crooks displayed heroism by leading dive-bombing and low level strafing raids against Japanese troops columns and concentration points. During his fourteen months' activity as flight leader, he has demonstrated outstanding leadership and his actions have been in accordance with the fine traditions of the Army Air Forces.

By the end of the year 1943, orders were still citing personnel who qualified under the old policy, as well as citing others using certain heroic exploits instead of the number of missions or hours. It is evident that the Fourteenth Air Force was trying to comply with the new Headquarters Army Air Forces awards policy while still adhering to United States Army Forces,

China-Burma-India Theater, award policies based on sustained operational performance by utilizing combat hours and missions as a guide.

In January 1944, the Fourteenth Air Force's award orders for the DFC show more highlighting an individual's skills and heroics, but also the sustained operational performance reflects a standard of 50 combat missions and/or 200 combat flying hours. Air Medals are also reflecting individual acts of courage and skill, as well as the sustained operational performance of 25 combat missions. However, the majority of the sustained operational performance Air Medals for 25 combat missions occurred prior to the 22 September 1943 War Department awards regulation. Air Medal citations after that date make sure to mention some remarkable feat as well as noting that the individual had flown 25 combat missions. This indicates that flyers were not be submitted for any Air Medal award for sustained operational performance until they had completed 25 combat missions—just like the previous policy prior to the 22 September 1943 awards regulation. Oak Leaf Clusters for the Air Medal also held to the same previous pattern, 100 hours of aerial combat had to be accomplished before consideration would be made to bestow an additional award of the Air Medal, along with a nod to some specific accomplishment. The same pattern holds true for Distinguished Flying Cross award citations—a flyer had to get 50 operational flights in before being submitted for a DFC, but, the citation also had to note a specific courageous or heroic act. An Oak Leaf Cluster for the DFC was only considered after completing 200 hours of combat flying.²⁶³

By April 1944 the criteria for the bombardment aircrews to qualify for the Air Medal was now, if based on flying hours, 100 sustained hours of aerial flight. The number of combat missions, 25, remained the same. To qualify for the DFC, they had to fly 200 sustained hours of operational flights. Fighter aircrews' award criteria did not change. In May 1944 a general order noted the award of the DFC to a bomber pilot for flying over 200 hours, while a fighter pilot also awarded the DFC for flying over 50 combat missions. Both citations noted personal skill and courage by these pilots.²⁶⁴

In reviewing the award orders for 1944, the following pattern develops, showing that bomber, cargo and reconnaissance crews were recognized mostly by how many combat hours they flew while the fighter aircrews were recognized mostly by how many combat missions they flew:

Bomber and Reconnaissance Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours	or	Flights
Air Medal	100		25
DFC	200		50
1 st OLC to AM	300		
1 st OLC to DFC	400		
2 nd OLC to AM	450		
3 rd OLC to AM	500		

Fighter Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours	or	Flights
Air Medal	50		25
DFC	100		50

1 st OLC to AM	75
1 st OLC to DFC	100

By August 1944, the criteria for Cargo aircrews of the troops carrier units were noted as:

Medal	Hours or	Flights
Air Medal	150	
1 st OLC AM	150	
DFC	100	
1 st OLC DFC	200	

By October 1944, the criteria for Cargo aircrews of the troop carrier units had their requirements re-adjusted as:

Cargo Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours or	Flights
Air Medal	100	25
1 st OLC AM	150	
DFC	300	50
2 nd OLC AM	450	

Also in October 1944 a new category of aircrew, Liaison Pilot, appeared and they had to fly 50 missions to qualify for the Air Medal.²⁶⁵

By November 1944 the hard and fast rules of the number of hours of sustained operational flight time that qualified an airman for an award became less solid. Award orders from this time period show that while Bombardment crews' Air Medal criteria remained the same, they could be awarded a DFC for 160 operational hours, 1st Oak Leaf Cluster to the DFC ranging from 180 to 380 hours. However, the majority of the bomber crews remained around the 200 hours for a DFC. Cargo crews could receive an Oak Leaf Cluster to their Air Medal for flying 100 hours. The 300 hours minimum still remained for the DFC for cargo crews. Only the fighter and Liaison pilots' criteria remained fixed throughout 1944.²⁶⁶

The beginning of 1945 continued the same criteria for the aircrews as in 1944:

Bomber and Reconnaissance Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours or	Flights
Air Medal	100	25
DFC	200	50
1 st OLC to AM	300	
1 st OLC to DFC	400	
2 nd OLC to AM	450	
3 rd OLC to AM	500	

Fighter Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours or	Flights
Air Medal	50	25

DFC	100	50
1 st OLC to AM		75
1 st OLC to DFC		100
2 nd OLC to AM		125

Liaison Pilot Criteria:

Medal	Flights
Air Medal	50
1 st OLC to AM	150
DFC	200

By the end of January 1945 a change to the Bomber crews' criteria appeared in the awards orders, and it is noted that the number of combat flights are no longer mentioned, but like the Cargo aircrews, combat flying hours are cited:

Bomber Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours	or	Flights
Air Medal	80-100 (100 being the normal standard)		25
DFC	180-200 (200 being the normal standard)		50
1 st OLC to AM	100-125-290-300 (300 being the normal standard)		
1 st OLC to DFC	380-400 (400 being the normal standard)		
2 nd OLC to AM			
3 rd OLC to AM			

Cargo Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours	or	Flights
Air Medal	100		
OLC to AM	200		
DFC	300		
1 st OLC to DFC	600		

Fighter Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours	or	Flights
Air Medal			25
DFC			50
1 st OLC to AM			75
1 st OLC to DFC			95-100-150 (100 being the normal standard)
2 nd OLC to AM			125

Liaison Pilot Criteria:

Medal	Flights
Air Medal	50
1 st OLC to AM	150
DFC	200
1 st OLC to DFC	more than 200

Unfortunately, the Fourteenth Air Force awards orders, in referring to the bombardment crews, started using the phrase “Air Medal or the Oak Leaf Cluster” and “Distinguished Flying Cross or the Oak Leaf Cluster,” followed up by noting the aircrew listed had flown at least 100 operational hours. This muddies the waters as to exactly how many hours were required for the basic medal or the oak leaf cluster. The hours and flights noted in the above tables are reflected from clearly stated basic and subsequent award citations. The ranges noted above in hours or flights show that there was some flexibility by this point concerning the criteria of an award. For instance, if a fighter pilot deserved an oak leaf cluster to his DFC, but only had 95 missions, it was not a hindrance. Some fighter pilots did not receive an oak leaf cluster to their DFC until they had finished 150 missions. However, these examples applied mostly to oak leaf clusters more than to the basic awards (only one example for the basic award of the Air Medal for a bomber crew could be found where they had not met the normal 100 hour standard). But this was the exception rather than the rule, and for the most part, the majority of aircrew received awards by meeting the normal requirements as already outlined.

By May 1945 the Cargo aircrew had a new set of criteria:

Cargo Crew Criteria:

Medal	Hours
Air Medal	100-150 (150 being the standard)
DFC	300
1 st OLC to AM	450
1 st OLC to DFC	600
2 nd OLC to AM	750

In May 1945 awards for the Air Medal for Medical Air Evacuation Squadron personnel started to appear, and in August the DFC was being awarded to these personnel and their awards were also based upon flying hours in a combat zone:

Medal	Hours
Air Medal	150
DFC	300

Reconnaissance and Combat Camera aircrew, which had not been mentioned of late, by May 1945 had the following criteria:²⁶⁷

Medal	Hours
Air Medal	100
DFC	200

The above patterns were maintained throughout the rest of 1945.²⁶⁸

Other

On 16 July 1944, the Royal Air Force representative at Headquarters, Air Command South East Asia, announced that His Majesty The King had granted general permission for the acceptance

and wearing without restriction of decorations and medals conferred by the Allies upon British subjects of the Royal Air Force, which included the United States Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal. The authority to award Royal Air Force personnel such awards was delegated to the Commanding General, Army Air Forces, India-Burma Sector, China-Burma-India Theatre.²⁶⁹

Summary

In conclusion, the circumstances and interpretation of the criteria for the awarding of the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal changed not only from one numbered air force to another, but also as each numbered air force or higher headquarters matured and the circumstances of meeting the enemy changed. The overall directives issued by the War Department and from General Arnold himself tried to combat the “score-card” approach, but with the term “sustained operational activities,” theater commanders struggled with an equitable means of rewarding their aircrews. In the end, each went their own way and General Arnold and the War Department did not try to second guess them. While many World War II aircrews may have believed the award system to be subjective at best and unsavory at worst, the awards must be compared with only those of the same command, and in the same time period. Eighth Air Force 1942 criteria cannot be compared to China-Burma-India Theater 1944 criteria. The exact standards for the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross was not set by those sitting behind desks in Washington, but by the theater commanders who were in the best position to know the circumstances the men of their command operated under and determined what would be appropriate recognition.

A post war analysis of the European Theater of Operations handling of awards and decorations was published in 1946 by the General Board. The General Board was established by Headquarters, European Theater of Operations in June 1945 to prepare factual analysis of the strategy, tactics, and administrative procedures by the United States Forces in the European Theater. Under that mandate, it reviewed the criteria of the awarding of the Distinguished Flying Cross and concluded that “There appears to have been no great controversy over this medal.” However, as far as the Air Medal was concerned, “...the standards for it should be held considerably higher than has been the practice in the European Theater of Operations. The Air Forces have had no generally basic uniform policy for this decoration, basing the multitudinous variations on the type of plane flown, the particular mission, and the individual Air Force involved.” Brigadier General George W. Read, Junior, the Assistant Division Commander for the 6th Armored Division wrote on 22 June 1945 that after reviewing the way the Air Medal was handled for field artillery observers, reflected that they were “...given so generously under the regulations that it has been cheapened in my opinion.” But, like so many others in leadership position, although recognizing a potential problem with the award of the Air Medal, coupled with almost four years of combat experience to draw upon, no specific recommendations were made by the General Board to make the perceived situation more equitable.

Sources

All source material for this study came from the holdings of the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA), at the Headquarters Army Air Forces, Command, Numbered Air Forces, and Wing level (most notably in the .179, .183, .186, .196, and .287 sections or SU-AW designated supporting documents), as well as the occasional Squadron history. All the documents noted in the endnotes are located in a single subject file under “Awards, WWII DFC/Air Medal Monograph” at the AFHRA.

¹ The background of both the DFC and the Air Medal come from the Air Force Personnel Center’s web page at: http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/main_content.asp?prods1=1&prods2=2&prods3=152&prods4=3&prods5=158&prods6=159&p_faqid=30; and http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/main_content.asp?prods1=1&prods2=2&prods3=152&prods4=3&prods5=158&prods6=159&p_faqid=43.

² Extracted from Policy Letter, Colonel I.B. Summers, Adjutant General, Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, to Commanding General, 8th Air Force, “Authority to award decorations,” paragraph 1.d., 5 July 1942.

³ Policy Study, Army Air Forces Policy Studies: No. 8, “Abstracts of Policy-Making Messages Affecting the Eighth Air Force, 24 January 1942 to 31 August 1943,” page 33, citing Message: CM-OUT-7279 (23 Aug 42), London, OUT, Aug 42, AFPMP to USFOR, London, War Dept. #R60, 22 Aug 42 (AFHRA Call Number 103-8, 24 Jan 42-31 Aug 43).

⁴ Policy Letter, Major General J.A. Ulio, The Adjutant General, War Department, to Commanding General, et al, “Suggested Guide for the Uniform Award of Decorations to Personnel of the Army Air Forces,” 25 September 1942 (AFHRA Call Number 533.287, Aug 42-Apr 44).

⁵ Army Regulation 600-45, Personnel, Decorations, 22 September 1943.

⁶ Army Regulation 600-45, Personnel, Decorations, 22 September 1943, Change 6, 2 May 1945.

⁷ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Lieutenant Colonel C.R. Frederick, Executive, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, “Special Service Diary for the Twenty-four hours ending at Noon of August 17th,” 17 August 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).

⁸ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, “Special Service Diary,” 27 December 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).

⁹ Message, General Henry Harley “Hap” Arnold, Commander, Army Air Forces, to Commanding General, VIII Air Force Service Command, SCR 220, A 2660, Routine Book Message, no subject, 19 June 1943.

¹⁰ Memorandum, Lieutenant Colonel Parham, HQ Ninth Air Force, to Colonel Crom, referencing Air Medal award to Mr. Henry T. Gorrell, 3 February 1943, with attached Memorandum, Major Parham, HQ Ninth Air Force to Commanding General, referencing heroic act of Mr. Henry Gorrell, 7 October 1942 (AFHRA Call Number 533.287, Aug 42-Apr 44).

¹¹ HQ Twentieth Air Force General Order Number 38, Section XIII, 20 August 1945, awarding the Air Medal to Mr. Richard Tregaskis, War Correspondent for meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flights from 5 June to 14 July 1945 in successful combat missions from a base in the Marianas Islands against the Japanese Empire (AFHRA Call Number 760.193, GO #31-40, 13-21 Aug 1945, IRIS Number 262269).

¹² Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, “Special Service Diary for the Twenty-four hours ending at Noon of August 13th,” 13 August 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).

¹³ Historical Report, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Lieutenant Colonel Harold D. Kraft, Recorder, AAF Awards Board, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, quoting the policy of 14 August 1943, 26 December 1944.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, “Special Service Diary,” 28 September 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44); Message, General Henry Harley “Hap” Arnold to Commanding General, VIII Air Force Service Command, R258/05, no subject, 1 October 1943..

¹⁶ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, “Special Service Diary,” 29 September 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).

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- ¹⁷ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Diary, week ending 2 October 1943," 4 October 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ¹⁸ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary," 20 October 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ¹⁹ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary," 23 December 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ²⁰ Letter, War Department, Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Services Division, Office, Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, to Commanding General, Fourth Bombardment Wing, "Procurement of Theater Awards," 2 February 1944, with attachments (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ²¹ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Lieutenant Colonel C.R. Frederick, Executive, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary," 28 January 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ²² Weekly Activity Report, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Lieutenant Colonel C.R. Frederick, Executive, Special Services Division, to Assistant Chief of the Air Staff, Personnel, "Weekly Activity Report – Special Services Division," 8 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ²³ Daily Activity Report, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Services Division, to Assistant Chief of the Air Staff, Personnel, "Daily Activity Report – Special Services Division," 17 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ²⁴ Letter, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Major General L.S. Kuter, Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Plans, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, 24 June 1944.
- ²⁵ Report, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Office of the Recorder, Army Air Forces Awards Board, Lieutenant Colonel W.W. Van Der Wolk, Associate Recorder, AAF Awards Board, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Historical Report," 17 April 1945, concerning events on 19 March 1945.
- ²⁶ Report, Daily Activity Report, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Lieutenant Colonel Harold D. Krafft, Acting Chief of Awards Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Daily Activity Report," 21 May 1945.
- ²⁷ History, Headquarters Far East Air Forces, Deputy for Personnel, Military Personnel Actions Directorate, Casualty and Awards Division, "FEAF Awards Program, 1950-1954," under Tab A, Air Medal entry, unnumbered pages 5 and 6 (AFHRA Call Number K720.287-1, 1950-1954).
- ²⁸ Report, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Office of the Recorder, Army Air Forces Awards Board, Lieutenant Colonel W.W. Van Der Wolk, Associate Recorder, AAF Awards Board, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Historical Report," 10 April 1945, concerning events on late January 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 121.34, Sep 1944-Aug 1945, IRIS Number 111061).
- ²⁹ Ibid.
- ³⁰ Report, Daily Activity Report, Office of the Recorder, Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Board, Lieutenant Colonel W.W. Van Der Wolk, Associate Recorder, AAF Awards Board, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Daily Activity Report," 25 April 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 121.34, Sep 1944-Aug 1945, IRIS Number 111061).
- ³¹ Newspaper Article, Herald Tribune, "50 Flyers Here Decorated for U-Boat patrols, Air Medals Given to Mitchel Field Men for Protecting Convoys From Submarines," 14 May 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 424.952).
- ³² Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary," 14 September 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ³³ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary," 15 October 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ³⁴ Newspaper Article, Herald Tribune, "Civil Air Heroes," 26 May 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 424.952).
- ³⁵ Letter, Office of Civilian Defense, Earl L. Johnson, National Commander, Civil Air Patrol, to Base Commander Wynant C. Farr and Pilot John Haggins, 17 July 1942, on file with Civil Air Patrol National Historian.
- ³⁶ Book, "Flying Minute Men, the Story of Civil Air Patrol" by Robert E. Neprud, page 19 and photo supplement, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York, 1948, revised and reprinted by the Office of Air Force History, 1988 (AFHRA Call Number 270.04-1, IRIS Number: 168978).
- ³⁷ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary," 4 September 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).

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- ³⁸ Message, Headquarters USSTAF Incoming Message, Routine, EX 43925, From LEE to 1st US Army Group, 12th Army Group, 1st US Army, 3rd US Army, 9th US Army, no subject, 19 August 1944.
- ³⁹ Report, Report of The General Board, United States Forces, European Theater, "Awards and Decorations in a Theater of Operations," Study Number 10, circa 1946 (AFHRA Call Number 502.101-10, 1943-1945).
- ⁴⁰ Policy Memorandum, HQ VIII Air Force Service Command, ETOUSA, Personnel, Number 75-5, "Awards and Decorations," paragraph 1f, of attachment, 24 September 1942 (AFHRA Call Number 528.186, Mar-Jun 1943 [sic]).
- ⁴¹ Policy Study, Army Air Forces Policy Studies: No. 8, "Abstracts of Policy-Making Messages Affecting the Eighth Air Force, 24 January 1942 to 31 August 1943," page 33-34, citing Message: CM-IN 2733 (7 Nov 42), London, Nov 1-10, 1942, London to AGWAR [Adjutant General, War Department], #4566, 6 Nov 42 (AFHRA Call Number 103-8, 24 Jan 42-31 Aug 43).
- ⁴² Policy Letter, Colonel William W. Dick, Adjutant General, Headquarters Eighth Air Force, to Commanding Generals, et al, "Awards and Decorations," 29 November 1942; Policy Letter, Colonel P.M. Whitney, Adjutant General, Headquarters Twelfth Air Force, to Commanding Generals, et al, "Awards and Decorations," 29 November 1942.
- ⁴³ Policy Memorandum, Headquarters VIII Air Force Service Command, Personnel, Number 75-5, "Awards and Decorations," paragraph g (1), 2 December 1942.
- ⁴⁴ Instructions, Headquarters 2d Bombardment Wing Instructions, Number 35-3, "Personnel – Military, Awards and Decorations," 8 February 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 526.179).
- ⁴⁵ Instructions, Headquarters 2d Bombardment Wing Instructions, Number 35-3A, "Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations," 20 February 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 526.179).
- ⁴⁶ Policy Letter, Headquarters Eighth Air Force, Colonel H.G. Culton, Adjutant General, to Commanding Generals, et al, "Awards and Decorations," 31 March 1943.
- ⁴⁷ Policy Letter, Headquarters Eighth Air Force, Colonel H.G. Culton, Adjutant General, to Commanding Generals, et al, "Awards and Decorations," 17 August 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A, Aug 43-Mar 45).
- ⁴⁸ Instructions, HQ 4th Bombardment Wing Instructions Number 35-1, "Personnel, Military, Awards & Decorations," 6 June 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ⁵¹ Policy Memorandum, HQ VIII Air Support Command Memorandum Number 75-13, "Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations," 20 July 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 532.186, 10 Sep 42-8 Oct 43).
- ⁵² Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary for the Twenty-four hours ending at Noon of August 5th," 5 August 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ⁵³ Inter-Office Routing and Record Sheet, HQ 3d Bombardment Division, First Lieutenant E.M. Dahill, Jr., A-1 (Awards), to Lieutenant Colonel T. B. Scott, Jr., A-1, "Meeting with Awards Officer, A-1, VIII Bomber Command, on Awarding of Air Medals," 24 September 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287B, Sep 1943-Apr 1944).
- ⁵⁴ Note, Colonel A.W. Kissner, 3d Air Division to Major General Curtis E. LeMay, circa 16 October 1943, attached to General Henry H. Arnold Teletype Message Number 0957, VIII Bomber Command to 3rd Bomb Division, 15 October 1943, Serial Number 2458 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287B, Sep 1943-Apr 1944).
- ⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶ Inter-Office Routing and Record Sheet, HQ 4th Bombardment Wing, First Lieutenant E.M. Dahill, Jr., A-1 (Personnel), to Lieutenant Colonel T. B. Scott, Jr., A-1, no subject, 17 October 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287B, Sep 1943-Apr 1944).
- ⁵⁷ Inter-Office Routing and Record Sheet, HQ 4th Bombardment Wing, Lieutenant Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., A-1, to First Lieutenant E. M. Dahill, Combat Crew Section, no subject, 18 October 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287B, Sep 1943-Apr 1944).
- ⁵⁸ Bomber Command Instruction 35-11, Headquarters VIII Bomber Command, Personnel Military, Policy of Awards and Decorations," Colonel John A. Samford, Chief of Staff, 22 October 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A, Aug 1943-Mar 1945).
- ⁵⁹ Letter, Headquarters 1st Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, to Commanders, All Combat Bomb Wing and Bomb Groups, this Division, "Recommendation for Awards," 3 November 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 522.183, Sep-Dec 1943).
- ⁶⁰ Decorations Chart, Awards and Decorations Eighth Air Force, 7 December 1943, showing the award criteria.
- ⁶¹ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division, Colonel Thomas B. Scott, Jr., A-1 (Personnel) to Captain Dahill (Awards Section), "Automatic DFC's (last five missions)," 24 January 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287B, Sep 1943-Apr 1944).

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- ⁶² Letter, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, Colonel C.W. Seebach, Adjutant General, to Commanding General, U.S. Strategic Air Force in Europe, APO 633 [Lieutenant General Carl A. Spaatz], "Awards and Decorations," 27 January 1944.
- ⁶³ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary," 7 January 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ⁶⁴ Letter, Lieutenant General Carl A. Spaatz, Headquarters USSTAF to Commanding General, Ninth Air Force, no subject, 25 March 1944.
- ⁶⁵ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, Colonel Thomas B. Scott, Jr., A-1 (Personnel) to Combat Crew Section, 3rd Bombardment Division, no subject, 21 February 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287B, Sep 1943-Apr 1944).
- ⁶⁶ Letter, Headquarters 392nd Bombardment Group (H), Colonel Irvine A. Rendle, Commander, to Commanding General, 2nd Bombardment Division, "Report on 8th Air Force Awards Board," 18 March 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A, Aug 1943-Mar 1945).
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ Letter, Headquarters 2nd Combat Bombardment Wing (H), Brigadier General Edward J. Timberlake, Commanding, to Commanding General, Headquarters 2nd bombardment Division, "Meeting of Decorations Board at Pinetree, 29 March 1944," 31 March 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A, Aug 1943-Mar 1945).
- ⁶⁹ Ibid.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid.
- ⁷¹ Ibid.
- ⁷² Letter, Headquarters Eight Air Force, Colonel Edward E. Toro, Adjutant General, to Commanding General, 3rd Bombardment Division, "Awards and Decorations," 2 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c). This authority was extended to the VIII Fighter Command and the VIII Air Force Composite Command, as well as to the three Bombardment Divisions. See Letter, 200.6, Headquarters Eighth Air Force, Major Burnis Archer, Assistant Adjutant General to Commanding Generals, VIII Fighter Command, VIII Air Force Composite Command, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Bombardment Divisions, "Awards and Decorations," 4 August 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ⁷³ Letter, Headquarters 93rd Bombardment Group (H), Colonel Leland G. Fiegel, to Commanding General, 2nd Bombardment Division [Brig Gen James P. Hodges], "Eighth Air Force Board Meeting on Awards and Decorations," 8 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A (Aug 1943-Mar 1945).
- ⁷⁴ Letter, Headquarters 2nd Bombardment Division, Captain Raymond E. Strong, Assistant Adjutant General, to Commanding Officers, All Groups, This Command, Commanding Generals, All Combat Bomb Wings, This Command, "Awards and Decorations," 9 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A, Aug 1943-Mar 1945).
- ⁷⁵ Policy Memorandum, Headquarters 2nd Bombardment Division, Lieutenant Colonel Ray P. Foote, no subject, 10 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Ibid.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid.
- ⁷⁹ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division, Colonel Thomas B. Scott, Jr., A-1 (Personnel) to Chief of Staff, "Awards and Decorations, 3d Bombardment Division," 9 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287B, Sep 1943-Apr 1944).
- ⁸⁰ Letter, 3rd Air Division Combat Crews, Sub-section A-1, Headquarters Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsoloe, Jr., to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, "Policy for awards of the Air Medal or DFC for sorties accomplished," 25 June 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ⁸¹ Policy Letter, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division, Lieutenant Colonel F.E. Fitzpatrick, Assistant Adjutant General, by command of Major General LeMay, Letter, 200.6, "Awards and Decorations," 12 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ⁸² Policy Memorandum, Headquarters Eighth Air Force Memorandum, Number 35-9, Brigadier General John A. Samford, Chief of Staff, "Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations," 18 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A).
- ⁸³ Letter, 3rd Air Division Combat Crews, Sub-section A-1, Headquarters Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsoloe, Jr., to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, "Policy for awards of the Air Medal or DFC for sorties accomplished," 25 June 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ⁸⁴ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division, Colonel Thomas B. Scott, Jr., A-1 (Personnel) to Commanding General (through the Chief of Staff), "Awards of Achievement as a Result of Command of Successful Combat Operation (Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal)," 21 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).

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- ⁸⁵ Handbook, Headquarters 3rd bombardment Division, "Awards and Decorations," circa 21 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c, IRIS Number 00230114).
- ⁸⁶ Ibid.
- ⁸⁷ Ibid.
- ⁸⁸ Ibid.
- ⁸⁹ Ibid.
- ⁹⁰ Letter, 200.6, Headquarters 2nd Bombardment Division, Major George L. Paul, Adjutant General, to Commanding Officers, All Bombardment Groups, This Division, "Awards and Decorations," 3 August 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A, Aug 1943-Mar 1945, IRIS Number 229006).
- ⁹¹ Message, General Curtis E. LeMay to HQ 3rd Bombardment Division units, 3BD M-1258-C, "Sustained Operational Recommendations for Distinguished Flying Cross," 29 May 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ⁹² Letter, 200.6, Major George L. Paul, Adjutant General, to Commanding Generals and Officers of all Wings and Groups of the 2nd Bombardment Division, "Awards and Decorations," 1 July 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A, Aug 1943-Mar 1945).
- ⁹³ Letter, Headquarters European Theater of Operations, AG 200.6 MPGA, Brigadier General R.B. Lovett, Adjutant General, to Commanding General, US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, "Awards and Decorations," 12 June 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 533.183, May-Jun 1944).
- ⁹⁴ Letter Headquarters European Theater of Operations, AG 200.6 MPGB, Brigadier General R.B. Lovett, Adjutant General, to Commanding General, US Strategic Air Forces in Europe, "Unclassified Extracts of Orders for Awards, Promotions, Etc, and of Letters of Commendation," 13 June 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 533.183, May-Jun 1944).
- ⁹⁵ Letter, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division to Commanding Officers, All Bombardment Groups, 3d Bombardment Division, "Awards and Decorations," 8 June 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ⁹⁶ Letter, Captain G.S. Parsloe, Jr., 3rd Air Division Combat Crews, Sub-section A-1, Eighth Air Force, to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, "Policy for awards of the Air Medal or DFC for sorties accomplished," 25 June 1944.
- ⁹⁷ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, to Combat Crew Sub-Section, "Awards," 28 June 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ⁹⁸ Message, 3BD Y-304-C, Brigadier General Earl E. Partridge, 3rd Bombardment Division Commander, to 3rd Bombardment Division units, 8 July 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ⁹⁹ Message, A-422-C, Brigadier General Earle E. Partridge to 3rd Bombardment Division units, no subject, 10 July 1944, (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ¹⁰⁰ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Second Lieutenant R.W. Marsh, A-1 Awards Section to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr. (thru Captain G.S. Parsloe, Jr.), "Ninth Air Force Awards of the Air Medal," 4 July 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ¹⁰¹ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Second Lieutenant R.W. Marsh, A-1 Awards Section to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr. (thru Captain G.S. Paralo, Jr.), "Awards for Men Destroying Enemy Aircraft Before 2 April 1944," 15 July 1944, with a copy of the 16 July 1944 message that went out to 3rd Bombardment Division units (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ¹⁰² Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Second Lieutenant R.W. Marsh, A-1 Awards Section to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr. (thru Captain G.S. Paralo, Jr.), "Attached Instruction Pertaining to Awards for MIA's, KIA's and Internees," 25 July 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ¹⁰³ Letter, 200.6, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division, Lieutenant O.T. Draewell, Adjutant General, to Commanding Officer, Each Station, 3d Bombardment Division, "Disapproval of Awards to Personnel Subject to Disciplinary Action," 27 July 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).
- ¹⁰⁴ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe Jr., A-1 combat crews subsection to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, "Sustained operations DFC," 7 August 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ¹⁰⁵ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe Jr., A-1 combat crews subsection to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, "B-24 Leadership Awards," 5 July 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D); Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe Jr., A-1 combat crews subsection to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, "Policies of Award Section Affected by Personnel Policies Outlined in Letter, this , file 221, 10 July, Attached," 16 July 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D); Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, to Combat Crews, Subsection, A-1, "Leadership Awards," 14 August 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

¹⁰⁶ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe Jr., A-1 combat crews subsection to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, “Leadership Awards,” 5 August 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

¹⁰⁷ Letter, 200.6, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division, Lieutenant O.T. Draewell, Adjutant General, to All Wing and Group Commanders, 3D Bomb Division, “Sustained Leadership Award Recommendations – Distinguished Flying Cross,” 25 August 1944; and Message, A-1240-C, Brigadier General Earle E. Partridge, 31 August 1944 (both have AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).

¹⁰⁸ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe Jr., A-1 combat crews subsection to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, “Fighter Wing Combat Personnel Procedures,” 18 September 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.; and Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe Jr., A-1 combat crews subsection to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, “Automatic Awards to Fighter Personnel,” 9 October 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

¹¹⁰ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe Jr., A-1 combat crews subsection to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, “Leadership DFC Policy,” 12 November 1944, citing a 7 October 1944 3d Bomb Div Instructions, 36-11, par 2, Sec III (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Second Lieutenant J.E. Delaney, A-1 combat crews subsection to the Chief of Staff, through Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, “Screening Procedure for Awards Recommendations,” 18 October 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

¹¹³ Instruction, Headquarters, 2d Bombardment Division Instructions Number 35-4, “Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations,” 29 October 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.175-55, 5 Dec 1944-16 Mar 1945).

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Policy Letter, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division, First Lieutenant Edward M. Mullin, Acting Assistant Adjutant General, to Commanding General, 66th Fighter Wing, “Awards and Decorations,” 1 November 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).

¹¹⁸ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe Jr., A-1 combat crews subsection to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, “Leadership DFC Policy,” 12 November 1944, (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Instructions, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division Instructions, Number 36-11, “Awards and Decorations, Distinguished Flying Cross,” 28 November 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Major Leon P. Howell, Director of Personnel to Deputy Chief of Staff, Administration, “DFC Recommendation for Lt. C.B. Rollins, Jr.,” 6 December 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D); and Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe, Jr., to Director of Personnel from Awards Section, “Eligibility of Formation Controller for DFC on Sustained Leadership,” 13 December 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

¹³⁰ Instructions, Headquarters 3rd Bombardment Division Instructions Number 36-11A, “Awards and Decorations, Distinguished Flying Cross,” 18 December 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287c).

¹³¹ Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Major Leon P. Howell, Executive Officer, A-1, to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., A-1, “Awarding of Sustained Leadership DFC,” 21 October 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).

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- ¹³² Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Major Leon P. Howell, Assistant Chief of Staff, A-1, to Colonel T.B. Scott, Jr., Chief of Staff, “Operational DFC’s,” 15 November 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ¹³³ Memo, Brigadier General [sic—the General was now a Major General, but he was still using old letterhead] E.E. Partridge to Director of Administration,, no subject, circa 21 December 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D); and Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Colonel Donald G. Graham, Deputy Chief of Staff, Administration, to Command General thru Chief of Staff from DCSA, “Awards,” 22 December 1944 (attached to Partridge memo, AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ¹³⁴ Ibid.; Inter Office Routing and Record Sheet, 3rd Bombardment Division, Eighth Air Force, Captain G.S. Parsloe, Jr., Awards, to Director of Personnel, “Chart on Non-Automatic DFC’s and AM’s,” 23 December 1944, attached to Partridge memo, cited in endnote 75 (AFHRA Call Number 527.287D).
- ¹³⁵ Instructions, Headquarters 2nd Bombardment Division Instructions Number 35-4A, “Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations,” 24 December 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 526.175-55, 5 Dec 1944 – 16 Mar 1945).
- ¹³⁶ 406th Bombardment Squadron (Night Leaflet) Aircrew Orientation Booklet, page 10, December 1944 (AFHRA Call Number Sq-Bomb-406-HI, May 1945, IRIS Number 46409).
- ¹³⁷ History, 466th Bombardment Group December 1944 through February 1945, Volume 1, pages 9-10 (AFHRA Call Number GP-466-HI, V. 1, IRIS Number 94026).
- ¹³⁸ Instructions, Headquarters 2nd Air Division Instructions Number 35-4B, “Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations,” 18 February 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 526.179-55, 5 Dec 1944-16 Mar 1945).
- ¹³⁹ Memorandum, Lieutenant Colonel George L. Paul, Adjutant General, Headquarters 2nd Air Division, to Commanding General, All Wings, this Division, Commanding Officers, All Stations, this Division, “Awards and Decorations,” 26 February 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 526.287A, Aug 1943-Mar 1945).
- ¹⁴⁰ Policy Memorandum, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, Brigadier General V.H. Strahm, Chief of Staff, Memorandum Number 35-18, 20 December 1943.
- ¹⁴¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁴² Policy Memorandum, Headquarters Ninth Air Force, Brigadier General V.H. Strahm, Chief of Staff, Memorandum 35-18D, “Personnel Military, Awards and Decorations,” 8 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 533.186, Mar 1944).
- ¹⁴³ Crews’ Comments and Suggestions Following Mission to Fort De Perseigne, 6 Aug 44, extracted from 386th Bombardment Group Operational Report for 6 August 1944 (AFHRA Call Number GP-386-SU-OP-S (Bomb), 5-6 Aug 1944, IRIS Number 87036).
- ¹⁴⁴ Memorandum, Headquarters Ninth Air Force Memorandum Number 35-18F, Colonel W.W. Millard, Chief of Staff, “Personnel, Military, Awards and Decoration,” 24 November 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 533.186, Nov 1944).
- ¹⁴⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁴⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁴⁸ Order, Ninth Air Force General Order Number 10, dated 1 February 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 533.193).
- ¹⁴⁹ Policy Guide, HQ Northwest African Air Forces, 19 April 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 612.287, 1943).
- ¹⁵⁰ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Lieutenant Colonel C.R. Frederick, Executive, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, “Special Service Diary,” 28 January 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ¹⁵¹ Circular, Headquarters North African Theater of Operations Circular Number 26, Brigadier General David G. Barr, Chief of Staff, “Awards and Decorations,” 6 March 1944 (AFHRA Call Number WG-51-SU-AW, 1944).
- ¹⁵² Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Lieutenant Colonel C.R. Frederick, Executive, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, “Special Service Diary,” 28 January 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ¹⁵³ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, “Special Service Diary,” 28 March 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).
- ¹⁵⁴ Report, Report of The General Board, United States Forces, European Theater, “Awards and Decorations in a Theater of Operations,” Study Number 10, circa 1946 (AFHRA Call Number 502.101-10, 1943-1945).
- ¹⁵⁵ Circular, Headquarters, Mediterranean Theater of Operations Circular Number 73, Major General George D. Pence, Chief of Staff by command of General Joseph T. McNarney, “Awards and Decorations,” 12 May 1945 (AFHRA Call Number WG-51-SU-AW, 1944).

¹⁵⁶ Policy Letter, Colonel William W. Dick, Adjutant General, Headquarters Eighth Air Force, to Commanding Generals, et al, "Awards and Decorations," 29 November 1942; Policy Letter, Colonel P.M. Whitney, Adjutant General, Headquarters Twelfth Air Force, to Commanding Generals, et al, "Awards and Decorations," 29 November 1942.

¹⁵⁷ Policy Letter, Headquarters Twelfth Air Force, Colonel T. J. Brogan, Assistant Adjutant General, to Commanding Generals, et al, "Awards and Decorations," 1 March 1943.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary for the Twenty-four hours ending at Noon of August 28th," 28 August 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).

¹⁶⁰ Circular, Headquarters 42nd Wing Circular Number 35-4, Captain Frederick J. Green, Jr., Acting Adjutant, 42nd Wing, Twelfth Air Force, "Personnel – Military, Awards and Decorations – Air Medal," 2 June 1944.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Policy Letter, Headquarters Twelfth Air Force (Main), Brigadier General Robert M. Webster, Deputy Commander, to Commanding General, 42nd Bomb Wing, "Policy – Distinguished Flying Cross," 6 November 1944.

¹⁶³ Memorandum, Headquarters, XII Tactical Air Command (ADV), Brigadier General Gordon P. Saville, Commanding, to Colonel George L. Hart, Chief of Staff, "Award of the DFC," 19 December 1944.

¹⁶⁴ Letter, Brigadier General Gordon P. Saville, XII Tactical Air Command Commander, to Commanding General, First Tactical Air Force (Provisional), "Standardization of Sortie Credit," 11 January 1945.

¹⁶⁵ Informal Routing Slip, Headquarters First Tactical Air Force, "Recommended Quotas for Awarding Air Medals, DFC and Bronze Stars," with attachments, 15 February 1945.

¹⁶⁶ Diary, Headquarters Army Air Forces, Colonel Robert C. Jones, Chief, Special Service Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, "Special Service Diary," 23 December 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44).

¹⁶⁷ History, 463rd Bombardment Group, August 1943 through June 1945 (AFHRA Call Number GP-463-HI (Bomb), Aug 1943-Jun 1945, IRIS Number 93938), May 1944 installment, page 30.

¹⁶⁸ Memorandum, Headquarters XV Fighter Command (Prov), Memorandum Number 35-5, "Awards and Decorations," 26 September 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 672.186).

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ This entire background section is from a draft chapter of the South Pacific Base Command by Major Ben Lippincott, Thirteenth Air Force Historical Officer, written on 23 January 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 705.26, 23 Jan 1945, IRIS Number 251282).

¹⁷² U.S. Army Forces in South Pacific Area (USAFISPA) General Order 338, 27 October 1943, quoted in 70th Fighter Squadron, 347th Fighter Group history, Oct-Dec 1943 (AFHRA Call Number SQ-FI-70-HI, Oct-Dec 1943, IRIS Number 57152, list of awards on page 6).

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.; Page 5, USAFISPA GO 182, 16 July 1943.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Letter, Major John F. Concannon, Adjutant General, Thirteenth Air Force, to Commanding General USAFISPA (Lt Gen Millard F. Harmon), "Recognition for Award of Air Medal for Lt. William D. Wells," 11 October 1943, on file at AFHRA Subject File, "Awards, WWII DFC/Air Medal Monograph."

¹⁷⁸ United States Air Forces in the Far East Regulation Number 10-50, "Award of Decorations," 27 May 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 704.196, 10 May 1944).

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Policy Memorandum, Headquarters Army Air Forces, India-Burma Theater Memorandum AAF 75-2A, "Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations," Brigadier General Charles B. Stone, III, 14 November 1944.

¹⁸² History, 68th Troop Carrier Squadron, June 1944 (AFHRA Call Number SQ-TR-Carr-68-HI, June 1944).

¹⁸³ An example of this is found in History, 26th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron, August 1944 (AFHRA Call Number SQ-Photo-26-HI, Aug 1944, IRIS Number 65515). The October and November 1944 histories for the 26th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron also records Air Medals being bestowed for 100 hours of sustained operational flights, as does the February 1945 unit history.

¹⁸⁴ History, 26th Photo Reconnaissance Squadron, December 1944 (AFHRA Call Number SQ-Photo-26-HI, Dec 1944, IRIS Number 65519), page 1.

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- ¹⁸⁵ History, 321st Bombardment Squadron, 90th Bombardment Group, March 1945 (AFHRA Call Number SQ-Bomb-321-HI, Mar 1945, IRIS Number 45117), page 18.
- ¹⁸⁶ History, 321st Bombardment Squadron, 90th Bombardment Group, June 1945 (AFHRA Call Number SQ-Bomb-321-HI, Jun 1945, IRIS Number 45120, Section I, Part III, page 5.
- ¹⁸⁷ Diary, Headquarters Fifth Air Force Consolidated Staff Diary Number 18, for Period Ending 1600 Hours, 8 October 1945.
- ¹⁸⁸ Policy Letter, Headquarters Thirteenth Air Force Letter S35-39, Lieutenant Colonel Paul R. Davis, Assistant Adjutant General, to Commanding Officers, All Units, Thirteenth Air Force, "Combat Mission Zone," 21 October 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 750.287).
- ¹⁸⁹ Chart, AAFPOA War Department Decorations, December 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 187.1x, December 1943, IRIS Number 135247).
- ¹⁹⁰ Regulation, Headquarters, Army Air Forces Pacific Ocean Areas Regulation Number 35-5, "Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations, 1 November 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 702.196, Sep-Dec 1944, IRIS Number 250137).
- ¹⁹¹ Minutes, Headquarters United States Army Strategic Air Forces Staff meeting of 11 August 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 703.144, 27 Jul-8 Nov 1945).
- ¹⁹² Circular, HQ VII Bomber Command Circular Number 80-1, "Administration, Awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) and the Air Medal," 21 March 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 742.287, Sep 1942-Feb 1944).
- ¹⁹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁴ Regulation, Headquarters Seventh Air Force Regulation Number 35-10, "Personnel, Military, Policy of Award of Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross," 30 November 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 740.196, 1941-1944).
- ¹⁹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁶ Regulation, Headquarters Seventh Air Force Regulation Number 35-10A, "Personnel, Military, Policy of Award of Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross," 1 February 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 740.196, 1941-1944).
- ¹⁹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁸ Regulation, Headquarters Seventh Air Force Regulation Number 35-10B, "Personnel, Military, Policy of Award of Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross," 28 March 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 740.196, 1941-1944).
- ¹⁹⁹ Regulation, Headquarters Seventh Air Force Regulation Number 35-10C, "Personnel, Military, Policy of Award of Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross," 31 March 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 740.196, 1941-1944).
- ²⁰⁰ Regulation, Headquarters Seventh Air Force Regulation Number 35-10, "Personnel, Military, Policy of Award of Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross," 1 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 740.196, 1941-1944).
- ²⁰¹ Ibid.
- ²⁰² Ibid.
- ²⁰³ Ibid.
- ²⁰⁴ Regulation, Headquarters Seventh Air Force Regulation Number 35-10A, "Personnel, Military, Policy of Award of Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross," 27 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 740.196, 1941-1944).
- ²⁰⁵ Regulation, Headquarters Seventh Air Force Regulation Number 35-10B, "Personnel, Military, Policy of Award of Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross," 16 May 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 740.196, 1941-1944).
- ²⁰⁶ Regulation, Headquarters Seventh Air Force Regulation Number 35-10, "Personnel, Military, Policy of Award of the Air Medal and Distinguished [sic] Flying Cross," 2 October 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 740.196, 1941-1944).
- ²⁰⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁰⁸ Regulation, Headquarters, Army Air Forces Pacific Ocean Areas Regulation Number 35-5, "Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations, 1 November 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 702.196, Sep-Dec 1944).
- ²⁰⁹ Memorandum, Headquarters Eleventh Air Force Memorandum Number 35-35, "Personnel, Military, Awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal," 6 February 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 480.205, Sep 43-Sep 44 [sic]).
- ²¹⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹¹ Ibid.
- ²¹² Ibid.
- ²¹³ History, 462nd Bombardment Group, June through December 1944, Volume 2, 769th Bombardment Squadron history for November 1944 (AFHRA Call Number GP-462-HI, Jun-Dec 1944, V. 2, IRIS Number 93921), page 2.
- ²¹⁴ Ibid., 768th Bombardment Squadron's December 1944 history, page 3. HQ XX Bomber Command General Order 75, dated 6 December 1944 and HQ XX Bomber Command General Order 77 dated 8 December 1944 are cited as the authority for these Air Medals and Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medals for flying 100 hours of combat and 'Hump' missions.

²¹⁵ Procedure, Headquarters XX Bomber Command, Chief of Personnel Office, “XX Bomber Command Standard Operating Procedure, Awards & Decorations,” Section IV, 1 December 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 761.287-1, 1 Dec 1944).

²¹⁶ Memorandum, Headquarters XX Bomber Command Memorandum Number 35-43B, “Personnel, Awards and Decorations,” 2 April 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 761.186, Apr 1944-Jun 1945).

²¹⁷ Minutes, Headquarters United States Army Strategic Air Forces Staff meeting of 11 August 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 703.144, 27 Jul-8 Nov 1945).

²¹⁸ Msg, General Twining, Commanding General, Twentieth Air Force, to Commanding General 313th Bombardment Wing, “Policy on Award of the Air Medal,” 17 August 1945 (AFHRA Call Number 760.01, 1 Jul-2 Sep 1945, Volume 24, IRIS Number 262163).

²¹⁹ The Adjutant General’s letter of 14 August 1943, “Suggested Guide for Uniform Award of Decorations to Personnel of the Army Air Forces,” states that the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal may be used to “...recognize single action or *sustained operational activities against the enemy* [emphasis is mine—editor]. Hours and sorties [can] not constitute the sole basis for awards, but may be used to substantiate meritorious achievement in flight which would include sustained operational activities.” (AFHRA Call Number 121.34, September 1944-August 1945, IRIS Number 111061, Headquarters Army Air Forces Awards Board Historical Report, 26 December 1944.

²²⁰ Headquarters AAF Special Service Diary, 28 September 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44, IRIS Number 110874).

²²¹ Headquarters AAF Special Service Diary, 29 September 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44, IRIS Number 110874; and HQ AAF Personnel Diary, 29 September 1943, AFHRA Call Number 121-1, Jul-Oct 1943, IRIS Number 110800).

²²² Headquarters, AAF, Chief Special Service Division, Memorandum for Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, 4 October 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44, IRIS Number 110874).

²²³ Headquarters AAF, Awards Board, Historical Report, 17 April 1945 by Lieutenant Colonel W.W. Van Der Wolk, Associate Recorder, AAF Awards Board (AFHRA Call Number 121.34, Sep 1944-Aug 1945, IRIS Number 111061).

²²⁴ Policy Memorandum, Headquarters Army Air Forces, India-Burma Sector, China-Burma-India Theater, Memorandum AAF 75-45B, Brigadier General Charles B. Stone III, Chief of Air Staff, “Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations, Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross,” 31 January 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 825.186, 1942-1944, IRIS Number 266546).

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Headquarters, AAF, Chief Special Service Division, Memorandum for Assistant Chief of Air Staff, Personnel, 4 October 1943 (AFHRA Call Number 121.07, Aug 43-May 44, IRIS Number 110874).

²²⁷ Policy Memorandum, Headquarters Army Air Forces, India-Burma Sector, China-Burma-India Theater, Memorandum AAF 75-45B, Brigadier General Charles B. Stone III, Chief of Air Staff, “Personnel, Military, Awards and Decorations, Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross,” 31 January 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 825.186, 1942-1944, IRIS Number 266546).

²²⁸ Headquarters AAF, India Burma Sector, CBI Theater, General Orders Number 53, 19 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 312.073-1, 1 Dec 1942-1 May 1944, IRIS Number 181458); HQ AAF, India Burma Sector, CBI Theater, General Orders Number 52, 18 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 312.073-2, IRIS Number 181460); HQ AAF, India Burma Sector, CBI Theater, General Orders Number 62, 3 May 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 316.073-17, 21 Jun 1943, IRIS Number 181497).

²²⁹ Headquarters AAF, India-Burma Sector, China-Burma-India Theater, General Orders Number 52, 18 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 312.073-2, IRIS Number 181460); HQ AAF, India-Burma Sector, CBI, General Orders Number 53, 19 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 312.073-11, May 1944, IRIS Number 181490); HQ AAF, India Burma Sector, CBI, General Orders Number 62, 3 May 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 312.073-1, 1 Dec 1942-1 May 1944, IRIS Number 181458); HQ AAF, India Burma Sector, CBI, General Orders Number 52, 18 April 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 312.073-1, 1 Dec 1942-1 May 1944, IRIS Number 181458); and HQ AFF, India Burma Sector, CBI, General Orders Number 62, 3 May 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 316.073-17, 21 June 1943, IRIS Number 181497).

²³⁰ Headquarters AAF India-Burma Sector General Orders (AFHRA Call Numbers 312.073-1, 1 Dec 42-1 May 44, IRIS Number 181458; 312.073-11, Jan-Apr 1944, IRIS Number 181489; 312.073-4, 22 Feb 43-31 Dec 43, IRIS Number 181466; 312.073-2, IRIS Number 181460; 312.073-11, May 1944, IRIS Number 181490; 316.073-17, 21 Jun 1943, IRIS Number 181497).

²³¹ Station 16 [Karachi Air Base], India China Wing, Historical Report, 15 May 1944, Page 3 (AFHRA Call Number 312.073-16, Dec 1942-July 1944, IRIS Number 181495).

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- ²³⁷ Headquarters, AAF, India Burma Sector, China Burma India Theater, GO 8, 28 January 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 312.073-4, 22 Feb-31 Dec 1943, IRIS Number 181466).
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- ²³⁹ India-China Division (ATC) History for 1944, Volume III, Page 752 (AFHRA Call Number 312.01, Jan-Dec 1944, V. 3, IRIS Number 181450).
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- ²⁵³ Ibid.
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- ²⁶⁵ Headquarters Fourteenth Air Force, General Orders Number 73, 2 October 1944 (AFHRA Call Number 862.193, GO 50-98, 13 Jun-31 Dec 1944, IRIS Number 268448).
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