

Strength and Location of the German Air Force
in South France

The air force formations employed in South France were assigned to:

- 1) the 2nd Fliegerdivision (air division)
commanded by Air Force General Fink
- 2) the 10th Air Force Corps

The 2nd Flieger division with its units was located in the Rhone Valley, and was charged with the mission of attacking ship transports in the western Mediterranean with its torpedo units, and ensuring coastal protection with its reconnaissance units. To this division were subordinated:

Bomber Wing 26 with 2 bomb groups of Ju 88's, special equipment for air torpedo release, both groups with about 45 Ju 88's ready for action.

1 group of Ju 88's, special equipment as destroyer, used as fighter escort for the torpedo planes. This group had belonged to the former Destroyer Bomber Wing, and had about 15 or 20 Ju 88's ready for action. Another group assigned to Bomber Wing 26 in the summer of 1944 was in Germany, being equipped with Ju 188's, likewise to be employed as torpedo air planes.

Training Fighter Group 102, a fighter group formed from a pursuit school in South France, designed to conduct protective missions on the south coasts in a limited extent. This group had a total of approximately 30 Bf 119's and Fw 190's ready for action.

1 long range reconnaissance squadron with about 10 Ju 88's and Me 140's for ocean reconnaissance in the Western Mediterranean west of Corsica and Sardinia.

2 close reconnaissance squadrons with approximately 15 to 20 Bf 109's and 1 ocean reconnaissance squadron with about 10 Ar 196's ready for action, for antisubmarine protection for our own coastal convoys, and to patrol the waters near the coast.

All in all the 2nd Flieger division had about 130 air planes ready for action. Main air fields in 2nd Flieger divisions territory were:

Marignane (NW Marseilles)
Istres (SW Salon)
Avignon
Orange

The X Air Force Corps with its components was situated in Southwest France and the Biscayan coast, although its bomber units were also used on the Southern coasts of France. Only this part of the Corps will be mentioned.

Bomber Wing 100, organized from:

1 group with about 15 to 20 Heinkels, He 177
2 groups with about 30 Dorniers, Do 217

All planes were equipped for radio controlled bombs as well as with 1400 kilogram armor piercing bombs to be used against war ship and the

500 kilogram bomb used on merchant ships. These groups were also used against ship targets with the radio controlled bombs exclusively.

Fighter squadron 100 and its groups were located at the airport in Toulouse.

Other parts of X Air Force Corps were not employed in South France.

All in all it can be said that about 150 to 180 planes of all types were used in the southern coast.

The IV Air Force Corps

The IV Air Force Field Corps is a regular infantry corps, formed in 1942/1943 along with the I, II, III Corps as part of the general formation of the Air Force Field Divisions (divisions made up from ground crews, signal and AA units), to act as the command unit over these divisions. This staff was heterogenous, army and air force officers and personnel.

As I remember it, before the landings IV Air Force Corps commanded the Montpellier-Perpigny sector, and was included in the course of the general withdrawal movement, and later took over a Corps sector in the Middle Vosges under command of nineteenth Army.