



MAJOR GENERAL RUPERT H. BURRIS

Retired Oct. 1, 1977.

Major General Rupert H. Burriss is commander of the Air Force Communications Service with headquarters at Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base, Mo. The AFCS mission includes engineering, installing, operating and maintaining communications-electronics-meteorologica1 facilities for all Air Force commands. AFCS is also responsible for operating long-haul intercontinental and local base communications, air traffic control, and navigational aid facilities and services for the Air Force and selected government and civilian agencies.

The first nonrated officer ever to head an Air Force major command, General Burriss was born in Whelen Springs, Ark., in 1925. He graduated from high school in 1943 in El Dorado, Ark., and received a bachelor of arts degree in business administration from Jackson College, Honolulu, Hawaii, in 1958. He has attended Squadron Officer School and the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, Va.

During World War II, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces in October 1943 and served as a B-17 aircraft armorer/gunner in the European theater of operations, completing 30 combat missions over Germany and France. He was discharged from the Army in December 1946.

General Burriss reenlisted in the U.S. Army Air Forces in March 1947. He served as an administrative clerk until July 1948, when he entered Officer Candidate School at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, where he received his commission as second lieutenant in December 1948. He was then sent to Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., where he completed the Aircraft Warning Officers Course in June 1950.

In December 1950, after attending Squadron Officer School, General Burriss was assigned to the aircraft control and warning squadron at McGhee Tyson Airport, Tenn., that had responsibility for protecting Oak Ridge. He served from June 1952 to December 1954, with the 1st Radar Calibration Squadron at Griffiss Air Force Base, N.Y., where he helped the Air Force modify radar calibration procedures into what is now known as radar evaluation.

In December 1954, General Burris went overseas to Headquarters Far East Air Forces at Tokyo, Japan, where he served as a ground electronics officer. He was transferred to Headquarters Pacific Air Forces in Hawaii in December 1956, as chief, Aircraft Control and Warning Branch, in the Electronic Systems Division.

He returned to the United States in December 1958 and served, first, as senior evaluation officer and, later, as chief of the Radar Evaluation Branch in the Communications-Electronics Directorate at Headquarters Air Defense Command, Ent Air Force Base, Colo.

In February 1964, following graduation from the Armed Forces Staff College, General Burris was transferred to Headquarters European-African-Middle Eastern Communications Area, Wiesbaden, Germany. There he served successively as chief, Aircraft Control and Warning Division; director of electronics; director of communications systems management; and deputy chief of staff for electronics. In August 1966, he entered the Air War College.

General Burris was transferred to the Republic of Vietnam in August 1967 as director of communications-electronics for the U.S. Air Force Advisory Group, Military Assistance Command Vietnam. He joined Headquarters Pacific Communications Area at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, as deputy chief of staff for electronics in August 1968 and later was deputy chief of staff, plans and programs. In January 1971 he became director of communications-electronics for the Aerospace Defense Command at Ent Air Force Base, Colo.

He became Commander of AFCS' Southern Communications Area, Oklahoma City Air Force Station, Okla., in April 1972, and assumed command of the Northern Communications Area, Griffiss Air Force Base, N.Y., in July 1974. He became AFCS vice commander on July 1, 1975, and commander on Aug. 25, 1975.

His military decorations and awards include the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster; Bronze Star Medal; Meritorious Service Medal; Air Medal with four oak leaf clusters; Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters; Air Force Outstanding Unit Award Ribbon with "V" device; Good Conduct Medal; Vietnamese Honor Medal, First Class; Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm; and the Republic of China Meritorious Service Medal, Class A, Second Degree.

He was promoted to the grade of major general on Feb. 6, 1976, with date of rank June 5, 1973.

(Current as of April 1976)