

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

AIR PUBLICATION 2025FEB

AIR COMBAT GROUP

FIELD BOOK

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1 - Structure | 3 |
| 1.1 Leadership..... | 3 |
| 1.2 Staff Duties | 3 |
| 2 - Squadrons & operations..... | 4 |
| 2.1 Ranks & Chain of Command..... | 4 |
| 3 - Campaign..... | 6 |
| 3.1 Campaign Overview | 6 |
| 3.2 Campaign Rules..... | 6 |
| 3.2.1 Participation..... | 6 |
| 3.2.2 Recruitment & Guests..... | 7 |
| 3.2.3 Attitude | 7 |
| 3.2.4 Scoring and Statistics | 7 |
| 3.2.5 Refly and 'single life' protocol..... | 8 |
| 3.2.6 Character Survival..... | 8 |
| 3.3 Scheduling..... | 9 |
| 3.4 In game tags and representation..... | 9 |
| 4 - PAM and After Action Reports..... | 10 |
| 4.1 Pilot- and Mission Database (PAM)..... | 10 |
| 4.2 After Action Reports..... | 10 |
| 4.2.1 Writing the AAR..... | 11 |
| 4.2.2 Claims and synopsis of events..... | 12 |
| 5 - TacGrab & Custom Skins..... | 13 |
| 5.1 TacGrab..... | 13 |
| 5.2 Custom Skins & Personalisation..... | 13 |
| 5.2.1 Custom historical skins | 13 |
| 5.2.2 Personalisation of skins | 14 |

1 - Structure

1.1 Leadership

ACG is run by its members. There is a Board of Directors type of structure with supporting staff like the campaign team lead and each individual squadron leader and adjutant or other members assigned to different management roles. Squadron roster can be found [here](#).

The Board of Directors (BoD) consists of five members, usually members who make up the high command of each faction, but this is not always the case. Other roles of management given out to members include Campaign Team lead and Skinning Team Lead and roles in Public Relations for example. This relieves workload from high command and spreads out responsibility and streamlines the decision-making process. You can see the structure [here](#).

All ACG activity outside of flying our campaign missions and writing the AAR's is done voluntarily. Everybody, regardless of experience or length of service in ACG is encouraged to contribute in whatever way possible.

1.2 Staff Duties

The duties of the staff members mentioned above include, but are not limited to:

- Signing up and dismissing members
- Providing information on ACG operations
- Transferring and promoting members, awarding medals
- Monitoring attendance
- Providing statistics to other members and staff
- Managing the ACG Pilot and Mission Database (PAM)
- Administering the forums and the ACG Discord server

2 - Squadrons & operations

ACG is divided into two factions, the allies and the axis. Each faction is then divided into multiple squadrons. Each faction is led by a high command made up of a Commander and his Adjutant or 2ic (second in command), these members, like members of the BoD are long serving members of ACG who are in the position, because they are driven by their aspirations for the betterment of the entire community.

Our squadrons are based on the ACG units used back during the groups first campaigns in IL2: Cliffs of Dover, so their names reflect that fact. Depending on the campaign currently run, these units may differ depending on the actual unit deployment on the frontline at the time the campaign is taking place. Any squadron may represent some real-life squadron should the so called "base squadron" not have been present at the place and time represented in the campaign currently run.

Squadron commanders manage and direct day-to-day operations of their respective units. They are responsible for welcoming, training, developing, promoting and supporting their squadron's pilots as well as leading operations during campaign missions. Each squadron commander is supported by an Adjutant to assist in all these duties.

2.1 Ranks & Chain of Command

ACG is a pseudo-military historical reenactment community, but we are not hung up on ranks or calling each other "Sir". The rank system provides a framework for leadership and management and only has relevance in providing members with a guide to who should be in charge of any squadron at any given time. The system is based on what somebody brings to the group and demotions occur as easily as promotions do.

All new pilots in ACG start at the lowest rank respective to that faction. For the Luftwaffe that's the 'Gefreiter', for the RAF, the 'Sergeant Pilot' and for the USAAF that would be the 2nd Lieutenant as pilots in the USAAF were predominantly officers. Pilots will stay at the lowest rank until they show that they are active with the group and all this involves is getting involved and being a regular participant.

Officers' ranks are usually reserved for members that either have longstanding service in ACG or otherwise contribute to the group apart from flying. We are a historical reenactment group and we try to maintain a historical balance in the ranking system. The importance of the rank structure should not be overstated, it simply forms a part of the group immersion and should give an indication of the members' ability, responsibility and contribution.

Promotions are based on squadron involvement, campaign participation and attendance as well as flying experience. Other qualities include flight leadership, communication, overall flying skills, combat tactics and situational awareness, contribution to the group other than flying and any training provided to the squadron or group in general.

ACG promotes the use of chain-of-command. We are a big community and with almost 120 members issues are bound to rise every now and then. By adhering to the chain-of-command and acting upon it, we ensure that every member is heard on any issue that they have and that the issue reaches the right people to deal with it. Therefore, should pilots have any concerns regarding their ACG experience, they should take it up with their squadron command who would then bring it up to the faction high command and ultimately up to the BoD, if necessary.

3 - Campaign

3.1 Campaign Overview

Participation in the ACG Campaign missions represents the core ACG experience. Missions are flown every Sunday at 18:30 UK time with briefings taking place around 30min prior. We use Discord and SRS for communications. The key focus of the ACG campaign is realism, authenticity, immersion and enjoyment.

The campaign is open to interested people who would like to try it out before considering membership. ACG requires new pilots to participate in two separate campaign missions before being made full members. This is to ensure that the pilots themselves feel like this is the right place for them and also for ACG Staff to make sure the pilot fits into the community.

Everyone is welcome and no experience is necessary to join us.

However, we do recommend that new pilots contact ACG members on the Discord or on the forums for some training and to help them be prepared and set up for the full campaign mission experience.

3.2 Campaign Rules

3.2.1 Participation

The campaign missions take place every Sunday. Members are expected to attend “most” of the missions with prior notice of absences being notified to the squadron commanders and/or adjutants, this can easily be done via Discord or the forums and should not take more than a few minutes, therefore it is expected. Any difficulties with regular attendance can usually be negotiated with a member of staff. Members failing to attend the campaign missions WITHOUT informing their squadron

commander and/or adjutant, will be contacted via private message on Discord or the forums about their status.

3.2.2 Recruitment & Guests

Campaign missions are open to all virtual pilots to try out and we encourage people to bring one or two friends with them. ACG wants potential new members, but does not want to poach pilots from other groups. Therefore, we do not allow members of ACG to also be members of other IL2 based communities.

Other virtual squadrons or communities are also not invited to the campaign unless there is a specific event organised for that purpose. ACG expects all members to offer assistance to potential new recruits and encourage attendance, usually through initially joining a weekly training night if at all possible.

3.2.3 Attitude

The ACG campaign is an immersive campaign, not a competitive campaign. Pilots and squadrons are usually assigned a task to accomplish in a campaign mission and they are expected to carry this out as best they can. There are no winners or losers, events and outcomes are recorded, as happened back in the real war, through the After Action Reports in the Pilot- and Mission Database. The character system and 'single life' rules are there to promote immersion and encourage realistic behaviour in self-preservation during campaign missions.

3.2.4 Scoring and Statistics

There is no scoring system per se; events, results and claims are recorded in the After Action Reports which submission is compulsory - see section 4 for details on this. The PAM tracks each individual pilots' statistics automatically.

3.2.5 Refly and 'single life' protocol

Refly is only allowed if specifically briefed for the mission flown that evening and it may be subject to certain conditions like the condition of the aircraft when landed back at base. In some missions it's possible for pilots to fly more than once, however this will mean filing one After Action Report per sortie flown and if a character was lost in the first sortie, it means a new character must be created for the second After Action Report written. Mission briefing will always have the details if multiple sorties are going to be possible.

Pilots should assume that they are vulnerable to attack from the moment they spawn in their planes on the airfield, however being shot at, destroyed, wounded or damaged on the ground or immediately after take off will usually prompt a refly, these are looked at on a case-by-case basis.

3.2.6 Character Survival

ACG expects its pilots to accurately document the outcomes of their missions in their AARs. Integrity and honesty are expected and the system should not be abused. This means that if during the mission the pilot was wounded or shot down and failed to bail out in time, it should be marked as 'Wounded' or 'KIA' in the AAR. Currently a system is in place for situations where a pilot manages to bail out in time. This is based two separate maps with distances to the frontline and a dice roll which will determine one of 20 outcomes for the pilots character. One map will have better chances of survival and one map worse chances for survival, it is possible that a dice roll will also wound a character which is then to be marked on the AAR as such. If a pilot is to bail out behind enemy lines, for now this is automatically determined as becoming a 'POW'.

3.3 Scheduling

Missions are flown most Sundays at 18:30 UK time. Briefings take place usually 30min prior on Discord. Every six missions or so there is usually a two-week break. Additional breaks may occur due to national holidays or other external events. The mission schedule can be found on the forums in the Pilot Briefing Room.

Briefings are published usually between Wednesday and Friday to provide sufficient time for pilots to plan their Sundays out and to notify their squadron command should they miss out that week. Spawn times and briefing times are usually published at the same time with the briefing.

The so called “paper” version of the briefing is uploaded to the mission page on the PAM and is visible only to the pilots of the relevant faction, ie. Anyone flying USAAF squadrons will not be able to see the Luftwaffe briefing nor the RAF briefing as the PAM encrypts this automatically. Verbal briefings take place on Discord around 18:00 UK time and ACG encourages members to take part in this as it is a good time to relay any concerns about the mission to high command as well as to catch up with others and chat for a bit before the mission starts.

3.4 In game tags and representation

ACG requires all members to set their in-game and/or Steam name to have the ‘ACG_’ tag. For example, ACG_Steel. This is done via Steam or via your profile settings on the IL2 main website. On the ACG Discord members carry the tags of their base squadron, for example 9./JG26_Steel.

This naming convention is in place to help staff monitor attendance on the servers as well as to help members represent ACG on other public servers and platforms.

4 - PAM and After Action Reports

4.1 Pilot- and Mission Database (PAM)

The PAM is an open-source custom piece of website unique to ACG and one other community, but it was originally created for ACG. It allows the creation of AAR's, tracking of statistics and the creation of characters as well as the awarding of medals to characters. The PAM is also used to transfer members between squadrons and monitor attendance and also as an archive for campaigns flown previously.

New pilots shall be walked through the PAM by their squadron command so that afterwards they know how to write an AAR, check their own member profile as well as have the ability to find the briefing for the next mission flown after it's posted.

The PAM, besides the campaign missions, is one of the key elements of what makes ACG. It is a vital part of the whole reenactment part of the experience with the pilot characters, medals, ranks and promotions.

4.2 After Action Reports

Writing an after action report for a flown ACG campaign mission is compulsory. Failure to submit an AAR after taking part in a campaign mission will result in a ban from taking part in the following mission. This is monitored and enforced by high command. Attendance in ACG means flying the campaign mission AND writing the AAR.

Note that the AAR's are part of the expectation and attendance is monitored via the reports. This means that pilots who fail to write an AAR did not also attend the previous mission.

The reports and claims will be checked by squadron adjutants and commanders and also sometimes double checked by faction high command. Comments and feedback can and will be provided if something is missing or not according to regulations. Pilots will be advised to alter their report and/or claims in such cases and assistance will be provided by the squadron commander and adjutant if necessary. Reports should be submitted in good time, preferably by Wednesday the following week. This is to ensure that the pilots memory is fresh from the events that took place and so that high command has ample time to sort out any issues as well as gather data for statistics etc. If the report is not accepted it equals to no report, which means attendance will not be recorded.

4.2.1 Writing the AAR

For all factions, additional details may be required, but most importantly the AAR should include the following

- Overall report of what happened during the flight
- The starting airfield, aircraft type, markings and position in squadron ORBAT
- Claims and if any, they require ample description in the overall report of what happened. Especially when the claim was not witnessed by anyone else
- Pilot and aircraft status at the end of the sortie, for example KIA and Lost
- The adding of a witness for any kills that were witnessed by other pilots in the air

To aid pilots in writing the AAR, the form itself is quite simple and self-explanatory, there are drop down menus or fields to write into.

4.2.2 Claims and synopsis of the events

Claims and the general overview of what happened in the air should be written based on what the pilot remembers of the events at the time of writing the AAR (hence it should be written ASAP after the mission). Under no circumstances is the use of video recordings or software like TacView allowed to refresh one's memory of the events in the air. Any claims, the general overview of events and witnesses to claims shall be based purely on memory, this is how it was in the real war and this is the way it is in ACG, for historical immersion.

Apart from the pilot and aircraft status after the sortie, pilots should write and claim what they think is correct. If this results in inaccurate claims, so be it. There was plenty of overclaiming and underclaiming in the real war on both sides and this is reflected in the ACG AAR system as well. In addition to that, pilots should be ready to receive feedback and comments on any claims made, these will come from squadron adjutants, commanders or the faction high command.

Adding details and further information about any claims in the report will help the respective authority assess their validity. Under no circumstances are server scoreboards or chat messages to be used as confirmation for any kill claims or as a suggestion to claim something in the AAR, everything must come from memory.

Writing the synopsis of the action is optional if no claims are made or if the pilot was KIA. If technical difficulties occur during the flight, it is still important to file an AAR to ensure attendance is recorded.

5 - TacGrab & Custom Skins

5.1 TacGrab

TacGrab is a custom piece of software, specifically made for the needs of ACG. It allows the automatic continuation of the IL2 recording by automating the key press after the 500mb limit is reached for the in-game recordings.

In addition to that, TacGrab is used to share and download the custom ACG skins for all the planes flown in the campaigns.

Access to TacGrab is given ONLY to members of ACG. Once a recruit has flown their two initial missions and he/she decides to join, they are given the information and access to TacGrab. Under no circumstances is TacGrab to be shared with anyone outside of ACG.

5.2 Custom Skins & Personalisation

5.2.1 Custom historical skins

ACG uses custom, historical skins on our planes flown in the campaigns. For this we have a dedicated skinning team who oversee and produce the skins each time a new set of skins is required. The skin team leader is currently 'Blondi'.

Our custom skins are based on real life camouflages used back in the war. All markings, numbers, colours, patterns and any other details must be based on real-life reference material. Immersion and historical accuracy are taken into account with the skins too, this includes the use of the swastika in Luftwaffe aircraft.

5.2.2 Personalisation of skins

Officers and members with a minimum of 1.5 years of service are eligible for nose art. A member may also be awarded permission for nose art as an exemption for additional contributions and/or service to ACG.

NOTE: For USAAF, any pilot who meets the above requirements will be allowed to choose their noseart, but these must also meet the historical criteria applied to any skins in general. Other pilots may be assigned an airframe with nose art relative to that aircraft.

For any victory markings applied to skins the following rules apply:

- Luftwaffe, current or highest scoring pilot character. Laurels may be painted for overall member victory count like passing 100 kills. Laurels limited to 3 aircraft per staffel
- RAF, current or highest scoring pilot character
- USAAF, current or highest scoring pilot character

Customisation of skins must be authentic to historical examples. This does not necessarily mean a direct replication of an original piece from a photograph, but it must be relative to the period and similar in theme/style to historical examples.

In details, the placement, font, design, time, faction, aircraft, quality of reference image and fame are taken into consideration as to whether or not it is acceptable. This is looked at on a case-by-case basis by the skin team leader and other historical consultants.

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK