

163 MAINTENANCE GROUP

MISSION

LINEAGE

163 Logistics Group

163 Maintenance Group

STATIONS

March ARB, CA

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

LTC Jacob Leisle

Col Charles W. Manley, II, 2003

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

The California Air National Guard's 163rd Maintenance Group at March ARB, Calif., now oversees a fully functioning training operation to prepare mechanics for Predator unmanned aerial vehicles. The group's Det. 26 initially trained under the tutelage of UAV trainers at Nellis AFB, Nev. Now the March MQ-1 Predator maintenance schoolhouse, which operates under agreement with Air Education and Training Command, serves as a formal training detachment to provide UAV maintenance training for active, Air Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command personnel. The maintenance group has its own equipment, separate from its parent 163rd Reconnaissance Wing, which began operating Predators in late 2006, which enabled the UAV training to continue despite the wing's heavy operational duties, according to MSgt. Michael Adams, communications instructor. But, the wing plans to open a flying training activity to train Predator operators at the former George Air Force Base, near Victorville, which Adams said would open even more doors, explaining, "We'll be able to provide hands-on training and let the students interact with flying aircraft so they can learn and practice what they will be doing in a realistic environment."

The 163rd Maintenance Group was instrumental to the wing's successful employment of the Predator. While managing equipment installations and upgrades, deploying personnel to support combat operations and standing up a maintenance-training detachment, the group ensured Predator operations continued unhindered. Additionally, the FTD heralded a new era for Predator maintenance training, becoming a recognized training detachment under the Air Education and Training Command.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.
Unit yearbook. *163 Fighter Interceptor Group 1943-1993*.