

# **184 AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON**

## **MISSION**

## **LINEAGE**

184 Aircraft Generation Squadron, 1 Apr 1995

Redesignated 184 Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 25 Apr 2003

Inactivated

## **STATIONS**

McConnell AFB, KS

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

184 Maintenance Group

## **COMMANDERS**

LTC Edward A. McIlhenny, 1 Aug 1995

LTC Gene A. Martin, 3 May 1997

Maj Michael D. Ray, 2 May 1998

Maj Gary V. Wells, 11 Jul 1999

LTC Leonard H. Mattingly, 5 Aug 2002

Maj Michael J. Tokarz, 1 Feb 2004

## **HONORS**

**Service Streamers**

**Campaign Streamers**

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

**EMBLEM**

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

The 184th Aircraft Generation Squadron, formerly located in Hangar 1107 and Building 1108 on the east side of McConnell, was initially created when the unit converted to the B-1B. It consisted of Flight line (crew chiefs), Phase, Support, Weapons, Offensive Avionics, Defensive Avionics, Autopilot/Instruments, and a command section. The first leaders of AGS included Lt Col Ed McIlhenny as commander, Maj Jim Pittman as directorate, and CMSgt Joe Ward as maintenance superintendent. Not only was the 184th the first Air National Guard bomber unit ever, it was also the first time in the wing that personnel from many radically different aircraft maintenance career fields had been combined into one squadron.

The command section worked closely with the Air National Guard Readiness Center to create manning documents from scratch. They worked with supervisors to provide support equipment, tools, and required work space. They took people from four different sections and melded them into a cohesive, effective, and highly efficient squadron.

Crew chiefs and Phase personnel not only had to quickly adapt to the size and complexity of the new aircraft but also had to learn the extremely complicated systems and their interaction with each other. Flightline provided aircraft on a regular basis for depot level kit-proofs on numerous aircraft modifications. Crew chiefs assigned to the flightline had to know a little about all aircraft systems and often acted as the focal point when multiple shops were troubleshooting highly complex malfunction(s). Phase personnel developed and implemented ways to improve aircraft reliability and designed BIB specific maintenance stands. The Support section acquired and maintained hundreds of items required to inspect and repair the aircraft and were in charge of hangar upkeep.

The Weapons section occupied building 1108 and filled it with support equipment required to configure the aircraft for various missions. They certified all load crews on the various delivery platforms and munitions that the B-1B was capable of delivering. Each B-1B had three weapons bays that could be configured with various weapons. Personnel maintained weapons racks that could deliver twenty-eight 500-pound bombs, ten cluster bomb units (CBUs), or eight 2000-pound bombs. They also maintained rotary launchers that were capable of delivering eight 2000- pound joint directed attack munitions (JDAMs), a highly accurate weapon that would later be used with great success on the battlefield.

The Avionics Shops contributed substantially to improved capabilities of not only 184th aircraft but the entire B-1B fleet. All three areas identified major problems and helped redesign components or rewrite software and tech data to resolve problems and improve systems. Offensive Avionics technicians worked closely with debrief personnel to identify and correct inaccurate fault codes, substantially reducing repair time. Defensive Avionics personnel helped rewrite test equipment software, required to perform annual inspections on

aircraft, to make it much more accurate. Autopilot/Instruments shop members worked closely with shops outside AGS to ensure all electro-mechanical parts of the flight control systems were adjusted for maximum performance.

The Aircraft Maintenance Squadron evolved from the Aircraft Generation Squadron and was established in 2001 during the conversion from the B-1B to the KC-135R. It consisted initially of isochronal inspection personnel, crew chiefs, and a command section. The first leaders of the 184 AMXS were the commander, Lt Col Chip Mattingly, and the maintenance superintendent, CMSgt Mike Hamilton. Two years after the establishment of AMXS the isochronal inspection flight was transferred to the Maintenance Squadron.

The sudden loss of the B-1B was difficult because many former members of the Aircraft Generation Squadron were transferred to other squadrons to start new careers. Some of those remaining had mixed feelings about changing aircraft once again after only a few years working on the B-1B. In some ways it seemed like a step backwards to go from working on a bomber built in the mid 1980s to a tanker built in the 1950s or 1960s. Soon AMXS personnel realized that there were new opportunities for travel and deployment that did not exist for B-1B units and they quickly started taking steps to make the 184th the premier KC-135R unit in the Air Force.

The AMXS command section coordinated the transfer of personnel, the transfer out of B-1Bs, and the acquisition of KC-135Rs at the same time. The necessary steps were immediately taken to provide training for personnel. This was instrumental as flying began on the KC-135R with traditional guard crew chiefs initially performing overall maintenance on aircraft with the assistance of Air Force augmentees.

As the AMXS progressed into their new role there were many new and difficult challenges associated with the accelerated conversion. Initially all crew chiefs had to attend a month long field training detachment class, followed by proficiency training. Other major impacts included becoming familiar with new inspection requirements, technical data, and support equipment. Other challenges included setting up a new support section, increased travel with numerous overnight trips, reconfiguring aircraft to meet varying mission profiles, and learning to handle cargo and passengers. Further challenges included supporting student pilot training which increased daily sorties and off station deployments.

With challenges came opportunities; crew chiefs became a vital part of the new mission as flying crew members. From the receipt of the first tanker in May 2002 crew chiefs deployed to over fifty different locations with multiple trips to many of them. They traveled to ten different countries and dealt with support personnel from many different backgrounds.

The AMXS quickly became an integral part of the tanker community, working closely with other guard and active duty units as part of the Tanker Task Force, providing Global Reach capability. Crew chiefs quickly realized a sense of pride with the emergence of the new missions. Missions included Air National Guard business efforts to Geilenkirchen, Germany,

and Coronet missions to overseas locations. In addition, Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) rotations to Istres, France, Reykjavik, Iceland, Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, and Cope Thunder and Northern Edge exercises in Alaska were planned or completed.

---

USAF Unit Histories

Created: 12 Mar 2021

Updated:

Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

The Institute of Heraldry. U.S. Army. Fort Belvoir, VA.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.