

419 FLIGHT TEST SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

29 Reconnaissance Squadron (Heavy) constituted, 28 Jan 1942

Activated, 3 Feb 1942

Redesignated 419 Bombardment Squadron (Heavy), 22 Apr 1942

Redesignated 419 Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 6 Mar 1944

Redesignated 419 Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy, 5 Aug 1945

Inactivated, 15 Oct 1945

Redesignated 419 Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 20 Aug 1958

Activated, 1 Dec 1958

Discontinued and inactivated, 1 Jan 1962

6519 Test Squadron designated and activated, 10 Mar 1989

419 Bombardment Squadron, Medium consolidated with 6519 Test Squadron, 1 Oct 1992

Redesignated 419 Test Squadron, 2 Oct 1992

Redesignated 419 Flight Test Squadron, 1 Mar 1994

STATIONS

Geiger Field, WA, 3 Feb 1942

Alamogordo, NM, 28 May 1942 (operated from Muroc, CA, 28 May–14 Jun 1942)

Richard E. Byrd Field, VA, 21 Jun–19 Jul 1942

Fort Dix, NJ, 20 Jul 1942-4 Aug 1942
Chelveston, England, 19 Aug 1942
Tafaraoui, Algeria, 24 Nov 1942
Biskra, Algeria, 21 Dec 1942
Ain M'lila, Algeria, 16 Jan 1943
St-Donat, Algeria, 8 Mar 1943
Oudna, Tunisia, 6 Aug 1943
Cerignola, Italy, 10 Dec 1943
Lucera, Italy, 2 Feb 1944-Jul 1945
Sioux Falls AAFld, SD, 28 Jul 1945
Mountain Home AAFld, ID, 17 Aug 1945
Pyote AAFld, TX, 23 Aug-15 Oct 1945
Lockbourne AFB, OH, 1 Dec 1958-1 Jan 1962
Edwards AFB, CA, 10 Mar 1989

ASSIGNMENTS

301 Bombardment Group, 3 Feb 1942-15 Oct 1945
301 Bombardment Wing, 1 Dec 1958-1 Jan 1962
6510 (later, 412) Test Wing, 10 Mar 1989
412 Operations Group, 1 Oct 1993

WEAPON SYSTEMS

B-17, 1942-1945
B-47, 1958-1961
E-47, 1961
B-52, 1989

COMMANDERS

LTC Arnie Bunch, #2001

HONORS

Service Streamers

None

Campaign Streamers

World War II
Antisubmarine, American Theater
Air Offensive, Europe
Egypt-Libya
Tunisia
Sicily
Naples-Foggia
Anzio

Rome-Arno
Normandy
Northern France
Southern France
North Apennines
Rhineland
Central Europe
Po Valley
Air Combat, EAME Theater

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

None

Decorations

Distinguished Unit Citations

Tunisia, 6 Apr 1943

Germany, 25 Feb 1944

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1 Jan 1961–1 Jan 1962

1 Jan 2013-31 Dec 2013

EMBLEM



419 Bombardment Squadron emblem approved, 11 Aug 1961



6519 Test Squadron emblem: Azure, a rondel celeste fimbriated Sable, charged with a bezant of the like. Overall, a saltire coupé Argent superimposed in base by a scorpion Gules; all within a diminished bordure Black. (Approved, 21 Feb 1990)

MOTTO

SILENT STING

OPERATIONS

Antisubmarine patrols off California coast, late May–early Jun 1942.

Combat in ETO and MTO, 5 Sep 1942–26 Apr 1945. Electronic countermeasures, 1958–1961.

Tested advanced cruise missile on the B–1B, B–52, F–15, F–16, and A–6.

The Air Force Flight Test Center has tested bomber aircraft throughout its fifty-year history. This past year the men and women of the 419th Flight Test Squadron, the "Silent Sting," have continued that tradition. The squadron has tackled upgrades to all three of the US Air Force bombers, the B-1 Lancer, the B-2 Spirit and the B-52. The major test programs included upgrading the offensive system and adding the Wind Corrected Munitions Dispense to the B-1's arsenal, clearing the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM) for use on the B-52, testing software improvements and adding JASSM the B-2 weapon inventory. These test programs, and several others, have kept the squadron flying and prepared the USAF to meet its twenty-first century combat requirements.

B-1s will be taking a break from the fight in the Middle East for the first time since 2001, as aircraft assigned to the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing head home this month for aircraft modifications. Within the past six months, aircraft and crews, deployed from Ellsworth AFB, S.D., flew 490 sorties and dropped 4,850 bombs. The group dropped 2,224 bombs in one month, more than any other B-1B unit, topping the previous deployed team's mark of 1,068 bombs, said Capt. Abraham Smith, officer-in-charge of the 379th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. "Hundreds of thousands of manpower hours have been put into the

past six months to keep these aircraft running and it's been a very challenging and an exhausting deployment; however we've found ways to make it enjoyable," Smith said. The B-1B modification, which includes three different improvements to the aircraft's avionics, is one of the largest ever. Lt. Col. Michael Williams, who leads the 419th Flight Test Squadron at Edwards AFB, Calif., told Air Force Magazine last year the modification is so big it "ought to be called the B-1C." 2016

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORIES

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Sources

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

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

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.

Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards Air Force Base, CA, 50th Anniversary. 1951-2001.