

442 LOGISTICS READINESS SQUADRON



MISSION

LINEAGE

442 Motor Vehicle Squadron constituted, 8 Sep 1950
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 1950
Ordered to Active Service, 10 Mar 1951
Inactivated, 12 Mar 1951
Activated in the Reserve, 15 Jun 1952
Redesignated 442 Transportation Squadron, 8 Oct 1956
Ordered to Active Service, 1 Oct 1961
Relieved from Active Duty, 27 Aug 1962
Discontinued, and inactivated, 17 Jan 1963
Redesignated 442 Logistics Readiness Squadron, 4 Sep 2002
Activated in the Reserve, 1 Oct 2002

STATIONS

NAS Olathe, KS, 1 Oct 1950-12 Mar 1951
NAS Olathe, KS, 15 Jun 1952
Grandview (later, Richards-Gebaur) AFB, MO, 3 Apr 1955-17 Jan 1963
Whiteman AFB, MO, 1 Oct 2002

ASSIGNMENTS

442 Maintenance and Supply Group, 1 Oct 1950-12 Mar 1951
440 Maintenance and Supply Group, 15 Jun 1952
442 Air Base Group, 14 Apr 1959-17 Jan 1963

442 Mission Support Group, 1 Oct 2002

COMMANDERS

Maj Ann Yelderman, 2006

Lt Col Allan R. Slavin

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards

1 Mar 2003-28 Feb 2005

1 Mar 2005-28 Feb 2007

EMBLEM



Blazon. On a disc Or, a knight armored affronté Smoke, detailed Sable, his visor and shield Azure, upon the shield four garnishments and an eagle's head erased of the second, eye and detail of the third, surmounted by his sword point to sinister chief, bendwise sinister; all within a narrow Yellow border. Attached above the disc, a Black scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "READY FOR WAR" in Yellow letters. Attached below the disc, a Black scroll edged with a narrow Yellow border and inscribed "442D LOGISTICS READINESS SQ" in Yellow letters.

SIGNIFICANCE: Ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are the Air Force colors. Blue alludes to the sky, the primary theater of Air Force operations. Yellow refers to the sun and the excellence required of Air Force personnel. The knight is symbolic of gallantry and chivalrous duty in support of the warfighter. The warfighter is fully armed and ready to respond worldwide. The shield

charged with an eagle denotes the logistic capabilities of the unit and the readiness planning for war or deployment. The four garnishments upon the shield represent knowledge, support, defense, and logistics. (Approved, 11 Mar 2021)

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

442nd Logistics Readiness Fuels section “Hosers” strive to make their products meet or exceed the same criteria. While the most commonly known product the Hosers handle is jet fuel, they are in the gasoline and diesel fuel business too. Oh, and by the way, they also handle liquid oxygen, more commonly referred to as LOX, and liquid nitrogen too. All of their products are handled with an eye toward providing only the safest, most reliable product grades to their “customers,” and when the lives of anyone flying in a U.S. Air Force plane are concerned, it can be a matter of life or death.

“We are responsible for the quality of all the fuel,” Sergeant Hamby said. “We make sure it’s clean, dry, serviceable fuel. We take care of it from the time it gets on this base until it is put on an aircraft.” JP-8 is the only grade of jet fuel on Whiteman AFB for aircraft. Diesel is provided to local military vehicles, government vehicles and power equipment using that type of fuel. Unleaded gasoline, also known as “Mo-Gas” is used in other vehicles and equipment. Two other products they dispense are liquid oxygen for breathing purposes and also liquid nitrogen. The nitrogen is primarily used for inflating aircraft tires. Regular air out of an air tank is not used because of moisture content and for compression reasons. When aircraft get up to a certain altitude, nitrogen is a much more stable gas to use.

LOX is what the pilots breathe. It’s what the pilots depend on to keep them alive and it’s another very dangerous product. It’s stored at more than minus two hundred degrees and it boils when it hits the air. It’s also an explosion hazard, especially if it comes in contact with oil or grease. Indeed for all of the products delivered by the Hosers there is a great need to maintain quality and safety. “We receive our fuel from a contractor ... an outside agency ... and they add all of the additives that are required to meet military specifications,” Sergeant Hamby said. Once it gets on this base, it’s our job to ensure all of those additives were added in a proper amount.

“We have our lab guys pull a random in-line sample that’s coming off the delivery truck and take the sample back to the lab to run specification tests. For JP-8 we’ll confirm that it has a flashpoint of more than 100 degrees to make it safer for everybody to handle. We’ll run a conductivity inhibitor test. This verifies that the product is less likely to ignite from random static electricity in a normal atmosphere.” Another very important test is for fuel system icing inhibitor.

“A refractometer is the tool we use to determine the content of fuel system icing inhibitor in the fuel,” Tech. Sgt. Jim Bishop, NCOIC of Quality, said. “The inhibitor lowers the freeze point of the small particles of water always found in fuel.” Once an airplane gets to certain altitudes, that water can turn to ice. When that ice starts going through the aircraft’s filters, those ice particles can clog the filter screens, and in turn, an aircraft could be lost along with its pilot. The additive attaches itself to the water and keeps it from freezing. The water goes on through the engine to be burned with the fuel. Sergeant Bishop also scrutinizes the fuel for dirt and other contaminants.

Hamby’s shop is a blend of new blood and proven experience. They range from brand new to more than 18 years of experience. “We’re a 12-person shop and we’re fully staffed right now,”

Sergeant Hamby said, "We were short here last year. We were down to seven individuals but in the last three or four months we got four brand new troops as straight out of tech-school arrivals. We were getting to be kind of an older group here ... techs, masters and seniors ... we needed some young blood in here."

One of those newer troops getting trained on identifying bad LOX is Airman 1st Class Josue Santiago. To transfer LOX from the storage container to the LOX cart, he has to don protective gear including an apron and a Plexiglas face shield. "It a pretty dangerous substance," Airman Santiago said. "If you get any of it on you, it can freeze your skin." Senior Airman Evan Michael agrees about the need for caution. "Liquid oxygen is around negative 297 degrees," Airman Michael said. "Also liquid nitrogen is negative 321 degrees so we are working with some extremely cold substances." It doesn't take much imagination to envision what would happen to any flesh coming into contact with either product. Another critical step when transferring LOX is the smell test.

If liquid oxygen is bad it will have a rotten egg smell. Before it is ever issued they sniff out the tell-tale sign of bad product. "It would be obvious if it was bad and we don't want our pilots going up there with bad oxygen," Sergeant Hamby said. "We also do a test for particles, dirt and discoloration but primarily it's the smell. The 442nd Hosers maintain they have first-class support from their 509th Bomb Wing counterparts. "We couldn't make it without the 509th (Bomb Wing)," Sergeant Hamby said. "They are here every day and they keep us in the loop as far as what's going on in the fuels world." Airman Santiago is still fairly new to the Fuels game, and when asked about what it's like working with the 442nd Hosers, he has a positive answer. "I enjoy working here a lot," he said. "Everyone is just great to work with." Sergeant Hamby knows why. "Fuels is a pretty tight-knit group no matter if you are from here or there," Sergeant Hamby said. "It's a big family that acts more like a small one. Even if you are POL from somewhere else you just take good care of each other." 2006

2008 Airmen of the 442nd Security Forces Squadron and the 442nd Logistics Readiness Squadron recently returned home after a seven-month deployment to Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The contingent made up of 26 442nd SFS and five 442nd LRS Airmen, arrived at Kirkuk last August and September then returned to Whiteman Air Force Base in March, bringing back a wealth of experiences and insights. The troops said they were proud of their work, providing base security and transportation, as they endured temperatures ranging from the 130s to the 20s, including two snow storms. The weather, however, was just one of many memories that left deep impressions on the Airmen. A shot-up Army Humvee being brought back on base.

Mortar and rocket attacks. Meeting Iraqis who worked on base but wouldn't tell anyone off base where they worked for fear of retribution. Sheep herders, "just like on 'The Little Drummer Boy'," according to Tech. Sgt. Craig Gall, 442nd SFS. Oil wells burning all day and all night. Caskets of Army Soldiers being loaded on aircraft for a final trip home. "The thing I'm proudest of is that we all came home safe," said Staff Sgt. Brian Byler, 442nd SFS. "No one got on base who wasn't supposed to," Sergeant Gall said. "We put up a hard target and never got penetrated." The security forces searched roughly 5,000 vehicles trying to enter the base, occasionally finding an assortment of contraband that included alcohol, pornographic material, maps, knives and video cameras.

“Any kind of storage or recording device can’t be brought on base,” Tech. Sgt. Jeff Bousman said. “They’d try to hide cell phones in dash boards sometimes and if we couldn’t get into compartments, we’d just bust them open.” “We had the master key,” Tech. Sgt. Joe Erler said. While the Airmen maintained order on base, off base was another story. “One time we were on the perimeter of the base in a Humvee,” Staff Sgt. Scott Isaacson said. “There’s a road that goes by the base – Clemson – and a car bomb went off. It was supposed to kill an Iraqi general. I saw it explode.

There was a big ball of fire. I was looking in that direction and saw the car hood flying off.” Burning oil wells, belching mountains of smoke, also made for quite a sight. “All day and all night, the oil wells would be burning and you’re breathing that stuff in. There were also open sewage pits, a huge lake of it that would make you throw up if you got within half a mile of it,” Master Sgt. Robert Reeves, SFS, said. “It was dirty over there.” Dealing with the stress of rocket and mortar attacks and other threats, the Airmen said focusing on their jobs helped them keep a healthy level of detachment. “It is what it is,” Sergeant Gall said. “You just press on and do your job. You control what you can control and don’t worry about what you can’t control. A self-preservation mechanism kicks in.

You just let things roll off your back. Keep your attitude and sense of humor, because a situation is what it is.” “When we first got there, a rocket attack was a big deal,” said Staff Sgt. Phillip Werner, SFS. “Then we slowly realized that they couldn’t aim and would often shoot over the base. So when an alarm would sound, you’d put your (protective gear) on and continue watching TV.”

When their tour of duty ended in March, the Airmen said they were reminded of the age-old military maxim “hurry up and wait”, as they began their trip home. Schedule changes, cancelled flights and going through customs multiple times, the troops worked their way from Southwest Asia to Budapest, Hungary, to Shannon, Ireland, to Baltimore-Washington International Airport and, finally, home to Whiteman Air Force Base. “After the holidays, boredom sets in,” said Staff Sergeant Craig Alexander, 442nd LRS. “I have a wife and two teen-agers and we were all very anxious to get out of (Kirkuk). “It was very emotional,” Sergeant Alexander said. “You’re telling yourself on the plane ride that you’ll be happy and smiling, but I was just overwhelmed when I got off the plane. About 20 people showed up from my civilian job and some people from the 442nd. It was a little embarrassing.

My lips started quivering and my eyes were watering.” Sergeant Alexander said his kids were more shocked than anything at the sight of their father. “My kids’ reaction was, ‘Oh, my gosh! Is this the same dad?’ because I’d lost 40 pounds over there.” “We could call home pretty much when we wanted, but being away was rough,” said Senior Airman Rob Long, 442nd LRS. “But you think of everyone who has it a lot worse. We were deployed with the Army and they’re there for 15 months at a time. They may miss two Christmases in a row.”

2008

442nd Logistics Readiness Squadron’s drivers, in partnership with the squadron’s vehicle mechanics, have transported most members of the 442nd Fighter Wing. Whether it’s delivering personnel by bus to a waiting aircraft on the flight line to carry them overseas for deployment, training wing members on operating tractor- trailers, performing scheduled periodic vehicle

maintenance or repairing special purpose vehicles, these Airmen play an important role in the operation of the Wing. Indeed, without them, Wing operations would soon come to a grinding halt literally and figuratively.

Sharing facilities and equipment with their 509th LRS counterparts, in what both units call "Team Trans," the LRS drivers and mechanics often work shoulder-to-shoulder with their active-duty hosts. In some instances, because of wartime taskings, 442nd Airmen are picking up the difference on a daily basis by serving on mandays. Senior Master Sgt. D.J. Collins, 442nd LRS Vehicle Maintenance superintendent, has been running the shop for the past nine years.

The pride he has in his people is evident as he speaks to his mechanics' level of experience. "One guy comes to us with 20-years' experience with the Army and he's doing real well," Sergeant Collins said. "I've got two guys on full-time orders with the 509th, backfilling.

One of them has been on orders for the past three years and the other for the last year and right now (Tech. Sgt. Adam Lambert) runs the (general purpose) shop and (Tech Sgt. Clifton Briggs) runs the body shop. That says a lot for the Reserve and our working relationship here." Sergeant Collins was especially impressed with Sergeant Briggs' ability to adapt to, what for him, was a new situation working in a body shop.

"It was kind of a new thing for him when he started out here," Sergeant Collins said. "He took it and he ran with it and now he's running the whole thing." He's also quick to point out that the two are part of a very talented team. "We've really got a great crew here," he said, "they're the best I've had in a while." Still fairly new to the Air Force, Staff Sgt. Chancy Mudd, a General Purpose mechanic, works on sedans, busses, pickup trucks and other vehicles used for most transportation needs around the base.

She said that despite coming to the shop without previous vehicle maintenance experience she was welcomed as one of the crew. "They are a good group," Sergeant Mudd said of the other mechanics. "Most of them are mechanics (in their civilian jobs), and they do (vehicle maintenance) every day. I can learn more from them than the (Career Development Courses)." The mechanics refer to general purpose vehicles as the "blue fleet" because they are typically painted the Air Force's familiar strata-blue color.

The "green fleet" includes the special purpose vehicles such as material-handling vehicles, including forklifts, and construction vehicles. Other areas of vehicle maintenance focus on fire trucks and refuelers. The 442nd LRS drivers and maintainers are scheduled to deploy to Aviano Air Base, Italy, and Sergeant Mudd, anticipating her first overseas deployment, says she's excited to go with her fellow vehicle-maintenance troops. "I deployed previously to Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., and it was good," she said, "but I'm excited about the chance to get to go somewhere different, especially overseas."

On the vehicle-operations side of the house, LRS drivers hone their skills on those same vehicles the vehicle maintenance troops keep in top running shape. When they first come into operations, drivers typically operate vehicles in the blue fleet but most are eager for the challenge of operating the base's many special purpose vehicles. Although he previously served as a vehicle mechanic in the Army, Staff Sgt. Josh Burr also learned to operate a tow truck there. "I enjoyed driving the tow truck then," Sergeant Burr said. "So when I went to the Air Force recruiter, he told me I had a wide selection of what I could do. I asked which one had the tow truck and he said 'vehicle ops.'"

The choice was easy for him and, since coming to the 442nd, he's also tried his hand at tractor-

trailer operations. He said it has even given him some chances to drive "over the road." When they shut down the Air Force Reserve unit at New Orleans, I drove a tractor-trailer down there twice," he said. He made a similar trip to MacDill AFB, Fla., with some replacement parts for one of the Wing's A-10s. Back at home station, the drivers also train Wing members on operating different vehicles. Their skills as drivers are matched by their skills as instructors as they teach and evaluate student drivers in the safe operation of a wide array of equipment. Deployed to Iraq in 2004, the drivers have faced operating vehicles in a combat zone while providing "in-lieu of" support to the Army.

The six drivers logged several thousand miles driving the length and breadth of Iraq, often coming under fire. A mortar round exploded fifteen feet from Master Sgt. Mitch Reifschneider's vehicle and now retired Tech. Sgt. Brian Quinn's truck was hit by an improvised explosive device wounding him and his passenger. Five LRS drivers recently returned from another deployment to Iraq, this time to Kirkuk Air Base, where they supported base operations there. That story was chronicled in the June Mohawk. "I have an outstanding group of young NCOs and Airmen," said Senior Master Sgt. Chuck Thomas, Vehicle Operations superintendent. "Anything we need and ask of them, there is no hesitation.

They are on it." Tying Vehicle Operations and Vehicle maintenance together is the Wing's Transportation liaison, Mr. Jim Boyle who works closely with Whiteman's host unit, the 509th Bomb Wing in communicating the 442nd's needs. Sergeant Thomas characterized Mr. Boyle's value to both of these shops. "He is absolutely the glue that holds us all together," Sergeant Thomas said. "Jim has such a great personality that he has built a great rapport and relationship with our 509th counterparts."

Updated: 13 Jan 2023

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.