

463 FIELD MAINTENANCE SQUADRON



MISSION

The mission of the squadron is the support and maintenance of C-130 aircraft assigned the wing at Mactan. In addition, it has a secondary mission of being able to continue its primary mission wherever the squadron is deployed.

Field maintenance is broken down into five branches: fabrication, propulsion, communications and electronics, aerospace ground equipment and aero repair. Breaking the branches down into specific shops, the aero repair branch consists of the instrument shop, tire shop, aero repair shop, fuel shop, pneudranlics shop, electric shop and mechanical accessories.

“Keep 'Em Flying” Is the motto of the aero repair shop and to do this means working on the Hercules under the blazing Philippine sun or in drenching rain. This shop is responsible for all major and minor maintenance on landing gear, flight controls and other related airframe structures of the C-130 and must be done on the flight line and not in a shop. It also performs major overhaul on the 463L (aerial delivery system) which plays a big role in the wing's support mission.

The aerospace ground equipment (AGE) branch is made up of three sections--inspection and servicing, repair and pick-up and delivery.

Operating 24-hours a day, the pick-up and delivery section Is responsible for delivering all repaired items to the aircraft no matter what time of day or night

The most complete shop in the complex is the communications and electronics shop. This shop has good test equipment and everything it needs. The C and E shop is responsible for inspecting and repairing, when needed, any and all communications equipment peculiar to the C-130.

Fabrication branch consists of five shops—welding, sheet metal, paint fabric and machine shop. Some of these shops, such as the machine shop, just don't have the equipment they need, points out Colonel Cusworth. For instance, the shop doesn't have lathes or drill presses, "but nevertheless, they're hacking the mission, which I think is a tribute to the people of the shop," the colonel declared.

The propulsion branch has the responsibility of keeping the engines of the Hercules in flying condition.

LINEAGE

463 Maintenance Squadron

Redesignated 463 Field Maintenance Squadron

STATIONS

Memphis Muni Apt, TN

Ardmore AFB, OK

Sewart AFB, TN, 15 Jan 1959

Langley AFB, VA, 1 Jul 1963-23 Nov 1965

Mactan Isle Air Field, Philippines

Clark AB, Philippines, 15 Jul 1969-31 Dec 1971

Dyess AFB, TX, 1 Jun 1973

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Capt Reese W. Clark

Lt Col M. C. Cusworth

Maj Thompson

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

OPERATIONS

Take one squadron activated less than four years ago, add highly trained and skilled technicians and a squadron commander who withdrew his retirement papers in order to make the move with his unit to Mactan and it all adds up to the 463rd Field Maintenance Sq. of the 463rd Troop Carrier Wg.



PUTTING THE FINAL TOUCHES on a C-130B engine that was rebuilt by the 463rd Field Maintenance Sq.'s engine branch is A1C Janies A. Boone. Much of the work the maintenance experts do on the Hercules here is accomplished in one of two weather conditions—under a boiling hot sun or during torrential rainfall. Either way, they get the job done and do it well their commander will tell you.

Take one squadron activated less than four years ago, add highly trained and skilled technicians and a squadron commander who withdrew his retirement papers in order to make the move with his unit to Mactan and it all adds up to the 463rd Field Maintenance Sq. of the 463rd Troop Carrier Wg. Commanded by Lt. Col M. C. Cusworth, the 463rd was activated Oct 1, 1962, at Sewart AFB, Tenn., and moved to Langley AFB, VA, July 1, 1963. From Langley, the unit moved with the 463rd Wing to Mactan, with the first members and equipment arriving in November 1965 and the remainder being in-place February 1966. Briefly stated, the mission of the squadron is the support and maintenance of C-130 aircraft assigned the wing at Mactan.

In addition, it has a secondary mission of being able to continue its primary mission wherever the squadron is deployed. Field maintenance is broken down into five branches: fabrication, propulsion, communications and electronics, aerospace ground equipment and aero repair. Each branch reports directly to the officer-in-charge of maintenance supervision, Maj. James L. Thompson. Major Thompson is responsible for overseeing all maintenance done by the squadron in conjunction with maintenance control which also has a far reaching effect upon the maintenance

complex. The major is proud of his people, although, as he says, “We do get some odd ball jobs, such as one we are working on now. It’s not really ‘odd ball,’ but it doesn’t really fall into the category of maintenance. We’re constructing two floats for the beach recreation area using tip tanks from F-84s with wooden platforms on top. These floats will be anchored off shore for swimmers to dive off, or just lounge around on and sun bathe. “Although we have extremely limited facilities, operating pretty much out of a tool box with no real shop facilities, the caliber of the people in this organization keeps us not only on top of the job but well ahead,” the major commented.

These sentiments were echoed by Colonel Cusworth, who praised his men for performing field maintenance on a comparable basis as units at bases such as Clark. “We’re generating as many flying hours, more actually, with more limited facilities, than units much better situated than we are, and I think this is a tribute to our people here,” the colonel emphasized. Breaking the branches down into specific shops, the aero repair branch consists of the instrument shop, tire shop, aero repair shop, fuel shop, pneudraulics shop, electric shop and mechanical accessories. “Keep ‘Em Flying” is the motto of the aero repair shop and to do this means working on the Hercules under the blazing Philippine sun or in drenching rain. This shop is responsible for all major and minor maintenance on landing gear, flight controls and other related airframe structures of the C-130 and must be done on the flight line and not in a shop.

It also performs major overhaul on the 463L (aerial delivery system) which plays a big role in the wing’s support mission. During recent months, according to TSgt. Ted Picotte, shop NCOIC, his crew has been performing major jobs such as main landing gear ball screw changes. “These changes are tedious and time consuming jobs, but this shop has managed to get the job done in a minimum of time and with zero defects,” the sergeant proudly states. “All this is possible through the supervision of our chief and the willingness of the crews to work and their pride in the accomplishment of the job they perform,” he continued. The aerospace ground equipment (AGE) branch is made up of three sections—inspection and servicing, repair and pick-up and delivery. Operating 24-hours a day, the pick-up and delivery section is responsible for delivering all repaired items to the aircraft no matter what time of day or night.

According to Colonel Cusworth, the field maintenance facilities are limited due to lack of shop equipment which is normally present at a main operating base. Working out of tool boxes, the most complete shop in the complex is the communications and electronics shop. This shop has good test equipment and everything it needs. Under the direction of 1st Lt. Charles D. Wallace, assisted by his NCOIC, SMSgt. Ralph Pratt, the C and E shop is responsible for inspecting and repairing, when needed, any and all communications equipment peculiar to the C-130. Fabrication branch consists of five shops—welding, sheet. metal, paint, fabric and machine shop. Some of these shops, such as the machine shop, just don’t have the equipment they need, points out Colonel Cusworth.

For instance, the shop doesn’t have lathes or drill presses, “but nevertheless, they’re hacking the mission, which I think is a tribute to the people of the shop,” the colonel declared. Directed by CWO-4 Willis B. Greer, the propulsion branch has the responsibility of keeping the engines of the Hercules in flying condition. Maintenance on engines is performed in-place at other bases, but the men in Mr. Greer’s shop also build-up engines, something that must be done here. Two things, away from the working mission of the squadron, of which Colonel Cusworth is especially proud, are the esprit de corps and morale of his men and the OJT program carried out within his organization.

Conducted by MSgt. James R. Doss, the squadron OJT program comes in for high praise from the commander.

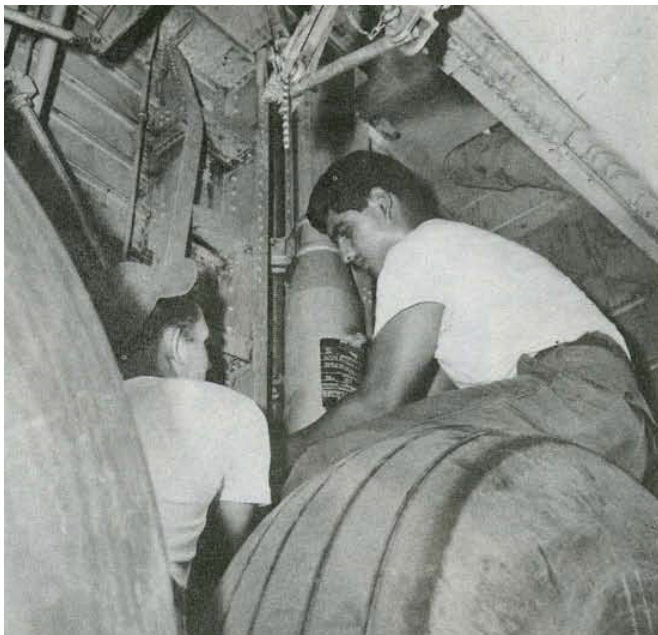
The program is conducted under directives from the wing, but Sergeant Doss counsels, aids and oversees the program in the squadron. Especially pleasing to Colonel Cusworth is that one of his men, A2C Lloyd A. McGowan, received the highest percentile on his five-level test of any man yet tested on Mactan. A squadron with pride in its work, high morale, esprit de corps and a feeling of doing an outstanding job with limited facilities and equipment sums up the 463rd Field Maintenance Sq. And what can you expect from a squadron whose commander would voluntarily withdraw retirement papers to follow his men to an oversea duty assignment?



WORKING on aircraft radio equipment, A1C Robert A. Selby receives guidance from MSgt. Clarence Herr of the communications and electronics branch of the squadron.



AERO SHOP REPAIRS are performed by this trio of maintenance experts. They are, left to right, SSgt. Charles M. Wixted, A1C Ronald B. Aheimer and A2C Charles Guthrie. Each of the squadron's shops have a staff of specialists to keep the various functions of the C-130 in working order.



TIGHT PLACES are the work areas for some members of the unit, such as A2C Frank Martin, left, and A2C Robert Mercado, who replace a part on a Hercules.



A conference is held in the squadron orderly room as Master Sergeant James Wright, First Sergeant and Lt Col M. C. Cusworth, commander go over duty roster.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNIT HISTORIES

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Sources

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

Unit yearbook. *Ardmore AFB, OK*. Army and Navy Publishing Co., Inc. 1955.