

114th CONSOLIDATED AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

LINEAGE

STATIONS

Sioux Falls, SD

ASSIGNMENTS

COMMANDERS

Maj Leelan K. Larsen, #1986

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

EMBLEM SIGNIFICANCE

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Permission flight planning did not exist for all practical purposes. A pilot would simply show up and check with maintenance to determine whether an aircraft was available. Crew chiefs, on the other hand, would preflight an aircraft then wait in operations for a pilot to appear!"

Maintenance personnel were responsible for all facets of aircraft maintenance with little training and no specialization. New members completed basic training on site attending one weekly meeting for six weeks. Individuals were then assigned to that area of aircraft maintenance in need of assistance without consideration of individual ability or specialized requirements. Maintenance due to oil leaks and coolant leaks of the water cooled radial engine

on the P-51 were most common. Maintenance repair was regular with engine changes occurring frequently."

The post Korea era brought with it transition to the jet age and an increasing realization that specialized maintenance was needed due to the complexities of the hydraulic systems, flight controls, and turbine engines.

The T-33 introduced the unit to jets with the F-94 and F-94B bringing their active transition and the additional complexity of an aircraft radar system and afterburner engine. In addition to jet aircraft maintenance, the nearly forty P-51 s which were stored on base were run-up every two weeks to lubricate their engines."

Before conversion to the F-89J was completed maintenance personnel were informed to suspend all maintenance activity as a change had been directed. Introduction of the Delta Dagger, the F-102, in 1960 was the beginning of what the unit is about today. Fulfilling an air defense mission four aircraft and crews were on constant alert status with a five minute airborne response time demanded regardless of weather conditions. When alerted crew chiefs would follow the pilot up the ladder and fire the starter and run the throttle to expedite the launch as the pilot strapped in."

Crew chiefs and mechanics performed exceptionally well being responsible for all aircraft maintenance including the electrical, fabric, hydraulics, munitions, and engine. Veterans from World War II and draftees during the Korean conflict were the source of the maintenance force. Their performance was due largely to the dedication and personal pride taken in their work. Harry Tunge in referring to crew chiefs stated "... they took care of their airplanes ..." They also displayed a unique possessiveness to an assigned aircraft with personal attention given it and an apparent attitude that "... if you ride somebody else's horse you're in trouble ..."

Additional base facilities such as the calibration hangar were also erected during this time to support the more sophisticated aircraft with the electronic, avionic, and radar capability. Additional manpower was provided as well as expanded aircraft specialties beyond mechanics developed such as munitions load teams which completed combat turns and quick turns. Inspections similar to those conducted today were also implemented to measure the operational capability of the unit.

Arrival of the first F-100 in 1970 brought not only another aircraft but a change in mission from air defense to air-ground support. Additional fuel drop tanks were needed for the F-100 due to its fuel consumption. The additional weight combined with runway heat made regular daytime launches more difficult and consequently shifted many sorties to the cooler evenings. Air to air refueling also became a requirement during the F-100 era."

"During the early seventies the consolidated maintenance organization was emphasized in response to the increasing complexity and sophistication of aircraft. Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance (CAM) was created with all aircraft related maintenance activity organizationally integrated rather than being simply collocated."

The deactivation of the 114th Materiel Squadron and the forming of the 114th Consolidated

Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (CAMRON) caused more changes for the unit. The mechanics were reassigned from the 175th Fighter Squadron to CAMRON leaving the fighter squadron a tactical squadron only.

Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 7 Sep 2010

Updated:

Sources