

## 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

#### **NICKNAME**

#### **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

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Air Force Lineage and Honors

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#### 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.

Unit History. *Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards Air Force Base, CA, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. 1951-2001.*