

## 393<sup>rd</sup> BOMB SQUADRON



### MISSION

### LINEAGE

393<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Squadron, Very Heavy constituted, 28 Feb 1944

Activated, 11 Mar 1944

Redesignated 393<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 2 Jul 1948

Redesignated 393<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Squadron, Heavy, 2 Apr 1966

Redesignated 393<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Squadron, Medium, 1 Dec 1969

Inactivated, 30 Sep 1990

Redesignated 393<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron, 12 Mar 1993

Activated, 27 Aug 1993

### STATIONS

Dalhart AAFld, TX, 11 Mar 1944

Fairmont AAFld, NE, 12 Mar 1944

Wendover Field, UT, 14 Sep 1944–26 Apr 1945

North Field, Tinian, 30 May–17 Oct 1945

Roswell AAFld (later, Walker AFB), NM, 6 Nov 1945

Pease AFB, NH, 1 Jul 1958–30 Sep 1990

Whiteman AFB, MO, 27 Aug 1993

### DEPLOYED STATIONS

Kwajalein, 1 May–Jul 1946

Mildenhall RAF, England, 4 Jun–2 Sep 1952

Andersen AFB, Guam, 18 Jun–18 Sep 1953 and 10 Jul–8 Oct 1954

RAF Upper Heyford, England, 26 Jan–30 Apr 1956

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

504<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, 11 Mar 1944  
Second Air Force, 25 Nov 1944  
509<sup>th</sup> Composite (later, 509<sup>th</sup> Bombardment) Group, 17 Dec 1944  
509<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing, 16 Jun 1952–30 Sep 1990  
509<sup>th</sup> Operations Group, 27 Aug 1993

## **ATTACHMENTS**

509<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Wing, 17 Nov 1947–14 Sep 1948 and 1 Feb 1951–15 Jun 1952  
(probably attached to Twentieth Air Force, 18 Jun–18 Sep 1953)

## **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

B-17, 1944  
B-29, 1944–1952  
B-50, 1949–1955  
B-47, 1955–1965  
B-52, 1966–1969  
B-52D  
B-52C  
FB-111A  
FB-111, 1970–1990  
B-2

## **COMMANDERS**

LTC Thomas J. Classen 28 Apr 44  
Col Paul W. Tibbets, Jr. 8 Oct 44  
LTC Thomas J. Classen 17 Dec 44  
LTC Charles W. Sweeney 3 May 45  
LTC Virgil M. Cloyd 1 Jul 46  
LTC Phillip Y. Williams 1 Jun 48  
LTC Robert B. Irwin 3 Sep 48  
LTC Phillip Y. Williams 15 Oct 48  
LTC J.I. Hopkins 3 Jan 49  
LTC Phillip Y. Williams 20 Jan 49  
LTC Jack D. Nole 3 May 49  
LTC Phillip Y. Williams 13 Jun 49  
LTC William S. Martensen 30 Jun 49  
LTC Wilbur B. Beezley 31 Oct 51  
LTC John O. McFalls, Jr. 24 Feb 52  
LTC Wilbur B. Beezley 3 Mar 52  
LTC Howard E. Jackson 1 Jul 52  
LTC John O. McFalls, Jr. 9 Sep 52  
LTC Glen R. Hempleman 31 Oct 52  
LTC John O. McFalls, Jr. 31 Dec 52

LTC Raymond F. Johnson 30 Sep 53  
LTC Frederic N. Millen 31 Dec 53  
LTC Glenn F. Stephens 31 Aug 55  
LTC Milton J. Jones 1 Jul 56  
LTC Lindsey M. Silvester 22 Apr 58  
LTC Russell A. Downey 18 Aug 59  
LTC Clyde L. Grow 16 Dec 60  
LTC Robert E. Johnson 25 Jul 61  
LTC Paul A. Wiles 1 Aug 63  
LTC John F. Mauck 30 Apr 65  
LTC John C. Mead, Jr. 20 Mar 66  
LTC John D. Mash 12 May 68  
LTC Miles G. Murphy 15 May 69  
LTC Robert G. Voelker 11 Dec 72  
LTC Robert Krieder 1 Jun 73  
LTC Donald K. Nims 1 Jul 74  
LTC John P. Hopper 1 Apr 76  
Lt Col Charles J. Searock, Jr. 11 Feb 77  
LTC Kenneth B. Keskinen 15 Dec 77  
LTC Paul M. Matthews 20 Jul 79  
LTC Charles R. Waterman 26 Nov 80  
LTC Jerrold P. Allen 18 Jan 81  
LTC Richard N. Goddard 3 Sep 82  
LTC John W. Mentz 21 Feb 84  
LTC David M. Jameson, Jr. 19 Aug 85  
LTC Fay J. Pledger, Jr. 25 Oct 85  
LTC Jerry A. Gossner 3 Jun 87  
LTC Bernard B. Burklund, Jr 19 Aug 88-3 Aug 90  
not manned: 3 Aug-30 Sep 90 & Inactivated on 30 Sep 90)  
LTC Richard Y. Newton III 27 Aug 93  
LTC Jonathon D. George 2 Aug 95  
LTC Gregory A. Biscone 5 Aug 96  
LTC Eric N. Single 16 Jun 98  
LTC Eric E. Theisen 23 Jun 00  
LTC Gavin L. Ketchen 10 Jun 02  
LTC Steven L. Basham 02 Jun 04  
LTC Paul W. Tibbets IV 13 Apr 06  
LTC John M. Vitacca 3 Oct 07

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

World War II

American Theater

### **Campaigns Streamers**

World War II  
Air Offensive, Japan  
Eastern Mandates  
Western Pacific

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

None

### **Decorations**

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor  
15 Mar-26 Apr 03  
1 Jun 03-31 May 05

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1 Apr-1 Oct 68  
1 Jul 77-30 Jun 79  
1 Jul 81-30 Jun 82  
1 Jul 82-30 Jun 84  
1 Jul 88-30 Jun 90  
1 Jun 95-31 May 97  
1 Jun 97-31 May 99  
1 Jun 99-31 May 01

Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm  
5 Mar-14 Oct 1969

### **EMBLEM**



On a Green disc edged Air Force Yellow, a mushroom- shaped atomic cloud issuing from a blast, White; all surmounted by a snarling tiger's head in profile, proper (Air Force Yellow with Black stripes, White teeth, Red tongue and eyeball, Green iris and Black pupil); on the blast below the atomic cloud and tiger's head, an arrow of the second pointing to dexter, all outlines and

details Black throughout.

On a disc Argent, a circle Vert fimbriated Or in fess point charged with a mushroom shaped atomic cloud issuant from a blast in base Argent, detailed Sable, charged with an arrow in base pointing to dexter Or surmounted by a tiger's head Proper, eyed of the first, armed of the second and langued Gules, all within a narrow border Black. Attached below the disc, a Yellow scroll edged with a narrow Black border and inscribed "393D BOMB SQ" in Black 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 snarling tiger indicates that the squadron fulfills its mission with determination and fearlessness. The blast and atomic cloud signify the squadron's history as a member of the 509<sup>th</sup> Composite Group, the first US Air Force unit with atomic capability. The arrow is symbolic of insignia used by the unit during World War II. It means "Follow Me." (Approved, 15 Jul 1957; replaced emblem approved, 19 Dec 1944. Revised unit emblem approved 12 Jul 2007)

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPRATIONS**

The proud history of this unit began with its constitute on as the 393d Bombardment Squadron (BMS) on February 28, 1944 by the Army Air Forces (AAF). The AAF then activated the 393 BMS on March 11, 1944 and assigned it to the 504th Bombardment Group at Dalhart Army Air Field (AAFld), Texas.

Originally, the 393 BMS was equipped with B-17s, fate intervened when Colonel Paul W. Tibbets, Jr., selected the newly formed unit to participate in a very special mission.

Colonel Tibbets took formal command of the 393d on October 8, 1944, and on December 17, 1944, following creation of the 509th Composite Group (CG) by the Army Air Forces, became overall commander.

The 393rd Bomb Squadron, commanded by Lt Col. Thomas J. Classen, had completed two-thirds of its training in the 504th Bomb Group (VH) at Fairmont AAF, and was starting to prepare for movement overseas, when word came that we were headed for Wendover AAF in Utah instead of the Marianas. Rumors were plentiful, but this time no one knew the answers. Then about the middle of September 1994, by troop train, private cars, and a few by plane, the Squadron personnel arrived in the middle of the salt flats. Nebraska or the Pacific never looked like this! Several days were spent in getting oriented and finding out how often we could get to Salt Lake City. And then came the news. At a meeting of all members of the Squadron, Col. Paul W. Tibbets was introduced to us. We were told about a highly secret project on which we were to be engaged; if successful, the war could be concluded a year earlier than the most optimistic expected. Absolute security was drummed into us from the very start, no mention ,of any

special program was ever to be made to unauthorized personnel, not even our families. It looked as if the 393<sup>rd</sup> was in for something different. In the meantime, all departments were getting re-organized and in shape to resume operations. The area selected for the Squadron was about the best on the field, compact and close to all available facilities, in spite of the distance from the main gate. In one of the "E" buildings on the line, Operations, Communications, Personal Equipment, and Intelligence were situated; about 200 yards farther up the line Armament, Ordnance and Radar located themselves; and in hangar number 6, Engineering and Tech Supply were set up. The Orderly Room, directly in front of the Operations building, was flanked on one side by our Dispensary and on the other by Supply. Our Mess was conveniently in the center of the barracks area, although that didn't shorten some mighty long chow lines.

Before getting down to work again, and primarily because there wasn't much to keep us occupied, all personnel were given leaves and furloughs. Then began the long wait for new planes, something to fill up the great open spaces on the ramp. By the end of October we had two B-29s, not many it is true, but at least a start towards the ultimate fifteen. Because Wendover had been a fighter field, the facilities, equipment, and supplies available were not suitable for the very heavy bombers. Fortunately the new planes were slow in arriving, and there was usually plenty of time to order and procure all necessary items for maintenance and upkeep. In addition to these shortages there were also shortages of critical personnel, without whom the Squadron would be severely handicapped; but by the end of November this situation was well in hand. Flying commenced again in the last two weeks of October. Emphasis was on bombing and navigation missions and, what was new at the time, a 3000 mile over-water navigation hop. At this time there were absolutely no ground-school facilities on the base, and therefore it was the responsibility of the Squadron to train its own men for combat. All sections were conducting classes designed to further train their men in their special duties. This was true not only of the sections; all the combat crews were also trained by their own members or other Squadron personnel. Under the guidance of Lt Col. Classen, all Second Air Force and Army Air Forces flying and ground technical requirements were completed by the end of December. The 393rd could rightly be called a self-trained organization.

The Squadron was re-organized to suit the requirements of this special project. The biggest change was the slashing of our crews from twenty to fifteen in number. Then the planes themselves had to be modified, with resulting changes in the number of combat personnel for each plane. It seemed as if every time we turned around there was another change; at times this secret project could be irritating. This was especially true when restricted areas were fenced in, and a special pass was required for admittance; it always seemed like a long walk back to the barracks when you forgot the red pass.

December 17th saw the 509th Group activated. From our arrival at Wendover we had watched the building up of the parts of this new Group, and our gradual assimilation into it. In one way it was good to be part of a Group again, even if we were only a part, instead of the major factor, as up to now. For some time we had been hearing rumors of a trip to Cuba to perform some highly specialized training. This rumor, for a change, was correct. The first part of January saw

ten of our B-29s take off for Batista Field, and warmer climes. Cuba was pleasant this time of the year, the weather was ideal for flying, and also sun-bathing, and Havana was a great place for relaxation. It was amazing how a few trips into Havana improved the linguistic ability of the fellows. We couldn't quite understand the forlorn attitude of the permanent personnel stationed on the island; it looked like heaven after Wendover. Many a wife or girlfriend still has the alligator shoes or purse and perfume everyone rushed to buy at the PX or in the city -- after a few rum and cokes at Sloppy Joe's.

It wasn't just a vacation down there. Everyone was kept busy maintaining and flying the planes on bombing and navigation missions. Batista Field wasn't well suited to B-29s, particularly as many other units were training there in January, but it was considerably better than Wendover in September. The Squadron was run just as it would be in combat, with simulated combat missions to Berinquen on Puerto Rico, Bermuda, the Virgin Islands, and up to Norfolk. We seemed to have plenty of spare time, but accomplished a very intensive schedule. Base personnel complimented the 393rd on their excellent training record, and their behavior; perhaps it didn't mean too much, but it was pleasant to think someone else thought the Squadron was one of the best.

During this time, from September through January, the Squadron was being highly trained in every aspect including, besides the crews, Engineering, Armament, Radar, Communications, and all the other complementing sections. A good deal of this was due to the cooperative attitude within the 393rd. We had been training together so long and solved our own difficulties so often that it was impossible not to be well prepared. But there was one fly in the ointment: as beneficial as all this preparation undoubtedly was, it became trying and irksome. The work of the outfit couldn't be done in the States -- the feeling was predominant that it was time for us to get started on this secret project, overseas. Quite often one crew, or several, along with other personnel, would disappear for a week or longer to a destination simply described as "I" or "A" or "Y". And when they returned they had that look on their faces that said, "We know, but won't talk." Later we found out they were being oriented to the new bomb, and aiding in the project itself. And every so often there would be another security talk, with dire prospects dangled before us of our fate if we talked when we should have listened. It proved one thing: the project hadn't been called off; maybe we'd still get overseas before this war was over.

The next few months after our return to the States from Cuba were spent in supply and administrative processing, including an armful of shots, in preparation for overseas. There were frequent trips to Omaha for new planes, and shakedown missions on these planes to put them in shape for combat. Then the last part of April we went down to Wendover depot to see off our ground echelon -- finally we were started. In the early part of May, Lt. Col. Classen was transferred to Group as Deputy Commander while Major Charles W. Sweeney, CO of the 320th, assumed command of the 393rd. Shortly thereafter the advance air echelon departed in C-54s, and in June and July we saw the combat planes of the Group and Squadron leave Wendover for Tinian.

Tinian was hot and humid, but about the best of the Mariana islands from which to operate. There was a good deal of moving about until we were finally settled in the 18th Seabee area, with our tents, canvas cots, rationed beer, candy and cigarettes, home-made shorts, and good food.

After a week's ground school at 313th Wing, our crews were ready to fly, and so began more training missions. It looked as if this war was all training and no combat. Briefings were held in the theater, and soon the crews had behind them a series of orientation and practice bombing missions on Rota and Guguan. This was followed by several strikes on Truk and Marcus, where flak was first encountered, but no combat credit was given because these, too, were training missions.

And then, on the 20th of July, ten of our crews flew their first mission to the Japanese Empire. This, like the other non-atomic missions, was a rush job. Concentrated effort was required to have all planes in top mechanical condition, load the *Pumpkin* bombs, inspect radar and communication facilities, and accomplish all the other essential but little-publicized work, before the aircraft were ready to take off. Finally the briefings were completed, early breakfast was over, and the first B-29 was moving down the runway, through the humid night, with a bomb bay full of death for the enemy. The first targets were at Otsu, Taira, Fukushima, Nagaoka, Toyama, and Tokyo. Mt. Fuji looked just like the pictures in our geography books. Weather was decidedly poor for visual bombing; radar was used and most bomb impacts were unobserved. In the week following, the list of targets grew, and after the fifth mission, these cities were acquainted at first hand with the 393rd Bomb Squadron: Tsuruga, Niihama, Kobe, Yokkaichi, Shimada, Nagoya, Hamamatsu, Yaizu, Osaka, Uwajima, Kashiwazaki, Hitachi, Ube, Wakayama, Maizuru, Koriyama, and Tokushima. The Squadron was doing its part in the air offensive against the Empire by some excellent precision bombing from high altitude, smashing some of the most important of the remaining Japanese industrial facilities.

On all the missions flown by the Squadron, no more than six enemy planes were sighted, and these were not inclined to attack. AA fire was meager generally, but occasionally the Jap gunners threw up enough flak to make the crews uncomfortable. However, only one of our planes was damaged, and no one qualified -- or desired to -- for the Purple Heart. The atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki provided spectacular and welcome reading for the folks back home. But only the men in the Squadron really understood the long preparation and training and back-breaking effort required to put those bombs on target. This was the sole purpose of the Squadron, the purpose of the crew members, the mess personnel, engineering, radar, communications, intelligence, operations, personal equipment, supply, the medics, armament and administrative sections. Every man was necessary, every man had an important part to play. On each mission, after the atomic bomber had taken off from Tinian, there began the long "sweating out" process for the report of "bomb away" and its safe return. Finally, when the flight was completed, the Squadron was able to relax beside the radio and listen to the superlatives emanating from back in the States. Everyone seemed satisfied; the job we had trained for was done.



The Japanese seemed loath to accept unconditional surrender immediately, so, as an added incentive, seven of our B-29s bombed Koromo and Nagoya on August 14th. These bombs were probably the last ones dropped by any of the 20th Air Force B-29s on Japan. The war was over.

Participated in atomic bomb tests on Bikini Atoll, Jul 1946, while deployed on Kwajalein.

Rotated aircraft and crews to Andersen AFB, Guam, in support of Southeast Asia Operations, 1966–1969.

Not operational, Nov 1969–Jun 1971.

3/4/2005 B-2 Spirit bombers have deployed here for the first time to support Pacific Command's security efforts in the Western Pacific. More than 270 Airmen of the 393rd Expeditionary Bomb Squadron deployed from the 509th Bomb Wing at Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., currently the only B-2 unit in the Air Force. They replaced the 93rd EBS from Barksdale AFB, La. The 393rd EBS is the first B-2 squadron to deploy here supporting Pacific Command's continuous bomber presence in the Asia-Pacific region. The bombers enhance regional security and the U.S. commitment to the area, Pacific Air Forces officials said. This rotation provides training to integrate bombers into PACAF's joint and coalition exercises from a forward-deployed location, they said.

"We feel that we have some great training opportunities out here," said Col. Curtiss Petrek, 36th Expeditionary Operations Group commander. "One of the things we do a lot with the B-2 is fly missions that tend to be a bit longer than the average sorties that most of the aircraft fly. We'll get an opportunity to fly those types of missions and to really practice some of the command-and-control communication links." Besides training missions, the Whiteman bombers need to acclimate themselves to the differences of flying around here, Colonel Petrek said.

"The distances are so much further apart here, and if you are going to fly a mission, you need good command and control. It's important that everyone knows the systems you have, how they are to be used, and that they are used properly," he said. Although the 393rd EBS is the first B-2 squadron to deploy to Andersen, the pathway has been cleared for them by three previous B-52 Stratofortress squadrons, Colonel Petrek said. "The transition here has been pretty easy primarily because the prior B-52 unit deployed here worked with us well in advance to make our transition go (smoothly)," he said. The bomber squadron consists of a variety of maintainers to keep the B-2 up and flying.

"A large majority of us are maintenance specialists," the commander said. "We have quite a few systems that require unique specialties so we have quite a few Airmen with some very specialized skills." The B-2 is distinguished from other bombers and fighters by its stealth capabilities and high aerodynamic efficiency, he said. "Probably one of the key things that differentiate us from other aircraft is the low-observable characteristics of the airplane," the colonel said. "(They give) the combatant commander an airplane to use in instances that other aircraft can't be used. This comes at some price, however, because it takes quite a bit of work to maintain those (characteristics)." The B-2 commander said he expects the Airmen to make the most of their time here and to complete their mission as they have been trained to do. "One of the things we put a lot of focus on is to be able to put the airplane over a target when

we are told to do it," Colonel Petrek said. "We practice and train to do those things (at Whiteman and now here) so if we are ever called to do it, we can do it and do it well."

The squadron remained at North Field until October 17, 1945 when the 509th returned to the United States and proceeded to their new home, Roswell AAFld (later Walker AFB), New Mexico. Because of its expertise with the atomic bombs, the unit became the core organization of the newly created Strategic Air Command (SAC), on March 21, 1946. The squadron remained at Roswell until the 509th CG was directed to Kwajalein, Marshall Islands in 1946, for Operation Crossroads, an atomic explosion test. Although the squadron did not drop the bomb, it waited in reserve as a back-up to its sister squadron, the 715 BMS. After the squadron returned to Walker AFB, it continued to fly and train in B-29s until 1952 when the 393d welcomed a new aircraft, the B-50 and was reassigned directly to the 509th Bombardment Wing. In 1955, the unit pioneered a new chapter when it began receiving SAC's first all-jet bomber, the B-47.

In 1958, the 393 BMS, along with the 509th Bombardment Wing, moved with personnel and equipment to Pease AFB, New Hampshire. Seven years later, in 1965, SAC announced the squadron would be inactivated following phase-out of the B-47s from the Air Force. However, fate intervened when SAC decided to keep both the 393d and the 509th active and replace the aging B-47s with B-52s. The squadron officially received its first B-52 on March 23, 1966.

In November 1966, several crews and aircraft from the 393d deployed to Andersen AFB, Guam. While there, the squadron's representatives participated in Vietnam ARC LIGHT operations. An urgent need for the bombers in the war prompted SAC to deploy all 393 BMS crews and aircraft to Andersen again in April 1968. During the six-month stay, the squadron participated in many bombing missions. A year later, SAC issued another call and once more the 393d aircraft and personnel went to Southeast Asia. At this time, SAC announced the 393d had been selected as the command's first FB-111A squadron. In preparation for arrival of the medium bomber, the squadron released its last B-52 on November 19, 1969. During flight line ceremonies on December 16, 1970, the 393d received its first FB-111 at Pease AFB.

For the next several years, 393 BMS crews and aircraft pioneered tactics for the FB-111A deployment of the Short Range Attack Missile. In the mid-1980s, the squadron helped the 509 BMW win virtually every major bomber award in Eighth Air Force and SAC. These achievements included winning SAC's Bombing/Navigation Competition for three consecutive years (1981-1983).

In the late 1980s, when SAC announced the retirement of the FB-111s from its inventory, the future of the 509th and its squadrons was once more cast in doubt.

on November 30, 1988, SAC determined that the 509 BMW would move to Whiteman AFB, Missouri, to become the Air Force's first B-2 Stealth Bomber unit. The command further directed the 393 BMS to become the first operational B-2 squadron in the Air Force.

In preparation for this distinction, SAC inactivated the 393 BMS on September 30, 1990. On March 12, 1993, the Air Force renamed the squadron the 393d Bomb Squadron, and on August 27, 1993, activated it at Whiteman AFB as part of the 509th Bomb Wing Operations Group. Over the next several months, the 393d prepared for another rendezvous with history when, on December 17, 1993, the first B-2 Advanced Technology Bomber, nicknamed the "Spirit of Missouri," arrived at Whiteman.

Over the next several years, as more B-2 aircraft were added to Air Force inventory, the 393d played an important role in bringing the bomber on line. That concept became a reality on January 1, 1997 when the Air Force declared the 509th (and the 393d) ready to assume a conventional bombing role. Four months later, on April 1, 1997, the squadron's efforts again paid dividends when the Air Force decreed Initial Operational Capability for the 509th and the B-2. Within two years, members of the 393d again proved their mettle as the unit tasted combat for the first time in almost 30 years. On March 24, 1999, the 393d Tigers played a key role in taking the B-2 into its first combat engagement when two of the aircraft attacked targets as part of Operation ALLIED FREEDOM in the former Republic of Yugoslavia. The 393d BS participated in and supported the attacks until the end of hostilities in May 1999.

After the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the 393d Tigers were called upon to fight in the War on Terrorism as a part of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. In that Operation, Tigers flew the longest combat sortie to date, 44.3 hours, a world record, and kicked down the door for follow-on forces as a decisive weapon in attaining the Combined Forces Commanders campaign objectives.

The following year, on February 1, 2002, the 393d Tigers were the first unit to deploy two B-2s to Nellis AFB, Nevada to participate in Red Flag 02-02, an exercise designed to increase combat readiness, capability and survivability of participating units by providing realistic training in a combined air ground and electronic threat environment. Returning to Red Flag on February 3, 2006, the 393d BS was integrated with coalition forces from Australia and the United Kingdom with assets from all branches of service.

The combat readiness of the 393d BS was again tested on March 21, 2003, when the Tigers led the way at the start of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, flying an unprecedented 6-ship of B-2s the first night, and sustained operations for the duration of the air campaign from a forward location in Southwest Asia and Whiteman AFB, Missouri. This marked the first combat deployment of the B-2, a historic event which accelerated the decision to declare the weapon system Fully Operational Capable in December 2003.

Since the incorporation of the B-2 into Air and Space Expeditionary Force (AEF) normal bomber rotation, the 393d BS has been deployed to Andersen AFB, Guam several times. The February 2005 mission fulfilled an AEF tasking for the first time and provided a formidable bomber presence for U.S. Pacific Command. During a two-month deployment to Andersen which began on April 27, 2006, the 393d participated in 24-hour long duration sorties in support of exercise Polar Lightning, integrating for the first time with the F-22 and executing the AF's Global Strike Task Force concept. Additionally, the Tigers joined the Navy and Marines in Valiant Shield 2006 with over 300 aircraft and 28 naval vessels, the largest exercise since the Vietnam War.

On 15 May 2002, at 1215 L (1715Zulu), the left main landing gear on a B-2A, S/N 82-1069, collapsed in Dock 7 on Whiteman AFB, MO. The B-2A, assigned to the 393 Bomb Squadron, 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB, was undergoing non-routine diagnostic maintenance on the left main landing gear to eliminate false computer indications of the gear's position. Five maintenance personnel were under the aircraft when it collapsed and were injured. Three persons from the 509th Maintenance Squadron received minor cuts and bruises, one from the 393d Bomb Squadron received a head injury, and one from the 509th Operations Group received head and neck injuries. There was no injury or property damage to civilians on the ground. Aircraft damage from the mishap included the left main landing gear, the left weapons bay and main gear doors, the left wing and its control surfaces, and a yet to be determined amount of internal structural damage. Shortly before the gear collapsed, maintenance personnel were removing gear indication. The primary cause of the mishap was improper maintenance practices not sanctioned in the aircraft technical orders and maintenance job guides. The Board determined that a main landing gear safety pin was improperly removed by one of the maintenance personnel, followed by the same individual pushing up the lock-link assembly into an unsafe retracted condition. Without hydraulic power, the aircraft collapsed under its own weight. Material failure and design flaws were ruled out as possible contributing factors.

23 February 2008– A Northrop-Grumman B-2A Spirit, 89-0127, 'WM', "Spirit of Kansas", of the 393rd Bomb Squadron, 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman AFB, Missouri, crashed shortly after takeoff from Andersen Air Force Base in Guam. Both pilots ejected from the plane before it crashed, the aircraft was destroyed. Moisture in flight sensors caused steep pitch-up and stall to the left.

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Air Force Order of Battle

Created: 5 Sep 2010

Updated:

#### 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.