



309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group



309 AMARG

Supporting the Warfighter 24/7...

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Army HET's "maneuvers" to benefit both services under joint agreement

Just days after appearing as a featured attraction in last month's Veteran's Day Parade, an impressively-sized heavy equipment transport system or HETS, designed to rapidly deploy Army tanks onto the battlefield, arrived at 309 AMARG for special duty.

Massive enough to be considered a man-made island, this 231,400 lb. tractor truck and trailer combination is owned by the Army Reserve's 257th Transportation Company, Detachment 1, in Tucson.

Now on loan to AMARG, the Army's HETS will be utilized to transport heavy construction equipment and heavy, oversized loads of aerospace equipment that regular flatbed trailers can't safely accommodate.

"AMARG is embracing a number of alternative energy solutions, requiring us to modernize much of our infrastructure," said Maj. Andy Middione, an Air Force IMA reservist assigned to AMARG's 309th Support Squadron.

"The HETS will quickly move our bulldozers and excavation equipment to various locations throughout the facility, allowing AMARG to conserve fuel and minimize equipment wear and tear," he said.



U.S. Army Reservist Sergeant First Class Michael Fooks (left), assigned to the 257th Transportation Company, Detachment 1, Tucson, is welcomed to 309 AMARG by Major Andy Middione (middle) and Mr. Ivan Taitingfong, 578th Storage and Disposal Squadron (right). Army Reservist Private First Class Dailon Vesely, vehicle operator.

Spearheading efforts to acquire the HETS, Major Middione stated the easily-negotiated agreement between the Army Reserves and AMARG allows the Group exclusive and any-time use of this load accommodating, all-wheel steering vehicle. In addition, the Army agrees to provide all required maintenance and drivers.

However, 309 AMARG is fortunate enough to already employ a fully qualified Army HETS driver.

"I've operated vehicles similar to this one since 1995 and I've been deployed twice with the HETS," said Mr. Ivan Taitingfong, a 578th Storage and Disposal Squadron employee who greeted the Army Reserve vehicle delivery team.

Assigned to the Army Reserve's 257th Transportation Company, Detachment 1, Sergeant First Class Taitingfong expects to be the HET vehicle's sole driver as long as he is performing his civil servant duties here, and is comfortable knowing that soldiers from his unit will fill any void during Taitingfong's reserve duty or deployment absences.

Mr. Taitingfong, the 70-ton capacity HETS and a forklift team recently relocated C-5 aircraft crash recovery kits, previously deemed non-transportable due to flatbed weight restrictions, and the team is scheduled to undertake the movement

of Peacekeeper missile tooling and components prior to year end.

"This is a win-win situation," said Major Middione. "AMARG has a need and the Army has the solution. We're afforded the use of their HETS to assist us in aerospace asset relocation and cutting heavy equipment transportation costs; and, at the same time, we offer an opportunity for Army Reserve drivers and maintainers to remain proficient and ready to serve our nation," he said.



“Stellar leadership” earns dedicated Air Force reservist an MSM

Col. Patrick Kumashiro, commander of the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group, presents a meritorious service medal to Maj. Shirley Mercier, an Air Force reservist on active duty, currently assigned as Director of the 576th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Squadron.



Recognizing Major Mercier's contributions to AMARG for the last four years, the award citation describes her impressive and varied accomplishments as Deputy Squadron Director of the 578th Storage and Disposal Squadron; Deputy Chief of the Aircraft Storage and Disposal Division; and, Deputy Squadron Director of the 576th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Squadron.

“Thank you for your stellar leadership,” said Colonel Kumashiro, pinning her with a medal symbolizing Major Mercier's remarkable ability to organize and manage resources for AMARG's C-130 programmed depot maintenance overflow work, A-10 service life extension program, and both the F-4 and F-16 regeneration programs. Together, these programs represent \$53 million dollars of production.

“You're a pillar of stability and I appreciate the level of support you've shown since I took command,” Colonel Kumashiro said.

Given an opportunity to comment on her achievement, Major Mercier humbly said that although her current position is “extremely challenging,” she appreciates the Command's trust and the opportunity they've given her to play such an important role at AMARG in direct support of the warfighter.

“Thank you for recognizing the contributions that reservists make,” said Major Mercier. “They do great things for the Air Force and we appreciate that you recognize our efforts here.”

SEASON'S GREETINGS
from 309 AMARG

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Modified B-1B Lancer brings crew chief family together

During the last three years, sixty-six supersonic B-1B bombers passed through 309 AMARG and Davis-Monthan Air Force Base for a specific modification to render the platform no longer capable of accepting nuclear weapons. At the same time, the bombers were made capable of carrying an advanced targeting pod, enhancing their conventional weapons prowess during combat operations.

Recently, Capt. Shawn “Scraps” Kidd, a 9th Bomb Squadron B-1 navigator and Tucson native, arrived here to retrieve one of the last operational bombers converted at AMARG and fly it back to Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, where he is currently stationed.

Serving the Air Force for more than 16 years, Captain Kidd’s career began as a B-1 crew chief, tracing his father’s footsteps as a former F-4 Thunderbird crew chief, as well as brother Bobby’s, a retired Air Guard crew chief.

“After officer training and navigator school, I wanted

to fly the B-1 because of the experience I had as a crew chief on the aircraft,” said Captain Kidd.

“The B-1 is a great platform with a very unique mission, and the only strategic bomber currently

employed in combat ops with a targeting pod. We have a close air support role now and working with the joint terminal attack controllers (JTACs) on the ground is awesome,” Captain Kidd explained.



Mr. John Kidd (middle), an AMARG quality assurance specialist, shares a moment with son, Capt. Shawn Kidd, a B-1B navigator and electronics weapons officer, both former Air Force crew chiefs. B-1B flight crew from Dyess Air Force Base, Texas shown from left, Capt. Trent Brower, Maj. Steve Graham, Capt. Shawn Kidd, and Maj. Ian MacGregor.

Joining his son on the flight line, Mr. John Kidd, a quality assurance specialist here at AMARG stood proudly for a photograph with Shawn and flight crew before a pre-flight inspection.

“His mother and I are exceptionally proud of him,” said his father. “He strayed a bit from his dad’s career path, but it’s great to see he’s now flying the plane he took care of as a crew chief,” he continued with a smile.

According to Mr. Kidd, his son is also the B-1’s EWO or electronic warfare officer, a highly trained navigator specializing in the defense of the aircraft.

Despite numerous achievements throughout his Air Force career, Captain Kidd said his proudest moment is when his father pinned second lieutenant bars on his uniform during his officer commissioning ceremony.

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