

# 131 CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON



## MISSION

## LINEAGE

131 Installations Squadron, Feb 1951  
131 Civil Engineer Squadron

## STATIONS

St Louis, MO  
Whiteman AFB, MO

## ASSIGNMENTS

131 Mission Support Group

## COMMANDERS

Cpt Robert J. Gochenback, #1954  
LTC Jack F. Shelby, #1973

## HONORS

**Service Streamers**

**Campaign Streamers**

**Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

**Decorations**

## EMBLEM

## **MOTTO**

## **NICKNAME**

## **OPERATIONS**

In February 1951, the Missouri Air National Guard underwent extensive redesignation, under AGMo General Order No. 7. Additionally the order called for the activation of seven new units. Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron of the 131 Composite Wing was redesignated Hq and Hq Squadron, 131 Fighter Wing and the 131 Composite Group was redesignated the 131 Fighter Group. The 110th was also reorganized, with support personnel going to the squadrons activated by General Order No. 7, the 131 Maintenance Squadron, the 131 Supply Group, the 131 Motor Vehicle Squadron, the 131 Communications Squadron, the 131 Food Service Squadron, the 131 Air Police Squadron and the 131 Installations Squadron. The 131 Medical Group was also activated.

The 131 Civil Engineering Squadron (CES) first received federal recognition as the 131 Civil Engineering Flight on October 11, 1969. From that time until receiving recognition as a squadron on July 1, 1985, the 131 CES distinguished itself by supporting the Lambert St. Louis operating site with Civil Engineering support, including building and grounds maintenance, flight hangar and ramp support, and numerous unit moves and building utilities improvements.

The civil engineering organization existed long before its first federal recognition. It was part of "Base Facilities" under which were a part of the 131 Air Base Group. This organization moved into the old hangars abandoned by the U.S. Navy at Lambert in Guard units, support for the community at large in 1958. From that point until the present, the 131 Civil Engineers have had a tradition of providing for the operational and support facilities needs and fire protection for the St. Louis Air Guard.

The first call-up of the engineering unit coincided with the Berlin Airlift crisis when the 131 Tactical Fighter Wing was activated and sent to Toul-Rosieres, France as the 131st Tactical Fighter Wing. From the first sudden call-up, the 131 Civil Engineers became known worldwide for their rapid response to critical situations and their "Ready Now" squadron patch designation.

In a more recent call-up, the 131 Civil Engineers responded to the Great Flood of 1993 with critical skill teams and mobile equipment within only hours of the first notification.

The 131 Civil Engineers have had a variety of mission statements throughout the years, all of which included engineering support for the local Missouri Air National Guard units, support for the community at large in times of natural disaster, and the preparation and support of worldwide operations for U.S. military forces.

Another major milestone for the engineers occurred in June 1972 when the base was granted a 50-year lease of the land north of the airport road, thus enabling a modernization and expansion of the entire base. Moving forward to 1998, the 131 Civil Engineers are already planning for another base relocation and modernization due to the expansion of Lambert Airfield. If any tradition exists within civil engineering, it is one of history repeating itself. For this very reason, the 131 Civil Engineers maintain a dual posture, that of maintaining the local base for operations, and preparing to operate worldwide in a wide variety of possible deployment scenarios.

Towards this end, the squadron has deployed for training since 1980 to practice air base preparations in the Azores, Israel, Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, England, and Germany. Elements of the unit have also deployed within the U.S. to almost every state of the Union including Alaska. These deployments were used to sharpen individual tradesmen skills and provide valuable services such as construction and renovation of buildings, airfield communications, and roadways.

The unit has also supported the local community throughout the years by assisting scouting organizations, improvement of Blackburn park in Webster Groves, and assignment of personnel supporting Counter-drug operations.

Commanders of the Civil Engineers based at Jefferson Barracks and at Lambert included LtCol's Verono Keck, Jeff Felder, Emil Tejkowski, Robert Tenholder, and Sam Sivewright. Since December 1995, the squadron has been under the command of Lt. Col. William Bath.