

187 FIGHTER WING



MISSION

LINEAGE

187 Tactical Reconnaissance Group established and allotted to the National Guard, 11 Sep 1962
Activated and extended federal recognition, 15 Oct 1962
Redesignated 187 Tactical Fighter Group, 1 Jul 1983
Redesignated 187 Fighter Group, 15 Mar 1992
Redesignated 187 Fighter Wing, 15 Oct 1995

STATIONS

Dannelly Field, Montgomery, AL

ASSIGNMENTS

Alabama Air National Guard

WEAPON SYSTEMS

Mission Aircraft

RF-4

F-4

F-16

Support Aircraft

C-130

COMMANDERS

Col Samuel W. Black, Oct 2011

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Since 1990, the 187 has undertaken an ambitious and successful regimen of participation in many Total Force deployments. These deployments have taken the men and women of the 187 to exercises in South Korea, Norway, Guam, Hawaii, Alaska, and many other stateside locations. In 1995, the unit deployed for a 30-day rotation to Incirlik Air Base, Turkey for Operation Provide Comfort II. The following year, the Wing deployed to Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait for Operation Southern Watch. Then in 1997, the Wing returned to Incirlik for Operation Northern Watch. These operations were to enforce the respective northern and southern no-fly zones over Iraq.

Immediately following the 11 Sep 2001 attacks, the 187 was called into action. Within hours of the attacks the 187 had jets in the air flying Combat Air Patrol missions over the largest cities in the southeastern United States. The unit sustained this effort for Operation Noble Eagle for one year following the events of 11 Sep.

The 187 was again called to active duty in Jan 2003 until Apr 2003 as part of the largest military

mobilization since the 1991 Gulf War. This marked the largest unit activation in the units 50 year history with over 500 personnel being deployed along with aircraft and equipment for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 187, as an integral part of the Total Force, deployed to an undisclosed Middle Eastern location as the lead unit, commanding a mixture of Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, Active Air Force and British Air Force units comprising the 410th Air Expeditionary Wing.

In Sep 2004 the unit again deployed over 300 personnel with aircraft and equipment to Al Udeid, Qatar for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

More than 140 members of Air National Guard units in Alabama, California, Iowa, Massachusetts, and Washington arrived at Mirgorod AB, Ukraine, for Safe Skies 2011, a US European Command-sponsored air sovereignty exercise with the Ukrainian and Polish air forces. This exchange "is important to US interests, in that it helps promote regional stability" and "increases our collective capacity to address common security challenges," said LTC Robert Swertfager, Safe Skies 2011 project officer and an F-16 pilot with the California ANG's 144th Fighter Wing in Fresno. A total of seven F-16s from the Alabama Air Guard's 187 Fighter Wing in Montgomery and the Iowa Air Guard's 132nd Fighter Wing in Des Moines touched down at Mirgorod on 16 Jul, following the arrival of advanced teams of airmen. The F-16s are among the first American fighters to visit the former Soviet-bloc country, according to Air Guard officials. They will fly will engagements with Ukrainian Su-27s and Mig-29s and Polish F-16s. 2011

2011 28 July –A General Dynamics F-16C Block 30H Fighting Falcon, 87–296, of the 187 Fighter Wing, Alabama Air National Guard, flying out of Montgomery Air National Guard Base, overruns the runway at the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh air show at Wittman Regional Airport, Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The nose gear collapsed, the nose radome broke and the air-frame skidded to a stop. Pilot was uninjured.

3/13/2014 - DANNELLY FIELD AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ala., -- This spring, Alabama Air National Guard members from the 187 Fighter Wing, based at Montgomery Regional Airport, will deploy to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The wing's F-16C+ Fighting Falcon aircraft - the "Red Tails" - will provide armed over-watch and close-air-support for ground units in their area of responsibility. Fighter jets and Airmen from the Air National Guard (ANG) have deployed regularly for the last 20 years as part of the U. S. Air Force's Air Expeditionary Forces. However, this type of mobilization is the first for a traditional Air National Guard unit since Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. Past deployments for Air National Guard (ANG) units have been of shorter duration, and, with a few exceptions, covered by a combination of equipment and personnel from two or three ANG units. Cooperation and burden-sharing among several units reduces the time away from home and work for any given Airman and minimizes what is often a financial burden on both the volunteer Airman's family and employer. The concept has worked well for the last 20 years, providing inexpensive, yet

highly trained Air National Guardsmen to combatant commanders on a voluntary basis. However, recent budget crises have challenged the U.S. Air Force, active and reserve components alike, to find ways to maintain high levels of readiness while continuing to meet its overseas rotational commitments. The expectation is that mobilizing and deploying a single unit for a longer period of time rather than using several units to cover an expeditionary commitment will result in higher sustained readiness levels for more units. Any time a unit moves from garrison to a deployed location, training must be curtailed while equipment is shipped, Airmen are transported, and aircraft are flown to the new base. Since the mission is ongoing, the unit being relieved must remain in place, overlapping with the new unit. Minimizing these inefficiencies frees up time and resources for home-station units to continue training for the full spectrum of combat missions. "That we're an ANG unit will be transparent to anyone in theater. For the leadership in place when we show up, we could be an active duty squadron. Other than the hardware that we are bringing in, we'll be the same," said Lt. Col. Ryan Barker, 100th Fighter Squadron commander. The 100th Fighter Squadron is part of the 187 Fighter Wing and was one of the original Tuskegee Airmen squadrons of World War II fame. "We've come a long way from back when some guard units were seen as flying clubs, and there were 30-day deployments with a swap out at the two week point. Obviously, this is one where we're doing a full-length deployment just like the active duty component." This mobilization of the "Red Tails" has the wing's Airmen excited to once again serve their country in missions for which they have intensively trained. The deployment order came with much less advance notice than usual, but all positions were filled within 48 hours. Preparing any unit for deployment presents challenges, but for an Air National Guard unit, efficient time management is paramount. When an active duty unit is given six months notice for deployment, they have six months to prepare. In a sense, for an Air National Guard unit, that is equal to a 12 day notice. While the unit's full-time members continue their work, they are less than 40 percent of an ANG unit's manpower. The remaining sixty-plus percent are drill-status Guardsmen who train one weekend per month and two weeks per year. In spite of the time crunch, the 187 Fighter Wing has completed all training and medical requirements ahead of schedule. The process of preparing the wing's jets for deployment has been a great success story for the "Red Tails" and the Air National Guard. Over the last several months, the 187 Fighter Wing's aircraft have been off-station, several at a time, undergoing systems upgrades. The new equipment includes a high-resolution display and a helmet-mounted targeting sight which will allow pilots to deliver weapons in minimum time with great accuracy - an important capability to reduce friendly losses and civilian casualties. The wing's maintenance personnel have worked extended shifts to get the jets in top shape for deployment, while continuing to support the necessary training flights for the pilots. With necessary preparations complete, the wing is anticipating another successful deployment. This will be the ninth combat deployment for the 187 Fighter Wing since the end of Operation Desert Storm. While the deployment is a first for many of the wing's Airmen, others have served multiple times. There is never a shortage of Alabama Airmen willing to serve. The state has a high rate of National Guard members per capita. "It's a privilege to serve with such a great group of Americans," said Col. Samuel Black, commander of the 187 Fighter Wing.

1/31/2014 - BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La., -- More than 145 Airmen and eight F-16C Fighting Falcon aircraft from the 187 Fighter Wing, Dannelly Field Air National Guard Base, Ala., traveled

to Barksdale Air Force Base, La., to participate in Green Flag East, Jan.12-28. Green Flag is a simulated combat operation held between Barksdale Air Force Base and Fort Polk, La., to employ close air support and hone communication between air and ground forces. "Green Flag gives us the opportunity to work directly with the Army which we don't get a lot of practice with at home," said Lt. Col. Clarence Borowski, 187 Operations Group commander. "We get to do some very involved scenarios with both large and small forces and do more than we do at home." The importance of joint training was not lost on members of the 187 FW. "The Army is our customer down range, so it is important that we work with these guys and make sure we understand the same terminology, understand their tactics and they understand our tactics," said Borowski. "We also get the opportunity to understand their limitations and they understand our limitations. This is how we become more effective." Lt. Col. Casey Cooley, 187 Maintenance Group deputy commander, said exercises like GFE give Airmen the opportunity to train how they fight. "The last place you want pilots and maintainers to see a scenario for the first time is down range," Cooley said. "Here, they are able to experience simulated scenarios to prepare them for what they may encounter during their tour. This exercise does a really good job preparing our guys." Though the 187 FW has many full-time Airmen, GFE provides an opportunity for traditional guardsmen to get hands-on training. "The training that we get out of this exercise we can't get at home," said Chief Master Sgt. Johnny Tadlock, 187 MXG Quality Assurance Superintendent. "The young people we bring out here get a lot of extra training, like loading and downloading live ammunition; that gives them the real-world feeling of being on a deployment." Not only does this exercise provide training for the unit, it also provides an opportunity to enhance teamwork and mission effectiveness. "You have to work together without a doubt," said Tadlock. "This exercise brings all shops together. It helps for everybody to chip in." Though the 187 FW has many full time Airmen, GFE provides an opportunity for traditional guardsmen to get hands-on training. "That's the way we fight, almost never will there be a time that the Air Force will engage independently; it will almost always be with a joint partner, total force partner or international partner." For Airman 1st Class Paul Froom, 187 Fuel Systems, this exercise provided a learning experience on how to respond to jets in a time-crunch situation. "We actually had to send them off to a mission in a timely fashion and ensured they got where they needed to be on time." Borowski's goal for this exercise was to get new pilots more comfortable with the new technology on the jet, and provide Airmen with more experience and practice before going down range. "Everything is a learning curve," Borowski said. "When you go out and do something for the first time you are going to be slower, you're not going to be as accurate as you would be if you have done it a dozen times, so the more you practice the better you get." Captain Scott Eshelman stated that however, we did not get an official score, training at GFE for our deployment preparation was very successful.

USAF Unit Histories
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Sources

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