

# 4392 CONSOLIDATED AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON



## MISSION

## LINEAGE

4392 Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

## STATIONS

Vandenberg AFB, CA, 21 Jul 1961-30 May 1975

## ASSIGNMENTS

## COMMANDERS

## HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

## EMBLEM

## MOTTO

## OPERATIONS

With a designation so long that it has to be abbreviated, the 4392nd Consolidated Aircraft

Maintenance Squadron is conveniently referred to as "CAMS." The squadron, commanded by Lt. Col. Orville J. Howells, is assigned to the 4392nd Aerospace Support Group with a mission unique among Strategic Air Command aircraft maintenance units. Despite its title, CAMS is not concerned only with aircraft, but rather is equally involved with missiles. It provides shop repair of missile components and equipment as well as missile site repair support through its welding, sheet metal and machine shop facilities. It also has the meticulous task of calibrating the precision torque measuring tools used in the missile operations of the SAC units, military tenants and civilian contractors located at Vandenberg.

At present, the squadron maintains seven models of five different types of aircraft, and even these activities are related to the aerospace mission. CAMS provides its helicopters for unique photo missions and range surveillance, and its long range C-97 transports for down range trips to remote island bases in the Pacific. It also maintains specially instrumented aircraft used for the airborne checkout of AFWTR's aerospace ground equipment. On top of all this, the 4392<sup>nd</sup> CAMS provides transient services and maintenance for the hordes of military aircraft which are attracted to Vandenberg by the missile activity. Since over 4,000 aircraft of all types visit the base each year, CAMS is a very busy cog in our vital aerospace operations.

Like all the other squadrons assigned to the 4392nd ASG, the 4392nd CAMS can claim continuous service at Vandenberg far beyond the actual life of the unit. When these squadrons were first organized, they absorbed the men, equipment and missions of comparable Vandenberg units being discontinued on the same day after many years on base. Unfortunately, like all the others, the 4392nd CAMS could not also absorb the history, lineage or emblem of its predecessor it had to start its own from scratch. And it all started on July 21, 1961, when the squadron was designated and organized at Vandenberg taking the place of the 392nd CAMS which was inactivated simultaneously. The personnel and equipment rendered surplus by this latter action were then used to man and equip the 4392nd. On the same day, the 4392<sup>nd</sup> Aerospace Support Wing (now the Group) was also organized with the CAMS as one of its subordinate units. Ever since then, the 4392nd CAMS has remained assigned to the 4392nd ASG under 1STRAD (SAC).

Over the years, CAMS has handled its diversified mission very well. Despite its busy schedule, it has found time to design, develop and prototype an oil system modification which cured a chronic problem in the UH1F helicopters and was adopted by USAF for fleet wide use. It also devised an aircraft phased inspection concept which drastically reduced scheduled downtime by over 40 per cent, and SAC has adopted the system for all its C-97, C-131 and T-29 aircraft. At present, CAMS has flown almost 17,000 accident – free flying hours since October 1966 and has maintained a perfect safety record since that time with no accidents of any type.

THE 4392<sup>ND</sup> CAMS EMBLEM After all the reference to the association of General Vandenberg to the four stars found on many of the local unit emblems, the sudden appearance of five stars on the CAMS emblem may cause some confusion because the general never reached that plateau. In this case, the dark blue stars refer to nothing more than the five branches which comprise the squadron: Field Maintenance; Organizational Maintenance; Quality Control; Maintenance Control and Training Control. This is a rather recent emblem having been authorized on April 19,

1965, before the freeze was placed on emblems for MAJCON squadrons. Again we find the standard Air Force colors, golden yellow and ultramarine blue. The dark and light blue background depicts the sky in diurnal representation symbolizing the unit's night and day operations. The silver globe outlined with the dark blue grid indicates the worldwide support rendered by the squadron in these operations. The standard aerospace symbol a silver dart — is used to denote the aircraft and missiles serviced by the unit, and the dark blue book represents the manuals from-which the unit operates. The golden yellow flash with the five branch stars symbolizes “the swiftness with which support is given.” The emblem differs from most squadron insignia since it does not have the conventional scroll at the bottom. Instead, a golden yellow ring outlined in brown encircles the emblem disc. This unusual arrangement allows the unit to display both its motto — “Knowledge, Skill, Quality” — and its numerical designation without having to add a second scroll on top of the emblem as most other units with mottos would have to do.

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USAF Unit Histories  
Created: 26 Mar 2022  
Updated:

Sources  
Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.