

183d Wing News



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Illinois Air National Guard F-16 jet engine repair facility expands to A-10s

by Lt. Col. Laura Fogerty
183 Air Combat Operations Squadron Public Affairs

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois – The Illinois Air National Guard’s 183d Maintenance Squadron, 183d Wing, based at Abraham Lincoln Capital Airport, is now maintaining engines for the famed A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft.

The A-10, often nicknamed the “Warthog” for its toughness, is loved by ground troops for the effective close air support it provides to those fighting the enemy on the ground. Thanks to the work of the 183d Wing Airmen, there will be more “Warthogs” available to troops in combat.

The A-10’s engine, the General Electric TF34, began arriving in Springfield early this year. The first TF34s are expected to roll out of dock maintenance at the Central Repair Facility in July.

Senior Master Sgt. Roger Smith, Aerospace Propulsion Superintendent at the facility, said the U.S. Air Force was looking at multiple options for intermediate repair of the A-10’s engine and the 183d Maintenance Squadron was asked to step-up. “We never say no,” said Smith.

Smith put together an initial training cadre of 11 aerospace propulsion specialists and all were sent to U.S. Air Force advanced technical training for the TF34.

The training cadre is led by Master Sgt. Wade Boyd, Tech. Sgt. Zach Patterson, and Staff Sgt. Jason McMullan. This 3-person team is establishing additional programs required to support the TF34, including tooling, technical orders and in-house training programs.

Boyd explained the A-10 is all mechanical, with no electronic adjustments, and requires many specialized tools. The unit recently dispatched Patterson

to the Naval Air Depot at Jacksonville, Fla., in pursuit of those specialized tools. Despite these minor challenges, the program has had a successful launch.

A big part of that success is owed to the TF34 experts at the 122nd Maintenance Group, Ft. Wayne,



Illinois Air National Guard aerospace propulsion specialists are pictured in front of an A-10 Thunderbolt II engine, the General Electric TF34, at the Central Repair Facility in Springfield, Ill., Jun. 21, 2017. The unit began repairing TF34s in January of this year. The first engines will roll out of dock maintenance in July. The team becomes the first group qualified on two engines (the F-16 Fighting Falcon engine is also repaired here). Pictured back row (l – r): Staff Sgt. Luke Seymour, Tech. Sgt. Ben Snow, Tech. Sgt. Zack Patterson, Tech. Sgt. Dave Estep, Staff Sgt. Andrew Stroupe, Master Sgt. Wade Boyd, Staff Sgt. Jason McMullan, Front row (l-r): Master Sgt. Shane Watkins, Staff Sgt. Blake Vorreyer, Staff Sgt. Eric Ogden. Not pictured: Staff Sgt. Doug Millburg (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Lt. Col. Laura Fogerty)

Ind. The Indiana Air National Guard unit performs ‘backshop’ maintenance on the TF34 supporting the 122nd Fighter Wing.

Boyd, Patterson and McMullan packed up the first engine and headed to the 122nd Maintenance

Group for initial certification on all tasks required in the break down and reassembly of the engine. “Fort Wayne was phenomenal,” said Patterson.

Lt. Col. James Bentley, the commander of the 183d Maintenance Squadron, added his praise for the Ft. Wayne unit, the training cadre volunteers, and the high standards that all of the 183d Maintenance Squadron members bring to jet engine repair, every day.

“We perform at the highest level possible because that’s our culture in maintenance. We ensure everything we touch is above standard. Providing the finest jet engines to the nation is a matter of personal pride for our maintainers,” Bentley said.

The unit will gradually increase production of the TF34 and look to the next challenge: the General Electric F118 engine used in another famous aircraft, the U-2 Dragon Lady. Those engines are projected to be added to maintenance schedules in January 2018.

Work continues on the General Electric F110 engine used in the F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft. That program has been highly successful, achieving an average production rate of 25 days per engine.

The 183 Maintenance Squadron is uniquely qualified for Jet Engine Intermediate Maintenance with over 60 percent of the maintainers averaging 18 years of repair experience.

The CRF is a state of the art repair complex which includes multiple maintenance and storage bays, as well as T-9 and T-10 test cells designed to test-fire the engines in a mounted position.

