

**355<sup>th</sup> Aerial Spray Branch**  
**Loadmasters/Spray System Operators**



In the photos are Loadmasters/Spray System Operators undergoing a refresher training on operating the A/A45Y Aerial Spray System.

(Pictured in this short story is TSgt. Bob Bien (Instructing), MSgt. John Philson, TSgt. Jerry Miller, TSgt. Bob Kneisley, TSgt. Duncan Barth, TSgt. Glen Carey, TSgt. Bob Wanner, TSgt. Chip Walters, and one other member we couldn't recall his name. TSgt. Jeff Price is also missing from this photo.)

NOTE: We know this picture was taken prior to 1983 because pictured is TSgt. Robert Kneisley, who passed-on December 23, 1986. Approximately 3 years prior to this, he became an Air Force Recruiter. We will never forget what a great guy he was and how he performed all his jobs with Pride and Professionalism.

This photo was taken during a UTA Drill weekend. I believe LTC. George Rowcliffe, Chief of Aerial Spray, notified his spray team that the upcoming Hurricane season was predicted to be an active one, and perhaps one of the most active in many years. He instructed his team to begin reviewing all spray procedures and physically check all spray systems for proper working condition.

We had the capability to launch as many as eight Spray Aircraft, should the storms leave behind such a disaster that it would become a public health emergency.

You are probably wondering "what role would Aerial Spray play in these disasters". Normally associated with hurricanes and tropical storms comes a lot of rain, flooding and widespread destruction. Then flies and mosquitoes' seem to emerge, causing a lot of sickness and even deaths. This is the kind of job aerial spray can quickly and effectively handle.

The need to utilize our DOD Aerial Spray aircraft for these disasters, on a large scale, never materialized. All the states were able to respond quickly, and had adequate funds to hire civilian contractors to eliminate the disease threats, working with all city, county and state organizations.

The 355<sup>th</sup> Aerial Spray Unit did continue to provide aerial abatement of mosquitoes, on DOD and military installation in the same area the storms hit. We were never called in during the 1985 Hurricane Season, , which was one of the worst on record, for any massive aerial spray effort. However, we continuously prepared for any large scale national or international insect borne disease crises.

Story by Bob Bien and Jeff Price, November 29, 2015