

## FEATURE

## 373 TRS provides realistic training for maintainers

Story and photos by  
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437 AW Public Affairs

The use of aircraft simulators isn't limited to those who fly. Maintainers and Aerospace Ground Equipment troops also get their feel for the real thing when they attend courses at the 373<sup>rd</sup> Training Squadron, Det. 5.

"We train aircraft maintainers and AGE mechanics on aircraft and all aircraft related maintenance and support equipment using the largest maintenance training devices in the USAF," said Master Sgt. Lee Woody, 373 TRS, Det. 5 superintendent.

The devices used are replicas of real aircraft parts, to include the cockpit, engines, landing gear and wing.

"The devices add a sense of realism that's never been achieved in the past," Lee said.

Since the detachment isn't large enough to store all of the simulated parts at full scale. Some parts like the wing are built to about 25% of the actual size and other parts like the flight deck are built to 100% of actual size.

"On some of the simulated parts, there's no need to have every plug and wire copied," Lee said. "The parts are accurately reproduced and equipped with enough pieces to give trainees a sense of how the real parts will operate."

The C-17 curriculum is written so trainees will spend less time in the classroom and more time doing hands-on training on the simulator or aircraft.

A majority of the classes being taught are transition courses, Lee said. With the recent loss of the C-141, quite a few of the maintainers must now learn about the C-17.

"Most of our students already

know the basics about aircraft," Lee said. "We just need to teach them about the C-17 specifically."

Courses offered through the 373 TS, Det. 5 last anywhere from three days to two months.

"We have a three-day familiarization course that a lot of commanders and superintendents attend," Woody said. "It's for those who need general information about the makeup of the aircraft, but don't need in-depth system knowledge."

Students who attend the courses come from Charleston, Altus AFB, Okla., and McChord AFB, Wash., and the classes are made up of both military members and civilian employees.

"We graduate an average of 800 students a year," said Woody, "and our washout rate is extremely low."

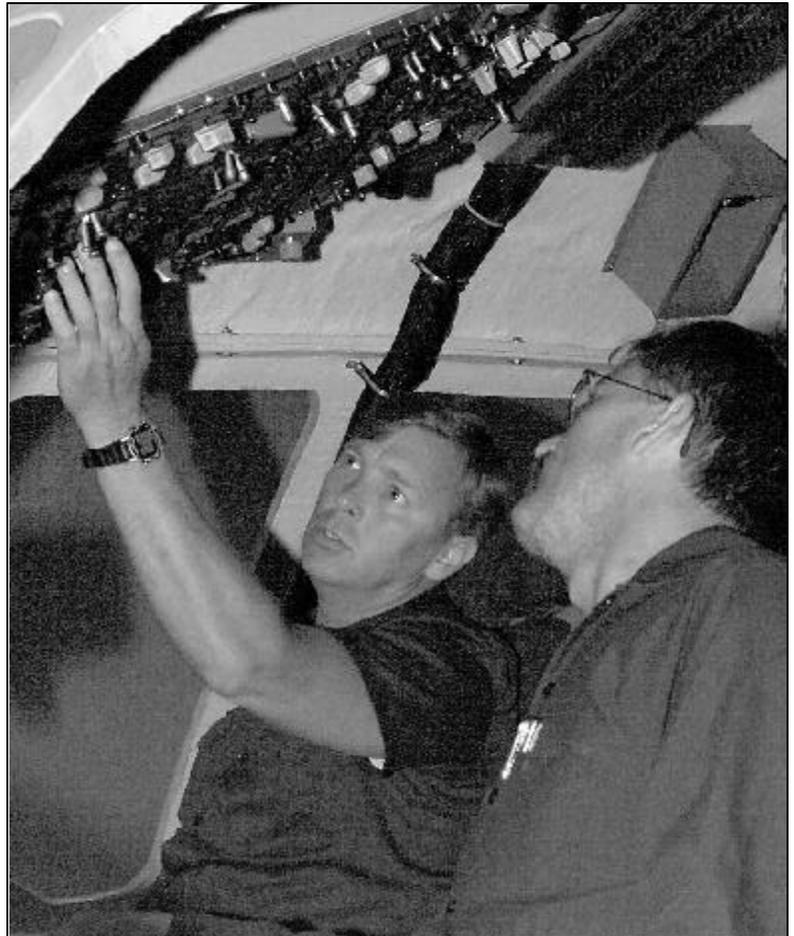
He said that can be attributed to the fact that instructors tend to encourage students in what needs to be done and not simply direct them to do it.

"We offer a low stress learning environment," Woody said. "It makes it easier for students to learn if there isn't a whole lot of pressure to do it themselves and do it right the first time, just as long as they do it right in the end."

The unit also offers the only C-17 crew chief Air Force Specialty Code awarding course for new airmen.

"Trainees will go to Sheppard (AFB, Texas) for their initial training, then they'll come here for a five week course before they receive their three-level upgrade," Lee said.

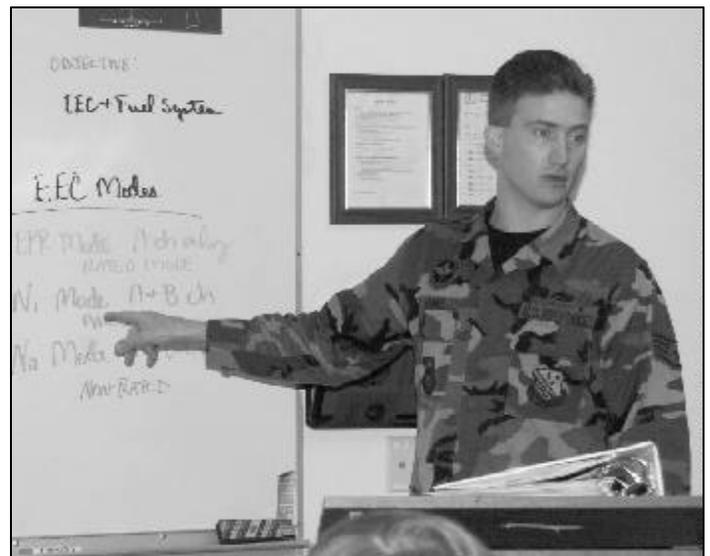
Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Chris Dutch, 437<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Squadron, an attendee of the seven-day AGE refresher course, said he enjoys being at the detachment. "They offer great classes here and I always learn a lot."



Ralph Call (left) and Curt Phipps, civilians from Altus AFB, Okla. and former C-141 maintainers, learn start-up procedures in the C-17 cockpit simulator.



Senior Airman William Knight (left), and Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Chris Dutch, both members of the 437<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Squadron and students in the AGE refresher course, tune-up a diesel engine.



Staff Sgt. Jason Hanks, 373 TRS instructor, reviews C-17 electronic engine control procedures prior to his class' hands-on training.