

1st Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment

The 1st Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment was first organized as a carrier unit on 01 April 1986 utilizing the UH-1 Huey and OH-58 Kiowa helicopters. On 01 October 1986, the 149th was federally recognized as a combat unit with its Headquarters stationed at Ellington Field in Houston, Texas, along with the Headquarters Service, A and B Companies. C Company was originally stationed at Martindale Army Airfield in San Antonio and was later transferred to Ellington Field in January 1989. The battalion was rededicated on 01 March 1988 as the 1st Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment and added the AH-1 “Cobra” to the inventory.

In April 1991, the unit was reorganized as an Apache Advanced Helicopter Battalion. On 15 December 1992, Headquarters Service Company was converted and redesignated as Headquarters and Headquarters Company. The AVUM Platoon was designated as D Company, 1-149th. At the time of the reorganization, the battalion consisted of AH-64 Apache, UH-60 Blackhawk, and OH-58 Kiowa helicopters. The battalion dedicated itself to the successful completion of the Apache Fielding Program and the EXEVAL at Ft. Hood in August 1993, which culminated in the battalion’s certification as an Apache Attack Helicopter Battalion. In 1996, the battalion completed a successful JRTC rotation at Fort Polk, Louisiana. In 2001, the 1-149th deployed as part of the 4/49 Armored Division Task Force conducting J-Ship operations with the USS Tarawa to determine feasibility of using Army aircraft on U.S. Navy ships.

In January 2003, B Company and a maintenance slice deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina providing attack helicopter assets to the 35th Infantry Division for Stabilization Force 13. In June 2003, the 1-149th Aviation Regiment’s Headquarters, an A Company and D Company were deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina on 26 August 2003 in support of Stabilization Force 14. After serving as an AVN Task Force, the battalion returned to Texas in April of 2004. During September 2005, the 1-149th was mobilized on a humanitarian mission to respond to Hurricane Katrina by providing support for operations in New Orleans and Houston.

During January 2006, the battalion was mobilized at Ft. Hood and was augmented by E Troop, 1-104th Cavalry Squadron (MSARNG), and A Company 1-135th Aviation Regiment (MOARNG). From August 2006 to July 2007, the 1-149th conducted combat operations in Iraq serving as the Attack Reconnaissance Battalion of the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade supporting the Multi-National Corp – Iraq. The 1-149th served in all the “hot spots” to include Ar Ramadi, Basra, Bacuba and Bagdad. For its combat actions in Ar Ramdi supporting multi-component ground forces, the 1-149th ARB was awarded the Valorous Unit Award, which is equal to the Silver Star as a unit.

During 2010, B Company, 1-149th was tasked to support Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. This deployment required B Company to transition to AH-64D Longbows ahead of the battalion’s fielding. During January 2013, B Company was mobilized to support 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade and conducted combat operations in Afghanistan from March 2013 to November 2013.

The 1-149th retired the last AH-64A Apache in the US Army on 15 July 2012. From June 2013 to December 2013, the 1-149th was fielded with new AH-64D Block II Longbows and is ready to respond to the nation’s call.