

1-183d ARB

Idaho Army National Guard
Boise, Idaho



1-183rd Attack Reconnaissance Battalion

The 1-183rd ARB is stationed on Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho, with an attack aviation history that dates back to the 1970s when Idaho Soldiers flew and supported the UH-1 Huey and OH-58 A/C Kiowa as air troop members of the 116th Armored Cavalry Regiment. In the late 1980s, the Idaho Army National Guard underwent an intense restructuring. Out of that, the 1-183rd Aviation Battalion was born in 1989 with a lineage that traced to the 1-183rd Field Artillery of World War II. Idaho Aviators flew the Huey until 1991 and the Kiowa until 2000. As the US Army recognized the value that National Guard Soldiers contribute to the combat force structure of our nation's defense, the Army determined the State of Idaho would field an attack helicopter battalion. The Idaho Army National Guard received its allocation of sixteen AH-64A Apache helicopters beginning in 1992. The Apache fielding culminated in June 1994 when the 1-183rd deployed to FT Hood, Texas, to complete certification as an attack helicopter battalion.

Since its modern inception, the 1-183rd shared a "war trace" with the 66th Aviation Brigade out of Washington State. In 2007, the 1-183rd changed brigade affiliation to the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade of the Minnesota Army National Guard and became the 1-183rd Attack Reconnaissance Battalion. The 1-183rd is composed of a headquarters company, three line companies, an aviation maintenance company and forward support company. The 1-183rd also maintains administrative purview over A/1-168th Command Aviation Company, Det 1, D/1-112th S&S (MEDEVAC, UH-72) and Det 35 OSACOM (C-12). In total, the 1-183rd provides administrative oversight and support for 24 aircraft and nearly 500 Soldiers.

The 1-183rd ARB is collocated with the 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team headquarters and the Idaho Air National Guard's 124th Fighter Wing, 190th Fighter Squadron and 124th ASOS. The mix of mountainous terrain and desert floor allows for flight training opportunities that few areas in the US can match. The terrain is very similar to current theaters of operation and gives aviators the ability to fly in a wide array of conditions and altitudes. The 1-183rd instructor pilots are nearly all qualified to teach High Altitude Mountainous Environment Training (HAMET). The close proximity of mountainous terrain approaching 10,000 feet is ideal, and HAMET is often conducted by active duty and other reserve component units.

The Orchard Combat Training Center (OCTC) is a 10 minute flight from Boise and is the IDARNG's primary training facility. This world-class MPRC-H offers a wide range of training capabilities and opportunities from urban scenarios and small arms ranges to major combat systems live-fire, including tank, infantry fighting vehicle, artillery and helicopter gunnery with Hellfire missile capability. Heavy brigade maneuver operations are also conducted in the OCTC. AH-64 battalions and other aviation units from across the US and allied partners routinely conduct gunnery in the OCTC because it is an ideal and modern training area. The benefit of sharing modernized training areas with the 116th CBCT and 124th Fighter Wing allows for highly realistic combined arms and joint training. Furthermore, Mountain Home Air Force Base Saylor Creek Gunnery Range is 60 miles from Boise. The 1-183rd routinely provides attack aviation support to small and large scale exercises in conjunction with the USAF, USMC, USN and allied units operating out of the Air Force base.

Major deployments and exercises conducted by the 1-183d ARB:

- 1999: Deployed to CFB Wainwright, Alberta, in support of joint US-Canadian forces exercise Operation Total Ram.
- 2000: B/1-183rd provided attack aviation support at the National Training Center.
- 2002-2003: Provided the headquarters and attack aviation resources in support of SFOR 12, 28th ID, from Tuzla.
- 2004-2005: Provided attack aviation support to three JRTC rotational brigades, including the 116th CBCT.
- 2005-2007: Deployed to FT Hood, TX, for validation and then to Afghanistan to provide the bulk of attack aviation assets in support of the 10th Mountain Division and 82nd Airborne Division for OEF-7.
- 2008: Supported the 190th Fighter Squadron and 2/116th ACR in preparation for their OIF deployments.
- 2008: Supported 5-2 SBCT at the Yakima Firing Center in preparation for their SBCT Afghanistan deployment. The 1-183rd also supported 2-75th Ranger Regiment at Yakima to train their Soldiers in the use of attack aviation support.
- 2009: Deployed a company task force of AH-64s and UH-60s to Hawthorne, NV in support of joint special operation forces.
- 2010: Supported JSOC Operation Jaded Thunder at Mountain Home AFB.
- 2010: Deployed a company task force of AH-64s and UH-60s to CFB Suffield in support of the British Army's Operation Prairie Thunder.
- 2011-2013: The focus was on the Longbow transition, schools and training requirements.
- 2014: Supported the 116th CBCT XCTC exercise in the Orchard Combat Training Center to exercise decisive actions and combined arms operations in preparation for the 116th and 1-183rd National Training Center Rotation in August 2015.
- 2015: Supported Operation Instant Fury in support of the US Air Force at Mountain Home AFB.
- The 1-183d has a valued reputation among the active duty community and especially the Special Operations community. On a nearly weekly basis, the aviators of 1-183rd train with other branches of the armed forces in the OCTC or MHAFB vicinity. SEAL Teams, other Special Operations units and JTACs frequently train in Idaho and integrate 1-183rd crews into their training. The regularity of joint training opportunities allows the 1-183rd to maintain a high state of readiness and ability to perform according to the latest doctrine, tactics, techniques and procedures.

The 1-183rd turned in its last AH-64A Apaches in January 2012. Later that year, the unit received its first AH-64D Longbows and began the formal transition to a Longbow Battalion. The battalion has completed its transition, and all its aviators and support personnel are qualified to fly and maintain the AH-64D.

The 1-183rd has also proven its relevancy to support domestic operations by providing valuable night vision and infrared assets to help local agencies conduct search and rescue missions in the mountainous Idaho terrain. The Longbow radar has also been successfully used to find missing vehicles during search and rescue missions. The 1-183rd ARB now stands and will continue to stand ready and relevant to deploy to fight and win our nation's wars and provide domestic support to the State of Idaho and the United States of America.