

ROBINS AFB and 78 ABW Heritage Pamphlet

PART 1: A BRIEF HISTORY OF WR-ALC AND ROBINS AFB

From Whence We Came

On 16 June 2011, members of Robins AFB, Georgia and the 21st Century Partnership along with a myriad of other national, state and local leaders and citizens celebrated the 70th Anniversary of the base in a party at the Museum of Aviation. While many asked why that date, the answer was simple. On that day 70 years earlier, the late Congressman Carl Vinson sent a telegram from Washington to local civic dignitaries, led by Macon Mayor Charles Bowden, announcing that the U.S. War Department had selected a site across the road from the sleepy whistle stop town of Wellston, Georgia, as the location of a new southeastern Army Air maintenance and supply depot. That announcement brought a mood of elation to Middle Georgia! Heavily burdened by the weight of the Great Depression, mostly Macon area leaders had long been working for the location of a large industrial complex amid the region's dairy farms and pecan orchards to break the cycle of grinding poverty local citizens had suffered for nearly two decades. What was originally called the Georgia Air Depot was the Godsend that would bring new hope to the region.

From the outset the cooperation between the military and new flying field was nothing short of amazing. Local business and political leaders could not do enough to help the construction of the new installation along. The land on which the depot would be built was opened to construction crews on 14 August 1941. While there were actually several official ceremonies to commemorate this beginning, the official ground breaking took place on 1 September 1941, with the first depot commander, then Colonel (soon to be General) Charles Thomas presiding. At first, work progressed at a moderate pace, but when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and the United States

entered World War II things accelerated to a fever pitch. By April of the next year, the flight line and many of most important buildings had been completed. By May, the first aircraft had begun arriving for maintenance. The local communities were so excited by the new jobs and so proud to contribute to winning the war in such a major way that they insisted that there be a ceremony to dedicate what was by now known as the Warner Robins Army Air Depot at Robins Field. While the War Department was reluctant to celebrate anything since the war was still very much in doubt, they finally relented and decided to dedicate the installation on Easter weekend 1943.

The Dedication of Robins Field

It was 26 April 1943, the day after Easter Sunday. The weather was perfect in Middle Georgia. A light breeze introduced the spring day to the thousands gathered around a temporary stage and podium erected at one end of a newly constructed runway. There were VIPs of every kind, all present to dedicate the new Army Air Forces facility named in honor of the late Brig. Gen. Augustine Warner Robins--one of the Army Air Corps' first General Staff Officers and commander of the Fairfield Air Intermediate Depot (FAID), Ohio from 1921 to 1928, Deputy Commander of the Materiel Division, Wright Field, Ohio, from 1931 to 1933 and Commander from 1935 to 1939.

The War Department located this new air depot in Georgia believing it would be part of a long-range plan to prepare American defenses in case of war. Instead, America's entry into WWII turned the facility into one of America's most vital military bases. Located 16 miles south of Macon, Georgia, and bordered by the Ocmulgee River on the east and the sleepy little Southern Railroad station of Wellston, Georgia, on the west, the flat former dairy farm tract soon began to be reshaped into what is today the largest industrial installation in Georgia.

Known as the Georgia Air Depot in the early days, the Depot's name has changed many times during its history. During World War II, it was re-designated seven times. It was known as:

the Southeast Air Depot, Wellston Air Depot (WAD), Wellston Army Air Depot, Warner Robins Army Air Depot (WRAAD), Warner Robins Air Depot Control Area Command, Warner Robins Air Service Command (WRASC), and Warner Robins Air Technical Services Command (WRATSC). Less than a year after the War, as its function changed and satellite bases were closed, the name changed again and it became the Warner Robins Air Materiel Area (WRAMA). Its designation changed again to the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (WR-ALC) in April 1974 to mirror its new world-wide responsibilities. The most recent name change occurred in July 2012. At that time the Centers at Ogden, Warner Robins and Oklahoma City were combined into the Air Force Sustainment Center (AFSC), at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. The various components of the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center remained in the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex (formerly the 402d Maintenance Wing) and Air Force Life Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC), with headquarters at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. They embodied the logistics function while the 78th Air Base Wing (78 ABW) took on a bigger role than it had previously.

Builders completed the new airfield's industrial and cantonment areas on 31 August 1942. The second and third phases were completed by 10 April 1943. As a rule, parades and military celebrations were held to a minimum during World War II, particularly in the early years when the outcome was still in doubt. Neither the President nor U.S. military leaders deemed it appropriate to hold formal military ceremonies since nothing had been won as of April 1943. However, as noted, in the case of WRAAD, the local citizenry were so enthusiastic and so insistent that the depot commander, Col. Charles E. Thomas agreed to hold the dedication ceremonies anyway.

An earlier example of this local enthusiasm had been the willingness of Wellston leaders to rename their town Warner Robins on 1 September 1942. This action allowed Thomas to name the Field and the Depot after Gen. Robins, his mentor and friend.

On 26 April, participants and spectators began gathering at Robins Field about 0900. An hour later, troops marched onto the field in mass formation. They were reviewed by Maj. Gen. Walter H. Frank, Commander of the Air Service Command, Maj. Gen. Walter Reed Weaver, Commander of the Technical Training Command, and Col. Thomas. As Master of Ceremonies, Thomas declared, "We have assembled here today to pay honor to a distinguished American soldier, Brigadier General Augustine Warner Robins." He also noted that such ceremonies were "a little unusual when the country is at war." But he added that "the keen interest and pride... displayed by our local citizens...is ample justification...for this dedication."

Chaplain Charles E. Lunn gave the invocation, and was followed immediately by the principal speaker, Maj. Gen. Weaver. In his speech, entitled "General Robins as I Knew Him," he proclaimed that Gen. Robins was "an outstanding Air Corps officer who, along with others, laid the foundations for all that you see today." He described him as "human" and "all that you would like to know as a man." He concluded by charging those present to "take General Robins as your example," for if they did, "there would be no fears of the success of this installation..."

Macon Mayor Charles L. Bowden followed by officially presenting the deeds for the Depot property to General Frank and the U.S. Army Air Force. In receiving the site in the name of the Commanding General of the AAF, Frank dedicated the field and depot and declared that Robins had been his "very dear friend," and great "gentleman." He described him as a "leader of men" concluding that: "This city and this state should feel proud in the legacy of his name for this station. I hope this depot, as a monument to him, will be as outstanding as was his stature."

Colonel Thomas concluded by recounting the general's career, and noting: "It was my special privilege and pleasure to be closely associated with General Robins for a period of about six years. I came to...admire him profoundly.... It is common knowledge among all of his friends that

one of his outstanding qualities was his ability to inspire his men with unquestioned [loyalty and devotion].” Thomas also asserted that, “I doubt that any single individual has had any more to do with the development of what we now know as the Air Service Command than Brigadier General Augustine Warner Robins.” He concluded, “It is most gratifying that such an important project bears the name of one who held supply and maintenance functions so close to his heart, and who inspired so many improvements in the performance of these functions.”

At 1400 that same afternoon, ceremonies moved to Macon where the AAF Band offered a concert and then a parade from Central City Park through downtown to the Municipal Auditorium. More speeches followed given by Col. Thomas, Gen. Frank, and Mayor Bowden. These were augmented by comments from City Attorney J. Ellsworth Hall, and Chamber of Commerce President Cubbedge Snow. That evening the officers’ wives held a reception, followed at 1930 by the annual Macon Chamber of Commerce Banquet held at the Hotel Dempsey. General Frank was the featured speaker. General Robin’s wife, Dorothy Gretchen Hyde Robins, and his three daughters, Dorothy “Robbie” Robins Gray (later Cook), Elizabeth “Betty” Warner Robins, and Helen Hyde Robins attended the ceremonies as honored guests.

ROBINS AFB AFTER WORLD WAR II

By the end of World War II, the depot was the state’s largest industrial facility. However, things were not always good. After World War II, the number of military and civilian employees dropped dramatically until in March 1946--it reached a total of only 3,900. Yet, the critical role that Robins AFB and its repair and supply personnel played in the Berlin Airlift (Operation Vittles) 1948-1949 caused the work force to grow to 11,000. This trend continued with the advent of the Korean War. Once again the nation took notice of the essential role of WRAMA. In one of its finest efforts, workers at the depot literally unwrapped and refurbished hundreds of “Cocooned”

Boeing B-29 Superfortresses. Working around the clock, they made sure that United Nations forces in the Far East had the necessary tools to fight the North Korean invaders. This was particularly true with the key role B-29s played in bombing Communist supply lines and staving off the enemy's assault on Allied forces pinned down inside the Pusan Perimeter.

After the Korean conflict, though numbers fluctuated slightly, both the Air Force and Department of Defense (DoD) always ensured that Robins AFB was adequately staffed. This paid off since Robins AFB and the WR-ALC played key roles in the Vietnam War with the resupply of troops and materiel through the Southeast Asian Pipeline. Among the weapons systems managed by WRAMA personnel during the Vietnam War was the B-57 Canberra used for night raids along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The modification of AC-119G and K Gunships were managed entirely by Center personnel in the late 1960s. It proved to be one of the Allies' primary "truck killers." Also playing a vital part in war were the AC-130 Gunship, various helicopters, the C-141, the C-130, the C-123, and the C-124 cargo aircraft—all serviced and maintained at WRAMA.

In the 1970s, WRAMA and Robins AFB personnel once again found themselves on the world's center stage as they surged to resupply America's important Middle Eastern ally, Israel, in the 1973 Yom Kippur War. During Operation Nickel Grass, dozens of C-141s managed by WRAMA provided the Israeli military with critical supplies to prevent defeat in its war with its Arab neighbors. In October 1983, WR-ALC-managed C-130s and gunships supported U.S. ground forces during the invasion of the tiny Caribbean Island of Grenada.

In 1990-1991, Desert Shield and Desert Storm once again challenged the WR-ALC and Robins AFB work force to provide supplies, parts, repairs, and personnel to Coalition forces in the Persian Gulf wresting Kuwait from the clutches of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein. Personnel at Robins and throughout the Air Force airlifted more supplies and aircraft to the Persian Gulf Theater

of War in 14 weeks than the Allies had airlifted in 14 months to West Berlin during the Berlin Airlift. Of course, everyone is familiar with the vital roles that the F-15 Eagle and the E-8A (now E-8C) Joint STARS played in bringing the Sadaam's elite Republican Guard to its knees.

Most Americans recall the tense days of March-June 1999. They learned new names like Kosovo, Bosnia, and Serbia. They came to know a new tyrant, Slobodan Milosevic. The scenario was all too similar—genocide, brutality, and the strong oppressing the weak. The Air Force played the decisive role in putting an end to this dictator, while the WR-ALC and the other organizations at Robins AFB played a major role in supporting U.S. warfighters with surge items, manpower, and even operational aircraft. The success of Operation Allied Force eventually led to a restoration of relative peace and democracy in the region.

In addition to its combat role, Robins AFB today sustains and supports several of the most vital Air Force weapons systems. They are the C-5 Galaxy, the F-15 Eagle, the C-130 Hercules, C-17 Globemaster III, Special Forces (SOF) gunships, the 116th Air Control Wing's (116 ACW) E-8C Joint STARS, the U-2 Aircraft, Air Force vehicles, numerous helicopters and many other key high tech, avionics and aircraft systems. It continues as is one of the most important avionics centers in the Air Force, the integral manager of several important Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programs, the Small Arms Center for the Air Force, and a major location for the military development of high technology and automated industry. Since 1958, Center personnel have managed programs for 30 to 77 countries worth between \$200 million to \$3 billion annually.

During its 73-year history, Robins AFB, Georgia, received visits from numerous dignitaries and people of international fame. Numerous U.S. cabinet and sub-cabinet level officials, senior military officers from every branch of service and numerous Georgia state officials and national political leaders have visited and toured Robins AFB. The late former first lady of Nationalist

China Madame Chiang Kai-shek, the late Egyptian President Anwar El-Sadat and his wife, and the late Prime Minister of Israel Menachem Begin were among the most distinguished visitors.

Several serving or former Presidents and Vice Presidents have visited Robins AFB. George Bush, Dan Quayle, and Al Gore also visited Robins. Of particular note the base received visits from President Richard M. Nixon with First Lady Pat Nixon, during the 80th birthday celebration for Carl Vinson; President James E. "Jimmy" Carter Jr., with First Lady Rosalynn Carter, who housed Air Force One at Robins AFB during trips to their home in Plains, Georgia; and Presidents Lyndon Baines Johnson and William Jefferson Clinton who flew into Robins AFB on campaign trips to Macon and other parts of Middle Georgia.

Robins AFB itself has gone through many changes. It has been buffeted by a major tornado in April 1953 and squeezed by growing pains throughout. Originally, Robins Field consisted of just less than 4,000 acres valued at one million dollars. The initial construction cost just over \$14 million. Today Robins AFB is comprised of 6,935 acres, with 2,200 acres of wetlands and 350-400 acres of upland forest, which includes hardwoods and planted pines. Among the species of plants and animals on base are 400 plant, 39 mammals, 110 birds, 60 fish, 34 reptile, 26 amphibian, and 411 insect species. There are 58 archaeological sites, including 16 which are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, 13 Native American tribes have historical associations with the Middle Georgia region, including Robins AFB.

Today, Robins AFB has 14,297,809 square feet of facilities. There are 3.9 million square feet of maintenance shops, 1.7 million square feet of administrative space, and 3.4 million square feet of storage space at Robins AFB. The flight line runway is 12,000 feet long and 300 feet wide with two 1,000-foot overruns. Up until the early 1990s, it also has 13 miles of railroad tracks a link to its origins in World War II. Its landing area is not only the largest runway in Georgia, but it is

capable of accommodating the largest aircraft in the world including the C-5B, C-17 and the NASA Space Shuttle piggybacked on a Boeing 747. Robins has dormitories for 1,415 single members. In addition, it has medical facilities and a large base chapel that offers services for members of many faiths. Robins also has 180 acres of diversified recreational facilities, first class military/civilian social clubs with restaurant facilities, a base theater, a base exchange, a base post office, an airline ticket office and a commissary. The Economic Impact Statement in 2013 reported the replacement value for just the facilities on Robins AFB to be \$7.67 billion.

The Museum of Aviation at Robins AFB began in 1981 with a directive from the AFLC Commander and when Dr. Richard W. Iobst, then Museum curator, obtained the photographic collections of Georgia World War I aviator Lt Guy O. Stone. The first buildings opened in 1984, and since then it has grown into a world class facility. Five major structures on a 43-acre site include nearly 100 historic aircraft on display. There are SR-71, U-2, P-47, B-52, and even a MiG fighter. In just 32 years, the Museum became a major southeast regional educational and historical resource with over 600,000 people visiting annually. Over the years, this trend continued with the addition of numerous educational programs and exhibits.

Robins AFB demonstrated its importance to the Air Force, and that its impact on the state and region has been dramatic. Between \$200 million and \$400 million in annual contract awards have been presented to Georgia businesses each year over the past decade. Robins AFB awarded between \$2 billion and \$4 billion in contracts each year during that same period. Robins AFB's total economic impact on Middle Georgia ranged from \$2.8 to \$4.2 a year during the past two decades.

The sleepy little whistle-stop known as Wellston changed its name to Warner Robins on September 1, 1942. Since that time, it has grown from 51¹ to 61,336 citizens, while Houston County now has a population of 135,715. But Warner Robins has not been the only beneficiary of the base's employment. Perry, Cochran, Fort Valley, Byron, Macon, Forsyth, Hawkinsville, Eastman, and the other regional towns of Middle Georgia's 25 counties have also grown in size and experienced economic stability as a result of the development of Robins AFB and its supporting collateral businesses and industries which have burgeoned since 1941.

In 1993 and again in 1995, members of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Commission examined Robins AFB. On both occasions, the BRAC commissioners agreed that the installation was vital to the nation's defense and it should continue to function as one of America's primary Air Logistics Centers. On May 12, 1995, all of the hard work by Team Robins Plus paid off. The Center and base personnel received the Commander-in-Chief's Installation Excellence Award from Secretary of the Air Force Widnall during formal ceremonies in Washington.

September 11th: A New Reality

Robins AFB, like all U.S. military installations, was deeply affected by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Security measures so restricted access to the base that for the first few days long lines of traffic stretched for miles and many members of the workforce were not able to even get to their job sites. However, as they did since the base opened in 1941 the military and civilian leadership and personnel adjusted and overcame. Like the rest of the nation, they adapted to their role in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) surging repair materials and spares and pushing forward sustainment and support operations for U.S. forces going into harm's way.

¹This was Wellston's population according to the 1940 Census. The population reported in the first official history is 47, the number of people who lived in Wellston when Colonel Thomas arrived.

Between 7 October 2001 and 18 March 2002, they performed remarkable service for Allied forces during Operation Enduring Freedom, the liberation of Afghanistan. This task continued during Operation Iraqi Freedom from 19 March to 1 May 2003 as Coalition forces destroyed the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq. Afghan and Iraqi rebuilding efforts were supported by the men and women of Robins AFB. After the capture of Hussein on 14 December 2003, underground resistance continued, but the U.S. remained determined to complete its nation-building effort. Robins continued to play a vital role this effort.

To better achieve the wartime sustainment process, AFMC leadership decided to reorganize the entire Command along more military lines. In an effort to “Blue” the Command, the Air Logistics Centers were divided into new unit organizations that changed directorates into wings, divisions into groups and branches into squadrons. The Center made these changes beginning in the second half of 2004 and culminating in early 2005, with WR-ALC leading the way in the reorganization converting its units and obtaining its new lineage/honors, heraldry and unit histories first. Reaching back into the illustrious history of the Air Force, the Center reactivated World War II and Cold War wings to designate the new units.

The WR-ALC was organized into four Wings, three in addition to its existing 78ABW which stood up in 1994 during an earlier reorganization. It now stood up the 330th Aircraft Sustainment Wing (330ASW), 402d Maintenance Wing (402MXW) and 542d Combat Sustainment Wing (542CSW) on 15 March 2005. Even as the reorganization went into effect, the base survived another round of BRAC. In May 2005, Robins AFB did not appear on the closure list.

In July of 2010, as the Air Force’s missions expanded, the WR-ALC reorganized once again. While the 78 ABW and 402 MXW continued much as before, officials combined the other

two wings into the Aerospace Sustainment Directorate (ASD). Even though plans called for personnel and administrative changes the WR-ALC's role of weapons systems and equipment sustainment remained the same.

On 2 November 2011, General Donald Hoffman, AFMC Commander, wrote an e-mail to all the members of AFMC. He reported the decision to restructure the Command based on "the rising national deficit and subsequent fiscal constraints currently affecting our nation" and the efforts by the "Commander-in-Chief and Congressional leaders" to resolve the problem. Because of the planned \$400 billion in budget, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta challenged the services to increase funding for mission functions through efficiency realignments from overhead, support and non-mission areas. The reorganization included several long-term efficiency initiatives -- two that had significant impact on AFMC.

The first initiative, "Global Base Support" (GBS), reviewed 32 core areas of base and mission support and sought efficiencies by standardizing levels of service across the Air Force, consolidating and regionalizing where able, and partnering with the local community. The GBS preserved essential services like childcare, food services, and fitness centers, and change the traditional base-level support to which everyone was accustomed. This initiative was expected to save AFMC more than 1,100 positions over the next three years.

The second initiative involved restructuring AFMC to reduce overhead costs and management staffs. To this end, AFMC was organized into 12 Centers, while other Major Commands (MAJCOMs) had only three or four such units. Reducing AFMC Centers from twelve to five would, management believed, standardize business practices, streamline processes and decision making authority, and bring it into a "one mission-one commander" alignment. This restructure called for the elimination of 1,051 positions in a way that would preserve mission

capability, while saving \$109 million annually. It provided AFMC an opportunity to perform the four-core mission areas, plus nuclear, more effectively while operating under tight budget.

No plans existed to reduce the number of AFMC bases because of the restructure. Instead, they focused on reducing the staff/management level, but no strategies existed for movement of personnel. The schedule called for the AFMC restructure to reach initial operating capability (IOC) by 1 October 2012. Other changes included combining the Command's life cycle management mission, the maintenance and supply mission, and the test and evaluation mission into single organizations. The Air Force Research Library (AFRL), Wright-Patterson, AFB, Ohio, would continue to be the center for science, technology, research, and development. The Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center (AFNWC), Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, would oversee the nuclear support mission. The Air Force Test Center (AFTC), Edwards AFB, California, would continue responsibility for the test and evaluation mission. The 46th Test Wing at Eglin AFB, Florida; 412th Test Wing at Edwards AFB; and Arnold Engineering Development Center (renamed Arnold Engineering Development Complex) at Arnold AFB, Tennessee, would all align under the AFTC.

The new AFLCMC located at Wright-Patterson AFB, would perform the life cycle management missions performed by the Aeronautical Systems Center (ASC); Electronic Systems Center (ESC) at Hanscom AFB; and the Air Armament Center (AAC) at Eglin AFB, Florida, prior to realignment. Their headquarters functions would stand down and their acquisition work forces (remaining in current locations) would report directly to the AFLCMC, eliminating duplicate layers of management staffs. Program Executive Officers (PEOs) would remain at their respective locations and continue to report to the Air Force Service Acquisition Executive (SAE). The AFLCMC would also assume oversight responsibility for the life cycle management mission within the Aerospace Sustainment Directorates (ASDs) at Robins AFB, Tinker AFB, and Hill AFB, with

these programs affiliated with the appropriate PEO. Also aligning under the AFLCMC will be the new Air Force Security Assistance and Cooperation Directorate (AFSAC), formerly the Air Force Security Assistance Center. Its Foreign Military Sales (FMS) mission would continue from its Wright-Patterson AFB location.

Plans called for the AFSC to lead AFMC's maintenance and supply mission and for that Center to be located at Tinker AFB. The AFSC would consolidate oversight of most missions performed at the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center (OC-ALC) at Tinker AFB; Warner Robins ALC at Robins AFB; and Ogden ALC (OO-ALC) at Hill AFB. The three Air Logistics Centers' headquarters would stand down and be replaced by an "Air Logistics Complex" (formerly Maintenance Wings or MXWs) at each location which would report to the new AFSC Commander. Each location would operate one of the Air Force's three depots and would continue to have a small staff associated with an Aerospace Sustainment Division (ASD) to ensure horizontal integration during the period of change. The Air Force Global Logistics Support Center (AFGLSC) headquarters at Scott AFB would also stand down, and the 635th Supply Chain Operations Wing (SCOW) located at Scott AFB and the 448th Supply Chain Management Wing (SCMW) located at Tinker AFB would align under the AFSC.

On 10 July 2012, HQ AFSC was activated under AFMC. On the same day, the Oklahoma City ALC, at Tinker, was re-designated the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex (OC-ALC). On 12 July 2012, the ALC at Ogden, Hill AFB, Utah, was re-designated Ogden Air Logistics Complex (OO-ALC). Finally, on 17 July 2012, the last Center to be re-designated was WR-ALC, which became the Warner Robins Air Logistics Complex.

The 78ABW and the 402d Maintenance Wing were attached to AFSC. The AFSC Commander then exercised specified Administrative Controls (ADCON) responsibilities over these

units. These included accomplishing assigned unit tasks, organizing, training, equipping and sustaining assigned and attached forces as well as force protection, morale, welfare, and discipline; and personnel management.

The 402d Aircraft Maintenance Group (402 AMXG), 402d Commodities Maintenance Group (402 CMXG), 402d Electronics Maintenance Group (402 EMXG), 402d Maintenance Support Group (402 MSXG), and 402d Software Maintenance Group (402 SMXG) were also attached to WR-ALC. The WR-ALC Commander had ADCON responsibilities over these attached units. On 1 October 2012, all of these units were relieved from their assignment to the 402d Maintenance Wing and reassigned to the Complex at Warner Robins. On 11 July 2012, the 404th Supply Chain Management Squadron was attached to the 638 SCMG at Robins AFB, Georgia.

On 1 October, AFMC Commander General Janet Wolfenbarger addressed all AFMC employees regarding achievement of Initial Operating Capability (IOC). It had taken 18 months to align all the AFMC units under five centers. It was the most thorough modification to AFMC since it was formed from Air Force Logistics and Systems Commands 20 years earlier.

In June, the Command delivered two mandated reports to Congress, received Air Force approval for the 5-Center Construct, and Senate confirmation for three key leadership positions at two centers and HQ AFMC. In July, the new centers began activating, reducing the number of centers from twelve-to-five, with a “lead” center for each of the four primary mission areas. The consolidation then allowed the command to approach business in a more organized way, with a single center and commander for each primary mission. This would foster an environment of efficiency and cost effectiveness and present a single face to customers.

Some positive results already anticipated included the Air Force Research Laboratory's consolidation of its Air Vehicles Directorate and Propulsion Directorate into a single Aerospace Systems Directorate which would save taxpayer's \$4.2 million each year and improve mission effectiveness by promoting integrated solutions to the warfighter's needs. The Air Force Test Center's subordinate units teamed to share resources rather than develop independent, competing capabilities. One wing shared information about software development programs and gathered inputs from multiple organizations producing an enterprise capability assessment versus a single-site analysis. At the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center, officials aligned Air Force and Navy programs to better control technologies and components for the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile fuse modernization. This alignment would continue to strengthen the Air Force nuclear enterprise. As to the AFSC, of which the 78 ABW was a piece, initial integration activities resulted in an enterprise view across three air logistics complexes. The integrated weekly performance reviews related to aircraft production became prime examples. Finally, at the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center, the realignment of all activity associated with a single weapon system to a single program manager yielded a more integrated acquisition and sustainment execution process. These were only a few of the myriad of efficiencies being realized at the centers.

With the achievement of IOC, work was not over. To move toward Full Operating Capability (FOC) in late 2013, a series of metrics to measure how the command carried out its mission must be implemented. These measurements would be results-oriented measuring productivity, not simply activity. To this end, FOC would be reached through a deliberate and focused governance process. As the first day of the fiscal year marked the first day of the new AFMC, the Commander requested everyone, "Work hard as a team taking advantage of this rare opportunity to find new and better ways to accomplish our multifaceted mission."

The present day members of Team Robins carry on the tradition of confronting and overcoming hard jobs just as their predecessors did. From its origins as a dairy farm pastureland 73 years ago to its status as a major defense industrial plant, Robins AFB, Georgia, remains one of the nation's greatest defense assets.