



ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam -- A B-1 takes off as a B-52 taxis past, readying for takeoff here during the last day of surges April 2. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Charlene M. Franken) | [High-res version of this photo](#)

Bomber surge: 103 sorties in less than three days

*by Staff Sgt. Jess Harvey
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04/05/03 - **ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam (AFPN)** -- Although B-52 Stratofortresses and B-1B Lancers have become a common sight in the skies here their presence has been more visible the past few days.

Bombers from the 7th Air Expeditionary Wing here, successfully completed 103 sorties in less than three days as part of a surge in operations March 30 through April 2.

"(This) performance is easily one of the three best military accomplishments that I've ever witnessed and clearly the most aggressive self-induced challenge," said Col. Jonathan George, 7th AEW commander. "After this week, I have complete confidence that our team can do anything."

He said he had intended the surge as a way to gauge what needed improvement.

"Initially, my intent for this effort was to see where we stood as a team, help us mature and determine what our weak areas might be," said George who described this test as a bomber version of baseball's spring training. "I knew that our team would work hard and put forth a great effort."

"What I wasn't prepared for was a championship performance," said the commander. "I've been around military jets and (operations) for 22 years, and no one could have done better."

"(They) turned spring training into a winning World Series," said George, "and lots of people have noticed."

It proved, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that the 7th AEW is ready and capable to take on virtually any challenge, said Col. Robert Dickmeyer, 7th Expeditionary Maintenance Group commander.

"Safely launching 103 bomber sorties in just 67 hours is an extremely aggressive tasking, but everyone stayed focused through the entire exercise and proved that the American spirit is our greatest weapon," he said.

George said it was almost unbelievable for some.

"We've received a load of calls and e-mails asking for a correction to our typos on the sortie count," said George, who added he is not sure they believed him when he responded that the 103 sortie count was accurate.

Of those, 54 were B-52s and 49 were B-1s.

He mentioned the outstanding schedule they maintained was more demanding than any pace they had ever seen in normal operations.

Dickmeyer said that since the 7th AEW started flying March 10, they averaged around 21 sorties during any three-day period. (Courtesy of Pacific Air Forces News Service)
