



16 A-10Cs taking part in the MD ANG “Elephant Walk” (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Christopher Schepers)

16 A-10 Warthogs took part in a Mission Generation Exercise and staged a nice “Elephant Walk”.

“Elephant Walk” events are becoming increasingly frequent at air bases in the U.S. and all around the world to test the squadrons ability to launch large formations of aircraft at short notice. If you search in our archive you will find many articles with photographs of aircraft taking part in this kind of drills, where all types of combat planes (including [tankers](#) or [mixed formations](#)) taxi all together (more or less...) in the same way they would do in case of a [minimum interval takeoff](#), and then, depending on the purpose of the training event, they either take off or return back to their parking slots.

In the military aviation community, this process is known as an “elephant walk,” a term that originated among the U.S. forces during World War II when hundreds of aircraft would taxi in single-file lines that resembled elephants walking to a waterhole.

Actually, most of times, these “walks” are staged just to get some [nice shots](#) (and this is perfectly fine, because the photographs generate much more interest), as the exercise’s goal is obviously not to taxi along the runway in close formation but to assess the ability launch as many aircraft as possible, in the shortest time possible.

The latest in this long series of mission readiness drills took place on Nov. 3, 2021 and involved the

Maryland Air National Guard, that carried out a mission generation exercise at Warfield Air National Guard Base in Middle River, Maryland, that involved 16 [A-10C Thunderbolt II](#) aircraft, that is to say every Warthog (as the A-10 is nicknamed) assigned to the 104th Fighter Squadron.

[16 A-10C Thunderbolt II aircraft assigned to the 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard, conducted a mission generation exercise and an “elephant walk” at Warfield Air National Guard Base at Martin State Airport, Middle River, Md., November 3, 2021. \(U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Christopher Schepers\)](#)

“Seeing our entire fleet on the runway, it’s just an awesome display of combat power,” said U.S Air Force Col. Richard D. Hunt, vice commander of the 175th Wing in a [public release](#). “Our maintainers are some of the best in the Air Force, and this is concrete proof of our ability to bring the full force of our airpower to bear whenever it is needed.”

“Our ability to generate combat airpower at a moment’s notice helps promote regional stability because we can immediately respond to any threat,” said U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul D. Johnson, commander of the 175th Wing. “The 175th Wing is always ready to answer our nation’s call and defend our country from our adversaries. We know they are watching, so it is good for them to know we can bring the fight at any time. I’m proud of our Airmen’s ability to generate and employ with the highest level of excellence in a contested environment and with complete [operational security].”

[Aerial view of the Elephant Walk \(U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Christopher Schepers\)](#)

In fact, what is particularly important during this exercises is to test the unit’s preparedness to face a surge in operations that might occur when the squadron is requested to deploy to theatre, evacuate the airfield under attack or launch as many sorties as possible at short notice. During the mission generation exercise, maintainers prepared the aircraft and pilots then started the engines of the A-10s and taxied away, forming a line half a mile long before getting into a tight formation on the runway.



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Source: [Every A-10 Thunderbolt II Of The Maryland ANG Took Part In An 'Elephant Walk' At Warfield ANGB](#)