



MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR Feb. 22, 2016

Alaska National Guard
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More than 100 Air National Guardsmen will deploy to Middle East

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska – More than 100 members of the Alaska Air National Guard's 176th Wing will deploy to the Middle East this week.

Most of the deployers are members of the Wing's 144th Airlift Squadron; once in theater, they will fly their C-130H "Hercules" tactical-airlift aircraft in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. They will be accompanied by members of the Wing's maintenance units, and a handful of support specialists drawn from other Wing units.

The deployment is expected to last approximately four months.

From a historical perspective, this represents an unusual deployment because of a current proposal at the national level to divest the 176th Wing of its C-130H tactical-airlift aircraft.

The Wing today is one of the country's largest and busiest Air Guard wings -- beyond tactical airlift, its mission sets include strategic airlift, domestic and combat search & rescue, and air defense. But tactical airlift has been one of its core missions since 1957, when the Air Guard's emphasis shifted from air combat to airlift.

The current proposal was put forward and recommended by retired Lt. Gen. Stanley Clarke III, Director of the Air National Guard, to the Total Force Continuum (a board of Active, Reserve, and Guard members tasked to try to balance requirements, capabilities, risk and cost regarding strategic plans and programs). The Total Force Continuum is taking action to push forward Lt. Gen. Clarke's proposal. As such, this deployment could conceivably be the last for the 144th Airlift Squadron, at least in its current form.

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What: Departure for Air National Guard deployment

Where: Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson

When: *Must arrive at the Boniface Gate by 6:45 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 23.*

JBER ACCESS: **Media must be at the Boniface gate at 6:45 p.m.** for escort on base. Please call Capt. John Callahan by 2 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 23, at 907-223-4243 if you will be sending media.