

THE CARGO COURIER

123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky.

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AMC declares Kentucky wing 'combat ready'

By Capt. Dale Greer
Wing Public Affairs Officer

SAVANNAH, Ga. — A year of intense preparation, punctuated by a long series of drills and exercises, finally came to an end here April 9 when the 123rd Airlift Wing successfully completed an Operational Readiness Inspection at the Air National Guard Combat Readiness Training Center.

Nearly 400 personnel and more than 120 tons of equipment were deployed for the week-long test, officially known as an Air Mobility Command Inspector General Exercise. Once here, the Kentucky unit joined forces with a similar contingent from the New York Air Guard, forming a fictional 603rd Air Expeditionary Wing based in the Republic of Korea.

AMC inspectors evaluated almost every aspect of the mission, from the first deployment sortie out of Louisville to the wing's final redeployment flight back home. In between, hundreds of scenarios played out in Savannah as inspectors evaluated the performance of Airmen executing their jobs in a hostile combat environment.

In the end, the 123rd Airlift Wing proved its combat readiness, earning an overall grade of "satisfactory."

"I couldn't be more proud of our folks and the way they performed their mission," said Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing. "Given all the things we've had to contend with, I think the accomplishments are nothing short of extraordinary."

Colonel Kraus noted that the wing seemed to be fighting an uphill battle from the very beginning.

During the past year, a shortage of active-duty days made ORI preparations unusually difficult, and the wing continued to participate in numerous real-world missions even as it ramped up for the inspection. These included multiple deployments in support of hurricane relief efforts last summer.



Photo courtesy New York Air Guard

Members of the fictional 603rd Air Expeditionary Wing check chemical detection paper following a simulated attack at the Savannah, Ga., Combat Readiness Training Center.



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

See ORI, Page 4 Kentucky Airmen set up a tent during the ORI's deployment phase in Savannah, Ga.

Successful inspection was the result of wing's hard work and sacrifice

A

n inescapable truth is that the truth is inescapable.

The truth is that in April 2006, the 123rd Airlift Wing was awarded a "combat ready" certification by the Air Mobility Command's Inspector General following the wing's completion of an Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI).

In his executive summary of the inspection, IG Team Chief Col. Steven B. King wrote that the 123rd Airlift Wing "earned an overall 'Satisfactory' grade with solid leadership and capable supervision in the face of multiple inspection challenges, coupled with the threat of severe weather, both during the Deployment and Redeployment phases."

"The determination and pride of the Louisville Team," he continued, "enabled them to complete the ORI on a very positive note."

The IG team also praised several duty sections for excellent performance: aircraft generation, personnel, public affairs, redeployment, safety, security forces and weather.

"The 123 AW Team is combat tested



Col. Mark Kraus
123rd Airlift Wing Commander

and ready to support the challenges of global mobility operations worldwide," Colonel King concluded.

Stirring words, and well-written. But they do not begin to capture the true magnitude of the hard work, sacrifice and, at times, sheer grit of the members of the wing who successfully closed out this inspection.

It is impossible to reduce into a few sentences the year-long period of

preparation and exercise necessary to accomplish such an achievement; it likely wouldn't fit adequately into several volumes of text.

But make no mistake: As difficult as it is to faithfully portray the effort poured into this endeavor, it is equally challenging to express my appreciation to those who made it happen.

So I'll simply start with a THANK YOU to all who brought their time, talent and tenacity to bear on this objective with magnificent results.

I am so proud of this wing and all who fill its ranks — not just for your extraordinary ORI performance but for all of your additional accomplishments while preparing for and executing the inspection.

Winston Churchill, no stranger to adversity himself, once remarked that "Sometimes it is not enough to do our best; we must do what is required."

The nation can take great comfort in knowing that when the 123rd gets the call to serve, whatever the mission, you have demonstrated that you will "do what is required" on their behalf.

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<p>The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the Public Affairs office of the 123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard. All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.</p>	<p>Wing Commander.....Col. Mark Kraus Wing Public Affairs Officer.....Capt. Dale Greer Staff Writer.....Senior Airman Malcolm Byrd II</p>
<p>Our office is located in room 2118 of the Wing Headquarters Building. Deadline for the next issue is July 7.</p>	<p>Contact Us</p>
<p>Address: 1101 Grade Lane, Louisville, KY 40213-2678 Phone: (502) 364-9431 • Fax: (502) 364-967 E-mail: dale.greer@kyloui.ang.af.mil</p>	
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Cargo Courier, Public Affairs win national awards

The 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs office has been awarded eight national honors for excellence, Air Force and National Guard officials announced recently.

Five of the honors were bestowed by the National Guard Bureau during the 2005 NGB Media Contest, which evaluated the work of military journalists from across the Guard earlier this year.

— The Cargo Courier was recognized as the nation's top newsletter-format publication. Significant contributors to The Cargo Courier during the evaluation period were Capt. Dale Greer, wing public affairs officer; Tech Sgt. Dennis Flora; and Staff Sgt. Philip Speck. Sergeants Flora and Speck are photographers assigned to the 123rd Communications Flight.

— Captain Greer was named National Guard Print Journalist of the Year, his fifth such title in the past nine years. He also took first place for news articles, first place for feature stories and third place for sports writing.

The Cargo Courier also went head to head with the best newspapers in the Air Force, earning third place among newsletter-format publications in the 2005 Air Force Media Contest.

Captain Greer took home two individual honors in the Air Force competition — second place for feature writing, and third place for Air Force Print Journalist of the Year.

“This competition looks at our most visible products — base newspapers, Web sites and radio/television programs — which are designed to educate, motivate and inform the Airmen and families in our great expeditionary Air and Space Force,” said Col. Michelle Johnson, director of Air Force Public Affairs.

“The quality of the submissions was outstanding. I salute the men and women of our communication team for entering.”

Sound of Thunder



Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG

A U.S. Navy F/A-18 Hornet prepares to taxi from the Kentucky Air Guard flightline April 22 for an aerial demonstration as part of the Thunder Over Louisville air show. The Hornet was one of six aircraft comprising the Navy's premier Blue Angels demonstration team, which made its first Thunder appearance this year. Other military aircraft that participated in the air show included U.S. Air Force F-15 Eagles, a Kentucky Air Guard C-130 and U.S. Army AH-64 Apaches.

Orange serving as ESGR rep

By Army Sgt. Gina Vaile
KyArNG Public Affairs

For many people, retirement means relaxing days spent at the beach or lake, catching up on reading or perhaps casting a line for the big catch.

But when David Orange faced retirement after 30 years in the military, the former Kentucky Air Guard command chief master sergeant saw himself waking up early to spend long days helping the same Soldiers and Airmen with whom he once served.

Mr. Orange was hired as a contractor for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, or ESGR, in June of 2005.

The position is, in his words, “very important” to the success of Kentucky's service members.

“I serve as a liaison between our Guard and Reservists and their employers,” Mr. Orange said of his duties. “It is my responsibility to ensure both our military members and their employers are trained in the duties and obligations associated with periods of active duty.”

Mr. Orange explains to service members the importance of knowing and understanding the laws protecting their civilian employ-

ment during times of active duty.

With thousands of Kentucky National Guard troops having been deployed in recent months, Mr. Orange often answers questions from both service members and employers on what to expect during an active-duty tour.

“I put 100 percent of my energy in making sure our service members are being well taken care of,” he said.

“I am impressed by our military members because they are serving our state and country in such a great fashion. I also get the opportunity to be associated with their families and their employers, which is also very rewarding.”

Because civilian employers play a huge roll in the lives of reservists, Mr. Orange said it's important for the ESGR to recognize and reward them for their support.

Mr. Orange joined the Marine Corps in 1971 and later served in the Kentucky Air National Guard, from which he retired in 2001 after 30 years of devoted service to the United States.

Before joining ESGR, Mr. Orange was a senior instructor in About Face, an after-school program sponsored by the National Guard that is designed to provide support and guidance to Kentucky high school students.

ORI

Continued from Front Page

“The hurricanes took us away from some ORI preparations, but the nation needed us then, so we set those plans aside to assist with hurricane relief,” Colonel Kraus said.

Weather continued to be an issue right up through the inspection, when severe thunderstorms and tornadic activity caused power outages on base just as the deployment phase of the inspection was getting underway.

“The fact that we persevered is a testament to the people in this wing,” Colonel Kraus said. “We’ve learned, especially since 9/11, that we must adapt, deal with adversity and take on challenges as they come. Anybody can work under ideal conditions, but it takes true professionals to stand up under difficult circumstances.

“We all knew that the wing was combat ready. What we did here was put the exclamation point on that for the IG. We proved that not only can we do our wartime tasking, but we can do it under very difficult circumstances. Everybody just stepped up and made it happen.”

A wing-wide luncheon and commander’s call will be held at the Kentucky Air Guard base on Sunday to celebrate that success and recognize exceptional performers, Colonel Kraus said.

The Inspector General cited seven duty sections for excellence during the inspection — aircraft generation, personnel, public affairs, redeployment, safety, security forces and weather.

Moving forward, Colonel Kraus said he intends to focus the wing on home-station training — at least for a few months.

“We want to give folks a little time to reconstitute following the inspection,” he said.

Following that, however, it will be business as usual for the 123rd Airlift Wing.

The unit is deploying to Germany this winter to provide airlift services for Operation Joint Forge, which supports military forces in Bosnia.

And hurricane season is once again upon us, Colonel Kraus noted.

“We need to be ready to respond to that if we’re called upon,” the colonel said.



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/Ky



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/Ky

Top: An aircrew member awaits simulated chemical decontamination during the ORI.

Middle: Services personnel set up a mobile field kitchen during the night shift.

Bottom: Airmen fill sandbags that will be used to harden structures across the base.



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/Ky



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

Above: Kentucky Airmen perform self-aid and buddy care on a wounded individual.

Right: A member of the readiness squadron assembles equipment for a chemical decontamination station.



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG



Photo courtesy New York Air Guard

Above: An Air Mobility Command C-5 Galaxy sits on the ramp of the 603rd Air Expeditionary Wing during the ORI.

New Airman Battle Uniform to be available in fiscal 2007

By Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — The new Airman Battle Uniform is ready for production and will be available in fiscal 2007, the Air Force deputy chief of staff of personnel said.

Many factors were considered in developing the final uniform selection, with the concern for Airmen being at the top of the list, said Brig. Gen Robert R. Allardice.

“We were looking for a uniform that would be easier to maintain,” he said. “We wanted to provide a uniform that the Airman wouldn’t need to spend a lot of out-of-pocket expenses to maintain.”

Also, Airmen’s feedback throughout the process was beneficial in adding new pockets on the uniform.

“We listened to the Airmen’s request where they wanted pockets to hold small tools and when they wear body armor — the existing shirt pockets are not accessible or usable,” General Allardice said.

“It will have the four pockets on the front of the shirt, and also a small pencil pocket on the left forearm and two pockets on the lower legs. In addition, inside the side pockets and inside of the breast pockets there will be smaller sewn-in pockets to hold small tools, flashlights or cell phones.”

The new uniform design is a pixilated tiger stripe with four soft-earth tones consisting of tan, gray, green and blue. The ABU will have a permanent crease and will be offered in 50-50 nylon-cotton blend permanent-press fabric, eliminating the need for winter- and summer-weight uniforms.

Will the new ABU need to be starched and pressed?

“Absolutely not,” General Allardice said. “Our uniform requirement is we want a uniform that you wash, pull it out of the dryer,

and wear it. This requirement meets the ease and cost-effectiveness needs in maintaining a uniform.

“I tested this uniform. I wash it, take it right out of the dryer and wear it,” General Allardice added. “We don’t want people putting an iron to it.”

The fit of the uniform also was a concern for Airmen.

“We’re making them available in more sizes to fit the body better,” he said. “We’ve taken the time to produce more sizes and tailored them for men and women.”

Available ABU accessory items include:

- A tan T-shirt, which is the only authorized color. Airmen will be required to maintain one tan T-shirt with an Air Force logo on the front and “Air Force” written on the back.

- Suede cowhide boots in matching green-gray color. Like the desert boot, these will be polish-free and available in men’s and women’s sizes.

- Name tapes, U.S. Air Force tapes, and rank insignia will feature midnight blue embroidery. Name tape and rank insignia backgrounds will be tan and will be sewn on using a matching tan thread.

- The ABU adopts the Battle Dress Uniform hat style for primary use. The

floppy hat design will be used in some deployed areas.

“This is the uniform of the future,” General Allardice said. “When enough of these uniforms are manufactured, we will phase out the BDU and desert combat uniforms.”

The current projected mandatory wear date for the new ABU is fiscal 2011. The only thing that needs to be determined is if patches will be worn. The Air Force chief of staff will make that determination soon.



CV-22 Osprey delivered

A new chapter in Air Force aviation opened March 20 as the first operational CV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft arrived at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.

The aircraft was flown from the test wing at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., by Lt. Gen. Michael W. Wooley, commander of Air Force Special Operations Command, to the 58th Special Operations Wing at Kirtland.

The CV-22 Osprey is a special operations variant of the MV-22, currently used by the Marines.

The aircraft has the unique ability to take off, land and hover like a helicopter, and it can tilt its propellers to fly like a conventional, prop-driven aircraft.

This dual capability gives the CV-22 extended range, speed and versatility over any other AFSOC aircraft.

Army, Air Force to purchase small cargo plane

By 2010, both the Army and the Air Force may be flying the same aircraft to provide airlift inside places like Afghanistan and Iraq.

The Secretary of Defense has given approval for the Army and the Air Force to work together to purchase those aircraft.

The Army has been calling it a “Future Cargo Aircraft,” while the Air Force calls it a “Light Cargo Aircraft.” But ultimately, those names will be gone in favor of “Joint Cargo Aircraft.” And it won’t just be the name that is the same.

The Joint Cargo Aircraft will be a small aircraft developed for both the Army and the Air Force. It will be smaller than the Air Force’s C-130 Hercules, but larger than the Army’s C-23 Sherpa. Most likely, the aircraft will be a variant of an aircraft already available in the civilian sector.

Ramstein being transformed as ‘super base’

By Louis A. Arana-Barradas
Air Force Print News

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — Parts of this hectic airlift hub remain under construction as the historic base transforms into the Air Force’s European super base.

The work is part of the Department of Defense’s largest ongoing construction project — a \$500 million boon for the base near Kaiserslautern, said Col. Carlos Cruz-Gonzalez, commander of the 435th Civil Engineer Group.

“The construction going on now is a continuation of the Rhein-Main Transition Program,” the colonel explained.

The transition program resulted from a U.S.-German accord to return Rhein-Main Air Base, outside of Frankfurt, back to Germany by the end of 2005. In return, Germany allowed the Air Force to replicate the base’s vital airlift mission at Ramstein and Spangdahlem Air Base, 80 miles northwest of here.

German agencies agreed to foot most of the bill for 37 new construction projects that would allow the bases to take on the new mission. Ramstein got 32 of the projects.

The breakdown of funds was \$200 million for transition-related military construction, \$200 million for the Kaiserslautern Military Community Center and \$100 million for new military family housing.

Today, 22 projects — started in 2003 — are finished, the colonel said. Done are the new south runway and “hot cargo pad” for handling munitions and hazardous cargo. Also completed is the expansion of parking ramps for transiting wide-body jets and Ramstein’s C-130 Hercules fleet. A huge, high-tech freight terminal, an expanded passenger terminal, flight kitchen and dormitories for enlisted Airmen also have been built. And extensive road construction was undertaken to keep up with the growing changes, he said.

Currently, 10 projects are either underway or awaiting funding, Colonel Cruz-Gonzalez said. Under construction are a new hangar and a fitness center.

“This construction has caused a true transformation of this base,” the colonel said. “I got here in July 2003 (and) Ramstein is a completely different base than when I arrived.”

Still to come is the completion of several key projects, including new military family



Master Sgt. John E. Lasky/USAF

Two C-17 Globemaster IIIs taxi on the busy new ramp while construction of a new hotel continues at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. The 350-room inn is slated to open in September as part of the Kaiserslautern Military Community Center.

housing and the refurbishing of the base’s north runway, extending it to 10,500 feet.

“The immediate goal in front of us is to get the north runway reconstruction project started,” the colonel said. He expects that to happen early next year.

“That’ll give the base two mission-capable runways.”

Plans also call for building between 860 and 870 town homes at Ramstein and surrounding military communities for officers and enlisted Airmen. Some new officer and senior NCO housing has already been built in the large military community.

“These are what I call 100-year homes — built to last,” Colonel Cruz-Gonzalez said. “And they’ll have just about all the amenities the Air Force now expects to be in family housing.”

“When it’s all said and done, the community will have more than 2,600 housing units,” he added.

Another, more visible, addition is the completion of the Kaiserslautern Military Community Center, or KMCC. The center, on the base’s south side, across from the passenger terminal, will include a new eight-story, 350-room hotel and a large

shopping mall.

The hotel will feature a restaurant on its ground floor and a sports bar. A new Army and Air Force Exchange Service store, boasting more than 150,000 square feet, will be the main attraction at the mall, the colonel said.

The mall also will have 46 concession shops, a food court, a ticket and tour office, four theaters, a bank and credit union, a barber shop, a sauna and morale, welfare and recreation facilities — all under one roof.

“It will provide one-stop shopping” for just about anything a person might need, Colonel Cruz-Gonzalez said. “And MWR operations will include a retail sales store, equipment checkout — even a two-story rock wall so people can practice their rock climbing.”

The center will open in stages. Construction of the yet-to-be-named hotel should end in July. But it will not open until September because it will take about 60 days to furnish it and for businesses to move in. The colonel expects the mall to open “early next year.”

Construction on other projects will continue for several years, with some projected through fiscal 2009 and beyond.

Promotions in the Kentucky Air National Guard

The following individuals have been promoted to the rank indicated as members of the Kentucky Air Guard and reservists of the United States Air Force:

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS (E-3)

•**Remy Hammock**,
123rd Student Flt.

•**Mark Pike**,
123rd Civil Engineering Sq.

•**Damon Quill**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.

•**Cory Shepherd**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.

•**Joshua Snelling**,
123rd Security Forces Sq.

•**Thomas Walsh**,
123rd Student Flt.

SENIOR AIRMAN (E-4)

•**Robert Bowling**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.

•**Julian Christopher**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.

•**Adrienne Healey**,
123rd Security Forces Sq.

•**Terrence Jones II**,
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

•**Jerry Owens**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.

•**Jesse Payne**,
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

•**Joseph Pollock**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.

•**Lonnie Sawyers**,
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

•**Brandon White**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.

STAFF SERGEANT (E-5)

•**Leumas Cowherd**,
123rd Services Flt.

•**Gabriel Kessler**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.

•**Scott O'Brien**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.

•**April Paulsen**,
123rd Medical Group.

•**Erik Smith**,
123rd Security Forces Sq.

•**Matthew Whitehead**,
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

TECHNICAL SERGEANT (E-6)

•**Virgil Gipson**,
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

•**Christopher Hamilton**,
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

•**Collin King**,
123rd Security Forces Sq.

•**Laura Mabe**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.

•**Jeffrey McMahan**,
123rd Security Forces Sq.

•**Edward McKenna**,
123rd Special Tactics Sq.

•**Kevin Roy**,
123rd Security Forces Sq.

•**Scott Terrill**,
41st Civil Support Team

•**Heather Wood**,
123rd Communications Flt.

MASTER SERGEANT (E-7)

•**Brian Bauer**,
165th Airlift Sq.

•**Jerome Buehner**,
123rd Maintenance Grp.

•**Jon Lundergan**,
123rd Airlift Wing

•**Heather Miller**,
123rd Logistics Readiness Sq.

•**Anthony Schmidt**,
123rd Civil Engineering Sq.

•**Felicia Williams**,
123rd Airlift Wing

123rd Airlift Wing
Public Affairs Office
Kentucky Air National Guard
1101 Grade Lane
Louisville, KY 40213-2678

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