

THE CARGO COURIER

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

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Wing claims top honors for excellence



Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG

Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing, attaches a 12th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award streamer to the wing's colors during a Sept. 16 awards ceremony held in the base Fuel Cell Hangar.

The honor recognizes the wing's achievements from March 6, 2003 to March 15, 2004, when unit personnel deployed around the world for combat and combat-support operations in the Global War on Terror, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

12th USAF Outstanding Unit Award and 3rd Metcalf Trophy continue proud Kentucky Air Guard tradition

**By Capt. Dale Greer
Wing Public Affairs Officer**

Members of the 123rd Airlift Wing gathered in the base Fuel Cell Hangar Sept. 16 to celebrate two prestigious new honors — the wing's 12th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award and its third Curtis N. "Rusty" Metcalf Trophy.

The Metcalf award, bestowed annually by the National Guard Bureau, recognizes the airlift or air refueling unit that demonstrates the highest standards of mission accomplishment. The wing previously won Metcalf trophies in 1994 and 2002.

The wing's last Air Force Outstanding Unit Award also was bestowed in 2002, but the latest one is especially noteworthy because it includes a citation for valor — earned as a result of the unit's participation in dangerous combat missions in the Central Command Area of Operations.

The new awards continue the wing's tradition as one of the most decorated units in the U.S. Air Force, said Brig. Gen. Howard Hunt, Kentucky's assistant adjutant general for Air.

"Our Airmen continue set the standard for excellence no matter where they serve around the world," said General Hunt, who presented the awards to 123rd Airlift Wing commander Col. Mark Kraus during last month's celebration.

"Our people are the best of the best. We as Kentucky Air National Guardsmen have made a mark in the Global War on Terror that very few others can match."

The outstanding unit award was bestowed for the wing's accomplishments from March 6, 2003 to March 15, 2004. During this period, six of the wing's C-130s, 12 associated aircrews and dozens of support personnel deployed with just four days' notice to a forward operating base and two follow-on locations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

From these austere locations, the wing's members completed more than 1,500 accident-free combat and combat-support missions, delivering more than 3,100 tons of material and 7,900 passengers to 37 airfields and 12 countries in Southwest Asia and Northeast Africa.

Another six aircrews, four C-130 aircraft and support personnel deployed on 10 days' notice to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, where they led operations that carried more than 19,100 passengers and 6,100 tons of cargo to 59 locations and 38 countries in Europe, Southwest Asia and Africa in support of ongoing combat operations.

See AWARDS on Back Page

No one should ever doubt our discipline or our ability fly, fight and win

Our enduring and distinguished record of mission success does not just happen.

It is forged by strong leadership and Airmen who are properly organized, trained and equipped to execute their assigned mission.

Whether deployed for expeditionary operations, at home station training for the next deployment or conducting daily work for the nation's combatant commanders, the expectations for all Airmen are the same: commanders command, supervisors lead and, from the most junior Airman to the highest levels of command, we all follow checklist procedures, comply with applicable directives and focus on our assigned missions or tasks.

Loss of focus can lead to failure: failure to execute the mission in a disciplined and accountable manner.

I need every Airman — wingman, leader and warrior — to join me in driving home this critical point, every day, in everything we do.

Our Air Force and our nation



**Gen. T. Michael Moseley
Air Force Chief of Staff**

expect, need and deserve nothing less.

Commanders and supervisors at all levels must lead by personal example, ensure compliance by all and reinforce the highest standards of the United States Air Force.

No one should ever be given a reason to doubt our discipline, our

integrity or our ability to fly, fight and win the nation's wars.

And we must never betray the nation's trust in its Airmen as guardians of the common defense.

Integrity, Service and Excellence are the enduring touchstones of the United States Air Force, and discipline is at the core of all three.

A disciplined force puts mission first; flies, fights and wins as a team; knows the rules; pays meticulous attention to details; and is accountable for the final results.

Our disciplined combat focus has served the nation exceptionally well throughout our 60 years as an independent service.

We can never allow ourselves to lose that focus — it defines who we are, as well as what we do.

What we are entrusted with is far too important for anything less than total, selfless devotion to our Country and the mission of the United States Air Force.

*—T. Michael Moseley,
Air Force Chief of Staff*

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Our office is located in room 2118 of the Wing Headquarters Building. Deadline for the next issue is Nov. 9.

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Cargo Courier named best paper in ANG for the 3rd straight year

The Cargo Courier has again been named the best newspaper of its kind in the Air National Guard, winning a third-consecutive title in the 2006 National Guard Bureau Media Contest.

The annual competition fields a panel of journalism experts to evaluate newspapers from across the Army and Air National Guard.

With the latest win, The Cargo Courier has now taken first-place honors in six of past 12 years, and second-place honors in four of the remaining six years.

Significant contributors to The Cargo Courier during the award period were staff writer Senior Airman Malcolm Byrd; photographers Staff Sgt. Diane Stinnett, Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora and Tech. Sgt. Phil Speck; and editor Capt. Dale Greer.

“This award recognizes a lot of sustained, hard work on the part of many people,” said Captain Greer, the wing’s public affairs officer.

“I’d like to thank every member of the 123rd Airlift Wing public affairs team for their continued dedication to the mission and their true commitment to excellence.

“They exemplify the Air Force Core Values of Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence in All We Do.”

Captain Greer also won two individual awards — first place for sportswriting and third place in the National Guard Bureau David J. Super Print Journalist of the Year competition.

Personnel flight wins award

NGB selects unit as tops in its field

By Capt. Dale Greer
Wing Public Affairs Officer

The National Guard Bureau has selected the Kentucky Air Guard’s 123rd Mission Support Flight as the top personnel unit in the nation, honoring it with the 2006 Gerrit D. Foster Jr. Outstanding MPF Achievement Award.

The award is a reflection of extraordinary unit accomplishments at a time when the personnel career field is undergoing drastic drawdowns and reconfigurations, said Capt. Shawn Keller, commander of the 123rd Mission Support Flight.

“The way we deliver personnel services to our Airmen is changing at a faster pace than ever before,” Captain Keller said.

“Our military personnel flights are constantly being tasked to do more with less, and the transformation to customer self-service means we will continue to become a smaller career field.

“To be named one of the best personnel flights in the entire Air National Guard — especially during this time of unprecedented change — is just a phenomenal achievement.

“I couldn’t be more proud of this team and the sacrifices they have made to accomplish the mission.”

That mission was especially challenging during fiscal year 2006 — the period for which the award was given — because of the Kentucky Air Guard’s sustained high operation tempo.

During this time, the mission support flight expertly juggled a busy deployment schedule that saw more than 550 personnel deployed worldwide in the Global War on Terror and other active-duty missions.

The flight also continued to deploy support teams for hurricanes Katrina and Rita, sending 263 Kentucky Airmen to the Gulf Coast for emergency response operations.

Meanwhile, the mission support flight continued its preparations for the 2006 Air Mobility Command Operational Readiness Inspection, which tested the wing’s ability to pack up the base, deploy to a remote location, fight a simulated war and return home safely.

The flight’s personnel deployment function — a team that processes Airmen for departure — was praised by the Inspector General for successfully deploying 391 personnel during the ORI, despite a real-world tornado warning, power failures and system crashes.

The flight’s Deployment Control Center representatives were further identified by the IG as superior performers, and its forward-located in-processing center garnered an “excellent” rating.

Back home, the Kentucky Air Guard exceeded all Air National Guard recruiting goals for fiscal year 2006.



Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

Members of the 123rd Mission Support Flight pose with their award from the NGB.

Civil engineering squadron comp

By Capt. Dale Greer
Wing Public Affairs Officer

Thirty members of the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron returned to the Arizona desert this summer as part of Operation Jump Start, the National Guard-led mission to improve security along the U.S.-Mexican border.

The troops, who deployed to Naco, Ariz., from July 21 to Aug. 4, graded access roads and erected tactical infrastructure along a five-mile stretch of border in support of the Naco Border Patrol Station, said Lt. Col. Connie Allen, the unit's commander.

Besides placing 100 tons of gravel and installing a new culvert in a washed-out section of road, the Kentucky Airmen set 252 fence poles and 2,885 feet of concrete formwork, Colonel Allen said.

The team then placed 135 cubic yards of concrete, resulting in 2,640 feet of completed foundation for new fencing.

The project is designed to frustrate illegal entry into the United States by giving U.S. Border Patrol agents enough time to respond to suspicious activities, officials said.

Working with the Border Patrol proved to be one of the highlights of the deployment, said Maj. John Cassel, operations officer for the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron.

"We felt pretty good about the mission because it gave us an opportunity to help out the Border Patrol folks," he said.

"It also provided us with a chance to do some good civil engineering training."

The squadron last deployed to Arizona in August 2006, when it erected 500 yards of steel fencing and placed 70 vehicle barricades along the border at Naco.



Master Sgt. Robert Jameson/KyANG



Maj. John Cassel/KyANG

Left and below: Tech. Sgt. Tod Ketterer and Civil Engineering Squadron welds steel fence posts near the Naco, Ariz., Border Patrol Station as part of the deployment this summer as part of Operation Jump Start.



Left: Airman 1st Class Nick Ketterer sends hand signals to the operator of a cement truck to control the flow of concrete as it pours into forms along the fence line.

Right: Civil engineers direct the concrete into footers on which steel fencing will be erected.

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Master Sgt. Robert Jameson/KyANG



Chief Master Sgt. Steve Peters/KyANG

Above: Road crews repair a washout on an access road that runs along the U.S.-Mexican border. The road is used by Border Patrol agents to monitor illegal entries.

Below: Senior Airman Elizabeth Humphrey (foreground) and Senior Master Sgt. Carol Davis check the alignment of a fence post being set.



Maj. John Cassel/KyANG



Chief Master Sgt. Steve Peters/KyANG

Airmen keeping Iraqi supply routes open

By Senior Airman Andrew Dumboski
386th Air Expeditionary Wing

SOUTHWEST ASIA — Wearing more than 40 pounds of body armor, an NCO walks along the side of an Iraqi highway as the sun rises behind him, and keeps a sharp eye out for dangers and hazards.

Staff Sgt. Charles Lemley, along with other Airmen of the 887th Security Forces Squadron's Bravo Flight, patrols convoy routes outside of Camp Bucca, Iraq, securing the dangerous roads for resupply and troop movement.

"We perform route-clearance patrols, sweeping main supply routes for improvised explosive devices," said Sergeant Lemley, a fire-team leader for Scorpion 1-6.

The Airmen of Scorpion 1-6 are on-shift 12 to 15 hours a day, six days a week, patrolling a single stretch of highway. Spending so much time keeping an eye on their stretch of road helps them get the job done.

"When we first got here, we were calling out the explosive ordnance disposal team a lot, but we all know the area very well now. We can tell if something has been put out here recently," Sergeant Lemley said.

The Airmen will often get out of their vehicles during their patrols and spend time getting a closer look at the environment. The amount of time the teams spend on dismounted patrols varies, said Tech. Sgt. Donnie Gallagher, Scorpion 1-6 squad leader. Sometimes they'll only get out of the vehicle to check on a possible improvised explosive device, other times they may patrol for a kilometer or two on foot.

"You see a lot more when you get out and walk," Sergeant Gallagher said.

And they do see IEDs.

In late July, a member of Scorpion 1-1 was injured when an IED exploded beside his Humvee. Staff Sgt. Chris Forsythe was riding in the passenger-side front seat when shrapnel from the explosion tore through his door, breaking his arm.

"There's a particular stretch that we patrol called 'IED alley,'" Sergeant Forsythe said the day after the attack. "The one that hit me was buried just before that."

Typically on their patrols, children come out and ask for water from the Airmen. The kids come out with their parents and the Airmen usually give them bottled water and



Staff Sgt. Raymond Mills/USAF

Tech. Sgt. Donnie Gallagher and a fellow Airman from the 887th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron scan a supply route for improvised explosive devices in Iraq.

some pens for school.

But on the morning Sergeant Forsythe was hit, they didn't come.

"As we rolled into the area where the kids usually are, we started to get out some water," Sergeant Forsythe said. "Then someone noticed that the kids weren't there. It wasn't even a second after they said something over the radio that we were hit."

Sergeant Forsythe was the vehicle commander for the lead vehicle on the patrol; his Humvee was totaled instantly. While he was the only one injured enough to be sent home, he wasn't the only Airmen injured in the blast. The heavy-weapons gunner for the lead vehicle was also injured when he received glass and shrapnel to his face.

"They were both very lucky," Sergeant Lemley said. "I've known Sergeant Forsythe for almost our entire Air Force careers, and I'm glad he's OK and that he'll be able to see his family sooner."

Despite the risk and their life-threatening experiences the Airmen of Scorpion 1-6 continue to carry on and accomplish their mission.

The stretch of highway Scorpion 1-6 patrols includes the cloverleaf intersection where Airman 1st Class Elizabeth Jacobson was killed in September 2005. And she wasn't the only casualty. After an Army specialist was killed there in 2006, the decision was made to keep constant security on the intersection.

"We spend a few hours during every one of our patrols maintaining security on the cloverleaf," Sergeant Gallagher said. "Between the many patrols that go on in this area, there is always someone nearby 24 hours a day and 7 days a week."

With the exception of one or two people, the Airmen of Scorpion 1-6 deployed together from the 822nd Security Forces Squadron at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., in May.

Policy updated on wear of battle uniform

WASHINGTON — Now that the Airman Battle Uniform is on the shelves of some military clothing sales stores, Air Force uniform officials here released a revised ABU wear policy message Sept. 5 to ensure Airmen are aware of the standards for the new uniform.

The message is a follow-up to a message released in February.

“The first wear message was very much theater-oriented because only deployers, general officers and command chiefs had the ABU,” said Lt. Col. Shawna Morrill, the chief of the Air Force uniforms and recognition branch at the Pentagon. “Now that the uniform is becoming more available to Airmen, it’s time to re-address the wear policy as well as talk about the winter items.”

Some items addressed in the new policy letter include:

- The mandatory wear date for the ABU is November 2011. The ABU or battle dress uniform can neither be mandated nor prohibited during this transition period.

- Desert tan, crew-neck T-shirts are the only T-shirts authorized for the wear with the ABU. Desert sand-colored turtlenecks are authorized for wear in cold weather.

- ABU sage green boots are authorized for wear with all utility uniforms. Desert tan boots are also authorized for wear with the ABU until the mandatory wear date.

- Only the ABU patrol cap is authorized for wear with the ABU outside the area of responsibility, or AOR. Organizational caps and patches are no longer authorized.

- Occupational badges are optional.

COPs providing answers through secure Web sites

Virtual communities now house official information on broad range of topics

By Staff Sgt. Matthew Bates
Air Force News Agency

SAN ANTONIO — The Air Force now has a “virtual community” where individuals can go anytime to share information with their peers anywhere in the world.

Called “Knowledge Now,” this community is a collaborative Web system that is accessible through the Air Force Portal and is designed to allow Airmen of all ranks, specialties and skill levels to communicate with each other on a variety of topics.

“The objective is to create an environment of people from across the Air Force where they can collaborate and share their expertise on a variety of subjects,” said Randy Adkins, director of the Air Force Center of Excellence for Knowledge Management.

These subjects are divided into databases and joint work spaces called Communities of Practice, or COPs. This capability has proven to be one of the system’s more popular features, Mr. Adkins said.

These “communities” serve as a resource for Airmen who need information to accomplish a mission.

One example, said Mr. Adkins, was in 2003 when a junior Airman was deployed to Baghdad and told to set up an armory.

The Airman had never performed this task and was unsure how to accomplish it. So, he logged into Knowledge Now, went into the security forces COP and sent out a request for help.

He received an answer from a senior master sergeant in the United States who detailed exactly how to set up an armory and provided instruction manuals.

The Airman’s armory was up and running in no time.

“This system can be used to help someone with just about any problem or information

request imaginable,” Mr. Adkins said.

With nearly 200,000 users and more than 9,000 COPs, the list of subjects covered in Knowledge Now includes everything from space tactics to special weapons to system management to B-2 Spirit radar modification, Mr. Adkins said.

Indeed, members of the Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Airlift Wing have their own Community of Practice site, which offers a range of information on upcoming events and training opportunities.

Because the system is more secure than a military e-mail account, users can use Knowledge Now to send operations manuals, training guides and enlisted performance reports to all corners of the globe.

There is even a secure version of the system available to units and users who use Secure Internet. Protocol Router, or SIPR, to communicate.

Initially created in 2002, Knowledge Now is continually growing and evolving.

The system is seeing approximately 8,000 new users and dozens of new communities being started every month.

And it’s not just for Air Force people. The system is open to active-duty, Guard and Reserve people from the Army, Navy and Marine Corps as well.

So, growth is exactly what the system’s developers want to see.

“Ideally, we’d like to see everybody in the Air Force and the military as a whole using this system,” said Bill Miles, Air Force Knowledge Now program manager.

This program is also in line with the chief of staff’s directives regarding information sharing and knowledge enhancement within the Air Force.

“We have all heard the phrase “Flexibility is the key to airpower,” said Gen. T. Michael Moseley. “I would like to add that knowledge-enabled Airmen are the key to flexibility.”

Knowledge Now can be found at <https://afkm.wpafb.af.mil/ASPs/CoP/Entry.asp?Filter=OO>. Users also may access the system from home via the Air Force Portal.

Awards

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Aircraft maintenance personnel working from locations in Southwest Asia and Germany contributed significantly to the success of these missions, accomplishing “an astounding 99 percent departure reliability rate and a superior mission capability rate of 88 percent,” General Hunt said.

Other support troops, including security forces and civil engineers, provided crucial services at Baghdad International Airport. Firefighters from the wing were instrumental in saving more than \$20 million in equipment from destruction by quickly containing a fire in a hangar stocked with petroleum and munitions.

The Metcalf Trophy was awarded for the wing’s accomplishments during calendar year 2006.

During this time, the unit expertly managed a busy deployment schedule, sending 560 troops to locations around the world, including sites in Afghanistan, Iraq, Curacao, Qatar, Kyrgyzstan and Antarctica.

The unit also supported Operation Coronet Oak, airlifting more than 18 tons of cargo to locations throughout South America and the Caribbean; and Operation Jump Start, the National Guard-led effort to secure the nation’s border with Mexico.

The latter effort included more than 30 civil engineering troops who were among the first nationwide to deploy for a mission to erect border fencing; a cadre of Kentucky Airmen who volunteered to monitor illegal border crossings under austere field conditions; and a group of Kentucky Air Guard officers who established a leadership team at Joint Forces Headquarters in Arizona.



Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG

Col. Mark Kraus (center), commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, accepts the Curtis N. “Rusty” Metcalf Trophy from the Kentucky Air Guard’s 2007 Airman of the Year, Senior Airman Garrett Gerald, during the Sept. 16 awards ceremony as Brig. Gen. Howard Hunt, Kentucky’s assistant adjutant general for Air, stands at attention.

The wing also successfully completed an Air Mobility Command Operational Readiness Inspection, achieved unit staffing levels of 100.4 percent and continued an enviable safety record, with 63,416 accident-free flying hours since 1992.

Speaking to the audience during last month’s award ceremony, Colonel Kraus said the Metcalf trophy rightly recognizes the exceptional work and sacrifices made by members of the 123rd Airlift Wing during 2006.

“It’s been a long year of inspections, exercises and deployments to the farthest

reaches of the globe,” he said. “In every instance, and with every tasking, you have performed with professionalism, dedication, perseverance and a great attitude that has reflected well on the Kentucky Air National Guard.

“I could not be more proud or feel more privileged than to serve alongside you in defense of America.

“Today, receiving the Rusty Metcalf Trophy formalizes the fact that you are the top airlift wing in the nation, and that makes you a champion in my book. You earned this award, and you deserve it.”

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