

# THE CARGO COURIER

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

Vol. XXVII, No. 4 • April 14, 2012

## 123rd earns 15th Outstanding Unit Award

### Top White House official honors wing, HQ and special tactics unit

By Maj. Dale Greer  
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

One of President Barack Obama's top advisors praised the Kentucky Air National Guard for superior achievement March 18, calling the organization "second to none" during a ceremony honoring the 123rd Airlift Wing for winning a nearly unprecedented 15th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

Also recognized were Kentucky Air National Guard Headquarters, which accepted its 9th Air Force Organizational Excellence Award; and the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, which received an Air Force Meritorious Unit Award from Air Force Special Operations Command.

"It is indeed a pleasure for me to be here and recognize the great accomplishments of the more than 1,200 Citizen-Airmen in the Kentucky Air National Guard," said Richard Reed, special assistant to the president for national security affairs and senior director for resilience policy. "The missions you perform are critically important to ensuring our nation's security, defense and disaster response, both at home and abroad."

The 123rd Airlift Wing's 15th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award is especially noteworthy, Reed told an audience of more than 1,000 Airmen who packed a hangar at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base. Research indicates that only three other units have ever earned 15 AFOUAs.

"This level of achievement is a testament to the 123rd Airlift Wing's rich legacy of service and excellence, dating back to your founding in 1947," he said. "With six Distinguished Flying Unit Plaques, three Metcalf Trophies, three 15th Air Force Solano Trophies and three Spaatz Trophies, the 123rd Airlift Wing is among the most — if not the most — decorated units in the United States Air Force.

"That heritage of excellence continues today. Your recent accomplishments show a dedication to mission performance that is really unsurpassed. Whether supporting the war overseas or defense of the homeland in the United States, you are always there."

During the award period, which ran from October 2009 to September 2011, the wing deployed 741 personnel to 32 locations in 21 countries. Many were in direct combat or combat-support missions, including 150 Airmen who deployed to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, with five of the unit's C-130 aircraft to fly airlift missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Those Airmen logged an unprecedented 100 percent mission-capable rate while flying 3,600 sorties that transported 41,000 passengers and moved 13,500 tons of cargo, including 3.5 million pounds of airdropped materiel. They also broke multiple monthly records for overall combat airdrops and amount of cargo moved in theater.

Members of the 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron deployed to Bagram, too, completing more than \$300 million in base construction projects in six months, including a fully functional Air Mobility Command passenger terminal and the first permanent C-130 maintenance hangar.

In a novel concept, the wing deployed 17 Airmen to Afghanistan for Agribusiness Development Teams 1 and 2, fostering the creation of a sustainable agriculture economy and boosting income for 1,400 Afghan



Senior Airman Max Rechel/KyANG

**Col. Greg Nelson, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, pins the unit's 15th Air Force Outstanding Unit Award streamer to the wing's guidon during a ceremony in the base Fuel Cell Hangar March 18.**

raisin vineyards by 50 percent in less than 6 months. One of the wing's officers was later selected as commander of ADT 3 — the first time an Air Guardsman has led an agribusiness development team. That group of 60 Army and Air National Guardsmen coordinated Afghanistan's first-ever commercial mulberry harvest in the Panshir Valley, producing 75 metric tons of mulberries and netting about \$45,000 for local farmers.

See AWARDS, Page 6

# *2012 is our Year of Improvement; So how is the 123rd Airlift Wing doing?*

**W**e are four months into 2012, and I want to know how we are doing with our Year of Improvement.

I need to know from you: How are we doing? Have we improved our communications? Have we improved the relationship between our traditional and full-time forces? These are our two main goals this year.

How are we doing?

Have we taken the time to look at the processes in everything we do to find areas of waste or duplication that can be eliminated? What system or program have we used to help us with our improvement process?

Who have we identified in our wing, group, squadron, flight, unit or individual work center to attend training on process improvement and lead our efforts?

Have we taken the time to read about Air Force Smart Operations for the Twenty-first Century (AFSO21)?

Understanding we don't need to be a black belt or even a green belt, do we know the eight simple steps of AFSO21? Do we know how these eight steps are synonymous with the steps of Six-Sigma, and the OODA Loop process of military planning and strategy?

Are we looking for ways to improve



**Col. Greg Nelson**  
123rd Airlift Wing Commander

our preparation for the upcoming AEF deployment? Have we read the After Action Reports or Lessons Learned from 2010? Are we thinking about what will be the same as last time and what will be new?

How are we doing?

Are we using process improvement while accomplishing our Unit Self Inspections? These are due in just over a month, so isn't this a great opportunity to incorporate the new Management Internal Control Tool into our self inspection checklist?

Are we using our Unit Self Inspection program this year to begin daily preparation for our Unit Compliance Inspection next year?

Are we looking for ways to improve our support for our Airmen, our families, our retirees and our local community? What can we do to help them with their problems? What are we doing to communicate with them throughout the month, not just on UTA weekend?

How are we representing the 123 AW in our community to support recruiting quality members?

What are we doing to improve individually? What are we doing this year to improve our readiness of mind and body? What are we doing to improve our physical, social, psychological and spiritual wellness? What process are we using? What program are we using? How are we measuring our success?

Lots of questions for us here. I wonder how many we can answer positively.

I need to know how we are doing. I will visit each Group within the next two months to find out what you are doing and how we can incorporate your successes throughout the Wing.

Bottom-line, I need to know: How are we doing with our Year of Improvement? The 123rd Airlift Wing Stands Ready!

**This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services. Contents of The Cargo Courier are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Air Force.**

**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.**

**We welcome your feedback. Please contact the Public Affairs Office directly if you have suggestions for articles or photography. Publication deadline for submissions to the next issue is May 4. Our office is located in room 1160 of the Wing Headquarters Building.**

### **123rd Airlift Wing Editorial Staff**

- Wing Commander.....Col. Greg Nelson
- Chief of Public Affairs.....Maj. Dale Greer
- Public Affairs Manager.....Master. Sgt. Philip Speck
- Photo Editor.....Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora
- Staff Writer.....Master Sgt. Diane Stinnett
- Staff Writer.....Tech. Sgt. Jason Ketterer
- Staff Writer.....Senior Airman Maxwell Rechel

**Address: 1101 Grade Lane, Louisville, KY 40213-2678**  
**Phone: (502) 413-4484 • Fax: (502) 413-4676**  
**E-mail: allen.greer@ang.af.mil**

*Digital versions of Cargo Courier content are available at the Kentucky Air Guard's Web site — [www.123aw.ang.af.mil](http://www.123aw.ang.af.mil)*

## Thunder static display open to wing members, retirees on April 21

Airmen assigned to the 123rd Airlift Wing, their family members and retirees are invited to enjoy a static display of Thunder Over Louisville aircraft on the base flight line from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 21.

The display is not open to the general public, and personnel must have a valid DoD identification card to access the installation, said Capt. Josh Ketterer, executive officer for the 123rd Operations Group.

Car pooling is encouraged due to limited on-base parking.

April 21st marks the 22nd annual Thunder Over Louisville Air Show. Since the show's inception in 1991, the wing has hosted military performers at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base.

"The 123rd consistently provides a high level of service to the community and a high level of hospitality to our visiting air crews and maintainers during Thunder, and this year will be no different," Ketterer said.

"Based on years of hospitality and the finest air show venue in the country, Thunder and the 123rd were selected to host one of only four air shows in the nation this year celebrating the Centennial of Marine Aviation."

The United States Marine Corps began its flying program on May 22, 1912.

"Since then," Ketterer said, "the U.S. Marine Corps air wing has developed into a standalone air force that is among the world's finest."

Marine aviation's purpose is the support the Corps' two primary missions: amphibious assault and vertical envelopment.

Thunder and the 123rd will showcase the legacy of Marine Aviation by playing host to F4U Corsairs, SB2C Helldivers, A-4 Skyhawks, AV-8B Harriers, F/A-18 Hornets and a myriad of other current and historical Marine Aviation assets, Ketterer said.



Cadets from the Navy Junior ROTC program at Valley High School in Louisville board a Kentucky Air National Guard C-130 here Dec. 14 for an orientation flight.

# Local students flying high after Ky. C-130 orientation

By Maj. Dale Greer  
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Dana Brookings has always loved flying, but she never thought about becoming a pilot until a recent experience aboard a Kentucky Air National Guard C-130.

Brookings, a cadet in the Navy Junior ROTC program at Louisville's Valley High School, participated in an orientation flight on the venerable Hercules transport plane Dec. 14 and is now considering a career in aviation.

"I can honestly say that, when I saw how high above the ground we were and I could see nothing but clouds, my love of flying intensified," said Brookings, who holds the rank of cadet seaman apprentice. "I'd never considered being a pilot — Air Force, Navy or otherwise — until (that flight)."

The sortie was equally memorable for many of Brookings' classmates, about 70 of whom joined her on the orientation flight. Their day began at the Kentucky Air Guard Base with a unit mission briefing, followed by a question-and-answer session with pilots and loadmasters from the Louisville-based 165th Airlift Squadron.

The cadets then boarded the C-130 for a flight to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, where they toured the U.S. Air Force Museum and immersed themselves in active-duty military culture before returning to Louisville via C-130 that afternoon.

Cadet Lt. Junior Grade Sabin Martinez said he enjoyed the museum tour, but he reserved his highest praise for the C-130 flight, which Martinez described as "amazing."

"It was my first time experiencing flight, and it was more than exhilarating," he recalled. "From the runway to liftoff to cruising altitude, every part put me in a sense of awe. Feeling the weight shift as we inclined into the air, the pressure flux in my ears, the sensitivity to every turn — it was just something I would never have experienced without being in NJROTC and (having the Kentucky Air Guard's) help."

Cadet Seaman Apprentice William Lucas described the C-130 as "the coolest thing I think I've ever seen." A first-time flyer, Lucas initially feared getting sick, "but after we were up and going, I enjoyed it," he said.

"The coolest thing is when I got to look out the window, and we were over the clouds. I thought we would see grass or buildings, but no — we were on top of the clouds!"

Cadet Seaman Apprentice Alisa Bolin was equally apprehensive before the flight, but her nervousness soon turned to exhilaration.

"This was my first time flying, and I enjoyed every minute of it," said Bolin, who hopes to serve in the Air Force or Air National Guard after graduation. "At first I thought I was going to be scared, but when the plane took off, I felt like I belonged in the air. I look forward to joining the Air Force even more now than I did before going on the trip."

# 'Incredible performance'

## 123rd CRG wows officials, earns U.S. Transportation Command verification for crucial joint cargo-handling capability at Eagle Flag

By Maj. Dale Greer  
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKE-HURST, N.J. — The men and women of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Contingency Response Group set new standards for excellence when they deployed here last month to demonstrate their logistics capability in an austere environment, according to officials from U.S. Transportation Command and the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center.

As a result, U.S. Transportation Command has now verified the 123rd Contingency Response Group as the first CRG in the Air National Guard that's fully capable of operating a Joint Task Force-Port Opening — a logistics hub that combines an Air Force Aerial Port of Debarkation with an Army trucking and distribution unit.

The Kentucky group, working in conjunction with the U.S. Army's 690th Rapid Port Opening Element, established a fully operational JTF-PO here within 24 hours of the main body's arrival March 26, then proceeded to offload an unprecedented 1,068 short tons of simulated cargo from in-bound planes before trucking it to a forward distribution point over the next three days, inspectors said.

"U.S. Transportation Command officials said we 'knocked it out of the park' and described our performance as 'best seen to date' in two key areas — cargo operations and force protection," according to Col. Warren Hurst, commander of the JTF-PO and 123rd CRG. "We moved 475 pallets of cargo in just over 72 hours, which was a new record for this exercise. That's truly gratifying because it's a reflection of everyone's individual and team efforts. I saw phenomenal teamwork all the way around, from the aerial porters who were unloading aircraft to the Army RPOE Soldiers trucking cargo to the forward node. Right from the start, the RPOE integrated very well with the aerial port and made it a seamless operation."

The Kentucky group has successfully executed this kind of mission before, Hurst noted. In 2010, for example, the 123rd CRG operated one of two overseas airlift hubs supporting earthquake relief operations in Haiti. Now, with its success in New Jersey, the unit has TRANSCOM's official seal of approval.

"I think we have now truly demonstrated our ability to accomplish this mission anywhere in the world," Hurst said. "It's a significant milestone in the history of the 123rd CRG, but also for the Air National Guard to have verification on this crucial mission set. Any large response, whether it's for

combat operations or humanitarian operations, will need a JTF-PO capability."

Contingency response groups fulfill a unique role in America's military, providing a kind of "airbase in a box." They can deploy to a non-functional airfield and establish aerial port operations within 48 hours, bringing with them all the equipment and expertise required to operate for up to 45 days. Skill sets include air traffic control, cargo handling, power production, aircraft maintenance and security forces.

"We provide everything necessary to get airflow moving into what otherwise would be an inoperable airfield," Hurst explained. "That's a particularly valuable asset following natural disasters like earthquakes or hurricanes, where relief supplies need to flow in quickly and injured personnel may need to be medevaced elsewhere for medical care."

The Kentucky unit's JTF-PO verification was staged in New Jersey as part of Eagle Flag, a USAF Chief of Staff-directed exercise designed to test a unit's ability to operate in a deployed environment. Traditionally an air base opening exercise, Eagle Flag has evolved into a proof of concept for Joint Task Force-Port Opening, defense support to civil authorities and other contingency operations, according to the U.S. Air Force Expeditionary Center, which runs Eagle Flag.

The 123rd's exercise began when a Joint Assessment Team of less than a dozen personnel arrived March 25 to survey the airfield, determine whether it could support required operations and begin initial set-up. They found a usable tarmac, a bare patch of sandy ground and little else. The following day, the main body of about 80 Airmen arrived from Louisville, Ky., along with 47 active-duty Soldiers from Fort Eustis, Va. Additional Air Guardsmen from Mississippi and New Jersey augmented the package.

The troops banded together quickly to set up camp, but exercise officials had other plans, noted 1st Lt. Kevin Eilers, the 123rd CRG's bioenvironmental engineering officer. Inspectors decided to delay the simulated arrival of two aircraft carrying most of the equipment needed to erect tents for sleeping quarters. By the time the gear arrived, winds had picked up to 30 knots, and the temperature had dropped to 20 degrees.

"It was pretty cold and very windy," Eilers recalled. "Setting up tents was difficult, but we got it done. Then we didn't have heat in every tent the first night, so it was a pretty tough day. But those folks who did endure the icy temperatures adapted and overcame."

By the next day, operations were humming

smoothly, Hurst said, despite constant exercise injects that required JTF-PO members to meet with simulated local military leaders, politicians, journalists and citizens — all being played by Eagle Flag actors.

"We had initial operating capability within 24 hours of the Joint Assessment Team's arrival, and full operating capability within 42 hours — six full hours ahead of the exercise requirement," Hurst noted.

"Our public affairs team, two staff judge advocates and chaplain were essential to keeping those operations on track," he added. "All had vital work that contributed directly to our success. Many of the exercise injects could not have been handled without their expertise and professionalism, which allowed the mission to continue without interruption."

Eagle Flag officials had similar praise for several other duty sections, including the Joint Assessment Team, power production, medical, logistics and security forces, which dispatched a highly effective Quick Reaction Force to the forward node — 5.7 miles away — about 10 minutes after it came under attack from enemy forces on the next-to-last day.

But their highest praise was reserved for the smooth flow of cargo handled jointly by the Air Guard and Army units.

"You guys moved cargo like no one else," said Lt. Col. Rhett Boldenow, commander of the 421st Combat Training Squadron at Joint Base MDL. "The measure I use is: How many pallets are in the clearance yard? You guys never had more than one airplane's worth of pallets sitting out there at one time. Overall, you did a great job with this mission. I was really impressed. You raised the bar for everyone else."

Master Sgt. Joshua Younce said the credit goes to effective cooperation between Air Guardsmen and Army Soldiers.

"It was truly a purple, seamless operation," said Younce, chief of the 123rd Mobile Aerial Port Flight. "A lot of times, you couldn't tell whether it was the Air Force or the Army that was performing a task. When someone saw a hole that needed to be filled, they jumped in and filled it."

Army Maj. Keith Pruett agreed.

"I've not had a lot of opportunity to work closely with the Air Force," said Pruett, commander of the 690th RPOE. "I've never dealt with an APOD. So building that teamwork with blue and green, and just getting the job done — that was seamless, I think. Everyone knew what we had

See CRG, Back Page



Left: Maj. Greg Schanding, a civil engineer for the 123rd CRG, plots tent layouts March 26 at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., as a member of the Joint Assessment Team for Eagle Flag.

Below: Col. Warren Hurst, commander of the 123rd CRG, meets for tea with an actor playing the role of a local politician during Eagle Flag March 28.



Master Sgt. Phil Speck/KyANG

Maj. Dale Greer/KyANG



Master Sgt. Phil Speck/KyANG

Staff Sgt. Brian Leach, aerial port ramp supervisor for the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Contingency Response Group, pushes a pallet of cargo from a C-17 during Eagle Flag at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., on March 28.

## Awards

Continued from Front Page

Over in Kyrgyzstan, the wing deployed 28 Security Forces to Manas Air Base, protecting 4,000 personnel and over \$2 billion in assets during the massive build-up of forces needed to support a troop surge in U.S. Central Command.

When a devastating earthquake struck Haiti in 2010, the wing's 123rd Contingency Response Group was hand-picked to open an airlift hub in the Dominican Republic, enabling the evacuation of 210 personnel and delivering 725 short tons of life-saving aid. The CRG Commander also coordinated the airflow into Haiti and later deployed to run air operations for tsunami and earthquake relief in Japan.

"I've had the opportunity to watch elements of this unit in action in the Dominican Republic, and I've certainly spent a fair amount of time dealing with the aftermath of events in Japan," said Reed, who leads the development of disaster-response policy at the White House. "I can tell you: At the end of the day, your work speaks for itself. In most cases, that's either a really good thing or a really bad thing. In your case, it's a damn good thing."

Reed noted that the 123rd Airlift Wing has a long history of disaster response and humanitarian relief, including missions in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Gustav.

"Your militia heritage really gives you a special passion to support the citizens of the United States," he said. "And you are true innovators in homeland security and defense, as exemplified by The 123rd Airlift Wing Initial Response Hub, which stands alone in the capability it will provide during response to a major disaster."

Now operational, the Initial Response Hub is a small group of Kentucky Air Guardsmen with the training, equipment and C-130 aircraft to deploy within hours to the site of a natural disaster or enemy attack, set up command and control of a non-functioning airfield, provide first-feed situational awareness to the national command authority and begin accepting incoming aircraft for humanitarian assistance or medical evacuation. No other unit in the U.S. military has all of these capabilities housed in one unit, with the C-130 aircraft to permit immediate response.

"In short, you bring the capability our nation will need during a crisis, and you will be there within a few hours of the call," Reed said. "It's a capability that will serve this nation well, and it's a capability we need to provide for the safety and welfare of Americans here, as well as citizens across the globe."

Reed said the Initial Response Hub's first-feed situational-awareness capability is especially valuable, given that reliable information is hard to come by in the early hours following a natural disaster.

"I spend a lot of time deconflicting informa-



Photos by Senior Airman Maxwell Rechel/KyANG

**Brig. Gen. Michael Dornbush, chief of the joint staff for Joint Forces Headquarters-Kentucky, pins a streamer on the flag of Kentucky Air National Guard Headquarters during the March 18 awards ceremony as Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, observes. The streamer represents Headquarters' 9th Air Force Organizational Excellence Award.**



**Lt. Col. Jeff Wilkinson, commander of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, pins an Air Force Meritorious Unit Award streamer on the squadron's guidon March 18.**

tion from a variety of sources to try to prepare senior leadership — in particular the president — for understanding what's going on, on the ground," he said. "That's not an easy task to do. So this capability will really help me paint the picture for the boss in such a way that he can make decisions from a very, very well-informed position."

Reed noted that the Initial Response Hub is

more than just an idea on paper. It was validated in 2010 when the wing earned an "Excellent" rating during the Air Mobility Command's first-ever homeland-defense Operational Readiness Inspection. It also was mobilized during the last three National Level Exercises — large-scale disaster-response scenarios involving a full spectrum of government agencies.

Last year, for example, the wing stood up an Initial Response Hub for medical evacuation in Missouri, directing 17 aircraft, 80 tons of cargo and 104 passengers while interoperating with U.S. Transportation Command, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and numerous other federal, state and local civilian organizations.

“The president’s guidance is pretty simple: We need to have an aggressive, well-coordinated and comprehensive response,” Reed said. “Your understanding of your mission in support of domestic operations is key. (Your wing commander) tells me the 123rd Airlift Wing is not the kind of unit that waits to be called when need arises. You pick up the phone and say, ‘You need us, and we’re on the way.’ I call that leaning forward, and I appreciate that. When America needs help, you’ve constantly demonstrated that you are ready and you will be there.”

The day’s other two awards recognized exceptional achievements by the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron and Headquarters, Kentucky Air National Guard.

The special tactics squadron earned a Meritorious Unit Award as part of the 720th Special Operations Group during an evaluation period that ran from October 2009 to September 2011. During that time, the Kentucky unit deployed more than third of its personnel in 29 combat and combat-support roles in Southwest Asia, Southeast Asia, Africa, South America and the Caribbean. The unit’s combat controllers and pararescuemen conducted more than 450 ground combat missions and 10,000 hours of Combat Search and Rescue, saving 54 personnel.

The squadron’s Airmen also were among the first U.S. troops on the ground following the Haiti earthquake, establishing air operations at Port-au-Prince and controlling the first C-17 disaster-relief airdrop.

“I was there when that happened,” Reed recalled, “and I can tell you, if it had not been for the efforts of that particular mission, that disaster-recovery operation could have gone south really, really quickly.”

Headquarters earned its 9th Air Force Organizational Excellence Award in part by aggressively seeking new missions for the Kentucky Air National Guard. During its award period, which also ran from October 2009 to September 2011, the unit launched successful campaigns to bring two new missions to Kentucky — a Fatality Search and Recovery Team; and a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package.

Reed noted that such accomplishments were remarkable, given the current climate of constrained resources and budget cuts that “don’t necessarily support any new missions, and yet you find a way to bring two to Kentucky.”

Headquarters Airmen also reached out to U.S. allies abroad, coordinating underwater search-and-rescue training for members of the Ecuador military and hosting foreign officers from 12 nations as part of comprehensive international



**Richard Reed, President Barack Obama’s special assistant for national security affairs, walks into the Fuel Cell Hangar March 18 to honor three Kentucky Air Guard units for excellence.**

education efforts.

“Congratulations again on your great accomplishments,” Reed said. “I can think of no honor more fitting than one which simply says, ‘Outstanding.’”

Kentucky’s adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, echoed Reed’s praise, calling March 18 an “historic day.”

“It’s not every day we’re fortunate to receive such distinguished awards, and certainly not three of them at one time,” Tonini said. “If you’re not from Kentucky, it might seem amazing — maybe even impossible — for a single unit, in this case the 123rd Airlift Wing, to receive not one, not two, but 15 Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards. Or that the headquarters unit could merit nine Air Force Organizational Excellence Awards. Some people might even be surprised to note that the best special tactics squadron in the nation resides right here in the Kentucky National Guard.

“But having spent 43 years in the Kentucky National Guard, I’m not surprised by any bit of this. I’ve seen for myself the professionalism and pride of our Airmen, both here at home and overseas. When these C-130s touch down in any of the seven continents, they bring with them the pride of Kentucky and a legacy that I believe is second to none. Our men and women exhibit their unbridled service in everything they do for the Commonwealth and their country, from Bagram to Kyrgyzstan, from Quito to Haiti, and most recently even Antarctica. Outstanding in every way.”

Kentucky’s assistant adjutant general for Air, Brig. Gen. Mark Kraus, encouraged the men and women of the Kentucky Air Guard to take pride in their accomplishments and the heritage of those who came before them.

“You should be rightly proud, not only of your recognition as top achievers but also of

the heritage of this organization — an organization that from its very beginning valued excellence and built upon that foundation block by block,” he said.

“Let me encourage you to continue to mark a path of excellence, both professionally and personally. It will equip you for the tasks and challenges that lie ahead and serve to inspire a future generation of Kentucky Air National Guardsmen who will follow your lead.

“Thank you again for your exemplary service, your sacrifice and the difference you make every day toward mission accomplishment. Folks, I simply could not be more proud to serve along side you.”

Col. Greg Nelson, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, thanked his Airmen for their continued legacy of excellence in defense of America.

“What a great day to be in the Kentucky Air National Guard, and what an outstanding day to be a member of the 123rd Airlift Wing,” he said. “To the men and women of the 123rd Airlift Wing: Thank You. This is your award. This is your day to celebrate.

“Wing Command Chief Master Sgt. Curtis Carpenter and I can’t thank you enough for the great things you did during this time period of October 2009 to September 2011. We also can’t thank you enough for every day you’ve been in the fight since the attack of 11 September 2001.

“Thanks to the retirees who established our heritage, and thanks to every single one of you for the oath you took, swearing your allegiance to support the constitution and your promise to fight for our freedom every single day.

“The 123rd Airlift Wing is the best tactical airlift wing in the United States Air Force. Thank for standing ready, thank you for flying safe and fighting hard.”

*Additional photos are posted at [www.flickr.com/photos/kyngpaol/sets/72157629629279335/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/kyngpaol/sets/72157629629279335/)*

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

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

## CRG

Continued from Page 4

to do, from operations to customs to clearance out to the forward node. It was the smoothest operation I've ever been a part of."

For Col. Spike Owens, commander of the USAF Expeditionary Operations School, the JTF-PO's weeklong demonstration was "an incredible performance."

"You should be very impressed with what you accomplished over the past week," Owens told the Airmen and Soldiers during an Eagle Flag outbrief March 30. "There's no doubt in my mind you guys are ready to go execute the mission."



Master Sgt. Phil Speck/KyANG

Aerial porters assigned to the 123rd CRG offload cargo from a C-17 using an all-terrain forklift at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., March 28 (top right). The cargo is then placed on a flat rack for uploading to a U.S. Army Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck in the JTF-PO marshaling yard (above). Soldiers from the Army's 690th RPOE next truck the cargo to the forward node, where it is transferred to flatbed trucks for eventual distribution to the final customer (right).

Additional photos are posted at [www.flickr.com/photos/kyngpaol/sets/72157629312644486/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/kyngpaol/sets/72157629312644486/)



Maj. Dale Greer/KyANG



Maj. Dale Greer/KyANG