

# THE CARGO COURIER

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

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## Mobile ops enhance disaster response

### Emergency command center provides broad interoperability with range of civilian agencies

By Airman Basic Joshua Horton  
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Airmen at the Kentucky Air National Guard have enhanced their ability to work with civilian agencies following a catastrophe, thanks to a new Mobile Emergency Operations Center.

The state-of-the-art trailer, informally called a MEOC, arrived on base Nov. 27 and provides an extremely capable command-and-control hub that can be towed to the scene of any domestic disaster, said Senior Master Sgt. Carol Davis, emergency manager for the 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron.

One of the things that makes the MEOC unique is its ability to tap into the civilian communications infrastructure, Davis explained. Most military equipment is designed to access military computer and communications networks instead.

“The MEOC provides on-scene communications and response capability we did not have previously,” Davis said. “We refer to our MEOC as having ‘.com communications,’ meaning it’s all civilian-capable. Military responders could also use it, but it isn’t equipped with ‘.mil’ communication systems. It is specifically designed for use with civilian agencies, and we would deploy the MEOC at the request of the civilian community. The civilian emergency management officials could then work out of it side-by-side with our military responders.”

The MEOC is 36 feet long by 13 feet wide and is a self-contained system, featuring its own electric generator capable of supporting 24-hour operations for three to five days. A satellite-based communications suite integrates multiple radio systems, three dedicated phone lines, national and local TV reception and a surveillance camera. The trailer also includes such amenities as a toilet, meeting room, microwave oven and refrigerator.

The \$750,000 MEOC will be based in Louisville, but Davis said it will be shared with other Air Guard units on an as-needed basis.

“It’s a regional asset that the National Guard Bureau has placed in the state of Kentucky. Ultimately, there will be 30 deployed to various wings throughout the United States.”

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Photos by Staff Sgt. Maxwell Rechel/KyANG

Senior Airman Eric Finley, an emergency manager for the 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron, operates a surveillance camera Dec. 1 in the unit’s new Mobile Emergency Operations Center.



The \$750,000 MEOC features an on-board electric generator, a full suite of civilian communications capabilities and meeting room space. Officials say it will enhance the Kentucky Air National Guard’s ability to support civilian emergency responders following a catastrophe in the United States.

# *Now is the time to throttle up for inspection*

I hope the holiday season was refreshing for everyone as we throttled back a little while folks took time off to spend with their families.

We start the new year with a full schedule of events that will culminate in May with a Consolidated Unit Inspection, or CUI.

We will have just over 100 inspectors and observers on our base during the CUI window.

Our main focus between now and May will be to ensure all our programs are in order and we have mastered the self-inspection process as we transition to the new Virtual Inspection Concept.

This means the Management Internal Control Toolset — MICT — does not happen just once every 5 years. It becomes a routine process as part of everyday readiness.

My expectation is that all unit commanders will be intimately familiar with their unit's status and are addressing any issues or concerns in a timely manner. Preparation is critical to our approach for these upcoming inspections.

We have been working on a self-established pace for building and accomplishing our self-inspection



**Col. Warren Hurst  
123rd Airlift Wing Commander**

checklists. Now is the time to throttle it up so we do not find ourselves trying to cut corners or accepting less as we approach cut-off dates prior to the inspection.

Please highlight areas that need more attention so we may allocate more resources to that effort as necessary.

Our goal is excellence; marginal programs are simply unacceptable.

Please take the time to review previous inspection reports for your

areas. We have them all on file if you have difficulty locating them. If you notice shortfalls, please bring them to the attention of your supervisors and up through the chain of command to resolve if required.

It is easy to get distracted from our objectives when we have numerous taskings, followed by additional short-notice requirements, and seemingly less time to accomplish it all.

That will not change as we continue to support the fight overseas and any domestic crises that may require our assistance.

We will always have growing expectations and the need to strike the right balance between all our activities.

I understand that, and I expect unit leaders to identify problem areas and ask for guidance if a shuffling of priorities becomes necessary.

We have a reputation of excellence that dates back to the birth of our wing. I have complete confidence that we will be very successful as long as we keep our eye on the ball.

Thanks for all your efforts. It is what makes this wing one of the best in the Air Force!

— Col. Warren Hurst

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We welcome your feedback. Please contact the Public Affairs Office directly if you have suggestions for articles or photography. Our office is located in room 1160 of the Wing Headquarters Building.

Publication deadline for submissions to the next issue is Jan. 18.

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## Humana a finalist for DoD employer support award

Humana Inc. was honored as a finalist for the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award during a ceremony Nov. 1 at its Louisville headquarters.

The award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. government to employers for their support of employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserves.

Robert Silverthorn Jr., a retired Army major general and chairman of the Kentucky Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, presented the honor to Humana chairman and CEO Mike McCallister.

"Today's event, while it focuses on the National Guard and Reserves, represents another opportunity for Humana to say 'Thank you' to all our military-affiliated associates and their families," McCallister said.

"Humana understands the importance of the healthcare needs that the Guard, Reserves and their families face, especially in this time of extended deployments."

In accepting the award, McCallister noted Humana's progress toward its goal of hiring 1,000 former servicemen and servicewomen or their spouses by late 2014. The company has hired 928 veterans and spouses to date.

Master Sgt. James Tongate, a Humana employee and loadmaster in the Kentucky Air National Guard's 165th Airlift Squadron, also spoke at the event.

"I'm proud to be a part of a company that strives to help those that have sacrificed for their country," Tongate said.

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of ESGR to recognize exceptional support from the employer community. In the years since, 160 employers have been honored with the award.

ESGR was established as a DoD agency 40 years ago to develop and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service.

# 4th Agribusiness team home from Afghanistan

## Task force comprised of Army, Air Guardsmen

By Army Capt. Stephen Martin  
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

FRANKFORT, Ky. — Just in time for the holidays, about 50 members of the Kentucky National Guard's Agribusiness Development Team 4 were welcomed home from Afghanistan Dec. 21 during a ceremony at Capital City Airport in Frankfort.

Family and friends weathered snow and the delayed arrival of the troops by several hours as they anxiously awaited the return of their loved ones.

For Elizabeth Toushee and her son, Benjamin Jr., it was the best Christmas gift anyone could ask for as her husband, Staff Sgt. Benjamin Toushee, returned from his first deployment.

"It's been a hard deployment but at the same time, it has been worth it," Elizabeth said. "Today is so amazing and wonderful, I

just feel so grateful."

Benjamin Jr. agreed with his mom.

"This is my daddy!" he screamed and jumped into his arms.

ADT 4 was charged with sustaining the relationships built between former ADTs and Afghan farmers to ensure the country becomes agriculturally self-sufficient through the development of the agricultural marketplace.

The task force is comprised of Army and Air National Guardsmen with a variety of skills in agricultural matters.

It was the fourth agribusiness mission for the Kentucky National Guard. ADT 5 is currently in Afghanistan and just replaced ADT 4.

Maj. Gen. Lonnie Culver, Deputy Adjutant General for the Kentucky Guard, presided over the ceremony welcoming the Soldiers and Airmen back to the Commonwealth.

"ADT 4 had the unique responsibility of bringing some good old-fashioned Kentucky agricultural know-how to a people plagued by decades of war," Culver said.

"Welcome home from a job well done, and merry Christmas!"



Army Capt. Andi Hahn/KyArNG

Friends and family members gather Dec. 21 at Capital City Airport in Frankfort to welcome home about 50 members of the Kentucky National Guard's Agribusiness Development Team 4. The task force is comprised of Kentucky Army and Air National Guardsmen.

# Christmas cheer



Photos by Staff Sgt. Maxwell Rechel/KyANG

**Above:** The daughter and son of Senior Airman Jose Lopez Castro, a crew chief for the 123rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, talk with Santa Claus during the 123rd Airlift Wing's family holiday party here Dec. 2.

**Right:** The daughter of Staff Sgt. Darrell Hinton, a structures specialist with the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron, gets her face painted during the event, which also featured games and door prizes.



**Below:** Staff Sgt. Melissa Longhofer, an orderly room administrator with the 123rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, plays bingo with her daughter.



## Annual holiday party draws over 85 children to Kentucky Air Guard

Christmas came a little early this year for the children of Kentucky Air National Guard members when Santa stopped by the 123rd Airlift Wing for the unit's family holiday celebration Dec. 2.

More than 85 boys and girls turned out for the annual party, which provided each youngster with the opportunity to pose for a picture with Santa and take home a sack full of presents donated by area businesses, said Dave Rooney, program manager for the wing's Airman and Family Readiness Group.

"I believe it was probably our best children's Christmas party yet," Rooney said.

"This is my fifth one, and it seems to get bigger year after year after year."

Rooney expressed his gratitude to the more than 20 volunteers who operated games, painted faces and handed out door prizes during the celebration.

"A big thanks to Ms. Sharon Williams, our top volunteer, for a lot of the planning, and to our key volunteer groups, who were instrumental in the party's success," he said.

"Their contributions were huge."

*View more photos at [flickr.com/photos/kyngpao/sets/72157632233325884/](http://flickr.com/photos/kyngpao/sets/72157632233325884/)*

# Wing using new targeted-recruiting tools

Magazine and radio ads appeal to students and prior-service individuals

By Master Sgt. Philip Speck  
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The Kentucky Air National Guard is now using local radio and magazine ads to capture the attention of potential recruits.

The targeted campaign, which began in November, includes radio advertisements aimed at prior service members and magazine ads designed to appeal to students who want help paying for college tuition, according to Master Sgt. Tommy Caruso, 123rd Airlift Wing Recruiting Office supervisor.

The radio ads are being broadcast on ESPN 680, a local AM sports station, while the magazine ads appear in the centerfold of the ESPN 680 College Basketball Guide, a full-color compendium of statistics, profiles, schedules and tournament brackets. The guide is being distributed at local businesses and during games for the University of Louisville, University of Kentucky and Indiana University.

Caruso said the effort is a more effective use of recruiting dollars than handing out promotional items at job fairs and local schools.

“If you buy a backpack or a pencil, you’re only reaching one person, but by buying a 30-second radio ad you can exponentially increase exposure to your target audience.”

With local college basketball teams starting the season at the top of the rankings, the partnership with ESPN radio was an easy



Courtesy photo

**This magazine advertisement, which appears in the centerfold of the 2012-2013 ESPN 680 College Basketball Guide, promotes the Kentucky Air National Guard’s college tuition assistance benefits. The ad is part of a new targeted-recruiting initiative.**

choice to get the Air Guard message to the masses, he added.

Master Sgt. Brett Dew, recruiting and retention superintendent for the Kentucky Air National Guard, said the campaign also is an excellent fit for the unit’s goal of recruiting a diverse and robust group of Airmen that reflects the local population.

“With college sports not knowing a color or creed, it’s a perfect tool for diversity recruiting,” he said.

Caruso said the radio ads are already getting

some attention.

“Since the radio ads have started to run, we’ve seen a slight bump in prior-service applicants.”

Future ads are planned to help fill job vacancies in advanced computer fields and to find individuals interested in technology. Others openings in the health profession are being advertised in national medical journals, Caruso said.

“We are trying to get the right message to the right people at the right time,” he said.



Members of the 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron conduct training on the MEOC’s video conferencing capabilities here Dec. 1.

## MEOC

Continued from Front Page

Kentucky was one of the first states to get a MEOC because of its proximity to surrounding Federal Emergency Management Agency regions, according to Senior Airman Eric Finley, an emergency management journeyman for the 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron.

“We can take it to any scene, whether it’s a hazmat incident or a natural disaster,” he said.

The first planned use of the MEOC’s capabilities will occur in March during a scheduled Major Accident Response Exercise, Davis said.

“We plan to put the MEOC to the test during the upcoming MARE. Until then, we have some work to do in acquainting our emergency managers and Emergency Operations Center personnel with the MEOC’s capabilities.”

# Dornbush concludes 4 decades of service

## Outgoing director of Joint Staff to retire in ceremony today

By Maj. Dale Greer  
123rd Airlift Wing Chief of Public Affairs

The Kentucky Air National Guard will mark the end of an era today when Michael Dornbush formally retires from duty, concluding a four-decade career that saw him rise from the rank of airman basic to brigadier general.

During those 40 years, the 123rd Airlift Wing has grown along with Dornbush, metamorphosing from a strategic reserve force to an operational unit whose personnel have served with distinction in thousands of deployments to dozens of countries around the world.

That level of achievement — in operations as diverse as earthquake relief, homeland defense and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan — is no accident, according to Brig. Gen. Mark Kraus, Kentucky's assistant adjutant general for Air. It comes as a direct result of the wing's institutionalized passion for excellence, and from men like Brig. Gen. Michael Dornbush who made it their mission to pay the legacy forward.

"Mike has had a tremendous impact on this organization by helping develop and sustain a standard of excellence as part of our culture," said Kraus, who has worked alongside Dornbush since the mid-1970s.

"He's the consummate professional officer — a mentor and leader for countless folks in whom he's made a tremendous difference in terms of their careers and personal lives. We're really going to feel the loss when Mike Dornbush retires. He's just a remarkable man and a remarkable officer."

Dornbush came to the Kentucky Air National Guard as an enlisted communications specialist in 1976 after serving more than three years in the active-duty Air Force and Air Force Reserve.

For the next 22 months, he reported to duty as a traditional Guardsman, working primarily in a classified communications vault to process message traffic using teletypes, punch-card readers and cryptographic machines.

"No one knew who I was because I never left the comm vault," Dornbush joked.

But he must have made an impression on someone. In January 1978, the wing commander, then-Brig. Gen. Carl Black, hired the young Airman as a full-time communications manager, a position Dornbush held until being commissioned as a communications officer in October 1984.

Dornbush remained in communications until August 1994, ultimately serving as commander of the 123rd Communications Squadron before being named full-time director of the base personnel office and, eventually, commander of the 123rd Mission Support Flight.

In November 2000, he accepted the post of executive staff support officer at state headquarters, a job Dornbush held until being named vice commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing in May 2004.

He moved back to Frankfort in December 2006 for promotion to brigadier general as chief of staff for the Kentucky Air National Guard. Four years later, he was named to his current position, director of the Joint Staff at Joint Forces Headquarters—Kentucky.

Kraus noted what a rare achievement it is for an Airman to rise from E-1 to O-7, but

Dornbush said he draws more satisfaction from having had the opportunity to command in a war zone in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

He deployed to Jacobabad, Pakistan, in 2003 and 2004, serving as commander of the 438th Air Expeditionary Group, a robust flying unit with multiple aircraft operations including Marine Corps KC-130s, Navy P-3s and Air Force Predators.

"That was one of the most rewarding experiences in my career," he said.

Dornbush has seen a lot of changes during his 40 years, but none have been more significant, he said, than the Guard's transition into a front-line fighting force.

"Back in the mid-1970s, the Guard was really a training organization," he recalled. "We basically existed to ensure that a large number of Reserve-component members were trained to the 80-percent level and could be quickly brought up to 100 percent if the Russians ever came through the Fulda Gap. Everything we did was associated with meeting the mission of a Cold War environment."

While unit members had more time for bowling leagues and softball tournaments,

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Master Sgt. Philip Speck/KyANG

**Brig. Gen. Michael Dornbush has seen a lot of changes during his 40 years in the military, but the most significant has been the Air National Guard's move from a strategic reserve to a front-line operational force.**

# Grass becomes 27th chief of National Guard

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

WASHINGTON — Gen. Frank Grass became the 27th chief of the National Guard Bureau in a Pentagon ceremony here Sept. 7.

“I’m very excited about the future; there’s hard work to do,” Grass said. “To the men and women of the National Guard: You’re the most professional, most well-trained and experienced National Guard our nation has ever had. I pledge that I will work every day to serve and support you so that we can continue to be a ready, accessible and essential operational force for our states as well as our nation.”

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta hosted the change-of-responsibility ceremony in the Pentagon Auditorium.

“I know our citizen-warriors will be in good hands,” Panetta said. “Today, we entrust General Grass with a national treasure — a force that has been transformed from a strategic reserve to an essential part of the operational military and whose ranks are now filled with skilled combat veterans.”

Grass relieved Air Force Gen. Craig R. McKinley as the chief of the National Guard Bureau. Grass also received his fourth star during the ceremony.

“I am confident that General Grass will be a strong advocate for the National Guard’s most valuable asset — its Soldiers, its Airmen and their families,” Panetta said. “The reason we are the greatest military power on earth lies not in our weapons, lies not in our planes or our ships or our advanced technology, as great as they all are. The strength of our military lies in our people.”

As chief of the National Guard Bureau,



U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Chad J. McNeeley/DoD

**Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta swears in Army Lt. Gen. Frank J. Grass as National Guard Bureau chief Sept. 7 during a change-of-responsibility ceremony held at the Pentagon. Grass, who received his fourth star during the event, replaced Air Force Gen. Craig R. McKinley.**

Grass serves as a military adviser to the president, the secretary of defense and the National Security Council, and is the Department of Defense’s official channel of communication to the governors and adjutants general in all 54 states and territories on all matters pertaining to the National Guard.

He is the second chief to also serve as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

McKinley was the first, and also the first four-star officer in the National Guard’s more than 375-year history.

“The chiefs and I welcome General Frank Grass and his wife, Patricia, to the team,” said Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

“This is the right man for the job: A thinker, a learner and one of the most experienced leaders in our military today. He knows what it means to put service before self and to put people first.... It’s because of leaders like you and the Soldiers and Airmen of the National

**See GRASS, Back Page**



Staff Sgt. Ryan Crane/U.S. Air Force

## Selva takes charge of Air Mobility Command

Gen. Paul J. Selva, right, accepts the Air Mobility Command guidon from Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, during a change-of-command ceremony Nov. 30 at Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

Selva was previously assigned as vice commander of Pacific Air Forces at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. Prior to that, he served as assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, D.C.

The outgoing AMC commander, Gen. Raymond E. Johns Jr., served 35 years in the Air Force, commanding more than 130,000 Airmen and executing 4,500 flight hours in various aircraft.

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## Dornbush

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the base wasn't exactly laid back.

"You couldn't be in this unit without recognizing pretty quickly that the wing was a very serious, professional organization with extremely high standards. We trained all the time, and operations were very methodical.

"But today, we're living in the era of the Operational Guard. We're part of the Total Force mix every day, doing the real-world mission that keeps the five services engaged around the globe. They simply cannot accomplish their mission today without the contributions of the Guard and the Reserve Component."

Despite the changes of the past four decades, one thing has remained constant at the Kentucky Air Guard, Dornbush said: a commitment to excellence.

"I'd put our capabilities up against anybody in the Air Force today," he said.

"We exude professionalism. I'm just thankful to have had the opportunity to work with so many outstanding Airmen who executed their missions so well. They provided me with leadership opportunities that allowed me to grow with the organization.

"For me to be the first non-rated support officer who served as vice wing commander was certainly a privilege. For me to be the first director of the joint staff was certainly a privilege. But I'm no one special. I owe those things, to a great extent, to the people who worked for me, because no one does these things by themselves."

As Dornbush looks to the future, and life after the Kentucky Air Guard, he knows two things for sure.

First, his wife, Linda, will get the lion's share of his attention for quite some time.

And second, the wing is in good hands.

"The leadership team is excellent, and I know they will take the unit to the next level," he said. "I don't think we've ever had more talent in the wing than we do today.

"I'm very proud to be a former member of the Kentucky Air National Guard."

## Grass

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Guard that we remain the world's preeminent military force."

Grass is responsible for ensuring that more than half a million Army and Air National Guard personnel are ready to protect the homeland and provide combat resources to the Army and Air Force.

The Guard rose to the challenges of the past decade, Panetta said.

"The Guard responded," he said. "Be it patrolling our nation's skies. Be it fighting and dying on the war fronts. Be it responding swiftly and compassionately to floods and fires, disasters of one kind or another, meeting the needs of their fellow countrymen in distress here at home and abroad — and that is what the National Guard is all about.

"Last year in Libya, the Air National Guard was there providing the bulk of the tankers that were so essential to that effort. And today more than 28,000 National Guardsmen remain deployed in support of operations in Afghanistan, in Kosovo and elsewhere overseas.

"When I travel to the war zones, when I travel abroad, I cannot tell the difference between Guardsmen and the active-duty force, and that's the way it should be, because we're all part of one team.

"The men and women of the Guard have shown again and again that they are always ready and always there. Throughout our history, America has depended on the citizen-Soldier. Those citizen-Soldiers who've been willing to leave their farms, to leave their homes, to leave their businesses, to leave their jobs, to leave their families in order to fight to protect this country.

"In deploying the Guard, we have made certain — this is very important — we have made certain that every community, every citizen shares in the responsibility of defending America. If we are to fight wars — as we must when we are called to do that — all of us, all of us need to be part of that effort if we are to succeed."

The United States is beginning to emerge from a decade of war that has seen more than 460,000 Guard personnel deploy to Afghanistan, Iraq and other overseas operations, Panetta said.

"Our National Guard today is far more capable, far more experienced and battle-hardened than at any point in our nation's history," he said. "The Guard remains not just an important part of our fighting force, but they are our first responders when disasters strike here at home."