

## **155<sup>th</sup> AIR REFUELING WING**



### **MISSION**

#### **LINEAGE**

155 Fighter Group (Air Defense) constituted and activated  
Extended federal recognition and activated, 1 Jun 1960  
Redesignated 155 Tactical Reconnaissance Group, 1 May 1964  
Redesignated 155 Reconnaissance Group, 16 Mar 1992  
Redesignated 155 Air Refueling Group , 1 Jan 1994  
Redesignated 155 Air Refueling Wing, 1 Oct 1995

#### **STATIONS**

Lincoln ANGB, NE

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Nebraska Air National Guard

#### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

##### **Mission Aircraft**

RF-4

KC-135

##### **Support Aircraft**

C-12

#### **COMMANDERS**

LTC Fred H Bailey, Jr.

LTC Richard E Bertrand, Feb 1976

Col. Bruce Schantz, Mar 1985

Col Carl A. Lorenzen, Aug 1992,  
Col Mark R. Musick 1995,  
Col. Robert Bailey Aug 1998  
Col Steve Adams Jan 2004  
Col Richard J. Evans III Sept 2007

## HONORS

### Service Streamers

### Campaign Streamers

### Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

### Decorations

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award  
1981, 1984, 1986, 1989, 1992, 1993, 1998, 1999, 2008, 2010

## EMBLEM



Argent, a foot abased nebuly azure, overall issuant from middle base and extending to chief bendwisc a flight of stylized aircraft one, three, one. one, three. one, one. gray and sable, in sinister chief a stylized eagle of the like grasping a lightning flash issuant from sinister fesswise or and all within a diminished bordure of the last. **SIGNIFICANCE:** The emblem is symbolic of the group and its mission, which is to protect our freedom and democracy. Against a background of deep blue and white to represent aerospace, an eagle, symbol of our freedom and democracy rides on a lightning streak, which indicates intensive strength and quickness to react in accomplishing the mission. The precise delta formations are symbolic of discipline and cooperation, attributes of an Air Force organization. The emblem bears the Air Force colors, ultra-marine blue and golden yellow.

## MOTTO

**PARATI ATQUE POTENTES--Ready and Able**

**NICKNAME**

**OPERATIONS**

On July 1, 1960, the National Guard Bureau reorganized the 173rd as part of the 155th Fighter Group and increased staffing to about 900 people. The new unit consisted of Headquarters, 155th Fighter Group, 155th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 155th Material Squadron, the 155th Dispensary and the 173rd Fighter Squadron. The group was part of the 132nd Air Defense Wing headquartered at Des Moines, Iowa.

2005 Nebraska Air National Guard's recent Oct. 28 -Dec. 4 Air Expeditionary Force deployment to Turkey tested the Cornhuskers' expertise, pride and maintenance skills like never before. "On this deployment we really asked a lot of not only our aircrews, but also maintenance," said Lt. Col. Bob Athan, vice commander of the 90th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron, during the deployment to Incirlik, Turkey. Maintenance is doing a fantastic job. We're turning jets three times a day or more. That says volumes about the quality of our maintainers. These aircraft are in tip-top condition and it really shows on a deployment like this." Lt. Col. Daryl Bohac, commander of the 385th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron during the first of two rotations, said the biggest challenge for maintenance was the fluctuating flying schedule that "slips and slides." "What we see coming out in the morning is not what we will have by night fall. It can change a lot," Bohac said. "Other than that, it's been really good. Folks have been busy. Most have said their time has gone by fast." Bohac said some of the slippage was caused by American aircraft on the ground in Iraq receiving fire. "Nighttime flying has added another safety risk," Bohac said. "We don't launch our aircraft unless the receiver's in the air. We're sometimes turning aircraft right back into the air." Like everyone, Bohac said the squadron takes pride in knowing they are directly supporting what's happening in Iraq. "We know we refueled transport aircraft that took 200 injured Soldiers to Germany to get necessary medical care," he said. "We're glad to be able to contribute." Everyone here has been top notch and performing well to get the job done," he said. As the first major deployment with the newly installed Global Air Traffic Management (GATM) and other avionics components, Bohac said they anticipated more problems than they had. The system is necessary for military aircraft to comply with coming changes in worldwide air traffic management. "GATM has not been a show-stopper," he said. "But we had more fuel cell issues than we thought we'd have." Chief Master Sgt. Marvin Leners, maintenance superintendent who took over the second rotation following Chief Master Sgt. Dale McIntosh, said deployed maintenance specialists rose to the occasion. "This is an intense mission for a two-week period," Leners said. "It's not your normal two weeks. You have to be so flexible." Col. Ron Malousek, commander of the 155th Maintenance Group, said the work schedule — typically 12-hour shifts — was one of the most demanding the maintenance crews had faced in recent memory. "The facilities are good and the airplanes held up. A lot of home station work was done. We're working folks pretty hard. Some are barely getting a day off. Some aren't," he said. "The only challenge for the Guard is the rotations. But it's gone smoothly.

We haven't missed a beat. I think that's one of the things that has impressed our active duty colleagues here," Malousek said. "I am very proud of our deployed volunteer Airmen and their accomplishments on this demanding deployment. Our reputation as a professional and successful unit continues to grow." Master Sgt. Nathan Kucera, jet engine specialist who has deployed many times over the years, said when he and his colleagues weren't busy fixing engine problems, they were helping other maintenance specialists. "If we're not doing anything, we'll help other shops. If it's night, we'll hold flashlights for specialists or go wrestle up parts for someone else," he said. "During deployments there's a very strong emphasis on teamwork. This is an excellent deployment for young traditional (Guard members). It gives them a real mission environment. It has an added sense of urgency." Bohac said Air Force aircraft and maintenance personnel from Mildenhall Air Base, England, blended well and supported Nebraska during the deployment. Several maintenance specialists from the Tennessee Air National Guard and Pennsylvania Air National Guard also worked with Nebraska. War Readiness Kit sergeant Tech. Sgt. Michael Anderson of the Tennessee Air National Guard, said working with Nebraskans was "just like working back home." "The main thing is to take care of the mission," he said. Senior Airman Joshua Sears, a traditional Guard jet engine mechanic, said the experience gave him an opportunity to hone his skills and do a little different work than he's used to as a car mechanic. "With an aircraft, you have to check things several times over. You can't pull over off the road if something goes wrong," Sears said. "You skip a step and that could cost lives." "I never thought I'd be working on jet engines. I think the Guard is one of the best things I've ever done,"

2005 Lauded by Nebraskans for his forthrightness, passion and concern for people, Air Force Lt. Col. Jerry Martinez, commander of the 385th Air Expeditionary Group, said one example of the success of total force was demonstrated at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey, recently. About 200 members of the 155th Air Refueling Wing of Lincoln, deployed there Oct. 28-Dec. 4, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Of the 133 people under Martinez's command during the second half of the deployment, 119 were Air Guard. As commander of the 385th, he has 10 units small and large under his command. Six of the 10 are Air National Guard organizations, he said. Martinez, an Air Force C-5 Galaxy pilot and deputy operations group commander from Dover Air Force Base, said he's proud of the successes of the 385th and the seamless total force environment. "It's a true testament that when you mix forces like that, we can be a total combined force and we can learn from each other and be successful in our mission," Martinez said. "I don't know when I look out on my troops everyday on the flightline who is Reserve, Guard or active duty... it doesn't matter to me. Each does a professional job. Their performance is what I care about. "Everyone has families and responsibilities at home, but when they get over here, their attitudes are just tremendous. They're so positive, they're happy in what they do and proud to serve their country and perform exceptionally. It says something not just about the Guard, not just about the active duty, but it says something about being an American," he said. Martinez, who was serving a four-month tour in Incirlik, said the biggest challenge he faces is keeping continuity with the continuous rotation of people. Guard units typically serve 30 days in deployed locations. Midway through the deployment, personnel typically are changed-out — called a midweek rotation. "This week, three aircraft - and pretty much the entire support staff - will rotate out,"

Martinez said. "Keeping continuity in a deployed environment is tough. But the fact that we rotate is not a bad thing. The reason we do that is to try to limit the temporary duty and deployments that the folks undergo back at other bases." "We're providing air refueling support to ensure planes get in and out of theater so they can return to supply bases and get reconstituted and then go back to the theater again," said Martinez. During the Nebraska Air Guard's time in Turkey, the 385th refueled a variety of aircraft, including those carrying wounded and deceased Soldiers and Marines from the battle of Fallujah, he said. "These are very important missions...their families want them home. It's a tough time for them and everyone around them so we do our best to get the planes onto Europe and then to the U.S.," Martinez said. 2nd Lt. Drew Webb, a recent graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, learned a lot about the Guard as Martinez's executive officer. Webb's job is to execute the commander's instructions, "put out fires" and ensure continuity during the rotation process. "I didn't realize how often the Guard deploys," he said. "Without their help, we wouldn't get to see our families much." During the time Nebraskans were deployed, there were a handful of people who experienced family emergencies and tragedies. Martinez recalled one story that brought tears to his eyes. A sergeant received a call from his wife while she was enroute to the hospital in an ambulance with their daughter. The daughter had quit breathing and was receiving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The sergeant needed to get home. As luck would have it, former Secretary of the Air Force James Roche, Ph.D., and Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force Gen. John P. Jumper, were visiting the base that day. They were in their aircraft getting ready to leave when a request was made to get the sergeant onboard. "We asked if the sergeant could go back with them. They said, 'absolutely, yes,'" Martinez said. A team of people pitched in to pack the sergeant's bag, check him out of billeting, clear him through customs, arrange transportation and carry his luggage. "It was an incredible sign that our top leadership cares for and takes care of our people," Martinez said. "When your command will do that for their people...that says a lot. We heard when the daughter woke up, the first thing she asked was, 'Where's my dad.' I like to think we had something to do with that," he said. During the deployment, Martinez said he only had one major problem working with Nebraskans. "It's not maintenance-related, it's not ops-related ... I'm from Oklahoma," he said, smiling. "The University of Oklahoma and Nebraska played football a couple nights ago. It's rough when you're around a bunch of Cornhuskers and you're the commander and the only guy around from Oklahoma. That was a tough time. "We won, but I will tell you I locked myself in my room and I did not go out for a while. I did not feel safe and did not run around doing the Boomer Sooner song."

2006 After becoming the first Air National Guard refueling unit to have its aircraft modified with a new communications and navigation system, members of the 155th Air Refueling Wing are now stepping to the forefront of the Guard in another way as they help other refueling units transform to the system. According to Lt. Col. Keith Schell, 155th ARW executive officer, the Nebraska Air Guard unit worked hard to complete the modernization of its KC-135R Stratotanker fleet to the new "Block 40" modification and the addition of the Communication, Navigation, Surveillance/Air traffic management (CNS/ATM) system. The system was formerly known by the acronym GATM, which stood for Global Air Traffic Management. "What the new CNS/ATM system had done for us is we now have datalink capability where the aircraft, via

satellite, reports its position periodically or on demand by the controller. So, we no longer have to make the radio position report," said Schell. This allows more aircraft to fit into the same air space, which is very important in crowded flying areas such as the northeastern United States, Pacific area countries and Europe, said Schell. Along with being the first Air Guard KC-135R unit – and only second in the Air Force – to switch to the new system, the 155th ARW was also the first unit to become completely operational with its modified aircraft. "We were the first Air Force platform (airplane) to be certified and trained in the Pacific and the north(east)," said Lt. Col. Bob Stevenson, 173rd Aerial Refueling Squadron operations officer. Since the systems were new, a revised training program had to be developed for aircrews to become proficient in using the CNS/ATM. Members of the 155th ARW solved this challenge by developing new training modules for flight and maintenance crews. "We developed, designed and executed a training program that had never been done before...(to) take E model Block 30 crews and train them in the R model block 40 all at the same time." said Stevenson. Previously air crews were trained from the E-model to R-model aircraft and then from the Block 30 to Block 40 modification. "We combined the two into a single training program." said Stevenson. 155th ARW communication and navigation personnel have offered their expertise to other units as well. "We communicate with other units for training requirements. In some cases units request the opportunity for hands on training and we provide that," said Senior Master Sgt. Gene Trausch, Avionics Element supervisor. So far two units have come to Lincoln for CNS/ATM training in guidance and control, and avionics, said Trausch. Other units have contacted the unit's avionics section for possible future training as they receive their newly modified aircraft. "We are the lead unit for this change." said Master Sgt. William Rowell, Communication/ Navigation Shop chief. Rowell said that being the lead unit means the avionics section has helped review technical manuals and procedures to fix and upgrade the new systems. "We review (Time Compliance Technical Orders) and advise the writers of changes," said Trausch. "This helps other units avoid difficulties and problems with their CNS/ATM systems." Lincoln communication and navigation technicians also talk frequently with the software engineers about difficulties with the CNS/ATM systems, especially when the system upgrades cause other aircraft systems to work incorrectly. As a result, the 155th ARW has become a model for other bases. "The Air National Guard in Washington (D.C.) looks to us as the CNS/ ATM experts in the Guard." Said Stevenson. "The training load is heavy for the active duty and.... we are in a position where we are trying to help alleviate some of that for them."

2007 Hundreds of 155th Air Refueling Wing members returned recently after being deployed throughout July to Anderson Air Force Base, Guam, to refuel B-52s as the bombers flew 22-hour missions to Alaska and back again. The unit was supporting a B-52 exercise called Polar Lightning that is designed to test the long range capabilities of the bomber. Each mission typically involved two bombers and two tankers taking off with the refueling taking place about two hours out from Guam. Then the B-52s would continue on to Alaska and meet up with two tankers from the Alaskan Air National Guard. After being refueled there the tankers would turn around and head back to Guam. "We would meet up with them about 4-5 hours out from Guam," said Lt. Col. Steve Plaman, 155th Operation Support Flight commander. At that point they would complete the last refueling for the B-52s before they came on back home. The mission called for a lot of flying, but it has to be done to ensure the bomber crews are mission

ready, said Plaman.“Our refueling missions were 5.5 to 9.5 hours long.” With the great distances the bombers had to fly every contingency had to be planned for so that tankers would always be available to gas up the bombers. Along with following the B-52s out, the unit also had to maintain an alert aircraft on the ground at all time. “It was really critical to have the (alert aircraft ready) at all times,” said Chief Master Sgt. Ken Nauert 155th Maintenance Group. “If for some reason we couldn’t refuel the B-52, we had to scramble the alert, otherwise they would have to put it (the B-52) in the ocean.” The initial Nebraska Air Guard members began deploying at the end of June with rotations every 15 days, with some serving the entire duration of the mission. The mission was completed on Aug. 1 when the final aircraft and crew returned home. The experience gave many the opportunity to keep skills honed while others were able to experience a deployed environment for the first time. “What an awesome experience,” said Senior Airman Brent Frohner, a scheduling technician with the 155 Maintenance Support Group. Frohner was especially impressed with how the whole organization came together to get the mission accomplished. “We were really dedicated. It didn’t matter if we had to be there early or stay late at night. Everybody’s there to do a job and we aren’t going to leave until we can get it done.” Frohner’s sentiments were echoed by many in the organization including Nauert, who said: “Our maintenance kept up really well even though it was our fourth deployment this year and many of the positions were filled by some of our junior Airmen,” said Nauert. “We didn’t miss a sortie and we didn’t delay a sortie.” The unit’s performance was even more amazing because of the hours that were required to be maintained. “We sustained 24/7 operations,” said Plaman. “With phenomenal support from maintenance, we didn’t miss a mission.” While in Guam, the wing performed 33 sorties while off-loading 3,378,900 pounds of fuel which is equivalent to 355,000 gallons. To reach these numbers the air crews had to fly over 200 hours.

2008 the debris is cleared away, the remains of a 52-year-old legend comes to an end, making way for a new community of joint military team work. A long-time relic of Nebraska Air Guard history, Building 660 was demolished in February to clear room for a new state-of the- art state joint forces headquarters Built in 1956 for \$103,000, the building was originally used as a warehouse with over 16,000 square feet of space. It later converted to a photo processing lab in support of the 155th Tactical Reconnaissance Group’s RF-4 mission. Along with the photo processing team, the building also served as the main home for base security. “I first got introduced to that building in 1978,” said Chief Master Sgt. Matthew Swetland 155th Security Forces Squadron superintendent. For Swetland there were a lot of memories he could recall while watching the building slowly come down. Swetland said he remembered how the location of the building kept them out of the way of the rest of the base “When we were down there we liked it. When they told me they were going to build me a new building, I said ‘Why don’t you remodel this one?’” he said. “Out of sight out of mind, which we liked.” The building also served as the initiation ground for many new Guard members’ careers. “All the people that have been through this security unit through the years have been through that building,” said Swetland. For many, it was also a home away from home as Air Guardsmen came and went. “They did their 20 years there, and they (basically) grew up there.” One of those who cut her teeth in the building when she first joined the Guard was Master Sgt. Mary Baker, 155th Mission Support Group first sergeant and 155th SFS administrative assistant. “It’s a total closing of an era and

the opening of a new era." Baker started her career in 1989, processing film that the 155th TRG's RF-4 Phantom II jets shot during reconnaissance training missions. Baker finally moved when she changed jobs in 1994. "It brings up memories," she said. One mid-90s spring saw the entire roof cave in during a heavy rain storm . "I don't know what year it was, but it had a flat roof and it let go," said Swetland. "It looked like it was raining in the building. We were using pallet covers to cover the furniture. That was not a good day" The roof finally proved to be the final downfall for the building. After several more roof leakages and cave-ins it was finally determined to be uninhabitable and became part of an overall larger project to create an area for the new headquarters building. The Army was using it at the end for office space before it finally was turned into rubble. Besides the photo processing and security units, the building housed an array of different Guard units including: Bio-Environmental, Public Affairs, Multimedia, Intelligence, Armory, and Counter Drug. Also included in the demolition project were Buildings 644 and 648. Building 648 was the previous RF-4 simulator building and then became home to the Base Exchange. Building 644 was most recently used as a medical clinic and then housed the Guard's Counterdrug Task Force.

2008 A far as days go, Master Sgt. Kim Davila of the 155th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron admits that May 22 was probably going to be a little bit of a rough one. That's because the airplane she and a team of three other Nebraska Air Guard crew chiefs had lovingly looked after for more than a decade would be making its last appearance on the Lincoln tarmac as a Nebraska Air National Guard airplane. "It's going to be a tough day," said Davila, lead crew chief on aircraft number 61-0266 as she looked up at the gray KC-135R a few days before the aircraft's scheduled departure. "I've worked on that airplane since it arrived in 1993." As an Air National Guard aerial refueling wing, the Lincoln-based 155th Air Refueling Wing has operated eight primary aircraft inventory (PAI) airplanes and one additional back-up aircraft since 1995. That, , changed when National Guard Bureau directed the 155<sup>th</sup> ARW to send its backup aircraft inventory (BAI) airplane to the Kansas Air National Guard. The reassignment is part of a nationwide effort among the Air Guard Stratotanker community to meet two separate requirements, said Col. Rick Evans III, 155th ARW commander. "This is essentially tied a little bit to (the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) commission) and a little bit to the acceleration of the retirement of the KC-135E," said Evans. According to Evans, the 2006 BRAC report directed the Air Force to speed up its retirement of the aging KC-135E fleet and replace it with the more modernized R-model aircraft like the ones the 155th ARW flies. In order to do this, every current Air Guard KC-135R unit – with the exception of the Hawaii Air Guard – was directed to reassign its BAI aircraft to those units either transitioning to the KC-135 mission or upgrading from KC-135E model aircraft. "So, our BAI aircraft is being transferred to Forbes, Kan., to become a PAI airplane," Evans said. According to Evans, this is the second time that the Nebraska Air Guard has seen its aircraft sent to a different unit since it transitioned into the aerial refueling mission in the early 1990s. In 1994, the wing – which was at the time a 10 PAI organization – sent two aircraft to Alaska. That reorganization – because it involved two of the wing's primary aircraft and not its backup – resulted in a loss of approximately 45-50 unit positions and unit flying hours. Evans said that when the wing learned of National Guard Bureau's plans, they immediately asked NGB to provide more information before agreeing to release the aircraft to Kansas. "Our main issue when we were told that they wanted us to

transfer this aircraft was, ‘Are we being treated fairly in the process?’” Evans said. That process began with Maj. Gen. Roger Lempke and continued on into Brig. Tim Kadavy’s term as adjutant general. “It took a while, but we finally got the answer. The bottom line is nobody is going to have a BAI airplane in the KC-135 community in the Guard, other than Hawaii.” Evans said the decision affects nine other eight PAI units like Nebraska, all of whom are sending their backup aircraft to other Air Guard KC-135 units. “So, we’re not alone. There’s going to be a whole bunch of other units doing the same thing that we’re doing,” Evans said. Evans said wing leaders looked at a variety of things to decide which aircraft to send to Kansas. One of the biggest issues, he said, was determining which aircraft could be released without adversely affecting the unit’s ability continue supporting missions while also preparing for its all important Operational readiness inspection next January. Also factored in was a future change in the intervals between major aircraft inspections that each aircraft must undergo, from 12-months to 18-months. Still, Evans said, it was a tough choice. “These tail numbers that are assigned to us become ours. It’s kind of like a classic car that you’ve done a lot of work on,” said Evans, adding that he knew no matter what the decision was, it was going to be felt deeply by the crew chiefs who work on the aircraft. “It was tough picking out a tail number,” he said. “But it’s kind of like hiring a job. You’ve got to settle on one. It’s not easy to do, but we did settle on one.” Unlike 1995, when the 155<sup>th</sup> ARW lost unit members during the transition, this movement will not affect any personnel positions or a loss of flight hours. That’s because it involves a backup aircraft instead of a primary aircraft, to which flight hours and manning are assigned. Still, the loss of the aircraft will not be without some stresses on the unit, said Col. Keith Schell, 155th Maintenance Group commander. “We’re not changing how many hours we’re flying. We’re not changing the number of missions. We’re not changing the duration of missions. So, we now have to use eight airplanes to fly the same amount of hours and accomplish the same amount of missions we did with nine airplanes,” said Schell. While that may not seem like a major problem on the surface, it does have potential ramifications. Under the old nine airplane system, the unit typically was able to accomplish its training requirements, mission assignments and rigid maintenance inspection program by essentially having a spare aircraft to fit in wherever needed. Thus, when the wing would deploy overseas on an aerospace expeditionary force mission to a location such as Incirlik, Turkey, the unit could have one or two aircraft in various inspection processes, while still leaving additional aircraft available to conduct mid-deployment rotations and flying training in Lincoln. With only eight airplanes to meet the same flying and maintenance requirements, the 155th ARW will now have to focus even harder on finding ways around the various conflicting schedules, said Schell. For example, he said, if the unit is supporting an AEF mission with several aircraft while two of its aircraft are in various inspection cycles, that will leave the wing with only a few aircraft to accomplish its ongoing training requirements and rotation schedule. If one of those aircraft has a maintenance issue that forces it to be grounded? “We may have to rely on other Guard units to help with our AEF,” said Schell. “Just like other units are going to have to rely on us.” Another aspect of the change will be the emotional impact it will have on the crew chiefs and maintenance technicians who have supported the aircraft since they arrived in Lincoln and have literally put their “blood, sweat and tears” into making the aircraft the best KC-135s in the entire Air Force inventory. “If you ask anybody who flies in our planes, these planes are just pristine,” said Schell. “And it’s due a lot to these crew chiefs. They’re the ones who go up there and polish

things up. They make sure they're clean. They take care of the little nittanoids that become problems. They help with the specialists." "The same thing with the specialists. The specialists work on these planes and they know these planes inside and out," said Schell. "They know what they might have to tweak a little bit here or there to keep the aircraft in the fantastic shape that they are. So, now they're losing one of their planes." Davila definitely knows what Schell is talking about. "Crew chiefs like to think each aircraft has its own personality and each aircraft acts accordingly," she said. "Sometimes you have to give it some encouragement and some coaxing." Davila said she will particularly miss the aircraft she deployed with to so many different countries. One deployment in particular sticks out. Following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, the aircraft was the first Nebraska Air Guard airplane to be sent to Moron Air Base, Spain, where the unit helped set up the air bridge over the Atlantic Ocean to Central Asia as part of what would become Operation Enduring Freedom. While in Spain, Davila and other crew chiefs decided to have a nose art logo designed featuring an American bald eagle and the twin World Trade Center towers that would stay on the aircraft for several years, effectively marking the aircraft as the first Nebraska Air Guard aircraft to support the Global War on Terror overseas. That memory, said Davila, is going away with the aircraft. "I think what is hardest is thinking that there is going to be a new crew chief working on it," she said. "Will they treat it with the same respect and caring that we did? That's what I think is the hardest about watching it leave." Schell said the crew chiefs who worked on the departing aircraft will be reassigned into the crews on the other aircraft. Davila will continue working on aircraft as the lead crew chief on a different Nebraska Air Guard KC-135R. Schell added that, even though the crew chiefs will now have to learn the varying 'personalities' of their new aircraft, he doesn't see any major impact from the team shakeups due to the fact that the aircraft crew chiefs typically work interchangeably together on each other's aircraft during overseas deployments. "All of our crew chiefs work well together," Schell said. "If you look at our deployments, sure they're assigned to their aircraft, but when they deploy, they work with different people... they work with everybody constantly." "I don't think it's going to be a big problem," he added. According to Evans, once the conversion of Air Guard units to the KC-135R is accomplished by about 2011, there will be approximately seven or eight aircraft that will then be redistributed back to the eight PAI units as new backups. "I would tell folks that right now, we're in the same boat as everybody else," he said. "Although we would've loved to have been able to have kept it, it's in the best interests of the Guard as a whole to transfer it to Kansas and help them get through their conversion." "In FY-11, we're going to come back and make a strong case for the backup aircraft to return here," Evans said. "It probably won't be the same tail number, but it will hopefully be another jet on the ramp to help us do the mission." Until then, Evans said, he feels good – and the rest of the unit should as well – in the knowledge that they are sending one of the very best KC-135s in the Air Force to Kansas. "I'm sure Kansas is going to be very happy with the product they receive down there on the flightline and flying that jet around the world," Evans said. "And when we get a new airplane in FY-11 hopefully, we'll take that on and do a good job with it as well."

2008 Nebraska Air National Guard's 155th Air Refueling Wing recently received word that it has been awarded the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for 2007, the ninth time that the organization has earned the prestigious award. According to unit officials, the unit received

word in late January that Lt. Gen. Craig R. McKinley, director of the Air National Guard, had approved the award earlier that month. The 155th is one of 17 Air Guard wings nationwide to receive the award. In the citation accompanying the award, the 155th ARW was commended for its "exceptionally meritorious service from May 1, 2005 through April 30, 2007." "During this period, the 155th distinguished itself by successfully employing its mobilized and volunteer unit members in support of Homeland Defense, Operation Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi freedom and a host of Expeditionary Combat Support deployments," the citation reads. "The unit's tankers and personnel performed brilliantly in the execution of world-wide missions of vital importance to our strategic national interests. In addition, the unit excelled in operational readiness, environmental protection, compliance inspections, community involvement and flying safety." According to Col. Rick Evans, commander of the 155th ARW, the award speaks volumes about the unit and its members. "The 155th Air Refueling Wing members have a long tradition of working together to achieve excellence on a daily basis, so this award comes as no surprise to me," said Evans during the unit's drill unit, Feb. 2. Brig. Gen. Tim Kadavy echoed those comments. "I just wanted the wing to know how proud we are of them and their performance," Kadavy told members of the organization, Feb. 2. "This is a tremendous accomplishment... the 155th is a cut above the rest." The award will be formally presented to the organization at a ceremony later this year, most likely during the 155th Air Refueling Wing's annual "Honors Day Formation," typically held during the September drill.

2010 Nebraska Air National Guard's 155th Air Refueling Wing has been named a recipient of the 2009 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. This marks the 10<sup>th</sup> time that the Lincoln-based organization has earned the award in its 64-year history. The 155th Air Refueling Wing is one of only 14 Air National Guard wings from across the United States to earn the award this year. In earning the award, its first since 2007, the 155th Air Refueling Wing was commended for a number of accomplishments including: 800-plus members of the 900-member unit filled Operation Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom air expeditionary force taskings to over 40 locations worldwide. Flew 5,700-plus hours on operational training, 1,200 hours of which were combat or combat support missions for Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Additionally, 155<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing volunteer crews flew 225 combat hours to and from Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, supporting high-risk medical evacuation missions. Transported more than 270 Nebraska Army and Air National Guardsmen to and from Louisiana during the Hurricane Gustav relief effort. Supported numerous national combat and homeland security exercises. Participated in the "Beyond the Horizon" humanitarian mission to Honduras in 2008, providing medical and dental support to local Honduran citizens. Maintained 100 percent or greater personnel end strength for the entire period. The 155th Air Refueling Wing was also lauded for its performance during recent Air National Guard evaluations and U.S. Air Force operational readiness inspections, and its work in helping other KC-135R units upgrade to modernized navigation systems. Also noted were the unit's family support and energy conservation programs, and its level of community involvement. The unit was also recognized

for its flying and ground safety efforts, having recently surpassed more than 115,000 hours of Class A mishap-free flying. According to Col. Rick Evans, commander of the 155th Air Refueling

Wing, the unit is honored to be able to add another award to its already long and distinguished record of achievements and outstanding service to state and nation. In his announcement to the unit, Evans noted that “while this is a team award it is enabled by the pride, dedication and purposeful service of each unit member.” He added that “the 155th has once again lived up to its motto of ‘Ready and Able,’ proving that it is among the very best units in the entire U.S. Air Force.” 2010

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#### USAF Unit Histories

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