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512th Airlift Wing, Dover Air Force Base, Del.

Team Dover delivers search, rescue teams to Japan

Two Air Mobility Command C-17 Globemaster IIIs departed the United States March 12 and delivered search and rescue equipment and personnel to Japan in support of humanitarian relief efforts after an earthquake and tsunami struck the island nation March 11.

The first C-17 mission, operated by a 62nd Airlift Wing crew from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., is transporting California-based SAR equipment and personnel from Los Angeles to Misawa Air Base, in northern Japan, Tanker Airlift Control Center facts show. The second mission, operated by a 436th Airlift Wing crew from Dover Air Force Base, Del., is transporting Virginia-based SAR equipment and personnel from Fairfax County to the same destination.

In addition to the C-17s, two KC-10 Extenders from the 60th Air Mobility Wing at Travis AFB, Calif., are supporting the operation by providing in-air refueling to the C-17s over the Pacific Ocean.

In addition to the C-17 and KC-10 forces, AMC also has additional aircraft and crews prepared to respond if further assistance is requested.

Mission planning and command-and-control for the AMC portion of the humanitarian effort is conducted by AMC's TACC at Scott AFB, Ill.

Senior NCO Induction tickets available

The 512th Public Affairs Office has tickets for the Senior NCO Induction Ceremony at 6 p.m., April 2 at the Duncan Center. The cost for the formal event, which recognizes the wing's newest master sergeants, is \$35. Cash and checks, made payable to 512th Top 3, are accepted. For more information on this event, call 512th Public Affairs at (302) 677-3408.

TRICARE to fast-track Young Adult program

The new program, TRICARE Young Adult, will be available to eligible dependents who age out of TRICARE at age 21 (or 23, if full-time college students) who are not married or eligible for their own employer-sponsored coverage.

Beginning later this spring, qualified, unmarried dependents up to age 26 will be able to purchase TRICARE coverage on a month-to-month basis.

Upon implementation later this spring, eligible dependents will have an option to purchase TRICARE Standard/Extra health coverage on a month-to-month basis.

Those who are eligible to purchase coverage should save their receipts after the first of the year, as the benefit will be retroactive to Jan. 1, 2011, provided premiums are also paid back to January 1. After purchasing coverage, enrollees will be issued a new ID card as verification.

Colonel dons MOPP gear, assumes command of 512 MSG

Capt. Marnee A.C. Losurdo
512th AW Public Affairs

It was an atypical assumption of command for the 512th Mission Support Group at the Landings March 6.

Usually a formal affair symbolizing the passing of responsibility and authority to the new commander, this ceremony broke away from tradition in favor of operational readiness.

Lt. Col. Gretchen M. Wiltse took command of the 512th MSG not in the traditional attire of the service dress uniform but in Mission Oriented Protective Posture, commonly referred to as MOPP gear.

There are five MOPP levels, 0-4. The assumption of command took place in MOPP 4, which means all protective gear was worn.

"My goal was to set the stage for the 512th Airlift Wing's preparation for the (Operational Readiness Inspection) in December and to demonstrate that we are serious about this," said Colonel Wiltse, who, along with 240 other reservists, will work in MOPP gear during the week-long inspection.

"The best way to prepare for the ORI is to practice what we'll be doing, and this assumption of command was a way to encourage folks to get out their gear and get comfortable wearing it," said Col. Randal L. Bright, 512th AW commander and presiding officer for the ceremony.

The assumption of command in MOPP gear may be a first for the wing.

"We weren't going for a first-time award, but I honestly don't know if anyone's done this method for a change of command or assumption of command before," said Colonel Bright.

For Colonel Wiltse, taking command of the 512th MSG is a humbling experience, she said.

"I know I'm going to get all the support I need to lead the group, but I just need to make sure that I do everything I can to support them as well," said the new group commander whose career has spanned two decades.

The colonel is a U.S. Air Force Academy graduate and has been a squadron commander in maintenance and logistics.



Photo by Jason Minto

Col. Randal L. Bright, 512th Airlift Wing commander (left), and Lt. Col. Gretchen M. Wiltse, former commander of the 512th Logistics Readiness Squadron, don Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear March 6 at the Landings. Colonel Wiltse assumed command of the 512th Mission Support Group in her MOPP gear to set the stage for the wing's preparation for the wing's upcoming Operational Readiness Inspection.