

115 OPERATIONS GROUP

MISSION

LINEAGE

115 Fighter Group (Air Defense) designated and allotted to the Air National Guard, 15 Apr 1956
Activated and extended federal recognition, 15 Apr 1956
Redesignated 115 Fighter-Interceptor Group, 1 Jan 1972
Redesignated 115 Tactical Air Support Group, 9 Nov 1974
Inactivated, 1 January 1979/1 Jul 1980
Redesignated 115 Operations Group and activated, 1 Oct 1994

STATIONS

Traux Field, Madison, WI

ASSIGNMENTS

128 Air Defense Wing, 15 Apr 1956
126 Air Defense Wing, 1 Mar 1958
Wisconsin Air National Guard, 1 Aug 1969
128 Fighter-Interceptor Wing (later, 128 Tactical Air Support Wing), 1 Jan 1972 - 1 Jan 1979
115 Fighter Wing, 1 Oct 1994

WEAPON SYSTEMS

F-89, 1956
F-102, 1966
O-2, 1974
F-16, 1994

COMMANDERS

Maj Moffatt
Col Jim Dawson

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM



MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Flying at 8,000 feet above flood-ravaged Wisconsin in mid-June, Wisconsin National Guard members got a lift from Guard units in Mississippi and Arkansas and provided “eyes in the sky” to help with disaster relief efforts. Heavy rains left Wisconsin rivers and lakes swollen and in many cases the surrounding areas flooded. With disaster relief efforts ongoing, the Madison-based 115th Fighter Wing worked with the Mississippi Air National Guard’s 186th Air Refueling Wing to bring an RC-26 from Mississippi that could fly over a flooded area and send back live video and still pictures. With technical help from the Arkansas Guard’s 314th Airlift Wing, the aircraft flew over more than 25 locations across Wisconsin for on-the spot assessments of the flood situation.

The Mississippi plane was sent on short notice as a substitute for Wisconsin’s own RC-26, which was deployed in the Global War on Terror. It was a more advanced version of a similar mission Wisconsin Air Guard members undertook during Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. At that time, Wisconsin Task Force Katrina used an RC-26 to photograph bridges, highways and associated infrastructure in and around New Orleans. The Katrina mission required the RC-26 crew to land the plane in order to process the photos, but the June mission in Wisconsin took

advantage of a “Katrina Mod” that allows for instantaneous transmission of images and video. The modification was tested in 2007 in support of the California and Florida wildfires. The Wisconsin floods mission was the first full-scale use of the technology in a disaster.

The system helped coordinate relief efforts by providing immediate assessments of flooded areas including highways, bridges and dams. Real-time images were sent to an antenna array temporarily set up on the roof of Joint Force Headquarters in Madison. Inside the building, the Wisconsin Joint Operations Center and the state Emergency Operations Center used the still and motion images, to coordinate relief and recovery efforts. “It’s all about accurate information,” said Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general of Wisconsin. “With this type of aircraft able to stream live video to the governor holding a cabinet meeting or a county official meeting with first responders, they can see firsthand exactly what’s going on and figure out how to deploy their assets in the best way possible.”

The RC-26’s normal mission includes drug interdiction support for local and state law enforcement agencies. “The communications and the relationships we have built up over the years doing the counter-drug missions in Wisconsin apply directly to emergency response situations,” said Lt. Col. Stephen Dunai, RC-26 program manager for the 115th Operations Group. “This greatly enhances our ability to provide support whenever called upon.” While officials commonly use helicopters in assessing damage over a particular area, the RC-26 offers advantages when there is widespread damage.

“The RC-26 is a fixed-wing aircraft which can get to the scene fairly quickly and can easily be redirected to other sites that officials would like to see,” said Col. Dave Romuald, 115th Operations Group commander. Summer storms in Wisconsin created a need for rapid visual data to emergency responders, Dunbar said, and providing that data was the primary goal of the mission. “It is not about the particular cause of the event, whether it is Mother Nature or a terrorist threat; it is about all hazards response, and this capability for homeland defense is irreplaceable,” Dunbar said. 2009

Air Force Lineage and Honors

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Sources

Air Force Historical Research Agency. U.S. Air Force. Maxwell AFB, AL.

Air Force News. Air Force Public Affairs Agency.