146 AIRLIFT WING

MISSION

LINEAGE
146 Composite Wing established and allotted to California ANG, 31 Oct 1950
Organized and received federal recognition, 1 Nov 1950
Redesignated 146 Fighter Wing on 1 Feb 1951
Federalized and placed on active duty, 1 Mar 1951
Redesignated 146 Fighter-Bomber Wing on 1 Jun 1951
Released from active duty and returned to California state control, 11 Dec 1952
Redesignated 146 Fighter Interceptor Wing, 1 Jul 1955
Redesignated 146 Air Transport Wing, 1 Oct 1961
Federalized and placed on active duty, 1 Oct 1961
Released from active duty and returned to California state control, 31 Aug 1962
Redesignated 146 Military Airlift Wing, 8 Jan 1966
Redesignated 146 Tactical Airlift Wing, 1 Apr 1970
Redesignated 146 Airlift Wing, 16 Mar 1992

STATIONS
Van Nuys Airport, CA
Lockheed Air Terminal, CA, 1 Apr 1951
Moody AFB, GA, 10 May 1951
George AFB, CA, 25 Oct 1951-1 Jan 1953
Van Nuys, CA
Channel Islands ANGS, Port Hueneme, CA

ASSIGNMENTS
California Air National Guard

WEAPON SYSTEMS
Mission Aircraft
F-51
F-86, 1951
C-97
C-130

Support Aircraft

COMMANDERS
BG Doyle C. Beers, #1974
Col Daniel H. Pemberton, #1993
Col Paul Hargrove

HONORS
Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM
Azure (light blue), on a pale or, a futuristic interceptor aircraft sable, highlighted white, overall in saltire a sword piercing a vulture's wing both argent, detailed and outlined of the third. (Approved, 21 Jun 1957)

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

Apr 1951 - At Lockheed Air Terminal, Burbank, CA, the 146 Composite Wing was activated into Federal Service for the Korean Police action. The 195th Fighter Squadron was left at Van Nuys (not mobilized) to defend the home front.

1952 - New Air National Guard Base completed west of the former WWII Army Air Force Base Unit facilities in preparation for the return of the 146 Fighter-Bomber Wing.

1960 - The 146 Fighter Wing moved from the attack and fighter mission to that of transport. With air transportation recognized as a critical wartime need, the 146 was selected to receive the C-97 Stratofreighter and was re-designated the 146 Air Transportation Wing (Heavy).

1960 - Two new nose docks built on the west side of the ramp to support C-97 maintenance.

1961 - October, the 115th, the 195th, and their parent units were called to active duty because of the Berlin Crisis and assigned to the Military Air Transport Service. Still based at Van Nuys, they conducted operations world wide in support of the Air Force's needs.

1962 - August, the Wing and its squadrons were released from active duty and continued to operate out of Van Nuys.

From 1960 to 1970 the 146 Air Transportation Wing (Heavy), later the 146 Military Airlift Wing, flew the C-97 all over the world.

146 Tactical Airlift Wing was equipped with 16 C-97s.

1970 - The 146 Airlift Wing began flying the C-130 and was re-designated a Tactical Airlift Wing.

In 1976 the base occupied 62 acres of land between the Van Nuys Airport Runways and Balboa Boulevard. The physical plant consisted of 3 large hangars and two nose docks for aircraft maintenance, as well as administrative buildings, supply buildings, shops, and recreational areas, totaling 26 structures. The base had two large aircraft parking areas, taxiways and an aircraft washing area, over 79,000 square feet of concrete pavement.

The base was the home for the 146 Tactical Airlift Wing, the 115th Tactical Airlift Squadron and 14 other operational and support units. It was composed of 1,300 men and women with 300 of them assigned full time.

By March 1990, all but a small remnant of wing personnel had transferred operations to Channel Islands ANG Station. Shortly thereafter, the old Van Nuys facility was closed and turned over to the City of Los Angeles. On April 30, 1990, the flag at Van Nuys ANG Base was lowered for the last time during a special ceremony.

In February 2002 the large double hangar was demolished.

In March 2004 the World War II Machine Shop Building (Bldg. T507) south of the former World War II ramp was demolished.

2005 1 Sep One C-130 assigned to the 146 Airlift Wing, California ANG, deployed to NAS New Orleans on an Aeromedical evacuation mission.

8 Sep The 146 Airlift Wing, California ANG, deployed twenty-four Aerial Port Squadron personnel in Title 32 status to Ellington Field, Texas to provide mobile command and control airfield operations in support of hurricane relief efforts.

20 Sep The 146 Airlift Wing, California ANG, deployed its Tanker Airlift Control-Element to Ellington Field to support hurricane rescue and relief operations. due to the arrival of Hurricane Rita, all 146 Airlift Wing personnel evacuated back to home station at Channel Islands Air National Guard Station, California.

22 Sep The 146 Contingency Response Group-Element, California ANG, returned to home station at Channel Air National Guard Station, California. They had deployed to Ellington Field, Texas.

2008 Guard's ongoing State Partnership Program, Guardsmen from the 146 Airlift Wing recently returned from another successful trip to Melitopol, Ukraine. This trip was one in a series of ongoing events where the goal is to assist the Ukrainian military in its efforts to build an train a more professionalized Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Corps. The 146 Airlift Wing

was tasked on 26 September to bring a command team of four personnel who have worked together for at least one year. The command team consisted of one squadron commander (O5-O6), one Chief (Command Chief or Senior Enlisted Advisor equivalent), one Senior NCO Superintendent, and one 1st Sgt. The command team was also accompanied by a Ukrainian translator. Their key objectives were to help their Ukrainian counterparts: develop and utilize professional NCOs; outline the relationships and interactions between officers and NCOs; explain the roles, responsibilities and duties of NCOs; discuss professional development of NCOs; and explain the unique relationship between a commander and his senior enlisted advisors. The 146 Airlift Wing's command team developed four key presentations that gave an overview of the role of an NCO as seen by each command team member. The first presentation conducted by Lt. Col. Michael Dugas included an overview of the command team, commander responsibilities, and the commander's relationship with his team members. The commander emphasized his responsibility of organizing, training, and equipping. Two key points to this brief were: accomplishing the mission and taking care of the people. Chief Joel Reynoso followed with a presentation stressing his role as the most senior enlisted with the job as the senior advisor/mentor to NCOs and junior officers. He spoke of his responsibility of "setting the tone" of an organization and to lead the direction of unit morale while assisting the 1st Sgt. Supporting the Superintendents, and carrying through the commander's policies and programs. The 1st. Sgt, Senior Master Sgt. Jeri Nieberding, presented third. Order and discipline, maintaining good morale, and carrying out administrative duties were three key points in her presentation. She explained how she was "an extension of the commander," the commander's problem solver, and the liaison between the enlisted force and the commander. Lastly, the Superintendent set out to brief on more "technical" terms. Senior Master Sgt. Adrianne Martinez briefed on developing plans, programs, and policies, conducting surveys and providing analysis to the commander since she acts as his, "eyes and ears". The education and training of NCOs and officers was stressed as paramount to ensuring a highly competent well trained force able to carry out the mission. Training every member to a level where they can replace you and take charge is our ultimate training goal. In the end, the members of the 146 Airlift Wing and their Ukrainian hosts were pleased that yet another successful step was taken in furthering the development of Ukraine's NCO Corps. And of course, after the formal briefings, the members of the 146 and their new Ukrainian friends had a great opportunity to get out for a little cultural experience and see some of the beautiful sites Ukraine has to offer. The California National Guard State Partnership Program is coordinated by the staff out of Joint Force Headquarters in Sacramento and they were also very pleased with the members of the 146 Airlift Wing. "Successful events like these are always a positive experience as they continue to enhance a high level of respect and esteem for each other's armed forces and lead to many lasting friendships," said Capt. Clayton Smith. "The California National Guard State Partnership Program has been helping our allies in Eastern Europe build stronger democratic institutions for the past thirteen years, and we are proud to say the results have been very positive." Capt. Clayton Smith, International Affairs Officer, Joint Force Headquarters.

Firefighting C-130s Conclude Mission: After flying 242 sorties and dropping 609,960 gallons of fire retardant over wildfires in Arizona and New Mexico since June 16, airmen and their specially equipped C-130s concluded their mission. On Thursday, personnel and two Modular

Airborne Firefighting System-carrying C-130s from Air Force Reserve Command's 302nd Airlift Wing returned home to Peterson AFB, Colo., from Kirtland AFB, N.M., their temporary operating base as they battled the fires. Over the mission's course, the North Carolina Air National Guard's 145th Airlift Wing in Charlotte and the California's ANG's 146 AW at Channel Islands ANG Station each also dispatched two MAFFS-fitted C-130s to Kirtland to help. "The team success over the past 30 days demonstrated the professionalism and effectiveness of the citizen airmen who volunteer for this vital mission," said Lt. Col. Dave Condit, deputy commander of the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group that oversaw this aerial firefighting operation. 2011

C-130s Continue to Battle Wildfires: Four specially configured C-130s continue to operate out of Kirtland AFB, N.M., in support of efforts to contain wildfires in New Mexico, including those threatening the Los Alamos National Lab in the northern part of the state. Through Wednesday, these Modular Airborne Firefighting System-carrying airplanes had flown a total of 122 sorties since June 16, completing 133 airdrops, Air Forces Northern spokesman Tom Saunder told the Daily Report Thursday. The aircraft have released 308,989 gallons of fire retardant (2,811,804 pounds) in those airdrops, he said. On Tuesday, two MAFFS-equipped C-130s and their crews arrived at Kirtland from Air Force Reserve Command's 302nd Airlift Wing at Peterson AFB, Colo., relieving two MAFFS C-130s from the California Air National Guard's 146 AW at Channel Islands ANG Station. They joined two MAFFS C-130s from the North Carolina Air Guard's 145th AW in Charlotte, keeping the strength of the aerial firefighting force deployed to Kirtland at four airplanes. 2011

Firefighting C-130s Deploy to Kirtland: Two specially configured C-130s from the California Air National Guard's 146 Airlift Wing at Channel Islands ANG Station on Wednesday deployed to Kirtland AFB, N.M., to help contain wildfires that have been raging for nearly two weeks in the southwestern United States. Those containment missions are scheduled to begin Thursday. These aircraft carry the Modular Airborne Firefighting System, self-contained equipment that can discharge 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in less than five seconds on an area one-quarter of a mile long by 60 feet wide. Previously this year, MAFFS-equipped C-130s from across the nation helped fight wildfires in Texas and northern Mexico. 2011

Aerial Firefight Goes On: Six C-130 aircraft carrying special firefighting equipment continue to help battle wildfires in Texas and northern Mexico from the air, as of Monday, announced US Northern Command officials. Since the first of these aircraft arrived on the scene on April 17, these C-130s have carried out 64 missions to release many thousands of gallons of fire retardant and suppressant on the fires in southern Texas and the Mexican state of Coahuila via the self-contained Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System that they carry. Two of the C-130s are from Air Force Reserve Command's 302nd Airlift Wing at Peterson AFB, Colo. They are deployed to Laughlin AFB, Tex. The other four, staging from Dyess AFB, Tex., are Air National Guard assets from the 145th AW in North Carolina, 146 AW in California, and 153rd AW in Wyoming. 2011

The 146 Airlift Wing of the California Air National Guard hosted an official aircraft dedication ceremony March 1. Present at the event were Congressman Elton Gallegly, California’s Adjutant

General, Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II and Maj. Gen. Dennis Lucas, Commander of the California Air National Guard, as well as senior civic leaders and elected officials from across Ventura County. The wing dedicated its eight new J-model C-130s to individual cities in Ventura County to include Camarillo, Thousand Oaks, Fillmore, Simi Valley, Ventura, Oxnard, Santa Paula, Moorpark, and Port Hueneme. The name of the city is proudly displayed above the crew entrance door of the aircraft. Community leaders were presented plaques from the wing in appreciation of their commitment and support to the wing. “These communities have been incredibly supportive of our troops and their families over the years, and this is our way of thanking them,” said Vice Wing Commander Col. Marilyn Rios. “These new aircraft represent a culmination of a multi-year effort to modernize our unit’s mission capabilities; and it’s appropriate that we recognize our local communities for their continued support.” “The fact that the unit chose to acknowledge the local communities is significant not only for their steadfast support of the unit over many years, but also because of their involvement—politically and actively—seeking these Js to replace the aging E-models,” said Major General Wade,. “It’s a significant event that shows how ingrained this unit is with the local community.” “This day has been a very long time coming, and to have the names above the doors of the aircraft is very gratifying to someone who has lived in Ventura County for 40 years,” Congressman Gallegly commented. “We’ve been looking forward to this day for many years, since we were first told we were getting the Js,”said Maj. Gen. Lucas. “The 146 has always shown how important the community is, and today is a perfect example.” The C-130 are brand new off the Lockheed-Martin factory lines and boast the latest in aerospace technology. The visitors, their families and
media were offered a look inside the aircraft, and aircrew members were available to answer questions about the aircraft’s capabilities. “Receiving all of the C-130J is a real milestone for the California National Guard,” said Maj. Gen. Wade. “It’s just another example of how prepared our National Guard is in California. Our National Guard is always ready, always there.”. The mission of the 146 Airlift Wing is to provide tactical airlift delivery of personnel, equipment and supplies to theater military commanders, and to provide humanitarian relief during emergencies and natural disasters in California, throughout the United States, and worldwide. The 146 Airlift Wing at Channel Islands is one of four Guard and Reserve units in the nation equipped with the Modular Airborne Firefighting System (MAFFS) used in battling wildfires throughout the country. In addition the unit has played an active role in the war on terrorism with
aircraft and personnel deployed to the Middle East and around the world. Several of the unit’s members are also currently deployed on OPERATION JUMP START, in support of the U.S. Border Patrol in its efforts to secure out south

Time felt like it was standing still as we walked off a C-130J aircraft in Anchorage, Alaska, in early June. With so much green and so much snow on the towering mountains all around us, it was truly beautiful. And with nearly 24 hours of sunlight in Alaska at that time of year, the sense of timelessness carried with us throughout the day. The 146 Airlift Wing Air Terminal Operations Squadron, Logistical Readiness Squadron and Security Forces Squadron were scheduled to performed their annual training exercises at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson,

Alaska, in June, and my partner in crime and photographer, Tech. Sgt. Alex Koenig, and I were invited to document their training. It began with a flight in one of our wing's C130J, and about eight hours later we landed in Alaska. Soon after, we were dragging our bags to an area affectionately named Mad Bull. In the middle of the woods, past a lake and over a few rivers, up several miles of winding, unpaved roads, we came upon Mad Bull — a gated "camp site" with a few small buildings, a set of showers and bathrooms and a giant fiberglass-looking dome in the center, where we slept on cots among the local bears and moose. Obviously, the Army National

Guard-spread rumors about Hilton-like Air Force accommodations are false. Security Forces began their training the next day in the classroom, learning how to read and use a compass on grid maps. Tech. Sgt. Marco De La Cruz instructed the class and emphasized the importance of understanding how to navigate without advanced technology such as a global positioning system, or GPS. Although navigation technology may be useful in the field, Tech. Sgt. Wayne Furhmann said there were major problems with the devices among deployed service members a few years ago. In an effort to get an edge on the enemy, some service members brought their personal GPS devices on deployment and used them in the field. While this made things easier, and the troops were able to speak to each other using their equipment, the devices were not encrypted and did not use government signals. Therefore when these devices were used, they were using public satellite signals that anyone could use and track. So while those deployed members were trying to get the advantage by using digital tracking, they were actually giving their position away to the enemy. Hence, GPS systems are forbidden unless issued by Uncle Sam. Soon after the classroom instruction, Security Forces began patrol maneuvers while working in groups. All were issued simulation rifles and rounds as well as protective vests and helmets. Then we were given a "wildlife brief" in which one of the full-time members explained the differences between brown bears and black bears (other than the obvious) and how to protect yourself if you encounter one. If you meet a brown bear, we were told, don't run or make any sudden movements. Lie on the ground, cover your neck and face and just pray for the bear to leave you alone, the expert said. The black bear is different. If you come across a black bear, we were taught, put your arms up to make yourself appear as large as possible and yell, and the bear should run away. This was not comforting for me — an Airman who isn't even five feet tall with her boots on. The Security Forces Airmen were then separated into groups and reviewed flanking movements. Positioning is important in these movements, so that every area has eyes on it. After a few dry runs of each movement and where everyone needed to be, the Airmen were ready to test their skills in the woods. As they walked through the wilderness, they used hand signals to communicate while scanning the woods for potential enemies. Being in the middle of nowhere,

with all the brush on the ground, the forces found it hard to be as quiet as they wanted. The next day, vehicle maintenance personnel from the Logistics Readiness Squadron showed us the vehicles they had been working on and several large dump trucks that were getting tune-up service. There was also a fire truck that looked more like a monster truck to me: I guess the worse the weather gets, the bigger and badder the trucks need to be. I looked around and noticed that all of the vehicles in the shop had extremely large tires; most were as tall as I was. There was a lot of action going on inside the shop, including maintenance on alarge dump truck that needed a tire change. Changing a tire on an industrial dump truck is not the same as

changing one on my 4Runner back home. It required two Airmen, several pieces of equipment and ear plugs. The following day we were back with Security Forces, and Alex and I followed them as they accomplished their land navigation course, bringing all of the training they had done in the classroom together and putting it to practical use. As we headed out on our land navigation course, it was soon very clear to me that we weren't going to be hiking on the trails. We climbed over anything that stood in our path, crawling over fallen trees, literally holding back branches and walking through bushes and brush; it was a real course. As we trekked through the terrain, the importance of exact compass readings became evident. Staff Sgt. Herb Seaman said that being off by just a few degrees could mean missing your target by 100 yards. And looking for something in a 100-yard radius through very thick forest isn't much fun. The next day was active shooter training. Airmen were trained on proper formations when entering a building where an active shooter may be located, procedures for clearing rooms quickly and efficiently, and how to make it to the target (the shooter) in the fastest way possible. As a 911 dispatcher in my civilian career, the class on an active shooter was very interesting to me. These types of things unfortunately could happen anywhere, and having knowledge about what you need to do when

something like this happens is vital. The instructors for that day were Master Sgt. Bryan Morberg and Tech. Sgt. Michael Zener of the 176th Wing, Air National Guard Station, Anchorage, Alaska. They explained how to subdue your suspect, how to get to the suspect' s location quickly and efficiently, and what to do and not do to avoid endangering more lives. The instructors also talked about active shooter incidents from the past, including the 2009 massacre at Fort Hood, Texas, and what we could learn from what did or didn't happen there. After our classroom training, the Airmen went outside to practice formations and making entry into a building. Everyone suited up and some were given simulation rifles and ammunition. A group of Airmen stood outside the doors while others were placed strategically inside, playing the roles of the shooter or victim. And then it started. As I stood in the corner with my little blue helmet on, trying not to get shot with paintball rounds, I watched as entry teams came in, cleared the area room by room, yelled to the victims to run out the door with their hands raised and eventually found the suspect. There must have been a "take no prisoners" policy, because every time the entry group found the suspect, there was a loud barrage of rounds going off followed by an Airman walking out with spots of pink and blue paint all over their uniform. Alex and I met up in the last days with the members of the Air Terminal Operations Squadron and watched as they loaded pallets. We learned about labeling the pallets for routing and delivery, and we watched as Airman 1st Class Ron Navarro, with the direction of Staff Sgt. John Fratangelo, moved a forklift to position pallets in the warehouse. While we were there, we received word that a plane had landed carrying Soldiers and equipment back from a drop zone. We jumped in trucks and rushed down the flight line to help unload. As the Soldiers exited the plane in two single-file lines, a Humvee was unloaded from the center. Tech. Sgt. Cenobio Alvarez guided the Humvee off the plane, and others did their part to get the Soldiers unloaded safely. "This is so important for us because … we have brand new Airmen who need this hands-on training, Airmen who are cross-training into our field from other areas and some who are preparing for possible upcoming deployments," Alvarez said. What these Airmen learned in Alaska during their annual training is vital to the Air Force mission. Many of them will deploy soon, and this training will ensure they are prepared. They have the skills to deploy confidently,

get the job done and, most importantly, return home safely. 2011

The 146 Airlift Wing continued to excel in fulfilling its diverse and demanding schedule of deployments, training and events during 2010. The year began with the Air Expeditionary Force deployment of personnel and equipment to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Aerial porters were also busy in January with members deploying to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom continued with the 407th Air Expeditionary Group at Ali Air Base, Iraq, providing command and control as well as mission operation support for aerial and ground operations. California's State Partnership Program is an ongoing element for the wing, and 2010 included events with Ukraine and Nigeria. In February the wing sent two teams to train with the Ukrainian Air Force on operations, ground safety, deployment practices and risk management. That training continued with Ukrainian Air Force personnel visiting the 146 Airlift Wing in early May for training on the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System (MAFFS) and to share information on firefighting capabilities. Nigerian Air Force members paid a visit to the 146 Airlift Wing in late May for C-130 aircraft maintenance, transportation and safety training. At that time, only one of eight C-130s in the Nigerian Air Force was operational. Nigeria strives to strengthen its support of African Union and United Nations peacekeeping transport capabilities. During the spring the 146 joined other Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and U.S. Forest Service personnel in South Carolina to complete annual MAFFS training. In the fall, the MAFFS wings again gathered for a conference. This time they were joined by senior representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense, National Guard Bureau, U.S. Northern Command and the U.S. Forest Service. The two-day conference enabled the various stakeholders to coordinate operational standards for employment of the new MAFFS II units, with the goal of ensuring efficient and cost-effective operations. Through May 2010, the wing maintained a presence in Saudi Arabia at Eskan Village with Security Forces members continuing to provide protection of base personnel and resources. In June the 146 Civil Engineering Squadron conducted its annual training in Oahu, Hawaii. During their two weeks of training at Naval Base Pearl City and Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point, two dozen squadron members completed training tasks that ranged from beach clean-up to pouring concrete foundations. In response to President Barack Obama's directive to the National Guard to support U.S. Customs and Border Protection on the Southwest border, the 146 sent volunteers as part of the 260-member California National Guard team, Joint Task Force Sierra. The task force remained in place through the end of 2010. The wing's Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear and Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) deployed to Guam to participate in a joint operation exercise
involving multiple states and territories, earning the Guam Commendation Medal. A CERFP incorporates search-and-extraction, decontamination and medical capabilities along with a command-and-control element to pass communication to an incident commander. It is a rapid response team responsible for quick reaction to not only a weapon of mass destruction incident or terrorist attack but also to any potentially hazardous man-made or natural disaster. As a tribute to the wing's tradition of excellence, the 146 was selected to provide initial and recurring C-130J training to more than 80 Canadian Air Force operations and maintenance personnel. Further the wing hosted international delegations from Kazakhstan and Norway, highlighting aeromedical evacuation and maintenance operations. In addition to its domestic mission

responsibilities, the wing also responded to international taskings to countries including Greece, Honduras, Israel and Peru. With dedicated personnel and experienced leadership, the 146 Airlift Wing continues to be a flag-carrier within the Air National Guard, carrying out missions in training, mobilization readiness, humanitarian and contingency operations.

First it was Texas wildfires and history making international firefighting in Mexico. Then it was the largest fires in Arizona history, which burned more than 500,000 acres. Finally the wildfires spread over borders into Colorado and New Mexico and screamed their way through forested lands, threatening homes and significant structures like the Los Alamos National Laboratory where the first atomic bomb was built and where the world's most dangerous weapons are made today. The California Air National Guard's 146 Airlift Wing has been fighting fires alongside other Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems (MAFFS) units from around the country since April, when it battled multiple fires in Texas. Most recently the 146 responded to the rapidly growing Los Conchas fire in New Mexico, which started June 26. "The National Guard's MAFFS C-130s were some of the first tankers to get to the Los Conchas fire just outside of Los Alamos, New Mexico," said Lt. Col. Bryan Allen, one of the 146 AW's MAFFS pilots who deployed to New Mexico. "The fire is getting a lot of national attention and is growing in size at an alarming rate. We were glad to be here to help." The Guardsmen have been supporting the U.S. Forest Service with firefighting efforts in Arizona since June 15, providing two C-130J Hercules aircraft and support personnel operating. Two C-130s from the 145th Airlift Wing in Charlotte, N.C., arrived June 18 to help fight the fires that crossed the border into New Mexico. Two C-130s from the Air Force Reserve's 302nd Airlift Wing at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., replaced the 146 on June 29. "Our aircrews, maintenance and support personnel did an outstanding job performing this dangerous mission," said 146 Airlift Wing Commander Col. Paul Hargrove. We were called out early this year to assist drought-ridden Arizona and New Mexico, and we are prepared to deploy again if needed by the U.S. Forest Service, as the fire season is now fully under way." The 146 flew 58 sorties and completed 65 drops while deployed to New Mexico. It dropped 167,300 gallons of retardant. "California is no stranger to the threat of wildfires, and protecting our nation's vital assets and the people who live here is what we train for," Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, the adjutant general of the California National Guard, said . "It's important to note that while we have two of our aircraft deployed to assist with the New Mexico and Arizona wildfires, this does not affect our ability at home to respond within the Golden State as our state's own wildfire season approaches." So it could remain in Texas to fight the fires there, the 146 Airlift Wing pulled out of its annual MAFFS certification and training which had been scheduled for May. The wing's training and certification were rescheduled and held instead in Port Hueneme, Calif., in early June. The 146 AW's MAFFS II-equipped planes can discharge 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in less than five seconds, covering an area one-quarter of a mile long by 60 feet wide. Once discharged, the aircraft can reload in less than 12 minutes.

A new era in firefighting for the National Guard and Air Force Reserve began in May in Tucson, Ariz., during the annual certification and training for Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems, or MAFFS. The next time the MAFFS program is called upon to assist the U.S. Forest Service when

wildfires break out, there will be new tools at its disposal. The Forest Service recently purchased the newest MAFFS technology, MAFFS II, and for the first time the system is being integrated into the annual training alongside the earlier MAFFS system. “With these firefighting assets, we now have the most modern fleet of military firefighting aircraft in the world and are ready to respond when needed this fire season,” said Col. Paul Hargrove, 146 Air Expeditionary Group (AEG) commander and 146 Airlift Wing (AW) commander. Forest Service spokesman Lynn Ballard noted that the MAFFS II has an on-board compressor system that saves time and money by eliminating the need for ground-support compressors, adding flexibility to where an aircraft can land to reload fire retardant before its next drop. In addition, new designs have reduced the amount of retardant splashed on the exterior of the plane during aerial drops. In development since 2000, a prototype model of the new system was used in firefighting missions around California last summer. Since then the Forest Service has purchased nine MAFFS II units, and both the 146 AW in Channel Islands, Calif., and the 302nd AW in Colorado Springs, Colo., have full complements of MAFFS II-qualified aircrews. The MAFFS II units are designed to roll into and out of C-130 aircraft, including the latest J-model. The units include a tank that holds up to 3,000 gallons of retardant, and an air compressor that enables the retardant to spray out of a nozzle on the left side of the plane. The certification and training ran May 4-9 and involved more than 300 military and 100 civilian personnel, including representatives of the Forest Service; California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection; Coronado National Forest; and Aero Union Corp., the manufacturer of the MAFFS units. “Aerial firefighting is a serious and unforgiving endeavor,” said Lt. Col. Bryan Allen, MAFFS pilot and 146 AEG deputy commander. “Being able to practice and hone our skills each year alongside all the agencies we activate with sharpens our proficiency so we are ready and able to execute the mission safely.” MAFFS is a partnership between federal land management agencies and the military to provide supplemental air tankers to assist in fire suppression efforts nationwide during times of high fire activity. There are two units assigned to each of four military wings, with a total of eight aircraft available to support civilian agencies when needed. Since 1974, National Guard and Reserve pilots have flown 6,500 firefighting missions, dropping 167 million pounds of fire retardant in the western United States.

The 146 Airlift Wing deployed 40 National Guardsmen and two C-130J from April 17 through May 6 in response to wildfires that were devastating much of southern Texas. “Our wing received notification in the late afternoon on [April 16] that we would be deploying to Texas, and less than 29 hours later we were actually performing our first drop of retardant,” said Lt. Col. Kurt Holden, commander of the 115th Airlift Squadron, 146 Airlift Wing. “The members of this wing are truly dedicated to this mission and worked throughout the night loading the equipment onto the aircraft to ensure an on-time departure.” Shortly after departing Channel Islands Air National Guard Station, Calif., the 146 aircraft were diverted to Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, where they were loaded with fire retardant and sent directly to the Wildcat Fire about 10 miles north of San Angelo, Texas. “This is the first time we’ve been called out of California to do something of this scale,” said Tech. Sgt. Marc Garnsey, a loadmaster for the 146, while flying home from a weeklong stint helping out with the fires. “It breaks the monotony of training.” Air National Guard and Reserve units from four states flew more than 80 missions and dropped more than 243,000 gallons of retardant on many of the state’s largest

fires, which have burned more than 2 million acres since November. During the time the California National Guard unit was deployed to Texas, it was not uncommon for planes to drop up to 10 loads of retardant before sunset. It was also not uncommon for crews to sit and wait for launch orders for days at a time. Their biggest challenges came from the weather. “We had rain the first week, then hail and thunderstorms,” Senior Master Sgt. Bob Barry said. “Then it was nice, in the 80s. Literally the only thing we’ve been missing out here is snow.” “[Sometimes] we’ll sit around for four or five hours, maybe doing nothing till 2 or 3 in the afternoon. But when you get the call, it can get really busy,” Garnsey added. Tasking for launch orders is determined by the incident commander at the fire and is based on weather, work and safety conditions. Air support is only requested when conditions are favorable for an effective retardant drop, according to officials from the U.S. Forest Service The deployed C-130J aircraft are equipped with a self-contained aerial firefighting system known as the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems II, or MAFFS II, which can discharge 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in less than five seconds, covering an area up to 1/4-mile long by 60 feet wide. “Commercial air tankers like the P3 and P2 use gravity feeds to distribute retardant,” said pilot Lt. Col. Bryan Allen of the 146. “The water tends to want to stay together, so it can potentially be destructive.” By using pressurized air, MAFFS can drop a consistent layer of retardant on an area without the risk of damaging structures and other things on the ground, Allen said. The MAFFS units are also equipped with onboard air compressors that can reload while in flight, making for a much quicker reload time on the ground. Planes only need to be on the ground long enough to refill their fire retardant about 12 minutes. Maintenance crews waiting on the ground work busily to keep up with the planes returning for fuel and retardant. “In the past, we needed to have compressors on the ground,” Allen said. “Most air bases don’t have air compression equipment, so we had to bring our own whenever we went out on a mission.” The 146 had been scheduled to spend early May conducting its annual MAFFS certification and training in Boise, Idaho, with the other three MAFFS units from around the country. The 146 has 12 fully qualified MAFFS crews and does not anticipate any issues responding to future fires. The wing plans to hold local certification and training for its air crews in June at Channel Islands Air National Guard Station.

From the air and on the ground, the California National Guard is equipped with some of the most advanced technology available to combat fires during the upcoming wildfire season, which once again could be full of action. The Guard rolled out two new Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems II (MAFFS), three Tactical Fire Fighting Trucks (TFFT) and two High-Mobility Water Tenders during an event at McClellan Air Park near Sacramento on Jan. 30. The Guard already had one TFFT. “These new firefighting assets will greatly enhance the capability of the National Guard to support first responders and protect Californians in natural disasters,” said Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, adjutant general of the California National Guard. “[They] will change the way the California National Guard responds to forest fires.” The receipt of this equipment marks the success of a multi-year process by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and other elected officials as well as the U.S. Forest Service, the Department of Defense, civilian contractors and other emergency management agencies. "We asked the federal government to partner with us in supporting our firefighters and were answered with six firefighting trucks and the most modern military firefighting aircraft in the world – all of which will be based here in

California permanently," Schwarzenegger said. "We are lucky to have the best and bravest firefighters and National Guard troops in the world, and they are even more prepared with this new equipment." Last year, California Army National Guard aircraft dropped 5.5 million gallons of water on California fires, while Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve units from other states used MAFFS technology to drop 12 million pounds of fire retardant on California fires. The military's contributions were greatly needed, as 2,100 lightning strikes ignited more than 1,800 simultaneous fires that charred nearly 1.3 million acres of land. A MAFFS unit loaded onto a C-130J aircraft can hold 3,000 gallons of water or retardant. The MAFFS equipment is owned by the U.S. Forest Service and flown on Air Guard and Air Force Reserve aircraft. Maj. Bryan K. Allen, a MAFFS pilot with the 146 Airlift Wing, said it takes about five seconds to disperse 3,000 gallons. "We believe this is the most advanced fixed-wing aerial firefighting system available, with the high technology in the aircraft combined with the high technology of the MAFFS," Allen said. "Others can drop more retardant or can [drop much less retardant] more precisely, but not many can drop this much retardant with this much precision." Pilots in the C-130J can keep their eyes on the lead plane and on the fire without ever needing to look down to check their displays. The flight plan, performance indicators and terrain-avoidance and aircraft collision warnings are projected on a holographic heads-up display – a piece of glass that places information within the pilot's field of vision, no matter where the pilot looks in the sky. The C-130J also integrates redundant mission computer systems that continuously monitor – and, in some cases, even self-heal – the aircraft's various systems. Allen added that he has been amazed by the performance of the aircraft, which can fly at 350 knots, carrying 30,000 pounds of retardant. Allen formerly flew a C-130E aircraft, which traveled at 280 knots. "It can haul more retardant faster, farther and more safely … and it's [like] a spaceship inside," said Allen, who has flown C-130s for 18 years. "It's the C-130 I've always wanted." The TFFTs acquired by the Guard are also state-of-the-art equipment, which Lt. Col. Allen Johnson of Army Material Command referred to as a "Swiss Army knife of firefighting." The eight-wheel drive, 445-horsepower trucks with four foot fording clearance each include a 1,000-gallon tank that can be carried up a 60 percent incline or along a 30 percent side slope. In addition, the Guard added two High-Mobility Water Tenders, which feature 2,500-gallon tanks, all-wheel drive, 45 horsepower, 60 percent gradability and three-foot clearance. "With the TFFT and the [High-Mobility Water Tenders], we'll be able to run up the Sierra Nevadas, [and] we'll be able to take those 2,500 gallons," said John Stoddart, executive vice president of Oshkosh Corp., the vehicles' manufacturer. The new equipment could be called into action later this year. U.S. Forest Service Deputy Regional Forester Richard Cook said Jan. 30 that snow pack and rainfall in northern California were well below normal for the third consecutive year, meaning Guard personnel and equipment may again be needed. About 2,400 Guard members were called up last year to fight fires, including 900 who were trained as hand crews and put on the fire line.

More than 250 members of the 146 Airlift Wing have deployed over the last few months in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Most recently, five of the wing's C-130J aircraft flew to Afghanistan with a full complement of aircrew and maintenance crew from the 146's Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Air Terminal Operations Squadron and Civil Engineering Squadron. The squadrons will be deployed for three months and provide airlift and airdrop capabilities to forward operating bases, many within Afghanistan. One group of maintenance

and aircrew personnel departed Sept. 8 from the 146's base at Channel Islands Air National Guard Station in Port Hueneme, Calif. A crowd of family and friends stood near a massive C-130J on the flightline to say farewell to their loved ones, and some of the Airmen and family members shared their thoughts with local media members who attended. Birthdays, holidays, the first day of school — all of these occasions and more will be missed. Many at the deployment ceremony shared why saying goodbye was so hard for them. "My daughter starts 1st grade in two weeks," said Staff Sgt. Michael E. Reyes, who has been to the Middle East as a Navy Seabee but is deploying with the 146 for the first time. "I'm sad that I'll miss it, but we all know it's a part of the sacrifice we make." Reyes works on the electrical systems of the C-130J, an aircraft with highly advanced systems that eliminate the need for a human navigator or flight engineer onboard. The need for maintainers of these complex systems is critical. "We have to go," Reyes said. "Our roles are important." The 146 operations and maintenance crews are working alongside members of the Rhode Island National Guard's 143rd Airlift Wing, another C-130J unit. Together, upon arrival at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, the units became the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron (EAS). "The primary way the forward operating bases get supplies is by airlift or airdrop. We are their lifeline of sustainment," said Lt. Col. Bill Willson, 774th EAS commander. These operations reduce the number of dangerous supply convoys crisscrossing Afghan roads. In its first month alone, the 774th EAS flew more than 900 sorties with a 99.9 percent sortie effectiveness rate, completing approximately 40 airdrops and delivering more than 3,100 tons of cargo. The wing's C-130J aircraft boast numerous technological upgrades that allow them to cruise faster for longer distances, climb to greater altitudes more quickly, and take off and land in shorter distances than preceding C-130 models. They also have a greater hauling capacity and can perform airdrops from higher altitudes more accurately, which makes missions in a combat area of operations much safer for the aircrew. The 146 and 143rd airlift wings have been deploying together since 2004. They also deployed together prior to Sept. 11, 2001, when both units flew the older C-130E model. The units consider themselves one big family, according to leadership. "We complement each other very well," Willson said. "One of the nice things about the Guard is you stay with the same people for sometimes decades. Most of the pilots here, I have flown with for 20 years."

California Air Guard Still Lacks Firefighting Add-on: According to an Associated Press report (via The Mercury News), California is still waiting for the Administration to make good on its vow to equip state Air National Guard aircraft with an aerial fire-fighting capability. As we last reported, the Bush Administration acknowledged it would miss a July fielding date but hoped to provide the equipment by September. However, a Guard spokesman told AP that the equipment "is still under testing and validation." The equipment in question is new and called MAFFS 2, for modular airborne fire-fighting system. The 30-year-old MAFFS 1 does not work with the new, longer C-130J Hercules flown by the California ANG's 146 Airlift Wing at Channel Islands Air National Guard Station. Now, an official with the US Forest Service, which has been overseeing development of the new equipment, tells AP that the contract calls for the 146 AW's eight J models to be MAFF 2-ready by the end of December.

At the request of California Gov. Jerry Brown (D), the state Air National Guard's 146 Airlift Wing

at Channel Islands ANG Station is activating two of its specially configured C-130J aircraft to help battle wildfires in the state, announced state officials on Monday. "Wildfire season is upon us, and our Guardsmen are in the fight," said Army Maj. Gen. David Baldwin, California's adjutant general, in a May 6 release. The Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System II-equipped C-130s will stage from home at Channel Islands, allowing for shorter response times to the fires in Ventura County in southern California, states the release. The MAFFS-carrying airplanes are capable of dropping up to 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in a single pass. "Our well-exercised and long-standing relationship with the California National Guard allows for rapid, effective deployment of these additional resources during times of elevated fire activity," said Chief Ken Pimlott, director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. 2013

The 146 Airlift Wing brought the year to a close with many impressive accomplishments. During this year of change, the wing continued to support numerous worldwide and state missions, coupled with challenging training events. This year was also marked by sadness. Colonel Steven Freidricks, a member of the wing since 1970 and wing commander since 2004, passed away unexpectedly due to illness. In May, more than 500 people attended services for their friend and fellow Air Guardsman. Using the example he set, the wing carries forward in the firefighting mission, quest for technological advancement and example of positive leadership.

Under the new command of Col. Paul Hargrove, former commander of the 146 Operations Group, the wing remains focused on its essential missions. In May, the wing deployed an aviation package to Afghanistan and served as part of the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron. During the four-month deployment, wing members transported more than 8,900 tons of cargo and 25,367 passengers, more than any airlift squadron in the history of the U.S. Air Force. Throughout the year, the wing also supported ongoing operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Germany.

In preparation for California’s wildfire response, the 146 hosted the annual Modular Airborne Fire Fighting training for MAFFS-equipped units across the nation. Members of C-130 units from Wyoming, Colorado and North Carolina came to Channel Islands to share the latest in airborne firefighting technology as they completed their annual training. The MAFFS capability was utilized extensively during the state’s 2008 wildfires. In addition, the 146 answered the governor’s call for assistance with about 70 wing personnel training as Type II ground firefighters before being assigned to Task Force Bucket and Task Force 10. These teams provided valuable assistance to heavily burdened California ground firefighters.

In addition to firefighting missions, more than 20 members of the wing continued to support Operation Jump Start, the southwest border mission. The two-year mission in support of U.S. Customs and Border Protection provided Guardsmen a rare opportunity to perform a Homeland Security mission on U.S. soil before the mission came to a close in September. Preparing for a wide spectrum of missions is essential in the Air National Guard; this year, members of the wing’s medical group participated in an Enhanced Response Force Package

(known as CERF-P) credentialing evaluation held at Camp San Luis Obispo. Trained to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear explosion situations, CERF-P personnel from the 146 distinguished themselves and received full accreditation.

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