



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

BOB TAFT, GOVERNOR

MAJOR GENERAL GREGORY L. WAYT, ADJUTANT GENERAL

News Release

Dec 8, 2006

Log # 06-58

Springfield Air National Guard unit to announce new mission

The Ohio Air National Guard will celebrate Dec. 11, a new mission joining the 178th Fighter Wing with the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf) during a 9:00 a.m. ceremony at the Springfield Air National Guard Base.

As part of the Air Force Total Force Integration initiatives, the Ohio Air National Guard is teaming with the active duty Air Force to conduct a new mission to build partnership capacity with a strong NATO ally.

The Ohio Air National Guard will host an international F-16 training mission at Springfield Municipal Airport Air Guard Station. Under a Foreign Military Sales program, the Ohio Air National Guard will provide flight instruction, facilities, flight operations, and maintenance support to the Royal Netherlands Air Force. Ohio Air National Guard instructor pilots will train Dutch pilots in F-16 flight operations and combat tactics.

This training will enhance the Royal Netherlands Air Force's ability to defend the skies over the Netherlands and other NATO countries, contribute to NATO and coalition operations, and continue contributions to the Global War on Terrorism.

"This new mission for the Ohio Air National Guard is going to be a fantastic opportunity for our flight instructors, operators and maintenance workers to share their knowledge with the Royal Netherlands Air Force," said Maj. Gen. Harry "A.J." Feucht, the assistant adjutant general for air.

"This mission will strengthen the relationship that the Ohio Air National Guard has already built with the Dutch" said Col. Richard Lohnes, 178th Fighter Squadron commander. "Our Airmen are looking forward to writing a new chapter in the rich heritage of the 178th. We have worked hard to get this mission and anticipate a huge success."

The ANG training mission at Springfield will strengthen the USAF-RNLAF relationship by not only increasing RNLAF capabilities and interoperability, but also by building Airman-to-Airman relationships. In addition, Dutch Airmen and their families will have the opportunity to experience American culture first-hand as they work and live in Ohio.

Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general, credited the hard work and support of Governor Bob Taft, Congressman Dave Hobson and U.S. Senator's Mike Dewine and George Voinavich.

"This new opportunity is the result of a team effort at the local, state and federal levels. We knew that if we could get the Air Force, the National Guard and Dutch officials on the base to walk them through the advantages of our highly-skilled workforce, specialized infrastructure and location, they would understand why Springfield was an ideal site to accept a new mission like this one," Hobson said.

Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, said he is encouraged by this change and will continue to work to ensure that the ANG remains an important partner in the Nation's defense.

"This move shows the Air Force is committed to involving the Air National Guard in all missions," Blum said.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: The Ohio National Guard Public Affairs Office at 614-336-7000 or James Sims at 496-3812.