



Ohio Adjutant General's Department

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C-27Js nationwide provide hurricane relief in less than 12 hours

COLUMBUS, Ohio — As the sun set behind an American flag waving over the Mansfield Lahm Airport on Saturday, Nov. 3, a 179th Airlift Wing C-27J Spartan touched down after its crew joined forces earlier in the day with personnel from the Maryland and Mississippi National Guards, to provide airlift support for Hurricane Sandy relief efforts.

"We have been making the argument, and Congress has been listening, that the C-27J is the right platform for the National Guard, said Maj. Gen. Deborah A. Ashenurst, Ohio adjutant general. "The performance of the C-27J while deployed overseas has proven this is the right aircraft for the time-sensitive, mission-critical airlift mission, and this domestic deployment shows how important an asset the C-27J is for the nation's governors, making it possible for the National Guard to deliver assistance quickly to citizens in need."

These Citizen-Airmen and -Soldiers embody the National Guard's motto of "Always ready; Always there," by pulling together aircraft and personnel across multiple state borders and differing branches of service in order to provide assistance for their fellow Americans in need. As part of "Operation Guardian Big Apple," less than 12 hours after getting the initial call, the 135th Airlift Group in Baltimore, 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, Ohio, and 186th Air Refueling Wing in Meridian, Miss., each supplied one C-27J Spartan to airlift personnel and equipment into New York, where direct relief support for the citizens of New York City will be provided.

All three states worked together seamlessly to pull together a detailed multi-branch support mission. The day began with three C-27Js departing their respective wings to pick up an initial forward group of equipment and personnel.

Every Airman and Soldier traveling in the forward group shared words of pride and excitement about the opportunity to help their fellow American citizens. Many said it's what the National Guard does — citizens helping the citizens throughout their communities nationwide, whenever and wherever necessary.

“Today’s mission highlights the core value of the National Guard,” said Maj. Jeff Capretto, a 179th pilot who returned from Afghanistan earlier this year and an Avon Lake, Ohio, native, who flew Ohio’s C-27J on Saturday into New York. “What a great opportunity to be involved with the relief support, especially on the U.S. home front.”

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