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## MEDIA ADVISORY

Alaska National Guard

**FOR May 4, 2016**

### **Alaska Air Guardsmen return from deployment to Middle East**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – Seventeen Alaska Air National Guardsmen from the 176th Wing are scheduled to return to Ted Stevens International Airport Wednesday after a two-month deployment to the Middle East in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

Most of the returning Guardsmen are members of the Wing's 144th Airlift Squadron, who operate the C-130H "Hercules" tactical-airlift aircraft. Additional returning Guardsmen are from the 176th Operations Support Squadron and the 176th Medical Group.

Tactical airlift has been one of the 176th Wing's core missions since 1957, when the Air Guard's emphasis shifted from air combat to airlift. However, a current proposal at the national level has been put forth to divest the 176th Wing of its C-130H tactical-airlift aircraft.

The current proposal was put forward and recommended by retired Lt. Gen. Stanley Clarke III, Director of the Air National Guard, to the Total Force Continuum (a board of Active, Reserve, and Guard members tasked to try to balance requirements, capabilities, risk and cost regarding strategic plans and programs). The Total Force Continuum is taking action to push forward Lt. Gen. Clarke's proposal. As such, this deployment could conceivably be the last for the 144th Airlift Squadron, at least in its current form.

This group of returning Guardsmen is part of a larger group that deployed in late February, which are scheduled to return later this summer.

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#### **Details:**

**What:** 176th Wing members return from deployment to Middle East

**When:** **Wednesday, May 4, 2016 (See note below for contact number and time of return)**

**Where:** Ted Stevens International Airport, Anchorage

**Note:** Media interested in interviewing a returning Guardsman must call Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead at 727-1972 *no later than May 4 by 12 noon*. Please leave a message with name, affiliation, and cell number for coordination. Media will not be notified of time or time changes if we do not have contact information.