



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Air crew and space operators welcome new commander

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska – Col. Richard Adams assumed command of the 168th Operations Group, Alaska Air National Guard, from Col. Bryan White during a change of command ceremony May 24 inside the unit’s maintenance hangar. Col. Torrence Saxe, commander of the 168th Wing was the presiding officer.

Adams assumed command of the group after serving as the vice commander of the 168th Wing, a position he’s held since April 2017. Prior to his assignment with the 168th, Adams was deputy commander of the 176th Operations Group, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

The 168th Operations Group is comprised of the 168th Air Refueling Squadron and 168th Operations Support Squadron on Eielson, as well as the 213th Space Warning Squadron, located at Clear Air Force Station.

“I have met very few people who have the perfect balance that Rich Adams has,” Saxe said. “He does balance the mission and the people, the art and the science. He will execute the mission, but he will lead the people during that process.”

As commander, Adams will be responsible for the successful execution of multiple mission sets that are assigned to the group and space warning squadron—missions ranging from the early warning of ballistic missile attacks against the United States and Canada to supporting global refueling and airlift taskings.

“For me, a priority going forward is going to be mission excellence,” Adams said. “If we are not experts in our craft, if we can’t do the mission, then everything else is irrelevant.”

Once assuming command of the operations group, Adams took a few minutes to thank White, Saxe, and leaders of the 354th Fighter Wing in attendance, and ended with some words for his wife.

“Lastly, to my wife Val, thank you for uprooting after 18 years in Anchorage...you left friends, a church, [and] your school that you started down there. You’ve been a rock, a sounding board, and a confidant, and I couldn’t – wouldn’t do [this] without you up here.”

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PHOTOS

1. Attached PDF includes a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.

2. Flickr link includes an event album with the complete selection of full-resolution, free downloadable images. (May not be accessible from all military computers.)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/168thwingakang/albums/72157697416554665>

3. **DVIDS link** includes story and selected full-resolution photos. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is accessible from .mil computers.) <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/278417/air-crew-and-space-operators-welcome-new-commander>



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Col. Richard Adams receives the guidon from Col. Torrence Saxe and officially assumes command of the 168th Operations Group, Alaska Air National Guard, during a ceremony May 24, 2018, at Eielson AFB, Alaska. Adams previously served as the vice commander of the 168th Wing, is a command pilot with more than 5,800 flying hours, and has been a member of the Alaska Air National Guard for more than 14 years. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Paul Mann)



180524-Z-ZA470-0055

Col. Torrence Saxe, commander 168th Wing, talks to Col. Bryan White and Col. Richard Adams prior to the 168th Operations Group change of command ceremony, May 24, 2018, inside the unit's maintenance hangar, Eielson AFB, Alaska. The three commanders have served a combined 50 years with the Alaska Air National Guard with assignments at Clear, Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, and Eielson, fulfilling missions in both air and space. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Paul Mann)



180524-Z-ZA470-0104

Col. Richard Adams, commander 168th Operations Group, Alaska Air National Guard, addresses the audience after assuming command of the unit during a ceremony May 24, 2018, at Eielson AFB, Alaska. Adams previously served as the vice commander of the 168th Wing, is a command pilot with more than 5,800 flying hours, and has been a member of the Alaska Air National Guard for more than 14 years. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Paul Mann)



180524-Z-ZA470-0121

Mrs. Valerie Adams, wife of Col. Richard Adams, listens as her husband addresses the audience and the Airmen of the 168th Operations Group, Alaska Air National Guard, after assuming command of the unit May 24, 2018, at Eielson AFB, Alaska. Adams assumed command of the unit from Col. Bryan White, who has been selected as the 168th Wing commander, and will assume command of the Eielson-base Air National Guard unit at a ceremony later this summer. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Paul Mann)