

Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs: Media update

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CONTACT: Capt. Joe Trovato | ngwi.pao@mail.mil | 608-242-3048

MADISON, Wis. — Lt. Gov. Rebecca Kleefisch, and senior Wisconsin National Guard leaders will join family and friends in sending off approximately 25 Wisconsin Army National Guard Soldiers from the Milwaukee-based 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade Military Engagement Team deploying to the Middle East this spring at a noon ceremony Sunday, March 25 in Madison.

The 157th Military Engagement Team sendoff ceremony will take place at the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs Joint Force Headquarters at 2400 Wright Street, Madison.

The military engagement team will work with allied nations to build stronger partnerships through joint military exercises, military-to-military non-training engagements and assessment of partner nation military capabilities.

The team will travel extensively during its deployment to conduct its engagements, and it will also maintain an active liaison presence at a number of American embassies in the region. The team will be split between Kuwait, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates. Currently planned engagements will take the team to nearly a dozen countries throughout the unit's deployment.

The Wisconsin National Guard remains heavily engaged fulfilling its mission as a key component of the primary combat reserve of the Army and Air Force. Three Wisconsin Army National Guard aviators from Detachment 5, 641st Aviation deployed to Afghanistan last week, and Soldiers from the 248th Aviation Support Battalion deployed to the Middle East in September. Approximately 85 Soldiers with

1st Battalion, 147th Aviation returned from a nine-month deployment to the Middle East in January, and approximately 35 Soldiers from West Bend's Company C, 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation returned from a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan in November.

Also in November, approximately 270 Airmen from the 115th Fighter Wing returned to Madison from a deployment to Korea, and more than 100 Airmen from the 128th Air Control Squadron at Volk Field returned from Southwest Asia. Approximately 70 Airmen from the 128th Air Refueling Wing in Milwaukee are in the midst of deployments worldwide, and other Airmen from the 128th deployed earlier in the fall as well.

Meanwhile, the Wisconsin National Guard has been busy fulfilling its other mission as the state's first military responder in times of emergency. Last fall, the Wisconsin National Guard deployed Soldiers and Airmen to Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to assist with hurricane recovery efforts, and Soldiers responded on multiple occasions to flooding last summer in Monroe County and Burlington, Wisconsin.