



Vol. 59 No.1

Fall 2012



**READY FOR ANYTHING** An F-22 from the Hawaii Air National Guard takes off during a training exercise Nov. 8, 2012 at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. The exercise culminated with the achievement of Initial Operational Capability by the HIANG's 199th Fighter Squadron and the active duty Air Force's 19th Fighter Squadron which fly the planes jointly. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Jackson)

Senior Master Sgt. Eric Correa with the 154th Maintenance Squadron inspects an external fuel tank on the 199th / 19th Fighter Squadrons' F-22 prior to a launch to mark the HIANG's Initial Operational Capability at Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickam, Nov. 8, 2012. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Jackson)



**See "F-22 IOC" story on page 17**

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Jackson

# Commander's Call

## *IMUA Na Koa! "Go Forward Warriors!"*

**by Brig. Gen. Braden Sakai, Commander 154 WG**

I just returned from a six-week Senior Officer Course for the F-22 Raptor. I thought flying fighters was a thing of the past for me. However, Gen. Gary L. North and other senior leadership have recently concluded that senior officers should obtain qualification on the F-22. This is primarily and specifically to help us understand the concerns that come with a fifth generation aircraft, thus enabling us to make informed decisions as an operator.

Next, Mahalo to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam for the fantastic job we all did during our Phase 2 in September. As I've been saying for some time now, we are in the middle of change...Embrace it, understand it and improve it. I respectfully ask each and everyone of you to help improve on the exercise in preparation for next year's inspection. We must bring solutions to the table and not road blocks. Regardless of whether we are in a "walk before we run" phase of an exercise, we need to demand from one another that we are all in and will always display a 'sense of urgency.' Hold each other accountable; train the way you would fight.

Recently I sent out to your commanders two speeches, one from Gen. Deptula (Ret) and the other from our new Chief of the Air Force, Gen. Welsh. It will be worth good for our Airmen to read these speeches. I'm confident that we are at a time where we will see our Air Force (Active, Guard and Reserve) pull together and work better together than ever before. I highly recommend watching the video clip from his talk to the Air Force Academy in Nov 2011. It's a 50 minute video that's worth every second.

On a similar note, there are notable leadership changes in PACAF. As Gen. Deptula noted in his speech at the recent Air Force Ball, "...In my 34+ years in the Air Force, I have never seen a collection of more experienced, gifted, and competent leadership in one command at the same time...ever! Generals Carlisle, Selva, Kresge, Jouas, Angelella, Hoog, Handy, Wong...these are America's premier Airmen...and I'm not saying that just to be nice. Men and woman of PACAF you are blessed...take advantage of this conflux of talent, and together you'll create a vision and a set of capabilities that will actualize our Nation's ability to succeed in any challenge..."

Our own 154th Wing will be going through change as well. In an effort to be as transparent as possible, I am doing my best to prepare and mentor future candidates for the Wing Commander position when I retire. Hopefully through mentorship and hard work, we will have anywhere from 3-5 individuals from within our Wing, groomed, diversified and competitive. The upcoming changes include a new Vice Wing Commander and Operations Group Commander. Col. Steve Su'a-Filo, 154WG/CV, has been selected to be

the new Director, Air National Guard Forces, Pacific Air Forces. He will be replacing Col. Fred 'Garvin' Hartwig. The position has the responsibility of liaison between National Guard Bureau and Gen. Hawk Carlisle, PACAF/CC. He will be moving into this new position in early November and when he moves, Col. Nakamura will move into the Vice Commander job after we find a replacement for the Operations Group Commander job.



After the ORI next year, my plan will be to next send Col. Glen Nakamura to NGB for a short tour where I will then move Col. Woodrow into the Vice Commander position. Finally, if and when Col. Greg Woodrow moves out of the MXG/CC position, there may be an opportunity to groom one more individual in the MXG/CC position for a year or so. When all is said and done, at a minimum, we could have 3 individuals in our Wing ready to compete for the WG/CC job---all groomed and diversified.

When the HIANG's Force Development Plan is fully implemented, we will have our best groomed and diversified for future leadership positions. Although it's a challenge to prepare the next generation of HIANG leaders, we should do everything we can to do so. This extends to our mid-grade officers. The time is now to identify your heavy hitters and start talking with them to see what their goals are. If it's aspirations to be a commander, get them on the right track now. This also holds true for our enlisted force too. We need well rounded leaders that are adaptable to changes.

In closing, and unfortunately on a sad note, the day I arrived at Tyndall for training I was notified of a suicide that hit close to home. A longtime, personal friend of mine lost his son to suicide. This was a young man who grew up with my kids and would routinely come over my house with his parents. I have been praying for all of them and mourning the loss of this young man every day. No one saw this coming; there were no signs that anyone noticed.

As I come to terms with this loss, I encourage all of you to talk to your family about this very sensitive topic. Get into your kids lives, talk to them and let them know they can talk to you. Talk to your spouse and other family members. Talk to your peers. Talk to your Airmen. Together, let's make a difference and do what we can to prevent suicides. Imua Na Koa!



# Enlisted Force Challenges During Process Improvement

by Command Chief Master Sgt. Willie Rafael, 154 WG

Last month, the Command Chiefs and several Airmen from the HIANG participated in the Air National Guard Enlisted Force Challenges Process Improvement event. Issues such as Ancillary Training, Community College of the Air Force (CCAF), Enlisted Performance Report (EPR), Communication, Enlisted Force Development, Enlisted Grade Review, and Fitness were some of the topics of discussions.

We also had a chance to witness the induction of Lt. Gen. Wyatt to the Order of the Sword. Order of the Sword is an ancient ceremony rich in tradition. The ceremony is conducted by NCO's to honor leaders who have made significant contributions to the enlisted corps. Earliest traditions hold that ancient NCOs would, on occasion, honor a leader and pledge their loyalty by ceremoniously presenting the leader a sword. The sword--a symbol of truth, justice, and power rightfully used--served as a token for all to see and know that here was a leader among leaders. LtGen Wyatt is only the 11th ANG recipient of this honor.

Majority of our two days were spent on the issues I've mentioned earlier.

Here are the updates to these issues.

**Ancillary training** – the issue is not enough time to accomplish the requirements. Expect ancillary training to be streamlined decreasing time needed to satisfy the requirements.

**Community College of the Air Force** - Expect to have CCAF degree for promotion to Senior Master Sergeant and Chief rank.

**Enlisted Performance Report** – Expect to have an EPR for all enlisted airmen every two years.

**Communication** – Leveraging more on technology and social media to reach our airmen in the most instant way.

**Force Development** – Define leadership competencies and provide a clear path and standardize from Airman to Chief Master Sergeant.

**Enlisted Grade Review** - Next round of Grade Review is on hold pending the end strength final number.

**Fitness** - There will be no changes to the current AFI 36-2905. Continue to encourage all to



participate and be successful.

**Suicide and Resiliency** - Expect focused support for front line supervisors, to include formal and informal mentoring for personal and professional growth.

On a different note, did you know that our very own Command Chief Denise Jelinski-Hall interviewed last week for the next Chief Master Sergeant of Air Force? She was not select but came in second. Nonetheless, to have an Air National Guard member even considered for the top enlisted position is

## Kuka'ilimoku

This funded Air Force newspaper is an authorized publication for the members of the US military services.

Contents of the Kuka'ilimoku are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the US Government, the Department of Defense, and the Department of the Air Force or the Hawaii Air National Guard.

This publication is prepared, edited and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 154th Wing, Hawaii 96853-5517.

Telephone: DSN/ (315) 448-7255 / (808) 448-7292. Send e-mail submissions, comments or suggestions internally to: 154wg.pa@pacaf.af.mil

The Kuka'ilimoku can be seen on the State Department of Defense website: <http://hawaii.gov/dod/>

The punctuation of the name of this publication was researched by the Indo-Pacific Language Department at the University of Hawaii. All photos are United States Air Force photos unless otherwise noted.

## COMMNDER

Brig. Gen. Braden Sakai

## PAO

Capt. Daniel Garcia

## STAFF

Tech. Sgt. Michelle Thomas

Tech Sgt. Andrew Jackson

Staff Sgt. Lee Tucker

A1C Orlando Corpuz

## PUBLISHED BY:

154th Wing Public Affairs Office

# Why Integrity Matters

*By Chaplain Edward Ganigan, 154th Chaplain's Office*

One of the first things that really grabbed me when I came onboard with the Hawaii Air National Guard was the Air Force Motto. As you all know it reads: Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence In All We Do. I love the simple yet concise way in which it compels us to live our lives and the values we are to bring to each and every role we play as we go about our mission. I also love that it begins with the phrase "integrity first."

Integrity is vital to accomplishing any mission. It is key in the way we go about our service and it is essential in performing a task excellently.

But there's another reason why integrity is so very important. Here's that reason...it allows God room to work in our lives. Somehow God is honored when people hold highly strong moral values. God is a God of integrity.

His character is such that it is internally and consistently good and pure, totally lacking any hint of corruption. He is wholly holy! And because God is like that, whenever we live in a way that displays that same character, it's like God is saying: *I will honor that act, and now I can and will work in your situation because you've displayed integrity.*

What does that look like? I've often heard that integrity is choosing to do what is right (instead of what is wrong) when no one is looking. That certainly is true and God is honored in that for

certain.

But another way that integrity is displayed is when we do what is right when others choose to look away.

I'm reminded of a secretary who would not lie for her boss when he doublebooked appointments. Choosing not to lie opened up a whole can of worms for her (she could lose her job) but endless options where God was able to see that act of integrity and say to her the same thing: *I will honor that act and I can and I will work in your situation because of the integrity you displayed.* Here's how the story plays out: the secretary loses her job for telling the second representative that her boss had overbooked appointments.

However, a month later that representative and his company are discovered by the media to be part of a huge scam and under investigation. The boss realizing his ex-secretary of strong moral character actually saved him and his company from a disastrous business relationship. Full of gratitude, he offers her job back to her with even more control of the business and a raise.

God was honored by that act, "space was created" by that act and thus God was able to work because integrity was displayed.

Let's continue to hold high the value of "integrity first" that we might cooperate with God and create space for Him to work on behalf of ourselves, our families, our mission and our country.



## LEGACY OF SERVICE

*Chief Master Sgt. Willie Rafael, 154 Command Chief, re-enlisted this fall while his son Brian was at Basic Military Training.*



*Airman 1st. Class Brian M. Rafael (right) graduated Basic Military Training class recently with top honors. His name will be engraved on a brick paver to be placed at the new dorms and will forever be a part of that structure.*



# Ho'okanaka

## TO BE A WARRIOR

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Michelle Thomas, 154th Public Affairs

The Hawaii Air National Guard welcomed a new vessel to its fleet last August.

The canoe or Wa'a christened Ho'okanaka (to be a warrior) is the charter vessel of the fledgling Hawaii National Guard Canoe Club.

Paddling has historic ties to the native Hawaiian heritage of many local people. It holds a special place in the hearts of many men and women who are members of the Hawaii Air National Guard.

Paddling is a popular and competitive sport in the state of Hawaii with year round competition seasons, and an avid following.



Staff Sgt. Remegius “Hudson” Soon, a weapons specialist with the 154th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, applies the name Ho’okanaka (to be a warrior) to the Hawaii National Guard’s newest “vessel.”



Chaplain Maj. Leah Boling blesses the canoe during the launch ceremony in August. More than 30 people came out to help welcome the charter vessel of the Hawaii National Guard’s Canoe Club.



Members of the Hawaii National Guard’s Canoe Club prepare to launch the vessel on its maiden voyage. More than 30 people came out to help welcome the clubs charter vessel.



## What An Honor!

*Medal of Honor recipient Col. (retired) George E. "Bud" Day signs the countertop located in the 199th Fighter Squadron. Shot down while on a mission during the Vietnam War, Day was captured and resisted severe torture as a POW in the "Hanoi Hilton" from 1967 to 1973. Three years after his release, Day was presented with the Medal of Honor along with fellow POW Admiral James Stockdale.*



*Personnel from the 199th Fighter Squadron met Medal of Honor recipient, Col. (retired) George E. "Bud" Day in October. He is often cited as being the most decorated U.S. service member since General Douglas MacArthur, having received some seventy decorations, a majority for actions in combat.*



*Tech. Sgt. Shirlene Cardenas of the 154th Force Support Squadron received the Commandant Leadership Award, Sept. 6, 2012.*

*The Commandant Leadership Award is presented at the end of the Non Commissioned Officer Academy course to the student who has displayed all the characteristics of an effective leader.*



*The 154 Operational Support Squadron, pictured above, participated in the first annual Summer Camp. Once a support flight, the newly-named squadron focused on the basics during the 154 OSS Summer Camp. In three days, the squadron accomplished a full year's worth of ancillary training, in accordance with (IAW) AFI 36-2201.*



# Guardisman finds bone marrow donation rewarding

By Tech. Sgt. Michelle Thomas, 154th Public Affairs

"I hate needles," said Staff Sgt. James Chun II, whose normally reserve demeanor suddenly changed when the subject came up. "I really, really hate needles," he said, driving the point home.

"My wife is a nurse and she knows how much I hate them so she was surprised when I decided to do this."

Several years ago, in 2006, Chun participated in the C.W. Bill Young Department of Defense Marrow Donor Program - designed to help DoD members provide bone marrow and stem cells to people in need, most of whom are cancer patients.

"Staff Sgt. Gindalle Page organized a donation drive where all we had to do was get a swab of the inside of my cheek (with a cotton-tipped swab)," said Chun, a full-time maintenance specialist. "I thought it was easy enough."

The swab retains a sample of DNA. Some applicant's DNA never matches that of a needy recipient. However, for others, the match is made within months or years. Chun's DNA fell into the latter category.

After collecting the sample, he signed a consent form, DoD Form DD 2576, DOD Bone Marrow Donor



*Staff Sgt. James Chun, a maintenace specialist on the C-17, reaches for a tool Oct. 13 , 2012.*



*Staff Sgt. Chun endures five hours of peripheral blood stem cells donation at the Apheresis Clinic in Va., Aug. 24, 2012. Luckily, the process was pain free aside from slight twinging at the IV site, said Chun.*



*Chun braces for the first needle to be inserted to start the five hours of "blood letting."*

Program Donor Information and Health Screening, to be listed on the DoD and National Marrow Donor Program registry.

Staff Sgt. Chun then waited...for six years.

"I was told that I was a match for someone a few months ago," he said in early August 2012, a few weeks before going to Virginia to make the actual bone marrow donation.

"I was excited, a little unsure and nervous, too. You aren't allowed to know anything about the person receiving the donation, So, I still have no idea who got my donation."

Upon being matched with a possible recipient, he and his wife Kiyomi traveled to Apheresis Associates of Northern Virginia, Annandale, Va. He immediately began the physical preparations necessary for his body to donate the stem-cells. He received a complete physical examination and started receiving the five-day cycle of Filgrastim injections.

Filgrastim, a protein similar to a hormone naturally produced in the body, moves the blood-forming cells out of bone marrow and into the bloodstream so there are enough cells for a transplant.

After his series of injections were complete and his body ready for contribution, Chun then endured five hours of blood-letting...which started

with a needle.

Oddly enough, the needle involved in the method Chun endured was less intimidating than the more widely-known method of stem cell donation. The hospital-based surgical process involves using a hollow needle to withdraw liquid bone marrow, where stem cells reside, from the back of the pelvis. The procedure is known for leaving the individual donating the marrow sore and sometimes requiring a blood transfusion. In contrast, the apheresis method which Chun went through, officially called peripheral blood stem cells donation, is similar to a typical blood donation except that it takes longer.

"The only discomfort I felt was a little pinching at the IV site," said Chun. "Other than that there was really no pain. I really didn't feel anything."

Following the donation that left him physically exhausted, but relatively pain free, he returned to home to Hawaii. A few days later, he went back to work.

"I hope it works," said Chun, when asked about the possibility that what he did saved the life of another human being. For someone who normally winces at the sight of needles, it's quite remarkable.

"I would tell people that if they ever thought about trying to become a donor, they should do it," he said. "What could be better than knowing you gave a person a chance to live?"





# *COMBAT HAMMER*

**HIANG Aircraft put bombs on  
targets during weapons evaluation**

**Story and photos by Senior Amn. Orlando Corpuz , 154th Public Affairs**

Hawaii Air National Guard personnel trained alongside active duty and contractor personnel for two weeks last summer at Hill, AFB, to take part in the U.S. Air force's air to ground weapons evaluation program known as COMBAT HAMMER.

The two week-long evaluation allowed more than 100 pilots and maintenance personnel from the HIANG's 199th Fighter Squadron and the active duty 19th Fighter Squadron to hone skills and processes required for bomb dropping missions.

"It was a great opportunity to get the jets in the air," said Maj. Joshua Biederman, a 19th Fighter Squadron pilot and the weapons officer for the exercise.

Combat Hammer is a complete evaluation of air to ground weapons systems. In addition to evaluating the end results of bombs hitting targets, Combat Hammer evaluates the effectiveness of operations and

maintenance personnel and all the processes in between, from bomb build to bomb drop.

According to Biederman, approximately 80 percent of the personnel who deployed were "first time droppers" who had not been afforded the opportunity to drop munitions onto a target before now.

Among other firsts, Combat Hammer marked the first deployment for the HIANG's raptors; it was also the first time the HIANG has deployed air to ground munitions. Variants of previous HIANG combat aircraft, from the F4 to the venerable F15 had an air to air combat focus. Though the F-22 is an air superiority fighter, its ability to deliver air to ground weaponry adds another dimension of what the HIANG can bring to the fight.

Additionally Combat Hammer allowed the HIANG's 199th pilots and their active duty counterparts at





**199th Fighter Squadron pilots Maj. Alexander Ress and Lt. Col. James Sage discuss last minute details during Combat Hammer weapons system evaluation. During the first two weeks of August the Hawaii Air National Guard conducted training flights over the Utah Test and Training Range, Hill Air Force Base, Utah.**

**RIGHT: Senior Airman Jason Allen (background) and Tech Sgt. Russell Mesinas (foreground), 199th Fighter Squadron crew chiefs, operate a Stored Energy System (SES), Hill Air Force Base, Utah, Aug 2, 2012. The SES provides energy for F-22 engine startup.**

the 19th to reinforce the Total Force Integration (TFI) initiative to improve effectiveness and efficiency. The TFI initiative promotes increased integration of active duty, guard, and reserve components.

"This is a very cohesive group (the 154th and the 19th) focused on working together," said Biederman of the working relationship of the two squadrons during the evaluation.

The HIANG "owns" the raptors and has a larger share of the flying and maintenance responsibilities with roughly a 75-25 split. COMBAT HAMMER provided the chance to take the TFI model on the road.

"It's a really great validation (the exercise); it has shown and proven that TFI can and must work and from my perspective it's working really, really well," said Master Sgt. Christopher Cruz, assigned as the first sergeant for the deployment.

The four aircraft that took part in Combat Hammer were previously based out of Langley Air Force base, Virginia. Added to the 14 that were already in Hawaii and two currently on the mainland for maintenance, the HIANG realized its final complement of 20 raptors, more than two years after the first raptors first arrived in Hawaii

in the summer of 2010.

"Within hours of hitting the ground at Hill our F-22 personnel had all four aircraft ready to fly for the next day," said Lt. Col. Christopher Faurot, the commander during the exercise.

"All told we flew every mission planned and then some with an overall mission effectiveness rate of 113 percent. In addition, we exceeded the normal Combat Hammer fleet tasking rate of 75 percent and flew 100 percent of available aircraft, successfully completing 16 of 16 tasked missions and dropping 30 GBU-32's JDAMS in the process."

"I am extremely proud of each and every Airman that supported this deployment and I look forward to the next opportunity to show the world why we truly are No Ka Oi or "Indeed the Best!"



**Tech. Sgt. Russell Mesinas, Senior Airman Jason Allen, Master Sergeant Samuel Bukoski, and contractor David Shiraishi pour over data at Combat Hammer, August 2012, Hill Air Force Base, Utah. The data was downloaded from a Hawaii F-22 that had just completed a training sortie.**







DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC 20330

JUN 18 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL AIRMEN

SUBJECT: Leaders Encouraging Airmen Development (LEAD) Message 2012-2013

Our United States Air Force Academy (USAF A) and the USAFA Preparatory School offer valuable opportunities for our most qualified enlisted Airmen who meet the criteria to enter the commissioned ranks. As commanders and supervisors, we ask you to encourage your sharpest Airmen to apply for the LEAD program. Each year, a total of 170 highly competitive slots for direct entry to USAFA and the Preparatory School are split evenly between the active and reserve (Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard) components of the Air Force. This year, 50 Airmen were offered appointments to USAFA and the Preparatory School.

If you have talented and deserving Airmen in your command who demonstrate impeccable character and values coupled with leadership potential, please encourage them to consider a commissioning path through our Academy. As a reminder, each applicant must meet the following criteria: (1) less than 23 years of age by 1 July 2013 for entry to USAFA, or less than 22 years of age by 1 July 2013 for entry to the Preparatory School; (2) unmarried; (3) a U.S. citizen (or ability to obtain citizenship prior to entry); and (4) have no dependents.

An Airman wishing to apply for a USAFA or Preparatory School appointment must complete and return an Air Force Form 1786 by 31 December prior to the entry year. Upon completion, the form and commander's endorsement should be mailed to HQ USAFA/RRS, 2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 2300, USAF Academy, CO 80840-5025.

The USAFA POC for the LEAD program is Captain Christopher Goshorn, at (719) 333-2233 (DSN 333), or [usafa\\_lead@usafa.edu](mailto:usafa_lead@usafa.edu). Additional information is available on the USAFA Admissions website ([www.academyadmissions.com](http://www.academyadmissions.com)), the USAFA Admissions Android/iPhone "app," the USAFA Admissions Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/AcademyAdmissions](http://www.facebook.com/AcademyAdmissions)), or at each local base education office.

JAMES A. ROY  
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

NORTON A. SCHWARTZ  
General, USAF  
Chief of Staff





## **Ultimate Spiritual Resiliency and Relationships (R & R)**

Dining Facility 154 WG  
Friday, 16 November 2012

Course Instructor  
Wing Chaplain (Maj) Leah Boling

### **TRAINING SCHEDULE**

0800-0830	Registration / Sign-In / Course Materials / Refreshments
0830-0845	Commander's Welcome
0845-0900	Course Overview (structure, purpose, teaching methods and expectations)
0900-1015	Session 1    Becoming Resilient Through Developing Your Spirituality
1015-1030	Break
1030-1145	Session 2    Transforming Spiritual Beliefs Into Spiritual Mindfulness
1145-1300	<b>Lunch (Will be provided)</b>
1300-1430	Session 3    Developing Emotional Strength Through Your Spirituality
1430-1445	Break
1445-1615	Session 4 Exercising Your Spiritual Commitments/ Touching the Lives of Others
1615-1630	Conclusion / Course Evaluations

# HIANG's F-22 RAPTORS ACHIEVE INITIAL OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY

By Tech. Sgt. Michelle Thomas, 154th Public Affairs

It took 28 months to get here.

More than two years after the first jets arrived in July 2010, the Hawaii Air National Guard's 199th Fighter Squadron and the active duty Air Force's 19th Fighter Squadron have achieved Initial Operational Capability (IOC) status.

The announcement came at the end of a three-day long exercise, clearly demonstrating the units' ability to fly and maintain the world's most advanced fighter aircraft for any contingency operation.

"This is a huge milestone for our combined 154th and 15th Wings", said Brig. Gen. Braden Sakai, 154th Wing commander. "IOC means we are able to deploy a portion of our F-22 Raptors, anytime, anywhere, in support of theater operations.

Our F-22 Raptors underscore the U.S. commitment to the Pacific region and adds additional air dominance capability to U.S. Pacific Command".

The F-22 Raptors replaced the F-15 Eagles that the 154th's flying unit, the 199th Fighter Squadron, flew since 1987. The F-22 is designed to counter lethal threats posed by advanced surface-to-air missile systems and next-generation fighters equipped with launch-and-leave missile capability.

Pilots from the 199th Fighter Squadron trained for the conversion over the past two years.

Both full-time and traditional pilots attended a four-month long transition course (also known as a TX course) for experienced pilots transferring from other fighter aircraft types. Seventy-five percent of the mission is manned

by the 154th with the other 25 percent being covered by the active duty personnel.

"We are a day closer to the fight," said Lt. Col. James Sage, two years ago, when asked about the benefit of having Raptors here.

"Logistically, we are a stopping off point for other F-22 units so we would be able to support any training and aircraft housing requirements."

While the HIANG has worked toward this achievement, the Montana Air National Guard has been guarding the Airspace that the HIANG is responsible for since the transition in 2010.

The Hawaii Air National Guard's F-22's are scheduled to transfer to Full Operational Capability (FOC) next month.

*F-22 Raptors take off from Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii during an Initial Operational Capability (IOC) certification Nov. 8.*

