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170th Air Refueling Squadron activated

JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Air National Guard’s 108th Wing unveiled its newest unit yesterday, with the inauguration of the 170th Air Refueling Squadron at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey.

Guided by the Fiscal Year 2023 National Defense Authorization Act, the new unit’s nearly 60 Citizen Airmen will perform aerial refueling missions in association with the active duty 305th Air Mobility Wing. Through this arrangement, the 170th Air Refueling Squadron, alongside the 108th Wing’s 141st Air Refueling Squadron, will provide aircrew to help operate the KC-46 Pegasus tankers.

The New Jersey Air National Guard's two squadrons now join the active duty's two squadrons to complete an embedded classic association, with each of the wings contributing two squadrons toward the overall conventional and strategic efforts.

“These are exciting times,” said Col. Eric A. Guttormsen, 108th Wing commander. “I have no doubt our Airmen will serve with character and a great sense of purpose, establishing strong foundations and supporting our forces’ global mobility with excellence.”

The numeric unit designation of the 170th Air Refueling Squadron was derived from the 170th Air Refueling Group, previously based at McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey. The squadron itself, however, explained the 108th Operations Group Commander, Col. William A. Liess, is new.

“The history of the 170th Air Refueling Squadron starts today,” said Liess. “There were countless individuals involved with getting the unit to this point of activation. Now we have a

tremendous opportunity to serve our state and nation with the Air National Guard's newest squadron and its newest tanker aircraft."

During the ceremony, the new squadron was activated through publication of formal military orders, the squadron's guidon unfurled.

Liess introduced the squadron's first commander, Lt. Col. Matthew J. Secko, who assumed command of the unit.

"It is a privilege and an honor to start this squadron," said Secko, acknowledging the special role of families in military life. "Our first members bring talents and experience to the squadron from many backgrounds, and they will each make a difference."

The squadron's patch, selected and developed from nine submissions during a wing-wide design contest, was displayed and its symbology [explained](#) as Secko presented a patch to each of its members.

"It's a good day," said Liess. "This is a team day."

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