

152 MEDICAL GROUP



MISSION

LINEAGE

152 Tactical Dispensary
152 Tactical Clinic
152 Medical Squadron
152 Medical Group

STATIONS

Reno ANGB, Reno, NV

ASSIGNMENTS

152 Airlift Wing

COMMANDERS

Col Richard Newbold

HONORS

Service Streamers

Campaign Streamers

Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers

Decorations

EMBLEM

MOTTO

NICKNAME

OPERATIONS

On the 26th of January 1968 all elements of the Nevada Air National Guard except the State Headquarters in Carson City, were called to active duty with the United States Air Force. The call-up was ordered by President Lyndon B. Johnson as he responded to the crisis created by the North Korean capture of the USS Pueblo. The recall differed from the 19-51 tour as there was no alert or get-ready" period involved.

The 152d Tactical Dispensary was reduced to one man assigned and was relocated to Suwon, Korea.

By the end of August 1968 all units and personnel of the Nevada Air National Guard had been reassigned and relocated. This was the largest reassignment action in the history of recalled Air National Guard units.

In December 1968 it was announced that the recalled units and their assigned personnel would be demobilized effective 9 June 1969.

The demobilization plan for the Nevada ANG units as established by Headquarters USAF required all members be reassigned to their home station at Reno Municipal Airport. Personnel were to arrive between 25-30 May 1969 for final out processing with release effective 9 June 1969.

2007 U.S. Southern Command officials recently deployed more than 30 Air Force medics to Bolivia to participate in a two week-long Medical Readiness Training Exercise, including 13 from the Nevada Air Guard's 152nd Medical Group. Air Force medics, working with Bolivian health officials, provided free medical treatment to underserved populations in Bolivia while gaining invaluable experience and training. "We are happy to be in Bolivia doing what we love most and that is helping people get better," said Col. Jack Schnurr, the MEDRETE mission commander and commander of the 152nd Medical Group.

"I am very proud of the work we are doing here and hope we can do many more missions like this in the future." Airmen provided medical care including general medicine, pediatrics, optometry and dentistry. The team came with a medicine cabinet of pharmaceutical drugs costing more than \$45,000, while the total cost of the mission came to more than \$150,000. The team treated more than 1,300 Bolivians in three remote locations. Although medical

issues varied from patient to patient, care is consistently needed to treat a number of parasite infections, skin diseases, and life-threatening diseases like abscesses. Lt. Col. Catherine Kanwetz and Master Sgt. Brian McBeth performed dozens of tooth extractions while in Bolivia. "We are seeing things here that could very easily be seen on our deployments into Southwest Asia," Schnurr said.

"Leishmaniasis (a rare skin disease) is endemic in Southwest Asia, so for us to see similar diseases here gives exposure to some of the (medics) who have not yet deployed." Along with the added benefits of providing care to the Bolivians and treating foreign illnesses, the team gained a wealth of mobilization experience that started well before arriving and treating their first patient. The team went through the entire pre-deployment process from arranging the logistics, personnel readiness, travel and other deployment processes vital to their success. A critical component to mission accomplishment included several Spanish translators who are bridging the language gap between patient and doctor.

"This mission would have been severely handicapped had it not been for our team of translators," said Maj. Scott Shepherd, a doctor from the Reno unit. "Our goal is to reach as many people as possible, and their help is allowing us to do just that." There is a consistent level of praise from the Bolivians for the care the medical team is providing. "For my family, medical care is expensive, and it is not easily accessible," said Gabriel Solano, a father of four who traveled more than six hours to receive medical care.

"This treatment from the doctors from the United States and the free medicine they are providing is going to really help my family." While there are airmen from various Air Force units participating in this exercise, the majority of the medical staff come from the 152nd and the 163rd Medical Group from March Air Reserve Base, Calif. The team treated more than 800 Bolivian patients. U.S. Southern Command sponsors approximately 70 MEDRETEs per year and 12th Air Force and Air Forces Southern, the air and space component to USSOUTHCOM, plan and execute about 30 of these exercises in locations throughout Central America and South America plus additional sites throughout the Caribbean.

The Nevada Air Guard's 152nd Medical Group continued to provide a high standard of medical care to troops and civilians throughout the world during the biennium. In January, several medical group Airmen completed a rigorous emergency medical technician refresher course. The training was provided by doctors, nurses and specialists from the unit. The training was part of a mandatory re-certification program.

In May, 45 Airmen from the 152nd Medical Group deployed to the Alpena, Mich., Medical Readiness Training Site. The staff at Alpena provided a realistic field environment that allowed the 152nd Medical Group an excellent opportunity to learn, reinforce and test their individual and group skills in treating casualties at an esoteric expeditionary medical facility. In July, 31 Airmen from the group deployed to Tripler Army Medical Center in Hawaii to obtain essential medical training and valuable real-world work experience. Unit members worked with active duty Army counterparts in a variety of specialty areas including: dental, bio-environmental, emergency room, urology, family practice, orthopedics, administration, anesthesia, labor and delivery, surgery, respiratory therapy, public health and the laboratory.

In both 2009 and 2010, nine Airmen in the 152nd attended Air Guard medical conferences in Utah and Minnesota respectively. The Surgeon General of the Air National Guard and his

staff presented two weeks of beneficial and constructive presentations that directly affected the medical group. In September, the 152nd Medical Group combined with the Nevada Army National Guard's Medical Detachment and participated in a mass casualty exercise in Hawthorne. Airmen had the opportunity to perform and witness a multitude of advanced medical procedures. The exercise provided unique, invaluable hands-on training in procedures such as intravenous insertion, intubations, needle thoracotomy, use of the Heimlich valve, chest tube insertion and control of arterial bleeding. The 152nd Medical Group was led by 1st Lt. Catherine Kanwetz during the exercise. She was assisted by Lt. Kelly Niedzwiecki.

USAF Unit Histories

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Sources

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