



ple in the tanker community. A second alert crew was added during the fall of 2004.

At the same time, the unit continues to provide support to several high-profile development programmes of the US Navy at Point Mugu and Eglin, the F-22 Raptor at Edwards AFB, or JSTARS. After Hurricane Katrina left large parts of the Gulf Coast in tatters, members of the 939th helped the Oregon Army National Guard's 41st Battalion deploy for relief operations. In a nine-day period (with several days lasting 17-18 hours), members loaded more than 35 aircraft (C-5s and KC-135s) with 1,200 soldiers and 1.2 million lb of cargo. This was the largest troop movement to come out of Portland Air National Guard Base.

When Hurricane Rita hit Texas, the wing ferried aeromedical personnel to aid in patient evacuation. In that same year the unit augmented the active-duty Air Expeditionary Force at Diego Garcia with one aircrew for the duration of three months, and again deployed to Turkey with two aircraft and four crews, undertaking 37 sorties to offload a total of 1,995,000 lb (904932 kg) of fuel in support of Central Command operations.

From 1 October 2003 until 25 April 2006, the wing logged more than 2,100 sorties in the KC-135 for more than 7,685 hours of flight time. During that time, aircrews from the 939th offloaded 24,069,840 lb (10918079 kg) of fuel and moved more than 4,200 passengers and 3,907,730 lb (1772546 kg) of cargo.

The wing's mission will realign as part of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure, and the current timeline requires that all aircraft depart Portland by 30 September 2007. Manning authorisations for Reservists assigned to the 939th Operations and Maintenance Groups will cease in September 2007 as well. However, reservists assigned to the 939th Wing staff and 939th Mission Support Group will remain at Portland until September 2010, when manpower authorisations will be moved to Vandenberg Air Force Base, California. At that time, another chapter of military history will have been closed, leaving the state of Oregon and its two F-15 wings dependent on air refuelling capacities from outside the state.

*Marnix Sap/MIAS*

