



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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## **Tennessee National Guard flying over Nashville and Knoxville for centennial celebration of aerial refueling**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – On June 27, the United States Air Force invites the public to observe flyovers throughout the country and around the world, honoring 100 years of aerial refueling excellence.

There will be two U.S. Air Force flyovers in Tennessee performed by a Knoxville based KC-135R Stratotanker with the 134th Air Refueling Wing, and two F-16 Fighting Falcons from the 169th Fighter Wing, South Carolina Air National Guard.

The first flyover is scheduled to occur over Nashville at 11:00 a.m., central, and will pass over downtown. The second flyover is scheduled to occur over Knoxville, at approximately 12:30 p.m., eastern, and will fly near Interstate 40 and Neyland Stadium as part of the national celebration.

With 100 years of experience, today's U.S. Air Force air refueling capabilities deliver unrivaled rapid global reach for U.S. forces and our Allies and partners through the mobility air forces fleet of KC-46, KC-135, and KC-10 tankers. Aerial refueling serves as a force multiplier, increasing the speed, range, lethality, flexibility, and versatility of combat aircraft. Tankers also carry cargo and passengers, perform aeromedical evacuations, and enable strategic deterrence for the United States.

“Air refueling propels our Nation’s air power across the skies, unleashing its full potential,” said Gen. Mike Minihan, Air Mobility Command commander. “It connects our strategic vision with operational reality, ensuring we can reach any corner of the globe with unwavering speed and precision. Air refueling embodies our resolve to defend freedom and project power, leaving an indelible mark on aviation history.”

Innovation and tenacity, hallmark characteristics of Airmen throughout the service’s history, delivered the game-changing capability, once deemed impossible.

In the continued pursuit of advanced capabilities and increased endurance, U.S. Army Air Service aviators pulled off the impossible on June 27, 1923. On that day, 1st Lt. Virgil Hine and 1st Lt. Frank W. Seifert, flying a DH-4B, passed gasoline through a hose to another DH-4B



flying beneath it carrying Capt. Lowell H. Smith and 1st Lt. John P. Richter, accomplishing the first aerial refueling.

One hundred years later, the United States Air Force celebrates these Airmen's tenacity and innovative will that is still thriving in Airmen's spirits today.

This critical capability is essential for the Department of Defense's most vital missions. To remain relevant in the current and future security environments, the Air Force is in the process of recapitalizing its tanker fleet with the ongoing acquisition of the KC-46A and accelerating its pursuit of the next-generation air refueling system, propelling forward the capability developed and entrusted to Airmen a century ago.

"As we embark on the next 100 years of air refueling, we will continue to strengthen our air mobility excellence," said Minihan. "We must leverage the remarkable capabilities of air refueling to preserve peace, protect freedom, and bring hope to the world. As Mobility Airmen, we write the next chapter of air refueling."

Air Mobility Command salutes the visionaries who challenged the status quo of yesteryears while we inspire the next generation of dreamers and out-of-the box thinkers for the challenges ahead.

For more information, contact Lt. Col. Travers Hurst, 134th Chief of Public Affairs, at 865-336-3205.

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