

by 2nd Lt. Jonathan Russell
117th ARW/PA

1/18/2012 - **117th AIR REFUELING WING, Birmingham, Ala.** --

The Alabama Air National Guard and 106th Air Refueling Squadron will celebrate its 90th Anniversary here on Saturday.

Established on January 21, 1922, the Alabama Air National Guard and 106th Air Refueling Squadron have been actively involved in overseas campaigns, maintaining national security and supporting humanitarian relief missions throughout the world. They also support the local communities in Alabama through disaster relief, law enforcement and other critical missions.

In its early years, the Alabama Air National Guard got its start at Roberts Field in Birmingham. Their mission was to fly the groundbreaking concept of airmail in the Curtiss JN-4D "Jennies" biplanes. In 1929, the Alabama Air National Guard airdropped food and other supplies to flood victims in south Alabama. In the 1930s, the squadron moved to its current location at Sumpter Smith Air National Guard Base. Currently the 106th Air Refueling Squadron of the Alabama Air National Guard provides in-flight refueling using the KC-135R Stratotanker aircraft.

While there are some full-time airmen in the Alabama Air National Guard, many of them are part-time. Being part-time gives the airmen the flexibility to have civilian careers or to pursue a higher education. They serve in the Air National Guard a minimum of one weekend a month and two weeks a year. With the recent involvement in the Global War on Terror a majority of these part-time airmen have been activated and deployed to various locations throughout the world.

The members of the Alabama Air National Guard and the 106th Air Refueling Squadron have been an important part of defending, protecting and serving the of the United States of America and the State of Alabama and will continue to be ready for the next challenge.