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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

South Dakota Guard gets a visit from governor

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq (12/12/07) - Soldiers from Detachment 3, Company A, 641st Aviation Regiment, South Dakota Army National Guard recently received a visit from South Dakota Governor Mike Rounds as they continue to provide aviation support to units throughout the region supporting Operation Iraq Freedom.

The detachment left South Dakota in October and specializes in transporting personnel and cargo with its two C-23 Sherpa cargo planes. The C-23 Sherpa is capable of airlifting up to three and a half tons of cargo or about 20 passengers.

Since the unit's arrival in Iraq, the National Guard members have flown 800 hours, hauled 1.6 million pounds of cargo and transported 3,600 passengers, according to Maj. David R. Doran, commander of Company A, 641st Aviation Regiment.

"The troops are extremely hard-working and are doing a phenomenal job across the board," said Doran. "Everyone has a positive attitude and the guys are really looking out for each other; it's really amazing to see how well this team works together."

Doran, an Oregon National Guardsman, said that several aircrew members are nearing 150 hours and are on pace to reach 600 by the end of the six-month tour.

The entire company consists of four detachments from South Dakota, Washington, Oregon and Oklahoma that form Company A.

Photo cut line: BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq (12/12/07) - South Dakota National Guard Soldiers of Detachment 3, Company A, 641st Aviation Regiment pose with South Dakota Governor Mike Rounds in front of one of the unit's C-23 Sherpa aircraft at Logistical Support Area Anaconda, Balad Air Base, Iraq. From left to right: Chief Warrant Officer Fred Loofbourow (kneeling), Sgt. Ronald Diekman, Sgt. Matthew Day, Sgt. Nicholas Dupont, Chief Warrant Officer Ryan Wiley, Gov. Mike Rounds, Staff Sgt. Christopher Cox, Sgt. Clinton Walker, Sgt. 1st Class Julie Harpe (kneeling), Chief Warrant Officer Ronald Boutch (kneeling). Not pictured is Chief Warrant Officer Steven Graves.
(Courtesy Photo)(Released)

Link to photo:

https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/released/Governor_Rounds_visits_South_Dakota_Guard_Members.JPG

- 30 -

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