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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Guard unit to deploy overseas**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. – Thirty-one members of the 114th Security Forces Squadron, South Dakota Air National Guard, will be honored during a deployment ceremony at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 9, at Joe Foss Field as they prepare to deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Airmen officially mobilized on Jan. 3, 2008, and deployed to Fort Lewis, Wash., for training specific to the unit's upcoming overseas mission. The unit has since returned to Sioux Falls for a short period of time prior to its deployment to Southwest Asia where the Airmen will conduct security missions and law-enforcement duties as well as provide force protection for U.S. and coalition forces.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**, please contact Lt. Col. Reid Christopherson at (605)-988-5644, cell (605) 310-9476, or Maj. Orson Ward at (605) 737-6721, cell (605) 431-8753.

**NOTE 1:** Since the terrorist attacks on America, the South Dakota National Guard has mobilized more than 3,100 Soldiers and 700 Airmen in support of the Global War on Terror.

Currently, more than 200 Soldiers and Airmen from the South Dakota National Guard remain on duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. More than 4,000 National Guardsmen are available in South Dakota to provide support for state and national emergencies and homeland defense.

**NOTE 2:** South Dakota National Guard units currently deployed.

Battery B, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 147<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, South Dakota Army National Guard, is currently stationed at Convoy Support Center Cedar II near An Nasiriyah, Iraq, which is approximately 193 miles southeast of Baghdad. The 180 Soldiers of Battery B arrived in Iraq in early January and will conduct various security missions for the next 10 months in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Detachment 3, Company A, 641<sup>st</sup> Aviation Regiment, South Dakota Army National Guard, is currently stationed at Balad Air Base, Iraq, which is located 42 miles north of Baghdad. The 10-member unit began providing airlift support to units throughout the region on Nov. 1, 2007. Company A has already flown more than 330 missions transporting more than 3.5 million

pounds of cargo and 7,650 personnel. This is the unit's second rotation in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom since 2004.

The South Dakota Embedded Training Team (ETT) is currently training at Fort Riley, Kan., for two months prior to deployment to Afghanistan. The 16-member team, known as "Coyote One," will train and mentor the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Detachment 48, Operational Support Airlift Command, South Dakota Army National Guard, is currently training at Fort Benning, Ga., in preparation for its deployment to Afghanistan. The seven-member unit will deploy for a six to 12-month deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The detachment will provide aviation support to units throughout Afghanistan by flying two high-performance C-12 Huron aircraft. While overseas, the unit expects to be stationed at Bagram Air Base, 27 miles north of Kabul, where the detachment will operate the two aircraft that are already in place.