



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

**Lt. Col. Jim St. Clair**

169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Office: 803-647-8208

[169.FW.Public.Affairs.org@us.af.mil](mailto:169.FW.Public.Affairs.org@us.af.mil)

**Kim Jamieson Crafton**

Columbia Metropolitan Airport

Director of Marketing & Air Service Development

[K.Crafton@flycae.com](mailto:K.Crafton@flycae.com)

803.714.3998 (mobile)

**South Carolina Air National Guard extends operations at  
Columbia Metropolitan Airport**

**MCENTIRE JOINT NATIONAL GUARD BASE, S.C.** – The South Carolina Air National Guard’s 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, which has been operating out of the Columbia Metropolitan Airport (CAE) since April due to runway renovations at McEntire Joint National Guard Base, will be extending their flight training operations at CAE for several weeks, SCANG officials announced today.

“When we started the renovations of our main runway in April, we had expected that this project would take approximately six months and consequently we had been aiming for an end of October completion date,” said Col. Quaid Quadri, 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing Commander. “However, due to unforeseen circumstances during the construction process, we have had to adjust the completion timeline and will be staying at Columbia Metropolitan Airport several more weeks,” Quadri said.

Unanticipated conditions during the demolition of the existing runway at McEntire Joint National Guard Base created additional work which dictated more time required to finish the project, Quadri explained.

The 169<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing has been conducting its flight training operations as well as supporting its 24/7 homeland defense mission from Columbia Metropolitan Airport in Lexington County since April. Approximately 200 military personnel from the SCANG have been working at Columbia Metropolitan Airport at any one time during the week. On drill training weekends, the number of SCANG personnel at the airport is closer to

300 people. The vast majority of SCANG personnel remained and will continue to remain at McEntire Joint National Guard Base for their work.

“We understand the challenges with large-scale projects and invite our partners with the South Carolina Air National Guard to continue this temporary relocation as long as they need,” said Mike Gula, Executive Director at CAE. “Our ultimate goal is to ensure we’re supporting our military community in every way we can. We appreciate our community’s patience and understanding during this temporary relocation and ask they continue enjoying the sounds of freedom here at CAE.”

“We appreciate the overwhelming support we have received from Columbia Metropolitan Airport as well as all our community partners. We are grateful for everyone’s patience and understanding as we strive to move our jets from CAE and back to McEntire as soon as it’s feasible,” Quadri said.

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**About South Carolina Air National Guard/McEntire Joint National Guard Base:**

The South Carolina Air National Guard comprises of nearly 1,500 Airmen who serve their state and nation. The primary unit of the South Carolina Air National Guard is the 169th Fighter Wing. Its mission is to maintain wartime readiness and the ability to mobilize and deploy expeditiously to carry out tactical air missions or combat support activities in the event of a war or military emergency. The South Carolina Air National Guard operates as part of the Total Force of the U.S. military and is fully integrated with the active-duty Air Force. Additionally, members of the South Carolina Air National Guard respond to state and national emergencies as directed by the Governor. The wing flies the F-16 Fighting Falcon, a single-seat, multi-purpose fighter with the ability to fly up to twice the speed of sound. It is capable of performing air-to-air and air-to-ground tactical missions. For additional information on the South Carolina Air National Guard and the 169th Fighter Wing, please visit [www.169fw.ang.af.mil](http://www.169fw.ang.af.mil) or find us on Facebook, Twitter and Flickr. For additional Information on this release, please call (803) 647-8208.

**About the Columbia Metropolitan Airport:**

Now providing nonstop service to 12 major airports in 11 cities including Atlanta, Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas/Fort Worth, Miami (seasonal), New York City (LGA), Philadelphia, Tampa (seasonal), Orlando (seasonal) and Washington, D.C. (Dulles and Reagan National). Columbia Metropolitan Airport (CAE), a Global Biorisk Advisory Council® (GBAC) STAR™ accredited facility, continues to be a major economic driver for the Midlands region. Welcoming over 1.3 million passengers in 2019, CAE is served by American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Silver Airways (seasonal) and United Airlines. CAE is a regional cargo hub for UPS and is served by FedEx. For more information, please visit [www.flycae.com](http://www.flycae.com).