

# Air Force service members and civilians receive awards

*By: Capt Robertson 31st ADA PAO*



FORT SILL, Okla., - On Wednesday, the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade Commander Col. Michael Morrissey recognized and awarded 35 Air Force service members and three civilians from the 97th Air Mobility Wing based out of Altus Air Force Base. The recognition was for the logistical mission support provided to soldiers of 3-2 ADA Battalion, 31st ADA Brigade deployed to Turkey. "We are forever in your debt for your support of this mission and our Soldiers," said Morrissey.

There were a total of 21 missions executed out of Altus Air Force Base in response to their deployment to Turkey. Over 250 soldiers from the 3-2 Patriot Battalion Headquarters and two Patriot batteries were loaded and pushed out to Turkey from Altus Air Force Base. Tech. Sgt. Michael Skeens, an Air Transportation Craftsman with 97th Air Mobility Wing was among the awardees, he is a 15 year Air Force veteran and has worked multiple joint-missions. "This is a great opportunity for both Air Force and Army personnel to work together, the joint operation really showed the true professionalism of the United States military," said Skeens. "There was a smooth integration of both services that occurred and that allowed the mission to be executed."

This mission came with an eighteen-day alert and notice to deploy to Turkey in support of NATO's mission there. There will be a total of six Patriot batteries in Turkey in response to their request through NATO. "Turkey is an important NATO ally and we welcome the opportunity to support the Turkish

governments request in accordance with the NATO standing defense plan," said Navy Vice Adm. Charles Martoglio, U.S. European Command deputy commander. "We're incredibly proud. Especially of everything you've done in the last three weeks after you received the deployment order," said Morrissey. " It was only 18 days from alert to execution when we started moving equipment and personnel."