

Griffins,

Please join me in congratulating Col Victor "Siko" Sikora on his appointment to the 144th Fighter Wing Operations Group Commander position.

I am also forwarding an email from Col Reed "Snake" Drake, Commander of the 144th Fighter Wing, sent to the current members of the wing, highlighting the many recent accomplishments and upcoming events of the great organization which we have all been privileged to contribute to.

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From: Williams, Kaci A MSgt USAF 144 FW (US)
Sent: Thursday, January 04, 2018 2:55 PM
To: USAF CA 144 FW List ALL
Subject: Year in Review and Senior Leader Announcement Forwarding on behalf of Col Drake--

144th Fighter Wing Warriors – Happy New Year. I hope you and your families had a joyful holiday season. Your accomplishments in 2017 were tremendous and I expect 2018 will be even more successful. We deployed to Sentry Aloha in March, Sentry Eagle in July, WSEP in September, had countless “Adaptive Basing” events and topped it off with a successful UEI where we demonstrated to the ACC/IG that we are the premier F15 unit in the CAF. We are off and running in 2018, starting with a Phase I and a Sentry Aloha deployment. We will turn around after that with a Red Flag to Nellis in March, an AFOA, and a summer Red Flag to Alaska. We'll round out the year with a deployment to Trident Juncture where we will base out of Sweden or Finland. While deployed to Europe we will also participate in an exercise with our State Partner, Ukraine. This will be a busy year. Get up for it. I thank you for your tremendous devotion to the mission.

We have also seen changes in our leadership ranks. Col Kelly took over as the Vice Wing Commander, Lt Col Lundholm is doing a tremendous job leading the Maintenance Group and Lt Col Jaurique has the Mission Support Group running on all cylinders. As we continue building our HRF mission, Col Blackburn has our Medical Group positioned as the best in the CAF. I am proud of each and every one of you, for it is because of you that our team is the best in the business.

As we develop our leaders, please join me in congratulating Col Early as he transitions to serve the CA ANG by working directly with Maj Gen Garrison. Col Early has been a tremendous asset to the 144FW team for the last 2 years and has completely defined a normalized F15 “Battle Rhythm”. He has brought us through conversion, declared FOC, and immediately orchestrated a successful European TSP deployment. And over the past year Col Early’s leadership was fundamental to our successful UEI performance and building our reputation as an outstanding F-15C wing. The 144FW continues to improve the CA ANG through force development tours and Col Early is the latest in what the 144FW stands for -- excellence. It will be great to have Col Early’s expertise and strategic vision on the staff.

I am also proud to announce that, effective 7 January 2018, Col Sikora will join our elite team as the interim Operations Group Commander. Colonel Sikora is a career Guardsman and has been proudly serving in the California Air National Guard for more than 35 years. He enlisted into the 144th Maintenance Group in 1982 and graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo with a degree in Aeronautical Engineering in 1989. He is a 1989 graduate of the Academy of Military Science, and completed Undergraduate Pilot Training in 1990, then qualifying in the F-16A Fighting Falcon. He’s held assignments as an Instructor Pilot, Flight Examiner, Chief of Safety, Chief of Standardization and Evaluation, Operations Support Flight Commander, Fighter Squadron Commander, Vice Wing Commander for the 144th Fighter Wing, Fresno Air National Guard Base and most recently, the Director of Operations for the California Air National Guard, JFHQ, Sacramento. Colonel Sikora is a Command Pilot with more than 3000 total military flight hours. He has flown the T-37/T-38, F-16 A/B/C/D, RC-26, F-15C/D, and has combat operations experience in the F-16C. Having held almost every position in the Operations Group, Col Sikora is the obvious choice to lead the Operations Group as I begin the search to find a permanent Commander. Please join me in congratulating Col Sikora and Col Early on their new positions.

These are exciting times. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication. It takes every person in the 144FW to make this a successful endeavor. This is a TEAM event. It is because of YOU that we are successful TEAM. I am humbled to be your Wing Commander.

Col Drake
Commander, 144FW