

Second THAAD Battery activates at Fort Bliss

story and photos by Sgt. William Bolderson / 11th ADA Bde. Public Affairs / October 2009

The 11th Air Defense Artillery held an activation ceremony for A Battery, 2nd Regiment (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense), at the Fort Bliss Museum, Oct. 16.



Col. Joseph DeAntona and Command Sgt. Maj. Jimmie Nelson, the brigade's commander and command sergeant major respectively, along with Cpt. Brendan McShea and 1st Sgt. Larry Turner, the A Battery, 2nd Air Defense Artillery Regiment (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense), commander and first sergeant respectively, uncased the regiment's colors during an activation ceremony, Oct. 16.

Guests throughout the 11th ADA "Imperial" Brigade stood witness as Col. Joseph DeAntona and Command Sgt. Maj. Jimmie Nelson, the brigade's commander and command sergeant major respectively, along with Cpt. Brendan McShea and 1st Sgt. Larry Turner, A-2's commander and first sergeant respectively, uncased the regiment's colors.

"Today we celebrate the second activation of several that we will execute over the next several years," said DeAntona. "Alpha battery reaffirms the significant role that both air and missile defense and Fort Bliss praise in our 21st century Army."

The event served as a milestone for air and missile defense combatant commanders' capabilities with protecting critical assets while staying on the cutting edge of ballistic missile technologies and inventories.

“Activation of Alpha Battery, Second Air Defense Artillery Regiment, represents a tactical, operational and strategic victory to our branch, for the Army and for our nation,” said DeAntona.

A-2 THAAD’s activation coincided with the return of its sister unit, A-4 THAAD, from field certifications. Since May 2008, THAAD Soldiers and Raytheon contractors unit participated in testing, production and fielding activities integrating the new system into air and missile defense.

A luncheon was held after the ceremony to honor the accomplishments of joint THAAD Soldiers and Raytheon teams making history amongst the air defense artillery branch. Lockheed Martin's vice president and program manager for the THAAD system, Tom McGrath, received a warm welcome from A-2 and other 11th ADA Soldiers and commanders.

"Lockheed Martin is proud to be a part of this important THAAD weapon system milestone for the U.S. Army and the Missile Defense Agency," said McGrath. "THAAD provides an upper tier overlay to the nation's currently deployed air and missile defense units that will greatly increase the quality of protection for our troops, allies and friends around the globe."



Soldiers of A Battery, 2nd Air Defense Artillery Regiment (Terminal High Altitude Area Defense), stand proud as the Army’s second ever THAAD battery at the Fort Bliss Museum, Oct. 16.