

by Master Sgt. Val Gempis



**A B-52 Stratofortress** from the 5th Bomb Wing, Minot Air Force Base, N.D., sits on the flight line before night operations at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. The aircraft deployed at U.S. Pacific Command's request to station a bomber force there. The

continuous bomber presence is aimed at enhancing regional security, demonstrating the United States' commitment to the western Pacific and providing training opportunities that integrate bombers into joint and coalition forces in the Pacific.

## Bombers arrive at Andersen

ANDERSEN AIR FORCE BASE, Guam — Some temporary duty assignments are better than others.

"The temperature was 10 degrees with a wind chill of minus 60 when I left North Dakota," said Tech. Sgt. **Matthew Bleigh**, 5th Bomb Wing aircrew life support. "Now I'm here in 85-degree weather. It's beautiful."

Sergeant Bleigh is part of a team bringing six bombers from Minot Air Force Base, N.D., for an undetermined amount of time at the request of U.S. Pacific Command officials. The bombers are the first rotation to deploy here as part of the command's ongoing force posture adjustment.

"While here, we'll support Pacific Command in enhancing the security of the region, demonstrating U.S. commitment to the western Pacific, and continuing to fight the global war on terrorism," said advanced echelon team member Lt. Col. **Harry Bender**.

He said this deployment is a great opportunity for the wing to fly in this region.

"It's a completely different flying environment, with many opportunities to integrate with joint and coalition forces," he said. "We plan on participating in multiple exercises throughout the entire PACOM area of responsibility."

Being deployed to Andersen may be a new experience for these bomber crew members, but hosting B-52s is a part of the base's history.

"Andersen has always been, at its heart and soul, a bomber base, even when there were no bombers present," said Col. **P.K. White**, 36th Air Base Wing commander.

— Senior Airman T.D. Cooper  
36th Air Base Wing Public Affairs