



## COLONEL JOHN L. WILKINSON

Col. John L. Wilkinson is the Commander, 172nd Airlift Wing, Thompson Field, Jackson, Mississippi. He directs the operations, maintenance and support of the Wing's assigned C-17 Globemaster III aircraft tasked with providing global strategic and tactical airlift in support of National Command Authority objectives and the objectives of the Governor of Mississippi. The 172nd Airlift Wing is comprised of more than fifteen local and geographically separated units and is capable of supporting airlift and aeromedical evacuation operations, tactical airlift control, combat civil engineering, air control, and combat readiness and training.

Col. Wilkinson was commissioned through the Academy of Military Science in July 1996 and started his flying career at Vance Air Force Base, Oklahoma. He is a Command/Evaluator pilot with more than 4500 total flying hours in the C-141B/C and C-17A aircraft. Col. Wilkinson has served in Operations Northern/Southern Watch, Noble Eagle, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. He has broad experience and has served in a variety of positions including command at the squadron and group level. Prior to assuming his current position, Col. Wilkinson served as 172nd Operations Group Commander, 172d Airlift Wing, Jackson, Miss.



## EDUCATION

- 1992 Bachelor of Science Degree, Aerospace Engineering, Mississippi State University, Starkville, Miss.
- 1997 Undergraduate Pilot Training, Vance Air Force Base, Enid, Okla.
- 2007 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence
- 2008 Air Force Advanced Instrument School, Oklahoma City, Okla.
- 2014 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence
- 2017 Mobility Commanders Tactics Course, Advanced Airlift Tactics Training Center, St. Joseph, Mo.
- 2019 Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence
- 2022 Director of Mobility Forces, USAF Expeditionary Center, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

## ASSIGNMENTS

1. August 1996–September 1997, Student, Undergraduate Pilot Training, Vance Air Force Base, Okla.
2. September 1997–January 1998, Student, C-141B Formal Training Unit, Altus AFB, Okla.
3. September 1998–July 2004, Aircraft Commander, 183rd Airlift Squadron, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.
4. August 2004–January 2006, Maintenance Quality Officer, 172nd Maintenance Group, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.
5. January 2006–January 2008, Current Operations, 172nd Operational Support Squadron, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.
6. January 2008–September 2011, Chief of Training, 183rd Airlift Squadron, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.
7. October 2011–December 2014, Chief of Standardization and Evaluation, 172nd Operations Group, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.
8. December 2014–August 2017, Director of Operations, 183rd Airlift Squadron, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.
9. August 2017–December 2021, Squadron Commander, 183rd Airlift Squadron, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.





- 10. December 2021–March 2025, Commander, 172nd Operations Group, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.
- 11. April 2025–Present, Wing Commander, 172nd Airlift Wing, Thompson Field, Jackson, Miss.

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Command/Evaluator Pilot  
Flight hours: more than 4,500  
Aircraft flown: T-37, T-1A, C141B/C and C-17A

## MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters  
Air Medal with oak leaf cluster  
Aerial Achievement Medal  
Air and Space Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters  
Air and Space Achievement Medal with three oak leaf clusters  
Meritorious Unit Award  
Air and Space Outstanding Unit Award with ten oak leaf clusters  
Combat Readiness Medal  
National Defense Service Medal  
Global War on Terrorism Service Medal  
Humanitarian Service Medal  
Air and Space Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border  
Air and Space Longevity Service with three oak leaf clusters  
Armed Forces Reserve Medal with two hourglass devices and one 'M' Device  
Air and Space Training Ribbon

## STATE AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Mississippi War Medal  
Mississippi Emergency Service Medal  
Mississippi Service School Medal with four devices  
Mississippi Longevity Medal

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Life member, National Guard Association of the United States  
Life member, National Guard Association of Mississippi

## EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant July 18, 1996  
First Lieutenant July 18, 1998  
Captain Aug. 16, 2000  
Major July 27, 2007  
Lieutenant Colonel July 27, 2014  
Colonel March 4, 2021

(Current as of March 2025)

