

# ARNORTH Monthly

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# TF 51

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Photos by Sgt. Joshua Ford, U.S. Army North PAO

Top: Lt. Gen. Thomas R. Turner, U.S. Army North commanding general, presents Sgt. 1st Class Kuoway Ho, U.S. Army North defense travel system administrator, with the American Society of Military Comptrollers 2009 Meritorious Award during a quarterly recognition ceremony before the U.S. Army North Town Hall Meeting July 9 at Fort Sam Houston.

Bottom: Lt. Gen. Thomas R. Turner, U.S. Army North commanding general, shakes Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Jacobs' hand after presenting the Operational Command Post 2 commanding general, ARNORTH, with the Humanitarian Service Medal during a quarterly recognition ceremony before the U.S. Army North Town Hall Meeting July 9 at Fort Sam Houston.



U.S. Army North,

We need your help in identifying different ways the San Antonio community can assist military Families. We are looking for your ideas! Please send your feedback to Don Manuszewski at [don.manuszewski1@us.army.mil](mailto:don.manuszewski1@us.army.mil). Your feedback is wanted! Thank you!

**Vibrant Response****U.S. Army North's Task Force 51 prepares for CBRNE response exercise****By Sgt. Joshua Ford***U.S. Army North PAO*

FORT SAM HOUSTON — In preparation for Vibrant Response 2009, the Soldiers and their Civilian partners of U.S. Army North's Task Force 51 worked diligently during a training exercise at Rudder Army Reserve Center in San Antonio, July 13 to July 24, to prepare for the command post exercise portion of Vibrant Response.

The Vibrant Response exercise will be conducted at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., from July 31 through August 14; it will focus primarily on responding to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive incidents.

The exercise is designed to confirm the readiness and abilities of incoming forces that will fall under the CBRNE Consequence Management Response Force, effective Oct. 1.

During the "prep" session, Task Force 51 worked through identifying and resolving any potential issues with new equipment, setting up and tearing down their command post, conducting software training and creating new methods to better anticipate scenarios they may face during the exercise or, more importantly, a real-world event.

"Training before Vibrant Response is going to help us get into our battle rhythm so when we start working with the units that will fall under the CCMRF, we are better prepared," said Col. John Foster Jr., chief of staff, TF 51. "It is of absolute importance that we know our procedures and work with each of the units that will make up the CCMRF and that we are on the same



*Photo by Sgt. Joshua Ford, U.S. Army North PAO*

Task Force 51 staff meet during a stand-up exercise in preparation for Vibrant Response 2009 at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Vibrant Response is an exercise that focuses primarily on responding to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive incidents.

page so that if a catastrophe does strike, we are better prepared to respond."

U.S. Army North, the Army Service Component and Joint Force Land Component Command for U.S. Northern Command, is charged with coordinating the federal military response in the land domain for domestic operations or disasters, to include CBRNE.

The bulk of the forces to fall under the CCMRF include the 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, an Army National Guard unit out of South Carolina, the 330th Medical Brigade, an Army

Reserve unit out of Fort Sheridan, Ill., and the 11th Theater Aviation Command, which is a mix of regular Army and Army Reserve units based out of multiple installations across the United States.

"Getting to work with these units will be very beneficial to us and the units under the CCMRF," said Staff Sgt. Orm Jenkins, military police officer, U.S. Army North. "Working as much as we have before the exercise is helping us help these units when we get to Vibrant Response.

"I am learning a lot and you always have to take every opportunity you can to train and learn."

Getting up to speed with the Command Post of the Future support system kept the task force busy learning about new operations capabilities.

Command Post of the Future was fielded by U.S. Army North three months ago and is designed to provide better situational awareness to commanders by

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**"We are always in the learning phase. Even guys like me who have been here for 20 years always have something new to learn; and every time you do train, new challenges come up so it is important that we document it and learn from it."**

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*Raymon DeHoyos,  
training specialist, U.S. Army North*

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## CCMRF

# Consequence management response force 'serious capability' in crisis

By Master Sgt. Mike Smith

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. — When all other emergency response capabilities are exhausted during a crisis, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear high-yield explosive, consequence-management response force would be called in to assist civil authorities, DoD officials said today.

"It's definitely a serious capability that we are trying to develop in this country," Maj. Gen. John Basilica told participants in the DoD Bloggers

Roundtable. "We are making significant progress."

The nation is standing up three CCMRF units, he said. One is currently operational and a second unit is scheduled to be operational this October.

"We are going to develop (them), so that we have the ability to respond to three simultaneous or near simultaneous events," said Basilica.

As the commander of Operational Command Post 1 of U.S. Army North, Basilica

leads one of the CCMRFs, and he discussed its makeup, upcoming training and its interaction and role with Civilian response authorities during an emergency.

"We are providing more capabilities" to local authorities after a disaster, he said.

To prepare for this role, Basilica said it takes many phases to train on the individual tasks and specialties of a CCMRF.

In their approaching exercise, Vibrant Response, which will be held July 31 through

Aug. 9 at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., players will simulate a catastrophic event requiring many different local, state and federal agencies.

The command post exercise, said Basilica, by its nature, will be complex and require all of the different agencies involved in command and control and instructions and plans.

Navy Capt. Michael Collins, chief of staff of Joint Task Force Civil Support, discussed the use of CCMRFs

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providing collaborative tools to support decision making.

"We are always in the learning phase," said Ramon DeHoyos, training specialist, training management branch, U.S. Army North. "Even guys like me who have been here for 20 years always have something new to learn; and every time you do train, new challenges come up so it is important that we doc-

ument it and learn from it."

The training was extremely beneficial to the task force and to Army North, said Foster, because it also provides the unit's new personnel a chance to get a feel for what will happen in Kansas.

"Around this time of year, we have a lot of new personnel coming into the headquarters so the two weeks of extra training gives them a chance to get their feet wet in the world of defense support of civil authorities and homeland defense operations," Foster said.

Staff Sgt. Darin Ingle had just arrived to U.S. Army North from the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and was immediately thrown into the exercise as an operations noncommissioned officer.

"It really is a different side of the Army," Ingle said, about the transition from a brigade combat team to working in a unit that is focused on homeland defense and defense support of civil authorities. "I have learned quite a bit in the couple of days I have been here – but there is still so much to learn. I do feel better prepared for Vibrant Response because of this training."

Vibrant Response will challenge TF 51 to integrate smaller units from all military services as well as multiple government agencies into CCMRF operations.

"When we get a training venue like this, we have to take advantage of it," said DeHoyos, referring to the Reserve center. "The best part about exercises like this is when everyone goes out and trains to execute the mission working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, state and local authorities, to assist the American people in a time of need.

"This preparation is definitely setting us up for success at Vibrant Response."



Photo by Sgt. Joshua Ford, U.S. Army North PAO

Staff Sgt. Brandon Hammond, military police officer, U.S. Army North, tests the headset of his Command Post of the Future system during Task Force 51's stand-up exercise in preparation for Vibrant Response 2009 at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. Vibrant Response is an exercise that focuses primarily on responding to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive incidents.

## Supporting Education

# U.S. Army North NCO helps donate refurbished laptops to local school

By Sgt. Joshua Ford

U.S. Army North PAO

FORT SAM HOUSTON — When Sgt. 1st Class Rudy Hass was told to exchange his section's old laptops for new ones, he asked the question: "What can we do with the old laptops?"

Instead of letting them go some place where they might sit for months without being used he registered them in the Department of Defense's computers for learning program.

Hass, a chemical noncommissioned officer at U.S. Army North, saw his work come to fruition when he presented 22 refurbished laptops to the kids and employees of St. Peter Prince of the Apostles school July 13 during a ceremony at Fort Sam Houston.

"Sgt. 1st Class Hass came to our rescue and we're really excited about it because it is helping our children move forward in the world of technology," said Janette Salinas, school vice principal.

In February 2009 Hass started working to find a way to put the laptops to better use and after doing much research, found the computers for learning program.

"Really this thing is for the kids. The kids are who I thought of when I came up with the idea," said Hass. "I didn't do this for any type of recognition. I did it for kids who need these laptops to further their education."

Computers for learning takes older computers used by DoD, refurbishes them and puts them up for grabs: first to other DoD organizations and then to schools registered in the program.

Hass started with 126 laptops and oversaw the process of donating 22 of them to St. Peter Prince of the Apostles school, a catholic private elementary school in San Antonio. Each laptop's estimated value was \$3,200 for



Photo by Sgt. Joshua Ford, U.S. Army North PAO

Sgt. 1st Class Rudy Hass (right), chemical noncommissioned officer, U.S. Army North, presents 22 refurbished laptops to principal Ann Lauder (left), vice principal Janette Salinas (middle), and students of St. Peter Prince of the Apostles school, July 13 at Fort Sam Houston.

a total of more \$70,000 worth of computers.

"It was Christmas in July for us. To have this many computers given to a school like St. Peter's is unheard of. So for us it's a wonderful program that will definitely make a big difference in our children's lives," said Salinas.

"We're moving to (electronic) books. This will make all the difference in the world to us because we are really trying to phase out old text books," said Ann Lauder, St. Peter Prince of the Apostles principal.

The idea of moving away from textbooks and to electronic books is a plan Lauder has to set up her kids for success when they get to high school and hopefully beyond high

school to the college level.

This wasn't the first time the school was selected for the program though. Five years ago it was presented more than 15 computers from the computers for learning program. The computers are outdated now and both teachers and students are happy to get newer computer that are smaller and easier to move.

"Last year, we didn't use laptops that much so now I'm looking forward to using laptops," said Bethany Bisnett, St. Peter Prince of the Apostles. "I'm excited."

"We want to continue our partnership with SFC Hass and the military and also want to support any Families coming into to Fort Sam Houston," said Salinas.

## from CBRNE, pg. 4

in emergencies. He said they can include a force of up to 5,000 military personnel and their equipment.

The composition of a CCMRF, said Basilica, is fundamentally three large task forces, including: task force opera-

tions, which includes specific chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear high yield explosive experts; a task force medical and a task force aviation.

"It a very, very skilled and capable group of people that come from many different services and many different components," he said.

Basilica said it's extremely important to have the opportunity to come together in August and go through a rigorous, robust exercise.

"We are committed to training this force so that if it becomes necessary, we will be as ready as we ever could be."

# ARNORTH provides opportunity to earn 'free' Master's Degree

**By Lt. Col. Thomas Shrader**  
U.S. Army North PAO

FORT SAM HOUSTON — For those taking the challenge in the never-ending quest to improve their education in support of their missions, many face the daunting challenge of where to turn to in their scholastic endeavors.

Many of their concerns revolve around consistent challenges, such as: "I don't have the time. It will cost too much;" or, "There are no schools nearby that offer something in my career field."

These are among the reasons many face as roadblocks in their endeavors to attend graduate school and earn their master's degree.

For the Soldiers and their Civilian partners however, U.S. Army North has tackled these issues head on by teaming up with the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., to offer a master's degree in homeland security.

And, perhaps best of all, the price is right – it is free. Yes, that's correct: the cost of earning a master's degree through the program is at no expense to the student.

The 18-month course involves a combination of in-class sessions and distance learning classes, said Bob Townsend, Army North's chief of education and training, who works in the G7 office.

"Students attend two-week resident phases in a TDY status at NPS. Between resident sessions, they are working through distance learning. ARNORTH bears the cost of the entire program," explained Townsend. "There are zero charges to the individual."

The goal of the program is to enhance the knowledge base of ARNORTH staff members and the wider federal government.

"The intent of this degree plan is to build a cadre of homeland defense professionals for Army North, the Army and Department of Defense," he added.

According to the NPS website, the master's program teaches students how to:

"Develop strategies, plans and programs to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, and reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism;

"Build the organizational arrangements

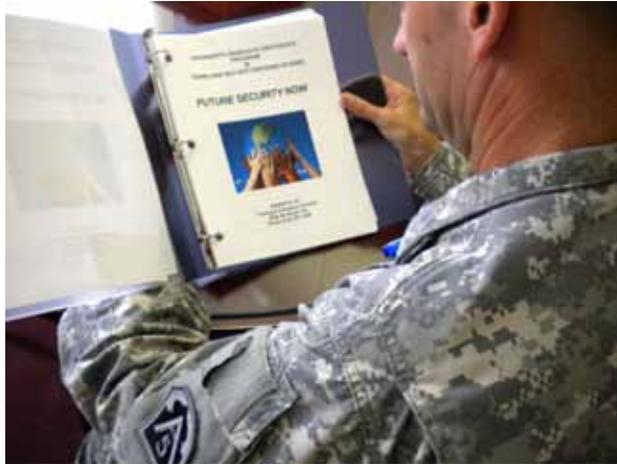
needed to strengthen homeland security, including local/tribal/state/federal, civil-military and inter-agency cooperation;" and "Help mayors, governors and federal officials improve homeland security preparedness by conducting 'real world' actionable policy and strategy development."

Students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and government agencies. The most recent graduating class included several policemen, sheriffs, firefighters, FBI agents, a member of the Department of Health and Human Services, a captain from the U.S. Coast Guard and a member of Joint Task Force – Civil Support.

The course involves a rigorous course load and culminates in a thesis. "The program requires participants to complete a thesis that proposes solutions to current homeland security policy and strategy challenges within their agencies," according to the NPS Web site, which details the requirements. "Several of the theses have become best practices and are used as national models."

As for the accreditation of the program, the NPS Web site indicates the degree is fully accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and is awarded by the Naval Postgraduate School.

The goal of Army North is to send at least two students per year, said Townsend. To be considered for admission, according to the NPS Web site, applicants should have the following qualifications: Be employed full-time by a local, tribal, state, or federal government agency or the U.S. military, and have homeland security experience and responsibilities; possess an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or uni-



versity; and must have graduated with a minimum 3.0 grade point average for all undergraduate coursework or awarded a graduate degree. Applicants with a grade

point average below 3.0 will be considered if they have relevant work experience and qualifications to complement their academic record.

Other educational opportunities are available to Army North professionals through NPS as well, said Thompson, which are also designed specifically to complement demanding work schedules.

"The Naval Postgraduate School is recognized as the gold standard as it pertains to homeland defense and security education," said Thompson. "Another program associated with the NPS Masters is the Homeland Security Executive Leaders Program. This program's objective is to strengthen the national security of the United States by providing a non-degree graduate level educational program that meets the immediate and long-term needs of leaders responsible for homeland defense and security."

The program consists of four resident sessions, he explained, with each session being conducted over a 4.5-day period at the Naval Postgraduate School's Center for Homeland Defense and Security facilities in Monterey, Calif., in addition to other locations around the country. Participants are required to attend the four one-week sessions over a nine-month period.

Those interested in further information on these and other educational opportunities at NPS can log on to the NPS Web site at <http://www.chds.us/?contact> or contact Dorothy Cannon, education division, G7, Army North.

## Hurricane Preparedness

# Ready Army: Hurricane season is here: time to prepare is now

By Yvonne Johnson  
APG News

The 2009 Hurricane season began June 1 and lasts through Nov. 30. Forecasters at Colorado State University have predicted that 12 named tropical storms will form in the Atlantic Basin, which includes the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea, with six developing into hurricanes and two becoming major hurricanes with winds faster than 110 mph.

Now is the time to prepare.

## Ready Army means prepare, plan and stay informed

The Ready Army Web site encourages Soldiers and their Families to prepare for disasters ahead of time, make and practice a Family emergency plan and stay informed about threats, hazards or events that can trigger emergency situations.

### Get a kit

To prepare for an emergency, assemble one or more emergency kits that include enough supplies to meet the Family's essential needs (food, clothing, shelter, medical aid) for at least three days. Keep a kit prepared at home and consider having kits in the car and at work. These kits can be useful whether evacuating or sheltering in place.

### Suggested basic items

- Water: at least one gallon per person per day for three days.
- Food: nonperishable food for at least three days; consider items that do not require cooking and that will stay fresh, such as ener-

gy bars, freeze dried, dehydrated and canned foods.

- Formula and diapers for infants.

- Pet foods, water, documents and other supplies.

- Manual can opener.

- Flashlight, NOAA battery-powered weather radio, battery-powered cell phone charger and extra batteries or hand-crank powered devices.

- First aid kit with dust masks, rated to at least N95, disinfectant and garbage bags.

- Sanitation supplies, such as moist towelettes, disinfectant and garbage bags.

- Important documents in watertight packaging.

- Family emergency plan, local maps, command reporting information.

### Make a plan

Make and practice a Family emergency plan. Consider the range of potential emergencies and all the places you and your Family might be. Some emergencies require different responses than others but a Family communications procedure will be helpful in any case.

### When making a plan, consider the five Ws

- Who: Gather input from all Family members to consider all possibilities and make them more likely to remember important steps when an emergency happens. Choose a contact person, a Family member or friend living somewhere else whom everyone can contact if an emergency strikes when you are separated.

- What: Plan for all hazards that

could affect your Family, considering potential hazards and weather patterns in your region. Think through each possible emergency situation and determine how your Family should respond.

- Where: Think about all the places you and your Family may be throughout the day, such as home, office, school and in transit. Establish meeting places and discuss situations to use them.

- When: Because emergencies can happen at any time, make your Family emergency plan immediately. Review the plan annually and whenever there are major changes in your Family situation schedule or activities.

- Why: Emergencies can be scary. By establishing and practicing a Family emergency plan, you and your Family are more likely to find each other quickly and help one another get through the emergency situation safely and with less worry.

### Practice your plan

Making an emergency plan is just the first step; you should practice it at least twice a year. Describe to Family members a hypothetical event and tell them to follow the Family emergency plan.

Practice gathering your emergency kit and important documents.

Communicate with one another and meet at a designated place.

Afterward, discuss the actions you took and how the plan would change in a different type of emergency.

### Notification and emergency actions

You should understand the local mass warning systems and when notified be prepared to evacuate, move to a shelter or designated safe haven or shelter-in-place.

Each year, averages of 11 tropical storms develop over the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico. Many of these remain over the ocean and never impact the U.S. coastline. In an average, 3-year period, roughly five hurricanes strike the U.S. coastline anywhere from Texas to Maine. Of these, two are typically "major" or "intense" hurricanes — Category 3 or higher.

### Estimated hurricane damages by strength

In general, wind speed, precipitation, duration, and other factors can be expected to inflict certain amounts of damage to the environment and structures according to the strength of the hurricane.

#### Category 1 Hurricane, winds 74 to 95 mph

- No real damage to buildings.
- Damage to unanchored mobile homes.

- Some damage to poorly constructed signs.

- Some coastal flooding and minor pier damage.

Examples: Irene 1999 and Allison 1995.

see **Ready** pg. 8

**Force Protection****U.S. Army North hosts force protection conference in San Antonio****By Lt. Col. Thomas Shrader***U.S. Army North PAO*

FORT SAM HOUSTON — U.S. Army North hosted a force protection conference in San Antonio July 22-24 to focus on increasing the safety and security of service members, Civilians, Family members and installations.

The conference was led by U.S. Army North's Provost Marshal's Office and covered a wide range of topics for the force protection professionals.

The event marks the second annual conference headed by U.S. Army North, which is the Army proponent for force protection in the continental U.S. It served as an opportunity for the attendees from across the force protection spectrum to meet one another and learn about some of the risks community members face every day.

"The purpose of the conference is to bring the Army FP community together to identify the key risk management challenges for FP in CONUS," said Chris Frels, ARNORTH's deputy provost marshal, who organized the conference.

The event, she added, attracted a wide range of participants, to include those from the Army commands throughout the continental United States, sister services, U.S. Northern Command, Department of the Army, and their Civilian law enforcement



*Photo by Lt. Col. Thomas Shrader, U.S. Army North PAO*

Jack Colley, from the Texas State Emergency Operations Center, presents a briefing on the structure and function of the Texas State Fusion Cell during a Force Protection conference held in San Antonio July 21-23. U.S. Army North organized the conference to address a variety of FP issues. The event stressed interagency cooperation and included a wide range of participants from both military and Civilian law enforcement agencies.

partners.

Brig. Gen. Perry Wiggins, the deputy commanding general for U.S. Army North, kicked off the conference by welcoming those attending as he emphasized the importance of working together for the com-

mon good and safety of everyone.

"We need to leave parochialism at the door," he said. "Synchronization, collaboration and coordination are the keys to suc-

**see Force pg. 9**

from **Ready, pg. 7**

**Category 2 Hurricane, winds 96 to 110 mph**

— Some damage to building roofs, doors and windows. Considerable damage to mobile homes.

— Flooding damages piers and small craft in unprotected moorings may break their moorings.

— Some trees blown down.

Examples: Bonnie 1998, Georges 1998 and Gloria 1985.

**Category 3 Hurricane, winds 111 to 130 mph**

— Some structural damage to small residences and utility buildings.

— Large trees blown down.

— Mobile homes and poorly built signs destroyed.

— Flooding near the coast destroys smaller structures with larger structures damaged by floating debris.

— Terrain may be flooded well inland.

Examples: Keith 2000, Fran 1996, Opal 1995, Alicia 1983

**Category 4 Hurricane, winds 131 to 155 mph**

— More extensive curtain wall failures with some complete roof structure failure on small residences.

— Major erosion of beach areas.

— Terrain may be flooded well inland.

Examples: Hugo 1989 and Donna 1960

**Category 5 Hurricane, winds 156 mph and higher**

— Complete roof failure on many residences and industrial buildings.  
— Some complete building failures with small utility buildings blown over or away.

— Flooding causes major damage to lower floors of all structures near the shoreline.

— Massive evacuation of residential areas may be required.

Examples: Andrew 1992, Camille 1969

(This information compiled from the Ready Army Web site, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Hurricane Center.)

# SMA calls for review of TRICARE standards

**By Holly Meyer**  
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — The Army's top noncommissioned officer recommended reviewing the standards of the military health-care program TRICARE during his testimony on Capitol Hill this month.

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth O. Preston and the top NCOs from other services appeared before the House Armed Services Military Personnel Subcommittee to share the successes and problems of military family support programs.

Preston said military Families are experiencing problems finding TRICARE providers off installations, especially in more rural areas.

"One of the major accessibility challenges to getting quality medical care is finding sufficient health-care providers outside our military installations who accept TRICARE payment,"

Preston said.

TRICARE brings together health-care resources of the military and Civilian medical professionals, Preston said.

It serves active, Guard, and Reserve members, retirees, Families, survivors and certain former spouses worldwide.

The limited number of health-care providers who accept the plan is a result of negative past experiences with the program, Preston said.

"Many of them were left with a bad taste in their mouth from dealing with TRICARE before because of the length of time it took to get reimbursement," Preston explained.

One health-care provider he spoke with accepts TRICARE patients out of charity to help the military, Preston said.

Due to reimbursement problems, the health-care program was revamped and Preston said he sat down with the TRI-

CARE management team and discussed what was done to restructure and streamline the process.

Although it has made significant advancement, he said the program still has gaps that need fixed.

TRICARE offers three different plans to the 9.4 million eligible beneficiaries. TRICARE Reserve Select is a premium-based plan that qualified Guard and Reserve members can buy. It is similar to TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra and charges a monthly premium of \$47.51 for the Soldier and \$180.17 for the Soldier and family.

Through TRICARE, Soldiers and their Families have access to authorized providers, and they can use military treatment facilities — 59 military hospitals, 413 medical clinics and 413 dental clinics — on a space-available basis.

Soldiers and their Family members list quality medical care as a priority and a main reason to stay with the Army team, according to Preston's submitted statement to the subcommittee.

Preston said the center of the Army's commitment to supporting servicemembers and their families comes from two covenants — the Army Family Covenant signed in 2007 and the Army Community Covenant signed in 2008.

The covenants ensure the Army will continue to provide programs that will enhance the quality of life for everyone involved, he said.

"Both of these initiatives institutionalize and fund the programs supporting our Soldiers and their Families with the support that is commensurate with their quality of service they provide to our nation," Preston said.

## from **Force**, pg. 8

cess in this endeavor. Our very way of life here is under attack. The military and interagency must work together, because we will get no second chances."

Dave Spencer, an agent from the Drug Enforcement Agency, provided an overview on the role of illicit drugs in providing financing for global terrorism. He also spoke of the differing responsibilities of the DEA as opposed to that of police officers by explaining that the goal of the police department is to make an arrest whereas that of the DEA agent is to figure out where the drugs came from.

Also providing valuable information were representatives from the U.S. Army's Network Command, which provided a lecture on the growing threat of cyber attacks, and a Federal Bureau of Investigation representative, who addressed new intelligence-sharing initiatives put in place since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, such as the Field Intelligence Group.

Clay Davis, the deputy chief of emergency services for Installation Management Command, provided a briefing on the key role IMCOM plays in force protection and in providing a "safe and secure" environment on post.

"We do this through anti-terrorism measures," he said, adding that standards have been greatly improved through the use of unified facility codes, which help standardize what is being done in force protection across the nation.

Also providing briefings during the ceremony were numerous government and military organizations, to include the San Antonio Police Department, Customs and Border Patrol, Medical Command and Army Materiel Command, among others.

"Each command presented challenges and shared ideas with each other on how to fix problems and address the issues," said Frels. "There is an enduring threat to DOD, and we must be prepared to prevent, deter and mitigate those threats that would diminish our war-fighting capability."

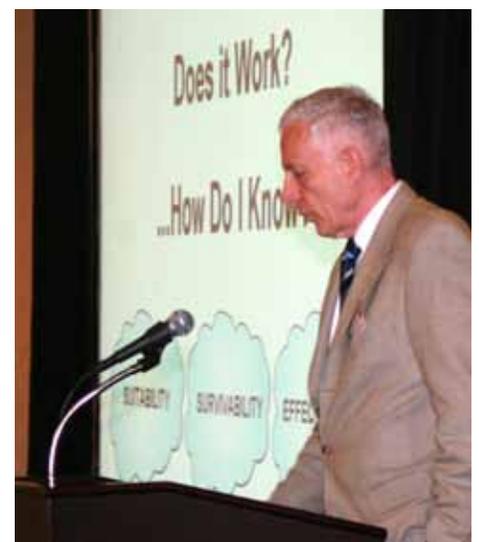


Photo by Lt. Col. Thomas Shrader, Army North PAO  
Ken Masoner, from Army Test and Evaluation Command, presents a briefing on the role of ATEC in developing and testing new equipment during a Force Protection conference held in San Antonio July 21-23.

# Vice chief challenges doctors to help with ‘mental wellness’

By Jerry Harben

Army News Service

SAN ANTONIO — Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli told more than 2,000 Army health-care professionals Tuesday that they must produce “mental wellness” through a multidisciplinary approach.

Chiarelli spoke at the annual Army Medical Symposium in San Antonio sponsored by the Association of the United States Army and U.S. Army Medical Command. He told the audience a spike in Soldier suicides during January and February was “appalling,” and described his work organizing a task force to address the problem.

“I realized the problem is larger than suicide prevention. It’s about mental wellness of Soldiers and their families,” he said.

One key to mental wellness is the ability to spend adequate “dwell time” at home between deployments, he said.

“Dwell really matters. If you can keep a unit at home, they can get that knee operation done that they need to get done, they can get help for the musculoskeletal issues that they have, and have time to recover and not push themselves. It really matters,” Chiarelli said.

He told of speaking to a training course for junior noncommissioned officers in which almost all the students had deployed to combat, many three or four times.

“That’s stress. And, as much as it is stress on that individual Soldier, it is stress on the Family,” he said.

Chiarelli described changes in today’s transformed Army, and said one of those changes is a tendency to maintain strength by keeping Soldiers in the Army rather than separating them because of drug, alcohol or similar issues.

“A lot of people have said to me, we don’t need to boot people out, we need to get them help. I am in total, total agreement,” he said.

He added that during a tour of six installations this spring to investigate Soldier suicides, he found “that is not neces-



Photo by Ed Dixon

Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli speaks July 21 at the Army Medical Symposium in San Antonio.

sarily what is happening in units today. We are not getting them help that they need, and that’s what I find appalling.”

Evidence indicates commanders sometimes do not report infractions in order to keep Soldiers deployable. As a result, those Soldiers do not get treatment, Chiarelli said.

The number of suicides by Soldiers now exceeds the rate in a demographically similar population of Civilians.

“January and February was a [suicide] epidemic,” Chiarelli said. “Through a lot of great work of folks here and the stand down that we conducted, I believe we have people started thinking about this problem and taking action. I’ve seen we have started to drive that number down. Knock on wood.”

Chiarelli pointed out there are 32 organizations that play a role in suicide prevention, and he wants to reduce that to one organization.

“What we’re trying to do in a short period is get this to where it makes sense to people working in the OPTEMPO of today,” he said.

Chiarelli said the Army is doing well

at assisting and treating patients, but needs to improve at assessment and education. He said the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness programs being developed by a team headed by Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum will help.

“This has the opportunity to revolutionize how we attack this problem,” he said. “It is not just 140 Soldiers who committed suicide last year, it’s all those others out there who will never commit suicide but who are suffering and need our help ... this is the big idea.”

The general also addressed a stigma associated with receiving behavioral-health care. He said the Army is experimenting with allowing Soldiers at some installations to self-refer for treatment without their commanders being informed. Another initiative is Web-based care.

He said Tri-West, the TRICARE contractor for the Western Region, will begin such a program in August.

Chiarelli concluded by emphasizing five points: The force is stressed. Army Force Generation has effects on Soldiers and Families. Mental wellness is key. It requires a multidisciplinary approach.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### ARMY-WIDE

## First Soldier to receive Medal of Honor for valor in Afghanistan

By **ARNEWS**

WASHINGTON — Sgt. 1st Class Jared Monti, who was killed in Afghanistan June 21, 2006, will receive the Medal of Honor for his valor in combat, the White House has announced.

President Barack Obama is scheduled to award Monti's Medal of Honor Sept. 17, to his parents in a White House ceremony. His father Paul Monti and mother Janet Monet currently live in Raynham, Mass., where their son was born and raised.

Monti, 30, was assigned to 3rd Squadron, 71st Cavalry, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, when he was killed in Gowardesh, Afghanistan, in a battle with enemy forces using small arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades. He displayed immeasurable courage and uncommon valor, according to the White House release, which goes on to say he sacrificed his own life in an effort to save his comrade.

### NATIONAL GUARD

## North Dakota Guard responds after tornado

By **Sgt. Ann Knudson**

*North Dakota National Guard*

DICKINSON, N.D. — Almost 100 North Dakota Army National Guardsmen were called to duty in July to respond after an EF3 tornado struck this town south of the Heart River.

The tornado tore up over 100 buildings and many trees on July 8. There were no casualties and only minor injuries were reported by local officials.

"Through the whole week they talked about how severe it would be. People were gearing up," said Spc. Kory Twardoski, a

member of the 818th Engineer Company, Williston.

The 816th Engineer Company (Horizontal) responded immediately to the storm's damage with shelter, traffic control and patrols.

For two days, almost the Soldiers staffed 18 traffic control points in two shifts. They allowed only repair crews, residents and helpers into the area.

"The homeowners were very thankful, and the police department was just ecstatic to have the extra help," said Capt. Ann Mutzenberger, commander of the 816th.

Most of the Soldiers were from the 816th, the others volunteered from assorted units all around the state.

"I'm extremely proud of our Soldiers," said Capt. Mutzenberger. "They've got families, they've got jobs, but every time we call, they're here. The Soldiers are very proud to be able to assist their own town, and the community support has been awesome."

## Guardsmen battle wildfires in two states

By **Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy**

*National Guard Bureau*

ARLINGTON, Va. — Guardsmen from Texas and Oklahoma assisted local firefighters over the weekend as they worked to extinguish wildfires about 20 miles east of Austin, Texas, and in Major County, Okla.

Soldiers from Texas' 1st Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment responded with two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters carrying 600-gallon "Bambi" buckets to help put out the flames, said Col. William Meehan, spokesman for the Texas National Guard.

A four-man Black Hawk crew from Oklahoma also responded to fires in their state, according to National Guard reports. Over the course of the two-hour mission on Sunday, Soldiers in the helicopters dropped 154 buckets or about 100,000 gallons of water on the blaze, said Meehan.

Responding to wildfires is nothing new for the Texas Guard. "We have been doing this for so many years that it's mostly second nature," said Meehan, adding that they work with the Texas Forestry Service to assess where fire-fighting assets will be needed most.

And because of that planning, aircraft are ready to go in strategic positions across the state.

"We have aircraft ready to go in Austin and San Antonio," said Meehan, adding that aircraft can be pre-positioned almost anywhere in the state as the need arises.

While the most recent fire has been contained, the dry conditions in Texas will most likely continue.

"We have many areas of Texas that are bone dry," said Meehan. "The state has asked us to be on standby as the (conditions have) actually gotten drier."

That could mean a busy summer for the Texas Guard. "We expect a very long fire season," said Meehan. "And it will go right up to hurricane season."

The Texas Guard is prepared for either. "We hope we're not needed, but we're ready to go if we are," said Meehan.

### HOMELAND SECURITY

## DHS Coordinates National Level Exercise to Prevent Terrorist Attacks

By *Office of DHS Press Secretary*

The Department of Homeland Security will launch July 27 the five-day National Level Exercise 2009 — the first national level exercise to focus on terrorism prevention in conjunction with federal, state, local, tribal, private sector and international partners.

"Coordinating with our partners across the United States and around the world is critical to protecting the nation from terrorist attacks," said Secretary Janet Napolitano. "The National Level Exercise allows us to test our capabilities in real-time to refine and strengthen our strategies for preventing terrorist attacks."

The Congressionally mandated exercise directed by the White House and coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency promotes intelligence and information sharing between and among federal, state, tribal, local, private sector and international participants. The NLE 09 scenario focuses on preventing a terrorist from entering the United States to carry out additional

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## NEWS BRIEFS

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attacks in the aftermath of a terrorist event outside of the country, prioritizing intelligence and law enforcement activities that detect, disrupt and deter preventable terrorist incidents.

“FEMA’s focus is to make sure that our entire response team, from the general public up to the highest level of government, is taking steps now to increase preparedness – regardless of what the next emergency or disaster is,” said FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate. “This exercise is an important step in our ongoing preparedness efforts, and allows FEMA and its federal partners to better serve and protect our citizens.”

The Departments of Homeland Security, Defense, Justice, and State, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and a broad spectrum of component agencies, offices and commands will all participate in the exercise. NLE 09 activities will take place at command posts, emergency operation centers, intelligence centers and field locations throughout the country, including federal headquarters facilities in the Washington, D.C. area as well as federal, regional, state, tribal, local and private sector facilities in Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and California. International partner nations will include Australia, Canada, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

Following the exercise, a comprehensive evaluation process will assess counterterrorism and law enforcement prevention capabilities.

To learn more about NLE 09, visit [http://www.fema.gov/media/fact\\_sheets/nle09.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/media/fact_sheets/nle09.shtm).

## DHS Launches YouTube Channel and Redesigns DHS.gov

By Office of DHS Press Secretary

The Department of Homeland Security today launched the DHS YouTube Channel and announced the redesign

of DHS.gov — steps to enhance the Department’s web presence, increase transparency and provide accurate, up-to-date information to the public.

“Social media plays an increasingly large role in our engagement with the public, especially in the event of an incident or disaster,” said DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano. “These new tools will facilitate an open dialogue about the Department’s security efforts across the nation and around the world.”

The YouTube Channel, found at [www.youtube.com/ushomelandsecurity](http://www.youtube.com/ushomelandsecurity), will allow DHS to use video to highlight events, speeches, public service announcements and other related content. DHS’s emphasis on web 2.0 tools such as YouTube allows the Department to provide greater transparency and access to the public and our state, local, territorial, tribal, private sector, and international partners.

DHS.gov was reorganized around Secretary Napolitano’s five major responsibilities—counterterrorism, border security, enforcement of immigration laws, disaster preparedness and response and Department unification—and redesigned based on user input and search analysis to help visitors find relevant and timely information.

### FEMA

## FEMA Administrator Meets With Governors To Discuss Emergency Preparedness

By FEMA News Desk

WASHINGTON, D.C. — This week, the Department of Homeland Security’s Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator Craig Fugate met with several of our nation’s governors to discuss emergency preparedness and ensure that as many resources and plans as possible are in place prior to any potential emergency.

“FEMA is committed to protecting and assisting our states and citizens during disasters,” said Administrator Fugate.

“By working together and strengthening relationships at the state level, we can continue to build the national emergency response team which includes FEMA, as well as state, local, tribal and federal partners, the private sector and faith-based organizations.

“The work we are putting in now to build this team will go a long way during the next disaster,” he added.

This past Sunday Fugate addressed governors from across the country at the National Governors Association conference in Biloxi, MS, where he discussed how FEMA can best support the states and their citizens as we prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters.

While in Biloxi, Fugate met privately with Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue as well as Iowa Governor Chet Culver.

After returning to Washington, Fugate met Monday with Governor John deJongh Jr. of the U.S. Virgin Islands and Tuesday with North Dakota Governor John Hoeven.

The NGA meeting, as well as the individual meetings with governors, built on efforts already underway to strengthen the national emergency response team.

FEMA’s primary responsibility as a member of this team is to support governors and ensure that all members of the team work together to better prepare for and respond to all types of emergencies.

As part of the meetings, Administrator Fugate stressed the key role the public plays in these preparedness efforts.

The more Americans do now to prepare their families, including developing a family emergency plan, the more effective our response team will be.

Prior to this week’s meetings, Administrator Fugate had already met with a number of governors from across the country, including participating in a video teleconference with governors and officials from over a dozen hurricane prone states on his first day as Administrator.

FEMA leads and supports the nation in a risk-based, comprehensive emergency management system of preparedness, protection, response, recovery, and mitigation, to reduce the loss of life and property and protect the nation from all hazards including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other man-made disasters.

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