

ARNORTH Monthly

August 2010



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Commanding General: Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III
Command Sgt. Maj.: Command Sgt. Maj. David Wood

U.S. ARMY NORTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Chief Public Affairs Officer: Lt. Col. Randy Martin
Public Affairs Sergeant Major: Sgt. Maj. Eric Lobsinger
Public Affairs Operations: Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres
Editor: Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson



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Photo by Sgt. Roberto Di Giovine, 108th PAD, S.C. National Guard

Command presence

CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind. — Navy Adm. James Winnefeld Jr., commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command, based in Colorado Springs, Colo., speaks with Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III (left), commanding general, U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston, headquartered in San Antonio, and Maj. Gen. John Basilica, commanding general, Joint Task Force – 51, during a visit of the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise here July 16. The visit provided Winnefeld an opportunity to observe the two-week, multi-agency exercise, led by Army North's JTF-51, designed to simulate an emergency response effort to a nuclear detonation.



Photo by Mike Howard, FEMA Region X External Affairs officer

Partners meet

BOTHELL, Wash. — Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, commanding general, U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston, visited local, state and federal emergency management counterparts during a whirlwind visit July 7-8. Swan is not a stranger to the Pacific Northwest. He served at Fort Lewis, Wash., in the mid-80s. His visit was his second visit in his capacity as the Army North commander.

ARNORTH prepares for nuclear disaster aftermath during FTX

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres,
Army North PAO

CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind. — Almost twenty-four hours after a notional nuclear blast exploded in Indianapolis, planes began arriving in the early morning hours to transport critical assets needed to support response and recovery efforts.

At the center of the activity, U.S. Army North's Joint Task Force – 51 dug in its heels and worked to finalize the critical communication systems and procedures to help support the efforts of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and local and state agencies.

Intercom speakers filled the air with emergency signal messages, requesting that residents stay inside and wait for assistance.

Such was the scene during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise, at Camp Atterbury, the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center and other surrounding areas in Indiana.

"It's important for the purposes of this exercise to maximize reality throughout," said Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, commanding general, U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston. "The fast pace and the stress and chaos introduced during the exercise help units test their products and processes, and this is where units start to see if their systems are actually functioning – everything from their sleep plans to the battle rhythm."

During a catastrophic event such as this, time is of essence.

"Initially, the first 48 hours are critical due to the fact of the amount of personnel and equipment coming to one location," said Maj. Maria Tutt, Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosive

officer, Army North. "Ensuring that our subordinate units, other Armed Forces and joint enablers come together and are accounted for, that's the most important first step in the overall mission."

For the exercise, as well as in a real-world application, setting up the command's contingency command post is critical to the success of providing assistance to local authorities. The support includes help in the decontamination process and providing support and aid to the local populace.

"This event is being put on by members of all services, components, DoD civilians and contractors. I'm impressed by the teamwork and seamlessness of all the players here," said Swan. "This is a model for how we have to operate in a real-world response. The public doesn't care what uniform we're wearing. They expect performance



Members of U.S. Army North's Joint Task Force – 51 prepare the operations cell for action July 12 during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

and results."

U.S. Army North's mission would be to provide immediate response and necessary assistance to support local, state and federal agencies.

"It's imperative we get coordination done with local law enforcement as soon as possible," said Staff Sgt. John Jenkins, provost marshal's office, ARNORTH. "We continuously look at the force protection aspect for the Joint Operation Area and build a threat picture for Department of Defense forces."

With the support from the various DoD components during the Vibrant Response exercise, joint cooperation is paramount in establishing a working relationship and understanding each other's capabilities before an actual real-world catastrophe happens.

"We need to capture lessons learned on how the exercise is run.

“The whole CBRNE response enterprise is changing at the local, state and federal level. We need to capture the good tactics, techniques and procedures to train the forces that will be coming on over the next few years,” said Swan. “We train for missions we hope we never have to execute, but we have to get it right the first time. The American public expects it — and deserves it.”



ABOVE: Sgt. 1st Class Yvonne Desfosses, communications NCO, U.S. Army North, begins pulling out power supply cables July 12 to help set up an operations cell at Joint Task Force – 51 during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

LEFT: A simulated Indianapolis town lies in shambles after a notional nuclear explosion detonated in the city at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center near Butlerville, Ind.

Soldier Show cast entertains Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio communities at Laurie Auditorium



Photo by Sgt. Maj. Eric Lobsinger, Army North PAO

Maj. Gen. Perry Wiggins, the deputy commanding general for U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston, is presented a Soldier Show plaque by Sgt. 1st Class Earnest Baskin, the show's noncommissioned officer in charge, following the 2010 U.S. Army Soldier Show July 27 at Trinity University's Laurie Auditorium in San Antonio. Wiggins served as the host and guest speaker for the event. Following the performance, he presented a plaque to the show's cadre and a coin for excellence to each performer.



Photo by Sgt. Maj. Eric Lobsinger, Army North PAO

Castmembers of the 2010 U.S. Army Soldier Show open their performance with a bang as they swoop across the stage during the Soldier Show performance July 27 at Trinity University's Laurie Auditorium in San Antonio.

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ARNORTH welcomes

Keith Clear, CSTA
 Gary Fahrni, G3
 Guy Sands-Pingot, DtoCG
 Daniel Shine, G6
 Michael Ulestad, G6
 Col. William Laigaie, OCHAP
 Col. John Moore, RGN VII/KANSAS
 Maj. Christopher Campbell, G3
 Maj. Richard Marzancollazo, G4
 Maj. Christopher Wiley, G3
 Capt. Michelle Martinez, HHB
 CW4 Lewis Corbitt, INS Co.
 CW2 Beofra Butler, G1
 Sergeant Maj. Jorge Escobedo, G1
 Sgt. 1st Class David Bemiss, RGN VI
 Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Wright, SJA
 Staff Sgt. Mario FuenteSoliden, CG
 Sgt. Alfonso Rodriguez, HHB

ARNORTH says goodbye

Randall Fain, CSTA
 Scott Giarratano, G6
 Stephen Hiller, G3
 Peter Martinez, G5
 Karen Ossorio, Reg IV
 Deborah Rush, G8
 Lanzo Wallace, G6
 Mary Wieser, Exec Svcs
 Sergeant Maj. Albert Green, G4

National Grandparents Day

The impetus for a National Grandparents Day originated with Marian McQuade, a housewife in Fayette County, West Virginia. Her primary motivation was to champion the cause of lonely elderly in nursing homes. She also hoped to persuade grandchildren to tap the wisdom and heritage their grandparents could provide. President Jimmy Carter, in 1978, proclaimed that National Grandparents Day would be celebrated every year on the first Sunday after Labor Day. More information and resources are at <http://www.grandparents-day.com/>.

info from www.usa.gov

Installation farewells 200 years of military duty



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres-Cortes, U.S. Army North PAO

Lt. Col. Daniel Mishket (left), 5th Brigade ROTC; 1st Sgt. Jeffrey Milos, HHD, 470th Military Intelligence Brigade; Lt. Col. Heidi Gebhardt, U.S. Army South; Master Sgt. Bobby Russell Jr., HHC, 1st Armored Division; Ms. Rhonda Greer, U.S. Army South; Sgt. 1st Class Gideon Providence, U.S. Army North; Lt. Col. Daniel Bowman, U.S. Army North; Master Sgt. Jose Sierra Jr., 287th Military Police Company; 1st Sgt. Lorenzo Diaz Jr., Brooke Army Medical Center, honor the U.S. Flag before a crowd of Family, friends and well wishers for a final time during a retirement ceremony in the Quadrangle July 28.



Lt. Col. Daniel Bowman, served at U.S. Army North's intelligence operations. His deployments include Operation Desert Storm, Operation Joint Endeavor, Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and a deployment to the Philippines.

Sgt. 1st Class Gideon Providence served as U.S. Army North's Joint Reception Center noncommissioned officer-in charge and previously deployed as the senior human resources sergeant and deployed with Contingency Command Post 2 as the assistant J-1 in support of the California wildfires.



ARNORTH OCs guide Vibrant Response exercise



BUTLERVILLE, Ind. — James Berkley, observer controller, U.S. Army North, watches Soldiers from 413th Chemical Company, South Carolina Army National Guard, perform evacuation procedures and nuclear decontamination July 18 during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, near Butlersville, Ind.



BUTLERVILLE, Ind. — Ronnie Guajardo, observer controller, U.S. Army North, writes down his observations as he watches Soldiers from 413th Chemical Company, South Carolina Army National Guard, perform evacuation procedures and nuclear decontamination July 18 during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise.

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres
U.S. Army North PAO

BUTLERVILLE, Ind. — In the chaotic mix of realistic training, a team of individuals donning orange vests can be seen flitting throughout the area as they jot down notes and observations; their mission is to prepare detailed observations on the steps taken while units perform life-saving measures during a mass casualty and decontamination training exercise.

After the mission is complete, it is then up to the observer controllers to compile those notes and to provide the valued feedback to the units and commands conducting operations during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise July 11-21, at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, which is located near Butlerville, Ind.

Such is the mission for the OCs from U.S. Army North's Joint Task Force – 51, which is headquartered in San Antonio and serves as the command and control element for the national emergency response FTX.

“Observing units allows us to ensure they are meeting the standards,” said James Barkley, observer controller, ARNORTH. “They use the skills they have been taught to complete the mission, and we are here to validate that the training is to standard.”

While watching the South Carolina Army National Guard's 413th Chemical Company perform decontamination of a large group of casualties, observer controllers see the process from beginning to end. They observe how units set up the site and deploy its Soldiers to perform their mission – it is all part of the validation process.

“In a mass casualty mission like this, you have to maintain the safety of the people who need help as well as the safety of the units performing the mission,” said Barkley. “We ensure the times where units must conduct their rotation with other team members to avoid dehydration and heat casualties.”

Temperatures in MUTC were in the upper 90s throughout the week of training. With showers and thunderstorms throughout the afternoons, it makes the area more humid and potentially dangerous for Soldiers performing in their protective clothing, which can result in heat casualties

in a matter of minutes. While being encased in air-tight suits from head to toe, as well as wearing their protective masks, the Soldiers stand in the sun – protecting themselves from the notional nuclear contamination area – for up to an hour at a time.

“This is real training; this is as real as possible; every hour, Soldiers must rotate, get water, perform life-saving measures on civilians who were affected in the blast,” said Barkley.

Included in the scenarios and evaluation processes is that units must know how to properly evaluate casualties, how to control the flow of the wounded casualties they are providing aid to, and how to provide oversight and control of the decontamination and records process.

“The 413th Chemical Company is doing really well today,” said Joseph Ussery, observer controller, U.S. Army North, a contractor for the Advanced Technology Education Program. “We ensure they have the live role-playing casualties, the mannequins, and the time and place of the training, and we give them the realism that they experience during the training.”

During the exercise, Soldiers must assess and process the injuries of mannequins, which are labeled with specific injuries, in addition to the live role players, who suffer from the symptoms of dehydration, starvation, burns, radioactive contamination and hysteria. The Soldiers are evaluated on their ability to process the live role players, and the mannequins, through the decontamination sites.

After processing through decon, all notional casualties must then be cleaned, washed and processed through the medical aid stations, where they will be provided medical attention and treated for their injuries.

The added realism of training aids and live role-playing casualties provide Soldiers with an added measure of realism.

“I'm learning a lot here; this is very different than our mission overseas,” said Sgt. Westly Linder, infantryman, 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment, South Carolina Army National Guard. “The controllers are here, and they help us communicate to use our skills to help the civilians get to where they need to go for help. Every drill, we practice our mission; this helps me and my team to accomplish our mission.”

Hawaii-based engineers support Border Patrol

Story by Armando Carrasco, JTF-N PAO, and 1st Lt. Brigida Sanchez, 65th Eng. Bn.

FORT BLISS, Texas — A detachment of military engineers from the 82nd Engineer Support Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, based at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, completed a month-long deployment to the U.S.-Mexico border July 3.

The engineers deployed to Southern California in response to a request for Department of Defense assistance submitted by the U.S. Border Patrol – San Diego Sector. The engineer support company volunteered to repair and upgrade 3.5 miles of border road used by border patrol agents near the Tecate Port of Entry, located southeast of San Diego.

Joint Task Force – North, the U.S. Northern Command element under the operational control of U.S. Army North, coordinated the road project, which was designed to enhance the mobility and safety of the Border Patrol agents responding to suspected illegal activities along the border.

The engineer mission site is a well-known drug and smuggling corridor that is patrolled 24 hours a day. The project is a continuation of the U.S. Border Patrol – San Diego Sector’s border infrastructure engineer support program.

“Military engineer units from all services execute a variety of construction projects along the Southwest border,” said Lt. Col. Larry Stephney, JTF-N staff engineer. “Our engineer support operations provide military engineer units unique training opportunities to exercise multiple skill level tasks in military construction.”

The JTF-N support operations provide the volunteer units the opportunity to train on 90 percent of their mission essential task lists – the units’ required military wartime duties. In accordance with DoD policy, the JTF-N support missions must provide a training benefit to the volunteer units or make a significant contribution to



Spc. Heather Clark, 82nd Engineer Support Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, carries a large stone to a newly constructed ditch.

national security.

“This mission provided us with a unique opportunity to certify our unit on its horizontal construction capabilities for future deployments,” said Capt. Joshua Long, commander, 82nd Eng. Spt. Co. “Our unit leaders were exposed to a technical mission that will enhance their capabilities. This is critical to our future success.”

JTF-N provided the unit with all the required contracted engineer equipment and maintenance support; the rented commercial equipment is similar to the unit’s organic engineer equipment.

“In garrison, we don’t get the opportunity to operate equipment very often,” said Staff Sgt. Ivan Ramirez, platoon sergeant, 82nd Eng. Spt. Co. “During the five hours of Sergeants’ Training Time, our Soldiers only receive about two hours of technical training.

“Here, the Soldiers receive eight hours of technical training each day – for 20 days! That adds up to 160 hours of stick time (actual equipment operating time);



Soldiers from the 82nd Engineer Support Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, construct a drainage ditch adjacent to a patrol road along the U.S.-Mexico border. The engineer mission site is a well known drug and alien smuggling corridor.

see Hawaii, Pg. 22

We serve in a company of heroes

Story by Sgt. Maj. Daniel Adle,
Operations SGM, Army North

One of my favorite movie scenes from the movie “A Band of Brothers” is the story told at the end of the film when a World War II veteran was asked by his grandson if he was a hero in the war.

His reply was no – but he served in the company of heroes. That answer resonates with me and makes me think how lucky I am to be serving here in a company of heroes at U.S. Army North.

I do not think any of us would presume to call ourselves heroes; yet, when you look at what people do day in and day out, we all serve in a company of heroes.

What makes someone a hero? Is it the person who displays physical courage?

The military has recognized and rewarded acts of physical courage throughout its history.

U.S. Army North is fortunate to have many people assigned here who, by nature of their duties while deployed, have done so.

These outstanding individuals range from service in Vietnam to the current War on Terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Yet, how many of us are called upon daily to demonstrate physical courage in combat?

By contrast, virtually everyone has the opportunity, each day, to demonstrate moral courage through our words, actions, choices and decisions. Thomas Jefferson once said: “One man with courage is a majority.”

Every time we make a decision or take a course of action that demonstrates moral courage, we not only define our identity but also our eth-

ics. This moral courage is what I believe makes the Soldiers and Civilians of ARNORTH “heroes.”

As with most beliefs, if you can’t define moral courage, it is virtually impossible to appreciate why you serve in the company of heroes and how you can serve as an example.

Some people define moral courage as the willingness to do the right thing.

Others would add that it is the willingness to do the right thing – even if doing so is unpopular or unpleasant for the person doing it.

Moral courage is related to integrity. With a well-defined sense of integrity, each of us possesses the moral courage to do what is right – even if the personal cost is high.

Moral courage is as simple as picking up a piece of litter as you walk by rather than letting it sit, or counseling the person who tossed the litter about expected behavior.

It is remaining pleasant and professional even when confronted by an unhappy or distressed individual during a crisis – even when they are neither pleasant nor professional. Finally, it is rating subordinates in a manner with what they have earned – not what is most expedient or expected.

Moral courage, like a muscle, must be exercised through training and repetition to remain healthy and strong.

If we can leave no other legacy for the future, let it be our acts of moral courage. It is in observing these acts of moral courage that I am inspired to be a better example.

When others are asked, will they think of you when they say that they served in the company of heroes? Everyday acts of moral courage are your defining opportunity.

Three Month Extension of Current Puerto Rico Birth Certificates

On June 28, the Government of Puerto Rico extended the validity of current Puerto Rico birth certificates for three months, through Sept. 30. Puerto Rico birth certificates issued prior to June 30, 2010 were scheduled to become invalid on July 1.

The extension provides for a transition period as Puerto Rico begins issuing new, more secure certificates starting July 1.

The government of Puerto Rico has launched an on-line application process for those born in Puerto Rico to request new birth certificates.

Soldiers, Civilians and their Family members who were born in Puerto Rico should follow this process. Applications are currently being accepted at: <https://serviciosonline.bierno>. (English Speakers must click on the “English Version” followed by the “First Time User?” ->Create an Account” tabs).

Through this new on-line process, those seeking the new birth certificate will be able to complete the application, in English or Spanish, upload the necessary identification documents, such as a scanned copy of a driver’s license or U.S. passport, and pay for the new certificate via Visa or Master Card. The fee is \$5, but will be waived for people over 60 and those with military service.

The new birth certificates will be issued starting July 1.

New birth certificates may also be requested through the mail by completing a birth certificate application form available at: <http://www.salud.gov.pr/Programas/RegistroDemografico/Documents/>.

Though on-line and hard copy applications are being accepted, new birth certificates will not be issued until July 1 or later.

The government of Puerto Rico recommends that only people who have a specific need for their birth certificate related to the near term usage of this document for official purposes.

JTF-CS welcomes new commander

Story by Maj. Jefferson Wolfe
JTF-CS PAO

FORT MONROE, Va. — Joint Task Force – Civil Support has a “no-fail mission,” declared its new commander: to provide life-saving and life-sustaining capabilities to local and state leaders in the wake of a catastrophic event.

Such was the message delivered by Air Force Brig. Gen. Jonathan Treacy as he assumed command of JTF-CS from Army Maj. Gen. Daniel “Chip” Long Jr. during a July 2 ceremony in Continental Park.

“I’m very honored to be here and certainly very privileged to be here,” he told the crowd of approximately 300. “We will continue to dedicate ourselves to the process of continual improvement.”

JTF-CS is focused on Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or high-yield Explosive consequence management planning and preparedness, and command and control, of Department of Defense forces following a catastrophic CBRNE incident. Its mission is to save lives, prevent further injury and provide temporary critical support to enable community recovery.

“I can think of no more important calling than to be here and be ready to provide aid and comfort to our fellow Americans,” said Treacy, a federalized Hawaii Air National Guardsman. “This is an absolute ‘no-fail’ mission.”

JTF-CS and the CBRNE Consequence Management Response Force are changing in the next year, he said.

In 2011, JTF-CS is to move from Fort Monroe to a new building under construction at Fort Eustis.

At the same time, the CCMRF is to add approximately 1,000 forces from around the country, which will bring the total of the renamed Defense CBRNE Response Force to approximately 5,200.

Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, the commanding general of U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston, Texas, served as the ceremony’s presiding official and said the United States needs a standing, ready-to-go capability in the event of a CBRNE incident.

“That organization,” he declared, “is Joint Task Force – Civil Support.”

Swan praised Long, the outgoing commander, for his work during his three years at JTF-CS and his 47 years of military service. During Long’s tenure, the secretary of defense assigned CCMRF personnel to JTF-CS for the first time.

JTF-CS has forces allocated from across the United States ready to support local and state authorities in the aftermath of a CBRNE incident.

Long was able

to combine the geographically dispersed force and into a unified team, he said.

“Chip has been the right commander for this pivotal period of JTF-CS,” Swan said, adding that because of Long’s central role, the nation is better prepared to face unthinkable threats.

Speaking before those assembled, Long thanked his Family, the staff of JTF-CS, the CCMRF task force commanders and all the people who worked during his tenure. “I call this unit a national asset,” he said.



Photo by H. J. Bentley III, JTF-CS PAO

FORT MONROE, Va. — Army Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, the commanding general of U.S. Army North and Fort Sam Houston, passes the colors of Joint Task Force – Civil Support to Air Force Brig. Gen. Jonathan Treacy (center right), the unit’s new commander, during the change of command ceremony at Continental Park July 2 at Fort Monroe, Va., as Maj. Gen. Daniel Long Jr. (front left), the unit’s outgoing commander, and Command Master Chief Petty Officer Glenn Hopkins watch on.

“If there’s a crisis of some kind, these units are well trained to do what the nation expects them to do.”

JTF-CS and the CCMRF will continue to evolve and get better, Long said, adding Treacy is well prepared to do great things as JTF-CS commander.

Swan shared Long’s assessment of Treacy.

“Just like Chip, I’m confident that you are the right guy, in the right job, at the right time,” Swan told Treacy.

Treacy comes to JTF-CS after serving as the deputy director for Antiterrorism and Homeland Defense, Joint Staff, since January 2009.

In that position, he served as the primary advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in the chairman’s capacity as principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense and the President for all matters relating to antiterrorism, force protection, homeland defense and defense support to civilian authorities.

Treacy directed the efforts of three divisions and led more than 65 hand-picked Joint Staff officers, noncommissioned officers and civilians in the planning and support of worldwide antiterrorism and force protection measures, and homeland defense and domestic military support operations.

Long, a federalized Virginia National Guardsman, has been the JTF-CS commander since July 2007. Previously, he served as the principal assistant to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, responsible for formulating and coordinating plans and support to the southwest border security mission.

He also served as the senior military officer assigned to the Joint Iraq/Afghanistan Study Group and commanded Task Force Care/Katrina.

During a deployment to Iraq, Long was the deputy director and then director of the Project and Contracting Office from September 2004 to September 2005.

He also commanded the 29th Infantry Division (Light) from August 2002 to August 2004.

JTF-CS is a standing joint task force established in 1999 composed of active, reserve and National Guard members from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard.

The task force also includes civilian and contract personnel. To accomplish this, JTF-CS works closely with many other federal, state and local agencies.

JTF-CS is assigned to U.S. Northern Command. The commander of U.S. Army North serves as the Joint Force Land Component Command’s commander and has operational control of JTF-CS.

WERE YOU STOP LOSSED?

There are millions of dollars waiting to be claimed by service members and veterans who were stop loss, and time is running out!

Those eligible must submit their claim by Oct. 21, 2010. The DoD Web site (<http://www.defense.gov/stoploss>) links to service-specific sites, where you can get more information, or begin the RSLSP claim process.

The 2009 War Supplemental Appropriations Act established Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay, providing \$500 for each month/partial month served in stop loss status. Service members, veterans, and beneficiaries of service members whose service was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss between Sept. 11, 2001 and Sept. 30, 2009 are eligible for RSLSP.

To receive this benefit, those who served under stop loss must submit a claim for the special pay. Throughout the year, the services have been reaching out to service members, veterans and their families through direct mail, veteran service organizations, and the media.

But there is still money left to be claimed, and the deadline is approaching. We’re reminding all service members who are eligible to submit a claim for the benefit available to them. The average benefit is \$3,700.

Tell a Friend

If you know people who separated/retired and may be eligible for this benefit, remind them to submit a claim before the deadline!

Note on Eligibility

Effective Dec. 19, 2009, per the Defense Appropriations Act, stop-lossed service members who voluntarily reenlisted or extended their service, and received a bonus for such reenlistment or extension of service, became no longer eligible to receive retroactive stop loss special pay.

**APPLY NOW FOR RETROACTIVE
STOP LOSS SPECIAL PAY**



Task force works 'day and night' to support efforts following 'the bomb'

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson
U.S. Army North PAO

CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind. — The exercise is the nightmare scenario: a 10-kiloton nuclear weapon has detonated in Indianapolis. The state of Indiana has requested federal help in the nation's most devastating disaster.

The service members and civilians of U.S. Army North's Joint Task Force – 51, based at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, deploy to Camp Atterbury to set up a 24-hour tactical operations center to support the state of Indiana, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and other partner agencies.

For two weeks, July 10-24, task force members, joint enablers and augmentees conduct

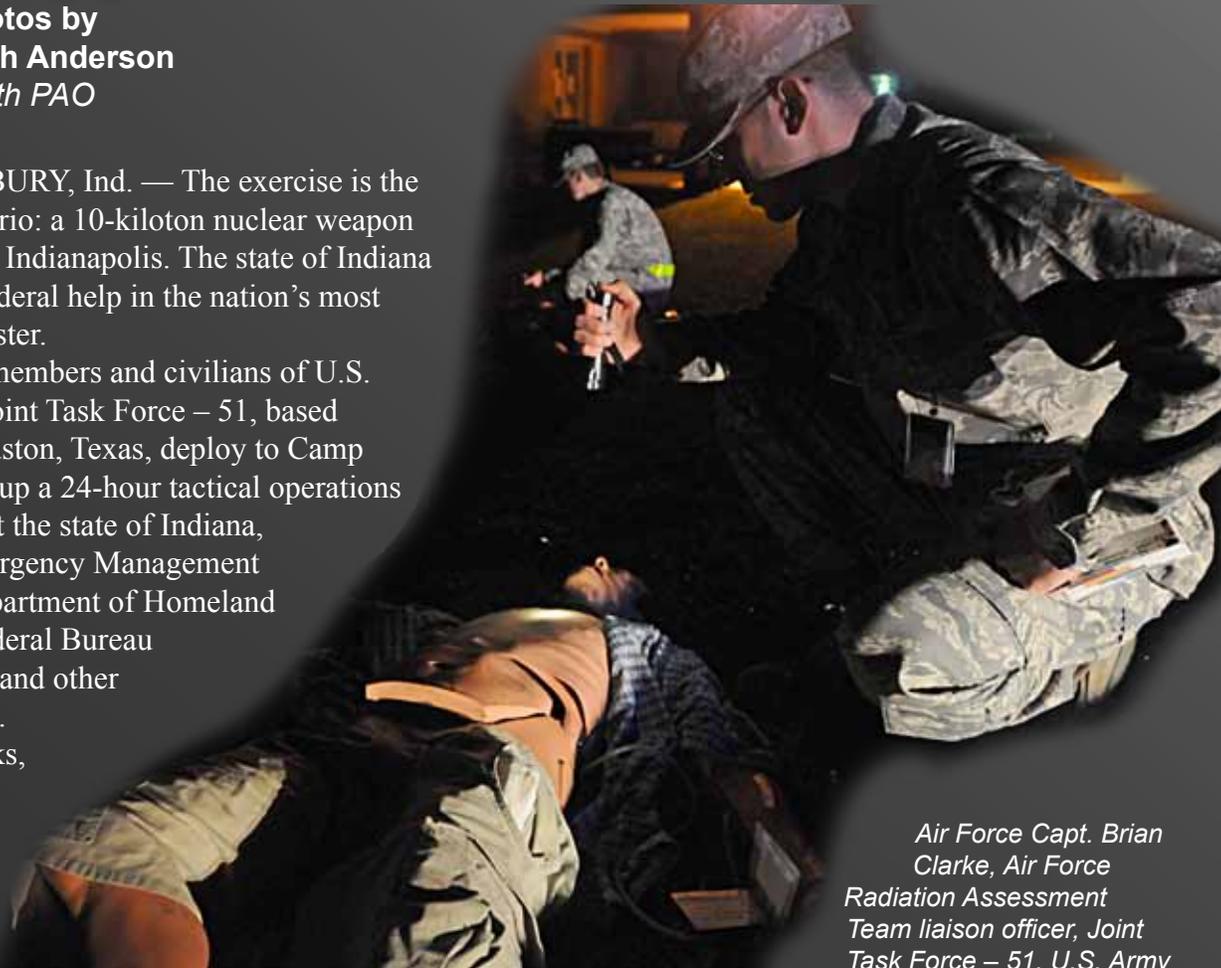
response and recovery operations in Vibrant Response 10.2, a field training exercise for domestic terrorism response.

Although a majority of the observed activities appear to occur during the daylight hours, the team provides an active night shift that works just as fervently to support the frenzy of activities that occurs throughout the day.

"This event allows us to bring together units from across the United States to train on our response to a nuclear event," said Lt. Col. Michael Brough, operations officer, JTF-51. "We pray this kind of event never occurs, but if it does, we're ready."

In the beginning, disaster responders scrambled to get systems online, people in place and critical lifesaving operations in progress. But over the course of the exercise, a beneficial rhythm developed between the day shift and the night shift.

The day shift is filled with a sort of frantic energy, phones ringing constantly and people regularly shouting



Air Force Capt. Brian Clarke, Air Force Radiation Assessment Team liaison officer, Joint Task Force – 51, U.S. Army

North, assesses injuries to a "civilian" after a simulated generator exploded outside the joint task force tactical operations center July 18 as part of the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

"Attention in the TOC!" to report the latest progress of lifesaving and life-sustaining missions, but at night, when there are fewer operations, the tactical operations center here is quiet, except for voices in low murmur and the incessant tap-tap-tapping of keys on laptops.

The work being done at night assigns helicopters and field litter ambulances to lifesaving missions; it assigns convoys to transport food and water; decontamination teams to centers that will evaluate, decontaminate and move victims to treatment facilities; and analyzes data and plans for the requisition of forces that will enable future response and recovery operations.

The staff of more than 70 U.S. Army North



Members of Joint Task Force – 51 brief Maj. Gen. John Basilica Jr., commanding general, JTF-51, on operations and significant activities in the last 24 hours July 19, during Vibrant Response 10.2 exercise at Camp Atterbury, Ind.

personnel and augmentees who serve on the night shift analyze mission assignments and write fragmentary orders that set in motion support operations by more than 2,700 service members and Department of Defense civilians from units around the country gathered in Indiana.

“On the day shift, there’s more coordination going on; at night, there’s more product production and policing up of TOC operations in preparation for day shift,” said Maj. Jaime Calica, night shift battle captain, JTF-51.

“The work we do enables the day shift to conduct operations in support of civil authorities.”

For Capt. David Heninger, night shift logistics officer, JTF-51, his job overnight is about analysis and future planning.

“We analyze logistics assets

that have been pushed through the proper channels and try to anticipate needs before they arise, and if there’s a need, to ensure it’s taken care of with logistics,” Heninger said. “We also give the commander an operational picture of the logistics assets available.”

The Monument, Colo., native said the exercise was instructive.

“From my level within the TOC, this has been a great exercise for every section to run through real operations with field units, and it has increased our effectiveness as a contingency command post to help the American people when called upon,” Heninger said.

The work done by the night shift contributed significantly to the overall success of the exercise, said U.S. Navy Commander Charles Smith, joint planner, JTF-51.

“The plans and analysis

they conducted allowed us to conduct timely and coordinated operations,” said Smith, a Wilmington, N.C., native.

“In a disaster of this magnitude, or any natural disaster, emergency support functions mean life and death – and we have to be prepared.”

Day or night though, the service members and civilians of Joint Task Force – 51 said they were proud of their role in civil support and disaster preparedness, and were prepared to serve as long as necessary, whatever the disaster.

“There’s no such thing as an exit strategy in the joint task force,” said Maj. Gen. John Basilica Jr., commanding general, JTF-51.

“We continue to provide support until civilian agencies can do it for themselves.”

Realistic training in Army North exercise proves vital for ARNG units

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Manuel Torres,
Army North PAO

BUTLERVILLE, Ind. — In the simulated metropolitan area of Indianapolis, a parking garage collapsed after a nuclear explosion hit the city. The report from local officials was that there were 23 civilians trapped inside the rubble, and their conditions and status were unknown.

This was the scenario for the Soldiers from the 392nd Chemical Company, Arkansas Army National Guard based out of Little Rock, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency Urban Search and Res-

cue unit during Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise held at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center July 17. U.S. Army North's Joint Task Force – 51, headquartered in San Antonio, serves as the command and control element for the national emergency response FTX.

This joint mission required members of both the 392nd Chem. Co. and FEMA to work together to help those who were still trapped in the collapsed garage.

“We are here to ensure that the building has all required safety precautions met so we can begin

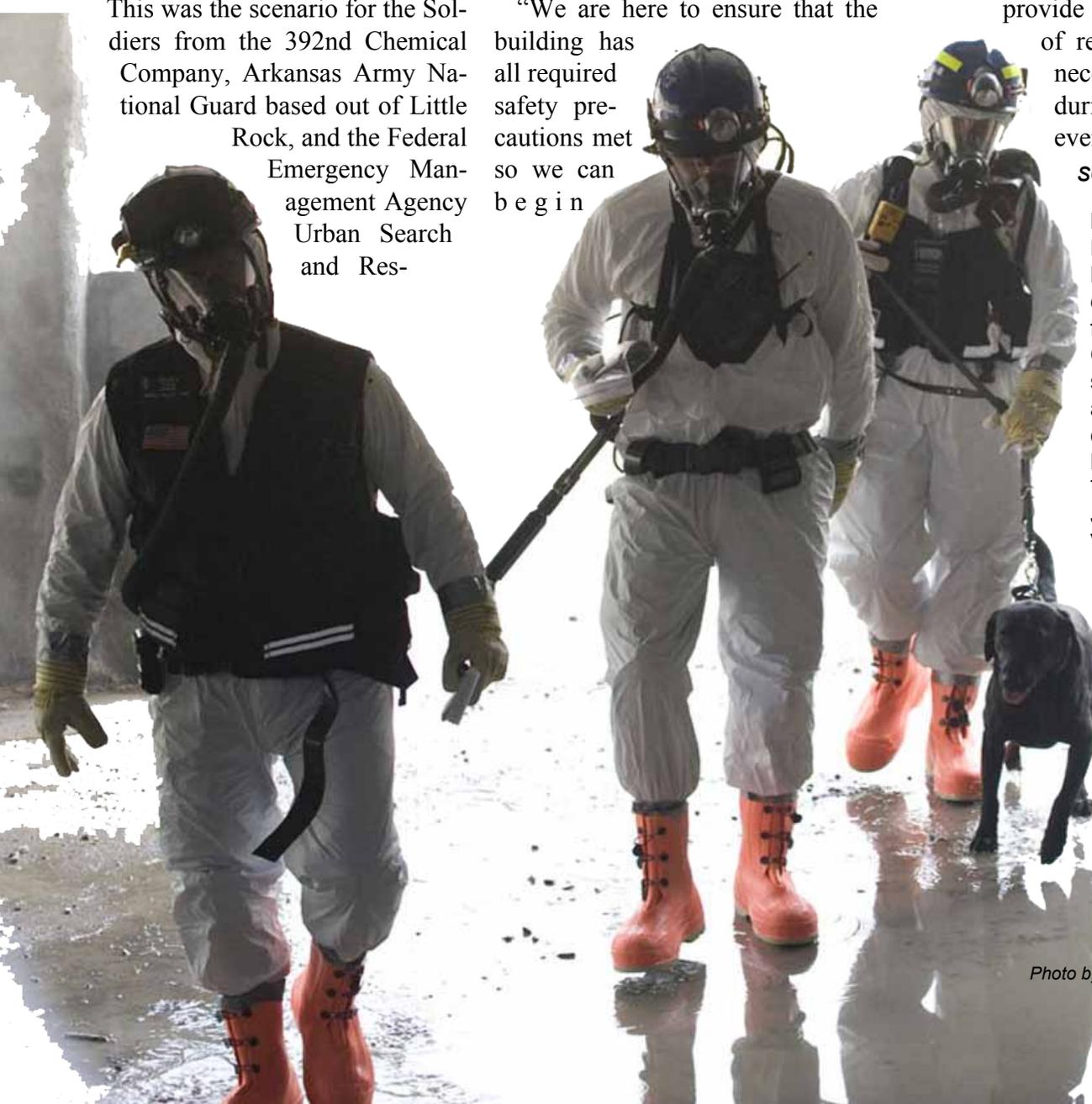
the extraction of the wounded,” said Mike Rosenthal, FEMA urban search and rescue team leader. “We must be able to provide a safe environment and training element for the units coming in that will work with us.”

The extraction tested the abilities of the units to coordinate with one another to remove the rubble; find, extract, and decontaminate the wounded; and provide medical assistance. Civilian role players provide a critical element of realism that is not necessarily available during local training events.

see **Guard**, Pg.18

Members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Task Force, from Dayton, Ohio, search for simulated survivors and victims in the collapsed garage at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center July 17 during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise. U.S. Army North's Joint Task Force – 51, headquartered in San Antonio, serves as the command and control element for the national emergency response exercise.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Brad Staggs,
MUTC PAO



ARNORTH welcomes new deputy to the CG

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson,
Army North PAO

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — U.S. Army North welcomed its new deputy to the commanding general during a ceremony in the historic Quadrangle here July 30.

Guy Sands-Pingot, who is a brigadier general in the Army Reserve, was appointed as a member of the Senior Executive Service — the uppermost ranks of federal civil service.

He will support Lt. Gen. Guy Swan III, commanding general, Army North and Fort Sam Houston, and will serve as the command's senior civilian employee.

"I personally selected Mr. Sands to be our first civilian deputy to the commanding general because of the importance of this newly created position," Swan said, during the ceremony. "With half of our teammates in the command being government or contract civilians, we need a solid representative for these professionals in the command group."

Swan said Sands was a perfect fit for the unit.

"We've all heard the saying: 'The right man, at the right place, at the right time for the right position.' And for Guy Sands, this is especially true," Swan said. "He has a proven track record of success.

"He'll focus much of his time working support and sustainment activities in ARNORTH, and with many of you here at Fort Sam, and representing me as senior commander and helping to continue that smooth transition to a joint base."

Sands, who served most recently as the assistant inspector general for inspections and strategic planning within the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, told those in attendance that he was humbled by their service.

"When our homeland is in peril, and Americans ask: 'Whom will serve?' The response has been, without

fail, from people such as those who I am humbled to see are present at this ceremony today," he said.

"I will serve to make our Army strong. I will serve to protect our nation and all that it means, and I will serve selflessly to do that which others cannot, or will not, do."

During an earlier visit to Army North in April, Sands said his job as the top civilian in the Army's service component command to the U.S. Northern Command is to support Swan.

"I think the key point is to assist the commanding general in fulfilling his vision for the organization

because it's his vision that is going to propel the organization forward," Sands said.

He said he feels ARNORTH provides a vital service for the nation.

"The American people have to know that there is a silent partner who is always out there — watching for their security and to make sure that life goes on as we know it," Sands said. "The adjunct to the answer is that the American people have an expectation of safety and

security, which underlies everything that we do, as a nation, and as a people.

"Without safety and security, our economy will fail and the normal measures of life that we expect to have — of home, Family and work — just will not go on as we know it. Army North has the vital role of being a focal point for homeland defense and, of course, of helping to integrate interagency participation and supporting it."

Sands has served for more than 30 years in the military — an experience, he said, that has taught him the importance of professional development and growing the force.

"Through my 30 years experience as a Soldier, culminating as a general officer, I've been able to work from the time of being a cadet all the way to general officer and in a variety of places, but the most important thing is how we interact with people and how we're able, as leaders, to make everybody a success."



Guy Sands-Pingot is sworn in as a member of the Senior Executive Service as U.S. Army North welcomed its new deputy to the commanding general during a ceremony in the historic Quadrangle July 30.

— from **Guard, Pg. 16**

“Adding civilians increases the realism of the total experience,” said Maj. Bryan Faye, civilian role player manager, Army North.

“This is the best way to reinforce training – by putting the civilians in place so the Soldier does not have to pretend.”

“ARNORTH training assets are critical in the success of the overall training exercise,” said Faye.

“You can plan, train and talk about it all day, but once you come out here and actually participate in it, you can see the effects.”

A joint effort helps the Soldiers interact with the state and local agencies – and especially with civilian community members.

“This is very realistic training with the role players, and we are learning there are ways to talk with them,” said Spc. James Jackson, infantryman, 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Carolina Army National Guard, as he was providing perimeter security. “Some of these people could be our neighbors, brothers, sisters, and we need to treat them with the utmost respect and

let them know that we are here to help.”

The job of the civilian role players is the most important element in the training, said Faye, because it provides confusion, frustration and on-the-spot thinking that will be needed in the real-world event.

“It’s amazing how emotionally invested you become as a part of the civilian on the battlefield characters,” said Wilma Morris, North Vernon resident and civilian role player. “If it helps one young Soldier, then it’s all worth it.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brad Staggs, MUTC PAO

Floyd McTarsney of Franklin, Ind., is decontaminated by members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Task Force 1 search and rescue team from Dayton, Ohio, after he is “found” in the collapsed garage at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center July 17 during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise. U.S. Army North’s Joint Task Force – 51, headquartered in San Antonio, serves as the command and control element for the national emergency response exercise that is designed to create the realism of an American city following a nuclear blast.

ARNORTH, partners create tough training

Story by Michael Rozsypal
Army North operations analyst

CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind. — The task was to replicate the conditions and effects required to fully exercise the Joint Task Force – 51's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosives Consequence Management Response Force, along with the Indiana National Guard Rapid Response Force, during a 10-kiloton nuclear detonation in a major U.S. city – Indianapolis.

The mission was assigned to U.S. Army North's G7 training directorate. Its task: to plan and execute Vibrant Response 2010, a robust nine-day training event capable of fully employing the more than 4,000 personnel of the JTF-51 CCMRF Joint Task Force and the Indiana National Guard Response Force.

The team prepared a series of high-operational tempo missions designed to stress the units in realistic training scenarios.

The missions included, but were not limited to, wellness checks, providing supply support by ground and air to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, medical evacuation by air and ground, deployment of a fully functional temporary hospital and treatment center, engineer route clearance, patient decontamination, and technical search and rescue from collapsed buildings.

It also included rendering assistance to displaced civilians, coordinating with local, state, and Federal response forces, and to provide the maximum coordination possible with National Guard unit headquarters.

The training was conducted at seven separate training sites, including three airfields and two forward

operating bases in southern Indiana.

The Indiana National Guard's Muscatatuck Urban Training Center provided an ideal training venue for the participating forces.

It contains more than 73 separate multi-story buildings, numerous residential housing areas and trailer parks, an oil refinery, a remote village, and four miles of tunnels. To further enhance the training opportunity, the Indiana National Guard added two search and rescue rubble piles, a collapsed parking garage, five partially collapsed four- to seven-story buildings, 15 tons of road rubble/debris, approximately 100 abandoned cars and trucks and more than 20 flame and smoke devices.

The exercise site closely resembled that of a movie set and provided a tremendous amount of realism. Smoke, flame and rubble were reset between each exercise and role players and mannequins were appropriately adorned with medical moulage make-up. Rehearsals were conducted, scripts reviewed, and a small army of support personnel worked long into the night to reset conditions for the next day's events.

Approximately 160 locally hired civilian actors were hired to portray displaced and injured civilians, and 300 mannequins served to replicate casualties during the mass-causality treatment events.

The other exercise sites included Camp Atterbury, Jefferson Proving Ground, Seymour, North Vernon, Freeman and Scottsburg, all in Indiana.

The close ties established between Army North and the Indiana National Guard helped to produce one of the most realistic disaster response exercises conducted to date in the United States, and established a benchmark for future operations.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Brad Staggs, MUTC PAO

A civilian role-player, playing the role of a blast victim, is "decontaminated" by Soldiers from the Army Reserve's 108th Chemical Battalion out of South Carolina at MUTC in Butlerville, Ind., July 15, during Vibrant Response 10.2.

News

Military support to mitigate oil spill continues

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — The Military efforts along the Gulf Coast continue as part of the federal response force to clean up the oil spill. About 1,900 Defense Department and associated personnel are deployed to the Gulf.

They are providing ongoing support to contain the leak and clean up the spill, including military-owned skimmers and pollution control equipment, said Lt. Col. Robert Ditchey II, a Pentagon spokesman.

The military also is providing funding for National Guard support to state governors in the region as well as staging areas for boom and logistical coordination along the coast and at sea, Ditchey said.

The Navy, he said, has 19 skimmers and 29 tow boats in the Gulf to help soak up the oil.

The Naval Sea Systems Command has oversight over those vessels and equipment. The command expects additional assets in the region in the coming weeks, Ditchey said.

The Naval Oceanographic Office has deployed 24 drifting buoys and 10 profiling floats to monitor wafting oil, he added.

National Guard troops set for arrival on Arizona border

USA Today

TUCSON, Ariz. — The National Guard troops assigned to the Ari-

zona border will begin to arrive Aug. 1, and the federal government is sending other reinforcements to stem the flow of illegal immigrants and narcotics entering the state, said Janet Napolitano, Homeland Security Secretary. National Guard Soldiers will be used primarily in port-screening operations and as criminal analysts.

Survivors can now apply for disaster aid on smart phones

FEMA

WASHINGTON — For the first time, survivors of a disaster will now be able to apply for federal disaster assistance on their Smartphones, making aid more immediately accessible for people after a disaster hits. This new tool can be accessed directly at FEMA's new mobile Web site: m.fema.gov. Smartphone models that will be able to access the new mobile platform include Blackberries, Apple iPhones and Windows Mobile.

Top 5 hurricane vulnerable, overdue cities listed

The Weather Channel

FORT HUACHUCA, Ariz. — It seems instructive to highlight examples of locations that are both vulnerable and overdue for a very significant hurricane impact. The following five metropolitan areas have been selected based on a combination of the amount of people and property at high risk, and how long it has been since the area has been directly affected by a very strong hurricane. It is a matter of

when, not if, these areas are struck next:

#5: Atlantic City, N.J. — A Category 1 hurricane made landfall near Atlantic City in 1903. Numerous other hurricanes since then have moved parallel to the Jersey Shore, producing some significant impacts from storm surge, waves and strong winds. Perhaps most notable is the "Great Atlantic Hurricane of 1944," which brought hurricane-force winds and a storm surge of up to nearly 10 feet.

#4: Savannah, Ga. — The "Sea Islands Hurricane" made landfall near Savannah in late August 1893, taking the lives of somewhere between 1,000 and 2,000 people in its storm surge. A hurricane following a track similar to Hurricane Floyd of 1999, but only slightly farther to the west, could bring a hurricane disaster to the entire Georgia coastline.

#3: Tampa Bay, Fla. — The Tampa Bay area is especially surge-prone due to the miles and miles of developed coastline along the bay, including downtown Tampa, St. Petersburg, and numerous, large residential and commercial areas. A scenario that would be extremely devastating to the area is one in which the center of a large, major hurricane makes landfall just north of the entrance to the bay. A hurricane in late October 1921 took that track, making landfall with an estimated Category 3 strength, and producing storm surge of up to roughly 10 feet in Tampa Bay and causing extensive damage.

#2: New York City — The Great Atlantic Hurricane of 1944 and, perhaps most notoriously, the "Long Island Express" of 1938 demonstrated how quickly a hurricane can move up the eastern seaboard and bring extremely damaging winds and storm surge to New England. In

these cases, New York City dodged a major disaster by being on the comparatively weaker side of the storm. But in 1893, the center of a Category 1 hurricane came onshore between Coney Island and where JFK Airport resides today.

The shape of the coastline makes New York especially vulnerable to storm surge, since a hurricane passing just to its west would focus the water rise into New York Harbor. Vertical evacuation in high rises is not a desirable option, since hurricane-force winds would be even stronger on higher floors and would blow out many windows. Most hurricanes approaching New York will be moving quickly, meaning that even one down near the Bahamas might only be a day or two away.

#1: Miami/Fort Lauderdale – Metropolitan Fort Lauderdale and Broward County, and the nearby city of Miami, along with many of its suburbs in Miami-Dade County, have gone for decades without experiencing the direct impacts from a very damaging hurricane. At the same time, the population has soared and building has boomed in an area where essentially every person and structure resides within 20 miles of the coastline. Hurricane Andrew in 1992 spared downtown Miami, the Port of Miami, Miami Beach, and the now even more developed suburbs to the north and west.

Gates calls on FBI to join leak investigation

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates announced he has asked the FBI to help Penta-

gon authorities investigate the leak of the classified documents published by WikiLeaks.

Gates and Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, condemned the leak in the strongest possible manner during a Pentagon briefing here today. The WikiLeaks organization made public tens of thousands of classified battlefield reports.

Those who leaked classified documents to WikiLeaks, and those who decided to publish them, may have blood on their hands, Mullen said. The chairman challenged the motivation of Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, to publish the leaked documents.

“Mr. Assange can say whatever he likes about the greater good he thinks he and his source are doing, but the truth is they might already have on their hands the blood of some young Soldier or that of an Afghan family,” Mullen said.

People can reasonably disagree about the war, and they can challenge commanders for their decisions, but don’t put those who willingly go into harm’s way even further in harm’s way just to satisfy your need to make a point, the chairman said.

Gates said the more than 90,000 documents that have been posted are old and cover material already well known and debated. Still, he said, the release has battlefield consequences for U.S. and Afghan troops and Afghan civilians and also may damage U.S. relationships in Central Asia and the Middle East.

Intelligence sources and methods, as well as military tactics, techniques and procedures, will become known to U.S. adversaries, the secretary said.

“These documents represent a mountain of raw data and individual

impressions, most several years old, devoid of context or analysis,” Gates said. “They do not represent official positions or policy. And they do not, in my view, fundamentally call into question the efficacy of our current strategy in Afghanistan and its prospects for success.”

Defense Department officials will conduct a thorough and aggressive investigation to determine how this leak occurred, to identify who is responsible and to assess the content of the information compromised, Gates said.

Calling on the FBI to aid the investigation ensures that the department will have all the resources needed to investigate and assess this breach of national security, the secretary said.

“As a general proposition, we endeavor to push access to sensitive battlefield information down to where it is most useful – on the front lines – where, as a practical matter, there are fewer restrictions and controls than at rear headquarters,” Gates said.

New DSCA Handbook available

USARNORTH

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — There is a new DSCA Handbook, Part 1, Tactical Commander and Staff Toolkit, and Part 2, Liaison Officer Toolkit in our DSCA Community of Interests Knowledge Center. If you would like to view or download the new handbooks, you can access the JKO Communities of Interest by clicking on <http://jko.jfcom.mil/> enter JKO, and click on the tab labeled JKO COMMUNITIES. Click on DSCA Handbook and you can download both documents.

Active-duty general sworn in to Guard to take Joint Task Force command

By JTF-NSJ, PAO

FORT A.P. HILL, Va. - U.S. Northern Command and the National Guard are making historic strides in interoperability during the 2010 National Scout Jamboree at Fort. A.P. Hill, Virginia.

Brig. Gen. Robert "Woody" Nolan, commander, Joint Task Force-National Scout Jamboree, has been commissioned in the Virginia National Guard, making him the first active-duty officer to simultaneously hold commissions in both the active Air Force and the National Guard.

With this "dual status," Nolan commands a task force comprised of about 2,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and civilian personnel. About 600 of JTF-NSJ's forces are National Guardsmen from 15 different states.

The 2010 NSJ, held from July 26 through Aug. 4, celebrated 100 years of Scouting in the United States, and JTF-NSJ provided Department of Defense support along several lines of operation: security, medical, logistics, merit badge instruction and performing unit support, all in order to provide a safe and secure environment for a successful NSJ.

Federal law authorizes National Guard and active-duty officers to hold dual commissions only with the approval of both a Governor and the President.

For several past events, such as the 2009 G-20 Summit in Pittsburgh, National Guard officers have held this dual status, enabling them to command active forces. Nolan pointed out that these successful partnerships built trust

between federal and state authorities and paved the way for organizing this year's military support to the NSJ.

"I think it says we trust each other and we're willing to work together," he said.

"It's required because of these unique situations in the continental United States. We've done

eight dual-status commands prior to the National Scout Jamboree; and in each case, the President offered a National Guard officer a federal commission so that officer could control both Guard and federal forces.

"This is the first case where the Governor of a state has offered a federal officer a state commission so we could do a dual-status command with federal officer in charge, and I think that says a lot about the trust and confidence that the organizations have with each other."



from **Hawaii**, Pg. 10 that's plenty of time for the Soldiers to become proficient on a variety of equipment."

The unit's newly assigned Soldiers, many on their first deployment, were quick to echo their leader's remarks.

"I have gained a lot of knowledge about my MOS (military occupational specialty), like using the front-end loader, the water distributor, and the HYEX (tracked mounted hydraulic controlled excavator)," said

Pvt. Nicholas Lahs, an engineer equipment operator. "The HYEX is my favorite piece of equipment; it feels really great when you finally get the hang of it!"

The 65th Eng. Bn. Soldiers were billeted at a nearby California National Guard training camp and were provided contracted breakfast and dinner meals. The lunchtime meals were MREs.

Prior to starting the mission, all participating Soldiers completed mandatory legal, safety and environmental training; the unit

deployed to and from San Diego via civilian aircraft.

Engineer support is one of the six different types of support categories that the task force provides to the nation's federal law enforcement agencies.

"The JTF - North missions truly yield a 'Win - Win' situation. The volunteer units gain great training opportunities that are directly related to their military duties, and the nation's law enforcement agencies get much needed support," said Stephney.

Region IV DCO leads way as DCE team springs into action for exercise

Story and photo by
Patti Bielling,
Army North PAO

KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss. — As a few June raindrops fell on residents of Southern Mississippi, members of United States Army North assembled in the Gulf Coast state to practice responding to a much larger storm: the notional Hurricane Francine, which spawned a deadly tornado, knocked out power and left thousands injured and homeless.

The weeklong hurricane response exercise at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., June 26 – July 2, was designed to help the Region IV Defense Coordinating Element practice its mission to coordinate federal military support to civil authorities during response to catastrophic storms or other disasters.

The training event also served as the first opportunity for Col. Barrett Holmes to observe his team perform its mission since he assumed the job of Region IV defense coordinating officer in April.

“There is a big benefit to training with the staff in a realistic scenario before having to respond to a real hurricane.”

“We’re told it will be a very active hurricane season, so we’ll probably get a chance to do this once this year – if not multiple times.”

The combat engineer is an avid note-taker and admits to filling up half of his green notebook with observations from the exercise.

He credits most entries to Col. Mark Armstrong, Region IX defense coordinating officer, a veteran



Col. Barrett Holmes (center), defense coordinating officer, Region IV, U.S. Army North, confers during an exercise with Lt. Col. Shannon Miller (front), his deputy, and Col. Mark Armstrong, DCO, Region IX, Army North, during a weeklong hurricane response exercise at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., June 26 – July 2.

of multiple civil support missions who served as a peer mentor for the training event. Armstrong said Holmes is a very capable officer with the right core competencies to be a DCO: the ability to plan, coordinate, integrate, synchronize and execute complex operations.

“(Holmes) also has the ability to quickly assess his people, assess the situation, and distill from multiple inputs the really important issues and then give clear guidance to his subordinates on how to proceed,” he explained.

Armstrong also noted that the team of nine got right to work, quickly integrating 33 augmentees from three other regions and the Army North headquarters.

Within hours, the group had

gelled and was coordinating the efforts of simulated aviation, medical and communications units.

Holmes recognized the talent of his new team and called himself “blessed” to work not only with the DCE but with their experienced regional counterparts in the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The Laurens, S.C., native, added that he takes great pride in this assignment, noting that he has family and friends in each of the eight states of the Region.

“In almost 27 years of active-duty service, I have taken great satisfaction in serving and protecting the United States,” Holmes explained. “What better place to do that than here?”

Army North Soldiers meet, greet children of deployed parents during Operation Purple



**Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson,
Army North PAO**

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Kids serve, too. That's the message at Operation Purple, a summer camp for children whose parents are deployed or are about to deploy.

At the Blue Streak Stables in Seguin, one of three camps hosting Operation Purple in Texas, U.S. Army North Soldiers from Fort Sam Houston took a day July 29 to talk about the military and to lead 55 young girls in leadership challenges and relay races.

“Being a parent who has deployed, it was good to show the girls something different and take their minds off of some of the things they're dealing with,” said Lt. Col. Mike Harvey, chief, air operations cell, Army North. “There is nothing but good that can come from a camp like this.”

Harvey, whose daughter, Mattie, 11, was also at the camp, said it is good for the girls to meet others in their situation.

“They all face the same emotional challenges; making bonds with other girls helps them,” Harvey said. “The older girls can help the younger girls with some coping mechanisms that they've been taught.”

Harvey, along with his fellow volunteers from Army North, spoke with the campers about some issues they face as military family members.

“How many times have you moved?” Harvey asked the room. “It's hard making new friends sometimes, isn't it?”

At the horsemanship camp, July 25-30, children contributed pictures of their parents to the wall of

honor, created a tree-ring history of their lives, and learned to care for, brush, groom and saddle horses, and rode the horses in an outdoor arena.

For the military day, the girls took a break from the horses and asked questions about the military as they climbed through an old Army jeep, a humvee and an Army North Emergency Response Vehicle.

They also used their teamwork skills as they completed team-focused obstacle courses and relay races.

Heidi, a sixth-grader whose father is a helicopter pilot in the Army, said the obstacle course was her favorite military-themed activity because it helped to show the importance of teamwork and leadership.

“I liked the leadership skills thing,” Heidi said. “We had to think real hard about getting to the other side without help from the adults.”

Reba Martinez, who owns the Blue Streak Stables with her husband, Larry, said she wants children to learn to accomplish goals and gain confidence.

“It's not learning to tie a safety-release knot; it's learning to try something new – to develop steps to accomplish a goal so then they bring that back with them into their lives,” Martinez said. “When we get these girls on the horses, it means a lot because they've conquered their fear.”

Talking with military children about the Marines, and leading obstacle courses and relays, was a chance to support military families, said Marine Maj. Mike Tsung, Joint Task Force – North liaison officer, Army North.

“It was a great opportunity to help the kids to have fun today while their parents are deployed overseas,” said Tsung.



(Left) Girls, ages eight to 15, run with military gear during a relay race at Operation Purple, a camp for children of deployed parents hosted by Blue Streak Stables Horsemanship Camps in Seguin. Soldiers from U.S. Army North, stationed at Fort Sam Houston, spent the day July 29 meeting and greeting the 55 young ladies attending the horsemanship camp, which ran from July 25-30. (Center) Lt. Col. Mike Harvey, chief, air operations cell, Army North, takes a watermelon break with his daughter, Mattie, and her fellow campers July 29. (Right) Children of deployed parents work together in teams to overcome obstacles July 29 during a leadership challenge course led by Soldiers from U.S. Army North.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jacob Bailey

Soldiers from the 251st Area Support Medical Command, South Carolina Army National Guard, provide medical care to a civilian involved in a simulated car accident at Forward Operating Base Jennings in North Vernon, Ind., during exercise Vibrant Response 10.2.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Angelita Lawrence

A Soldier with the 457th Chemical Battalion helps decontaminate a comrade from the 4224th U.S. Army Hospital after providing simulated medical care to civilian role players, who were injured and/or contaminated as part of the Vibrant Response 10.2 exercise at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, Ind.



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Samuel Goodman

Sgt. Maj. Daniel Adle, U.S. Army North, observes as Soldiers from Company A, 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment, a National Guard unit based out of Charleston, S.C., leap into action July 15 during the Vibrant Response 10.2 field training exercise. The exercise is a U.S. Northern Command training event for the Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and high-yield Explosives Consequence Management Response Force 10.2, which is coordinated by U.S. Army North's Joint Task Force – 51, headquartered in San Antonio, Texas.

VR 10.2 Photos in Review



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Samuel Goodman

(Top) Pfc. Robert Caldwell, from Company D, 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment, performs simulated care on a mannequin July 18 during exercise Vibrant Response 10.2 at Camp Atterbury, Ind. (Right) A UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter dumps a slingloaded water bucket over a fictional house and car fire during Vibrant Response 10.2 at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center in Butlerville, Ind. Vibrant Response is a field training exercise held July 10-24 in which Department of Defense forces assist federal, state, local and tribal partners in saving lives, preventing further injury and providing temporary critical support to enable community recovery after a biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive incident.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Brad Staggs, MUTC PAO)



