

THE CARGO COURIER

123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky.

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123rd exercises disaster-recovery capability

Air Guard team deploys for Vibrant Response

By Maj. Dale Greer
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

A new disaster-recovery team from the Kentucky Air National Guard successfully demonstrated its urban-response capabilities for the first time last month during a major homeland-defense exercise held in Southern Indiana.

The U.S. Army North exercise, called Vibrant Response 12, tested the ability of more than 7,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Defense Department civilians to respond to the detonation of a radiological device in a major U.S. city while providing a broad range of assistance to civil authorities, said Capt. Jason Rhodes, commander of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Communications Squadron.

A key component of that response was the Kentucky Air Guard's Fatality Search and Recovery Team, one of 17 such teams stood up across the Air National Guard late last year to locate and recover the remains of victims killed in hostile action or natural disasters, Rhodes said. Team members have special training and equipment that allow them to operate in a broad spectrum of dangerous environments, including those contaminated by nuclear, biological or chemical agents.

"This is a unique capability that only the Air National Guard has, and it's also an essential capability," said Rhodes, who served as OIC of the Kentucky team during Vibrant Response. "Civilian authorities such as local coroners are likely to be overwhelmed in the event of a scenario like this attack, but the Air Guard's Fatality Search and Recovery Teams can deploy the resources necessary to recover victims quickly, with dignity and respect. It's the kind of capability the American people expect from their disaster-response forces."

Vibrant Response was staged at the Indiana

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Photos by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson/U.S. Army

Above: Air National Guard Fatality Search and Recovery Team members collect a simulated casualty from a collapsed parking garage at Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex near Camp Atterbury, Ind., on Aug. 18 as part of Vibrant Response 12. From left to right are Senior Airman Kevin Woodard and Tech. Sgt. Brittany Ingram of the Kentucky Air Guard; Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Feliciano of the Puerto Rico Air Guard; and Staff Sgt. Jason Gallegos of the Colorado Air Guard.



Left: Wreckage, flames and smoke serve as the aftermath of a simulated 10-kiloton nuclear detonation at Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex near Camp Atterbury, Ind., on Aug. 16 during Vibrant Response 12. U.S. Army North conducted the exercise to prepare military forces for their role in responding to a catastrophic chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incident in the homeland.

September 11, 2001: The 123rd Airlift Wing remembers

Remember. Ten years ago tomorrow, terrorists attacked the United States of America.

Each one of us remembers the morning of 11 September 2001. We remember exactly what we were doing when we received the news. We can recall the exact time, the weather where we were, and who we were with.

We remember initially thinking this must be a tragic accident. Then, we remember the impact of the second aircraft and the empty feeling of horror and disgust, followed by anger, as we realized our great nation was under attack.

My memory of events pre-9/11 and post-9/11 is completely different. I remember significant events before 2001, but they seem to be over 100 years ago. I remember almost everything I have done since 11 Sept. 2001, and those memories seem like yesterday.

I will remember, and so will you.

Reflect. This Sunday, 11 Sept. 2011, I ask that each of you take time to reflect on the events of 9/11. Talk to each other about it. Talk to some-



Col. Greg Nelson
123rd Airlift Wing Commander

one from a different unit than yours within the 123rd Airlift Wing. Listen to their stories, and share yours with them.

Reflect on everything you have done individually in the defense of our nation. Be proud of your service. Be proud of the service and

accomplishments of your unit and the entire 123rd Airlift Wing. Reflect on all we have done together to fight terrorism and protect our families, friends, neighbors here in Kentucky; and reflect on our support of our allies abroad in the destruction of our enemies.

Realize. Realize this war is not over. Realize, study and understand that this is a new enemy. Realize this enemy is different from any we have ever fought before. Realize this enemy does not represent any geographic nation or organized government.

Realize this enemy is a collection of terrorists with no moral law we understand. Realize this. Study this enemy, and learn to defeat them.

Ready. Be ready. Stand ready. Be prepared both personally and professionally. Be ready to prevent and defend against another attack here at home, and be ready to deploy against the enemy where they live.

Sunday, and every day, remember, reflect, realize and be ready.

The 123rd Airlift Wing stands ready!

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Our office is located in room 1160 of the Wing Headquarters Building.

We welcome your feedback. Please contact the Public Affairs Office directly if you have suggestions for articles or photography. Publication deadline for submissions to the next issue is Oct. 7.

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An electronic version of the Cargo Courier is available at the Kentucky Air Guard's Web site — www.123aw.ang.af.mil



Greet the Chief

Kentucky's assistant adjutant general for Air, Brig. Gen. Mark Kraus, greets the director of the National Guard Bureau, Gen. Craig R. McKinley, on the flight line of the Kentucky Air Guard Base July 23. McKinley was in town to attend the NGB National Volunteer Workshop, which brought more than 1,400 Family Programs volunteers to Louisville.

Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

National Fire Prevention Week tips keep you safe

National Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 9 to 15, which serves as a good reminder to review fire-prevention strategies around your home and workplace, base fire officials said.

"This year, our campaign is all about keeping you, your family and your community safer from fire," said Staff Sgt. Brandon K. Curry of the base Fire and Rescue Department.

"We have free educational materials and tip sheets on the leading causes of home fires, information about protecting your family with life-saving technologies and guidance on the importance of home-escape planning."

Curry reminds Airmen to develop an escape plan and practice it regularly. He also said smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries should be tested twice a year, and houses with two or more stories should have at least one escape ladder upstairs. For free training on how to use fire extinguishers, contact the fire department at ext. 4418.

Officials want your input: Climate Survey still open

Equal Opportunity Office seeking Airmen's feedback through end of September

Cargo Courier Staff Report

Members of the 123rd Airlift Wing have until the end of the month to share their opinions on the unit's human relations atmosphere by completing a Unit Climate Assessment survey, said Maj. Latonia Trowell, wing equal opportunity officer. The assessment, which began in August, will be wrapping up Sept. 30.

Unit Climate Assessments are conducted by the base Equal Opportunity Office in coordination with wing command staff and are used to assist commanders in assessing positive and negative factors of the human relations climate in their organizations, Trowell said. The EO office is required to conduct the surveys every four years, within six months of assignment of a new commander or upon request.

The surveys touch on cohesion and pride, supervisory support, motivation and morale,

overt discriminatory behaviors, perceived discrimination, and command policy.

"Your concerns are important to your commander, the EO office and the wing commander," Trowell said. "We need the participation of everyone. If you have something to say, or feel that you have not been heard, this is one way to express what matters to you.

"We need your honest responses. Each individual will be receiving a unique password that will allow responses to be strictly anonymous."

The Equal Opportunity Office seeks to eliminate unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment against military personnel, family members and retirees based on race, color, national origin, religion and sex, to include sexual harassment.

"These are the areas that fall in our purview," Trowell explained. "If, however, your concern does not fall within the EO purview, we will assist in referring you to the appropriate agency for assistance.

"For more information about the Unit Climate Assessment surveys, please feel free to visit the wing Equal Opportunity Office in the Base Annex during monthly UTAs."

Wing stands alert for Hurricane Irene

Story and photos by Maj. Dale Greer
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The National Guard Bureau placed 24 Kentucky aircrew members and two C-130 aircraft on alert here Aug. 26 to 29 to fly relief missions across the East Coast in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene.

Meanwhile, more than 15 members of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron were slated to deploy to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., on Aug. 28 to carry out water rescue missions as directed by state and federal officials.

Ultimately, the airlift sorties weren't needed, and the special tactics deployment was canceled just hours before the team was set to take off from Louisville, said Col. Greg Nelson, commander

of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing.

"Thankfully, the damage along the East Coast from Hurricane Irene wasn't as bad as initially anticipated, and officials in the affected states determined that they didn't need our assistance," Nelson explained.

"Nevertheless, the alert posture was good training for every Airman in the wing. As always, the Kentucky Air National Guard stands ready to answer our nation's call for assistance, any time, anywhere."

The wing's special tactics troops include pararescuemen who are specially trained in water rescue missions and emergency medical care.

They typically deploy with a range of dedicated rescue equipment like Zodiac motorboats and diving gear in order to carry out a broad spectrum of

relief and recovery operations.

Other Airmen in the unit include Communications Controllers, who have the capability of establishing air traffic control at any location, from a concrete landing strip at a non-functional airport to an improvised helicopter landing zone on a highway overpass.

The unit has been instrumental in hurricane recovery operations before, conducting rescue missions and operating a helicopter landing zone in New Orleans that airlifted more than 11,000 people to safety following Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

"We're always prepared to conduct a full range of rescue operations anywhere in the United States as directed by civil authorities," said Lt. Col. Wilkinsons, the unit's commander.



Above: Loadmasters from the 165th Airlift Squadron direct a truck and trailer loaded with rescue equipment into the cargo hold of a C-130 on the tarmac of the Kentucky Air National Guard Base Aug. 28 as Kentucky Airmen prepare to deploy for recovery efforts in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene.

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Left: Airmen from the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron load a trailer here with Zodiac motorboats and other rescue equipment Aug. 28 in preparation for a deployment to New Jersey following Hurricane Irene. The deployment was called off just prior to the unit's departure after damage was less severe than officials anticipated.



Tech. Sgt. Adam Keller and Staff Sgt. Jared Cain guide the trailer onto the C-130 from inside the aircraft (left) as Senior Master Sgt. John Siebert provides instructions outside to the truck's driver, Master Sgt. Kelley Blair (above).



Right: Senior Master Sgt. John Siebert, a loadmaster in the Kentucky Air Guard's 165th Airlift Squadron, secures the truck's chassis to the floor of the C-130 aircraft with 10,000-pound tiedown chains. The vehicle, assigned to the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, was loaded with a wide range of gear useful in water-rescue missions, including Zodiac motorboats and diving equipment. The 123rd Special Tactics Squadron has been instrumental in hurricane recovery operations before, conducting rescue missions and operating a helicopter landing zone in New Orleans that airlifted more than 11,000 people to safety following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Its Airmen include pararescuemen, who have specialized training in rescue operations and emergency medical care.



Guard responds to threat of Hurricane Irene

Thousands put on alert, deploy to provide relief to affected coastal areas

By Army Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill
National Guard Bureau
and Army Spc. David Bolton
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

ARLINGTON, Va. — National Guard support to the joint response to Hurricane Irene was in full motion last month as thousands of Soldiers and Airmen rolled out in multiple states to support civilian authorities.

Guard officials at the National Guard Coordination Center here were tracking the storm and working with other federal agencies, states, territories and the District of Columbia around the clock as Guard members in 13 states supported the response.

Members of National Guard units from multiple Eastern and Midwestern states converged at the Pennsylvania National Guard's 28th Aviation Brigade airfield at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. in response to disaster recovery operations Aug. 29.

"We're here to help out where we're needed," said Army Capt. Josh P. Damera, commander of C Company of the 244th Florida Army National Guard and a UH-60 pilot from Brookfield, Fla. "It's why we wear the uniform."

Eighteen aircraft, including UH-60 Blackhawk, CH-47 Chinook and OH-58 Kiowa helicopters stood ready as part of the second package of Task Force 151 to be called upon if needed to assist in state relief efforts.

Army Lt. Col. Andrew W. Batten, TF 151 aviation commander from Camden, S.C., said he was pleased with the response from supporting states.

"This shows that the National Guard Aviation is relevant and ready to respond," Batten said.

The ability of National Guard service members to answer the call of their country, both domestically and abroad, stems from continuous training, coordination and exercises with local and state emergency responders nationwide, said Army Sgt. Devin Gregory, a UH-60 crew chief with B Company, 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment out of Frankfort, Ky.

"We have the ability to provide quick relief and provide medevac to put people where they



Photos by Spc. David Bolton/Kentucky Army National Guard

Spc. Tom Harrington, a crew chief and Kentucky Army Guardsman assigned to Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment, communicates with his Blackhawk aircrew while standing by to support a Hurricane Irene relief mission Aug. 29 at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa.



Left: Kentucky Guardsmen from "Wildcat Dustoff" Detachment 1, Charlie Co., 2/238th General Aviation Support Battalion, stand ready to execute relief missions in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene while positioned at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., Aug. 29.

need to be," he said.

Throughout the response, the National Guard Bureau coordinated closely with state and federal agencies, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency and U.S. Northern Command, to provide timely, potentially lifesaving hurricane relief, Guard officials said.

More than 400,000 Guard members are available in more than 3,300 communities nationwide, including about 101,000 in the affected states.

States as far from the storm as Alaska, Illinois, Louisiana and New Mexico contributed

National Guard assets to the response. Alaska sent its storied "Guardian Angels" with helicopters for potential search and rescue missions; helicopters and troops were en route from Illinois for potential support to New York, where the governor mobilized about 2,000 of his own troops; and Louisiana contributed helicopters and troops to a response package staging to assist where needed.

The National Guard has the size, skills, training, experience, command and communications infrastructure, and legal flexibility to support civil authorities at a moment's notice, Guard officials said.

Military Clothing offers custom sizing for hard-to-fit Airmen

DALLAS – Got long legs? Or a barrel chest? Having trouble finding an off-the-shelf uniform to fit your body type?

Military Clothing Sales, which have now been rebranded as simply Military Clothing, has your solution.

Through an agreement with the Defense Logistics Agency, MC can special-order any uniform to any single Airman's exact measurements.

"The way the Special Measurements program works is a lot like visiting a tailor shop," explained Tech. Sgt. Larry McCoy, the Air Force Program Manager for Military Clothing at the Army and Air Force Exchange Service.

"An associate at the MC will take a series of measurements, depending on the item you are ordering, be it a jacket or pants or boots," McCoy said.

The measurements are then sent off to DLA for production. Typical lead times are six to eight weeks. When the item is complete, it will be available for pick up at the store where you ordered it. Prices are the same for both Special Measurement and off-the-shelf uniforms.

McCoy uses the Special Measurements program himself and encourages other Airmen and Soldiers to do the same.

"Because I am muscular, I have broad shoulders, big arms and chest. The standard size uniforms feels constricting when I try them on, so I usually have to custom-order a uniform that fits me just right. Along with being a coordinator of the program, I am also a very satisfied customer."

Another key point to remember is that all items sold at the MC meet standards for things like infrared signatures.

You might not get that guarantee if you buy something off base, McCoy said.

Airman magazine ending printed version this month

New digital edition has fresh format, improved content

Defense Media Activity

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, Md. — Airman magazine entered a new era Sept. 1 with the release of its final hardcopy edition and the unveiling of its new digital home.

Airman is being re-launched as a new website and, while the Web address remains www.airmanonline.af.mil, the site has a fresh format and improved functions, officials said.

In addition to the stories and photos in the print magazine, the site will offer visitors additional content.

By publishing digitally, Airman staff will be able to provide more and different kinds of stories, officials said.

For example, the print version for September includes a block of stories on the changes in the Air Force since 9/11, with two expansive photo features, a look at Operation Noble Eagle, the personal perspective of a wounded warrior and statistics from overseas operations.

On the web, this special 9/11 content is supplemented with an interview with Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Norton Schwartz and a question-and-answer piece with Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James Roy.

Additionally, throughout the month of September, Airman staff will post additional perspectives from Airmen directly involved in or affected by 9/11 and a story on the changes in Air Force technology in the past decade.

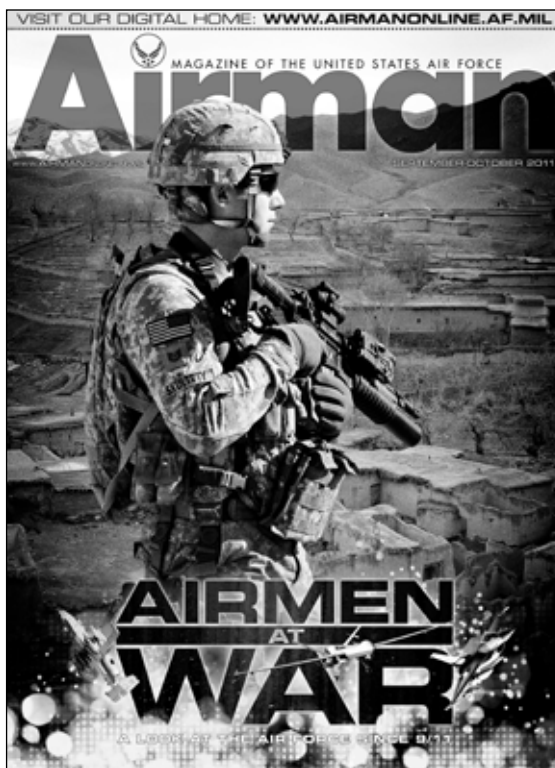
In another example of a new storytelling feature available in the digital magazine, a multimedia video accompanies the print and

photo tale of Lester West, a barber who has cut the hair of military trainees at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, for the past 50 years.

Airman, the official magazine of the United States Air Force, has been in circulation since 1957. It has changed publication size and frequency many times over the years, having been a quarterly, monthly and, most recently, bi-monthly print publication.

As the staff moves forward into digital publishing, their

goal is to continue providing Air Force readers with Airman's trademark feature-length stories and high-quality images while embracing new technologies and new ways of telling the Air Force story, officials said.



The final printed edition of Airman magazine was published this month. A new digital version with enhanced content will be available online, officials said.

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OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Vibrant Response

Continued from Front Page

National Guard's Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex near Camp Atterbury, Ind., a unique facility created on the grounds of a former mental hospital. It features a robust assortment of training environments, including collapsed buildings and structures that can be set ablaze on command.

"Muscatatuck is a pretty impressive facility," Rhodes said. "The disaster area has spouting flames, clouds of smoke, burning cars and buildings that have been reduced to piles of rubble. It's about as realistic as you can get."

It was in this environment that the Fatality Search and Recovery Team worked to extract casualties from Aug. 15 to 18, said Master Sgt. Krista Lindsey, NCOIC of the team. Because the disaster area was contaminated with simulated radiation, team members had to wear heavy protective gear from head to toe and process through a decontamination station prior to leaving the "hot zone" with casualties, she said.

While the protective gear includes a battery-operated air purification system, the suits themselves are not ventilated, and ambient temperatures during the exercise hovered in the mid-90s, Rhodes said, requiring careful management of work-rest cycles.

"By the time they finished donning their suits, our team members had about 20 minutes to work," he said. "So that's 20 minutes to get into the hot zone, do what you need to do, and come back out. The warmer it is, the longer it takes to recover remains. High temperatures make for a very time-consuming process."

Senior Airman Megan Cuebas, one of seven Kentucky Air Guardsmen on the team, said the recovery process went extremely well, despite the heat and the fact that team members had just received the suits a few days before the exercise.

"We had never trained with the suits before, but we were able to don and doff them pretty quickly, and everyone was able to operate in them," she said. "We also kept a close eye on each other, and no one fell out from heat exhaustion."

Another challenge was the presence of simulated news media and ambulatory survivors, courtesy of more than 150 actors who were hired to add a dose of unpredictable realism to the scenario, Cuebas noted.

"We saw blankets hanging out of windows with messages from citizens asking for help, and survivors were coming up to us and

yelling at our convoy as we drove in," she said. "We've trained before on the search-and-recovery aspect of our mission, but I never thought about what it would be like to deal with the other things that go along with this type of operation, like civilians trying to get help from you, or the news media putting cameras in your face."

Lindsey agreed.

"This exercise really gave us a new realization of what we should expect in a real-world situation: We're going to have news media and the civilian community watching us while we perform our mission, and some of those civilians are going to want and need help."

For Cuebas and her Air Guard teammates, that kind of awareness may be the most valuable lesson learned during Vibrant Response.

"I feel like this training gave us a real foothold on exactly what our purpose is with respect to homeland defense, what kinds of people and agencies we might need to work with, and how intense it can get," she said. "I know this scenario gave me an extra sense of purpose outside our normal military mission. If we can execute well in this kind of homeland-defense mission, I know we can feel real good about ourselves at the end of the day."

The Kentucky Air Guard's Fatality Search and Recovery Team was augmented during the exercise with nine FSRT members from Air Guard units in Puerto Rico and Colorado.



Courtesy photo

Protective gear allows Fatality Search and Recovery Team members to operate in a spectrum of dangerous environments, including those contaminated with nuclear or biological agents.