

# WARRIOR CITIZEN

## READY FORCE X

Training to be more agile, more lethal, some Army Reserve units have been chosen to “fight fast” in this world of ever-evolving threats

## A YEAR IN RESPONSE TO DISASTER

2017 brought wild fires, hurricanes and severe flooding, and the unprecedented relief efforts of America's Army Reserve

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“I want to be sure we're all clear on this; we are going to get this [Ready Force X] done. This is about leadership in the third component of the United States Army. We are going to generate for the American people what they expect us to generate. If you think you've got months or years to get ready in a very time-tested, lethal environment, you're in the wrong ball club.”

— LT. GEN. CHARLES D. LUCKEY, CHIEF OF ARMY RESERVE AND COMMANDING GENERAL,  
U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND



Are you ready? Is your unit ready? How about your family, your employer and your finances? As we build the most capable, combat-ready and lethal federal reserve force in the history of the nation, it is paramount that Soldiers are fully prepared to respond to evolving threats, mobilize and deploy on compressed timelines and provide critical early-entry and set-the-theater capabilities.

*Welcome to Ready Force X.*

Ready Force X units represent a wide spectrum of Army Reserve capabilities. This special focus issue, starting with *From the Top*, page 4, highlights what RFX means to the Army Reserve, and how these units are training to maintain higher levels of peacetime readiness to offset risk to the nation in the event of war.

Not only is today's Army Reserve prepared to meet emerging threats as they arise across the globe, Warrior Citizens also stand ready to respond in the homeland to help those in need. Beginning on page 22, read about those affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria—lost access to water, power and available food sources—and the unprecedented response provided by America's Army Reserve.

*The Road to Awesome* isn't always easy to navigate. Page 42 highlights resources and opportunities to keep you on the right path. On page 38, Army Reserve Engineers train to “blow the doors off” as they familiarize themselves with a new door-breaching weapon system. Master Sgt. Michel Sauret's story, *Training Locally to Deploy Globally*, on page 40 shows how two units, working together, can effectively complete a training objective and enhance their collective readiness.

Whether as part of the operational force, operational depth or strategic depth forces, the Army Reserve must be capable of mobilizing rapidly and deploying with the mobility, survivability, connectivity and lethality needed to win on the battlefield. As we continue to ruck down the road to awesome, it's important to learn from our shared experiences, and there's no better place to do so than *Warrior Citizen*.

Contact us at [usarmy.usarc.ocar.mbx.warrior-citizen@mail.mil](mailto:usarmy.usarc.ocar.mbx.warrior-citizen@mail.mil).

*Melissa Russell*

**Melissa Russell**  
Editor-in-Chief

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Trained to “fight fast,” hundreds of units, thousands of Soldiers, have been chosen to make up “Ready Force X.” Challenging real-world training like Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) 86-17-02 and Operation Cold Steel ensure these units are ready to meet the needs of the U.S. Army and our nation.

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Under various forms of attack—chemical, complex attacks and indirect fire—MPs train how to change mission from securing enemy prisoners of war to taking care of displaced civilians.

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Larger and more ambitious than OCS I, Operation Cold Steel II has been expanded to include collective live fire training, all synchronized with Combat Support Training Exercises to provide trained gun and vehicle crews at specific times.





U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS MALCOLM MCGLENDON

# 22 | A YEAR IN RESPONSE TO DISASTER

Harvey. Irma. Maria. 2017 was a year that brought forth an unprecedented number of natural disasters. Strategically positioned and ready to respond to any location, regardless of where home based, America's Army Reserve was called upon more than ever to help communities return to a state of normalcy.

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## ON THE COVER

Sgt. Ian Rivera-Aponte, a sniper and infantryman with the 100th Infantry Battalion, Honolulu, Hawaii, poses during a photo shoot for Army Reserve recruiting.

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. MICHEL SAURET, 200TH MILITARY POLICE COMMAND



PHOTO BY SGT. AARON ELLERMAN, 143D SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY)

America's Army Reserve has always met the challenges of the time. In the past year we have covered much ground—we are posturing this team to be able to move fast, engage quickly and win decisively on the battlefields of tomorrow. Ready Force X, combined with energetic leadership, is changing the culture of the Army Reserve, creating and sustaining the most capable, combat-ready, and lethal federal reserve force in the nation's history.

# The Power of Ready

BY ARMY RESERVE  
COMMUNICATIONS

*(Contains excerpts from  
Army Reserve at a Glance)*

At top: Soldiers assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 332nd Transportation Battalion, board a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III cargo plane for an aerial redeployment training mission Sept. 27, 2017, at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

Far right: Soldiers from the 339th Military Police Company (Combat Support), headquartered in Davenport, Iowa, help evacuate an "injured" Soldier during a route reconnaissance mission at a Warrior Exercise (WAREX) held June 20, 2017, at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

## THE ARMY RESERVE PROVIDES COMBAT-READY

units and highly-skilled individual Soldiers to the Army in order to generate the decisive combat power required to win the nation's wars. We will continue to recruit and retain our team where they live and work and remain flexible, agile, innovative and attuned to the velocity of change in our time. In addition, we will continue to use our unmatched scope, connectivity, agility and ability to leverage the talent of the private sector for the good of the Nation.

In today's full-spectrum environment, America's armed forces must be prepared to respond quickly to high-end threats, conduct sustained counterterrorism operations and deter aggression in multiple regions of the world while simultaneously defending the homeland.

As the character of warfare becomes more complex, reserve forces that can survive and win on the battlefield are essential to the Army's success in winning future wars. America's Army Reserve is ensuring its ethos and culture are highly-focused and able to deliver capable, combat-ready and lethal units and Soldiers.

Readiness is the number one priority, and full-spectrum threats demand full-spectrum readiness. In addition to sustaining counter-insurgency and

counterterrorism capabilities, the Army Reserve is continuing to develop a force that is ready to respond to evolving threats from multiple sources, including the possibility of large-scale, near-simultaneous contingencies from peer or near-peer competitors in multiple theaters. Such threats, if realized, would require full or partial mobilization, to include the Army Reserve, which provides the technical enablers crucial to opening, sustaining, and synchronizing major operations.

Readiness begins at the Soldier level, which is the foundation for collective readiness and the combat capability required to win the Nation's wars. It relies on energetic leadership and execution, the ultimate force multiplier, and depends upon both the families who support and sustain our Soldiers and the employers who enable them to serve the Army and the Nation.

## READY FORCE X

In an emerging environment, in which rapid mobilization of lead formations is crucial to deploying and sustaining combat power, the Army Reserve is ensuring a significant portion of the team is able to move fast—in some cases, days or weeks—to complement and augment the active component




PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS CLINTON WOOD,  
412TH THEATER ENGINEER COMMAND

with critical capabilities. To achieve the required level of readiness in shorter periods of time, the Army Reserve is conducting real-world training, including crew-served weapons qualification pre-mob; manning Ready Force X units through innovative policies and incentives; and prioritizing RFX units for equipment upgrades, closing

interoperability gaps in areas such as battlefield communications and mission command systems.

These RFX units, comprised of hundreds of units and thousands of Soldiers, will have the mobility, survivability, connectivity, and lethality needed to win on the battlefield. Quickly generating and deploying RFX units will require additional training days, capable equipment, and improved command and control structure, to ensure they are ready to deploy rapidly without extended post mobilization train-up.

Challenging real-world training, like the featured Combat Support Training Exercise 86-17-02 and Operation Cold Steel II, featured in this issue, will ensure units and Soldiers are trained and ready to bring combat-ready and lethal firepower on short notice in support of the Army and Joint Force partners around the world.

As we build the most capable, combat-ready and lethal federal reserve force in the history of the nation, Ready Force X underscores the Army Reserve's commitment to meeting emerging and enduring threats across the globe. 

Left: Sgt. Daniel Patrick, left, and Spc. Aaron Elliot, both with the 979th Mobility Augmentation Company, based in Lexington, Ky., emplace a Bangalore torpedo during the company's training at Wilcox Range on Fort Knox, Ky., March 30, 2017.

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. MICHEL SAURET,  
200TH MILITARY POLICE COMMAND

# Force X



BY SGT. MAJ. GARY LITTLE,  
U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. DEBRALEE BEST, 84TH TRAINING COMMAND

Above: Soldiers conduct night fire qualification on an M2 machine gun Dec. 5, 2017 during Operation Cold Steel II, at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif.

Below: A recruit runs for cover during a training exercise at Fort Jackson, Aug. 3, 2017.

# Get Ready

## GENERATING READINESS IN RFX UNITS

**AS THE ARMY RESERVE ORGANIZES AND** prepares to generate the significant surge capacity required by combatant commanders to fight and win the nation's wars, all RFX units will train in accordance with Army standards, conducting crew-served and platform qualifications in order to meet readiness objectives.

The first RFX-focused exercise of its kind was Cold Steel. Conducted in 2017, it was the largest live fire exercise in Army Reserve history. Cold Steel trained and certified more than 400 crews over a seven-week period on weapons systems including the M2, M19, and M240B. An estimated 1,800 Soldiers qualified to Objective T standards

at this large-scale live-fire training and crew-served weapons qualification and validation exercise.

"Lt .Gen. Luckey continues to drive commanders and leaders to be more aggressive and innovative in their training and readiness efforts, preparing Soldiers fight and win in an evolving and lethal environment," said Col. Shawn Reed, the Army Reserve director of training. "Our Combat Support Training Exercise model provides our units with complex threat scenarios in Live, Virtual and Constructive venues, creating tough and realistic multi-component training opportunities and challenging Soldiers, leaders and commanders."

## AMERICA'S ARMY RESERVE: CAPABILITIES AT A GLANCE

### SPECIALIZED CAPABILITIES

The Army Reserve is structured with theater-level commands and specialized capabilities that are vital to defeating a near peer, high-end competitor, including some not present elsewhere in the Joint Force. These include:

- **Sustainment capabilities** that are needed for major combat operations, but too expensive to keep on active duty when not required, such as theater-level transportation and sustainment.
- **Career skills** that are in high demand in the civilian sector and difficult to retain on active duty, such as medical, legal, engineering and cyber skills.

### THEATER-LEVEL ENABLING COMMANDS

- 2 – Theater Engineer Commands
- 2 – Medical Deployment Support Commands
- 4 – Civil Affairs Commands
- 8 – Expeditionary Sustainment Commands
- 1 – Military Police Command



### SUPPORTING CAPABILITIES FOR THE OPERATIONAL FORCE

- **Civil affairs battalions/brigades**
- **Quartermaster**, to include petroleum operations, field service, force provider and mortuary affairs (companies/battalions/groups)
- **Medical**, to include hospitals/medical minimal care detachments
- **Military-Information Support Operations**, including psychological operations, (company/battalion/groups) information operations and cyber operations)
- **Chemical**, including area support, hazard response and biological detection
- **Transportation**, to include port operations and movement control
- **Legal Support**
- **Military History**
- **Chaplain**

PHOTO BY SPC. JEREMIAH WOODS, EXERCISE NEWS DAY

## COLD STEEL II

**11 MONTH** time-span to accommodate rotations

**5 LOCATIONS** to meet space and training requirements

**3,000 CREWS**

**6,000 INDIVIDUAL SOLDIERS**

**1,000 THREE-PERSON CONVOY PROTECTION PLATFORM CREWS**

will rotate through CSII at Fort McCoy from 15 February to 20 May, 2018.

**11,000+ SOLDIERS and 128 UNITS**

will participate in a bridging CSTX that integrates 12 functional exercises.

Every ground crew assigned to a Ready Force X unit and all RFX convoy protection platform teams, will train and certify at Cold Steel II. Crews and teams will rotate through multiple CSII locations from October 2017 to September 2018.

Newly developed within our OCSII model is a “bridging strategy” that links multiple CSTX’s that will be conducted near simultaneously and linked via echeloned mission command. These training events are conducted at Fort Knox, Fort McCoy, Joint Base Fort Eustis and Port of Charleston. Also new is a collective live fire exercise that combines MET proficiency with platform gunnery. In each unit that requires a collective live fire, this will include up to five gun trucks accompanied by non-gun trucks, engaging targets during convoy operations.

U.S. Army Reserve Command is committed to adapting its training with numerous similar exercises focused on ensuring RFX units are able to maintain higher levels of peacetime readiness to offset risk to the nation. ★

**MOTIONLESS IN THE TALL GRASS, STARING DOWN THE SCOPE OF A M2010 ENHANCED SNIPER RIFLE, WAITING TO TAKE THE SHOT. THIS IS THE LIFE OF A SNIPER.**

## THE SNIPER

By Sgt. Russell Toof,  
99th Regional Readiness Division

**JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX, Lakehurst, N.J.**—According to Sgt. Ian Rivera-Aponte, he’s just trying to carry on the family tradition. Like seventy-nine percent of all troops, Rivera-Aponte—a third-generation service member—comes from a military family. His grandfather fought in Vietnam and his father also served.

Another source of pride is that he’s part of the Army Reserve’s only infantry unit, the 100th Infantry Battalion out of Fort Shafter, Hawaii. The 100th Battalion, 442nd Regimental Combat Team, is the most decorated combat unit of its size in the history of the Army, with more than 18,000 individual awards for valor, including 21 Medals of Honor.

Originally from Trujillo Alto, Puerto Rico, Rivera-Aponte is tremendously skilled at his craft, his personal-best, hitting a 2,450-meter target.

Rivera-Aponte smiled when asked about the portrayal of snipers in popular movies such as American Sniper, Lone Survivor and Shooter.

“I laugh at some of the movies and the way they portray snipers, but they are entertaining,” he said. “Things that would take days to prepare... and they do it in five minutes.” ★

PHOTO BY PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. MICHEL SAURET, 200TH MILITARY POLICE COMMAND

# A Mindset, Not a Destination

A SOLDIER REFLECTS ON "THE ROAD TO AWESOME"



STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
SGT. JOHN CARKEET IV,  
143D SUSTAINMENT COMMAND  
(EXPEDITIONARY)

Above: Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command, shakes hands with Spc. Sergio Velazquez, a transportation management coordinator assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 332nd Transportation Battalion, 641st Regional Support Group, during a deployment readiness exercise, Sept. 27, 2017, at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

## MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. —

"You, step up here."

All eyes follow the lean, tall and tan specialist as he quickly strides toward the center of the crowd, his own eyes fixed on the somewhat intimidating 3-star presence.

"Now, I want you to sound off and tell these people what you told me," says the lieutenant general, gesturing to the scores of Soldiers and airmen gathered around them.

The specialist faces the crowd and clears his throat. "'The Road to Awesome' is a mindset, not a destination."

Spc. Sergio A. Velazquez, a transportation management coordinator assigned to Headquarters

and Headquarters Company, 332nd Transportation Battalion, had just impressed the most senior officer in the third component of the Army, Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, chief of Army Reserve and commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command.

**"[Lt. Gen. Luckey] states that leadership, energy and execution drive us along 'The Road to Awesome,' which in turn drives the way we think and live."**

— SPC. SERGIO A. VELAZQUEZ,  
332ND TRANSPORTATION BATTALION

"Outstanding, specialist. I know generals who cannot define the 'Road to Awesome' as well as you did."

Luckey, who coined the term to summarize his command philosophy, joined Soldiers from the 332nd, staged at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, as they conducted a joint aerial redeployment training mission as part of the battalion's Deployment Readiness Exercise Level III, a multi-phase operation that assesses a unit's ability to muster its troops, mobilize its assets and deploy to any corner of the globe within a 96-hour window.

"The most important thing for me to do today is to be here with you," Luckey said to the troops waiting to board a U.S. Air Force C-17 cargo plane. "What you do exemplifies why America's Army Reserve is the most lethal and capable federal reserve force in our nation's history."

The aerial training mission exposed Soldiers to the meticulous planning, careful coordination and flawless execution required to transport troops,

vehicles and other warfighting supplies across continents via land and air.

"I didn't appreciate the scope and scale of this mission until Lt. Gen Luckey spoke with us," admitted Velazquez, a Rochester, New York, native. "It wasn't until we boarded the plane with our gear and left the ground did I realize that this mission was conditioning our minds and bodies to the rigors of warfare."

The 332nd is among the Army Reserve's Ready Force X units, designated to "fight fast," and trained to dominate near-peers in a degraded environment.

"The enemy gets a vote on when we go," said Luckey. "That enemy no longer gives us the luxury of planning months in advance. We have weeks—maybe only days—to respond to these threats."

Luckey's vision and philosophy resonates with Velazquez.

"I've read many of Lt. Gen Luckey's messages in various posts and newsletters," said Velazquez, who, when not wearing the uniform, helps recent college graduates connect with employers by serving as a career counselor for Ultimate Medical Academy in Tampa, Florida. "He states that leadership, energy and execution drive us along 'The Road to Awesome,' which in turn drives the way we think and live."

When Velazquez and his fellow Soldiers from the 332nd stepped off the bus and onto the flight line, they were greeted with a familiar figure standing on the C-17's ramp, welcoming the Soldiers as they made their way to their seats.

**"Awesome is out there, just out of our reach. We never quite achieve it, because it constantly moves forward. That's why we have to keep pounding and remain relentless."**

— LT. GEN. CHARLES D. LUCKEY, CHIEF OF ARMY RESERVE AND COMMANDING GENERAL, U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND



Deployment Readiness Exercise Level III is a multi-dimensional, real-world training event in which a unit is notified to mobilize and must become ready to deploy to any corner of the globe within a 96-hour window. Exercises like the DRE Level III help Army Reserve units remain capable and ready to accomplish a variety of missions, both at home and abroad, and provides leaders with an opportunity to identify deficiencies and implement improvements that cut the time and resources required to send Soldiers into battle.

"I didn't expect to see [Lt. Gen Luckey] on the plane, and I was completely surprised when he motioned me to break away from the line and stand by his side," said Velazquez. "We shook hands and he gave me his personal contact card."

"You are a future leader," the general said to Velazquez. "You have what it takes to inspire people to do what must be done."

As engines roared to life and wheels rolled onto the road, Velazquez, a 25-year old specialist, reflected on the mission and the man who oversaw it.

"At first, I was nervous that the Chief of the U.S. Army Reserve asked me to define his philosophy," said Velazquez. "I thought, 'I'm just a specialist. What can I offer to a general?'" But Lt. Gen Luckey's energy and composure put me at ease. He lives and breathes the Army values, and that makes him no different from any other Soldier in the Army. We're one team fighting one fight, and that to me is awesome." 🇺🇸

Above: Soldiers from the 332nd Transportation Battalion climb aboard a U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III cargo plane to participate in a deployment readiness exercise Sept. 27, 2017, at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla.

*AS THREATS AROUND THE WORLD CONTINUE TO EVOLVE, SO TOO MUST AMERICA'S ARMY RESERVE. SELECT UNITS ARE TRAINING TO MOVE RAPIDLY, BE MORE AGILE, MORE LETHAL... CONSTANTLY PREPARED TO OPERATE IN AUSTERE, EVER-CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS. THEY'RE CALLED...*

A composite image featuring a soldier in the foreground aiming a rifle. The soldier is wearing a digital camouflage helmet and a uniform with an American flag patch. In the background, a military vehicle is visible, and blue smoke or gas is rising from the ground. The word "READY" is overlaid in large, white, bold letters across the center of the image.

# READY

A black and white photograph of three soldiers in riot gear, including helmets with visors and carrying shields. They are standing in a line, possibly during a training exercise. The image is partially obscured by a large, stylized 'X' graphic that is gold and grey. The word 'FORCE' is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

# FORCE

***CHALLENGING REAL-WORLD TRAINING LIKE COMBAT SUPPORT TRAINING EXERCISES AND OPERATION COLD STEEL ENSURE THESE UNITS ARE READY TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE U.S. ARMY AND OUR NATION.***

# TRAINING FOR AN AUSTERE BATTLEFIELD

BY DEBRALEE BEST, 86TH TRAINING DIVISION

**THE 86TH TRAINING DIVISION WORKS HARD TO PREPARE UNITS WITH REALISTIC, AUSTERE TRAINING EXERCISES. PREVIOUSLY, ANNUAL EXERCISES HAVE BEEN FOCUSED ON PREPARING FOR THE CONFLICTS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN, BUT EXERCISES ARE CURRENTLY BEING ADAPTED TO BETTER REFLECT NEW THREAT ENVIRONMENTS.**

Right: Soldiers assigned to the 693rd Quartermaster Company, Bell, Calif., check around a corner while moving through a mock village during Combat Support Training Exercise 86-17-02 at Fort McCoy, Wis.

Opposite page: Master Sgt. Erin McArthur, Observer/Coach/Trainer, discusses first aid procedures with Spc. Tymir Brooks, 140th Quartermaster Company, following a small arms engagement scenario.

**COMBAT SUPPORT TRAINING EXERCISE (CSTX) 86-17-02**, which began August 5, 2017, at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, is one such exercise with remote, unestablished bases.

The CSTX large-scale training event, hosted by the 86th Training Division, 84th Training Command, trained more than 12,000 service members from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, as well as from six foreign countries. The training was particularly critical for the Army Reserve units participating, as the majority are designated Ready Force X.

“We set the box, we set the scenario, we set the conditions for an austere environment for training rotation units,” said Col. Ronald Meredith, 86th Training Division acting commander and exercise director for CSTX, “...we provide a scenario for real-world exercises in an austere environment for those units to come here, occupy tactical assembly areas and conduct missions based on our injects, our scenario writing, the operating scenario of the environment and then whatever STX—situational training lanes—we have established.”

The 86th TD and three partner units from First Army, 75th Training Command and

Medical Readiness Training Command work collaboratively to bring all the collective training together.

“Our responsibility, our mission, is to provide that collective training opportunity,” said Lt. Col. Andrew Rigor, deputy operations and plans officer, 86th TD and exercise program manager.

While CSTX mainly focuses on training Army Reserve units, other military services and international forces join the training as well.

“I think there is so much value in joint and multinational training that it’s worth the extra effort to make it happen. We often say ‘train as you fight,’ and in the current and future environment, that’s what it’s going to be. It’s going to be multinational,” said Rigor.

In addition to including additional forces, there are also multifunctional exercises within CSTX. These include: the Air Force’s Patriot Warrior; Global Medic, a medical exercise; U.S. Army Reserve Mortuary Affairs Exercise; HR Warrior, a personnel management exercise; Diamond Saber, a finance exercise; Exercise Newsday, a public affairs functional exercise, and Trans Warrior, a transportation exercise.

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. ANTHONY TAYLOR, 86TH SUPPORT COMMAND



PHOTO BY DEBRALEE BEST, 86TH TRAINING DIVISION

“Five years ago, we were decisively engaged in Iraq and Afghanistan, so the thinking was that a unit would come here and fall in on a pre-existing set of equipment and facilities, what we used to call FOBs, forward operating bases,” said Meredith. “We’re going to fight the next war in an austere environment. What austerity means is: you do an invasion of a country, whether it’s land or sea, you establish a bridge-head or a beach-head and you start pushing troops out. You’re basically operating in the wild. Last year was really the first year we pushed them off the FOB and into the wild.”

For the planners, this meant changing the scenario of the exercise and the timeline.

“The exercise now starts about the beginning of the counter-attack. In this exercise, the coalition counter-attack started two days before the official start date of the

exercise. It’s earlier, and that’s a big change,” said Rigor. “Because of that, there is nothing established in the country you’re counter-attacking into; we’re following the combat elements in so we can continue to support them.

“That’s why you hear the term austerity a lot. It’s an austere environment. Whatever is out there on the ground is what’s out there on the ground. We’re not contracting big giant tents, we’re not building a dining facility, there’s no FOB walls and there is no mayor cell anymore. Things are more fluid. You might not stay in that location very long before you move on to another location. So, that has to be incorporated in there.”

The new training scenario of CSTX also allows a more mobile force.

“Going back to 20 years ago, take a look at the way the Army was, they were

a lot more expeditionary; you set up a tactical assembly area, and you defend that assembly area,” said Rigor. “As needed, that assembly area can move to a different location as the battle progresses forward.”

CSTX is about shaping the Army Reserve into a more agile and lethal force and changing the mentality of those Soldiers to train as they will fight.

“You can’t change a 200,000-person culture overnight, but these Warrior Exercises and CSTXs help change that culture. How does this help readiness? It helps change the culture to back where we were during the Cold War, when we actually did this stuff,” said Meredith. “You’ve got truck drivers out there probably building fighting positions for the first time in their lives. So that’s a step in the right direction.” 📌

# GETTING BACK TO BASICS

*STORY AND PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. ANTHONY TAYLOR, 85TH SUPPORT COMMAND*

THOUSANDS OF ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS, ALONG WITH SERVICE MEMBERS FROM EACH BRANCH OF SERVICE AND MILITARY PERSONNEL FROM FOREIGN PARTNER NATIONS CAME TOGETHER TO TRAIN DURING THE ARMY RESERVE'S COMBAT SUPPORT TRAINING EXERCISE 86-17-02, AUGUST 5 THROUGH 25, 2017.

**THE LARGE-SCALE EXERCISE INTRODUCES** a scenario adapted to the current threat environment, with remote, unestablished bases, and multi-echelon and multi-functional,

realistic, tactical training to challenge units and improve the proficiency.

"If the unit comes to CSTX prepared in their Mission Essential Task List, they come

here and get to exercise their command post operations, and Soldiers actually get to exercise their individual tasks through their collective tasks for their unit's mission," said Command Sgt. Maj. Ted Copeland, Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Reserve. "It's critical for readiness and for Objective T (the Army's system designed to better measure a unit's readiness)."

Copeland further explained that training scenarios are adapting to the threat, and that units and Soldiers need to return to basics.

"We're getting away from the Forward Operating Base concept. That's how we had to fight in Afghanistan or Iraq, but that may not be how we have to fight in the future," said Copeland. "Units have to be agile, pick up their headquarters and move in a short time frame for survivability. Getting back to



Left: Spc. Andrew Bahun, from the 454th Transportation Company, Columbus, Ohio, engages targets during a high value target extraction in a Reconfigurable Vehicle Tactical Trainer 360-degree immersion simulator at Combat Support Training Exercise 86-17-02 at Fort McCoy, Wis.



Soldiers don their protective masks during a simulated chemical attack outside of their perimeter at Combat Support Training Exercise 86-17-02 at Fort McCoy, Wis.

the basics is Soldiers just being Soldiers first and their Military Occupational Specialties second. They have to realize that our old slogan, 'shoot, move and communicate' is important. Soldiers have to be able to fight and survive against the enemy or their MOS skills are not relevant."

The Army Reserve's 85th Support Command, partnered with First Army, provided critical support of the CSTX to train the force. Many of the observer coach/trainers on the ground, assigned to the 85th, worked with the training units in the planning stages and throughout the exercise to enhance their readiness levels.

"The 85th is still providing roughly half of the OC/Ts for First Army," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Eric Nordy, Command Chief Warrant Officer, 85th Support Command. "There are three of our battalions involved in this CSTX, providing OC/Ts and providing logistical support."

Alongside OC/T support, MP training units assisted each other in becoming more proficient in their specific skill sets.

"They saw us doing riot [control] training and asked us to give a little instruction on it,"

*"We're getting away from the Forward Operating Base concept. That's how we had to fight in Afghanistan or Iraq, but that may not be how we have to fight in the future. Units have to be agile, pick up their headquarters and move in a short time frame for survivability."*

— COMMAND SGT. MAJ. TED COPELAND, COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR, U.S. ARMY RESERVE

said Sgt. Kyle Cordero, from the 344th MP Company, and a law enforcement officer in his civilian capacity. "So we demonstrated first with our guys, and now we're running them through the basic principles of riot control, starting off with a shield team. That's the cornerstone of riot control."

Miles away within the training area, other Army Reserve OC/Ts, trained chemical and firefighter units and a Movement Control Team. Some of these units have been identified as Ready Force X units that must be prepared to quickly deploy.

"We're getting ready to fight a near-peer competitor, so we're going back to tactical assembly areas," said Lt. Col. John Smalley, battalion commander of 2nd Battalion, 361st Training Support Regiment, 181st MFTB, Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Lt. Col. Tim Campbell, battalion commander of the 1st Battalion, 383rd Training Support Regiment, 181st MFTB emphasized the significance of basic Soldier skills.

"We're hoping that they continue to sharpen those skills and that they go back

to basics and get away from the crutch of the digital battlefield,” said Campbell. “Pull out that hand-held map and start reading it, because map reading is a perishable skill, and all of these skills are perishable.”

Campbell said Soldiers also need to be ready to adjust and adapt. “We’re preparing for Kuwait, however the reality may change to be, who knows? The Horn of Africa, anywhere.”

The 693rd Quartermaster Company, from Bell, California, was one of many units repeatedly attacked in training scenarios throughout the exercise. One ambush that the 693rd QM CO encountered was during a water delivery to a local village.

*“Getting back to the basics is Soldiers just being Soldiers first and their Military Occupational Specialties second. ...our old slogan, ‘shoot, move and communicate’ is important. Soldiers have to be able to fight and survive against the enemy or their MOS skills are not relevant.”*

— COMMAND SGT. MAJ. TED COPELAND, COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR, U.S. ARMY RESERVE

“We were delivering Class 1 water, but we got hit. One of our rear vehicles went down, so we had to engage and had one [Soldier]

wounded,” said Staff Sgt. Byron Molina, describing the exercise scenario. “We got hit with an RPG, a grenade and small arms fire.

Soldiers assigned to the 693rd Quartermaster Company, Bell, Calif., treat a casualty after an ambush during Combat Support Training Exercise 86-17-02 at Fort McCoy, Wis.



The wounded Soldier got hit in the shoulder and had two bullets in the leg and one went through the head."

A hit to one of their Humvees reduced the convoy speed to five miles an hour. Molina quickly secured a tow bar to pull their damaged vehicle. Immediately upon locking the tow bar, he rushed over to assist an injured Soldier, simulated by a mannequin covered in blood, with cuts and tattered clothing.

The austere training environment allowed units to focus on the basics of Soldiering and helped them to hone their survival skills.

Copeland said the training is essential to preparing RFX Soldiers for an environment where rapid mobilization of lead formations



will be critical to deploying and sustaining combat power. "I'm impressed with the increase in focus and energy across the force," said Copeland. "This training will ensure RFX units are ready to respond to evolving threats from near-peer and non-state competitors, and prepared to mobilize and deploy on compressed timelines as part of critical 'Fight Fast' formations."

Lt. Col. Derek Morton, 86th Training Division added that the revised training

Above: Soldiers of the 693rd Quartermaster Company, treat a casualty during a base attack at Combat Support Training Exercise 86-17-02 at Fort McCoy, Wis.

scenario, minus any forward operating base, is also critical to ensuring RFX Soldiers are prepared for a harsh future battlespace.

"We need to get back to the basics of fighting a near-peer competitor, so that's the idea of going back into the wood line." ✖



Sgt. 1st Class Miranda Herrmann, observer coach/trainer from the 2nd Battalion, 361st Training Support Regiment, 181st Multi-functional Training Brigade, yells out to Soldiers, from her training unit, during a base attack at Combat Support Training Exercise 86-17-02 at Fort McCoy, Wis.



**READY FORCE X**

FORT McCOY, WIS.

# MPs TRAIN TO ADAPT AND OVERCOME

*BY MASTER SGT. MICHEL SAURET, 200TH MILITARY POLICE COMMAND*

MORE THAN 600 MILITARY POLICE SOLDIERS TRAINED TOGETHER THIS AUGUST DURING ONE OF THE LARGEST COMBAT SUPPORT TRAINING EXERCISES OF THE YEAR RUN BY THE U.S. ARMY RESERVE.



PHOTO BY PFC. PAULINA CASTANEDA,  
982ND COMBAT CAMERA COMPANY AIRBORNE



PHOTO BY SPC. THERELL FRETT, 982ND COMBAT CAMERA COMPANY AIRBORNE

## MILITARY POLICE SPECIALIZE IN DETAINEE

operations, such as securing enemy prisoners of war, but they also safeguard and feed displaced civilians who lose their homes during times of war.

The training exercise, also known as CSTX, combined Army Reserve units from various functions and specialties into a single “battlefield” to improve their overall readiness to deploy for combat. CSTX runs multiple cycles and locations each year, typically in Wisconsin, California and New Jersey. This particular cycle included more than 12,000 service members from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps and forces from six partnering nations. Units on the ground specialized in every combat support function: engineering, defending against chemical warfare, logistics, transportation, water purification and more.

“CSTX has exercised my units in both their military occupational specialty role as military police and in basic survivability on a lethal battlefield,” said Lt. Col. Edward Diamantis, commander of the 310th MP Battalion.

In addition to their basic functions, units were expected to train on their battle drills, base defense, survivability and defeating the enemy. During typical training exercises,

large units aligned alongside one another don’t often train together, but this cycle was different for the MPs. The 333rd Military Police Brigade came to Fort McCoy, Wisconsin and trained with two of its battalions: 400th MP Battalion and 310th MP Battalion.

“This has been a completely austere environment ... I think it was pretty unique that the brigade was able to come to an exercise with organic units ... Doing this allowed both battalions to validate and be ready and be able to conduct mission command with their organic headquarters,” said Capt. Deveney Wall, the executive officer for the 400th MP Battalion.

MPs had to operate their missions on a 24-hour cycle while responding to attacks on their bases that came in various forms: chemical, complex attacks and indirect fire. They did this while processing thousands of prisoners using biometrics systems, running convoy operations for missions outside the wire and responding to civil disturbances.

Additionally, one of the battalions had to relocate their tactical operations center by packing up their equipment into a convoy of vehicles and re-assembling their operations tents at a new location. This process,

known as a “Jump TOC,” is becoming more common among Army Reserve units as they train to respond quickly to mission changes or potential enemy threats. In this case, the MP battalion had to change mission from securing enemy prisoners of war to taking care of displaced civilians. Once they set up the new camp, MPs worked to provide food, shelter, water and medical care to civilians on the battlefield.

“Fort McCoy and its ranges provide a realistic theater environment that greatly enhances training. The various cell structures, sally ports and towers give Soldiers a true feel for their mission tasks. Also, this year’s emphasis on survivability brought to light the need for more basic infantry-like training in order to survive and win the next conflict,” said Diamantis. 🇺🇸

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Opposite page: Military police Soldiers detain a trespassing protestor during a simulated protest during a Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) on Fort McCoy, Wis., Aug. 19, 2017.

Above: A military police Soldier assigned within the 300th Military Police Brigade conducts surveillance over a detainee compound for a training exercise at Fort McCoy, Wis., Aug. 17, 2017.

# COLD STEEL II

## MORE VEHICLES, MORE FIREPOWER

*BY DEBRALEE BEST, 84TH TRAINING COMMAND*

**OPERATION COLD STEEL II KICKED OFF OCTOBER 12, 2017 AT FORT HUNTER LIGGETT, CALIFORNIA, PREPARING READY FORCE X UNITS TO BRING THE MOBILITY, SURVIVABILITY, CONNECTIVITY AND LETHALITY NEEDED TO FIGHT AND WIN ON THE BATTLEFIELD.**

**A LARGER-SCALE, SECOND ITERATION** of the exercise, both in locations and in the number of Troop List Units, is running from October 12, 2017 to August 31, 2018 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, Fort Knox, Kentucky and Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, with approximately 3,800 crews of 10,000 Soldiers from across the Army Reserve conducting mounted and ground crew-served weapons qualification.

“OCS II is far larger and more ambitious than OCS I, owing to three main factors: it has been expanded to include collective live fire; it has been synchronized with Combat Support Training Exercises to provide trained gun and vehicle crews at specific times; and it is being conducted at four installations over the course of [fiscal year] 18,” said Maj. Ryan Gore, Task Force OCS II operations officer in charge.

During the months of April and May, 2017, an estimated 1,800 Army Reserve Soldiers from approximately 60 Army Reserve units participated in the U.S. Army Reserve Command's inaugural Operation Cold Steel, hosted by the 84th Training Command. The purpose of Operation Cold Steel was to create a more deployable, combat-ready and





PHOTOS BY SGT. HEATHER DOPPKE, 79TH THEATER SUSTAINMENT COMMAND

lethal fighting force within the Army Reserve by training and qualifying participating units on the crew-served weapons within the Army arsenal.

The exercise executed crew-served weapons platform qualifications through multiple 12-day rotations, with Soldiers qualifying on weapons systems like the MK 19 grenade machine gun, M240B machine gun and M2 machine gun.

The first Operation Cold Steel was a successful proof of principle, concluding with a qualification rate of 93 percent.

The 84th Training Command, through TF OCS II, provides oversight of each executing agent unit conducting the training. Task Force Coyote was led by the 79th Theater Support Command (TSC), at Fort Hunter Liggett, from October to December, 2017. The 416th Theater Engineer Company (TEC) will lead Task Force Triad at Fort McCoy from February to May 2018. The 377th TSC will head Task Force Bullion and fire at Fort Knox, March through May 2018. U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) will lead Task Force Ultimate and conduct gunnery operations at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst from July to August 2018.

“Specifically, OCS II will focus on crew-served weapons and platform qualification as well as collective live-fire training to enhance the readiness of selected units. Additionally, it provides a platform for Soldiers to be trained as Vehicle Crew Evaluators and gain practical experience so they can effectively perform in this capacity at their units,” said Gore. “Finally, it teams newly trained Army Reserve Master Gunner Common Core graduates with seasoned active-component Master Gunners to build the bench that will enable units to conduct gunnery autonomously at the unit level in the coming years.”

According to Gore, this combination of training is designed to make units self-sufficient in completing this training on their own.

“We at OCS II are trying to work ourselves out of a job,” said Gore.

At Triad and Bullion, Soldiers will train and qualify on the MK 19, M240B, M2 and M249 light machine gun weapon platforms mounted on various military vehicles, including Humvees, Medium Tactical Vehicles, Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks and Heavy Equipment Transports. Crews at Bullion will feed into a Bridge CSTX,

providing trained gunnery crews for the exercise. At Coyote and Ultimate, Soldiers will conduct ground training and qualification with the weapon platforms.

Ultimately, the goal of OCS at all locations is to improve the readiness within the Army Reserve to deploy and fight in any contingency.

“Operation Cold Steel is a training event that helps to ensure Army Reserve units and Soldiers are trained and ready to deploy on short notice and bring combat-ready, lethal firepower in support of the joint force anywhere in the world,” said Col. Phillip A. Taylor, TF OCS II commander. ✪

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Above: Spc. Justin Martinez, paralegal specialist with 382nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, fires the first rounds downrange with an M2 machine gun for weapons qualification during Operation Cold Steel II at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., Oct. 15, 2017.

Opposite page: Pvt. Garrett Brazzell and Staff Sgt. Lee Hicks, both petroleum specialists with the 842nd Quartermaster Company, work together as gunner and assistant gunner firing an M2 machine gun for weapons qualification during Operation Cold Steel II.



U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD PHOTO BY



SGT. 1ST CLASS MALCOLM MCCLENDON



PHOTO BY JOCELYN AUGUSTINO, FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Far left: Hurricane Harvey flooding north of Beaumont, Texas, Aug. 31, 2017. Hurricane Harvey formed in the Gulf of Mexico and made landfall in southeastern Texas, bringing record flooding and destruction to the region. U.S. military assets supported FEMA as well as state and local authorities in rescue and relief efforts.

Left: St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands, Oct. 12, 2017—Debris from the recent hurricanes remains throughout the island.

# A YEAR IN RESPONSE TO DISASTER

**BY STAFF SGT. PHILLIP VALENTINE**  
Army Reserve Communications

**2017'S RECORD-BREAKING HURRICANE SEASON LEFT THOUSANDS WITHOUT SHELTER, WATER, FOOD OR ELECTRICITY.** Army Reserve Soldiers were among more than 33,000 Federal civilian personnel and military service members at the height of the response. The Army Reserve provided critical response capabilities to Hurricane Harvey, including search and rescue, aviation, engineer, transportation, medical and communications support.

Within five days of their mission, Army Reserve Soldiers executed more than 28 vehicle and aviation missions, rescuing more than 4,900 civilians—including women, children and elderly—and more than 390 pets.

Soldiers of the 4th Expeditionary Sustainment Command were among the first to respond. The 644th Transportation Company provided temporary shelter for over 50 evacuees and pets at the North Houston Reserve Center until the Red Cross could provide longer-term shelter. The 300th Sustainment Brigade transported several

prison guards to the Houston Correctional Facility to relieve guards who had been stuck in place due to the flooding, demonstrating the readiness of Warrior Citizens, willing and able to mobilize on short notice with crucial capabilities and equipment.

By the time Hurricane Irma, the strongest Atlantic hurricane ever recorded, hit Florida, daily registrations for individual assistance had eclipsed Hurricane Katrina 18 times. Army Reserve Soldiers provided equipment and vehicles—including several M1078 light medium utility vehicles capable of traversing



PHOTO BY U.S. ARMY SGT. DEBRA COOK

Above: Aerial views of the devastation in Key West from Hurricane Irma from Black Hawk helicopters piloted by National Guardsmen Sept. 14, 2017. Wind gusts were recorded to reach 130 mph during Hurricane Irma.

Opposite page: Staff Sgt. Darrell Thibeaux, a human resources specialist with the 373rd Combat Sustainment Support Brigade, is thanked by a survivor during a high water rescue mission in Beaumont, Texas, Sept. 1, 2017.



U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. LARRY E. REID JR.

At top: Sergeant Eric Elder, a power line distribution specialist assigned to Delta Company, 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power), inspects a damaged power line in Río Grande, Puerto Rico, Oct. 25, 2017.

rugged terrain—forded through high waters to distribute cases of bottled water to local residents on Merritt Island, which had lost access to safe, clean water sources.

In Puerto Rico, Soldiers helped recovery operations in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, assisting the Coast Guard and Maritime Authorities in conducting port assessments. In the Northwest coastal area of Aguadilla, Puerto Rico's 335th Area Support Medical Company established a medical facility. Along with the Air Force's 331st Expeditionary Medical Support Team and a Disaster Medical Assistance Team, they provided primary care services, to over 5,000 patients—more than 300 per day. The 49th Multifunctional Medical Battalion pulled Soldiers from stateside units in their command to deliver food and water, install protective tarps over homes and shelters, and clear debris from homes and roads. ■

## IMMEDIATE RESPONSE AUTHORITY HELPS SAVE LIVES

**THE FIRST USE OF AMERICA'S ARMY RESERVE UNDER NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT 2012** was in November of that year, when Super Storm Sandy struck the east coast, flooding New York City streets and subway tunnels and leaving thousands of homes and millions of people without electric service.

Since then, the Army Reserve has helped respond to the Boston Marathon bombings, rescued a mountain climber from the summit of Mt. Rainier in Washington State, helped extinguish wildfires in Kansas and responded to other emergencies at the request of local authorities, including three consecutive hurricanes: Harvey, Irma and Maria.

Immediate response is conducted by Army Reserve units and Soldiers under the Immediate Response Authority (IRA) outlined in DoD Directive 3025.18, which authorizes local commanders to take action to save lives, prevent human suffering or mitigate great property damage in an urgent situation when there is insufficient time to get approval from higher headquarters.

As listed in DoD Directive 3025.18, a request for assistance from a civil authority (tribal authority, mayor, chief of police, fire chief, sheriff, chief of emergency management, etc.) is required to initiate the Immediate Response Authority. Following the request, Army Reserve units within the affected area may respond immediately to imminently serious disasters or attacks as required by civil authorities and within limits established by law.



### IMMEDIATE RESPONSE AUTHORITY SUPPORT INCLUDES:

- Distribution of medicine, food, consumable supplies and services
- Removal of debris and road clearance for immediate restoration of emergency and essential services
- Emergency medical care, search and rescue
- Transportation of supplies and persons
- Restoration of essential services
- Construction of temporary bridges and facilities for shelters, schools and essential public services
- Demolition of unsafe structures and posting hazard warnings
- Dissemination of public information on health and safety measures
- Technical and advisory assistance to state/local officials



Aviators from the 7th Battalion (General Support Aviation Battalion), 158th Aviation Regiment, stationed in Conroe, Texas, conduct water re-supply missions to Beaumont. An anonymous billionaire donated three semi-trailers full of bottled water to relieve water shortages caused by Hurricane Harvey.

# AVIATORS TRANSPORT A GIFT OF WATER



**STORY AND PHOTO  
BY CAPT. LOYAL AUTERSON**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

**AS SEMI-TRUCKS FULL OF WATER AND SUPPLIES** rolled into Conroe North Houston Regional Airport, two local pilots, Chad Herdrich and Mike Barksdale, unexpectedly found themselves at the forefront of relief operations.

Unprepared for the anonymous donation of water, they began negotiating hanger space to make room, and reaching out to local pilots to help transport the supplies to flooded communities north of Beaumont.

However, they faced two significant challenges: their personal aircraft could only carry a few hundred pounds at a time; and airspace was already congested with military helicopters trying to locate trapped survivors.

As a solution, the men reached out to local Army Reserve aviators with the 1st Battalion (Assault Helicopter Battalion), 158th Aviation Regiment. One day later, four CH-47 Chinooks from the 7th Battalion (General Support Aviation Battalion), 158th Aviation Regiment, each capable of moving 15,000 lbs. of water, took on the mission.

"We kept having semi-loads show up and we just weren't cutting a dent into it," said Herdrich. "...The Army Reserve comes in and tackles the issue with these big CH-47 Chinooks and God bless them that they came in and helped us out."

"We do have the capability to move a massive amount of cargo to affected areas with four Chinook and three UH-60 Black Hawks. Yesterday, we moved just shy of 100,000 pounds," says Capt. Chris Fishel, assistant operations officer for 1st Battalion.

"This community has supported us through the good times, through the bad times for a lot of years," said Fishel. "Having the opportunity to support the community that has supported us for all those years, is an honor, it's a privilege and it's a responsibility that we take very seriously." ■

Left: Pvt. 1st Class Matheaw Sicard, a power line distribution specialist with Delta Company, 249th Engineer Battalion, walks down a cleared road to repair power lines in Río Grande, Puerto Rico.

# IN THE AFTERMATH OF



**IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE HARVEY,** Captain Tabitha Williams, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 373rd Combat Sustainment Support Brigade, led Army Reserve efforts to administer aid and relief to people affected by the catastrophic hurricane.

"Our Soldiers are providing capabilities to travel through high water and collect multiple citizens," Williams said. "They're providing expertise and efficiency while collaborating with the Beaumont Fire Department and Police Department."

The mission involved severe flooding and impassible roadways. Water levels continued to rise throughout the week, but the skills acquired during previous training events proved to be effective.

"They are well-trained, licensed, and experienced drivers in these vehicles, but the conditions of driving in deep water—it is new to the Soldiers," explained Williams. "Even though there were many variables, basic soldiering skills allowed us to adapt and overcome, and we were successful in that."

Fire Capt. Cody Theriot, leader of Beaumont Fire Department's Strike Team 3, said that the efforts and resources put forth by the Army Reserve were critical in life-saving missions.

"The [Army] Reserve has been a big help. The Soldiers want to jump in and help local



Above: A vehicle from 373rd Combat Sustainment Support Brigade navigates through flooded streets conducting a water level survey in Beaumont, Texas, Sept. 2, 2017.

Right: Staff Sgt. Darrell Thibeaux, a human resources specialist with the 373rd Combat Sustainment Support Brigade, helps survivors into a tactical vehicle during a high water rescue mission in Beaumont, Texas, Sept. 1, 2017.

By the end of operations, Army Reserve Soldiers had assisted in evacuations of more than 700 citizens and 170 animals and transported over 100 emergency personnel to critical locations.

Sgt. Ronald Allen, a unit supply specialist with the 373rd CSSB, outlined the scope of their impact.

"There were at least 150 adults and 100 kids, along with 15 animals," explained Allen. "That was the first day. The other vehicles were only able to carry three people at a time, and ours could transport twenty-five to thirty people at a time."



# HARVEY

BY SPC. KAITLIN WAXLER  
4th Expeditionary Sustainment Command

PHOTOS BY SGT. HEATHER  
DOPPKE, 79TH THEATER  
SUSTAINMENT COMMAND

authorities, and it's been outstanding," says Theriot. "They're driving [military tactical vehicles] for us. As we've needed help in the water, they've been jumping in with us and helping to rescue people. They're really doing a great job at getting us where we need to go." 🇺🇸

"There were at least 150 adults and 100 kids, along with 15 animals. That was the first day. The other vehicles were only able to carry three people at a time, and ours could transport twenty-five to thirty people at a time."

SGT. RONALD ALLEN, 373rd Combat Sustainment Support Brigade





# RELIEF AFTER IRMA

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
**STAFF SGT. SCOTT GRIFFIN**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

NEARLY

## 200,000 SOLDIERS

**OF THE ARMY RESERVE ARE TRAINED, EQUIPPED AND ORGANIZED TO PERFORM A FULL RANGE OF OPERATIONS**—including disaster response with facilities located in over 1,200 communities across the nation.

**Key Army Reserve capabilities available for disaster response include:**

- **Aviation:** medical evacuation, medium and heavy lift helicopters, search and rescue
- **Engineering:** search and rescue, debris removal, horizontal and vertical construction, portable bridges
- **Medical:** ground ambulance, combat support hospitals, specialized medical teams, veterinary services
- **Communications:** communications capabilities including satellite
- **Logistics:** water, petroleum, generators, general logistics
- **Transportation:** light, medium and heavy trucks, watercraft
- **CBRN:** Army Reserve chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear incident response capabilities are trained and ready

### **SOLDIERS WITH THE 76TH OPERATIONAL RESPONSE COMMAND AND 143RD SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY)**

were called up to support Hurricane Irma relief efforts on September 11, 2017. Three days later, Soldiers assigned to the 329th Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Company, based in Orlando, and other nearby units were handing out cases of bottled water to the residents of Merritt Island, Florida.



Soldiers distribute cases of bottled water to residents of Merritt Island, Florida, Sept. 14, 2017, in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, Sept. 13, 2017.

“When my Soldiers received notice they responded really quickly—everybody was ready and had volunteered just a day after Hurricane Irma had hit,” said 2nd Lt. Karla Carter, executive officer for the 329th CBRN Company. “They left their families and came over as quickly as possible. By 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, they were all on site and ready to work.”

After receiving a federal mission assignment officially requesting assistance, they prepared equipment and vehicles, including several M1078 Light Medium Tactical Vehicles that can traverse rugged terrain and ford through high water.

The University of Central Florida provided overnight staging grounds for the units and their vehicles, who then traveled to Merritt Island, Florida, to distribute cases of bottled water to local residents.

“It’s a good thing, helping out, you know,” said Spc. Angelica Dobruck, a Soldier with the 143rd ESC whose home and family reside in Lake Wells, Florida, which was also affected by Hurricane Irma. “We’re without power, without water. But, I feel great about helping out here—we’re helping people in need.” ■



# FUELING HOSPITALS IN PUERTO RICO

**BY SGT. CARLOS GARCIA**  
99th Regional Readiness Division



**ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS ASSIGNED TO THE 941ST QUARTERMASTER COMPANY,** out of Salinas, Puerto Rico, were tasked to deliver diesel fuel to all hospitals and clinics in Puerto Rico as part of the ongoing Hurricane Maria relief efforts.

Top left: Spc. Irwin Candelaria, assigned to the 941st Quartermaster Company, refuels a tanker in order to deliver fuel to hospitals in Puerto Rico, Sept. 27, 2017.

Right and top right: Soldiers assigned to the 941st Quartermaster Company, deliver fuel to HIMA-San Pablo Hospital, located in Caguas, Puerto Rico, Sept. 27, 2017.

The 941st began conducting fuel operations September 26, 2017. In approximately 11 weeks, the unit executed more than 540 missions, delivering more than 381,000 gallons of fuel to community hospitals, clinics, Army Reserve centers and other areas.

“My wife is also a service member here, and we’re both engaged in this mission,” said Sgt. 1st Class Marcial Ortiz, the first sergeant for the 941st QM, “We have Soldiers who have lost their homes and are living with their parents, but the community is showing their appreciation for their efforts, and that fuels them to keep going.”



# PURIFYING WATER FOR PUERTO

**ARMY RESERVE SOLDIERS OF THE 973RD QUARTERMASTER COMPANY** were part of a multi-compo effort to set up water purification systems, providing safe, potable water to community members of Guajataca Lake in Puerto Rico, October 9, 2017, after Hurricane Maria damaged the local water treatment facility.

The local residents cut trees and cleared space for the Soldiers to setup their Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units and Tactical Water Purification Systems, capable of providing 300,000 gallons of clean water daily.

Soldiers connected and ran hoses into the lake to pump water, then tested the water to ensure safe human consumption levels.

Residents of Isabella, Sebastian, Quebradillas and other small towns in the region depend on Guajataca Lake for drinking, cooking, agriculture, fishing and recreational use, and many expressed their gratitude to see the military in their towns.

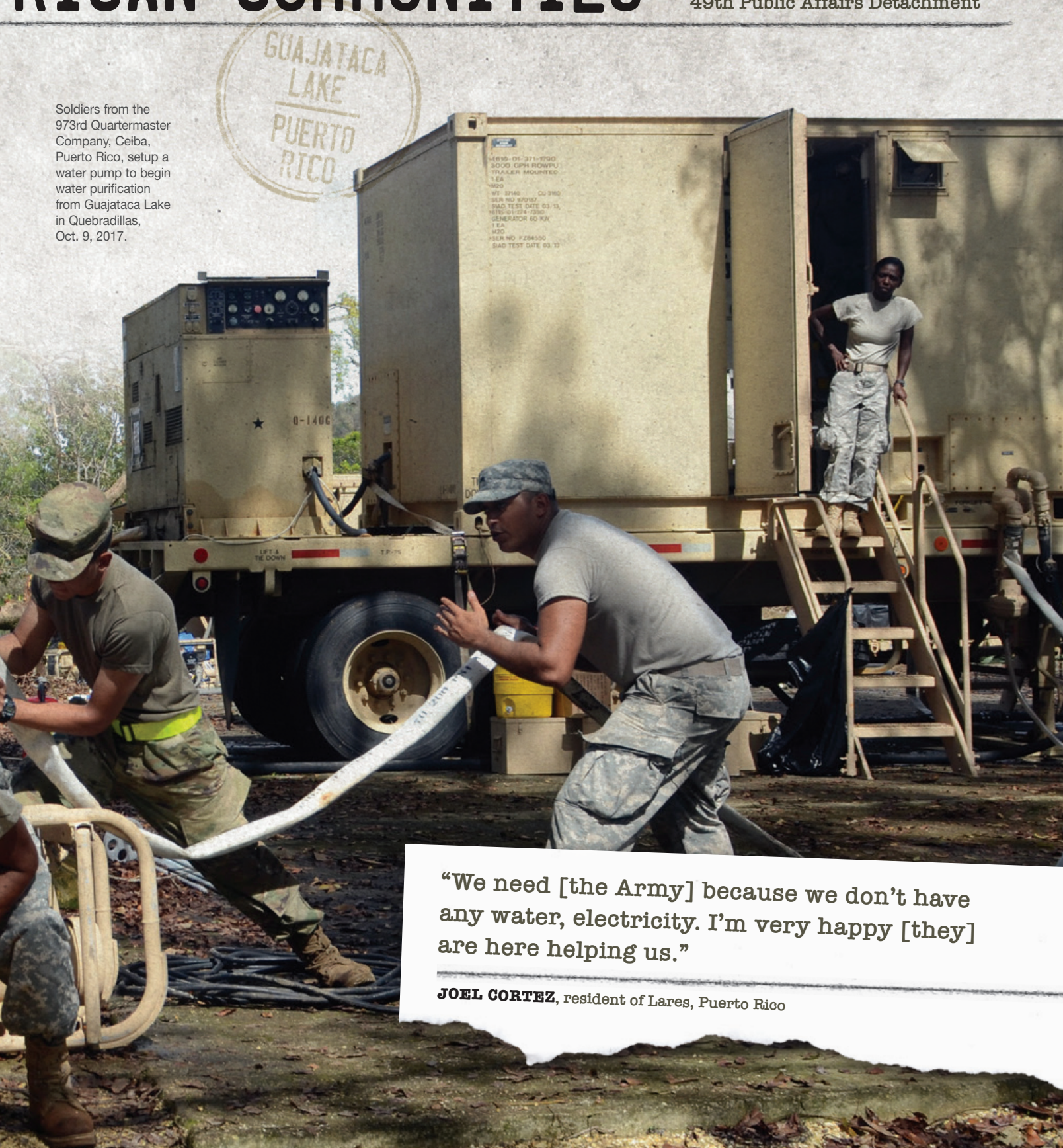
"It means a lot, because we can actually see that there is an interest to help Puerto Rican people," said Coral Diaz-Piferrer Acevedo, a biology student and Las Marillas native. 🇵🇷



# RICAN COMMUNITIES

STORY AND PHOTO BY  
STAFF SGT. ELVIS UMANZOR  
49th Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from the 973rd Quartermaster Company, Ceiba, Puerto Rico, setup a water pump to begin water purification from Guajataca Lake in Quebradillas, Oct. 9, 2017.



"We need [the Army] because we don't have any water, electricity. I'm very happy [they] are here helping us."

JOEL CORTEZ, resident of Lares, Puerto Rico



PHOTO BY SPC. ANTHONY MARTINEZ, 1ST MISSION SUPPORT COMMAND



PHOTO BY SGT. ANDREW VALLES, U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND

# NOTHING SHORT OF AWESOME

BY MAJ. RUTH CASTRO  
1st Mission Support Command

FORT  
BUCHANAN  
PUERTO  
RICO

**MORE THAN 2,000 PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLAND-BASED SOLDIERS WERE ACTIVATED** in response to local and federal requests for assistance after Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico on September 20, 2017.

Top left: Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, Chief of Army Reserve, and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, meets Soldiers assigned to the 597th Quartermaster Company at the Convention Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico, October 21, 2017. The 597th Quartermaster Company has been providing laundry and shower services to refugees in the Convention Center who were affected by both Hurricanes, Irma and Maria.

Top right: Staff Sgt. Miguel Antonio Luzunaris, water treatment specialist with the 973rd Quartermaster Company "Waterdogs" from Ceiba, Puerto Rico, explains the water purification process to Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, Commanding General of U.S. Army Reserve Command.

A month later, members of the 1st Mission Support Command and Fort Buchanan met with Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, Chief of Army Reserve and Commanding General U.S. Army Reserve Command, who traveled to Puerto Rico to observe their ongoing relief efforts.

"You have done awesome stuff for the Army and for the people of Puerto Rico," said Luckey. "All of the goodness that you have demonstrated is permeating America's Army Reserve. Your fellow Soldiers are proud of you, proud of what you are doing, proud of what you represent."

Pfc. Jonathan Crespo, assigned to the 597th Quartermaster Company, was among the Soldiers supporting the effort.

"I think it is great that he is here to see us," said Crespo. "Having Lt. Gen. Luckey here is

something important for us. When we start to wonder why we are here, having our leader visit helps to keep us motivated and working hard."

During his time on the island, Luckey met with several units. In Ceiba, he met with Task Force 166th and was given a brief synopsis of their everyday operations.

The 432nd Transportation Company began operations in support of FEMA two days after Hurricane Maria hit, and pushed out commodities all over the island to include Cabo Rojo, Rinco and Aguada.

The company's top noncommissioned officer, 1st Sgt. William Gonzalez, had been looking forward to the visit. "We ran into [Lt. Gen. Luckey] during the Army 10 miler, and he made a commitment that he would be here in two weeks, and here he is," said Gonzalez.

"It is unfortunate that the whole unit is not here, but I am truly honored that a small unit like the 432nd Transportation Company had a chance to visit with Double Eagle 6."

On his last stop, Luckey arrived at Guajataca where he had the opportunity to speak with Soldiers from the 973rd Quartermaster Company. The 973rd is in charge of purifying water from the Guajataca Lake.

"We are purifying water for the community, and we are trying to get as much water out as possible. We see the lines forming every day, and the lines don't stop," said Staff Sgt. Miguel Antonio Luzunaris. "We can also see

how grateful the people are. They always come up to us and try to speak English with us, they think that we are not from here, but we let them know that we are the Army Reserve and that we are 'Boricua' too. They are more grateful when they learn that. They tell us that we are doing a wonderful job."

"This team exemplifies exactly what we are looking for in the future of America's Army Reserve," said Luckey. "... what you are doing here, in terms of supporting the people in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, is nothing short of awesome." ❏

Lt. Gen. Charles D. Luckey, Chief of Army Reserve, and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, hands a filled water jug to local residents from the Guajataca, Puerto Rico area while meeting with the 973rd Quartermaster Company "Waterdogs" from Ceiba, Puerto Rico, water purification site Oct. 22, 2017.



PHOTO BY SGT. ANDREW VALLES, U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND

**DELTA COMPANY, A CRANSTON, RHODE ISLAND-BASED UNIT UNDER THE 249TH ENGINEER BATTALION (PRIME POWER), deployed to Puerto Rico October 13, on what they call their largest mission to date.**

# DELTA COMPANY'S PRIME POWER

**BY PATRICIA FONTANET RODRÍGUEZ**  
Public Affairs, Southwestern Division, USACE

It is rare for Delta Company to deploy in double-digit numbers. Twenty-three personnel from Delta Company are currently on the ground in Puerto Rico, repairing distribution lines. The company is known for being the only Army unit composed solely of linemen. Their experience and expertise will help in efforts to restore power to Puerto Rico after hurricane Maria, which left 100 percent of the island without power and a collapsed electric grid.

Their job is to support the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in coordinating efforts with the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority to execute repairs to the distribution feeder lines, within the greater San Juan area initially

and then on to substation repairs outside of San Juan once the transmission lines are energized.

In order to repair distribution lines, Delta Company first receives new poles from Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority, which are then firmly secured in place. Fallen distribution lines, usually tangled and covered in debris, are then “fished” from the ground and placed on the power poles. The lines are not immediately energized when in place; that will happen once transmission lines come online. Delta Company is capable of placing an average of 10 power poles per day, repairing

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. LARRY E. REID JR.




more than 27,000 feet of distribution line in under a month.

Delta Company deployed to Puerto Rico with orders for 90 days, but will not leave until their mission is complete. "We want people to get home and turn the light switch

on," says Sgt. 1st Class Jitu Whitehead, the noncommissioned officer in charge. "We want to bring the comfort back."

According to Whitehead, the Soldiers are proud to be part of the mission and are motivated by community members, who often wave and honk as they repair power lines along the street. "When they see us, they know good things are happening," says Whitehead. "It gives them hope." 🇺🇸

Private Michael Bailey, a power line distribution specialist assigned to Delta Company, 249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power), Cranston, R.I., removes a loose branch in order to repair damaged power lines in Río Grande, Puerto Rico, Oct. 25, 2017.



The Category 5, 155 mph Hurricane Maria—the strongest to hit Puerto Rico in 85 years—devastated the island and its fragile power grid.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT.  
SHAIYLA HAKEEM, 354TH MOBILE  
PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

## River Rats

Clockwise from below:

Soldiers with 459th Engineer Company, work to assemble an Improved Ribbon Bridge on the Tygart Lake.

Soldiers from the 459th Engineer Company work to place sections of an Improved Ribbon Bridge onto Tygart Lake Friday, Sept. 8, 2017.

Tygart Lake was used as training grounds, Sept. 8, 2017, for the 459th Engineer Company, located out of New Martinsville, W. Va.

**NEW MARTINSVILLE, W. Va.** — No bridge, no problem.

The 459th Engineer Company located in New Martinsville, West Virginia and known as the “River Rats,” spent time building on local Tygart Lake during a three-day training event to support the Department of Defense’s Immediate Response Authority. The 459th practiced assembling and disassembling six sections of an Improved Ribbon Bridge over the lake.

Local public officials were invited to the marina at Tygart Lake State Park, September 8, to watch

the company conduct a mock Immediate Response Authority exercise and showcase their bridge building competence. First Sergeant Marti Durst, with the 459th Engineer Company, said the exercise was for Soldier training, “of course,” but was also used to spread awareness of the unit’s potential.

“We were trying to put together a demonstration of our capabilities and what we can do for disaster flood relief with rafting operations and our boats,” explained Durst, “as well as emergency bridge replacement.”

The state of West Virginia has a history of flooding and there’s need for emergency and disaster flood relief. Heavy flooding caused a bridge to collapse in Elkwood, West Virginia, on June 23, 2016. The collapse left hundreds of citizens





temporarily stranded and resulted in an isolated shopping center.

“That could have been an easy fix for us,” said Durst, “We could have put a dry support bridge section over that gap where the bridge washed down and those businesses could have stayed open.”

According to the Defense Support of Civilian Authorities directive, “DOD officials may provide an immediate response by temporarily employing the resources under their control, subject to any supplemental direction provided by higher headquarters, to save lives, prevent human suffering or mitigate great property damage within the United States.”

This provides the authority to assist with a 72-hour rescue mission and emergency response support if requested by civil authorities.

Training is paramount to ensure reserve forces are ready to deploy at any moment. Sgt. Jaron McLain, who served as bridge commander during the training exercise, believes training like this provides the opportunity for Soldiers to learn, make mistakes and learn by those mistakes.

“I would much rather work out the kinks now than somewhere in Iraq,” said McLain. “You can die in practice a million times, but in real life you’ve just got one shot.” ✕

“You can die in practice a million times, but in real life you’ve just got one shot.”

— SGT. JARON MCLAIN,  
459TH ENGINEER COMPANY



# Ballistic Breach

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SGT. 1ST CLASS CLINTON WOOD, 412TH THEATER ENGINEER COMMAND

Below: A Soldier assigned to the 420th Engineer Company, ejects a shell from his M26 Modular Accessory Shotgun System 12-gauge shotgun while familiarizing with the weapon at a Ballistic Breaching range on Fort Drum, N.Y., Aug. 10, 2017.

**FORT DRUM, N.Y.** — “Muzzle placement, weapon at 45 degree angle, weapon on fire, head tilt,” Sgt. 1st Class Justin Carman’s directions were punctuated by a loud boom.

Mentoring Soldiers at the Ballistic Breaching Range is noisy business. The obstacle was a plywood door attached to a concrete entry way. A wooden block centered on the edge of the door served as the “doorknob.”

The blast created extensive damage to the door’s simulated locking system, allowing easy access for the breaching team.

It was the Soldiers from the 420th Engineer Company, 412th Theater Engineer Command, based in Indiana, Pennsylvania, mastering how to breach an obstacle in a four-man stack using the M26 Modular Accessory Shotgun System 12-gauge shotgun.

This company was among 10 units and 400 Soldiers conducting annual training in the 479th Engineer Battalion’s Extended Combat Training (ECT). Three of the participating units were Ready



Force X, tasked with maintaining higher levels of readiness in order to deploy quickly—sometimes in less than 90 days.

“For many of the Soldiers, it was an opportunity to do more than just fire the new weapons system,” said Carman. “They got practical hands-on training.”

Most Soldiers have limited opportunities to practice their military occupational specialty. Pfc. Jason Beckley, a combat engineer in the Army Reserve, is groundskeeper at a golf course in Montgomery, Pennsylvania.

“It is definitely something you should do if you’re a 12B (Combat Engineer),” said Beckley.

By the end of the training, more than 70,000 rounds had been fired from the M2 machine gun, M240B Machine Gun, MK 19 40-millimeter grenade launcher and M16A2 rifle. The ranges varied from qualification to reflexive fire and known distance.

“We are going back to all of the basics for a route clearing company,” said Capt. Dan Gusich, company commander. “The training ties in with one of the Mission Essential Tasks approved for this training year.”



**“For many of the Soldiers, it was an opportunity to do more than just fire the new weapons system. They got practical hands-on training.”**

— SGT. 1ST CLASS JUSTIN CARMAN, 420TH ENGINEER COMPANY, 412TH THEATER ENGINEER COMMAND

This wasn't the only training conducted during this annual exercise. Just a day prior, the company had already expended more than 3,000, M2 .50-caliber machine gun rounds with 10th Mountain Division's 7th Engineer Brigade on a “breaching with demolitions” lane.

Gusich believes that the unit will significantly improve its readiness through similar ECTs.

Next year Gusich's Soldiers will train to hone their defensive skills. The following year he will lead his

company in route clearance training techniques, which will include vehicle training.

“Typically when you are doing clearance now, 50 percent of your patrol is dismounted,” noted Gusich. “So they really need be able to refit and reorganize as infantry.”

This enhanced training and focus ensures that every Soldier goes into theater with the survivability, combat-readiness and lethality needed to fight and win the nation's wars. 🇺🇸

Above left: Pvt. Dontae Pennybaker assigned to the 420th Engineer Company, turns his head as he fires a M26 Modular Accessory Shotgun System 12-gauge shotgun, meeting safety standards and avoiding an eye injury at a Ballistic Breaching range on Fort Drum, N.Y., Aug. 10, 2017.

Above right: Spc. Joshua Harshman assigned to the 420th Engineer Company, based in Indiana, Penn., fires a M26 Modular Accessory Shotgun System 12-gauge shotgun at a Ballistic Breaching range on Fort Drum, N.Y., Aug. 10, 2017.

# Training Locally to Deploy Globally

BY MASTER SGT. MICHEL SAURET,  
200TH MILITARY POLICE COMMAND



Above: A transportation noncommissioned officer from the 1398th Deployment Distribution Support Battalion gives a logistics and transportation brief to drivers from the 200th Military Police Command and the 400th Military Police Battalion.

At top: Soldiers from the 200th Military Police Command and the 1398th Deployment Distribution Support Battalion conduct a port operations training exercise at the Port of Baltimore on Nov. 2, 2017. The cargo vessel, *Cape Wrath* (left), is owned by the Department of Transportation.

**BALTIMORE, Md.** — The convoy of military police trucks rolling up the ramp and into the gaping mouth of a 697-foot cargo ship named *Cape Wrath* tested the METL of critical warfighting capabilities.

The recent port exercise in Baltimore brought together military police and watercraft units identified to deploy rapidly—in some cases in days or weeks. They are both Ready Force X units, and they are training to have the mobility, survivability, connectivity and lethality needed to win on the battlefield.

“This training helps us be aware of some of the showstoppers, some of the issues we could run into when we do get deployed, and it helps us get smart on a lot of the processes that it takes to move our equipment,” said Sgt. 1st Class Angela Ross, the unit movement officer for the 200th Military Police Command, headquartered at Fort Meade, Maryland.

The symbiotic relationship brought trucks to the watercraft unit, and cargo ships and cranes to the military police units. So it was a match made in Maryland—given the access to the nearby Port of Baltimore—for all units involved.

The exercise was split into multiple days and separate events taking place in October and early November. The lead unit, the 1398th Deployment Distribution Support Battalion, specializes in seaport embarkation and debarkation. When deployed, they’re able to manage single-port operations for a combatant command anywhere in the world. Military cargos include vehicles, weapons, ammo, equipment, food and everything else Soldiers need on the battlefield.

“If we’re not performing our function in our port, it hinders an entire geographical command, potentially,” said Capt. Lee Rodriguez, transportation and operations officer for the 1398th DDSB.

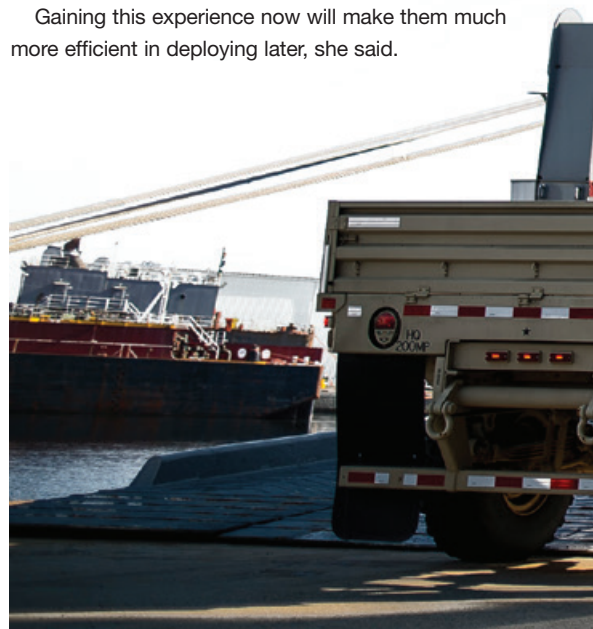
Soldiers from the 200th MP Command and one of its down-trace units, the 400th MP Battalion, both located at Fort Meade, partnered with the DDSB for this training.

“By partnering with the 200th Military Police and its down-trace, we were able to simulate a deploying unit, which helped us meet our mission essential tasks of port operations,” said Rodriguez.

Taking part in this Baltimore port exercise familiarized the military police with the very technical and detail-oriented processes of logistics and transportation. It’s not as simple as driving up to a boat and taking off. The process involves multiple log systems, equipment measurements, flawless accountability and constant communications between the deploying and the port units.

“If we give incorrect information, that slows the process down... we could miss our movement. We could miss the boat,” said Ross.

Gaining this experience now will make them much more efficient in deploying later, she said.



**“This training helps us be aware of some of the showstoppers, some of the issues we could run into when we do get deployed, and it helps us get smart on a lot of the processes that it takes to move our equipment.”**

— SGT. 1ST CLASS ANGELA ROSS, 200TH MILITARY POLICE COMMAND

The port battalion also coordinated with fellow Army Reserve transportation companies and the Department of Transportation to gain access to various vessels and loading equipment throughout their exercise.

“We don’t get to play with a vessel this size, ever. So this is a big deal for our guys. It gives them an invaluable experience, because opening a vessel like this [for training] is expensive,” said Maj. Jon McKee, operations officer for a Terminal Management Team with the 1398th DDSB.

Through these local partnerships in Maryland, the 1398th DDSB was able to accomplish a major training event at a lower cost because everything was done locally.

“We’ve done something that in essence nears a large-scale exercise, like a Combat Support Training Exercise or Trans Warrior. By coordinating between internal units, we were able to do a much more effective job on a shorter suspense,” said Rodriguez.

One day, all of these units may well deploy anywhere in the world, but in the meantime, they’ve found a way to complete necessary training just a few miles from home. 🚚



Above: Soldiers from the 1398th Deployment Distribution Support Battalion lower a Light Medium Tactical Vehicle from the 200th Military Police Command onto a cargo vessel.



Below: A Light Medium Tactical Vehicle from the 200th Military Police Command rolls onto the cargo vessel, *Cape Wrath*.

# The Road to Awesome Begins with You

## Maintain Individual Readiness

**You think the Commanding General is kidding about Readiness? Think again.**

If your medical readiness classification is MRC4, you're not getting paid.

In accordance with AR 600-8-2, commanders will initiate a suspension of favorable action (Flag) code of "X" for all Soldiers who are MRC4 and not in compliance with the PHA and/or annual dental examination requirement.

The gist of the MRC4 policy, implemented by Lt. Gen. Luckey on 21 July, is that if you are not medically ready—if your status is MRC4—then you are not authorized to attend individual duty training or annual training until you produce verification of medical readiness compliant status. And if you aren't attending battle assembly or

annual training, then you are not getting paid. It's that simple.

AGR and IMA Soldiers, you're on the hook also. For AGRs, non-compliance can result in release from active duty status. In other words, you are out of a job. IMAs, if you can't maintain the medical readiness standard, then you too can be removed from the program.

If you are MRC4 for either the annual health (PHA) or dental assessment, make resolving this is your first priority.

If you're not ready, we can't defend our nation. So, if you are MRC4, get it fixed! Log on to AKO, and under My Professional Data, click on MyMedPros. Contact your unit administrator if you are "red" in any of your Medical Readiness Indicators. 🚩

STORIES COMPILED BY COL. MIKE STEWART AND MAJ. BILL GEDDES,  
ARMY RESERVE COMMUNICATIONS

# Get Promoted. It's a SMAPP!

## Get Promoted WITHOUT Being Boarded.

You read it right—eligible Soldiers can bypass the boarding process and get promoted to sergeant or staff sergeant. You may even be eligible for a bonus.

The Army Reserve Special Military Occupational Specialty Alignment Program, or SMAPP, allows Army Reserve Troop Program Unit (TPU) Soldiers to reclassify and be promoted into critically short MOSs, that is, skills that are at less than 50 percent of assigned strength. Upon completion of MOS reclassification, providing you are otherwise qualified, you will be promoted into a valid promotion vacancy.

How does SMAPP work? First, meet with your unit's personnel officer to ensure you meet the MOS requirements outlined in DA Pam 611-21. Then you must either reenlist or reclassify into the critically short MOS. Next, you are enrolled into that MOS school, where you must successfully complete training. **Learn more at:** <http://www.armyreenlistment.com/smapp.html>. 📄

There are currently 24 skill sets providing this amazing opportunity:

12Q > Power Distribution Specialist	68B > Orthopedic Specialist
15F > Aircraft Electrician	68S > Preventative Medicine Specialist
17C > Cyber Operations Specialist	68T > Animal Care Specialist
25D > Cyber Network Defender	68U > Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist
25E > Electromagnetic Spectrum Manager	68Y > Eye Specialist
25M > Multimedia Illustrator	74D > CBRN Specialist
29E > Electronic Warfare Specialist	88H > Cargo Specialist
35L > Counterintelligence Agent	89B > Ammunition Specialists
35P > Cryptologic Linguist	92L > Petroleum Laboratory Specialist
35T > Military Intelligence Systems Maintainer/Integrator	94A > Land Combat Electronic Missile System Repairer
46R(S) > Broadcast Journalist	94E > Radio and Communications Security Repairer
51C > Acquisitions Logistics and Technology Contracting	94H > Test Measurement and Diagnostic Equipment Maintenance Support Specialist

## Be Ready to "Fight Fast"

The majority of the Army Reserve's Ready Force X units must be prepared to "Fight Fast." Ready Force X units, many of which provide essential early entry/set-the-theater capabilities, must be prepared to deploy within six weeks, and

some in less than 30 days. Currently, nearly 300 Ready Force X units do not have the luxury of validating for deployment over the course of several weeks or months at the mobilization station through collective and individual training and cross-leveling personnel from other units.

The CDRP Pilot Program is the voluntary reassignment of selected Soldiers with critical military occupational specialties and areas of concentration from non-RFX units to RFX units. Reassignment of individual Soldiers will be within a 50-mile radius. Selected Soldiers will be notified by mail in the upcoming weeks. 📄





PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY U.S. AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. ALEXANDRE MONTES, 70TH INTELLIGENCE, SURVEILLANCE AND RECONNAISSANCE WING

The Blended Retirement System combines service-member's traditional legacy retirement pension with distributions from the Thrift Savings Plan, creating a portable retirement option. The BRS will grandfather in servicemembers serving as of December 2017 under the legacy retirement system. No one currently serving will be automatically switched to the BRS, according to the DoD's Military Compensation website.

automatically enrolled in BRS. Resources and information are available through a local Retirement Services Officer or an Army Personal Financial Counselor.

Starting in January, every pay period delay counts against savings under the Blended Retirement System.

"Every Soldier needs to take this seriously—this is about money in your pocket and your family's financial well-being," said Command Sgt. Maj. Ted Copeland. "Do the training and make a well-informed decision for your family's future."

Under the BRS, Army Reserve Soldiers with 4,320 or more retirement points are grandfathered under the legacy 1.0 retirement system. Those entering service beginning January 1, 2018 will automatically enroll in the 2.0 BRS. However, a large majority of Soldiers, those with less than 4,320 retirement points, are faced with a decision to either opt in to BRS or to maintain their status under the legacy retirement pension.

Soldiers are required to complete training at <http://jko/jten.mil>, course number **J30P-US1332** and have the entire 2018 calendar year to opt-in.

## BRS: Army Reserve Retirement 1.0 vs. 2.0

BY VALARIE GANDY, ARMY  
RESERVE LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

**"Every Soldier needs to take this seriously—this is about money in your pocket and your family's financial well-being."**

— COMMAND SGT. MAJ. TED COPELAND,  
U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND

**FORT BELVOIR, Va.** — The goal of the new Blended Retirement System (BRS) is to give service members financial knowledge and to better prepare them as they transition from military service into civilian life.

For Soldiers currently serving, BRS is up to the individual service member—they will not be

### BASIC SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON OF BOTH RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

VERSION 1.0 LEGACY PENSION	VS	VERSION 2.0 BLENDED RETIREMENT SYSTEM
No TSP match		TSP match (up to 5 percent)
No continuation pay		Continuation pay
Pension multiplier 2.5 percent		Pension multiplier 2.0 percent
No lump sum pension options		Lump sum pension options
Must reach 20 years for pension account		Depart service with an established retirement

Visit this link to access a retirement benefits calculator:  
[https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit\\_Calculators/Retirement.html](https://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil/Home/Benefit_Calculators/Retirement.html)

# DON'T RISK LOSING YOUR NEST EGG...



## THE BLENDED RETIREMENT SYSTEM: RESERVE COMPONENT

The Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act provides our military force with a modernized retirement plan built for retirement savings. Beginning in 2018, Reserve Component service members can get automatic and matching Thrifts Savings Plan contributions, a mid-career compensation incentive, and if they obtain 20 years of service, monthly retired pay for life starting at age 60.\* All service members under the current system are grandfathered into today's retirement system.

### RETIREMENT SYSTEM SELECTION FOR RESERVE COMPONENT MEMBERS

#### MORE THAN 4,320 RETIREMENT POINTS

remain under the  
legacy plan

#### LESS THAN 4,320 RETIREMENT POINTS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2017

Opt in to new BRS plan,  
or stay in the legacy plan

#### NEW ACCESSIONS AFTER JANUARY 1, 2018

automatically enrolled  
in the new BRS plan



You can find additional information at <http://militarypay.defense.gov>

Blended Retirement Sources: Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, sections 631, 632, 634 and 635





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