

Va. Guard displays capabilities to General Assembly

Approximately 30 Virginia National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and members of the Virginia Defense Force came together Jan. 21, 2015, outside of the General Assembly Building in Richmond, Va., to display some of their domestic response capabilities and equipment. The event aimed to educate Virginia legislators on the capabilities and support the Guard can provide during a disaster. Among displays were Soldiers and Airmen from the Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear High Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package, the 34th Civil Support Team and the Virginia Guard's Counterdrug Program, members of the Virginia Defense Force and Airmen from the 192nd Intelligence Squadron and the 200th Weather Flight.

"It's important that all Guardsmen convey to elected officials a sense that their Guard is ready, willing and able to deploy and prevail at a moment's notice," said Del. Richard Anderson, co-chair of the General Assembly Military and Veterans Caucus.



A Virginia National Guard Soldier greets Delegate Richard Anderson outside the Virginia General Assembly Building Jan. 21, 2015, in Richmond, Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/01/27/6735/>

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Infantrymen train on advanced leader skills

At Fort Pickett's 183rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute, 20 active duty, U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard infantrymen gained the skills and knowledge necessary to take on roles as senior noncommissioned officers during the Infantryman Advanced Leader Course held Jan. 11-28, 2015.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/01/26/6718/>

Va. Guard Soldiers demonstrate medical skills during Warrior Exercise

Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers from the 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team joined Soldiers from the U.S. Army Reserve and Sailors from the U.S. Navy Reserve to participate in Warrior Exercise "Arctic Lightning" Jan. 24, 2015, at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/01/26/6713/>

Gibbs selected as new Fort Pickett command sergeant major

Command Sgt. Major Terry Gibbs will become the next command sergeant major of Fort Pickett Maneuver Training Center beginning March 1, 2015, according to an announcement made Jan. 12, 2015, by Brig. Gen. Walter L. Mercer, Assistant Adjutant General – Army.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/01/23/6707/>

AG briefs JLC on legislative initiatives for General Assembly

Brig. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, updated members of the Joint Leadership Council of Veterans Service Organizations on the Virginia National Guard and discusses the Va. Guard's legislative initiatives for the 2015 session of the Virginia General Assembly Jan. 16, 2015, in Richmond Va.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/01/17/6724/>

Mark Your Calendars!

African American History Month

February is African American History Month, an annual celebration of achievements by African Americans and a time for recognizing the central role they have played in U.S. history.

Learn more online about African American History Month and the role they have played in U.S. history and in the military:

Virginia National Guard's Equal Opportunity Program:

<http://go.usa.gov/UQ43>

African American History Month website:

<http://go.usa.gov/Swu9/>

African Americans in the U.S. Army:

<http://go.usa.gov/SwJY>

Va. National Guard aviators depart for border

Soldiers from the Chesterfield-based Detachment 1, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 151st Aviation Regiment departed Jan. 26, 2015, for the border between the United States and Mexico aboard a UH-72 Lakota helicopter to provide aerial detection and monitoring support to U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Customs and Border Protection. The three-Soldier crew flew from the Chesterfield County Airport, and additional Virginia Guard Soldiers will rotate through the mission until the end of April in support of law enforcement interdiction operations against illicit trafficking in people, drugs, weapons and money, as well as the violence associated with those illicit activities.

The Lakota is configured with the Mission Equipment Package that includes a camera system with advanced optics and infrared sensors, a high intensity searchlight, a digital video recorder and data downlink system and communications equipment specially suited for domestic operations, said Lt. Col. Kevin Warfield, the Virginia National Guard's state aviation officer. An additional Det. 1 Lakota is configured for search and rescue operations with a mechanical hoist and space for medical support personnel and equipment.

Last year the Virginia Guard rotated approximately 10 Soldiers through the border security mission over a three month period and has repeatedly supported the mission in previous years. During those rotations, Soldiers saved the lives of illegal immigrants stranded in the desert without water or medical aid in addition to conducting security operations.

The Lakota brings a special capability to the CBP for reconnaissance and security operations, especially during times of limited visibility, Warfield said.

"The Southwest Border mission provides two important opportunities for our Lakota detachment personnel," he said. "First, they gain experience using the Mission Equipment Package operating in an unfamiliar environment. Second, they are able to complete more flying hours than they would get in a typical one-month period in Virginia, due to the current fiscal constraints. Both opportunities result in improved operational readiness for the Virginia detachment."

Aviators from Det. 1 train continuously with local first responders and have assisted in real-world response operations.

Virginia Guard personnel joined a multi-agency search effort in the remote mountains near Deerfield Valley immediately after the Aug. 27, 2014, crash that killed the pilot of a Massachusetts National Guard F-15C Eagle. The search effort employed both Lakota and Black Hawk helicopters and additional Guard personnel coordinated the overall aviation operation.

For the last two years, Virginia Guard aviators trained over land and water with local first responders, including the Chesterfield Fire & EMS rescue team and the designated Virginia Division I Technical Rescue Team Water Rescue Asset. The training utilized Black Hawk helicopters and both configurations of the Lakota, using the hoist to lower a first responder to a simulated victim before extracting them. Concurrently, the MEP Lakota provided



Va. Guard Soldiers depart for the border between the United States and Mexico Jan. 26, 2015, aboard a UH-72 Lakota helicopter from the Chesterfield County Airport.

mission command for the operation.

The unit also trained with the Virginia Air National Guard's 192nd Intelligence Squadron from Langley Air Force Base on using of full-motion video for incident awareness assessment during domestic operations. Most recently they conducted the Sentinel Phoenix II exercise in September 2014 at Camp Pendleton, where they worked jointly to provide live full-motion video during a simulated wildfire at the Great Dismal Swamp. The exercise tested the 192nd IS' ability to capture full motion video from the Lakota, analyze it and support first responders during a state emergency. Aviators from Det. 1 also trained with the 192nd IS on using video in support of I-64 lane reversal mission.

Read more: <http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/01/27/6746/>

MORE ON THE WEB

Va. Guard G-4's tailor-made solution helps Soldiers

<http://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2015/01/27/6731/>

Photos: 88M course begins at Fort Pickett

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157649907181197/>

Photos: Lieutenant Governor, SPSHS commend Va. Guard

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/vanguardpao/sets/72157650426595295/>

Fort Pickett Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/FortPickett>

Camp Pendleton Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/CampPendletonCTC>



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