

THE DISPATCH

June 2012



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The Texas Air National Guard practices medical transportation before the 2012 hurricane season.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SHOWCASE 10

Event highlights capability, cooperation between agencies, ability to serve Texans during natural or man-made disasters..

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Two C-130H aircraft assigned to the 136th Airlift Wing at NAS JRB Fort Worth, participate in the Coastal Bend Regional Evacuation Exercise (CBREE) at Corpus Christi International Airport, in Corpus Christi, Texas, on May 15, 2012. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Phil Fountain, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs.)

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Blue Star Museum Program

Blue Star Museums is off and running! Military families now have access to 1,600 art exhibits, science centers, and amazing museums all over the nation. For more information about participating museums, visit www.bluestarfam.org/Programs/Blue_Star_Museums.

Calendar

June-

National Safety Month

Army Birthday (June 14)

July-

Independence Day (July 4)

Operation Lone Star (July 23-27)

August-

National Immunization Awareness Month

Women's Equality Day (Aug. 26)

September-

National Preparedness Month

National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sep. 15- Oct. 15)

Suicide Prevention Month

Air Force Birthday (Sep. 18)

Texas Military Forces Museum Casino Night Fundraiser (Sep. 22)

October-

National Crime Prevention Month

National Depression Education and Awareness Month

National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

National Brain Injury Awareness Month

Army Family Covenant Anniversary

From the Desk of the Public Affairs Officer

Texans Serving Texas

Our proud tradition of timely and professional response to requests for support from our fellow state agencies is easily expressed in the phrase “Texans Serving Texas.”

Fiercely independent, yet quick to form bonds of partnership in times of crisis, whether they come in natural or man-made form, your National Guard stands ready to answer our Governor’s call to service.

This issue of The Dispatch highlights our recent opportunities to strengthen and exercise our unique capabilities for air and ground support. From evacuation to shelter, it is our privilege to serve our fellow citizens in any circumstance that arises, from the Texas Gulf Coast to arid desert in Africa, continuing to build capacity for future state or federal response operations.

Highlights of the past decade include, the Texas Air National Guard’s C-130 fleet evacuation of hundreds of hospital patients and movement of relief supplies not only to support Texans, but our neighbors affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Texas Army National Guard Engineer units backed firefighting efforts with heavy equipment capabilities, while Texas State Guard volunteers manage shelter and evacuation tracking operations. As we enter Hurricane season, a checklist for storm preparation is included on pages 12-13 to assist you and your family in emergency planning.

To learn more about our history of service to Texas and around the world, visit the National Guard Headquarters, Camp Mabry, located in Austin, Texas. Camp Mabry features the Texas Military Forces Museum along with a running/walking track, fishing pond, parade field, and overnight camping and picnic facilities.

Admission to the museum is free, all you need is a driver’s license to access Camp Mabry, and a few minutes to celebrate the service of your fellow Texans. For more information, please visit www.txmf.us.

Have a safe and peaceful Independence Day.



Col. Amy F. Cook
Public Affairs Officer

Texas Military Forces practice hurricane relief du

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Phil Fountain
Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – In preparation for the state’s hurricane season, members of the Texas Military Forces joined other military components, as well as civilian emergency management officials for the Coastal Bend Regional Evacuation Exercise (CBREE) to practice medical evacuation capabilities in and around Corpus Christi from May 14-18, 2012.

“Many agencies came together to work in this case,” said Brig. Gen. Kenneth W. Wisian, Texas’ Assistant Adjutant General – Air and Commander of the Texas Air National Guard. “The Texas Military Forces are here with our C-130’s and some other capabilities. We’ve got state response forces on the emergency side, aeromedical teams, all together with the local officials to practice a patient evacuation in an emergency.”

The Texas Air Guard commander explained that the weeklong exercise provided an opportunity to demonstrate the capability of the state’s C-130H tactical aircraft assigned to the Texas Air National Guard’s 136th Airlift Wing at Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base.

“The C-130 is a rugged and dependable aircraft,” Wisian said. “They can be used to evacuate people away or bring aid and aid resources for-

ward during a disaster.”

Members of the Texas State Guard, a volunteer component of the Texas Military Forces, assisted with the processing of patients using the Texas Emergency Tracking Network, which utilizes Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) wristbands to ensure patients are safely transported from the aeromedical evacuation hub, onto their remote treatment location and back to their medical home.

In addition to the Texas Guard assets, the training event included members of the Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Contingency Response Group, based in Louisville, Kentucky, and the U.S. Air Force Reserve’s 433rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and Aeromedical Staging Squadron, both based at Lackland Air Force Base, in San Antonio, Texas.

The military professionals practiced the process of transporting medically needy patients from local hospitals and nursing homes, which would be the most high-risk during an emergency situation. The Texas C-130s transported mock patients from Corpus Christi to San Antonio and Dallas during the exercise.

Prior to being loaded onto the aircraft, the patients were treated and stabilized in an aeromedi-



Coastal Bend Regional Evacuation Exercise

cal staging facility, which was established in an aircraft hanger at the Corpus Christi International Airport.

Significant coordination was required, and the military activities were in support state and local officials, as will be required during an actual disaster situation.

“We’ve been here all week preparing for this exercise and getting ready for this year’s hurricane season,” said Nim Kidd, assistant director of the Texas Department of Public Safety and chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management. “We’re continuing to reinforce and test the ties between local government, local emergency management, the state of Texas, the Texas Military Forces and our federal partners.”

The state’s senior emergency management official emphasized the need for this training, and its importance to Texas and the region.

“Since 1953, when FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) started keeping records, Texas is number 1, we lead the nation in the number of disaster declarations,” Kidd said. “This is about making sure that all of the things we’ve taken for granted, the things we always knew how to do, that we can still do [them] with new or inter-

changeable people, and how that always has to be synchronized with our local and state partners.”

This joint exercise provided the civilian and military officials an opportunity to continue to hone their plans and skills to effectively respond to disaster situations. It can be of critical for local residents and emergency management officials, who are not likely to have adequate resources to respond once a disaster becomes regional.

“It’s been proven to save lives in the past. We had a dry run during Hurricane Ike [in 2008], when we were forced to evacuate people,” said Andy Cardiel, an assistant fire chief and emergency management official with the city of Corpus Christi. “We have to thoroughly understand each other’s capabilities, so that we know exactly what we can and can’t do. It is essential that we continue to work closely, learn and improve our response.”

“It’s essential to Corpus Christi and the people of South Texas,” Cardiel added.

*Left and center- Members of the Air Force Reserve’s 433rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron load on board a C-130H aircraft assigned to the Texas Air National Guard’s 136th Airlift Wing as they transport patients during the Coastal Bend Regional Evacuation Exercise (CBREE), a hurricane evacuation exercise in San Antonio and Corpus Christi, Texas
Right- A member of the volunteer Texas State Guard (right) and the Air Force Reserve’s 433rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas (left), position a training mannequin onto a C-130H aircraft assigned to the Texas Air National Guard’s 136th Airlift Wing.*



ESGR rewards Dell as top military employer in Texas



On Thursday, May 31, 2012, representatives from the Virtus Board, the Texas Military Forces, the Texas Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and other military support organizations joined together to honor Dell with the Patriot and Pro Patria awards. Latin for "for one's country," Dell was selected as the Pro Patria award winner from more than 1,200 Texas employers and is the highest honor the Texas Committee for ESGR can bestow on an employer. (National Guard Photo photo by Laura L. Lopez).

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Texas Military Forces demonstrate streng

Story and photos by Laura Lopez
Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas (June 1, 2012)- As the official first day of the Atlantic Hurricane Season kicked off on Friday, June 1, 2012, members of the Texas Military Forces participated in the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) State Response Activation Exercise and Showcase at the South Terminal of Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in Austin, Texas.

“This is critical. A lot of the state agencies don’t often get a chance to work together,” said Lt. Col. Peyton Randolph, Operations Officers, 2nd Reg., Texas State Guard. “You’ll see on the terminal ramp they are all integrating their communication and emergency operations and actually getting to know each other and work together before the emergency happens.”

An exercise designed to increase public awareness, identify agency capabilities and assets, improve resource and interagency familiarization, as well as identify space utilization for base camp operations, Texas Governor Rick Perry joined Chief Nim Kidd, Assistant Director of the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and Chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) for a tour and briefing of the various agencies and equipment. With Perry proclaiming May 27-June 2, 2012 as Hurricane Preparedness Week in Texas, it was during his speech that he encouraged all Texans to prepare for an emergency or disaster.

“We are blessed to be coming off a relatively quiet hurricane season,” said Perry “[However], we know that its not a matter of if another major hurricane is

going to hit us, it’s a matter of when.”

Members of the Texas State Guard viewed the exercise as an opportunity to employ the Texas Emergency Tracking Network (TxETN); a State-directed evacuee and resource tracking system for emergency response operations that uses Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). Through the use of bar-coded wristbands and tags, the State Guard can monitor evacuees and his or her belongings from the time of their enrollment at transportation hubs through their sheltering and the return home, helping to keep families together and easily reconnect if separated.

“It’s exercises like this that allow us to be able to handle what is going to be thrown in our path, whether it be a natural disaster or a man-made disaster,” said Kidd.

A common fixture in the skies, throughout the state, during the massive wildfire season of 2011, the Texas Army National Guard displayed a variety of different helicopters that included the UH-60 Blackhawk, CH-47 Chinook and UH -72 Lakota. Other equipment and personnel partaking in the showcase allowed the Army National Guard to highlight some of its communications capabilities and other specialized emergency resources.

One of eight C-130 Hercules aircraft owned by the Texas Air



Various stations at the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) State Response Activation Exercise.

th at State Response Activation Exercise

National Guard was on display at the showcase and has worked over 110 hurricane support missions coordinating movement of over 540 tons of cargo and over 870 passengers since Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

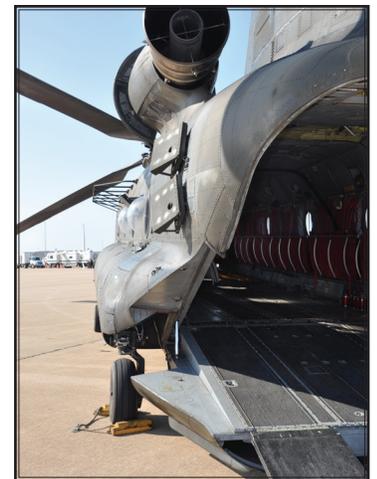
“Having the ability to move patients and ambulatory individuals very quickly can only be done by those aircraft [referring to the C-130 Hercules in his background] and having them right here in the state of Texas, which is where the vast majority of natural disasters with broad impact, like a hurricane, are going to be.” said Perry.

As Perry took the time to personally thank many of those emergency responders often in harms way, those hosting the exercise added that in the past five months there has been a State Operations Center (SOC) exercise (not at the center), four regional hurricane workshops, a DPS and TxDot staged a full-scale exercise to contraflow I-37 stressing that a successful response is a three-legged stool.

“It has to be a first responder, a group of local emergency responders dedicated to making good decisions, it has to be a media that gets that message to the public and it has to be a public that will trust the media and trust the elected and first responders,” said Kidd.

Representatives from the American Red Cross (ARC), Texas Forest Service (TFS), Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), Public Works Response Team (PWRT), Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD), Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX), Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), Texas Task Force 1 (TX-TF1), the Salvation Army (TSA), the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and the Veterinary Emergency Team (VET) also participated in the exercise on June 1st.

The 2012 hurricane season officially runs from June 1- November 30, 2012. For more information about disaster preparedness, visit the Texas Prepares website at www.texasprepares.org.



Top- (Left to Right) Brig. Gen. Brian C. Newby, Chief of Staff for the Texas Air National Guard accompanies Texas Governor Rick Perry on his tour of the Texas Department of Emergency Management (TDEM) State Response Activation Exercise at the South Terminal of Austin Bergstrom International Airport on Friday, June 1, 2012. Middle left- Texas Governor Rick Perry shakes hands with Command Chief Master Sgt. Kevin O'Gorman of the Texas Air National Guard. Middle right- A Texas Army National Guard Chinook helicopter on display at the TDEM State Response Activation Exercise. Bottom- Texas Governor Rick Perry visits with Senior Master Sgt. Jonathan R. Karlin at the J-6 communications trailer.

Battening down the hatches a checklist

HURRICANE KIT

Assemble this now. Put aside in a special box in garage. Keep heat-sensitive items inside home and rotate stock throughout season. Batteries can go in refrigerator.

- Flashlights and extra bulbs
- Battery-operated TV or Radio
- Fully charged battery-operated lanterns. Don't get candles and kerosene lanterns. They are fire hazards.
- Extra batteries
- Matches
- Clock (wind-up or battery-operated)
- Plastic garbage bags
- Working fire extinguishers
- Scissors
- Toilet paper
- Clean change of clothes, rain gear, sturdy swamp boots you won't mind throwing away later
- An inexpensive rabbit-ears television antenna to use when cable goes out
- Map of the area
- List of phone numbers—include emergency contacts outside the area affected by the storm
- Copy of insurance policy

EMERGENCY TOILET

- Small can or garbage can with tight lid
- Plastic bags for liners
- Disinfectant or bleach
- Deodorizer

HARDWARE

- Hand tools - hammer, screwdrivers to use now, shovel and pickax for after the storm
- Power screwdriver
- 4-by 8-foot sheets of plywood 3/8-inch to 1/2-inch thick to put over your windows. Make sure you ask for exterior plywood.
- 1/4-inch machine screw sockets and screws
- Plastic sheeting to cover furniture
- Rope
- Sturdy working gloves
- Duct tape to waterproof items. Masking tape isn't strong enough
- Canvas tarps
- Nails. There are many kinds, so look over your home now and determine what you will need. A nail too small, the wrong shape or hammered in wrong will fail, and that will give the storm the breach it needs to get into your home.

Are *YOU* ready f

FOOD SUPPLIES

Get enough nonperishable foods now for two weeks. Then put them in a box and leave them alone. Don't buy foods that are salty or dry or high in fat or protein; they'll make you thirsty. Buy foods you know your family will eat.

- Water: 2 quarts to 1 gallon per person (get a week's supply)
- Ice
- Shelf-package juice and milk boxes
- Canned and powdered milk
- Beverages (powdered or canned, fruit juices, instant coffee, tea)
- Prepared foods (canned soups, beef, spaghetti, tuna, chicken, ham, corned beef hash, packaged pudding)
- Canned vegetables and fruits
- Dried fruits
- Snacks (crackers, cookies, hard candy, nuts)
- Snack spreads (peanut butter, cheese spreads, jelly)
- Cereals
- Raw vegetables
- Sugar, salt, pepper
- Bread
- Dry and canned pet food
- Extra formula, baby food

KITCHEN SUPPLIES

- Manual can opener
- Bottle opener
- Matches in a plastic bag
- Pocket knife - preferably Swiss Army-style
- Camp stove or other cooking device and plenty of fuel. Use canned fuel, not charcoal or gas
- Ice chests or coolers
- Paper plates, napkins
- Plastic cups, knives, forks, spoons

BABY NEEDS

- Disposable diapers
- Wipes
- Diaper-rash ointment, petroleum jelly
- Baby medicines (pain, cold, cough)
- Medicine dropper
- Extra formula, baby food

There are between five and six named storms each hurricane season...

or the 2012 hurricane season?

Enhancing the value of community

Story and photos by Richard Boysen

Capital City Village 

My cousin Anne died last November following a long and arduous bout with ovarian cancer. I went to Philadelphia for her memorial service. One of Anne's oldest friends, remembering Anne, said that Anne always worked to enhance the value of the community in which she lived.

Enhancement of community value is something I had never thought about. What did it mean? I understood that good communities involve persons who care for and about their families, friends, neighbors, and homes. But, is something more at work here?

Thinking through this, I began reflecting on how Camp Mabry affects the value of the Austin community. Our realtor, when we were searching for our new home in Austin, showed us two homes near Camp Mabry. She told us that Camp Mabry has been at its present location for many years and that it offers many opportunities for people living in the area to exercise and visit an excellent museum. I did not give that much thought at the time but I am beginning to understand how Camp Mabry and Austin are neighbors.

How does Camp Mabry work to enhance the value of community? Well, let me count the ways.

As Camp Mabry houses military forces its contribution to community value includes the protection of residents of the United States. Protection includes protecting residents from attacks by all enemies, foreign and domestic. Mobilizations in the past three years have included tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. Members of the 36th Infantry Brigade returned from Iraq last September. Our local men and women are still serving in Afghanistan and will be rotating back and forth from Austin to Afghanistan until the projected draw-down date in 2014. While operations in Iraq and Afghanistan received the most press, military units from Camp Mabry have been to Guatemala, Nicaragua, Haiti, El Salvador, Korea, Africa, Columbia, Chile and the Czech Republic. In some cases these tours were for traditional military purposes while others included

anti-drug operations.

Less known, but of local import were the assistance provided by units based at Camp Mabry during local natural disasters including fires, floods, hurricanes, and extreme winter weather in the Texas Panhandle. Units based at Camp Mabry provided anti-rabies vaccinations to Texas residents and conducted bulldozer training so that other groups could assist with fire control and related activities.

Many local residents are unaware of the valuable assets located on Camp Mabry that are open to the public. Most of these assets are provided free of charge, some involve nominal fees. In some cases, involving not-for-profit community organizations, the fees may be waived upon application with the Garrison Commander's Office.

Perhaps the best known of these assets is the Texas Military Forces Museum. I recently interviewed Jeff Hunt, Executive Director of the Museum and received the following information. Admission to the Museum is always free of charge. However, virtually all of the "museum" things the Museum does require support from the Texas Military Forces Museum Historical Foundation. Donations from visitors as well as from Friends of the Military Forces Historical Foundation who pay annual dues of \$20 or \$250 for lifetime memberships supplement the work of the Foundation.

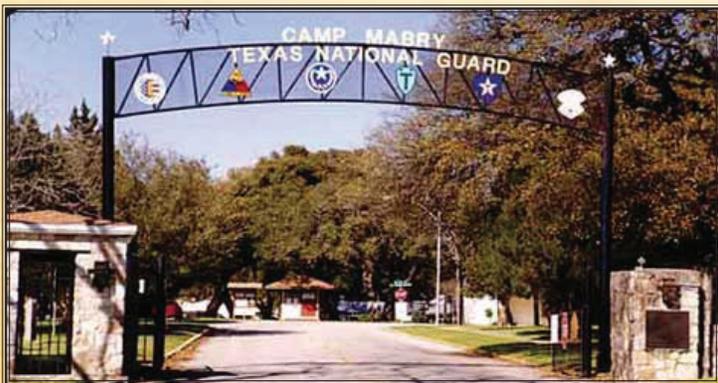
Jeff told me that the mission statement of the museum is "To tell the story of the Texas Military Forces from 1823 through the present and into the future, support the mission of the Texas Military Forces, honor our veterans, educate our fellow citizens, promote esprit d' corps among the men and women of the Texas Military Forces, and inspire our youth to serve."

Annual community events at Camp Mabry include Heroes Day in April of each year and Close Encounters that are generally conducted around Memorial Day weekend.

The museum has expanded exhibit space and now includes a new exhibit focused on the Global War on Terror and expanded exhibits on the 49th Armored Division, the Cold War, and the Korean War. Group tours may be booked by conducting the Museum office.

Other "things to do" at Camp Mabry include fishing in ponds, using the running track, overnight camping, and using the several picnic facilities. Community groups wishing to have a venue for activities can apply for space in several auditoriums and can reserve the running track for athletic events. While using the track will generally involve a nominal fee, promoters of activities will not have to pay for security or apply for permits from the City of Austin.

Camp Mabry clearly enhances the value of Community. In the 3rd and final installment of this article we will discuss the future of Camp Mabry and how it will help us build community value.



The former main gate of Camp Mabry, home of the Texas Military Forces. (Courtesy photo)

149FW Det. 1 facilitates joint training, hosts Texas Red Flag

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Phil Fountain
149th Fighter Wing Public Affairs*

YANKEE RANGE, Texas – For over a quarter of a century, Detachment 1, a subcomponent of the Texas Air National Guard's 149th Fighter Wing, has managed Yankee Range, the northern of two ranges that comprise the McMullen Target Complex, which is part of Naval Air Station Kingsville. The nearly 3,000-acre remote location in McMullen County, Texas, is situated between San Antonio and the Rio Grande Valley.

Yankee Range is primarily used for practice bomb and gun-strafing operations to enable the Air National Guard unit to accomplish its primary federal mission to train combat-ready F-16 pilots for worldwide operations. In addition to being able to accept air-launched munitions from fighter aircraft, the location has the capability to accomplish numerous state training missions as well.

"We're 1 of 13 such ranges throughout the country that are managed by the National Guard," said Capt. Eric Hoopes, commander of Det. 1. "We have maneuver space, are [geographically] positioned to assist with disaster preparedness staging, and have numerous targets and mock villages for both air and ground components to accomplish realistic training."

From May 30-June 1, 2012, Det. 1 hosted a joint service, multinational event called Texas Red Flag, which allowed for aerial and ground maneuvers involving Texas Air and Army Guard personnel, as well as members of the air force of the Czech Republic, one of Texas' counterparts within the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

The exercise allowed the Citizen-Airmen and soldiers to sharpen their combat readiness skills and improve capabilities in order to support civil authorities during times of disaster within the state.

During the activities, participants operated alongside each other for close air support operations with Gunfighter F-16s and practiced insertion and extraction maneuvers into a faux village, known as a military operations in urban terrain site, with Texas Army National Guard helicopters from the 449th Aviation Support Battalion assigned to the Martindale Army Airfield, in San Antonio.

Additionally, C-130H tactical aircraft with the Texas Air National Guard's 136th Airlift Wing at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth trained on employing counter-measures to evade ground attack during low-altitude combat support missions.

Tactical Air Control Party and Joint Terminal Attack Controllers from the Texas Air National Guard's 147th Air Support Operations Squadron at Houston's Ellington Field received on-the-ground CAS training.

"We integrate air power into the Army commander's

ground scheme of maneuver," said Lt. Col. John Olsen, commander of the 147ASOS. In a real-world situation, Olsen, also an F-16 pilot, explained he would "serve as the senior air liaison to the combatant brigade or battalion commander, and two [TACP's and JTAC's] are with each battalion of Army soldiers."

The role of the TACP's and JTAC's is to communicate with the combat pilots from the ground, and "only they are allowed, by law, to clear [the aircraft's] weapon release when close air support is required in close proximity of friendly forces," Olsen added. Additionally, they "coordinate with senior leaders, and can add items to the (Air Tasking Order)."

Additionally, members of the Texas Air National Guard's 149th Communications Flight, a part of the 149th Fighter Wing, established a satellite communications link and live video feed from Det. 1 to the state's National Guard headquarters at Camp Mabry, in Austin.

"This is about facilitating cross-service training, using our money wisely, and increasing efficiencies within the state," said Col. Thomas Duke, director of operations for the Texas Air National Guard and officer-in-charge of the joint operation. "These activities help coordinate training not only for overseas missions, but here at home."

The Texas C-130's can "quickly position personnel and assets throughout the state. In a disaster, the JTACs can use this training to assist with search and rescue," Duke said.



Members of the Texas Air National Guard's 147th Air Support Operations Squadron aboard a Texas Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook helicopter above Yankee Range, the northern of two ranges that comprise the McMullen Target Complex, which is part of Naval Air Station Kingsville, and is managed by Detachment 1, a subcomponent of the Texas Air National Guard's 149th Fighter Wing at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, on May 30, 2012.

Texas lends a hand at the US-Mexico

Story by Staff Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson
Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

For the Texas Military Forces, a mission on the border is nothing new. In 1916, members of the Texas Army National Guard, along with Guardsmen from Arizona and New Mexico, were called up to defend the border after a devastating Mexican raid in the Big Bend region of Texas. At the peak of the 1916-1917 border call-ups, Texas provided 3,762 troops stretched across large portions of the Southwest.

More recently, though TXMF members have been deployed in support of other border missions, providing extra eyes and ears to the Customs and Border Protection agency to help curtail both drug and human trafficking. All

three sub-agencies of the CBP, the Border Patrol, the Office of Air and Marine, and the Office of Field Operations have benefitted from the partnership of CBP and TXMF, going back as far as Operation Jump Start.

Operation Jump Start, announced by President George W. Bush in May of 2006, gave the Border Patrol National Guard assistance in strengthening border security and fulfilling non-law enforcement duties while up to 6,000 additional agents were hired and trained. Open-source intelligence work, translation duties and infrastructure work performed by TXMF members allowed the CPB to focus on train-

ing new agents. Ending in July of 2008, the partnership was regarded as a successful collaboration between law enforcement agencies and the National Guard.

At the ceremony marking the close of the Operation Jump Start mission, David V. Aguilar, then chief of the Border Patrol stressed the pride taken in the relationship between CBP and the National Guard.

“Within law enforcement, there is one word that we put a lot of weight on,” said David V. Aguilar, chief of the Border Patrol. “That is the word ‘partner.’ ... Today, I am very, very proud to use that word ... with the National Guard, as true partners. ...,” said Aguilar. “Today, I am very proud to call every individual that wears the uniform of the National Guard, has ever worn it or will wear it, or is in any way affiliated with the National Guard ... our true partners, and for that we truly thank you.”

CBP officials weren’t the only people who considered the mission a success.

Lt. Col. Paul Hernandez, Texas National Guard commander for the El Paso sector of the mission, harbored no doubt the mission to support the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Agency was successful. “I think the mission was a complete success,” the El Paso sector commander said during an interview in 2008.

“I visited with new Border



Members of the Customs and Border Protection agency and Joint Task Force Liberty discuss the upcoming flight. Although National Guardsmen do not have any law enforcement powers on the border, they do provide air transportation for CBP agents, allowing them to move faster and faster through rough country side. (Photos by Sgt. Amy Urbina, Joint Task Force Liberty Public Affairs)

border to give agents longer “legs”

Patrol civilians and officers and reflected on when we first started, wondering how it was going to go.” However, within a short time, he said, “Soldiers and Border Patrol agents fully embraced the mission, with the level of cooperation increasing throughout the nation.”

Overall, more than 176,000 undocumented aliens were apprehended, more than 1,100 vehicles seized, and more than 321,000 pounds of marijuana and cocaine were seized. National Guard pilots logged more than 28,000 hours of flight time for aviation assistance. More than 19 miles of road, 38 miles of fencing and 96 miles of vehicle barriers built and close to 720 miles of road were repaired.

Operation River Watch #2 is the current National Guard and Customs and Border Protection partnership operation focused on southwest border security along the Texas / Mexico border. Unlike Operation Jump Start the current joint border mission is less focused on repairing roads and building fences.

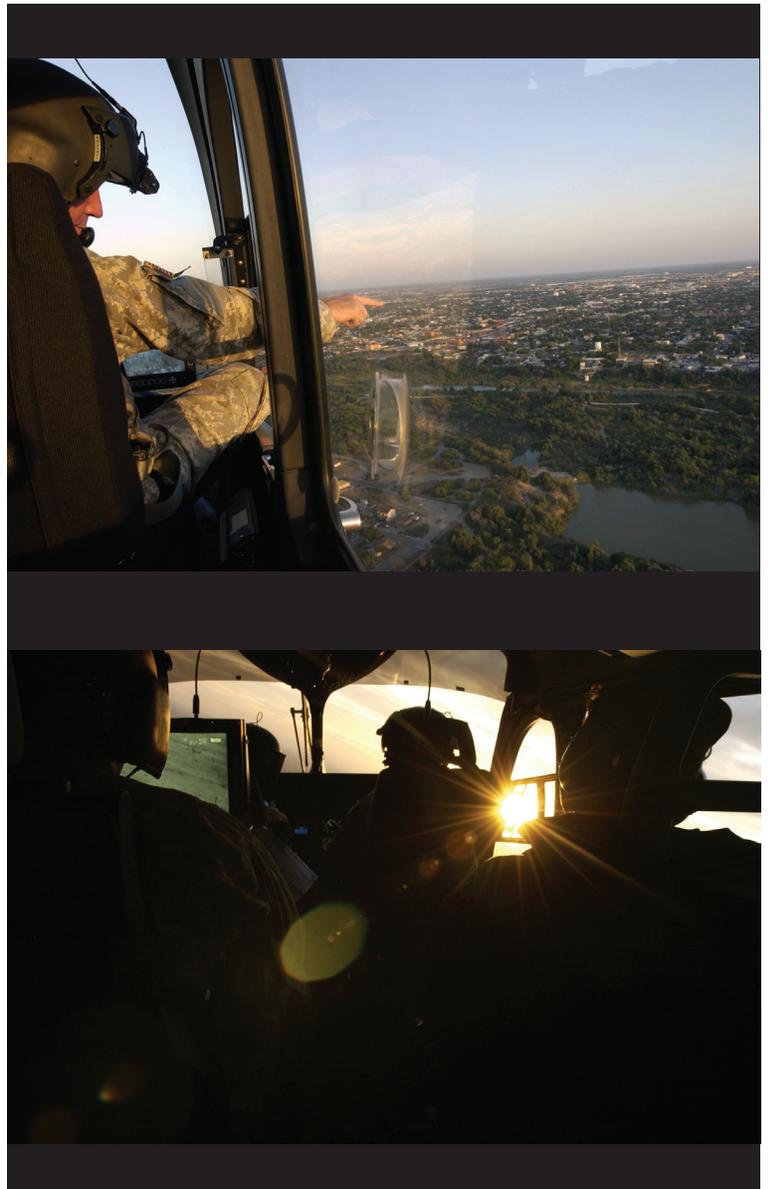
Instead, National Guard members are providing longer “legs,” to allow CBP agents to cover more ground in the course of their duties. Much of the border is rugged terrain, and nimble helicopters allow the Border Patrol agents to get farther, faster than ever before.

The members of Joint Task Force Liberty, a South Carolina led task force comprised of Soldiers & Airmen from 14 states & territories, operate out of Laredo and Harlingen. Two flight companies, using UH-72 Lakota helicopters and a modified observation airplane, support the CBP mission in an “observe and detect” role. The aircraft are fitted with several mission specific devices, including cameras with infrared sensors, a searchlight, mapping capabilities and digital video recorders.

JTFL maintains an aggressive flying hour program over both the Laredo and Rio Grande Valle areas. Each flight company will spend about 320 hours in the air per month, while the airplane pilots log an additional 200 flight hours.

With cooperative weather, and operating at full

capacity since March 1, 2012, JTFL has flown over 3000 hours, directly supporting the CBP mission. JTFL successes include seizing over 16,000 lbs. of marijuana, apprehension of over 5,500 undocumented aliens (UDA), and over 3,000 UDA Turn-Backs back into Mexico.



In the air, CBP agents use various means of detecting suspicious activity, including cameras, searchlights, and digital recorders. The National Guardsmen allow the agents to roam further afield than in the past,

Rising VI helps mentor, guide Airmen through career, concerns

By Airman 1st Class Alicia Lacy
147th Reconnaissance Wing Public Affairs

With many organizations focused on promoting the morale of airmen, the Rising VI is a different type of airmen-focused organization. While promoting morale is one facet, the 147th Reconnaissance Wing Rising Six here operates on the premise of airmen helping airmen by providing a forum for airmen, from airmen basic to technical sergeant, to discuss issues pertinent to them candidly and without the bounds of rank structure.

The Rising VI is a private organization of airmen working together with the primary mission to promote morale and provide support to airmen, while mentoring airmen and keeping a clear line of communication among them and the goings on at the base.

The organization also supports programs geared towards the needs of enlisted airmen, as well as promotes professionalism and camaraderie, provides feedback to senior leadership, maintains a channel of communication for the implementation of policy and enhances military life through nonprofit events, recreational activities and charitable contributions, information from organization states.

"They were looking for an organization that met the needs of E-6 and below," said Tech Sgt. Bao-Viet Luu, the electronic system security noncommissioned officer in-charge and the unit training manager with the 147th Security Forces Squadron and interim vice president for the organization, about the birth of the organization in 2009. "We have all those councils, the Top 3 and Chief's Council, but there is a huge gap for the enlisted corps."

As a result, the Rising VI was founded at the 147th Reconnaissance Wing in July 2009. Chief Master Sgt. James Brown, the Air Support Operations Squadron chief enlisted manager and the president of the Top 3 here, said he tries to attend the Rising VI meetings so senior leadership can understand the concerns of the airmen and offer support and guidance.

"It helps me understand what their concerns are and what issues they're working so if we can offer any

support or any backing to them as well as to try to give them some guidance too because sometimes experience helps to get more accomplished," Brown said.

"If they start to come across roadblocks, that's the time when the senior NCOs come in to clear the roadblocks for the younger people and accomplish what they want because they're doing some really great and outstanding things," Brown added.

Tech. Sgt. Rhonda L. Hamell, the unit deployment manager with the 147th Maintenance Group, participated in a similar organization in 2009 when assigned to the 131st Bomb Wing, Missouri Air National Guard at St. Louis, Mo.

"It's a benefit because you get to know what's going on around the base, you get to connect with other airmen and it's a way of getting more involved and if you want to grow professionally," Hamell said. "It's helped me because I was able to get promoted. I did the mock board and was able to get more involved."

Since its inception, the organization has helped raise funds to support the family readiness group, ship deployment boxes to troops in theater and work with various nonprofit organizations to give back to the surrounding community.

The organization also offers a bulk of knowledge to airmen regarding career progression and mentoring, and conducts mock boards for those preparing for promotion boards.

The group has a membership of about 80 airmen and meets once a month during drill weekends where members are briefed on upcoming courses, career advancement, and professional development and any information regarding the base, Luu said. Membership is open to any airmen ranked E-1 through E-6.

For more information, contact the Rising VI at 147rw.rising.six@ang.af.mil.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND YOUR TEXAS MILITARY FORCES ONLINE?

AGD Sites

- Command Group
- Air National Guard
- Army National Guard
- Texas State Guard
- Joint Task Force - 71
- 36th Infantry Division
- Environmental
- Job Opportunities
- Government Affairs
- Inspector General
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HERE RESTS IN HONORED GLORY
A COMRADE IN ARMS
KNOWN BUT TO GOD

MEXICAN REVOLUTION

WWI

WWII

KOREA

VIETNAM

HURRICANE CARLA

HURRICANE CELIA

HURRICANE ALICIA

HURRICANE GILBERT

DESERT SHIELD

DESERT STORM

GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

HURRICANE RITA

HURRICANE KATRINA

HURRICANE IKE

TEXAS MILITARY FORCES