

# Alabama Guardsman

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A publication for the Citizen-Soldiers & Airmen of Alabama



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# Guard prepares for Alabama's number one threat

by Capt. Andrew Richardson  
Public Affairs Office

MONTGOMERY-- The Alabama National Guard takes disaster response seriously. Guardsmen from units across the state gathered at the headquarters here, April 28, 2012, for a Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) drill to rehearse the state's hurricane operations response plan.

Staff members from the Alabama Emergency Management Agency were on-hand for the rehearsal due to the close working relationship of the AEMA and the National Guard during disaster relief. "We are a coordinating agency," said Jeff Byard, AEMA Executive Operations Officer. "The National Guard is our force multiplier." Members of U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM), the U.S. military's command responsible for North America, were also on-hand, including the Ala-



Andrew Richardson/photo

*The command group looks on and asks questions about the hurricane ROC drill. L to R: Jeff Byard, AEMA Executive Operations Officer; Col. Eddie Porter, ALNG Chief of Staff; Maj. Gen. Charles Gailes, USNORTHCOM Task Force 51 Commander; Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, ALNG Adjutant General; Brig. Gen. Allen M. Harrell, ALNG Director of Joint Staff; Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie Pike, ALNG Command Sergeant Major.*

bama National Guard's Maj. Gen. Charles Gailes, now commander of USNORTHCOM's Task Force 51.

The rehearsal included Alabama National Guard Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) and individual unit actions to prepare for a hurricane response. The event covered pre-hurricane season activities, hurricane approach through land fall, and beyond. This ensures that Guardsmen fully understand the response plan at

all levels and synchronize actions from the JFHQ level down to the unit level in response to a hurricane.

Guardsmen briefed from two lecterns standing on the panhandle of Florida on a map that took up the entire drill hall floor. Other Soldiers used placards to show where their respective units would provide a particular asset at a particular time during response as a 4-foot-wide hurri- **(Please see *THREAT*, page 6)**

## Alabama Guardsman

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## On the Cover

During pre-deployment training, Soldiers are exposed to many different scenarios to help prepare them for encounters in theater. Role players in padded Blauer suits, act as aggressors to sharpen Soldiers' hand-to-hand combat skills. (image by Spc. Brenda Thomas).

## Adjutant General

# Focusing on what's right with the Alabama Guard



**Maj. Gen.  
Perry Smith**

As you can read in this issue of the Alabama Guardsman, I recently went to Pelham Range to visit the Pre-mobilization Training Assistance Element (PTAE) and

the 1/167th Infantry Battalion. I'm going to brag just a minute. While I was there, I witnessed a high-value civilian extraction rehearsal. The exercise was flawless! Of course, this is what I

expected from the 1/167th, just as I expect excellence from all Alabama National Guard units. I was so sure of their performance that I invited another cabinet member, Alabama Emergency Management Agency director Art Faulkner, as well as opened the event to the media. None of the visitors were less than very impressed at the training quality, superior facilities, and the expertise and character of the Soldiers they met.

There are a lot of problems facing the Alabama National Guard and the military as a whole right now: unemployment, funding cuts, ongoing war and more. But, for right now, I just want to focus on

what is right with the Alabama National Guard and its Soldiers and Airmen.

You are highly-trained, proficient warriors. You have honor, character and loyalty. You continually prove to the active duty force, to your leaders, to your state and your nation that you are capable of doing more with less and accomplishing any task set before you with professionalism and integrity. When an oil slick from the worst oil disaster in American history threatened the shores of Alabama, who came to the rescue? The Alabama National Guard. When more than 60 tornadoes ripped across our state (Please see *GUARD*, page 6)

## State Command Sergeant Major

# Standards, discipline and excellence in our Soldiers



**Command Sgt.  
Maj.  
Eddie Pike**

The importance of discipline and high standards in the military cannot be overstated. Values and traditions preserve our profession of arms through time, but

discipline and high standards preserve our force day to day. Disciplined leaders enforce high standards for themselves and their soldiers. Disciplined Sol-

diers achieve high levels of performance, thereby improving the effectiveness and survivability of our units in combat. Precision in our actions yields excellence in our Soldiers.

In today's operational environment, National Guard Soldiers are key components in the war. National Guard Soldiers have unique and individual skill sets that the Army recognizes as being beneficial to the fight. Our Soldiers must be as fit as our active duty counterparts. The standards are the same for all components of the military. All of us, officers, NCOs, and junior enlisted

Soldiers alike, are challenged to maintain educational requirements and Soldier Fitness concurrently with daily activities.

Soldiers should do everything, every day to live the Army Values and to perform their duties to the highest Army standards. We depend on our Soldiers to show up for drill or any other military activity ready to go. This means that during the month, on off-duty time, Soldiers must take it upon themselves to do PT, maintain their weight, keep medical and dental readiness appointments, keep current on military educa- (Please see *EXCELLENCE*, page 6)

# Realistic scenarios prepare Alabama Guard units for deployments

by Spc. Brenda Thomas  
Public Affairs Office

The Alabama Army National Guard's 1/167th Infantry Battalion and 152nd Military Police Company will deploy overseas to Afghanistan and Qatar respectively this summer. Prior to their deployments, the units undergo extensive pre-mobilization training conducted by the Alabama National Guard's Pre-mobilization Training Assistance Element (PTAE) at Fort McClellan Army National Guard Training Center and Pelham Range. The PTAE is responsible for ensuring units have completed key individual and unit tasks before



Brenda Thomasphoto

*Soldiers take on the role of local nationals to simulate interactions that they experience in theater. Soldiers learn basic phrases in the language native to their country of operations, but often have the help of a translator to ensure communication is clear and accurate.*



Brenda Thomasphoto

*Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, Alabama's Adjutant General, addressed the members of the 167th Infantry Battalion during pre-deployment training at Pelham Range.*

reporting to a mobilization site for final validation. These tasks cover critical skills such as weapons training, hand-to-hand combatives, and perimeter security. About 350 Army National Guard Soldiers were preparing at the training cen-

ter May 8, 2012. One of the scenarios the Soldiers faced was an urban setting, realistic training for what the Soldiers will face overseas. Kunday Village, named by the Soldiers, tested many of the Soldiers' tactical and communication skills. Other Soldiers role-played as local nationals, both friendly and aggressive, to help make the experience as real as possible.

"The Soldiers live here for 21 days," said Maj. Tim Maples, PTAE officer in charge. "We've incorporated lane scenarios that are relevant and realistic as possible for what they will experience in theater." In previous years, pre-deployment train-

ing consisted of written and oral exam-style evaluations. In this new method of training, Soldiers get hands-on experience with all of their tasks and battle drills. "This way they can see it, live it, and understand it," said Maples.

Upon completion of PTAE training, the Soldiers will return to their units and then attend final mobilization training at a mobilization station prior to their deployment.

"We have what we think is the best PTAE," said Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, Alabama National Guard Adjutant General. "We want our soldiers to go over there with the best training."

# Snap Shots

A look at some of the recent highlights from the PTAE



Brenda Thomas/photo

*A search and extraction team rolls into a training village to locate and rescue a role player that has been captured by enemy forces. Team members practice together many times to make the mission as fast and seamless as possible.*



Brenda Thomas/photo

*Instructors set off small simulated explosive devices around the training site to simulate audio and visual obstructions the Soldiers may experience in a combat zone.*



Brenda Thomas/photo

*Soldiers load captured insurgents into a truck to be transported. Soldiers playing the role of insurgents are known as OPFOR.*

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### *(THREAT continued from page 2)*

-cane symbol approached and then landed on the map that spanned 40 feet wide and 85 feet long.

This rehearsal led to May's weeklong hurricane response exercise where the Alabama National Guard will practice in a simulated environment the actions taken in storm response, again from pre-landfall operations to days into the response.

These rehearsals and exercises are key to mission success. "The reason we did

so well last year with the tornadoes is because of training events like this," said Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, Alabama National Guard Adjutant General.

Even though this rehearsal is for hurricanes, the preparations, coordination and many of the missions are the same for most disasters that may face the state. "Hurricanes are what we're known for," said Smith. "This is what we do." "A hurricane will always be the number one threat to Ala-

bama," said Byard.

"The final result of all the preparation and training prior to this ROC drill, the conduct of this drill and then the exercise in May is that the Alabama National Guard is fully prepared to respond to a hurricane by the June 1 beginning of hurricane season," said Lt. Col. Jim Hawkins, Alabama National Guard Deputy Director of Military Support.

### *(GUARD continued from page 3)*

killing hundreds and devastating thousands of lives, who searched for survivors, passed out food and water, provided security and much more? The Alabama National Guard. When the United States ramped up efforts in Iraq and then in Afghanistan, who provided an average of 1,500 troops a year? The Alabama National Guard.

In every instance, when you have been called, you have risen to the challenge and have proven that you are a premier force and the best National Guard organization in the United States.

This is, of course, in great part, due to your character to which I referred earlier. This is also due to the excellent training you receive

### *(EXCELLENCE continued from page 3)*

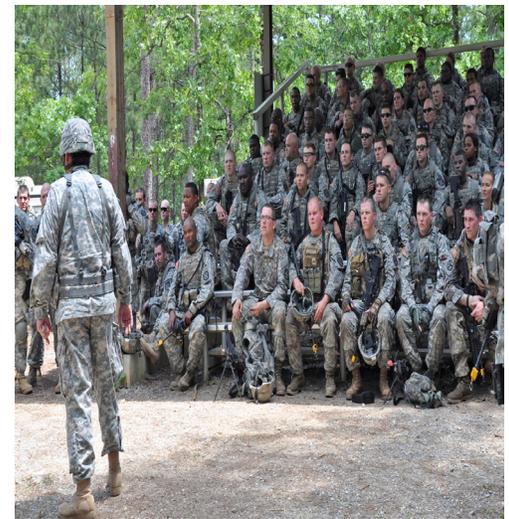
-tion, and maintain MOS and grade proficiency. This requires a lot of self discipline and time management in our soldiers. A career in the National Guard takes dedication and a commitment to high standards. National Guard soldiers

in this state by the PTAE and other units and the great facilities that we have at our training centers.

There are plenty of problems to address – and I will address them another time. As we near Armed Forces week and Memorial Day, however, I wanted to just brag on you a little. When I visit with adjutants general from other states, I am more than proud to say I am from Alabama. I brag about you to National Guard Bureau, the governor, other adjutants general and even my friends and family. However, I wanted to make sure that I also brag on you to you. So, job well done! Now, let's keep it up. Lead from the front!

must maintain a balance between military duties and civilian life. It's hard, but it's not impossible. Commanders and Unit leaders are the greatest source of help in this balance. Soldiers should never hesitate to call on team leaders, their

First Sergeant, or Unit Commander to help them navigate the demands of their National Guard career. It's their job. Great leaders develop great leaders.



Brenda Thomas/photo

*Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, Alabama's Adjutant General, addressed the members of the 167th Infantry Battalion during pre-deployment training at Pelham Range.*



# ALARNG Monthly Safety Bulletin

**Safety First! Prevention Always!**

27 April 2012

## *Distractions: They're Everywhere*

As good as cell phones might be for instant communication, they contribute to bad driving. It is becoming increasingly clear that talking on a cell phone distracts a driver from seeing hazards and responding quickly. Have you ever driven behind a slow vehicle, and then passed it only to see a cell phone conversation taking place? Minutes later the driver speeds past you because he just hung up? Aggravating isn't it? It's also a serious hazard.

Drivers can't afford to be distracted by cell phones or anything else. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in the United States says some form of driver distraction is a contributing factor in 20 to 30 per cent of vehicle crashes.



### **Some common driving distractions include:**

- ◆ Cell phone use
- ◆ Reading or sending text messages
- ◆ Reaching for a moving object inside the vehicle
- ◆ Looking at an object or event outside of the vehicle
- ◆ Reading a newspaper, map, or document
- ◆ Applying makeup
- ◆ Playing with the GPS or other electronic gadget

### **Here are some reminders for driving safely without distractions:**

- ◆ Make sure you, and the workers you supervise, use cell phones safely. The safest thing is to make your calls before you set out. If you receive a cell phone call while you are driving, let the caller leave a message, pull over, and call that person back. Reinforce this safety policy by issuing regular reminders and by setting a good example.
- ◆ Consider how your children might be observing your unsafe habits and thinking of them as something normal that everyone does. If you don't want your children jabbering away on cell phones while they are driving, don't let them see you doing it, ever.
- ◆ Be aware that using a hands-free, voice-activated cell phone can still distract you.
- ◆ Keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road.
- ◆ Never read or send text messages while driving.
  - ◆ A safe driver also stops before checking maps and addresses, looking at paperwork, and dealing with similar distractions.
  - ◆ Even eating, drinking, fiddling with the radio or vehicle sound system, adjusting heaters and digging items out of the glove box while driving have caused vehicle crashes.
  - ◆ Arguments or stressful conversations with passengers can also divert the driver's attention from the road. We know better than to drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, but fatigue, stress and strong emotions such as anger can also impair the ability to drive safely.



**Don't let yourself get distracted while driving. Keep your mind on your driving; keep your eyes on the road, and your hands on the wheel! Your life and the life of other drivers around you may just depend on it.**

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