



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 4, 2016**

Release: 16-023

### **National Guard and State Defense Force participate in Alaska Shield 2016**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** —The state of Alaska held an emergency response exercise in communities throughout the state March 31 – April 2. Nearly 150 Airmen and Soldiers from the Alaska National Guard and members of the Alaska State Defense Force teamed up with other members of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs during Alaska Shield 2016.

The exercise included a plane crash in the North Slope Borough due to a cyber-attack. Upon request for support from the state, 36 Guardsmen from the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, provided transportation, security, shelter and medical support to the simulated plane crash in the vicinity of Barrow.

Simultaneously, the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management's State Emergency Operation Center was stood up, housing personnel from numerous agencies in a central location to consolidate and streamline interagency coordination for the response. The National Guard also stood up a Joint Operations Center to respond to requests for and coordination of Air and Army Guard assets and the ASDF.

Participating organizations later began to receive reports about an active shooter at a high school in Cordova. Guardsmen from the 297th BFSB, with assistance from the ASDF, provided communications support; and the 297th BFSB, with help from the Air National Guard's 168th Wing, also assisted with post shooting mortuary affairs.

The city of Palmer was notionally evacuated in response to a simulated HAZMAT incident of a tanker truck carrying 13,000 gallons of liquid sulfuric acid, which collided with a bus at the Palmer fairgrounds. Alaska Guardsmen with the 38th Troop Command's 103rd Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team provided HAZMAT response to include survey, decontamination and communications. The 297th Military Police Company assisted local law enforcement by providing security at the point of distribution, the local hospital and a temporary shelter. UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation, were used to provide notional casualty evacuation support. Medical personnel from civilian and government agencies worked to help sustain simulated casualties. Approximately 20 members of the Alaska State Defense Force provided assistance with casualty evacuation and medical support.

Members of the Mongolian Ministry of Defense and Mongolian National Emergency Management Agency observed how the AKNG, ASDF and DHS&EM participated in the exercise by visiting Alaska Shield events on JBER, in Anchorage, Palmer and Wasilla.

Several other communities throughout the state practiced a variety of emergency scenarios including Craig, Fairbanks, Kenai Peninsula Borough, Ketchikan, Kodiak, North Pole, Sitka and Valdez.

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*See next page for photos*

PHOTOS

1. **Attached pdf** includes story and photos.
2. **Flickr album** for full resolution and additional photographs.  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard/albums/72157664392153674>
3. **DVIDS link** includes story and photos. (DVIDS is generally accessible from all computers)

160402-Z-ZY202-004



Sgt. Joseph St. Germain (left) and Staff Sgt. Andrew Markham, both Soldiers of the 103rd Civil Support Team, Alaska National Guard, close a valve on an Alaska Railroad water tender, April 2, 2016, at the Alaska State Fairgrounds during exercise Alaska Shield 2016. The tender served as the source of a simulated sulfuric acid leak, necessitating the skills of the 103rd CST, an organization composed of Soldiers and Air National Guardsmen. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. David Bedard)

160402-Z-ZY202-024



Amy Bohmbach, a Palmer Fire Department firefighter, assesses simulated casualty, Alaska State Defense Force Staff Sgt. Steven Flippen, April 2, 2016, at the Alaska State Fairgrounds during exercise Alaska Shield 2016. Area first responders exercised mass-casualty response during a simulated crash of a passenger train into a schoolbus. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. David Bedard)

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-3-

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Members of the Mongolian Ministry of Defense and Mongolian National Emergency Management Agency meet with Alaska Shield 2016 exercise participants in the Joint Operations Center at the Alaska National Guard Armory on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, April 2, 2016. Members of the Mongolian Ministry of Defense and Mongolian NEMA observed the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs participation in Alaska Shield 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead)



160402-Z-ZY202-028



An Alaska Army National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk belonging to 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment takes off following a response to a simulated mass-casualty event, April 2, 2016, at the Alaska State Fairgrounds during exercise Alaska Shield 2016. Area first responders exercised mass-casualty response during a simulated crash of a passenger train into a schoolbus. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. David Bedard)

160402-Z-ZY202-013



Alaska State Defense Force Lt. Col. David Stevens, ASDF deputy chief information officer, monitors the satellite uplink for the ASDF Field Emergency Operations Center, April 2, 2016, at the Alaska State Fairgrounds during exercise Alaska Shield 2016. The operations center also includes HF and Alaska Mobile Radio communications. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. David Bedard)