

THE DISPATCH

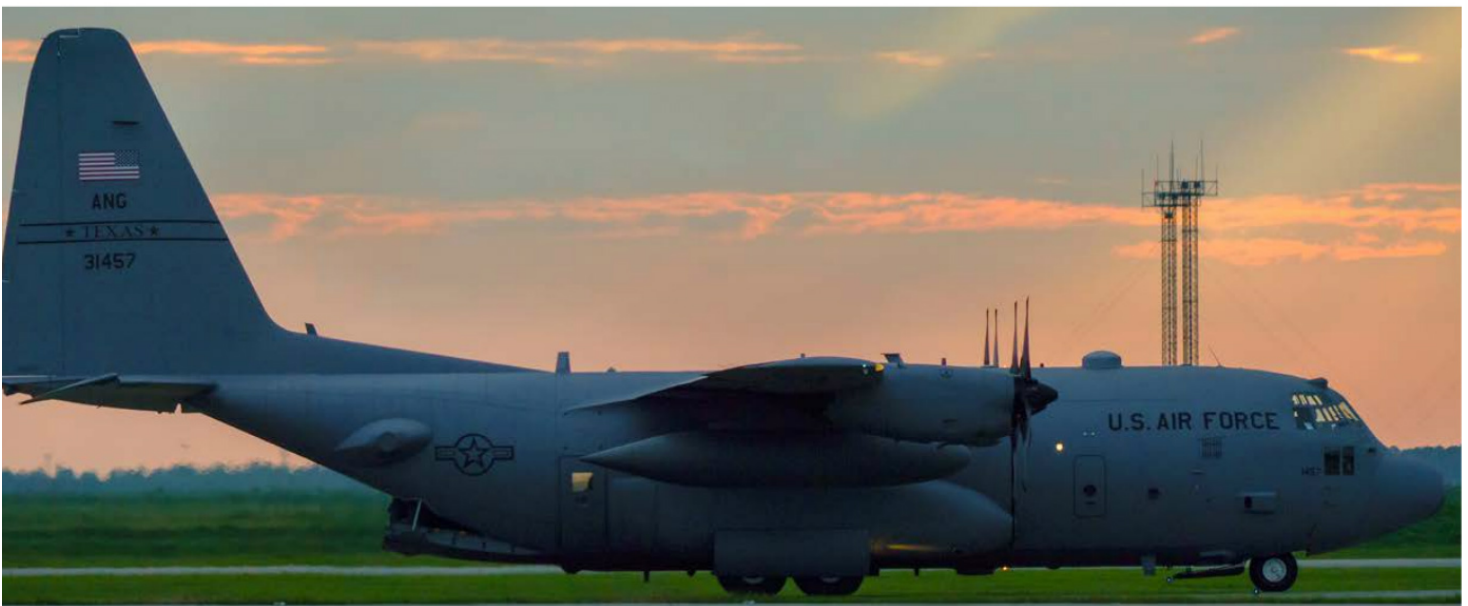
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HURRICANE HARDVIEW



OCTOBER 2017

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



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TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

A THANK YOU TO ALL OUR TEXAS GUARDSMEN



"I am proud of you and how seamlessly you partnered with local, state and federal first responders to help so many."

MAJ. GEN. JOHN F. NICHOLS
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL - TEXAS

I want to take a moment to thank each of you for your hard work and dedication to our fellow Texans affected by Hurricane Harvey. For the first time since World War I, 100 percent of our Texas Guardsmen were mobilized at one time, in support of both domestic disaster response at home and in support of the nation's warfighter and peace-keeping needs across the globe.

Hurricane Harvey left great destruction in its path and the recovery process will take many years. However, the Texas Military Department's response to Hurricane Harvey, alongside our partners, saved lives and helped many Texans take the first step toward rebuilding.

You rescued or evacuated more than 35,000 people from harm's way and saved thousands of beloved pets. You provided shelter to 26,000 people without homes. You fed livestock from the back of our Chinook helicopters, helping to maintain the nation's food supply and preserve the state's agricultural industry. When commerce and infrastructure resources collapsed, you distributed clean water, food, ice and diapers to more than 100,000 Texas families in need. In the midst of this, you went on to provide additional resources and support to the Florida National Guard following Hurricane Irma's devastation.

You continue to show our civilian leaders and our fellow Texans that the Texas Military Department is ready to provide whatever is needed to care for our families, friends and neighbors in the face of disaster.

President Donald Trump and Governor Greg Abbott saw firsthand the impact you had on affected communities.

I am proud of you and how seamlessly you partnered with local, state and federal first responders to help so many. Because of your efforts, hundreds of thousands of people are on the road to recovery and will be able to rebuild their communities. You gave our fellow Texans more than life-saving aid when they needed it most. You also gave them hope for tomorrow.

As we look toward the future, the holiday season is quickly approaching. Take this time to refit and recover. Identify resources that may need to be replaced, record your lessons learned and reset for future operations. This will set us up for success when we are needed next.

For those of you who are deployed overseas, remember to care for yourself and your team as you conduct your missions. Communicate to one another. Work hard, but identify opportunities for your team to rest. If you see a service member in need, reach out and let your leadership know. Support each other every day, especially as you approach the holiday season.

Thank you for the work you've done and the way you've treated each of our fellow Texans in need with dignity, respect and care. You exemplify what it means to be a Texas Guardsman – Texans Serving Texas.

Duty, Honor, Texas.

FROM THE TOP

TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

“You continue to show our civilian leaders and our fellow Texans, that the Texas Military Department is ready to provide whatever is needed to care for our families, friends and neighbors in the face of disaster.”



Maj. Gen. John Nichols, The Adjutant General of Texas, and Texas Gov. Greg Abbott prepare to greet troops Sep. 2, 2017 at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base. The Governor was in Houston with President Donald Trump to visit areas affected by the flooding caused by Hurricane Harvey. (U.S Air National Guard Photo By Master Sgt. Sean Cowher)

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DOMESTIC OPERATIONS RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD



(ABOVE) From left to right, The Honorable Kenneth P. Rapuano, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Global Security, Brig. Gen. Patrick Hamilton, Commander of the Domestic Operations Task Force, Command Sgt. Maj. Elizabeth Shockley, Senior Enlisted Advisor 28th Civil Engineer Squadron, and The Honorable Mr. Robert G. Salesses, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense Integration and DSCA take a group photo during an award ceremony in the Pentagon Hall of Heroes, Washington, D.C., Sept. 24, 2017. The Domestic Operations Taskforce was one of four organizations to receive national recognition for their efforts in preparing to respond to natural or man made disasters.

(RIGHT) Statue given to recipients of the Department of Defense National Preparedness Award 2016 during an award ceremony held in the Pentagon.

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TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

HEROES OF HARVEY

Story By: Staff Sgt. Bethany Anderson
100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

HOUSTON -- Hurricane Harvey carved a path of destruction through countless communities in southeastern Texas for days, after making landfall with an estimated 130 mile per hour winds near Rockport, Texas, August 25, 2017. While storm winds, rain and flood waters brought chaos and tragedy to the area, Texas Guardsmen partnered with local, state and federal first responders, bringing life-saving support and supplies to Texans in need.


Months before Hurricane Harvey struck the Texas coast, the Texas Military Department worked with state and federal partners to plan a concept operation to rehearse inter-agency coordination and joint training. All of the training for Texas National Guard units would be put to the test before, during and after Harvey left its mark on Texas.

“While we don’t want to have to put our training to the test during a tragedy, our citizen-guardsmen remain prepared to help save lives and property, when called,” said Texas Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Patrick M. Hamilton, Dual Status Commander for Hurricane Harvey recovery efforts.

The Texas Military Department began strategically mobilizing Texas Army, Air and State Guardsmen as Harvey entered the Gulf of Mexico and approached the Texas coast. While the storm raged on, they worked with state and federal agencies through a phased approach to put the appropriate military resources in the right place at the right time.

“We are here to help our communities,” said Hamilton. “Working alongside our partner agencies and local first responders, we focused on deploying Guardsmen and resources where they were needed to save lives.”

Within three days of Harvey’s landfall, 12,000 Texas Guardsmen were working around the clock to support Hurricane Harvey relief efforts. It was the first time in since World War I that the entire force was mobilized at once.



U.S. Soldiers, 1-124th Cavalry Squadron, walk through the streets checking on the those affected by Hurricane Harvey, Orange, Texas, Sept. 6, 2017. Police and U.S. Soldiers work together with the focus of helping those affected by Hurricane Harvey. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Joseph Cannon)

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The first priority was search and rescue. Zodiac boats, high-profile vehicles, helicopters and fixed wing aircraft from Texas and across the country were deployed in response to emergency conditions in affected areas.

Guardsmen from across the United States, partner first responders and service members from both active and reserve components waded through waters with boats and high profile vehicles. Overhead helicopter crews worked to airlift Texans stranded on rooftops, while Airmen in C-130s evacuated numerous people to safety.

Texas State Guardsmen were waiting with dry blankets and a smile, for displaced Texans at shelters across the state where evacuees would be identified and reunited with loved ones. Integrating seamlessly into Harvey relief operations, Texas Guardsmen helped with everything from search and rescue to critical life support, logistics support and safety operations.

Texas Guardsmen conducted hundreds of air and ground missions, performing more than 16,000 rescues and evacuating more than 18,000 people and 1,200 animals. As part of the complex inter-agency and joint operation, state and federal partners performed thousands of additional evacuations and rescue operations.

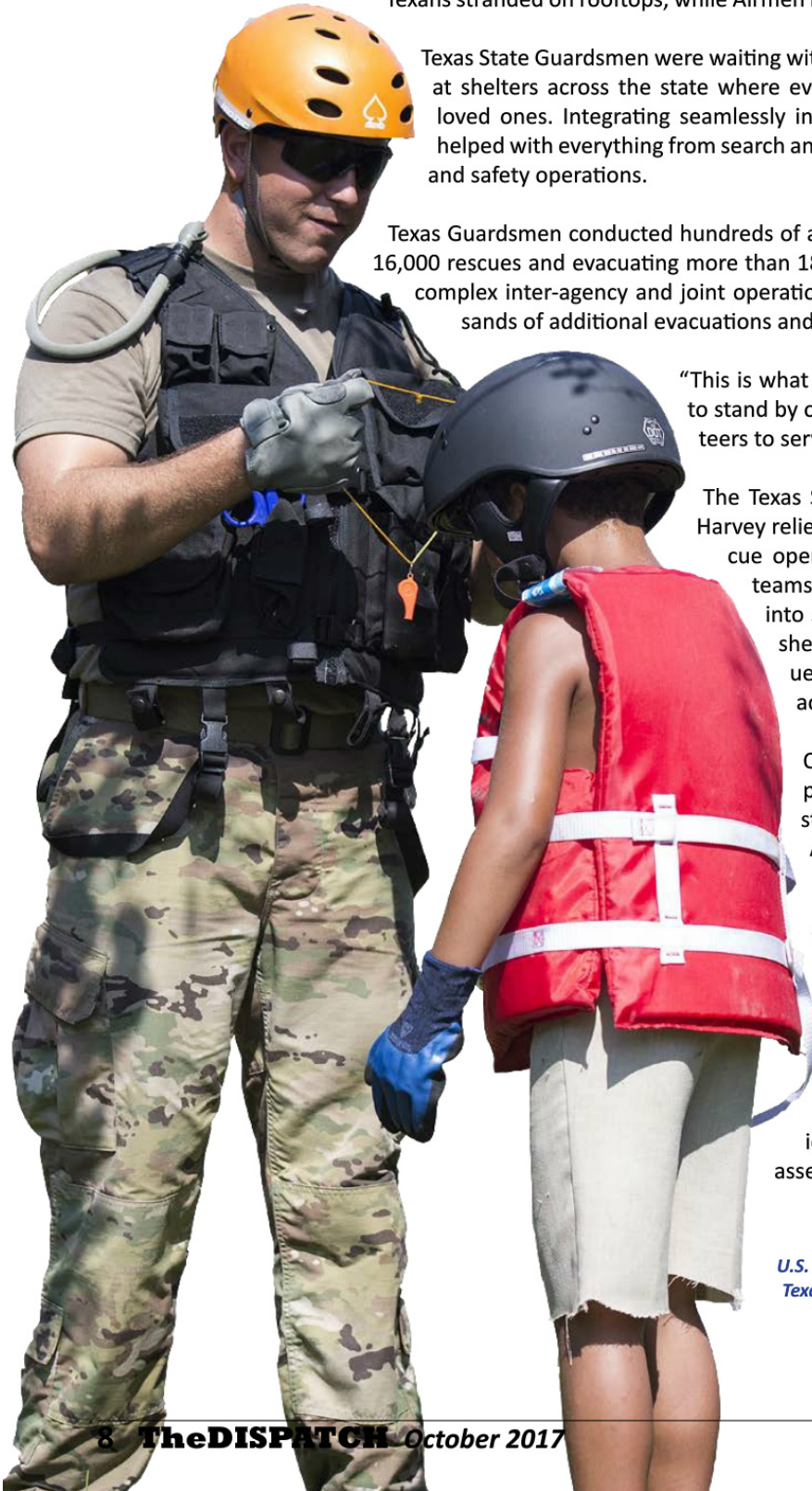
“This is what we train for,” said Hamilton. “And we’re proud to stand by our civilian partners, first responders and volunteers to serve the citizens of Texas.”

The Texas State Guard, an all-volunteer force, supported Harvey relief efforts with 17 boat teams for search and rescue operations and eight Electronic Tracking Network teams to help evacuees locate loved ones checked into shelters. In addition, the 41 Texas State Guard shelter teams sheltered more than 26,000 evacuees and more than 700 animals in 15 shelters across the state.

On Sept. 1, The sun broke through clouds, stopping what seemed like Harvey’s never-ending stream of rain a, causing flood waters to recede. As the threat from severe flooding began to dissipate, Texas Guardsmen switched their focus to supporting recovery and stability operations.

Texas Army and Air National Guardsmen immediately began constructing temporary hospitals and emergency clinics to aid medical first responders until hospitals regained power. Inside Texas Military Department medics worked side-by-side with civilian doctors to assess and treat those injured in the storm.

*U.S. Army Sgt. Jessie Fergeson of the 1-124th Cavalry Squadron, Texas Army National Guard, gives a whistle to a flood victim in Orange, Texas, Sept. 4, 2017.
(U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Carl Greenwell)*



“There’s been some pretty serious injuries,” said Texas National Guard Spc. Sergio Villarreal, 1-143rd Infantry Regiment, “It’s great to see civilians and military working hand in hand.”

Thousands of families and individuals were stranded and without clean drinking water for days after Harvey passed over their cities. To provide Texas families in need of basic necessities, the Texas Military Department managed approximately 30 points of distribution in areas affected by Hurricane Harvey. Guardsmen, working with volunteers from all over the country, distributed food, clean water, hygiene, baby and pet products to more than 100,000 Texan families in cities from Corpus Christi to Beaumont as part of the relief operations.

Texas Military Department chaplains provided emotional and spiritual support to service members and first responders, while simultaneously coordinating with local churches to get much needed supplies to affected Texans. Soldiers from Texas and Ohio worked together to deliver and feed hay to stranded livestock, helping to preserve the local agriculture and economy.

“This is the way I serve my country. I’m here helping people out,” said Texas National Guard Pfc. Jonathan Galindo, 3-133rd Field Artillery, who worked as a member of a POD team in Orange. “You know, the water is high, they’re not able to get out of their homes. It’s great we’re able to provide for them here.”

The mission of the Texas Military Department is to provide the Governor and the President with ready forces in support of state and federal authorities at home and abroad. When they were called upon, the men and women from the Texas Guard were ready and answered that call with a passion to help people.

“Hurricane Harvey left great destruction in its path, and the recovery process will take many years,” said Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, The Adjutant General of Texas. “However, the Texas Military Department’s response to Hurricane Harvey, alongside our partners, saved lives and helped many Texans take the first step towards rebuilding.” **-D**

TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



Texas National Guard soldiers conduct rescue operations in flooded areas around Houston, Texas Aug. 27, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by: 1st-Lt. Zachary West)



Texas National Guard Soldiers with the 551st Multi-Role Bridge Company search flooded neighborhoods in Orange, Texas Sept. 3, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by: Master Sgt. Joshua L. DeMotts)



Texas Army National Guard Soldiers from the 36th Infantry Division transported and distributed food, water, and supplies from Orange County Airport to stranded residents of Orange, Texas on September 6th, 2017. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Melisa Washington)

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RIDERS IN THE SKY

Story and Photos by: Sgt. Steve Johnson
100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

HAMSHIRE, Texas -- Soldiers and Airmen from the Texas Military Department joined forces with civilians from the City of Hamshire for "Operation Hay Drop," Sept. 5, 2017. The goal of the operation was to feed the region's cattle that were stranded by Hurricane Harvey related flooding.

The Soldiers and Airmen, along with CH-47 Chinook helicopters from Texas and Ohio National Guard units, local law enforcement, ranchers and farmers organized the operation as a way to ensure livestock across a five county area were fed. High floodwaters made reaching the animals by land impossible for more than a week. The operation targeted an estimated 10,000 animals across an area of over 50,000 acres.

This mission was a key part of ensuring that once the rescue missions wound down, the long term needs of Texas communities would be addressed.

"It's important for the Texas Military Department to use the assets we have on hand to help protect the livelihoods of people who have been impacted by the floods," said Texas National Guard Maj. Alicia Schweitzer, 71st Troop Command. "This affects people's lives from today to months down the road. If we don't protect their livestock, their communities aren't going to survive in the long run."

Cattle ranches make up a significant part of the local economy in Hamshire. The benefits of the hay drop by Texas Military Department personnel were greatly appreciated by residents of the small town that depend on it.

"The cattle industry in this area is a \$25 million dollar a year industry. Losing that type of dollar amount would be a tremendous hardship on the community," said Tony Viator, a lieutenant with the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department, who was helping with the operation.

With much of his jurisdiction still reeling from Hurricane Harvey, Viator was glad to have access to the resources the Texas Military Department could bring to the region.

"We have a five-county area that, due to the flood waters has approximately 10,000 head of cattle that are trapped on islands, unable to be fed and taken care of by their owners. We asked the Texas Army National Guard for help, and they have done an outstanding job, giving us everything we needed, from pilots, to logistics, to ground support, and help loading the aircraft," said Viator.

Before the operation ended for the day, Texas Guardsmen had loaded and air dropped approximately 1,000 bales. Residents of Hamshire, like rancher Danny Drawhorn were thankful for the help in the wake of Harvey.

"I have about 50 head of cattle in my pasture, probably about \$100,000 worth of cattle, plus they've all got calves with them," said Drawhorn. "This part of the country is America's table-top and when we get 42 inches of rain like we did, it's virtually impossible to get hay back there. This air-drop has just been tremendous for us." **-D**



Soldiers secure hay bales onto a CH-47 Chinook helicopter as it prepares to deliver the feed to cattle that have been stranded by Hurricane Harvey near Hamshire, Texas on Sept. 3, 2017. The Department of Defense is conducting Defense Support of Civil Authorities operations in response to the effects of Hurricane Harvey. DSCA operations are part of the DoD's response capability to assist civilian responders in saving lives, relieving human suffering and mitigating property damage in response to a catastrophic disaster. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin D. Biven / 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

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TEXAS AIRMEN RIDE OUT STORM:

GUARDSMEN KEEP ELLINGTON FIELD OPERATIONAL THROUGH HURRICANE HARVEY.5

Story by: Maj. Fredy Reyes
147th Attack Wing

ELLINGTON FIELD JOINT RESERVE BASE, Texas -

As Hurricane Harvey approached Houston, August 23, 2017, the 147th Attack Wing, part of the Texas Air National Guard located at Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base, Texas, activated personnel to mobilize the Crisis Action Team and Emergency Operations Center.

As personnel began to arrive, the wing held initial planning meetings in anticipation of the hurricane, focusing on physically preparing the base for the storm, as well as plans to contact and assist Airmen and their families, including families of deployed Airmen.

The CAT prepared to coordinate all Ellington Field support, bringing multiple agencies together to provide search and rescue capabilities. It also gives guidance to the Emergency Operations Center, Ellington Field's central command and control agency for emergency management during disasters.

"The 147th Attack Wing's Crisis Action Team and Emergency Operations Center staff really came together to get Ellington Field through this crisis," said Barker. "Their persistence and focus, under tough conditions working long days, kept the base fully functional for the Attack Wing, USCG Air Station Houston, Texas Army National Guard, and other tenant units."

Col. Matthew Barker, the Vice Wing Commander of the 147th Attack Wing and the Deputy CAT Director, helped identify important aspects of preparation. The CAT organized and delivered priorities for each unit on the base,

including pre-positioned search and rescue equipment and personnel, ready to help the city of Houston in recovery efforts.

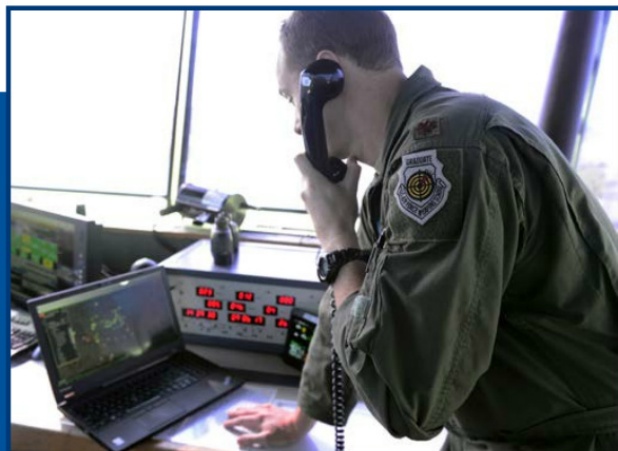
The Emergency Operations Center began missions with only 30 Airmen that had volunteered to remain, only half of the team's personnel.

"Beginning with just 30 members and expanding once the recovery was underway, this core team rode out the storm and preserved Ellington's vital capability as a 24/7 regional power projection platform for the state of Texas," said Barker.

Those members that stayed behind took on a multitude of duties including using high-profile military vehicles for rescues and coordinating arriving aircraft.

As Airmen returned to Ellington after securing the safety of their families, they joined the unit and continued to conduct missions in response to the flooding that followed Hurricane Harvey. Search and rescue became a key focus, along with ensuring personnel safety, accountability and base operations.

Throughout the recovery efforts, the unit coordinated with 13 agencies and worked with eight other Air National Guard units. Ground efforts resulted in four high water entry missions transporting over 50 evacuees. The team received 50 emergency calls and coordinated more than 1,600 military personnel on base to assist in response and recovery efforts. Air assets flew over 40 reconnaissance missions partnered with United States Coast Guard resulting in rescuing more than 200 lives, and establishing 14 landing zones which allowed 1,640 evacuees to be moved to safety. **-D**



Maj. Travis Williams, 111th Attack Squadron, coordinates communication with the unit's ad-hoc Air Support Operations Center (ASOC) from the Ellington Field air traffic control tower September 6, 2017. Member's of the 147th Attack Wing stood up the ASOC in just three days, providing coordinated rescue efforts in the wake of Hurricane Harvey. (Photo Courtesy of: Texas Air National Guard)

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TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TO HURRICANE HARVEY BY THE NUMBERS

18,137 
PEOPLE EVACUATED

 **349**
AIR HOIST RESCUES

 **16,012**
GROUND RESCUES

26,040 
PEOPLE SHELTERED

1,214 
ANIMALS EVACUATED

 **764,000**
POUNDS OF CARGO

EQUIPMENT USED

FOR RESCUE AND SUPPORT OPERATIONS

859 
HUMVEES

 **573**
HIGH PROFILE VEHICLES

109 
BOATS

 **5**
COMMUNICATION PACKAGES

 **30**
UH-60 BLACKHAWKS

14 
UH-72 LAKOTAS

 **19**
CH-47 CHINOOKS

39 
C-130 HERCULES

TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

Texas State Guard Supports Shelter Ops

**Story by: Chief Warrant Officer 3 Janet Schmelzer
Texas State Guard Public Affairs**

As Hurricane Harvey threatened to overwhelm local response capabilities Governor Greg Abbott mobilized the Texas State Guard. More than 1,000 State Guardsmen, with the Army, Air, Medical and Maritime components, as well as chaplains, judge advocates and engineers, responded quickly to assist storm victims.

State Guardsmen receive extensive training in emergency and natural disaster response and brought this training to bear during Hurricane Harvey, by conducting search and rescue missions, coordinating shelter operations and delivering critical supplies to impacted residents.

“Helping fellow Texans at shelters means thousands of displaced families and individuals will find some comfort in the aftermath of this traumatic event. I am humbled by their resiliency and courage,” said Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Adamowicz, 4th Regiment, Texas State Guard.

Emergency evacuation teams deployed to assist with the statewide Emergency Tracking Network, a system that maintains accountability of evacuees who travel to American Red Cross shelters on designated busses.

Texas State Guardsman sets up cots in a hurricane evacuation center. The State Guard supported shelter operations throughout the state for residents displaced by Hurricane Harvey (Courtesy Photo Texas State Guard.)



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State Guardsmen in-processed thousands of evacuees using the ETN system, allowing families to travel together to the same shelters, locate relatives and eventually travel by bus back to their hometowns. State Guardsmen also registered family pets into the tracking system, giving many pet owners peace of mind that they would not have to leave their pets behind.

Texas State Guard search and rescue teams, working jointly with local emergency management officials, the Texas National Guard, the Department of Public Safety and local fire, rescue and law enforcement agencies, went into flooded neighborhoods to evacuate residents trapped by rising water. Using rescue boats, or in many cases just wading through the floodwaters, State Guardsmen rescued more than 1,300 stranded people and pets, saving countless lives.

As thousands of evacuees went to American Red Cross designated shelters, Texas State Guard shelter teams helped evacuees find comfort and keep their families together. Guardsmen set up shelters with cots and blankets, dining areas, medical rooms play areas for children and pet kennels.

One shelter guest commented that the Texas State Guard “made me feel relieved about being here amongst the other 3,000 people in this convention center. Just because of the Soldiers’ presence, we could sleep and eat so well.”

With the loss of power and water systems, many Texas residents in the hurricane strike zone also needed assurance that their drinking water was safe.

“Working with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and local water departments, our unit of professional engineers inspected water and sewer systems. Our mission was to determine if the flood waters had damaged these systems and to protect Texans from contaminated water,” said Capt. Ian Taylor, Engineer Direct Report Unit, Texas State Guard.

For Texans in immediate need of water and food, State Guardsmen moved pallets of water and packed cleaning kits into American Red Cross warehouses and supported numerous points of distribution, where they handed out food, cases of clean drinking water and bags of ice to hundreds of local residents.

“The Texas State Guard trains extensively for these types of emergencies, which often require a wide array of services,” said Capt. Esperanza Meza, 19th Regiment, Texas State Guard. “From search and rescue, to helping our fellow Texans rebuild their lives, the services we provided during Hurricane Harvey meant the communities impacted by this disaster could count on us to be there when they needed us the most.” **-D**

TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



Members of the 372nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion conduct external sling load resupply operations with our international partners from the Republic of Singapore Air Force in support of Task Force Harvey, Aug. 30, 2017. This unique capability provided much needed forward distribution of food and water to Logistics Support Area (LSA) Brenham. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Jerod Zuniga)

SINGAPORE AIRMEN BATTLE HARVEY ALONGSIDE TEXAS PARTNERS

**Story and Photos by: Staff Sgt. Michael Giles
100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

AUSTIN, Texas—Airmen with Singapore's Peace Prairie Detachment supported hurricane relief efforts by delivering supplies to Brenham, Texas, on August 30, 2017, in support of Joint Task Force Harvey.

Thirty four members of the Republic of Singapore Air Force in CH-47 Chinook helicopters coordinated with the Texas National Guard's 372nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion to resupply Joint Task Force Harvey personnel with food and water.

The contribution toward Harvey relief efforts reflects an ongoing partnership between Singapore and Texas, according to an Aug. 30 Singapore Ministry of Defense statement.

"This was a small gesture to express our appreciation and gratitude to the U.S., and in particular the State of Texas, which have been good hosts for our Peace Prairie Detachment," said Lee Hsien Loong, Singapore's prime minister.

Texas has hosted Singapore's Peace Prairie Detachment at the Grand Prairie Army Aviation Support Facility in Grand Prairie, Texas, since the detachment's inauguration

in 1996. In that time, they received training at the Joint Readiness Training Center and in Exercise Red Flag and trained alongside Texas Guardsmen in large-scale emergency response exercises. They put this training to use as they coordinated with the Texas Guard in response to Hurricane Hurricane Floyd in 1999, fire and flood operations in Texas in 2000 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The Singaporean detachment has been fulfilling a crucial role in helping resupplying food and water to service members on the ground, said Lt. Col. John Crawson, commander of the Texas Army National Guard's 36th Sustainment Brigade.

"We have Soldiers down in the joint operations area that are relying on our resupply," Crawson said. "They're relying on our MREs and bottled water. And when they begin to get very low on supplies, it's very crucial that I get them there."

Crawson said that sling load operations are necessary when flooding prevents effective ground travel. The Singaporean detachment is an ideal partner in these situations, because they frequently rehearse these capabilities with Texas Guardsmen during their annual training.

"We are extremely grateful for their support and we will continue to ask them to help us out," Crawson said. **-D**

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TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

A LETTER FROM THE DUAL STATUS COMMANDER



As Dual Status Commander, Brig Gen. Patrick M. Hamilton led all state and national military forces aiding in Hurricane Harvey recovery operations.

For many Texas Guardsmen, Hurricane Harvey was your first domestic operation. Yet, Harvey's dangers and devastation tested the resolve of even the most seasoned Guardsmen within our ranks. The whole world was watching the Lone Star State for more than two weeks, and the Texas Military Department proved that it undoubtedly lives up to its motto: "Texans serving Texas."

As Harvey's capacity for destruction became apparent, our local, state and federal partners called on us for assistance. This was especially true for those first responders whom we worked alongside throughout the operation. They were our close partners, and we used our equipment and training to support their work saving lives and maintaining security.

On August 27, 2017, Governor Greg Abbott mobilized 3,000 Texas National Guardsmen. Quickly realizing the scale of Harvey's devastation, he then mobilized the entire Texas Military Department. This decision ultimately saved lives, allowing us to respond effectively and efficiently. Throughout the operation, I heard countless stories of Texas Guardsmen asking how they could help and springing into action. Communities didn't have to ask for help; we were already there.

The military response quickly expanded to include National Guard members and equipment from other states and a tremendous number of active duty resources. At the peak of operations, more than 17,000 Guardsmen were on the ground. Active duty personnel supported a number of mission assignments and USNORTHCOM sent commodities, vehicles, rotary and fixed-wing aircraft and many additional assets. We even had assistance from global partners like Singapore and Canada. This coordination ensured we had the resources we needed in the right place at the right time.

During the initial stages of our response, flooding posed significant risks to hundreds of thousands of people in impacted areas. Our early efforts focused almost exclusively on search and rescue operations. The Texas Military Department, along with our military partners, conducted hundreds of air and ground missions, rescuing and evacuating more than 35,000 people and 1,200 animals.

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TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



Brig. Gen. Patrick Hamilton, commander of the Texas Domestic Operations Task Force, speaks to the volunteers providing emergency relief to the victims of Hurricane Harvey in Orange, Texas, Sept. 2, 2017. The Department of Defense conducted Defense Support of Civil Authorities operations in response to the effects of Hurricane Harvey. DSCA operations are part of the DOD's response capability to assist civilian responders in saving lives, relieving human suffering and mitigating property damage in response to a catastrophic disaster. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Matt Britton / 22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

As our mission shifted to critical life support and logistics support, the Texas Military Department and our partners immediately transitioned to meet the changing needs of local, state and federal agencies. Our Texas State Guard Shelter Teams ran shelters across the state and we managed approximately 30 points of distribution. These PODs assisted more than 100,000 families and distributed food, clean water, diapers and other vital necessities. Military aircraft transported essential supplies to affected communities, while medical personnel assisted civilian doctors in impacted areas. All this helped our fellow Texans begin what will be a very long rebuilding process.

From the outset, the Texas Military Department's collaboration with the Department of Defense, as well as our local, state and federal agency partners, was seamless throughout the operation. The Dual Status Command construct allowed me to oversee both federal and state troops. It centralized command and control operation and gave all recovery assets a singular chain of command, providing better synchronization and improving response in the field.

Texas is no stranger to natural disasters, but Hurricane Harvey was a truly exceptional, once-in-a-lifetime event. During an interview on September 3, 2017 Gen. Joseph L. Lengeyl, National Guard Bureau chief, praised the Texas National Guard for being well-practiced and having a well-oiled response network, leading to our success. His remarks remind us why our training is so important, and in the case of Hurricane Harvey, how it truly saved lives.

I could not be more proud to have served as the Dual Status Commander during this operation and could not be more proud to serve alongside the men and women of our Texas Military Department.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the Texas Military Department and for your tireless work helping our neighbors in need. **-D**

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TASK FORCE BAYONET DEPLOYS TO HORN OF AFRICA



Story and Photos By: Master Sgt. Michael Leslie
36th Infantry Division Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas – With friends and family by their side, the Texas Army National Guard bid goodbye and good luck to members of the 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment, 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 36th Infantry Division as they mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa, on Aug. 30, 2017. The battalion was joined by Company A of 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 36th Infantry Division.

While deployed, Task Force Bayonet's mission is to provide security force protection, quick reaction forces, military to military training and an East Africa Response Force. The approximately 800 "Arrowhead" Soldiers spent a portion of August training at Fort Hood, as they prepared to take on the role of security forces for U.S. installations and train foreign military soldiers on tactics learned.

"Through the mission focus of each company command team, and the drive of the Non-Commissioned Officer corps our Soldiers were able to complete team live fire, squad live fire, crew gunnery and progress on to the beginning stages of platoon operations," said Lt. Col. Ross Walker, battalion commander. "The key was to exercise mission command to the lowest level and allow our leaders to learn here so we can establish best practices in order to perform at peak once we arrive in [Africa]."

Upon their arrival in Africa, members of Task Force Bayonet will be joined by a company of Soldiers from the 1st Brigade, 10th Mountain Division to support the East Africa Response Force.

"The command sergeant major and I are fully confident in the Task Force's ability to handle any mission it is assigned," added Walker.

Last month's mobilization marked the first of back-to-back Texas Army National Guard deployments in support of Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa.

Units within the 3rd Battalion, 144th Inf. Reg. last deployed to Afghanistan in 2012 to provide base security for Shindand Airbase and surrounding areas in Afghanistan's Regional Command – West. This will be the first time since 2007 that the battalion has deployed as a whole. - **D**

Members of the 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment, 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 36th Infantry Division prepare to case their unit colors as they mobilize in support of Operation Enduring Freedom – Horn of Africa, Aug. 30, 2017.



18 **TheDISPATCH** October 2017

Texas Guardsmen Join Multi-state Team To Provide Aircraft Maintenance

Story and Photos By: Staff Sgt. Isolda Reyes
29th Combat Aviation Brigade

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Helicopter maintenance teams of the Texas Army National Guard’s 2-149th General Support Aviation Battalion recently benefited from the Army’s new phase maintenance program for UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters. The new phase program increases the phase maintenance interval from 360 hours to 480 hours, which will immediately add up to 120 flight hours for many aircraft. The extra flight time between phase maintenance inspections will improve the brigade-wide work flow.

Soldiers of Company D, 2-149th based in Grand Prairie, Texas, performed their first HH-60M Black Hawk 480-hour phase maintenance on August 5, 2017, at Taji Military Complex, Iraq.

“We have done five phases at this location so far and this is the first one where they included an enhanced schedule maintenance check,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Andrew Wickland, D Co.’s production control officer.

This new program provides commanders with increased bank time and available flight hours for missions, explained Wickland.

Building the company’s phase team required consolidation of Army National Guard Soldiers from Wisconsin, Texas and Puerto Rico, who met for the first time during their mobilization period at Fort Hood, Texas, in January.

“We first had to find out what skill-sets everyone had, then who would be placed where based on strengths and weaknesses in the three locations we support in Iraq,” said Texas Guardsman, 1st Sgt. Mario Orta. “Each team needed to be balanced in it’s abilities, and that took a lot of work.”



There were several logistical challenges that had to be overcome to operate a well-run phase team, especially due to the fact that maintenance capabilities were split between Kuwait and Iraq.

“We had to learn early to ensure that we not only take apart the aircraft as soon as it arrives, but we also inspect each and every part so that if it needs to be replaced, or an additional part needs to be ordered, we are able to get those orders in as early as possible,” said Wickland. “This cuts down on the wait time for parts when it’s time to put the aircraft back together.”

The maintainers had to learn how to operate as an independent, fully functional phase-maintenance team. In the Army National Guard, most Soldiers normally work out of an armory where Class IX Air parts and calibrated tools are readily available. Back home they would have support from the armory out of which they work, said Orta.

Here in Iraq and Kuwait, the unit must order parts and constantly follow-up on the shipping process. They must also replace many broken and missing tools in theater-provided equipment (TPE) sets. Tools requiring calibration must be shipped to a calibration lab through a process that takes approximately two weeks to complete. On past deployments, civilian contractors performed much of the maintenance, but the aviation maintenance contractor presence in Iraq is minimal. The maintainers are doing most of the work themselves.

“My advice to those units back home coming up on rotation is to get your maintainers working on those aircraft prior to coming in country,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Raul Torres Aviation, Maintenance officer for the 2-149 GSAB. “While we know what we are doing, resources aren’t as plentiful.”

The unit is not entirely alone. Company B, 449th Aviation Support Battalion is also performing phase maintenance in Kuwait and providing shops support to members of the 2-149th GSAB in Iraq and Kuwait. Together, these hard-working maintainers generate the combat power for 29th CAB to perform their critical missions in Operation Spartan Shield in Kuwait and Operation Inherent Resolve.

■ D

Spc. Brandon Anderson, a helicopter repairer with Company D, 2-149th General Support Aviation Battalion, works on changing the break line of the front wheel of a HH-60M Black Hawk helicopter during its first 480-hour phase maintenance cycle on August 5, 2017, at Taji Military Complex.

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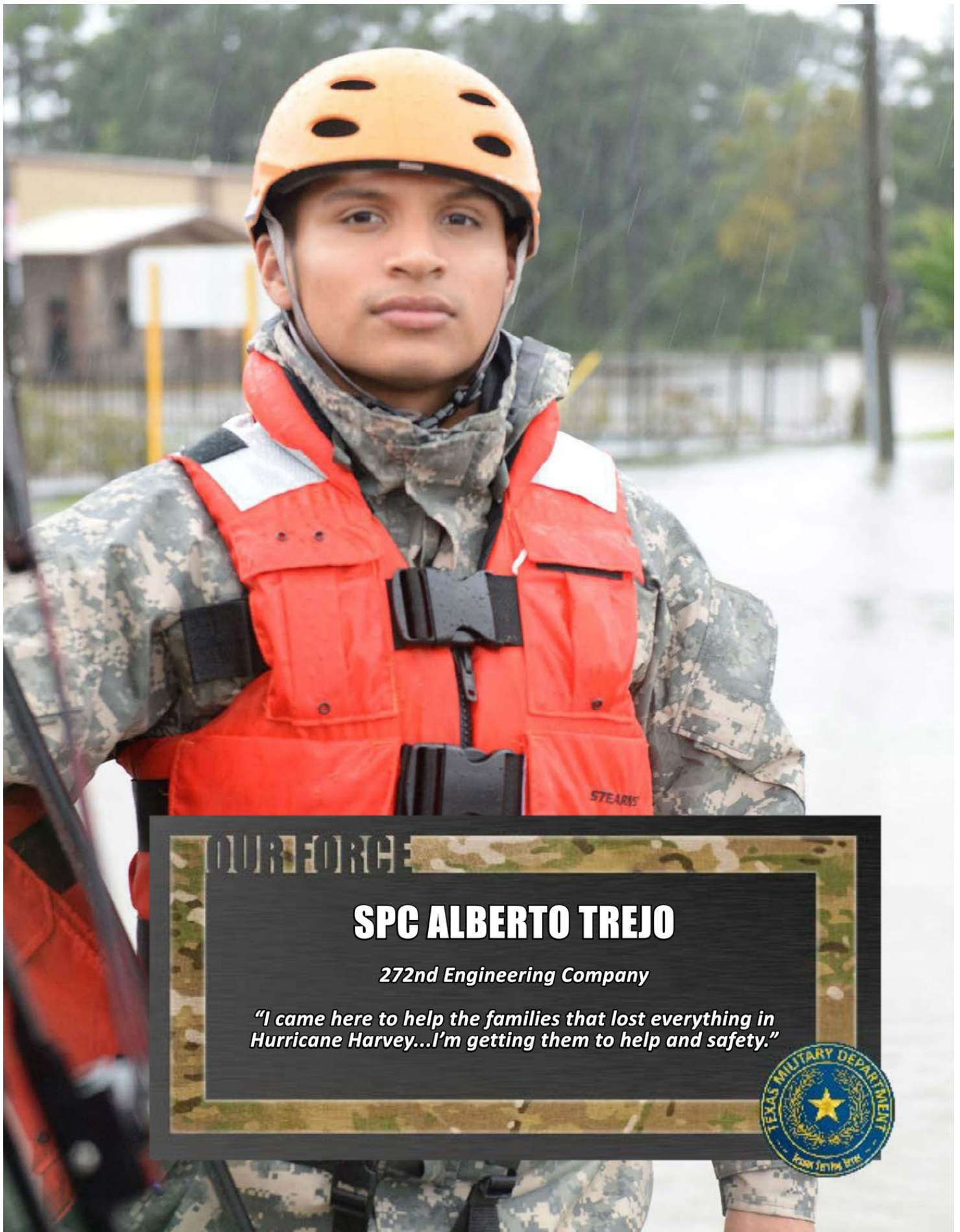
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272nd Engineering Company

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IN MEMORIAM

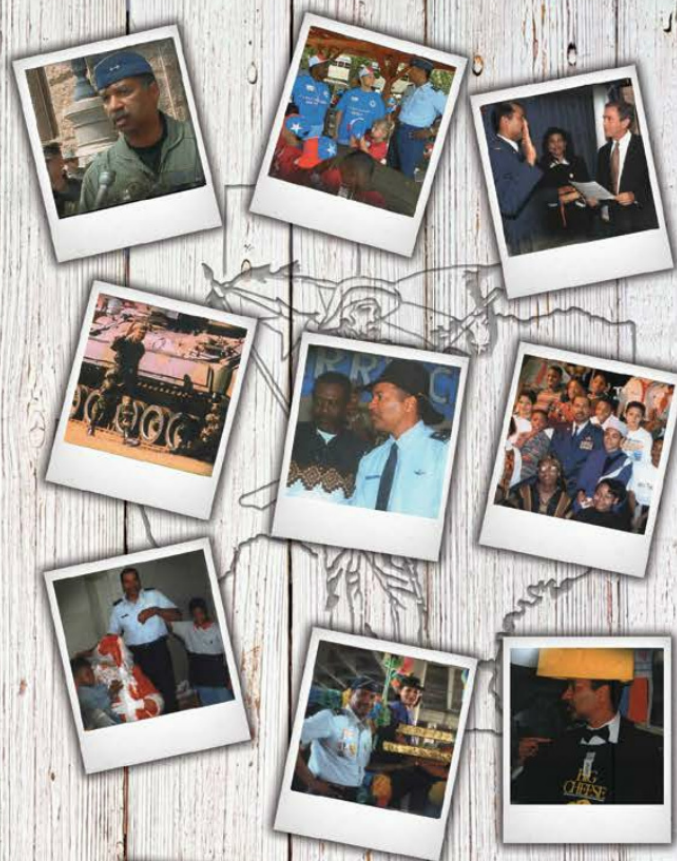


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