

THE DISPATCH

D



JUNE 2018

PREPARED FOR ANYTHING

GUARDSMEN TRAIN FOR DOMESTIC
AND INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

U.S. Soldiers with 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment, Texas Army National Guard, help and secure simulated casualties in Djibouti City, Djibouti, April 24, 2018. As part of a joint mass casualty training exercise, service members performed various tasks in order to locate, secure and rescue simulated casualties. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Sarah Mattison)



(ON THE COVER)

A Guardsman with 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment, Texas Army National Guard, moves around a simulated vehicle fire in Djibouti City, Djibouti, April 24, 2018. As part of a joint mass casualty training exercise, service members performed various tasks in order to locate, secure and rescue simulated casualties. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Sarah Mattison)



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TEXAS MEDICAL RANGERS

*Story By: CW 3 Janet Schmelzer,
Texas State Guard Public Affairs*



In 2016, during the Texas Department of Emergency Management Air Exercise in Harlingen, Texas, the Texas Medical Brigade, a component of the Texas State Guard, was identified as the only reliably available military “medical surge” resource to meet high-speed Texas disaster contingencies. The unit is a medical force multiplier that can rapidly and substantially increase medical service capabilities to support the Texas Military Department, the Texas Air National Guard Medical Service and when ordered, other state agencies.

What the Texas Medical Brigade provides is a medical surge force composed of rapidly deployable, flexible and scalable mission packages, manned by skilled, highly qualified medical professionals who are licensed or certified by the state.

In full coordination with the Joint Surgeon, Texas Military Department, Col. Craig Manifold and the National Guard Bureau Region 6 Medical Planner, Maj. Wayne Hill, Brig. Gen. Constance McNabb, Commander, Texas Medical Brigade, reconfigured the Mission Ready Packages for her component to reflect the U.S. Air Force highly deployable and maximally flexible force packages. The new MRPs include medical teams for Aerial Port of Embarkation, Aerial Port of Debarkation, Medical Logistics, Patient Movement Site Administration and Provider/Nursing teams operations.

These MRPs make the Texas Medical Brigade a force multiplier to the Texas National Guard and an integral part of a joint medical response to an emergency or disaster, such as a hurricane, flood or manmade catastrophic event in Texas.

"The Medical Brigade is an invaluable medical capability prepared to serve Texas and Texans. Our ‘right size’ highly flexible medical teams are a perfect fit to augment the forward deployed Air Guard medics or serve wherever Texas Military Department or the Texas Department of Emergency Management and Department of State Health Services need us," stated McNabb.

During an aeromedical evacuation, the Texas Medical Brigade becomes a surge force to support the Texas Air National Guard Medical Service, the lead medical service in domestic operations, to meet the Texas Department of Emergency Management priorities for patient evacuation at an air or transportation hub. Texas Medical Brigade physicians, nurses, medical technicians and paramedics are trained medical professionals who triage patients, provide limited medical care and stabilize patients to be transported by ground or cargo aircraft to safety.

In contrast to the 2008 hurricanes of Dolly, Gustav, and Ike, which demonstrated the need for rapid augmentation of military medical support, the Texas Medical Brigade

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"I want to fly a fixed wing. I want to fly it all," Chavez said.

Chavez reflected upon where she would be in life had her father not brought her and her family to the United States.

"I would be living a sad life, not in school, not educated or maybe something even worse," Chavez said.

Silvano crossed his arms and shook his head in disagreement with his daughter's statement.

"If we hadn't come here, nothing would be different," Silvano said. "I would have wanted them to keep up with their education, and if Lily were in Mexico she would move somewhere else and still succeed because that is the way she is."

Although she has reached what her family and many people would see as the pinnacle of success, Chavez said she still has many dreams to fulfill.

"My other plan is to go back to school for Earth and Coastal Sciences, diving and studying earth forms," Chavez said. "I want to be an astronaut too, one day."

Chavez said that working in the community where she was raised is a humble reminder of all the people who have shaped and molded her life.

Sitting up straight on the end of her office chair, both hands on her knees, Chavez leaned forward and passionately voiced her message to other girls who have big 'movie-star dreams' like hers.

"I'd tell them don't limit yourself, the sky is actually not the limit – you can be an astronaut if you want to." **-D**

2ND LT. LILIANA CHAVEZ URIBE

*Aeromedical Evacuation Officer,
Texas Army National Guard,*

"I serve my country to give back for all of the life changing opportunities it has given me and my family."





medical mission of Aerial Port of Embarkation, Aerial Port of Debarcation, and Medical Logistics teams fill that need. During Hurricane Harvey, the Medical Brigade supported the Texas Army National Guard joint reception, staging, onward movement, and integration of personnel and they augmented civilian medical teams serving evacuees in mega shelters. Medical Brigade senior officers led the stand up of a massive air evacuation hub at Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston. Although the Air National Guard and U.S. Air Force medical teams were the initial forces on the ground, Texas Medical Brigade was the designated force to provide the medical surge force, if an evacuation of 8,000 hospital patients was needed.

In joint training exercises with other military units and state agencies, the Texas Medical Brigade is building “peacetime” relationships and community partnerships with other military units and state agencies to enhance training. As a force multiplier, the Texas Medical Brigade conducts joint air evacuation training with the Texas Air National Guard so that together they can respond efficiently and effectively in service to fellow Texans during an emergency or disaster. The Texas Medical Brigade is prepared to support the Texas Department of State Health Services Health and medical contingency operations. During Operation Lone Star, a DSHS annual humanitarian medical service program, and emergency responder training exercise along the Rio Grande Valley, the Medical Brigade supports OLS as the lead military provider of medical personnel and uses OLS as a mass casualty training exercise by providing basic medical services to thousands of people in South Texas. **-D**

The Texas State Guard Texas Medical Brigade and the Texas Air National Guard pose for a group photo during a joint mass casualty and air evacuation training exercise at Harlingen, Texas, June 8, 2016.

(Texas State Guard Photo)

Col. David Alexander, Texas Air National Guard and 2nd Lt. Bruce Daley, Texas Medical Brigade, Texas State Guard, participate in a joint mass casualty and air evacuation hub training exercise at Harlingen, Texas, June 8, 2016.

(Texas State Guard Photo)



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Reenactor waits in brush-line during a re-staging of the final battle between 36th Infantry Division Guardsmen and Nazi forces.



HONORING THE HISTORY OF THE 36TH INFANTRY DIVISION



*Story & Photos By: Spc. Christina Clardy
36th Infantry Division Public Affairs*

AUSTIN, Texas – The 36th Infantry Division commemorates the 100th anniversary of entering World War I and the 75th anniversary of entering World War II remembering the unit's history, honoring its service members and paying tribute to its fallen heroes. Members of the Texas Military Forces Museum's Living History Detachment honored those historical Soldiers by reenacting a World War II battle during the Texas Military Department Open House, April 21-22, 2018 at Camp Mabry in Austin.

"History is about people – the sacrifices that people have made," said Gill Eastland, a history enthusiast and re-enactor with the Texas Military Forces Museum's Living History Detachment. "Without those people, without their lives and deaths, we would not have our history. They deserve to be honored and remembered for that."

Muster Day

The U.S. War Department created the 36th Division on July

18, 1917, with the publication of General Order Number 95. Eight days later, men from the Texas and Oklahoma National Guards began to muster at Camp Bowie in Fort Worth for federal military service. Thus, the "Texas Division" was born.

World War I

After initial and extensive training, the division boarded ships and trekked across the Atlantic Ocean to join the fight against the Central Powers in Europe. The division consisted of two infantry brigades with two infantry regiments each, an artillery brigade with four regiments and four specialized support regiments.

"The U.S. entered World War I in April 1917," said Eastland. "But the war in Europe had already gone on for two years at that point."

Jumping into the war mid-fight, the division endured 24 days of combat during the Meuse-Argonne offensive as part of the French 4th Army in the northeast of France. This offensive was part of the final Allied offensive push

TEXAS MILITARY FORCES MUSEUM | CAMP MABRY

HANDS-ON HISTORY



JULY 21

6 PM – 9 PM

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Texas Guardsmen Connects First Responders during Disasters



**Story & Photos By: Sgt. Elizabeth Pena
Texas Military Department Public Affairs**

AUSTIN, Texas – Recent natural disasters throughout Texas have proven just how important emergency preparedness is.

While the Lone Star State is recovering and recording its “lessons learned” from Harvey, one of the deadliest hurricanes to date since 2004, Texas National Guardsmen are busy prepping their equipment and ramping up their communication capabilities for the next time they are called upon.

Four communication teams made up of Texas Army and Air National Guardsmen came together for the week-long Texas interoperable communications exercise May 7-11, 2018, at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas.

“The service members are here for a week, and we give them a PowerPoint presentation followed by hands-on field training exercises so they come out and employ all the stuff that they’ve learned in the classroom,” said Texas Army National Guard Master Sgt. Marcus Jennings, J6 non-commissioned officer in charge.

One of the main focuses of the exercise is the Texas Interoperable Communications Package, used to provide communications capabilities to command and control centers during emergency disasters.

“The TICP is great to have in any kind of disaster situation where communications go down,” said Texas Army National Guard Sgt. Brandon Crawford, a network specialist with the 449th signal company. “We can instantly come in and create basically a mobile command post and we can bridge communication efforts between fire, military, government, police, aviation.”

There are currently 14 TICPs in the Texas Military Department, which were first implemented in 2008 following Hurricane Ike and Gustav.

“The system has come a long way in the past years,” said Jennings. “Before, it was a dish in a case and they had to physically go inside the TICP, pull the case out, set the dish up, turn the dish, point it southwest towards the satellite and get it locked on. Now it’s pretty much the push of a button.”

The communications package has deployed all across Texas supporting hurricanes, floods, fires and various other support missions across the state.

“By coordinating relief efforts, it brings all the different agencies together and allows them to talk to each other. They can bring UHF, VHF, Singars for military, whatever kind of radio system they have. The TICP provides the first responders with the means to get to disaster victims quickly, more efficiently,” said Crawford.

One of the unique things about the program is the ability to train all components within the Texas Military Department.

“We train Army Guard. We train Air Guard and we train State Guard to operate these pieces of equipment,” said Lt. Col. William Richard, Deputy Director Information Directorate for the Texas Military Department. “Why that’s important is because all three of those elements can come in different pay statuses, so for example, the border mission right now is a federally funded mission. I can’t send a TICP with State Guard people in it down to the border. I can’t send Air guys down to the border because it’s an Army mission. But I do have trained Army people that I can send to go do that.”

Having the ability to train Army, Air and State Guard, allows the force to provide the governor and president with ready forces in support of state and federal authorities at a moment’s notice.

“We’ve had other missions where first responders needed something right now, and the State Guard invariably are our go-to guys because they’re like, ‘yes, we want to go and we’ll do it right now.’ “So we are truly joined because we train all the elements of the Texas National Guard.”

During Hurricane Harvey, all 14 TICPs were deployed throughout the state. This was a true testament to just how important it is to stay trained up.

“A lot of people were caught off guard,” said Jennings. “But I was glad that we had done these types of trainings for that reason. When it came down to it, we were ready.” **-D**

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FROM THE TOP

COMMENTARIES FROM TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT LEADERS



TAKING OWNERSHIP LEADERS TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

CCMSgt MICHAEL E. CORNIITIUS JR

TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT COMMAND SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER

As leaders, we must be the ones taking responsibility when things do not go as planned, even if we were not directly responsible for the action. Too often we are quick to call in a troop when things don't unfold in the way we desired way or had intended, so the one question I always try to ask myself when this happens is did I express the desired output clear enough so the troop had clear expectations of what I wanted? More often than not, the answer is no, which then places responsibility for the failure on my shoulders and not theirs because as a leader, I have failed them.

To be clear, I'm not talking about spoon feeding your troops the entire plan step by step, but I do want to make sure you're stating the expectation of what your desired end result is so they can then take the initiative to make it happen in whatever way works best for them. If they happen to stumble along the way, that's okay because they are trying and we have to allow failure for growth so they can become better leaders themselves.

I like to compare leadership to baking a cake. I may tell you to bake a chocolate cake, because who doesn't like chocolate, but I want you to figure out what the ingredients are, how to mix the ingredients and how long to bake it so that it will come out tasting great. We don't want to become the type of leader who micro-manages and tells them we want a cake but then immediately follow it by saying, "Don't forget to grease the pan, get eggs, water, flour, a large bowl, etc, etc." When we get too detailed in our requests, we lose sight of our main

mission of leadership, development and mentoring by not allowing them to grow and make some crucial decisions on their own.

"If we're not teaching and providing them with the tools necessary to make such decisions, then we have failed as leaders.

- CCMSgt. Michael E. Cornitius Jr. -

Conversely, if we're not teaching and providing them with the tools necessary to make such decisions, then we have failed as leaders and that is where ownership of the problem must lie, with you. If we don't manage expectations from the beginning and have a clearly defined desired result, then how are we setting our troops up and showing them what success looks like?

Being a leader is not meant to be easy, and it takes a lot of work, but that is the expectation our communities, state and nation have laid upon us when we decided to join the greatest military force in the world. Again, I ask that you always remember to take responsibility for failed actions or plans, but most importantly, never push the blame down onto those you lead. Take ownership for the problem, and guide your troops down a new and successful path.

I have faith in you and know you are great leaders who will make the state of Texas better every day by develop-

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of World War I and was later recognized as the largest American campaign of the war with more than 1.2 million American soldiers.

“For the European armies, most of the war was fought in trenches,” said Eastland. “But most of the American troops spent more time fighting across open ground trying to overtake different enemy positions.”

Eastland continued, “And although our experiences weren’t the same in length of time or location as say the French or British, we suffered a tremendous amount of casualties such as frontal assaults against machine guns and artillery fire both incoming and outgoing.”

After fighting through the Argonne Forest, the “Texas Division” with the French 4th Army, operating on the left flank of the U.S. 1st Army, engaged German forces in heavy combat near the village of St. Etienne on October 9-10, 1918. Several hundred German soldiers and officers were captured, including their artillery resources.

Upon discovering that the Germans were tapping their telephone communications, the 142nd Infantry Regiment of the 71st Infantry Brigade decided to use one of the more than 26 Native American languages known by Soldiers within the unit to encode Allied communications and disperse the code talkers throughout units along the Aisne River. With the Germans unable to decode their communi-

cations, the 36th and its French counterparts made significant advances on the Western Front, putting much needed pressure on the German forces.

On November 11, 1918, an armistice was signed and “The Great War” came to an end.

“As a percentage of troops engaged, World War I was more deadly than World War II for the U.S. military,” said Jeff Hunt, director of the Texas Military Forces Museum and commander of the museum’s Living History Detachment. “We lost more people more quickly in a smaller physical space in World War I than we did in the Second World War.”

After the war, the division returned home to Texas where it was demobilized and became an all Texas National Guard unit. The division suffered more than 2,500 casualties in World War I, including 466 killed in action. Two of its members earned the nation’s highest award for valor in combat, the Medal of Honor.

“This year, 2018, is the [36th Division’s] 100th anniversary for [entering] World War I,” said Eastland, who is a re-enactor for both World War I and World War II. “World War I was called ‘The Great War’ and those who fought in it, those who sacrificed in it and those that gave their lives in it deserve our remembrance and our respect.”



Reenactors fire blank rounds from a foxhole during a WWII reenactment held at Camp Mabry, Texas.

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**Story & Photos By: Maria Mengrone
Texas Military Department Public Affairs**

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – “Knock it down, knock it down!” chanted a group of Rose Shaw Elementary School students. They gathered on May 16, 2018, to witness guardsmen and local law enforcement knocking down a known drug house located directly across from their school during Operation Crackdown, a joint operation that partners municipalities and Texas Guardsmen to rid neighborhoods of gangs, drugs and associated violent activity.

“We are the last piece of the operation,” said Col. Miguel Torres, Texas Joint Counterdrug Task Force Commander. “We provide the engineer assets that assist communities to reclaim known trafficking locations by knocking down structures allowing for community revitalization.”

The operation is scheduled to demolish 20 structures throughout several Corpus Christi neighborhoods.

“This is being able to take your neighborhood back,” said Corpus Christi Mayor Joe McComb. “We appreciate the Texas Guard’s help. It saves taxpayers’ money and improves quality of life.”

Before moving into Corpus Christi, Operation Crackdown demolished 17 drug houses in nearby Robstown.

Municipalities requesting support from Operation Crackdown are responsible for submitting a written request with several supporting documents.

“The request includes a description of drug nexus, completing the appropriate memorandum of understanding, historical reviews and hold harmless agreements for each site to be demolished,” Torres said.

Additionally, the request must also include validation that utilities have been turned off, no hazardous materials exist at each site, the removal and hauling-off of debris is coordinated and police escort and appropriate city personnel presence are provided at each demolition.

“This is amazing to see for my community,” said nine-year-old Hylaria as she excitedly clapped and cheered on the hydraulic excavator performing the demolition. “I think this will be good for us.” **-D**

Col. Miguel Torres (left), Texas Joint Task Counterdrug, Commander, encourages students of Rose Shaw Elementary school to chant “knock it down, knock it down” signaling the beginning of demolition of a known drug house located in front of the school May 16, 2018, Corpus Christi, Texas. (Photo by Army National Guard Capt. Maria Mengrone)

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OUR FORCE

Story By:
1st Lt. Nadine Wiley De Moura
100th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

MCALLEN, Texas — In a small barbed-wired enclosed, green-pastured yard in Tamaulipas, Mexico, just three hours south of the Texas-Mexico border, six-year-old Liliana Chavez Uribe marveled at the sight of crop-dusters flying over her home and dreamed that one day she, too, could fly. A short 18 years later, 2nd Lt. Liliana Chavez Uribe smiles as she recalls the memory that propelled her ever forward, ever upward.

"I grew up in a rural area where we didn't have running water -- we had wells," Chavez, 24, said. "We had outhouses, so, no toilets, and the first time I saw a shower I was in second or third grade -- I grew up in the projects."

Chavez, now an Aeromedical Evacuation Officer, 2nd Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment, General Support Aviation Battalion, who flies Blackhawks and Lakotas, said that her accomplishments are far beyond what her six-year-old self could have imagined.

"I have been wanting to fly since the first time I saw an airplane, but I kind of put that dream aside, since I thought it was very competitive," Chavez said. "It was like dreaming to be a movie star, you put it aside because you think it will never happen."

Despite the obstacles that Chavez and her family endured as immigrants during their journey, Chavez realized her dreams were more of a reality than she thought.

"I came here as a permanent resident," Chavez said. "My dad worked his butt off to get us all here the correct, legal way, and now I am citizen."

Upon moving, to Pharr, Texas, with her parents, Chavez and her older sister went to school in the Pharr-San-Juan-Alamo Independent School District. It was during her high school years that Chavez discov-

ered her love for the disciplined military structure when she joined the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Chavez graduated fifth in her high school class with an associate degree under her belt and landed a two-year Texas Armed Services scholarship to the University of Texas Pan-American, where she joined the Reserve Officer Training Corps.

"In ROTC I got the opportunity to go up for the aviation board," Chavez, a biology major, said. "I put in the packet, took a physical fitness test, went before a whole bunch of important people and was selected," she casually recounted without hubris, as if it was no feat at all.

Chavez graduated flight school and Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape training.

SERE is a 21-day training requirement for all pilots and U.S. Special Forces that tests the limits of the participants' mental and physical fortitude to prepare them to evade capture and survive extreme conditions and unforgiving elements, while maintaining the military code of conduct.

Chavez said that SERE training was the most challenging experience that she has faced in her life.

"My lowest moment (during the training), I can't say it, but it was really, really low," Chavez said. "But I started laughing, even though there were tears coming out of my eyes. It was tough, but I always had a positive attitude. I tried to sing and make something positive."

Chavez credited her father's work ethic to the reason she is so driven to overcome the multitude of challenges she faced during SERE training.

"My dad, he is really motivating," Chavez said. "He works in construction, in roofing. He would come back home just burned and blistered -- everyday nonstop and he never complained."

Silvano Chavez, Liliana's father, frequently expresses his pride for his daughter when talking to his friends.

"I tell my friends that Liliana is on another level, she isn't just any normal college graduate -- she is way more than that," Silvano said. "Liliana serves as an example that if you work hard and persevere you can get to where you want to be."

Silvano never had the opportunity to finish his education or go to college. He started working at the age of 13 to help provide for his family.

Silvano said that he taught his three daughters that if you want to do better in life you need to focus and take every opportunity that you have.

When asked about the challenges she has overcome Chavez cites graduating college and intensive military training as some of the most daunting; however, failure was never an option.

"My main drive was not to disappoint my father," Chavez revealed. "I wanted to finish school and do amazing things for myself and him also. I want to eventually pay him back for all he has done for us."

Chavez, a lean five-and-a-half-foot tall, walks ruler-straight and with purpose, radiating positivity, while also having a steadfast command presence.

"The leader I hope to be -- I expect to touch many, many lives," Chavez excitedly exclaimed. "I am already a joyful leader, always looking at the positive side. I am always smiling, I don't want to be bitter. If you aren't happy and have a moody face that is contagious."

When Chavez talks about her job and flying, her face lights up, and her voice exudes an energetic rhythm and tone that only proves that long after achieving her dream of flying, she is still filled with the same wonder and awe she had watching the crop dusters as a young girl.

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World War II

Nearly 25 years later, as the U.S. prepared for the possibility of joining the Allied Forces in World War II, the “Fighting 36th” was again mobilized into federal military service. The division spent the next two years undergoing rigorous training at the new Camp Bowie near Brownwood, Texas, at Camp Blanding, Florida, and at Camp Edwards, Massachusetts, to include the newly formed Ranger training provided by British Commandos.

“The men that went to war with the 36th Division in World War II mobilized November 19, 1940 and didn’t come home until late 1945,” said Hunt. “There were no tours of duty; you were in for the duration. You came home when one of three things happened: you won the war and the Army was done with you, you were so badly wounded or crippled that the Army could not fix you and keep you in the ranks or you were killed.”

In the fall of 1941, the 2nd Battalion of the 131st Field Artillery became the first American unit to fight on foreign soil in World War II after it was detached from the division and sent to the Pacific Theater. At the fall of Java in the Indonesian Islands, the unit’s service members became prisoners of the Japanese. Their fate was unknown for the rest of the war, and the unit became known as “The Lost Battalion.” Many of those captured worked on the Burma Railway or were detained in prisoner of war camps for the next three-and-a-half years.

The rest of the division landed in North Africa in the spring of 1943 and continued training in preparation to enter combat in Europe. In September 1943, a massive invasion, codenamed Operation Avalanche, combined the U.S.’s 36th and 45th Infantry Divisions and Britain’s X Corps as they kicked off the Allied Forces’ Italian campaign.

More than 450 U.S. and British warships, transports, support vessels and landing craft cruised into the Gulf of Salerno off the eastern coast of Italy in the pre-dawn hours of September 9. The transports carried 100,000 British Commonwealth troops, 69,000 American Soldiers and 20,000 vehicles of various types. The 36th made an amphibious assault landing at Salerno, Italy, making it the first U.S. division to land on the European continent in World War II.

The division encountered heavy German opposition pushing north through Altavilla, Naples, San Pietro and Cassino. The division took heavy losses attempting to breach the Rapido River, January 20-22, but was harshly repelled by the German 15th Panzer Grenadier Division. In those 48 hours the 36th Division sustained 1,681 casualties out of the 6,000 men who took part: 143 were killed, 663 were wounded, and 875 were missing.

“Typically [the casualty rate] was 1500 to 2500 casualties a month killed in direct enemy combat during World War II,” said Hunt. “But there were some engagements that had particularly high casualty rates.”



Reenactors playing as German forces surrender to advancing 36th Infantry Division Members.



Air National Guard Director Visits 136th Airlift Wing

Story by: Senior Airman Bryan Swink, Senior Airman De'Jon P. Williams, and Tech. Sgt. Lynn M. Means



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In May 1944, the 36th, nicknamed the “Texas Army,” moved to the Anzio beachhead to reinforce Allied troops there during Operation Diadem. After weeks of fighting and pushing to cross the German Winter Line, the 36th led a breakout that resulted in the capture of Rome, June 4th.

After the 36th had been fighting nine months in the Italian Campaign, Allied Forces conducted Operation Overlord, also known as “D-Day,” into Normandy in northern France. Soon after, the “Arrowhead Division” moved up into Southern France for Operation Dragoon. The 36th then moved up through the Rhone River valley, putting pressure on the southern German lines.

The 36th moved quickly across France to the foothills of the Vosges Mountains and began a harsh winter campaign to take control of the mountain passes. After several months, the vital mountain passes were under Allied control and purged of German blockades.

The Germans launched a counteroffensive attack in December 1944 but were repelled by the “Fighting 36th” in Alsace, France. It was during this time that the division encountered some of the fiercest artillery combat of the war. The “Texas Army” resumed their push across France to the Rhine River valley, encountering heavy German resistance at Hauenau, Oberhofen and Wissembourg. In March 1945, the division assisted in breaching the Siegfried Line and entered Germany. There they liberated the Dachau and Landsburg Concentration Camps, April 1945.

On May 8th, also known as Victory in Europe Day (V-E Day), the division captured the commander of All German Forces on the Western Front, General Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt, while based in Kitzbühel, Austria.

In more than 400 days of combat, the division suffered nearly 19,500 casualties with 3,131 Soldiers killed in action. The unit returned home in December 1945 and continued service back in the Texas Army National Guard.

The 36th secured a reputation for great bravery and valor. Seventeen members of the 36th Infantry Division received the Medal of Honor during World War II, which cemented a legacy that is still significant today at home and in Europe.

“The thing that is always most impressive is that combat veterans, in both World War I and World War II, will tell you that they aren’t heroes,” said Hunt. “They will tell you that the heroes are the ones that didn’t come home. The heroes are the ones who are still there or in our National Cemeteries sleeping beneath the white stone crosses and stars of David.



Medical Reenactor replies to cries for help as the simulated battle rages around him.

“They didn’t want to go to war,” continued Hunt. “They didn’t want to be there. They would have rather have been home going about their lives. But their country needed them so when their country called, they stepped up. They did the job and they paid the price. For those that died and for those that lived, they will all always be true heroes.”

The Texas Military Department, in conjunction with the American Heroes Air Show, presented its annual public Open House and Air Show on Camp Mabry in Austin, April 21-22. During the event, the Texas Military Department showcased its civilian and first responder partnerships with operations demonstrations, air-to-ground missions and historic reenactments including the Texas Military Forces Museum’s Living History Detachment, which gave an adapted re-enactment of the 36th Infantry Division’s December 1944 St. Marie pass engagement in Southern France. **-D**

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FEDERAL EMPLOYEE CONTRACT RECEIVES FIRST UPDATE IN 15 YEARS.

Story By: Sgt. Elizabeth Pena
Texas Military Department Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas – The Texas Military Department is made up of Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard and state and federal employees. There are approximately 1,400 full-time members within the organization that work as state employees or National Guard employees.

“We have regulations, we have directives that we have to comply with,” said Stanley Golaboff, director of Human Resources for the Texas Military Department. “We needed to renegotiate and really not renegotiate as much as we needed to update our collective bargaining agreement.”

Key leaders from the Texas Military Department and Texas Lone Star Chapter #100 of The Association of Civilian Technicians worked together to revise an employment contract.

“Without an updated contract, we were still doing old practices that maybe hindered the efficiency of technicians as well as the state's overall mission,” said Weldon Hedrick, president of the Lone Star Chapter 100. “So having the updated contract made everything better.”

“The contract was originally written for regulations that were in the 80s and 90s but dated 2003,” said Olguin, national field rep for the Association of Civilian Technicians. “So it was kind of hard to go back and forth between them. There was conflict between the contract and the technician personnel regulation. So a lot of this was to clean up those differences, making everything work together and make it more efficient for both parties to operate under.”

One benefit to the contract was implementing more ways supervisors can reward employees for outstanding performance.

“Under the old CBA the only way management could reward a technician for outstanding performance was a \$2,000 cash bonus because of the way the contract was worded back in 2003. Now that really wasn't the intent, the intent was to make sure that if you did an outstanding job you got an award,” said Golaboff. “Under the new contract, if you are an employee and you get an outstanding rating on your performance appraisal, management is going to give you an award. It could be a \$2,000 cash award, it could also be a quality step increase or it could be time off. We opened it up to all of the options that we have available to reward employees for outstanding performance.”

In addition to the administrative updates, members from the Lone Star Chapter visited armories across the state to hear concerns and issues within the organization.

“We drove across Central Texas over a two-week period,” said Weldon. “We got in front of a lot of people, and we actually logged several thousand miles driving across Texas, sitting down with people and hearing out their issues, complaints and what

they need, so that we can help them facilitate those needs.” Some of the hot topics were environmental differential, hazardous differential, lack of personnel equipment and uniform deficiency.

These issues were brought up to management and were able to be resolved.

“Management realized that there was a problem too and they didn't realize that they could fix it,” said Olguin. “We've got a process in place now, it's just opened up those lines of communication between the union and the agency to ensure that the technicians are being taken care of. And that was the biggest thing for the contract is it opened the eyes of both parties to see the shortcomings that were affecting the technicians of the Texas Army National Guard.”

During a ceremony, the Texas Adjutant General signed the newly updated contract, making it available to employees across the force. There is, however, still much work to be done.

“Got a little work ahead of me. We've identified problems and we've fixed problems, but there are still back-end type situations that didn't completely get completed,” said Weldon. “Now that we have the signed copy of the contract, that means basically that the TAG understands and he will uphold that agreement, so it gives me more leverage to push and say hey, yeah we've got something in place, but we're still not fully fulfilling that intent. So here is the complaint, now let's get it fixed.” **-D**

*Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, the adjutant general of Texas, signs a new federal employee contract during a ceremony at Camp Mabry Near Austin Texas.
 (U.S. National Guard photo by Liz Pena.)*



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FORT WORTH, Texas – Air National Guard senior leaders visited the 136th Airlift Wing on May 20 to meet with the men and women of the wing and tour the facilities.

Lt. Gen. L. Scott Rice, the director of the Air National Guard, and Chief Master Sgt. Ronald Anderson, the command chief of the Air National Guard, took a look at the 136 AW mission and spoke with hundreds of Airmen around the wing.

“There’s depth to this thing called patriotism, and that’s what energizes me and drives me forward,” said Rice.

After arriving to the installation, the director and command chief received a mission brief by Col. Thomas M. Suelzer, the commander of the 136 AW, which highlighted key components of the wing’s mission.

Both Rice and Anderson were given the opportunity to meet with Airmen who will deploy overseas. They also spent time during lunch with outstanding performers of all ranks to discuss any concerns the Airmen may have and talk about the direction the ANG is headed.

“It was good to see someone so high in command like the DANG take time to come visit us. It’s really cool to have moments like these to remind us that we’re all in this together,” said Senior Airman Travis Garcia, a material handler with the 136th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

After lunch, the distinguished visitors spent time at the 136th Maintenance Squadron’s propulsion shop to receive an in-depth look at the turboprop engines which power the wing’s C-130 Hercules cargo aircraft. They also spent time getting a tour of the aircraft and discussing the C-130’s capabilities with aircrew members.

Rice and Anderson got a chance to witness 136 AW Airmen in action as they completed training in the Expeditionary Skills Rodeo, which focused on response to self-aid buddy care and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense drills.

“It’s incredibly important, and we’re absolutely honored to be able to spend a little bit of time with the wing today,” said Anderson. “We want to understand a little bit of how you’re so incredibly successful and what we can do to make you more successful in the future. And ensure that your kids and grandkids have a wing and future here if they want to be a part of the Air National Guard family.”

The final stop on the visit was a commander’s all-call at the base theater where Rice spoke with Airmen and answered questions related to force structure, physical fitness testing and career development within the ANG.

“And frankly,” said Rice, “with all the things you’ve done, all the things you’re doing, and all the hope and pride and excitement for the future that you have, you’re making a difference in this world. And for that I thank you all.” **-D**

Photo Cutlines

(Page 16 top) Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Efren Perez Jr., the propulsion supervisor for the 136th Maintenance Squadron, briefs Lt. Gen. Scott Rice, the director of the Air National Guard, and Chief Master Sgt. Ronald Anderson, the Command Chief Master Sgt. of the Air National Guard, on capabilities and processes of the propulsion shop May 20, 2017, at NAS Fort Worth JRB, TX. The visit allowed for an up-close inspection of unit assets and equipment. (Air National Guard photo by Tech Sgt. Lynn M. Means.)

(Page 16 Bottom left) Lt. Gen. Scott Rice, the director of the Air National Guard, takes a selfie with Airmen from the 136th Maintenance Squadron’s propulsion shop May 20, 2017, at NAS Fort Worth JRB, TX. The visit allowed for an up-close inspection of unit assets and equipment. (Air National Guard photo by Tech Sgt. Lynn M. Means.)

(Page 16 Bottom Right) Air Force Master Sgt. Patrick Watson, a propulsion shop chief for the 136th Maintenance Squadron, briefs Lt. Gen. Scott Rice, the director of the Air National Guard, on the tear-down and build-up process for propellers May 20, 2017, at NAS Fort Worth JRB, TX. The visit allowed for an up-close inspection of unit assets and equipment. (Air National Guard photo by Tech Sgt. Lynn M. Means.)

TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

TEXAS' OLDEST UNIT TAKES ON NEW OVERSEAS MISSION

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

SAN ANTONIO, Texas – “This is a historic unit,” said Brig. Gen. Patrick Hamilton, Assistant Division Commander – Operations of the 36th Infantry Division. “Task Force Alamo is aptly named. It traces its lineage back to when Texas was still just a republic, fighting for its own independence.”

The Texas Army National Guard’s oldest unit, dating back to 1823, the 1st Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment of the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, conducted a deployment ceremony on May 16, 2018 at Joint Base San Antonio – Fort Sam Houston. The battalion is preparing to deploy to the Horn of Africa, partnering with more than ten nations to promote regional stability and prosperity.

“This is a vitally important mission,” said Hamilton. “All people are created equal, and we are defending that freedom around the world, so it is critical that we do a great job in helping the countries that we’re going.”

Hundreds of family members were in attendance to see their Soldiers off and show their support.

“Although your Soldiers wear the uniforms,” said Col. Rodrigo Gonzalez, the commander of the 72nd IBCT, “you also serve with them in your capacity as a family member and you wear the uniform in your heart.”

This will be the last time that Soldiers will see their families for the coming year, and Maj Sean Iburguen, commander of the battalion, addresses that hardship.

“For some, the toughest timeframe of the deployment is upon us and that is moving toward the final goodbye,” said Iburguen. “Soon your Soldier will return home and the joy of that return will eclipse the sadness of saying goodbye in the coming days.”

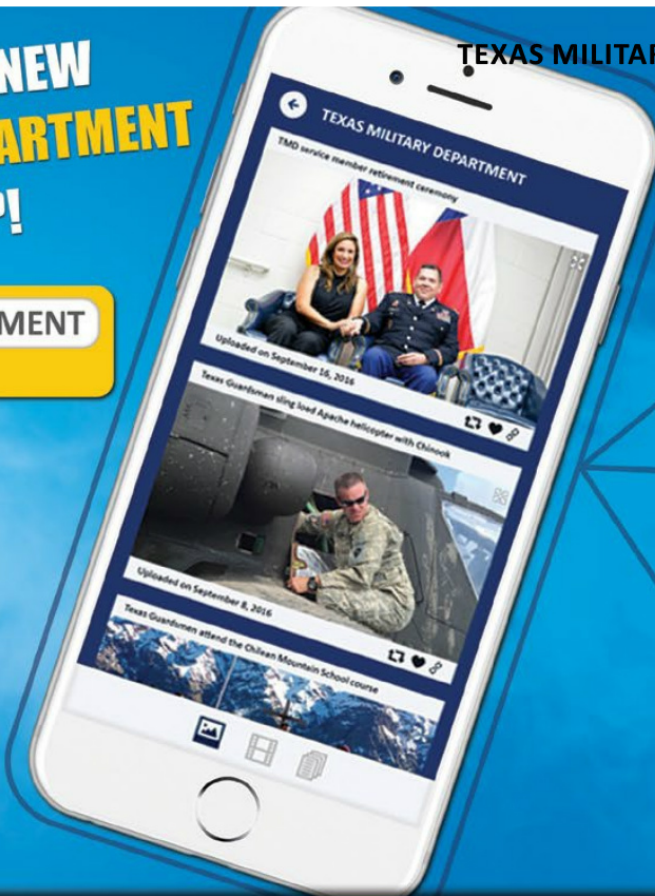
The 12-year-old daughter of the battalion commander gave him advice on a painted rock to carry with him on his deployment that he passed along to his Soldiers that “time flies.”

“It may not feel like it right now, but time does fly and it will fly moving forward,” said Iburguen. “We will be back in the Lone Star State before you know it.” **-D**



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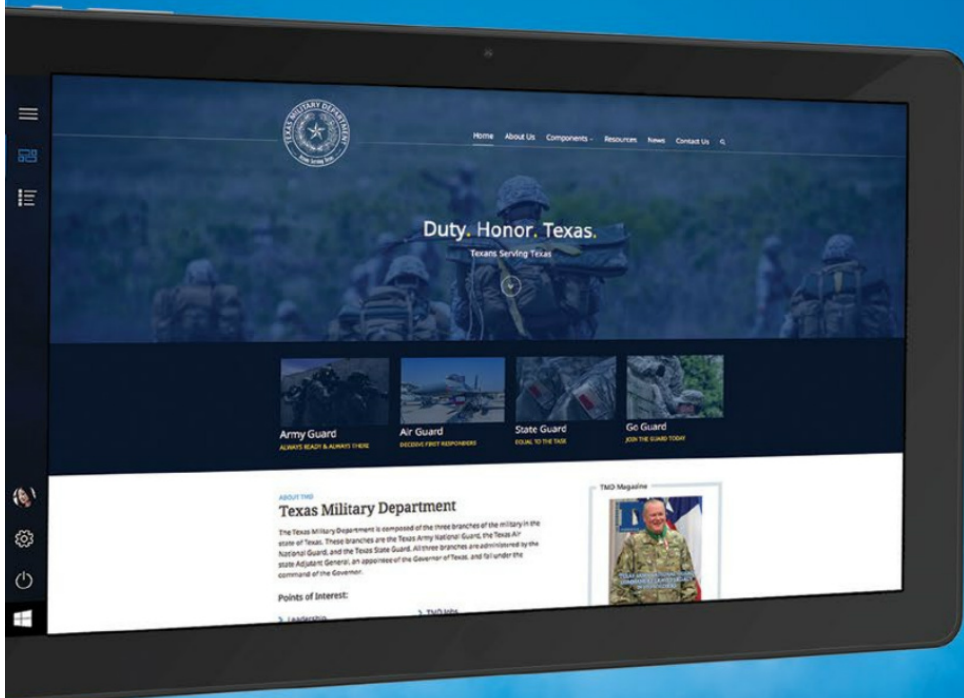
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PREPARING FOR THE NEXT MAJOR DISASTER

*Story By: Sgt. Mark Otte
100 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

With Hurricane Harvey a scant eight months in the rear-view mirror, the Texas Military Department, with a handful of lessons learned, began training for the next big natural disaster as it hosted the largest search and rescue exercise in the organization's history on May 21, 2018.

The week-long drill that simulated another Harvey-scale disaster kicked off as more than 20 helicopters from multiple state agencies descended on the Armed Forces Reserve Center, adjacent to the Austin Bergstrom Airport.

Involving local police and the Texas Department of Public Safety in exercises, and even less controlled real-world rescue efforts, is complicated, but Lt. Col. Troy Meuth, director of the TMD Air Operations Center, said that they knew from Harvey, if other states are needed to help, the complexity can become almost unmanageable.

"This exercise simulates a situation where both local law enforcement and DPS respond to the event, plus, we are simulating that we need more help," Meuth said. "So, we have North Carolina, South Carolina, Missouri, Oklahoma and the Coast Guard all coming to help in a coordinated operation to rescue the citizens of Austin."

With plans beginning nearly five months ago, the exercise totaled 24 agencies--12 who supplied vital aircraft-- 20 helicopters and 250 people.

While citizens could see the pilots and rescue swimmers training at various spots throughout Austin, Meuth said that some of the best training came while the birds sat on the tarmac.

Coast Guard pilot Lt. George Mathews, who flew alongside TMD partners during Harvey, said that taking the time to acquaint rescuers, enabling them to

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recognize and understand the people who they are working with during high-stress situations, is an invaluable addition to the search and rescue training.

"I think that these types of exercises and the opportunity to meet each other and the partnerships we are forming are what is going to help us be more prepared for next time," Mathews said. "It's likely something like that will happen again and we have to prepare for the worst."

With new bonds formed the pilots and rescue swimmers took to the air where they received missions from the Air Operations Center. Those missions involve the most complicated rescues crews attempt. Throughout the day pilots hovered over small rooftops, stranded vehicles and overflowing rivers, while rescue swimmers snatched victims from the ravages of a notional mother nature.

As the sun set, the rescuers were only getting warmed up. The real challenge was still ahead as the crews geared up for night operations. While night rescues are inherently more dangerous, stopping operations at sundown was not something the Texas Military Department does, according to Meuth.

"If you lose the ability to conduct night operations, you are not conducting rescues for 12 out of the 24 hours," Meuth said. "The worst thing we could do is say, 'it's getting dark, and you are still in trouble, but we can't help you.' Now we can come get you and that's an important capability we added to the training this year."

While the Texas Military Department and its partners did an outstanding job responding to Harvey, Meuth said, the aftermath leaves planners wondering whether they are doing enough to prepare for the next mission. With many citizens' memories of Harvey starting to fade, for those tasked with ensuring the safety of others, Meuth said exercises like these will continue to happen and continue to grow and will continue to be a reminder that events like Harvey do happen.

"The people of Texas should know that we have a drive and dedication to ensuring that when we are called upon we have the most well-trained group, with the skills and the know how to get the job done," Meuth said. **-D**

A Lakota with the Texas Military Department lowers a member of Texas Task Force 1 into the bed of a truck for a simulated night rescue operation during the a search and rescue exercise held near Austin Bergstrom International Airport on May, 21 2018



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