







# SPECIAL EDITION DISPATCH

- 4 A Letter from the Commander
- 5 COVID - 19 Special Section
- 11 CDO Special Section
- 14 Feeding Families
- 16 TMDx
- 18 Secure the Border
- 20 A Town Without Water
- 21 TMD Deployments
- 22 40 Years of Service

*Cover Illustration: Image featuring Pfc. Ana Vega, as photographed by Capt. Leyda Ocasio-Kanzler Texas Army National Guard. Illustration by Andrew Smith.*





*Texas Army National Guard Soldiers assist factory employees at the Prestige Ameritech mask factory in Fort Worth, Texas, April 7, 2020. The Texas Military Department partnered with Prestige Ameritech to bolster the factory's manpower in order to allow for 24-hour production of N95 respirator masks which are critical for healthcare workers treating patients with COVID-19. (Texas Air National Guard photo by A1C Charissa Menken)*



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Greg Abbott



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## TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# "A YEAR THAT MADE HISTORY"

## A LETTER FROM THE DESK OF: MAJ. GEN. TRACY NORRIS THE ADJUTANT GENERAL OF TEXAS

My fellow members of the Texas Military Department,

I don't have to tell you that 2020 has been an unprecedented year. In the past 12 months we have experienced nation-wide civil unrest, natural disasters both at home and in our sister states, ongoing border missions and some of our largest overseas deployments in years. Since March, we have been in an all-hands-on-deck status as we have helped Texas mitigate the effects of COVID-19.

Long hours, late nights, time away from families, quick adaptations to changing information and continuous mobilizations have been the hallmarks of this year. These are circumstances which would challenge even the most prepared and skilled warrior. Yet, in the midst of all of these challenges, I see our team standing strong. Soldiers, Airmen, State Guardsmen and Civilians- we have come together to support our Nation in its time of trial.

As COVID-19 spread across the state, TMD activated more than 4,000 personnel who, among other things, administered over half a million coronavirus tests. Our Guardsmen also sanitized long-term living facilities, setting aside their own safety to help ensure the safety of Texas' most vulnerable.

The global pandemic didn't stop natural disasters, and TMD operations had to continue despite the additional complexities the virus added to each mission. Between fires, floods, tornados and two hurricanes, more than 1,000 Texas Guardsmen were called to assist in communities around the state.

Preserving the peace, and ensuring every Texan's voice was heard, proved to be a fine line. Nearly 5,000 Soldiers, Airmen and State Guardsmen were called to quell civil disturbances this year. I am certain the positive outcomes from those missions were a direct reflection of the professionalism of all that took on that often difficult job. The people of Texas owe you a debt of gratitude for your service.

All of these missions were accomplished as nearly 1,500 Texas Guardsmen continued to secure our Nation's Southwest border and another 1,500 were deployed for overseas missions.

As the year wraps up, the call to service hasn't ceased. Our growing team of cyber warriors were called to action as adversaries continue to attack our municipalities' networks. I know our talented team will work tirelessly to restore those vital services whose loss disrupted the lives of Texans.

I am immensely proud of the hard work and dedication exhibited by our entire force. We all play different roles as we set about completing each of TMD's missions and each role is precious and critical to our success. Thank you for all you do. Much was asked of you this year, and time and time again you delivered.

Remember, We are Texas Strong and Texas Proud. It's the contributions from each of you that make TMD one of the greatest military organizations. You should all be proud of your accomplishments in 2020.

### 4 TheDISPATCH



TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# COVID-19 COMES TO TEXAS



*COVID-19, 2020 SPECIAL EDITION*





**5,242**  
PERSONNEL  
DEPLOYED



**17**  
TESTING  
TEAMS



**708K**  
COVID-19  
TESTS GIVEN



**472K**  
CALLS ANSWERED  
IN CALL CENTER

**ALL DATA AS OF  
NOVEMBER 15**

# COVID-19 TESTING



*Texas Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Michael Pate at work at a COVID-19 Testing center. (Texas Air National Guard Photo by Staff Sgt. Sean Kornegay)*

**Story By: Staff Sgt. Sean Kornegay**  
**136th Airlift Wing**

EL PASO, Texas - Early on, emergency managers realized the best way to coordinate Texas' response to COVID-19 was through easily accessible testing for both urban centers and rural areas. To quickly rollout this effort medical and logistics experts from the National Guard were deployed to quickly establish, equip and staff test sites that would move throughout the state increasing access to their critical tracking measure.

Staff Sgt. Michael Pate, an Aerospace Medical Technician with the Texas Air National Guard's 136th Airlift Wing Medical Group, explained how the testing mission has evolved since the beginning of the pandemic.

"The testing moved from medics performing the tests to overseeing the patients perform the tests themselves," said Pate.

Pate was part of a team of Guardsmen working throughout west Texas at the height of the simmering desert summer.

"It's hot and I'm not used to such dry weather," said Pate, "but I enjoy helping out the citizens of El Paso."

Pate also serves his local community as an emergency medical technician. The connection

between his civilian job and military occupation allows him to focus on serving those in need in both his careers.

"As a full-time emergency medical technician in the civilian sector, my job is to assess patients and provide care," said Pate. "I'm able to apply those skills along with those I've acquired from my military career."

Pate explained that though this is the first time he has applied his military specialty to a disaster response, he is no stranger to domestic operations.

"This activation provides all new challenges because I'm in a leadership role now. I was a Senior Airman during Hurricane Harvey and now as a Staff Sgt., I'm able to lead my Airmen and utilize their input to improve testing processes."

Pate joins more than 1,200 Guard members providing testing resources throughout the state, a mission Texas Governor Greg Abbott specifically highlighted for the Guard during his activation order in March.

More than 700,000 tests have been administered by Guard members. Though many commercial services have begun to provide testing the Guard continues their effort in areas with poor access to medical services. **-D**

**COVID-19, 2020 SPECIAL EDITION**





**137.9**  
MILLION POUNDS  
FOOD DISTROED



**175.1**  
MILLION MEALS  
DISTRIBUTED

TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# FEEDING TEXANS

*Story By: Master Sgt. Lynn M. Means, 136th Airlift Wing*

AUSTIN, Texas - The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic led to widespread unemployment as retail stores, restaurants, manufacturing plants, and office buildings closed to stem the spread of the virus.

At the pandemic's peak more than 3.6 million Texans lost their jobs. Food Banks quickly became a central point of support for Texans in need.

The sudden influx of new users overwhelmed food banks ability to processes, pack, track and deliver food items and the call went out for help.

Texas Guardsmen began providing food distribution support in June, 2020 after Gov. Abbott directed the Guard to leverage its logistical expertise to mitigate the growing food insecurity impacting Texas families. Partnerships with local non-profits and grocery suppliers allowed the state to quickly shift resources where they were needed most.

"Sometimes we do fruits and vegetables, sometimes dry foods," said Jackson. "And it's just a variety pack, which makes it easier for distribution points."

Jackson is one of thousands of Guard members who joined with local volunteers and food bank staff to package and distribute up to 50,000 pounds of food per day. She explained the program provided a variety of meal options which required the Guardsmen and volunteers to be flexible in their distribution methods.

Jackson said that it was a team effort to feed the nearly 80,000 families around Tarrant County, one of dozens of counties where Guard members worked with local food banks.

The Guard's efforts led to millions of pounds of food being distributed to Texas families and the assurance that no Texas family that asked for help would be turned away.

Texas Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Brenna Jackson, 136th Security Forces Squadron said that most of the people she met in line were grateful for the Guard's presence.

"One driver rolled down her window with tears streaming down her face, just to say thanks," said Jackson. "She didn't know how she was going to feed her family."



*Texas Army National Guard Spc. Juan Hernandez carries bags of canned goods at the Endowment Community Resource Center in Edinburg, Texas, April 15, 2020.  
(Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. De'Jon Williams)*



*Texas National Guard Soldiers pack bags of food at the Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley in Pharr, Texas, April 16, 2020.  
(Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. De'Jon Williams)*

**COVID-19, 2020 SPECIAL EDITION**



TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# DECONTAMINATION

Story By: Staff Sgt. Michael Giles, 36th Infantry Division Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas - As the COVID-19 pandemic continued into the summer months, new data showed the virus was more adept at surviving in the environment than previously believed.

To combat the virus, Guardsmen were equipped with personal protective equipment and sanitizing kits as part of a decontamination mission directed Texas Gov. Greg Abbott. On May 8, 2020 these Guard members received training on the proper wear of safety gear and effective disinfectant techniques by the Texas National Guard's 6th Civil Support Team.

The Texas Military Department's Joint Task Force 176, National Guard disinfection teams cleaned more than 400 hundred longterm care sites, medical facilities, and government buildings where people had tested positive for the virus

1st Lt. Joseph Warth, Joint Task Force 176 battle captain, explained that the National Guard disinfection teams worked with the Texas Division of Emergency Management to locate facilities where occupants had tested positive for COVID-19. Warth said that the mission focused on protecting the buildings residents and providing a clean, sanitized space to live and work in.

"We will go in and ensure that residents are protected," Warth said. "That's what we're here for."

Spc. Precious Watkins, a Texas Army National Guard culinary specialist assigned to Joint Task Force 176, said this mission hits close to home for her as an individual with elder relatives

"In class today we talked about how people who have had strokes or heart attacks are more vulnerable to COVID-19," Watkins said. "That's a little scary for me."

Maj. Peter Ammerman, operations officer with Joint Task Force 176, said National Guardsmen were able to quickly learn and execute the cleaning mission because their dual military

and civilian life makes them well-rounded, adaptive and committed to the mission.

"Not only are they Army Soldiers and Air Force Airmen, but they're also civilians who do a lot of different things," Ammerman said. "They're able to get out there and truly do whatever the State of Texas asks them to do." -D



(Above) Army National Soldier wipes down surfaces as part of a Long-term care facility disinfection operations of Joint Task Force 176 around Austin, Texas, May 12, 2020. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Andrew Smith)

(Below) Army National Soldiers donning personal protective gear for long-term care facility disinfection operations of Joint Task Force 176 around Austin, Texas, May 12, 2020. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Andrew Smith)



10.2M  
SQ FEET  
SANITIZED



472  
FACILITIES  
DISINFECTED



## COVID-19, 2020 SPECIAL EDITION



TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# ACTIVE PARTNERS

*Story by Robert Seyller  
Texas Military Department Public Affairs*

AUSTIN, Texas - More than 1,200 service members are partnering together from the Texas National Guard, Active and Reserve components of the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force to support Texas hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With a request to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Gov. Greg Abbott secured a partnership between the Texas National Guard and U.S. Army North that will provide local hospitals with medical professionals from the U.S. Armed Forces.

Maj. Gen. Tracy R. Norris, the adjutant general of Texas, welcomed the additional healthcare providers joining a Texas Military Department led response that began in March 2020.

“By partnering with the Active duty and Reserve components, we will be able to provide this much needed support and relief to the Texas civilian healthcare workers who have been working tirelessly to care for the people of our great state,” said Norris.

According to Norris, the Texas National Guard already shares a strong working relationship with U.S. Army North. The San Antonio based U.S. Army North also provides defense support to civil authorities in times of need.

Lt. Gen. Laura J. Richardson, commanding general of U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) and the Joint Force Land Component Command, also pointed to the long-standing relationship between the Guard, Active Duty, and the joint force.

“This is a total force effort,” said Lt. Gen. Richardson. “Our joint service members are working determinedly to relieve stress on hospitals and to deliver care to communities in need.”

Maj. Gen. Norris, serving as the first female adjutant general of the state, and Lt. Gen. Richardson, serving as the first female commander of U.S. Army North, have both spent months working to reduce the impact of COVID-19 on the nation.

“We are committed to assisting those in need as part of the ongoing whole-of-nation response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in support of FEMA,” said Lt. Gen. Richardson. “At the same time, we remain fully capable of conducting our primary mission of defending the homeland.”



*Maj. Gen. Tracy Norris, the Adjutant General of Texas (left), meets with U.S. Army North Commanding General, Lt. Gen. Laura Richardson (right), during a visit to the Texas State Operations Center in Austin, Texas, July 16, 2020.*

Leading the effort on the ground will be Texas Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Thomas Suelzer. Appointed as the dual-status commander, Suelzer will provide direction to both Texas National Guard and federal service members. The nomination and approval of the dual-status commander streamlines the process, ensuring a smoother and more effective collaboration of state and federal resources.

According to Suelzer, the dual status commander allows the Governor to continue leading the response with both state and federal military assets. Under this structure, orders and guidance can simultaneously be received by the president.

“It is an incredible experience to work with our service members in this historic event. My position will allow for collaboration between orders directed by Gov. Abbott and those by the president” said Suelzer. “I am proud to see how effortlessly our forces have integrated with each other.”

The 12 initial teams will consist of 100 medical staff, including doctors, nurses, medics, and healthcare administrators from the National Guard, Active Duty forces, and Military Reservists.

Current focus areas are Houston, San Antonio, Del Rio, Eagle Pass, the Rio Grande Valley, and the Texas Coastal Bend. Suelzer explained the mix of metropolitan and rural response areas highlight very different ways the Texas health system is strained. Cities like Houston and San Antonio are dealing with large populations that increase the communicability of the virus, while rural areas including the Rio Grande Valley and the Texas Coastal Bend struggle to find medical providers in the sparsely populated region. **-D**

## COVID-19, 2020 SPECIAL EDITION





# 2020 TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT MOBILIZATION TIMELINE

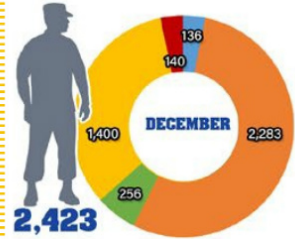
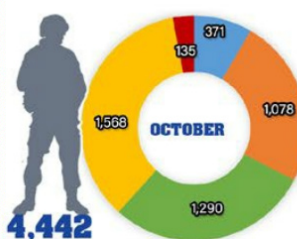
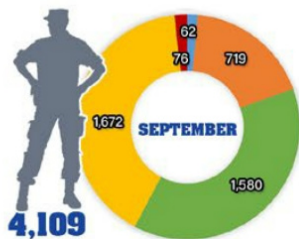
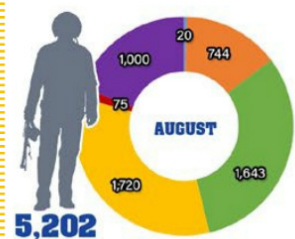
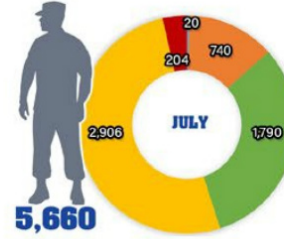
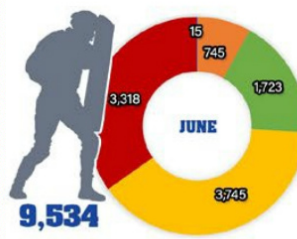
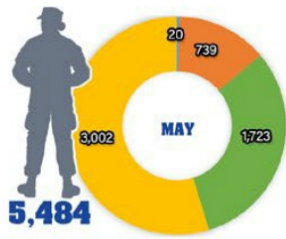
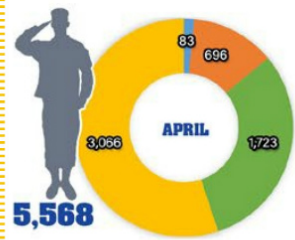
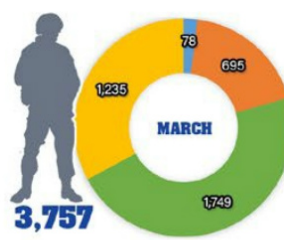
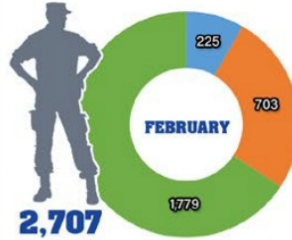
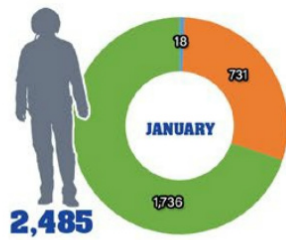
## MOBILIZED TEXAS GUARDSMEN KEY

- █ CONUS
- █ OCONUS
- █ Border
- █ COVID-19
- █ Civil Disturbance
- █ Hurricane Laura

### TOTAL PEAK MOBILIZED

**235** out of **254**  
**COUNTIES SERVED**

**17**  
**TEXAS AGENCIES SUPPORTED**



ALL DATA AS OF DECEMBER 30



TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# DEFENDING TEXAS

## CIVIL DEFENSE OPERATIONS



**Special Edition 11**



## TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

*Story by Robert Seyller  
Texas Military Department Public Affairs*

AUSTIN, Texas - Following the death of George Floyd, a resident of Minneapolis, Minnesota who died in police custody, a series of protests spread across the United States, including several cities in Texas. Governor Greg Abbott activated the Texas National Guard in response to civil disturbance following several violent and criminal incidents occurring near protest activities, May 31, 2020.

Texas Guardsmen were positioned at government facilities including the Texas State Capitol in Austin, and several historical landmarks. Abbott stressed that the Guardsmen were in place maintain public safety, not stop protests.

"As Texans exercise their 1st Amendment rights, it is imperative that order is maintained and private property is protected." Said Abbott.

Military Police Guardsmen from the both Texas Air and Army National Guards mobilized to support law enforcement in 88 locations across the state.

Members of the Texas State Guard provided security support to Texas Military Department facilities and the Joint Forces Headquarters at Camp Mabry, in Austin, Texas.



*Army National Guard Soldiers with Joint Task Force 176's Task Force Capitol support law enforcement during protests at the Texas State Capitol in Austin, Texas, June 19, 2020. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Charles Spirtos)*



*A joint team of Texas Army National Guard Soldiers, Texas Department of Public Safety troopers and local law enforcement officers prepare for protests in the Dallas, Texas area following renewed focus on police conduct. Texas Military Department Soldiers were positioned to assist local authorities in securing protest sites and protecting key infrastructure from criminal behavior. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Charles Spirtos)*



# CIVIL DEFENSE OPERATIONS BY THE NUMBERS



**5 HISTORIC SITES  
PROTECTED**



**4,400 DEPLOYED  
GUARDSMEN**



**88 LOCATIONS  
SUPPORTED**



**95 PLATOONS  
DEPLOYED**



**191 AGENCIES  
SUPPORTED**



**42 EVENTS  
PROTECTED**



**105,502  
TRAINING HOURS**



**542,858  
HOURS OF SERVICE**

*"We are here to assist in the  
Protection of all Texans"*

*Maj Gen. Tracy R. Norris ~ The Adjutant General of Texas*

ALL DATA AS OF DECEMBER 15

**Special Edition 13**



TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# TEXAS AND EGYPT



## FORM NEW STATE PARTNERSHIP



*Story by Charlie Spirtos  
Texas Military Department Public Affairs*

*Maj. Gen Tracy R. Norris, the Adjutant General of Texas poses after the signing of a proclamation honoring the inception of the Texas state partnership with the Arab Republic of Egypt at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas on August 24, 2020. MG Norris was joined by Texas Secretary of State Ruth Hughs and Maj. Gen. Abdelraouf A. Moussa Mohamed, the Defense Attaché of the Arab Republic of Egypt to the United States. (Charles E. Spirtos)*

AUSTIN, TEXAS – Texas and the Arab Republic of Egypt took the first step in forming a long-term partnership under the National Guard's State Partnership Program, August 24, 2020.

In a ceremony at the historic Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas Secretary of State Ruth R. Hughs; Maj. Gen. Tracy R. Norris, the adjutant general of Texas; and Egypt's defense attaché to the United States, Maj. Gen. Abdelraouf A. Moussa, affirmed their intent to form a long-term partnership between the Texas National Guard and the Egyptian military.

In her remarks, Norris highlighted past and future cooperation.

"The Texas Military Department is proud to play a key role in the overall U.S.-Egypt relationship. From the Texas National Guard's continued participation in Exercise Bright Star - a decades-running, multilateral defense exercise, to Texas National Guard units supporting the MFO's mission in Sinai, Texas is a key player in the military partnership between our two countries. The formal establishment of our partnership through the State Partnership Program codifies and makes official a rela-

tionship between our militaries that has been in the making for decades."

U.S. Ambassador to Egypt Jonathan Cohen noted the U.S. military relationship with Egypt has been a foundation of the U.S.-Egypt strategic partnership for more than 40 years. "Defense cooperation with Egypt is a cornerstone of our strategic partnership, spanning counterterrorism, border security, and joint training and planning to address complex geopolitical challenges."

Moussa and other Egyptian officials also toured Texas military facilities and observed operations along the U.S.-Mexico border. A formal signing ceremony of the State Partnership program is scheduled for later this year in Cairo, where Egypt will have the opportunity to showcase its military capabilities for visiting U.S. officials.

This partnership benefits both Texas and Egypt through the conduct of exchanges and exercises in the areas of C-130 and F-16 flight maneuver and maintenance, cyber defense, logistics, special forces, homeland security response preparedness, military support to civilian authorities, and humanitarian and disaster assistance response.

The State Partnership Program has been successfully building relationships for over 25 years, and now includes partnerships with 84 nations around the globe. These programs link a unique component of the Department of Defense - a





*Leadership from the Texas National Guard and the Egyptian military take a picture in front of an F-16 Fighting Falcon from the 149th Fighter Wing, Aug. 25, 2020, at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. (Air National Guard photo by Minidy Bloem)*



*Texas Air National Guard Airmen from the 149th Medical Group's Emergency Medical Detachment, Air National Guard, brief Maj. Gen. Abdelraouf A. Moussa Mohammed, Egyptian Defense, and Air Attache to the United States and Canada, on their mission, Aug. 25, 2020, at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas. (Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Derek Davis)*

*Delegations from the Texas National Guard, USCENTCOM, the National Guard Bureau, and the Arab Republic of Egypt pose in front of the Alamo in San Antonio, August 25, 2020. The visit to the Alamo is part of a larger cultural exchange between Egypt and Texas*

*(U.S. Army photo by Charles E. Spirtos)*





TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# TEXAS LAUNCHES JOINT INNOVATION UNIT

Story by Bob Seyller  
Texas Military Department Public Affairs



*TMD x hosts a manned and unmanned aerial vehicle demonstration at Camp Mabry, in Austin, Texas, September 15, 2020, allowing top DoD officials and innovators to discuss new product offerings and needed capabilities.*



## TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

AUSTIN, Texas – After more than a year of preparation, July 2020 saw the official launch of the Texas Military Department Joint Innovation Unit: TMDx.

Located at the Capital Factory in Austin, TMDx is serving as a flagship innovation hub bringing together corporate, academic, government and military resources to locate solutions to emerging combat and disaster response concerns.

TMDx will utilize the Texas Guard's position as the largest state military force in the country to leverage the manpower, equipment and facilities needed to make the program a success.

The unit has already proven itself as a leader in the innovation sphere helping develop "Pilot Training Next, a technology-focused pilot preparation course developed to reduce pilot training time. The strategic program has produced partnerships in construction, software programs and 3D printing technology.

TMD notched success early as the top winner of the National Guard bureau's inaugural innovation competition, a technology concept showdown that brought submissions from all 54 states and territories.

The win came from the Texas National Guard's partnership with Austin based Essentium, a 3D printing company. The Guard is working to innovate maintenance operations for F-16 fighter aircraft by printing components and replacement parts for the air frame.

Driving the effort for TMDx is Lt. Col Alex Goldberg, director of the Joint Innovation Unit. He explained that for the military to succeed in an ever-expanding battlefield speed and the adaptability is imperative.

"It all comes down to needing to move faster," said Goldberg. "Our adversaries are moving faster – faster in space, faster in hypersonic and faster in fielding commercial technology."

Goldberg explained that a growing number of near-peer threats are out pacing the U.S. in innovation not because they are smarter or more capable, but because they don't have programs burdened with bureaucratic hurdles.

Maj. Gen. Tracy R. Norris, the adjutant general of Texas agreed that speed was a critical component in updating the military's ability to defend the nation.



*Texas Army National Guard Soldiers review 3D printed replacement parts for military aircraft and vehicles during an exhibition in maintenance technology. the concept won the Texas Guard top honors at the National Guard Bureau inaugural innovation competition. (Texas Military Department Photo By: Kyle Burns )*

"The status quo is comfortable, but what works today to ensure our national security will not be good enough for the challenges on the horizon," said Norris. "The military moves slower than we would like, but we are moving away from a 'no because' mindset to a mindset of, 'How do we get to yes?'"

Among the programs seeing early benefit is ICON, a construction company that specializes in 3D printing concrete structures. The company visualizes changing how the military constructs everything from forward operating bases in combat zones to barracks and armories. Partnering with the Texas Military Department provided access to early funding and locations to better develop equipment.

In September the program hosted an aerial vehicle demonstration at Camp Mabry in Austin. The gathering brought top Department of Defense officials together while area business showcased new product capabilities.

During a recent trip to Texas, the Joint Innovation unit hosted the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson. Goldberg took the opportunity to explain how the program allows Texas based companies to work directly with service members when developing new products for the military.

Goldberg, said that the Austin Hub was the first of many planned innovation centers with eventual expansion to San Antonio, Houston, Dallas, Ft. Worth and El Paso as the end goal for the program. **-D**

**Special Edition 17**



# SECURING THE BORDER



*Soldiers with the Joint Task Force – 136th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade prepare to board a CH-47 Chinook in Laredo, Texas, March 11, 2020. The soldiers boarded the aircraft to conduct further training along the Southwest Texas Border. (Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. De'Jon Williams)*

## **Story by Capt. Leyda Ocasio-Kanzler Joint Taskforce Guardian Support Public Affairs**

AUSTIN, Texas – The Texas National Guard has a history of securing the 1,885-mile-long border between Texas and Mexico, that dates back to the mid-1800's and the Republic of Texas. Since the inception of the Texas National Guard, Guardsmen have supported law enforcement officials along the border whenever needed.

Most recently, on April 2018, on the order of the President of the United States, the Texas National Guard mobilized to secure the southern border.

Comprised of service members from across the Texas National Guard, Joint Task Force – Guardian Support was the Department of Defense's key force element in its support of the Department of Homeland Security's border operations.

In its current capacity, the Texas National Guard collaborates closely with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to enhance its border security operations in Texas. The Guard accomplishes this mission by supporting Border Patrol agents with aviation, infrastructure, logistical, surveillance, and operational support.

"The partnership has aided us greatly in several areas," said Chianti Edwards, U.S. Customs and Border Protection Supervisory Border Patrol Agent for the Rio Grande Sector. "The surveillance support provided by the Texas Guard increased our overall situational awareness and amplified our ability to detect and mitigate illicit activity."

Edwards explained that the overall success of the Texas National Guard's ground support assistance program significantly enhanced their fleet readiness. In just two years, National Guard mechanics repaired more than 91,000 Border Patrol vehicles.

Edwards said that the most important benefit of their Texas Guard partnership was the Guard assistance in support functions which allowed Border Patrol agents to primarily focus on law enforcement duties. This support directly resulted in an increase of apprehensions, narcotics interdictions and vehicle seizures along the southwest border.

"I cannot express enough just how important this contribution is to our agency and our operation," said Edwards. "One of the greatest contributions is that Joint Task Force – Guardian Support allowed Border Patrol agents to deploy back to the field in the more traditional enforcement functions to mitigate illicit activity."

The partnership between the National Guard and U.S. Customs and Border Patrol is a long-standing relationship that has developed overtime.

"One of the greatest lessons learned is the importance of the whole-of-government approach to securing our nation's border," said Edwards.

Whole-of-government efforts bring together personnel and resources from across cabinet departments and agencies, working across traditional lines of effort to produce results on complex mission sets.

Currently, the National Guard is undergoing redeployment,



transitioning service members off the border and back to their organic units. As Texas National Guard members begin to return to their home units, Texas will conduct a change of responsibility with units from various state's National Guards, who will take over this mission in a federally funded Title 10 status.

“We have full confidence in the ability of our fellow states to ensure America’s borders are secure,” said Maj. Gen. Tracy R. Norris, the Adjutant General of Texas. Norris added that “it has been an honor to support CBP and the border security mission for so many years.”

As the Texas Guard prepares to return home, and a new set of service members comes in to replace them, the team at U.S. Customs and Border Patrol said they have full faith and confidence in the ability of fellow states to support the border security effort.

“We don’t have concerns,” said Edwards. “The National Guard elements that we have on ground here are great and we are coordinating each step of the transition together.”

As service members begin this transition, Texas National Guard leadership is working to ensure that returning service members have access to resources that will secure a successful transition back to civilian life and their home units.

“The goal is to set all service members up for success and to ensure their transition back to their organic units is as seamless as possible, with no discrepancies,” said Capt. Gonzalo Garcia, Joint Task Force Guardian Support J1 personnel officer.

Garcia said the Soldiers will be eligible for certain education benefits that will assist them and their dependents enrolling in college level courses as they begin to exit the Guardian Support mission.

Regardless of home state or occupational background, Texas Guardsmen use their skills and capabilities gained from both military and civilian training to respond to threats to the United States both abroad and at home.

When it comes to protecting the United States’ southern border, the Texas National Guard remains an agency comprised of Texans working to serve Texas – Texans who are always ready and always there to support their law enforcement partners. **-D**

### TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



*Texas Army National Guard Spc. Devonte Kinney guides travelers at the Gateway to the Americas bridge in Laredo, Texas, Aug. 14, 2020. (Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. De’Jon Williams)*



*Texas Army National Guard Cpl. Christian Reney grabs a firearm from U.S. Border Patrol agents at the U.S. Border Patrol Fort Brown Station in Brownsville, Texas, Aug. 10, 2020. (Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. De’Jon Williams)*

**Special Edition 19**



## TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# Amoeba strikes Lake Jackson

*Story by Master Sgt. Lynn M. Means,  
136th Airlift Wing*

LAKE JACKSON, Texas – When the water supply of a southern Texas city became tainted and unsafe to drink in late September 2020, the Texas Military Department responded by sending Army National Guard members to ensure residents had the water they needed to sustain life.

“Back in September, a little boy lost his life due to a brain eating amoeba,” said Bryan Sidebottom, Lake Charles, deputy emergency manager. “We were trying to figure out what happened, and posted a water advisory. We told everyone the water was not consumable, and to use it only to flush the toilet.”

City officials were faced with the dilemma of ensuring residents had water to drink. Without the free flow of clean water to houses, it was going to be an enormous task.

“We didn’t have enough manpower in the city to hand out water bottles while we continued to provide city services,” said Sidebottom. “It’s a big task, so we requested the Guard.

“Initially we had a do-not-use advisory for the water, then it became a boil water advisory. This meant you could drink it after you boil the water.”

But this still was not a good solution, said Sidebottom, as the elevated levels of chlorine used to disinfect the system caused great concern for the residents.

“We wanted to provide the water to ensure every citizen felt they were being taken care of,” said Sidebottom. “It’s been a very arduous task, but thankfully the Guard came to our aid.”

Thirty-one Army National Guardsmen arrived on the morning of September 27, 2020, bringing water to quench the thirst of Lake Jackson. Over a span of nearly two weeks, the team handed out cases of water, talked to residents, and expressed their joy at being able to serve.

“Today we handed out 4,400 cases, and we also hit a little over one million water bottles since we started,” said Private 1st Class Markel Locks, a Texas Army National Guardsman assigned to the team. “Seeing people smile when we gave them water, it meant the world to us.

Juan Guerrero, officer in charge of the mission explained that at one point there was a fear that the team had contracted COVID-19, however the mission continued as

Texas Military Department leaders organized a quick response force to fill the mission’s needs.

“Within six hours’ notice, the QRF was out here,” said Guerrero. “It was really awesome. Next morning at 7:00, they started doing our thing and they kept it up for two days until we got our tests back.

The rest of the team was relieved to receive a negative coronavirus test within a couple of days.

“We were ready to get back to work,” said Guerrero. “The city of Lake Jackson was a great host. They made sure we had hot meals and no need to eat MREs. They really boosted our morale.”

Sidebottom said everyone was immensely grateful for the Citizen-Soldiers who came to distribute water to their city.

“One resident wrote she could see everyone was happy to do what they were doing, and she could see that through their smiling eyes,” said Sidebottom, grinning.

“She said it brought tears to her eyes to see their service,” said Sidebottom. “I love that. It brings tears to my eyes just thinking about it.

Sidebottom said it takes a special person to serve and that the city sends it’s thanks to Texas’ Guardsmen. **-D**



*Texas Army National Guardsmen distribute water bottles to local residents on October 8, 2020, at Lake Jackson, Texas.  
(Photo Credit: Master Sgt. Lynn M. Means)*

**20 TheDISPATCH**



TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# OVER THERE



Maj. Gen Patrick Hamilton, Commander of the 36th Infantry Division salutes his soldiers during a deployment ceremony in Round Rock, Texas, as they prepare to deploy to the CENTCOM region. The 36th Infantry Division will provide command and control over division assets across multiple countries supporting ongoing anti-terror and regional stabilization efforts. (Courtesy Asset)



Lt. Col Malcolm Warbrick, Commander of The 4th Battalion, 133rd Field Artillery Regiment from the Texas National Guard, transferred authority of the Army Central (ARCENT), Force Field Artillery Headquarters, (FFA HQ) High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) Regiment to the 1st Battalion, 14th Field Artillery Regiment, 75th Field Artillery Brigade from Fort Sill, OK, in a ceremony, August 28, 2020. (Courtesy Asset)



Capt. Clark (left) and 1st Sgt. Castellow of HHC, 136th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, Texas Army National Guard wait case the colors at the Battalion Deployment Ceremony, November 20, 2020 at Minute Maid Park in Houston. The Battalion will be stationed in the CENTCOM area of responsibility. (Army National Guard photo by Spc. Jason Archer)

**Special Edition 21**



## TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# 40 YEAR OF SERVICE

Story By: **Andrew Smith**  
Texas Military Department Public Affairs

Over the past 40 years Texas Army National Guard Col. Peter Coldwell has tallied an impressive list of achievements, from graduating medical school to saving a stranger from a heart attack while visiting family in England. But perhaps most impressive of all he has accomplished all of this while working weekends as an officer in the National Guard, culminating in Col. Peter Coldwells most recent assignment as the Texas State Surgeon.

In 1978 Coldwell and his family immigrated to the United States from England when he was 17-years-old. After completing his education Coldwell reentered active service as an active duty physician and was assigned to Selfridge Air National Guard as the only active duty physician in the state of Michigan.

While Coldwell is now an accomplished leader, he says he owes a lot of his success to mentors he met early on in his military carrier. "One of the first people I met was then Maj. Dennis Fringeli, I was his driver so we worked together a lot. He was the kind of person who has high expectations but he would never ask you to do something he would not do himself. I became a more well-rounded Soldier from watching him. I learned a lot from him and when we parted ways he wanted my parents address. He ultimately sent them a very nice letter

in which he described how hard-working I was and he included his hope that his son would grow up to be like me. That meant a lot to me and my parents."

As an E.R. trauma surgeon, Coldwell was able to balance his time between working scheduled shifts in his civilian job and his work in the National Guard over the weekend and during non-shift days. He has also deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan in support of the Guard.

In 2015 Coldwell put his medical skills to use while on vacation in the town of Denby Dale, England. While helping set up for a local fund raiser Coldwell recognized the symptoms of a heart attack in local man Richard Hobson, and dialed 999 (the United Kingdoms emergency number) An ambulance arrived in time and with Coldwell providing aid, the paramedics were able to resuscitate Hobson as he entered cardiac arrest. In a great twist of fate the fund raiser both men were helping with was collecting donations to have an AED installed at the local cricket club.

The local paper, the Yorkshire Examiner, reported on the story writing, "It was a sheer fluke that Peter was there. He was visiting a cousin in Denby Dale and she brought him down to the cricket club to help prepare for our annual community bonfire." From his hospital bed Hobson said, "I never thought I'd become an extreme fund raiser."



*Texas Army National Guard Col. Peter Coldwell, the State Surgeon of the Texas Military Department, demonstrates how to properly administer an IgG/IgM antibody test to screen for COVID-19. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Andrew Ryan Smith)*



**TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT**

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, Coldwell was activated to serve as the Texas Guard's State Surgeon full time. One of his biggest achievements was establishing the medical isolation support facility on Camp Swift. "The logic was that we needed a place we could take potentially sick people quickly that was close to other guard facilities, fortunately is has yet to be used." He also gave guidance to units that took part in the nursing home cleaning efforts across the state. "I think overall the state and the country did a good job of slowing the spread of COVID.

When asked about what advice he would give young soldiers that may want to follow in this path Coldwell responded "Don't follow a path like me, mine was like a bottle on the ocean getting washed about by waves. I would tell people to maintain a focus and seek out professional military education and development." **-D**



Col. Peter Coldwell sent overseas to support the Global War on Terror (Left). Moments in uniform captured with family members. (Right) (Photos courtesy of Col. Peter Coldwell)

**TMD STATUS OF DISCIPLINE COMPLETED ACTIONS 1 JUN 2020 - 30 SEP 2020**

Count	Rank	Status	MACOM	Action	Final Action	Alcohol	Drug	Description / Chapter
1	FGO	AGR	36ID	INVESTIGATION	GOMOR	No	No	Failure of Command
1	CGO	MDAY	36ID	INVESTIGATION	GOMOR	No	No	Failure of Command
1	SRNCO	MDAY	36ID	INVESTIGATION/NJP	Guilty/Reduced E-8 to E-5	No	No	TCMJ 432.151 False Statement
1	SRNCO	AGR	36ID	INVESTIGATION/NJP	Guilty/Suspended Reduction	No	No	TCMJ 432.137 Failure to Obey
1	SRNCO	MDAY	36ID	INVESTIGATION	GOMOR	No	No	Failure of Command
1	NCO	MDAY	ANG	ADMIN SEPARATION	Separated	No	Yes	ADCO
1	NCO	MDAY	ANG	ADMIN SEPARATION	Separated	No	No	AWOL
3	NCO	MDAY	36ID	ADMIN SEPARATION	Separated	No	Yes	ADCO
6	NCO	MDAY	36ID	ADMIN SEPARATION	Separated	No	No	AWOL
2	ENL	MDAY	36ID	ADMIN SEPARATION	Separated	No	No	Misconduct
2	ENL	MDAY	ANG	ADMIN SEPARATION	Separated	No	No	AWOL
65	ENL	MDAY	36ID	ADMIN SEPARATION	Separated	No	No	AWOL

**85 Total Completed Actions**

2	AGR	0 Alcohol
2	Officer	4 Drug
3	Senior NCO	81 TXARNG
11	NCO	4 TXANG

<span style="color: blue;">■</span>	Officer (2)
<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>	Warrant Officer (0)
<span style="color: orange;">■</span>	SRNCO (3)
<span style="color: green;">■</span>	NCO (11)
<span style="color: gold;">■</span>	Enlisted (70) 1

12/7/2020

Prepared by Office of the General Counsel

**Special Edition 23**



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