



January 24, 2025

eGUARDIAN

January Regularly Scheduled Drill

Drill Events

NO EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TRAINING THIS RSD

The 176th Wing Equal Opportunity office will not host training this drill weekend. The next class will be Feb. 23 at 10 a.m. in the Wellness Center Classroom.

Burning questions regarding EO? The 176th Wing EO office is available all weekend. Reach out to Maj. Kimberly Westfall, (907) 854-1030 or email kimberly.c.westfall.mil@army.mil.

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT DEPUTY CHIEF HOSTS Q&A AT THE WING

On behalf of the 176th Mission Support Group, wing members are invited to join the MSG Thursday, Jan. 30 at the Kulis Theatre for a Q&A with our MSG Honorary commander, Dr. Kersten Johnson, Anchorage School District deputy chief.

This is a great opportunity for members with kids in the ASD to get some burning questions answered. In addition to coming to the event, members are encouraged to submit questions ahead of time via the ASD link below, so Doctor Johnson has a better understanding of our concerns and questions and can better stream the topics during our one-hour event.

Who: Wing members

What: ASD Q&A with ASD Deputy Chief and MSG Honorary Commander Dr. Kersten Johnson

When: Jan. 30 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Where: Kulis Theatre

Why: Engaging opportunity for our wing parents to talk with ASD leadership to better understanding their process and vision as we enter the next five years and the changes they are projecting to take place soon.

EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE AWARDS

Recognize the amazing employer that you work for outside of the National Guard.

Patriot Award

Service members serving part time in the National Guard may nominate individual supervisors/managers for support provided directly to them. The Patriot Award reflects the efforts made to support citizen warriors. It is a simple online submission, and the certificate comes to the Alaska ESGR office. ESGR will contact you and present the award with you to your supervisor at your civilian business.

Online at <https://esgr.mil/Employer-Awards/Patriot-Award/Form>.

Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award

Nomination for this prestigious award runs from Oct. 1 to Dec. 31 each year. This award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of employees serving in the Guard and Reserve (only 15 given out annually). The ESGR State Committee reviews nominations and submits three to compete at the national level. If you are interested in submitting your company for the Freedom Award, reach out to the Alaska ESGR Committee staff member Amy Arsenault, amy.m.arsenault.ctr@army.mil, 907-428-6576. The nomination is an online nomination but it is very detailed. ESGR can give you some tips for submission. <https://www.freedomaward.mil/>

ONGOING FREE COUNSELING SERVICES

Military Family Life Counselors (MFLC) provide short term non-medical solution-focused counseling to support military families with the challenges of deployments, reintegration, parenting, relationship issues, conflict resolution, anger management and other life issues. They provide free, confidential services on and off military installations, flexible service delivery in non-traditional settings and times. With the exception of child abuse, domestic violence, mandatory reporting, and duty to warn situations, services are confidential.

In response to COVID-19, MFLCs are providing services via secure, encrypted video teleconference.

For more information and to schedule an appointment, call Husch Hathorne-Cantil at 907-382-1407. Appointments are available within 24-48 hours.

Wing News

176TH MAINTENANCE SQUADRON FIELDS HELICOPTER ENGINE TEST STAND

By David Bedard | 176th Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — The 176th Maintenance Squadron marked the fielding of a helicopter engine test stand, the first of its kind in the Air National Guard, during a Dec. 9, 2024, ribbon cutting at JBER.

The recently installed T700 Flexible Engine Diagnostics System test stand allows 176th MXS Propulsion Flight maintainers to test the engine without having to install it into a 210th Rescue Squadron HH-60G Pave Hawk combat search and rescue helicopter.

Col. Michael Cummings, 176th Maintenance Group commander, said the inclusion of the new capability caps a 14-year effort initiated by Senior Master Sgt. Ben DeVries, 176th MXS Propulsion Flight Supervisor at the time, when he observed the unit had a C-130 Hercules engine test stand but didn't have a comparable capability for helicopters.

DeVries visited Naval Base San Diego on an information-gathering mission into the Navy's engine test stand for their MH-60 Seahawks, which are similar to HH-60s. Despite establishing the benefit of fielding the only test stand in Alaska, DeVries was unable to secure funding from National Guard Bureau.

The effort continued until when Senior Master Sgt. Troy Freeman, Propulsion Flight supervisor, coordinated the efforts to acquire a refurbished Army unit and secure the funding from NGB.

"So, after 14 years of persistent efforts, the Alaska Air National Guard has successfully acquired a T700 Flexible Engine Diagnostic System test stand funded by the National Guard Bureau," Cummings said during remarks before the ribbon cutting. "The T700 test

stand is a significant milestone being the only one in the Air National Guard and second in the entire Air Force.”

The T700 FEDS comprises a dedicated building with a custom-built ventilation system bringing in fresh air to feed the engine’s intake and drawing out exhaust from the turbine. The brain of the system is housed in a sound-resistant booth where the propulsion specialist can control the engine load with a throttle while gathering crucial diagnostic information.

“A key feature of the FEDS test stand is its ability to verify the flight readiness of turboshaft engines removed from aircraft for maintenance, ensuring they are safe and ready for reinstallation,” Cummings said. “By efficiently testing engines, the FEDS test stand helps reduce maintenance turnaround times, minimizing aircraft downtime and improving operational readiness.”

Beyond enhancing mission readiness, Cummings said the test stand will eventually pay for itself.

“The system is cost effective, helping to reduce maintenance costs by streamlining the testing process and identifying issues early, preventing costly repairs down the line,” he said. “This significant acquisition marks a new era of enhanced engine maintenance and operational efficiency for the Alaska Air National Guard.”

Cummings hailed how the system will save time for 210th RQS Pave Hawk pilots who will spend less time testing engines.

“We get a better product in less time with less operations involvement,” Cummings said. “We can simulate flight parameters in this facility that eliminates the need for it to be on the aircraft with the crew.”

DeVries said Propulsion Flight specialists previously had to remove an engine, carry out repair procedures they thought would fix it, but they wouldn’t know if they succeeded in a fix until they reinstalled the unit.

“Anytime we had a repair that was going to take a substantial time or we were just unable to diagnose on the aircraft, we would remove it to the back shop,” DeVries said. “We took our best stab at what was wrong, rebuild it, put it together, and then we wouldn’t know until we put it on the helicopter if we had fixed the problem. We had a high percentage of being able to fix the problem the first time, but maybe we had a leak we weren’t able to fix.”

DeVries said now the Propulsion Flight can perform break-in runs on the test stand, saving further time on the aircraft and improving safety because without the test stand, the helicopter would have to take flight to conduct a proper engine test.

Cummings said T700 FEDS fielding is an example of innovative Alaska Air National Guard thinking that makes the most of limited resources.

“It is a testament to the Guard culture of efficiency and always looking for a better way to do something – a way to maximize the use of the reduced manpower we have at a

lower cost to accommodate our lower resourcing,” he said. “It’s an exciting chapter in the innovation, resilience, dedication and persistence of the 176th Wing culture to get things done in the constant pursuit of excellence.”

ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD STRENGTHENS COOPERATION WITH ALASKAN COMMAND

By Maj. David Bedard | Alaska National Guard Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — The Alaska National Guard strengthened operational cooperation with Alaskan Command through an Oct. 21 signing of a memorandum of agreement that establishes “a formal coordination relationship” between the two organizations.

As stated in the MOA, the purpose of the document is to detail the relationship between ALCOM and the Alaska National Guard “with the goal of increasing unity of effort.”

ALCOM, commanded by a regular Air Force three-star general, “is the subordinate unified command of United States Northern Command responsible for planning and executing homeland defense and defense support of civil authorities operations within the Alaskan theater of operations.” Air Force Lt. Gen. Case Cunningham, current ALCOM commander, is also the commander of Alaskan NORAD Region and the Eleventh Air Force.

The Alaska National Guard, led by an Army or Air National Guard two-star adjutant general, “is a component of the Alaska Organized Militia and a Reserve component of [the] United States Army [and the] United States Air Force, which supports state and federal mission sets. The AKNG under proper authority executes global, theater and state operations, including assistance with recovery from domestic disasters, emergencies and [homeland defense].” Air National Guard Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe, current Alaska adjutant general, also serves as the commissioner of the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

To increase operational coordination and collaboration, several Alaska National Guard members were recently assigned to ALCOM, including Alaska Air National Guard Brig. Gen. Kenneth Radford, Alaska National Guard director of the Joint Staff, who assumed duties as the ALCOM deputy commander and National Guard assistant to the ALCOM commander.

According to the May 8 delegation of authority memo, “the primary purpose of this new position is to act as the key integrator between the Alaska National Guard and Alaskan Command for operations, activities, investments and contingency planning. The intent ... is to empower [Radford] in the National Guard assistant to the commander position as an Alaskan Command deputy commander with all legal authorities legally delegable to such position not otherwise prohibited by law or regulation.”

Radford said the agreement is a natural fit.

“If you look at ALCOM’s mission statement on their website, there is a natural nexus between ALCOM and the Alaska National Guard,” Radford said. “ALCOM’s mission is

homeland defense and defense support of civil authorities for the most part. Then you look at what [the Alaska National Guard] Joint Staff does, and our primary jobs are domestic operations and homeland defense. Those are the same jobs, and we have a Title 10 entity doing the same thing as a Title 32 [National Guard] entity. Why wouldn't we create more synergy between the two organizations?"

Alaska Army National Guard Col. Kurt Rorvik, ALCOM deputy chief of staff, said recent circumstances further underscore the importance of the cooperation.

"Following recent events in Alaska including the high-altitude balloon incident over Prudhoe Bay in February 2023, the increasing presence of Russian and Chinese air and maritime threats off the coast of Alaska, and natural disasters such as Typhoon Merbok in 2022, we recognized that ALCOM and the Alaska National Guard needed to work together to support ALCOM's two primary missions: homeland defense and defense support to civil activities," he said. "We recognized that integrating our two organizations will increase our operational readiness, information sharing, situational awareness, sharing resources, and will enhance our ability to respond to any future crisis events impacting Alaska."

Radford explained how the integration will benefit Alaska during times of crisis. As such, Radford said he would likely serve as the dual-status commander for the response and be assisted by National Guard and an active component DSCs who are colonels or Navy/Coast Guard captains.

"On Alaska's worst day, the National Guard is going to need Title 10 assistance," he said. "We're going to activate the dual-status commander, and the great thing is we have both staffs focused on the same problem set planning together. We don't have different sets of assumptions, different sets of planning criteria. In that scenario, I most likely become that dual-status commander."

Rorvik said Radford is a trailblazer in the National Guard Assistant Program that authorized the general's appointment

"Brigadier General Radford was the first National Guard general officer assigned under the NGAP program at ALCOM, and we're excited to continue the momentum, continuing to fill this position with Alaska National Guard GOs as we move forward," the colonel said.

Rorvik explained how Guard members other than general officers are assigned to active component commands on federal active status under United States Code Title 10.

"The National Guard has Title 10 senior Guard advisors at the colonel/lieutenant colonel level assigned worldwide at combatant commands – to include regional subordinate commands, i.e. ALCOM, Army service component commands and Army centers of excellence training commands," Rorvik said. "We are assigned as part of the staff at the headquarters, but our larger role is to serve as senior advisors to the commander for National Guard and Reserve forces including operational capabilities, force structure, mobilization, training and readiness."

Rorvik detailed the Alaska National Guard's commitment to ALCOM during the next year.

"In Fiscal Year 25, the Alaska National Guard will have seven members serving in some capacity at ALCOM: Brig. Gen. Ken Radford, Maj. Levi Vail, J3 operations, Maj John 'Chad' Smyre, J5 strategy plans and policy, Maj. Kelly Buschelman, J2 intelligence, Capt. Jennifer Downs, J3 operations, and there are two more Army National Guard [active duty operational support] positions that we are in the process of filling," Rorvik said. "This makes up nearly 10 percent of the ALCOM staff spread out in key staff positions."

Rorvik said the Alaska National Guardsmen will be instrumental in working with ALCOM to face Alaska's unique challenges.

"The threats to Alaska by our adversaries continue to increase, and combined with the impact of natural disasters, ALCOM and the Alaska National Guard must stand ready to respond to a wide range of operational scenarios," Rorvik said. "Alaska is a tremendously large geographical state, with some of the harshest conditions in the world. It is imperative that ALCOM and the Guard work together, build our important partnership, and increase readiness at every opportunity."

ALASKA GUARD, MONGOLIA CONDUCT CYBERSECURITY EXCHANGE

By Senior Master Sgt. Julie Avey | 168th Wing Public Affairs

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska - The Alaska Air National Guard launched a new partnership with Mongolia through the State Partnership Program. The collaboration aims to develop cybersecurity training for the newly formed Mongolian Cybersecurity Command, with the Alaska team playing a pivotal role in designing and exchanging training curricula.

A group of AKANG experts, including members from the 168th Wing Communications Flight and 176th Communications Squadron, recently traveled to Mongolia to meet with the Mongolian cybersecurity team. The goal was to craft a training program tailored to the Mongolian Cyber Command's needs. The training, part of the State Partnership Program, enhances collaboration and interoperability with Mongolia and global allies.

SPP began in 1993 and pairs Guard elements with partner nations worldwide. It builds enduring relationships through mutual training engagements and subject matter expert exchanges.

Chief Master Sgt. Brandy Thanos emphasized that the working group's mission was to identify the Mongolian team's training needs and create a targeted curriculum for future cybersecurity exchanges. The group also fostered positive relations with their Mongolian counterparts, strengthening the partnership. A comprehensive reference library was developed to support future training.

"Through collaboration, the teams were able to identify and prioritize desired training targets based on shared core knowledge topics and work roles," said Thanos. "This information provides a targeted training curriculum from which to develop a focused training plan for future exchanges."

During the exchange, Tech Sgt. James Gilchrest led a session on information assurance manager roles, while Thanos facilitated a roundtable discussion to understand the Mongolian team's training needs.

"The team was able to adapt and develop additional products as needed to advance working group discussions and objectives," said Thanos. "The primary intent for this exchange was to establish an understanding of the cyber command's current structure and needs as a developing cybersecurity organization."

Thanos also introduced the Department of Defense Cyber Workforce Framework, providing a foundational overview of key elements such as work roles, knowledge, skills, abilities and tools. The discussion helped both teams establish common ground and identify priority areas for training.

Common cybersecurity threats and vulnerabilities were discussed, with Staff Sgt. Steven Laszloffy and Gilchrest providing insights.

The cultural exchange component of the trip was equally valuable.

"Both teams experienced esprit de corps while exchanging cultural backgrounds," said Thanos. "Alaska participation and enthusiasm for sharing in local culture and customs furthered positive relations."

"I'm excited to connect and continue the training," said Gilchrest. "It was easy to work with them, and I can see their eagerness."

The exchange represents a significant step in supporting Mongolia's growing cybersecurity capabilities while reaffirming the importance of international collaboration to address cyber threats. The efforts of the Alaska Air National Guard and the Mongolian Cybersecurity Command have paved the way for continued engagement and mutual growth in cybersecurity and the State Partnership Program.

The SPP has been successfully building relations for more than 30 years and now includes 105 partnerships with 115 nations.

ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD WRAPS UP OPERATION SANTA CLAUS

By Staff Sgt. Seth LaCount | 134th Public Affairs Detachment

YAKUTAT, Alaska –Approximately 50 Alaska National Guard service members, volunteers from the Salvation Army, AKNG Child and Youth Program, and others visited the southeastern Alaskan city of Yakutat on Dec. 18.

Operation Santa Claus is an annual community outreach program aimed at delivering holiday cheer to rural Alaskan communities.

"This is such an exciting time for all the kids who have been looking forward to seeing Santa," said Velvet Ivers, a retired Yakutat educator and community schools grant coordinator who has lived in the Yakutat community for more than 40 years. "I wish we

had something like this when I was a kid. This is such a treat.”

The group traveled to Yakutat on a C-17 Globemaster III, belonging to the Alaska Air Guard’s 144th Airlift Squadron. The aircraft carried two Alaska Army National Guard Humvees and one pickup truck loaded with gifts for the children.

Mr. and Mrs. Claus arrived at the Yakutat school aboard one of the Humvees. The local children warmly greeted them with a rendition of jingle bells in English and Tlingit, the indigenous language native to that region of Alaska.

“This is something that the community has been looking forward to for a long time and has brought so much Christmas spirit to the community,” said Reanna Brown, one of the Yakutat educators. “My daughter asked me why the military are the ones bringing Santa, and I told her because he needs their protection.”

The festivities moved inside the school, where Mrs. Claus read a book to the children before Guardsmen handed out presents to each child. The children also enjoyed ice cream delivered by Anchorage-based ice cream stores.

The AKNG Child and Youth Program brought three of its youth council members to the event this year to celebrate with the local children. The youth council volunteered their time to wrap the presents and put them in backpacks before the trip.

“I’m honored to be able to attend and give back to the community like this,” said Sean Kegan, the parliamentarian for the youth council, who oversees the group’s meetings and event planning. “It’s great to be able to travel and share in the festivities with all these excited kids.”

The Guard’s partnership with the Salvation Army has been a crucial part of the operation since its inception.

“It takes an entire community to make this happen, and we couldn’t have done it without our partners in the Guard,” said Jenni Ragland, a service extension and disaster services director with The Salvation Army. “The community puts a lot of work into making this happen, and we’re happy to share in the celebration. I can’t wait to see where we go in the coming years.”

In 2022, 31 members of the Alaska Guardsmen took part in a crucial snow removal operation after a snowstorm nearly collapsed the local school’s roof in Yakutat. This year’s visit highlights the continued commitment that the Guard has to its communities in need.

This year, Operation Santa Claus 2024 was conducted in the towns of Circle, Crooked Creek and Yakutat, bringing joy to more than 200 children and moving nearly 1,000 pounds of cargo and 60 passengers. On their way to a successful year, the teams overcame many challenges, including weather and logistical obstacles.

The joint mission of Operation Santa Claus showcased the strength of the Air and Army National Guard and the partnership with the Salvation Army, with contributions from the 297th Regional Support Group, 38th Troop Command, the 176th and 168th Wings, as

well as the Air and Army headquarters staff.

SERVICES / ANNOUNCEMENTS

MILITARY ONESOURCE RESOURCES

Did you know that Military OneSource is bigger than a 24/7/365 toll free number? The program offers more than just free non-medical counseling. It also provides assistance for the deployment readiness cycle. Military OneSource is a Department of Defense funded program that aids eligible service and family members with building resiliency; both within the military culture and on the homefront. To help strengthen one's resiliency skillset, Military OneSource offers many activities that you and your family members can partake in. For example:

MWR Digital Library:

- Ancestry.com Library Edition - unlock the story of your family using more than 8,000 resources.
- Consumer Reports – are you looking to make a purchase? Use this online library to access 1,000+ ratings, reviews, expert buying advice, product comparisons, consumer user reviews and product video clips.
- EBSCO Audiobooks - more than 2,000 audiobooks in different subjects and categories available for free download.
- Mango Languages - check out this digital language learning program for learners of all levels, with courses in more than 70 different foreign languages, 21 English language courses, and 44 specialty courses.
- Morningstar Investment Research Center - find information and advice on mutual funds, stocks, exchange-traded funds and market returns. Track investments, access daily market news and commentary, view snapshots on investments and interact on the research center forums.
- PressReader Digital Newspapers - unlimited digital access to more than 7,000 newspapers from 120 countries in more than 60 different languages. These newspapers are provided in full-color, full-page format, and appear on your screen exactly as they appear on the news stand, many providing instant translation and audio.
- Stingray Qello Concerts - enjoy more than 1700 live moments in music history with the world's largest collection of full-length concerts and music documentaries streamed on-demand to just about any digital device. From the 1920s to today's hottest artists, Qello Concerts spans more than 30 genres, from classical to rock, reggae to country.
- Small Business Builder - helps patrons interested in planning and optimizing their businesses or nonprofits. Built for aspiring entrepreneurs and those with existing small businesses, providing a step-by-step process supported by a variety of recognized tools

that enable users to produce complete business plans and other documents essential for gaining access to capital and growing their enterprise.

- Universal Class - over 500 online courses to aid with personal and professional interests: including FREE CEUs, plus online books, movies and music for all ages. Over 40 different references to use.
- Weiss Financial Ratings - Enjoy access to financial literacy tools on retirement planning, home and mortgage, insurance strategies, and saving for your child's education.
- Chill Drills: An overview of four simple drills to help reverse the symptoms of stress. These drills can help slow your heart rate, lower your blood pressure and reduce the level of stress hormones in your body. By doing these drills regularly, you can lower your baseline stress level and be better prepared to deal with stress in the future. Order yours online (free shipping) or download to your smartphone.
- MilTax - free tax services, which provides easy-to-use software that is designed specifically for the military community and is available mid-January through mid-October. MilTax also offers free consultations with experts trained to help military members and their families take command of their taxes.

Many other resources are located online with just a click of the mouse or online chat with a trained consultant to provide more guidance with your ideal topic. See: www.militaryonesource.mil.

AIRMAN SAFETY APP

If there was a way to anonymously and quickly make safety reports on your phone, would you use it? There's an app for that. The Aviation Safety Action Program (ASAP) a voluntary, identity-protected means of reporting safety issues that increase the risk to Aviation, Occupational, or Weapons Safety. The goal of the program is to prevent future mishaps and strengthen a culture of safe, effective mission accomplishment. The two ways to submit an ASAP report are on the website (<https://asap.safety.af.mil>) or the smartphone app "Airmen Safety App." Contact: your friendly safety office (551-7604, 176wg.se.176wg@us.af.mil)

UPCOMING AWS DAYS

The 176th Wing is essentially shut down for business on the upcoming Alternate Work Schedule days. RDs (rescheduled drills) and AT days should not be scheduled for these times. The full AWS calendar can be found on the wing SharePoint in the Resource Library.

January: 31

Feb: 14, (17: Presidents' Day) 28

March: 14, 28

RSD SCHEDULE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR REGULARLY SCHEDULED DRILL WEEKENDS

February: 22-27 (22 and 23 core drill dates)

March: 22, 23

April: 8-13 (Superdrill)

WEEKEND DINING FACILITY HOURS

Normal Hours:

BREAKFAST: 0630-0830L

GRAB-N-GO: 0900-1030L

LUNCH: 1030-1330L

GRAB-N-GO: 1330-1630L

DINNER: 1630-1830L

MIDNIGHT: 2300-0100L

GATE HOURS

For latest gate hours, visit <https://www.jber.jb.mil/Units/673abw/673SFS/>

POINTS OF INTEREST

176th Wing

Website: <http://www.176wg.ang.af.mil/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/176thWing>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/176thwing>

Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/176wg/>

DVIDs: <https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/176WPA>

SharePoint (requires CAC): <https://cs2.eis.af.mil/sites/12468/Pages/176%20Wing.aspx>

Alaska National Guard

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/AKNationalGuard>

Instagram: <http://www.instagram.com/alaskanationalguard>

Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard>

Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/NationalGuardAlaska>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/AKNationalGuard>

JBER

Website: <http://www.jber.jb.mil/>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/JBERAK>

Newspaper: <http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/397/arctic-warrior>

Fulltime Job Opportunities:

<http://dmva.alaska.gov/employment.htm>

HRO – Alaska National Guard:
<http://dmva.alaska.gov/HRO>

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

The eGuardian is a service of the 176th Wing Public Affairs Office. See: <http://www.176wg.ang.af.mil/units/wingstaff/pa/eguardian.asp>

EXTERNAL/COMMERCIAL LINKS: The appearance of hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the 176th Wing, the Air National Guard, the United States Air Force, or the Department of Defense, of the external Web site, or the information, products or services contained therein. For other than authorized activities such as military exchanges and Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) sites, the United States Air Force does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations. Such links are provided with the stated purpose of the Web site.