

# *The* FOCUS

ARMY REFORMS FITNESS TEST,  
CUTS STANDING POWER THROW

P.5



JULY 2025

NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS THEMES AND MESSAGES



July Observances

National Roadside Traffic Safety Awareness Month  
Bioterrorism/Disaster Education and Awareness Month  
National Park and Recreation Month

1 Anniversary of the All Volunteer Force (1973)  
National Postal Worker Day

2 National Wildland Firefighter Day

4 Independence Day

13-19 Operation Safe Driver Week

16 MLB All-Star Week, Arlington, TX

21 Liberation of Guam (1944)

26 Anniversary of Armed Forces Integration (1948)

27 Anniversary of the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement (1953)

29 Army Chaplain Corps (1775)

30 International Friendship Day (Allies and Partners) - holiday especially celebrated in Latin America

July - Modernization

Media Team Themes

National Guard public affairs plays a vital role in amplifying the Department of Defense’s modernization priorities by clearly communicating how emerging technologies and upgraded capabilities support readiness, deterrence, and national security. Through strategic storytelling and transparent engagement with the public and media, public affairs can showcase how modernization efforts—such as advanced training systems, resilient infrastructure, and integration with joint and allied forces—enhance the Guard’s operational relevance. These communications not only build public trust but also highlight the Guard’s unique ability to adapt and evolve in an era of strategic competition.

Timely communication within the Guard ranks ensures that modernization efforts are understood, embraced, and effectively implemented at all levels. By informing Soldiers and Airmen early and clearly, public affairs helps build trust, reduce uncertainty, and accelerate adoption.

Messages

Whether it’s updated communications gear or advanced training simulators, new technology helps Guard members respond faster, smarter, and safer—at home and abroad.

The world is changing fast, and so are the threats. Modernizing now ensures the Guard can handle tomorrow’s challenges, not just today’s.

New equipment matters, but so does investing in training, innovation, and leadership development to make sure our Soldiers and Airmen are empowered to succeed.

Modernization is crucial to ensuring the National Guard remains a ready, reliable warfighting component of the Army and Air Force—fully equipped to integrate with active forces and operate in today’s complex, high-tech battlespace.

The National Guard is uniquely positioned to lead in modernization because its Soldiers and Airmen bring real-world experience from civilian careers in tech, engineering, cybersecurity, and more—bridging innovation from the community to the battlefield.

Military and civilian world acumen enables National Guard members to flourish as natural innovators—bringing fresh ideas, diverse skill sets, and community-driven solutions that help accelerate modernization across the force.

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Leadership News and Notes

NGB-PA Air Force O-3 - O-4 Job Announcement

OPEN PERIOD: 19 May 2025 thru 2359 EST 03 JUL 2025		TOUR LENGTH: 2-4 Years
POSITION TITLE: Public Affairs Officer		AGENCY: National Guard Bureau (NGB)
AFSC REQUIREMENT: 35P3/35P4 (PAFSC, 2AFSC, 3AFSC)		DUTY LOCATION: TARC, Arlington, VA
RANK/GRADE REQUIREMENT: Capt/O-3 (Promotable) - Maj/O-4		WHO MAY APPLY: Current ANG members only and the homeland.
POSITION INFO: Full Time, Title 10, Statutory Tour		See full job announcement at: <a href="https://intelshare.intelink.gov/sites/ngbhr/careers/templates/Forms/MVA_Application.aspx">https://intelshare.intelink.gov/sites/ngbhr/careers/templates/Forms/MVA_Application.aspx</a>

NGB-PA Army E-7 Job Announcement

The National Guard Bureau Public Affairs Office is hiring a One Time Occasional Tour Public Affairs NCO in the rank of SFC. NGB-PA seeks a highly competent 46S with a track record of success.	community leaders, general officers, and other senior leaders. The applicant must independently manage themselves and PA assets while on mission.
Applicants must have excellent writing, photography, video production, and editing skills. Proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite applications required. Must have excellent written communications skills, specifically in news and feature writing, and a solid understanding of copy editing and AP Style.	Applicants are required to submit a one-page PDF portfolio containing, at a minimum, three examples of personally produced written stories, three examples of video products, and five photos with captions. DVIDS URL links to the products are acceptable formats for submission. Applicants are encouraged to submit up to three more examples of their choice.
The successful candidate must demonstrate proficiency in photo and video editing. Proficiency in interview techniques is a must and expertise in joint and service regulations governing the release of information through traditional and social media channels is required. The position requires travel and frequent integration with	The point of contact for questions and applications is: Sgt. Maj. Pete Morrison <a href="mailto:peter.d.morrison.mil@army.mil">peter.d.morrison.mil@army.mil</a> Work: (520) 671-6733 Cell: (207) 632-0108

On the Cover:

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Moses Howard, a mass communication public affairs specialist with the 124th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Georgia Army National Guard, tosses a 10-pound medicine ball during the Standing Power Throw event of the Army Combat Fitness Test in Marietta, Georgia. The event was eliminated June 1 when the Army adopted its new fitness test, the Army Fitness Test. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class James Braswell)

August Observances

National Back to School Month  
National Immunization Awareness Month  
Antiterrorism Awareness Month  
National Traffic Awareness Month

1 Woman Astronomers Day

2 National Friendship Day

4 Coast Guard Birthday (1790)

7 Purple Heart Day

10 DOD Birthday (1949)

14 Navajo Code Talkers Day

15 Victory over Japan Day (1945)

19 National Aviation Day

19-25 National Aviation Week

19-25 Liberation of Paris (1944)

24-28 World Water Week

21 National Senior Citizens Day

26 Women’s Equality Day

29 Marine Corps Reserve Birthday (1916)

# August - Domestic Operations



South Carolina Army National Guard Soldiers, assigned to the 125th Multi-Role Bridge Company, 122nd Engineer Battalion, conduct bridging operations during Vigilant Guard in Milan, Tennessee, May 13. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Jordan Wright)

## Tennessee hosts Exercise Vigilant Guard

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee National Guard hosted Exercise Vigilant Guard May 12-18, which focused on statewide disaster response training and included the Tennessee Guard and more than 30 state and federal agencies.

Co-sponsored by U.S. Northern Command and the National Guard Bureau, the exercise saw participating agencies and National Guard members from Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Wyoming, respond to realistic major disaster scenarios designed to improve mission command and relationships among federal, state, and local agencies.

“These exercises, where we operate jointly and with various emergency responders, are crucial to our

organization’s readiness,” said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Warner Ross, adjutant general of the Tennessee Guard.

“The more we work alongside one another, the more we fine-tune our policies and procedures. Building these relationships are vital to our effectiveness, and continuing to practice what we do will make all of us much better when it’s time to respond to the real thing.”

This year’s exercise scenario is based on a 7.5 magnitude earthquake occurring along the New Madrid Seismic Zone near Tipton County. Exercise participants worked together to respond to numerous situations and conduct search and rescue, critical site security, and respond to large infrastructure failure.

## Media Team Themes

U.S. service members continue to support efforts carrying out President Donald Trump’s executive orders on protecting the territorial integrity of the United States. Trump promised to secure the southern border, and the DOD has been on the job there since January.

# September - Reform

## Army introduces new fitness test for 2025

By Sgt. Woodyne Escarne,  
Defense Media Activity

FORT MEADE, Md. — The U.S. Army officially adopts the Army Fitness Test as the new test of record for Soldiers starting June 1, 2025. The change will replace the Army Combat Fitness Test and introduce updated scoring standards that emphasize readiness and combat effectiveness.

Soldiers will have until Jan. 1, 2026, to meet the new AFT requirements without facing adverse actions. Active-duty Soldiers in 21 designated combat specialties must additionally meet the more rigorous combat standard of a minimum score of 350 points total, with a minimum of 60 points in each event. National Guard and Reserve Soldiers in those same specialties will have until June 1, 2026, to meet these requirements. The passing score for all other specialties is 300 points, with a minimum of 60 points in each event. Active Guard Reserve Soldiers and those mobilized on orders exceeding 60 days must meet the Jan. 1, 2026, suspense.

“The AFT is designed to improve Soldier readiness and ensure physical standards [and] prepare Soldiers for the demands of modern warfare,” said Sgt. Maj. Christopher Mullinax, senior enlisted leader, deputy chief of staff for Operations, Army Headquarters. “It emphasizes holistic fitness over event-specific training and is grounded in performance.”

The decision to replace the ACFT with the AFT follows 18 months of analysis

[Click here for AFT score chart PDF](#)  
NIPR users copy and paste: <https://tinyurl.com/4jmyhxx4>

and feedback from thousands of test iterations. The Army describes the change as a data-driven reform focused on combat-effective fitness.

The AFT is a five-event assessment, including the three-repetition maximum deadlift, hand-release push-up, sprint-drag-carry, plank and two-mile run. While similar in structure to the previous test, the standing power throw event is no longer a requirement.

“We eliminated the standing power throw because it wasn’t effectively promoting fitness and readiness as well as we would like,” Mullinax said. “Furthermore, it presented an elevated risk of overuse injury and encouraged Soldiers to focus on technique rather than demonstrating true power.”

The new test raises expectations, particularly for Soldiers in combat roles. The updated scoring tables are standardized, and combat standards are sex-neutral for the 21 direct combat roles, a change designed to ensure fairness and operational readiness.

“We’re a ‘Be All You Can Be’ Army, and that means if you’ve got the heart, the grit, and the drive to meet our toughest standards, you belong in the fight,” Mullinax said. “It doesn’t matter who you are, what matters is that you want it and you’re willing to earn it. The battlefield doesn’t care about anything but performance, and that’s what we’re built to deliver.”

September Observances

National Hispanic Heritage Month  
(Sep 15 - Oct 15)  
National Preparedness Month  
National Suicide Prevention Awareness  
Prevention Month

1 Labor Day

2 National V-J Day (1945)

4 National Wildlife Day

7-13 Suicide Prevention Week

11 Patriot Day and National Day of Service  
and Remembrance

16 National Voter Registration Day 4th  
Tuesday in Sept.

18 Air Force Birthday (1947)

19 National POW/MIA Recognition Day

22 Autumn Equinox

27 National Family Health and Fitness Day  
(Last Sat. of Sept.)

28 National Gold Star Mother’s and Family  
Day (Last Sun. of Sept.)