

The Castle

November 2025

Navigating our way through the busy summer training season for Global Strike at Fort McCoy, Wis.



412th Theater Engineer Command



ARMY
RESERVE



Staff from the 412th Theater Engineer Command stand in front of the Fort McCoy headquarters flagpole as they ended their time as the senior command in charge of training units during the Combat Support Training Exercise - Global Strike at Fort McCoy, Wis. August 7, 2025. Approximately 7,000 Soldiers from around the Army Reserve participated in the annual exercise designed to prepare reserve Soldiers for the transforming battlefield of the future. The exercise focuses on training for Large Scale Combat Operations, incorporating emerging threats seen in the global spectrum. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. 1st. Class Ryan Green)

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Cover Photo Caption:

U.S. Army Reserve Staff Sgt. James Capelli, with the 374th Engineer Company, conducts map reconnaissance during Global Strike 2025 for the Combat Support Training Exercise at Fort McCoy, Wis. August 11, 2025. CSTX immerses units in realistic, multi-domain combat scenarios to sharpen skills and enhance readiness. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. William Kuang)

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Command Team's Corner

Strengthening Readiness: Lessons from CSTX Global Strike Maintenance Operations

By Brig. Gen. Sandra Martin, Deputy Commanding General - Sustainment, 412th Theater Engineer Command

The Combat Support Training Exercise - Global Strike concluded this past August, I want to express my sincere appreciation for the dedication and hard work demonstrated by every Soldier and unit involved. Your performance was commendable and the lessons learned will be invaluable as we prepare for future training events in 2026 and even future mobilizations.



The 412th Theater Engineer Command's Deputy Commanding General - Sustainment, Brig. Gen. Sandra Martin, served as the senior trainer during the CSTX where she validated and certified participating unit training. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Ribas)

Global Strike provided a challenging and realistic training environment that tested our ability to deploy, sustain, and conduct a wide variety of military engineering operations. The exercise highlighted areas of strength within the 412th Theater Engineer Command and identified opportunities for continued improvement. Units demonstrated significant growth in tactical proficiency, logistical execution, and battlefield communication.

One area I would like to highlight as a strength as part of this year's CSTX is a clear demonstration of the direct link between proactive property accountability and successful mission execution. Units with robust systems in place were able to convoy long distances with minimal breakdowns, sustain operations with minimal friction during the exercise, and again convoy long distances to home station with few breakdowns.

We also identified opportunities to enhance equipment readiness through focused maintenance efforts, which

will be a key area of emphasis as we prepare for next year's training exercises.

As we look ahead to future exercises, we must prioritize property accountability and equipment maintenance now. To that end, we will be evaluating procedures for future CSTX participation with a particular focus on establishing robust shop stock levels to accompany units to the exercise.

Having a readily available supply of common repair parts on-hand significantly reduces downtime and empowers units to conduct more effective field-level maintenance, ultimately increasing operational tempo. Planning for, and deploying a well-managed shop stock will be a critical component of future CSTX preparation.



Here are some points to build sustainment resiliency:

- **Training Focus:** Consider including CTOs that challenge the unit's maintenance and supply tasks. Battalions can reference ATP 4-33 to use maintenance capabilities in the field. Understanding how to fight a forward support company and understanding your organic field maintenance capabilities and incorporating evacuation plans into the tactical standard operating procedures are paramount to smooth maintenance actions.
- **100% Accountability:** Ensure all assigned equipment is accurately accounted for in property book systems. Conduct regular inventories and reconcile discrepancies immediately.
- **Preventative Maintenance:** Adhere to scheduled maintenance programs. Don't defer maintenance; proactive upkeep prevents costly repairs and ensures equipment is mission-ready when needed.
- **Operator Maintenance:** Every Soldier is a maintainer. Ensure all personnel are trained and proficient in operator maintenance tasks for their assigned equipment.
- **Supply Discipline:** Utilize supply support activities effectively to obtain necessary parts and repair items.

Our next large-scale training exercise will demand the highest levels of readiness. By focusing on property accountability, equipment maintenance, and proactive logistical planning – including adequate shop stock – now, we will ensure we are prepared to meet that challenge. Let's build on the successes of this year's global Global Strike and continue to improve our capabilities.



U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Christopher Hughes, a heavy equipment operator with the 718th Engineer Company, directs a forklift at Global Strike 2025 during the Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) at Fort McCoy, Wis., Aug. 4. The CSTX prepares Army Reserve units for deployment by providing realistic, externally evaluated, and collective training scenarios. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Ribas)



Pvt. Samantha Lawton, operates a mounted M240B machine gun on a HMMWV at Global Strike 2025 during the Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, Aug. 5. The CSTX prepares Army Reserve units for deployment by providing realistic, externally evaluated, and collective training scenarios. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Ribas)

Army Reserve Soldiers Bring the Thunder in "Global Strike"

By Staff Sgt. Nicholas Vidro, Office of the Chief, Army Reserve

Approximately 7,000 Soldiers from around the Army Reserve are training at Fort McCoy as a part of the Combat Support Training Exercise 25, Global Strike, an annual exercise designed to prepare reserve Soldiers for the transforming battlefield of the future. The exercise focuses on training for Large Scale Combat Operations, incorporating emerging threats seen in the global spectrum.

Deputy Commander of the 412th Theater Engineer Command, Brig. Gen. Sandra Martin, is serving as the senior trainer for the event. The scope of her duties are to ensure that all units participating in the exercise are meeting their mission.

"I'm responsible for working with the observer-coach-trainers; getting information and feedback on how the units are doing every day with achieving their training objectives," she said. "We spent a year of planning that led up to CSTX, and during that planning, we worked closely with 78th Training Division to understand what challenges Soldiers would benefit from the most."

Some of the units participating in training are engineering, military police, chemical, aviation, and logistics units.

Along with training the Soldier skills needed to defend against near-peer adversaries the participating units are challenged with innovating defenses against anticipated threats.

"CSTX prepares battalion level and below on large-scale combat operations," she said. "We are incorporating some of the modern day battlefield threats, such as UAS [unmanned aircraft systems] and training counter-UAS battle drills. The emerging threat is going to encompass a lot of AI [artificial intelligence] and robotics. Our Soldiers are adapting at a rapid pace to prepare for that."

As the Army prepares for large-scale combat operations with near-peer adversaries the name of the game is speed. Units will be on the move with an enemy that is hunting them.

"You've got to be mobile, you've got to be concealed if you think you're going to survive on the battlefield," Martin said. "That's what we're really focused on here is trying to get battalions to be able to move on the battlefield very quickly. As a matter of fact, we had a success where the 844th Engineer Battalion was able to move their TOC [tactical operations center] in less than 15 minutes."

This exercise crosses over with the Medical Readiness and Training Command led, Global Medic. The mission challenges Soldiers similarly in a medical environment. They provide simulated medical evacuation during training scenarios where Soldiers in training temporarily become simulated casualties.

Both exercises are coordinated and facilitated by the 78th TD, providing OC/Ts, Soldiers, and simulated opposing forces with scenarios that allow for the 60,000 acre base to be completely utilized; giving the participants the most realistic environment to train in.

With so many elements dedicated to the success of these Soldiers, there's a few things Martin is hoping all can come away with.

"Leaders should walk away with battle drills to quickly move their CPs [command posts]," she said. "To understand the ins and outs of those drills, to rehearse it with their Soldiers, and to understand what is a necessity and what isn't. Lightening the load as they move forward"



U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers with the 363rd Engineer Battalion conduct bridging operations by connecting bay pieces delivered by a CH-47 Chinook at Global Strike 2025 during the Combat Support Training Exercise (CSTX) at Fort McCoy, Wis., Aug. 7. The CSTX prepares Army Reserve units for deployment by providing realistic, externally evaluated, and collective training scenarios. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Ribas)



Observations in Training the Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

By Lt. Col. Joseph Finelli, Deputy Commanding Officer, 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

In large-scale combat operations where the division is the unit of action, attention often gravitates toward the close fight—maneuver brigades battling for terrain and decisive advantage. The division main command post focuses on shaping this fight through deep fires and effects, leaving the rear area as an afterthought. Yet, critical enablers—long-range fires, mission command nodes, aviation, and sustainment—reside in this complex, congested space, which can span an area as large as Connecticut and face both conventional and unconventional threats. How do we secure this area, enable logistics flow, and neutralize threats without draining combat power from the close fight? The Army's answer: the maneuver enhancement brigade.

Role and Structure of the MEB

The MEB provides a task-organized force for area operations, maneuver support, consequence management, and stability operations to assure mobility, protection, and freedom of action. It is one of four brigade types capable of owning battlespace in large-scale combat operations, thanks to its headquarters structure with fires, air missile defense, air traffic control, and area operations cells. Each MEB is mission-specific; no two are alike. For example, a corps rear-area MEB may emphasize security forces, while a division rear-area MEB typically includes engineers, chemical units, and military police. Regardless of configuration, every MEB should have a tactical combat force—ideally a mobile unit like a Stryker battalion with fires capability—to defeat tier III (conventional) threats. This variability demands a headquarters trained across a wide mission spectrum, tested during warfighter exercises.



A Soldier from the 444th Mobility Augmentation Company, 479th Engineer Battalion, 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade provides security in a gunner's mount in preparation for incoming forces at Fort Drum's Mountain Peak exercise November 1, 2021. (U.S. Army Reserve Photo by Maj. William C. Allred)

Training for Warfighter Exercises

The 302nd MEB has supported multiple warfighter exercises since 2021 and prepares through a deliberate training cycle starting with a capstone command post exercise. The headquarters focuses on three critical areas:

1. Operations Process

Mastery of the Military Decision-Making Process is essential. After our CPX in 2022, the 302nd MEB shifted from Defense Support to Civil Authorities to large-scale combat operations, emphasizing MDMP. Training began with functional briefs from engineers, military police, air defense, fires, and maneuver forces, followed by MDMP steps during battle assemblies. A CPX at Fort Drum simulated austere conditions using a 10th Mountain Division scenario. This deliberate approach built habits necessary for warfighter success, enabling the staff to contribute meaningfully to division planning and execute rear-area security tasks under pressure.

2. Battle Command Systems Operations

The MEB operates a variety of standard mission command platforms plus systems for fires, air traffic control, and missile defense. These capabilities allow the MEB to own battlespace like a brigade combat team. However, low-density jobs in the U.S. Army Reserve requires cross-training. The 302nd leverages mission training centers for technical instruction, ensuring redundancy and continuity even under enemy attacks on command nodes. Training culminates in CPX events where operators execute in real time, reinforcing both technical and tactical proficiency.

3. Clearance of Fires in the Rear Area

Indirect fires remain decisive, but clearing fires in the congested rear area—full of logistics nodes, detainee sites, and convoys—is challenging. Division Artillery prioritizes deep and close fights, leaving rear-area fires low on the list. The MEB must clear ground and airspace swiftly and manage collateral damage expectations. Command and control systems enable rapid clearance, while observation remains critical. The 302nd MEB has experimented with military police's Raven systems but prefer direct observation. Every Soldier should know the call-for-fire drill, and the MEB should request artillery and leverage TCF mortars to suppress threats effectively.

Additional Considerations

Static defense is insufficient for the vast rear area. The MEB must employ TCF, engineers, and military police for active patrolling to detect enemy infiltration before they degrade division and corps operations. The MEB is a combat headquarters and must act aggressively to secure freedom of action.

Lessons and Limitations

Wargames provide valuable insights but cannot replicate the physical and mental strain of real combat or the complexity of logistics under fire. While computer simulations simplify supply and



fatigue, they remain the best available method to prepare for future conflicts, including those shaped by AI and drone warfare. The CPX-to-warfighter cycle offers the most realistic training for the 302nd MEB's critical mission: securing the rear area to enable success in the close and deep fights.

Soldiers from the 444th Mobility Augmentation Company, 479th Engineer Battalion, 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade run defense scenarios to prepare for incoming enemy forces at Fort Drum's Mountain Peak exercise November 2, 2021. (U.S. Army Reserve Photo by Maj. William C. Allred)



Command Sgt. Major Ryan Bodmer, command sergeant major for the 412th Theater Engineer Command checks on Soldiers of the 663rd Engineer Construction Company as they complete their mission to restore a storm damaged network at Fort Irwin, Calif., July 5-22 2025. Soldiers used their skills to restore connectivity to facilities. (Courtesy photo)

Engineers Collaborate to Restore Network Connectivity at Fort Irwin

By Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Green, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

FORT IRWIN, Calif. — In August 2023, the remnants of Tropical Storm Hilary carved a path of destruction throughout Southern California, including Fort Irwin in San Bernardino County. The storm produced up to 13 inches of rain in a matter of days, depending on the location. The massive amount of rain caused flooding that washed out and severed critical fiber-optic lines across the installation, disrupting communications.

An initial assessment determined that the scale and complexity of the damage demanded a broader, more sustained operation to return the network to full capability. Fort Irwin put out a call to units across the force to help restore the network. The 412th Theater Engineer Command and signal experts from the **812th Tactical Installation and Networking-Enhanced (TIN-E) Company**, **335th Signal Command (Theater)**, answered the call and sent personnel to help rebuild infrastructure lost to the storm.

The 335th Signal Command (Theater) conducted a second site survey and developed a comprehensive recovery plan. This blueprint outlined deliverables, personnel requirements and logistical pathways to restore full network functionality. To execute the physical reconstruction, the 412th TEC led all construction operations, deploying engineer units with the expertise and equipment necessary to tackle the terrain and technical demands.

The plan included two 21-day rotations of U.S. Army Reserve engineers from June 14 to July 21, 2025. The first rotation consisted of Soldiers from the **712th Engineer Support Company**, **391st Engineer Battalion**, **926th Engineer Brigade**, followed by the **663rd Engineer Construction Company**, **467th Engineer Battalion**, **926th Engineer Brigade**.

"Upon arrival, we expected to have a completed work plan and would be able to start our work almost immediately, but that wasn't the case," said Capt. Mark Turco, company commander of the 712th ESC. "To ensure success, we collaborated with the 812th to develop a tactical plan that worked for everyone and then began executing the mission."

The plan called for precision digging and trenching of the current lines to avoid damaging good lines, since the bad lines could be cut out, replaced and spliced back into the good lines. The most difficult part of the plan was that it had to be done at night. Working at night made it easier for the Soldiers to work efficiently and easier on the equipment, since it would be much cooler.

In total, the 812th TIN-E completed 864 splices, threading life back into the network strand by strand at one site, and at another site executed 48 splices and 120 terminations, laying the groundwork for the collapsed loop system and reinforcing the network's structural integrity.

Together, the 412th TEC and 335th SC(T) worked in tandem with Fort Irwin leadership to source contracts, procure specialized materials and refine the project scope to ensure both feasibility and fiscal responsibility. The mission called for trenching and backfilling more than 18,000 feet of rugged desert terrain at multiple sites. High-diameter conduit and fiber-optic cable were buried beneath the surface to protect against future weather events. The teams not only restored the fiber network but also eliminated single-point failures by installing a collapsed loop system at one site to enhance network redundancy and resilience.

"This mission tested us in every way possible. It tested our skills as equipment operators and as leaders. We had to plan everything, including convoying to and from the site, maintenance, soldier care and working with other organizations," Turco said. "In the end, we successfully executed this mission. I am proud of the team for everything they did."



Soldiers from the 712th Engineer Support Company dig trenches for the 812th Tactical Installation and Networking-Enhanced (TIN-E) to inspect and replace fiber optic cable at Fort Irwin, Calif. (Courtesy photo)



Soldiers from the 712th Engineer Support Company unwind cable to repair a fiber optic cable network at Fort Irwin, Calif. The mission called for trenching and backfilling more than 18,000 feet of rugged desert terrain at multiple sites. (Courtesy photo)





The 412th Engineer Vertical Construction Company spent their annual training using their construction skills to help a houseless community on the island of O'ahu, Hawaii. The company's efforts help kept the project on track during their rotation July 21-28, 2025. (Courtesy Photo)

The 412th EVCC Helps Provide a Foundation for a Houseless Community in Hawaii

By Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Green, 412th Theater Engineer Command Public Affairs

WAI'ANAE, Hawaii – After two years in the making, the 412th Engineer Vertical Construction Company were finally able to join the rotation of military units participating in the construction of tiny homes for the Pu'u'honua O' Wai'anae, a small houseless community, on the island of O'ahu, for their annual training July 12-28, 2025.

The Scranton, Pa. based 412th EVCC, 365th Engineer Battalion, 302nd, Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 412th Theater Engineer Command sent a platoon size element as part of the Innovative Readiness Training program rotation. The IRT program allows Department of War's units to perform real-world training opportunities through projects that benefit underserved communities.

"We are very honored to have this opportunity to use our military and civilian skills to help a community in need," said 1st Lt. Nicholas Monaco, commander of the 412th EVCC. "Once we arrived, we were asked if we have any horizontal engineers and equipment maintenance personnel. Although we didn't have any military trained personnel in those fields, as members of the Army Reserve we were able to use our civilian skills to help get equipment back to working order and additional manpower to tasks outside of what we planned."

Pu'u'honua O' Wai'anae, located on the leeward side of O'ahu near the Wai'anae Small Boat Harbor, is home to approximately 200 individuals, including keiki (children), kūpuna (respected elders), and working families, with two-thirds of the population being Native Hawaiian. The community has built a unique and self-sustaining village rooted in traditional Hawaiian values of kuleana (responsibility) and communal care.

The 412th focused on performing as much construction work as their time allowed for phase II of the project. The overall plan aims to build fifteen plugin houses and a hale aina or dining facility with bathrooms and laundry facilities. The team started assembling modular tiny homes, which are climate-resilient private shelters that provide a foundation for stability.

"Getting the structures constructed was a huge learning curve," said Monaco. "Not only did we have to quickly adapt to the time change and heat, but we also had to learn how to build the homes due to the number of parts and equipment used in order to construct them properly."

The team was able to go beyond their assigned tasks in vertical construction. Using the Engineer Regiment's motto - essayons or let us try, the 412th team repaired some heavy equipment to return them back to working order, repaired a refrigerator, and even performed some survey work. All of which helped the civilian general contractor to accelerate the project's timeline.

"This experience not only helped a community in need, but it helped improve our proficiency for our military jobs," said Monaco. "Although most of our time was spent on the jobsite, we able to get out and enjoy a few things on the island like going to the beach and visiting Pearl Harbor. I am extremely proud of our contribution to this project."



Equipment operators from the 412th Engineer Vertical Construction Company dig utility trenches for plumbing lines. Soldiers were able to maintain their operating skills during their time for this IRT project. (Courtesy Photo)



Soldiers from the 412th Engineer Vertical Construction Company guide pieces of a plugin home into place for the Pu'u'honua O' Wai'anae's new site during their annual training July 12-28, 2025. The project is part of the Innovative Readiness Training program that allows units to perform real-world training opportunities through projects that benefit underserved communities. (Courtesy photo)



U.S. Army 1st Lt. Bryan Albertson, the executive officer assigned to 333rd Engineer Company, 365th Engineer Battalion, 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 412th Theater Engineer Command, sits atop an Altec AC38-127S-EJ 38-Ton Boom on the road construction project between U.S. and Mongolian forces, during Khaan Quest 2025, at Five Hills Training Area in Mongolia, on June 24, 2025. Khaan Quest is an annual, multinational and multicomponent training exercise led by the Mongolian Armed Forces designed to promote regional peace and security. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Anthony Kapelka)

An Army Engineer's Journey in Mongolia - Khaan Quest 2025

By Capt. Anthony Kapelka, 207th Public Affairs Detachment

Albertson, the executive officer assigned to **333rd Engineer Company**, 365th Engineer Battalion, 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 412th Theater Engineer Command, has served in the U.S. Army for over three years. During that time, he has been afforded the chance to work with a handful of non-commissioned officers who have helped guide his growth and development as a junior officer.

"He has a very strong work ethic," said Staff Sgt. Adam Bahrey, a horizontal construction engineer assigned to the **365th Engineer Battalion**. "He was ambitious to learn about the equipment, the Soldiers' tasks, and figuring out what tasks he and I worked together as platoon leader and platoon sergeant."

Albertson, from Harrisonburg, Virginia, has always loved the mountains. He spent much of his life camping in the Shenandoah Valley and spending time in nature or in the kitchen with his family. For him, the steppes of Mongolia are reminiscent of home.

"I told our interpreter when we first got here, it feels a lot like home, because even when you look off into the distance, you notice how the mountains are very blue as they fade away, same way as the Blue Ridge Mountains," said Albertson. "The hills are about the same size as the Appalachians, but at home they're just covered with forests instead of grassland."

Growing up, he and his family made a tradition of camping in as many national parks as possible, having gone to 15 parks in total. One of the most memorable parks for Albertson was camping in the iconic Yosemite National Park when he was younger.

"It was awesome being out there in the mountains," said Albertson. "Camping with my family, we saw wildlife that we don't see back east, and being up in those mountains there, they're just incredible, because they're not to a scale that we see on the East Coast."

In addition to Albertson's love of the mountains and his home, he has a thrill for traveling abroad. For Albertson, a lifelong goal has been to visit every continent. His service in the U.S. Army has started to make that ambition become a reality. Last year, he was afforded the opportunity to travel to Hohenfels, Germany.

"When I joined the Army, the slogan was, 'join the army, see the world,'" said Albertson. "Many Soldiers don't believe they can see the world with the U.S. Army Reserves, however, I have been afforded the opportunity to go to multiple countries, like Germany and Mongolia, which has definitely shown me a different corner of the world."

When asked about some of his favorite experiences of being in Mongolia so far, Albertson was quick to answer: the food.

Much of the food served in the Mongolian dining facility involves beef, lamb, fish, and an assortment of different vegetables.

"We've had some good eats at the dining facility," said Albertson. "I'd love to try my hand at home with some of these recipes. Recipes such as stir fry, wok cooking, noodle, and mutton, like the meals we've had here, to share at home."

Though an engineer by trade, Albertson is also a skilled cook at home. As a child, his parents instilled in him the necessity and love for cooking. From an early age, his mother taught him and his siblings to cook a variety of meals, such as lasagna, burgers, and salmon, while his father taught him how to make steaks and tacos.

"My mom wanted to make sure that we knew how to cook, because you should always be able to cook some delicious food for yourself. And so we grew up, the kids, making two to three dinners a week just to learn how to do it," said Albertson.

This method of learning to cook by his parents was similar to how the military trained Albertson his roles and responsibilities.



U.S. Army Sgt. Cory Parkins, right, a horizontal construction engineer assigned to 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 412th Engineer Command and Mongolian Armed Forces Lt. Battugs Baatar, a construction engineer assigned to Unit 041 ground guide heavy construction equipment during Khaan Quest, on June 18, 2025, at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia. Khaan Quest is an annual, multinational and multicomponent training exercise led by the Mongolian Armed Forces designed to promote regional peace and security. (U.S. Army photo by Staff. Sgt. Tristan Moore)

"When I was coming up as a cadet, I was taught to mentor Soldiers in the left-seat right-seat method," said Albertson. "That is where a senior Soldier sits next to a junior Soldier, and shows them the way to operate the controls of the equipment until they can do it independently. Out here we are doing the same, pairing up one Mongolian and one U.S. Soldier side by side, making sure the Mongolian Soldier can pick up the finer points of equipment operating from our Soldiers."

As Albertson has explored the world, he has also taken the time and insight to reflect on how cooking correlates to his position within the U.S. Army. He holds a similar mindset to cooking when it comes to being on a construction site: following guidelines and blueprints of a job to that of a recipe in the kitchen.

"Everything in construction needs to be by the book and properly executed, just like a recipe. If you don't construct it all properly, then you're going to end up with issues further down the line."

"He's one of the best platoon leaders I've worked with. His openness and willingness to work with the non-commissioned officers and ensure we are making the right decisions will make him a good captain in the future," said Bahrey.

When reflecting on how he feels at the end of past jobs, Albertson likened his sense of accomplishment to completing a journey through the wilderness.

"I'd say in mindset terms, the biggest thing is seeing the payoff from all of your hard work, similar to when we execute a large job like this one," Albertson said. "All of the hard work and sweat is made worth it by making it to the final portion and seeing the view at the end."



U.S. Army Sgt. Cory Perkins, right, shows Spc. Danielle Olson, both horizontal construction engineers assigned to 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 412th Engineer Command, how to operate a Caterpillar small wheeled loader, during Khaan Quest, on June 18, 2025, at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia. Khaan Quest is an annual, multinational and multicomponent training exercise led by the Mongolian Armed Forces designed to promote regional peace and security. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Tristan Moore)



U.S. Army 1st Sgt. Josh Schoch, the first sergeant of the 333rd Engineer Company, 365th Engineer Battalion, 302nd Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, 412th Engineer Command, offers assistance to several Mongolian Armed Forces engineers to repair construction grader during Khaan Quest, on June 19, 2025, at Five Hills Training Area, Mongolia. Khaan Quest is an annual, multinational and multicomponent training exercise led by the Mongolian Armed Forces designed to promote regional peace and security. (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Anthony Kapelka)

New Leaders Welcomed to the 412th

The 412th TEC hosted a Change of Command ceremony for the **926th Engineer Brigade** at the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) Auditorium in Vicksburg, Miss., September 6, 2025. Col. Jeffrey M. Dulgarian relinquished command to the new Brigade Commander, Col. Matthew S. Holbrook.

(U.S. Army Reserve photo by Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Green)



The **363rd Engineer Battalion** welcomed a new leadership team during CSTX 25-02 at Fort McCoy, Wis. August 2025. Command Sgt. Major Stan Wylie took over for Command Sgt. Major Jason Hoyt in a change of responsibility ceremony in front of the recently constructed ribbon bridge. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Lt. Col. Matthew Nowak)

Following the change of responsibility ceremony, Lt. Col. Taylor Irvin transferred command of the **363rd Engineer Battalion** to Lt. Col. Anthony Barney during change of command ceremony. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Lt. Col. Matthew Nowak)



The **479th Engineer Battalion** welcomed new commander, Lt. Col. Jason McKnight as Lt. Col. Gretchen Bux relinquished command of the battalion during a ceremony at Fort McCoy August 2025. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Lt. Col. Matthew Nowak)



U.S. Army Capt. Ellis Hainey, Spc. Taylor Humes and Maj. Stephen Lask, key members of the 207th Digital Liaison Detachment team, pose for a photo in front of analog products they update during Exercise Southern Vanguard 25 in Antuco, Chile, Aug. 27, 2025. Exercise Southern Vanguard 25 underscores the U.S. Army's enduring commitment to regional partnership as U.S. forces deploy to Chile to conduct combined mountain warfare, field, and command post training alongside Chilean forces, with participation from Argentina and Peru - strengthening interoperability, shared readiness, and mutual trust while advancing regional security and cooperation across the Western Hemisphere. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jean Sanon)

Digital Liaison Detachment bridges gaps in austere environment

By Sgt. 1st Class Sebastian Rothwyn

ANTUCO, Chile — In the rugged high-altitude terrain of central Chile, a U.S. Army unit designed for digital warfare is building partnerships and improving interoperability using both computer networks and offline tools during Exercise Southern Vanguard 25.

The U.S. Army South-sponsored annual exercise, which runs from Aug. 11-29, this year, aims to strengthen regional partnerships and enhance readiness alongside Chile, Argentina and Peru.

The **207th Digital Liaison Detachment** is a key player working directly with their Chilean partners in a real-world test of adaptability. Its presence reflects a broader role, one where it must navigate logistical and cultural divides to forge a new kind of partnership.

"A digital liaison detachment is designed to bridge technology capability gaps," said U.S. Army Maj. Stephen Lask, the officer in charge of the 207th DLD team assigned to the exercise.

The shared goal of creating a common operating picture for all parties has been a major point of focus. This picture, often using a constantly updated digital map in a shared network system, shows the real-time position of all units and is critical for decision-making.

Lask explained that, early on without that picture, the lack of synchronized communication led to challenges and repetitive work, but this was quickly resolved.

The challenge of a language barrier may have been resolved quickly but there were many network systems that the DLD team had to choose from to implement, but they opted to learn the Chilean Army's system of record.

"I'd have to say that our Chilean partners have done a fantastic job of meeting us in the middle and really going out of their way to increase communication with us, which is always important no matter who you work with," Lask said.

Several Chilean soldiers said that they learned the English language for the purpose of this multi-national exercise, starting only six months ago.

The Chileans' own adaptability has been a key factor, said U.S. Army Capt. Ellis Hainey, the logistics and planning officer with the DLD. She believes their hard work is a testament to how committed they are to this partnership.

She explained that Chileans have been using similar military processes to the U.S. for almost two decades, a testament to their professionalism and foresight. This shared foundation, Hainey believes, has made collaboration more effective.

As a logistics lead for the operation, her current role is the result of months of planning she helped orchestrate. It's also a departure from Hainey's usual duties.

"I'm really proud to be here as a reservist," Hainey said. "One doesn't really get a lot of really great training opportunities like this, and this is unique."

Hainey explained that while on ground in Chile they are assisting more with overall operations.

Lask said, "We're filling gaps that Army South needs us to, and that might be helping with scenario injects, helping with products and then just stepping up where we are needed."

Apart from assisting with the common operating picture, the DLD helps with exercise injects, which are challenges that assist the soldiers in the exercise with reacting to various situations they can learn from.

As the exercise continues, the DLD's primary contribution often lies in small, routine tasks.

"Sometimes routine stuff has the biggest impact on common exercises," said Lask. "Not glorious by any means, but necessary," he added.

The U.S. Army's participation with advisors from the 1st Security Force Assistance Brigade, instructors with the Mountain Training Group, 10th Mountain Division, and the Chilean army's 3rd Mountain Division is a marriage of digital expertise and international partnership.

With a combination of the networked system and the synchronization of details from the digital system to analog products, such as maps, all stakeholders were able to receive consistent information regardless of access.



U.S. Army Spc. Taylor Humes, a medical specialist working with the 207th Digital Liaison Detachment, poses for a photo in front of analog products she updates during Exercise Southern Vanguard 25 in Antuco, Chile, Aug. 27, 2025. Exercise Southern Vanguard 25 underscores the U.S. Army's enduring commitment to regional partnership as U.S. forces deploy to Chile to conduct combined mountain warfare, field, and command post training alongside Chilean forces, with participation from Argentina and Peru - strengthening interoperability, shared readiness, and mutual trust while advancing regional security and cooperation across the Western Hemisphere. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jean Sanon)

Spc. Taylor Humes, a medic who came to assist with the exercise, now works with high-ranking individuals in the command center and is tasked with supporting the information in the common operating picture.

"Everything I'm doing now, I learned for the first time once I arrived," she said.

Humes, who spends a lot of her time building graphics for maps both digital and analog, stated that the experience has been as valuable a learning experience as it has been a challenge.

She was never involved in an operation such as this, as she usually works outside of the tactical operations center with the Soldiers who are participating in the exercise, in her capacity as a medic.

"It gives me a better understanding of what the guys up here in the TOC are doing," she said.

This level of adaptability to new circumstances has aided the entire team as they've had to fill a variety of roles to ensure other aspects of the exercise went smoothly.

"It also helps me to have more patience and understanding as to what their position entails and what I need to do to help assist them in the future," Humes explained while discussing what she would take back to her regular duties as a medic.

"The liaison side is our ability to go in and assist, fill gaps, and provide liaison activities between our partners and the U.S. Army," said Lask.

Through a combination of technical skill and personal dedication, the DLD has proven its value in a joint international setting. By stepping outside their typical roles and embracing the challenges of a new environment, the reservists not only supported the mission but also strengthened the bonds of partnership.

The exercise demonstrates that true interoperability is not just about systems and doctrine, but about the willingness of people to work together and adapt to achieve a shared goal.



U.S. Soldiers with the 207th Digital Liaison Detachment, a unit designed to bridge technology capability gaps between the U.S. and partner nations, collaborate with Chilean Soldiers to identify capability gaps in support of Exercise Southern Vanguard 25 in Antuco, Chile, Aug. 23, 2025. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Richelle Cruickshank)

Build to Serve!

News from around the 412th



The Civil Affairs Association awarded **Command Sgt. Major Ryan Bodmer** with the prestigious Winfield Scott Gold Medallion, the highest level award given by the Civil Affairs Corps, in recognition of his extraordinary strategic leadership during battle assembly, September, 2025.

Bodmer has served in every level of leadership within the Civil Affairs Corps, including Civil Affairs Team Sergeant, First Sergeant, and command sergeant major at the battalion, brigade, and CACOM levels, including three combat tours to Afghanistan and Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. Matthew Nowak)

Maj. Gen. Matthew Warne has been in many roles during his career. In this case, he played the role of a patient who received a simulated surgery.

Service members from the **301st Field Hospital, 332nd Medical Brigade**, jumped into action during an intense simulation at Global Medic 2025, where realism meets readiness. Using a high-fidelity cut-suit to simulate traumatic injuries, their medics were put to the test—quickly evaluating a "patient," stabilizing him, and rushing him into surgery in the field hospital Operating Room. (Courtesy Photo)



Deputy Commanding General - Sustainment, **Brig. Gen. Sandra Martin** served as the presiding officer for the change of command ceremony between **Col. Michael Lane** and **Col. Jacqueline Legginton** for the ceremony at Fort Jackson, S.C., June 2025. Legginton took over as the new Commander of the 206th Theater Liaison Detachment. We're excited to have her leadership and vision guiding the team forward.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks and best wishes to Col. Michael Lane, left, as he transitions to his next assignment. (Courtesy photo)

Chaplain's Chat

By Chaplain (Col.) Scotty Riggs, 412th Theater Engineer Command, Command Chaplain

This year's CSTX presented an excellent opportunity for chaplains across the Command to conduct tailored mission training. Sixteen unit ministry teams assembled at Fort McCoy to test and validate their religious support plans through a refresher training course on staff processes as part of the August exercise.

I had the honor of serving as the senior chaplain trainer with responsibility to mentor the unit ministry teams. For many of these chaplains it was the first time to being in a simulated deployed environment. In coordination with the 78th Training Division we prepared a 3-day training course to ensure all chaplains were prepared to execute their assigned missions.

Chaplains rarely struggle to provide religious support to soldiers and command teams, but integrating into staff operations can be a challenge. This exercise forced the chaplains to exercise the staff process to circulate around their assigned area. As I circulated throughout the training area, I saw much growth as I encouraged and coached them throughout their time in the field. I even had an opportunity to do a mini training session on how a chaplain can be involved throughout the Military Decision Making Process. My heart was full leaving this exercise knowing the next generation of the Chaplain Corps is prepared to perform when called.

Another highlight of this exercise was the visit of Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Military Services, Bishop Gregg Caggianelli. The Archdiocese of Military Services was created by Pope Saint John Paul II to provide the Catholic Church's full range of pastoral ministries and spiritual services to those in the United States Armed Forces. His visit showed the importance of this exercise and was a highlight for all chaplains. He was able to conduct two field Mass celebrations while two engineer battalion chaplains were able to take part in his aerial round robin visit. Chaplain (Capt.) Cornielle Boyeye and Chaplain (Capt.) Matthew Kurt had the honor of assisting Bishop Caggianelli with services. They also had the time for one-on-one mentoring.



Bishop Gregg M. Caggianelli, Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Military Services, brought words of faith, hope, and encouragement during Mass at the Fort McCoy chapel. His visit reminded us that spiritual readiness is a vital part of mission readiness! (U.S. Army Reserve Photo by Staff Sgt. Nicholas Vidro)

A Cup of Coffee with the Command Chief Warrant Officer

This issue's article is strong and right to the point. There is no cream or sugar in this one. I say this because the last U.S. Army Reserve Warrant Officer promotion results were very disappointing. The reason for this is because of lack of Professional Military Education and educational requirements. This is not limited to one unit or MOS either. Those warrant officers who were selected - Congratulations! I implore you to mentor the cohort on how to get it done.

2025 Promotion Board Roll-up:
CW3 - AGR 72.7%, TPU 40.9%
(209 boarded only 96 selected)
CW4 - ARG 68.6%, TPU 16.4%
(261 boarded only 61 selected)

Please reflect on the numbers, we need to make sure this is not a trend. Take the time to review the state of your personal military education. Warrant officers are part of the two-time non-selected promotion system, requiring a retention board or mandatory separation. The results from the last board are troubling.

On the Bubble:
CW2 first time non-select: 93
CW3 first time non-select: 70
Scheduled for Retention Board or Separation:
CW2 two time non-select: 19
CW3 two time non-select: 88

The new Professional Military Education requirements are in effect as of October 1, 2025. The class schedules are published and see your unit training NCO to get a slot. Please step up and complete the requirements or step out of the way. This cup of strong coffee serves as a wake-up call if you want to continue your career. I am continuing the talent management of slots in the Command and encourage all to reach out for higher level of responsibility. Do not become stagnant in your career. Let me help you.



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One Team!

Brig. Gen. Sandra Martin shows off the 412th Theater Engineer Command's patch on a recently constructed improved ribbon bridge during Global Strike at Fort McCoy, Wis., August, 2025. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Philip Ribas)



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