

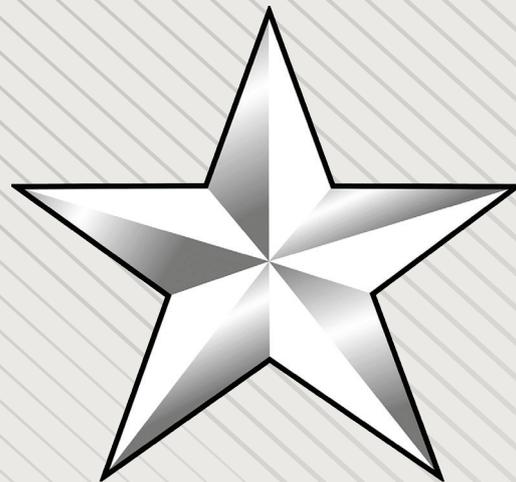


1ST MSC GAZETTE

1st Mission Support Command
U.S. Army Reserve Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Island



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BG Carlos E. Gorbea Diaz
1st Mission Support Command
Commanding General

As your 16th Commanding General, I am proud to serve alongside every member of the Garita Warrior family—Soldiers, Civilians, Contractors, and Families. Together, we represent a Multifunctional Force with a proud legacy of support across the Western Hemisphere and mobilizations worldwide. From hurricane response in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, to securing our homeland, to building partner capacity across the Americas and the Caribbean basin, the 1st Mission Support Command has answered the call.

Over the past two years, thousands of our troops have mobilized and demobilized in support of missions across North America, the Middle East, Europe, and Latin America. At the same time, we proudly revived the Caribbean Thunder exercise—last executed in 1998 and now conducted in 2024, 2025, with great momentum heading into 2026. This training exercise sharpens Large Scale Mobilization and Combat Operations, bringing us back to the basics and allowing training in Inter-Island Logistics. Meanwhile, our Innovative Readiness Training projects connect directly with our communities. From delivering health services to over 2,000 citizens in Utuado, to veterinary training in Saint Thomas, to engineer support doing airfield infrastructure repair in Ceiba and Vieques—your efforts are felt far and wide.

Together, we are building the future of the Army Reserve in the Caribbean. We must stay ready, now, and always.

Twice the Citizen, Combat Ready! Garita Warriors, Always 1st!



CSM Lorraine Duke
1st Mission Support Command
Command Sergeant Major

As your Command Sergeant Major, I want to emphasize getting back to basics — ensuring our NCOs lead the way with tough, realistic training executed safely and to standard. Training is the foundation of readiness, and it is our duty as NCO leaders to set the example for our Soldiers to follow.

In my visits across the United States and overseas, whether at exercises like Mojave Falcon, drill sergeant graduations, or while visiting our troops in Europe and the Middle East, I continue to hear the same message: our Soldiers are disciplined, professional, and setting the standard for others. The 1st MSC earns its reputation through your daily efforts.

I could not be prouder of those who have stepped forward to compete and succeed. From our 2024 Best Squad Competition champions to the Soldiers who won the U.S. Army Reserve-level Philip A. Connelly Awards Program, the Water Purification challenges, and the Expert Soldier Badge, where so many of our Soldiers stepped up to the challenges and succeeded. These achievements reflect the strength of our NCO Corps and the pride you carry as Garita Warriors.

We must continue to forge a strong NCO Corps that will carry on the tradition of Soldier excellence for years to come. The standard is ours to uphold.



1st Mission Support Command
Command Chief Warrant Officer

It is an honor and a privilege to serve in the best U.S. Army Reserve organization. I feel immense pride in serving with the 1st Mission Support Command, a storied unit with unique capabilities and operational reach within the forces in the western hemisphere. Our command proved invaluable in providing humanitarian assistance during natural disasters on the island and abroad. We have shown that we can support large-scale combat operations at a moment's notice and for long tours.

Our people and equipment are ready for any mission anywhere. Based on our current unpredictable geopolitical environment, there is an obligation for us to continue to make readiness our primary goal. As leaders, it is essential for us to place the utmost priority on our greatest element – our fighting force! Garita Warriors, people first - always ready, always first!

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H2F Coaches Inspire Leaders During Symposium

Story by:
U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Jose Robledo, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment



US Army photo by:
Staff Sgt. Tristan Peete

JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, NJ - “Some leaders tell Soldiers to be fit because they signed their name on the dotted line, but that mentality tends to only breed compliance, where Soldiers only give the bare minimum,” said Staff Sgt. Angie Perez, Holistic Health and Fitness (H2F) instructor/coach during the symposium held at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst from Mar. 8-9, 2025.

The symposium hosted by the 78th Training Division centered around sharing current research from leading experts and best practices from trainers and leaders around the Reserve force. For Perez, implementing H2F requires, “reminding Soldiers why fitness is important, and they don’t have to do it, but that they get to do it. They have privileged access to resources civilians don’t, but more importantly, they have leaders who care to share those resources and want to see them improve and succeed.”

Staff Sgt. Brandon Shaw, H2F coach, agrees. He reminds his Soldiers that physical, mental, spiritual fitness isn’t just for the military, but for your entire life. You want to be able to play and keep up with your kids and eventually grandkids.



US Army photo by:
Staff Sgt. Tristan Peete

H2F is based on five pillars: mental, sleep, nutritional, physical, and spiritual readiness. The doctrine, as outlined in Field Manual 7-22, directs leaders and Soldier to use unit-level experts, facilities, and equipment to develop the physical and non-physical components of Soldier readiness.



Staff Sgt. Jezreel Hernandez, H2F coach, likes to tell his students that H2F requires a change in perspective, that regardless of occupational specialty, any Soldier may find themselves in combat. He asks his Soldiers, “do you hope you run into the enemy combatant that doesn’t work out?”

404th CA BN Trains in Realistic Unfamiliar Puerto Rico

Story and Photos by:
Army Reserve Capt. José Robledo,
363rd Public Affairs Detachment



CAMP SANTIAGO, PR – The 404th Civil Affairs Battalion (CA BN) under the 352nd Civil Affairs Command (CACOM) began their mission essential tasks training with support from the 1st Mission Support Command after a successful airborne operation on Apr. 11, 2025.

“Operation Taino Warrior provided a significant and diversified exercise opportunity for not only members of the 404th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne), but also members of the 346th Psychological Operations Company (Airborne),” said U.S. Army Capt. Rebecca Butler, exercise planner and BN S3.

The 1st Mission Support Command supported the exercise with units from the 407th Medical Company, 824th Quartermaster Company, and 941st Quartermaster Company.

“First and foremost, the presence of the 1st MSC at Fort Buchanan proved to be an invaluable asset enabling us to meet the finite requirements of Civil Affairs, Large Scale Combat Operations, and Airborne Operation Tasks in a new and challenging environment. Likewise, the Camp Santiago Joint Training Center provided the setting to enhance the survivability skills of our Soldiers in an unfamiliar setting, while conducting Civil-Military Operations in support of Army and Joint Force requirements,” said Butler.

The 78th Training Division as well as the 2/641st Aviation Regiment from the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, the 166th Air Wing of the Delaware National Guard, and elements from the Puerto Rico National Guard also supported the 404th CA BN. “This mission established a platform to demonstrate the proficiency of our interoperability amongst sister forces truly mimicking the execution of Expeditionary Deployment Operations,” said Butler. “Operation Taino Warrior required advanced planning of complex operations while validating our collective training and execution of our battalion mission essential tasks (METs) in a realistic and cost-effective environment.”

The 404th CA BN trained on their METs in Camp Santiago, Puerto Rico as opposed to their usual location state-side. “A thorough cost and time analysis showed us that training at Camp Santiago was more fiscally sound than conducting similar operations stateside, even when compared to major military installations within a five-hour drive,” said (U.S. Army) Lt. Col. Aaron Dombroski, the 404 CA BN commander. Civil Affairs units also utilized the 1st Mission Support Command’s Spanish-speaking Soldiers as role-players and challenged themselves in an unfamiliar terrain during their training.



“Being a civil affairs unit training in Puerto Rico, a location we haven’t trained before and had no pre-existing relationships established, allowed us the opportunity to exercise civil affairs skills in real-world situations,” said (U.S. Army) Capt. Brianna Abrams Kok. “We were out of our comfort zone in Puerto Rico. The convenience of running back to the reserve center, because we forgot to grab something, wasn’t an option. The unit was forced to be resourceful and intentional in our planning and execution phases to accomplish the mission and meet the intent of the training, while still prioritizing safety. Conducting training in Puerto Rico challenged us to think creatively to ensure we were prepared for the conditions, able to sustain that preparation, and be fully immersed in the training scenario.”

Army Reserve Soldiers Repair Airport, Train and Give Back

Story by:
Army Reserve Sgt. Jofenell Ruiz-Febus, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment

VIEQUES, Puerto Rico – Soldiers from the 471st Engineer Company (EVCC), 1st Mission Support Command, participate in an Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) mission with a focus on readiness, renovation, and community service at the Antonio Rivera Rodríguez Airport in Vieques, Puerto Rico, from July 14 until Aug. 11, 2025.

“We’re enhancing the line of sight for the runway and reinforcing safety,” said U.S. Army Reserve 1st Lt. Josue Lebron, the officer in charge of the 471st EVCC first rotation in Vieques.

The mission consists of clearing 36 acres of vegetation and repairing over 300 feet of fence to improve the visibility and perimeter security of the airport. Improvements are handled by a mix of heavy equipment operators, electricians, plumbers, and carpenters, split between their horizontal and vertical engineer platoons.

According to Lebron, this IRT project was requested by the Puerto Rico Ports Authority. This mission provides real-time mobilization training opportunities for Soldiers, such as mustering, readying, and deploying equipment and Soldiers, and integrating into a higher headquarters. Soldiers also established a full base camp to support around 60 troops from different units participating in the mission.

“As we expose our Soldiers to austere environments, we provide realistic training and prepare them for not having luxuries from back home like running water,” said 1st Sgt. Isaias Diaz, the 471st EVCC senior enlisted advisor. “We learn to sustain ourselves as individuals and as a unit, as well as hands-on training allows us to assess our talent management.” Transporting equipment and personnel from the main island to Vieques involved logistical challenges, including ferry delays and space and weight constraints of moving heavy machinery. “Challenges have been faced and addressed one at a time,” said Diaz. “...the transportation of equipment and materials was not as fast as we expected, but with great collaboration from both island shores and ferry support, we managed to bring it in an orderly manner, with no loss of personnel and equipment.”

The community’s support has been key to the mission. “From local leaders to small business owners, everyone’s been welcoming,” said Lebron. “That connection reminds our Soldiers this work matters.” As IRT delivers value to local communities, it also instills pride and purpose in its participants. “This is what readiness looks like,” Lebron said. “This isn’t just about completing a checklist—it’s about making a real difference.” Mentors and fellow 1st MSC Soldiers responded with thundering applause at the announcement of Best Squad.

“I’ve been able to watch them from the start of this – the way they’ve bonded together and picked each other up,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Derek Andrasic, representing 1st MSC enlisted leadership. “I’m so proud of the way they kept rising up and kept hitting the grind.” Harter emphasized the need for leaders to support the Soldiers honored at the event. “You leaders tell me what you need. We’ll get you the resources,” Harter said. “These young men and women deserve it. These young men and women are going to be at the tip of the spear.” The host finished the ceremony by expressing his pride, as well.



Top and bottom photos by: Spc. Airam Amaro.
Middle photo by: Sgt. Jofenelle Riz Febus

363rd PAD Covers the Army's Transformation Initiative In Germany

Story by:
U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Jose Robledo, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment

HOHENFELS, Germany – The 363rd Public Affairs Detachment (PAD) joined more than 4,000 participants from the United States and 15 NATO allies and partner nations, led by 7th Army Training Command (ATC), during exercise Combined Resolve 25-01 at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC), Hohenfels, Germany, Jan. 17, 2025.

This year's Combined Resolve (CbR) was not a typical rotational exercise. The first iteration CbR focused on helping the wider Army identify how recent technologies are changing how we deploy tactical

formations and understand how to adapt lessons into new formations, techniques, tactics, and procedures (TTPs), and doctrine. The 363rd PAD alongside JMRC's Viper combat camera team documented the training with professional-quality photography and video products.

“This allowed the 363rd PAD to train their mission essential task list (METL) in a real-world environment by producing visual information (VI) products of real impact to the entire Army,” said U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Andrew Miller, Viper team leader and operations non-commissioned officer (NCO).



Photo by:
Staff Sgt. Tristan Peete

The 363rd PAD, out of the 1st Mission Support Command in Puerto Rico, conducted an overseas deployment training (ODT) for US Army Europe and Africa to support the wider U.S. Army strategic communications' mission under direction of the 7th ATC – disseminate how the Army transformation efforts are iterative, continuous, and enabling the Force to become leaner, more mobile, lower signature and more lethal.

“Having a Reserve component PAD during this rotation allowed my Viper team to focus on VI documentation in direct support of the JMRC Observer Controller Trainers (OC-T) and exercise our ability to supervise and direct multimedia projects and videography assets,” remarked Miller.

According to Army Regulation 350-9, Reserve Component (RC) units execute ODT primarily to improve their mission readiness; however, RC units conducting ODT also fulfill capability requirement shortfalls for an Army service component command's theater engagement, security cooperation, forward presence, stabilization, and mission support activities.

“This is the first ODT for the [363rd] PAD in several years and it has allowed us to work alongside Active Component units, refine our public affairs skillsets, and provide critical communications products the entire Army is looking at,” said U.S. Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Tristan Peete, fulltime operations NCO for the 363rd PAD. “Soldiers love doing the job they signed up for, so even when unit based out of Puerto Rico goes to Germany during the winter, they are excited to grab their cameras and learn how to operate



Photo by:
Staff Sgt. Tristan Peete



Top photo by: Staff Sgt. Miguel Miolan
Bottom photo by: Spc. Airam Amaro

in a new environment away from the grip and grins and other training distractions,” concluded Peete.

The Wallstreet Journal, ABC News, Defense One Radio, Breaking Defense, Defense Scoop, NBC News, the Army Times, and the U.S. Army via social media platforms and its homepage all used VI products created by the 363rd PAD.

“It was great seeing our training payoff,” said U.S. Army Reserve Sgt. Jofenell Ruiz-Febus, mass communications NCO of the 363rd PAD. “Creating video and stills to the Department of Defense communications’ exacting standards and then watching those products get picked up by international news organizations filled every Soldier in the [363rd] PAD with pride; we are looking forward to our next mission and showing the Army, again, what our unit can do,” Ruiz-Febus concluded.



Photo by: Staff Sgt. Tristan Peete



Caribbean Thunder 25 Dominates Multimodal Operations

Story by:
Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Birk, 1st Army Public Affairs

CAMP SANTIAGO, Puerto Rico – It was impossible not to wonder what was happening across Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands as military equipment soared the skies, roads, and waterways during the 1st Mission Support Command's premier training event, July 28 to Aug. 11, 2025.

“Caribbean Thunder 2025 (CT25) provides the opportunity for units to experience large-scale mobilization operations by deploying personnel and equipment across multiple islands,” said Maj. James C. Rish, transportation officer with 1st MSC. “Utilizing multimodal transportation [air, land, and sea], we exercise all aspects of transportation delivering combat power and lethality at speed.”

CT25, a U.S. Army Reserve prominent training event led by the 1st MSC, involved more than 1,100 Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, and Aviators working together to refine interoperability and dominate real-world scenarios focused on large-scale combat operations to achieve national strategic objectives, protect national interests, and prevail in conflicts involving near-peer adversaries, particularly through sustained combat operations at the tactical level.

“Examples of multimodal use during CT25 were when our troops convoyed from home stations to training areas; moved engineering equipment to neighboring islands via sea vessels; used fixed-wing [C-130 Hercules] to move personnel and equipment; and exercised rotary wing [UH-60 Black Hawk, CH-47 Chinook] for critical resupply,” added Rish. “Multimodal operations provide commanders the flexibility and tools to accomplish a multitude of missions from combat to sustainment.”

To meet evolving threats, the 1st MSC falls in line with the U.S. Army's overarching transformation to develop the capability to converge effects on land, in the air, sea, and cyberspace, including investment in our people, reorganization of forces, and the adoption of new concepts on how to fight that allow the Army to maintain superiority over any potential adversary.

"What we are doing here directly aligns with the Army's 2030 vision of the future operating environment," said Lt. Col. Maria G. Harrigan, logistics officer with 1st MSC. "Moving materiel and Soldiers across archipelagic terrain, coordinating with civilian ports and aviation authorities, and executing theater mobility tasks that would be essential in any LSCO scenario while continuing to build and maintain partnerships with the U.S. Army National Guard, U.S. Air Force, aviation units, host nation port and ferry terminals, and local authorities, to apply innovative readiness training and strengthen our ability to fight and win."

LSCO operations spanning across 2,500 kilometers of the Caribbean attracted the attention of many senior leaders from the U.S. Army, U.S. Army Reserve, U.S. National Guard, and Canadian Armed Forces. Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael R. Weimer arrived to the Caribbean and was able to observe the 1st MSC's training event during his visit to several Army units in the region. "Annual training like Caribbean Thunder is vital for our Reserve Soldiers because this is where they get to test their mission essential task list," said Weimer. "Going through tough, realistic training builds cohesive teams. As a Total Army – Active Duty, Reserves, and National Guard – we need cohesion to fulfill our mission: to fight and win." Since the mid-1990s, Caribbean Thunder has established secure communications from multiple points across the Caribbean, demonstrating its capabilities in the event of a regional emergency.

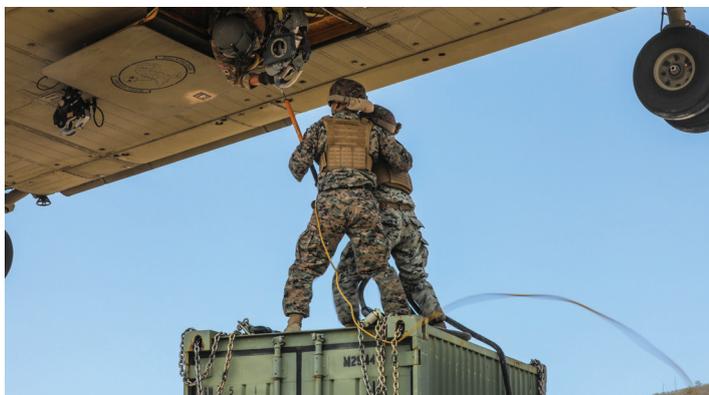


Photo by: Spc. Adilen Soto Margolla



Photo by: Staff Sgt. Miguel Miolan

"CT25 has allowed us to operate in an overwater environment, and also in a capacity to support the Army, our primary C-130 customer," said U.S. Air Force Capt. Chris Summins, a pilot with the 700th Airlift Squadron. "The more that we [U.S. Air Force] get to work with the Army, the better prepared we are for what we are likely to do in an actual wartime scenario. The Army Reserves have done a fantastic job setting the stage: it's been a great experience working with them." The 1st MSC showcased their ability to deploy signal, medical, engineering, military police, and civil affairs units across the Caribbean, an adaptability crucial in any emergency or combat scenario.

"It was important for me to come to Puerto Rico and observe the training, so these Soldiers know senior leaders appreciate what they are doing is central to that mission," said Weimer. The Garita Warriors proved to be exceptionally skilled, highly motivated, and capable of accomplishing missions not just in the Caribbean but worldwide.



Army Reserve Best Squad Names its Winners

10.11.2024 Story by: Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Scott Griffin, 366th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Photo by Staff Sgt. Brittany Primavera.

JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, N.J. – The Army Reserve recognized the Best Squad Competition winners during a ceremony held at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, Sept. 7, 2024.

The event, which was hosted by Command Sgt. Maj. Gregory Betty, the 15th Command Sergeant Major of the Army Reserve, named the winning squad, the soldier and noncommissioned officer of the year.

Spc. Ewan Sulser, 79th Theater Sustainment Command, was named Soldier of the Year. Sgt. Nelson Medina, 1st Mission Support Command, was named NCO of the Year. Medina and his fellow Puerto Rican “Garita Warriors” were named Best Squad; including Sgt. Edgardo Santiago, Spc. Abel Bonilla, Spc. Angel Machado and Spc. Elvin Rivera.

The Army Reserve Soldiers trained intensely for months to prepare for eight days of grueling challenges including an expert physical fitness assessment, multiple day and night weapon qualifications, dismounted patrol scenarios, high value target extractions, a helocast in the Atlantic Ocean, 12-mile ruck march, and squad-based fitness challenges culminating with the squad facing a Sergeants Major board and written exam.

“The Soldier of the Year and Best Squad are things that don’t happen overnight,” Betty said. “This is Soldiers getting after it, 100 percent. It’s their lifestyle – they’re staying fit, staying ready and showing their proficiency on how to be lethal and to be warfighters.”

Lt. Gen. Robert D. Harter, Chief of Army Reserve and Commanding General, U.S. Army Reserve Command, attended the event to say how proud he was of these Soldiers. “There’s no place I’d rather be than with these young men and women who worked so hard to be here today. You inspire me,” Harter said. “Thank you for Soldiering up, getting out here and getting after it.”



Photo by: Spc. Matthew Keegan



Photo by: Capt. Katherine Bustos Chaves



Photo by: Staff Sgt. Scott Griffin

Mentors and fellow 1st MSC Soldiers responded with thundering applause at the announcement of Best Squad.

“I’ve been able to watch them from the start of this – the way they’ve bonded together and picked each other up,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Derek Andrasic, representing 1st MSC enlisted leadership. “I’m so proud of the way they kept rising up and kept hitting the grind.”

Harter emphasized the need for leaders to support the Soldiers honored at the event. “You leaders tell me what you need. We’ll get you the resources,” Harter said. “These young men and women deserve it. These young men and women are going to be at the tip of the spear.”

The host finished the ceremony by expressing his pride, as well.

“Congratulations to the 1st MSC,” Betty said. “I can’t wait to see what you’re doing next.”

The “Garita Warriors” will now move on to the Department of the Army Best Squad Competition at the end of September.



Photos by: Staff Sgt. Britteny Primavera



1st MSC Engineers Renovate Navy Building Bring New Capacities to Ceiba

Story and photos by:
US Army Reserve Capt. Jose Robledo, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment

CEIBA, PR - “This building will support so many different missions and so many different units,” said U.S. Army Reserve Master Sgt. Herbert Correa, 1st Mission Support Command (MSC) Reserve Facilities Improvement Project Manager, during groundbreaking of the construction project at building 2469 within the reserve center complex in Ceiba Puerto Rico, on Sep. 2, 2025.

The 475th Engineer Company out of Ponce and the 471st Engineer Company out of Fort Buchanan will renovate the building under the direction of Correa. The renovations will include the removal of floor tiles and the pouring of epoxy for new floors, installing new commodes and sinks, electrical installations such as interior lighting and air conditioning, new locks for updated security, and fresh coats of paint.

“The 81st Readiness Division (RD) is the command in charge of fire safety such as alarms, suppression systems, and the external lighting; the 1st MSC is in charge of making sure the building is usable for 17 office spaces, training spaces, and as surge-capacity living space for up to 150 personnel,” said Correa.

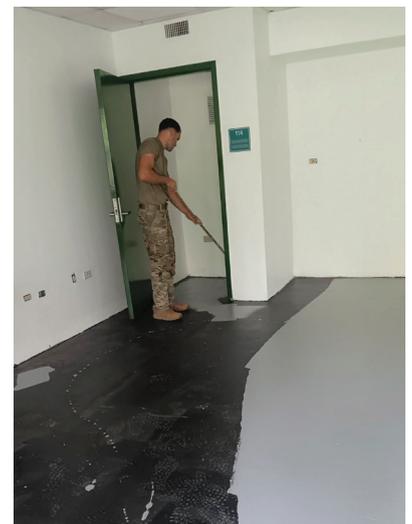
The Navy turned over the Roosevelt Roads buildings in Ceiba in 2004 and the U.S. Army Reserve took custody these specific set of buildings previously belonging to U.S. Navy Special Warfare Group 4 in 2005. The buildings and installations include a 320-meter long drydock with a draft as deep as 24 meters. The 390th Transportation Company (Seaport) conducted 24-hour sustainment and transportation operations during Hurricane Maria and recovery operations in the aftermath. However, much of the infrastructure was severely damaged during the storm, precluding any further local seaport operations training.

“Reserve Soldiers qualified in their military occupational specialty (MOS) will gain confidence in their work because after their advanced individual training (AIT) this is where they get to practice and master the craft – it makes them future leaders,” said U.S. Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Javier Rivera Rodriguez.

There are over 300 tasks for an engineer construction company from construct roads, electrical utilities, wood frame structures, headwalls, and sewerage systems to perform project management and even repair harbor craft refueling facilities. The doctrine, as outlined in their unit task list (UTL), directs leaders and Soldiers to operate hand tools, heavy machinery such as dozers, and material handling equipment like forklifts. During the construction project, the engineers will train unit mission essential tasks (METs) in addition to also building comradery and esprit de corps.

“The project brings together plumbers, electricians, carpentry/masonry specialists, heavy equipment operators, construction supervisors, and one medic for a total of 19 Soldiers ready to show what they can do,” remarked Correa.

U.S. Army Reserve Pvt. 1st Class Victor Ruperto Vélez, a heavy equipment operator from the 475th Engineer Company, said, “I picked my MOS because I have loved heavy machinery since I was a kid. My primary job during this project is to operate the forklift, but I am also helping with the general construction. This project compliments my civilian career where I operate the civilian versions of the same equipment, but also gives me new skills that I can take back to regular job and be a greater asset to my civilian teams.”





Caribbean Thunder 25 Largest Army Reserve Training Event in Caribbean

Story by: US Army Reserve Capt. Jose Robledo, 363rd Public Affairs Detachment

Photos by: Sgt. Edrick Torres

CAMP SANTIAGO, Puerto Rico – The 1st Mission Support Command (MSC) concluded Caribbean Thunder 25, its yearly home-station annual training including over 1,100 Soldiers, Guardsmen, Airmen and Marines at the Camp Santiago Joint Training Center, Salinas, Puerto Rico, Aug. 11, 2025.

Caribbean Thunder 25 (CT25) is a 1st MSC-led collective training exercise with a focus on inter-island coordination and sustainment operations in support of large-scale combat operations (LSCO). CT25 takes place across eight locations in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands from July 28 to Aug. 11, 2025. 30 distinct units participated in this training event, all dispersed across four islands spanning 2,500 kilometers of over-the-shore communications and multi-modal transportation lines.

“We were able to accomplish several basic skills and training readiness (T&R) standards in the short timeframe of our participation in Caribbean Thunder,” said U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Capt Orlando X. Carrasquillo, Inspector-Instructor, Detachment 1 Landing Support Company, Combat Logistics Regiment 45. “We integrated Army training events into our training, such as

rifle qualification, pistol qualification, and virtual practical application classes, but more importantly for us, we conducted significant Marine Corps-centered training accomplishments, including convoy operations, aerial delivery support, medium machine gun live fire, and external lift operations with an Army CH-47.”

The USMC detachment used 1st MSC equipment to train sling-load operations by attaching equipment, vehicles, and containers to U.S. Army Reserve Aviation Command (USARAC) CH-47 Chinooks and UH-60 Blackhawks and preparing equipment for load and drop from US Air Force Reserve C-130 Hercules aircraft.

The U.S. Air Force Reserve’s 700th Airlift Squadron provided two C-130s as the fixed-wing aerial platforms. They conducted Low-Cost Low-Altitude (LCLA) aerial resupply training by taking off from Mercedita International Airport in Ponce, Puerto Rico, and dropped supplies on Circuns drop zone in Camp Santiago. The 700th Airlift Squadron also conducted repositioning of strategic communications equipment from Puerto Rico to the U.S. Virgin Island of St. Croix exercising operational reach, inter-island chain transportation



Photos by Staff Sgt. Edrick Torres

and communications in support of LSCO.

“Caribbean Thunder has allowed us to operate in an over-the-water environment and also in a capacity where we can support the Army, [who] we think of as our primary customer in the C-130 world, so the more we work with the Army, the better prepared we are for what we are likely to do in an actual wartime scenario,” said U.S. Air Force Reserve Capt. Chris Summins, C-130 pilot from the 700th Airlift Squadron.

U.S. Army Aviator-Soldiers from the 244th Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade (ECAB) and the 5-159th General Support Aviation Battalion (GSAB) flew the CH-47 Chinooks and UH-60 Blackhawks, which supported CT25 and allowed the U.S.M.C. Combat Logistics Regiment 45 to conduct their training. These two aviation units supported eight days of continuous support, moving supplies and personnel between Camp Santiago, Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in San Juan, Roosevelt Roads in Ceiba, Antonio Rivera Rodríguez airport in Vieques island, Cyril E. King Airport on St. Thomas, and Henry E. Rohlsen Airport on St. Croix.

In addition to CT25 hosting fixed-wing air delivery from Puerto Rico to USVI via C-130, it also allowed air delivery from Puerto Rico to Vieques via C-20's and UC-35's from USARAC.

“I have been in the military for 22 years and this is the first training [I] have been to with the U.S. Army Reserve where we have exercised multi-modal transportation from ground convoys, sea ferries, and both rotary and fixed-wing aerial platforms across multiple islands,” said Maj. James Rish, transportation officer with 1st Mission Support Command.

Among the many logisticians, enablers, and support personnel brought together by CT25, the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Readiness Command (MIRC) recognized three Soldiers from Bravo Detachment, 321st MIRC, for their performance during their concurrent training in Puerto Rico. B Det. 321st MIRC conducted counter-intelligence training during CT25 as an opportunity to challenge themselves by training in a novel environment with an immersive language barrier. Observer-Controller Trainers from the MIRC recognized 321st Soldiers with coins for their exceptional performance.

Trainers from the 84th Training Command (TC) augmented the 1st MSC's instructors with NCOs to conduct gunnery training across a wide range of small arms and crew-served weapons. 84th TC instructors worked side-by-side with 1st MSC instructors during pre-marksanship instruction (PMI), the engagement skills trainer (EST) 2000,

a laser-based, indoor, multipurpose arms trainer for 11 individual and crew served weapons, and during the live-fire zero and individual weapons qualification (IWQ) portions of training. Senior Gunner Instructor, Sgt. 1st Class Trevor Trembl from the Army Reserve Marksmanship Unit, demonstrated and taught 1st MSC Soldiers basic rifle marksmanship, such as the five fundamentals of marksmanship, to a few advanced rifle marksmanship techniques.

During the enhanced home-station annual training, the combined efforts of the 1st MSC and 84th TC created Task Force (TF) Stormbreaker, which oversaw 662 Soldiers qualify on their assigned weapon systems. TF Stormbreaker trained Soldiers on the M4 rifle, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW), M240B medium machine gun, and the M17 modular handgun system for standard qualification and law enforcement weapons training and qualification (LEWTAQ). Many 1st MSC units also conducted IWQ prior to the start of CT25 to allow them to support their sister units during the larger training event.

Caribbean Thunder 25 provided the 84th TC with the opportunity for their instructors to challenge themselves in inter-service coaching

techniques, such as when Sgt. 1st Class Jason Postl, a Senior Gunner Instructor with the 84th Training Command, assisted Cpl. Ranoldo Torres-Maldonado, a Heavy Equipment Operator with Det 1 CLR 45, during the Marine's first experience at the Army M4 rifle qualification tables. CT 25 also afforded the 84th TC the opportunity to exchange doctrinal concepts with foreign partners, such as when US Army Master Sgt. Jesse Swank, a Senior Gunner Instructor with the 84th Training Command, provided preliminary marksmanship instruction to Brig. Gen. Guinevere Bourque, Deputy Commander of the Canadian Army Doctrine and Training Center (CADTC) and Chief Warrant Officer Bryan Gardner, CADTC Reserve Advisor Sgt. Maj.

Among the many distinguished visitors, the Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Weimer also inspected training at Caribbean Thunder 25. SMA Weimer gave tips at the rifle qualification range, shook hands with enlisted leaders, took questions from junior Soldiers, presented a few coins, and even promoted an NCO whose date of rank coincided with training.

It wasn't just distinguished visitors and high-profile outside units that received recognition during



CT25. U.S. Army Reserve Command Chief Warrant Officer 5 Alfonso Hernandez and Master Sgt. Marcos Martinez, on behalf of the Commanding General, recognized the cooks of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 166th Regional Support Group, with coins for their outstanding work and service in keeping all the service members from all the services and countries fed and ready to train. The field feeding teams were the first to establish footprints at Camp Salinas and some of the last to leave.

“We owe our cooks a great deal of gratitude for keeping us fed and ready to train,” said Hernández.

CT25 also brought together Army Seaport Operations Companies (SPOCs) from the island and the continental United States (CONUS) to train together and increase proficiency. SPOCs primarily conduct joint logistics over the shore (JLOTS). The 948th SPOC out of Marysville, Washington, had the opportunity to train in conjunction with the 390th SPOC, out of the 1st MSC in Ceiba, PR during CT25 .

“Every item one can think of a Soldier will use is transported by sea at least at one point,” said Lt. Col. Heath Dickinson, 1st MSC G-3 Current Operations Officer. JLOTS is a key component of the United States’ strategic reach in warfare. “CT25 allows for our SPOC Soldiers to train in real-world conditions under arduous, yet controlled settings and gain valuable experience they would otherwise have to simulate.”

Dickinson also led the efforts of the 1st MSC opposing forces (OPFOR). He brought together staff officers and NCOs from G3, G4, G6, and other slice elements to provide realistic training during Caribbean Thunder 25 by attacking the bivouac sites, training areas, and situation training exercise (STX) lanes where the training units were: Guards were taxed during night operations, shift changes were assaulted, and logistics nodes were ambushed. The OPFOR took on the motto, “no one is safe.”

During CT25, the 1st MSC also stressed its operational reach by conducting an Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) mission with a focus on readiness, renovation, and community service at the Antonio Rivera Rodríguez Airport in Vieques, Puerto Rico, from July 14 until Aug. 11, 2025

Soldiers from the 471st Engineer Company (EVCC), 1st Mission Support Command, cleared 36 acres of excess foliage and repaired over 300 feet of fence to improve the visibility and perimeter security of the airport. The work party consisted of heavy equipment operators, electricians, plumbers, and carpenters, split between their horizontal and vertical engineer platoons. The training challenges stemmed from the logistical complexities of transporting equipment and personnel from the main island of Puerto Rico to Vieques, including coordinating around ferry delays and factoring in space and weight constraints of moving heavy machinery on over-the-shore vessels.

Photo by: Spc. Adilen Soto Margolla



Photo by: Spc. Airam Amaro



Photo by: Staff Sgt. Raquel Birkk



Aside from typical, though stressed logistics field problems, the 1st MSC also extended itself in maintenance, sustainment, and communications operations. Master Sgt. Miguel Ortiz, senior maintenance supervisor, led a maintenance team consisting of ordnance Soldiers from both 1st MSC and 948th Transportation Battalion out of Seattle, Washington, to exchange engines (engine swap) between High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles, or HMMWV.

“It is an arduous and complex task to do in garrison, let alone in the field. We said ‘yes’ to the challenge and did it in less than 48 hours,” said Ortiz.

While the equipment maintainers rose to the challenges of engine swaps in the field, the 35th Expeditionary Signal Battalion – Enhanced (ESB-E) established five communications nodes across the islands of Puerto Rico, Vieques, and the U.S. Virgin Islands of St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix. Spanning over 2,500 kilometers of over-the-shore communications, the 35th ESB-E demonstrated the ability to keep signal operations going for 15 days. The planning team is exploring the possibility of adding the additional connection to Fort Jackson, the 81st Readiness Division’s home-station and new higher headquarters for the 1st next year, an additional 2,300km of communications according to lead planner, U.S. Army Reserve Capt. Michael Rodriguez.

“Though CT25 conducted training operations well beyond the typical home station annual training, CT25 still conducted the ‘bread-and-butter’ events typical of annual training, like combat life saver (CLS) training, drivers training, night drivers training, mass-medical readiness events, etc.” said U.S. Army Reserve Col. Blake Price, G-3/5/7 Operations Chief.

Price concluded, “Caribbean Thunder is not just the premier training opportunity for Army Reserve Soldiers in the Caribbean, but a prime opportunity for any unit from any service branch, Marines, Navy, Air Force, to challenge their operational reach and train in an environment that better simulates emerging threats.”

Caribbean Thunder 2025 brings over 1,100 Soldiers, Airmen, Guardsmen and Marines under a 1st-MSCLed training for Large-Scale Combat Operations and island-chain mobilization, signal communications, and logistics home-station annual training event across Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, while concurrently running 1st MSC-led engineering projects and Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) missions across islands of the Caribbean.





SPORTS & FITNESS SCHEDULE



MON

30-minute Circuit (2026)

@Fitness Center Bldg. 148
11:30 am to 1 pm

Basketball Open Court

@Fitness Center Bldg. 167
4 to 6 pm

Cross Drills Class

@Fitness Center Annex Bldg. 170
5 to 6 pm

Pickleball Open Court

@Roofed Basketball Court
5 to 7 pm

WED

Lap Swimming

@Waterspout Bldg. 161
6 am to 10 am

30-minute Circuit (2026)

@Fitness Center Bldg. 148
11:30 am to 1 pm

Basketball Open Court

@Fitness Center Bldg. 167
4 to 6 pm

Cross Drills Class

@Fitness Center Annex Bldg. 170
5 to 6 pm

Pickleball Open Court

@Roofed Basketball Court
5 to 7 pm

FRI

Lap Swimming

@Waterspout Bldg. 161
6 am to 10 am

Pickleball Open Court

@Roofed Basketball Court
5 to 7 pm

TUE

Golden Age Program

@Fitness Center Bldg. 167
9 to 10 am

Back 2 Basics Class

@Fitness Center Annex Bldg. 170
12 to 1 pm

Circuit Training

@Fitness Center Bldg. 148
3:15 to 4 pm

Hybrid Cycling Class

@Fitness Center Bldg. 148
4:30 to 5:30 pm

Futsal Open Court

@Roofed Basketball Court
5 to 7 pm

Tennis Open Court

@Tennis Court
5 to 7 pm

Water Aerobics

@Waterspout Bldg. 161
6 to 7 pm

THU

Lap Swimming

@Waterspout Bldg. 161
6 am - 10 am

Golden Age Program

@Fitness Center Bldg. 167
9 to 10 am

Back 2 Basics Class

@Fitness Center Annex Bldg. 170
12 to 1 pm

Circuit Training

@Fitness Center Bldg. 148
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6 to 7 pm

Contact us

- ✔ Fitness Classes 787-707-3767
- ✔ Sports 787-707-3277
- ✔ Aquatics 787-707-3550

Fees may apply
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All activities are subject to change.



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