

SERVING DURING COVID-19



THE *Maryland*



LINE

FY2020 ISSUE #2 - SPECIAL EDITION

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD



Maryland National Guard
Public Affairs Office
Fifth Regiment Armory
29th Division St.,
Baltimore, MD 21201
ng.md.mdarng.list.pao@mail.mil
410-576-6179

Governor:
Larry Hogan

Adjutant General:
Maj. Gen. Timothy Gowen

Public Affairs Director:
Maj. Kurt Rauschenberg

Design & Layout:
Spc. Shadrach Hicks &
Sgt. Elizabeth Scott

 /MDGUARD

 /MarylandGuard

 /MDNG

 /MDNG

 /MarylandGuard

CONTENTS:

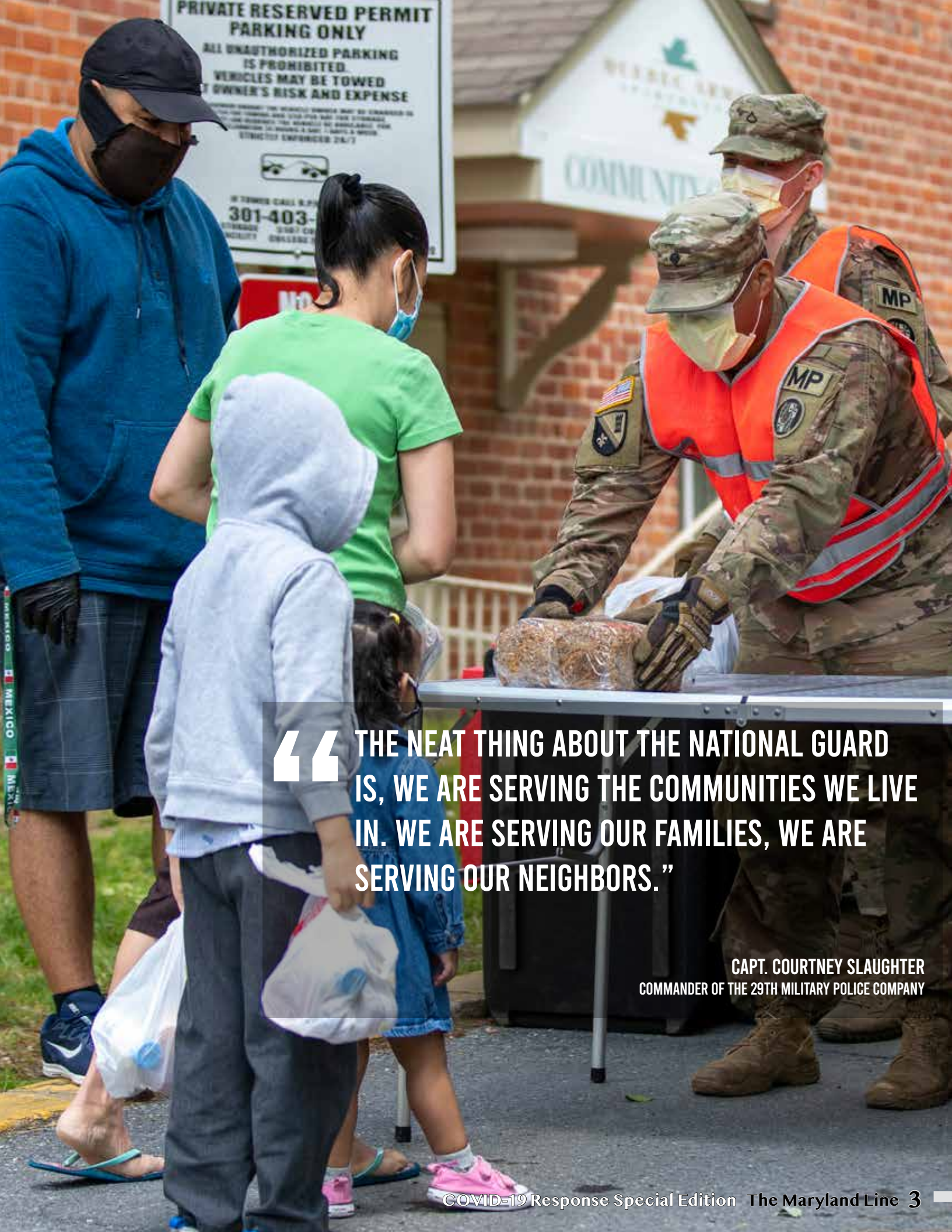
Articles

- 4 **In it Together: Maryland Military Department's Response to the Pandemic**
- 10 **Timeline**
- 12 **Service Member's First Stop in the COVID-19 Response**
- 14 **Maryland National Guard Helping w/ Strategic National Stockpile Push**
- 20 **Maryland National Guard Provides support to Nursing homes**
- 22 **Maryland National Guard Support FedEx Field Medical Services**
- 24 **Maryland National Guard Serves Real, Virtual Communities**
- 28 **Bridge Between Partners**
- 30 **Presence Through the Darkness: Maryland National Guard Stands Watch**

MDNG embraces change during the COVID-19 pandemic response.

The Maryland Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment conducts a change of command ceremony on May 4, 2020, at Battle Acre Park, in Dundalk, Maryland. Lt. Col. Adam Tiffen took command of the battalion from Lt. Col. Daniel Collins, who has served as the commander of the battalion since June 2018.





“ THE NEAT THING ABOUT THE NATIONAL GUARD IS, WE ARE SERVING THE COMMUNITIES WE LIVE IN. WE ARE SERVING OUR FAMILIES, WE ARE SERVING OUR NEIGHBORS.”

CAPT. COURTNEY SLAUGHTER
COMMANDER OF THE 29TH MILITARY POLICE COMPANY

IN IT TOGETHER: MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD'S RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

On March 12, 2020, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan signed an executive order activating the Maryland National Guard to assist in the state's fight against the novel coronavirus. In nearly five months, approximately 1,500 Soldiers and Airmen supported more than 1,300 missions supporting the citizens of Maryland.

The days were long and the needs of the local partners were constantly shifting as COVID-19 spread through the state but the Guardsmen and women were ready to serve however they could.

"Our singular purpose is to meet the needs of the people of Maryland and do our part to

help keep our communities safe," said Army Maj. Gen. Timothy E. Gowen, the adjutant general for Maryland. "The Maryland National Guard is focused and prepared to bring every appropriate capability to bear to confront this crisis."

The Maryland Guard's status as a state military force makes it uniquely suited to respond to state-level emergencies whenever needed, in addition to its federal warfighting mission. The brought capabilities like medical augmentation, transportation, food distribution, facility construction, and cyber defense to the state's response.

Building on relationships forged through years of training, other state of emergencies, and consistent collaboration, MDNG leaders and emergency managers worked closely with Maryland Emergency Management Agency and other civil agencies to determine how they could best support.



STRATEGIC NATIONAL STOCKPILE

The support began with Airmen from the Maryland Air National Guard assisting at a Strategic National Stockpile warehouse. The Strategic National Stockpile is the

federal government's supply of life-saving pharmaceuticals and medical supplies for use in severe public health emergencies that would exhaust local supplies and supply systems. The stockpile, which is maintained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is stored at key undisclosed locations throughout the United States.

Airmen from 175th Logistics Readiness Squadron processed and distributed more than 59.1 million pieces of personal protective equipment, more than 520,000 COVID-19 test kits, nearly 9,500 vials of remdesivir, and 351 ventilators all over the state. These Airmen also completed 170 deliveries to 327 hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and medical facilities. By working closely with the Maryland Department of Health, the Maryland Office of Preparedness and Response, as well as other federal partners, they moved supplies and equipment to those who needed it.

"Our Airmen were outstanding and they were able to see the impact of their mission," said U.S. Air Force Col. Amy Kremser, commander of the 175th Mission Support

Group. "We never had a shortage of volunteers because they wanted to be hands-on and to know they were making a difference in their community and with their neighbors."

MEDICAL OPERATIONS

The supplies from the Strategic National Stockpile went to those medical professionals serving on the frontlines across the state in all 23 counties and Baltimore City. Soldiers from the 224th Area Support Medical Company, the 104th Area Support Medical Company, the Maryland Medical Detachment and Airmen from the 175th Medical Group provided much needed support in nursing homes and other skilled nursing facilities.

"These [nursing home] missions are very important because these places tend to be a vulnerable population," said Army Lt. Col. Vincent Reed, a medical support team lead, and aeromedical physician assistant in the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade. "Also, it's a population of people that have a lot of comorbidities [the simultaneous presence of two





chronic diseases or conditions in a patient].”

At the behest of the governor, medical support teams were activated to provide assistance to nursing home facilities. The teams, first in the nation to be formed, were composed of members of the National Guard, representatives of local and state health departments, and EMS clinicians, as well as doctors and nurses from local hospital systems.

The teams, led by civilian medical

professionals, helped to identify existing and potential needs and risks. They supported the medical care facilities in their response efforts by providing additional testing of employees and residents and provided additional medical supplies when needed.

“Our goal is to bring medical care for lower urgency conditions to the residents rather than transporting them to emergency departments where they may be exposed



The MDNG's presence has been an integral part to Maryland's response to COVID-19. The MDNG has made a medical impact by visiting 327 nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Additionally, the team supported 14 sites, which in turn tested more than 22,000 citizens. Also, the MDNG delivered nearly 55,000 test kits to facilities that needed them.

LOGISTICS

The response effort required establishing 14 testing/screening facilities throughout Maryland communities and coordinating efforts among the various organizations. These sites assisted with the screening and testing of over 22,000 people during the MDNG response.

Soldiers from the 291st Digital Liaison Detachment were charged with the responsibility for providing daily communication and coordination to support civilian partners throughout Maryland. The assigned liaison officers required a diverse set of skills and a broad range of knowledge to successfully establish communication, maintain mutual understanding, and enhance cooperation between the Maryland National Guard and the organizations it supports.

"LNOs protect units from collateral damage, can share tactical and logistical data, and create channels to better effectively respond to national emergencies," said Army Maj. Christian Maisel, a member of the 291st DLD. "They need to know the capabilities and limitations of the military equipment in the area of responsibility, the partner's equipment, and local laws and regulations."

At the FedEx Field temporary screening facility members of the 175th Wing's Emergency Management Flight aided in communication and command capabilities by providing their Mobile Emergency Operations Center to support the testing and screening facility at the stadium.

"We are here as a joint effort with the 115th Military Police Battalion, to provide interoperability, communications and command support to local and state agencies," said Air Force Tech. Sgt. Derek White, Emergency Manager assigned to the 175th Emergency Management Flight. "We are able to give them

to the COVID-19 virus," said Army Col. Eric Allely, M.D. the Maryland National Guard state surgeon, who was also appointed by the governor as the state's Emergency Safety and Compliance Officer for nursing homes. "In addition to protecting the residents of these facilities, our efforts help decompress the patient load in emergency rooms and hospitals, opening beds for the growing number of patients in need of those resources."

a platform to establish command and control and make sure all the resources and operations that are conducted are done in an efficient manner.”

At Pimlico Race Course and Lake Clifton park, in Baltimore, Maryland, COVID-19 testing sites were established. Soldiers from the 1297th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion which includes the 1729th Maintenance Company and the 1229th Transportation Company setup deployable rapid assembly shelters and medium tents at the locations.

The transportation unit drove nearly 30,000 miles moving hospital beds, supplies, personnel, and facility infrastructure throughout Maryland’s COVID-19 response. They also distributed more than 190,000 box meals in Baltimore alone and delivered 687 pallets of PPE across the state.

Military police Soldiers assisted with traffic control at the first state-sponsored, community-based COVID-19 testing site vehicle emissions sites.

Effective communication is necessary for any kind operation, especially with all the different civil agencies involved. These efforts allowed the MDNG to complete 1,323 unique missions, an average of 12 missions per day, over 142 days activated.

FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Through these uncertain times and financial instability basic necessities become a concern for some. This does not mean people have to go hungry. Members of the MDNG provided assistance to local communities with organizing and distributing meals multiple times a week and groceries monthly. Servicemembers transported boxes of food from food banks to Maryland communities and established food distribution to assist civil agency partners in their efforts to provide relief.

“Our mission is to support our fellow Marylanders,” said Army Pfc. Jerel Jones, an infantryman with C. Co. 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment, and a step-father of three, distributed meals in the same Baltimore community he resides in.

Jones, like many other service members, supported multiple food distribution sites

throughout the state in order to facilitate sanitization, ensure safety guidelines are observed, and foster goodwill between the National Guard and the local community.

Units also prepared and delivered meals to an emergency encampment for the homeless population in Salisbury, people who have been displaced due to the pandemic. Soldiers from three different military police units, all part of the 115th MP Battalion, formed an assembly line in their armory’s kitchen to add the food to the carry-out containers headed to the residents at the encampment, which has been affectionately renamed, Camp Hope.

“Having the National Guard help us feed the [citizens] that are experiencing homelessness is a huge blessing,” said Christine Chestnutt, the housing and homelessness manager for the City of Salisbury. “It is incredible and makes my heart happy.”

Overall, the MDNG distributed more than 1.1 million meals at 56 sites across the state. In addition to meals, 78,174 pounds of groceries and 3,732 hygiene kits were provided to the residents in need.





CYBER

In addition to slowing the spread of the health threat posed by COVID-19, the MDNG was tasked to protect digital infrastructure against anyone attempting to exploit vulnerabilities that impact Maryland communities.

The MDNG was fully prepared to defensively support cyber COVID-19 response efforts. Cyber operations such as defending state and local government networks sometimes fly under the radar. The Joint Task Force Cyber, which is composed of members from the Maryland Army and Air National Guard, Maryland Defense Force, and Maryland Department of Information Technology, were focused on serving their communities by evaluating state and local government websites to ensure they were functioning properly. These websites provided essential information to Marylanders searching for unemployment assistance, updates on COVID-19 relief efforts, or simply how to donate resources.

"We want to make sure the public is getting the most accurate information and that the governor doesn't have to worry about nefarious activity [disrupting the flow of information to the public]," said Air Force Lt. Col. Colin Ferguson, MDNG Joint Staff Deputy J6 for Cyber.

The MDNG's cyber protection capabilities have been honed over the years by working

alongside their state and local partners.

"They have already done preliminary work in support of the Maryland Emergency Management Agency in the Maryland Joint Operation Center to reduce known vulnerabilities, especially those used by advanced persistent threat actors," explains Air Force Col. Reid J. Novotny. "It's easy to hit-the-ground-running because we already knew the people involved and had already set up the command structure between the different organizations in the military and at the state level."

The Maryland Military Department worked in tandem with local and state organizations to lessen the spread and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The MD Mil. Dept. consists of the Maryland Air and Army National Guard, Maryland Defense Force and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency. As a team, the department activated approximately 1,500 service members, completed an average of 9 missions daily for 142 days. Missions included moving 59.1 million pieces of personal protective gear to all 23 Maryland counties plus Baltimore City, distributing over 1 million meals in the community, and assisting with the screening and testing of over 22,000 people over 14 sites across the state.



March 12

Gov. Larry Hogan activates the MDNG to support statewide COVID-19 response efforts. The activation authorized the MDNG to work alongside civil authorities and provide our unique capabilities.



March 20

MDNG members construct shelters and tents at FedEx Field in Landover, Maryland.



March 31

Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy and Director of the Army National Guard Lt. Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson visit MDNG members at the FedEx Field COVID-19 testing site.

March 12, 2020

Governor's order prohibits mass gatherings of 250 people or more.

April 18, 2020

Governor orders mandatory face covering inside businesses

March 30, 2020 - More than 1 million PPE distributed

March 19, 2020

Governor's order prohibits gatherings with 10 or more people

March 30, 2020

Governor issued stay at home order. COVID-19 outbreak at Pleasant View Nursing Home

April 5, 2020

Department of Defense issues face mask requirement.

April 7, 2020

Governor forms and activates "medical strike teams"

March 17

Members of the MDANG's 175th Wing transport quarantined cruise ship passengers from BWI Airport to their homes.

March 28

MDNG Soldiers work with various agencies to construct an alternate medical facility at the Baltimore Convention Center.

March 30

The MDNG assists local agencies with drive-thru coronavirus sites at Maryland Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program center in Westminster, Maryland.





May 2

During Operation America Strong, the Navy's Blue Angels and the Air Force's Thunderbirds fly over Maryland as a part of their salute to healthcare workers during the state's fight against the coronavirus pandemic.



May 5

About 130 Members of the Maryland National Guard's 629th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Battalion along with the 58th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade deploy overseas to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility and will provide intelligence capabilities.



July 4

229th Maryland Army National Guard Band conducts an Independence Day performance at Warfield Air National Guard Base, Middle River, Maryland.

April 28, 2020 - More than 3 million PPE distributed May 9, 2020 - More than 13.9 million PPE distributed May 29, 2020 - More than 50.1 million PPE distributed

May 4, 2020 - More than 50,000 meals distributed May 29, 2020 - More than 800,000 meals June 18, 2020 - Over 1 million meals distributed

April 25, 2020
Gen Lengyel visit
at FedEx Field

April 19

Gov. Larry Hogan appoints Col. Eric Allely, state surgeon of the Maryland National Guard, to serve as an emergency safety and compliance officer for Maryland nursing homes.

April 29

MDNG Soldiers and Airmen assist in the transporting of 500,000 COVID-19 tests from South Korea as part of Operation Enduring Friendship.

May 8

The 175th Wing performs a community flyover with an A-10C Thunderbolt formation to honor frontline responders and essential workers across the state.

June 2-6

Maryland Army National Guard Soldiers provide a security presence in Washington, DC to protect historical landmarks in the nation's capital.

us testing
center in



THUNDER





SERVICE MEMBER'S FIRST STOP IN THE COVID-19 RESPONSE

Story by Master Sgt. Christopher Schepers and Sgt. Elizabeth Scott

As the sun rises, the first few Maryland National Guard service members and Maryland Defense Force members begin trickling into the Dundalk Readiness Center. As they start their preparations, it appears to be an average day, with a few exceptions.

Instead of handshakes, elbows are bumped and the staff of the joint reception, staging, onward movement, and integration station are maintaining a more cautionary distance from each other than normal. Grey and red vests are worn, depending on their roles in the process, breaking up the usual earth-toned or digital camouflage seen on MDNG and MDDF military uniforms respectively.

This is one of the first mandatory stops soldiers and airmen make to be placed on State Active Duty in response to Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan's activation of the National Guard in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They must in-process at the JRSOI before they can participate in missions that will help augment the civil authorities in Maryland.

"Our goal is to process groups of 50 people within one hour and we are exceeding that goal at this point," said U.S. Air Force Maj. Joseph Winter, JRSOI deputy commander. "We are a joint team led by Air National Guard members. The joint team also includes the MDDF who is assisting our medical personnel with initial medical screenings."

The MDDF members ensure the Soldiers and Airmen have all of their proper paperwork and guide them through a pre-medical screening to ensure they are not exhibiting any signs of illness. If any exhibit any symptoms, they are sent through a more in-depth screening process.

"The MDDF provides professional and technical support on a variety of levels," said Maj. (MDDF) Fred Sanford, the officer in charge. "I'm a teacher, and we're all off for two to three weeks [because of COVID-19]. When the call came from our chain of command to support the response to COVID-19, I thought that this was an opportunity to serve and to work with my National Guard counterparts."

Upon entry into the readiness center, members are directed to the briefing area to receive information from representatives of medical, finance, legal and public affairs. These briefs are necessary to make sure that these service members are ready for when they are sent out on missions.

Each Soldier or Airmen are then medically screened for a second time to make sure the MDNG service members are not immunocompromised or have been potentially exposed to COVID-19, as well as make sure that they are medically up-to-date and ready to serve the people of Maryland.

"Our mission, which is led by the Air National Guard, is for us to receive forces who have been pre-identified to participate in on-going missions by order of the governor as it relates to the pandemic we're facing," explained Winter. "Our ultimate goal is to ensure our members who are going on to future missions know exactly their roles and that they're protected."



MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD HELPING W/ STRATEGIC NATIONAL STOCKPILE PUSH

Story by Lt. Col. Wayde Minami

Activated Maryland Air National Guardsmen worked at a Strategic National Stockpile location in Maryland, preparing and loading medical supplies and equipment needed for the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Maryland Department of Health, working with Governor Larry Hogan's COVID-19 Emergency Response Team, has developed an allocation plan for scarce resources to provide as much protection as possible to the state's most vulnerable populations, considering the level of need, as well as access in the commercial pipeline.

All assets provided by the Strategic National Stockpile were prioritized for health care workers and hospitals. The Strategic National Stockpile is a national supply of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies for use in severe public health emergencies that cause local supplies to run out. The stockpile is maintained by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is stored at key locations throughout the United States.

Airmen from the 175th Wing, based at Warfield Air National Guard Base at Martin State Airport in Middle River, Maryland, arrived at the site yesterday morning, and have been hard at work sorting medical equipment and supplies, preparing them for shipment and loading them on trucks for distribution across the state.

"Today we are taking the supplies [provided by the federal government], such as gowns and gloves and the things that health departments, hospitals, long-term care facilities, dialysis centers, nursing homes, and Emergency Medical Services around the state that are in short supply," said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Richard Malloy, a ground transportation specialist with the 175th Logistics Readiness Squadron. "I've always been proud to wear this uniform, especially when we get deployed on the federal side. But, this time being activated on the state side I feel really proud to be able to serve my community and be able to help those in our community, those in need."

This is not the Maryland National Guard's first experience in working with the Strategic National Stockpile. During the 2018 Vigilant Guard Exercise, 15 members of the Maryland Air National Guard practiced preparing to ship medical supplies from the stockpile to combat simulated hurricane and waterborne illnesses in Maryland.

"This is a great example of the value the National Guard brings to emergencies like this," said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Timothy E. Gowen, the adjutant general of Maryland. "Our troops are not only cleared to work at sensitive locations, such as the Strategic National Stockpile, but they have had hands-on experience doing so. These kinds of established relationships are crucial to rapid, effective crisis response."

The Maryland National Guard is working alongside various agencies and civil authorities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic such as the Maryland Department of Health.



“ MARYLAND’S AIR GUARD IS UNIQUELY QUALIFIED FOR THESE SPECIALIZED MISSIONS THAT REALLY COMPLEMENT OUR ARMY GUARD TEAMMATES REALLY WELL. WE MAY HAVE SMALLER NUMBERS IN BEHIND-THE-SCENES ROLES, BUT THEY ARE MAKING A HUGE IMPACT TO THE CITIZENS OF MARYLAND.”

BRIG. GEN. EDWARD JONES
ASSISTANT ADJUTANT GENERAL FOR AIR



“MY FAVORITE PART OF THE JOB IS WAKING UP AND ACTUALLY SAYING THAT I AM MAKING A DIFFERENCE. YOU HAVE KIDS OUT THERE WHO SAY, ‘I WANT TO BE THAT [SOLDIER] WHEN I GROW UP AND I WAS ONCE ONE OF THOSE KIDS.’”

Sgt. Aaron Brown
290th Military Police Company



“WHAT MOTIVATES ME TO COME IN EARLY EVERY DAY IS KNOWING THAT THESE MEDICAL SUPPLIES COULD ONE DAY HELP IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO [MY FATHER], AS WELL AS OTHER PEOPLE EXPERIENCING THE EXACT SAME SITUATIONS IN THEIR FAMILIES.”

Airman Robert DuFour
275th Cyber Operations Squadron



“THE MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD COULDN'T BE MORE PROUD TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITIES DURING THIS CHALLENGING TIME. OUR PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY ALONG WITH OUR CAPABILITIES MAKE US PERFECTLY SUITED TO HELP OUR NEIGHBORS GET THROUGH THIS.”

Maj. Gen. Timothy E. Gowen
The Adjutant General for Maryland



“ IT’S MORE THAN JUST MYSELF. IT’S MY TEAM. IT’S MY COMMUNITY. IT’S MY STATE. IT’S MY COUNTRY. I AM HERE ACTUALLY DOING SOMETHING TO HELP OUT AS BEST AS POSSIBLE.”

SPC. HUGO GOMEZ
COMPANY A, 1ST BATTALION, 175TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
NOT PICTURED ON THIS PAGE



MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD PROVIDES SUPPORT TO NURSING HOMES

Story by Capt. Benjamin Hughes

To protect the most vulnerable among us, the Maryland National Guard proactively supported the Maryland Department of Health in the state's COVID-19 mitigation and suppression efforts with multi-discipline medical assistance teams to help safeguard the citizens at nursing homes facilities across the state.

As directed by Governor Larry Hogan, the teams will help identify potential and existing needs and strengthen facility policies, protocols, and procedures in line with state and federal guidance related to COVID-19 and immediately adopt a series of enhanced protective measures to protect those with underlying health conditions. Initial assessment is done by telephone, followed by a visit to the facility.

"The residents of these facilities are at high risk," said Col. Eric Allely, M.D., the Maryland National Guard state surgeon. "We need to help identify and rapidly fill any resource gaps that the facilities may have due to the current pandemic."

Assistance teams were led by a medical doctor or advanced medical practitioner. They will also include a field medic and administrative, logistical, and behavioral health specialists, and drivers. All Guard members who in close contact with residents of nursing homes will have the proper personal protective equipment, including a face mask, appropriate eye protection, gloves, and gown. Team members are being drawn from the 224th Area Support Medical Company, 104th Area Support Medical Company and Maryland National Guard Medical Detachment.

"Our goal is to bring medical care for lower urgency conditions to the residents rather than transporting them to emergency departments where they may be exposed to the COVID-19 virus," said Allely. "In addition to protecting the residents of these facilities, our efforts help decompress the patient load in emergency rooms and hospitals, opening beds for to the growing number of patients in need of those resources."

ENSURING OUR COMMUNITY IS SAFE



AND PREPARED

In addition to the assistance teams provided by the Guard, the state deployed testing and care teams, which the National Guard assist or augment, when needed. The testing teams, led by the state and county health departments, will screen residents and

workers at facilities with active COVID-19 cases. The care teams, led by local hospitals, determined what additional personnel and support should be sent directly to the facilities in order to provide on-site care and to prevent transport to any hospital.



MARYLAND GUARD SUPPORTS FEDEX FIELD MEDICAL SERVICES

Story by Staff Sgt. Enjoli Saunders

Members of the Maryland National Guard at FedEx Field in Landover, Maryland provided support to the Prince George's County Health Department and Office of Emergency Management efforts at the COVID-19 community screening and testing site.

Setting up the temporary screening facility, which was used as statewide model, involved many moving parts and communication was key. The 175th Wing Emergency Management Flight, Maryland Air National Guard, responded by providing their Mobile Emergency Operations Center (MEOC) to support the operations at the open parking lots around the stadium.

"We are here as a joint effort with the 115th Military Police Battalion, to provide interoperability, communications and command support to local and state agencies," said U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Derek White, Emergency Manager assigned to the 175th Emergency Management Flight, Maryland Air National Guard. "We are able to give them a platform to establish command and control and make sure all the resources and operations that are conducted are done in an efficient manner."

Planning, training and preparation are critical when the Maryland Guard conducts an emergency response event. When the time comes, they have the well-trained personnel ready and the right equipment to put out in the field to respond effectively.

"We have the flexibility to make decisions on-site in support of our partners with their guidance to ensure all efforts are successful," said U.S. Army Capt. Jason

Yankee, operations officer assigned to the 115th MP Battalion, Maryland Army National Guard. "When the screenings begin and the operation runs in a professional, safe manner the MDNG will demonstrate to the people of Maryland that their National Guard is here. When things happen, the government agencies are all in sync and doing what is best for everyone."

The site provided assistance and information for the citizens of Maryland. The site operated by appointment only.

Patients must be screened by telephone beforehand. If they meet the CDC criteria for testing, they will get an appointment.

Once onsite, the patients spoke with medical staff to determine what symptoms individuals may be experiencing, if any at all. Those that are experiencing symptoms will be directed to a separate area, while those not experiencing symptoms related to COVID-19 will be recommended to self-quarantine after speaking with a registered nurse about prevention.

"Thus far, it has been a well-executed mission," stated White. "We have had several missions before with the MEOC, so we understand the importance of its capabilities. I am extremely proud to be part of the team called upon to support the state in their response to this national crisis."





“AMERICANS SHOULD KNOW THE NATIONAL GUARD HAS THEIR BACKS THROUGHOUT THIS CRISIS. WE’RE IN THIS TOGETHER, AND WE’LL GET THROUGH THIS TOGETHER.”

GEN. JOSEPH LENGYEL
CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU



MARYLAND GUARD SERVES REAL, VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

Story by Senior Airman Sarah McClanahan

The Maryland National Guard assisted in protecting virtual communities through the development of a joint task force composed of Guardsmen and their cyber partners in the Maryland Defense Force and the Maryland Department of Information Technology.

The Maryland National Guard's response to the COVID-19 pandemic has involved a number of missions, including statewide efforts in assisting transportation support, medical supply and food distribution, and setting up potential health screening locations. However, the response efforts to protect the health of Maryland communities does not stop in the physical world and the cyber task force is the first of its kind in response to COVID-19.

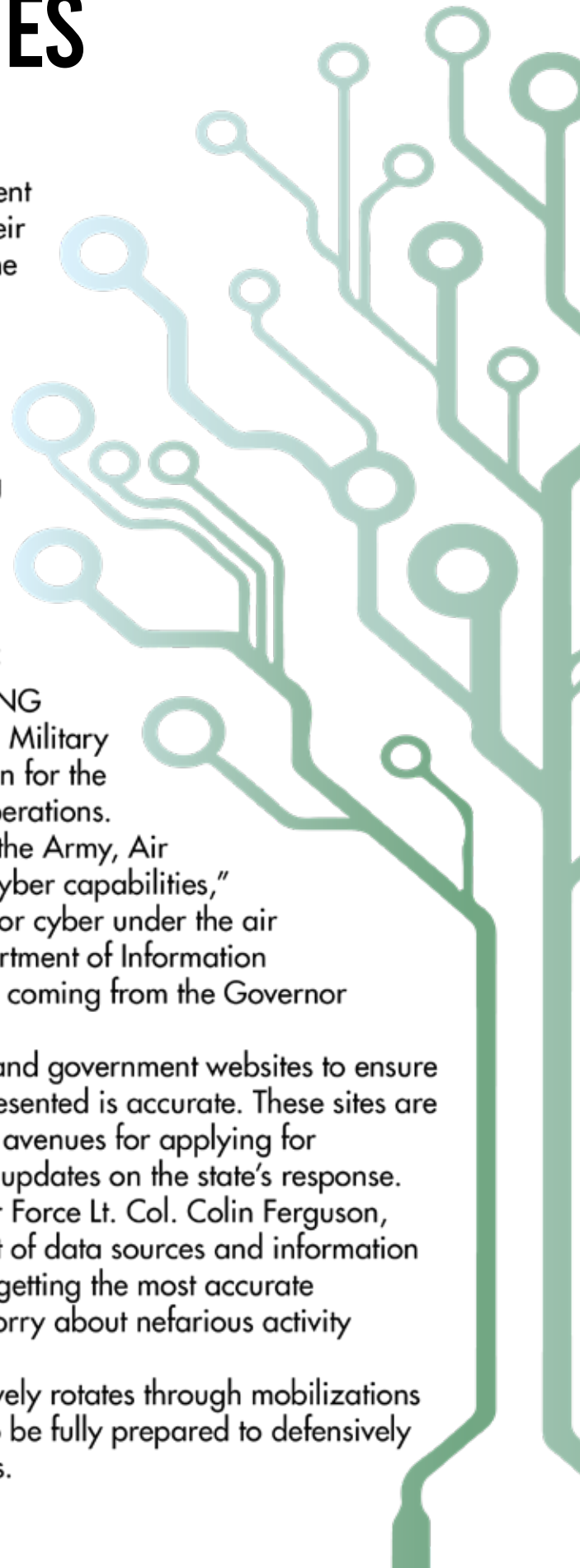
In response to the Governor's call for a state of emergency, U.S. Air Force Col. Reid J. Novotny, MDNG Joint Staff J6, began coordinating with the Maryland Military Department and lead agencies doing cyber protection for the state to determine how they could assist the state's operations.


"The [Maryland Military Department], both in the Army, Air and Maryland Defense Force, have a great deal of cyber capabilities," explained Novotny. "We stood up a joint task force for cyber under the air component and will be helping the [Maryland] Department of Information Technology in their mission to protect communication coming from the Governor and the state."

The joint team is tasked with evaluating Maryland government websites to ensure they are functioning properly and the information presented is accurate. These sites are providing critical information to the public to include avenues for applying for unemployment, how to donate resources, and timely updates on the state's response.

"It's an incredibly fluid situation," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Colin Ferguson, MDNG Joint Staff Deputy J6 for Cyber. "There's a lot of data sources and information flowing around. We want to make sure the public is getting the most accurate information and that the governor doesn't have to worry about nefarious activity [disrupting the flow of information to the public]."

The 175th Cyberspace Operations Group actively rotates through mobilizations and is consistently training. This allows the MDNG to be fully prepared to defensively support a mission like the COVID-19 response efforts.





“Our livelihood basically is to prepare for these types of events,” explains Air Force Lt. Col. Janice Hernandez, Maryland Joint Task Force Cyber commander. According to Hernandez, the group’s cyber protection team has had substantial experience in defending military computer networks. “We’ve trained for it and we can also use it in our state capacity.”

In many ways, this mission is normal for the cyber professionals of the MDNG. This is in part due to existing partnerships with Maryland’s other agencies involved in cyber protection.

“They have already done preliminary work in support of the Maryland Emergency Management Agency in the Maryland Joint Operation Center to reduce known vulnerabilities, especially those used by advanced persistent threat actors,” explains Novotny. “It’s easy to hit-the-ground-running because we already knew the people involved and had already set up the command structure between the different organizations in the military and at the state level.”

In a great example of neighbors stepping up to help their neighbors, the members of Joint Task Force Cyber are able to work within Maryland State government systems and websites, having a direct impact on the members of their communities.

“One of the things that makes it very meaningful is the real impact on the state and for the citizens,” explains Chip Stewart, Maryland Department of Information Technology State Chief Information Security Officer. “What we’re doing helps protect the state from bad guys that would seek to do harm in this crisis and I think that that impact is extraordinarily positive and unique.”

In a time of crisis, it is more important than ever to come together and collectively do our individual parts in responding to the COVID-19 crisis. Each role may look different, but each and every instance of neighbors helping neighbors makes an impact.

“Outside of our Guard family, we’re members of the community,” said Ferguson. “I’ve had multiple Maryland residents reach out to me to ask if I was getting pulled into the guard efforts to ask what we’re doing. I think it’s really important for citizens to be able to have a level of one-on-one connection with a Guard member to understand this is a supportive and enabling effort. That’s the real intent and they’re hearing it directly from the people that are their friends and neighbors.”



JOINT TASK FORCE - CYBER

Joint Task Force - Cyber began collaborating with Howard County's Department of Technology and Communication Services in late April to methodically test access points.

They shared their findings with county officials to give them an idea of what a breach would look like and how it could be prevented so online threats could not impact the county's COVID-19 response.

As of May 15, the TF support included more than 3,000 man-hours to four different state agencies, providing a substantial value in commercial cyber support.

BRIDGE BETWEEN PARTNERS

Story by Staff Sgt. Paul Porter

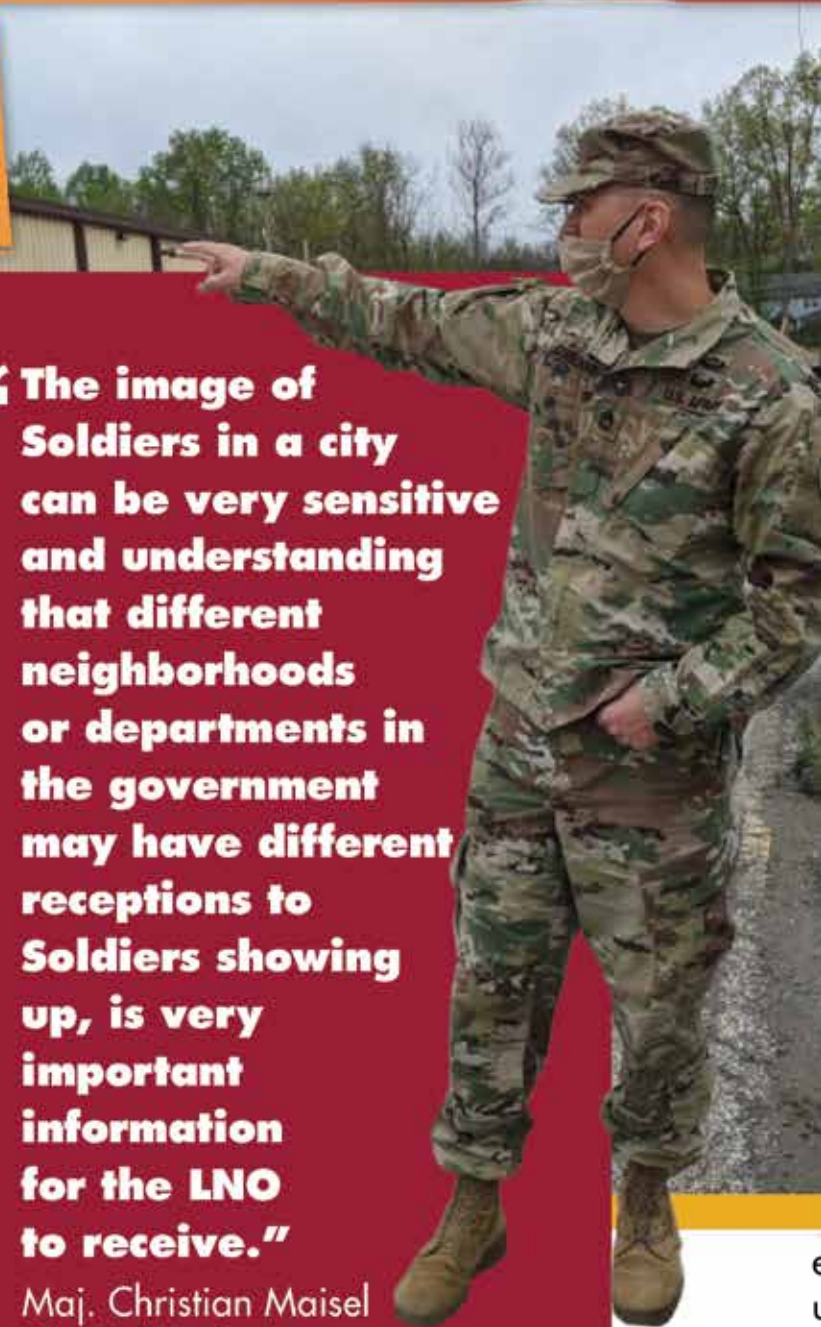
The Maryland National Guard supported civil agencies with service members spread around the state, liaison officers—commonly referred to as LNOs—are making a critical difference in getting support to the people who need it.

“The most important job of an LNO, is to build relationships,” said Maj. Christian Maisel, a member of the 291st Digital Liaison Detachment, based at Adelphi, Md. Maisel is the LNO embedded with the City of Baltimore’s Emergency Operations Center.

During the COVID-19 pandemic response, Soldiers from the Maryland Army National Guard’s 291st DLD have been responsible for providing daily communication and coordination to support civilian partners throughout Maryland. The 291st DLD is composed of 30 personnel experts in five functional areas operations/maneuver, intelligence, fire support, logistics, and air and missile defense. Digital liaison detachments help integrate military operations with other military units, as well as interagency and international partners.

“They need to be friendly, professional, knowledgeable, and sensitive to cultural differences,” Maisel said. “And as much as they are there to feed info to their own headquarters, good LNOs make themselves an asset to their partners.”

Over the years, Maisel has worked with the City of Baltimore EOC during



“The image of Soldiers in a city can be very sensitive and understanding that different neighborhoods or departments in the government may have different receptions to Soldiers showing up, is very important information for the LNO to receive.”

Maj. Christian Maisel
291st Digital Liaison Detachment

hurricane and snowstorm responses, embedded with the Maryland State Police during the 2015 civil unrest in Baltimore, and had served as an LNO during a Republic of Korea and North Korea missile situation.

A LNO requires a diverse set of skills and a broad range of knowledge to successfully



establish communication, maintain mutual understanding, and enhance cooperation between the National Guard and the organizations it supports.

“Being born and raised in west Baltimore and still a current resident, it is empowering to have the opportunity to serve the community and give back to my home city,” said 2nd Lt. Nicholas Kostas, an LNO currently working with the Baltimore Police

Department. “I am grateful to serve with the different agencies and not only learn what they do on a daily basis but ultimately come together as one team against COVID.”

While this is his first mission as an LNO, he credits his success in the position to the experience and mentoring of the other LNOs he serves with. There is no formal training for an LNO and the officers are typically embedded with their organization without any prior experience with that organization.

A part of the MDNG’s force consists of people who have spent time on active duty, in other military branches, and in the civilian sector. This type of experience is critical for an LNO who must work both within the Guard and for partner organizations that have a diverse mix of experiences and priorities.

But in the job of the LNO, the information sharing goes both ways. It is important for the LNO to share critical information from their host organizations back to the Guard.

“The image of Soldiers in a city can be very sensitive and understanding that different neighborhoods or departments in the government may have different receptions to Soldiers showing up, is very important information for the LNO to receive,” said Maisel.

Task Force 291 is one of four Maryland Army National Guard’s Major Subordinate Commands dual-hatted with the 291st DLD. In addition to providing command and control for federal missions, TF291 also provides support to state and local authorities during governor-declared state emergencies. For the COVID-19 response, TF291 units performed liaison roles with Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and the Annapolis State House; adaptive battle staff for the Army and Joint Staffs in Maryland; as well as Defensive Cyber Operations as part of JTF Cyber.



PRESENCE THRU

Story by Spc. Christina Chang

More than 100 Soldiers from the Maryland Army National Guard provided a security presence over historical landmarks along the National Mall at night in response to civil unrest in the nation's capital. The quiet time allowed the Guard members time to reflect on the events of the past few weeks.

"[This protest] is one of those things where it starts off peacefully. And [it] can easily turn violent with a couple of aggressors," said Staff Sgt. Damon Adams, a member of the 231st Chemical Company, who also served during the 2015 civil unrest in Baltimore.

Adams, a police officer and a Baltimore native, is used to being away from his family due to his past deployments in the Army. However, his time in D.C. was the

longest he's been away from home that his five-year-old son will be able to remember.

"When he gets older, he may realize the importance of it," Adams added.

Soldiers from the 231st Chemical Company, 253rd Engineer Company, and 581st Troop Command were positioned at the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the National World War II Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial from June 2-6, 2020 when the Maryland National Guard was called upon to assist the District of Columbia National Guard.



OUGH THE DARKNESS: MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD STANDS WATCH

The U.S. Park Police requested assistance after memorials were vandalized in the days before they arrived. The Maryland Guard units selected were not currently engaged in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic response mission supporting the communities where they live and work.

"[People in D.C. are] under the assumption that because we're here, we don't support their movement or right to protest," said Pvt. Spencer Tilford, a member of the 231st Chemical Company. "These are Americans and we care what they care about."

The National Guard is uniquely equipped and trained to ensure the citizens of their state are protected during natural disasters or times of civil unrest; as a member

of the U.S. Armed Forces, they swore an oath to defend the Constitution and protect the rights of Americans.

According to Capt. Christopher Carmody, commander of the 231st Chemical Company, the MDNG Soldiers completed their mission supporting civilian authorities as the protests remained peaceful.

"I'm excited to be a part of history," said Carmody. "We ensured that the civilians can safely protest and express their First Amendment rights while honoring our monuments."



Maryland National Guard

COVID-19 response by the numbers



142 DAYS ACTIVATED

APPROXIMATELY **1,500** SERVICE MEMBERS ACTIVATED
including those put on standby

1,323 UNIQUE MISSIONS
with an average of **12 MISSIONS PER DAY**

THE STRATEGIC NATIONAL STOCKPILE TEAM handled the receipt, accountability, storage, apportionment, distribution and delivery of :



59.1 MILLION

pieces of personal protective equipment TO ALL 23 COUNTIES AND BALTIMORE CITY

520,000 COVID-19 Test kits 

COMPLETED **170** DELIVERIES OF **351** ventilators
588 pallets of PPE
9,493 vials of Remdesivir to
327 medical and state facilities

22,684 personnel screened/tested at 14 different sites



Maryland Army National Guard Medical Support Teams:

252 facilities visited **227** sites tested **54,564** test kits distributed

400 vulnerability assessments on state & county websites & IP addresses 

795 hospital beds transported 

1,157,262 meals distributed at 91 different sites throughout the state 

197,124 pounds of groceries distributed **3,732** hygiene kits distributed AS OF 31 JULY 2020

