

VNG supports statewide severe weather response

After staging Soldiers and Airmen with tactical trucks and chain saws at multiple locations across the state for possible severe weather response, the Virginia National Guard transitioned back to routine operations Oct. 4, 2022. Personnel initially staged at readiness centers to prepare for possible impacts from Hurricane Ian, then resources shifted when a weather system threatened flooding on the Eastern Shore and in the Hampton Roads area. Soldiers deployed, linked up with local emergency managers and were ready to respond if needed.

“Once again the Virginia National Guard demonstrated the ability to rapidly respond and provide requested capabilities to assist fellow Virginians in a time of need,” said Brig. Gen. James W. Ring, Virginia National Guard Director of the Joint Staff. “We are fortunate Virginia did not experience any significant weather impacts during this ever, but the weather impacts in Florida highlight the importance of National Guard readiness in support of multi-agency response.”

Additional Soldiers, Airmen and Virginia Defense Force personnel were on duty providing support to the deployed teams.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22016>



Eight Virginia National Guard Soldiers and four tactical trucks capable of high water transportation stage Oct. 3, 2022, on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and Soldiers linked up with local emergency managers for possible assistance.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

VNG State Tuition Assistance Program updated to reimbursement model

Due to a change in state legislation, the Virginia National Guard's State Tuition Assistance Program, or STAP, moved to a reimbursement model beginning Sept. 15, 2022, with the opening of the application period for the spring 2023 academic semester.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22003>

VNG Soldier reflects on Hispanic heritage, mother's motivation

Spc. Rosa Willett joined the Virginia Army National Guard in 2019 as an 88M Motor Transport Operator. She credits her mother with encouraging her to join the National Guard, which she did right after finishing high school.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22004>

VNG H2F team weighs in on top ACFT questions

Starting in October, the Army Combat Fitness Test becomes the U.S. Army's official physical fitness test of record for certain Soldiers. It's a big change from the Army Physical Fitness Test.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/22005>

VDF Officer Candidate School commissions four new officers

The Virginia Defense Force commissioned four new officers during a graduation ceremony Sept. 17, 2022, at the National Museum of the United States Army at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/21971>

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Ceremony officially opens new HQs for 91st Cyber Brigade

Virginia National Guard senior leaders and Soldiers assigned to the 91st Cyber Brigade joined distinguished guests and former members of the unit at a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the 91st's new headquarters building Sept. 16, 2022, at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. Jason Pak, Deputy Secretary of Veterans and Defense Affairs, Maj. Gen. Timothy P. Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, Col. Rusty McGuire, commander of the 91st Cyber Brigade, and E. Scott Newcomb, construction project manager, cut the ribbon to officially open the new building.

"This is a special day," Williams said, and he commended the extraordinary team effort leading up to the ribbon cutting.

The building went through the funding, design and construction process in record time due to a joint effort of the VNG Facilities and Construction Management Office, the National Guard Bureau G9 Installation Management Office staff and Fort Belvoir leadership. It reflects the VNG's commitment to staying on the cutting edge of cyber capabilities and took a concept and turned it into a tremendous asset, Williams said.

"We are in a contested environment, and this facility will immediately be put to task," Williams said. "Our cyber warriors know it, and now it is time to get to work and get at the harder things to make sure our military and our nation are protected, and we have cyber supremacy."

The more than 41,000 square foot facility was constructed at a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Silver standard and is currently LEED Certifiable. It serves as an administration and operations building with the required secured spaces and network access allowing the Soldiers of the 91st to integrate into the modern operational environment and rapidly respond to support mission partners.

"It is incredibly important what you bring to the fight," Pak said. "It is so vital and critical, and not just the mission here in the commonwealth, but in the country. The cyber warriors of the 91st are at the tip of the spear."

McGuire reflected on the transformation of the 91st Troop Command to create the National Guard's first cyber brigade, and he thanked the team of people in attendance who had the vision to create the organization. The history of the 91st dates back to the 1970s when the 123rd Data Processing Unit provided main frame computer support for National Guard Bureau.

"Virginia had cyber before anyone knew what cyber was," McGuire said.

As the 123rd DPU grew beyond their NGB support mission, they began to deploy cyber capabilities across the globe and consistently had formations on federal active duty up until the creation of the cyber brigade. The 123rd Cyber Protection Battalion, one of the brigade's five battalions, carries on the lineage of the 123rd DPU.

The creation of the 91st gave the Department of Defense cyber enterprise great capabilities than they would have had if the brigade was not created, he said.

McGuire said two of battalions of the 91st were currently on



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mission, and at least one battalion was on federal duty since the brigade was activated in 2017.

"The homeland is no longer a sanctuary, but because of the people who will work in this building, we are better protected," McGuire said. "What we have built here will last long after we have all retired, and Virginia and our nation will benefit."

Display areas in the new facility help tell the story of the growth of VNG cyber capabilities since the 1970s, and the ceremony took place the day before the fifth anniversary of the activation of the 91st Cyber Brigade.

Read more: <https://ngpa.us/21970>

MORE ON THE WEB

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SMP cadet trains alongside British Army

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VNG SGM completes master's with USASMA program

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Photos: TF Red Dragon Soldiers return to Virginia

<https://ngpa.us/22009/>

Photos: VaARNG OCS celebrates graduation

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