

South Carolina National Guard
Office of the Adjutant General
1 National Guard Road
Columbia, SC 29201-4766
Major General Stanhope S. Spears
The Adjutant General

National Guard Public Affairs Rapid Response Team
1 (803) 239-8769 (ACTIVE April 18-26)

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April 22, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

State response teams work hand in hand with National Guard

By Spc. Erica Knight

BEAUFORT, S.C. – In an emergency the first responders are local agencies, but when they need help, they call the South Carolina Emergency Response Task Force (SCERTF). If those resources are not enough then they call the National Guard. The Vigilant Guard 2008 exercise April 21 – 24 in Beaufort, S.C. was developed to test this capability.

“Our search and rescue is similar to the National Guard, but we go a little farther,” said Daniel McManus, the assistant state fire marshal for the Division of Fire and Life Safety, from Columbia, S.C. “We bridge the gap between local and federal responders.”

The SCERTF organization has 87,000 pieces of rescue equipment and can be ready to be air-lifted in six hours.

“The National Guard has given us transportation capabilities that weren’t possible before,” said McManus

“Our organization and the National Guard are both state assets,” said McManus. “We both do the same work, it’s what we do opposite that makes use a good partnership.”

One of those differences is that SCERTF also has a K-9 search unit that has dogs trained to detect live human scent.

“The dog will circle by all of the rescuers in the area and get familiar with their scent,” said Duane Brock, a K-9 search specialist with SCERTF. “Then the dogs smell for the ones (people’s scents) they can’t see.”

“It’s mainly a game to them,” said Brock. “Whenever they find a scent we give them a toy.”

McManus said that they are learning from the deployment and staying at the site for many days. He also said feels fortunate to have the opportunity to train along side the National Guard because it improves communication and logistic challenges.

“Complacency is our worst enemy,” said McManus. “It is invaluable experience to get the team out and familiar with the deployment process.”

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High resolution photos will be available at the following Web site:

<http://www.ngb.army.mil/features/vigilantguard2/mm.aspx>

Photo Cut Lines:

080422-A-3979K-001 South Carolina National Guard rescue crews work with South Carolina Emergency Response Task Force to rescue victims from the 'rubble pile' at the Vigilant Guard 2008 exercise in Beaufort, S.C. (National Guard photo by Spc. Erica Knight)(RELEASED)

080422-A-3979K-002 K-9 search specialist Duane Brock from the South Carolina Emergency Response Task Force waits to join in the search with his search dog, Dixie, at the 'rubble pile' during the Vigilant Guard 2008 exercise in Beaufort, S.C. (National Guard photo by Spc. Erica Knight)(RELEASED)

080422-A-3979K-003 Duane Brock, a K-9 search specialist for the South Carolina Emergency Rescue Task force directs his search dog, Dixie, to find victims in the 'rubble pile' at the Vigilant Guard 2008 exercise in Beaufort, S.C. (National Guard photo by Spc. Erica Knight)(RELEASED)

080422-A-3979K-004 Rescue crews from the South Carolina National Guard work together to search for victims in the 'rubble pile' at the Vigilant Guard 2008 exercise in Beaufort, S.C. (National Guard photo by Spc. Erica Knight)(RELEASED)

Location of National Guard Public Affairs Rapid Response Team:

144 Shanklin Road
Beaufort, SC 29902
Phone: 1 (803) 239-8769

MAP:

<http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=144+Shanklin+Road,+Beaufort,+SC&jsv=107&sll=37.0625,-95.677068&sspn=33.847644,81.914062&ie=UTF8&ll=32.463444,-80.748482&spn=0.008799,0.019999&z=16&iwloc=addr>

Location of Beaufort National Guard Readiness Center:

1 Cavalry Lane
Beaufort, SC 29902

MAP:

<http://maps.google.com/maps?f=q&hl=en&geocode=&q=1+Cavalry+Lane,+Beaufort,+SC&jsv=107&sll=32.463444,-80.748482&sspn=0.008799,0.019999&ie=UTF8&ll=32.459533,-80.736015&spn=0.008799,0.019999&z=16&iwloc=addr>

MEDIA WISHING TO EMBED are asked to RSVP with Col. Pete Brooks at (803) 806-4327 or via E-mail at peter.brooks2@us.army.mil.

FOR ADDITION INFORMATION on Vigilant Guard 2008, please contact:
National Guard Public Affairs Rapid Response Team: (803) 239-8769.
Maj. Scott Bell: (803) 806-1479
Maj. Jim St. Clair: (803) 806-4321
Staff Sgt. Joe Cashion: (803) 806-2697

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION about the South Carolina National Guard, please visit our Public Affairs Website at <http://guard.sc.gov/>

NOTE: The South Carolina National Guard is hosting Vigilant Guard 2008 that will test the capabilities and interoperability of local regional and state level first responders including the South Carolina National Guard, the state's first military responders.

Vigilant Guard is a three-day National Guard-hosted exercise beginning April 21 in Beaufort County, S.C. The exercise is designed to test the ability of the National Guard, along with federal, state, and local "first responders," to react to a domestic emergency.

Vigilant Guard reinforces that all emergency events are local. Vigilant Guard's emergency exercises will run Monday through Thursday, April 21-24. This year's scenario will be a mock 7.3 earthquake centered in Beaufort County. After-effects of the earthquake will result in over 50 various scenarios at incident site locations throughout the county.

BROADCAST SCRIPT:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
KILL DATE: APRIL 24, 3008

ANNOUNCER:

IN AN EMERGENCY THE FIRST RESPONDERS ARE LOCAL AGENCIES, BUT WHEN THEY NEED HELP, THEY CALL THE NATIONAL GUARD AND THE SOUTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY RESPONSE TASK FORCE (SCERTF) AND THE VIGILANT

GUARD 2008 EXERCISE APRIL 21 – 24 IN BEAUFORT, S.C. IS DESIGNED TO TEST THEIR RESPONSE.

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