

**Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe**

*Commissioner & Adjutant General*



*Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs*

[www.dmva.alaska.gov](http://www.dmva.alaska.gov)

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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24-009

## **Alaska EX, Vigilant Guard emergency response exercises to test state's ability to respond to catastrophic event**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** — Approximately 350 participants will engage in a full-scale, all-hazards disaster response exercise, known as Alaska EX and Vigilant Guard 24-2, in the communities of Anchorage, Cordova, Kenai and Valdez, Mar. 4-8, with some elements happening later in the year.

Multiple venues across the state will serve as the backdrop for these exercises, which will test Alaska's ability to respond to a catastrophic disaster event. The scenario is crafted to mirror the challenges of responding to a seismic event, similar to the 1964 Good Friday Earthquake but in today's environment.

The exercise brings together a coalition of participants, including the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, National Weather Service, U.S. Army 11th Airborne Division's 95th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear Company, U.S. Marine Corp's Chemical Biological Incident Response Force, and National Guard units from Alaska, California, Maine, Minnesota, Missouri, Virginia, and Washington. The objective is to exercise effective coordination between local, state, private sector, non-governmental organizations, and federal partners.

A significant component of the exercise involves the Alaska National Guard (AKNG) transporting the Disaster Response Bed Down System (DRBS) to Cordova via a 176th Wing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft. This fully independent camp, capable of housing more than 40 responders, will be rapidly set up to support the exercise play in Cordova. Establishing the DRBS allows the AKNG to test their ability to transport the camp to a remote Alaskan location, quickly set it up, and provide Defense Support to Civil Authorities.

The state and local government portion of the exercise is dubbed Alaska Ex, and Vigilant Guard 24-2 is the name of the Alaska National Guard hosted portion. The public may notice increased military activity, including vehicle convoys, near venue locations and increased military air traffic across the state.

Vigilant Guard is sponsored by U.S. Northern Command in conjunction with the National Guard Bureau to practice responding to the multiple, geographically disparate, catastrophic disasters in a Defense Support to Civil Authority environment to strengthen regional partnerships, validate crisis action plans, and demonstrate the functionality of the Shared Situational Awareness Common Operational Picture tool.

Due to a previous scheduled events the City of Valdez will be participating in AlaskaEx on May 30-31, 2024. Valdez will focus their exercise play on tsunami response and sheltering in the community.

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Media are invited to attend the following exercise events:

### **Media Availability via Microsoft Teams**

March 4, 2024, at 10:00 – 10:30 am

DHS&EM Director Bryan Fisher, Alaska National Guard Col Matthew Kirby, City of Cordova Emergency Manager Heather Brannon.

Leadership will discuss aspects of the exercise and the efforts to bring multiple participants together.

[Microsoft Teams Link](#) or call [+1 907-202-7104](tel:+19072027104), [806589816#](tel:+1907202806589816)

POC: Jeremy Zidek, [Jeremy.zidek@alaska.gov](mailto:Jeremy.zidek@alaska.gov), 907-428-7077

### **National Guard Disaster Response Bed Down Shelter in Cordova**

March 5, 2024, at 1:00-2:00 pm

A tour of the National Guards Disaster Response Bed Down Shelter set up in Cordova, Alaska. The Alaska National Guard, Maine National Guard, and the City of Cordova will transport the DRBS from Anchorage to Cordova and test that facilities capabilities to support a community's disaster response and recovery activities. For media that cannot participate in person video and photos will be provided.

POC: Dana Rosso, [dana.rosso@alaska.gov](mailto:dana.rosso@alaska.gov), 907-428-6039 / 907-244-1444

### **Anchorage Fire Training Center and Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson**

March 5, 2024

Multiple events will happen simultaneously at the Anchorage Fire Training Center and on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. These include establishing sheltering and support, conducting hospital decompression and patient transfer, operating a Forward Arming and Refueling Point, and completing search and extraction operations.

POC: Alan Brown, [alan.brown@alaska.gov](mailto:alan.brown@alaska.gov), 907-428-6030

### **PHOTOS**

1. **DVIDS** links include story and selected full-resolution photos, video a-roll and b-roll that will be available during the exercise. <https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/VigilantGuardAK24>
2. **Flickr** link includes selected full-resolution photos that will be available during the exercise. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard/albums/72177720315081560>