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**Department of Military  
and Veterans Affairs**

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

**January 11, 2022**

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Press Release:

**Alaska National Guard to deploy personnel to assist Yakutat with snow removal**

The State Emergency Operations Center responds to Yakutat's emergency request

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** — The City and Borough of Yakutat and Southeast Alaska has received tremendous amounts of snow and rain over the last seven days. The State Emergency Operation Center (SEOC) has been working with communities in the region to identify and address critical life health and safety needs.

On Jan. 11, 2022 the City and Borough of Yakutat submitted a Declaration of Local Disaster Emergency to the state, and requested assistance with the community's ongoing emergency. Given the fact that Yakutat is an isolated community off the road system, and all local available resources have been exhausted, the SEOC requested Alaska National Guard support. The SEOC is also working with state, federal, and non-government partners to address emergency assistance requests identified in the community's declaration.

The Alaska National Guard has been requested by the SEOC to build a team of approximately 20 service members and multiple vehicles to be transported to Yakutat, via military airlift, in order to provide emergency snow removal and building safety assessment to the community.

Joint Task Force-Yakutat will be comprised of Guardsman from the Air and Army National Guard and is assigned two four-wheel drive vehicles providing direct support to the City and Borough of Yakutat.

Actual numbers of deployed service members, vehicles, equipment, and supplies may be decreased or increased through verbal approval from SEOC to accommodate available personnel or mission requirements.

The SEOC has received reports of snow and rain impacts in the region to include; collapsed buildings, communities cancelling schools, a Juneau grocery store closed for multiple days, and numerous private and public buildings leaking due to excessive weight on roof tops. At this time there are no reports of serious injury or deaths.

"As Alaskans we are accustomed to severe weather, but this winter has been particularly challenging for many areas of the state," said Director Bryan Fisher, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. "The state is standing by to help our local jurisdiction when a natural disaster is greater than their local response capabilities. Together with our non-government partners, we will ensure every community receives the emergency assistance they need."

The SEOC is managed by the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, which falls within the Alaska Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

When local authorities determine that an emergency or disaster has caused more impact or damage than the community is able to support independently, they may request assistance through the SEOC. State emergency managers assist local emergency managers in a coordinated effort to provide the necessary resources, effectively and within a codified process. It is through this process that it may be determined that the National Guard's assistance is needed, and the state requests specific support through the Alaska National Guard Joint Operations Center and Joint Staff, who expedite and coordinate the effort.

Additional, snow and rain are forecasted for the region. In addition, an increased avalanche danger exists in many areas. Residents are encouraged to work with their local governments to address needs.

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