



# THE DANG TRUTH

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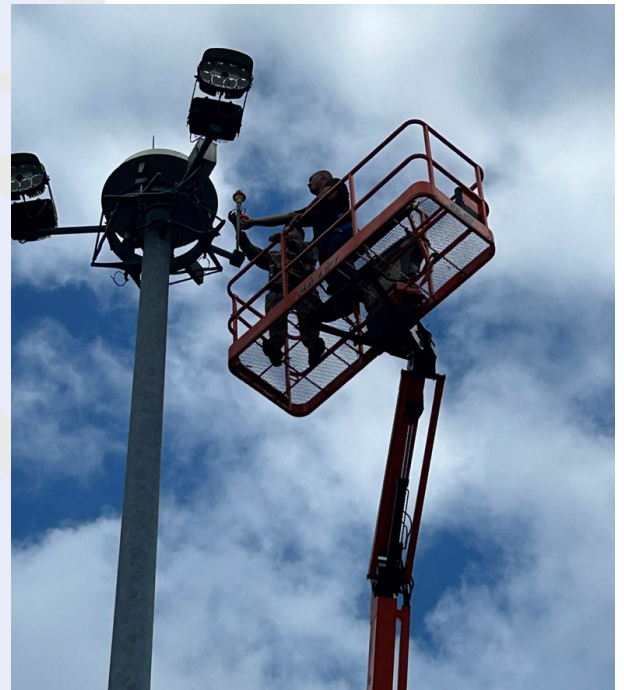
### UPCOMING EVENTS

4-6 April	RSD Weekend
6 April	TAG & ATAG-Army Change of Command
7-8 April	Senior Leaders Symposium, JFHQ
3 June	State of the State: ANGRC, JBA

## Facility Operations and Maintenance Team: Keeping the Lights On and the Heat Flowing.

By Maj Parker Hodges, 166th CES Operations Flight Commander

The 166th Civil Engineer Squadron Facilities Operations and Maintenance Activity (FOMA) is authorized by the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and executed through a Cooperative Agreement with State of Delaware. Through this agreement, the squadron employs a team of 12 State of Delaware technicians tasked to maintain the 80,000-acre, 44 facility complex that is the 166th Airlift Wing. Their diverse skill sets include electrical systems, water and fuels infrastructure, heavy equipment operations, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) equipment, and structural repair. Additional responsibilities include snow removal, grounds maintenance, and the inspection of various building systems to include fire alarm and suppression. These dedicated professionals arrive early, stay late, and respond to weekend emergencies such as power outages, water leaks, and severe weather events.



(Courtesy Photo)

HVAC technicians have dedicated extensive overtime hours to repairing and replacing aging infrastructure while also providing temporary...

See "FOMA" continued on page 2

### Social Media Links:



Facebook: 166th Airlift Wing



Instagram: @166thAirliftWing



Flickr: delawareairnationalguard

...And *that's* the DANG Truth!



"FOMA" continued from page 1

...heating solutions for multiple buildings. Moreover, they have taken a proactive role, participating in rapid improvement activities to improve their heating system maintenance cycles. The team is responsible for over 500 pieces of HVAC equipment across the installation.

When the base fuel pump controls failed, electricians quickly devised a temporary solution, ensuring emergency response vehicles remained fueled and operational. Their swift action supported both base operations and airport activities until replacement parts could be installed. Additionally, the electrical systems team sprung into action, executing high voltage temporary solutions and coordinated contract repairs for sustainment of critical infrastructure.

The water and fuels maintenance team provided critical oversight during fire suppression line pressure testing at the \$23M Fuel Cell Hangar construction site. Their technical oversight ensured proper tie in and prevented water damage during two leak events. Moreover, the team oversaw potable water backflow surveys, inspections and repairs, ensuring compliance with Air Force regulatory guidance.



The Facilities Operations team focuses on maintaining installation grounds, conducting snow removal and ensuring vegetation does not compromise base infrastructure. During the winter months, this team works to maintain snow removal equipment, distribute snow melt product and coordinate with base agencies. As we transition to Spring and Summer, they will focus their efforts on mowing and maintaining unimproved areas of the installation. Their responsibilities also include coordinating with pesticide contractors, ensuring adequate product coverage and environmental compliance.

Recently, Mr. Hilton Williams, a 166 CES Structural Maintenance Technician, was recognized as the State CE Technician of the Year for the Air National Guard. His outstanding efforts ensured sustained installation maintenance during the deployment of 27 Engineers, to include multiple critical full time staff members. Additionally, he was a lynch pin in the Wing Headquarters transition, coordinating keying activities and conducting facility inspections. Lastly, his coordination efforts enabled the first ever Delaware State Military Department internship program with New Castle County Vocational Technical School District.



Despite aging infrastructure, ongoing challenges, and long periods of below-freezing temperatures, the 166 CES Facility Operations and Maintenance Team has demonstrated exceptional resourcefulness and determination in keeping the base fully operational. As the Wing transitions to a new deployment and training model, CE remains steadfast in ensuring the Warfighting Platform is always mission-ready.





## AIRMAN SPOTLIGHT

### Technical Sergeant James H. Coates Jr.

*166th Operations Support Squadron*

On October 15th, 2023, I officially became a member of the Delaware Air National Guard. In doing so, I closed the book on nearly 13 years with the Massachusetts Army National Guard as an Air Traffic Control Platoon Sergeant for Fox Company, 3rd Battalion, 126th Aviation Regiment on Joint Base Cape Cod. I value my time, lessons learned, and the friends I made in the Army, but look forward to new challenges in the Air National Guard.

I was born in Wilmington and raised in Hockessin, staying local through my Sophomore year at the University of Delaware. In 2011, I enlisted as a Private First Class with the Massachusetts Army National Guard, selecting Air Traffic Control Specialist (15Q) as my MOS. Over the years, the Army provided me many opportunities and broad experience that I'm thankful for, including a hectic, last-minute Joint Readiness Training Center rotation in 2021, a reclass to Air Traffic Control Equipment Maintainer (94D) in 2017, a year-long deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom/Inherent Resolve from 2014-2015, and a successful trip to Pathfinder school in 2013.

My previous positions include serving full-time Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) as the Logistics Non-Commissioned Officer-in-Charge and Property Book Manager for the Region 1 Homeland Response Force in MA, a Senior Emergency Operations Center Controller with a private aviation firm, AGR Air Traffic Maintenance Chief and Unit Supply Sergeant, and Air Traffic Controller at Fort Barfoot, VA. Goodbyes are hard, so day-to-day I work for the Department of the Army as a Safety and Occupational Health Specialist at Aberdeen Proving Ground. I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Applied Science and Technology with a focus in Air Traffic Control, an FAA Control Tower Operator license, multiple operator,

maintenance, and evaluation certifications on fixed base and tactical air traffic control equipment, and the Army Professional Certificate in Emergency Management. Within the next 6 months, I hope to earn additional certificates in Safety and Occupational Health, Explosives Safety, and Industrial Safety through the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center and University of Texas Arlington.



The majority of my career revolved around aviation operations, which led me to the Airfield Management (AM) section of the 166th Operations Support Squadron. I earned Distinguished Graduate at Tech School this past June, achieving my first AFSC. In October, I completed the requirements for my 5-Level. While the sticker shock has been real, the AM team and the OSS as a whole have been supportive throughout my transition to the DANG and I feel confident in my choice to come home to Delaware to continue my military career. Though I've been playing catch-up as a TSgt, I hope to achieve my 7-Level in the near future and work my way back to E-7 and hopefully, beyond.

I always tell people that joining the military was the best decision I ever made. I met lifelong friends, finished college, traveled the world, and got to do some really cool things over the years. I advanced quickly and was afforded fantastic opportunities because I always stood ready, worked hard to stay ready, and tried my hardest at every opportunity. I also learned skills and values as a leader that I hold very closely to this day, and my biggest takeaway is to always apply yourself wholeheartedly, strive for excellence, and don't just be happy with meeting the standard. I want to continue that mentality in the Air Guard, but if nothing else, I hope to integrate my knowledge, experience, and abilities into the DANG and leave the unit a better place while learning from those around me. I am excited for the future and hope to tackle whatever challenges may come as I finish my career, and know that one day, I'll look back just as fondly on my time with the Air Guard as I do the Army.





## 166AW Continuous Process Improvement & Innovation

By: Mr. Bryan Krams, Director of Inspections 166 AW/IG



A 3-day Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) took place February 18th to 20th, 2025, focusing on streamlining the Wing & Active Guard Reserve (AGR) in/out processing checklists. Facilitated by Master Sgt. Michael DellaVella, assisted by Team Leader Senior Master Sgt. Katelyn Williams and championed by Col. Jeremy Meartz, the event saw a 15-member team representing various units, including the Airlift Wing Staff, Commanders Support Staff (AW, Cyber Operations Squadron & Operations Group), Base Training, Information Protection, Force Support Squadron, Joint Force Headquarters, Comptroller Flight, Human Resource Office, and Logistics Readiness Squadron. Utilizing a Continuous Process Improvement & Innovation framework, the team clarified the problem, identified performance gaps, established improvement targets, and pinpointed root causes to develop countermeasures. This resulted in 60 SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, & Timebound) countermeasures forming a comprehensive implementation plan. The updated checklists, designed for clarity and ease of use, will be implemented upon completion of all countermeasures, and reviewed annually for necessary revisions. These standardized checklists will provide clear points of contact, required documentation, and actionable steps for both customers and POCs. Concurrently, the team is developing a Wing Operating Instruction (OI) to complement the checklists and provide comprehensive guidance throughout the entire in/out processing procedure.

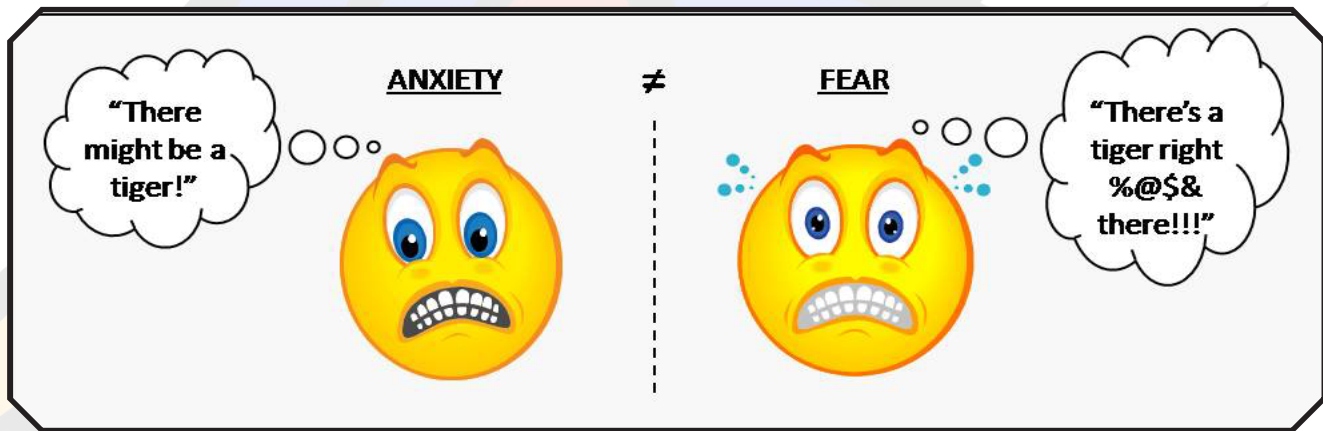


## Anxiety VS Fear

Worrying is a natural human response that sharpens our problem-solving skills.

“By worrying about something, we are more likely to think of reasons to take action and be motivated to do something” – Edward Watkins.

Fear and anxiety are two common types of worrying whose symptoms sometimes tend to overlap. Fear and anxiety have very similar characteristics, yet they differ in how they are originated. **Fear** is the emotional response to a **known or perceived imminent threat**, while **Anxiety** typically results from the **anticipation of future threats**.



Regardless of what is driving our worries, it can sometimes leave us with some very intense feelings. In the presence of either anxiety or fear our biological system is triggered to respond automatically by activating a series of short-term responses to help us deal with the threat. Like too much of everything can be unhealthy, so is worrying. Excessive worrying can be detrimental to our health both physically and mentally.

While we may not be able to control what is happening around us, we can certainly take control of how much we allow in, or, even how much of it we allow to affect us. It is very easy to find yourself on an Anxiety spiral once you start worrying. Simple thoughts of you potentially losing a job can quickly turn to an excessive worrying about you becoming homeless.

Here are a few coping tools to consider when dealing with anxiety, fear or both:

### Practice Thought Stopping.

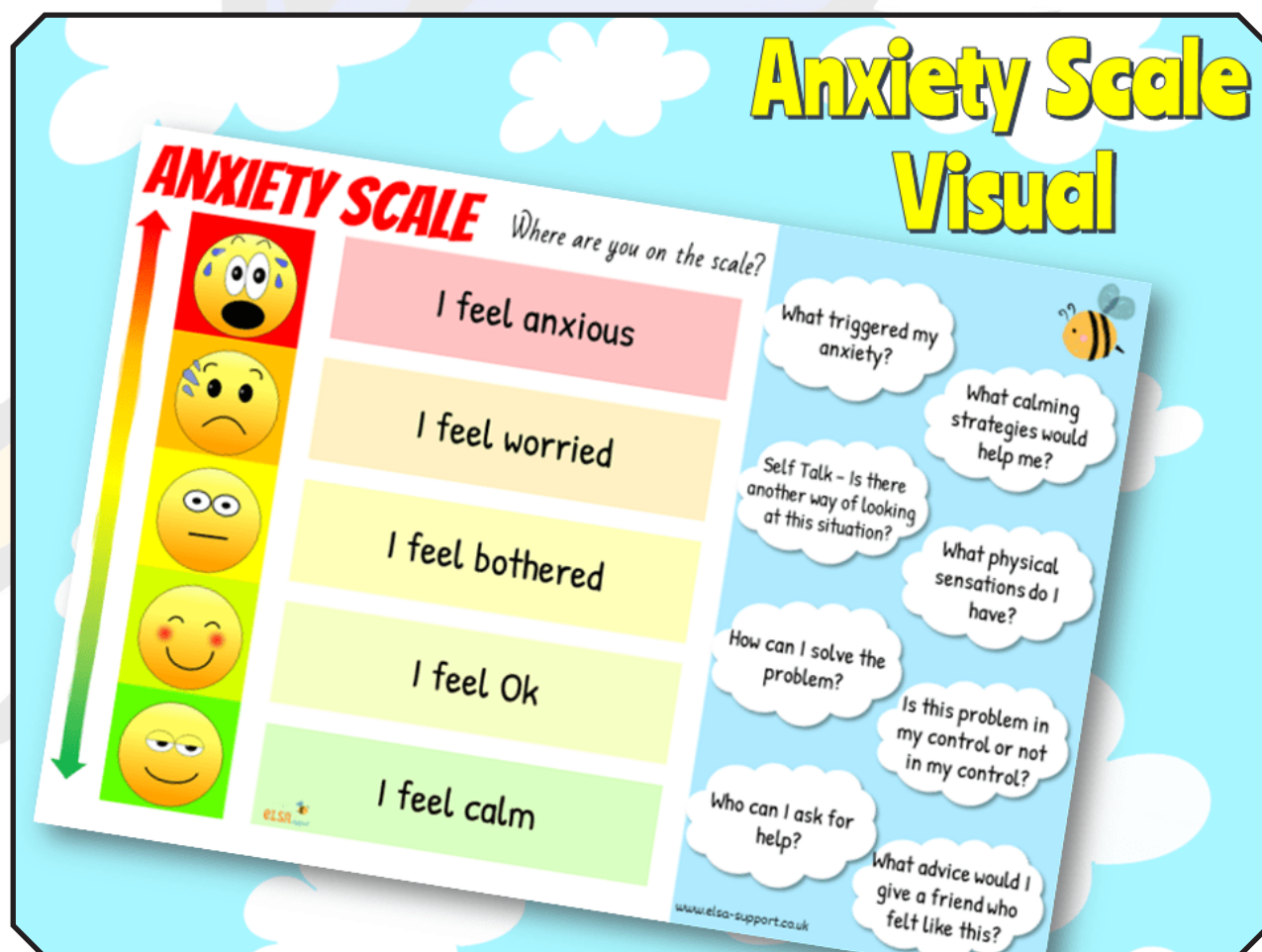
1. Assess your worries: Examine your thoughts when worrying excessively.
2. Question your thoughts: Ask yourself if the thought is hurting you or helping you.
3. Distract yourself: Find a strong activity to engage in if your thoughts are hurting rather than helping the situation.



**Limit access to social media.** In today's social media era both factual and false information can widely trend. Limiting access to social media and, verifying source of information before worrying about it can be helpful for your mental health.

**Practice Self-calming.** Find a relaxing or calming activity to engage in when feeling anxious or afraid. Simple activities such as deep breathing, listening to music, reading, journaling and meditation can work miracles on any jumpy nerves.

Finally if none of the coping tools you're using seem to be helping, please reach out for professional help.



Stella Alexandra Twumasi, LCSW, DE-CMHS

166AW Director of Psychological Health/ SPPM

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## *Promotions & Retirements*

March 2025

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### **Promotions**

Tommy Zheng to Staff Sgt.  
Talan Bishop to Technical Sgt.  
Giovanni Lopez-Mora to Technical Sgt.

### **Retirements**

Technical Sgt. Anthony Bynum, 166th LRS





## OPERATION FULL STRENGTH

### PRESENCE & PUBLICITY

- PURPOSEFUL MESSAGING
- EFFECTIVE MARKETING
- INCREASED VISIBILITY



### PARTNERSHIPS

- COMMUNITY OUTREACH
- TARGETED PARTNERS
- SUSTAINABLE RELATIONSHIPS

### COMPETITIVE POSITIONING

- IMPROVE BENEFITS
- COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES



### PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

- VACANCY MANAGEMENT
- RETENTION EFFORTS
- NEW MEMBER INTEGRATION



### REFERRALS

- IMPROVED INCENTIVES
- INCREASE LEAD GENERATION

END STRENGTH  
GOAL

95% +



HAVE AN IDEA?  
SEND IT OVER!

