



THE DANG TRUTH

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UPCOMING EVENTS

18-20 July	NASCAR Event
1-3 August	RSD Weekend
5-7 Sept	RSD Weekend
7 Sept	Wingmen Sports Day

166 COS Supports Southern Defender 25

By Mr. David Rice, 166th Cyber Operations Squadron, Director of Operations

I had the pleasure of participating in the Southern Defender Exercise last month. The 166 COS provided a Mobile Training Team (MTT) to support an exercise site in Trinidad and Tobago for the exercise.

Southern Defender is a new off-shoot of the annual Tradewinds exercise that regularly tests members of the Caribbean community's ability to respond to disasters. Historically, the cyber portion of this exercise is very minor. With a largely separate exercise this year, the cyber exercise was able to make significant contributions to building cyber skills and relationships in the cyber community and with critical industry partners such as electric, water, POL, and telecommunications.

With over 300 participants exercising in 12 locations from 20 countries, the exercise was a huge success not only in numbers but in quality of training. The exercise ran from 26 Apr to 8 May 2025 and Trinidad and Tobago fielded over 40 participants. The combination of quantity,...



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Social Media Links:

Facebook: 166th Airlift Wing Instagram: @166thAirliftWing Flickr: delawareairnationalguard



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...quality, and enthusiasm of the team members in Trinidad and Tobago was impressive. The interactions between team members, the MTT members, and the Trinidad and Tobago Defense Force (TTDF) created a positive vibe that lasted throughout the two weeks.

Participants learned or improved their proficiency in using several cyber security tools that are freely available. In addition to the tools, the curriculum covered several topics to assist in creating and strengthening good cyber hygiene to protect against a range of cyber threats. Several of these threats were built into the exercise scenario so that participants could see the impact of properly implementing some basic tools on their security posture.

Trinidad and Tobago was the host of Tradewinds 25 this year, which ran simultaneously with Southern Defender. While several members of the 166 MDG and 142 AES supported Tradewinds from Teteron Barracks, the 166 COS supported Southern Defender from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine campus. The school provided an excellent computer lab where we provided all instruction and conducted the exercise for our site. The overall Southern Defender exercise environment was provided out of Augusta, GA, and most of the materials were provided by USSOUTHCOM.



It's often said that the true benefit of traveling isn't the places you go as much as it is the people that you meet along the way. We met several wonderful and gifted people during our visit. They are gracious hosts and helped share their rich culture. From the food to the local expressions, everyone on the MTT thoroughly enjoyed absorbing all the things we learned. We got to try "doubles" and "bake and shark" and learn about "liming", "playing corbeau alive", and "better belly buss dan good food waste".

Delaware has been a state partner with Trinidad and Tobago for 20 years. Our efforts along the cyber front have only come along in the last few years. The enthusiasm on both sides have been great and we look forward to continuing to build our relationships and friendships in the years to come.





AIRMAN SPOTLIGHT

Master Sergeant Todd Glessner

166th Civil Engineering Squadron, Explosive Ordnance Disposal

I began my military career as a Military Police Officer while stationed in Germany with the U.S. Army. Following my initial enlistment, I transitioned to the Army Reserve, where I reclassified my MOS to EOD. In 2015, I joined the Delaware National Guard, continuing to build my experience and expertise in military operations and Explosive Ordnance Disposal.

I decided to join the Air National Guard after realizing that my reserve unit lacked the leadership and training infrastructure necessary to support a newly graduated EOD technician. To gain the mentorship and hands-on experience essential for developing my skills, I completed RSD with the DE ANG EOD flight. That experience confirmed it was the right fit, and it has been a rewarding journey ever since.

One of the most significant challenges I faced was the steep learning curve—there's always more to learn and I've made it a priority to seek out answers and continually grow in my role. However, a particularly unique and ongoing challenge has been navigating organizational cultures where accountability can be inconsistent. At times, I've encountered individuals who remain in comfortable positions without contributing meaningfully, largely due to a lack of performance-based accountability. Changing that dynamic is difficult, especially when the system doesn't always support those efforts. I firmly believe that positions should be earned and maintained through merit, not personal connections.

Training as an EOD tech in a DSG role presents unique challenges. To stay proficient and mission-ready, we actively seek training opportunities around the globe to expand both our knowledge and hands-on experience. While learning is essential, true expertise comes from practical application—doing the job is what builds subject matter expertise. Traditional drill weekends often aren't sufficient for in-depth technical training, as they're typically filled with administrative tasks, mandatory briefings, or required online courses that don't always contribute directly to job proficiency. However, extended three-day drills provide a valuable opportunity to better balance mission-essential training with these requirements, often giving us at least one dedicated day to focus on AFSC-specific tasks. This focused time is critical to maintaining readiness and supporting our unit's mission effectively.

Outside of work, I enjoy traveling. It gives me the opportunity to explore new places, experience different cultures, and gain fresh perspectives. Travel has become a meaningful way for me to recharge and stay inspired both personally and professionally. I have a dog that is the light of my life as well.

Since joining the Guard, I've been fortunate to gain hands-on experience in my AFSC through deployments and unique assignments. I completed a tour with the USAFE/AFAFRICA A4 staff in Germany and am currently

supporting the Office for Bombing Prevention as an explosive blast modeler. These opportunities have significantly broadened my perspective and technical knowledge.

As an EOD technician within CE squadron, we often operate independently from other CE trades. However, participating in a DFT allowed me to observe how other CE functions operate and collaborate. Understanding how different roles support the mission enhances my own effectiveness in EOD. Taking advantage of opportunities like this is essential for personal and professional growth.

Looking ahead, I'm keeping an open mind about where my career may lead. As I move into more senior leadership roles, I'm aware that my connection to frontline operations may shift. However, staying engaged and relevant means continuing to seek out opportunities to lead, learn, and contribute in new ways. I've had discussions with my commander about potential paths forward, and I remain committed to exploring roles where I can add value and drive improvement.

The ANG offers a unique platform to continuously evolve your career. The term "Guard bumming" often refers to those who actively seek out missions and assignments, and I embrace that. It has allowed me to grow, support others, and contribute to meaningful change within the organization. Real progress starts with understanding systems, identifying areas for improvement, implementing change, and reassessing as needed following the OODA LOOP mindset.

Whether my path leads to reaching the rank of Chief or simply continuing to mentor and support others, I aim to be a positive influence. And fortunately, I won't need to remind anyone to take their hands out of their pockets anymore, thanks to the updated policy!

To fellow leaders in the Guard: Know your job—thoroughly—and never stop learning. Leadership isn't about taking the easy path; it's about setting the standard and supporting your people. Too often, I've seen leaders avoid responsibility or treat helping their members as an inconvenience. This attitude undermines morale and mission effectiveness. Our junior Airmen are the ones who carry out the day-to-day work that enables mission success and by extension, helps us as leaders succeed. We owe it to them to lead by example, advocate for their needs, and recognize their efforts, even if it's as simple as saying, "You did a great job."

To the junior enlisted force: Don't be afraid to ask questions or push back when something doesn't make sense. If you're told "no," ask why—and then take the initiative to learn more. Empower yourself by seeking out information and connecting with those who might have the answers or resources you need. Roadblocks will happen, but persistence, accountability, and a willingness to engage others can take you much further than you might expect. Your growth is your responsibility, and taking ownership of it is how you shape both your career and the future of the force.





Delaware Air National Guard



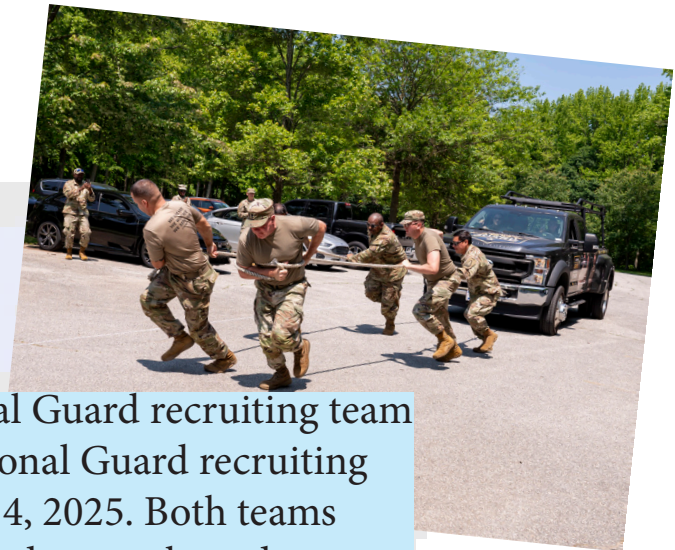
From tactical airlift to aeromedical evacuation to cyber operations, the dedicated men and women of the Delaware ANG are always ready serving our community, state, and nation from their own backyard.





Fitness Face-Off

Army VS Air Recruiter Fitness Challenge



Members of the Delaware Air National Guard recruiting team faced off against the Delaware National Guard recruiting team in Fitness Face-Off on June 4, 2025. Both teams competed in various events that tested strength, endurance and teamwork. Team Air took the win in the end, but both teams demonstrated excellent sportsmanship and are ready to compete for the title again next year!





Promotions & Retirements

June 2025

Promotions

Brayden Below to Airman
Ursele Ngwibisirri to Airman
Sarah Bessel to Senior Airman
Bridgitte Tchakam Kamga to Senior Airman
Gian Disanto to Senior Airman
Gabrielle Price to Senior Master Sgt.

Retirements

Technical Sgt. Steven Gasperino, 166th COS

