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Armories

ABC Sells One Life to Live™s Former NYC Studio (NYNG mention)

Soaps In Depth, February 12, 2025 :

The American Broadcasting Company — aka ABC — has parted ways with a historic New York City building that previously housed the One Life to Live studios.

Located on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, the three-story property at 56 West 66th Street was built between 1900-1903 by the New York City Armory Board. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the castle-like property was one of ten built in New York City and housed the First Battery of the New York National Guard until 1913. It was converted to a television studio in 1973, and ABC purchased the armory in 1976, adding to its existing properties in the Lincoln Square area and setting up OLTL in Studio 17 at the castle.

OLTL taped at the armory until 2010. When Disney/ABC relocated the production of All My Children to Los Angeles, the soap moved into the former Pine Valley space up the street at 320 West 66th Street, which was a bigger studio. In recent years, a portion of the building was home to ESPN's New York City headquarters, but when Disney consolidated its offices around the city in 2023, the company put the castle up for sale for \$30 million, according to real estate website The Real Deal.

The new owner of the historic building is Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, a rabbinical seminary and educational institution of the Reform Judaism Movement. HUC announced that it sold its Greenwich Village building to New York University and will relocate to West 66th Street sometime in 2027. "The new building, a landmarked armory that was extensively updated with modern systems by its last owner, will be reconfigured to include state-of-the-art technology and infrastructure for in-person and hybrid learning, as well as a library, beit midrash, and areas for prayer, community events, and exhibitions," HUC said in a statement.

<https://www.soapsindepth.com/posts/one-life-to-live/abc-sells-one-life-to-lives-former-nyc-studio>

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Emergency Response

4 FEMA employees are fired over payments to reimburse New York City for hotel costs for migrants

Associated Press, February 11, 2025 :

Note: This item is provided for informational purposes.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Four federal employees were fired Tuesday over payments to reimburse New York City for hotel costs for migrants, Department of Homeland Security officials said.

The workers are accused of circumventing leadership to make the transactions, which have been standard for years through a program that helps with costs to care for a surge in migration. But officials did not give details on how the four had violated any policies.

On Monday, President Donald Trump’s aide Elon Musk posted on X that his team had discovered payments used to house migrants in “luxury hotels” with money intended for disaster relief. Musk blasted the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which is part of Homeland Security, and called the payments “gross insubordination.”

FEMA’s acting administrator, Cameron Hamilton, later said the payments were suspended and the employees who authorized them would be held accountable.

The terminated employees were FEMA’s chief financial officer, two program analysts and a grant specialist, a Homeland Security statement said.

The employees made “egregious payments for luxury NYC hotels for migrants,” the statement said. “DHS will not sit idly and allow deep state activists to undermine the will and safety of the American people.”

The statement gave no other details, and officials didn’t reply to emails seeking further comment.

Information from New York City indicated that money it has received to care for migrants was appropriated by Congress and allocated to the city last year by FEMA. The city has never paid luxury rates for hotels, spokeswoman Liz Garcia said.

The funds were likely sent via the Shelter and Services Program, which reimburses cities, towns or organizations for immigration-related expenses.

The money comes from Congress and is specifically for Customs and Border Protection, which also is part of Homeland Security. FEMA administers the payments.

The money is separate from the disaster relief fund, which is FEMA's main funding stream to help people and governments affected by disasters.

The Shelter and Services Program has become a flashpoint for criticism by Republicans, who incorrectly claim it's taking money from people hit by hurricanes or floods.

The firings come as Trump's Republican administration ratchets up pressure on FEMA, suggesting it should be disbanded and money should be given directly to states to handle disasters.

AP reporter Cedar Attanasio contributed from New York.

<https://www.borderreport.com/immigration/4-fema-employees-are-fired-over-payments-to-reimburse-new-york-city-for-hotel-costs-for-migrants/>

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For Information

Why Attorneys Should Understand Military Culture

New York State Bar Association, February 11, 2025 :

To better understand veteran clients, attorneys should learn more about military culture, including trauma.

A recent Continuing Legal Education course, presented by the New York State Bar Association, discussed the experiences of servicemembers and veterans and how it can affect their interactions with the court system. Nancy Farrell, director of the Veterans Defense Program at the New York State Defenders Association, led the discussion.

Farrell explained that unlike most professions, servicemembers are always on duty, and do not have control over what they wear or eat or where they live. The work is dangerous and stressful, and it varies based on where a person served and what their job was in the military.

“When we’re talking about culture in the military, it’s not as though there’s just one culture for all of our servicemembers,” said Farrell. “You really have to break it down to what branch they were in. Each branch is going to have its own culture. And from there, each unit within that branch will have its own culture.”

For example, Farrell noted that people who serve in the National Guard spend most of their time away from the larger military and may not call themselves veterans. So it is important for attorneys to ask clients if they’ve been in the military, if they were in boot camp, if they were responsible for a unit, and how many people were in their unit – all to get a sense of what their service actually entailed.

Farrell also went into the challenges faced by LGBTQ+ people in the military. Approximately 2.2% of servicemembers identify as LGBTQ+, but that number is likely higher as many servicemembers choose not to self-identify.

When “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” was in effect from 1994 to 2011, servicemembers were not allowed to disclose their sexual orientation. Transgender people were not allowed to serve from 2019 to 2021, and on January 27, 2025, President Donald Trump signed an executive order reinstating the ban.

“If a veteran is serving in the military and has to hide part of themselves – especially who their significant other is, or if they’re transgender, or if their significant other is transgender – that’s a huge aspect of one’s life to have to hide while serving in a very stressful role,” said Farrell. “And that can very easily cause trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, [and] anxiety.”

Additionally, Farrell said that attorneys should also be aware that post-traumatic stress disorder can come from any aspect of service, not just combat zones. An accident like last month’s Blackhawk helicopter crash in Washington, D.C., can cause trauma for survivors, witnesses and soldiers who were close to the deceased.

“I would strongly discourage you from delving into your client’s traumatic stories unless they initiate the conversation and freely share it,” said Farrell. “And even if they do, I wouldn’t ask questions... If you ask a question that could be triggering for them, it’s really important that there is a follow-up plan in place.”

As such, Farrell advises working with veteran clients to minimize triggers by warning them of such conversations in advance, explaining what will happen in a courtroom, making sure to communicate in a way that is comfortable to them, and building trust by following through on promises.

The program was sponsored by the Committee on Veterans. View it in full here.

<https://nysba.org/why-attorneys-should-understand-military-culture/>

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Pentagon Prepares Potential Cuts for Elon Musk's DOGE, WSJ Reports

U.S. News and World Reports, February 214, 2025 :

NOTE: This item is provided for your information.

(Reuters) -Some parts of the U.S. military are preparing lists of weapons programs they have long wanted to cancel in a bid to get ahead of what could be drastic cuts by Elon Musk's Department of Government Efficiency, the Wall Street Journal reported on Friday.

Members of DOGE are expected at the Defense Department as soon as Friday, WSJ said, citing defense officials.

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Thursday said that he had already been in touch with Musk and expressed confidence in the effort to find billions in cost-cutting and to make the Pentagon more efficient.

"There's plenty of places (at the Pentagon) where we want the keen eye of DOGE, but we'll do it in coordination," Hegseth said.

U.S. President Donald Trump had earlier said he expected Elon Musk to find hundreds of billions of dollars of fraud and abuse at the Pentagon during an audit that the billionaire will lead.

The Pentagon declined to comment on the WSJ report.

<https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2025-02-14/pentagon-prepares-potential-cuts-for-elon-musks-doge-wsj-reports>

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New York Air National Guard

NY Wing to Participate in Canadian Arctic Training Exercise

NationalGuard.mil, By Staff Sgt. Jocelyn Tuller, 109th Air Wing, February 11, 2025 :

SCOTIA, N.Y. – Fifty-nine Airmen and two LC-130 Hercules aircraft from the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing will participate in a joint military exercise in the Northwest Territories of Canada from mid-February to early March.

The exercise, Nanook-Nunaliut, demonstrates the ability to project and sustain forces in the High Arctic under the harshest conditions and test new capabilities and operational compatibility with allies. The 109th Airlift Wing has participated in this exercise twice, in 2015 and 2016.

Before the exercise, the Polar Camp Skiway Team will create a ski landing area and polar camp using heavy equipment, including a new ski landing area grooming tractor, ensuring safe landing conditions for aircraft.

"The Polar Camp Skiway Team is a 12-member team who analyze and build the ski landing area and maintain the camp through collaboration and dedication," said Maj. Joseph Shanahan, the 109th ski landing control officer. "The ice thickness, ice roughness, water depth, snow depth, and wind are all factors in choosing where we can build the ski landing area and camp."

The Polar Camp Skiway Team will also be setting up the largest polar camp the 109th Airlift Wing has ever set up, which will be the hub of the exercise, according to Lt. Col. Matthew Sala, the 109th deployed commander.

During the exercise, Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing will provide tactical airlift and rapid airdrop resupply to the Canadian Armed Forces and joint partners. They will also provide search and rescue and aeromedical coverage in the region.

The exercise will allow the 109th to test new equipment and increase deployment and logistical readiness for Arctic environments.

"We are excited to participate in this exercise to demonstrate the 109th Airlift Wing's capabilities in the Northern Arctic, working alongside our joint partners to showcase how the LC-130 can support Arctic operations in a way that no other tactical lift aircraft can," Sala said.

Airmen from the 109th will strategically demonstrate Arctic Agile Combat Employment. The ACE concept is a dynamic maneuver strategy that enhances survivability and sustains combat power within threat timelines.

"We are proud to be participating in Nanook-Nunaliut, an exercise that not only demonstrates the 109th Airlift Wing's unique ability to operate in Arctic regions but also displays the unique capabilities of our multi-capable Airmen," said Col. Robert Donaldson, the wing commander. "This exercise is vital as we continue to enhance our readiness, ensuring we can rapidly project and sustain forces in the most austere environments."

The LC-130s flown by the 109th Airlift Wing are the largest aircraft in the world able to land on snow and ice using skis.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article-View/Article/4062709/ny-wing-to-participate-in-canadian-arctic-training-exercise/>

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Roselle National Guard Airman Receives New Rank, New Responsibilities

TapInto Roselle, February 13, 2025 :

ROSELLE, NJ - A Roselle National Guard Airman was among several members of the New York Air National Guard who were promoted in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Nixon Castro from Roselle, N.J., assigned to the 105th Airlift Wing, received a promotion on January 21 to the rank of staff sergeant. Air National Guard promotions are based on an Airman's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism, and future development potential.

"I am extremely proud of the men and women of the New York Air National Guard who have earned promotions this month," Air Force Major General Michael Bank said. "Their hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence are a testament to the high standards of our organization, and I offer my sincerest congratulations to each of them on this achievement."

The New York National Guard (New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs) is the state's executive agency responsible to the Governor for managing New York's Military Forces, which consists of nearly 20,000 members of the New York Army National Guard, the New York Air National Guard, the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/roselle/sections/community-announcements/articles/roselle-national-guard-airman-receives-new-rank-new-responsibilities>

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New York Air National Guard Promotions

Daily Gazette, February 14, 2025

LATHAM — Major General Ray Shields, the Adjutant General for the State of New York, announces the promotion of members of the New York Air National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Samantha Allen of Gloversville, and assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing, received a promotion December 1, 2024 to the rank of master sergeant.

Nickolas Cross of Mayfield,, and assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing, received a promotion Dec. 1, 2024 to the rank of master sergeant.

Jacob Reisler of Northville, and assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing, received a promotion Dec. 11, 2024 to the rank of captain.

Brandon Walton of Johnstown, and assigned to the 109th Airlift Wing, received a promotion Dec. 15, 2024 to the rank of staff sergeant.

Air National Guard promotions are based on a Airman's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified Airmen for a career in the New York Air National Guard.

"I am extremely proud of the men and women of the New York Air National Guard who have earned promotions this month," Bank said in a news release. "Their hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence are a testament to the high standards of our organization, and I offer my sincerest congratulations to each of them on this achievement."

https://www.dailygazette.com/townnews/navy/local-news-in-brief/article_f45052c4-ea31-11ef-be90-7f5ca774ef60.html

New York Army National Guard

Baker and Fantaske promoted in the Army National Guard

Springville Journal, February 13, 2025 :

Major General Ray Shields, the Adjutant General for the State of New York, announced the promotion of members of the New York Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

– Kyle Baker of East Concord, assigned to the B Troop, 2nd Squadron, 101st Cavalry Regiment, received a promotion Jan. 23, 2025 to the rank of sergeant.

– Rayquan Flaherty Fantaske of Cattaraugus, assigned to the Company C, NY National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion Jan. 30, 2025 to the rank of private.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a Soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified soldiers for a career in the New York Army National Guard.

<https://www.springvillejournal.com/articles/baker-and-fantaske-promoted-in-the-army-national-guard/>

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FLCC hosts online talk about African-American combat unit the Harlem Rattlers

Finger Lakes Times, February 11, 2025 :

CANANDAIGUA — In honor of Black History Month, Finger Lakes Community College will host an online talk by Jeffrey Sammons, emeritus professor of history at New York University, at 7 p.m. Wednesday.

Sammons will discuss his book, "Harlem's Rattlers and the Great War: The Undaunted 369th Regiment and the African-American Quest for Equality," which he co-wrote with John Morrow.

The legend that surrounds the 369th Infantry Regiment that fought in World War I is that the men never gave up ground, never quit, and would march forward or die. While they remain known to history as the Harlem Hell-fighters, the Regiment called itself the Rattlers after the symbol of the snake.

"Joining the Regiment did not signal loyalty to country as much as it served as a means to an end, namely, full citizenship for self, and by extension, the 'race,'" Sammons and Morrow said. "These men did not fight the war to make the world safe for democracy; instead, they fought to convince America to live up to its democratic promise."

"Suddenly, 'the most undesirable element in the United States' became 'the most reliable,' as symbolized and recognized by the calling out of the black National Guard troops to protect the White House."

Sammons' research and teaching interests focus on African American and military history, film history, and Black autobiography and sport history.

Sammons earned his Ph.D. in American history from the University of North Carolina in 1982. His first monograph, "Beyond the Ring: The Role of Boxing in American

Society,” received critical acclaim. He was a Henry Rutgers Research Fellow, a Schomburg Center Research in Black Culture fellow, and received a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship in 2002-03.

Sammons also won a Hackman Research Residency endowed by The New York State Archives Partnership Trust and the New York State Archives.

https://www.ftimes.com/news/flcc-hosts-online-talk-about-african-american-combat-unit-the-harlem-rattlers/article_fe0a9066-e588-11ef-a098-c74deb7ceb18.html

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Local Army National Guard soldier receives promotion

Rome Sentinel, February 12, 2025 :

LATHAM — A Utica resident is among the members of the New York Army National Guard to have recently received a promotion, according to Major Gen. Ray Shields, adjutant general for New York. Army National Guard promotions are based on a soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

Nicholas Distefano, assigned to the Company B, a New York National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, has been promoted to private first class.

The New York National Guard is the state's executive agency responsible for managing New York's military forces, which consists of nearly 20,000 members of the New York Army National Guard, the New York Air National Guard, the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard. For more information, visit www.dmna.ny.gov or www.1800goguard.com.

https://www.romesentinel.com/townnews/navy/local-army-national-guard-soldier-receives-promotion/article_64903f46-e56d-11ef-ac2c-e3f3ae788961.html

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Local News in Brief

Daily Gazette, February 14, 2025 :

New York Army National Guard Promotions

Gaberiella Scutt from Fultonville, and assigned to the Company B, NY Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion December 4, 2024 to the rank of private.

Octavio Bernard from Amsterdam, and assigned to the Company B, NY Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion November 17, 2024 to the rank of private.

Amron Henry from Amsterdam, and assigned to the 1501st Quartermaster Company, received a promotion December 15, 2024 to the rank of private 1st class.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a Soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified Soldiers for a career in the New York Army National Guard.

https://www.dailygazette.com/townnews/navy/local-news-in-brief/article_f45052c4-ea31-11ef-be90-7f5ca774ef60.html

Byron National Guard soldier receives new rank, new responsibilities

The Batavian, February 9, 2025 ::

Major General Ray Shields, the adjutant general for the state of New York, announces the recent promotion of members of the New York Army National Guard in recognition of their capability for additional responsibility and leadership.

Kevin Czachorowski from Byron, and assigned to the Company B, 642nd Aviation Support Battalion, received a promotion January 16 to the rank of master sergeant.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a Soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

These promotions recognize the best qualified Soldiers for a career in the New York Army National Guard.

<https://www.thebatavian.com/press-release/byron-national-guard-soldier-receives-new-rank-new-responsibilities/642417>

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14 Staten Islanders earn National Guard promotions (list)

Staten Island Advance, February 8, 2025 ::

Fourteen Staten Islanders were among a group who earned New York Army National Guard promotions, the reserve force recently announced.

The promotions were bestowed in recognition of capability, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism, and future development potential.

Claudia Caballero Caballero, who is assigned to the 14th Finance Detachment, received a promotion to the rank of specialist.

Fredi Caballero Milan, who is assigned to the Company A, N.Y. National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion to the rank of private.

Lily Chavez Basurto, who is assigned to the Company A, NY National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion to the rank of specialist.

Katherine Columna Marcial, who is assigned to the Company A, NY National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion to the rank of private.

Vincent Gioe, who is assigned to the Company A, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, received a promotion to the rank of staff sergeant.

Maya Lobato, who is assigned to the Company A, NY National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion to the rank of private.

Romain Metellus, who is assigned to the 107th Military Police Company, received a promotion to the rank of sergeant.

Arnold Pareja, who is assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 42nd Infantry Division Artillery, received a promotion to the rank of private 1st class.

Gabriella Pena, who is assigned to the Company A, NY National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion to the rank of private 1st class.

Daniel Saldeen, who is assigned to the Company A, NY National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion to the rank of private.

Joseph Sheehan, who is assigned to the 187th Signal Company, received a promotion to the rank of staff sergeant.

Gabriel Soto Medina, who is assigned to the Company A, NY National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion to the rank of private 1st class.

Joseph Tolan, who is assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 42nd Infantry Division Artillery, received a promotion to the rank of staff sergeant.

Aleksandr Yakovenko, who is assigned to the Headquarters and Support Company, 42nd Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, received a promotion to the rank of private 1st class.

The New York National Guard (New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs) is the state's executive agency responsible to the governor for managing New York's Military Forces, which consists of nearly 20,000 members of the New York Army National Guard, the New York Air National Guard, the New York Naval Militia and the New York Guard.

<https://www.silive.com/news/2025/02/14-staten-islanders-earn-national-guard-promotions-list.html>

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National Guard soldier from Kendall promoted

Orleans Hub.com, February 7, 2025 ::

KENDALL – Cassidy Primmer from Kendall, assigned to the Company C of the NY National Guard Recruiting & Retention Battalion, received a promotion Jan. 30 to the rank of private.

Army National Guard promotions are based on a soldier's overall performance, demonstrated leadership abilities, professionalism and future development potential.

Army National Guard citizen soldiers who serve the state and nation are eligible for monthly pay, educational benefits (from the state and federal government), travel across the globe, technical and leadership training, health and dental insurance and contributions towards retirement programs similar to a 401(k).

For more information about the New York Army National Guard, visit www.dmna.ny.gov or www.1800goguard.com.

<https://orleanshub.com/national-guard-soldier-from-kendall-promoted/>

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Duty Calls : Middle East mission

Times Union, February 10, 2025 :

More than 1,300 New York Army National Guard soldiers from the Troy-based 42nd Infantry Division have completed a Warfighter Command Post Exercise at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. in preparation for a future Middle East mission.

The soldiers are members of the Army's 19 divisions. The 42nd is one of the nation's Army National Guard divisions.

Infantry soldiers completed training missions built around computer combat simulations against an experienced opposing force, according to Col. Jean Kratzer, division spokeswoman. The exercise tested the ability of division and brigade commanders and their staffs to conduct the tasks they would execute in battle. The simulated battle went around the clock for a week.

"The training will also help prepare the division headquarters for deployment to the Middle East this summer," Kratzer said.

Upon arrival in the Middle East, Maj. Gen. Jack James, the commander of the 42nd Infantry Division, will assume command of Task Force Spartan, the Army's 10,000-soldier task force.

Soldiers from the brigade headquarters of the Syracuse-based 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, the 369th Sustainment Brigade from New York City, and the 42nd Expeditionary Combat Aviation Brigade in Latham also participated in the training. Another 1,000 soldiers from 11 other states that would have units assigned to the division in wartime also participated in the Warfighter exercise.

The 42nd Infantry Division also includes the 44th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from New Jersey, the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Vermont, and the 197th Fires Brigade from the New Hampshire Army National Guard, as well as smaller elements.

James said the headquarters' soldiers were well prepared for the exercise.

“This is our third Warfighter in four years, so we’ve developed some real expertise,” James said. “At the same time, this was the first Warfighter for about half the division staff. So, each Warfighter brought new learning and helps us build the division team in a challenging environment.”

During the exercise, leaders, staff officers, and soldiers participated around the clock, making decisions involving logistics, intelligence, operations and tactics, which play out in the computer simulation.

<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/duty-calls-veterans-group-needs-assistance-20157315.php>

Computer-based simulation trains 42nd Infantry Division HQ under realistic war conditions

Army.mil, By Master Sgt. Warren Wright, 42nd Inf. Div. Public Affairs, February 10, 2025:

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. — For the past few years, the U.S. Army has transitioned training priorities to focus on large-scale combat operations against what is known as near-peer adversaries, a dramatic shift from nearly 20 years of counter-insurgency operations. Large-scale combat operations, or LSCO, now requires division staffs to exercise their ability to lead multiple brigades and thousands of Soldiers simultaneously to meet higher headquarters, allied, and national mission priorities.

The nation has not been truly involved in a LSCO fight since World War II, and the New York National Guard’s 42nd Infantry Division is ensuring it thoroughly prepares leaders and staff for the next fight. They are doing so through realistic, challenging, comprehensive training, as they exhibited during their recent Warfighter 25-3 exercise at Fort Indiantown Gap, Jan. 29 to Feb. 6, 2025.

With LSCO, the Rainbow Division has the tremendous responsibility for coordinating the actions of multiple infantry, armor, sustainment, aviation and various other types of brigades in a battle with more than 10,000 Soldiers and billions of dollars worth of equipment over hundreds of miles of terrain. However, placing those assets on the ground just to train the division headquarters is not practical or realistic.

So, the question arises: how can the Army train a division headquarters to lead such a large operation without actually placing thousands of real Soldiers and billions of dollars worth of equipment in the field? The answer is a highly detailed and realistic virtual war simulator focusing on command and control rather than large numbers of troops training in the field.

The Warfighter simulation evaluates the division staff’s ability to develop plans and proficiency in responding to virtual battlefield scenarios. Carson Davis, the support

team manager with the Combined Armed Center's Mission Command Training Program, explained there are primarily four different simulations taking place at the same time within the WARSIM, and those simulations all get filtered into a single system before going through the mission command adapter that simulates the Army mission command systems.

Computer-based simulation trains 42nd Inf. Div. headquarters under realistic war conditions

"It takes all the simulation language, digital language, and it converts it, or translates it, into mission command language," he said. "So it goes from the simulation, all filters into that one tiny server with mission command, and then it goes to my guys, and that's what we push out, so (the training audience) can actually see what's in the simulation."

Davis explained that the WARSIM is extraordinarily detailed and mimics the real world, down to the terrain features, the types of weapons systems used, their capabilities, and how engagements with the enemy are determined.

"Like (with) a tank, there's so many things you can (and can't) do," he said. "You can make a fighting position for it. If you try to drive it up certain slopes, it won't go. It does a lot of things a normal tank can and can't do. There are a lot of things that the WARSIM does that are very, very accurate. And that accuracy is what makes the Warfighter realistic. The more accurate the simulation is, the more realistic the Warfighter is."

Reconnaissance also plays a vital role in the WARSIM. If the enemy has not been confirmed by any of the friendly capabilities, whether via drone recon or having eyes on by friendly forces, the division's mission command system will not visually represent that enemy.

Computer-based simulation trains 42nd Inf. Div. headquarters under realistic war conditions

"You can template in (the mission command system) a bad icon where you think the enemy's at," Davis said. "But those are just templated, 'this is where I think they are.' In the war sim, you can dismount a person and put them on top of a hill, and if he sees that enemy tank, it will register as a red icon, so that will be a confirmed enemy location. But you have to see it in the simulation (to be confirmed)."

For the training audience, the information they receive from the simulation is an accurate replication of what they would see during actual combat operations, ensuring the training they conduct on mission command effectively prepares the division staff to deploy and successfully conduct operations when called upon.

“If it were to do this for real in a conflict zone, we would still be in that (command post) environment,” said Col. Andrew Couchman, the division’s operations officer and Brooklyn, New York native. “Even though the people that were commanding the down trace units and the Soldiers, they’ll be out on the on the front lines, but we would still be in that command post environment to have to control such a wide network, wide area of operation that has all these Soldiers under them.”

The WARSIM “does a fairly good job of replicating what it would be like: the science behind the Warfighter,” Couchman added. “Of course, there are the other aspects of it, like the emotion of having real Soldiers die versus ones and zeroes, but generally, it gives you the tools needed to make it realistic in a virtual environment to train as a headquarters.”

The more than week-long exercise put the division’s staff to the test, with weeks of planning ahead of time and thorough coordination amongst the many staff sections across the division and down to the multiple brigade headquarters. The staff conducted their detailed planning no differently than they would have had it been a real-world operation, which has been key to a successful Warfighter.

“It’s pretty amazing to watch a staff that comes from other jobs, civilian jobs, and then put on a uniform, have to quickly transition and become military members and also adapt that kind of really stressful environment,” Couchman said. “Then, of course, the growth is just monumental. Just the transition from that early stage, kind of fumbling around and trying to figure out our way, to an actual staff that’s performing and making each other better. It’s incredible in such a short amount of time.”

Computer-based simulation trains 42nd Inf. Div. headquarters under realistic war conditions

On top of the mandated training requirements placed on the division from the Army, the senior leadership also added additional tasks not required by higher but still vital to the division’s success during real-world operations, such as the location of the main command post and conducting a command post “jump,” where the location is rapidly moved from one location to another during operations.

Divisions establish their command posts using locations and facilities that are readily available. During LSCO, this can mean setting up in an abandoned building in the area of operations, using organic equipment such as satellite communications and power generators, and relying on sufficient supply movements to support the division staff. For Warfighter, the division elected to establish their command post at Fort Indiantown Gap’s Combined Arms Collective Training Facility, a 12-building training facility designed to replicate an urban environment.

“There was no requirement we had to do that,” Couchman said. “We could have stayed in a big warehouse with open space comfortably. But we decided to really

replicate what it would be like in LSCO, where it is a little more remote, you're taking over buildings that are in the middle of the countryside, and you'd have to build power, and you might suffer in the cold."

At the end of the long and demanding mission command exercise, the Troy, New York-based division headquarters succeeded in their final major task prior to their upcoming mobilization later this year. Couchman contributes the division's success at Warfighter to the staff's professionalism, experience and ability to work together under periods of high stress.

"It was amazing to see the Rainbow Division come together from all over the place," he said. "A lot of us have barely known each other for that long, especially when you just look at drill days. We've only known each other for a total of 12 days when you look at six drills. When you look at the progress from the train up to where we are now, it's pretty incredible. And when you compare it to an active-duty division that trains every day, it really shows you the strength of the personnel that we have."

https://www.army.mil/article/282941/computer_based_simulation_trains_42nd_infantry_division_hq_under_realistic_war_conditions

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