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[Gun detectors coming to NYC subway as transit system sees sharp drop in crime:](#)
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[NYC subway crimes down by double digits, officials tout surge of National Guard & police into transit system:](#)
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Armories

Two years after National Guard's exit, historic Ogdensburg Armory still vacant

Yahoo.com, July 17, 2024 :

Jul. 16—OGDENSBURG — Two years after the New York National Guard pulled out of the historic armory, the 225 Elizabeth St. building remains vacant.

In June 2022, 30 members of the 108th Infantry Regiment of the New York National Guard were relocated to Morrisonville, leaving the armory empty.

The state Division of Military and Naval Affairs declared at the time that it no longer required the armory for military purposes and named the property as excess.

Owned by the state, the property has not seen any interest, according to Joseph A. Brill, public information officer for the New York Office of General Services.

"There has been no movement on this property, and there are currently no plans for its use by another agency," Brill wrote in an email.

He added that there have been no recent inquiries from the city of Ogdensburg about acquiring the armory.

The property will continue to be maintained by the Division of Military and Naval Affairs, which is "checking on it about once a week," according to Brill.

Brill previously said that the DMNA will be responsible for maintaining the armory until a closing with a new owner occurs, then OGS will administer the transfer.

According to historical records, the city's New York State Armory was constructed between 1897 and 1898 and it was designed by Isaac Perry, the same state architect who drew up the plans for the St. Lawrence State Hospital which is now known as the St. Lawrence Psychiatric Center.

The lower levels were constructed of Ogdensburg limestone taken from the Nevins quarry on Riverside Drive, while the upper levels were made from Potsdam sandstone. It has two turrets and two large towers and records state "the towers and turrets are battlemented. The narrow windows shaped like castle windows give the building the appearance of an old fortified chateau."

The Armory was originally built for the 40th Separate Company under Capt. Frank Chapman who oversaw 90 men.

"Since its opening in 1898, military units, draftees and volunteers have assembled here before departing for service," records state. "The Armory is not only historically significant for its association with American military history but also in particular the history of the National Guard."

Ogdensburg's armory was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1995.

<https://www.yahoo.com/news/two-years-national-guards-exit-035900132.html>

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Civil Support Teams

NY Guard Civil Support Teams Learn from Brazilian Counterparts

NationalGuard.mil, by Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Pietrantoni, 138th Public Affairs Detachment, July 18, 2024 :

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL - Thirty-five New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen worked with Brazilian soldiers to secure a major soccer tournament from a chemical, biological or radiological attack.

The members of the New York National Guard's 2nd and 24th Civil Support Teams, who specialize in identifying chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons, spent July 8-12 practicing their craft at Rio's Maracanã Stadium.

The New Yorkers worked with members of the Brazilian Army's 1º Batalhão de Defesa Química, Biológica, Radiológica e Nuclear, which translates into English as the 1st Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense Battalion.

These Soldiers provided support for security missions when Brazil hosted the soccer World Cup in 2014 and the Summer Olympics in 2016.

The exercise simulated a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attack — known as CBRN — during a soccer match at the stadium, which is home to the Brazilian soccer club Flamengo F.C.

Lt. Col. John Giroux, the commander of the 2nd CST, said this training is relevant because the final matches of the 2026 Soccer World Cup tournament will be held at the New York New Jersey Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey, and the two civil support teams expect to provide support.

“As we look forward to hosting in the U.S., especially in New York for the World Cup finals in 2026, we will take the lessons, skills and partnership we learned here to ensure our spectators have the safest World Cup possible,” Giroux said.

The Brazilians, he said, “have extensive experience in world-level events such as the World Cup and Olympics.”

The 2nd CST is based at Stratton Air National Guard Base outside Schenectady, New York, while the 24th CST is based at Fort Hamilton in New York City.

Brazilian Army Lt. Col. Luiz Bifano, the commander of the 1st Battalion, said his Soldiers enjoyed training with the New York National Guard Soldiers.

“The training was a great insight on how to work as a team in a small unit with high skills and a high level of equipment and preparation,” Bifano said.

During the week, both units worked together in CBRN tasks, including surveillance, reconnaissance, sampling and decontamination. The training included a simulated attack at the stadium.

Americans and Brazilians taught classes on CBRN skills and equipment and demonstrated how they do their jobs.

Staff Sgt. Raven O’Neil, a member of the 24th CST, helped demonstrate the hasty decontamination. This is the method used to run a small number of people through the decontamination line in case of an attack.

“The Brazilian soldiers are accustomed to running over 200 people through their decon line, so they were eager to learn something new and different, which made it exciting for us to teach,” O’Neil said.

“It’s been tough overcoming the language barrier, but honestly, it’s been easier than I originally thought because a lot of our CBRN training is a universal language that we both speak despite a different uniform,” O’Neil said.

The training before the event helped to build a familiarization with each unit’s equipment and capabilities, Brazilians and Americans said.

Capt. Salvatore Scannapico, the science and medical officer assigned to the 2nd CST, demonstrated different sampling techniques.

“We really were able to share different tactics and procedure ways to acquire a sample and break down how similar and different the equipment we use in the field,” Scannapico said. “We’re genuinely building a stronger partnership through learning and those bonds are only going to better help us work with each other in the future.”

The New York National Guard has been training with Brazilian Soldiers and Airmen since signing a State Partnership Program agreement with Brazil in 2019.

Under this Department of Defense National Guard Bureau program, Guard Soldiers and Airmen share their skills with, and learn from, military personnel in 106 nations.

New York also has State Partnership Program agreements with the Republic of South Africa and Sweden.

<https://www.nationalguard.mil/News/State-Partnership-Program/Article/3842635/ny-guard-civil-support-teams-learn-from-brazilian-counterparts/>

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NY National Guard civil support teams learn from Brazilian counterparts

Army.mil, By Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Pietrantoni July 18, 2024:

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL— Thirty-five New York National Guard Soldiers and Airmen spent a week in Rio De Janeiro learning how to help secure a major soccer tournament from a chemical, biological, or radiological attack from Brazilian Soldiers.

The members of the New York National Guard's 2nd and 24th Civil Support Teams, who specialize in identifying, chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons, spent July 8-12 practicing their craft at Rio's Maracanã Stadium.

The New Yorkers worked with members of the Brazilian Army's 1º Batalhão de Defesa Química, Biológica, Radiológica e Nuclear, which translates into English as the 1st Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defense Battalion.

These Soldiers provided support for security missions when Brazil hosted soccer's World Cup in 2014 and the Summer Olympic in 2016.

The exercise simulated a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attack – known as CBRN--during a soccer match at the stadium, which is home to the Brazilian soccer club Flamengo F.C.

This training is relevant because the final matches of the 2026 Soccer World Cup tournament will be held at the New York New Jersey Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey and the two Civil Support Teams, called CSTs for short, expect to provide support, explained Lt. Col. John Giroux, the commander of the 2nd CST.

“As we look forward to hosting in the U.S. especially in New York for the World Cup finals in 2026, we will take the lessons, skills and partnership we learned here to ensure our spectators have the safest World Cup possible,” Giroux said.

The Brazilians, he said, “have extensive experience in world-level events such as the World Cup, and Olympics.”

For these reasons, he jumped on the opportunity to train with their Brazilian counterparts, Girouz said.

The 2nd CST is based at Stratton Air National Guard Base outside Schenectady, New York, while the 24th CST is based at Fort Hamilton in New York City.

Brazilian Army Lt. Col. Luiz Bifano, the commander of the 1st Battalion, said his Soldiers enjoyed training with the New York National Guard Soldiers.

“The training was a great insight on how to work as a team in small unit with high skills and a high level of equipment and preparation,” Bifano said.

During the week both units worked together in CBRN related tasks, including surveillance, reconnaissance, sampling, and decontamination. The training led up to a simulated attack at the stadium.

Americans and Brazilians taught classes on CBRN skills, equipment and demonstrated how they do their jobs. This included training on standard operating procedures and communications procedures.

Staff Sgt. Raven O’Neil, a member of the 24th CST, helped demonstrate the hasty decontamination. This is the method used to run a small number of people through the decontamination line in case of an attack.

“The Brazilian soldiers are accustomed to running over 200 people through their decon line, so they were eager to learn something new and different which made it exciting for us to teach,” O’Neil said.

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The training prior to the event helped to build a familiarization with each unit’s equipment and capabilities, both Brazilians and Americans said.

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The New York National Guard has been conducting training with Brazilian Soldiers and Airmen since signing a State Partnership Program agreement with Brazil in 2019.

Under this National Guard program, Guard Soldiers and Airmen share their skills with, and learn from, military personnel in 106 nations.

New York also has a State Partnership Program agreement with the Republic of South Africa and on July 12, New York National Guard leaders signed an agreement with Sweden’s military.

https://www.army.mil/article/278141/ny_national_guard_civil_support_teams_learn_from_brazilian_counterparts

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Emergency Response

Longstanding churches among structures damaged in Rome tornado

Spectrum News, July 17, 2024 :

Many homes, businesses and landmarks in Rome were damaged or destroyed in Tuesday’s tornado. Longstanding churches also suffered significant damage from the storm, causing concern among nostalgic residents.

“These are churches that we grew up in and we did our first Communion. We went to church every Sunday, did our confirmation. We’ve had weddings. We’ve had funerals that mean something. And all of a sudden, to have all of this annihilated, is going to be difficult,” said Michael Uvanni, owner of Michael J. Uvanni Interiors.

St. Mary’s Church in Rome is no longer used for worship, but seeing it damaged and in such condition was still a tough thing for many Romans to accept. The buildings next to it opened as a wellness clinic just last year. Now, it’s hard to know what the future holds.

“It’s hard to anticipate right now what we can do because, you know, structural, we don’t know what the structural damage of anything is right now,” said Della Pray, the project manager of Kabari Wellness Institute.

Clean up was continuing throughout the city, inside and outdoors.

“You can see that the storm came right up into this room, and it took that large painting on that wall and smashed it over here. These are some of our most exquisite pieces,” Uvanni said.

Residents and business owners say it’s overwhelming, and not having power hurts.

“They just don't seem like there's enough resources out here right now to help us,” said business owner Rick Pimpinella.

“We need all the help we can get,” said Uvanni said.

“To this community, we will not abandon you,” Gov. Kathy Hochul said at a press conference on Tuesday. “We'll continue to bring the resources from the state of New York now and for as long as it takes.”

Hochul said she was deploying 50 members of the Army New York National Guard to the area for cleanup.

<https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/buffalo/news/2024/07/17/churches-among-structures-damaged-in-rome-tornado>

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For Information

Opinion: Overuse of National Guard threatens to undermine preparedness

Federal Times, July 16,2024 :

This article is provided for your information

Among the branches of the United States military, the National Guard is unique. It serves as a reserve force ready to be deployed to combat overseas and it is also available to help respond to natural disasters and other emergencies here at home.

If used wisely, the National Guard is an invaluable asset to our national security and well-being. However, we have become concerned that the Guard is being used for an increasing number of missions outside of its core functions. That is why we, along with a group of other retired civilian and military leaders, recently published a statement attempting to help recalibrate the use of the National Guard.

In recent years, Guard members have been asked to execute an increasing variety of nontraditional missions. They have patrolled the border, taught in high schools, guarded prisons, filled in for civilian police officers, and served in a range of situations that stretch the definition of “emergency.” More and more often, governors and presidents — from both political parties — call upon the Guard to address problems that are typically handled by civilian authorities.

These missions come at a considerable cost to state and federal taxpayers, and they run the risk of diverting resources that could be dedicated to training and preparedness for core National Guard responsibilities as the primary combat reserve of the United States Army and the United States Air Force.

Even in the absence of new obligations, much is asked of National Guard members. They must be trained, equipped, and ready, when called upon, to perform a variety of different functions: to serve in combat overseas, to help respond to violent civil unrest at home and to provide assistance during domestic natural and manmade disasters. Maintaining readiness for these traditional functions is no small task, particularly given that most National Guard members balance their service obligations with full-time civilian jobs and with commitments to their families and communities.

The individual men and women of the National Guard want to be of service to their communities, and we are confident that they will execute their assigned missions to the best of their ability, no matter the task. At a certain point, however, overuse of the National Guard threatens the Guard's ability to effectively execute core missions — missions that protect lives and property. It threatens the Guard's readiness and availability to respond to genuine disasters or to be deployed to combat overseas.

And it threatens the public trust in the National Guard and the broader United States military. Often, nontraditional deployments coincide with a particular political agenda, and that appearance, warranted or not, can erode the trust that the Guard depends on to effectively execute its missions.

These are the considerations that we and our colleagues emphasize in our statement: mission preparedness, overall readiness and public trust. We think that these values should guide determinations about when to deploy the National Guard and should counsel in favor of restraint when there are other tools available.

Having helped inform decisions to deploy the National Guard, we fully recognize that they can be challenging. Often, it is state governors who must take on the considerable responsibility of deploying their National Guard units, and they must do so based on their own understanding of the need and the risks. Civilian political leaders are the ones who ultimately make these decisions. Voters are the ones who ultimately hold them accountable.

It is for this reason that we offer principles, not prescriptions. We hope that these principles will help spark a thoughtful public conversation about the appropriate use of the National Guard. And we welcome engagement and feedback both from those of you in uniform and from interested members of the American public.

Alongside our fellow retired civilian and military leaders at Count Every Hero, we are committed to doing our part to ensure that the National Guard remains a strong and ready military force worthy of the faith of the American people. We hope our elected

leaders will do their part by endeavoring to deploy the National Guard only in the best interests of their states and our nation.

Daryl Bohac, a retired general, formerly served as Adjutant General for the Nebraska National Guard. Joseph Lengyel, a retired general, served as the 28th chief of the National Guard Bureau. Craig McKinley, a retired general, served as the 26th chief of the National Guard Bureau. Allyson Solomon, a retired general, formerly served as Assistant Adjutant General for the Maryland Air National Guard. Paul Stockton formerly served as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense and Americas' Security Affairs.

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States pledged hundreds of troops and spent millions to help Texas at the border so far this year

**Missouri Independent, July 15, 2024 ::
Jul 19, 2024**

This item is included for your information.

More than a dozen Republican governors gathered in Eagle Pass in February, heeding a call from Texas Gov. Greg Abbott to confront what he labeled “President Joe Biden’s border crisis.” The governors, along with other GOP state leaders, vowed to send another round of National Guard troops from their states to the Texas-Mexico border.

With shifts in pandemic-era federal border policies, there’d been a sharp increase in migrant encounters in the latter half of 2023. But then January saw a steep 50% drop.

Still, the governors told their constituents that they needed to send more people to assist Texas in fending off an “invasion,” as both Abbott and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis have called it, or fight drug smuggling. But the deployments have been widely criticized as political grandstanding — opportunities to take photos near personnel in uniform on the border while feeding nationalism and fear during an election year.

States Newsroom outlets across the country have tracked state deployments and expenses so far this year as part of a collaboration with Texas Tribune and Stateline to get a sense of what becomes of these promises, and what those deployments look and feel like at the border.

States generally chip in anywhere from five to 200 troops for deployments that can last anywhere from a couple of weeks to months. Typically, the funding comes from state budgets and state emergency funds.

The federal government also deploys thousands of National Guard members to the border year-round.

Gen. Daniel Hokanson, the chief of the U.S. National Guard Bureau who will retire Sept. 1, told the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense in mid-June that nearly 2,500 troops were serving at the southwest border under federal command. Sen. Jon Tester, a Democrat from Montana, asked the general about the impact of this deployment on the guard's other duties.

"There is no military training value for what we do [on the border]," Hokanson said. "For our guardsmen there, they might as well be deployed to Kuwait or somewhere overseas, because they're away from their families. They're there doing mission sets that are not directly applicable to their military skill set. That time, I think, would be better utilized building readiness to deter our adversaries." — Marisa Demarco

STATE DEPLOYMENTS

Texas

Gov. Greg Abbott launched Operation Lone Star in March 2021, soon after Biden took office. Since then, the state has deployed thousands of people from the Texas Department of Public Safety and Texas National Guard along the roughly 1,250-mile border it shares with Mexico.

It was an unprecedented activation of soldiers for a state operation. Usually the federal government, not a state, deploys troops for long-term assignments and gives them much more notice. Soon after the operation began, guard members began to complain about being paid late or not at all, living in cramped mobile homes and feeling underutilized.

Today, 97% of troops currently on the mission volunteered to be deployed, according to guard leadership. The state also just finished building the first phase of a new base in Eagle Pass to house National Guard members. The base is designed to house up to 2,300 people.

Texas has spent more than \$11 billion on Operation Lone Star to date, but it's not clear how much of the money has been spent on the National Guard deployment, and the state hasn't divulged exactly how many people have been sent to the border. — Alejandro Serrano / The Texas Tribune

Missouri

When Gov. Mike Parson announced a deployment of 200 National Guard troops and 22 state highway patrol officers in February, he cited a visit to the region that he said showed it was a “crisis.” There has been some debate over the deployment, which was funded in part by a special appropriation bill.

During a February budget hearing, lawmakers focused on short-staffing at the state patrol, noting that the officers were being sent despite being 132 short of full strength.

“Does that not put Missouri at risk when we’re sending even more troopers away when we already have a deficit of 132?” asked state Rep. Deb Lavender, a Democrat from Manchester.

Col. Eric Olson, superintendent of the patrol, said only volunteers were going, and they had been selected from eight of the patrol’s nine regions.

“Geographically, we spread that out,” Olson said, “and we feel like we will be able to manage this event as well as take care of our duties here at home.”

There was very little opposition to the actual spending once troopers were deployed in March. National Guard members were sent on rotations of 50 over three months at a cost of \$2 million, while patrol officers were split into two teams and sent to Texas for 32 days at a cost of \$206,000. The deployments were set to end on June 13. The money came from the state’s general fund.

The Missouri budget for the fiscal year that began July 1 included \$8.8 million to continue deployments for a full year, but Parson has said he will not extend the deployment and vetoed \$6 million of that appropriation.

“We don’t need that money,” he said. “I think that was more of a political statement people were trying to make.”

In his letter to lawmakers explaining the veto, Parson wrote the National Guard’s deployment to the southern border has already concluded. If there is a need to deploy again, Parson wrote, there is enough money already in the budget to “support another short-term mission.” — Rudi Keller / Missouri Independent

South Dakota

South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem’s deployment of 60 National Guard troops in the spring is the state’s fifth deployment to the U.S.-Mexico border since 2021.

Noem initiated three of the deployments in response to calls for help from Texas, and the other two were federal.

One of the deployments Noem initiated was mostly funded by a \$1 million donation from Tennessee billionaire Willis Johnson. That donation and Noem's use of it sparked criticism from Democrats, who said it gave the appearance that the South Dakota National Guard is available to do the political bidding of wealthy donors.

Noem funded the remaining costs and the two other deployments she initiated with money from the state's Emergency and Disaster Fund, despite a state law that defines emergencies and disasters as events "in any part of the state." She declined to deploy guard troops to flood-ravaged areas in South Dakota in late June. Her use of the fund has drawn bipartisan criticism from some legislators, but a majority endorsed the practice during the last legislative session.

Previous deployments have cost the Emergency and Disaster Fund at least \$1.3 million, and \$1.5 million is budgeted from the fund for this year's. No further deployments are planned yet. — Seth Tupper / South Dakota Searchlight

Montana

After Montana Gov. Greg Gianforte made a trip to the border earlier in the year, he declared that he would send members of the Montana National Guard to Texas at the request of the Texas governor, a fellow Republican.

Ten troops were called to active duty for vehicle repair and maintenance.

They returned home in mid-May after a monthlong deployment, where Gianforte met with them for breakfast, and he declared May "Military Appreciation Month" in Montana.

Despite public document requests being filed in April, no information has yet been released on the expense. — Darrell Ehrlick / Daily Montanan

Indiana

Indiana's National Guard has estimated the cost of a 10-month, 50-member deployment at \$7 million. The troops were called up under state active duty, meaning Indiana pays their salaries. That budget also covers transportation, supplies and maintenance.

Guard officials have said they will use existing appropriations in their budget for the costs.

Gov. Eric Holcomb made the move this year — his last in office. He didn't need legislative action. There has been little debate on the matter. Republican lawmakers issued supportive statements, and Democrats have been opposed.

Troops deployed in early April. That month, an Indiana guard member assigned to Operation Lone Star shot a migrant who was attacking another migrant, according to a U.S. Border Patrol bulletin.

“I am beyond thankful to this individual who potentially saved two lives by defending them and themselves. I'm reassured that the training that they got before they deployed and assumed this active duty on the southern border was beneficial,” Holcomb told reporters on a Zoom. — Niki Kelly / Indiana Capital Chronicle

New Hampshire

New Hampshire National Guard troops have been deployed to the southern border twice since 2020, each time for about a year and by the federal government. From April through early June, 15 soldiers from New Hampshire were stationed at a Texas National Guard base camp in Del Rio, about an hour from Eagle Pass.

Two months earlier, during an hourlong discussion with Gov. Chris Sununu, the Joint Legislative Fiscal Committee's Democrats in February asked the governor how much of an impact 15 National Guard members could have at a border crossing seeing thousands of migrants a day.

Sen. Lou D'Allesandro, a Manchester Democrat, said a better response could come from Republicans in Congress who blocked a border deal that cleared the U.S. Senate. “Although it's a wonderful thought in terms of support, it seems to be that the real issue is that Congress isn't funding what they should be funding to protect the southern border,” D'Allesandro told Sununu.

The committee's Republicans praised Sununu's plan to send troops to the border. Senate President Jeb Bradley noted the governor had requested the funding for the 2024 deployment under the civil emergency law to address the state's drug overdose deaths, which have topped 400 yearly since 2015.

The three-month deployment cost the state \$850,000, which covered salary and benefits. New Hampshire paid the Texas National Guard \$200 a day per soldier for room and board, as well as other expenses at its base in Del Rio. — Annmarie Timmins / New Hampshire Bulletin

Idaho

In Idaho Gov. Brad Little's State of the State Address in January, he announced he would send two teams of five state police troopers to the border to "learn the best tactics to respond to those who smuggle and abuse vulnerable people."

The 10 officers were sent to the border in April for three weeks and partnered with the Texas Department of Public Safety for the mission.

"We are determined to utilize this training to enhance our efforts in Idaho and to combat human trafficking with utmost efficiency," Idaho State Police Col. Kedrick Wills said. "It's vital for our troopers to face repeated real-world scenarios to sharpen their skills."

The governor this year recommended \$200,000 to the Idaho state police budget to send troopers to the Texas-Mexico border for training. The total cost of the trip was \$205,655.

One state police officer said the majority of the time was spent along the border wall assisting the Texas Department of Public Safety and the National Guard with traffic stops and arrests, then turning people over to the Border Patrol. — Mia Maldonado / Idaho Capital Sun

Nebraska

Republican Gov. Jim Pillen has continued a push by his predecessor, former Gov. Pete Ricketts, to send state-paid law enforcement and National Guard members to the Texas border with Mexico.

In 2023, Pillen sent 61 National Guard members and 10 state troopers to the border, and Ricketts sent 32 state troopers to the Del Rio area in 2021.

This year, Nebraska sent 24 National Guard members for roughly three months from April 1 through June 27. Ten state patrol troopers deployed for two weeks from April 14-28. No additional deployments have been announced.

This year's two border deployments ordered by Pillen cost a combined \$1.27 million. The state says it paid \$1.2 million of that total using interest accrued from the second wave of \$48 million in federal pandemic relief funds that Congress set aside for rental assistance.

State taxpayers covered the remaining \$71,675 from the state's general fund, the Nebraska state patrol confirmed.

Pillen has argued that public safety and national security dictate the need for every state to send help, speaking often about the importance of doing what it takes to

stem the flow of migrants at the southern border. He has dismissed questions about the cost-effectiveness of state efforts.

Pillen, like Ricketts, has faced criticism of his efforts from some Democrats and from groups that advocate for immigrant rights and those representing Latino voices in Nebraska. They argue that his push is political and his rhetoric about crime and drugs at the border contributes to the animosity and fear local Latinos face. — Aaron Sanderford / Nebraska Examiner

Iowa

Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds has deployed National Guard troops and state law enforcement officers to the border multiple times in recent years. There are currently five Iowa National Guard troops in Texas who arrived April 1 and will be there through Sept. 30, providing public affairs assistance and vehicle maintenance for Operation Lone Star. Earlier this year, 110 troops were deployed to the Texas border from April 1 through May 3, assisting the Texas Military Department. Eight Iowa Department of Public Safety troopers and two sergeants went to work with Texas DPS from March 31 through April 27.

The cost of the 2024 border deployment has not yet been released, according to Iowa National Guard officials.

Previous deployments saw 109 National Guard members and 31 Iowa DPS personnel assisting at the border in 2023, and 28 Iowa State Patrol troopers in 2021. While the deployments over the past two years have been financed using federal American Rescue Plan funding, with the 2023 mission costing \$1.93 million, according to the governor, the 2021 deployment was paid for with \$300,000 in other state funds

Reynolds has also spoken in favor of the 2023 Texas law — currently under injunction — allowing state law enforcement to arrest migrants suspected of illegally entering the country. She signed into law a similar measure this year that was set to take effect July 1 but is under a preliminary injunction following challenges from the U.S. Department of Justice and civil rights organizations.

The blocked Iowa statute would have also allowed state law enforcement to arrest and charge immigrants if they have been previously deported, removed or denied admission from the U.S., or if they have an order to leave the country. Judges would have been allowed to order people charged with “illegal reentry” crimes to leave the country or face prison time, with state agencies and law enforcement authorized to transport them to U.S. ports of entry to ensure they leave the country.

State Attorney General Brenna Bird appealed the injunction ruling on Iowa's law in June, seeking to begin enforcement. — Robin Opsahl / Iowa Capital Dispatch

Tennessee

Gov. Bill Lee has continued to deploy Tennessee National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border since 2021, when he first sent 300 troops on a yearlong mission.

In March, Lee affirmed he would send two waves of 50 active-duty soldiers as part of Operation Lone Star, in addition to the 123 deployed in October 2023.

State funding for these deployments have ramped up through the years. In fiscal year 2022, Tennessee spent \$500,000. In 2024, it jumped to \$1.4 million. The state government's fiscal year 2025 started July 1, and \$5 million in nonrecurring funds was budgeted. — Holly McCall / Tennessee Lookout

Utah

After Utah Gov. Spencer Cox's February visit to Texas' southern border, he deployed a small number of troops. The Republican governor announced he would send five people from the Utah National Guard engineer battalion to maintain military equipment, plus one sergeant and four officers from the Utah Highway Patrol's Criminal Interdiction Team, which specializes in drug investigations.

The deployment for both groups was scheduled on Feb. 26. The highway patrol team went for 30 days at a cost of \$100,000, while the Utah National Guard battalion was sent for 14 days costing \$50,000. Funding came from the Governor's Office's emergency fund.

Legislative leaders at the helm of the Republican-supermajority Utah Legislature applauded the deployment when it was announced earlier this year, while Democratic leaders pushed back, arguing it shouldn't be Utah's role. Senate Minority Leader Luz Escamilla, D-Salt Lake City, and Senate President Stuart Adams, R-Layton, agreed, however, that Congress and the White House should seek solutions to the nation's broken immigration system.

The Utah Democratic Party criticized Cox for playing a part in "the MAGA Republican party's ongoing political grandstanding in immigration."

Asked whether the governor has sent or will send any additional resources, a spokesperson said, to her knowledge, no additional deployments are promised or

planned. A spokesperson for the Utah National Guard echoed that. — Katie McKellar / Utah News Dispatch

Arkansas

Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders has spent more than \$2 million in state funding to send 120 Arkansas National Guard members to the southwest border twice since taking office in January 2023.

Eighty guard members were deployed for a mission that lasted from June 24 to Aug. 5, 2023, and cost \$1.3 million. This year, another 40 were activated for a \$1 million mission from April 1 to May 30.

Both active-duty missions ordered by the governor were paid for with state funds, said Maj. Cibeles Ramirez-Rodriguez, Arkansas National Guard spokesperson.

Additionally, 50 guard members were deployed to the southwest border from October 2022 to October 2023 for a Title 10 federal mission in support of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Ramirez-Rodriguez said. The state guard also sent 40 members to the southern border in 2021 for 90 days. That mission was primarily to recover and repair vehicles belonging to a Texas task force.

Troops from the Arkansas Guard were deployed between 2006 and 2008 in support of the federal Operation Jump Start under former President George W. Bush, with the state providing more than 750 soldiers and airmen in support of Border Patrol. — Antoinette Grajeda / Arkansas Advocate

Louisiana

Gov. Jeff Landry announced July 1 that engineers with the Louisiana National Guard would deploy in Texas to assist with border security through mid-November. Their assignment extends Louisiana's commitment of 150 personnel from its state militia spread across three 30-day rotations.

Landry said the additional time guard members will spend in Texas will not create an additional cost to taxpayers. State lawmakers approved \$3 million for Operation Lone Star earlier this year, and there is \$800,000 remaining from that allocation, according to the governor's office.

Landry is one of many Republican governors who have sent National Guard troops to Texas in support of Abbott's border policies. In addition to busing migrants to

Democratic-led cities, the Texas governor placed razor wire along the banks of the Rio Grande near Eagle Pass to hinder unauthorized border crossings.

In a letter to legislative leaders, Landry said Abbott and the Texas National Guard leadership requested additional engineering support from Louisiana. The governor said he has worked with Brig. Gen. Thomas Friloux of the Louisiana National Guard and Jacques Thibodeaux of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness "to ensure that this will not impair our ability to mobilize troops here at home if necessary."

Louisiana National Guard members are among the first emergency response personnel put to work ahead of a pending disaster and during the recovery stages. The Atlantic hurricane season started June 1 and lasts until the end of November. — Greg LaRose / Louisiana Illuminator

Georgia

The Georgia Army National Guard has fewer than 20 troops supporting Texas' border operations, according to spokesman Maj. William Carraway.

Carraway said the deployments are paid for through Texas' Emergency Management Assistance Compact and directed questions about funding to the Texas National Guard and Texas governor's office. He declined to give a specific timeline but said the troops likely arrived in early May and that they wouldn't be there long.

"It's a short-term thing," he said. "They're just going over there, and they're coming back. So they're not going to be over there for years or anything like that."

Gov. Brian Kemp announced the deployment in a Feb. 13 press conference in the Georgia Capitol, where he blamed Biden for what he termed a crisis on the southern border. Kemp said the troops will be responsible for assisting with the construction of a forward command post on the border.

Kemp has made multiple visits to the U.S.-Mexico border since he was first elected in 2019 and made immigration a major issue in both of his successful campaigns, suggesting in a 2018 commercial that he may need to round up "criminal illegals" in his big truck. — Ross Williams / Georgia Recorder

Florida

Gov. Ron DeSantis announced on Feb. 1 that Florida would deploy up to 1,000 members of the Florida National Guard and Florida State Guard to assist Texas with Operation Lone Star. That was in addition to the more than 90 officers from the

Florida highway patrol, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Florida Department of Law Enforcement that were already on the border.

A couple of weeks later on Feb. 23, DeSantis announced he would send more troops to Texas for border security — 50 National Guard members and another 76 Florida highway patrol officers.

How many troops were sent or what it cost the state remains unknown. Gov. Ron DeSantis' press office did not respond to requests for comment.

The state budget this year provides nearly \$20 million to “restore and build upon” the Florida State Guard, one of the state agencies that has been sent to deter migrants in Texas and South Florida.

Gov. DeSantis signed measures in 2022 and 2023 that included an additional \$12 million to continue to relocate immigrants to “sanctuary jurisdictions.” This year, there is no funding specifically allocated for those relocations.

A spokesperson for the Florida National Guard said troops have also deployed as part of the federal mission in 2021 and 2023, with the next company set to depart in October and return a year later. — Mitch Perry / Florida Phoenix

FEDERAL DEPLOYMENTS

North Dakota

About 100 members of the National Guard deployed to the southern border in August 2023 under state orders from Gov. Doug Burgum. Members of the 188th Engineer Company, they were integrated into the Texas Department of Public Safety and Military Department for one month as part of Operation Lone Star. The North Dakota Emergency Commission authorized up to \$2.2 million for the deployment through a loan with the Bank of North Dakota. About \$1.7 million was spent.

Since 2021, members of the North Dakota National Guard have supported U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents every October under federal orders through the Department of Defense. North Dakota National Guard members will complete their third yearlong deployment to the southern border in the fall.

The deployed units, consisting of between 100 to 125 soldiers, are tasked with assisting with surveillance efforts, maintenance and other needs, according to the National Guard.

The 142nd Engineer Battalion will head to the southern border in the fall on federal orders under the direction of U.S. Northern Command and Joint Task Force North,

according to a guard spokesperson. The unit will consist of about 50 service members. — Michael Achterling / North Dakota Monitor

Ohio

After a request from Texas' governor, in June 2023, Republican Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine authorized 14 Ohio state highway patrol officers and supervisors to go to Texas to help with border surveillance for two weeks. They were not tasked with making arrests. A spokesperson for DeWine said in May that he did not believe Ohio highway patrol troopers had been down to the border at all in 2024.

Ohio National Guard spokesperson Heidi Griesmer said Ohio troops have had a continuous presence at the border since October 2020.

“Over the past four years, Ohio has deployed approximately 375 Ohio National Guard members to support the Southwest Border operations at the request of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. Northern Command, including Ohio National Guard members who deployed in October 2023 and remain there today,” she said.

For operational security reasons, she said, they would not reveal the number of guard members currently at the border. Nor could she confirm whether there would be future deployments. When asked for the costs, she said they don't have a figure for expenditures.

“Ohio National Guard members' deployments have been paid for by the U.S. Department of Defense,” Griesmer said. — David DeWitt and Marty Schladen / Ohio Capital Journal

Alaska

Alaska plans to send 20 National Guard members and two helicopters to the border as part of the federal Department of Defense's ongoing border mission, according to a spokesperson for Alaska Gov. Mike Dunleavy, a Republican. They are scheduled to support the federal Border Patrol for an estimated nine months, starting in early October. While there are no official orders yet, the state continues to move forward with planning.

This mission is entirely federally funded and not related to Texas's Operation Lone Star, according to Dunleavy's office. The state does not have plans to send the Alaska National Guard to support Operation Lone Star, the governor's spokesperson said.

Dunleavy said in February that he was interested in supporting Texas's operations, but cited the cost as a potential concern. The estimated cost was \$1 million per month to support 100 guard members, and the Legislature did not include funding for this in the annual budget it passed in May, which Dunleavy signed into law in June for the budget year starting in July. — Andrew Kitchenman / Alaska Beacon

Kansas

The Kansas Legislature allocated \$15.7 million to send Kansas National Guard troops to Texas to assist with the U.S.-Mexico border.

Democratic Gov. Laura Kelly vetoed the funding, but she was overridden by GOP supermajorities in both the House and Senate. That means the funding remains in place through fiscal year 2025 but is unlikely to be spent.

“As the Kansas National Guard's commander-in-chief, it is my constitutional authority to direct the National Guard while on state duty,” Kelly said when she vetoed the funding. “It is not the Legislature's role to direct the operations or call out the National Guard.”

The governor also said “lawmakers in Washington must act to solve this issue.”

Still, there are Kansas National Guard troops at the U.S. border as part of federal security efforts, whose deployments are federally funded by the Department of Defense. — Sherman Smith / Kansas Reflector

Michigan

Dave Kennedy, a spokesperson for the Michigan National Guard, said there are no troops deployed to the U.S. southern border, nor any scheduled for fiscal year 2024, which ends Sept. 30. While negotiations are ongoing for the FY 2025 budget, there has been no discussion of additional funding for deployments to that region.

However, that hasn't stopped the Michigan Freedom Caucus, a small group of far-right lawmakers in the Michigan House, from demanding Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer send guard troops to Texas or Arizona.

The legislators banded together during the current session after Republicans moved into the minority in Lansing for the first time since 2010. The caucus says the military personnel are needed to help stop what they referred to as “sabotage” of the nation's borders. Several members also visited the border in February.

Whitmer's office has noted that the Michigan National Guard has made several deployments to assist at the southern border in the past few years as part of federal

operations, during both the Trump and Biden administrations, including 175 members of the 3rd Battalion, 126th Infantry Regiment, who were sent to locations in Fort Bliss, Laredo and El Paso, Texas, from March 2020 to March 2021. — Jon King / Michigan Advance

Pennsylvania

In March, the GOP-controlled Pennsylvania Senate voted along party lines 27-22 to pass a resolution urging Democratic Gov. Josh Shapiro to send Pennsylvania National Guard troops to the U.S.-Mexico border. Introduced by Republican state Sen. Doug Mastriano, the resolution came the same day as a U.S. Supreme Court preliminary ruling that allowed state authorities in Texas to deport people who crossed the border into the U.S.

Mastriano, who ran for Pennsylvania governor in 2022 and lost, argued that immigration was as big a concern for Pennsylvania as it is for border states, noting that in 2006, then-Gov. Ed Rendell, a Democrat, authorized 500 Pennsylvania National Guard soldiers and airmen to deploy to the Texas border on a volunteer basis for “Operation Jump Start” during the George W. Bush administration.

Shapiro ultimately did not send troops. “This issue requires leaders in both parties to step up and deliver real, comprehensive solutions – not more the failed talking points and political grandstanding that have brought us decades without immigration reform,” Shapiro spokesperson Manuel Bonder said. — Peter Hall / Pennsylvania Capital-Star

This article was reported and written in collaboration with The Texas Tribune, a nonpartisan media organization that informs Texans — and engages with them — about public policy, politics, government and statewide issues.

<https://missouriindependent.com/2024/07/15/states-pledged-hundreds-of-troops-and-spent-millions-to-help-texas-at-the-border-so-far-this-year/>

Eagle Pass residents have mixed feelings about sharing their city with the National Guard

San Antonio Current, July 15, 2024 :

This story is included for your information.

Eagle Pass residents have mixed feelings about sharing their city with the National Guard

Texas has sent thousands of soldiers to the border as part of Gov. Greg Abbott's multibillion-dollar initiative Operation Lone Star. No border town has felt their presence more than Eagle Pass.

EAGLE PASS — From a shaded bench off Main Street, next to the city park the state of Texas seized in January for its border operations, Jessie Fuentes sometimes likes to count the number of humvees, Department of Public Safety SUVs and unmarked trucks driven by uniformed soldiers that pass him.

Often, Fuentes said, he loses count.

"You just never wanna see your community change into a militarized zone," said Fuentes, a retired school teacher who now runs a business giving kayak and canoe tours and lessons on the Rio Grande. "It makes you feel hopeless."

Since Gov. Greg Abbott launched Operation Lone Star in March 2021, Texas has deployed thousands of National Guard troops — along with DPS troopers — to the border. The soldiers have patrolled the riverbank with drones and guns, installed countless coils of razor wire along its banks and at least once spied on migrants using WhatsApp. More recently, they have turned to crowd control, trying to contain groups of migrants that have pushed through state barriers and shooting pepper balls to discourage crossings.

To support the operation, 18 other states have deployed roughly 2,400 troops to the Texas-Mexico border in the last two years, Major General Thomas M. Suelzer, leader of the Texas National Guard, testified during a recent state legislative committee hearing.

"In this crisis, every state is now a border state," Suelzer said.

Texas' unprecedented push to secure the border has defied laws and court rulings that say immigration enforcement is a federal responsibility.

In many ways, Eagle Pass has become the focal point of the state's efforts to bolster the border. Texas is building an 80-acre military base with a capacity to house more than 2,000 National Guard troops. The state also took over Shelby Park, where Main Street begins, against the city's wishes and put up a wall of shipping containers strung with razor wire along the river.

People in the city of about 30,000 have mixed feelings about being surrounded by troops. Some agree with the state's Republican leaders that the armed forces — mostly standing at the edge of the river staring at Mexico — are needed to keep migrants from entering the country. Others see it as an unwanted invasion of their tight-knit community by the state.

Either way, they don't have a say about what the state does in Eagle Pass, where Fuentes traces his family's history back 240 years.

He used to launch tours from the public boat ramp in Shelby Park, but that's been reduced to rare trips because the state has limited access to the park, he said. Where he once highlighted the beauty he grew up around, he now shows mostly out-of-town visitors the state's installations — a floating barrier in the river aimed at preventing migrants from crossing, rows of gleaming concertina wire — and talks about how it's affecting the river.

“To me, it's just upsetting that they're messing everything up,” he said. “This is our ecosystem. This is what brings us life.”

At the Eagle Grocery near Shelby Park, 80-year-old Benny Rodriguez, who runs the store with his wife, said he supports the National Guard.

“They mean well, they want to do a good job and we wish them the best of luck,” he said. “All we want is for Eagle Pass to continue striving, providing jobs and for everybody to make a good living.”

Maverick County Sheriff Tom Schmerber said neither he or his 34 deputies interact much with National Guard troops. Their presence in the community benefits the town when soldiers are off duty and spend money at restaurants and stores, he said.

Still, he'd like the state to leave Shelby Park. The city can no longer host celebrations there, people can no longer relax on the riverbank and kids can no longer play soccer, he said.

“It should be given back to the city,” Schmerber said.

In and around the 47-acre park, National Guard troops stand guard at an entrance gate and walk along the riverbank where families used to fish and unwind in the open area near the water. Now the quiet along the river is sometimes broken by the roar of airboats and the occasional chopping of a helicopter's blades as soldiers patrol by water and air.

Eagle Pass was a hot spot for migrant crossings as recently as December, when thousands of migrants entered the country through the city during record migration across the southern border. However, fewer migrants have tried entering the country through Eagle Pass since then. Border Patrol agents in the Del Rio sector, which includes Eagle Pass, recorded the biggest decrease in migrant encounters at the beginning of this year compared to their counterparts throughout the rest of the southwest border.

Texas National Guard members load a boat into a pickup at the boat ramp in Shelby Park in Eagle Pass on Jan. 16, 2024. - Texas Tribune / Eddie Gaspar

Texas Tribune / Eddie Gaspar

Texas National Guard members load a boat into a pickup at the boat ramp in Shelby Park in Eagle Pass on Jan. 16, 2024.

While encounters in the Del Rio sector have dropped 66% from May 2023 to May 2024, the El Paso sector, which includes New Mexico, has seen a smaller 10% drop over the same period.

Earlier this year, large groups of migrants regularly gathered on the Mexican bank of the dry riverbed in El Paso, waiting for an opportunity to cut through the concertina wire and push through so they could surrender and request asylum. Following two mass rushes at one border gate this spring, state troopers arrested hundreds of migrants and charged them with misdemeanor rioting — an unusual move that is now being reviewed by local courts.

National Guard soldiers also began firing pepper balls near migrants, trying to break up groups and deter them from approaching border barriers, according to Guard leadership. Soldiers are trained not to shoot migrants with the projectiles, which contain a chemical that causes irritation to the eyes, nose and throat, but migrants in Ciudad Juárez say they have been hit by the munitions, which left welts and bruises.

In the hours between dusk and dawn on a recent Monday, troops flew a drone overhead looking for migrants hiding in the brush. Others patrolled on foot, looking across the river, where empty gallons of water, shoes and bras left by migrants on their way north littered the dry riverbed.

A few migrants crawled into the U.S after several men cut a hole in concertina wire with a bolt cutter. A moment later, a truck with a wailing siren appeared.

“Get back inside! Hurry up,” a National Guard soldier yelled at several dozen migrants who approached the wire.

“Go back to Venezuela,” another one yelled.

A majority of the group quickly retreated.

Uriel J. García contributed to this story.

<https://www.sacurrent.com/news/eagle-pass-residents-have-mixed-feelings-about-sharing-their-city-with-the-national-guard-35059365>

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New York Air National Guard

Scotia's 139th Aeromedical Squadron best in nation

Times Union, July 15 2024::

Jul 19, 2024

GLENVILLE - The New York Air National Guard's 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron airmen have earned a Best in the Air National Guard Award.

The squadron is an element of the 109th Airlift Wing, based at Stratton Air National Guard Base, Scotia, and this is the second time the 139th has been named the best of the Air National Guard's nine aeromedical evacuation squadrons. The unit was recognized in 2023 as well.

Aeromedical evacuation units are responsible for the in-flight care of patients being transported to the United States or Germany on board Military Airlift Command aircraft.

"It's an honor to be recognized with such a prestigious award twice now" said Lt. Col. Robert Huhn, the commander of the 139th, after he learned his airmen earned the honor. The 139th Aeromedical Squadron was selected for the award based on its accomplishments during 2023, Huhn said.

Those accomplishments included participating in Canada's Exercise Gurrier Nordique in the Arctic and conducting training with their Canadian counterparts; participating in training with Brazilian airmen as part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program; deploying 22 airmen to Antarctica in support of Operation Deep Freeze, the Department of Defense support for Antarctic research; taking part in Angel of the Andes exercise and trained Colombian aeromedical evacuation personnel; participating in exercise Ultimate Caduceus, which tested Defense Health Agency readiness; pioneering training in local hospitals for aeromedical evacuation personnel to improve skills and having 35 airmen take part in real-world medical evacuation missions.

Huhn also praised his airmen for their commitment to unit missions.

"The airmen of the 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron continue to impress and astound me with their contributions to not only the squadrons' mission, vision, and values, but to the entire enroute care enterprise and enlisted aviator community," Huhn said.

The diverse backgrounds and experiences of unit members undoubtedly contribute to their success in delivering medical expertise, even in challenging in-flight environments, Huhn added.

Aid wounded warrior

The seventh annual Upstate Wounded Warrior Vet Run motorcycle ride will benefit New York Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Jacob Pratt of Rensselaer. Registration starts at 9 a.m. Saturday, July 27, and kickstands up is at noon at Brunswick Harley, 1130 Hoosick St. in Troy. The ride will end at Veterans of Lansingburgh Post, 777 1st Ave. in Troy.

Donation is \$20 per rider and passenger. Walk-ins are welcome. A bike is not required to participate. Funds will help Pratt, a crew chief, deal with medical and other expenses as he recovers from injuries suffered along the Mexican border. Pratt was critically injured when his National Guard UH-72 Lakota light utility helicopter crashed. His two New York Army National Guard pilots, Chief Warrant Officers 2 Casey Frankoski of Rensselaer and John Grassia of Schenectady, died in the crash on March 8 along with a Border Patrol agent from Edinburg, Texas.

A ceremony, music and raffles are planned. Vendors will also participate.

Museum ship tours

The USS Slater (DE-766) Cannon-class destroyer escort on the Hudson River is open with guided tours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays at 141 Broadway, Albany. The Destroyer Escort Historical Museum also has a store.

The World War II Navy vessel is one of 563 destroyer escorts that battled Nazi submarines and protected convoys of troops and military supplies shipped on the Atlantic. The destroyer escorts also defended naval task forces from Japanese submarines and kamikaze attacks in the Pacific. During World War II, the Slater had a crew of 15 officers and 201 enlisted sailors.

Admission is \$9 for adults, \$8 for senior citizens 65 and older and \$7 for children ages 6-14. Children younger than 6 are admitted free. For information, call (518) 431-1943.

News of your troops and units can be sent to Times Union, Duty Calls, Terry Brown, Box 15000, Albany, NY 12212 or brownt@timesunion.com.

<https://www.timesunion.com/news/article/scotia-s-139th-aeromedical-squadron-best-nation-19571389.php>

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Air National Guard unit from Scotia receives prestigious honor (video)

WNYT, July15, 2024 ::

The New York Air National Guard's 139th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron in Scotia was named the Best in the Air National Guard for 2024 – out of the branch's nine aeromedical evacuation squadrons.

The 139th is part of the unit based at the Stratton Air Base in Scotia.

It was selected for the award based on its accomplishments last year.

It's the second time the squadron has won the award.

<https://wnyt.com/capital-region-news/air-national-guard-unit-from-scotia-receives-prestigious-honor/>

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New York Army National Guard

New York Army National Guard lists promotions

**River Reporter, July 16,2024:
Jul 19, 2024**

LATHAM, NY — 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.

Francois Espinosa from Bloomingburg, assigned to the Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 258th Field Artillery Regiment, received a promotion May 21 to the rank of specialist.

Nicolas Faust from Woodbourne, assigned to the 1156th Engineer Company, received a promotion May 3 to the rank of 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.

Army National Guard citizen soldiers who serve our 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://www.riverreporter.com/stories/new-york-army-national-guard-lists-promotions,155794>

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State Partnership Program

New York National Guard and Sweden enter military partnership

Stars and Stripes, July 17, 2024 :

The New York National Guard has entered a partnership with Sweden's armed forces that will see the two sides regularly work together.

The deal marks the latest military agreement inked by Sweden, which in March ended two centuries of neutrality by joining NATO amid ongoing concerns over Russia's expansionist ambitions.

Under the National Guard's State Partnership Program, New York and Swedish troops will engage in activities ranging from training exercises and personnel exchanges to disaster response work.

"This partnership will not only enhance operational abilities, it will also strengthen the bonds of friendship and a new understanding between our forces and our countries," Swedish Defense Minister Pål Jonson said in a statement Friday, when the partnership was signed.

New York Gov. Kathy Hochul, in a separate statement, said the capabilities of both militaries were set to improve under the partnership.

There are nearly 100 such partnerships between state National Guards and foreign countries. They began in 1993, when Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were paired with Maryland, Michigan and Pennsylvania, respectively.

The three Baltic countries had recently emerged from the breakup of the Soviet Union and worked with the National Guard troops to reform their militaries.

In May, Sweden's neighbor Finland signed an agreement with the Virginia National Guard.

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 prompted both countries, which had long ruled out NATO membership, to apply to join the bloc.

The militaries of both countries had frequently trained with the alliance before joining and worked with NATO troops in places such as Afghanistan.

In the days leading up to Sweden's signing of its partnership agreement with the New York National Guard, the country's air force participated in NATO operations across the north Atlantic for the first time as a member.

Sweden deployed an ASC 890 aircraft and support staff to Keflavik, Iceland, to conduct surveillance and combat control flights during the NATO summit in Washington last week.

Earlier this week, Sweden and Finland launched their quick reaction alert forces to intercept two Russian fighter planes flying over international waters in the Baltic Sea, NATO said.

<https://www.stripes.com/theaters/europe/2024-07-17/sweden-state-partnership-program-14514217.html>

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New York National Guard inks State Partnership Program agreement with Swedish military

Army.mil, By Petty Officer 1st Class Stephanie Butler, July 15, 2024::

The New York National Guard and Swedish military entered into a joint training agreement on Friday, July 12, as part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program during a ceremony held in New York City's Freedom Tower.

Major Gen. Raymond Shields, the adjutant general of New York and Marcos Soler, New York State's Deputy Secretary for Public Safety signed a document formalizing the agreement with Sweden's Minister for Defence Pal Jonson and Major General Johan Pekkari, chief of the Swedish Defence Staff's Strategy Unit.

"We are ushering in a new partnership for the Empire State, welcoming the Kingdom of Sweden to the New York National Guard's State Partnership Program, New York Gov. Kathy Hochul said. "Our shared values, focus and commitment to the partnership will build relationships and improve capabilities for both our military forces. I look forward to the opportunities ahead."

As part of the partnership, the New York National Guard and Sweden will conduct joint training missions and military exchanges to improve readiness within their respective forces.

The agreement is the latest program that pairs state National Guards with the militaries of foreign countries, including some NATO allies.

“On March 7, 2024, Sweden became the 32nd member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization – NATO,” Shields said. “Allies, friends and partners are stronger together than they are individually – especially against those who want to destroy freedom and independence.”

The partnership is part of the National Guard's State Partnership Program which pairs state National Guard's with the militaries of countries around the world in bilateral training and exchange partnerships.

“This partnership will not only enhance operational abilities it will also strengthen the bonds of friendship and a new understanding between our forces, and our countries,” Jonson said.

“This is a big moment for us, and we are honored to be here.” This partnership will be driven by the mutual need of capability developments,” he continued.

For more than 30 years, National Guardsmen have built enduring connections with foreign counterparts through the State Partnership Program, said General Daniel Hokanson, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau. The program is one of the most productive, cost-effective security cooperation programs the United States has to offer.

We are hoping that being a part of the State Partnership Program, that it will open doors to new venues that will benefit both of our militaries and civil defence authorities, said Maj. Gen. Pekkari.

States such as New York would be the ultimate choice for Sweden, as a result we could not be happier standing here today, Pekkari continued.

The program originally began after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Guard was chosen to help former Soviet states reform their militaries and move toward civilian control of their armed forces as newly emerging democracies.

In 1993, the National Guard State Partnership Program started with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania as they emerged from the breakup of the Soviet Union

Since then, the program has grown to 89 partnerships across 106 nations and every continent – today adding the Kingdom of Sweden to that list.

In recent years, Guardsmen have conducted about 1,000 training exchanges with their foreign counterparts annually, focusing on everything from peacekeeping operations to leadership development, lifesaving techniques and cyber defense.

New York has maintained a State Partnership Program relationship with the South African National Defense Force since 2003 and Brazilian Ministry of Defense since 2019.

The New York National Guard and Israeli Defense Forces also initiated a formalized relationship in 2019 with a bilateral security cooperation agreement and New York signed a statement of intent with Denmark in late 2023 to establish joint training and exchanges in Greenland with their Joint Arctic Command.

https://www.army.mil/article/278012/new_york_national_guard_inks_state_partnership_program_agreement_with_swedish_military

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Subway Mission

Gun detectors coming to NYC subway as transit system sees sharp drop in crime

**Gothamist, July 17, 2024 :
Jul 19, 2024**

Gun-detecting scanners equipped with artificial intelligence will soon come to the New York City subway, Mayor Eric Adams announced Wednesday.

The mayor said during a news conference at Fulton Transit Center that the technology will be set up “in a few locations” within “the next few days.” Over the last two years, Adams and NYPD officials have said they’re considering putting the detectors in subway stations. Similar technology is in use at venues like Yankee Stadium and Citi Field.

Adams did not specify where the technology would be rolled out, or which company would provide the equipment.

The NYPD earlier this year tested scanners from the company Evolv in subway stations. The scanners flag riders carrying metal objects resembling a firearm without requiring anyone to stop or wait in line. Adams has said police are also looking into other companies that provide similar technology.

Legal Aid attorney Diane Akerman criticized the announcement.

“New Yorkers want a safe subway system that works. These scanners will create significant inconvenience, adding congestion and delays to an already overburdened system,” Akerman said in a release.

“Even worse, they are an unjustified invasion of privacy, and put people’s lives — particularly those of our clients, the majority of whom are people of color — at risk from the panic that an inevitable false alarm would induce.”

The news of the metal detectors comes as NYPD data shows subway crime has fallen below pre-pandemic levels — a drop MTA Chair Janno Lieber partly attributed to Gov. Kathy Hochul’s order to deploy hundreds of National Guard soldiers and state police officers into the transit system earlier this year.

Lieber said during the news conference that the city and state “are really making progress” on subway crime and argued the system is not a “dystopian hellscape.”

Major felonies reported in trains and stations since the start of the year fell 11% compared to the same period of 2019 — and nearly 8% compared to 2023, according to NYPD data.

“We are breaking the cycle of crime in our subway system” Adams said. “If you take out the first two years of the pandemic, when no one was on the system, our system is now the safest in over 14 years.”

Adams said subway robberies in particular dropped sharply in 2024, noting they’re at “the lowest point in recorded history.”

MTA officials said several other initiatives have helped reduce crime on the subways, including the installation of more security cameras on trains and in stations and an initiative to send more mental health professionals into the system.

<https://gothamist.com/news/gun-detectors-coming-to-nyc-subway-as-transit-system-sees-sharp-drop-in-crime>

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NYC subway crimes down by double digits, officials tout surge of National Guard & police into transit system

WCS, July 17, 2024 :

NEW YORK -- New York City subway crime numbers continue to fall by double digits, and the governor and mayor are crediting their influx of law enforcement officers into the transit system.

Officials announced Wednesday transit crime is down 44.4% this week compared to the same week last year and down 7.8% year-to-date.

July is also on track to be the sixth straight month of double-digit decreases, officials said.

Transit crime fell by 15.4% in February, 23.5% in March, 23% in April, 10.6% in May and 15.3% in June, according to the mayor's office.

"We've had five straight months of double-digit decreases in overall subway crime after we surged more than 1,000 additional officers into the system in February, and, so far, in July, we're on track for a sixth month of safer subways," Mayor Eric Adams said in a statement. "Today, other than during the pandemic, our transit system is the safest it's been in 14 years, with the lowest number of robberies in recorded history."

The latest crime stats come a week after police reported two separate subway slashings at the Times Square-Port Authority station.

Surge of National Guard and police into the subway

Following a series of attacks on riders and transit workers earlier this year, Gov. Kathy Hochul ordered the National Guard and MTA Police into the system to help with subway bag checks. The city also sent additional officers to patrol cars and platforms.

"Keeping New Yorkers safe is my top priority, and it's clear that the proactive measures we're taking to prevent and reduce violence on our subways are working," Hochul said in a statement Wednesday. "Secure, reliable transit is a necessity for residents and visitors in our great city."

Back in March, the governor laid out a five-point safety plan that included things like banning repeat offenders, installing cameras in conductors' cabins and \$20 million for mental health outreach.

In response to Wednesday's crime numbers, the Riders Alliance once again called on Hochul to invest in the subway system by bringing back congestion pricing.

"With subway crime numbers heading quickly in the right direction, Governor Kathy Hochul needs to address the urgent infrastructure challenges facing riders by starting congestion pricing," Riders Alliance Policy & Communications Director Danny Pearlstein said in a statement. "After major subway meltdowns on the morning and evening commute yesterday, the governor owes the New Yorkers who elected her the modern, reliable, accessible transit system we deserve."

The governor pumped the brakes on congestion pricing just weeks before its start date, raising concerns about the cost to everyday New Yorkers and the economy.

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