



## PRESS RELEASE

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By Sgt. Marisa Lindsay

### **Guardsmen train and engage with the Valdez community**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** – Soldiers with the Alpha Troop, 1st Battalion, 297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron and the 207th Combat Support Company, along with members of the Alaska State Defense Force and other state entities, supported a municipality-led active-shooter exercise in Valdez on Oct 17.

Hosted by the Valdez Police and Fire Department, the exercise provided our Guardsmen with an opportunity to engage with the local municipality and community members.

“Although our Guardsmen generally wouldn’t respond to an active-shooter scenario, during any incident or event we would most certainly be working with other agencies, so it’s imperative that we exercise with those agencies to build a rapport and learn their capabilities,” said Capt. Christopher Dailey, the Alpha Troop, 1-297th R&S commander. “It’s our objective to interact with our various partners and find a way to tie in training on the newly written Rules for the Use of Force guidelines.”

The Rules for the Use of Force, or RUF, is a 13-page document written by the state provost marshal, Maj. Brian Fuchs, and approved by Brig. Gen. Laurie Hummel, the adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. It provides information and guidelines for our Guardsmen based on Alaska state laws and statutes when performing Defense Support of Civil Authorities operations.

“The rules for the use of force doctrine basically lets our Soldiers know what they can and cannot do — as far as self-defense and levels of resistance and control within civilian crowds,” described Dailey. “Our Soldiers are only here providing support for this operation, but it has also served as a segue for me to go over other hypothetical scenarios where we would use the RUF.”

Aside from their support role during the exercise, the Guardsmen, Alaska State Defense Force members and Alaska Army National Guard recruiters held an open house, which provided food, entertainment and static displays for the community of Valdez.

“Valdez is a very military-friendly community, and we want the people of this community to know that we are here to support them,” Dailey said. “Additionally, we would really like to build upon the Guard presence and existing relationship in this area.”

Valdez, home to approximately 4,000 residents, is located on the coast of the Prince William Sound and surrounded by the Chugach Mountain Range. Although the Army Guard has been downsizing many of their rural armories, recently there has been a renewed effort to engage with Alaskan community residents and their emergency management personnel in order to strengthen that relationship and partnership.

“This has been a great weekend — I’ve learned a tremendous amount about communicating with civilians during civil support operations and was able to make the acquaintance of local community leaders,” said 1st Lt. James Tollefson, the executive officer for Alpha Troop, 1-297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron. “Any opportunity that we have to work jointly with local departments and get out into rural Alaska is always a win-win.”

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Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers with A Troop, 1st Battalion, 297th Reconnaissance and Surveillance Squadron and the 207th Combat Support Company support a municipality-led active-shooter exercise held at Valdez Elementary School Oct 17. Hosted by the Valdez Police and Fire Department, the exercise provided Soldiers with an opportunity to engage with local municipality and community members. (Valdez Fire Department photo by Brandy Smelcer)



**PHOTOS**

1. **Attached pdf** includes story and a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.
2. **DVIDS link** includes story and selected full-resolution photos. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is also generally accessible from .mil computers for individual users.)

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/179526/guardsmen-train-and-engage-with-valdez-community#.VifzyU3luUk>