



**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Alaska National Guard**

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## **Alaska National Guard hosts hazardous response exercise**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** — The Alaska National Guard’s 103rd Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team tested its ability to react to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and explosive threats in Anchorage May 1-3 in conjunction with four other civil support teams from other states and several other agencies.

The exercise is held every other year in an effort to bring together first responders and emergency management communities in an all-hazards scenario. Exercise Orca 2017 scenarios provide opportunity for multiple agencies to tandemly react to several notional CBRNE threats, requiring quick reaction and response by the players.

This year, the exercise simulated a state-sponsored terrorist network armed with CBRNE capabilities and located within Anchorage city limits. 103rd WMD-CST responders reacted in support of the U.S. Coast Guard, Anchorage Fire Department, Anchorage Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation at six locations within the Anchorage bowl to protect and defend the home front and citizens.

“This is the third Orca exercise the 103rd WMD-CST has conducted and every year it seems to get bigger with more CSTs and local, state, and federal agencies who want to participate,” said Lt. Col. Richard Mohammadi, commander of the 103rd WMD-CST. “This exercise helps prepare the unknown by allowing all agencies a chance to practice their established processes in responding to an unknown event, thus validating what works and what needs to be improved upon.”

Located in every U.S. state, territory and Washington, D.C., CSTs are a key element of the Department of Defense’s overall program to provide support to civil authorities in the event of an incident involving weapons of mass destruction anywhere in the country. Civil support teams consist of 22 highly skilled, full-time National Guard members who are federally resourced, trained and exercised.

“Exercises such as these are an essential aspect of our mission,” said Mohammadi. “Training ensures seamless integration with other responders allowing us to operate with each other effectively and efficiently.”

Additional agencies who participated in Exercise Orca 2017 were: Alaska National Guard's Joint Operations Center and 176th Civil Engineer Squadron, the Guam-based 94th WMD-CST, Nebraska-based 72nd WMD-CST, North Dakota-based 81st WMD-CST, Rhode Island-based 13th WMD-CST, Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Alaska Public Health lab, Anchorage Police Department (SWAT), Anchorage Fire Department (HAZMAT), Palmer Fire Department, Anchorage Harbor, Providence Hospital, Alaska Native Hospital, Anchorage Water & Wastewater Utility, University of Alaska, Alaska Railroad, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Federal Bureau and Investigation, U.S. Coast Guard, Environmental Protection Agency, Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, JBER Counter-Improvised Explosive Device, National Weather Service and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

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#### PHOTOS:

1. **Attached PDF** includes story and a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.
2. **Flickr link** includes an event album with the complete selection of full-resolution, free downloadable images. (May not be accessible from all military computers.)  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/alaskanationalguard/albums/72157680663999942>
3. **DVIDS link** includes story and selected full-resolution, free downloadable images. (Primarily for media, DVIDS is accessible from .mil computers.) <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/232571/alaska-national-guard-hosts-hazardous-response-exercise>



#### 170502-Z-QK839-0004

The Alaska National Guard's 103rd Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team react to a notional biological terrorist threat at the Alaska Rail Road's main terminal area during an exercise in Anchorage, May 2, 2017. Exercise Orca 2017 provides an opportunity for multiple local, state and federal agencies to tandemly react to a weapons of mass destruction event. The 103rd WMD-CST participates in this exercise to ensure they are trained and prepared to identify and assess hazards during emergencies and incidents. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 2nd Lt. Marisa Lindsay)



**170502-Z-QK839-0003**

The Alaska National Guard's 103rd Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team tests its ability to respond to a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threat in the municipality of Anchorage, May 2, 2017. Exercise Orca 2017 provides an opportunity for multiple local, state and federal agencies to tandemly react to a weapons of mass destruction event. The 103rd WMD-CST participates in this exercise to ensure they are trained and prepared to identify and assess hazards during emergencies and incidents. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 2nd Lt. Marisa Lindsay)



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