

**MEDIA ADVISORY FOR  
November 21, 2017  
17-069**

## **Alaska State Defense Force returns from historical first out-of-state disaster relief mission in Puerto Rico**

**JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska** –After their historical first-time activation for duty outside of Alaska, four Alaska State Defense Force Soldiers return from Puerto Rico just in time for Thanksgiving.

The ASDF team augmented the Alaska National Guard, operating a Joint Incident Site Communications Capability system on the island. The JISCC is a transportable 20-foot mobile system used for communication between military and civilian agencies by providing shared, non-secure Department of Defense and civilian network capabilities.

The ASDF Soldiers, knowledgeable in signal and communications support, provided direct support to accomplish the mission accepted by the Alaska National Guard in support of the Puerto Rico disaster relief effort.

The ASDF, an all-volunteer state militia established in 1984, has about 120 members throughout the state. Their primary role is to augment and support the Alaska National Guard and other state agencies in response to major emergencies. The Soldiers meet monthly and are trained in communications, logistics and emergency shelter management. They were last activated in response to the 2015 Card Street fire on the Kenai Peninsula.

The ASDF members who served in Puerto Rico are from Bethel, Fairbanks, Kenai, and Wasilla.

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### **Details:**

**What:** Alaska State Defense Force returns from Puerto Rico disaster relief mission

**When:** Interview availability is at 2 p.m. today

**Where:** Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson, National Guard armory

**Note:** Media interested in interviewing the ASDF commander should contact Lt. Col. Candis Olmstead at 428-6030 *no later than 12 p.m. today*. Please leave a message with name of news organization and reporter. Plan to meet at the Ft. Richardson gate visitor's center at 1:45 p.m. for escort.



### **171117-Z-ZZ999-1000**

Sgt. (AK) John Bell, assigned to the Alaska State Defense Force, prepares palletized commodities during a humanitarian relief deployment to Puerto Rico, Nov. 17. The ASDF made history with their first-ever deployment outside of Alaska for this mission. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Herbert Avellaneda/Released)