

Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe

Commissioner & Adjutant General

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Alaska National Guard

*Department of Military
and Veterans Affairs*

Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

020-

Sept. 14, 2020

By Sgt. Seth LaCount

Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Alaska Guard members recognized for assisting state lab with COVID-19 testing

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska — From early June, to mid-August, Alaska Air and Army National Guardsmen Capt. Roger Tran and Capt. Jamie Bowden, both assigned to the 103rd Civil Support Team, augmented the Alaska State Public Health laboratory by processing COVID-19 samples for testing.

Over the course of approximately 21 days of testing, totaling more than 148-man hours, the two officers tested 11,426 samples.

“I feel honored, for our unit to have been considered for this important task,” said Bowden, who specializes in medical operations for the 103rd CST. “This mission is right in our wheelhouse and I’m grateful for the opportunity to work alongside, and in support of the community.”

According to the U.S. Center for Disease Control, lab testing is a specialized skill. To be done effectively, it requires people with the extensive training and supervision, along with requisite knowledge and skills pertinent to the lab environment.

Guardsmen in CST units have a specialized capability of responding to a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incident. Bowden and Tran come with a wealth of expertise they’ve acquired throughout their careers. Both servicemembers have completed the U.S. Army’s Analytical Lab Course, which reinforces specific skillsets and techniques they’ve employed in the testing effort, like Polymerase Chain Reactions.

Tran and Bowden were both recognized by the Rasmuson foundation as “Unsung Heroes” for their work during the pandemic.

The Commissioner and Adjutant General of the Alaska National Guard, Maj. Gen. Torrence Saxe gave high praise to both servicemembers for their dedication to excellence.

“While we are proud of the whole team at Military and Veterans Affairs, these two individuals stand out for selfless service, innovative approaches, and going above and beyond,” Saxe said.

In addition to supporting the Analytical Laboratory System operator request by the state, that was coordinated through the State Emergency Operation Center, Bowden and Tran recently participated in

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Their unit's Terminal Proficiency Evaluation which served as a validation for the unit on August 4, 2020.

This type of validation is done once every 18 to 24 months. The training, evaluated by an outside civil support team, replicated a notional scenario where an unknown biological hazard was present, with a request for assistance from the FBI.

"Our team executed this validation with speed and precision, said Tran, who works as the Nuclear Medical Science Officer for the 103rd CST. "It's a testament to the collective attitude and work ethic of our unit as a whole."

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PHOTOS

1. **Attached pdf** includes story and a small selection of low-resolution photos for viewing on screen.
2. **DVIDS link:** <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/380042/alaska-guard-members-recognized-assisting-state-lab-with-covid-19-testing>



Alaska Air National Guard Capt. Roger Tran, the Nuclear Medical Science Officer for the 103rd Civil Support team, tests COVID-19 samples at the Alaska State Public Health laboratory on June 8, 2020. From early June, to mid-August, Tran augmented the Alaska State Public Health laboratory, working closely with state microbiologists, processing COVID-19 samples for testing. Over the course of approximately 21 days of testing, totaling more than 148-man hours, the two officers tested 11,426 samples. (U.S. Army National Guard courtesy photo by Capt. Jamie Bowden)



Alaska Army National Guard Capt. Jamie Bowden, who specializes in medical operations for the 103rd Civil Support team, tests COVID-19 samples at the Alaska State Public Health laboratory on June 8, 2020. Bowden augmented the Alaska State Public Health laboratory, working closely with state microbiologists, processing COVID-19 samples for testing. Over the course of approximately 21 days of testing, totaling more than 148-man hours, the two officers tested 11,426 samples. (U.S. Air National Guard courtesy photo by Capt. Roger Tran)



Alaska Air National Guard Capt. Roger Tran, the Nuclear Medical Science Officer for the 103rd Civil Support team, leads the unit in assessing biological hazards at a validation exercise in Anchorage, Aug. 4, 2020. Tran has been nominated for the Corporation for National and Community Services' "Unsung Hero" award for his work assisting the Alaska State Public Health laboratory during the COVID-19 pandemic. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Seth LaCount/Released)



Alaska Air National Guard Capt. Roger Tran, the Nuclear Medical Science Officer for the 103rd Civil Support team, alongside Alaska Army National Guard capt. Jamie Bowden, a Medical Operations officer for the CST, participate in a unit validation exercise in Anchorage, Aug. 4, 2020. The two Guardsmen have been nominated for the Corporation for National and Community Services' "Unsung Hero" award for their work assisting the Alaska State Public Health laboratory during the COVID-19 pandemic. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Seth LaCount/Released)