



Virgin Islands National Guard

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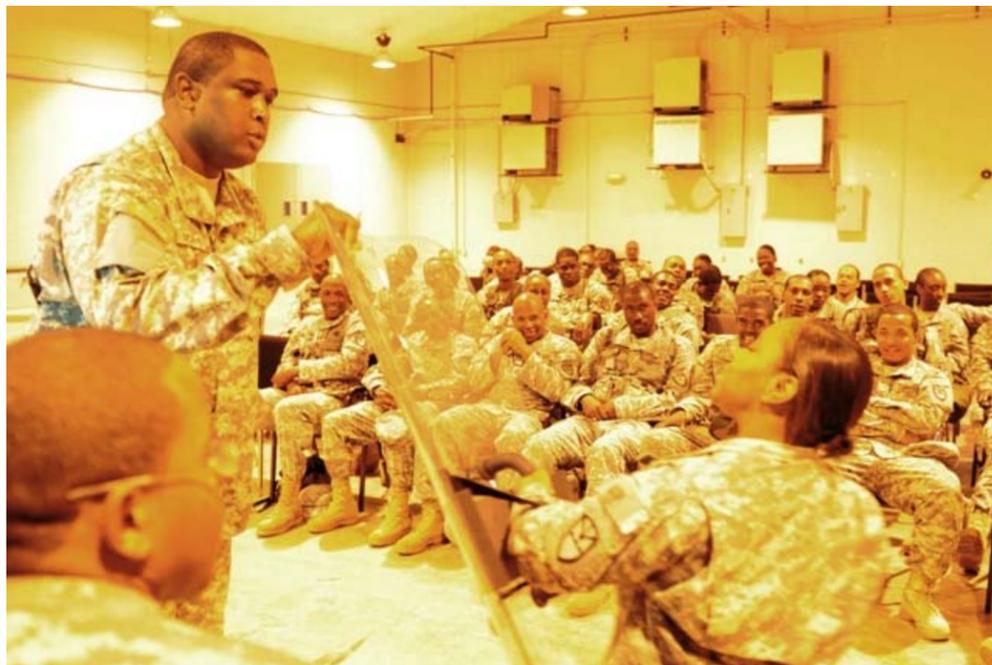
Classroom education encourages psychological and physical protection

Master Resiliency Trainer Master Sgt. Francisco Nazario of the Virgin Islands National Guard conducts a Resiliency Training briefing to troops attending Individuals Weapons Qualifications at Camp McCain, Miss. Mar. 28.

Resiliency Training offers strength-based, positive psychology tools to help soldiers, leaders and families in their ability to grow and thrive in the face of challenges and bounce back from adversities.

Training and information is targeted to all phases of the soldier deployment cycle, soldier life cycle and soldier support system.

VING photo by Sgt. Athneil Thomas



Spc. Alexander Moorhead of the 661 Military Police Detachment 1 plays the role of the aggressor during a Quick Reaction Force training at Camp McCain, Miss. Mar. 28.

VING photo by Sgt. Thomas Tharrington II

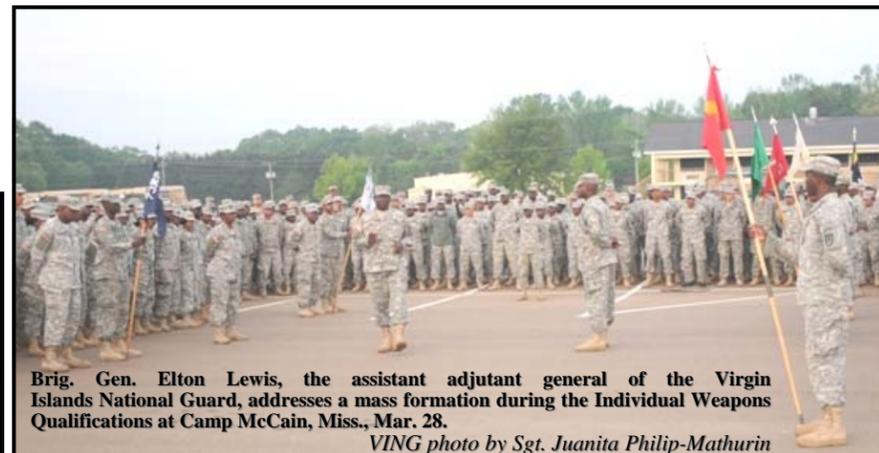


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ATAG stresses training, Soldier care



Brig. Gen. Elton Lewis, the assistant adjutant general of the Virgin Islands National Guard, addresses a mass formation during the Individual Weapons Qualifications at Camp McCain, Miss., Mar. 28.

VING photo by Sgt. Juanita Philip-Mathurin

Sgt. Juanita Philip-Mathurin 51st Public Affairs Detachment

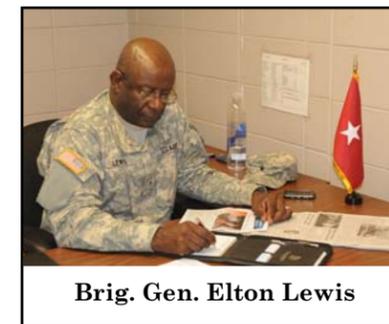
While Virgin Islands National Guard members are busy conducting their required training here at Camp McCain, Miss., the leadership is paying close attention to how the servicemembers interact with each other on this consolidated training.

The Assistant Adjutant General and VING upper level command are closely following the progress of the two VING battalions- 104th Troop Command Battalion and 786th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion as well as the Joint Force Headquarters and the Medical Detachment.

This is not the first time that the VING has mobilized to train. However, it is the first time in a long time that such an event has happened.

"The National Guard [Virgin Islands] as a whole has mobilized under the leadership of Maj. Gen. Ernest Morgan," said Brig. Gen. Elton Lewis, the current assistant adjutant general. "We mobilized the entire unit as a whole to the island of Vieques, Puerto Rico for consolidated training. That event happened more than 18 years ago.

According to Lewis, the idea that the current Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Renaldo Rivera continues that legacy is a plus.



Brig. Gen. Elton Lewis

"It gives the Soldiers an opportunity not only to train together, but to utilize proper equipment, and an opportunity to not only to fire with their assigned weapons, but to familiarize themselves with other weapons within the Guard inventory," Lewis stated.

He went on to point out that it fosters organizational cohesion. "This also gives them [Guard members] an opportunity to meet fellow Soldiers that they may or may not have known from the 786th CSSB and other elements of that battalion."

Lewis commented on how productive the personnel he observed on his site visits were. "We have met at least 90 percent of our requirements, based on my visits to the various training sites; I see no reason why we should not meet TAG's objectives."

There were actually two parallel sets of objectives-- one set by TAG for all individuals to qualify with their assigned weapons, and another by the National Guard Bureau to meet the standard of 80 percent qualified.

If all goes as planned, VING members will not have to wait another 20 years to train again. "I had an opportunity to travel to Camp Shelby, Miss. to explore just that," Lewis explained.

"I think consolidated training is a plus; in the long run it saved us money, and I think that the Troops will greatly benefit from such continued training in the future."

"Not only will it help to maintain tension, but it will also give the Soldiers something to look forward to, in regards to training opportunities," he explained.

The general was generous with his praise of two sections that have stood out during the training. "I would like to acknowledge the Medical Detachment and the food service specialists; they have done an outstanding job in terms of carrying out their mission- medical care- I think that the food has been great as well kudos to the cooks." In parting Lewis had advice to the leadership of the individual units. "I just want to continue to encourage the commanders and first sergeants that one of the key ingredient to integrate into the training is that we have to put Soldiers first."

"We have to take care of the Soldiers first, once we do that, we'll see the productivity in effect and efficiency that is required of Soldiers to fulfill their mission."



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