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DLA Joint Reserve Force

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DLA Joint Reserve Force exercise builds confidence, improves needed skills

More than 170 Defense Logistics Agency reservists from all four military services participated in the fifth annual Joint Reserve Training Readiness Exercise at Fort Eustis, Va., April 4-10. The objective of the exercise was to enhance total force readiness while completing service-required training and promoting teamwork.

"Our goal is to take every service and put them in a pseudo-deployment environment; increase the operations tempo, increase their training, basically put them in an environment that is alien to them," said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Onofrio Margioni, JRF deputy director of training and readiness and JRTRX director. "The JRTRX mirrors exactly what our reservists will be doing at the [Continental United States] Replacement Center and Navy Individual Augmentee Combat Training. The reason why we offer JRTRX is to enhance the training for our troops."



Navy Rear Adm. Raymond English, Defense Logistics Agency Joint Reserve Force director, motivates fellow members of the Joint Reserve Force before beginning the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer during a rollover exercise April 5 at Fort Eustis, Va. Photo by Air Force Capt. Bryan Lewis

Much like CRC and NIACT events, which deploying service members must complete prior to deploying, the JRTRX provides its attendees with theater-specific individual requirements training. This includes the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer, the Engagement Skills Trainer 2000, the Leadership Reaction Course, weapon familiarization and firing range for M-4 and M-9 qualification, improvised explosive device identification and reaction, distribution service instruction, and joint physical training.

"We hit every milestone that we set out with the objective of ensuring our reservists get a taste, and sometimes a bit more than just a taste, of what they'd be experiencing at CRC and NIACT, including an increase in ops temp that would give a familiarization of what to expect in theatre," Margioni said.

Adding flavor to simulated deployment was the successful firing of more than 12,000 rounds of ammunition via M-4s and M-9s. The Sailors, Soldiers and Marines had the opportunity to qualify with the appropriate weapon for their rank. Of those who fired an M-9, 90 percent qualified, with 72 percent qualifying with the M-4. Airmen were given the opportunity to complete weapon familiarization fire, and all attendees had a hands-on opportunity to safely aim and fire a weapon.

Leading the way in qualification on the M-9 range was Navy Reserve Rear Adm. Raymond English, director of the DLA Joint Reserve Force, who reminded participants of the most important aspect of this exercise – taking care of each other.

"Of all the experience and training you gained, the most important thing I hope you've learned and keep with you when you deploy is we take care of each other," English said. "If we take care of each other, everything else will turn out right."

This concept was especially demonstrated on the Leadership Reaction Course and the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer. The LRC challenges teams physically and mentally as they attempt to complete obstacles, such as maneuvering a wounded Soldier across a barrier. Much like the reaction course, HEAT recreates the physical sensation of a vehicle rollover to train personnel how to respond safely and quickly when exiting a compromised vehicle. Five service members must work as a team to safely exit the flipped vehicle.

The participants were intentionally divided into joint teams during the training to further demonstrate the nature of many deployed environments, especially those DLA members find themselves in, DLA Joint Reserve Force officials said.

The JRF's objective is to support the DLA mission worldwide. More than 110 reservists in the JRF are deployed for combat logistic support at any given time. To further improve on needed skills, DLA Joint Reserve Force members completed instruction on current activities by DLA Distribution. Members from this field activity's headquarters in New Cumberland, Pa., completed multiple hours of instruction for all attendees.

"This is more opportunity to hone your skills and give you that confidence so that when you are that DLA representative in theater, you can do your best to provide that mission success, that difference helping the warfighter be successful," Celia Adolphi, deputy director of JRF, said during the exercise in-brief. "You have the confidence in your combat skills to make your functional mission easier."

Members had additional opportunities to demonstrate their confidence as this year's event was two days longer than in previous years. The lengthened training schedule was a result of previous years'

surveys and allowed for an extra day on the firing ranges, six more hours in the EST 2000, a full day of HEAT, and a cookout to relax and celebrate all the participants had accomplished, officials said.

Upon completion of the JRTRX, members completed surveys about the training. A common theme among the comments was the high quality of the training and that they wished it was longer.

"In the end this was all about bringing people together and teaching them how to work together" Margioni said. "In the joint world, if you can achieve that, you've done your job."



Army Command Sgt. Maj. Otis Cuffee (right), DLA's senior enlisted leader, helps Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Charles Mapes, from DLA Distribution, secure his harness before entering the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer April 5 during an exercise at Fort Eustis, Va. Photo by Air Force Capt. Bryan Lewis



Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Daphanie Pipkin (right) and Air Force Master Sgt. Carrie Wade (bottom), both from DLA Distribution, establish a perimeter after safely exiting a simulated Humvee rollover during the fifth annual Joint Reserve Training Readiness Exercise April 5 at Fort Eustis, Va. Photo by Air Force Capt. Bryan Lewis