Mississippi Military Department

Annual Report

July 1, 2013 - June 30 2014
To the Governor of the Great State of Mississippi

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the annual report of the Mississippi Military Department for the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2014.

The Mississippi National Guard is again leading the nation as a model, force multiplier training in national-level exercises Emerald Warrior and Southern Strike. The 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team conducted the first Combined Arms Live-Fire Exercise in 16 years, featuring infantry, armor, artillery, aviation and unmanned aerial vehicles in a joint assault with live ammunition. Our Air National Guard continued its C-17 Globemaster and KC-135 Refueling missions. C-17 aircraft and crews remain dedicated to the Air Mobility Command for contingency operations and Afghanistan Retrograde Missions, and our refuelers are operating around the globe.

With such a busy year, Mississippi Guard men and women continued to serve in Afghanistan, Kuwait and other worldwide locations. They also supported our state missions providing security and storm relief following devastating spring tornadoes in Louisville and Tupelo.

Your Mississippi National Guard remains hard at work providing for our nation’s defense and protecting our citizens here at home.

Augustus L. Collins
Major General, Mississippi National Guard
The Adjutant General of Mississippi

Mississippi National Guard Annual Report
July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2014

Table of Contents
Mississippi Army National Guard Command Structure ......................... 4
Mississippi Air National Guard Command Structure .......................... 6
National Guard Training Sites located in Mississippi .......................... 8
Economics ................................................................................................ 11

Maj. Gen. Leon Collins, the adjutant general, briefs distinguished visitors at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center in August.

1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment Soldiers fire M-4 rifles during Advanced Marksmanship training at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center on July 25, 2014. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Maj. Brooks Little, 102nd Public Affairs Detachment)
An A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft, flown by the Mississippi Air National Guard’s 186th Air Refueling Wing, sits on the ramp prior to takeoff at the Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) flight line in Gulfport, Miss., while participating in Exercise Southern Strike 15 (SS15) Oct. 29, 2014. SS15 is a total force, multiservice training exercise hosted annually by the Mississippi National Guard’s CRTC. The SS15 exercise emphasizes air-to-air, air-to-ground, and special operations forces training opportunities. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Gregory Brook, 1st Combat Camera Squadron)
grounds and special operations forces training opportunities for both active and reserve components of all branches of service.

Nov. 6, 2014, at Stennis Space Center, Miss. The unit was participating in Southern Strike (SS15), a total force, multiservice exercise hosted by the Mississippi National Guard’s Combat Readiness Training Center in Gulfport. SS15 emphasizes air-to-air, air-to-ground and special operations forces training opportunities for both active and reserve components of all branches of service.

U.S. Army National Guard Soldiers with Jackson’s 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group conduct a nighttime assault mission

M109A6 Paladin Howitzers and home to the 177th Armored Brigade (Training Support). Camp Shelby serves as a training site for National Guardsmen and Reservists from throughout the country hosting as many as 100,000 personnel annually.

Camp McCain
Camp McCain, in Elliott, Miss., is a National Guard training site that covers 13,000 acres. Training at the facility includes tank maneuvers, artillery training and general training for National Guard troops.

The camp also served as a prisoner of war camp for captured German soldiers -- Camp McCain housed 7,700. In 1944, the four base camps - Camp McCain, Camp Como, Camp Clinton, and Camp Shelby - developed fifteen branch camps that furnished POWs to work in the cotton fields. The Camp closed on October 15, 1944 and all but 3,000 acres of the site was sold. The camp was deactivated after the war and most of the buildings were dismantled and some sold to municipalities and colleges.

Camp McCain today functions as an important Army National Guard training site, but with only one-tenth of its original area and capacity. In 1947, the Mississippi National Guard prevailed upon the U.S. Government to retain control of the camp for small arms training. The rifle ranges and 3000 acres were retained under state control, and the rest sold.

In the beginning, the camp was administered by the local unit in Grenada. As usage increased, the demand for more facilities also increased. In the mid to late 60’s, the 223rd Engineer Battalion constructed mess sheds, quonset huts, a latrine, and some of the first roads in the tactical area. In 1969, tracked vehicles were added to Camp McCain, and 1971 a maintenance facility was built. The opening of the tactical areas caused many changes, including the organization of the 221st Engineer Detachment. This unit is now named Detachment 2, State Area Command.

In recent years, the camp has expanded at an excited rate. Additional buildings have been constructed for operations, maintenance support facilities have been added, and three more National Guard Units are now stationed on Camp McCain. Buildings for troop housing have been constructed, so that now 1200 troops may be housed here. In 1984, an additional 4500 adjoining acres were added, increasing the tactical training area. In 1987-1988, ten modern weapons ranges were constructed. The road network on Camp McCain has been expanded and improved, allowing improved tactical training.

Combat Readiness Training Center, Gulfport
The Air National Guard Field Training Site, Gulfport, Mississippi, was established at the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport in 1954. Renamed the Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) in 1999, military training actually began in 1921 when training started at the Naval Air Station on land in the Region. As the Center evolved, a new building was constructed and the Combat Readiness Training Center became the military training facility in use today.

A look of determination crosses the face of Spc. Edward Lampley as he crosses a rope bridge on the obstacle course at the Camp McCain Training Center on July 23, 2014. The Brandon-based Soldier was competing in the 112th Military Police Battalion’s annual Warfighter Competition. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Veronica McNabb, Camp McCain Training Center)
with the Army Air Corps in 1941. The CRTC’s mission is to provide an integrated, year-round, realistic training environment of supersonic airspace, gunnery ranges, systems, facilities and equipment for deployed units to enhance their capabilities and combat readiness. The CRTC fully supports the “Total Force” concept by supporting units from all branches of the Department of Defense (DoD), as well as the National Guard and Reserve components.

The CRTC hosts regular deployments of ANG units, and offers convenient offshore airspace that is fully instrumented for recording air to air engagements. Nearby Camp Shelby features an air to ground range and sufficient low altitude airspace to provide realistic ground attack scenarios.

The CRTC enjoys a very supportive and proactive relationship with the local community. Community involvement includes participation in Chambers of Commerce, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserves’ (ESGR) programs, and Adopt-A-School and Mentoring programs. During emergencies, the CRTC is supportive of both the Federal Emergency Management Agency and Mississippi Emergency Management Agency operations.

The CRTC has two tenant Mississippi Air National Guard units on base. The 255th Air Control Squadron (ACS), activated in 1971 as a Combat Communications Squadron (CCS), was converted to a Control and Reporting Center (CRC) in 1987. They were the first Air National Guard unit to receive datalink capabilities for all joint forces. In 1998, the 255th was converted to their role of Air Control. ACTS provides state-of-the-art Ground Control Intercept (GCI) capability to the total force, as well as other very vital activities. The 255th ACS has 255 personnel and is combat ready in all areas. Their mission is to organize, train and equip personnel to provide an operational ready Control and Reporting Center in support of worldwide theater air operations and statewide emergency contingencies.

The other tenant is the 209th Civil Engineer Squadron (CES). The 209th CES was formed as the 173rd Civil Engineering Flight in 1969, and has grown over the years at its present manning of 90 personnel. The mission of the 209th CES is to provide a highly mobile emergency engineering force for base damage recovery after attack. This unit constantly trains and maintains a state of readiness to allow short notice deployment capability. This is accomplished through management of the Rapid Runway Repair (RRR) site and the fire training facility. Within the first year of opening, the new RRR site had trained 1,600 personnel, and over 1,400 personnel were scheduled for training in the year 2000. The 209th CES began augmenting the United States Air Force (USAF) “Silver Flag” Training Program at Tyndall AFB, FL in FY00.
A 9mm bullet casing is ejected as PFC Jeremy Betts of Pontotoc, fires his pistol during weapons qualification July 24, 2014, at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. Betts is a medic assigned to the Mississippi Army National Guard’s 1st Squadron, 98th Cavalry Regiment, 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team.

(U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes, 102nd Public Affairs Detachment)

Mississippi Army National Guard Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group conduct fast rope insertion training with the 1st Battalion, 185th Aviation Regiment, as part of Exercise Emerald Warrior, a multinational, joint force training exercise April 30, 2014, at the Combat Readiness Training Center in Gulfport. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Shane Hammann, 102nd Public Affairs Detachment)

Pfc. Joshua Smith of Tylertown, fires an AT-4 Anti-Tank Missile Launcher during the Detachment 1, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment Annual Training at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center July 31, 2014. The detachment is based in Tylertown. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes, 102nd Public Affairs Detachment)

1st Lt. Bryce Wade is welcomed home by Jalyn Wade in Jackson on Nov. 11, 2014, following a tour in Kuwait with the 210th Finance Company in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Army National Guard photo by Lt. Col. Christian Patterson, JFH-MS Public Affairs)

A Mississippi Army National Guard Soldier surveys damage caused by a tornado that struck on April 28, 2014, between Tupelo’s Green and North Gloster streets. Civil disaster response is one of the Guard’s chief missions. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Jessi McCormick, 102nd Public Affairs Detachment)


Joint Terminal Attack Controllers (JTAC) from the 238th Air Support Operations Squadron (ASOS), Mississippi Air National Guard, 183rd Airlift Wing, in flight over the Combat Readiness Training Center flight line in Gulfport during Exercise Southern Strike 15 on Oct. 29, 2014. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Gregory Brook, 1st Combat Camera Squadron)

Master Sgt. Shane Haney, a master trainer from Air Military Command Detachment 2, demonstrates the Boom Operator Simulator System during its National Guard debut with the 186th Air Refueling Wing April 16, 2014, at Key Field, Meridian. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes, JFH-MS Public Affairs) Below, Mississippi Air National Guard Lt. Col. Joelee Sessions, 172nd Airlift Wing, Charlie Flight commander, explains information during the morning battle update briefing at the Combat Readiness Training Center in Gulfport on Oct. 30, 2014. Exercise Southern Strike 15 is a total force, multiservice training exercise hosted by the Mississippi National Guard’s CRTC. The state’s Air National Guard directs the exercise for active duty and reserve components by providing mission opportunities and operational support. (Photo by Senior Airman Logan Brandt, 1st Combat Camera Squadron)

North Carolina Air National Guard Senior Airman Doretha McLaughlin provides care to a simulated wounded patient by using a respiration device on a C-17 Globemaster III flown by the Mississippi Air National Guard, 183rd Airlift Wing, in flight over the Combat Readiness Training Center flight line in Gulfport during Exercise Southern Strike 15 on Oct. 29, 2014. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Gregory Brook, 1st Combat Camera Squadron)


Mississippi Air National Guard aircrew with the 186th Air Refueling Wing conduct a preflight safety brief during Exercise Southern Strike 15 at Key Field, Meridian on Nov. 4, 2014. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Alexandra Minor, 1st Combat Camera Squadron)
Mississippi Military Department Annual Report

1 Jul 13 - 30 Jun 14

Published by the Mississippi National Guard Public Affairs Office. For more information about the Mississippi National Guard, please follow us on Facebook or Twitter or visit our website at:

MS.NG.MIL