

South Dakota National Guard

Public Affairs Office

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Suriname partners with SD Guard to improve emergency response

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen
SDNG Public Affairs Office

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota National Guard’s State Partnership Program welcomed four soldiers from the country of Suriname to share information about how to improve each other’s Joint Operations Centers May 7-9 at Camp Rapid in Rapid City.

During the visit, the Surinamese and SDNG soldiers exchanged ideas on managing operations in response to domestic emergencies or natural disasters.

“Our JOC is different from Suriname’s, yet we are similar in the fact that we both have the same mission,” said Maj. Kathleen Dirk, state partnership coordinator. “It doesn’t matter where you are in the world; we all have to respond to natural disasters. We are showing the Surinamese soldiers how we operate and are seeing if how we do business fits the needs of their country.”

The JOC serves primarily as an information hub; where emergency operations are tracked and coordinated with leaders making decisions at emergency or disaster sites.

The Surinamese built a JOC three years ago to help respond to domestic emergencies in their country and are seeking information on how to make their operations more streamlined, said Dirk.

“The Surinamese are primarily concerned with how to effectively use their JOC if a flash flood were to occur,” said Dirk. “In South Dakota, we have dealt with several floods in our recent history so we have relevant information to share with them.”

Lt. Col. Dan Iverson, assistant director of military support, gave the soldiers a tour of the SDNG JOC and discussed the lessons learned during the 2011 Missouri River Flood.

“Everyone has learned a lot on this trip to South Dakota,” said Capt. Bob Mangal, Suriname’s Joint Operation Center officer in charge. “We now know how to get where we want to be.

“We learned how to brief our commander everyday about the status of his organization, and that we need to have specialized people working in the JOC,” continued Mangal. “We are thankful for what we have learned from the South Dakota National Guard and we look forward to making our JOC better so we can respond quicker when we are needed to serve our country.”

Suriname and the SDNG have been exchanging ideas and developing a partnership since 2006 when the SPP was officially established between the two entities.

Similarities between the two partners makes the relationship beneficial because they can use and share ideas that will work well for each other. South Dakota was chosen to partner with Suriname because of their similarities in population size, land mass, agricultural based economies, and lack of significant language barriers.

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120508-A-CW157-001: South Dakota Army National Guard's Lt. Col. Dan Iverson, assistant director of military support, explains the technology of the Joint Operations Center to soldiers from the country of Suriname at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., May 8, 2012. Suriname and the SDNG have been exchanging ideas and developing a partnership since 2006 when the State Partnership Program was officially established for the two entities. (SDNG photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen) (RELEASED)



120508-A-CW157-002: South Dakota Army National Guard's Lt. Col. Dan Iverson, assistant director of military support, explains how the SDNG responds to an emergency using the Joint Operations Center at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., May 8, 2012. Suriname and the SDNG have been exchanging ideas and developing a partnership since 2006 when the State Partnership Program was officially established for the two entities. (SDNG photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen) (RELEASED)

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