

# South Dakota National Guard

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Golden Coyote hosts realistic IED training**

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen  
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CUSTER STATE PARK, S.D. – The Arizona Army National Guard’s 856th Military Police and the Navy Reserve Expeditionary Medical Facility Dallas-One, of Texas, teamed up in the Black Hills for a mock improvised explosive device, or IED, and convoy role-play as part of the Golden Coyote training exercise June 12.

More than 680 service members from around the world are participating in the counter-IED lane near Custer, S.D., for the South Dakota National Guard 28th annual exercise – a premier training venue for National Guard, Reserve and active-duty military.

The counter-IED lane is conducted in Custer State Park on land similar to the landscape in deployment areas, such as Afghanistan, with rolling hills and scattered bushes.

To make the training as realistic as possible, Capt. Cody Spann, the IED lane officer-in-charge, who conducted more than 200 route reconnaissance and route clearances in Iraq from 2003-2005, strategically placed obstacles throughout the course such as a sniper, IED explosion and a civilian terrorist.

“When they go through the IED lane, I am teaching them how to look, find and identify IEDs,” said Spann. “I am also teaching them how to get the wounded out of the area and continue on with their mission.”

Spann said awareness is key in the military and it is definitely true for route clearance.

“The biggest lesson to learn from the course is to be vigilant,” said Spann. “If you suspect an IED, you need to stop, call up a UXO report (unexploded ordnance), get EOD (explosive ordnance disposal) to verify and clear it.”

The IED training is critical for units such as the 856th Military Police, who may be tasked with route patrols, route reconnaissance, convoy security and convoy escorts in Afghanistan.

“We’re scheduled to deploy next year,” said Sgt. 1st Class Chad Dixon, of the 856th. “Any counter-IED training we can get is going to be helpful, not only for our own security, but because we are responsible for the safety of others when we do convoy escorts or convoy security.”

Service members will go through the IED lane during broad daylight and the darkness of night.

“It is beneficial to have us go through the course during the day and night,” said Dixon. “The night lane worked well because some of the IEDs were so well camouflaged that we just couldn’t see them. So it gave us a chance to use our night vision and our thermals to try and spot IEDs or somebody trying to detonate a bomb. The day lane, since we did that second, helped provide us with a little more information on how the terrain can be used and how IEDs can be emplaced.”

Since the 856th may be tasked with convoy escorts, they treated the Navy personnel, who were training alongside them, as VIPs.

“It was difficult training with the Navy because they do not speak the same language when executing tactical movements,” said Dixon. “But it did add to the training, because we now have better ideas on how we can improve to protect our assets or package that we’re escorting.”

Lt. Col. Gary Willis, EMF Dallas-One, says this was the first time his personnel have trained on an IED lane.

“I think this is going to prepare my young crew, my young sailors for immediate placement out in the field,” he said.

The counter-IED lane is not the only course where service members can enhance their skills or be introduced to during Golden Coyote

“Military forces are able to participate in numerous warrior tasks and battle drills, such as urban combat operations, medical aid, combat patrols and firearms training,” said Maj. Travis Eastman, Golden Coyote training coordinator.

There are 37 units representing 17 states and six foreign nations participating in the exercise and from multiple branches of military service – Army, Navy and Air Force – working together to create an invaluable training experience, said Eastman.

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**120612-A-RW991-005:** Soldiers from the Arizona Army National Guard’s 856th Military Police Company, of Bellemont, Ariz., and Navy personnel from the Expeditionary Medical Facility Dallas - One, of Dallas, Texas, join together to train on a Improvised Explosive Device training lane at South Dakota’s Golden Coyote training exercise near Custer, S.D., June 12, 2012. This is the 28th annual Golden Coyote exercise held in the Black Hills of South Dakota; hosted by the South Dakota National Guard and conducted in cooperation with the National Forest Service and Custer State Park; providing a realistic training environment and valuable services to the public. (SDNG photo by Spc. Eldena Sharp Fish) (RELEASED)



**120612-A-RW991-012:** Soldiers from the Arizona Army National Guard's 856th Military Police, of Bellemont, Ariz., and Navy personnel from the Expeditionary Medical Facility Dallas - One, of Dallas, Texas, join together to train on an Improvised Explosive Device lane at South Dakota's Golden Coyote training exercise near Custer, S.D., June 12, 2012. The exercise is one of the premier training venues for National Guard, Reserve and active duty military, providing relevant training opportunities for combat support and combat service support units in support of overseas contingency operations and homeland defense. (SDNG photo by Spc. Eldena Sharp Fish) (RELEASED)



**120612-A-CW157-001:** Soldiers from the Arizona Army National Guard's 856th Military Police Company, of Bellemont, Ariz., and Navy personnel from the Expeditionary Medical Facility Dallas - One, of Dallas, Texas, join together to train on an Improvised Explosive Device lane at South Dakota's Golden Coyote training exercise near Custer, S.D., June 12, 2012. The exercise is one of the premier training venues for National Guard, Reserve and active duty military, providing relevant training opportunities for combat support and combat service support units in support of overseas contingency operations and homeland defense. (SDNG photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen) (RELEASED)



**120612-A-CW157-003:** Petty Officer 1st Class Daniel Gunn, a hospital corpsman, from the Expeditionary Medical Facility Dallas - One, of Dallas, Texas, places a tourniquet on Spc. Justin Hancock from the Arizona Army National Guard's 856th Military Police Company, of Bellemont, Ariz., while conducting a mock counter Improvised Explosive Device training lane during the South Dakota National Guard's Golden Coyote training exercise at Custer State Park June 12, 2012. The exercise is one of the premier training venues for National Guard, Reserve and active duty military, providing relevant training opportunities for combat support and combat service support units in support of overseas contingency operations and homeland defense. (SDNG photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen) (RELEASED)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** please contact Maj. Anthony Deiss at (605) 737-6721 or cell (605) 431-8753, or e-mail [pao@sd.ngb.army.mil](mailto:pao@sd.ngb.army.mil).