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Tennessee National Guard supports 60th Presidential Inauguration

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Approximately 150 Soldiers and Airmen from the Tennessee National Guard departed Tennessee, January 17, to join the nearly 8,000 National Guardsmen from across the U.S. preparing to support the 60th Presidential Inauguration on January 20. The Guardsmen left from Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site aboard two C-17 Globemaster aircraft provided by Memphis' 164th Airlift Wing.

These Tennesseans will assist the D.C. National Guard's Joint Task Force-District of Columbia by providing crowd management, traffic control, and other logistical support to help ensure a safe and successful event.

"This is an exciting opportunity for our Soldiers and Airmen to be part of this defining moment of American democracy," said Maj. Gen. Warner Ross, Tennessee Adjutant General. "We have a long history of supporting the U.S. presidential inauguration and I am proud of our Guardsmen who volunteered to represent Tennessee and support our nation during this historic event."

The Tennessee National Guard has supported several presidential inaugurations, most recently in 2021; however, for some Guardsmen, this is their first presidential inauguration support mission.

"I've been in the Tennessee Air National Guard for almost three years, and this will be my first time supporting an inauguration," said Senior Airman Ashlyn Rail, 134th Security Forces. "This is a historic experience, and it's something I'll cherish forever. I'm excited to be a part of this."

The Tennessee Joint Task Force, comprised of Military Policemen from Jackson's 194th Engineer Brigade and Security Forces from Knoxville's 134th Air Refueling Wing and Memphis' 164th Airlift Wing, trained together this past week to refine their skills prior to departing.

"This is a great opportunity because we have a mixture of Soldiers and Airmen," said Capt. Morgan Smith, Tennessee Joint Task Force commander. "Although we typically train separately, the fundamental standards are the same, and this mission provides us the opportunity to work together and share best practices."

Army and Air National Guard units normally train independently throughout the year, however, events like this provide opportunities to learn from one another and get to work together.

"Our Soldiers and Airmen performed a lot of tasks during training, but they've met every challenge head-on," said 1st Sgt. Erik Yatusis, Tennessee Joint Task Force first sergeant. "Working with our Air Guard counterparts has been a smooth transition, and we're ready to function seamlessly as a task force."

Tennessee's Joint Task Force is expected to return later next week.

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Soldiers and Airmen with the Tennessee National Guard depart Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site aboard a C-17 Globemaster III from Memphis' 164th Air Refueling Wing, January 17. These Guardsmen are traveling to Washington D.C. to join Guardsmen from several other states to provide support to federal and district authorities for the 60th Presidential Inauguration. (photo by Sgt. Olivia Gum)



Soldiers and Airmen with the Tennessee National Guard load a C-17 Globemaster III at Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site, January 17, and prepare to travel to Washington D.C. to join Guardsmen from several other states to provide support to federal and district authorities for the 60th Presidential Inauguration. (photo by Spc. Landon Evans)