



INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING

Premier Military Training for a
Secure and Prosperous America



AUGUST 2025 | NEWSLETTER

Joint Military Efforts Drive Civil Infrastructure Forward in Alaska

From March 9 to July 12, 2025, the Army National Guard partnered with the Native Village of Eyak as part of Operation Build Eyak to continue construction efforts in Cordova, Alaska. This joint training activity was supported by the Marine Corps Reserve, the Air Force Reserve, as well as the Army National Guards from North Carolina, Kansas, and Utah, who provided expert construction planning and skilled labor.

The 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill had a significant impact on the Native Village of Eyak and the city of Cordova, releasing approximately 11 million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound. To enhance response capabilities for future spills, the IRT Program mobilized 184 service members skilled in horizontal construction, civil engineering planning, and construction equipment maintenance. Their efforts involved clearing and preparing 5 acres of challenging terrain at Shepard Point, a remote area in Prince William Sound.



Distinguished Visitors visited Shepard Point, Alaska, to observe the progress of the ongoing construction.

At the beginning of this mission, the area where service members would work was densely covered with trees, shrubs, and stumps, making the use of heavy equipment impractical. The Marines worked diligently for a month to clear and prepare the area for heavy equipment operations. Army National Guard equipment operators soon discovered that Shepard Point's soil was more unstable than initially anticipated, and the presence of sharp natural objects required careful handling. Despite these challenges, mission planners successfully cleared several acres at Shepard Point to facilitate future vertical and horizontal construction missions in fiscal year 2026 and beyond.

Transporting heavy equipment to Shepard Point required careful logistics, involving barge transportation. Equipment breakdowns and unforeseen environmental conditions necessitated quick thinking and adjustments to the initial construction plans. Service members collaborated with civilian engineering planners to address these challenges.

Upon completing the final phase of this mission, the village will have dual-use maritime infrastructure. This infrastructure will be utilized to respond to emergencies such as oil spills and natural disasters, as well as serve as a hub for supplies. Given the limited number of roads in the region, ship-based transportation of supplies becomes a necessary and practical alternative. This development ensures that the community is equipped to handle emergencies and maintain a consistent flow of essential goods and services despite transportation limitations.

By the end of the mission, a total of 16,470 hours of valuable training was logged under horizontal engineering training and readiness standards. The mission delivered an estimated fair market value of \$500,000 in no-cost construction services to the village.

IRT's civil-military partnerships continue to strengthen relationships between military members and American communities, enhance unit and deployment readiness for service members, and provide essential services to local communities. To learn more, visit irt.defense.gov.

UNITY OF PURPOSE

IRT strengthens joint coordination and hands-on military training that ensures real-world readiness and mission success in complex contingency environments.

ACCOUNTABILITY & INNOVATION

IRT increases fiscal discipline, ensuring best use of DoD resources for cutting-edge military training and threat resilience for American communities.

READINESS & LEADERSHIP

IRT develops strong military leaders who are prepared to meet the challenges of deployment, mission success, and deterrence abroad.

IRT TRAINING HIGHLIGHTS

- Civil-Military Partnerships
- Civil Engineering
- Joint Mission Planning

IRT LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Colonel James Hogan, Director
- Colonel Stephen Rubright, Deputy Director
- Major Melford Simpson, Operations Officer
- Chief Master Sergeant Mathew Forster, Superintendent
- Master Sergeant Rachelle Morris, Public Affairs Manager

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Mr. Collin Bronson

Native Village of Eyak
Lead Project Manager



"The partnership with IRT has been invaluable and a great opportunity to provide real-world training opportunities to military engineers; training in all manners of expeditionary roadbuilding under challenging logistical and weather conditions. IRT elements are welcome guests, and support not just the Eyak Tribe but the entire community of Cordova."



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IRT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

CAPTAIN EMANUEL MENDEZ

MARINE CORPS RESERVE
PROGRAM MANAGER



“My tenure as the USMC IRT Program Manager has been vital and eye opening to understating and enhancing the synergies of training and readiness deployment, sustained through joint civil military missions. Our ability to effectively and rapidly deploy for the needs of our nation requires an extensive amount of training. Having the capability to train domestically while serving underserved communities in different climes and cultures throughout US states and territories creates a legacy of pride, trust and enthusiasm amongst our services members and the communities they are helping, IRT will have an everlasting impact on my time in the service.”

IRT STAFF SPOTLIGHT

TECHNICAL SERGEANT COLIN BOSWELL

CONSOLIDATED ASSET MANAGEMENT SITE
ASSET DRIVER



“Being part of the IRT program through the Consolidated Asset Management Site has been an incredible experience. Getting to see the country while playing a vital role in delivering the assets that make these missions possible is a unique privilege. Supporting missions that directly impact underserved communities gives real meaning to the work we do. It’s a rewarding way to serve and stay mission-ready.”

IRT EVENTS & SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Aug 3: Cyber Virginia, Start Date
Aug 3: Operation Healthy Ellwood, End Date
Aug 6: Operation Build Puerto Rico, DV Day
Aug 7: Operation Healthy Broome, Start Date
Aug 7: Cyber Virginia, DV Day
Aug 10: Operation Build North Carolina, End Date
Aug 11: Operation Healthy American Samoa, Start Date
Aug 13: Operation Build California, DV Day
Aug 14: Operation Healthy Broome, DV Day
Aug 16: Cyber Virginia, End Date
Aug 18: Operation Build Puerto Rico, End Date
Aug 20: Operation Healthy American Samoa, DV Day
Aug 22: Operation Healthy Broome, End Date
Aug 28: Operation Build Elizabethton, DV Day
Aug 28: Operation Healthy American Samoa, End Date
Aug 29: Operation Build Hawaii, End Date
Aug 29: Operation Build California, End Date
Aug 31: Operation Build Michigan, End Date

More information
on missions at:



FY25 IRT PROGRAM MANAGERS

Major John Pineau
Army Reserve | Army Active Duty

Captain Scott Thurman
Army National Guard

Captain Emanuel Mendez
Marine Corps Reserve | Marine Corps Active Duty

Lieutenant Commander Shaun Shillady
Navy Reserve | Navy Active Duty

Major Nathaniel Horwitz-Willis
Air National Guard | Air Force Active Duty

Major Michael Nordin
Air Force Reserve