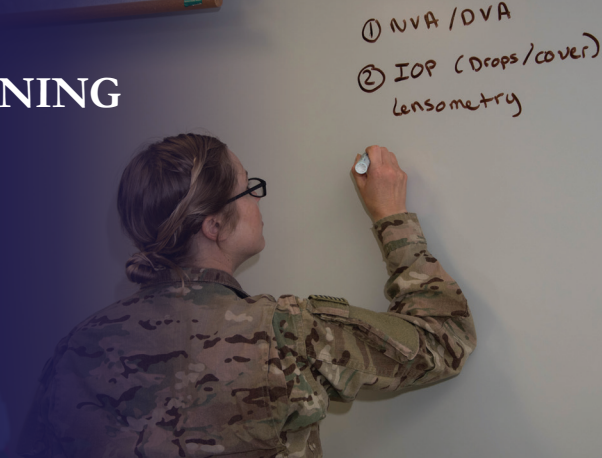




# INNOVATIVE READINESS TRAINING

Premier Military Training for a  
Secure and Prosperous America



## Fiscal Year 2026 Planning Season Takes Shape

As we approach the fiscal year 2026 training season, the IRT program's meticulous planning process, which begins months before Service members deploy to communities across the United States and its territories, forms the foundation for a successful IRT support activity.

IRT support activities follow a structured, three-phase planning timeline, mirroring deployment planning processes:

- 1. Initial Planning Meetings (IPMs):** Conducted approximately 6 months before the activity starts.
- 2. Mid-Planning Meetings (MPMs):** Held 90 days before deployment.
- 3. Final Planning Meetings (FPMs):** Completed 45 days before activity launch.



*U.S. Army Maj. Abbynet Quinones-Martinez, 49th Multifunction Medical Battalion officer, participates in planning briefs during the Salud en tu Pueblo IRT final planning conference in Utuado, Puerto Rico, April 2, 2025.*

This comprehensive planning process ensures successful mission-essential training for participants while enabling leaders to tackle all aspects of project planning. This includes uncovering and resolving issues like securing locations for lodging, clinic sites, and food services. In addition, leaders address site-specific concerns, such as communications and transportation challenges. While traditionally held in person, planning meetings can also take place virtually or in a hybrid format when necessary. The hybrid approach maximizes cost savings and planning efficiency by enabling key personnel to physically examine sites while minimizing travel costs for others whose participation is necessary but not required to be present.

Community involvement is essential to a successful training, contributing local knowledge and helping to identify resources to augment the training. Their active participation in all planning meetings helps ensure successful training and positive community impact, creating a "win-win situation" for both Service members and the community partner.

For FY26, IRT leadership has approved applications for 26 civil-military partnerships across 19 states and territories. The proposed training portfolio consists of the following:

- Ten civil engineering activities
- Two civil affairs activities
- Eight medical activities
- One diving activity
- Four cybersecurity exercises
- One aerial spray training.

These support activities are projected to provide essential training for an estimated 3,964 Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, and Airmen on critical tasks while delivering valuable services to American communities.

The planning meetings address different project types' unique planning challenges:

- **Construction projects** require careful coordination of permitting timelines and building material storage.
- **Medical training** involves identifying clinic locations and coordination with medical asset management sites.
- **Cybersecurity exercises'** specialized considerations offer valuable training for a unique set of requirements.

The planning process brings together representatives from across the joint Services: Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force components (Active, Guard, and Reserve). Through this collaboration, participants have the unique opportunity to work in a joint environment similar to deployments.

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](http://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 DoW 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  
Mission Planning  
Joint Planning

### IRT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Colonel James Hogan, Director  
Colonel Stephen Rubright, Deputy Director  
Major Melford Simpson, Operations Officer  
Chief Master Sergeant Mathew Forster, Superintendent

### MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

#### Major Melford Simpson

Innovative Readiness Training  
Operations Officer



"As we approach FY26, our planning meetings are more important than ever due to the government shutdown. These sessions allow us to address every detail, improving both the quality of our training and our impact on the community.

Despite the current challenges, we remain fully committed to careful planning. Together, we will navigate these obstacles and continue delivering meaningful and successful support activities."



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NOVEMBER 2025 | NEWSLETTER

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBER OF THE YEAR

### MASTER SERGEANT COURTNIE CLARK

AIR FORCE RESERVE  
ASSET MANAGEMENT SITE ASSET MANAGER



IRT Program Management Team Member of the Year was awarded to Master Sergeant Courtnie Clark for her exceptional leadership, vision, and innovation. As a key contributor to the Joint Working Group, she played a crucial role in charting IRT's strategic direction.

Her efforts in aligning training priorities, resource strategies, and operational planning have significantly maximized military readiness and community impact. Master Sergeant Clark oversaw the revitalization of the medical, dental, optometry, civil engineering, and veterinary inventories, overseeing assets worth over \$22 million across 17 IRT missions. She expertly coordinated the request, distribution, and delivery of \$6.9 million in medical assets over 39,897 miles, effectively supporting dispersed operations. In her role, Master Sergeant Clark executed \$240,000 in O&M funds, maintaining seamless site operations.

Her outstanding mentorship of 11 joint service personnel and the implementation of surge protocols expanded IRT's capacity for rapid response. Her remarkable ability to drive strategic outcomes, optimize resource utilization, and lead complex logistical efforts has been instrumental to the IRT program's overall success and its mission to enhance military readiness through innovative civil-military partnerships.

## CIVIL-MILITARY PARTNERSHIP OF THE YEAR

### DELTA AREA ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY CORPORATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE AIR FORCE RESERVE

CAPTAIN HEATHER EDSALL AND MR. JOEL EVANS

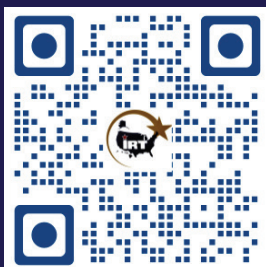


IRT Civil-Military Partnership of the Year was awarded to Delta Area Economic Opportunity Corporation in partnership with the Air Force Reserve Command for their success in executing the Operation Healthy Delta mission in Sikeston, Missouri. Through their efforts and collaboration, this partnership delivered no-cost medical, dental, wellness checks, and optometry care to the community, resulting in an estimated 1,567 patients seen, 9,773 procedures completed, \$851,364 in no-cost healthcare services, and 4,044 hours of real-world training. The mission included a 40-hour Tactical Combat Casualty Care course for handling life-threatening injuries, followed by an advanced course to enhance medical techniques and decision-making skills, preparing service members for emergencies on and off the battlefield.

## IRT EVENTS & SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Nov 3: Kodiak Arctic Care, Initial Planning Meeting

Find more information on missions at:



## FY26 IRT PROGRAM MANAGERS

Major Penny Cannon  
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 Edward Brouch  
Air Force Reserve