

Wisconsin National Guard: Black Hawks on their way to US Virgin Islands for hurricane relief

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MADISON, Wis. — Gov. Scott Walker issued Executive Order 260 Oct. 23, authorizing Maj. Gen. Don Dunbar, Wisconsin's adjutant general, to call elements of the Wisconsin National Guard to state active duty as necessary to assist the Virgin Islands in response to an Emergency Management Assistance Compact request from the U.S. territory.

Two Wisconsin National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and crews are on their way to the U.S. Virgin Islands to assist in the aftermath of hurricanes that ravaged the Caribbean last month.

Approximately 19 Soldiers deployed with the medevac aircraft, representing the latest in the Wisconsin National Guard's ongoing response to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Wisconsin National Guard troops have already been serving in Puerto Rico since early October.

Upon arrival, the Wisconsin Army National Guard aircraft and crews from units based in Madison and West Bend, Wisconsin, will provide aerial medevac support.

The Soldiers join a contingent of Airmen from the Wisconsin Air National Guard who deployed to Puerto Rico in late September and early October in the wake of Hurricane Maria. A team of six Airmen from the Madison-based 115th Fighter Wing's Joint Incident Site Communications Capability, or JISCC, deployed Sept. 23, followed

by a team of 16 Airmen from the 115th and the Milwaukee-based 128th Air Refueling Wing with a mobile kitchen equipped to feed as many as 1,000 people in 90 minutes.

Meanwhile, two airfield managers from the 115th and Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center in Camp Douglas, Wisconsin, deployed to Georgia earlier this month where they are assisting with staging and movement of aircraft bound for the Caribbean. A member of the Madison-based 54th Civil Support Team deployed to Puerto Rico to augment communications support there, and the Wisconsin Guard is also sending its RC-26 aircraft and crew to Puerto Rico to assist authorities with incident assessment and awareness.

Approximately 650 Wisconsin National Guard troops recently returned from Florida where they provided humanitarian relief, security and traffic control support to communities in the wake of Hurricane Irma.

Meanwhile, the Wisconsin National Guard simultaneously continues to fulfil its role as the primary combat reserve of the Army and Air Force. Soldiers of the West Bend-based 248th Aviation Support Battalion deployed to the Middle East Sept. 30. Approximately 270 Airmen from the 115th Fighter Wing deployed to Korea in August, while 110 Airmen from the 128th Air Control Squadron deployed to Southwest Asia in May, and more than 70 Airmen from the 128th Air Refueling Wing in Milwaukee are deploying worldwide to support global security operations. Another 150 Soldiers from the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation deployed to Kuwait last spring, and 35 Soldiers from the West Bend-based Company C, 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation deployed to Afghanistan last winter.