

# South Dakota National Guard

## Public Affairs Office

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## **SD Guard, Suriname military collaborate to protect environment, Soldiers**

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Members of the South Dakota National Guard and Suriname military collaborated on how to protect service members and the environment from toxic chemicals during a subject matter expert exchange at Camp Rapid, May 13-15.

The goal of the exchange, conducted as a part of the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program, was to share information on best practices for handling hazardous materials, or hazmat, and spill response procedures.

Four members of the Suriname Defense Force met with more than a dozen SDNG Soldiers from several units and facilities to discuss protocols and processes for storing, containing and disposing of hazmat.

Whether it's operating vehicles or equipment in a field environment or maintenance operations in a facility, military personnel must plan and prepare for the hazards chemicals pose to the environment and people.

"The dialog is beneficial to be able to share knowledge on prevention, containment and cleanup in the event of fuel, oil or other chemical spills," said Army Capt. Shawn Mamula, maintenance officer for the 109th Regional Support Group. "It is important for not only protecting our Soldiers but also the environment."

"The exchange is very positive and valuable," said Army Capt. Joeri Kasandiredjo, head of transportation for the SDF. "Chemicals and materials can be very dangerous and it's important to take the right approach to dealing with the handling and disposition of the materials should they leak or spill."

The hazmat exchange is just one of about a dozen events that take place annually between the SDNG and its partner nation from South America. Since 2006, numerous exchanges have taken place to share experiences, training techniques and operational processes on a variety of military topics.

The Suriname members first met with staff from Joint Force Headquarters' Directorate of Logistics and discussed compliance with policies and procedures and how to mitigate potential hazards.

"We always want to be sure we are following all the applicable state and federal regulations," said Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 James McGuire, supervisory surface maintenance specialist with Joint Force Headquarters. "One area we focus on is the reduction of hazmat quantities to minimize the potential for hazardous waste."

From there, McGuire said the Suriname members were able to see the practical application of these processes at several maintenance facilities.

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“In our facilities we have to be sure we are properly managing our hazardous materials – everything from storing basic products to how we cleanup waste in the shops using spill kits,” said McGuire. “Having a plan and implementing it is key to ensuring a quick and safe response to spills.”

Kasandiredjo said there are many similarities, and differences, to how each organization handles hazmat.

“Every unit in the Suriname Defense Force works under the same regulation,” said Kasandiredjo, who oversees logistics support on land for all of the SDF, which includes the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force and National Police. “However, in Suriname we don’t have all the materials or resources to do it the same. We do it, but in a different way.”

Kasandiredjo said the lack of resources to deal with hazmat is replaced by ingenuity.

“We use about any reusable material we can find that is absorbent,” he said. “Sawdust works well.”

The Suriname members also had a chance to visit with several other units to discuss their process for containment and spill response.

From the brigade level, meeting with the 109th Regional Support Group, to meeting with smaller units such as Training Center and the 451st Engineer Detachment (Firefighting Team), provided unique perspectives and feedback.

The Surinamers also had an opportunity to meet with officials from the Rapid City Fire Department for a civilian agency’s approach to hazmat.

“Each unit has a different mission and provides different perspectives and experiences when handling hazmat,” said Mamula. “The goal is to consolidate that information and use those lessons learned for enhancing any program.”

It’s these lessons that Mamula and Kasandiredjo say will help improve both programs and ultimately protect Soldiers and the environment.

“We will take the lessons learned and see how we can use the knowledge gained to incorporate into our processes and our work place,” said Kasandiredjo. “We are always looking for ways to do it better. It’s very important for the sake of our environment and our soldiers.”

“It was great to learn about their culture, their backgrounds, how their military system works and some of their different operational processes,” said Mamula. “I think we learned a lot about each other’s procedures and how we can better protect our people and Mother Nature.”

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High resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard)



**160513-Z-ZZ999-001:** U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer 4 James McGuire, supervisory surface maintenance specialist with the South Dakota Army National Guard’s Joint Force Headquarters, discusses with four members of the Suriname Defense Force the procedures and protocols for handling and disposing of hazardous materials during a subject matter expert exchange at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., May 13, 2016. The exchange was conducted as a part of the Suriname-South Dakota State Partnership Program. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Waylon Skelton/Released)



**160514-Z-ZZ999-002:** U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ben Petrik, supply noncommissioned officer with the South Dakota Army National Guard's Training Center Command, discusses hazardous spill containment units with members of the Suriname Defense Force during a subject matter expert exchange at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., May 14, 2016. The exchange focused on the handling, containment and disposing of hazardous materials and conducted as a part of the Suriname-South Dakota State Partnership Program. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Waylon Skelton/Released)



**160514-Z-ZZ999-003:** U.S. Army Sgt. Sean Fischer, a crew chief with the South Dakota Army National Guard's 451st Engineer Detachment (Firefighting Team), discusses hazardous materials response procedures with members of the Suriname Defense Force during a subject matter expert exchange at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., May 14, 2016. The exchange focused on the handling, containment and disposing of hazardous materials and conducted as a part of the Suriname-South Dakota State Partnership Program. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Waylon Skelton/Released)



**160514-Z-ZZ999-004:** U.S. Army 1st Lt. Jonathan Antar, safety officer with the South Dakota Army National Guard's 109th Regional Support Group, briefs members of the Suriname Defense Force on safety procedures used during hazardous material spills during a subject matter expert exchange at Camp Rapid, Rapid City, S.D., May 14, 2016. The exchange focused on the handling, containment and disposing of hazardous materials and conducted as a part of the Suriname-South Dakota State Partnership Program. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Waylon Skelton/Released)



**160515-Z-ZZ999-005:** Suriname Army Capt. Henri Kasanradji, logistics officer, left, discusses equipment used by Lt. Billy Potter, firefighter with the Rapid City Fire Department, during hazardous material spill response, as Army Capt. Ulrich Morgan, Air Force Capt. Radjindrekoemar Soemai and Army Capt. Joeri Kasandiredjo, all members of the Suriname Defense Force, look on during a subject matter expert exchange in Rapid City, S.D., May 15, 2016. The exchange focused on the handling, containment and disposing of hazardous materials and conducted as a part of the Suriname-South Dakota State Partnership Program. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Waylon Skelton/Released)

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