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SPRINGFIELD, IL (08/28/2011)(readMedia)-- As approximately 160 members of the Illinois Army National Guard travel to New York for hurricane relief operations, approximately 1,000 Illinois National Guardsmen are being released from duty. The additional 1,000 Soldiers and Airmen were activated Aug. 27 to prepare and train for hurricane relief efforts, but federal officials have deemed their services no longer necessary in the wake of Hurricane Irene.

"This mission is indicative of what the National Guard has done for 375 years," said Maj. Gen. William L. Enyart the Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard. "These servicemembers are men and women who live next door to you and who put aside everything in their civilian lives to help others in need."

The Illinois National Guard is sending six UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters, two CH-47 Chinook helicopters, pilots and crew, ground support vehicles, and command and control staff to New York to help with relief efforts.

Units departed for New York to provide hurricane relief include: Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 106th Aviation Battalion in Peoria and elements of Company A, 106th Aviation Battalion in Decatur; Company B, 106th Aviation Battalion in Chicago; Company C and Company D, 106th Aviation Battalion in Peoria; and 2nd Battalion, 238th General Support Aviation Battalion in Peoria. An advanced party of approximately 20 Soldiers from the 108th Sustainment Brigade in Chicago also left for the East Coast.

Fifteen National Guard units in 13 Illinois communities had their Soldiers and Airmen report to duty and will now release those citizen-Soldiers to return to their civilian lives.

Units reporting for preparation and training for hurricane relief and now releasing their Soldiers include: 108th Sustainment Brigade in Chicago, 710th Area Support Medical Company in North Riverside, Company C, 33rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion in Carbondale, 232nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion in Springfield, 1544th Transportation Company in Paris, 1844th Transportation Company in Quincy, 631st Engineer Company in Lawrenceville, 3625th Maintenance Company in North Riverside, 933rd Military Police Company in Fort Sheridan, 33rd Military Police Battalion in Bloomington, 333rd Military Police Company in Freeport, 405th Brigade Support Battalion in North Riverside, Company B, 405th Brigade Support Battalion in Crestwood, Company A, 405th Brigade Support Battalion in Streator and 182nd Airlift Wing in Peoria.

The 1,000 additional Soldiers will remain at their respective units until Monday afternoon to unpack gear, clean and put away equipment and prepare to return to normal day-to-day activities.

"I am proud of our Soldiers and Airmen," Enyart said. "From plans with family to work and college commitments, these troops continue to show their selfless service and prove why we are one of the greatest organizations in the world."

For more information, please contact the Illinois National Guard Public Affairs Office at ngilstaff pao@ng.army.mil

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