**Press Release –**

**Date of Release Aug 7, 2020**

**Cyber Reserve Marines on the Attack in Large Scale Exercise**

PEMBROKE, N.H. - The Marine Corps’ newest Defensive Cyber Operations (DCO) Reserve members played the “Red Team” or attack role in Exercise Cyber Yankee hosted by the New Hampshire National Guard from July 20 to Aug. 1, 2020. The DCO Marines kept the Army and Air National Guard units from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and Maine on their toes throughout the evolution by injecting measle cells and new attack vectors.

The DCO Marines injected attacks throughout the exercise to test the defenses of the other departments and Guard units. The DCO Marines then held training classes to inform fellow service members about attack Tactics, Techniques and Procedures, using network mapping software, attack vectors and more.

The exercise garnered the attention of U.S. Sen. Maggie Hassan of New Hampshire, “With cyber attacks on the rise, exercises like these are vital to preventing and responding to cyber threats.”

Col. John Grella, U.S. Marine Forces Northern Command, Defense Coordinating Element - Region 1, was on site for the exercise to observe the training. He spoke very highly of the Marines throughout the exercise and noted their high level of technical abilities, workspace setup efficiency, team spirit and intentional collaboration with others. Additionally, participants all expressed their appreciation to be working with and competing against the DCO Marines.

Col. Grella elaborated on the mix of expertise the DCO Marines bring, “Only in the military can you be taught to fly an F-35 or operate a LAV-25 but from what I see with cyber, it’s the opposite.  The Marines that transitioned to the reserves and now have civilian cyber jobs, backgrounds and certifications, possess the knowledge, training and experience that is hard to beat and they only enhance our capabilities. They get smarter and stronger while employed in the civilian sector.”

Supporting agencies such as the US Cyber Command, Department of Homeland Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation, power and light companies, water authorities, Departments of Transportation and other state organizations all took part in this realistic test of critical infrastructure and communication systems, and their defenses. See the [video](https://www.dvidshub.net/video/761759/nh-national-guard-hosts-cyber-yankee-2020#_blank) here from the 157th Air Refueling Wing.

*More about the Defensive Cyber Operations Companies:*

The Cyber Reserve unit has two companies, one on the West Coast, Company A, led by Maj. Robert McCartney, and one on the East Coast, Company B, led by Maj. Dan Heywood.

The Defensive Cyber Operations Companies (DCO) are part of a broader information environment spanning, operations and related capabilities such as computer network attack, electronic warfare and information operations. These Marines are trained and geared to support the Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group (MIG), Marine component headquarters, or a Combined/Joint Task Force headquarters (C/JTF HQ) in order to enable and enhance the warfighting abilities of a Commander.

Interested to learn more? Visit the [DCO webpages](https://www.marforres.marines.mil/Major-Subordinate-Commands/Force-Headquarters-Group/Company-A-Defensive-Cyberspace-Operations-Internal-Defensive-Measures/#_blank) and contact a Marine Forces Reserve representative if you are interested in joining the cyber companies.  DCO teams are primarily comprised of warriors, cyber security professionals, innovators and information technology experts. [https://www.marforres.marines.mil/Major-Subordinate-Commands/Force-Headquarters-Group/DCO-IDM/](https://www.marforres.marines.mil/Major-Subordinate-Commands/Force-Headquarters-Group/DCO-IDM/#_blank)

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