



## Naval District Washington

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# NEPLOs Provide Vital Link in DoD Support to State and Local Authorities

WASHINGTON (NNS) – Navy Emergency Preparedness Officers (NEPLO) stand ready to respond to national emergencies and events when requested. NEPLOs assigned to Naval District Washington (NDW) were recently called to action to provide Defense Support of Civilian Authorities (DSCA) with the current COVID-19 pandemic.

NDW NEPLOs, led by Commanding Officer Capt. Andrew Shank, are assisting various federal and state agencies since they bring a unique and specialized skill set to any emergent operation. Capt. Andrew Shank is currently mobilized to the National

Response Coordination Center at the Federal Emergency Management Agency headquarters, while his other team members are assisting with the Joint Task Force-National Capital Region and U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

According to Shank, the NEPLOs are a contingent of about 100 officers and 30 enlisted personnel nationwide who respond on short notice to civilian or military operations centers during real-world disasters. They are assigned to each state, Navy regions, FEMA regions,

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Navy Emergency Preparedness Officers (NEPLO) are key in getting DoD support to civil authorities like the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) above, which was deployed to Los Angeles, March 27, 2020. Mercy deployed in support of the nation's COVID-19 response efforts, and serves as a referral hospital for non-COVID-19 patients currently admitted to shore-based hospitals.

# DEFEATING COVID-19

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## Thunderbirds, Blue Angels to Salute Responders in Select U.S. Cities

From United States Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron and Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron Public Affairs

NAS PENSACOLA, Fla. (NNS) -- The U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, the Thunderbirds, and the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, will honor frontline COVID-19 responders and essential workers with formation flights over some U.S cities over the next two weeks.

"We are truly excited to take to the skies with our Navy counterparts for a nationwide tribute to the men and women keeping our communities safe." said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. John Caldwell, Thunderbird 1 and mission commander for the flyover. "We hope to give Americans a touching display of American resolve that honors those serving on the frontline of our fight with COVID-19."

A formation of 6 F-16C/D Fighting Falcon and 6 F-18C/D Hornet aircraft will conduct these flyovers as a collaborative salute from the Air Force and Navy to recognize

healthcare workers, first responders, military, and other essential personnel while standing in solidarity with all Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We are incredibly honored to have the opportunity to salute those working on the frontline of the COVID-19 response, we are in awe of your strength and resilience," said Cmdr. Brian Kesselring, U.S. Navy Blue Angels commanding officer and flight leader. "Thank you to all of those in essential industries keeping our nation moving forward. We will get through this. We are all in this together."

This mission, the first of several planned over the coming weeks, is the culmination of more than a month of planning and coordination between the two teams and numerous city and government offices.

Residents along the flight path can expect a few seconds of jet noise as the aircraft pass overhead, along with the sight of 12

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## Telework from page 1

and major headquarters like U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Army North and U.S. Fleet Forces Command. There are more than 60 NEPLOs or NEPLO assistants currently mobilized.

“Our job is to help with the coordination of DOD resources and make sure they’re getting to the right place at the right time,” said Shank. “For COVID-19, those resources are mainly medical personnel like doctors and nurses with a lot of different specialties.”

The NEPLO program, which consists of Navy Reservists, organizes support for response to large scale disasters and other domestic

emergencies. They support the DOD and act as liaisons to civil and federal authorities.

As a civilian, Shank works for a government contractor dealing with the Defense Threat Reduction Agency and Defense Intelligence Agency. As a service member, he has been called into action during President Bush’s State Funeral, two State of the Union Addresses, Hurricane Dorian, and now the COVID-19 pandemic. Shank says the COVID-19 pandemic presents unique challenges.

“I think this pandemic is a new and different ballgame from anything we’ve encountered before. We’re seeing things that haven’t been seen since the plague or Spanish Flu. It’s really been a big learning experience in

terms of how to operate in this environment. We’re learning a lot about how to respond to large scale events and will be able to apply those lessons in the future,” said Shank.

Military operations in the United States are limited by U.S. law, but when civil authorities are dealing with natural or manmade disasters, civil unrest, or special events and require assistance from the federal government, it is the NEPLOs that provide the critical DSCA link and Department of Defense resources.

“We’re prepared to stay as long as necessary to support as long as we’re needed,” said Shank.

## Flights from page 1

high-performance aircraft flying close in precise formation.

Residents in select cities will be able to see the flyover from the safety of their home-quarantine and should maintain all social distancing guidelines during this event. They

should also refrain from traveling to landmarks, hospitals and gathering in large groups to view the flyover. A detailed flight route will be released on the day prior to the flyover.

The teams welcome and encourage viewers to tag the flyover on social media with the hashtag #AmericaStrong.

Thunderbird and Blue Angel Pilots will be available for in online video teleconference interviews on April 27 from 11:30-12:30 a.m. (EST). Media interested can contact 850-452-3710 or [americastrong.media@gmail.com](mailto:americastrong.media@gmail.com).

For photos and video for Operation America Strong, visit, <https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/americastrong>

## Weekly Tip for Working at Home



### Designate a Workspace or Home Office

If you’re used to going into an office each day, the separation between work and home is physical, and you want to try to recreate that as much as possible with a designated physical workspace at home. You may scoff at the idea of

a separate room for a home office if you live in a small apartment. Your workspace doesn’t have to be its own room but it should feel as separate from the rest of your home as possible.

## Use Official News Sources

Monitor official news resources and public health updates regularly to stay informed. Navy Region Naval District Washington will continue to provide weekly (or more frequently as needed) updates.



See Navy-specific updates for the Navy family on the [NDW FaceBook Page](#)

## Beware of Stimulus Check Related Scams

As U.S. citizens begin to receive notifications regarding Government—issued stimulus checks formally known as economic impact payments malicious actors are conducting online scams to steal money or sensitive information from victims using phishing emails, text messages, and social media messages, among other tactics. While there are no indications that the Department of the Navy family is being specifically targeted, please be vigilant and do not reply to these messages.

Actors often impersonate financial institutions, the Internal Revenue Service, charities, and other businesses to request victims verify personal or financial information in order to receive a stimulus check or request a fee for quicker processing of the payment. Actors may also attempt to deliver malware to victims via a malicious link.

In other versions of stimulus check-related scams, actors mail fake checks to victims and request them to verify information online or

via phone in order to cash the check. Other fraudulent checks appear to offer the victims more than what they are owed and include requests the difference back in online money transfers, gift cards, or cash.

### Red Flags

Request for personal and/or financial information in order to receive stimulus checks is delivered via email, phone, social media, or text message. A legitimate bank or agency would never request personal and/or financial information using these tactics.

Promises for a faster payment if the victim clicks a link, provides sensitive information, or pays a fee

Message includes grammar, spelling errors, or typos within the content of emails or messages Message is delivered from an unknown sender or the sender appears to be an official from the IRS, White House, or other agency that does not typically reach out for sensitive information.

Message includes the term “stimulus check” or “stimulus payment. Official government documents will use the official term “economic impact payment.”

If you have been targeted with this scam, call NCIS or use NCIS TIPS via [www.ncis.navy.mil](http://www.ncis.navy.mil) or downloading the app via iTunes or Google Play.