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Kentucky Air National Guard to Conduct Island-Based Military Training Exercise on St. Croix

The Kentucky Air National Guard will train on St. Croix from Aug. 25 to Sept. 4, simulating counter-enemy operations in an island setting. The exercise, supported by C-130J aircraft, aims to boost readiness while strengthening ties with local authorities.

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The V.I. Police Department has informed residents that the Kentucky Air National Guard (KY ANG) will conduct a military training exercise on St. Croix from August 25 to September 4, 2025.

The exercise is designed to simulate countering an enemy force in an island environment, allowing the Guard to develop and refine skills in settings that mirror real-world conditions on the ground. The VIPD expressed gratitude for the KY ANG's service, noting its commitment to

readiness and supporting national defense.

The Kentucky Air National Guard serves as a critical aerial militia for the Commonwealth of Kentucky and a reserve component of the U.S. Air Force. Its primary unit, the 123rd Airlift Wing, operates eight C-130J “Super Hercules” transport aircraft and performs worldwide airlift missions for military and humanitarian purposes. In November 2021, the 123rd was reequipped with these advanced C-130J aircraft, bolstering its transport capability.

Under the Total Force concept, the KY ANG trains and equips its units to meet both state and federal missions. At the state level, the Governor may activate them for disaster relief, homeland defense, and emergency response. Federally, they are operationally aligned with the U.S. Air Force and can be deployed by the President as needed.

The 123rd Airlift Wing encompasses several specialized units—from operations and maintenance to medical, logistics, and special tactics—ensuring a comprehensive mission capability across domains.

This deployment to St. Croix brings the Kentucky Air National Guard’s adaptability and logistical strength directly into a tropical, maritime training environment. Such island operations test planning, flexibility, and rapid response—skills essential not only for combat scenarios but also for crises such as hurricanes, humanitarian relief, and infrastructure recovery.

By training in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the KY ANG will improve its understanding of multi-domain operations in island settings, which aligns with its broader role supporting state and federal missions alike.