



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2021

21-18

CONTACT: Lt. Col. Richard Stackpole

OFFICE: 615.313.0662

richard.a.stackpole2.mil@mail.mil

117th Regional Training Institute hosting change of command

SMYRNA, Tenn. - The Tennessee National Guard's 117th Regional Training Institute, headquartered in Smyrna, will conduct a change of command ceremony at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna on Saturday, May 15, at 10 a.m.

Col. Jason Fleming, the current 117th commander who is from Covington and resides in Stanton, will relinquish command to Lt. Col. Tommie Stevens who resides in Sherwood.

Fleming served as commander since February 2018. During his command, he led the 117th through the COVID-19 pandemic. After the initial quarantine, the 117th was one of the first Army-wide schools to reopen and resume classes using innovative methods to implement CDC recommendations. The 117th graduated over 2,100 students during Fleming's time as commander. A field artillery officer with over 31 years of military experience, Fleming will be retiring from the Tennessee National Guard following the ceremony.

Stevens currently serves as the operations officer for the 117th RTI. He is also a field artillery officer whose prior commands include the 2nd Battalion of the 117th RTI and command of Chattanooga's Battery B of the 1-181st Field Artillery Regiment. He deployed overseas to Iraq and Afghanistan and has more than 35 years of military experience.

The 117th RTI provides nationwide programs and training for Soldiers in the U.S. Army, National Guard, and U.S. Army Reserves. They specialize in individual and team level instruction and certification for Military Police, Armor, and Quartermaster branches as well as commissioning Soldiers through Tennessee's Officer Candidate School. They also host and provide numerous training events to ensure the readiness of all forces in the Tennessee National Guard.

- (30) -

*******MEDIA COORDINATION INSTRUCTIONS*******

Media interested in attending must RSVP by calling the 117th Regional Training Institute at (615) 355-3712 or email Sgt. 1st Class James Mayberry at james.o.mayberry@mail.mil. Media will be met in the lobby of Building 500 in Smyrna's Volunteer Training Site prior to the ceremony. All CDC guidelines will be adhered to.

All Tennessee Army and Air National Guard press releases can be found at
<https://www.tn.gov/military/news.html>