

26,000 make Brim Frost '89 the largest ever

by Holly F. Reimer

Tundra Times reporter

Bitter cold temperatures throughout much of Alaska cooperated with the military, as the cold weather military training known as Brim Frost got under way Friday.

This cold weather training is more like a mock war for Joint Task Force-Alaska and includes Army, Air Force, Reserve, Coast Guard, National Guard

and Canadian forces. All these forces will join together in the biennial Brim Frost '89.

During a press conference last week at Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, Air Force Lt. Gen. Thomas G. McNerney said that this year's Brim Frost is the largest ever.

McNerney is commander of the Alaskan Air Command, headquartered at Elmendorf.

During Brim Frost '87 there were

24,000 people involved. This year there are 26,000 people involved, including Canadian forces.

The exercise will also include about 120 fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, as well as 1,000 wheeled and tracked vehicles.

"Brim Frost '89 is unique because of its size, and it's unique because of the Arctic climate," McNerney said.

McNerney also pointed out having military exercises in Alaska is unique

because most of the state isn't connected by roads, unlike other places throughout the Lower 48 and other parts of the world where the United States conducts training exercises.

And with a military exercise of this size an environmental impact assessment was prepared. It states that in maneuver areas the existing roads must be used. Other restrictions are

(Continued on Page Thirteen)

• Brim Frost

(Continued from Page One)

that the cutting of live vegetation and harassment of wildlife will not be allowed.

Although this year's exercise is expected to cost about \$15 million, McInerney said it's less than '87.

And Army Maj. Gen. Harold T. Fields Jr., Sixth Infantry Division (Light), said that this money is for a good cause — the defense of the nation.

The Coast Guard will be conducting training independently near Whittier and off Kodiak Island.

The Coast Guard, when involved in its wartime role, becomes part of the Maritime Defense Zone-Sector Alaska — a joint cooperation between the Coast Guard and the Navy.

JTF-Alaska includes Army forces, air forces and Alaska National Guard forces.

JTF-Alaska is activated during hostilities, national emergencies or natural disasters. JTF-Alaska then assumes operational control of all air and ground military forces in the state.

Alaska troops will be joined by about 5,000 people from all over the Lower 48.

Special cold weather training and extra precautions are taken with troops from outside Alaska

"Our casualty track record is pretty good. We have to be careful with troops coming up from the Lower 48. They all have to go through cold weather survival training," Fields said.