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Aviation unit Soldiers hone important helicopter maintenance skills during annual training

**Story by Spc. James Yahn
Company D, 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment**

RICKENBACKER AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ohio — Soldiers of the Ohio Army National Guard's Company D, 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment, benefited from the opportunity for a maintenance-filled home station annual training from June 10 to 26. Company D performs Black Hawk helicopter maintenance in support of various flight missions for the battalion.

During this annual training there was plenty of maintenance to be done. In addition to planned scheduled maintenance, Company D also performs unscheduled maintenance, as was evident June 17, when the unit's DART, or Downed Aircraft Recovery Team, had to trouble-shoot, repair and recover a Black Hawk that had landed in a corn field just south of Akron, due to an electrical malfunction. There were several possible causes of the electrical malfunction, and the experience and preparation of Staff Sgt. Chris Long enabled him to have the proper electrical components and tools to get the job done quickly.

After the recovery aircraft landed in the corn field, Long quickly identified the problem as the on-board flight computer. Using his training and experience, he easily replaced the bad part, completed ground checks and the Black Hawk was ready to fly home — except for one more thing. Neighboring children had come over to watch the Soldiers repair the aircraft. Before the helicopters returned to Rickenbacker, the Soldiers brought the kids over to the Black Hawks so they could see them up close. They sat inside, took pictures, and enjoyed time with the pilots, crew and mechanics. The two Black Hawks then returned to Rickenbacker without incident.

"This is just one of the many examples from annual training where the Soldiers of Delta Company experience the important task of on-the-job aviation maintenance," said Capt. Paul Tumidolsky, company commander. "Without proper maintenance, nothing flies."

Photo Caption

DSC00955.jpg — Soldiers from the Ohio Army National Guard's Company D, 1st Battalion, 137th Aviation Regiment, perform maintenance on a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter June 17, 2011, in Akron, Ohio. The Downed Aircraft Recovery Team, or DART, from Company D repaired and recovered the aircraft, which was forced to make a precautionary landing in a cornfield near Akron. (Ohio National Guard photo)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: The Ohio National Guard Public Affairs Office at 614-336-7000. Please visit the Ohio National Guard website at <http://ong.ohio.gov>.