



National Commission on the Future of the Army

2530 Crystal Drive, Zachary Taylor Building, Suite 5000
Arlington, VA 22202

SUBJECT: National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) Minutes – 9 July 2015,
Site Visit Fort Hood, Texas

Date: 9 July 2015

Time: 0800 - 1315

Locations: III Corps Headquarters Bldg 1001, Hood Army Airfield (HAAF), Robert Gray
Army Airfield (RGAAF)

Format: Commissioners discussion with Commanders and staffs

Attendees:

Commissioner Robert Hale
Commissioner Larry Ellis
Commissioner JD Thurman
COL Kurt Weinand – NCFA Staff
LTC Greg Hartvigsen – NCFA Staff
LTC Steve Pierce– NCFA Staff
LTC Sean Spence– NCFA Staff
Mr. Mark Pizzuto –Alternate Designated Federal Officer (ADFO)
MG Jeff Colt, Commander, 1st Army Division West
CM Patrick Akuna, Jr., Command Sergeant Major, 1A Division West
COL Adam Lange, G3 Air, III Corps
COL Randall Wickman, Commander, 189th Infantry Brigade, 1A Division West
COL Daniel Hurlbut, Commander, 120th Infantry Brigade, 1A Division West
COL John Leffers, Chief of Staff, 1A Division West
LTC George Hodges, G3 Plans, 1A Division West
LTC Oscar Pintado, DCofS G3, 1A Division West
LTC Sean Smith, Chief of Operations, G3, 1A Division West
CW5 James O’Gorman, CWOB, 120th Infantry Brigade, 1A Division West
Mr. Chip Hickman, Mobilization Officer, G3, 1A Division West
Mr. Jeff Kramer, Training Officer, G3, 1A Division West
COL Jeffery Thompson, Commander, 1st ACB
CSM Sean M. Dunn, Command Sergeant Major, 1st ACB
MAJ Matthew R. Minear, Operations Officer, 1st ACB
MAJ James G. Campbell, Assistant G3 Air, 1st Cavalry Division
CPT Kyle Rogers, F Company, 227th Aviation Regiment

Documents Submitted to Commission: 1ACB Organization and Training Brief (classified and stored separately)

SUBJECT: National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) Minutes – 9 July 2015, Site Visit with The Command Team Fort Hood, Texas

Meeting Summary

Meeting convened at 0900hrs with Commissioners Hale, Ellis and Thurman and NCFA Staff meeting 1st Army elements at III Corps Headquarters. Mr. Pizzuto, ADFO, and Commissioner Hale provided opening remarks and introductions. The ADFO discussed the applicability of the Federal Advisory Committee Act to the discussions for the day. A briefing without slides and discussion based on Commissioners' questions followed.

Commissioners and NCFA Staff met with the 1st Army Division West (Div West) Commander and his staff. Commissioner Hale explained the purpose of the National Commission on the Future of the Army and that this site visit was part of gathering perspectives on Reserve Component training and mobilization at Active Army installation and the impacts to the Total Army.

MG Colt presented information that summarized the Div West mission, organization, and locations. He described the recent deactivation of Brigades within his command and the affect this has and will have on meeting the mission of DivWest. He pointed out that their Aviation Brigade was deactivated and DivWest only has a small aviation Training Support Battalion available to train and validate Reserve Component Aviation units. He indicated this will be a problem when an O-6 command mobilizes as the Training Support Battalion is commanded by an O-5.

MG Colt specifically commented on his perspective of how Army Aviation is becoming increasingly complex and how this complexity will outpace the Reserve Components' ability to train in the time available at home station. When asked if he was comfortable with the loss of a strategic bench of Apache aviators that will result from the transfer of all Apaches to the Regular Army under ARI, he indicated he was more concerned with keeping those pilots that remained in an appropriate state of readiness and that he was comfortable with no strategic bench.

Commissioners asked specific questions related to experience with National Guard Apache units post-mobilization training. MG Colt and his staff answered questions posed even when NCFA Staff noted that the last National Guard Apache unit was mobilized and conducted training and validation at Ft. Hood prior to MG Colt's or his staff's assignment to DivWest.

After meeting with MG Colt and DivWest staff, the Commissioners moved to HAAF for a briefing from COL Thompson Commander, 1st ACB, and his staff. At 0925 hrs, Mr. Pizzuto, ADFO, and Commissioner Hale provided opening remarks and introductions. The ADFO discussed the applicability of the Federal Advisory Committee Act to the discussions for the day. Briefings and discussions based on Commissioners' questions followed in the order below:

1st ACB presented a briefing that summarized their key events for the next 3 years and commented on the very high operational tempo of training, equipment fielding, exercises and deployments. When asked by Commissioners if this OPTEMPO is sustainable, the unit representatives responded yes, but they are at the redline on OPTEMPO.

SUBJECT: National Commission on the Future of the Army (NCFA) Minutes – 9 July 2015, Site Visit with The Command Team Fort Hood, Texas

COL Thompson and staff then briefed their FY16 campaign plan and the unit's current quarterly calendar of events. They highlighted the successes of the last National Training Center rotation, discussed flying hour resources, the emphasis on commanders taking ownership for training and training management for their own force, and the risks that are created by the high turnover and lack of experience of the newly assigned aviators. COL Thompson further provided information on how the Brigade organized for operations and major training exercises, the level of collective proficiency the unit can achieve, and how the quality and quantity of combined arms and multi-component training is essential and cannot be replaced by other means. He specifically noted that 1st ACB is training 76 of 91 days in this calendar quarter. COL Thompson concluded the brief with a discussion of the modernization process the brigade has underway and his perspective of how the Aviation Restructure Initiative (ARI) facilitates this modernization process and how delaying or failing to execute ARI will delay or prevent modernization of 1st ACB aircraft.

1st ACB moved the Commissioners and NCFA Staff by helicopter to RGAAF at 1105 hrs to visit a Grey Eagle Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) company. The UAS company presented an orientation on their aircraft, its capabilities, and logistical support required to conduct training and operations. The Commissioners asked questions related to the maintainability of the aircraft and deployability of the company. The CPT Rogers, Company Commander, F Company, 227th Aviation Regiment, and staff indicated the unit, its aircraft and accompanying systems, must deploy to a non-field environment using a hard stand airport or airfield. The unit gave the Commissioners a view of the operating consoles used to operate the Grey Eagle systems while another Soldier flies the aircraft.

The Commissioners and NCFA Staff then returned to HAAF at 1200 hrs for continued briefings from F Company. This included a demonstration of the Manned Unmanned Teaming (MUM-T) of a Grey Eagle flying and sending video to an Apache on the ramp. Blackhawk and Chinook crews presented information and answers to the commissioners on their aircraft and an Attack/Recon Battalion commander gave a short briefing on his unit's training and operations. The brigade also gave commissioners a tour of their mobile mission command center that integrated information from their helicopters and UAS. Commissioners asked questions and received information from members of the brigade during this time viewing the static displays on the ramp.

The meeting ended at 1315hrs with the Commissioners thanking everyone for offering their opinions and personal experiences. Commissioners also explained more information about the Commission's activities, along with the how to provide input, could be found at www.ncfa.ncr.gov.