



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 from - 14 JUL
15 Engagement with the Adjutants General of Maryland and Virginia

Date: 14 July 2015

Time: 1130 - 1345

Location: HQs Bldg, Fort Meade, Maryland

Format: Round Table with the Adjutants General (AGs) and Staff

Attendees:

Commissioner Carter Ham (Chairman)

Mr. Rickey Smith – NCFA Staff, Chief of Staff

Mr. Scott Sharp – NCFA Staff

LTC Tim Palmer – NCFA Staff

MAJ Doroneth White – NCFA Staff

Mr. Mark von Heeringen – Alternate Designated Federal Officer (ADFO)

MG Linda Singh, - The Adjutant General for the State of Maryland

MG Timothy Williams – The Adjutant General for the Commonwealth of Virginia

COL Sean Casey – Director, Joint Staff MDNG

COL Kohler – Public Affairs Officer

LTC Drake McGraw – Commander, 32nd Civil Support Team

MAJ Sheldon – Executive Officer, AG Virginia

1SG Sergio Alcantara - 32nd Civil Support Team

SSG Montgomery – Public Affairs NCO

Documents Submitted to Commission:

- 1) Command Briefing Charts: 2015 Baltimore Civil Unrest “Operation Baltimore Rally”
- 2) Special Edition of The Maryland Line, “Operation Baltimore Rally,” Official Magazine of the Military Department, April 27 – May 3, 2015

Meeting Summary

The ADFO explained the application of the Federal Advisory Committee Act including all materials and discussions would be posted on the Commission’s public website. Chairman Ham participated in a round table engagement with the Adjutants General of Maryland and Virginia with select staff to discuss the purpose of the National Commission on the Future of the Army

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and to gather input on the issues before the Commission. Key threads of the discussion included the following:

MG Singh (Adjutant General Maryland) (AG MD) began by telling a personal story about how the “Guard” saved her life and she has been in uniform since the age of 17. She also mentioned having some concerns about still being able to deploy her units given the reduction in wartime footing and indicated Soldiers want to do meaningful things, but absent that, it would be difficult to maintain recruiting and retention.

MG Singh discussed some of the preparation leading up to, and the actual deployment of Soldiers to assist with civil unrest in Baltimore following the death of Freddie Gray. Some keys to success were the good fortune of having recently completed civil unrest training and working closely with State Police and early activation of the Joint Operations Center. MG Williams (Adjutant General Virginia) (AG VA) worked closely with MG Singh and kept frequent communications going should VA forces be required in MD or elsewhere.

One of the lessons learned was that the Maryland National Guard had the ability to activate, muster and deliver Soldiers faster than local authorities could manage reception and task. The Maryland National Guard made 1750 Soldiers available in 25 hours. MG Singh was confident there was no capability left unavailable to the State once the Soldiers were called up despite the deployment involving predominantly infantry. MG Singh credited the combat experience of the mid and junior grade leadership as a critical ingredient to success, stating that every leader who deployed to Baltimore had also been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan and the discipline developed there gave them a sense of which situations were truly dangerous.

MG Singh found it interesting that there were about 4500 Reserve MPs who might have been available for the Baltimore crisis, but indicated lines of authority and mechanisms to employ them were not fast. Commissioner Ham noted that homeland defense and the threat environment is vastly different today than ever before and authorities need to recognize that.

Discussion turned to Active Component (AC) to Reserve Component (RC) recruiting and MG Williams said AC to RC accessions were less than 20% and part of the issue may be that Soldiers leaving the Regular Army are not happy and the last thing they are thinking about is joining the National Guard. Someone mentioned it might make sense to consider some amount of requirement to finish an AC term with RC time or otherwise incentivizing RC service past AC service.

Chairman Ham asked whether a “TTHS”¹ type account would make sense for the Army Guard, to which MG Williams (who had TRADOC force structure experience as a DA civilian) responded that he did not think TTHS would be easy or clean to manage beyond initial entry training – e.g., for advanced course TTHS implementation would be like comparing apples and oranges for AC vs. RC.

¹ TTHS, Trainees, Transients, Holders and Students account used for Regular Army manpower when a Soldier is not assigned to a position in an operational unit or institutional organization.

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BOG: Dwell ratio was also discussed, and both AGs indicated their states were currently averaging about 1:4, or perhaps 1:4.1, and there are differences depending on the types of unit, but most Soldiers who have joined in the past decade are used to that level and even expect it now. They also indicated most commercial employers are responding well to the deployments, but if there were issues, they tended to be with State and Federal employers who were reluctant to let their employees go to serve.

The group discussed the utility of knowing which civilian skillsets were resident in the force, particularly with respect to specialized skills like cyber. AG VA suggested such knowledge of individual Soldiers' capabilities resides primarily at the command level and is not easily visible at higher levels – implying across units, states or nationally. Each AG indicated their respective State Guard had a good, if not even robust, cyber capability and thought it might make sense to bring back some form of specialty ranks (e.g. Specialist 5 or 6) for these types of skills for recruiting purposes. They also cited the need for cyber units to use a multi-component concept for organizing.

Chairman Ham asked about the value of State Partnership Programs and both AGs echoed the sentiment that the programs were extremely valuable, citing engagements with Bosnia and Estonia and the need to ramp up programs in areas where relationships are more challenging or difficult.

Other discussion items included full-time manning with the pre-war ramp in the early 2000s providing benefits that the forces are enjoying to this day, but there are concerns now with reducing this type of support. AG VA indicated the majority of his Soldiers' mobilizations occurred with less than 90 days notice and full-time support was essential to achieving those timelines. The combination of full time support and experience gained through deployments has been vital to building capability. MG Singh stated, "I would not want to deploy to the streets of Baltimore with the National Guard from the 1980's or early 90's."

The concept of multi-component units was further discussed, particularly with respect to First Army. The concept of using round-out functions from other units to take advantage of the current level of combat experience the Army has gained over the last several years was discussed. Chairman Ham solicited opinions on the role of First Army from the AGs perspective. AG MD recounted the stark difference in her two mobilization experiences. The first mobilization experience in 2007 for Operation Iraqi Freedom was slow and frustrating while tasks from pre-mobilization training were repeated at the mobilization station. Post-mobilization activities for her second deployment almost four years later were more efficient and effective by focusing on critical tasks that could only be accomplished at mobilization station.

The meeting concluded at 1345hrs with Chairman Ham asking about the AH-64 Apache helicopter transfer. Neither AG foresaw immediate effects in their States because they don't have AH-64 units. AG MD explained that currently the 175 Infantry conducts air ground integration training with the PA AH-64 battalion. Both AGs expressed general concerns about the turmoil and potential cost of retraining pilots, which they did not believe was currently programmed. AG VA also said he was troubled that the Guard combat units would no longer look like the rest of the Army in terms of capability if the transfer is completed.