

MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

2015 ANNUAL REPORT | 2016 OBJECTIVES **MMXV**



The 2015-16 Senior Advisory Task Force consists of (from left to right): Steve Hunegs, Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota; Mark Ritchie, former Minnesota Secretary of State; Charles Porter, Retired Judge, Hennepin County Veterans Court; Carolyn Parnell, former Commissioner of Minnesota Information Technology; Don Shelby, former WCCO-TV anchor; Maj. Gen. Richard Nash, Minnesota National Guard Adjutant General; Steve Towrek, Marvin Windows; Jim Kosmo, Author; Sara Criger, President of Mercy Hospital; Greg Coleman, Harris Communication and Minnesota Vikings; (not pictured) Father Kevin McDonough, St. Peter Claver's Church in St. Paul; J. Robinson, University of Minnesota Head Wrestling Coach; and Dr. Earl Potter, President of St. Cloud State University. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Paul Santikko)

Soldiers continue an 18-year tradition by participating in the Bataan Memorial March in Brainerd on Aug. 15, 2015. The march commemorates the sacrifices of those who suffered the infamous Bataan Death March of 1942. On Dec. 8, 1941, Japan attacked U.S. and Allied Forces on the Philippine Islands. With the U.S. Pacific Fleet decimated by the same-day attack on Pearl Harbor, Allied Forces were cut off from resupply and reinforcements. The Soldiers in the Philippines, including Brainerd-based A Company, 194th Tank Battalion, put up a brave and determined fight against the overwhelming Japanese Imperial Army for three months before surrendering. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Paul Santikko)



## TO THE CITIZENS OF MINNESOTA,

With more than 500 citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen deployed overseas in 2015, the last year showcased the versatility and relevance of your Minnesota National Guard. Whether in Kuwait, Afghanistan or Egypt, your National Guard continued a well-earned tradition of excellence.

On the home front, our men and women performed admirably when called upon by the governor. Well-trained aviators and crews were dispatched to assist local authorities to fight wildfires here in Minnesota, as well as in Western states. When avian influenza threatened the state's poultry industry, Minnesota National Guard troops were called upon to assist in the logistics of stemming the outbreak.

2015 was a year wherein we sharpened our skills through a major statewide exercise – *Vigilant Guard*. More than 1,400 military participants joined nearly 500 others from state, federal and local emergency management agencies to develop strategies for a coordinated response to simulated disasters across the state, such as severe weather and an oil train derailment.

This year placed an emphasis on diversity, ensuring that our military force reflects the communities in which we serve. During the last four years our recruiting efforts have resulted in nearly doubling the number of racial, ethnic and gender diverse members in our formation; and in 2015, 27 percent of new recruits were from diverse populations. In April we held our first-ever Joint Female Professional Development Symposium, showcasing opportunities for women.

Looking ahead to 2016, we expect another busy year. Our 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team will culminate two years of training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, in a large-scale exercise. The 34th Red Bull Infantry Division Headquarters will continue to prepare for major exercises such as *Cooperative Resolve* in Turkey, *Talisman Sabre* in Australia and *Yama Sakura* in Japan; and other Army and Air National Guard units are awaiting confirmation on upcoming deployments.

There are three legislative priorities in 2016. First, we need to find an alternative to sequestration and automatic spending cuts which would result in a loss of readiness for both domestic and overseas missions. Next, we urge Congress to look at a potentially negative item in the current National Defense Authorization Act. There is a provision that would allow non-military federal civil servants to be placed into jobs throughout the National Guard. We believe that would harm the readiness of our units. Finally, we want to continue to develop our force structure so we can meet emerging threats, in particular cyber security and response.

2016 will be the 160th anniversary of the founding of the Minnesota National Guard. Even before Minnesota was a state, men and women have stepped up to serve our state and nation. Minnesotans should be confident in the competence, values and character of those who serve in the Minnesota Army and Air National Guard. Thank you to all who have come forward in the form of our Yellow Ribbon Networks throughout the state – you are making a difference for our Soldiers and Airmen.



MAJ. GEN. RICHARD C. NASH  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

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Soldiers exit a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter operated by B Company, 2-147th Assault Helicopter Battalion, during a personnel recovery exercise March 16, 2015, at Marauder Range, Kuwait. The exercise involved service members from the United Kingdom, Canada, Denmark, as well as U.S. Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Spc. Sebastian Nemece)



## 2015 IN FOCUS

### DOMESTIC FIREFIGHTING | AVIAN FLU

In April 2015 the 682nd Engineer Battalion and 134th Brigade Support Battalion were activated to support the state's response to the avian influenza outbreak affecting Minnesota poultry farms. Thirty National Guard Soldiers and 15 military water trucks were used in depopulation operations to curtail the outbreak.

In 2015 the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade supported two missions at the request of the governor. In June the brigade supplied two Black Hawk helicopters, equipped with 660-gallon water buckets, to help the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources in fire suppression efforts across the state. In August, at the request of the Washington National Guard, the brigade supplied two Black Hawk helicopters to assist in aerial firefighting efforts to stem historic wildfires throughout the Western U.S.

### VIGILANT GUARD

More than 1,400 service members from the Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin National Guard joined approximately 500 participants from various state, federal and local emergency response agencies to carry out the *Vigilant Guard* exercise at three training sites across the state: Duluth, Camp Ripley and St. Paul.

The exercise – which simulated multiple disasters, such as an overturned rail car and weather-related events – tested the Minnesota National Guard's ability to respond to large-scale incidents that could affect Minnesotans. Through the collaborative design of the exercise, *Vigilant Guard* also provided an opportunity for the organization to build valuable interagency relationships and coordinate resources with civilian authorities, responders and other military units that might be part of a future response effort.

### FORCE PROTECTION

The July 16, 2015, attack on military facilities in Chattanooga, Tennessee, prompted the organization to take a hard look at personal safety at Minnesota National Guard installations, armories and recruiting facilities.

As a result, the Minnesota National Guard fortified its force protection measures to preserve the effectiveness and survivability of personnel and facilities.

By addressing specific items, such as conducting active shooter training, coordinating with local law enforcement and ensuring the ability to rapidly arm trained personnel with military firearms, the organization aims to mitigate risk from threats against its employees.

### HOCKEY DAY MINNESOTA

The Minnesota National Guard was the focus of Fox Sports North's ninth annual Hockey Day Minnesota, an event showcasing the enthusiasm for hockey throughout the state. Partnering with the civic group Serving Our Troops, FSN, the Minnesota Wild and Metropolitan Airport Commission, Hockey Day Minnesota honored service members and families during the event in St. Paul. Organizers constructed a regulation-sized ice rink, which was used for five competitive boys' and girls' high school games, on an active airfield adjacent to the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade's headquarters.

The event was broadcast live via satellite to Soldiers deployed in Kuwait, who participated in a floor hockey game with prominent Minnesota hockey alumni.

This partnership earned the Minnesota National Guard its fifth Board of Governors Emmy® Award from the Upper Midwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

A 148th Fighter Wing F-16C Block 50 Fighting Falcon stands ready for its next training mission during the Sentry Savannah exercise in Savannah, Georgia, on Feb. 11, 2015. The exercise provides Airmen with wartime readiness training in an unfamiliar, high tempo environment. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Ralph Kapustka)



## MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD | PRIORITIES

### INTRODUCTION TO PRIORITIES

The Minnesota National Guard's enduring goal is to provide an agile, resilient force, ready to fulfill any federal, state or community need. The Minnesota National Guard's success relies on its ability to provide military assets when called upon, working with interagency partners to enhance joint-response capabilities.

In order to fulfill its obligations to the state and nation, the Minnesota National Guard focuses on six priorities that guide the organization through decision-making and mission-planning processes, ultimately ensuring a unified and consistent response.

The past several years presented the Minnesota National Guard with many fluid and dynamic events that tested the organization's ability to operate under fluctuating budgets and strenuous mission requirements.

Though the operational circumstances and challenges have varied, the Minnesota National Guard's six priorities provide a fundamental blueprint that ensures success of the mission while maintaining personnel and equipment at optimal levels.

#### DIVERSITY

*We value diversity in our organization to broaden our perspective, incorporate a variety of strengths and better represent the communities we serve.*

#### COMPETENT READY FORCE

*We provide the required personnel, equipment and partnerships to ensure we have a competent, ready force to meet the needs of our state and nation.*

#### OPTIMAL FORCE STRUCTURE

*We optimize our force by organizing our personnel, equipment and capabilities to accomplish current and anticipated missions.*

#### BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON

*We connect service members, veterans, military families, employers and communities to ensure the resilience of those who serve.*

#### SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

*We invest in sustainable infrastructure to ensure our facilities are economically and environmentally sound and remain assets to service members and communities.*

#### CYBER SECURITY & RESPONSE

*We secure our state's military network and collaborate with interagency partners to enhance our response to and recovery from negative cyber events.*



(Left) Members of the Minnesota National Guard pose at the inaugural Joint Female Professional Development Training Symposium in St. Paul on April 18, 2015. The symposium focused on personal and professional development of female Airmen and Soldiers in the military, and covered resilience, retention, inclusion and diversity. The keynote speaker at the event was Air Force Materiel Command Commanding General, Gen. Janet C. Wolfenbarger. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Amy M. Lovgren)

(Right) In 2015 the Minnesota National Guard unveiled a new logo for its Diversity & Inclusion program. (Design by the Minnesota National Guard Visual Information Office)



## DIVERSITY

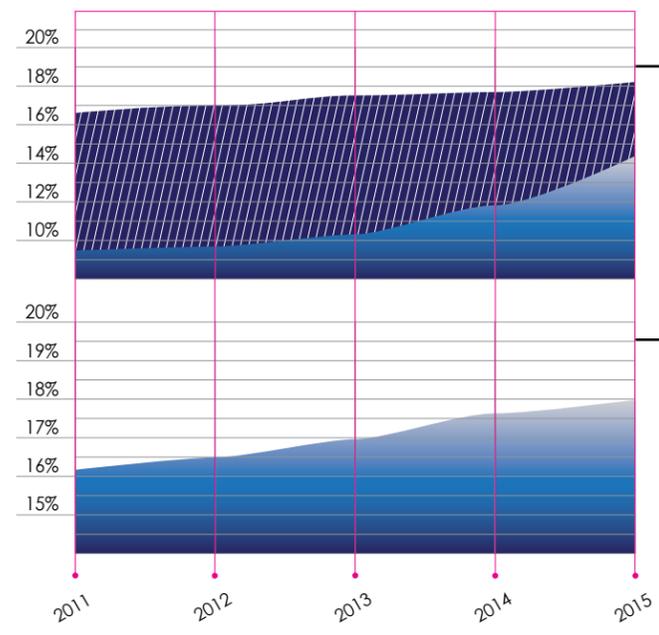
When the Minnesota National Guard established its diversity goals in 2011, the organization set its sights on shaping a force with a commensurate percentage of diverse individuals relative to the state of Minnesota's population.

In 2011, 7.8 percent of service members in the Minnesota National Guard were from diverse ethnicities, compared to 16.6 percent of Minnesotans as a whole. In four years, the Minnesota National Guard closed that gap by attaining 14.3 percent of its force from diverse ethnicities and is approaching the 18.1 percent of Minnesotans that currently come from diverse ethnicities.

Additionally, in 2016 the organization will continue to provide opportunities for service members to represent their heritage affiliations at cultural events, such as participation in lacrosse skill camps, the Hmong New Year, the annual Martin Luther King Jr. breakfast and Cinco de Mayo celebrations.

The Minnesota National Guard has eight special emphasis councils that focus on diversity: African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Disability, Holocaust Remembrance, Latino, LGBT, Native American, and Women.

To continue the positive trend toward achieving its diversity goals, in 2016 the Minnesota National Guard will continue to engage in community relationship building, such as participation in powwows, engagement with the Somali youth group Ka-Joog and forums on closing the Latino education gap.



### TOTAL MINORITIES

- In 2011, 16.6% of Minnesotans were in the minority
- In 2011, 7.8% of Minnesota National Guard members were in the minority
- In 2015, 18.1% of Minnesotans were in the minority
- In 2015, 14.3% of Minnesota National Guard members were in the minority

### MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD WOMEN

- In 2011, 16.2% of Minnesota National Guard members were women
- In 2015, 18.0% of Minnesota National Guard members were women

### NATIVE AMERICANS

- In 2011, 1.0% of Minnesotans were Native American
- In 2011, 1.2% of Minnesota National Guard members were Native American
- In 2015, 1.0% of Minnesotans were Native American
- In 2015, 1.5% of Minnesota National Guard members were Native American

### ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDERS

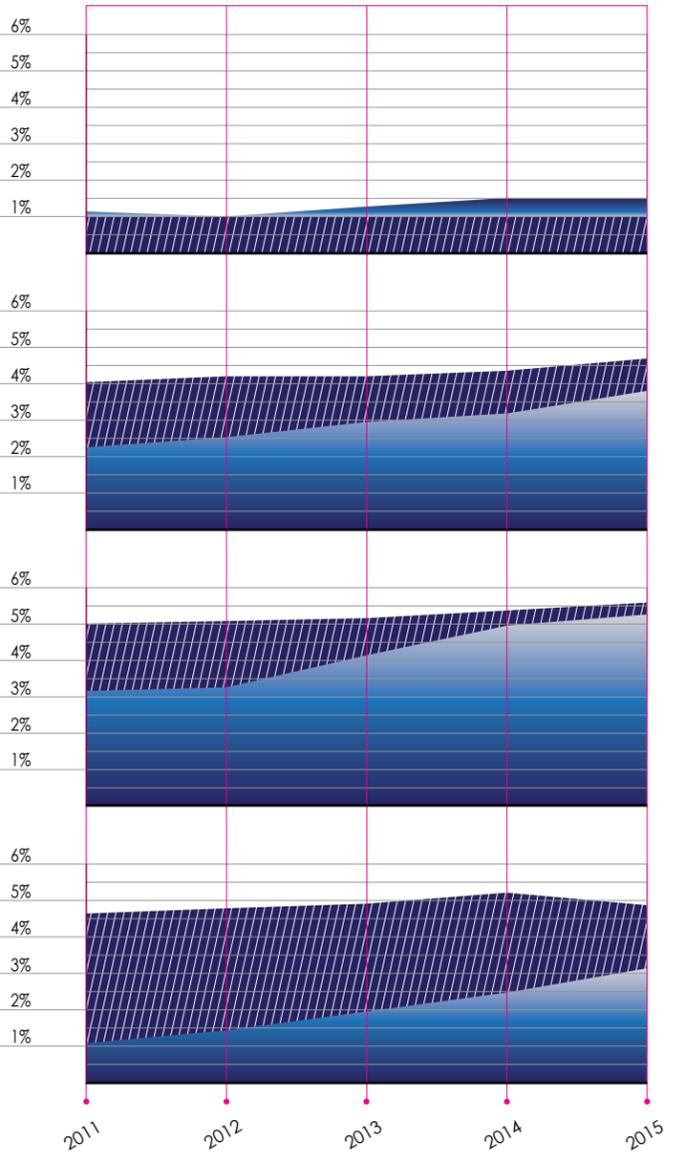
- In 2011, 4.0% of Minnesotans were Asian/Pacific Islanders
- In 2011, 2.3% of Minnesota National Guard members were Asian/Pacific Islanders
- In 2015, 4.6% of Minnesotans were Asian/Pacific Islanders
- In 2015, 3.7% of Minnesota National Guard members were Asian/Pacific Islanders

### AFRICAN AMERICANS

- In 2011, 4.9% of Minnesotans were African American
- In 2011, 3.1% of Minnesota National Guard members were African American
- In 2015, 5.5% of Minnesotans were African American
- In 2015, 5.2% of Minnesota National Guard members were African American

### LATINO

- In 2011, 4.6% of Minnesotans were Latino
- In 2011, 1.1% of Minnesota National Guard members were Latino
- In 2015, 4.7% of Minnesotans were Latino
- In 2015, 3.1% of Minnesota National Guard members were Latino





*Spc. Kristina Koch secures a Humvee and trailer to a rail car at the Camp Ripley Training Center railhead on Nov. 21, 2015. Soldiers logistically supporting the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team's National Training Center rotation in June 2016 assembled at CRTC during their November drill to practice rail load and equipment tie-down procedures. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Patrick Loch)*

*Brigade staff officers brief the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team Commander, Col. Robert Inness, on different courses of action the unit can take to successfully accomplish a combat simulation exercise. This training was in preparation for the brigade's rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California, in 2016. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Patrick Loch)*



## DIVERSITY

We value diversity in our organization to broaden our perspective, incorporate a variety of strengths and better represent the communities we serve.



## COMPETENT READY FORCE

We provide the required personnel, equipment and partnerships to ensure we have a competent, ready force to meet the needs of our state and nation.

Throughout 2015, the Minnesota National Guard was successful in recruiting candidates of racial, ethnic and gender diversity backgrounds into the Minnesota National Guard. Diversity efforts emphasized during the past four years have resulted in nearly doubling the number of diverse members in the organization.

In 2015 nearly 27 percent of new Minnesota Army National Guard recruits were from diverse populations, exceeding the Recruiting and Retention Battalion's 25 percent goal. Meeting this standard ensures that service members develop and continue their careers to become mid- and senior-grade leaders, which benefits the Minnesota National Guard by having a higher proportion of its members trained and ready to deploy.

By building and sustaining new relationships within the community, the Minnesota Air National Guard also increased its racial, ethnic and gender diversity recruits by 4 percent in 2015. Additionally, nearly 22 percent of all recruits were females, and diversity recruits increased in four out of five race and ethnic categories. Partnerships with Somali youth group Ka-Joog, Spanish-speaking radio station La Raza and Open Streets Minneapolis are examples of the Minnesota Air National Guard's outreach to the growing, diverse populace and fostering strong ties within the community.

In a historic change, the Department of Defense announced on Dec. 3, 2015, that all military jobs will be available to women. Even before the DOD, in 2013, rescinded the Ground Combat Exclusion Rule – which barred women from serving in combat roles – the Minnesota National Guard initiated opportunities for women to serve in direct combat and leadership positions.

By striving for diversity through better inclusion, the Minnesota National Guard is able to draw from the talent found throughout the state. Currently, women in the Minnesota National Guard hold four percent of the available positions they were previously barred from, and female recruits in both the Army and Air National Guard have increased each of the last five years. Women will be fully integrated into combat units by January 2016.

More than 350 Minnesota National Guard members gathered for the first Joint Female Professional Development Symposium at Metropolitan State University in April 2015. The event promoted equality and diversification of thought and talent in the more than 13,000-member force, of which 18 percent are women. Participation in the symposium empowered women to network, mentor and lead each other into positions of greater responsibility.

Minnesota National Guard recruiters have modeled a similar path of diversity through inclusion. In keeping with the goal to reflect the communities in which they serve, Minnesota National Guard recruiters are challenged to recruit and retain the Soldiers and Airmen needed to maintain one of the nation's largest National Guard formations while drawing candidates from the nation's 21st-largest population. Recruiters identify and develop relationships within communities that previously did not have a National Guard presence, ensuring that all Minnesotans are afforded the opportunity to serve. In doing so, Minnesota National Guard recruiters ensure that the organization remains at or above 100 percent force strength and is one of the best in the nation in terms of personnel readiness.

The efforts of the Diversity Working Group and the Recruiting Ambassador Program have resulted in the 133rd Airlift Wing's connecting with 24 high schools and community colleges and attending more than 15 community events, helping the wing to make measurable strides to more accurately reflect its community. The efforts of the Diversity and Inclusion Council and the Community Outreach Ambassador Program have resulted in the 148th Fighter Wing's connecting with 32 local and regional high schools, colleges and universities as well as attending nearly 30 local and regional events with similar success.

The Minnesota National Guard is committed to providing the state and nation a trained, prepared and equipped force, capable of responding to any community need or federal mission.

A competent and ready force is achieved by recruiting the right mix of people, then training them to do specific jobs and assigning them to units across the state. Additionally, units are required to ensure their Soldiers and Airmen are proficient in operating the most up-to-date equipment and large-scale exercises are conducted routinely to evaluate performance and strengthen partnerships with outside agencies and entities.

Personnel readiness, which is achieved when units ensure that all of their members are administratively and medically prepared, is the final component to fielding a competent and ready force.

For more than 14 years the Minnesota National Guard played a significant role in combat missions overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the operations tempo winding down, however, the organization was challenged with maintaining that exceedingly high level of readiness – or risk atrophy and degradation of the force.

The Minnesota National Guard met that challenge by conducting a multitude of training exercises that pushed the limits of state partnerships, interagency

collaboration and unit competency.

In 2015 the Minnesota National Guard partnered with nearly 500 state, federal and local responders to conduct the *Vigilant Guard* exercise, which tested the ability of the Minnesota's response community to support large-scale domestic emergencies.

The 34th Red Bull Infantry Division worked with components in each of the Department of Defense's branches of service, in addition to eight allied countries, to complete three major training exercises – *Yama Sakura*, *Cooperative Resolve* and *Talisman Sabre* – that tested its ability to rapidly deploy and support emerging events.

The Minnesota Air National Guard participated in a Joint Multinational Readiness Center rotation with the U.S. European Command, air dropping more than 1,000 paratroopers and 93,000 pounds of equipment.

The 148th Fighter Wing conducted three major training events, including a Suppression of Enemy Air Defense exercise with the Japan Self-Defense Force and Republic of Korea Air Force.

The Minnesota National Guard's training focus in 2016 is the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team's rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California.

The National Training Center is among the most challenging training environments the Army has to offer. It will provide two weeks of intense combat training for the 1st ABCT. At the conclusion of the rotation, the brigade – which constitutes more than half of the total force of the Minnesota Army National Guard – will be at maximum readiness and certified to Army standards.

In 2016 the Minnesota National Guard is expected to have three units deployed overseas in support of ongoing missions.

The 682nd Engineer Battalion, deployed in October 2015 to Kuwait in support of *Spartan Shield*, will provide mission command for vertical and horizontal survey units in the region.

In July 2016 B Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment, will deploy to Afghanistan in support of *Operation Freedom Sentinel* to provide heavy rotary lift support with its CH-47 Chinook helicopters.

The 47th Chaplain Detachment will mobilize in December 2016 to the Mihail Kogălniceanu Air Base Passenger Transit Center in Romania to support the religious needs of service members.



Master Sgt. Mark Swedeen (left), 1st Sgt. Donnie Hance (middle) and Spc. Dustin Lauby from the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade prepare a specialized fast-response firefighting trailer to be sling-loaded and transported via CH-47 Chinook helicopter during the Vigilant Guard training exercise. This particular equipment lift was important during Vigilant Guard because of its use in combating wildfires that could occur in remote areas and on railroad tracks where ground support would not be available. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Paul Santikko)

The 5th Annual Minnesota Military Teen Summit was held June 25 to 28, 2015. It was attended by teens ages 13 to 18 whose parents are active service members in Minnesota. The Summit is supported by the Minnesota National Guard Child and Youth School Services Program and hosted by the Minnesota Military Teen Panel. At the Summit teens participated in workshops to increase knowledge in teamwork, resilience, communication, understanding personality types, decision making and résumé building. Additionally, they learned about healthy living, stress relief, personal finance and understanding the media. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Rechtfertig)



## OPTIMAL FORCE STRUCTURE

We optimize our force by organizing our personnel, equipment and capabilities to accomplish current and anticipated missions.

With the U.S. military in the midst of a campaign to modify its total force to fit the complex and demanding missions anticipated in 2020 and beyond, there is an ongoing effort to ensure the Minnesota National Guard's force structure remains prepared to respond when called upon by the state or nation.

By employing smart budget practices, fielding new inventory and proactively training its members, the Minnesota National Guard will complete any and all assigned missions with an ideal blend of talent and equipment.

The Minnesota National Guard is proficient in fielding new equipment into the organization. This requires considerable effort as service members must be trained to operate the new equipment, and infrastructure must be in place to properly store and maintain the new items. The full-service training facilities at Camp Ripley, Arden Hills Army Training Site and the two Air National Guard wings provide the infrastructure and environment to accomplish this.

In 2015 the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade upgraded its Black Hawk helicopters to the UH-60M model, which enhances aircraft control, survivability, range and navigation while reducing maintenance costs.

Additionally, the 334th Brigade Engineer Battalion fielded a Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Reconnaissance Vehicle that can detect contaminants in an area of operations and transmit hazard information throughout the force. This asset further enhances the battalion's ability to support the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team's transition from a traditional combat brigade into a self-contained combined arms formation.

In December 2015 the Minnesota Army National Guard was selected to receive a Cyber Protection Team. The team, which will be fully operational by 2019, will enhance the organization's ability to support state, local and regional responses for cyber contingencies.

Lastly, the organization will continue to implement the Readiness Center

Transformation Master Plan, a 20-year blueprint formulated in 2015 that guides the Minnesota National Guard through a deliberate process of constructing, consolidating and closing some of its facilities. The RCTMP was the result of an extensive study that assessed long-term facility conditions, capacity for improvements, demographics and travel considerations for unit members.



## BEYOND THE YELLOW RIBBON

We connect service members, veterans, military families, employers and communities to ensure the resilience of those who serve.

Since the first Yellow Ribbon Network was proclaimed in 2008, 97 networks in 216 cities and 25 counties have emerged in Minnesota. These self-sustaining networks strive to support the service members, veterans and military families – of any age and from any era – that reside in their areas. In 2015 the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program saw the cities of Big Lake, Champlin, Montrose and Northfield join the effort.

The Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program also recognizes Minnesota companies that make a commitment to supporting the service members, veterans and military families they employ. In 2015 the Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Mayo Clinic, Experis: A ManPowerGroup Company, The Goodman Group, Minnesota Department of Corrections, Hibbing Community College and Southeast Technical College were proclaimed, bringing the total number of Yellow Ribbon Companies to 48.

In 2015 the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program continued its run as the nationally preeminent model in integrating service

members back into their communities and supporting them during and after their service ends. By sharing the template with other states and showcasing the program at high-visibility events – including the Association of the U.S. Army's annual conference – Beyond the Yellow Ribbon demonstrates and expands the proven model of networking support services for service members and their families.

Having accomplished one of the program's original goals – creating a Yellow Ribbon Network in each of the Minnesota National Guard's 61 communities – the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program is now seeking to connect all service members with each of the service-support organizations in their communities. To accomplish the next level of synchronization, the program has enlisted the help of AmeriCorps Volunteers In Service To America Members to look at every entity that can assist in supporting and serving all service members, veterans and military families.

In September 2015 the Minnesota National Guard hosted two suicide prevention fun runs

at Camp Ripley Training Center and Arden Hills Army Training Site. The events, focusing on the "Power of One," were held to raise awareness and establish a renewed emphasis on preventing suicide. To coincide with the event, the Minnesota National Guard's Resilience, Risk Reduction and Suicide Prevention program released the "I'm Only Human" music video. Both efforts sought to combat the stigma associated with suicide and suicide ideation and also encourage the organization's most valuable asset – people – to seek help in moments of crisis.

Lastly, the Minnesota National Guard continued to nurture the resilience of military-connected youth through the State Family Programs' Child Youth and School Services Initiative. Through 2015 the K-12 Military Kids Toolkit, a set of seven lessons designed to help both students and educators understand and successfully negotiate the deployment cycle, has been distributed to 211 Minnesota schools.



A solar panel sits in front of the stage where Rep. Rick Nolan speaks to an audience and other special guests, including Sen. Al Franken, Alan Hodnik, CEO of Minnesota Power, and Minnesota National Guard Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Richard C. Nash, during a ceremony to commemorate an agreement to build a 10 megawatt solar energy array covering 100 acres at Camp Ripley. The project begins in February 2016, when the solar field footprint will be cleared for construction. (Photo by Kelly Humphrey, Brainerd Dispatch – used with permission)

Soldiers and Airmen of the Minnesota National Guard place a high precedence on individual cyber security by employing safe online practices. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Cpl. William Boecker)



## SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE

We invest in sustainable infrastructure to ensure our facilities are economically and environmentally sound and remain assets to service members and communities.

In 2011 the Minnesota National Guard articulated a vision to ensure the sustainability of its facilities while setting an even loftier goal of making Camp Ripley Training Center and Arden Hills Army Training Site Net Zero installations. Through both physical upgrades and behavioral changes, the organization has made tremendous strides in reducing cost and conserving resources – efforts that resulted in being awarded the Secretary of Defense's Sustainability award in 2015.

The tangible upgrades to conserve energy have been installed in most of the Minnesota National Guard's facilities. At AHATS, a water collection system accumulates and stores 45,000 gallons of water for reuse in site irrigation and vehicle wash bays. Throughout the organization's 62 armories, 55 percent of waste is diverted to recycling centers – reducing the strain on community landfills. From LED lighting and motion-activated switches to water collection systems and waste stream diversion, the Minnesota National Guard is ensuring each one of its existing and planned facilities are setting the standard in energy efficiency.

The Minnesota National Guard enforces its commitment to sustainability by fostering a culture that promotes energy conservation and awareness among its members.

Through the Minnesota National Guard's Sustainability Working Group, the organization implemented the "Energy Challenge," which provides facility managers training and support as they work to meet energy reduction benchmarks. By reworking how energy and resources are being used by Guard members – such as adding water bottle fill stations to discourage consumption of single use plastic bottles – small changes are adding up to substantial use reductions.

The most ambitious sustainability efforts are being implemented at CRTC. Camp Ripley is striving to become Net Zero, meaning the total amount of energy used by the installation on an annual basis is roughly equal to the amount of renewable energy created on the site. Utilizing renewable and alternative sources of energy, such as geothermal and solar power, the largest training facility in the Minnesota National Guard incorporates the Net Zero philosophy as a guiding ethic measured not

only in terms of financial benefit, but also in terms of preserving mission capability, ensuring high quality of life and nurturing positive relationships with local communities.

Some specific examples of sustainability at CRTC include:

- Solar thermal upgrades in the Education Center now account for 30 percent of the installation's hot water supply. A similar upgrade was made at the AHATS Field Maintenance Shop
- Geothermal heat pumps were installed in three billeting structures, reducing greenhouse emissions by nearly 25 metric tons per year
- The construction of a solar array – with the capacity to produce enough power to exceed the installation's electricity requirements – is slated to begin in February 2016
- Plans to construct a biomass heat district which will utilize on-site forest resources as a sustainable fuel supply, with the potential to decrease dependence on non-renewable natural gas by 91 percent

## CYBER SECURITY & RESPONSE

We secure our state's military network and collaborate with interagency partners to enhance our response to and recovery from negative cyber events.

Working with federal, military and state partners, in particular the Minnesota Department of Information Technology, the Minnesota National Guard is working to maintain and defend its communications systems and improve its ability to react to negative cyber events.

The Minnesota National Guard defends its information infrastructure as outlined in the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002, which requires all federal agencies to develop, document and implement agency-wide plans to ensure information security. As part of its recovery strategy, the Minnesota National Guard monitors for indicators, such as severe weather, that could possibly degrade its information network and require action as outlined in established communication response plans.

The Minnesota National Guard conducts exercises to evaluate its critical information infrastructure, and tests alternate forms of communication to minimize dependence on technology that could be compromised by outside factors. This work is routinely done with city, county, state and federal agencies

to expand the Minnesota National Guard's understanding of the defensive posture of its partners and to share best practices.

In 2015 the Minnesota National Guard participated in the *Vital Connections* exercise in conjunction with U.S. Northern Command, the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's Emergency Communication Network and Minnesota Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department. The four-day exercise, which simulated a cyber attack resulting in the loss of telecommunications and Internet capabilities in the Metro area, provided a scenario to ensure communications interoperability among first responders and military personnel.

The *Vital Connections* exercise was followed by *Vigilant Guard*, a state-wide training event that simulated multiple disasters throughout Minnesota. Using best practices and lessons learned from the *Vital Connections* exercise, the Minnesota National Guard was able to once again test its ability to enable the flow of information between and among its interagency partners in a degraded environment.

In October 2015 members of the Minnesota National Guard attended Cyber Security Summit 2015. The two-day event brought together thought leaders from the public and private sectors of industry, government and academia in an effort to improve the state's cyber security posture.

In collaboration with the University of Minnesota and private sector information technology experts, the Minnesota National Guard has partnered with the Croatian military to assist in the development of its own cyber program. Through the State Partnership Program, all vested parties benefit from the honing of cyber skills, which involves a unique cross-section of experience in a culturally diverse environment.

In December 2015 it was announced that the Minnesota National Guard would be one of 23 states benefiting from a National Guard Bureau plan to activate 13 cyber units by 2019. The units, spread throughout the various organizations, will enhance the Minnesota National Guard's ability to provide cyber security and enhance network engineering.

The Minnesota National Guard's Military Funeral Honors Team presents the colors before an event in Prior Lake on Sept. 11, 2015. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Patrick Loch)



## MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD | UNITS



**JFHQ**  
Joint Force  
Headquarters

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *St. Paul, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *638 Soldiers & Airmen*  
COMMANDER: *Maj. Gen. Richard Nash*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Command Sgt. Maj. Douglas Wortham*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/jfhq](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/jfhq)



**84th TRC**  
84th Troop Command

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *Cambridge, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *1,759 Soldiers*  
COMMANDER: *Col. Troy Soukup*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Command Sgt. Maj. Rollyn Wold*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/84trc](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/84trc)



**34th ID**  
34th Red Bull  
Infantry Division

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *Rosemount, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *820 Soldiers*  
COMMANDER: *Maj. Gen. Neal Loidolt*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Command Sgt. Maj. John Lepowsky*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/34id](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/34id)



**175th RTI**  
175th Regional  
Training Institute

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *Camp Ripley, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *89 Soldiers*  
COMMANDER: *Col. Stefanie Horvath*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Command Sgt. Maj. John Wood*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/175rti](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/175rti)



**34th CAB**  
34th Combat  
Aviation Brigade

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *St. Paul, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *1,191 Soldiers*  
COMMANDER: *Col. Shawn Manke*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Cunnien*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/34cab](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/34cab)



**CRTC**  
Camp Ripley  
Training Center

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *Camp Ripley, Minn.*  
EMPLOYED: *722 Soldiers, Airmen & Civilians*  
COMMANDER: *Col. Scott St. Sauver*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Worden*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/crtc](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/crtc)



**1st ABCT**  
1st Armored Brigade  
Combat Team

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *Bloomington, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *5,599 Soldiers*  
COMMANDER: *Col. Robert Intress*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph J. Hjeltnstad*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/1abct](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/1abct)



**133rd AW**  
133rd Airlift Wing

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *St. Paul, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *1,204 Airmen*  
COMMANDER: *Col. James Johnson*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Chief Master Sgt. Paul Kessler*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/133aw](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/133aw)



**347th RSG**  
347th Regional  
Support Group

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *Brooklyn Park, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *721 Soldiers*  
COMMANDER: *Col. Lowell Kruse*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Command Sgt. Maj. Marcus Erickson*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/347rsg](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/347rsg)



**148th FW**  
148th Fighter Wing

HEADQUARTERS LOCATION: *Duluth, Minn.*  
UNIT STRENGTH: *1,015 Airmen*  
COMMANDER: *Col. Jon Safstrom*  
ENLISTED LEADER: *Chief Master Sgt. Mark Rukavina*  
WEBSITE: [MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/148fw](http://MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/148fw)





Members of the Minnesota National Guard's 55th Civil Support Team move a simulated injured firefighter onto a gurney during Vigilant Guard on Aug. 25, 2015, in Duluth. Vigilant Guard is a United States Northern Command- and National Guard Bureau-sponsored exercise program designed to improve emergency coordination, response and recovery management with federal, regional, local, civilian and military partners. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Brett R. Ewald)

## 34th RED BULL INFANTRY DIVISION

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Rosemount-based 34th Red Bull Infantry Division provides command and control for 11 National Guard brigades in seven different states. In Minnesota the 34th ID includes the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 34th Combat Aviation Brigade, 84th Troop Command and the 347th Regional Support Group.

In 2015 the 34th ID was scheduled to deploy in support of *Operation United Assistance*, the military effort supporting the United States Agency for International Development's response to the 2014 Ebola virus outbreak in Liberia. That mission, however, was canceled in early 2015 after considerable gains were made in stemming the outbreak. Following the cessation of the 34th ID's preparation for *Operation United Assistance* – with the division at peak readiness after planning for the complex and nontraditional deployment – the unit shifted its focus to several large-scale exercises with an eye toward developing a new model for rapid mobilization.

U.S. Army Forces Command challenged the 34th ID to develop a sustained readiness training model that integrates active and reserve component forces with the readiness posture required to deploy in a much shorter time frame than what had become the norm. In 2015 four exercises were conducted with active duty units, allied countries and local agencies, testing the division's ability to deploy its command and control staff in half the time of the previous model.

In August 2015 the 34th ID participated in the *Vigilant Guard* exercise, which required the division to execute its ability to provide a dual-status commander to direct both active duty and National Guard units and oversee large-scale domestic response operations in cooperation with civilian responders and interagency partners.

The *Talisman Sabre* exercise was held at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, in July 2015. The exercise is held annually in conjunction with I Corps, a Joint Task Force under U.S. Pacific Command, and the Australian Defense Force, to increase both countries' ability to plan and execute a wide spectrum of missions, including combat operations and humanitarian aid.

The *Cooperative Resolve* exercise was held at Caserma Ederle in Vicenza, Italy, in September 2015. This exercise is an annual event to enhance U.S., Turkish, Romanian and British interoperability and combat readiness.

The 34th ID also participated in the *Yama Sakura* exercise at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in December 2015. *Yama Sakura* is a computer-simulated command post exercise designed to strengthen military operations and ties between the U.S. Army and the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016 the 34th ID will continue planning for and executing its slate of annual, large-scale exercises: *Cooperative Resolve*, *Talisman Sabre* and *Yama Sakura*. Additionally, the division will support the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team's National Training Center rotation in June 2016.



## JOINT FORCE HEADQUARTERS

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Located in St. Paul, the Minnesota National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters is a joint Army and Air National Guard unit tasked to oversee operations for all state National Guard forces. Joint Force Headquarters coordinates military support at the request of the governor in the event of a disaster or state emergency. Joint Force Headquarters can also provide a dual-status commander, specially qualified to command state and federal forces operating in Minnesota.

In 2015, Joint Force Headquarters placed considerable emphasis and focus on the successful completion of the *Vigilant Guard* exercise. More than 1,400 participants from the Minnesota, Iowa and Wisconsin National Guard joined approximately 500 participants from state, federal and local emergency response agencies to carry out *Vigilant Guard* at three training sites across the state: Duluth, Camp Ripley and Saint Paul. After responding to a multitude of simulated incidents integrated into the exercise – including a chemical spill from an overturned railroad car, massive landslides and flooding – Joint Force Headquarters was able to identify best practices, build relationships and prepare for large-scale incidents that could affect Minnesotans across the state.

Lessons learned from *Vigilant Guard* were applied to improve the Minnesota National Guard's operations in a cyber-contested environment. By implementing tactics to overcome network and communication failure – caused by both environmental and adversarial factors – Joint Force Headquarters was able to improve its ability to support domestic operations under extreme, degraded circumstances.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016 and beyond Joint Force Headquarters will apply the knowledge and skills gained from its participation in *Vigilant Guard* and integrate the lessons learned in more challenging and complex training scenarios. Following the activation of Minnesota National Guard members to support the state's response to the avian influenza outbreak in April 2015, Joint Force Headquarters will plan an interagency training event in 2017 that focuses on a pandemic outbreak scenario.

Joint Force Headquarters will continue to plan in anticipation of supporting local authorities responding to natural disasters and homeland emergencies. By coordinating through the headquarters' Joint Operations Center – in conjunction with other state assets – the foundation for successful and safe interagency missions will be further developed and refined.

International relationships will continue to be vital in 2016. The year will mark the 20th anniversary of the Minnesota National Guard's State Partnership Program with Croatia. Additionally, the bilateral American/Norwegian Reciprocal Troop Exchange will take place during the summer for only the second time in the program's 43-year history.



Soldiers with the 682nd Engineer Battalion assault an objective during mobilization training at Camp Ripley Training Center on May 15, 2015. (Minnesota National Guard photo by 1st Lt. David Elm)





**A** Marine with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit jumps out of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter operated by 2nd Battalion, 147th Assault Helicopter Battalion, Minnesota National Guard, during a parachute exercise Dec. 7, 2014, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The Black Hawk climbed to a chilly 10,000-foot altitude for the jump. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Andrew Turner)



## 34th COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The St. Paul-based 34th Combat Aviation Brigade is an Army National Guard unit that supports the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division and the state of Minnesota by providing aviation capabilities – both UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopters and the C-12 Huron aircraft – for federal and state missions.

In April 2015 the 34th CAB welcomed home more than 220 Soldiers with Headquarters Company and the 2nd Battalion, 147th Assault Helicopter Battalion, from a deployment in support of *Operation Enduring Freedom*. The Headquarters Company and 2-147 AHB were stationed at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, and conducted aviation operations and security cooperation in support of U.S. Army Central Command. Additionally, members of the 34th CAB were tasked to support *Operation Inherent Resolve*, the U.S. military response against militant groups in Iraq and Syria.

While overseeing a Task Force of 1,500 personnel and 76 airframes, the 34th CAB in Kuwait logged 9,000 flight hours operating rotary, fixed wing and unmanned aerial vehicles. In addition to flying missions, the 34th CAB conducted significant joint training with the Royal Jordanian Air Force and the Kuwait Air Force. These military partnerships, unique in scope for an aviation brigade, provided an opportunity to modernize U.S. allies' platforms and tactics in order to exceed the capabilities of enemy forces.

In Minnesota, the 34th CAB supported two state missions. In June 2015 the brigade supplied two Black Hawk helicopters, each equipped with 660-gallon water buckets, to help the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources respond to fires across the state. In August, in response to the request of the Washington National Guard, the brigade supplied two Black Hawk helicopters to assist in aerial firefighting efforts to stem historic wildfires throughout the Western U.S.

Soldiers in the 34th CAB focused heavily on incorporating the upgraded UH-60M model Black Hawk helicopter into its force. The 34th CAB received the new aircraft in 2015 and qualified more than 40 pilots on the upgraded Black Hawk after a six-week transition course at Fort Rucker, Alabama, with the goal of having all pilots and maintainers trained by 2016.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016 the brigade will welcome home Soldiers from Detachment 1, C Company, 1st General Support Aviation Battalion, 171st Aviation Regiment. The unit deployed to Kuwait in support of *Operation Inherent Resolve* to provide medical evacuation operations for U.S. Army Central Command.

Additionally, 40 Soldiers from both B and C Companies, 834th Aviation Support Battalion, will return from a seven-month deployment. The unit deployed to Kuwait in support of *Operation Spartan Shield* to provide aviation, mechanical and communication operations for the Mississippi and Kentucky National Guard.

Lastly, in July 2016, B Company, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 211th Aviation Regiment, will deploy to Afghanistan in support of *Operation Freedom Sentinel*.

## 1st ARMORED BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Bloomington-based 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, consists of eight major subordinate commands. More than 5,500 Soldiers make up the brigade's infantry, armor, cavalry, artillery, engineer and brigade support units, constituting more than half of the Minnesota Army National Guard's total force structure.

In 2015, the 1st ABCT conducted three large-scale training events in preparation for the brigade's 2016 National Training Center rotation at Fort Irwin, California.

The *Brigade Warfighter* was held in April at Camp Ripley Training Center for seven of the brigade's eight battalions, including the 1st Battalion, 145th Armor Regiment, Ohio National Guard, which is in an aligned-for-training relationship with the 1st ABCT. The *Warfighter* exercise enabled the brigade to validate the interoperability of its combined arms formation in a command and control driven combat scenario.

The brigade conducted the *Exportable Combat Training Capabilities* exercise, known as XCTC, at Camp Ripley during May and August. The 1st ABCT conducted intense field training to include calling for fire, movement to contact, reconnaissance, vehicle recovery and obstacle breaching. The training lanes, designed by the brigade and approved by First Army, ensured brigade units are prepared for NTC.

Additionally, the 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry, executed a Joint Readiness Training Center rotation with the Iowa National Guard's 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division. The training at Fort Polk, Louisiana, provided realistic, joint and combined arms training.

To meet the Army's equipment modernization strategy objectives, the brigade completed 402 tactical system upgrades and fielded more than \$40 million in new equipment. The upgrades included radar, tactical data systems and modifications of its armored vehicle fleet.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

The 1st ABCT will remain focused on personnel readiness. Additionally, improvement of individual Soldier skills, collective training, crew qualification and reduced crew turbulence will be essential for a successful rotation at the National Training Center.

The NTC rotation will be the culmination of two years of intense planning, training and preparation. The brigade will execute force-on-force maneuver and company-level live fire operations throughout the expansive Fort Irwin Training Center. Through a tough, realistic training environment and "near peer" world class opposition force, brigade Soldiers will encounter mock villages, displaced persons and enemy forces that will ultimately validate and prepare the brigade for future operations and deployments.



**A** Soldier with the 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 194th Armor Regiment, mans his vehicle's gunnery system during the *Exportable Combat Training Capabilities* exercise at Camp Ripley Training Center on June 20, 2015. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Cpl. William J. Boecker)





Members of the 347th Regional Support Group train with the 133rd Airlift Wing's aeromedical team during Vigilant Guard 2015. The 347th RSG was responsible for the successful Joint Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration of all Vigilant Guard participants. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Paul Santikko)

## 84th TROOP COMMAND

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 84th Troop Command, headquartered in Cambridge, provides command and control of field artillery, military police, engineer and civil support forces, providing troops capable of performing a wide variety of missions. A specialized command with a unique mission, the 84th maintains the highest Army training standards to remain ready to support federal missions and domestic operations throughout the state.

A large portion of the 84th Troop Command's domestic operations involves the 55th Civil Support Team – responsible for Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear response – as well as the CBRN Enhanced Response Force Package, which conducts search and extraction, decontamination and medical operations to assist civil authorities in providing disaster relief. Additionally, the 84th Troop Command maintains the Quick Reaction Force and the National Guard Reaction Force, available to assist local authorities on short notice at the direction of the governor.

In 2015 the 84th Troop Command moved its headquarters from Minneapolis to Cambridge. By being more centrally located and less encumbered by Metropolitan area traffic, the move enhances the command's ability to quickly mobilize and deploy in support of domestic operations missions.

In 2015 members of the 682nd Engineer Battalion deployed to Kuwait in support of *Operation Spartan Shield*. Utilizing the battalion's horizontal and vertical engineering capabilities, their mission is to oversee and execute construction projects across the Middle East.

The 682nd Engineer Battalion provided logistical support for civilian responders to counter the avian influenza outbreak in April. Having identified a resource shortage, the state called on Minnesota National Guard Soldiers to transport the large amounts of water required for the depopulation operations.

The command's major training events included participation in *Vigilant Guard 2015*. The exercise provided the opportunity to train units on potential real-world missions, and included the CERF-P conducting medical support and evacuation drills using ground and air transportation.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016 the 84th Troop Command will continue to execute realistic and challenging training as it supports the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team's rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. The command's 850th Horizontal Engineer Company will deploy with the 1st ABCT to build and improve roads and other infrastructure ensuring mobility during the exercise. Additionally, the 84th Troop Command will provide forces to support the State Partnership Program with Croatia. By participating in exercises held by the U.S. European Command, the unit will strengthen relationships with NATO partners.

In 2016 the 84th will continue to conduct its CST missions at locations across the state, and will also validate its CERF-P during the *Miles Paratus* exercise, a biannual training event at Volk Field, Wisconsin, in June.



## 347th REGIONAL SUPPORT GROUP

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The mission of the 347th Regional Support Group is to deploy and provide contingency and expeditionary base operations, with responsibilities for managing facilities, providing administrative and logistical support for troop services and ensuring the security of personnel and facilities on a base camp. The brigade provides command and control of assigned units during homeland security, homeland defense and other civil support missions within the U.S. to include managing the Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration of supporting forces.

In 2015 the 347th RSG welcomed home more than 40 Soldiers with the 204th Area Support Medical Company following the completion of their deployment to the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, in support of the Multinational Force and Observers. The 204th supported the MFO's mission – to enforce the 1979 peace treaty between Egypt and Israel – by providing health service support in remote areas and at two centralized treatment facilities. The unit treated more than 4,400 patients, providing care that included dental, veterinary, preventive medicine, physical therapy, wellness services, medical logistics and emergency treatment. The 204th ASMC was instrumental in responding to a mass casualty event after an attack on MFO forces.

In Minnesota, the 347th RSG supported the *Vigilant Guard* exercise by establishing a Joint Reception, Staging, Onward Movement and Integration operation. This process transitioned exercise participants and equipment from a mobilization station into the areas of operation. By integrating Army and Air Force planning and execution of JRSOI, the brigade processed 840 personnel and 292 vehicles while familiarizing both junior and senior leaders on the capabilities of their counterparts.

Additionally, the 347th RSG's 224th Transportation Company supported the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team's *Exportable Combat Training Capabilities* exercise at Camp Ripley Training Center by delivering \$40,000 in repair parts, 52 pallets of food, 24,000 gallons of water and 18,800 gallons of fuel to support the unit's operations.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016 the 347th RSG will fully incorporate new specialties into its command structure including engineering, public affairs and force protection as well as additional intelligence analysts. The fielding of new personnel will greatly enhance the brigade's ability to improve base camp operations and security by providing specialists to assist in the maintenance of a secure perimeter and proactively engage with surrounding communities.

The 347th RSG will also participate in *Diamond Saber 2016*, a U.S. Army Reserve functional exercise that will evaluate the 147th and 247th Financial Management Support Companies' ability to perform real-world financial transactions.

Finally, the 347th RSG will provide logistical support to the 1st ABCT leading up to and during its National Training Center rotation in June 2016. In addition to cantonment and lodging facilitation, the 347th RSG will assist in the railway operation to transport nearly 1,300 vehicles and pieces of equipment from Camp Ripley Training Center to Marine Corps Logistics Base Barstow, California, and back.

Soldiers with the 682nd Engineer Battalion conduct medical evacuation drills during mobilization training at Camp Ripley Training Center on May 15, 2015. (Minnesota National Guard photo by 1st Lt. David Elm)





Soldiers participating in Officer Candidate School finish the last mile of an early morning, 10-mile ruck march through Camp Ripley Training Center on Oct. 25, 2015. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Anthony Housey)

## CAMP RIPLEY TRAINING CENTER

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Camp Ripley Training Center, located near Little Falls, is a 53,000-acre regional training installation featuring numerous ranges and state-of-the-art facilities to support military and civilian agencies. CRTC is committed to environmentally-sound stewardship of the land it occupies through its Environment Office, partnership with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and guided by the goal of becoming a Net Zero installation.

As demand for the post's facilities have greatly increased, so too has the ability of the installation to fulfill those training requests. In 2015, CRTC oversaw approximately 358,000 total days of military training and 62,000 training days for local and state authorities, which surpassed 2014's training total by 40,000 days.

In 2015 CRTC conducted three *Exportable Combat Training Capabilities* exercises for the Minnesota National Guard's 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, Nebraska National Guard's 67th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade and South Dakota National Guard's 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. Despite the aggressive challenge of executing three rotations, utilizing all of the installation's resources, post-exercise reviews found that all unit commanders' training objectives were either met or exceeded.

Major construction projects and renovations to CRTC's Education Center were completed in 2015. These efforts resulted in an immediate boost for military and governmental agencies undergoing large-scale training events, including the *Vigilant Guard* exercise and the 1st ABCT's *Warfighter* exercise. CRTC also opened the Medical Simulation Training Center in 2015, which offers Military Occupational Specialty education for medics and also refresher courses for combat medics and civilian responders.

Lastly, CRTC leadership fostered Minnesota's State Partnership Program with Croatia by hosting advisors from the Croatian Army and sending a contingent of Soldiers and Airmen to Croatia – efforts aimed at making improvements to Croatia's Slunj Training Range so that it may be considered as a future regional training center for NATO forces.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016 the annual American/Norwegian Reciprocal Troop Exchange will be held in the summer for only the second time in the program's 43rd iteration. The longest-running military exchange between any two nations, NOREX promotes goodwill and sharpens military readiness while providing opportunities for cultural understanding between Minnesota and Norway.

CRTC will continue to host veterans outdoor activities, including Trolling for the Troops, Disabled Veteran's Deer Hunt, Muzzle Loader Deer Hunt and several others. These programs provide service members opportunities to experience the outdoors while ensuring safe and responsible use of the post's environment and resources.



## 175th REGIMENT REGIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Camp Ripley-based 175th Regiment Regional Training Institute provides combat arms, Military Occupational Specialty and formal leadership training to the U.S. Army to prepare Soldiers and units for deployment at maximum combat readiness levels.

Each year hundreds of Soldiers from across the country travel to Camp Ripley to attend one of 31 courses offered by the 175th RTI, qualifying them as infantrymen, cavalry scouts, health care specialists, wheeled vehicle mechanics and tracked vehicle repairers. The 175th RTI also offers Advanced Leader Courses for several MOSs and more than 10 functional courses, including Company Commander/First Sergeant Course and Army Basic Instructor Course. The institute also contributes to the commissioned ranks by offering both Officer Candidate and Warrant Officer Candidate Schools.

Soldiers attending the 175th RTI's courses in 2015 have done so at CRTC's newly-remodeled Education Center, which offers 22 classrooms, two computer labs, a conference room and an auditorium. The upgraded building also offers a new dining facility and various technological upgrades to its existing rooms, enhancing the 175th RTI's educational offerings with the goal of retaining the Institution of Excellence rating it received in 2012 and 2015.

In 2015 the 175th RTI qualified 822 Soldiers with a 96 percent graduation rate among all attending the various schools. Additionally, the institute received top scores from the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command's annual accreditation assessment, including 100 percent scores for its OCS, armor and infantry programs. The U.S. Army TRADOC also scored the 175th RTI's Training and Doctrine program at 96.7 percent, and the Army Medicine program at 96.4 percent, placing the 175th RTI among the best training institutes in the nation.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016 the 175th RTI will maintain and enhance its operations while continually undergoing the U.S. Army TRADOC's extensive inspection process with the goal of being awarded its third consecutive triennial Institution of Excellence rating in 2018. Additionally, after winning the Supply Excellence Award for the state and region in 2015, the institute will compete for the national award in 2016.

Lastly, the institute will continue its efforts to sustain the professional eminence and organizational expertise of its cadre, providing the best trained Soldiers. In its effort to maintain its ranking as one of the top training facilities in the nation, the 175th RTI will continue to seek out premier Soldiers to become quality instructors that train and produce agile and adaptive leaders.

A combat engineer with the 334th Brigade Engineer Battalion rushes from cover to breach a wire obstacle during a training exercise at Camp Ripley on May 21, 2015. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Anthony Housey)





**A** C-130 Hercules from the Minnesota National Guard's 133rd Airlift Wing airdrops paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade over Pordenone, Italy, on April 13, 2015. (U.S. Army photo by Paolo Bovo)



## 133rd AIRLIFT WING

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 133rd Airlift Wing is a Minnesota Air National Guard flying wing headquartered at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. Utilizing the C-130H Hercules, the wing provides the U.S. Air Force with tactical airlift capability to transport troops, cargo and medical patients across the globe in addition to providing the citizens of Minnesota with domestic operations and disaster response support. The 133rd is known as the first federally recognized National Guard flying unit in the country.

In April the 133rd Airlift Wing participated in the *Saber Junction* exercise, the wing's first-ever rotation at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center with U.S. European Command. Throughout the month, the wing's operations group completed 100 percent of its missions by flying 69 sorties and air dropping 1,285 paratroopers and 93,000 pounds of equipment, the equivalent of four months of home-station training.

Members of the 133rd Airlift Wing also supported the U.S. Pacific Command's *Pacific Angel* mission, an ongoing humanitarian assistance operation in the region. During their operation, Airmen from the wing provided medical outreach to more than 7,000 patients and repaired seven community schools in the Philippines.

The wing utilized the state-wide *Vigilant Guard* exercise to improve its interoperability with other military organizations, civilian healthcare providers and emergency response personnel by conducting aeromedical evacuations, decontamination training and command and control operations.

The 133rd took a lead role in planning the Minnesota National Guard's first Joint Female Professional Development Training Symposium. More than 350 Guard members attended the symposium, which focused on the personal and professional development of female Soldiers and Airmen in the military. This unprecedented symposium contributed to promoting a climate of equality and diversification of thought and talent.

In 2015 the 133rd Airlift Wing achieved measurable improvement in readiness by implementing a rapid Periodic Health Assessment that raised the wing's medical readiness from below 50 percent to the top five percent in the nation. Additionally, by installing raised aircraft maintenance stands that improve efficiency as well as safety, the annual inspection time needed on each aircraft was reduced from 19 days to 15 days.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016, the 133rd Airlift Wing will highlight its gains in personnel readiness and availability of its aircraft as it undergoes an extensive Unit Effectiveness Inspection. The inspection, which focuses on the wing's operations during the past five years, is a tool to evaluate and ensure the organization maintains its successes in managing resources, improving the unit, leadership and executing the mission.

Finally, the wing will begin renovations on its North Hangar, completing the modernization initiative for all base facilities. The 133rd Airlift Wing also anticipates upgrading its flight simulators to provide optimal simulation training and lowering costs by reducing flight training hours.

## 148th FIGHTER WING

### 2015 | ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 148th Fighter Wing, headquartered in Duluth, operates the F-16C Block 50 Fighting Falcon to provide Suppression of Enemy Air Defense. The full wing structure, which includes headquarters, operations, maintenance, mission support and medical groups, is comprised of Airmen prepared to rapidly respond to support federal and state missions and community needs.

As of 2015 the 148th Fighter Wing was the seventh-largest employer in Duluth, employing more than 1,000 Airmen. Operating the most advanced F-16s in the U.S. military's inventory, the unit is one of only two National Guard wings flying the aircraft and conducting SEAD missions.

In 2015 the 148th Fighter Wing had a total of 37 Airmen deployed overseas to support *Operation Enduring Freedom*, *Operation Freedom Sentinel* and security missions with the U.S. Pacific Command.

In February 2015 members of the 148th Fighter Wing participated in the *Sentry Savannah* exercise in Georgia. The two-week event afforded pilots the opportunity to conduct air-to-air combat simulations with F-15, F-16, F-18, F-22, F-35 and T-38 aircraft.

In May 2015 the 148th Fighter Wing participated in *Combat Hammer*, an ordnance delivery exercise in Utah that familiarized pilots on more than 50 types of munitions that the F-16C can carry and deploy.

For its final training deployment, in August 2015, the 148th Fighter Wing participated in the three-week *Red Flag* exercise in Alaska. During the training members of the wing partnered with the Japan Air Self-Defense Force and Republic of Korea Air Force on SEAD operations.

Also in 2015, the 148th Fighter Wing welcomed its first pilot to participate in its Active Associate Program. The program, designed to distribute training resources throughout the Air Force components, provides active duty pilots the flight time and experience needed to become fully qualified.

### 2016 | OBJECTIVES

In 2016 the 148th Fighter Wing will deploy the majority of its Airmen to support the U.S. Pacific Command's mission to deliver rapid and precise air capabilities to protect and defend the U.S. and its allies and maintain regional security.

The wing also aims to gain additional pilots for its Active Associate Program to provide trained and ready Airmen to the U.S. Air Force, and also undergo a construction project which will increase the wing's flight capacity.



**S**enior Airman Jessalyn Schmaedeke with the 148th Fighter Wing works on a Block 50 F-16 during a *Sentry Savannah* training exercise in Savannah, Georgia, on Feb. 10, 2015. The exercise allows fighter pilots to participate in war simulations that represent what they would encounter in a combat scenario. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Ralph Kapustka)



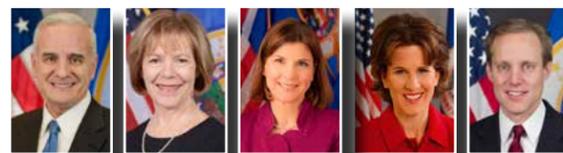


Gov. Mark Dayton drops the ceremonial puck on "Hockey Day Minnesota" before the St. Paul Johnson versus Luverne High School Hockey game Jan. 17, 2015 in St. Paul. The ninth annual Fox Sports North and Minnesota Wild "Hockey Day Minnesota" was held on a refrigerated rink constructed by St. Paul Civic Group "Serving Our Troops" at Holman Field, home of the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade. Deployed Soldiers from the brigade in Kuwait were connected to the festivities through a special Internet connection. Gov. Dayton is flanked by (from left): Doug Baker, CEO of Ecolab; Maj. Gen. Neal Loidolt, 34th Red Bull Infantry Division commander; Jack Helmick, president of SuperAmerica; and Kelly Brooks, daughter of legendary Minnesota hockey coach Herb Brooks. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech Sgt. Paul Santikko)

Members of each military branch are recognized for their service at the 2015 WNBA champion Minnesota Lynx's Military Appreciation Game at Target Center on Sept. 4, 2015. The event included members of the Waseca American Legion as color guard, a brass quintet from the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division Band, a trumpet rendition of the National Anthem and an all-service large-flag detail. Additionally, during half-time, more than 20 Marine recruits were sworn into service. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech Sgt. Paul Santikko)



## 2015 | STATE LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



2015 state constitutional officers: Governor Mark Dayton, Lieutenant Governor Tina Smith, Attorney General Lori Swanson, State Auditor Rebecca Otto and Secretary of State Steve Simon

### 2015 STATE LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2015 the Minnesota National Guard requested an adjustment to the Department of Military Affairs budget in order to more properly balance funds without increasing the total agency request. The Minnesota Legislature approved the request, which resulted in additional resources to meet immediate requirements for facility maintenance and general support accounts.

By working through the governor's office, the Minnesota National Guard was granted a transfer of \$10 million from the balance of the enlistment incentives account into the asset preservation account, significantly reducing a backlog of maintenance needs.

The Minnesota National Guard proposed a revision to Minnesota statute, which was passed into law, that realigns the amount of a death gratuity for Soldiers and Airmen who lose their lives in service to the state to the comparable federal payment amount, and to fund the payment from the State Active Duty emergency appropriation.

The Minnesota National Guard proposed a revision to the Minnesota statute, which was passed into law, that modified statutory language to allow the establishment of reclassification bonuses through the existing Enlistment Incentive Program, which provides incentive for Soldiers and Airmen to reclassify into certain specialties that are determined to be critical to the readiness of the organization.

Legislation was passed that establishes lands around Camp Ripley as a "Sentinel Landscape," providing Minnesota a competitive advantage in seeking federal funding from outside the Department of Defense for conservation and protection from future encroachment at Camp Ripley Training Center.

The Minnesota National Guard supported Gov. Mark Dayton's appointment on the Council of Governors, a National Governors Association committee that serves as a critical mechanism for governors and key federal officials to address matters pertaining to the National Guard, homeland defense and defense support to civil authorities.

On March 10, 2015, the Minnesota National Guard completed a new addition to the Camp Ripley Education Center. Financed using bond funding from the 2011 and 2012 legislative sessions, this \$19.5 million, 67,000 square foot addition to the existing 27,000 square foot facility includes 48 individual lodging rooms, nine classrooms capable of holding more than 425 students, a 200-person stepped theater and a 400-person dining facility capable of serving 1,600 people during a single mealtime period. In addition to adding capacity to better meet the Minnesota National Guard's federal training requirements, the Minnesota National Guard can now offer other state agencies and local government activities a centrally located, modern, comfortable, and economical facility for training, briefings and meetings.

## 2015 | FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



2015 federal elected officials: Senator Amy Klobuchar, Senator Al Franken, Representative Tim Walz, Representative John Kline, Representative Erik Paulsen, Representative Betty McCollum, Representative Keith Ellison, Representative Tom Emmer, Representative Collin Peterson and Representative Rick Nolan

### 2015 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Future Year Defense Program featured three military construction projects in Minnesota: the National Guard Readiness Center at Arden Hills Army Training Site (\$39 million), a Load Crew Training and Weapons Release Facility at Duluth International Airport (\$7.6 million), and a National Guard Vehicle Maintenance Facility at the New Ulm Armory (\$11.2 million).

The Army Compatible Use Buffer program was funded \$4.3 million in 2015, with \$2.8 million in Federal funds and \$1.5 million in Lessard-Sam's Outdoor Heritage Council State funds. A total of 39 land transactions – encompassing 3,456 acres – were completed, and Camp Ripley Training Center was designated a Sentinel Landscape, as part of a joint U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Defense and Interior initiative to preserve habitat and natural resources near military training sites.

The Minnesota National Guard was successful in retaining all of its existing force structure in 2015, whereas other states have lost units or equipment. Additionally, the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team's readiness was rated as the best in the nation.

In December 2015 the Minnesota Army National Guard was selected to receive a Cyber Protection Team. The team, which will be fully operational by 2019, will enhance the organization's ability to support state, local and regional responses for cyber contingencies and missions.

The Minnesota National Guard Office of the State Surgeon decreased the Medical Evaluation Board case load from 180 to 40 while making improvements to significantly impact the processing time for ongoing and new cases.

In 2015 the 148th Fighter Wing received its first active duty F-16 fighter pilot, officially making the unit an Active Associate Wing.

With the help of civil leadership engaging the FAA in Washington D.C., the Minnesota National Guard continued its support of the Duluth Airport Authority's long-range plan to extend the Duluth International Airport Crosswind Runway, which would be mutually beneficial and enhance operations for the 148th Fighter Wing.

The Minnesota National Guard was provided relief from the impacts of sequestration through March 2017 with the enactment of the 2015 Bipartisan Budget Act.

The Minnesota National Guard hosted members of the National Commission on the Future of the Army for three days in August, allowing the commission the opportunity to meet Minnesota National Guard senior leaders and observe the *Vigilant Guard* exercise. The commission is conducting a comprehensive study to make an assessment of the size and structure of all three Army components based on current and anticipated mission requirements in conjunction with current and anticipated funding.



**L**t. Gov. Tina Smith helps send off more than 150 Soldiers with the 682nd Engineer Battalion during a ceremony in Willmar on Oct. 8, 2015. The Soldiers will return in 2016 from their deployment to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield with the mission to manage engineer sustainment operations throughout the Middle East. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Blair Heusdens)

**A**rmy and Air National Guard members of the 55th Civil Support Team don their protective gear before entering a simulated chemically-contaminated environment during the Vigilant Guard exercise in Duluth on Aug. 25, 2015. Vigilant Guard is a United States Northern Command- and National Guard Bureau-sponsored exercise designed to improve emergency coordination, response and recovery management with federal, regional, local, civilian and military partners. (Minnesota National Guard photo by Tech Sgt. Brett R. Ewald)



## 2016 | STATE LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

### 2016 STATE LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

Continue to explore legislation to enhance eligibility of service members and their dependents for funding for treatment of existing substance abuse and mental health treatment.

Coordinate and collaborate with the governor's office to identify means to fund enhanced physical security improvements at select armories and training and community centers across the state (\$1.5 million).

Support a Department of Public Safety bonding request for a Rail and Pipeline Safety Training Facility at Camp Ripley (\$3.1 million).

Seek bonding funds for construction and renovation projects in West St. Paul and St. Cloud facilities, parking lot expansions at the Owatonna and Cambridge armories, and eight asset preservation projects statewide (\$15.4 million).

Support a possible Department of Administration legislative initiative to raise the threshold for construction project referral to the Designer Selection Board.

Support Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council legislation, which includes \$1.5 million in funding for Phase IV of the Camp Ripley Training Center Army Compatible Use Buffer program.

Continue to seek funding to support treatment of service members and their dependents for substance abuse and chemical dependency treatment that is not covered by TRICARE or other programs.



## 2016 | FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

### 2016 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

While there are numerous federal legislative objectives, the three priorities in 2016 are:

The Minnesota National Guard supports efforts to find an alternative to sequestration and requisite automatic spending cuts which would result in degraded readiness for both domestic emergencies and overseas combat missions.

The Minnesota National Guard supports future legislation to repeal provisions under section 1053 of the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act. Creating an additional civilian classification of employees has the potential to degrade readiness of the National Guard and hinder its ability to perform its unique state and federal mission requirements.

The Minnesota National Guard intends to grow or maintain its force structure. Current force structure organizes and equips the organization to respond to natural disasters, provide assistance to local law enforcement or assist during a domestic emergency. The Guard's major commands, including the two air wings, are positioned to meet the governor's state requirements through ten essential capabilities, including cyber response, for homeland readiness.

### 2016 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE OBJECTIVES

Support the request to establish a National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriations account with a separate line in the President's budget for National Guard Military Construction. The military Construction on Future Years Defense Program for the Minnesota Army National Guard is projected to cost \$48.8 million through 2017. For the Minnesota Air National Guard, the cost is projected at \$28.8 million through 2019.

Support efforts to become a Sentinel Landscape via federal designation through the DOD. Target approximately \$3 million in federal funds and \$1.5 million in state funds for ACUB-Sentinel Landscapes.

Continue to work with the National Guard Bureau to make up a 49 Airmen shortfall for the 148th Fighter Wing. The wing was designated as an 18 Primary Aircraft Authorization Active Associate wing in 2012, with a portion of manning to be supplied by the active component. Delays in assigning the full compliment of active duty Airmen have left the wing short of manpower requirements for its Suppression of Enemy Air Defense mission.

Continue to support the Duluth Airport Authority's long-range plan to extend the Duluth International Airport Crosswind Runway, which would be mutually beneficial and enhance operations for the 148th Fighter Wing.

Support efforts to pursue the C-130J Super Hercules model aircraft as a future, versatile airframe for the 133rd Airlift Wing. In the interim, the organization will encourage efforts to modernize the avionics in the current C-130H Hercules fleet to meet the 2020 world-wide Air Traffic Control deadline.

Continue to pursue next-generation equipment for upgrades to the C-130H3 simulator at the 133rd Airlift Wing.

Champion efforts to fortify and simplify service members' access to mental health, behavioral health, substance abuse and chemical dependency services by enforcing TRICARE compliance with the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act.

Support the recommendations in the Readiness Center Transformation Master Plan, including long-range funding to support replacement, modification and consolidation of Minnesota National Guard facilities.

Pursue an Air National Guard Cyber Operations unit in order to expand cyber capabilities within the Minnesota National Guard and to support the adjutant general's cyber response strategy.

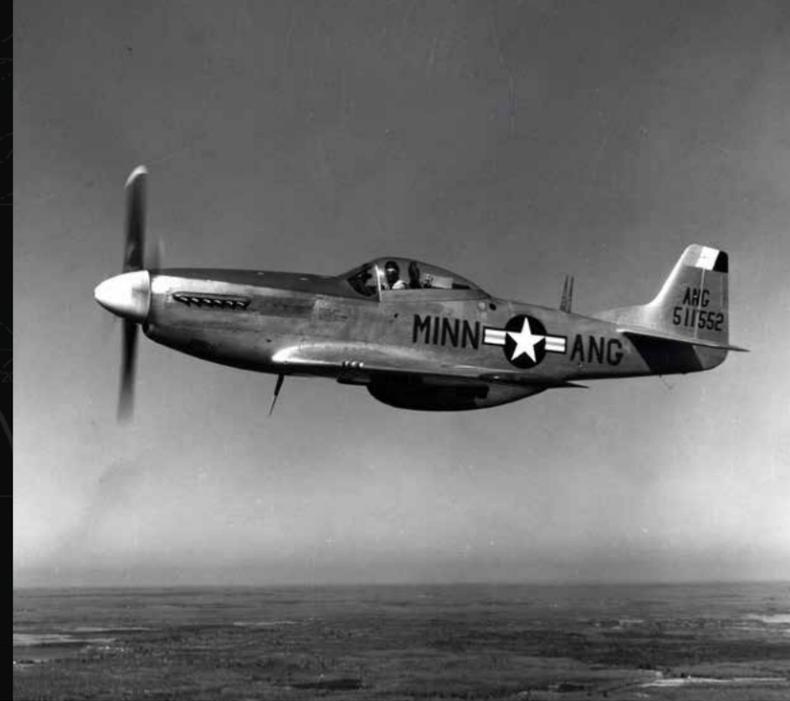




(LEFT) An artist's rendition of the 1st Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment standing their ground against Brig. Gen. Cadmus Wilcox's Brigade during the Battle of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania on July 2, 1863. (Copyright Gallon Historical Art Inc., used with permission)

(MIDDLE) Minnesota National Guard Soldiers with the 47th Viking Infantry Division prepare for their mobilization as a training division at Fort Rucker, Alabama, during the Korean War. (Minnesota National Guard file photo)

(RIGHT) A pilot with the 148th Fighter Wing on patrol in an F-51D Mustang over northern Minnesota. (Minnesota National Guard file photo)



## THIS YEAR IN HISTORY | SIGNIFICANT ANNIVERSARIES IN 2015

### 2015 | A YEAR OF ANNIVERSARIES

In 2015 the Minnesota National Guard commemorated several of its proudest moments in history through a series of noteworthy anniversaries.

Minnesotan pioneers and militia served their frontier state and country for more than 150 years – and have continued to serve in every U.S. conflict to this day – exemplifying the Midwestern work ethic, and demonstrating their patriotic commitment to Minnesota and the United States.

### 1865 | 150th ANNIVERSARY END OF THE CIVIL WAR

When the Civil War broke out in early 1861, Minnesotans were the first to answer President Lincoln's call for volunteers. Although then a young state in the Union, Minnesota was heavily involved in both the Civil War and the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862.

On July 2, 1863, Confederate forces broke through an overextended portion of the Union line at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, forcing the them into retreat. General Winfield S. Hancock needed to slow the Confederate advance in order to buy time for reinforcements to arrive.

Hancock spotted the solitary eight-company, First Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment, which was held in reserve, and ordered the unit to counter-charge Brig. Gen. Cadmus M. Wilcox's larger Alabama Brigade – knowing he may be sacrificing every man of the regiment.

Lt. William Lochren, K Company, 1st Minnesota Regiment, later wrote, "Every man realized in an instant what that order meant – death or wounds to us all; the sacrifice of the regiment to gain a few minutes' time and save the position, and probably the battlefield."

The First Minnesota was outnumbered three- or four-to-one, but the Soldiers bravely charged the Confederates near Cemetery Ridge. On July 3rd, the First Minnesota also participated in the repulse of Pickett's Charge, marking the end of the Battle of Gettysburg and a critical turning point in the Civil War.

The 1st Minnesota was lauded for its actions at Gettysburg. General Hancock said of the Soldiers afterward, "No Soldiers on any field, in this or any country, ever displayed grander heroism. There is no more gallant a deed recorded in history."

While the First Minnesota's charge represents Minnesota's highest contribution to the preservation of the Union, the Battles of Franklin and Nashville were the largest actions by Minnesota forces. Marching

over muddy fields of the rolling Tennessee countryside, Soldiers of the 5th, 7th, 9th and 10th Minnesota Infantry Regiments moved to engage Confederate forces dug-in along the Hillsboro Turnpike on Dec. 15 and 16, 1864.

The Minnesota regiments were key in capturing Shy's Hill. Their efforts, despite the loss of 87 Minnesotans, helped recover Nashville and bring an end to the last major battle of the Civil War.

### 1945 | 70th ANNIVERSARY END OF WORLD WAR II

Seventy years ago this year, the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division began one of the last military operations in Italy, defeating German fortifications south of Bologna. In the process they forced the surrender of the hard-fighting German 34th Infantry Division which had fought in France and Russia. Unable to retreat quickly enough, and their destruction imminent, the German forces in Italy surrendered on May 2, 1945. Allied victory in Europe followed within days.

The Red Bulls began to leave the European theatre for home after 44 months in war. The division participated in six major Army campaigns in North Africa and Italy, and is credited with amassing 517 days of front line combat, more than any other U.S. division.

In the Pacific Theater, A, G and I Companies of the 136th Infantry Regiment received the Distinguished Unit Citation for outstanding performance during the Battle of Luzon in the Philippine Islands.

After 40 months of brutal captivity, survivors of the Bataan Death March, which included Soldiers of the Brainerd-based A Company, 194th Tank Battalion, were liberated.

### 1950 | 65th ANNIVERSARY START OF THE KOREAN WAR

In 1950 the 47th Viking Infantry Division was federalized into service for action in Korea. Many of its members were seasoned WWII veterans, resulting in the selection of the 47th as a training division stationed at Camp Rucker, Alabama. Many members of the 47th deployed individually during the Korean War.

### 1975 | 40th ANNIVERSARY END OF THE VIETNAM WAR

On April 30, 1975, Saigon fell to communist North Vietnam, signaling the end of the Vietnam War. Many veterans continued their military service in the National Guard after returning to Minnesota. Their hard-earned experience contributed immensely to the readiness levels of the organization.

"You define us as Soldiers," recalled Col. Scott St. Sauver, Camp Ripley post commander, at a recent memorial event. "Your sacrifices make us who we are as Soldiers today."

### 1990 | 25th ANNIVERSARY START OF THE GULF WAR

2015 marked the 25th anniversary of *Operations Desert Shield/Storm*. About one quarter of all U.S. military personnel called into active duty during the Gulf War were from the National Guard and Reserves.

More than 600 Minnesota National Guard members volunteered or were activated, including the 109th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, 109th Light Equipment Maintenance Company, the 1187th Medical Company and the 257th Military Police Company.

The war was over by April 1991, and soon Minnesota's service members returned home.

### 2010 | 5th ANNIVERSARY OF MINNESOTA MILITARY RADIO

This weekly radio show first aired Nov. 7, 2010. Since then, the hour-long program has traveled to, and broadcasted live from, as far away as the Middle East and invited hundreds of guests to speak on a wide variety of topics affecting military service members, veterans and their families.

The Minnesota National Guard partners with the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, the Minneapolis VA, iHeart Media Minneapolis and volunteer host Tom Lyons to produce the award-winning show.

In 2015 the Minnesota Military Radio Network added several new affiliates, bringing the total number of stations airing the show across the state to 26.

Through captivating, historic interviews with veterans of all eras, the show endeavors to showcase and preserve noteworthy stories of heroism before they are forgotten.



# MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

[www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org](http://www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org)

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