VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA
NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT

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May 11 – May 17, 2024

STAFF ACTIVITY

- NS Staff began sending out notifications to the 2024 American Legion Spirit of Service Award winners.

- NS Staff is conducting final preparations for the 2024 National Commander's travel to Europe.

- NS Staff reviewed the bill text of FY2025 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) and drafted a letter to HASC. We will be incorporating VE&E Division inputs to the letter.

- NS Staff conducted a legislative review of a draft bill calling for service members to receive training on cybercrime and misinformation tactics.

- NS Staff continues to research immigration and border policies matters and is reviewing all applicable resolutions.

- NS Staff provided subject matter advice to a post regarding a proposed military recruiting crisis resolution.

- NS staff is proactively collaborating with Tank-automotive Armaments Command (TACOM) to identify defunct posts and recover military equipment as appropriate.

- NS Staff participated in an MSO/VSO briefing on the DoD Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military today, hosted by the Department of Defense. The report was provided to Congress on May 16, 2024. The data provided in the report serves as the foundation and catalyst for future sexual assault prevention, training, victim care, and accountability goals. Secretary of Defense Statement on the FY23 Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military and Annual Report on Sexual Assault in the Military

- NS Staff participated in a webinar, "Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity," hosted by the Department of Defense, Office of Intergovernmental Affairs. The discussion emphasized cyber threats' real and persistent nature, necessitating ongoing investment and action at all levels. Critical infrastructure owners and operators must integrate

cybersecurity into their strategic plans. Collaboration between the government and the private sector is crucial for enhancing national resilience.

- NS Staff spoke with a representative from Express Scripts about the transition to Accredo for specialty pharmacy services, which beneficiaries have received well due to reduced copays and increases in additional support services. We also discussed the deployment prescription program, advising that orders be placed a month in advance to avoid shortages, and introduced a new Military Treatment Facility (MTF) mail pharmacy concept to reduce costs and MTF congestion.

- NS Staff spoke to the Defense Health Agency (DHA). We addressed whether DHA had taken steps to lower copay costs to reduce foot traffic and improve services at Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs). The answer was no, as Congress sets copay policies and faces significant administrative and budgetary challenges. Additionally, shifting to an all-mail-in pharmacy model with zero copays requires congressional approval and alternative budget sources.

- NS Director met with Senior Australian Army Sergeant Major, Darren Murch, Forces Command to discuss issues relating to military recruiting, to the Trilateral Security Partnership involving Australia, United Kingdom and United States (AUKUS) and issues involving China in the south Pacific.

- NS Director met with the Adjutant General, Massachusetts National Guard, to discuss issues involving a training area that was approved through the FY2020 NDAA.

- NS Staff met with representatives from Huron to discuss their efforts involving suicide prevention for the active-duty military and veteran community.

- NS Director attended the monthly Director meeting with all Indianapolis and DC leadership.

- NS Director met with VA&R to discuss upcoming legislation and efforts which involve cross-divisional staff efforts.

- NS Staff is focused on preparation/planning for national convention, focusing on logistical coordination for the meetings, for sourcing potential speakers for the Commission meeting and hosting of multiple guests who will present on the main convention floor.

- NS Staff remains in contact with multiple installations regarding potential BASE Program quality of life visits.

POW/MIA

May 14, 2024

- Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Smith, T.)
- Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Engesser, M.)
- Soldier Accounted for from WWII (Hinson, C.)

May 10, 2024

- USS Glennon Sailor Accounted for from WWII (Alexander, H.)
- Tanker Accounted for from WWII (Baskind, N.)

DPAA has identified/repatriated 67 service members this year.

PROGRAMS (The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment)

- Processed request: Ammo – 7440; Rifles – 40; Clips – 25; Static Displays – 2
- Participants: Posts – 6; Departments – 5

The American Legion JROTC/ROTC Program

- Military Excellence – 1
- Scholastic Excellence – 1
- Departments – 1

TIP OF THE WEEK

NS Staff was very busy this week reviewing the newly released bill text for the 2025 NDAA. This mark up is not the final version and discussions in the House of Representatives is scheduled to begin on May 22nd. If you are interested in reviewing what your representatives will be discussing, click on the link above.