VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA
NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT

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Apr 26 – May 3, 2024

STAFF ACTIVITY

- NS Staff attended an MSO/VSO Quarterly Update hosted by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

- NS Staff attended a House Appropriations Committee Hearing entitled, "*FY25 Request for Army Military Construction and Family Housing*", which can be viewed here.

- NS Staff virtually attended a Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing entitled, "*Open/Closed: To receive testimony on worldwide threats",* which can be viewed here.

- NS Staff virtually attended a Senate Armed Services Meeting entitled, " *Hearings to examine worldwide threats",* which can be viewed here.

- NS Director escorted the National Commander to visit the Southern US- Mexico border in Eagle Pass, Texas from April 24-26. Details of the visit will be presented by the National Commander during the Spring NEC meeting. The visit agenda included:

  - Part 1: Multi-agency coordination / planning with the Department of Texas
  - Part 2: Eagle Pass border tour /visit with Local experts/military entities
  - Part 3: Visit with Laredo City Mayor and Sheriff
  - Part 4: Townhall and discussion at American Legion Post 59, Laredo, Texas

- NS Staff continues to plan and coordinate for TAL's participation in Memorial Day activities at Arlington National Cemetery.

- NS Staff began receiving The American Legion Spirit of Service Award nominations and is reviewing packages.

- NS Staff is finalizing the schedule for the National Commander's foreign travel to Europe.

- As a board member of the Veterans Consortium (TVC), an honorary seat provided to the American Legion as a founding member of TVC, The NS Director participated in a fireside chat with Marine Medal of Honor recipient, Corporal Kyle carpenter at the Navy Memorial in Washington D.C. Video of the event will be provided to leadership once its available for release.

- NS Staff attended a quality-of-life panel held at the Washington Convention Center Moderated by Kathryn Paik, Senior Fellow, Center for Strategic and International Studies.

- NS Staff is working with TACOM to ensure all American Legion posts are meeting the reporting and operating requirements for the ammunition, weapons and equipment issuance program that is provided to VSOs by the United States Army. Adherence to requirements is being strictly enforced and all Departments are encouraged to ensure they conduct random checks on posts to ensure compliance. We will continue to release information and guidance on this matter.

  Panelists:

  LtGen. James Glynn, Deputy Commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

  SgtMaj. Carlos Ruiz, 20th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps

  LtGen. James Adams, Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources

  MajGen. David Maxwell, Commanding General of Marine Corps Installations Command

  Key points discussed:

  - Quality of Life Focus:

    SgtMaj Ruiz emphasized the critical need for the military to prioritize people over equipment and weapons systems = Quality of life is the primary means to enhance warfighting readiness. He highlighted ongoing efforts to refurbish living quarters and improve general living conditions to boost morale and efficiency among Marines.

  - Predictability and Support:

    LtGen Glynn discussed initiatives aimed at increasing predictability and support within the uncertain military environment, focusing on the well-being of families and the predictability of Marines' lives regarding promotions and resources.

  - Resource Allocation:

  - LtGen Adams addressed financial strategies to ensure funds are directed towards impactful quality of life improvements, acknowledging challenges posed by inflation and budget constraints.

- Infrastructure Improvements:

- MajGen Maxwell spoke about broadening the scope of responsibility for Marine Corps Installations and enhancing the delivery of services that contribute to Marine's readiness and quality of life from work to home.

- Audience Engagement:

  The panel engaged with audience questions, focusing on improving living conditions within the barracks, improvement of the duty station assignment process and enhancing the overall support system for Marines and their families.

POW/MIA

April 29, 2024

- Pilot Accounted for from Vietnam War (Kerr, J.)

DPAA has identified/repatriated 57 service members this year.

PROGRAMS (The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment)

- Processed request: Ammo – 7440; Rifles – 36; Clips – 0; Static Displays – 0
- Participants: Posts – 13; Departments – 12

The American Legion JROTC/ROTC Program

- Military Excellence – 15
- Scholastic Excellence – 10
- Departments – 10

TIP OF THE WEEK

Last week, Congress passed a pivotal security assistance package that will bolster American troops and our allies. Here is how the $95 billion authorized by the bill is being spent:

Aid to Israel

A total $13,040 billion is allocated to Israel's defense efforts. There are also funds to reimburse U.S. military operations in response to attacks in 2023.

- $4.4 billion replenishes defense service to Israel
- $4 billion funds the replenishment Israel's missile defense systems.
- $3.5 is used to procure advanced weapons and defense systems
- $2.4 funds U.S. military operations in the region
- $1.2 billion is used for short-range rocket and mortar defense
- $1 billon is used to streamline artillery and critical munition development.

Aid to Ukraine
$60.84 billion will be used to assist Ukraine and other partners in countering Russian aggression. The legislation requires repayment for economic support by the government of Ukraine.

- $26 million will be used for oversight and accountability of the aid provided to Ukraine
- $23.2 billion is allocated replenish U.S. military stock and facilities in the region
- $13.8 billion will be used to procure advanced weapons and defense systems
- $11.3 billion is funding U.S. Military operations in the region

Deterrence in the Indo-Pacific Region
$8.1 billion is authorized to counter China's continual aggression in the Indo-Pacific region.

- $3.3 billion is allocated to develop U.S. submarine infrastructure
- $2 billion is used to bolster Taiwan and other military allies
- $1.9 billion is directed to replenishing defense articles for allies in the region
- $542 million is authorized for U.S. military capabilities in the region
- $133 million is used to streamline artillery and critical munition development.

The package also supports shipping protections in the Red Sea and funds efforts to stop the trafficking of fentanyl. Humanitarian aid is also provided to Gaza and Haiti under the legislation.

The Department of Defense's report on the supplemental package can be found here. To review the legislation, the law can be found here.