

**VETERANS STRENGTHENING AMERICA**

**NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION'S WEEKLY REPORT**

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**May 1 – 5, 2023**

**STAFF ACTIVITY**

* NS Director attended the quarterly U.S. Army VSO/MSO update at the Pentagon on May 4, 2023. The agenda included the following briefs:
	+ Brief by MG John Rafferty, Chief of Public Affairs that covered the Army’s engagement and response to a wide range of media queries to include quality of life issues involving housing and barracks mold, aviation mishaps and the related safety standdown.
	+ Brief by Col Andy Blanton, Chief of Staff, Army Recruiting and Retention Task Force where he provided an update that the Army would most likely once again fail to meet its recruiting goals. Additionally, the Army is reviewing its approach to recruiting and retention as well as recruiter quality of life and how we can assist them through relationships in local communities.
	+ Update and discussion with the Honorable Mr. Mario Diaz, Deputy Under Secretary of the Army on a full range of personnel and operation related matters including the possible restructuring of Army personnel models to fit the modernization/transformation efforts, and equipment fielding and acquisition efforts. He also addressed quality of life and suicide prevention efforts going on across the Department of the Army.
	+ Brief by Ms. Alayne Conway, Deputy Director Plans Division and Ms. Corinne Dionisio, Strategic Plans Division on upcoming events for the Army 248th Birthday and the 50th Anniversary of the All-Volunteer force. Details will post soon on the U.S. Army main [page](https://www.army.mil/).
	+ Brief by LTG Kevin Vereen, Deputy Chief of Staff, G-9, provided an update on [quality-of-life](https://www.army.mil/qualityoflife/#taskforce) efforts. He spoke about the Army’s DoD leading progress involving childcare and child development centers, military spouse employment, Infrastructure and MilCon projects and asked the VSO community for advocacy in procuring more funds for sustainment and renovation of existing facilities and not just for building new facilities. He also provided an update on the progress on implementation of actions directed by the Base Renaming Commission, stating that progress is going well. For full details see story [here.](https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/Article/3260434/dod-begins-implementing-naming-commission-recommendations/)
* NS Staff finalized the draft Memorandum of Understanding for the Base Assessment and Service Member Experience (BASE) quality of life program which will be shared with each of the military service branches to set conditions for future installation visits.
* NS Staff began drafting a volunteer training syllabus for Legion volunteers who will be participating in the BASE program visits.
* NS Staff is in the process of completing final drafts for their respective quality of life research paper topics.
* NS Staff finalized the Spring NEC report to include pending resolutions to be presented at the NEC meeting and recommendations after reviews by the Resolution Screening Committee and NS Commission.
* NS Staff met with Rep. Issa’s (R-CA) office to discuss and request co-sponsorship of [H.R.932](https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/932/cosponsors?s=1&r=1&q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22hr932%22%5D%7D), a bill to repeal the 1991 and 2002 authorizations for use of military force (AUMF) against Iraq. Rep. Issa voted in 2021 to repeal the Iraq AUMFs but has yet to cosponsor the bill in the current Congress.
* NS Staff met with Rep. Comer’s (R-KY) office to discuss and request co-sponsorship of [H.R.932](https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/932/cosponsors?s=1&r=1&q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22hr932%22%5D%7D), a bill to repeal the 1991 and 2002 authorizations for use of military force (AUMF) against Iraq. Rep. Comer voted in 2021 to repeal the Iraq AUMFs but has yet to cosponsor the bill in the current Congress.
* NS Staff met with the Executive Director of Armed Forces Housing Advocates (AFHA) to discuss the Military Housing Readiness Council Act.
* NS Staff is receiving nomination packages for The American Legion Spirit of Service Award.
* NS Staff met with Rep. Thompson’s (R-PA) office to discuss the *Military Housing and Transparency Act.*
* NS Staff completed a bill review of the *Military Housing Readiness Council Act.*
* NS Staff is finalizing logistics for the Commander’s visit to NATO HQ and the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in preparation for the Commander’s trip to Europe.
* NS Staff attended the annual Spring reception of Diplomats and Consular Officers, Retired (DACOR), an association of former State Department staff and foreign affairs professionals. Maintaining a professional working relationship with the Department of State is among the mandates of the National Security Commission and Division.
* NS Staff attended a webcast hosted by the Vandenburg Coalition, a nonpartisan network of foreign policy scholars and practitioners who believe in the power of American leadership to protect American national security. The event featured a conversation with author Jonathan Ward about his new book, *The Decisive Decade: American Grand Strategy for Triumph Over China*. More information and video are [here](https://vandenbergcoalition.org/upcoming-book-talk-decisive-decade/).
* NS Staff attended a webcast hosted by the Brooking Institute titled: *US-Taiwan relations: Will China’s challenge lead to a crisis?* The event featured a discussion around the past, present, and future of the Taiwan Strait and America’s role in it. More information and video are [here](https://www.brookings.edu/events/u-s-taiwan-relations-will-chinas-challenge-lead-to-a-crisis/).

**POW/MIA**

**May 2, 2023**

Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Grimes, G.)

DPAA has identified/repatriated 56 servicemembers this year.

**PROGRAMS (The American Legion Military Surplus Equipment)**

* Processed request: Ammo – 4,960; Rifle – 12; Clips – 0; Static Display – 0
* Participants: Post – 4; Department – 4

**ROTC/JROTC Awards**

**Department of Indiana**

Scholastic Excellence Awards – 1

Military Excellence Awards – 1

**Department of Florida**

Scholastic Excellence Awards – 1

Military Excellence Awards – 1

**Department of California**

Scholastic Excellence Awards – 1

Military Excellence Awards – 1

**Department of Massachusetts**

Scholastic Excellence Awards – 1

Military Excellence Awards – 1

**Department of New York**

Scholastic Excellence Awards – 1

Military Excellence Awards – 1

**Department of Texas**

Scholastic Excellence Awards – 1

Military Excellence Awards – 1

**Department of Illinois**

Scholastic Excellence Awards – 1

Military Excellence Awards – 1

**Department of New Mexico**

Scholastic Excellence Awards – 3

Military Excellence Awards – 3

**TIP OF THE WEEK**

**How to Spot a Biased News Source**

When keeping up to date on the latest National Security news, it is helpful to ensure that the news you are reading is not heavily skewed towards one side or that the article contains misinformation or disinformation. Here are some tips on how to spot a biased new source:

**1. It can't be verified.**

A false or misleading news article may or may not have links in it tracing its sources; if it does, these links may not lead to articles outside of the site's domain or may not contain information pertinent to the article topic.

**2. It appeals to emotion.**

Deliberately misleading news plays on your emotions. Writers of 'fake' news know that articles that appeal to extreme emotion are more likely to get clicks. If an article makes you really angry or super upset, check those facts!

**3. Authors usually are not experts.**

Sometimes they are not even journalists, often they are employees paid to write click-bait. Check the author's credentials by running their name through a search engine to see where else and what else they have written.

**4. The claims cannot be easily found elsewhere.**

If you look up the main idea of the news article in a search engine you may not be able to find it covered in any reputable news sources.

**5. Is the site legitimate?**

Did your article come from abcnews.com.co? Or mercola.com? Realnewsrightnow.com? These and a host of others regularly post false or misleading information.