



DEPARTMENTS OF THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE

JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS – ALASKA

OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

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NGAK-TAG

2 October 2018

Message to the Force #30

SUBJECT: Alaska State Defense Force Update

1. The Alaska State Defense Force (ASDF) has evolved over the past few years. As the organization continues to grow, it's important to touch base periodically and ensure updates are passed to the entire Alaska Organized Militia. What follows is a refresher on what ASDF is, and some important recent developments.
2. The ASDF is an element of Alaska's organized militia. But, unlike the National Guard and Alaska Naval Militia, it is a State-only militia that is always under the Governor as commander-in-chief. The ASDF is a largely volunteer organization whose members normally train without pay but are put on State Active Duty status when activated to perform missions. The Governor has the authority to prescribe the ASDF missions; those missions normally include activities to augment the Alaska National Guard in disaster emergency response, and other activities to assist the State and communities when the Guard is otherwise engaged or prohibited from doing them by federal law.
3. The Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs (DMVA) is increasing the size of the ASDF as well as its dispersion across Alaska from its established high density participation along the rail belt into small communities across Alaska. These new detachments in rural villages will be scout units. Members of these detachments may assume some additional duties as well to assist other departments. This effort is in concert with the Governor's Public Safety Action Plan, where we're working with Department of Corrections (DOC) to set up a program where probationers can check in with a specially trained local ASDF member, who both assists the DOC probation officer and provides mentorship to the probationer. In this way, probationers can more quickly return to their home communities and resume productive lives, instead of staying stuck in limbo in one of our major cities.
4. We're also working in partnership with the Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN). AFN has provided a \$100,000 grant to focus on accelerating growth of ASDF detachments, with a goal of increasing rural community emergency preparedness and resilience. An Executive Program Director, LTC (AK) Simon Brown, was recently hired and is working with communities to roll out aggressive recruiting and training plans. We'll announce our ASDF rural growth plan at the AFN convention later this month. Also, from a \$210,000 legislative appropriation, ASDF is hiring part-time cadre staff in Bethel and Kotzebue to stand up detachments; interviews for these positions are next week. The training for our rural ASDF members there will include things like scout skills, field craft, Emergency

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Incident Command System; suicide and violence prevention; first aid; health and wellness.

5. None of ASDF's accomplishments are incidental to DMVA strategic ends. As ASDF expands its presence across all of Alaska, expands its partnerships, and builds community resilience from within, all of these actions implement ASDF's role in executing the 2016 DMVA Strategic objectives: 1) Implement an integrated Arctic strategy that supports Alaska's Arctic Policy, 2) Build emergency management capacity, and 3) Engage our communities.

6. Finally, I'll remind you that every Guard member or DMVA employee is a potential ASDF recruiter. ASDF recruits Alaskans willing to serve their communities and State from where they reside. Military experience is not required. If you have potential leads, please reach out to COL (AK) James (john.james@alaska.gov) or LTC (AK) Brown (simon.brown@alaska.gov) for more information.

7. I'm proud to share these ASDF updates with you and look forward to sending out more good news in the future. Under COL (AK) John James' direction as the ASDF Commander, ASDF continues to posture to meet the demands of the current operational environment and will continue to cement a legacy of relevancy into the future.

Sincerely,


LAUREL J. HUMMEL
Major General, AKNG
The Adjutant General