



Michigan Volunteer Defense Force (MI-VDF)

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Lansing, MI 48909

1 October 2016



MEMORANDUM FOR MI-VDF Battalion Commanders and Brigade Staff

SUBJECT: Training Guidance for Michigan Volunteer Defense Force (MI-VDF) 2016-17

1. References

- a. Michigan's State Defense Forces, A concise History and Lineage of the Michigan Emergency Volunteers and its Predecessors from 1917-1988, by Duane E Miller, dtd 1999.
- b. Field Manual 22-100, dtd 31 August 1999, Army leadership, Be, Know, Do.

2. Purpose. Provide Training Guidance for the MI-VDF for 2017 inclusive of Annual Training.

3. **Commander's Training Philosophy** remains unchanged from that which was originally manifested during 2007. It is based upon a consideration of Michigan's State Defense Force's historical legacy, present day status and practical mission context. In order to conduct an effective training program several essential components must be realized:

a) Viable/Doable Essential Tasks b) Capable & Trained Personnel c) Competent & Dedicated Leadership d) Essential Training Resources e) Time.

The MI-VDF depends upon volunteers for its personnel and leadership. It is reasonable to expect that the majority will have experienced military training, however some will not have, especially younger volunteers. **Key to the success of the MI-VDF is the proper combination of training to mission with a dynamic weaving of leadership, personnel and training resources into the time tapestry of mission focus. The MI-VDF has six viable/doable Essential Tasks.**

4. **Commander's Assessment of current MI-VDF status:**

a) **Organizational Structure and Ranks/Grades:** The MI-VDF will continue its organizational structure modeled on a traditional U.S. Army Light Infantry Brigade "like" structure with commensurate battalion, company and platoon units. This organization is based upon three companies per Battalion, three platoons per company and three squads per platoon. Ranks/grades have been defined and personnel are being assigned as they are recruited. The MI-VDF Website >> www.mivdf.org << facilitates the assignment process with the inclusion of the volunteer application and streamlined processing procedures.

b) **Essential Tasks:** The six Essential Tasks are displayed on the MI-VDF Website.

c) **Personnel: Each of the six Battalions** will recruit volunteer personnel.

The battalions will recruit from within each area of operation with the emphasis on maintaining home town knowledge of the operational environment. Essential to the recruiting of personnel is the ability of each MI-VDF recruiter/volunteer to communicate the mission of the MI-VDF and the role of each battalion. Whatever actions the MI-VDF conducts must be viewed within the context of **Credibility**.

Two important questions which must be asked and re-asked:

a) Does what we are doing make sense re: the structure, manning and resources of the MI-VDF?

- b) Does what we are doing fit within the overall mission of those non-volunteer State organizations (county and local Emergency Management Services) that would have the need to call the MI-VDF into operational status, as authorized by TAG, Michigan National Guard?
- c) Each VDF Volunteer and Leader is expected to conduct him/herself in a manner to bring credit to him/herself and the MI-VDF. A focus on our core **Values of: Integrity, Volunteerism, Service, Leadership and Professionalism** guides our on-going efforts in recruiting, training, personnel administration and interaction with other agencies.
- d) *The Sustainment of the Credibility of the MI-VDF* continues to be an essential focus for Brigade and Battalion leaders.

5. Commander's Goals for 2017:

- a) **Personnel:** Complete recruiting efforts to the degree that a **10% increase (approx 20) in Volunteer Personnel** is realized. Complete (as necessary) the recruitment and appointment of Battalion Command Groups (Cdr, XO/Training/Operations Officer and Command Sergeant Major). Additionally, continually review all positions with currently assigned personnel and retain them or reassign/promote based upon: a) expressed desires of individual members b) the requirements of the position c) military experiences of individual members **c) Recruit and/or promote senior leaders into vacated positions, including Bn Cmd and Bn and Bde staff.**
- b) **Essential Tasks:** **Focus training on the revised "Retirement Services"** while maintaining competency with the RSS, CERT, and JRSOI Essential Tasks; continue to develop local relationships with Emergency Management personnel in order to strengthen our County Liaison Officer roles.
- c) **Credibility of the MI-VDF:** Ensure that all assigned VDF members are fully aware of the duties and job descriptions for his/her assigned position.
- d) **Training:** Battalion Commanders are authorized to add additional training during the year in order to maintain high morale and interest by the volunteers. **During the month of March, each Brigade primary staff officer (S-1, S-3, S-4, S-6) is encouraged to conduct an audio conference training meeting with respective battalion counterpart staff officers.** The purpose of these meetings will be to a) enhance the competence of battalion staff officers b) discuss and resolve challenges which may be experienced by battalion staff c) prepare for any staff training to be conducted during Annual Training 2017.
- e) **Year-end Assessment:** conduct a careful review of accomplished Cdr's Goals No later than 30 September 2017 and construct new training Guidance for 2018.

6. Commander's Training Guidance Annual Training 2017 :

- a) **Dates: 24-27 August 2017**
- b) **Location:** Camp Grayling 600 area
- c) **Training Focus:** Conduct multi-echelon training with emphasis on "hands on" training for:
 - 1) Basic & Advanced training for new volunteers utilizing the MI-VDF Drill Sergeants
 - 2) Ruck Challenge for volunteer participants
 - 3) RSO training with MIARNG full-time staff, as authorized
 - 4) **NCO & Officer training, as needed**
 - 5) **SAR/CERT practical exercise with participating County Emergency Management personnel**
 - 6) **Communications exercise for the VDF radio teams**

/////signed /////
 WILLIAM R EWALD
 COL, Army (Ret)
 Commanding