



Michigan Volunteer Defense Force (MI-VDF)

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Lansing, MI 48909

5 October 2013



MEMORANDUM FOR MI-VDF Battalion Commanders and Brigade Staff

SUBJECT: Training Guidance for Michigan Volunteer Defense Force (MI-VDF) 2014

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 2014 (inclusive of Annual Training period)

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. Currently (Training Year 2014) 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 seven 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. An emphasis for improving the strength

of each battalion will continue as a primary focus of the MI-VDF. Essential to the recruiting of personnel is the ability of each MI-VDF recruiter/volunteer to communicate the mission/s 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 given 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, MING?

Each VDF Volunteer and Leader is expected to conduct him/her self in a manner to bring credit to self 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 2014:

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 individuals

b) **Essential Tasks: Focus training on "Retirement Services"** while maintaining competency with the RSS, CERT, JRSOI Essential Tasks; continue to develop local relationships with Emergency Management personnel in order to strengthen our County Liaison Officer roles. Battalions are authorized (as of TY-2014) to train on the basics of Search and Rescue/Recovery (SAR) with County and local governmental agencies.

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 within the MI-VDF. These duties and job descriptions mimic (similar but not identical to) the commensurate duty/job descriptions in an Army brigade, battalion, company and platoon.

d) **Training:** Battalion Commanders are authorized to add additional training during the year in order to maintain high morale and interest by the volunteers. This especially refers to the new (as of TY2014) SAR essential task.

e) **Year-end Assessment:** conduct a careful review of accomplished Cdr's Goals No later than 30 September 2014 and construct new training Guidance for 2015.

6. Commander's Training Guidance Annual Training 2015: Conduct multi-echelon training with emphasis on "hands on" training for enlisted using NCO trainers in classroom and outdoor scenarios; battalion staff training, continued RSO training with MIARNG full-time staff (as authorized); basic training for new volunteers and NCO (E-6/7) training as opportunity permits.

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WILLIAM R EWALD
COL, Army (Ret)
Commanding