

Fiscal Year 2024 Public Budget Hearing - November 14, 2022
Haslet Armory Room 133 (9-11am)
Maj. Gen. Michael R. Berry, Adjutant General of the Delaware National Guard

Good morning. It is my distinct honor to represent the Delaware National Guard as we present our Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Operating and Capital Budget Requests.

At a glance, The Delaware National Guard (DNG) is committed to:

- Maintain a balanced force structure authorization of 1,646 Army Guard Soldiers and 1,162 Air Guard Airmen and women;
- Enhance joint operation capabilities to achieve optimal mission effectiveness and efficiency of operations involving Army and Air personnel;
- Continue quality recruiting, promotion and retention programs;
- Enhance mission readiness, through effective military leadership development programs and challenging unit training; and
- Develop and participate in local, state and national programs and partnerships that provide a positive impact on the community.

The Delaware National Guard's FY24 operating budget request is for a total of \$5,231,598 which includes a 1% enhancement from FY23. The operating budget submission identifies specific requests to support three top priorities for next fiscal year.

- \$51,798 in contractual services funding for increased maintenance and repair requirements of both our aging 100% State funded Army Readiness Centers and 25% State funded ANG facilities located at New Castle County Airport. This additional funding will support this agency's needed services in accordance with the Master Cooperative Agreement, allow for optimal use of federal matching funds and change our operational responses from reactive to preventive in nature.

If additional funding becomes available, please consider the authorization of two FTEs:

- One, 100% State funded, full-time employee to serve as an Emergency Management Specialist to support the DNG's Joint Operations Center; and
- One, 100% State funded, full-time employee to serve as a Contracting Manager for the Air National Guard to execute capital projects. This position has the possibility of being federally reimbursed through a Centralized Personnel Plan.

Minor capital improvement funding continues to be a critical budget item for the Delaware National Guard to ensure proper maintenance, repair and acceptable standards of our 10-aging readiness centers whose average age is 48 years, seven of which the oldest average 61 years in age. When our antiquated Guard facilities fall into disrepair, this adversely affects readiness, recruiting and retention. A great deal of money is invested into training our members, so we need to provide adequate and safe facilities to work in, so they don't seek employment elsewhere.

Our FY24 capital budget submission requests \$2.5M in minor capital improvement funding to supplement the many millions of federal dollars, which total over \$90.0M in the last five years. We receive these federal funds annually to help maintain our older facilities. If authorized, this funding will help support the many projects listed in our formal capital budget submission.

In addition, we are requesting \$2.475M in capital funding in support of two projects. First, the FMS #1 Conversion Project. Funding is requested for the conversion of Field Maintenance Shop #1 in Wilmington. The scope of the project is to convert a 9600 sqft maintenance shop to an office building as an expansion of the units and missions stationed at Stern Readiness Center. DNG does not have sufficient federal funds for what should be its 75% share, but DNG needs the space for mission requirements. Second is the Dagsboro Land Site Preparation. Funding is requested for land preparation for future use.

The scope of the project is to demolish three existing structures on the property and perform an environmental site assessment to identify any potential impacts created by previous usage.

Both our FY24 operating and capital budget requests validate the funding needed to sustain the high level of operational readiness and effectiveness of the Delaware National Guard during the next fiscal year. DNG embodies the saying, “if you stay ready, you never have to get ready.”

On behalf of all the men and women of our Delaware National Guard, I want to thank you very much for your continued support and assistance. The DNG is proud to serve the citizens of this great State and our nation when called.

My staff and I are prepared to answer any questions you may have regarding our FY24 budget requests.

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