



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

*Adjutant General's Office  
Virginia National Guard  
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THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

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SUBJECT: Command Philosophy

To the Virginia National Guard:

I am honored and humbled Governor McAuliffe selected me as the next Adjutant General of Virginia, and I stand ready to serve our Commonwealth and nation. I find it a great privilege to be provided the opportunity to lead this outstanding team, and I think it is important for you to understand "where I'm coming from." This command philosophy will help guide the way we will do business in the Virginia National Guard. As with each of you, I have been shaped by my experiences in the military, both good and bad, and by the leaders, uniformed personnel and civilians with whom I have served.

**Focus on the Basics:** We are now a military in preparation. As we deploy our last units to support the war effort, we must refocus on what has made us great: Hard, realistic training that made us capable of meeting or exceeding requirements, and taking care of our personnel and their families. We must take what we have learned over the last 12 years of war and shift to prepare our Soldiers, Airmen, Virginia Defense Force personnel and the state and federal civilian work force that supports them to meet the demands of full spectrum conflict and be prepared for our role in National Guard Civil Support. Everything you are doing should contribute to the Virginia National Guard being a premier ready, relevant, resilient and rapidly responding operational force capable of executing the orders of the President of the United States and the Governor of Virginia.

**Values:** I firmly believe in our shared values across the Army, Air Force, VDF and the Department of Military Affairs, and I expect all of our personnel to adopt and aspire to them:

**COURAGE** - do what is right, even when it's hard and when no one is looking.

**CANDOR** - tell the truth and always be open and honest. Integrity can take you a long way in your career, but losing it just once can end a career.

**COMPETENCE** - know your job and lead others by example.

**COMMITMENT** - have the dedication to duty and mission accomplishment that our fellow citizens in the Commonwealth of Virginia and our nation expect.

**COMPASSION** - know your unit and your personnel and **take care of them!** Soldiers and Airmen perform better when they know that their leaders care. That means truly caring and not merely paying lip service to the term. Our people are our greatest resource, and we need to ensure they know where to turn to receive any physical, mental, financial or spiritual assistance they require.

**Teamwork:** Each of us is a part of something bigger than ourselves, and success requires us to work together in order to accomplish our mission. Compete against the standards, not each other. The expectation is **we will be the best in the nation.** When you have a problem you can't resolve,

take it to your **chain of command** with possible solutions. Don't tell me things are impossible to accomplish. Instead tell me what you see as our options and give me your suggestions on how we fix it. Always keep me informed. I thrive on information and will tell you when you have given me enough. The more information I have on a subject, the better-informed decision I can make on all related subjects. Tell me bad news, even impending bad news, right away and we will **fix bad things together**. Remember, the military is a team sport, and we need to get all the players in the game. Finally, the only way we can truly be an effective team is for all of us to foster a diverse environment where everyone feels safe and valued for who they are. We will have no tolerance for discrimination, harassment and sexual assault.

**Consistent Excellence:** Great units perform at the top end of the Band of Excellence at all times not just in preparation for an inspection or a major training event; they establish a culture of excellence. So, do good things and look good doing them. Maintain high standards of appearance, military courtesy, and bearing. At home station and in the field, maintain high standards of security, maintenance, personal readiness, equipment and weapons readiness. **Don't let your guard down!** Reward personnel who continually excel in these areas. Demanding and sustaining a high level of performance at all times will drive the Virginia National Guard higher in its performance.

**Tell Our Story:** In order to stay relevant, we must inform and educate our neighbors, local, regional and state partners and elected officials about our capabilities, policies and programs and how we are being successful. We all feel a great sense of pride in our mission and the people we serve with, so we must actively seek opportunities to let others know what we can do and how well we are doing it. Whether it is through a media engagement, speaking at a local community event or inviting an elected official to visit training, we will be more effective as an organization if the people we serve know more about the great things we are doing and how we can help in times of crisis.

**My Personal Notes:** I've personally followed the three rules below and have for the past 29 years of my military career and found them to be a helpful guide in the performance of duty:

1. Follow the 'Golden Rule' and treat others as you wish to be treated with dignity and respect.
2. At the end of each and every day, ensure that your little piece of the Virginia National Guard is better than the way you found it at the start of the day.
3. Stay positive because a good attitude and optimism are contagious while cynicism can be crippling.

I will underwrite any and all honest mistakes because we all make them, but repeat offenses indicate systemic errors, which require more complex corrections. Finally, violations of **HONESTY** and **INTEGRITY** are not tolerable. You must hold yourself and your subordinates to the absolutely highest standards in regards to these two fundamental values.

I am extremely proud to be a member of the Virginia National Guard and look forward to leading us in to the future.



TIMOTHY P. WILLIAMS  
Brigadier General  
The Adjutant General