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Thank you for the opportunity to talk about warrant officer issues in today's Army National Guard (ARNG). For nearly 370 years the Army National Guard has served this nation and today's ARNG warrant officers are taking on greater roles as Soldiers, Leaders and Experts.

The key topics I will be covering today will be the ongoing operations of the Warrant Officer Senior Advisory Council (WOSAC); Warrant Officer Professional Development; Warrant Officer Candidate School for the Reserve Components; and the annual conference for the National Guard of the United States (NGAUS).

The State Command Chief Warrant Officer (CCWO) position within each state headquarters continues to evolve as a key leader within the Joint Force Headquarters. The focus of the duties of the CCWO is directly related to warrant officer education, management, recruiting and career enhancement including equal opportunity, morale, welfare, discipline, performance, training, awards and recognition. The CCWO is directly involved in overall warrant officer career management within their respective states.

To be fully effective the State CCWO has a close working relationship with their State Command Sergeant Major (or Senior Enlisted Advisor) and their Recruiting Officer Accession Team. They must also interact with their counterparts at the state and national level from NGB, to the USAR and the active Army's Warrant Officer proponents. They are senior leaders, counselors and mentors in warrant officer professional development and readiness issues affecting their states.

Every CCWO belongs to the Army National Guard Warrant Officer Senior Advisory Council (WOSAC). The WOSAC provides advice and assistance through national and regional committees on matters affecting policy, plans, programs, resources, training, readiness and professional development of ARNG Warrant Officers. The entire WOSAC meets at least annually to address these issues.

The WOSAC met in February 2006 and was briefed by a number of personnel from the National Guard Bureau (such as CW5 Haynes, CCWO-ARNG; CW5 Green, WOSAC Chair, CW5 Perry, WOCS-RC, CW4 Pablo, NGB WO Policy, and others) as well as senior active Army Warrant Officer representatives and Branch Chiefs (such as WO Advisor to CSA, CW5 Dillard; Ft Rucker WOCC, CW5 Wigglesworth; OD Proponent, CW5 Hobbs; QM Proponent, CW5 Toter; AG Proponent, CW5 Sims; SF Proponent, CW4 Best and others). An update of issues affecting the United States Army Reserve was provided by the USAR CCWO, CW5 Koch. The topics presented by everyone focused on warrant officer policy issues, regulatory changes, and the Army's expectations to meet requirements for warrant officer appointment.

The WOSAC Executive Committee represents each of the six regions in the United States. They meet three to four times a year to address issues that need to be resolved at the national level but without needing to convene the entire WOSAC. They focus on a variety of positions that will enhance warrant officer accessions and career management.

Currently the WOSAC is focusing on the following position papers:
2003-01: Add CCWO Role, Duties and Responsibilities to NGR 600-101
2004-01: Alternative Accessioning for Warrant Officer Appointments
2004-03: Need for a Full Time WO-SME on all state's Officer Strength Teams
2005-01: Eligibility of AGR and Fulltime Techs for the WO Accession Bonus
2005-02: Authorization of a CW5 MOS 255Z to the JFHQ master TDA
2005-03: Retention Bonus for Critically Short WO MOS
2006-01: Appointment of SFC/E7 to CW2 at WOCS Graduation

The good news today is the continued development of warrant officer recruiting media that can be used for effective marketing programs. 39 states have attained a full time Warrant Officer as a member of their State Officer Accession Teams. The goal is for every state to have a Warrant Officer as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) on their Officer Accession Team. The Warrant Officer Strength Manager (WOSM) will be the SME for warrant officer accessions while supporting the RRO with all officer accessions in their state.

Warrant Officer Professional Development days continue to be presented by an increasing number of states. This training allows them to focus on a training day specifically focusing on their warrant officers. They gain increased knowledge in OER preparation, increased understanding of education required for promotion, how to review their files on-line (PERMS), leadership development and training, and how they have a direct role in warrant officer recruiting and retention.

From 1-3 August 2006 the National Guard Bureau hosted the first Warrant Officer Senior Leaders Seminar (WOSLS). CW5 Poyas Haynes established this training session and had a number of senior leaders come and speak to the entire WOSAC and additional ARNG senior warrant officers from throughout the country. They spoke of issues affecting the Army National Guard today and how warrant officers are an integral part of it's success. Some of the key speakers included: Hon. Claude Bolton, Asst Sec of the Army; LTG H. Steven Blum, Chief NGB; LtGen Craig McKinley, Director Air NG; BG James Nuttall, Deputy Director, Army NG; COL Stephanie Walsh, Chief of Staff Air NG; COL Rodney Dixon, NGB Force Management; CSM John Gipe, ARNG CSM; Cmd Chief Master Sgt Richard Smith, Air NG; along with many other excellent speakers.

The topics addressed during the WOSLS were: Equipping the force; ARFORGEN; Transformation; ARNG support of the Global War on Terrorism and the Southwest Border Mission; ARNG Partnership Missions; Air National Guard OPTEMPO; personnel transformation; quadrennial defense review (QDR); changing from a strategic reserve to an operational force; and status of equipment issues. It was an eye opening experience to be briefed as senior warrant officers who's role is critical in increasing responsibilities being placed on the Army National Guard.

Looking at transformation imperatives affecting the Army National Guard you can see the shift in it's direction to an operational force. We have changed from a force with ample lead time to no notice mission requirements. We have gone from a single service component to a joint/multi-component/multinational force.

Homeland defense is a critical mission of today's Army National Guard. From local law enforcement/narcotic missions to supporting overseas conflicts.

Continued involvement in state partnership programs continues to evolve with cultural and professional interaction with over 53 countries.

The Warrant Officer Candidate School at Fort Rucker and has become a single school for both active Army and reserve component personnel. Candidates attending flight school must attend WOCS-AC at Fort Rucker. The length of the course can vary from 4-6 weeks dependant on their having PLDC/WLC or not.

Warrant Officer Candidate School for reserve component (RC) soldiers was established in 2006. It is for ARNG and USAR technical (non-aviation) warrant officer candidates (WOC). They attend five (5) inactive duty training (IDT) weekends and will be completing the course after a two week active duty training period. The first WOCS-RC class graduated on 30 September 2006 with 118 Warrant Officer Candidates in attendance.

WOCS-RC has proven to be highly successful and will continue in Training Year (TY) 2007. Phase 1, Distance Learning (DL) phase will occur from October thru December. Each WOC must have their DL phase done prior to beginning Phase 2 and they begin the five IDT weekend period. Phase 3 will be held at either Camp Atterbury, IN or Fort McClellan, AL dependant on where they attended Phase 2.

Many warrant officers attended the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) conference this past September. There were a number of exceptional speakers addressing national issues affecting the role and responsibilities of the Army National Guard. There was a separate Warrant Officer Caucus conducted. CW5 (Ret) Larry Massey is the Warrant Officer Representative to the NGAUS Board and held a separate meeting for the warrant officers attending the conference. CW5 Poyas Haynes, NGB ARNG CCWO, was the guest speaker and addressed a number of "hot topics" affecting Army National Guard warrant officers.

Thank you again for this opportunity to talk to the United States Army Warrant Officer Association about what is happening in the Army National Guard and it's impact on fellow Warrant Officers. Let me know if there are any questions I can answer for you on where we are at and our focus for the future.