

Virginia Defense Force now 1,000 strong

By 2nd Lt. Henry C. Howells
Virginia Defense Force

RICHMOND, VA— The Virginia Defense Force has met their 2009 recruiting goal and now has more than 1,000 members ready to respond to assist their fellow Virginians in all facets of disaster response.

“The Virginia Defense Force, as a member of the Virginia Department of Military Affairs, has significantly increased the volunteer force in the last two years by reaching the 1,000 goal”, said Maj. Gen. (VA) John Taylor, Commanding General of the Virginia Defense Force. “With a broad range of training in communications, security, emergency response and other areas, more Virginians are taking an active role in protecting their homeland.”

Noting the enhanced mission capabilities, Taylor states, “This significant increase in personnel has improved the overall response capabilities to augment the Virginia National Guard for disaster assistance to the citizens of the Commonwealth in local communities throughout the state. We will continue to increase the volunteer force into next year to reach 1,200 members as directed by the Virginia National Guard Adjutant General.”

In 2008, the VDF volunteered more than 85,000 hours in support of the people of the Commonwealth in civilian assistance and Virginia National Guard operations. The value of those volunteer hours is estimated to have saved the Commonwealth of Virginia nearly \$1.6 million.

“The Virginia Defense Force has grown and matured into an extremely capable organization and is an integral part of the overall response capability of the Virginia Department of Military Affairs,” said Maj. Gen. Robert B. Newman, Jr. “The volunteers of the VDF bring skills and capabilities with them that will be invaluable to the commonwealth in a time of crisis, and the tremendous recruiting effort on the part of Maj. Gen. Taylor and his leaders will continue to increase that capability in the months to come.”

VDF units are located in over 38 Virginia Army National Guard installations throughout the Commonwealth. The Division Headquarters and Division Troop Command are located in Richmond and there are three operational brigades: Lafayette in the Hampton Roads area, Black Horse in Northern Virginia and Highland in Roanoke.

Further information about the VDF may be found on its website: www.vdf.virginia.gov, or by contacting division headquarters at the VNG armory, 500 Dove Street, Richmond, Virginia 23222; local: 804-228-7018; toll free: 866-791-9164.