VDFR 600-10 Appendix D

Administration and Correspondence Standard Operating Procedures

Version August 2022

Contents (Listed by page number)

1. **Purpose**. This **VDF Regulation (VDFR) 600-10, Appendix (APDX) D** prescribes Administration and Correspondence (A&C) Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). This APDX and its enclosures outline the most common A&C responsibilities, forms, and guidance for the VDF. The SOP is intended to simplify common A&C matters, so leaders can spend more time with troop training, and less time navigating common A&C processes. The SOP applies to all VDF personnel, should be distributed to the lowest levels, and should be kept on electronic media for quick reference and access to printable procedures and formats. Enclosed Forms, other forms, and VDF Regulations (VDFR)

mentioned here are available on the VDF web site: https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/ If this SOP conflicts with a current published directive, the directive overrides this SOP. In such case, notify the VDF Assistant Chief of Staff, Personnel and Administration ((A/CS), G-1) about the conflict.

2. **Replacement and Proponents**.

a. Replacement. This regulation cancels and replaces the (1) "MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS AND STAFF, SUBJECT: Administration and Correspondence Standard Operating Procedures, dated 1 July 2021; (2) VDFR 600-8-4, "Line of Duty: Policy, Procedures, and Investigations;" (3) "VDFR 600-90, VDF Special Classification for Vehicles (Waiver from Car Tax)," 14 NOV 14; and (4) "VDFR 600-9, XXX2018, Weight Management Program."

b. Proponents. The joint proponents for regulation are: (1) Assistant Chief of Staff for Personnel and Administration (G1); and (2) VDF Active Detachment (ACTDET). The proponents have the authority to recommend to the Commanding General (CG) exceptions to this regulation, so long as the exceptions are consistent with controlling law and good order.

3. **Responsibilities**.

a. Chief of Staff. The VDF Chief of Staff (COS) will monitor all staff actions and will ensure all A&C actions are timely completed. The COS or designee will administer the VDF Action Request system.

b. VDF A/CS, G1. The G1 is the principal coordinator for all A&C actions, including processing and monitoring progress for VDF Action Requests (VAR).

c. Active Detachment (ACTDET). The ACTDET provides general support to the Force Headquarters (FORHQ) and MSC on designated A&C actions.

d. Staff Section Leaders and MSC. Major Subordinate Commands (MSC)) and Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC) administrative sections/S-1 or an alternate designated point of contact (POC) will initiate all requests for individual personnel or unit-wide actions to FORHQ, using the below VAR system. MSC may delegate POC designation down to the company level commander (Cdr). Similarly, FORHQ Staff Section leaders will initiate requests for MSC or HHC actions (other than operations and training (O&T) orders) using the VAR system.

(1) Cdrs and HHC S-1/POC will perform quality control for administrative matters before they are forwarded via VAR to the G-1 and assist the FORHQ in completing requirements directed via a VAR from FORHQ.

(2) VDF service positive reinforcement comes especially from: (1) a sense of military efficiency and purpose; (2) awards; and (3) promotion. VDF leaders will further

these goals by ensuring they and subordinate leaders consistently review their subordinates' records each Unit Training Assembly (UTA) for promotion eligibility, schools' eligibility, Professional Military Education (PME) requirements, and awards/decorations eligibility in accordance with (IAW) **Enclosure (1), Leader's Checklist**, and ensure appropriate leader supportive action is taken when needed.

4. **VDF Action Request (VAR)**. The VAR (**Enclosure 2**) will be the primary method used to initiate and track Administrative, logistics, or training requests, and staffing actions. *Transparency and accountability in staffing and administrative procedures are key to maintaining Force efficiency and morale.* VAR is a two-way device to initiate actions, meaning it may go from units to FORHQ, or from FORHQ to units. The COS or designee coordinates all VAR. Requesting units attach a VDF Form 3R or other forms normally used for the below areas to the requesting VAR for administrative actions.

a. Process.

(1) The initiator fills the VAR out, attaches supporting documents, and electronically delivers to their activity's designated VAR coordinator (usually S1 at units).

(2) The VAR coordinator checks the VAR and any attached documents, corrects deficiencies, then sends to the VDF FORHQ email address g1@vdf.virginia.gov or an alternate published email (*see below guidance for protecting sensitive information*).

(3) The COS or designated FORHQ Point of Contact (POC) (a) checks the VAR and any attached documents, corrects deficiencies; (b) *after* deficiencies are corrected assign a VAR tracking number and in date to requests coming from units to FORHQ, or VAR going from FORHQ activities to units for tracking purposes; (c) then forward to the action unit or FORHQ activity via email (cc the VAR originator).

(4) FORHQ POC (usually G1) will enter the VAR in a tracking spreadsheet and will audit the existing open VARs monthly with the COS, and prompt action persons toward completion. MSCs and staff leaders will receive an electronic a copy of the status spreadsheet monthly.

(5) When the action is complete, the action lead will return the completed VAR to the FORHQ POC for logout and forwarding to the VAR originator. Only the FORHQ POC may close a VAR upon completion or withdrawal.

b. Header Information. Every VAR must have date of request (e.g., 1 MONTH 20**), section/unit title, contact email, and contact telephone number.

c. Action Requested. Check one action box only and submit one action only unless the actions are related, such as one request for a ribbon going to multiple name persons for the same action). Ensure the correct documentation is attached and correctly filled out (see below sections for more details). *Note that ID Card requests will go to the VAR* *email box, and once the VAR is reviewed, the FORHQ POC will forward the VAR to the ID Card email box.*

d. Action: "Non-Admin/Personnel". Use for training, logistic (supply, maintenance), support requests, and miscellaneous staffing actions. One action per VAR. Name every staff section/leader needing to act on the VAR.

e. "Brief Description of Requested Action & Suspense Date". Where a matter does not explain itself (e.g., no need to explain an award request), discuss briefly the who/what/why/where. "Suspense date" if used must be reasonable and needed. Generally, the monthly VAR database audits will drive timely VAR completion.

f. FORHQ-Assigned VAR #/Date In/Date Complete/Returned. Again, only the FORHQ POC may log in a VAR, assign it a number, and close it.

g. Action Agent Information. The "Action" person is the one for completing and/or coordinating the requested action. The Action person will provide the listed information when the VAR action is complete, for any needed follow up.

5. **Attendance/Accountability**. Consult **VDFR 600-10, APDX I, "Personnel Assets Attendance and Unit Strength Accounting**." for details. *Attendance* r*eports are not submitted via a VAR.* Personnel Accountability is a key metric. Accurate monthly reporting of attendance are critically important not only for VDF reporting to higher headquarters (HHQ), but because those persons not properly reported will not be covered by State Workman's Compensation for their duty days.

a. Sign-in or spread sheet assessing the same information (and the sign in rollup/report shall be submitted to the G1 within 72 hours after UTA. VDF Form 680-1-1 is the authorized form for signing-in, but MSC S1 may consult with G1 on a modified spread sheet approach. VDF Form 680-1-2 is the authorized MR and is used to summarize all personnel gains and losses; assignments and reassignments within the unit; training subjects covered at the UTA; impacts of personnel actions; and events appropriate for entry in the morning report, but MSC S1 may consult with G1 on a modified spread sheet approach.

b. Use VDF Form 680-1-5 (ATEV) to support make-up training of individuals unable to attend regularly scheduled drill due to job conflict, illness, or planned/emergency leaves. MSC S1 may consult with G1 on a modified spread sheet approach. "This form will be turned in at UTA and will be placed in unit personnel files.

c. Units should use the sign-in-process to have members verify (and correct as needed) their information on the ACTDET "Alpha Roster" and the VDF "Manning Table of Organization (MTO)." Changes to these documents should be submitted to ACTDET monthly.

6. **Awards, Service Ribbons, and Skills Devices**. Consult **VDFR 600-10, APDX E, "Awards, Service Ribbons, and Skills Devices for VDF**" for details. Award

nominations must fully comply with regulation, including a well -written justification – and be attached to a VAR. **Enclosure (3)** is a blank VDF Form 638-1 for an award nomination. The G1 will upon request provide units samples of successful past recommendations to consult.

a. Common Errors. Common errors include: (1) 638-1 not fully completed; (2) untimely submissions/last-second award dates; (3) "Achievements" which do not fit listed criteria in 600-8-22, are generic, undescriptive, or simply describe normal duty performance; (4) Citation missing key words- for certain awards per **APDX E**; (5) not getting chain-of command (COC) approval. Do not submit a VDF Form 3R.

b. Use VDF Form 638-B **Enclosure (4)** for award of service ribbons and 638-D **Enclosure (4)** badges/tabs.

c. Use VDF Form 600-8-22, and VDF Form 638-C for unit awards.

7. **Pay/Reimbursement**. State Active Duty (SAD) pay matters are exclusively processed by the G1. Pay forms -- such as the IRS Form W-4 and Department of Military Affairs (DMA) Direct Deposit form -- are normally processed while the member is still on SAD. However, the VAR may request pay-related action to the G1 when the subject member is not on SAD.

8. **Correspondence, Including Emails**. Routine correspondence within VDF generally consists of telephone calls, emails, and "Memorandum (Memo) For." Only VDF MSC Cdrs and FORHQ staff section heads may contact the VDF *Commanding General (CG)* directly, unless "direct liaison (with CG) is authorized (DIRLAUTH). *Correspondence/ communication outside of VDF is limited to those the CG expressly authorizes*. VDF members must use the COC to conduct business with VDF FORHQ staff section heads, MSC commanders, or the VDF senior leaders.

a. When a "Memo For" is going to be used for correspondence, employ the guidance in **Enclosure (5)**.

b. When using email correspondence, there are several important rules of use and etiquette outlined in **Enclosure (6)**.

c. Personal Identifiable Information (PII). PII is non-public, information held or used by the government (including VDF) about a person, which can improperly reveal an individual's identity and/or contact information. PII is information that (1) directly identifies an individual (e.g., name, address, social security number, telephone number, email address, etc.) or (2) can indirectly identify a person via information such as gender, race, birth date, geographic indicator, and other descriptors which may be assembled to improperly identify the individual). PII loss can substantially harm individuals, including identity theft or other fraudulent information use.

(1) VDF personnel will not: (1) electronically transmit PII outside protected email accounts like .gov and .mil accounts, or commercial software approved by the G1 for

containing and protecting PII; (2) store electronic PII on private accounts or media (storage may only be on state infrastructure that complies with applicable state law, regulations and security guidelines for safeguarding PII); (3) fail to use commercial encryption keys for documents containing PII; (4) share PII with someone who lacks the "need to know" the information for official duties; (5) store paper files containing PII except under lock and key; (6) store PII information beyond what is needed for the holder's official-duty needs; and (7) solicit, transmit, or store PII except for official purposes.

(2) Any VDF member who personally violates or becomes aware of theft, loss, improper handling or storage of PII, must *immediately* inform their COC or the VDF Inspector General.

9. **ID Cards, PR Management, Vehicle Tax Waivers, and Vanity Plates.**

a. ID Cards. Consult **VDFR 600-10, APDX G, "Identification Cards**" for details.

(1) Use VDF Form 600-8-14, at https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/ and submit the scanned, signed, Form fully filled out, with a face-chest "mug shot" photograph in BDU (neutral background) *with VAR* to g1@vdf.virginia.gov or designated alternate email. Re-issue of damaged or lost ID cards may require a fee.

(2) ID cards are *state property* and must be recovered from the VDF member leaving or who has left the VDF. (Note: personnel possessing *issued* uniforms or other VDF property must also return those upon departure from VDF.)

b. VDF Personnel Record (PR). Consult **VDFR 600-10, APDX L, "Personnel Records Management**" for details. PRs are electronically maintained at the FORHQ level and MSC/small unit/company level should only maintain temporary personnel records on official VDF-owned devices for use while the member is in the unit. The PR contains enlistment/personnel documents, property receipts, orders, awards, current professional certifications, and training certificates. Training records are limited to those needed for promotion or substantiating professional qualification certifications. For instance, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) course completion certificates for IC 100, 200, 300, 400, 700 and 800 are needed for promotions to certain ranks. Other FEMA course completion certificates should *not* be submitted for the PR, but instead held by the individual Soldier.

(1) Action: File records. A VAR will be used to transmit attached files for a Soldier's FORHQ PR.

(2) Action: Correct record. VAR must explain which record aspect must be corrected, and fully explain why. The applicant's unit POC must verify the justification.

c. Vehicle Tax Waiver Request. Per Code of Virginia § 58.1-3506.A.44, and The Adjutant General (TAG) guidance, *active* members may use VDF Form 600-90 at https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/ to request a vehicle tax waiver from their local taxing authority (note that the local tax authorities are not required to grant the request). The request may be submitted for one vehicle per member (the vehicle the member uses to perform VDF duties). A member wishing to submit the request will fill out the form, attaching a copy of the vehicle's registration. The form will be sent (*using a VAR*) annually to the ACTDET not later than (NLT) 15 NOV. After compilation, the requests are forwarded to TAG for signature, then returned via ACTDET to the member NLT 20 DEC. The member must then submit the form annually to the local tax authority NLT 31 JAN.

d. VDF Vanity License Plates. Active VDF members may download from the VDF web site at https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/ a VDF FORM 9 LICENSE PLATE AUTHORIZATION 17 JUNE 2010, fill it out, *attach it to a VAR*, and submit to G1 for authorizing signature. Once it is authorized and returned, consult the VA Department of Motor Vehicles web site for submittal instructions.

10. **Orders**.

a. MSC Orders Authority. MSC Cdrs may issue duty orders (non-pay), assignment orders within their MSC, and enlisted promotion orders within their promotion authority. **Enclosure (7)** provides examples.

b. FORHQ Orders. The *VAR should be used* to request FORHQ pay or non-pay orders for training, or a request for transfer between units and FORHQ line numbers within VDF, and promotion orders. A VAR for Reassignment or Transfer will be initiated by the Cdr or staff leader of the losing unit/section, then signed by the Cdr/leader of the gaining unit/section. The position title, unit title, Manning Table of Authorization (MTO) paragraph number, and MTO billet line number for position from, and position to, must be filled out.

c. Prohibition on Working Two Paid Positions Simultaneously. DMA has identified possible conflicts of interest for VDF members who, while deployed on extended State Active Duty (SAD) orders, continue to work full time simultaneously in their civilian status for their employers. VDF members will generally not be allowed to also remain on full time work status if on extended SAD. There should be some form of leave status from their employer, unless on case-by-case basis they are reviewed by DMA, VDF Commanding General and a VDF Judge Advocate. Any possible conflicts of interest issues shall be submitted to a VDF FORHQ Judge Advocate before any waiver request.

11. **Personnel Evaluation System and Counseling**. Consult "**VDFR 600-10 APDX H, "Personnel Evaluation Reports and Counselling,"** for details.

a. Performance Evaluation Reports (PERs), VDF Form 623-3 (See **Enclosure 8**), are the primary tool a promotion board has to evaluate a member, so raters should ensure these are timely, properly completed, and thoughtfully written. Every enlisted member, E-5 and above, and all commissioned and warrant officers will receive (1) "CR" when the Reporting Senior (RS) changes, and "SP" for promotion and position board applications, evaluated by the current RS. Each rated member must be counselled by the RS *before* the report is submitted to the Reviewing Officer (RO). *The rated member must receive a complete PER copy for her/his records after RO comments are added.*

(1) Submission. The RS must have the completed CR PER to the RO within 21 days after the end of the reporting period, and the RO will send the PER attached to a VAR to the G-1 within 60 calendar days after the reporting period ends. For boards, follow board guidance.

(2) Common Errors. Common errors include: (1) 623-3 not fully completed; (2) untimely submissions; (3) VDF number missing; (4) comments are generic, undescriptive, or not accurate; (5) signatures missing; (6) RS not following up to ensure the RO completed and forwarded the PER; and (7) submitting a VDF Form 3R (not needed; submit using VAR).

(3) “Grade” will be abbreviated: SGT; SSG; SFC; MSG; 1SG; SGM; 1LT; 2LT; CPT; MAJ; LTC; COL.

(4) “Position” means *the MTO position description* the individual is assigned to.

b. Counseling. VDF members whose performance is above (meritorious) or below (deficient) standards should be counselled before such performance is noted in an annual appraisal, or a discharge request for deficient conduct. Use the **VDFR 600-10 APDX H** Counselling Form for (1) commending a member’s exceptional performance; (2) documenting performance or conduct problems, not rising to the level requiring formal action (first short unexcused absence, task failure, etc.); or (3) building a record to support later formal action if performance does not improve, or to support and award.

12. **Promotions**. Consult **VDFR 600-10, APDX L, “Personnel Promotions**” for details. G-1 will provide Promotion Certificates when the VAR requesting that the promotion action be taken is processed.

a. E-2 and E-3. Soldiers meeting the **VDFR 600-10, APDX L,** Table 3 E-2 and E-3 requirements may be authorized for promotion by their HHC/company-level Cdr. Submit a VAR for promotion order with a Form 3R to G-1, to be placed to the electronic PR.

b. E-4 and E-5. Soldiers meeting the **VDFR 600-10, APDX L,** Table 3 requirements for E-4 and E-5 will be screened by the HHC or the Soldier’s MSC. A subsequent VAR requesting promotion must include (1) VDF Form 624-1-1, Commander’s Certificate of Promotion Eligibility/Promotion Screening Report (See **Enclosure 9**); (2) VDFR 35R Promotion Screen Board Results (See **Enclosure 10**); (3) Letter of Recommendation (LOR) by the member’s Cdr and Command Sergeant Major (CSM); and, (4) VDF Form 3R -- signed by the Cdr requesting promotion.

c. E-6 and above. Soldiers meeting the **VDFR 600-10, APDX L,** Table 1 (for officers), Table 2 (for Warrant Officers) or Table 3 (for enlisted) for promotion to the next rank E-6 and above (but not O-1 to O-2 which are per CDR request via VAR), will be screened by a promotion board convened by the FORHQ. E-8/9 and filed grade officers' boards will meet about NOV each year, usually at the fall Multiple UTA (MUTA). E-6/7, CPT/CWO boards will meet about MAR each year, usually at the spring MUTA. G-1 will publish the board dates and promotion package due date. Normally A VAR requesting promotion consideration must include (1) VDF Form 624-1-1, Commander's Certificate of Promotion Eligibility/Promotion Screening Report (See **Enclosure 9**); (2) VDFR 35R Promotion Screen Board Results (See **Enclosure 10**); (3) (optional) LOR by the Soldier's commander and, for enlisted, CSM; (4) VDF Form 623-3 PER (number and dates per G-1); and (5) VDF Form 3R signed by the commander requesting promotion.

13. **Commander's Critical Information Reports (CCIR) and Serious Incident Reports (SIR)**.

a. CCIR. The VANG and CG need certain kinds of information reported upon the precipitating serious event happening. When the events outlined by the Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) in **Enclosure (11)** happen, the senior person present should complete and forward a Serious Incident Report (SIR) per the format at the bottom of **Enclosure (12)** to the VDF G-1 and G-3 (G-3 will forward to the JFHQ Joint Operations Center (JOC)). Immediately report injury to/illness/death of VDF member while participating in a VDF activity; death of any VDF member, or death of any person that occurs on Virginia Department of Military Affairs (DMA) property (Readiness Center, training base, or facility); or serious crime committed on DMA property. Other incidents require less urgent treatment – but must be reported via SIR within 24 hours – as listed at **Enclosure (11)**. When in doubt (for instance a VDF member being arrested off duty), err on the side of filling out an SIR.

14. **Worker's Compensation Insurance, Injuries, and Death Reports.**

a. Worker's Compensation Insurance. All VDF personnel are covered by Commonwealth of Virginia Workman's Compensation Insurance while traveling from (home of record (HOR)), to, and during UTA, MUTA, SAD, and other events under official duty travel orders (or as ordered by a signed Training Schedule). However, personnel making a stopover for personal reasons to/from those events who are injured are *not* covered. A workman's compensation claim is a claim against the Commonwealth and a VDF Judge Advocate cannot assist the injured member in filing and adjudicating a claim.

b. Reporting Injuries. When a VDF member suffers an injury or significant illness during UTA/MUTA/CSE/SAD/VANG support, an **Enclosure (12)** SIR and DMA Accident Investigation (Workman's Compensation) Form *must* be filled out *electronically* by the immediate supervisor of the injured/ill member claiming workman's compensation, within 24 hours. Consult the G1 for details, but minimally the submissions (1) fill out the DMA accident report form under direction of the appointed G1 member after assessment of injury by qualified VDF medical personnel; (2) under no circumstances will these two (2) forms – VANG JOC SIR or the DMA Investigation Form (Workman's Comp Form) – be filled out by the injured member, a safety officer, G3 personnel, or G-1 personnel; it is a command leadership responsibility. must be double checked for completeness; (3) the report should include photographs of the accident scene to supplement the narrative; (4) If the accident/incident occurs at Fort Pickett, the injured member's supervising NCO/Officer shall fill out Fort Pickett Training Accident Report (TAR) form (G1 shall file TAR Form with Fort Pickett Range Office); and (4) G1 shall keep all documents of filed line of duty claims for three years from date of incident on file at VDF FORHQ ACTDET.

c. Reporting a Death. The death of VDF member while on duty is covered by the Code of Virginia § 9.1-400-407 (http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+9.1-400) Virginia Line of Duty (LOD) Act Fund. (http://valoda.org/). General information for this can be found at: http://www.doa.virginia.gov/Admin_Services/Line_Of_Duty/Line_of_Duty_Handout.pdf The VDF Inspector General in conjunction with the G1 will investigate the incident following receipt of the DMA Accident Investigation form from the deceased VDF member's supervisor. The report is to be completed within seven (7) days of the member's death, contingent upon final report from any investigation by law enforcement. VDF G1 or designee shall render any necessary aid in assisting survivors of deceased VDF member in filing application for LOD compensation from the Commonwealth. The process for application is at: http://www.oag.state.va.us/FAQs/LineofDuty_State.html.

15. **Administrative Investigations**. The Commanding General or designee may appoint administrative investigations into accidents/incidents, per **Enclosure (13)**. Line of duty investigations MSC Cdrs may appoint administrative investigations into matters within their command. The Inspector General may conduct investigations IAW CG guidance. *Only the CG or his designee may refer suspected criminal wrongdoing to appropriate law enforcement authorities for investigation.*

16. **Weight Control**. Members must remain within the height-to-weight ratio described in **VDFR 600-10, APDX B, "Accession of Unrestricted Line VDF Personnel,"** Enclosure (4) Tables, unless the member has a medical exemption, approved by the VDF Force Surgeon or designee.

J. P. CARLITTI, Sr.
Brigadier General (VA)
Commanding General

Enclosure (1)
MONTHLY LEADER'S CHECKLIST FOR SECTION/UNIT: ___________________________
UTA: [Date]
Each section head must complete this form not later than 1200 on drill day:
Initial

_____ Section/Unit Sign-in Roster is turned in, and reflects a status for every Soldier (present, excused, alternate to UTA authorized, AWOL). **Soldiers must validate their 30-day availability and Alpha Roster information each UTA.**

_____ Training Form(s) for any training conducted by or for section members during previous month attached.

_____ All Soldiers' ID cards valid; recall information is verified.

_____ G4 has been informed of any Soldier uniform or supply needs.

_____ All Soldiers have been inspected for appearance and proper uniform each UTA.

_____ All Soldiers have been inspected for complete 72-Hour Load Pack and deficiencies corrected -- quarterly.

_____ All paperwork is up to date for Soldiers and any award/promotion/school recommendations are turned in.

_____ Section members are up to date/scheduled for MOS training, professional military education, eligibility for promotion monitored, and promotion packages submitted/ tracked.

_____ Soldiers are capable of performing the following drill movements: (1) Sequence and timing of leader "echo commands"; (2) Fall in at normal or close intervals, with dress and cover; (3) Open/Close ranks; (4) Rest/ease positions; (5) Facing movements; (6) Present/order arms; (7) How to report and react for individual recognition; (8) Forward march/halt; (9) Column right/left, march; (10) Mark time, march followed by halt or forward, march; (11) Rear, march; and (2) Left/right step, march, w/ halt.

_____ Ensure the Soldiers are informed of DMA and unit news and query them on their motivation and any issues.

______ Review and practice leadership Principles and Traits.

/S/ OIC________________________________
/S/ SNCOIC___________________________

Enclosure (1)

Enclosure (2)

VDF ACTION REQUEST (VAR) TO FORHQ

DATE OF REQUEST:

REQUESTING SECTION/UNIT/CONTACT INFORMATION: "D.J." Thornley
COL (VA), Commander, Support Operations Group, donald.j.thornley.civ@us.navy.mil (Primary), donald.thornley@gmail.com, (W) 757-443-2338, (C) 804-939-7859 (Primary)

REQUEST FOR: FULL NAME AND VDF ID # IF PERSONNEL RELATED:

ADMIN/PERSONNEL ACTIONS REQUESTED (PLACE X NEXT TO ACTION TYPE AND HIGHLIGHT; (ATTACHMENTS PER APPLICABLE REGULATION)

[ ] APPLICATION PACKAGE FOR BOARD ATTACHED (SPECIFY THE BOARD):

[ ] AWARD (ATTACH VDF FORM per VDFR 600-10, APDX D)

[ ] FILE ATTACHED RECORDS, OR CORRECT RECORD AS DECRIBE BELOW

[ ] ID CARD (EMAIL VAR TO var@vdf.virginia.gov; FORHQ POC FORWARDS TO ACTDET

[ ] ORDERS (SAD, NONPAY, TRANSFERS, REASSIGNMENTS, LEAVING VDF) DESCRIBE DUTY DETAILS BELOW

MTO "FROM" PARA AND LINE #:
MTO "TO" PARA AND LINE#/ TO IRR/TO DISCHARGE OR TO RET:

[ ] MSC-LEVEL PROMOTION PACKAGE ATTACHED

[ ] OTHER ADMIN ACTION AS DECRIBED BELOW, WITH DOCUMENTS AS DESCRIBED IN REGS

NON ADMIN/PERSONNEL ACTIONS (PLACE X NEXT TO ACTION TYPE AND HIGHLIGHT; (ATTACHMENTS PER APPLICABLE REGULATION)

[ ] APPLICATION PACKAGE ATTACHED FOR PME ENROLLMENT/CREDIT (SPECIFY)

[} TRAINNG SUPPORT REQUEST

[ ] LOGISTICS REQUISTITION, VEHICLE OR FACILITY RESERVATION, ETC. (DECRIBE BELOW)

[ ] REQUEST MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT (DECRIBE BELOW)

[ ] REQUEST OTHER STAFF OR COMMAND ACTION *AS SPECIFIED BELOW* FOR:

[ ] DECISION AUTHORITY FROM CG
[ ] DECISION BELOW CG, OR CONCUR/COMMENTS TO CG FROM: [LIST POSITIONS REVIEWING]

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF REQUESTED ACTION & SUSPENSE DATE, IF APPLICABLE:

ASSIGNED VAR #:

DATE IN: **DATE COMPLETE/RETURNED:**

ACTION POC CONTACT INFORMATION, & COMMENTS IF ANY)

____REV 5.2022

Enclosure (3) VDF Form 638-1 (Awards) See https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/
Enclosure (4) VDF Form 638-B (Badges) See https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/

Enclosure (5)
Writing the Memorandum For ("Memo For")

1. INTRODUCTION**.** Army Regulation (AR) 25-50, *Preparing and Managing Correspondence*, gives specific guidance on the many correspondence formats used by the Army. This below guidance explains the basics and will use and explain features common to the Memo For.

2. MEMORANDUMS. [Numbered paragraphs are capitalized, but not underlined]

a. The basic format for Army correspondence is the formal memorandum. It is used to correspond formally (internally and externally) with any command, staff, or activity within the Virginia Department of Military Affairs.

b. You can modify the basic format to create the various other types of memorandums, but generally the Virginia Defense Force (VDF) only uses the Memo For, and directives formatting as explained in AR 25-50. Critical reasoning, creative thinking, the five steps of effective writing, and elements of style are common to all memorandums. The most key aspect of good writing is short sentences, formed into short paragraphs, which feature more information and less passive, indirect, long-winded explanations.

(1) The Informal Memorandum. Commands use the *informal memorandum* to communicate informally within a unit, organization, or agency. Its format is the same as the formal memorandum, except that you do not use letterhead stationery.

(2) The Memorandum for Record. The purpose of the Memorandum for Record (MFR) is to document conversations, meetings, and other events for future reference. Its format is the same as the *informal memorandum*, except the word "RECORD" appears in the place of the addressee.

(3) The Memorandum of Agreement (or Understanding). The *Memorandum of Agreement* (or the *Memorandum of Understanding)* is to document agreements or understandings. The format is the same as the *memorandum* except for two changes. First the phrase "MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT" or "MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING" appears on the second line below the seal. Second, a signature block appears for each party entering into the agreement or understanding.

c. Format Rules for a Memorandum. [Not all sub-paragraphs need headings but use them when they aid understanding. Underline, and end with a period, not underlined.]

(1) The Heading.

(a) Use letterhead stationery for the first page only. If not available, use plain white paper and type the unit title and address in.

(b) Put the suspense date at the right margin on the same line as the "Reply to Attention Of" or one clear space above the date of the memorandum.

(c) List the office symbol of the originating office or unit flush left two lines below the seal, three lines above the MEMORANDUM FOR line.

(d) In parenthesis two spaces after the office symbol add a Modern Army Recordkeeping System (MARKS) number. This number indicates where to file the document.

(e) Type the date of signature flush right on the same line as the office symbol. Use military dates in memorandums. For example: 23 June 2021. If you abbreviate the month, use upper and lower case letters and also abbreviate the year. For example: 23 Jun 21.

(f) Three lines below the office symbol line and beginning at the left margin type MEMORANDUM FOR followed by the address line. If the address line extends to a second line, indent the second line to start under the third letter of the word after FOR. For example:

MEMORANDUM FOR Commander, Combined Arms Center and Fort Leavenworth, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027 [note what is and is not capitalized]

(g) Type SUBJECT: flush left on the second line MEMORANDUM FOR. Skip two spaces and begin typing your subject. Identify your subject clearly. Use a noun phrase. Do not indent if the second line is needed.

(2) <u>The Body</u>.

(a) Begin the first paragraph on the third line below the subject line.

(b) Maintain 1-inch margins all around.

(c) Single-space the text and double-space between paragraphs.

(d) Acronyms, abbreviations, and brevity codes.

<u>1</u>. Use only those acronyms, abbreviations, and brevity codes your reader will understand. The first time an acronym is used in a document, spell it out and follow it with the acronym in parenthesis.

<u>2</u>. Type acronyms in upper case letters without periods. Don't use apostrophes to form the plurals.

(e) Separate each major section by using numbered paragraphs and lettered or numbered subparagraphs with clear headers. All major sections begin at the left margin.

(f) Subparagraphs.

<u>1</u>. Indent all first level subparagraphs four spaces and begin typing on the fifth space. Indent second level subparagraphs eight spaces. Wrap all second and succeeding lines to the left margin.

2. If you create an "a" subparagraph, you must also have at least a "b" subparagraph. If you have a "(1)," you must also have a "(2)." Generally do not subdivide paragraphs beyond the third subdivision; however, do not indent any further than the second subdivision. Sequence would be like this: “1.; a.; (1); (a); 1”

(g) Continuation pages.

1. Put the office symbol at the left margin on line eight of each continuation page. Do not type the date.

2. Type the subject line (worded exactly as on page 1) on the line immediately below the office symbol (don't skip a line).

3. Center the page number 1 inch from the bottom of the page *starting with page 2*.

(3) Point of contact. If you have a point of contact (POC), list the rank, name, office, and telephone number in the last paragraph.

(4) Authority line. Use an “AUTHORITY LINE” (if commander is not signing) if applicable. The authority line is flush left on the second line below the last paragraph.

(5) Signature block. Type the signature block on the fifth line below the last paragraph or the authority line (if included). The signature block starts at the center of the page. Spell out the name of the signing official in all upper-case letters. Rank and branch may be all upper case or, if spelled out, upper and lower case. For example:

JOHNNY P. JONES, JR.	JOHNNY P. JONES, JR.
2LT, FA	Second Lieutenant, Field Artillery
Co. FSO	Company Fire Support Officer

(6) Enclosures. Type the number of enclosures and the word "Encls" flush left on the same line on which the signature block begins. Number and attach enclosures in the order they appear in the text. Identify them in the text (Encl 1, Encl 2, etc.) and list them after the enclosure line. List them in the same way you would a reference. If you have only one enclosure, use the word "Encl," and do not number it. For example:

3 Encls	NAME
1. Memo, office symbol, date, subject	RANK, BRANCH (or Rank, Branch)
2. DA Form	Duty Position
3. AR #-##	

Encl	NAME
DA Form	RANK, BRANCH (or Rank, Branch)
	Duty Position

(7) Distribution. Type DISTRIBUTION: flush left on the second line after the signature block or the last listed enclosure (whichever is lower on the page). To use the distribution line, you must have stated MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION in your MEMORANDUM FOR line. List the addressees in logical order, each on a separate line immediately below the word DISTRIBUTION.

(8) Copies furnished. Type CF: on the second line after the signature block, the last listed enclosure, or the last addressee in the distribution list (whichever is lower on the page). List all addresses in logical order, each on a separate line immediately below the word CF. Show whether or not enclosures are included by adding either "(w/encls)" or (wo/encls)" at the end of each CF address.

(9) Figure 5-1 gives a sample of the memorandum format.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Organizational Name/Title
City, State Zip Code

S: Suspense Date
Date of Signature

OFFICE SYMBOL (MARKS NUMBER)

MEMORANDUM FOR Addressee's Duty Position or Title, Organization, City, State, Zip Code

SUBJECT:

1. xx

a. xx

(1) xx

(2) xx

(a) xx

(b) xx

b. xx

AUTHORITY LINE: (If needed)

2 Encls (If needed)
1. xx
2. xx

NAME
RANK, BRANCH
Duty Position

DISTRIBUTION: (If needed)
Addressee's Duty Position, Unit

CF: (If needed)
Duty Position, Unit

Figure 5-1. Memorandum format.

VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
5001 Waller Road
Richmond, VA, 23230

VDFHDC 16 January 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR VDF Commanding General

SUBJECT: State the Title of the Decision Paper

1. PROBLEM: State the nature of the problem and how it affects the Virginia Defense Force (VDF)

2. RECOMMENDATION: Bottom line up front (BLUF) is that COA 3 meets all of the stated Evaluation Criteria and solves the problem. Implement a VDF [fill in the recommendation]

3. BACKGROUND: Give the nature of VDF problem and why it needs solving.

4. FACTS:

a. The VDF Officer [fill in the key facts to help frame the recommendation]

b. *****************

5. ASSUMPTIONS:

a. The agency's funding is not likely to [[fill in the assumptions showing how the problem is framed, and how the solution will inevitably be framed]

b. ****************

6. COURSES OF ACTION:

a. COA 1 – Maintain the status quo.

b. COA 2 – Continue to search for *****

c. COA 3 – Implement the proposed ******.

7. SCREENING CRITERIA FOR COURSES OF ACTION (COAs):

a. Evaluation Criteria

(1) No or very little cost.

(2) Viable and credible manpower requirements, etc.

b. Weighting Criteria (between alternative COAs.).

(1) Explain how different COAs are weighted, such as cost, or manpower restrictions.

(2) ***********

8. ANALYSIS OF COURSES OF ACTION:

a. COAs screened out based on application of Evaluation Criteria: COA 1 (Maintain the status quo.); and COA 2 (Continue to search for ***.)

b. Achievable COA which solves the stated problem: COA 3 (Implement the proposed***.)

c. COA 3 Advantages:

(1) No or little cost to the VDF. Etc.

d. COA 3 Disadvantages:

(1) ********. Etc.

9. CONCLUSION: COA 3 meets all of the stated Evaluation Criteria and solves the problem. Implement a VDF ******** Enclosure (1). This was coordinated with the staff and senior leaders.

10. VDF CG Decision: CONCUR/NONCONCUR__________________ DATE: ___________

11. POINT OF CONTACT: Questions may be directed to [NAME AND NUMBER/EMAIL].

(1) Encls
1. Title of Enclosure

INITIALS LAST
RANK (VA)
Title (lower case)

Enclosure (6) Email Protocols

VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
5001 Waller Road
Richmond, VA, 23230

HQVDF 1 January 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Email Protocols

1. PURPOSE: This provides Virginia Defense Force (VDF) personnel protocols and best practices for emails. Emails are the most common form of intra-VDF and external communications. The following protocols and best practices should be widely promulgated to VDF members to promote the clearest and most professional email product. A professional product helps communication and impresses personnel outside VDF

2. PROTOCOLS AND BEST PRACTICES:

a. To line. Limit addressees to only those who MUST be on the email. If the email has sensitive or contentious material (or if string starts in that direction), less people is better.

(1) Counselling (dirty laundry). Use the VDF counseling form for formal counseling. But even informal corrections via email should follow the rule of "Commend in public and condemn in private." Strictly limit extra addressees, if any, to "need to know."

(2) Follow the Chain of Command. Use the Chain of Command. Under military protocol individuals may freely communicate with immediate subordinates, immediate senior (usually your rater) and peers. This includes emails to the staff or Active Detachment.
Exceptions to the rule include express permission from the higher-level senior for direct contact (with immediate senior concurrence); or regulatory permission (e.g., Inspector General for complaints, or Serious Incident Report to Joint Operations Center. General subordinates should not be included when requesting to a senior, and a senior should not be included when commanders are sending information to their subordinates.

(4) Emails to higher Headquarters (DMA/VANG) should only be sent when those emails are within your authority/ specialty, or otherwise when expressly allowed by a commander.

(5) If you lack time to respond in detail, at least let the sender know you received the email. Use an "out of office" response and alternate person to contact if you will be gone.

b. cc line. Limit addressees to only those who MUST be on the email. "Might be interested" is a terrible reason to include as a cc.

c. bcc line. This might rarely be let the bcc addressee know about a conversation without others on the email also knowing. Be careful, as this can blow up when the bcc does not notice that is her status and replies to all. Instead, forward the email to the "offline" addressee.

c. Subject line. Make the Subject line as descriptive as possible and as short as possible. Help the recipient have as concise and descriptive Subject by which to save the email.

(1) One Subject. Limit any email to one subject so the recipients can easily locate that email by Subject later.

(2) Sensitivity. Any email with operational security (OPSEC) or privacy sensitive information should have "CUI" (Controlled Unclassified Information) after the Subject.

d. "Reply" and "Reply to all".

(1) If you are a "cc" that does not invite your response – especially a "Reply to all."

(2) *If you are on the "To" line correct courtesy is to acknowledge receipt.*

(3) *It is not your email string, so* rarely add more addressees.

e. Greeting. Email to senior personnel should begin "Sir/Ma'am" or the senior's full name. Remember every email is a record, so avoid inappropriate humorous greetings.

f. Body of Email. Mark Twain famously said, "If I had more time I would have written you a shorter letter." Use short sentences and get to the point.

(1) If the email requests an opinion or decision, make that clear and suspense as needed.

(2) Do not add subjects to a string. If any email has several parts (such as including several attachments and explaining them) use paragraphs clearly marked for each portion.

(3) Do not hijack someone else's email with off topic comments or re-directing it.

(4) About three back-and-forth's should be a strong signal that the subject matter may be best continued in person or by telephone.

(5) Be alert for emotion creeping into an email. Angry exchanges create a record, unnecessarily obscure the subject at hand, and lead to lingering bad feelings. Defuse, then re-direct; usually such subjects benefit form telephonic or personal conversation.

g. Signature block. This explains itself, but do not depend on an email address as explaining who you are. Emails to seniors may, but do not have to include “V/r,” or Very Respectfully. On the other hand, do not use flip sign offs; remember, you are creating a record and a recipient may miss the attempted humor. Always sign the email correctly as shown below.

INITIALS and Last Name
RANK (VA)
` TITLE
Telephone number (s) and Alternate email as desired

Enclosure (6)

Enclosure (7)

VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
5001 Waller Road
Richmond, Virginia, 23230
Telephone (804) 225-4051 Fax (804) 225-4063
Email dane_gay@disciplefish.net

Office of the [MSC]
Cdr Name/rank

VDF-[OFF CODE] 1 Month 20**

ORDER No. 029-01

1. The following individuals of [UNIT], Virginia Defense Force, are ordered to training 5 February 2022 at [Location], VA.

   LAST, FIRST MI VDF#, RANK, UNIT, VDF

2. The Commander orders the named members to duty per the authority of Code of Virginia Title 44-100, which authorizes VDF members to be ordered to military duties by competent authority. Title 44-54.4(2) defines "military duty" as " training duty" and "State Active Duty." Such duty status is protected from employment actions by law and protects VDF members from civil suit due to discharge of ordered duties.

3. Travel from and to Home of Record will be by privately-owned vehicle (POV). Travel expenses will not be reimbursed.

4. Uniform is Class C.

OR

You are reassigned as indicated:
Duty relieved from: Title, MTO 116, Para 114, Billet No. 900980
Duty assigned: Title, MTO 116, Para 103, Billet No. 900300
Effective date: 2 Month 20**
Authority: [MSC] Cdr, VDF

OR

LAST, FIRST MI VDF#, RANK, UNIT, VDF
You are appointed in the Virginia Defense Force. Grade of Rank: Sergeant (E-5)
Assigned to: UNIT MTO 119, Para 115, Billet No. 700423 Effective date: 16 Month 20**
Authority: Authority: VDF Reg. No. 600-210, Promotion Board

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Encls (1)
1. Title of Enclosure

INITIALS LAST
RANK (VA)
Title (lower case)

CF:
VDF-UNITCDR

Enclosure (8) VDF Form 623-3 (PER) See https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/
Enclosure (9) VDF Form 624-1-1 See https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/
Enclosure (10) VDFR 35R See https://vdf.virginia.gov/vdf-forms-and-publications/

Enclosure (11)

I = Immediate notification/M = Morning Notification 0700	DG3	G3	DCO	COS
TAG/Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIR) to be reported via Serious Incident Report (see below)				
CCIR #1: a. Injury to/illness/death of VDF member while participating in a VDF activity.	I	I	I	I
b. Death of any VDF member or death of any person that occurs on DMA property – Readiness Center, training base, or facility.	I	I	I	I
c. Death of VDF member while off duty (not participating in a VDF activity.)	M	M	M	M
d. Injury to/ serious illness/hospitalization of VDF member while off duty (not participating in a VDF activity.)	M	M	M	M
e. Injury to/ serious illness /hospitalization /death of immediate family member of VDF member. (note: serious injury is life threatening or admitted to the hospital overnight as a result of illness or injury.) (cf. DMA CCIRs # 1 and #5)	M	M	M	M
CCIR #2: Observed or reported suspicious/illegal activity at any VDF office in a DMA facility. (cf. DMA CCIR # 2)	M	M	M	M
CCIR #3: Accident or criminal activity involving VDF personnel that results in government property damage estimated in excess of $750, injury to a civilian, or damage to a civilian's property. (cf. DMA CCIR # 3)	M	M	M	M
CCIR #4: Unsolicited media and/or elected official contact with VDF unit. (cf. DMA CCIR # 4)	M	M	M	M

= Immediate notification/M = Morning Notification 0700	DG3	G3	DCO	COS	CG
CIR #5 Attempted suicide or suicidal ideations of any VDF member or any person on DMA property. cf. DMA CCIR # 7)	M	M	M	M	M
CIR #6 Incident that may create negative public image of the DMA/VDF. (Includes social or traditional media ticles, posts, or transmissions) (cf. DMA CCIR # 8)	M	M	M	M	M
CIR #7 Loss of a sensitive item or OPSEC/COMSEC compromise.	M	M	M	M	M
CIR #8 Change to any DSCA Tier 1 or Service Component Response Package readiness level. cf. DMA CCIR # 11)	M	M	M	M	M

Essential Elements of Friendly Information (EEFI). The critical aspects of friendly operations that if advertised could lead to the failure, or limit the success of the operation, and therefore must be protected or limited for distribution.
EEFI 1. Itinerary of General Officers and/or public Officials.
EEFI 2. Commonwealth's identified critical infrastructure sites.
EEFI 3. Overall VDF/DMA capability to respond to DSCA operations
EEFI 4. Availability of VDF/DMA Senior Leaders (as briefed in WCUB).
EEFI 5. Current force protection condition (FPCON) levels of DMA and DMA facilities.

Enclosure (12)

SERIOUS INCIDENT REPROT FORMAT FOLLOWS (CUI): From:___________________
(Unit Reporting)
To: JFHQVA, J3-JOC// ng.va.vaarng.mbx.ngva-joc@army.mil

SUBJ: SIR number: ___________ (Leave blank)

1. Category of Incident: CAT: ________ (Leave blank)
2. Type of Incident: ng.va.vaarng.mbx.ngva-joc@army.mil

3. Date/Time of Incident:
4. Location:
5. Other Information:
   a. Racial:
   b. Trainee Involvement:

6. Personnel Involved:
   a. Subject:
      (1) Name:
         (a) Pay Grade:
         (b) SSN:
         (c) Race:
         (d) Sex:
         (e) Age:
         (f) Position:
         (g) Security Clearance:
         (h) Unit and Station of Assignment:
         (i) Duty Status:
         (j) Has the soldier deployed within the past 12 months:
   b. Victim:
      (1) Name:
         (a) Pay Grade:
         (b) SSN:
         (c) Race:
         (d) Sex:
         (e) Age:
         (f) Position:
         (g) Security Clearance:
         (h) Unit and Station of Assignment:
         (i) Duty Status:

7. Summary of Incident:

8. Remarks:

9. Publicity:

10. Commander Reporting:

11. Point of Contact:

12: Downgrading Instructions: The FOUO protective markings may be removed on______ (Date)

Enclosure (13)

VDF INVESTIGATING OFFICER'S GUIDE FOR INFORMAL INVESTIGATIONS

This Investigation Officer's (IO) Guide serves to assist IOs -- appointed to conduct Virginia Defense Force (VDF) investigations modeled on the guidance within "Army Regulation 15-6, Investigation Guide for Informal Investigations" -- in conducting timely, thorough and legally sufficient investigations. This handbook provides a simplified approach to the investigative process. IOs should also consult with the assigned legal advisor assigned by the VDF Staff Judge Advocate (SJA) and submit the draft report to that person for review prior to completion and signing.

What is an Informal Investigation?

An informal investigation is simply the process of collecting relevant information for the command so that the command can make informed decisions about corrective actions, administrative, and disciplinary action.

Who's who?

Convening Authority – is the individual authorized to "start" an investigation. The Convening Authority will usually be the Commanding General (CG) or delegated appointed officer. The appointing order will identify the convening authority.

Investigating Officer – is the individual authorized to conduct the investigation.

Legal Advisor – is the attorney assigned to provide legal advice to the IO. The Convening Order will identify the Legal Advisor.

Technical Representative – is a subject matter expert assigned to advise the IO. The Convening Order will identify the Technical Representative if provided.

Subject(s): A person suspected of having caused an incident or accident through intentional or negligent action. The Legal Advisor will guide IO interactions with a subject.

What is the job of the Investigating Officer?

During the investigation phase, the primary duty of the IO is to plan and conduct a thorough and impartial investigation; draft the report of investigation; and report findings of fact, opinions and recommendations (the latter two only if so directed) to the Convening Authority.

What rules and procedures should an IO follow?

The IO should follow these procedures and consult with the SJA and/or Inspector General (IG) (if the investigation is assigned via the IG). Even for IG investigations, the IO should also consult with the legal advisor before and during the investigation process. The appointing order may also include additional references which also govern the investigation.

CONDUCTING THE INVESTIGATION

How does an investigation begin?

When an incident/accident occurs which appears to be under VDF cognizance, the Convening Authority (CA) must, with SJA advice, decide whether to convene a command investigation. If warranted, the CA's staff will choose the IO, prepare the Convening Order (CO) per **enclosure (1)** and, after being signed by the CA, forward the CO to the IO. The CO generally outlines the scope of the investigation, provides the name and contact information of the IO's legal advisor and technical advisor (if any), authorizes the IO to collect evidence, requests opinions and recommendations if so stated in the CO, and establishes the completion suspense date. The CO is the IO's authority to conduct an investigation; swear witnesses; and examine and copy documents, files, and other data relevant to the investigation. The IO is the CA's direct representative, meaning the CO represents the IO's authority to require all relevant parties' full cooperation.

How does an IO I conduct my investigation?

Before beginning, the IO must review all written materials provided by the CA. Review all the enclosures to this Guide. Next, the IO should consult with the legal advisor. Early coordination with the legal advisor will allow problems to be resolved before they are identified during the mandatory legal review. The legal advisor can assist an IO in framing the issues, identifying the information required, planning the investigation, and interpreting and analyzing the information obtained. The attorney's role, however, is to provide legal advice and assistance, not to conduct the investigation or substitute his or her judgment for that of the IO.

PLANNING

Prepare and Plan.

After meeting with the legal advisor, the IO should develop an investigative plan that consists of (1) an understanding of the facts required to reach a conclusion, and (2) a strategy for obtaining evidence.

This should include a list of potential witnesses and a plan for the order in which each witness will be interviewed. The first witness to speak to is one making a harassment claim or claim of misconduct. **Enclosure (2)** is a format any leader may use to quickly record allegations for a permanent record. The order in which witnesses are interviewed may be important. An effective method is to interview the most important witnesses **last**. This best prepares the IO to ask all relevant questions and minimizes the need to re-interview these critical witnesses. As the investigation proceeds, it may be necessary to review and modify the investigative plan.

Depending on the incident/accident being investigated, the IO may have to consider several interrelated topics such as:

(1) Training and qualifications of personnel involved.
(2) Applicable procedures and requirements.
(3) The investigation may require multiple considerations and should be planned to take those into account. Such considerations might include (a) personnel (G1) matters; (b) safety; (c) training (G3) matters; (d) operational (G3) matters; and (e) applicable regulations or laws.

(4) The Report of Investigation should gather facts and evidence to identify/establish the "root cause(s)" of the matter. For example: (a) human error; (b) equipment failure; (c) management/supervision; and (d) technical shortcomings.

COLLECTING EVIDENCE

Obtaining Documents and Physical Evidence. The IO needs to collect documentary and physical evidence such as applicable regulations and procedures, witness statements collected earlier and photographs. Obtaining this information early in the investigation can save valuable time and effort. IOs should seek evidence that is accurate and, where possible, from individuals with direct personal knowledge of what happened. Original evidence should be placed where it is protected from tampering.

Physical Evidence. Physical evidence consists of documents, computer records, photographs, and objects (e.g., tools). IOs must ensure evidence is properly collected, handled and secured. For more information, IOs should contact their legal advisor.

Documents. Documentary evidence may be in the form of operations orders, Technical Manuals, SOPs, handwritten notes, correspondence, reports, newspapers, inventories and computer records such as e-mails. Written documentation, if authentic, gives the IO a snapshot in time. Anytime a witness discusses a particular document during testimony, the IO should ensure the testimony identifies the document (e.g., "my letter, dated X, subject line "quote"). If it would be helpful, the IO can create or have witnesses create documents to illustrate points in the investigation. For example, the IO can have the witness diagram a location where people were standing at a given time. Other examples include: organizational wiring diagrams, chronologies and maps. Label accurately.

Computer Evidence. Occasionally, an IO may want to access a subject's or witness' email or computer files. Where an IO believes a search of computer files is necessary, IOs should consult their legal advisor.

Testimony. Much of evidence will be witness testimony. Testimony includes oral statements, written statements and IO summaries of witness interviews (the last is least preferred). Witnesses should only speak of what the witness personally knows (not suspects) and saw. Speculation and hearsay are not evidence.

Witness Availability. IOs should work through the owning commander to make the witness available for interviews. Most witnesses are willing to cooperate with an IO. In the case of the unwilling witness, the means and ability to require their cooperation will vary depending on the witness' status. Consult the legal advisor if an issue comes up.

Order of Witnesses. Each witness must be interviewed individually. The recommended sequence is: (1) subject matter experts; (2) regular witnesses; (3) subjects. Interviewing the subject last ensures the IO has learned the necessary information to ask the right questions. This process can also enhance truth telling, as people are more likely to be truthful if they know the IO has information from others. If the interview is last, the IO can also challenge any statements that are inconsistent with other evidence. Finally, interviewing the subject last allows the IO to advise the subject of all adverse information against them and decreases the need to re-interview.

Testimony Format. The IO can obtain testimony in a variety of formats, but all testimony should be written, under oath, *and signed by the witness*. See **enclosures (3) and (4)** for witness statement formats. *Regardless of form, testimony should always include the full names, office designation, contact information, and unit for each witness*.

Under Oath. All testimony should be taken under oath. See enclosures (3) and (4). It puts the witness on notice that the investigation is a serious matter and lets them know they could be criminally liable if they fail to tell the truth.

Summarized. The IO may interview witnesses and prepare summaries of testimony. Interviews allow the IO to explore issues raised during the interview and evaluate witness credibility. If the witness is missing key information, the IO can add more information using a "Q" and "A" approach, placed under the main summarized testimony. If using a summary of information method (instead of having the witness compose his/her own statement) it is best practice to summarize the testimony immediately following the interview and have the witness review and sign the summary that same day. See enclosure (3). The witnesses and the IO should sign the summarized statement, under oath, to certify its validity.

Written Statements. A witness' sworn statement should either be written legibly or typed. All witnesses should sign and date their statements under oath. *If a witness makes any pen-and-ink changes to their written statement, the IO should have the witness initial the change. Do not ask for or allow the witness to insert social security numbers, other personal identifiers other than names, or personal contact information. These raise privacy-protected issues which unnecessarily complicate the IO's job.*

Alternates to face-to-face interviews. If the witnesses are unavailable for face-to-face interviews, but are critical to the investigation, the IO may want to arrange a telephonic interview. Any prepared statements, whether by the individual or the IO, can be faxed or e-mailed for signature. Email exchanges are also acceptable, but ensure the witness electronically signs the final statement.

Rights Advisements. Rights advisement for subjects, suspects or witnesses may become an issue and generally would not be a part of a VDF investigation. The IO should work very closely with the legal advisor to avoid criminal law issues, and if unexpectedly discovered, referred to law enforcement authorities.

Third-Party Presence During Interviews. An interview will normally only involve the IO and the witness. Sometimes a technical advisor or administrative assistant appointed to assist the IO will accompany the IO during interviews. For example, while interviewing witnesses of the opposite sex, the IO may want an assistant present to avoid any appearance of impropriety. Additionally, if the testimony of a particular witness is especially important to the investigation, the IO may want a third-party present to take notes and act as a witness to what is said. Although the IO can have team members present during witness interviews, witnesses cannot have third parties present. The IO should consult with the legal advisor when a witness requests that a third party be present.

Confidentiality. Communications made to the IO during a investigation ***not privileged or confidential***. However, the IO's disclosure of these communications (and the identity of the person who provided the information) will be limited to an official need-to-know. The investigation Report of Investigation (ROI) will be marked *"Controlled Unclassified Information"* (CUI) and will be released only in accordance with SJA guidance.

Conducting witness interviews. Prepare for the witness interview. While there is no need to develop a script for the witness interviews, IOs may wish to review the information required and prepare a list of questions or key issues to be covered. This will prevent the IO from missing issues and will maximize the use of the IO and witness's time. Generally, it is helpful to begin with open-ended questions such as "Can you tell me what happened?" After a general outline of events is developed, follow up with narrow, probing questions.

Ensure the witness's privacy. Investigating officers should conduct the interview in a place that will be free from interruptions and will permit the witness to speak candidly without fear of being overheard. Witnesses should not be subjected to improper questions, unnecessarily harsh and insulting treatment, or unnecessary inquiry into private affairs.

Focus on relevant information. Unless precluded for some reason, the IO should begin the interview by telling the witness about the subject matter of the investigation. Generally, any evidence that is relevant and useful to the investigation is permissible. Relevancy depends on the circumstances. The IO should not permit the witness to get off track on other issues, no matter how important the subject may be to the witness. The IO should avoid any "hearsay" (conversation the witness does not hear him/herself).

Letting the witness testify in his or her own words. The IO must avoid coaching the witness or suggesting the existence or non-existence of material facts. After the testimony is completed, the IO should assist the witness in preparing a written statement that includes all relevant information and presents the testimony in a clear and logical fashion. Written testimony also should reflect the witness's own words and be natural. Stilted "police blotter" language is not helpful and detracts from the substance of the testimony. The IO may use a tape recorder but must advise the witness that the IO are going to do so. Additionally, the tape should be safeguarded, even after the investigation is completed.

Protecting the interview process. The IO may direct witnesses not to discuss their statement or testimony with other witnesses or with persons who have no official interest in the proceedings until the investigation is complete.

PREPARING THE REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

After all the evidence is collected, the IO must review it and prepare a ROI for the CA. Use **enclosure (5)** to guide you. The ROI must be a stand-alone document. All essential facts, documents, portions of regulations, interviews, etc., must be included in the report so that a reviewer can arrive at a determination without reference to information outside the report. *The IO should write the ROI as if the reader had no prior knowledge of the case.* Do not assume the reader understands the situation, setting or actors. Only use acronyms after they are first spelled out.

Report of Investigation. The goal is a full exploration of the "who, what, where, when, why and how" leading to a logical set of facts.

a. References. References are written matters not used as evidence, unless it is an official directive. Both the numeric designator and title of a directive (such as "AR 15-6, Informal Administrative Investigations") should be used. Additionally, telephone or personal conversations not reduced to an IO statement (see below) are listed here. References *are listed in the order they appear* in the investigation.

b. Enclosures. The first enclosure is the signed, written appointing order or signed, written confirmation of an oral or message appointing order. Subsequent enclosures should contain all evidence developed by the investigation. Enclosures are used as evidence to support findings of fact. No matter may be the basis for a "fact" unless there is an enclosure supporting it. They may be documentary evidence or (absent very unusual circumstances) signed and dated written statements. Enclosures *are listed in the order they appear* in the investigation. They are labeled at the lower right of the first page for each enclosure, and appended, in the order mentioned, to the investigation. Multi-page enclosures should be numbered in order ("1 of 4, 2 of 4," etc.) The IO must ensure all enclosures are present and complete before submitting the report.

c. Background Statement. A background statement informs convening and reviewing authorities of the bottom line up-front of the investigation results. It also indicates that all relevant evidence was collected or is forthcoming and that the investigating officer met each of the CA's directives. After setting forth the nature of the investigation, the background statement details difficulties encountered, extensions requested and granted, and any other information necessary for a complete understanding of the case.

d. Findings of Fact (FOF). Findings of facts should be stated in a logical, chronological order, and must be clear factual statements entirely supported by the attached enclosures (in the order listed). All pertinent findings of fact relative to the nature/scope of the investigation must be stated/supported. Use the "5 Ws and H" (Who, What, When, Where, Why and How). Each fact must be a separate finding. *Remember the report should be written as if the reader knows nothing of the background/facts.* Do not leave gaps.

e. Opinions. Opinions will only be included in an "Opinions" section, and only if the CA asks for them in the appointing order. When used, each Opinion must be directly based on FOFs, and must list the FOF(s) which supports it. Opinions must be logical, relevant and unbiased. They can never infer any point not directly supported by the FOF. No matter how upset the IO may feel about the documented problems, that emotion must not be at all evident in the Opinions.

f. Recommendations. Recommendations will only be included in a "Recommendations" section, and only if the CA asks for them in the appointing order. Each Recommendation must be logically based and must list the Opinion(s) which support it.

g. Legal Review. All IO's must submit the draft investigation to the Legal Advisor for review and re-submit when told to do so until told the investigation is ready for signature. The IO will include a statement in the Preliminary Statement that s/he obtained legal review.

h. Signatures. The investigating officer must sign the investigative report.

SAMPLE APPOINTING ORDER LETTER

VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
5001 Waller Road
Richmond, VA, 23230

VDFHDC 16 January 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR

SUBJECT: Appointing Letter to Conduct an Investigation into [A FEW WORDS WITH TYPE LOCATION, EVENT]

1. **References:**

a. AR 15-6, Procedures for Administrative Investigations

b. A&C SOP, VDF Investigations Guide

2. Per Commanding General email dated DD MMM YYYY, the following individual is appointed as Investigating Officer (IO) beginning DD MMM YYYY to investigate the subject matter:

NAME, VDF ID#, RANK, UNIT, VDF

You (IO) will gather all evidence and interview all relevant witnesses to establish the facts surrounding the events alleged. This letter constitutes proof of your authority to represent the appointing authority on this investigation.

3. You will provide written findings, opinions, and recommendations within 90 days. You may submit a written request for an extension of time to complete your report should you encounter unavoidable delays or, for good cause, require additional time. You will be guided by the applicable provisions of the references and enclosures in completing your written report.

4. You will maintain complete independence in this matter. You are to coordinate your efforts with the assigned Legal Advisor, *****. You should consult with the Legal Advisor to guide you in the investigation and drafting the report.

Encls (2)
1. Investigations Guide

INITIALS LAST
RANK (VA)

2. Any supporting docs Title (lower case)

Enclosure (1)

From:

____

(Leader or IO Name) (Organization)

To:

____

(member's Name) (Organization)

Subj: HOSTILE WORKPLACE REPORT

Ref: (a) AR 15-6, Procedures for Administrative Investigations

1. You allege that you have suffered harassment and/or observed misconduct; specifically:

____
____
____
____
____

2. You are required by law to attach a written, dated, and signed statement. (Provide a description of the incident to include the Who, What, When, Where, Why and How, **and any witnesses**.)

3. While your privacy will be protected to the extent possible, I am required to report this incident to the appropriate Virginia Defense Force authority. Immediate steps will be taken to investigate and resolve this issue.

4. State law prevents us from providing you details of any proposed or actual actions taken against another person related to your allegations. However, you will be advised, to the extent allowable, of the actions taken regarding your complaint. You should receive bi-weekly updates from me until this matter is resolved. Please contact me if I do not do so.

PRINTED NAME/SIGNATURE OF LEADER & DATE

PRINTED NAME/SIGNATURE OF MEMBER & DATE
I acknowledge receiving a completed copy of this form this date

PRINTED NAME/SIGNATURE OF WITNESS & DATE

Enclosure (2)

SAMPLE WITNESS STATEMENT

[I am 1LT Beth Jones, TITLE, UNIT]

[Statement]

I hereby voluntarily and of my own free will make this statement without having been subjected to any coercion, unlawful influence, or unlawful inducement. I swear (or affirm) I have read this statement and it is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

/s/ Beth Jones
BETH JONES, Rank/Grade
Title

Subscribed and sworn to before me, a person authorized to administer oaths, this ___ day of _____,20___.

(signature)
NAME, RANK/GRADE
Investigating Officer

Enclosure (3)

SAMPLE SUMMARIZED TESTIMONY FORMAT

SUMMARIZED TESTIMONY OF LT BETH JONES

1LT Beth Jones appeared at the investigation, was sworn, and testified substantially as follows:

[Summary of Statement/Testimony.]

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed at ____________, ___________, on _______ 20___.

/s/ Beth Jones
BETH JONES, 1LT, (VA)

I declare under penalty that the foregoing in a true and correct summary of the testimony given by the witness. Executed at ___________, _______________, on ________ 20___.

(signature)
NAME, RANK/GRADE
Investigating Officer

Enclosure (4)

VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
5001 Waller Road
Richmond, VA, 23230

VDFHDC 16 January 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR VDF Commanding General

SUBJECT: Investigation into [SAME AS APPOINTING LETTER]

1. **References.**

a. AR 15-6, Procedures for Administrative Investigations

b. VDF Investigations Guide

2. **Background**. In accordance with the references, [A background statement informs convening and reviewing authorities of the bottom line up-front of the investigation results. It also indicates that all relevant evidence was collected or is forthcoming and that the investigating officer met each of the CA's directives. After setting forth the nature of the investigation, the background statement details difficulties encountered, extensions requested and granted, and any other information necessary for a complete understanding of the case].

EXAMPLE: The UNIT was involved in ***** One soldier, **** was injured during ****. A Serious Incident Report and appropriate State Workman's Compensation Program documents were filed. Additionally, the Commanding General, ordered that this investigation be conducted. No major difficulties were encountered in conducting this investigation, other than *****

3. Findings of Fact. [Findings of facts should be stated in a logical, chronological order, and must be clear factual statements entirely supported by the attached enclosures (in the order listed). All pertinent findings of fact relative to the nature/scope of the investigation must be stated/supported. Use the "5 Ws and H" (Who, What, When, Where, Why and How). Number each fact. Each fact must be a separate finding. **Remember the report should be written as if the reader knows nothing of the background/facts.** Do not use acronyms until first spelled out. Do not leave gaps.]

a. Thirty-two soldiers of the UNIT, under orders, supported Operation on. Encl (1) – (3).

b. GG and UNIT support to it went smoothly in the morning. Encl (2).

c. After lunch, ********SO FORTH Encl (3).

4. **Opinions.** [Opinions will only be included in an "Opinions" section, and only if the CA asks for them in the appointing order. When used, each Opinion must be directly based on FOFs, and must list the FOF(s) which supports it. Opinions must be logical, relevant and unbiased. They can never infer any point not directly supported by the FOF. No matter how upset the IO may feel about the documented problems, that emotion must not be at all evident in the Opinions.]

a. **** injury was incurred in the line of duty. Findings of Fact (FOF) 1, 4, 6, and 11.

b. **** injury was not incurred because of any misconduct. FOF 1, 4, 6, and 11.

c. **** was following exercise coordinators' guidance when he… FOF 6, 10 and 11.

d. *** promptly and properly sought medical attention, and the State Workman's Compensation Program should reimburse him for his medical costs claimed via State forms. FOF 17-21.

5. Recommendations. [Recommendations will only be included in a "Recommendations" section, and only if the appointing authority asks for them in the appointing order. Each Recommendation must be logically based and must list the Opinion(s) which support it.]

a. In future **** Such measures will promote training, but greatly reduce injury.

b. The State Workman's Compensation Program should reimburse ***** for his medical costs claimed via State forms.

Encls (2)	INITIALS LAST
1. One encl for each statement	RANK (VA)
2. One encl for each document	Investigating Officer