VIRGINIA DEFENSE FORCE
VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

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VDF-FORHQ **24 NOV 2026**

SUBJECT: HOLIDAY SEASON

To: The Virginia Defense Force Family,

As the holiday season arrives and another year draws to a close, I want to take a moment to thank each of you, our dedicated volunteers and your families, for your unwavering commitment and service to the Commonwealth.

Throughout the past year, the Virginia Defense Force has stood ready to answer the call, met every challenge head-on, and upheld the highest standards of excellence. That readiness is only possible because of you. We come from different backgrounds, communities, and traditions across Virginia, yet we stand shoulder-to-shoulder, united by a shared duty to our neighbors and to one another. Let us never forget our DNA – where men and women of different background and cultures came together to defeat the oppressor and create one nation to unite us all. You carry that same DNA as George Washington, who was willing to give everything to protect his family and his country.

This time of year carries many traditions across our force and remind us to cherish family, extend goodwill to our communities, and find light and hope even in the busiest seasons. To those of you remaining on standby, supporting state missions, or ensuring our readiness remains sharp while others celebrate in peace: your selfless sacrifice does not go unnoticed. The entire command holds you and your loved ones in our thoughts. And to our VDF families, thank you for your quiet resilience and the steady support you provide on the home front every single day, enabling your loved ones to volunteer their time and talents.

However you choose to observe this season, I encourage you to take care of yourselves, look out for your fellow members, and recharge for the year ahead. May we continue to be inspired by those who gave everything for our freedom and way of life.

Wishing you and yours a safe, peaceful, and restorative holiday season, and a prosperous New Year.

Semper Fidelis,

RLD Diddams

Rich Diddams
Brigadier General (Va.)
Virginia Defense Force
Commander