



DEPARTMENTS OF THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE
JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS MINNESOTA
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
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July 9th, 2020

Honorable Scott Newman
Chair, Joint Transportation Finance and Policy and
Judiciary and Public Safety Finance Committee
3105 Minnesota Senate Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Newman and Committee Members;

Below is the testimony I will provide on July 9th, 2020:

Mr. Chair and Committee Members: Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. I know you have a lot of questions this morning, so I will be brief in my opening comments.

The period of 28 May to 9 June marks an unprecedented deployment of the Minnesota National Guard in support of law enforcement agencies. Over 7,100 Soldiers and Airmen of the Minnesota National Guard were ultimately deployed in support of Minneapolis, St Paul, and surrounding cities and counties to include Clay County. This type of deployment of the Minnesota National Guard is rare. In the past 86 years there have been five similar deployments of the Minnesota National Guard and include:

- 1934 Labor Strike: 3500 (Hennepin County)
- 1967 Civil Unrest: 806 (Minneapolis)
- 1972 Demonstrations and Protests: 800 (Dinkytown)
- 1979 Labor Unrest: 5680 (Multiple Locations)
- 1986 Labor Unrest: 1000 (Austin)

Response to civil unrest is an extremely complicated mission for everyone involved; law enforcement and National Guard alike. The complexity and potential for loss of life and property are extremely high, and the decision making cycle is extremely compressed. While supporting law enforcement agencies in this role I am cognizant that the decisions and actions of every Soldier and Airmen have the potential to save lives and take lives. In this regard, the Soldiers and Airmen of the Minnesota National Guard responded admirably.

The process to request National Guard resources and our planned response times are laid out as part of the Minnesota Emergency Operations Plan (MEOP). The MEOP, as it is called, is a well-communicated state plan that encompasses all state agencies and describes state response to emergencies. This plan is the cornerstone of any state response, understanding that every scenario is different, and not every contingency can be planned for.

The Minnesota National Guard met all timelines associated with this plan – and in many cases were more responsive than the MEOP lays out. The responsiveness of the Minnesota National Guard is a tribute to the commitment and dedication of the Soldiers and Airmen that make up our units. I heard story after story of our great Soldiers and Airmen leaving their places of employment and their family within a moment's notice to respond, and doing so in an uncertain environment due to COVID-19.

As I have stated before – the Minnesota National Guard is NOT a law enforcement agency. We are a military force that has a dual mission which includes supporting the citizens of this great state. This support can be as diverse as responding to avian flu, responding to floods, winter storm response, wildfire suppression, and COVID19 testing. When you consider the diversity of our state responses and consider our federal mission requirements, I offer that no other state agency is more flexible and adaptable than the men and women of your National Guard.

In support of the MEOP and local incident commanders, the Minnesota National Guard is always a supporting agency and never the lead agency. Those who suggest that the Minnesota National Guard should have unilaterally moved into Minneapolis or St. Paul are advocating for martial law; as that is the only legal means for the Minnesota National Guard to become legally responsible for law enforcement activities. I believe martial law was last declared by a Minnesota Governor in 1959 in Freeborn County. The constitutional premise of military subordination to civil authority is a foundational principle of our nation, and a principle that those of us that wear a United States military uniform hold dearly.

I won't go through our entire timeline today, but I would like to highlight a few key items:

- On Thursday 28 May, within 5 hours of our initial notification, our first unit arrived at Arden Hills and began preparation for tasking. This was well ahead of the 4-8 hour timeline line for mustering and beginning movement laid out in the MEOP.
- Within 7 hours of notification on Thursday morning, May 28th, we had 183 Soldiers staged for tasking and by the end of that evening, we had 451 personnel in direct support of law enforcement or supporting the mobilization of Soldiers and Airmen at Arden Hills.
- By the end of Friday, 29 May, we had over 711 Soldiers and Airmen supporting operations or in the process of mobilizing.
- By the end of Saturday, 30 May, we had 4,527 personnel on duty.
- Sunday, 30 May, we ended with 7,123 personnel on duty.
- We ultimately provided support to over 60 locations across the Twin Cities between 28 May and 9 June, and provided over 43,000 man-days of support

Finally, any failings of the Minnesota National Guard in regards to our response are mine alone. I am exceptionally proud of how our National Guard responded to this event and I am exceptionally proud of how our Soldiers and Airmen performed their assigned tasks. Their ability to transition from their citizen role and into their Soldier/Airmen role is amazing and should give everyone confidence that your Minnesota National Guard is prepared to meet the needs of our state and our citizens. Thank you and I stand by for your questions.



Jon A. Jensen
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