## MEARNG RRB SOP

**Personnel Procurement**

**MEARNG**

**Retention and Attrition Management SOP**



**Headquarters**

**MEARNG RRB**

**Building 6 Camp Keyes**

**Augusta, ME**

**01 August 2019**

**UNCLASSIFIED**

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

1-1 New Purpose statement

1-4 Added new section “State and Unit Goals”

2-6 AddedState Retention Manager duties and responsibilities

3-2 Added updated State Sponsorship policy.

3-3 Updated the wording for RMS use: added must to support the mandatory use of the system

4-2 Added in the new Accreditation Program from NGB (Late Spring 2019)

5-2 Replaced sending M-day Retention Counselors to SMTC for the 2 week Retention school

5-3 Added an in-State training option

**Headquarters MEARNG RRB SOP**

**MEARNG RRB**

**Building 6 Camp Keyes**

**Augusta, ME**

**01 AUG 2019 Effective 01 August 2019**

**Personnel Procurement**

**MEARNG RRB RETENTION & ATTRITION MANAGEMENT SOP**

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Approved by:

 **JEFFREY M. BILODEAU**

 COL, LG, MEARNG

 Commanding, Recruiting & Retention Battalion

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**Chapter 1**

**Introduction**

* 1. **Purpose**

This regulation provides policy, outlines specific responsibilities and establishes uniform procedures to assist commanders in implementing and maintaining a comprehensive retention and attrition program within the Maine Army National Guard.

**1-2. References**

Required and related references and publications are listed in the Appendixes.

**1-3. Philosophy**

The MEARNG at all levels will minimize attrition through IADT completion and the support of unit attrition and retention efforts in order to ensure MEARNG units are properly manned and ready for their federal and domestic missions.

**1-4. State and Unit Goals**

The primary goal for all units is to meet or surpass 100% of their assigned strength. All units are assigned a retention mission from the National Guard Bureau (NGB) each Fiscal Year (FY). It is the unit Commander’s responsibility to manage attrition and retain all qualified Soldiers in order to meet 100% of the NGB assigned FY Reenlistment Mission requirement.

 *a*. Retention Goal: Retain all qualified Soldiers that are eligible to extend after a satisfactory term of service. Unit Retention goals are located in the Director’s Personnel Readiness Overview (DPRO) portal by echelon of command. In order to ensure success and meet this critical mission, \*\* Your State assigned mission will be the required mission for the FY\*\*. If the DPRO portal is down for any reason, the mission will be provided from data farmed from supporting programs and issued out by the State Retention Manager.

 *b*. Attrition Goal: Attrition goal is to keep all losses at or below 12% of their assigned unit strength.

 c. Strength Goal: Unit meets or surpasses 100% of their authorized strength.

 *d*. Units that reach all criteria for all 4 quarters of a fiscal year will be awarded the Assistant Adjutant General’s Streamer of Strength Maintenance Excellence.

 e. Both Officer and Noncommissioned Officer evaluations will capture the goals of the unit and results during the period evaluated. ( Unit and detachment leadership)

**Chapter 2**

**Roles & Responsibilities**

**2-1. The Adjutant General**

The Adjutant General (TAG) is the ultimate authority for the development and implementation of the Maine Army National Guard SM program. The Adjutant General holds unit leaders at all levels accountable for achieving their assigned end strength goals and objectives.

**2-2. Commanders**

Commanders are essential to ensuring that strength maintenance objectives are developed and accomplished at the unit level. It is imperative that they establish and maintain a partnership with the Recruiting and Retention Battalion (RRB) to help them meet their assigned end strength missions. Commanders at all levels will:

 *a*. Develop and implement an SM Program to achieve established end strength goals, ensure subordinate unit strength management goals are established and implemented, and identify attrition and retention goals in officer evaluation support forms, officer evaluation reports, and non-commissioned officer evaluation reports to ensure accountability of the goals to these leaders.

 *b.* Provide the personnel, administrative equipment, facilities and other resources required to support the SM Program.

 *c.* Appoint an additional duty Unit Career Counselor (UCC) to perform retention / attrition related duties and ensure that the UCC is included in unit training meetings in order to schedule necessary SM activities.

 *d.* Develop and implement rehabilitative programs for unsatisfactory participants who are qualified for continued service in the ARNG in order to encourage active participation.

 *e.* Develop and maintain methods to track Inactive National Guard Soldiers and facilitate assimilation back into an active status within the unit.

**2-3. Recruiting and Retention Battalion Commander**

The Recruiting and Retention Battalion Commander (RRC) will serve as the primary advisor to the senior leadership of the State on all matters pertaining to State SM Programs. The RRB Commander will ensure that development, implementation, and monitoring of the State SM Program accomplished in accordance with, and guidance from NGB and State leadership.

**2-4. The State Command Sergeant Major**

The State Command Sergeant Major serves as the Senior Retention NCO in the organization. All CSMs must take personal responsibility to ensure that the attrition and retention objectives for their assigned command are achieved as follows:

 *a.* Emphasize SM related responsibilities to Sergeants Major, First Sergeants, FLLs and others in the NCO support channel, providing guidance.

 *b.* Emphasize SM during all unit visits and inspections, placing special emphasis on attrition management and retention related activities.

 *c.* Advise commanders and unit leaders on all actions and events that affect strength.

 *d.* Implement / assign attrition / retention goals in non-commissioned officer evaluation reports to ensure accountability of the goals to these leaders.

 *e.* Ensure that retention and attrition training is conducted using the full spectrum of tools available.

**2-5. The Recruiting and Retention Battalion Command Sergeant Major**

The Recruiting and Retention Battalion Sergeant Major (RRB CSM) serves as the State subject matter expert on all matters pertaining to retention, attrition, and recruiting. The RRB CSM is the primary advisor to the RRB Commander and the State CSM on all SM related issues.

**2-6. State Retention Manager** Assists the Command by providing continuous attrition management and retention focus within each MSC. Provides counsel to Soldiers on re-enlistment options and alternatives to discharge or separation. Works in partnership with all MEARNG units to plan and conduct attrition management and retention activities as required. Further duties include;

 *a*. Coordinate with the MSC Commanders to provide detailed analysis of the Strength Maintenance posture within each command. Deliver unfiltered and unbiased feedback of the current climate of units from exit interviews and annual retention counseling. Focus attention to specific units that MSC commanders feel need it

 *b.* Manage NGB’s Retention Accreditation Program. (see NGB memo dated 23 May 2019)

 *c.* Work with senior leaders and the RRB to identify “at risk” Soldiers and Soldiers scheduled to ETS.

 *d.* Consults with senior leadership to identify strength maintenance deficiencies and assist in the development of strength solutions.

 *e.* Prepares and submits an MSC Retention Overview Report to the RRB.

 *f.* Trains, works with, and assigns duties to MSC and subordinate Unit Retention Counselors (URC).

 *g*. Ensures that Soldier retention interviews are conducted as required by coordinating / conducting Retention inspections with the MSC Career Counselor on a regular basis.

 *h*. Attends weekend drills, administrative nights, and attend annual training to discover any issues not uncovered during unit SM activities

 *i*. Develops and implements a unit attrition / retention awards program to recognize those who extend (retention promotional items, tickets to events and State Recruiting Ribbon

 *j*. Communicates benefits of being a participating ARNG member and family member via unit newsletter, unit web page or email distribution to Soldiers, leaders and family members

 *k*. Uses the Director’s Personnel Readiness Overview (DPRO) to maintain visibility of the unit’s strength readiness posture

 *l*. Manages and provides access to the Retention Management System (RMS) for selected retention personnel. Ensures that the use of RMS is the single source for recording retention events to include; Sponsorship, Extensions, and Counseling, for the MEARNG. By utilizing RMS, it provides a database for a soldier’s full life cycle.

 *m*. Provides, at a minimum, a monthly report to the MSC key leadership identifying all Soldiers in the 365 day window. Identifies each Soldier’s intention regarding extension / re-enlistment.

 *n*. Assists units in identifying Soldiers scheduled to ETS within 12 months of mobilization. Determines bonus eligibility and counsels Soldiers on re-enlistment options

 *o*. Create a final formation like event in order to have one last chance to retain, as well as capture exit interviews of those committed to leaving the organization.

 *p*. Identifies and educates Soldiers on retirement activities and requirements.

 *q*. Organize and conduct annual Retention reviews in conjunction with Units PHA events. This eliminates the need for soldiers who are undecided or ETS’ing to attend a Crossroads event. Soldiers within their 365 window at the time of the PHA/Retention Review will be required to visit with a Retention Counselor in order to clear the PHA event.

 *r*. Ensures all DCSPER required actions are executed for retiring Soldiers.

**2-7. Unit First Sergeant**

The First Sergeant (1SG) is the primary advisor to the Commander and the focal point for all NCO actions in the unit. The 1SG’s involvement in SM is vital to unit strength. It is imperative that the 1SG establish and maintain a partnership with the RRB and assigned unit retention RRNCO to help meet assigned end strength mission. The First Sergeant will:

 *a.* Assist the Commander in developing, implementing and monitoring the unit SM Plan.

 *b.* Implement and monitor the Unit Sponsorship Program.

 *c.* Ensure that Re-enlistment / Extension Ceremonies are conducted for each Soldier, the “Oath of Extension” ceremony is conducted with dignity and honor, and appropriate incentive / recognition items are presented.

**2-8. Full-Time Support**

Full-Time Support (FTS) personnel are the driving force behind any successful unit. Due to the nature of their positions and the amount of contact and influence they have with traditional Soldiers, it is imperative that they work in partnership with the unit leadership and the RRB to ensure that unit strength objectives are met. FTS personnel will:

 *a.* Assist the Commander and the First Sergeant in developing, implementing and monitoring the unit SM Plan.

 *b.* Know their Soldiers, to include civilian occupations, ETS date, family status and any other important information affecting their career (military and civilian) and duty performance.

 *c.* Maintain regular contact with Soldiers, including those personnel assigned to the ING to bring them back to an active drilling status.

 *d.* Ensure that newly assigned Soldiers are properly sponsored, receive their initial counseling and are integrated into the unit in an effective and timely manner.

**2-9. First Line Leaders**

First Line Leaders (FLLs) are **key individuals** in the success of any organization. They have a significant influence on the actions and decisions concerning individual Soldiers. FLLs must work in partnership with the unit leadership and the RRB to help their unit meet its assigned end strength mission as follows:

 *a.* Assist the Commander, First Sergeant and FTS personnel to implement and monitor the unit SM Plan.

 *b.* Know their Soldiers, to include civilian occupations, ETS date, family status and any other important information affecting their career (military and civilian) and duty performance.

 *c.* Determine the needs, wants and desires of their Soldiers and regularly inform the unit leadership to help maintain a positive unit climate.

 *d.* Create an effective career development environment for their Soldiers by fulfilling their role as a leader, mentor, counselor, coach and trainer.

 *e.* Maintain regular contact with Soldiers, including those personnel assigned to the ING to bring them back to an active drilling status.

 *f.* Hold subordinates accountable for their attendance at all scheduled training; this includes making personal contact with and counseling subordinates who are absent from training.

 *g.* Ensure that newly assigned Soldiers are properly sponsored, receive their initial counseling and are integrated into the unit in an effective and timely manner.

**2-10. Recruiting and Retention NCOs**

Recruiting and Retention NCOs (RRNCOs) are the backbone of the RRB organization. Every effort should be made to ensure that they are adequately trained and supported to accomplish their assigned three tenet SM mission. RRNCO retention duties are fluid in nature based on the type of unit and the approved and established relationship with the unit. The duties listed are not to be considered all inclusive but are a basic guideline:

 *a.* Pre-qualify referrals, prospects, leads and / or current members to determine their eligibility for enlistment, reenlistment or extension.

 *b.* Assist UCC with scheduling appointments and interviews to obtain to retain current enlistments and gain re-enlistments.

 *c.* Establish and maintain a partnership with assigned unit and assist the Commanders and First Sergeant in executing the unit strength maintenance program.

 *d.* Assist unit leaders in all matters pertaining to SM by providing SM guidance, support and recommendations, conducting SM training, and assisting in the development of SM incentive award programs.

 *e.* Attend weekend drills and administrative nights (as outline by current MEARNG Strength Maintenance Action Plan (SMAP)) and annual training to discover any issues not uncovered during unit SM activities. Address these issues with the unit leadership in order to prevent a negative climate or perception of poor leadership.

 *f.* Distribute and display SM promotional items in the unit and in the community.

 *g.* Conduct interviews with Soldiers, family members, employers and other key individuals to determine the effectiveness of current policies, unit training, ARNG benefit programs and other initiatives and provide recommendations to the unit leadership for improvement.

 *h.* Maintain regular contact with unit members to help prevent and solve problems, discuss issues, provide information and answer questions. Provide trends and recommendations to unit leadership.

 *i.* Train FLLs in career planning, recommend available programs and options.

 *j.* Provide strength maintenance guidance and training for unit attrition personnel and on all administrative requirements necessary for Soldiers retention.

 *k.* Assist the UCC in providing feedback as required after each unit drill and provide information papers and other reports as needed or required to keep the unit leadership informed of strength status and provide the company leadership the following information:

 (1) Identification of all Soldiers in the 365 day ETS window.

 (2) Each Soldier’s intention regarding extension / re-enlistment.

 (3) Complete summary of why any Soldier is undecided or plans to ETS if no intention to extend / re-enlist.

 *l.* Explain ARNG opportunities to Soldiers and their families; research and explain available features, benefits, rights and entitlements.

 *m.* Assist in transfer, separation and discharge requests.

 *n.* Assist in the preparation and staffing of Family Assistance Centers (FACs) as directed.

 *o.* Have direct access to the Commanders and First Sergeant with regard to all strength (recruiting, attrition management, and retention) maintenance issues.

 *p.* Obtain, prepare, distribute and display attrition management promotional items.

 *q.* Assist in the development and implementation of the Unit Sponsorship Program.

 *r.* Assist with ETS interviews when the Soldiers are not available during the scheduled drill.

 *s.* Plan, coordinate and conduct SM training for UCCs and FLLs as necessary.

 *t.* Work directly with unit administrative personnel to support / complete SM issues at the lowest level.

 *u.* Personally interview all Soldiers who have Expired Term of Service (ETS) within 365 days of the last IDT when UCC is not available.

 *v.* Ensure that all extending / re-enlisting Soldiers receive their extension award. The award must be presented in front of the unit formation to recognize the Soldier’s continued commitment to serve the Army National Guard.

 *w.* Ensure that all extending / re-enlisting Soldiers’ families receive an appreciation award. The award should be presented in front of the unit formation to recognize the families’ continued support of their significant other’s commitment to serve the Army National Guard.

**2-11. MEARNG Career Counselors**

MEARNG Career Counselors (MSC / BN / Unit) assist the Command by providing continuous attrition management and retention focus within each MSC. Career Counselors will counsel Soldiers on re-enlistment options and alternatives to discharge or separation. They will work in partnership with their units to plan and conduct attrition management and retention activities as required.

 *a. Brigade Retention Counselors* will work with senior leaders and the RRB to identify “at risk” Soldiers and Soldiers scheduled to ETS. Dual slotting of these NCO’s in leadership or primary battle staff positions is highly discouraged as it creates competing priorities, especially during mobilization. Career Counselors will:

 (1) Conduct attrition management and retention activities to assist unit Commanders to reduce the first term losses and retain the Military Occupational Skill Qualified (MOSQ) individuals to achieve and / or maintain specified strength and readiness levels of the affiliated unit(s).

 (2)

 (3) Consult with senior leadership to identify strength maintenance deficiencies and assist in the development of strength solutions.

 (4) Prepare and submit an MSC Retention Overview Report to the RRB; frequency of reports will be per the Commander’s directive.

 (5) Work with and assign duties to subordinate Career Counselors.

 (6) Ensure that Soldier retention interviews are conducted as required by coordinating / conducting Retention inspections with the MSC Career Counselor on a regular basis. Evaluate the process to ensure that the interview is effective and focused on uncovering any objections or obstacles to retaining the Soldiers.

 (7) Attend weekend drills, administrative nights, and attend annual training to discover any issues not uncovered during unit SM activities. Address these issues with the unit leadership in order to prevent a negative climate or perception of poor leadership.

 (8) Communicate benefits of being a participating ARNG member and family member via unit newsletter, unit web page or email distribution to Soldiers, leaders and family members.

 (9) Develop and implement a unit attrition / retention awards program to recognize those who extend (retention promotional items, tickets to events and State Recruiting Ribbon).

 (10) Coordinate with the Chamber of Commerce and local employment agency to conduct periodic job fairs in the armory. This effort makes visible the efforts of the ARNG, leadership and Career Counselors in providing civilian employment opportunities and true concern for the lives of the Soldiers and families outside of drill.

 (11) Use the Director’s Personnel Readiness Overview (DPRO) to maintain visibility of the unit’s strength readiness posture. The DPRO program allows “pushing” of the data to subordinate commanders to ensure that the data is communicated down the chain of command. The data assists the leaders in identifying loss trends and Soldiers nearing ETS as well as opportunities for career counseling. Subscribe subordinate leaders to the “push” reports. The DPRO program and reports are available at <https://arngg1.ngb.army.mil/>

 (12) Provide, at a minimum, a monthly report to the MSC key leadership identifying all Soldiers in the 365 day window. Identify each Soldier’s intention regarding extension / re-enlistment.

 (13) Ensure that subordinate units are giving proper recognition to eligible extending / re-enlisting Soldiers and their families. Soldiers and family members should be recognized in front of the unit formation for their continued support of the Army National Guard.

 (14) Assist units in identifying Soldiers scheduled to ETS within 12 months of mobilization. Determine bonus eligibility and counsel Soldiers on re-enlistment options to promote in theater enlistment for eligible Soldiers to receive the maximum tax free benefit.

 *b. Unit Career Counselors* (UCC) are additional duty positions, appointed on orders via a memorandum for record (MFR) by the Unit Commander. The MFR should be iPERMed to the Soldier’s record. The position is MOS immaterial. The Unit Career Counselor plays a critical role in SM by assisting the Commander, the 1SG, FTS, FLLs and the RRNCO in implementing the unit SM Plan. Unit leadership should send Unit Career Counselors to the career counseling training when it’s made available:

 (1) Perform all assigned SM duties as directed by the Commander or 1SG.

 (2) Have direct access to the Commander and the 1SG with regard to SM related issues and provide recommendations to improve the unit’s SM program execution and activities.

 (3) Receive technical assistance, guidance and training from the MSC Career Counselor / Unit Retention NCO on SM related issues as required.

 (4) Identify and help solve / prevent attrition and retention related problems, causes and impediments through monitoring feedback from Stay Guard Surveys, DPRO reports and Retention Management System (RMS) interview sessions.

 (5) Ensure that leaders conduct retention interviews in a timely manner.

 (6) Assist the 1SG with implementing and monitoring the sponsorship program and ensure that the program adheres to this guide.

 (7) Monitor and improve unit attendance by assisting FLLs with contacting absent Soldiers.

 (8) Assist in conducting SM related training as required or necessary.

 (9) Coordinate with FTS personnel to ensure that extension documents are completed accurately and in a timely manner.

 (10) Conduct RMS retention interviews IAW NG Pam 601-1 to identify and help prevent potential problems. Ensure that Soldiers are receiving the incentives and the benefits they are eligible for and determine their desire and eligibility for extension. See Retention Responsibility matrix, Appendix F.

 (11) Coordinate with unit leadership to schedule, plan and conduct extension ceremonies.

 (12) Contact Soldiers who have been in an inactive drilling status (i.e. Soldiers in the ING or on the non-validated pay list) and make every attempt to bring the Soldier back to an active drilling status.

 (13)

 (14) Execute the unit SM Plan.

 (15) Follow up on Soldiers in AWOL status.

 (16) Post publications, announcements and all other strength maintenance related material to the unit SM bulletin board.

**Chapter 3**

**Attrition Management Activities**

**3-1. Purpose**

As an element of the SM program, attrition management activities now play an important role in the FLL’s, UCC’s and RRNCO’s duties. These members must assist the unit to ensure Soldiers are not lost during their first period of service. Retaining theses Soldiers after their initial enlistment will ultimately benefit the ARNG. With more trained Soldiers remaining in the ARNG, fewer newly enlisted Soldiers are required to replace them. This program is about working smarter, not harder. **UCCs,** **RRNCOs and FLLs should work together within the unit to develop a process to keep attrition to a minimum**. Accomplishing this can be done through the following: (not intended to be all inclusive)

 *a.* Establishing a partnership with the unit leadership.

 *b.* Maintaining contact with first-term Soldiers.

 *c.* Assisting units with attrition management.

 *d.* Briefing family support group members.

 *e.* Regular benefits briefings.

 *f.* Attending unit IDT.

 *g.* Attending portions of the unit annual training.

**3-2. Sponsorship Program**

**DSCPER Policy 19-01 became effective 15 April 2019.**

 *a. Purpose.* Sponsorship is critical to the personnel readiness and health of our formations. Sincere and effective sponsorship is essential to integrating all new accessions into the Maine Army National Guard. It is the first step to the first impression into our units. Commanders, First Sergeants, and Sponsors will ensure that their new Soldier's transition into the unit is an efficient, methodical, and enjoyable experience. Reference NGR 601-1, AR 600-8-8 The Total Army Sponsorship Program

 *b. Appointment.* A sponsor must be appointed by the 1SG, or designated representative, as soon as a new Soldier is assigned to the unit. The sponsor should be the new member’s First Line Leader FLL. If this is not possible, the sponsor must be from the new member’s team (squad, section, fire team and crew) and should hold the same MOS, grade and duty assignment as the new member. The sponsorship period may be determined at the time of appointment. Factors to be considered are the new member’s age, gender, background and any previous military experience as well as the unit situation. The sponsor must be aware of and understand the unit mission and unit operations. The sponsor must have knowledge of unit / State policies, SOPs and other regulatory guidance.

 *c. Procedures and Duties of the Sponsor.* A sponsorship checklist will enhance the completion of all required steps in successful sponsorship. The sequence in which the Soldier is sponsored is not as important as the quality of the process. The following must be included in this program:

 (1) Introduce key personnel: Commander, 1SG, FLLs, supervisors, duty section members; and FTS personnel such as unit clerk, training NCO, supply sergeant, readiness NCO and any other person detailed on the sponsorship checklist.

 (2) Explain unit history, lineage, honors, unit organization, State ARNG missions and functions, the Soldier’s role and participation policies, military justice and the Commander’s policies.

 (3) Coordinate the issuing of appropriate items such as clothing, equipment, Soldiers training publications and local standard operating procedures (SOP).

 (4) Appoint a sponsor for each Soldier who has had an extended absence from the unit, such as initial entry training (IET), inactive National Guard (ING), MOS training or attached to another unit. The sponsor will reacquaint the Soldier with the unit.

 (5) Upon completion of the sponsorship checklist, the sponsor will return the checklist to the First Sergeant who will then file the checklist in the sponsorship binder for future reference and inspection.

 (a) The 1SG is responsible for termination of the sponsorship effort. Adequate integration of the Soldier is a primary objective. The quality of the sponsorship program must not suffer in the interest of speed.

**3-3. Retention Management Software (RMS)**

In lieu of the DA Form 5434 in accordance with AR 600-8-8, the Retention Management Software (RMS) Sponsorship work buckets **must be used to assign and track Sponsorship**. Work buckets must be satisfactorily managed in order to align with Career Management of our Soldiers. RMS is an automated system capturing all new Soldiers at the point of entry and further tracking the Soldier lifecycle, through Career Management work buckets (one to five years) then retention and exit counseling (l-340 day work buckets).

**3-4. Soldier Attrition Support Tools**

One of the most important features of the ARNG, especially to younger Soldiers, is the monetary incentive that they receive (directly or indirectly) for their service in the military. Units should reference NG PAM 601-1, 3-7 for Soldier support functions such as incentive pay, bonuses and tuition assistance.

**3-5. First Term Soldier Contact**

A critical element in attrition management is identifying Soldier’s potential problems as early as possible. Remember, that a majority of the new, first term Soldiers you will be dealing with are quite young. This time in their lives is quite turbulent. They are just beginning to develop their coping skills and the teenagers are progressing from that dependent stage in their lives to a more independent phase, when they are attempting to start a life away from the security of parents. Try to remember the obstacles you had in your life and the unique situations you had to deal with: marriage, divorce, college, your first job, living away from home for the first time, purchasing your first new home, as well as becoming a member of the ARNG. You didn’t have the knowledge then that you have now, and these young Soldiers are in the same situations. In addition to your experiences and input personally, helping them become an integral part of a unit with a strong sense of unit identity will get them started. Help them cope with their lives, and the personal satisfaction you receive will add to the success in your career as a result. Units should reference NG PAM 601-1, 3-12 d., e. for a list of Soldier support ideas and guidance.

**3-6. Assist Unit with Attrition Management**

The ARNG faces challenging SM objectives each year. Leaders at all levels must fully embrace and implement the "combat attrition" philosophy in order to be successful. Leaders at all levels understand that we simply *cannot “out recruit” our losses*. It is a simple budgetary constraint; the ARNG cannot afford the training seats necessary. When used properly, the unit SM Team is an invaluable asset and key to the success of your attrition management and retention programs. Units should reference NG PAM 601-1, 3-17 thru 3-18 for further guidance on SM Teams and unit member contacts (both active drilling and inactive drilling member).

**Chapter 4**

**Unit Retention Management Activities**

**4-1. Retention Eligible Interview Program (REIP)**

 *a. Purpose.* The purpose of the Retention Eligible Interview Program (REIP) is to ensure that every effort is made to retain Soldiers who are within 365 days of ETS. This is accomplished by Commanders, 1SGs, UCCs and RRNCOs working together to ensure that each Soldier is given full opportunity to remain an active member of the MEARNG.

 *b. Implementation.* REIP is standardized through the use of the Retention Management System (RMS) extension / case counseling tab. RMS is used by unit Commanders, First Sergeants and Career Counselors to follow the eligibility, desires, career plans, status and the results of retention interviews. At a minimum retention interviews will be conducted IAW NGR 601-1 and NG PAM 601-1.

 *c. Responsibilities.* A DA Form 4836 will be prepared, signed and processed in RMS without delay for Soldiers that express the desire to extend during a retention interview session. Soldiers must be fully eligible to extend; no retention eligibility issues (flags, PHA, adverse action, etc…). Following the interview session, if the Soldier expresses the desire to ETS or remains unsure of whether to extend or ETS, the UCC / RRNCO, 1SG, or Commander will complete their required portions in RMS, the Soldier’s summary of his / her disposition will be annotated in the case comments block, a DA Form 4856 may be required and the Soldier and RRNCO, UCC if RRNCO is unavailable, will sign. Soldiers that have not extended by 120 days from ETS, if otherwise eligible, will meet with Battalion and / or MSC CSM.

 (1)**. Fifteen months from ETS – Unit Career Counselor (UCC),** **assisted by the unit’s assigned RRNCO,** will conduct the initial retention interview session to determine the Soldier’s intentions and present the Soldier with options and information that underscore the benefits of continuing as an active member of the MEARNG. The Soldier’s intent will be annotated in RMS under the case admin tab. As a last alternative to leaving the MEARNG (beyond transferring units or changing MOS, and ING), ensure that the Soldier is made aware of the possibility of IST and transfer to another branch of service. Caution should be used when presenting these alternatives in order to prevent giving false information. Unit Retention NCOs and / or UCCs will follow up with Soldiers monthly until Soldier extends, transfers, or a discharge packet is accepted at the state level.

 (2)**. NLT Six months from ETS – the unit 1SG** will conduct a retention interview session to determine if the Soldier has reached a decision to extend his / her ETS in the MEARNG or if there has been a change in the intention to ETS. The 1SG will review the comments provided in the first interview and ensure that any issues brought to light are addressed.

 (3)**. NLT Three months from ETS - the unit Commander** will conduct a retention interview session to determine if the Soldier has reached a decision to extend his / her ETS in the MEARNG or if there has been any change in the intention to ETS. Out-processing is then set into motion, beginning with coordinating with unit supply for government property turn-in if Soldier still desires to ETS. It’s imperative that out-processing start NLT 90 days out to allow sufficient time for BN / MSC and state to review and prepare separation / discharge documents.

 (4)**.** **One month from ETS – Unit Career Counselor (UCC) & Unit Recruiting and Retention NCO (RRNCO)** will conduct the last retention interview session in which all previous interviews are reviewed and any issues addressed. A final effort to retain the Soldier will be made to include an overview of the options and benefits that are available to the Soldier, the valuable service the Soldier provides to the state and nation, and a discussion of the Soldiers plan beyond discharge from the MEARNG. If the Soldier still desires to ETS, the UCC & RRNCO will complete the required portions in RMS (ensuring that an Exit Survey is completed).

**4-2**. **Retention Inspection**

 *a. Purpose.* The Retention Accreditation Program provides assistance to raise the level of emphasis and awareness to ensure successful retention programs and to provide potential courses of action to resolve any issues identified. Statistical Analysis is the only tool that ARNG currently has to comprehensively evaluate the 54 State/Territory Retention Programs. The data provides limited insight into the “health” of the programs. Retention management is vital to achieving desired end strength. There has not been a National in‐depth assessment of ARNG Retention that focused on both adherence to regulatory requirements as well as business practices

 *b. Components - Retention Imperatives-Area of Focus*

 (1). Imperative 1- Command Emphasis: Retention SOP’s, policies, retention and attrition goals

 (2). Imperative 2- Retention Task Organization: Designated Positions and secondary duties, additional personnel assigned, battle rhythm, OERS/NCOERS.

 (3). Imperative 3 – Sponsorship: published guidance, RMS utilization and sponsor tracking, sponsor assignment, checklists

 (4). Imperative 4 - RMS Extension Module: State guidance and policy letters, percentage of extensions on RMS, ETS counseling guidance, ETS interview Guidance.

 (5). Imperative 5 – Command Awareness: Retention and attrition metrics, RMS and DPRO permissions and access, distribution of metrics, understanding of statistical analysis.

 *c. Implementation.* Inspections will be conducted in coordination with State OIP guidelines.

The Retention Inspection ensures that RMS is being utilized properly and that the UCC / Unit RRNCO has access to required publications. Retention inspections are scheduled through the BN or MSC Career Counselor in coordination with NGB guidelines. Units will be randomly selected every year to ensure that 100% of units inspection are completed in a 3 year cycle. Formal inspection results will be out briefed to the Company, Battalion, and RRB Commanders following the inspection with corresponding corrective measures and timelines for implementation.

**Chapter 5**

**Training and Education**

**5-1. State Training Initiatives**

Training initiatives will be taken at all levels when required to ensure proper adherence to strength maintenance guidance and operations. Current training requirements at the state level are under review and policy will be updated and implemented when available.

**~~5-2. ARNG Unit Retention NCO Course (805B-F24) (Course is currently suspended Pending SMTC funding and availability)~~**

 *~~a.~~* ~~This course includes both resident and distance learning (DL) instruction for required initial training. This course is designed to provide ARNG traditional (M-Day) Soldiers with the knowledge, skills, and techniques necessary to assist unit leaders with strength maintenance plans and activities. Upon completion of this course, Soldiers will be able to provide support to their assigned units in the areas of retention, attrition management and career counseling to enlisted Soldiers. Training will include the following: Determining Extension / Immediate Reenlistment Eligibility; Determining Eligibility for Selected Reserve Incentive Program (SRIP); Analyzing a Unit Retention Environment; Conducting Career Planning; Conducting Face-to-Face Interviews; Preparing and Conducting a Briefing; and Preparing an Extension Packet.
Soldiers will also be able to assist with implementing and monitoring sponsorship programs.~~

 *~~b.~~* ~~Resident training or MTTs are available upon request through the SMTC. Advance coordination is required to ensure that adequate staffing and course materials are available.~~

**5-2. Mobile Training Teams (MTT) (Pending SMTC funding and availability)**

 *a.* The SMTC has MTTs available for short-term training needs and can design specific training to assist States in their RRB sustainment training programs. These teams are meant to complement, not take the place of, the States' existing training programs. MTT courses are designed for the RRB, AGR leadership and traditional Soldiers. For a list of current MTT course offerings, see the SMTC section of the SMTC website.

 *b.* Additionally, MTTs can also assist commanders by training FLLs on SM related matters. Training can be tailored to the needs of the requester.

 *c.* States may request a MTT through the Chief, SMTC. The request must contain the dates of training, topics, funding citation for instructor travel and the intended audience. Lead time of thirty to sixty days should be provided to ensure that student materials and instructor assets are available.

**5-3. In State Training team.**

 a. This course will be taught by the State Retention Manager and assisted by RRNCO’s. This course is designed to be taught with minimal resources but with maximum effect. Locations can vary to accommodate regions of the state to minimize travel expenses. Upon completion of this course, Soldiers will be able to provide support to their assigned units in the areas of retention, attrition management and career counseling to enlisted Soldiers. Training will include the following: Determining Extension / Immediate Reenlistment Eligibility; Determining Eligibility for Selected Reserve Incentive Program (SRIP); Analyzing a Unit Retention Environment; Conducting Career Planning; Conducting Face-to-Face Interviews; Preparing and Conducting a Briefing; and Preparing an Extension Packet.

**Chapter 6**

**Ceremonies and Awards**

**6-1 Extension Ceremonies**

Soldiers often wish to extend without the ordeal of a ceremony. It’s important to remind all involved that the ceremony itself is a retention tool and shows the importance in the event. Ceremonies **will** be conducted by the unit or detachment commander and senior enlisted person. RRB will maintain the inventory of nationally funded program items. RRNCO will ensure they have enough items during a weekend to conduct the number of ceremonies for their units. NGR 601-1 provides guidance and direction on conducting extension ceremonies.

**6-2 ETS Awards**

The way an organization says good bye to its people speaks volumes of its values. Our goal is to retain everyone, however, reality is that soldiers will get out of the organization. It’s important to recognize these soldiers as they can and will be future ambassadors for our organization. Soldiers who ETS have done everything that we have asked of them. Let’s thank them for their service by an award for those eligible and certificates for those not.

**6-3 Retention Awards**

Retention awards are unit awards to recognize those units that have met all the required metrics in a fiscal Year.

**APPENDIX A**

**References**

**Section I**

**Publications**

**AR 40-501**

Standards of Medical Fitness

**AR 600-9**

Army Body Composition Program

**AR 601-280**

Army Retention Program

**DCSPER Policy 12-06**

Sponsorship Program Policy for all Units, Maine Army National Guard

**MEARNG 601-280**

ETS Management

**NG Pam 601-1**

ARNG Strength Maintenance Program

**NGB-ARH Policy Memo 098-026**

Interim Policy for Extension, Immediate Re-enlistment, and Bars

**NGR 601-1**

ARNG Strength Maintenance Program

**OPLAN 2401**

Retention SOP

**Section II**

**Prescribed and Referenced Forms**

Except where otherwise indicated below, forms are available as follows: DA Forms are available on the Army

Publishing Directorate Web site (http://www.apd.army.mil); DD Forms are available from the OSD Web site (http://

[www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/formsprograms.htm](http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/formsprograms.htm)).

**DA Form 4836**

Oath of Extension of Enlistment or Reenlistment

**DA Form 4856**

Developmental Counseling Form

**DD Form 1966**

Record of Military Processing – Armed Forces of the United States

**SF 86**

Questionnaire for National Security Positions

**Appendix B**

**RETENTION NCO IDT REQUIREMENTS**

**B-1. Pre-Drill**

 *a.* Identify the date that the unit you are assigned conducts their predrill admin / training meeting. Ensure you are on the distribution list and are being notified of the meeting. Ensure you have a slot of time allotted to you to discuss retention and attrition priorities for the weekend.

 *b.* Run **Eligible by ETS Date** report in Retention Management System. Review the report and familiarize yourself with everyone on the report and preplan your strategy for conducting your retention interviews at drill.

 *c.* Review any AWOL cases you are assisting with or are aware of in order to speak to those during the unit’s admin/training meeting.

 *d.* Attend the unit admin / training meeting as scheduled and brief your plan for the weekend

 (1) How many Soldiers are in the 15 month window and who they are so their FLL’s can be better prepared to assist getting them to you during the drill weekend.

 (2) How many Soldiers are in the window that the 1SG (6 months out) or Commander (90 days out) need to interview and who are they; add any Soldiers that you have identified as needing command emphasis as well (Soldiers at risk no matter where they are in the retention eligible window, for example who needs an APFT or ABCP waiver and will it be entertained by Commander).

 (3) Briefly discuss any strength maintenance initiatives that the unit has undertaken and ensure that leadership and the unit’s strength maintenance team has allotted time during the drill weekend to evaluate the progress of the initiatives.

**B-2. Drill Weekend**

 *a.* Attend the unit stand-up prior to first formation and recap your admin / training meeting discussion and make final adjustments to your plan for the weekend with the FLLs of the unit. Remind the Commander and 1SG of any Soldiers they need to interview.

 *b.* Attend the first formation and ask the 1SG for time to pass along any strength maintenance news or instructions that are relevant to the unit. This should all be strategized before drill and at the stand-up that morning.

 *c.* Ensure that you and the assigned UCC (if available) or FLL HR NCO have interviewed or accounted for everyone on the 15 month ETS report. Detailed comments in RMS are required but do on violate any HIPPA / PII / PHI regulations.

 *d.* Ensure that you meet and greet any new Soldiers to the unit. Talk to them about their experience and sponsorship status.

 *e.* Assist the unit with AWOL recovery efforts. Understand that the unit leadership should have made maximal effort to recover the Soldier and they are coming to you for support. You need to ensure you ask good questions of the leadership.

 (1) Has anyone attempted to call the SM? (FLL, admin NCO, or even the SM’s best friend in the unit)

 (2) When was the last time anyone spoke to the SM?

 (3) Are we aware of any family issues or work conflicts recently or in the past?

 (4) Ask any other questions you believe to be important based on your relationship with the unit.

The unit is coming to you for help based on your expertise as a 79T so use those skills to assist them. Do not hesitate to find out who the AWOL Soldier’s initial RRNCO was and see if they have had contact with them. Use your resources like the unit admin clerk and pull their SF86 from iPERMS and call their references listed. Look at the DD Form 1966 or any other document that will list who their RRNCO is. Make a hot knock at their residence but ensure one of their FLLs are going with you.

Finally, add your comments in the AWOL Recovery case comments section in RMS or in the Career Development or Extension / Counseling section if an AWOL recovery case has not been generated in the system.

 *f.* Ensure that the unit’s strength maintenance team is reviewing the retention initiatives moving forward as needed.

 *g.* Attend training sessions with the unit and participate when possible. Put yourself out there as being a part of the unit. Help conduct APFT, STX lanes, range ops, and any other training that helps you gain the trust of the unit and that you consider them your unit. This is key in getting your intel for the climate allowing you to better brief the command during the after drill brief / AAR.

 *h.* Be available for any Soldier in the unit that might want to come discuss their career options.

 *i.* Conduct an after drill brief / AAR prior to the commander and 1SG departing from the AO. The importance of the brief can’t be underestimated. Ensure the brief is candid with all things good, bad, or indifferent regarding the strength of the unit. Recap what you accomplished for the weekend and share your observations of what’s happening in the unit regarding climate, Soldier care, training, and other observations. Remember, we are there to help the leadership have that non-bias feedback so they can implement that into their decision making process moving forward.

**B-3. After Drill**

*a.* Wrap up the weekend on the approved AAR worksheet and send to both or current RRSCs.

*b.* RRSCs will review and consolidate the AARs to be passed up the RRB and Unit COC.

**Appendix C**

**Helpful ETS Timelines**

**365 – 150 days prior to ETS** – encourage / execute extensions for all eligible; consider waivers

for those not eligible (Cross Roads attendance required at 180 days of ETS under current policy)

**150-120 days prior to ETS** – process extensions with waivers (as needed) – NOTE: waived SM can immediately reenlist with incentive if they become eligible

**120 – 90 days prior to ETS** – conduct final exit interviews / notify BN for contact as required

(Future Cross Roads attendance requirement, policy under review)

**60-90 days prior to ETS** – begin ETS packet processing / final award prep / exit survey

**30-60 days prior to ETS** – BN packet review / clear supply forward to MSC

**1-30 days prior to ETS** – packet to state if loss

**Appendix D**

**Strength Brief Questions**

**Strength:**

* During this FY what has the unit done to educate at the lowest level the importance in the overall strength posture of your unit?
* What were your strength initiatives and were they successful?

**Officer/Warrant Officer:**

* The Current FY SMAP instructed each unit to nominate at a minimum 1 assigned Soldier to be boarded for an Officer or Warrant Officer Commissioning Program. Who was yours?
* What is being done in the units to identify future Officer Candidates in the lower enlisted ranks?

**Enlisted:**

* Are the Soldiers of your unit bringing leads to drill weekends? If so, how are those leads passed off to the Unit RRNCO?
* How many times has your unit been part of the Gold Phase hand off at RSP drill?

**Skill Level 10 Vacancies:**

* What is the unit doing to promote the squad challenge? Are the SMs bringing in leads? Are you recognizing Soldiers for bringing in leads? Did the unit implement a lead referral program as directed in the Current FY SMAP?

**Negative End Strength/Long Term NOVAL Pay**:

* Do you have SMs that have been on the NOVAL Pay roster for more than 90 days? Why?
* What processes are being done in your unit to mitigate the potential of Soldiers affecting the MEARNG Negative End Strength?
* What is the unit’s AWOL recovery plan? Is the Unit RRNCO part of this?

**Expired ETS:**

* How many expired ETS’s has your unit had this FY?
* What is the unit doing to track out far enough to reduce the chance of an expired ETS which affects our Negative End Strength?
* Are you getting your retention packets / discharge packets up thru the COC prior to suspense dates?

**Retention Success Rate:**

* What has your unit done to increase Retention this FY?
* What challenges or concerns do you see as potential issues moving forward to maintain a high Unit Retention Success Rate?
* What level has your Unit RRNCO played in the Retention process?
* Has the unit been formally recognizing extending Soldiers? If so, how?

**Retention Eligible (12 mos):**

* How effective has your unit been at extending Soldiers in the 271-365 day window this FY? Are Soldiers being counseled effectively using RMS? What time is put aside each month for the counselors to complete RMS entry and actually counsel the Soldiers?
* In these counseling’s are you noticing any trends on why Soldiers want to ETS out of the unit / MEARNG? Are they afforded opportunities to look outside the unit for positions if they want to move on to a different MOS? Do you support a Soldier who might want a change in careers?

**Attrition Loss Rate:**

* How would you define the success of your Unit Sponsorship Program?
* How are you currently tracking and reviewing “At Risk” Soldiers (AWOL, NOVAL Pay, Medical, Adverse Action, etc.) on a monthly basis in your unit?
* Do you currently utilize the ING option in your unit? If so, do we maintain contact with them? Is the Unit RRNCO aware of them? What role do First Line Leaders play in Attrition Management?
* Do junior enlisted get the opportunity to shine in front of the unit? (e.g., allowed to give Skill level 10 training to other Soldiers or assist primary instructors during training.)

**First Term Attrition Loss Rate:**

* What are the most concerning trends you are seeing in your 1st Term Soldiers? How can your Unit RRNCO help with your 1st Term Soldier’s adjustment to unit life?

**Current Losses:**

* What are the top three reasons Soldiers are leaving your unit?
* What are the steps that you now have in place to reduce future Soldier losses and show them opportunities to stay (unit or MEARNG in general) versus reasons to leave?

 **Community Events:**

* Did the unit conduct at least one community event each quarter as directed by the Current FY SMAP? How effective have your unit events been this year?
* Are they more public awareness, or more lead generating? Has the Unit RRNCO actively assisted the unit with planning productive lead generating events?

**Appendix E**

**Unit Career Counselor**

**Additional Duty Memo Sample**

DEPARTMENT OF

DEFENSE, VETERANS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Military Bureau

52ND Troop Command, Maine National Guard

Suite 100, 300 Hildreth St. N., Bangor, Maine 04401-5774

MEARNG-52nd TC 12 January 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR (Rank, Name, Unit)

SUBJECT: Appointment of Unit Career Counselor

1. Effective\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 (Date) (Rank/Name) (SSN)

is appointed the additional duty as the Unit Career Counselor.

2. Authority: Paragraph 2-4d and 2-9b, NGR 601-1

3. Purpose: To accomplish tasks associated with implementing the unit SM plan.

4. Period: Indefinite

5. Special Instructions: Accomplish the responsibilities in Paragraph 2-9b of NGR 601-1, which are further clarified by the SOP for Maine Army National Guard Retention.

 (COMPANY COMMANDER)

 (RANK, BRANCH)

 Commanding

**Appendix F**

**Retention Responsibilities - ETS Management**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Commander** | **First Sergeant** | **FTUS** | **1ST Line Leader** | **URNCO** | **RRNCO** | **Other-****RRB/State/ETC** |
| **15 month projected ETS roster** | Review | Review | Use to initiate RMS case |  | Use to record results of extension/ discharge | Provide unit / use to record results of extension / discharge | RRB – distribute to RRNCO’s quarterly |
| **RMS** | Review at 9 months prior to ETS IAW MEARNG 601-280 | Ensure that RMS is used to schedule interviews | Responsible for RMS review for administrative data | Record results of interviews in RMS | Manage RMS interview schedule as needed, record data as needed | Evaluate / advise / train / assist with interviews and RMS data input |  |
| **ETS Interviews** | When scheduled – 9 months and last month if discharge | In place of or in addition to commander | Review RMS | As scheduled – 4-6 months prior to ETS | Review to ensure interviews are being completed | Evaluate / advise / train / Interview as necessary |  |
| **Extension****Processing** |  | Ensure completed in a timely manner | Process required forms | Recognize by thanking soldier | Evaluate – ensure extensions are completed in a timely manner | Evaluate – ensure extensions are completed in a timely manner |  |
| **Extension****Ceremony** | Ensure oath administered to Soldier / recognize | Same as commander |  | Be present if possible | Assist in coordinating | Provide RPI’s / be present to assist | RRB – Order and distribute RPI’s / |
| **ETS PAR** | Sign 4856 in RMS | Ensure soldier thanked on last drill | Process discharge per checklist | Thank outgoing Soldier and family | Assist in coordinating |  |  |

Reference for ETS Management is MEARNG Reg 601-280 Chapter 4, 6 and appendices B. C. Appendix A OPLAN 2401 Retention SOP

**Appendix F cont.**

**Retention Responsibilities - Projected Loss Management**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Commander** | **First Sergeant** | **FTUS** | **1ST Line Leader** | **URNCO** | **RRNCO** | **Other-****RRB/State/ETC** |
| **Identify****Projected Losses** | From interviews, reports, attendance reports etc… | From interviews, reports, attendance reports etc… | Review RMS discussion with RRNCO. Establish Projected loss list | From attendance, conversations with Soldier or other Soldiers | From review of conversations with Soldiers. | Discuss with FTUS ASAP following drill. | Provide ETS rosters or other information |
| **Follow up on projected losses** | Speak with soldiers as appropriate | Speak with Soldiers as appropriate | Call Soldiers between drills | During Drill / or call in-between drill | During drill | As discussed with FTUS or First Sergeant |  |
| **Review Projected Losses** | Weekly | Weekly | Provide updated list weekly | As appropriate | During drill | As discussed with FTUS or First Sergeant - weekly |  |
| **Soldier Retained** | Recognize if appropriate ie ETS | Recognize if Appropriate | Ensure any necessary admin is completed | Follow up to ensure things are OK for soldier |  | Evaluate, Advise, Train |  |
| **Soldier Becomes a Loss** | Thank Soldier for Service. | Recognize Soldier during last formation | Prepare PAR, other admin / supply requirements | Thank Soldier for Service. | Monitor | Prepare MFR and forward. Suspense info for possible reenlistment. |  |

If all members of the Leadership, FTUS, and Strength Maintenance NCO work as a team and become involved in identifying losses early and working to retain the Soldiers, losses can be minimized. Attempts to save Soldiers will be made before it’s too late and Soldier has cleared unit etc. When PAR’s are prepared, they can be processed quickly without delays for last attempts to save Soldiers.

 Appendix B OPLAN 2401 Retention SOP

**Appendix F cont.**

**Retention Responsibilities - Sponsorship**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Commander** | **First Sergeant** | **FTUS** | **1ST Line Leader** | **URNCO** | **RRNCO** | **Other-****RRB/State/ETC** |
| **New Soldier Information** |  |  | Add to unit roster, mailing list, ect |  |  | Give to FTUS ASAP following enlistment |  |
| **Prep Welcome Packet / Notify sponsor – First Line Leader** |  |  | Send Welcome pkt to Soldier / family. Notify Leadership 24-48 hrs |  | Monitor | Evaluate, Advise, Train | Provide new soldier RPI’s |
| **Welcome Call, Other Things TO DO Prior to Drill** |  | Announce at admin night and first formation | Order uniforms for first drill if possible but NLT 2nd Drill | Call new soldier | Monitor | Evaluate, Advise, Train | Provide new soldier RPI’s |
| **Orientation – first drill** | Responsible – talk with new soldier | Responsible – talk with new soldier – initiate and review sponsor checklist | Provide sponsor checklist, other information to ensure sponsor program works | Ensure good sponsor assigned and that new Soldier is always with someone | Monitor | Evaluate, Advise, Train |  |
| **End of Drill Check** |  | Talk to soldier – review checklist | Review and file checklist | Ensure things went well, - follow up call 2-3 days after drill | Talk to soldier | Call new Soldier 2-3 days after drill. |  |
| **Develop / Implement /****Improve program** | Provide input | Responsible for the program | Provide input | Provide input | Assist and provide input | Evaluate, Advise, Train |  |

Sponsorship should continue for as many drills as it takes to get Soldier started off right. If soldier is scheduled for IET, then recruit training unit (RSP) or other level should be part of the program. When Soldier returns, reintegration sponsorship should occur.

 Appendix C OPLAN 2401 Retention SOP

**Appendix F cont.**

**Retention Responsibilities - Other**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Commander** | **First Sergeant** | **FTUS** | **1ST Line Leader** | **URNCO** | **RRNCO** | **Other-****RRB/State/ETC** |
| **Absence****Contact** | Command Emphasis | Command emphasis – 2d responsibility – after drill | Review contact forms, 3d responsibility – after drill | 1st responsibility during drill and after |  | Evaluate, Advise, Train, 4th responsibility if applicable |  |
| **ING Management** | Conduct Annual Muster | Review ING Roster Assist with Annual Muster | Send newsletters, contact Soldiers for annual muster | Call ING Soldiers 2-3 times per year | Assist in annual muster | Call ING Soldiers periodically. Assist with annual muster |  |
| **ESGR** | Review Program – ID list of employers | Include employers in open houses, etc. | Maintain good employer info for all Soldiers | Know Soldiers employers, job conflicts etc. Encourage Soldiers to recognize Employers | Support ESGR program | Evaluate, Advise, Train. “My Boss Is A Patriot” | Provide up to date info on ESGR |
| **Family Program** | Implement Program – recruit and work with Unit volunteer coordinators | Support commander by encouraging Soldiers to involve families | Maintain good family info for all Soldiers | Encourage Soldiers to keep families informed and prepared | Support Family Program | Evaluate, Advise, Train. Liaison between unit and Family Program Coordinator | State FP Coordinator and O&T SGM provide info, support, etc. to leaders and families |
| **Educational services** | Ensure any info on education program is given to all Soldiers | Include in NCODP | Post info for Soldiers to see. Assist Soldiers in paperwork | Encourage Soldiers to use benefits | Assist in getting the program out | Evaluate, Advise, Train. Counsel Soldiers when appropriate | Education Services Manager will provide guidance and support |

Appendix D OPLAN 2401 Retention SOP

**Appendix G**

**Retention Websites**

**AUTOMATED SYSTEMS REFERENCE SHEET**

**Retention Management Software (RMS)** – Utilize for all retention activities from 1st

UTA thru ETS https://smms.army.pentagon.mil – RMS icon

**Guard Incentives Management System (GIMS)** – Utilize to secure control numbers for

Incentives https://smms.army.pentagon.mil – GIMS icon

**Directors Personnel Readiness Overview (DPRO)** – Utilize to track unit retention

Missions https://smms.army.pentagon.mil – DPRO icon

**Personnel Electronic Records Management System (iPerms)** – Database to house permanent personnel records https://iperms.hrc.army.mil – iPerms link

**StayGuard Citizen-Soldier Surveys –** Utilize to identify potential conflicts, as well as morale, pay, and other problems. <https://g1arng.army.pentagon.mil/Pages/StayGuardSurvey.aspx>

Citizen Soldier and Exit Feedback link

**GLOSSARY**

**Section I**

**Abbreviations**

**1SG**

First Sergeant

**AAR**

After Action Review

**ABCP**

Army Body Composition Program

**AO**

Area of Operation

**ARNG**

Army National Guard

**ASAP**

As soon as possible

**AWOL**

Absent Without Leave

**BN**

Battalion

**CC**

Career Counselor

**COC**

Chain of Command

**CSM**

Command Sergeant-Major

**DA**

Department of the Army

**DCSPER**

Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel

**DD**

Department of Defense

**DL**

Distance Learning

**DPRO**

Directors Personnel Readiness Overview

**ESGR**

Employer Support for Guard / Reserve

**ETS**

Expiration Term of Service

**FAC**

Family Assistance Center

**FLL**

First Line Leader

**FP**

Family Program

**FTS**

Full-time Support

**FTUS**

Full-time Unit Support

**FY**

Fiscal Year

**GIMS**

Guard Incentives Management System

**HIPPA**

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

**IADT**

Initial Active Duty Training

**IAW**

In accordance with

**ID**

Identify

**IDT**

Inactive Duty Training

**IET**

Initial Entry Training

**ING**

Inactive National Guard

**iPERMS**

Interactive Personnel Electronics Records Management System

**M-day**

“Mobilization Day” – Traditional Reserve Component Soldier (part-time)

**MEARNG**

Maine Army National Guard

**MFR**

Memorandum for Record

**MOS**

Military Occupational Specialty

**MOSQ**

MOS Qualified

**MSC**

Major Subordinate Command

**MTT**

Mobile Training Team

**NCO**

Non-commissioned Officer

**NCODP**

NCO Development Program

**NG**

National Guard

**NGB**

National Guard Bureau

**NGB-ARN**

Chief, National Guard Bureau

**NG Pam**

National Guard Pamphlet

**NGR**

National Guard Regulation

**NLT**

No later than

**NO-VAL**

No Pay - Validate Status

**O & T SGM**

Operations and Training Sergeant-Major ??

**OPLAN**

Operations Plan

**OIP**

Organizational Inspection Plan

**PAR**

Personnel Action Request

**PHI**

Personal Health Information

**PII**

Personally Identifiable Information

**PS**

Prior Service

**REIP**

Retention Eligible Interview Program

**RMS**

Retention Management System

**RPI**

Recruiting / Retention Promotional Item

**RRC**

Recruiting and Retention Commander

**RRB**

Recruiting and Retention Battalion

**RRNCO**

Recruiting and Retention NCO

**RRSC**

Recruiting and Retention Section Chief

**RSP**

Recruit Sustainment Program

**SM**

Strength Maintenance

**SMAP**

Strength Maintenance Action Plan

**SMTC**

Strength Maintenance Training Center

**SOP**

Standard Operating Procedure

**SRIP**

Select Reserve Incentive Program

**STX**

Situational Training Exercise

**TAG**

The Adjutant General

**UCC**

Unit Career Counselor

**URNCO**

Unit Retention NCO

**Section II**

**Terms**

**Additional Duty**

When a Soldier is assigned a task or area of responsibility in addition to their normal everyday tasks. Often these tasks do not warrant significant time investment but are genuinely needed to accomplish a mission or to comply with regulatory guidance.

**Army Body Composition Program (AR 600-9)**

Implements Army policy and prescribes procedures governing physical fitness and weight / body fat standards in the Service.

**“At-risk” Soldier**

Is a Soldier who is on the path for separation from service either through attrition or non-retention when entering the re-enlistment window. Behaviors could include being on NOVAL pay, AWOL, multiple height and weight failures and or multiple APFT failures. Morale, family issues and military job performance could also indicate being “at-risk”. This is not an all-inclusive list.

**Attrition**

Separation of ARNG Soldiers prior to achieving their expiration term of service (ETS).

**Directors Personnel Readiness Overview (DPRO)**

The Director's Personnel Readiness Overview (DPRO) is a comprehensive management information system. It provides access to thousands of metrics that are updated daily and available for both current and historical dates. These metrics enable custom reporting in the areas of strength management, attrition, retention, accession, and military readiness.

**Expiration Term of Service (ETS)**

The scheduled date on which a Soldier’s statutory or contractual (whichever is the later) term of military service will end.

**ETS Date**

The date on which ETS occurs. It is the last day of official active / participating service for a specified contractual period.

**ETS Window**

A Soldier’s individual reenlistment opportunity widow **opens 12 months from their ETS** and continues through the final day of their current contract or ETS date.

**Extension**

When an ARNG Soldier has extended a current ARNG enlistment or reenlistment contract for an additional period of service. In the application of this SOP, the term is synonymous with “immediate reenlisted (A Soldier who reenlists without a break in ARNG service into the same or another State) although the administrative actions are different.”

**Family Assistance Center**

Family Assistance Centers provide a variety of referral based services to geographically-dispersed families and retirees from all military components. Services include, but are not limited to, ID cards and Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) enrollment, TRICARE and military medical benefits education, emergency financial services, legal information & referral, crisis intervention and referral, and community information and referral.

**First Line Leader**

Is a Soldier’s direct, face to face leadership. He is the first person in a Soldier’s chain of command and or NCO support chain.

**Full-time Support / Full-time Unit Support**

This program encompasses personnel assigned as a full-time basis for the purposes of organizing, administering, recruiting, instructing, or training the ARNGUS. These personnel include civilian personnel, members of the Active

Army, and personnel serving on Active Guard Reserve status. The Active Guard Reserve Program is a component of the Full-Time Support Program.

**Guard Incentives Management System (GIMS)**

GIMS is a web-based program composed of several centers which ensure proper managing, processing, and tracking critical elements of the ARNG incentive and education benefit programs.

**Inactive Duty Training (IDT)**

Authorized training performed by a member of a Reserve Component not on active duty or active duty for training and consisting of regularly scheduled unit training assemblies, additional training assemblies, periods of appropriate duty or equivalent training, and any special additional duties authorized for Reserve Component personnel by the Secretary concerned, and performed by them in connection with the prescribed activities of the organization in which they are assigned with or without pay. Does not include work or study associated with correspondence courses.

**Inactive National Guard (ING)**

The Inactive National Guard (ING) consists of Enlisted National Guard personnel in an inactive status in the Ready Reserve, not in the Selected Reserve. To remain in the ING, members must muster once a year with their assigned Unit, but they do not participate in training activities. On mobilization, ING members mobilize with their Units or are cross leveled into other mobilized units. Similar to Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) members, some ING members have a contractual obligation. Members of the ING may not train for retirement credit or pay and are not eligible for promotion. The ING category is currently used only by the ARNG. Members of the Reserves with no inactive duty training or active duty for training obligations may perform voluntary unpaid drills with Units of the Selected Reserve, enroll in correspondence courses, or perform other unpaid inactive duty training for the purpose of accumulating retirement points. Individuals who have enlisted in the Reserves and are awaiting their initial active duty for training may also perform unpaid drills. ING is an effective way to keep Soldiers in the Guard who need a temporary reprieve from the rigors of regular participation in the ARNG.

**Interactive Personnel Electronic Records Management System (iPERMS)**

The iPERMS is the Army's authorized personnel records repository for the Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR).

**MOS Immaterial (position)**

A position within a unit that is considered a special assignment. This position is for a Soldier of a required grade / rank and leadership experience. MOS does not usually play a role in being selected for the position and is there for not a specific consideration. Military leadership and ability to learn the special attributes of the position are the prime consideration. The position is specifically created for that unit or is a duty that must be performed for that unit. The position may also be additional duty, such as a Unit Career Counselor.

**Negative End-Strength**

The percentage of Soldiers who are in a Long-Term NOVAL Pay status, have expired ETS dates, are in a Long-Term Non-MOSQ status, or who are in the Training Pipeline with no class reservation.

**No Pay - Validate Status** **(NO-VAL)**

Soldiers in a drilling status who have not received pay from the Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) for at least four months are coded as “No Pay – Validate Status” (NOVAL Pay) on the commander’s monthly pay report. This status is meant to identify Soldiers that do not attend drill or training.

**Non-commissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCOER)**

DA Form 2166–9 series allows rating officials to provide HQDA with performance and potential assessments of each rated NCO for HQDA selection board processes. It also provides valuable information for use by successive members of the rating chain, emphasizes and reinforces professionalism, and supports the specialty focus

Enlisted Personnel Management System processes.

**Personnel Actions Request (PAR)**

In MILPO, A PAR initiates a request for action to review of a request that may lead to approval and publication of an order.

**Projected Loss**

Is a known anticipated strength maintenance / Soldier loss. This is a loss that can be possibly mitigated since it is known and there is a firm date when this will happen. The pending vacancy (projected loss) can be filled ahead of the actual loss or the Soldier can be counseled on the benefits of being retained. Leadership also has time to possibly affect this course of action.

**Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP)**

is a program of the United States Army National Guard designed to introduce new recruits to the fundamentals of the U.S. Army before they leave to Basic Combat Training (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training (AIT).

**Re-enlistment**

*a.* A second or subsequent voluntary enrollment in the USAR. This term differs from the term “immediate reenlistment” since it is used to identify continuing military service or reentry into the military service from civilian status as a prior service applicant.

*b.* Reentry into the ARNG of an individual who has had a break in ARNG service or has been discharged from one

State for the purpose of joining the ARNG of another State, regardless of a break in service, or is joining the ARNG from the Air National Guard (ANG).

**Retention**

Maintaining ARNG membership through extension of ETS or immediate reenlistment.

**Retention Eligible Interview Program**

The Retention interview program establishes a system and provides assistance to unit leadership to effectively interview with documentation that will increase unit strength. It is an ongoing communication with a Soldier enhances the possibility of the ultimate goal of retaining the Soldier as a member of the ARNG. Retention interviews provide an opportunity to eliminate old grievances, surface problem areas, develop self-understanding, increase self-assurance, and encourage and guide the Soldier in proper career progression. Interviews will be formal and conducted state guidelines. Interviews will also be recorded in RMS. The UCC, Unit 1SG, Unit Commander and Unit Retention NCO all participate in this program at the appropriate times as necessary.

**Retention Management System (RMS)**

The Retention Management Software (RMS) product is composed of several different modules, each assisting in the execution and achievement of missions critical to the Army National Guard. These modules incorporate a Case Management system that allows you to focus on only those tasks to which you are assigned, and keep track of the status of each Soldier’s case. The RMS modules include: AWOL, Recovery, Extension, Interstate Transfer, Sponsorship, Transition Services, and Vulcan RSP.

**Strength Maintenance Action Plan (SMAP)**

A memorandum produced each FY by the TAG / AAG to lay out a plan to improve the strength posture of the MEARNG and subordinate units by 30 September of the current FY; to gain new Soldiers into our organization at rates that support the end strength objective of each FY; to improve our retention climate and reduce losses within the MEARNG in order to meet or exceed the reenlistment mission of each FY. Also, to aggressively manage negative end strength to not greater than NGB standards.

**Strength Maintenance Plan**

Is coordinated with the Recruiting and Retention Battalion (RRB), using NGR 601-1, state regulations and local policies, to achieve established end strength goals. Establish subordinate unit attrition management goals and implement / assign attrition / retention goals in officer evaluation support forms, officer evaluation reports, and non-commissioned officer evaluation reports to ensure accountability of the goals to these leaders.

**Strength Maintenance Program**

The SM program is one of total sales and service, committed to improving and maintaining personnel readiness. This program consists of three major tenets; recruitment of quality Soldiers, retaining of MOS qualified Soldiers, and attrition management intended to reduce first term Soldier losses.

**Unit Career Counselor (UCC)**

is an additional duty position, appointed on orders by the Unit Commander. The position is MOS immaterial. The Unit Career Counselor plays a critical role in SM by assisting the Commander, the First Sergeant, FTS, FLLs, and the Recruiting and Retention NCO (RRNCO) in implementing the unit SM Plan.

**Unit Retention NCO**

is the RRNCO assigned to a unit to assist in retaining the required number of trained and qualified Soldiers necessary for the ARNG to maintain authorized strength levels and mission-mobilization readiness. Duties may include retention interviews, processing extension / re-enlistment paperwork, and providing information on options and incentives to the unit and Soldiers as a SM subject matter expert.

**Unit Sponsorship Program**

The Unit Sponsorship Program is designed to properly welcome a new Soldier into the unit and the Maine Army National Guard. The intent of the program is to demonstrate to the Soldier, that the unit:

 *a.* is concerned about their welfare

 *b.* recognizes any anxieties and uncertainties

 *c.* identifies conduct and performance expectations

 *d.* provides guidance and information.