



## Michigan Volunteer Defense Force (MI-VDF)

P.O. Box 26245

Lansing, MI 48909

10 September 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR MI-VDF Battalion Commanders and Brigade Staff

SUBJECT: Training Guidance (**Interim**) for Michigan Volunteer Defense Force (MI-VDF) 2012

### 1. References

- a. Michigan's State Defense Forces, A concise History and Lineage of the Michigan Emergency Volunteers and its Predecessors from 1917-1988, by Duane E Miller, dtd 1999.
- b. Field Manual 22-100, dtd 31 August 1999, Army leadership, Be, Know, Do.

### 2. Purpose. Provide Training Guidance for the MI-VDF for 2012 (inclusive of Annual Training period)

3. Commander's Training Philosophy has not changed from that which was originally manifested during 2007. Essentially it is based upon a consideration of Michigan's State Defense Force's historical legacy, present day status and practical mission context. **In order to conduct an effective training program several essential components must be realized. 1) Viable Missions 2) Capable Personnel 3) Competent Leadership 4) Essential Training Resources 5) Time.** The MI-VDF depends upon volunteers for its personnel and leadership. It is reasonable to expect that the majority of those who join the MI-VDF ranks will have experienced military training (some will not have, especially younger volunteers). **Key to the success of the MI-VDF is the proper marriage of training to mission with a dynamic weaving of leadership, personnel and training resources into the time tapestry of mission focus. The MI-VDF has seven viable missions. Two of which we have trained for and exercised. One (Support the MI Selective Service System) is a contingency mission which will require a national crisis to prioritize. Four missions are directly related to the MI National Guard Joint Staff which no longer exists (as of 1 July 2011). These must be reviewed and revised by the Commander of the 46<sup>th</sup> Military Police Command (the new reporting headquarters for the MI-VDF) and the Commander of the MI-VDF. This action is expected to be completed no later than 1 December at which time a revised Mission List for the MI-VDF will be published in conjunction with the final MI-VDF Commander's Training Guidance for 2012.** Each of the seven Battalions is recruiting volunteer personnel for filling empty ranks. The battalions are recruiting from within each area of operation with the emphasis on maintaining home town knowledge of the operational environment. An emphasis for improving the strength of each battalion is primary focus of the MI-VDF. Essential to the recruiting of personnel is the ability of each MI-VDF recruiter to communicate the mission/s of the MI-VDF and the role of each

battalion. **Whatever actions the MI-VDF conducts must be viewed within the context of Credibility, i.e., two important questions which must be asked and re-asked are, “a) Does what we are doing make sense given the structure, manning and resources of the MI-VDF, b) does what we are doing fit within the overall missions of those non-volunteer State organizations that would have the need to call the MI-VDF into operational status”?**

4. Commander’s Assessment of current MI-VDF status: A) **Organizational Structure and Ranks/Grades:** It is imperative that the MI-VDF remain focused on its reorganization as an Army Light Infantry Brigade “like” structure with commensurate battalion, company and platoon units. Currently the structure is based upon three companies per Battalion, three platoons per company and three squads per platoon. Ranks/grades have been defined and personnel are being assigned as they are recruited. The MI-VDF Website >>[www.mivdf.org](http://www.mivdf.org)<< facilitates the assignment process with the inclusion of the volunteer application and streamlined processing procedures. B) **Missions:** The current seven Missions are subject to review, revision and/or deletion no later than 1 December 2011. C) **Personnel:** Each VDF Volunteer and Leader is expected to conduct him/her self in a manner to bring credit to self and the MI-VDF. Thus far into our early organizational development, the MI-VDF has enjoyed excellent conduct by its Volunteers. Focus on our core **Values of: Integrity, Volunteerism, Service, Leadership and Professionalism** guides our on-going efforts in recruiting, training, personnel administration and interaction with other agencies. D) **The Credibility of the MI-VDF** continues to be challenged by our current stage of development of our essential components.

5. Commander’s Goals for 2012: **1) Personnel:** Complete recruiting efforts to the degree that a **15% increase (approx 25) in Volunteer Personnel** is realized. Complete the recruitment and appointment of Battalion Command Groups (Cdr, XO/Training/Operations Officer and Command Sergeant Major. Additionally, continually review all positions with currently assigned personnel and retain them or reassign/promote based upon: a) expressed desires of individual members b) the requirements of the position c) military experiences of individuals **2) Missions: Training focus will be detailed upon final approval of the MI-VDF Mission list.**

**3) Credibility of the MI-VDF:** a) improve working efforts with those non-volunteer State organizations that would have the need to call the MI-VDF into operational status, i.e., the MIARNG J-5/7 Director and staff. b) ensure that all assigned VDF members are fully aware of the duties and job descriptions for his/her assigned position within the MI-VDF. These duties and job descriptions mimic (similar but not identical to) the commensurate duty/job descriptions in an Army brigade, battalion, company and platoon. **4) Training:** Based upon the revision of the current seven Missions, the Brigade Commander will provide additional guidance to the battalions. However, the focus on continued development of the Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) assigned within the Battalions will continue under the leadership of the Brigade CSM. Battalion Commanders will continue to conduct training on the CERT mission and the JRSOI mission which was rehearsed during the MI-VDF Annual Training 2011.

6. Commander’s Training Guidance Annual Training 2012: Conduct training exercises as a Brigade during a designated weekend. Training will be focused on specific and essential Mission tasks. Details have yet to be determined; more information will follow.

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WILLIAM R EWALD  
COL (Ret) Army  
Commanding