



September 2009

Soldiers and Airmen:

Since 9/11, the National Guard and specifically the Minnesota National Guard has been called on to take on unprecedented responsibilities and missions. This new reality or “new normal” is what we’ve come to expect as we have transformed into a flexible, highly-trained deployable fighting force.

When I was appointed the Adjutant General in November 2003, we had already entered a new era that challenged our Nation and perhaps our way of life in many ways. This change has unquestionably altered the National Guard and its role in our society. Many have wondered, “When will things return to normal?” But we all know in our hearts that our world changed forever on September 11th, 2001.

In a post-9/11 era, we must always be in the process of preparing ourselves by means of deployment and re-deployment processes to ensure that our military capability can fully support our state and federal requirements on any terrain at home or abroad. To thrive in the new normal, we must change how we think of ourselves from a “single use” force to a flexible and multifunctional force that recover from and prepare for recurring deployments in dual theaters of operations and at home.

We must also always think about the way the new normal affects our lives, families, and careers outside of our commitment to our units and the total force, and subsequently plan and prepare accordingly.

This is not a one-time adjustment, our units cannot simply lift and shift fire one time to become the multifunctional units that our leadership requires, but instead the new normal requires each of us to rethink our individual contributions and abilities in light of missions our force is called on to undertake.

In the next six months, you will become very familiar with my overall strategic plan for the Minnesota National Guard. Each month, I will present to you a different concept of the strategic plan. This strategy will serve as a guide for our organization as we adjust to this new normal.

This strategy was written not as a precise roadmap for the future, but as a guide for our organization as we move forward, encounter unexpected opportunities and challenges, and enable subordinates to make decisions that will posture the Minnesota National Guard for success in the future. History shows that despite our best efforts, we cannot predict the future with certainty.

In the end, all of us make decisions that will posture the Minnesota National Guard for success in the future. I encourage you to read and understand the concepts of the new normal strategy. By doing so, we will all better understand the direction in which we are headed as an organization.

Sincerely,

Larry W. Shellito

Major General, Minnesota National Guard
The Adjutant General