



DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

ANNUAL PLAN

FY 2026

Vision Statement: A ready and resilient Montana

Mission Statement: Department of Military Affairs strengthens Montana through our collective readiness to defend against threats, increasing resilience, and engaged citizenship.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Military Affairs (DMA) is a very diverse organization that serves the citizens of Montana. DMA is comprised of the Directors Office, Department of Emergency Services, Montana Veterans Affairs Division, Montana Youth Challenge Academy, STARBASE, and both the Montana Air and Army National Guard.

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

The Director's Office provides departmental administration through the Office of the Adjutant General and department-wide support for accounting and budget management, information technology, human resources, payroll, labor relations, and purchasing and property management oversight. Additionally, there are two major programs in DMA, the Montana Youth Challenge Academy and STARBASE. The Director of the Department of Military Affairs also serves as The Adjutant General (TAG) and Commander of the Montana National Guard.

MONTANA YOUTH CHALLENGE ACADEMY

The Montana National Guard Youth Challenge Academy (MYCA) is a volunteer program for youth ages 16 to 18 who are not on track to graduate high school. Challenge is a 17-month, voluntary, three-phased military educational intervention program. The program provides an opportunity for "at risk" youth to enhance their life skills, increase their educational levels and employment potential. Phase I of the program is a 2-week acclimation phase conducted at the Dillon Readiness Center followed by a 20-week residential stay on the campus of Western Montana College of the University of Montana in Dillon. The residential phase focuses on the eight core components to include physical fitness, academic excellence, life coping skills, service to community, health and hygiene, responsible citizenship, job skills and leadership/followership. Phase II is a year-long mentoring relationship with a specially trained member of the community where the youth reside to provide a positive role model and to assist the student in gaining employment or enrolling in post-secondary schooling.

STARBASE PROGRAM

STARBASE is the 100% federally funded premier youth outreach program of the Department of Defense. Currently, STARBASE has classrooms at Fort Harrison in Helena and the 120th Airlift Wing in Great Falls, providing 25 hours of hands-on science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) instruction to all fifth-grade classes within the Helena and Great Falls school districts, as well as afterschool programs and summer camps to students in grades 3- 12 across Montana. STARBASE locations provide students the opportunity to interact with military personnel, foster familiarity with local military installations, nurture interest in STEAM careers, and empower Montana's youth for future success.

DISASTER AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DIVISION

The Disaster and Emergency Services Division (DES) duties and responsibilities are provided for under Title 10, Chapter 3, MCA. The division is responsible for the coordination, development and implementation of emergency management planning, mitigation, response, and recovery statewide. This responsibility includes the administration and disbursement of federal Homeland Security and Emergency Management funds to eligible political subdivisions and tribal nations across the state. The division maintains a 24 hour a day point of contact to coordinate the volunteer, state, and federal response for assistance to political subdivisions and tribal nations in the event of an incident, emergency, or disaster.

MONTANA VETERANS AFFAIRS DIVISION

The Montana Veterans Affairs Division (MVAD) assist discharged veterans and their families, cooperates with state and federal agencies, promotes the general welfare of veterans and provides information on the veterans' benefits. The division also administers the Montana state-run veteran's cemeteries located in Miles City, Fort Harrison in Helena, and Missoula. The division reports to the Board of Veterans Affairs and operates under a state mandate provided in Title 10, Chapter 2, MCA.

MONTANA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The Montana Air National Guard's (MTANG) federal mission is to maintain well-trained, well-equipped units available for prompt mobilization during war and provide assistance during national emergencies (such as natural disasters or civil disturbances). During peacetime, the combat-ready units and support units are assigned to Air Force major commands to carry out missions compatible with training, mobilization readiness, humanitarian and contingency operations. Air National Guard units may be activated in a number of ways as prescribed by public law. Most of the laws may be found in Title 10 of the U.S. Code. When Air National Guard units are not mobilized or under federal control, the units report to the governor and are supervised by TAG. Under state law, the Air National Guard provides protection of life, property and preserves peace, order and public safety. These missions are accomplished through emergency relief support during natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, and forest fires; search and rescue operations; support to civil defense authorities; maintenance of vital public services and counterdrug operations. This program is mandated by the U.S. and Montana Constitutions and Title 10, Chapters 1-3, MCA.

MONTANA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD


The Montana Army National Guard (MTARNG) is a component of the United States military's total force, ready to respond in a time of need. The Army National Guard mission is dual and fulfills both federal and state missions. The Army National Guard's federal mission is to provide trained and ready soldiers who are equipped to respond under presidential authority. The state mission is to provide trained and ready soldiers who are equipped to aid in the protection of life and property, and uphold the preservation of peace, order, and public safety for the citizens of Montana, under the leadership and control of the governor. The Army National Guard is composed primarily of traditional guardsmen — civilians who serve their country, state, and community on a part-time basis (usually an average of one weekend each month and an extended collective training event over a two-week period). The governor can call the Army National Guard into state active duty in accordance with the Montana Constitution during local or statewide emergencies, such as storms, fires, earthquakes, search and rescue, or civil disturbances. In addition, the president of the United States can activate the Army National Guard for participation in federal missions such as national emergencies, humanitarian crisis, and contingency operations in response to national interests on the homeland or overseas.

This program is mandated by the U.S. and Montana Constitutions and Title 10, Chapters 1-3, MCA.

The Construction and Facilities Management Office (CFMO) reports to the Adjutant General. The CFMO mission is to provide state-of-the-art, community based, installations and training sites that, by virtue of their geographical dispersion, can be leveraged by the Army and the State; and that facilitate communications, operations, training, and equipment sustainment to support the deployment of required forces and other assigned State and Federal missions. The operation, organization, process and procedures for CFMO are outlined in National Guard Regulation (NGR) 420-10. Montana House Bill 5 provides State funding and authority for approved projects.

In state fiscal year (SFY) 2026 the Department of Military Affairs (DMA) is committed to enhancing community engagement and implementing effective marketing strategies to ensure that Montanans are well-informed about the various divisions in DMA that are available to support and serve them. We aim to build resilient communities by fostering strong connections and support. Additionally, we are dedicated to transforming both the Army and Air National Guard to meet the evolving threats of our adversaries. We must ensure we are manned, equipped and prepared to serve our state and nation effectively.

DMA Objectives for SFY 2026 – 1 July 2025 – 30 June 2026:

 <div>Strategic Outcome</div> <div>#1</div>	Objective #1: Empower and Develop DMA Professionals	
	<div>An empowered and developed workforce ready for tomorrow’s challenges.</div> <div><div>1. Provide clear communication of leadership’s intent and organizational goals.</div><div>2. Empower leaders to drive their programs and achieve their goals.</div><div>3. Manage effectiveness of individual career ladders.</div><div>4. Increase employee/supervisor engagements.</div><div>5. Invest in employee development.</div></div>	
	Key Measures	<div><div>• Complete 100% of annual performance plans and mid-year check-ins.</div><div>• Conduct annual strategic planning sessions.</div><div>• Conduct monthly executive level agency update briefings.</div><div>• Conduct a minimum of two town hall events.</div><div>• Complete 100% review of career ladders and applicable actions taken.</div><div>• Employees will complete a minimum of one professional or personal development course annually (TALENT or other).</div></div>



Strategic Outcome

#2

Objective #2: Training to the Next Level

DMA increases training opportunities and enhances services for employees and stakeholders.

1. Provide training that targets both professional growth and individual wellness.
2. Promote interagency collaboration.
3. Develop platform(s) to receive customer service feedback.
4. Achieve national level accreditation or recognition for excellence.
5. Development of Integrated Communication Strategy and Platforms.

Key Measures

- Each division nominates one employee to attend State Executive Leadership Training.
- Disaster and Emergency Services achieves professional accreditation for the state emergency management program by December 2025.
- Utilize customer service feedback to enhance programs.
- Implementation of common operating picture platform(s) to enhance communication with interagency partners.
- MYCA achieves 80% or higher long-term placement.
- MYCA graduates a minimum of 205 cadets per class.
- STARBASE serves a minimum of 2000 students.
- Increase Veteran Services Program survey (customer feedback) participation by 10%.
- Director's Office coordinates and conducts agency-wide quarterly training events.



Strategic Outcome

#3


Objective #3: Align Current Missions and Proactively Compete for Future Missions

DMA enhances current missions and seeks opportunities for new missions to better serve Montanans.

1. Achieve DMA Objectives, Goals, Strategies and Measures (OGSM).
2. Expand awareness and visibility of DMA programs throughout the state.
3. Increase participation in DMA programs/events.
4. Improve infrastructure and facilities to meet current and future needs.
5. Manage readiness and military force structure.

Key Measures

- Conduct monthly progress review of OGSM.
- Develop robust marketing strategy to reach communities and stakeholders. Develop by 31 Dec 2025. Implement Jan 2026.
- Each division develops a community engagement strategy and each conduct at least two new community, business or key stakeholder engagements by Jun 2026.
- Develop and submit statewide master plan by Sep 25.
- Complete Fort Harrison Cemetery Expansion project by end of Dec 2025 (increase of 1600 burial spaces).
- Montana State Veteran Cemetery Interment Processing Center – complete design phase by Mar 2026.
- DES Warehouse – issue construction notice to proceed by Jul 2025; complete construction by Jun 2026.
- DES State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC) – complete design by Dec 25; notice to proceed by Mar 26 (be on target for completion in 2027).
- CFMO submits long range building program to include 6-year capital development facilities plan by Apr 2026.
- MTANG purchases land for aerial drop zone NLT Oct 2025 and develops to be on target to conduct first heavy drop in Nov 26.
- Limited Army Aviation Support Facility (LAASF) in Billings:
 - Phase I, 90% complete by 30 Jun 2026 and on target for completion in Sep 2026.
 - Phase 2, design complete NLT Feb 2026.
- STARBASE submits updated request to open program in a 3rd location.
- MTANG – received new C130J model aircraft by Mar 2026 and initiates new training program and infrastructure requirements.
- MTARNG – develops transition strategy for new Mobile Combat Force.

 <p>Strategic Outcome</p> <p>#4</p>	Objective #4: Recruit and Retain the Best to Serve our Great Nation and State	
	DMA is an organization people want to be a part of. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance recruitment, selection, and retention processes. 2. Develop and implement feedback mechanism. 3. Enhance agency recognition program. 4. Provide competitive pay and benefits. 	
	Key Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve vacancy rate goal: $\leq 8\%$. • Achieve attrition goal: $\leq 12\%$. • Achieve average vacancy fill timeline: 70 days. • Develop and conduct one internal employee feedback survey. • Conduct quarterly employee recognition events. • Each division will conduct a minimum of two team-building events. • HR conducts quarterly reviews with each division to assess compensation needs.