

State of Alaska FY2020 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs

Mission

To provide military forces to accomplish military missions in the state and around the world; provide homeland security and defense; emergency response; veterans' services; and youth military style training and education.
AS 26, AS 44.35

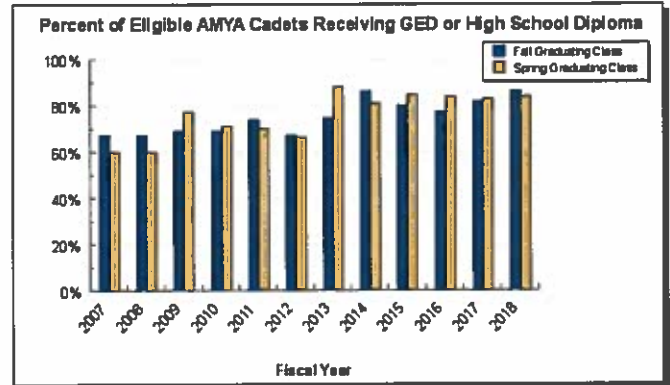
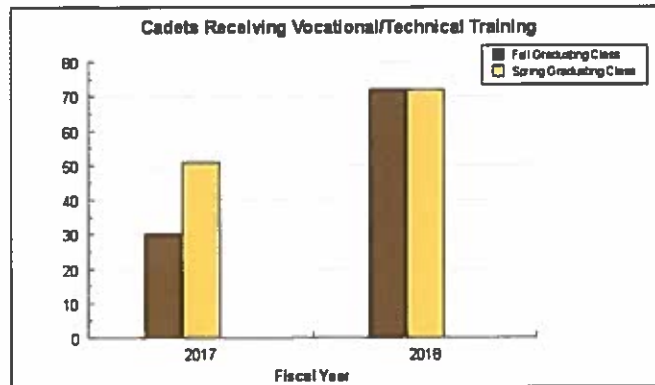
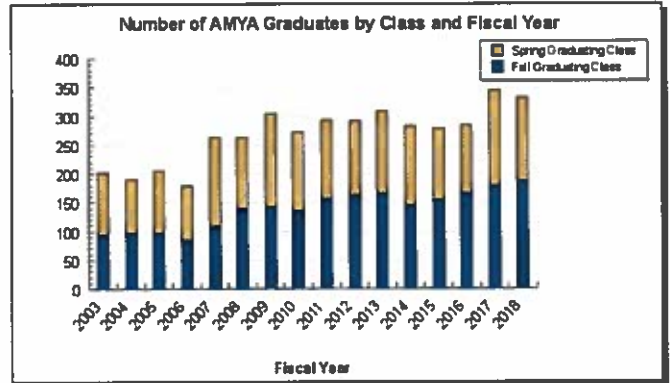
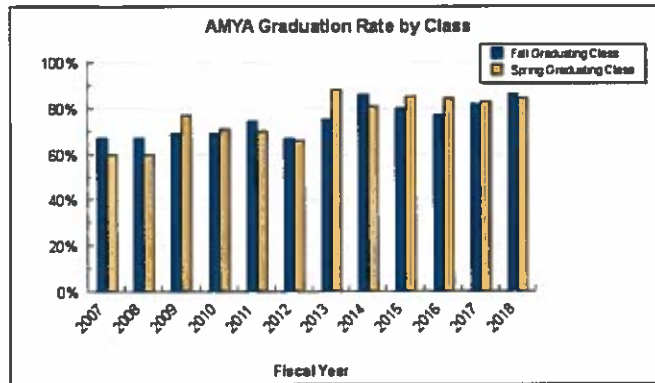
Core Services (in priority order)	UGF	DGF	Other	Fed	Total	PFT	PPT	NP	% GF
1. Defend and Protect Alaska and the United States	6,741.6	27.4	5,908.4	21,668.7	34,346.1	145	1	2	39.8%
2. Disaster Preparedness/Response and Recovery	3,471.3	0.0	3,676.3	4,745.2	11,892.8	62	0	0	20.4%
3. Youth Intervention	4,808.7	1.0	515.2	4,178.8	9,503.7	66	1	0	28.3%
4. Outreach to Veterans and Military Families	1,948.3	0.0	85.4	350.2	2,383.9	4	0	0	11.5%
FY2019 Management Plan	16,969.9	28.4	10,185.3	30,942.9	58,126.5	277	2	2	

Measures by Core Service

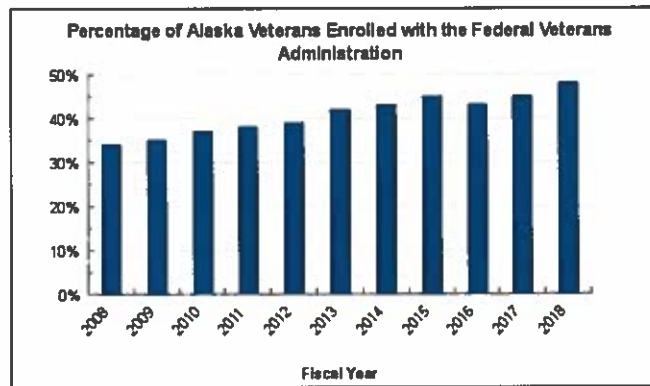
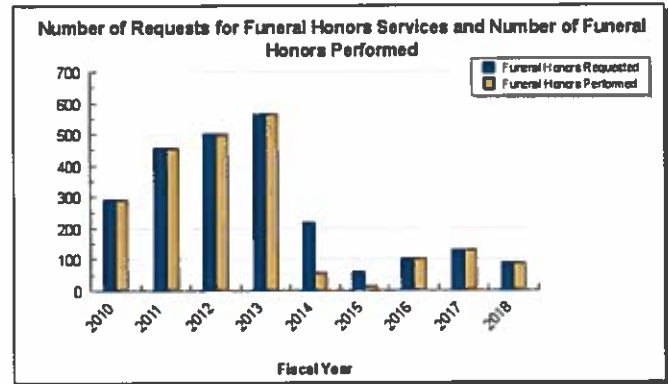
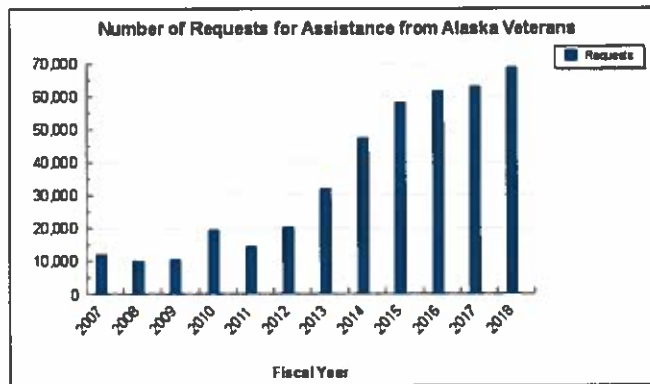
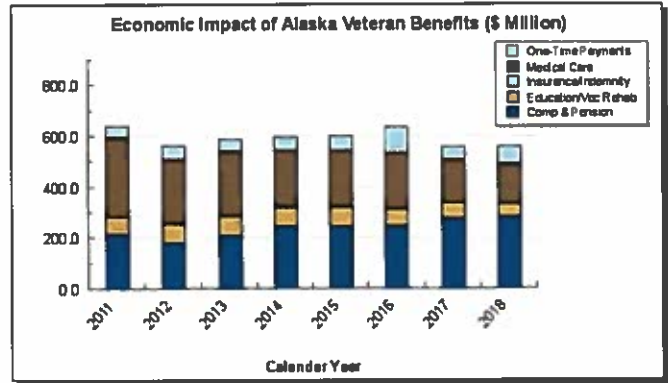
(Additional performance information is available on the web at <https://omb.alaska.gov/results>.)

1. Disaster Preparedness/Response and Recovery

2. Youth Intervention



3. Outreach to Veterans and Military Families



Major Department Accomplishments in 2018

Defend and Protect Alaska and the United States

Alaska Air National Guard

The Alaska Air National Guard (AKANG) continued to execute an extremely high operational tempo and deployment pace. In any given month, 30 to 40 AKANG members deployed around the world in support of multiple contingencies and operations.

The AKANG executed 24/7, 365-day operations in support of North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) air defense missions, National Missile Warning and Space Surveillance, Search and Rescue, and C-17 strategic airlift tasking. Specifically, the AKANG controlled over 3,100 local and regional, joint and combined training sorties, tracked over 347,000 space objects, airlifted over 7,000 tons of cargo, transferred over 17 million pounds of

fuel to over 2,000 receivers, and flew over 11,000 flight hours. AKANG members performed superbly in multiple world-wide deployments, operations, and international/national/state-level exercises throughout the year. Additionally, the AKANG continued the 61-year tradition of generating Operation Santa missions, ferrying over 6,000 pounds of donations to two remote Alaskan villages annually. Furthermore, AKANG members volunteered and served local communities, organizations, and remote Alaskan villages, treating over 5,000 patients and veterans. Finally, the Rescue Coordination Center directed and executed 111 Search and Rescue missions in Alaska's extreme arctic conditions, saving 65 lives.

Discussions between the State of Alaska, Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, and the National Guard Bureau generated recommendations for transitioning aircraft operated by the AKANG; specifically, reductions in C-130 aircraft operations throughout the United States Air Force with older aircraft being retired and not replaced. Based on direction from the Air Force Chief of Staff Strategic Choices forum in February 2015, and as outlined in the 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, eight (8) C-17 aircraft transferred from the active duty Air Force to the AKANG in May 2017. While the aircraft and their maintenance requirements remain fully federally funded, the AKANG gained operations and maintenance responsibility for three facilities on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, totaling more than 480,000 square feet (a large aircraft hangar and two additional support facilities). This new requirement brought on five new facilities maintenance positions which are 75% supported by Federal funds; the Legislature approved both FY18 Supplemental and FY19 increment funding for their operations and maintenance costs.

Alaska Army National Guard

The Alaska Army National Guard (AKARNG) served the State of Alaska (SoA) and the nation with pride and distinction through myriad capabilities, including aviation, engineering, military police (MP), infantry (IN), and missile defense. The AKARNG responded in support of domestic operations, conducted training and community engagement, and deployed in support of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) in locations such as Afghanistan, Jordan, and Kuwait. Additionally, the AKARNG participated in exercises locations across the world, including Bangladesh for Shanti Doot 4, Germany's Hohenfels Training Area, Mongolia for Khaan Quest, and South Korea for Key Resolve.

Furthermore, AKARNG soldiers participated in hundreds of events with schools, local community organizations, native corporations, and tribal organizations to educate fellow Alaskans about opportunities and benefits of service. In particular, the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program allowed military units to assist communities with local projects, such as construction and healthcare. To date, the AKARNG used the IRT program to support dozens of Alaska's rural communities. Moreover, the AKARNG's federally funded Military Funeral Honors team also made invaluable contributions to the state by providing military honors at the funerals of 57 veterans conducting 57 missions in rural Alaska.

The AKARNG Construction and Facilities Maintenance Office (CFMO) continued executing facility improvement projects and divesting excess facilities, infrastructure, land, and equipment. Among the more than 60 projects identified and valued at over \$8 million, were the demolition of the Armory on Little Diomed, lead remediation in Ketchikan; and divestiture of armories in Buckland, Kake, Petersburg, and Tuntutuliak. Additionally, on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson (JBER), the CFMO completed the design phase of a \$27 million Military Construction (MILCON) project to support the United States Property and Fiscal Office and also received National Guard Bureau endorsement on a \$30 million armory project in 2023.

Alaska Aerospace Corporation

The Alaska Aerospace Corporation (AAC) continues to develop a high-technology aerospace industry in Alaska. Its operational base, the Pacific Spaceport Complex – Alaska (PSCA) located on Kodiak Island, is the nation's only high latitude, non-federal, full service spaceport that provides an unrestricted ability to launch high inclination missions without overflight of land. With FY18 contracts from government and commercial customers, AAC purchased over \$16 million in goods, services, and labor from Alaskan vendors. Additionally, AAC invested \$2.1 million into the maintenance and sustainment of state-owned facilities and equipment, and earned over \$8 million to expand range capacity at PSCA.

Disaster Preparedness/Response and Recovery

Homeland Security and Emergency Management

Over the past year, the Division of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (DHS&EM) saw several successes in the key lines of effort of Planning, Preparedness, Response, & Disaster Assistance.

In the area of Planning, there were several noteworthy accomplishments. For example, a required biennial update to the State Emergency Operations Plan was completed. Nine new Small Community Emergency Response Plans (SCERPs) were completed, bringing the total to 80 completed plans with an additional 13 in the approval process. Additionally, the Division participated in numerous preparedness and planning events. The Division also updated the Alaska State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Planning efforts were complemented by several training events and exercises. The All-Hazards Resiliency Team conducted a Rural Resiliency Workshop in Nome for 11 communities in the Bering Strait and Norton Sound region in cooperation with Kawerak, Inc. The three-day agenda offered many topics regarding Emergency Management and subjects of importance to the local communities. In addition, the Alaska Partnership for Infrastructure Protection (APIP), which integrates private and public sector critical infrastructure owners into the overall emergency response framework, met monthly from September through May and conducted a disaster tabletop exercise as its culminating event. Furthermore, the Division's Mitigation Team completed 49 new FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMP) for a statewide total of 119 approved plans, which allows communities to receive federal mitigation funds if available.

In the area of preparedness, following guidelines in the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program, the Division helped guide the planning and development process for rural resilience workshop exercises for the Nome and Kotzebue regions. Specifically, they prepared all necessary exercise documents to support Denali Commission funded Small Community Emergency Response Plan exercises in two rural communities (Kivalina and Shishmaref) and then facilitated those exercises.

Division exercise planners also provided subject matter expertise to two national-level Department of Defense exercises, Van Winkle, and Orca. Additionally, they made substantial contributions to community-based exercises, designing more than 18 individual community exercises and further supporting 12 individual communities and five boroughs in developing locally created and facilitated exercises. Furthermore, Division exercise planners began work on Alaska Shield 2019, a statewide full-scale exercise involving 10 local jurisdictions, five state agencies, 10 federal agencies, and multiple non-profits and private-sector entities.

The Division provided coordinated instructional training to 1,525 individuals from State, local and tribal entities. The Division coordinated a total of 65 specialized training events in the state and approved 121 individuals to attend training offered by national training partners.

The Division also conducted 52 outreach events with entities including private businesses, childcare providers, military units, local utility companies, hospitals/clinics and local communities with their own outreach programs. The outreach team led the planning, development and execution of the Spring Preparedness Conference conducted annually in Anchorage. The 2018 Spring Preparedness Conference had 173 attendees. The Division's Earthquake Simulator was used at 17 events across the state and more than 6,000 people participated in outreach events. The Earthquake Simulator went on a tour of Interior Alaska in August, stopping in the communities of Healy, Fairbanks, North Pole, Ester, and Fort Wainwright.

The Division staff continued partnering with the Alaska Military Youth Academy (AMYA) to conduct Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for all cadets. The CERT program trains AMYA cadets on a variety of disaster topics and certifies them to join or become a founder of a local CERT within their communities upon graduation.

To continue funding critical programs, the Division received a new FEMA Non-Profit Grant Award for \$103,000, providing funding for two non-profit agencies, the Blood Bank of Alaska and the Congregation Beth Shalom, to harden their facilities. Additionally, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant was reduced from a two-year period to a one-year period with no significant decrease in funding; NOAA grants provided funding for: promotion of local, regional, and state level tsunami mitigation and preparedness; installation of warning systems, tsunami signage, and development of inundation models. Similarly, new awards for the 2018 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) to 19 communities (up one from last year) supported planning, equipment purchases,

training, communication and physical security upgrades and exercise needs for acts of terrorism and other catastrophic events. Additionally, the 2018 Emergency Management Performance Grant, awarded to 13 communities (up two from last year), provided direct funding on a 50% federal, 50% local cost share to jurisdictions to pay the salaries of local emergency managers.

The Mitigation Team successfully prioritized \$28.1M in State and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Mitigation funds and \$25.5M in State and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) funding for mitigation projects statewide. These mitigation efforts include the Galena Structures Elevation, Newtok Village Home Acquisition and Demolition and Mat-Su Borough Acquisition and Demolition projects, to name a few. The team also successfully implemented the Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness Grant which facilitated several HazMat technician courses (25 students), workshops (approximately 100 students) and tabletop exercises in the North Slope Borough, Denali Borough and Delta Junction to increase community preparedness.

In the area of Response, there were several instances where the Division worked to provide assistance to communities in crisis. Through the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), the Division responded to 52 incidents and requests for assistance from local jurisdictions. Two incidents (2018 May Susitna River Flooding and 2018 October Kenai Peninsula Borough Flooding) were declared State disasters, authorizing disaster assistance programs utilizing the Disaster Relief Fund to respond and recover from each disaster. The Susitna River Flooding Disaster was also declared a federal disaster, which authorized the federal government to reimburse Alaska for not less than 75% of eligible disaster related expenses. On January 23, 2018, a magnitude 7.9 earthquake in the Gulf of Alaska caused a tsunami warning to be issued for southern Alaska coastal communities from Attu to Metlaktla. The SEOC supported multiple communities as they issued evacuation orders, leading to refinements and improvements in Alaska's tsunami warning system. Throughout 2018, the Division coordinated the deployment of Alaska National Guardsman, nurses from the Alaska Respond Program, and multiple emergency managers to Hawaii, South Carolina and Florida in response to catastrophic volcanic eruptions and Hurricanes Florence and Michael. These deployments occurred through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact.

In the area of Disaster Assistance (DA), the Division's DA team conducted two program-specific training exercises for the Individual Assistance program to test equipment and cross training success between Public Assistance (PA) and Individual Assistance (IA) staff. The DA Team also conducted training with our disaster contractor, Adjustors International, to ensure they are prepared to augment state staff if needed. The DA team currently manages 10 federally declared disasters with 183 open projects valued at \$159.1M and 17 State declared disasters with 56 open projects valued at \$7.5M.

Youth Intervention

Alaska Military Youth Academy

The Alaska Military Youth Academy (AMYA) conducts two residential National Guard Youth Challenge Program classes each fiscal year. In 2018, AMYA graduated classes 2018-1 and 2018-2 in February and August, respectively, the 49th and 50th classes since inception. Youth Challenge has two distinct phases. First, a holistic 22-week Residential Phase on the Camp Carroll Training Site, Joint Base Elmendorf Richardson, with separate housing for male and female cadets. Following graduation, the Post-Residential Phase is a year-long mentoring period during which graduates return to their communities and apply life strategies learned to become more productive members of society. Over the past year, AMYA excelled at placing 100% of its graduates in durable activities including re-enrolling in secondary education, enrolling in post-secondary education, enlisting in the military, or employment; this level of achievement places AMYA in the top five programs across the nation.

Additionally, AMYA graduated 333 cadets who earned 165 high school diplomas or General Education Development (GEDs) diplomas in 2018. A select number of eligible students who enroll with 13.5 high school credits, complete online courses to recover credits towards award of a credential. An average of 30 students per class meet this standard and 50 – 60% finish the courses. Furthermore, AMYA is one of 35 Challenge sites that offers Everfi™ Endeavor S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering, and math) courses to 100 eligible students per year. Moreover, AMYA offers EduTyping.com keyboarding skills courses to all cadets as a means of equipping this generation of learners with the ability to connect their texting skills with online curricula and assessment platforms.

Finally, to assist students needing additional reading and language support, AMYA added digital technology, to include C-pen readers and tablets.

Beyond traditional academic materials, AMYA cadets participated in several career field-related programs. The pre-apprenticeship Cadet-To-Work Program continued to expand with funding from the Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense, Manpower and Reserve Affairs-Reserve Integration (OSAD/RA) and a grant from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD) Youth Employment Initiative, supporting two sessions during the last four weeks of the Residential Phase. As a result, seventy-two (72) cadets completed training in four construction trades (electrical, carpentry, laborers, and ironworkers/welding) with OSHA 10 and Scaffolding Safety Certifications. Similarly, twenty-four (24) cadets completed Culinary Arts Training in addition to testing for award of ServSafe® Food Handlers Certification. A total of 40 students were trained in Health Occupations Services and 274 students received certifications in Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training. Additionally, twenty cadets completed the Equipment & Engine Training Council's Small Engine Repair course and 19 cadets completed Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (U.A.V.) instruction, which included the FAA recreational knowledge and safety course. Finally, all students completed requirements for award of their Adult First Aid/CPR/AED Training Certificates.

Outreach to Veterans and Military Families

Office of Veterans' Affairs

The Office of Veterans' Affairs (OVA) establishes and sustains comprehensive advocacy programs for all of Alaska's Veterans, Active Duty, National Guard/Reserves and dependents. The Office of Veterans' Affairs works to:

- Identify and resolve issues that face Alaska's 68,276 veterans and their 161,207 dependents, survivors, and extended families in 348 communities;
- Represent the State of Alaska to federal and state agencies and nationally recognized veteran service organizations;
- Build connections between military and veteran populations, veteran groups and service organizations, and local, state and federal government agencies;
- Provide Alaska's veterans with direct services, outreach, and advocacy.

The economic impact of Alaska Veteran Benefits is significant, averaging just under \$600 million annually over the past eight years. As such, OVA remains keenly focused on connecting Veterans with benefits earned as a result of their service. In FY2018, the combined OVA team assisted more than 68,600 Veterans, active duty, reserve component members, and family members, with federal and state benefits/claims questions and processing. Representatives completed 260 visits around the state, again reaching many veterans for the first time. As a result of these efforts:

- The Veterans Affairs (VA) Mortgage Servicing Assistance program insured issuance of Certificates of Eligibility to 3,595 Veterans, resulting in over \$1.08 billion in home loans
- VA Healthcare System enrollment increased by 3,000 patients for a total of 36,000 registered with a managed care cost of \$310 million in federal funds
- Compensation and pension increased annually \$3 million, for a total of just over \$281 million federal funds
- Through successful navigation of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (USDVA) Appeals board, Veterans and families received over \$71 million in single one-time payments
- Over 4,000 veterans attended higher education and certification in Alaska, expending over \$69.5 million federal funds

Key Department Challenges

Defend and Protect Alaska and the United States

Alaska Air National Guard

The Alaska Air National Guard (AKANG) aims to exceed all standards with the most mission-diverse, relevant, and resilient units in the nation; however, work remains to optimize Total Force Initiatives to preserve capability and capacity. While the simultaneous conversion of the HC-130H to the HC-130J, the C-17 association flip from a classic

association to an active association, and the upcoming Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2019 Operational Loss Replacement (OLR) of five HH-60G helicopters bring challenges; there are commensurate positive changes in manpower, facilities, and training requirements. Additionally, the Air Force's decision to base F-35s at Eielson AFB, dramatically intensifies the demand for tanker support.

With a 360% increase in federal funding, the AKANG is addressing recruiting and retention challenges through several means including: establishing recruiting teams in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, and Wasilla; reviewing recruiting and retention procedures/processes; utilizing a mobile recruiting trailer at statewide events; fielding new and modern advertising campaigns through social media, radio, and theater; and aggressively advocating for seven additional federal manpower authorizations dedicated solely to recruiting.

Alaska Army National Guard

Facilities in South Central Alaska only meet approximately 66% of the assigned units' requirements. Specifically, units assigned to the existing 1974-era, 17,164 square foot Alcantra Readiness Center are operating in less than 40% of the space required. As a result, training activities are offset to other AKARNG facilities on JBER, a 100 mile round trip. Additionally, unit equipment is stored at JBER or at assigned soldiers' homes, increasing the likelihood of loss. Additionally, AKARNG retention rates averaged only 65% over the past four years. To remedy this situation, the National Guard Bureau (NGB) plans to request funding for a new 60,000 square foot AKARNG Armory in Wasilla in Federal Fiscal Year 2022. To remain on schedule, the AKARNG requires \$1.32 million in General Fund Match and \$3.32 million in Federal Receipt Authority in State Fiscal Year 2020 to complete project design and supporting requirements. The DMVA will seek a follow-on General Fund Match increment for the construction phase in a future budget year.

Deferred facility and infrastructure maintenance remains a concern. While in SFY19, DMVA petitioned for and received \$625,000 to address mission critical requirements out of a statewide lump sum appropriation of \$20 million, AKARNG remaining deferred maintenance needs exceed \$33 million (all fund sources) and \$7 million (General Fund only). The DMVA will continue work with the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities as the State's approach to addressing deferred maintenance needs evolves.

Alaska Aerospace Corporation

While annual sustainment costs of a launch facility, including personnel, infrastructure, business development, environmental, and other liabilities, remain a significant challenge, AAC continues to improve its ability to provide cost competitive launch services to both government and commercial customers, and has not received any general funds for operations and sustainment since FY2015.

Disaster Preparedness/Response and Recovery

Homeland Security and Emergency Management

The Division and SEOC continue to respond to requests for State assistance (monetary and technical) for events that fall outside of the scope of Alaska Statute 26.23.900. Events such as erosion, permafrost degradation, cyber-attacks and equipment failure due to lack of adequate maintenance continue to challenge communities throughout Alaska. Additionally, with support from the Legislature in the SFY19 Budget, the Division saw a significant influx of funding into the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF). Maintaining this legislatively approved, readily available fund source is key to the State's ability to speed relief and recovery actions during various emergency scenarios.

Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)

Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC) facilitate and coordinate emergency management preparedness for communities in Alaska. In 2018, the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHS&EM) awarded \$300,000 in grants to 20 LEPCs for all-hazard emergency operations planning, training, exercise, and

outreach preparedness education. Although there are 21 active LEPCs, one LEPC opted not to receive grant funding in FY 2019.

In FY2018, LEPCs assisted in the coordination of "all hazard" preparedness within their jurisdiction, collaborated with and assisted jurisdictions developing and updating emergency plans, supported volunteer Community Emergency Response Teams, assisted with response to public requests for information under the Community Right to Know Act (CRKT); and supported outreach activities including tsunami awareness, booths at public events, radio broadcasts, and distributing printed and electronic materials.

Additionally, LEPCs performed a wide variety of hazardous material awareness activities, including a review of inventories as reflected in the Tier II hazardous materials database. As a grant requirement, all LEPCs report to DHS&EM regarding annual, mandatory public notifications regarding these inventories, along with making necessary updates to community response plans.

Youth Intervention

Alaska Military Youth Academy

The Alaska Military Youth Academy (AMYA) continues to seek ways to ensure the program provides the greatest return on investment. The division undertook a number of effective initiatives, including reducing authorized positions to the minimum number necessary to maintain federal reimbursement and reducing admissions staff travel while placing greater reliance on local school staff, social workers, etc. for rural recruitment. Additionally, shift schedule changes across the Division substantially reduced overtime premium pay. Furthermore, the Division reduced cadet stipends but continues to emphasize financial literacy skills that are the basis for the stipends. These initiatives notwithstanding, there are signs some of these reductions, combined with increased recruitment, retention, and graduation rates over the past several years, are making the current workload unsustainable. Budgeted overtime amount is now more than double that from four years ago and based on the first three pay periods of this year, AMYA projects meeting or exceeding that budgeted amount by year-end. Additionally, AMYA's turnover rate is the highest in DMVA with experienced members departing at an increasing rate as experience gained here proves very useful to those seeking other opportunities in law enforcement, fire services, corrections, or other similar career fields.

The majority of the facilities supporting the ChalleNGe program were built in the 1970s and were intended for limited use during Alaska Army National Guard training periods. While multiple modifications occurred to support the ChalleNGe program, continued operations will require additional maintenance, renewal, and replacement to support future missions and requirements. The Division will work to identify and prioritize these within the Department, as it partners with the Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities on the State's evolving approach to addressing deferred maintenance needs.

Outreach to Veterans and Military Families

Office of Veterans' Affairs

After almost 10 years since inception, challenges associated with designing, constructing, and operating an interment facility in Interior Alaska have proven many and varied. Fortunately, with strong partnership from the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities, Department of Natural Resources, and the Alaska Mental Health Trust, a more promising location for the proposed Interior Alaska Veterans Cemetery is being finalized. However, additional funding and receipt authority, through a combination of a proposed Capital Appropriation scope change and new funding increments are necessary to bring this vision to reality. If approved, further increments for annual operating costs are also required.

In SFY19, DMVA proposed continuation of General Funding for Personal Services requirements following its transition of the fund source for one of OVA's full time staff members from State of Alaska funding to a federal grant. Rather than being fully continued, OVA received a one-time increment through the end of SFY19. Over the past decade, OVA's workload grew six-fold; however, staffing levels have not increased accordingly. The Division's current operating pace of essentially six days a week (roughly 2,900 cases per person per year) is unsustainable.

Absent restoral of the one-time increment and with no guarantee of continued federal grant funding beyond the end of SFY19, OVA will need to review staffing levels, potentially reducing support to Alaska's growing Veteran population.

Additionally, OVA is working to assist chronically homeless Veterans with security deposit funding sufficient to allow them to use permanent vouchers through the Housing and Urban Development and Department of Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) program. Furthermore, OVA is working to improve funeral honor support to Alaska Veterans, as both funding and manpower adjustments in the Alaska National Guard in 2013 greatly reduced this critical mission area.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2020

Defend and Protect Alaska and the United States

Alaska Air National Guard

The 168th Wing continues to advocate for the future KC-46 Tanker mission, working with HQ Pacific Air Forces and the National Guard Bureau to establish an Active Association at Eielson Air Force Base. In an Active Association, the reserve component (AKANG in this case) takes possession of and maintains the principal responsibility for the aircraft with support from active duty personnel, typically in terms of manpower. The 168th Wing is also a receptive partner for both the F-35 and the F-16 Aggressor missions, should USAF present the demand signal. Construction continues in full swing at Clear Air Force Station, primarily with the Long Range Discrimination Radar (LRDR) but also numerous projects to include a Military Construction (MILCON) project for a new Fire Station. The new LRDR is under construction with an anticipated Initial Operational Capability (IOC) in 2021. Additionally, with modernization of the USAF's current Early Warning Radar (EWR) to the Upgraded Early Warning Radar anticipated to be complete in the first quarter of 2019, Clear Air Force Station will become a full Ballistic Missile Defense System participant. The Air Force is actively exploring options to have the Alaska National Guard assume command of the current EWR mission, where currently 85% of the force is National Guard members. Should this initiative become a reality, both the 49th Missile Defense Battalion (Army National Guard) at Fort Greely and the 213th Space Warning Squadron (Air National Guard) at Clear Air Force Station will be mission partners and commanding operational units defending North America from ballistic missile attack.

The 176th Wing continues to illustrate the need for initial implementation of the Combat Rescue Helicopter (CRH) due to extensive usage rates both home and abroad. By 2026, the 210th Rescue Squadron will undergo a fleet-wide helicopter upgrade from current HH-60G models to the CRH HH-60W. Beginning in the first quarter of FFY19, aging HH-60G helicopters will be replaced with Operational Loss Replacement aircraft. The 176th Wing is also requesting additional Backup Aerospace Vehicle Inventory (BAI) aircraft to supplement its current five Primary Aerospace Vehicle Inventory (PAI) HH-60G aircraft, allowing for a robust 24/7 rescue alert posture and to facilitate aircrew readiness training. Additionally, the 176th Wing continues advocacy for full weapon system support for the 176th Air Defense Squadron's Battle Control Center (BCC), improving capabilities and interoperability connectivity to other weapon systems, as well as improving coordination and mission execution with other government agencies for civil support through radar following, communication, and radar data reduction for lost aircraft.

Alaska Army National Guard

As part of the Army National Guard aviation rebalance initiative, the AKARNG gained two UH-72 Lakota helicopters and will gain six CH-47 Chinook helicopters over the next year. Upon completion of the rebalance, AKARNG aviation capabilities will consist of an eight-ship UH-60 Command Aviation Company, a six-ship UH-60 Aviation Medical Evacuation Detachment, two UH-72 Lakotas, six CH-47 Chinooks, and two C-12s for a total of 24 airframes, significantly increasing lift capacity and operating range.

The 208th Construction Management Team, 1-297th IN Battalion, and 297th MP Company have deployed or will deploy in support of Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO's); these opportunities federal mission assurance, support readiness efforts through additional training days, provide real-world operational experience, and set conditions for the AKARNG's long-term success.

The National Guard Bureau resourced the AKARNG with an additional five recruiters between the end of FFY18 and beginning of FFY19, allowing stationing of additional recruiters in Bethel, Juneau, and Sitka. One of these newly

resourced recruiters is currently being trained and prepared to serve full time in Nome in June 2019. In addition, NGB is resourcing the AKARNG with an additional \$160,000 for new initiatives that will improve recruiter production in top Department of Defense zip codes and underrepresented populations in the AKARNG. The Department of the Army also authorized opportunity to award eight scholarships (between 2-4 years) for current and future soldiers to attend the University of Alaska (Anchorage or Fairbanks).

Alaska Aerospace Corporation

The Alaska Aerospace Board of Directors approved a resolution, adopting Articles of Organization and Operating Agreement and establishing Aurora Launch Services, LLC. As a wholly-owned subsidiary of Alaska Aerospace, Aurora Launch Services continues AAC's efforts to create more cost effective, private sector-focused contract launch services to spaceports worldwide.

Disaster Preparedness/Response and Recovery

Homeland Security and Emergency Management

The Division continues to shift its focus to supporting rural Alaskans and communities. By conducting training, exercises, public outreach and planning activities locally, the Division maximizes state and federal funding in order to protect lives, property, and the environment from all hazards Alaska faces.

Youth Intervention

Alaska Military Youth Academy

Following receipt of \$3 million in end of Federal Fiscal Year 2018 funding from the National Guard Bureau, the Department anticipates establishing two (2) two- to five-month residential Job ChalleNGe programs for AMYA graduates with a projected start date in March 2019. The Department has sufficient SFY19 funding to meet the State match requirement for these federal funds. The proposed Job ChalleNGe programs provide another path to success for AMYA graduates not planning on joining the military or continuing formal education. During these programs, students can learn and obtain employment certification from partner agencies in areas such as construction trades, healthcare services, culinary arts, unmanned aerial vehicles and small engine repair.

Outreach to Veterans and Military Families

Office of Veterans' Affairs

The Alaskan VA Healthcare System initiated improvements to the Veterans appointment program by adding a consolidated care team approach and a VA Healthcare System one-stop call program; while many Alaska Veterans are still adjusting to the new program, to date all feedback is very positive. Additionally, in 2018, the Alaskan VA was authorized an additional 100 medical care professionals; most are now hired and appointment wait time is projected to reduce significantly from the current rate of "within 30 days." Furthermore, VA/Native Healthcare Agreements will continue, ensuring over half of Alaska Veterans receive care closer to home and providing medical coverage to over 96% of Veterans residing in state. Moreover, pending legislation may improve adult day healthcare, allowing respite care for home providers, increasing paid home providers for WW II through Vietnam War veterans, and adjudicating appeals more quickly.

In 2018, the Alaskan VA Veteran Centers saw a reduction in trained clinicians who are able to provide counseling to Veterans, active duty member, and their families. The Office of Veterans Affairs will continue to work with the Alaska VA on options.

Contact Information

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