

MARYLAND MILITARY INSTALLATION COUNCIL

Monday, 10 March 2025; 0830-1155

Meeting Minutes

The first MMIC meeting of 2025 was conducted in-person at the Maryland Department of Transportation headquarters at 7201 Corporate Center Drive, Hanover, MD. The session included introductory remarks from the MMIC Executive Director, briefings on the Maryland National Guard, Maryland implementation of the Purple Star School Program, strategies for bridging education and employment gaps, resources for Maryland's former federal employees, military installation business and talent ecosystem initiative, a briefing on impact of new federal administration policies on Maryland installations, plus updates from the Maryland installation and base commanders, and from the military alliance presidents. Total attendance was 69.

Opening Comments

Lisa Swoboda, Executive Director of the MMIC, and Senior Director of the Maryland Commerce Office of Military & Federal Affairs called the meeting to order at 8:40 am, welcomed attendees, provided opening remarks with a review of the agenda, and recognized the MMIC cabinet members and special guests in attendance.

Keynote Speaker: Maryland National Guard (MDNG) Briefing

MG Janeen Birkhead, Maryland Adjutant General

- MG Birkhead presented on the MDNG structure, mission and capabilities overview, with detailed description of the dualities of federal/state chains of command, and warfighting/ domestic missions. Her presentation (attached) was followed by substantial Q&A.
- Presentation highlights included:
 - 6,000 National Guard members in Maryland.
 - MDNG includes Title 5 and Title 13 federal employees.
 - MDNG serves dual missions: warfighter and domestic missions addressing threats to the homeland and two chains of command: Governor Moore for cyber defense, search and rescue, disaster response, and humanitarian and to the US President for defense activation and mobilization.
 - Reviewed the history of the Maryland's National Guard, including the Maryland 400, George Washington's army and encouraged attendees to visit the Guard's history museum in downtown Baltimore.
 - In the past 18 months, MDNG has been activated to support the NATO meeting at the US Capitol, the Key Bridge disaster, various natural disasters, including Hurricane Helene, the Presidential Inauguration, and to the recent range fires at APG.
 - Referenced loss of their flying mission and the MD Air National Guard history and mobilization to support combat missions, domestic responses to natural disasters, border control, the Baltimore riots, and COVID19.
 - MG Birkhead is serving as an advisor to Governor Moore in his appointment to the Council of Governors.
 - Current initiatives include: planning for a 2026 State Cybersecurity Exercise, hosting state critical infrastructure working group, counter drug task force, CBERN response.
 - Recognized the MD National Guard Honor Guard (established in 1998) which is a ceremonial guard that provides funeral honors to MD veterans.
- Q&A Overview:

- Q (Bob Keane, MTA): Why don't we hear more about the MD 400?
 - A: Need to do a better job sharing the story and historical perspective about the MD 400.
- Q (Mary Jane Jernigan, CSSC): Are their exercises regional in focus?
 - A: Yes, work closely with VA on cyber exercises and regional FEMA teams. Work collaboratively nationally and internationally.
- Q (Lisa Swoboda, OMFA): What are the future in-demand capabilities for the Guard?
 - A: Critical infrastructure and preparedness is a focus. Position, navigation and timing concerns critical to resilience of our infrastructure of bridges, roads, rail, preventing air accidents, etc. Cybersecurity a focus for the Guard.
- Q (Terrance Taylor, Rep. Steny Hoyer's Office): What are the Guard's authorized personnel numbers and are they at full capacity? Recruitment strategy?
 - A: MD Army National Guard has 4,500 authorized and 4,300 assigned. Recruitment goals are being exceeded. Doing best in the nation by state and credits this to their presence in the community.
- Q (Dean Ertwine, OMFA/MMIC Member): Is there a realistic replacement to the A-10s? What impact can we expect to the state?
 - A: There is no total replacement currently and economic impact can be expected at Martin State Airport. The MD Congressional delegation recently signed a letter to the SecDef to support replacement and continues advocating to SASC for a replacement. Next NDAA versions (house and senate) demand recapitalization of fighter missions across the air national guard. Impact to maintainers of flight missions but looking to transition them to DC Guard or cyber mission. Long term lease with Martin State Airport for Guard to continue to provide firefighting support.
- Q (?): Implications on the Guard from AI?
 - A: AI is important but cannot currently replace boots on the ground.
- Q (Bob Keane, MTA): Any maritime reserves in Maryland?
 - A: No, but that could always change.

Lisa recognized a number of audience members, including Mary Jane Jernigan; the new MMIC Member, Monique Street, a military spouse; and Yolanda Rayford from Blue Star Families.

Maryland Purple Star Schools Update

Mary Gable, Assistant State Superintendent of Schools, and Commissioner Interstate Compact for Educational Opportunity for Military Children

- Purple Star Schools program is a statute within MD code.
- Maryland has eight inaugural Purple Star Schools.
 - One in Howard, One in St. Mary's, Two in Queen Anne's, Three in Anne Arundel, and one in Calvert.
 - Recently held a recognition ceremony of inaugural schools attended by the Governor.
- The Purple Star Schools go above and beyond for military students and families:
 - A designated military liaison
 - Provide digital resources to military students and families
 - Offer a peer-led transition program
 - Provide supplemental materials
- There are already 51 applications from Maryland schools for the next round of designations. Looking to announce the next round of Purple Star Schools in April 2025.
- The State Board of Education is the approval authority.
- Schools have to reapply every two school years so inaugural schools will need to reapply next year.

- Q&A:
 - Q (general audience): Do the schools receive financial support as a result of the award?
 - A: No financial support with the award.
 - Q (Bob Keane, MTA): President Trump has mentioned wanting to increase ship building capacity and Maryland has historically been a ship building state. What has MSDE done to target programs for maritime trades at high schools and universities?
 - A: MSDE covers birth to grade 12 preparing students for college and careers with apprenticeship programs, including dual enrollment. Push at K-12 level for career and technology development.
 - Q (Monique Street, MMIC member): Any plans to help military families with early childhood education access?
 - A: Early childhood education is not her area of expertise but there are financial qualifications for preschool scholarships. No universal pre-K in MD. Not familiar with any particular programming targeted for military families. Universal issue. Financially a big burden on the state to provide universal pre-K.

Bridging the Education and Employment Gaps

Eric Davis, Executive Director, Maryland STEM Education to Employment Ecosystem (MSE3)

- There are 5 regions within the state, each with different needs.
- The structure includes an academic advisory board (what we have to offer), and an industry advisory board (what we need).
- The goal is to align MD STEM education with the defense industry needs, with a focus on early workforce development.
- Commerce will be invited to join the MSE3 Council.

Networking Break 10:05-10:20

Trump 2.0 – DoD, Maryland and Military Families

Matt Herrmann, Principal, The Roosevelt Group

- CR funds the federal government to Sept. The House budget resolution pluses up the defense budget. Bill based on guidance from House bill passed last summer and Senate draft bill released by committee.
- TBD if CR will pass; house tightly divided and Republicans can only lose two votes and seem to have already lost one. The vote is tomorrow and it will need to pass out of the rules committee tonight. If it passes the House, it heads over to the Senate, which is uncertain.
- Currently working an appropriations package to avoid a government shutdown.
- If there is a shutdown if the CR fails, option to do another short term CR for another month to finish the bills. The full appropriations bill is nearly done and needs more time to finalize.
- Next up will be a “skinny” FY26 budget, with a year-long continuing resolution. (A better outcome would be a short-term CR.) This will be the first time the DoD is operating on a CR.
- There will be a community impact to the federal workforce in MD. Firings of federal workers has slowed down due to growing discontent from cabinet secretaries.
- Significant reduction of DoD’s probationary employees has not happened yet to avoid the firing of essential employees as seen in other agencies.
- OLDCC being targeted. The Defense Community Infrastructure Program appears zeroed for FY26. It will take a concerted effort to save some of the other OLDCC programs.
- There is a good possibility of a BRAC. (Recommended reading is “Project 2025” which is guiding the Trump administration and recommends a BRAC). All services acknowledge some degree of excess infrastructure. If there is a BRAC, DOD will likely abandon the procedure used in previous BRAC and seek new authority for the Department to make closure and realignment decisions.

- China continues as “the pacing threat” to drive strategy and budget. De-emphasis on Russia and Iran (to a lesser degree) as threats. This is driving policy and budgeting from WH.
- Trump’s first administration focused on ensuring made in America policies and Howard Lutnick, Secretary of Commerce, is talking about it. Silicon Valley interests conflict with DoD’s desire to on-shore the industrial base.
- Deputy SecDef Secretary Feinberg has a finance background. Could indicate a trend to attract more private capital to defense.

Resources for Maryland’s Former Federal Employees

John Feister, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor

- Department of Labor provides resources for displaced or terminated federal employees, including unemployment insurance
- Division of Workforce Development – resources at 33 state job centers across the state that help with supportive services for job seekers. Have printers for resumes, resume writers, workshops to understand the labor market. Also host job fairs.
- Employers are looking to hire, although the market is changing from a labor market to an employer market.
- Labor has federal transition resources for displaced workers.
- Office for Veterans Employment - Specific targeted veteran services include free assistance with professional license transition, priority of service, disabled veterans, and local veterans. Specific staff members help veterans one-on-one and work in the field to ensure employers are available to veteran job seekers.
- Dept of Labor has 7 divisions, including Division of Workforce development and Adult Learning.
- The unemployment insurance division provides insurance payments to eligible unemployed people.
 - Unemployed workers should submit an application online through MD Labor’s website to file a claim.
 - For federal workers, more challenging as unemployment insurance paid to anyone who has paid into the state’s unemployment insurance program.
 - Payments, while low, can support families and range from \$50-430/week and can last up to 26 weeks.
 - Requirements to stay eligible for unemployment include weekly filing and participation in MD Labor workshops.
- Maryland Workforce Exchange connects job seekers with employers.
- Q&A:
 - Q (Terrance Taylor, Steny Hoyer’s Office): Do federal workers apply where they live?
 - A: Federal workers should apply in the state where their duty location is located, not where they live
 - Q (?): Who pays out the claim for federal workers?
 - A: For federal workers, the federal government pays that claim, however workers still apply through MD Labor.
 - Q (Bob Keane, MTA): How does Labor identify what employers are looking for and what their industry needs are?
 - A: Mary Gaable is on a task force for defining the future of Maryland’s labor needs. Labor provides career and technical education.
 - Q (Monique Street, MMIC member): Advice for military spouses looking for unemployment support?
 - A: Interested parties need to apply and be able to show that they were working and are no longer employed.

Maryland Military Installation Business and Talent Ecosystem Efforts and Recommendations

Secretary Anthony Woods, Maryland Department of Veterans and Military Families

- One of three federal workers is a veteran. So the federal layoffs are hitting hard on our veteran community.
- Secretary Woods described the purpose and goals of the Installation Business and Talent Ecosystem initiative. Commerce and Veterans Affairs are building resources that are relevant to Maryland's installations.
- Asks MMIC members to reach out to Secretary Woods (anthony.woods@maryland.gov) to share their thoughts on the report by April 1.
- Lisa asked MMIC members to review and provide recommendations by April and notified members that they would also receive an electronic copy.
- Q (Dale More, SMNA): Question regarding the proposed business to business tax proposal
 - A (Del. Mike Rogers): Business tax proposal is under consideration as a methodology to close \$3B deficit but no decisions have been finalized yet. The state is looking to see what will happen on March 14th with possible government shutdown.

Maryland Military Installation Commander Updates

Fort Meade – COL Yolanda Gore, Garrison Commander

- "Return to Work" has been hectic.
- The Reese Gate is now open and designated as the main gate to Fort Meade.
- The post gym is now open on Sundays.
- The Army's 250th Birthday will be celebrated 9-13 June and will be reaching out to MMIC to plan and coordinate the event.
- New Senator Alsobrooks and Representative Elfeth are both scheduled to visit Ft. Meade.
- It would be helpful to have a central place (or repository) for all the information shared at the MMIC meetings.

Joint Base Andrews – Col. Jun Oh, Installation and 316th Wing Commander

- JBA is hosting the seventh annual STEAM event for high school students for 300 HS students and teachers in PG county.
- A State of the Base event is planned for 25 April. Invitations going out to local, state, and federal officials and programming will include mission and challenges.
- A public meeting on community environmental impacts is scheduled for 29 April.
- JBA expects 25,000 students to attend the 2025 Air & Space Expo Open House.
- Prince Georges County is finalizing the local Military Installation Resilience Review (MIRR). The project focuses on the resilience of transportation routes around the base.
- Conducting a study that focuses on building energy resilience and studies the feasibility of a geothermal energy facility on the base. Will include recommendations that can be replicated across the DoD.

Coast Guard Yard – CAPT David Obermeier, Commanding Officer

- CAPT Obermeier will retire in June.
- U.S. shipbuilding has declined dramatically. In 1950 Baltimore had 50% of the world's shipbuilding. Today it is .04%. All shipyard workers in Baltimore, around 600, work for the CGY.
- No infrastructure investments in shipbuilding since WWII and hopeful that CR or future budgets will include increased opportunities for shipbuilding.

Naval Air Station (NAS) Patuxent River– CAPT Mark Zematis, Executive Officer

- Vehicular traffic issues with “return to work” policy. Traffic has increased from 7,000 to 15,000 vehicles through the main gate. Roads are crowded and are unable to accommodate the increase in traffic. Also need to find desks for 1,900 people.
- The test pilot school will celebrate its 80th anniversary.
- NAS Pax River will host an airshow on 20-21 June 2026 with the Blue Angels..

Naval Support Activity, Washington representing Carderock, Olney and Suitland sites CAPT Ryan Gaul, then Naval Surface Warfare Center, Carderock Division Dr. Elissa Trueman

- NSA Washington represents seven (7) installations across the DMV, including 3 in Maryland: Suitland, Carderock, and Olney.
- Still adjusting to increased vehicular traffic due to the “return to work” policy. Particular impact at the Washington Navy Yard.
- NSF Suitland conducted a Tabletop Exercise to address drinking water issues with the community. Days later, there was an outage that affected drinking water, so timely.
- At NSF Carderock, with NSWC Carderock their largest tenant, they are pursuing restoration to the Rock Run stream as well as nature-based solutions to alleviate nuisance flooding in the area.
- Mutual Aid Support agreement with Montgomery County Fire and Police which have helped train NSA Washington police officers and recently helped put out a fire on NSF Carderock.
- NSWC Carderock updates:
 - Educational Partnership agreements with local communities.
 - Upcoming STEM curriculum opportunities.
 - Bi-annual International Submarine Race in the David Taylor basin on base occurring June
 - Industry Day for 3D technology scheduled for August.

Aberdeen Proving Ground – COL Phil Mundweil, Garrison Commander

- APG will divest the Blossom Point research facility to the Navy.
- The DEVCOM commander, MG Cushing, is being reassigned as the Army Futures Command Chief of Staff in Austin, TX.
- APG may be disproportionately affected by recent federal actions. Most workers are civilian or contract workers. Expects 10-20% reduction in force and that on-post units that are lab or testing oriented will be impacted. US Army Chemical Munitions Activity was already targeted and that process has now been accelerated.
- APG will host a National Vietnam War Veterans Day event on 29 March. This will be the final celebration of this day and will recognize local Vietnam veterans.
- Major tenant units will participate in an Advanced Planning Briefing for Industry in April.
- COL Mundweil’s change of command is scheduled for 6 June.

Fort Detrick – COL Christopher Chung, Garrison Commander

- No report. COL Chung had to depart the meeting for another commitment.

Army Corps of Engineers – COL Frank Pera, Baltimore District Commander

- The Army Corps of Engineers supports all installations and communities in Maryland.
- The Baltimore District currently has 1100 civilian employees. Impacted by federal RTO and are adjusting their footprint at the Inner Harbor and satellite locations accordingly. Commuting for workers has been impacted by the key bridge collapse. Two percent of the workforce have signed up for the early retirement incentive but most were already close to retirement.
- Spending continues on current projects with no impact from CR or decrease in spending.
- New projects in the solicitation phase could be impacted by new tariffs which would impact pricing structures and cause increases in the cost of projects and impact on budgets.

- The workforce is project-funded, not Title 10 funded. Annual expenditures are approximately \$2.3B.
- The District is impacted by the current hiring freeze and the need to hire specialty skills.
- The Beltsville Bureau of Engraving and Printing project estimated cost of \$1.5B is being renegotiated. May keep the project at a smaller capacity.
- Fort Meade project is being delineated by different site conditions throughout the electrical grid.
- The incinerator project for the Defense Health Agency at Fort Detrick has completed the design phase.
- With priority status, the Key Bridge permitting is on track.

Naval Support Activity Indian Head – Andy Revelos, Commander’s representative

- RTO challenges have the base trying to address increased traffic issues. Base is looking at who is probationary or who is at risk for a reduction in force action.
- The Energetic Comprehensive Plan currently includes 500 separate projects. The local approach will seek compatible growth with the Indian Head community.
- The community received an Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation grant to conduct a traffic study, necessary for community planning and to address increased growth and investment on the base.

Naval Support Activity Annapolis – Mike Coury, Commander’s representative

- Due to the nature of work at the Naval Academy, there has been little impact of the “return to work” policy. Have a small amount of excess space they are offering to local federal workers.
- A Blue Angels demonstration is scheduled during commissioning week for 20-21 May.
- Security reviews and certifications have been recently completed. Worked with community partners for these exercises and included practice drills, including an active shooter drill at alumni hall and an aerosol release of fentanyl from a UAV.
- The Bancroft Hall renovation is underway. The first wing will be completed in 2026.
- Beginning a 2-year project to restore structural issues in the perimeter wall.
- More flooding events this year than ever before, including two major flooding events.
- Short range planning activities include Gate 2 flood wall and increasing safety for pedestrians and bikers on the Route 450/King George street.
- Ronald Wolfe is the new school liaison officer.

Naval Support Activity Bethesda – Not represented

Military Alliance President Remarks

Army Alliance (AA) – Mike Ray, President

- The Alliance partnered with the Harford Chamber of Commerce to host a legislative breakfast on 21 Nov.
- The annual Alliance luncheon on 4 March featured remarks by Brian Glackin on what impacts to expect from the new federal administration.
- The annual Alliance “Challenge meetings” with APG major tenant senior leaders is complete.
- The Alliance annual dinner meeting is scheduled for 3 Jun.
- APG will celebrate the U.S. Army’s 250th anniversary with several events the week of 8-14 Jun.

Fort Detrick Alliance (FDA) – Kelly Spore, Executive Director

- The new FDA Executive Director introduced herself and said that the alliance is working on building relationships with the base.
- The FDA quarterly networking breakfast on 25 Feb was a success.

- The FDA is coordinating with the Garrison to schedule an installation tour for community partners.

Fort Meade Alliance (FMA) – Tim O’Ferrall, Executive Director

- Next week on 20 March Commerce Secretary Harry Coker will present keynote remarks at the FMA Industry Day.
- FMA is beginning the second annual cycle of a Career Transition Program, with focus on military spouses. Applications are open through FMA’s website. Matchmaking event between employers and employees scheduled for 8 May and will include scheduled interviews.
- The FMA Tech Mania program at Meade High School will be expanded to include middle school students.
- And the Project SCOPE program (Security Clearance Overview and Preparation Education) is expanding to include middle school students.

Military Alliance Council (MAC) (Indian Head) – Pam Frank, Executive Director

- Discussed OLDCC grant for local Indian Head traffic study. Builds on the NSF Indian Head MIRR project and is the result of gate crashers and emergency access needs of the base. Tri-County Council of Southern MD is the grant sponsor. The project is called the Indian Head Technology Corridor Transportation Safety Study and will address increased traffic from base growth, including transportation of dangerous materials.
- The ECMP is currently programmed for \$2.7B over the next 15 years. Optimistic that IH being the Navy’s only arsenal, will continue to receive this increased investment.
- The annual State of the Installation brief is scheduled for 20 March.
- This year is the 20th Anniversary for the MAC.

Southern Maryland Naval Alliance (SMNA) – Dale Moore, President

- SMNA met with Senator Van Hollen and Representative Elfreth to discuss concerns about workforce and implications from recent federal actions.
- Expressed concern about the expense of a proposed R&D tax having an impact on small businesses around the base and impact economic development. Pushing for LRP threshold increase as well.
- SMNA continues to support workforce development initiatives.
- Also expressed concern about intellectual property rights.
- Joint stimulation environment trains 1,000 pilots within this facility using digital and virtual environments to test systems.
- SMNA released their annual report.
- SMNA joined the Maryland Aerospace and Technology Commission.
- Southern MD 2030 workforce initiative hosting a SPARK event between local students and businesses and expects 1,000 attendees.

Maritime Technology Alliance (MTA) – Bob Keane, President

- Congratulations and thanks to CAPT Obermeier for his impactful leadership while in command of the Coast Guard Yard.
- The MTA continues support for the “Let’s Go Boys and Girls STEM” program. The program provides high school students with internships, many have been hired by Carderock.
- The House Armed Services Committee will hold a hearing this week on the state of the U.S. shipbuilding industry. MTA prepped Representative Elfreth for this hearing.

Andrews Business & Community Alliance (ABCA) – Not represented

Closing Remarks

Karen Holt, Harford County Economic Director, and President, Association of Defense Communities reminded attendees of two upcoming ADC events:

- The ADC National Summit 31 March – 2 April at the Crystal Gateway Marriott.
- The annual ADC Installation Innovation Forum is scheduled for Monterey, CA in October.

Ms. Swoboda thanked those in attendance for participation, announced that the second Maryland Defense Forum is scheduled 17-18 Jun, and adjourned the session at 11:55 am.

Enclosures:

MMIC Agenda 3.10.25

MMIC Slides 3.10.25

MMIC Attendee List 3.10.25