



22 March 2013

Fellow Guard Airmen

Today General Frank Grass will preside over an Assumption of Responsibility ceremony for me as I formally take the reins as the Director of the Air National Guard (ANG). This is quite an honor and I am humbled at this opportunity to serve all of you. I actually arrived in Washington two weeks ago but the responsibility found me immediately! I arrived during a period of budget turmoil and uncertainty but I view this time as a period of opportunity as well. My commitment to you and your Adjutants General is clear... my staff and I will do everything within our authority to ensure our Airmen have clear policies, equipment, training, and resources to accomplish assigned missions.

We have a great organization and culture. We remain community based, team oriented, and experienced. The National Guard is unique—we reflect the history of our nation and the constitution as well. The dual role of supporting homeland operations and defending our national interests abroad is a noble and righteous duty. I know that all of you are passionate about being in the Guard, and it shows. Your families, employers, and state leadership should be rewarded for their unwavering support as well.

We operate as a part of the Total Force. Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Mark Welsh, always speaks in terms of the “690,000 Airmen.” We are an important part of the overall team; indeed, we are inseparable. We meet the same standards, we take the same inspections, and we are on the first string when it comes to operations. With this in mind, let me ask you to do something—continue to serve with distinction.

ANG Command Chief Jim Hotaling and I have the distinct pleasure in recognizing and honoring our best. But please make our job harder by driving up the competition to be acknowledged as the best. How you present yourself as a professional Airman could not be more important at this time. Extra resources aren’t required for this effort and your commitment to serve with distinction as an honorable and committed Airman will pay off in ways you can’t imagine. Not just for you personally, but for your unit, your state, the ANG, and the USAF. I hope you take this challenge seriously.

The National Guard has come a long way since I joined it over 20 years ago. But we can go farther, much farther. It has been a pleasure for me to be a part of the National Guard experience and journey. I am really looking forward to serving as the 15th Director of the ANG and serving all of you with distinction.

With appreciation and admiration,

STANLEY E. CLARKE III
Lieutenant General, USAF
Director, Air National Guard