

UTAH NATIONAL GUARD STRATEGIC PLAN - FY26

READINESS



INNOVATION/
LETHALITY



CULTURE



Executive Summary:

The Utah National Guard's strategic plan for State Operations is a comprehensive framework designed to optimize support for state personnel and programs. Ultimately, this will lead to enhanced readiness of our forces to respond effectively to a diverse range of challenges within Utah. This iteration of the strategic plan continues to align more directly with the Governor's mission for the Utah National Guard, which is different, yet supportive of the Federal (warfighting) strategic plan. As we move forward, the three components (the Utah Army National Guard, the Utah Air National Guard and State Operations) will work collaboratively to utilize all available resources to ensure we support The Adjutant's General's priorities: **Readiness, Innovation, and Culture**. In addition, the plan answers the request from the Governor to focus efforts for his second term on **People, Place, Prosperity**. Acknowledging the pivotal role of the National Guard in upholding community safety and backing state endeavors, this strategic blueprint delineates essential goals, objectives, and strategies to uphold the Utah National Guard's commitment as a dependable partner in the state of Utah.

Utah National Guard State Operations plan is for Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26, July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026).

Vision:

Our vision for the National Guard is to be the cornerstone of national security and community resilience. We aspire to embody a force of inclusive, adaptable, skilled, and trusted guardians, fostering unity, safety, and prosperity for all.

Mission:

To serve our nation and communities with unwavering dedication, the Utah National Guard is committed to safeguarding lives, property, and freedom. We stand ready to respond to all threats, natural disasters, and emergencies, both at home and abroad, with resilience, integrity, and honor.

Core Values:

Army

Loyalty

Duty

Respect

Selfless Service

Honor

Integrity

Personal Courage

Air Force

Integrity First

Service Before Self

Excellence In All We Do

Goal 1: Utah National Guard has clear communication strategies across various channels to promote **internal, state, federal, and foreign engagement**, thereby optimizing resource allocation and utilization across all Utah National Guard units to maximize readiness and operational effectiveness.

Objective 1.1: Strengthen community and legislative **outreach efforts** to effectively communicate the vital role of the National Guard, cultivate support, and advocate for increased resources and funding allocations, enhancing our capacity to fulfill both state and federal missions with excellence and resilience.

Strategy 1.1.1: **Offer insight** into the Utah National Guard for our service members, legislators, stakeholders, our international state partner (Morocco), and community members through engaging discussions, formal document submissions, events, open dialogue, fostering understanding, and building strong partnerships to support our shared goals and mission.

Strategy 1.1.2: **Use armories** throughout the state to serve as hubs for National Guard outreach efforts. These centers offer multifunctional spaces for hosting community events, educational workshops, and training programs. By leveraging the accessibility of armories, the National Guard will actively engage with local communities, strengthen partnerships, and increase awareness of the Guard's mission and contributions. In addition, these efforts support the Governor's priority—"protecting rural".

Strategy 1.1.3: **Harness the power of community events** as platforms for National Guard outreach by actively participating and supporting various local gatherings, festivals, and activities. The National Guard will showcase its role, capabilities, and contributions while fostering meaningful connections with community members, enhancing visibility, building trust, and promoting understanding of its mission and values.

Strategy 1.1.4: **Capitalize on regional and national events** and participate in regional and national organizations as opportunities to strengthen partnerships and effectively leverage state and federal resources. This strategy involves proactively engaging with relevant stakeholders and agencies before, during, and after organized events to coordinate resource sharing, joint planning, and mutual support efforts.

Strategy 1.1.5: The purpose of our **new website** is to:

Engage with Stakeholders: The website acts as a one-stop access point to facilitate seamless communication and interaction between the Utah National Guard and its internal (e.g., guard

members, families, retirees) and external (e.g., community members, affiliates, recruits) stakeholders.

24/7 Accessibility: Stakeholders can access important static information (e.g., organizational structure, FAQs, and resources) and dynamic content (e.g., news updates, event calendars, and announcements) at any time, ensuring convenience and availability.

Strengthened Support Structure: By providing a reliable platform for disseminating information, the website enhances the Guard's ability to support its members, their families, and the community effectively.

Recruitment and Public Outreach: The professional, well-maintained website attracts recruits and increases public awareness of the Guard's mission, services, and community involvement.

Improved Efficiency and Resource Management: Reducing reliance on physical communication channels and administrative overhead, the website offers an efficient, cost-effective way to disseminate and collect information.

Transparency and Trust Building: The website fosters trust by promoting transparency about the Guard's operations, programs, and community impact.

Dynamic Features for Interaction: The inclusion of interactive tools, such as contact forms, feedback mechanisms, and event sign-ups, allows for direct communication and engagement with stakeholders.

Consistency in Messaging: Centralized digital content ensures consistent, accurate information delivery across all stakeholder groups.

Objective 1.2: Ensure fiscal responsibility and efficiency in **budget management** through rigorous oversight, strategic resource allocation, and continuous evaluation, maximizing the value of every dollar invested in National Guard operations while maintaining the highest standards of readiness and capability.

Strategy 1.2.1: Utilize the Financial Network (FINET) as a comprehensive platform to enhance fiscal responsibility and transparency within the National Guard. This strategy involves redefining FINET categories within the Morale Welfare Recreation hospitality suite (MWR), leveraging FINET's data analytics capabilities to streamline budget management processes, identify cost-saving opportunities, and track

expenditures in real time. **In order to minimize fiscal risk, the MWR program MUST have a state-compliant point of sale (POS) system.**

Strategy 1.2.2: Implement monthly and quarterly budget reviews to systematically assess financial performance, cooperative agreement compliance, realign resources, and optimize budget utilization within the National Guard. Through these reviews, key stakeholders will identify areas of overspending, underspending, and emerging priorities, enabling informed decision-making to reallocate resources as needed. Additionally, leveraging data analytics and performance metrics during these reviews will enhance transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in budget management.

Strategy 1.2.3: Optimize state operations division within the National Guard to complement federal functions while enhancing oversight and management of state-specific programs and initiatives. Continue review of state employee job descriptions and personnel responsibilities to ensure allocation of resources provides optimal support to the Utah National Guard. Continue to advocate for the addition of IT, Department of Technology Services, audit, and background check capability to the State Operations team.

Customer Experience

Use website analytics to gauge success of website rebuild - Categories on the website include recruiting engagement, full-time employment opportunities, unit, program and affiliate information, member/family/retiree resources, external community support, and current news and events.

Performance Measures

Utah National Guard website utilization can be measured for outreach metrics.

Goal 2: Empower National Guard personnel by fostering a culture of acceptance, innovation, and professional development, encouraging creative problem-solving and adaptive thinking to address evolving challenges, thereby enhancing operational effectiveness and resilience.

Objective 2.1: Implement comprehensive member engagement initiatives aimed at fostering a culture of belonging, professional growth, and fulfillment within the National Guard workforce, thereby enhancing morale, loyalty, and recruitment/retention rates, ensuring a highly skilled and motivated end-strength ready to meet current and future mission requirements

Strategy 2.1.1: Gather, analyze, and act upon feedback from National Guard personnel and stakeholders to identify and address key areas for

improvement in recruitment and retention efforts. This objective aims to leverage the data-driven capabilities of Qualtrics to gather insights, identify trends, and pinpoint areas of strength and opportunity within recruitment and retention processes.

Strategy 2.1.2: Cultivate a culture of employee-driven innovation

within the National Guard by establishing platforms and mechanisms for idea generation, collaboration, and implementation, fostering a dynamic environment where creative solutions to operational challenges are encouraged and rewarded, ultimately enhancing effectiveness, adaptability, and mission success. This includes the pay for performance program, state tuition assistance, and the recruiting and retention bonus program.

Strategy 2.1.3: Leverage the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR)

programs and funding streams to enhance member engagement within the National Guard, fostering camaraderie, resilience, and overall well-being among personnel. By promoting a culture of inclusivity and belonging through the MWR program, the National Guard enhances morale, retention rates, and overall readiness by ensuring that personnel feel valued, supported, and connected to their unit and organization. In addition, these efforts will support the Governor's priority—"strengthening families".

Objective 2.2: Enhance recruitment and retention strategies through monetary incentives and other creative initiatives within the National Guard to sustain a highly skilled and motivated force and bolster overall readiness capabilities. This objective aims to attract and retain qualified personnel through targeted recruitment initiatives, comprehensive retention programs, and cultivating a supportive and inclusive organizational culture.

Strategy 2.2.1: Implement and optimize a comprehensive State Tuition Assistance program within the National Guard to facilitate educational opportunities for personnel, thereby attracting and retaining high-caliber individuals, cultivating a highly educated and skilled workforce, as well as fostering a culture of lifelong learning and professional development. In addition, these efforts will support the Governor's priority—"educational excellence".

Strategy 2.2.2: Develop a robust recruitment and retention strategy within the National Guard to sustain a highly skilled and motivated force. By prioritizing recruitment efforts to attract qualified individuals and implementing targeted retention initiatives to support career progression and personal development, the National Guard will ensure a strong,

resilient workforce capable of meeting current and future mission requirements.. In addition, these efforts will support the Governor's priority—"solving and serving".

Strategy 2.2.3: Enhance accessibility and transparency of **benefit information** for National Guard members and civilian employees of the Utah National Guard by implementing comprehensive communication strategies and resources. This objective aims to ensure that all Guard personnel have easy access to accurate and up-to-date information regarding their entitled benefits, including healthcare, education, retirement, and other entitlements. By providing clear and concise benefit information through multiple channels such as (internal) sharepoint, workshops, and informational materials, the National Guard will empower its members to make informed decisions about their benefits. In addition, these efforts will support the Governor's priority—"improving health".

Strategy 2.2.4: Establish and strengthen connections with **National Guard retirees** to foster lifelong community and support among current members, highlighting the enduring benefits of Guard service beyond time spent in the Utah National Guard. By facilitating mentorship programs, hosting retiree events, and providing ongoing support and resources for retirees, the National Guard will create a sense of continuity, pride, and belonging that motivates current members to view Guard service as a lifelong commitment and source of enduring camaraderie.

Strategy 2.2.5: To enhance our recruiting strategy, we will **broaden our reach** and leverage the unique cultural diversity found in the Wasatch Front, as well as expand into areas beyond Utah, including initiatives like the American Samoa outreach.

Customer Experience

Data captured in Qualtrics survey for recruiting and retention. Success measured by end strength numbers for both the Army and Air National Guard.

Goal 3: Enhance **readiness** through collaborative state and community partnerships, facility modernization, equipment optimization, protection of training space, and resource leveraging with stakeholders, ensuring the National Guard maintains a state of constant preparedness to swiftly respond to any emergency or mission requirement, safeguarding our communities and nation.

Objective 3.1: Forge **collaborative partnerships** with city, state, federal agencies, and community organizations to enhance readiness capabilities and response effectiveness within the National Guard. By fostering a culture of collaboration and interagency cooperation, the National Guard will enhance its

readiness posture, improve interoperability, and expand its capacity to address complex and evolving threats and challenges, ultimately enhancing mission success and overall readiness.

Strategy 3.1.1: Participate in **cooperative agreements** with the federal government to optimize resource sharing, training opportunities, and operational support, thereby enhancing readiness within the Utah National Guard. By fostering close partnerships with federal entities, the Guard can enhance its interoperability, resilience, and preparedness to effectively respond to both state and federal missions, ensuring readiness across all operational domains.

Strategy 3.1.2: Maximize the utilization of **state resources**, and capitalize on unrealized potential within the Utah National Guard, to enhance the operational effectiveness and readiness of the Utah National Guard. This involves identifying and leveraging state personnel, agencies, properties, contracts, and programs to enhance the capabilities of the Utah National Guard. Additionally, it entails establishing formal partnerships and agreements with state agencies, private entities, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to access specialized resources and expertise.

Objective 3.2: Pursue **Modernization** of the National Guard facilities to enhance operational efficiency, safety, and readiness capabilities, aligning infrastructure with evolving mission requirements and technological advancements. This objective aims to prioritize investments in facility upgrades, renovations, and modernization initiatives to ensure that National Guard units have access to state-of-the-art facilities that **meet current operational needs** and support future readiness objectives.

Strategy 3.2.1: Develop a comprehensive capital improvement plan to modernize and upgrade National Guard facilities, ensuring optimal operational functionality, safety, and efficiency. This strategy involves conducting thorough assessments of existing facilities to identify infrastructure deficiencies, prioritize improvement needs, and establish long-term investment goals. Key components include securing funding through federal grants, state appropriations, or public-private partnerships and implementing phased improvement projects based on clear prioritization criteria. The strategy also emphasizes leveraging sustainable design practices, energy efficiency measures, and innovative technologies to enhance facility resilience and reduce long-term operating costs. As part of this effort, addressing rising utility expenses—particularly for electricity, water, and heating—is critical to maintaining operational readiness. Ongoing investment in energy infrastructure will help offset

these growing costs and ensure facilities remain functional and mission-ready across 22 communities.

Strategy 3.2.2: Develop a comprehensive Armory/land management plan to **leverage monetary value of state-owned land and facilities**

throughout the state, charging fees for land usage to generate revenue and support readiness initiatives within the Utah National Guard. This strategy involves establishing leasing agreements with private entities, organizations, and government agencies for various purposes, such as training exercises, equipment storage, and logistical support. This includes a collaboration with the Military Installation Development Authority (MIDA).

Strategy 3.2.3: Conduct a comprehensive **review of current missions** within the Utah National Guard to identify opportunities for enhancement or efficiencies, ensuring readiness and adaptability to **effectively address evolving state and federal challenges.**

Objective 3.3: Develop and implement comprehensive strategies to **protect land** designated for training purposes, future growth, or to mitigate noise impacts, ensuring the sustainability of training activities while addressing community concerns and preserving environmental integrity. By safeguarding lands and implementing noise mitigation measures, the National Guard will sustain critical training capabilities, minimize disruptions to surrounding communities, provide future growth opportunities, and foster positive relationships with stakeholders, ultimately enhancing readiness and mission effectiveness.

Strategy 3.3.1: Implement a comprehensive modernization plan for the **West Traverse Sentinel Landscape (WTSL)** to optimize training capabilities, enhance operational effectiveness, and preserve natural resources. This strategy involves conducting a thorough assessment of existing infrastructure, technology, and training needs within the WTSL area and developing targeted land protection initiatives to address identified gaps and opportunities. By investing in land use efforts tailored to the unique characteristics of the WTSL, the National Guard can improve training outcomes, reduce environmental impacts, and ensure the long-term viability of this critical training landscape for current and future generations of military personnel.

Strategy 3.3.2: Identify underutilized Armory land parcels and less desirable plots that could be exchanged with other entities to **protect training spaces and provide future mission growth.** This includes exploring potential collaborations with private sector entities or government agencies to expand training areas into more desirable

locations through avenues like commercial leasing, joint ventures, or development projects. Additionally, conduct feasibility studies, engage stakeholders, and obtain necessary approvals to maximize the value of Armory land assets while aligning with state and community interests.

Customer Experience (Website)

- For **recruiting** engagement: Track conversions such as form completions, inquiries, and clicks on "apply now" buttons.
- For **full-time employment opportunities**: Monitor time spent on job-related pages.
- For **unit, program, and affiliate information**: Measure page views, time on page, and bounce rates to gauge engagement with this content.
- For **guardsmen/family/retiree resources**: Track downloads, and page views to assess resource usage. The majority of the pages on the website are intended to provide information quickly therefore the goal is minimal time on each page.
- For **external community engagement and support**: Monitor outbound links, event registrations, and social sharing metrics.
- For **current news**: Track page views, scroll depth, and click-through rates on news stories.
- For **journey mapping**: analyze how users navigate through the website from one category to another, identifying high-traffic paths and drop-off points to optimize cross-linking and usability.
- For **behavior flow analysis**: use behavior flow to understand how users interact across different categories. This can reveal if users are finding the information they need, which will help refine content and navigation.
- Use **conversion tracking** for goals like recruitment sign-ups, application submissions, and resource downloads, set up specific conversion goals. This helps quantify engagement for key actions.
- Use **heatmaps** to reveal where users are clicking and engaging on pages, particularly in key categories like employment and recruiting. Use **session recordings** can show navigation challenges or frustrations.
- Use **feedback collection** to offer short, targeted feedback forms or post-visit surveys in each section. For example, after a user visits the recruiting page, ask if they found the job-related information helpful.

COBI performance measures

Personnel Readiness - assigned and available
Individual Training Readiness - qualification completion
Individual Training Completion - MOS/AFSC completion
UTNG Mission Fulfillment - deployment accomplished
Installation Readiness - buildings and facilities
Facility Project Federal/State Share - target 75% Federal
Facility Maintenance Cost per Square Foot - 75% Fed/25% State
Utility Cost per Square Foot - tracking energy savings initiatives
Tuition Assistance Applications Fulfilled - total #
Recruiting and Retention bonuses Fulfilled - total #
Percentage of Tuition Assistance Filled - % due to limited funding
WTSI - project completion % instead of total acres

Performance Measures

Utah National Guard resource utilization rates can be measured for outreach metrics.