



Office of the Adjutant General



OTAG 2024 Budget

Kodjo S. Knox-Limbacker
Major General, U.S. Army
OTAG 2024 Budget

1 Introduction

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3 Good afternoon 35th Legislature Finance Committee Chair, the Honorable Senator Donna
4 Frett-Gregory, Vice Chair Senator Novelle E. Francis, Senator Marvin A. Blyden; Senator
5 Samuel Carrion; Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator Ray Fonseca; Senator Javan E.
6 James Sr; other non-committee members present in the Senate chambers; family, friends,
7 and the general public viewing and listening locally and abroad.

8 I am Major General Kodjo S. Knox-Limbacker, the 15th Adjutant General and Commander
9 of the Virgin Islands Army and Air National Guard serving at the discretion of the
10 Commander and Chief of the Virgin Islands National Guard Governor Albert Bryan Jr. It
11 is an honor to be sitting before this esteemed body to discuss our proposed Fiscal Year
12 2024 operating budget for the Office of The Adjutant General. My teammates joining me
13 here today to provide testimony are.

- 14 ➤ Ms. Nikita Ward, Executive Director of the Office of the Adjutant General, and
- 15 ➤ Colonel Deborah Lobbenmeier, the United States Property and Fiscal
16 Officer for the Virgin Islands National Guard.

17 My team and I thank you for the opportunity to provide our testimony today while members
18 of our Air National Guard are deployed in support of combat operations in the middle east
19 and our Army Guard are deployed along the United States Southwest Borders supporting
20 Homeland Security initiatives in line with our United States National Defense Strategy to
21 deter and defend our nations interest abroad and defending the Homeland. The remaining

22 of our Air and Army National Guard forces continue to build and sustain warfighter
23 readiness, and are postured to project combat power, defend the homeland, and respond to
24 natural and man-made all hazards in the territory. We look forward to answering your
25 varied questions after articulating our mission, strategic vision, and priorities for continued
26 support to the territory with our proposed budget. During my testimony I will provide the
27 Bottom-line up Front, Agency Overview, Executive Summary context of our operating
28 environment, our responsibilities, and my team will address our prioritized financial
29 strategy to fund our plan to sustain and improve operational readiness of the Virgin Islands
30 National Guard to meet its federal mission and local mission under the Bryan Roach
31 Administration.

32 **The Bottom-Line Up Front**

33 Our proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2024 is **\$2,716,886.00** for Fiscal Year 2024
34 to sustain a ***Ready, Relevant, and Responsive*** Army and Air National Guard Joint
35 Force with worldwide force projection capabilities. The proposed budget requested from
36 the Virgin Islands government, is 19.4 times less than the federal projected contribution of
37 **\$52,800,000.00**. These funds have enabled us to safeguard our territory and execute
38 federal wartime missions supporting combatant commanders' efforts against belligerent
39 actors.

40 The Fiscal Year 2024 projected \$52,800,000.00 federal funds will be received and
41 controlled through the United States Property and Fiscal Officer on behalf of the National
42 Guard Bureau. This is an increase of one percent over last fiscal year. The OTAG's

43 proposed budget, \$2,716,886,00 is to execute the cost share of \$679,616.00 of federal funds
44 for FY24 Master Cooperative Agreement Program. As outlined in our Master Cooperative
45 Agreement, the territory is required to provide matching funds for expenditures that are not
46 100 percent federally funded for example 25% (GVI) / 75% (Fed) maintenance cost share
47 for St Croix and 50% (GVI) / 50% (Fed). Ms. Ward and Colonel Lobbenmeier will provide
48 the details of such expenditures later in our testimony.

49 **Executive Summary**

50 The Office of The Adjutant General plans, coordinates, and
51 implements support of territorial Emergency Support Functions
52 responders to natural and man-made disasters, civil disturbances,
53 foreign and domestic threats, and weapons of mass destruction.



54 The Office of The Adjutant General (OTAG) was established in Executive Order
55 30-1987 to support the Virgin Islands National Guard (VING) which was established
56 in October 1973. Pursuant of Federal Law all states, territories, and the District of
57 Columbia appoints an Adjutant General and an associate Agency to provide the
58 necessary infrastructure for the National Guard in their perspective jurisdiction.

59 Pursuant to Virgin Islands Code Annotated Title 23 Internal Security and Public
60 Order Chapter 19 National Guard, Subchapter I. General Provisions Section 1508
61 Adjutant General of the Virgin Islands establishes the responsibility of the Adjutant.
62 General. Per this statute, the Adjutant General shall

- 63 • Keep and administer all the funds appropriated and shall be in charge of all
64 the property entrusted to the National Guard of the Virgin Islands and shall
65 render an annual report of such funds and property to the Commander-in-
66 Chief and the Legislature of the Virgin Islands.
- 67 • Additionally, make annual estimates of funds and prepare the budget
68 required for the operation of the National Guard of the Virgin Islands
69 exclusive of Federal funds.

70 *Office of the Adjutant General Mission Statement*

71 Execute the day-to-day administrative, maintenance, and security requirements enabling
72 the Virgin Islands National Guard is a Ready, Relevant, and Responsive Joint Force.

74 *Strategic Vision for the Office of the Adjutant General*

75 Provide first-rate support to the Virgin Islands National Guard’s federal war fighting and
76 territorial Defense Support to Civil Authorities requirements. The Office of TheAdjutant
77 General will provide the administrative, maintenance, and security requirements for the
78 training, manning, equipping, and leader development required to execute the Army and
79 Air National Guard’s warfighting and territorial domestic civil support missions. The
80 Office of the Adjutant General priority is ensuring the Virgin Islands National Guard
81 achieves the Readiness required to be **“Ready, Relevant, and Responsive Joint**
82 **Force.”**

83 The United States Army and Air Force exist for one
84 primary reason, which is to be the guardians of America’s
85 freedom and our way of life. The “Guardians of the
86 Eastern Front” have worked hard to transform into an
87 organization that Exceeds the Standards,” because we
88 know the call to serve as an integral part of a
89 warfighting, force to fight and win our Nation’s wars in a
90 multi-domain complex battlefield environment can come
91 anytime.



92 As the Adjutant General, my responsibility encompasses the administrative, security,
93 maintenance, operations, and training required to achieve goals that support ***Warfighting***
94 ***and Defense Support to Civil Authorities operational readiness goals of a joint Army and***
95 ***Air National Guard force.*** These goals nest within the National Military Strategy’s wartime
96 goals and the Governor of the Virgin Islands Territorial civil support requirements. The full
97 capacity of the National Guard’s capabilities is only realized once activated for Territorial
98 Active Duty by the Governor. Per statute, this activation happens in response to
99 natural/manmade disasters, state of emergencies, and other requirements at the discretion
100 of the Governor or President. The Virgin Islands National Guard not only continues to be
101 “always ready and always there,” but that we will be at a higher state of readiness when
102 called.

103 The vast majority of the Virgin Islands National Guard workforce is part-time. The full

104 levels of the National Guard’s capabilities are only realized once activated for Territorial
 105 Active Duty by the Governor. Per statute, this activation happens in response to
 106 natural/manmade disasters, state of emergencies, and other requirements at the discretion of
 107 the Governor or President. This workforce is comprised of an Active Guard and Reserve
 108 force of 100 Army and 19 Air National Guard fulltime employees. Additionally, we have
 109 a 100% federally funded Civilian Technician workforce consisting of 158 fulltime.
 110 employees.

Virgin Islands National Guard Force					
Army Active Guard Reserve	Air Active Guard Reserve	Federal Title 32 Dual Status Military/Technicians	Federal Title 5 Civilians	M-Day (Part-Time) Army	M-Day (Part-Time)Air
ASGN: 100	ASGN: 19	ASGN: 124	ASGN: 34	ASGN: 562	ASGN: 66
AUTH: 102	AUTH: 19	AUTH: 94	AUTH: 24	AUTH: 623	AUTH: 73
98%	100%	132%	142%	90%	90%
Authorized: AUTH				Assigned: ASGN	

111
 112 **Organizational Opportunities**

113 The Administrative Services supervise the operations of the OTAG through fiscal control,
 114 personnel, and administrative management. The Maintenance Division provides supplies
 115 for required building repairs and maintenance, custodial services, ground-keeping, and
 116 environmental protection services for the VING facilities. The SecurityForce protects all
 117 VING personnel, facilities, and property.

118 **Change Implemented Through Line of Efforts (LEOs)**

119 **LOE 1: Increase Readiness and Responsiveness**

- 120 • Create a ready and responsive joint force by leveraging

121 institutional, organizational, and operational developmental
122 learning.

123 **LOE 2: Change Performance Culture**

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- 125 • Rebrand and change overall performance culture from achieving the
126 minimum to exceeding the standards.

127 **LOE 3: Build Relevant Force Structure**

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- 129 • “Change or Die”: Build relevancy to conduct full spectrum operations in a
130 multi domain environment by restructuring and right sizing the force.

131 **LOE 4: Increase Lethality**

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- 133 • Increase lethality by recruiting, retaining, and develop future leaders to
134 achieve Core Warfighting and Defense Support to Civilian Agencies-Training
135 requirements.

136 **Context**

137 The Virgin Islands Army and Air National Guard continues to be a lethal, dual-role
138 operational force that make up an operational reserve force for the Army and Air Force
139 respectively. We continue to nest within the National Defense Strategy and its requirement to meet
140 the challenges and take advantage of opportunities for our Nation. Our Air and Army National Guard
141 forces are postured to defend the homeland, deter strategic attacks against our homeland, our allies,
142 and partners; and deter aggression while preparing to fight and win in conflict when necessary. The
143 National Guard’s primary mission is to fight and win our Nation’s war, while serving a secondary
144 purpose of defending the homeland by responding to all hazards and crises in States/Territory within

145 our authorities. Our men and women have support overseas combat operations and simultaneously
146 defended the homeland. As we speak the National Guard has more than 40,000 men and women
147 engaged in missions around the world. This includes over 20,000 servicemembers serving outside
148 the continental United States. With over 430,000 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen the National
149 Guard provides 20 percent of the Joint Force. The National Guard total force is only second in size
150 to the active-duty Army. It is larger than the active-duty Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and
151 Coast Guard individually.

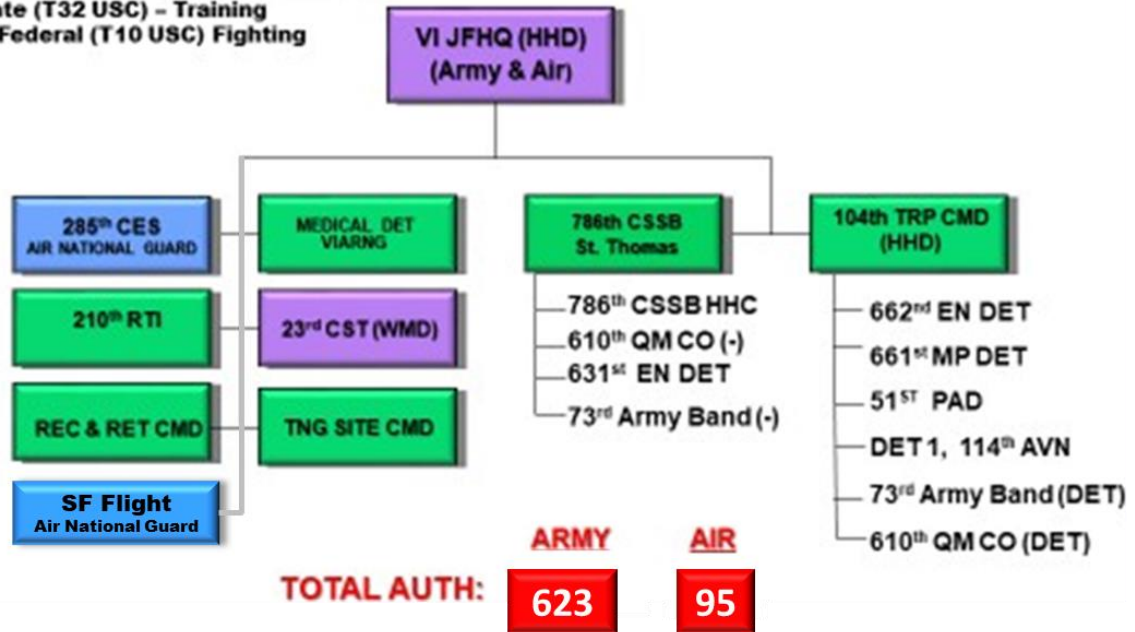
152 Our Virgin Islands Army and Air National Guard force has an authorized rightsized military
153 workforce of 718 servicemembers in line with the Virgin Islands current population of personnel
154 willing and qualified to serve. There is a reduction of 156 Soldiers from 779 to 623 Soldiers and an
155 increase of 22 Airmen from 73 to 95 Airmen with the addition of a Security Force Flight.





M-DAY ORGANIZATION CHART

- Title 23 VIC sec 1506
- Governor is Commander-in-Chief
- Combination of Army and Air Force Units
- NG – State (T32 USC) – Training
- NGUS – Federal (T10 USC) Fighting



State Partnership Program

This month we celebrated 30 years of the National Guard Bureau’s State Partnership Program with 88 enduring partnerships which encompasses 100 nations. America never fights alone, from the Revolutionary War in 1775, World War I and II, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan to name a few, we have always partnered with our allies. These relationships with our allies and partners continue to be mutually beneficial to global security and safeguarding democracy worldwide. The war in Ukraine has highlighted the importance of National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) in this manner the Virgin Islands National Guard continues to increase its support to our SPP Regional Security System (RSS) partners. The RSS is comprised of Antigua and



167 Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent, the
168 Grenadines and recently Guyana recognizes “Strength through Unity.” Our partnership with the
169 RSS is like no other. The VING is made up of men and women from all seven Caribbean Island
170 nations and Guyana that make up the RSS. Our familial tie with the RSS enables us to better
171 understand their unique needs. VING has been able to strengthen our partnership and build partner
172 capacity by sending 17 Subject Matter Experts on nine Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEE)
173 events throughout the RSS Islands Nations. Women, Peace, and Security Initiative, Master
174 Resiliency, Public Affairs Exchange, Military Police, Small Unit Tactical and Maritime
175 Operations SMEEs.

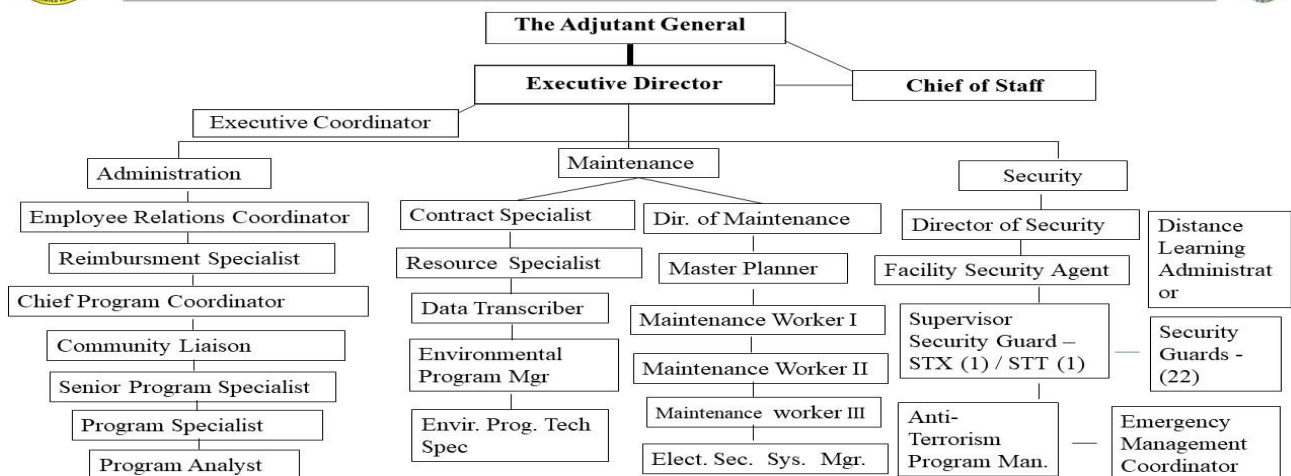
176 **Office of The Adjutant General**

177 To provide greater context, The Office of the Adjutant General is growing its force to
178 enable Virgin Islands Army and Air National Guards the deter and posture to defend
179 against threats to the homeland through increasing its workforce with talented personnel in
180 its administrative, maintenance, and security divisions to meet sustainment and force
181 protection needs. Our operational tempo continues to be among the highest in the history
182 of the Virgin Islands National Guard since its inception almost fifty years ago 19 October
183 1973. The Virgin Islands National Guard continues to be “always ready and always there.”
184 By the efforts of the Office of the Adjutant General sustaining the administrative,
185 maintenance, and security of our facilities to enable our federal force to meet training and
186 mission requirements. Our efforts enable the National Guard to support many of our sister
187 agencies’ 15 Emergency Support Functions. Our efforts enable operations during time of

188 crises like COVID-19 Pandemic, the transition to new facilities like Juan F. Luis (JFL)
 189 Hospital North St Croix's, public safety support to Virgin Islands Police Department and
 190 the Executive Security Unit for government sponsored festivals, carnivals, and celebrations
 191 to generate tourism revenues as well as support monitoring of toxic gas releases and
 192 disposal from the oil refinery on St Croix. The Office of the Adjutant General have
 193 increased its support within the territory twofold, which provided new fulltime
 194 employment opportunities and greater capacity to support federal government initiatives.
 195 Under Governor Bryan's leadership I continue to have the flexibility to enable a level of
 196 response by the Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilians to safeguard the people of the Virgin
 197 Islands that exceed historic operational norms, while they continue to exceed the standards
 198 of performance and be postured to the war.



OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL



Return on Investment

Some of the missions executed by the military and civilian men and women of the Virgin Islands Army and Air National Guard and the Office of the Adjutant General are as follows:



Domestic Support to Civil Authorities Operations (DSCA)

- VING supported the state funeral of the late Governors Roy L. Schneider MD and Turnbull.
- VING also provided material assistance to 7 agencies as part of its White House mission support during President Biden’s visit at the start of this year.
- Other support included Gubernatorial Inauguration Mission Support, Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD) Crucian Christmas Festival and St. Thomas and St. John Carnival Support. VING participated in multiple local and national level training exercises in preparation for its continued support to Domestic operations. This year we exercised our domestic response at the national level when we participated in New Orleans’ All Hazards Coordination Workshop and ARNORTH Tabletop Exercise (TTX). We also participated in VITEMA’s Capstone Event here locally.
- Execution of EMAC Agreement with Puerto Rico for UH60s in support of a locally declared Fire Event at the Bovoni Landfill. This agreement was in support of the Virgin Islands Fire and Emergency Medical Services

Army National Guard

- Detachment 1, Delta Company, 1st of the 114th Aviation Regiment: Successfully deployed and are exceeding the standards in providing protection requirements on the Southwest Border to enhance Department of Homeland Security / Customs and Border Patrol mission capabilities.
- Two of our units the 610th Quarter Master Company and 640th Field Feeding Detachment are currently deployed to Guyana in support of this year's Tradewinds Exercise.
- The 631st Engineers Detachment (Utilities), and 786th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB) are both poised to deploy in the upcoming year to the AFRICOM Theater.
- Over 90 percent of VING units have successfully conducted all Annual Training and Inactive Duty Training (IDT) requirements for this training year with only one unit remaining. In the conduct of their federal training the territory continues to receive incidental benefits. Amongst these are the many local events the 73rd Army Band has participated in and the Medical Detachment's support to the JFL Hospital move.
- Our units also performed in national level exercises with HHC, 786th CSSB on 17 April – 21 May 2023 conducting Joint Reception, Staging, Onward Movement (JRSOI), establish Command and Control to seven (7) Combat Support company sized logistics organizations and provide administrative and logistical support to

friendly forces in support of Vibrant Response 23, Camp Atterbury, Indiana. 610th
Quarter Master Company and 640th Field Feeding Unit deployed 14-28 July 2023
to establish water purification and distribution operations as well as feeding
operations for over 600 personnel at the base camp and remote training areas.

Air National Guard

- Increased Operating and Maintenance budget raised from \$70K to \$210K.
- Solicited for 100MB circuit and contracted to be installed by 3 Nov 23.
- Deployed 18 of 18 service members to five separate locations in the Middle East
- Establishment of 22-person Security Forces (SF) Operating location and coordinating for the buildup of a Flight
- Successfully filled first Virgin Islands SF position with the Airmen currently at SF Tech School.
- Worked with National Guard Bureau (NGB) /A4 Staff to hire SF temporary technician allocation to assist standing up SF program within compliance.
- Filled key positions throughout the organization bring end-strength up from 76% over 90%.
- Pending 95% design on new 285th Installation Development Plan on ST Croix
- NGB/A4 facilities leadership approved our program facility replacement projects.
- Currently 97% complete of Fire Suppression project
- Supported POTUS visit C-17 loading/unloading support providing seamless execution.

Counter Drug Operations

Virgin Islands National Guard Counterdrug (CD) Program provided Investigative Analysts to support local and federal law enforcement agencies in their continuous efforts to destroy, dismantle and disrupt illicit drug trafficking organizations. This support has contributed to numerous cocaine seizures and marijuana eradication efforts totaling over \$20 million year to date (YTD). The Drug Demand Reduction Outreach section provided presentations to a combination of over 3,500 adults and youths YTD that was focused on drug abuse or addiction, alcohol and prescription abuse affecting the Virgin Islands communities. The VING will continue with its partnership with the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and their Prevention initiatives which included a collaboration of local and federal Law Enforcement Agencies, the Department of Health, Virgin Islands Police Department and the Virgin Islands Counterdrug Program



Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team Operations

The 23rd Weapons of Mass Destruction - Civil Support Team (WMD-CST) provides support to civil authorities at domestic incident sites. By law, WMD'CSTs respond to the use or threatened use of a WMD; the intentional or unintentional use of nuclear, biological, radiological, or toxic poisonous chemical materials; and natural or manmade disasters in the United States and its territories, which result in, or could result in, catastrophic loss of

283 life or property. Significant near-term contributions of the 23rd WMD-CST include:

- 284 • Continued partnership with VI Department of Health, regarding COVID measures
285 and preparedness.
- 286 • Worked with Federal Bureau of Investigation and U.S. Secret Service to support
287 President of the United States (POTUS) 2023 new year's visit, as well as First Lady of
288 the United States (FLOTUS) early 2023 visit, on St. Croix
- 289 • Assisted Virgin Islands Emergency Management Agency (VITEMA) and Federal
290 Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to create potential industrial chemical
291 release hazard scenario, used by FEMA, to request additional financial resources from
292 the federal government for territory preparedness.
- 293 • Assisted with the Honorable Governor Wesley Turnbull Funeral and other executive
294 events attended by distinguished guests.
- 295 • Assisted various agencies, to include DPNR, EPA, Virgin Islands Fire and
296 Emergency Service (VIFEMS), to advise Limetree Refinery, in its effort to safely
297 reopen operations.
- 298 • Assisted the Governors Executive Security Unit (GESU) and other first responders
299 (VIPD and (VIFEMS) agencies, in support of the Governor's State of the Territory
300 Address, the swearing in of Territory Senators, and several community based, highly
301 populated carnival season events, occurring on St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix.

302 **2023 Hurricane Season Preparedness**

- The VING continues to maintain a heightened state of readiness in the event it is mobilized in a Territorial Active Duty (TAD) status in support of local emergency response operations. This becomes particularly heightened during every hurricane season. As a part of these efforts, we are actively engaged in exercising our response and recovery posture. We conducted our annual All Hazards Coordination Workshop March 2023 with 75 local, federal and Department of Defense attendees. It served to strengthen relationships between local and federal partners to ensure a shared understanding of both the territory’s capabilities and shortfalls. We also participated in the ARNORTH TTX as well as VITEMA Capstone event that had 98 local and federal partners. These exercises enable us to better refine our mission ready packages to support the Virgin Islands projected shortfalls.

Process of Evaluation

In line with the “*Change Course now*” vision of Governor Bryan and Lieutenant Governor Roach, the Office of The Adjutant General developed and implemented policies and procedures that’s supported by key performance indicators which enabled us to meet our strategic objectives to rapidly transform the Virgin Islands National Guard. These objectives were to promote operational effectiveness; have a safe and secure territory through effective and efficient preparedness; and to build a comprehensive territorial support capabilities to respond to all threats. This transformation led to a better quality of life and safer work environment for our Soldiers, Airmen, and Civilians workforce.



I want to personally thank all the members in our community, Employer Support to the Guard and Reserves, Executive and Legislative Branches, Congressional Office, and the Commander in Chief Governor Bryan for unwavering support to the Virgin Islands National Guard.



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I must thank the men and women of the Virgin Islands Army and Air National Guard who are our communities' sons, daughters, fathers, and mothers in who answer the call to service every day. Whether it is supporting our National Defense Strategy overseas or supporting the homeland during times of crises, they continue to exceed the standards and embody the warrior ethos. The support provided to our guardsmen and women while away and here on duty in the territory, shows just how much our community cares about their welfare and appreciates their selfless service. We all should be thankful for the sacrifices our service members and their families endure every day to safeguard our great nation.

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I will be remiss if I did not recognize the exceptional support provided to our Soldiers and Airman by our Family Readiness Program volunteers, our families, civilian employers, and the community. The Army and Air Force continues to recognize the increased readiness and relevance of the Virgin Islands National Guard. We are postured to support and respond to natural and manmade disaster during this hurricane season. Our Soldiers and Airmen must be ready when called to deploy, fight, and win on the modern battlefield to

345 meet our strategic military objectives to safeguard our freedoms here in the homeland.

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347 This concludes the initial portion of my testimony. I will be followed by Ms. Nikita Ward

348 my Executive Director for the Office of the Adjutant General and Colonel Deborah

349 Lobbenmeier the United States Property and Fiscal Officer for the Virgin Islands

350 National Guard.

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Good afternoon 35th Legislature Finance Committee Chair, the Honorable Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory, Vice Chairman, Senator Novelle E Francis Jr.; Senator Samuel Carrion; Senator Dwayne M. DeGraff, Senator Ray Fonseca, Senator Marvin A. Blyden; and Senator Javan E. James Sr.; other non-committee members present in the Senate chamber; family, friends, and general public viewing and listening locally and abroad. I am Nikita D. Ward, Executive Director for the Office of the Adjutant General. Today I will outline The Office of The Adjutant General's budget for Fiscal Year 2024.

The Office of The Adjutant General is requesting a General Fund Budget of \$2,716,886.00. The aforementioned figure includes the Miscellaneous Budget Appropriation of \$60,000 for the Virgin Islands National Guard Pension Fund and \$200,500 for the Youth About Face and Forward March Program. Additionally, the projected federal Master Cooperative Agreement budget allocation of \$8,982,748.00 is the amount proposed to support the Virgin Islands National Guard.

The Office of The Adjutant General is responsible for three divisions. Each division supports the policies and procedures to accomplish key strategic objectives for the Virgin Islands National Guard. This enables us to fulfill our federal and territorial missions as identified below.

OTAG Divisions

First, the Administrative Services Division provides supervision and oversight, for administrative and operational activities of the agency. Also, this includes, budgeting, fiscal control, and personnel management.

Second, the Maintenance Division provides operational supplies for building repairs and maintenance, custodial services, grounds keeping, Electronic Security Systems, and Environmental Protection for the Virgin Islands National Guard

facilities.

Third, the Security Division provides force protection measures for the Virgin Islands National Guard personnel, facilities, and equipment.

Performance Goals

The Office of the Adjutant General has three (3) performance goals:

1. Promote operational effectiveness.
2. Establish a safe and secure territory through effective and efficient preparedness.
3. Build a comprehensive territorial support capability in response to all threats.

KPI Name	Unit	Target	Results	Trend Goal
Percentage of preventive maintenance completed on buildings and/ or equipment	Percent	80%	53%	Increase
Percentage of equipment that is functional/ operational	Percent	80%	60%	Increase
Average number of days to complete work orders	Days	30	82%	Decrease
Average number of days to recruit	Days	40	29	Decrease
Percent of trained employees	Percent	100%	12.5%	Increase
Percent of participants that complete community-based programs	Percent	100%	50.0%	Increase
Number of community-based partnership	Number	8	4	Increase
Retention rates	Percent	70%	72%	Increase
Number of preparedness exercise completed	Number	12	3	Increase
Percent of security searches completed	Percent	100%	80%	Increase

I will now justify the recommended operating budget for Fiscal Year 2024.

Office of the Adjutant General	
<u>FY2024 Recommended Appropriation</u>	
<u>Account Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Personnel Services	\$1,087,390.00
Fringe Benefits	\$488,881.00
Supplies	\$124,450.00
Capital Projects	\$220,346.00
Other Services	\$575,818.00
TOTAL.....	\$2,716,886.00

As listed in the chart above, the General Fund recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2024 is \$2,716,886.00.

The following diagram shows the breakdown of the General Fund recommended budget by division and objects.

**Office of the Adjutant General Details
Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget**

OBJECTS	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT BUDGETED (ADMIN SVCS).	AMOUNT BUDGETED (MAINTENANCE)	AMOUNT BUDGETED (SECURITY)	TOTAL AMOUNT BUDGETED
PERSONAL SERVICES					
511010	SALARIES – EXEMPT	\$1,077,044.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$1,077,044.00
511000	SALARIES – CLASSIFIED	\$ -	\$10,346.00	\$ -	\$10,346.00
	SUB-TOTAL	\$1,077,044.00	\$10,346.00	\$ -	\$1,087,390.00
FRINGE BENEFITS					
522200	WORKERS COMP.	\$9,355	\$260	\$ -	\$9,615.00
521000	SOCIAL SECURITY	\$68,017	\$642	\$ -	\$68,659.00
521100	MEDICARE	\$28,117	\$150	\$ -	\$28,267.00
522000	HEALTH INSURANCE	\$177,324	\$7,499	\$ -	\$184,823.00
520010	EMPL. CONTRI. RETIR.	\$195,087	\$2,431	\$ -	\$197,518.00
	SUB-TOTAL	\$477,900.00	\$10,982.00	\$ -	\$488,882.00
SUPPLIES					
541000	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$6,550	\$7,750	\$2,500	\$16,500.00
541100	OPERATING SUPPLIES	\$6,260	\$7,480	\$3,300	\$17,040.00
542000	REPAIR & MAINTENANCE	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$5,000	\$25,500.00
542100	SMALL TOOLS	\$10,343	\$10,467	\$5,000	\$25,810.00
543100	FOOD & CATERING	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$11,000.00
546100	CLOTHING & CLOTH MATERIAL	\$3,500	\$4,500	\$9,500	\$17,500.00
541200	VEHICLE SUPPLIES	\$3,500	\$5,600	\$2,000	\$11,100.00
	SUB-TOTAL	\$44,653.00	\$50,797.00	\$29,300.00	\$124,450.00
OTHER SERVICES					
532000	REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE	\$15,800	\$138,360	\$ -	\$154,160.00
535000	COMMUNICATION	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$10,000	\$30,500.00

534000	PROFESSIONAL	\$5,000	\$22,158	\$5,000	\$32,158.00
	SERVICES				
560000	TRAVEL	\$3,500	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$11,500.00
560100	PURCHASE BULK	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$2,000	\$9,000.00
	AIRLINE TICKETS				
535010	ADVERTISING &	\$8,500	\$8,500	\$2,000	\$19,000.00
	PROMOTION				
533020	RENTAL	\$5,500	\$8,500.00	\$2,000	\$16,000.00
	MACHINE/EQUIPMENT				
532100	AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR	\$5,500	\$5,500	\$2,000	\$13,000.00
	&MAINTENANCE				
563100	GRANT PRIVATE	\$60,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$60,000.00
	AGENCY & INDIV				
534000- M1917	ABOUT FACE &	\$200,500	\$ -	\$ -	\$200,500.00
	FORWARD MARCH PROGRAM				
564100	OTHER SERVICE NOC	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$ -	\$30,000.00
SUB-TOTAL		\$337,800.00	\$213,018.00	\$25,000.00	\$575,818.00
UTILITIES					
	ELECTRICITY	\$ -	\$209,500	\$ -	\$209,500
	WATER	\$ -	\$10,500	\$ -	\$10,500
	SUB-TOTAL	\$ -	\$220,000.00	\$ -	\$220,000.00
CAPITAL OUTLAYS					
575000	MACH EQUIP & MISC.	\$100,173	\$110,173	\$10,000	\$220,346.00
SUB-TOTAL		\$100,173.00	\$110,173.00	\$10,000.00	\$220,346.00
TOTAL GENERAL FUND		\$2,716,886.00			

The Budget Breakdown descriptions are as follows:

Personnel Services:

The amount of \$1,087,390.00 represents the salaries of seventeen (17) full-time positions and 25% territorial matching funds for two (2) vacant full-time positions.

Capital Outlay:

The amount of \$220,346.00 represents the local match of the Master Cooperative Agreement for Capital Projects. This amount supports the repairs, rehabilitation and new construction projects for the Estate Bethlehem and Estate Nazareth Military Compounds to maintain compliance with local and federal codes.

Fringe Benefits:

The amount of \$488,882.00 represents the total fringe benefits for seventeen (17) full-time positions in addition, 25% for two (2) vacant positions funded through the General Fund.

Supplies:

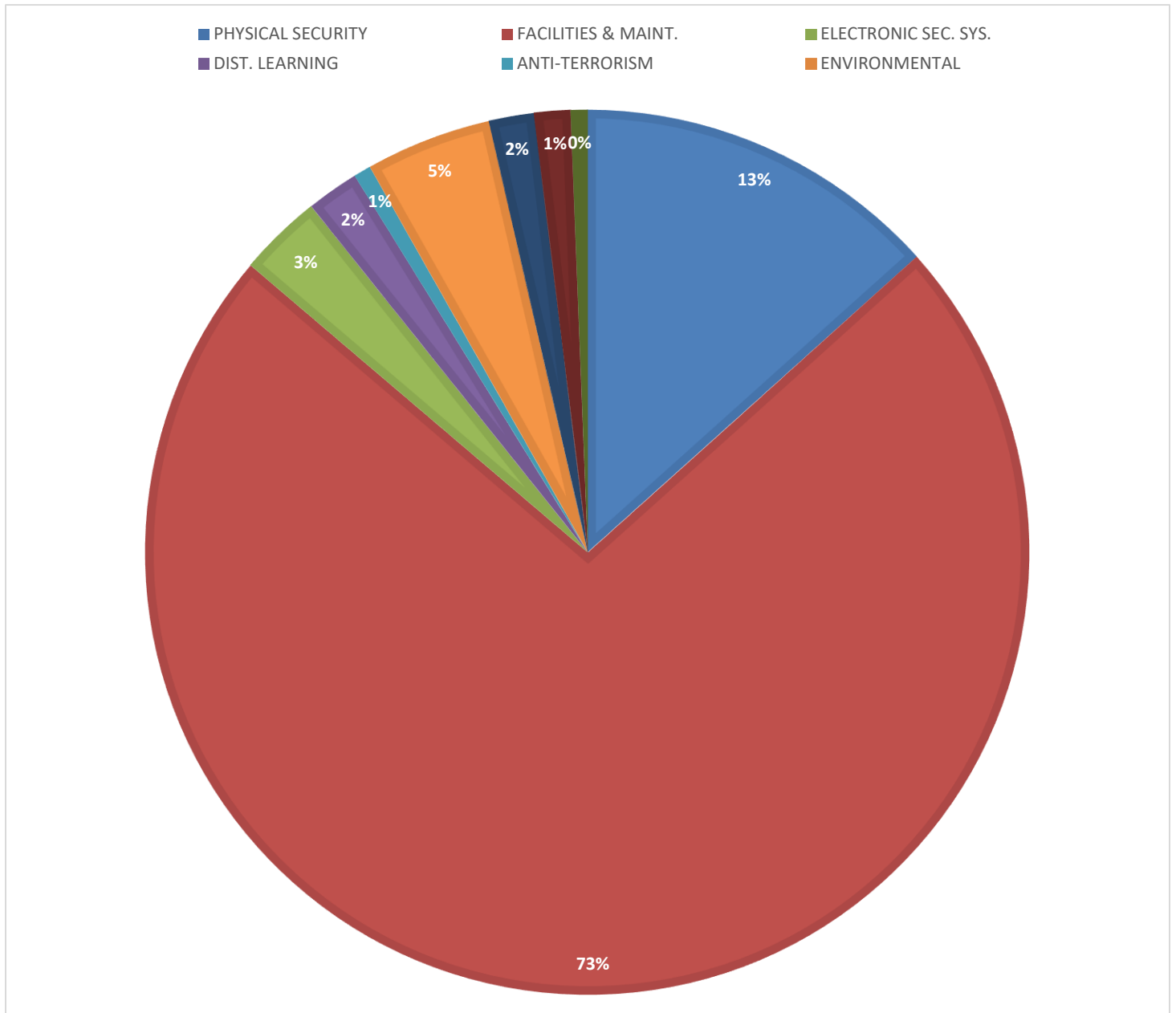
The amount of \$124,450.00 will be for the purchase of supplies in support of the local match of the Master Cooperative Agreement.

Other Services & Charges:

The amount of \$836,378.00 represents operational, service, and miscellaneous charges. \$60,000.00 is earmarked for National Guard Pension Funds, which provides a monthly stipend to qualified, retired Virgin Islands National Guard members as mandated under Title 23, Section 1556 of the VI Code. Twenty- five (25) eligible members are projected for Fiscal Year 2024 to receive this stipend. The amount of \$200,500.00 is earmarked for the Youth About Face Forward March Program in accordance with Act No. 8035 for the territory.

This concludes the justification for the General Fund Budget of \$2,716,886.00, which includes the Miscellaneous Appropriation of \$260,500.00 as recommended for Fiscal Year 2024. I will continue with the Justification of the Master Cooperative Agreement (MCA).

Office of The Adjutant General – Virgin Islands National Guard Master Cooperative Agreement
Fiscal Year 2024



The Department of Defense National Guard Bureau enters into master cooperative agreements (MCA) with States and Territories to provide Federal Support for services provided by the State

and Territory Military Departments for authorized facilities for leases, real property services, real property maintenance and repair, operations and maintenance, and minor construction costs. The Adjutant General (TAG) and the United States Property & Fiscal Officer (USPFO) are responsible for the execution of the MCA and Appendices. OTAG in conjunction with the United States Property and Fiscal Office (USPFO), through the Master Cooperative Agreement (MCA), provides services to the territory on behalf of the Virgin Islands National Guard. This agreement is a fully executed contract between the Territory and Federal Government and is renewed every Fiscal Year. On an annual basis, the territory receives federal funds as a reimbursement for expenses incurred through the MCA programs. The MCA is comprised of eight (8) programs or appendices. Each appendix has its own funding. The OTAG pays for services in advance and is reimbursed for a certain percentage depending on the program. Two (2) of the programs' expenditures are calculated at a match split whereas the remaining seven (7) programs are one hundred 100% percent federally reimbursed. To date we have expended \$2,962,747.16 which is in the processed to be reimbursed from the Federal Government to the territory.

The Pie Chart on Page 27 shows the breakdown of the Projected Federal Funds of \$8,982,748.00, which supports the Master Cooperative Agreement for Fiscal Year 2024. The distribution is as follows:

- \$1,355,300.00 represents the Army National Guard Security Program. There are presently twenty (22) full-time Army Security positions. All positions are 100% federally reimbursed.
- \$6,599,500 supports the Facilities and Maintenance Program. Operational and maintenance expenditures are federally reimbursed at 75% with support of a General Fund local match of 25%. A total of six (6) positions are 100% reimbursable and two (2) positions are 75% reimbursable. Presently, eight (8) positions are filled and job announcements for one (1) vacancies are in process for readvertising.
- \$ 135,000.00 is projected to cover the Telecommunications Program. This amount

will be federally reimbursed at 100 %.

- \$ 239,400.00 represents the projected cost to support the Environmental Resource Program. There are one (2) filled full-time position. All expenditures are federally reimbursed at 100%.
- \$ 107,788.00 is projected for Air National Guard Operating and Maintenance Program. This program requires a 25% General fund local match and a federal contribution of 75% of the total expenditures for supplies, repairs, and maintenance, electricity, and water charges.
- \$ 157,000.00 is for the support of the Distance Learning Program. Presently one (1) filled full time position. All charges incurred under this program are federally reimbursed at 100%.
- \$ 249,460.00 is the projected cost to support the Electronic Security System. Presently one (1) filled full time position and all expenditures are federally reimbursed at 100%.
- \$ 69,300.00 is the projected allocation for the Anti-Terrorism program. Presently one (1) full time employee is assigned, and all expenditures are federally reimbursed at 100% is presently vacant and has been advertised for fill.
- \$ 70,000.00 is the projected allocation for the Emergency Management program. Presently one (1) full time employee is assigned, and all expenditures are federally reimbursed at 100% presently vacant and has been advertised for fill.

Madam Chair, it is of utmost importance to note that the requested General Fund matches for

the Master Cooperative Agreement Operating and Maintenance Cost must be committed in order to receive the federal share. The Budget Projection presented to you today includes the recommended General Fund Budget of \$2,716,886.00 in order to receive the Federal Projected Allocation of \$8,982,748.00. This allocates a combined total of \$11,699,634.00 in federal and local funds, to support the Office of the Adjutant General's operations for Fiscal Year 2024.

This concludes my presentation of the Fiscal Year 2024 proposed budget. I thank you for your attentiveness and stand ready to answer your questions on fiscal and administrative matters. I will be followed by the COL Deborah Lobbenmeier, United States Property & Fiscal Officer for the Virgin Islands National Guard.

Good afternoon Committee Chairwoman, Senator Donna A. Frett-Gregory, Members of the Committee on Finance and other members of the 35th legislature. I am Colonel Deborah Lobbenmeier, United States Property & Fiscal Officer for the Virgin Islands National Guard. My testimony today will present the FY 2024 projected federal funding and the required local match.

The Virgin Islands National Guard is primarily supported by three Army and Air Appropriations: National Guard Personnel, Army (NGPA) or 2060 Appropriation; Operations & Maintenance, Army NG (OMNG) or what we refer to as the 2065 Appropriation; and Military Construction, Army NG (MCNG) or 2085 Appropriation; and the Air National Guard Appropriations: Operations & Maintenance, Air National Guard Personnel and Military Construction, Air National Guard.

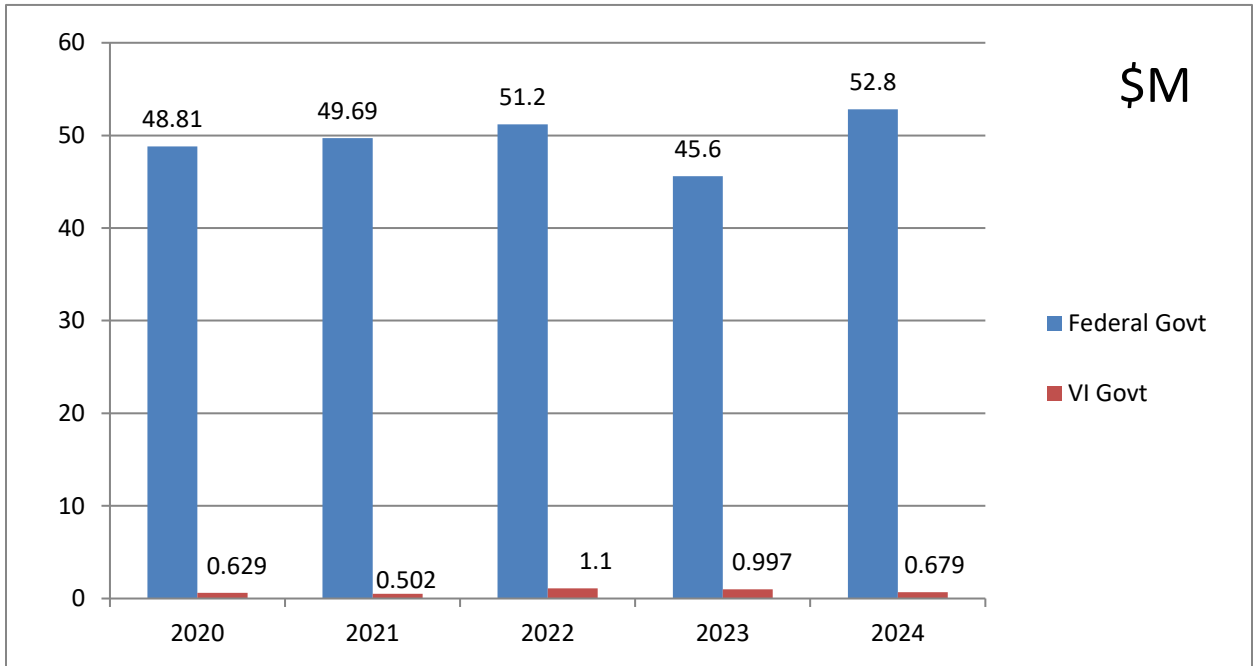
The FY 2024 National Guard budget request supports an end strength of 325,000 to achieve the Army's and The National Guard Bureau's priorities of, Readiness, Modernization, Taking Care of our People and succeeding through teamwork. To achieve these priorities, this budget request links strategy to resources to continue executing our National Defense Strategy, which outlines DOD's Defense and Security Priorities. As the Combat Reserve of the Army, the Army National Guard (ARNG) continues to support the Active Force in sustaining Joint Operations through a Responsive and Ready Force-Generating capability. ARNG readiness continues to provide both federal and state support in response to Domestic Emergencies to include hurricanes, wildfires, and other requirements in addition to overseas operations. The changes in the FY 2024 budget are split between price and program changes: The price changes are due to increases in the rates for pay and allowances. Military pay and allowances raise effective 1 January 2024 are:

Basic Pay 5.2%, Basic Allowance for Housing 3.9% and Basic Allowance for Subsistence 3.4%. In FY 2024, The Virgin Islands National Guard anticipates an overall funding increase of one percent over FY 2023 actuals, going from Total Funding Of 45.6 million dollars in 2023 to 52.8 million dollars in 2024. Areas that saw increases were Active Guard Reserve (AGR) payroll, from 12.4 million dollars to 14.0 million dollars; Technician payroll, from 11.6 million dollars to 12.3 million dollars; Part-Time (M-Day) payroll, from 3.2 million dollars to 3.4 million dollars and operation and training, 6 million dollars to 6.8 million dollars. Funding levels for installation support (9 million dollars), services and supplies (3 million dollars), and ESGR (20.8 thousand dollars) are projected to increase by less than one percent in FY 2024. The graph below depicts the Army and Air National Guard overall funding for FY 2024, which is projected to be 49.1 million dollars for the Army and 3.7 million dollars for the Air National Guard. Full-Time and Part-Time Payroll of 3.4 million dollars and Operations and Maintenance 318.1 thousand dollars.

FY-2024 PROJECTED FEDERAL REVENUE

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	<u>ARMY CATEGORY</u>	<u>AIR CATEGORY</u>
FULL-TIME PAYROLL	\$26,373,963.97	\$3,081,209
PART-TIME PAYROLL	\$3,455,161.90	\$328,329
SERVICES & SUPPLIES	\$3,374,796.80	\$198,100
INSTALLATION SUPPORT	\$9,069,056.00	\$110,000
OPERATIONS & TRAINING	\$6,812,550.00	\$10,000 (Family Support)
ESGR	\$20,890.00	-
TOTAL	\$49,106,418.67	\$3,727,638

5 YEAR BUDGET COMPARISON



The chart above illustrates the difference between federal and territorial support to the Virgin Islands National Guard over five (5) fiscal years. Current projections for FY 2024 will require the local government to provide 679 thousand dollars to fully execute the Master Cooperative Agreement. The territory is responsible for matching federal funding at varying totals based on the facility. The St. Thomas Armory requires 43%, the St. Croix Armory requires 25%, Sprat Hall facility 4%, Air Guards facility 25%, and Joint Force Headquarters 25%. This matching of funds is crucial because the federal share cannot be committed without the territory's percentage being available. The FY 2024 federal allocation projects a slight increase from 2023.

Significant, is the fact that we do everything we can to keep these monies in the territory to support the local economy. We estimate that during fiscal year 2024, 75%, or approximately 39.6 million dollars, will remain in the Virgin Islands. The National Guard is a good investment for the territory of the Virgin Islands.

Mrs. Chairwoman, this concludes my testimony. I will be followed by The Adjutant General, Major General Kodjo S. Knox-Limbacker.

Conclusion

Madam Chair, this concludes our written testimony. We seek your committee favorable vote of approval for our fiscal year 2024 proposed budget. This bodies approval will enable our efforts to increase operational readiness with realistic *ends*; ethical, legal, and moral ways; and the appropriate means to fund the operations of the Virgin Islands Army and Air National Guards for its continued support to DSCA requirements in the territory and our federal warfighting mission requirements. Our team stands ready to answer your question regarding our fiscal year 2024 budget request.