



Dual Status Commander

National Disasters and Special Events

In the event of a multi-state disaster or national event requiring a DSC, separate DSCs would be appointed to command in each of the affected states due to state law prohibitions (where appropriate/where required). Consistent with current laws and procedures, the Governor of a State does not use the DSC to request DoD forces or equipment.

Dual Status Commander Authority

- Federal or State capacity
- Giving orders on behalf of or relaying orders from the Federal chain of command to Federal military forces.
- Giving orders on behalf of or relaying orders from the State chain of command to State military forces.
- Never relaying Federal orders to State military forces or State orders to Federal military forces.

Dual Status Commander NOTE:

The President and the Governor of the State must both agree to the establishment of a dual status commander in the event of an emergency requiring the need to utilize multi-component personnel.



Historical Note:

Dual status commander was first implemented for the "Group of Eight" (G-8) Economic Summit in June 2004. Brig. Gen. Terry Nesbitt (Georgia NG) commanded more than 4,800 Soldiers and Airman, 317 NG personnel from other states, 43 members of the GA State Defense Force and approximately 2,400 Title 10 personnel (including ARNG and ANG units mobilized under T10)

Key Facts about Dual Status Commander

- A dual-status commander (DSC) is an officer of the Army (ARNG) or AirNational Guard (ANG) or a commissioned officer of the Regular Army or Regular Air Force (who has completed specialized training and certification and are jointly managed by the Commander, U.S. Northern Command, and the Chief, National Guard Bureau) who may, by law, serve in two statuses (Federal and State) simultaneously.
- In State status, the DSC is a member of the State chain of command, subject to the orders of the governor and Adjutant General of the DSC's State (exercises command of assigned State NG forces)
- In Federal status, the DSC is a member of the Federal chain of command, subject to the orders of the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the supported Combatant Commander (Commander, U.S. Northern Command when in the 48 contiguous States, Alaska, D.C., and the territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) or (Commander, U.S. Pacific Command when in Hawaii and the territory of Guam) and exercises command of assigned Federal military forces.
- The President and the Governor of the State must both agree to the establishment of a dual status commander.
- 51 States/Territories have established standing Memorandum of Agreements with the Secretary of Defense and its Governor for DSC appointmental Status Command
- DSC appointment can be terminated by the Secretary of Defense or the Governor at any time. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), signed in December 2011, facilitated the use of DSC to provide unity of effort between state and federal forces in achieving common objectives in a disaster response or in securing a national event.
- Title 32, United States Code, Section 325 authorizes a National Guard officer to be placed on active duty without losing their Guard status.
- An active duty (T10) Army or Air Force officer is authorized to accept a commission in the NG of a state without losing his/her active status (32 U.S. C. section 315).