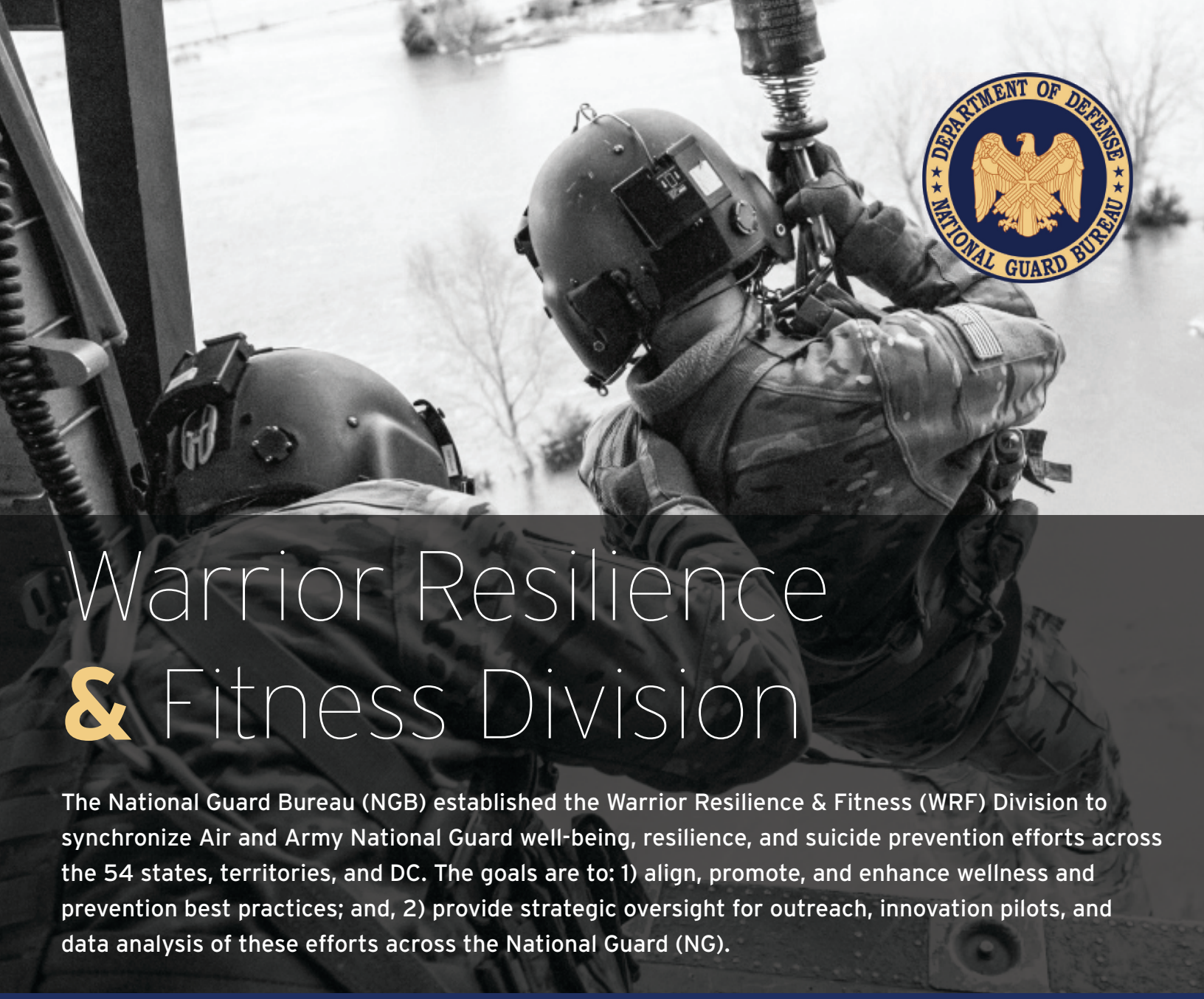

Warrior Resilience & Fitness Division

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) established the Warrior Resilience & Fitness (WRF) Division to synchronize Air and Army National Guard well-being, resilience, and suicide prevention efforts across the 54 states, territories, and DC. The goals are to: 1) align, promote, and enhance wellness and prevention best practices; and, 2) provide strategic oversight for outreach, innovation pilots, and data analysis of these efforts across the National Guard (NG).

Unique Challenges

NG Service members face unique challenges in comparison to their Active Duty counterparts, including: geographic dispersion, significant time between drill activities, healthcare eligibility, and accessing resources across the 54 states, territories, and DC. A deeper understanding of these challenges is required to build targeted solutions that mitigate risk and promote evidence-based prevention strategies.

Uniquely Positioned

WRF was established in July 2019 within NGB's Manpower and Personnel Directorate (J-1). From its position within the Joint Staff, WRF aligns Air and Army National Guard programs through a holistic approach that leverages the Department of Defense's Total Force Fitness framework. WRF is organized into two branches: 1) Resilience, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention; and, 2) Innovation and Outreach.

NOVEMBER 2019

Chief, NGB

J1

Chief, Warrior Resilience & Fitness Division

Resilience, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention Branch

Plans, develops, and executes the NG's efforts to increase readiness, mitigate high-risk behaviors, and provide aid for Service members and families in need.

Resilience

Efforts to increase physical and psychological health and enhance the performance of Service members, families, and DoD civilians.

Substance Abuse

A continuum of substance abuse services to include; reducing risk through prevention education, deterrence with drug testing, assessment, Unit Risk Inventory (URI), and risk mitigation plans.

Suicide Prevention

The development and enhancement of policies, training, data collection and analysis, community resources, and strategic communications designed to minimize suicidal behavior.

Commanders Ready and Resilient Council (CR2C)

The Adjutant Generals' (TAG) executive agency charged with recommending priorities, synchronizing activities for all ready and resilient campaign functions, assessing and monitoring high-risk mitigation strategies, improving readiness and resilience, and advancing health promotion, risk reduction, and suicide prevention efforts.

Innovation and Outreach Branch

Enhances the wellness and resilience of the NG through pilots, analytics, and partnerships.

Pilots

Pilot evidence-based innovations at local-levels to solve local issues with promise to expand across the NG; facilitate the WRF Innovation Incubator; provide programming, metrics, and analytics support; and develop and maintain a compendium of prevention strategies.

Analytics

Complete evidence and programmatic assessments to inform data analysis; build and utilize data-driven tools and models to examine protective factors, risks, and promising practices related to suicide and readiness in the NG; develop dashboard and data visualizations to inform decision-making.

Partnerships

Conduct outreach to form strategic partnerships at the federal, state, and local level. Key stakeholders include other military services, federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and public and private entities. Partnership and collaboration are critical elements to expanding access to care, promoting resiliency, and ensuring the overall well-being of the NG's geographically dispersed population across the 54 states, territories, and DC.

Initiatives

+ Warrior Resilience & Fitness Innovation Incubator
State-level pilot programs designed to enhance the readiness, wellness, and resilience of all geographically dispersed NG members.

+ Compendium of Suicide Prevention Strategies
Compiling a range of evidence-based programs aimed at reducing a host of destructive behaviors (e.g., suicide, sexual assault, substance abuse) and promoting wellness and resiliency in the NG.

+ Suicide Prevention and Readiness Initiative for National Guard (SPRING)
A multiphase approach to identify risk factors and effective interventions and implement systematic data collection best practices. This effort will provide an evidence-based and data-driven foundation upon which NG resilience and holistic wellness resources are developed, scaled, and evaluated for impact.

+ VA Center Outreach Initiative
A partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for mobile teams to provide behavioral health support services to NG members and their families during drill weekends. NGB formalized this partnership with the VA through a Memorandum of Understanding signed in June 2019.

+ Star Behavioral Health Providers Program Expansion
NGB partnered with the Uniform Service University to develop networks of civilian providers trained in military culture and mental health treatments relevant to the needs of NG members. In 2019, NGB expanded Star Behavioral Health to begin training civilian behavioral health providers in 10-12 additional states.