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Iowa Employers Support Flood Relief Operations Through National Guard Employees

More than 4,000 Soldiers and Airmen went on activity duty in Iowa in support of flood relief operations. When Iowa's citizen-Soldiers and Airmen were activated, their employers were put into service, too.

"This is a team effort in ways that many people don't realize," said Barry Spear, chairman of the Iowa Committee of Employer Support of Guard and Reserve. "We are grateful for the service Iowa National Guard members provide to the state. But we also recognize and applaud the employers of Iowa's National Guard members for the ready support they give their military employees who have been called to serve. Employers of military members readily step up to adjust work loads and help their other employees adapt in the absence of these valued employees."



Photo courtesy of the Iowa National Guard.

"Iowa employers have supported their employees through deployments to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Now these employers are showing great patriotism again as their military employees are asked to help protect the people of Iowa during the floods threatening so many of our communities."

Service in the National Guard and Reserve requires flexibility on the part of both the employees and the employers, Spear points out. Iowa National Guard members have responded quickly in assisting Iowa communities as part of their State mission. As Iowa lakes, rivers and streams are at near record levels, flooding Iowa communities and forcing many Iowans from their homes, Iowa National Guard members are deployed across affected areas working with the local, state, and federal entities in support of flood relief operations. The employers must be equally flexible.

"We believe it is important to recognize the contributions that employers of citizen Soldiers and Airmen make every time their military employees are asked to step up to the plate in service to our state and country," Spear added.

ESGR Mission: Gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts through mediation.

From the Chairman

It seems like just yesterday we launched the “prevention” strategy in Iowa. The Iowa ESGR committee had always been one of the best in the country. Conflicts and disagreements between employer and civilian military members were handled quickly and efficiently. The partnership with the Department of Labor served our cause well.

Remember when we talked about going “upstream” to determine the cause of the problem? We talked about smothering potential conflicts with better education and greater involvement by identifying and recruiting business leaders across the state. We began recruiting folks that were visible in the community. They were on the Chamber of Commerce Board. They were members of the big Rotary Clubs. They held offices in the trade association, the economic development commissions and they were municipal, county and state government leaders.



Those strategic partnerships are serving us well. The Association of Business and Industry, the Iowa Bankers Association, the Iowa Hospital Association, the State Human Resource Managers Association, Iowa Workforce Development and the Department of Labor have all followed through and have done what they promised they would do. In 2008 we plan to expand the number of partners and also further serve them with items for their newsletters, attending and supporting their state conferences and including them in our boss lifts.

Area Committees strive for the successful attainment of our stated objectives: increase top of mind awareness of Iowa ESGR; sign Statements of Support for 20% of all employers found on the National CEI data base; mitigate and eliminate ombudsmen cases within 14 days; and work closely with all military units by having an ESGR member assigned to every single unit in the State.

We will continue to expand our sister organization ESGR, Inc., the 501(C)(3) non-profit organization where money can be donated to support our cause. As volunteers for the Department of Defense, we cannot actively serve in that organization, but we can look for folks who can. We are planning for an IMPACT event in the state where all of us can participate and raise some extra money to provide the “icing on the cake” for our work.

Let me close by saying THANK YOU. By design we have selected the busiest, most involved leaders in the state. Why? You are the most organized. You know which buttons to push in your communities and your network of business associates and customers can be tapped to join and support the committee. Thanks for letting me serve you as your State Chair.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barry Spear". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

“The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual.”

-Vince Lombardi

What's Happening with Iowa ESGR

By Al Enright, Executive Director

Thanks to the hard work of the volunteers on this committee, Iowa is looked upon by the National ESGR Headquarters in Washington D.C. as a leader. Iowa had a lot of compliments at our recent conference of the Central region in Overland Park, KS recently. I want to thank each and every one of you for your efforts in providing services to our customers (employers and military members). Your support of these two groups has been on an upswing the last 12 months. Additionally, I appreciate your efforts to spread the word about our programs.

Most of our Boss Lifts have been canceled due to the Iowa flooding. We are still managing to have a few one-day boss lifts into Camp Dodge and the Area Chairs have been notified of those dates and the number of employers we can support. Next year we will hope Mother Nature cooperates with us a little better.

Special thanks to the Area Chairs that have attended the Area Chair Training and to those who are going in August. This leadership training should be very beneficial to our entire committee and spur on the competition for the Area of the Year trophy. Area 9 says, "Bring it on."

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Lunch and Learns are scheduled for several more Iowa cities, check with your area chair, as all members should attend one of these employer events.

Partnership annual conferences are scheduled: This is a great opportunity for ESGR to set up a vendor booth and talk to lots of people about our program.

Iowa Bankers Association	Des Moines	September 21-23, 2008
Iowa Workforce Development	Des Moines	October 1-2, 2008
Society Human Resource Management	Dubuque	October 8-10, 2008

SHARE YOUR NEWS:

If you have news or photos that you would like share, please be sure to forward them to your Area Chair or to Doug Enright at the ESGR office so that we may put it in upcoming issues of our newsletter!



Area 4 Chair, Dave Campbell, presents a Patriotic Employer award to Kathy Bice of Woodward Resource Center.

Bice's employee, Craig Hart, serves with Co. B 248th AMC of the Iowa Army National Guard.

Did You Know?

The Guard & Reserve comprise almost half of our nation's total military force.



Need Assistance?

Please contact your Area Chair or State ESGR committee if you have questions or need assistance.

Area Chairs

Area 1: Pat Denzer (712) 279-3230

Area 2: Francis Clark (712) 328-2600

Area 3: Tom Manley (712) 262-3030

Area 4: Dave Campbell (515) 554-5772

Area 5: Dr. Susan Dawson (319) 226-2014

Area 6: Tad Cooper (319) 377-6357

Area 7: Marty Graber (319) 372-1896

Area 8: Tom Flynn (563) 583-6494 ext 20

Area 9: Harry Cockrell (563) 324-1028

Area 10: Reggie Randau (641)-672-0143

Area 11: Rich Burchett (712) 755-5153

Area 12: Mark Stanton (641) 421-9563

State ESGR Committee

State Chairman: Barry Spear (515) 964-8084

Vice Chairman: Rob Kelly (515) 490-9364

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State Employer Outreach Director: Vacant

State Awards Director: Gary Kinsinger (319) 356-4607

State Military Services Director: Dick Rue (515) 238-3931

State Training Director: Rex McClafin (515) 556-1053

State Boss Lift Coordinator: Eric Idehen (515) 237-5133

Did You Know?

**20 of America's
43 Presidents
have served in
the National
Guard.**



Have you visited the ESGR website?

The ESGR website is full of information and resources for volunteers, service members and employers, including:

- Patriotic Employer Nomination forms
- Questions & Answers for Employers & Employees
- Register your company for a Statement of Support
- Download an Employer Resource Guide
- Volunteer Best Practices
- Articles from Iowa newspapers about ESGR

www.IowaESGR.org

Please pass this newsletter on to others who may be interested in the ESGR mission.

To subscribe to this quarterly newsletter, email Douglas.Enright@us.army.mil