



State Defense Force Q&A

Q. What is a “State Defense Force”?

A. As defined under Title 32 of the United State Code, each state is authorized to maintain an armed defense force, under the sole control of that state’s Governor, not the Pentagon, not the US Congress, and *not* the President of the United States.

Q. Are there Defense Forces in other states?

A. Yes. Currently there are defense forces that have been established in 23 other states and in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. California, New Mexico, and Texas have already established their State Defense Forces. Arizona is the only southern U.S. border state that has not yet done so.

Q. Is a State Defense Force the same as those “militia” groups that we keep hearing the mainstream news media get so animated about?

A. State Defense Forces are fully legal state military forces, authorized by Title 32 of the US Code, and in Arizona by ARS 26-174. They are intended to augment the National Guard forces of each state.

Q. Isn’t a State Defense Force the same as the National Guard?

A. No. State Defense Forces are separate and apart from the National Guard. Like the National Guard, State Defense Forces are under the command of our Governor, but unlike the National Guard, State Defense Forces *cannot* be ordered into federal military service.

Q. What would be the mission of the Arizona Special Missions Unit?

A. That would be decided by our elected representatives, and, ultimately, by the voters of Arizona. Under the Arizona Revised Statutes 26-174, a State Defense Force for Arizona would be established “for the safety and protection of the lives and property of the citizens of the state”.

Q. Our state already has big budget problems. Wouldn’t establishing *another* state force cost the taxpayers plenty of money that we don’t have?

A. No. Unlike the fine soldiers of the National Guard, Special Missions Unit soldiers serve purely as volunteers, and would only receive \$100 per day for their monthly drills, and for their Annual Training. Some State Defense Forces receive no funding at all from their respective states. State Defense Forces offer a low-cost, high-value way for states to augment their Homeland Security and Emergency Management capabilities.

Q. Must I have previously served in the military before I could join the Arizona Special Missions Unit?

A. The bill, SB1083, currently making its way through the Arizona Legislature, actually addresses that. You can review the proposed legislation, including the requirements for volunteers, online at <http://tinyurl.com/sb1083-7> .

Q. Where can I find out more?

A. Please visit our website at www.azsdf.org, or speak with one of our volunteers .