The State Defense Forces are a State Authorized Military Force that supports, assists, & augments The National Guard and Civilian Authorities. The State Defense Force is authorized under Federal law 32 U.S.C. s.109. They provide a trained force multiplier to The National Guard and civilian agencies in the following capacities:

Fields State Defense Forces assist & augment the National Guard & Civil Authorities:

- Administration
- Aviation Support
- Chaplain Services
- Chemical & Radiation Decontamination

- Communications
- Civil Affairs
- Cyber Security
- Engineering

- Honor Guard
- Judge Advocate General
- Logistics
- Medical

- Public Affairs
- Search & Rescue
- Supply
- Transportation

Wildland Firefighting
During peacetime the State Defense Force provides a force multiplier to augment and assist National Guard Forces for mission support or mobilization assistance. During wartime, Upon order from The Governor, The State Defense Force can assume Military Responsibility of The State if The National Guard is deployed overseas. This would involve continuing the active missions the National Guard operates on a daily basis until their return from Overseas duty.

TRAINING

For Non-Prior State Defense Force troops, recruits undergo an initial basic training that varies in duration among the State Defense Forces. After basic training troops undergo Job training in their specified field. Upon graduation the troops become Active Duty members of The State Defense Force. Prior Service are excluded from this basic training as their Federal Training qualifies them for service.

During Inactive Duty Training (IDT) weekends, State Defense Forces assist the National Guard in a variety of missions from mission support, mobilization assistance, legal assistance, medical support, etc., as well as developing their skillset to any missions assigned to them by The Adjutant General (TAG). Such missions include setting up an Emergency Radio Network, Setting Up Shelter Management Operations for Evacuees, Point Of Distribution (PODs) supply points during emergencies.

COMMITTMENT

State Defense Forces require their troops to serve the same Inactive Duty Training (IDT) requirements as the National Guard. This would include one weekend a month and One to Two weeks a year of Annual Training.

SALARY

The State Defense Force is a voluntary force that is unpaid for Inactive Duty Training (IDT) and operational support. During State emergencies or State Active Duty missions The State Defense Force can be activated by The Governor and may receive pay according to State law.

PRIOR SERVICE

More than half of the State Defense Forces ranks are composed of Prior Service Personnel. Prior Service US Army, Navy, Air Force, National Guard, Coast Guard and Marine Corps troops all currently serve in The State Defense Forces. Prior Service personnel that join The State Defense
Forces return with their current rank or higher. State Defense Forces honor any awards or medals Prior Service personnel achieved during Federal Service.

STATE ACTIVE DUTY

State Defense Forces do have troops on continuous Active Duty missions. Troops are placed on State Active Duty (SAD) and perform the duties of that military occupational specialty. Examples of such missions include the California State Guard having full time troops performing Force Protection duty at the Joint Forces Los Alamitos Base.

LAW & REGULATION

Members of The State Defense Force are subject to their State’s Uniform Code of Military Justice. They are bound under State law to abide by military regulation and law.

JOB PROTECTION

The State Defense Force is a State Military Force and as such its members are covered under State law for job protection.

UNIFORM

Members of The State Defense Force are authorized to wear the military uniform assigned by The Adjutant General of the State. Many State Defense Forces wear the current Army Uniform with some modifications that differentiate them from US Military troops such as Black Covers (Hats), State Flag instead of the US Flag, etc.

OUT OF STATE DEPLOYMENT

State Defense Force’s can deploy outside of the State under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC). These deployments are ordered by the Governor of the State and The Adjutant General (Senior National Guard General) and usually require State Defense Force troops to volunteer for such missions. Such deployments occurred during natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Sandy, Hurricane Maria.
OUT OF COUNTRY DEPLOYMENT

There has only been one deployment of a State Defense Force unit being deployed outside of the United States. In 2006, The Maryland Defense Force 10th Medical Regiment joined the Maryland Air National Guard on a medical / humanitarian mission to Bosnia & Herzegovina.