

# Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve INSTRUCTION

NUMBER 1250.30

January 4, 2011

---

---

National Outreach and Plans

SUBJECT: Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award

- References:
- (a) National Committee for Employment of the Guard and Reserve Instruction (NCESGRI) 1250.30, subject as above, October 1, 2008 (hereby canceled)
  - (b) The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), Chapter 43 of Title 38, US Code, as enacted by Public Law 103-353, October 1996
  - (c) ESGRI 1250.21, Statement of Support Program, October 1, 2008
  - (d) Administrative Dispute Resolution Act 1996, Chapter 5 of Title 5, US Code, Section 574

1. PURPOSE. To specify the recipient selection process for the annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award (SDESFA).
2. CANCELLATION. This Instruction cancels ESGRI 1250.30 (Reference (a)) and any other Freedom Award Selection guidance or procedures that have been promulgated prior to the date of this Instruction.
3. APPLICABILITY. This Instruction applies to all Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) State Committees.
4. DISCUSSION. The SDESFA is presented annually to the top employers in the nation who have demonstrated exceptional support to their Guard and Reserve employees and is the highest Department of Defense (DoD) award strictly for employers. This selection process seeks to identify those employers of Guard and Reserve personnel who have committed to a strict adherence to USERRA (Reference (b)) and a level of support to their Guard and Reserve employees that goes significantly above and beyond that required by USERRA in support of the ESGR mission.
5. DEFINITIONS. See glossary.
6. POLICY.
  - a. The term “Freedom Award” may only be used when referring to the SDESFA. No other awards associated with or presented by ESGR may contain the phrase “Freedom Award.”

b. Up to 15 award recipients may be selected each calendar year.

c. Employers can only be nominated by their Guard or Reserve employee, or a family member of the Guard or Reserve employee. Service Member must be in a Guard or Reserve status during the year of the nomination.

d. The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Headquarters (ESGR HQ) shall establish the selection process for the SDESFA, subject to approval by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (ASD (RA)). The basic criteria for ESGRI 1250.21 (Reference (c)) will be incorporated into this selection process.

e. ASD (RA) shall approve the membership of the National Selection Board and act as the board chair as shown in Enclosure 1.

f. When nominations are received from the local level for a regional or national organization, the organization's corporate headquarters will be considered for receipt of the SDESFA vice the individual local level store or franchise.

g. Employers in which individuals affiliated with ESGR (staff, volunteers, their family members) have a controlling interest are ineligible.

h. Previous recipients become eligible to receive the award in the 10th year following that of prior receipt. For example, a 2006 recipient will become eligible in 2016.

## 7. PROCESS.

a. Nominations shall:

(1) Be submitted via the Freedom Award website: [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil).

(2) Indicate all pertinent information on the employer's direct support of their Guard and Reserve personnel.

(3) Open the first working day of November and close 6 p.m. (1800) Eastern Standard Time (EST) on the third Monday in January.

(4) Be available to ESGR State Committee Selection Boards for initial review and validation via the existing software and assigned user logins.

b. State Committee Selection Boards shall:

(1) Consist of ESGR volunteers assigned by the State Chair. The State Chair shall serve as the head of the selection board.

(2) Review all nominations received on employers within their area of responsibility.

(3) Verify the accuracy of the information provided by the nominator in Enclosure 2.

(4) Complete Enclosure 3 to obtain additional information on those nominations considered most deserving of the SDESFA.

(5) Select up to three employers as semifinalists from that state or territory, using both objective criteria established by ESGR HQ and the information provided by the nominator. State Committees may forward not more than one nomination from each of the following categories to the National Review Board (NRB):

- (a) Public sector employer
- (b) Large private employer (500 + employees)
- (c) Small private employer (under 500 employees)

(6) State Committees will submit their nominations to the National Review Board by close of business on the first working day in March via the ESGR Portal submittal system.

(a) Comments shall include any information the State Committee Selection Board feels is relevant.

(b) Supplemental information can be provided via a separately mailed package, but this is not encouraged due to the volume of nominations received. If submitted, this information must be both directly relevant to the employer's actions towards their Guard and Reserve personnel to be considered and must be received by the National Review Board by the specified date for all nominations.

(7) The State Committee Selection Board will notify, in writing, all employers not forwarded to the National Review Board using Enclosure 4 as an example.

c. The National Review Board shall:

(1) Be comprised of the Director of National Outreach and Plans or alternate, an Employer Outreach representative and the Regional Deputy Directors (RDD). The Director NOP, will chair the NRB. The NRB will also assign an ESGR staff member as a non-biased At-Large review member.

(2) Compile a list of all organizations that received multiple nominations and include the number of total nominations received.

(3) Sort all semifinalist submissions by region.

(4) Validate and correct, as necessary, the numerical score assigned.

(5) Identify an intermediate pool which contains:

(a) At least three employers from each category in each region.

(b) A number of employers from each region that does not exceed the number of States/Territories in that region.

(6) Identify 30 finalists to forward to the National Selection Board ensuring that at least five organizations from each employer category are included. Five alternates shall be identified for possible substitution if necessary.

(7) Conduct a USERRA compliance review of all 30 finalists and 5 alternates using Enclosure 5. Review and input will be in accordance with information restrictions outlined in Administrative Dispute Resolution Act 1996 (Reference (d)). Should significant information be found that eliminates a finalist from consideration, an alternate shall be substituted as a finalist.

(8) Collate the complete nomination package and Executive Summaries for the 30 finalists and forward to the National Selection Board by the fourth Monday in March. Additional information, including the original nomination package from the [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil) website, the State Committee Selection Board's comments, and the completed Ombudsman Review form will be made available electronically.

d. National Selection Board shall:

- (1) Consist of the board members listed in Enclosure 1.
- (2) Meet to review all nomination packages on the 30 finalists by mid-April.
- (3) Select up to 15 award recipients for consideration by the Secretary of Defense.
- (4) Select a first, second, and third alternate recipient.

(5) Endeavor to ensure a minimum of three representatives from each of the three categories is considered for final selection.

e. The Executive Director, ESGR shall:

(1) Invite the National Selection Board members at least 4 weeks prior to the chosen date of the selection board.

(2) Provide the precept to the National Selection Board for use in their selection.

(3) Provide a selection process and timeline briefing to the ASD (RA) each year.

(4) Provide all administrative and IT support for the initial nomination process, National Review Board and National Selection Board.

(5) Forward the results of the National Selection Board to the Secretary of Defense.

(6) Once approved, inform all of the Award Recipients of their selection.

(7) Notify in writing those employers considered but not selected by the National Review Board or the National Selection Board using Enclosure 6. Employers not selected by the National Selection Board will be notified in writing after the SDESFA Recipients have been approved.

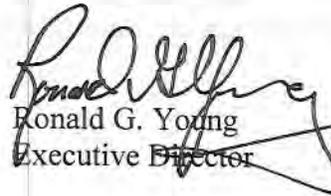
(8) Develop, plan, and execute an appropriate award recognition ceremony.

(9) Provide financial assistance for recipients (principal employer, nominator and one guest each) to fund travel to Washington, DC to accept the award. All travel (air and hotel) must be supported by an Individual Travel Order (ITO) with travel planning executed via the Defense Travel System (DTS). Travel will also be funded for volunteers and past Freedom Award recipients selected to participate in the National Selection Board. The Director of NOP will approve all travel requests to be reviewed by the ESGR Executive Director.

(10) ESGR Resources-Finance will be responsible for obtaining the funding authorization from the appropriate authority during the spring of the award year. This includes handling all staffing actions associated with funding. ESGR Resources-Finance will be included in the audit process for the invitation list prior to final approval to ensure compliance with Official Representation Funds (ORF) ratios. After the event, Resources-Finance will conduct a post-event audit for compliance with ORF ratios.

8. RELEASABILITY. UNLIMITED. This Instruction is approved for public release. Copies of this instruction may be obtained through the Internet from the ESGRnet Website at <https://www.esgrnet.com/Library/library.asp?area=ESGRInstructions>.

9. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Instruction is effective immediately.

  
Ronald G. Young  
Executive Director

Enclosures

1. National Selection Board Members
  2. Freedom Award Nomination Form – Service Member
  3. Freedom Award Evaluation Form – State/Territory Selection Committee
  4. Sample Employer Non-Selection Letter
  5. Ombudsman Review Form
  6. Sample Employer Non-Selection Letter from ESGR
  7. ESGR SECDEF Employer Support Freedom Award Critical Timeline
- Glossary

ENCLOSURE 1

NATIONAL SELECTION BOARD MEMBERS

Members:

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (Board Chair)  
ESGR National Chairman (Board Vice Chair)  
Senior Department of Labor/VETS Representative  
Senior Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Representative  
Chief, National Guard Bureau  
Chief, Army Reserve  
Chief, Navy Reserve  
Commander, Marine Forces Reserve  
Chief, Air Force Reserve  
Director, Reserve and Training, US Coast Guard  
Senior Enlisted Advisor Reserve Affairs  
Prior Freedom Award Recipient – Public Sector  
Prior Freedom Award Recipient – Small Business  
Prior Freedom Award Recipient – Large Business  
ESGR Volunteer (At-Large annual rotation)  
Additional Trade Association Representatives as required

Support:

Senior Recorder  
Asst Recorder  
Asst Recorder  
Admin Assistant  
Admin Assistant

ENCLOSURE 2

FREEDOM AWARD NOMINATION FORM – SERVICE MEMBER

<b>Q#</b>		
<b>1</b>	<b>PAY POLICIES</b>	
	Does your employer provide compensation when you are away from work performing military service?	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>BENEFITS AND LEAVE POLICIES</b>	
	Does your employer, either as a matter of published policy or practice, provide continuation of health care, dental, or insurance benefits for you or your family when you are away from work performing military service?	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE (ESGR) AWARDS</b>	
	Has your employer been awarded other ESGR recognition, such as the Patriot, Above and Beyond, or Pro Patria Awards?	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>SUPERVISOR TRAINING</b>	
	Does your employer train its managers and supervisors on the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act (USERRA) so that they can effectively manage their Guard and Reserve employees?	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>ESGR ADVOCACY</b>	
	Does your employer engage in activities or have established policies which demonstrate an eagerness to help increase employer support for the Guard and Reserve within the community and encouraging other employers to do so.	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>SERVICE MEMBER RECOGNITION</b>	
	Does your employer provide positive recognition of its Guard and Reserve employees in organizational publications, events, or in other ways?	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>FAMILY SUPPORT</b>	
	Does your employer interact with and support the family members of employees during periods of military service?	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>SERVICE MEMBER SUPPORT</b>	
	Does your employer interact with and support Guard and Reserve employees during their periods of military service?	
		<b>YES</b>

		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>HIRING PREFERENCE</b>	
	Does your employer provide any preference to members of the Guard and Reserve in the process of hiring new employees?	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>GENERAL MILITARY SUPPORT</b>	
	Does your employer establish policies or engage in activities which are generally supportive to the US Armed Forces, such as discounts, services, donations, scholarships, employment programs, etc.? [Nomination form states: Please explain, in detail, specific examples of the outstanding support your employer has provided. You may also include additional information elaborating on the questions above. Past examples include: closed business for a farewell; made personal visits to family while deployed; or used software to track information on all employee military members.]	
		<b>YES</b>
		<b>NO</b>
		<b>NOT SURE</b>

ENCLOSURE 3

FREEDOM AWARD EVALUATION FORM – STATE/TERRITORY SELECTION COMMITTEE

<b>1</b>	<b>PAY POLICIES</b> [10 possible points]	<b>VALUE</b>
	Does the employer provide compensation when a service member is away from work performing military service?	
	Undetermined	0
	Employer provides no pay during periods of military service, regardless of duration.	0
	Employer provides full or differential pay for short periods of military service (less than three weeks) such as drill and annual training	2
	Employer provides the difference between a service member's regular pay and military pay for:	
	periods of military service of up to 12 months.	5
	periods of military service greater than 12 months.	8
	Employer provides FULL pay to a service member for:	
	periods of military service of up to 12 months.	7
	periods of military service greater than 12 months.	10
<b>2</b>	<b>BENEFITS POLICIES</b> [10 possible points]	
	Does the employer, either as a matter of published policy or practice, provide continuation of 1) health care, 2) dental, or 3) life insurance benefits for service members or their families when away from work performing military service?	
	Undetermined	0
	Employer provides no continuation of benefits during periods of military service, regardless of duration.	0
	Employer provides continuation of one or two of the benefits above for:	
	periods of military service of up to 12 months	5
	periods of military service greater than 12 months	8
	Employer provides continuation of ALL benefits for:	
	periods of military service of up to 12 months	7
	periods of military service greater than 12 months	10
<b>3</b>	<b>SUPERVISOR TRAINING</b> [4 possible points]	
	Does the employer train its managers and supervisors on the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act (USERRA) so that they can effectively manage their Guard and Reserve Employees?	
	Undetermined/does not conduct any training	0
	Employer provides training on USERRA to supervisors and/or managers within the organization.	4
<b>4</b>	<b>EMPLOYER SUPPORT ADVOCACY</b> [3 possible points]	
	Does the employer engage in activities or have established policies which demonstrate an eagerness to help increase employer support for the Guard and Reserve within the community and encourage other employers to do so.	
	Undetermined	0
	Employer is actively engaged in promoting employer support of the National Guard and Reserve (may include active engagement with ESGR and/or signing a Statement of Support)	3

<b>5</b>	<b>ESGR AWARDS</b> [3 possible points]	
	Has the employer been awarded other ESGR recognition, such as the Patriot, Above and Beyond, or Pro Patria Awards? [Choose the response which affords the greatest number of points] <b>NOTE: Receipt of other ESGR awards is NOT a prerequisite for selection as a SDESFA recipient</b>	
	Employer has never received an ESGR Award.	0
	Employer has received an ESGR Patriot award, Above and Beyond Award, and/or an ESGR Pro Patria Award.	3
<b>6</b>	<b>HIRING PREFERENCE</b> [10 possible points]	
	Does the employer provide any preference to members of the National Guard and Reserve in the process of hiring new employees?	
	Employer does NOT provide any hiring preference.	0
	Employer actively recruits and hires members of the National Guard and Reserve.	10
<b>7</b>	<b>SERVICE MEMBER SUPPORT</b> [15 possible points]	
	Does the employer interact with and support Guard and Reserve employees during their periods of military service?	
	Undetermined	0
	Employer does not interact with military members during periods of military service.	0
	Employer actively maintains contact with Guard and Reserve employees during periods of military service.	5
	Employer accomplishes the above and provides other support to Guard and Reserve employees during periods of military service (such as care packages, letters, etc.).	10
	Employer does all of the above and has senior leadership that personally emphasizes and participates in support of Guard and Reserve members during periods of military service.	15
<b>8</b>	<b>FAMILY SUPPORT</b> [15 possible points]	
	Does the employer interact with and support the family members of employees during periods of military service?	
	Undetermined	0
	Employer does not interact with families of military members during their periods of military service.	0
	Employer actively maintains contact with the families Guard and Reserve employees during periods of military service.	5
	Employer accomplishes the above and provides other support to the families of Guard and Reserve employees during periods of military service (such as products, services, continued involvement in company events, designated Family Support Coordinator, etc.).	10
	Employer does all of the above and has senior leadership that personally emphasizes and participates in support of the families of Guard and Reserve employees during periods of military service.	15

<b>9</b>	<b>SERVICE MEMBER RECOGNITION</b> [10 possible points]	
	Does the employer provide positive recognition of its Guard and Reserve employees in organizational publications, events, or in other ways?	
	Employer does not recognize its National Guard and Reserve employees.	0
	Employer frequently and publicly acknowledges National Guard and Reserve employees in a variety of ways (announcements, postings, publications).	5
	Employer accomplishes all of the above and has senior leadership that personally and publicly expresses support of its National Guard and Reserve employees and encourages other employers to do so.	10
<b>10</b>	<b>GENERAL MILITARY SUPPORT</b> [20 possible points – allocate points based on the quality of the service member narrative provided with the nomination]	
	Does the employer establish policies or engage in activities which are generally supportive to the US Armed Forces, such as discounts, services, donations, scholarships, employment programs, etc.? [Nomination form states: Please explain, in detail, specific examples of the outstanding support your employer has provided. You may also include additional information elaborating on the questions above. Past examples include: closed business for a farewell; made personal visits to family while deployed; or used software to track information on all employee military members.]	
	Undetermined/no supporting details	0
	Employer provides support directly to service member employees.	5
	Employer has contributed (financially or otherwise) to events or activities in the community in support of the Armed Forces.	10
	Employer has initiated and is directly responsible for programs/events which directly support the Armed Forces, and seeks out other means of assisting their local military establishment and employees.	15
	Employer does all of the above and has senior leadership that personally and publicly encourages patriotic support of the Armed Forces, and encourages other employers to do the same, while supporting service member employees.	20

ENCLOSURE 4

SAMPLE EMPLOYER NON-SELECT LETTER

(ON STATE/TERRITORY LETTERHEAD)

(DATE)

Mr. XXX XXXXX  
(Job Title)  
(Business Name)  
(Address)  
(City), (State) (Zip code)

Dear Mr. XXXXX:

As previously announced, (Business Name) was nominated by one of your employees for the prestigious Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The Freedom Award recognizes American employers of Guard and Reserve personnel who provide exceptional support to these designated citizens. The competition this year was intense and demonstrated the incredible support for our Guard and Reserve.

The events of September 11th changed America forever. The use of the Guard and Reserve has dramatically increased and clearly reflects the cost effective force in readiness these men and women represent. Our military could not perform the duties of protecting the homeland or conducting ongoing contingency operations around the globe without your continued support. America's Employers are inextricably linked to our national security. Unfortunately, only a limited number of Freedom Award recipients are selected each year from the many great employers providing outstanding support.

Even though your organization was not selected, your nomination for this award illustrates the exceptional leadership, support and personal devotion you provide to your employees. I sincerely appreciate your support for your Guard and Reserve members, and in turn, this great country of ours. We are forever grateful for your understanding and recognition of our patriotic volunteers.

Members of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Employer Outreach Program will maintain close contact with you to solidify the strategic partnership that is vital to the nation's military readiness. Please contact us at 800-336-4590 with your questions or concerns and visit our website at [www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil).

Sincerely,

XXXX XXXXXX  
Chair

ENCLOSURE 5

OMBUDSMAN REVIEW FORM

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This form is to be completed by the Ombudsman Team to ensure that employers nominated for the Freedom Award do not have significant and/or outstanding complaints registered in the ESGR database. Research will be done from past 18 months.

Please complete all blocks and **make a recommendation in block 5**; attach pertinent information as directed.

- 1) Name of Employer to be researched: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) Name of National Case Manager performing the search: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) Case Management System was checked:
- 4) Provide the Numbers:  
    Number of complaints in the Case Management System: \_\_\_\_\_  
    Number of cases still open: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Provide the Number Cases on file with the Department of Labor \_\_\_\_\_

I. M. OMBUDSMAN

ENCLOSURE 6

SAMPLE EMPLOYER NON-SELECT LETTER FOR NOMINATIONS FORWARDED TO HEADQUARTERS ESGR

(ESGR HEADQUARTERS LETTERHEAD)

Mr. XXX XXXXX

(DATE)

(Job Title)

(Business Name)

(Address)

(City), (State) (Zip code)

Dear Mr. XXXXX:

As previously announced, (Business Name) was nominated by one of your employees for the prestigious Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The Freedom Award recognizes American employers of Guard and Reserve personnel who provide exceptional support to these designated citizens. The competition this year was intense and demonstrated the incredible support for our Guard and Reserve.

The events of September 11th changed America forever. The use of the Guard and Reserve has dramatically increased and clearly reflects the cost effective force in readiness these men and women represent. Our military could not perform the duties of protecting the homeland or conducting ongoing contingency operations around the globe without your continued support. America's employers are inextricably linked to our national security.

Even though your organization was not selected, your nomination for this award illustrates the exceptional leadership, support, and personal devotion you provide to your employees. We sincerely appreciate your support for your Guard and Reserve members, and in turn, this great country of ours. We are forever grateful for your understanding and recognition of our patriotic volunteers.

Members of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Employer Outreach Program will maintain close contact with you to solidify the strategic partnership that is vital to the nation's military readiness. Please contact us at 800-336-4590 with your questions or concerns and visit our website at [www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil).

XXXX XXXXXX

National Chair

XXXX XXXXXX

Executive Director

ENCLOSURE 7**ESGR SECDEF EMPLOYER SUPPORT FREEDOM AWARD CRITICAL TIMELINE**

<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Primary POC</b>
		<b>Freedom Award Orange Tops</b>	
		SECDEF Schedule Proposal - Hosting FA Recipients, FA ceremony attendance/participation (SECDEF)	
		ESFA Ceremony Funding Approval (USDPR)	
		List of Recipients for 2010 (SECDEF)	
		Alternate Request of Keynote Speaker (SECDEF)	
		Program Support Request (ASD(RA))	
		Hosting FA Recipients at White House (POTUS)	
		ESGR Week Proclamation (POTUS)	
		SECDEF Message in Program (SECDEF)	
		Recipient Thank You Letters (ASD(RA))	
		<b>Timeline Tasks</b>	
		2010 Freedom Award nomination season (1st business day in November to 3rd Monday in January)	
		Semifinalists from State/Territory Committees to HQ ESGR (1st business day in March)	
		Distribute State Nominees Press Release	
		Mail FA NOMINEE certificates to all nominees	
		Convene National Review Board (Director NOP, EO, RDD - final results due by 4th Monday in March)	
		Convene National Selection Board (target: early April)	
		Distribute State/Territory Semi-Finalists Press Release (in early April)	
		Distribute State Finalists Press Release (target: early May)	
		Convene Internal Project Management Team	
		Develop "draft" invite list for FA ceremony (except for recipients and contingents)	
		Review of Dinner Ceremony Invitation Design	
		Provide "draft" Invite List to ASD(RA)	
		90 Day Out Pre-Brief to ESGR leadership	
		<b>90-day out Brief to ASD(RA)</b>	
		Save the Date email - Military/Senior Leaders	
		Secure Master of Ceremonies	
		Notify ESGR State/Territory Chairs (target: early June)	
		Notify Recipients (target: early June)	
		Notify Nominators (target: early June)	

Due Date	Date Completed	Task	Primary POC
		Secure SDI FA POC's for Recipient Contact (after National Selection Board results are finalized)	
		Announce Recipients (target: mid-June)	
		Send NSB National Finalists Press Release (target: mid-June)	
		<b>Recipient Congratulation Letters (ASD(RA))</b>	
		Secure Recipient Transportation to/from Pentagon	
		Secure Anthem singer/music group	
		Secure Color Guard	
		Secure Videographer - IEP (décor options)	
		Secure Photographer	
		Procure Recipient PA & Logistical Contacts	
		Approve Invitation	
		Create Media Invitation List - market list based on recipients	
		60 Day Out Pre-Brief to ESGR leadership	
		<b>60-day out Brief to ASD(RA)</b>	
		Declaration of Support Letter approval – ASD(RA)	
		Review Dinner Menu Options	
		Stage Design/Décor	
		Conduct Menu Tasting	
		Approve Table Settings	
		Conduct Final Review of Invitation List (include Resources-Finance)	
		Arrange Travel Assistance (checklist for recipients/nominators)	
		Approve Event Memento	
		<b>Review of Event Program Options</b>	
		<b>Draft Program Sequence/Script</b>	
		Draft ASD(RA) Freedom Award Editorials (approx. 45 days prior)	
		Dinner Menu Finalized	
		<b>Mail Invitations (approx. 45 days prior to event)</b>	
		Event Location Contract Review Meeting With SDI (next year)	
		Produce Employer Narratives	
		Finalize Awardees ITO	
		Procure Recipient Attendee/Nominator Bios	
		<i>Procure Recipient Logos</i>	
		Finalize Guest Lodging	
		RSVP Deadline for Hotel	
		Freedom Award Op-Ed (ASD(RA))	
		30 Day Out Pre-Brief to ESGR leadership	
		<b>30-day out Brief to ASD(RA)</b>	
		<b>Prepare Welcome Packet for Awardees</b>	
		Prepare Welcome Packets for Nominators	
		<b>Confirm Declaration Letter signing by ALL recipients</b>	

Due Date	Date Completed	Task	Primary POC
		<b>Secure Chaplain</b>	
		Press Release announcing Keynote Speaker (as necessary)	
		Distribute Welcome Packet to Nominators	
		Distribute Welcome Packet to Awardees	
		Post of FA Narratives on ESGR Website	
		Approve Event Program	
		Print Event Program	
		<b>Distribute Media Advisory (two weeks prior)</b>	
		<b>Approve Event Signage</b>	
		<b>Create Vendor Event Staffing Plan</b>	
		Confirm ETA/Receipt of Mementos by SDI	
		Distribute Media Kits	
		<b>7-day out Brief to ASD(RA)</b>	
		Speaker Scripts	
		Provide Final Guest Count to Caterer	
		Finalize Seating Chart based on RSVP's	
		<b>ESGR Management FA Briefing</b>	
		Ceremony Program Delivery to SDI	
		Distribute DV Kits (for senior government officials - 2-3 days prior)	
		Updated Press Release for ceremony (release 2-3 days prior)	
		ESGR Recipient Host Briefing	
		<b>Dinner Ceremony Venue Walk Thru</b>	
		Review Ceremony RSVP - starts 45 days out	
		Finalize Script, Production Cues	
		Entertainment Rehearsal/Sound Check	
		<b>Dinner Ceremony</b>	
		POTUS Hosting of Recipients at WH	
		Confirm Award Shipment Details with SDI	
		Distribute Award Press Release/Video	
		Post Award videos/photos on FA Website	
		<b>Distribute Thank You letters</b>	
		AFTER ACTION REPORT (final 2 weeks after event)	
		Final Budget Report (involves Resources-Finance)	
		Post-ceremony follow-up articles involving recipients	

NOTE: Highlighted items are critical tasks.

GLOSSARY

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ASD (RA)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs
CSO	Committee Support Operations
DoD	Department of Defense
DOL	Department of Labor
ESGR	Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve
ESGRI	Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Instruction
EST	Eastern Standard Time
NOP	National Outreach and Plans
RDD	Regional Deputy Director
SECDEF	Secretary of Defense
SDESFA	Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award
USERRA	Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act