National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve INSTRUCTION

NUMBER 1250.21
October 01, 2008

NCESGR/[CSO]

SUBJECT: Statement of Support Program

References: (a) NCESGR Instruction 1205.21, Five Star Employer Program, November 16, 2005 (hereby canceled)
(b) DoD Directive 1250.01, National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (NCESGR), April 13, 2004
(c) DoD Instruction 1205.12, Civilian Employment and Reemployment Rights of Applicants for, and Service Members and Former Service Members of the Uniformed Services, April 4, 1996
(d) DoD Instruction 1205.22, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, March 17, 1997

1. PURPOSE

This Instruction cancels and replaces reference (a) and serves as a how-to guide for effective implementation and administration of the Statement of Support program in support of the ESGR mission described in references (b) through (d) above.

2. APPLICABILITY

This Instruction applies to all ESGR Field Committee members and volunteers involved in employer outreach activities.

3. INTENT

The intent of the Statement of Support Program is to increase employer support for the Guard and Reserve by developing employers into advocates for employee participation in the Reserve components.

4. POLICY

Each Field Committee shall implement the Statement of Support program to gain and maintain employer support for the Guard and Reserve.

5. PROGRAM CONCEPT

The Statement of Support Program builds employer support by enabling employers to show public affirmation of the support they give to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve. In addition to increasing employer support for the Guard and Reserve, the program provides ESGR with a mechanism for collecting, cataloging and managing information on employers who have signed a SoS.

6. <u>RESPONSIBILITIES</u>

   6.1. The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve shall:

      6.1.1. Provide overall program goals, objectives, guidance and oversight.

      6.1.2. Provide a sufficient supply of SoS certificates, as well as training materials and resources for Field Committees to train and equip Employer Outreach Representatives to administer the Statement of Support Program.

      6.1.3. Provide an automated method for Field Committees to identify and report support achieved by employers.

      6.1.4. Ensure that employer data collected from by the Civilian Employment Information Program is up to date and provided to the Field Committees.

      6.1.5. Provide funding to Field Committees for employer outreach activities in support of the Statement of Support program.

      6.1.6. Maintain a national list of actively serving Employer Outreach Directors as provided by the Field Committees.

   6.2. The Field Committee Chair shall:

      6.2.1. Appoint an Employer Outreach Director and Area Chairs, if applicable, to manage the Statement of Support program.

      6.2.2. Aggressively recruit sufficient Employer Outreach Representatives to ensure coverage of all employers of Guard and Reserve members.

      6.2.3. Plan, organize and implement Committee employer outreach events to generate interest and build employer support for the Guard and Reserve and meet assigned program goals.

      6.2.4. Report to NCESGR the number of employers who have signed Statements of Support each quarter or as required.

   6.3. The Employer Outreach Director (EOD) and Area Chairs, if applicable, shall:

6.3.1. Manage the implementation and administration of the Employer Statement of Support Program by providing supervision, leadership and guidance to Employer Outreach Representatives and assist the Committee Chair in meeting assigned program goals.

6.3.2. Ensure Employer Outreach Representatives have the necessary materials, resources and training to implement the Statement of Support Program. At a minimum, initial training shall include at least four hours of USERRA, a detailed review of ESGR programs, services and administrative procedures, and an overview of the seven Reserve components.

6.3.3. Appoint Employer Outreach Representatives to assume responsibility for employers in their assigned area or industry.

6.3.4. Provide employer data, leads and requests for SoS received from NCESGR, the ESGR web site or other lead sources to Employer Outreach Representatives for immediate follow-up.

6.3.5. Monitor the status of employers who have signed Statements of Support within the Committees using the employer listing available on www.esgrnet.com.

6.3.6. Consolidate and report employer outreach activities to Field Committee leadership as directed.

6.3.7. Maintain a Committee listing of actively serving EORs.

6.3.8. Utilize enclosures (1) through (4) for the implementation and administration of the Statement of Support program.

6.4. The Employer Outreach Representative (EOR) shall:

6.4.1. Gain an understanding about ESGR's programs and services and the role the Reserve components have in America's armed forces.

6.4.2. Build and maintain an employer file on assigned employers that includes basic employer information, awards received, Statement of Support status as well as a list of Guard or Reserve members employed by the company.

6.4.3. Meet with assigned employer(s) initially and thereafter as needed to obtain signed SoS and encourage and assist them to maintain their support of the Guard and Reserve.

6.4.4. Report results of each employer contact to the EOD as established by Committee reporting requirements.

7. <u>ENCLOSURES</u>

Enclosures 1 through 4 to this Instruction provide the EOD and the EOR with a detailed outline of their responsibilities along with other information designed to help them understand their role and assist in effectively accomplishing their mission.

8. <u>EFFECTIVE DATE</u>

This Instruction is effective immediately.

                                        Dr. L. Gordon Sumner, Jr.
                                        Executive Director

Enclosures - 4
    E1. Statement of Support Program Procedure Guide
    E2. Statement of Support Program Checklist
    E3. Statement of Support Review and Printing Instructions
    E4. Sample Employer Statement of Support

E1. ENCLOSURE 1

Statement of Support Program Procedure Guide

E1.1. Prioritize Employers. The first step in the Statement of Support Program is to prioritize employers. With hundreds of thousands of employers throughout the nation, ESGR Field Committees must prioritize how they will contact these employers to maximize the time and effort of committee volunteers. The following priorities are established as a guide to help prioritize employer contacts for the Statement of Support program for the Field Committees.

E1.1.1. Priority 1. Employers who have not signed a SoS who currently employ Guard and Reserve members.

E1.1.2. Priority 2. Employers who have not signed a SoS who do not currently employ Guard or Reserve members.

E1.2. Receive Employer Contact Information. The next step in the Statement of Support Program is to receive employer contact information. Employer contact information is generated from the following sources.

E1.2.1. Statement of Support Request. When a request for a Statement of Support (SoS) is submitted on the ESGR web site the SoS is no longer mailed to the employer, the requestor, or the Field Committee for signing. Instead, the on-line request generates an automatic email notification to the Committee Chair, or other designated committee member, alerting them of the request.

E1.2.2. The designated committee member should then forward the message to the Employer Outreach Director (EOD) for immediate follow-up and to arrange a signing ceremony.

E1.3. Contact Employers. Once priorities are established and employer contact information is received, the EOD should assign lead follow-up responsibility to an Employer Outreach Representative (EOR). It is absolutely essential to initiate follow-up with interested employers as quickly as possible following receipt of their information. Delaying contact for months or even weeks could turn a willing prospect into a disillusioned skeptic. The following steps outline the process of making contact with employers.

E1.3.1. Make Initial Contact. Once an EOR has been assigned an employer, the volunteer should make initial contact as soon as possible. When making initial contact, the goal is to determine the company's current level of support for their Guard and Reserve member employees and, if appropriate, schedule a SoS signing. Request to speak with the owner, president, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or other top executive. Tell them who you are, who you represent (ESGR) and how you received their contact

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information. Next, ask what type of support they currently provide to their Guard and Reserve member employees (i.e. have they already signed a SoS, have they revised their Human Resource policies to allow for the provisions of USERRA, do they provide their Guard and Reserve member employees with differential pay while deployed, etc. Based on their response, explain the Statement of Support Program and arrange for a convenient time to visit the company to sign the appropriate SoS.

E1.3.2. Organize the Statement Signing Ceremony. When organizing the SoS signing, request the owner, president, or CEO to sign the SoS and encourage the company to make the signing a significant event. Encourage the employer to invite their managers, supervisors, Guard and Reserve member employees as well as the general employee population. EORs are encouraged to invite local unit commanders of Guard and Reserve member employees, local media outlets as well as Field Committee leadership. The larger the population at the signing, the more significant the event becomes and more lasting the impression to all those involved.

E1.3.3. Prepare the SoS Certificate. As stated earlier, SoS for the Statement of Support Program are no longer mailed from the supplier with the employers' information pre-printed on the certificate. Instead, Statements of Support are ordered by the Field Committee and are printed with the employer name at the local/State level. See Enclosure 4 (Statement of Support Review and Printing Instructions) for detailed instructions on how to enter employer information and print the employer name on a SoS. Note: Committees will determine which Committee volunteers will be authorized to print certificates.

E1.3.4. Conduct the Signing Ceremony. Prior to the day of the signing event, ensure you have the employer's name accurately printed on the correct SoS certificate. Have extra brochures and business cards for your audience, and arrive early to meet your host and get comfortable with the signing venue. Be sure to write the employer's contact information on the information tear-off card on the bottom of the SoS and validate the information with your host. Remove the tear-off card from the bottom of the form prior to the signing ceremony and maintain the information for your records and/or submit the tear-off form as directed by your EOD. Following the signing ceremony, make time to visit with the employer's Human Resource (HR) Manager to discuss their HR policies and compliance with USERRA.

E1.3.5. Conduct Follow-up. Let them know that ESGR is their advocate. Answer the "What's in it for me?" question. The key to effective employer outreach is consistent follow-up aimed at developing and building personal relationships. Throughout the follow-up phase, EORs should never pressure or annoy the employer through excessive contact. Instead, EORs must focus on building personal relationships and being available to the employer to assist them as required. Periodic contact will normally be sufficient to establish a personal relationship and to keep the employer mindful of ESGR and maintaining their support to their Guard and Reserve member employees.

E1.4. <u>Conduct Employer Outreach Events</u>. Conducting employer outreach events is a major part of the Statement of Support Program. Committees are encouraged to develop an employer outreach plan which provides an opportunity for the Field Committee to inform and educate known employers of RC members. After the event, EORs must be vigilant in their follow-up efforts by contacting their assigned employers and encouraging them to sign a Statement of Support. See paragraph E1.3.5 (Conduct Follow-up), for more information on staying in touch with employers.

E1.5. <u>Monitoring of Results</u>. To assist Committees in this effort, each Field Committee is strongly encouraged to use the CEI data base as their primary source of information for the management of the Statement of Support Program. This data base lists the known employers of RC members. All SoS signers from 2004 and earlier will be entered into the data base as One Star Employers. Information is input into the Five Star Employer data base via the following methods:

E1.5.1. SoS Requests. All SoS requests submitted through the ESGR website are automatically entered into the Statement of Support database.

E1.5.2. NCESGR Input. Tear off cards located at the bottom of the one through five star SoS received by NCESGR are manually input into the Statement of Support database.

E1.5.3. Field Committee Input. States have the option to manually add an employer's information into the Statement of Support database if it has not yet been added by the two methods described above. Note: All SoS signed by employers prior to the implementation of the Statement of Support Program should be entered.

E1.6. <u>ESGRNet Access Instructions</u>. ESGR Field Committee leaders, Military Liaison, Ombudsman and Employer Outeach personnel are encouraged to access ESGRNet frequently to review SoS requests, update employer information, or enter new employers. Committees may access ESGRNet by following the steps below.

E1.6.1. Step 1: Access www.esgrnet.com (requires user ID and password)

E1.6.2. Step 2: Go to the „Admin Forms and Tools' drop down menu

E1.6.3. Step 3: Click on „SoS Review and Print'

E1.7. <u>Statement of Support Certificates</u>. FCs can obtain Statements of Support from the NCESGR fulfillment vendor. EODs are encouraged to order and maintain a sufficient supply of SoS to accomplish their Employer Outreach mission. Certificates are paid for by the Field Committees and can be ordered through www.co-store.com/esgr.

E1.8. <u>Statement of Support Employer Checklist</u>. See Enclosure 2 (Statement of Support Program Checklist) for an outline of the Statement of Support Program. This document comprises the recommended steps to successfully implement the Statement of Support Program. It is designed to help the EOD and the EOR organize their activities as they assist their assigned employers in signing a Statement of Support.

E2. ENCLOSURE 2

Statement of Support Program Checklist

This checklist comprises the recommended steps to successfully implement the Statement of Support Program.

❑ 1. Receive List of Assigned Employers
> (Data available from the Committee Employer Outreach Director, Area Chair, Executive Director or Field Committee Chair)

❑ 2. Maintain Supply of SoS Certificates
> (Maintain a sufficient supply of SoS certificates for use at employer outreach events and signing ceremonies)

❑ 3. Make Initial Contact with Each Employer
> (Determine level of employer support, determine what is needed for them to sign and provide assistance)

❑ 4. Organize the Signing Ceremony
> (Work with the employer to ensure event is well attended, invite local unit commanders, ESGR Committee leadership and the local media)

❑ 5. Prepare the Statement of Support Certificate
> (See Enclosure 3 to ESGRI 1205.21, for detailed instructions on how to print employer information on a Statement of Support certificate)

❑ 6. Conduct the Signing Ceremony
> (Verify employer info on the tear-off portion of the SoS and return to your EOD, NCESGR or keep for entry into the SoS database.)

❑ 7. Conduct Follow-up
> (Maintain the relationship with the employer through regular contact, provide assistance as requested and use ESGR events such as Bosslifts and Briefings with the Boss to encourage greater awareness and employer support)

❑ 8. Report Results
> (Report results of employer visits/contacts to the Committee Employer Outreach Director or Area Chair as applicable for entry into the SoS database)
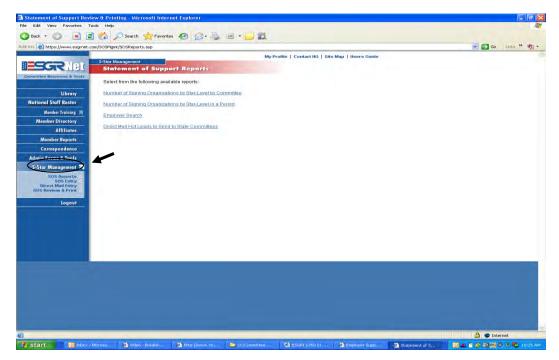
E3. ENCLOSURE 3

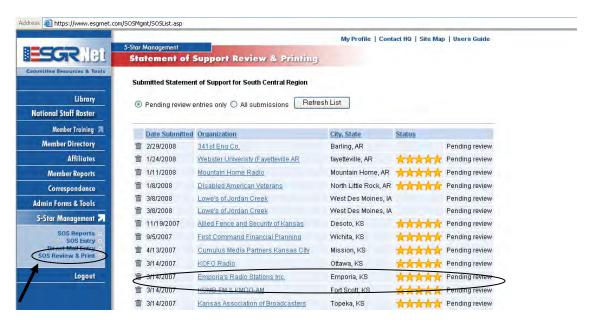Statement of Support Review and Printing Instructions

E3.1. Step 1: Access ESGRNet.

E3.1.1. Go to www.esgrnet.com.

E3.1.2. Enter your username and password.

E3.2. Step 2: Access the Statement of Support database.

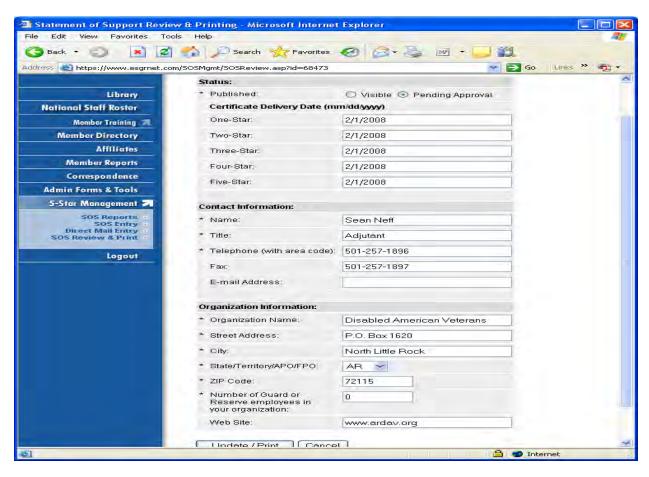E3.2.1. Click on „5-Star Management' on the bottom left side of the menu.

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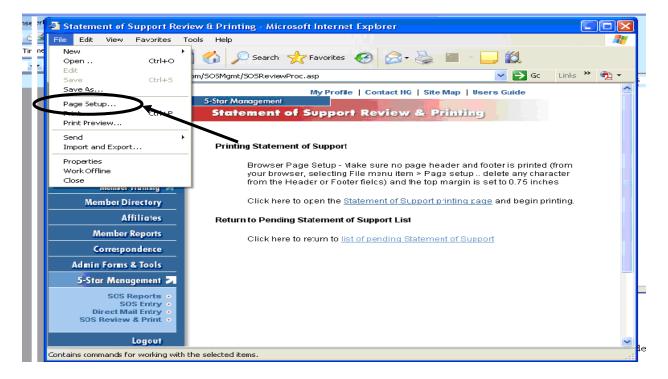
E3.2.2. Click on „SoS Review & Print'.

E3.3. Step 3: <u>Review Employer Information</u>. Select the employer you wish to review.

E3.4. Step 4: <u>Prepare to print the Statement of Support</u>.

E3.4.1. Review the employer information and make any changes required.

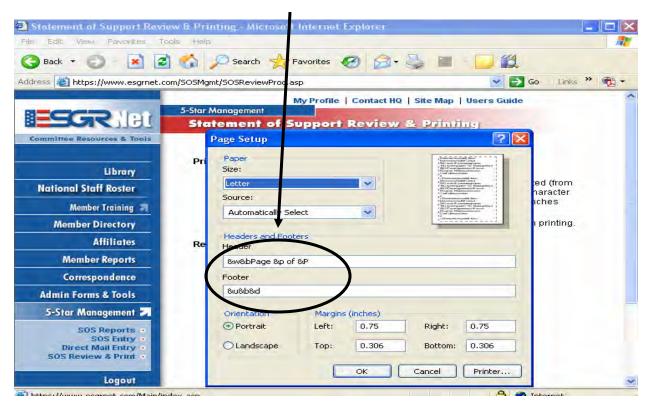E3.4.2. Next, enter the date that the SoS certificate will be awarded.

E3.4.3. Select "Visible" if the SoS has already been signed or "Pending Approval" if the SoS signing ceremony has not yet taken place.

E3.4.4. When finished, click "Update and Print".

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E3.4.5. From the screen below, click on "File" and then "Page Setup".
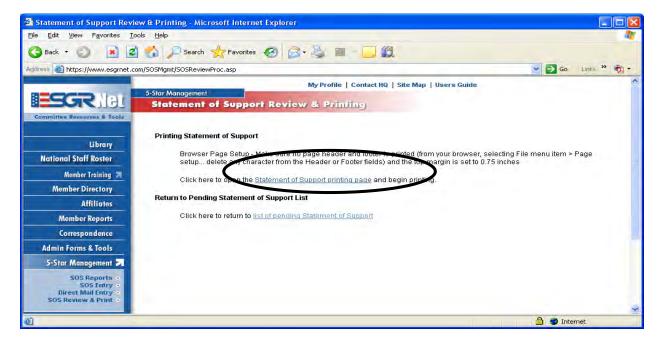
E3.4.6. Next, look in the <u>header and footer</u> field. If there is anything in them, delete it and click OK.
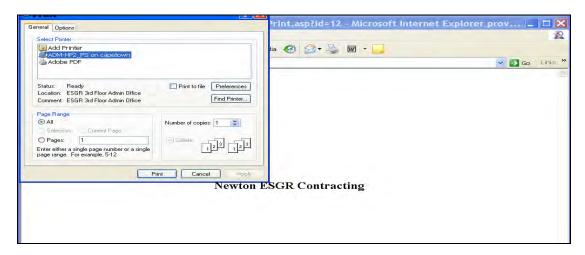

E3.5. Step 5: <u>Print the Certificate</u>

E3.5.1. Click on the "Statement of Support printing page" link.

E3.5.2. Do a printer 'test' by getting a <u>blank sheet of paper</u>.

E3.5.3. Write „Front-Top' across the top of the paper and feed the paper through your printer according to the printer instructions – i.e., face up or face down.

E3.5.4. Once the paper is positioned properly in your printer, click 'print'.

E3.5.5. Place the test page over the SoS Certificate and see if the name is properly positioned in the blank spot for the employer's name.

E3.5.6. If the employer's name is positioned correctly, insert the SoS certificate in your printer, click on the „Statement of Support printing page' link again and click 'print'.

E3.5.7. If the employer's name is NOT positioned correctly, re-insert the test paper and re-conduct the test until it lines up properly.

E4. ENCLOSURE 4

Sample Statement of Support

**STATEMENT OF SUPPORT
FOR THE GUARD AND RESERVE**

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

We recognize the National Guard and Reserve are essential to the strength of our nation and the well-being of our communities.

In the highest American tradition, the patriotic men and women of the Guard and Reserve serve voluntarily in an honorable and vital profession. They train to respond to their community and their country in time of need. They deserve the support of every segment of our society.

If these volunteer forces are to continue to serve our nation, increased public understanding is required of the essential role of the Guard and Reserve in preserving our national security.

Therefore, we join other employers in pledging that:

* We fully recognize, honor and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

* Our managers and supervisors will have the tools they need to effectively manage those employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.

* We will continually recognize and support our country's service members and their families in peace, in crisis, and in war.

_____
Employer

_____
Date

Chairman
**National Committee for Employer
Support of the Guard and Reserve**

Secretary of Defense

ESGR
**EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF
THE GUARD AND RESERVE**