

## **FY2016 Governor's Proposed Budget Adjustment - *Military***

### *Representing the Military Department:*

Major General Steven A. Cray, Adjutant General, Department of the Military  
Brigadier General Michael T. Heston, Deputy Adjutant General, Department of the Military  
Ken Gragg, Financial Director, Adjutant General's Office

The Military Department is requesting a total of \$88,484 as an FY2016 Budget Adjustment. The request is to cover one unforeseen cost and one related to how the FY2016 initial budget was represented.

The Department is requesting \$39,484 to support the Armed Services Scholarship Fund.

- Based on a misunderstanding about how the budget authority worked for this special fund, the authority was initially requested in the FY2016 budget as special funds tied to fund 21975 and wasn't requested as part of the General Fund (GF). The supporting legislative language directs the Office of Finance and Management to move the funds from Military's GF to the special fund.
- Therefore, once the \$39,484 was moved from the Office of Veterans Affairs GF there became an operational shortfall. This GF shortfall in the Office of Veterans Affairs will significantly impact their ability to meet program requirements to include payroll, operating cost and grants to needy veterans.
- The issue has been corrected for the FY2017 budget submission.

The Department is requesting \$49,000 to support the Federal Caps on Military Leave reimbursement.

- The Federal Fiscal Year 2015 grant for the State Firefighters (funded as 100% federally reimbursable) located at the Burlington International Airport has a stipulation that the federal program only authorizes up to 168 hours of military leave for reimbursement.
  - o Currently, the VSEA contract stipulates that military leave is charged as a duty day. In the case of the firefighters a duty day is 20.75 hours. Therefore, if they use the normal 12-13 days of military leave they have accrued up to 269.75 hours. 21 of the 29 State Firefighters (state employees) are also Vermont National Guard members. Therefore, they are entitled to sign for military leave when they are in a military duty status. **(See attached representation of the state firefighter's duty schedule and the impact of military duty to include monthly training periods)**
  - o By the end of federal fiscal year 2015 (September 30, 2015), the firefighter program exceeded the leave cap by \$51,945.83. However, Military needs \$49,000 and can absorb the additional \$2,945.83.

- The impact is that those salary expenses had to be re-directed to the Air Services GF. This current shortfall in the Air Services GF will significantly impact their ability to meet program requirements to include payroll and operating cost (e.g. utilities, facility maintenance, etc.). A compounding factor is that the program is a share matching program. For each GF dollar the program receives \$3 in federal match. Therefore, the \$49,000 GF shortfall equals a \$147,000 federal matching shortfall or a total budget impact of \$196,000.
- Potential mitigation for the FY2017 budget is having the VSEA language for the Firefighter appendix of the contract modified to allow the firefighter to sign military leave by the hour instead of the duty day. This is being negotiated on behalf of management as part of the contract negotiations.

## State Firefighter Duty Schedule

The fire station at Burlington International Airport operates 24 hours/day, 7 days/week and 365 days per year. The firefighters are on station one 24-hour day and off two days. However, for pay purposes they are paid for a 20.75-hour duty day as negotiated by the VSEA.

The table below represent what a 3- week rotation looks like for an operational firefighter:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
work			work			work
		work			work	
	work			work		

During a 12-month period firefighters will have 7-8 months that their state employee duty day will fall on either a Saturday or a Sunday of a Guard training weekend. When these occur the firefighter signs for military leave so that they can attend the training period. The training period is normally only 8 hours, however based on the current VSEA contract military leave is charged by the duty day. In the case of the firefighters it is 20.75-hours. So, at the end of their training period, they go home for the balance of the shift and the state is charge 20.75-hours of military leave.

At the same time when a firefighter goes on and extended active duty period (up to 15 days of military orders) there worst case would be signing five duty days of military leave at 20.75-hours per day. This is because in a 15-day cycle they would only be schedule for 5 days of firefighter duty.

Currently, how this looks under a normal scenario:

7-8 days signed for training periods = 145.25 to 166 hours of military leave  
 5 days of annual orders = 103.75 hours of military leave

**Totaling: 249 to 269.75 hours charged as military leave.**

If negotiations with VSEA are successful to change the policy to allow firefighters to sign military leave by the hour, below would be the normal scenario:

7-8 days signed for training periods = 56 to 64 hours of military leave  
 5 days of annual orders = 103.75 hours of military leave

**Totaling: 159.75 to 167.75 hours charged as military leave.**