



Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington National Cemetery
Arlington, VA 22211

July 09, 2018

The Honorable Mark T. Esper
Secretary of the Army
100 Army Pentagon, Room 3E700
Washington DC, 20310

Dear Mr. Secretary,

The Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery (ACANC) is a congressionally mandated non-discretionary advisory committee established under Title 10 United States Code § 4723. The ACANC is chartered to make periodic reports and recommendations with respect to the administration of Arlington National Cemetery (ANC), the erection of memorials at the cemetery, and master planning for the cemetery. These recommendations compliment, not supplant, Army command and staff actions with respect to ANC. The Department of the Army provides support through Arlington National Cemetery.

The DoD, consistent with the Committee's mission and DoD policies and procedures, has authorized two subcommittees:

The Honor Subcommittee. The primary mission of this Subcommittee is to accomplish an independent assessment of methods to address the long-term future of the Army national cemeteries, including how best to extend the active burials and what ANC should focus on once all available space is used. Specifically, to assess current eligibility requirements for interment and inurnment at ANC as they affect the available space and life of active burials and ensure that recommendations serve and protect the interests of all service members and veterans, surviving family members, and the American public. The Subcommittee's review of the Southern Expansion Project focuses on the qualitative and quantitative benefits of the options to best honor our veterans, their families, and the Nation while maintaining the iconic nature of ANC.

The Remember and Explore Subcommittee. The primary focus of this Subcommittee is to review issues and provide recommendations to the Committee to best maintain the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Monument, accomplish an independent assessment of requests to place commemorative monuments, identify means to capture and convey the history of Arlington National Cemetery, and to improve the quality of visitors' experiences now and for generations to come.

The Committee takes seriously its mandate to provide independent advice and is excited and pleased with the significant progress that continues at Arlington National Cemetery. The Committee, after thorough review and deliberation, voted unanimously to recommend the Secretary of the Army support an ANC strategic initiative to provide

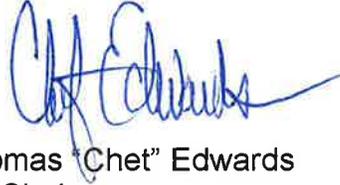
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funeral escorts only to the grades of E-9, W-4 and above and O-4 and above. The report and recommendations are included in the attached July 2018 Report of the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery at Tab A. We look forward to working further with your staff to continue to enhance the service and experience provided to veterans and their loved ones as well as our nation at Arlington National Cemetery.

Very Respectfully Yours,



James Peake
Co-Chair
Advisory Committee on
Arlington National Cemetery



Thomas "Chet" Edwards
Co-Chair
Advisory Committee on
Arlington National Cemetery

Enclosure

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References

- (a) Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, Title 5, United States Code, Appendix 2.
- (b) The Government in the Sunshine Act of 1976 (5 U.S.C. § 552b)
- (c) National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2012, Advisory committee on Arlington National Cemetery (10 U.S.C. § 4723)
- (d) Department of Defense Instruction 5105.04.
- (e) Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery Charter, July 2016, Amended February 2017.

Background

Title 10 U.S.C. § 4723 stipulates that “not later than 90 days after receiving a report or recommendations from the advisory committee, the Secretary of the Army shall submit the report or recommendations to the congressional defense committees and the Committees on Veterans’ Affairs of the Senate and House of Representatives and include such comments and recommendations of the Secretary as the Secretary considers appropriate.”

Report

On May 7, 2017, meetings of the Remember and Explore Subcommittee and the Honor Subcommittee were held at Arlington National Cemetery. Each meeting was convened with a quorum of members. The Designated Federal Officer, Ms. Renea Yates, was present for both meetings which were open to the public. Formal minutes were produced and are available to the public on the Arlington National Cemetery public website.

The Remember and Explore Subcommittee received presentations by ANC staff addressing the following issues:

- Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – 100 year anniversary planning
- Tomb of the Unknown Soldier – Upkeep and repair status
- ANC Events and Ceremonies – Spring 2018 update
- ANC Private Marker policy - Update

The Honor Subcommittee received presentations by ANC staff addressing the following issues:

- ANC Master Plan – Update
- Southern Expansion project – Update
- Public Survey – In-stride review
- Strategic and Operational Issues - Update

On May 8, 2018 a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery was held at Arlington National Cemetery. The Designated Federal Officer, Ms. Renea Yates, was present for the meeting which was open to the public. A video

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recording and formal minutes were produced and are available to the public on the Arlington National Cemetery public website.

Five of six appointed Committee members, a quorum, were present for the meeting:

- Mr. James Peake (Lieutenant General, U.S. Army Retired), Co-Chair
- Mr. Chet Edwards, Co-Chair
- Ms. Debra Fix (Colonel, U.S. Army, Retired)
- Mr. Thomas Kelley (Captain, U.S. Navy Retired), Medal of Honor Recipient
- Mr. Gene Castagnetti (Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps, Retired)

During the course of these meetings, the Committee received reports by ANC staff addressing the following issues:

- Funeral Procession Queuing lane project
- Electronic Interment Scheduling System
- ANC Events and Ceremonies
- ANC Master Plan
- Southern Expansion project
- Future ANC Capacity Assessment
- Public Survey

Additionally, the Committee received reports by the Chairs of the subcommittees:

- The DFO reported for Acting Chair (in absentia) of the Remember and Explore Subcommittee that repairs made to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier are holding well and monitoring of previous cracks continues. She noted that extensive planning is underway to commemorate the Centennial of the Tomb, including work to publish an historical pamphlet. Additionally, she reported that private markers are no longer being accepted at ANC.

The Chair of the Honor Subcommittee reported discussing military funeral honors at ANC. There exists a terminology lexicon at ANC which differs from that used in Army Regulation:

- "Standard Military Funeral Honors" at ANC meet the definition in Army Regulation prescribed for full military funeral honors which consists of a chaplain, bugler, NCOIC / OIC, a firing party, and casket team.
- "Full Military Funeral Honors" at ANC include all of the above and additionally include a funeral escort, consisting of a marching formation, military band, and caisson with team. These services are conducted for grades E-9 and above; for land forces O-6 and above, a caparison (rider-less) horse is added to the caisson team.

By comparison, the compliment of military support personnel required for ANC military funeral honors is approximately 16 to 18 (depending on military branch). Support personnel required to support an ANC military funeral honors with escort is no less than 70.

The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$1,650 for the 2018 Fiscal Year. This includes \$0 in expenses and \$1,650 in DoD labor.

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ANC leadership is considering a strategic initiative to improve operational efficiency, conserve resources, and reduce significant wait time for families to schedule military funeral honors with escort. Currently, waiting time for services requiring the most resource intensive funeral honors with escort are averaging greater than 7 months. ANC conducts services that require no less than 70 personnel eight times each weekday. Operational analysis reveals that of these eight, five are conducted for Field Grade Officers (CW-4, CW-5, and O-4 and above) and three of which are for Company Grade Officers (CW-1 to CW-3 and O-1 to O-3). Statistically, Field Grade Officers have spent significantly more of their lives in the military – demonstrating a higher level of commitment to service to the Nation.

Limiting the population of service members who are provided funeral escort to E-9, CW-4, and O-4 and above will significantly shorten wait times by over one third. It is important to note that funeral service honors, with or without escort, are specifically related to paygrade which does not affect eligibility determination for internment or inurnment at ANC in any way.

As part of the overall strategy, the Executive Director, ANMC generated a memorandum to inform local military district commanders and solicit feedback on the proposed strategic initiative to increase operational efficiency, conserve resources, and enhance support to military families. (Encl 1)

Advisory Committee Recommendations

1. Recommend approval for ANC operational policy change to limit those military funeral services requiring a full escort platoon and a caisson team to grades of E-9, CW4 and above, and O-4 and above.

- After thoughtful discussion and deliberation, the Committee agreed with the ANC strategic initiative of reducing overall waiting time for scheduling funeral services and increasing operational efficiency. From an operational perspective, a policy change limiting the grades of those eligible for a military service with an escort platoon and a caisson team to only E-9, CW-4 and above, and O-4 and above will reduce waiting time and increase operational efficiency by approximately one third.

- The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of this initiative.

Actions Pending Further Review

The Committee takes seriously its mandate to advise the Secretary of the Army on Arlington National Cemetery. Public awareness about future limitations of ANC is increasing through a report to Congress, open engagements such as the Roundtable discussions between the Honor Subcommittee and senior leadership of Veteran and Military Services Organizations, and a national dialogue consisting of two public surveys which generated nearly 260,000 responses. Accordingly, the Committee will continue to engage stakeholders to provide recommendations to extend the life of active burials and continuing to honor our veterans and their family members after all available space at the Arlington National Cemetery is used.