



17 August 2018

To Our Valued Employees and Supporters:

Last summer I asked our key leaders at Army National Military Cemeteries (ANMC) and Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) to develop a strategic plan that communicates our priorities and related supporting efforts to provide us with a direction and focus for the future. I am pleased to approve and publish the resulting document—Our Army's Cemeteries: A Path to the Future.

This strategic plan encapsulates:

1. Our new vision statement: Great people honoring service and sacrifice to a grateful Nation. This new vision emphasizes the tremendous work performed by our talented workforce.
2. Revised missions statements for both ANMC and ANC. Although our basic missions remain the same, how we communicate our solemn duties has been refined.
3. Our three priorities: readiness; people; and the future. Descriptions of each focus area and their supporting strategic efforts are provided to help us prioritize our work.
4. Our guiding principles serve as guide posts for how we perform our sacred mission.

We are privileged to honor the service and sacrifice of the military members, Veterans, and their family members laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery, the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery, and our Army cemeteries. As the larger DoD cemetery enterprise considers how to best serve the needs of this population, we look forward to leading, partnering with, and delivering cemetery expertise for all committed to this sacred mission. "HONOR, REMEMBER, EXPLORE."

KAREN L. DURHAM-AGUILERA
Executive Director



Our Army's Cemeteries

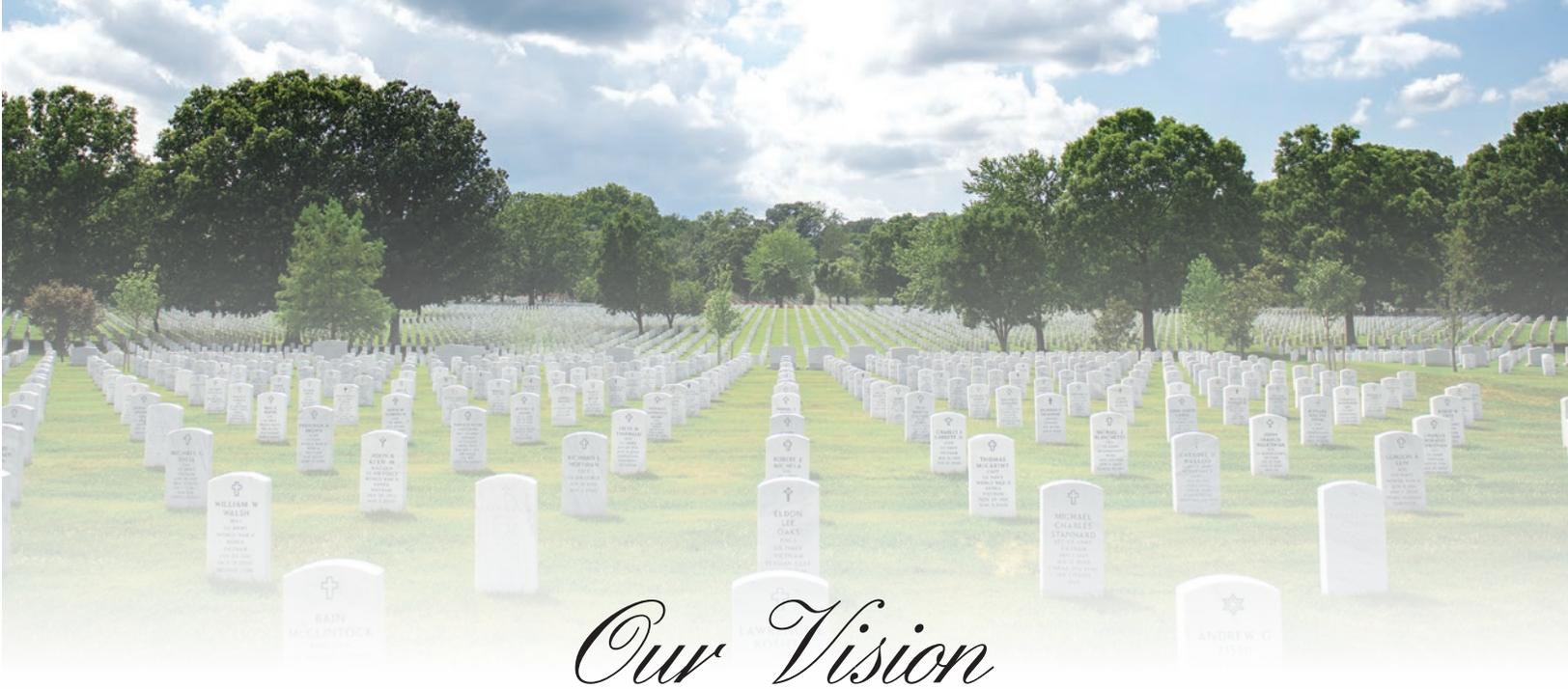
– Army National Cemeteries and Post Cemeteries

Founded in 1864 during the American Civil War, Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) is the final resting place for American Veterans who have fought in every war since the Nation's inception. Over 150 years later almost 400,000 Veterans and their family members are laid to rest at the cemetery. With the burials of two U.S. presidents, numerous historical figures, and location of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the cemetery has grown in size, significance, and popularity through the years. A visit to this national symbol and shrine continues to remind each generation of the sacrifice members of the Armed Forces and their families make in the defense of freedom.

In 2010 highly visible management and accountability issues were identified at ANC, and new leadership took action to dramatically improve the cemetery's accountability processes and supporting technology. In 2012 further action was taken to establish Army National Military Cemeteries (ANMC) to provide oversight and support for the Army's forty-one cemeteries, including ANC. As a HQDA principal official, the Executive Director of ANMC reports directly to the Secretary of the Army, and the Superintendent of ANC reports to the Executive Director of ANMC. Today, less than a decade later, Arlington National Cemetery is the industry standard with the support from Congress, senior leaders in DoD and the Army, and ANC's non-discretionary Advisory Committee; the hard work of hundreds of dedicated employees; and the unfailing support from the American people.

Recently in 2016, recognizing that ANC was at a crossroad, Congress passed Public Law 114-158, requiring the Secretary of the Army to submit a report on the interment and inurnment capacity of ANC. More specifically, the law required the estimated date of maximum capacity and recommended options—to include eligibility and expansion—to extend the life of the cemetery “well into the future.” In February 2017, the Secretary of the Army provided the report, outlining potential actions to preserve ANC as an active burial ground well into the future, defined as the next 150 years. The report also clearly specified that without changes in current eligibility and physical boundaries, ANC will run out of space for first interments by the early 2040s. The continuing public dialogue and the resulting decisions will not only make a meaningful impact on capacity, but also have a significant impact on the future of ANC.

ANMC will continue to provide strategic direction and oversight to support and enhance all Army cemeteries. As the Army's cemeterians and subject matter experts, ANMC will also assist other services as they support and enhance other DoD cemeteries. Our nation has pledged and we must provide perpetual care of the gravesites of selfless military members, Veterans, and their family members who are laid to rest in our cemeteries.



Our Vision

We are privileged to honor the service and sacrifice of those laid to rest at our Army cemeteries. This solemn and honorable duty is captured in a singular vision that drives what we do each and every day.

Great people honoring service and sacrifice to a grateful Nation.

Dedicated and talented Americans serve at our Army cemeteries. Each individual contributes to a talented, cohesive team. Soldiers and civilians alike contribute their time, compassion, effort, drive, and motivation. This high degree of dedication ensures that those who are laid to rest in Army cemeteries are honored for their service and sacrifice now and in perpetuity.

Army cemeterians are proud to represent our grateful Nation. We are ambassadors of our Nation's commitment to honor those who served and sacrificed so that we can continue our way of life. We are also proud to extend our Nation's compassion to grieving families and share our cemeteries with millions of guests each year, including with the next generation, who will continue the tradition of service to our Nation.

These solemn responsibilities are part of a special ethos that is communicated by our vision. This ethos exists at all of our military cemeteries, but it is especially poignant in the 600-plus acres of Arlington National Cemetery.

“Honor-Remember-Explore”: Together these three words resonate with our guests and employees, and they succinctly capture key elements of ANC's mission.

Honor

Honor the service and sacrifice of our eligible military members, Veterans, and their family members with dignity, compassion, and accountability.

The muffled drum's sad roll has beat the Soldier's last tattoo; No more on life's parade shall meet that brave and fallen few. On fame's eternal camping ground their silent tents are spread, and glory guards, with solemn round the bivouac of the dead.

Theodore O'Hara



Our Missions

Every military organization is proud of its mission - the essential tasks assigned by its higher headquarters and entrusted by the American people. Arguably, no mission is more humbling than that of a military cemetery.

Army National Military Cemeteries (ANMC) oversees and supports a varied group of forty-one Army cemeteries, including two national cemeteries: Arlington National Cemetery and United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery.

ANMC's mission statement:

As the Army's cemeterians, ANMC provides oversight and expertise for all Army cemeteries through policy, program management, inspections, training, and assistance, honoring those laid to rest in perpetuity.

OUR OBJECTIVES

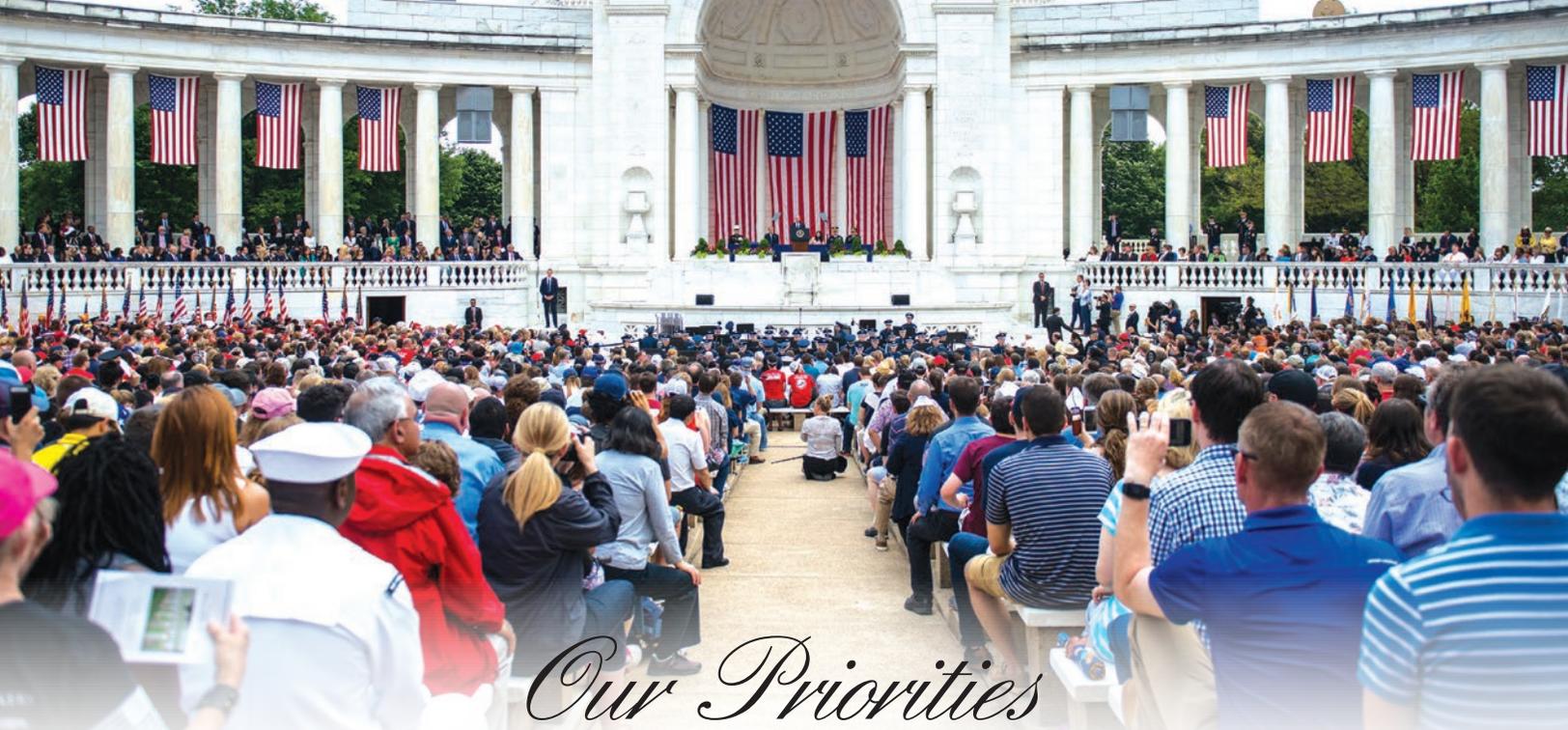
- Honor the Fallen and Sustain Accountability
- Preserve our Hallowed Grounds
- Synchronize and Sustain Army Cemeteries for the Future

Given its significance as a national symbol, ANC merits a distinct mission statement:

Arlington National Cemetery represents the American people for past, present, and future generations by laying to rest those few who have served our nation with dignity and honor while immersing guests in the cemetery's living history.



Taps is played...a solemn tribute to the service member



Our Priorities

We are focused on three priorities: Readiness; People; and the Future.

1. Readiness.

Readiness is our number one priority. We deliver on our sacred mission by synchronizing and sustaining the appropriate resources of personnel, equipment, and facilities.

Supporting Strategic Efforts:

- **Integrated Planning.** This plan serves as the strategic overview to inform the direction and development of supporting planning efforts (see Annex A). Examples include:
 - ANC Master Plan. A multi-faceted planning effort that includes modernizing and expanding existing infrastructure, maximizing available space, and enhancing the experience of our guests, all while maintaining ANC's iconic image and providing a safe and secure environment.
 - ANC Interment Management Plan. Once developed, this plan will prioritize and synchronize land use, equipment locations, and other resources in order to increase readiness and optimize management of resources.
 - To sustain future readiness, our plans will adjust based on new burial procedures and techniques, industry innovations and trends, and changing family desires at the time of need while maintaining the iconic nature of our cemeteries.
- **Military Cemetery Enterprise.** As the proponent for Army cemeteries, ANMC developed a program management plan to provide a structured approach to increase awareness, accountability, conditions, and resources for Army cemeteries. ANMC supports readiness across the broader military cemetery enterprise by partnering with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) and the other armed services to include participation in the Cemetery Management Board (CMB). Additionally, ANMC maintains strong partnerships with the American Battlefield Monuments Commission (ABMC), Department of Veterans Affairs' National Cemetery Administration (NCA), Department of the Interior's National Park Service (NPS). An enterprise-wide approach helps to ensure that those laid to rest are honored in perpetuity and that our Nation will always care for its fallen. Examples include:

Remember

Remember the sacrifices of those from each generation who have answered the call to serve by preserving cemeteries befitting of their sacrifices.

- ANMC contributes to an executive-level forum known as the Joint Working Group. In this forum, ANMC, NCA, and ABMC collaborate on similar cemetery challenges to include policy, and share best practices such as cross-functional training, accountability, and burial records management.
- ANMC and NCA first established a training Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in 2011 and continues its renewal. This MOA enables personnel from each organization to attend training hosted or coordinated by the other.
- ANMC conducts Cemetery Responsible Official (CRO) training at ANC. In addition to training Army personnel, this course is attended by personnel from the other armed services, NCA, and ABMC.

2. People.

Taking care of our people is paramount, as we cannot perform our mission without our talented workforce working together as a team. This priority not only includes training and developing our people, but also ensuring their safety and security while managing a demanding operational tempo. This priority extends to the safety and security of our guests.

Supporting Strategic Efforts:

- **Sustainable Operational Tempo.** For the last several years, ANC has conducted an average of 7,000 funeral services per year, 27-30 services per weekday, and ten services on Saturdays. In 2017 senior leaders recognized this intense pace led to high stress among our workforce and did not afford opportunities for necessary training. As such, ANC published and implemented pacing guidance that prioritizes and protects specific dates for training, reset, and leave, understanding this effort may eventually slightly reduce the total number of services provided each year.
- **Properly Resourced Organizational Structures.** Initiated in 2017, both organizations are conducting holistic reviews of their organizational structures in order to properly resource the workforce. These reviews account for a high demand for interments and accountability of remains, as well as emerging mission requirements associated with increased security and connecting school groups and virtual visitors through education and outreach programs. A properly resourced workforce not only aligns the number of authorized positions with those required, but also enables hiring actions for the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities, provides opportunities for career progression, and ensures proper supervisor-to-employee ratios.
- **Safety and Security.** This effort not only accounts for standard regulations and directives, but also challenges Army cemeteries to enhance safety and security for their unique locations and circumstances. A security annex to the ANC Master Plan is under development to address the security challenges at ANC.



3. Future.

As a Nation, we have the responsibility to preserve our Army cemeteries and what makes them special, especially ANC—a national shrine and symbol located in our Nation’s capital. Our cemeteries serve as perpetual tributes to those at rest, and we strive to extend this tradition for future generations that defend our freedom. In order to extend the active life of ANC beyond the early 2040s, tough and informed decisions will be needed to accomplish meaningful change, involving a combination of eligibility changes and expansion opportunities.

Explore

Enable our guests to explore the rich, living history of our cemeteries and gain appreciation for those who have defended our freedom and helped shape our Nation’s history.

Supporting Strategic Efforts:

- **Extending the Active Life of ANC.** As previously discussed, in 2016 Congress required the Secretary of the Army to provide analysis of options or actions to keep ANC open “well into the future” and further specified “for generations to come.” The resulting report to Congress defined this future as an additional 150 years. In order to reach this goal and avoid closure as an active cemetery in the very near future, a combination of eligibility changes and expansion opportunities are under development. Expansion alone will not meaningfully extend the life of the cemetery.
 - Eligibility. In order to responsibly extend the life of ANC, changes in eligibility criteria are necessary. Those groups under consideration include traditional veterans, retirees, Prisoners of War, valor awards, Purple Heart recipients, Medal of Honor recipients, Killed in Action, and active duty. Through continued stakeholder engagement and discussion of eligibility options, there is a clear and strong consensus to consider limiting future burials to those service men and women killed in action and recipients of the Medal of Honor or other specific awards for valor. Such changes would enable ANC to continue its solemn legacy of laying to rest those who have given their last full measure of devotion to our Nation. None of these considerations affect eligibility at the other 280-plus national or state Veterans cemeteries.
 - Expansion. The life of ANC can be marginally extended by expanding its boundaries. The most recent expansion, known as the Millennium Project, extends the life of ANC for first interments and first inurnments by more than seven years, or until the early 2040s. Future expansion options are receiving thoughtful consideration and analysis. Specifically, planning is underway to expand the cemetery to include land around the Air Force Memorial. Referred to as Southern Expansion, with no change in current eligibility, this expansion will only add 15-20 active years to ANC, or until the mid-to-late 2050s.



Aerial view of the Southern Expansion site - 2018

ANC will continue to seek public input and participate in a robust dialogue with its stakeholders. Without taking action, ANC will be closed for first interments and first inurnments by the early 2040s.

- Enhancing Other Cemeteries. The following initiatives are focused on Army cemeteries other than ANC, but they can also be leveraged to advance the broader military cemetery enterprise in ways befitting of the service and sacrifice of those laid to rest. ANMC stands ready to provide further support and expertise to the military cemetery enterprise.
 - Develop a career program that trains, supports, and recognizes Cemetery Responsible Officials (CROs). This program will also increase awareness among Army commands that own, operate, and maintain cemeteries.
 - Continue to refine ANMC's training and assistance to ensure that Army cemeteries benefit from lessons learned and best practices developed at our larger cemeteries—such as ANC and the West Point Cemetery—and those shared by our partners.
 - Continue to engage our partners, ABMC and NCA, to share and collaborate on best practices to properly care for all military gravesites.
 - In partnership with NCA, determine who is best positioned to care for our military cemeteries when circumstances change.



Autumn at West Point Cemetery, New York.



Our Guiding Principles

– How we perform our sacred mission

- ✓ We think safety first—every hour of every day
- ✓ We serve families with compassion and through accountability
- ✓ We demonstrate respect and appreciation for all of our guests
- ✓ We develop and support our people
- ✓ We communicate throughout the cemetery enterprise, exchanging feedback and best practices
- ✓ We are good and responsible stewards of precious resources (people, money, land, and equipment)



Our Army's Cemeteries

- A Path to the Future

One only needs to drive through the gates of a military cemetery in the quiet early morning, or observe from afar a family laying to rest their loved one, to appreciate the Army's desire to put its cemeteries on a path for the future. This path focuses on our priorities to ensure that we deliver on our mission and achieve our objectives of honoring the fallen, preserving our hallowed grounds, and sustaining Army cemeteries for the future.

Annex A: List of Supporting Planning Efforts

This Strategic Plan, titled *Our Army's Cemeteries: A Path to the Future*, supersedes the ANMC Strategic Plan (2016). Supporting planning efforts include:

- Army National Cemetery Program (ANCP) Campaign Plan (2012): Used as an operational assessment tool to measure our progress.
- ANC Master Plan (2013): The next iteration of this major planning effort was initiated in 2017.
- ANMC Program Management Plan for Post Cemeteries (2017).
- ANC Capital Investment Strategy (CIS) (2015).
- ANC Interment Management Plan: To be developed.
- ANC Turf and Grounds Maintenance Plan (2016).
- ANC Interpretive Plan: To be developed.
- ANC Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan (2013).
- ANC Human Capital Plan and supporting Command Plan: To be developed.

