

# Director's Notes: Changes for 2017

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Each fall, national MOAA pauses to review and assess association programs in preparation for the next year. This year has been different; we began earlier, when our new president and CEO, Lt. Gen. Dana T. Atkins, USAF (Ret), came on board in January. Throughout the year, he has been asking tough, thought-provoking questions about all MOAA programs.

Some questions related to council and chapter programs included: Does this support the chapters? How can we leverage technology to support councils and chapters? Does this help chapters recruit new members? Is this the best use of financial resources? Can your department scale this program across the entire system? Is this a good return on our investment?

These questions led the Council and Chapter Affairs Department to conduct a programmatic review, with key tenets including:

- Programs must link to and support MOAA's strategic plan;
- The council and chapter system will continuously evolve;
- The council and chapter community presence is priceless — it's the face of MOAA;
- The council and chapter system facilitates advocacy and membership; and
- Our department must remain flexible in support of the system.

Maintaining a healthy and vital council and chapter system remains an essential component of MOAA's strategic goal. Our department's specific mission is to conduct programs and provide support to our councils and chapters.

Following the programmatic review, we recommended some changes as we move forward. Atkins and MOAA's board of directors approved these recommendations in April.

Since then, during council and chapter visits, we have been providing updates and explanations on the pending changes for 2017. We also briefed in April the council and chapter leaders who participated in Storming the Hill. For the most part, our chapter and council leaders have understood and supported the changes.

Program changes will be addressed in the *Annual Chapter Recruiting Program*, which will be sent out in January 2017. However, below and in the next issue of *The Affiliate*, I will address key changes, modifications, and emphasis to programs.

**Affiliate visits:** Beginning in 2017, we will transition from a three-year to four-year chapter-visit cycle. We will retain our goal of visiting councils each year. Remember, if we can link one or more chapters to one airfare cost, we will attempt to do so, which might mean we can visit chapters more frequently. Please try to work with us if we request you to shift your meetings to accommodate air travel.

**Chapter incentives:** Focus remains on recruiting and retaining chapter members, and they must be national MOAA members to qualify. We consolidated the annual recruiting awards category (from 10 to six) because of chapter membership.

**Online tools:** Expand use of webinars to increase chapter-management support/training.

Our department's goal remains constant: to provide chapter-management tools, programs, and timely support and training to our council and chapter leaders. Thanks for your continued support.