May 4, 2016

Mr. Frank Haines
Legislative Finance and Budget Officer
Office of Legislative Services
State House Annex
P.O. Box 068
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0068

Re: DMAVA April 20, 2016 Budget Hearing

Sir:

Please accept the following as the New Jersey Department of Military and Veterans’ Affairs’ (DMAVA) response to Assemblyman Gary Schaer’s April 27, 2016 correspondence regarding questions posed by Assemblypersons Johnson and McKeon during the DMAVA hearing conducted before the Assembly Budget Committee on April 20, 2016. A copy of Assemblyman Schaer’s April 27, 2016 correspondence is attached hereto for your reference.

Assemblyman Johnson:

Q1. When seeking applicants for Requests for Proposals (RFPs) is there a way for minority and women-owned businesses to participate?
A1. The Department adheres to applicable state and federal contracting laws.

Q2. During the base realignment and closure (BRAC) process, does the United States Department of Defense consider the economic impact of the base in the surrounding communities and how the closure of a base will affect those communities?
A2. BRAC Commissions may consider the economic impact or base closure affects on surrounding communities when deciding base closures or realignment.
Assemblyman McKeon:

Q1. With regard to the BRAC process, approximately $200,000 was expended on a consulting contract to study the situation and to develop a strategy to avert any base closures in New Jersey. What were the criteria upon which the consultant was selected and what are the advantages and disadvantages of having a consultant?

The June 2015 Military Installation Growth and Development Task Force Report recommended the retention of an experienced consultant to advocate on behalf of New Jersey’s military installations in Washington D.C. to stave off more closures through BRAC. A consultant provides the expertise and resources necessary to develop an aggressive plan to safeguard New Jersey’s military installations through the coordination of local, county, state, and federal officials to secure installations’ current and future infrastructure, capabilities, and future missions. In addition, a consultant can work with Department of Defense officials, as well as Capitol Hill, on behalf of New Jersey’s interests. Regarding our current contract, the consultant was selected based on their qualifications and lowest bid, in accordance with current regulations regarding the procurement of contracting services.

Q2. What other states have contracted with outside consultants for these purposes?
A2. To the Department’s knowledge Maryland and New York have contracted with outside consultants though others may have as well.

Additional Questions:

Q1. During the last budget cycle, the department stated there were 7,000 homeless veterans in New Jersey; this year is stated there were 2,000. What caused the dramatic drop in homeless veterans year over year?
A1. The Department continually works with the federal government, other state agencies, and nonprofit partners to identify the homeless veterans population; and refer them to housing and services. The Department is represented on the Governor’s Working Group on Homelessness, and we regularly collaborate with our state partners to better serve this population. After carefully evaluating collected data from our partners and coupling 2015 data published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department estimates New Jersey’s homeless veteran population is approximately 2,000 individuals.

Q2. How are data on homeless veterans collected?
A2. The Department uses multiple sources to collect data on the homeless veterans population including other state agencies, nonprofit partners and the annual HUD Point-in-Time survey.
Q3. What criteria are used to decide what data to collect?
A3. When collecting data, the Department considers any person who served in the Armed Forces as a veteran and who is homeless or chronically homeless.

Q4. How does the department define a homeless veteran? Has the definition of homeless veteran changed from last year to this year?
A4a. The Department defines a homeless veteran as a person who lacks regular, adequate housing or will imminently lose housing and lacks resources to obtain other permanent housing. This definition also includes veterans who might be staying with family and friends.
A4b. The definition of homeless veteran has not changed.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael L. Cunniff
Brigadier General, New Jersey National Guard
The Adjutant General