

Weidner takes command of the 192nd Wing

The 192nd Wing, Virginia Air National Guard, welcomed Col. Andrew M. Weidner as the new wing commander Sept. 7, 2025, at Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Hampton, Virginia. Brig. Gen. Catherine M. Jumper, Virginia Air National Guard commander at the time, presided over the change of command ceremony, where Col. Brock E. Lange relinquished command to Weidner.

“You are surrounded by a great team, from our mission partners across JBLE to the elite, empowered and effective citizen-Airmen in the VaANG. You have a team united by service to the nation, the profession of arms and to each other,” Jumper addressed Weidner. “Over the past two years, the Airmen in the 192nd Wing have achieved remarkable accomplishments, demonstrating innovation, resilience and an unwavering commitment to the mission; I know you are already thinking about how you will build on this momentum and utilize the talents of the Airmen in the wing to tackle the complex challenges the Air Force is facing today.”

Weidner joined the U.S. Air Force in 2003 as a pilot. In 2015, he joined the VaANG as a dual-status Guardsman and federal technician.

~ Read more at <https://vngpao.info/3x9pjxsb>



Col. Andrew M. Weidner assumes command of the 192nd Wing from Col. Brock E. Lange during a change of command ceremony held Sept. 6, 2025, at Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Hampton, Virginia.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

VaARNG Soldiers conduct CBRN exercise in Finland

Virginia National Guard Soldiers assigned to the 229th Chemical Company and 34th Civil Support Team conducted a chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear exchange with members of the Finnish Defense Forces during Exercise Karelian Stronghold Sept. 1 - 5, 2025, near Helsinki, Finland.

~ Read more at <https://vngpao.info/5n7hxa27>

VNG participates in counter-mobility operations exchange in Finland

Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen participated in the Finnish Engineer Platoon Counter-Mobility Operations 25 course Aug. 25 - 29, 2025, at the Kainuu Brigade in Kajaani, Finland.

~ Read more at <https://vngpao.info/4yzzh2tw>

VDF cyber operators join Cyber Fortress 25 response exercise

Virginia Defense Force personnel assigned to the 31st Cyber Battalion joined National Guard Soldiers and Airmen as they partnered with military and civilian cyber operators Aug. 2-17, 2025, during Cyber Fortress 25.

~ Read more at <https://vngpao.info/2p8putwt>

Voices of the VaANG: 192nd Wing welcomes first full-time chaplain

Earlier this year, the Virginia Air National Guard’s 192nd Wing marked a significant milestone by welcoming Capt. KMarie Tejeda as its first full-time chaplain.

~ Read more at <https://vngpao.info/ycycjmtp>

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National Guard, Nordic partnerships bolster European defenses

The National Guard Bureau's top leaders traveled to Finland, Sweden and Norway last week as part of a series of visits to Northern European countries to strengthen the Guard's security cooperation ties in the Nordic region. Each nation hosted Air Force Gen. Steve Nordhaus, chief, National Guard Bureau, and Senior Enlisted Advisor John Raines, SEA to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, for meetings with defense and military leaders to discuss deepening longtime and new partnerships and how to continue strengthening European and global security.

Accompanying Nordhaus and Raines were the adjutants general of the states partnered with each Nordic nation through the Department of War National Guard Bureau State Partnership Program, or SPP: Army Maj. Gen. James Ring, Virginia National Guard; Army Maj. Gen. Raymond Shields, New York National Guard; and Army Maj. Gen. Shawn P. Manke, Minnesota National Guard.

"These key strategic partnerships ensure we will strengthen our collective defenses along Europe's northern flank," said Nordhaus. "As we deepen our defense cooperation, we look forward to building partner capacity and sharing the burden of global security together."

While Norway is a founding member of NATO, going back to 1949, Finland and Sweden have historically adhered to military non-alignment, maintaining strong national defense capabilities while opting out of formal alliances. Finland and Sweden ended their longstanding policies of neutrality after Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, prompting each nation's accession to NATO in 2023 and 2024, respectively.

In addition to a now unified NATO front fundamentally reshaping the security dynamics of the Arctic and Baltic Sea regions, all three Nordic nations entered security cooperation partnerships with the U.S. in the past two years through the SPP.

Initially developed in 1993 to assist countries emerging from behind the Iron Curtain, the SPP has grown to include 115 nations partnered with every U.S. state, three territories and the District of Columbia — including the Finland-Virginia, Sweden-New York and Norway-Minnesota partnerships.

Beginning their multi-nation visit in Finland, Nordhaus and Raines familiarized themselves with the nation's defense capabilities and ways to deepen Finland and Virginia's budding SPP relationship. Of the three countries, Finland shares the longest border with Russia — about 835 miles.

"It is significant that the Chief of the United States National Guard Bureau visits Finland in the current security situation," Finnish Lt. Gen. Vesa Virtanen, chief, Defence Command, Finland, said in a release. "The visit offered an opportunity for in-depth conversations on current issues and opportunities for further deepening our cooperation. At the same time, it is important that we can offer our important ally an insight into the Finnish defence system and into our national defence principles."

Finland maintains a large pool of trained reserve military forces of approximately 870,000 personnel, which is significant



Gen. Steve S. Nordhaus and Maj. Gen. James Ring take a guided tour about Finnish Defence Forces logistics and armament capabilities Sep. 16, 2025, in Upinniemi, Finland.

considering the nation's relatively small population, to bolster its active-duty military of around 24,000 personnel. Finland can mobilize up to 280,000 troops accustomed to the country's heavily forested terrain and equipped with experience in Arctic operations.

"The foundations of this partnership go back to 2001 when members of the Finnish Defense Forces served with the Virginia National Guard's 29th Infantry Division during the Stabilization Force 10 rotation in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2001-2002," Ring said. "We formed enduring friendships with our Finnish counterparts, and Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have trained with Finnish military personnel on many occasions over the years, resulting in deep professional and personal bonds."

~ Read more at <https://vngpao.info/3yfne4w3>

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The Virginia Veterans Network

~ Read more at <https://vvn.dvs.virginia.gov>

Virginia National Guard Resiliency Resources

~ Read more at <https://va.ng.mil/Resiliency/>

Virginia National Guard Foundation

~ Read more at <https://vngpao.info/39res633>

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