



CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU INSTRUCTION

NGB-J8
DISTRIBUTION: A

CNGBI 7000.02A
19 September 2025

NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU WARGAMING AND DISCUSSION-BASED EXERCISE PROGRAM

References: See Enclosure B.

1. Purpose. This instruction establishes policy and assigns responsibilities for the National Guard Bureau (NGB) Wargaming and Discussion-Based Exercise (DBE) Program in accordance with (IAW) reference a through reference f.
2. Cancellation. This instruction cancels and replaces Chief of the NGB Instruction 7000.02, 18 March 2020, "National Guard Bureau Wargaming and DBE Program."
3. Applicability. This instruction applies to all National Guard (NG) personnel.
4. Policy. It is NGB policy to analyze concepts, inform analysis-based decision-making, explore complex NG problems, and improve the readiness of the NG through the NGB Wargaming and DBE Program.
 - a. The NGB Wargaming and DBE Program supports joint force development, joint training, and joint force use and exercise initiatives IAW reference a through reference g and other Department of Defense (DoD) requirements and resourcing processes.
 - b. The Strategy, Policy, Plans, and International Affairs Directorate (NGB-J5); the Operations Directorate (NGB-J3/4/7); and the Programs and Requirements Directorate (NGB-J8) will oversee the NGB Wargaming and DBE Program, as well as establish and participate in the Guard Wargaming Alignment Group (GWAG) to oversee synchronizing and allocating NGB Wargaming and DBE Program resources.
 - c. The GWAG oversees a process enabling NG elements to request support for developing and conducting wargames, DBEs, modeling and simulation, studies, and analyses. The GWAG will use the NG Enterprise Governance System to inform and receive guidance from general officers on GWAG efforts.
5. Definitions. See Glossary.
6. Responsibilities. See Enclosure A.

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7. Summary of Changes. Revisions to this instruction include incorporating the new NGB Joint Staff organizational structure and office symbols, realigning the responsibility of the DBE portion of the NGB Wargaming and DBE program to the NGB-J3/4/7, and establishing NG Enterprise Governance System general officer oversight to the GWAG.
8. Releasability. This instruction is approved for public release; distribution is unlimited. It is available at <<https://www.ngbpmc.ng.mil/>>.
9. Effective Date. This instruction is effective upon publication and must be reviewed annually by the Proponent/Office of Primary Responsibility for continued validity, and must be revised, reissued, canceled, or certified as current every ten years.



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Enclosures:

- A -- Responsibilities
- B -- References
- GL -- Glossary

ENCLOSURE A

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Director of the Army National Guard, Director of the Air National Guard, NGB Director of Staff, and NGB Joint Staff Directors. The Director of the Army National Guard, the Director of the Air National Guard, the NGB Director of Staff, and the NGB Joint Staff Directors will:

- a. Provide a representative to participate in GWAG meetings at the Colonel or General Schedule-15 (O-6 or GS-15) level.
- b. Support the use of wargames and DBEs to explore complex NG doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership, personnel, facilities, and policy problems; drive discussions; analyze concepts; inform analytically-based decision making; and improve NG readiness.
- c. Prepare NGB senior leaders to participate in interorganizational wargames and DBEs.
- d. Provide support for developing and conducting GWAG-sponsored wargames and DBEs.

2. Director of Strategy, Policy, Plans, and International Affairs (NGB-J5). The Director of NGB-J5 will:

- a. Provide a representative to participate in GWAG meetings at the Colonel or General Schedule-15 (O-6 or GS-15) level.
- b. Provide NGB-J5 directorate participants with the required travel, training, supplies, and equipment to support the NGB Wargaming and DBE Program in partnership with NGB-J3/4/7 and NGB-J8.
- c. Advocate for using wargames and DBEs to support NG strategy formulation.
- d. Use wargames and DBEs to support developing, coordinating, and publishing NG strategy, policy, and plans for warfighting, homeland defense, domestic response, and security cooperation IAW reference g.
- e. Determine whether wargame and DBE results require further consideration under the Joint Strategic Planning System.

3. Director of Operations NGB-J3/4/7. The Director of NGB-J3/4/7 will:

- a. Provide a representative to participate in GWAG meetings at the Colonel or General Schedule-15 (O-6 or GS-15) level.

- b. Provide NGB-J3/4/7 directorate participants with the required travel, training, supplies, and equipment to support the NGB Wargaming and DBE Program in partnership with NGB-J5 and NGB-J8.
- c. Advocate for using wargames and DBEs to support NG joint capabilities studies, analysis, experimentation, and development.
- d. Coordinate NGB participation in DoD, interorganizational partners, academia, and private-sector DBEs.
- e. Determine whether wargame and DBE results require further consideration under the Joint Strategic Planning System.
- f. Support NGB-J8 in developing and facilitating GWAG-sponsored wargames.
- g. Identify and adopt processes, tools, and techniques being used by DoD and interorganizational partners to design and facilitate DBEs.
- h. Develop and facilitate GWAG-sponsored DBEs.
- i. Provide joint lessons learned to the NGB Wargaming and DBE Program.

4. Director of NGB-J8. The Director of NGB-J8 will:

- a. Provide a representative to participate in GWAG meetings at the Colonel or General Schedule-15 (O-6 or GS-15) level.
- b. Provide NGB-J8 directorate participants with the required travel, training, supplies, and equipment to support the NGB Wargaming and DBE Program in partnership with NGB-J5 and NGB-J3/4/7.
- c. Advocate for using wargames and DBEs to support NG joint capabilities studies, analysis, experimentation, and development.
- d. Use wargames and DBEs to support capabilities-based assessments, analysis, experimentation, and joint concept development IAW the NG Strategic Planning System.
- e. Determine whether wargame and DBE results require further consideration under force development, joint training, and joint force use and exercise initiatives IAW reference a through reference g, and other DoD requirements and resourcing processes.
- f. Support NGB-J3/4/7 development and facilitation of GWAG-sponsored DBEs.

- g. Identify and adopt processes, tools, and techniques used by DoD, interorganizational partners, academia, and the private sector in designing and facilitating wargames.
- h. Lead in developing and facilitating GWAG-sponsored wargames.
- i. Coordinate NGB participation in DoD, Federally Funded Research and Development Center, interorganizational partners, academia, and private-sector wargames.
- j. Coordinate wargaming efforts with the Joint Chiefs of Staff Force Structure, Resources, and Assessment Directorate's Defense Wargaming Alignment Group.
- k. Lead in developing GWAG-sponsored modeling and simulation, studies, and analyses.
- l. Use modeling and simulation-based platforms, software, and capabilities to support wargames and DBEs.
- m. Use wargames, DBEs, and decision-support tools for exploring, assessing, and analyzing strategic, operational, and program questions confronting the NG.

ENCLOSURE B

REFERENCES

PART I. REQUIRED

- a. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) Instruction 3500.01k, 11 December 2024, “Joint Training Policy for the Armed Forces of the United States”
- b. Secretary of Defense Memorandum, 15 November 2014, “The Defense Innovation Initiative,” <<https://defenseinnovationmarketplace.dtic.mil/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/DefenseInnovationInitiative.pdf>>, accessed 13 August 2025
- c. Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, 09 February 2015, “Wargaming and Innovation,” <<https://paxsims.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/osd-memowargaming-innovationdepsecdefworkfeb15.pdf>>, accessed 13 August 2025
- d. Deputy Secretary of Defense Bob Work and Vice CJCS General Paul Selva commentary, 08 December 2015, “Revitalizing Wargaming Is Necessary to Be Prepared for Future Wars,” <<https://warontherocks.com/2015/12/revitalizing-wargaming-is-necessary-to-be-prepared-for-future-wars/>>, accessed 13 August 2025
- e. Joint Publication 5-0, 01 December 2020, “Joint Planning,” Incorporating Change 1, 01 July 2024
- f. Department of Defense Directive 5000.59, 08 August 2007, “DoD Modeling and Simulation (M&S) Management,” Incorporating Change 1, 15 October 2018
- g. Chief of the National Guard Bureau (CNGB) Instruction 5100.01A, 24 Mar 2023, “National Guard Strategic Planning System”

PART II. RELATED

- h. CNGB Instruction 5100.01A, 24 March 2023, “National Guard Strategic Planning System”
- i. CNGB Instruction 5000.01C, 17 February 2023, “Chief of the National Guard Bureau Issuances Program”
- j. CNGB Instruction 5101.01A, 31 July 2024, “National Guard Bureau Organization and Principal Official Responsibilities,” Incorporating Change 1, 27 September 2024
- k. CJCS Instruction 3100.01F, 29 January 2024, “Joint Strategic Planning System”

- l. CJCS Instruction 5123.01I, 30 October 2021, "Charter of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council and the Implementation of the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System"
- m. CJCS Instruction 3030.01A, 01 October 2022, "Implementing Joint Force Development and Design"
- n. Department of Defense Directive 5105.77, 30 October 2015, "National Guard Bureau (NGB)," Incorporating Change 1, 10 October 2017
- o. U.S. Army War College, 01 July 2015, "Strategic Wargaming Series Handbook," < <https://www.professionalwargaming.co.uk/USAWC-WargameHandbook.pdf> >, accessed 13 August 2025
- p. U.S. Naval War College, 01 January 2013, "War Gamers' Handbook: A Guide for Professional War Gamers," < <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/AD1001766.pdf> >, accessed 13 August 2025
- q. CJCS Instruction 8501.01C, 01 March 2024, "Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Combatant Commanders, Chief, National Guard Bureau, and Joint Staff Participation in the Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution Process"
- r. CNGB Instruction 7201.01, 26 April 2017, "Joint Training Policy"
- s. CNGB Instruction 8201.01B, 08 November 2021, "National Guard Joint Capability Assessment and Development Process"
- t. CNGB Instruction 8202.00, 06 June 2022, "National Guard Requirements Oversight"
- u. CNGB Instruction 8501.01, 07 June 2018, "National Guard Bureau Participation in Department of Defense Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution Process"

GLOSSARY

PART I. ACRONYMS

DBE	Discussion-based exercise
DoD	Department of Defense
GS-15	General schedule 15 civil service pay grade
GWAG	Guard Wargaming Alignment Group
IAW	In accordance with
NG	National Guard
NGB	National Guard Bureau
NGB-J3/4/7	National Guard Bureau Operations Directorate
NGB-J5	National Guard Bureau Strategy, Policy, Plans, and International Affairs Directorate
NGB-J8	National Guard Bureau Programs and Requirements Directorate
O-6	Colonel pay grade for the Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps

PART II. DEFINITIONS

Discussion-Based Exercise -- A facilitated event focused on assessing the adequacy of policies, plans, procedures, training, resources, and relationships or agreements that guide prevention of, response to, and recovery from a defined event.

Modeling and Simulation -- Reference f defines this as “the use of models, including emulators, prototypes, simulators, and stimulators, either statically or over time, to develop data as a basis for making managerial or technical decisions. The terms ‘modeling’ and ‘simulation’ are often used interchangeably.”

Wargaming -- A competition-based event focused on facilitating the exploration of, analysis of, experimentation with, or education concerning policies, plans, procedures, training, resources, and relationships or agreements.