

# South Dakota National Guard

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January 12, 2016

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Hoekman named new SDNG senior enlisted leader

By Pvt. Joshua Quandt and Sgt. Rachel Korzeniewski  
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Army Command Sgt. Maj. James Hoekman assumed the role of senior enlisted leader of the South Dakota National Guard from Air Force Chief Master Sgt. James Welch during a change of responsibility ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters in Rapid City, Jan. 9.

Hoekman, who has over 30 years of service in the National Guard, assumed responsibility from Welch, who held the position for three years.

As the senior enlisted leader, Hoekman is responsible for advising Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, SDNG adjutant general, on all enlisted matters affecting training and utilization of resources, health of the force, and enlisted professional development concerning the Guard's nearly 4,200 Soldiers and Airmen.

"When I got into the military, my goal was to become the state command sergeant major," said Hoekman. "Taking care of Soldiers, and now Airmen, and veterans is a passion of mine and is the biggest thing I look forward to in this new position."

"With every person that comes into a new position like this, you get new ideas and perspectives," said Reisch. "He will step right into the role and the South Dakota National Guard will not miss a beat."

Hoekman, who grew up in Platte, enlisted into the South Dakota Army National Guard in 1985. He served in various units, from engineer to transportation companies, across the state and held nearly every key noncommissioned officer position from squad leader to command sergeant major.

"You go into every unit hoping to leave a big footprint and make the unit better before you leave," said Hoekman, who also holds the position of state command sergeant major for the SDARNG. "I'm humbled to have the opportunity to take care of our Soldiers and Airmen."

Welch was the first person appointed to the SEL position within the SDNG. He will retire in March with more than 38 years of military service.

"I want to thank Welch for dedicating a lifetime to the National Guard and the Air Force," said Reisch.

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High resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard)



**160109-Z-ZZ999-331:** Air Force Chief Master Sgt. James Welch, outgoing South Dakota National Guard senior enlisted leader, left, Army Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, SDNG adjutant general, center, and incoming senior enlisted leader, Army Command Sgt. Maj. James Hoekman, prepare for the change of responsibility ceremony between Welch and Hoekman at Joint Force Headquarters in Rapid City, S.D., Jan. 9, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Rachel Korzeniewski/Released)



**160109-Z-ZZ999-154:** Army Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, South Dakota National Guard adjutant general, left, hands a saber to the new senior enlisted leader of the SDNG, Command Sgt. Maj. James Hoekman, during a change of responsibility ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters, Rapid City, S.D., Jan. 9, 2016. The symbolism and history of the passing of the sword illustrates the importance a commander places on the position of the senior noncommissioned officer in the unit. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Joshua Quandt/Released)



**160109-Z-ZZ999-364:** Air Force Chief Master Sgt. James Welch, outgoing South Dakota National Guard senior enlisted leader, address the audience at the change of responsibility ceremony between he and Army Command Sgt. Maj. James Hoekman, the incoming senior enlisted leader, at Joint Force Headquarters in Rapid City, S.D., Jan. 9, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Rachel Korzeniewski/Released)



**160109-Z-ZZ999-176:** Army Maj. Gen. Tim Reisch, South Dakota National Guard adjutant general, left, presents Army Command Sgt. Maj. James Hoekman with a certificate of appointment as he assumes the position of senior enlisted leader for the SDNG at Joint Force Headquarters in Rapid City, S.D., Jan. 9, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Joshua Quandt/Released)

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