

South Dakota National Guard

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1st ID commander preps 196th MEB for upcoming training

By Staff Sgt. Mark VanGerpen – 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

SIoux FALLS, S.D. – The commanding general for the U.S. Army's 1st Infantry Division, Maj. Gen. John S. Kolasheski, visited the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade in Sioux Falls, Jan. 5, as part of preparation for an upcoming multinational training mission this spring.

The 196th MEB is set to support the 1st ID at Warfighter 19-4, a joint training exercise slated for March 31 to April 15, in Fort Riley, Kansas. The exercise will test multiple organizations' abilities to effectively and collaboratively function in a simulated wartime scenario.

"We need to be prepared to deploy, fight and win in a multinational environment in support of national military objectives," Kolasheski said. "We need to look at how we can optimally integrate together to be successful."

The visit marked the first time a U.S. Army division commander has come to South Dakota to visit the 196th.

"I'm really honored to be here, to spend some time laying the foundation for how we plan to approach the warfighter," Kolasheski said. "This maneuver enhancement brigade has a long history, and how we organize and integrate elements like this brigade is critically important. We can't do this alone."

The mission of the 196th MEB is to enable, enhance and protect operational and tactical freedom of action for a supported maneuver force, such as armor, striker or infantry units. With about 190 Soldiers in its ranks, the unit commands and controls the forces necessary to conduct security and functional operations in a designated area on the battlefield.

The warfighter exercise presents a unique opportunity for the 196th. More complex than a typical two-week annual training, a warfighter enables the unit to train side-by-side with a division-sized force.

Working within that larger context means the 196th will have the chance to iron out its role in a true-to-life wartime scenario.

"A warfighter is an opportunity for a division commander to train his staff, as well as brigade staff, on operations that are hard to replicate at a training center," said Maj. Jason Thomson, executive officer with the 196th. "It forces division and brigade staffs to work out field problems that enhance their knowledge base."

It also gives the two units the chance to develop a working rapport, which will help increase the efficiency and effectiveness of both units in training and mission readiness.

"We can't do this alone," Kolasheski said. "We have to integrate all players on the battlefield in all warfighter functions."

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“Having a relationship with them is extremely convenient,” Thomson said. “It makes it easier for us to network, communicate and train together.”

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190105-Z-LN227-0006: U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John Kolasheski addresses members of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at the South Dakota National Guard Armory, in Sioux Falls, S.D., Jan. 5, 2019. The 196th is scheduled to participate in an upcoming multinational training exercise, which Kolasheski will oversee as commander of the U.S. Army’s 1st Infantry Division. The exercise will enable the MEB to train as part of a division-sized force in a true-to-life wartime simulation. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Mark VanGerpen)



190105-Z-LN227-0003: U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John Kolasheski addresses members of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade at the South Dakota National Guard Armory, in Sioux Falls, S.D., Jan. 5, 2019. The 196th is scheduled to participate in an upcoming multinational training exercise, which Kolasheski will oversee as commander of the U.S. Army’s 1st Infantry Division. The exercise will enable the MEB to train as part of a division-sized force in a true-to-life wartime simulation. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Mark VanGerpen)



190105-Z-LN227-0014: U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John Kolasheski accepts a gift plate from Lt. Col. David Daily, fires coordinator with the 196th Maneuver Enhancement, at the South Dakota National Guard Armory, in Sioux Falls, S.D., Jan. 5, 2019. The 196th is scheduled to participate in an upcoming multinational training exercise, which Kolasheski will oversee as commander of the U.S. Army’s 1st Infantry Division. The exercise will enable the MEB to train as part of a division-sized force in a true-to-life wartime simulation. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Mark VanGerpen)

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