

South Dakota National Guard

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Command Sergeant Major of the Army National Guard visits SD soldiers

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RAPID CITY, S.D. – The senior enlisted advisor of the Army National Guard visited South Dakota Army National Guard soldiers at Camp Rapid, July 11.

Command Sgt. Maj. John Sampa met with the soldiers in an open forum town-hall meeting to address any concerns that soldiers might have, as well as to reinforce key areas that are critical to soldier well-being through a new initiative.

Sampa is the 12th command sergeant major of the ARNG and provides advice to senior leaders on Army Guard policies and actions affecting enlisted soldiers across the 54 National Guard states and territories.

“My three by five card initiative talks about the corrosives within our formation that we want to eradicate,” said Sampa. “Those corrosives are suicide, sexual assault and sexual harassment. Those are things that do not belong in the formations of the Army National Guard.”

The three by five card initiative involves soldiers carrying an index card with them at all times in uniform. On the card soldiers write the words “suicide” and “sexual assault.”

“What this does is it engages leaders and soldiers to have a conversation about those things. To eradicate them from our formations by having a conversation one-on-one,” said Sampa. “Additionally, soldiers should write ACFT [Army Combat Fitness Test] on their cards, it’s not just about the fitness test, it’s about what soldiers are doing to prepare themselves by taking care of themselves physically as well as proper dieting.”

Sampa addressed new changes to the Army uniform standards, and addressed soldiers concerns over promotions, maternity care, and pay issues. Sampa was accompanied by Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Couser, the SDARNG’s state command sergeant major.

“I wanted him [Sampa] to talk to us about his three by five card initiative and the three issues that face Guardsmen,” said Couser. “To hear it directly from the Army National Guard command sergeant major is huge, what better way to get it through our forces here himself.”

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210711-Z-WX003-0001: Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. John Sampa addresses soldiers of the South Dakota Army National Guard about his three by five card initiative while at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D. Sampa’s card initiative assists soldiers and leaders to have open conversations about the three issues that face National Guard soldiers. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Ward)



210711-Z-WX003-0002: Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. John Sampa meets with Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Marlette, South Dakota National Guard adjutant general, during Sampa's visit to Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., to meet with soldiers about their concerns and reinforce efforts to eradicate threats that exist within soldier formations. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Ward)



210711-Z-WX003-0003: Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. John Sampa holds an open forum town hall meeting with soldiers of the South Dakota Army National Guard at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D. Sampa addressed soldier concerns, highlighted changes to the Army uniform standard, and reinforced efforts to eradicate threats that exist within soldier formations. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Ward)



210711-Z-WX003-0004: South Dakota Army National Guard State Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Couser sits with Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. John Sampa for a briefing on the Officer Candidate School at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D. Command Sgt. Maj. Sampa visited South Dakota to talk to soldiers about their issues and reinforce Army standards. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Ward)



210711-Z-WX003-0005: Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. John Sampa talks to officer candidates at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D., to emphasize with the candidates about the importance of training, education, and utilization of soldiers time. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Ward)