



NGAUS

What to Expect

Engagement Tips & Strategies
NGAUS Legislative Staff



Agenda

- **Operating Environment**
 - Influencing Members of Congress
 - Congressional Office Structure & Dynamics
 - The Legislative Process
 - Defense Congressional Cycle
- **Best Practices**
 - Meeting Strategies
 - Engagement Tactics
 - Meeting Follow-Up



Influencing Members of Congress



Members value constituent contact...

- Constituent conversations connect Members to their community
- Local meetings provide opportunities for visibility
- Re-election hinges on Member ability to serve voters



...staff input and expertise...

- Members trust staff to guide policymaking
- Good relationships with staff lead to:
 - Honest dialogue
 - Positive consideration on issues or vote recommendations
 - Members attending your events

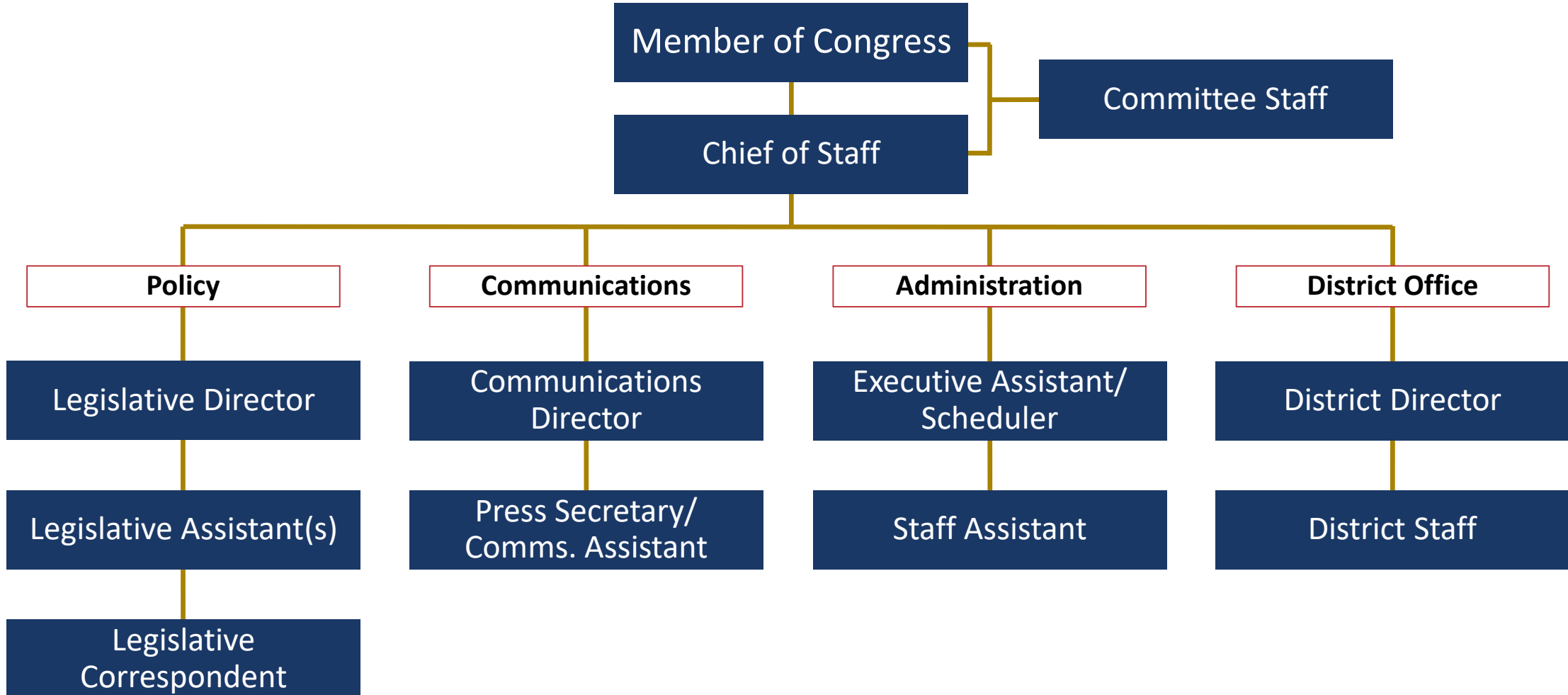


...and constituents with policy knowledge are persuasive.

- Advocates should focus on their subject matter expertise when communicating with Members and staff
- Anecdotal experience is most impactful



Congressional Office Structure





Congressional Office Dynamics



Member of Congress

- Not uncommon for Members to arrive or leave during meetings



Chief of Staff

- Manages entire staff; meetings rarely scheduled with the Chief



Legislative Director (LD)/Legislative Assistant (LA)

- LD manages entire policy team
 - Specializes in issue area of Member's Committees
- LAs typically manage multiple issue portfolios
- Meetings most often scheduled with one or more of these staffers

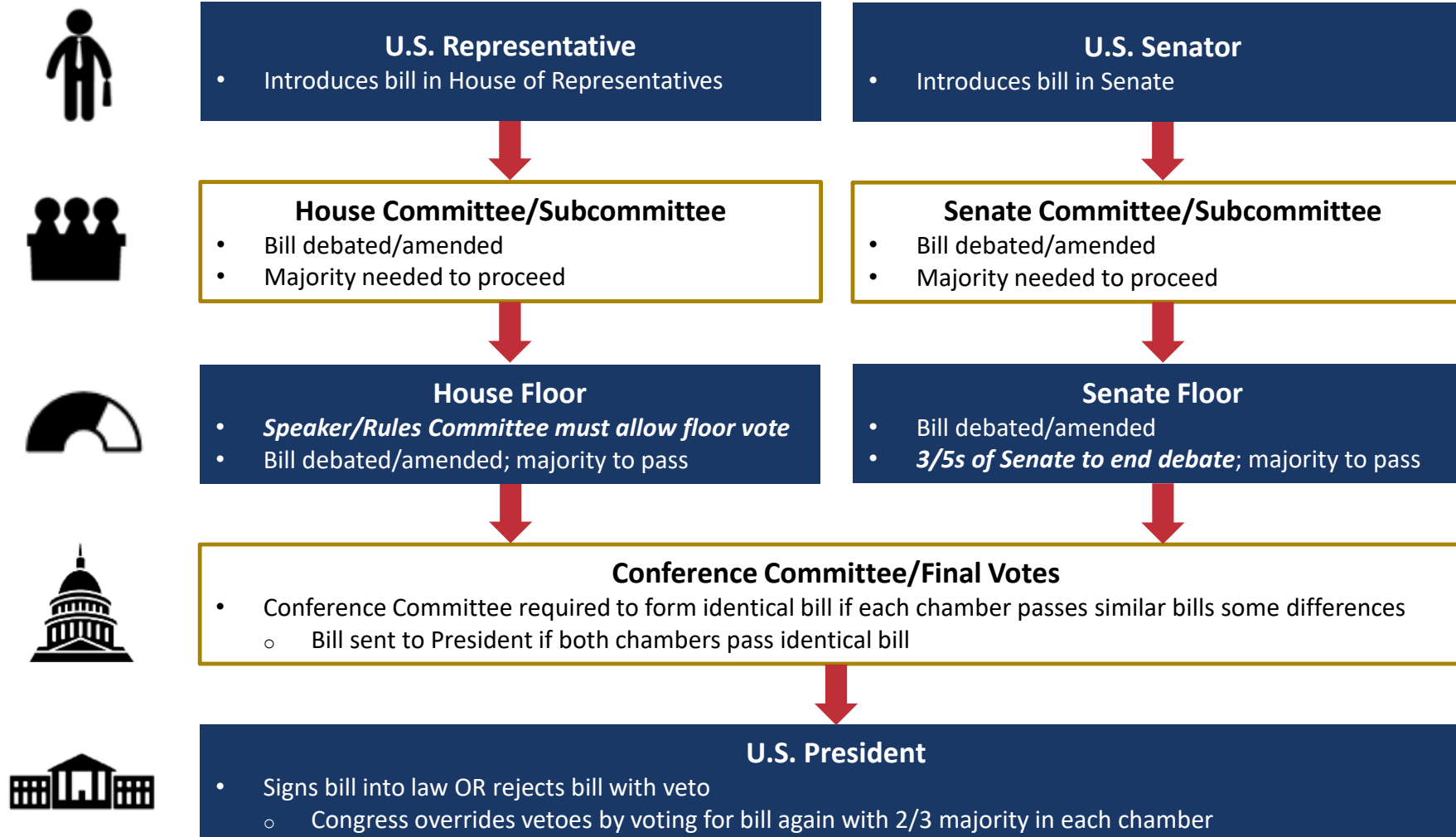


Legislative Correspondent (LC)/Staff Assistant (SA)

- LCs/SAs may join meetings as junior staffer or note-taker

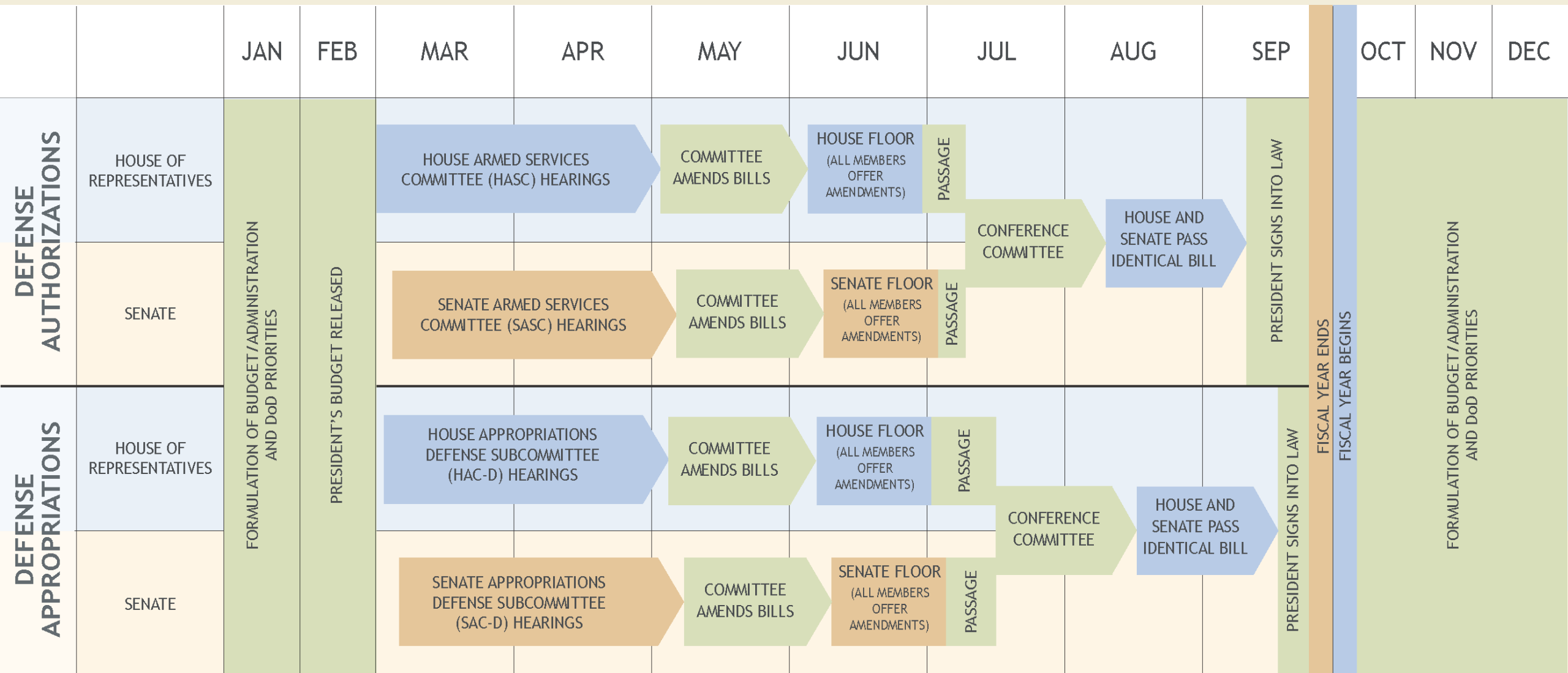


The Legislative Process





Defense Congressional Cycle





Best Practices



Meeting Strategies



State/District Connection

- Issue impact to district or state
- How issue would positively impact National Guardsmen and families



Background Connection

- Does the Member or staff have a military background?
- Is the Member a co-sponsor of relevant legislation or have publicly expressed support?



Timing Connection

- Why is this issue important **NOW**, examples include:
 - Current events
 - Moving legislation



Personal Connection

- **SHARE YOUR STORY**
- Tell Member or staff how issues have impacted you
- Cite examples



Future Contact

- Reference any upcoming outreach or engagement opportunities
- Offer invitations to attend relevant events



Engagement Tactics



Be Professional

- Be professional and forthright
- Arrive at least 5 minutes before scheduled start
- Inform scheduler or staff POC if you will be late



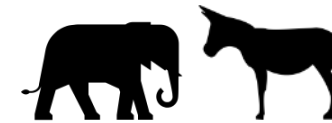
Be Flexible

- Prepare to meet with either the Member or staff
 - Treat both with equal respect



Be Focused

- Straightforward conversation, with a clear “ask”
- Keep meeting focused
- Always ask how you can help the Member or staff



Be Apolitical

- **DO NOT** discuss elections, campaign support, or controversial issues



Provide Concise Handouts

- Leave behind **1 PAGE** handouts, include:
 - Clear, concise points with images
 - Spelled-out acronyms
 - Contact information
- Document should be quick reference



Meeting Follow-Up



Send “Thank You” Messages

- Send brief follow-up e-mail after meeting with Members or staff, include:
 - Meeting topic
 - Meeting “do-out” reminder(s)
 - List your own
 - **POLITELY** remind them of theirs



Invite to District/State Events

- Build relationships with local staff
- Invite the Member and staff to visit installations and special events, includes:
 - Deployment ceremonies
 - Promotions/changes of command
 - New equipment/weapons systems arrival
 - State Conferences



Maintain Contact

- **DO NOT** over-communicate with the Member or staff
- Pass along new and relevant information as it becomes available
- Always communicate respectfully, informatively, and concisely



Questions?