

SMA's Senior Enlisted Council Focuses on Personnel

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Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey, right, talks with Command Sgt. Maj. James Sims, U.S. Army Material command, during a recent Senior Enlisted Council meeting at the U.S. Army Human Resources Command. The SEC meets quarterly to discuss issues affecting Soldiers' welfare. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Joy Dulen, U.S. Army Human Resources Public Affairs)

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel A. Dailey led the first 2016 meeting of the Senior Enlisted Council recently at the U.S. Army Human Resources Command at Fort Knox, Kentucky, with the focus set on managing the enlisted force and maximizing talent.

Because HRC's mission is to optimize total force personnel readiness, Dailey said it was the perfect setting for the topic at hand.

"This time, we talked about our personnel and how we're going to rearrange the talent management and leader development of our senior noncommissioned officers, he said.

A new direction

Dailey changed what was once known as the Board of Directors under former Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond Chandler to the SEC shortly after taking over as the 15th Sgt. Maj. of the Army in January 2015. The council of senior sergeants major from throughout the Army meets monthly via video teleconference and in person quarterly to discuss issues that affect the welfare of Soldiers.

Topics may range from military pay and compensation recommendations to uniform changes. However, Dailey said the time has come to concentrate on Soldiers after more than a decade at war.

"The Chief of Staff of the Army has tasked me with taking a look at how we manage our enlisted force, how we maximize the talents and capabilities of our Soldiers, and really answer some of the questions that we've asked for a long time, Dailey said.

Topics discussed during SECs can affect the force in as little as a month or result in ongoing talks into the future. Dailey said it depends on the issue.

"We get recommendations, and some of those start with one individual Soldier, he said.

Making changes

He gave the example of a recent change in Army policy on the authorized wear of black socks with the Army physical fitness uniform. A Soldier stood up in a town hall meeting and asked why black socks weren't allowed. Less than 30 days later, the policy was changed.

"We took that to the Senior Enlisted Council, had a unanimous vote that it was in keeping with the finest traditions of Army service, went to the Chief of Staff of the Army and we quickly made a decision, Dailey said.

Some issues are much more complex. When you're discussing working through the intricacies of military compensation and reform, it could take several months to affect the force, he said.

"The perfect example is the Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report that has just been launched, Dailey said. "We worked on that for two years in the Senior Enlisted Council ... and some of these things take a lot of work because we have to call in the professionals, like those people who work here at the Human Resources Command, to be able to inform us and do the analysis.

Dailey reiterated the SEC's biggest concern is Soldiers' welfare. They don't want to make decisions that could have a negative impact over the long term, he said.

"This is the Army, it's a big organization and it's hard to turn back, he said. "Simple things like black socks — not a huge effect on Soldiers. But the Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report, that has a huge effect on the total population of NCOs, not just now, but into the foreseeable future.

Dailey said the SEC will continue to meet with a fresh new focus on Soldiers and the Chief of Staff of the Army's No. 1 priority — readiness.

"We're an organization made up of people, and we're the largest people organization in America," he said. "Human Resources Command is one of those critical nodes that we have to invest in for the future and make sure we get it right because they're here to take care of our people. And our job as an Army is to always get better."