

VFW National Commander to Visit Army's National Training Center

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WASHINGTON — The national commander of America's largest and oldest major combat veterans' organization will be visiting the nation's largest Army training facility in California next week.

B.J. Lawrence, national commander of the 1.6 million-member Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Auxiliary, will be visiting the National Training Center at Fort Irwin on Tuesday and Wednesday to learn more about the live-fire training required of armored brigades before they deploy overseas. He is especially interested in troop training, readiness and morale.

The National Training Center, more commonly known as NTC, is the only U.S. military training facility that supports brigade-level, live-fire exercises. The more than 460-square-mile facility supports joint and combined team operations expending live munitions ranging from small arms to 2,000-pound aircraft-launched bombs.

The NTC visit is part of a larger initiative that will have the VFW national commander meeting up with an armored brigade combat team in their deployed overseas location after the New Year.

"Meeting the troops where they train, and especially where they deploy, is essential to maintaining the close relationships the VFW has nurtured with our armed forces for more than 119 years," said Lawrence. "I look forward to meeting them, learning of their mission, and hearing of any concerns they might have, which will enable us to better advocate for them and their families on Capitol Hill."

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