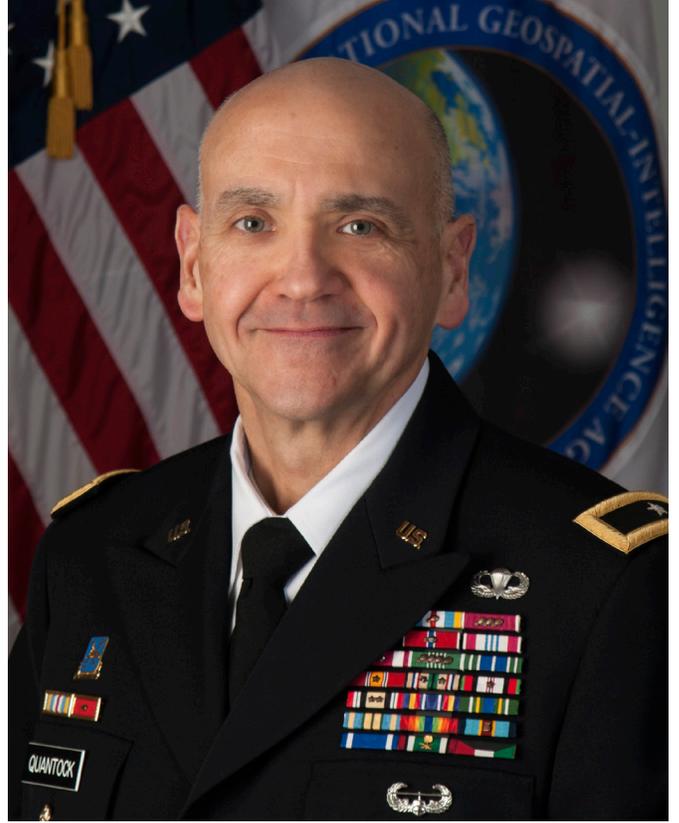


NGA SENIOR Q&A: BRIG. GEN. MARK R. QUANTOCK

By Kristen Mackey, Office of Corporate Communications
Photo by Kevin Clark, Office of Corporate Communications

BRIG. GEN. MARK QUANTOCK IS THE MILITARY DEPUTY of the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency. As NGA's senior military officer, he is a member of the NGA command element. He advises the NGA director on combat support functions and provides a military perspective to the NGA board of directors. He also oversees NGA's expeditionary operations. He manages more than 400 active duty military billets across the NGA enterprise and has oversight of NGA's Military Services directorate.



DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE.

I WOULD DESCRIBE MY LEADERSHIP STYLE AS PARTICIPATORY. I LIKE

active stakeholder involvement in the decisions we make. I think stakeholder buy-in is critical to successful execution.

I'm also a believer in heliotropic leadership. The "heliotropic effect" argues that all living systems lean toward positive energy rather than negative energy – that people remember better, learn faster and perform better in a positive environment.

While practicing it my entire career, I didn't even realize it had a name until Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti described the type of command environment he wanted in his International Security Assistance Force Joint Command headquarters when I worked for him as his Joint Intelligence chief, or J2, in Afghanistan. The command climate he fostered was the best I've ever seen, even on the darkest days in a year of combat operations.

I've been fortunate to have worked for some great men and women who live by Army values and create the positive type of climate I seek. But Gen. Scaparrotti stands out because of his positive brand of leadership. I would follow that guy anywhere.

TELL US ABOUT THE NEW STRUCTURE OF NGA'S MILITARY SERVICES DIRECTORATE.

MR. SAMMIE JACKSON IS THE NEW DIRECTOR FOR MS, AND HE

is the right person for the job. His depth and breadth of knowledge in all things MS make him the perfect senior to lead the organization.

MS has not undergone a true reorganization. Rather, there is better alignment of functions. For example, we are moving personnel, technology and logistics to the same organizations that manage those functions for most of the agency, like Human Development and Security and Installations.

At the beginning of the wars in the Middle East, it made sense to have those administrative things managed within MS, but as we wind down large combat operations abroad and are challenged to maximize efficiency, I recommended to the director that now was the time to make adjustments.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS MAJOR PRIORITIES IN YOUR ROLE AS NGA'S MILITARY DEPUTY?

MY PRIORITY IS TO HELP NGA REALIZE ITS STRATEGIC VISION. THIS

involves helping communicate our message to the field – chiefly to the services, combatant commands, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the intelligence community.

As a combat support agency, we must interface with our partners to ensure we understand their requirements, and they understand our capabilities.

The senior military advisor role runs the gamut – from helping the director formulate options for senior decision makers, to providing a military perspective on any topic. I think a top priority is to ensure I’m available to work issues at the flag level for her with the military.

WHAT AREAS DO YOU BELIEVE YOU CAN IMPROVE OR ADVANCE FOR THE AGENCY?

I THINK WE CAN IMPROVE OUR COMMUNICATIONS WITH OUR

partners. You cannot have too many messengers – provided you have a consistent message. The director has asked me to help build relationships with foreign partners in conjunction with our International Affairs office, for example – specifically where military-to-military conversations can help move us forward faster.

The director has asked me to provide oversight on a number of topics and to ensure we have tight linkages between the agency and our partners. Afghanistan, for example, remains a top priority. Supporting transition to the Resolute Support mission is not a task for any one key component in NGA. It’s an agency mission. I try to ensure we incorporate all relevant KCs in the transition, while I interface with NATO’s International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Central Command senior leaders to present a clear NGA message and resolve any issues.

Other areas where I think the MD can be helpful are cyber warfare and optimizing the placement of our military professionals. Wherever I’m needed, I’m happy to help.

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OSD AND THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF?

CLEARLY THE PENTAGON PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN WHAT WE

do. They are one of our key customers, and one of our bosses. No KC should have to go it alone working tough issues with the joint staff, OSD, combatant commands and the services. Leveraging the military deputy ensures we bring the full power and weight of NGA to bear in achieving success with our military partners.

YOU HAVE STATED THAT NGA SHOULD HIGHLIGHT SUPPORT WE GET FROM RESERVISTS WHO WORK HERE. TELL US WHY THAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU.

OUR RESERVISTS DO A FANTASTIC JOB. WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO capitalize on this capability and capacity – they are “value added,” to be sure.

We need to expand the Reserve capacity here – to partner with geospatial-capable Reserve units and individual reservists across the country to leverage their capabilities for service requirements. This expands our ability to meet requirements and broadens and deepens the capability of the GEOINT enterprise.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE MILITARY SERVICE, INCLUDING MULTIPLE AND MAJOR OPERATIONS OVERSEAS, WITH YOUR FAMILY LIFE AT HOME AT FORT BELVOIR, VA.?

PROBABLY NOT WELL. BUT MY WIFE COMES FROM GOOD STOCK. HER

father was an Army command sergeant major, so she had a pretty good idea of what she was getting into when she “married down” to a lieutenant in 1982.

She’s been the love of my life, a terrific mother to our three fantastic, now grown, children, and she is, simply put, a wonderful human being. I clearly married up. We balance our time together by focusing on “quality” time over “quantity of” time. And we treat each other as equal partners – with love, dignity and respect. But make no mistake – she owns the checkbook, so I give her a little more respect.

I am honored and humbled to be NGA’s military deputy. I’ve worked on the periphery of NGA for many years as a military intelligence officer and have been the beneficiary of NGA’s superb support. So, I jumped at the opportunity to join the NGA family and am grateful to Director Long for bringing me on board. ✨