

# THE MILITARY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION AS APPLIED TO STATE WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

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I would like to point out the advantages of the military type of organization where utilized in Wildlife Law Enforcement Agencies, and even as I do so, would like to stress the importance of such agencies in allowing their agents, conservation officers, rangers or whatever title is given the "old game warden" in your respective states; a certain latitude, independence of action, and freedom from top level, official direction and command as far as practicable.

We must realize, and keep in the forefront of our minds, that the working wildlife agent, the enforcement officer in the field, is our primary contact with the sportsman, hunter, fisherman, man who pays the bills, there in the field. The Wildlife Agent is in effect our Public Relations man for the department. He answers more inquiries about our activities, seasons, reasons for doing, than any other person or persons in the department. He is speaking as a rule, to his neighbors, relatives, friends and acquaintances and commands more respect and trust in his area than all the information and education men that we could employ for years to come!

In the normal evolvement of Wildlife Enforcement Divisions in the various State Agencies, those who had not already operated for some time in the military type of organizational manner soon came to the same conclusion arrived at by all enforcement agencies in time.

The chain of command must exist if we are to avoid the common mistakes of conflicting orders, parallel assignments to reach the same conclusions, investigations conducted thru the same agency and the participants in different Districts unknowingly using man hours that could be expended on different complaints and violations.

The chain of command must exist if we are to be constantly informed of the disposition of men and equipment, or know how to obtain this information by contacting a subordinate so informed, and thus minimize the effort of supervisors to effect quicker communication and use of material, men, boats and vehicles.

The chain of command is essential if we are to avoid a situation wherein the officers at District or State level have to handle the most picayune of matters that could usually be resolved at the Parish (County) or immediate supervisor level. No State Chief of Enforcement, Assistant Chief of Enforcement, or even their immediate subordinates could be expected to handle all the problems, complaints or situations that arise in an organization as complex and of the size of a State Wildlife Enforcement Department. The Parish (County) Lieutenant can dispose of most matters arising out of his general experience. In the case of problems beyond his experience or knowledge, he can seek answers from his District Captain. A situation that is beyond the capacity of the District Captain can be referred to the Main Office for resolution. In the event that personnel in the Main Office can offer no solution, the district Captain should refer his inquiries to the Assistant Chief of Enforcement, and in his absence, to the Chief of Enforcement. Such screening eliminates the necessity of unduly distracting supervisors and allows each in his capacity to function.

In some instances, states have men employed in the capacity of coordinators of activity, with two or more Districts in their jurisdiction. These coordinators can alleviate the build up of log jams within the Department by keeping District Supervisors, and thus their men, informed of procedural, policy, and legal

changes. The Chief of Enforcement by delegating a degree of authority to his coordinators can eliminate the necessity of his being present personally at meetings and functions that command presence of someone familiar with the upper echelon policies and procedures. Obviously the Chief of Enforcement or even his assistants cannot personally attend all District meetings, Wildlife group gatherings or sports events, gun safety schools, boating safety seminars, etc. Naturally these wildlife coordinators must rank above the District supervisors if they are to serve as liaison between Captain and Chief. Not least of their duties would be investigation that needs attention by the Chief of the Department.

The Military Type of Wildlife Enforcement Department makes good use of the Military attitude toward uniforms, and a uniform appearance. Hunters and fishermen should be able to tell at once when they are being approached by a Wildlife Agent. The agents should have such insignia, shoulder patches, and identification badges that improve the appearance of the uniform and instill confidence in the person approached. Agents so uniformed are identifiable by almost anyone, and are less likely to provoke an incident.

The higher pay and added responsibility of promotion make the desirability of rank attractive to those agents seeking responsibility and incentives to work. Rank, therefore serves to meet these requirements. Insignia of rank on the Wildlife Agents uniform theoretically would indicate that this was a man who sought responsibility and had been rewarded for his efforts. The insignia of rank will also designate this agent's position in the all important chain of command to both superiors and subordinates, thus allowing deployment of personnel to advantage, even where all agents are not personally acquainted, in situations where they are assigned to tasks that are not merely routine. In conclusion, we have found the Military Type of Wildlife Enforcement Agency workable. I cannot envision another system that could function as well in all circumstances, and if the system has drawbacks, it has far more advantages.

## **REORGANIZATION OF THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES ENFORCE- MENT DIVISION AND LIMITING ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECTION ONLY**

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Webster defines "reorganization" as:

1. an act of reorganizing or state of being reorganized.
2. the reconstruction of a business firm.

The definition of the word barely takes up three lines of space in the half column of a dictionary page, but there is one helluva lot of difference between definition and deed.

It had been almost thirty years since the last reorganization of the natural resources agencies in Maryland. At that time there was one agency, the Maryland Conservation Department. In 1939, the reorganization divided the conservation department into five separate departments, and formed a Board of Natural Resources with each new department being a member of the board.

Each of the departments was responsible for assigned segments of natural resources management. The five departments were: Forests and Parks; Tidewater Fisheries; the Game and Inland Fish Commission; Geology and Mines, and Research and Education.