



## *Aurora Chamber Defense Council* **Frequently Asked Questions**

- **What is the Defense Council?**

The Defense Council is a committee of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce that is dedicated to building greater understanding between the military and business communities in the Metro area. Our primary goals are to build understanding, recognition and support for our men and women in uniform; bring more Defense Department and Intelligence Community business to the eastern metro area; and to aid our members in winning government contracts.

- **Who is eligible to participate in the Defense Council?**

Any member of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce may attend the monthly meetings and other activities of the Defense Council.

- **How much does it cost to be a member of the Defense Council?**

Once a business or organization is a member of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, there is no additional cost to be a part of the Defense Council. All Chamber members are eligible to serve.

- **Are military organizations involved in the Defense Council?**

Yes, the military organizations in the Eastern Metro area, be they Active Duty, National Guard or Reserve, are all members of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce and are committed to the success of the organization.

- **How long has the Defense Council been around?**

The Aurora Chamber Defense Council traces its roots to an informal relationship between the Aurora Businessman's Club (predecessor of the Chamber) and the U.S. Army Hospital at Fitzsimons back in 1918. The ABC supported the Denver Civic and Commercial Association in purchasing the Gutheil Tree Nursery in Aurora and leasing it to the U.S. Army Department. Army Hospital 21 became Fitzsimons Army Hospital in 1918 and began meeting regularly with the business community. The Aurora Chamber also supported the Denver Chamber in purchasing the old Phipps Sanatorium in 1937 for the purpose of attracting an Army Airfield. They were successful and in 1938 Lowry Field began construction. In 1942, a newly commissioned Army Air Corps engineer named Lt. Rio Lucas (a member of the Defense Council until his passing in 2008), was ordered to lay out an auxiliary field to train fighter-bomber pilots east of Aurora. This dusty air field became Buckley Air Force Base in 2000 and has been actively involved in the Council since.

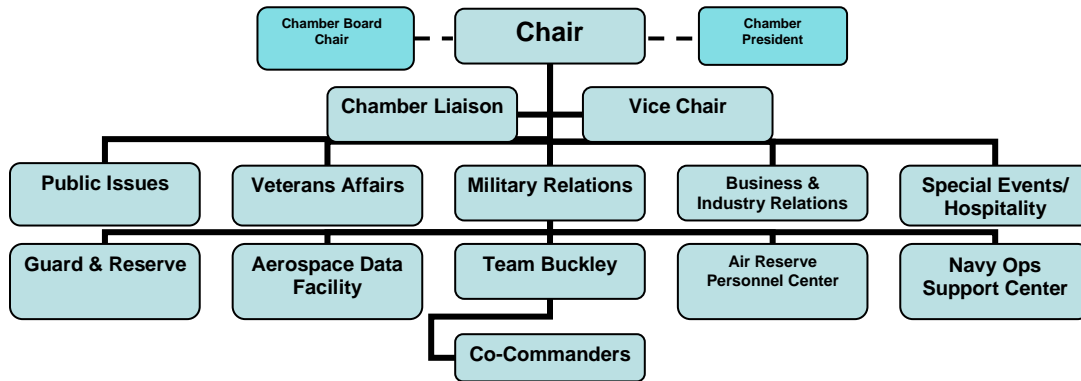
- **How many people are on the Defense Council?**

Approximately 400 people are on the Defense Council roster including business and community leaders and senior military leadership from the area.

Due to the size of the Council the Chamber formed the Defense Council Executive Committee in 2004. The Exec Committee took responsibility for organizing the Council along functional lines and serving as the planning body for all Council activities including the monthly meeting. The Chair of the Executive Committee also serves as chair of the Council as a whole and is Defense liaison to the Chamber Board of Directors.



## Defense Council Executive Committee



- **What are the responsibilities of the subcommittees of the Defense Council Exec?**
  - The Public Issues Subcommittee is responsible for monitoring political issues that may have an impact on military units in the area or diminish the ability of business to work successfully with the military.
  - Veteran's Affairs monitors veterans' issues both locally and state-wide and recommends selected legislation to the Chamber Board for support. It maintains close ties with the United Veterans Committee of Colorado.
  - Military Relations brings together the many military units that make up the military community in the metro area. This subcommittee is responsible for building understanding between the military and civilian sectors.
  - Business and Industry Relations works closely with aerospace contractors, large and small businesses that do, or would like to do, business with the military community.
  - Special Events plans activities to recognize and honor the military in the Metro area. Largest of these events is the annual Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon.
- **Who is the current chair of the Defense Council?**

Stephen Gourley, Colonel (retired), USAF
- **How can I learn more about the Aurora Chamber Defense Council?**

More information on the Defense Council is available on the Aurora Chamber web site, [www.aurorachamber.org](http://www.aurorachamber.org). Just click on the Committees tab and go to Defense. Or call The Chamber at 303-344-1500 and ask to talk to the Chief of Military Affairs, Rene Simard, CMSgt (retired), USAF.