[H.A.S.C. No. 110–47]

HEARING

ON

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008

AND

OVERSIGHT OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED PROGRAMS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

READINESS SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING

ON

BUDGET REQUEST ON READINESS OF THE ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

HEARING HELD
MARCH 27, 2007

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FISCAL YEAR 2008 NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT—BUDGET REQUEST ON READINESS OF THE ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
READINESS SUBCOMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, Tuesday, March 27, 2007.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 3:50 p.m. in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Solomon P. Ortiz (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM TEXAS, CHAIRMAN, READINESS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. ORTIZ. Today the Readiness Subcommittee will receive testimony on the readiness posture of our Army and Air National Guard.

National Guard readiness is an issue that I have followed closely, and it is of great concern to me. Not just because my district is in a hurricane prone area, but also because I understand how important the guard is in providing for our national defense. Our concerns for the guard have grown over the past several years as I have watched the guard change from a force supporting the strategic base to one that is operational in nature with less focus on strategic missions. This is an enormous shift in how the guard is used, and while this change is not the focus of the hearing today, it does directly influence guard readiness.

It is no secret that all of the services are having readiness shortfalls. Recent testimony before the subcommittee by the services cast also great concern about the sustainability of the ongoing as well as potential future missions. Just yesterday we learned that as many as 1,200 Marine reservists are being involuntarily called up for duty in Iraq. The service has been unable to find enough volunteers to fill. While this hearing is focused on the guard and not the reserve, this call-up illustrates the increasing manpower shortages the services are facing as the war in Iraq continues.

The guard's readiness posture is even more troubling than the active component. The shortfalls in equipment and training, the guard will have a direct effect on how they will respond to emergencies at home or abroad.

During General Blum's testimony before the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, you said that it will take $40 billion to bring the Army and Air National Guard up to 80 percent of their equipment requirements. And I have seen in your statement today that the guard is only at 40 percent of its required equipment.

This is an enormous shortfall, and it is evident, when I go out to see national guard units in my own district, because I visit both my reserve and national guard, and I find the shortage of equipment, every unit I visit has shortages of equipment, and I know if Members were to travel and go to their own national guard units and the reserve units, they will find the same things I did. And this is totally unacceptable.

Hurricane Katrina and the Iraq war has shown us that we need a national guard that is manned, equipped and ready. Today I hope you gentlemen will help us better understand the readiness problems that the Army and the Air Force Guard face today.

The country wants to help, and we need to fully understand that the guard needs to be ready for missions at home and abroad.

Gentlemen, I look forward to hearing your testimony, and the chair recognizes my good friend from Virginia—he is Virginian and North Carolinian, so he is both.

Mr. JONES. We really are good friends, by the way.

Mr. ORTIZ. The ranking member, Ms. Davis, has been ill for a little while, and we pray to God that she can come back and join us.

And now I turn to my good friend, Mr. Jones, for any statement that he would like to make.

STATEMENT OF HON. WALTER B. JONES, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM NORTH CAROLINA, READINESS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. JONES. Thank you, Chairman Ortiz, for holding this timely and very important hearing on the readiness of our national guard. I strongly believe the issues we are discussing here today are absolutely critical to the Nation's ability to meet the National Security Strategy, and I thank you for holding this hearing.

I would also like to thank our witnesses, General Blum, General Vaughn, and General McKinley, for taking the time to talk to us today about the needs of the national guard.

Gentlemen, thank you for your testimony, and thank you for all you do for our Nation.

Whether we like it or not, the world is changing around us. Gone are the days when we could assume that the guard and reserve were a lower funding priority than the active component. The global events of the last four years, to include Hurricanes Rita and Katrina, have shown us the flaws in our thinking. Decades have reduced procurement and underfunding training, maintenance and military construction accounts have placed our national guard in jeopardy.

The increased operation tempo driven by continued combat deployments, counterterrorism activities, Homeland Security requirements, border protection and domestic disaster relief brings the true state of our national guard to the forefront of our discussion as we craft the fiscal year 2008 requests.

This committee received testimony last week on the findings and recommendation of the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves. In their written report, the Commission stated, and I quote, Like all participants in the federal budget process, the reserve components must compete for scarce resources. Reserve funding requirements are planned, programmed, and budgeted for each serv-

ice budget process and are considered as part of total force requirements.

Finding sufficient funding for these requirements will remain an ongoing challenge given the tight fiscal environment, competing budget priorities, and the demands on Department of Defense (DOD) in alloting its resources. We realize that policy-making is often driven by resource constraints, and that trade-offs are necessary.

With that, Mr. Chairman, thank you again very much for this hearing, and we do appreciate it.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you so much.

Today we have a panel of distinguished witnesses representing the National Guard Bureau and the Army and Air National Guard who will address the guard's readiness posture. Let me say that we thank you so much for the outstanding work that you do.

Even though we have a lot of problems, you still excel and do a great job.

Our witnesses are Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau; Lieutenant General Clyde A. Vaughn, the Director of the Army National Guard; and Lieutenant General Craig R. McKinley, the Director of the Air National Guard.

Now, without objection, all of the testimony, the written testimony that I have, or any other written material that I have will be included for the record.

General Blum, if you are ready, you can begin with your testimony, sir.

STATEMENT OF LT. GEN. H. STEVEN BLUM, CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU, U.S. ARMY

General BLUM. Thank you, Chairman Ortiz and members of the committee. Thanks for the opportunity to come here and talk to you today about the readiness posture of the Army and Air National Guard—actually, your Army and Air National Guard that protects your families and your loved ones back at home and also helps our Armed—our active duty Armed Forces do their job overseas in the war on terrorism.

I will try to be brief and to the point.

In the past, the practice of underresourcing the national guard in assuming risk was a very conscious decision this Nation took with regard to its Army National Guard force structure. It didn't fully man it. It didn't fully equip it. It didn't fully train it, and it didn't fully resource the Army National Guard because it never was expected to be an operational force.

Thirty-four years ago we stopped what we called the draft, and we went to an all-volunteer force. The national guard has been an all-volunteer force since its inception in 1636, so this was nothing new for us, but it was for the Department of Defense. And what we are finding is that this old strategy of resourcing or underresourcing the national guard and assuming risk, because you have months and years to build up the force and equip the force and fill up the force and then train it and employ it, is really not a model that fits today.

Today you must—it is come-as-you-are and it is come-on-no-notice. And when it comes to the national guard, we have two mas-

ters, Mr. Chairman, as you have adequately pointed out. One of our masters are the Governors of the 50 States and 2 territories, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and they have the national guard that they can call out at any time to deal with the hazards of mother nature, floods, hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes and on and on, winter storms, as you have seen. On any given day, at least 17 Governors call on our national guard each and every day since I have been in the job in the last 4 years. So it is not uncommon to have as many as 17,000 Army and Air National Guardsmen deployed right in our own homeland saving lives and reducing suffering and trying to bring normal conditions back to your communities as we have seen all too well in Hurricane Katrina, Rita, Wilma and on and on.

So today we find ourselves with a strategy that doesn't fit the operational use. The national guard is an operational force overseas. We provide significant combat power, combat service support and combat support to the United States Army. We are essential to the war in Iraq. We are essential to the effort in Afghanistan. We are essential in the Horn of Africa. We are essential—we are the forces on the ground in the Balkans. We are guaranteeing the treaty in the Sinai, and frankly, we are deployed in about 40 nations around the world supporting the war on terror.

At the same time, as you are well aware, we have 6,000-plus national guardsmen along our southwest border in California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas that are providing military support to civil law enforcement agencies and the Border Patrol to make our borders safer and more secure, and to deal with what is becoming an increasingly focused threat on our southwest border to a safe and secure environment for those four border States.

Now, to do this kind of response, we need to be adequately resourced. We have to be fully manned, fully trained and fully equipped and fully resourced. I am proud to tell you that, for the national guard forces, both Army and Air, that are deployed overseas, this is the case. They are the best equipped, best trained, best led, best quality force that this Nation has ever put into harm's way, and that, I think, is something that the Congress can applaud and be proud of.

What I am not so proud of and I do not want to applaud, but I do want to highlight to this Committee, is that we are now in a degraded state back here at home. And the ability for the national guard to respond to natural disasters and to perhaps terrorists or Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) events that may come to our homeland is at risk because we are significantly underequipped.

The average Army National Guard unit in the States, without going into classification categories, is—rough order of magnitude has about 40 percent of the equipment it is supposed to have to do its mission as an organization. So if it is an engineer unit, it may only have 40 percent of its equipment. If it is a medical unit, it may only have 40 percent of its equipment. If it is an aviation unit, it may have only 40 percent of its helicopters. Now 40 percent is an average. So there will be States and members here today that have less than that. And there will be some, a few in this room, that will have slightly more than that. But nobody has more than 65 percent of the equipment they need back here at home. And I

think that that condition is unacceptable, and it should be brought to the attention of the Congress because I think the Congress is the proper place to appropriate and authorize the cure to that.

If we were to get all of the moneys that the Department of Defense has offered and briefed this committee and to us, we would have more money than we have ever had historically before in equipping the guard. But all of that money, if all of it came to us over the complete Program Objective Memorandum (POM) or over the complete fiscal year defense plan (FYDP) over the five-year distribution of those funds, which is not a given, okay; but if that were to occur, we would still find ourselves with what I described to you as a $40 billion dollar deficit to equip the national guard, both Army and Air, at the level that I feel is an acceptable level of operational readiness and would buy down the operational risk that exists here in our homeland.

Today, only 12 percent of the Army Guard units that are in the United States, not forward deployed overseas, are equipped at a level that I am describing. That means almost 9 out of 10 are not. And in the Air National Guard, about 6 out of 10 are fully equipped, and about 4 out of 10 are not.

So I am trying to give you the magnitude of the problem and what it would cost, frankly, for this Nation to purchase the equipment that I am talking about.

We have the best led, best trained, best quality force, but to have a capability, you have to have three things: You have to have people; they have to have training; and those trained people have to have equipment. Those three things deliver the capability that I think this Nation expects out of its national guard.

Today we have two of the three. And we have about half of the—a little less than half of the third. And that is what I want to bring to the attention of this committee today.

I talked about the fact that we are a dual mission force. We respond to the Governors on no notice. No notice means a 911 kind of response. Governors measure the response of their national guard to events that happen in their states and in those zip codes that they govern in terms of minutes and hours. The Department of Defense, a rapid reaction would be 96 hours, 72 hours. Ladies and gentlemen, that is three or four days. That is an unacceptable measurement of response time for the national guard to respond here at home. To respond here at home, you have to have your people fully manned, fully trained and fully equipped and operationally ready on a moment's notice.

If we don't have the equipment we need, the reaction time is slower, and time equals lives lost, and those lives unfortunately are American lives in your home districts.

So this is a very, very important subject, I think, for this committee to consider and for us to discuss in detail here today.

The part of the national guard that acts as a federal reserve as the Army and Air Force is receiving unprecedented commitment of resources and attention by the Department of the Army, the Air Force and the Department of Defense. I applaud that. I celebrate that. It is the first time in the history of this Nation that that has ever occurred. We now need to make sure that that same level of

attention is directed to the national guard that is in the employment of the Governors of this great Nation.

The Army and Air National Guard need equipment, but they also need other things. They need a full-time manning that is realistic and necessary to provide an instantaneous 21st Century minuteman and woman response when the Governors need their national guard. The level of full-time manning in the Air National Guard is a model that we should emulate and try to achieve and duplicate in the Army National Guard. We are not there. We, today, finally have the Army recognizing the requirements for the full-time manning of the Army National Guard, but, unfortunately, the resources have not been applied or allocated to make those requirements a reality. So we will not achieve that reality unless some adjustments are made there.

It is unreasonable to expect to be able to generate a 150-man medical unit or communications unit or engineering unit and have only one or two full-time people in that armory responsible for the Administration, the logistics, the training and the readiness of that force. We need to get to a much more realistic model, and we need to help the Congress to do that.

While we face challenges, there are many positive developments as well, and I would be remiss if I didn't bring that to the attention of the committee.

First, our new Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates. Secretary Gates on the 11th of January made a very significant decision to limit the mobilization time for the guard and reserves to one year, start to finish. This will guarantee, in my judgment, a sustainable, all-volunteer force for the foreseeable future that could generate perhaps 60,000 to 65,000 Army and Air National Guardsmen for an indefinite period of time without straining the relations that the soldier must maintain with their families and their employers. The national guard is an older, more mature force than the active duty force. And 70 percent of our force is married. So the family is an absolute majority stockholder in what goes on and whether that service member is going to maintain their membership in the national guard and be available on call.

We simply must address the predictability for the families and the civilian employers so they can deal with the time and interruptions of service when the civilian employer has to let their employee go to do national guard service. I think this one year will fulfill the bill. It gives the predictability and certainty the families and employers have asked for, and Secretary Gates's policy demonstrates his willingness to listen and to consider and be sensitive to the citizen soldier and their needs. And it also, I think, shows his courage and decisiveness to make hard calls that many in the Pentagon were unwilling to make prior to his tenure.

Another great part of his policy is that we will call the national guard units up as units and we will not force the service members to have to volunteer. That is an unfair burden for them to bear with their families and with their civilian employers. If they are a member of the unit, they know when the unit will be called. It will be on the cycle of service. They know exactly when their unit is scheduled to be called or available to be called, and if they are in

that unit, they will go with their unit. And they can make their choices whether to remain with the unit before the unit is called.

So I don't think we will have to have many of the adverse effects of stop-loss as we have seen in the past. His new mobilization policy will have a significant positive long-term effect, in my judgment.

Additionally, Secretary Gates has made a firm commitment and has stated that he is personally committed to resourcing the national guard to a reasonable level that it has not been resourced in the past.

Second, recruiting in the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard is at an all time high. We have the best quality force, and we are generating higher enlistment numbers than we ever had in the history of the Army and Air National Guard. Our retention rate or the propensity of our citizen soldiers to stay with us and reenlist is at an all time high. It averages at about 115 percent of our retention goals.

General Vaughn is most proud, as all of us are, as this time last year we were getting wire-brushed pretty good by the services and the Congress on what the strength looked like in the national guard. I am happy to tell you that we will achieve our end strength in probably the next 30 days which will take us to the 350,000 mark. You will find that the national guard has recruited higher numbers in 2006 and higher quality than it ever has in the history of recorded—keeping records of the all-volunteer force. So it is a good news story, and frankly, we could not have done this and accomplished this without the authorizations and the appropriations, that this Congress has provided the resources to the guard to make us successful.

If the guard is adequately resourced and the guard has the proper authorities, we will not fail the Nation.

In closing, I would simply remind this committee that, in the 21st Century, with threats both overseas and here at home, a strong national guard must have the response not only to respond here at home but it has to be equipped and trained so that our adversaries overseas see us as a credible deterrent force, a force that will complicate their thought process and make them consider very long and hard before they make a short-range miscalculation.

What it would cost to send our forces overseas, if they do miscalculate, would be several times the magnitude of what it would cost to appropriate and authorize what it would take to make our force a credible deterrent for overseas adversaries and still a magnificent operational-ready force both abroad and here at home.

I would ask now the director of Army National Guard if he would like to make some remarks in specifics to the Army Guard, and he will be followed by General McKinley of the Air Guard.

[The prepared statement of General Blum can be found in the Appendix on page 31.]

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you so much.

General Vaughn.

STATEMENT OF LT. GEN. CLYDE A. VAUGHN, DIRECTOR, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD, U.S. ARMY

General VAUGHN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members. It is indeed a privilege to be here to testify today.

I want to just quickly amplify and go through some of the points that General Blum made, and then we will go quickly to my significant other down there on the other end.

Authorized end strength. General Blum talked to you about that a second ago. The States have done a magnificent job in filling the roles, and we have the youngest force that we have ever had.

When you look at the number of soldiers that we have less-than-10-years now, we have more soldiers in the less-than-10-years ranks than we have over-10-years. The Army National Guard is changing and changing very quickly. A lot of enthusiasm out there, but it will be tempered down quickly if we don't get it equipped.

The Army has stepped up to this. As you know, there is $36 billion worth of equipping between the 2005 and 2008 through 2013 POM that they pledged to and testified to over here several times.

They are working hard to hold that. We need to insist upon transparency. Even that, some of our concerns from our adjutants general in the field is, there is no transparency between the checkbook, between the appropriations and them being able to see that the equipment arrives in the States. And so we need to work very hard on that particular piece.

Equipping is only one piece of the readiness puzzle, and the other being training. And as we talked about a second ago, we have recruited a lot of soldiers. We have also gone through nodularities, as you know, that caused a lot of our soldiers to change their Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) on the run. So we have a significant delta that has to be dealt with.

Full-time support: As General Blum talked about, a lot of people equate readiness directly with full-time support. And where was that ramp before? It was based upon a strategic force. It is actually an operational force now. No doubt about it. We need to accelerate that ramp so we get the ramp brought out in fiscal year 2010 rather than following all the way through to fiscal year 2013.

And the last thing I would say is we are told many times not to confuse enthusiasm with capability, and what I will tell you is we have great enthusiasm in our soldiers to serve. Our states are measuring up, and the capability piece of this is not exactly just the men at this table. The capability that is brought about by the dollars and resources for training and for equipping the force, which are the big two, lays in some other different directions other than us three.

And so we need that capability to have—we need to have the resourcing to make this a tremendously capable force. Because it certainly is a strong one, and it has the support of the people.

Thank you.

STATEMENT OF LT. GEN. CRAIG R. MCKINLEY, DIRECTOR, AIR NATIONAL GUARD, U.S. AIR FORCE

General MCKINLEY. Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of this committee, it is a pleasure to be the junior member of the Na-

tional Guard Bureau team to come talk to you today about the state of readiness of the Air National Guard.

I am proud to be a member of the national guard. I have been in the national guard since 1980. I also served on active duty prior to that. I am also very proud to be a member of the United States Air Force.

The United States Air Force is going through some very challenging times, but it has always prided itself on its integration of its Air National Guard and its Air Force Reserve.

As the Air Force faces these challenges of recapitalization, re-equipping its force, those same challenges trickle down to us, and as General Blum's vice chief for Air, I represent him with the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force to make sure that we are modernized, trained and equipped, so that your Air National Guard can be as effective and efficient in the 21st century as it was in the 20th century.

We have got readiness indicators that are trending down. And for me to say that in the Air National Guard, it is hurtful because, for many, many years, the Air National Guard has maintained extremely high readiness rates.

We are involved in the Federal mission alongside our active and reserve counterparts at a high rate of tempo, and we are also assisting with our missions here at home. And as General Blum is fond to say, we provided some of the greatest airlifts since the Berlin airlift in our resupply during Hurricane Katrina and Rita. We are proud to do that. We are proud to do our State mission in addition.

So, Mr. Chairman, thanks for letting me be part of this committee today. We look forward to your questions. And I thank you for what you have done for the readiness of the Air National Guard.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you so much.

Now I am going to ask you a question. You are the director of the Air National Guard, and I understand that the Air Force accepted a ten percent risk across the total force in flying hours. How does that impact on the Air National Guard?

General MCKINLEY. Any time you ask an airman to take a cut in flying hours, it is hard to do. And I think, from my vantage point, it is a risk that we have to take in this environment in which we are living. You know, the Air National Guard prides itself on its experience, both in maintenance and operations and our combat support, but that experience degrades over time. It becomes hollow. And we have never had to experience tiered readiness.

I am afraid that when our active component takes a cut in flying time, which translates in us taking a cut in flying time, it will have a risk to bear at the other end of it.

Now General Blum asked me when I became the director to maintain our end strength. End strength was vitally important to us as I became the director of the Air National Guard. So taking that 10 percent risk, while it was painful, meant that we kept 106,700 members in the Air National Guard, also very important to us.

So we had to do the tradeoff. But what it will equate to us, it will mean that our pilots will get fewer than eight sorties a month

in our fliers, fewer sorties in our large aircraft, while at a very high operational tempo rate in our global war on terror.

So I am concerned. It is a risk. I will keep General Blum fully informed of that risk, but I thank you for that question because it is very important to us.

Mr. ORTIZ. I want to look at ways to see how we can bring it up to the standards, to what it was before because I understand—I am not a pilot—but I know this is a very risky business, and you need to have all of the adequate training you need. So we are going to see what we can do to help you out.

General MCKINLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ORTIZ. I just have one more question, and then I am going to pass it on to some of the other members.

Now General Vaughn, you are the director of the Army National Guard. Regarding personnel end strength, are you comfortable with the Army National Guard end strength of 350,000 for the fiscal year 2008? Is this enough?

General VAUGHN. Mr. Chairman, I am not comfortable with that, and the reason I am not comfortable with the 350, first of all, we would have to choke it down some and we would have to quit recruiting like we are now. We have the opportunity to grow this force. We cut our force structure significantly in the last 24 months.

You remember the debates about hollow force. We cut from 375,000 and we got our force structure down to around 350 to 352. Now to increase that readiness that we all are concerned about, we need to take our appropriated strength up above that. And I know that in growing the force, the Army has a 358 projection in for us through fiscal year 2013. I will tell you that that is reachable a lot earlier than that. And as soon as we can get an over-strength posture, we will increase our readiness significantly in our units.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you so much.

Now I want to yield to my good friend from Georgia, Mr. Jones.

Mr. JONES. I will claim the State.

General McKinley, let me ask you, General McKinley, the term "reset," would you explain to this committee as it relates to the number of changes that will be forthcoming to the Air National Guard? And can you briefly explain what you mean by the Air Guard reset and how this will impact on the readiness of the Air Guard?

General MCKINLEY. Thank you, sir, for that question. It is a term that we have never used before in the Air National Guard. For 60 years, the Air National Guard has been on a steady stream of capitalization. We have maintained older airplanes, but we have always had relevant missions in support of our United States Air Force and in our state mission at home.

When I became the director last summer, we encountered some severe headwind, as I would say in my vernacular, in that we were feeling the effects of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) legislation which affected almost all of our units; practically all of our states' territories in the district were affected by BRAC.

We also were faced with the Air Force restructuring or transforming itself, and their proposal, that we have used as a model, was the Total Force Initiatives Implementation program. Total

Force Initiatives means looking for new missions for missions that have sunset and gone away.

We also need to look at our Air National Guard in the context of making all of our wings the same. Some states had gotten out of balance. Some of our wings had grown at the expense of other states. And so we felt that if we were going to go through this radical transformation, let us do it all at once. The upheaval is causing a great deal of tension in our organization. So we decided not to extend it out but to encapsulate it.

And finally, we wanted to what I call fix the books, make sure everything within our system was adequately funded and that we didn't take extreme risks.

So you put all of those factors together, that is what we call our reset.

General Blum and I are working very closely with the states. The adjutants general, for the first time in history, we have agreement that this reset is important, that we can move through it carefully in an environment in which each airman is protected so that we don't break our force, and we feel that with the support, the membership in Congress, that if we are adequately resourced, we will go through this reset, through the effects of BRAC, through the effects of Total Force Initiatives and integration and have a stronger Air National Guard when this is completed.

Mr. JONES. General Vaughn, just one question. It is my understanding that as you go on a 12-month mobilization policy, you will need to adjust training. Also, funding to the Army National Guard will need to be provided early in the cycle. Is this accurate?

General VAUGHN. Congressman, that is right on the money. We need to move a lot of our training from what we call the righthand side of the mobilization to the lefthand side. And we simply need to move the resourcing dollars to accompany that.

The states need the equipment 12 months prior. They need to know what the mission is going to be, and they need to get the resourcing dollars, the training dollars, to make sure that we prepared the soldiers and units for the best possible mission. We need to prepare them in such a way that they are going to survive, going to do the right things for the Nation, and the way to do that is to give them as much training time as we can as far forward as we can, which is 12 months early.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you so much.

The gentleman from Mississippi, Mr. Taylor.

Mr. TAYLOR. First of all, I want to thank you, all of you, for your service to the country. In particular, I want to thank you for the magnificent job the national guard did in Mississippi after Hurricane Katrina. It is very fair to say that Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) fell on their face, and the only thing that prevented FEMA from being a further embarrassment to our Nation was the magnificent work of our national guard riding to the rescue.

To that point, General Blum, if a Katrina-type event—well, I will go back. I remember, in the Spring of 2004, the 890th, which is an engineering unit which had been a part of the initial invasion of Iraq, came home to Mississippi, and they had been ordered to leave their particular equipment behind. And in the Spring of 2004, I re-

member asking Secretary Rumsfeld—at that point, they had been replaced, I think, 60 percent—if we had a catastrophe in Mississippi, what would you do? It actually happened 19 months later.

And to the best of my knowledge, 19 months later, we were still at 60 percent. Now they did a magnificent job with what they had, but they could have done better with more.

Do you have any higher degree of confidence in FEMA today than you did 19 months ago, or are you still going to be called upon, whether it is a natural disaster in Mississippi or a man-made disaster because of an act of terror in New York, San Francisco wherever, are you any better prepared to respond to that than you were 19 months ago, or are you less prepared?

The second question would be with regard to vehicles like Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAPs) vehicles.

A couple weeks ago, Representative Hunter made the observation that we have a lot of very good unarmored Humvees in Iraq in staging areas. And he supposed that that equipment would be coming back and be given out to the guard units. I am not so sure that that is a good supposition. Because it is my hunch that the Administration, whether it is this Administration or a future Administration, is going to be highly tempted to give those vehicles either to the new government in Iraq, the new government of Afghanistan or some other ally in the region.

So of the 37 billion that you have—that you have outlined as your immediate needs, does that address my theory that a heck of a lot of equipment won't be coming back. Does that take that into account, and to what extent, if any, are you replacing things like Humvees with MRAPs?

General BLUM. Thank you, Congressman. That is a good list of questions. Let me try to deal with them in reverse order, if I can.

The accounting—could you put up Chart 10, please.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 41.]

General BLUM. What I am about to show you presumes that all of the money that the United States Army, the Department of the Army, and the Department of Defense have allocated to the national guard over the next five years gets to us. I am making that assumption. I am going to assume that the DOD and the Army honor their commitments that they have made to move the money that they said they would to the national guard. That will be an unprecedented amount of money. However, it will leave us at about a 65 percent fill level nationally.

Mr. TAYLOR. After the 33 billion?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. After. After that money is received. So it still leaves about a $13.1 billion bill to make whole the equipment we would need to get to an acceptable level of readiness that is described at the top of the chart. And it would also require $6.5 billion in operating and maintenance money to make that a reality as well, and approximately $4.5 billion for the national guard payment allowance money that would be required to make all that fit.

So all together, that is a $24 billion bill additional to the moneys that we are assuming and counting on getting to the national guard over the next five years. So, to directly answer your question, yes, we took into account those factors that you brought up.

So this is a realistic estimate, in my judgment, of what will be required to in fact buy down the risk and to in fact ensure that we were a credible deterrent force in the eyes of any adversaries overseas and an immediate operationally ready force back here at home should we have to respond to a future Katrina.

The second question you asked me was about MRAPs, the improved vehicles that are basically mine resistant and anti-ambush protected vehicles. Those vehicles that exist today are at arguably 400 percent more effective in protecting the soldiers inside of them than an up-armored Humvee and largely that is due to the shape of the bottom of the vehicle, as you are well aware of. I won't go into that because of the classified nature of why it is that way. But I am reasonably confident you will understand what I am talking about.

We have expressed, General Vaughn and I have expressed our absolute commitment to accelerating that program and making sure that no soldier that goes in harm's way doesn't have the very best armor protection this Nation or any other Nation's industry can provide. Right now, General Speakes, the Army, G8, has an open competition, with the captains of industry to compete for these vehicles and is purchasing these vehicles at a pretty aggressive rate now. When I say a pretty aggressive rate it is almost equal to what the Marine Corps is doing. They have, a rough order of magnitude, I think 1,100 in theater now. He is pressing very hard to go to 2,500. If I am not mistaken—and I am pulling these numbers out of my memory—it is close to 17,000 of these MRAP vehicles that we see as a requirement and the Army is working very furiously to get to that. It would be very welcome, I think, that this committee watch that very close and if they can offer any assistance in that I would ask you to do so because it will mean numbers of lives saved rather than lives lost on the battlefield.

You asked me if FEMA, do I feel confident FEMA is better positioned now than it was in Katrina? Yes, I do. And so I think FEMA's capabilities have improved and I think organization has improved. And I think that there is a new sense of urgency and commitment within that organization to do better the next time.

That said, it will still require the response of the national guard—and that is not a bad thing. That is a good thing. It is going to take a joint, interagency, intergovernmental response to any disaster of that magnitude. And we should be much better together than we were last time.

I am not happy to tell you, however, that our capabilities are not in the gross terms of percentage of equipment fill better than they were when Katrina happened. When Katrina happened, you were about 50 percent on your fill in Mississippi for your national guard, Army National Guard equipment. Today you are 49 percent. That is not going in the right direction.

I will tell you that within that 49 percent we have made significant improvement in our greatest deficiency, and that was communications equipment. So within the 49 percent, there is some bands of excellence and a better capability to respond. But, however, our engineer equipment, our high water trucks, our aviation assets are still in scarce supply.

How do we overcome and mitigate that? We do that through emergency management assistance compacts between the States that would not be affected by the hurricanes or less likely to be affected by the hurricanes, and we move that equipment and preposition that equipment to ensure that it is close enough to respond to the predictable hurricane patterns of this Nation.

But I would feel much better if every State National Guard had what they needed to do their job so that the magnificent citizen soldiers in those units had all the engineer equipment they need in that great engineer unit and the aviation unit had all of the helicopters they were supposed to have because that would reduce the time it takes to respond. And a timely response actually translates into number of lives we can save. Time equals lives saved and lost. Quick response and effective response saves lives. A delayed response costs lives. And I think we are all in the business of trying to save as many American lives as we can and lose as few as we possibly have to.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, General, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ORTIZ. Gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. LoBiondo, do you have a question, sir?

Mr. LOBIONDO. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being here today, for your service to our country. To General McKinley I am sorry that weather forced us not to be able to meet at the 177th, but thank you for considering it and I look forward to working with you.

General McKinley, the Air National Guard is some of the oldest aircraft in the fleet. Can you talk about what concerns you may have with the recapitalization from the Air National Guard perspective?

General MCKINLEY. Thank you, sir. Yes, sir, I am sorry I missed that meeting up at Atlantic City, too. You have got a great fighter unit there and they have been fighting the global war on terror with their air defense mission now nonstop, and I really appreciate what they do for us.

The United States Air Force is faced with a very serious recapitalization problem. When I joined the Air Force in 1974, the average age of our fleet was eight years old. Today the average age of the United States Air Force aircraft, to include the national guard and Air Force Reserve, is 24 years old. If we recapitalize the Air Force, as the Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force would like, it will only slow down that age creep.

So for units like yours in Atlantic City, what we have to do is find a way to put them in a road map so that they can see that there is a future mission for them. We have to work with the Chiefs of National Guard Bureau, and the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief to make sure those airmen who have stayed up in that city and dedicated their lives to that organization don't feel that there is not a plan for their futures.

The United States Air Force has a plan to recapitalize. The Air National Guard has been considered in that plan, and we will continue to work closely to make sure that units like yours and others around the Nation are fully resourced and are fully able to participate in the recapitalization that is on the books but unfunded.

Mr. LOBIONDO. I appreciate that because there is a lot apprehension and a lot of uncertainty, and a lot of dedicated people are sort of counting on the right thing to happen.

It is pretty well known that the older the aircraft the more it costs for the upkeep and to maintain them and keep them in the air. And yet, the Active component is shifting its older aircraft into the guard. The national guard receives approximately 7 percent—if my calculations are right—of the Air Force budget but at times over 50 percent of the strikes in the global war on terror are being performed by national guard and reserve units.

So how does the Air National Guard plan to address the soaring costs of maintenance of these older aircraft in the guard units like the 177th and others around the country?

General MCKINLEY. It is a serious problem. I would like to say there is a short-term fix but there is not. There is a stable, long-term fix to our aging aircraft fleet.

The aircraft that you talk about, the F–16s, are deemed legacy and yet they are still fighting in the war on terror today doing a great job, as I talked about in our closed session. They are fighting alongside the Active component in every mission we fly.

I think when you have a legacy fleet like we do in the Air National Guard, if we continue to face serious funding shortfalls, it will only degrade our readiness over time.

Those aircraft can only be deferred for maintenance for so long. Those aircraft will ultimately break and be out of service. Some of the ages of our fleet, KC–135, 47 years of age, not many of us drive an automobile that is that old. Our C–130s are 26 years old. Our F–15s are 24 years old. Our F–16s in the high teens.

So this is a large problem. It is a serious problem that affects our total Air Force. We are concerned about it, sir. We will work with you and other Members in Congress to make sure we don't let that valuable force go to waste.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Chairman, do I have time for another question?

Mr. ORTIZ. Yes, go right ahead.

Mr. LOBIONDO. General, beyond the maintenance cost issue, one of the other serious concerns that I have is about the capabilities of the older aircraft that are being shifted into the guard, the lesser capabilities.

Is that taken into account? It has to be taken into account when you are talking about mission tasking, doesn't it?

General MCKINLEY. Right now we have got a fleet of aircraft—I am speaking predominantly of kinetic fighters that can integrate well with our aerospace expeditionary force model and, thanks to Members like yourself, through the national guard and reserve equipment account we have been able to modernize those aircraft with precision targeting pods and things that we were unable to obtain through the normal funding streams. So I would like to thank you again for giving us that capability.

For the foreseeable future we should be able to be fully interoperable with our Active component counterparts. But as we get into fifth generation fighters, new C–17s, new KCXs, the real task for General Blum and myself is to make sure that the Air Force has

enough resources so that it equips the guard and reserve units that they have depended on for the last 60 years.

That is going to be the real challenge for all of us, is to find enough money to re-equip those units with systems that can sustain themselves into this new century.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Has there been any discussion or planning of selecting Air Guard units with homeland security missions such as the combat air patrol over high value targets of terrorists attacks with newer aircraft, you know, the F–35s? Any discussions or any comments you can make on that?

General MCKINLEY. Sir, as you know, the preponderance of air sovereignty over the United States is flown by Air National Guard aircraft, both fighters and tankers. Atlantic City, prime example of that. Those aircraft fly over critical infrastructure, and they are doing a great job, and we thank them for what they do.

In the future, as the Air Force modernizes its fighter force with the F–22 Raptor, now stationed at Langley Air Force Base, we envision a time when the fifth generation fighters will be used because they are very effective aircraft, with its speed and its lethality of getting to a target fast enough to have an effect. We will look at the F–35 as we can, as it is brought into line, to see if it can also meet that mission requirement.

There is a tremendous balance with these new sophisticated fighters being used so much overseas that we don't retain them here at home. We need to make sure that we have enough of them in quantity to do that.

Mr. LOBIONDO. General McKinley, thank you. Generals, thank you. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mr. ORTIZ. Ms. Bordallo.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to say thank you to the generals here, General Blum and General Vaughn and General McKinley.

General Blum, you spoke very glowingly about the guard and particular about our guardsmen, our Guam guardsmen that are stationed over in the Horn of Africa.

And since this now is a public hearing, I would like to ask you again the same question that I did earlier, and that is to say that I am particularly a strong supporter of our country's national guard. And it seems that the men and women of our national guard do more with less each year.

So currently the guard units are deployed to practically every hotspot around the world, including Iraq and Afghanistan. And companies from Guam's Guard have for four years now—this is the fourth deployment—have been deployed to the Horn of Africa. In fact we have an entire company there.

So my question to you, and I respectfully request that you discuss with the committee whether you believe that this increased reliance on the guardsmen and women, is a short-term reality or whether the guard can be expect to be tasked in this manner for the foreseeable future, and whether the Department's budget planning will reflect this outlook.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. That is an excellent question, Congresswoman. First, let me tell you that the performance of the Guam National Guard is second to none. They are well respected and wel-

come in the theater. They have established an amazing reputation for competence, tolerance, and professionalism. And you can be very proud.

The citizen soldiers of Guam serve at a disproportional rate to the rest of our Nation. Compared to the rest of the country, they probably have the highest percentage of native sons and daughters in uniform of any of our States and Territories, and they do an amazing job.

I don't think what you see happening with them now is a short-term anomaly. I think what we are experiencing now is the new reality. The national guard has fully made the transition from a strategic reserve to an operational force. The citizen soldiers and airmen of Guam have done that as well. The only thing that has not done that so far are resourcing policies and authorities, regulations and statutes.

They are still largely best supportive of a strategic reserve, and they do not fit. And they do not adequately address, without some significant friction and work-arounds, the resourcing and sustaining an operational national guard or reserve component.

These need to be addressed by the Congress and these need to be addressed also by the Department of Defense and Department of the Army and the Air Force and they are moving in that direction, although not as fast as many would like. But it is moving in the right direction and there is a new sense of commitment to getting that right.

I think this is exactly what our Founding Fathers intended. I think our Founding Fathers had it right. And I think they were amazing in their vision because I firmly believe—as both a military officer and as a taxpayer and American citizen—we should never send our American sons and daughters into harm's way ever without calling up the national guard because there is a very significant difference calling up citizen soldiers and airmen as opposed to a professional army of all volunteers.

For the last 34 years, we have been an all-volunteer force. When you call up the guard for overseas missions or even missions here at home, you call up America. We saw that in Katrina where every single state and territory, to include Guam, sent people to Mississippi and Louisiana to save lives, reduce suffering and restore normalcy to the lives of the people in the gulf coast.

As you go around the world, you cannot find any theater where combat is being conducted, where stability operations are being conducted, or any other military operations are being conducted that do not include citizen soldiers and airmen from your Army and Air National Guard from all the various states. That is exactly the way it should be.

And when they go overseas, they should be superbly equipped. And they are. And they should be superbly trained. And they are. And they should be superbly and competently led. And they are. But they also deserve that same level of support when they are deployed back here at home under the command and controls of the Governors of our great Nation to do homeland defense missions or support the homeland security missions or respond to the adverse ravages of Mother Nature, such as you experience on the islands in typhoons and tsunamis and hurricanes and tropical storms and

all of other severe weather patterns and anomalies of nature that we suffer.

On the average about 17 states a day for the last 4 years have had their national guard called out, and it is not uncommon to on any given day have 7,500 citizen soldiers called out by the Governors of our great States of this Nation to save lives, reduce suffering and return normalcy to the lives of the community and the citizens of that state.

And that doesn't even take into account the 6,000 that are on the Southwest border right now supporting the Border Patrol. When you call out the national guard at home, you have a different—you can't do it on the calendar. You have to do it on your watch. It is counted in minutes and hours. The response must be that quick. It has to be like your local fire department. And they have to get there almost as fast as the local fire department. That is the expectation of the American people and the mayors and Governors of this Nation. That means they must have the people, the training and equipment they need to be able to do that. If your house catches on fire and you call your local fire department and they show up with 34 percent of their equipment, you are not going to be happy with the result. And you expect better than that, and you would find that unacceptable.

I think that is the same level of scrutiny we ought to put on how we equip our national guard for the homeland mission, and that is why I brought it to the attention of this committee.

Ms. BORDALLO. Thank you very, very much, General. And it may interest you to know that our chairman of this subcommittee will be visiting our guard facilities on Guam in a few days.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you so much. Ms. Boyda and then followed by my good friend, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mrs. BOYDA. Thank you so much for your testimony in both of these hearings, and you have been very generous with your time and I certainly, as many people, including our Governor back in Kansas, are concerned with the readiness levels of equipment with our national guard.

My question had to do with the change of policy that Secretary Gates was talking about with the one year, and I might ask you to explain that again so we all are on the same page.

My question is, if that is one year, one year out of five—wasn't that it? One year? If the guard has become really part of our overall full force and we have a Katrina, does that mean that those guards, in your estimation, would you expect in the case of a national emergency, whether it be on our soil or others, for someone to be able to say, well, that was our best theoretical but, unfortunately, we have changed from being an emergency guard that you all have played, to now being part of those full-time Armed Forces?

What is your level of confidence at some point they are going to come to you in a national emergency and say we need to go ahead and deploy people who have already deployed for over a year?

General BLUM. I don't think it will take—Congresswoman, I don't think it will take a national emergency to do that. I think we are there now. The stated goal, the objective that Secretary Gates stated, was we will absolutely mobilize the guard for one year and one year only. That is a very welcome policy because heretofore it

was one year boots on the ground and probably four or five months of preparation, training, and perhaps a month or two after they got back and one year wasn't a year. It ended up being somewhere like 18 to 22 months. I think he realized the burden that was placing on the citizen soldier and the family and the employers, the three legs of the three-legged stool that I described earlier. I think it was a very courageous and right decision that he made.

He said the stated goal would be that we would call up the guard perhaps one year, followed by five years. The model would be—the goal would be——

Mrs. BOYDA. So they would be deployed once every six years.

General BLUM. One year followed by five years back at home, essentially one in six. That is exactly what it would be. He said we are not—he was very clear. He said it at the White House. He said it at a press conference. He said it to committees of Congress. And he is consistent in his message. He said that is not achievable right now. We will have to deploy the guard more frequently than one in six years. We will have to probably use the guard more, to be totally realistic, at the rate we are using it today and, as the best we know in our crystal ball, the best—which is not perfect, and never has been—but we think we are probably going to have to turn the force at about one year and followed by four years back at home, which would be one in five and some specialized units where we don't have a deep enough inventory to rotate may have to go even slightly sooner than that.

The Secretary understands that that places an undue burden on the family and the employer, and he is working a compensation package that I don't have the details of yet because they haven't been finalized, but they will be forthcoming very soon, that will show how we recognize the sacrifice of the family, the member and the employer and we take some measures to mitigate that discomfort that turning or more frequent rotation would cause.

He is also even with that piece of the disadvantage, and the reason for that is the enemy has a vote in this. And they are not following our plan. If they were, we could change the rotation rate down. The current realities of the global world security situation are going to require that the guard be an operational force overseas for the foreseeable future at about the rate I described, which is a little less than what his desired end state would be.

Mrs. BOYDA. May I just ask is that based on our current conflict in Iraq? Is that based on if something else were to happen globally? When you say you foresee it being at that level, given where the world is today, is that the world is at war in Iraq?

General BLUM. Well, Iraq is not the totality of where our forces are.

Mrs. BOYDA. I understand.

General BLUM. We have forces in the Balkans in the national guard, we have forces in the Horn of Africa.

Mrs. BOYDA. That is basically the level of conflict today.

General BLUM. Yes, a steady state. And the reason he has done that is to not repeat the errors where we made rosy predictions and optimistic predictions of less force required and then we found ourselves running to catch up with reality. So we are worst-casing it, planning for the worst. Rather than planning for the best and hop-

ing the worst doesn't happen, we are planning for the worst and hoping for the best. And if we can get to the one in six sooner then obviously everybody will be happier about that.

But the national guard will be part of the operational rotation. Just how much it will be involved and how frequently it will go is undetermined, frankly, and we don't determine that. What we have to determine is to make sure that two things happen and if you can—and it might be useful to put up a slide that shows the commitment that we have made to the Governors. I think that is slide three. This would be an interesting slide to show. Because when I first came in to the job, we were not paying attention to what you are alluding to, and that is the balance of the forces that we have to remain available to the Governors on call all of the time to be able to respond in the States, to do homeland defense, homeland security operations and still be a reliable, accessible ready force for our overseas missions as a Federal Reserve of the Army and the Air Force.

So the Governors worked out this model that you are looking at. And what it illustrates—you don't have to read the small print. You just have to watch the large colors. They are saying that the piece of the pie that is shown in the chart that is in green is the force that would remain available to them at any given time.

And they said, Governors of this Nation, all of them, the National Governors' Association had a meeting in 2003 and they approved that if they thought it was reasonable that we would have about 25 percent—and that is the people that are shown in red—that would be deployed overseas at any given time from the national guard, Army and Air, that that would leave them 75 percent of their force back at home. That would be the quadrant shone in gold and in green, and the ones that would be red would be overseas and unavailable. And now that period of time would be one year. And before that period of time was 18 to 22 months.

So the new policy reduces that friction. And then the people that would be in the gold quadrant would be those that are in intensive training, being equipped—that is what General Vaughn was talking about, moving the manning and the money and the equipment into those people so that they are absolutely ready when they are needed and we can in fact have them ready when they need to go into that one year of mobilized status. And the goal would be that that wheel would rotate about one in six years. Now if it needs to turn quicker, it can. But the proportions stay the same.

Now if you looked at these charts, which I know you can't read from there, but it takes every one of your states and every one of your districts, your home districts and it shows that we have honored that, our obligation to the Governors, and that there is only one state in the whole country right now that threatens breaking the 75 percent availability model and that only breaks it by 1 percent. Every other state in our country has about 80 percent as an average of its national guard back at home and less than 20 percent currently deployed overseas. So the people are back there. The troops are back there to train——

Mrs. BOYDA. Your point is training and equipment——

General BLUM. Now what is missing is the equipment because when the troops came home, the equipment didn't come home. So

remember we go back and I don't want to—we go back on the other three-legged model and that is people, training and equipment. And if you don't have the equipment you don't have capability.

Again let's go to the fire department. You have a world class fire department, has all of its 80 percent of its people in the station ready to go and they are superbly trained. But they only have 34 percent of their equipment. How effectively can they respond? They can respond. But it takes longer. They have to borrow equipment from other places which means they are slower in their response which means they are not as effective in saving lives and property as they could be. You can take that little model and apply it to the national guard's mission here at home and it translates very, very well.

Mrs. BOYDA. Thank you very much.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for letting me join your committee today. Thank you, Generals, for your testimony and your service. I have to tell you that I keep waiting for the good news. I have been here a grand total of about 90 days now, and I asked to be on Armed Services so I could help you to do your jobs. I have been to the Pentagon and met with different hearings. And when I came in I guess I was a bit naive to our readiness and our state of readiness in all the branches, and it is very concerning to me.

And now I find out again—I won't do this very often—but when I read the initial articles about being redeployed in readiness, my first call was to Adjutant General Lombard of Indiana. Let me tell you, you have a good one. Indiana should be proud and I am sure you are, too.

But I can feel your pain a little bit. As a former sheriff, I can remember sitting on that side in front of a county council and trying to convince the county council about equipment needs and that we wouldn't use these things every day and they would sit there. But on the day that you get the call that you need them, you need them. And you don't have time to procure and you don't have time to order and you don't have time to go down and shop for that. And I know you don't either.

General, one of the things you said in both hearings, you were talking about during the budget process that—and you kind of emphasized the word "if." If we got all the money budgeted it would still be about 65 percent of what I take is the 65 percent of what we need and leave 13.1.

Is there a question whether we get that, or has it happened in the past where we, the Congress, or they the Congress at that time—I shouldn't use the word "earmark." that is not a very good term, but put money for you and it didn't make it to you or there is doubt in your mind that it is going to make it to you? And then I guess the follow-up question to that is, what do we in the Congress need to do to make sure you get your share of the pie?

General BLUM. Well, let me give you some good news. The good news is the force is in magnificent shape in personnel. That is the hardest part to fix. We have the best people, the best quality people and the ranks are full. That is great news. A year and a half ago nobody thought that was possible except for the two guys at this

table. We have achieved that and it is the finest quality force, the most professional force, the youngest force and the most combat experienced force. Sixty-five percent of our force are combat veterans. That is the good news.

The other good news is it looks like the young men and women of America are continuing to want to join our ranks and do what we are asked to do. I think that is good news.

The other good news is that our problems are pretty easy to fix. This is a very rich nation, and these problems are solvable. These aren't complex problems. These are really moneys that need to be authorized and appropriated. The fix is that simple.

So most of the real bad news problems are much more complex than that. This is a relatively simple thing to fix. And again I go back to your history as a sheriff. If you had all your deputies and they are all trained and they are high quality guys and girls, if all you need is some equipment and the county council votes you money and authorizes the money, it is pretty easy fix, isn't it, compared to finding quality officers, experienced officers, guys and girls with extraordinary integrity and courage to go do that kind of work.

We have that. We have got the hard part fixed. That is the good news. The bad news is that we are under resourced. And the bad news is what you alluded to, it would be highly unusual—I mean the Members here have a far greater historical record of watching how appropriations and authorizations change and morph over the FYDP and over the POM. It is very extraordinary that money that shows up in the POM in one year survives and gets to its intended purpose throughout that five or six-year cycle.

Let me say that history is replete with broken promises and broken commitments—not of the current leadership, but of past leadership. So if history is an example, we should be skeptical. We should be dubious. We should be very watchful, both as senior military leaders and as a Congress, to see that what was intended actually transpires and becomes reality.

There are also historical examples of times where the Congress was very clear in what their authority and their appropriation and what their authorization was intended to do and they put it into an account called a national guard and reserve equipment account, and that has rarely ever deviated from its intended purpose to its desired end state.

Same could be said for national guard pay and allowance accounts and national guard on operation and maintenance (O&M) accounts. So I am not talking about earmarking, but I am talking about if the Congress is concerned that the money that is authorized and appropriated would be rerouted, reprogrammed, used for another purpose, if the Congress is concerned about that, there are some remedies of that that Congress could implement. We would be glad to take the appropriations and the authorizations in any manner they come, because we are going to use it to purchase and buy the capability that we are discussing today that we don't have.

So however it comes, we are going to be grateful. If it comes down from DOD appropriations or the Department of Army appropriations, in your case, or Air Force appropriations, we are willing to move out with that. If they come in on the national guard equip-

ment account, it is very clear what the intent is and we will not deviate from the intent.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. I will speak for the whole committee, but I have heard enough in the backroom that we want the money to get where we think it is going and we will do everything we can to get that. I think probably the same thing you talked about, where we were not as ready as we were on September 11 of 2001 was probably equipment. I am guessing, since you stated you have the men, we have got the training, the good people, but having the equipment is——

General BLUM. I am glad you gave me the opportunity to clear that up. We are eminently more ready today than we were on September 11th. We are focused. We have planned. We have trained. We have exercised. We have stood up new capabilities in the last five years. We had zero joint force headquarters on September 11th. We have one in every State and Territory today. We had zero chemical biological nuclear high yield explosive enhanced response force packages on September 11th. We have 17 of those today. We had only 10 civil support teams on September 11th. We have almost 48 of them trained, ready and certified today.

We have had little connectivity of Information Technology (IT) and communications to provide secure and nonsecure e-mail and secure and nonsecure video teleconferencing (VTC) and communications capability. We now have exceedingly good situational awareness, common relative operating picture that we share in a secure and nonsecure method through something we call the joint Continental United States (CONUS) support environment, communication support environment. These are huge steps in the right direction.

We have trained and exercised with the Department of Homeland Security and Northern Command, which did not exist on September 11th. So there is great—we have an Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense that we didn't have on September 11th. So we have policy overwatch at the Pentagon for this. We now have a combatant commander that watches out for this. We now have a national guard that is postured and mentally prepared to do this. Now all I am asking is, let's close the last mile correctly and let's equip the guard adequately so that when we are called we can be as superbly able as this country expects us to be in response to a weapon of mass destruction or a catastrophic event, whether it is caused by a freak of nature or it is caused by an accident, an industrial accident, whatever it is. Whatever causes Humpty-Dumpty's demise we have to be able to respond to that and return to a normal condition and save as many lives. The long pole in the tent right now, the last thing we need to make this complete, is to equip the force properly to do that job.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. I couldn't agree more. I think the American people will drive by a guard center and see the generators out there, think, boy, they haven't moved for a year but when I needed those in the tornado in 2005, November of 2005, when the guard came out and did an excellent job, we couldn't have done without them and 25 of our residents were killed that night. Not nearly on the size of Katrina, but certainly in our area it was huge.

Finally—so thank you for that also. Finally, do the Governors have a say—this shouldn't take a long answer—have a say if our guard units are deployed overseas, do the Governors have a say and, if not, should they have some say or at least consultation from our Administration before they are deployed overseas?

General BLUM. Absolutely they do and absolutely they should, and they have been magnificent. I have not seen in four years in my tenure here any Governor at any time play politics with regard to their guard. They stop being politicians and they become the commanders in chief of their national guard. That is what they are by law and they take that responsibility with immense seriousness. And not one single Governor has ever denied equipment, soldiers, or airmen for the overseas mission in the war on terror in my tenure here, and I know my two colleagues can speak to that in detail.

We have at times had discussions with Governors to make sure that we didn't disproportionately pull capabilities out of one State—let me not use Indiana, let me use Idaho. Idaho at one point had 82 percent of its national guard deployed overseas. That is a little bit much to ask. And we found better ways to do that. And hence, that is why we built that model with the National Governors' Association to make sure that the Governors always would have what they needed to protect their local citizens at home, yet at the same time would be a reliable, accessible ready force to help the Air Force and their air expeditionary rotations and help the Army in the Army force generation model so we can give the combatant commanders the capabilities that they needed without leaving Governor Daniels uncovered in Indiana.

Mr. ELLSWORTH. Thank you, and thank everybody the three of you represent. Thank you for your service. Mr. Chairman, I yield.

Mr. ORTIZ. Thank you so much. You know, I know that this committee is very concerned. But we have 435 Members. Do you think, should all 435 Members be concerned? Do you think we should be very concerned? I know members of this committee are.

General BLUM. Mr. Chairman, absolutely. Whose district should not be adequately protected? Of course. The answer is every zip code, every congressional district in our great Nation ought to be adequately protected. And if the guard is adequately equipped, we can do that because we are prepositioned, forward deployed in every Congressional district of this Nation. There is no place that anyone elects a Congressman that doesn't have a national guard presence, which means a capability to respond in that local area, and call on all of the help that they can get from the adjacent areas and the adjacent states if necessary, as was demonstrated in Katrina.

So the better we are equipped the better we can respond, the faster we can respond, the more effective it can be, and again not only is that a capability, I think every American expects, it sends the message that is no small message to our adversaries overseas that while we may be stretched and we may be engaged in Afghanistan, in Iraq, we are not out of options. We are not out of capabilities. And could we respond if some other event were to happen? Of course we could. Could we respond more effectively? More timely? And better if we were fully equipped? Absolutely. And could we perhaps prevent the requirement to respond overseas to a new

place if an adversary viewed us as a more credible reserve than we are right now? I think the answer to that is absolutely.

Mr. ORTIZ. One of the things that I noticed when I went to visit my national guard and reserve units, my district borders Mexico and they had just come back from Iraq. They had—this is the second time that they have been activated and they came back to Iraq—I mean from Iraq. We saw that they don't have—when they are activated they don't have anybody left behind, because the families stay behind—to give them information that they need because the families stay behind. They don't know where to go for family services, for medical services.

And then on top of that, I always want to talk to the families. I found out that 15 percent of the members of the national guard who were there, they are married, they are married to their wives who are in Mexico. They are in the United States. They are fighting a war, but then the families who are on the Mexican side, the immediate families, the wife and the children, do not receive any type of services whatsoever. No health services. We had a lady whose little girl, she couldn't be there because she was sick. She had pneumonia and her husband was fighting the war in Iraq.

I think we need to look at that, and I don't think that a lot of people understand that and know that when you get close to the border there are a lot of young men and women who serve in the military and their families are separated from them. And I hope that when they are activated somebody can stay behind. We had one lady that was doing voluntary work and the reason she was doing volunteer work was because her brother had been in Iraq, and he was there. There was nobody to guide the families who were behind to tell them what kind of services were available and where they could go to seek assistance.

Maybe we need to look at that and see what we can do because now more than ever we are seeing more activation of reserve units and national guard units than before. And I don't know generally if you all were aware of this, about the 15 percent all along the border of the families, immediate families, wife and children, who are on the Mexican side cannot come across to receive any type of medical services.

General BLUM. Mr. Chairman, every day I learn something new. I learned something new. I would like to take that for the record. I would like to take that back. We clearly understand we are a very diverse nation, and it is very different what is going on in Connecticut, is very different from what is going on in Guam, and what is going on in the whole rest of the country is very different than what is going on in Texas. So we have tried not to have a one-size-fits-all solution and we kind of powered down all of our programs to the State level.

But I must be honest and admit to you that I was not aware what you have just described to me. And I will look into that, and I will call up General Chuck Rodriguez, the Adjutant General of Texas, and make sure he knows about this and he may say, sure, we know about that and this is what we are doing about it and I will share that with you. And if he says, no, I did not know that, I will make sure he does know that and we develop some way to

adequately support those soldiers that have a problem that up until now I was unaware of.

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix beginning on page 51.]

Mr. ORTIZ. And thank you so much. I did not know either until I went to pay a visit in the national guard unit in my community.

Well, thank you so much for the work that you do. We are going through a few crises here and there, but we will do okay and this is a great nation, a great country. We ask God to give us wisdom so that we can do the right thing, so that we can make the right decisions. And being no further questions, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 5:20 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MARCH 27, 2007

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

MARCH 27, 2007

UNCLASSIFIED

FOR RECORD

STATEMENT BY

LIEUTENANT GENERAL H STEVEN BLUM
CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE, SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

FIRST SESSION, 110TH CONGRESS

ON

READINESS OF THE ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

MARCH 27, 2007

NOT FOR PUBLIC DISSEMINATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

UNCLASSIFIED

STATEMENT BY
LIEUTENANT GENERAL H STEVEN BLUM
CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the state of readiness in the Army and Air National Guard. The Army and Air National Guard are engaged with our active component Army and Air Force counterparts in combat operations. War is never cheap, easy or pleasant. You can be proud that the citizen-soldiers and airmen of your Army and Air National Guard are ready to answer the Nation's call to arms. The National Guardsmen who are mobilized and deployed overseas are superbly trained and equipped. Like their active duty counterparts, they are unquestionably the best trained and best equipped American fighting force in history. For more the past 15 years, the National Guard has consistently delivered trained and ready units to the Army and Air Force when called on to do so. Over the past four years, this pace has been intense. The ongoing operational tempo and, in the case of the Army National Guard, the need to cross-level personnel and equipment from non-deploying units to increase readiness of deploying units has resulted in a situation in which readiness of our units here at home has declines over time. We are prepared to provide additional details on this situation.

I am honored to have with me today Lieutenant General Clyde A. Vaughn, Director, Army National Guard and Lieutenant General Craig R. McKinley, Director, Air National Guard. Together we will address your concerns regarding readiness in the Army and Air National Guard.

Recent Mobilization Policy Changes

On January 11, the Secretary of Defense announced his decision to limit Guard and Reserve mobilizations to 12 months is truly historic. It demonstrates

his willingness to listen to advice, the courage to make tough decisions, and the commitment to do what is right. His new mobilization policy will have significant positive long-term effects on personnel readiness, employer, family and public support.

The United States has made a commitment of national effort that requires military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere around the globe. The fulfillment of those commitments demands that our Total Force -- active duty, National Guard and reserve components -- all be brought to bear on the task at hand. This is a "long war." In addition to the execution of our overseas operational requirements, Army forces must also be reset and transformed during periods between deployments. These are tough challenges. We must pace ourselves accordingly. The burden cannot be carried by the active component alone. The National Guard is committed to doing its part as a full partner in the Total Force. We have carried a fair share of the burden so far. We intend to continue to carry our fair share the rest of the way. No one will dispute that the task before us in Iraq is a difficult one and that the path to success is long and hard.

The benefit of remobilizing the National Guard is that the tough duty along that path will be shared. The citizen-soldier will stand with his active duty comrade to accomplish the mission. This allows active duty forces to rest, reset and transform to be ready to fight again.

Is it tough? Yes, it is. Can we do it? Yes, we can. The National Guard today is a veteran force. America's citizen-soldiers are up to the task.

The National Guard's equipment needs

The President's budget request is now before the Congress. That request includes an unprecedented commitment and investment by the Army to improve the equipment readiness of the Army National Guard. The president's budget also seeks the funding needed for the Air National Guard to continue to be fully-integrated modern total force partner for the Air Force. It is imperative that the National Guard receives the full support of Congress for every penny in that request.

Last year, Congress provided $150 million for Army and Air National Guard in the National Guard and Reserve Equipment account. Millions more were provided in Service procurement accounts. In addition, Congress also provided another $500 million as part of the broader Army reset funds. This was still extremely helpful in addressing the equipment needs of our citizen-soldiers. The National Guard is tremendously grateful for this support. I must implore this committee, in the strongest possible way, to remain steadfast in your dedication to addressing the persistent equipment shortfalls we face.

This is absolutely critical.

The Army Force Generation model works on the assumption that units have the equipment needed for training. This model is going to be less effective if this assumption is not met. Currently the Army National Guard has on-hand only 40% of its equipment requirement and an additional 11% is either deployed or stay – behind — equipment. This hinders the ability of our units to train. It also can slow our response to disasters and terrorist incidents in the homeland, as equipment may need to be brought into an affected area from further away.

Improved equipping strengthens readiness for both overseas and homeland missions but it also reduces stress on the people in our ranks. With more equipment on-hand, we can conduct more and better training at home station.

If we are to be successful in our goal of providing our soldiers a shorter total mobilization period and maximize time in theater for the combatant commander, it is imperative that we reduce post-mobilization training time prior to deployment and accomplish more of it at home station prior to the mobilization to active duty. We need the equipment to do that training. If units train regularly at home station with the best equipment, then little training is needed in the post-mobilization period immediately prior to deployment. A 100% optimally equipped Army National Guard will allow training, possible homeland missions, and deployments to all occur simultaneously.

The Army National Guard's equipment needs are critical, but we can't ignore the needs of the Air National Guard. They also simultaneously perform both State and Federal operations ranging from domestic and global humanitarian efforts to homeland defense and the Global War on Terrorism.

For FY08, the Air National Guard has identified modernization and recapitalization shortfalls in Precision Engagement, Datalink/Combat Identification, 24-hour operations, and Enhanced Survivability. All shortfalls are founded on validated Air Force and Combatant Commander Requirements, vetted through a forum of reserve component and active duty warfighters at our annual Weapons & Tactics Conference.

In addition to the Air National Guard equipment needs, we have identified Air Guard funding challenges in the areas of transformation, Total Force Integration (TFI), Base Realignment and Closure Implementation, new mission bed down, recruiting, retraining, and other program shortfalls.

Efforts to assure stronger unit cohesion

From the very beginning of the War on Terrorism, the Army National Guard has provided forces in every package and manner requested. When tailored forces were required, we tailored them. At the beginning of the war, however, we were still structured as a strategic reserve in the Cold War model. For the Global War on Terrorism, the need is for fully manned and equipped units. To achieve this, we had to pull people and equipment from non-deploying units to fill those slated for deployment. This hurt unit cohesion and ruined the readiness of the non-deploying unit. When that unit later was selected for deployment, it required even more people and equipment to be brought in. Cross-leveling people and equipment to solve problems in the short term causes serious troubles in the long term and must be stopped.

The case of 162nd Infantry of the Oregon Army National Guard illustrates the issue. The unit is the subject of the book, "The Devil's Sandbox" by historian John R. Brunning. When one battalion from the 162nd Infantry was alerted for an overseas mission, volunteers from the other two battalions jumped into the deploying one. Months later, a second battalion received a mission. By the time the third battalion received its mission to fight in Iraq, there were few soldiers still in it – they had been piecemealed away. If all three battalions had a predictable schedule this could have been avoided.

Military leaders know, however, that units are more effective and soldiers more steadfast when unit cohesion is preserved. We must move away from the piecemeal, last minute approach of building units out of individuals. We must move toward having cohesive units who train together, fight together, and come home together. We must deploy units as units, not as ad hoc, last minute collections of individuals.

The Secretary of Defense's new mobilization policy takes us in a powerful step in that direction. Additionally, we have reorganized our Army National Guard forces, eliminating hollowness in those of our units which we plan to

mobilize and deploy. These are now full formations. They contain veterans and they contain new soldiers, many of them brought into our ranks by our highly successful Guard Recruiting Assistance Program and by the recruiting and retention bonuses and other incentives helpfully provided by Congress.

For the Air National Guard, the Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) construct has helped tremendously by making it possible for our Airmen to forecast the likelihood of deployments. This affords them the opportunity for advance planning and in a vast majority of cases we encourage the use of volunteerism to decrease the number of mobilization requirements. This construct has worked well for the Air Force, their needs and deployment styles are different from the Army, our Air National Guard forces have deployed within the AEF system successfully since its inception. In fact, since 9-11, approximately 50,000 Air National Guard members have been mobilized and more than 60,000 volunteered for deployment within the AEF construct. Some low-density, high-demand career fields such as Security Forces, Airlift and rescue units are feeling a greater strain. We need to ensure that programs such as bonuses for Airmen in these careers are fully funded to help relieve stress and enable increased recruiting into these needed areas.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, your National Guard is fully up to the task of answering the call to duty. At the National Guard Bureau, we are absolutely committed to working closely with the Services to effectively implement fresh ideas and new approaches to meet the challenges we face today in such a way that our citizen-soldiers can be trained and ready to serve and that their service will be of a nature that they will continue to serve for years to come.

We are grateful for the opportunity to appear before the committee today. We welcome your questions.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

MARCH 27, 2007

Transformation Imperatives

Strategic Reserve		Operational Force
Active Service Draft	→	Volunteer/Recruited Force
Ample time for buildup	→	No/limited notice
Time-phased, overseas fight	→	Any time/any where
Threat-based force	→	Capabilities-based force
Linear formations	→	Modular units
Symmetric threats	→	Asymmetric threats
Single service/component	→	Joint/multi-component/multinational

Minuteman values and missions transcend time

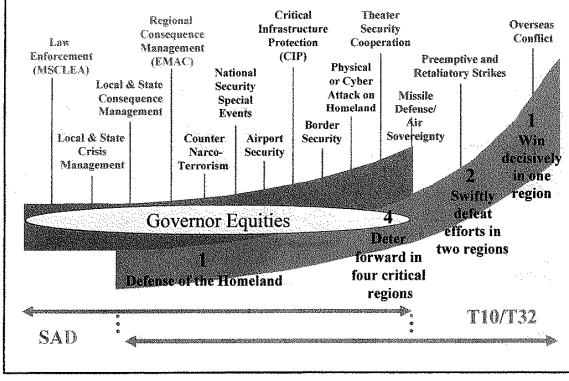
Federal Role = Strategic Reserve (1903-2001), but is since transforming

1636 — 1903 (Dick Act) — 2001

Constitutional Militia = Operational Force (since 1636)

1

Continuum of Operations

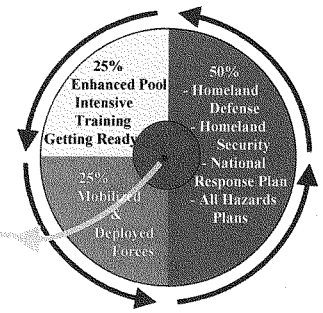


2

Army & Air National Guard Core Capabilities

ESSENTIAL 10

- **Joint Force Headquarters (State)**
- **Civil Support Teams**
- **Maintenance**
- **Aviation**
- **Engineer** (Technical Search & Rescue)
- **Medical** (Mass Decon)
- **Communications**
- **Transportation**
- **Security**
- **Logistics**



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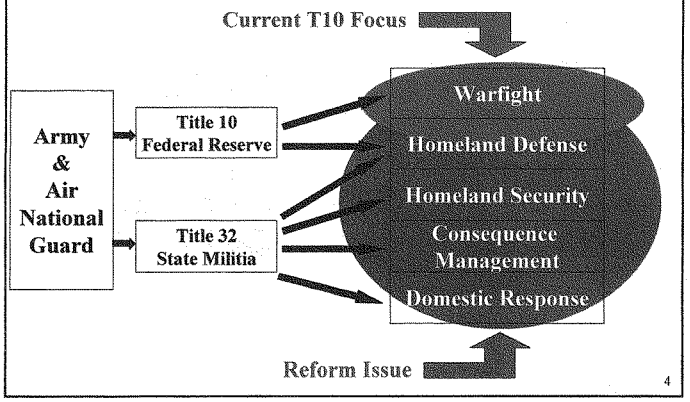
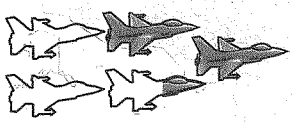
Dual Status/Dual Mission

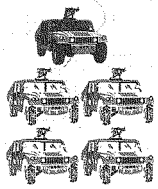


4

Equipment Readiness Shortfall

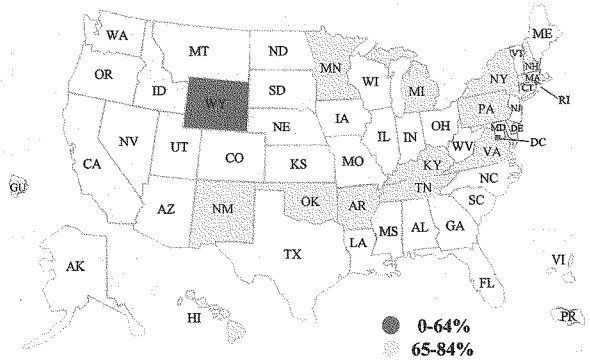
88% of the ARNG and 45% of the ANG here in the United States are not ready due to lack of equipment and training.





5

ANG Equipment Available to Govs for HLD



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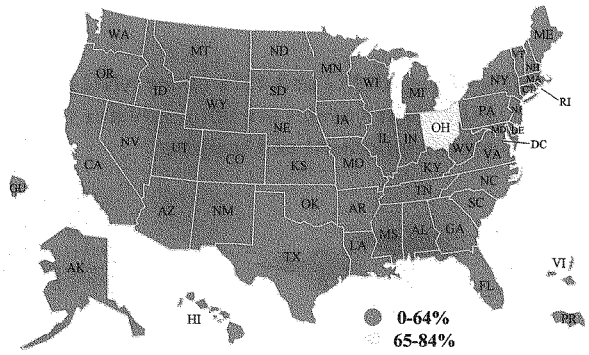
ARNG Equipment Available to Govs for HLD



7

ARNG Equipment Available to Govs for HLD

ROLL-UP	%
AVIATION	37%
COMMAND AND CONTROL	24%
COMMUNICATIONS	63%
ENGINEER	63%
LOGISTICS	60%
MAINTENANCE	63%
MEDICAL	87%
SECURITY	77%
TRANSPORTATION	47%
CST/CERFP	62%

8

Resources for Readiness

Unfunded Requirements needed to bring the National Guard Equipment On-hand, O&M, & Personnel to a 90% Level of Readiness over the FYDP

Air National Guard

	Required	Programmed over FYDP	UNFUNDED
MilPers	18.4 B	17.0 B	1.4 B
O&M	34.6 B	31.0 B	3.6 B
Equipment Procurement	Unspecified		8.8 B

TOTAL UNFUNDED △ : $ 13.8 B

9

Resources for Readiness

Unfunded Requirements needed to bring the National Guard Equipment On-hand, O&M, & Personnel to a 90% Level of Readiness over the FYDP

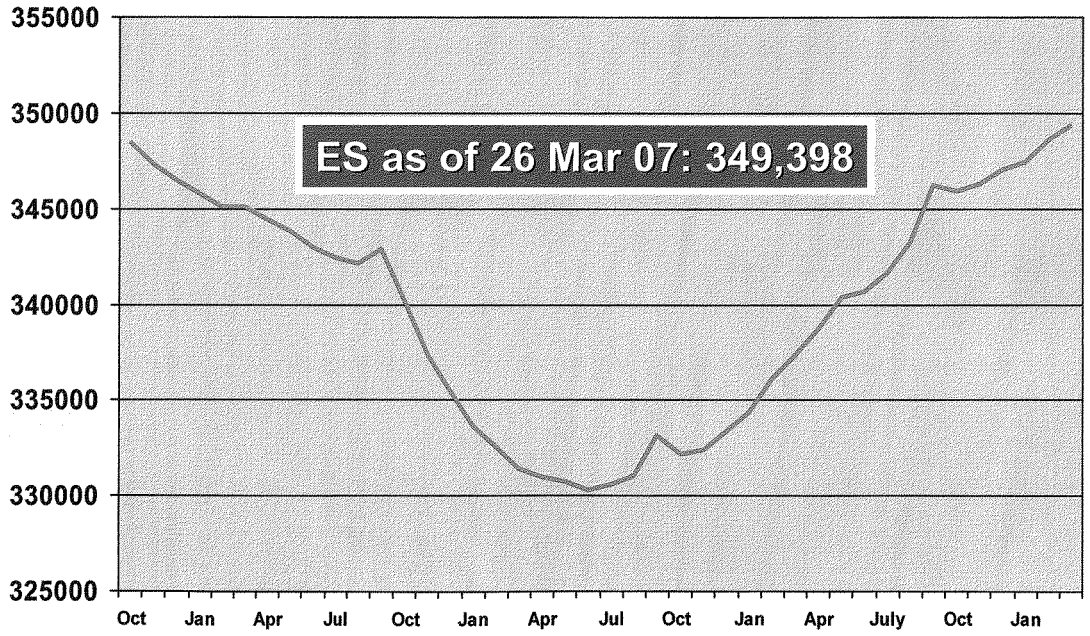
Army National Guard

	Required	Programmed over FYDP	UNFUNDED
NGPA	43.5 B	39.1 B	4.4 B
O&M	42.8 B	36.3 B	6.5 B
Equipment Not O/H	34.2 B	21.1 B	13.1 B

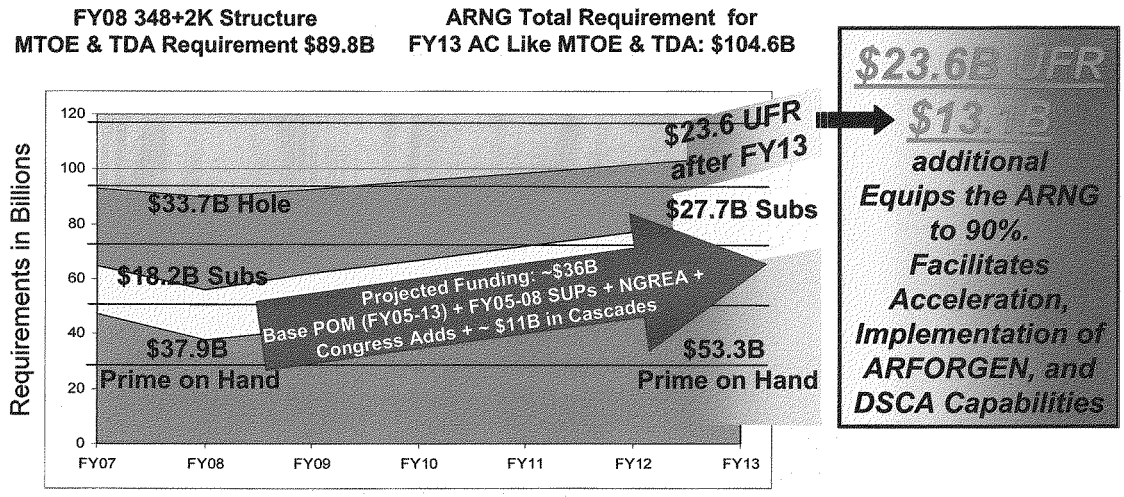
TOTAL UNFUNDED △ : $ 24.0 B

10

Army National Guard
Total Strength – FY04 to Present



ARNG Equipping Requirements and Funding Over Time



$23.6B UFR

$13.1B

additional Equips the ARNG to 90%. Facilitates Acceleration, Implementation of ARFORGEN, and DSCA Capabilities

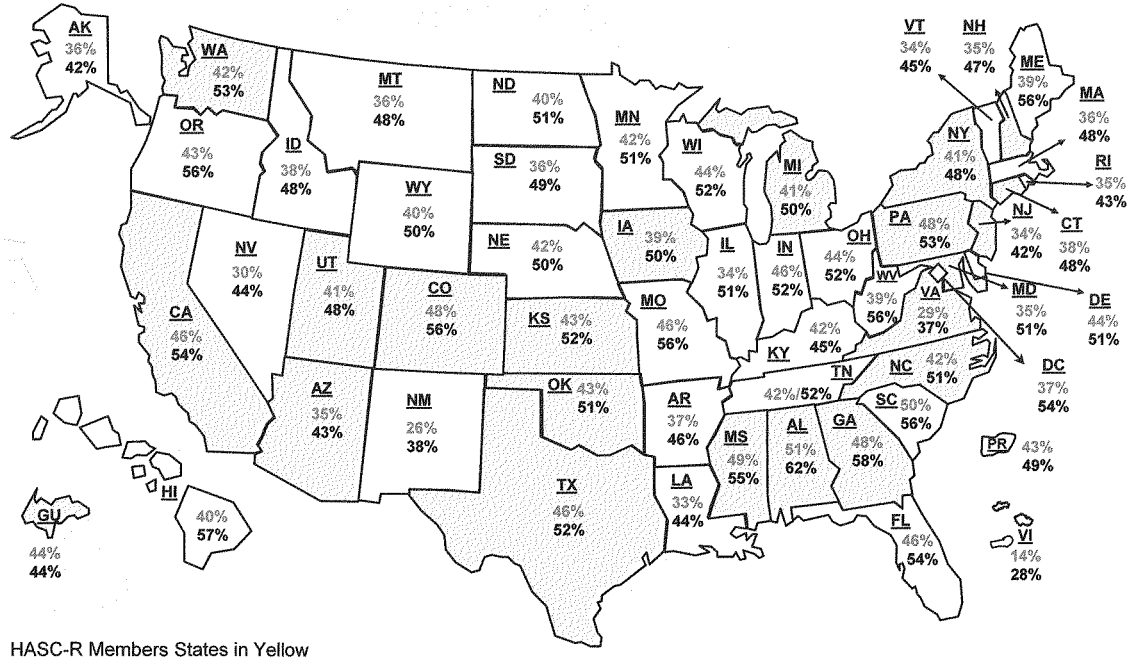
Facts & Assumptions

- "Like AC" MTOE & TDA
- Accounts for Modernization
- Based on AERC 6.1
- Subs are 90% Armor and Avn
- Not all $ fill holes
- Some $ modernize existing
- Based on FY08 Dollars
- Does not account for Wear Out, Battle Losses, or Inflation
- Does not include Grow the Army

Equipment in States Possession

All LINs not currently deployed or SBE against FY06 MTOEs w/ subs: AVG = 40%

All LINs if all units were returned home against current requirements w/subs: AVG = 52%



HASC-R Members States in Yellow

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

MARCH 27, 2007

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. ORTIZ

Mr. ORTIZ. There was nobody to guide the families who were behind to tell them what kind of services were available and where they could go to seek assistance.

Maybe we need to look at that and see what we can do because now more than ever we are seeing more activation of reserve units and national guard units than before. And I don't know generally if you all were aware of this, about the 15 percent all along the border of the families, immediate families, wife and children, who are on the Mexican side cannot come across to receive any type of medical services.

General BLUM. When national guard soldiers are alerted for deployment, they are briefed at that time on the wide array of family support resources which will become available to them.

For every Texas Army National Guard unit that is deployed there is a rear detachment led by the Rear Detachment Officer in Charge or Non-commissioned Officer in Charge. These individuals have contact with the families and the unit's Family Readiness Group leaders.

Each deployed unit has established a Family Readiness Group (FRG) that is led by volunteers (usually spouses of the deployed soldiers). These FRGs make routine contact with all the family members of the deployed unit and host many activities in order to promote cooperation and cohesion amongst the families.

The Texas National Guard State Family Program has established 18 Family Assistance Centers (FAC) throughout the State of Texas to directly assist families and provide referrals to any agency or organizations that can provide needed assistance to the families. They also routinely contact the families of deployed Soldiers and Airmen.

At this time, no deployed Texas National Guard soldier has identified benefits-eligible dependents living in Mexico. The Texas National Guard has researched the matter, however, and determined that there are soldiers who, if deployed, may have eligible family members in Mexico. The Texas National Guard is reviewing its system for collecting this information from soldiers during the pre-deployment phase to insure that contact information is provided on record for such dependents.

Families of national guard soldiers and airmen who are deployed have full benefits under TRICARE provided the family members have been properly enrolled for coverage. The National Guard Bureau is not the controlling authority for the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) but it is our understanding that even if a spouse resides in Mexico, he or she may be enrolled by their national guard member upon presentation of validated documents such as a marriage license. Once enrolled, family members are authorized to obtain healthcare either in the United States or inside Mexico via TRICARE Overseas.

○