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UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

**UNITED STATES SENATE
PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES**

ON OVERVIEW OF PERSONNEL PROGRAMS IN THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, as always we are extremely grateful for this opportunity to talk about the National Guard and what it needs to stay strong for America.

Title 10 of the United States Code invests the Chief of the National Guard Bureau with many responsibilities for administering, training, organizing and equipping the National Guard nationwide. I appear here today in my capacity as the Acting Chief of the National Guard Bureau. I am joined by the directors of Army National Guard, LTG Roger Schultz and the Director of the Air National Guard, Lt Gen Danny James. Both of them are charged with the statutory duty to assist the Chief of the National Guard Bureau in carrying out the functions of the National Guard Bureau. They will talk in detail about Army and Air National Guard matters respectively. Before they do that, however, I would like to mention a few joint, over-arching concerns that apply to both the Army and the Air National Guard.

The issues we address today and many others are covered in the 2004 National Guard Posture Statement. This document is in the final stages of completion and will be available to you and your staff members shortly.

JOINT NATIONAL GUARD ISSUES

Perhaps more than at any time in modern American history, both the Army and the Air National Guard has responded to the call of America. Even prior to September 11, 2001, the National Guard was performing an unprecedented amount of duty in support

of military operations worldwide. Since that time, National Guardsmen have come forward in huge numbers to fight the war on terrorism both overseas and here at home.

The National Guard as a State/Federal Asset B The three duty statuses

The National Guard can be employed in three separate duty statuses and members of the National Guard have been employed heavily in every one of them. First is state active duty. State governors call their National Guard members to full-time State Active Duty to provide disaster relief or help law enforcement preserve civil order. Since 9/11 states have also put Guardsmen on duty under state-funded orders to fight terrorism. They have performed myriad homeland security tasks at the state level including guarding ports, bridges, power plants and other key facilities.

Second, National Guardsmen can be employed under 32 USC 502(f) for duties funded by the federal government but executed under state command and control. Nearly all National Guard training is done in this status. Civil Support Teams and the National Guard Counter Drug program not only train but also conduct operational missions under this status.

Civil Support Teams use military assets to help state and local authorities identify and deal with chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high explosive hazards. They are jointly manned by both Army and Air National Guardsmen. Over the past year the value of these teams B and the wisdom of Congressional support for them B has been demonstrated over and over again. Of the 32 Civil Support Teams that have

been established, the Secretary of Defense has operationally certified 31 of them. We expect the remaining team to be certified within days.

National Guard Counter Drug activities use military assets to help law enforcement fight the war on drugs. In many cases, drug money funds terrorism. In addition to fighting terrorism indirectly, some of our National Guard counter-drug assets have also proven helpful in fighting the war on terrorism. Because the military assets are employed by state governments, the restrictions of Posse Comitatus do not apply. The unique structure of the program allows National Guardsmen to provide this support to law enforcement without diminishing the readiness of National Guard units to perform their federal mission. Recently we have taken steps to ensure that support provided by National Guardsmen for this mission is reflective of military tasks so that doing these missions actually strengthens wartime readiness. This program is a valuable tool for merging military capabilities with law enforcement. It has successfully helped fight drugs. A similar program based on this model might be valuable in fighting terrorism.

Since 9/11 the National Guard has also successfully performed even more homeland security operations under the Title 32 duty status as well. When the President asked state governors to employ the National Guard to secure America's airports, this was done using Title 32 duty. This was highly successful. In addition, Title 32 duty is being used to employ National Guardsmen for added force protection at National Guard facilities nationwide. For homeland security matters in which states and the federal government have a shared interest, the use of the National Guard under Title 32 duty has proven to be a highly valuable tool for putting boots on the job.

The third duty status for National Guardsmen, of course, is federal active duty under Title 10 to provide units to the active Army and Air Force for war or other national security requirements. This is what we train, organize and equip for. National Guard contributions to the Army and the Air Force over the past year will be covered in their respective sections below but in both cases, it has been historic.

Mobilization Effects on both Army and Air National Guard

While it is true that both Army and Air National Guardsmen are being called away from careers and families for extended periods, the members of the National Guard are proud to serve. Given the large numbers of Guardsmen called to duty, there have been relatively few complaints. They train for the mission. They are ready, willing and able to perform the mission when the time comes.

Even so, there are some issues. One of the negative impacts of the increased level of mobilizations has been the disparity in benefits. Members of the National Guard mobilized under Title 10 are protected under the Soldiers & Sailors Civil Relief Act. Those serving under Title 32 are not protected.

The increased use of the National Guard has intensified our need for more full-time manning. We are a force largely of traditional part-time citizen-soldiers and airmen. The few full-time people we do have are crucial to performing the administration and training preparation necessary to make productive use of the limited training time available to the traditional drilling members.

~~We need more full-time support.~~ As we will discuss later, we have designed a plan to build up full-time support.

— We are working successfully with both Services to establish a truly joint state headquarters. This is will enhance jointness in the National Guard right down to the state level. More importantly it has the potential to greatly strengthen mobilization as well as operational capabilities here in the United States.

Homeland Security

The National Guard is poised to play important roles in homeland defense including missile defense, air sovereignty and information operations among others. In addition to these military missions here inside the United States, the National Guard Bureau will also facilitate military support to civil authorities by the Army and Air National Guard. Military support to civil authorities includes domestic disaster relief operations that occur during fires, hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. Our support also includes counter-drug operations and incident management assistance, such as would occur after a terrorist event employing a weapon of mass destruction.

Under Title 10, the National Guard Bureau is the official channel of communications between the states and the Departments of the Army and the Air Force. Recently we have coordinated with the Combatant Commander of U.S. Northern Command to perform that same role for NORTHCOM. As part of this, the National Guard Bureau provides situational awareness on state-commanded National Guard operations to the

Commander of U.S. Northern Command to augment his ability to effectively plan for and manage the overall role of his command.

The National Guard Bureau's capability as a two-way channel of communication to the National Guard of the several states is a valuable tool in the Homeland Defense and Homeland Security environment. We are pursuing some discussions and initiatives inside the Department of Defense to better exploit that capability for all segments of the Department of Defense.

The fight against terrorism and the protection of our homeland is expected to be a protracted endeavor much like the Cold War. To that end, many policy experts, reports, and studies have advocated an expanded role for the National Guard in Homeland Security. While some have suggested that the National Guard should be reoriented, reequipped, and retrained for the Homeland Security mission, the reality is that the National Guard is an integral part of the Army and Air Force Total Force mission capability and that role is vital to the survival of the nation. In the past the resources, personnel, equipment and training provided for the wartime mission were sufficient to allow the National Guard to also fulfill its local and state support role by responding to local disasters and military support to civilian authorities. Times have changed, however. The threat posed by well-financed, sophisticated and determined international terrorist groups has raised the bar as to what the National Guard must be able to do. While the National Guard will continue to maintain a high state of readiness for overseas operations, it must also better prepare itself to respond to the Homeland Security mission within the United States. Both at the National Guard Bureau and in the

states, the National Guard is working hard to find ways to meet the increased demands of the Homeland Security mission while still maintaining its ability to execute its Total Force requirements.

The National Guard Bureau will work with the States as they identify what additional homeland security capabilities they need. We plan to consolidate and validate the stated requirements and help find solutions.

The road ahead also includes a transformation of National Guard Counter Drug efforts into an integrated Counter Narcotics/Homeland Defense Counter Terrorism program. These mission areas employ many of the same tactics, techniques and procedures, as well as equipment, training and skills. Therefore, a great deal of cross-skill transfer will begin immediately once the change is effected, and a quick, effective, seamless transition between and across mission sets will allow Guard troops to readily take their places on the front lines of the war against terrorism at home and abroad.

Conclusion

The men and women of the Army and Air National Guard are extremely busy. Thousands are away from their families and their careers, serving in uniform for their state or the Nation in the global war on terrorism. They are making significant sacrifices. Even so, they are enthusiastic about serving and do so with fierce pride and determined competence. They prove everyday that when America needs the National Guard, the National Guard is there. We have a non-negotiable contract with the

American people to win our nation's wars and are entrusted with their most precious assets, America's sons and daughters. These sons and daughters are proud and patriotic members of the Army National Guard family.

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

The Army National Guard plays a crucial role in providing security to the nation, the nation's citizens, and the interests of the country overseas. We fulfill our role in the National Military Strategy by supporting combatant commanders and conducting exercises around the world. Within our borders, Guard soldiers continue to provide assistance to victims of disaster and protection from our enemies. Our soldiers always stand ready to support the United States and its citizens whenever and wherever they are needed.

Operations NOBLE EAGLE and ENDURING FREEDOM

From September 2001 to September 2002, the Army National Guard alerted and mobilized more than 32,000 soldiers throughout the country and around the world, fighting the Global War on Terrorism and defending freedom with our engagement in numerous operations. Operation NOBLE EAGLE has mobilized in excess of 16,000 soldiers from 36 States and Territories to provide force protection at various Department of Defense facilities and at our nation's borders. Operation ENDURING

FREEDOM has mobilized about 16,100 soldiers from 29 States and Territories to support the Global War on Terrorism in Southwest Asia through the US Central Command area of operations. Army National Guard soldiers are also involved in other peacekeeping operations throughout the world.

Army National Guard Anti-Terrorism Force Protection

In Fiscal Year 2002, the Army National Guard provided soldiers for deployments in the continental United States and overseas. Almost 20,000 soldiers worked 1,490,000 mandays conducting force protection missions and executing border security missions at 83 sites owned by the Army Material Command, the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, the U.S. Army Forces Command, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the U.S. Customs Service. The National Guard supported Homeland Defense missions by guarding airports, nuclear power plants, domestic water supplies, bridges, and tunnels in support of the State Governors.

The Army National Guard's Anti-Terrorism Force Protection and physical security programs provide for security and protection of facilities, personnel, and equipment, as well as the monitoring and maintenance of intrusion detection systems that detect and assess threats at 397 critical sites. Intrusion systems, closed circuit television, and access control systems decrease the number of personnel needed to guard facilities as well as prevent personnel from exposure to potentially harmful situations. Increasing security systems saves on personnel costs, requiring fewer soldiers to guard

Department of Defense facilities, equipment, and property and are channeled instead into mission deployment or crisis management.

Contingency Operations

The Army National Guard has assumed the lead as the stabilizing force in the Balkans and in Southwest Asia. Six Army National Guard brigades and numerous battalions participated in rotations as part of the Multinational Force Observers in the Sinai, and in Southwest Asia, providing support to the Air Defense Artillery units in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. The Army National Guard is scheduled to provide Division Headquarters and maneuver units to four of the next six rotations to Bosnia.

Military Support to Civilian Authorities

Since September 11, 2001, Army National Guard soldiers have responded to 263 requests for emergency support for a total of 645,419 mandays. These soldiers provided security, logistics support, transportation, and family care centers. They worked in support of World Trade Center relief, the Winter Olympics, and security at American icons such as Mount Rushmore, the Boston Marathon, and the Superbowl in Louisiana. Major wildfires involving 21 States and consuming over 6.6 million acres required 47,519 mandays of support. The Army National Guard provided aviation support with water-bucket drops, security, and command and control as needed. The

Guard-s soldiers supported flood recovery operations in Kentucky, West Virginia, Tennessee, and Texas for a total of 23,882 mandays.

Extensions of Mobilizations Beyond One Year and Repeat Mobilizations

More than 6,100 ARNG soldiers currently are affected by either repeat mobilization or extension of their mobilization for a second year. A total of 41 units have been or currently will be mobilized for a second time since January 2001. These repeat mobilizations affect units either in whole or significant part. These repeat mobilizations include units mobilized under Presidential Reserve Callups for Bosnia, Kosovo and Southwest Asia, as well as under Partial Mobilization for MFO-Sinai and Operations Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle. The most affected unit type is Military Police. Of the total 41 units and 5,600 soldiers concerned, more than halfC23 units and 3,090 soldiersCare Military Police. Other affected unit types include Aviation (Air Ambulance), Army Oil Analysis Program lab, Engineer, Military Intelligence and Air Defense.

The number of soldiers currently in their second year of continuous mobilized service is 531. A total of 354 have been extended for Operation Enduring Freedom; 177 have been extended for Operation Noble Eagle. Extensions primarily are due to High Demand/Low Density nature of affected units, or due to the specialized nature of the skills required. Units and skills affected include Military Police, Special Operations Forces, Military Intelligence, Military History Detachments, Chaplains and Information

Operations.

Recruiting and Retention

The United States cannot undertake any worldwide military contingency or operational effort without the National Guard. The events of September 11, 2001 have placed increased demands on the Army National Guard. Manning and maintaining a viable force is our number one priority. There are new challenges today -- the unknown impact of war, the lowered propensity for enlistment, retention challenges for soldiers returning from mobilization, and the continued competition with civilian sector all impact our ability to recruit and retain. But there are always challenges. Over the course of the last eight years, the Army National Guard has maintained a quality force, meeting our Congressionally mandated end strength objectives. We will continue to be successful in FY03 and in the future.

Last year, FY02, we achieved an end strength of 351,078, representing 36,441 officers and 314,629 enlisted soldiers. The Army National Guard met our accession goal, recruiting 32,811 non-prior service and 30,448 prior service soldiers. We exceeded both our first-term and career retention goals.

In FY03, we must enlist 62,000 soldiers, 32,865 non-prior service enlistments and 29,935 prior service soldier contracts. To date, we are experiencing a slight decrease in both non-prior service and prior service accessions. These challenges are not insurmountable. We are making adjustments to our national and by-state strength plans to meet our objectives. We are not seeing an increase to our attrition and

retention numbers, based on increased demands. We are, however, working plans to address the possibility of higher attrition rates upon demobilization of our soldiers.

There is no current indication that this will be problematic.

How we treat our mobilized soldiers, and more specifically, their families, will determine if our soldiers stay or leave the service after deployment. Family readiness, family assistance centers, and overall family care is critical to our long-term success. Many of the Guard families are not located in close proximity to military facilities. We are aggressively establishing and manning family assistance centers across America to ensure our family needs are met. Our outreach programs are not optional, we have an obligation to provide assistance to our Guard dependents. Our goal is to have 100 percent contact with every family member through active outreach. Continued support of these programs is critical.

Our inducement programs -- bonuses, incentives and education programs have been successful in attracting quality enlistments to critical positions, and retaining trained, qualified, and ready soldiers. As in the past, the Guard places great emphasis on our educational benefits which include federal tuition assistance, Montgomery GI Bill, tuition assistance within the states, and specialized education programs to assist our soldiers in degree planning and lifelong learning. Education increases the wellbeing of the soldier, their families, and their potential in society. Soldiers that participate in education programs are much less likely to leave our ranks.

Today, we offer a non-prior service and prior service bonus for critical skills. We also offer a retention bonus for qualified soldiers. These programs have allowed us to

meet our strength objectives while tailoring the force to meet specific manpower requirements. We see continued funding of these incentives as critical to our success today and in the future.

The Army National Guard is active in the Army's Well-Being initiative. As Lieutenant General Le Moyne, the Army G-1, testified before this committee last week, "we recruit soldiers, but retain families". The well-being of our soldiers, retirees, veterans, civilian work force and their families is important to our ability to meet the nation's call to arms. No where else is this more important than with our citizen-soldiers. We will continue to work hand-in-hand on this important initiative.

Accelerated Officer Candidate School Program

The Army National Guard initiated a very successful accelerated Officer Candidate School Program in 1996. This accelerated program cuts 11 months off the traditional course duration (eight weeks of full-time versus 13 months of part-time training). This is particularly beneficial to States experiencing large company-grade officer vacancies. Class sizes were increased to 200 students in 2001 and to 400 students in Fiscal Year 2002 to meet the forecasted training requirements submitted by the States. Moreover, an additional class was conducted beginning in January 2003 to support the current war effort. The Army National Guard will continue to grow the program to address the shortage of company-grade officers.

Initial Entry Training Management

The Chief of Staff of the Army has provided guidance to the Reserve Component to have at least 85% of assigned soldiers qualified in their duty specialties by Fiscal Year 2005. The Army National Guard fully intends to meet or exceed this goal, funding this program at 95% of validated requirements for FY04. In the past, the Army National Guard has had difficulty getting the proper Initial Entry Training quotas to meet the demands of the force. As a result, the Army National Guard has been lacking in qualified personnel in certain occupational specialties. These shortages affect its ability to mobilize and/or deploy.

In order to meet the quota goal, the Army National Guard has taken input from the Adjutants General and has developed a new Initial Entry Training management system. This system has refined the Army National Guard's ability to accurately forecast Initial Entry Training requirements. These forecasts will more closely match those necessary to meet Army National Guard readiness goals than previous methods.

The Army School System and Qualifying Army National Guard Soldiers

The Army School System is a multi-component organization of the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, the Army National Guard, and the U.S. Army Reserve that has been organized to deliver Military Occupation Skills Qualification Reclassification, Noncommissioned Officer Education System, Officer Education System, and functional military courses. This system provides the National Guard with

the means to train and retain quality soldiers and leaders who are so essential to rapidly and effectively responding to the federal mission or to missions of Homeland Defense.

The Army National Guard has developed an In-Unit Training program that has enhanced the ability to produce a larger number of soldiers who have achieved Duty Military Occupational Skill Qualification. The Army National Guard has also provided Mobile Training Teams overseas to sustain the training of its soldiers who are deployed around the world. The Army Guard and Reserve instructional, training development, and budget management staffs are combining efforts to build a future United States Army Training and Doctrine Command that can deliver seamless training to standards as part of the institutional training within the Army.

The Army National Guard supports the initiative by the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel to hold selective retention boards that will allow selected captains and majors to be retained so that they may reach 20 years of active service. The Army National Guard also supports the Deputy Chief's initiative to select captains for promotion who do not possess a baccalaureate degree or military education certification. The actual promotion to the next higher grade will become effective once the individual completes the required civilian or military education.

Army National Guard Medical and Dental Readiness

Individual medical readiness of Army Guard soldiers has become a heightened

priority since September 11, 2001. Individual medical readiness requirements include immunizations, dental, and medical screenings. The speed at which units deploy today places significant time constraints on the Guard to properly identify or correct medical or dental deficiencies at mobilization stations.

In October 2001, the Army National Guard initiated the Medical Protection System, an automated tracking system for medical and dental records. This system also tracks Physical Exam readiness data, as well as HIV and DNA readiness data on file at the Army and Department of Defense repositories; it is used at mobilization stations to verify Individual Medical readiness in the Mobilization Level Application Software. When fully implemented, the system will allow commanders and human resource managers to monitor individual medical readiness of their soldiers. Resources can then be directed where needed, and early decisions can be made regarding the readiness of individuals and units to be deployed.

It is important to understand that with very few exceptions, Army National Guard soldiers are not entitled to medical or dental care for pre-existing disorders, only for injury or illness incurred in the line of duty. Dental readiness is particularly problematic.

Both Congress and Department of Defense have attempted to positively influence dental readiness, but the remedy is not yet available. Units are still arriving at mobilization stations with soldiers in need of dental care to bring them to deployment standards.

If the nation continues to utilize the Army National Guard and Army Reserve in support of the Global War on Terrorism, it must ensure that these Reserve

Components maintain the same high level of medical readiness as the active component.

Full-Time Support

Recent events, including fighting the Global War on Terrorism, underscore the vital role Full-Time Support personnel have in preparing Army National Guard units for a multitude of missions both in the homeland and abroad. Full-Time Support is a critical component for achieving unit-level readiness during this period in the nation's history. To meet readiness requirements, the Chief, National Guard Bureau, in concert with the State Adjutants General, has placed increasing Full-Time Support authorizations as the number-one priority for the Army National Guard. Those full-time Guard members are responsible for organizing, administering, instructing, training, and recruiting new personnel, as well as the maintenance of supplies, equipment, and aircraft. Full-Time Support personnel are critical links to the integration of the Army's components and remains the Army National Guard's number one priority.

Three years ago the Army conducted an extensive review of its Reserve Component FTS requirements. As part of this process, the Army developed a FTS "high risk" requirement, defined as "the level of FTS below which units cannot maintain minimum standards for readiness". The ASA (M&RA) and Army G3 approved an incremental ramp in FY00 to achieve the high risk level of support NLT FY12. Funding for incremental growth along the ramp was programmed in POM FY04-09. The ramp increase funds an additional 724 Active Guard and Reserve (AGR) and 487 Non-dual

Status Military Technicians each year until the high-risk level is achieved.

Requirements for ARNG FTS requirements have increased commensurate with the Global War on Terrorism and Homeland Security. Consequently, the ASA(M&RA) and the Army G-3 and have approved a 798 AGR requirement increase to support high priority emerging missions/initiatives. These requirements have been leveraged across the ARNG AGR FTS ramp, with the ramp now reflecting spikes in given years corresponding to respective implementation timelines. These increases are in addition to annual increases programmed in POM 04-09 for the high risk ramp. Categories with FTS increases include Ground-Based Midcourse Defense, NGB Homeland Security and Liaison Offices, Weapons of Mass Destruction B Civil Support Teams, and Transformation Installation Management.

Mobilizing Active Guard and Reserve Soldiers Under Title 32

The Active Guard and Reserve program is designed to ensure that the training and readiness of Army National Guard soldiers are maintained at a high level. These codes have very specific limits on how the Army or the States and Territories can utilize their Active Guard and Reserve force in times of need.

The events of September 11, 2001, brought these limitations to the forefront. Under Title 32, Active Guard and Reserve soldiers are not authorized to support State missions after 72 hours unless specific criteria are met, such as the imminent loss of

life. The inability of State Governors and Adjutants General to utilize all of their full-time soldiers caused some significant organizational and leadership problems within affected formations.

Active Guard and Reserve members are critical assets to the force, enabling units to rapidly respond to State emergencies and Homeland Defense efforts.

Ground-Based Midcourse Defense Program

The National Guard is playing a significant role in the defense against ballistic missile threat by organizing, manning and deploying Ground-Based Midcourse Defense Units. The Army National Guard received approval to activate a Missile Defense Brigade, based on the results of the Total Army Analysis 2009. The Brigade Headquarters will be located in Colorado and the first Battalion will be located in Alaska. These organizations will serve as the cornerstone for the Ground-Based Midcourse Defense program.

The Missile Defense Agency, Ground-Based Midcourse Defense-Joint Program Office has agreed to provide pay and allowance for initial personnel required for this program in preparation for Initial Defensive Operations beginning in Fiscal Year 2004.

As critical as this mission component is to the national defense, it requires adequate full-time manning to achieve full operational capability. By offering the needed manpower to the Army Space Command and the Space and Missile Defense Command, the Army Guard will provide this primary land-based homeland defense

system.

Guard Knowledge Management

The Guard Knowledge Management initiative and the Distributive Training Technology Project support the Army National Guard's ability to maintain and improve individual and unit readiness, the ability to mobilize, and quick, efficient deployment.

Through the effective integration of information technology programs and implementation of Knowledge Management initiatives, the Army Guard is enhancing its capability to identify, distribute, and access critical information that directly impacts the Army Guard's ability to meet readiness goals and mission objectives.

For example, the Army National Guard saves money and resources and heightens readiness by providing increased foreign language sustainment and enhancement training using distance-learning technologies. Courseware is being developed at several sites throughout the United States, including Iowa, Pennsylvania, Arizona, Arkansas, and New Jersey. In addition, the Vermont Army National Guard has been conducting Information Operations training since February 1999 for all components of the Army. The Army National Guard made full use of its Knowledge Management capabilities to conduct extensive pre-deployment training for the 29th Infantry Division (Light) Headquarters for their peacekeeping rotation in Bosnia.

The Army Guard has also partnered with the National Air and Space Administration to deliver a wide array of educational content to young people to stimulate interest in

science, math, and technology. The Army National Guard is building on these and other success stories to help increase readiness through a vigorous implementation of Knowledge Management principles.

Army National Guard Restructuring Initiative

On September 8, 2002, the Secretary of the Army, Honorable Thomas E. White introduced the Army National Guard Restructuring Initiative at the 2002 National Guard Association of the United States annual conference. Mr. White stated that in light of our new plan for national defense [we] are now undertaking a new initiative which we will call the Army National Guard Restructuring Initiative. Whereas the original initiative Army Division Redesign Study converts combat formations to support structure, the new initiative restructures a sizeable portion of the National Guard combat formations to better support our combatant commanders' requirements.

The concept is to convert existing heavy and light combat structure to new designs that better support Combatant Commanders (including the new Northern Command) under the new defense strategy. Tentatively called Multi-Functional Divisions and Mobile Light Brigades, these new organizations will be first and foremost war-fighting organizations prepared for full spectrum operations. The first unit could begin conversion as early as Fiscal Year 2005.

The conversion to these new organizations, combined with efforts already under way as part of the Army National Guard Division Redesign Study effort, will result in a

30% decrease in the current number of tracked vehicles in Army Guard Combat Divisions and Brigades. Although this constitutes a reduction of heavy assets, the National Guard is determined to ensure that the Army Guard does not maintain obsolete systems that are inconsistent with future Army operational concepts including unit design, support and sustainment.

Army National Guard Aviation Transformation and Modernization

Army National Guard aviation is one of the nation's highest value assets for both wartime and peacetime missions. In wartime, these Army National Guard aviation units provide the sustaining and reinforcing power required for successful execution of the National Military Strategy, as well as the most readily available Army aviation assets for Homeland Defense. In peacetime, these critical aviation assets are equally important for the widest possible range of missions at both the State and Regional levels. These peacetime missions range from Air Ambulance, Search and Rescue, and Counterdrug support in areas having no such civilian capacity, to wide-scale and timely response to both natural and man-made disasters.

The Army National Guard's aviation units continue to contribute almost half of the Army's aviation structure, including Counterdrug Reconnaissance and Aerial Interdiction Detachments in 37 States and Territories, which use specially modified OH-58 observation aircraft to support federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies with counterdrug efforts in the US. These units are also postured to support Homeland

Defense efforts. Six of these units were deployed along the Northern Border supporting the US Border Patrol and Operation NOBLE EAGLE during Fiscal Year 2002.

Since Fiscal Year 2002, the Army's Aviation Transformation effort, coupled with other aviation modernization and recapitalization improvements, has not only significantly improved the readiness and capabilities of Guard aviation units, but also has reduced the overall aviation footprint.

~~—While significant quantities of modern series UH-60, CH-47, and AH-64 aircraft have been cascaded from active Army units to Army Guard units, the associated equipment (tool set, tool kits, test equipment, and parts) critical for the successful support of these aircraft has not kept pace. Current Army procurement levels will leave the Army Guard permanently short of its required number of aircraft. In addition, many of the remaining allocated aircraft are not scheduled for upgrade to the most current standard configurations.~~

Army National Guard Permanent Electronic Records Management System

The Army National Guard's Permanent Electronic Records Management System is a web-based system utilizing digital imagery to store and retrieve personnel records.

The importance of the Permanent Electronic Records Management System lies in its seamless records management capability throughout the Army, enhancing both mobilization and personnel readiness.

By consolidating the administrative operations of human resources in one place, the

Permanent Electronic Records Management System allows personnel records to follow a soldier regardless of component. In the past, the system was slow and labor-intensive, resulting in pay problems, promotion delays, difficulties in making new assignments, and low personnel morale. Fixing the problem involves the conversion of paper files to electronic files; and is a practice currently used by the Department of the Army for all of its personnel actions. At present the Army National Guard is the only military component that lacks electronic records storage capability.

Under the Department of Defense's vision for a paperless environment, the Army National Guard will be required to provide electronic capabilities for personnel records in the 50 States, three Territories, and the District of Columbia.

The Army National Guard will adopt an Automated Selection Board System to support and improve the process under which information and votes regarding personnel actions are processed by military personnel boards.

Departing from an obsolete paper system to a digital system that views data and images from the Permanent Electronic Records Management System and the Department of the Army Photo Management Information System. However, once the Automated Selection Board System is adopted, it will save the Army National Guard more than \$150,000 per year in microfiche production and postage costs.

This system is essential to achieve and fully support Personnel Transformation. The Army National Guard must remain interoperable with the Army and the Army Reserve by adopting this system. The conduct of boards at the State level will become extremely cumbersome due to unavailability of routine printed information. By failing to

adopt the Automated Selection Board System, the Army National Guard will be required to download paper copies of an automated viewing and storing system.

Conclusion

The Army National Guard comprises diverse individuals from all walks of life united by the desire to keep the American people safe and secure. Many soldiers in the Guard leave behind promising career tracks and loving families to serve their country without compromise or hesitation. These soldiers lead dual lives; their sacrifices are overwhelming and should not be forgotten nor discounted.

While it has succeeded on many fronts, certain challenges still face the Army National Guard. The issues of recruitment, retention, and subsequent development of junior officers continue to be areas of discussion. Dental and medical care remains lacking for many soldiers in the Guard.

Army National Guard soldiers have accomplished much work in the past fiscal year, providing relief to victims of catastrophes, security at numerous vulnerable locations, and mobilization to various military operations world-wide. The Army National Guard, the crucial foundation of the Army, reinforces and augments the efforts of fellow soldiers to ensure that objectives are achieved and initiatives are met.

AIR NATIONAL GUARD

We are pleased to report that your Air National Guard is truly more relevant and more involved in global operations and defense of this nation than anytime since the Korean War. The fruits of many years of training, preparation, and commitment to combat readiness B made possible in no small part by this committee's support - have come to fruition in a scope of participation even the most ardent of Total Force advocates may not have envisioned.

Today, nearly 50% of the Air National Guard, including 16,000 plus mobilized members or volunteers are serving around the world. Our new motto AReady, Reliable, and Relevant@is perhaps an understatement of the great things our women and men are doing in service of our nation. We have quite a story to tell, and are proud to be the conduit of our story on behalf of over 110,000 patriots that comprise your Air National Guard today.

The close relationships we have maintained with our communities throughout our history make it possible for us to answer our nation's call during this Global War on Terrorism. Our communities= support, and the unselfish support of our employers, has truly been awe-inspiring. To provide a historical perspective, our mobilized numbers over the last year and a half, totaling over 30,000 people, exceed our involvement in all other conflicts in the last 25 years combined. Only the Korean War has involved more Air National Guard members in a mobilized status. We are proud to serve and solicit your continued support as we perform our dual mission as citizen airmen protecting our country here at home and around the globe, filling Aerospace Expeditionary contingency and steady state requirements. Our members' service is not without

sacrifice and their sacrifice is not without meaning.

The role of the Air National Guard has evolved dramatically since the end of the Cold War to our current War on Terrorism. The Department of Defense Total Force policy requires a greater integration of the active and reserve forces. Our members continue to be called upon at an unprecedented frequency and durations.

For Fiscal Year 2002, the Air National Guard's Programmed End Strength was 108,400. For the first time in over ten years, our assigned strength exceeded the Programmed End Strength throughout the entire fiscal year. In fact, the Air Guard's average assigned strength throughout FY02 was 102.5% and we ended this fiscal year at 103.4% of our programmed strength.

This situation was primarily a result of two factors; first, the implementation of Stop Loss during FY 02 that served to reduce separations, and second, the outstanding work of our recruiting force which exceeded their recruiting goal during a very difficult year.

With regard to Air National Guard Retention, our rate since FY97 has averaged approximately 89.5%. At the conclusion of FY02, the Air Guard's Retention Rate stood at 92.7%. Personnel shortages remain in some critical specialties, primarily our aircraft maintenance career fields. We have placed emphasis on these and other career fields by offering enlistment and reenlistment bonuses, and other incentives such as the Student Loan Repayment and Montgomery GI Bill Kicker Programs. As a result, in many of our critical maintenance specialties, we have seen real strength growth from two to six percent over the last two fiscal years. These incentives have contributed

greatly toward enticing and retaining the right skill for the right job. Your continued support for the Student Loan Repayment and Montgomery GI Bill Kicker Programs is critical to our success in attracting and retaining people in critical skills.

We would like to thank the Congress for recently passing two pieces of legislation that will significantly aid the Air National Guard's future recruiting and retention efforts. Specifically, allowing us to increase the Prior Service accessions bonus from \$5,000.00 to \$8,000.00. Our recruiting depends heavily on our ability to attract former service members into the Air Guard, and our combat readiness is greatly enhanced through the use of their prior training and acquired skills. Secondly, your initiative to increase the eligibility period for the Montgomery G.I. Bill from 10 to 14 years should be of tremendous assistance in further improving the retention of our airmen. Both of these programs will pay the Air National Guard substantial dividends for many years to come.

~~However, for the Air National Guard to adequately compete for today's youths and reach prior service members, it is paramount that adequate resources be devoted to marketing our message. At our present funding level, we are unable to establish or launch any paid broadcast advertising for the Air Guard. As a result, we have not optimized the opportunity to connect with the American public or to enhance the image of the Air National Guard. In today's mass media advertising environment, to effectively compete we need to use this medium. The next five years for the Air National Guard's Recruiting and Retention Programs will be crucial. Approximately 47% of our Air Guard members currently have 16 or more years of service. Without additional resources for our advertising and awareness programs, our ability to~~

~~motivate and attract young Americans into the Air National Guard will be severely curtailed.~~

~~—We must also strive to retain the backbone of the Air Guard B our mid-term airmen. Our lowest retention rate among the three enlisted career status categories (first term airmen, mid-career airmen, and career airmen) is an airman with between 6 and 12 years of service. Currently, a reenlistment bonus for critical specialties is capped at \$5,000.00. We believe a more appropriate limit would be \$10,000.00. — Raising this limit would allow us to pay those personnel who have shown a commitment to serve a bonus equal to or greater than the amount of that allowed for prior service members initially entering the Air Guard. Consideration to enhancing the Reenlistment Bonus is also vital from the standpoint of the Air National Guard's recent change in the accession force mix. In FY97, the Air National Guard recruited 64% Prior Service personnel. In the last five years ending in FY02, that figure had dropped to 49%. As a result, recruiting more Non-Prior Service personnel became the norm in order to meet our Programmed End Strength, and impacted our ability to obtain sufficient training slots. Further, with recent declines in our School Workday Program, every airman we retain reduces costs and relieves the pressure on an already strained training environment. This enhancement is essential if we are to retain our highly trained, experienced, and skilled mid-term airmen and to sustain our readiness posture for rapid mobilization and deployment. By keeping our experienced personnel, we reduce recruiting and training requirements and continue to build and maintain our technical expertise.~~

—Despite the current operations tempo, I am confident our retention rates will remain high. We have just completed an Air National Guard-wide survey, and the results indicate that at least 82% of our people are committed to stay, 7% said they will leave and the remaining 11% are unsure. The survey also revealed that quality of life issues B pay, support for the families, and support for and from the employers B are important factors regarding retention, not tempo. This is a good news story because it has the potential to positively impact those members committed to stay and influence those separating or who are unsure, with the proper support. The survey also highlights that the most critical element of retention B quality of life B with the support of this committee, is within our control.

We thank Congress for the many TRICARE initiatives outlined in the FY03 NDAA that were designed to improve the quality of service to our beneficiaries. The FY03 NDAA extended TRICARE eligibility to reserve dependents residing in remote locations without their reserve sponsors. ~~However, TRICARE Prime for dependents of our Air National Guard members is only authorized when members are called to duty on orders over 180 days. Most of our volunteers are placed on orders of 179 or less due to Active Duty end strength accounting limitations. The resulting effect is that family members are only eligible for TRICARE Standard and Extra, incurring TRICARE cost shares and deductibles of 15 to 20 percent with a catastrophic cap for families at \$1,000. In many cases, private benefits have expired. Additionally, transitional benefits for de-mobilized reservists are only for 60 to 120 days, depending on the member's years of service. Extending TRICARE Prime to our families without regard to~~

~~the length of active duty, when it is in support of a declared contingency operation, will remedy this situation. Such a measure would provide meaningful healthcare to our families and remove yet another burden they face during the extended absence of the military member, and eliminate the disparity between Active and Reserve Component medical benefits.~~

~~—Disparity among Active Duty and Reserve Component members also continues in the payment of housing allowances. Reserve Component members serving on active duty tours for less than 140 days are given a reduced Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) based on the logic that their housing costs don't change and remain based on civilian needs. However, this creates a disparity between Active and Reserve Component members who live in the same area and experience the same housing costs for that area, yet receive different housing allowances simply based on the duration of the Reservists' orders.~~

~~—Additionally, Reserve Component members are not entitled to BAH while on temporary duty if assigned to government quarters, unlike their active duty counterparts. Even though they must maintain their civilian residence. And if a member without dependents is on active duty for greater than 139 days in support of a contingency and government housing is not available, they must obtain housing from the local economy at their own expense. In essence, they are maintaining two households on one housing allowance. In both instances, there exists a disparity between housing quality of life issues between Active and Reserve Component members.~~

~~—Another issue of concern is the fact that mobilized members on temporary duty~~

~~outside the normal commuting area must forfeit per diem (lodging) payment while in a leave status. Therefore, these members must either pay the lodging expense out of pocket or must vacate their living quarters while in a leave status. Provisions should be addressed to allow payment of lodging expenses during temporary duty assignments for members who are ordered to active duty in support of war or national emergency.~~

During the past year the Air National Guard continued to see an increase in Aviator Continuation Pay (ACP) take rates. Currently 508 out of 618 eligible (82%), Air National Guard Active Guard Reserve pilots have signed up for the bonus. Aviator Continuation Pay has accomplished its goal by retaining qualified instructor pilots to train and sustain our combat force B a critical force enabler in today's crisis environment.

The increased emphasis on the Total Force and expanding reliance on the Reserve Component necessitates equitable pays for equitable work. Consideration for payment of Special and Incentive Pays for Reserve Component personnel, at the same level as their active duty counterparts, should be given to those members who meet the same thresholds of proficiency.

Although the Air National Guard received the majority of all formal training allocations requested for Fiscal Years 04-06, including significant increases in Security Forces, Intelligence Applications, F-16 Crew Chief and Communications, current FY 03 execution year allocation shortfalls continue in 18 Air Force Specialty Codes. Even with the increased allocations in these and other Air Force Specialties commencing in the FY 04 execution year, it remains questionable if demand will continue to outpace

supply in these or other areas in the future.

We have taken major steps to help offset the training capacity shortfalls the Total Force is seeing during these transformation years. These include the standup of the following graduate level flying training units: KC-135E at McConnell AFB, KS, F-16 units at Kelly Field, TX and Springfield, OH, and the F-15C unit at Klamath Falls, OR. 107th The Air Control Squadron in Phoenix, Arizona has converted to a schoolhouse to train Air National Guard and Active Duty Air Weapons Controllers. However, the shortfall in the Search and Rescue aircrew training capacity is a major constraint today and in the foreseeable future. This shortfall will negatively impact the operational readiness and manning of our operational units. Search and rescue unit readiness should be a top priority for all our forces, especially today during our on-going fight against terrorism, when there could be a downed aircrew member at any moment. We need to have the resources, parts and manning available to alleviate these training shortfalls.

The Air National Guard continues to expand Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) as a prime training vehicle for our members. As a forerunner in this dynamic medium, the satellite-based Air National Guard Warrior Network transports training and information to our members at 203 downlink sites throughout the nation. The Air National Guard also uplinks training from three production studios in Knoxville, TN; Panama City, FL and Andrews AFB, MD. In addition to training delivery and production, these studios also serve as full communicative links to the states and territories in times of national and local contingencies. The Andrews studio provided

timely updates to the field in support of Noble Eagle. From the Air National Guard Training and Education Center in Knoxville, TN we transported critical information for the F-16 community concerning their new wheel and brake assembly. This training saved over \$480,000.00 in costs associated with travel and time away from maintainers' home stations. We also continue to enjoy good working relations with the Federal Judiciary Training Network, providing the uplink for their training to all the federal courts. The Air National Guard has joined with the Army National Guard in sharing electronic classrooms and training development in our common communities. These partnerships serve to establish a Total-Guard learning network, and are saving millions of dollars by avoiding duplication of training systems and products. Furthermore, the Air National Guard Warrior Network will serve as a valuable asset to Homeland Security teams, where vast audiences can be connected for timely information or training.

Many National Guard units are developing cooperative agreements with local industry and academia to share development of Advanced Distributed Learning products and reinforce community relations. PROJECT ALERT in Nebraska (one such agreement) completed the conversion of 23 training courses to CD-ROM and Web-based training during the past calendar year, and is currently working to convert 28 more courses. These courses not only benefit the National Guard, but are applicable to other federal agencies as well. The Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute will receive the lion's share of these courses for use in the upcoming academic year.

We continue to work with the DoD and all the federal training communities in developing and delivering expedient learning pieces. These cooperative efforts are helping to increase unit and member readiness. The Air National Guard needs to be positioned to compensate learners, to assist with computer acquisition (or accessibility), Internet access, and to convert courses into a deliverable format.

The Air National Guard has continually recognized the importance of family readiness as a vital component of overall mission readiness and personnel retention. There is a strong connection between how well members of the Air National Guard function when called to duty and their level of assurance that their families are being well cared for at home. The mandate of the Family Program is to help families prepare in every way. We have been successful in improving family support because you have given us the necessary resources to fund a full-time contracted family readiness position at each Wing and Combat Readiness Training Center. The post 9/11 changes in operational tempo of the Air National Guard increased the reliance on our members and the subsequent demand being placed on their families.

In order to enhance family support and sustain overall readiness, the Air National Guard Family Program has identified the need to maintain a viable infrastructure and properly staffed family outreach program that promotes physical, emotional, mental, and behavioral health and well-being. While the relationship between the National Guard and their family members is important at all times, it is critically necessary today with increasing mobilizations and deployments. The Air National Guard Family Program must ensure that needed resources are provided during all phases of

deployment, from preparation, through separation, and reunion. In order to continue to promote overall family readiness and subsequently improve military readiness and retention, the Air National Guard Family Program needs sustained resources to provide outreach directly to family members and maintain a support structure for the Wing Family Program Coordinators and Combat Readiness Training Center personnel.

The Air National Guard could not function without the support of our nation's employers. With the increased utilization of Reserve Component personnel, employers are being impacted more than ever. As a result, DoD programs such as the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve are key to our efforts in gaining and maintaining the support of our civilian employers. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve helps civilian employers manage their Guard and Reserve employees by providing information, rewarding them for their sacrifices, and if necessary, resolving disputes. We appreciate your continued support of these important programs.

~~While federal law generally protects the civilian jobs of our National Guard personnel, it is not well known that there is a significant gap in this protection that needs remedy. Individual protection under the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act only applies when a member is called to active duty under the provisions of Title 10 U.S.C., and is not afforded to our citizen airmen on active duty under the provisions of Title 32 U.S.C., a state-controlled status.~~

~~This disparity became clearly evident in the aftermath of 9/11 when hundreds of Air National Guard personnel were brought to active duty in this status to secure and protect our nation's airports. Despite the fact that this call came at the request of the~~

~~President, these members were not afforded any protection under the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act. Your support in expanding the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act would eliminate this disparity. Equitable application of the Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act, regardless of Title 10 U.S.C. or Title 32 U.S.C. status, is required to protect our citizen airmen while serving our country in an active duty status.~~

— Outside of our collective efforts to preserve the delicate synergy of the member, family, and employer, the Air National Guard needs assistance with separation and transition benefits. With the expiration of force management transformation authorities in December of 2001, the Air National Guard lacks the force shaping tools to effectively address skill rebalancing and its effect on the current personnel assigned. A prime example of this is the 116th Air Control Wing, at Robins AFB, Georgia. In addition to being the only Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System unit, the 116th is the only blended active duty Air Force and Air National Guard wing in the Total Force. The flexibility to re-balance workforce skills, due to mission changes, unit conversions, as well as programmatic and/or operational reductions in specific skills, presents the need to execute these authorities.

We look to the future and wonder what more may be asked of our brilliant women and men. Our proven track record of rising to every challenge and answering every call is the bedrock of our organization. We are busier than ever, and we most certainly need ample tools and resources to perform our mission. We are confident that working with you we will remain a premier military organization, serving in communities throughout this great land, protecting America at home and around the world.