AUTHENTICATED
U.S. GOVERNMENT
INFORMATION
GPO

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2008

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 10 a.m., in room SD–192, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Ted Stevens presiding.

Present: Senators Leahy, Dorgan, Durbin, Mikulski, Murray, Stevens, Cochran, Domenici, and Bond.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

RESERVES

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JACK C. STULTZ, CHIEF AND COMMANDING, UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR TED STEVENS

Senator STEVENS. Gentlemen and ladies, the chairman will not be here for a while and may not be here at all this morning. I want to put his statement in the record and welcome all of you, the chiefs of the Reserve components who will testify before us on the status of the Reserve components.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE

Today the Subcommittee meets to receive testimony on the fiscal year 2009 budget requests for the National Guard and Reserve components. From the Reserve we welcome: Chief of the Army Reserve, General Jack Stultz; Chief of the Naval Reserve, Admiral John Cotton; Commander of the Marine Forces Reserve, General John Bergman; and Chief of the Air Force Reserve, General John Bradley. And from the National Guard we are pleased to have: Chief of the National Guard Bureau, General Steven Blum; Vice Chief of the Army National Guard, General Clyde Vaughn; and Vice Chief of the Air National Guard, General Craig McKinley.

Gentlemen, as the National Guard and Reserve components continue to transition from a strategic to operational reserve, you face significant personnel and equipment challenges. Currently we have thousands of guardsmen and reservists deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, many of them already on their second tour. We are asking a great deal of these service members, their families, and employers. Unlike their active duty counterparts, they often do not have easy access to support services. Today we look forward to hearing what is being done to ease the strain through family support and reintegration programs.

It is a credit to the dedication and patriotism of our reservists that retention levels remain strong despite the high operational tempo and mandated force realignments. We want to make sure that you have the resources required to retain these talented experienced service members, particularly those in high demand career fields. We are pleased to see that recruiting has improved for the Air National Guard, and Army and Navy Reserves, although we are concerned that many of the

components face shortfalls in high demand, critical skill specialties. We hope to hear today what you are doing to continue to attract quality recruits.

Equipment shortages are another ongoing challenge, particularly now that more pre-deployment training is being done at home station. While the Subcommittee is pleased to see that the Army has dramatically increased procurement requests for the Guard and Reserve, existing equipment levels remain a concern. We want to ensure that you have the equipment you need for training and operations at home and abroad.

Gentlemen, I look forward to hearing your perspective on these issues and your recommendations for strengthening our forces during this demanding time. I thank you for your testimony this morning.

Senator STEVENS. General Stultz, it is good to see you with us again today.

I understand, Admiral Cotton, this will be your last appearance, retiring now after 34 years in the service. We are grateful for your service to our country and appreciate all you have been able to accomplish to enhance the Reserve components.

General Bergman, I understand you also will retire now after 38 years.

General BERGMAN. Yes, sir.

Senator STEVENS. We wish you also the best and sincerely appreciate your service to the country.

And General Bradley, you are retiring after 41 years. It has been a pleasure working with you, particularly these last few years. I will never forget the F–22s coming in to Elmendorf. It was really a great day for us.

General BRADLEY. Thank you, Senator Stevens.

Senator STEVENS. I wish you continued success in your future.

The Reserve components have changed drastically since September 11, 2001. It has been remarkable how quickly you all have been able to transition from what was purely a strategic reserve force to an operational one. The total force concept is working. I know there are many challenges that still remain as the active components rebalance and reset. I am confident that you will point your respective services in the right direction to fully support the missions that will be presented to you in the future. We thank you all for your service and look forward to the testimony today.

As I said, I will put the chairman's statement in the record.

I would call on Senator Leahy.

Senator LEAHY. I will be coming back and I will yield to Senator Mikulski. I have to go to a Judiciary matter, but I will be back.

I also echo the comments to Admiral Cotton and the others. You have a tremendous lineup here. I know these gentlemen. Of course, I know their service as well. I think it is a credit to all of us that they are willing to serve and serve so well.

Senator STEVENS. Senator Mikulski.

Senator MIKULSKI. Mr. Chairman, in the interest of time, I do not have an opening statement. I want to welcome, of course, our leadership and look forward to hearing the needs that they face in order to fulfill the mission and look forward to it and thank them for being here.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you.

Gentlemen, all of your statements will be put in full in the record. We appreciate whatever comments you want to make this morning. General Stultz, we will call on you first, please.

INTRODUCTION OF RESERVE SOLDIERS

General STULTZ. Yes, sir. Mr. Chairman, Senator Mikulski, thank you for giving us the opportunity to come and talk to you today. As you indicated, I have submitted my statement for the record.

Rather than taking time to make any further opening comments, what I did want to do today, sir, is to introduce a couple of people that I brought along with me. One, my command Sergeant Major, Leon Caffe, the senior enlisted soldier for the Army Reserve representing our 200,000 soldiers, who is here with me.

But also I wanted to introduce two great soldiers, just to give you a flavor of the quality of what we have got in the Reserve components today.

The first gentleman I have got is Captain Joe Webster. Joe? Joe is an Army Reserve soldier. He is a lawyer here in Washington, DC, a partner in a firm that handles Indian affairs throughout this Nation, very well known.

What is unique about Joe, though, is in 1990–91, Joe was in school at Purdue University, stopped his education, joined the Army Reserve, and deployed for Desert Storm as a legal clerk, specialist 4, legal clerk. He came back after 1990–91, went back to Purdue, finished his undergraduate, went to George Washington University here in Washington, DC, and got his law degree, and became a very successful partner in a law firm here in Washington, DC.

After 9/11, Joe said, I need to go serve my country again. So he joined the Army Reserve again, got into one of our legal units. He deployed last year and was in Iraq for the entire year last year serving General Odierno of the Multinational Corps Iraq on his legal staff handling legal matters. He is a true representative of what this Nation is all about: individuals that are willing to put their careers, put their lives on hold, leave their families, and risk their lives to go and serve their Nation on a volunteer basis.

The other soldier I have with me is Master Sergeant Marie Brooks. Sergeant Brooks again represents what this Nation is all about. You see, Sergeant Brooks' father is retired military. Sergeant Brooks is one of our master sergeants in the Army Reserve. Her son is an active duty soldier also, currently stationed in Germany as a medic. Three generations of soldiers in that family. Sergeant Brooks is a chaplain's assistant for us.

She deployed to Kuwait and Iraq in 2003 as part of a medical command, serving as a chaplain's assistant, and provided chapel services throughout the theater when we were short chaplain officers, as the NCO Corps does, steps up, makes it happen, and she was conducting seven different types of services at Camp Arifjan Kuwait to service all the soldiers, about 20,000-some soldiers that were there to provide religious support, counseling, whatever the need while she was deployed for that year in 2003.

She now works also for us helping assist at the Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia on a regular basis.

PREPARED STATEMENT

But these are two great soldiers, sir, that I just wanted to introduce, have the opportunity to talk about what quality we have, what dedication we have in our Reserve components.

I look forward to your questions, sir. Thank you.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you very much. Captain Webster, Master Sergeant Brooks, we welcome you and thank you for your service.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JACK C. STULTZ

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Inouye, Senator Stevens, members of the Senate Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, thank you for calling this hearing on the fiscal year 2009 budget for our Reserve components. As you know, after September 11th, the Nation's Reserve components were challenged to evolve from a strategic force in reserve to an operational force that is constantly deployed. It literally happened overnight. And now during the seventh year of this persistent conflict, demand for Army Reserve warrior citizens is such that between 25 and 30,000 Army Reserve soldiers are mobilized at any given time in the United States and in 18 other nations around the globe.

Last month the Army Reserve celebrated its 100th anniversary. During our centennial celebration, soldiers from every State took the oath of re-enlistment here on Capitol Hill; committing to at least another 2 years of service to our Nation in the Army Reserve. When the Medical Reserve Corps originated on April 23, 1908 with 160 civilian physicians, it was unforeseen that 100 years later 12 to 15 percent of our force would be fully engaged in theater an operational force providing key capabilities to the Army.

We continue to meet our mission because our soldiers are committed to serve the Nation, even as we undergo dynamic institutional and operational changes that challenge our state of readiness. And like the Active Component, the Army Reserve is a force that is out of balance but we are not broken. Historically, the Army Reserve has been a cost-effective, value-added force as evidenced by what we accomplished with the fiscal year 2007 budget Congress appropriated to us. That budget request of $6.9 billion represented only 3.1 percent of the total Army budget, yet we:

—Mobilized more than 30,400 warrior citizens;
—Recruited 39,055 soldiers;
—Retained 19,727 soldiers (119 percent of our retention goals);
—Launched the Army Reserve Warrior and Family Assistance Center;
—Accelerated reorganization of the entire Army Reserve Training Structure;
—Executed two major warrior exercises involving more than 8,000 soldiers;
—Moved 6,700 pieces of unit equipment to regional training centers;
—Aligned 78 percent of our strength into operational and deployable forces;
—Overhauled 4,139 pieces of equipment in the $144 million depot maintenance program;
—Fielded more than 17,000 items of equipment;
—Increased our aviation force structure by two Blackhawk companies;
—Activated and deployed the 316th Expeditionary Support Command—the primary logistics command supporting multinational forces in Iraq;
—Activated the 11th Theater Aviation Command;
—Activated or converted 386 organizations to new modular structure;
—Initiated the disestablishment of 12 Regional Readiness Commands;
—Initiated the establishment of 4 Regional Support Commands and 11 Operational Commands;
—Commissioned two water vessels; and,
—Initiated 23 BRAC and military construction projects.

More than 193,900 warrior citizens have mobilized since 9/11; they represent America's best and brightest. Our soldiers, their families and employers; however, are experiencing an operational tempo unlike their comrades in arms who served before them. As you know, earlier this year, the report released by the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves concluded that the Nation will continue to rely on the Reserve components as part of an operational force for missions at home and

abroad. To accomplish this, the report concluded, reforms are needed to ensure the readiness of the Reserve components and to ensure our feasibility and sustainability over the long term.

To achieve our goal of transforming from a strategic force in reserve to an integrated, operational force, the Army Reserve relies on continued support from Congress via fiscal and supplemental budgets. Today, even though our mission has increased, our funding has not moved significantly beyond resource levels of the Cold War. Our fiscal year 2008 budget request of $7.1 billion represents 4 percent of the Army base budget. We are grateful for your support, our state of readiness relies on it, but our readiness is also impacted by our transformation, the operational tempo, the stress on our soldiers, their families and employers, and the state of our equipment. All challenges we continue to address.

OVERVIEW

I am here to discuss the President's budget request for fiscal year 2009 and what it means to the Army Reserve. I will separate the budget request in to three categories, Reserve Personnel, Army (RPA); Operation and Maintenance, Army Reserve (OMAR); and Military Construction, Army Reserve, (MCAR).

In an environment of scarce human resources, RPA appropriations are vital for the Army Reserve to maintain our readiness by recruiting and retaining warrior citizens. The RPA appropriation increased 6 percent to $3.9 billion which includes $321 million for recruiting and retention bonuses. These bonuses are critical to the Army Reserve to sustain our effort to exceed our end strength of 205,000 soldiers. For the first time in the 35 years since the birth of our all-volunteer force, we must recruit and retain our force during a period of protracted war. Traditionally, the Army Reserve has not grown its own force. We have relied on soldiers who came off Active duty, but that's not happening any more. Now, our Reserve soldiers are either leaving the service at the end of their commitment or they are going back on active duty. Last year 7,107 warrior citizens transferred to the active Army. So while our force is contributing to the end strength of the Army, we impede our ability to reach our own end strength. We are short about 10,000 soldiers and that affects our readiness should our force be called to respond to another contingency at home or abroad.

The RPA also includes $195 million for 47,000 soldiers to attend professional military education. These schools are essential for the Army Reserve to support higher occupational skill qualification rates. We are not only interested in recruiting Army Reserve soldiers who want to serve their country—we want to provide soldiers the skills to better themselves and to give back to their community.

Our request for resources to increase the Active Guard Reserve end strength by 300 soldiers was also included in the fiscal year 2009 budget, and we appreciate the President's support. But we must also rely on the fiscal year 2009 supplemental request so the Army Reserve can continue to evolve to a more fully integrated operational force. The Army Reserve has requested $80 million for additional training days for approximately 20,000 soldiers and another $82 million to resource up to 17 days of special pre-mobilization training. These funds are critical for the Army Reserve to properly prepare soldiers and units as they ready to deploy.

As you know, the process that is driving much of our organizational change is the Army Force Generation or ARFORGEN model. ARFORGEN aligns Army Reserve units into 5-year cyclical training and force sustainment packages.

Full implementation of ARFORGEN will improve our force by providing a predictable and rapid capability to synchronize our soldiers and resources with national and global mission requirements to increase unit readiness and provide a progression of trained, ready, and cohesive units. We have aligned approximately 80 percent of Army Reserve units into the ARFORGEN process, and we are working toward achieving the 4 years at home to 1 year deployed objective.

The President's fiscal year 2009 budget request is essential to implementing ARFORGEN. The $2.6 billion in the budget for OMAR is a 5.8 percent increase over fiscal year 2008 and includes $66 million to support Army Reserve force structure rebalancing, increased training events and equipment. Our rebalance will replace less-equipment intensive units with more equipment-intensive units resulting in an increase demand for fuel, parts and sustained maintenance. Resources for base support services to 1,100 Army Reserve activities are funded at $548 million, which translates to 92 percent of our essential needs with an increased emphasis on family programs and youth services. The $256 million for sustainment, restoration, and modernization in the President's fiscal year 2009 budget will allow the Army Reserve to continue to reduce our facility maintenance backlog by increasing our com-

mitment to restore our facilities sustainment program worldwide to an adequate readiness level.

Our operational tempo is particularly difficult on families. Although we recruit soldiers, we retain families. Our readiness depends on the ability to provide predictability to our soldiers, their families and employers. As with RPA resources, the Army Reserve must rely on the fiscal year 2008 GWOT supplemental request for OMAR funding to ensure we take care of soldiers and their families. Our supplemental request includes $22.9 million for family programs, $4.1 million for the strong bonds program, $13.7 million for tuition assistance, and $3.6 million for post deployment health reassessments. The OMAR supplemental request also includes $23.7 million to offset rising fuel costs.

Our warrior citizens are the core of your Army Reserve. Warrior citizens bring maturity, experience, and civilian-acquired skills to the Army. In theater, you cannot tell the difference between an active Army soldier and our warrior citizens. However, off the battlefield, the demands on our warrior citizens are great; in many respects greater than those an active duty soldier faces. Our soldiers must balance civilian careers with military and family obligations; and most of our families do not reside near military installations. Warrior citizens must manage a delicate balance with employers who are often left with one less employee to conduct business. This balance is made the more challenging for our soldiers by the Army Reserve's high operational tempo and ongoing organizational change.

The President's fiscal year 2009 budget request for MCAR is $281.7 million, which will allow the Army Reserve to invest in building five Army Reserve centers and to modernize Army Reserve centers in four States. The end result will be 15 Reserve Centers supporting nearly 5,000 warrior citizens and four training ranges. We have also built in minor military construction funds to address unforeseen critical needs or emergent mission requirements that cannot wait for the normal programming cycle.

The bottom line, this persistent conflict requires the Army Reserve to transform from a strategic force in reserve to an operational force. The Army cannot sustain this operational tempo without our warrior citizens and their contributions to the total force.

As the Army Reserve evolves to a more fully integrated operational force we recognize we cannot overlook the critical contribution employers make to national defense. The citizen soldier legacy is built on the backbone of citizens and employers sacrificing together to ensure our security. Employers are looking for the same skilled, capable, disciplined personnel we are. We can and should cooperate with industry in a number of ways for our mutual advantage: recruiting, training and developing the best and the brightest to serve. For our part, the Army Reserve develops discipline, soldier and leader skills that are valuable to employers. Working with industry we can help employers fill occupational specialties where there have been traditional shortages of personnel. While we share an employee's talents and skills we can surely find ways to share the cost of benefits to our mutual advantage.

Last month, I was proud to launch our Employment Partnership to foster formal relationships between the U.S. Army Reserve and private sector. We signed agreements with INOVA Health Systems and the American Trucking Association. In the future, we hope to enter into comparable partnership projects with law enforcement, corrections, transportation, and other industry organizations leveraging Army Reserve core skill sets.

To improve Army Reserve personnel readiness, we rely on continued support from Congress to provide stable and predictable resourcing and the authority for flexible management of incentives to recruit, retain, reassign, promote, and train our personnel.

As the first Federal Title 10 responder to support civil authorities during a domestic emergency, the Army Reserve is an important element of the current DOD "Lead, Support, Enable" strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support. Unit readiness for current and future peacetime contingency and major combat operations at home or abroad requires timely, predictable personnel resourcing and a full complement of equipment.

During our first 100 years, the Army Reserve repeatedly provided the most cost-effective Federal force to the Nation. Continued support with resources and authorities from Congress ensures your Army Reserve is ready to serve the Nation any time, any where, now and in the future. Thank you for the opportunity to review the impact of the President's fiscal year 2009 budget request for the Army Reserve. I look forward to your questions.

UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE 2008 POSTURE STATEMENT

APRIL 1, 2008.

Today's Warrior Citizens serve our Nation during an era of persistent conflict—a role unforeseen when the Army Reserve originated on April 23, 1908, as the Medical Reserve Corps. One hundred sixty civilian physicians comprised this first strategic reserve, one that could be ordered by the Secretary of War to active duty during a time of national emergency. A century later, the U.S. Army Reserve is a diversified, capable, skill-rich, community-based operational force with an authorized end strength of 205,000 Warrior Citizens.

Throughout our first century of service, our mission was to support the Army to ensure mission success, and our Soldiers served with pride and distinction. In the final decade of the 20th century, the Army Reserve was called upon to support training, coalition-building, and stability missions, as well as foreign and domestic contingency operations. At the dawn of this century, with further demands placed on our Nation's military after September 11, 2001, it became necessary for the Army Reserve to transform to a more fully operational force.

Today, the 21st century Army Reserve Soldier is a Soldier who serves in an expeditionary force that is an integral part of the world's best Army. Yet, as we have done for the past 100 years, our Soldiers live and work in their civilian communities while volunteering to serve their Nation in the U.S. Army Reserve. In the past six years, 190,796 Army Reserve Soldiers have mobilized and deployed in support of the Global War on Terror. Currently 27,143 Warrior Citizens from communities around the Nation are serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and in 18 other countries. They serve at a time when the stakes for our Nation and our national security are high, the demands on our force are significant, and the need for a strong Army is undeniable.

As we move forward in our transformation, we are undergoing the most dramatic change to our force structure, training, and readiness since World War II. However, as we continue to transform, one thing does not change—the Army's reliance on our Army Reserve Warrior Citizens' civilian-acquired skills, skills that are critical to the Army's success. As a result of the continuous state of mobilization and a high operational tempo, the Army Reserve has experienced stress on our Soldiers and their units, stress on their Families, stress on their employers, and stress on our equipment. We have come to realize that while we remain a committed, professional, All-Volunteer Force, the Army Reserve, like the Active Component, is increasingly out of balance.

To help us build capacity and increase our military effectiveness, we have aligned our needs into four imperatives: to sustain our Soldiers, their Families, and employers; to prepare our Soldiers for success in current operations; to reset and rebuild readiness for future operations; and to transform to better meet the demands of the 21st century.

To continue our mission for the next 100 years, the Army Reserve depends on adequate essential resources in the fiscal year 2009 budget and beyond. The firm application of the individual and collective skills resident with Army Reserve Warrior Citizens is essential to the offense, defense, and stability operations of this persistent conflict. Operationalizing the Army Reserve meets the needs of the Army Transformation guidelines and strategies and gives taxpayers confidence we are using their resources wisely and efficiently. We agree with the January 31, 2008, Commission on the National Guard and Reserves characterization of the Nation's Reserve Forces; "The Reserve Components are this nation's insurance policy against unexpected events, provide a daily connection between the military and their civilian communities, constitute a significant pool of pre-trained manpower, and are well-suited for a leading role in homeland response activities. Their value to the nation cannot be overstated."

We will continue to reflect the very best of our Nation by defeating the enemies of freedom and the proponents of terror, by defending our homeland, and by assisting our Nation to build a better future for coming generations. But we cannot fulfill our mission alone; we require continued support from Congress and the American people.

The men and women of the U.S. Army Reserve epitomize what is best about America; it is an honor to serve with them. It is humbling to see the support our Families give to their Soldiers; for while it is the Soldier we recruit, it is their Families that we retain. It is also a privilege to work with the civilian employers who support our Soldiers in their communities; they continue to motivate us to find solu-

tions for managing a shared workforce. Together, our Army Reserve Soldiers, their Families, and employers are the strength of the Nation.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL JACK C. STULTZ,
Chief, U.S. Army Reserve.

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR LEON CAFFIE,
Command Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Reserve.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Warrior Citizens: An Integral Part of Today's Army

The quality of our Force is undeniable. Army Reserve Soldiers are Warrior Citizens who contribute to their local communities as they pursue their civilian careers. In uniform, they also contribute to our national security when they train, prepare, watch, and listen for a call to arms. Over the last century, Warrior Citizens have repeatedly answered that call and have proven the value of citizens serving in the Army Reserve to achieve national goals. Today, tens of thousands of men and women are in the Army Reserve; when they mobilize, they leave their homes, their Families, and their jobs to serve our Nation. And, over the course of the coming years, thousands more Army Reserve Warrior Citizens will step forward to serve and sacrifice on behalf of their friends and neighbors and the strangers they call countrymen—the citizens of the United States.

Our Warrior Citizens are volunteer members of the best trained, best led, and best equipped fighting force our Nation has ever fielded. The 190,796 Army Reserve Soldiers mobilized since September 11, 2001, demonstrate why Warrior Citizens are among those proud to be called Army Strong.

The men and women of the Army Reserve hail from every corner of this Nation, ordinary Americans volunteering for extraordinary service. They are black (22 percent), white (60 percent), Hispanic (12 percent), and Asian and Pacific Islanders (4 percent). Seventy-seven percent are men, 23 percent are women. They are young (46 percent are 17–29 years old) and they are mature (46 percent are aged 30–49). They don the uniform as enlisted Soldiers (81 percent), officers (18 percent), and warrant officers (1 percent). Our Warrior Citizens are men and women committed to their Families, their communities, and their country. They are the strength of our Nation.

Our Force includes Soldiers like Staff Sgt. Jason Fetty, a civilian pharmacy technician from Parkersburg, West Virginia. In the Army Reserve, he is a pharmacy specialist with the 339th Combat Support Hospital in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania. When he deployed to Afghanistan in April 2006, he voluntarily transferred from his medical unit to the 364th Civil Affairs brigade to join a Joint Provincial Reconstruction Team.

With just a week left on his one-year tour, Fetty encountered a man dressed in a hospital lab coat that forever changed his life. On February 20, 2007, at a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the emergency room his unit constructed at the Khost City Hospital, Fetty noticed one of the doctors acting strangely. He said the doctor looked "crazy in the eyes." After ten months in Khost, he knew a lot of the medical personnel, and he didn't recognize this man, so he confronted him and immediately perceived him as a threat. He was right. The man was a suicide bomber.

Fetty knew he couldn't risk hitting an innocent bystander if he were to shoot and miss, so he maneuvered away from the crowd, hoping the suicide bomber would follow. He did. Two other U.S. Soldiers began firing warning shots at the man, still not realizing he was a suicide bomber. After firing a warning shot, Fetty shot the man in the legs. He fell, but didn't go down completely so Fetty himself raised his weapon again and struck him in the abdomen. When Fetty saw the man slowly put his hand under his lab coat, he knew this was an indicator something was about to happen. Fetty yelled for everyone to get out of the way and he started running. He didn't get far. When the bomb exploded, Fetty sustained shrapnel wounds to his face, back, thighs, ankle, and elbow. The other two U.S. Soldiers were also wounded, but no one in the large crowd gathered for the ribbon cutting ceremony died; no civilians, no dignitaries, no Soldiers. Fetty was awarded the Purple Heart as he recovered from his wounds at the Task Force medical treatment facility at Bagram Airfield. On October 12, 2007, he was also awarded the Silver Star in recognition of his heroic service under fire. He is the first Army Reserve Soldier to earn this distinction for service in Afghanistan. From Fetty's perspective, "Anyone would have done what I did if they were put in the same situation."

We are also privileged to have Soldiers like Jennifer J. Johnson in our ranks. She was a nurse practitioner who thoroughly enjoyed her civilian career in medicine, skills she brought with her when she joined the Army Reserve in 1985. But she felt something was missing, that perhaps nursing was a bridge to an even greater call-

ing. In 2003, she was ordained as a minister and moved from the nurse corps to the chaplain corps in the Army Reserve. Of the 393 chaplains serving in the Army Reserve, only 29 are female. Chaplain Johnson says there are many qualities of nursing that are comparable to the ministry. "We guide, we direct, we nurture," she said.

Chaplain Johnson mobilized for one year in July 2006. Twenty-one years after she first joined the Army Reserve, her professional and military careers came full circle when she deployed to Iraq in September of that year. As the chaplain for the military hospital in Tikrit, she provided pastoral care at the 46-bed facility. There she saw first-hand how holistic care—taking care of the emotional and spiritual well-being of a patient—helps physical healing. Chaplain Johnson always carried a Prayer Book for U.S. Forces with her—in the operating room, visiting patients, or leading a congregation in prayers. She also provided spiritual healing to the medical staff. Like many Soldiers, her military duties kept her away from her family for 15 months. She missed her daughter's first prom, family weddings and funerals, and routine family life. But her sense of duty to country by serving in the Army Reserve and her responsibility as a person of faith kept her focused. When she returned from Iraq, she was hired as the chaplain of a large university hospital. Chaplain Jennifer J. Johnson is an example of the kind of strength our Soldiers bring to the Operational Force as well as to their civilian communities.

College student Bethany Gunter wanted to challenge herself mentally and physically, so she joined the Army Reserve; the educational assistance would help defray college expenses. In her Little Rock, Arkansas, unit she not only found the challenge she sought; she also found a soul mate, Nicholas Horn. After taking a few college courses and working for several years in the plumbing business, he was also ready for a change. He dreamed of being a Soldier, and the thought of becoming a husband never entered his mind, until he met Beth. The two Soldiers married shortly before deploying together to Mosul, Iraq, where they served with the 43 1st Civil Affairs Battalion. There, Spc. Bethany Horn worked in supply, but was trained to drive a 17,000-pound up-armored Humvee and to serve as the swiveling turret gunner behind a belt-fed machine gun. Sgt. Nicholas Horn was the operations non-commissioned officer in charge. During his one-year deployment, he was awarded a Bronze Star for saving the life of a civilian injured in a mortar attack.

Bethany said their joint deployment forced them to mature, "We couldn't be kids anymore; our day-to-day objective was to survive and to try to make a difference in Iraq." Nicholas said the deployment reinforced to him the fact that marriage is a team effort, especially in a combat zone. "We worked together 24 hours a day, seven days a week. We saw each other react when mortars hit and we grew to depend on each other, to stay alive as we build our lives together. She's the only battle buddy I'll ever need." They both believe the skills they've learned in the Army Reserve will help them be better leaders in their community as they interact with customers and classmates and improve their readiness and training with their unit in the Army Reserve.

Our force also includes Soldiers like 1st Lt. Virgilio Villacorta. He's a senior scientist who works in algorithm development and image processing for defense applications. He earned his Ph.D. in health sciences and technology from MIT, where his research was on how the brain adapts to acoustic perturbations and resilient speech patterns. He joined the Army Reserve in October 2001 because he wanted to serve his country. He was commissioned in December 2004 and now serves with the 368th Military Intelligence Battalion. He attributes his work in military intelligence to providing him with a better understanding of the technology Military Intelligence units need in the field and how important the design of the technical equipment is to the Soldiers who depend on it. Villacorta, like many of our Warrior Citizens, came to the Army Reserve with an advanced degree.

These Army Reserve Soldiers are typical of the patriotic men and women who have answered the Nation's call to serve. They are illustrative of why our Warrior Citizens are the strength of our Nation, are an integral part of today's U.S. Army, and deserve the best possible and most thorough training, resourcing, and support from Congress and the American people.

The 21st Century: A Century of Leadership and Strength

The Army Reserve has experienced significant change during our first century of service to the American people. Our military forces support the American people and are connected directly to American communities through Soldiers such as the Warrior Citizens who serve in the Army Reserve.

As we look to the future, we know without a doubt we will continue to adapt to change, to transform to a more effective operational force, and to meet the needs of the Army. Increasingly, we recognize that the uncertain security environment of

the future and the challenging fiscal responsibilities faced by our Nation require more cost-effective, flexible sources of manpower that can be efficiently increased in times of need and reduced in a way that economically preserves capability when requirements diminish. As the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves concluded, "Fundamental reforms are needed to ensure the Reserve Components are feasible in the short-term while sustainable over the long-term." This will impact the pace of the Army Reserve's transformation and how our Force is resourced, manned, and trained.

We have entered a dynamic era—an era of extraordinary challenges—an era marked by unprecedented technological and economic advances, expanded globalization, and a burgeoning world population. These advances have resulted in an increased demand on resources such as fresh water, food, and the elements that sustain economic enterprise. As the global community becomes more interconnected, an unstable natural environment and a growing world population will exacerbate the potential for conflict and increase the likelihood of humanitarian crises.

Other contributing factors impacting international stability include the struggle for power involving economic and technological dominance, religious and cultural conformity, and the infrastructure to provide basic human necessities such as food, water, shelter, sanitation, medical care, and the economic means to sustain affected populations.

The technological advances of the last century have contributed to an increase in the length and quality of life for many of the world's inhabitants. But technology has proven to be a double-edged sword. While it is used for many productive ends, it may also be leveraged for destructive purposes. Unstable governments and well-financed groups who seek to exploit weapons of mass destruction for diverse aims seriously threaten global peace and must be contained. State-on-state regional conflicts, failed states competing for internal and external resources, and global terrorism threaten world peace and stability.

The challenges America faces are many, and the risks are great. We are in a position that is both envious and dubious. Global leadership demands global responsibility. The United States Army is one of the most far-reaching and capable forces available for the country to tackle global challenges of the 21st century. The United States Army Reserve is an integrated, operational component of the world's greatest Army—ready, willing, and able to face these challenges.

The emerging trends of globalization, population growth, resource depletion, climate change and natural disasters, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and failed and failing states demonstrate a global environment of dynamic risk. These risks place high demands on our military. The core competencies that reside in the U.S. Army Reserve allow the Active Force to mitigate these risks to achieve national objectives.

The Army Reserve is a valuable component of the Army because it is dynamic, flexible, and capable, as well as a significant provider of combat support and combat service support to the Total Force. The Army Reserve is well designed and well suited for operations in a global environment of instability. The Army Reserve possesses extensive capabilities to respond to nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons threats. Army Reserve Soldiers are uniquely suited, by way of the extensive civilian-acquired skills that complement military-acquired skills, to participate in missions to defeat threats to security, as well as stability and reconstruction operations. The Army Reserve also possesses unique capabilities and resources to address humanitarian contingencies at home or abroad and remains the Nation's first Title 10 responder to provide support and assistance to civil authorities when a disaster or emergency occurs in the United States and its territories.

The Army Reserve is postured to respond and execute, in real time, missions to support the national military strategy. We continue improving the Army Reserve's capability and efficiency. We are in the midst of restructuring and improving our business practices, reducing overhead, and fielding more deployable force structure to meet the wide array of missions ongoing or expected in the years ahead.

The 21st century is proving to be a century in need of the capabilities of our Warrior Citizens. The strength of the Nation lies with the strength of her citizens to bear the burden, pay the price, and to commit and sacrifice for the greater good. Army Reserve Warrior Citizens are carrying forth that tradition into a second century of service and sacrifice. We are more fully integrating with the Active Army to leverage our mutual strengths as we effectively and successfully carry out every mission we are called upon to accomplish.

2007: A Year of Success and Achievement

The year 2007 was one of commitment, sacrifice, and change. Although the Army Reserve's fiscal year 2007 budget of $6.9 billion represented only 3.1 percent of the

$221 billion total Army executed budget, the Army Reserve proved itself a cost-effective, successful force with a global presence. In fiscal year 2007 we achieved the following:

—Mobilized more than 30,400 Warrior Citizens in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Currently, the Army Reserve has 27,143 Warrior Citizens mobilized.
—Recruited 39,055 Soldiers into the Army Reserve.
—Trained 16,479 Soldiers as recruiting assistants through the Army Reserve Recruiting Assistance Program.
—Retained 19,727 Soldiers, which represents 119 percent of our retention goals for first-term and career Soldiers.
—Launched the Army Reserve Warrior and Family Assistance Center to provide assistance to Soldiers and their Families, supporting more than 900 Warriors in Transition.
—Conducted 165 Strong Bonds programs for 8,500 Soldiers and Family members to enhance Family and community relationships following deployments.
—Initiated contact with business leaders to begin a dialogue on how the Army Reserve and employers can better share the skills of our Warrior Citizens.
—Trained 350 Soldiers, Family members, and teens using Stephen R. Covey's "7 Habits of Highly Effective Families" method to provide tools for Family members to communicate and resolve problems effectively.
—Graduated 33,605 Soldiers from basic, advanced, and skill-specific courses and offered 2,797 courses to our Soldiers. Our professional education requirements are essential to ensure that Army Reserve Soldiers remain vital to the world's premier military force.
—Graduated 355 commanders and Command Sergeant Majors and more than 500 company commanders from pre-command courses.
—Inaugurated the first two Army Reserve Enrichment Camps attended by 100 children of Army Reserve Soldiers.
—Accelerated reorganization of the entire Army Reserve Training Structure and Training Commands to ensure synchronization with Army Reserve Training Initiatives.
—Executed two major Warrior Exercises involving more than 8,000 Soldiers at Fort Bliss, Texas, and Fort Hunter-Liggett, California. Conducted 16 functional exercises to sharpen Soldiers' technical skills.
—Processed 5,957 Soldiers through the Rapid Fielding Equipment initiative.
—Achieved initial entry rotor-wing training for 100 percent of the helicopter pilots residing in the Army Reserve at the U.S. Army Aviation Warfighting Center.
—Moved over 6,700 pieces of unit equipment to regional training centers in support of the Army Reserve Training Strategy.
—Aligned 78 percent of Army Reserve strength into operational and deployable forces.
—Overhauled 4,139 pieces of equipment in the $144 million Depot Maintenance program.
—Recapitalized 420 High-Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicles and 61 Heavy Expanded-Mobility Tactical Trucks.
—Fielded over 17,000 items of equipment to include: 12 Longbow Apache attack helicopters, Medium and Light Tactical Vehicles, Improved Ribbon Bridge, and communications equipment.
—Increased Army Reserve Aviation force structure by two Blackhawk companies.
—Moved to increase Army Reserve operating force by over 16,000 deployable spaces by reducing and rebalancing force structure from training and support organizations to deployable modular operational units.
—Activated and deployed the 316th Expeditionary Support Command, the primary logistics command supporting multinational forces in Iraq (from "zero to Iraq" in nine months).
—Activated the 11th Theater Aviation Command at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and mobilized and deployed a command and control element with Aviation Task Force 49 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.
—Activated or converted 386 organizations to new modular structure.
—Initiated the disestablishment of 12 Regional Readiness Commands and the establishment of four Regional Support Commands and 11 Operational Commands to reduce overhead and generate more deployable capability.
—Initiated 23 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) and Military Construction Army Reserve (MCAR) projects to build 14 Armed Forces Reserve Centers (AFRC), five Army Reserve Centers, and four training support projects.

—Commissioned two Logistic Support Vessels, including the first watercraft in the U.S. military to be named after an African American, Capt. Robert Smalls, a hero from the American Civil War.

DYNAMIC CHANGE, CHALLENGING TIMES

As the Army Reserve faces the threats of the 21st century security environment and responds to the Nation's call to serve, we continue to accelerate our transformation to a more effective, efficient, and relevant organization. We are carrying out dynamic institutional and operational changes in challenging times. We are not moving forward blindly, but we are adjusting to current conditions and responding to Army needs, as they develop. However, the current operational tempo is exacting a toll.

Army Reserve Warrior Citizens are experiencing competing demands of civilian careers, Family, and repeated mobilization and deployments. The effect of these demands is most notable with junior noncommissioned officers and mid-grade commissioned officers. The Army Reserve faces a manning shortfall of experience and expertise at the ranks critical to the long-term health and vitality of the force. The Active Component is growing and the prospects of repeated long-term separations in rapid succession are not sitting well with Soldiers' Families and employers. The Army Reserve and the Nation must address these challenges to sustain our critical Warrior Citizen capability. This manning shortfall is the Army Reserve's most critical challenge.

The Army's leadership has recognized the challenges impacting the force and taken steps to focus time, energy, talent, and resources to address these challenges. General George W. Casey, the Army Chief of Staff, established seven initiative working groups to tackle the Army's most critical challenges; the Army Reserve is engaged in each of these groups. The seven Army initiatives are:

—Grow the Army;
—Enhance support to Soldiers and Families;
—Modernize the Force;
—Transition the Reserve Component to an operational reserve;
—Develop leaders;
—Adapt institutional policies, programs, and procedures; and
—Build strategic communications capability.

The Army Reserve is addressing elements of all seven of these Army initiatives, but we are most focused on growth, enhancing support to Soldiers and Families, and transitioning to a more effective operational force. We direct our progress in each of these areas through the organizing construct of four imperatives: Sustain, prepare, reset, transform. To continue to succeed and meet the needs of the Nation, we must ensure we recruit and retain the best and brightest for our team, support our Soldiers, their Families, and their employers, and ensure they have the most efficient and effective organizations and processes to successfully accomplish their missions.

We are organizing to address our personnel shortfall and improve the operational effectiveness of our formations. One of the cornerstones of our institutional transformation—the process that is driving much of our change in response to contemporary demands—is to organize Army Reserve units into a deployment cycle to maximize stability, predictability, and resource utilization. To increase the effectiveness of the Army Reserve and improve our contributions to the Active Component, we have aligned our units into synchronized training and force-sustainment packages supported by manning, equipping, and training processes. Taken together, we call this construct Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN), which mirrors and is directly aligned to the Army's ARFORGEN model.

When fully implemented, this ARFORGEN process will improve our force by providing a predictable and rapid capability to synchronize our Soldiers and resources with national and global mission requirements. Based on a five-year training cycle, ARFORGEN involves a structured progression through three successive force pools: Reset/Train, Ready, and Available. By establishing these three distinct force pools, the Army Reserve increases unit readiness and ensures a cyclical progression of trained, ready, and cohesive units.

Since 2004, we have aligned 78 percent of our Force into the ARFORGEN process. To fully implement the five-year training model, we need approximately three years of stabilized Army deployment requirements. We have therefore programmed our combat support and combat service support into packages of approximately 35,000 Soldiers annually in the various stages of ARFORGEN.

Implementing ARFORGEN has proven that the Army Reserve must fully integrate with the development and fielding of Army logistics information and manage-

ment systems to meet our requirements for maintaining pre-mobilization readiness. ARFORGEN is an effective tool for our force, allowing the Army Reserve to focus on current operations while enabling Soldiers, Families, and employers to anticipate future Army requirements as a fully operational force.

ARFORGEN

Reset/Train

ARFORGEN years one and two

Activities during the first two years focus on obtaining or sustaining individual and squad training as well as refreshing unit leaders. Once these small team and section tasks are complete and leadership set, the unit will focus on subunit collective tasks or mission-specific tasks.

Ready

ARFORGEN years three and four

After building on individual and team training, during years three and four, the focus shifts to sustaining those skills and training at higher collective levels in increasingly challenging environments. This phase is designed to reduce post-mobilization training time and to provide unit depth or strategic capability that can be surged to meet unexpected operational demands. Once units are alerted for deployment mission, training is reoriented to prepare for specific missions and the conditions the units will likely face. Activities during this phase include unit training to support leaders as they prepare for and conduct full spectrum operations, growing team capabilities, and enhancing individual, collective, and organizational learning.

Available

ARFORGEN year five

During this year in the ARFORGEN cycle, Army Reserve units are available to mobilize and deploy, to execute specific programmed missions, or to stand ready to respond to unexpected events at home or abroad.

Critical Challenges to Operationalize the Army Reserve

As the Army Reserve transforms to a more effective operational force, we continue to witness a change in how the American public views not only the Army Reserve, but also patriotic responsibilities to serve our Nation. Immediately after September 11th, Americans answered the call to serve. However, after more than six years of war, we recognize there is a compelling need to inspire a new generation to public service with the Army Reserve. Maintaining the Army Reserve as a world-class provider of support and stability capability also requires:

—Timely and predictable funding through base and supplemental budget requests to fund Reserve Personnel, Army (RPA), Operation and Maintenance, Army Reserve (OMAR), and Military Construction, Army Reserve (MCAR).
—Extend recruiting and retention incentives to assure the Army Reserve enlists and retains the best and brightest to man the force.
—Extend incentive pay for health care professionals and other specialized occupations to ensure we retain the professional skills we need.
—Support Army Reserve programmed increases for full-time personnel.
—Improved employer partnership initiatives to ensure employers do not bear an undue burden for employing Army Reserve Soldiers.
—Fund Army Reserve Logistics Automation Operations and Maintenance of new equipment training requirements to support the integration of Army Reserve requirements into Army logistics information technology systems.
—Support Army Reserve request for funding for base operation support and facilities, sustainment, restoration, and maintenance of Army Reserve facilities.
—Continued funding of depot maintenance to overhaul older generation equipment.
—Continued support to implement the ARFORGEN process, enabling the Army Reserve to completely transform to an operational force.
—Maintain momentum to achieve Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) mandates with modern facilities.

—Support the Army Reserve program for secure communication systems to ensure integrated capabilities—tactical to strategic—that are plug-and-play, modular, and scalable to achieve jointness and modularity.
—Fund Army Reserve training program request to sustain four regional training centers and combat support training centers.

SUSTAIN OUR SOLDIERS, FAMILIES, AND EMPLOYERS

We live in an era in which Army Reserve Soldiers find themselves serving in a persistent conflict. This is the first time in history that our Warrior Citizens, who are patriotic, professional, and integral to our All-Volunteer Force, have been engaged in such a long conflict. No longer can Army Reserve Soldiers plan on one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer to fulfill their annual service/training requirement. The impact of our transformation to an operational force, combined with a state of continuous mobilization, has put a strain not only on our force, but also the Families and employers whose support is vital to our Warrior Citizens.

Today, the Army depends on the Army Reserve to sustain the tempo of deployments demanded by this persistent conflict. For the Army Reserve to remain a significant asset to the Army, our Nation, and the communities where our Soldiers live and work, it is necessary to take care of our most valuable resource—our people. To sustain our force, we must do more to ensure our Soldiers, their Families, and our Soldier's civilian employers are supported through solid programs and supportive communities.

We care about the physical, spiritual, and mental health of our Soldiers and their Families. Sustaining the Army Reserve begins with recruiting high-quality men and women and then retaining them and their Families, as well as partnering with their civilian employers throughout their military careers. Our Soldiers cannot be sharp on the battlefield if their focus is the impact their military service is having on their Families and employers. We must take care of our Families and we must have a relationship with the employers of our Warrior Citizens. Without support from Families and employers, we cannot sustain our force.

Sustaining the Army Reserve also reminds us of our moral obligation to take care of our Soldiers who are wounded, injured, or ill, as well as the Families of our Fallen Soldiers.

Recruit

Our Warrior Citizens must be physically strong, mentally aware, fully trained and equipped, and ready to deploy when the Nation calls. In fiscal year 2007, the Army Reserve surpassed its overall recruiting goal. Although the Army Reserve is solely responsible for meeting our end strength objective, the Army Reserve recruiting mission is shared; thus, we do not have direct control of a recruiting budget that affords us the opportunity to market and advertise to specific Reserve Component demographics. As a result, we rely heavily on targeted initiatives such as Army Reserve-specific advertising and the Army Reserve Recruiting Assistance Program.

Army Reserve Recruiting Assistance Program

AR–RAP is a community-based recruiting program launched in July 2007. The program leverages the personal contacts our Soldiers have within their communities. Essentially, every Army Reserve Soldier is now a recruiter who can earn up to $2,000 for each recruit that contracts and ships to Basic Combat Training, Basic Officer Leader Course, or for each Prior Service Soldier that completes 120 days of unit affiliation and attends a Battle Assembly.

Retain

In an environment of scarce human resources, retaining our Warrior Citizens is a top priority. During fiscal year 2007, reenlistment of first-term Army Reserve Soldiers reached 155.2 percent of our goal. Our fiscal year 2007 goal was to reenlist 5,103 first-term Army Reserve Soldiers. We surpassed that number and actually reenlisted 7,887 first-term Army Reserve Soldiers. We also surpassed our career reenlistment goals; we achieved 103.2 percent of that goal. However, our high operational tempo has resulted in a decline in our end strength. The primary cause of the decline is the number of Soldiers who transfer out of the Army Reserve into the Army and the Army National Guard.

In fiscal year 2007, 7,107 Warrior Citizens transferred to the Active Army and 2,375 transferred to the National Guard. Though still good for the Army, to ensure Army Reserve readiness and sustain personnel strength of units scheduled for upcoming deployment, the Army Reserve instituted a policy that Soldiers in units transitioning into the fourth year of ARFORGEN are ineligible to voluntarily enlist

or to be appointed in the Active Army, Army National Guard, or any other military service.

The Army Reserve offers a variety of incentives through our selected Reserve Incentive Program to retain Soldiers who endure the stress and hardship of multiple mobilizations and deployments. Incentive packages are targeted to specific audiences such as Soldiers with prior service, those who complete 20 years of service, officer and warrant officer accession and affiliation bonuses, enlisted affiliation bonuses, and Army Civilian-acquired skills bonus programs. Incentives can range from $7,500 up to $20,000. An additional Army Reserve retention bonus specifically addresses mid-career officer and non-commissioned officer shortages. Based on critical skill needs of our Soldiers, the Critical Skills Retention Bonus-Army Reserve can pay up to $50,000 per Soldier for a 3-year service obligation. This incentive is paid out to Captains, Chief Warrant Officers Three, Staff Sergeants, and Sergeants First Class who possess a critical military occupation specialty. This incentive authority was part of a recent National Defense Authorization Act Fiscal Year 2008 change; the Army Reserve is awaiting approval from the Office of the Secretary of Defense for implementation of enlisted and warrant officer bonuses.

Improve Quality of Life

The most important element in sustaining the Army Reserve is the quality of life we provide our Warrior Citizens and their Families, impacted by their Soldiers' commitment to serve. We work aggressively to support our Soldiers and their Families with services that address health care, family programs, education, and employment. Support from our communities is vital to our Army Reserve Families, who do not traditionally reside on or near military installations. These Families often have more diverse needs than those of Active Component Soldiers. It is therefore essential that we continue to improve coordination of state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and the military community to ensure our Warrior Citizen Families have integrated, accessible support available to them.

Seamless Health Care

Few programs reflect care for Soldiers more directly than health care plans; yet current medical management strategies and structures do not adequately support Army Reserve Soldiers and their Families, who, unlike the Active Component, transition back and forth between their civilian careers and their military careers. The Army Reserve believes that seamless health care coverage contributes to the military readiness of our Soldiers by preventing our Soldiers from being "whipsawed" between military and civilian health care service providers. Additionally, fully supporting Army Reserve Soldiers who live in remote locations continues to be a top priority. The Army Reserve is working with the DOD to determine how best to solicit health care providers to support health care coverage for our Soldiers and their Families in communities where TRICARE is unavailable.

—*Restructured TRICARE Reserve Select*.—As of October 1, 2007, Selected Reserve (SELRES) Soldiers became eligible for TRICARE health coverage. TRS is available to Soldiers and their Families regardless of any active duty time served. Benefits of the program include: worldwide availability to most Select Reserve members and their Family members; freedom to manage health care with no assigned primary care manager; no referrals required; access to care in a military treatment facility on a space-available basis; and comprehensive health care coverage including a TRICARE prescription drug benefit.

Strong Bonds Program

The Strong Bonds program offers Soldier/Spouse and single Soldier Family reintegration events after deployment. This training helps Families of deployed and deploying Soldiers deal with the stress that often accompanies a Soldier's deployment. It is a proven, multicomponent program under the supervision of the Office of the Chief of Chaplains. As part of this program, the Army Reserve conducted 165 Soldier retreats, serving more than 8,500 Soldiers and Families in fiscal year 2007. The Army Reserve anticipates conducting a comparable number of programs and outreach in fiscal year 2008.

Army Reserve Warrior and Family Assistance Center

The Army Reserve Warrior and Family Assistance Center was established in October 2007 to ensure that Warrior Citizens receive appropriate support under the Army Medical Action Plan. This center provides a sponsor to each Army Reserve Soldier and Family currently assigned to a Warrior Transition Unit, Community-Based Health Care Organization, or Veterans Affairs Poly-Trauma Center. The center also manages a toll-free hotline (866–436–6290) and Web site (www.arfp.org/

wfac) to provide assistance to Army Reserve Soldiers, Families, and retirees on a variety of issues, such as medical, financial, administrative, and pastoral concerns.

Family Programs and Services

Our commitment to family readiness is further demonstrated by Army Reserve Family Programs (ARFP) initiatives that continue to develop and evolve to meet the unique needs of our Soldiers and their Families. The Army Reserve is hiring Employer Support Program Managers who will be assigned to 27 major subordinate commands throughout our Force to meet Army Reserve Soldier and Family needs on a full-time basis. Soldiers and their Families can log on to www.arfp.org to learn about other Family program initiatives including:

—Virtual Family Readiness Groups where Army Reserve Families can utilize the information and resources provided by the Army's Integrated Family Support Network. Funding and staffing have increased, allowing more face-to-face, as well as telephonic and virtual, contact with Families.

—*Virtual Installations*.—The Army Reserve will conduct a pilot test of our Virtual Installation in May 2008. Virtual Installations will consolidate our services and allow Families to stay in touch, stay informed, and stay together. The Virtual Installation represents a conglomerate of Families, volunteers, associations, military programs, and civic organizations such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars. Services that will be available online include registering for ID cards, enrollment in TRICARE, and the ability to get counseling, support, financial assistance, job placement, or to take classes.

—*Outreach*.—Army Reserve staffers are able to share information, conduct education and training, and provide appropriate crisis response, conflict resolution, or referral to an appropriate helping agency. The first issue of "Family Strong," a full-color quarterly publication providing Family readiness information, was distributed to 22,000 households of deployed Army Reserve Soldiers in the fall of 2007. Future issues will be distributed to the entire Army Reserve population.

—*Welcome Home Warrior Citizen Award Program*.—This award was created to publicly recognize the sacrifices that Army Reserve Soldiers and their Families have made to the Global War on Terror. Since the program's inception in fiscal year 2004, 124,887 awards have been delivered to Soldiers, their Families, and their employers.

—*Child and Youth Services*.—Child and Youth Services ensures that children of our Warrior Citizens understand how their family dynamics may change when a parent is mobilized. Programs and initiatives are designed to meet the needs of children and young adults and include child care, leadership and development conferences, and Army Reserve Enrichment Camps. These camps provide youth an opportunity to learn new skills, develop relationships, and learn more about the Army Reserve. The Army Reserve will host five Enrichment Camps in 2008.

—Operation Purple® Camps are free one-week residential camping programs funded by the National Military Family Association. The camps bring together children who have a parent or guardian experiencing some stage of a deployment. During the summer of 2007, 566 children of Army Reserve Soldiers attended these camps; four camps were hosted by Children and Youth Services in partnership with Boys & Girls Clubs of America and 4–H. The Army Reserve will host eight Operation Purple® Camps (in partnership with national organizations dedicated to serving youth) in 2008.

—*Civilian Education for Soldiers*.—Education benefits clearly enhance the development of Army Reserve Soldiers, as well as our ability to retain Soldiers. During fiscal year 2007, 28,115 Army Reserve Soldiers used tuition assistance and 1,265 participants earned degrees.

Warrior Care and Transition

The Army Reserve will never forget its moral obligation to our injured and wounded Soldiers and their Families. At the core of our service, Army Reserve Warrior Citizens are Army Strong. It is the duty of all Soldiers to care for their fellow Soldiers in time of battle and in time of healing; our actions exemplify the strength of our Force as it supports the strength of the Nation. It is also the duty of all Soldiers who are wounded, injured, or ill to focus their energies on healing as intently as they focused on their mission in theater.

The Warriors in Transition Program assists disabled Soldiers who suffered severe injuries on or after September 11, 2001, and who have been awarded (or are likely to receive) an Army disability rating of at least 30 percent. Assistance is provided

from initial casualty notification through the Soldier's assimilation into civilian community services (for up to five years after medical retirement).

Warrior Transition Units

Injured Army Reserve Soldiers who are on active duty healing are assigned to WTUs. The Army Reserve has approximately 1,400 Soldiers in these units. We made available 380 Soldiers to assist the full-time WTU staff in manning these units and providing continuous, dedicated support to these Warriors in Transition. All Soldiers assigned to WTUs are given this mission:

"I am a Warrior in Transition. My job is to heal as I transition back to duty or continue serving the Nation as a Veteran in my community. This is not a status, but a mission. I will succeed in this mission because I am a warrior and I am army strong."

Support to Families of Our Fallen Soldiers

In support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, 156 Warrior Citizens have made the ultimate sacrifice and given their lives in service to their Nation, each with a Family back home. We recognize the distinguished service, selfless acts of bravery and leadership, and the ultimate sacrifice these Soldiers and their Families have made for the cause of freedom.

As part of our commitment to the Families of our fallen comrades, the Army Reserve conducts a memorial service to honor their loved one's sacrifice, offers chaplain support, and offers ongoing support to help the Family through its period of mourning and beyond, with follow-on counseling, support, and services. The Warrior Citizens of the United States Army Reserve will never leave a fallen comrade. We will also never forget Sergeant Ahmed Kousay Altaie of Ann Arbor, Michigan, who was assigned to the Provincial Reconstruction Team Baghdad. He was declared missing-captured on December 11, 2006.

Employer Partnerships

The Army Reserve Employer Relations Program fosters better understanding between commands, Soldiers, and Soldiers' civilian employers. Building enduring partnerships with the civilian employer community is vital to Soldier readiness and positively impacts retention. It would be impossible for the Army Reserve to sustain our force without the support of the nearly 44,000 businesses that employ our Warrior Citizens in communities around the country. Employers who hire Army Reserve Soldiers earn a great return on their investment: they benefit from the values, experiences, and leadership skills that Warrior Citizens bring to the workplace. A solid partnership requires efforts and sacrifices from all parties through an open and candid dialogue based on a clear appreciation of each party's interests and requirements.

In fiscal year 2007, the Army Reserve focused its efforts on alleviating the burden on corporate America when their employees, our Warrior Citizens, mobilize and deploy. We are working to enhance employer support through a systemic blending of grass-roots objectives: mitigation, mediation, employer outreach and awareness, and Soldier-employer relations. Throughout fiscal year 2008 we will continue to develop and improve employer relations with the following initiatives:

—Hiring Employer Support Program Managers for assignment to 27 major subordinate commands throughout the Army Reserve. These managers will participate with state-level Committees for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve to proactively engage with employers on behalf of the Army Reserve's Warrior Citizens. These managers will provide commanders with the expertise and support required to carry out the employer relations initiatives established by the leadership of the Army Reserve.

—"Partnering with Industry." The Army Reserve is experiencing increased challenges and demands in providing personnel to meet mission requirements abroad and in support of domestic civil authorities. In a tight labor market, employers such as local law enforcement, interstate trucking companies, and medical care facilities are competing for the same qualified pool of talent as the Army Reserve. We continue to look for opportunities to build enduring partnerships with industry and to focus our efforts on "Optimizing a Shared Workforce" with and between the Army Reserve and civilian employers. Army Reserve Aviation, for example, has found success by partnering local medical facilities with new air ambulance (MEDEVAC) companies and providing mutual benefits through the credentialing of common but critical skills sets in a shared labor pool.

—Establishing the Employer Outreach General Officer Steering Committee to ensure Army Reserve Soldiers remain competitive in both their military and civilian careers. The committee consists of general officers who engage with the

business community to foster relationships and exchange ideas and methods to support a strong Army Reserve.

—An initiative currently being reviewed is the creation of a virtual "job bank" for Soldiers. This job bank would create a direct and focused link between employers and Soldiers in targeted career fields and specialties across a wide spectrum of positions.

To sustain our Warrior Citizens, their Families, and their employers throughout fiscal year 2008 and beyond, the Army Reserve will continue to identify incentives, initiatives, and legislative changes to increase recruiting and retention and minimize attrition as we transform to a more effective operational force. We cannot realize long-term success as a force if we cannot create a stimulating environment that fosters growth and personal satisfaction. We must continue to maintain and improve the quality of life for our Soldiers, Families, and employers. This requires sustained and predictable funding to meet our manning objectives. Our focus on the imperative of Sustain will help bring the Army Reserve into balance and will support our full transformation to an effective, capable, sustainable, and enduring operational force.

PREPARE SOLDIERS FOR SUCCESS IN CURRENT OPERATIONS

The prepare imperative is defined as the readying of Soldiers, units, and equipment to succeed in the current operational environments of Iraq and Afghanistan and the 18 other countries where Army Reserve Soldiers serve. Our military success in the Global War on Terror is dependent on our ability to prepare and equip Army Reserve Soldiers as full cohesive units for current and future operations. Our Warrior Citizens serve the Nation as an operational force for which they were neither designed nor resourced; as a result, our primary focus is on the demands of current operations. We consume readiness as fast as we build it.

Our mission is enduring: to provide necessary forces and capabilities to the Combatant Commanders in support of national security and defense strategies. Growing and transforming the force during an era of persistent conflict is driving the need for increased resources to train Soldiers and units; we risk failure if faced with a rate of change that exceeds our capability to respond.

As outlined earlier in this Posture Statement, Army Reserve Soldiers are organized into a five-year cyclical manning, equipping, and training process—ARFORGEN—to increase the effectiveness of the Army Reserve and to improve our contributions to the Army.

Train Soldiers and Units

We have updated the Army Reserve training strategy over the past year. The update was necessary to accommodate the continued maturation of Army ARFORGEN plans and concepts; to implement the Army Campaign Plan; to execute DOD mobilization policies; and to prepare for the dynamic environment Soldiers and units will face. To accomplish this, we revised the following:

—*Command Relationships*.—The U.S. Army Reserve Command (USARC) continues to grow into its new role as a direct reporting unit to Headquarters, Department of the Army (previously USARC was a major subordinate command of U.S. Forces Command). This has resulted in additional responsibility and more direct accountability to Army senior leadership for all matters attendant with providing, maintaining, training, equipping, and the readiness of Army Reserve forces.

—*Post-mobilization Training Time*.—During the first quarter of fiscal year 2007, the Secretary of Defense announced a policy to limit involuntary mobilization of Reserve Component members to a maximum of one year, inclusive of post-mobilization training. The goal is to provide predictability to Reserve Component Soldiers, their Families, and their employers so they can better prepare for recurring mobilizations. This necessitated a streamlining of pre- and post-mobilization training to increase time in theater conducting combat and support operations. Thus far, the Army has supported our request for additional pre-mobilization training time to perform theater-specified, required training—17 days in the fourth year of ARFORGEN. Training performed to standard during pre-mobilization will not be repeated at the mobilization station.

—*Army Reserve Generating Force Transformation*.—Fiscal year 2007 was a year for dramatic and fundamental change for training organization, certification, and support to the Army Campaign Plan. The Army Reserve became the certifying official for all Army Reserve pre-mobilization training. Upon mobilization, the Army continues to validate deployment readiness. Additionally, six Institutional Training Divisions were reorganized into a three-division structure consisting of initial entry training, the Army school system, and battle command

staff training. These changes to our generation force resulted in reducing non-deployable headquarters structure, yet we retained essential training capabilities.

—*Regional Training Centers*.—The Army Reserve began to field the first of four RTCs where units can train Soldiers and leaders on tasks that are too difficult to execute at Army Reserve Centers. On November 1, 2007, Fort Hunter-Liggett, California, was established as the first of these centers. Training began later that month with more than 100 Army Reserve units scheduled to attend pre-deployment training in 2008. Major training conducted at these centers includes weapons qualifications, convoy operations, and live fire. Three additional centers will be established in 2008: Fort Dix, New Jersey, Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, and a location to be determined in the Southeast. These centers are crucial enablers to reduce post-mobilization training time, improve pre-mobilization training, and enhance readiness of Army Reserve forces.

Collective Training

In 2007, the Army Reserve continued to improve pre-mobilization collective training, most visibly through the execution of two Warrior Exercises and the continued refinement of functional exercises. Warrior Exercises are ARFORGEN year-three events, which focus on collective war-fighting skills in eight-day, continuous-operation, field-training exercises that replicate the process of mobilization, deployment, and employment in theater. In fiscal year 2007, more than 8,000 Army Reserve Soldiers participated in Desert Warrior at Fort Bliss, Texas, and Pacific Warrior at Fort Hunter-Liggett, California.

We also conducted 16 functional exercises to sharpen Soldiers' technical skills in a tactical environment. Functional exercises are ARFORGEN year-two events, which feature branch specific training in a field environment at the small team level. For instance, the Quartermaster Liquid Logistics Exercise is the prime venue to train Army Reserve petroleum, oil and lubricant, and water units. The exercise replicates theater-level petroleum and water operations to include storage, distribution, and production.

Collective medical training at Fort McCoy, Wisconsin, Camp Parks, California, and Fort Gordon, Georgia, provide Soldiers with hands-on training on the latest theater-specific equipment.

Throughout fiscal year 2007, we continued to support a train alert-deploy model. We realized that the Army's current installation inventory was not capable of meeting demand for training to standard Combat Support and Combat Service Support units. Additionally, the Army's Combat Training Center community could not sufficiently meet the Army Reserve training strategy requirement that all deploying units receive a "Combat Training Center-like" experience, nor could it meet the new mandate to complete many post-mobilization training requirements during the pre-mobilization period.

As a result, in addition to the Regional Training Centers, the Army Reserve is developing concepts for Combat Support Training Centers.

The Combat Support Training Center program will provide the Army and Army Reserve with the ability to design training scenarios, simulate theater operations in a contemporary environment, and provide exercise exit evaluation for the Army Reserve's performance of Combat Support and Combat Service Support missions across the full spectrum of operating environments.

The Ready Response Reserve Units initiative is a pilot program designed to create units capable of meeting short-notice requirements from Combatant Commanders. Test units are manned with volunteer Soldiers who are willing to serve on "part-time active duty"—more than 39 days but less than 365 days per year. This is a key initiative to fill gaps in force-structure capabilities. Once this pilot program validates its proof of principle, it can be expanded and synchronized with ARFORGEN to fill gaps in high-demand, low-density units. At present, the current pilot directed by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs has identified three categories of units to test. These include: Early Entry Operations, Known Surge Operations, and Sustainment Operations, all scheduled to begin October 1, 2008.

Develop Agile and Adaptive Leaders

Army Reserve senior leaders serve in Army Reserve Operational and Functional formations and at all levels of Army Commands throughout the force. They bring a unique blend of civilian-acquired skills and honed warrior-leader attributes to the fight.

The Army Reserve continues to explore avenues to increase the primary war-fighting skills through direct management, development, and utilization of our senior

leaders from the Active Guard and Reserve (AGR), Troop Program Unit (TPU), and Individual Mobilization Augmentee (IMA) ranks.

—*The Senior Leader Training Program*.—The Senior Leader Training Program develops the intellectual and strategic-thinking skills senior leaders need to implement, manage, and lead change in the Army Reserve. Topics covered include: strategic leadership skills, ethical decision making, critical thinking, and Army Reserve transformation. The program focuses on general officer and colonel-level leaders with seminars that assist subordinate commanders in working through transformation and organizational change.

—*Pre-Command Courses*.—The Army Reserve upgraded brigade and battalion pre-command courses to enhance training to prepare field grade commanders and command sergeant majors to lead Army Reserve Soldiers.

Equipping Soldiers

The Army Reserve is committed to providing our Warrior Citizens with the best, most technologically advanced equipment available when they train and deploy. We are implementing innovative initiatives and programs to support the Army Reserve Training Strategy to concentrate equipment and sustainment capabilities at regional training sites.

During fiscal year 2007, the Army Reserve was able to mobilize all of its sourced units and elements while meeting pre-mobilization training objectives. The existence of theater-provided equipment relieved some pressure on the Army Reserve to find Modular Force-compatible equipment for our mobilizing units. However, providing the same equipment for pre-mobilization training has forced the Army Reserve to expend limited resources to move Modular Force-compatible equipment between units and training locations. Over 6,700 items were shipped from unit-home stations and equipment-demobilization sites to pre-mobilization training sites during fiscal year 2007. We anticipate approximately 7,000 pieces of equipment to be shipped to pre-mobilization sites in fiscal year 2008.

The Army Reserve has continued to maintain 90 percent or better availability of its limited inventory for deployment and training through extensive use of overtime and contracting. Much of this success can be attributed to the availability of supplemental funds to contract for support to offset the shortfall in facilities and manpower and to sustain logistics operations in support of the training and mobilization of "next-deployers."

The continuing shift of pre-mobilization training objectives under the ARFORGEN process not only continues to add pressure to our aging and limited equipment inventory for training, it could impact our response during a domestic emergency or a second foreign or domestic contingency.

Currently programmed funding for equipment procurement will alleviate this concern, but the equipment procured will not be completely delivered until fiscal year 2016. At that time, our equipment on hand against unit requirements will increase from the current 68 percent to approximately 85 percent. The programmed funding, however, will only cover current shortages in Modular Force equipment.

Other critical factors in maintaining the readiness of our equipment to support pre-mobilization training and deployment are the national level sustainment programs, such as Recapitalization and Depot Maintenance. The Recapitalization program affected only two major Army Reserve systems, the High Mobility Multi-Purpose Vehicle and the Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck. The Depot Maintenance program, however, provides the opportunity to extend the service life, reduce life-cycle costs, and maintain safe operation of older items required to substitute for Modular Force equipment due to equipment shortages in the Army Reserve.

Homeland Defense and Support to Civil Authorities

As the first Title 10 responder to support civil authorities during a domestic emergency, the Army Reserve is in the best position to respond to an attack that occurs in the United States. Our personnel and equipment are located in 1,200 communities across the Nation. As such, the Army Reserve is an important element of the current DOD "Lead, Support, Enable" Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support. U.S. military forces organize, train, and equip to operate in contaminated environments, as well as manage the consequences of chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear explosion incidents on a level unmatched by any other single domestic agency or international partner.

The Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Nuclear Explosion Consequence Management Response Force consists of a rotational pool of Active and Reserve units from each of the services. When assigned to this force rotation, these units are kept on short notice to conduct a secondary mission of domestic consequence manage-

ment should the need arise. Forces for direct response to the effects of an incident deploy when directed by the President or Secretary of Defense.

The Army Reserve is uniquely positioned to support the Army and protect our homeland with experience, knowledge, capability, and competency. During this persistent conflict, the Army Reserve has the capabilities to keep watch at home and to respond to domestic emergencies. The imperative of Prepare will help bring the Army Reserve back into balance by ensuring our Warrior Citizens are prepared to succeed in current and future operational environments.

RESET OUR EQUIPMENT TO RESTORE READINESS AND DEPTH FOR FUTURE OPERATIONS

To succeed in current and future operations, the Army Reserve must take deliberate steps to ensure that our force is reset as a result of repeated deployments, and that our Families and employers are revitalized between their Soldiers' deployments so they too can sustain the continuous state of mobilization that their Warrior Citizens now experience. The Reset imperative now focuses on our equipment with the goal of undoing the accumulated effects of repeated equipment use by repairing, replacing, and recapitalizing our equipment to rebalance the Force.

In response to the ARFORGEN process, the Army Reserve is building pools of equipment to support the mobilization of Army Reserve units in year five (Available) at strategic deployment sites, where the equipment is maintained in controlled humidity storage. If no Army Reserve units are mobilized for a contingency, foreign or domestic, the equipment will remain ready for the next cycle. The equipment in the hands of our units will remain with these units, be inducted into national sustainment programs, or be redistributed to meet the needs of the Army Reserve units as they enter the Reset/Train phase (year one).

The Army Reserve does not budget for unplanned requirements. Therefore, should any Army Reserve units be mobilized, additional funds will be required to reset the equipment assigned to the mobilized units when they demobilize. These funds will prevent an adverse impact on the Army Reserve's ability to sustain the ARFORGEN process.

A critical enabler for the Army Reserve during Reset is an array of standard Army management information systems, such as the Army Reset Management Tool and supplementary logistics information and management systems developed and fielded by the Army Reserve.

Repair and Replace Equipment

Currently, logistics operations and support for the Reset Program is managed and executed by the Army Materiel Command and the Army Installation Management Command. The fiscal year 2007 supplemental budget fully funded the reset of Army Reserve equipment redeployed from Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. In fiscal year 2007, the Army Reserve significantly reduced its logistics reset backlog. We recovered, repaired, and serviced all redeployed equipment not inducted into national level maintenance by the Reset program. With the shortage of equipment in the Army Reserve, this recovered equipment was immediately transferred from redeployed units to "next deployers" in order to sustain pre-mobilization and pre-deployment training.

In fiscal year 2007, equipment losses incurred by the Army Reserve during mobilization and deployment were identified to the Army for integration into procurement and redistribution planning. Equipment is programmed for replacement over the next five years. The Reset imperative will contribute to restoring balance to the Army Reserve by reconstituting our equipment to match the operational tempo of this persistent conflict.

TRANSFORM THE ARMY RESERVE TO MEET THE DEMANDS OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Demand for the authorized 205,000 Army Reserve Soldiers continues to verify the value of their contributions to the Total Force. Our transformation to a more effective, integral operational force allows us to meet today's demands and to position the Force for future deployments and contingency operations and commitments at home and abroad. Army Reserve Soldiers, Families, and employers continue to be an integral part of this transformation as we form and confirm bonds that support changes in the way we train, equip, resource, and mobilize our Force. The men and women of the Army Reserve are the centerpiece of our transformation. They are the strength of the Army Reserve force and the Nation—as both Soldiers and Citizens.

On January 31, 2008, after releasing two interim reports, the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves submitted its final report to Congress. In it, the Commission concluded, "The reliance (on the Reserve Components) should grow, even after the demands for forces associated with current operations are reduced." The

report noted that, "Their service in the operational force will be required in peacetime, and they will continue to provide a cost-effective means of ensuring that strategic requirements to meet a large wartime threat are also available. . . . Employing the Reserves in this fashion has proven necessary and effective and they have been relied on in every major military operation since Operation Desert Storm, yet the structural foundations of Reserve Component organization have been changed little to facilitate this employment."

Fully integrating with the Active Component and effectively operationalizing the Army Reserve are fundamental to the Transform imperative. The implementation of this imperative will return balance to the Army Reserve as we seek to grow the Army, modernize, undergo organizational and institutional change, and improve communications.

Grow the Army

As the Army Reserve continues to shape our force in preparation to support an era of persistent conflict, the challenge continues to be recruiting enough Soldiers to man units and equip new units with modern equipment compatible with the units and services with which we integrate and serve. Ready units will enable Soldiers as they train and prepare for deployment. Once activated, these modular units will increase our rotational depth and provide additional flexibility by having units that can be tailored to meet specific mission requirements for the Army.

In fiscal year 2007, the Army Reserve programmed to make efficiencies and reintegrate 16,000 spaces to build into modular operational units. Additionally, we will also add 1,000 spaces to our Force Structure Allowance. The approximately 17,000 spaces of structure incorporated into our Force will help to mitigate anticipated shortfalls in combat support and combat service-support personnel and equipment according to the Total Army Analysis. The Army Reserve resourced force will then be a force structure of 206,000—with an operating force of 145,500, generating force of 48,500, and Trainee, Transient, Holding, and Student force of 12,000.

The process of shifting our command and control from generating to operational commands is nearing completion. In the next two fiscal years, we will finalize the disestablishment of the 12 two-star readiness commands and transfer command and control of subordinate units to 11 one- and two-star operational and functional commands. This shift enables the Army Reserve to source more operational units from the space savings as a result of reductions in headquarters structure throughout the Army Reserve. Additionally, we will create structure savings as the four two-star Regional Support Commands (RSCs) are established during fiscal year 2008 to assume the base operations functions in support of more than 1,000 Army Reserve centers throughout the United States. These four RSCs will relieve operational commands of facility/garrison-type functions and allow these commands to focus on unit readiness training. The RSCs will be the Army Reserve's link to Installation Management Command to ensure standardization in garrison operations.

Modernize

As a result of historically low levels of modern equipment, the Army Reserve still faces equipping challenges, even though no Army Reserve unit deploys without a full complement of compatible or interoperable deployable equipment. In support of our transformation to an operational force, the Army has committed to spending approximately $5 billion in new equipment procurements for deploying Soldiers and next-deploying units in scheduled equipment deliveries between July 2007 and June 2010. These deliveries represent some of the Army's most modern systems—such as the biological integrated and detection systems, armored security vehicles, and various models of tactical-wheeled vehicles.

In fiscal year 2007, the Army Reserve fielded the joint biological detection system, the self-powered biological warfare agent detection and identification instrument suite, the all-terrain lifter Army system, and various communications equipment and individual weapon systems. The Army Reserve is also gaining aviation capability with the delivery of six of 36 HH–60 MEDEVAC helicopters identified in the Army Campaign Plan, and 12 AH–64D Longbow Apache helicopters as part of the Attack Helicopter Conversion program.

The centerpiece of Army transformation as well as the biggest acquisition challenge is the Future Combat Systems (FCS). FCS will link a new generation of 14 manned and unmanned ground vehicles, air vehicles, sensors, and munitions. The architectural platforms within each of the individual systems will be designed simultaneously, and will ensure compatibility and interoperability of combat support and combat service support with the combat forces.

The Army is modularizing all of its formations—in both the Active and Reserve Components—representing a net increase of new modern equipment required in all

components, and allowing the Army to retire several obsolete equipment systems. Modularity seeks to make independent, deployable organizations at the lowest levels possible. Decentralizing logistics support means recreating that capability at unit level. Cooks, mechanics, drivers, equipment operators, and warehouse personnel—once concentrated above platoon, company, and battalion level—are now required to support independent modular units. This also increases the requirements for equipment, including: trucks, kitchen trailers, material handling equipment, and computers, as well as logistics information and management systems. These are items that are often already in short supply within the Army Reserve. Modularity has put increased stress on a limited inventory of Modular Force and Modular Force-compatible equipment available to the Army Reserve.

Organizational Change

Transformation is changing the way logistics support and operations are conducted by the Army Reserve. Command and control and responsibility for unit logistics readiness are being transferred from the Regional Readiness Commands to Operational and Functional Commands, such as the 377th Theater Sustainment Command in New Orleans, Louisiana. Four regional support commands will provide logistics support for pre-mobilization training and domestic operations. The operation of Army Reserve maintenance and storage facilities, such as area maintenance support activities, equipment concentration sites, and strategic deployment sites, will become the responsibility of the regional commands. Critical enablers include renovated or new facilities and the required logistics information and management technologies for effectively and efficiently managing logistics readiness and operations.

The Army Reserve has a strategic commitment to fulfill the vision of the Army Campaign Plan. By 2013, we will have built 77 brigade force equivalents to include 12 multifunctional support brigades (nine sustainment brigades and three maneuver enhancement brigades) and 53 functional support brigades (three Army field support brigades, one chemical brigade, four engineer brigades, three military police brigades, three petroleum, oil, lubricant brigades, one signal brigade, ten medical brigades, two information operations brigades, one theater aviation brigade, and 25 regional support groups); eight civil affairs brigades; and two psychological operations groups.

—*Base Realignment and Closure Execution*.—BRAC 2005 has effectively "flattened" the hierarchy that characterized the Army Reserve force structure during the Cold War. As we convert to operational commands, we currently have five regional support groups with projected gains of two information operations groups, one combat support brigade, two sustainment brigades, one Army field support brigade, and seven expeditionary support commands. BRAC represents significant cost efficiencies to the American taxpayer via the Army Reserve; its mandate is to improve the support we provide Soldiers.

Institutional Change

Our transformation to an operational force cannot succeed without institutional change to adapt processes, policies, and procedures to meet the realities of current and future needs. A critical aspect of institutional change is our Business Transformation initiative, which challenges the Army Reserve to transform our business methods and culture to apply the best civilian business practices to increase effectiveness and efficiency.

Our Business Transformation Office, established in April 2006 at the U.S. Army Reserve Command, reviews all business processes for waste, inefficiency, and duplication, and assures best business practices. One of the most effective business improvement methodologies the Army Reserve has adapted from the business world is Lean Six Sigma, a business methodology to define and analyze opportunities and to measure, improve, and control performance. In order to maximize the unique skills and certifications Army Reserve Soldiers have that are not normally resident within the Active Component, we have identified more than 50 Army Reserve Soldiers highly qualified in Lean Six Sigma methodologies as a result of their civilian occupations. Utilization of civilian-acquired skills instead of relying solely on contractors provides a cost avoidance of approximately $3.5 million.

Additional best business practice oversight is conducted by the Army Reserve Internal Review Program to evaluate risk; assess internal controls; improve quality, economy, and efficiency; and foster stewardship. In fiscal year 2007, more than 350 internal reviews resulted in monetary benefits of over $34 million.

The Army Reserve, like the Active Army, is also concerned about problems in Army contracting; we are, therefore, committed to improving our contracting operations across the Army Reserve. Our plan to implement improvement initiatives

maintains that Acquisition Planning is critical for this effort to succeed. World-class acquisitions don't just happen—they are planned! Planning is the most pivotal activity the Army Reserve must perform in the acquisition process to ensure we get what we want, when we need it, for the most cost-effective, value-added, economical price.

In the military, we are trained to plan for combat. When planning for and conducting combat operations, we focus on the enemy by knowing the enemy, developing plans to keep the enemy foremost in mind, and strategizing war games that allow us to enhance or adjust the plan once enemy contact is made. As a vital component to the Active Army, the Army Reserve must approach acquisition planning the same way we approach planning for a military campaign. For an acquisition, cost overruns, schedule/delivery delays, and performance shortfalls are our enemy. We will develop our acquisition plan via market research, and finally, war-game the acquisition from start to finish, applying the Acquisition Planning Process. We will involve our supporting contracting professionals in every step of the process to ensure contract operations best practices and proper use of resources.

Communications

The geographic dispersion of the Army Reserve makes communications and information technology (voice, data, and video) services the primary means of conducting command and control, managing mobilization timelines, facilitating training data exchange, and providing Army Reserve "reach-back" capabilities to support the Combatant Commander and the Soldiers in the field. As the Army Reserve transforms to adapt to the emerging Modular Force structure, the Command, Control, Communications, Computers/Information Technology infrastructure supporting the mission must also adapt and expand mobile services to those Modular Forces.

Over the past two years, we have successfully consolidated information technology services including network operations, authentication, security/protection, e-mail, and critical application hosting, which have resulted in significant improvements in terms of systems availability and reliability. In coordination with the Army, the Army Reserve is executing a strategy for network convergence that will provide more robust access and service to Army Reserve mobile forces worldwide, and thereby tremendously improve the availability and security of these systems and application data.

At both organizational and unit levels, the ability to communicate via secure video teleconferencing and secure Internet communication are paramount for deploying forces. Services directly affected by mission changes include expanded bandwidth to relieve network traffic saturation; force protection and home-station command operations for locations within the continental United States; secure audio and video connectivity; and support for ongoing reach-back operations that provide logistics and personnel support and satellite operations.

Progressive change, as outlined in the Transform imperative, is essential for the Army Reserve to improve capabilities and to ensure our ability to regain balance as an operational federal force.

READY FOR THE NEXT 100 YEARS

The Army Reserve will require considerable resources and several years to optimize structure and build capacity for the future. Our plan to mitigate near-term risk and regain balance by 2011 centers on the four imperatives described in this report: Sustain, Prepare, Reset, and Transform. Recent decisions by the President, the Secretary of Defense, and Congress have accelerated the growth of the Total Force, increased the Army's access to the Reserve Component, and generated momentum needed to restore balance for the Army and the Army Reserve. Due to current operational demands, however, an imbalance exists between our supply of forces and capabilities and the Combatant Commanders' requirements for them. To enhance readiness for current operational demands and future challenges, we require sustained, predictable funding and operational timelines under ARFORGEN for the foreseeable future.

Although we have adapted our training for counterinsurgency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, we must rebuild readiness across the Army Reserve to succeed throughout this persistent conflict. Funding for the Army Reserve not only affects equipment readiness, but also Soldier readiness for current and future peacetime military engagements and major combat operations.

Sustain Army Reserve Soldiers, their Families, and their Employers

Failure to provide the resources necessary to sustain Army Reserve Soldiers, their Families, and their employers jeopardizes the ability for the Army Reserve to respond when the Nation calls. The Army Reserve has been able to manage the risk of mission failure thus far because we have not faced a major contingency operation

in conjunction with support to Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Such a contingency, especially one in the continental United States, would compromise the ability of the Army Reserve to train and supply the force for deploying missions. To mitigate this risk we continue a two-pronged approach: (1) provide Soldiers, their Families, and their employers the resources, programs, and services they deserve and the Army requires to ensure readiness and to sustain the All-Volunteer Force; and (2) procure modern equipment, appropriate facilities, and the full-time support personnel necessary to train the force and maintain equipment.

Failure to motivate our current and future Warrior Citizens to serve their Nation and to take care of our Soldiers, their Families, and their employers will adversely impact our ability to transform to an operational force.

Prepare the Army Reserve for Success in the Current Conflict

Without an immediate and continuing investment in procuring training dollars and sustaining enough Modular Force equipment to completely equip the Army Reserve, the ability to meet pre-mobilization training and mobilization objectives under the ARFORGEN process will be put at risk. Training on obsolete equipment is ineffective and wasteful. Failure to fund the maintenance (including parts, full-time personnel, and storage facilities) of new equipment will be more expensive in the long run. To mitigate this risk, the Army Reserve continues to fund the training resource model, including full-time personnel and the best available equipment. Additionally, the Army Reserve continues to fund and fully integrate Army Reserve logistics information technology to sustain future Army requirements.

Reset the Army Reserve to Rebuild for Future Contingencies

Shortfalls to repairing and replacing our equipment directly impair unit readiness. Lack of retraining and revitalizing our Soldiers directly impacts personnel readiness (to include Soldiers' Families and their employers). Simply put, failure to fully fund resetting the force, including equipment and people, hinders our ability to perform our Title 10 responsibilities. To mitigate risk during reset we will bring all of our current resources to bear on the problem. We will consolidate repair operations whenever and wherever feasible. We will consolidate training activities where we can. However, program support is critical in order to correct equipment shortages incurred as a result of the operational tempo our equipment has endured during this persistent conflict.

Transform the Army Reserve to Meet the Demands of the 21st Century

By increasing the depth and breadth of its overall capacity, Army Reserve transformation is improving the Army Reserve's ability to execute and support protracted operational requirements. Sustained resources to continue this transformation will improve the readiness of non-deployed Army Reserve forces, reduce stress on Army Reserve Soldiers, their Families, and their employers, and improve the readiness of Army Reserve equipment and facilities. Failure to support Army Reserve transformation compromises the Army's ability to develop relevant capabilities to respond to current and future operations. To mitigate this risk, the Army Reserve must continue to receive full funding of its budget request and retain flexibility to manage the force.

The Next 100 Years

The Army Reserve is a community-based, All-Volunteer, federal force. As the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves recently concluded, "There is no reasonable alternative to the nation's continued reliance on the Reserve." Ensuring that our force of skill-rich, Warrior Citizens remains relevant requires a significant investment from our Nation. Sustaining the Army Reserve requires resources to fund issues such as quality of life, restructuring initiatives, and the ability to provide competitive pay and benefits for our Soldiers. Recruiting and retaining our Warrior Citizens involves support from our communities, Families, and employers.

During our first 100 years, the Army Reserve repeatedly provided the most cost-effective federal force to the Nation. To remain a value-added, skill-rich Force that is the strength of the Nation requires your support to the Army Reserve now and in the future. We remain committed as a Force that is Army Strong!

Senator STEVENS. Our next witness is Vice Admiral John Cotton, Chief of the Navy Reserve.

STATEMENT OF VICE ADMIRAL JOHN G. COTTON, CHIEF, NAVY RESERVE

Admiral COTTON. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, and thanks for the nice comments. It has, indeed, been a privilege and real honor to serve the past 4 years.

As a result of our Active Reserve integration efforts in the United States Navy, I am proud to say this morning that our Navy Reserve is slightly over strength. That is a good position to be in. We recruit as a total force and we emphasize sailor for life and a continuum of service. It frankly has never been better. About 70,000 reservists this morning, about 21,000 on orders, about 5,000 are mobilized, and about 4,000 are in theater supporting Central Command.

We are fully funded to support the fleet and the combatant commanders, and that is the great news.

If I look back over the 4 years, the one item that we have not fixed that we talked about here 4 years ago is still a single pay and benefits system for all the services because back here in the States, we have our own systems. We need to go forward. It is very tough for the combatant commanders with all the joint forces that are there. I know we are working on it. We have some solutions, but it always seems to be a couple of years out. So I think that is something we need to work on in the future.

We also have all been working together. We mobilize a lot better than we used to. We fight extremely well together. We demobilize a little bit better. We still need to put a lot more attention, I think, into our wounded warrior efforts and especially our family efforts. And back in our States, each service cannot do it alone. We need to do it jointly, and I think that is where the Guard and Reserve components can really help out especially the active component members that are going forward on IAs and their families move back to their home States.

PREPARED STATEMENT

So, sir, I will put my statement in the record. I thank you for your support, especially to our National Guard and Reserve equipment account that we use to plug the holes where we have emergent needs for our warfighters, especially our expeditionary maritime security forces. Thank you, sir.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you, Admiral.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF VICE ADMIRAL JOHN G. COTTON

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Inouye, Senator Stevens, and distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about the capabilities, capacity, and readiness of the dedicated men and women who serve in our Navy's Reserve Component (RC).

With continued emphasis on Active Reserve Integration (ARI), our Navy Reserve force is more ready, responsive, and relevant as a full partner in the Navy's total force. Alongside Active Component (AC) sailors, RC sailors provide integrated operational support to the Fleet and Combatant Commands (COCOMs). Nearly 70,000 Navy reservists are deployed in support of global coalition forces, at their supported commands or in strategic reserve, ready 24/7/365 to surge to homeland defense. Since September 11, 2001, over 50,000 Navy reservists have been mobilized in support of the global war on terror, and on any given day more than 21,000 talented

men and women, or 30 percent of the Navy Reserve, are on some type of orders as part of the total Naval workforce, fully leveraging their military and civilian skill sets and capabilities. Included are about 6,000 RC sailors mobilized in support of Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM (OEF/OIF), and with this steady state requirement, we maintain the capacity to rapidly increase contingency support with more than 28,000 additional ready reservists.

Whether supporting combat operations in Iraq or Afghanistan, providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief at home or abroad or supporting daily Navy missions at every Fleet and COCOM, Navy reservists provide integrated operational support while continuing to maintain the RC's role as a strategic baseline.

As demonstrated through force generation, deployment, and redeployment, it is clear that RC forces meet two significant needs of our Navy. First, reservists deliver a strategic capability and capacity in support of major combat operations, and second, they provide operational augmentation to meet predictable and periodic routine military missions. By continuing to fully develop ARI, our Navy has institutionalized an operational Navy Reserve. The Navy simply cannot meet all Fleet and global war on terror requirements without the many contributions of its Reserve force.

The vision of the Navy Reserve is "Support to the Fleet—Ready and Fully Integrated." Our overall Navy Reserve force effectiveness is measured by the level of integrated operational support it provides to the Fleet and COCOMs. While some RC sailors are only able to perform the minimum contractual requirement of 2 drill-days a month and 2 weeks active duty each year, over two-thirds of the force are far exceeding these minimums while performing essential operational support. When the work is predictable, periodic and requires special skill sets, utilizing a ready and responsive reservist is often the most cost effective and capable solution.

On September 29, 2007, Admiral Gary Roughead assumed the watch as our 29th Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and issued his top three priorities to the fleet: current readiness, a Navy for tomorrow, and people.

CURRENT READINESS

Maintaining our warfighting readiness demands that we are agile, capable, and ready. We generate forces for the current fight and employ our Navy much differently than in years past. Simultaneously, we provide ready naval forces and personnel for Joint Force Commanders, sustain forward presence, fulfill commitments to allies and respond to increasing demands in regions where we have not routinely operated, specifically South America and Africa.

To provide sustained combat readiness, the Navy has moved from predictable deployment cycles to a more flexible Fleet Response Plan (FRP), under which a surge Navy is able to provide a requirement-based and continually ready posture which produces greater warfighting capability at reduced cost. As part of the FRP, a fully integrated and ready Navy Reserve provides an enhanced surge capacity to meet validated requirements with individuals and units. Our FRP increases operational availability and allows us to operate with greater flexibility. The RC continues to emphasize current readiness and is capable of engaging future geopolitical challenges as an affordable and effective element of our total force.

Our force readiness is comprised of two interdependent categories: sailor and family readiness. Sailor readiness is defined by the medical, physical and administrative preparedness of the sailor. We also recognize the fundamental contribution of the Navy family to overall readiness. Therefore, we must continue to provide families better and more responsive assistance which enables them to be prepared for their sailor's call to service.

Medical Readiness.—Navy Reserve continues to be a leader in individual medical readiness. Four years ago, Navy Reserve was 63 percent medically ready to deploy. Today, our force exceeds 84 percent medically ready, which leads all military components. Our significant improvement can be attributed in part to the Medical Readiness Reporting System (MRRS), which has given Navy leadership improved visibility of the medical readiness of the Force. As a comprehensive web-based management tool, MRRS has enabled leaders to identify deficiencies and promptly address them, as well as plan for future medical readiness requirements. Due to the success of MRRS in the Navy Reserve, all Navy and Marine Corps commands are being incorporated into the system, which will automatically report accurate and timely medical readiness. Additionally, the United States Coast Guard is also planning to implement MRRS this year.

Physical Readiness.—Navy Reserve continues to emphasize physical readiness for all sailors. We have established a culture of fitness by emphasizing both individual and command accountability for physical readiness. Every Navy unit has a Command Fitness Leader (CFL) who is responsible to the Commanding Officer (CO) to

administer the unit's Fitness Enhancement Program (FEP), which emphasizes individual physical readiness. Our COs are held accountable in their personal evaluations for their sailors' performance in the FEP. Commanders have visibility into the physical readiness of both individual sailors and larger units via the web-based Physical Readiness Information Management System (PRIMS). CFLs are enabled to enter data from physical readiness tests into PRIMS for each member of their command. Commanders then have the ability to accurately assess their units' physical readiness and adjust the FEP as necessary. Sailor readiness is also a primary discussion topic during weekly Reserve force communications, placing further command emphasis on the importance of medical and physical requirements.

Administrative Readiness.—The Navy Reserve has enhanced administrative readiness through the employment of the Type Commander (TYCOM) Readiness Management System—Navy Reserve Readiness Module (TRMS–NRRM), which provides a scalable view of readiness for the entire force. Commanders can quickly determine readiness information for individuals, units, activities, regions, and many other desired echelons. TRMS–NRRM, a Navy Reserve developed system, has served as a prototype for the Defense Readiness Reporting System—Navy (DRRS–N), which is currently under development by Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command for use by the total force. DRRS–N will provide a database to collect and display readiness information across the force enabling commanders to make real-time capability-based assessments and decisions.

Navy is considering additional options for total force systems that will reduce administrative impediments. The administrative inefficiencies created by multiple electronic pay and manpower systems create waste and unnecessary burdens on leadership and hinder force readiness. A common AC/RC pay system is crucial to the success of our Sailor for Life and Continuum of Service initiatives. In the future, manpower transactions will ideally be accomplished on a laptop with the click of a mouse, and records will be shared through a common data repository with all DOD enterprises. Navy fully supports the vision of an integrated set of processes to manage all pay and personnel needs for the individual and provide necessary levels of personnel visibility to support joint warfighter requirements. Manpower management tools should enable the ability for a financial audit of personnel costs and support accurate, agile decision-making at all levels of DOD through a common system and standardized data structure.

One constraint to these initiatives is the RC order writing process. Our current system has roughly 30 types of duty, including Inactive Duty for Training (IDT), Inactive Duty for Training–Travel (IDT–T), Annual Training (AT), Active Duty for Training (ADT), and Active Duty for Operational Support (ADOS). Numerous funding categories of orders are inefficient, wasteful and inhibit Navy's ability to access reservists and quickly respond to Fleet and COCOM requirements. Process delays are especially troubling at a time when we are relying on our reservists to serve as "first responders" in the case of a domestic emergency. A reduction in the number of duty types, coupled with a well-developed, web-based personnel management system, will enable RC sailors to rapidly surge to validated requirements. In addition to multiple types of orders, the disparate funding processes are equally complex. The consolidation of most RC order writing to the Navy Reserve Order Writing System (NROWS) has been a significant evolution in Navy's effort to integrate its Total Force capabilities by aligning funding sources and accurately resourcing operational support accounts.

Family Readiness.—We recruit the sailor, but retain the family; which means family readiness is more important than ever as we face the challenge of constant conflict with the expectations of multiple, predictable and periodic deployments. Navy is dedicated to the support of our families and is engaged in an ongoing effort to expand family support programs. Since our sailors are stationed in all 50 States, we have improved access to available family support resources, including those of the Guard. We have developed a family support program that employs professional administrators at each Navy Region Reserve Component Command (RCC) who are knowledgeable in every aspect of sailor and family assistance, especially for those mobilized and deployed. Recent initiatives include the Returning Warrior Workshops (RWW), pioneered by Navy Region Southwest RCC, which assist returning warriors and their families with a smooth transition from a deployed status. The weekend-long sessions include interactive group presentations by trained facilitators, breakout sessions, vendor information, and one-on-one counseling in a conference-style setting. Qualified facilitators help the participants cope with potentially sensitive and emotional discussions as they adjust to family life and civilian employment. By continually incorporating lessons learned, RWW effectively deal with the broad array of issues facing Navy families before, during and after deploy-

ments. Workshops also provide additional resources for sailors as they return to non-mobilized status.

A NAVY FOR TOMORROW

The global war on terror has demonstrated the increasing importance of the Navy's expeditionary capabilities. Emergent requirements enabled Navy leadership to program the expansion of our core maritime capabilities into the coastal and inland environments, and Navy Reserve continues to perform many important roles in these evolving warfighting operations. Almost half of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command (NECC) 30,000 sailors are reservists. NECC is an adaptable force which deploys Navy capabilities in the green and brown water environments and ashore. Our sailors perform a variety of global missions, including security on North Arabian Gulf oil platforms, counter-improvised explosive device operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, customs inspections in Kuwait and drilling and developing potable water wells in villages in the Horn of Africa.

Reservists comprise over 90 percent of the Navy Expeditionary Logistics Support Group (NAVELSG), a component of NECC. NAVELSG performs air cargo handling missions, customs inspections, freight terminal operations, and ordnance handling. Navy Customs Battalion (NCB) UNIFORM recently deployed with more than 400 reservists and typifies the diversity and relevance of the Navy Reserve as it supports the war from Main Street, USA. More than 107 Navy Operational Support Centers (NOSCs) in 43 States, Washington, DC, Puerto Rico, and Guam mobilized our diverse group of UNIFORM sailors who range in age from 21 to 58, and include; police officers, school teachers, postal clerks, safety inspector agents, engineers, trauma nurses, and carpenters. NCB UNIFORM is the seventh rotation of Navy Reservists activated to perform this unique mission in support of OIF.

Navy reservists are 60 percent of the Naval Construction Force (SEABEES), who help fulfill more than one-third of NECC's manpower requirements. SEABEES are engaged throughout Afghanistan and Iraq constructing base camps, roads, and airfields, and repairing bridges and buildings. Sailors have constructed school dormitories and water wells in Djibouti, erected shelters for flood victims in Ethiopia and provided humanitarian relief in Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh, East and West Timor, and the Philippines.

The Navy League recently honored a Reserve SEABEE with the prestigious Admiral Ben Morell Award for Logistics Competence. Senior Chief Equipment Operator (SEABEE combat warfare) Jason Jones, from Naval Construction Battalion 21, mobilized and deployed to Kuwait with a detachment of 145 shipmates. Drawing from his civilian construction skills, he successfully led his sailors to complete several vital projects, including the rebuilding of an operationally critical airfield in Afghanistan. Similar NECC RC operational support is evidenced daily in Naval Coastal Warfare with Embarked Security Detachments (ESDs), Maritime Civil Affairs Group (MCAG) and the Expeditionary Combat Readiness Center (ECRC). ESD sailors provide force protection for naval assets in the Suez Canal, Arabian Gulf, and Strait of Hormuz.

Because of their experience, Reserve sailors frequently train AC security team members. The MCAG works directly with civil authorities and civilian populations in the maritime environment and is capable of addressing issues such as maritime law, marine fisheries, port operations, security and immigration. ECRC, 25 percent RC, is a dedicated team of more than 200 professionals overseeing the training, equipping, deploying and redeploying of augmentation forces.

Navy Reserve sailors are fully integrated into the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE) and play critical roles in training, air logistics, adversary support, counter narcotics operations and combat support. Exemplifying the relevance to the total force, Reserve instructor pilots fly nearly 1,000 sorties per week while assigned to squadron augment units under the Chief of Naval Aviation Training (CNATRA). While only 10 percent of CNATRA's training squadron instructor cadre are reservists, they are responsible for about 17 percent of the instructional flight events. Fleet Logistics Support Wing assets are routinely deployed and provide responsive air logistics support to the Fleet and COCOMs. The active and reserve sailors of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron-84 are forward deployed in Iraq in direct support of combat operations. The Reserve sailors of Electronic Attack Squadron-209 recently returned from a 3-month deployment to Afghanistan. The Reserve sailors of Helicopter Antisubmarine (Light) Squadron SIX ZERO and Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron SEVEN SEVEN deploy in support of counter-narcotics operations under United States Southern Command. The missions that RC sailors perform serve to make the NAE more cost-effective and efficient, while capitalizing on the experience and maturity of talented reservists.

Expeditionary Capabilities. The global war on terror examples of surge support include:

SEABEES
Engineers
EOD
Supply Corps
Coastal Warfare
Cargo Handling
Customs Inspectors
Civil Affairs
Chaplains
Medicine/Corpsmen
Trainers/Instructors
JTF Staff Augmentation
Intelligence
Linguists
Public Affairs
IT/Network Support
Anti-Terrorism/Force-Protection (AT/FP)
Law Enforcement
Logistics & Logistical transport/airlift

Navy Medicine.—We value our RC doctors, nurses and corpsmen serving on hospital ships during disaster relief and humanitarian missions and supporting the Fleet Marine Forces ashore. At Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, 332 of 361 positions are currently filled with Navy Reserve medical professionals. When USNS COMFORT (T–AH 20) left its homeport in June 2007 for a 4-month humanitarian deployment, 10 Navy reservists embarked. RC medical professionals are critical to Navy's overall readiness, but are often unable to mobilize for extended periods due to the requirements of their civilian practices. Therefore, Navy is working to provide them flexible service options such as shorter but more frequent mobilizations and deployments. Feedback from RC medical professionals and potential recruits indicates that 90 days is optimum, but up to 6 months can be performed with adequate notification.

Alignment.—Flexibility is a key component to the success of ARI, and several initiatives aim to facilitate more effective and efficient operational support. Former Reserve Readiness Commanders now serve as integrated Navy Region RCCs, responsible to the region commanders for RC readiness, training, assets and surge capabilities within the region. Additionally, Naval Reserve Centers were renamed Navy Operational Support Centers to indicate that our mission is to provide ready, responsive, and relevant integrated operational support to their supported commands, the Fleet and COCOMs. ARI remains the catalyst for aligning our organizations and processes to CNO's guidance and strategic goals, providing increased warfighting wholeness and greater return on investment to taxpayers. Navy Reserve continues to lead change while emphasizing speed, agility, innovation and support to our customers; the Fleet, COCOMs, our sailors, and their families.

PEOPLE

Our sailors, Navy civilians and contractors are talented, dedicated professionals. We must devote our resources and shape our policies to ensure they are personally and professionally fulfilled by their service. Recruiting, developing, and retaining diverse and capable men and women are imperative to the success of our future Total Force. We must continually address the changing national demographic in order to remain competitive in today's employment market. Only 3 out of 10 high school graduates meet the minimum criteria for military service, and the propensity of our Nation's youth to serve in the military is declining in many areas.

The next generation, known as "Millennials," is now entering the workplace. These young men and women expect to change jobs or career fields multiple times, and they expect a life/work balance that permits them the opportunity to serve as well as attend to personal and family needs. Career path pay and benefits must evolve to a more flexible system that supports "off" and "on" ramps to and from active to reserve service, as well as temporary sabbaticals. Born into a globalized world saturated with information and technology, Millennials comprise 43 percent of our Navy and are more accomplished than previous generations. They are a technologically savvy and cyber-connected group who may find the military's hierarchical command and control structure contradictory to the flat social networks they are accustomed to navigating. The different paradigm under which this generation views the world and the workplace has implications for how our Navy attracts, recruits and retains top talent.

The members of the Millennial generation are reticent to consider military service as their first career option. The Navy must recognize and respect generational traits to ensure we appeal to those talented young people who we seek to recruit and retain. Today's influencers, most of whom have never served in the military, are often not inclined to steer Millennials toward a military career. Our focus in the next several years is building a variety of service options to entice potential recruits and striving to capitalize on the diversity and differences of our total force to ensure our Navy is a family-friendly, "Top 50" workplace.

Our talented personnel are the foundation of all we do, and Navy Reserve is dedicated to policies, programs, and initiatives that improve the quality of service for our sailors and their families. In fiscal year 2007, 12 percent of enlisted and 23 percent of officers who transitioned from the AC chose to affiliate with the Navy Reserve. Recent initiatives intended to attract transitioning sailors include higher affiliation bonuses, mobilization deferment and the Fleet-to-NOSC Program. Affiliation bonuses as high as $20,000 are offered to sailors possessing specific skill sets, particularly those in high demand for the global war on terror.

Mobilization Deferment.—To afford transitioning AC sailors who affiliate with the RC ample time to become settled in their civilian careers, the mobilization deferment policy was established. All veterans who affiliate with Navy Reserve within 6 months of transitioning from the AC qualify for a 2-year deferment from involuntary mobilization, and those who affiliate with Navy Reserve within 12 months are eligible for a 1-year deferment.

In order to be a competitive employer, our Navy realizes that we must offer opportunities for personnel to pursue their respective interests. We have initiated the AC to RC transition program, which is changing the paradigm of sailors who decide to terminate their AC service at the end of their enlistment. By providing veterans an informed, systematic option to convert to the RC, we preserve the ability to surge their talents and realize a much higher return on their initial training investment. Previous force shaping efforts have been designed to achieve a specific end strength, or "fill," but our focus has shifted to building a competency-based workforce with the right skill sets, or "fit," to more rapidly and effectively meet emergent global war on terror requirements.

Created by the Commander, Navy Recruiting Command, the Fleet-to-NOSC Program streamlines the Navy Reserve affiliation process. Thirty-two commands are currently participating in the program, and since its inception in November 2006, 27 percent more sailors have affiliated. In fiscal year 2009, this program will be expanded to allow AC sailors to select from vacant Reserve billets prior to transitioning. To facilitate the continuation of a Navy career, members will also have visibility of Navy Reserve positions located in the geographic area where the sailor plans to reside.

Health Care.—We have some of the finest medical professionals in the world serving in our Navy and the health care they provide to our sailors is a valuable recruitment and retention incentive. Our missions in OEF and OIF increased the demand for medical services in combat and casualty care. Another more complex aspect of health care is the mental well-being of our sailors returning from combat operations. Medical professionals are rapidly learning more about assessing and treating the effects of mental health issues associated with war, such as post traumatic stress and traumatic brain injury. We are constantly integrating these lessons into our health care system.

Wounded Warrior/SAFE HARBOR Program.—Our care for combat wounded personnel does not end at the Military Treatment Facility (MTF). The Navy established the SAFE HARBOR Program in 2005 to ensure seamless transition for the seriously wounded from arrival at an MTF through subsequent rehabilitation and recovery. As soon as our warriors are medically stabilized and arrive at an MTF, SAFE HARBOR staff members establish close contact with each severely injured sailor. Typical assistance provided by SAFE HARBOR includes; personal financial management, member or family member employment, permanent change-of-station moves, nonmedical attendant orders for assisting attendants, post-separation case management, travel claims, Veterans Administration and Social Security benefits and resolving administrative issues. Since its inception, 193 sailors, including 29 from the RC, have benefited from the program. We are committed to providing the individualized non-clinical care that each of these sailors and their families deserve.

Continuum of Service.—Essential to a dynamic, diverse, and capable Navy workforce is establishing a continuum of service by which a sailor may serve and reserve over the course of a lifetime. A Sailor for Life philosophy removes administrative and policy impediments and creates more flexibility to transition between active and reserve statuses, manage a civilian career, pursue advanced education and account for unique life circumstances. The Navy has asked Congress, via the Secretary of Defense, for authorization to begin a pilot program in fiscal year 2009. We plan to enable sailors to seamlessly navigate "off ramps" to the RC and "on ramps" to the AC. Our vision also provides the taxpayer a better return on investment by extending the opportunities for our personnel to serve, thereby taking full advantage of both military and civilian training and work experience. A well-developed continuum of service will create a Sailor for Life, ready to surge in support of national interests and defense.

Navy continues its total force approach to manpower management by utilizing an enterprise framework and providing cost-wise readiness. We are improving processes to deliver increased readiness and combat capabilities, provide better organizational alignment and recapitalize our Navy. The Navy Reserve has the capacity to meet current and future requirements and to continue to transform into the right Force for tomorrow.

SUMMARY

Since September 11, 2001, over 50,000 Navy Reservists have been mobilized to support the GWOT. Leveraging unique military and civilian skill sets and capabilities, our RC continues to transform and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of our commands while meeting all Fleet and COCOM requirements. As we strive to provide more responsive and relevant operational support, Navy Reserve will strengthen our culture of continual readiness while balancing predictable and periodic mobilizations for contingencies. Yes, we are asking more of our reservists, but they are responding and performing magnificently across all Navy enterprises while surging for the GWOT, serving as a strategic baseline and maintaining a ready alert posture for homeland contingencies. Our total Navy is a powerful force which will continue to enhance the opportunities for our sailors and their families to serve and reserve. On behalf of the sailors, civilians and contractors of our Navy Reserve, we thank you for the continued support of Congress and your commitment to our Navy's total force.

Senator STEVENS. The next witness is Lieutenant General John Bergman, Commander of the Marine Corps Reserve. General.

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JACK W. BERGMAN, COMMANDER, MARINE FORCES RESERVE, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS RESERVE

General BERGMAN. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, again and thank you so much for your kind words.

I am not the only one retiring from the leadership of the Marine Corps Reserve this summer. My sergeant major, Jimmy Cummings, will retire in August with over 30 years of service, and he is the reason that I can travel and do things freely because I know that those 60,000 to 70,000 young enlisted marines that we have under our command are well taken care of. In fact, he just returned from Alaska visiting our AT battalion up there, and he said they are plenty good on cold weather gear, but they need some other weapon strengths. We are going to take care of that.

Over the last several years, as we have realized that we are going to be in the long war for literally generations, the development of the force generation model within the Marine Corps has proven already to be paying dividends. What that means is we can tell an individual, we can tell the Congress, we can tell OSD when a unit is going with a level of predictability that before was not there. It was previously kind of a pick-up ball game, to be quite honest.

With that predictability now to tell that reservist 5 years from now you will be headed out with your unit again, it allows us to train, first of all, recruit to that unit, then train to it, set it up in such a way that over a 4- to 5-year period, building blocks of the training can be designed in order to, in the short term, prior to a deployment, possibly beyond the step of homeland defense, homeland security, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief missions, in preparation for a worldwide deployment at the end of the dwell time.

It is adaptable. We know that the enemy changes their tactics as quickly as we change ours. With the predictive model of the force

generation piece, we can adapt our training so that when those marines go to fight, they have the latest of the tactics, techniques, procedures that are going to enable them to fight and win.

Last, it is affordable. When you predict that far out, you know that a unit that is in the beginning of its dwell time may not necessarily need the resources and equipment and training, but it may need it more on the post-deployment, family support side to make sure that everybody assimilates back into society.

So the force generation model will allow us for the long term to be able to tell the people when they are going and to be able to tell the Congress and everybody else how much it is going to cost in the meantime and where we need to place our resources to keep our readiness level up.

Last, on the family readiness side, the Marine Corps, through the efforts of General Conway, has gone to a professional family readiness officer group where we are in the process of hiring people for full-time support of our units, both Active and Reserve, so that at all times, whether they are deployed or whether they are home in dwell time, we have a professional network that will provide the continued support. And that, dovetailing with the Yellow Ribbon Panel and all the efforts that are coming out from that, is a nice dovetailed approach to increasing the ability of our marines and their families and our sailors who serve with us to maintain a healthy level of physical and mental readiness.

PREPARED STATEMENT

Sir, again, it is a pleasure to be here with you all today, and I look forward to your questions.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you very much.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JACK W. BERGMAN

Chairman Inouye, Senator Stevens, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, it is my honor to report to you on the state of your Marine Corps Reserve as a major contributor to the total force Marine Corps.

Your Marine Corps Reserve fully understands that the road ahead will be challenging—not only in the immediate conflict in Iraq, but in subsequent campaigns of the long war on terror, which we believe to be a multi-faceted, generational struggle. In an environment where the total force Marine Corps must be able to rapidly adapt to broad strategic conditions and wide-ranging threats, your Marine Corps Reserve, a primarily operational Reserve, stands ready to meet the challenges before us.

We continue to recruit and retain the best of our Nation's sons and daughters. We continue to train them in tough, realistic scenarios and we continue to provide them the best equipment available.

On behalf of all our marines and their families, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee for your continuing support. The support of Congress and the American people reveal both a commitment to ensure the common defense and a genuine concern for the welfare of our Marines and their families.

TODAY'S MARINE CORPS RESERVE

Today's Marine Corps Reserve is firmly committed to and capable of war fighting excellence and continues to be a major contributor to the total force Marine Corps. We remain steadfast in our commitment to provide Reserve units and personnel who can stand as full partners with their active component counterparts while seamlessly performing in all contingencies. Today's Marine Corps Reserve continues to maintain the pace during the longest mobilization period in our history, and will continue to meet the challenge of sustaining that pace for the foreseeable future.

Last year I reported to this committee on the implementation of an integrated total force generation model that would lay out future activation and deployment schedules for Marine units. The model was designed to provide predictability for the individual Reserve marine who is striving to strike a balance between family, civilian career, and service to community as well as country and Corps. I am happy to report that implementation has been successful and we are about to activate the third rotation based upon the model.

To date, we have activated and deployed 6,600 marines in two rotations to Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom based on the model and are activating approximately 2,400 in April, May, and June of this year in order to train and deploy late summer to early fall. The predictability the force generation model provides has been well received by the Reserve marine who can now confidently plan for the future; whether going to school, building a civilian career, or making major family decisions.

The force generation model continues to assist service and joint force planners who can count on a consistent flow of manned, equipped, trained, and ready selected Marine Corps Reserve units to support future operations in the long war. This steady flow of Reserve force packages also supports our active component in reaching their stated goal of 1:2 dwell time. The model, based on a 1-year activation to 4-plus years in a non-activated status, continues to be both supportable and sustainable, thus providing the Marine Corps with a truly operational Reserve force. Predictable activation dates permit unit commanders to focus their training on core mission capabilities early in the dwell and then train to specific OIF and OEF mission tasks once they are within 12 to 18 months of activation. Furthermore, regularly scheduled dwell time enables our units to recover from past activation practices that had required substantial cross-leveling while simultaneously degrading parent unit cohesion in order to deploy combat capabilities. With each subsequent rotation, the requirement to cross-level Reserve units decreases. In fact, for an upcoming activation of 2nd Battalion, 23d Marine Regiment, we foresee little to no required cross-leveling of enlisted personnel in order to activate a full battalion.

We believe the full benefit of the force generation model will be realized once we have completed a full cycle of rotations, which is presently nine rotations per cycle, and the active component reaches the authorized end strength of 202,000. That, coupled with our use of the force generation model, will be instrumental in the Reserve component migrating to a 1:5 dwell time.

In addition to the 6,600 marines activated and deployed in support of OIF and OEF, an additional 4,000 marines from Marine Forces Reserve deployed worldwide in support of joint/combined security cooperation exercises in the past year as we continue to fill the gap left by a lack of available active component forces. Between OIF and OEF and security cooperation exercises, nearly one-third of our force has deployed outside the continental United States both in an activated and non-activated status, again, demonstrating the operational nature of the Marine Corps Reserve. We believe that this level of operational tempo will continue and we are prepared to maintain and sustain this pace for the foreseeable future.

During this past year, more than 3,500 marines from Fourth Marine Division have served in Iraq. Included are two infantry battalions, as well as armor, reconnaissance, combat engineer, and truck units. A highlight during this past year was the deployment of Battery F, 2nd Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, a Reserve unit from Oklahoma City. Battery F was the first Marine Corps High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) unit to be deployed in a combat role; thus demonstrating the success of horizontal fielding of equipment within the total force Marine Corps.

The Division also deployed two of its regimental headquarters in the role of Marine Air Ground Task Forces (MAGTF) command elements. The 24th Marine Regiment headquarters deployed as a Special Purpose MAGTF to U.S. Southern Command to support the new Partnership of the Americas series of small combined security cooperation exercises in South America, while 25th Marine Regiment headquarters led the MAGTF in support of the combined/joint exercise Talisman Sabre in Australia with more than 1,500 marines from across Marine Forces Reserve. The Division also conducted training to assist our friends and allies in foreign militaries from Mongolia to the Republic of Georgia. The Division continued its ongoing relationship with the Moroccan military during combined exercise African Lion. The upcoming year will be another busy one for the Division as they will conduct training in Nigeria, Ghana, Tanzania, Korea, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Curacao, Aruba, Argentina and Bosnia. They will also be returning for exercises in Morocco and the Republic of Georgia.

Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing has provided necessary exercise support and pre-deployment training as the active component squadrons continued supporting deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. The Marine Corps' premier pre-deployment training

exercise, Mojave Viper, received a majority of air support from our fixed wing and helicopter squadrons. Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing deployed Marine Wing Support Squadron 473 to run airfield operations and Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 773 (-) to support combat operations for Multi-national Forces—West in Iraq. Additionally, they deployed a Marine Transport Squadron Detachment with the UC–35 Citation Encore in order to bring time-critical lift capability to U.S. Central Command.

In addition to these missions, the Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing has participated in several combined, bi-lateral and joint exercises in Africa, Asia, and Australia. Support for these exercises not only includes supporting U.S. and Marine Corp forces, but also can focus on training and supporting our allies, as in African Lion, when our pilots trained Moroccan pilots in techniques of air-to-air refueling.

Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing is an integral partner in the Marine Corps aviation transition strategy. Focused on the long-term war fighting capability of total force aviation, the initial steps require a transfer of certain Reserve component aviation manpower, airframes, and support structure to the active component Marine Corps. As a result, two Reserve Fighter/Attack-18 squadrons will be placed in cadre status and a Reserve Light Attack UH–1N/AH–1W helicopter squadron, a Heavy Lift CH–53E helicopter squadron, an Aviation Logistics Squadron, and two Marine Aircraft Group Headquarters will be decommissioned. Another Heavy Lift CH–53E helicopter squadron will be reduced in size. Additionally, as part of the Aviation Transition Strategy, Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing has commissioned two Tactical Air Command Center Augmentation Units to reinforce the total force in the prosecution of the global war on terror. Long term, to complete the aviation transition strategy, Fourth Marine Aircraft Wing will be equipped with 21st century airframes and C2 capabilities.

Fourth Marine Logistics Group continues to provide the active component with highly skilled, dedicated personnel capable of delivering sustained tactical logistics support. During the past year, Fourth Marine Logistics Group provided more than 1,800 marines and sailors from across the spectrum of combat service support for its ongoing support of OIF. Also during this past year, Fourth Marine Logistics Group demonstrated the true meaning of total force as they provided a headquarters for an engineer support battalion comprised of marines from their own 6th Engineer Support Battalion combined with active component Marines from 7th and 8th Engineer Support Battalions and deployed in support of OIF.

In addition to ground, aviation, and logistic elements, Marine Forces Reserve has provided civil affairs capabilities since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Detachments from Marine Forces Reserve have augmented the supported Marine Air Ground Task Forces and adjacent commands with air/ground fires liaison elements. Marine Forces Reserve also continues to provide intelligence augmentation for Operation Iraqi Freedom, to include human exploitation teams, sensor employment teams, and intelligence production teams.

The trend in recent years toward increased participation of our Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) marines continued in fiscal year 2007. During the fiscal year, the Marine Corps Mobilization Command (MOBCOM) processed 2,500 sets of active duty orders for IRR marines. Consequently, the readiness requirements of our IRR marines and their families have also increased. We have modified IRR management practices accordingly. In fiscal year 2007, the Marine Corps Mobilization Command screened 4,000 more IRR marines than in fiscal year 2006, just short of 11,000 of the 60,000 marines in our IRR population. MOBCOM accomplished this by increasing the number of administrative musters conducted at locations throughout the United States and, also, by increasing the quality of communications between the Marine Corps and members of the IRR. Higher quality communications keeps our marines better informed and prolongs their connection with each other and our Corps. We believe that these longer-term connections will be critical as we truly seek to create the continuum of service necessary to support a sustainable operational Reserve and our total force through the long war.

In summary, more than 6 years into the long war, the Marine Corps Reserve continues to serve shoulder-to-shoulder with our active component counterparts. Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom have required continuous activations of Reserve forces. Accordingly, your Marine Corps Reserve continues to focus upon the future challenges of the total force and corresponding requirements of modernization, training and personnel readiness to ensure that the Marine Corps Reserve meets and exceeds its obligations within the total force.

While we continue to support the long war, it is not without a cost. Continuing activations and high Reserve operational tempo highlights the fact that we have personnel challenges in some areas and we are putting additional strain on Reserve equipment.

EQUIPMENT STATUS

The Marine Corps Reserve, like the active component, faces two primary equipping challenges: supporting and sustaining our forward deployed forces in the long war while simultaneously resetting and modernizing our force to prepare for future challenges.

Our priorities for supporting and sustaining our deployed forces are: first, to provide every marine and sailor in a deploying Reserve unit with the latest generation of individual combat and protective equipment; second, to procure essential communications equipment; third, to procure simulation training devices that provide our marines with valuable training to enhance survivability in hostile environments; and fourth, to provide adequate funding to our operation and maintenance accounts to sustain training and pre-deployment operations.

Our priorities in support of resetting and modernizing the force include the following: first, to procure principal end items necessary to reestablish on hand equipment to the level dictated by our training allowance, which is the amount of equipment needed by each unit to conduct home station training; and, second, to procure the equipment necessary to enhance our capability to augment and reinforce the active component. Since the Marine Corps procures and fields equipment as a total force, equipment modernization efforts of the Marine Corps Reserve are synchronized with the efforts of the active component.

As with all we do, our focus is on the individual marine and sailor. Our ongoing efforts to equip and train this most valued resource have resulted in obtaining the latest generation individual combat and protective equipment: M16A4 service rifles, M4 carbines, rifle combat optic scopes, improved helmet pad suspension systems, enhanced small arms protective insert plates, modular tactical vests, and the latest generation AN/PVS–14 Night Vision Devices, to name a few. I am pleased to report, as I did last year, that every member of Marine Forces Reserve deployed in support of the long war is fully equipped with the most current authorized individual combat clothing and equipment to include personal protective equipment.

Deployed Marine Corps unit equipment readiness rates remain high—above 90 percent. Ground equipment readiness rates for non-deployed Marine Forces Reserve units average 88 percent, based on training allowance. the slightly lower equipment readiness posture is primarily attributable to home station training allowance equipment shortages caused by sustainment requirements of the long war. The Marine Corps Reserve equipment investment overseas since 2004 in support of the long war is approximately 5 percent of our overall equipment. This investment includes various communications, motor transport, engineer, and ordnance equipment, as well as several modern weapons systems such as the new HIMARS artillery system and the latest generation light armored vehicle. This investment greatly adds to the war fighting capability of the Total Force while providing minimal impact to our home station training requirements. Deliberate planning at the service level is currently underway to reset the total force, to include resourcing the Reserve equipment investment made to the long war. This will allow the Marine Corps Reserve to remain ready, relevant, and responsive to the demands of our Corps.

Reduced supply availability continues to necessitate innovative resourcing approaches to ensure Reserve marines can adequately train in preparation for deployment, until the effects of supplemental funding produce tangible results. Despite ongoing efforts to mitigate shortfalls, the inherent latency in procurement timelines and competing priorities for resources will continue to challenge the training and equipping of Reserve forces for the long war.

Your continued support of current budget and procurement-related initiatives, such as the President's budget submissions, supplemental requests, and National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriations (NGREA), will guarantee our ability to properly equip our individual marines and sailors. Marine Corps Reserve equipment requirements are registered in each of these as part of the Marine Corps total force submissions. Reserve equipment requirements that cannot be timely met with these vehicles are identified as the Reserve portion of the unfunded priorities list and equipment procurement requirements are sometimes resourced by NGREA. It would be impossible for me to overstate the value and importance of NGREA to the Marine Corps Reserve. We appreciate Congress' continued support of the Marine Corps Reserve through NGREA. Since 2002, NGREA has provided more than $200 million to Marine Forces Reserve for equipment procurements. It is safe to say that we couldn't have provided some critical capabilities to our Nation without NGREA. Moreover, I want to emphasize this year the value of consistent NGREA funding for our Reserve components and specifically, the Marine Corps Reserve. In the last 3 years, through consistent funding, we have been able to "close out" equipment purchases—or to buy to our established training allowance—in 32 different end

items. Examples of equipment purchases we have been or will be able to close out using fiscal year 2006, fiscal year 2007, and fiscal year 2008 NGREA funding are: the Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer; the Medium Tactical Vehicle Replacement—Training Systems; the LITENING II Targeting Pod; the AN/ARC–210 (V) Multi-Modal Radio system for our KC–130 aircraft; the UC–12+ aircraft; and, multiple C2 systems components. We've also been able to come close to closing out other equipment purchases. If consistent NGREA funding is received in the coming year, and if requirements for these and other items of equipment do not change, we envision closing out four other equipment purchases with fiscal year 2009 funding: the BRITE STAR FLIR; the Tactical Remote Sensor System; the Deployable Virtual Training Environment; and, the HMMWV Egress Assistance Trainer.

FACILITIES

Marine Forces Reserve is comprised of 183 sites in 48 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. These sites are comprised of 32 owned, and 151 tenant sites. In contrast to active duty installations, normally closed to the general public, our Reserve sites are openly located within civilian communities. This arrangement requires close partnering with State and local entities nationwide. The condition and appearance of our facilities may directly influence the American people's perception of the Marine Corps, the Armed Forces, and our recruitment and retention efforts.

Marine Forces Reserve Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization (FSRM) program funding levels continue to address immediate maintenance requirements and longer term improvements to our older facilities. Sustainment funding has allowed us to maintain our current level of facility readiness without further facility degradation. Restoration and Modernization (R&M) funding continues to be a challenge due to its current $4.5 million programmed funding shortfall across the Future Years Defense Plan (FYDP) and an overall backlog of $130.2 million created through significant funding shortfalls in prior years. Currently, 10 of our 32 owned sites are rated C–3 or C–4 under the Marine Corps' facility readiness reporting system. Our OSD-mandated objective is to maintain levels of C–2 or better. The fiscal year 2009 budget, if approved, will see programmed upgrades for eight sites to C–2 or better, with the remaining sites programmed to meet C–2 or better by fiscal year 2010. The fiscal year 2009 budget attempts to bring the R&M program back on track to address remaining deficiencies. However, it should be noted that this funding does not address the reported backlog created through prior year funding shortfalls. As such, we continue to apply internal savings to address R&M projects at the end of each fiscal year.

The programmed R&M funding shortfalls in the current FYDP, when combined with lingering R&M requirements carried over from prior fiscal years, continue to increase the FSRM backlog exponentially over the FYDP. This jeopardizes our ability to meet the C–2 or better rating for quality by 2010. The fiscal year 2007 sale of the former Marine Corps Reserve Center in San Juan, Puerto Rico, will potentially provide funding to address nearly 20 percent of this combined R&M shortfall. Further use of Real Property Exchanges (RPX), and other similar laws, has been an invaluable tool towards addressing shortfalls and emerging requirements. The RPX program extension to 2010 will allow us further opportunities to use proceeds from existing older properties to fill gaps in minor construction projects for our centers to meet evolving needs.

The Military Construction, Navy Reserve (MCNR) program, including Marine Corps Exclusive and Navy-led projects, is addressing critical needs for new facilities to replace older buildings and accommodate changes in Marine Corps Reserve force structure. The President's proposed fiscal year 2009 budget contains $22.8 million for military construction and $836,000 in planning and design funding. Congressional approval of this budget provides new Marine Corps Reserve Centers in Atlanta, Georgia, and at the Naval Air Station Lemoore, California. Your continued support for both the MCNR program and a strong FSRM program are essential to addressing the aging infrastructure of the Marine Corps Reserve. With more than 50 percent of our Reserve Centers being more than 40 years old and 35 percent being more than 50 years old, support for both MCNR and FSRM cannot be overstated.

The Base Realignment & Closure (BRAC) 2005 is an area of continuing concern due to the limited funding for BRAC military construction projects. Unique to the Marine Corps Reserve BRAC program is the secondary impact to our Reserve Centers that are part of Army and Navy BRAC actions. Of the 25 BRAC actions for the Marine Corps Reserve, 21 are in conjunction with Army and Navy military construction projects, reflecting OSD policies toward shared joint Reserve centers. As

a result, any funding shortfalls experienced by these two services will have a secondary negative effect on the Marine Corps Reserve. Escalating prices in the construction industry continue to challenge the Reserves in narrowing the gap between funding requirements for projects and budgetary allowances. In fiscal year 2007, two of three BRAC projects awarded for Marine Forces Reserve required significant increases in funding over what was programmed, ranging from $500,000 to $3 million over the budgeted amounts. These factors challenge Marine Forces Reserve and its designated construction agents, as well as the other Reserve components, to award projects and comply with BRAC law deadline. The ramifications of this trend are that Marine Forces Reserve will have less funding available in later years for any overages and be forced to either significantly cut our requirements at the cost of facility mission functionality or move funds from other required facility programs. Adequate and timely receipt of funding for the entire BRAC program, including restoration of the fiscal year 2008 budget cut no later than fiscal year 2009, is essential to meeting the statutory requirements of BRAC 2005. The compounding effect of the back-to-back continuing resolutions we have experienced to date, during peak BRAC construction years, has heightened the risk that we will not meet statutory compliance by September 15, 2011.

Our Marine Forces Reserve Environmental Program promotes accepted stewardship principles as well as compliance with all regulatory requirements in support of training both on site and outside the fence line. Marine Forces Reserve has initiated a nationwide program to reduce waste production and ensure proper disposal at our centers. We have also executed several major projects to protect the nation's waterways near our drill centers. Continued funding is essential to ensure that both emerging environmental requirements are met and critical ongoing training continues.

TRAINING

Since 9–11, approximately 99 percent of U.S. Marine Corps Reserve units have been activated and 98 percent of those units have deployed to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and the global war on terrorism. The collective lessons wrought from their experiences abroad have helped improve nearly all facets of our current Reserve component training. In this regard, one of the most exciting areas where we are continuing to transform the depth and scope of our training is in the cutting-edge arena of modeling and simulations technology.

Rapid advancement in modeling and simulation software, hardware, and network technologies are providing ever new and increasingly realistic training capabilities. Marine Forces Reserve is training with and continuing to field several complex digital video-based training systems which literally immerse our Reserve Component Marines into "virtual" combat environments, complete with the sights, sounds, and chaos of today's battlefield environment in any clime or place, day or night, spanning the full continuum of warfare from high-intensity conventional warfare to low-intensity urban conflict.

Some of these new training capabilities that we are training with and continuing to field to support our Reserve marines stationed at our 183 training sites located throughout the country include the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship Trainer—XP. This interactive audio/video weapons simulator provides enhanced marksmanship, weapons employment, and tactical decision making training for a variety of small arms. The system consists of infantry weapons instrumented with lasers that enable Marines to simulate engaging multiple target types.

Another system that we addressed in lasts year's testimony that continues to prove invaluable in the pre-deployment training of our tactical drivers is the Virtual Combat Convoy Trainer—Reconfigurable Vehicle System. This is an advanced, full-scale vehicle simulator that trains Marines in both basic and advanced combat convoy skills using variable terrain and roads in a variety of weather, visibility and vehicle conditions. The simulator is a mobile trailer configured platform that utilizes a HMMWV mock-up, small arms, crew-served weapons, 360-degree visual display and after action review/instant replay capability. Marine Forces Reserve was the lead agency for initial procurement, training, and evaluation of this revolutionary training system, which is now being used to train the total force.

Starting this summer, we will begin fielding the newly developed Deployable Virtual Training Environment. This is an advanced, first-person, immersive, simulation-based training system, made up of 16 laptops and peripherals packaged in ruggedized deployable cases. The system is capable of emulating and simulating a wide variety of weapons systems and generating hi-fidelity, relevant terrain databases in any clime or place. It also provides small-unit echelons with the oppor-

tunity to continuously review and rehearse Command and Control procedures and battlefield concepts in a virtual environment. The system consists of two components, the Combined Arms Network providing integrated first person combat skills and Tactical Decision Simulations providing individual, fire team, squad and platoon-level training associated with patrolling, ambushes and convoy operations. Additional environment features include combat engineer training, small-unit tactics training, tactical foreign language training and event-driven, ethics-based, decision-making training.

All of these advanced training systems have been rapidly acquired and fielded with vital supplemental and NGREA funding. These critical funding resources are not only providing a near-term training capability in support of combat deployments, but are also providing a solid foundation for the transformation of our training environment from legacy static training methods to more realistic virtual combat training environments that are preparing our Reserve marines and sailors to succeed on future battlefields.

PERSONNEL READINESS

Like the active component, Marine Corps Reserve units primarily rely upon a first-term enlisted force. Currently, the Marine Corps Reserve continues to recruit and retain quality men and women willing to manage commitments to their families, their communities, their civilian careers, and their Corps. Despite high operational tempo, the morale and patriotic spirit of Reserve marines, their families, and employers remains extraordinarily high.

In fiscal year 2007, the Marine Corps Reserve achieved 100 percent of its recruiting goal for non-prior service recruiting (5,287) and exceeded its goal for prior service recruiting (3,575). As of April 1, 2008, we have accessed 1,890 non-prior service and 2,482 prior service marines, which reflects 50 percent of our annual mission.

Our selected Reserve population is comprised of Reserve unit marines, active Reserve marines, individual mobilization augmentees, and Reserve marines in the training pipeline. An additional 60,000 marines are included in our Individual Ready Reserve, representing a significant pool of trained and experienced prior service manpower. Realizing that deployments take a toll on active component marines, causing some to transition from active duty because of high personnel tempo, we continue to offer the selected Marine Corps Reserve Affiliation Involuntary Activation Deferment policy, which was instituted in June 2006. This program allows a marine who has recently deployed an option for a 2-year deferment from involuntary activation if they join a Selected Marine Corps Reserve unit. The intent of the 2-year involuntary deferment is to encourage good Marines to participate and still maintain breathing room to build a new civilian career.

I do anticipate greater numbers of Marines from the Reserve component will volunteer for full-time active duty with the active component throughout fiscal year 2008 as they take advantage of new incentives aimed at encouraging marines to return to active duty. These incentives support our plan to bolster active component end strength. the fact is we need good marines to serve longer, either active or Reserve.

Our focus is to provide an environment that attracts and retains dedicated, high performing individuals. For the current year, Reserve officer retention has thus far remained above historical norms. Enlisted Reserve retention is currently slightly lower than the fiscal year 2006/fiscal year 2007 average, and is being monitored very closely. We continue to offer several incentives for enlisted Marines to stay in the Selected Marine Corps Reserve, which includes increasing the initial 3-year reenlistment bonus from the current $7,500 level to the maximum allowable $15,000. I greatly appreciate the increased reenlistment incentive provided in the fiscal year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act.

Junior officer recruiting and consequently meeting our Reserve company grade requirement remains the most challenging area. At the beginning of fiscal year 2007, the Marine Corps modified an existing program and implemented two new Reserve officer commissioning programs in order to increase the number of company grade officers within deploying Reserve units and address our overall shortage of junior officers in our Reserve units. Eligibility for the Reserve Enlisted Commissioning Program was expanded to qualified Active Duty enlisted Marines. The Meritorious Commissioning Program—Reserve was established for qualified enlisted marines, Reserve and active, who possess an associates degree or equivalent number of semester hours. As of May 1, the Officer Candidate Course—Reserve (OCC–R) has proven to be the most successful of the three programs. Eighty-four candidates have been commissioned second lieutenants in the Marine Corps Reserve. The OCC–R fo-

cuses on ground-related billets. Priorities of fill for recruitment of candidates are tied to our force generation model.

In the long run, if the Marine Corps Reserve is to remain ready and relevant, we must begin to implement necessary changes to the superseded cold war reserve model. In particular, we must develop a new paradigm that allows our top performing marines to extend their service to the total force through a continuum of service. We must continue to develop policies and procedures that allow the seamless transition of individual reservists on and off of active duty and that would permit varying levels of participation by the servicemembers over the course of a military career. Current administrative policies routinely raise unnecessary obstacles to transitions between military jobs and duty status creating barriers to volunteerism. Presently, there are a significant number of different types of Reserve service, primarily tied to the cold war model of a strategic Reserve. In order to successfully transition a specified number of individuals and unit capabilities to an operational Reserve, that number of duty statuses could and should be reduced.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Whether we are taking care of our marines in the desert or families back home, quality of life support programs are designed to help all marines and their families. Because marines and their families make great sacrifices in service to our country, they deserve the very best support.

We are aggressively instituting new Family Readiness Programs, revitalizing services, and proactively reaching out to our young demographic to ensure our programs and services have transitioned to a wartime footing.

As part of widespread Marine Corps reforms to enhance family support, we are placing paid, full-time civilian employees to fill the position of Family Readiness Officer at the battalion/squadron level and above to support the Commander's family readiness mission. Modern communication technologies, procedures and processes are being expanded to support family members including spouses, children and parents of single marines.

The Marine Forces Reserve Lifelong Learning Program continues to provide educational information to service members, families, retirees, and civilian employees. The program is not only beneficial to career marines, but also those intending to transition to civilian life. More than 1,300 Marine Forces Reserve personnel (active and Reserve) enjoyed the benefit of tuition assistance, which paid out more than $2.6 million and funded more than 4,000 courses during fiscal year 2007. Tuition assistance greatly eases the financial burden of education for our service members while enabling them to maintain progress toward their education goals.

The Marine Corps' partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) and the National Association for Child Care Resources and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) continues to provide a great resource for servicemembers and their families in selecting child care, before, during, and after a deployment in support of the long war. The Boys and Girls Clubs of America provide outstanding programs for our Reserve Marines' children between the ages of 6 and 18 after school and on the weekends. Under our agreement with BGCA, Reserve families can participate in more than 40 programs at no cost. With NACCRRA, we help families of our reservists locate affordable child care that is comparable to high-quality, on-base, military-operated programs. NACCRRA provides child care subsidies at quality child care providers for our reservists who are deployed in support of the long war and for those active duty Marines who are stationed in regions that are geographically separated from military installations. We also partnered with the Early Head Start National Resource Center Zero to Three to expand services for family members of our reservists who reside in isolated and geographically-separated areas.

We fully recognize the strategic role our families have in mission readiness, particularly mobilization preparedness. We prepare our families for day-to-day military life and the deployment cycle (pre-deployment, deployment, post-deployment, and follow-on) by providing educational opportunities at unit family days, pre-deployment briefs, return and reunion briefs, post-deployment briefs and through programs such as the Key Volunteer Network (KVN) and Lifestyle, Insights, Networking, Knowledge, and Skills (L.I.N.K.S.).

Every Marine Corps Reserve unit throughout the country has a KVN program, which is a volunteer-based program that serves as the link between the command and family members—providing official communication, information, and referrals. The KVN proactively educates families on the military lifestyle and benefits, provides answers for individual questions and areas of concerns, and enhances the sense of community and camaraderie within the unit. L.I.N.K.S. is a training and mentoring program designed by Marine spouses to help new spouses thrive in the

military lifestyle and adapt to challenges—including those brought about by deployments. Online and CD–ROM versions of L.I.N.K.S make this valuable tool more readily accessible to families of Reserve marines who are not located near Marine Corps installations.

To better prepare our marines and their families for activation, Marine Forces Reserve continues to implement an interactive approach that provides numerous resources and services throughout the deployment cycle. Available resources include, but are not limited to, family-related publications, on-line volunteer training opportunities, and a family readiness/mobilization support toll free number. Family readiness educational materials have been updated to reflect the current deployment environment. Specifically, deployment guide templates that are easily adapted to be unit-specific were distributed to unit commanders and family readiness personnel, as well as Marine Corps families, and are currently available on our Web site. Services such as pastoral care, Military One Source, and various mental health services are readily available to our Reserve marines' families.

Managed Health Network (MHN) is an OSD-contracted support resource that provides surge augmentation counselors for our base counseling centers and primary support at sites around the country to address catastrophic requirements. This unique program is designed to bring counselors on-site at Reserve Training Centers to support all phases of the deployment cycle. Marine Forces Reserve has incorporated this resource into post-demobilization drill periods, family days, pre-deployment briefs, and return and reunion briefs. follow-up services are scheduled after marines return from combat at various intervals to facilitate on-site individual and group counseling. Additionally, we are utilizing these counselors to conduct post-demobilization telephonic contact with IRR marines in order to assess their needs and connect them to services.

The Peacetime/Wartime Support Team and the support structure within the Inspector-Instructor staffs at our Reserve sites provides families of activated and deployed Marines with assistance in developing proactive, prevention-oriented steps such as family care plans, powers of attorney, family financial planning, and enrollment in the dependent eligibility and enrollment reporting system. During their homecoming, our Marines who have deployed consistently cite the positive importance of family support programs.

To strengthen family support programs, we will continue to enhance, market, and sustain outreach capabilities. We believe current OSD-level oversight, sponsorship, and funding of family support programs properly correspond to current requirements. We are particularly supportive of Military One Source, which provides our reservists and their families with an around-the-clock information and referral service via toll-free telephone and Internet access on a variety of subjects such as parenting, childcare, education, finances, legal issues, elder care, health, wellness, deployment, crisis support, and relocation.

Marines and their families, who sacrifice so much for our Nation's defense, should not be asked to sacrifice quality of life. We will continue to be a forceful advocate for these programs and services. We will continue to evolve and adapt to the changing needs and environments in order to ensure that quality support programs and services are provided to our Marines and their families.

EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

Marine Forces Reserve continues to be acutely aware of the importance of a good relationship between our Reserve marines and their employers. We fully support all the initiatives of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and have been proactive in providing the information to our Reserve marines on the Five Star Employer Program, Patriot Award and Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Awards, which are tangible ways for us to recognize those employers who provide tremendous support to our men and women who go into harm's way. I recently directed all of my major subordinate commands to appoint a field grade officer to ensure that units have all relevant information to take full advantage of ESGR programs. This will ensure that the most current information is passed down to Marine Reserve units and personnel, and that all units comply with the new requirement for annual ESGR training at the company level. Reserve unit commanders are strongly encouraged to correspond with Marines' employers prior to deployment.

CONCLUSION

The Marine Corps Reserve continues to be a highly ready, relevant and responsive component of the Total Force Marine Corps. As our Commandant has stated in the past, "Our Marines and sailors in combat are our number one priority." There is

no distinction between Active or Reserve personnel or units regarding that priority. We fight shoulder-to-shoulder with our active component counterparts and our Reserve Marines have consistently met every challenge placed before them. Your consistent and steadfast support of our marines and their families has directly contributed to our successes.

As I've stated in past testimony, appearing before congressional committees and subcommittees is a great opportunity to showcase the absolutely outstanding long-term contributions and commitment of this patriotic group of citizens we have in the Marine Corps Reserve. It has been my honor to serve this great Nation and Corps for the past 38 years, and although I will be retiring from the Marine Corps in the near future, I look forward to continuing serving our great country and the Marines and families of the Total Force Marine Corps for many years to come. Thank you for your continued support. Semper Fidelis!

Senator STEVENS. Next is Lieutenant General John Bradley, Chief of the Air Force Reserve. General.

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN A. BRADLEY, CHIEF, AIR FORCE RESERVE

General BRADLEY. Senator Stevens, it is a pleasure to be here with you again today. Senator Mikulski, thank you for being with us as well, ma'am.

I am very proud to be the Commander of the Air Force Reserve, and as you indicated, my last hearing perhaps here. I want to thank you and all of the members of this subcommittee for the great support you have given us over these years.

I am very, very proud of my airmen in the Air Force Reserve Command, and I do not usually spend a lot of time introducing folks, but I do like to brag about my folks. And I want to tell you about our special 70,000 airmen we have doing great work for us today around the world.

Senator Mikulski will know. We have a very large air refueling unit in her State who do fabulous work for us in many areas around this country, providing air refueling support for important fighter cap missions and deployments. They do missions in the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility (AOR). They fly injured soldiers and marines and airmen and sailors from Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, back home frequently. So they are a great unit.

I hope perhaps I can talk to Senator Bond later about a fabulous A–10 unit in Missouri that deployed to Afghanistan last week for their third Afghan deployment in the last 3 years, which followed in 2003 a 9-month deployment to Iraq. They were on the ground in Iraq and flying missions, doing close air support for soldiers and marines in Iraq in 2003 for 9 months. I am very, very proud of that unit in Missouri, just as I am many others.

I have with me today representing more than 55,000 enlisted airmen my command chief, Chief Master Sergeant Troy McIntosh, with me in this hearing today, sir. Chief McIntosh helps me invaluably keep track of how our airmen are doing and tells me about the issues about which they are concerned and what help they need. He is a great advisor to me and I am honored to get to serve with him. Thank you, Chief.

I also have with me Colonel Eric Overturf, Senator Stevens, who is based at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska. He is the commander of the 477th Fighter Group which is our associate F–22 group flying with the 3rd Fighter Wing at Elmendorf, this phenomenal new air superiority fighter, the F–22. I am proud of Colo-

nel Overturf and the operations and maintenance folks that he has hired to help the 3rd Wing with its important mission in Alaska.

I also have with me Major Karen MacKenzie. Dr. MacKenzie in civilian life is a trauma surgeon who lives near Fresno, California doing trauma surgery every day. But she volunteered for a tour last year and deployed to Al Udeid, Qatar to be on a critical care air transport team, which is a team of a doctor and a respiratory specialist and a nurse to transport injured soldiers, marines, airmen, and sailors, and was involved in an alert scramble to Afghanistan following the crash of a Chinook helicopter with 22 Army Special Forces soldiers on board. Eight were killed in the crash; 14 survived. They were flown to Kandahar, Afghanistan, and her team, along with another team from Bagram Air Base triaged and took care of those 14 injured soldiers, put them on a C–17 within 2 hours and flew them to Landstuhl, Germany. She took them to the hospital and all 14 of those brave soldiers survived.

She is a fabulous representative of our medical community in the Air Force Reserve. We do 60 percent of the aeromedical evacuation for the Air Force in the Air Force Reserve. She is one representative of that great community that has saved so many lives of those who have been badly injured in Iraq and Afghanistan. So I am very proud to have Dr. MacKenzie behind me, as well as Colonel Overturf and Chief McIntosh.

PREPARED STATEMENT

I am very proud of all 70,000 airmen I have in the Air Force Reserve, the many deployments they do to support this Nation and our Air Force.

And I look forward to your questions, sir.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN A. BRADLEY

Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and discuss the fiscal year 2009 President's budget request of the Air Force Reserve.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Air Force Reserve. We remain an equal partner in the Total Air Force and an integral part of our Nation's defense. The Air Force Reserve has provided significant contributions during that time, made possible because we remain tier-one ready for the Air Force. We have frequently responded to global events within 24 hours of notification. For the last 17 of our 60 years, we have maintained a persistent presence in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility. It began with Operation DESERT STORM and we have been continually engaged, never leaving the Persian Gulf. During the intervening years we again responded to the needs of the Nation after the attacks of September 11, 2001, protecting the homeland through Operation NOBLE EAGLE and supporting operations abroad in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Air Force Reserve also supplied humanitarian relief in the wake of natural disasters both home and abroad following hurricanes, tsunamis and earthquakes. These efforts are possible because we have dedicated, professional, highly trained reservists volunteering to participate in these noble causes and the support of their families and employers.

The Air Force Reserve is a strong and steady Total Force partner. As operational demands continue, we face challenges that can adversely impact our readiness and overall combat capability. We are always alert to the need to stay ahead of those challenges so we remain strong partners in our country's defense. As an unrivaled wingman, we share the same priorities as the Regular Air Force: Win Today's Fight, Take Care of Our People, and Prepare for Tomorrow's Challenges.

WIN TODAY'S FIGHT

Air Force Reserve Global War on Terror Contributions

I am proud to say that your Air Force Reserve continues to play a vital role in support of our nation's Global War on Terror (GWOT). Side-by-side with our Air Force and Air National Guard partners, we continue to support the war effort primarily in a volunteer status.

Our Reserve mobility community stepped up with large numbers of volunteers and is providing essential support to combatant commanders. We currently have seventy-four C–17 and C–5 strategic airlift crews on long term active duty orders in support of the GWOT. Ten Reserve KC–10 crews remain on active duty orders supporting the air bridge, aerial refueling and other airlift requirements.

Our Reserve F–16s and A–10s remain engaged in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM with regularly scheduled rotations. We provide eighteen crews and twelve fighter aircraft to USCENTCOM annually for close air support missions.

With little fanfare, our Special Operations and Combat Search and Rescue units continue their support of combat operations. Although rarely receiving public recognition for their actions, our personnel are heavily engaged on the ground and in the air.

To date, sixty percent of the aeromedical evacuation sorties have been flown by Air Force Reserve crews, providing a lifeline home for the Joint warfighter. Since September 11, 2001 we have flown nearly 5,000 aeromedical evacuation sorties, safely delivering 26,769 patients: 11,030 litters, 10,955 ambulatory and 4,784 attendants. I could not be more proud of these men and women. Their selfless dedication and professionalism have saved countless lives and dramatically improved the chances of recovery for those injured in the line of duty.

Tier One Ready

We in the Air Force Reserve pride ourselves on our ability to respond to any global crisis or natural disasters immediately or within hours. The Selected Reserve is trained to the same standards as active duty Airmen for a reason. We are one Air Force engaged in the same fight. With a single level of readiness in the Selected Reserve, we are able to seamlessly operate side-by-side with the Regular Air Force and Air National Guard in the full spectrum of combat operations. As an equal partner in day-to-day combat operations, it is critical we remain ready, resourced, and relevant.

Combat Training

As part of the Total Force Integration initiatives, Air Force Reserve Officer Training School was moved to Maxwell AFB, Alabama and combined with the Regular Air Force Officer Training School. Recently the Air Force initiated several programs to incorporate additional combat training for our Airmen. For example, officer training now teaches fundamentals of unarmed combat to their officer candidates. This is just one part of a 70-hour course of expeditionary skills training.

Basic war fighting skills will be incorporated into Basic Military Training for enlisted recruits beginning October 1, 2008. This course will be two and a half weeks longer in order to produce more lethal and adaptable Airmen with emphasis on weapons training and participation in an intense exercise that replicates the deployed environment and the challenges it presents.

The Air Force is developing other training total force opportunities such as Common Battlefield Airman Training, and Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape training because the battlefield continually changes shape and venue, and Airmen need to be able to react and survive in any situation.

Fiscal Year 2008 National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account

A significant reason for our relevance as a combat force is the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA). The items we purchase with NGREA are prioritized from the Airmen in the field up to the Air Force Reserve Command Headquarters and vetted through the Air Staff. The cornerstone is innovation and the foundation is capabilities-based and has been for many years. I am grateful for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account because those authorizations enable us to remain relevant to the fight. The Congress provided $45 million in NGREA last year, with which we secured critical combat capability for our Airmen in the field.

—*C5A Airlift Defensive Systems*.—Protects our aircrews and C–5A aircraft from Infrared Guided Missiles.

—*C–130 Secure Line of Sight/Beyond Line of Sight capability*.—Provides clear communication, interoperability and improved situational awareness for our C–130 aircrews.

—*C–130 Small Arms Fire Lookout Capability*.—Procures troop door with large windows for C–130 aircraft to visually scan for threats to the aircraft and aircrew.

—*F–16 Upgraded Commercial Fire Control Computer*.—Enables use of the helmet mounted cueing sight and software improvements for continued upgrades to the aircraft.

—*LITENING POD Spiral Upgrades*.—Upgrades current targeting system by providing improved visual and guidance system.

This account is critical to the combat capability of the Air Force Reserve and the safety of our people. Many of the new capabilities resulted in top-of-the-line improvements that are directly tied to better Close Air Support for our Soldiers and Marines in both Iraq and Afghanistan. These capabilities save lives. There is much more we can do if we continue to receive your support.

Readiness Challenges

While we maintain sufficient combat readiness to meet our current missions, we are accepting risk in a number of critical areas. For example, Depot Purchased Equipment Maintenance is budgeted at seventy-nine percent. This reduces aircraft availability for training and operations. We will continue to work within our budget guidance levels to balance this risk and others while accomplishing wartime taskings.

TAKE CARE OF OUR PEOPLE

Family Support

It is a long standing belief the Air Force recruits members but we retain families, and that statement is as true today as in the past. As we continue playing a large role in prosecuting the GWOT, our members and their families are making huge sacrifices. While the Air Force's Air Expeditionary Force construct provides predictability for members, families and employers, we recognize the impact of the demands of operations and are committed to providing services and support to the families that support us so well. We continue to place considerable emphasis on looking for new, innovative ways to reach our Reserve families of deployed members as well as to continue to improve programs already in place. To meet their needs, our Air Force community support programs and services are there for both married and single Total Force Airmen, whether at home or deployed. New initiatives include predeployment, deployment, and post deployment Airmen and family wellness programs. Specific areas of improvement include a standardized predeployment checklist as well as mandatory, comprehensive redeployment services, post-deployment health assessment and reassessment, non-clinical counseling, and education on reunion challenges that Airmen and their families face.

In 2007, several surveys were launched to evaluate the state of our members and families. Included were the Community Action Information Board Community Assessment Survey, with 8,440 Reserve respondents, and the Caring for People Airmen's Questionnaire Assessment, which noted family as one of the top concerns. We continue to provide information and referral services, assistance with financial questions and concerns, family support groups, morale calls and video telephone access, volunteer opportunities, reunion activities, letter writing kits for children, and a myriad of other services.

The commuting nature of the Air Force Reserve combined with base closures and realignments create additional challenges for reservists and their families. Unlike the Regular Air Force, many of our Reserve members do not live in the local area of their host unit. In many cases, the families are scattered over various geographical regions, making access to centralized counselors difficult. With the transformation to an operational force, mobilizations and the need for more volunteerism, we are engaged in addressing several issues that have surfaced with this target population to include adjusting to the new steady state (more deployments, less predictable intervals and tour lengths, etc.), access to affordable child care, and employment opportunities. We are pursuing solutions to these problems and will continue to until they are resolved.

Force Shaping in Fiscal Year 2009

In the 2006 and 2007 President's budget requests, the Air Force reduced Total Force end strength by 37,000 full-time equivalents and reprogrammed active military, civilian, and reserve end strength funds into the modernization and recapitalization accounts. As a result of these actions, the Air Force Reserve reduced its end

strength from 74,900 to 67,500. Additionally, BRAC and Total Force Integration initiatives impacted nearly twenty percent of our personnel, many of whom we transitioned from operating, maintaining, and supporting legacy systems to new and emerging missions such as CYBER, Predator, Global Hawk, Falconer Air Operations Centers, and Distributed Common Ground Systems. Over the past three years the Air Force has made difficult choices in respect to its People, Readiness, Infrastructure, and Modernization and Procurement accounts. The Air Force is in the process of reevaluating its end strength requirements based on new and emerging mission types as well as Air Force support for manpower increases programmed for the Army and Marine Corps.

Recruiting and Retention

We met our recruiting goals for the last seven years thanks to our great recruiters and the many authorities and funding the Congress has provided such as increased bonus incentives, opening TRICARE Reserve Select at the lowest premium to all selected reserve members, and expanding the Montgomery G.I. Bill eligibility window from 10 to 14 years. Our retention targets are also being met. While we continue to maintain manning levels to meet mission requirements, we anticipate significant recruiting and retention challenges in the near term, and potentially the long term, due to base closures and mission realignments. BRAC also reviewed the Air Force Reserve's new missions and realigned some of the locations. We are not allowed to move our Reserve Airmen when we close a base or unit, as is done in the Regular Air Force. Reductions and displacement of reservists present significant recruiting and retention challenges for the Air Force Reserve.

One new mission area is the stand-up of an F–22 associate unit at Elmendorf AFB in Anchorage, Alaska, and Holloman AFB in Alamagordo, New Mexico. This mission will have reservists associate with their regular component partners on the fifth generation fighter. While we are excited about the opportunity, we have had to increase the number of recruiters for officer, enlisted and Air Reserve Technician positions to overcome the obstacles of this challenging recruiting market.

We must continue to identify opportunities to attract members separating from the Regular Air Force. With a shrinking pool of prior-service Air Force members, recruitment and retention of these experienced individuals is vital to avoid the costs of training non-prior service members. For some of our most critical specialties, affiliation and retention bonuses actually provide a greater return on investment versus recruiting non-prior service Airmen. Finally, force shaping authorities and incentives should be viewed from a Total Force perspective to ensure that provisions do not discourage continued service in the Reserve components.

PREPARE FOR TOMORROW'S CHALLENGES

Air Force Reserve Transformation

The Air Force Reserve is accepting an increased share in the Total Force partnership with accelerated mission growth and associations. We continue to combine with our Regular and Air National Guard partners to deliver 21st Century capabilities in Global Vigilance, Reach and Power.

The technological skills and civilian experience of Reserve Airmen are ideally suited to expanding the Nation's eye in Global Vigilance. To support Air Force dominance in space, the 310th Space Group at Schriever AFB, CO expanded to become the 310th Space Wing just last month. A further example of our growth in space is the increased manpower we are adding to associate with the Regular Air Force's 8th Space Warning Squadron at Schiever AFB, and the increase of our own 9th Space Operations Squadron at the Joint Space Operations Center at Vandenberg AFB, CA. The Air Force Reserve also operates a Global Hawk unit and other Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance systems at Beale AFB, CA, as well as Predator units at Nellis AFB, NV. All of these reservists contribute to the Nation's ability to gain and maintain awareness anywhere in the world, to provide warning and fuse data together to route relevant information to Combatant Commanders.

To extend the arm of Global Reach, we are creating Active Associations, where the Air Force Reserve has primary responsibility for the aircraft and the Regular Air Force will augment with manpower. This will occur with our KC–135s at Seymour Johnson AFB, NC and March ARB, CA, and with our C–130s at Pope AFB, NC. The Air Force Reserve will cease operating at Selfridge ANGB, MI and move manpower to augment the regular component in a classic Associate KC–135 unit at MacDill AFB, FL. In the third associate model, an Air Reserve Component (ARC) Associate, the Air National Guard is providing manpower to augment our Reserve KC–135s at Tinker AFB, OK. Additionally, we will host an Active Associate C–130 unit at Peterson AFB, CO, as well as an ARC Associate C–130 unit at Niagara

Falls, NY, the Nation's first-ever combat delivery ARC association. These units will provide responsive military capability anywhere on the globe to rapidly supply, position, or reposition Joint Forces.

To increase Global Power projection, we are assuming new missions by associating with the regular component in the F–22 at Elmendorf AFB, AK and will soon begin standing up an F–22 association at Holloman AFB, NM. In another new mission area, we will associate in the F–15E at Seymour Johnson AFB, NC. In a mission we are very familiar with, we will provide experienced instructors to train the Total Force in the A–10 at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ and extend operational experience in a classic A–10 association at Moody AFB, GA. These new and expanded missions help increase the Nation's ability to hold at risk or strike any target, anywhere in the world, and achieve swift, decisive precise effects.

Commission on the National Guard and Reserves

The Congressionally directed commission completed an extensive review of the Guard and Reserves' role as an operational force. In the report the Commission acknowledged that the Air Force Reserve has been a leader in developing the force to meet operational requirements while maintaining a significant level of strategic capability. The Commission recognized the uniqueness of each Service and acknowledged the need to develop discretionary authority that provides flexible tools for the Service Secretaries to use when meeting requirements. The Department of Defense is studying many of the recommendations and part of that review will be the impact on the budget if any of the recommendations are adopted in fiscal year 2009.

CLOSING

Mr. Chairman, I take pride in the fact that when our Nation calls on the Air Force Reserve, we are trained and ready to go to the fight. Everyday we have reservists who are training and deploying around the globe in support of our Nation's defense. Our ability to respond is due to our focus on readiness. In order to maintain this readiness, we budget wisely and ensure we have the proper funding levels to support our Airmen and weapon systems.

On behalf of over 67,500 Air Force Reservists, I appreciate the support this committee provides to our readiness and combat capability. The Air Force Reserve, as with the other Services, is facing many challenges. While we maintain our heritage of providing a strategic reserve capability, today and into the future, we are your operational warfighting Reserve bringing a lethal, agile, combat hardened and ready force to Combatant Commanders in the daily execution of the long war. We are proud of the fact that we provide the world's best mutual support to the United States Air Force and our joint partners.

Senator STEVENS. Well, thank you very much, and we welcome Chief McIntosh and Colonel Overturf. I am proud to have an Alaskan here. And, Dr. MacKenzie, thank you very much for distinguished service.

Let me call first on Senator Mikulski.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, thank you, Generals and Admiral. Of course, all the wonderful men and women in the Reserves, those who were introduced here and those here and around the world, we would like to just greet so personally, and we want to thank them for their service.

RETENTION

My concerns are recruitment—not recruitment, but retention. I think during this intense time and this intense OPTEMPO, you have done a good job with recruiting, but my concern is retention when one thinks about just the tempo of being a flight surgeon, if a flight surgeon or a chaplain were all that you do. Could you just go down what your retention rates are and what other kinds of support services, particularly either to the troops themselves or to their families, that we should be focusing on?

My concern is that they are very worried about their families and both their financial situation and then the stress of the kind of de-

ployments that they are being called upon that reserves never originally anticipated. Maybe we could just go down the line on that.

General STULTZ. Yes, ma'am. The good news is our retention rates are very good. Last year in 2007, we achieved 119 percent of our goals in retention. The good news about that is traditionally we have made our retention goals on the backs of our career soldiers who have 10 to 15 years and they are working toward a 20-year retirement.

Where we have struggled has been with our first-termers who joined and now they are trying to make a decision on whether they are going to continue. In 2007, our first-term reenlistment rate was almost 150 percent of goal. It was tremendous, which means these young soldiers, just as was epitomized here today that joined after 9/11, knowing what they were getting into, are staying with us.

So it is a good news story that we are meeting our retention goals and currently this year, we are on par for about 110 percent of goal at a time when we increased the overall number of our goal by almost 3,000. So we increased the total number, and we are still exceeding what our goals are.

To your question, though, we recruit a soldier. We retain a family. If you do not have the families with us, that soldier is not going to stay with us. And I think what we have got to do—and some of the panel here have already mentioned things like the Yellow Ribbon Program, the family support networks. We have got to continue to pay more and more attention to taking care of families and taking care of soldiers prior to deployment, during deployment, and post-deployment. And we cannot have this approach which we have a legacy strategic system that said we mobilize the soldier. When he comes back from Iraq, we take him off orders and send him back home, and fine, thank you for your service. We are done with you.

We know now that we are seeing things like post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, those types of wounds that manifest themselves 6 months after the soldier has returned, those types of injuries that the soldiers do not know they have got until they get back. And what we are looking at is instead of the traditional approach—I was gone for 22 months. I was gone from October 2002 through August 2004. I got ready to come home from Iraq and Kuwait, and they said to me, okay, tell us if there is something wrong so we can keep you. I am leaving. Okay, I get back to this side to my mobilization station, and they ask you the same question. Tell us if there is something wrong so we can keep you here. I am going home. We have got to change that approach. We have got to say, okay, let us get the soldier back with their family and then let us take an approach after they get home for the next 3 to 6——

YELLOW RIBBON PROGRAM

Senator MIKULSKI. General, I appreciate that. I know I have limited time on my question.

I would just like to say to my colleagues—and I am sorry Senator Inouye is not here and this has also been very helpful to the leadership of General Blum. Our Yellow Ribbon Program is something I have been advocating and one of the pioneer States was Mary-

land. It is the military reintegration program for when either the Guard or the Reserve comes home.

I think my colleagues would be stunned to know that the civilian leadership at the Pentagon did not include it in this year's appropriation request. Fortunately, our bipartisan leadership has chosen to include it in the supplemental which would pay, I think, $65 million and will cover 15 States and a down payment on those States that are initiating the program.

Our concern with the Yellow Ribbon Program is that it is an excellent program as far as it goes. But, General, I think what you are saying, even that excellent program does not go far enough because it is about an immediate reentry program, but if anyone has other issues that go on for a period of time, it presents challenges.

And what we heard at a Maryland roundtable—the Governor and I—was that for a lot of people, they do not really know what they need until they have been home 1 year, that year of just getting cleaned up and the noise level going down and all of the things that it takes just to reconnect. Has that been your experience that we have to think about the Yellow Ribbon Program not only as it is, but really what our men and women are experiencing?

General STULTZ. Yes, ma'am. We have got to be able to provide that soldier and his family the confidence that we are going to take care of them for any kind of related illnesses, services, or whatever no matter when it manifests itself.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, I know my time is up. But is this pretty much in agreement with what you all would say?

RETENTION

Admiral COTTON. Yes, ma'am. I just want to say retention is great for all of us, but it is not just numbers. We call that fill. There is also fit. It is the right skill sets. There are certain skill sets that are used over and over again. That compresses the back-home time. So that is what we have really got to work on.

Thank you to all of you. TRICARE Reserve Select went into effect last October 1 for all reservists. So if you are a drilling reservist, a selected reservist, a traditional reservist, you can buy health care. This is a huge, huge thing for our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines. And this has picked up our retention. So I thank you for that benefit.

Senator MIKULSKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator STEVENS. Senator Murray.

Senator MURRAY. I think Senator Durbin was here ahead of me. He can go ahead. I will wait.

Senator STEVENS. My list shows you came in first. Why do you not go ahead?

Senator MURRAY. Well, thank you very much, first of all, to all of you for all you have done for our country. I really appreciate it, and for all the men and women who serve in the Guard and Reserve. There are just tremendous tasks that we have asked all of them to do, and I want them to know how much we appreciate it.

KC–X PROGRAM

But, General Bradley, let me turn to you first for a question because I have really been working hard to better understand how

the KC–X program was run and to what level each branch participated in the selection process. As you are aware, this program is the number one procurement effort the Air Force has, and the selection process has been touted as the most thorough and transparent competition. And I wanted to ask you this morning if you could please tell this subcommittee what input the Air Force Reserve had on that selection process.

General BRADLEY. Senator Murray, the Air Force Reserve had no input on that process. As a major command like the other major commands, we are not in any way connected to the acquisition process.

Senator MURRAY. So you were not asked to give any input about this procurement process even though the Reserves fly a number of these tankers?

General BRADLEY. No, ma'am. I was not asked at all. I was not involved in any way. We do fly the current old tankers, but we are not part of the acquisition and no one talked to me or my command in any way about this program.

Senator MURRAY. I find that interesting.

Now, you know, this protest is now before the Government Accountability Office (GAO). So I know you cannot comment in particular.

But let me ask you a simpler question rather than something about that, and it is one I have asked General Moseley and Secretary Wynne. And that is, would you be proud to fly the Boeing 767, had that been chosen?

General BRADLEY. Of course, ma'am. Every airplane we have had over the course of my 41 years in the Air Force I think has been a very good, capable aircraft. There are many very capable aircraft out there. The Air Force is proud to have any aircraft. We would be proud to have any.

Senator MURRAY. Thank you. I appreciate that.

General BRADLEY. Yes, ma'am.

FULL-TIME SUPPORT

Senator MURRAY. Let me turn to a broader question. Each one of you has a full-time support entity within your organization, and with the increased usage of the Reserve component, do you feel you have the full-time end strength to fulfill your obligations to each of your active duty components' requirements? And I would like each one of you to respond. General Bradley, we can start with you.

General BRADLEY. Senator Murray, we have come down in size a little over the last couple of years. We have had a 10 percent personnel cut to help pay for acquisition programs, the same kind of cut that the active Air Force underwent. And what we have had to do is evaluate what missions the Air Force needs us to do the most and what the least, and we have had to cut some things out. We have had to do some reorganization. We have cut one flying wing out of our organization, as well as doing a lot of restructuring and closing of some smaller units.

That being said, we have enough people to do everything the Air Force wants us to do now. There are more things that they would like us to do, if there were more funds. So the Air Force has on its unfunded requirements list a personnel increase, if they had

more funds available, and they have included an Air Force Reserve piece in that unfunded request, a growth of 4,200-plus positions over the course of a few years.

Senator MURRAY. An unfunded request. So we need this but we do not have the funds?

General BRADLEY. Yes, ma'am. There are more things the Air Force believes it needs to do for this Nation, and they include the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard and all of those kinds of missions in which they are involved and the things they see for the future. They believe with the future we are presented and the threats we face, there are some more things we could do if we had more people and more funds, but we do not have enough funds in the budget for it today.

Senator MURRAY. Thank you.

General BERGMAN. Good morning, Senator. In the full-time support category, the active component Marine Corps for decades has provided over 4,000 active component marines to support the 183 sites of Marine Forces Reserves. Those active component marines, literally from the rank of corporal through colonel, come to serve with the Reserve component for a 2- to 3-year period. They bring with them the current tactics, techniques, and procedures that the big Marine Corps is using to go to the fight. That usage of those 4,000-plus marines over the course of the last several decades has paid off big time for us because our units were ready to go to the fight from the beginning.

The better news is that when those active component marines return to the big Marine Corps, they come with the knowledge of the challenges of the Reserve component when it comes to the integration piece and how it all works. We also have about 2,200 AR, Active Reserve, billets which are our equivalent of the full-time support. They are Reserve marines on active duty. Historically they did administration type of work. The number is about right.

But what we are looking at is providing two things: number one, career tracks for that small of a population, very challenging, especially on the enlisted side; but number two, providing them tours in the appropriate place. So if they are going to be viewed by the active component folks as experts in the Reserve component, they had better have served with the Reserve component in some way, shape or form. Otherwise, they are just another marine who may or may not be able to articulate the needs of the Reserve component. So we are focusing on restructuring those 2,200 billets to provide, number one, the career potential and, two, the expertise that is needed across the big Marine Corps in order to understand the nuances.

The best opportunity I believe we have for the future here is to provide the continued numbers dollar-wise of ADOS money, formerly ADSW, to bring now the new qualified reservist on active duty for 2 or 3 years and provide them opportunities as they work through their personal continuum of service. Now you have an individual, whether it be officer or enlisted, who can talk both sides of the equation with a level of articulation that everybody needs. So that is the big picture of where we stand.

Senator MURRAY. Excellent. Thank you.

Admiral.

Admiral COTTON. The Navy has enough FTS. Just like the Marine Corps, we fully integrate them. We have got about 760 FTS deployed right now in support of combatant commanders getting joint experience. The Commission on National Guard and Reserve recommended we continue this integration. FTS stands for full-time sailor. We are part of the Navy, not separate Active and Reserve.

And I think the highlight of this right now is the commander of Task Force 76 off the coast of Myanmar, or Burma, is Rear Admiral Carol Pottinger on board U.S.S. *Essex*, and she is a full-time support admiral and she is fully integrated in command of a task force. So this is what Navy has done in the integration.

Senator MURRAY. Excellent.

FULL-TIME SUPPORT STRUCTURE

General STULTZ. I echo what Jack Bergman just said. I think in the Army Reserve, two things. One is we have got to reform the full-time support structure. We have got to get more integration with active components and Reserve soldiers moving back and forth between assignments so that we get that experience level. And we can take a soldier who is coming back—let us say he has been with the 101st at Fort Campbell. He has done two tours in Iraq. Maybe he comes back and his next tour is in a Reserve unit where he gets some dwell time, but also he brings that experience back to us and helps us train that unit. In the meantime, I take one of my soldiers and put him in the 101st and let him get that experience there. So we have got to start getting this continuum of service with soldiers moving back and forth.

In terms of the number, though, we still continue to need additional full-time support in our forces. Now, when I have talked to the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Casey, I have said there are two ways to go about it. One is to give me more additional full-time authorizations or give me back the full-time support that are in what I call the above the line. They are in the DA staff. They are in the joint staff. They are in the COCOM's.

I have got 2,700 full-time support soldiers that are Army Reserve that are serving outside of Army Reserve assignments. They are supporting the Army staff. They are supporting the joint staff. They are supporting a lot of other operations, good experience in some cases, but they are coming out of my ranks.

And so we are looking and saying we need to recapture that 2,700 whether or not it is an increase in our full-time support authorization to make up for that or to give them back to me so I can put them back into those units where the readiness really needs to be.

We also need more flexibility. This cycle we keep talking about—and it gets to what Senator Mikulski was talking about with reintegration. As a unit goes through a 5-year cycle that we are going to put them through, when they come back from theater and they are in year one, I probably need a full-time staff that looks like a supply sergeant to get my equipment straight and accounted for, maybe a chaplain for reintegration. I probably need a trainer to get school seats for soldiers who need to go to school, those kinds of

things, some admin people to get orders straight, get reassignments and promotions accounted for.

But 2 years from then when they are getting ready to deploy again, they are about 2 years from deployment, I probably need to change the mix of that full-time structure, and maybe I need a full-time commander and a full-time first sergeant and a full-time operations NCO. And so I think one of the things we have got to do is make the system we have got more flexible.

Senator MURRAY. And what is the barrier to doing that?

General STULTZ. Part of it is the type of structure we have—military technicians as full-time people who we do not have the capability to move around like that. And then our own systems of where we designate full-time positions and it takes, for lack of a better term, an act of Congress almost to get that changed. And that is our own bureaucracy. That has nothing to do with you. It is our own bureaucracy. We have got to get more flexible in the way we do things.

Senator MURRAY. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator STEVENS. Senator Durbin.

Senator DURBIN. Thank you, Senator.

MENTAL HEALTH

I would like to address an issue which is not talked about a lot, but needs to be. Admiral Mullen briefed us recently and gave us a very candid briefing about the state of our military in terms of problems they are facing, both in continuing to serve in theater and after they return. He spoke, I thought, in very candid terms and honest terms about the toll that this war has taken on many of our great citizen soldiers, as well as those in the regular Army and regular branches of the service. And he talked to us about the concern he has about how long we can continue to ask these men and women to make the sacrifices that they are making.

We recently received a report through the Veterans Administration, November 2007. It found that 42.4 percent of National Guard and reservists screened by the Department of Defense required mental health treatment after service. Many of these citizen soldiers do not live close to VA facilities and have some challenges there.

The recent VA data on suicide deaths among returning veterans from Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) indicate that Guard and reservists account for 53 percent of those suicides. Significantly, only one in five had been seen at a VA facility before they took their lives.

When it comes to these issues—heartbreaking issues—of divorce, mental illness, and suicide, can you tell me what is going on in each of your branches now, having watched this war over more than 5 years with repeated deployments, longer deployments, strains on individuals and families that they might never have contemplated? General Stultz?

SUICIDES

General STULTZ. Yes, sir. It is a big concern of mine.

Now, we have looked at the suicides. I will tell you that our suicide rates in the Army Reserve have not spiked or increased. We are averaging about 20 suicides a year. Now, we used to report only those suicides that occurred while the soldier was on duty. We changed that policy because I said, no, when I lose a soldier, I lose a soldier. It does not matter if he is on duty or off duty. And it is my responsibility. So we have been tracking them for the last 3 years, and we have averaged right at around 20.

We have looked at the suicides and to date we cannot correlate anything with the deployment and the suicide rate. A lot of my suicides occur among soldiers who have never deployed, who are not facing deployment. They just have some kind of traumatic events in their life. And so in that relationship, I said, I cannot make the correlation yet. However——

Senator DURBIN. Excuse me. The 20 is for Army Reserve?

General STULTZ. Yes, sir.

Now, that being said, just as I spoke with Senator Mikulski about, what does concern me is the stress. What I have told my soldiers is everybody suffers stress from deployment. Everybody does. When I was gone for 22 months and came back and I went back to my civilian life at Proctor & Gamble and I was sitting in a board room talking about how many sizes of Charmin toilet paper do we need on the shelf, I could not take it. I said this has nothing to do with what is the reality in the world. That is stress. Now, how you deal with that is one thing.

But what we have got to recognize is every one of our soldiers goes through stress, and to me, every one of them needs to go through the mental counseling. Do not make it voluntary. Make it mandatory that everybody gets screened so that there is no stigma attached to it. And you do it 3 to 6 months after they come back.

Senator DURBIN. That was an excellent suggestion. I heard exactly the same thing from returning guardsmen in Illinois when they were sent to Fort McCoy in Wisconsin and asked, "Before you go home, do you have any problems?" The answer was, "Of course not." And they did. They just did not want to, in any way, be delayed in going home.

General STULTZ. Well, I think the other thing we cannot forget is the families and the kids. They suffer stress also. They have got to be part of this process.

I went down to Camp Rockfish last summer, which is one of our summer camps we have for children of soldiers that are deployed. We have Operation Purple Camps for all services, and then we have some Army Reserve camps. And we were talking to one of the counselors down there, and he said, you just got to understand what is going on in these kids' minds. Two young boys sitting there talking to each other and one of them said, when my dad comes back, and the other one said, they come back? He assumed he had lost his father. We have got to understand those kids. We have got to get them reintegrated also. So the stress is not just about the soldier. It is about the entire family. We have got to address that.

Senator DURBIN. Are you tracking divorce rates as well?

General STULTZ. Not to the extent we probably should, no, sir.

Senator DURBIN. Admiral.

MENTAL HEALTH

Admiral COTTON. I agree with everything Jack just said. We have had the same experiences.

I will add one thing, though. Going as a unit is far different than as an individual, and we are doing 1-year deployments for these provincial reconstruction teams, 15 months in some cases, prison guard duty, this kind of stuff. So it is tough on an individual family. This is where our total Navy has come into play, whether Active or Reserve. We shoot it exactly the same way. We used to have Reserve centers. We do not have them anymore. They are Navy operational support centers and they are manned by Active and Reserve in a State, Illinois, for example. And so anybody can get assistance there.

I have said before that we mobilize well and we fight well. We do not do well when sailors come home. We have found that at the 3-month, 6-month, maybe as late as the 9-month mark, we need a celebration of their service through a returning warrior workshop. They go to a nice hotel at about $800 per person or couple and celebrate who they are, what they did, receive certificates, and are treated to a nice dinner. This is also when the onset of the PTSD usually kicks in, like Jack said, and this is where you have representatives from the VA, other organizations there with phone numbers, Web pages, cards, handouts, so we aggressively go after these kind of things. And that has really helped here. But we have learned this over time. So that is one of the solutions we have.

Senator DURBIN. General Bergman?

General BERGMAN. Yes, sir. To echo what John and Jack have both said, unit deployment is key. Unit cohesion is key. We as the Marine Corps Reserve deploy our units largely as infantry battalions or squadrons. So they are together before they go. They are together after they come back so that minimization of isolation, especially after they return, is a big positive factor.

Plus, we only deploy into theater for 7 months, whether you are Active or Reserve in the Marine Corps, because we maintain a worldwide base forward presence that a 7-month deployment works for us as a service. That helps. But that reservist, of course, when they mobilize, is still gone for a year whether they are across the street or across the world.

The critical time after returning in our force generation model is that first year to allow them to reintegrate into their home life, their business life, but maintain whatever level of connection with that Reserve unit while they now rebalance their personal life. The positive connection helps. We do track that.

A challenge with tracking some of the folks is from the IRR, the Individual Ready Reserve, who come from all over the country as individuals and then return—our mobilization command tracks that better than we did before because we are now aware of the numbers that we have involved. And 16,038 folks today from the IRR are mobilized, and almost all of those are forward deployed.

Sometimes when a person gets back from deployment, they leave a unit. We are providing avenues for if they do not stay in touch with us, we are not hesitant to stay in touch with them. As ma-

rines tend to do, we tend to be a little direct at times, and it works because they know in that directness we care.

Senator DURBIN. Thank you.

General Bradley.

General BRADLEY. Senator Durbin, my colleagues have given you some good, thorough answers with which I would completely concur.

What I would say in addition is we do a lot of deployments as units, but we do, in the Air Force, a lot of individual deployments. I agree having units together is better and we have done a lot of restructuring of the deployments that we do to the AOR to gather more of our people from a unit together in one place. So we gather hundreds of reservists at one place instead of spreading people out more. That is helpful.

We also, when we bring them home, whether they are individuals or units, they immediately go to their families. We do not send them to a mobilization center or something. So we have a different approach on that. I think, as General Stultz mentioned a moment ago, getting people back to their families fast helps.

Also, having unit contact. We put great emphasis in our units on commanders and supervisors, first sergeants, senior enlisted folks, looking after our people and their families before deployment, during deployment, after deployment to make sure we stay in touch with these folks and have a handle on this.

There are many things we can do better, but I think we look after this fairly well. But we still worry about that stress. I would not compare the deployments that my airmen do to those that General Bergman's or General Stultz' soldiers and marines do due to length. Our deployments are maybe 4 months long or sometimes even shorter. Theirs are 7 months, 12 months, very lengthy, tough deployments. So no comparison there, I think. But there is still stress because my units are doing multiple deployments. As I mentioned earlier, many have deployed four and five times, shorter tours, but it is a lot of turmoil in family and their employment life. So that adds stress.

EMPLOYERS

Senator DURBIN. Let me ask one last brief question. How important is it when employers of your members of the Reserve are willing to make up the difference in pay for those who are activated? Is that important?

Admiral COTTON. I would say it is huge. We just had a brief yesterday from the Assistant Secretary of Defense of Reserve Affairs of a study that was just done on this. And I just have to compliment the employers of America and what they are doing for our Guard and Reserve. We are in a long war. They have stuck with them. If anything, I think it is accelerating at home. That is a really good sign.

Senator DURBIN. Thank you. I have tried for 5 years to get the largest employer of Guard and Reserve, the Federal Government, to do this, and I failed. But I will keep trying. Thank you.

I have also submitted a statement that I would like to have entered into the record.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR RICHARD J. DURBIN

Chairman Inouye and Senator Stevens, thank you for your leadership in addressing a very important part of our nation's armed services—our National Guard and Reserves.

The Long War

Over 1.6 million servicemen and servicewomen have now served in Iraq or Afghanistan. Over 262,000 have served as Guardsmen and 208,000 have served as Reservists. We have lost 454 National Guard soldiers in Iraq, almost five times as many as were killed in Vietnam.

The war in Afghanistan has gone on for seven years. It will last longer than Vietnam. There still is no end in sight.

This summer, Illinois will see the largest deployment of its National Guard since World War II.

2,700 Illinois National Guard members will deploy to Afghanistan, where they will help train the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police. For some, the deployment will be their second, third, or even fourth during their service.

These are the outstanding men and women of America. We ask them for their service, their strength, their courage and fortitude. They will spend a year using their talents to help rebuild Afghanistan.

Looking Out for Reservists

Deployed Guardsmen and Reservists don't just leave behind their families and their jobs. They often leave behind higher civilian salaries. A pay cut hurts any family, but it is especially painful for a family that also sees a mother or father deployed to war. I've offered legislation requiring employers to cover the salary difference for Guardsmen or Reservists called to active duty. I think it's right thing to so.

There are several good proposals for improving conditions for our Guardsmen and Reservists. Perhaps the most overdue is Senator Webb's GI Bill that improves educational benefits for all members of the military, including the Guard and Reserve.

"Stop-Loss"

But it isn't just about the benefits we make available. We need to respect the decision to step down from service, when a service member decides he or she is ready to move on to the next phase of their lives.

Today, the Pentagon prevents some from leaving the service even if their tour of duty is soon to be completed.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates issued an order in January 2007 to minimize "stop loss" for the active and reserve forces. The Army now says it will continue this practice well into 2009. At this time last year, 8,540 soldiers were serving involuntarily. Today, that number has surged by 43 percent.

We need to end this "back door draft" approach—and let these brave men and women move on to the next phase of their lives.

Caring for Reserve Veterans

I know we're here to talk about those who are serving, but we can't ignore the toll this service is taking on those who have served.

Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan are coming home with higher rates of traumatic brain injuries (TBI), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and depression, among other physical and mental wounds.

One in five suffers from TBI. One in five suffers from PTSD.

I introduced a TBI bill last year that was enacted as part of the Wounded Warriors title in the fiscal year 2008 Defense Authorization Act.

And we've expanded the VA's polytrauma capabilities to help veterans—active duty, Guard, or Reservist—suffering from multiple traumas, such as traumatic brain injuries, hearing loss, fractures, amputations, burns, and visual impairments.

These injuries are not always obvious or easy to identify, and once they are identified they will require a lifetime of care. But we owe our men and women in uniform at least that much. We're starting to see what happens when we skimp on diagnosing and treating these wounds.

Impact to Illinois

My home state of Illinois is feeling the impact of this war.

The Illinois Department of Veteran Affairs, led by Tammy Duckworth, launched the Illinois Warrior Assistance Program—a first in the nation program that will screen returning Illinois National Guard members for a traumatic brain injury (TBI). The program also offers TBI screening to all Illinois veterans, and a 24-hour

toll-free psychological helpline for veterans suffering from symptoms associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The Illinois Army National Guard needs more equipment. It has 61 percent of the "dual use" equipment it needs—equipment that can be used at war and at home for defense or disaster response.

The 2,700 soldiers deploying to Afghanistan this year serve in the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, at Urbana, Illinois.

To support this mission, the 33rd recently received $80 million for equipment. But at the same time, more than 30 percent of the Illinois National Guard's vehicles are outdated.

Conclusion

We need an honest and candid dialogue about the true cost of this war—not just the cost of fighting it abroad, but the cost to families, employers, and opportunities lost.

I look forward to learning what more we can do.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you very much.

Senator Cochran.

Senator COCHRAN. Mr. Chairman, thank you and thank all of you for being here today to be sure we understand and have the facts we need to help support your mission and help assure your success in defending the security interests of our country. We know this is a tough time and there is a lot of stress and questions, unknowns out there in the minds of those under your commands. And we appreciate the sensitivity that you have and that you have indicated this morning to the challenges to families and to the stability of communities in our country. We thank you for your service.

I know Admiral Cotton has this returning warrior program. You mentioned that a while ago. I am curious to know if the other services have anything similar to that. General Stultz.

RETURNING WARRIOR PROGRAMS

General STULTZ. Yes, sir. We have had, for some time, a reintegration program. Now, part of the challenge we had was the policy from the Secretary of Defense that was put out initially that said when a unit returns, for the first 90 days, there is a blackout period before they are able to drill again to come back together. We just recently got that changed because we said, no, we need to get our hands on that soldier immediately after they come back so that we can get hands on, we can talk. Plus, the soldier wants to get back with his comrades. So that was the first step, to get that policy changed.

The next step is this Yellow Ribbon Program which the Secretary of Defense and others are now pushing us to say we—they recognize that we have got to get a systematic approach that is not just you come back and 2 weeks later you are done. It is 3 months, 6 months, whatever approach, just as General Bergman said, almost a 1-year integration plan. So we are starting to put together those types of programs.

We do have programs like Strong Bonds, which our chaplains put on, where we pay for the couples to come together and talk about it like a marriage enrichment retreat. We started last year a singles program because we had a lot of single soldiers that said, what about us, and helping them dealing with problems, get reintegrated.

But we have got to do better at formalizing that and not just making it as here is where we can do this in a case-by-case basis,

but across the force. That is going to take money. It is going to take money to pay for, just as John said, getting them together in a hotel environment where you can bring the family together. It is going to take some money to bring in those types of services we need, whether it is mental screening or physical screening, or those types. But I think it is something we have got to do. If we are going to have an operational force, if we are going to be in an age of persistent conflict and we are going to call on the reserve components as we have to sustain this war, then we have got to put those kind of programs in effect.

Senator COCHRAN. General Bradley, what about the Air Force? What do you have?

General BRADLEY. Senator Cochran, sir, we do not have a formal program like Admiral Cotton described, but on a unit level, we do many things. Different units do this different ways, have welcome home ceremonies. They may have a barbecue welcoming people back, have their families, et cetera. Different units do it different ways.

We send people out as much as we can. I and other senior leaders in the Air Force Reserve try to go out and welcome people home off deployments. We like to shake hands when they get off the airplane and thank them for their service. And I go out as much as I can to visit units and thank people for what they do.

We do not have that kind of formalized program. Perhaps we should look at something like that. But each of our wings have different ways to introduce them to their families and units and thank them for their service, but no formalized program.

Senator COCHRAN. General Bergman.

General BERGMAN. Yes, sir. Both the Active and Reserve components of the Marine Corps have a defined return reunion program for the families. It varies after the point where that unit demobilizes, and now as the Reserve component, we spread out events over that year timeframe because we know for a fact, like we joke about in some ways before they leave, if we are having a family event right before that unit leaves, those folks are not paying attention to what is being briefed. They are holding onto their loved one. They know they are leaving.

When they return, they are still holding onto them because they are glad they are back. So we try to make sure that the program that is presented meets the immediate needs and keeps the door open, so 30 days, 60 days, 90 days down the road, if something develops, now they know that they have a place to go to get help. That is key.

Senator COCHRAN. We appreciate very much your leadership, and thank you very much for cooperating with our subcommittee and giving us the facts we need to help you and help defend the security interests of our country.

Senator STEVENS. Senator Bond.

Senator BOND. Thanks very much, Senator Stevens.

I want to say a sincere thank you to the great work that you are doing in leading a vitally important part of our combined forces. Without the Reserve, we would be in terrible condition, and your efforts have made a huge impact.

I am particularly proud of the Reserve A–10 unit at Whiteman Air Force Base which, I believe, has been three times to Afghanistan and apparently is preparing to deploy again. I would appreciate any comments that you have on that.

RESERVE A–10 SQUADRON

General BRADLEY. Senator Bond, I was bragging about that unit in my opening statement. I am glad you are here because I told them I would love to talk to you about it. I am very proud of them. In fact, I was honored to be the wing commander of that unit almost 20 years ago.

There is not a better unit in the Air Force Reserve than that wing at Whiteman, and they deployed last week to Baghram, Afghanistan for the third time. And I am going to visit them at the end of this month when I go over to Iraq and Afghanistan. And I will be proud to see them. They are fabulous airmen who are doing great work for America, doing close air support for soldiers and marines, NATO, and other coalition partners there in Afghanistan.

They are indicative of the other airmen we have in the Air Force Reserve, but I will tell you they are special. They also spent 9 months on the ground and in the air over Iraq from March to November 2003. So in 5 years, this is their fourth combat deployment, and I am very proud of them. And I will pass on your regard to them when I visit.

Senator BOND. Please do and give them not only our thanks and congratulations, but best wishes. Thanks very much.

General BRADLEY. Yes, sir, I will. Thank you.

Senator BOND. Thank you, Senator.

Senator DURBIN. Senator Stevens, if I might just make a comment. I would like to acknowledge, if it has not been acknowledged, that General Bradley is a few weeks away from retirement after more than 41 years of service to our country, and thank him personally for all that he has given us.

General BRADLEY. Thank you, Senator Durbin, and I have two colleagues who are not quite as old as I am who are leaving as well. And I am proud to serve with them.

Senator DURBIN. I wish you all the best. Thank you.

Senator STEVENS. Well, thank you very much.

Senator MIKULSKI. Senator Stevens, could I also make a comment, just a very brief one?

Senator STEVENS. Yes.

Senator MIKULSKI. We could talk even more with you, particularly in the area of Reserve medical units like the *Comfort*, homeported in Baltimore.

But I just want to thank you for your candid, very candid presentation here today to really talk about what more—whether it is the marines, the Air Force, the Navy, or the Army does. I just found the candor and the bluntness in the way you are standing up for the reservists to be really refreshing, and I wanted to thank you for both your service but really your advocacy for the men and women who serve under you.

ELMENDORF AIR FORCE BASE

Senator STEVENS. General Bradley, there was an experiment really at Elmendorf Air Force Base when you took the Air Force Reserve and melded them in with the active duty as far as the F–22 is concerned. Now, I understand that experiment is going to be followed now at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico. Would you tell the subcommittee members here what you have done and how that improves the whole operation as far as the total Air Force is concerned?

General BRADLEY. Yes, sir. I would be very glad to.

What you are talking about at Elmendorf Air Force Base is what we in the Air Force refer to as an associate concept where we have one set of airplanes that belongs to a particular wing and that wing, whether it is Active or Reserve or Guard, owns those aircraft. And then we put another organization alongside it that associates with it, and they have people who work on and fly those aircraft as well. We have done that in Alaska. We are hiring maintenance personnel. We are hiring pilots to fly our F–22's there.

And it has been very successful. I saw the active duty wing commander, General Tinsley, 2 weeks ago, and he told me he is so happy with the way this is working. And his reservists are doing tremendous work for him.

We do this all over the Air Force. Senator Murray is gone, but at McChord Air Force Base, Washington, we have a similar operation in the C–17.

We do it in many of the aircraft systems. It provides more capability, more people to work on and fly airplanes because the airplanes are more capable today than they used to be. And we need to keep them in the air more. Just as the airlines like to keep airplanes in the air, we need to keep them in the air so they can do more work because we have fewer aircraft today. So this provides more accessibility of the aircraft to the active Air Force and it also provides an experience base of guardsmen and reservists who are able to help fly these.

We have a unit in Senator Durbin's area at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, that does this with distinguished visitor airlift and special assigned mission aircraft, Active and Reserve working together.

So at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico, as you asked, Senator Domenici—I have spoken to him about this. We are going to stand up a similar organization at Holloman to the one we have at Elmendorf Air Force Base where we will have Air Force reservists flying and working on the F–22 right alongside active duty airmen who fly and maintain the aircraft.

It is a great concept. We have been doing it actually in some parts of the Air Force Reserve for 40 years in the air mobility business. So this association concept works well, and we do it whether it is the Reserve associating with the Active or Active associating with us. So in different cases, a different component may own the aircraft actually and the others associate with it. It is a proven concept that works.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you very much.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

The chairman and I will have some questions we will submit to you. I request you respond to them at your convenience.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the Department for response subsequent to the hearing:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL JACK C. STULTZ

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE

YELLOW RIBBON INTEGRATION

Question. Gentlemen, the Department is establishing a Yellow Ribbon reintegration program for all reserve components. I know that many of the reserve components have already been providing reintegration programs. What is your component doing to support the reintegration of reservists returning from deployment and do you expect your program to change significantly with the introduction of the Yellow Ribbon program?

Answer. The Army Reserve currently provides reintegration activities to our Soldiers and their Families through the entire deployment cycle. Activities include Marriage Enrichment Retreats, Single Soldier Retreats, Pre-deployment briefings and homecoming and reunion workshops for Family members.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense Memo dated April 15, 2005 on Policy on Involuntary Training Following Demobilization prohibits military training for at least 61 days following a deployment. The Yellow Ribbon Program will dramatically expand our current reintegration activities by allowing us to bring Soldiers on duty shortly following deployment along with their Family members specifically for reintegration activities. This will help us better identify and provide help to our veterans who are experiencing difficulties.

Additionally, our intent is to gather Families at the time of unit alert and again at pre-deployment processing to prepare them for extended deployments and help identify Families in crisis or those requiring additional support. We are developing the curriculum for our commands, utilizing medical and community resources, to provide counseling and initial intervention for those in need, as well as the outlets to help them overcome a myriad of issues based on stress, trauma, or Family crisis. While our Soldiers are deployed, Yellow Ribbon gives us the ability to invite Family members to the unit, on travel orders for one day, approximately 60 days after the start of the deployment and again, for one day 60 days prior to their return to continue to help the Family with existing or new issues that may arise. Once the unit returns home, we will begin the reintegration process by conducting three reintegration weekends centrally located to the command. The first two reintegration weekends requiring Soldiers and inviting Family members to attend will be held regionally and at centralized, off-site locations. Contracted professional child care will be available to those Soldiers who have small children. The third reintegration weekend will be for Soldiers only. All events will focus on reintegration back into the Family and community, and help identify medical issues that may begin to surface. We are engaging our Combat and Operational Stress Teams, the Military Family Life consultants, and the U.S. Public Health Service to help provide the expertise and classes to accomplish these reintegration events and activities.

We expect the Army Reserve Yellow Ribbon events to help reduce the stress of combat and extended deployment and separation, reduce domestic violence, reduce the number of suicides, lessen financial difficulties and allow for more timely intervention for those suffering from emotional disorder, mild traumatic brain injuries (concussion) and post-traumatic stress disorder.

ARMY RESERVE—FULL TIME SUPPORT (FTS)

Question. General Stultz, the Army Reserve has identified a requirement of an additional 9,000 full time personnel to support training and mobilization activities. The fiscal year 2009 budget does not request a significant increase in full time support personnel. Why has the Department not supported a significant increase?

Answer. The Department does not support a significant increase because they are currently conducting an extensive study on the Full Time Support (FTS) required for an Operational Reserve. In addition, the United States Army Reserve is also conducting its own analysis of the entire FTS structure.

Question. And do you believe that the shortage of full time support is affecting the operational readiness of the Army Reserve?

Answer. Yes, today's full-time personnel are major contributors across the full spectrum of the United States Army Reserve (USAR) operations. Fighting the Global War on Terrorism underscores the vital role Full Time Support (FTS) personnel have in preparing units for the multitude of missions both at home and abroad. The USAR Army Guard Reserve (AGRs) sustain the day-to-day operations of the entire USAR. The readiness level of the USAR units is directly tied to its FTS program.

Question. The Army Reserve's full time support personnel (Active Guard and Reserve personnel and Military Technicians) currently comprise 11.9 percent of its end strength, compared to 34 percent for the Air Guard and approximately 17 percent for the other reserve components. Only the Army Guard, with 15.9 percent full time support, is faced with a similar full time support shortage. A 1998 study, re-validated in 2006, supported the addition of 9,200 full time support personnel, bringing full time support to 16.8 percent of the Army Reserve's endstrength. The Army Reserve argues that even more full time support is now justified because of GWOT-related training and mobilization requirements. A new study is currently ongoing, with a December completion date, to re-evaluate full time support requirements.

Recently, the Senate Armed Services Committee authorized an additional 3,300 full time support in their fiscal year 2009 bill. The Army Reserve has not yet provided cost estimates for this increase. In addition, although the Army Reserve is now meeting its recruiting goals after a year or two of lackluster performance, it might still be difficult for the Reserve to recruit that number of full time personnel in one year.

General Stultz, the Army Reserve has struggled to achieve its recruiting mission in previous years, if given the authority and funding to increase your full time support levels in fiscal year 2009, how many positions could you fill?

Answer. At this time the United States Army Reserve (USAR) can fill 3,000 AGR positions in fiscal year 2009 if given the authorizations. Although the USAR has struggled in achieving its Troup Program Unit (TPU) end strength, we have successfully and consistently met the AGR end strength. As a result, we are confident we could fill the additional AGR authorizations.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN A. BRADLEY

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE

FORCE REALIGNMENTS

Question. General Bradley, the Air Force Reserve has been implementing several force structure adjustments as part of the Total Force Integration and base closure initiatives. The resulting closures and mission realignments have hurt Air Force Reserve retention. Now, as an additional cost saving measure, the Air Force is considering closing several reserve bases and transferring the units and personnel to active duty bases to reduce base overhead costs. How do you think this will affect the Air Force Reserve? Are you concerned that this will hurt retention levels?

Background

The Air Force Reserve is undergoing significant force structure adjustments. As part of the Total Force Integration plan, the Reserve is working to pool equipment and personnel resources with the active Air Force to maintain capabilities at a lower cost by associating a reserve unit and active unit with the same set of equipment. At this same time, the BRAC Commission realigned Air Force assets at over 100 facilities, recommending some bases close and other realign equipment and personnel. These changes affect 26 of the 37 Reserve locations.

The Air Force Reserve is very concerned about how these additional changes are affecting retention. Reserve forces are not as mobile as those of the active force so base closures and mission reassignments threaten to hurt personnel retention as many airmen choose not to follow their unit to another base or to learn a new skillset to perform their unit's new mission. Since these initiatives began in fiscal year 2005, the Air Force Reserve has seen a 2.2 percent decrease in retention levels with the largest losses coming from 1st and 2nd term personnel.

Now, just as the Air Force Reserve is more than halfway through this wave of restructuring, additional cost saving measures are being examined. In an effort to reduce base overhead costs, the Air Force is considering eliminating many reserve bases and relocating the unit and affiliated personnel to an active duty base. This realignment could cause the same retention difficulties created by the Total Force

Integration and BRAC initiatives because many reservists may chose not to uproot their families and leave their civilian jobs to follow their unit to a new base.

General Bradley, when do you expect the Air Force to make a decision on whether to go ahead with this restructuring?

Answer. The fiscal year 2009 President's budget request does not include any programmatic closing of additional Air Force Reserve bases beyond measures directed by the Congress in the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure round. The Air Force is currently deliberating its fiscal year 2010–15 Program Objective Memorandum (POM) submission to DOD, and as such, looks at many possible options to fund Air Force requirements. Most of the options discussed during this process never make it into the final submission to DOD. Since these options are pre-decisional it would be pre-mature to discuss any of the multiple scenarios that may be a part of the POM submission in a constrained fiscal environment. But Congress will be notified as soon as the fiscal year 2010 PB is final and releasable.

YELLOW RIBBON REINTEGRATION

Question. Gentlemen, the Department is establishing a Yellow Ribbon reintegration program for all reserve components. I know that many of the reserve components have already been providing reintegration programs. What is your component doing to support the reintegration of reservists returning from deployment and do you expect your program to change significantly with the introduction of the Yellow Ribbon program?

Background

The Yellow Ribbon program is a reintegration program for reservists returning from deployment. The program invites service members and their families to attend a weekend reintegration seminar at 30, 60, and 90 days after returning from deployment. It was started as an Army Guard program in Minnesota and is currently operational in a dozen states. The fiscal year 2008 authorization bill required the Department to establish a Yellow Ribbon program for each of the reserve components. To date, efforts are still in their infancy and the reserve components have not been given clear guidance about how to implement the Yellow Ribbon program and how to integrate it with any existing reintegration programs. So far, the Army is the only service to require military personnel to attend reintegration training, for the other components it is either optional or is incorporated into normal weekend drill activities.

Admiral Cotton, General Bergman, and General Bradley, I have been told that currently reintegration training is only mandatory for the Army, have you considered requiring your service members to attend reintegration activities?

Answer. Given the purpose of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, it is very likely that the required training will be mandatory and although optional for family members, will be strongly encouraged. High emphasis will be placed on providing our Airmen and their families with sufficient information, services, referrals and proactive outreach opportunities throughout the deployment cycle. Our mobilization process is often not unit based as compared to the Army and therefore our deployment distribution varies widely depending on the mission demands. Mass reintegration activities may not be our best avenue to help. We would also like the opportunity to personalize our efforts. Therefore, we are exploring the most efficient, effective, and creative ways to take care of our deploying Airmen and their families. We are currently exploring the use of telephonic outreach, screening and advocacy services by licensed behavioral health clinicians to personally contact and follow our deployed Airmen at the 30/60/90 day intervals. At the same time, we are taking a hard look at our current policies and perceptions to lessen concerns and stigma associated with seeking help. Available counseling services will be presented positively and communicated in a way that by electing to receive help, the Reservist's career will not be jeopardized. We also realize that trust must be built before reintegration activities achieve their intended purpose, mandatory or otherwise.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN W. BERGMAN

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE

REINTEGRATION TRAINING

Question. General Bergman, I have been told that currently reintegration training is only mandatory for the Army. Have you considered requiring your service members to attend reintegration activities?

Answer. Yes. As we move forward in our planning, we envision providing some of these activities at mandatory events, such as drills or musters.

RESERVE REINTEGRATION

Question. What is your component doing to support the reintegration of reservists returning from deployment and do you expect your program to change significantly with the introduction of the Yellow Ribbon program?

Answer. Since deployments commenced in 2003, the Marine Corps Reserve has developed and implemented programs to support Reserve Marines and their families, from predeployment through reintegration. The recent authorization to involuntarily activate Marines from the IRR introduced new challenges, and we expanded our embrace to Marines who had no experience with the Reserve, families who may have had no experience with the Marine Corps at all, and families dispersed far from any Marine Corps facility. Throughout the deployment cycle, we have experienced tremendous support from local communities and volunteer agencies, and see the Yellow Ribbon Program (Joint Deployment Support and Reintegration Program) as a tremendous asset in coordinating all of the available support. We also view the funding as an important component of the program, allowing Marines and their families to travel to activities that may have been otherwise impractical.

They JDSRP will open many doors for us, allowing the Marine Corps to tap into and share assets with other services, the State National Guard Bureaus, and the multitude of support services available through state and federal Veterans Administrations. It has defined the criticality of supporting Marines and their families throughout the four stages of deployment, but we are most aggressively formulating plans specifically designed to support the reintegration of our returning IRR Marines.

Current reintegration activities include:

—Tailored in-theater training for our unit leaders, focusing on combat operational stress control (COSC) programs (the symptoms and risks of untreated combat stress, how to recognize it, and both in-theater and home base resources to assist in its treatment).

—A standardized "Warrior Transition" presentation is delivered to each unit prior to leaving the theater of operations by the unit chaplain or CREDO trained chaplains.

—A standardized "Return and Reunion for Marines" presentation has been developed for delivery in theater by Chaplains or other qualified personnel. All Marines receive this brief before returning home.

—Upon arrival at the home location, Marines are made aware of the supportive services available through the Chaplains, Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS), Medical Treatment Facilities (MTF's) and Military One Source.

—To the maximum extent possible, Commanders are advised to allow time (through half work days perhaps) for returning Marines to "decompress" from their battlefield experience.

—Upon arrival at the home location, a Command Safety brief takes place prior to Marines being sent on liberty. This usually includes aspects such as standards of conduct, safety, alcohol and substance abuse, sexual harassment, suicide prevention, stress and anger management, and financial management. Our families also receive return and reunion information and support to ensure successful homecomings.

—Managed Health Network (MHN), one of the nation's leading mental and substance abuse health care organizations, provides counseling specialist(s) to individual units who are remotely located and unable to access local services and/or to augment local counseling providers. MHN is available to assist with predeployment briefs, deployment issues and especially return and reunion/reintegration issues.

—Post deployment telephonic contact for IRR Marines from Managed Health Network care providers at least once per month for three months after return from deployment and periodically for the following nine months.

—IRR administrative screening musters at Marine Corps Reserve sites, in large metropolitan areas and at Veterans' Administration hospitals which tie Marines into local services and employers as well as introduce them to VA and VA services.

We envision educating our dispersed families not only through web based support but through partnering with other service programs such as CREDO and Strong Bonds. We see moving beyond educating our Marines and families, and are even now working to build stronger relationships with employers and educational institutions, to ensure that our Marines have support in all aspects of their reintegration.

While the "Yellow Ribbon Program" is still in its infancy, we have provided a Reserve Marine representative to the Joint Deployment Support and Reintegration Program office and have worked with them already on our specific challenges and potential solutions. We coordinated most recently for the JDSRP office and the other Service Reserve Agencies, at the annual DOD IRR Conference.

RECRUITING AND RETENTION BONUSES

Question. General Bergman, to continue recruiting and retaining good people despite the high operational tempo, the Marine Corps Reserve has tripled bonuses this year from $5 to $15 million. The fiscal year 2009 budget requests only $5 million for bonuses. Do you believe that is sufficient to maintain your recruiting and retention efforts?

Answer. The fiscal year 2009 incentive dollar figure of $3.6 million was the original planning figure submitted during the budget programming process in the previous years. The fiscal year 2009 budget, like the fiscal year 2008 budget, will be adjusted to meet the Selected Marine Corps Reserve recruiting and retention requirements. The tentative dollar amount for fiscal year 2009 is $15 million, which we believe to be sufficient to maintain our recruiting and retention.

OPERATIONAL TEMPO AND MORALE

Question. How is high operational tempo affecting morale?

Answer. One of the methods used to gauge the morale of the troops is to look at retention and reenlistment rates. Our reenlistment rates have held steady over the past few years, indicating Reserve Marines are showing a desire to continue their service even during this period of high operational tempo.

Also, we have had over 200 Reserve Marines so far this fiscal year request to augment to active duty. Some of this is due to the fact that the active component has been authorized to grow to 202,000 and some new incentives have been introduced for augmentation. But also, we have seen a good number of Marines request to augment to active duty after demobilizing because they get a taste of the active duty lifestyle while activated and desire to stay active.

The Marine Corps Reserve continues to recruit and retain quality men and women willing to manage commitments to their families, their communities and their civilian careers, and their Corps. In fiscal year 2007, the Marine Corps Reserve achieved 100 percent of its recruiting goal for non-prior service recruiting (5,287) and exceeded its goal for prior service recruiting (3,575).

One of the initiatives we have implemented to help prepare Marines to serve during periods of high operational tempo, is the Total Force Generation Model.

The implementation of the integrated Total Force Generation Model lays out future activation, deployment and dwell schedules for Marine units. This predictability allows the individual Reserve Marine to strike a balance between family, civilian career and service to community as well as country and Corps by being able to confidently plan for the future.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO VICE ADMIRAL JOHN G. COTTON

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE

YELLOW RIBBON

Question. The Yellow Ribbon program is a reintegration program for Reservists returning from deployment. The program invites service members and their families to attend a weekend reintegration seminar at 30, 60, and 90 days after returning from deployment. It was started as an Army Guard program in Minnesota and is currently operational in several states. The fiscal year 2008 authorization bill required the Department to establish a Yellow Ribbon program for each of the Reserve Components (RC). The program is being fully established, with OSD (RA) as the lead, to assimilate it with any existing reintegration programs. So far, the Army is the only service to require military personnel to attend reintegration training, for the other components it is either optional or is incorporated into normal weekend drill activities.

Gentlemen, the Department is establishing a Yellow Ribbon reintegration program for all RCs. I know that many of the RCs have already been providing reintegration programs. What is your component doing to support the reintegration of Reservists returning from deployment and do you expect your program to change significantly with the introduction of the Yellow Ribbon program?

Answer. Navy Deployment Support Programs were expanded to support Individual Augmentations (IAs) from both the RC and Active Component (AC), and they provide support through all phases of the Deployment Cycle.

The primary reintegration event for returning mobilized personnel is the Returning Warrior Workshop (RWW), a weekend retreat in a non-military setting designed to attract spouse participation. The participating Sailor and spouse are provided cost orders to attend, and it satisfies an RC Sailor's drill obligation. The RWW assists members and their families in identifying any immediate or potential issues, and provides access to resources to resolve those issues. A key element of the program is a dinner honoring the Sailors' service and recognizing family members' sacrifices. The desired timeframe to attend an RWW event is approximately four to six months after deployment. Events are held in a wide variety of geographic locations, enabling Sailors and their families to attend. Attendance is voluntary, but strongly encouraged.

The RWW Program has requested and received additional funding, and it is undergoing a significant expansion in fiscal year 2008. The revised program will meet many of the additional requirements contained in the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program legislation.

REINTEGRATION ACTIVITIES

Question. Admiral Cotton, General Bergman, and General Bradley, I have been told that currently reintegration training is only mandatory for the Army, have you considered requiring your service members to attend reintegration activities?

Answer. The Returning Warrior Workshop (RWW), a weekend retreat in a non-military setting designed to attract spouse participation, remains the primary reintegration event for returning mobilized RC personnel. Events are held in a wide variety of geographic locations to make attendance easier for Sailors and their families. The attending Sailor and spouse are provided cost orders to attend, which also satisfies the Sailor's drill obligation. The RWW assists members and their families in identifying any immediate or potential issues, while also providing access to resources to resolve those issues. A key element of the program is a dinner honoring the Sailors' service and recognizing family members' sacrifices.

Attendance at an RWW is currently voluntary, but strongly encouraged. The RWW Program has requested and received additional funding and is undergoing a significant expansion in fiscal year 2008. As part of that expansion, we are reviewing alternatives to making the program mandatory for Sailors deploying in excess of 180 days. The revised program will meet many of the additional requirements contained in the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program legislation.

NAVY RESERVE OFFICER RECRUITING

Question. Although the Navy Reserve achieved its overall recruiting goal in fiscal year 2007 after falling significantly short in fiscal year 2006, the Reserve still fell far short of its officer recruiting goal. The Navy Reserve fell short of its recruiting goal by 48 percent in fiscal year 2007 and 56 percent in fiscal year 2006. In fiscal year 2008, the Reserve is on track to reach a reduced recruiting goal, scaled back to give the recruiting command a realistic target.

Navy officials attribute the shortfalls to high mobilization rates in some Reserve communities and the demographic of officers. Officers tend to be older, more likely to be married, have children and have better career prospects than many enlisted sailors so those sailors who leave the active component, tired of frequent deployments, are unlikely to risk frequent Reserve mobilizations.

In an effort to address the problem, the Navy Reserve increased the number of recruiters targeting officers and continues to offer more money for officer and medical officer bonuses. Last fall, the Reserve increased officer affiliation bonuses. For medical and dental officers serving critical wartime specialties, the accession bonus can be as much as $75,000 and a monthly stipend of $1,907 while studying in a medical residency program. The request for fiscal year 2009 requests $14.6 million total for officer bonuses, an increase of $3 million over fiscal year 2008 levels.

Admiral Cotton, in fiscal year 2007, the Navy Reserve fell 48 percent short of its recruiting goal of 2,000 officers and in fiscal year 2008 is recruiting to a reduced goal of 800. What measures are you taking to attract and retain more officers?

Answer. In fiscal year 2007, Navy achieved 52 percent of its Reserve Officer recruiting goal. The goal for fiscal year 2008 was set at 1,200, as opposed to 800 as stated in the question. We have also established upper bands that exceed the goal in several programs to allow and encourage overshipping to a level of 2,148. Through the end of April, 84 percent of the recruiting goal has been either commissioned or selected awaiting commission.

We are offering several monetary incentives to attract Officers to affiliate in the Navy Reserve: a $10,000 affiliation bonus for entry into 16 different designators; repayment (up to $50,000) of outstanding loans used to obtain certification in Critical Wartime Specialties in the Health Professions; special pay of $25,000 per year for Medical Corps, Dental Corps, and Nurse Anesthetists and $10,000 per year for Medical Service Corps and Nurse Corps; and a monthly stipend of $1,605 (which will increase to $1,907 on July 1, 2008) for officers in a medical residency program or post baccalaureate education program in a Critical Wartime Specialty.

A mobilization deferment was established as a non-monetary incentive to encourage Officers leaving active duty to affiliate with the Reserves. Those who affiliate within six months of transitioning from the Active Component qualify for a two-year deferment from involuntary mobilization and those who affiliate within twelve months are eligible for a one-year deferment.

We are making a concerted effort through advertising and other initiatives to reach out to Officers before they separate from active duty to inform them of opportunities in the Navy Reserve. Initiatives include increased advertising on Navy bases and in military newspapers, targeted direct mail, and e-mail to the members as well as their spouses. We have also encouraged Commanding Officers through the "Stay Navy" NAVADMIN to regularly discuss Reserve opportunities with their wardrooms.

To ensure continued future success, we have programmed an increase in Reserve Officer Recruiters in the field beginning in fiscal year 2009.

To improve retention among Selected Reserve officers, we are currently conducting analysis to determine which designators may benefit from application of a critical skills retention bonus. To assist in the retention of skilled medical officers and to encourage medical officers to acquire critical wartime subspecialties, eligibility for the Medical Special Pay, Loan Repayment, and Stipend incentives have been expanded to include current Selected Reservists accepted into a residency program.

NAVY RESERVE OFFICER SHORTAGE

Question. Admiral Cotton, how is the shortage of officers, particularly in critical specialties, affecting the readiness of the Naval Reserve?

Answer. For clarification of the first preamble paragraph, the following is offered: The Navy fell short of its Reserve Officer recruiting goal by 48 percent in fiscal year 2007 and 56 percent in fiscal year 2006. In fiscal year 2008, the Navy is on track to reach a reduced Reserve Officer recruiting goal to meet end strength requirements.

On a percentage basis, the top three specialties mobilized to date are Civil Engineers, Supply Corps, and SEALs. Although inventory is below requirements in these communities, the Navy Reserve is able to meet current mobilization requirements in all of these specialties, therefore maintaining required readiness.

We are encouraged by the success of this year's recruiting efforts. Through April, we are exceeding last year's attainment in all three specialties, in both real numbers and percentage of goal attained. To support affiliation, Officers in these specialties receive the maximum Reserve affiliation bonuses allowed by law, and Veterans transitioning from Active Component to Reserve Component within six months after their end of obligated active service are provided a two-year deferment from mobilization to allow establishment of their civilian careers. A retention bonus will be funded for RC Officers as resources are available. The retention bonus will target Junior Officers in specialties that are determined to be limited supply/high demand by Officer Community Managers.

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

Senator STEVENS. We are now going to move on to the next panel. We do thank you for your service. Again, the three of you are retiring as young men. I have recognized that. You should follow the advice of my first father-in-law who said only in the English language does the word "retire" mean other than go to bed. So I expect you to have full careers after you leave this job. We might even welcome you up here. You ought to think about it.

Thank you very much.

We will now ask General Blum, General Vaughn, and General McKinley to come forward to testify concerning the National Guard Bureau.

Thank you very much. We will now to turn to panel two. Our witnesses are Lieutenant General H Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, and Lieutenant General Clyde A. Vaughn, the Army National Guard Director, and Lieutenant General Craig R. McKinley, the Director of the Air National Guard.

Gentlemen, as we indicated, your statements will be included in the record in full. We appreciate if you would make your statements or whatever presentations you wish to make to the subcommittee. We will first call on General Blum.

General BLUM. Ranking Member Stevens and distinguished members of the subcommittee, it is an honor and privilege to be before you here today with my two colleagues, General McKinley and General Vaughn, my right hand and left hand when it comes to the Army and the Air Guard. The leadership of the National Guard Bureau is here today, and we brought our senior enlisted leaders to talk to you about the readiness of your National Guard and answer any concerns or questions you might have.

At this time, I would ask General Vaughn to introduce his senior enlisted advisor and a guest, please.

Senator STEVENS. General.

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL CLYDE A. VAUGHN, DIRECTOR, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

ACCOMPANIED BY SERGEANT MAJOR JOHN GIPE, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

General VAUGHN. Senator Stevens, distinguished members, thank you very much. It is quite an honor to be here.

We have an enormously strong Army National Guard. We appreciate everything that this subcommittee has done. We just could not have come close and stayed here and be in the position we are at today. A couple years ago, it was an entirely different story. And we have a lot to appreciate from this subcommittee.

I would like to introduce the command sergeant major of the Army National Guard, all 358,000 of them. Sergeant Major John Gipe.

Sergeant GIPE. Thank you, sir. Mr. Chairman, it is my distinct honor here today to introduce two outstanding young Americans from Ames, Iowa, Specialist Jay Winkowski and his wife of 9 months, Lisa. Specialist Winkowski mobilized with the Iowa Army National Guard in October 2005 with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry for a deployment to Iraq. They arrived in Iraq in March 2006 at Al Asad Air Base in Al Anbar Province where he served for 16 months.

Specialist Winkowski's duties while he was deployed was as the battalion commander's driver and communications specialist. While deployed, he was honored with being named the battalion soldier of the quarter and the soldier of the quarter for Al Asad Air Base. He also earned the combat infantryman's badge for direct combat action against the enemy.

When he returned home in August 2007, after being deployed for 22 months, he attended the warrior leaders course where he graduated as a distinguished graduate.

It is a great honor to introduce these two fine, outstanding young Americans to you. Thank you, sir.

Senator STEVENS. We welcome you and your new bride. Thank you.

General BLUM. Similarly, I would like General McKinley to have the same opportunity on the Air Guard side.

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL CRAIG R. McKINLEY, DIRECTOR, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

General MCKINLEY. Thanks, General Blum.

It is a pleasure, Senator Stevens, to be with you and your subcommittee today representing the great men and women who make up the Air National Guard. It is also, indeed a privilege for me to introduce my command chief master sergeant. Chief Smith from Ohio has served the Air National Guard as its senior enlisted advisor for the past 4 years, and he will retire at the end of this year. It has been a great honor and privilege for me to serve with Chief Smith, and I would like him to stand and introduce our special guest.

Chief SMITH. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Chairman and subcommittee, I would like to introduce to you Senior Master Sergeant Donna Goodno. She is from San Diego, California. She is a mission support flight superintendent at the 147th Combat Communications Squadron in San Diego, California. She has three deployments to Iraq, to her credit, many great accomplishments that I will not go into while she deployed. But because of those accomplishments on her deployments, she has recently been selected and named as the outstanding senior non-commissioned officer for the entire Air National Guard. So it is my honor and pleasure to present to you our great American, Senior Master Sergeant Donna Goodno.

General BLUM. If I could, let me add because I think you understate her capabilities. When all of the general officers could not find their way to get an instrument landing system into Kabul, Af-

ghanistan, she found one. When we deployed her to Iraq, she immediately identified a systemic problem in the communications security that had been missed by everybody that had been over there, and she got it corrected very quietly and quickly. She is outstanding in every measurable way.

Donna, we are proud of you.

Senator STEVENS. Sergeant Major, we congratulate and thank you for your service.

General BLUM. Senator Stevens, members of the subcommittee, when it comes to readiness of your National Guard, it is all about having three things. This subcommittee knows it well. You have to have people. You have to have the part-time people that you need, the citizen soldiers and airmen, but you heard our reserve counterparts tell you say that you must have the full-time cadre to make it work.

And the reason the Air National Guard works and the reason the Air Force Reserve works so well is that they have that cadre. They were used as an operational reserve starting 30 years ago. Their readiness is superb. They can go out the door in 72 hours any place on the planet. We need to follow that same kind of model now that we are asking General Vaughn and the Army Guard to have basically that same kind of readiness standard to meet.

PERSONNEL

Full-time manning is a big issue and part-time manning, having enough soldiers and enough airmen in the ranks that are fully trained and enough airmen and soldiers over strength so that your training pipeline does not count against you for readiness, in other words, so that everybody in the unit is fully trained and ready and those that need to go to school are held in school account over and above what your unit requirement is what we need.

EQUIPMENT

Second, you need equipment. Everybody in this subcommittee knows about that, and thank God for the National Guard and Reserve equipment account because of that and because of the staunch support of Congress and the interest of Congress and now the commitment, serious commitment, on the part of the Secretary of Defense and the service secretaries and the chiefs of staff of the Army and the Air Force, every single day our equipment condition improves. And so the status that I presented to you last year is much better today than it was last year, and next year it will even be better

Again, that is because of your continued support for the National Guard and Reserve equipment account. When that money is authorized and appropriated, we are able to place those dollars exactly against buying readiness, nothing but readiness. And that readiness is to be able to respond in the ZIP code right where your constituents live and raise their families. So that is very important.

TRAINING

The third thing is training. We must have the resources to train the force so that we do not have to waste time, when these forces

are separated from their families and from their businesses, to get training they should have received before they were called up for the service of this Nation.

PREPARED STATEMENT

So with that, Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, we await your questions.

[The statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL H STEVEN BLUM

INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

LIEUTENANT GENERAL H STEVEN BLUM, CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

In the 371-year history of our National Guard, the year 2007 will no doubt be remembered as one of historic proportions. We are members of a National Guard in the midst of significant evolution.

We have become an operational force, fighting side by side with our active duty partners, working hard to win the long war against terrorism that began some six and half years ago. While we are an essential force multiplier in the overseas warfight, we also remain focused on and connected to our constitutional roots as the organized militia of the states, prepared to rapidly respond domestically under the command of our nation's Governors whenever and wherever we are needed in the 54 states and territories.

The President, Congress, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaries of the Army and Air Force, the Governors and the Adjutants General all agree: The country needs a National Guard that is manned, resourced, ready, and structured to meet the security challenges of the 21st century.

RESOURCES

Our greatest resources are our Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen. Today, these brave men and women are the most professional, most experienced, most capable, and most relied upon that our National Guard has ever had in its ranks. Hundreds of thousands of our Soldiers and Airmen have deployed to the warfight—many more than once. At one point in this war, National Guard members made up about half of the ground combat forces in Iraq.

Even in the face of increased deployments, shorter dwell times, and extended separations from families and civilian employers, we are retaining members of the National Guard at extraordinary rates. Our recruiting numbers are equally impressive. Right now, the Army and Air National Guard are contributing to the overseas warfight in staggering numbers approaching 513,500 (309,786 Army and 203,700 Air) mobilizations as of December 31, 2007.

Parallel to our support of the overseas warfight is our support of the nation's Governors as the first military responders to incidents and disasters, whether natural or man-made. Each day, an average of 17 Governors call on their National Guard for everything from weather related assistance to suspected anthrax contamination. The National Guard does all of this while remaining an all-volunteer force.

These young men and women who have volunteered to serve are a testament to what it means to answer the call to something bigger than ourselves. We must continue to work hard to recruit and retain them; they are the future of the National Guard and the future of America.

READINESS

When looking at the readiness levels of the National Guard, it is important to consider two of the core elements of readiness: equipment and personnel.

Equipment

Our objective for the Army and Air National Guard is to have modern equipment on a par with that of the Title 10 forces. Make no mistake—our deploying Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen have the equipment they need to deploy overseas, and it is the same equipment our active duty Soldiers and Airmen take with them to the warfight.

However, over a period of years, the domestic levels of equipment available to Governors have fallen to unacceptable levels. For example, in 2006, the Army National Guard had about 40 percent of its equipment available domestically. As of

September 30, 2007, that number is about 61 percent. By the end of 2009, it will be close to 70 percent; and by 2013, it will be 77 percent. This is just one illustration of the unprecedented support and commitment Congress and the Department of Defense has given this issue.

While the Air National Guard has most of its required equipment, the primary challenge is modernizing the aging fleet. Continuing Air Force and Congressional support will be important as we move to meet the Air National Guard equipment challenges ahead. Last year, Congress appropriated an additional $800 million for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account. This support is critical to the National Guard Soldiers and Airmen—who are serving a nation at war.

Personnel

Equally essential to our readiness is having the people necessary to accomplish our missions, and America's National Guard needs more people. The President's fiscal year 2009 budget asks Congress to increase the Army National Guard's end-strength authorization from 351,300 to 352,600. That request also seeks additional full-time support.

Most of our National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have full-time civilian careers and devote a minimum of 39 days each year to military training. A far smaller number of full-time active National Guard and Reserve technicians are integral to the readiness of the part-time force. They perform the administrative, maintenance, readiness and training preparation essential to ensuring productive time spent by the part-time force as they participate in weekend drills and annual training.

STRUCTURE

On January 28, 2008, the President signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2008. This law contains the most significant and sweeping reforms in the administration and organization of the National Guard Bureau, and indeed the National Guard itself, since the National Defense Act of 1916.

Of significance, the 2008 NDAA designates the Chief of the National Guard Bureau as the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense, through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on matters involving non-federalized National Guard forces, and on other matters as determined by the Secretary of Defense. The Chief of the National Guard Bureau will continue to serve as principal advisor to the Secretaries and Chiefs of Staff of the Army and Air Force on the essential role of the National Guard as a reserve component of each of these services. The law also designates the National Guard Bureau as a joint activity of the Department of Defense.

These and other reforms contained in the 2008 NDAA serve to strengthen the role of the National Guard within the Department of Defense to meet our growing responsibilities, at home and abroad.

STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The National Guard's State Partnership Program, establishes partnerships between foreign countries and American states and is an important contribution to the Department of Defense's security cooperation programs conducted by the Combatant Commanders.

This program was created in 1993 to assist the United States European Command's engagement with defense and military establishments of former Warsaw Pact nations after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The State Partnership Program fosters long-term, mutually beneficial and enduring relationships between states and America's friends and allies around the globe. National Guard Soldiers and Airmen apply both military and civilian skills to support defense reform and military transformation, promote democracy, encourage economic development, and further regional cooperation and stability.

The State Partnership Program currently has 58 state partnerships throughout the world focused on military-to-military, military-to-civilian and civil security exchanges with United States security partner nations. This high value program will continue to grow in both numbers of partner nations and strategic importance to the Combatant Commanders.

THE FUTURE

The National Guard remains focused on operational readiness to answer the calls of our Governors and the President in doing our part to secure America's future. As the nation and our world change, the impacts on our force will be significant. The warfight overseas and our response to crises here at home are but two important areas of our reach. We will continue to invest in our family programs, our youth-based programs such as ChalleNGe, our counterdrug programs and many others.

As Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Thomas Hall recently noted, "Today's National Guard members are the continuation of the Minuteman spirit that defended our citizens and way of life. National Guard members have earned the respect of their fellow Americans by performing above and beyond the call of duty."

With the 2008 NDAA, Congress gave the National Guard new responsibilities and clarified roles. This unity of effort will continue to solidify our foundation for the next 371 years of National Guard excellence. We will remain "Always Ready, Always There."

The following is a full report on our recent accomplishments and an explanation of our requirements for fiscal year 2009.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL CLYDE A. VAUGHN, VICE CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU AND DIRECTOR, ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Army National Guard (ARNG) continued to step up to new challenges as well as confront the ongoing realities of persistent global conflict. As fast as units returned home from Iraq and Afghanistan, new ones were mobilized, trained and deployed overseas—some for their second or third such deployments.

The Army National Guard also defends American borders. Under Presidential mandate, Operation Jump Start continued along our nation's southwest border. There we worked with U.S. Customs and Border Protection to stop illegal immigrants and drug traffickers. Army National Guard Soldiers responded to the numerous natural disasters and emergencies created by blizzards, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes and wildfires.

In addition to the above accomplishments, we continued our transformation to a modular design. Doing so allows the Army National Guard to remain an important force in the nation's emergency preparedness network with missions both at home and abroad.

We had an admirable track record of successes in 2007. In particular, our continued achievements in recruiting and retention have been commendable. Our recruiting and retention efforts are keeping our organization strong, and are handing the future of our force to a new generation of determined and capable leaders.

The Army National Guard understands the human price of freedom and national security. By maintaining and improving the Army National Guard's full potential, we honor the Soldiers who have paid the ultimate price. We have redoubled our efforts to provide our units with equipment needed to replace that left behind from overseas deployments, and lost due to damage or end of serviceable use. With the aid of Congressional funding and a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Army, we have made considerable headway in rebalancing, resetting and re-equipping our force for the future.

In January 2007, the Secretary of Defense directed that Army National Guard units be scheduled for mobilizations of no more than 12 months. To maximize the availability of National Guard troops to Combatant Commanders, we must maximize and certify home state (regional) pre-mobilization training.

The Army Chief of Staff has directed that the Adjutants General have certification authority. This will reduce training time away from the home state or territory and increase "boots on the ground" time. We look forward to the full implementation of the Army Chief of Staff's policy.

The following pages summarize the Army National Guard's key programs and operations during fiscal year 2007, highlighting organizational and transformational changes and outlining requirements and goals for the future.

READINESS

The U.S. Army uses Army National Guard units as an operational force. Units mobilized and deployed for support during the era of persistent conflict have maintained high levels of readiness. High readiness levels translate to successful missions.

With lower-than-historical averages of equipment availability, increased mobilizations and deployments, and heavy personnel demands continued in fiscal year 2007. Despite these difficulties, the Army National Guard met all mission requirements and continued to support military actions abroad.

Our ability to respond reflects the value of the National Guard. Since September 11, 2001, the Army National Guard has deployed Soldiers as follows:

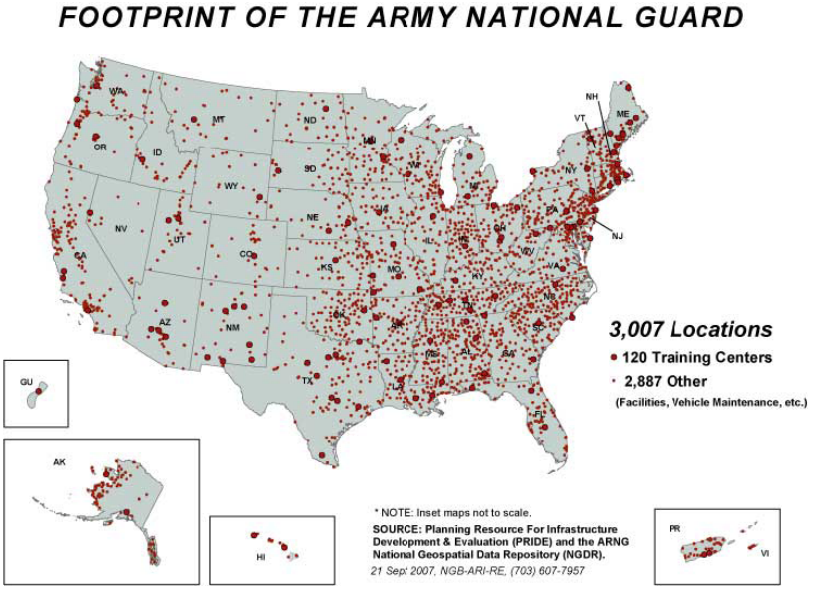
ARMY NATIONAL GUARD—A TRADITION OF SERVICE TO AMERICA

	Title 10 Orders	Title 10 and Title 32
Total ARNG Mobilized Since 9/11	309,786	401,840
Operation or Event	Service in 2007	Serivce since 9/11/2001
Operation Iraqi Freedom	34,947	172,988
Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan)	5,951	24,109
Operaion Noble Eagle	164	35,327

Full-Time Support

Full-time support personnel are vital to the full spectrum of Army National Guard operations. Meeting readiness needs, especially in an era of persistent conflict, underscores the vital role of our full-time support personnel.

Our previously validated Army National Guard full-time support requirement is 84,800 (Technician: 42,329, active Guard Reserve: 42,471). These authorizations are based on the perception of the Army National Guard as a strategic reserve.



Transformation through Modular Force Conversion and Rebalancing

As part of the Army's continuing modular conversion, the Army National Guard is restructuring to create forces that are more independent and interchangeable (modular). Brigade Combat Teams are structured and manned identically to those in the active Army. Because of this, they can be combined with other Brigade Combat Teams or elements of the joint force, facilitating integration and compatibility.

The Army National Guard has transformed over 1,500 operating force units to these new designs. An operating force represents units specifically organized to engage in combat and provide service support. At the current pace, the Army National Guard will successfully convert more than 1,300 additional units to the new modular designs by the end of fiscal year 2008.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Army is transforming (through Modular Force Conversion) from a division-centric force (18,000 Soldiers) to a more flexible brigade-centric force (4,000 Soldiers) and is restructuring its organizations to create forces that are more stand-alone and alike (modular) while enhancing their full-spectrum capabilities.

The Army National Guard's transformation into modular formations gives us the ability to function as an interchangeable operational force. This effort impacts Army National Guard units across all 54 states and territories.

Lower-Than-Historical Levels of Available Equipment Affects Rebalancing

The rebalancing plan also ensures that Army National Guard units—many under-equipped after leaving deployed equipment behind for follow-on units—receive replacements equal to their active duty counterparts. While the Army National Guard continues to receive more National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation funding, equipping levels are still lower than historical levels because of transformation and persistent conflict requirements. The average non-deployed unit has about 61 percent of authorized equipment needed to conduct training, handle future deployments and respond to domestic missions.

By subtracting unacceptable/non-deployable substitute items, the equipment available falls to an even lower level. The fiscal year 2009 budget will increase equipment funding levels, increasing the amount of equipment on hand available to National Guard units. Despite these equipment challenges, the Army National Guard stands ready to respond to any federal or state mission.

Dual Mission Operations

The Army continues to work with National Guard leaders to refine requirements for critical dual-use equipment (equipment usable both in wartime and in domestic operations) and to ensure that the states and territories have sufficient resources during a catastrophe. This collaborative effort has successfully garnered Congressional support to better equip and modernize the Army National Guard for critical federal and state capabilities.

Domestic Operations

In May 2007, a severe tornado leveled the Kansas town of Greensburg, leaving in its wake 10 fatalities, more than 100 injuries and a swath of incredible destruction. The Kansas Army National Guard was at the ready. The Kansas Guard's 278th Sustainment Brigade established a joint task force near the site; the Army National Guard deployed an additional 366 Soldiers; and the Air National Guard provided 200 Airmen. The National Guard established shelters, distributed food and water, and supported first responders with search and rescue, power generation, logistical support, debris removal and law enforcement assistance.

In August, the I–35W bridge in Minneapolis collapsed, claiming 13 lives. It was the worst independent structural disaster since a 1983 failure on Interstate 95 in Connecticut. A local network of first responders was on the scene quickly to work the rescue and recovery effort, including the Minnesota Army National Guard.

That same month, Texas prepared for Tropical Storm Erin, which made landfall on August 16 near Lamar, Texas. Erin dropped 3 to 6 inches of rain before moving northward, resulting in emergency declarations for 70 counties, some with up to 10 inches of rain. At least 17 fatalities were attributed to the storm, and an already severe flooding problem in the state was exacerbated. At the height of the emergency, 151 Texas Army National Guard Soldiers worked to help the communities recover.

End-strength: Recruiting and Retention

The Army National Guard is authorized by law to have a limit of 351,300 Soldiers. Due to a multiple-program team approach, fiscal year 2007 was a strong year for recruitment and retention. By March 31, 2007, the Army National Guard exceeded the 350,000-Soldier goal for first time since May 2004. By December 31, 2007, the Army National Guard strength stood at 353,979 Soldiers.

Several innovative programs, Soldier incentives and command emphasis helped the Army National Guard successfully achieve and maintain Congressionally-authorized end-strength levels. They include:

Active First Program

Launched October 1, 2007, and set to run through 2013, Active First is a pilot program under evaluation by the Army National Guard. The program applies to people with no prior military service. Recruits join the National Guard and agree to serve in the active Army first. After completing an active duty tour, a Soldier can either re-enlist in the active Army or revert back to the National Guard to complete his or her military obligation.

The Active First program increases bonus maximums to $20,000 for enlistments, $15,000 for re-enlistments and $15,000 for prior service enlistments. The National Guard also raised retention bonuses from $5,000 to $15,000.

Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G–RAP)

G–RAP is a recruiting program that employs civilian assistants to provide recruiting services. As of December 31, 2007, the Army National Guard had approximately 123,000 active recruiting assistants—one of whom has single-handedly recruited 49 Soldiers (and counting).

Every Soldier a Recruiter

Every Soldier a Recruiter is a referral bonus program established by the Army to motivate every Soldier to be a recruiter. Launched in January 2006, the program has helped bring nearly 3,700 new Soldiers into the Army National Guard.

Continued success in boosting prospect numbers by offering the potential for increased monetary compensation could lead to reductions elsewhere, such as recruitment advertising on radio and television. Only Soldiers assigned specific recruiting and retention positions are excluded from participation in the program.

Army National Guard Recruit Sustainment Program

The Army National Guard Recruit Sustainment Program is a formal process for transitioning new non-prior military service enlistees into the life of an Army National Guard Soldier. The Recruit Sustainment Program prepares recruits by endowing them with the physical and mental abilities to withstand the rigors of basic training and Advanced Individual Training. By doing so, the program works to reduce training pipeline losses.

Since instituting the Recruit Sustainment Program, the Army National Guard has reduced training pipeline losses by more than 10 percent with the rate of graduation from this program exceeding 95 percent. Long-term prospects of keeping new accessions on duty after the first year are also showing improvements with gains leading over losses by 88 percent.

Logistics—Depot Maintenance

The Army National Guard Depot Maintenance Program played an integral part of sustainment activities during fiscal year 2007. Unlike the active Army, which uses a loaner system, the Army National Guard's program is based on a "repair and return to user" premise. Additionally, program funding must stretch beyond repair work to cover testing, measurement and diagnostic equipment calibration.

Funding for the Army National Guard's surface depot maintenance requirement was increased by six percent in fiscal year 2007. During fiscal year 2007, the Army National Guard Depot Maintenance Program funded the overhaul of 2,276 tactical vehicles.

TRAINING

WAATS (aka "Gunfighter U")

The Western Army National Guard Aviation Training Site (WAATS) gives Army Aviation Soldiers the skills to defend our nation. Its mission is to conduct training in support of Army aviation readiness.

Also known as "Gunfighter University," it provides the Army National Guard and active Army counterparts the flexibility to train attack helicopter units to meet mobilization requirements. With realistic training opportunities in desert, mountainous and urban operations, the school is a premier attack helicopter training site. It provides skills training in all areas necessary to sustain the AH–64 Apache Attack helicopters, and their maintenance technicians and aircrews.

In 2007, WAATS supported a significant student load playing a critical role in the Army's Aviation Transformation plan as active and Army National Guard attack battalions transition to the AH–64D Longbow.

Ground Operating Tempo

Collective maneuver training is the foundation of unit readiness and depends primarily on ground operating tempo (OPTEMPO) funding. These funds cover oper-

ation and maintenance of authorized equipment and training, administration, and housekeeping supplies for all units in the Army National Guard. Funding for OPTEMPO impacts Army National Guard unit readiness in operations such as Iraq and Afghanistan, southwest border security and domestic preparedness.

In fiscal year 2007, Ground OPTEMPO funding totaled $723 million. Significant equipment remains in theater even after a National Guard unit's return from deployments. Equipment shortages at home stations compel greater use of what is available. These demanding conditions accelerate wear and tear resulting in rapid "aging" of equipment.

Maintaining leadership, management oversight and support of the ground OPTEMPO program is one of the keystones to maintaining readiness of equipment on hand.

SUPPORTING OUR SOLDIERS

Medical Readiness

The Army's community-based health care organizations provide the best medical care for Soldiers in the Medical Holdover Program and augment medical treatment facilities. This program allows a recuperating Soldier to remain at home on active duty during recovery.

Program highlights include:

—Manned primarily by mobilized Army National Guard Soldiers;
—Oversees more than 1,000 Soldiers;
—Soldier well-being managed by community-based health care organizations;
—Case managers coordinate health care appointments, track the Soldier's progress and ensure that care is up to standards; and
—Medical care is focused on returning Soldiers to their pre-mobilization health status.

The Army National Guard has mobilized 11 state and territorial medical detachments to staff newly created community-based health care organizations. They are: Alabama, Alaska, Arkansas, California, Florida, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Puerto Rico, Utah, Virginia and Wisconsin. Plans are developing to open additional state medical detachments as needed.

Incapacitation Pay

In March 2007, the Army National Guard started testing the Incapacitation Pay software scheduled for release in fiscal year 2008. The goal of this paperless process is to legally compensate Soldiers who are unable to perform military duties and who demonstrate a loss in civilian-earned income resulting from an injury, illness or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

The incapacitation pay program allows Soldiers to focus on their families, concentrate on rehabilitation and work towards a speedier recovery without the hardships of income loss.

Family Readiness Programs

The National Guard Joint Forces Headquarters within each state, territory and the District of Columbia coordinates family assistance for all military dependents within each respective location.

Recent accomplishments and activities that help Army National Guard families include:

—The National Guard Bureau Family Program Office which provides training to families to help make them self-reliant throughout the deployment cycle process.
—The Army Families Online website which provides information of interest to families of National Guard Soldiers www.armyfamiliesonline.org.
—The Department of Defense (DOD) Military OneSource program which provides benefits to all military families (for example, counseling services, resources for parents, assistance with consumer credit, and free access to online tax return preparation).
—The DOD Military HOMEFRONT web portal which provides information about Quality of Life programs and services such as childcare, elder care, and programs for resolving domestic abuse or domestic violence problems www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil.

Family readiness is not an option; it is an essential part of our mission.

Family Assistance Centers

As part of our commitment to those who remain behind when our Soldiers deploy, 325 Family Assistance Centers are strategically placed in every state and territory to overcome the geographic dispersion of Army National Guard families from cen-

tralized, installation-based service providers. Each Family Assistance Center is staffed monthly with military and civilian personnel, members of the Recruiting and Retention force, Soldiers on active duty special work orders, contract personnel, temporary technicians, state employees and volunteers.

The continued operation of the Family Assistance Centers in fiscal year 2008 is necessary to support services for families' long-term welfare during an era of persistent conflict.

Freedom Salute Campaign

The Freedom Salute Campaign, one of the largest Army National Guard recognition endeavors in history, is designed to publicly acknowledge Army National Guard Soldiers and those who have supported them in service to our nation. So far, the campaign has recognized more than 100,000 deserving Soldiers, family members, friends, employers, and other important persons for their contributions since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

LIEUTENANT GENERAL CRAIG R. MC KINLEY, VICE CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU AND DIRECTOR, AIR NATIONAL GUARD

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Since before the birth of manned flight, Airmen have embarked on proving the validity of mastering the third dimension of warfare. Our Air Force is the proven leader in this era of air dominance—an advantage no other nation on earth has ever matched. However, now is not the time for complacency.

We can't predict what challenges are on the horizon. What we know, however, is that the speed of advances in technology is eroding and encroaching on our technological advantage. We must remain vigilant and prepared to counteract this dangerous erosion.

We support civil authorities in protecting life and property through rapid response airlift, supplementing search and rescue, assisting aerial fire fighting, providing wide-area situational awareness, and airdropping food and supplies to those isolated by floods or blizzards. We also provide support capabilities to primary airpower missions such as medical triage and aerial evacuation, civil engineering, security force augmentation, infrastructure protection and HAZMAT response.

Ninety-four Air National Guard units provide security at home-station and deployed locations through law enforcement patrols, integrated base defense and antiterrorism/force protection initiatives. Security Forces professionals also provide nuclear security, information security, combat training, combat arms training and maintenance services. Every day, more than 6,000 Air National Guard members stand watch, patrolling the skies and assisting civil authorities protecting U.S. borders.

At the same time, approximately 7,000 Airmen are deployed around the world fighting terrorism in Southwest Asia and Africa, and supporting joint and coalition forces through their airlift, air refueling, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

Whether fighting overseas, protecting the homeland, or responding to hurricanes, fires and tornadoes, Air National Guard members continue to play an integral part in disaster response in communities throughout America and abroad.

In 2007, throughout the world, the Air National Guard:

—Supported 34,554 activations (31,922 voluntary and 2,632 involuntary).

—Deployed 29,524 (26,920 voluntary and 2,604 involuntary).

—Deployed service members to dozens of countries on every continent, including Antarctica.

—Participated in missions in Iraq, Afghanistan and Bosnia; humanitarian airlifts to Southeast Asia and Africa; drug interdiction in Latin and South America; exercises in Europe and Japan; and many other missions.

The Air National Guard is forward thinking. We adapt to ensure we have the capability to meet the needs of our nation. In the past year, the Air National Guard expanded into new capabilities including unmanned aerial systems (MQ–1 Predator and RQ–4 Global Hawk), intelligence collection and exploitation (DCGS Sentinel), space operations support and cyberspace. Air National Guard members have adapted their traditional community-based organizations to associate more closely with both active duty and other reserve components. New organizational structures are designed to capitalize on the Air National Guard's competitive advantage of cost effectiveness and our core competency of experience.

A crucial part of the American military, the Air National Guard remains vigilant and prepared. The Air National Guard of the 21st century stands as a sleek, efficient and dedicated part of our nation's defense.

HOMELAND DEFENSE AND DOMESTIC OPERATIONS

Securing the Home Front While Defending the Nation

In every natural disaster occurring in the United States, the Air National Guard provides critical air capabilities to the states. Airpower is crucial for protection against unknown eventualities including national emergencies. As a nation, we cannot afford to assume otherwise.

Since September 11, 2001, thousands of Air National Guard personnel have provided complete air sovereignty across the United States. We provide 95 percent of our nation's fighter interceptor aircraft, 85 percent of the aerial refueling capability, and 100 percent of the air defense command and control system. Maximizing the traditional basing locations, capitalizing on high experience levels and leveraging a long professional history in Air Defense operations, the Air National Guard continues to serve as the backbone of this vital mission for the near future.

In early 2007, the Air National Guard provided disaster relief during a Colorado snowstorm and a Kansas tornado. Since October 1, 2007, our Modular Airborne Fire Fighting systems have spread 132,479 gallons of retardant on wildfires. Air National Guard pararescue and special tactics units, highly experienced, reliable and ready forces, are not only deployed in combat missions but also serve in homeland defense/disaster relief contingencies. Air National Guard squadrons are deployed in combat; they secure public safety against missile launches; provide rescue coverage for the space shuttle if necessary; and provide full-time search and rescue coverage for Alaska.

Through its counterdrug operations, the Air National Guard provides specialized airborne resources critical in the effort to stem the flow of drugs and associated violence crossing our borders. Moreover, as a strong component of the President's Operation Jump Start and other missions, the Air National Guard helps keep America's borders secure.

Since July of 2006, Operation Jump Start Air Guard has:

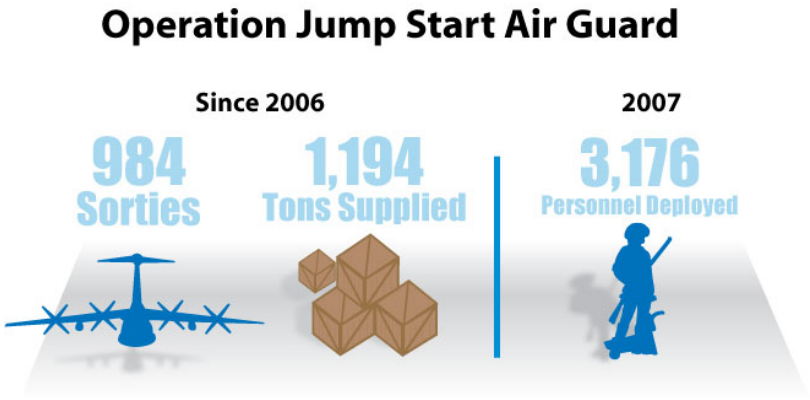
—Flown 984 border sorties (13,922 passengers).

—Airlifted 1,193 tons of materials and supplies.

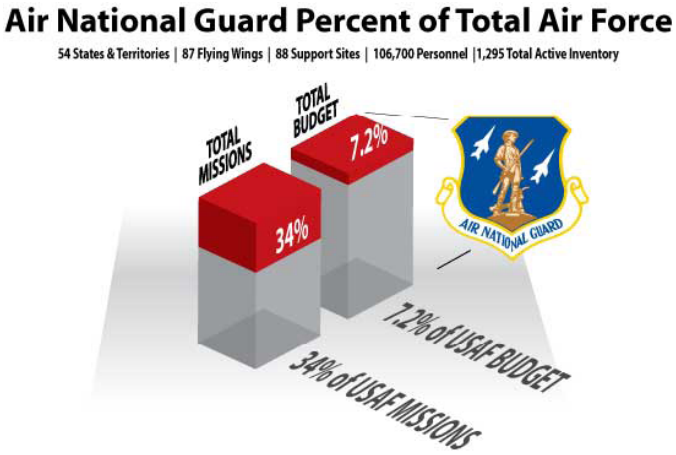
In 2007 alone, the Air National Guard supported Operation Jump Start by:

—Activating 3,250 personnel (3,150 deployed).

—Participating in infrastructure protection and border surveillance resulting in a 75 percent decrease in illegal border crossings.



In 2007, the Air National Guard provided 2,676 individuals and 274,705 duty days using RC–26B aircraft to assist local, state, and federal law enforcement authorities in conducting counterdrug operations.



CRITICAL TO TODAY'S FIGHT

Like the Air Force, the Air National Guard is integrated into America's fighting force overseas. Protecting the homeland from terrorist threats begins on American soil and extends overseas. On September 11, 2001, Air National Guard aircraft were the first to respond. Since 1991, the Air National Guard has provided the highest percentage of its force, more than any other reserve component, in responding to America's needs.

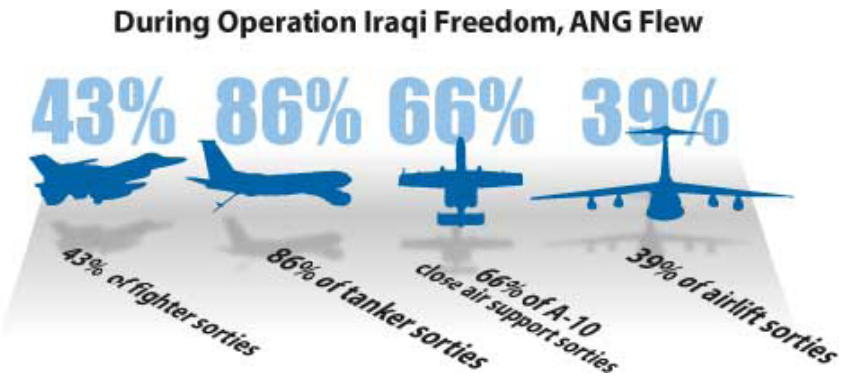
Over the past six years, we have:

—Deployed more than 203,700 Airmen (92 percent voluntarily deployed).

—Flown more than 179,000 missions.

—Logged more than 558,000 flying hours.

During the peak of Operation Iraqi Freedom, more than 22,000 Air National Guard members were either mobilized or volunteered to support today's fight.



During the same period, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, the Air National Guard flew more than 25 percent of both fighter and tanker sorties. In addition, the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance air support provided by the Air National Guard in both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom contributed significantly to safeguarding the troops on the ground while pursuing and terminating terrorist leaders.

In addition to our airborne capabilities, the Air National Guard has contributed ground forces in the following manner:

—15 percent of the Air National Guard's expeditionary combat support was engaged during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

—60 percent of the Air National Guard security forces made expeditionary combat support contributions.

—25 percent of the Air National Guard's intelligence, services and weather personnel were mobilized.

DEVELOPING ADAPTABLE AIRMEN

Readiness remains a top priority for the Air National Guard. Our goal is to continue to develop adaptable Airmen, service members who are always in a state of readiness and are willing and able to accomplish the job at hand. Proper funding for continued recruitment and training will ensure that the quality of our service members remains high. We are developing Airmen for leadership roles to meet the needs of our Total Force—today and tomorrow.

RECRUITING AND RETENTION

Adaptable Airmen are critical to the Air National Guard. They are combat-ready to defend national interests and balance global strategic risk. To preserve these assets, we need significant investment in our personnel, operations and maintenance accounts.

The top priority for Air National Guard recruiting and retention is to meet year-end goals, and build and retain a quality force to meet mission requirements.

For fiscal year 2007, the Air National Guard reported an end-strength of 106,254, or 99.3 percent of our goal. We accomplished this goal in the face of challenges like base realignment and closure decisions, and Total Force Initiatives implementation.

Air National Guard retention is also solid and has exceeded annual officer retention goals for fiscal year 2007. The Air National Guard ended fiscal year 2007 retention at 89.5 percent overall. The Air National Guard continues to have an excellent retention rate, which decreases the cost of replacing valuable members. To maintain this momentum we continue to work to ensure the Air National Guard Recruiting and Retention program is adequately funded.

TRANSFORMING INTO A CAPABILITIES-BASED FORCE

Transforming from a platform-based force to a capabilities-based force is critically important for the Air National Guard. We have to ensure our force is building the capabilities of the Combatant Commanders, Air Force and National Guard need to defeat tomorrow's adversary and support our domestic needs.

The Air National Guard's capabilities-based force realignment requires shifting functions, organizational constructs, and realigned priorities across the entire force. This has to be accomplished while fully engaged in today's fight. Simply put, we will

transform at mach one speed; we do not have the luxury of pausing operations while re-equipping and resetting our force.

Some of our missions demand a different force than the one we have today and will affect us in these ways:

—Mission changes, aircraft movements and programmatic decisions will directly impact about 15,000 Air National Guard members in 53 of the 54 states and territories.

—Estimated cost for fiscal year 2009 is $350 million; and involves a complex interplay of people, training, equipment and facilities.

—Fully implementing, retraining and rebalancing our force will take 5 to 10 years.

As we shift aircraft and missions, some units are transitioning into ground-based capabilities including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance duties. This transition is necessary for the Air National Guard to maintain its essential role as part of our nation's defenses.

In a few years we'll be able to reflect on this period of change and recognize how hard work, tough decisions and forward thinking reshaped our National Guard into a more capable force.

EQUIPPING AND MODERNIZING THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD

Developing and fielding "dual-use" capabilities are the cornerstones of the Air National Guard's cost effective contribution to combat and domestic operations. In fiscal year 2008, with Congressional assistance, we will address critical Homeland Defense shortfalls.

Specifically, we will address:

—Additional Expeditionary Medical Support suites;

—Enhanced deployable wireless communication capability;

—More fire fighting vehicles (current fleet averages 30 years old);

—Upgraded security weapons;

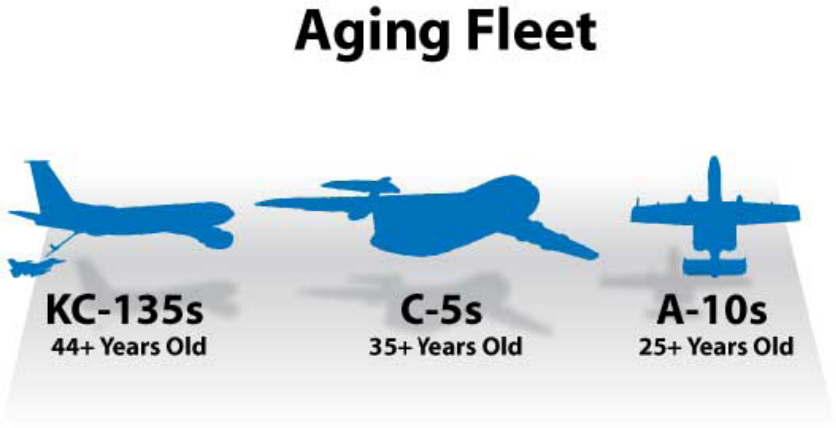
—Enhanced explosive ordnance disposal; and

—Improved hazardous material handling equipment.

The Air National Guard has forces in every Air Expeditionary Force deploying to the current combat theaters. Consequently, the Air National Guard must be equipped with the active duty force to meet combat mission demands. The age of the fleet, mission demands, and combat readiness require a parallel approach to aircraft modernization working in tandem with active duty forces.

An Aging Fleet

Our Air Force is struggling with sustainment bills versus recapitalization funding, which directly impacts the Air National Guard. More than 42 percent of the Air National Guard fleet is 25 years or older:



Navigation and Combat Systems Modernization Needs

The Air National Guard is critically important to the Air Force's Total Force effort. Forty percent of the Air Force's C–130 fleet resides in the Air National Guard. In fiscal year 2007, Air National Guard C–130s flew over 11,000 hours in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and over 4,200 hours in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In support of the Aeromedical Evacuation mission, Mississippi Air National Guard C–17 aircraft returned over 19,000 patients to Germany and the United States from Iraq.

C–130, C–5 and C–17

The C–130, C–5 and C–17 aircraft all operate in environments of increasing levels of threat and complexity. We must ensure these aircraft continue to provide our Airmen with the best protection and warning systems available.

Combat Aircraft

Air National Guard combat aircraft—A–10, F–15 and F–16—comprise approximately 30 percent of the Air Force's combat capability. Our maintainers continue to keep our fleet combat ready and lethal.

E–8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System

The E–8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) continues to be the Combatant Commander's command and control system of choice. JSTARS supports the warfighter by locating, classifying, and tracking ground targets and movement, day or night, in all weather conditions, at ranges in excess of 150 miles. All 17 E–8Cs are operated by the Air National Guard's 116th Air Control Wing at Robins Air Force Base in Georgia. Our challenge is to keep the system modernized while maintaining the current operational tempo. The most urgent modernization need for the JSTARS includes re-engining.

Rescue Squadrons

Air National Guard Rescue Squadrons comprise 30 percent of the Air Force's high-demand combat deployable pararescue capability while special tactics personnel provide 25 percent of the Air Force's Special Tactics capability. These squadrons provide the highly experienced, skilled and reliable force for both deployed and domestic operations support.

Predator/Reaper Operations Center

The Air National Guard conducts predator operations and training in Arizona, California, North Dakota, New York, Nevada and Texas Air National Guard units. We continue to pursue development and acquisition of an integrated Predator/Reaper Operations Center (POC). The POC will allow smooth operation and control of current and future transformational warfighting and homeland defense missions. The new POC design will integrate the multiple systems that currently run independently.

KC–135

To meet continuous demands of global power projection, the Air National Guard KC–135s are effective. These aircraft are crucial to supporting the warfighter.

Operational Support Aircraft

Finally, Air National Guard Operational Support aircraft—C–40, C–38 and C–21—meet the special mission transportation needs of distinguished visitors and Congressional delegations.

TRAINING

Significantly important to the Air National Guard's training of Airmen is the Distributed Mission Operations program. The program supports all weapons systems. It includes flight and mission crew trainers to provide high fidelity, immersive simulators for individual, team, inter-team and full mission rehearsal training.

MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM H. ETTER, ACTING DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) enters 2008 with Congressional designation as a joint activity of the Department of Defense (DOD) and not strictly as a joint bureau of the Army and Air Force. How important is that to the history of an institution that has served this nation for more than 371 years?

From a historical perspective, this change in law is on a par with the National Defense Act of 1916 which created the term "National Guard" and made the state militias a component of the U.S. Army.

New levels of responsibility and authority come with the new law—requirements for plans and protocols for change. As a joint DOD activity, for example, manpower requirements for the bureau are now under the purview of the Secretary of Defense

in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Secretary and the Chairman, working in consultation with the Secretaries of the Army and Air Force, are responsible for the development of a new charter for the National Guard Bureau.

While there will be changes, one thing will remain constant for the Joint Staff and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau. They will serve as the channel of communication between the Defense Department and the Governors of these sovereign states via their Adjutants General.

At the end of 2007, National Guard members were doing remarkable things in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, the Horn of Africa, and 40 other countries. They were also serving here at home, protecting our borders, fighting fires, providing rescue and recovery in the wake of disasters, and interdicting the flow of illegal drugs.

SUPPORTING OPERATION JUMP START

In May of 2006, the President asked the National Guard to temporarily provide support to the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) effort to secure the southwest border. In 2008, that mission will end as originally conceived. While never meant to replace border patrol agents with Guardsmen on a one-to-one basis, the National Guard's support has provided DHS with time to grow its own capabilities. U.S. Customs and Border Protection is now better resourced and equipped than when the mission started. National Guard members from every state and territory have served in the four southwest border states under the command of the Governors and at the direction of U.S. Border Patrol.

As of November 30, 2007, National Guard members:

—Helped DHS apprehend more than 169,000 aliens and seize more than 269,000 pounds of marijuana, 4,900 pounds of cocaine, and 7,900 vehicles.

—Built more than 37 miles of fence, 18 miles of road and 70 miles of vehicle barriers.

—Provided support to local, state and federal law enforcement through the Counterdrug program.

—Conducted non-core border activities which allowed 581 Border Patrol agents to direct border security missions, and to hire and train additional agents.

—Allowed Border Patrol agents to enhance their law enforcement and border security efforts against all threats—illegal aliens, drugs, weapons and possible terrorists.

—Aided in apprehending 137,387 aliens in the past year, increasing more than six times the number recorded in the first five months after operations began in June 2006.

NATIONAL GUARD COUNTERDRUG PROGRAM

Because of the National Guard's Title 32 status, we are not restricted by posse comitatus (the federal law that otherwise prohibits support of local law enforcement by members of the uniformed services), it serves a particularly unique role for the Department of Defense in the fight against illicit drugs. Since Congress authorized the National Guard to perform interdiction and anti-drug activities in 1989, the program has worked tirelessly with civilian law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations.

Counterdrug program highlights include:

—Employing more than 2,500 Soldiers and Airmen in the 54 states and territories to support over 5,000 law enforcement agencies at the local, state and federal levels, preventing illicit drug import, manufacture and distribution.

—Contributing numerous liaison officers to work with State Joint Force Headquarters within the four southwest border states (Texas, Arizona, New Mexico and California).

—Allowing the states unprecedented access to National Guard Bureau assets resulting in a seamless flow of communication between the Joint Force Headquarters and National Guard Bureau.

—Reaching about 2.8 million people in fiscal year 2007 through drug demand reduction efforts, the National Guard Counterdrug program has unparalleled relationships within its communities; studies have shown that this can lead to drug use prevention among youth.

—Participating in nearly 80,000 drug-related actions.

—Supporting local law enforcement who seized more than 1.4 million pounds of illegal drugs (including more than 3 million "designer drug" pills known by the street name, ecstasy).

In order to continue to support the new light utility helicopter, currently used for the counterdrug mission, adequate funding is required during all of the acquisition

years of 2008–2013. The equipment is critical to both counterdrug, as well as in support of first responders during natural disasters.

The National Guard Bureau Joint Staff continues to focus on "mission first, people always." We continue to increase functions and services that enhance the quality of life for the men and women of the National Guard and our communities. In the following paragraphs, we offer a sampling of the accomplishments that demonstrate our commitment to this nation, and the Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen who protect it.

DOMESTIC OPERATIONS

Information Sharing Environment Initiatives

The National Guard Bureau and the State Joint Force Headquarters are key partners in the development, implementation and execution of the National Strategy for Information Sharing Environment initiatives.

This partnership was instrumental in assisting a unified command leadership to effectively allocate resources and handle hot spots during the 2007 California wildfires. The ability for key federal, state, local and tribal partners to view a real-time common operating picture enhanced command, communications and coordination.

Critical Infrastructure Protection and Mission Assurance Assessment (CIP–MAA)

The National Guard Bureau is developing 10 National Guard Vulnerability Assessment Teams to provide analysis of sites deemed critical by the Department of Homeland Security. With a newly developed web-based automated reporting tool, the Critical Infrastructure Protection and Mission Assurance Assessment office can provide continual, detailed readiness information to National Guard Reaction Forces in all states and territories.

SUPPORT TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES

The National Guard Bureau and the 54 states and territories are prepared to provide response to a wide variety of homeland defense/civil support missions.

The National Guard has supported homeland security missions guarding airports, nuclear power plants, domestic water supplies, bridges, tunnels, military assets, counterdrug operations and more. Across the country, National Guard members have responded to hurricanes, snow storms, wildfires, border security and other missions requiring individual assistance. During fiscal year 2007 the National Guard Bureau Joint Domestic Operations Division provided subject matter expertise and facilitated information sharing across federal, state, and local agencies in over 554 instances of non-federalized National Guard support to civil authorities.

State Active Duty Support to Civil Authorities

During fiscal year 2007, the National Guard supported hundreds of disaster and crisis response missions using state active duty Soldiers and Airmen. These humanitarian relief operations included construction, security, communications, aviation, medical, transportation, law enforcement support, search and rescue, debris clearance and relief supply distribution.

The following is a more detailed list of those disaster and crisis response missions:

—6 Hurricane and Tropical Storms affecting the Gulf Coast states, Guam and the Virgin Islands;
—20 flood disasters in 14 states;
—11 tornado recovery responses in 14 states;
—17 winter and spring storm response missions affecting 23 states;
—11 water supply and purification missions in 11 states;
—1 earthquake response in Hawaii;
—1 bridge collapse in Minnesota;
—17 missions in support of law enforcement in 14 states; and
—304 search and rescue missions in 25 states.

Additionally, the National Guard provided critical infrastructure protection for facilities deemed critical by the states. Joint Force Headquarters Louisiana alone maintained a cumulative total of 109,500 duty days in ongoing support of law enforcement for Hurricane Katrina in fiscal year 2007. (Possible "Did you know" Box)

Joint Enabling Teams and the Liaison Officer Program

The National Guard Bureau Joint Enabling Team program assists the 54 states and territories with communication and request flow processes.

Since development of the Joint Enabling Teams in fiscal year 2006, they have been successfully employed in live emergency responses to Hawaii for an earthquake; Kansas for tornadoes/floods; Hawaii and Puerto Rico for hurricanes; Texas for a tropical storm; and California for wildfires.

The Joint Enabling Team program must be maintained in a collaborative effort with the supported states and territories to save lives and mitigate suffering.

Joint Continental United States (CONUS) Communications Support Environment

The National Guard continues to provide communication systems for non-federalized National Guard Forces involved in domestic operations for civil authorities and homeland defense activities. This is an essential requirement for non-federalized National Guard domestic operations; particularly in those cases similar to Katrina, in which a large number of states provided National Guard forces in support of a particular Governor. This capability is even more critical with the passage of the National Guard Empowerment Act, and we must provide Congress clear visibility within the President's budget for the funding support required for non-federalized National Guard domestic operations.

National Guard Support to Civil Fire Fighting

The National Guard provides military support to wildland fire fighting as a part of the Department of Defense response plan.

In fiscal year 2007, National Guard assets delivered more than 5.3 million gallons of retardant during some 6,800 fire suppression drops in fire fighting efforts across the country. In September 2007, over a five-day period, National Guard helicopters spread more than 35,000 gallons of retardant on the California Lick Fire, aiding in preventing the destruction of homes, commercial buildings and livestock.

National Guard assets are available year-round but are especially focused from April to October—the prime period for forest fires. Aviation fire fighting assets reside in North Carolina, California, Wyoming, Florida, Nevada, New York and Oregon National Guard aviation units and have been greatly successful in past years.

Throughout the 54 states and territories, National Guard units also have 249 "bambi buckets" strategically located to combat wildfires nationwide. These fire buckets range in size from 144 to 2,000 gallons and can be carried by UH–1, UH–60, HH–60 and CH–47 helicopters from the Army and Air National Guard. Fire fighting assets and crews assisted state and federal forest fire fighting efforts in California, Nevada, Florida and Georgia in fiscal year 2007. (Possible "Did you know" Box)

Vigilant Guard Regional Exercise Program

Vigilant Guard provides an opportunity for National Guard Joint Task Forces and field units to improve command and control, and operational relationships with internal, civilian, and military partners against homeland security threats. The exercise involves all the command elements of Northern Command, National Guard Bureau, Department of Defense, U.S. Transportation Command, Department of Homeland Security and other supporting U.S. government agencies.

The states, divided into regions, have four opportunities per year to test coordinated tactics, techniques and procedures among state and federal civil and military partners in response to a regional level incident. The desired outcome is an increase in readiness while developing partnerships at all levels to enhance the unity of effort in the future.

Vigilant Guard highlights include:

—Eight Vigilant Guard regional exercises have involved 34 participating states.

—In May 2007, a combined Vigilant Guard and U.S. Northern Command exercise in Indianapolis tested more than 2,000 National Guard personnel from Indiana and surrounding states.

Joint Interagency Training and Education Center

An integral part of continuing the National Guard's transformation for the future is building relationships and capabilities with our interagency partners.

Joint Interagency highlights include:

—Interagency training capability has afforded critical training and interaction with over 90 different organizations and agencies in over 800 exercises during more than 30,000 days of training since September 11, 2001.

—The Defense Department established some funding support to develop National Guard interagency training capability in 2007.

More than 200 training, exercise, or assessment activities are scheduled in 2008. With continuing support from both DOD and Congress, the National Guard will continue to transform itself into a premier homeland security and defense organization, leveraging state and federal responses, capabilities and expertise.

SUPPORTING THE WARFIGHTER—CONNECT THE COMMUNITY

National Guard Family Program

The National Guard Bureau Family Program provides members and their families with education, training, community outreach, and partnerships in three critical areas:

—Family Readiness is a six-step process that prepares families for having a loved one in the National Guard. The process covers all phases of service, including a welcome brief, in processing, training, pre-deployment, deployment, reunion and reintegration.

—Family Assistance provides support to military families during long or short-term deployments. Over 400 contracted personnel across the nation provide crisis intervention and community outreach services, as well as information and referral services on legal, financial, medical and dental matters. Help is also available for families online at: www.guardfamily.org.

—Program Services provides support services, education, and information to assist the National Guard members and family members. This is accomplished through family services, youth programs, community outreach, national volunteer programs and training initiatives.

Home Station Transition Support

Last year, Congress appropriated funds for National Guard pilot programs to help returning veterans reintegrate to their civilian lives. Congress also established the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program in the fiscal year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act. In the year ahead, the National Guard Bureau looks forward to working closely with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness to implement the program. We will develop these capabilities in view of the best practices of the several states that have created their own programs. These programs support the difficult process of transitioning from a combat deployment to civilian status by offering support on civilian employment, the Department of Veterans Affairs, educational benefits and health care.

Youth ChalleNGe Program

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program is a community-based concept that leads, trains, and mentors at-risk youths, ages 16 to 18, and assists them in becoming productive citizens. The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program is the second largest mentoring program of its kind in the nation—second only to the Boy Scouts of America. ChalleNGe is a coeducational program, consisting of a five-month "quasi-military" residential phase and a one-year post-residential phase. The young adults targeted to become Cadets in this program are unemployed high school drops outs—but must be drug fee and have no police record.

Since 1993 ChalleNGe has grown to 34 sites in the United States and Puerto Rico. The program has graduated over 76,000 young men and women.

A 1998 Vanderbilt University report placed the value of intervening in the life of such young people somewhere between $1.5 and $2 million per youth. Today, at an average cost of $14,000 per student per year, the taxpayer reaps an estimated savings of $109 million in juvenile corrections costs annually.

Veterans Affairs Liaison

Sustained mobilization of the National Guard since September 11, 2001 has resulted in a larger number of members eligible for entitlements through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Since the May 2005 memorandum of agreement was signed to support National Guard members, significant progress has been made to improve the services available to National Guard members and their families. A permanent liaison has been appointed in both the National Guard Bureau and Department of Veterans Affairs

to work out issues at the federal level. Additionally, 57 Transition Assistance Advisors have been trained and placed in the Joint Forces Headquarters to act as liaisons among the members entitled to VA benefits within a state and the local Veterans Affairs, veterans' service organizations and community representatives.

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

The basic Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) mission continues to be gaining and maintaining the support of public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve.

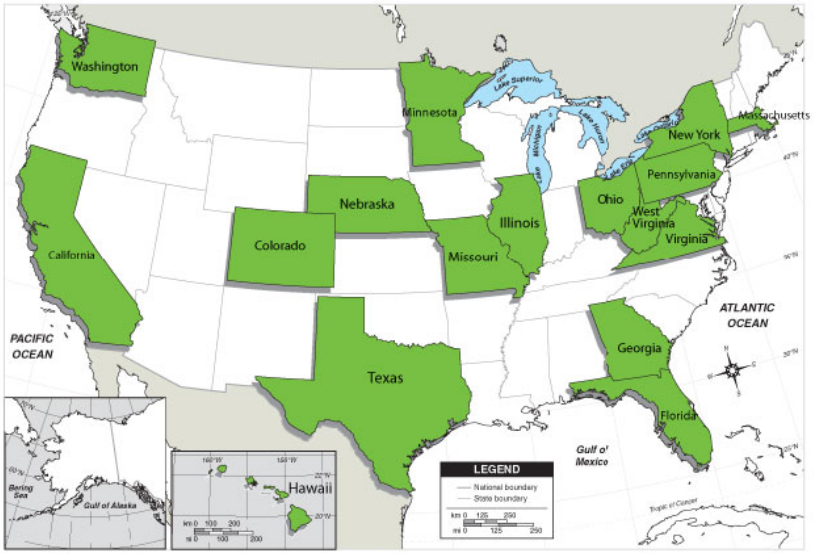
Today, nearly 4,200 volunteers serve on local ESGR committees. With resources and support provided by the National ESGR Office and the National Guard Bureau, these 54 ESGR committees conduct Employer Support and Outreach programs. This includes information opportunities for employers, ombudsman services, and recognition of employers who support and encourage participation in the National Guard and Reserve.

TRANSFORMATION FOR THE FUTURE

The National Guard continues to staff and publish logistics doctrine and plans for domestic contingency operations and emergencies. The National Guard Bureau is committed to the transformation and integration of the best available information technology enablers into our joint logistics plans, exercises and operations.

Important upgrades and new equipment have been fielded for the 57 Civil Support Teams and 17 Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and High-Yield Explosives (CBRNE)-Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFPs) locations. The next generation of Civil Support Team equipment was fielded for various operational systems; consisting of the Unified Command Suite, Analytical Laboratory Suite and Advance Liaison Vehicle. Additionally, a ground transportation equipment program for the CERFP units was staffed for resource allocation consideration. Staff assistance visits were conducted to identify and fill equipment shortfalls in the initial 12 CERFP organizations to bring them to the same level of capability as the five latest additions to the CERFP force structure. Based on these assistance visits, accountability procedures and material fielding plans were established to synchronize new equipment delivery.

CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package Locations



Seventeen CERFPs are currently assigned with at least one in each of the 10 Federal Emergency Management Agency regions, with some having up to three based on population density for that area.

With the ongoing support of Congress and the American people, the National Guard will continue to secure the American homeland while defending her interests abroad. America can depend on the National Guard to be "Always Ready, Always There."

STATE ADJUTANTS GENERAL

Alabama: Major General Abner C. Blalock Jr.
Alaska: Major General Craig E. Campbell
Arizona: Major General David P. Rataczak
Arkansas: Major General William D. Wofford
California: General William H. Wade, II
Colorado: Major General H. Michael Edwards
Connecticut: Major General Thaddeus J. Martin
Delaware: Major General Francis D. Vavala
District of Columbia: Major General David F. Wherley, Jr., Commanding General
Florida: Major General Douglas Burnett
Georgia: Major General William T. Nesbitt
Guam: Major General Donald J. Goldhorn
Hawaii: Major General Robert G. F. Lee
Idaho: Major General Lawrence F. Lafrenz
Illinois: Major General (IL)[1] William L. Enyart Jr.
Indiana: Major General R. Martin Umbarger
Iowa: Major General Ron Dardis
Kansas: Major General Tod M. Bunting
Kentucky: Major General (KY)[1] Edward W. Tonini
Louisiana: Major General Bennett C. Landreneau
Maine: Major General John W. Libby
Maryland: Major General Bruce F. Tuxill
Massachusetts: Brigadier General (MA)[1] Joseph C. Carter
Michigan: Major General Thomas G. Cutler
Minnesota: Major General Larry W. Shellito
Mississippi: Major General Harold A. Cross
Missouri: Major General King E. Sidwell
Montana: Major General Randall D. Mosley

Nebraska: Brigadier General (NE)[1] Timothy J. Kadavy
Nevada: Major General Cynthia N. Kirkland
New Hampshire: Major General Kenneth R. Clark
New Jersey: Major General Glenn K. Rieth
New Mexico: Brigadier General (NM)[1] Kenny C. Montoya
New York: Major General Joseph J. Taluto
North Carolina: Major General William E. Ingram, Jr.
North Dakota: Major General David A. Sprynczynatyk
Ohio: Major General Gregory L. Wayt
Oklahoma: Major General Harry M. Wyatt, III
Oregon: Major General Raymond F. Rees
Pennsylvania: Major General Jessica L. Wright
Puerto Rico: Brigadier General (PR)[1] David A. Carrion-Baralt
Rhode Island: Major General Robert T. Bray
South Carolina: Major General (Ret) Stanhope S. Spears
South Dakota: Major General (SD)[1] Steven R. Doohen
Tennessee: Major General Gus L. Hargett, Jr.
Texas: Major General Charles G. Rodriguez
Utah: Major General Brian L. Tarbet
Vermont: Major General Michael D. Dubie
Virginia: Major General Robert B. Newman, Jr.
Virgin Islands: Brigadier General (VI)[1] Renaldo Rivera
Washington: Major General Timothy J. Lowenberg
West Virginia: Major General Allen E. Tackett
Wisconsin: Brigadier General (WI)[1] Donald P. Dunbar
Wyoming: Major General Edward L. Wright

[1] Denotes Brevet Rank.

IN MEMORIAM

Our Dedication to the men and women of the National Guard who sacrificed all for their nation and state.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you very much. We have about 50 minutes left and there are seven of us. I would urge members to just follow the concept of 7 minutes apiece. We have the chairman and co-chairman of the National Guard Caucus. So I will call on Senator Leahy first and then Senator Bond and then those who came in order.

Senator LEAHY. Well, thank you very much. Both Senator Bond and I are proud to co-chair the National Guard Caucus. We have 95 of 100 Senators on it, and it is hard to get 95 to agree on the time of day around here. That is because we are proud of the 450,000 men and women in the Guard. We are also very proud of the three of you, General McKinley, General Blum, General Vaughn, for the work you do.

General Blum, I understand there is still at least a $10 billion shortfall on the long-range Army budget plans to re-equip the Guard. That is gear that is absolutely necessary to allow the force to carry out its dual missions. I also look at the Air National Guard modernization book which reveals our best pilots and operators say they need at least $8 billion in upgrades just to carry out their missions.

It seems a little bit better than it has been in recent years, but you cannot get around the basic fact that these equipping gaps exist. We understand why. With the war in Iraq and all, a lot has been drawn down. But we also to prepare for natural disasters as well as threats worldwide which simply increase every year.

Can you tell us what plans there are to close these kind of gaps?

General BLUM. I will give it to you, Senator Leahy, at the macro level. Then if you want further detail in the Army program, Gen-

eral Vaughn will provide it or General McKinley will provide it for the Air National Guard, if you so desire.

All three Departments that really influence how we get equipped and where the resources come from have re-examined their strategies and their priorities as far as the National Guard is concerned. There is a serious commitment on the part of the Army and the Air Force and the Department of Defense to make sure that we have those items of equipment that are absolutely necessary to be a Federal reserve of the Army, a Federal reserve of the Air Force, to meet our joint requirements that are out there, and also to satisfy the finally recognized mission of supporting the Governors in a realistic manner, no notice, here at home in case of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, or a catastrophic event brought on by mother nature, as you have seen this week with the tornadoes, the hurricane and——

Senator LEAHY. It is the no-notice part that I worry the most about. It is one thing if you have got plenty of time. You can ramp up. You can borrow from this guy's unit or that guy's unit, given plenty of notice. I am far more worried about the no-notice.

General BLUM. Right.

Senator LEAHY. And I am not sanguine enough to assume we are not going to have some no-notice problems.

General BLUM. We share that concern and we now finally have some partnering with the Department of the Army and the Air Force and their responsibilities to help us with that no-notice response. This is unprecedented in the historical past of the Army and Air Force. It is a good step forward.

But you have accurately laid out that even with—while I have to support and do support the President's budget, if more resources were to be applied earlier, then we have the capacity to absorb those resources and turn that authorization or that appropriation into real readiness capability, meaning the equipment that we need to go out the door in a no-notice response tonight if necessary or this afternoon.

Senator LEAHY. My staff will continue to work with yours and with General McKinley's and General Vaughn's on that because I am getting very, very worried that we have gone beyond a tipping point.

General McKinley, you will not be surprised if I talk about the 158th Fighter Wing in Vermont. It is proudly flying the F–16 Fighting Falcon. It is one of over 15 units in the Air Guard that fly the aircraft. That is a sizable percentage of the Air Force tactical air capabilities. It is getting kind of old—that airplane. It is going to be around a while until we see the F–35 or whatever comes in to replace it.

What kind of upgrades are needed? Do we have the funding for that?

General MCKINLEY. Senator Leahy, I appreciate your strong support, and yes, the Burlington, Vermont unit is one of our finest, and I am very proud of them.

We meet annually. As you know, members of your staff have worked with us closely to bring up the types of equipment issues that are necessary to keep the legacy fighters that the Air National Guard has relevant. And we publish annually a modernization

book that is really developed by our weapons and tactics officers in the squadrons. This is not some theoretical concept. This is what the actual fighter pilots who train our members use. And so we are able to collect that data. We have collated it. Senator, you have a copy of it. And that is where we go back to the Air Force, and through your help with the National Guard and Reserve equipment account, and try to make sure that the legacy fighters continue to serve our Nation well because we are going to expect these fighters to continue to perform for the next decade or so. So it is vitally important, and I thank you again and members of the subcommittee for your help to maintain these aircraft.

Senator LEAHY. And I am sensitive to the time and I agree with Senator Stevens on that. So you will get at least private calls from me on community basing.

General MCKINLEY. Yes, sir.

Senator LEAHY. I think that is a great idea. I know it is growing substantially in Vermont. We talk about other places it might go, and we will keep working on that.

General Vaughn, we talk about the full-time personnel in the Army National Guard. I understand the requirements for full-time manning have not been reworked since well before September 11th when the Guard made up such a high percentage of the forces on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Can you tell the subcommittee about the role the full-time personnel have in Guard units and what kind of requirement is there for additional full-time personnel?

General VAUGHN. Thank you, Senator Leahy.

The full-time support piece, as you talked to, is based upon a 1999 strategic reserve model. We think it is out of date and we think it needs to be revamped. The Army is working that through a study. We think that readiness of our forces to move quickly, as you stated earlier, and do the things that the Governors and the President need demands that we have a higher level of full-time support. We have the capacity and capability to grow whatever it is that we are told to grow to. And we should grow.

Senator LEAHY. Thank you. Well, you have a sympathetic committee here on both sides of the aisle and I applaud all of you being here.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you.

Senator Bond.

Senator BOND. Thank you very much, Senator Stevens. And I join with my co-chairman, Senator Leahy, in expressing the confidence and the appreciation of the Guard. I welcome General Blum, General McKinley, General Vaughn.

General Blum, thank you for your service. You work so well with the National Guard Caucus. We very much appreciate meeting with you regularly and we thank you for the good information.

I would say by summary of what could be a long speech, that I really think the Guard is the most respected and capable organization we have. Every mission that our Nation has asked the Guard to execute, it has done so. Whether it is fighting terrorists in Iraq or Afghanistan, protecting the sovereign air space over the United States, securing the Southwest border, fighting the war on drugs

through the counter-drug program, creating new futures for at-risk youth through Youth Challenge, or leveraging the Guard's civilian skills or "smart power," as I like to call it, the Guard has been and will be there.

With respect to the Guard's smart power, General Vaughn, I appreciate your leadership in developing the National Guard agriculture development teams in Afghanistan. With roughly 80 percent of the Afghan population depending upon agriculture, they will be training Afghans in sustainable agriculture and develop projects that will contribute to rural development.

Would you give the committee an update on the ag development teams? Because I think this is a vitally important effort that was referenced, I believe, at least indirectly by Secretary Gates in his comments yesterday.

General VAUGHN. Thank you, Senator Bond.

It plays right to the strength of what we do best and that is incorporate the States at every level, especially in a non-kinetic venture like this. It uses civilian acquired skills, of course, that being in this instance farmers. Now, that is kind of out of the box because it does not sound like a military solution. But it is aimed at the poppies. It is aimed at the plight of the farmers that simply need a better way of life, and it is about doing good in uniform.

There are 10 agriculture soldiers from the State of Missouri. Missouri has been in the lead. We appreciate your great support. We appreciate the great support of Charles Cruz with the Farm Bureau. We looked at this and said, you know what we need to do is get some energy and support from the farming community of a State and link a State with a province. And that is exactly what we have done. It is a 50-person team. It has 10 professional agriculture soldiers on it. The other 40 come from agriculture backgrounds. The State of Missouri has wrapped their arms completely around these soldiers. It is playing in the papers, as you well know. There is great interest in it, and they are deployed in Jalalabad today.

The 82nd Airborne and the 101st have wrapped their arms around it, and as you know, there are other States now queued up ready to go. Texas is coming next, Nebraska, Tennessee, Alabama. I think there is a great deal of support for a non-kinetic solution at this time.

Thank you, sir.

Senator BOND. Thank you very much, General Vaughn. And here the Guard is really playing a lead. They have got 17th century agriculture, and with what the Guard can bring them in terms of know-how, not only training of farmers, but training the people who will be training the farmers, have the possibility of bringing them up at least a couple of centuries so they can be more self-sufficient. And I hope we continue to use that model.

General McKinley, Senator Leahy, and I recently wrote you about the Air Force fifth generation TACAIR procurement strategy and the effect on the air sovereignty alert. We know the Air Force is facing billions in recapped costs and a 800-plus aircraft shortfall. Yet, despite the questions we have raised, they have refused to come up with a plan B to provide the equipment we need. With the number of F–22's capped at 183 and the F–35 initial operating ca-

pability slipping and the cost going up, how does this impact the Air Guard's mission, particularly the ASA and other paramount flying missions? Where are you going to be in terms of aircraft in the very near future?

General MCKINLEY. Thank you, Senator Bond, for your advocacy and for your support of the air sovereignty alert mission.

As you know, sir, we have 16 fighter units that presently sit alert over the United States of America. They all fly aging F–16 and F–15 aircraft. In fact, a unit in your home State, St. Louis, Missouri, lost an F–15 earlier this year, a catastrophic bulkhead failure. It shows the age of the aircraft.

The plan B for us, sir, is to continue to extend these aircraft, to put modernization into them, but it is not going to solve the problem long-term because as early as fiscal year 2015—General Blum and I have looked at this, and we have determined that at that early date, we will start attritting aircraft out of this fleet and we will be leaving the combatant commander of NORTHCOM unable to meet his requirements. General Blum and I are working very closely with the Air Force to make sure we do not have that bathtub, but today, as we look at it, there is a bathtub.

Senator BOND. Would newly produced F–16's and F–15's at what, I might add, would be about one-third or less the cost or the F–22's enable you in the interim to fill that gap?

General MCKINLEY. Sir, you obviously know those are not in the Air Force procurement budget. But either one of those aircraft have served this Nation exceedingly well for the past 20 to 30 years. And we need to modernize an air sovereignty alert fleet that can serve this Nation.

Senator BOND. I believe in that, and I believe that plan B is a necessity.

General Vaughn, let me finish up commending you and the Army Guard for pushing the top in recruiting with quality recruits. The Army National Guard has the Guard Recruiter Assistance Program, which serves as a model.

Can you provide us an update on the Army Guard recruiting effort, and what, if any, are some of the challenges facing you for which you may need assistance?

General VAUGHN. Senator Bond, we have done great things. In the last 2½ years, we have grown 28,000 soldiers, and we recruit nearly 70,000 soldiers a year. As you referred to, we put into place a program that takes advantage of peer recruiting, uses our soldiers, incentivizes those soldiers to go out and recruit their communities and make their organizations to look just like them. You know, we go to school, church, play ball with every recruit that is out there. We are at 358,000 soldiers.

The authorization through 2009 is 352,600. We were given authority from the Office of the Secretary of Defense to go ahead and not slow down this recruiting program that is attracting youngsters at a record rate to serve their country.

And so General Blum mentioned something a while ago. We have a couple things going. We have got the equipment piece going in the right direction, which we have to monitor. We have the full-time support piece that we have to get to work on. The other piece is we have to have a serious debate about what the real end

strength of the Army Guard should be because over history, as a dinosaur and as a system that is outdated, we have all of our training pipeline sunk into our units, which is the wrong thing to do. So we have to look at how much strength we really need in the future.

Senator BOND. Thank you very much, General Vaughn.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you.

Senator Mikulski.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, good morning, Generals, and thank you for both being here and for your service. And as always with the Guard, thank you for your candor and the willingness to tell it like it is. I appreciate the charts that you have given to us that actually identify your budgetary needs and where the base shortfalls are. It is rare that we get it and so straightforwardly.

General Vaughn, it is great to see you at this table joining with our colleagues in the National Guard Caucus. We would like to see you at the Joint Chiefs table.

But let me get right to my questions. First of all, to you, General Blum—my colleagues, General Blum is a fellow Marylander and we are very proud of him and his position in our military.

But in the Yellow Ribbon reintegration program, I want to thank you for the fact that you furnished Maryland $1 million out of your discretionary funds to help with the Maryland reintegration program. As of April 1, over 1,000 Maryland guardsmen were serving in either Iraq or Afghanistan. Many are now on their way home. We wanted to operationalize the program. We are one of 15 States, but the civilian leadership at the Pentagon had failed to fund it. Your $1 million and Governor O'Malley, willing to step up for what is essentially a Federal responsibility, with $3 million, we have been able to do it.

But I want you to know we had a roundtable with guardsmen and they are very grateful for what you were able to do, which takes me right to the Yellow Ribbon Program.

We are going to put the money in the supplemental, thanks to Senators Inouye and Stevens, and we are looking to implementing it here. As I understand it, 15 States have a Yellow Ribbon Program. Of course, that means 35 do not. Do you anticipate that all 50 States will develop a program, and do you see that all 50 States need them?

General BLUM. Senator Mikulski, you are at the essence of a very critical issue. Every soldier that we deploy, every unit that we deploy and goes into harm's way has to be reintegrated. The first panel that was in here—you were spot on, right on target on what the needs are. General Stultz told you. We recruit soldiers. We retain families. To maintain those families, to even put them back to the way they were before the deployment requires a systematic reintegration process that heretofore we had not paid enough attention to.

We have a pilot program with 15 States that is proving to be tremendously successful in encountering some of the concerns of Senator Murray and yourself as to the ill effects of the deployment on their families and the soldiers and how they reintegrate back into the workplace and into the household. Every single soldier and their family deserves this program.

Now, if they are called by the Governors to do something in the State, then the State probably should bear the responsibility for that.

Senator MIKULSKI. Right.

General BLUM. But when you are called in the Federal service of your country and you go overseas for a year, we owe them everything we would give any other soldier, airman, marine, or sailor in the Armed Forces. The fact that they happen to be guardsmen is irrelevant in my view.

Senator MIKULSKI. So do I take that as a yes——

General BLUM. Yes.

Senator MIKULSKI [continuing]. That you need 35 more?

General BLUM. Yes, ma'am.

Senator MIKULSKI. And is the reason that we do not have 35 more because the pilot did not work or is it a wallet issue? Is it a real issue?

General BLUM. It is a resource issue.

Senator MIKULSKI. So it is a wallet issue.

General BLUM. The pilot worked magnificently well. As a matter of fact, right now I would say Minnesota is the gold standard. Maryland is right up there.

Senator MIKULSKI. Yes. Do not start that.

General BLUM. Well, what I am saying——

Senator MIKULSKI. We will all suit up and fight for our guardsmen.

General BLUM. What I am saying is that the States have really embraced this, taken it serious. The fact that Governor O'Malley would put that kind of money into that program out of the State coffers just to jump start it and make it possible is very commendable, but it should not be sustained that way.

Senator MIKULSKI. So what you are saying is what we have now in the supplemental we anticipate will keep the programs going for 15, but we really need to face up to the fact that it should be integrated, that there should be this substantial list for all of the guard units coming home so that they would have parity with active duty on a reintegration program.

General BLUM. Yes, ma'am, absolutely. Clyde, do you want to add anything to that?

General VAUGHN. Senator, the Army has looked out there and seen this, and they have listened. And they integrated the family action plan by the Army which, unfortunately, because of the resource tail, it is a little further out. They have this program, Yellow Ribbon, in this integrated family action plan. And it has got to be resourced to make it happen. But they have seen the light, and they are working this very hard.

Senator MIKULSKI. Let me go then to this. Do you have at the Guard really those who are looking at evaluating the program? And let us say what you have now is very good. What the Guard tells us, as we meet in family roundtables, is that when they come home, it is not a linear process. In other words, you have it very well sequenced, but some feel they do not need the services until maybe they have been home a year or they need it when they have been home for 3 months and it dawns on them they need it. Or they have assessed the family financial situation, and they find

that they need a lot of counseling just in terms of getting out of debt.

There are two things going on. One, an evaluation that 1 year is not enough, that a guardsman can come in at any point? And number two is that really the reintegration program should have almost like an alumni association where they would periodically be able to come back for at least another year after they return home or before they deploy again because it is after they get home to get reintegrated. But then there is that undercurrent of anxiety of the redeployment. So you have got two significant dynamics going on in the family: one, to reintegrate and then the possibility of saying goodbye all over again.

General BLUM. If we are going to have an operational National Guard, which this Nation must have, with an All-Volunteer Force, the only way we can sustain the defense of our Nation right now is to optimize and operationalize the Reserve component. That includes the National Guard. If we are going to have repeated deployments, the conditions, the symptoms that manifest themselves come, as you well described, at irregular times. They are different for each person, and they really are cumulative. If you have deployed two and three and four times, the intensity of your symptoms and when they manifest themselves is different than if you go one time for a short deployment and come back.

So we want to build as much flexibility in this program because we are looking to keeping soldiers and their families really for a continuum of service, basically as a career. We do not use our most precious resources to bring them in for one enlistment and then let them go out the door. We spend a lot of time and effort. They become more valuable to us with each passing day. We need to realize that in the programs that support and sustain these soldiers and their families.

Senator MIKULSKI. Well, thank you very much. I know others have asked questions related to equipment and retention and so on. But thank you and thank all who serve as well. Thank you.

Senator STEVENS. Senator Murray.

Senator MURRAY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much and thank you to all of you for your tremendous service and those who serve under you and with you.

I wanted to ask General Blum. I have been following the KC–X recapitalization effort. And in reading your prepared testimony and General McKinley's, I see that the Air Guard flew 86 percent of the tanker sorties in Operation Iraqi Freedom and 25 percent of tanker sorties in Operation Enduring Freedom. Pretty impressive. So considering that the Air Guard is very heavily involved in the operations of these mid-air refueling tankers, I am curious how much input you or your staff had in the KC–X recapitalization process.

General BLUM. The joint staff did not have any. Did the Air Guard staff?

General MCKINLEY. No, sir.

General BLUM. This is pretty much consistent with what General Bradley told you. It would not be normal that the Air Guard or the Air Force Reserve would participate in an acquisition action.

Senator MURRAY. Even though you fly a large majority of the sorties.

General BLUM. Pardon?

Senator MURRAY. Even though you fly the vast majority of the sorties.

General BLUM. Yes. But how new aircraft are acquired does not take into account the advice and consultation of the Chief of the Air Force Reserve or the Director of the Air National Guard.

Senator MURRAY. I know that there are going to be associated costs with either the Boeing or the Airbus plane. But I want to know what impact the difference in size and weight of the two tankers would have on our future budgets. And there is a lot of costs associated with upgrades of hangars and ramps and taxiways.

Has the National Guard conducted an evaluation of the construction costs for the various beddown locations?

General BLUM. That is ongoing. Do you want to handle this, General McKinley?

General MCKINLEY. That, Senator Murray, was done several years ago as a what-if drill because——

Senator MURRAY. For both the larger tanker, Airbus tanker——

General MCKINLEY. I would have to get that back to you for the record. I know we have looked at a larger aircraft tanker beddown for Milcon and hangar space. I know that. So I will get that to you for the record.

Senator MURRAY. So you could provide me with the information on both of those planes and the costs?

General MCKINLEY. Yes, I can.

Senator MURRAY. Okay, for the record. Thank you. I appreciate that.

[The information follows:]

As part of routine tabletop and internal "what-if" planning drills conducted several years ago, my engineers verbally discussed with several Air National Guard (ANG) tanker wing commanders potential beddown issues such as facilities, ramp space and hangars for future recapitalization efforts.

At the 20 ANG sites where tanker assets are currently based, we estimate the facility costs would be approximately $50 million to $275 million for the KC–45 and $50 million to $250 million for the Boeing aircraft depending on location. For example, at a notional ANG-only base, we estimate costs to be approximately $70 million for either aircraft selected. And, at a notional civilian location, costs range from $250 million to $275 million. These MILCON estimates will be used for potential ANG KC–X bases and are intended to assist in the Guard's initial planning for potential aircraft replacement. These estimates were not part of the Air Force's formal acquisition process.

In coordinating this response, we were informed by the Air Force that part of the official KC–X Source Selection process, the Air Force calculated and took into consideration MILCON cost estimates for representative active duty CONUS/overseas locations, as well as sample Guard and Reserve bases. The Air Force conducted site surveys at several existing active duty tanker bases. These surveys were used as a basis for estimating MILCON costs for the Most Probable Life Cycle Cost (MPLCC) which would address ANG and overseas locations. It's important to note that MILCON cost estimates were not considered in isolation by the source selection team, but were included as a component of the MPLCC, accounting for approximately 2 percent of the total cost.

When Air Mobility Command coordinates the final KC–45A beddown with the MAF and the plan is approved by Headquarters Air Force, the National Guard Bureau will lead the site survey processes at selected Guard locations. Initial MILCON cost estimates will be updated based on the specific requirements of each location. Local experts will be an integral part of the site survey team, as is the case with all site surveys.

Senator MURRAY. And, General Blum, I wanted to ask you specifically your opinion on flying the Boeing 767. And the reason I am asking that is because shortly after the—well, within a day after the announcement of the procurement of the Airbus plane was made, Loren Thompson, who is with the Lexington Institute, released a paper extolling the benefits of the Airbus platform and hinting that somehow the Boeing plane was a lesser plane.

Now, that was before we were given any kind of debriefing. Boeing was not given any kind of debriefing. I have been asking Secretary Wynne and General Moseley and even Secretary England how that could happen, and no one knows.

But regardless of that, some of the misinformation from that analysis has left people wondering whether the 767 is a plane that your forces would be willing to fly. And I wanted to ask you specifically if you have an opinion about the Boeing 767.

General BLUM. Well, I am probably the least qualified person to comment on that, but I think General McKinley could probably offer a more credible opinion on that.

Senator MURRAY. General.

General MCKINLEY. Ma'am, we are under advice that while the contract is under protest, the order is under protest, that we are supposed to leave it at that.

So all I can tell you is we have 17 great KC–135 units in the Air Guard. They fly great missions. They are looking for new equipment. That equipment is very old and needs to be replaced very badly.

Senator MURRAY. Okay. Well, let me change directions a little bit.

General Vaughn, I had a question for you. I know that the psychological issues for our men and women who are returning are something that you care about. And I saw that in February, the Army released the MHAT–5 report that had a number of findings. Some of them were them more positive; some were more troublesome. And I was pleased to see that the report said morale had increased throughout the ranks of the Army and that stigma had decreased for mental healthcare.

But I was alarmed to see that the suicide rates for soldiers who were deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan were up. Additionally, that report found a significant increase in mental health problems for soldiers deployed to Afghanistan.

Could you comment a little bit on whether this transition to heavy use of the National Guard and operational forces has had an impact and what you think we should be doing?

General VAUGHN. Thank you, Senator Murray. Yes, I think there is no question it has had an impact, and we are all disturbed by the numbers. But it is the stress that probably all of us, all services, find ourselves in today with the repeated use, and this is what the Nation has asked us to do.

Now, how do we fix it and what things can we do? I think the thing that you may have alluded to—and I had a sister that has coached me for years in head injuries. So my concern, after the last couple of trips, was with all of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines that had taken repeated blows and there were in incidents that we had no record of. And so I said when I look back at this

in the Guard and Reserve especially, our soldiers come back and then they return to the civilian populace. They are not on active duty any longer. Rather than them having to come forward, why is it we cannot do something in the integration piece and at 30-, 60-, 90-day checks? And then you ask yourself, well, who is it that is going to be doing that?

And when we look around, I think long-term, if we are looking at something that is kind of like the Agent Orange piece, you know, the Vietnam war, then we should have a database on all these soldiers who took these repeated blows in a blast or whatever it is, which is an operational nature. What I am saying is if they are hurt, they are already captured and in the personal side of the medical records, and that is protected. But if we did something operationally that said, when that soldier comes back for redeployment and if he goes through the demobilization station, perhaps the State needs to be there with us. Every State probably will handle this a little bit differently, but there are head injury counsels out there that I think ultimately are going to be kind of the case managers and folks that move them in various directions.

I think our responsibility—and I have had this discussion with the hospitals in Afghanistan and Iraq and I have had this with the senior leadership in the Army. I think our responsibility is to accumulate that track record on each one of those soldiers.

Senator MURRAY. And that is not being done currently?

General VAUGHN. Ma'am, that particular piece for the Army National Guard is not being done currently. And to me it is a command responsibility to report it in through chains and for us to be able to give it to our great adjutant generals out there and get it in to the interagency community of that State. And then we will figure out which direction they need to go.

But rather than them swimming upstream with a stigma and saying I have a problem, we ought to know whether this soldier is likely to have a problem. And when they look at that, there is a database that says, oh, yes, you were this, this, this, and this. And that is what we are trying to work right now.

It is an emotional issue to us, and we have tried to attack this, and we are going to keep pushing it. And we would like to have all the help we could get.

Senator MURRAY. What are the barriers? What can Congress do to help you with that?

General VAUGHN. A barrier for us—and I will just be very open with this and ask the Chief to throw in, if he wants to. A barrier for us is the command relationships with our organizations that are deployed today. Our units are spread out over such a big area that if our brigades and the command relationships were in place where they had command and control and the reporting chains were all there, we could get them to report this data up through the chains to us. But as it is, they are segmented all over the place.

This is going to take some work, and it will not just be Army and Air Guard and the other the Reserve components. It will also be the other active soldiers that do not go through the 20 years that are not really, really hurt that is going to come back into the State environment. So we need to take care of it for everyone for good.

Senator MURRAY. General Blum, did you want to comment?

General BLUM. I would just add my solid support for that.

What General Vaughn says is absolutely correct. It is a challenge for the Army Guard to document whether Specialist Winkowski has been exposed to one improvised explosive device (IED) or two IEDs or three IEDs. I do not know. His chain of command would know.

Senator MURRAY. He just said two? You were exposed to two?

General BLUM. So that is two. That needs to be recorded someplace.

Senator MURRAY. Was that recorded anywhere for you?

Mr. WINKOWSKI. I do not know.

General BLUM. He does not know and we do not know, but that is information that is very vital to know if we are going to understand what we——

Senator MURRAY. Well, everything we are being told is that symptoms can occur 1 year, 2 years, 3 years later. I thought we were asking the question when soldiers came home if they had been in the vicinity of an IED. We are not doing that?

General VAUGHN. Ma'am, we are asking that question, but for all the right reasons, tough folks want to get home to their families, all these things, and plus they miss several of them. And then they ask the question, they say, oh, by the way, who else was in there with you? And so we need to be accumulating this for the soldiers.

General BLUM. Nobody is refusing to do it and nobody does not want to do it. We do not have a good system to do it yet. We are struggling to do this. This is hard to do for the active force. It is even more difficult for the Army National Guard because of the unintended consequences of breaking—the way we are employing our units today needs to be looked at hard. General Vaughn and I are working with Army leadership on this because one of the unintended consequences of the way we are desegregating our leadership from our units, once we send them overseas, in some cases makes what we are describing here an almost impossible task.

So we are not condemning anyone, but this is a problem that we must address as senior leaders, and I think this is for the Army to fix for the soldiers. And when I am talking about the Army, I am talking about the total Army, active, guard, and reserve, soldiers I am talking about are active, guard, and reserve soldiers.

Senator MURRAY. Well, thank you. I am way over my time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you.

Senator Cochran.

Senator COCHRAN. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

We are very proud of the fact that in Camp Shelby, Mississippi, near Hattiesburg there is a National Guard training facility. The Army has been there for quite a while, since World War II. As a matter of fact, Senator Inouye was sent there for initial Army training before he was deployed in World War II. So there is a rich tradition and heritage that we honor at Camp Shelby.

Camp Shelby is now engaged in a total immersion training program where they have villages and buildings that resemble the facilities that you will encounter in the combat zones that we have been involved in Iraq and Afghanistan and other places around the world.

The point I am making here is that just recently they had a tornado that came through there and tore up some of those buildings, damaged some of them severely. And we have asked for supplemental funding to repair those and restore those facilities so they can continue to be used.

Is it the plan of the Army National Guard to continue to use Camp Shelby as a training facility for guardsmen who are being deployed?

General VAUGHN. Senator Cochran, absolutely. When you look at the premier facilities all the way around and what generates combat power, especially for our brigade combat teams, Shelby handles large formations. As you know from the museum out there, you can see who all has gone through there. It is just a fabulous place and we intend to put the kind of resources that it takes to continue to keep that going within our limited capabilities. But I also believe that the Army, the big Army, the total Army, stood up to do exactly that too. And all we need to know is whether something is amiss on that or not because we cannot afford for Shelby to be out of step with what we are doing today.

Senator COCHRAN. Well, I am hopeful and I expect that we will include funds in the supplemental to be able to repair and put the facilities back in full operation.

General BLUM. Senator, I will take that question for the record, but it is my understanding that it has been done. But I want to make absolutely sure. And I think General Vaughn is right. I think that was done with Army funds. But we will take that for the record and we will get it back to you.

Senator COCHRAN. Well, thank you very much.

[The information follows:]

To date, the Army National Guard has not received any federal funds to repair the damage to Camp Shelby caused by a tornado on March 4, 2008. This tornado caused extensive damage to facilities, including three barracks (36-soldiers capacity) and one latrine all of which had to be torn down due to safety concerns. The latrine facility was critical since it served a block of buildings and rendered them un-usable. The impact was a loss of capacity to house soldiers. Work-arounds were accomplished by immediate repair where possible, relocation of soldiers, and continued use of the minimally damaged buildings. One headquarters building and office facilities also incurred tornado damage. Emergency or temporary repairs have been performed on all facilities to mitigate immediate safety hazards. These repairs were completed by diverting scheduled maintenance and repair funds. Only the most critical of repairs were completed. Funding estimates to repair tornado damage include $11.5 million in Military Construction funds and $866,000 in Operations and Maintenance funds.

Senator COCHRAN. Well, it is a high honor to be a host in Mississippi to such a good training facility. I remember when my son trained down there when he was in the 155th Combat Brigade, a tank platoon leader, in preparation of going to Kuwait to deal with that situation. He called me up and he said, Dad, I am not sure our training is going to be complete by the time that thing is over over there. I think I need to be transferred to a unit that is going. And I said, well, I cannot do anything about that. The Army knows where they want you. And he said, well, I will call Congressman Montgomery then.

Well, one other thing that I just want to comment on and that is the recruiting and retention by the Army National Guard. It has been very impressive, particularly at a time when deployments to

hostile areas and serious combat may be involved. I know your recruits have been deployed multiple times in support of our national security interests, and I want to commend you for the quality of the leadership you have provided to these men and women. We are very proud of them in our State and they continue to engage in training and are serving out their commitments. They are not dropping out. They are staying in.

So at the time when the overall size of the Army Guard is growing, are you able to meet your retention goals nationwide? I know it is good in Mississippi.

General BLUM. I will let General Vaughn brag about this. This is a great success story.

General VAUGHN. Senator, we have met every goal. We set a retention factor of 18 percent across the Nation, and we are exceeding that. We are much younger than we have been because we are attracting so many youngsters, and they are obligors and they are staying.

So attrition and recruiting—there are two elements of this: keeping the folks with you and taking care of them. And the biggest piece of that is that the community really, really shows their affection for them. Both sides of the aisle—you know, they are on the side of the soldiers. And they feel not like second-class or third-class citizens. They feel like first-class citizens. And our communities and Governors and congressional delegations have just taken wonderful care of these soldiers when they return.

Senator COCHRAN. That is reassuring and good to hear. And I congratulate you for the great job you all are doing in making this happen. Leadership makes a difference.

General McKinley, I know you are probably aware that the 186th Air Refueling Wing currently flies KC–135 tankers out of Key Field in Meridian, Mississippi. In the base realignment and closure process in 2005, these aircraft were reassigned to another base. But the Air Force, as I understand it, is considering replacing those tankers with joint cargo aircraft, but it may not be in time to avoid a gap in the training that will be available to air guardsmen at Key Field.

I would like for you to look into this and see if there is any way to reduce that gap or eliminate it if it can be done so that the training of highly qualified flight crews and maintenance personnel can continue with real-world missions assigned to Key Field.

General MCKINLEY. Thank you for that question, sir. You know we have experienced a lot of mission change as a result of base realignment. Meridian has a great history and a great record. General Blum has worked very closely with the leadership of the Air Force on finding this future mission which is the C–27. But we are looking collectively as the National Guard Bureau on how to bridge the gap between 2011 and 2015 when those new aircraft come. So I will make sure we get back with you or your staff and let you know how we are progressing.

General BLUM. And, Senator, you need to know that the intent—and Senator Dorgan knows this well because we worked his issue early, starting about almost 3 years ago. We had to take out the oldest F–16s because of base realignment and closure (BRAC) out of North Dakota, and they were not going to get the C–27 aircraft

in time for it not to be a gap. So we arranged a bridge mission for that unit, and we will do the same thing for Meridian.

I have made a commitment to all of the adjutants general and Governors that we do not want—we want this to be like a relay race or a baton pass where we do not let go of the baton until someone has grabbed it. We do not want a gap and drop it. If we do that, it will be very costly in terms of recruiting, retention, and resources to reestablish that unit after it has been disestablished. So it would be much better to have a bridge mission to transition it from what it used to be to what it is going to be, and we are committed to doing that with you, as well as the other States.

Senator COCHRAN. Thank you very much.

Senator STEVENS. Senator Domenici.

Senator DOMENICI. It is nice seeing all three of you again.

General Blum, last year a GAO report studied the National Guard domestic equipment requirements and readiness and indicated that the nondeployed Army National Guard forces in New Mexico did not rank very high. As you recall, they ranked the last in the Nation in equipment readiness with less than 40 percent of the total amount of dual-use equipment they were authorized to have for warfighting missions.

Since that report, it is my understanding that things are better. The dual-use equipment availability has increased to 61 percent. According to your posture statement, it looks as if we are slowly going in the right direction. Is that correct?

General BLUM. Yes, sir, that is correct. And it is because of the extremely helpful assistance we got from this subcommittee and the Congress with the National Guard and Reserve equipment account. We were able to literally put the capability and the capacity exactly where we needed it. We were able to apply that $800 million that Congress appropriated and authorized last year for the National Guard and Reserve equipment account, and New Mexico was one of the beneficiaries. You are now at exactly the same as the national level. You are coming up at the same rising tide as the rest of the Nation.

Senator DOMENICI. How does the 2009 budget request address this situation?

General BLUM. If additional resources or funds were made available, we could apply them to accelerate moving from the 60 percent level or the mid-60 percent level where we are and we could probably increase that in terms of quantity and quality by a rough order of magnitude of 10 percent by next year, which I think is probably very useful to do.

Senator DOMENICI. I do too.

The National Guard's role in border security. General, again, Operation Jump Start will end this June. We really appreciate the fine work that was done by our guardsmen and women in supporting Department of Homeland Security (DHS) on the border security mission. I also want to thank you for your support of our communities and the law enforcement agencies with the counterdrug program.

Can you tell us a little bit more about the National Guard's work as part of Operation Jump Start and its counterdrug work?

General BLUM. Those two are separate programs, Senator, as you well know, but they are somewhat related.

Senator DOMENICI. Right.

General BLUM. Before Operation Jump Start ever happened, we were on the Southwest border for about 20 years largely through the counterdrug program. Lots of good things were done that have beneficial effect with some of the issues that the Governors and the President had to deal with with our international border and our State borders down there.

Operation Jump Start was a limited operation that was only supposed to last 2 years and only funded and authorized for 2 years. It will come to conclusion in July. We have met and exceeded everyone's expectations, the Governors', the President's. Everyone is happy with it and we will complete that mission at the end of July.

That does not mean that you will not see the National Guard on the Southwest border of the United States. We were there in two legitimate ways for many years before Operation Jump Start, and I think we will probably be there for the foreseeable future, probably using those two programs again.

One of them is the innovative readiness training program that is run out of the Department of Defense where all of the Reserve chiefs that were here this morning and us send our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines to go down there and actually practice and perfect their military skills in a way that is useful to also helping secure the border and improve the infrastructure along the border which helps secure the border.

The second program is the counterdrug program. If the counterdrug program were fully authorized and fully funded, it could do even more than it is doing right now. And what it is doing right now has a very beneficial and synergistic effect for border security as well as interdicting illicit drugs and people that are trafficking through the border.

Senator DOMENICI. General, are you saying that when Jump Start ends, there are still some programs, aside from just a general involvement, that will perhaps be used on the border until it is better taken care of by the fully operational Border Patrol activities?

General BLUM. I am not sure I would say it exactly that way. I am saying that the National Guard will be involved in the counterdrug program in California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas for sure even after Operation Jump Start is over. And I think you will see the Guard and Reserve specialized units, engineers, medical communications. The same people that you saw for 25 years in the past will probably return to that vicinity to do their training which has a synergistic beneficial effect as well. But it will not be Operation Jump Start. Jump Start was a very limited operation authorized for a specific purpose.

Senator DOMENICI. A number of Governors on the border have officially asked us to extend Jump Start, and I do not know that that is going to happen. But the reason I am inquiring of you is what is it going to look like if Jump Start is not there. And my understanding is that in an ad hoc way you are still involved. You are asked to do things and you do them, but it will not be Jump Start.

General BLUM. I think that is an accurate and fair way to phrase it. I really do.

Senator DOMENICI. Thank you very much.

Senator STEVENS. Senator Dorgan.

Senator DORGAN. Well, thank you very much. I believe I am last, so I will be mercifully brief. You have had a long morning, and I have not been able to be at all of the hearing.

But I wanted to ask just a couple of questions. One is about—well, first of all, I should thank all of you. I will be Saturday in Grand Forks, North Dakota, at a coming home ceremony for some soldiers that are on their way back from their mission in Afghanistan. And all of us do that frequently to thank soldiers and their families, especially their families who carry on while they are gone. It is always a source of great pride. So thanks to the men and women of the Guard and Reserve.

The Air Guard units—particularly in Fargo, the Happy Hooligans, of course, are now flying Predators. I am told that the Air Guard Predator units are manned to operate one Predator unit 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. That is the way they are staffed. I am also told that they are now operating two orbits with essentially that same staffing. That is a substantial tempo for them. Can you tell me what the background is on that and will that be relieved at some point?

General MCKINLEY. Senator, thanks for your support. Secretary Gates has testified that the need for increasing ISR capability is very necessary. So he has asked the Chief of the National Guard Bureau and me to ramp up the training in the units that have the Predator in the Air National Guard, as a result of base realignment, to pick up the tempo to be fully mobilized to do as many airborne combat air patrols as possible to help the soldiers and marines on the ground.

The Hooligans have stepped up in a great way, as well as our other units who fly the Predator.

This mission will probably transition itself from MQ–1 Predator to MQ–9 Reaper because it will give the combatant commander more fire power on the ground overseas. So that demand signal has been given. The North Dakota Air National Guard has stepped up. It is going to increase and I do not see this tempo lessening, Senator, for the foreseeable future.

General BLUM. The good news, Senator, is it works so well. The guys like Senator—I mean, Specialist—maybe a future Senator, but right now Specialist Winkowski—he depends on them greatly to identify who is placing the IEDs, where they are placed, who is manufacturing these vehicle-borne IEDs and ground-buried IEDs. In an unclassified setting, I will tell you they are enormously effective in saving the lives and reducing the suffering of our American soldiers deployed. So anything that we need to do to provide more orbits for the people in the field right now we are doing.

Senator DORGAN. I had heard reported a statement by Secretary Gates. The way the report came out, it seemed to imply some concern about the Air Force. I think the Air Force and the Air Guard are involved in putting almost everything up that they have got and doing, I think, by all accounts of other services, a terrific job. I checked too and my understanding is that reporting is not exactly what the Secretary of Defense had in mind. I think the Secretary of Defense is, from my understanding, pleased with the tempo and

the work done by both the Air Force and the Air Guard with respect to UAVs. This is a new part of the Air Force in many ways, used in a new way as well.

I want to ask about the joint cargo aircraft because you talked about the bridge with Senator Cochran, I believe, on that issue. The budget documents that we have say the Air Force plans to buy 24 joint cargo aircraft between 2010 and 2013. And I think that there are a number of Guard units that are candidates to receive the joint cargo aircraft.

Can you tell me what we will expect? I mean, we involved with you I think several years ago—3 years ago now. What do we expect with respect to the Air Guard in Fargo and the Happy Hooligans with this bridge mission?

General MCKINLEY. Chief, thanks. If I could just carve out the Air National Guard piece of this. Right now in the Air Force budget, there are 26 C–27s in the budget, and the allocation right now—we have six units that have been designated as receivers of those aircraft, thereby making the math easy for four planes per unit on the Air National Guard side. And General Vaughn, obviously, is going to get a tranche of airplanes for the Army National Guard.

Senator DORGAN. I understand it then. I was trying to reflect those numbers in terms of what General Blum and I had talked about previously.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I will perhaps submit some other questions.

But again, I make one additional observation, and that is this. The National Guard has done just a terrific job. I do think that now, over a period of a number of years, 5 and going toward 6 years, that frankly we are using the National Guard in a way that was not previously intended. And that works for a while. I mean, you can move things around and units around. It will work for a while.

But I do think that multiple, repeated deployments will—I think there is a huge price for that at some point because the National Guard is capable of it, but it is not constructed to do that. And I think my hope is, as I think the hope is of everybody in this Congress, we are able to extract ourselves from this war at some point soon. But I also hope that we understand, when we get back to more normal times, the specific mission of the National Guard.

General BLUM. Senator, if we do not change how we man the force with full-time manning and allow over-strength for the units for the part-time manning or the traditional guardsmen, if we do not equip the Guard to be an operational force and we do not resource them and train them to be an operational force, then what you said is exactly right. If we do those three things, I think we can sustain the volunteer force and the citizen soldier indefinitely, particularly if we are allowed to grow capacity so that we are not turning the units and the individual soldiers as fast as we are today.

Senator DORGAN. But the short answer to that is we are not meeting those needs. There are shortfalls in the percentage of equipment that is necessary for the various units. We are regrettably not having the resources to make that full commitment.

General BLUM. We cannot do things the same old way and use the Guard in a whole new way and make it work and sustain it. I agree.

Senator DORGAN. Well, I thank all three of you for your leadership.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your time.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you. Thank you very much.

I have sort of restrained myself a little bit here on questions today. So I will submit most of the questions.

But I do want to ask you two things. General McKinley, I am told the Alaska Air Guard has the second lowest manning level in the Air National Guard. And they are working with the Guard Bureau to try to find the personnel to support the C–17 mission that is coming there. What is the situation? Are we going to have the planes and no people to fly them?

General MCKINLEY. Sir, General Campbell and I are working a plan right now to make sure we put our main effort on the C–17. It is critical. It is vital to our Nation. There are ways for us to adjust manpower in Alaska. I will be coming to the Chief of the Bureau with several courses of action here shortly, but it is a high priority. In fact, we have a team in Alaska today working those manpower issues with the adjutant general. So I share your concern. We are looking for ways to solve those issues, and I think we will be able to alleviate the stress.

Senator STEVENS. Well, General Blum, when I asked General Campbell about it, my staff and I, we were told there is a concept of cross-balancing manpower. Now what is that? I do not understand that.

General MCKINLEY. What we need—and it is an Air Force term. What we are looking for is a balance of possibly active duty manpower working with Guard manpower to alleviate the immediate shortfalls. Working with General Lichte at Air Mobility Command, we are looking at all those options. And I have not brought to the Chief what our courses of action are, but believe me, it is number one on my list.

Senator STEVENS. We are planned to move the Guard unit onto Elmendorf Air Force Base. Will that assist at all in this concept?

General MCKINLEY. Well, as you know, sir, that move from Kulis to Elmendorf is as a unit, and it has integrity of its own right. And we cannot rob manpower from it or we will have a similar crisis with another unit. So I think as I bring these courses of action to General Blum, we will give several ways to remediate this and then we will pass them on and make sure they are coordinated with General Campbell.

Senator STEVENS. Okay.

General Vaughn, I am told that Alaska Army National Guard recently transformed the 207th Infantry Group to the 297th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade. Now, can you tell us how this new mission will improve the role of the Guard as far as its support capabilities?

General VAUGHN. Absolutely, Senator. The battlefield surveillance brigades are very needed and valuable organizations. They have a military intelligence capability but they have a scout capability that fits a lot of the kinds of structure that we originally had

up with the famous 207th Scout Group. And so when we looked at the conversion piece, because it is a brigade level formation, we looked at it and we thought that fits pretty well. That fits Alaska. We talked to the adjutant general of Alaska and everybody agreed with that. And I think it is a phenomenal piece of structure.

General BLUM. It is a much more capable unit, Senator Stevens, and it places strength that has historically been demonstrated by Alaska Army Guard. We did the same thing in my home State of Maryland, taking the infantry brigade and turning it into a battlefield surveillance brigade, far more useful to the Governor and far more useful to the United States Army. They are a modern, 21st century capability. They really are.

Senator STEVENS. As I said, I have got a bunch of questions. I will submit them.

Let me ask you just generally. How is recruitment and retention in our State in Alaska?

General VAUGHN. Excellent. Senator, recruitment and retention in Alaska pretty much goes the same all the way across the Nation. It is the same phenomenon of youngsters stepping forward to serve their country. But it is excellent. They are doing great. I was concerned a couple of years back, and I think we have just done wonderful.

Senator STEVENS. I was told that one of the units reenlisted 100 percent. Is that correct?

General VAUGHN. That is correct. We had some time to visit some units that were doing some phenomenal things in Afghanistan, for instance, and it just makes you so proud to see, regardless of where they are from. But they reenlisted 100 percent of their soldiers.

Senator STEVENS. Thank you.

General BLUM. When the history of Afghanistan is written and brought up to currency, you are going to be quite proud of what the Alaska Army National Guard did, particularly down in Kandahar. The City of Kandahar may be in the right hands today because of the Alaska Army National Guard's contribution, frankly.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

Senator STEVENS. Well, thank you. I am going to see them soon. I will be happy to pass on your comments, General.

We thank you, General Blum, General Vaughn, and General McKinley, for your testimony. I thank everyone today for their cooperation.

[The following questions were not asked at the hearing, but were submitted to the Department for response subsequent to the hearing:]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL CLYDE A. VAUGHN

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD: "ACTIVE FIRST"

Question. General Vaughn, the Army National Guard has initiated a new recruiting program called "Active First" which targets new recruits who would serve on active duty for a period of time, and then transfer to the Army National Guard. Participants can receive bonuses of up to $60,000 depending on the length of their commitment. How is this program coming along?

Answer. The program is moving ahead of schedule. Our fiscal year 2008 goal was to provide the Army with 1,600 Soldiers. We are on target and should have these Soldiers transitioned on or before September 1, 2008. The program kicked off on October 1, 2007 and the first Soldier completed his Initial Entry Training (IET) and transition into the Active Army was on February 22, 2008. As of June 3, 2008, 86 Soldiers have completed their IET and transitioned into the Active Army. There have been 1,923 Active First enlistments with 1476 scheduled to access into the Active Army.

Question. Is it meeting expectations?

Answer. Yes. In order to fully evaluate if the program is meeting complete long term expectations, we must wait until the Soldiers return to the Army National Guard (ARNG). The program has two expectations: one is service in the Active Army and the second is to return as a drilling member of the ARNG. The program is unique in that the Soldier enlists for eight years without the ability to go into the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). The Soldier must either return to a drilling unit in the ARNG or reenlist in the Active Army. Our expectation is that between 65 to 70 percent will return to an ARNG unit.

Question. The Army National Guard has initiated a new program called "Active First" which is designed to fill up its ranks with prior service Soldiers.

Recruits who enlist under this program serve in the National Guard until they complete their initial entry training (basic training and job training) and are then transferred to the Army for active duty for the time period specified in their enlistment contract (30, 36 or 48 months). After their active duty period, then can either re-enlist on active duty, or serve the remainder of the obligated service in the Army National Guard.

In the past, many Soldiers traditionally enlisted in the Army National Guard after serving on active duty. In fact, in years past, the Army National Guard got more than 60 percent of their new enlistees from prior service Soldiers. However, in the past five years, this percentage has dropped by half, most likely because National Guard units deploy much more often these days.

National Guard officials hope this new program will recruit as many as 2,000 Soldiers, and expect to see as many as 1,400 of them return to the Guard after their active duty period.

General Vaughn, what factors led to this program being developed and offered to new recruits?

Answer. There were several factors that led to the development of the Active First recruiting program. First, the Army National Guard (ARNG) was exceeding our end-strength goals and beginning to reach our Congressionally-mandated ceiling. This was a means to continue the recruiting momentum and also provide a cost-effective means to help the Active Component in attaining their "Grow the Army" objectives. The word "cost-effective" is used because the costs associated with the program were primarily an opportunity cost. The ARNG managed to recruit the Active First Soldiers without adding any additional resources to our manpower or to the Army training base. This is of great benefit to the taxpayer because the single greatest cost associated with recruiting is the expense of our full-time recruiting force, of which the ARNG did not add any additional recruiters.

Secondly, this program supports the continuum of service that the Army is trying to attain. Our formations will benefit from the experience an Active First Soldier will bring back to the ARNG when they return from the Active Component. By allowing our applicants to select a choice of going Active First we are also building a future base of Soldiers that will return to their communities already duty qualified.

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD—END STRENGTH

Question. General Vaughn, the Army Guard plans to finish fiscal year 2008 with 358,200 guardsmen. This is 7,000 more than budgeted and is equal to the entire end strength growth planned for the Army Guard. Does the Guard intend to continue growing in fiscal year 2009?

Answer. The Army National Guard (ARNG) has clearly demonstrated the ability to grow beyond 358,200 Guardsmen. The Department of Defense authorized the ARNG to grow beyond the fiscal year 2008 351,300 congressionally-authorized and budgeted end strength in accordance with the "Accelerated Grow the Army" plan supported with the Office of the Secretary of Defense-directed reprogramming and supplemental funding. This increased authorization leverages the demonstrated momentum of the ARNG recruiting force to meet mission manning and readiness requirements to support a nation in an era of persist conflict. The sustainment of this end strength above the approved Grow the Army ramp of 358,200 in fiscal year

2013 is tied directly to continued supplemental funding as are each of the other Army components Grow the Army plans. To continue to leverage the momentum demonstrated by the ARNG, additional funding via supplemental budgets, while substantiating the current authorization (358,200) in the base appropriation is required.

As the ARNG Force Structure Allowance (FSA) approaches steady state of 358,000 in fiscal years 2010 and 2011, continued end strength growth beyond 358,200 will permit the ARNG to address the challenge of having the ARNG training pipeline embedded within the operating strength. Creating a "Recruit Sustainment Program" for end strength above the FSA, similar to the Trainees, Transients, Holdees, and Students (TTHS) personnel accounts presently in the other Army service components, will allow the ARNG to fill the entire operating force with trained deployable soldiers to meet mobilization readiness requirements and support the transition of the ARNG to an Operational Reserve.

Question. And how does the Guard plan to pay for the additional guardsmen recruited this year?

Answer. The current level of Army National Guard (ARNG) bonus execution at $700 million includes contractual payments for student loans, statutory anniversary payments for prior-year accessions, critical wartime medical bonuses, and foreign language incentives. To resource both non-discretionary bonus payments and to support new incentive programs authorized by Congress, the ARNG implements cost controls to pinpoint bonuses to force shaping requirements.

fiscal year 2005 was the first year the ARNG received supplemental Recruiting and Retention (R&R) funding and by the beginning of fiscal year 2006 those funds along with new recruiting strategies began to pay off. Since supplemental funding began the ARNG has demonstrated a unique ability to grow its end strength. In fiscal year 2006 the ARNG recruited over 19,000 more Soldiers than it did in fiscal year 2005, demonstrating that when resourced, the ARNG can meet its recruitment and retention targets in a wartime environment. With the recruiting successes, both the dollar bonus amounts and eligible recruiting populations have increased due to congressional support. In order to maintain our current momentum and achieve accession targets at 65,000 per year, recruiting bonuses must be fully funded to support an operational end strength sustainment environment.

ARNG recruiting bonus costs will maintain a steady state to fiscal year 2007 spending. ARNG bonus program growth levels off at fiscal year 2007 spending after recent National Defense Authorization Act bonus amount increases. We do not project a significant increase in bonus takers in out-years. It is significant to note that the ARNG requested bonus costs for the Program Objective Memorandum 2010–15 are 60 percent less than the active component cost for approximately the same number of recruits (65,000 vice 71,000).

Question. The Army's Grow the Force plan had the Army Guard increasing by 1,300 soldiers per year. The Guard's actual end strength growth has far exceeded the budgeted Grow the Force plan. The Guard expects to finish fiscal year 2008 with at least 358,200, which is 7,000 more soldiers than budgeted and equal to the Guard's final end strength under the Grow the Force initiative. The Guard will not say whether they plan to keep growing.

To achieve this growth the Army Guard continues to spend large sums of money on recruiting. In fiscal year 2007, the Army Guard spent $417 million on recruiting bonuses out of a $7 billion military personnel budget. In fiscal year 2008, the Guard is planning to spend $720 million on recruiting bonuses. In fiscal year 2009, the Guard has requested $373 million with presumably a large request in the supplemental.

The Army Guard has not yet provided an estimate of the cost of these additional personnel in fiscal year 2009. In fiscal year 2008, the additional personnel costs are minimal because most recruits are still awaiting basic training.

General Vaughn, after falling short of recruiting goals in fiscal year 2005, the Army Guard has turned around its recruiting efforts but, to achieve this, the Guard is spending over $700 million per year on recruiting bonuses. Are you concerned that this cost is unsustainable?

Answer. The success of the Army National Guard (ARNG) recruiting program is a direct result of a whole program approach. While bonuses and other monetary incentives are a significant part of the program, so is our innovative marketing and cutting edge recruiting philosophy.

The current level of ARNG bonus execution at $700 million includes contractual payments for student loans, statutory anniversary payments for prior-year accessions, critical wartime medical bonuses, and foreign language incentives. To resource both non-discretionary bonus payments and to support new incentive pro-

grams authorized by congress, the ARNG implements cost controls to pinpoint bonuses to force shaping requirements.

ARNG recruiting bonus costs will maintain a steady state to fiscal year 2007 spending. ARNG bonus program growth levels off at fiscal year 2007 spending after recent National Defense Authorization Act bonus amount increases. We do not project a significant increase in bonus takers in out-years. It is significant to note that the ARNG requested bonus costs for the Program Objective Memorandum 2010–15 are 60 percent less than the active component cost for approximately the same number of recruits (65,000 vice 71,000).

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD J. DURBIN

BLAST INJURIES

Question. Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan are coming home with higher rates of traumatic brain injuries (TBI), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and depression, among other physical and mental wounds. One in five suffers from TBI. One in five suffers from PTSD. I introduced TBI legislation last year that was enacted as part of the Wounded Warriors title in the fiscal year 2008 Defense Authorization Act that requires routine brain injury screening tests for military personnel. I was disturbed to learn that the Army National Guard is not tracking soldiers' exposure to blasts in Iraq. This information would be very valuable in assessing and treating TBI in returning service members.

To what extent do you plan to track the incidence of blasts soldiers are exposed on the battlefield?

Answer. The Army National Guard (ARNG) plans to be as proactive in this critical area as possible and we thank you for asking the question. The ARNG is currently developing and executing a reporting process to identify and track all blast exposed Soldiers. The intent is to track every Soldier immediately after the event occurs. This system will not be tracking Soldiers that have been seen by the medical system as they are fully covered and cared for. The Soldiers we will track have been exposed to these events (some multiple), not sought medical care, and may be at risk for future medical problems both while in theatre and after redeployment due to the event. Following up with these particular Soldiers will allow for early identification of potentially related issues to include traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder and aid in providing needed support to all Soldiers, Families, and Employers.

The result will enable the force to more accurately forecast the potential needs related to services in the future. The ARNG will be able to identify trends in blast exposure and their impact on Soldiers and Families and the force and what programs may be needed their futures.

I have directed all deployed ARNG units to collect and report data on Soldiers exposed to blasts. Commanders will have the discretion to determine which Soldiers should be included based on their proximity to the blast. The intent is to capture data on Soldiers that do not seek immediate medical treatment, but may have been impacted by the blast. This data will be used to follow up with individually impacted Soldiers in theatre and will be maintained in an ARNG database that will be provided to states upon redeployment of ARNG units. States will partner with appropriate civilian agencies to provide Soldiers with needed services, but at a minimum will follow up with Soldiers during the 30, 60 and 90 day reintegration events.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL H STEVEN BLUM

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE

CIVIL SUPPORT READINESS

Question. General Blum, recent GAO reports have addressed the Guard's readiness for civil support missions. According to GAO, the Guard is resourced and prepared for average state level events but does not have adequate guidance nor planning for a medium to large scale, multi-state domestic emergency. What is the Guard doing to improve its preparation for these types of events?

Answer. The National Guard is improving its preparation for responding to a medium to large scale, multi-state domestic emergencies by conducting exercises titled "Vigilant Guard" which reinforces that all incidents are local. These exercises demonstrate the capabilities of the National Guard Joint Force Headquarters and the

Emergency Management Assistance Compact—a process where Governors reach out to other Governors for more assistance. Specific National Guard homeland defense capabilities include the National Guard Reaction Forces, Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Civil Support Teams and the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Enhanced Response Package teams.

States that have participated in Vigilant Guard Exercises include Tennessee, Missouri, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, South Carolina, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and Ohio. States planning to participate in future Vigilant Guard Exercises include Hawaii, Nevada, California, Guam and Iowa.

The National Guard Bureau also participates in the National Level Exercises (e.g. NORTHCOM sponsored Ardent Sentry), which exercises continuity capabilities to include the National Essential Functions, Federal Government Essential Functions and to manage emergency from dispersed locations. Previous exercises focused on exercising hurricane preparedness, response capabilities and responding to terrorist WMD threat/attack, to include the integration of Defense Support of Civil Authorities.

These tactical, operational and strategic level exercises allow the states and the National Guard Bureau opportunities to capture lessons learned in order to improve the processes in which the states plan, respond, as well as coordinate additional capabilities and resources from other states.

Question. A recent GAO survey of state adjutant generals (TAGs), reported that many TAGs were greatly concerned about their state's ability to respond to a medium to large scale, multi-state incident while they felt comfortable that their state guard had adequate planning and resources to respond to a typical state-level disaster. According to GAO, the U.S. government has not adequately planned for medium to large scale disasters that require multi-state involvement. For this reason, the Department of Defense and National Guard Bureau do not have clear guidance as to their roles in these types of events and are limited in their ability to plan and equip for these events.

Detailed state-level emergency response plans exist and help the TAGs in planning and equipping for state missions but there is no standardized method to track civil support readiness for larger events because there is no required table of equipment nor training for civil support missions.

The National Guard Bureau has identified significant Army and Air Guard shortfalls in dual-use equipment. These are items that are part of the required list of war-fighting equipment but also have civil support applications. The Guard estimates the cost to completely eliminate this equipment shortfall as $10 billion for the Army Guard and $2.5 billion for the Air Guard. However, without clear guidance as to the Guard's responsibilities during a multi-state event, it is unclear if this equipment requirement is accurate.

General Blum, GAO has reported that the Guard has not been provided with clear guidance on its responsibilities during a medium to large scale disaster or other incident. Without this guidance, how does the Guard assess its dual-use equipment requirements and prioritize its equipment requests?

Answer. Assessing National Guard Readiness for Domestic Operations is a function of understanding the requirement, the required capabilities and enablers and management systems for data collection, analysis, reporting and information sharing with stake-holders. I have asked all 54 State Adjutants General/Commanders to develop a written "Joint Combined State Strategic Plan" that addresses state-specific goals and objectives while allowing supporting entities, such as the National Guard Bureau (NGB), to have a clear picture of each state's external needs. Those assessments are then input to the Joint Capabilities Database (JCD). The current authoritative Department of Defense (DOD) readiness reporting system, the Global Status of Resources and Training System, does not presently assess homeland defense missions or emergency response equipment requests by the Governors.

NGB is working closely with the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness as DOD transitions to the new Defense Readiness Reporting System to ensure the functionality of our JCD is incorporated. The JCD is a complimentary, unclassified, separate and unique system of evaluating every state's preparedness for National Guard Domestic Operations (NGDO). The JCD captures the readiness of the National Guard of every state and territory for Domestic Operations missions at two levels: (1) to respond to the most frequent NGDO missions experienced over the last ten years, and (2) to respond to major catastrophic incidents as articulated in the National Planning Scenarios. From this assessment, we've become aware that dual-use equipping levels vary from state to state. NGB continues to work closely with each state and DOD to ensure critical equipment is pre-positioned at the optimum locations to ensure maximum effective response. If it is in the National Guard, and the Governor needs it, they will get it either

through national-level coordination efforts or through pre-existing state to state Emergency Management Assistance Compacts.

LIGHT UTILITY HELICOPTER

Question. General Blum, the Army National Guard is slated to receive the majority of the new Light Utility Helicopter. However, the rising price of that helicopter means that fewer are being requested in the President's budget. What effect will slowing the fielding of the Light Utility Helicopter have on National Guard homeland defense missions?

Answer. The effect of slowing the fielding of Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) (UH–72A Lakota) to the Army National Guard (ARNG) would be significant with respect to ARNG aviation support to homeland defense missions. However, the Army has ensured the ARNG remains positioned early in the Army's overall LUH fielding plan and the expectation is that early ARNG LUH fielding will remain true. Required aircraft modifications caused some small aircraft quantities to be shifted to the out-years, but the Army is addressing those minor modifications in the current fiscal years 2010–15 Program Objective Memorandum. Additionally, the Army is working to achieve maximum production rate within the LUH program. The Security and Support Helicopter Battalions (SSHBNs) are currently operating aging legacy OH–58A/C aircraft. The UH–72A modernizes the SSHBNs and provides an enhanced aviation platform to conduct security, support and medical evacuation aviation missions and thus better support the National Guard's homeland defense requirements.

Question. The Light Utility Helicopter, or UH–72A Lakota, is a commercial helicopter that has been adapted for military use within the United States. Its primary missions relate to homeland defense, medivac, and movement of small numbers of personnel. The LUH is intended to fill these missions in areas with no risk of combat, so that the larger, more expensive, and battle-ready Black Hawks can be freed up for deployment overseas.

The price of each LUH rose from $5.3 million to $6.2 million this year after early tests found a need to upgrade various equipment. This cost growth has reduced the rate at which the Army is procuring the helicopters.

General Blum, the Army National Guard has identified four major aviation modernization or upgrade programs: the Light Utility Helicopter, the Black Hawk, the Chinook, and most recently, the Apache conversions. Since budgets are always limited, how would you prioritize those programs?

Answer. As over 40 percent of the Army's Modified Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) requirement for helicopters resides in the Army National Guard, our reserve component units represent a significant portion of the Army's aviation forces available to meet National Security challenges. Each of the programs that you mention has a distinct and important part in the long-term capabilities of the Guard to provide aviation support to the current and future warfighters. Because of the discreet mission sets that each of these platforms perform it's difficult to put them in a clean-cut prioritized list; however, here are the compelling needs for these platforms in the order in which they should be addressed.

The Army National Guard (ARNG) is short more than 18 percent of the CH–47s required by our reserve component MTOE units, the largest shortage within the National Guard aviation community. While this aircraft continues to be in high demand due to its ability to perform a myriad of missions in all environments, the ARNG must find ways to fill these holes. Additionally, these shortages are exacerbated in the short term by the need to take a CH–47D from a unit and induct it into the production line to create a CH–47F.

Four of the eight battalions in the ARNG AH–64 fleet are well on their way to being modernized. They are in the process of receiving AH–64Ds and will then be available for sourcing to the warfight. The remaining four battalions need to be accelerated in their modernization so that they, too, can be added to the pool of attack helicopter units available for utilization in the current fight. The attack community is heavily deployed and utilized and these additional assets will contribute significantly to our ability to provide aviation formations in the future.

The UH–60 fleet is the largest fleet in the ARNG, but also has the most holes in our formations being 113 aircraft short which represents over 14 percent of its required numbers. The Blackhawks needed by the ARNG predominantly reside within the MEDEVAC community as we try to grow the number of MEDEVAC units available for today's deployments. Additionally, as the UH–60As first entered service in the late 1970s, the modernization of this fleet to UH–60Ls and UH–60Ms is an important piece of the ARNG's ability to provide relevant aviation support into the future.

When one talks of ARNG aviation, it's difficult to do so without talking about the Joint Cargo Aircraft. It's a critical piece of the entire modernization strategy for ARNG aviation and Army aviation in general. It is the capabilities of the C–27J that will provide critical logistical support for ground commanders well into the future. It is also the platform that will provide the ability to divest our 1980 vintage C–23s and keep this cargo fleet viable well into the 2020s and beyond.

The Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) is the cornerstone of National Guard aviation transformation as it has enabled the ARNG to create S&S battalions within their Aviation Brigade structure. Its ability to satisfy both general support and MEDEVAC aviation missions in permissive environments has afforded the Army the opportunity to cascade UH–60s to the ARNG in support of the warfight and will also enable the Army to divest the remaining legacy aircraft (UH–1s and OH–58A/Cs).

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO LIEUTENANT GENERAL CRAIG R. MCKINLEY

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR DANIEL K. INOUYE

FORCE REALIGNMENTS

Question. General McKinley, the Air Guard is undergoing significant force structure adjustments as a result of the Total Force Integration and BRAC. Many bases have been closed and many units have been assigned new missions. These realignments mean that many airmen are being asked to either retrain on new equipment, or worse to uproot their families and leave their civilian jobs to follow their unit to a new location. I understand that this is creating significant challenges in training capacity and retention. How is the Air Guard addressing these issues? Has the Air Force been supportive in providing the training spaces needed to re-train the large number of airmen who have new missions?

Background

The Air Force is undergoing significant force structure adjustments. As part of the Total Force Integration plan, the Air National Guard is working to pool equipment and personnel resources with the active Air Force to maintain capabilities at a lower cost by associating a reserve unit and active unit with the same set of equipment. At this same time, the BRAC Commission realigned Air Force assets at over 100 facilities, recommending some bases close and others realign equipment and personnel. These changes affect 60 percent of all Air Guard units.

Another significant challenge, as reported by GAO in May 2007, is finding a sufficient amount of training spaces and funding to re-train the large number of airmen who are changing missions. There are also concerns with morale as personnel are required to train on new equipment mid-career, or worse, to temporarily train on equipment for a gap mission only to have to retrain again when the new equipment comes on line. To date, the effects on retention have varied by unit.

Retention levels may have remained strong due to a significant increase in bonuses. In fiscal year 2006, the Guard spent $29.5 million on re-enlistment bonuses while in fiscal year 2007 the level increased to $45.5 million. Fiscal year 2008 projections are comparable to fiscal year 2007 levels.

General McKinley, you have greatly increased the amount of money spent on re-enlistment bonuses in the last two years. The fiscal year 2009 budget reverses that trend, requesting only a third of current levels. With the retention challenges you are facing, why wasn't more funding requested?

Answer. The Air National Guard faces many budget challenges in fiscal year 2009, including recruiting and retention. We recognize the level of risk the budget request reflects and are counting on our leadership at the unit level as well as the flexibility within the budget execution year to continue to help us in the area of retention.

Due to the importance of achieving retention and recruiting goals, often funds are reprogrammed from other programs to address additional funding requirements. Unfortunately, we must assume risk in other programs to meet the challenges of sustaining a viable reenlistment program.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR PETE V. DOMENICI

NEW MEXICO ANG F–16 UPGRADES

Question. The 150th Fighter Wing at Kirtland Air Force Base has a proud heritage as part of the Air National Guard. The 150th used to fly Block 40 F–16s, but gave them to the Active Duty force to assist in meeting mission priorities. Now the 150th flies Block 30 F–16s, which will soon be retired.

Has there been any thought given to upgrading the Block 30 F–16s such as those used by the 150th to enable them to continue providing their outstanding service to New Mexico and the United States? What type of upgrades?

Answer. Yes. A portion of the 150th Fighter Wing's F–16 Block 30 aircraft recently received upgraded radios prior to deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Air Force, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command are pursuing the completion of this modification for all combat coded Block 30 aircraft. Additionally, the 150th Fighter Wing's F–16s are fully funded for replacement of the aging video tape recording system with a digital video recorder, greatly enhancing training effectiveness and post-mission assessment. Software releases currently in development will enable employment of new weapons such as the small diameter bomb. Numerous hardware modification programs for the F–16 Block 30 fleet are detailed in the Air National Guard's 2009 Weapons System Modernization Book. These efforts include upgraded fire control computers with ethernet connections, helmet mounted cueing systems, advanced targeting pod improvements, digital radar warning receivers, advanced line-of-sight and beyond line-of-sight radios, improved color displays capable of image transfer, and advanced interrogators for identification of friendly, suspect, and enemy aircraft. With adequate funding, these upgrades will greatly enhance the 150th Fighter Wing's ability to robustly support in-theater and homeland defense operations.

NEW MEXICO ANG F–35S

Question. Earlier this year the Air Force Chief of Staff released his "roadmap for the future". This roadmap names Kirtland AFB as a potential bed-down location for the F–35 and the Combat Search and Rescue Aircraft (CSAR–X). We are excited that Kirtland AFB and the 150th Fighter Wing (FW) are included in the roadmap, but there are some additional points about Kirtland and the 150 FW that I would like to bring to your attention.

—Kirtland AFB scored the highest of 33 locations on the BRAC 2005 score sheet for Air National Guard Fighter sites.

—Kirtland is the sixth largest Air Force Base in the country with the best airspace, ranges and weather in the country.

—Multi-role fighter aircraft from Kirtland AFB can provide adversary fighter training for the F–22s at Holloman AFB.

—These same F–35 aircraft can provide needed air-to-ground fighters for close air support training at Cannon AFB, White Sands Missile Range, and Fort Bliss, Texas

Kirtland AFB and the 150th Fighter Wing seem to be a natural fit for the F–35. What are you doing to develop the F–35 fighter mission for the Air National Guard at Kirtland Air Force Base?

Answer. On January 16, 2008, General Moseley, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, released his strategic roadmap, his long-term plan for basing of the next-generation weapon systems. Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico was listed as a potential bed-down location.

We assure you Kirtland AFB will receive full consideration and will be evaluated to support a potential F–35 mission. Each potential location that meets the preliminary requirements is subject to further analysis, to include an environmental impact study which is mandated by the National Environmental Protection Act. These studies take time and will be conducted over the next several years. Kirtland AFB has many great qualities which provide for superb flying operations and these factors will be considered when the final F–35 basing decisions are made.

The National Guard Bureau continues to advocate for parallel and proportional recapitalization of the Air National Guard throughout the Air Force's Planning, Programming and Budgeting process. As an operational and strategic reserve force, we must continue to meet the demands of our mission today while preparing for the challenges of tomorrow. Total Recapitalization of our Total Force is vital to our Nation's security and we look forward to your support of our efforts.

SUBCOMMITTEE RECESS

Senator STEVENS. This subcommittee will next meet on Tuesday, May 20, at 11 a.m., at which time we will receive testimony from the Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, on the Defense Department's fiscal year 2009 budget request.

Thank you all very much.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., Wednesday, May 14, the subcommittee was recessed, to reconvene at 11 a.m., Tuesday, May 20.]