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**RECORD**

**STATEMENT BY**

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**BEFORE THE**

**COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVES**

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## **Overview**

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves. I am grateful for any opportunity to represent the more than 106,000 Militia Airmen of the Total Force. The United States Air Force is transitioning to an air, space and cyberspace power, a force that derives its strength from the flexibility and the diversity of its integrated Active Duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve components. The optimum use of active duty and reserve component resources is critical in providing the complete potential of United States air, space and cyberspace capabilities.

The Air National Guard entered the 21<sup>st</sup> Century on the forefront of Total Force evolutionary change. Our transformation from a traditional “strategic” reserve to an “operational” reserve has presented us with both opportunities and challenges. Today, the Air National Guard has an increasing presence in space, intelligence and information systems. Without the combat, mobility, logistics capability and the technical and administrative skills supplied by the Guard and the Reserve, the United States Air Force can not operate as an expeditionary force. Today, the reserve components are providing day-to-day mission support — they are no longer simply a force in “reserve”.

The missions and roles of today’s Air National Guard are varied, many-sided and global. I am in awe of the accomplishments of our people and their future opportunities. Militia Airmen of the Air National Guard are representing our nation on every continent, in every theater and in every operation. They are woven into the fabric of America...in and part of their community, counted on in times of crisis — they answer every call. Our militia heritage is alive and well.

As we organize ourselves for today’s asymmetrical threats, constrained budget environments, and the need to modernize equipment, we will capitalize on the strengths of our militia heritage. Even in today’s more operational environment, the Air National Guard is the most cost effective solution for our Air Force. We bring a mixture of full-time and part-time forces, experience, stability and continuity to the Air Force mission. Our innovative solutions to training and equipment usage are an irreplaceable asset to the Total Force and a critical enabler to the Combatant Commanders.

The six areas the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves has chosen as its primary focus encompass many of the issues our Militia Airmen are now facing and will continue to face as we organize and equip for the “operational” reserve role, maintain a continued presence as a “strategic” reserve, and fulfill our homeland defense and Military Support to Civil Authorities commitments. During your review, I urge you to consider the preservation of the unique heritage, culture and identity of all the Reserve Components.

### **Roles and Missions**

The Air National Guard is a force enabler to the Combatant Commanders. We are seamlessly integrated into every theater and are a part of every staff. Air National Guard members are so much a part of the day to day operation, it is unlikely the Combatant Commanders can differentiate between them and their active duty counterparts. It is this level of integration across the full spectrum of force employment which is driving many of the organizational changes and legislative proposals.

To maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of tomorrow’s more capable systems, we have to capitalize on the strengths of each Air Force component. This means integration at every level of operation and training. The Air National Guard’s business model has proven its efficiency and effectiveness. Our mixture of full-time (35%) and part-time (65%) personnel allows us to provide the Air Force with a comparable combat capability at a significant cost savings. This ability to “surge” within a mission area allows the Total Force needed flexibility in managing critical skill sets. Our people can be selectively called upon to serve any time, any place.

As we conduct our analysis of tomorrow’s roles and missions for the Air National Guard, we have to be mindful to protect the proper level of part-time forces. The traditional part-time guard members — civilians in peace, military when needed — are our number one asset. We must ensure the missions we accept, and the roles our people perform, fit the Air National Guard’s traditional culture.

### **Homeland Security**

In his testimony to this commission, the Command Chief of the Air National Guard, Chief Master Sergeant Smith, said it best:

“The federal mission is what gives the Guard its skills and capabilities to perform the Homeland Security mission. It is not about just having a flying mission in every state. The true story is contained within the other capabilities accompanying the flying mission. The Air National Guard’s 88 flying locations provide a broad spectrum of support to Governors and to the Nation as a whole. Mission areas such as Civil Engineering, Security Police, Medical and Civil Support Teams provide critical links from National Command Authority down to first responders in our local communities. The synergies that exist, due to many of the Air National Guard Units being located on civilian airports, strengthen ties to both national and state leadership that reinforce the homeland defense mission in ways not found on active duty installations. Our unique ties to our communities allow us to maximize the exploitation of these “dual use” capabilities.”

The Air National Guard’s participation across the full spectrum of Air Force missions provides it the capability required to support to the Homeland Security mission. Equally important is the benefits our federal mission derives from our Homeland Security role. Many of the skill sets being used today in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom use the same expertise developed from our experience in offering Military Support to Civil Authorities. Our community links make the Air National Guard ideally suited for today’s mission requirements.

Whether it’s a natural disaster or civil unrest, the National Guard is often the first to respond. Over time, we have developed the critical skills to understand and relate to civil authorities, and to local community requirements. This expertise is a valuable commodity in today’s nation building operations. Many of our active duty counterparts are actively pursuing these skill sets for their members. The guard would be a natural fit to lead this training effort. Currently, Title 10 limits the use of the guard in training active duty members. The Department of Defense has in front of Congress today legislation to facilitate expanding the guard’s role in training active duty members. It is these types of solutions we will need as we move forward in today’s environment.

### **Personnel and Compensation**

Over the next several years, many of our most experienced guard members will become retirement eligible. We will be faced with finding innovative solutions to either retain or replace

them. The course of action we pursue must protect one of our most sought after core capabilities... our highly experienced personnel.

Innovative programs like the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program are beginning to provide positive results. Implemented in April 2006, we now have over 2,500 active Recruiting Assistants and already have gained 74 enlistments as a result of this program. In June, our most productive month, we achieved 113 percent of our monthly recruiting goal.

As the Air National Guard's Operational Tempo (OPTEMPO) increases it is critical we continue to take care of our people. Quality of life will play a crucial role in recruiting and retention. We must cultivate opportunities and remove roadblocks in our personnel policies. Benefit and compensation programs must be flexible enough to allow us to respond in today's environment. Family programs need to be strengthened and expanded to react to the lengthier and more frequent separations.

### **Mobilization and Demobilization**

Since 9-11, over 38,000 Air National Guard members have been mobilized and approximately 60,000 volunteered for deployment. Thousands have served on multiple deployments. Our Militia Airmen go above and beyond their required commitment. Predictability is the key to mitigating the disruptive nature of mobilizations. The Air Expeditionary Force construct has helped tremendously by making it possible for Total Force members to forecast the likelihood of deployments. This affords our members the opportunity for advance planning and in many cases we can use volunteerism to decrease the number of mobilization requirements.

While this has generally worked for the member, force planners are searching for solutions to effectively manage and ensure human resources are available to meet mission requirements. Under the Continuum of Service construct, the Office of the Secretary of Defense is developing options to mitigate this force planning concern, and I am confident the quality of life issue will continue to improve. We are all searching for ways to relieve the burdens on the member, civilian employers, and families in a way that allows our force planners to field the most effective force possible. The goal is to call upon our traditional Militia Airmen, when needed, and allow them to return to their communities with minimal disruption.

## **Readiness, Training and Equipping**

I am excited about the future of the Air National Guard. We have come a long way from our days as a “force in reserve” in the 1950s and 1960s, when Air National Guard equipment was a decade older than the active duty inventory. Today, our equipment is compatible with our active duty counterparts, our training programs set the standard, and in many areas we are the Air Force’s most experienced force.

Several years ago we were seeking to establish and explore the “Future” Total Force; we now know the “future” is here. With an eye to the future, we continue to welcome transformational efforts to shape our force for 21st Century roles and missions. These new and emerging missions will require critical skills and technical expertise which are in high demand across all Services. We expect this demand to place a greater burden on training pipelines, recruiting and most certainly retention.

It is no secret the Air Force possesses the most sophisticated and expensive equipment of any of the Services. Our need to modernize equipment is not driven by a need to own “new toys;” it is the core of our combat capability. Maintaining an unmatched combat edge is critical for our Air Force, Air National Guard and Nation.

Many of the legacy systems requiring replacement exist in the Air National Guard. Replacing these systems means not only new aircraft but new missions and new organizational constructs. For the Air National Guard, this is an opportunity to shape, equip and modernize and participate fully in the Total Force, as we position ourselves to “fly and fight, in Air, Space and Cyberspace.” (The Honorable Michael W. Wynne, Secretary of the Air Force)

In the area of training, no one area requires more emphasis than the ability to obtain “joint” training for our National Guard members. We have an excellent program at the Joint Forces Staff College which to date 95 guard members have participated. Joint training is critical to keeping the Guard ready for its federal mission. The training, education and equipping in joint operations of our guardsmen and women has to be on par with their active duty counterparts.

We need to continue our emphasis and growth in this area to ensure National Guard readiness, training and equipping in the future remains comparable for the joint warfighter.

### **Funding Analysis**

The Air National Guard's response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita was unprecedented. More cargo and passengers were moved in a 4-day period than ever before in the history of airlift. Our efforts on the ground were equally impressive. During the initial 4 days, 12 Air National Guard Combat Controllers established and controlled multiple helicopter landing zones, facilitating approximately 3,200 sorties that evacuated over 11,000 passengers. Over 70 percent of the Air Force response was produced by the Air National Guard.

The success of those efforts highlighted the need to focus on the gaps that exist in Military Support to Civil Authorities. Not only is it important for Northern Command to identify and explicitly document requirements, the Commission should examine mechanisms in law or policy that will help the Department of Defense identify which requirements, if any, should be funded through the Department of Defense and which through the Department of Homeland Security. Our goal, as a Nation, should be to provide military and civilian capabilities which respond to domestic emergencies in such a way that no major capability gaps exist. The National Guard frequently is called upon to respond to such emergencies. Strengthening the Nation's ability in this area will strengthen the National Guard.

### **Conclusion**

The next several years will offer new and unique opportunities for the Air National Guard. I'm confident the work the Commission on National Guard and Reserves is accomplishing will greatly enhance our efforts to meet the national security needs of the United States. Our channels of communication are always open and we stand ready to discuss the important issues of the day. Thank you for the opportunity to represent the views and perspectives of the Air National Guard. I look forward to working with you in the future and wish you success in your efforts.