

UNCLASSIFIED

RECORD

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVES

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Overview

The Airmen of the Air National Guard are on the transformational leading edge of today's evolution of the Reserve Components. Everyday Air National Guard members are found integrated seamlessly into the Total Force, ably defending their homeland or offering Military Support to Civil Authorities. Their mission is truly multifaceted and diverse.

The Air National Guard is serving in 27 countries and on all 7 continents. It maintains responsibility for over 90 percent of the Air Sovereignty Alert mission and more than a third of the missions flown in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Since September 11, 2001, the Air National Guard has flown more than 200,000 sorties and more than 600,000 hours in support of the Global War on Terrorism. The Air National Guard support to Hurricane Katrina was unprecedented – in a four day period, the men and women flew over 3,000 sorties, transported over 11,000 evacuees, and moved an excess of 11,000 tons of cargo. They continue to maintain their dual federal and state mission while balancing their three hat commitment of family, military service and civilian employment. This is truly a busy time in the history of the Air National Guard and we still have much work to do...officer and enlisted Airmen.

The six areas the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves has chosen as its primary focus will most assuredly touch on many of the issues our Airmen will face. As you conduct your review, I urge you to include the preservation of the unique heritage, culture and identity of all the Reserve Components and their enlisted members. For the enlisted men and women of the Air National Guard this means:

Roles and Missions

The Air National Guard's business model has proven its efficiency and effectiveness. Our mixture of full-time (35%) and part-time (65%) 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 efficiently managing critical skill sets.

For example, when the Air National Guard operated the B-1 Bomber, our average cost per flying hour was \$12,322 compared to Air Combat Command's (ACC) cost of \$14,101 (5 year period FY97-FY01). Current figures for the F-16C/Ds have the Air National Guard averaging \$3,703 cost per flying hour compared to ACC's \$4,185. Our average cost per flying hour for the F-15C/D is \$8,535 compared to ACC's \$9,601. We are confident we can assist the Air Force in its efforts to make the 315K force more efficient and its ability to maintain greater capability at lower cost. We feel the Air National Guard is ideally suited, structured and positioned to maximize the capability of Total Force.

Our Enlisted Airmen are the enablers to the Air National Guard's efficient and effective operation. They keep our legacy aircraft in the air and are the envy of the Total Force. The Air National Guard has the most experienced and trained enlisted corps in the world. It is intuitively obvious to us as we transform our force from its traditional strategic construct to more of an operational construct, we will need to preserve this important core capability.

To do so, we must ensure missions we accept and the roles our people perform fit the traditional culture of the Air National Guard. Specifically, we need to protect our ability to maintain a majority of our force in its traditional, part-time role. We owe this to our families, our

communities and our employers. We count on the service commitment of our part-time force and their volunteerism spirit to help us perform our daily mission.

Homeland Security

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 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 locations 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.

Personnel and Compensation

Our personnel are our greatest asset and force multiplier. Air National Guard Recruiting and Retention programs play a vital role in supporting our Homeland Defense mission and our successful transformation to the future, and they are the driving factors as to how well we support the warfighter. The Air National Guard's success is rooted in the quality of our recruits and our ability to retain them — our people are unequivocally our most valued resource. It is critical we continue to attract the quality personnel and retain current members as we transform our force and transition to different missions. For our enlisted members this means ensuring bonuses and incentives are on par with their Active Duty counterparts. Their sacrifices are comparable and their compensation should match their level of sacrifice.

Family Programs are critically important to our enlisted airmen. Increased operational tempo (OPTEMPO) means longer and more frequent separations from family and loved ones. In the past, family programs have been hard put to meet these challenges. We have been making progress in robusting and standardizing these programs but I would ask for your ideas and help in making these programs worthy of the patriots they are meant to support.

Mobilization and Demobilization

History has shown our Citizen Airmen go above and beyond their required commitment. They have always answered the call and the Air National Guard can be counted upon across the spectrum of operations. Our units and personnel know how to mobilize, deploy, integrate and operate side-by-side with their active duty and Air Force Reserve counterparts. Operational Tempo (OPTEMPO) is a Total Force issue. Full participation in deployed contingency operations is the Air National Guard's best retention tool. Volunteerism is cost effective and should always be an option considered for fulfilling operational commitments. Although mobilization is disruptive, the impact can be minimized through careful planning and adherence to delineated deployment timetables. This means making deployments predictable in both frequency and duration. Burdens on the Air Guardsmen, civilian employer, active duty force, and families are all relieved when the Air National Guard is effectively utilized — then returned to the traditional Citizen Airman role as soon as possible.

Readiness, Training and Equipping

The past year has been challenging for the Total Force. We have tested the limits of our Cold War structure and embarked on transformational efforts to shape our force for its 21st Century roles and missions. No portion of the force will feel the effects of this transformation more than our enlisted corps. New and emerging missions and roles will force all of us to place greater emphasis on readiness, training and equipping.

With the downsizing of the active component, the reserve component has to accept more of the burden for training within the Total Force. The Title 10/32 legislative proposals addressing reserve component limitations to train the active component will be essential for our future Total Force efforts. The reserve component is a key enabler to the success of the Total Force Integration initiatives. We will be counted upon to do what we do best...train effectively and efficiently. Our heritage includes a long history producing quality training without heavy investment in traditional training practices. The active component is looking for us to lead the way.

Funding Analysis

While the federal mission for the Air National Guard has kept our forces on par with their active duty counterparts, increased attention will need to be focused on funding for Military Support to Civil Authorities. This is one of the most important areas we believe improvement is needed. In the past Military Support to Civil Authorities has been treated as a bi-product of the federal mission. However, our recent efforts during Hurricane Katrina, while successful, exposed some of the gaps that exist between our federal and state missions. Eighteen Civil Support Teams provided personnel and equipment vital to the National Guard response and the Air National Guard is an integral part of those teams. While it was indeed a successful undertaking for the Guard, the Department of Defense needs to move forward defining domestic requirements so we can properly resource our forces, taking advantage of areas where Homeland Security and Homeland Defense requirements overlap. It may be productive if the Commission can examine mechanisms in law or policy that could help the Department of Defense to identify which portions of these requirements, if any, should be funded through DoD and which through the Department of Homeland Security. Our goal as a Nation should be military and civilian capabilities to respond to domestic emergencies in such a way that no major capabilities gaps exist. The National Guard so frequently is called upon to respond to such emergencies. Strengthening the Nation's ability in this area will strengthen the National Guard.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to represent the airmen of the Air National Guard from a senior enlisted perspective. I look forward to working with you in the future and wish you success in your efforts.