

**STATEMENT BY**

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**BEFORE THE**

**SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE**

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## **GENERAL CRAIG R. MCKINLEY**

### **CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU**

#### **Opening Remarks**

Chairman Webb, Ranking Member Graham, distinguished members of the subcommittee; I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the National Guard's personnel issues related to its ongoing role as an operational force. The evolution of today's threat environment has made it essential for the National Guard to strike the proper balance between operational force and strategic hedge. The diversity of our adversaries require us to have an adaptable force that is capable of efficiently engaging in the current fight while maintaining a cost-effective surge capability prepared for tomorrow's threat.

Today there are about 460,000 members of the Army and the Air National Guard. Our strength is good and our retention is even better.

As the United States Armed Forces continue to conduct operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere around the world, units of the Army and Air National Guard are participating as total force partners in that effort.

The National Guard has repeatedly proven itself to be a ready, accessible force. We have validated the total force concept by showing that the men and women in our formations are ready to answer the call, to be mobilized, to deploy overseas, return home, and then become prepared to do it again and again.

The citizen soldiers and airmen of your National Guard are adding value to America every day that they serve. The capabilities they bring to bear would not have been possible without the strong support of this committee, and we thank you all very much for that support.

The most critical part of that proven capability, however, is our National Guard men and women. Today's men and women volunteer to join or stay in the National Guard fully expecting to be deployed. This shift in expectation is a central aspect of the National Guard shift to being a fully operational force and no longer merely a strategic reserve.

Indeed, the soldiers and airmen of your National Guard now serve with that expectation and are proud of it. They want to remain central players in the nation's defense and would, indeed, be resistant to any move to return to a role limited to strictly strategic reserve.

In addition, the Department of Defense is moving forward to identify a nominee for the position of Director of the Army National Guard. Once that occurs we would be most grateful for your support and that the Senate move quickly to confirmation.

Overall, the budget request for F.Y. '11 meets the critical needs of the Army and Air National Guard in this era of persistent conflict overseas and ongoing threats to American lives and property here in the homeland.

One of the longest running joint programs in the National Guard, one which employs both Army and Air National Guard capabilities, is the National Guard Counterdrug Program. This unique program provides a mechanism under which National Guard military experience can be employed to assist civilian law enforcement agencies to fight the corrosive effect of illegal drugs in American society.

Funding for our Counter drug program is included in the FY '11 budget request, and it is important that the program is fully funded. The recent incidents along the Southwest border and the scourge of drugs migrating across our borders constitutes a real threat. Consequently, our National Guard counter drug program fills a very vital need.

Below you will find detailed information about personnel matters as they pertain to the Air and Army National Guard.

## **Air National Guard**

### **America's Exceptional Force, Home and Away**

The Air National Guard anchors the Total Air Force team, providing trained and equipped units and personnel to protect domestic life and property; preserving peace, order, and public safety; and providing interoperable capabilities required for Overseas Contingency Operations. The Air National Guard, therefore, is unique by virtue of serving as both a reserve component of the Total Air Force and as the air component of the National Guard.

Upon founding in 1947, the Air Guard served primarily as a strategic reserve for the U.S. Air Force. Increasingly and dramatically, the Air National Guard has become more of an operational force, fulfilling U.S. Air Force routine and contingency commitments daily. Since 9/11, over 146,000 Guard Airmen have deployed overseas. A snapshot of U.S. forces at any time shows Air Guard members in all corners of the globe supporting joint and coalition forces in mission areas such as security; medical support; civil engineering; air refueling; strike; airlift; and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance.

By any measure, the Air National Guard is accessible and available to the Combatant Commanders, Air Force and our nation's governors. Currently, the nation has over 13,000 Air National Guard members deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other overseas regions. At 16 alert sites, three air defense sectors, and Northern Command, 1,200 Guard Airmen vigilantly stand watch over America's skies. Amazingly, 75 percent of our deployed individuals are volunteers, and 60 percent are on their second or third rotations to combat zones. Percentages like these speak volumes about the quality and sense of duty of America's Air National Guard force!

The Air National Guard supports state and local civil authorities with airlift, search and rescue, aerial firefighting, and aerial reconnaissance. In addition, we provide critical capabilities in medical triage and aerial evacuation, civil engineering, infrastructure protection, and hazardous materials response with our Civil Support

Teams and our Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and high-yield Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Packages (CERFPs).

In the past year, Air Guard members helped their fellow citizens battle floods, mitigate the aftermath of ice storms, fight wild fires, and provide relief from the devastating effects of a tsunami. Early in the year, Guard members from Kentucky, Arizona, and Missouri responded to debilitating ice storms, which resulted in the largest National Guard call-up in Kentucky's history. Last spring, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota Air National Guard members provided rescue relief and manpower in response to Midwest flooding. In September, the Hawaii Air National Guard sent personnel from their CERFP, a command and control element, and a mortuary affairs team, to American Samoa in response to an 8.4 magnitude earthquake-generated tsunami. These are just a few examples of how the Air Guard provides exceptional expertise, experience, and capabilities to mitigate disasters and their consequences.

Within the Total Force, the Air National Guard provides extraordinary value in terms of delivering the most immediately available capability for cost in meeting America's national defense needs. In its domestic role, the Air Guard provides capabilities to support local emergency responders with life and property saving capabilities and expertise in consequence management not usually found elsewhere in the Total Force.

The changing nature of our force and our mission causes us to relook the rank structure of our full-time support personnel, particularly at the more senior mid-management levels. Specifically, we are examining whether we face a growing need for majors, lieutenant colonels and colonels as well as Senior Master Sergeants and Chief Master Sergeants. The number of Airmen we are allowed to have in these grades is limited by law.

### **Best Value for America**

The outstanding men and women of the Air National Guard continue to defend American interests around the world. Throughout 2009, the Air National Guard projected global presence in a variety of missions in regions ranging from the Balkans to Southwest Asia and from Eastern Europe to Latin America. We have provided much more than airpower, contributing our exceptional capabilities in security, medical, logistics, communications, civil support, and engineering, in order to support our nation's national security.

While the strategic environment has continually changed throughout history, the Air Guard has proven itself an adaptive force, able to meet any new challenges. One reason for this success is that Guard members normally live in the same communities in which they serve during times of natural disasters or when called upon to respond to national emergencies. Our Guard members know the folks they support very well, because they work together, their children attend the same schools, and they shop at the same business establishments. Our fellow citizens know the local Guard members and their contributions, and their appreciation has been illustrated through countless welcome home parades and outpouring of support over the years.

Throughout history, many of the issues our forbearers faced are essentially the same issues we face today: aging capabilities and declining budgetary resources. The Air National Guard has consistently provided the answer in an efficient, cost-effective, community-based force that is ready and responsive to domestic and national security needs.

## **Best Value in Personnel, Operations, and Infrastructure**

During the past year, the Air National Guard has deployed 18,366 service members to 62 countries and every continent, including Antarctica. The Air National Guard provides a trained, equipped, and ready force for a fraction of the cost. We provide a third of Total Air Force capabilities for less than seven percent of the Total Force budget. In all three areas – personnel, operations, and facilities – the Air Guard provides the “Best Value for America.”

A key Air National Guard efficiency is the part-time/full-time force structure mix. The predominantly part-time (traditional) force can mobilize quickly when needed for state disaster response missions, homeland defense, or when we need to take the fight overseas.

We have the ability to maintain a stable force with considerably fewer personnel moves than the Regular Air Force, which is a critical factor in our cost-effectiveness. Traditional National Guard members cost little, unless on paid duty status. Some Air National Guard efficiencies compared to regular military components include:

- Fewer “pay days” per year
- Lower medical costs
- Significantly lower training costs beyond initial qualification training
- Virtually no costs for moving families and household goods to new duty assignments every three or four years
- Fewer entitlements, such as basic allowances for housing
- Lower base support costs, in terms of services, facilities, including commissaries, base housing, base exchanges, child care facilities, etc.

The Air National Guard is an operational reserve with surge potential, with 2,200 mobilized and 5,700 volunteering per day. If this force were full-time active duty, the military personnel budget would be \$7.62 billion. Air National Guard military personnel pay in FY09, including military technician pay, was \$4.77 billion, for a yearly cost savings of \$2.85 billion, or a daily cost savings of \$7.8 million.

Whether compared to another major Air Force command, or even to the militaries of other countries, the Air National Guard is an extraordinary value. In direct comparison with the militaries of France and Italy, for example, our Air National Guard members cost only \$76,961 per member, while the bills of those countries respectively run to \$128,791 and \$110,787 per member. Further, compared to the US Air Force, cost per Air Guard member is less than a fifth of that of the Regular Air Force. Comparisons such as these illustrate well the cost savings realized with an operational reserve possessing surge potential.

Operational savings are due to the Air National Guard’s experienced force and lean operating methods. An examination of the Air National Guard’s F-16 maintenance by Rand Corporation last year highlighted the ability of our maintenance personnel to generate double the amount of flying hours in a one-to-one comparison of full-time equivalents.

## **Recruiting and Retention**

Air National Guard Recruiting and Retention programs play a critical role in supporting today’s fight and how we posture our force for the future. The commitment

of our field commanders and their exceptional recruiters are key factors in recruiting successes. Their partnership with the National Guard Bureau has enabled us to remove barriers that traditionally prevented the ability to meet end strength. The Air National Guard continues to build on that success and has focused its efforts to target critical needs.

As of April 22, 2010, Air National Guard end strength is 108,420. The challenge as we move forward is to strike a delicate balance of remaining close to end strength while strengthening “effective” recruiting. We show troubling signs in specific areas of officer recruiting (currently, 1,500 short) and critically manned mission areas including Health Care Professionals, Chaplains, Engineers, Intelligence, and Mobility aviators. To compensate for lagging prior service numbers, the Air National Guard increased its emphasis on the non-prior service market. This required increases in advertising to the non-prior service market through radio, theatre, print media and web sites, as well as additional recruiters, community presence with store-front offices and additional advertising dollars. The continued support of the Air Force, Department of Defense, and Congress will undoubtedly shape the foundation of their success.

The quality of Air National Guard recruits has not declined and their retention rate remains strong at 96.9 percent. The Air National Guard saves on average \$62,000 in training cost for every qualified member retained or recruited. Our focus in this area allows us to retain critical skills lost from the active component and save valuable training dollars.

In 2009, through the use of our 14 In-Service Air National Guard recruiters strategically placed at active duty bases, the Air National Guard garnered approximately 896 confirmed accessions of a total of 5,309 accessions. The bonuses and incentive programs are a key component to that success.

Our Air National Guard incentive program is a critical component in our Recruiting and Retention efforts and serves to motivate and support manning requirements in units with skills that are severely or chronically undermanned. It is established to encourage the reenlistment of qualified and experienced personnel. Stable funding for the Air National Guard Recruiting and Retention program is critical to our success.

### **Airman and Family Readiness Programs**

In focusing on our Airmen we must also focus on the most important people in their lives — their families. The Air National Guard is a Wing-centered organization. Our 92 Wing Family Program Coordinators around the nation are at the center of our efforts to ensure our Airmen and their families receive the support they need.

In past year we were successful in having these coordinator positions upgraded from GS-9 to GS-11. Our coordinators are one-deep positions for us, so most of the effort is done through part-time support.

This is one area where we differ dramatically from our Regular Air Force counterparts. The Air National Guard does not have Airman and Family Readiness Centers as they have on active duty bases. In a culture that does not believe in saying “no,” our program coordinators have more and more piled onto their plates, thereby threatening the overall quality of service, if the Air National Guard maintains its pace as an operational force.

Programs like Operation Military Child Care have been very helpful.. Also, military and community partners like Military OneSource, Military Family Life

Consultants, and Operation Military Kids, just to name a few, are extremely beneficial in meeting the needs of the Guard Airmen, especially while deployed. Youth Development Camps like Air Force Teen Aviation, Air Force Space Camp, and the Air Force Reserve/Air National Guard Leadership Summits are huge successes as well. Additionally, this year we are conducting training such as Community Healing and Response Training, which is part of the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, and essential in our suicide prevention efforts.

For the Air National Guard, we believe maintaining strong family support programs are critical to ensuring the overall health of our force and our Guard Airmen.

### **Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve**

We must recognize the importance of support for military service by families, military leadership and civilian employers. This is referred to as the "Triad of Support." It is important to maintain an overall climate in which military service is honored and supported. The Department of Defense's organization that addresses civilian employer support is Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve. Their vision is to develop and promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees serving in the Guard and Reserve. Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve accomplishes this by gaining and maintaining employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflict through mediation. A Statement of Support, a formal statement voluntarily signed by an employer, is one way to demonstrate support and acknowledge employer rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act. During fiscal year 2009, 54,965 employers signed Statements of Support for their employees serving in the Guard or Reserve. This is an increase from the 44,861 employers that signed Statements of Support in fiscal year 2008. Another indicator of the current employer support climate is the number of Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act cases requiring mediation. The average number of cases mediated has remained consistent over the last three fiscal years: 2007 = 2,374, 2008 = 2,664 and 2009 = 2,475. These numbers indicate less than .01-percent of all Selective Reserve members who have opened a case to address employer issues. Based on these two indicators, it appears American employers are continuing to support their employees serving our nation.

### **Army National Guard**

Today, 76,949 of our Soldiers are mobilized, deployed, and on point for this Nation. The sacrifice of those Soldiers, their Families, and employers is something we must acknowledge and appreciate.

The last 8 years have seen the Guard transform to an operational force. The enablers for the Army National Guard—one of the greatest forces for good— have been provided and sustained by Congressional initiatives. Thank you for your continued support.

Today we would like to discuss the role of the Army National Guard as an operational force. We plan to describe our personnel challenges, significant accomplishments, and future operational requirements. Since September 11, 2001, the Army National Guard has transformed in several ways. The organization is no longer a strategic reserve; we are now and have been, for several years, an operational force.

## **Budget Requested Increase in Full-time Non-Dual Status Technicians**

The President's Budget for fiscal year 2011 requests an increase in funding for Army National Guard non-dual status technicians from 1,600 to 2,520 – an additional 920 positions. We ask the committee to provide this increase in its mark of the National Defense Authorization Act for 2011.

Non-dual status technicians work primarily in personnel administration, contract management, information technology and similar support functions with the Army National Guard's frequent mobilizations, we find that we need these non-deploying civilian technicians to fill critical positions in our generating force. Filling these positions with dual-status military members who deploy creates a disruption in workflow. Thanks to a special wartime exception, the Army National Guard has been able to hire some additional temporary non-dual status technicians, but these hires are only on a year-to-year basis. Reliance on "temporary" technicians, however, causes instability for the employees themselves and in the work produced. For this reason we are asking for a formal increase in the authorization level of Army National Guard non-dual status technicians in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY11.

Last year, the conference committee directed the Secretary of Defense to submit to the defense committees an extensive report on the duties of and requirements for National Guard non-dual status technicians. We at National Guard Bureau are completing our input to that Department of Defense report.

## **Duties Performed by Non-Dual Status Technicians**

National Guard non-dual status technicians are employed in positions that do not have an associated deployable position. These positions are typically not inherently military in nature, are lower graded, and are not supervisory except when the supervision is over other non-mobilization positions. More than 88% of non-dual status technicians work in the areas of human resources, administrative services, financial services, and information technology. More than 95% are in pay grades of GS-12 and below. Non-dual status technicians serve in positions that provide continuity of services in functional areas that continue to be required especially after large scale mobilizations within the state.

## **Current Authority for Non-Dual Status Technicians**

Under section 10217 of Title 10, the Air National Guard and Army National Guard are limited to a total of 1,950 non-dual status technicians across the two organizations. This limit of the current law has been in place unchanged since 1997. The National Defense Authorization Act has been annually prescribing the number of positions for the Army National Guard and Air National Guard at 1,600 and 350 respectively.

As the Army National Guard has transitioned from a strictly strategic reserve to more of a frequently and rotationally mobilized and deployed operational force both at home and abroad, it has become clear that more of the supporting positions at the state level need to transition from being held by deployable military members of the National Guard to being held by non-deployable civilian technicians. The Constitution reserves to the states the authority of training the militia. Consequently it is necessary to provide



the states with the type of staffing needed to achieve the goal of continuing to produce a ready operational force over the long term.

### **Current and Near-Term Means of Addressing the Technician Shortfall**

The Office of Personnel Management has delegated emergency hire authority for temporary non-dual status technicians. Each emergency hire technician is not to exceed a two-year employment period for that position. This process is consistent with the stipulations of the Extension of Declaration of National Emergency. Using temporary non-dual status technicians helps fill critical requirements left unfilled due to the 1,600 limit for the Army National Guard.

### **Future Technician Requirements**

The National Guard Bureau is in the process of assessing the overall longer-term needs of the force, including both the Army and the Air National Guard, to determine whether legislative changes are needed regarding non-dual status technicians to manage and support the National Guard beyond FY11. This effort continues to be actively deliberated through processes inside the Department of Defense and we will communicate any additional requirements or requests to the committee once final determinations are made concerning the long-term appropriate levels of non-dual status technicians in the National Guard.

### **Full-Time Support and Active Duty Operational Support**

Adequate full-time support is essential for reserve component unit readiness, training, administration, logistics, family assistance and maintenance, and a unit's readiness to deploy.

Since September 11, 2001, the Army, the Army National Guard, and the Army Reserve have maintained a tremendous operational tempo (OPTEMPO). This high OPTEMPO has required an increased level of full-time manning in order to prepare individuals and units for deployment. The Army National Guard and the Army Reserve have been able to meet the operational needs of the Army through the use of Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) Soldiers and other full-time equivalent (FTE) manning, such as temporarily hired military technicians, to bridge full-time manning shortfalls.

As a result it is clear that a robust authorization for Active Duty Operational Support is critical to the ability of the ARNG to continue its success in meeting Army mission requirements as a fully operational force.

### **Significant Achievements and Adequate Resources**

The intensive use of the Army National Guard over the last eight years demonstrates the value-added role our Citizen Soldiers render in the defense and protection of our nation at home and the support of the nation's strategic missions abroad. In order to sustain the Army National Guard as an operational force and to provide consequence management response forces adequate resources are required. Our key goals in support of the transition to an operational force are: maintain end strength of at least 358,200; train the force to the desired levels of proficiency in

accordance with the Army Force Generation Model (ARFORGEN). Our current manning level enables us to meet ARFORGEN readiness goals and provide the logistics train for maintaining and improving our infrastructure of buildings and equipment. In addition, the Army Equipping Strategy must ensure mission readiness, interoperability, and compatibility across all three Army organizations: Active Army, Army National Guard, and United States Army Reserve. As part of our domestic mission requirements, the Army National Guard must have a minimum of 80 percent of critical dual use equipment on-hand and available at all times.

As stewards of a 373-year militia tradition, we are privileged to uphold the institutions and maintain the infrastructure of our national readiness. Over 1400 of our readiness centers are 50 years old or older. The Army National Guard requests continued support from the Army to provide necessary improvements, including energy saving initiatives for our readiness centers and other facilities. Another goal is to care for the force by improving Soldier medical, dental and Family readiness.

In order to minimize force structure turbulence, we need to retain our current key force structure elements of 8 Divisions, 8 Combat Aviation Brigades (CABs), 28 Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) and functional Brigades while addressing key Homeland Defense and Homeland Security requirements.

The Army National Guard has made significant progress modernizing and converting to an operational force. The Army has transformed from a division-centric force to a more flexible brigade-centric force and is restructuring to create units that are more stand-alone and alike while enhancing full-spectrum capabilities. The Army National Guard brigade combat teams (BCTs) are structured and manned identically to those in the Active Army and can be combined with other BCTs or elements of the joint force to facilitate integration, interoperability, and compatibility across all components. The Army National Guard has transformed more than 2,800 operating force units to modular designs.

In FY09, 46,220 Army National Guard Soldiers were mobilized in support of combat operations (Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait). Overlapping with Soldiers deployed in FY08, mobilizations reached the highest point since 2005 of more than 65,000 Soldiers. An additional 5,500 Soldiers were mobilized for other contingency operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Sinai, and the Horn of Africa and also for domestic operations.

As part of transformation to an operational force, the ARNG rebalanced its force by reducing overall Force Structure Allowance (FSA) to approximately 350,000 authorizations while Congress maintained End Strength at 358,200. The resulting variance between FSA and End Strength of ~8,000 provided the ARNG some flexibility to implement an 8,000 Soldier trainees, transients, holdees and students (TTHS) account within the authorized End Strength of 358,200 starting in FY11. The initial program will concentrate on the medically non-deployable within the ARNG.

## **Recruiting**

We achieved our recruiting goals in FY09 and we are on track to meet our FY10 goal of maintaining our Congressionally authorized end strength of 358,200 Soldiers (actual strength is 361,904 as of March 31, 2010). We have shifted our focus from increasing the quantity of our assigned strength to improving the quality of our force.

We applaud the leadership of the Congress, governors, adjutants general, and our communities for their incredible efforts and achievements in helping us build and maintain the Army National Guard as our nation's largest community-based defense force. We are extremely proud of the overwhelming response of our patriotic communities and most grateful for Congressional support to our Citizen Soldiers.

### **Stabilize the Force to Build Readiness**

One of the enduring lessons learned from the overseas contingency operations is that we need to stabilize and sustain our forces mentally, physically, and spiritually. This includes having an outstanding full-time support team. Today's full-time personnel are major contributors across the full spectrum of Army National Guard operations. Meeting the needs of the persistent conflict underscores the vital role full-time support personnel have in preparing units for the multitude of missions at home and abroad. The ARNG program consists of both military technicians and Active Guard Reserve Soldiers. Full-time personnel sustain the day-to-day operations of the entire ARNG. The readiness levels of Army National Guard units are directly tied to the full-time support program. Congress has supported the ARNG full-time support (FTS) through increased authorization over the last several years. Those increases coupled with the Soldiers we have put on ADOS have allowed the ARNG to increase its readiness and be able to continue fighting the overseas contingency operations and become an operational force.

To provide the best support and transition assistance for wounded, injured, and ill Soldiers, the Army National Guard continued to support the Army's warrior transition units and community-based warrior transition units. The transition units provide non-clinical support, complex case management, and transition assistance for Soldiers of all components at medical treatment facilities on Active Army installations. The community-based warrior transition units provide high-quality health care, administrative processing, and transition assistance for recuperating Reserve Component Soldiers while allowing them to live at home and perform duties close to their homes and families. At the end of FY09, the warrior transition units managed more than 1,500 Army National Guard Soldiers and the community-based warrior transition units managed more than 900 ARNG Soldiers throughout the U.S.

The Army National Guard remains committed to supporting the families of deployed Soldiers throughout the deployment cycle. Every Soldier needs a support structure and a network of protection that includes self readiness, within a circle of family support, within a band of unit and community brothers and sisters, and within the larger networks of state and national organizations.

Army National Guard families were supported in numerous ways in FY09. The National Guard Bureau's Family Program Office provided families with training via computer-based modules, centralized classes, and locally-provided lectures to help make families self-reliant throughout the deployment cycle process. The Army Well-Being Program established the Army Families Online website, an information portal for families of National Guard Soldiers. The Department of Defense Military OneSource Program provided benefits which include counseling services, resources for parents, assistance with consumer credit, and online tax return preparation for military families. The Resiliency Training Center focuses on prevention through proactive marriage workshops and stress-relief training before, during, and after deployments. The main

goal of the resiliency program is to create “resilient” service members and families. The mission of the program is to provide a continuum of care, including a comprehensive range of education, training, and the tools necessary to cope with high levels of stress. This includes the skills to identify potential problems and the team effort of developing both individual and group techniques for surviving and prospering in times of great stress.

The Resiliency Training Program rolled out several courses in FY09 by collaborating on their course material with Army and Battlemind leaders, leading military personnel and mental health experts, and leading researchers in the stress management field. This included teaming with course developers from the American Association of Emergency Psychiatrists, the Walter Reed Institute for Research, the National Defense University, the Military Family Institute at Kansas State University, and partnering with the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors.

The Resiliency Training Center plans to continue to use all available traditional and modern communication tools, including onland and online training, Podcasts, web sites, social networking, professional speakers and trainers, videos, and small group discussions. The Army National Guard has appointed suicide intervention officers to every ARNG company nationwide. Each state and territory has a trained suicide prevention program manager. Also, each state and territory has hired a Director of Psychological Health (DPH) to provide case management and resourcing support for Soldiers in crisis.

### **Soldier and Family Support**

The Army National Guard strives to provide our Soldiers and Families with a continuum of care with a special emphasis on the Deployment Cycle Support process. Some of our Family readiness efforts include Family Assistance Centers, the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, the Freedom Salute Program, the Strong Bonds Program, and Suicide Prevention training. The Army National Guard operates 369 Family Assistance Centers across all 54 States and Territories. The Family Assistance Centers service all components and are strategically placed in each State and Territory to overcome geographic dispersion.

The National Guard Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program provides information services, referral, and proactive outreach opportunities for Soldiers, Families, employers, and youth throughout the entire deployment cycle: pre-deployment, deployment, post-deployment, and return to civilian life. The Yellow Ribbon program benefits service members from all reserve components.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program is a flexible Soldier and Family support system that meets the Soldier and Family readiness needs of geographically dispersed Families. The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program has hosted 40,421 Soldiers and 34,513 Family members at hometown events so far this fiscal year. In FY09, the Yellow Ribbon program supported 54,472 Soldiers and 72,316 Family members.

FY09 was a very active year for the Freedom Salute Campaign. As one of the largest Army National Guard recognition endeavors in history, the Freedom Salute Campaign publicly acknowledges Army National Guard Soldiers and those who supported them during the President’s call to duty.

The Freedom Salute Campaign is an important tool in the recruiting and retention program. The way an organization treats its people is a direct reflection of organizational values. The entire Army community pays attention to how the ARNG treats returning Soldiers. The Freedom Salute Campaign increases community awareness throughout the nation of the good work being done by National Guard Soldiers. In a recent survey, Soldiers returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom indicated that recognition for their service and sacrifice was one of the most important contributing factors in their decision to continue to serve in the Guard.

The Strong Bonds program is a Commander's program that is unit-based and chaplain-led to help Soldiers and their families build and rebuild strong relationships, especially when getting ready for or recovering from a deployment.

The Army National Guard recently initiated the Job Connection Education Program (or JCEP). This program improves National Guard force stability by advancing member skills at seeking, obtaining, and retaining civilian employment, much like the Army Career and Alumni Program, but at the local level. A key component of this jobs program is its proactive approach to connecting Soldiers, and where applicable, potential employers, to new and existing Federal, State and Guard programs and resources, coordinating job expositions and fairs, and conducting seminars, webinars, and workshops. Job Connection Education Program team members work closely with local employers to ensure they are aware of all the resources available to them in their effort to hire local Guard Soldiers. Classroom activities and practical exercises result in improved employment and reemployment rates for laid-off, under-employed, and unemployed Guard Soldiers. The Job Connection Education Program introduces and connects Soldiers to the evolving Employment Partnership Office efforts and the emerging formal relationships between Reserve Component and private sector businesses with a focus at the local community level. The state of Texas is the pilot test site with the first location in the Dallas area. This program can be used by Army Reserve Soldiers as well as National Guard Soldiers.

The Army National Guard is also partnering with the Army Reserve in the Employer Partnership Office. The Guard and Reserve Soldiers rely on a demographic segment that balances two careers. Service in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is vocational in nature and represents a motivation to serve in other than an active duty capacity. The Army National Guard and Army Reserve cannot exist without Citizen-Soldiers, the bulk of whose livelihoods are provided by civilian employers. Under the ARFORGEN concept, all Guard and Reserve service members are virtually assured of at least one year-long mobilization over the course of their careers. This affects small businesses much more than larger firms, in addition to the known effects on the Soldier and his or her family. We recognize that readiness has three dimensions: unit, family, and employer. The broad aims of this initiative are threefold: 1) to foster employer readiness for mobilization, 2) to make employing and retaining Reserve Component service members attractive to employers, and 3) to identify areas where the Reserve Component and civilian employers can share costs for benefit programs.

In order to provide assistance to the Soldiers to improve their job skills the Army National Guard has started an initiative called – Guard Apprenticeship Program Initiative (GAPI). This initiative involves partnering with the Department of Labor and

coordinating with the Department of Veterans Affairs while National Guard Soldiers work in their civilian jobs and participate in the program. Apprenticeship is a training opportunity for ARNG Soldiers to earn national certification and skills in a specific field while earning wages. In certain cases, eligible ARNG Soldiers can receive their VA educational benefits while they pursue an apprenticeship program. Apprenticeship combines classroom studies with on-the-job training supervised by a trade professional or supervisor. Apprenticeship training takes one to five years to complete or 2000 documented work hours to become fully qualified in the occupation or trade. Soldiers earn money while they learn on the job. This collaboration is essential to the sustainability of the ARNG and the vitality of the best-trained and dependable professionals our nation has to offer, which are our volunteer Soldiers. This is an opportunity to gain civilian employment and certification, while serving in the ARNG. This program can also be used by the Army Reserve.

We must recognize the importance of support for military service by families, military leadership and civilian employers. This is referred to as the "Triad of Support". It is important to maintain an overall climate in which military service is honored and supported. DoD's organization that addresses civilian employer support is Employer Support the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). ESGR's vision is to develop and promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees serving in the Guard and Reserve. ESGR accomplishes this by gaining and maintaining employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflict through mediation. A Statement of Support, a formal statement voluntarily signed by an employer, is one way to demonstrate support and acknowledge employer rights and responsibilities under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). During FY09, 54,965 employers signed Statements of Support for their employees serving in the Guard or Reserve. This is an increase from the 44,861 employers that signed Statements of Support in FY08. Another indicator of the current employer support climate is the number of USERRA cases ESGR has mediated. The average number of cases ESGR mediated has remained consistent over the last three fiscal years: FY07 - 2,374, FY08 - 2,664, FY09 - 2,475. These numbers indicate less than .01% of all SELRES have opened a case to address employer issues. Based on these two indicators, it appears American employers are continuing to support their employees serving our nation.

### **Reserve Retirement**

The current Reserve Retirement system was implemented in 1949 to enhance volunteerism, bolster recruiting, enable unit cohesion all while ensuring a ready force available for deployment based on lessons learned in World War I and II. Over these 61 years, the system has undergone few modifications. Congress recently made a critical shift in the retirement program paradigm of an operational reserve when they passed legislation authorizing Reduced Retirement Age Eligibility on 28 January 2008. The Army National Guard will continue to be employed as a major operational element of the Army, and as such, citizen Soldier benefits and entitlements should reflect their continued and often extended active duty service.

### **Medical and Dental Readiness**

The Army National Guard has three primary medical readiness goals: deploying a healthy force; deploying the medical force-units; and facilitating warriors in transition and family care-beneficiaries.

In FY09, the ARNG Office of the Chief Surgeon received funding for the following programs: medical readiness, \$126.5 million; overseas contingency operations, \$9.5 million; and dental treatment, \$21.2 million. These funds went toward period health assessments, immunizations, contracts in support of medical readiness, and deployment of 41,500 Soldiers who met physical, dental, and mental health standards. Readiness increased from 35% fully-ready in FY08 to 46% in FY09. This success resulted from increased targeted funding and a concerted effort by National Guard Bureau (NGB) staff to act as liaisons between NGB and Army medical commands to meet funding, manning, and equipment requirements.

Dental readiness at mobilization stations continued to increase to over 90% in FY09. Funding of \$21.2 million and National Guard Bureau/state coordination were instrumental in providing a drop in dental releases from active duty and Soldiers who were dentally disqualified. The First Term Dental Readiness Program moved forward to phase two with the goal of 95% in Dental Fitness Category 1 or 2 for Soldiers completing advanced individual training. Demobilization Dental Reset was implemented by U.S. Army Dental Command with a goal of 95% in Dental Readiness Category 1 or 2 upon release from active duty. To date over 90% of ARNG Soldiers processed by Dental Command facilities have been reset to a dental condition of Dental Readiness Category 1 or 2.

The Army Selected Reserve Dental Readiness System enables dental treatment of Soldiers throughout Army Force Generation. Program objective memorandum (POM) efforts to fund this initiative were successful for FY10 through FY15, achieving \$1.1 billion in critical requirements across the POM years.

### **ARFORGEN Cycle**

Unit stability in the ARNG is a key enabler of the ARFORGEN model to work most effectively. The annual personnel turbulence rate in a typical BCT, prior to a Notice of Sourcing, is 15.6 percent. This includes gains, losses, transfers in, and transfers out.

During the Sourcing period of the ARFORGEN cycle, between 6 and 12 percent of Soldiers assigned to units are untrained and cannot be deployed by law. These Soldiers are new enlistments who have signed up for service, but who have not yet completed initial entry training. The Army National Guard and Training Doctrine Command (TRADOC) have worked hard to alleviate this problem by increasing the capacity for initial entry training at the key times that ARNG soldiers are available to attend (for example, during the summer months). The training pipeline has been reduced by more than 10K soldiers.

### **Accelerated initial training**

Once a unit receives an Alert Order, additional training seats need to be made available in order to return Duty Military Occupational Skills Qualification (DMOSQ) Soldiers that are assigned to that unit. On average, new recruits take 11 months to

complete initial entry training. Our Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) decreases training ship time, as well as pre-training and in-training losses. Since the ARNG initiated RSP, the rolling 12-month average number of Soldiers lost during initial entry training has decreased by 3.6% resulting in positive control of DMOSQ drop. Training seat availability is directly linked to personnel readiness. Additionally, the Recruit Force Pool (RFP) reduces the period of time in which non-MOSQ Soldiers are holding paragraph and line numbers in MTOE units and gives the ARNG the ability to target the available seats.

Upon an Alert Order, units enter the pre-mobilization cycle with personnel shortages due to untrained and medically non-deployable Soldiers occupying positions in the operational force, as well as normal attrition. Mobilizing BCTs must cross-level on average 37% of their authorized strength in order to meet mobilization requirements. This depletes donor units and creates a cascade of unreadiness across the ARNG. The ARNG is working an initiative to anticipate so as to better manage this cross-leveling and minimize the impact to units preparing for deployment.

### **Increasing the Stability of Units Prior to Mobilization**

Retention incentives to minimize cross-leveling: The Deployment Extension Stabilization Pay (DESP) program stabilizes ARNG units from the period of sourcing through mobilization. This program has a positive impact on unit readiness by reducing cross-leveling and attrition well in advance of the unit's mobilization date. By fixing end strength at 358,200, each Soldier retained by DESP reduces the loss rate and simultaneously reduces the requirement for an accession by one in addition to stabilizing the unit through the next subsequent mobilization. As retention increases, losses and accessions decrease. In other words, the ARNG 'trades losses' between DESP takers and other ETS-eligible Soldiers in order to meet programmed losses where end strength is fixed at 358,200.

### **Access to the ARNG**

The Army has determined that it must rely on an Operational Reserve to meet the demands of the Army in today's environment and will need to continue to rely on an Operational Reserve to meet expected near term demands of the Nation. The Soldiers in the Army National Guard also want to be part of an Operational force as well. We know this from the discussions we have had with our Soldiers and their leaders; but more indicative are the recruiting and retention rates of Army National Guard Soldiers. Everyone of our Soldiers have had to make a decision to either enlist, stay or leave the Army National Guard during the current conflict, knowing they will more than likely deploy at least once in their initial period of service. As I have stated earlier, the Army National Guard continues to meet its authorized end strength of 358,200. Our current reenlistment rate is 116 percent of our plan. As long as our Soldiers are doing meaningful missions and provided the resources to accomplish those missions, Army National Guard Soldiers want to continue to be an operational part of the Nation's defense solution.

The Army National Guard is a fully accessible reserve component of the U.S. Army. It has met every request for forces to date. The Reserve Components provide significant capability to the Department of Defense at a very cost effective rate. A number of authorities exist that permit the Executive Branch to access the Reserve



Component. We are working with OSD and the Army to ensure there is a clear understanding of the authorities and the policies that allow the exercise of those authorities, particularly in light of the current and future operational and funding environment.

The Army with Congressional support has invested a significant amount to bring up the readiness of the Army National Guard. It is important to maintain the capabilities of that investment. The alternative means a larger Active force at a considerably higher cost. The Army National Guard is better equipped, trained and ready than it has ever been in its history. The 12 month mobilization policy enacted by the Secretary of Defense goes a long way in protecting the Reserve Component Soldiers and allowing more predictability for mobilizations. This is key to our Soldiers.

We need to continue to educate our senior leaders on the capability of the Army National Guard and advise them if we are getting over used; however, the Army National Guard is committed to the Army Force Generation model. In my view, it is able to provide about 55,000 Soldiers every year based on the rotational rate of one year mobilized and five years at home.

Our Nation was built as a militia nation and the Reserve Components are the tie back to the communities we serve. The Army National Guard has provided over 300,000 Soldiers to Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. At the height of the Operation Iraqi Freedom surge when the Army National Guard had over 90,000 mobilized or deployed overseas, more than 50,000 others responded to the support Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts within 11 days. This proves that the militia concept remains strong in the face of 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges.

## **Closing Remarks**

The men and women of the National Guard greatly appreciate the cooperation and support you have provided in the past and look forward to working with you as we meet today's challenges.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I look forward to your questions.