

**NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN  
AUGUST 26, 2015**

**MAJOR GENERAL DAVID SPRYNCZYNATYK  
ADJUTANT GENERAL NORTH DAKOTA**

It was nine years ago today, August 26, 2006, that I assumed the command of the North Dakota National Guard. I have experienced first-hand the exceptional value of the National Guard to the nation's defense and homeland security as a low-cost, high-capability option to increase our overall warfighting capacity in support of the National Military Strategy. Traditional, and full-time Guard Soldiers, have the same education and training requirements as their active-duty counterparts, at a fraction of the cost. This, in conjunction with the ability to support civilian emergency responders during natural or man-made disasters, ensures that funds spent for the National Guard are one of the best investments our nation can make. Keeping the Army National Guard at current manning levels ensures that an extremely economical, highly capable force of professionally trained Guard members are among the options available to the Department of Defense, as well as our elected leaders.

During the Global War on Terror, we have mobilized more than 4,400 Soldiers in support of federal missions to various locations around the world including Iraq, Afghanistan, Africa, Kosovo, Bosnia, South America, GITMO Cuba, Djibouti and Washington D.C. These mobilizations have included missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Noble Eagle, and have included all units from across the state of North Dakota. We have provided mission support ranging from Engineering to Aviation, to Military Police Detainee Operations and border patrol assistance, contracting and equipment withdrawal operations, and Air Defense of the National Capitol Region.

Stateside emergencies and disasters over the past nine years resulted in the mobilization of more than 7,000 members of the North Dakota National Guard. These missions supported communities and citizens in response to floods, fires, tornadoes, ice storms and blizzards providing assistance to our citizens and their families at their most dire times. The best example of this is the catastrophic flooding that occurred in our state in both 2009 and 2011. In 2009, more than 2,400 service members were mobilized to assist civil authorities in the Red River Valley. During state-wide flooding in 2011, we mobilized more than 3,000 service members to support flood response efforts in the Red River Valley, the Missouri River Valley, and Souris River Valley.

The National Guard garners exceptional community support that brings forth the best from our citizen Soldiers. When a unit from North Dakota is mobilized, we are not just mobilizing the Soldier or the unit; we are mobilizing employers, Families and communities. Over the past nine years, I have witnessed amazing levels of support for our Service Members from Families, employers, communities, and civic leaders. This support goes far beyond Soldier support. In many cases, the community reaches out to deployed Soldiers and units by providing resources for programs in theater, such as adopt-a-school and school backpack programs, as well as other initiatives that develop good will among the local populace. When you mobilize the Guard, you increase public support for the overall mission, and you mobilize the communities as well.

National Guard members provide many unique capabilities that greatly enhance support to civil-military operations. Numerous times during the deployments of our Soldiers, they were called on to use

their civilian-acquired skills. They were more than willing to share the expertise they bring to the table as teachers, police officers, public utilities employees and other capabilities that are crucial during stability and support operations. These civilian skills are unique to the Guard and serve to increase our ability to train community members on processes crucial to recovery.

For more than 20 years, the National Guard has participated in the State Partnership Program (SPP). This U.S. Department of Defense program, managed by the National Guard Bureau and guided by State Department foreign policy goals, links the National Guard with 70 partner nations around the world to support the security cooperation objectives of the Combatant Commands. This, in turn, is designed to increase U.S. security objectives by assisting partner nations' stability and encouraging democracy. The North Dakota National Guard enjoys three state partnerships with Ghana, Togo and Benin. The National Guard is uniquely qualified to support this important mission. The Guard capitalizes on its already strong relationships with other agencies to further enhance SPP support. This provides increased opportunities to meet requests from our partner nations, and by including these agencies in the SPP, countries have the ability to clearly see how successful civil and military integration can be.

While the Active Component incurs a large expense with its Trainees, Transients, Holders, and Students (TTHS) Account Soldiers, the Army National Guard Soldiers remain in a drilling status while awaiting training seats, transitioning to new duty assignments, and in any type of hold status. The National Guard does not incur the same costs, nor does it lose valuable training time, by having Soldiers remain in a drilling status during these periods.

The Army National Guard also provides unique professional training opportunities to all three components in various disciplines and MOSs at Regional Training Institutes (RTI) across the United States. The North Dakota Army National Guard has the 164<sup>th</sup> Regiment, which is an RTI, with an annual student capacity of 3,700 Soldiers. It offers training and qualification in eight different MOSs (12B, 12C, 12K, 12N, 12R, 12T, 12W, 92G), seven NCOES (12B30, 12C30, 12B40, 12H30, 12H40, 12N30, 12N40), OCS, Reserve Component Engineering Captains Career Course (RC-ECC), Army Basic Instructor Course (ABIC), and Small Group Instructor Training Course (SGI-TC). Active Component Soldiers have already completed training at our RTI and stated that it was the best training they have ever received.

Army National Guard units have a Regional Alignment for Training with both higher level National Guard Divisions as well as Active Component Divisions. The North Dakota Army Guard has units regionally aligned with the 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Minnesota, as well as the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Colorado. These not only maintain war trace affiliations for potential mobilizations and synchronize component training, they build relationships between components and provide increased training opportunities across the spectrum of operations. These partnerships also maintain, and continue to grow, the multi-component cooperation and confidence that has been established through the last 14 years of war.

To summarize the value of the National Guard to both the Nation and our communities, the Guard provides a professionally trained, ready force that is economical and vital to our nation's security. Over the past 14 years, the Guard has clearly demonstrated our ability to support our nation's war fight while simultaneously continuing to support domestic operations and homeland defense. Our units and Soldiers have been extremely successful in support of all of these efforts and will continue to be the consummate professionals in light of the unknowns of the future. We all need to recognize the value and capability the Guard brings to the table, and support the Guard's efforts.