

The National Guard – Foundational Principles for the 21st Century

A strategic transition is underway -- a necessary transition driven by constrained resources and 13 years of sustained combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In an era of change and uncertainty, today's operational National Guard stands as a cost effective strategic hedge that is an accessible, capable and ready force with citizen soldiers and airmen who possess the skills necessary to meet current and future challenges.

As we orient to the future, we do so facing what I term the "three realities" of the security environment – global reality, resource reality, and the reality of change.

- Global Reality - asymmetric threats, cyber terrorism, pandemics, transnational organized crime, climate change, arctic impacts, and regional instability issues such as those we are witnessing in Ukraine, the Middle East, and Asia are just some of the threats we face today and into the future.
- Resource Reality - decreased defense spending diminishes our military's capabilities, capacity, and readiness. Ever increasing compensation and entitlement costs increase the burden on the defense budget. Like the Army and Air Force, the National Guard has seen the readiness effects of budget challenges and will continue to see erosion as sequestration returns in 2016. Striking the right AC/RC mix now is more critical than ever.
- The Reality of Change - the rate at which the current security environment is changing is unprecedented. Issues such as ISIL, Ebola, and the conflict in Ukraine are just some of the examples that have surfaced in the past year. Additionally, advancements in technology and new modes of communication have created a world where borders are blurred with a U.S. population that expects more from its government at greater speed. Citizens in the homeland expect immediate and deliberate responses to natural and manmade disasters.

As we face these security challenges, the vision for the National Guard is one that ensures we remain well-postured to confront and deter current and emerging threats. Tomorrow's National Guard will be organized around the following key principles.

- Integral to the Total Force – Establish or revise policies that truly address Total Force concepts and are fully implemented to organize, man, train, equip, modernize and utilize the Army and Air National Guard as an operational force. These policies will include such measures as providing predictable, recurring and sustainable capabilities to meet Combatant Command requirements.
- A Truly Operational Reserve - The National Guard will be resourced to remain an operational reserve. Army National Guard units will be resourced at a baseline of C3 within a progressive readiness model; units that have been assigned, apportioned or allocated for federal missions will be resourced to achieve the required levels of readiness for employment. Air National Guard units will be resourced at a baseline of C1 and provide forces in Unit Type Codes that have personnel and equipment that

are tailored and deployable enabling a complete warfighting package, not just augmentation personnel.

- Tremendous Value for America - National Guard forces provide our nation with an “as needed,” cost-effective, proven combat reserve of the Army and Air Force, providing full spectrum capability in the warfight and as the force of first choice for domestic emergencies. As our force shrinks due to budgetary challenges, the operational, dual-use National Guard provides the nation with reversibility through a rapidly scalable force.
- Building Partnerships - The National Guard provides Combatant Commanders with versatile, responsive, and consistently available forces for building partner capacity around the world. Due to a reduced forward presence, the Combatant Commanders will seek to increase their use of the National Guard for Theater Security Cooperation, leveraging the civilian-acquired skills of Guardsmen and the long term relationships developed through the National Guard’s State Partnership Program.
- Our Nation’s Combat Reserve - As the combat reserve of the Army and Air Force, the National Guard force structure should mirror that of the Active Component, and modernization of equipment and weapons systems should occur concurrently with the Active Component.
- Remaining Engaged; Always Accessible - Challenging, realistic training, real-world employment, and predictability are keys to National Guard leader development, member retention, and ensuring family and civilian employer support. The National Guard is ideal for predictable rotational missions to leverage the benefits of real-world operations, while concurrently providing stability in its deployment cycle. Accessibility is not an issue -- a full suite of statutory authorities exists for both contingencies and steady state operations.
- Connected with America - Guardsmen live in nearly every ZIP code with armories and airfields in over 3000 communities. The National Guard is often the face of the military across much of our nation; communicating the strategic value of the Total Force to the citizens we serve, and in return, gaining the trust and confidence of the American people. With less than 0.73% of the population serving in the Armed Forces, the National Guard further connects the U.S. military to America.

The National Guard stands ready to address the challenges facing our nation as an invaluable combat reserve of the Army and Air Force. The National Guard will succeed due to the commitment, extraordinary talent and excellence of the next generation of Minutemen who, like those who served before them for almost 400 years, will rise to the challenge of defending our nation and responding in the community during times of crises. We will continue to strive to be more innovative, responsive, accessible, capable, and affordable as we embark on a journey filled with many challenges, but one filled with hope and promise. I am certain that future generations of Guardsmen will continue our commitment to be Always Ready, Always There!