



Landpower Essay

No. 03-3
September 2003



An Institute of Land Warfare Publication

The Army National Guard— Back to the Future

by

Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum

National security starts with homeland security. Homeland defense is mission one whether it's on American soil or in overseas combat. The overseas fight is "the homeland defense away game."

The National Guard's vision for the 21st century is based on four guiding principles:

- The security and defense of our homeland in support of the Global War on Terrorism, at home and abroad, is the number one priority of the National Guard.
- The National Guard is transforming as we look to the future, enhancing readiness and capabilities for rapid action across the full spectrum of military operations both at home and abroad.
- The National Guard remains the constitutionally-based citizen militia that continues to serve our nation so well in peace and war.
- America insists on a relevant, reliable, ready and accessible National Guard transformed for the 21st century.

The National Guard can and will enhance and increase through innovative transformation the depth and breadth of its readiness to perform all national security missions. Effectively leveraging the existing forces; streamlining forces and organizations; creating or changing forces to meet near- and long-term needs; making organizations leaner, smaller and more effective; and training and equipping to full readiness levels are the critical components of transformation.

The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, along with Department of Defense (DoD) Transformation initiatives, have had and will have profound positive effects on each of these areas.

21st Century Challenges

The National Guard is and will remain a critical element of the war-fight capability of the United States.

It is imperative that we focus on the right force mix and the right kinds of units. We must develop maximum readiness across the full spectrum of national security requirements—from a full-scale war fight overseas to the myriad homeland security missions.

The Landpower Essay series is published by AUSA's Institute of Land Warfare. The series is designed to provide an outlet for original essays on topics that will stimulate professional discussion and further public understanding of the landpower aspects of national security. The content represents the personal opinions of the author and not necessarily the position of the Association of the United States Army or its members. Candidate essays of 5,000 words or less may be submitted to: AUSA's Institute of Land Warfare, ATTN: Landpower Essay Series, 2425 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22201. For more information about AUSA and the Institute of Land Warfare, visit our website at www.ausa.org.

The National Guard is committed to transformation. We will aggressively work with the active Army to integrate with their transformation plans. Simultaneously, we will transform the Guard into a more joint and more effective organization from top to bottom to meet the needs of our elected and uniformed state and federal leaders. We must and we will do what is right for America.

The Operational Environment

Iraqi Freedom and the response to 11 September were crystal-clear windows into the future of U.S. military operations at home and abroad. The national response was joint, combined, interagency, intergovernmental and international. The days of large-scale, single-service operations are long gone. The ability to think, plan and operate in a joint, unified and combined military construct is essential.

The Guard's homeland defense and national security roles mandate that it also be able to seamlessly operate in federal and state intergovernmental and interagency roles. The aftermath of the 11 September attacks is illustrative of the Guard's new operating environment.

First, the Guard was there when it was needed, demonstrating the flexible accessibility inherent in the unique multistatus roles of the Guard—8,500 soldiers and airmen on the streets of New York in less than 24 hours (in State Active Duty status), Guard members at the nation's airports in 72 hours (in USC Title 32 status) and more than 30,000 incident-free, fully armed combat air patrol missions (in USC Title 10 status) over the United States since 11 September 2001.

More important, the Guard demonstrated that it can and will operate across the full spectrum of national security missions from close-quarters combat (including seven infantry battalions and special operations forces) in Iraq and Afghanistan, through international peacekeeping in Bosnia and Kosovo, to airport and border security operations in the United States, while simultaneously responding to the calls of the governors for Homeland Security operations as well as calls to minimize human suffering in the face of natural or man-made disasters.

Guard Transformation

Transformation is a state of mind. It is about how we think, organize and approach the future. We are transforming our headquarters and our capabilities to shape our future. We must organize to operate in peacetime and fight in wartime in a joint, interagency, intergovernmental and potentially multinational environment.

We reorganized the National Guard Bureau from three separate organizations into a joint organization effective 1 July 2003. We streamlined and flattened the organization, making it more efficient and capable, and aligned staff functions and responsibilities with those of the Joint Staff and the combatant commanders. We now operate economically and efficiently in accordance with joint doctrine, integrated with all services and components.

The State Adjutants General are consolidating 162 state headquarters organizations into 54 doctrinally aligned Joint Force Headquarters—creating a single joint force headquarters in each state for all Army and Air Guard activities with initial operational capability effective 1 October 2003. Personnel and cost savings resulting from the realignments will be reinvested in unit readiness.

The Joint Force Headquarters will be capable of meeting U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM)/U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) command, control, communications,

computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance/reception, staging, onward movement and integration (C4ISR/RSOI) requirements and serving as an integrator for active component and reserve component consequence management operations. They provide seamless, effective intergovernmental and interagency integration and coordination.

Readiness through Transformation

New asymmetrical threats call for a different kind of warfighter and different mission systems. We need to be smarter, lighter, more agile and more lethal. We must look at our people, processes and realities. We will organize ourselves and leverage our existing structure and capabilities to ensure our forces are never late to need.

We, the Guard, must provide the kind of forces that America needs. The Guard force structure does not stand alone unto itself, but rather represents a 30 percent slice of the total Army. It is our view that if Army divisions are no longer needed then we, like the active component and the Army Reserve, will have to change.

We must change the Army's go-to-war protocols. It is no longer practical to follow Cold War regimens of train, alert, mobilize, train, certify and deploy. ***We must move to train, certify, alert and deploy.***

Under current guidelines, it can take several weeks to months to prepare an Army National Guard unit to mobilize and deploy—compared to the Air Guard model, where units deploy in a matter of hours or days. We need to study and adapt the Air Guard model where possible.

Training must produce enhanced readiness, immediate accessibility, and individual and unit capability to conduct operations at home and abroad.

Readiness is a product of resources and training. We must focus our training on the myriad missions we will be asked to perform and we—the National Guard Bureau—must obtain the resources necessary for the soldiers and airmen to accomplish the mission.

Homeland Defense and Security

We will leverage the units, training and resources in our existing warfighting capabilities to expand and enhance the roles we can perform in homeland security. We will make smarter use of force structure, leveraging capabilities and making minor modifications to mission-essential task lists to geometrically increase capabilities. We will provide capabilities in force packages, built from standardized warfighting units. We will raise the threshold at which commitment of federal military resources to nonwarfighting tasks becomes necessary.

We are:

- task organizing 10 National Guard CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High-yield Explosives) Enhanced Response Force Packages (NGCERFP). The task forces will consist of a National Guard Civil Support Team, an enhanced division medical company with 150 person-per-hour decontamination/treatment capability, an enhanced engineer company with specialized search and rescue equipment, and a task-trained combat unit capable of supporting law enforcement. These task forces will meet a previously identified NORTHCOM request for capabilities.

- expanding roles and missions of National Guard involvement in Ground-based Mid-course Missile Defense, Cyber and Information Operations, Space and Intelligence by including both the Army and Air Guard. We are building on the Nike Hercules Guard model and intend to include traditional Guard members and mobilization-day (M-day) units.
- creating National Guard Quick and Rapid Reaction forces through dual missioning and training existing units. These units will be immediately available to state and federal governments and for homeland security purposes and are already forward-deployed throughout the United States. The units will retain full warfighting and homeland security capabilities. These forces will also meet a previously identified NORTHCOM request for forces requirement.

In short, we are transforming the Guard in all domains—the way we fight, the way we do business, and the way we work with others—to provide the Guard America needs today and tomorrow.

[Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum is the Chief of the National Guard Bureau.]