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During a period of continued fiscal uncertainty, this past year demonstrated the Air National Guard's value to the nation. The men and women of the Air National Guard overcame the pressures of starting the fiscal year under the cloud of civilian furloughs and government shutdowns while continuing to meet the demands of Overseas Contingency Operations. Continuing a process that began in FY13, several units have transitioned into new mission areas such as cyber and remotely piloted aircraft while many others will undergo conversions over the next couple of years. We must prepare our force to meet the challenges of a complex and new world. Our Air Force needs a strong and ready Air National Guard.

This presentation provides an overview of the past year, focusing primarily on the Air National Guard's contribution to the national defense strategy, followed by a look into the future, including areas where we solicit your continued support.

The National Guard, including the Air National Guard, is unique in its contribution to the three pillars of the defense strategy – *Protect the Homeland, Project Power and Win Decisively*, and *Build Security Globally*. The inherent characteristics of the National Guard are foundational for its responsibilities to local, state, territorial, and federal authorities. Its cost-effective citizen Airmen and Soldier construct, underpin the unique qualities the National Guard brings to the table with its Balanced Strategy – *A Proven Choice for the Warfight, A First Choice for Homeland Operations*, and *An Enduring Choice for Security Cooperation and Building Partnerships*.

## **The Air National Guard – Always on Mission**

### *A Proven Choice for the Warfight*

National Guard Airmen have participated in every American conflict since the Mexican border emergency of 1916, but when the Guard members of the Nevada Air National Guard's 152<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Reconnaissance Group deployed to Shaikh Isa Ba in August 1990 to support Operation DESERT SHIELD, little did they know they were on the vanguard of redefining the Air National Guard and its contribution to 24 years of continuous combat operations. Since then, the Air

National Guard has evolved from a strategic reserve, called upon primarily during national emergencies, to an essential partner in the Total Air Force. Today's Air National Guard, in addition to providing a reserve surge capacity, contributes daily to the US Air Force commitment to *Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power* in all five core missions: *Air & Space Superiority, Intelligence, Surveillance, & Reconnaissance; Rapid Global Mobility; Global Strike, and Command & Control.*

Last year Air National Guard men and women filled nearly 11,000 Combatant Commander requests for support. Additionally, Guard Airmen defended the skies over our homeland and supported their deployed brethren through U.S.-based "reach-back" capabilities including remotely piloted aircraft operations and intelligence analysis. Air Guard contribution to Overseas Contingency Operations peaked in March 2003 at 24,301, and the men and women of your Air National Guard continue to respond to the country's security requirements. There were 5,413 Guard Airmen on mobilization orders in December 2014, 65% as volunteers.

Throughout our history, Guard Airmen have volunteered for routine or non-emergency missions augmenting the Regular Air Force in performing daily operational missions. In 2011, Congress enacted a new mobilization authority, 10USC12304b, authorizing the Secretary of Defense to mobilize reserve forces for other than war or national emergency. This new mobilization authority provides "predictability" to our Guard Airmen, their families, and employers. It also "guarantees" the Reserve Components will be there – where ever "there" may be – when needed. Guard Airmen left on their first 10USC12304b non-contingency deployment in January 2015. They will be augmenting the US Air Force by providing forward presence and assurance to the nation's security partners.

The men and women of your Air National Guard recognize the "New Normal." They understand that being in the Guard is no longer just training for the next big war. It means defending American interests both at home and

overseas, 365 days a year. It means regularly leaving home, family, and civilian jobs behind for the frontlines of America's defenses.

### *A First Choice for Homeland Operations*

When not helping to provide "forward defense," Air Guard members are manning the last line of defense here at home; what we call "Domestic Operations." I put Air Guard Domestic Operations into three (3) broad categories:

- First, the things we do every day to defend the homeland;
- Second, protection of life and property; and
- Third, preparing for the unthinkable.

As is well publicized, the Air National Guard is the primary US force provider to NORAD for the defense of US airspace. Air Guard units man 15 of the 16 fighter alert sites around the continental US and Hawaii, as well as command and control facilities, and many aerial refueling alert sites. Today there are about 950 Guard Airmen supporting Aerospace Control Alert (ACA) operations.

In addition to the ACA mission, the Guard Airmen support law enforcement agencies in Counter Drug Operations and Southwest Border Protection Operations -- Primarily with Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance and logistics support. The numbers vary daily, but there are about 300 Guard Airmen supporting the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency and another 10 to 20 assisting the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Service along the southwest border.

Air National Guard Domestic Operations includes protecting life and property. When a governor or the President "calls out the Guard" it is not just the Army Guard. At the end of 2014, there were 88 Guard Airmen in State Active Duty status helping with winter storm recovery in New York and Massachusetts, including civil engineers, security forces, civil response liaison personnel, and command & control. There are 27 ANG members on Hawaiian State Active Duty supporting the Puna Lava Flow response.

Specially equipped C-130 units frequently augment the U.S. Forest Service and local responders in fighting forest fires. Last year, ANG Modular

Aerial Fire Fighting units dropped approximately 2.273 million pounds of fire retardant on US wildfires. Last summer, an MQ-1 Predator from the California Air National Guard demonstrated the dual-use flexibility of the Air Guard by providing enhanced situational awareness to fire fighters battling the Rim Fire.

Air National Guard Search and Rescue units in Alaska, California, and New York provide around-the-clock coverage for domestic joint military operations. They augment U.S. Coast Guard and other search and rescue operations. They were credited with many dramatic “saves” last year, including the rescue of a sick 1-year-old girl and her family from their disabled sailboat off the Mexican coast last March.

The third category of Domestic Operations is preparing for the unthinkable. More than 70% of Defense Department’s chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear (CBRN) response capability resides in the National Guard. The Guard provides Joint Army and Air teams that respond to potential CBRN incidents to determine the agent and assess the hazard, conduct search and rescue operations, decontaminate personnel and equipment, and provide emergency medical support. For example, in January and February 2014, 274 Guard Airmen of the 130 Airlift Wing, West Virginia Air National Guard, assisted with water distribution and health & wellness checks following the chemical contamination of Elk River.

At the core of the National Guard’s Domestic Operations capabilities are relationships – long and enduring relationships. When a disaster strikes is not the time to be introducing yourself to the local police and fire chiefs, or the State disaster response coordinator, the Regional FEMA Director, or their local Red Cross coordinator. Because a core strength of the National Guard is its assignment stability, it is likely that local Guard leadership not only knows the local civic leaders and first responders, but went to school with them, and have participated in numerous local disaster response exercises together.

What makes the National Guard uniquely effective in providing support to civil authorities is its 378-year history of volunteering to protect and defend their

communities – defending their local communities is in the Guards' DNA -- and so is relationship building within these communities.

### *An Enduring Choice for Security Cooperation and Building Partnerships*

The men and women of our Air National Guard also contribute to the third pillar of the national defense strategy – Building Security Globally. Over the past twenty years, the National Guard has evolved into an in-demand, low cost, high impact security cooperation partner of choice for the Department of Defense with participation in such activities as the State Partnership Program, Foreign Military Sales training, and training exercises that assist in shaping our international environment and build partner capacity. Furthermore, the National Guard extends security cooperation at home via partnerships with both Department of Defense (DoD) and non-DoD organizations and agencies such as the Federal Aviation Agency, U.S. Customs & Border Protection, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and state and local first responders.

Air Guard units in Missouri, Rhode Island, Arizona, and Mississippi invested over 2-1/4 million man-days training foreign air force personnel to fly and maintain C-130s, F-16s, and C-17s, and teaching Advanced Airlift Tactics to C-160 crews. Guard Airmen traveled to 21 countries last year conducting military training and assisting our defense partners in other ways. For example, Utah and Arizona Air Guard members conducted in-country Helmet Mounted Cueing System training with the Moroccan Air Force, Guard KC-135 units provided air refueling support for NATO AWACS training, and Wyoming C-130 crews support Italian Army parachute training – to name just a few.

Guard Airmen are integral to the National Guard State Partnership Program. The State Partnership Program is an innovative, low-cost, small footprint DoD security cooperation program administered by the National Guard. The program pairs state National Guard units with the armed forces of partner countries in a cooperative, mutually beneficial relationship. While managed by the National Guard Bureau, Partnership Program activities must meet DoD,

COCOM, and State Department objectives for the partner countries. These activities are as varied as the partner countries.

Members of the Vermont Air National Guard, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) unit, trained the Senegalese military in landmine detection and removal – a particularly pertinent problem in Senegal. Guard Airmen then taught the Senegal Ministry of Defense how to setup and run their own landmine detection and removal training program.

Air Guard members have helped partner countries setup non-commissioned officer (NCO) academies, improve their airport security and airbase operations, evaluate their cyber defenses, and improve their medical services and emergency medical team capabilities. Last July, West Virginia Guard members spent six (6) days helping the Peruvian government prepare an emergency humanitarian response plan and exercise – a core competency of the National Guard.

There are two critical components to the State Partnership Program. The first is oversight – cooperative involvement of the partner states, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the regional COCOMs, and State National Guard leadership. These events are well planned and well-coordinated to meet the objectives of the numerous constituencies involved.

Second, the foundation of the program is enduring relationships. In the same way that the National Guard uses its stable personnel policies to build relationships within its local communities, the Guard builds enduring relationships, military-to-military and military-to-civilian relationships with its State Partnership Program partners. To quote General Rodriguez, US AFRICOM Commander, “We have eight states that are in the State Partnership Program. They perform a great role in building relationships as well as building capacity of our partners.”

### **Sustaining the Air National Guard**

The men and women of our Air National Guard have accomplished great things since 1990 and Operation DESERT SHIELD. Their transformation from a

Cold War era strategic reserve to a 21<sup>st</sup> century force capable of maintaining a long-term rotational combat operations tempo has been unprecedented and would not have been possible without the support of the Air Force and Congress. We must ensure this capability is not lost; we must not condemn the next generation of Airmen to relearn the lessons of past post-war drawdowns. We must sustain the Air National Guard capabilities within the National Guard's Balanced Strategy through the dedicated efforts of each Guard Airmen in concert with the U.S. Air Force, the Department of Defense, and Congress. I have three priorities for sustaining the gains we have made and for ensuring the Air National Guard continues to meet the needs of the nation:

- Supporting our Guard Airmen, their families, and their employers;
- Seamless integration within the Total Air Force; and
- Preparing for and bridging the gap to recapitalization.

#### *Personnel*

The FY2016 President's Budget includes an increase in Air Guard end-strength from 105,000 to 105,500 or in budget terms, from \$3,118,700 to \$3,222,500. The increase will help with the beddown and standardization of new, priority missions including cyber, intelligence, and remotely piloted aircraft (RPA).

Our Airmen are our most valuable and treasured assets upon which our success depends. Our Airmen, together with their families and employers, remain our first priority, especially in these times of uncertainty and change.

*Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program (SAPR)*. Every sexual assault incident taints our Core Values and destroys unit morale – it must be eliminated. The Air National Guard's SAPR Program is composed of five parts: prevention, advocacy, investigation, accountability, and assessment.

- Prevention. Acknowledging the problem and educating everyone in the organization of the problem is the first step. In January 2010, the Air Force launched an extensive education program to ensure every Airman



understands the problem and knows what is expected of him or her as Air National Guard professionals.

- **Advocacy.** In January 2013, the Air National Guard implemented a Special Victim's Counsel Program. This Program provides advice to victims on the investigative and military justice processes, victims' rights protections, and empowers victims by removing barriers to their full participation in the military justice process.
- **Investigation.** The National Guard has opened an Office of Complex Investigations composed of Guard members with previous criminal investigation training and special sexual assault investigation training, to step-in when local law enforcement agencies decline to investigate. In addition, the Air Force Office of Special Investigation (AFOSI) is charged with investigating all sexual assaults that occur in a federal or Title 10 status regardless of the severity of the allegations. For incidents that occur in non-federalized duty status, Air Guard commanders must report the assault to the local law enforcement agency.
- **Accountability.** Last July, the Air Force established minimum administrative discharge procedures for any Airman (officer or enlisted) who commits or attempts to commit a sexual assault or engages in an unprofessional relationship while serving in positions of special trust, e.g., recruiters, commanders, or training officers and non-commissioned officers..
- **Assessment.** The Department of Defense has established common metrics and reporting procedures to collect and track statistics on sexual assault. These tools will provide the feedback necessary for early identification of adverse trends and areas for additional action.

Suicide Prevention. The Air National Guard continues to struggle with the tragedy of suicide within its ranks. In 2014, the Air Guard experienced 14 suicides for a rate of 13.3 per 100,000, down from a high of 17.6 per 100,000 in 2010, but still well above our ultimate goal of zero. There is tangible evidence that the addition of Wing Directors of Psychological Health in 2010 and

implementation of the Air Force Suicide Prevention Program have had positive impacts; however, our team of medical personnel, chaplains, Airmen & Family Readiness Program Managers, safety personnel, Transition Assistance Advisors, and Military OneSource counselors, together with Air Guard supervisors and leaders at all levels, continue to address this important issue.

Our Directors of Psychological Health Program continues to evolve based on post-deployment experiences and current events. In 2010, to quickly implement the nation-wide program we moved out with a contractor-based program. We quickly learned that this program would not fully meet the needs of our Airmen. The contractor-based program was cumbersome, inflexible, suffered from high turnover and lacked consistency of mental health capabilities. After analyzing a number of options, we moved forward with converting from a contract-based program to civilian Federal government employees. Not only does this provide the best to our Guard Airmen, in the end, it will save approximately \$8-million annually. We expect to have the full program implemented in the next couple of months.

### *Facilities & Equipment*

The Air National Guard has a history innovatively operating and maintaining legacy equipment dating back to the end of World War II. That history includes creative improvements that permitted seamless integration with the next generation of systems. For example, in the 1960s a Guard aeronautical engineer hung two surplus J-47 jet engines on a piston engine driven KC-97 permitting the legacy aerial refueling tanker to refuel the Air Force's modern jet fighters. The modification improved the reliability and safety of the old aircraft.

The Guard supports the Air Force's policy of replacing its older 4<sup>th</sup> generation fleet with modern 5<sup>th</sup> generation aircraft to meet the potential threat from near-peer competitors, but we know that while awaiting recapitalization, the Air Guard needs to ensure its fleet of legacy systems remain safe and interoperable. The average of the Air Guard's aircraft fleet is 25.7 years with the oldest approaching 50 years and the end of their Certified Service Life. Without

modifications these aircraft may become unsafe and unreliable before being recapitalized. The Air Guard's aircraft require avionics upgrades to comply with new air traffic control requirements and to ensure their systems remain compatible with the latest command and control architectures, and is included in the FY 2016 budget request. The seamless integration of Air Guard equipment into the Total Air Force proved its value during the last 24 years of combat operations.

Military Construction (MILCON) Projects. The Air National Guard budget proposal for FY2016 includes \$138,700,000 for military construction projects. The Air Guard gave priority to MILCON projects supporting new missions and Air Force directed mission re-alignments; in fact, nearly all the major MILCON projects in the FY2016 budget, \$78.6M, support new missions. While this policy has caused increased risk to current missions, the Air Guard is working to address functional space deficiencies by consolidating functions and recapitalizing aging infrastructure, especially those with safety deficiencies.

National Guard & Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA). The Air National Guard FY2015 NGREA funding strategy directed 70% towards modernization projects on legacy major weapon systems, 90% of which are dual-use capable, and 30% towards improving domestic response capabilities. In FY2016, the Air National Guard seeks to update the communications suite, avionics, and defensive system on our F-15s and F-16s (\$57.8M); upgrade the tactical data link, avionics and communications on the C-130Hs and KC-135s (\$25.4M); purchase aircraft support, flight line, and back-shop logistics equipment (\$32.8M); and a number of smaller items.

## **Conclusion**

Managing a declining budget is one of the most challenging things the Department of Defense ever does. For the U.S. Air Force, it comes down to making difficult decisions between capability, capacity, readiness, and modernization. The Total Air Force decided to take increased risk in the near-

term to ensure its future warfighting capability by choosing to invest in new more capable equipment rather than upgrading its older systems. This decision, while agreed to, create challenges for the Air National Guard primarily in the area of near-term risk management, because much of the older or legacy systems are operated by the Air Guard, and we share the responsibility to ensure that the Total Air Force can meet today's defense commitments while waiting for tomorrow's capabilities.