



PRESS RELEASE

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***Statement by Chairman Duncan Hunter on Allegations of a Secret
Military Reserve Troop Call-up After the November Election***

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-CA), Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, issued the following statement on the allegations of a secret military reserve troop call-up after the November Presidential election.

“I am amazed that Senator Kerry and some of my Democratic House colleagues are alleging that there is a secret plan by the Bush Administration to call-up additional reserve troops after the November Presidential election. This statement is inaccurate and just plain wrong.

“The Department of Defense regularly activates reserve troops and units as part of the normal rotational cycle. Notifications for these rotations have been going on for months in plain view of members of the military, the public and Congress. The so-called “secret plan” is actually the beginning of the next scheduled rotation of troops in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The mobilization period for some of the units in this phase of operations will begin in November, as a result of the 180 days required to prepare for deployment in the spring of 2005. Reserve units will be an important part of the next phase of operations but there is no plan for any dramatic change in ratios beyond those being currently used. This comes as no surprise to me or any other Member of Congress that has been paying attention. Instead of being criticized, the Pentagon should be commended for proceeding in a way that gives military families and loved ones time to plan and prepare for these rotations.

“To further clarify the issue, I personally just discussed this matter with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Gen. Richard Myers, who assured me in a follow-up letter our current reserve troop rotation plan remains unchanged and is still in effect.

“Chairman Myers said in the letter, ‘With regards to the recent comments concerning our Reserve and National Guard alert notification process, I can assure you there has never been any guidance to defer notification until after the Presidential election.’

“Americans can be proud of our military men and women and their willingness to continue performing a tough mission with dedication and bravery. However, I regret that some have chosen to politicize this issue by attempting to make an issue where there is none. Our military forces deserve better than these attempts to use them as pawns in a political election.”

NOTE: Attached is a copy of Chairman Myers’ letter.

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<http://armedservices.house.gov/>

**CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20318-9906

20 September 2004

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-6035

Dear Mr. Chairman,

With regard to the recent comments concerning our Reserve and National Guard alert notification process, I can assure you there has never been any guidance to defer notification until after the Presidential election.

Alert notification is an established and consistent process based on meeting the needs of the Combatant Commander while ensuring, to the maximum extent possible, earliest notification of those units affected. As in the past, our goal is to alert as early as possible and mobilize in order to conduct necessary training before deployment. Our target for reserve combat units is six months prior to their deployment, given the time required to achieve proficiency at the company, battalion and brigade levels of competence. Our target for our reserve logistics units is less, currently at four months prior to deployment, since their tasks are typically smaller and less complex than their combat counterparts. The notification date is a balance between early notification and ensuring units are notified in as complete a package as possible, and not so early that changes in the operational situation may alter the Combatant Commander's needs and ultimately the composition of the deploying force. In the case of the current rotation, we announced our plan in the spring of 2004, testified before your committee in July 2004, and deployed the first unit in the fall of 2004. For the next rotation, we will announce our plan in November 2004, with the first unit deploying in May 2005.

As of September 15, 2004, 800 Individual Ready Reserve members have been activated. The intent is to fill 5,600 slots by December 2004, with a potential to go higher, if required. The skill sets that are in the highest demand are transportation, logisticians, mechanics, military police and engineers.

To reiterate, and consistent with our notification process, we will notify the next package of combat troops in support of OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM and OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM in late November 2004 to meet a May 2005 deployment date for the lead unit of the rotation.

Sincerely,

RICHARD B. MYERS
Chairman
of the Joint Chiefs of Staff