

Statement for the Record
The Honorable Gordon R. England
Deputy Secretary of Defense
House Armed Services Committee
National Guard
June 13, 2006

Chairman Hunter, Representative Skelton, Members of the Committee - Good afternoon.

Many thanks for the opportunity to appear before your Committee to discuss this important topic. Thanks also to this Committee for your continuing strong support for our men and women in uniform, who make sacrifices every day to defend the freedom and liberty we all so enjoy. Secretary Rumsfeld and I are deeply grateful to them and their families for their service and their sacrifices, and we are grateful to you for supporting them.

I'm pleased to appear before you today with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, ADM Giambastiani, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army GEN Cody, and Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen Corley to talk about a critical part of the Department's Total Force - the National Guard. I'd like to start the discussion by putting this topic in context: namely, where the Department has been, where we are headed, and the integral role of the Guard. Then I'll make a few suggestions about how we might continue to work together to improve the total force.

I. New requirements after the end of the Cold War, and 9/11, left the Department with some shortfalls.

In the 21st century, in the aftermath of both the Cold War and 9/11, America faces a new global security context. In the long war on terror, our Nation confronts a much wider array of asymmetric and irregular challenges than ever before. Terrorists seek to destroy the very way of life of America and our friends and allies, and they will stop at nothing to achieve their ends. At the same time, traditional state-based threats have not gone away. Hostile states could acquire and use weapons of mass destruction, to devastating effect.

The current long war is different from the wars of the past. We are no longer likely to suffer tens of thousands of casualties in a single, conventional battle, as we did during WWII. But the US could face that same magnitude of loss in an attack on the homeland.

In 2001, the new Administration inherited a military force that was still configured for the exigencies of the Cold War era. Secretary Rumsfeld and the rest of the Department's new leadership recognized that the new era required new approaches. The world had changed, and the Department had gaps to fill - notably, for irregular warfare and homeland defense. A shift of focus was required.

II. Transformation, launched by the new Administration in 2001, has already achieved concrete results, and continues apace.

Based on the assessment of shortfalls, the Department launched an aggressive process of transformation, to update and reorient both capabilities and processes to meet a broader array of challenges than ever before. That process is not a singular activity; rather, it is an evolutionary continuum that has already achieved many results.

Transformation has included many organizational reforms – both outside and inside the Department. Most notable on the national scale, in the wake of 9/11, was the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security by the US Congress. Most notable inside the Department of Defense was the creation of a new Combatant Command, US NORTHCOM. While these were positive steps, they added integration complexity. Efforts are continuing to bring about full unity of effort with and among the local, state and federal levels of government, agencies here in Washington, and our own Department of Defense.

III. The National Guard is an integral, inseparable part of the transformation of the total joint force.

The National Guard is an inseparable component of the Department's transformation process. In today's environment, the role of the National Guard, at home and abroad, as part of the total force, is essential and increasing. As part of the deployed joint force, the National Guard is fully integrated with their active component counterparts in countries around the world. The Department's June 2005 Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support placed further "focused reliance" on the National Guard to work with their active counterparts to protect and defend the homeland.

Transformation requires assessing and updating how the Guard, as part of the total force, is structured and resourced. The Government's past track record with the National Guard did leave room for improvement. In the past, the Guard was not always fully resourced. Limited procurement in the 1990's had an impact on all of the Nation's military forces, including the National Guard. The Guard has also not always been fully included in decision-making that affected their organization and membership.

Changes launched in the past few years have put the Department firmly on the path of improvement. My colleagues from the Army and the Air Force can speak in more detail about specific recent resourcing and organizational initiatives in their Services. Recognize that the process of achieving solutions is both complex and continual.

For the Department as a whole, many transformation initiatives coalesced in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review. The QDR introduced specific initiatives to update the Department's capabilities for meeting a full spectrum of challenges – from traditional threats to terrorism. The QDR also tackled how the Department can best make use of its Total Force - the active component, the reserve component, civilians, and contractors. The QDR strategic vision includes utilizing the Reserve Component as an operational as well as a strategic reserve, and rebalancing certain skills between the active and reserve components. The QDR also points to

the need to adjust the authorities and rotation policies that govern the use of the Reserve Component, in order to provide a greater degree of deployment predictability to those who serve. The National Guard is an integral part of every aspect of the QDR's strategic vision in terms of both capabilities and processes.

This year, recent legislative changes allowed the Department, for the first time, to submit the QDR to Congress together with this year's budget request. This timing allowed a few "leading edge" measures from the QDR to be included in the FY07 budget. However, the QDR's transformative vision will be much more fully realized next year, in FY08.

IV. A major remaining transformation issue is getting the relationships right, including fully integrating the Guard into the Total Force.

At the decision-making level, the Department created an inclusive and effective new governance mechanism for the QDR process. The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and I co-chaired a body of senior civilian and military leaders, including the Under-Secretaries and Service Vice Chiefs of Staff, which met frequently to debate and resolve issues. The Department is keeping that body in place – it's now called the Deputy's Advisory Working Group - to oversee QDR implementation and to help adjudicate organizational and investment priorities and decisions. Throughout the QDR process, the National Guard Bureau has participated in that forum.

The QDR's vision for reforming the defense enterprise also includes better horizontal integration at all levels, not just among the senior-most leadership. This includes ways to better integrate Guard personnel on the Army and Air Staffs, thereby making sure that the Guard has full visibility on strategic decisions that affect the total joint force. There is a parallel on the civilian side - the designated "manpower and reserve affairs" positions in Service Secretariats. Transparency and inclusiveness in the decision-making process are the best possible ways to strengthen trust and confidence across the board.

The Department values and recognizes the need for close cooperation between the federal and state levels. The Department is committed to making sure that TAGs are included in key future discussions like those about the future force. Governors, too, have a role to play in the consultation process – as Secretary Rumsfeld told a session of the National Governors Association earlier this year.

V. Arriving at the best solutions will take time.

There is still a great deal of work ahead, to determine the best approaches and how to implement them. It is very important that we take the time to make the best decisions regarding organizations, command relationships and decision-making processes. This kind of effort is complex and will take some time to develop.

The last time Congress passed legislation changing the make-up of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was in 1986, with the Goldwater-Nichols Act. Developing that legislation was a very deliberate process. It began in 1982, when the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Force General

David Jones, wrote an article, "Why the Joint Chiefs of Staff Must Change". The Chief of Staff of the Army, Edward "Shy" Meyer, supported the article and added new proposals of his own.

It was this very Committee, the House Armed Services Committee, that took on the challenge that same year – 1982 - and began to hold hearings. Chairman Hunter and Representative Skelton could tell the story better than I can, because they were serving on the Committee at the time. The hearings began, staffers carried out studies, the Department provided assessments, and key think-tanks – including the Center for Strategic and International Studies – produced valuable input. In 1986, Congress passed Goldwater-Nichols – nearly 5 years after the debates began.

Prior legislative changes to the Joint Chiefs of Staff had taken even longer. In 1978, an Amendment to the 1947 National Security Act welcomed the Commandant of the Marine Corps as a full member of the JCS. This was the culmination of a process that had begun in 1952, with an Amendment that gave the Commandant co-equal status on the Joint Chiefs of Staff for Marine Corps issues. It took 16 years to upgrade the Commandant's status.

Today, we face another set of organizational questions. This time, the Nation is seeking the best structures and processes to better integrate the National Guard into the Total Force. Arriving at the right solutions need not take 16 years – or even 5 – but a hasty decision would not be the right decision.

The Commission on the National Guard and Reserves has already made a strong start. Their initial 90-day Report, including 7 initial findings, shows great promise. The Department welcomes and encourages their effort, and remains ready to continue to facilitate their year-long study.

Coincidentally, the Commission's analytical work, and the Department's incorporation of the QDR's vision for change into the FY08 budget, will come to fruition at about the same time. Secretary Rumsfeld and I recommend that the Congress and the Department allow the Commission time to complete its work, consult with experts and develop clear recommendations, with a view to reconvening and taking action at that time, likely in the spring of next year.

Secretary Rumsfeld and I do appreciate the opportunity to work closely with this Committee on these issues in days to come. Thank you again for your partnership in these efforts, and for your support for our courageous men and women in uniform.