

STATEMENT BY

LIEUTEANT GENERAL STANLEY E. CLARKE III

DIRECTOR AIR NATIONAL GUARD

BEFORE THE

HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE

SECOND SESSION, 113TH CONGRESS

ON

NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE POSTURE

APRIL 3, 2014

NOT FOR PUBLIC DISSEMINATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

Opening Remarks

Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Visclosky, distinguished members of the subcommittee; I am honored to appear before you today representing the men and women of the Air National Guard.

The Air National Guard, as both a reserve component of the U.S. Air Force and the air component of the National Guard, has seen both successes and challenges this past year. Our successes can be attributed to the hard work of the men and women of the Air Guard, who continue to exhibit the professionalism and dedication upon which the Air National Guard is built. The challenges of sexual assault and suicide prevention are being addressed and will eventually lead to a stronger Air National Guard; however, rapidly declining and shifting funding levels are having primary and secondary affects upon the future of the Air Force and the 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 – *The First Choice for Homeland Operations, A Proven Choice for the Warfight, and An Enduring Choice for Security Cooperation.*

The First Choice for Homeland Operations

The National Guard has always been the state and territorial governors' first choice in disaster response. This is equally true of both the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard. The Air National Guard's contribution is founded in its dual-use of airpower capabilities, for while Guard Airmen are quite capable of helping with such labor-intensive tasks as filling sandbags, they are more likely to leverage the unique contributions of airpower and our Guard Airmen's extensive training for tasks such as airlifting essential supplies to the disaster area; setting up and operating emergency communications centers; transporting, erecting, and manning emergency medical facilities; or providing aircraft and/or satellite imagery and analysis essential for effective consequence management. The following are examples from last year:

- Boston Marathon Bombing (April 2013) – The Massachusetts Air National Guard transported, set up, and manned an emergency communications center, while Air Guard Security Forces cordoned

the crime scene and assisted the Massachusetts Transit Police in securing subway stations with armed and professionally trained Guard Airmen from the local community. These Guard Airmen provided order and security to a chaotic event, freeing local authorities to concentrate on securing the area and finding the bombing suspects. Additionally, Air Guard Religious Support Teams provided counseling and comfort to both private citizens and first responders.

- California Wildfires (August 2013) – Air Guard C-130s specially modified with Modular Aerial Fire Fighting Systems dropped over 211,000 gallons of fire suppressant, and the California Air National Guard's 234th Intelligence Squadron flew MQ-1 Predator remotely piloted aircraft over the fire area providing real-time, full-motion video and data analysis that was used to help direct and plan firefighting efforts.
- Southwest Border Operations – The Arkansas Air National Guard's 123rd Intelligence Squadron provided analysis of full-motion video from Air Guard RC-26 aircraft supporting U.S. Customs & Border Protection, Texas Rangers, and other civil authorities protecting our Southwest borders. This joint effort led to the seizure of over 53,000 lbs. of marijuana, 200+ lbs. of cocaine, and over 30,000 illegal individual border crossings.

- Eagle Vision – Alabama, California, Hawaii, and South Carolina Air National Guard units collected and analyzed unclassified commercial satellite images providing near real-time assistance to emergency management agencies coordinating firefighting, flood, hurricane, tornado, and other relief efforts in throughout the western U.S. and overseas including Typhoon Haiyan.

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 Alabama Air National Guard's 117th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing volunteered in August 1990 to deploy to Bahrain in support of support Operation DESERT SHIELD, little did they know they were on the vanguard of redefining the Air National Guard. Since then, the Air National Guard has evolved from a strategic reserve, called upon primarily during national emergencies, to an essential partner in the daily operations of the Total Air Force in all five core missions: air & space superiority; intelligence, surveillance, & reconnaissance; rapid global mobility; global strike, and command & control.

Last year, over 39,895 Air National Guard men and women deployed to 48 countries as part of the Total Air Force defense of U.S. national security interests. 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.

An Enduring Choice for Security Cooperation

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.

State Partnership Program. The National Guard State Partnership Program is Department of Defense program executed at the state level using both Army and Air National Guard expertise. The program is based upon each Combatant Commanders’ security cooperation objectives for the individual countries within their areas of responsibility. Today, 49 states, 2 territories, and the District of Columbia are partnered with 74 countries around the world. The specific objectives of each country program are a joint decision between the Combatant Commander, the partner nation, and the state National Guard; however, in general, the National Guard provides a consistent and enduring relationship with the partner nation, reinforcing deterrence, building capacity of U.S. and partner countries for internal and external defense,

and strengthening cooperation between countries. The program partners engage in training, assessments, and exercises in a broad range of security cooperation activities to include host nation homeland defense, disaster response, crisis management, interagency cooperation, and border/port/airport security.

The Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard are uniquely qualified for this program for a number of reasons. First, because Guard members often spend their entire military careers in the same unit or state, they are able to build long-term personal relationships with their partner country counterparts and provide program continuity. Second, the civilian and military skills of our citizen Soldiers and Airmen afford training opportunities outside the usual military defense training. For example, Air Guard members are also experienced in air security, constabulary operations, crisis management, disaster response, and a myriad of other civil support missions. Finally, Guard members exemplify civil-military relations and the role of the military in a democracy. Our citizen Soldiers and Airmen offer strong examples of a co-dependent, supportive relationship between the nation's political structures, civil society, and the military.

- Last year Guard Airmen worked 7,054 man-days, on 42 partnership engagements, in 13 countries including Uganda, Morocco, Jordan, Poland, India, South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Trinidad, Uruguay, Mexico, Honduras, and Colombia. Men and

women of the Air National Guard helped our Allies and partners improve their flying skills, equipment maintenance, aerial port operations, imagery analysis, and search & rescue techniques.

- The partnership between the state of South Dakota and Suriname, which began in 2006, is a great example of what our Air Guard men and women bring to the table in security cooperation. In 2013, led by one of our outstanding Air Guard chief master sergeants, the South Dakota Army and Air National Guard women participated in a “Women in the Military” workshop with members of the Surinamese armed force. The goal was to promote awareness, equality, and future opportunities for women in the military. As the partnership moves forward, they are broadening and deepening leadership and development while bolstering new opportunities for training and learning.

Foreign Military Training. In addition to the State Partnership Program, Air Guard members conduct flight training for foreign military aircrews through both formal schools at U.S. bases and Air Guard visits/exercises overseas. Guard Airmen trained 124 aircrew members last year from Lithuania, Norway, The Netherlands, Sweden, Iraq, Singapore, Denmark, Australia, Romania, India, Japan, Belgium, and Germany in C-130, F-16, and C-17 flight operations and maintenance.

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 surge force to a 21st 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; that we do 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.

Personnel

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 times of turmoil.

Recruiting & Retention. Some predicted that the move from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve would adversely affect our ability to recruit and retain quality people; however, the Air National Guard exceeded its authorized FY2013 end-strength of 105,700 by eight Airmen (105,708) through judicious personnel management. Last year, however, retention was disappointing as losses exceeded expectations by 15% (planned 9,072, actual 10,437). According to exit interviews, the

greatest challenge to retention was not repeated mobilizations but mission turmoil, i.e., the uncertainty caused when a unit loses its mission without a clear plan for the future. We have found the most effective counter to this challenge is the personal touch – making a concerted effort to ensure every member of the Guard family knows that we appreciate and value their contributions, and that the Air National Guard and U.S. Air Force leadership are working together to backfill their unit with a new mission.

To compensate for the unplanned increase in retirements and other departures, Air Guard Recruiters exceeded their recruiting goals by 4.5%, including an increase of 8% of prior-service personnel. But, as we move forward, the Air National Guard faces both significant opportunities and some challenges with its recruiting program. The opportunities come from the drawdown of Regular Air Force and other Services' manpower. In FY2015, the Regular Air Force end-strength will decline by approximately 16,700 Airmen. The Air Force will rely on a bevy of force management programs that include incentivizing early departure from active duty and releasing AFROTC cadets from their commitments. The Air National Guard is working with the Air Force to capitalize on these programs for possible Air Guard accessions. The challenge for the Air National Guard is that it too will be reducing its end-strength to meet budget targets. If the Air Guard is to help the nation sustain combat capability and retain access to the highly-trained personnel in which our

nation has made significant financial investment, the Air National Guard will need some flexibility in end-strength, at least temporarily.

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 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. In addition, 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.

- **Accountability.** In 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 2013, the Air Guard experienced 13 suicides, down from 22 in 2012, 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.

FY2015 President's Budget

Fiscal uncertainty is nothing new to the Air Guard, but this year, with the Budget Control Act, Continuing Resolution, Sequestration, and the Bipartisan Budget Act, it felt like we were stuck in "stop-n-go" traffic. The resulting cash flow challenges, government shutdown, and furloughs damaged morale and delayed Weapon System Sustainment programs, but the Air Guard was able to maintain its flying training schedule, meet operational commitments, and mitigate the impact upon its readiness.

The President's FY2015 Budget increases the number of Air National Guard F-16 fighter wings, adds eight KC-135 aerial refueling tanker aircraft, and eight C-130J tactical airlift aircraft to the Air Guard inventory. The Budget proposal, however, reduces Air National Guard end strength by 400 personnel in 2015 and retires 27 F-15C Eagles, the entire fleet of A-10 Warthog fighter aircraft, and six E-8 Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (J-STARS) aircraft. While the Bipartisan Budget Act provided welcomed relief, the steep glideslope of the defense budget combined with increasing personnel and equipment acquisition costs is forcing the U.S. Air Force to make very difficult tradeoffs between capability, capacity, and readiness.

No one wants to give up aircraft or people, but in order to ensure we have the best Air Force ready to defend this nation at home and

abroad within fiscal constraints, tough choices must be made. The Air National Guard worked closely with the Air Force leadership to mitigate the impact upon our Guard Airmen and develop a budget that complies with the Bipartisan Budget Act, lays the ground work to restoring Air Force readiness while preparing to meet future national security challenges, and ensures the Air National Guard remains a combat ready operational force.

Equipment. Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James explained the Air Force strategy in building the FY2015 budget, “we attempted to strike the delicate balance of a ready force today and a modern force tomorrow, while working to ensure the world’s best Air Force is the most capable at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayer.” The Air Force is sacrificing modernization of equipment (upgrading current equipment) and divesting older equipment to acquire the capabilities needed to defend against future challenges to U.S national security interests. The ANG, as the operator of much of that older or legacy equipment, has a slightly different challenge: we must make sure the older equipment lasts long enough to be traded in; not only lasts, but is capable of successfully accomplishing the mission if called upon in the intervening years. The Air Guard is not looking to make a Cadillac out of our old Fords, but we simply want to make sure our old Fords are up to the tasks of responding to international and domestic emergencies. For example, there are currently 139 H-model C-130s in the ANG inventory

that do not have the air traffic control systems required to operate in much of U.S. and European airspace by 2020. If we do nothing, these aircraft will sit on the ramp, essentially useless, when there is an emergency requiring rapid airlift.

Military Construction (MILCON) Projects. The Air National Guard budget proposal for FY2015 includes \$94,600,000 for military construction projects and planning and design. The Air Guard gave priority to MILCON projects supporting new missions and Air Force directed mission re-alignments; in fact, all the major MILCON projects in the FY2015 budget, \$78.6M, support new missions. While this policy has caused current missions to suffer, 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). NGREA funding is extremely important to Air National Guard force structure management and domestic capability response. The program begins at the unit level as operators from each weapon system meet to identify weapon system requirements to improve the Air National Guard's capability to respond to Combatant Commanders' needs. The Air National Guard FY2014 NGREA funding strategy directed 70% towards critical modernization projects on legacy major weapon systems and 30% towards improving domestic response capabilities. In FY2015, the Air

National Guard seeks to modernize the F-15C Eagle's self-protection suite to improve its survivability in combat, to upgrade the propulsion system on our LC-130 "ski birds" to improve their ability to support the National Science Foundation mission in Antarctica and eliminate the requirement for Jet Assisted Take-Off (JATO) rockets, and modernize the electronic systems on the HH-60G rescue helicopters to improve search and rescue capability for both combat and domestic operations.

Building Tomorrow's Air National Guard – Four Pillars of the Total Force

The U.S. is unique in its ability monitor world events and to shape those events through global power projection. This ability is dependent upon airpower and its inherent domains of air, space, and cyber. Whether showing resolve by flying through self-proclaimed controlled airspace, or supporting friends with reconnaissance and surveillance of potential enemy movements, or delivering critical relief supplies to disaster areas, our nation requires an Air Force that is ready *now* to go anywhere and succeed at whatever is asked of it. We must ensure our Air Force does not fall victim to post-war apathy even as it struggles with the near-term challenges of sustaining readiness against declining budgets, weighed against the need to continually improve the capabilities to provide Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power. To face these challenges, I believe the Total Air Force must continue to invest

and focus its efforts on what I refer to as the *Four Pillars of the Total Force – Standards; Inspections; Operational Engagements; and Resources.*

The men and women of the Total Air Force must continue to maintain the highest personal and professional standards centered on our Core Values: Integrity First, Service Before Self; and Excellence In All We Do. Standards are not simply the rules by which we do our jobs, but how we act everyday – the pride with which we wear our uniforms, the way we treat others. The men and women in the U.S. armed services must be held to a higher standard than our fellow citizens because the trust our nation places upon us is considerably greater. It is our duty to sustain that trust by maintaining higher personal and professional standards, on and off duty. Put simply: We must do the right thing all the time.

Inspections, the second of Four Pillars of the Total Force, are critical to Total Air Force readiness. Inspections are designed to measure how well we perform our missions. They improve teamwork and unit cohesion. They allow us to measure ourselves and provide the feedback necessary for constant improvement. Inspections are also an opportunity to evaluate the rules, processes, and procedures we use to accomplish our missions. Finally, by ensuring all components of the Total Air Force use common language and procedures, inspections are the link between Standards and the third element of the four pillars: Operational Engagements.

All three components of the Total Air Force must continue to participate in Operational Engagements, be they exercises, routine deployments, or crisis responses. Operational Engagements help us to ensure the three air components continue to operate as One Air Force -- ensuring we all speak the same language, maintain the same standards, and operate with the same procedures. Total Air Force Operational Engagements alone are not enough; however, we must continue to hone our capabilities to operate with our sister services, allies, and friendly forces. Finally, "Operational Engagements" are a mindset. It is continuing to think as the warriors we have become. It is the realization that every time we go to work, we are preparing ourselves and our units to successfully answer our nation's call.

Resources, the fourth Pillar, are fundamental in everything we do. We must have the necessary Resources to succeed, be it funding, manpower, equipment, or spare parts. While others may be responsible for appropriating and allocating the necessary Resources for us to maintain Standards, conduct Inspections, and participate in Operational Engagements, it is every Airman's responsibility to ensure the Resources are used effectively and efficiently. Additionally, the Air National Guard performs missions in every core function of the Air Force. Therefore, it is only proper that the Air Guard recapitalize on par with the Active Air Force.

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. It also decided to increase reliance on the Air Reserve Components by cutting their end-strength and force structure proportionally less than the reductions in the Active Component. These decisions, 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, we have the responsibility to ensure that the Total Air Force can meet today's defense commitments while waiting for tomorrow's capabilities.