

Latvian joint terminal attack controllers and joint fires observer perform tactical movements for close air support training mission with C Company, 125<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, Wyoming, Michigan, July 28, 2015, at Grayling Air Gunnery Range during Northern Strike 15 (U.S. Air National Guard/Scott Thompson)



# The Operational National Guard

## A Unique and Capable Component of the Joint Force

By Joseph L. Lengyel

Since the attacks on 9/11, we have seen a confluence of factors shaping our security environment that presents challenges much different from the past. Globalization, the rise of near-peer powers and regional actors, sociological changes, and extreme weather are some of the most significant factors that make our security environment dynamic and complex,

both at home and abroad, with the pace of change accelerating.

Major power competition will continue as states such as Russia and China test longstanding international customs and engage in activities that are just short of conflict, yet whose actions provoke, disrupt, destabilize, and test the limits of the West and its allies. Other states such as Iran and North Korea continue to threaten the Middle East and Asia Pacific, respectively, and pursue technologies and capabilities that threaten not only neighboring countries and our allies but also our citizens in the homeland.

Violent extremist organizations continue to persist and evolve as their capabilities and tactics become increasingly more unconventional and as they weaponize technology and commercially available materials to add new threat dimensions that could bypass our traditional defenses in unexpected ways.

Demographic shifts also affect the challenges we will face in the foreseeable future. The trend toward greater urbanization and megacities makes populations more sensitive to disruptions, especially as they rely on just-in-time logistics, and our Services are dependent on the information grid. Furthermore, the increase in the number and intensity of natural disasters challenge the capacity of civil authorities.

### Warfight First, Homeland Always

As it moves into the future, the U.S. military will remain a key instrument in maintaining security and stability around the globe and here in the homeland. How the joint force adapts to the requirements of that environment is critically important. It will require a military that can rapidly surge forces

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Soldiers from Charlie Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 69<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, New York Army National Guard, act as opposing force during final battle of Exercise Talisman Saber 17, July 19, 2017, at Shoalwater Bay Training Area, Queensland, Australia (U.S. Army National Guard/Michael Tietjen)

overseas, protect the homeland from emerging threats, and can work hand in hand with our allies, partners, and a multitude of governmental and nongovernmental organizations. Maintaining an operational National Guard, which is approximately 20 percent of the joint force, is essential to this end.

As the combat reserve of the Army and Air Force, the National Guard and Reserve component will be a critical part to any joint campaign. Since the first Gulf War in 1991, and even more so since 9/11, the National Guard has evolved into an operational warfighting organization, designed with a balance of combat and enabling units that largely mirrors the Active component. It has provided the joint force with the ability to rapidly expand its power overseas via the authorities and readiness resources granted by Congress. The capabilities and experience we gain from combat and

operational deployments are utilized here at home and have transformed the Guard into a ready and capable force. As the first military responder in the homeland, the National Guard has the necessary unique authorities, capabilities, and partnerships to ensure we are ready for the worst night in America. During my time as the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, my focus will remain with our three primary mission sets: warfighting, securing the homeland, and building enduring partnerships. These three fundamental missions will guide us as we develop the future National Guard.

### Warfighting

During most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the National Guard served as a strategic reserve, ready to be mobilized for large-scale conflicts. But in the new security environment, the Nation needs a Guard that is rapidly scalable and accessible.

Both the Army and Air Force will rely more heavily on the National Guard as the character of war continues to evolve. The operational Guard of today has an expectation that it will be utilized and deployed. Once mobilized and trained, the Guard is interchangeable with the Active component, providing the joint force with greater capacity and capability for the fight.

Thousands of National Guard members serve around the globe on any given day. From a current average of 18,000 mobilized, I believe we can judiciously increase the number of mobilized members over the next several years to support combatant commands around the world and augment Active forces in countering threats wherever they exist. The right level can be maintained if these increased mobilizations are recurring, rotational, sustainable, and predictable with acceptable dwell times.

Furthermore, deploying the Guard using mission-assigned readiness, whereby units are trained to the required readiness level, can also be an efficient use of training resources. Leveraging these real-world operations, along with high-end training exercises such as Combat Training Center rotations and Red Flag, affords the Guard challenging training and global employment opportunities that not only build readiness in the Guard but also preserves readiness in the Active components. Additionally, programs such as the Army's Associated Units Pilot Program, a multicomponent initiative, and the Air Force and Air National Guard's integrated and multicomponent associate wings ensure we are fighting as a total force. These mobilizations, multicomponent programs, and training opportunities are fundamental for developing leaders and retaining unit members while also providing predictable and sustainable mobilization cycles that maintain an operational Guard.

## Securing the Homeland

The National Guard plays a unique role in the homeland. From the Air Guard protecting our skies from 15 of the 16 Aerospace Control Alert sites, to Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Enhanced Response Force Packages (CERFP) ready to battle the effects of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), to our engineers repairing devastated roads from floods and hurricanes and our aircraft bringing lifesaving supplies, the National Guard is the Nation's primary military domestic crisis response force, ready to augment America's first responders.

America has benefited from its geographic location to defend the homeland with friendly neighbors to the north and south. Two large oceans to our east and west serve as natural barriers that have made it difficult for hostile powers to attack. During the Cold War, U.S. forces primarily had to contend with the ballistic missile and aerospace threat from one country. However, we no longer enjoy this safe haven due to new technologies and weapons that could reach the heart of America.

These new weapons, once limited to major powers, have found their way into states such as North Korea and Iran, where work on ballistic missile technology continues today at a rapid pace. Proliferation of nuclear technology, biological and chemical weapons, and high-yield explosive devices has increased the threat of a WMD attack on the United States. Delivery mechanisms for these kinds of weapons have also multiplied, and our adversaries continue to probe for weaknesses in our defense. In any future conflict, our homeland could become part of the global kinetic battlespace, with strategic effects coming from such domains as space and cyberspace. We must be able to respond rapidly to widespread disruptions to our critical infrastructure and posture the country for recovery and resiliency. Perhaps most important, we need the processes and plans in place to work with local, state, and Federal authorities to deal with crises at the right level to provide the necessary defense and resiliency capabilities for the homeland.

The National Guard's role in the homeland was greatly enhanced with the elevation of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau (CNGB) to become a full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 2012. The CNGB was also given the responsibility of being the principal advisor to the Secretary of Defense, through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on matters involving non-Federalized Guard forces. This new designation provides the CNGB with the ability to ensure seamless support during times of crisis when coordination is required with the states and North American Aerospace Defense Command/U.S. Northern Command (NORAD/USNORTHCOM). This coordination is particularly important at the beginning stages of an emergency when a clear delineation between Federal and state lines of responsibility may not be evident.

In addition to 9/11, Hurricane Katrina was one of the most significant events that shaped the National Guard's capability in the homeland and demonstrated the agility and resilience of our force. In 2005, while approximately 79,000 Guard Soldiers and Airmen were deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan,

Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast and roughly 50,000 Guard members were called to respond. Concepts such as the Dual-Status Commander (DSC) and Emergency Management Compacts (EMACs) had been instituted on a limited scale prior to Katrina, but it was not until Katrina that the importance of cooperation among the several states and Federal Government was fully realized. EMACs allowed states to help other states with resources and manpower. Additionally, creating a DSC who reported both to the state governor and the Federal military chain of command achieved the necessary unity of effort while giving local authorities control over their own resources. During this time, we also improved our domestic command and control structures by establishing joint force headquarters in each of the 54 states and territories. Improvements were made in the ability of these headquarters to communicate and share information with each other and the national command structures.

Today, whether working in a Federal (Title 10) or non-Federal status (Title 32 and state Active duty), the National Guard is able to leverage its unique authorities to provide both essential domestic response as well as defense capabilities should the homeland ever experience the worst night in America. The Guard builds its readiness by training for its Title 10 missions and has the capability to deploy anywhere in the world. Concurrently, Guard members have built-in responsiveness in their non-Federal status and are always ready for contingencies at home. Both fit squarely within the National Military Strategy. In addition to the 18,000 Guard members Federally mobilized in Title 10 status, more than 4,000 conduct missions in Title 32 (state controlled) status on any given day.

One of our key advantages is that geographically, the National Guard is present in approximately 2,600 communities. Leveraging their overseas experience from the warfight, our citizen Soldiers and Airmen return to their communities where they take back their readiness, capabilities, and skills to



F-16 Fighting Falcon from Ohio Air National Guard's 180<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing in Swanton, Ohio, stands ready for training exercises at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida, February 2, 2017 (U.S. Air National Guard/Joseph Boyer)

defend and secure our nation's skies and borders—and remain prepared for simultaneous contingencies that may occur at home and abroad.

Units such as the Army National Guard's 117<sup>th</sup> Space Battalion and Colorado and Alaska's missile defense battalions are protecting the homeland from the evolving dangers associated with the space domain and from long-range missile capabilities that could reach the homeland. In cyberspace, the Guard's cyber warriors are situated across the 50 states, our territories, and the District of Columbia, supporting the National Guard's and U.S. Cyber Command's cyber missions. The Guard is expected to grow to 43 Cyber Units across 34 states by fiscal year 2019, in addition to the 54 Defensive Cyberspace Operations Elements located in all of the states, territories, and the District of Columbia.

Given our unique authorities to work with law enforcement agencies, the

National Guard plays a large role combatting transnational criminal activity such as drug-trafficking. The Guard's Counterdrug Program is closely tied to the Department of Defense (DOD) and Office of National Drug Control Policy. Our Soldiers and Airmen play a vital role in the detection, interdiction, disruption, and curtailment of drug-traffickers and its related national security threats to the homeland.

On the CBRN front, nearly 14,000 Guard Soldiers and Airmen comprise approximately 60 percent of the DOD's CBRN response capabilities. The National Guard's capabilities include 17 CERFPs and 10 regionally aligned Homeland Response Forces. Should these units ever be needed, we will be able to react quickly and efficiently.

In this domestic threat environment, national defense and homeland security are a shared responsibility between the Federal Government and the several

states. The National Guard is the military organization best positioned for synchronizing state and Federal responses to ensure there are no unintended gaps. The Guard is evolving and adapting as it continues to play a more prominent role in the defense and security of the homeland.

### **Building Enduring Partnerships**

The joint force cannot fight America's wars or defend the homeland without its partners. Allies and partners, at home and abroad, are what increase our strength and resiliency during times of crisis and give us an asymmetric advantage over our adversaries. During the major wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in our recent wars against al Qaeda and the so-called Islamic State, the United States has worked in concert with allies and partners to achieve its objectives. When putting an economic value on our partnerships and alliances, the aggregate gross domestic product for

the United States and its European and Pacific allies is \$44.4 trillion, with just over \$1 trillion in military spending. This level of economic power among voluntary alliances is unparalleled in world history and underwrites global security.

Almost 25 years ago, the National Guard began its State Partnership Program (SPP) to assist the countries of Eastern Europe reform their defense sector, improve preparedness, and develop leaders. What began as a program of 10 partnerships has spread across five continents, and will grow to include 79 nations in the near future. We have witnessed the fruits of these relationships, which are built on trust, the exchange of ideas, and mutual respect. Our partnerships are located in strategic regions around the world and support the transition of many nations from security consumers to global security providers. The SPP builds trust and friendships and assures allies around the world.

The National Guard's emphasis on partnerships did not begin with SPP. Our history as an organization controlled by the several states naturally led us to build partnerships with state agencies and officials. In times of disaster, the Guard supports first responders to provide the necessary relief and aid that communities need. When there is disorder in communities, the Guard is called on to support local and state law enforcement to restore peace and guarantee the rights of citizens. We are a part of multiagency integrated playbooks that governors use in planning for and responding to crises, whether it is a natural disaster, civil disorder, or an attack from an adversary abroad. This integration with law enforcement and first responders also extends to the Federal Government, where we work together with such organizations as the Department of Homeland Security, which includes the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The National Guard is a critical component of the National Response Plan and works closely with NORAD/USNORTHCOM in defense of the homeland. The Guard instinctively takes a collaborative and

multiagency approach to all of joint force problem sets. This is how we do business.

### **The Minuteman: Innovation Is in Our DNA**

Our three core missions—warfighting, securing the homeland, and building enduring partnerships—could not be accomplished without our citizen warriors, symbolized by the Minuteman. Our Soldiers and Airmen come from individual states, unique communities, and have been answering the call ever since the first militia was founded in Massachusetts in 1636. While the underlying principles of the Minuteman remain constant, ready to defend our communities and the Nation, the Minutemen of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are a premier force that is a key component of the joint force. They are citizens who want to serve, but also want to go beyond and contribute to businesses and their communities in other ways. They are adaptive and innovative, often bringing diverse and new ideas on how to accomplish different missions.

While the past 16 years of war forever have changed the National Guard into an operational force, the U.S. military deferred much of its research and development as we prosecuted the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. During this period, the rest of the world did not remain idle, and as a result, our technological advantage has eroded. As we develop our next set of competitive advantages for the military, which will rely on American innovation and technology, the Guard will play a major role researching, developing, and fielding innovative systems, processes, and operational concepts. Innovation is inherently in the DNA of the National Guard because the scientists, engineers, and computer experts we see in the private sector—developing the game-changing innovations that ensure America maintains its military superiority—are the same individuals who have a military life serving in the Guard. As we look for ways to make our military more agile and technologically superior, the Guard's citizen-warriors will lend their skills and talents and play a critical role in developing the force of the future.

### **Conclusion**

The operational National Guard is a unique component of the U.S. military. As a combat reserve of the Army and Air Force, the Guard can significantly surge the size of the joint force in a short period of time to deter major powers or conduct smaller operational deployments when required. The ability to rapidly expand and contract the joint force is an extraordinary capability for our nation. At the same time, the skills and experience that our Guard members gain from these operations can be utilized here at home.

Our members are a part of the total Army and Air Force, but have unique and distinct roles in the homeland, which is strengthened by our business model. We are the military force securing the homeland, and proximity to our communities allows us to be the military's first responders when it comes to homeland defense and security. We build resiliency into the homeland. We make bad days better, no matter the cause of the catastrophe. With the capability to easily transition from different state and Federal statuses and authorities, the National Guard empowers the President and governors to address each crisis at the appropriate level.

None of our missions are accomplished without the members of the National Guard—citizen Soldiers and Airmen, along with their families and employers, who commit to serving the Nation, states, and communities alike. In many places across the Nation, we are *the* face of the military. When you call out the Guard, you are calling America. JFQ