

# Transformation of the Reserve Component

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The “Transformation of the Reserve Component,” the title of our panel, is interesting but should not necessarily be examined in a vacuum, as the transformation of the reserve component cannot be generally separated from the transformation of the Department of Defense (DoD).

When President Bush was first elected, he articulated his goal for DoD transformation. Since that time, efforts have continued to reach that goal, even in the midst of on-going combat operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Some have questioned whether these efforts—transformation and combat operations—should be conducted simultaneously, but I would argue that it is the only approach we can take in today’s world.

I have heard Ms. Mackenzie Eaglen, a Senior Policy National Security Analyst at the Heritage Foundation, suggest the Army National Guard employ a Stryker Brigade Combat Team in their efforts to reorganize, modernize and equip in lieu of heavy brigades or heavy battalions. Those of us who currently serve or who have served in the Army know that the size and shape of the forces used in combat operations, war, are made up of the forces you currently have. Although Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was criticized when he stated, “you go to war with the army you have, not the army you want,” he was speaking the truth. In hindsight, it’s easy to say ‘shoulda, coulda, woulda,’ in how we approached, conducted and continue to conduct our operations abroad, but we are where we are. Being from the ‘we are where we are’ school of management, I believe we cannot go back, but must instead move on from where we are now.

The DoD has adopted and now lives by the “total force concept,” which means having the right forces for the right capabilities for the right operations at any given time. What many may not understand is that the National Guard and the Reserve Components which include the Army and the Air Force National Guard, as well as the Service Title 10 Reserve Components are, in fact, fully integrated into that total force concept. Therefore, the Reserve Component is part of those right forces and are employed for their right capabilities to be used for the right operations at any given time.

The National Guard bore a significant burden of the early deployments into Afghanistan and to Iraq. This was done on purpose, as at that time we went with the ready forces we had to deploy—and the National Guard forces were ready. Since that time, while continuing to be integrally involved, they been scaled back considerably in terms of the numbers and percentages of the deployed forces. But that is not to say that, at some point in the future, the National Guard might again be deployed as a considerable percent of the forces deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

During the same time frame of involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq, we were also responding to the 9/11 attacks on the United States and concentrating on the development of Homeland Defense and Homeland Security operations inside the United States. Some question the difference between these two concepts: Homeland Security and Homeland Defense, so I will try to explain, rather than simply define the two and I’ll do so in terms of how I explained it to the 9/11 Commission.

One of the commissioners asked me to explain, in plain english, the difference. Here is how I attempted to explain using the attacks of 9/11 but within the current organization of our government: Preventing somebody, one of the hijackers, from getting into the country, preventing them from overstaying their visa, preventing them from getting through the airport security, preventing them from getting through the cockpit door and preventing them from hijacking the aircraft in order to take it over—these functions handled principally by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). They constitute

“homeland security,” principally and functionally law enforcement functions.

“Homeland Defense,” on the other hand, is the military defense of the United States against external threats and aggression, such as guided missiles which have been captured by some hijackers who turn commercial aircraft into guided weapons aimed at the people of the United States. This is the mission of the DoD—to defend against these type threats. Performing this function is also a test of means, i.e. who has the means to perform the function. Homeland Defense is a mission of the DoD because we’re the only department with the training, personnel and equipment to deal such threats or situations. Now, there is a sort of sliding scale where there are air marshals onboard aircraft who might be able to retake control and capture the hijackers, but ultimately, if military force is required to defend the United States, it falls under the purview of Homeland Defense, and that resides within the DoD.

The United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) was established for the purpose of commanding the active duty military forces should they be employed inside the territorial limits of the United States or inside the rest of their area of operations. USNORTHCOM must plan for scenarios, identify gaps in our ability to defend the nation, and close those gaps. I believe in this planning, USNORTHCOM, or more specifically our government, should have 50% of our total force available at any time.

We also developed a Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support. We recognized that part of Homeland Defense is the required support to civil authorities—the traditional role of the United States military in domestic affairs. Within that support, we have a focused reliance on the Reserve Component, in particular the National Guard, because the National Guard is comprised of the forces that, on a day to day basis, are deployed by and in the United States.

The Guard will tell you that they are in every town and every city—and I believe this is a fair statement. My in-laws reside in the small town of Chester, Vermont; a town with a population of 300. There is an

Air National Guard armory right there in Chester, Vermont. So yes, I believe they may be everywhere.

Over the years, the Guard has served well the interests of the United States and the interests of the American people. Governor James Gilmore and I are in virulent agreement as to the role of the National Guard and the role of the military domestically. We recognize that the founding fathers purposely set the system up so that domestic law and order, domestic security, and the security of the civilian population inside the United States are vested in the hands of civilian authorities. To do that, we rely on civilian law enforcement agencies and also the National Guard. Traditionally, the National Guard is the militia of each of the states or territories called into service by their governor if needed, by the President for deployment within the United States under certain circumstances, and called into service as part of the strategic reserve in the armed forces deployed overseas. The decision to call up or use the National Guard is not done lightly, nor without due consideration—the governors and the President will weigh various options and paths before determining the need for the Guard.

I'm a veteran of the Vietnam War. Those of you who remember that time know that our government made a conscious decision at the end of the Vietnam War to move certain military capacities and capabilities into the Reserve Component. This was a conscious decision to help ensure that the United States should not engage in future wars unless it was prepared to use all its national resources, including the reserves. So we purposefully moved the Army Reserve, Air Force Reserve, all the Reserve Components, and certain capabilities needed to go to war into the National Guard. In retrospect, was this the right way to do it? I don't know, but it's something that will be considered as we continue to transform the DoD, including the Reserve Component.

As previously stated, there is now a Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support. One of the components or tenets of this strategy is our three concept-approach of: Lead, Support and Enable. The DoD and the federal and active military forces will always take the 'lead' in the military defense of the United States. One notable exception is how we depend on the Reserve Component, particularly the Air National Guard, to fulfill the air defense mission of the United States.

Since 9/11, 90-some percent of the air defense, about 32,000 sorties, have been flown by the Air National Guard. That's in addition to the deployment of Air National Guard forces overseas into Iraq and Afghanistan. Much of our air power is, in fact, in the Reserve and the National Guard.

The other part of that strategic construct is to 'support.' We recognize that the DoD can be called upon and will be called upon, under certain circumstances, to provide support to civilian authorities particularly during times often described as, 'when civilian capability is overwhelmed,' or 'when it is exhausted,' or 'when it is expended.' Whatever term is used, the active duty military forces will be available to be called upon when and if civilian authorities deem it necessary. Those civilian authorities are principally the state governors of the United States, as their sovereign authority rests under our constitutional framework. It is also worth noting, our military personnel, including all those within the reserve component, swear their oaths to the Constitution of the United States—not to any individual person or governing body. So there's never a question as to why we're doing something or how we're doing it.

The last part of our strategy is what we call 'enable.' Through this concept, DoD tried to enable our partners, both our overseas partners and domestic partners to be prepared to prevent, respond to, mitigate and recover from emergency situations. Their abilities to do what needs to be done impacts how and when the DoD is called upon; and to be candid, we in the DoD prefer not to be called upon, especially when we might otherwise be engaged. In other words, we want our partners to be able to do what needs to be done. And we have many specific programs designed for that.

Governor Gilmore and I agree on the necessity of building up the capabilities of state and local first responders. Just as all politics are local, all emergencies and all domestic activities are really local, as they are the first people on the line. Governor Gilmore has also discussed the idea of specialized military units deployed to support civilian authorities, in particular when responding to incidents involving Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Congress, in its wisdom, has directed the DoD to provide 55 WMD Civil Support Teams around

the country—one for each state and territory and two for California. While these are small units of the National Guard, they are active-duty, full-time and paid for by the federal government. They can assist state and local governments in assessing the consequences of a WMD attack. If you have to go up a tier on those emergency responses, in particular with WMD, you get into Joint Task Force Civil Support with a component command in USNORTHCOM. Together, these form a ‘tiered-response’ to include federal, state and local authorities.

The main message that I would give is that reserve components are going to be transformed just as the active components will be transformed. People tend to concentrate on an organization, equipment and ‘things.’ In reality transformation is about thinking how we do business, how we do planning, how we respond and then about making sure that we respond with no more force than is ever necessary for the circumstance.