



National Guard Talking Points

FY15 Budget

Issue:

The Army will submit, in their FY15 budget request, a plan for the National Guard that will affect:

Aviation

- Transfer all 192 Apaches from the Army National Guard to Active Army Combat Aviation Brigades, affecting 9 states including AZ, ID, MO, MS, NC, PA, SC, TX and UT.
- Transfer 105 Lakotas, half of the Army National Guard fleet, to the Active Duty flight training school at Ft. Rucker, affecting most states.
- Divest the Army National Guard of all 30 OH-58D helicopters, affecting TN.
- Give the ARNG 111 older UH-60 Blackhawks in return

Force Structure

- Downsize ARNG Brigade Combat Teams from 28 to 22.
- Take Combat Aviation Brigades down from 10 to 6.
- Remove all Attack Aviation Battalions, from 8 to 0.

End Strength

- Reduce Army National Guard end strength down to 315,000, a level unseen since the 1950s and 35,000 fewer soldiers than pre-9/11 levels.

Impacts:

- The Army National Guard will lose all attack and reconnaissance capabilities.
 - As the primary combat reserve for the Army, this would represent an unprecedented change in the National Guard's historic role as a dual-missioned, augmentable force.
 - Putting all attack helicopters into the Army provides no depth (reversibility), no reach back support and increases costs.
 - The Total Army will lose its most experienced Apache pilots and maintainers, and it eliminates a place for active-component pilots and maintainers to serve should they leave the active service
 - The removal of all Attack Aviation helicopters is shortsighted. Using the large, heavily armed AH-64 Apache as a "scout" is like using an Abrams tank to scout for a ground force.
 - At varying points in the GWOT, the ARNG provided approximately 50% of the Army's combat power overseas.
- During the last 12 years, Congress and the Army have invested billions of dollars in the National Guard to be trained and equipped to be interchangeable with the Army.
- The changes the Army plan advocates for will impact all 54 states, territories and the District of Columbia, including job loss, economic turbulence, significant risk for future conflicts and protection at home, and loss of capabilities to states and national security.
- Significant unprogrammed costs similar to the promised savings the BRAC process promotes. The turbulence associated with these changes comes with costs that bring the savings estimates into question.
- Once gone, these capabilities are much more time-consuming, difficult and expensive to recreate.
- Proposed cuts may not be enough if the budget issues continue and military personnel costs are set to double by 2025.
- National Guard end-strength, force structure and aviation reductions are not a long-term solution for savings.
- The major concern is that this decision carried little analysis, as was the case last year when the Air Force was rebuffed by Congress after it proposed major force structure changes.

The National Guard is the Solution to Defense Cuts:

- After 12 years of war fighting side-by-side, the National Guard is best led, best trained and best equipped force it has ever been.

- The National Guard is ready, accessible, and trains to the same standards as the Army, making them interchangeable.
- The National Guard has two distinct missions, and both must be considered in making future decisions
 - An augmentable reserve component to the active forces in time of war
 - Responding in the homeland to domestic emergencies
- According to OSD Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) and the recent Reserve Forces Policy Board (RDPB) study, the National Guard is significantly more cost effective over their lifecycle at approximately 1/3 of the cost when not mobilized and approximately the same cost or less when mobilized.
- The National Guard offer opportunities to save money while sustaining defense capacity and capability by keeping tens of thousands more soldiers in our Total Army, housed in the National Guard and Reserves, while remaining well inside current cost constraints.
- The nation absolutely needs full-time Army troops for rapid response to future contingencies, however, for any sizable conflict, Guard troops can be ready in time. In the meantime, while we're not at war, it's much cheaper to keep part-time Guard members on the payroll and utilize them "as needed".
- Any recommendations involving the Guard have no impact on the Army's plans for their force or the Army Reserves. Those decisions should be left up to them.
- The Chief of the National Guard Bureau and all 54 disagree with the Army's plan and have offered alternatives that absorb the necessary amount of defense cuts.
- It doesn't make fiscal or business sense to cut your least expensive asset.
- Keeping the cuts fair and equitable is not the point, or at least it shouldn't be. What matters is getting the most combat power that the nation can afford.
- Any proposed solutions regarding the National Guard should include full participation from the National Guard Bureau and the states. Current pre-decisional budget discussions were briefed to the Guard, but it would be inaccurate to say that they fully participated or supported it.
- We don't need to jump too quickly into decisions with decades-long impacts on our Soldiers and the 54 states, territories and the District. Six weeks of work by the Army, if implemented as proposed, would have decades-long impact on the Guard's aviation force structure.
- Many of our defense allies, including Great Britain, Germany, and Australia are strengthening their reserve forces for greater future utilization.

The Way Ahead:

- Request the analysis for these decisions.
- Support the House bill H.R. 3930 - "National Commission on the Structure of the Army Act of 2014", which:
 - Prohibits the Army from using FY15 funds to divest, retire, or transfer, or prepare to divest, retire, or transfer, any aircraft of the Army assigned to units of the Army National Guard as of January 15, 2014.
 - Prohibits the Army from using FY15 funds to reduce personnel below the authorized end strength levels of 350,000 for the Army National Guard as of September 30, 2014.
 - Establishes the National Commission on the Structure of the Army