



Caught Off Guard

*The Link Between Our National Security
and Our National Guard*

Lawrence J. Korb and Sean E. Duggan
May 2007

CAUGHT OFF GUARD

The Link Between Our National Security and Our National Guard

Lawrence J. Korb and Sean E. Duggan

Center for American Progress

May 2007

“What we’re working out of right now is a situation where we have absolutely piecemealed our force to death.”

– Lt. Gen. Clyde A. Vaughn, Chief of the Army National Guard, November, 2006

“The dual status National Guard, with both a state and federal mission, lacks the necessary equipment and other resources necessary to fulfill the assigned tasks. A critical issue that may be lost in the discussion is the lack of resources for the Guard and the Reserve and diminution of readiness as they return to their states and local communities from Iraq and Afghanistan.”

– Melvin Laird, former Secretary of Defense, May, 2007

Overview

Four years ago this month, President Bush declared the end of major combat operations in Iraq. Today, the administration is completing its latest escalation by sending an additional 30,000 troops into what the National Intelligence Estimate of February 2007 describes as a civil war. However controversial this escalation may be, proponents and opponents of the war have reached a consensus on an equally important issue: nearly six years of war in Afghanistan and over four years in Iraq has pushed the total Army (Active, Guard, and Reserve) to the breaking point.

The crisis in our nation's active armed forces has received a great deal of attention, but the corresponding crisis in the Guard and Reserves, the reserve component of our military, has gone largely unnoticed. Yet to maintain the occupation in Iraq and our commitment to Afghanistan, the Pentagon has had to rely increasingly on reserve forces. In 2005 alone, 14 of the Guard's 38 brigades (including nine of the Army National Guard's 16 Enhanced brigades) were deployed either to Iraq or Afghanistan; seven Guard brigades served in Iraq and another two served in Afghanistan—for a total of more than 35,000 combat troops. In 2005, 46 percent (or about 60,000) of the troops in Iraq were from the reserve component.¹

The Department of Defense has recently announced plans to deploy four more Guard brigades—more than 13,000 troops—to Iraq within the next year, shortening their time between deployments to meet the demands of the administration.² Lt. General Steven Blum, the chief of the National Guard, summarized the situation when he said the Guard is “in an even more dire situation than the active Army, but both have the same symptoms; I just have a higher fever.”³

The current predicament of the Army National Guard reflects the changing role of the force itself—shifting the reserve component's dual-purpose balance between domestic commitments and overseas imperatives decisively toward the latter as the Pentagon struggles to maintain high levels of ground forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. The heavy reliance on the Army National Guard, its combat units (Enhanced Separate Brigades) in particular, for overseas operations represents a fundamental change from the Guard's planned role as a strategic reserve force whose wartime function was to deploy in the later stages of a major conflict if needed.

Ground troop levels in both theaters of war could not be sustained at the current rate without the numbers and skills provided by the men and women of the Army National Guard. Continued heavy use of Guard forces, however, has raised concerns about whether it can successfully perform both its domestic and international missions effectively.

As the Guard increasingly assumes the role of the active Army's operational reserve, what consequences will there be for domestic contingencies and homeland security? In a previous report, "Beyond the Call of Duty," we discussed the use of active brigades since September 11. This report will do the same for the 16 Enhanced Brigades of the Army National Guard. After clarifying the scope of the overuse of the reserve component, we will analyze the consequences for national security and homeland defense and then outline recommendations to ensure that the Army's strategy and future plans for the Guard enhance the security of the American people at home and abroad.

Overused and Overstretched

When the all-volunteer force was created, the National Guard and Reserve were designed to act as a strategic reserve for the active component, which would serve as the ready force. The reserve component was meant to act as a bridge to conscription should a protracted conflict occur. With the Pentagon straining to keep force levels high in Iraq, the Guard and Reserve are being used as an operational reserve, alternating deployments with the active force. The nation's current reliance on the Guard to fight two major ground wars is unprecedented. Since 2001:

- Every Enhanced Brigade has been deployed overseas at least once and two have already been deployed twice.

- Eleven have deployed to Iraq, three to Afghanistan, and two to the Balkans. Currently two of the Enhanced Brigades are in Iraq and one is in Afghanistan—a brigade combat team from the Minnesota Guard has been in Iraq since March 2006 and will not return home until this summer.
- All told, more than 417,000 National Guard and Reservists, or about 80 percent of the members of the Guard and Reserve, have been deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, with an average of 18 months per mobilization. Of these, more than 84,200, or 20 percent, have been deployed more than once.⁴

The president's latest escalation has forced the Pentagon to recall to active duty several thousand Guard and Reserve personnel that have already served in Iraq and Afghanistan. To do this, the Bush administration announced in January that it was revising rules that limited call-ups of Guard members. The Pentagon's previous policy limited involuntary mobilization of Guard members to no more than 24 months every five years.

Units that are scheduled to be deployed within the next year include:

- The 39th Infantry Brigade from Arkansas, which returned from Iraq in March 2005 after a one-year tour in country and 18 months on active duty. It is rescheduled to go to Iraq in December of this year, about two and a half years after return-

The Reserve Component

The total Army consists of about 1.1 million men and women. About half of the people are on active duty and the other half are in the selected reserve. The selected reserve or reserve component consists of the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve. The authorized end strength of the Guard is 350,000 and the reserves, 200,000. The Guard is organized into separate combat units, (divisions, brigades) while the reserves are organized into combat support units (intelligence, civil affairs).

Enhanced Brigades

The Army National Guard currently consists of 34 brigades compared with 38 before the beginning of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and will decline to 28 by 2012. Each (for the most part) is attached to a separate state of the union. Sixteen are considered Enhanced Brigades that are supposedly fully manned and equipped and able to deploy rapidly.

ing. Of particular concern to Capt. Christopher Heathscott, a spokesman for the Arkansas National Guard, is that the reality of going to Iraq next year could cause some Arkansas reservists not to re-enlist this year. “Over the next year roughly one-third of the soldiers in the 39th will have their enlistment contracts expire or be eligible for retirement,” Captain Heathscott said.⁵ Moreover, the brigade is short 600 rifles.⁶

- The 45th Infantry Brigade from Oklahoma, which returned from a 12-month deployment to Afghanistan in December of 2004. It is now slated to go back to Iraq in January of 2008, about three years after returning from Afghanistan—even though one-third of the unit lacks standard issue M-4 rifles.⁷
- The 76th Infantry Brigade from Indiana, which returned from a year-long deployment to Afghanistan in August 2005. It is now scheduled to go to Iraq in January 2008, some 29 months after coming back from Afghanistan. Major General R. Martin Umbarger, head of the Indiana National Guard, has recently commented that “what keeps me up at night is, I think I am able to surge . . . for the normal disaster, but if I needed to deploy every bit of my soldiers and airmen, I know for a fact I do not have enough equipment.”⁸
- The 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Ohio, which returned from a six-month deployment to Kosovo in February 2005. It is now scheduled to go to Iraq for a year-long deployment in January 2008, less than three years after returning from its Kosovo deployment. Mark Wayda, director of the government and public affairs office for the Ohio National Guard, recently noted that “there’s a whole host of things the National Guard just doesn’t have or doesn’t have of sufficient quantity to do their missions.”⁹

According to standard practice of no more than one deployment every five years, none of these units should have been redeployed before 2010 at the earliest. Yet in order to maintain this latest escalation, none of these four units was home more than three

years and one unit, the 76th Infantry Brigade from Indiana, received only two and a half years between deployments. Violating the rule has and will continue to have adverse effects on these units.

For example, lengthy and repeated deployments have taken a toll on the people in the Guard and Reserve. The National Military Family Association released a survey on cycles of deployments that concluded:

“Army National Guard and Reserve families reported the greatest stress concerning deployment length. Their service members typically experience family separations of close to 18 months.”¹⁰

Because the families of the Army National Guard and Reserve are experiencing unexpectedly long periods of separation, future recruitment and retention are bound to suffer, as is the case with the 39th Infantry Brigade. As the Commission on the National Guard and Reserve recently concluded:

“Overall, if the reserve component, including the National Guard, continues its high operational tempo, current indicators cast considerable doubt on the future sustainability of recruiting and retention, even if financial incentives continue to increase.”¹¹

Moreover, these extended deployments that violate longstanding deployment policy also have a detrimental impact on military families as well as the civilian employers of Guardsmen and Reservists. Troops in both forces had reasonable expectations that they would not be deployed so often and for such long periods of time. Not surprisingly the Army National Guard fell short of its recruiting goals in 2005 and 2006.¹²

The equipment situation for the rest of the National Guard is also in tatters. Both the Army Guard and Reserve began the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq with their units short tens of thousands of soldiers, or about 15 percent to 20 percent, and equipped with only 65 percent to 70 percent of their required wartime needs. Those shortages have deepened as people and equipment are borrowed from units stay-

ing home to fill out those about to go overseas—a process known as “cross-leveling.”¹³

According to Lt. General Blum, the Army National Guard presently has on hand only 30 percent of its essential equipment here at home while 88 percent of the Army National Guard that is in the United States is very poorly equipped.¹⁴ Nearly nine out of every 10 Army National Guard units that are not in Iraq or Afghanistan have less than half the equipment needed to respond to a domestic crisis and less than 45 percent of the Air National Guard’s units have the equipment needed to deploy.¹⁵

According to Lt. General Blum, this is “the first time such a shortfall in equipment readiness has occurred in the past 35 years.”¹⁶ He estimated the total cost of the shortfall at about \$36 billion.¹⁷ Guardsmen even lack training on even the most essential equipment, even those in units about to deploy. Cases in point (as noted above): one-third of the Oklahoma National Guard is lacking M-4 rifles and the Arkansas National Guard is short 600 rifles for the state’s 39th Brigade Combat Team.¹⁸

Unprepared at Home

Even as significant numbers of personnel and equipment are supporting overseas operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army National Guard’s responsibility for homeland defense and civil support has remained constant. As a result, the Guard’s evolving role from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve has had a significant impact on its ability to perform its domestic missions, something both Republican and Democratic governors have complained about to the president and the secretary of defense for the past three years.

In the pre-September 11 security environment, it was assumed that the National Guard could perform its domestic roles with the personnel and equipment it was supplied with for its war fighting missions.¹⁹ Even a cursory examination of the Guard’s equipment situation demonstrates that the force’s current operational model while performing both its domestic and international roles is unsustainable.

In order to address equipment requirements for current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army now requires that reserve (and active) units leave behind certain essential items that are in short supply. These key items include up-armored humvees and other armored vehicles as well as long-range surveillance and communications systems.

This process is meant to assure that follow-on units are 100 percent equipped. The procedure also reduces the amount of equipment that has to be transported from the United States to Iraq or Afghanistan, better enables units to meet their deployment dates, and maintains stocks of essential equipment in theater where it is most needed.²⁰ But as a 2005 Government Accountability Office report notes, “while this equipment approach has helped meet current operational needs, it has continued the cycle of reducing the pool of equipment available to nondeployed forces for responding to contingencies and for training.”²¹

The response to Hurricane Katrina revealed these serious shortcomings in the equipping of Guard units for the Homeland Security and Defense departments. According to WGNO, a Louisiana ABC affiliate, four weeks before the hurricane struck the Gulf Coast, Lt. Colonel Pete Schneider of the Louisiana National Guard complained that when guard members left for Iraq in October 2003 they took a lot of needed equipment with them. Specifically, they took dozens of high-water vehicles, Humvees, refueling tankers, and generators.²²

Like Lt. Colonel Schneider’s warnings, similar reports of critically depleted equipment stocks by the Louisiana Army National Guard were ignored. As of July 2005, the Louisiana Guard reported that it had less than 5 percent of the required amount (or a quantity of fewer than five each) of more than 220 critical items. Among these 220 high-demand items were generators, trucks, and radios—items that would become invaluable in the wake of Katrina.²³

Both the Department of Defense and the National Guard leadership have repeatedly denied that the Guard’s response to Katrina was hamstrung by overseas deployments. Both point to the number of person-

nel, some 50,000 troops, that were able to deploy to the area of operations in “record time.”²⁴ But, as a Congressional Research Service report released in the wake of the disaster noted, the inability to carry out relief operations centered as much upon the unavailability of equipment as personnel. The report notes that:

“National Guard units responding to Katrina did not have adequate numbers of tactical radios or High Mobility Multi-Wheeled Vehicles adapted for high water operations because this equipment was in Iraq. Another example noted is that of the 101st Air Assault Division, based in Ft. Campbell, KY. This division, which has the largest number of transport helicopters of any Army unit, was not deployed to Katrina operations because it is in the process of deploying to Iraq.”²⁵

Contrary to official statements by the Bush administration, a dearth of ready troops was also to blame. Had a substantial number of essential Guard units been readily available, logistical gaps that occurred during Katrina operations would have been mitigated. Fort Polk—which is about 270 miles northwest of New Orleans—is home to the 4th brigade, 10th Mountain Division. Immediately after Katrina struck the 4th brigade could send only a few dozen soldiers manning purification equipment and driving half-ton trucks filled with supplies and equipment. According to *The Wall Street Journal*, a week after Katrina hit the Army was reluctant to commit this active unit because the 4th brigade, which numbers several thousand soldiers, was in the midst of preparing for an Afghanistan deployment in January 2006.²⁶

Instead, the Pentagon chose to send some 7,500 soldiers from the active Army’s 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, TX and the 82nd Airborne Division from Fort Bragg, NC, along with Marines from California and North Carolina—a factor that lengthened their arrival time on the ground in Louisiana by several days (soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division—nicknamed the ready division—are meant to be able to deploy anywhere in the world in 18 hours).²⁷

Moreover, at the time of the disaster over a third of the total Guard of Louisiana and Mississippi, some

5,900 troops, were deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan. And according to Dave McGinnis, former Chief of Staff of the National Guard Association of the United States, the problem for Louisiana and Mississippi was not how many troops were in Iraq at the time but rather the kind of soldiers who were there. As McGinnis noted, “It’s combat brigades, which are the types of units you need in these situations,” that were overseas, he said.²⁸

Combat brigades—large, self-sustaining units of about 3,000 troops—have the vehicles, communications equipment, and structure to cope best with a natural disaster. In Louisiana, communications and mobility were especially critical because most of New Orleans was without water, power, and telephone service. Without the relief of these troops, the people of New Orleans were placed at much greater risk.

Unfortunately, symptoms of the pre-Katrina equipment shortages are already beginning to reappear elsewhere. Efforts to rebuild the tornado-ravaged community of Greensburg, KS have revealed that reconstruction and crisis management has been constrained by a lack of National Guard equipment. According to Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius, the state’s National Guard has only about 40 percent of the equipment it is allotted because much of it has been sent to Iraq.

Much of the Guard’s equipment that is normally positioned around Kansas to respond to emergencies and natural disasters is gone. As Sebelius noted, a lack of immediate access to things like tents, trucks, and semi trailers will really handicap the rebuilding effort.²⁹ Regrettably, this sounds all too familiar.

Sadly the problems plaguing the Kansas Guard are not unique. The Guards of California, Florida, Arizona, New Jersey, Idaho, Louisiana, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Michigan, New Mexico, Oregon, and Arkansas also have less than half the equipment they need to deal with natural disasters. As Defense Secretary Robert Gates has acknowledged, Army National Guard equipment levels are the lowest they have been since 9/11. In fact, the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves reported in March 2007

that nearly 90 percent of National Guard units are not ready to respond to crises at home and abroad.³⁰

Faced with shortages, states have been forced to rely more on existing compacts with their neighboring states in order to mitigate the dangers of being caught off guard by a natural disaster, terror attack, or civil disturbance. Such compacts represent mutual assurances of aid, relief, and troop commitments should a contingency occur. Yet as Major General Melvyn Mantano, the former head of the New Mexico National Guard, notes, “these compacts are practically nullified now because all states have people in” Iraq. “If you have four or five states around you, where are they going to get their equipment from? Because they all have been deployed.”³¹

Moving Forward

According to Arnold L. Punaro, Chairman of the Commission on the National Guard, “we cannot sustain the [National Guard and Reserves] on the course we’re on.” The extent of the resources needed to deal with a catastrophe on the scale of Hurricane Katrina, in addition to the requirements for combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, raise the question of what resources would be available in the event of another catastrophic event or outbreak of yet another ground troop-intensive contingency.

“We are now in a degraded state back here at home,” explains Lt. General Steven Blum, the National Guard’s top officer. “The ability for the National Guard to respond to natural disasters and to perhaps terrorist weapons-of-mass-destruction events that may come to our homeland is at risk because we are significantly under-equipped.”³²

This situation clearly cannot persist without serious adverse consequences to our national security and our National Guard. Accordingly, we offer the following set of recommendations:

- *Fully fund the reset of National Guard and Reserve equipment.* Even if it means continuing supplemental funding after the end of the war in Iraq.
- *Increase the size of the Active Army and Marines by at least 100,000.* This will ensure that the Active forces will have to rely less on the reserve component.
- *Establish in each state a non-deployable homeland security corps of volunteer citizens with skills that are central to responding to catastrophic disasters.* Such volunteers would include doctors, nurses, construction workers, firefighters, police officers, communications experts, city planners, engineers, and social workers, among others. These units would serve as a backup for National Guard units, which will continue to be deployed away from their home states. Congress should increase the Department of Homeland Security budget by \$1 billion to pay for such a program.
- *Limit the president’s ability to mobilize Guard units to no more than one year out of five without congressional authorization.* Current law allows the president to mobilize selected reserves for up to two years. The president can mobilize them for more than two years as long as they are not consecutive. Limiting the president’s ability to do so would allow Guard and Reserve troops and their families to prepare both personally and financially for deployments with greater predictability.
- *Reintroduce in Congress the national service proposal by Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY).* To provide for the common defense, require all persons in the United States between the ages of 18 and 42, including women, to perform a period of military service or a period of civilian service in furtherance of the national defense and homeland security, and for other purposes. Even if this legislation is not enacted, the debate will help Americans understand the toll that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq is taking on our armed forces.
- *Allow members of the Guard to enroll in TRICARE, the active duty’s military health care system, as soon as they join.* This will ensure that Reserve troops do not have to change health care plans when they are mobilized and will allow them to obtain first-rate care when they return from their tours of duty.

Appendix: Enhanced Separate Brigades

Our research team compiled the following facts through an extensive review of available information about individual brigade deployments in local news reports and elsewhere. Although we have high confidence that the information presented is accurate, we openly acknowledge that some pieces of information may be inaccurate or incomplete.

Possible errors or discrepancies could not be helped given the nature of the task and the fact that some brigades have changed designations or name since the war began due to the ongoing transformation of the Army to modular brigades. We have no doubt, however, that the overall picture of strain and fatigue that emerges is accurate. We expect to maintain and update this database and welcome corrections and additions from those who have more complete information.



29th Infantry Brigade

Hawaii National Guard

- Began training in August 2004 for deployment during Operation Iraqi Freedom III March 2005 to February 2006



30th Heavy Separate Brigade

North Carolina National Guard

- Began training in January 2004 for deployment to Iraq, February 2004 to January 2005
- **Governor Michael Easley Said For National Guard To Serve A Dual Role, They Must Be Supported.** Testifying before a commission last summer, North Carolina Gov. Easley cited the extensive use of the Guard in overseas missions and in hurricanes and regional floods. “The dual role of the Guard will continue,” he said. “But for the Guard to continue to be successful in both national and homeland defense missions, we must ensure that it is properly staffed, adequately funded and fully equipped.”
- On May 14th, 2007 Governor Easley told a National Press Conference that nearly 50 percent of the Guard’s equipment remains in Iraq and that his state could face major problems if a major hurricane strikes this year.



34th Infantry Division

Minnesota National Guard

- 1st BCT Deployed in Iraq, March 2006 to April 2007, extended 125 days to July 2007. Previous smaller deployments to Bosnia (Sept. 2003 to March 2004) and Kosovo (Feb. 2004 to August 2004)
- **Governor Tim Pawlenty Said Promises By Federal Government Over Equipment Need To Be Kept.** Gov. Pawlenty said that the federal government must follow through on its promise to replace equipment taken by Guard troops to Iraq. “Those promises need to be kept,” Pawlenty said. “We’ll be able to test that, because we have a significant number coming back this summer. We’ll be able to see if the equipment comes back.”³⁵



37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Ohio National Guard

- Last deployed to support operations in Kosovo as part of the United Nations Kosovo Force mission from August 2004 to February 2005. Restructured with Guard members from Ohio and Michigan in early 2007 as part of Modularity, the Army's extensive restructuring effort.
- Slated for second deployment to go to Iraq from January 2008 to January 2009
 - **National Guard spokesperson said the National Guard Doesn't Have Enough Quality Equipment.** Mark Wayda, director of government and public affairs for the Ohio National Guard said, "While on the one hand I would agree that people who are taking fire need the best stuff, you've also got to be looking at other missions the National Guard has to perform and making sure that it has those capabilities." He continued, "There's a whole host of things the National Guard just doesn't have or doesn't have of sufficient quality to do their mission."³⁶



39th Infantry Brigade

Arkansas National Guard

- Deployed as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom II as part of the 1st Cavalry Division, February 2004 to March 2005
- Activated, slated for second deployment to go to Iraq, December 2007 to December 2008
 - **Many Arkansas National Guard soldiers lack the equipment they need.** "Capt. Christopher Heathscott, a spokesman for the Arkansas National Guard, said the state's 39th Brigade Combat Team was 600 rifles short for its 3,500 soldiers and also lacked its full arsenal of mortars and howitzers. Of particular concern, he said, is the possibility that the prospects of going to Iraq next year could cause some Arkansas reservists not to re-enlist this year. Over the next year roughly one-third of the soldiers in the 39th will have their enlistment contracts expire or be eligible for retirement, Captain Heathscott said"³⁷



41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Oregon National Guard

- Deployed to Afghanistan to train Afghan National Army, June 2006 to June 2007
 - **Oregon Guard short \$103 million worth of equipment, 66 percent short on weapons and vehicles.** "Oregon's National Guard units are short more than \$100 million worth of equipment, largely because five years of deployments have depleted weapons and vehicle stocks," said Brig. Gen. Mike Caldwell. Much of that equipment was damaged or destroyed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and some was left behind for other troops to use, he noted. "Back home, the lack of equipment makes Guard training and response to emergencies more difficult," he explained. Caldwell estimates that Oregon's Guard units have about 44 percent of the weapons, vehicles and other equipment they are supposed to have. "It would cost \$103 million to replace the 'most important' of what's been lost or left behind," he said.³⁸



45th Infantry Brigade

Oklahoma National Guard

- Deployed to Afghanistan to train the Afghan National Army. December 2003 to December 2004
- Slated for second deployment to go to Iraq, January 2008 to January 2009
 - **Oklahoma National Guard troops are facing their longest deployment since the Korean War**³⁹
 - **Massive equipment shortfalls hinder the Oklahoma National Guard.** “Maj. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt stated that if his unit is going to be sent to Iraq next year, he said, ‘We expect the Army to resource the Guard at the same level as active-duty units.’”⁴⁰



48th Infantry Brigade

Georgia National Guard

- Deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom IV, April 2005 to April 2006



53rd Infantry Brigade

Florida National Guard

- December 2002 to December 2003: 1st, 2nd, 3rd Infantry Combat Battalions deployed to Iraq
- June 2004 to September 2005: Brigade Headquarters sent to Afghanistan
- September 2006 to present: 2nd Combat Battalion currently in Iraq
 - **The Iraq war has crippled Florida’s ability to respond to hurricanes.** The Iraq war’s drain on personnel and equipment is forcing the Guard to work overtime to stay prepared. The Florida National Guard began the year with only about 25 percent of the authorized equipment it should have on hand, down by half from before the invasion of Iraq in March 2003.”⁴¹



76th Infantry Brigade

Indiana National Guard

- Activated April 2004 for deployment to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, August 2004 to August 2005
- Slated for second deployment to go to Iraq, January 2008 to January 2009
 - **National Guard Does Not Have Enough Equipment To Deploy Soldiers.** “What keeps me up at night is, I think I am able to surge or the normal disaster, but if I needed to deploy every bit of my soldiers and airmen, I know for a fact I do not have enough equipment,” said Maj. Gen. R. Martin Umbarger, head of the Indiana National Guard.⁴²



81st Infantry Brigade (Mechanized)

Washington State National Guard

- Deployed to Iraq, March 2004 to March 2005



116th Cavalry Brigade

Idaho National Guard

- Deployed to Iraq, November 2004 to November 2005
- **Republican Governor “Butch” Otter Says Idaho Guard Lacks Equipment and Needs Retraining.** In a news release, Gov. Otter said that 18 months in Iraq was enough for his former National Guard outfit. “Department of Defense regulations state that units may not be deployed more than 24 months over a five-year period. That would suggest the 116th has only six months left before exceeding the two-year limit. As most units sent to Iraq are staying longer than six months, I think it unlikely the 116th will get that call. Additionally, many of the unit’s equipment needs have not been addressed since returning from Iraq. Members also are in the middle of transitioning from tanks to armored personnel carriers, and that training is still underway.”⁴³



155th Armor Brigade

Mississippi National Guard

- Deployed to Iraq, January 2005 to January 2006



218th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized)

South Carolina National Guard

- Deployed to Stabilization Force, Bosnia, October 2002 to April 2003



256th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized)

Louisiana National Guard

- Deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom III, September 2004 to October 2005
- **Lt. Col. Pete Schneider, Spokesman for the Louisiana National Guard, Issues equipment warning.** “We are really concerned about vehicles. We would have enough for a small-scale issue, maybe a Category 1 tropical storm we could handle—an event that doesn’t involve massive flooding or massive search and rescue.”⁴⁴



278th Armored Cavalry Regiment

Tennessee National Guard

- Deployed to Iraq Operation Iraqi Freedom II, November 2004 to November 2005
- **Senator Lamar Alexander Said Tennessee Guardsmen Have Had To Leave Equipment In Iraq.** Tennessee Sen. Alexander sent a letter to President Bush and wrote that over 10,000 Tennessee guardsman have served in Iraq and Afghanistan in units who were forced to leave most of their equipment behind. “Re-equipping the National Guard is one of the biggest challenges we face in funding the Defense Department,” Sen. Alexander wrote. “Guard units have been equipped to do their jobs in combat overseas, only to come home and find that what equipment was not destroyed in combat had to be left behind for others to use.”⁴⁵
- The 278th Regimental Combat Team left \$163 million in equipment behind in Iraq and Gov. Phil Bredesen has expressed his concern about the ability of Guard units to respond to a state emergency.⁴⁶

Endnotes

- 1 Scott Tyson, Ann, "Possible Iraq Deployments Would Stretch Reserve Force," *Washington Post*, November 6, 2006.
- 2 Cloud, David, "US National Guard May Undertake Iraq Duty Early," *International Herald Tribune*, February 22, 2007.
- 3 "General: Guard Units not Ready for Combat," *USA Today*, August 1, 2006.
- 4 Website of House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, <http://majorityleader.house.gov/docUploads/Iraqbythenumbers031907.pdf>
- 5 David S. Cloud, "Units of National Guard May Return to Iraq Early," *New York Times*, February 22, 2007.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Oklahoman, February 1, 2007.
- 8 Tyson, Ann Scott "Most National Guard Units Rated Not Ready for Service," *Washington Post*, March 2, 2007.
- 9 *Plain Dealer*, February 18, 2007.
- 10 National Military Families Association, "Cycles of Deployment," <http://www.nmfa.org/site/DocServer/NMFAcyclesofDeployment9.pdf?docID=5401>
- 11 Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, "Strengthening America's Defenses in the New Security Environment," March 1, 2007.
- 12 Hall, Kristin, "Numbers Up for Guard Recruitment," *Associated Press*, May 15, 2007.
- 13 GAO, "Reserve Forces Army National Guard's Role, Organization, and Equipment Need to be Reexamined," October 20, 2005.
- 14 Drew Brown, "Wars are Depleting the National Guard's Equipment Stocks at Home," *McClatchy Newspapers*, January 31, 2007.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Free Market News Network, "Chief: National Guard Funds Lacking," May 15, 2007.
- 18 David S. Cloud, "Units of National Guard May Return to Iraq Early," *New York Times*, February 22, 2007.
- 19 GAO, "Reserve Forces Army National Guard's Role, Organization, and Equipment Need to be Reexamined," October 20, 2005.
- 20 DOD Directive 1225.6, Equipping the Reserve Force, April 7, 2005.
- 21 GAO, "Reserve Forces Army National Guard's Role, Organization, and Equipment Need to be Reexamined," October 20, 2005.
- 22 Block, Schatz, Fields, Cooper, "Behind Poor Katrina Response, A Long Chain of Weak Links," *Wall Street Journal*, September 6, 2005.
- 23 GAO, "Reserve Forces Army National Guard's Role, Organization, and Equipment Need to be Reexamined," October 20, 2005.
- 24 2007 National Guard Posture Statement, <http://www.ngb.army.mil/resources/downloads/2007posturestatement.pdf>
- 25 Congressional Research Service, "Hurricane Katrina: DoD Disaster Response," September 19, 2005.
- 26 Block, Schatz, Fields, Cooper, "Behind Poor Katrina Response, A Long Chain of Weak Links," *Wall Street Journal*, September 6, 2005.
- 27 Ibid.
- 28 Moniz, Dave, "Pentagon to Send 10,000 National Guard Troops," *USA Today*, August 31, 2005.
- 29 "Iraq War Hampers Kansas Cleanup," May 6, 2007, <http://www.kcbs.com/pages/424076.php?contentType=4&contentId=472199>
- 30 Commission on the National Guard and Reserves, Second Report to Congress, 3/1/07.
- 31 Spiegel, Peter, "Guard Equipment Levels Lowest Since 9/11," *Los Angeles Times*, May 10, 2007.
- 32 Trowbridge, Gordon, "Iraq War Strains National Guard in Michigan," *Detroit News*, March 31, 2007.
- 33 *Plain Dealer*, February 18, 2007.
- 34 Boyum, Tim, "Easley wants help for National Guard," *TWEAN, Raleigh News 14*, http://news14.com/content/top_stories/582410/easley-wants-help-for-national-guard/Default.aspx.
- 35 Molly Hennessey-Fisk, "Governors Warn of Troop Buildups Impact on Guard," *Los Angeles Times*, February 25, 2007.
- 36 *Plain Dealer*, February 18, 2007.
- 37 David Cloud, "US National Guard May Undertake Iraq Duty Early," *International Herald Tribune*, February 22, 2007.
- 38 *Portland Oregonian*, March 2, 2007.
- 39 *Oklahoman*, February 1, 2007.
- 40 David Cloud, "US National Guard May Undertake Iraq Duty Early," *International Herald Tribune*, February 22, 2007.
- 41 Nation Brief, *Washington Post*, April 10, 2007.
- 42 Ann Scott Tyson, "Most National Guard Units Rated Not Ready for Service," *Washington Post*, March 2, 2007.
- 43 Idaho Governor Bill Otter Press Release, http://gov.idaho.gov/mediacenter/press/pr2007/prjan07/pr_004.html, January 10, 2007.
- 44 Ann Scott Tyson, "Most National Guard Units Rated Not Ready for Service," *Washington Post*, March 2, 2007.
- 45 Pitts, Edward Lee, "National Guard Requires Replacement Equipment," *Chattanooga Times Free Press*, January 9, 2007.
- 46 Hall, Kristin, "Numbers Up for Guard Recruitment," *Associated Press*, May 15, 2007.

About the Authors

Lawrence J. Korb, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense in the Reagan administration, is a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress and a Senior Advisor to the Center for Defense Information.

Sean E. Duggan is a Research Assistant at the Center for American Progress.

Center for American Progress



ABOUT THE CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS

The Center for American Progress is a nonpartisan research and educational institute dedicated to promoting a strong, just and free America that ensures opportunity for all. We believe that Americans are bound together by a common commitment to these values and we aspire to ensure that our national policies reflect these values. We work to find progressive and pragmatic solutions to significant domestic and international problems and develop policy proposals that foster a government that is “of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

Center for American Progress
1333 H Street, NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
Tel: 202.682.1611 • Fax: 202.682.1867
www.americanprogress.org